

# The Relationship between Art and Politics in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Ottoman Empire

## *Institutionalization, Change and Continuity*



Editors

**Ayşegül KOMSUOĞLU**

**Hikmet TOKER**

**Federica NARDELLA**





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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND POLITICS IN THE 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY OTTOMAN EMPIRE: INSTITUTIONALIZATION, CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

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### THE EDITORS

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**Hikmet Toker** is Associate Professor of Musicology in the Department of Musicology at Istanbul University, State Conservatory. He graduated from Haliç University’s Conservatory in 2005 and from the Music Education master’s program at the Institute of Educational Sciences, Yeditepe University in 2006. He then attended a doctoral program in the Department of Islamic History and Arts at Marmara University. After completing his PhD, he joined the Music Department at King’s College, London as a post-doctoral researcher between 2015 and 2016. After he returned to Turkey, he became an Associate Professor of Musicology in 2017. Hikmet Toker continues his musical work as a tanbur player and a vocalist. He is currently conducting a number of projects in the field of historical musicology with a focus on music history of the Ottoman Era. He has published four books and numerous articles on the subject.

**Federica Nardella** completed her BA degree in English Literature and Creative Writing at Royal Holloway and her MMus degree in Ethnomusicology at the School of Oriental and African Studies; with both degrees being a part of the University of London. From 2005 to 2018, she worked as a Musician, Teacher, and Translator in London. Between 2007 and 2012, she composed, arranged, self-produced, and performed two EPs (*And Yet I Was Happy, and Yet I Was Sad*, 2008; *Ishtar*, 2012) and one album (*Babylon Mood*, 2012), all while performing at various live music venues of London (Ain’t Nothin’ But, The Troubadour, Ronnie Scott’s, The Spice of Life among others) and joining blues and jazz jam sessions as well as performing her own materials. In 2014, she began studying Turkish classical music under the guidance of Master Necati Çelik. She is currently PhD Candidate in King’s College, London and moved to Istanbul in 2018 to conduct fieldwork for her PhD project. In 2020, she published a collection of poems titled *Songfield: Merging Beyond* for the online poetry journal *Still Point*. Several of her works on ethnomusicology and music history have been published in both international and national journals. Her current research interests include ecomusicology, environmental issues, and the impact of sound on ecosystems, environmental conflict resolution, and climate change.

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### THE CONTRIBUTORS

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**İnanç Özekmekçi** completed his undergraduate education at the Faculty of Political Sciences, İstanbul University in 2003 and his master’s degree at Boğaziçi University in 2005. He obtained his PhD degree From the Department of International Relations, Institute of Social Sciences, İstanbul University in 2012. He has been working as an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Erciyes University since 2013. He has also been conducting his academic studies mainly in the fields of Turkish modernization, medicine, politics, and political sociology. Özekmekçi is a board member of the Kayseri Memory Center and Beşikçizade Center for Medical Humanities.

**Okan Murat Öztürk** completed his doctoral thesis titled “A New Approach to the Melody and Makam Relationship in Makam Music in Terms of Analysis and Interpretation: Tone/Fret Tunings and Melodic Makam Nuclei” in 2014. His main interests include researching the concept of maqam in theoretical and historical terms as well as various problems encountered in the field of music in Turkey together with the change from the Eastern civilization to Western civilization. He published his first book *Zeybek Culture and Music* in 2006. As an Editor, Writer, or Translator, his works can be found in several publications, such as *Mehter* (2020), *Music Policies of the Republic* (2019), *Turkish Music Atlas* (2019), *Turkic Soundscapes* (2018), *Die Bağlama in der Türkei und Europa* (2018), *Tanburi Cemil Bey* (2017), *Illusion* (2016), *Maqam Traditions* (2016), *Writing the History of “Ottoman Music”* (2015), *Space of Mugham* (2015), *In Which Direction is Music Heading?* (2014), *The Kirsehirli Edvar* (2014), *The Maqam* (2012), and *Music Culture in Turkey* (2008). He conducted joint projects with many distinguished domestic and foreign researchers and artists. In 1988, he founded the first bağlama trio in Turkey—the Bengi Bağlama Trio. In addition to the many album records, Öztürk produced and presented various TV and radio programs such as *Katre*, *Anonim*, *Eski*



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*Havalar* for TRT. He worked as bağlama artist in the State Turkish Folk Music Choir of the Ministry of Culture and TRT Ankara Radio Yurttan Sesler Choir. He is also a member of various scientific and professional organizations, such as the ICTM, Ethnomusicology Association, and Müyorbir.

