Experiencing Armenian Music in Turkey: An Ethnography of Musicultural Memory

by Burcu Yıldız

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The initial reactions of many people to my idea of researching Armenian music in Turkey included questions like "Is there anything to research?" and "Is there a ethnomusicological field for Armenian music and performance practices in Turkey to write a book?" Most of the questions came from my Armenian friends in Istanbul or people that I interviewed during my research. They would often continue with the following remarks: "There is no genuine Armenian music here! There are only choirs", "If you want to learn about Armenian music, you have to go to Armenia", "If you talk to the elderly, you may be able to learn a few old songs from them, if they remember, of course. Otherwise, you won't find any information in Istanbul".

As many of the people I interviewed supposed, if there is no Armenian musical realm worth studying today – though I will challenge and dissent from that belief throughout this book – then what are the fundamental explanations for this loss and rupture? More specifically, contemplating the issue of "loss" during my fieldwork led me to reconsider the need for historical ethnographic studies on Armenian music in Turkey. At this point, questions on what exists and what has been lost, the historical processes behind the survival and loss, and how music and musical practices have been remembered and forgotten, have become the central arguments of my research. My acquaintance with many members of Istanbul's Armenian community over nearly 15 years had already demonstrated the existence of an 'Armenian musicking community' in Istanbul, about which a dissertation or a book could be written; but this was a rather neglected area of research. Consequently in this book I prefer to discuss 'the role of musicking and cultural memory in the construction of Armenian identities' instead of the quantitative existence of musical products.

Cultural Memory and the Musicking Community

In this book, I prefer to use the conceptual frame of the term *musicking*, coined by Christopher Small (1998). He proposes this verbal form of music which encompasses all musical activity rather than the noun form signifying music as an abstract thing. In general, the main determinants in the creation of music are the music itself, the performers and the listener. However, the term musicking focuses on the creation of music in a broader sense:

> "To music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composing), or by dancing. We might at times even extend its meaning to what

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> the person is doing who takes the tickets at the door or the hefty men who shift the piano and the drums or the roadies who set up the instruments and carry out the sound checks or the cleaners who clean up after everyone else has gone. They, too, are all contributing to the nature of the event that is a musical performance" (Small 1998: 9).

In this definition, Small points out the process of music rather than the musical work as a thing; thus every act that contributes to the process can be appreciated and valued as a musical activity. Additionally, Small (1995) states that "the act of musicking brings into existence among those present a set of relationships, and it is in those relationships that the *meaning* of the act of musicking lies." Similarly, my approach focuses on the meaning of the act of musicking in the Armenian community, not only its musical products. From this perspective, the preliminary reactions questioning the existence of my research topic become baseless. Clearly any attempt to list works of music in Armenian, or those directly identified as Armenian in modern-day Turkey makes it quite apparent that such works are quite limited in quantity. But musicking practices and discourse among Armenians in Turkey are surprisingly common, and a useful category in which to address the constructions of identity.

Years ago, during a chat about music and Armenians with my colleague Aram Kerovpyan, who concentrated his studies on Armenian music, I mentioned that despite the dearth of Armenian musical performance and practice in Istanbul, many Armenian people I had contacted had a specific interest in and knowledge of Armenian music, its repertories, history and musicians. He smiled and said, "Yes, every Armenian seems to be a musicologist."[1] That statement concealed some deeper meanings. That same week, I conducted an oral history interview with a Mardin Armenian, who was interested in Armenian culture and architecture. He had grown up in Mardin, after which his family immigrated to Istanbul. We discussed such subjects as his childhood memories in Mardin, why they emigrated, and the social and economic conditions of Mardin without Armenians today. When I mentioned the difficulty in finding music-related information on the Armenians of Mardin and other regions of Anatolia, he excitedly threw books about Armenians of Mardin onto the table, and said, "Don't forget, every Armenian is a historian."[2] Both striking discourses; "every Armenian seems to be a musicologist" and "every Armenian is a historian" were articulated spontaneously in the interviews and both had comprehensive meanings. I realized that the link between cultural/collective memory and musicking could be helpful in my research. In the words of Jacques Attali, "All music, any organization of sounds, is then a tool for the creation or consolidation of a community, of a totality" (1985: 6). Music not only brings the subject into relation with collective memory, but also collectivizes it at the level of memory (Mowitt 1987: 182). In

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1 Aram Kerovpyan, interview with author, July 2008.

2 T. Ç., interview with author, July 2008.

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view of these points, cultural/collective memory studies, which appear as an interdisciplinary field involving the specific methodologies and perspectives of many fields, present a conceptual framework for this research as well. The term *mémoire collective* (collective memory) was introduced by Maurice Halbwachs in the 1920s and his studies have emerged as the foundational texts of memory studies. Halbwach's interest in memory is rooted in French sociology and philosophy and in particular, the insights of two important scholars, Emile Durkheim and Henri Bergson. Around 1900, scholars from different disciplines such as Sigmund Freud, Aby Warbung, Arnold Zweig, Karl Mannheim, Frederick Bartlett and Walter Benjamin also became interested in the concepts of culture and memory (Olick 2008; Erll 2008). Halbwach articulated the idea that individual memories are inherently shaped and structured by social environment: "It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories" (1992: 38). On the other hand, collective memory is not a monolithic concept and collective remembering is a highly complex process, involving different people and practices. One must be careful, therefore, not to presume at the outset that every society has a single collective memory (Olick 2008: 159).

The choice of the term 'cultural memory' rather than 'collective memory' in the book is due primarily to its dimensional framework, comprised of social memory, material memory and mental or cognitive memory. All these dimensions are involved in the creation of cultural memories. As stated by Astrid Erll, in a metaphorical sense, the concept of "remembering," a cognitive process that takes place in individual brains, is metaphorically transferred to the level of culture (2008:4). The two levels of cultural memory; individual/cognitive memory and collective/social memory, interact while the remembering process is under the strong influence of socio-cultural contexts and shared notions of the past. Furthermore, it is clear that the concept of cultural memory is interpreted either as remnants of past or as a construction in the present. The former, traditionalist models degrade collective memory to heritage or national character and view it as a root for the continuity of identities. They often ask how collective memory shapes contemporary action. The latter presentist model comprises manipulation and deception, asking how contemporary interests could shape the images of the past. Olick recommends "a particularly insightful way to understand the complexities of remembering, which is always a fluid negotiation between the desires of the present and the legacies of the past" (2008: 159). What we remember is actually a selection we have created out of our experiences (Connerton 2009). Here, oral history studies emerge as an effective means to analyze reconstructed memories of the past, because life story narratives are separate from collective memory, but they create new spaces for the expression of subjectivities with which they share a constant relationship. (Neyzi 2004).

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Interpretive anthropology is one of the most effective approaches to the ethnomusicological research of individual communities. The interpretive paradigm mainly criticizes the traditional positivistic model that tries to reach an objective "truth" in science; and deals with meaning and the contextuality of behaviors. Interpretive anthropology thus addresses qualitative perspectives including hermeneutics, structuralism, semiotics, phenomenology, cultural studies and gender studies for analysis, often in the form of ethnography. In his book, *The Interpretation of Culture*, Clifford Geertz (1973) assumes culture to be a web of socially shared meanings and looks at how meaning is created, assigned and reinterpreted between actors within a given social world in a symbolic interactionist way. Following that paradigm, ethnomusicologists have analyzed musical performance as an activity that communicates social meanings within the community. As Jane Sugarman points out, ethnomusicologists "have thus defined their task as conveying the 'lived experience' of individuals participating in a musical tradition by elucidating the meanings that community music-making holds for its members" (1997: 24). One tendency of analysis within this paradigm is to construct structural homologies between musical forms and social aspects, ideologies or beliefs in the society. This is the aim of the search for consistency between music's structure, and patterns of thinking and behavior within the culture. The articulation of those homologies or shared meanings by the members of society is unnecessary. There may be some iconic or symbolic constructions. This method or procedure of inquiry was defined as ethnoscience or new ethnography, and was used by scholars in the 1960s and 1970s. As pointed out by William Sturtevant, ethnoscience is "the system of knowledge and cognition typical of a given culture" (1968: 99). Hugo Zemp's (1978) research on the 'Are'are in the Solomon Islands, Steven Feld's (1990) study focusing on the relationship between sound structures and social structures among the Kaluli in New Guinea, and Adrienne Kaeppler's (1972) work on movement and meaning in dance ethnology, are some of the most significant ethnomusicological studies in this area.

However, the main problems of ethnoscience are not only its view of culture as holistic and monolithic, but also that it ignores the contestation of meaning constructions among community members. Sugarman, in her inspiring book on singing practices of Prespa Albanians during wedding ceremonies, writes: "It has thus become a major concern for me to provide an account of their singing that addresses the tension that often exists between shared understandings and the idiosyncratic and at times conflicting interpretations of individuals" (1997: 25). She finds the interpretive paradigm necessary but insufficient, criticizing the "…issue of postulating a culture, belief system, or meaning system as something holistic and internally consistent that a musical performance 'mirrors' or 'articulates'". That critique specifically is one of my significant concerns, because I too have tried to avoid the notion of a monolithic, ethnicity-based, homogenous identification for Turkey's Armenian community in my research. So, what does

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make the community? How can we define it? In *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, Anthony Cohen proposes that instead of thinking of community as an integrating mechanism, it should be regarded as an aggregating device. In his approach, the 'commonality' found in community need not be a uniformity (1985:25). So what does the boundary mean to people? What meanings do they assign to it? He suggests that the term be used in a sense beyond its dictionary definition and focuses on the element that embodies the sense of discrimination: the boundary: "To say that community boundaries are largely symbolic in character is, though, not merely to suggest that they imply different meanings for different people. It also suggests that boundaries perceived by some may be utterly imperceptible to others." (Ibid.13). As pointed out by Cohen, some categories such as age, life, gender, father, cleanness etc. are the shared symbols by those who use the same language or who participate in the same symbolic behavior. Nevertheless, their meanings are not shared in the same way. So, the members of community share the symbol, but do not necessarily share its meaning. As a symbol, it is held jointly by its members; but its meaning varies with its members' unique orientations to it. Thus, the aggregate of those symbols constitutes the community's boundaries.

At this point the 'paradigm of complexity,' which emphasizes the plurality of the identity concept, presents a descriptive intellectual framework for qualitative research in anthropology and sociology. The paradigm of complexity aims to analyze certain factors effective in the construction of identity within their own complexity and thus tries to go beyond the positivist, reductionist perspective based on a linear and cumulative causality relation. It evaluates the multidirectional relationship between each individual element of identity and the 'others' (Morin 1992). Alex Mucchielli (1986) defines the principles of the paradigm of complexity as follows: 1) There is no given objective reality. Human reality is a semantic reality and it is built by actors; 2) There is not only one 'reality' but many different coexisting 'realities' built by actors. Each of these realities is as 'real' as the others; and 3) If a semantic reality exists, this is not the result of one or many reasons. This semantic reality is dependent upon a set of cyclical causalities, which also contains the reality emerging in the end. From this perspective, the paradigm of complexity is an attempt to understand and interpret through the refusal of the concept of positivist linear causality. The main reason of the aforesaid plurality is the fact that each subject – which is the carrier of an identity – reads its own and the other's identity differently in different contexts. This is why identity is in a continuous transformation (as cited by Özdoğan, et. al 2009: 29).

Consequently, the paradigm of complexity makes it possible to bring multidimensional explanations about my research subject – the Armenian musicking identities – and to interpret the complexity of the construction process of those identities. Like any other attempt to understand and interpret, it incorporates sub-

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jectivity, and thus makes no pretensions of bringing a holistic explanation of 'reality.' What then is this 'complexity'? The difficulty of this research lies in the need to address these phenomena in the context of wider, complex, sometimes non-placed, multi-local worlds of meaning, because of the plural character of Armenian identities. I would like to emphasize here that one of the difficulties I faced was my ability to perceive this complex multidimensional presence of Armenian identities as distinct from the simple nation-state/nationalized community perceptions inherited since the 19th century. In this respect, I should confess that I also struggled with my own nationalized, stereotyped perceptions of people in an imagined land, in a linear historical timeline. Stephen Blum's critique exemplifies how the model of national music causes to disregard cultural interactions between various peoples living in the same land:

> "Historians of European music have traced continuities in the traditions associated with a single language and nation, giving us excellent histories of, for example, 'Italian music' and 'Russian music.' However, the model of national music histories is more misleading than helpful when applied to the Middle East, where the norm has been cultural interaction among speakers of two or more languages and among practitioners of several religions." (2001: 12).

Nevertheless, though focusing on Turkey, I needed to consider some concepts, facts, discourses and debates regarding Armenian musicking across the transnational Armenian world. The life experiences of the Armenians in Turkey underwent a change during the transition from the Ottoman Empire period to the Republic of Turkey; similarly, the Armenian population in Armenia went through different life experiences during the Soviet and republican periods. Although the Armenian diaspora is perceived as a homogenous category in Turkey, they live all over the world from Lebanon to France, California to Argentina, with unique dynamics in each location. On the other hand, the Armenians of Turkey are one component of that pluralistic, transnational community despite their unique existence. The community provides a considerably heterogeneous structure with individuals of different beliefs such as Protestants, Catholics, Apostolics or atheists, as well as other variables like Istanbul vs. Anatolian descent, economic status, knowledge of Armenian, and level of education. In the final analysis however, these differing communities and spaces are joined around the Armenian ethnicity through a transnational network of cultural solidarity. Even with their different worlds of meanings, musicking is, like language and religion, a very important component and means of expression for identity, which takes shape within this network. Stuart Hall defines two vectors that characterize the dialogic relationship in terms of defining cultural identity within Caribbean identities: The vector of 'similarity' and 'continuity'; and the vector of 'difference' and 'rupture' (1996: 226). Armenian identities are similarly comprised of continuity with the past and similarity within communities; on the other hand, they also share the experience of a profound rupture resulting from 1915.

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Notes on Methodology: Multi-sited Ethnography

During my fieldwork, ethnography seemed the best way to interpret my research questions, but I realized that I could not easily define the field using conventional where/what/when questions because of the complex plurality mentioned above. Arjun Appadurai debates the effects of globalization on the ethnographic site and defies older practices of locating cultures in places: "What is the place of locality in schemes about global cultural flow? Does anthropology retain any special privilege in a world where locality seems to have lost its ontological moorings? Can the mutually constitutive relationship between anthropology and locality survive in a dramatically delocalized world?" (1995: 205). Rethinking concepts of space and place in ethnographic research has stimulated a multi-sited construction of ethnographic designs. De Certeau's theoretical foundation for his distinction between space and place clarifies the multidimensional conceptualizations of social processes, which ethnographers should take into account. According to De Carteau, a place implies an indication of stability. Place is somewhere a person is physically situated; e.g. at school, at the market or in a room.

> "A place (lieu) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location (place). The law of the 'proper' rules in the place: the elements taken into consideration are beside one another, each situated in its own 'proper' and distinct location, a location it defines. A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability." (1984: 117).

Space, on the other hand, is the way in which place is used, or more specifically, the meaning that is made out of place. Space lends dimension to place. For a place to be a space, people must be involved in the place for particular reasons over time (Gustavson and Cytrynbaum 2003: 256). De Certeau states as the following:

> "…space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. On this view, in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is, when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts." (1984: 117).

Furthermore, people change the place into a space by ascribing multiple meanings to that place. Because space is not contained by place, the distinction between place and space delimits the field in productive and creative spaces. For instance, some performative social spaces reconcile a community's local reality with a distant homeland by disseminating and reinforcing collective memory. Whenever I attended stage performances of Armenian dance and folk music, I

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always sensed that the performance halls were being transformed into an Armenian village within the atmosphere shared by both performers and audience as a reflection of cultural memory. Similarly, for many diaspora communities the concept of 'homeland' is the meaning of imposed space rather than a place. Even though they are not physically in their homeland, they can, as migrants, live the life of that homeland in their new home through their traditions and cultural memories.

Multi-sited ethnography, as a revival of ethnographic research, provides a significant shift on the concept of the field with the construction of identities in global-local frames. According to George E. Marcus, multi-sited ethnographies define their objects of study through several different modes or techniques:

> "These techniques might be understood as practices of construction through preplanned or opportunistic movement and of tracing within different settings of a complex cultural phenomenon given an initial, baseline conceptual identity that turns out to be contingent and malleable as one traces it" (1995:106).

Marcus recommends those modes of construction as following people; the thing; the metaphor; the plot, story, or allegory; the life or biography; and the conflict, in order to define the objects of study. For instance, migration studies are a common contemporary research genre within the 'following the people' approach to multi-sited ethnography. Similarly in my research, to consider Armenian music in different sites in Turkey, Armenia and the diaspora involves following the displaced Armenian people historically. On the other hand, the 'following the conflict' approach provides another mode for generating multi-sited terrains for research through conflicting identity constructions and musical meanings. In so doing, I apprehend the connections, suggested relationships, and associations or differences in order to form multi-sited Armenian musicking practices and discourses through those different spaces. Gustavson and Cytrynbaum describe the concept of 'relational spaces' to deepen and build upon Marcus' call for recognizing complicity in relation to multi-sited ethnography. Over the course of the inquiry, research space is reproduced and reworked as the ethnography unfolds:

> "The relational spaces of research are those moments when the originally intended purposes of the planned data collection activities get pushed to the periphery and the relational dynamics of the research take center stage. This is not to say the concrete realities of data collection activities (e.g., participating observation, interviews, etc.) end. They continue" (2003:253).

As Marcus states, the most important knowledge in which the multi-sited ethnographer is interested, is that which parallels the ethnographer's own interest:

> "In this cognitive and intellectual identification between the investigator and variously situated subjects in the emergent field of multi-sited research, reflexivity is most powerfully defined as a dimension of method, serving to displace or recontextualize the sort of literal methodological discussion..." (1995:112).

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Ethnographers attempt 'reflexively' to understand their positions in the cultures being studied and to represent these positionings in ethnographies in a process Kisliuk (2008) illustrates as follows: "We got to know other people by making *ourselves* known to *them*, and through them to know ourselves again, in a continuous cycle" (p. 187). This book represents an ethnographic practice that became as multi-sited as my own presence in the field. I have decided to write about Armenian musicking practices in terms of my own journey and experiences rather than as an attempt to describe Armenian music in Turkey. I must state that my fieldwork process did not begin with deciding on a topic, followed by fieldwork planning and finally the research. In fact, it was performance that inspired me to do fieldwork on Armenian music. In 1998, I began performing Armenian music with the Boğaziçi University Folklore Club, and continued in the Boğaziçi Performing Arts Ensemble (BGST). These concerts represented Turkey's cultural plurality through songs in different languages (Turkish, Kurdish, Armenian, Laz, Arabic, Greek, Ladino, Assyrian, Georgian, Albanian, Romani, etc.) of Turkey and surrounding countries. The BGST collaborated with choir members and musicians from the Sayat Nova Choir as well as popular Armenian musicians such as Onnik Dinkjian, Ara Dinkjian and Arto Tunçboyacıyan for special concerts in Istanbul and abroad. I thus had the opportunity to meet and perform with musicians from Istanbul's Armenian community and the diaspora. In addition, Istanbul Armenian friends and I also sang in an ensemble that performed Armenian songs. We rehearsed for three years and held concerts for commemorations, memorial events, conferences and community gatherings organized by Armenians and NGOs in Istanbul. These performing experiences provided many opportunities for participant observation during my research; as a non-Armenian, provided positive references to me. My demonstrated deep interest in and love for Armenian songs, music and culture quickly gained me a place in Istanbul's Armenian musicking community. Rather than a task, this participation became my daily activity in the fieldwork process, and eventually transformed into ethnographic study of musical practice. Participating as a representative of Armenian music had a strange effect on my position in the field. I cannot forget the interesting concert in which my Armenian guitarist friend and I played for an Armenian couple's 50th anniversary. My friend had phoned and said, "An Armenian woman called me and said she is organizing a celebration for her parents' 50th marriage anniversary. She wants a guitarist and singer who can play 1970s Turkish pop as well as Armenian popular songs. She said her parents would be thrilled if we sang Armenian. Would you like to sing with me?" "Of course I do!" I said. During my fieldwork, I mostly felt that being a singer of Armenian songs at Armenian community gatherings allowed me an intimate, mediating relationship with them rather than outsider or insider status. Michelle Bigenho refers to the insider/outsider boundaries that have been problematized by many scholars in ethnomusicology and anthropology, and asks "Does being a

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musician provide a privileged form of insider-ship, and is that insider-ship anything like being a native ethnographer?" (2008: 30). Timothy Rice writes about his musical participation in Bulgaria, which placed him in the ambiguous position of being neither an insider nor an outsider: "…I speak as myself, as self formed, reconfigured, and changed by my encounters with an understanding of Bulgarian, and indeed all kinds of other, musical works and performances" (Ibid. 57). Referring to Ricoeur's dialectical thinking, Rice states that 'appropriation' is the process of mediation between insider and outsider, in which individuals operating within tradition continually reappropriate their cultural practices, giving them new meanings. Within that process, they then create a continually evolving sense of self, identity, community, and 'being-in-the-world.' Because ethnomusicologists often find themselves at some cultural or historical distance from the traditions they study, appropriation is the dialectical counterpart of that initial distantiation (Ibid. 58). As the singer in an Armenian musical performance, I mostly felt a sense of appropriation as an active participant rather than as an insider or outsider.

During my fieldwork, in addition to performance, I attended and participated in many musical and cultural activities such as concerts, dance performances, rehearsals, conferences, seminars, religious ceremonies in the churches, meetings and demonstrations related to the Armenian agenda of Turkey, an oral history workshop organized by an Armenian community organization, a workshop for Armenian monodic religious singing and Armenian language courses. Furthermore, since I lived for five years in the Kurtuluş neighborhood, home to one of Istanbul's largest Armenian communities, I was able to observe their daily lives. I visited Yerevan, Armenia twice for performances and research. I interviewed musicians, music groups and folk music researchers. I took Armenian singing courses in order to gain a better understanding of the stylistic and discursive characteristics of Armenian music. In fact, my trips to Armenia enabled me to contextualize Armenian identity and music more comprehensively. The 2000s witnessed an intellectual struggle to confront the silenced past of Turkish nationalism, coupled with increasing interest in Armenian identity in public space, especially in academic circles and certain NGO projects. This led to improved dialogue through cultural and art activities, not only via collaboration with Armenia but also with the diaspora, both institutionally and individually. More frequent visits to Turkey by Armenian musicians from Armenia and the diaspora enabled various sites for interaction between the Armenian community and broader Turkish society. For instance, several visits to Istanbul by popular Armenian diaspora musicians Onnik Dinkjian, Ara Dinkjian and Arto Tunçboyacıyan allowed me to meet them and broaden the scope of my fieldwork. This helped me understand the role of concepts of homeland and cultural memory in the construction of musical identities at the individual level. I also joined a group of young Armenian musicians from the Yerkir Union's Van Project on a fifteen-day

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trip through Anatolia. Together with an ethnomusicologist and an anthropologist from Yerevan, they sought out the remnants of Armenian musical characteristics in historical Armenia, while I tried to understand their process of creating meaning relative to music and cultural memory. I could observe their conflict of being in the lost homeland, in the space that they could only imagine through the narratives about the past.

In my data collection, I employed a combination of participant observation and ethnographic interview. I conducted in-depth interviews, mainly with musicians, as well as researchers, musicologists and ethnomusicologists who I believed to have extensive knowledge of Armenian music, history and culture; with chorus members active in Istanbul's Armenian musicking community; and, as an oral history study, with elderly people from various localities. Their narratives and life stories provided rich ethnographic data. The interviews took place mostly in Istanbul and Yerevan, but due to the multi-sited character of the study, interviews were also necessary in different locations including Diyarbakır, Vakıflıköy (Hatay), Çamlıhemşin (Rize), Tunceli and New Jersey. A total of 38 people participated in these in-depth interviews and conversations. Because of the study's structure however, I made held many short, spontaneous interviews with people at the performances I attended. The interviews were conducted mostly in Turkish and English. In Yerevan especially, I employed an Armenian translator for many interviews.

In these in-depth interviews, I generally preferred descriptive and open-ended questions formulated according to the informant's personal history, occupation, and relation with music, rather than a set of questionnaire for every participant. We talked about musical references at various points in their narratives including mention of homelands, family stories, childhood, youth, marriage, their first encounter with the Armenian music, music's place in their lives, musical studies, recollections and knowledge of Armenian music, perception of the Armenian music, and the presence or lack of opportunities for musical expression in their lives. The informants' family histories extended back to Anatolian provinces like Sivas, Hatay, Mardin, Harput, Diyarbakır, Muş, Van, Çatalca, Kayseri, etc. The narratives thus provided detailed and specific local insights, mainly about the history of Anatolian Armenians. Despite all this complexity and variety, however, I was also able to form a conceptual framework in which all these distinct narratives overlap and integrate. In this context, I approached to the interviews in order to understand the process of creating meaning in musicking, and the discourses and attributions woven around it in the process.[3] The meaning depends on how individuals negotiate an event or an experience. As Alessandro Portelli notes, oral history "tells us less about events than about their meaning to

[3] Although my informants did not requested to remain anonymous, I have decided not to use full names for all-non public persons, because of the controversial nature of interpretative paradigm.

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the interviewees" (1998: 67). For this purpose I addressed individual negotiations of musicking, cultural memory and identity through the framework of oral history and memory studies.

The Organisation of This Book

I would like to clarify that as I examined Armenians' musicking practices, I addressed only Armenian language music and musical environments. Although aware of the Armenians' multilingual practices and identities from the Ottoman period to the present, in this study I discuss only music performed in Armenian. For this reason, it does not address specific subjects like 'Armenians in Ottoman music,' 'Armenian *ashugh*s in Turkish folk music' or 'Armenian composers in Turkish pop music.' Neither have I aimed to share informative, referential data such the history, folklore, instruments, musical genres and general musical characters. This book is an attempt to interpret and discuss the sounds, performance environments, performance practices and discourses witnessed by the author during the course of the fieldwork. It is structured to explore different domains of cultural memory encoded in and conveyed through musicking practices.

My own approach is complementary in being situated within the ethnographic tradition with a particular interest in the experiential and subjective viewpoint in ethnomusicology. Therefore, the second chapter of the book will detail the experience I attained regarding Armenian music throughout a fifteen-year process. It will also transmit the discourses I observed with regards to Armenian music as a participant observer. With a reflexive perspective, I particularly wanted to share with the reader the personal transformation that I underwent during this process. This is because I thought that the framework I have tried to construct in the remaining section could only be properly conveyed to the reader as such. With the reference to this personal journey, I suggest that much like there is no singular Armenian identity, there can be no singular definition of Armenian music. In the third chapter, I trace the historical and sociopolitical background relating to ethnic identity and minority issues during the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey. Then I provide a short overview of music policy to provide a historical framework on the possibilities or impossibilities of expression concerning Armenian music in Turkey. The following sections of this chapter describe the demographic and socio-cultural structure of Armenian community after 1915, and the community's remembrances upon Armenian music. The fourth chapter covers the musicking community founded in Istanbul by Armenians of Turkey from the 1970's up until today. This chapter takes the shape of a historical ethnography involving the *Yerki Bari Khump* ensemble's performances and the developing and traditionalizing musical repertoires, musical forms, sounds, chorus operations, intercommunal communication and development of Istanbul Armenian identity vis-a-vis music. In the fifth

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chapter--by looking at the academic and musical works of Gomidas Vartabed completed in the Ottoman and Russian Empires in the late 19th to early 20th century–I discuss further the notion of 'the authenticity of Armenian music' to explain the perception of an authentic musical tradition. In this chapter I examine the discourses with which Gomidas' legacy has been extended to Armenians today as a vehicle of musicultural memory. In the sixth chapter I focus on the relationship between music and the cultural memory of diaspora communities that have been forced to live a life of exile. I discuss how a musical performance can turn into a performance of one's homeland via the musical identity and life story of Onnik Dinkjian. In the seventh chapter, we are going on a journey to Artostan, to the imagined homeland of a musician, Arto Tunçboyacıyan. I describe the process of 'constructing the self' by means of his musical representation and discourses through his oral history narratives. I point out how 'Artostan', is being abstracted and embodied in his musical sound. The focus on Arto Tunçboyacıyan's music and his performativity sheds new light on the mutual relationship between cultural memory and musical creativity. I do not bring together the book's disparate chapters in order to leave the reader with an excessively unified conclusion. The last chapter takes the form of epilogue rather than a conclusion.

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Chapter 2: A Personal Journey into Armenian Music(s)

The concept of Armenian music is actually a composite shaped by various regional styles with many distinct sounds and a polyvalence of social, political and historical discourses. The main focus of this chapter is to present these ideas and the dynamics that affected my research topic, in the form of a personal narrative of my journey towards understanding Armenian music. Because my perception of Armenian music has been shaped by fieldwork experiences, and reshaped continually during the course of this research, I contextualize a reflexive approach to the discourses, concepts, ideas, and topics of study introduced in this narrative.

The reflexive approach highlights the personal nature of the experience, and in this sense, becomes part of the ethnographer's field concept and research process. Naturally 'personal' here does not mean that ethnographers may pursue whatever they fancy and impose their own agenda upon the field of study. Jeff Todd Titon states that "new fieldwork leads us to ask what it is like for a person (ourselves included) to make and to know music as lived experience." (2008: 25). Timothy Rice (2008) questions metaphoric ideas which arose as fundamental epistemological issues in ethnomusicology during the 1970s, such as being an insider/outsider, or to put it another way, emic/ethic[1], and the scientific objectivity underlying this. He draws attention to the 'subject' that find its 'self' as the result of encountering symbols in hermeneutics opposite to the rational 'subject' in the enlightenment philosophy. Referring to his own fieldwork, Rice states that he became a gajda player and ethomusicologist following his encounters with Bulgarian music and musicians, and the personal transformations he experienced. He will never be an insider in terms of ethnicy, but as a gajda player with a good knowledge of Bulgarian music, he has much more of an insider's perspective on musical performance than many Bulgarians who cannot play the gajda. Based on Ricoeur's phenomenological hermeneutic approach, he brings up the concept of *appropriation*, in which he tries to bring together 'field experience' with his 'fieldwork methods' (2008: 57).

Beyond observation as an insider or outsider, ethnography is the account of experience that takes form as a result of encounters in the field. According to Rice, the 'field,' a metaphoric creation of the researcher, is an experiential space, and accordingly, fieldwork is an epistemiological process. In the light of these different experiences, ethnomusicologists too are forced to discover new modes

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1 The status of being an insider or an outsider is a conceptualization which proved useful in cultural anthropology during the 1950s and 60s, in reference to Kenneth Pike's study (1954). He draws a distinction between *ethic* evaluations of a culture and language by scientifically trained observers, and *emic* cultural expressions by people within that culture.

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of personal communication, methods or theories in relation to modern or historic research methods. Fieldwork becomes a process which entails the acceptance of multiple truths and epistemologies, characterized by James Fernandez as "creative diversification" (1993: 180). Therefore, the reflexive approach and ethnographic viewpoint which I have tried to summarize here is a clear reflection of the field perspective I have established in my study, the narrative language of this book.

My awareness of identity and ethnicity issues and my intimate relationship with Armenian music began during my undergraduate studies at Boğaziçi University. In 1998, I joined the Folklore Club, where I began to sing and participate in music and dance performances. I became aware of the Folklore Club when I chanced upon a concert during university orientation week. Looking for the Music Club's jazz concert, I mistakenly followed the sounds coming from another hall and found myself at the Folklore Club performance. After the concert, I decided to join the Folklore Club. Twice a week its members would meet and learn songs and music of Anatolia and neighboring regions. The repertoire included Turkish, Kurdish, Georgian, Azerbaijani, Armenian, Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Ladino, Assyrian and Arabic folk songs. All of this music was new to me, and thus awakened a deep curiosity about them. During those first years, I spent more time in the Folklore Club archive listening to that music than at the library studying for my courses. As a casual music listener, the most intriguing point for me was hearing all these new and different sounds, which made me aware of a rich and varied world of music very different from what I had been listening to for years. The inherent multiculturalism of and fraternity among the peoples of Anatolia and the surrounding regions was the founding concept of the Folklore Club, which was clearly visible in their performances. It was this basic political outlook that guided the club's musical research, the aim of which was to address the full scope of Turkey's cultural, historical and political background. With this goal, the club organized readings and seminars on the music, dance, and social histories of ethnic groups of Anatolia, as well as neighboring regions, and published a journal called *Folklora Doğru* (Towards Folklore). Quite frankly, for new club members these study sessions, rehearsals and performances were like discovering the music and dances of 'hidden' cultures of Anatolia. At the same time, the club's activities allowed a generation brought up under the ideological influences of public education, media and the family – where the non-Turkish elements of society were labeled as the 'other' – to understand Turkish society as a multicultural entity. In addition, the knowledge that the ethnicities who perform this music are not only neighboring peoples – as the nation-state construct would have it – but are historically integral to modern Turkey, put the 'official history' into perspective[2]. As a student of political science and international rela-

2 A lead article in the *Folklora Doğru*, "Cumhuriyet Dönemi Müzik Politikaları" (Musical Politics in the Republican Era) was an important critical source in the literature of Turkish

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tions, I took courses such as Turkish Politics, Politics and Culture, and Ideology and Discourse. Examining the official history in these courses provided a foundation on which to understand that the history we were taught in secondary and high school was not in fact based on 'factual fixed truths,' and that the history and historiography of power relations were constructed.

These ideological viewpoints from my undergraduate studies guided me in my ethnomusicological studies as well. It has long been argued in anthropologically-based ethnomusicology that the process of learning and understanding different cultures is more productive from the vantage point of a performer and participant. Though I was not aware of it at the time, my work with the Folklore Club immersed me in an ethnomusicological inquiry. I can say that the foundations laid during these years led me to write this book. My introduction to Armenian music and culture began when I began singing Armenian songs. It was considered more productive to focus on a particular area, paying attention to the language and/or the regional characteristics of vocal production, so singing rehearsals were organized in this way. One day my colleague who organized and conducted the vocal practice sessions suggested that I work on Armenian songs, as the timbre of my voice complemented them well. I remember thinking that apart from one Armenian piece in our practices, I could not think of a single Armenian song, and took this recommendation with some trepidation. Besides, I felt more or less the same distance from all the non-Turkish songs in our repertoire, so it was not the language issue that concerned me. While learning to sing in a language I did not know or understand brought a sense of alienation, the opportunity to discover worlds of different feelings by performing those songs was a great pleasure. It occurred to me that performing, and singing in particular, brought people closer and created spaces independent of time and place. At this stage of learning by doing, musical performance always brought a sense of inner connection with others; and the common musical language engendered, at the very least, a kind of sympathy and solidarity. In this respect, my entrance to the sense-scape of Armenian music started with the song *Sari Gyalin*[3], which my colleague had recommended that I practice. *Sari Gyalin* is a folksong that has effectively come to symbolize Armenian-ness in Turkish society since its first use in *Salkım Hanımın Taneleri*[4] (The Pearls of Ms. Salkım), a film that brought the Armenian issue to national attention in Turkey, and years later surrounding the murder of Hrant Dink. What I wish to underline is this: this song was one of my first steps towards my participation in the Armenian musicking community.

musical history and was one of my primary resources in that period. See Necdet Hasgül, 1996.

3 *Sari Gyalin* means 'Bride of the Mountains' in Armenian. The Turkish version of this song is *Sarı Gelin,* meaning 'Blonde Bride' in Turkish.

4 A film directed by Tomris Giritlioğlu and published in 1999, based on the novel written by Turkish author and politician Yılmaz Karakoyunlu. The film recounts individual stories illustrating the repression of the property tax for non-Muslims in 1942.

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I became acquainted with Armenian music first through the copied cassettes in the Folklore Club collection. The handwritten covers of those cassettes provided only the song titles and occasionally the names of the singers. The sound quality was rather poor due to conditions at the time, and it was like listening to recordings from long ago. I now know that most of those copies were of disks from Armenia, Lebanon and the USA, from the collections of acquaintances in Istanbul's Armenian community. Colleagues from *Kardeş Türküler*[5] who were the graduates of the Folklore Club, had very early on established a relationship with some members of the Istanbul Armenian community involved in arts and culture, as well as those doing research on language and music. They had also established a cooperative relationship and friendship with members of an Armenian choir, Sayat Nova. As my first impression of the Armenian musical sound, I began to notice that the soloists on most of these cassette copies were singing folk songs using Western vocal techniques and timbres or that the choirs were singing in tonal harmony, that traditional instruments like the *tar*, *kanun*, *duduk* and *kamancha* were all mostly accompanied by Western style orchestras, that the arrangements relied on heavy harmonization. Rupen Matevosyan, Hovhannes Badalyan, Ofelya Hampartsumyan, Lusik Kochian were among the popular and influential soloists in this musical school. I had long assumed that Armenians were only a Caucasian people and this initially blanketed my perception of Armenian music. But the more I read about Armenian history and listened to the recordings, the more I questioned this assumption.

In the Folklore Club, we often debated the necessity of adhering as closely as possible to traditional styles as well as individual interpretations in our performances. Our soloists' renditions of the songs, instrumental performances and especially our dance performances were modeled chiefly on imitation, with stage adaptations. However, once we were satisfied that our performances approached these 'traditional' models, individual preferences could bring innovative directions to arrangements or staging, so these new approaches and vocabularies were integrated. It was at precisely this point that we seriously began to question whether or not the recordings that we had been listening to reflected an 'authentic' Armenian style. This question arose from the knowledge that Anatolia had been the Armenian homeland for centuries, while the political boundaries of Armenia today had been constructed relatively recently to create a modern nation state. I began to follow the trail of narratives from the members of the Istanbul Armenian community whom I had met and befriended. I stopped being surprised when they answered my question "Where are you from?" with the names of Turkish cities like Sivas (Sepastia), Kayseri (Kesaria), Van (Vaspuragan), Muş (Daron) and Diyarbakır (Dikranagerd). As I read the life stories and vi-

5 *Kardeş Türküler* (Songs of Fraternity) is an ensemble consisting of Boğaziçi University graduates who perform songs of Turkey's diverse ethnic groups.

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gnettes of ways of life in memoires published by Aras Publishing, I began to understand the significance of this 'historical Armenia[6]' as it concerned the Armenian homeland in the construction of identity. It became very clear that the 'Armenian folk music' in the cassettes that I had been listening to had undergone a major transformation in Soviet Armenia. The highly stylized women's voices, such as operatic sopranos employing wide vibratos, were an example of this. It did not seem possible to me that a villager living in Anatolia could have sung in this manner. So how could I acquire the 'original' versions of these? Where could I listen to 'real' Armenian recordings? Weren't a large proportion of today's Istanbul Armenians Anatolian? Then what was the music of Istanbul Armenians like? From lively discussions at dinner parties at the homes of my Armenian friends, and their performances of Armenian folk dance and music that I had watched, it appeared that the musical repertoire and performances of the Istanbul Armenians closely resembled that of the recordings in the Folklore Club collection. It was all in 'Soviet Armenian style'.

Though most of the Istanbul Armenians I knew and socialized with were from families that had emigrated from Anatolia, they themselves had either been born in Istanbul or forced to leave their homeland at a very young age. Thus their musical memories were not sufficient to dispel my curiosity about local, traditional Anatolian Armenian music. From my current perspective I am now aware that my curiosity varied at times between a search for a pure, ahistorical ethnicity and a nationalizing authenticity. I was doing a 'cultural excavation,' with the expectation of finding these regional and folk cultures preserved, much the way an archaeologist would. Like a salvage folklorist, I was searching for songs and materials from a world of another time or a life in another place.

Once I began graduate studies in ethnomusicology, I had the opportunity to learn the function of fieldwork in music research. I realized that it was possible to understand musical pasts in a living context, not in a frozen history. My discovery of Armenian music continued but this time with the awareness of such research methods as oral history, cultural memory studies, participant observation and performance. My first attempt at short-term fieldwork was in 2005 when I visited Vakıflıköy, a village in the district of Samandağ, Hatay province, and the only village with an Armenian population in Turkey today. Every year in the second week of August, the village hosts a grape harvest festival called *Surp Asdvadzadzin* organized by the Vakıflıköy Association, which is made up of vil-

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[6] The term 'Historical Armenia' refers not to political borders but rather to the regions where Armenians lived collectively and interacted with different cultures, in order to create a historical point of view that includes a region much different from present borders of the Armenian nation-state. Historical Armenia, or the Armenian plateau, has been the homeland since 3000 B.C., bordered by Sivas on the west, The Pontic Alps on the north, the Southeastern Toros Mountains on the south, from the Georgian/Turkish border to the present Armenian state on the northeast, and Lake Urumiye and the Iranian Plateau on the southeast (Hovannisian 1967: 1-3).

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lagers who migrated to Istanbul. Visitors from Istanbul, Syria, Lebanon, Armenia and other countries flood the village during the festival. The village has a population of no more than 100-150 people and most of the population is over 60 years of age. Many villagers have migrated to the big cities to take advantage of education and employment opportunities. It owes its continued existence to the fact that it has become an attractive summer destination as a living museum of the Armenian people.

In 2005, a few friends and I joined the tour arranged by the Istanbul Vakıflıköy Association. For me, the tour was also an opportunity to spend a four- to five-day vacation with an Istanbul Armenian group as a participant observer. When I went to the village, I had high hopes of being able to hear some traditional Armenian music, but must say that these expectations turned to disappointment. I would experience such disappointment so frequently during my research that it became a state of mind. Later in this text I will use these disappointments in a somewhat ironic manner. In my interviews I was able to collect three songs in the Armenian dialect spoken in Vakıflıköy. The first, *Hala Hala Ninnoyi*, was for all intents and purposes the village anthem. The other two, *Dgha dgha*[7] and *Sharjir sharjir*[8], were Armenian versions of popular Turkish songs, and thus did not fulfill my desire to find Anatolian Armenian echoes. That night, I went to the festival with high hopes for an Armenian musical feast, but instead, the night was filled with a *davul-zurna* team from a neighboring Arab Christian village who played regional Samandağ melodies. For a short time, the Istanbul Armenians danced and celebrated, singing the 'Best of Armenian popular songs', a repertoire of Soviet Style Armenian folk and *ashugh* (minstrel) music. When the Istanbul tour group learned that I was a singer and that I sang Armenian songs, I was added to the program and sang two Armenian songs. After that night, my position in the group changed considerably. They began asking me to sing everywhere, on the minibus during our daily excursions, at restaurants, and in the lobby of the hotel where we gathered for evening conversations. At one point I remember saying in protest, "Something is going wrong with my fieldwork, because instead of listening to you, I am always the one singing the songs. I should really be the one listening to you more." Two years later my friends and I were invited to give a concert at the festival evening organized by the Vakıflıköy Association; thus I returned to the village where I had first tried to collect Armenian music as a performer of Armenian music. From the progress I had made in my fieldwork, I understood that the observations, performances and ritual environments that I had not deemed of value at the time could provide answers to the things I had questions about. I had been seeking a definition of stable 'national' music in an ethnic group disconnected from any historical and

7 The Turkish version of the song is *Oğlan oğlan*.
8 The Turkish version of the song is *Bir dalda iki kiraz*.

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geographic coherence; and unable find it, I became disappointed – a perspective I am now critical of. Taking Vakıflıköy as an example, I saw that instead of dreaming to find the purest form of traditional music, it would be much more meaningful to research how music served as a form of cultural expression: how it had changed and evolved, what sort of synthesis it had become, and how it had become a form of shared culture among the Christian Arabs, Muslim Arabs, Turks, Kurds and Armenians who co-existed in the Samandağ region.

