WESTERN STYLE ROYAL/NATIONAL ANTHEMS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: TRACING RESISTANCE TO CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY*

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Abstract: The institution of constitutional monarchies in most European countries in the nineteenth century was accompanied by nation-state formations which were legitimized and popularized by 'national' anthems, as different from 'royal' anthems. For instance, the British national anthem God Save the King, which became popular as early as the mid-eighteenth century, became a musical expression of British national identity and unity since then, and the apparent reference to 'monarchy' did not contradict the rise of a parliament and the transfer of *de facto* political power from the monarch to a parliament. Again, from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, successive Ottoman rulers began to look to the West to find remedies for the declining power of the Ottoman state, mainly represented by the weakening of its military strength. Until the Tanzimat Fermanı (Rearrangement Edict) of 1839, westernization attempts were limited to the relative reform and modernization of the Ottoman military. After 1839, however, Ottoman rulers felt the necessity, mostly forced by circumstance, to adopt a more comprehensive understanding of westernization, which, in the nineteenth century, could only be complete with a transition towards constitutional monarchy. During this century, seven Ottoman monarchs stayed in power and the Ottoman Empire had five national anthems, all of them dedicated to and called by the names of the monarchs who were in power, composed by European musicians commissioned by respective sultans. Against the relevant social, cultural and political background, this paper argues that the foregrounding of the 'individual monarch' as a figure in supposedly 'national' anthems may have been intentional to reflect the symbolic resistance of Ottoman monarchs to constitutionalism, even though they appeared to be for constitutional monarchy.

Key words: Royal Anthems, National Anthems, Ottoman Empire, Constitutional Monarchy.

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Batı Tarzı Saltanat/Ulusal Marşları: Meşrutiyete Direnişin İzleri

Özet: On dokuzuncu yüzyılda birçok Avrupa ülkesinde meşrutiyet rejimlerinin yerleşmesine paralel olarak ulus-devlet yapıları belirgin olarak ortaya çıkmış ve bu yapılar "saltanat" marşlarından farklı olan "ulusal" marşlar vasıtasıyla meşrulaştırılmış ve popülerleştirilmişlerdir. Örnek olarak, Britanya ulusal marşı God Save the King (Tanrı Kralı Korusun) daha on sekizinci yüzyılın ortalarında popülerlik kazanmış ve o zamandan beri Britanya ulusal kimliğinin müziksel

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ifadesi olmuştur ve bu marşta açıkça görülen "monarşi" unsuru hiçbir zaman bir parlementonun gelişimini ve gerçek siyasi gücün kraliyetten parlementoya aktarılmasına engel teşkil etmemiştir. On sekizinci yüzyılın ortalarından itibaren Osmanlı padişahları Osmanlı devletinin, özellikle de askeri gücünün, zayıflamasına çareler bulmak için Batı'ya dönmüşlerdir. 1839 Tanzimat Fermanı'na kadar olan dönemde batılılaşma çabaları Osmanlı ordusunun göreceli modernizasyonu ile sınırlı kalmıştır. Ancak 1839'dan sonraki dönemde Osmanlı padişahları, koşullarının etkisiyle, çok daha kapsamlı bir batılılaşma anlayışına ihtiyaçları olduğunu anlamışlardır; ki bu da on dokuzuncu yüzyıl koşullarında meşrutiyet rejimine geçmeyi gerektirmiştir. Yedi Osmanlı padişahının tahta çıkmış olduğu bu yüzyıl boyunca Osmanlı imparatorluğunun beş milli marşı olmuştur ve Avrupalı besteciler tarafından bestelenen bu marşların hepsi bestelendikleri dönemde tahtta bulunan padişahların adıyla ve kendilerine ithafen bestelenmiştir. İlgili sosyal, kültürel ve siyasi arkalana bağlı olarak, bu makalede "ulusal" olduğu varsayılan bu marşlarda "münferit padişah" imgelerinin öne çıkarılıp vurgulanmasının, her ne kadar meşrutiyet taraftarı gibi görünseler de, bu dönem padişahlarının meşrutiyet rejimine karşı sembolik direnişleri olarak bilinçli bir şekilde yapılmış olabileceği tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Saltanat Marşları, Ulusal Marşlar, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Meşrutiyet.