**Armağan Coşkun** graduated from the Faculty of Languages, History and Geography, Department of Eastern Languages and Literatures, Ankara University in 1986. After finishing a MA degree in the same department in 1989, she completed a second MA degree in the Department of Turkish Folk Literature, Gazi University in 1992 and a PhD degree in the same department. In 2012, Armağan Coşkun was awarded with the title of first Associate Professor ever held in the discipline of Turkish folklore in the field of music. She was also awarded the title of Full Professor in 2018 in the field of Turkish music. She is currently the Chair of State Conservatory, Department of Turkish Music, İstanbul University while holding solo concerts. Coşkun has conducted many field research works in Anatolia and Balkans while being the Project Manager and Project Consultant in many national and international projects. Her research interests include Turkish folklore, Turkish folk music, Âşık (Turkish Minstrel) music, Türkü. Coşkun has published various national and international book chapters, articles, conference proceedings and books; the latest among which are “Âşık Müziği-Âşık Şeref Taşlıova'nın Ezgi Repertuarı” (The Melody Repertoire of Âşık Şeref Taşlıova), 2011 and “Anadolu Aleviliğinde Cem Âşıklığı/Zâkirliği” (Cem Âşıklık/Zâkirlik in Anatolian Alevism), 2017. Coşkun released solo albums titled “Şirindir” (Anadolu Halk Ezgilerinden Örnekler), 1993; “Değişler ve Semahlar” 1996; “Atatürk'ün Sevdiği Türküler, Şarkılar/Kahramanlık ve Asker Türküleri” 2001 and 2006; and “Semahlar,” 2009. Coşkun, who worked as a solo artist in the Ministry of Culture's Ankara State Turkish Folk Music Choir from 1986 to 2006, holds the title of “State Artist” (Republic of Turkey Presidency and Ministry of Culture) (awarded in 1998), Award of Service to Turkish Folklore (awarded in 1998), and Sensitivity to Ethical Principles in Turkish Folk Music (awarded in 2019) as well as many other awards.

**Bilen Işıktaş** was accepted into the Basic Sciences and Voice Training Departments of the Turkish Music State Conservatory at Istanbul Technical University in 2008. During the same years he founded “3 Dem Oud Trio” with Dr. Bekir Şahin Baloğlu and Dr. Sami Dural. They then released the album “Geç” [Late] comprising a repertoire of musical instruments. In June 2009, he was the second prize winner in the oud competition organized by the Arab Music Academy and the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik located in Beirut. He completed his MA degree in 2011 and PhD degree in 2016 at ITU (Turkish Music). He has participated in major artistic events worldwide with his oud. In addition to his artistic studies, he continued academic studies without interruption. His main research areas include sociology of music, historical musicology, Ottoman/Turkish music, the effect of modernization on music culture, the Frankfurt School, and popular culture. His first book *Harflerin ve Seslerin Ruhundaki*

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*Seyyahlar: Mehmet Akif Ersoy ve Şerif Muhiddin Targan* (Travelers in the Soul of Letters and Sounds: Mehmet Akif Ersoy and Şerif Muhiddin Targan) was released in 2017, followed by *Peygamber'in Dâhi Torunu: Şerif Muhiddin Targan, Modernleşme, Bireyselleşme, Virtuozite* (The Prodigious Descendant of the Prophet: Şerif Muhiddin Targan, Modernization, Individualization, Virtuosity), which was published in 2018. Işıktaş is currently working as an Associate Professor of Musicology in the Department of Musicology at the State Conservatory of Istanbul University.

**Nevin Şahin** is Assistant Professor of Music Theories at the State Conservatory of Hacettepe University, Ankara. After completing her MS degree in Social Anthropology with an ethnographic research project focusing on music and migration among German–Turkish young women in amateur Turkish music choirs, she completed her PhD degree in Sociology in 2016 with her research based on music and power among performers of Mevlevi music, which was awarded the Thesis of the Year by the Graduate School of Social Sciences at Middle East Technical University. She has worked in several research projects, including comparative theoretical research on makam music and Byzantine music. She has published articles and book chapters mainly on traditional Turkish music. Besides her research profile, she taught courses on English, introduction to sociology, and religious music traditions. From 2018 to 2021, she worked at the Orient-Institut Istanbul as part of the Corpus Musicae Ottomanicae team, which is a digital humanities project for the critical editions of Near Eastern music manuscripts and an online source catalogue for manuscript and print music sources.