After this trip to Vakıflıköy I was convinced that my fieldwork would have to be centered in Istanbul if I were going to study Armenian music in Turkey. During this same period I narrowed the focus of my work with BGST, specializing in the field of Armenian music. Together with the Getronagan Association's Sayat Nova Choir, an integral part of the cultural life of the Istanbul Armenian community, we began work on a series of joint concerts that would continue for nearly two years. This allowed me to observe the internal dynamics of performance from many angles: the extent of the choir members' knowledge of Armenian music, and the function of music in the community. Joining the members of the Sayat Nova choir for picnics in the garden of the church in Boyacıköy, and invitations to dinner in their homes, were the most delightful ways to improve my understanding of Armenian music. During that time, a group of musicians from the Sayat Nova choir and I formed an ensemble to play exclusively Armenian music, and after much rehearsal, we developed a concert repertoire. My friends in the Sayat Nova choir and BGST introduced me to the Armenian publishers of Agos newspaper and Aras Publishing, which quickly expanded my network of contacts considerably. Eventually I became a regular Agos reader. The memoires, stories and collections published by Aras significantly broadened my historical perspective on Turkey regarding the Armenians.

In reading Hagop Mıntzuri's memoires of Armıdan and Istanbul, Mıgırdiç Margosyan's captivating accounts of Diyarbakır, or the armchair journey to Harput that Hamasdeğ's book takes us on, it becomes clear that the de-Armenianization of Anatolia was a profound loss for the people of Turkey, and remains an open sore to this day[9]. The effects of Fethiye Çetin's *Anneannem* (My Maternal Grandmother) and Baskın Oran's *M. K. Adlı Çocuğun Tehcir Anıları: 1915 ve Sonrası* (A Child Named M.K.'s Memories of the Deportation: 1915 and Beyond) lingered long after I finished reading them[10]. I realized that all of these writings were characterized, either implicitly or explicitly, by a deep trauma left by the still-unacknowledged sufferings of 1915. While recording the oral histories of my Armenian friends' *yaya*s (grandmothers), I saw what an important role all this oral history and cultural memory research played in the formation of meaning in Armenian identity.

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9 See Hamasdeğ 1997; Mıntzuri 2003 and 2008; Margosyan 2009.

10 See Çetin 2004; Oran 2005.

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As my research subject took form, I also continued following my trail of traditional Armenian music. Events I participated in, conversations with every new person that I met, rehearsals – in short, all my relationships with the Istanbul Armenian community – led to more questions. For example, one day I sang an Armenian love song, *Bardezum vart e patsvel*, at a rehearsal with the Sayat Nova choir. Afterwards, one of the choir members rand up to me and said, "Burcu, you sing nicely and there is no problem with your pronunciation, but you have a somewhat *goygoycu* [exaggerated] style. I mean, you use too many ornaments. You sing like a Turk." I was surprised by this statement and the general round of agreement expressed by many other choir members present. This implied that there was a particular "correct" Armenian sound they were attuned to and must be striven for. Did it then follow that soloist Richard Hagopian who appears on the recording (1995) I had been listening to, did not sing the song 'correctly'? I had tried to sing the song with the same style and ornamentation as he did. Did not Onnik Dinkjian, a legendary singer of Diyarbakır Armenian songs whom I particularly admired, also sing his songs with glottal ornamentations in *makam* style? Clearly he did, so was he then wrong to do so?

In 2009, I had the opportunity to meet Onnik Dinkjian and his son, world-renowned *ud* virtuoso and composer Ara Dinkjian, and share the stage with them in a *Kardeş Türküler* concert in Diyarbakır. This encounter grew into a long-lasting friendship, and the two days I spent in Ara Dinkjian's priceless recording collection in his New Jersey home opened new doors in my journey toward understanding Armenian music. Ara Dinkjian's collection introduced me to recordings by immigrant musicians who brought their regional musical cultures to the United States in the aftermath of the genocide. These recordings bore a strong resemblance to the tracks on the Traditional Crossroads album *Armenians on 8th Avenue*, which I was familiar with. This album is a compilation of Turkish recordings of immigrant Armenian musicians who established themselves at Greek-owned cafes and nightclubs on and around 8th avenue in New York City. As the songs were not strictly Armenian music or sung in Armenian, I had felt that they had no place in my study of Armenian music. However several examples in Ara's collection, recorded between the 1920's and 1940's, most notably by Hovsep Shamlian, Mıgırdich Douzjian, Karekin Proodian, Moorad Elanjian, Vartan Margosian, The Arziv Orchestra and Yervant (Edward) Boghosian, were performed in this same style but with Armenian lyrics. For Armenians in the diaspora, listening to old Turkish songs was the only way to maintain a connection to the homeland. Eventually however, the Armenian community showed a marked preference to hear these songs in Armenian, so they were re-recorded with newly-written Armenian lyrics. Some were set to Turkish or Kurdish melodies; others were composed, but as Ara Dinkjian explained, they were in a general Anatolian rather than specific ethnic style. Similarly, musicians like Richard Hagopian and Onnik Dinkjian, whose recordings we had acquired from our Is-

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tanbul acquaintances in the 1990s, had based their musical identities on Anatolian source music that we cannot pinpoint as Turkish, Kurdish or Armenian. Raised a generation after the 1920s-40s musicians listed above and performing in a style known as '*Kef*[11] Time,' they echoed Anatolian sounds in the American diaspora communities. This multi-ethnic musical style is also found in the Ottoman-Turkish court music. My ethnomusicologist colleague Aram Kerovpyan once mentioned that in today's nation-state discourse, non-Muslim performers of Ottoman music have been appreciated as secondary contributors rather than the components of that tradition. From the perspective of the Ottoman *millet*[12] system however, these musicians were as fundamental to the establishment of this tradition as any musician. At this point, the search for a musical style that represented or defined a distinct, nationalized identity – be it Armenian, Turkish or any other ethnicity – or a template for such a sound, gradually became less meaningful to me, although in the case of Armenian music, I did not abandon it entirely.

When I first heard unaccompanied voices and distinct styles in field recordings made in 1939 by Sidney Robertson Cowell (part of the WPA California Folk Music Project at the Library of Congress), I felt it could potentially provide the clear answers I had sought for so long. This ethnographic collection of folk songs, instruments and photographs of Armenian immigrants living in Fresno, shed genuine light on what Anatolian Armenian music might have sounded like prior to 1915[13]. Over time, recordings of folk music collections similar to those in the Library of Congress began to appear on copies of CDs acquired from friends and acquaintances. *Traditional Songs of Armenia*, a two-volume work by Ensemble Karot (2000, 2001), and Garo Chalikian's *Armenian Folk Songs* (2001) were recordings of traditional songs from the *Vaspuragan* (Van), *Daron* (Muş), *Dikranagerd* (Diyarbakır), *Sepastia* (Sivas), *Kharpert* (Harput), *Ayntab* (Antep) and other regions where Armenian people had lived in Anatolia. These sources, issued in Yerevan, were important to me because this time, along with ethnicity, they included notes on regional musical styles and geographic locations. When I went to Armenia, I had the opportunity to meet and interview the musicians and specialists who had produced those albums. This enabled me to learn the conditions under which they had been recorded, and gather a great deal of information about where the songs were found, how the singers achieved the regional styles, and why they chose to perform *a capella* like most of the peasants.

My first trip to Armenia was in December of 2008, as part of a 68-person tour with *Kardeş Türküler*, the Sayat Nova Choir and the BGST Dance Troupe. We were there to perform a program highlighting the dance and music of the peo-

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11 'Kef' is an Armenian word meaning 'pleasure' or 'well-being'.

12 *Millet* was defining autonomous religious communities that were organized around its religious institution; namely Muslims and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire.

13 See http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cowellbib:armenian

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ples of Anatolia and its environs. During our weeklong trip to Yerevan, I was able to form an impression about Armenia as well as observe what sorts of ties Armenians in Turkey formed with Armenia. I was also able to compare their status with that of Armenians in Turkey. In Turkey, Armenians are treated as a minority group, while in the Republic of Armenia with its more than 90% Armenian majority, they exist as the 'nation' of a nation-state. Thus Armenian identity and culture in Armenia differ from those in Turkey on both a practical and ideological level.

My second trip to Yerevan, taken as part of my 2010 fieldwork, lasted nearly twenty days. I took Armenian singing lessons from a folk music specialist Hasmik Harutunian. Through my interviews with specialists and musicians, their statements about Armenian music, their approaches to folk music and their concepts of traditionality, I gained new understanding of the relationship between music, identity and history, this time from the Republic of Armenia's perspective. The increasing number of projects, personal enterprises and civilians' visits between Turkey and Armenia over the past few years has provided new opportunities for communication outside of the toxic relations on diplomatic and state levels. These visits elucidated the great differences between these societies and how little they knew about each other, as well as the pervasiveness and persistence of their long-held prejudices about each other.

In 2011, an Armenian music group called the Van Project, made up of fourteen young musicians, took an ethnographic trip to Turkey. The goal of the project, which was supported by the *Yerkir* Union NGO in Armenia and *Anadolu Kültür*[14] in Istanbul, was to allow the group, together with ethnomusicologists from Armenia and Turkey, to research local musical traditions of Anatolian cities, seek out and record traces of the musical traditions of the Armenians who had once lived in the region. Visiting Hopa, Malatya, Elazığ, Dersim and Diyarbakır, the young Armenian musicians met Hemshin, Laz, Turkish, Kurdish and Zaza musicians, exchanged knowledge and experiences, and created a dialog. Other goals of the project were to give concerts in the areas visited in order to introduce the local people to and remind them of the Armenian past. The concert repertoire of the Van Project, directed by Norayr Kartashyan, included examples of Armenian folk music. The orchestra, consisting of traditional instruments such as duduk, kaval, oud, kanun, dhol, tar and kamancha, also included bass guitar and two solo singers. My presence on this trip, which lasted around fifteen days, allowed me to observe the bond these young Armenian musicians established with their historical homeland as they visited Anatolia for the first time, as well as their efforts to keep their musical pasts alive as a survival strategy,

[14] Anadolu Kültür was founded as a not-for-profit cultural institution in 2002 when individuals from various fields of the art world, the business world and civil society came together to support the production and sharing of culture and art in cities across Turkey and abroad.

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and opened a new window in my fieldwork. I will never forget my amazement when, during their visits with the Hemshin[15] people in Hopa and Çamlıhemşin, they worked to form a bond between the Hemshin and Armenian identities, especially via the similarities in the language, and then reinforce that bond with music. To bring the *kemençe*, *tulum* and *horon* into Armenian music via the Hemshin identity and claim these cultures as well, was an important, if not expressly stated, motivation for the group; and the Hemshin piece the group added to their repertoire was clear evidence of this motivation. In this way, the Black Sea sound, which is rather difficult to relate to Armenian music, became part of a different world of meaning and identity.[16] Dersim, similarly, was an important center of Armenian culture in the past, and today the Islamized Armenians of Dersim are the subject of current research. For this reason, the history of the musical sound identified with Zaza and Alevi people from Dersim and its connection to Armenian music, is a subject of curiosity not only for the Van Project but for many musicians and researchers from Turkey and Armenia alike.[17] The trip paved the way for closer relations between musicians and researchers from Armenia and Turkey, which led in turn to a broader concept of Armenian music. I realized that in this way, the folk music tradition which has been canonized in Armenia for so many years, is begining to open up to different sounds and musical cultures.

In 2010 I, my friends Ari Hergel, Saro Usta, both members of our Armenian music group, and ethnomusicologist friend Melissa Bilal, who I consulted throughout my work, began a project to record music collected by Gomidas Vartabed. Supported by the Prince Claus Fund, Kalan Müzik and Anadolu Kültür, the project was titled "Gomidas' Resounding Legacy" and the result was an album, *Yerkaran* (2014). It had long been known to Armenians that Gomidas Vartabed had collectd Kurdish and Turkish folk songs as well as Armenian ones. The Kurdish songs' transcriptions had been published but we had not yet seen Turkish song transcriptions. The project became possible when we learned of a fourteen-volume publication based on Gomidas' collection notebooks, published in Yerevan by Robert Atayan and Georgi Geodakyan (2006). It included transcriptions of Turkish and Kurdish songs in particular which had never been performed or recorded. We spent many months transcribing the songs and de-

[15] Hemshin is the term given to the settlement and people who live in Çamlıhemşin and Hemshin districts of Rize and the Kemalpaşa district of Artvin. Most of Hemshins do not consider themselves to be an ethnic minority and certainly do not want to be perceived as such by others. The Western Hemshins living in Rize predominantly speak Turkish. The Eastern Hemshins, living in the Hopa and Kemalpaşa areas of Artvin, speak the Hemshin language, a dialect of Armenian. In recent years, the contact and cultural relationships have increased between Muslim Hemshins living in Turkey and the Christian Hemshins living in Abkhazia and Russia. For further information see Biryol 2014, Simonian 2007.

[16] For Hemshin music, see Vova 2005.

[17] For Dersim Armenian music, see Petag 2010.

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ciding upon an appropriate repertoire for the album. We discussed our approach to arrangement, and how we might come up with an alternative style to Gomidas heretofore published – and in a sense, canonized – western performance style; and one which might at times critique it. We spent much time trying to understand how Gomidas was characterized and interpreted in Armenian musical circles, and the context in which his works were viewed during his lifetime and by the international musicological community. Gomidas Vartabed is one of the most fundamental resources for the Armenian cultural memory and musical aesthetic. For this reason, this project comprised one of the most fertile environments for my field study; chapter five of this book draws heavily upon that process. The result was a new Armenian music album for music stores in Turkey.

To conclude, the impressions gained from my personal journey through Armenian music and field studies conducted for this book revealed that Armenian identities, perceptions and sounds vary profoundly according to historical, cultural and geographical factors. My main goal was thus to shed light on this musical plurality and thereby endeavor to understand how Armenians constructed their musical – and thus their Armenian – identities within a cultural memory under the influence of such hybridity and cross-cultural, transnational circulation.

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Chapter 3: From History to Memory: Between Forgetting and Remembering

During my research, the concept of loss and the historical ruptures regarding Armenian music performance practices and products often distracted me from my central focus on music and led me towards a study of Armenian history and the history of Turkish politics. Years ago when I had newly decided upon my research subject, Hrant Dink warned me, "Are you sure to study this issue? You will have to struggle with history rather than with music, are you prepared for that?" At this stage, I interpreted that warning in terms of the necessity of broad historical research. Later I understood much more clearly that he was referring to the great importance of historical consciousness to understand the modern day; and how history, more than being an historical description based on documents, is written, perceived, interpreted and lived by individuals in the present. I once asked an informant to tell me some of the characteristics of Armenian music. He answered, "the only thing I can say is, whether it is liturgical music, folk music, classical music even Armenian jazz, the spirit of the Armenian history will come through. The history of the people will come through. That is all I can say."[1].

The struggle to understand differences in the construction of history and memory as two different components of identity; that is, beyond what 'really' happened and the elements that form 'perceptions of history,' became the central focus of this research. As is the case with most societies that practiced their music through historical references, cultural memory studies provide researchers a fertile philosophical framework for the Armenians as well.

Existing literature on cultural memory was mostly centered on the binary opposition between history and memory, which defines the different modes of remembering. Halbwach (1992) conceives history as abstract, totalizing and dead, while memory is the living and meaningful past that forms our identity. Erll proposes to dissolve that opposition with the basic insight that the past is not a given, but must instead continually be reconstructed and represented. In this way, history is but yet another mode of cultural memory, and historiography its specific medium (2008: 7). The studies of Jan Assman (1995) and Aleida Assman (2008) illustrate that it is much more appropriate to treat history as a mode of remembering, as a 'mnemonic' practice. In that perspective, history is firstly a subcategory of memory. The past is invented and reconstructed by the present. Jan Assmann has proposed the concept of mnemohistory in order to analyze the ongoing process of shaping identities by reconstructing their past: "Unlike his-

1 Ara Dinkjian, interview with author, Diyarbakır, September 2009.

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tory proper, mnemohistory is concerned not with the past as such, but only with the past as it is remembered" (1997: 9). A narrative of the past that is not limited to reviving past events in the mind, but is reshaped according to the needs and dynamics of the moment, also serves as a tool to shape the future.

Memory studies gained momentum particularly after the Second World War and the Holocaust. Notably, from the 1960s onward, the oral history method argued that individuals could also be included in history through their life experiences told in their own words. Another factor that bolstered memory studies was the growing public interest in identity and, thereby, in the past[2]. As long as the conflicts rooted in nationalism and cultural identity continue to result in violence, the relation between these events and the construction of the past will demonstrate the importance of memory studies. Cultural memory studies is still a relatively new field in Turkey[3] as well. The social developments in the wake of Turkey's 1980 coup d'état, political restraints and the effects of globalization, accentuated the search for identity and led to increased interest in and curiosity about the recent past. Cultural memory studies in general examine individual and social patterns of remembering and forgetting. Because examining the remembering process also requires an awareness of the forgetting process, memory studies became a means to reawaken and reevaluate many issues, including the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey, minority policies during the republican era, the so-called 'Kurdish issue,' the 'Armenian issue' and the trauma resulting from all these historical conflicts; and made it possible to review history in the light of individual real-life experiences. The tension between official history and collective memory – Armenian history in Turkey and the genocide debate – exemplifies the conflict between two different historiographies, one Turkish and the other Armenian, drawing upon different sources.

During the founding years of the Turkish Republic, Turkish official history was constructed through the assimilation of the 'other' ethnic identities, the denial of the repressive state and other hegemonic policies, and the silencing and subsequent erasure of the survivors' traumas. During this process, which blocked intergenerational transmission of knowledge by denying its existence, a continual atmosphere of fear served to interrupt the mnemonic mechanisms of individuals and groups. When the production and reproduction of knowledge is disrupted in a society, the collective amnesia that sets in inevitably leads to a group's inability and/or unwillingness to remember certain traumatic events in its past (Cuc 2003: 36). The period from the early republican period to the 1990s can be regarded as one of 'collective amnesia' in which people in Turkey forgot history

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2 For a further research on memory studies, see Erll and Nünning 2008; Assman 2001; Thompson 1999; Nora 2006.

3 For the memory studies in Turkey, see Öztürkmen 2002, 2011; Neyzi 1999, 2004, 2009; Neyzi and Kharataryan-Araqelyan 2010; Canefe 2007; Özyürek 2001; Bilal 2006, 2013; Altınay and Çetin, 2009.

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or preferred to keep silent. More accurately, it was process in which differences were silenced by the state. Shrouded in silence, the period can be explained by the tendency toward post-genocide denial argued by Talin Suciyan. Following 1915, both the perpetrator and victims' generations went on living together, and as a result, went about their everyday lives within an institutionalized, socialized and denied history (2015: 133).

In that context, examining the factors leading to a period of collective amnesia in Turkey, including Turkish nationalism's transformative effect upon Ottoman codes of social identity defined according to the *millet* system; the demographic engineering process that was a key element in the construction of Turkish nationalism; discriminative musical and cultural policies implemented during the establishment of the Republic of Turkey; and the Republican-era minority policies, will facilitate a better understanding of the dynamics of Armenian cultural memory and musicking today.

The Millet *System and the National Identification Process in the Ottoman Empire*

In discussions of minority politics in Turkey, the *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire emerges as a model structure by which to explain the ideal relationship between the diverse communities, and present historical evidence that people were able to coexist peacefully here. What was the constitutive attribute defining *millet*? Firstly, the term had a specific use, distinct from the modern dictionary definition of 'nation.' *Millet* defined autonomous religious communities organized around their religious institutions. The most basic distinction was between Muslims and non-Muslims. The former was *Millet-i Hakime* (the group who rules) and the latter was *Millet-i Mahkume* (the group who is under sovereignty). All Muslims, including Turks, Kurds, Albanians, Circassians, Laz etc. were included in the Islamic *millet*, which excluded ethnic identity as a determinant. Similarly, non-Muslims were categorized according to religious groups such as the Greek (Orthodox), Gregorian Armenian, Protestant Armenian and Jewish *millet*s. For instance the Bulgarian and Serbian citizens of the Ottoman Empire were included in the Greek *millet*, while the Assyrian, Chaldean and Georgian communities were legally part of the Armenian *millet*. On the other hand, the Catholic and Gregorian Armenians were in different millets despite their shared ethnicity[4]. The authorities of each *millet* were its religious leaders, who ruled the internal administration of the communities and were legally responsible to the Ottoman Sultan regarding taxation.

According to Baskın Oran, the *millet* system as the social foundation of the Ottoman Empire has two characteristics that were both integrated and conflict-

4 For further information see Küçük 1985; Braude and Lewis 1982.

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ing. Firstly, the *millet* system was multiculturalist and not assimilative. For instance, non-Muslim societies could autonomously organize their religious practices, social life and education, and deal with conflicts in their own courts of law in cases not involving a Muslim party. In contrast, however to this multiculturalist element, the *millet* system had a discriminatory structure as well (2011: 404-405). Despite their Ottoman citizenship, non-Muslims did not have equal status either socially or politically[5]. The hierarchy between the two groups is illustrated in the use of the term 'non-Muslim' defining one as 'other.' The prefix 'non-' carries an immediately pejorative meaning and consolidates the power relation[6]. Fatma Müge Göçek criticizes Turkish nationalist historiography, which idealizes a conflict-free society and dehistoricizes the relationship between the Muslim and the non-Muslim communities:

> "Turkish nationalist historiography underplays or keeps silent about the obligations the Ottoman minorities had to fulfill in return for what they received, namely the additional taxes they were obliged to pay, and also the legal, social, political and administrative restrictions they faced within Ottoman society because of their religion" (2006: 87).

The restrictions faced by non-Muslims in Ottoman society and the discriminatory policies in general, were for the benefit of the dominant Muslim elite both in state administration and social relations. For instance, a non-Muslim could serve in the military, though not as an officer, despite the obligation of non-Muslim men to pay taxes. On the other hand, non-Muslims could take part in support services requiring special professional qualifications both in the military and administrative fields, such as medicine, architecture, interpreting, tax collection, etc. In addition, non-Muslims were taxed at a different rate for land than Muslims, and could not be legal witnesses except in cases within their own communities. They faced certain symbolic restrictions in daily life as well; for instance, they were not allowed to travel on horseback within cities, wear green clothes, marry a Muslim without converting, make the sign of the cross outside the church, etc. (Özdoğan et al. 2009: 114-116).

Despite these political and social restrictions, Christians and Jews were predominant in the economic sphere, especially in trade, finance, banking, marine transportation, new industrial fields and agriculture for export. The Armenians had gained power in trade by developing relations with Europe. Most of the Galata bankers were Armenian jewelers, and those prominent Armenian families were instrumental in the industrialization of the Ottoman Empire (Issawi 1982:

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[5] This unequal status does not mean that non-Muslim communities were the 'minorities' of the *millet* system. Minority, as a term has been added to law terminology after the Paris Conference of 1919 in the First World War period. So, to refer to these diverse *millet*s as minorities would be an anachronism.

[6] The use of the term, non-Muslim is also problematic because it homogenizes the diverse communities; Armenians, Jews, Greeks and the others in one descriptive form and covers the differences between them.

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170-73). The West's economic expansion and industrial revolution led to increasing involvement of European powers in the Ottoman Empire, and transformations in social system. Because the non-Muslims had specialized in trade and economy rather than the administrative and military spheres, they had well-established relations with the West and had visited European countries, which secured them the advantages of linguistic, cultural and religious affinities with Europe. Political developments in Europe in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment affected Ottoman social structure as well. "The most significant outcome of this Western political development was undoubtedly a discussion of the rights of individuals as citizens rather than as imperial subjects" (Göçek 2006: 89). Thus the period of Westernization through the reform movements set the ground for new political ideas among the Ottoman communities, and demands for recognition as a part of the Ottoman public sphere. Toward the mid-19th century, the younger generations of the non-Muslims as well as Western-educated Muslims began to establish educational and cultural institutions in order to develop along similar Western ideals. Moreover, administrative legal reform efforts such as the *Tanzimat* (1839), *Islahat* (1856) and *Meşrutiyet* (1876), which attempted to achieve equal status and rights for both Ottoman non-Muslims and Muslims, were insufficient to overcome the deep structural divide that had developed in Ottoman society. It was during this period, as communities struggled with the issue of defining their identities within an imperial framework, that the first stirrings of nationalism were felt. Greece was established as an independent state in 1830. The rebellions in Serbia in the 1850s and the increasing influence of the Russian Empire in the Balkans and Northeastern Turkey in the 1890s put the Ottoman Empire under pressure for reform, even as they led to resistance to their application.

To summarize, the autonomous status of non-Muslims and the millet system in general is characterized in Ottoman history as 'tolerance' for non-Muslims, with an assumed natural dominance for the Ottoman administrative elites. Throughout these legendary 'golden age' narratives, the period in which the millet system was institutionalized in the Ottoman Empire is mentioned in a positive moral tone, with the central message that all components of Ottoman society lived in peaceful order despite their differences. It is generally safe to say that the administrative model underlying the *millet* system was closer to a multicultural model than that of the Western empires in regards to minority rights. Religious communities did not lead a segregated life in different compartments of society. They shared and performed in public space collectively, but cultural ownership of that Ottoman public sphere was attributed to the legally dominant Muslim community. Also one should not imagine that the *millet* system meant a society exempt from power conflicts. Growing intercommunal prejudices and intolerance occasionally expanded into violence due to economic or political conflicts. Moreover, the deportations, forced resettlements, massacres, unlawful dis-

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crimination and violence toward non-Muslims by the state in the 19th and 20th centuries, served as warnings that the 'empire of tolerance' might turn into an 'empire of repression'.

Creating Homogeneity Through Demographic Engineering

Those researchers, who criticize the official-history discourse about the formation of the Turkish Republic, recognize the significant historical continuities between the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic. This stands in contrast to Turkish nationalist historiography, which excludes the first decades of twentieth century as a formative stage of Turkish nationalism[7]. In analyzing the heritage of the Ottoman Empire, the transition period from imperial state to nation-state should not be viewed linearly, with one ending and the other starting. Instead, it should be approached as a continuum in which these two eras coexisted and transformed each other.

Two major interpretations of 19th century nationalism, which also impacted Turkish nationalism, were the 'voluntarist' and the 'organic' nationalisms. Voluntarist nationalism is based on the principle of national sovereignty, which was created by the French Revolution, and on the principle that each citizen has the same rights as the others. Organic nationalism on the other hand, under the influence of German idealism, accepts nation as an organic reality with a common culture and historical conscience (Ersanlı 2009: 71). The transformation of the Ottoman Empire into the Republic of Turkey was characterized by a period of identity construction under the influence of various definitions of nationalism, which in turn were inspired by different aspects of social and political requirements. Büşra Ersanlı places these nationalistic movements in three different historical categories: "the imperial nationalism or the Ottoman-Turkish nationalism; Turkish nationalism inspired by ideologies of ethnic identity; and Turkish nationalism inspired by positivism and sociology" (Ibid. 76). First of all, the westernization movement, which took 19th century France and Germany as examples, promoted both the Ottoman and the Turkish identity as a cultural policy. This was because the Ottomanist ideology, focused on developing civil rights and the ideology of Turkism, complemented it with its focus on developing the racial identity of a modern nation. Ottoman nationalists of the period such as Namık Kemal had an unwavering belief in the state. They were preparing to 'Turkify' the language, secularize the education system and to make Western-inspired reforms at the administrative level.

Secondly, Turkists from Russia greatly impacted the development of Turkish nationalism and Turkish historiography. İsmail Gaspiralı, Hüseyinzade Ali, Yusuf

[7] See Zürcher 1993; Keyder 2007; Kadıoğlu 1996; Cagaptay 2006; Ersanlı 2009; Kushner 1997; Kasaba 2011; Durgun 2011; Dündar 2010.

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Akçura and Ahmed Ağaoğlu, among others, had received a good education in Russia, followed by exposure to the conceptual and scientific foundations of nationalism in Paris. In Istanbul, they found a suitable climate in which to propagate their ideologies through their writings and political activities. One of the leading nationalist intellectuals of the period, Yusuf Akçura, emphasized that Turkism was politically indispensable in his article titled *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset* (Three Styles of Politics) (1905). In his book called *Türkçülüğün Tarihi* (The History of Turkism), Akçura classified the Turkish people into three groups: Turks of the East, Turks of the West and Turks of the North. He claimed that the development of nationalism and Turkism in these regions in the late 19th century, should be considered intertwined with each other as well as with the political state of the Ottoman Empire. He also emphasized the importance of races.

Thirdly, these intertwined and usually terminologically-confusing terms, such as Turkism, Pan-Turkism and Pan-Turanism, can be discussed under a category of nationalism inspired by positivism and sociology. These different attempts at explanation and definition vary based on which of their various components, such as language, race, ethnicity, religion or common culture, were involved. Ziya Gökalp was a nationalist leader whose notion of nationalism was bound to positivism and sociology. Thus race, language, culture, and history became construed as both scientific and 'natural' social characteristics. The goal of Turkism, according to Gökalp, was to "bring the unconscious to consciousness." In other words, the Turkish identity or ethnicity, claimed to exist as a culture, must be revived (Ersanlı 2011: 88-89). Fed by 'Westernism and Islamism' as well, Gökalp created a new form of Turkism which excluded Ottomanism. This new notion of Turkism turned the Turkism built around Ottomanism upside down and took Turkishness as its focal point. Moreover, it attempted to redefine the state, and even 'Islamism' and 'Ottomanism.' This new ideology argued that Ottomanism, despite past events, should from now on serve Turkish-ness and Turkism (Dündar 2010: 76). According to Gökalp, Turkish-ness could have been a unifying bond with a potential to create cultural solidarity in a future Turkish state. Ersanlı (2011) states that these symptoms of nationalism, addressed in three categories, should not be considered as three distinct, independent movements. On the contrary, she argues that these tendencies unify in Kemalism as political means and goals. During the 19th and 20th centuries in the Ottoman Empire, negotiations/decisions about what ought to define the nation drew upon of various discourses including scientific and political progress, Turanism, religion and secularism, positivism, citizenship and race, and Western European concepts of nation. These negotiations shaped Turkish nationalism to various degrees during the early years of the Republic.

During the First World War when Turkish nationalism took form, empires were collapsing and nationalism was becoming legitimized all over the world. Turkish nationalism fed on opposing nationalist ideologies in the Ottoman Empire and

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arose as a reaction against these ideologies. The Ottoman elite, which included citizens of different religions and ethnic origins, sought a means of transformation which would allow the Ottoman Empire to join the modern world without collapsing. The Turkish nationalists in the Ottoman ruling elite had been dedicated to Ottomanism from the beginning. As most of the tradesmen and newly prospering trade groups were of Greek and Armenian origin, there were no competing Turkish elite groups of similar economical backgrounds. The Young Turks (*Jön Türkler*) differed in the ideology they adopted, not in their socio-economical background.

Until the end of World War I, Turkish-ness continued as a conceptual construction with no solid reference point. According to Cemal Kafadar:

> "The Ottoman ruling class eventually emerged as a combination of Muslims (some by conversion) who spoke Turkish (though not necessarily as a native tongue), affiliated (some voluntarily and some involuntarily) with the dynastic state under the rule of the House of Osman. And 'Turk' was only one, not necessarily a favored one, of the 'ethnicities' ruled by that class" (1995: 11).

The Ottoman-ness of the ruling elite is borne out by interethnic and interreligious marriages which started in the Ottoman dynasty and spread to all levels of the society; and with Europeans who converted to Islam to build a higher career in the government. Before World War I, Turkish nationalism had remained a marginal intellectual choice, viewed with suspicion even by the executive members of the Young Turks. During the final stage of the Empire, Turkish nationalism became more prominent due to its interaction with opposing nationalisms. This process was not the result of a national awakening but was rather the political choice of the elite class. To summarize, the Ottoman elite considered nationalism an effective strategy for the reconstruction of a centralized and fortified government. The defeat in the Balkan Wars strengthened the view that Turkism was the only way out, and that the 'other constituents' should be Turkified. Non-Turkish Muslims were to be Turkified, but whose who were difficult to assimilate (i.e. the Arabs) might be separated from the empire:

> "Despite these advantages, it also led to certain disadvantages for the Ottoman Empire, including: parting with the non-Turkish Muslim communities who lived in the Ottoman Empire and whose Turkification was impossible; and the division of Islam into two categories, Turkish Islam and non-Turkish Islam, with no significant relations with the non-Turkish Muslims" (Akçura 1976 (1905): 34).

Another important event which forced the Young Turks to side with nationalist versions of state modernism was growing population of Muslims who had fled recently-lost Ottoman lands in the Balkans and moved to Western Anatolia and Thrace. According to Keyder (2007), these immigrants had adopted Islamist ideology and Turkish nationalism in reaction to the conflicts in the Empire's former Balkan territories. These led to their separation from their homeland and properties, after which they emerged as a distinct Muslim community.

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For the other constituents of the Ottoman Empire, the non-Muslims, a demographic/ethnic engineering process was implemented. Rather than an extended assimilation policy, this required an immediate, results-oriented and massive population intervention. In his book titled *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)* [The Code of Modern Turkey: Ethnicity Engineering of the Committee of Union and Progress (1913-1918)], Fuat Dündar (2010) analyzes in detail how the Islamization- and Turkification-oriented population policies of the Committee of Union and Progress was imposed on various ethnic communities (Bulgarians, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Nestorians, Assyrians and Kurds) living in the Ottoman Empire. During the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the nation-state, erasing non-Turkish and non-Muslim homogenous territories was essential towards depriving any possible separatist movements of a future population base. Imposing Turkish ethnic dominance would also mean making this ethnicity economically strong, which would turn enable the development of a national bourgeoisie. In 1910 for instance, there was a conflict between the Muslim Balkan immigrants to Western Anatolia, and the Ottoman Greeks living in neighboring villages. The properties of the Greek villagers were plundered and they were forced to migrate to the inner regions. The Aegean Sea coast witnessed many ethnic conflicts between the 1909 (when the Committee of Union and Progress seized the control of the government through a coup d'état) and 1923 (the year of population exchange) (Şeker 2011: 169). This relocation was of paramount importance as one of the key practices implemented to achieve the Turkification of Anatolia. A similar conflict was playing out in the eastern regions of the Empire between Armenians and Muslims, especially in areas where the Kurdish population had recently been resettled. In its quest to persuade the Kurdish tribes to abandon their nomadic life and settle, the government had given them lands very close to the Armenian villages. This created a serious possibility of conflict between the Armenians and the Kurds on these lands, which would be used to expand range and farmland. According to Keyder, the spontaneity of these ethnic and proto-nationalist conflicts is questionable. Even if we assume that the government was not the provocateur of each conflict, it is still highly probable that official authorities provided support and consent. Sultan Abdülhamid II intervened, using the Committee of Union and Progress against the Greeks, and the *Hamidiye* Corps (formed from Kurdish tribes) against the Armenians (2007: 79).

Implemented under the influence of nationalism during the final stages of the Empire, a period of demographic engineering, these settlement policies were aimed at ensuring ethnic and/or religious homogeneity. According to Şeker, they were "a violence-based ethno-demographic operation to ensure the predominance of a specific population or to eliminate an 'unwanted' or 'threatening' population" (2011: 165). During this period of restructuring, people were massacred and assimilated; immigrants of different ethnicities and religions were settled where

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the relocated population had previously lived; and the properties of the expelled populations were expropriated, confiscated and distributed to the new immigrants. All these practices witnessed in the restructuring period reveal the political and economic dimensions of the demographic engineering efforts.

The breaking point of this demographic/ethnic engineering came on April 24, 1915. On that day, a group of Armenian intellectuals, parliament members and businessmen (the leading figures of the Armenian community) was arrested and exiled to various regions in Anatolia; the Armenians of Maraş and Zeytun, on the other hand, were deported to the deserts of Der Zor. In the following months, the scope of the deportation and massacres was extended to include nearly the entire Armenian population. In a very short period of time, the majority of exiles were deported beyond Aleppo, outside the future borders of the Republic of Turkey. The deportation, exile and massacres were survived by a small number of Armenians artists, government officials and members of the military, and those who converted to Islam. The national historiography discourse, which claim that the aim of these practices in 1915-1916 was to maintain the order and safety of the community, have been criticized by many scholars for decades.[8] Şeker also points out that attributing this transformation to conflicting ethnic nationalisms on the same territory would be an inadequate and misleading perspective:

> "This transformation is the result of a civil and military elite class' ethnical and religious redefinition of the elements making up the nation as Turkish and Muslim. This elite class represented the centralized government and had the power to allocate various tools to bring about the ethnical restructuring of Anatolia. The nationalist front, which emerged in 1919-1922, engaged in various activities that served to complement the project of the Committee of Union and Progress" (Şeker 2011: 173-174).

At the end of World War I, the Greek army occupied a large part of Western Anatolia. The Greek occupation ended after a three-year battle, from 1919 to 1922, and the entire Greek Orthodox population in Anatolia was forced to leave the country. Pursuant to an agreement signed between Ankara and Athens, it was decided that all Greek population would be sent to Greece as part of a population exchange program. Greeks who officially resided in Istanbul, as well as the islands of Gökçeada (Imvros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos) were exempt. In 1913, one fifth of the population living in the territory now called the Republic of Turkey was Christian. By the end of 1923, the ratio had fallen to one fortieth. The legitimizing ideology of the new republic, Turkish nationalism, was developed with these events in the background.

[8] For further research, see Akçam 1992, 2007; Hovannissian 1998; Suny et al. 2011; Kévorkian 2011.

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The Historiography of Turkish Nationalism

The positivist approach to historiography, prioritizing scientific objectivity and arguing for the existence of fixed, fact-based historic realities, amassed a vast literature as a component of the modernity project in 19th-century Europe. The interrelationship between 'nation' and 'history' was designed and employed 'scientifically' in the creation of nation-states. Because historiography interwoven with legends and myths reinforced national unity and solidarity, and allowed the definition of the unique qualities of the people that formed the nation, the nationalist notions formulated throughout the 19th and 20th centuries performed a legitimizing function. Approaches which discussed dark periods of modernity such as the Holocaust, and by focusing on the historical 'context,' offered a structural alternative to nationalist historiography, introduced a critical viewpoint in the creation of historical information (Göçek 2006:83). Consequently, along with post-modernism, questions such as "How do we learn about the past," "Who determines which historic events will appear in accounts of the past," and "Who decides whether or not a fact is objective or not" came to the forefront, and historiography, historical information and facts began to be questioned. In this view, history is a fictive truth. It is through this constructed past that historiography, or the creation of history, introduces meanings and ideologies.

The role of nationalism in Turkish politics became more prominent in the 1930s compared to the previous decade. The secular republic had been firmly established and the country had been rebuilt according to Kemalist ideology. A key development of the 1930s was the crystallization of Kemalist nationalism, together with the rise of authoritarianism. The *Turkish History Thesis* was nurtured by the 'Turkish Hearths Committee for the Study of Turkish History' with the membership of prominent historians, intellectuals, ideologues such as Yusuf Akçura, Galip Reşit, Ahmet Ağaoğlu, Rıfat Samih Horozcu, Fuat Köprülü and Afet İnan (Cagaptay 2006: 49-50). History became a pedagogical tool for the promotion of nationalism. Historians sought to prove the worthiness of Turks scientifically in their writings. These scientific models for history were informed by discourses of objectivity, 'truth' and 'documentation' in order to create an impression in the collective memory of citizens. Along with the construction of an image of 'homeland,' the notion of Turkish-ness was also reconstructed through the homogenization of the remaining population under the formula 'one nation, one language.' Consequently, the 'Turkish History Thesis' was constructed upon the fiction of a continuous ethnic history which drew upon a mythical past in a foreign land.

In terms of geographic origins, Turkish nationalism in fact presents two different narratives. The first refers to the arrival of the Turks from Central Asia, while the second is a root narrative in Anatolia. According to the Turkish History Thesis, modern Turks are the descendants of a civilization which came from Central

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Asia without losing its identity or being affected by any other civilization, and has preserved its purity to this day. The thesis holds that the Turks had to leave their homeland and migrate after a huge ecological catastrophe in Central Asia. As Smith has also pointed out, the construction of a nation cannot be finalized without referring to a specific homeland (2004: 25). In Turkish nationalism, Central Asia was accepted as the historical homeland. Their destination Anatolia, on the other hand, was considered a sacred place, a reality which could unite the nation around a common sentiment. The homeland concept thus found its answer in Anatolia. Turkish nationalists wanted to ensure that the region where the nation was being constructed belonged to that nation, and claimed that Anatolia had long been the actual land of Turks. They extended their national origins back to the Hittites, thus carrying Turkish-ness back to predate even the autochthonous communities in Anatolia. In this way, they tried to claim Anatolia as their primeval homeland (Durgun 2011: 164). The memory of the non-Muslim was no longer alive, the contradiction between the heritages of the Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire was over, and Istanbul was no longer the center of the homeland. Taking Ankara as the center, they created a new homeland, Anatolia. Renan illustrates the importance of forgetting in the creation of a nation:

> "Forgetting, I would even go so far as to say historical error, is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation, which is why progress in historical studies often constitutes a danger for [the principle of] nationality. Indeed, historical enquiry brings to light deeds of violence which took place at the origin of all political formations, even of those whose consequences have been altogether beneficial. Unity is always affected by means of brutality" (Renan, 1990 [1882]: 11).

As Renan also stated, avoiding the indicators of the previous life is the ideal of modernizing nationalism. For example changing place names and replacing former Greek, Armenian or Kurdish place names with Turkish names has been an effective method in the recreation of Anatolia and the construction of a new image of homeland. Durgun (2011) argues that the Turkish History Thesis had a constructed dimension, which was beyond the definition of history. It erased the existing history and geography from the memories and reconstructed the past and the future on the axis of three pillars; Central Asia–Anatolia–Western civilization. Combining the arguments of Anthony Smith and Benedict Anderson, this situation can be defined as "the ethnical ground built by the state". This ethnical ground Smith presented as a reality was "constructed and imagined" by the elite class in Turkey as if it were a "historical reality" – in the sense Benedict Anderson had meant – (Ibid.172-173).

Another attempt at creating a national identity and culture in the early days of the republic was the language reform, implemented during 1930s. In many respects, this was an extension of the Turkish History Thesis. In this period, the first goal of the language reform was to eliminate language differences and create a national language. The second goal was to 'purify the language' through mini-

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mizing the Ottoman effect on the language and excluding foreign words (Cagaptay 2006: 54-55). According to the Sun Language Theory, all human languages throughout the world are descendants of the Turkic language. This theory argues that Turkic language was the first language in human history and it was born as a result of sun salutation rituals (Balıkçı 2009: 45). These hypotheses were not based upon empirical evidences and consequently they were put aside after 1938. However, this does not mean that the language reform was entirely abandoned. The efforts to find pure Turkish words and to base these words upon Central Asian roots was over; but attempts to eliminate certain dialect words in favor of a standard and pure written language continued. If folk music collection efforts revealed a song with lyrics outside of the 'pure' Turkish language the non-Turkish words were eliminated or replaced with pure Turkish ones. Moreover, these collection efforts completely ignored certain local or minority languages for the sake of creating a standard language (Ibid. 46).