Over the past few years, a visible trend especially in mainstream western media with global outreach to restructure the image of Turkey as a 'model' for the Middle East and North Africa has run alongside the proliferation of a popular foreign policy discourse in Turkey, which nowadays is being articulated as 'New Ottomanism'. Since its early days, the discourse of New Ottomanism found immediate and widespread reception among the conservative right-wing and even the center-of-right segments of the Turkish society as it implied a 'new Turkey' which stood at the center of an influence zone exerting authority on more or less the same Middle Eastern and North African territory as the former Ottoman Empire did. Accompanying the discourse of New Ottomanism, substantial amounts of paraphernalia have emerged in the material culture of Turkey, constantly feeding into and being fed from the discourse. From car decals to t-shirts and home decoration items; from popular books, magazines and TV shows with historical subjects to the display of the maps of Ottoman Empire in highbrow prime-time TV debates, New Ottomanism has permeated contemporary culture in Turkey[1]. Even though in a recent article, İlber Ortaylı, who is perhaps one of the two most eminent scholars of Ottoman history in the twenty-first century, stated that Turkey's becoming an imperial power again is

[1] The fact that *Fetih 1453* (Conquest 1453), the film with the highest budget in the history of Turkish cinema so far, with an estimated budget of USD 8 million (Fetih 1453), has broken the box-office record in only four days after its release on February 16, 2012 is evidently an indication of the pervasiveness and popularity of New Ottomanism in contemporay Turkish society.

simply an impossible and unnecessary dream given her present circumstances, he also pointed out that the discourse of New Ottomanism should be known and investigated nonetheless (Ortaylı, 2011).

The starting point for this article is the idea that the study of the material culture surrounding New Ottomanism is as much important as studying the discourse itself, and that, in this atmosphere of glorification of the imperial past, it is of utmost relevance and importance to investigate what, if anything, the legacy of the Ottoman Empire can possibly offer to the Turkish nation of the twenty-first century in its almost a century old republican vision set by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk to become a respected member of the family of nations. More specifically, this article will deal with a study of the symbolic meaning of the Ottoman imperial/national anthems, as made known to the wider public in 2009 by an audio CD that came with *NTV Tarih* (Issue 3), a popular history magazine published in Turkey, in their own socio-political contexts and with reference to literature on national anthems, their construction, functions, and symbolic meanings in order to argue that they may have been symbolizing the resistance of Ottoman sultans to constitutional monarchy. Accordingly, the following description from an early nineteenth-century travel account becomes the point of departure:

> Learning that the sultan would perform his devotions this day at the mosque of Beshiktash, we proceeded to that village, in order to have a view of the Commander of the Faithful. […] We had not occupied our station more than half an hour, when the military band struck up Sultan Mahmoud's March, which announced his approach. As this was an ordinary occasion, there was little of that pomp and parade which commonly attends his appearance in public. First came some of the upper officers of his household; then four or five led horses richly caparisoned; and last of all, the great man himself. […] The men cast their eyes to the ground, the women looked up to him with eyes most dutifully beaming with loyalty [….] (De Kay, 1833, pp. 232-237) [2]

When James Ellsworth De Kay, a nineteenth-century American biologist who lived in Turkey for about a year, published his *Sketches of Turkey in 1831 and 1832*, his self-stated goal was to

> preserve a record of [his] own impressions [of Turkey], without reference to the descriptions of many preceding tourists, who seem[ed] to have taken a marvelous pleasure in exaggerating the vices and suppressing the good points of the Turkish character (De Kay, 1833, p. iv).

True to his word, his travel account provides quite an even-handed observation of many Turkish characteristics, as well as appreciation of Turkish civilization

[2] All references to De Kay's work in this article are from the Turkish translation.