**Cenk Güray** received his BA degree in 1995, MA degree in 1998, and PhD degree in 2003 from the Mining Engineering Department of Middle East Technical University. He received his MA degree in Musicology from Başkent University in 2006 and PhD degree in Turkish Religious Music from Ankara University in 2012. Currently, he is working as a Professor of Music Theory in the Department of Music Theory of the Hacettepe University's State Conservatory, Ankara while mainly concentrating on “Turkish Music Theory,” “Makam Analysis,” and “Theory of Cycles.” As a bağlama performer, he performed with ensembles like ABİS-Experimental Music Ensemble, Mediterranean Orchestra, Yağmur Öncesi, Dem Trio, Zeybek Havaları, Akis, Barok Miniatures, and METU Turkish Folklore Club Bağlama Orchestra. As a performer, composer, and researcher, he has also worked, performer, and director in many symposiums, conferences, concerts, seminars, workshops, masterclasses, TV–Radio programs, CD projects worldwide and wrote or edited many books, book chapters, papers, stories, and poems with regard to his area of interests. Cenk Güray is also the Director of the Ensemble for Anatolian Music Cultures.

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research on church art and the religious revival of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the territory of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren. She has published many articles and book chapters on the visual culture of the Balkans, with a focus on sacral art in the Ottoman era. She is a member of the Panel of Experts of the Association of Historians of Early Modern Art and Visual Culture (Belgrade), and a member of Matica Srpska's and Committee for Kosovo and Metohija (Novi Sad). She has worked on the research projects "Material and Spiritual Culture of Kosovo and Metohija", and "On the Holy Water of Lim" financed by the Republic of Serbia, and is currently a team member of the project "Visual Culture, Piety and Propaganda: Transfer and Reception of Russian Religious Art in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean (16<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century)" implemented by the Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas and the Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Crete.

**Nurettin Gemici** is Professor of Islamic History in the Department of Islamic History and Arts at the Faculty of Theology, Istanbul University. He graduated from Marmara University in 1990. He holds a MA in history from the same university. After his graduation from the program, he undertook doctoral research in Bamberg University in Germany. He completed his doctoral dissertation entitled "Evliya Çelebi in Medina" in 1999. His main research areas are Evliya Çelebi, travel books of the Ottoman era, and history of culture. His recent publications are as follows: "Evliya Çelebi in Medina," Marburg, 1999; "On Yedinci Yüzyıl'da Kadınlar: Evliya Çelebi'nin Gözlemleriyle (Women in the 17th Century According to Ewliya Chelebi's Observations), 2011; and "Osmanlı'nın Bilgeleri," Evliya Çelebi (Ottoman Men of Wisdom), İstanbul, 2018.

**Hilal Akgül** graduated from the Faculty of Economics, Istanbul University. She holds a MA degree in International Relations and PhD degree in Turkish History from the same University. She wrote a thesis titled "The Moratorium of 1958" and discussed the economic policies of the Democrat Party. Her research interests are Ottoman-Turkish politics and political institutions in Turkey, political parties and governments in Turkey from the 1920s to 1960. Since 1998, she has been a part of the academic staff at Istanbul Bilgi University. In addition to Istanbul Bilgi University, she teaches undergraduate and postgraduate courses at various universities, such as Istanbul University, Istanbul Technical University, Bahçeşehir University. She has published articles on Turkish history and politics in academic journals and academic books.

**Erhan Özden** graduated from the Department of Music Sciences, Faculty of Fine Arts, Atatürk University in 2001. He taught the Turkish Music Theory and Ney courses in the same faculty until 2009. Meanwhile, he joined the Turkish Music Choir of the TRT Erzurum Radio as a ney player. He completed his doctoral studies in the Institute of Social Sciences, Marmara University. Participating in several concerts and academic projects in both Turkey and abroad, Erhan Özden prepared albums of performances such as Neyzen I, Neyzen II, and Erzurumlu Kemani Haydar Telhüner Şarkıları. His books *Erzurumi İlahiler* (2016), *Ney*

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*Öğretim Programı* (2016), and *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Konservatuvarı Darülelhan* (2019) were published by Atatürk University Press, Department of Secondary Education of the Turkish Ministry of National Education, and Atatürk Cultural Center Press, respectively. Erhan Özden is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Turkish Religious Music, Faculty of Theology, Istanbul University. He also teaches Turkish music at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University and continues his work as a Founding Principal of Itri Fine Arts High School, Istanbul University.