While the Turkish History Thesis had asserted that the Turkish language was a key to both Turkish ethnicity and nationality, the 'Citizen! Speak Turkish' campaign and the Surname Law kept the avenues of assimilation open to those who were not ethnically Turkish (Cagaptay 2006: 63). The Turkification policy aimed to combine Muslims and non-Muslims coming from different ethnic origins but living in the Republic of Turkey, in a single melting pot – the Turkish national identity – and then recreate them as Turkish citizens. As Rıfat Bali cited, the 'Citizen! Speak Turkish' campaign began on January 13, 1928, pursuant to a decision taken by the Student Council of the Istanbul University Faculty of Law at its annual convention. The president of the student council made a suggestion to prohibit minorities from speaking languages other than Turkish in public spaces (avenues, streets, ferries, cafes and recreation venues like cinemas and theatres), especially in Istanbul. At another meeting held at the Turkish Hearths office, participants decided to organize conferences at schools on this matter, and to hang posters and banners saying 'Citizen! Speak Turkish' at various locations. This campaign led to public harassment of many citizens (Bali 2000: vi-vii). Even though this national language campaign seemed to target the non-Muslim population in particular, it also targeted Muslim citizens whose native tongue was not Turkish, such as Arabs, Circassians, Cretan Muslims and Kurds. However, the campaign was persistent and especially effective in the assimilation of Turkey's Jews[9]. The following decisions, taken under the heavy social pressure by a Jewish commission in Edirne and encouraged by the synagogues, reveal the extent of this oppression:

> 1- The Turkish language will be spoken in every kind of gathering place. 2- At religious ceremonies and rituals, the rabbis will recommend that the people speak Turkish. 3- Girls and boys attending Jewish schools must speak Turkish at school as well as in public and at home. 4- Merchants and tradespeople in Edirne will sign an agreement stating

[9] For further information see Cagaptay 2000; Bali 1998; Bali 2000.

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> that they will speak Turkish. 5- The waitstaff at cafes and nightclubs frequented and run by the Jews, will speak Turkish with customers (Bali 1998: 217).

Another Turkification strategy was to Turkify names and surnames, in keeping with the Surname Law[10] enacted in 1934, which required everybody to take a family name. Cagaptay states that "since most Turks already had last names, the intent of this law was not to give new last names to the entire population. Rather, the act aimed to force the citizens to have their last names recorded, so that they could be screened for Turkish-ness" (2006: 62). If a name did not sound Turkish, as with names ending in '-yan, -of, -ef, -vich, -is, -idis, -pulos, -akis, -zade, -mahdumu, -veled, or with the prefix bin, it would not be registered. This made it impossible to register Armenian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Bosnian, Serbian, Greek, Cretan, Persian, Georgian or Arabic surnames, forcing people change their names. The Republic of Turkey thus attempted to assimilate minorities by forcing them to adopt the Turkish language and even change their names. As a result, a new definition of nation which can be called "nation-through-language," became possible and the country's demographic diversity seemed to be bound to clash (Ibid. 64).

The demographic policies implemented by the Ottoman Empire, the assimilation plans put into practice during and after the war years, and conflicts with the local Christian populations were all fresh in the memories of people. However, the nationalist narrative developed after the foundation of the republic did not address the first twenty years of the 20th century, preferring instead to erase the conflicts from the public memory. Republicans, who had chosen to eradicate the Christian population between the years 1915-1923 and fully suppress and erase this common memory, also opted for the construction of an artificial history within an invented nationalism. The battle fought from 1915-1923 against the Greek army was glorified as the 'Turkish War of Independence.' It was even introduced as an anti-imperialist war fought against the colonial power. Nationalist history, expected to achieve the cultural unity of the nation, was created through the arrangement and promotion of the unreasonable narratives of the Turkish History Thesis. The conventional abyss between the elite class who produced this ideology, and the masses who were expected to adopt it, became deeper, as there was no common ground between them. During this period, the masses maintained their passivity, leading to an unwritten but mutually agreed-upon period of silence. Republican nationalists tried to keep their distance from the Muslim tradition and Ottoman culture, adopted the foundation myth which reduced the national heritage to an apparently artificial history, deprived the homeland of a geography and erased the common experiences of the recent past from public memory; thus implementing a top-down nationalist modernization movement. The silence of the masses afforded the elite class the opportunity to

[10] For further information see Türköz 2004.

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create an imaginary folk. As is generally the case in nationalism, the folk and the 'authentic tradition' were redefined through folklore and history.

National Music Policies: "Citizen! Sing in Turkish"

Music policy in the early republican era were implemented in tandem with the cultural policies during the construction of the Turkish nation-state. In this section, I will try to give a short overview of music policy to provide a historical framework on the possibilities or impossibilities of expression concerning Armenian music in Turkey.

Extremely important discussions of music politics in Turkey during the republican period have been published already.[11] For this reason, I do not feel the need for a detailed discussion on this subject here, but because of the necessity of illustrating the connection between the founding of the Republic and the scope of minority (and specifically Armenian) musical activities during the following period, I do feel the need to review them, if briefly. I will focus on the creation of a national music pursuant to the Turkism ideology discussed above, and on the musical counterparts of the 'competitive' nationalist language created in that period. One part of this project to create a 'modern' nation-state, was the proposition to create a 'National Music' in which polyphony would be emphasized in line with the policy of Westernization. On the one hand, the Turkish History Thesis took the West as a model and defined an ideal for modernization which included Western-based concepts. On the other hand, it emphasized the importance of preserving the characteristics of local culture, and attempted to establish an ethnical and historical connection between Turkish-ness and the origins of the concepts attributed to civilization. As also stated by Kadıoğlu (1996), one of the most important paradoxes of Turkish nationalism was its style, which imitated the West, but at the same time saw it as an enemy. According to Gökalp, the future of the new civilization would be a synthesis of the modern standard of civilization –the West– and the traditional culture of the Turkish people; and this synthesis would define Turkish culture:

> "We all understood that the oriental music is not only sick, but also irrelevant to our nation. Our folk music is the product of our national culture, and Western music is the product of our new civilization; so they are not foreign to us. Under those circumstances, our national music will be born from the synthesis of the folk music in our country and western music. Our folk music has provided us with many melodies. If we collect these melodies and harmonize them according to the western musical system, we will have a music which not only national but also European. Turkism's plan in the field of music consists of this in essence, and the rest depends on the discretion of musicians and music lovers" (Gökalp 1972: 146-147).

[11] For music policies in Turkey during the Republican period, see Balkılıç 2009; Hasgül 1996; Paçacı 1999; Şenel 1999; Stokes 1998; Tekelioğlu 1999; Öztürkmen 1998; Üstel 1994.

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This was an attempt to transform a reinvented folk culture into "national high culture" (Gellner 1998: 239). If we observe how this formulation was reflected in the music policies of the republican period, we see that this process is the continuation of the Westernization movements of the Ottoman Empire era. Musical changes which began during the first half of the 19th century, especially within the Ottoman army, can be considered developments which laid the foundation of the national music aimed for in the republican era. Some of these developments included: replacing the old janissary band known as the *mehteran* with European-style military bands that played anthems and marches in the Nizam-ı Cedid corps; commissioning the Italian musician Guiseppe Donizetti to oversee the transition to the Western music system, especially in musical notation; establishing the *Mızıka-yı Hümayun* (Imperial Military Music School); composition of the first opera in the Ottoman Empire by Çuhacıyan; studies by Rauf Yekta to make Turkish music polyphonic, and more.

This invented musical aesthetic, characterized as a synthesis of Western music and Turkish folk songs (defined as "national culture") was based upon rejection of the Ottoman legacy. Identified with Ottoman history and all non-Turkish elements, the East became the cultural taboo of the new nation-state. Consequently the tekkes and zawiyahs (dervish lodges or Sufi convents) were banned in 1925 to eliminate all locational and institutional possibilities for the promulgation of Classical Turkish Music. In 1926, the oriental music department of Darülelhan (Istanbul Conservatory of Music) was closed. Later, in 1934, radio broadcast of Turkish Classical Music was banned for nearly 20 months. In 1935, the Presidential Symphony Orchestra of the Republic of Turkey was established, followed in 1936 by the State Conservatory. Western-based reforms implemented to popularize polyphonic western music included playing western music in public spaces (to ferry passengers for example); organizing free concerts and music courses at community centers (*Halk Evleri*); founding conservatories; sending talented musicians abroad for training; collecting, transcribing and categorizing popular Anatolian folk songs and re-arranging them to be polyphonic; and establishing a new radio channel that broadcasted western classical music, jazz music and western pop music. These reforms thus summarize the spirit of the period. Ayhan Erol (2012) states that given the definition by Bourdieu, who extended Weber's definition of state, it might be argued that music reform was a paradigmatic example of 'symbolic violence' on the part of the state. Bourdieu states that "symbolic violence is the violence which extorts submission, which is not perceived as such, based on 'collective expectations' or socially inculcated beliefs" (1998: 103). In this way, Turkish culture was adopted as the national culture for the creation of a national music shaped under the influence of Turkism ideology.

In conjunction with hypotheses such as the Turkish History Thesis and the Sun Language Theory, the struggle to define a pure, unpolluted Turkish culture included the attempt to demonstrate the existence of a Central Asian origin of Turk-

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ish music (Stokes 1992). Adnan Saygun announced this hypothesis to the world using statements like "Pentatonism is the Turkish people's signature on music" or "Wherever you hear a pentatonic scale, the people living there are Turkish" (as cited by Şenel, 1999: 112). Şenel determined that the folk music studies which developed in the area of of folk music collection actually began with a 1922 survey conducted on music teachers and similar people. Questions posed in the survey included: "Are there any musicians or famous instrumentalists in your home town?", "Is there any music society in the city where you live?", "Can you tell us about the popular folk songs of your town and village?" and "Which folk songs are the most popular?" Participants were also asked to notate these folk songs and submit the notations. This survey continued for three years, followed by the first collection work, in 1925, in Western Anatolia. This early collection work was not deemed successful because no voice recorders were used and the oral dictation method posed a high risk of mis-notation (Ibid. 106-107). After the arrival of the phonograph in Turkey in 1926, four different collecting expeditions to Anatolia were organized between 1926 and 1929. As a result of these expeditions, 670 folk songs were collected and published in twelve volumes. Music reformers of the period found these expeditions fruitless. During the 1930s, the Ankara Halkevi (Ankara People's House) invited Hungarian composer and ethnomusicologist Bela Bartok to Turkey, to provide the researchers of the period with expert guidance in folk song collection and field research. A composer of 'modern Hungarian music' with roots in folk music, Bartok was seen as a potential source of inspiration for young Turkish musicians. The Darülelhan's transformation to the Istanbul Conservatory of Music (1928) and the establishment of the Ankara State Conservatory (1936), fortified the institutional structure of national music. Expeditions that started in 1937 and lasted for 17 years resulted in the collection of approximately 9,000 folk songs and enabled the formation of a national folk music repertoire (Ibid. 113-114). The People's Houses played an effective role in the popularization of national music in the republican era. These community centers organized various concerts and special performances, provided musical training to local people and carried out folk song collection work (Hasgül 1996: 42). When radio began spreading throughout Turkey in the 1940s, these recently collected folk songs were performed by a chorus and broadcast on a radio program called *Yurttan Sesler* (Sounds of the Motherland), thus becoming widely disseminated. However the performance principles adopted by the *Yurttan Sesler* chorus resulted in the development of a new performance style that was alien to local cultures. This method disregarded personal styles of expression in folk music; and centered on accompaniment and choral performances that did not actually exist in the Anatolian tradition. Even though orchestra conductors had never been a part of the tradition and were almost impractical for Anatolian folk songs, conductors were appointed to direct the *Yurttan Sesler* chorus. Meanwhile, the traditional *aşık tavrı* (minstrel style) was ignored (Tekelioğlu 1999: 149).

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The folk song collectors of the period stated unhesitatingly that during their work, they took care to record the songs in pure, "correct" Turkish, replacing foreign words with *öz Türkçe* ('pure Turkish') words (Balkılıç 2015:156-159). According to Stokes, Turkification of the folk songs in the national repertoire (replacing the foreign words with pure Turkish words) occasionally led to absurd results, as in the following example:

> "A song from the northeastern Turkey beginning with the words '*Prahoda mindim sürdüm seyrana'* ('I boarded the train and set off on a trip') exists in the TRT repertoire as *'Gemilere mindim sürdüm Samsun'a'* (I boarded the boat(s) and set off for Samsun'). Since the Russian word *prahod* was unacceptable, and no pure Turkish word for train existed, a boat trip was substituted for a train journey. The conscientious collector had changed *seyran'a* to *Samsun'a,* on account of the Arabic origin of *seyran,* and later changed the destination of the trip from Baku (the capital and principal port of Soviet Azerbaijan) to Iğdır (a small city in the centre of Eastern Anatolia). The boat trip that results is highly improbable" (Stokes 1992: 66)

Additionally, certain off-color words deemed "inappropriate to the great and noble spirit" of the Turk were removed from collected songs. Tuğrul says of the Ankara collections, "We never touched the texts, we only removed two lines that could be considered obscene, and left them blank" (as cited by Balkılıç 2015: 157). Another aspect of the purification process was the elimination of local dialect in song words; ignoring the diversity of the Turkish language for the sake of standardization. Yet another Turkification strategy in this process was censorship; in particular, words referring to cultural elements of the ignored "others" were found unacceptable, and changed. An example provided by Mehmet Bayrak is the replacement of the words "*Kürdün kızı*" ('Kurdish girl') with "*Türkmen kızı*" ('Turkmen girl') (2002: 21).

Mahmut Ragıp Gazimihal, an important pioneering figure in early Republican Period music policy and folk music research, includes an article titled "The Folk Songs of our Homeland" in his book *Anadolu Türküleri ve Musiki İnkılabımız* (Anatolian Folk Songs and Our Musical Revolution). In this article he divides the songs of Asia Minor into two groups: 1) "Genuine Turkish folk songs with Turkish lyrics, which we call 'folk songs' (*türkü*)" and 2) "folk songs (*şarkı*) which our minority communities sing in their own languages" (Gazimihal 2006 [1928]: 55). However as there was not as single study of these *şarkı* in the second group during the Republican period, they were not added to the collection repertoire and thus ignored and assimilated. Alongside the purification strategies applied to lyrics, it is safe to say that when non-Turkish ethnic elements could not be assimilated, they were simply ignored. For example, the TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) archive closed its doors to the Pontic Greek repertoire of the East Black Sea region and the Kurdish repertoire of Southeastern Anatolia (Hasgül 1996: 43).

The most obvious other aspect of the assimilation was the complete Turkification of the lyrics of non-Turkish folk songs. Turkish folk music collection and transcription efforts undertaken in order to create a national repertoire include

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many examples of rhythmic and melodic changes, as well as the Turkification of melodies sung in Kurdish, Laz, Greek, Armenian and other languages. The truly fascinating aspect of this is that such collection recordings are known to have been stored in the archives during the Early Republican Period, but not shared with researchers. 'Censorship' is not too strong a word for what happened to these very important archives for nearly a century. Although the unsuccessful nature of Republican Period music policy had been accepted, these recordings would be recorded in history as an antithesis of the 'national music' paradigm. Not only that, but it was rumored among musicological circles in Turkey that most of these recordings remained unclassified and had been stored under unsuitable conditions, as a result of which many were rendered unplayable.

Nevertheless, another strategy of early Republican music policy was either to deny the existence of non-Turkish songs in the musical heritage of this land, or attribute it to Turkish origin. In the article "*Türk Edebiyatı'nın Ermeni Edebiyatı Üzerindeki Te'sirleri*." (The Influence of Turkish Literature on Armenian Literature), written in 1922 by a prominent intellectual of the period, Fuat Köprülü, the existence of Armenian *ashugh*[12] literature was not denied; but rather was assimilated into Turkish *aşık* literature, seen as an ancient treasure of Turkishness:

> "The evolutionary stages (…) of the Turkish Minstrel (Aşık) Literature have been explicitly revealed and it is obvious that the Turkish Minstrel Literature, with its pure Turkish works of art dating back to the pre-Islamic era, has never been under Armenian or Christian influence. Moreover, all Armenian Minstrels' (Ashugh) writing in Turkish, are written with Turkish taste and inspiration… Even the name (Ashugh) and musical instrument of the Armenian Minstrels are taken from Turks… Armenians had to adopt the Turkish culture, as Turks were not only numerically and politically dominant, but also further advanced in civilization than the Armenians." (Köprülü 1986 [1922]: 268)

As stated by Köprülü, Turkish literary works by Armenian ashughs living in the Ottoman Empire were quite well developed, and indeed, a large portion of this literature consisted of Turkish texts written in Armenian script. In addition, the most important characteristic of the Armenian ashughs was that they were multilingual; there were very few who sang exclusively in Armenian, Turkish or Kurdish. Here however, Köprülü's clearly national and ethnocentrically competitive language is a good reflection of the spirit of the period. We find a similar view in the following statement by Gazimihal:

> "There is no example of any particular 'Armenian melody' in Anatolia... just as the Anatolian Armenians know no language other than Turkish, they also use no music other than Turkish songs. The music of the Caucasian Armenians do contain some special qualities, but those emerged under the influence of Turkish music" (Gazimihal 2006 [1928]: 57).

12 'Ashugh' means love, lover and is similar with the Arabian term *ashegh*, Turkish term *âşık* and Persian term *ašik*. *Ashugh*s are the professional musicians who transmit the oral tradition by traveling across the country.

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Gazimihal's statement may be valid for some regions of Anatolia, especially where there were no Armenian schools and language education was impossible. But the assertions that "there is no example of any particular 'Armenian melody' in Anatolia" or that "all Anatolian Armenians spoke no language other than Turkish" may be seen as a radical intent to ignore, deny or assimilate them. Yet Gazimihal was aware of the works of Gomidas Vartabed who, during the same period, put forth an avant garde effort to collect songs in Armenian, Kurdish and Turkish. Gomidas' leading role in collecting the folk songs of Anatolia in particular, attracted the attention of Gazimihal. Emphasizing in one of his articles that the collection of Turkish folk songs should have begun much earlier, Gazimihal states his opinions about Gomidas. Quoted below, his thoughts provide important musical clues regarding the ideological tendency that became dominant after 1915 and during the foundation of the Republic of Turkey:

> "It is essential to understand the phases that our folk music studies have thus far gone through. Turkish musicologists who learned about scientific studies of music acted swiftly to make youth aware of folklore studies in the western world. To sum up, in one of his articles in *Şehbal Magazine*, published after the Second Constitutional period of the Ottoman Empire, Rauf Yekta B. mentioned western efforts to collect folk songs and asserted that we should also collect our own folk songs. Turkish musicians with a deep knowledge about musical notation, i.e. Hüseyin Saadettin B. and the deceased İsmail Hakkı B., collected a vast number of melodies belonging to various communities. However, their efforts never reached into inner Anatolia. Greek collector Pahtikos (1905) and Armenian musician P. Komitas Vardapet (1905) collected various Greek and Armenian folk songs from Anatolia. As these folk songs bore the characteristics of Turkish '*türkü*s' (folk songs), they are also of great concern to us. However, Komitas and Pahtikos did not work according to modern techniques, did not use phonographs and did not even mention the nation these songs belonged to. They also worked with the aim of finding new materials to be used in their 'political-ethnic' extremist propaganda, so the final product of their studies were of little importance. Komitas' collection efforts are especially shrouded in suspicion; we cannot condemn him enough for this" (Gazimihal 1929: 5).

Another feature in the above quote is the pervasive tendency to otherize through trivialization. The "Turkish Music" chapter of *Encyclopedie de la Musique*, prepared by a committee headed by Albert Lavignac, was written by Rauf Yekta in 1921. This chapter includes the excerpt below, which notes how unskilled the *zurna* performances of Kurdish workers living in Istanbul are, and how the music of every nation may be measured according to their intellectual level:

> "The sound of this zurna is intolerably shrill and discordant. In Istanbul, in the neighborhoods where the members of Kurdish families live, there are certain *kahves* (a kind of local coffeehouse) frequented by these workers. Many a time, I had the opportunity to pass by these coffeehouses and listen to their dance music played during festivals with *davul* (a large, double-headed drum) and this kind of *zurna*. Even though I tried my best, I did not hear even a single flawless melody or a flawless fourth or fifth note. I was astounded to see these people dancing for hours to this flawed music. In any case, I have to believe that they take pleasure in this kind of music. As a result, we can conclude that the music of a community reflects its intellectual level." (Yekta 1921: 3020)

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I provide these statements as examples of the competitive, exclusionary, and dismissive discourse of the period. Gazimihal, Köprülü and Yekta's statements above may be read as examples of the dominant historiography of the period. These assimilationist policies functioned as a sort of 'melting pot' within the efforts to define a 'nationalist' music, not a 'national' one. The musical culture of that period was thus enveloped in a nationalist discourse which provided the groundwork for musical memory that developed through generations of Republican history. As Bohlman writes:

> "By claiming that 'our music is better than anyone else's, the aesthetic rhetoric that accompanied the rise of the modern nation-state also underwent a dramatic shift from emphasis on the national to the assertion of the nationalist. Comparison was crucial to that shift, and competition was critical to its implications." (Bohlman 2004: 117-118)

Following the expulsion of non-Muslim minority societies from Anatolia, environments for the performance of their music have decreased drastically, and public space for the performance of songs in 'other' language have disappeared almost entirely. In light of this, the assimilationist and 'otherizing' discourses summarized above actually played a significant road in this cultural fracture. It is an attempt to complete the cultural realm of this social transformation -brought about by massacres and demographic engineering- through policies of denying the existence of the 'other,' and thus causing them to be forgotten.

So then, in which historiography shall we evaluate the works of Mihran Tumajan (1972, 1978), who collected, classified by province, transcribed and published in books from the Armenian folk songs of Anatolian exiles living in America in the 1930s? And what of Helimişi Xasani's 1925-1931 collections of songs in the Laz language from the Hopa-Pazar regions[13]? Would it not be more productive to view the *Rembetika* musical tradition as a genre of Ottoman Urban Music[14] rather than a nationalized construct of 'Greek Music?'

The main goal in the denial of the Ottoman musical tradition in early-Republican Music reform was to detach it from the notion of 'cultural plurality' inherent in that music, and create an 'invented national music tradition' cleansed of non-Turkish elements. However, as Bülent Aksoy (2008) stressed that the Ottoman classical music tradition was not based on ethnic conventions. It was based on musical convention and taste. Thus musicians from non-Turkish or non-Muslim communities were never regarded as strangers or contributors, but as subjects of this tradition[15]. Similarly, Ottoman Urban Music also contained a wide variety of musical genres which developed in various cities throughout the very large region that comprises modern-day Turkey, in environments such as

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13 For information see Topaloğlu 2001.

14 For a further debate see Pennanen 2004.

15 It must of course not be overlooked that these non-Turkish and non-Muslim communities perform sacred music in venues such as their churches or synagogues, or local folk musical repetoires in their own languages.

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music cafes, taverns, nightclubs, cabarets and theatres where Turkish, Armenian, Greek, Sephardic Jewish and Arab musicians played together. Istanbul, one of the most important centers of culture for the Middle East and the Balkans in particular, was home to some of the finest singers, instrumentalists and composers in the Empire. In the early 20th century, Istanbul was also the center of music publishing, the record industry, and instrument-making. These skilled musicians performed folk music as well as hybrid musical forms that may not be claimed by any one ethnicity such as *şarkı, kanto, gazel, taksim, amanes*, *türkü, çiftetelli, karşılama, zeybek* (*zeybekik*os), *kasap havası* (*hasapikos*), *sirto* (*syrto*) and even *polka*s. The culturally pluralistic structure of the Ottoman Empire also created a linguistic diversity among different religious and ethnic groups. Just as there were Greeks who spoke Turkish/Ottoman as their mother tongues, there were Greeks who spoke Armenian and Jews who spoke Greek. Turkish literary works written in Greek or Armenian script, and Turkish/Ottoman music transcribed in Greek or Armenian notation, were one legacy of this linguistic diversity. The ethnic diversity of the performers on recordings made in Istanbul, Izmir, Athens and America in the early 20th century, and the variety of languages in the songs, highlight the uniquely multi-ethnic nature of the period. An examination of the songs' musical forms and style, instrumentation and performance practice reveals a clearly common musical sound, the only difference being the language, whether Turkish, Greek, Judeo-Spanish or Armenian. It must also be added that this sound was undoubtedly fed by the Ottoman classical music tradition, which it perhaps fed at the same time. Sephardic Jewish singers Victoria Hazan and Haim Efendi; Greek singers Marika Papagika, Achilleas Poulos and Rita Abacı; Armenian singers Marko Melkon, Kanuni Garbis and Kemani Minas, singing in their own languages as well as Turkish, became remembered some of the most famous singers of the period. Istanbul-born Sephardic Jewish singer Roza Eskenazi became one of the most famous female Greek *Smyrneika* and *rembetiko* vocalists, with nearly 350 recordings to her name. Greek lavta player Christo Bacanos, ud player Yorgo Bacanos, *kemençe* (lyra) player Lambros Leontaridis, Armenian ud players Agapios Stambulian and Udi Hrant and violin player Nishan Sedefjian, and Bulgarian violinist Nick Doneff are just a few of the musicians that rose to notoriety through their recordings. [16]

However, following the establishment of the official historical framework during Turkey's post-Republican years, and perhaps until the issues of cultural identity and ethnicity came into discussion in the 1990s, the echoes and traces of cultural plurality within the musical heritage of the land had been erased from collective memory. It is safe to say that 'other' ethnicities had no place in the cultural construction of society, and in actuality, little comprehensive research was

16 See, *To What Strange Place: The Music of the Ottoman-American Diaspora, 1916-1929*, compiled by Ian Nagoski (2011).

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done in this area. The remembering processes within communities always point to a 'narrative of loss and rupture of cultural memory.' However, not only forgetting processes, but remembering processes as well, can offer effective analytical perspectives in cultural memory studies.

After 1915: The Armenians of Turkey

Of the 7.6-8 million Armenians living in the world today, only around 3 million live in the Republic of Armenia. Most of the remaining population now live far from their homeland of historical Armenia and have scattered far and wide to various parts of the world[17] including the Middle East (Turkey, Iran, Syria and Lebanon), Europe (France, Italy, Britain, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland), Eastern Europe, Russia and the Caucasus, North America (The United States and Canada), South America (Argentina), Australia and India (Pattie 2005). Today, the estimated population of Armenians living in Turkey is 60,000 to 65,000 (Özdoğan et al. 2009: 462). Official statistical data about the Armenian population in Turkey is limited to information obtained from the censuses carried out in Turkey between 1927 and 1965. In the seven censuses that cover this period, minority population data were officially declared. Even though the Armenians were not expressly defined as an ethnic community in these censuses, the general language and religious groups within the society were classified and this classification provided approximate information about the size of the Armenian population. However, outside of the Apostolic Armenian population, there were no subcategories to determine the size of the Catholic and Protestant Armenian populations. Furthermore, these censuses provide no information about the number of the Armenians who do not know the Armenian language, or who are Crypto-Armenians. Thus the censuses of this period did not provide precise data but rather an approximate general overview (Dündar 2010). According to data from 1914, the Armenian population made up seven percent of the total population. However, according to the first census conducted after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, in 1927, this ratio is five per million. The results of the following census revealed a further decline in the Armenian population, and in 1965, the ratio of the Armenian population was 1.8 per million. In the post-Republican period from approximately the 1920s to the 1980s, almost all Anatolian Armenians who had survived the 1915 massacres and deportations gradually became concentrated in Istanbul[18]. In 1927, 69 percent of the total Armenian population in Tur-

[17] For the geographical distribution of Armenians today and through history, see Hewsen 2001.

[18] Armenians have been living in Istanbul since the Byzantine era. However, the community life took shape especially with the foundation of the Armenian Patriarchate after the conquest of the city by the Ottoman Empire in 1453. While the city was being rebuilt as a consequence of the war, a significant Armenian population migrated to Istanbul in order to

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key lived in Istanbul; by 1965, this ratio had increased to 89 percent (Özdoğan et al. 2009: 156-160). Therefore Istanbul's present Armenian population consists of Istanbulite Armenians, immigrants from Anatolia, and migrant workers from the Republic of Armenia. It can be said that with the exception of the Armenians still living in the Hatay village of Vakıflıköy, as well as Islamized Armenians in Anatolia, Istanbul has become the home for the Armenians in Turkey.

Istanbul became an attractive destination for Turkey's Armenians because there were no operational Armenian schools left in Anatolia, the Armenian churches in Anatolia were having a difficult time maintaining their existence, formal education in Armenian was only possible in Istanbul, and the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul had a protective role on the community. Consequently the immigration of Armenians from Anatolia gained momentum in the 1950s and 1960s. Thanks to the support of Patriarch Karekin Khachaturian and Partiarch Shnork Kalustian, a large number of Armenian students and their families migrated from Eastern Anatolia to Istanbul (Dink 2002). It is rumored that a priest, Sahak Papazyan, traveled to Central and Eastern Anatolia and selected students for the Surp Khach Tıbrevank Armenian School in Istanbul during the 1950s. Another reason for the decline in Turkey's Armenian population after the foundation of the Republic was immigration to other countries. Both the 1915 trauma and the minority policies exerted on non-Muslim minorities in Turkey, especially after World War II (the Conscription of "the Twenty Classes" – 1941[19], the *Varlık* (Wealth) Tax – 1942[20], the pogrom of September 6-7, 1955, acts by ASALA[21]), accelerated this emigration.[22] During this period, some Armenian families in Turkey were sending their children abroad for education at an early age, emigrating themselves when they gained an opportunity. One of the most compelling reasons for this flight

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work as blacksmiths, architects, stonemasons, engravers, etc., in the reconstruction of the city. That migration is seen as a historical crossroad determining the social structure of Armenians of Istanbul. It is said that Armenian population in Istanbul was then 120,000 to 234,000 (Pamukciyan 2002: 3-4). According to the data published by Mağakya Ormanyan in 1912, Armenian population in Istanbul was 161,000. On the other hand, according to the 1914 Ottoman census, the number was 84,093. (Köker 2005: 129).

19 The conscription of "the Twenty Classes" (20 Kur'a Askerlik) was the compulsory second or third time military conscription of non-Muslim citizens of Turkey during World War II. Non-Muslim citizens between the ages of 25 and 45 were kept away from the workforce for over 14 months.

20 In 1942, an additional tax was levied on non-Muslims on the basis of law. Those who could not pay the tax were exiled or condemned to forced labor in Aşkale, near Erzurum, where 21 forced laborers died. See Aktar 1996; Akar 2000.

21 ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) and JCOAG (Justive Commandos of the Armenian Genocide) violenced abroad against especially Turkish diplomats in the late 1970s and early 1980s and created escalated fear within Armenian community of Turkey.

22 See R. Bali's article about reactions of the Turkish press and the Armenian Community of Turkey after the call of Soviet Armenia for Armenians of Turkey and diaspora to settle in Soviet Armenia in December of 1945.

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was the pogrom of September 6-7, 1955 in Istanbul. Although the pogrom was aimed chiefly at the Greeks, Armenians living in Istanbul once again faced expulsion and violence reminiscent of 1915, at which their mistrust of the state solidified. One of my interviewees living in Yerevan stated that when he was a child, he did not want to live in Istanbul because they lived in constant fear: "I didn't know then that there was a place called Armenia, but I didn't consider Turkey my homeland either... We were afraid to speak Armenian on the streets"[23]

My interviewees talked about their lack of knowledge concerning 1915 and family histories in their childhood. Such things were not mentioned in their homes. They didn't know much about the events of the past. One of my Istanbul interviewees related an anecdote about this silence:

> "I was in my first year of the high school, we had an Armenian Professor at Istanbul University, Department of History. We would ask: 'Teacher, why did all the Armenian writers die in 1915?' and he would answer: 'There was a great epidemic in 1915. All these writers died at that time.' Nobody gave us accurate information."[24]

Interviewees said that the past was not talked about during their childhoods and fearful parents preferred silence in order to protect the next generation from hatred:

> "We heard our grandmothers' accounts of 1915 at home. I listened to many stories from them and those stories were tragedies. Such hearsay was all we could learn. The many publications we have today didn't exist then; there were no courses that dealt with it. Everything was covered up; and for us, it was doubly covered. They were so wary for our sakes. They would say, 'our children should not hear those stories. They'll grow needlessly spiteful; they live in this country; they'll both get into trouble and become unhappy'"[25]

Forgetting is an important vehicle in the formation of memory. A culture of forgetting, constructed not upon what we are, but rather upon what we will become, writes a thick black line over the past and creates the elements of collective identity upon designs for the future. According to Renan, this is a principle in the emergency of nations. The idea of nation exists on the legacy of rich memories on one hand, and on the other, the common memory as shared pain, and the shared culture of forgetting (1990 [1882]: 45). But even if the intergenerational flow of information is interrupted, the transmission of trauma continues for generations. Especially trauma left in the wake of enormous, inexpiable crimes against humanity, transforms into the collective emotion of the cultural community. Thus, Armenians of Turkey have a collective memory that has been passed from generation to generation despite the silence. In fact, silence is an influential

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23 H.D., interview with author, Yerevan, December 2009. For a further research on collective fear which shapes the daily lives of Istanbul Armenians, see the master thesis, Muratyan 2011.

24 S.E., interview with author, Istanbul, November 2009.

25 P.E., interview with author, Istanbul, January 2007.

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element in the formation of cultural memory. 1915, as one of the most traumatic events in 20th century history, had a tremendous impact felt even today by the peoples of Turkey. Not only the people but also the land of Anatolia itself, still bears the catastrophic marks and memories of 1915. Local stories about regions, cemeteries, churches and particular individuals combine to keep the memory alive and are transmitted from generation to generation. Survivors of 1915 largely attempt to use their collective memory make up for the dearth of knowledge and disinformation resulting from the official historical accounts. Although the loss has been remembered in a shared pain, each story about 1915 is unique to the narrator. My interviewees choose to refer to 1915 by various terms such as *seferberlik* (mobilization), *savaş zamanı* (war time), *kırım* (massacre), *soykırım* (genocide), *tehcir* (deportation), *1915 olayları* (1915 events), and *medz yeghern/büyük felaket* (big catastrophe) in order to describe the events that led to the annihilation of Anatolia's Armenian population. Dominant themes of the narratives about 1915 can be summarized as experiences of deportation; relatives who found each other after years of separation; massacres and violence; children left behind and broken families. Interviewees say that during the Republican period there were few publications and no education at schools about Armenian history. Rubina Peroomian's *And Those Who Continued Living in Turkey after 1915* examines this period of amnesia in literary publications by Armenian authors: "The established Armenian writers of the pre-1915 era, unable to freely express the sufferings of their people, refrained from writing at all, or resorted to occasional outbursts of abstract melancholy" (2008: 5). As a compensatory strategy, "They successfully overcame their own emotions and replaced the personal 'I' with the 'collective I'. They replaced personal struggle with the collective one" (Ibid. 7).

According to statements by my interviewees, two of the most important reasons for the silence about 1915 are 1) the cultural and economic survival strategy of individuals and society and 2) the fear of a recurrence of 1915, which intensified with the discriminatory policies imposed on non-Muslims after the establishment of the Republic. Furthermore, silence and collective amnesia in the public sphere are in effect, not only in the Armenian community of Turkey, but also in broader Turkish society[26].

One of the most powerful realities that sets the stage for collective amnesia is the fact that most of those who survived have been displaced from their homeland. The immigration of Anatolia's Armenian population to Istanbul resulted in the formation of a new Armenian community there, as people from differing regions and cultural backgrounds came together in Istanbul and intermingled with the existing Istanbul Armenian culture. Most of my interviewees were born in Istanbul, as well. When I asked "Where are you from?", their answers point to Anatolian cities of their family origins like Sivas, Malatya, Elazığ, Van, Mardin, Hatay,

26 For further information about silence in Turkish literature, see Köroğlu 2011.

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Sasun and Diyarbakır, places with which they no longer have any material bonds. Despite the lack of contact with their family homelands, they have clearly constructed an imaginary sense of belonging with these cities through the narratives of their families. Normally, people have various material bonds with their homeland. A homeland is, at the same time, a physical location where people can visit their relatives, go and stay for summer holidays, and spend the rest of their lives when they retire. However, the Armenians forced to migrate from Anatolia have very weak, if any, material bonds with their homelands. The following comments by my interviewee exemplify this sense of displacement:

> "Before Kırkısrak[27], we have no past. As I tell you my history, I can talk about Kırkısrak, but that's all. I have no information anything before that. This hurts me a lot, you know? Do you know why? I see people going to Sinop, Malatya and other places in the summer. Or, I see someone bringing tea from Rize, or hazelnuts from Ordu… We have nothing like that. No one brings us hazelnuts or apricots from our homeland. It's not possible… Sometimes, this really hurts me, because everyone should have a past. Why don't we have a past? But we've never asked this question. It hurts you, but you can't ever question it…"[28]

As is evident in the narrative above, the feeling of a sense of belonging with Anatolia due to family origin also leads to curiosity about the past. Being of Anatolian origin strengthens and socializes the identity structure of the individual, because an individual's bond with the past or history is an indispensible element of identity. Indeed, the homeland that defines the family origin and the status of being an Istanbulite, constitute a complementary homeland narrative. Their true-life experiences in Istanbul, together with their Anatolian origins, become indicators and proofs of their identities as Armenians in Turkey. My interviewee states: "I was born in Istanbul but my hometown is not Istanbul. We grew up with Anatolian culture. We never became Istanbulites. I still do not feel that I belong to Istanbul." His comments clearly reflect the historic conflict of identities observed between the Armenians of Anatolia and those of Istanbul:

> "Moreover, Kırkısrak was not an Armenian village. My parents lived with a Kurdish majority. When they moved to Istanbul from their village, they hoped to integrate with the Armenian community in Istanbul. Why? They went to churches in Istanbul, but the notables didn't like them much, and said "Oh, these villagers again?" We've always felt humiliated. Maybe that's why I still can't feel at home in Istanbul"[29]

The fundamental difference between the Armenians of Anatolia and the Istanbul Armenians is also reflective of the conflict between urban and rural cultures in Turkey. According to Arus Yumul, "Being an Istanbulite, and especially belonging to rich, well-educated and 'deep-rooted' families was a source of prestige and pride" within the Armenian community (as cited by Özdoğan et al. 2009: 339).

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27 Kırkısrak is a village near the city of Kayseri in Central Anatolia.
28 S.E., interview with author, Istanbul, November 2009.
29 S.E., interview with author, Istanbul, November 2009.

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Istanbul Armenians thought that the Armenians from Anatolia, with their lower level of education, were not only unable to adapt to urban life, but even had a negative impact upon it. For instance, Armenians from Anatolia did not speak the ‘clean’ Armenian language of Istanbul, instead, they used the rural Armenian *parpar* (dialect). The resulting transformation of the Armenian language in Istanbul disturbed the local Armenians. On the other hand, as also stated by the interviewees, Armenians of Anatolia did not want to be humiliated as ‘villagers talking barbarically,’ because of this, abstained from speaking Armenian. For many years, due to their financial difficulties in Istanbul, their lives differed little from their lives in Anatolia, and they had to live in small houses with their large families. Such cases threw the class distinction between them and the Istanbul Armenians into starker relief. A common situation mentioned by interviewees was that of three or four Armenian families living together in the same house in districts like Kumkapı, Yenikapı and Gedikpaşa when they first immigrated to Istanbul. As their economic situation improved, such families began moving to other districts like Samatya, Bakırköy, Yeşilköy, Kadıköy, Feriköy and Kurtuluş, according to their wealth. As most of the oldest Istanbulite Armenians have moved abroad, the majority of Armenians living in Istanbul today are non-Istanbulite in origin, and nearly everyone has a connection with Anatolia. Today, both ‘Istanbulite’ and ‘Anatolian’ are relative concepts which cannot be reduced to homogenous and static perspectives.

Remembrances on Armenian Music

In the interviews, the most common performance space that defined Armenian music and brought the musicking community together was, without a doubt, the church. During the inteviewees’ childhoods, especially for those over the age of 50, and in the early 1960s, Armenian music was a ceremonial thing, played on religious holidays. For the Armenian community, the church served for many years as one of a very few public spaces where Armenian music could be performed.

Without exception, the musical figure that everyone wanted to speak about in all of my interviews in Turkey and Armenia alike, was Gomidas Vartabed. Gomidas Vartabed (1869-1935) was an Armenian musician, composer, priest and musicologist who has been the central reference point in Armenian music historiography. It is no exaggeration to say that he is a cultural icon, a myth, and a legendary, heroic character for Armenians. This is not to say that all the Armenians feel the same way about him, but he certainly plays a significant role in the formation of Armenian identity. Most of the people who I interviewed began speaking about Gomidas as the fundamental historical and authentic reference point for musical discussions, before I even had a chance to ask about him. Indeed, most of my interviewees said that the first Armenian music they had heard outside of church music, was recordings of Gomidas Vartabed, some of his own

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voice, and others of him accompanying Armenak Shah Muradyan on piano. In the following account, an Armenian singer from Istanbul tells of his first acquaintance with Gomidas, and consequently, Armenian secular vocal music:

> "It must have been the 1970s... Okay, I remember. We had a 78 rpm record player, and a record with Gomidas' voice. The record was my father's, probably passed down from my grandfather. When he put that record on the turntable, I thought, 'Oh, my... Gomidas was singing, playing piano, and we have that recording, so there's such a thing as Armenian music. This isn't something that only belongs to the Italians, or whoever...the Polish.' Of course there is; I'm telling you what I was thinking at that age. Actually, we realized that years later. After Armenia gained its independence, we realized just how much there was. But because it was a closed box, we couldn't listen to it."[30]

Common memory cues regarding Gomidas include his voice on records, his polyphonically-arranged *badarag*, the thousands of folk songs he collected, and the 300-member *Gusan* chorus he formed when he came to Istanbul in 1910. But the most outstanding event regarding Gomidas in collective memory is that he was one of the intellectuals exiled on the journey to death in 1915 who managed to survive. In addition to this great trauma was the fact that upon his return, he saw that most of his years of work had been pillaged and lost. One of the poignant parts of this story is that Gomidas, believed to have become ill from his devastation at all of this, spent the last 20 years of his life at a mental hospital. Thus for most Armenians in the world, Gomidas is one of the outstanding symbols of 1915, and a narrative of loss. As I noticed from narratives I collected from fieldwork and searches of the literature, Gomidas is not only a historical resource for Armenian musical memory; he has also been the most influential figure in the construction of the Armenian musical aesthetic and performance style since the early 20th century. This is why I have devoted the entire fifth chapter of this book to Gomidas' construction of 'Armenian national music,' and the discussion of 'Armenian musical authenticity,' which he defined in order to explain its existence as a unique musical tradition. This chapter illustrates how Gomidas' legacy has been passed on to the present day, and the discourse in which it has been shared as a vehicle for musicultural memory. In addition, as stated by Melissa Bilal, ethnographic accounts with songs from places like Agn (Eğin/Kemaliye), or Daron (Muş), including lullabies, continued to be printed in a number of Istanbul Armenian periodicals, and then some Armenian songs have survived in families in Istanbul since the very early years of the Republic. (2013: 28-29).

Furthermore, popular urban Armenian songs were another special repertoire which my interviewees remember from 1970s and 80s. This repertoire includes several songs such as *Dzaghigner*, *Karun Karun, Sude Sude* and *Hingala,* mostly performed by popular *taverna* singer Hayko Tataryan in Istanbul taverns and other entertainment venues. These resemble Western pop songs with Armenian lyrics

30 Bartev Garyan, interview with author, Istanbul, 2009.

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and were in fact from the repertoire of the *estradayin*[31] movement, sung by the biggest star of the Armenian diaspora in Beirut, Adiss Harmandian. Adiss sang covers of popular English and French songs as well as traditional Armenian folk songs in Westernized pop arrangements[32]. Although most of my interviewees appreciate those songs as commercial music, they considered them worthless as representations of Armenian musical repertoire. Still, for Istanbul's Armenian community in the 1970s, they stood as pioneering examples of Armenian popular music. In the words of one of my interviewees:

> "Armenian music was performed only by choirs and at churches; there was not much beyond this. We would listen to a few audio casettes brought from abroad. During that period, even music from Armenia was limited. Whenever somebody brought a cassette or record from abroad, we would pass it around, copy it and listen to it. A few records, like Adiss Harmandian, would come from Beirut. We didn't even know about popular music. We had never heard an Armenian pop music song; we had no idea what they sounded like. It was the first time we'd heard about them or listened to them"[33].