and culture through comparison and contrast with American society and culture of his age. However, the above quotation from his account also points to a problem in the westernization attempts of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century. In De Kay's description, Sultan Mahmud II's (1808-1839) arrival is announced by the Mahmudiye March, composed in 1829 in western-style by Giuseppe Donizetti, an Italian composer employed at the Ottoman court (Kutlay Baydar, 2010, p. 286)[3]. Being the first ever official anthem of the Ottoman state, the Mahmudiye March was a 'royal'[4] anthem and was used from 1829 to 1839. As Kutlay Baydar explains, in the nineteenth century a separate march was dedicated to each succeeding sultan, and these marches were adopted as 'national' anthems of the Ottoman State during the reigns of respective monarchs (Kutlay Baydar, 2010, p. 286). Accordingly, the Mahmudiye March was followed by four other anthems composed in Western style, namely Mecidiye, Aziziye, Hamidiye and Reşadiye marches, named after sultans Abdülmecid, Abdüzlaziz, Abdülhamid II and Mehmet Reşad. Of the six sultans who reigned after Mahmud II, only two, Murat V, who reigned for three months, and Mehmet Vahdettin, the last sultan of the Empire, did not have anthems named after them. The Aziziye March was used during the reign of Murat V, and Donizetti's Mahmudiye March was the official anthem from 1918 until the end of Sultan Vahdettin's reign.

The problem illustrated by the scene in De Kay's travel account is posed by the discrepancy between the adoption of 'royal' anthems as 'national' anthems and the concept of 'national anthem' and its function as a symbol. The display of ultimate subjection of the people whose "eyes most dutifully beam […] with loyalty" upon hearing the Mahmudiye March is the discrepancy and, in fact, the bitter irony. In his groundbreaking work *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson has introduced the idea that nations are "imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal *comradeship* (italics mine)" (Anderson, 2006, p. 7). Likewise, Anthony D. Smith pointed out that "[a]s a doctrine of culture and a symbolic language and consciousness, nationalism's primary concern is to create a world of *collective* (italics mine) cultural identities or cultural nations" (Smith, 1991, p. 99). In other words,

[3] For a detailed account of the European musicians in the Ottoman court and their contribution to the development of Western music in the Ottoman Empire, see Kutlay Baydar, 2009.

[4] As reported by Fatih Tepebaşılı, the definition of 'royal' anthems was done as early as 1908 by Emil Bohn, who categorized anthems into two groups: "Royal Anthems" (*Königshymne*) narrating and celebrating the heroic and epic deeds of a monarch; and "folk" or "country" anthems based on the shared experiences of nations (Tepebaşılı, 2005, p. 388).

'comradeship' and 'collectivity' stand out as the most important keywords for a national identity and the symbols representing that identity. Drawing from Anderson's theories on national identity formation, Kelen and Pavkovic have aptly defined national anthems as "instruments of unison […] of 'singing ourselves together' " (Kelen and Pavkovic, 2010, p. 443). As such, national anthems are "signature tunes evoking not only the appropriate set of patriotic emotions, but also triggering a learned set of bodily responses – standing up to show respect, placing hand over heart, raising a hand clenched in a fist" (Kelen and Pavkovic, 2010, p. 443). With reference to Anderson's views that have gained a wide currency in the academia, Ottoman anthems, or at least the Mahmudiye March, would not qualify as 'national' anthems. Obviously, casting eyes to the ground to display, not 'comradeship' but absolute subjection to a person, which was the case in the Ottoman practice as we learn from De Kay, does not really fit into the general nature of bodily responses to national anthems.

Again, in line with Anderson's approach on the constructedness of national identities, Pål Kolstø has argued that "national identity is not an innate quality in human beings […] Like any other identity national identity has to be *learnt*" (Kolstø, 2006, p. 676) and referred to national anthems, among other national symbols like flags and coats of arms, as exemplifying the audiovisual aid that are "important instruments in any learning process" (Kolstø, 2006, p. 676) and definitely so in symbolic nation building. Kolstø goes on to argue that national symbols may have both unifying and divisive potentials depending on "what and whom they are being associated with and how they are being exploited politically" (Kolstø, 2006, p. 696), but states that "national symbols derived from mythical ethno-history will be unifying" (Kolstø, 2006, p. 678). When put to test by the concepts discussed by Kolstø, Ottoman anthems would not seem to have unifying potential and effects. Having been commissioned by and attributed to individual monarchs and even entitled with the names of the successive sultans, and thus reflecting next to nothing from mythical ethno-history of the Ottoman society, these anthems composed in an alien, Western style could not convey any message of unity of the citizenry of the Ottoman Empire as one entity, and even more so in the absence of lyrics, which might have compensated for the alienating musical element. In fact, the audible Western influence on supposedly 'national' anthems must have implied notions far less favorable than national unity. As Karen Cerulo has shown in her study of the relationship between sociopolitical control and symbolic codes as exemplified by the musical structure of national anthems, these musical expressions "tell us whether that nation is primarily exerting control over other countries or succumbing to the control of other countries" (Cerulo, 1989, p. 82). In that sense, the Western style national anthems of the Ottoman Empire were mirrors reflecting the Western pressure on the Ottoman state in the nineteenth