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## INTRODUCTION

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In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire's social, economic, military, and political structures changed. Military officers began to study the Western nations' technical and institutional structures to understand and resolve the causes of recent defeats and subsequent loss of land. Modernization efforts that began in the military field evolved into a movement to modernize all institutional structures. The Empire's intention to adapt to a rapidly changing world was evident in the widespread modernization of all fields, from art and agriculture to education and transportation. The reforms had some peculiar features. One such feature is continuity between old and new structures.

During this time, modernization caused an abrupt change in art. The most significant change was the institutionalization of plastic, visual, and performing arts. Many art institutions were founded between the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. New regulations were drafted to modernize art foundations. Musical ensembles were converted into formal establishments. However, these new establishments did not replace either old structures and educational systems or their traditional elements.

This coexistence of old and new allowed for continuity between the two, enabling different "worlds" to exist simultaneously. It also allowed different forms and mentalities across the Ottoman world to merge. Artists and administrators familiar with old and new systems played an important role in the construction of continuity in the Empire.

Another change was the politicization of art; for example, music was used to construct power symbols. Given its political use in the process of modernization of the Ottoman Empire, art can be seen as a significant component of the new Ottoman identity.

"The Relationship between Art and Politics in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Ottoman Empire: institutionalization, Change and Continuity" is an interdisciplinary reading of change and continuity in the Empire's period of modernization within the context of art and politics. We discuss how changes in the political, economic, and social spheres and the intervention of important figures and events affected various forms of art through different dynamics of change and continuity. The authors of this book are scholars working in different fields of the social sciences, bringing an interdisciplinary approach to the subject matter.

The first chapter, written by renowned Ottoman historian Bülent Arı, is a historical introduction to the Westernization and modernization of the Ottoman Empire. Arı presents the general political dynamics of the Ottoman Empire during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He provides readers with an important preliminary overview, focusing on the political dynamics of Ottoman attempts at modernization from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These historical events are described as attempts at either modernization or Westernization. They did not follow a linear timeline and were sometimes subject to fluctuations. Arı describes the military, legal, administrative, social, and institutional milestones of modernization

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and Westernization. For instance, Selim III's attempts were mainly military, but from the Tanzimat onward, the developments were political, legal, and administrative. The article also touches upon the domestic and international developments that affected the process of modernization. The Russian wars, in particular, are considered the main factor to have influenced Ottoman statesmen until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, the Western powers did not fully support the Ottoman Empire during this period. In response, Ottoman statesmen worked against each other to sustain the Empire's diplomacy. The article ends describing the final developments of the nineteenth century and the inheritance of a state system.

In the second chapter, İnanç Özekmekçi, a political scientist, examines how the perception of art reverberates in the story of renowned painter Zonaro. The shift in perception reflects the Empire's political transformation from a classical patrimonial state into a centralized bureaucratic state with modern techniques for governance. Portraits of the sultans were placed in prominent public locations, enhancing legitimacy in public perception. Imperial art collections symbolized the Sultan's relationship with the Western art world and aristocracy. Özekmekçi discusses Abdülhamit's relationship with art through the story of Zonaro, a renowned painter, and his effort to create a modern image of a ruler through various forms of artwork and collections.

Okan Murat Öztürk discusses the effects of Comte's positivism, which resonated with the Ottoman intellectuals who were developing an empirical theory of Ottoman music. Öztürk examines the intellectuals' identities and relationships from a prosopographical perspective. He focuses on how those who aimed to develop a new theory for Ottoman music did so by relating their work to science, technology, evolution, progress, and civilization. Contrary to common claims on the subject, his research reveals that five people, not six, played an active role in the process. The role of positivism in the Ottoman world during the 19<sup>th</sup> century reveals that the development of a scientific theory for music originates from a strong belief in evolution and progress.

Poems composed by minstrels are a source of information about the era they were composed in. Armağan Coşkun examines the poems for a perspective on the political and military events of the time. She also analyzes the poems for more detailed information about economic and social developments. Coşkun's insightful use of poetry for a historical perspective extends beyond what is found in classical historical works, including details on the values of society, sentiment, and views of political and military events.

In the following chapter, Bilen Işıktaş scrutinizes the effects of political and social change on the vision and mentality of artists in the last century of the Ottoman Empire. Işıktaş focuses on the example of Şerif Muhittin Targan, an important musician and composer whose musical education and culture were first shaped during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He traces the political and social dynamics characterising the musician's life. Işıktaş also examines the

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hybridity and continuity phenomena through Targan's pieces, which contain Western and Eastern elements. Finally, Işıktaş' study is an important example that builds on micro samples of the social sciences.