My interviewee recalls his excitement as he came out of Adiss Harmandian's 1970 concert in Istanbul, one of his first ever chances to hear Armenian music in concert:

> "In 1970, an Armenian singer born in Beirut came to Istanbul to give a concert. I was dying to go, but at that time I could hardly even afford to go to the cinema, so of course I couldn't go to that concert. I'll never forget Adiss Harmandian. I was only 10 minutes away from the Şan Cinema. He was my idol at that time. I have no idea how a 10 year-old kid could find such an idol for himself, but I think it was because he was an Armenian musician"[34]

Among the rare Armenian songs performed prior to the 1970s, the song *Yandım Aghavni* –an Istanbul folk song– and Udi Hrant Kelkulian's compositions like *Sirdıs Vra Kar Mı Ga* and *Sirun Aghcik*, can be considered urban songs composed under the influence of the Turkish/Ottoman musical style.

The 1970s, when *Yerki Bari Khump* (song and dance ensembles) began to perform shows, stood out as an especially important time –even a golden age– in the memories of most of my Istanbul Armenian interviewees. The *Yerk Bar* shows, which for years were the most basic types of musical performance binding the Armenian community, were also a very important process of musical recovery which was quite influential in the creation of today's musicultural memory. Especially as a result of association with ensembles from Soviet Armenia and the

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31 According to Alajaji, "the name of the genre originally derived from *estrada,* a genre of Soviet popular song that had been popular in Soviet Armenia. The term *estradayin* is now used to describe the transcontinental (but largely French-influenced) *boulevardier* style of Armenian popular music that arose in Lebanon in the late 1960s." (2015: 172)

32 For a detailed discussian on Adiss Harmandian and the rise of *estradayin* genre, see Alajaji 2015:110-127.

33 S.E., interview with author, Istanbul, November 2009.

34 Bartev Garyan, interview with author, Istanbul, 2009.

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diaspora and acquiring the *yerkaran*s (songbooks) widely published throughout Beirut, the 'traditional' dance and music repertoire regained a place in the collective memory as they were performed in Turkey for years, even on an amateur level, and passed from generation to generation. The *Yerk Bar* performances were an extremely important and influential cultural/artistic movement in the creation of a collective consciousness and body of knowledge of traditional Armenian music in Istanbul Armenian society. For this reason, the fourth chapter of this book is devoted chiefly to this period.

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Chapter 4: The Armenian 'Musicking' Community in Istanbul

By the late 1980s, ethnomusicologists, as well as the anthropologists and cultural geographers, began to retheorize the new notion of community from the local to the global world, instead of root-based definitions. Furthermore, it is extremely difficult to define community with any precision because community is a category that is imagined, constructed and reconstructed in ongoing human relations (Alleyne 2002: 608). Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983), which suggests that all communities are imagined*;* Anthony Cohen's *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, which defines community as "a matter of feeling, a matter which resides in the minds of the members themselves" (1985: 21); and Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) which suggests that traditions that appear to be ancient and linked to an immemorial past are in actuality products of recent times, have had a tremendous impact on ethnomusicological studies, and driven ethnomusicologists to reassess the community as a unit of study. Distinct from a sense of locality, community indicates a moral field binding persons into durable relations (Rose 1999: 172). Community is a term that needs to be approached 'in action' (Alleyne 2002:608). Ethnomusicologists and musicologists began to debate the use of community as a term and attempted to arrive at a theory about the collective in music. Building on the accounts of this scholarly literature, Shelamay reviews alternative terms and concepts of community, including subculture[1]; artworlds and musical pathways[2], and the music scene[3] (2011:360). She then offers a definition of 'musical community' as below:

> "A musical community is, whatever its location in time or space, a collectivity constructed through and sustained by musical processes and/or performances. A musical community can be socially and/or symbolically constituted; music making may give rise to real-time social relationships or may exist most fully in the realm of a virtual setting or in the imagination... A musical community is a social entity, an outcome of a combination of social and musical processes, rendering those who participate in making or listening to music aware of a connection among themselves" (Ibid., 364-65)

The concept of musical community offered by Shelamay has much in common with the concept of 'musicking' that I explained in the first chapter of this book; that is, Christopher Small's suggestion to render music as a verb by taking into account its social dimension. In light of these arguments, I too, desiring to de-

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1 See Hebdige 1979; Bennett 2004; Slobin 1993
2 See Becker 1982; Finnegan 1989
3 See Straw 1991

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fine the Istanbul Armenians whose musical practices I have attempted to transmit in this chapter collectively, saw fit to use the expression "musicking community." Just as my narratives and conclusions do not represent all of the Armenians living in Istanbul, they contain only my observations of the musicking community with which I had a relationship during my fieldwork. In this chapter, the Armenian musicking community which was established in Istanbul under the leadership of the Armenian Alumni Associations and Church Choirs, and musical practices of this community shall be discussed within the context of cultural memory and identity construction.

Yerki Bari Khump *(Song And Dance Ensemble) Performances: A Cultural Recovery of Istanbul Armenians*

Despite the trauma of 1915 as well as the discriminatory state policies and attitudes during the Republican era, Istanbul's Armenian community, has managed to preserve its community institutions. After many years of avoiding the open display of Armenian identity within broader Turkish society in favor of a more introverted community life, the Armenian community began making its voice heard from the mid-1990s on. Their demands for equal citizenship elicited a response during the democratization process which began in the 2000s. The community structure has a powerful function in the preservation and maintenance of Armenian identity in Turkey. For some people, the community is the sole foundation of their world of meanings, while for others, it may be a secondary reference. In reality, the symbols of community boundaries and their meanings are not monolithic, and their meanings vary with community members' unique orientations to it. I mentioned in the opening chapter that the Armenian community of Istanbul and Turkey is not homogenous in character, but the point I would like to clarify here is that the Istanbul Armenians, due to their common characteristics, perceive themselves as a community[4], both in defining themselves and being defined from outside.

The Armenian community structure functions upon basic foundations such as the churches, schools, community foundations, press institutions (newspapers and publishing houses) and community associations. Community associations are especially effective in creating a sense of solidarity between members of the community, and preserving culture, language and identity in general. *Tıbrats tas* (church choirs), *sanuts miutyun* (alumni associations of the schools) and various

4 Especially beginning in the 2000s, the term 'community' (*cemaat*) for Armenians began to recall a more introverted and isolated social relations mechanism and as a result, it became a matter of debate particularly among the young, new-generation Armenians in Turkey. 'Society' (*toplum*), rather than the term 'community' (*cemaat*) – The Armenian Society of Turkey – has begun to gain favor in referring to Armenian collectivity.

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sports clubs have been the most influential organizations holding the community together for years. Those Armenian community centers allow members to be part of Armenian community life. Beginning in early childhood, people are exposed to a basic cultural formation within the activities of those associations, which function as creators of 'ethnic space' and transmitters of cultural heritage. People like to gather with others sharing the same language, customs, traditions and background. The centers are like a second family for the members, therefore these associations and their activities are a natural response to the needs of the community. Since the 1970s, the increasingly active dance groups and choirs have become indispensable elements in the social lives of Istanbul's Armenian community. These cultural activities, organized under the umbrella of cultural associations, also stood as an effort to forge a bond with their cultural heritage and transmit it onto new generations. In this context, all of these activities stand out, in the words of Pierre Nora, as *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory). According to Nora, the true venue of memory is everyday life; memory is recorded in the venues, traditions, language and words of everyday life:

> "Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived." (1989:8)

The late 1960s witnessed a growing interest in Armenian folklore within leftist elements of Turkey's the Armenian community as well. It was also a period characterized by the founding of new universities and the modernization of advanced studies in Turkey. This restoration of universities resulted in increasing numbers of students coming to the cities from many regions of Anatolia. These students tried to maintain their local identities, for instance staying in the dormitories with other students from their homelands. Folk dance performance was yet another vehicle for solidarity with fellow students from their homelands. Consequently in the late 1950s, 'folklore' as a term initially recalled notions of 'folk dance' and 'folk music.' Folk dance activities, organized by the *Halkevleri*[5], continued developing within unofficial, private institutions following the closure of the *Halkevleri* in the 1950s, and became popular in Turkish society. The increasing popularity of folk dance contests and festivals, and the initiatives of TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) in the collection of dance and music in Anatolia were reflections of this popular performance sphere. The 1960s thus witnessed the consolidation of performance-based folklore activities (Öztürkmen 2006: 194-205).

In the late 60s, Armenian university and high school youth became very active in community associations, and alumni associations (*Sanuts Miutyun)* in particular, such as the Alumni Associations of the Surp Khach Tıbrevank, Bezciyan, Esayan, Getronagan, Pangaltı and other schools. Social activities including thea-

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5 Community centers, established by the state for public instruction and social events.

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Figure 4.1: LP cover of the Armenian Song and Dance Ensemble conducted by Tatul Altunian (Monitor Records)[6]

Figure 4.2: LP cover of State Dance Ensemble of Armenia (Arka Records).

6 I obtained those LPs from Ara Dinkjian's personal archive.

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ter, folklore, football, backgammon and chess were organized mainly by those associations, and continue today. The early instances of cultural exchange with other Armenian communities appeared in the cultural activities of those associations. My informants spoke of their surprise when they realized the existence of secular, non-sacred Armenian music, via records imported from Beirut, Soviet Armenia or other diaspora communities. Recordings by musicians such as Hovannes Badalyan, Tatul Altunyan, Khachadur Avedisyan, Parsegh Ganachyan, Aram Khachaduryan, Rupen Matevosyan, Ophelia Hampartzumyan and Edgar Hovhannesyan, who were trained under the Soviet system, have been the determining models influencing the developing musical aesthetics of Istanbul's Armenian community since the late 1960s. They began collecting records of Armenian songs, learned to sing them, and realized that the Armenian world was not confined to Istanbul. It may sound absurd at first, but many people were not even aware of the existence of Eastern (Soviet) Armenia. As a result of those records, the borders of Armenian ethnicity broadened for Turkey's Armenian community of Turkey, leading to cultural interaction with other Armenian communities in the late 1960s.

Folk Dances as the Experience of Collective Remembrance

First, the members of Surp Khach Tıbrevank Alumni Association, consisting of the graduates of two boarding schools, Karagözyan (elementary) and Tıbrevank (middle and high school), founded a folk dance ensemble. The schools included the children of Anatolian Armenians who had to immigrate to Istanbul to learn the Armenian language and receive an education at a community school. Hachik Apelyan, a pioneering figure of the period regarding dance performances in Armenian community, began to develop an interest in folk dances as a university student. During those years, he focused on dance performance, visiting Armenia for two months and learning Armenian folk dance figures there. He brought back LPs along with the dances they learned there. That enterprise was instrumental in the flourishing of dance and musical activities in the community. My interviewee explains the importance of the *yerk bar* performance in 1971, after Apelyan's return to Istanbul from Yerevan:

> "It was 1971. That concert was a first for Armenians in Istanbul. Most of them did not even know there were Armenian dances. Folk dances were very popular throughout Turkey at the time, referred to as 'folklore'. 'Dance folklore' was especially attractive. Haço was the first to introduce Armenian dances to Armenians in Turkey"[7]

According to the program booklet of that first performance in 1971, they had been researching Armenian folklore since 1962, with the main goal of 'presenting their culture for consideration,' and leading and furthering that effort in other Armenian community organizations.

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7 P.E., interview with author, Istanbul, 2007.

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Figure 4.3: Covers of *yerk bar* booklets[8] from performances by the Esayan and Sahakyan Alumni Associations.

They learned dance choreographies and songs collected from Eastern (Soviet) Armenian repertories. *Sevani Tsıgnorsnerı* (Fishermen of Sevan), *Gagachner* (Poppy Dance), *Lezginka*, *Hovivneru bar* (Shepherds' Dance), *Kochari*, *Govgasagan Bar* (Caucasian Dance), *Hoy Nazan* and *Dzaghgepunch* (Flower Bouquet) were some of the most popular dances, included in nearly every performance since the 1970s. Those repertoires were taken with almost the same choreography from the *Bari Bedagan* Dance Ensemble in Armenia (State Folk and Dance Ensemble).

However, this folklore recovery was accomplished by referencing Soviet Armenia. The concept of the suite for representation, i.e. staging customs such as weddings, and framing a series of dances and balleticized character dances, were similar to many other state ensembles of that period. Referring to Hobsbawm and Ranger, Anthony Shay explains the choreographic creations of the various state dance ensembles as "invented traditions." He points out that "the steps and movements of character dances often have no connection with dance in the field, yet ballet character dance characterizes the bulk of choreographic output of such twentieth-century folk dance companies..." (Shay 1999: 30). Similarly, the music and dance memory of the Istanbul Armenians was imported through invented repertories from Soviet Armenia. Were those dance and song repertories real memories of Anatolian origins? That is clearly impossible; they were all re-

8 I obtained these booklets from Hayko Garabetoğlu's personal archive.

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Figure 4.4: Surp Khach Tıbrevank Alumni Association, 1971 and 1978.

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constructions of those that had been lost. As Shay states, "Many individuals among the public largely believe the fiction that the choreographies they view on stage reflect actual dances as they would be experienced in a traditional, field setting. The performances of both musics and dances have become choreographed and modernized in the Soviet and Caucasian styles" (1999: 45).

The members of *yerk bar* ensembles also collected some dance figures from older Anatolian Armenian immigrants from regions such as *Sason*, *Daron*, and *Vaspuragan*, but those were limited resources. They then wrote new choreographies upon those figures and named them after those regions, as if they were original. *Daroni Yerker* (Songs of *Daron*) from the Muş region and *Dağlıların Barı* (Dance of Mountaineer) from Sasun and Musadağ, were examples of the Anatolian collections[9]. They also included examples of Turkish folklore from regions such as Diyarbakır, Bitlis, Sivas, Silifke, etc.

'Soviet Style' Armenian Folk and Ashugh *Music*

As was the case of dance, 'Soviet style' Armenian folk music was a constructed Armenian traditional music ideal of the period. That style still forms a considerable portion of musical memory of Armenians in Istanbul. In the 1960s, after a long period of collective amnesia, they began listening to Armenian music through Soviet style records. A definition of the sound that I refer to as "Soviet style" requires an understanding of Soviet cultural policy, and the musical attitudes reflected in that policy prior to the 1920s. Eastern Armenia came under Russian rule in 1828, and remained so until 1918 when there was a short period of independence. In 1920, Armenia came voluntarily under Soviet rule. At that time, the influential nativization policy of Soviet rule was *korenizatsia*, which ensured 'the right of self-determination' for the republics. Lenin applied this policy by satisfying national sentiments of the ethnic groups and eliminating ethnic inequalities, in order to gain support for Soviet rule. Andy Nercessian gathers the aims of Soviet ideology into three rough categories: "First, the goal of 'advancement,' which took on the particular form of Europeanization. Second, the elimination of any cultural forms suggestive of class differences, such as opera. Third, the survival of national elements in culture" (2001: 30). Thus the establishment of folk music ensembles, the standardization of traditional melodies with European-style harmonization, the standardization of tuning systems for the instruments, and an effort to elevate folk music to the level of European classical music, became the fundamental strategies of *korenizatsia* in the 1920s in particular, and contributed towards Armenian music's transformation in this direction.

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9 H.G., interview with author, Istanbul, October 2009.

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The first Armenian folk orchestra, the Aram Merangulian orchestra, was founded in Yerevan in 1926. Most ensembles consisted of a number of *duduk*s, one or two *shvi*s (end-blown flutes), a clarinet, a cello, a *davugh* (10-stringed harp), a *kanun*, a *dhol* and two *kamancha*s (Nercessian 2001: 69-70). In fact, it is unknown whether those instruments had ever been played in the same ensemble traditionally. Most of the players were musically illiterate, so they had to be educated and taught notation. They performed harmonized collected folk songs and *ashugh* songs, with standardized playing techniques. In a short period, those folk ensembles came to represent national identity both in Armenia and internationally. This music was defined as *azkain*, which may be translated as either 'folk' or 'national,' referring to 'folk music' played by the ensemble and the national culture that it represented (Ibid., 84-88). The significant point here is that this kind of *azkain yerajıshdutyun* (national music) has served as the medium of authentic Armenian musical sound for the Istanbul Armenian community since the late 1960s.

Singers like Rupen Matevosian, Ophelia Hampartzumian, Lusik Koshian and Hovhannes Badalian – accompanied by popular folk ensembles like the Armenian Radio Orchestra of Folk Music Instruments conducted by A. Merangulian, and the Armenian Song and Dance Ensemble conducted by Tatul Altunyan – have been among the most popular performers of national music in Yerevan since the 1930s. *Yergu kuyr enk*, one of the first Armenian songs I had ever heard, was also recorded by the Tatul Altunyan Armenian Song and Dance Ensemble. Years later, I found that song on YouTube. The video starts with the written statement "Welcome to the absolute sound of Armenian Folk Music." It is clear from the booklets of the *yerk bar* choral and dance performances Istanbul that Tatul Altunyan's records were one of the main sources of Istanbul Armenians in the acquisition and performance of Armenian traditional music. But the main point that I am trying to make is that the reason that this sound has determined the Armenian sound in Istanbul since the late 1960s, is that it was the only source available. The choral sound in particular has been shaped by these recordings, even in the absence of such orchestras in Istanbul. Listening to any choir in Istanbul singing Armenian folk songs, you are likely to hear the sound of Tatul Altunyan's arrangements. Over the years, that standardized sound has clearly spread and been transmitted as a canonized repertoire within Istanbul's Armenian community. Nercessian supposes 'propagation' as a major concern in the creation of a folk song style that adheres to the standardized original. He also points out that folk ensembles reconcile urban identity with national/traditional identity (2001: 74). That style of folk ensemble serves as a means of strengthening national identity through the creation of a well-defined concept of traditional music: "The main goal was to cleanse traditional music, i.e., to Europeanize it, not to forbid it. One method of cleansing was European-style harmonization" (Ibid. 33).

Compared to Yerevan, Istanbul's *yerk bar* orchestras were poor in instrumental diversity, consisting mainly of accordions, zithers, *dhols* and rarely *ud*, violin and

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klarinet. The *duduk* entered the *yerk bar* orchestras in the late 1990s. There were scarcely any Armenian musicians able to play traditional Armenian instruments such as *duduk*, *shvi*, *kamancha* and *tar*, or sing traditional songs in their regional timbre. This is still the case in Turkey, so they would bring guest musicians from Soviet Armenia to play in some *yerk bar* performances. Here, my interviewee compares the opportunities to experience Armenian music in Turkey and Armenia:

> "For instance, when there is a wedding ceremony, many people think, 'what can I play in Armenian?' But those in Armenia do not think that way; they can see live Armenian music at any time. He could make music with his *duduk* or *duduk* ensemble at a funeral ceremony or hold wedding celebrations with traditional Armenian instruments alone, but this is foreign to us. If there is a wedding, we'd sing *Kadifeden Kesesi* (a popular Turkish urban song) to dance. We wouldn't celebrate with Armenian songs; they weren't part of our lives, but more like a museum piece"[10]

In Turkey, the most popular instrument in the 1950s and 1960s was the accordion. In those years, if young people wanted to play popular music, the first instrument to come to mind was the accordion. My interviewee, who has played in *yerk bar* performances since the 1970s, notes that although the accordion is not a traditional Armenian instrument, it is appropriate with regards to Armenian style, and with its popularity, became a traditional instrument for Armenians in Istanbul: "There were Armenian accordion teachers like Agop Akyüz, Edvard Aris, Garbis Elbenk... Whenever there was a celebration, they would also come with their accordions to my grandparents' home in Samatya."[11]

First appearing in the 1970s, the *yerk bar* shows continue as one of the most basic performance environments for Istanbul's Armenian musicking community. Another avant garde feature of those performances is the idea of polyphonic choral accompaniment. The tradition of polyphonic choirs in Armenian music began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when musicians like Krisdafor Kara-Murza, Levon Chilingirian, Makar Yekmalian and Komitas Vardapet harmonized the *badarak* sung at the churches, and when the churches accepted these polyphonic arrangements. The first choirs to practice this polyphonic format were those of Kumkapı Surp Asdvadzadzin Patriarchal Church, Galata Surp Krikor Lusavorich Church, Beşiktaş Surp Asdvadzadzin Church and Yenikapı Church, who adopted this format in 1906 (Seropyan 1993: 184-185; Saka 1994: 185-186). Beginning in the 1970s, church choirs began joining *yerk bar* performances featuring folk and *ashugh* (minstrel) music. The choir, instruments and dance ensemble are all onstage together, with collaboration by dance groups from school alumni associations (*Sanuts Miutyun)*. Examples of such collaborations are joint shows by the Sayat Nova Chorus with the Esayan School Alumni Association and the Surp Khach Tıbrevank School in the 1970s, and by the

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[10] P.E., interview with author, Istanbul, January 2007.
[11] H.G., interview with author, Istanbul, October 2009.

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Figure 4.5: Sahakyan Alumni Association, 1986.

Figure 4.6: Surp Khach Tıbrevank Alumni Association, 1971.

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Esayan School Alumni Association's Maral Dance Group with the Lusavoriç Chorus and Karasun Mangans Chorus in the 1990s. I feel the need to note that nearly all the shows, whether dance, choral or instrumental, were by amateur performers. They were held through the generous volunteer efforts of a musicking community that devoted their time three or four days a week to every stage of the production, including, rehearsals, production work, the sewing of costumes and ticket sales. Some of the *yerk bar* shows featured very large (70-130 people) casts; despite being performed by amateurs, by the end of the intense rehearsal periods they grew into carefully and seriously planned productions. The main aim was to exhibit Armenian folk dance and musical culture to the community through an impressive performance.

The performance profile of the choirs is based on three or four-part polyphonic pieces. Consequently, the songs for their repertoire are selected from the polyphonized notations of the songs from Armenia. The repertoire consists mostly of polyphonic choral arrangements of Armenian music composed or arranged by Hachadur Avedisyan, Tatul Altunyan, Parsegh Ganachyan, Edgar Hovhannesyan, and Gomidas. A significant portion of the repertoire also consists of Armenian *ashugh* songs, such as Sayat Nova, Kusan Sheram and Kusan Havasi, some of which are performed solo by good singers among the chorus members.

Representations on the Booklets of Yerki Bari Khump *Performances*

The basic features of the booklets have changed little since the 1970s: An introduction by the community's patriarch and by the association organizing the show, lists of names of the dance and music ensembles (since the 90s, some booklets include photographs of every performer), photographs of show scenes, and a two-volume dance and music program. The booklets are generally in Armenian. All the booklets I had a chance to examine included Turkish translations of the program. Some booklets were entirely in both languages. Additionally, the goal of revitalizing cultural memory through folklore is specifically observable on the *yerk bar* concert program booklets. The published performance programs were organized as a comprehensive booklet to inform audiences about Armenian folklore in general. They also include informative texts on definition and content of folklore as a research area, and specific information about Armenian dances and music history.

Costuming, as a symbol of authenticity, is one of the most important visual aspects of those performances and booklets. Issues of authenticity arise concerning folk dance companies because of the belief that one is presenting an 'authentic' representation of the nation by using its purest, most primordial material. The most influential part of those program booklets is the section about the Armenian costume tradition taken from 19th-century books. In the booklet for Surp Khaç Tıbrevank's 1971 *yerk bar* performance, the representation of ethnicity

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Figure 4.7: From the booklet of Surp Khach Tıbrevank's 1971 *yerk bar* performance.

clearly emerges from the common public view that these dances, music and costumes originate in some primordial source of the nation's purest values.

Similarly, the booklet for the Talar music and dance ensemble's[12] 2001 performance includes illustrations of old Armenian village costumes. In 2011, the same ensemble added a fashion show of traditional Armenian costumes within a *yerk bar* show format. The costumes, which can be traced to old illustrations dating as far back as 1590, were reconstructed and their photographs were compiled into a booklet which was distributed alongside the concert program.

However, the most influential aspect of these presentations is the symbolic 'recovery' of folklore by exhibiting old costumes alongside the new ones as proof of their genuineness. Group members sew their costumes based on these drawings, and display them together to as an indication of authenticity, continuity, and cultural transmission. Another interesting aspect of these photographs is that the people who model these costumes assume the exact same poses that appear in the old books. As is clear from this example, the basic motivation behind cultural representation in many areas among the Armenians of Istanbul is a survival strategy of 'ensuring the survival of cultural values through the preservation of identity.' Although Anatolian immigrants active in the *yerk bar* shows cannot express the cultural elements of their Anatolian experience in everyday urban life, they remember this legacy through intracommunal folkloric events and ensure its transmission to coming generations.

12 Talar music and dance ensemble was established by the Pangaltı School Alumni Association in 1997.

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Figure 4.8: A peasant man from Daron (on the left), A young Armenian lady from Hemshin, 19th century (on the right), ladies from Malatya (down). From the booklet of the Talar Music and Dance Ensemble's 2011 *yerk bar* performance.

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Limitations in Freedom of Expression

The symbolic potential of the *yerk bar* performances for political resistance, and reconnection with a forgotten past or a broken cultural tradition, has impacted the collective imagined construction of the community. Music and dance are a strong driving factor motivating Armenians to take part in community associations and their activities. Furthermore, the *yerk bar* performances are typically a means of struggle against absorption or assimilation into mainstream Turkish culture. The performances have many symbolic meanings regarding the construction of the community. The community was declaring, "we are still here as Armenians!" on the one hand, but 'self-censorship' was an effective means of self-protection before the state. For instance, in the 1960s and 70s, if a song lyrics included an 'inconvenient' word such as 'Yerevan' (the capital of Soviet Armenia), or 'Hayastan' (meaning the land of Armenia) of the song, the choir members would remove it or replace it with a less political word such as '*Vartastan'* (the land of Rose) in order to avoid misunderstandings or trouble with officials.[13] In the words of one interviewee:

> "Did we experience difficulties in the past? We did. The Turkish Republic did not create or impose all of those difficulties, but in that political atmosphere, some cautious brothers advised us not to use the word 'Yerevan' in songs. If there were such [problematic] words in a song, that word would be replaced with a new one that would complete the rhyme... Censorship is bad, but self-censorship is much worse" [14]

Most of the shows' audiences during those years were from the Armenian community, except the police detectives. Though the performances contained no protest or political criticism, officials monitored them. In this way the state continued to show its power through the covert message, "We are watching you!" From 1971 to 2010, the noticable common feature of the *yerk bar* show repertoires was the song *Yerk Paregamutyun*[15] (The Song of Friendship / Fraternity), sung in every performance to symbolize the demand for peace. It was usually played at the beginning and at the end of the performances. The founder of the Maral dance group, Benon Kuzubaş, initiated the tradition of performing this song at all performances. The Talar dance group also supported this practice, which eventually became a tradition. As stated by one informant, because undercover police detectives were present at every performance under the guise of ordinary audience members, they realized the importance of that song. Once, one of them asked about the lyrics of that song. After that, performers translated

13 B. G., interview with author, Istanbul, October 2009.
14 P. E., interview with author, Istanbul, January 2007.
15 Music by James Kozalyan and the lyrics by H. Ghugasyan.

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the song into Turkish and sometimes sang it in Turkish.[16] In addition, this song was also taught in Turkish in Armenian schools[17]:

> We are weaving the song of friendship with golden strings
> In the sunny, deep green fields
> Let it resound, let it take wing
> In all the languages of world
> With millions of words
> In the whole world
> Let there be peace, let there be eternal spring
> Let it resound, let it take wing
> Our song like a dove
> In the living world.
> Let people be friends for centuries
> under the sun, forever
> Life is happy
> Let poetry and song
> be heard from the lips of children forever.

The content of the lyrics, and the fact that the song was sung without fail at every show, may be taken as an indication that a community that had experienced 1915 was attempting to replace hate and resentment with a language of peace. On the other hand, the spirit of these lyrics may also be interpreted as an expression of silence and fear on the part of a community struggling to survive. In reality, the booklet texts exhibited very clear, though unspoken, "cautious language" of consent on the part of the community; containing no distinct references to the broader Armenian public such as "the Armenian community" or "we Armenians," no collective statements of Armenian identity beyond the Armenian language, no political statements in the song lyrics or dances outside of folkloric elements, and no reminders of 1915. Beginning in the 2000s, the inclusion of a portrait and quote of Atatürk ("A nation without art is one that has separated from its vital source."), a section thanking the Municipality of Şişli (where most of the shows were held) and its mayor Mustafa Sarıgül, and special texts written by Sarıgül for the booklets, as well as his participation in most of these events, reflect a preference for problem-free communication with state institutions.

To sum up this section, the 1970s were definitive years for musicking by the Armenians of Istanbul, because the *yerki bari khump* tradition created virtually the only performance space for Armenian music outside of the churches. Cultural exchange with other Armenian communities and awareness of the Armenian world allowed Istanbul's Armenians to recover their cultural memories, and restructure them within the realms of dance and music. Thus, cultural memory maintains individual perception of continuity between the community's past and present existence. According to Halbwachs, a founder of memory studies,

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[16] H.G., interview with the author, Istanbul, October 2009.
[17] S.K., interview with the author, Istanbul, October 2009.

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Figure 4.9: Talarig Music and Dance Ensemble.

collective memory is the reconstruction of the past. It is always written in and reflects the present day (Assmann, 2001, p. 44). Consequently, the *yerk bar* performances evoke music and dance memory in Turkey's Armenians, even if in a different form than past versions. The Maral[18] and Talar Dance Ensembles are the Armenian dance groups that pursue the *yerk bar* tradition and transmit it to new generations in Istanbul today. Additionally, the dance ensembles have their separate children's groups in order to provide cultural transmission. The children's ensembles are named after the adult ensembles, with the the addition of the Armenian diminutive suffix '-ig', as in Maral(ig) and Talar(ig). Those educated in these children's choirs or dance groups eventually go on to take part in the adult ensembles.

To conclude, the Armenians of Turkey, by embracing an experience of collective remembrance, searched for a sense of cultural identity through *yerk bar* performances, which played a formative role in their lives. It was a response to the loss of cultural memory; a desire to break down years of amnesia and reconnect with the past. For them, the dances and songs were more than mere nostalgic revisions of the past; more than a soundtrack to accompany their lives. They were key ingredients, integral parts of cultural identity in the acculturation of a new generation, which defined who they were. The emergence of the *yerk bar* ensem-

18 The Maral Music and Dance Ensemble was founded in 1980 by Benon Kuzubaş and his friends entirely with amateur members, in order to stage Anatolian and Armenian folk dances, accompanied by an orchestra and polyphonic chorus.

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bles and their subsequent proliferation throughout Istanbul's Armenian community, was instrumental in the reconstruction of cultural memories and identities long repressed during the early republican period.

Singing in the Choir: From Ritual Context to the Stage

Church choirs have long been one of the most important centers of musical performance for Istanbul's Armenian community.[19] Providing music for religious functions like Sunday services, weddings and funerals is one of the choir's basic duties, but apart from their religious functions, some choirs also perform concerts of Armenian folk and minstrel songs. They also take part in choral festivals and events concerning the Armenian agenda in Turkey. Some choirs active in such events include the Lusavoriç, Vartanants, Sahakyan, Surp Takavor, Asoghig, Getronagan and Sayat Nova Choirs. In this section, I discuss the role of the community choirs as the most effective musicking actors in the Istanbul Armenian community. I focus especially on the Sayat Nova Choir, because I joined their rehearsals and concerts during my fieldwork from 2006 to 2009, and thus acquired a broad perspective on singing in an Armenian choir. In this section, I focus primarily on how musicking becomes a socially active ingredient of community life in the case of the Sayat Nova choir.

The Sayat Nova Choir was founded in 1972 as a church choir at Boyacıköy's Surp Yerits Mangats Church. The choir is named after the most famous representative of the Armenian *ashugh* tradition, Sayat Nova[20]. The Sayat Nova Choir is officially a church choir but mainly perform Armenian folk and *ashugh* music. My informant, a founding member of this choir, explains that the choir was founded in the ideological background of Turkey's leftist movement in the early 1970s:

> "The dominant idea in 1972, the year the choir was founded was 'to change the world now!!!'. The Sayat Nova Choir was founded in a revolutionary spirit. The founders were mostly university students, and being a university student in that time meant having a leftist, revolutionary ideology."[21]

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[19] Today, 35 of the total 41 churches under the authority of the Armenian Patriarchate of Turkey are in Istanbul and the rest are in Kayseri, Diyarbakır, Mardin, Hatay, Iskenderun and Crete. 20 of these churches have their own choirs: Asoghik Choir (Beyoğlu), Getronagan Choir (Karaköy), Gomidas Choir (Kuruçeşme), Karasun Mangants Choir (Bakırköy), Koghtan Choir (Patriklik), Lusavoriç Choir (Taksim), Miatsyal Choir (Üsküdar), Naregatsi Choir (Beşiktaş), Nersesyan Choir (Kınalıada), Sahak-Mesrob Choir (Yeşilköy), Sahakyan Choir (Samatya), Sayat Nova (Boyacıköy), Surp Garabed Choir (Üsküdar), Surp Hovhannes Choir (Narlıkapı), Surp Hripsimyants Choir (Büyükdere), Surp Takavor Choir (Kadıköy), Tarkmançats Choir (Ortaköy), Vartanants Choir (Feriköy), Varvaryan Choir (Kumkapı), Zıvarnots Choir (Gedikpaşa). http://www.hyetert.com/rehber.asp.

[20] Sayat Nova (Harutyun Sayatyan, 1712-1795) was an Armenian poet, musician and *ashug* who had compositions in a number of language. His adopted name Sayat Nova means 'Master of Songs' in Persian.

[21] P.E., interview with author, Istanbul, January 2007.

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Figure 4.10: Sayat Nova Choir (from Sarkis Erkol's archive)

In the 1970s Armenians in Istanbul had few outlets for civil organization outside institutions necessary for their religious communities. So, the way to articulate the initiation as a church choir made them in advantaged in order to be protected officially against the state. My interviewee's account below exposes the paradox of being a leftist organization within a religious institution:

> "One would say, 'what business do you have at church as a leftist?' But outside the Armenians had no other foundation to stand on. The church truly served as a *cami* (mosque) in the literal sense; the word *cami* means "place to gather/coexist" in Arabic. In the undemocratic environment of 1972, we could not establish an ethnic organization. A group called the "Sayat Nova Organization" was unthinkable, so the easiest way to organize within the community was as a church choir."[22]

The Sayat Nova Choir performed in the *yerk bar* performances organized by the Esayan Alumni Association in 1973 and 1974, and by the Surp Khaç Tıbrevank Alumni Association in 1972, 1975, 1977 and 1978. In the post-republican period of Turkey, the choir had a key role in the reconstruction of Armenian folk music performance and in the traditionalized sound of the *yerk bar* performances. In the 1980s, after the Turkish Coup D'Etat, the Armenian culture and arts scene, similar to many other social environments in Turkey, experienced a brief period of stagnation. In contrast with the prolific *yerk bar* performances of the preceding period, the Sayat Nova Choir began giving thematic choral concerts with no dance element. In 1985 they had an idea to perform a concert of Gomidas' works in commemmoration of the 50th anniversary of his death. This was followed by more concerts in honor of prominent figures in Armenian music history such as Gomidas, Tatul Altunyan, Sayat Nova, Krikor Suni and Khachadur

[22] Ibid.

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Avedisyan. In the words of one member, not only were these thematic concerts educational; they also enocuraged the organizers, performers and audience to learn more about Armenian culture:

> "I think I gained a lot by joining Sayat Nova and being part of an Armenian cultural and artistic environment. Before joining Sayat Nova, I had a 'leftist' perspective as a result of other things in my life, but it was only after Sayat Nova that I started to learn more about Armenian identity and culture, and approach these from a leftist point of view. This has always made me consider the educational character of this institution."[23]

The Sayat Nova Children's Choir was formed in 1990. Children who joined the choir continued in the senior choir, providing them with musical and cultural education. Sayat Nova generally performs a capella, but in 1992, an orchestra consisting of young accordeon, bass guitar, clarinet, *dhol* and percussion players was established to accompany the choir in some concerts. Guest *kanun* and *duduk* players from Armenia also took part in some performances, but unlike the choir, this orchestra did not meet consistently, coming together mostly for individual concerts.

In the 2000s, Armenian music of Anatolia began to attract the attention of the Sayat Nova Choir and concert themes shifted from composers to cities of origin or a homeland perspective; for example, *Folk Songs from Muş* (1999), *Yergir Nairi* (2001), *Ergir* (2005), *Mahlemize Aşık Geldi* (2006) and *Karun e Kalis* (2008). These were 'homeland themed' concerts where Armenian people remembered and celebrated the past and cultural heritage of historical Armenia. Similar to other choirs in Istanbul, the Sayat Nova Choir's concerts mainly featured music of the Armenian 'folk' and '*ashugh*' music traditions in common with other choirs in Istanbul. Moreover, these concerts used music and literature together, conveying certain social messages through texts and poetry read by a presenter on stage.

Most of the singers in the Sayat Nova Choir are amateur, non-professionals with no formal music education.[24] One member associates this amateur nature

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[23] S.E., interview with author, Istanbul, November 2009.

[24] Nevertheless, it can be said that particularly as of 1990's, lots of soloists, chorists and musicians who were trained in the Armenian choirs/ensembles of Istanbul, studied music in conservatoires and were trained as professional performers in Turkish public institutions. However I collected some narratives of the interviewees who explain that they were subject to discrimination in the conservatoire exams in 1970s and 1980s just because they were Armenian, as in the following: "I was at the entrance exam of the municipality conservatoire in Çemberlitaş. There were about 100 children who attended the exam. When it was my turn, I walked in. One of the jury members asked: "What is the name of this beautiful girl?" Takuhi Tovmasyan… He could hardly manage to say my name. The expression of the lady who asked my name changed in her face and ordered to me "Get out!" I was so excited and happy to go there. But in the end, I said to my mom "Mama, we don't need to come here tomorrow, I will never take place in the winners' list." My mother said to me "The fault is ours. We shouldn't have ever come. There are only 1 Greek and 1 Armenian child among 100 Turkish children. Who would expect them to accept us?" (Takuhi Tovmasyan, interview with author, February, 2008)

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Figure 4.11: Sayat Nova Choir.

with the Armenian word *sirogbagban*, meaning that their motives are love, affection and friendly conversation. [25] Conquently the Sayat Nova Choir does not hold auditions. Even though some members have difficulty learning the tunes and intervals, the choir has no difficulty with this, and those who do not sing well also can continue singing in rehearsals and concerts. I cannot deny that this does at times lower the artistic level of the choir, because in polyphonic singing, one person with a poor musical ear affects the entire sound. Through hours of disciplined rehearsals, however, they do their best to ameliorate these problems. I believe people sing together as a manifestation of their group identity; thus the sociological and psychological effects of communal singing are more important than some aspects of performance aesthetics. This is not to imply that they ignore the quality of their sound or artistic representation. I was quite surprised to learn that most of the members could not read music, though they always used sheet music during rehearsals and concerts. While not overly emphasizing musical ability or talent in practice, they do overrate the use of notation as a sign of artistry. In fact, many members, though unable to read the notes, do follow their visual line along with the lyrics.

At rehearsals, the director sings or plays the melodies on the piano, and they learn by repetition. The director's main concern is that they sing in tune and ad-

[25] P.E., interview with author, Istanbul, January 2007.

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here to the rhythm in a cohesive group sound, and in conformity with the dynamics and expressions which he prescribes. The choir's organization and musical approach conforms to an idealized Western choral tradition, with bass, tenor, soprano and alto voices. What I have related concerning the Sayat Nova Choir is quite similar to many Armenian choirs in Istanbul. The repertoire and Soviet-style performance practices acquired through the *yerk bar* shows form the basis for Armenian musical education. However I believe that for a good understanding of both sacred and secular styles performed by community choirs, an examination, however brief, of the history of the development and transformation through which Armenian church music has passed, will be helpful.

The Armenians' conversion from paganism to Christianity in the 4th century, and their claim to have been the first state to have accepted Christianity, are primary elements of their historical narrative (Garsoian 1997: 81). The creation of the Armenian alphabet in 405 BC, by Saint Mesrob Mashdots, who was also a poet and composer, and the translation of the Bible into Armenian sowed the seeds of the religious musical tradition, and this period is considered a milestone in music history. The translation of the Bible into Armenian brought about a change from the period of influence by the Byzantine and Assyrian churches. With the liturgical system that developed in the Apostolic Armenian church, religious representation was nationalized in a sense. Saint Mesrob Mashdots and Catholicos Saint Sahag Bartev are considered the first composers of Armenian liturgical music. (Pahlevanian et. al. 2013). The roots of the basic musical form called *sharagan* may date back to this ancient period. During this period, the old classical Armenian, known as Krapar and used as a ritual language in the Armenian church, was a unifying factor between Armenian communities divided between the Persian and Byzantine Empires. National musical styles were extremely important to early Armenian historians; their manuscripts on religious music in particular as well as books of secular music (*tagharan*), music theory, aesthetics, history, philosophy and collections of articles on literature, were many and varied. Such writings include information on instruments, epic song texts, song forms, descriptions of music-accompanied rituals and performances remaining from pagan times, and chronologies written in the 5th century by ancient historians like Movses Khorenatsi (the most important figure in Armenian historiography) and *Faustus of Byzantium*. Including not only religious music but folk and *ashugh* style music as well, these resources are part of the Mashtots Matenadaran (library) collection in Yerevan.

Boğos Levon Zekiyan associates the Armenians' conversion to Christianity, the creation of the Armenian alphabet and the importance of this first period in which they first appeared on the stage of history, with the formation of their national ideology and awarness of them worldwide as an integrated, singular identity. The time betweeen the 5th to the 7th centuries may be considered the most important historic period, both as a "golden age" of Armenian culture as well as the formation of the Armenians' 'ideology' as a Christian nation. (2005: 51-52). The link be-

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tween Christianity and nationhood, upon which Zekiyan focuses heavily, stems from the autonomous nature of the Armenian church. The *makam*/modal system used in the church was officially accepted in the 8th century. In the 9th century, when the new *sharagan* melodies were composed in order to achieve unity among the churches, the repertoire moved toward a standardization (Kazarian 1983: 20). The Armenian Church belongs to the Armenians alone, and throughout its history, has represented no other ethnic group. In terms of modernist ideals, the Apostolic Armenian Church is one of the oldest 'national' churches in the world. In addition, with the emphasis placed on the ancient period in Armenian history, the discourse of 'origin' may be legitimately attributed to much older periods than other civilizations in the region. As with religion and language, music too is an area in which evidence and findings may be presented regarding the appearance and continuity of a 'national' presence predating modern times. This viewpoint may be considered a reflection of the primordial approach, which suggests that the Armenians, with their ancient common language, culture, musical culture, religion and historic homeland, are one of the oldest nations in the world. Today however this approach, which may be found subjective regarding the concept of a nation, is receiving criticism because its fixed, origin-based vision of identity it overlooks the dynamics of social change. On the other hand, this approach is quite useful because it presents this consolidating feature on identity constructions of ethnic 'web of significance'. (Kurkchiyan ve Herzig 2005: 2).