century. But since that pressure was mainly in the form of European assertion for political modernization of the Ottoman regime towards a constitutional monarchy, it can be argued that at least the titles of the anthems were the sites where this foreign assertion for a new regime was contested, at least symbolically, by the Ottoman sultans.

In *Monarchy and the Constitution*, Vernon Bogdanor deals with the evolution of constitutional monarchy in Britain and defines the regime as follows:

> A monarchy in the strict sense of the term is a state ruled by a single absolute hereditary ruler. A constitutional monarchy, however, is a state head by a sovereign who rules according to the constitution. Such a constitution may be 'written' and codified […] In a modern constitutional monarchy, the constitution, whether codified or not, permits the sovereign to perform only a very small number of public acts without the sanction of his or her ministers (Bogdanor, 1995, p.1).

Defined as such, constitutional monarchy refers to a regime in which the sovereign does not rule but reign within the sphere the limits of which are drawn by a constitution and a parliament. Since it is out of the scope of this article, the history of constitutional monarchy in Europe will not be given here. Yet, again, for the specific purposes of this study, it must be stated that in most European examples, in line with the rise of constitutional monarchy and democratic ideas in the nineteenth century, national anthems emerged and foregrounded 'nations' and their common goals and values as a people. For instance, the British national anthem God Save the King,[5] which became popular as early as the mid-eighteenth century, has been a musical expression of British national identity and unity since then. Cerulo explains that God Save the King was first written in 1740 "as a celebration of solidarity, glorifying Admiral Vernon's victory" in the Anglo-Spanish conflict from 1739 to 1748; and adopted in 1745 during the reign of King George II "as a tool for retaining loyalty to the crown" during the Jacobite rebellion (Cerulo, 1989, p. 78). The unifying effects of the anthem was so visible and functional that, witnessing people's responses to God Save the King while in England, German composer Joseph Haydn decided to compose a similar anthem in 1797, Das Lied Der Deutschen (The Song of the Germans) for the German nation (Cerulo, 1989, p. 78) As far as the development of a constitutional monarchy in Britain is concerned, the apparent reference to 'monarchy' in God Save the King did not contradict the rise of a parliament and the transfer of de facto political power from the monarch to a parliament representing the people. On the contrary, as Cannon and Griffiths explain below, the whole process of transfer of authority led to the development of a 'popular' monarchy in Britain:

[5] Modified as God Save the Queen when the sovereign monarch is a queen.

> In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the monarchy has accommodated itself to the transition from an aristocratic to a liberal, and thence to a democratic society. In the process, it moved from sharing government to a share in government, and ultimately to a largely advisory role. 'Democratic monarchy' would exaggerate the speed of change […] 'Titular monarchy' would exaggerate the completeness of the loss of royal power […] The least misleading term may be 'popular monarchy', not in the sense that the monarchy has always been popular – at times it went through periods of considerable unpopularity– but that it compensated increasingly for the loss of formal political power by adopting a less remote attitude, by appealing to a wider range of its subjects, and by concerning itself greatly with its public image (Cannon and Griffiths, 1988, p. 530).

Golby and Purdue, on the other hand, aptly argued that "it is only because the British monarchy has gracefully withdrawn from a politically active role that it has survived" (Golby and Purdue, 1988, p. 11) even to our day. In other words, in Britain's evolution into a constitutional monarchy, the national anthem, even despite the clear reference to 'monarchy', but never to 'individual monarchs' has functioned as a unifying national symbol due, to some extent, to the existence of democratic notions since Magna Carta of the early thirteenth century, but mainly to the reasonable responses of British monarchs to the "zeitgeist" of the historical moment. However, the evolution of the idea of constitutional monarchy, and the practice of adopting national anthems in Ottoman context of the nineteenth century presented a different picture.