Music researchers Cenk Güray and Nevin Şahin explore changes in the Ottoman Empire within the framework of nationalism. The reform period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century led to significant changes in the identities of minority groups, from ethno-religious identities to a national identity. The authors consider the role of music theory and the music publishing tradition in the process. For this purpose, the authors examine the studies of Greek Orthodox theorists Apostolos Konstas (1800-1820), Konstantinos Protopsaltis (1843), and Panagiotis Kiltzanidis (1881). Şahin and Güray analyze music theories for signs of nationalism using a multidisciplinary framework. This study shows that musicological studies can yield original findings and results when they are carried out with a multidisciplinary vision.

Ivana Zenarju examines the relationship between architecture and reform in the territory of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. More specifically, several reforms were enacted after the declaration of the Tanzimat. These reforms brought new regulations and rights to Christians, which led to the rise of ecclesiastical life and the development of church art in the Patriarchate. This renovation movement affected the whole territory, from little town churches to big urban basilicas. Zenarju applies visual examples to scrutinize the politically inclined renovation process. Additionally, she highlights the Russian and Serbian support for the renovations as proof that art was used as an international political instrument.

In the following chapter, Nurettin Gemici and Hikmet Toker analyze the phenomenon of continuity characterizing Ottoman reforms through the relationship between the preceding and succeeding foundations Mehterhane, and Musika-i Hümayûn. The authors trace the adaptive mentality of the reforms by examining the continuity between the foundations. Additionally, they touch on the political motivation behind the reforms and how it affected these musical foundations. They discuss the mission, foundation, and management dynamics, as well as the music education, of both foundations.

Hilal Akgül explores the institutionalization of National Anthems in the Ottoman Empire. When the process of music Westernization began, the march became a favorite genre across the Empire. Foreign musicians began to dedicate compositions to Ottoman Sultans, dynasty members, and officers. Ottoman officers needed anthems to play at new Western-style ceremonies. They would perform different marches in place of a national anthem. Akgül examines the role played by anthems in the formation of an Ottoman national identity and as a symbol of "İttihat-ı Anasır," the aim of which was to unify all segments of society under an Ottoman identity. This was a concept dear to many Ottoman officers and intellectuals, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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Two other contributors to this book are Erhan Özden and Milad Salamani. They consider the motivation behind the nationalization of music academies and the political and social reasons for their founding. Additionally, they analyze the educational model used by academies. They trace the differences and similarities between the old and new systems of music education. Furthermore, the authors explore important aspects of the institutionalization of and continuity between the academies, specifically their foundation and work. Alongside the aforementioned relationship between old and new forms of music education, they present new information about the process of institutionalization with archival documents from the Empire's Ministry of Education. They also trace shifts in the Empire's cultural policies through the archival documents.

This book introduces five points that provide a framework for the role of art in the modernization of the Ottoman Empire during the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

1. Politics was a major influence behind the development of art.
2. Continuity existed between old and reformed structures.
3. Institutionalization was an important feature of reforms to the arts
4. Institutionalization occurred in all branches of the arts.
5. Art was used as a political instrument.

This book illustrates the importance of interdisciplinary studies. The chapters written by authors from different fields of the social sciences provide important insights on the role of art in a changing Empire. This book will be one of the first interdisciplinary volumes to study issues concerning the relationship between art and politics in the Ottoman Empire. We hope that it will inspire new research.



## FOREWORD

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We, Ayşegül Komsuoğlu and Hikmet Toker, scholars of the relationship between the arts and Ottoman-Turkish politics, produced this volume focusing on the effects of modernization on the art world of the Ottoman Empire during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, its “longest century.” There have been a few collaborative and cross-disciplinary academic studies in Turkey, so we thought it would be valuable to offer an interdisciplinary contribution to debates on art and politics from a historical perspective. Federica Nardella, who is known for her work in the field, joined our editorial team as an international researcher.

Researchers from various fields responded to our call for contributions, allowing us to gather many papers by qualified scholars in this edited book. We believe that its ten chapters, which describe Ottoman-Turkish modernization both in its historical continuities and ruptures, will be an important reference for readers seeking knowledge in a comprehensive framework at the intersection of history, politics, and art.

We thank all of those who contributed to the development of this comprehensive volume. First and foremost, our profound gratitude goes to the chapter authors and co-authors for their contributions, their patience, and their valuable suggestions for improvement.

Finally, our families deserve particular thanks for allowing us the time needed to work on this project.

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