The Armenians were occupied repeatedly throughout the Medieval period, living under the Byzantine, Sasanid, Arab, Seljuk and Mongol rule, and for a few short periods such as the Bagratunian and Rubinian dynasties, maintained their independence. During the Cilician period in particular the last Armenian Kingdom of Anatolia was established in Cilicia (the region on the northeastern shores of the Mediterranean); an era of political order during which cities developed, secular thought gained power, and the roles of commerce, the fine arts, literature and especially music developed in public life. (Zekiyan 2005: 54, Özdoğan et. al 2009: 44, Tahmizian 1982: 20-22). Religious music made important strides during this period, especially through the efforts of Nerses Shnorhali. Hovannissian, referring to a "new, free and popular style based upon Armenian folk melodies," presents Shnorhali as the "pioneer of the golden age of Armenian music" (1956: 156-157). Grigor Narekatsi was one of the most influential composers of the period with his compositions in secular hymn form, which were known as *tagh* and were one of the leading forms in the Armenian artistic renaissance. The most important Medieval innovation was the *khaz* notation, which allowed the collection of music in books called *manrusum*. Aristakes Hissarlian wrote in his book *Badmoutiun Hye Yerajsheshtootian* (Armenian Musical History) that this notation system is "only a reminder and can only be used if the performer knows the melody" (Hissarlian 1914, as cited by Kazarian 1983: 17). In this way, the period in which the liturgical repertoirs took shape and became uniform across different Armenian regions came

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to an end (Pehlivanian, Kerovpyan 2010: 57). The use of the *khaz* notation allowed the repertoire to be passed down over the centuries. Musical developments during this period were not limited to the writing of church music but included other vocal and instrumental forms as well, such as the *gusan* (*ashugh*) style. In light of all these developments, the 10th-15th centuries are still referred to in Armenian music historiography as a renaissance or golden age.

Zekiyan's book *Ermeniler ve Modernite: Gelenek ve Yenileşme, Özgüllük ve Evrensellik Arasında Ermeni Kimliği* ('The Armenians and Modernity: Armenian Identity between Tradition and Renewal, Specificity and Universality') (2002) presents a comprehensive framework for the processes of modernity, enlightenment and secularization that allowed interpretation of the fundamental transformations that took place from the 16th to the 19th centuries. In Zekiyan's view, modernity entered Armenian society during a very early period (2002: 33-35). In particular, the secularization period (1840-1915), which he defined as the 'Awakening (*Zartonk*)' was characterızed by an integral secularization during which the cultural hegemony of the church and religious authorities became limited, allowing for an intellectual expansion among the masses. The application of European forms of education and the standardization of the modern written Armenian language allowed publishing and journalism to take a pioneering role in the Ottoman Empire. This modernization movement was reflected in the areas of literature, poetry and other branches of art (Arkun 2005: 73-76, Zekiyan 2002: 89-103).

With the invention and widespread use of a new notation system, the process of Armenian modernity and musical westernization evolved into a new 'golden age' in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The destruction, uprising and political conflicts owing to wars throughout the 16th century led to a decrease in the use of the *khaz* notation, and indeed by the 18th century, the meaning of the *khaz* symbols was not entirely known. Because of this, the repertoire was transmitted orally until the invention of a new notation in the 19th century. Known as the Hampartzum notation, it is attributed to Hampartzum Limondjian (1768–1839), but was in reality the product of a collective effort by Minas Bejeshkian (1777–1851) Andon Duzian (1765–1814) and Hagop Duzian (1793–1847) (Kerovpyan ve Yılmaz 2010: 123). This notation system took on a historic role of a mediator between Armenian-ness and Ottoman-ness. Although the system became widely used among Armenian church musicians as well as performers of Ottoman music, it is seen as a symbol of Armenian cultural development. Kazarian for example, characterizes Limondjian as a "pioneer of national musical reform," stating that he cleaned up the Byzantine-influenced vocal style and eliminated the variation in liturgical melodies and used the notation system as a means of education to standardize the improvized *sharagan* melodies (1983: 44-45). Kerovpyan and Yılmaz consider the Hampartzum notation, which served as a very practical means both for musical education and recording of music in written form, the most important development in the westernization of Armenian music. The effort to develop a new nota-

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tion system may be viewed as part of the philology movement, which was one of the fundamental elelements in the westernization process. Music documented in writing was a scholarly means for the transmission of tradition. Consequently the Hampatsum notation had an important function in the creation of an 'ethnographic nation' as well as an encouraging role in other reform movements in Armenian music between the 19th and 20th centuries (Kerovpyan and Yılmaz 2010: 123-124).

On the other hand, this reform movement in church music caused a polarization among cantors, especially in Istanbul and its surrounding. The number of cantors who opposed the use of notation for religious music because they felt it would damage the *makam*-based oral tradition, diminished over time; while the real conflict was over the issue of polyphony and westernization. For example, proponents of westernization, assuming that Europeanization was a natural process of development for humankind, viewed Ottoman music as 'monophonic' and undeveloped. In this context, the use of Ottoman musical styles by church cantors offended them even more. A division over the 'Alaturka' and 'alafranga' styles developed. The growing interest in Western music is also evident in the use of Western notation in music magazines published in Istanbul in the late 19th century, such as *Knar Arevelyan* (Eastern Lyre) and *Knar Haygagan* (Armenian Lyre).

Such interest is also evident from the works in western notation. Because of the idea that over the years, the original, traditional styles of Armenian church music had grown closer to the Eastern style of Ottoman music, they had switched to a completely Western style (ibid.127-129). It can be clearly observed that the ideological tendencies of the time played a determinative role in today's musical performance. In addition, the social trauma and ruptures of the 20th century also had a powerful influence on Armenian church music. Kerovpyan and Yılmaz state that until the early 20th century, there were many active Armenian monasteries in Anatolia. It is well known that liturgies were performed frequently in cities and villages alike, and in this way the liturgical repertoire gained a place in collective memory (ibid. 71-72). As was the case for all Armenian community life in Anatolia, church music also underwent a great rupture in 1915. Monasteries as well as the musical traditions that thrived within them, were annihilated. Those urban or village cantors who managed to survive joined cantor ensembles in diaspora centers like Istanbul, Cairo, Paris and New York. As the Western-style choruses that began to develop in the early 20th century became more widespread, polyphonic liturgies surprassed the *makam* style in popularity. Presently, Nişan Çalgıcıyan, director of the cantor ensemble (*muganni heyeti*) at Üç Horan Church in Istanbul, and his young apprentice Murat İçlinalça play an important role in the continuation of this tradition. The purpose of the historic account above was to help in understanding the polyphonic performance practice of choirs in Istanbul. The western-style polyphonic practice has become the norm, not only for performance of liturgical music but of secular songs as well. The work of Gomidas Varta-

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bed and the Kusan Choir were doubtless very influential in the development of the polyphonic choral tradition in Istanbul. I will leave this subject for now, but will discuss it in detail in the next chapter.

To continue the discussion of the Sayat Nova Choir specifically, I can say that the number of members attending rehearsals changed constantly. Ranging from 30-60 members on average, the Sayat Nova Choir, as far as I could observe during my rehearsal participation, was attended most heavily when preparing for concerts. Because of their busy personal schedules, members skipped rehearsals from time to time but notably, there was always a control and monitoring mechanism in place to ensure attendance. Interestingly, some members, especially those over the age of 60, do not sing now because of health issues but come to rehearsals voluntarily and take part in the musicking process. What then are the motivating factors of being a choir member? Getting off work in the evening and coming to rehearsal two or three times a week, chorus members clearly do not set aside this time just to sing.

Singing is primarily about social relationships. Becoming a choir member thus engenders relationships among participants in various ways, whether as singers, conductors, listeners, organizers etc. More than merely a choir, Sayat Nova is a big 'family.' Singing in a choir is an activity that every age group partakes in together, just like in a family setting. Basically, their main desire is 'being together'. In comparing the chorus to a large family, I use the word 'family' only as a metaphor for togetherness. On the other hand, most of the choir members participate with their families, as parents or children, or relatives. Many of the choir members residing in Kurtuluş are also neighbors. When I characterize the choir as a family, I am referring to a widespread 'family' that spends time together outside of rehearsals. For instance, one of the main musicking activities of the choir is their weekend picnics, which can be considered a community ritual. Especially when a musician or artist from Armenia or the diaspora visits Turkey, they arrange a picnic or other gathering to meet and introduce the musician to Istanbul's Armenian community and their non-Armenian friends. They gather in the church garden, eat and drink, followed by singing and dancing. Every aspect of preparation, from buying the ingredients for the meal to cooking the barbecue, is highly organized. These picnics always felt to me like a traditional ritual in celebration of togetherness, and music is one of the indispensable components of that ritual, which is used to define the community as an act of exploration and celebration (Small 1998: 95). Singing has the power to reawaken the past and bring it into the present. Songs help reinforce collective memory and provide insight into the world of an explicitly Armenian experience, in the sense that choral singing strengthens collective identities, because music can play a symbolic role in the formation of national/ethnic consciousnesses.[26] Similarly, when national repertoirs were canonized in the 19th-

[26] On choirs and ethnic identities/minority identities, see Burnim 1980; Carvalho 1997; Savaglio 1996.

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century Europe, the choral tradition was a very influential area of performance. National songs appealed to a collective mentality and collective performance emphasized the songs' metaphoric meanings for the nation. In the book *From History of Armenian Choral Art*, the relationship between nation and the art of singing, is expressed as follows:

> "For a free Armenian, the national song is a core value of national identity, a part and parcel of our entire cultural heritage vibrant with melody and stunning panorama of choral performance. Our singing art is a tune, born from the destiny of our nation and from the history of its spiritual culture. Armenian singing art, a unique musical and artistic phenomenon, is the history and culture of the nation, our destiny and certificate of our spiritual identity." (Davtyan 2006:10)

As Benedict Anderson suggests, the simultaneity and togetherness inherent in the act of group singing echoes "the physical realization of the imagined community" (1983: 145). The choral environment creates a sense of support and solidarity in which individuals share a space where they can express and preserve their ethnicity. Additionally, music complements the social processes of community formation (Barz 2003: 85). Choirs help the new generation in being a part of Armenian community life, embodying a national/ethnic space in a non-Armenian environment such as Istanbul.

Besides, we must remember that the Sayat Nova Chorus has, since its foundation, a left-leaning organization. As such, it is an activist choir, sensitive to the political agendas both of the Armenian community and broader Turkish society. The chorus contains many members who work actively in community newspapers, publishing houses, various community institutions and a host of NGOs, and can product quick reactions (such as demonstrations or solidarity concerts). At the same time, the Sayat Nova Chorus helps Turkey's Armenian community to gain greater visibility on Turkey in general and even abroad, through joint projects with music groups and musicians outside the community.[27] It could thus be said that it transforms Armenian identity from something confined within the Istanbul community to a Turkey-based representation that emphasizes cultural sharing within a broader cultural citizenship.[28]

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[27] *Mahlemize Aşık Geldi*, a concert performed in 2006 by the Sayat Nova Ensemble in collaboration with *Kardeş Türküler* and the Ruhi Su Ensemble in the Harbiye Open Air Theatre, was an influential example that cultural sharing. Turkish, Armenian, Kurdish and Azerbaijani songs were performed in the concert, which was held to present minstrel music and melodies of "a vast land including Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Iran, Armenia and the Caucasian steppes." The concert's aim was to allow the performers to experience different musical cultures and create a common language with which to share their diversity through music. The Sayat Nova Ensemble adopted the same approach in other projects with musicians such as Metin Kahraman and Selda Bağcan.

[28] The term appears to have been coined by cultural anthropologist Renato Rosaldo (1997), to examine Latino civic participation in the voicing, claiming and negotiating of cultural space. The concept of cultural citizenship offers a different framework than national citizenship, which imposes a single common culture and relies on the history of one particu-

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Echoes of Anatolian Armenian Musics: The Knar Ensemble

The Armenian music group *Knar* was established in 1992 to accompany dance shows by the Kumkapı Bezciyan Alumni Association. The band began performing concerts while also accompanying the *yerk bar* performances. All of its members were amateur musicians performing "Armenia-oriented music composed of Caucasian melodies," with musical instruments such as *tar*, *ud*, *duduk*, accordeon, violin and *dhol*.[29] This band brought variety to the format of musical performances in Istanbul's Armenian community. In addition to *yerk bar* shows consisting solo and choral performances along with dance show, there were concerts by the *Knar* Ensemble. Following *Knar*'s first concert in Istanbul in 1996, they went to the Netherlands with a project called 'Istanbul, the Door of Anatolia.' According to my informant, an ethnomusicologist specializing in Anatolian and Middle Eastern music, came backstage after the concert and said that the project title did not match the content of the concert:

> "'Congratulations. You gave a beautiful concert with regards to performance, but I did not hear what I expected. You are all Anatolians, discover your music and perform it.' That same year, an audience member from Armenia made a similar comment after a concert organized by the Patriarchate in Kınalıada[30]: 'You performed well, but I can listen to the same music on Yerevan Radio. Isn't there anything unique to you? Is there no music unique to this land?'"[31]

At these suggestions, *Knar* worked to develop a repertoire of Anatolian Armenian music. After some progress, the band released an album, *Anadolu Ermeni Halk Müziği* (Armenian Folk Music of Anatolia) in 1999, which sold well and became popular at the time. *Knar* also made a political debut with this album because it surpassed the limits of the Armenian community and reminded the Turkish community of the existence of Anatolian Armenians. *Knar* became the new face of Istanbul's Armenian community. The political discourse in the album booklet also highlights this reality:

> "Social changes resulting from the Armenians' forced deportation from Anatolia at the beginning of this century, as well as modernization movements within the community, resulted in a gradual separation of Armenians from their Anatolian regional music. Today, nearly all of the Armenians in Turkey live in Istanbul. Aware that our origins are in Anatolia, and that this Armenian folk music is on the verge of extinction, we have looked Anatolia since 1997. This album is the first fruit of these studies. It is our hope that with your support, such efforts to display the diversity of Anatolia will continue."

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lar ethnic group. Cultural citizenship offers a flexible framework which can address questions of home and belonging, set into motion by the complicated routes of identity in an age of globalization. Cultural citizenship involves the right of minority or subordinated groups to be different and still belong to the nation.

[29] Sezar Avedikyan, interview with author, Istanbul, May 2007.

[30] An island near Istanbul mostly inhabited by Armenians.

[31] Ibid.

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Figure 4.12: Album cover of Knar.

In the early 1990s, the most commonly exploited sources for Anatolian Armenian music were Gomidas' and especially Mihran Toumajan's folk music collections. *Knar* mostly compiled its Anatolian repertoire by deciphering those song transcriptions and collecting songs from older Anatolian Armenians who could remember the songs from their hometowns. Mihran Toumajan was born in Gürün (in Sivas) in 1890. In Istanbul he studied law, simultaneously becoming a pupil of Komitas and singing in his *Kusan* Choir. He completed his musical education in Paris. Toumajan's Collections, titled *Hayreni Yerk u Pan* ('Armenian Songs and Sayings') and containing folk songs and other folklore collected between 1920 and 1965 from the Western Armenian/Anatolian diaspora, contributed much to Western Armenian musical and literary heritage.

These volumes include traditional folk songs classified by genre, such as lullabies, wedding songs, carnival songs, emigrant songs, laments, lyrical love songs and dance songs. There is also folkloric material presented in genres such as *mani* (lyric quatrains), traditional and relatively new songs of everyday life, children's game songs and rhymes, anecdotes and jokes, prayers-spells, proverbs, sayings and riddles. The first volume covers the regions of Izmit (Butania), Bahçecik (Bardizag), Yalova, Sölöz, Akıncılar (Kıncılar), Adapazarı and Ovacık. It also has an appendix presenting a few examples of the musical and literary folklore of Izmir (Smyrnia). The second volume consists of samples from Gürün (Gyurin), Harput (Kharpert), Tokat (Edessia), Antep (Ayntab), Kayseri (Kesaria), Çemişgezek (Chmushkatzag), Eğin (Agn) and Erzincan (Erznka). The third volume fo-

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cuses on Diyarbakır (Dikranagert), Muş-Daron, Garin, Surmalu, Baghesh-Bitlis, Shatakh and Khlat. The content of fourth and last volume is composed of two parts, including folk songs from Bitlis province from a single source, Anush Grigorian in the first part; and songs from the Van (Vaspuragan) region, which were researched and compiled by Komitas and Sp. Melikian from folk singer Tigran Chituni in the second part. The samples of Chituni's songs were recorded by Toumajan in different households in Paris in 1920-1922.

The material comprising the four volumes of this collection is arranged on a territorial basis and with attention to distinctive pecularities of genres. Many of these songs have musical and poetic variants. Different Armenian dialects with their distinctive phonetic characteristics have been faithfully preserved in the transcriptions. In addition, explanations and commentaries in the form of footnotes give detailed ethnographic information in each volume. The collections also include samples of Kurdish and Turkish folk songs or songs that were often sung by Western Armenians in Kurdish or Turkish with Armenian words mixed in.

To summarize, Toumajan presents a very rich historical source that has not yet been studied sufficiently by scholars and musicians. If this series of collections - which can contribute highly to the work not only of Armenian music researchers but also of musicologists studying folk music in Turkey- were translated into Turkish, it would facilitate comparative studies and periodic analyses of folk music. A special session on Mihran Toumajan was held at the *Symposium on Cultural Interaction in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey,* at Istanbul Bilgi University in 2010 by the Hrant Dink Foundation and organized by ethnomusicologist Melissa Bilal with the participation of Toumajan's nephew Dikran Toumajan and Zaven Tagakchyan, the editor of the 4th volume of the *Yerk u Pan* Collection. Following the symposium, I and fellow musicians studying Armenian music gave a concert of material from Toumajan and Gomidas' collections. The event became more meaningful when the members of *Knar*, who had not met for quite a long time, accompanied us and performed several Toumajan songs in their repertoire.

While preparing for the concert, we realized that performing from those transcriptions was a serious challenge. The main problem we encountered was the lack of clear references on which to base our choice of singing styles and approach to arrangement. The solution we arrived at was to refer to the locale of the song's origin. Due to the early period in which they were collected however, no sound recordings were available. As summarized in previous chapters, the use of phonographs began very late in such collection work in Turkey, and the ideological attitude in these efforts was to ignore or assimilate the minorities of Turkey. It is claimed that the Armenians who remained in Anatolia after 1915 were recorded by the offical collectors, but no such recordings have yet been located, and of these recordings, alleged to exist in the state archives, we have no information. As mentioned in the first chapter, in addition to Toumajan's collections

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in the diaspora, the Library of Congress' archive studies of Armenians from Anatolia, and the 'ethnographic folk singing' (as defined by the ethnomusicologists in Armenia) recordings taken from 2nd and 3rd generation Armenian survivors in Armenia, provide clues about these Anatolian styles. Still, the repertoire and regional diversity of these recordings are quite limited.

So Gomidas' and Toumajan's collections -the main references for any musicians or researchers studying Anatolian Armenian music in Turkey- were carefully notated, but as with most transcriptions employing Western staff notation, the microtones (*komas*) representing the modes/*makams* of the melodies were not indicated. Moreover, it is impossible to detect the timbre -a much debated issue in ethnomusicology- from notation. Therefore each new performance is an imagination. My band's performance in the Toumajan-themed concert and the *Yerkaran* album, the sound of *Knar*'s albums, the album *Petag*, which includes songs of Dersim deciphered from transcriptions, and even most of the ethnographic recordings made in Yerevan, are surely reconstructions of Anatolian echoes. Even if we had sufficient samples of regional sounds, would we be able to present an authentic performance? Of course not. I share this experience simply to illustrate musical culture was affected in the wake of the enormous historical rupture. These transcriptions are merely instruments to remind us of the lost songs of Anatolia. They build a musical bridge from the past to the present, between 'being Anatolian' and 'being Armenian'.

Urban Armenian Echoes in Istanbul

Armenian musicking echoes from entertainment and celebration environments of Istanbul's Armenian community, such as the weddings, celebrations organized by community associations and club performances. The first Armenian pop music figure in Istanbul was Hayko. As already mentioned, Hayko had become popular in the Armenian community with his album of Armenian songs from Beirut. But Armenian pop music as a means of entertainment truly gained popularity after a concert by Adiss Harmandiyan, a famous Armenian singer from Lebanon. Held at the Istanbul Şan Cinema, the concert featured *estradayin* songs of the 1970s. Bartev Garyan, possibly the only professional singer with a long career performing Armenian songs in Istanbul, launched his career with the *Petag* Orchestra in 1978. He performed mostly pop music and his repertoire incuded Turkish, Italian and Armenian songs. Most of the Armenian audiences who came to hear his band at the Mimoza Restaurant on Kınalıada in the 90s were not much used to the *estradayin* and 'Armenian pop song' genres. However these pop songs gradually gained favor and became popular in the community. In 1993, at the request of the partiarch, Bartev gave a concert in Kınalıada with a repertoire exclusively of Armenian songs. This concert earned him much positive attention from Istanbul's Armenians. For years, he recorded concerts, copied Armenian records to audio

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casettes at his own expense, and gave them to anyone who wanted them. In this way Armenian songs began entering households, and Bartev reached a wide audience in the Armenian musicking community. He then began operating a restaurant, Kaptan (Captain) in Osmanbey, where he performed weekly with the *Arakast* Orchestra. This restaurant had long been a popular venue where the Armenians in Istanbul could listen to Armenian music. Kaptan closed in the early 2000s, leaving Istanbul with no Armenian musical venues. The Haybar ('Armenian bar') concept[32] started by young Armenian volunteers in the Yeşilköy Association in the early 2000s created a similar venue where Armenian music was performed on special occasions. They would decorate the space (a big hall in the association building) with typical Armenian symbols (candles with the Armenian alphabet, photographs of Mount Ararat and Komitas, etc.), serve traditional dishes (some of them brought from Armenia) and listen to live Armenian music accompanied by Armenian poems, and thus created their own space in Istanbul in which they could express their Armenian-ness. In all of these examples, the venue receives an identity through a symbolic act, musicking.

Armenian pop bands *Saylort* formed in 1996, and *Akulis* which appeared in the early 2000s, can be considered as short-term attempts by Armenian youth at establishing space for musical expression. *Keops*, formed in 1978 under the leadership of Vartkes Keşiş, also produced rock compositions and arrangements in Armenian. Defining themselves as an alternative music group that stands close to traditional Armenian music but tries to move past its boundaries, the band *Vomank* is active in Istanbul today, making music in Armenian and Turkish. A statement on the group's website is particularly notable from the perspective of the link between cultural memory and musical identity: "What we sing today is a memory of the past and a vision of the future."

Considering that urban, popular Armenian echoes has not attracted sufficient attention even from Istanbul's Armenian community, it is quite difficult for these bands to reach the broader Turkish community and entering the professional arena. Thus for most of my informants, opportunities for Armenian musicking in Istanbul appear very limited at best: "You are creating ethnic music, but the country you live in has a mechanism and it is stronger than you. I mean, you are smaller and it is bigger than you. Of course, a Serdar Ortaç song will be heard and become popular more easily than my songs"[33] As their potential audience is limited mostly to the Istanbul Armenian, their opportunities to perform are equally limited. After a year of hard work to develop a repertoire, they cannot find opportunities to perform and have to settle for two or three times a year, meaning that they get little material or emotional return from their efforts. On the other hand, my interviewee, long involved in various musical projects in the Armenian com-

[32] A.H., interview with author, Istanbul, April 2012.
[33] Bartev Garyan, interview with author, October 2009.

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munity, believes that it is possible to reach a wider audience even with Armenian music by creating a new and different musical language that draws upon tradition:

> "All the Armenian musicians I have seen until now have always tried to engage Armenians. Nobody has attempted a project that addresses broader Turkish society. Sayat Nova tries to do this in collaboration with *Kardeş Türküler* and the Ruhi Su Ensemble, or by participating in different events. But they are amateur musicians and their work is mainly restricted to the Armenian community. People who want to be professional musicians have economic concerns. There is a lot of musical activity within the community but not by professionals. To produce something within a market, they need a different musical attitude that draws on tradition.[34]

Particularly in the 1990s, a prominent portion of Armenians in Turkey began to broach the questions of Armenian identity, civil citizenship and its associated rights, which led to a process of transformation in the 2000s. In fact many Armenians, being neither isolated individuals in the Armenian community structure nor integrated or assimlated into broader Turkish society, are engaged in an ardent effort to define themselves.

In conclusion, in this chapter I have illustrated various cases in Istanbul's Armenian musicking community, and argued that music, as an instrument of unification in the community, has a powerful function in the construction of identity. In this sense, the musicking community is a space where cultural identity tends to be recognized and welcomed, therefore facilitating a sense of belonging. Gregory Barz defines a community as "a group of people that gathers for a reason: whether to remember and recall, to share, or to create new experiences. Communities are often fluid social structures that allow people of similar or dissimilar backgrounds to cooperate on shared objectives." (2003: 85). On the other hand, communities are not simple gatherings of people: "They are gatherings of people involved in social action, in processes that allow performance to function in the definition of self (selves) within societ(-ies)" (Ibid., 92). Musicking then, is one of the indispensable components of that performance used to define community as an act of exploration and celebration (Small, 1998: 95). Musicking also functions as the performance of cultural identity fullfilling the human need to belong, and reinforces individual and group identity. After a long period of collective amnesia, the musicking community that arose among Istanbul's Armenians in the early 1970s provided a 'cultural recovery' in the Armenian community and played an important role in the subjectivities of the individuals as well. Through the musicking community, Istanbul's Armenians resisted rupture by constructing an ethnic musical space within cultural memory.

34 A.H., interview with author, Istanbul, April 2012.

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Chapter 5: Gomidas Vartabed and the Debate of Authenticity in 'Armenian Music'

During my fieldwork I set out with many difficult questions, such as how the Armenian musical tradition was defined, how it was transmitted from generation to generation, and during this transmission, what was chosen and what was left out, what was forgotten or caused to be forgotten, and how what had remained was remembered. As I realized that 'Armenian music' was a conceptualization containing a variety of musical sounds, meanings and discourses within different geographies, political developments and histories, I also saw that it was usually spoken of within a singular, general and standard definition. In events organized by Istanbul Armenians, choral rehearsals and many similar environments, I met many people who could speak about this musical tradition with historical references, and had devoted themselves to collect knowledge about traditional Armenian music in particular. In interviews with many people, including professional musicians, choir members, and people who were not performers but who were interested in Armenian culture on an intellectual level, the most important reference, mentioned even before I asked, was without a doubt Gomidas Vartabed[1]. A short biography:[2] Gomidas Vartabed, or by his given name Soğomon Soğomonyan, was born in 1869, in the western Anatolian town of Gudina (Kütahya). He lost his mother and father at an early age. A fine cantor, Gomidas was taken to Vağarşabad, home of the cathedral of Surp Eçmiadzin, where he received seminary training. After his graduation he was appointed as a music teacher. He was most passionate about collecting, notating and publishing folk songs. He first went to Tbilisi to study Western music theory with Magar Yegmalyan, and then to Berlin to continue his musical studies, where he studied performance and composition at Richard Schmidt's private music school. He also took courses on musicology at Friedrich Wilhelm University (now Humboldt University). While there, he wrote a series of polyphonic arrangements of folk songs and hymns. During this period, he was invited to conventions of the International Music Society, where he gave papers on Armenian folk and liturgical music, and received praise from many musicologists and musicians. Professor Guido Adler from Vienna declared, "If God does not hear the pleas of the Armenians, whose will he hear?" (as cited by Kuyumjian 2001: 105). Claude Debussy exclaimed excitedly: "Brilliant

1 Some letters such as G, D, B in Western Armenian is shown with the letters K, T, P in Eastern Armenian. I preferred Gomidas Vartabed as the Western Armenian version on writing his name. But when I'm citing, I didn't want to change the original material. Thus you can see the name as Komitas Vardapet in some parts.

2 Vardapet 2001 (1908), Gasparian 2009.

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Figure 5.1: Komitas Vardapet, Cairo, June 1911 (Gasparian 2009).

father Komitas! I bow before your musical genius... If Komitas had written only 'Antouny,' that alone would be enough to consider him a great artist." French musician F. Mahler notes Komitas' presentations in an article titled '*La Musique en Armenie*' as follows: "His lectures about folk songs, especially the one about the plough songs, were the most successful papers of the conference" (as cited by Lokmagözyan 2010: 38). Later Gomidas returned to Eçmiadzin (Vagharshapat), where he taught music and directed the chorus of *Kevorkyan Hokevor Cemaran* (Kevorkyan Seminary), and gave concerts with the chorus and orchestra which he

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formed from his students. Not believing that he could secure the spiritual and material support he needed to realize his projects at Eçmiadzin, he resigned. When his resignation was rejected, he decided to leave Eçmiadzin. Arriving in Istanbul in 1910, Gomidas worked on his polyphonic arrangement of the *Surp Badarak* (Holy Liturgy), and with his 300-member chorus, performed concerts in various cities including Istanbul, Alexandria, Izmir and Cairo. One of his fondest dreams was to establish a music conservatory with his students Parseğ Ganaçyan, Mihran Tumacan, Vağarşag Srvantzdyants, Hayg Semerciyan and Vartan Sarksyan. On April 24, 1915, he was arrested and deported to a camp in Çankırı; he was one of eight people who survived to return. Perhaps as a result of survivor's guilt, Gomidas' mental health deteriorated, and in 1916, he was taken to a hospital in Istanbul. He was moved to a clinic in France, where he died fourteen years later, in 1935.

In my interviews, I collected many accounts of Gomidas in many areas, such as his musical collections, his writings, the *Kusan* Chorus he established in Istanbul, his recordings, and his experiences while exiled to Çankırı in 1915 and after his return. However, when I was able to locate English versions of Gomidas' writings, my perceptions changed. I realized that in his accounts, Gomidas was not only a historical source in the transmission of the Armenian community's musical memory; he is also the most influential person in the construction of Armenian music's aesthetic and performance style from the early 20th century to the present. For this reason, I will explain the construction of 'national music' which Gomidas stressed in his articles and address the 'authenticity' of Armenian music, which he explained in terms of the existence of a unique musical tradition. As I present Gomidas' statements in the context of the period and locality in which he lived, within a philosophical framework developed in the international musicological literature and within a comparative perspective, I will also discuss these statements through the ethnographic information gained and observations made during my fieldwork.

The Spirit of 'Armenian National Music'

> "He is the God of Armenian music. Without Gomidas, we would be sitting at an empty table"[3]

In many world societies, folk music is a cultural construction that holds the individuals comprising the society together and serves as an agent for the definition of identity. For example, 'folk songs,' believed to be inspired by and reflect the 'spirit of the people' in 19th century Europe, are seen as the remains of a cultural past and are one of the basic building blocks in the formation of a nation. The exploration of folk songs, which transmit the common history and stories of a nation, also means the exploration of a 'people,' defined as a human society sharing

3 Hasmik Harutunian, interview with author, Yerevan, September 2010.

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a common culture. Philip Bohlman, in his articles discussing the role of music in the rise of nation-states in Europe from the Enlightenment to the present, states that the definition of modern European nation-state history and European music progress in a visibly parallel manner (Bohlman 2004). Music not only symbolizes nationalism; it plays an influential role in its definition. During the modernization period, when nationalism had its golden age, folk songs were symbolic representations that illustrated the difference between one nation and another. German philosopher and historian Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), believed to be the first to employ the term 'folk song' (*Volkslied*), states that the true voice of a people may be heard in their songs, and outside of national songs, there is no other particular form through which they may express this (Herder 1996). In 1820s Europe, various types of folk music and folk songs became the collective national expression of identity for several old and new nations. Collections of folk songs were published; four-part chorales were arranged, printed and began to be performed. Since the mid-19th century, there has been a goal of creating and standardizing national song repertoires. Choral performances bring about the proliferation of these efforts, as well as their institutionalization through education and performance. Following the breakup of Europe's empires, the collection of folk songs became the focus of national music studies, especially in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[4] In England, for example, Cecil Sharp added the folk songs he had collected to school repertoires, with the goal of creating a national school of English music (1965 [1907]). Béla Bartók attempted to define the 'essence' of Hungarian music by separating Hungarian village music from Romani music, with which it has interacted (1976 [1931]). It would not be erroneous to define the attempts to construct a national music and the collection of folk music during the founding of the Turkish Republic as an area of national struggle.[5] The importance Gomidas placed upon folk songs must be examined in the context of Europe's nationalist movements as well as local politics in the Ottoman and Russian Empires. The important feature distinguishing Gomidas' work from the aforementioned literature is that it is not an attempt to create a new nation state, but rather a national identity within an empire.[6]

Here, it would be appropriate to begin by analyzing, based on his writings, the contexts in which Gomidas used the concepts of 'national' and 'folk song.' Gomidas defines the spirit of the national folk song as "the aggregate of patterns that a nation instinctively employs in singing" (Vardapet 2001 [1955]: 69). Explaining this spirit in terms of many determinants such as the relationship be-

4 For the importance of choirs in the construction of national identity in 19th-century Europe, see Bohlman 2004: 71-73.

5 See chapter 3.

6 Melissa Bilal (2013) states that Gomidas' folk music studies drew from the work of other Armenian ethnographers in the 18th and 19th centuries, and presents a detailed discussion of this historic context in Armenian ethnographic literature.

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tween the language's unique expressive patterns and stress in music, the choice of vocal quality while singing, and the prosody of the language, he states that the folk song is the key that opens the door to national music: "All the things which have an immediate association with a song, provided that they are immediate, non-artificial, intrinsic reflections of the internal and external life of the folk, express the spirit of national music" (ibid.).

Gomidas' struggle to define the folk song is undoubtedly the result of an ideological struggle.[7] In Gomidas' texts, the word 'folk' is usually used synonymously with 'nation,' and the identity of the folk or nation finds its counterpart in the 'peasant' regarded in the 19th century as the source of authenticity. Music therefore plays the role of agent which transforms peasant culture into national culture. In his studies, he provides detailed analyses, categorizing the peasants' songs by type, to the age and sex of the singers, organologically listing the areas where different instruments are used, and defining women's and men's voices and performance qualities. The most important feature that separates Gomidas from European comparative musicologists of the period is that he overlaps his armchair study – that is, his technical analyses of musical material – with ethnographic accounts.[8]

In the late 19th century, studies of "comparative musicology" which focused on the similarities and differences between the music of various regions employed the overwhelmingly ethnocentric and Orientalist approach of Western researchers, containing transcriptions of sound recordings from the 'non-Western' musical traditions, along with melodic, rhythmic analyses etc. As the field of ethnomusicology took shape during the second half of the 20th century, these comparative musicological studies, defined as the 'Berlin/German school' and led by European researchers, were criticized as 'armchair ethnomusicology.' The chief reason for this was that material and music collected by others in the field were analyzed and subjected to experimental study by musicologists who worked like laboratory technicians. Fieldwork however, an indispensable practice in contemporary ethnomusicology, provides the researcher with a deeper and more comprehensive body of information on the musical reality under study.[9] Through his Berlin education and especially the International Music Society conferences in which he participated, Gomidas was also in communication with Berlin/German school musicologists for a time, and joined the comparative musicology tradi-

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7 Michael Tenzer (2006) suggests that every attempt at musical analysis involves the goal of illustrating the composition's depth or masterfulness; discovering the model of the tonal structure of the repertoire's origins; reflect upon the philosophy, community values or faith of the performer or society, or illustrate the historicity of change, and asks: "Is every analysis an expression of ideology?"

8 For an example in which he illustrated how Armenian peasants composed folk songs, see Vardapet 2001: 26-33.

9 For more detailed information, see Haydon 1941; Merriam 1964; Myers 1992; Nettl 2005; Stone 2008.

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tion. At the same time however, he followed the folklore studies of Russian and Armenian ethnographers, and with the expansion afforded by the ethnographic approach, he could be said to have departed from the comparative tradition in certain ways. For example, his academic texts were presented with content that appealed to and was accessible to the general reader. Of Gomidas' study of peasant' music, Terlemezyan writes:

> "They began to realize that this delicate, moving music is the work of the creative mind and emotions of that Armenian villager, whom they scorned as a lazy bumpkin, but who carries the legacy of our centuries-old culture within him. The more conscious they became of this, the more their admiration grew: These amazing things had been created, not by the gloomy, mercenary people of the upper classes, but rather by illiterate 'low class' peasants. Through his knowledge and sensitivity, the extremely talented Gomidas made those songs dainty, melodious and approachable for his people. From themes mostly of lowing oxen, rattling chains, gushing water and the sound of footsteps, he created extraordinary musical beauty." (2009 [1930]: 251-261)

In those years, researchers and composers in Europe have focused on collecting folk songs, and they too have turned to peasant songs. Explaining Béla Bartók's perspective on peasant music, Mineo Ota (2006) draws attention to the operative use of the word 'essence/spirit' in Bartók's article. In his interpretation of Bartók's discussion of peasant music, he draws a relationship between the modernist discourse and cultural nationalist discourse of the period. In a much later period than Gomidas' research but in a similar manner, Bartók (1977) redefines Hungarian identity through music and in order to legitimize this effort, he continually brings up the essence of peasant music in his explanations. Frigyesi (1994) attributes the importance placed on Hungarian peasants in the second half of the 19th century to the rapid development of the local economy, which changed the country's social structure. This change led to the formation of a new middle-class modern bourgeoisie. Rather than the lifestyle of the elite, developmental intellectuals began emphasizing the culture of lowest social class, the peasants, as a reference point for Hungary. Because nationalist intellectuals exploited the memory and myths (ballads, dances, traditions, social organizations, stories and games) in the construction and re-creation of ethnic narratives of origin, peasants became sacred objects of nationalist interest (Smith 1999). In addition to their representational importance, Bartók clearly saw peasants as the most abandoned section of Hungarian society. The insistence on peasant music and the idealization of the peasant are expressions of the conditional honor and moral responsibility toward those bereft of basic resources (Frigyesi 1994: 287).

Born on Ottoman territory approximately half a century before Bartók's arrival in Turkey, Gomidas also championed the spirit of the Armenian peasant, living through political and social hardships in the land known today as historical Armenia, divided between the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire and Iran. The role he had formulated for the peasant was similar to the role of Bartók. Describing the village singing style in the program for a concert with the 300-member

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Kusan chorus which he had established in Istanbul in 1911, Gomidas pointed out the powerful bond between the peasant, nature and the folk song (Vardapet 2001 [1911]: 105). To Gomidas, the peasant was a true child of nature, and the voice which found expression in the peasant's folk songs was the sound of nature itself. The information in this booklet could also be considered a presentation of the peasant identity, seen as the definitive essence of the Armenian nation, to urban Istanbul Armenian society. Referring to the historical framework constructed by Marc Nichanyan, in their book *Klasik Osmanlı Müziği ve Ermeniler* (Armenians in Ottoman Classical Music*)*, Aram Kerovpyan and Altuğ Yılmaz suggest that Gomidas' work should be considered a continuation of the Western philological movement (2010: 141-142). Philology may be defined as a descriptive discipline that works with written historical sources in the context of disciplines such as literature, linguistics, philosophy and history. Modern philology began with Eastern language studies, especially the study of Sanskrit in the 18th century, spreading and developing in the early 20th century. Adapted to and taking its model from ancient Greek culture, the philology movement brought about the discovery of European identity. The modern nation concept appeared simultaneously with the progress of philology. With the assumption that the local people had lost their memory and consciousness of the past, philology adopted the goal of presenting them with their 'original identity.' Oral and local traditions were remains of the past. In the light of archaeological and ethnographic research, cultural data were systematized; an ethnographic nation was discovered and presented again to the locals. Works of art would bring close together cultural components, and around these common qualities, the society would transform into a nation.

The philological movement and Armenian enlightenment were spread through Armenian society in the 18th century by the Mekhitarists. Mekhitar Sebastatsi and his disciples led the Armenian enlightenment with language development and publication efforts (Zekiyan 1997). Throughout the 19th century, theoretical publications in areas such as language, history, geography and archaeology were published, along with many Armenian folkloric collections. In assessments of Armenian modernity and westernization movements of music, the developments of the 19th and early 20th centuries stand out as a historical 'golden age.' Because of the cultural degradation resulting from wars, uprisings and a host of political conflicts in historical Armenia, the importance of *khaz* notation in church music began to wane from the 16th century on. A portion of the *khaz* notation symbols was in danger of being forgotten, and until the system was revamped in the 19th century and reintroduced under the name Hampartzum notation, the repertoire was transmitted orally to new generations.[10] The invention of Hampartzum nota-

[10] Yet another extremely important function of the Hampartzum notation was that it provided a transition between Armenian-ness and Ottoman-ness. Acquiring a significant place in both Armenian liturgical music and Ottoman music, it was seen in Turkish liberal multicultural discourse as 'one of the Armenians' important contributions to Otto-

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tion was the first musical reflection of the Armenian modernization and westernization process. As a means to preserve and record national melodies, the notation overlapped with the philological movement. Because Hampartzum Limonciyan used this notation system as a means of education through which to standardize the orally transmitted *sharagan* (melodic prayer) melodies, he was seen as a "leader of national music reform" (Kazarian 1983). Not only was Hampartzum notation an extremely practical way to learn music and commit it to writing; it also became one of the most efficient vehicles for the westernization of Armenian music. The idea of notation fit in conveniently with the philological movement, and consequently, with the westernization process, because the representation of music as a written document made it a scholarly resource for the transmission of tradition. Thus Hampartzum notation became an important vehicle in the construction of an ethnographic nation, and opened the way for other reform movements in Armenian musical history from the 19th to the 20th century (Kerovpyan ve Yılmaz 2010: 124). On this road paved by Hampartzum Limonciyan and his colleagues, Gomidas was in fact sleuthing out the code of the forgotten *khaz* notation. He was trying to simplify these liturgical melodies, which were illegible in their handwritten form, sort them out from their 'foreign' influences, and decode them. His aim was to take these melodies, which had been transmitted orally since the 15th century, arrive at their ancient 'original source,' and reintroduce these melodies to the church repertoire. Gomidas' effort to nationalize liturgical music corresponds to his looking to peasant folk songs, which he sees as the 'original source' in folk music. From the melodic prayers, and the songs he collected from peasants using Hampartzum notation, he created a national repertoire believed today to have numbered more than four thousand, but of which approximately 1,200 are recorded in Yerevan (Poladian 1972; Tahmizyan 1994:26).

Yet another of Gomidas' successes, the one which earned him a revered place in Armenian music history and provided him with a considerably avant-garde role in broader Ottoman society, was that he arranged this national repertoire composed both of church and folk songs polyphonically with the idea of modernizing it, and presented it to the urban people. Through this national repertoire, aestheticized into art music through polyphony, he completed his construction of a 'national music.' In order to explain 'aestheticization' efforts in Gomidas' work, Nichanian (2002) draws a parallel with two figures active in Armenian writing. One was the Mehyan group, which published a monthly Armenian magazine in Istanbul during the Ottoman era; the other was Yeghishe Charents, an important poet in Eastern Armenian literature. Nichanian discusses Gomidas' national ideal with a historical analogy between 1914 Istanbul and the literary discipline developing in Soviet Armenia in 1934. In his 1934 speech entitled "Trends in the de-

man/Turkish music.' Adopted by the dominant culture, it was also became a cultural symbol attributed to the Armenians.

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velopment of a literary language and the language of Terenik Demirciyan", Charents identified a non-nationalist national path. Three years later he died in jail after his arrest by the Soviet regime. Charents' description of a national path was based upon an aestheticized literary language. He identified two fundamental trends of the Eastern Armenians: "a tendency working in favor of the civil-literary language" and "the centrifugal tendency associated with all those who wrote in their dialects." In addition, he suggested a third path of language standardization and the unifying of various dialects (Nichanian 2002:37).