In theory, the Ottoman state was also going through a process of modernization in the nineteenth century, even though the political aspect of which, in the form of an evolution into what resembled a constitutional monarchy, came towards the end of the century. In fact, it was from the mid-eighteenth century onwards that successive Ottoman rulers had begun to look to the West to find remedies for the declining power of the Ottoman state, mainly represented by the weakening of its military strength. According to Cihan Osmanağaoğlu, the Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699 was the milestone after which the Ottomans grew curious about the reasons of the West's now-obvious military and technological superiority and sent out emissaries to European capitals like Paris to observe European technology (Osmanağaoğlu, 2004, p. 92). Mahmud I (1730-1754), Mustafa III (1757-1774), and Abdülhamid I (1774-1789) all encouraged their grand viziers to act towards the reform of the Ottoman army, but the only substantial move in the eighteenth century came during the reign of Selim III (1789-1807), whose Nizam-ı Cedid (New Order) Corps, trained and fashioned in the European style also implied a wider concern to initiate a more comprehensive reform (Osmanağaoğlu, 2004, pp. 92-93). However, all of these

attempts failed to deliver the radical ideological and intellectual transformation that was needed[6]. According to Weiker, the main potential agents of reform and modernization in the nineteenth century would have been the Ottoman bureaucracy as since the beginnings of regular diplomatic relations with European countries they had served in European capitals and had witnessed the industrial, social, political and economic revolution, as well as becoming familiar with ideas like popular monarchy and parliamentary government (Weiker, 1968, p. 456). However, in the long term, Ottoman bureaucrats were not able to bring about radical reform, as after reaching high ranks they grew "deeply committed to Ottoman values and not disposed to give up fundamental bases of the Ottoman system" (Weiker, 1968, p. 452).

Nevertheless, the first major relatively radical achievement of Ottoman modernization came during the reign of Mahmud II (1808-1839), when in 1826 he forcibly disbanded for good the centuries-old Janissary Corps and the Mehteran, the traditional Ottoman military band which had always accompanied the Janissaries. This major rupture was called Vaka-i Hayriye (The Auspicious Event). These institutions were replaced by a modernized army, namely, Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye (Victorious Mohammedan Soldiers) and a military band fashioned in Western style, the Muzika-i Humayun (The Imperial Band). A Western style band called for a Westerner chief instructor, and Mahmud II appointed Giuseppe Donizetti to the position in September 1828 (Kutlay Baydar, 2010, p. 285). After 1839, however, Ottoman rulers felt the necessity, mostly forced by circumstance, to adopt a more comprehensive understanding of westernization, which, in the nineteenth century, could only be complete with a transition towards constitutional monarchy. The highlights of the troubled Ottoman experiments with the idea of constitutional monarchy between 1839 and 1922 included the Tanzimat Fermanı (Rearrangement Edict) of 1839, the Islahat Fermanı (Reform Edict) of 1856, the First Constitution, Kanun-i Esasi, in 1876, the abolition of the Meclis-i Mebusan, the Ottoman parliament, in 1878, an İstibdat (oppression) period characterized by Abdülhamid II's personal rule from 1878 to 1908, and the second proclamation of the Constitution in 1908, which lasted until 1920 when the Turkish Grand National Assembly was founded. In 1923 the Republic of Turkey was officially

[6] To illustrate, Dr.William Wittman, who visited Constantinople and other parts of Ottoman territory from 1799 to 1801 and wrote an account of his travels, records that Selim III had asked his court astrologers and dealers in magic (reference is to *müneccim*s) to calculate the most favorable time for the launching of a new warship with seventy-four guns (Wittman, 1803, p. 57). Wittman attended the launching ceremony but remarked that it was "scarcely credible that such folly should exist in any part of Europe at the close of the eighteenth century" (Wittman, 1803, p. 57). In other words, the Ottoman mentality, even as late as the reign of Selim III, was still dominated by an 'old order'.

founded as a modern democratic nation-state. These milestones on Turkey's way to democratic parliamentary regime need to be briefly explained to understand the true nature and function of the Ottoman national anthems.