The aestheticization was the primary goal of the Mehyan generation, which included such foremost Armenian authors such as Tanyel Varujan, Hagop Oshagan and Gosdan Zaryan. The Mehyan group claimed that through aestheticization, the language could become a literary language. In Nichanian's view, the decisiveness exhibited on this path to aestheticization is also visible, though in a very different area, in Gomidas' work. Gomidas was engaged in an effort to collect folk songs in a systematic manner, and, with his modern renditions, transform them into an artistic language. The Mehyan generation was aware of the similarity between these two projects, and said that they were inspired by Gomidas' work, especially the re-creation of popular resources (Oshagan 1914: 40). Consequently the principle of aestheticization makes it possible to reclaim that which is becoming foreign to us – 'us' being used in the sense of 'national identity – by reconstructing it through works of art. At this point, the identification of features that constitute 'us' becomes an area of concentrated effort in Gomidas' career. His analyses on authenticity in Armenian music and his efforts to define it, lend themselves especially well to evaluation from this perspective.

'Authenticity' in Armenian Music

> "Poor Armenian people! A nation you are, as unique as other nations; nobody can deny that. Yours is distinct tongue: you speak. You have a distinct mind: you judge. You have a distinct physiognomy, through which you are distinguished from other nations and their physical make. But your heart, which is the source of your feelings, is allegedly not yours, it is merely Assyro-Byzantine and Indo-Persian. " (Vardapet 2001 [1913]: 209)

In this section, I present the basic arguments raised by Gomidas in order to identify Armenian authenticity, alongside impressions gained during my field studies, and similar statements used by people I interviewed as they defined Armenian music. Here, I am actually trying to demonstrate how Gomidas' collections, arrangements, performances and academic work have served as effective vehicles for the creation of a collective memory, from the aspect of musical knowledge, perception and aesthetics as well as Armenian identity in general.

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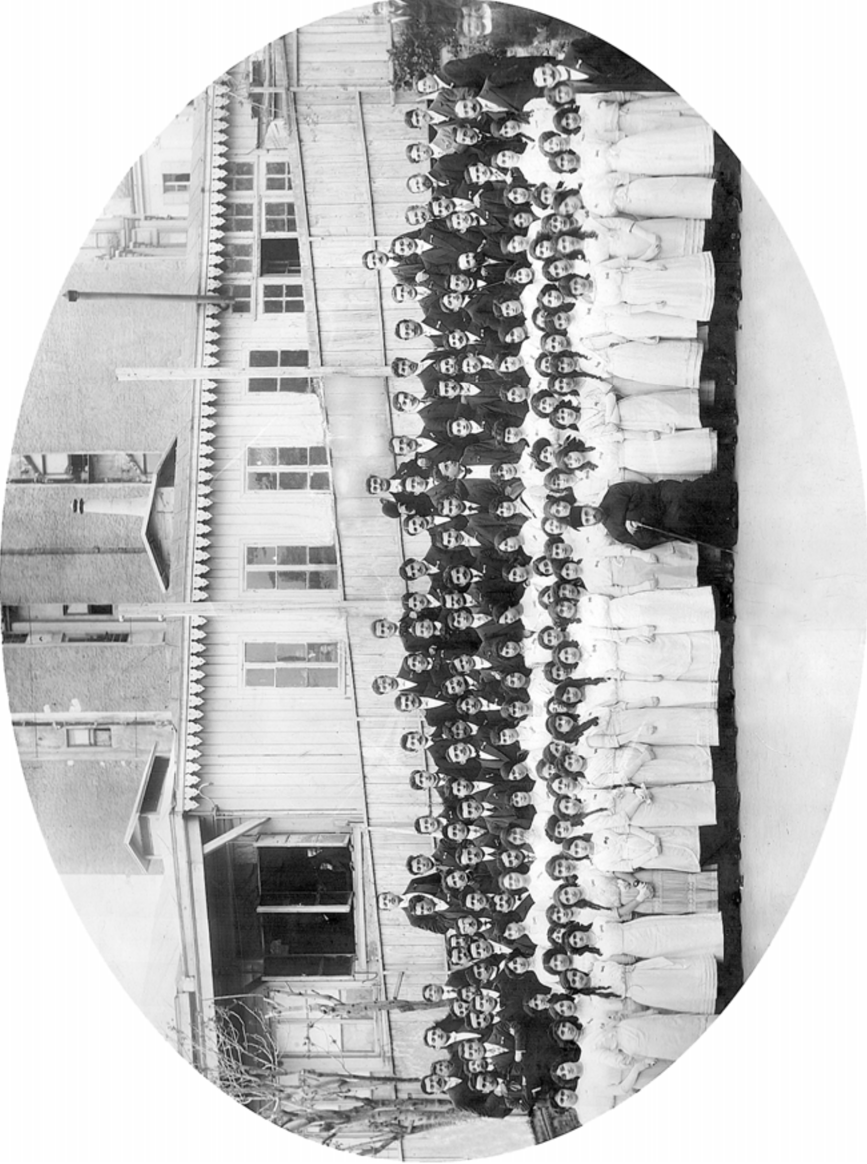

Figure 5.2: Komitas Vardapet's *Kusan* Choir in the yard of the 'Winter Theatre of Petits Champs' in Istanbul (Gasparian 2009).

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As folk songs were considered the most important source that separated this musical culture from others, the collection and transformation of these songs into a standard national repertoire, and the rearrangement and artistic transformation of both folk songs and the religious repertoire according to western aesthetic values, formed the chief focus of Armenian musical efforts in the 19th and 20th centuries. Most texts on Armenian music history stress that this musical tradition originates in antiquity, and has preserved its 'unique' qualities which have survived despite centuries of foreign domination. For example Grigor Suni, in his studies of Armenian music history, stresses that he has tried to present the unique qualities that bear the Armenian character (2005 [1919]: 7). Gomidas' most important legacy to Armenian music history literature is his attempt to identify an 'unique' Armenian 'national' music, within an ideology in keeping with European national musical movements of the 19th and 20th centuries.[11]

Seeing that there was no 'Armenian Music' in a music encyclopedia published in Paris, Gomidas wrote an article, 'Armenians Have a Unique Music,' in answer to the heated debate underway within the Armenian community. Stating unequivocally that the uniqueness of a musical culture can be proved through the states of "collection, confirmation and examination," he bases his argument on the thoughts of doctor and philologist H. Tiryakyan Khan and Father Serovpe Burmayan (Vardapet 2001 [1913]: 207-08):

> "*I think* (our emphasis) a thing called Armenian music does not exist in the *scholarly sense* (our emphasis) of the word... I understand that the Parisian musicological authorities concur... That which does exist has an Assyro-Byzantine or an Indo-Persian influence." (Tiryakyan's statements)
>
> "1) The Armenian language and literature, starting with its alphabet, were reshaped according to the model of the Assyrian and Greek languages, and 2) when there was no distinctive Armenian civilization, naturally *there was not an Armenian music either.*" (Burmayan's statements)

Gomidas severely criticizes Tiryakyan's comment for its lack of scientific objectivity, and for his unquestioning acceptance of Parisian musicologists' authority on Armenian music, an attitude that can now be defined as '*self*-orientalism.' He says that the interaction between Armenian music and different cultures is undeniable, and asks, "...what music in the world is pure and unmixed?" He answers Father Burmayan's conclusions about the Armenian language and script, and following statements about the absence of an Armenian music:

11 In his memoires concerning Gomidas, Hraçya Acaryan writes: "Gomidas's voice was very powerful. After a concert of Armenian folk songs in Berlin, the director of the Berlin Opera personally invited to perform as head soloist, for a substantial sum. Gomidas answered, 'My musical talent is devoted solely to the service of introducing of my great nation's songs and music to the musical world, and proving that the creative Armenian people have had unique songs and music since antiquity'" (Acaryan 2009 [1960]).

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"Any nation's language and literature assimilates elements of language from other nations as it develops. But if a nation has a unique language and literature, it has a unique music as well... For every nation's music originates and evolves from the intonation system of that nation. The Armenian language has its unique pronunciation; therefore it has an appropriate music as well." (2001 [1913]: 208-09)

The concept of authenticity under the lens of this debate uses several terms, such as 'uniqueness in reference to the past,' 'coming from the past,' 'original state' and 'preserved and resisting change' with similar meanings. Authenticity is dependent on an analysis of what is natural and real within the boundaries of a community, and what lies outside that 'reality'. For Herder and Fichte, both leading figures in German romantic thought, the most fundamental element in being a people, that is, the source of authenticity, is 'language' (Dumont 1986). It is through language that people form the modes of thought and expression of the society in which they live. In short, language is the mirror of the 'national spirit.' The most fundamental argument for Armenian musical authenticity presented by Gomidas develops entirely upon his definition of 'national intonation,'[12] which he relates to language. Gomidas stated that every people's language had a distinct intonational structure that brought out that people's spirit. Based upon language and the various pronunciations of phonemes, national intonation is the true spirit of the folk song. In his own words:

"The spirit of national music is the aggregate of patterns that a nation instinctively employs in singing. It is the particular movement of pitch and tone, it is the relationship between those tones and the phonemes of the language (grammatical expressive accent, musical accent)." (Vardapet 2001 [1955]: 69).

According to Gomidas, the vital element that determined national intonation was the choice of vocal placements and color; whether the sound resonated in the throat, the chest, the nose or the palate. Though he states that the Armenians have both native phonetic characters as well as some borrowed from neighboring peoples, his analysis of national intonation and singing style show rather clear boundaries, as is visible below:

"Armenians have both national and non-native intonation. The non-native intonation is borrowed from the phonetics of neighboring nations. The national intonation of the Armenian employs chest and head registrations for producing the natural sounds. High pitches are tinged with a touch of emotion through guttural expressions, to which a soft nasality is blended, the result being very close to the sound of the French clarinet, notably when there are nasal phonemes in words, especially if these are coupled with the *a* vowel. In refrains, for instance, the '*na, nay*' (which is common '*le, le*' refrain in Surmalou), instead of the '*le, le*' mostly '*na*' or '*nay*' is employed in this province, or both together. The other phonemes are pure and artistic (only in the singing of women). Chest tones are resonant, and head tones are crystal clear. Falsetto is not used." (Ibid. 68)

[12] Here, the word 'intonation' is used not only in the musical context – the voice's consistence and conformity with a tone – but also in a linguistic sense that includes voice intonation and stress.

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During my fieldwork trip in Yerevan (Armenia), and when taking folk singing lessons from a master singer, Hasmik Harutunian, she had talked about similar inferences. I received many answers from her on the perceived 'Armenianness' or 'non-Armenianness' of some musical characteristics, particularly regarding singing style. It was clear that she had referred to Gomidas, especially in her explanations of Armenian folk singing style. While stressing the correct use of tongue in the 'correct' Armenian sound, she especially stressed the importance of correctly sounding the letter 'A.' Gomidas' explanation contained a similar point. It was quite interesting that she explained the letter 'a' in a metaphoric manner using the word *Arev* (the sun in Armenian): "Everything is coming from A(rev). Everything is going around A(rev). The whole universe is in A(rev), you will take it up and up. If you keep your timbre there and sing a nice A, you will sing the other letters better." As she explained the sound's placement on the palate as its placement of resonance, she suggested that I imagine the upward-pointing shape of the Latin upper-case 'A.' She stressed the importance of using the breath to keep the 'A' sound high, and that all the other sounds must be sung from that region. In reality, she was localizing a rather common practice in singing technique, and attempting to describe the Armenian style in such a way as to distinguish it from the Turkish singing style, just as Gomidas did in many of his seminars. She especially stressed that the throat and nasal resonators frequently used by the Turks were absent in Armenian style, and that if I sang Armenian songs in this way, I would not achieve the necessary style.[13] Below is a similar explanation by Gomidas in the area of church music:

> "There was a time when singers even abandoned the national intonation and appropriated the throaty and nasal intonations favored by Turks, singing from the nose, with pursed mouth, sluggishly, and hootingly." (Vardapet 2001 [1914]: 168).

In addition, Harutunian believed that another element which determined the pronunciation of words, and should absolutely not be a part of Armenian style, was the heavy vocal ornaments and exaggerated stress of *makam* motifs, both of which are quite clear in Turkish, Persian and Arab styles.[14] Gomidas addresses the same point in this way: "You have no doubt noticed that the purity, the clarity, and the naturalness of the Armenian melody are lost in the particularly copious coloration and guttural trills common to Persian music." (Ibid.169). Harutunian said that this frequently-encountered 'foreign' style was damaging to Armenian music, and for this reason, distinguished between the performance styles of folk and *ashugh* music in the context of authenticity. It was extremely interesting to hear her singing the same song in two different styles. Gomidas' texts consistently refer to this subject:

13 Hasmik Harutunian, interview with author, Yerevan, September 2010.

14 For a similar debate, see the section "The Rabiz Debate and the Politics of Melismatic Singing" in Rik Adriaans book, *Sonorous Borders: National Cosmology and The Mediation of Collective Memory in Armenian Ethnopop Music* (2012: 67-71).

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> "Foreign music has had little influence on Armenian music, for our people sing a Turkish tune to a Turkish text, a Persian tune to a Persian text, a Kurdish tune to a Kurdish text, et cetera, but never a foreign tune to an Armenian text. Songs with Armenian texts are sung with national tunes. Only the minstrels, who often sing for the rich in urban areas, use foreign melodies adapted to Armenian texts which they compose according to the prosodic rules of the Arabs, Persians, or the Turks." (Ibid. 170).

In the previous section I addressed Gomidas' view of the peasants as the source of authenticity. He stated that elements of foreign peoples had entered the *ashugh* music in particular, but that peasants, even when singing songs composed by *ashugh*s, "corrected the words and music unconsciously, and brought them pure Armenian character." During a speech at a convention of the International Music Society in Paris in the spring of 1914, he said that a song composed by *ashugh* Gigo from Gyumri was sung in Turkish style in the *makam Araban* or *Karciğar* by the singers, and then he sang a version that peasants had adapted to the Armenian style. In his work, Gomidas frequently employed a comparative musicological approach and strived to explain stylistic differences through performance. I noticed that the most of the people I interviewed had difficulty in defining the 'Armenian sound,' but had a very clear imagination of it, and that this overlapped precisely with Gomidas' definitions. When I asked my informants to explain this sound, most of them, like Gomidas, tried to express it through examples of the 'foreign' characteristics of *ashugh* music and contrasting that with folk music, or with an attempt to distinguish it from Turkish, Azerbaijani or Iranian singing styles. Gomidas believed that by addressing liturgical and secular music together, he would arrive at a clear idea about national music as a whole, and based on his ethnographic collections, saw Armenian folk and liturgical music as close siblings:

> "I have found the living proof of authenticity in that the liturgical songs which I have collected in villages and ancient monasteries in their primitive forms, are virtually identical to folk songs which are the unquestionable creations of the Armenian peasant." (Ibid. 169)

The liturgical *tsayn*s (modes/*makam*s), formalized in the 8th century, formed the foundation of the *sharagan*, which displayed a monodic character and became a standard repertoire in the 9th century. Because nobody was able to read the *khaz* notation with surely after the 16th century, the *sharagan* singing survived for centuries as an oral tradition. The repertoire only returned to a written format with the advent of Hampartzum notation in the 19th century, and came to be known as *Mayr Yeğanag* ['Main Melody'] (Pahlevanian 2011). As a continuation of this work, Gomidas sought to rediscover meanings of certain symbols in the *khaz* notation, in order to be able to decipher the *khaz* notation in old manuscripts.

In the late 19th century, young European- and Russian-educated Armenian musicians adapted Armenian music to Western temperament and polyphony, starting with liturgical music. The *Surp Badarak* (Holy Liturgy) was first polyphonized by 1885 by Kristafor Gara-Murza, followed by Amy Akpar in 1896 and Levon Chilingiryan in 1906, but these versions were not officially recognized by

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the Armenian Apostolic Church. Magar Yegmalyan's 1896 harmonized version was the first *badarak* to receive widespread official acceptance. Gomidas' four-part contrapuntal *badarak* arrangement was published in Paris in 1933, and later rearranged in three parts by his student Vartan Sarkisyan (Kazarian 1983: 20). This reformist movement within liturgical music led to a polarization among the *tıbir*s (cantors). The number of those who rejected notation--believing that it would damage the oral tradition--decreased over time, but the real conflict emerged around the issue of polyphony and westernization. Proponents of westernization, for example, viewed European-ness as a necessary step in humanity's development. They held that Ottoman music was monophonic and thus undeveloped, and criticized the *tıbir*s who sang in the Ottoman style. This led to diverging factions over the *alafranga* (European) and *alaturka* (Ottoman) styles. This discourse was reinforced by the thought that the Armenian people had lived under the Ottoman and other empires, hence under this foreign influence, and their music had departed from its roots (Kerovpyan and Yılmaz 2010: 127-129).

In Gomidas' view, Armenian folk music and liturgical melodies had emerged from the same formation and were composed of tetrachords.[15] Melodies that did not conform to this system were foreign in origin. The scales were completely equivalent neither to European major/minor scales nor to the Persian, Turkish or Arab scales. Until the 5th century, when the Armenian alphabet was created and the Bible translated, only the psalms and old folk melodies were sung in church. Later, the psalms were replaced by the *sharagan* (melodic prayers), which were classified acccording to eight *tzayns*[16] (sounds/*makam/*mode) (Vardapet 2001[1894]: 142). In addition to the *sharagan*s, liturgical song forms such as *dağ*, *gandz* and *avedis* appeared, and sung in various versions of these eight modes. Of the modal character of Armenian music, Gomidas writes: "We are an Eastern nation, and therefore our modes belong to the same system of Eastern multi-branched modes and are related to them." (Ibid. 152). Still, he distinguished the modal character, defining a unique character for Armenian music:

> "The difference between our modes and other Eastern modes is that whereas they augment or diminish the compass of the tetrachord, we take a simple tetrachord and rearrange its intervals on the basis of semitones. In Persian, Turkish, and Arabic music they even make use of the impractical and senseless 1/3, ¼ tones[17]..." (Vardapet 2001 [1898]: 186).

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15 Gomidas describes this system: "In Armenian music, scales are formed by linking two tetrachords, thus: the modal tonic is in the middle, with the remaining degrees emanating from it in either an ascending or descending direction. This ascent or descent is accomplished in such a manner that each sequence forms a minor seventh that plays the same role in Armenian music as does the octave in European music." (Vardapet 2001 [1914]: 170)

16 For detailed information on *tzayns* system and *ashugh music* see Injejikian 1990.

17 Here he is referring to the *koma* tones (microtones).

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Collective identity with relative to debates on ethnicity is a way to define an 'us' vs. an 'other', or what the 'other' is not, via borders drawn between them and the 'other' societies that surround them (Barth 1998; Bauman 1992). Gomidas' statements display a similar content. In this context, Gomidas' attempt to define an Armenian style, and his zeal for cleansing it of foreign influences and taking it back to its essence, are among his central goals in his work. Because he identifies modal/*makam* music with Arab, Turkish or Persian music with the Ottoman/Turkish repertoire, he needs to separate Armenian music from this "other" musical style. At the base of his strategy of cleansing Armenian music from foreign influences is purifying it from its *makam* character. The most striking characteristic of the performance style that displays the eastern *makam* characteristics is the singing of melodies nasally, and with ornaments from the throat. As an example, Gomidas criticizes Armenian Church choir directors and cantors for singing[18] in a Turkish style:

> "In Turkey, *tiratsous*, the cantors in the church, began to embellish the Armenian songs with Turkish colorations when they sang for the banquets of their rich patrons. The noble and pure nature of the liturgical song did not amuse the guests who, living in Constantinople, had acquired some of the Turkish tastes and mores. In this way the Armenian liturgical music of the metropolis slowly lost a degree of its purity and national character as it required a Turkish laxity" (Vardapet 2001 (1914): 167).

A similar criticism had earlier been expressed by Hampartzum Limonciyan as well:

> "Some of our Diratsu brothers are bringing in [to the church] all manner of melodies that do not become the church; saying of the style of a fine-voiced singer *[hanende]*, or a Jew, or a Gypsy, or a Bektashi, 'what a beautiful thing it is' and bringing it into the church, and there is no greater crime. Some also have adapted a good throat motif; thinking they have done a good thing, they do it everywhere, and there could be nothing more repulsive; even swearing in church would be better than this... Thinking to excite the people, they lead them into sin." (as cited by Kerovpyan and Yılmaz 2010:108)

One of my interviewees in Yerevan, who is a linguist and folklorist, also distinguishes Armenian melodies from Eastern *makam* performances, but draws a metaphoric line in describing these melodies, drawing a connection between the flow of one's life and the melodic flow of melodies. Employing a metaphor constructed upon the mythical trinity of 'birth, life and death,' she presents an Armenian melodic formula and suggests that all songs have a similar flow.[19] She begins a melody with an ascending melodic figure that starts on the tonic, which symbolizes birth. Then, just as a human lifetime, the melody progresses, stage by stage until it reaches the summit – but emphasizes that the melodic zigzags like those in the Eastern *makams* are out of the question – and then says that the mel-

[18] For a detailed discussion on church singing at late 19th century, see Bilal 2013: 106-113.
[19] A.S., interview with author, Yerevan, September 2010. The songs provided as examples here were *Hayrur*, *Havun-havun* and *Sasuntsi Tavit*.

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ody ends with descending figures, signifying that death has come.[20] She also emphasizes that in descending melodies, villagers sometimes become ecstatic and as a part of natural expression, will leave and return to the tone; and that Gomidas had succeeded in solving all of these riddles. She reminds us that this melodic quality is visible in lullabies, epic songs and *sharagan*s; in other words, both folk and ecclesiastical styles. This account thus highlights a quest for authenticity, not only in national intonation or singing style, but also in the melodic progression of Armenian tunes.

In reality, Gomidas openly states in his manuscripts that his goal is to bring the ancient melodies into the light of day, and revive them in a way compatible with the requirements of modern liturgical music. But while aiming on one hand to cleanse melodies from 'Eastern' foreign influences in order to preserve their 'unique' and authentic national style, he does not hesitate to open their doors to European polyphonic sounds which are culturally quite foreign. As pianist Şahan Arzuni stated[21], Gomidas believes that aestheticization is the only way to make Armenian peasant music, with its monodic character, attractive to Armenian elites or Western listeners. The unconditional belief in Western modernity may be seen as a reflection of the cultural evolutionism which suggests that progression from simple to complex is a one-way street in human history, and that all societies may be evaluated according to a single measure of evolution. It is safe to say that this view was the dominant paradigm in Gomidas' time, and of Eurocentric comparative musicological studies in general. Its musical counterpart is the belief in polyphony as a natural state of development that must be achieved. This attitude is largely visible in the Armenian community's perception and choices, as well as performance style, of Armenian music. The excerpt from a speech at a 2010 seminar on Gomidas in Istanbul[22] neatly sums up precisely this attitude:

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[20] Pahlevanian evidently came to a general conclusion about melodic structure as well. According to her, a melodic action similar to a wave was common, involving a short ascending and relatively longer descending motif. See Pahlevanian et al. 2011.

[21] "Gomidas also considered how to introduce the songs he collected to the people of Istanbul. Elitist Armenians would say "Who's going to listen to songs sung by a villager?" He had to be sly. If he had wanted, he could have introduced these melodies with an accompaniment in the style of Schubert or Schumann, but it would no longer be an Armenian song! He had to find a solution that would appeal to both Armenian and European ears, and not lose its Armenian character! ... One of Gomidas' most important contributions was his interpretation of Armenian folk songs in a way that Westerners could understand..." (as cited by Taşçıyan 2010).

[22] During the 'Istanbul, Cultural Capital of Europe' activities in 2010, on the 140th anniversary of his birth and 75th anniversary of his death, Gomidas was honored in several events organized by Istanbul's Armenian community. Through projects such as a concert titled *Gomidas'a Saygı: Bu Toprağın Şarkıları* ('In Honor of Gomidas: Songs of These Lands'), organized by institutions such as Anadolu Kültür, Istanbulahay, the Gomidas Platform and the Armenian Patriarchate of Turkey; a dance and improvisational performance titled *Gomidas'la Yolculuk* ('A Journey with Gomidas'); a "*Badarak*" concert by the *Kusan 2010*

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> "…if you want to make polyphonic music, you must go over to tempered music. This is what Gomidas did. He left behind the *makam*s, and crossed over from *makam*s to today's tempered music, just as Bach did in Europe, a few centuries before him. In my view, this is not a loss, but a gain; otherwise we would have remained in monophony, unable to switch from monophony to polyphony. Polyphony is a more developed form of music."[23]

Actually, the attempt to simplify melodies according to the Western tempered system might, in a sense, have a pragmatic side in terms of reaching the goal of polyphonizing them. Gomidas, explaining his strategy of simplification when notating melodies, stated that unnecessary trills and motifs in the compositions should be cleaned up because they conflicted with the spirit of liturgical music, and that he was not reinventing the melodies but rather correcting them in a manner appropriate to their character (Vardapet 2001: 186). Although these strategies were voiced by a competent musicologist, these statements, which might be found quite subjective from an ethnomusicological perspective, might also be read as an 'essentialist' discourse on authenticity, which results from an understanding of tradition as frozen in the past, and consequently, the ignoring of innovation borne of cultural interactions. In this discourse, the 'pure' culture of the past must be preserved, and the word 'tradition' refers not to a cumulative line of development but to a static 'original.' At this point, whether or not the melodies which Gomidas says he rearranged through personal intervention are new creations, is a separate subject for discussion. But the idea that a social structure facing the continual danger of disappearance must lead to the protection of this culture considered equivalent with the past, legitimizes the discourse of authenticity (Erol 2009). The following excerpts exemplify the Armenian community's boundless faith in Gomidas. The main reason for this implicit trust and gratitude is Gomidas' studies, which he conducted with an extremely *avant-garde* effort and meticulousness in view of his period, and the invaluable cultural legacy he left behind:

> "Throughout his life, Gomidas worked and struggled to rescue and cleanse both liturgical and secular Armenian music from foreign elements. This was what Gomidas did. He sat down and researched it. He brought the Armenian musical forms to light. He took those songs he collected from the villagers, being sung carelessly and erroneously, and arranged them with those musical forms. For this reason, we can say that Gomidas neither turned them into Western music nor dreamt them up himself. On the contrary, he took them from their wellspring and brought them into the light."[24]

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chorus, a collaboration of Istanbul's active Armenian choruses dedicated to Gomidas' *Kusan* chorus, and a subsequently released album; a book titled *Deliliğin Arkeolojisi: Gomidas* (An Archaeology of Insanity: Gomidas), published by Birzamanlar Publishing; and the "Two Polyphonic Concerts by Three Choruses" project, they strove to create an agenda that would resonate not only with Istanbul's Armenian community, but throughout broader Turkish society as well.

[23] Diran Lokmagözyan. Seminar speech, Istanbul, 2010. The seminar was organized in 2010 as part of Anadolu Kültür's events commemorating Gomidas.

[24] Diran Lokmagözyan. Seminar speech. Istanbul, 2010.

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"Gomidas found the key to the Armenian song, and successfully defined the Armenian song in a pure manner."[25]

"For the villager, this is a form of expression that comes from nature. A mother does not sing a lullaby in the same way every time; Gomidas created a version of that. His most important achievement was not only that he transcribed them, but analyzed them. A melody has long, short, high and low notes. He also looked at the words and compared the two. A word accented in the prosody must either be on a high or a long note. If that was not the case, those lyrics are made up, they are not the true lyrics. He seeks out the genuine! He finds the word that fits into the pattern." (Taşçıyan 2010)

"He invited all the musically educated cantors and monks in the Caucasus, from the remotest villages of Abaran to well-known monks, and held a meeting with them. He had them sing every *sharagan*, one by one, and he – a very good musician himself – accompanied them. When he determined the most original, most correct melody, he asked Taşçıyan to notate that melody." (Acaryan 2009 [1960])

"And before arranging a melody, Gomidas picked out the foreign elements. Here he succeeded easily, because Gomidas was well acquainted not only with Armenian melodies, but also with the melodies of *Dacig* (Ottoman-Turkish), our Eastern Turkish (Azerbaijani) and Persian music. This is the reason that the melodies he arranged feel true to us. He would sing a Turkish song, followed by one of our religious songs. The two melodies sounded the same, but when he removed the foreign influence from the religious songs and sang only the main melody, it was as if we were hearing a folk song..." (Apeğyan 2009 [1930])

Statements about historic figures such as Gomidas, formed upon feelings of value and ownership or personal ideological views, may occasionally go beyond what the person in question actually did, to the point where they do not truly represent them, or even mythologize them. For example, as Ağavni Mesrobyan tells of Gomidas' method in his studies, uses the expression "the influence of corrupt and artless Eastern music."[26] Though Gomidas did not actually say this, this statement, a clear reference to Gomidas' texts in which he explained how he distinguished Armenian music from Eastern music, turns into a competitive nationalist discourse that disparages a musical tradition. Yet another statement I found which takes Gomidas' collection efforts and comparative analyses out of context is the following:

"Gomidas believed the exact same thing concerning Turkish music. If you look at Gomidas' Turkish compositions, you see that they have nothing to do with what he col-

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[25] Z.T., interview with author, Yerevan, September 2010.

[26] "Gomidas showed the correct road that Armenian original art must follow, not only through the general character of his works, but also with the lively struggle he launched around 1911 in Istanbul against the corrupt Armenian diratsu 'musicians.' Until Gomidas came onto the scene, Armenian music in Istanbul was in the hands of Mihran Celanyan, Krikor Zulayan, Mehrapyan, Tsaynegh Yenok and others. With no knowledge whatsoever of the great and original culture of the Armenian people, they had filled the church-affiliated neighborhood schools and Armenian events with *azkayin* [translated] songs in the diratsu style so distant from true Armenian style. To a large extent, they bore the influence of Eastern music, corrupt and lacking artistic value." (Mesrobyan 2009 [1947])

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lected. In my opinion, Gomidas also studied Turkish music and worked to bring out its own essence, and accordingly, to create a new, original Turkish music. Had he been able to continue his work, he might have succeeded."[27]

Although Gomidas did make collections of Turkish music and present comparative analyses at Armenian music seminars, claims that he "tried to bring out the essence of Turkish music" or "aimed to create an original Turkish music" depart from his own statements and serve to mythicize him. Similarly we see the claim in many publications about Gomidas that his doctoral thesis was about Kurdish music. This claim, presented with the suggestion that in 1903 he collected and published a booklet of Kurdish songs, must be considered yet another myth, because our research has revealed no documentation of Gomidas ever having received a doctorate, or any information about a thesis.

One thing that caught my attention in most of my conversations with Armenian music specialists, musicologists and musicians, was statements to the effect that Gomidas had created a harmonic language unique to Armenian music. In a letter to Markarid Papayan in 1907, Gomidas mentions the need to create an harmonic style suitable to Armenian melodies (Tahmizyan 1994: 39). In a conversation with Hasmik Harutunian, who was quoted earlier, she said that the young singers in the conservatory performed Western styles quite well but when it came to Armenian folk song, most had difficulty. She said that they were trying to sing Gomidas' folk songs accompanied by piano, which was nonsensical, at which I asked, "But didn't Gomidas also sing with piano accompaniment," and received this answer:

"That's Gomidas! He arranged folk songs for the solo singer and piano to show another way how people could use this academic style. But he never changed a note in the vocal part. And his arranging style features a very non-active left hand, in a special way to accompany the singer. That is not European-style harmonization. He arranged choral parts in a special Armenian style. That's why Gomidas' father is God. He is the God of Armenian music. Without Gomidas, we would be sitting at an empty table"[28]

A look at Gomidas' arrangements of folk songs for solo voice and piano reveals that he wrote simple accompaniments that did not overpower the melody, and that the left hand is not overly busy. As the left hand provides the pedal tones, the right hand follows the melody in a simple way. The pianist Şahan Arzruni describes Gomidas' piano accompaniments similarly:

"There is something called "holding the tone" [drone] in the music of Asia Minor. He made holding the tone. He made holding the tone more functional, more important. If you look at Gomidas' works, you see that the piano part has long, long tones. The sheet music isn't all black like Schubert or Schumann's; it's all white! There are extremely long ties. Gomidas had such a good ear; he understood that they would be right, and satisfying." (as cited by Taşçıyan 2010).

27 Diran Lokmagözyan. Seminar speech, Istanbul, 2010.
28 Hasmik Harutunian, interview with author, Yerevan, September 2010.

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As in many Armenian folk songs, in Gomidas' harmonic approach one line or melodic phrase of a song would be repeated, always with small differences in the second repetition. The tonal center in the song may shift abruptly. His arrangement of *Hove Arek* is an excellent example of this. As he made polyphonic arrangements of traditionally monophonic Armenian music, he applied the rules of harmony but also recognized the possibility of multiple modalities and tonalities. Harmonically, the melodies' modal/*makam* structure were a rich resource for Gomidas, and at times he sought out more original chords in order not to lose this quality (Atayan 2011; Tahmizyan 1994: 40).

We can seek a better and broader understanding of Gomidas' musical ideals and harmonic approach by considering the efforts to nationalize the music of the Caucasus region, which developed under the influence of the 19th-century Russian school. We know that much of Gomidas' musical knowledge developed within the Russian school, in which he was educated. Frolova-Walker (1998), in her comparative study of music and national identity in the Soviet republics, points to the 19th century when folk song collections were seen as an invaluable manifestation of the national essence, and considered a national treasure; following she goes on to discuss the awakening of romantic nationalism in the multinational socialist state structure. 19th-century efforts to transform Russian folk songs into art music through harmonization led to a redefinition of the function of folk songs. Folk songs were seen as distinguishing elements of the national cultural legacy. According to Frolova-Walker, this process can be summarized first and foremost as a style in which there is not much concern for Western harmonic tradition; later, a more respectful approach from within tradition; and finally, an effort to move to a style believed authentic. In this tendency, Gomidas is similar to many musicians of his period. For example, the difference between Russian-school harmony which centers on the 4th degree –believed to be the discovery of Vladimir Stasov– and Western harmony, centering on the 5th degree, can be offered as a proof for Russian authenticity. Odoyevsky says of his harmonization strategies, which are quite similar to those of Gomidas: "We tried to keep the piano accompaniment as simple as possible... We did not try to add 7th chords... this would mar the singing character of both secular and religious Russian songs." (1998:348). An example of a similar approach would be that of Üzeyir Hacıbeyov who, in the early 20th century, attempted to adapt Azerbaijani music to the tempered system, but preferred contrapuntal works over classical Western harmonization (Ibid. 356).

To summarize, we may say that the harmonic approach that Gomidas tried to develop in Armenian music was enveloped in a national character and was thus easier for Armenian society to accept, and this approach later overlapped with the national music strategies emerging in the Soviet Union. So then, does the arrangement of folk songs according to the principle of polyphony in accordance with the modernism of the period, the presentation in an aestheticized form,

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and popularization in society in this form not mean the "reconstruction of tradition?"[29] How can a reconstructed tradition be considered equivalent to 'national spirit?' That is, is Gomidas' representation 'national song' in a sense an 'invented tradition?' Is not the 'harmony' that forms the base of piano-accompanied folk song or polyphonic choral performances of folk songs itself a 'foreign' element in the aforementioned Armenian authenticity?[30] One criticism of the work of early period folk music collectors in Europe was that the Western sound in these collectors' imaginations overlapped with what they heard from their informants (Pegg 2012). The 1912 recordings of Gomidas accompanying his student, vocalist Armenag Şahmuradyan, and singing on some songs, are perhaps the oldest Armenian recordings available. Today, the folk songs on these records are considered a reference for authenticity by the Armenian community. For most of those aged 60-80 who I interviewed in Istanbul, these records were the first Armenian music they had heard outside of church. However most of these performances were so Western in their singing style that no Armenian villager in historical Armenia would be aware of them, or prefer them. Actually, polyphony applied to music with the goal of Westernization and the resulting standardization of performance has, in many countries, led to the loss of traditional variety and stylistic differences. Below, my interviewee, a musicologist in the area of liturgical music, notes that the motivation of Westernization and the effort to standardize tradition does jibe with the realities of performance:

> "And the Western mindset must be 'scientific', written; for example, it cannot accept the singing of two separate variants in two different places. It sees this as a weakness; it says 'it must be arranged, it must be sung the same way everywhere.' However, if there are forty churches in Istanbul, there are 40 different schools. It's very rich. Just think, even today they don't sing in the same way..."[31]

The 'melting' of local styles and dialects into the standard repertoire, or their gradually increasing similarity within a newly constructed musical aesthetic, has taken place in many nation-states as they standardize their national music. Precisely these criticisms have been leveled at the '*Yurttan Sesler*' ('Voices of the Homeland') choir, which became a tradition as the Turkish Republic was constructing a national music.[32] With the exception of a very few groups and musicians, the same can be said of Armenian music in Istanbul today, which is performed almost exclusively by church choirs. In the performance both of folk and

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[29] For modernist approaches to models of nationalism, see Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm and Trance 1983.

[30] Tahmizian states that his compositions and polyphonic arrangements, inspired by Gomidas' folk songs, reflected the life and spirit of the Armenian villager. According to Tahmizian, the villager's lyricism, liturgical attitude, feelings of the brilliance of nature, internal tension experienced under extremely difficult social conditions, and expressions such as dramatic cries and calls for tolerance, were all palpable in Gomidas' art (1994: 41).

[31] Aram Kerovpyan, interview with author, Istanbul, July 2008.

[32] See Hasgül 1996; Balkılıç 2009 and Stokes 1998.

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liturgical music, polyphonic choral arrangements and soloists singing in Western technique are at the forefront. In a sense, Gomidas can be said to have served this standardization with his folk and religious musical works; yet in his writings, he did not neglect to address dialects in folk songs and variety in musical styles. He does state however that the political conditions of the period prevented him from finishing his study of Armenian folk musical dialects, and describing the geographical and musical boundaries of Western Armenia.

In conclusion, while admitting that Gomidas' studies and performances were doubtless important in the transmission of historical knowledge and memory and the construction of a new artistic aesthetic in his period, and that this aesthetic doubtless created a new musical authenticity; it must be said that this authenticity cannot represent an ancient, unadulterated essence. Perhaps one of the most important distinguishing features of tradition is that it is subject to choice by subjects. Authenticity is actually a reference to the past. However, the value, judgement and qualities are attributed to the past when authenticity is defined; that is, in the present.[33] Authenticity establishes the framework of tradition as it relates to the present and provides a historical perspective on cultural continuity (Bohlman 1988:10). For this reason, though it refers to the past, the concretization, preservation and interpretation of the past is a modern-day phenomenon.

[33] For a debate on 'authenticity' and music, see Erol 2009: 207-10.

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Chapter 6: Performing Homeland by Performing its Music

During the course of my fieldwork project, I had the opportunity to meet Onnik Dinkjian, who grew up as a member of the American – Armenian Diaspora and has been one of the most prominent Armenian singers for Armenian communities around the world. In 2009, I spent a week in Istanbul and Diyarbakır with Onnik Dinkjian and his son Ara Dinkjian, also a highly celebrated figure in the world music scene and one of the top *ud* players and composers in the world. Onnik, who now lives in Florida, visited Turkey to perform for a concert with *Kardeş Türküler* in Diyarbakır, where Ara was also playing. Our friendship has grown since then, and our paths have continued to cross with musical collaborations, new projects, and even a documentary film titled *Garod* (Longing) (2015).

In this ethnomusicological study, as mentioned in the first chapter, I have employed the combined methods of participatory observation and oral history within a multi-sited ethnographic study. For this chapter, the ethnographic trip to the site framed the overall narrative of my research. So what I present in this chapter is firstly an outcome of the emotional journey: accompanying Onnik as he lands in Diyarbakır, into whose cultural domain he was born, but had never lived. The first question in my mind was "How can one be homesick for a home where one has never lived?" Before observing Onnik's trip to Diyarbakır, this was not a question I could easily answer, but thanks to a series of projects with the Dinkjian family during and after the journey, and the friendship we developed, the answers began, one after another, to answer themselves. Before moving on to this discussion, I will provide some information about Onnik Dinkjian's home, Diyarbakır, as well as some excerpts from his life story that relate to his musical identity.

My acquaintance with Onnik Dinkjian's music began with a copied cassette received from Istanbulite Armenian friends in the late 1990s. Handwritten on the cover of that cassette was: 'Armenian songs from Diyarbakır.' This bootleg recording, which was a compilation of the songs from records that Onnik Dinkjian had sung in Diyarbakır Armenian, served for years as one of my reference albums. During that time, it was extremely difficult to find published sound recordings regarding 'other' ethnicities of Turkey. Some friends from Istanbul's Armenian community were bringing Armenian records from their visits to Armenia or diasporas and copying them for those in Istanbul who wanted to listen to them. Having been copied and passed on from one household to another, the cassettes were often deteriorated from over-playing. I was not alone; many of my Armenian informants from Istanbul shared a similar experience. Why was that tape so special

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to us? For the very reason that the Anatolian musical style and performances that Onnik had developed, in the specific case of Diyarbakır region, had become established in the minds and memories as a historical source for the almost-forgotten sounds of 'traditional Armenian music.' Onnik's songs were a surviving record of a nearly-lost Armenian dialect of Dikranagerd, and a lost region for Armenians, now located in southeastern Turkey, namely Diyarbakır[1].

Prior to 1915, Diyarbakır had *vilayet* (province) status, and consisted of three *sanjaks* (districs) covering a larger area, along with the small towns politically bound to them. These were Diyarbekir *Sanjak* (containing Diyarbekir, Siverek, Derik, Viranşehir, Beşiri, Silvan and Lice), Arğana/Ergani Maden *Sanjak* (containing Ergani Maden, Palu and Çermik) and Mardin *Sanjak* (containing Mardin, Nusaybin, Cizre, Midyat and Savur) (Kévorkian and Paboudjian 2012). I must shortly describe what kind of a provincial city Diyarbakır was before the beginning of the 20th century. The population was 35,000, of which nearly 10,000 were Armenian. The city was also home to Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Turkomans, Chaldeans, Jacobites (Syrians), Greeks and foreigners (Hewsen 2006:73). Armenians also lived in 20 villages in the district. Armenian merchants and craftsmen played a significant role in the city's economic life. Coppersmithing, jewelry making, leather working, the clothing industry and carpet weaving were the chief occupations of Armenians in the city. They also worked in viniculture, fruit and vegetable farming, silkworm culture, and the raising of cotton and tobacco. Gregorian Armenians had two churches in the city of Diyarbakır: Surp Giragos and Surp Sarkis. They operated two schools near the churches. The weekly newspaper *Dikris* first published in 1910, the bi-weekly *Tsolker* and the journal *Trutsig Garmir* first published in 1913 were the main periodicals of the region (Köker 2005: 314).

As I've already stated in previous chapters, following the atrocities of war, exile, massacres and deportations in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire, the demography of the newly founded Turkish Republic consisted of survivors and other migrants from the fringes of the Empire (like the Caucasus and the Balkans). The Armenian population was nearly erased from Anatolia during the Republican period. While some survivors became part of the diaspora, others gradually moved to Istanbul, or continued to live in Diyarbakır as Islamized Armenians[2]. Today there are only a few Armenians in Diyarbakır who live their Armenian identity openly.

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1 I use the terms Diyarbakır, Diyarbekir and Dikranagerd interchangeably in this text. The official name of the city today is Diyarbakır, but prior to the founding of the Republic of Turkey, the name Diyarbekir had been used for many years, and remains a valid name today. The city's Armenian name is Dikranagerd (the city that Dikran founded); its Kurdish name is Amed. In this text I have mostly used the city's present name, Diyarbakır; and when referring to the regional Armenian dialect, I have used the term Dikranagerdtsi. When quoting Onnik Dinkjian's statements, I use either Diyarbekir or Dikranagerd according to his own usage.

2 For Islamized Armenians in Diyarbakır, see Çelik and Dinç 2015.

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With the loss of the Armenian community, its cultural legacy also gradually vanished, not only as local practices but also as cultural memory. Today, there are only a few people left in the world who can speak the regional dialect of Diyarbakır, and Onnik Dinkjian is one of them. What is important here is the role music played in preserving the Diyarbakır dialect, through a repertoire of songs that has survived in the popular memory of Armenian communities. Thus Onnik's particular singing style re-established a lost tradition from Anatolia, and in particular, from Diyarbakır.

Musical Identity of Onnik Dinkjian

Onnik's family was from Diyarbakır. Onnik was born in Paris in 1929 to an Armenian family that had been forced to leave Diyarbakır in 1915, and migrated to Syria, Lebanon, France and finally to the United States. Like many other Armenian singers, Onnik also started his singing career in the church, singing the church hymns known as *sharagan*. Foremost among the sources that inspired Dinkjian's musical style was Nishan Serkoyan (1899-1982), head cantor at the Paris church Dinkjian attended as a child. Dinkjian was one of the most talented members of the children's chorus that Serkoyan directed. Generally beginning at a young age in Armenian churches, musical education was conducted similarly to the Ottoman *meşk* system, an oral master-apprentice tradition. Kerovpyan and Yılmaz's book *Klasik Osmanlı Müziği ve Ermeniler* (Ottoman Classical Music and the Armenians*)* includes a "family tree" showing a chain of *meşk* that includes the cantors (*muganni*) and head cantors – most of whom were from or had served in Istanbul – who have entered the Armenian liturgical music literature. This tree reveals that Istanbul-born head cantor Nishan Serkoyan was a student of Krikor Mehteryan (1866-1937), who served in Istanbul and had been an influential figure in Ottoman music (2010: 76-77). Thus Onnik Dinkjian, as a practitioner of religious music and a representative of the Istanbul School, can be considered part of this chain. This heavily *makam*-based style is quite striking on Dinkjian's album of monophonic Armenian liturgical music, *Havadamk* (1997), one of the most notable works of his musical career. The album provides many important clues about the *makam* tradition prior to the Armenians' switch to Western-style polyphony in the 19th century, and is a rare example of this disappearing tradition.

Onnik Dinkjian's Armenian folk music performance has little to do with the 'Soviet-style'[3] of Armenian music. Dinkjian's Armenian folk songs display a hybrid 'Anatolian' style, sometimes close to an alla Turca style, with accompaniment by violin, clarinet, *darbuka* and *def* (with instruments such as guitar, saxophone and keyboards added later), and frequent use of rhythms such as 10/8 (3+2+2+3) and 2/4 patterns. A portion of the repertoire consists of Armenian

3 For a discussion of Soviet-style Armenian music, see Chapter 4.

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minstrel songs, folk songs, and traditional songs of Diyarbakır and the surrounding region, sung in the Diyarbakır dialect of Armenian. In addition to performing with ensembles such as the *Kusan* Choirs and Armenian Chorale of New Jersey during his youth, he began his professional musical life as a soloist at special community gatherings (*barahantes*) and women's musical events. His records[4], issued by the Krikor Music label, have become very popular, especially among the Armenian diaspora in America.

How is it then that a Paris-born musician who grew up in the United States is able to perform this Anatolian sound so locally and genuinely, and with such warmth? As a little boy, Onnik grew up with more Turkish folk music from Diyarbakır than Armenian music. One of his early childhood recollections is the home gatherings of Dikranagerdtsi families in France. He grew up in a Dikranagerd Armenian neighborhood, listening to the stories and songs of his 'homeland.' He remembers that the migrant Diyarbekir Armenians would frequently gather and sing together for hours. He states that his repertoire owes much to these gatherings as well as old records, mostly in Turkish. Although he does not speak Turkish, he established a very strong bond with this musical language:

> "In France all we had a gramaphone, and we had only two or three records: Burhan Bey's *Neden Geldim Amerika'ya* (Why did I immigrate to America) on one side and the *gazel* on the other. And Shah Muradian in Armenian singing, *Hayastan*. Maybe two or three records but they were mostly Turkish records... But I fell in love with the Diyarbekir songs, because of the language that I could relate, I could understand. And it was my pleasure to sing it."

Onnik's childhood memories appear, as a reflection of individual memory, to be subjective experiences relating to his own family. However, when these narratives are approached within the wider cultural context, they are seen to overlap with accounts of many Armenian families. Prior to the twentieth century, due to the multi-ethnic structure of the Ottoman Empire, Anatolian folk music(s)[5] was shaped by the collective performances of the Turks, Kurds, Armenians, Greeks, Jews and Arabs. The Anatolian diaspora communities also brought their traditional music, which mostly consisted of songs with Turkish lyrics, to the new lands in which they settled. Consequently, especially in the US cities such as New York, New Jersey, Boston, Detroit, and Fresno, new musical spaces emerged which shaped entertainment life[6]. This musical culture was also discovered by record labels such as Parseghian, Columbia and Victor (His Master's Voice), and in time, songs with Armenian lyrics also grew in number. As a consequence, these records also became a significant part of the transmission process for traditional culture.

4 The Many Sides of Onnik (1992), All My Best (1994), Havadamk: Sacred Hymns of the Armenian Church (1997), Onnik Dinkjian: Voice of Armenians-Live in Jerusalem (2007).

5 See, *To What Strange Place: The Music of the Ottoman-American Diaspora, 1916-1929.* [CD] (2011).

6 See, *Armenians on 8th Avenue* [CD]. (1996). New York: Traditional Crossroads.

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Figure 6.1: The records of Ashoog Moorad and Hovsep Shamlian

After 1915, listening to old Turkish songs was a powerful way through which many Armenians of the diaspora maintained a connection to their homeland and dealt with their trauma. The second generation of the Armenian diaspora could also relate to this repertoire because of their families, who continued to speak in Turkish at home and listen to these records. While this trend continued, there also emerged a desire to hear these songs in Armenian instead of Turkish, many songs were re-recorded with Armenian lyrics newly written beginning in the 1920s. Some of the tunes were newly composed as well, but they were melodies in a general Anatolian style as opposed to having specific ethnic characteristics such as Turkish, Kurdish or Armenian. Karekin Proodian, Hovsep Shamlian, Vartan Margosian, Mgrdich Douzjian and Yervant Boghosian were some of the first generation amateur Armenian musicians who maintained that tradition and built careers through that music[7]. Those surviving migrants were performing a style of musical entertainment known as '*Kef* Time' (meaning 'pleasure time'), which echoed Anatolian sounds in American diaspora communities from the 1920s to the 1940s. As a member of the second generation, Onnik Dinkjian is a representative of this *kef* style, with a special focus on Diyarbakır songs in his repertoire.

Imagining and Performing 'Homeland' in Diaspora

In this section, it might be useful to consider the diaspora concept in order to understand the musical identity of Onnik Dinkjian comprehensively. The diaspora concept has received increasing attention in theoretical debates on the issues of transnationalism, globalization, deterritorialization and locality. Cohen

[7] I am deeply grateful to Ara Dinkjian for sharing these special records from his personal archive.

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sums up diaspora studies in four phases. In the first phase, the term was widely applied to Jews and usually capitalized as Diaspora, using only the singular. In the 1960s and 1970s, the meaning was systematically extended to include Africans, Armenians, Irish and Palestinians (2008: 1). It was used to refer to "the experience of populations displaced by slavery, colonialism and forced migrations" (Macey 2000: 98). In the second phase, from the 1980s onward, 'diaspora' was deployed by Safran as 'a metaphoric designation.' He pointed out that the term designated different categories of people who applied the term to themselves or had the label conferred upon them: "expatriates, expelles, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities *tout court*" (1991: 83). Social constructionists' critiques marked the third phase from the mid-1990s as "decomposing two of the major building blocks previously delimiting and demarcating the diasporic idea, namely 'homeland' and 'ethnic/religious community'. In the post modern world, it was further argued, identities have become deterritorialized and constructed and deconstructed in a flexible and situational way…" (Cohen 2008: 1-2). By the turn of the century, the current phase of consolidation, in which the social constructionists' critiques were partially accommodated but also seen as in danger of emptying the notion of diaspora as an analytic and descriptive tool, set in.

Furthermore, the ideas of home and homeland remain powerful discourses in diaspora debates. Having been expelled by an overwhelming force from a homeland is usually a prerequisite for defining the term 'diaspora.' On the other hand, a diaspora is considered to be a mass of people who live outside a country of origin without necessarily having been expelled from it. For some people this flexibility of the definition of diaspora indicates the diversity of the phenomenon of migration; for others; it indicates a distortion of the term's meaning. In the first position, 'diaspora' is associated with the idea of changing place while preserving the tie to a real or imaginary land, whereas in the second position, it is argued whether or not the aforementioned population is worthy of being referred to as a diaspora (Dufoix 2011: 14).

In ethnomusicology, debates on the diaspora issue have reflected the positions both of communities and researchers concerning diasporic identities, musical diasporas or diasporic music for years. Recently, Volume 10 of *SEM (Society for Ethnomusicology) Student News* covers diaspora as a special issue by demonstrating that many researchers encounter multiple issues that complicate conceptualizations of diaspora in their research[8]. For instance, it is argued whether it is accurate to define musical traditions as diasporic, or the term diaspora should be reserved exclusively for people. Or in some cases, such as African-American diasporas, scholars may be blinded to the vast differences within diasporic groups,

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[8] See a resource list on music and diaspora: http://www.ethnomusicology.org/members/group_content_view.asp?group=144588&id=479944#PartIBiii

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especially regarding the issues of identity. So it must be remembered that diasporic identities are "creolized, syncretized, hybridized and chronically impure cultural forms" (Gilroy 2000: 129). As Mark Slobin writes, diaspora "… can resume its useful function only if we define it narrowly and precisely for musical ties of sentiment and memory among specific populations who think and act in ways that consciously engage a homeland-centered sensibility as members of transplanted community" (2015: 7). In fact, diaspora offers a broad conceptual space for analysis of musical performance in ethnomusicology as it intersects with issues such as ethnicity, nation, identity, gender and post-colonial conditions.

The diaspora issue is of course a popular debate in Armenian studies, however the definition of diaspora or the meaning attached to the Armenian diaspora(s)[9] may change according to the ideological discourse of the user. Therefore, the definition of 'Armenian diaspora' evokes different meanings[10]. Although the usage of this word may be inconsistent, it brings up the issues of the voluntary or compulsory migration of peoples and the maintenance or reconstruction of the sense of belonging to a country, land of origin or a locality. William Saroyan's[11] text on the question, 'what is one's country,' excellently summarizes the scope and diversity of the concept of 'homeland:'

> "My birthplace was California, but I couldn't forget Armenia, so what is one's country? Is it land of the earth, in a specific place? Rivers there? Lakes? The sky there? The way the moon comes up there? And the sun? Is one's country the trees, the vineyards, the grass, the birds, the rocks, the hills and mountains and valleys? Is it the temperature of the place? In spring and summer and winter? The huts and houses, the streets of cities, the tables and chairs, and the drinking of tea and talking? Is it the peach ripening in summer heat on the bough? Is it the dead in the earth there? Is it the sound of the spoken language in all the places of that country under the sky? The song that comes not only from the throat, but also the heart? That dance? Is one's country the prayers they say for its air, its water, its soil and fire, its life? Is it their eyes, their lips smiling? The grief?" (Saroyan 1988 [1936])

So, the main idea that I wish to address relative to the diaspora debate is the meaning of home/homeland for the diaspora. I do not refer to home as a synonym for 'house' or household' here. The idea of 'home' for diaspora communities must be considered conceptually, contextually and subjectively rather than in terms of a specific geography and time. A conception of home may be indi-

9 For an overview on Armenians in Diaspora see, Pattie 2005.

10 In fact, diverse interpretations of the Armenian diaspora occur because of the definition of homeland. See discussions on whether or not the Armenians of Istanbul/Turkey lead a diasporic life; Suciyan 2009; Koptaş 2009.

11 William Saroyan is an American Armenian author who wrote extensively about diaspora life in America and is recognized as one of the most prominent literary figures of the mid-20th century. For a detailed discussion on Saroyan's trip to his homeland, see Lusin Dink's documentary film *Saroyan Land* (2013).

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vidual, communal, multiple, situational or paradoxical. For many people in the world, "Where are you from?" is not a particularly difficult question, even though the answer may change according to the preference of birthplace, family homeland, or the place where the individual is living at the time. But for some people and communities such as the Armenians, who have historically been obliged to sustain a diaspora life worldwide, answering the question "Where are you from?" is not nearly so simple. A very general definition of 'home' might be, "The stable physical centre of one's universe -a safe and still place to leave and return to, and a principal focus of one's concern and control" (Rapport and Dawson 1998: 6). Home is generally in the sense of a "lived experience of a locality" (Brah 1996: 192). But for diaspora identities, home has no stable, universal meaning or reference; rather, it tends to be defined according to ancestral ties that bind its members to each other with a common history.

I had the opportunity to travel with Onnik to Diyarbakır in 2009, an experience which made me ask many questions. Because his family had been forced to leave, Onnik had never lived in Diyarbakır, but he was born into a cultural domain of Diyarbakır. The trip was his second physical exposure to the site, and what I found most striking was to observe his sense of longing for, and belonging to, a city he had never seen. To Onnik, Diyarbakır was a land of imagination, whose significance was performed through stories and as music. We wandered the area known as *Gavur Mahallesi* (Infidels' Quarter) / *Hançepek*. As we were walking around the Surp Giragos church he said:

> "Because of my childhood memory, it felt like I'd already seen and lived in Diyarbakır. In Paris, where I grew up, everyone I knew was from Diyarbekir. I don't know how to say the word '*misafir*' (guest) in Armenian, because we all used the Turkish word. Whenever we were guests or welcomed a guest, the talk would start with 'how are you, are you well, my this-or-that hurts.' You know, normal conversations. After coffee, our families would start talking, in a Diyarbekir accent, about how they lived there, what they did there. I had heard so much about Surp Giragos church that even without seeing it… I knew every stone of the church without ever having seen it. Every stone, every wall, every door..."

As he related his father's childhood narratives in the church's courtyard, especially the one about his father's pranks in that small pool, he seemed to relive all the details of the story. The Church was in ruins (it has since been restored), and we approached the altar under the open sky. Then, Onnik suddenly began singing the hymn *Amen*, *Hayr Surp* (Holy Father). The hymn is by Nerses Shnorhali (1102-1173), from the Divine Liturgy of Makar Yekmalian (1856-1905):

> Amen, Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit.
> Blessing to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Spirit,
> Now and always, forever and ever, Amen.

Onnik Dinkjian had lost his parents while quite young, and was adopted by a *Dikranagerdtsi* family. When speaking of his family, he refers to the one who adopted

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Figure 6.2: Onnik Dinkjian is singing *Amen* in the Church of Surp Giragos in Diyarbakır (photos by Onur Günay).

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him. I mention that personal detail because Surp Giragos church was Onnik Dinkjian's only concrete connection to his lost parents. As Ara Dinkjian said:

> "We don't know the address where my grandparents lived in Diyarbakır. But the center of the social community for the Armenians in Diyarbakır was Surp Giragos, the church… As far as a sight to see, there was no place more important for us to see than that church. Because we know that my grandparents were certainly there, they got married there. We know that they were there."

During that trip the most powerful feeling I experienced was that of witnessing the absence of a community while listening to their stories, told by Onnik. Throughout the trip, that feeling of absence never left us. Modern-day Diyarbakır is no longer the old Diyarbakır where the Armenians had lived. There are only a very few people in the city who live with an Armenian identity. Although new discussion has arisen about Islamized Armenians in the city, it is safe to say that this serves only to revitalize the city's collective memory. The city has changed considerably, not only in terms of demographics but also physically and architecturally, yet the area known as *Sur İçi* ('within the walls'), formerly populated by non-Muslims, is quite similar to the way it was a century ago. Last year, through an initiative of the Diyarbakır Municipality, a street in the *Gavur Mahallesi/ Hançepek* neighborhood in this area was renamed for famous Diyarbakır Armenian writer Mıgırdiç Margosyan. Sadly, even this symbolic show of goodwill only seems to reinforce the palpable absence of those annihilated or exiled a century ago. As Margosyan himself said, the presence of an Armenian community in that neighborhood today would be much more meaningful than giving the street an Armenian name. Onnik expresses the importance of being there despite that absence, that reality:

> "Can you believe that my son and I, so to speak, as the first and second generations, are returning to the lands where our family had to leave, even though in order to visit. Besides, our visit is beyond a visit, we are coming in order to sing here. I'm sure my mother and father are watching me."

One of the other most memorable images that Onnik recalled from his family stories is that the door of the church opened onto a street so narrow that one could touch both sides of the wall while extending both arms. The door of the Church was so small, that it reminded Onnik of a folk song *Amenu Daran* that narrates the moment the Armenians were taken away during the genocide:

> They collected and took them all away in a convoy.
> Only we stayed behind
> They couldn't take us away because the door of our home was so low
> They couldn't take us away through that door[12]

[12] *Amenu daran yesi tche daran key yamo. Mer turı tsadz er mezi tche desan key yamo. Elank pelink pantsertsenik key yamo. Vıran tenink kadvi pınik key yamo. Isi babus ındzi habir togh*

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Figure 6.3: Ara Dinkjian and Onnik Dinkjian, *Hançepek* neighbourhood in Diyarbakır (photo by Onur Günay).

Onnik explains, "Because of my childhood memories, it felt like I had seen and experienced Diyarbakır; the church of Surp Giragos, the small pool inside the church's garden, the Paşa Hamamı (public bath), the great wall where my father used to play çeçen oyunu (a soccer-like game)." In Onnik's recollections, it's obvious that these narratives provide a central vehicle to transmit memory, serving the process of remembering. Another story Onnik remembered was transmitted by his son Ara. Ara remembers that during the trip Onnik started to cry upon seeing the size of Diyarbakır's walls: "One day we climbed up the wall and at one point my father stood there and started to cry. I said, 'What is it?' and he said 'My father would tell me, they used to play on this wall.'" Later, Ara recited the dialogue between his father and his grandfather:

tcharnı. Nıshanades oskırtchi e gu shine. (The lyrics were obtained from Onnik Dinkjian's songbook).

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Figure 6.4: The great wall where Onnik's father would play soccer.

> You mean you kicked the ball against the wall?
> No we would go up onto the wall and play.
> But dad, it's a ball, what do you mean you were playing on the wall?
> Yes, it was that wide.
> Come on, dad. You are exaggerating. How wide could it be, that you could play ball on the wall?
> I'm telling you, it was wide. You could play on the wall'

What struck me more here was the welling up of a powerful emotion based on a memory, constructed more in the imaginary than the real world. I see that Onnik related to his father's narratives as if they were his own experiences. For Onnik, being exposed to Diyarbakır meant a connection to family narratives, which triggered nostalgic feelings for ancestral lands he had never seen but knew existed. These narratives also referred to the beauty of the landscape, regional epics, myths and other cultural images. Onnik had spent his childhood in Paris, but had been surrounded by a close circle of relatives and family friends from Diyarbakır. This was a cultural domain where a special dialect of Armenian was spoken, and songs and stories of Diyarbakır were told. Onnik states that during his childhood, he had been under the naïve impression that "all Armenians were from Diyarbakır and all the people from Diyarbakır were Armenians." In other words, his knowledge of Armenians and Armenian-ness was limited solely to that gleaned from Diyarbakır Armenians where he lived. Thus it becomes clear that Onnik's perceptions of Diyarbakır were based on a socially constructed milieu where the circulation of multiple narratives and the performance of Diyarbakır songs were very important. These narratives reveal how cultural memory is created and transmitted, as well as how it constitutes and shapes people's understandings of an imagined home. Gupta and Ferguson indicate that it is analyti-

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cally useful to distinguish between two interrelated processes of place-making: the process of 'imagined place-making' and of 'experienced place-making.' In that process, a locality is infused with identity and "emerges by the intersection of its specific involvement in a system of hierarchically structured spaces with its cultural constructions as a community or locality" (1992: 8). Places exist in the global space of relationships, and are constructed as communities of relations, as is evident in Onnik's story.

The term 'cultural memory' is used rather ambiguously, but generally refers to the interplay of past and present in socio-cultural contexts. On the one hand, Onnik's childhood memories seem related with his family, the individual memory in this case. On the other hand, those memories are collective because those narratives match up with those of many other Armenian families within the broader cultural context. Thus cultural memory maintains individual perceptions of continuity between the past and the community's present existence.

Our trip to the Hançepek neighborhood continued with a great surprise, when we came across to the last two remaining Armenians, Sarkis Eken and Baydzar Alato, at the Assyrian church of Diyarbakır. That was one of the most unforgettable moments for Onnik. He was overwhelmed with excitement when he saw that woman, Baydzar, and hugged her as if she were a relative. At that moment, Ara whispered to me, "He will never leave that woman. He feels as if that woman is the mother he lost." Although they were of a similar age, Onnik showed such respect for her, as if she were much older than he. Baydzar spoke Kurdish as her mother tongue, as it was the most commonly spoken language where she grew up. Because there was no Armenian congregation in Diyarbakır to hold services for, and the Armenian church had fallen into ruin (as mentioned before it was restored later), she and her husband attended services at the Assyrian church. When we met Baydzar at the church, and she learned that Onnik and Ara were Diyarbakır Armenians, she said she had forgotten how to speak Armenian, but after a moment they began chatting with each other in Dikranagerd dialect. Onnik was overjoyed to hear those Dikranagerdtsi words from Baydzar and tried to get her to speak more[13]. When they spoke some words to each other in the Dikranagerd dialect, even random words, they were filled with joy. As we left Baydzar and Sarkis in the church garden, Baydzar said the most emotionally loaded words of that trip: "I was Kurdish until today, but today, I became an Armenian". Onnik invited Baydzar and Sarkis to his concert the following day. Before the concert, he asked me to place those special guests where he would be able to see them clearly while singing. He added: "I always find an old lady in the audiences and sing *Dile*

13 According to Hewsen "While most Western Armenian dialects were heavily influenced by Turkish, that of Diyarbakır spoken so far to the south was more influenced by Kurdish and Arabic, so much so that the dialect was incomprehensible to most other Armenians. The dialect was preserved for a long time in the United States, as Dikranagerdtsi migrants tended to settle in their own neighborhoods" (2006: 74).

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Yaman[14] to her in my concerts. This time I will sing that song for Baydzar. It's really meaningful for me."

That coincidental meeting moved us all deeply, and I could not help but think about what made that woman so special to Onnik. How can we explain their connection that isolates them from us? It is very hard to describe the moment when Onnik was singing that song for Baydzar and crying. Was he remembering his mother? Was he longing for his childhood or lamenting lost memories and a lost land? Is it a representation of cultural mourning for a lost past that encompasses but also extends beyond personal history and memory? Smith states that ethnicities can be defined with certain characteristics: A collective name, a common ancestral myth, shared historical memories, symbols, customs and values, distinctive public culture, special ties with a historical homeland and a feeling of solidarity (Smith 1999). One can of course feel those characteristics as the ties that connect Onnik and this woman. But there is one more special element that binds them together; that of speaking in a lost language (Dikranagerdtsi Armenian) and belonging to a lost land (Dikranagerd). It goes beyond being Armenian or belonging to an ethnicity; this tie with the land, and this woman's status as one of the two remaining[15] Diyarbakır Armenians makes her special for Onnik.

I realized that Onnik was in a similar mood in Istanbul when we visited Mıgırdiç Margosyan in Aras Publishing. Mıgırdiç Margosyan, who is Dikranagerdtsi Armenian living in Istanbul and one of the remaining representatives of Armenian village literature, has written many books such as *Gâvur Mahallesi* ('Infidel Neighborhood') (1992), *Söyle Margos Nerelisen*? ('Tell us Margos, Where are you From?') (1995), *Biletimiz İstanbul'a Kesildi* ('Our Ticket is to Istanbul') (1998) and *Tespih Taneleri* ('Rosary Beads') (2006). Just as Dinkjian builds accounts of Diyarbakır though music, Margosyan includes memories of his childhood in Diyarbakır in his stories. Though autobiographic in character, these stories extend beyond his own life story to bear witness to Armenian history and depict the lifestyles of people in the Diyarbakır region. My most cherished memory of that special meeting of Margosyan and Dinkjian was when Margosyan read aloud the section in his book about the song *O Yar Dile*, which mentions the foods of Diyarbakır:

> "Onnig Dinkjian is of Diyarbakır descent; the first line of his song in Armenian is: 'Our meftune, with bulgur on the side, and onions and parsley…' Well known as a musician

14 A traditional Armenian folk song that symbolizes yearning for the homeland.

15 At the time of this trip, Sarkis Eken and Baydzar Alato were known as the last two Armenians in Diyarbakır. More accurately, they were the last Armenians in the period who were able say they were Armenian. It later became evident that certain Islamized Armenians in Diyarbakır maintained connections with the church and its congregation, so that one can speak of a community, though small, of people who identify as Armenian. Sarkis Eken and Baydzar Alato, had thus been the subject of photographs and interviews in several newspaper articles;http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2015/04/150424_hatice_sarkis; http://bianet.org/bianet/yasam/156785-diyarbakirli-son-ermenilerden-bayzar-alata-dan-selam; http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/7715/hay-loo-baydzar-hay-loo.

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> and singer, Onnig Dinkjian is one of rare people today who can speak the Diyarbakır Armenian dialect beautifully and purely." (Margosyan 1998: 99)

As they talked about Diyarbakır traditions and cultural traits, Onnik imitated his father's behaviors such as dipping bread into *meftune* (braised meat) –a traditional Diyarbakır dish– and they all started to sing *O Yar Dile,* one of Onnik's most famous songs, with lyrics telling of the foods of Diyarbakır. The music was traditional, but Onnik Dinkjian wrote the lyrics in Dikranagerdtsi dialect. He described the making of special traditional Diyarbakır foods and drinks such as *meftune, künefe* (a dessert with cheese) and coffee.

> Lay out our *meftune* with cracked wheat, O *yar dile yar dile*
> Add onion and chervil to it, O *yar dile yar dile*
> Lay out our braised meat with apples, O *yar dile yar dile*
> Let's eat it with bread, O *yar dile yar dile*
> Make *künefe* with cheese, O *yar dile yar dile*
> Make coffee with cardamom, O *yar dile yar dile*[16]

It's obvious that cultural memory tends towards narrative representation and the role of nostalgia has been immense in Onnik's music. Even if the lyrics sound nonsensical, all of these culinary narratives are permeated with nostalgia, and most of these narratives originate in Onnik's childhood memories. Although the flavors of some dishes described in the song's lyrics have been forgotten, even the descriptions help preserve their memory and continuity. He describes the conversations about food among guests at their house: "They would talk about foods, about their smells, their flavors… they'd tell us how delicious they were… We children would sit in a corner – my sister Arpine and I – and listen to our family's stories."

The point that emerges here is the power of food to evoke memories. Because of its emotional associations, food can enter the physical memory; and in this way, its flavor and aroma can awaken the emotions surrounding a particular moment or event. Sensory and emotional memory are quite influential in the creation of individual and collective memory (Hendrich 2009:93). So, the lyrics of this song reveal the affective role of traditional food in the process of structuring the narratives of home and reflecting nostalgia. He simultaneously exposes the desire to remember home by recreating culinary memories, and tries to create a sense of home and belonging in an adopted home by indicating the 'authentic' difference of dishes such as *meftune*. The song is thus a reflection of Diyarbakır Armenian authenticity. Mıgırdiç Margosyan and Onnik Dinkjian demonstrated how real and precious this song was within their life experiences and memories, even if others might find its lyrics meaningless. In addition, the nos-

16 *Mir metvunan bılgurov, O yar dile yar dile. Metche sugh bırdınusov, O yar dile yar dile. Mir kavurman ghındzurov, O yar dile yar dile. Ogo uding tırhug hatsov, O yar dile yar dile. Mir kınafan banirov, O yar dile yar dile. Kahvan le kakulayov, O yar dile yar dile.* (The lyrics are attained from Onnik Dinkjian's songbook)

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talgia around all these songs can serve as a survival strategy, revealing the relationship between individuals and the larger group; between personal and collective memories.

Svetlana Boym's debate on 'nostalgia' in her ground-breaking book, *The Future of Nostalgia* (2001), presents a conceptual framework in which to understand Onnik's longing to his homeland where he had never lived. The day I began reading the book and saw that Boym had asked the very same main question that I had posed for this chapter, I found myself quite moved and, I must confess, rather astounded. In *The Future of Nostalgia,* Boym asks, "How can one be homesick for a home that one never had?" (2001: xiii). I immediately realized the importance of the concept of 'nostalgia,' in the study of cultural memory, and that Boym was one of the first and most important figures in this literature, thus this discovery was not at all coincidental. The word 'nostalgia' is a European term, used for the first time in the 17th century. It was coined as a medical condition by Johannes Hofer in a 1688 medical dissertation for the University of Basel. In modernist literary texts, psychological discourse takes over and nostalgia becomes a state of mind rather than a physical condition. Boym defines nostalgia (from the Gk. 'nostos', homecoming, and 'algia', longing[17]) as "longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed." (Ibid. xv). She states that "nostalgia is not merely an expression of local longing, but a result of a new understanding of time and space…" (Ibid. xviii) So, beyond mere longing for a place, or a sentiment of loss or displacement, nostalgia involves yearning for a lost time. Nostalgia is a feeling which is presumed in superimposition of two images: of home and abroad, of past and present, of dream and everyday life. Boym distinguishes between two kinds of nostalgia, the restorative and the reflective: "Restorative nostalgia stresses nostos and attempts a trans-historical reconstruction of the lost home. Reflective nostalgia thrives in algia, the longing itself, and delays the homecoming-wistfully, ironically, desperately" (Ibid. xviii).

For Armenians in the diaspora, longing for the lost land, namely historical Armenia, corresponds mostly to reflective nostalgia. Children of exiles – second-generation exiles – are raised with post-memories, an intimacy with places never visited. In Onnik's case, two different levels of nostalgia create a third space; a musical space in which Diyarbakır can be experienced. Longing, homesickness is a narrative vehicle for Onnik's musical identity; however Onnik utilizes music not only to evoke but also to re-conceptualize his homeland. More than emotional grief for the loss of a particular time and space, Onnik's nostalgia is also for his people's separation from the larger cultural, historical and local community practices inherent to the land. It's a kind of cultural mourning that indicates cultural dislocation and the loss of ways of life. Roberta Rubenstein uses the phrase "cultural mourning" to signify an individual's response to the loss of something with

17 The 'longing' is inferred from the idea of "pain of/for a return home".

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collective or communal associations: “a way of life, a cultural homeland, a place or geographical location with significance for a larger cultural group, or the related history of an entire ethnic or cultural group from which she or he feels severed or exiled, whether voluntarily or involuntarily” (2001: 5). Thus Onnik’s musical narrative of memory situates him in time and space by constructing meaning that enables him to know who he is. Walder realizes a level of self-reflexivity within nostalgia: “Exploring nostalgia can and should open up a negotiation between the present and the past, leading to a fuller understanding of the past and how it has shaped the present, for good and bad, and how it has shaped the self in connection with others, a task that may bring pain as well as pleasure.” (2011: 9). Similarly, Steward defines nostalgia as “a cultural practice, not a given context; its forms, meanings, and effects shift with the content – it depends on where the speaker stands in the landscape of the present” (1992:252).

Onnik’s nostalgia thus denotes a positive attachment to the imaginary home. From his childhood memories to the present, we recognize the process of the creation of an imaginary home, enabled through nostalgia and the revival of memory. That is to say, Onnik’s nostalgia is not frozen in the past. Even as imagined visions of home are a construction, his nostalgia also constructs a longing for belonging. In the next part of this chapter I will conclude my observations on the Diyarbakır trip but continue on to explore some of the ways in which nostalgia has emerged as a complex form of representation through Onnik’s musical identity, and return to the concept of ‘longing for belonging’ at the end.

As mentioned before, the fieldworker-informant relationship which I developed with Onnik and Ara Dinkjian in 2009 through their concert and travels in Diyarbakır, became an enduring friendship. After the filming of the tour by my friend Onur Günay, we added the interviews we did in New Jersey and Florida and decided to make a documentary film. Actually, similarly to the experience of many fieldworkers, Onur and I wanted to share this very special experience and our resulting personal transformation with other people. We made a documentary film about the lives and the musical stories of a father and his son, Onnik and Ara Dinkjian, and named it *Garod,* one of the most moving traditional Armenian songs in Onnik’s repertoire. *Garod* means ‘longing’ in Armenian. *Garod* begins with Onnik and Ara Dinkjian’s encounters in a city, Diyarbakır, which had become a constitutive part of their identity, and goes on to tell the story of the remaking of a musical tradition and life in diaspora. Tracing the musicians’ past and musical lives, the documentary builds a bridge between the United States to Diyarbakır. Passing through different countries and regions, it follows in the path of a musical tradition.

In one of our conversations with Ara Dinkjian, I remember being quite surprised when he confessed that he had “only very recently realized the importance of having kept the music of Diyarbakır, and consequently of Anatolian Armenian music, alive in America and ensuring its continued existence.” On-

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nik's reactions to my questions in our first interview were exactly the same. He said many times that he didn't understand why a non-Armenian Turkish ethnomusicologist was so interested in him, and had not been aware people in Turkey cared so much about his music. He says that during the preparation of our video, and on every visit to Turkey, he became more knowledgeable about sociopolitical discussions in Turkey and the Armenian "issue," and better understood the Turkish people's value and love of music. He states during his meetings, concerts and special events with the Armenian diaspora in America, he takes care to tell what he experienced and shared in Turkey, because it significantly changed his life and his perceptions of this life.

After completing the documentary, we showed it at several national and international film festivals, and released it in DVD form. The presence of Onnik and Ara Dinkjian and their families at the gala showing for the 2013 Istanbul Film Festival was especially meaningful to us. Another important historical aspect of these Istanbul visits were that Onnik would perform his first concert there. Organized by the Surp Khaç Tıbrevank association, this concert was an important gathering of Istanbul's Armenian community, which formed the majority of the audience. After memorizing songs for years from copied cassettes, Onnik Dinkjian was in Istanbul to play a concert for the first time, and he was greeted with great enthusiasm. Later, in 2015, Onnik and Ara gave concerts in Istanbul and Diyarbakır during events commemorating the 100th anniversary of 1915. Through these concerts and events, Onnik Dinkjian finally began to establish a real, physical bond with his homeland. Yet, until his 80s, despite the great insistence of his son Ara, he had said that he did not want to come to Diyarbakır and Turkey even to travel and see them. More accurately, he had said that he was hesitant, and afraid. Now, he eagerly looks forward to every opportunity to visit Turkey. Generally, I feel that all of this musical interaction and sharing with people from Turkey caused a shift in his relations with his lost homeland. Perhaps his experience has allowed him to compare his imaginary ideas about Diyarbakır received from family accounts, with modern-day realities, revise them, and then reconstruct them. The contact that Onnik has developed with his homeland after so many years, has transformed his imaginary homeland. Whether his present ideas about his homeland, or his imaginary homeland formed before he saw Diyarbakır are the real ones, is impossible to know.

"The Soul of Diyarbakır is in All Our Hearts"

On one of their visits to Turkey, Ara mentioned a special project that he had imagined and wanted to realize with his father: A new album in which Onnik Dinkjian would perform music from the Diyarbakır region. The most important differences between this and Onnik's other albums would be entirely devoted to songs about Diyarbakır, and that Onnik would write the words in the Diyarbakır

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Figure 6.5: The cover of *Diyarbekiri Hokin* (Armenian Songs from Dikranagerd), by Onnik Dinkjian

dialect of Armenian, which is unfortunately on the brink of extinction. Also considering it an important and valuable project, we wished to be a part of the Dinkjian family's dream, and undertook the album's production. It became a project of the company (MİRA) through which my husband and I release our own productions, and in 2015, was released in Istanbul with the title *Diyarbekiri Hokin* ('The Soul of Diyarbekir').

One important element that set *Diyarbekiri Hokin* apart from Onnik Dinkjian's other albums was its musical sound. Directed by Ara Dinkjian, this album's instruments were recorded in Turkey. Feeling that recording in America would perpetuate the Armenian's feeling of isolation and distance from their historical cultural homeland, he preferred to record in Turkey. He believe that in this way, Onnik would be able to continue his journey to the geographical soul of his father's family, Diyarbakır. The acoustic counterpart to Ara's feeling of distance here was the fact that the instruments would be performed by musicians "intimate with the sounds of Anatolia and its surroundings." Special care was taken to avoid complex arrangements in favor of unison playing and simple harmonic designs, which brought out the instruments' unique timbres and performance potential. Performed by musicians from Turkey on local instruments like *duduk*, *mey*, *zurna*, *kanun* and percussion, the repertoire, limited to that of Diyarbakır and its environs,

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achieved an imagined and longed-for 'homeland sound.' The object is not 'authentic echos' frozen in the past, but rather, precisely as mentioned above, a 'sound chronotope (time-space) of Diyarbakır.' For example, even the use of instruments that overlapped with the Armenian musical tradition, such as *duduk* and *zurna* or *asma davul*, were enough to make Ara and Onnik happy; they often lamented the fact that the lack of good players of these instruments for American album recordings always left something to be desired in the sound's representational character. The feelings and thoughts that Ara expressed as we spoke during the album recordings beautifully summed up the bond he had forged between 'homeland' and 'sound:'

> "If we were on the moon looking at the earth, I could tell you that I'm from this area, here on the earth. Of course there are no lines, there are no political lines. It's a land, it's an area. And with that land, there is a taste, a smell, an atmosphere. The music has a certain tempo; the music has a certain *makam*. And that is the connection. It doesn't matter when you're talking about. If you are connected to your land, if you know where you're from, those sounds will come. Once I understood how precious it was, that dream entered my mind. And yes, before my father is gone we must make this recording. Certainly not for us and not for you, but for the future… And just as importantly, for the respect, love and acknowledgement of the past… This is the most important thing. Because the past shows us where to go and who we are. And as we are doing this project, I'm wondering "can they hear us?"

Ara's words are a clear expression of the relationship between the concepts of 'longing,' 'nostalgia' and 'belonging' that I have been discussing from the beginning. Actually, the *Diyarbekiri Hokin* album summarizes all of the issues that I have addressed in this chapter. All of the songs on the album relate to Diyarbakır. Onnik wrote most of the Armenian lyrics himself, or adapted them from old texts. Most of the songs are in Diyarbakır dialect and nearly all of them contain biographical snippets from his own life. For example, he wrote the lyrics of the song *Mamis*[18] (My Mother) for his mother who he lost when quite young, and remembers singing a very beautiful *uzun hava*[19]. In *Vay babo*, he paints a witty picture of the *hamam* (public bath) culture, very familiar to the peoples of the Middle East.

> Oh Daddy[20]
> Saturday is bath day, the wooden shoes and towel are in my hand
> Hot, hot, in front of the sink, my mother rubs with the bath mitt
> Oh daddy, oh daddy, oh daddy, this bath

---

[18] The song is an adaptation to a traditional folk song of Diyarbakır, "*Ağlama Yar*," collected by Celal Güzelses.

[19] A folk music genre of Anatolia

[20] *Şıpt or pağniki or e, kakab futan tzerkis e. Dak dak curuni teme, mamis kisan gı kıse. Vay babo, vay babo, vay babo es pağnike. Gı kıse nants gı kıse, marminsi yara gene. Gelam bısun bırıkhtun, eris si garmir tıtum. Vay babo, vay babo, vay babo es pağnike. Açkis esten enten e, mamis açkis gı kotse. Gıse dığas hon miya, açkit kotse amot e. Vay babo, vay babo, vay babo es pağnike. Kinam guzis hos ganis, cıncığugnire nayis. Hostsen sona pağnike, mıni kas babut hide. Vay babo, vay babo, vay babo es pağnike.*

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She rubs and rubs, it makes my body raw
I get out clean and shiny, my face red as a pumpkin
Oh daddy, oh daddy, oh daddy, this bath
My eyes roam here and there, my mother closes my eyes
She says, "Son, don't look there, close your eyes, it's shameful."
Oh daddy, oh daddy, oh daddy, this bath
I know you want to stay and look at the little sparrows
From now on, you'll go to the bath with your father
Oh daddy, oh daddy, oh daddy, this bath

The album also includes music from Diyarbakır-born Karekin Proodian and Hovsep Shamlian, both of who immigrated to America as first-generation exiles in the early 20th century. In this respect, the repertoire both serves as a living archive, and contains traditional melodies with Onnik's lyrics: "This album, this one here, to me is the real me. This is Diyarbekir. I feel it all the with down to my toes, you know, maybe that's what it is, I don't know. See, this is my language. This is not (only) Armenian, this is Diyarbekir talking." Two special tracks titled *Badmutinire* (Stories) 1 and 2 feature Onnik's own speech in Diyarbakır Armenian. He does not sing in those tracks. By recording the descriptions of Diyarbakır, its place names, and names of foods that he heard from his family; the cultural signifiers, he has in a sense prevented their loss. He is transmitting these 'snapshots' from his family's past to the present day. This album, similarly to his early albums, is infused with a palpable sense of longing. Interestingly however it is not expressed as a state of sadness and unhappiness through stereotypically sad melodies and lyrics. In addition to the sadness, Onnik's music contains a boundless energy that tries to imbue life to that which has not been lived, and that which has been lost. The last piece,

Diyarbekiri Hokin (The Soul of Diyarbakır), for which the album is named, sends the message that, in light of all this memory, "The Soul of Diyarbakır is in All Our Hearts":

The Soul Of Diyarbakır[21]

I'm sleeping on the roof, I slept until morning
The wall was very tall, we would play ball
The soul of Dikranagerd is in all of our hearts
Our huge watermelons, with a child sitting in them
We would go to the Pasha Bath, we would bathe on Saturday nights
The soul of Diyarbakir is in all of our hearts
With all kinds of games, we would make them last until morning
Hançepek is far, very far from our area

21 *Takhtin vıra kınir enk, harzi lus artıntsir enk. Badane şad pantzır er, çaçan oyin gı khağenk. Dikranagerdi hokin ımınus sırdin meçn e. Khoşur mir tzımeruge, dkhmare meç nısdir e. Paşi pağnike gertenk, Şıptor kışir gı lognenk. Diyarbakiri hokin, ımınus sırdin meçn e. Imın desag khağerov, harzi lus gergıntsınenk. Khançapake khoru ye, mir tağen şad enten e. Dikranagerdi hokin, ımınus sırdin meçn e. Surp Sarkise irantsn e, Giragosle ni mirn e. Diyarbakiri hokin, Dikranagerdi hokin.*

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The soul of Dikranagerd is in all of our hearts
Surp Sarkis is theirs, and Giragos, that's ours
The soul of Diyarbakır, the soul of Dikranagerd

In this context, the 'chronotope' concept employed by Mikhail Bakhtin allows Onnik to better perceive his memories of Diyarbakır as a construction of homeland. Bakhtin defines the chronotope as the "intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (1998: 84). Envisioning and the meaning of the human subject is inscribed into spatio-temporal structure which determines the narrative. Time and space are intimately connected, so for Bakhtin, "every entry into the sphere of meanings is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope" (Ibid. 258). While Bakhtin primarily develops the chronotope as a literary concept, Esther Peeren suggests a spatio-temporal perspective for diaspora studies by employing Bakhtin's chronotope concept "in order to propose a view of communal diaspora identity as predicated on an enforced separation not only from a particular location or place in space and in time, but also from the particular construction of time-space through which a community conceptualizes its surroundings and its own place in them" (Peeren 2006: 68). Peeren points out that all the people exist within time-space constructions that make us who we are and govern our lives. In this context, Bakhtin's chronotope is developed as a social practice and cultural concept.