The issuing of the Tanzimat Fermanı in 1839 marks the beginning of the Tanzimat Era in Ottoman history. Issued by Sultan Abdülmecid (1839-1861), the edict aimed to reform and to reorganize the relationships between the imperial state and it subjects, as well as introducing some European practices in law, finance, education, health services and communication. The main motivation, however, was to level out the differences between the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire in terms of their rights and responsibilities and to prevent the threatening spread of nationalism among the non-Muslim territories of the empire. In his efforts to create a new Ottoman identity instead of the old millet system, in 1844 Sultan Abdülmecid introduced the first official 'national' anthem of the Empire, the Mecidiye March, which had originally been composed by Donizetti Pasha in 1839 to be used as a 'royal anthem' for Abdülmecid. As far as the westernization and political modernization attempts of the Ottoman Empire are concerned, the existence of a Western style anthem may seem expected and progressive. After all, most of the European states that were evolving into nation-states and/or constitutional monarchies throughout the nineteenth century were legitimizing and popularizing their new political identities and regimes by officially or unofficially endorsing 'national' symbols, including the anthems. Similarly, another national symbol, the first official 'national' flag of the Ottoman Empire, which is almost identical with the flag of the Republic of Turkey, was also adopted in 1844. In 1856, Abdülmecid introduced even more reforms by the Islahat Fermanı and guaranteed the full equality of Ottoman citizens in terms of enjoying the rights and liberties granted with and since the Tanzimat Fermanı. However, he had made no attempts to introduce a constitution and share his absolute power with a parliament.

Sultan Abdülaziz (186-1876), Abdülmecid's brother and successor, continued the reforms in public life but the most noticeable one was the Tâbiyyet-i Osmaniyye Kanunnamesi (Ottoman Nationality Law) of 1869, which was complementary to previous efforts to create a new Ottoman national identity as it introduced a new idea of citizenship based on a secular concept instead of religion (Qafisheh, 2008, p. 27). Abdülaziz was an admirer of the West and had visited Britain and France. However, his reluctance to introduce a constitutional system resulted in his abdication. His insincerity about real reform was also reflected in the symbolic practices of the state. While the official flag of the Empire remained the same, the official 'national' anthem was replaced by the Aziziye March, composed by Callisto Guatelli. Similarly, Murad V, who was enthroned after his uncle Abdülaziz with the expectation that he would adopt a constitution, was deposed by his ministers only 93 days after his succession.

Had he stayed in power longer, there would most probably be a Muradiye March on the list of Ottoman anthems, but during his short reign, the Aziziye March was used as the 'national' anthem.

During Abdülhamid II's reign (1876-1909), the Hamidiye March, composed by Necip Pasha, the Chief of the Muzika-i Humayun at the time and a student of the former European chiefs of the band, was the national anthem. When Abdülhamid II succeeded to the throne after his brother Murad, the hopes of the reformist circles were refreshed. Accordingly, he worked with Young Ottomans, a group of reformist intellectuals and bureaucrats who were not satisfied with the scope and implementation of Tanzimat reforms and called for a Western style constitutional and parliamentary regime. Abdülhamid's intention, on the other hand, was to emphasize his title as the Caliph of Islam to ensure the continuation of his Empire, at least in the Muslim territories. Smith explains this period as follows:

> The last seventy years of the Ottoman rule witnessed successive attempts to reform the basis of the empire (Tanzimat), including a resort to 'Ottomanism' through equality and citizenship for all subjects and to 'Islamism' under Abdul Hamid, which promoted the welfare of the Islamic inhabitants without abolishing citizenship for all. But the modernizing attempts by an aristocratic Islamic elite failed amid the break-up of first the Christian and then the Muslim parts of the empire (Smith, 1991, p. 103).

The non-Muslim territories in the Balkans were already beginning to shatter with uprisings and demands for full autonomy, if not complete independence.[7] Under these circumstances, and due to constant pressure from European powers, on December 23, 1876, Abdülhamid II declared the Kanun-i Esasi (the Basic Law) as the first constitution and a bicameral parliament, namely the Meclis-i Mebusan, was also established. The first meeting of the parliament was held on March 19, 1877.