So for Onnik, Diyarbakır is the chronotope rather than the place itself. It functions to explore place, not only spatially but also by collecting memories attached to place. Here is the construction of time-space that is so intrinsic to diasporic memory, living and intersubjective interaction. Onnik's case demonstrates that leaving the homeland as the physical place need not imply a complete loss of its particular life. With a host of communal practices such as Diyarbakır's music, dances, conversations and foods, Onnik uses his diasporic Diyarbakır life to create a chronotopical conception. It is a performative and symbolic construction of chronotope. A chronotopical conception of homeland is not necessarily linked to only one spatial setting. It may travel with the diasporic indiviual or community to the various locations or interact within various spaces. As Peeren explicitly considers:

> "community and subjectivity would be constructed not only (or not primarily) on the basis of concrete spatial and temporal situation (where and when a community is located in objective space and historical time), but based on its shared particular practice of conceptualizing time-space and subjectivity within it through performative enactment." (2006: 73)

Therefore, the principal way in which memory is represented in Onnik's music is a chronotopical conception of homeland; possibly a dreamscape. I remember that when Onnik and Ara first set foot in Diyarbakır, they said, "We are not tourists here. Even though there's no Armenian life to speak of here, we feel like we're from here." In this statement, we see "home" expressed as an emotional time-space

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or as a state of mind. At this point, the question I asked the beginning of this chapter, “How can one be homesick for a home where one has never lived?” is no longer particularly meaningful. I don’t believe it would be inaccurate to say that Onnik and Ara have tried to close the gap between longing and belonging by musical performance. Longing in the context of their music means not only longing for loss, but also remembering and remaking of a musical tradition and life itself.

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Chapter 7: A Musical Narrative Lying in *Artostan*

> I had a mountain. They didn't let me eat my own grass.
> I went to someone else's mountain to look for my own grass.
> Dou you know what I learned? I am the mountain[1]

While I was chatting with one informant's family, I asked which Armenian musicians from Turkey they listen to. His wife first said Arto Tunçboyacıyan, a well known percussion player, singer, composer, and arranger. My interviewee objected, saying, "Ok. But he doesn't live in Turkey anymore. He lives in America." That point was thought provoking for me at the beginning of my research. Before deciding to apply a multi-sited ethnography in my research, I had wanted to limit my research to Armenians living in Turkey to better cope with the scope of the field. But I soon realized that it was not reasonable to narrow the scope, because concepts such as displacement, diaspora, transnationalism and multilocality provide an extensive framework for questions on meanings for Armenian music. Arto's story presents a comprehensive debate on how to research 'meaning' in Armenian musicking.

I structured this chapter as an attempt to interpret the role of cultural identity on the formation of one's 'musical identity' and 'self'. I present the musical life journey toward his discovery of 'self' based on an oral history narrative. Before telling the story, I would like to make a distinction between two terms that are generally used synonymously: 'identity' and 'self'. Thomas Turino presents a useful debate on the necessity of differentiating those terms in his book *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*, and this approach helps to identify the relationships between concepts such as ethnicity, culture and musical meaning. Turino defines 'self' as "...comprising a body plus the total sets of habits specific to an individual that develop through the ongoing interchanges of the individual with her physical and social surroundings" (2008: 95). Self is the sum total of the habits that determine our behaviors, tendencies, life-style, ideologies and everything we think, feel and do. Identity, on the other hand, "...involves the *partial* selection of habits and attributes used to represent oneself to oneself and to others by oneself and by others; the emphasis on certain habits and traits is relative to specific situations" (Ibid. 95). Thus representation and perception are significant components of that definition of identity. It is not possible to define a unitary, monolithic identity, because it is constructed in time and it transforms in an ongoing process. Stuart Hall (1993) states that identity is not an essence but a 'positioning': "Cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points

1 Arto Tunçboyacıyan, interview with author, Istanbul, July 2009.

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of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture" (1993: 395). From that standpoint, we may assume a variety of shifting identities for an individual at different times and places. Many factors influence the formation of identities, and all the categories of identity help the individual find his or her 'self.' Turino refers to different ways in which shared habits bind people into social groups according to specific aspects of self, or 'cultural cohorts' (gender, class, age, occupation, interests etc.) and the broader, more pervasive patterns of shared habits that give rise to 'cultural formations' (2008: 95).

Thus in this chapter I draw attention to the multiple natures of identity within an individual musician, Arto Tunçboyacıyan. I point out the meaning of Armenian music and Armenian identity for the musician based on the construction of his musical identity and discovery of self within the framework of his 'cultural formations.' Arto's family was from Sivas, a city in the central Anatolia. His family was forced to immigrate to Istanbul, a common history shared by other Anatolian Armenian survivors of 1915. Arto was born in Istanbul in 1957 and lived there up until his twenties, immigrating to America in the 1980s. He visits Turkey a few times a year to visit his brother's cemetery, meet with friends and relatives, play concerts and collaborate with various musicians and groups. When I asked Arto during the interview if he had any plans to come back and live in Turkey, he answered: "I never left. They say I left but I experience this place much more than those who live here." His statement again recalls the various conceptualizations of 'home' discussed in the previous chapter. As Madan Sarup indicates, many of the connotations of home are condensed in the expression, "Home is where the heart is. Home is (often) associated with pleasant memories, intimate situations, a place of warmth and protective security amongst parents, brothers and sisters, loved people" (1994: 90). Clearly, Arto's life narrative and the themes of many of his songs reflect emotions within the above definition of home. In the following sections of this chapter, we will take a journey to Artostan, the homeland of Arto Tunçboyacıyan. Narrating his life story is useful in grasping his musical identity and the process of 'constructing self' via musical representation and discourses referring to his own expression "I turn my life into sound."

First Musical Expressions

Arto was born in 1957 to an Armenian family in a village near Istanbul called Galatarya. His family had migrated to Istanbul from Sivas in the 1950s. The family was in a difficult economic situation, so Arto had to work and contribute to the family income during his childhood. While in elementary school he also worked many jobs such as apprentice to a shoemaker and goldsmith, selling newspapers, etc. As in Sivas, the entire family lived in a single-room house, similarly to other Anatolian immigrants in Istanbul at the time. I heard very similar stories from other informants as well; their family ties with Anatolia, even if they

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had never lived there, were special, and precious to them. Arto notes his family's lifestyle and culture had many Anatolian elements.

The hardships of living in such a poor family, working and attending school at a young age, mean that one grows up and matures earlier. Speaking about his childhood in the interview, he states clearly that he is not interested in *fakir edebiyatı* (poverty literature)[2]. He tells me more about those years because he genuinely believes that his music is inseparably connected with those conditions:

> "When you learn life itself from the streets, you learn how to react, to be a part of it and to support and lead in life… You have to adapt to your environment, perceive the time and react to it. Otherwise you crash on the streets, or somebody will always abuse you."

One of the most extraordinary talented percussionists in the world, Arto believes that his early experiences in the streets contribute to his musical behavior, especially to his perception of time. His analogy between keeping up with the rhythm of the streets and musical timing brings to mind Turino's debate on anthropologist Gregory Bateson's ideas regarding the evolutionary potential of the arts:

> "… the arts are a special form of communication that has an integrative function- integrating and uniting the members of social groups but also integrating individual selves, and selves with the world... Bateson concludes that the integrative wholeness of individuals developed through artistic experience- the balancing of connective inner life with 'reason', sensitivity, and sense- is crucial to experiencing deep connections with others and with the environment, which is crucial for social and ecological survival (Turino 2008: 3-4).

When Arto was 10 years old, he would go to hear his brother's band in a music club. His brother (Onno Tunç), a famous composer and arranger for Turkish pop music, played with the Orchestra of İsmet Sıral[3] in the club. As Arto sat near the stage watching the performance, he would accompany the percussion by himself. Sıral liked his accompaniment and unexpectedly brought him onstage. The first instrument he played was a conga. Because he was so small, the audience could see nothing but his head and hands, but they loved his performance. Then, at the age of 10, he joined the orchestra and began to earn money with music. He comments that his skill in adapting to the streets became a vehicle through which to express himself during his childhood.

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2 "Poverty literature" is a Turkish idiom meaning 'telling too much about the poverty and injustice of one's life to engage in self-pity and impress the one who is he/she is talking with.'

3 In Turkey, the effects of westernization have been visible at all the levels of social and political life since the 1950s. For instance, the only medium for music was the radio, on which especially songs in English, French, Spanish etc. were broadcast. Consequently young musicians of that period performed such music, imitating their European and American counterparts. Entertainment medium also transformed urban life. Music clubs in the cities featured dance music like rock'n roll, calypso, twist, rumba etc. Newly founded Western-style orchestras (e.g., Şerif Yüzbaşıoğlu, İsmet Sıral, Durul Gence et al.) became the places where musicians received their musical training.

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Experiences in the Turkish Popular Music Market

After completing elementary, he dropped out and began playing as a professional musician. The 1960s and 1970s witnessed the birth of popular music genres such as *hafif* (light) music, Anatolian pop and *arabesk* in Turkey. The period also saw the establishment of the commercial music market. After he left İsmet Sıral's orchestra, Arto began playing with percussionist and drummer Burhan Tonguç's group *Metronom*[4]. Because of his skill in memorizing all the parts of the arrangements, he quickly became the child leader of the group.[5] *Metronom* became the most popular group both for stage performances and *plak* recordings in Istanbul's studios, which allowed Arto to play with prominent and influential musicians such as Orhan Gencebay, Mustafa Sağyaşar, Zeki Müren, Müzeyyen Senar and Suat Sayın. It was those childhood experiences that formed his musical background. His brother Onno on the other hand, reached the peak of his career in the area of light/pop music. As a result, the family's economic condition improved, and they moved to Kurtuluş – an Istanbul neighborhood with a large Armenian population. After Onno married and left home, Arto took on the responsibility of caring for his family at the age of 11. He remarked that he was earning 500 TL a week when his father earned only 100 TL. The *arabesk* market eventually began to change negatively. Explaining the situation, Arto says that the cultural environment, which had served as a music school, deteriorated, and was taken over by dishonest, fraudulent music producers. At that point, Arto moved into the light/pop music arena and worked with his brother, Onno for years, playing with Turkish divas such as Ajda Pekkan and Sezen Aksu.

When he was 15 years old, Turkey's political environment began to change. The 1968 leftist trends in the West were echoed in Turkey in other ways. Poverty increased, living conditions became more difficult, and as Turkey industrialized, people began migrating from rural to urban areas. These transformations led to the rise of the working class. In the elections of 1965, for the first time in Turkish history, a working-class party won 15 seats in parliament. Leftist ideology grew in the early 1970s. A multitude of people became politically active and struggled for justice, equality, freedom and democracy. Young people, especially university students, began to organize and hold political meetings and boycotts to articulate their demands for a freer, more democratic system. The opposition blamed the problems in the social system on Western imperialism over Turkey. Anti-imperial-

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4 A Turkish music group formed by Burhan Tonguç, Vedat Yıldırımbora, İsmet Sıral, Ömer Faruk Tekbilek, Mustafa Sayan and Mine Koşan. The group succeeded in creating a hybrid sound with the mixture of *arabesk*, jazz and Turkish musical sounds.

5 In the interview, while speaking about his musical capability in remembering the parts, he recalled his memories in the children's choir at the Armenian church. Because of that talent and his eagerness to sing all the parts in the choir, his energy exhausted the conductor and he was asked to leave the group.

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ist and nationalist ideologies became the major political orientations determining the stance of opposition movements in the 1960s and 1970s. At the end of the 1970s, armed struggle and the extreme polarization between the Turkish left and right brought the country to the brink of civil war. The 1977 international workers' day festival celebrated in Taksim turned bloody, with armed battle. The bloodshed in Maraş (a city in southern Turkey) was a terrible event that left an indelible memory. Martial law was declared in several places in Turkey. The military coup declared on September 12, 1980 was a catastrophic event in Turkish political history. That political rupture also had its repercussions in the area of music. The political and social environment that the coup ushered in was hostile to making music. Most of the musicians chose to work in other professions, or emigrate. People who had once gathered at concerts, now gathered at their friends' funerals. Thus while the 60s and 70s were a time of musical progress, the 80s were a period of decline.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Arto's mood was overwhelmed by a desire to escape; to save himself. Even though he cannot describe the reasons behind this psychology, it could be related to the mood of suppression of individual identity resulting from the political, economical and social conditions of the country. It was a terrible atmosphere of deepening conflict between left and right, increased hostility toward Greeks following the military operations in Cyprus, and the tension in public space created by the *Asala* movement. They were also marked by the first ever 'genocide debates' in Turkey. The genie was released from the bottle.

The discrimination and violence he experienced during his military service left indelible memories. Discussing the effects of social change on individual lives during the interview, Arto suddenly remembered his friend Procop, a Greek musician from Istanbul. He said that Procop was discriminated because of his ethnicity, and despite his talent as a musician and manager on Turkey's music scene, people would not work with him. In describing that social change, Arto uses scenes from the streets and social life:

> "There was a bass guitar player, Procop, a Greek. He lived Kumkapı, above Kör [Blind] Agop. He opened the window and said something in Greek towards the square… A fisherman nicknamed Arabian Mustafa shouted, "What the hell did you say?!" He had said something like "Should I come down? Are the fish good?" in Greek. Kumkapı was like a family. They sent him away in tears. It was such an aberration; people who behaved like that ruined everything. The arts, and the entire atmosphere, disappeared."

On the one hand, Arto's desire to leave and escape Turkey can be interpreted as the effects of that political atmosphere. Yet another factor was the impossibility of finding a prejudice-free environment that allowed freedom of expression and encouraged creative work.

> "My concerts abroad are all sold out; you can't get a ticket. Do you know why? People say 'This man is musician. He's creative because he's living.' Their reactions give me a

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> marvelous confidence and comfort. How is it here? You put the artist in a cage and then ask why she/he isn't creating anything. What the heck is that? If you can't open your heart, your music will be limited too. Even if you don't like something, you should respect it."

Arto says that people's ideologies, values and tastes erect a barrier to musical expression and cause psychological discomfort. His struggle to break free from the limitations on his creativity and freedom of expression would guide him toward the musical style he later developed.

Night Ark: No Need to Become One More Charlie in America

In Turkey, Arto saw no system that could accept his individual creativity. He felt an inner musical voice that he wanted to express. He heard that voice, but for many years was unable to define it to himself. He wanted to leave the country because he felt he could no longer be himself in Turkey. He moved to America in 1981. At first, he met and played with friends from home; busked and joined in jam sessions. He filled a room in his house with percussions and had a rehearsal space. His talent quickly drew attention, and he played with outstanding musicians like Tony Williams, Steve Caton, Al Di Meola, Chet Baker, Arthur Blight, Mark Johnson and Paul Motian. Soon he was appearing at various performances in a variety of musical styles and gained experience on the jazz and world music scenes. These experiences accelerated his journey toward the invention of his own musical identity, but he felt sense some faults in his approach: "There are so many Charlies in America, and they don't need one more Charlie." In fact he was in search of that unique sound within himself: "But I still had something inside me, you know? Ok, I love jazz, it's great, but it's only part of the deal, not the whole thing. Like cheese but no bread, or bread but no cheese; I hadn't been able to bring the bread and the cheese together."

The reason I have not yet mentioned Arto's relationship with Armenian music, is that he had none until 1985, when he heard a cassette including Armenian songs. He knew only the sound of religious music in the children's church choir in Istanbul. When he borrowed that cassette from Danish music producer, which included *sharagan*s (hymns) and information about musicians' lives in Armenia, he knew nearly nothing about Armenian music. In the 1970s some Armenians in Istanbul imported and shared *plak*s from abroad and especially Lebanon with its large Armenian diaspora community, Arto had been unaware of them. When he first listened to that cassette in 1985, it strongly affected him; for the first time he realized there was a living Armenian music tradition in the world. He met with the *ud* player, Ara Dinkjian in US. Recognizing Arto's interest in Armenian music, Dinkjian prepared some collections of Armenian records for him:

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Figure 7.1: Night Ark (Arto Tunçboyacıyan, Ara Dinkjian, Armen Donelian, Marc Johnson)

> "I heard some records but they were not strange, foreign to me. They never surprised me. They were exactly what I was searching for, thinking about. Because we [Armenians] are like this; we dream. There's a quality, an art... I saw that in my father and everybody here [in Istanbul]. My father was illiterate, but people could pick one of Setrak Usta's [master] shoes out of a thousand shoes."

After that, Arto became deeply involved in the Armenian music scene. He collaborated with Ara Dinkjian and they formed the group Night Ark, with musicians Armen Danelian, Ed Schuller, Shamira Shahinian and Marc Johnson. Performing and recording in the US, the group gained fame and popularity on the world music scene. Between 1985 and 2000, the group released five CDs[6] and

6 *Picture* (1986), *Moments* (1988), *In Wonderland* (1993), *Petals on Your Path* (1999), *Treasures* (compilation 2000).

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Figure 7.2: Arto Tunçboyacıyan and Ara Dinkjian

traveled around the world, and was nominated as a Grammy Awards candidate. They did mostly instrumental music with no language barrier, but many singers from countries like Greece, Turkey and Israel related to the melodies and performed them their own lyrics. Here I would like to quote Ara Dinkjian's explanation of the name 'Night Ark':

> "I came up with the name Night Ark because well, frankly, I write the music at night when I can hear, when things are quiet. And I thought the 'ark' was a wonderful symbol. It's a rescue vessel. And what am I rescuing? I'm trying to rescue my culture. And the fact that in the Bible the ark landed on Mount Ararat, a symbol for the Armenian people… I didn't want to be overtly Armenian, because it's not an Armenian group for Armenian people, it's not. But I needed that element somewhere in the name. So for me, the concept of the ark was just perfect. 'Let's all get in, everybody;' 'Let's save ourselves, let's save our culture, our lives,' you know." [7]

So Arto's projects with Ara Dinkjian and Night Ark were possibly the first of his inner sounds that he could release and share with listeners at that time.

[7] Ara Dinkjian, interview with author, New Jersey, March 2010.

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Armenian Navy Band: Bringing the Ship to the Mountain (Ararat) in a City Without a Sea

In 1998, after a Night Ark concert in Italy, Arto decided to go to Armenia. He arranged to arrive in Yerevan on his birthday in order to start his life from zero there. When he arrived in Yerevan he did not feel as if he were in a foreign land. He emphasizes that he felt as if he were in Sivas, his family home. He soon made some friends and witnessed chats on Armenian history in family gatherings. It was his first unbearable reckoning with his past. He heard many painful, tragic accounts of 1915, and turned to alcohol for as long as he heard them. Surely, a nation's past traumatic experience has a definitive role in the formation of an individual's identity. Then he had two choices; to be embedded into those narratives and unable to free himself from the sorrow, or to continue on his way in the awareness of those realities and follow the sound that called him. He chose the latter. After listening to various Armenian records, he understood the musicians' talent and open-mindedness to different performance styles. He visited Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory and saw that the education system provided a program that brought musicians of different genres together instead of limiting their performance to folk, classic or jazz. *Duduk*, *kanun* or *zurna* players might play together with a saxophone or trumpet player in many ways.

Two days before his return to America, Arto went to a bar to hear some music. He had listened to that group -a trio consisting of a keyboard, drum and bass guitar- playing in that bar before and liked their sound very much. As they played, Arto went to the stage and spontaneously began to play conga. That first meeting was the foundation of the Armenian Navy Band. Arto was planning to return to Yerevan in a few months for the Jazz Festival with his other group, Night Ark, so they promised to meet again. But at this next meeting, wind instruments (trumpet, saxophone, *duduk* and *zurna*) and other percussion instruments were added to the trio. For him this was a magical musical embracement. They immediately made their first album *Bzdik Zinvor* in 1999, under quite difficult studio conditions. Arto named the the group Armenian Navy Band:

> "I will bring the ship to the mountain [Ararat] in a city without a sea. My belief and ideal were so clear... It is my heart… yours and all of ours... It is our sea. The ship will go as far as you can navigate it. If you believe in it and you're pure in heart, it will go. If you have a fraudulent heart, the ship will be flooded."

The group included Armenian musicians Anahit Artushyan (*kanun*), Armen Ayvazyan (*kemanche*), Armen Hyusnunts (tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone), Ashot Harutiunyan (trombone), David Nalchajyan (alto saxophone), Tigran Suchyan (trumpet), Norayr Kartashyan (*blul*, *duduk*, *zurna*), Vardan Grigoryan (*duduk*, *zurna*), Arman Jalalyan (drums), Vahagn Hayrapetyan (piano, keyboards) in Artyom Manukyan (bass). The musical dynamics of the Armenian Navy Band

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helped Arto realize what he had imagined. Breaking through all boundaries of percussion playing, singing with his 'strange' but 'warm' voice timbre, vocal improvisations and lyrics, moving into composition, building free-form compositions with Armenian/Anatolian traditional instruments in the leading melodies, and designing two new instruments –the *sazobo* and *bular*– in his search for distinctive timbres, his arranging style and avant-garde elements are the prominent features of his musical identity. He defines his distinctive musical style as 'avant-garde folk': "Avant-garde folk, in fact, lets you dream about the future without losing your soul. It is a really open-minded style, and regardless of who you are, it doesn't have a closed door. Without losing your own flavor, you extend it with your life experiences and imagination". He also dubbed himself Mr. Avant Garde Folk in reference to his style.

Since 1986, Arto has recorded nearly 20 albums with his two bands Night Ark and the Armenian Navy Band, as well as solo albums and the other collaborations.[8] But it was especially with the Armenian Navy Band in Yerevan that Arto realized his dreams, even if he never believed it would happen. The importance of Armenian music and Yerevan, which enabled him to express that inner voice, is visible in many ways. In that sense, it must be emphasized that Arto invents his musical identity toward the invention of his Armenian-ness. Although constructing musical identity is a too complex process to interpret solely through Arto's ethnic sphere, he clearly demonstrates his cultural identity and the memories that comprise his self through his musical meanings. In any case, Arto reveals his 'positioning' in his songs and lyrics, the titles he choose for his albums, his album booklet design, his discourse and autobiographical texts.

For example, the use of an apricot-ship on the cover of Arto's 1999 album *New Apricot* is quite symbolic, because the apricot (*tsiran*) has almost sacred status for the Armenian people. Of all the fruits grown in Armenia, it is the most celebrated. According to Ozinian (2013): "Historically, in the third century BC, Akkadians called the apricot "*armanu*" (meaning Armenian), and Armenia "*Armani*" (the land of apricots)…After fighting Armenian King Tigranes the Great in the first century BC, Roman general Lucullus took several apricot saplings from Armenia to Rome. The Romans planted those saplings in their city and called the fruit the "Armenian plum" (Prunus armeniaca)." In Armenian language, apricot is also the name for the color of the fruit and that is one of the three colors used in Armenian flag. Traditional Armenian musical instrument, *duduk* (a reed aerophone) is made only of apricot wood. Musicians believe this instrument owes its special mellow timbre to this wood. If you visit Armenia, you will see many souvenirs incuding instruments, foods and drinks made of apricots or apricot wood, and learn that nearly 50 differ-

8 Arto's very colorful musical life is vastly more varied than the narrative I have provided here. Important stops along Arto's musical journey include collaborations with Sezen Aksu, Kardeş Türküler, Yaşar Kurt and Serj Tankian of System of a Down as well as film music.

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Figure 7.3: The cover of *New Apricot*, by Armenian Navy Band and Arto Tunçboyacıyan

ent varieties of apricots are grown there. The name of the Yerevan International Film Festival, The 'Golden Apricot,' is also a reflection of this symbol. The symbolism is equally true for the pomegranate, symbolizing the Armenian people scattered around the world like pomegranate seeds. Trees are thus a physical embodiment of the Armenians' attachment to their heritage. The act of planting a tree provides a unique emotional bond between the past and the present (Darieva 2013: 36). Clearly cultural heritage, or the symbols that a community shares within their collective memory, delineates the boundaries between them and others (Barth 1998: 15). Arto's 2005 album with the Armenian Navy Band titled *How Much is Yours* is also full of cultural symbols. The notes below the piece *Kef Kef* in the album booklet illustrates the importance he places on the idea of 'cultural unity;' the song also functions as a reminder:

> "The beginning of this piece is a little-known Armenian Christmas song which many Armenians are unaware of; I just want to people to know how we celebrated Christmas where I'm from. Just imagine hundreds of people during many nights in different sections of the town, with snow and candles, singing songs from door to door without fear, celebrating the birth of Jesus. What stayed with me the most was the beauty of cultural unity. Unfortunately, it doesn't exist anymore except in memories… Anyway let's celebrate…"

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Furthermore, the importance of Mount Ararat exemplifies a similar symbolic meaning for Armenians. Ararat (Mt. Ağrı in Turkey) is thought to be located on originally historical Armenian land, and serves as an Armenian national symbol. According to Dudwick, "Because of its Biblical significance as the site where Noah is thought to have landed after saving humanity from the Flood, Mt. Ararat figures in a repertoire of powerful and evocative symbols of national identity, and contributes to the vision of a cosmos in which Armenia occupies the center" (1994: 87). Iconographic representations of Ararat are an ubiquitous symbol of identity, appearing on the national seal of Armenia, the name of Armenia's soccer team, bric-a-brac and in pictures and paintings. When we went to Yerevan for a concert with the Sayat Nova choir, the first view of Ararat from Yerevan was welcomed as a ritual by Istanbul Armenians. Ararat can only be seen over the Yerevan skyline on clear days, so the visibility of the mountain lends it special nostalgic meaning. In that trip, I realized that the side from which you view Ararat –the Armenian side or Turkish side- carries different meaning for many Armenians. For the exiles in both Yerevan and the diaspora, there is a never-ending yearning or feeling of loss for Ararat, because it represents their lost homeland and is a witness to 1915. At the same time, Ararat symbolizes the long-closed border. While chatting with one of my Yerevan interviewees about the issue of opening the Armenian-Turkish border, I asked what would change in their lives if the border opened. I had expected answers relating to the country's economic difficulties, but some of my interviewees truly astonished me with their responses. One said, calmly, "Let the border open, so that we can all have a barbecue on the summit of Ararat."[9] Another interviewee said she would be excited, because she would able to see Ararat from the other side.[10] It had never occurred to me that a mountain, or a piece of land, could carry such symbolic meaning. In another interview, Ara Dinkjian spoke similarly about Ararat's significance for Armenians in a self-critical and sarcastic manner:

> "Years later I took my father on a trip to Anatolia, to Diyarbakır, to all the villages and cities, and that time I saw Ararat from the other side, from the Turkish side. And it's…I don't know if 'funny' is the right word…but in Armenia of course we lament that the fact that it's not ours. And so one our consolations is to convince ourselves that 'we have the better view.'"[11]

In 1998, Arto finally saw Ararat from the Armenian side, while enjoying his friends' company in their home. He was captivated by a beautiful painting of the mountain on their window. Looking closer he realized that it was Ararat itself. He had known Ararat from the other side, from Turkey, but at that moment he both experienced the view and understood its meaning from that side, from Yerevan. He then composed a song, *Araradin Genatsı* ('Here's to You Ararat') in his

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9 Ş.D., interview with author, Yerevan, September 2010.
10 L. S., interview with author, Yerevan, December 2008.
11 Ara Dinkjian, interview with author, Istanbul, March 2010.

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album, *How Much is Yours*. The video he shot for this song begins with a text, signed by Arto, underneath an image of Ararat through a round airplane window: "In this world there is only one nation who looks at Mount Ararat as their identity- The Armenians."

The video again focuses on the view of Ararat from the Armenian side. [12] The mountain's physical form, composed of two triangular peaks – *Sis*, the smaller peak on the left and *Masis*, the larger one on the right – is presented as a symbol in various images and drawings throughout the video. At the beginning of the video, we see Arto gazing at Ararat. This is followed by random street shots in Yerevan, and a sequence of objects and structures with shapes similar to Mt. Ararat. Drawings of Ararat on a wall, electric lines next to each other, one large and one small, stools, street lamps, television antennas, heaps of construction stone, ladders side by side, roofs of buildings, fire extinguishers on the ground, buckets, balloons, a pile of grated carrots on a plate, a burning fire, and drink glasses.

Throughout the video, Arto uses this symbolism to say that wherever Armenians look, they see Ararat, their identity, and that they actually see their past there. An empty field with Ararat in the background appears frequently to reiterate the message. The lyrics below are in praise of Ararat; he says that he now understands the beauty of seeing Ararat from Armenia, now understands the mountain's importance for Armenians, and doesn't want to leave it.

Beautiful you are, you Ararat
You look so different from the Armenian side
I feel the essence of your soul,
Akh Ararat *akh*
Now I understand what you are for Armenians
You are the foundation of our soul; You are King I drink for you
Ararat our beautiful Ararat,
Ararat my heart trembles with your name
For five years I have been looking at you from the Armenian side
Every day you are different, you took me away I don't want to come back
The time has come for us to part ways
I am not separating you from my heart
I promise you, One day we will not separate...
Ararat, our beautiful Ararat
My heart trembles with your name[13].

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[12] My analyses of the video in the remainder of the text are my own reading, with an interpretive approach. I did not have an opportunity to speak with Arto about this video.

[13] *Keghetsig-keghetsig es tun, Ararat, hey can hey. Nıgarit darper e ku, Hayasdanin gughmen, can. Hokut hodi kalis e indz. Genatsit, hey li lay le loo can. Akh Ararat Akh. Hima hasganum em kezi inç es tu hayots hamar. Mer hokun himkı tun es. Takavorun es mez hamar, Khımum em yes kez hamar. Ararat, merin sirun Ararat. Sirdıs togha anunuv. Hink dari nayum em kez Hayastanin gughmen can. Amen or darper es tun, arir darir indzi can. Chem uzum veratarnam. Adenk egav hasav patsnvelu kezme can. Arduv chem patsnıvum es khosk dalis em kezi can. Mi or chenk patsnvir menk.*

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Figure 7.4: Snapshots from the music video, *Ararat*.

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As the video continues, we see people walking in the streets of Yerevan come to Arto's empty field with chairs and stools, sit, and gaze at Ararat. Together, in a happy, celebratory way, they sing the chorus, "Ararat our beautiful Ararat, Ararat my heart trembles with your name."

For Armenians, Mount Ararat is both the symbol of their survival and a site of memory (*lieux de mémoire)*. Pierre Nora (1989) recommends the concept of *lieux de mémoire* (site of memory) to describe the cultural appropriation of history into a mythic space of cultural memory. Two orders of reality appear, in which memory and place are intertwined: One a reality recorded in place, time, language and tradition; an attainable, comprehensible reality, sometimes material, sometimes less material; the other a purely symbolic reality that harbors history. In his song, Arto looks at Ararat as a representative of identity; a site of memory for the Armenians; and in this way, Ararat, as a component in Arto's expression of *Self*, becomes a song of celebration. A celebration which joins with Ararat, and thus his cultural identity. We might think of the construction of *Self* as a puzzle, of which he has completed one more piece.

Furthermore, history is a crucial element in the formation of identity. The impact of the past or cultural memory on the construction of identity becomes more dramatic when a traumatic event is at the center of that accumulated collective memory. Arto definitely faces his past in Yerevan. A common reaction of second-generation survivors of 1915 in Turkey in particular, was not to tell the stories of 1915 to their children in order to prevent feelings of hatred and revenge against Turks. Thus Arto had not heard the catastrophic narratives of 1915 in Turkey; he heard them in Yerevan. As mentioned above, he had two choices; to become embedded into those narratives and unable to free himself from the grief; or to continue on his way with the awareness of those realities and follow the sound that called him. He chose the latter, but with the awareness of those realities, and articulated them in an artistic discourse. In referring to 1915, he did not choose a harsh discourse and an overt description of the events. His song *Merelnerun Hoku Hamar* (For the Souls of Those Who Passed), in his album *How Much is Yours*, clearly illustrates his approach. The composition style and content of the lyrics are simply in a modern lament genre, in Anatolian style. He lets the listener feel the grief and the pain with the melodies, his voice, and the crying timbre of *kamancha*. On the other hand, he does not need to put into words the tragic details of the event; Who passed? Who killed whom? How? He puts a note under the song in the booklet: "I dedicate this song to the people who died because of their identity." The message is delivered. Transmission of the memory and the dialogue of the self with the past are provided within the musical meaning.

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Table 7.1: Transcription of the song *Merelnerun Hoku Hamar* (For the Souls of Those Who Passed).

TIME	LISTENING FOCUS
(00:00 – 00:21)	The excerpt begins with an emotional introductory melody played by *duduk*, *kanun*, *blul* and *kamancha* heterophonically with keyboard drone.
(00:22 – 01:02)	Arto's vocal with the only syllable "*vo*" is added with a new melodic phrase. Arto uses this syllable in many of his songs, employing the human voice as a wind instrument. You feel his pain from the timbre of his voice and melody.
(01:03 – 01:30)	Ending section of the introduction, with the pauses of *kanun* melodies.
(01:30 – 04:34)	With the opening melodies of the *kamancha*, Arto begins singing the lyrics. He starts the song, as an Anatolian lament with a syllabic vocal "*akh, akh*" (alas alas) to express the exclamation of sorrow. He uses this expression between the lines of the lyrics frequently, adding the words "*Asdvadz ısa*" (my god), as the song is also a prayer to God. In that section we hear only Arto's voice and the low drone. He structures the lyrics and melody with many insistent repetitions of certain lines. Naturally, those lines are mostly the ones he wants to emphasize. For instance, he repeats the line "why us?" six times, questioning why his community suffered to that extent.

Ah mothers, fathers
Do you know why I am crying?
You know my God why I am crying
I saw images and pictures
Little hands, little feet, ah
My heart aches, Ah, my God,
Every time I ask you my God
Why us?
Ah, my God, Alas, alas, alas...
Brother Armen, brother Armen
Play for us
For the souls of those who passed[14]

[14] *Akh mayrer, hayrer. Kidek inchu gulam. Kides Asdvadz ısa, inchu gulam. Desa, badgerner desa. Bzdig tserker, bzdig vordker akh. Sirdıs gıtsavi, Akh Asdvadz ısa. Amen aden hartsnum em, kezi Asdvadz, İnchu mezi, hamar. Akh Asdvadz ısa, akh akh akh...Akhber Armen, akhber Armen. Dzark mezi hamar. Erta merelnerun hokin*

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Table 7.1 (continued): Transcription of the song *Merelnerun Hoku Hamar* (For the Souls of Those Who Passed).

TIME	LISTENING FOCUS
(06:32 – 08:04)	In the last section of the lyrics, he again repeats the line "Don't show me, don't show us again" five times in order to drive home his plea to God.
(08:05 – 08:58)	He repeats the second melodic theme with the vocal syllable "*vo*" as in 00:22-01:02.
(08:59 – 09:05)	When the melody ends, the performance is concluded by Arto saying "*Aroghchutyun, urakhutyun kez*" "*Health and happiness to you all...*" He sends his regards to the listeners at the end of the song. He may have chosen those words as an epilogue because that is the last song of that album.

I beg you God
Don't show me, don't show us again
Ah, my God
Take my life, take my life
Health and happiness to you all[15]

To sum up, in Arto Tunçboyacıyan's music, the focus on his compositions and arrangements and his performativity shed new light on the interrelationship between cultural memory and musical creativity. The most interesting transformation in Arto's musical journey from Istanbul to America and then Armenia is the process in which he arrives at his self, his own home. The act of musicking is for Arto, as for many other Armenian musicians, an attempt to imagine and rebuild home sonically, whether real or imagined. Although being from Anatolia, Sivas or Istanbul is important for him, he tells a musical story residing in *Artostan*. We see how his *Artostan* is abstracted and embodied in his musical sound. *Artostan*[16] as an invented term by Arto Tunçboyacıyan, means the 'homeland of Arto', as in '*Hai*' and '*Hayastan*,' the indigenious terms for 'Armenians' and 'Armenia.' He takes a journey, going back and forth between identities and self, and builds the bridge between those two realms within the language of music. He then assigns a name his own home: *Artostan*. He says: "I have created my home with my power of humanity, *Artostan*!"

15 *Aghachum em kez me Asdvadz ısa. Mi tsutsner indzi, mi tsutsner noren mezi. Akh Asdvadz ısa. Ar gyankıs, ar, ar gyankıs ar. Aroghchutyun, urakhutyun kez.*

16 He also published an album, titled as *Artostan* (2005).

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Chapter 8: Epilogue

Every year, in the second week of August, the village of Vakıflı in Hatay's Samandağ district, Turkey's only village with an Armenian population, holds the *Surp Asdvadzadzin* Festival. Each year around that time, the Vakıflı Village Association in Istanbul holds a three- to four-day tour of the Hatay-Samandağ region. In 2006, I took part in this tour with nearly forty people, all of whom – aside from me and my friends – were Armenians from Istanbul. The day we toured former Armenian villages in the region, standing in ruins, we went to see a dilapidated, ruin church. As we got out of the bus and entered, a melody blended with the sounds of the birds flying through the collapsed roof: *Der Voghormia* (Lord have mercy). First a few of our group began singing, and then everybody joined in:

Lord have mercy.
All Holy Trinity, give peace to the world.
And healing to the sick, heaven to those who are asleep.
Lord have mercy.[1]

I had a similar experience in 2011 with the Van Project, a music group that had come from Armenia to Turkey to perform ethnographic work and concerts, in the Rabat church in the village of Bulanık, Artvin. As soon as we entered this crumbling church, the group gathered and hummed the same hymn, without singing the words. I narrated similar observation in Chapter 6, describing the song that Onnik sang in the church in Diyarbakır. Ruined churches are essential memory sites, for they enable the visitors to recollect the past and, through the physicality of the memory, get in touch with those who they have lost. They pay their respects to the people who lived there, and directly connect with the lost people's chronotope. The singing of *Der Voghormia* forges a link between them and history.

In 2007, Armenian journalist Hrant Dink was shot to death in front of the newspaper where he worked, by the "dark forces" of Turkey's nationalist movement. In response, thousands of people attended his funeral in a symbolic show of solidarity. At his commemoration service forty days after his murder, the first song performed by the Sayat Nova choir was *Der Voghormia*. For Istanbul's Armenian community, which believed that Hrant Dink's murder was a symbolic continuation of 1915, the song provided a narrative transitivity between past and present; between the Ottoman lands and Istanbul of modern Turkey, in different layers of time and space.

1 *Der Voghormia. Amenasurp Yerortutyun, dur ashkharhis khaghaghutyun. Yev hivantatz pıjhıshgıtyun, nınchetselots arkayutyun. Der Voghormia.*

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In a 2008 concert trip to Yerevan with the Sayat Nova Chorus, we visited a monument called *Tzitzernakaberd*. The holy places that exiled people create in their adopted homelands, eventually become sites for commemorative ceremonies. For the Armenians, *Tzitzernakaberd* was just such a site, and is located on a hill visible from all of Yerevan. Along the road to this monument is a wall bearing the names of all the cities where massacres were committed; Muş, Bitlis, Van, Malatya, Varto, Adapazarı, Adana... Disturbingly the list goes on and on. On the back side of that wall, the names of those people who struggled to prevent the slaughter are listed. The design of the monument is based on life and death, those who left and those who remained, and the dilemma between past and future. At the end is a pointed monument composed of two pieces. The shorter part stands for those who lost their lives, while the longer piece symbolizes the Armenians who are alive. The eternal flame at the center of the monument expresses the undying memory of those who lived in the past, but also the never-ending hope for the future. The Sayat Nova chorus stood silently around the flame for a time. Then one member spontaneously began singing *Der Voghormia* and the entire chorus, in tears, joined in the song.

In 2011, the city of Van was struck by the largest earthquake in the history of modern Turkey. 644 people lost their lives, 1,966 were injured, and 252 were rescued from under the rubble. After this tragic event, the Municipality of Şişli, Istanbul, organized a televised “Songs for Van” benefit concert with performances by many singers from Turkey. The concert marked the first time that an Armenian chorus had appeared on Turkish television, singing in Armenian. The Lusavoriç chorus, one of the most active Armenian choirs in Istanbul, under the direction of Hagop Mamigonyan, sang *Der Voghormia* for those who had been killed in the earthquake. I feel that the song has become blended with memories of violence, of catastrophe and death and loss, though in a very different context.

In 2009, the Getronagan Alumni Association held a workshop by Aram Kerovpyan on the roots of the Armenian music modes/*makam*s. The principle aim of the workshop was to introduce and promote the traditional religious Armenian melodies and modes. I participated in the workshop, and that song, *Der Voghormia*, which had kept appearing throughout my fieldwork, found me there as well. We learned different versions of the song in various modes. Years later, when my dear friend Ara Dinkjian came to Istanbul for a concert, he told me that Hasan Saltık of Kalan Müzik had proposed him to record an album in 2015, on the subject of 1915. Ara said he had selected a set of songs dealing with mourning, the peace of the souls of the departed, and struggle. He mentioned that he planned to include the song *Der Voghormia* on the album. It was quite interesting, and courageous of him to play a hymn melody without lyrics. I told him about Aram Kerovpyan’s workshop and our experiences with this song in various Armenian church modes. He already knew some of the versions but listened to the workshop recordings and transcribed some of them. He then played *Der Voghormia* as a medley of four

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melodies (*Ta Gen* mode / Uşşak, *Ta Gen Tartsvatsk* mode / Rast, *Kim Tsa* mode / Hicaz, and *Pen Tsa* mode / Nihavent) in his album *1915-2015 Truth & Hope*. Is this effort to revive these nearly-forgotten melodies on an album dealing with 1915 not yet another narrative of loss?

In April 2015, Lebanese-Armenian singer Eileen Khatchadourian performed at the Istanbul Convention Center, as part of the In Memoriam Concert for the 100th anniversary of 1915. Before her powerful, non-traditional performance of *Der Voghormia* in electronic music style from her album *Titernig*, she gave a short speech:

> "I am very happy, very happy and very proud, to be here tonight on the lands of my grandparents, who were forced to leave a hundred years ago. They, like all the 1 million and a half victims of the Armenian genocide, are watching us tonight. The next song is a prayer called *Der Voghormia*, God Have Mercy. I dedicate this song to all minorities who today are suffering terrible persecution, in the Middle East and elsewhere around the world. Have Mercy On Us."

I could add countless more examples and accounts relating to this song, but I want to stress here is that the collective world of meaning relating to this song in the memories of Armenians also leads to the reconstruction of cultural memory everywhere, and in every context, in which this song is performed. The narrative that I have constructed here for *Der Voghormia* could apply to many other Armenian songs as well: *Dıle Yaman* as a traditional Armenian folk song that symbolizes yearning for the homeland; *Grung* about the migratory crane; or *Sari Gyalin* which represents a narrative (or exploitation) of brotherhood from a liberal multiculturalist perspective as does. For an ethnomusicologist researching Armenian music, the recognition of 1915 is a central issue, because in every chapter – and perhaps on every page – of this book, the issue of Armenian musicking, which I have discussed as carrier of cultural memory and a performative compound of identity, is simultaneously an expression of the loss experienced in 1915, and a means of dealing with that loss. For Armenians in Turkey, Armenia or anywhere in the world, Armenian musicking helps them to remember their loss, grieve and recover, and in this way, to survive. It is a link between personal destinies, cultural memories and the pain of survival. Musicking is a way to share sorrow and the hope in a collective echo. The meaning of every Armenian song is continuously being reinvented and presented as a site for cultural memory and identification, in different cases and situations. In reference to Nora's "sites of memory," every Armenian song turns into a "song of memory." For this reason, the recognition of 1915 is, for an ethnomusicologist, not only a humane responsibility, but a precondition for the ability to listen to and sing these songs, and to be present in the field.

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