Again, in theory, the evolution of the Ottoman state into a constitutional monarchy seemed to be smoothly proceeding, but the reality was different. Both the parliament and the constitution were far from being close to what was promised by the sultan. As Ortaylı explains, the members of the parliament who were representing the people of their cities at the Meclis-i Mebusan were not elected by the people but simply appointed by the imperial governors (Ortaylı, 2007, p. 50). The constitution, on the other hand, was essentially weak as it

[7] According to Cerulo, since events leading to fragmentation such as independence movements weaken the domestic control in sociopolitical systems, national anthems set in such contexts display features of authoritarianism to "heighten domestic control" (Cerulo, 1989, p. 82), which definitely was the case for the Hamidiye March.

recognized a monarchy with authority but no responsibility and accountability (Ortaylı, 2007, p. 56). The monarch was given the authority to send people to exile and exercise censorship on the press (Ortaylı, 2007, p. 56). Obviously, the absolutism of former monarchs had been carried into the First Constitutional Period, which did not last too long. A little more than a year after the declaration of the constitution, the parliament was dissolved by Abdülhamid, and even though the constitution was theoretically still in effect, a period of İstibdat and of the Sultan's personal rule characterized by oppression, censorship and espionage followed. Being unable to control the pressure from the Young Turks,[8] Abdülhamid II, summoned the Meclis-i Mebusan for the second time in late 1908. Soon after, Abdülhamid was deposed.

The next national anthem was the Reşadiye March (1909-1918) composed by Italo Selvelli, simply because Abdülmecid's son Mehmed Reşad was the new Sultan. Coming to the throne at age of 65 after a life of confinement in the Ottoman palace, Mehmed Reşad had no real political experience and power. Strong figures from the İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti (Committee of Union and Progress), the strongest political party in the parliament representing the Young Turks, dominated his reign. With reference to the domination of the political apparatus by the İttihat ve Terakki, one may argue that Reşad's having ordered a national anthem named after himself most probably had more to do with the Young Turks' willingness to erase Abdülhamid's name from official memory than with Reşad's assertion of his authority. When the last Ottoman Sultan, namely, Mehmed Vahdettin (1918-1922) succeeded to the throne, the First World War had already reached a point at which the survival of the Ottoman Empire looked impossible. In other words, Vahdettin had no power to assert his person as the strong center and source of the state's sovereignty. During his reign, the Mahmudiye March, the first ever official anthem of the Ottoman Empire, was used as the last national anthem, most probably deliberately so, in order to give the message that the history of the Empire had come full circle and it was no more. Last but not least, the real and modern 'national' anthem of the Turkish nation, namely, the İstiklal Marşı (Independence March), which truly narrates the nation's struggle for and love of independence, was officially adopted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1921 and its current musical composition was adopted in 1930. Ever since, it has become the way Turkish people "sing (themselves) together".

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[8] Young Turks were the Ottoman intelligentsia who were "trained as bureaucrats, but spent the most of the Tanzimat period either in exile because they were too radical for the sultan" or away from administrative positions and working as writers and journalists; but they constantly propagandized for reform and "kept a spark lighted in the despotic period after 1877" (Weiker, 1968, pp. 454-455).

At this point, the rather lengthy account of the history of modernization and political reform in the Ottoman Empire given above needs to be related to the main argument of this article. It is clear that the Ottoman sultans of the nineteenth century were not really eager to share their absolute authority with a parliament. To quote from Weiker for a concise summary of that history:

> Though Mahmud vacillated in his zeal for reform; and Sultans Abdülmejid (1839-1861) and Abdülaziz (1861-1876) were sometimes reformist, sometimes conservative, and often capricious, attempts at reform continued with few interruptions until Abdülhamid II ended them in 1877 by suspending the Ottoman Constitution of 1876 and reverting to despotic rule (Weiker, 1968, p. 454).

Yet, declining rapidly in terms of political and military power and with an increasing financial debt to European powers, the Ottoman sultans of this century knew that yielding to Western pressure for political reform in the direction of constitutionalism was the only way they could ensure the survival of the monarchy. However, by commissioning the composition of supposedly 'national' anthems named after themself they symbolically resisted to their loss of ultimate authority. In the Ottoman context, anthems that were supposedly 'national' emphasized the 'individual monarch' as the source and center of the State's sovereignty. Furthermore, none of these anthems had lyrics, but were only musical representations of the monarchs. Even though they may be pleasant and nostalgic musical compositions to listen to today, in the nineteenth century they most probably meant nothing but the great authority of their Sultan for the peasants in Anatolia and elsewhere, that is, if they ever got to hear them played or recognized what they were. This last point leads to a need to understand the significance and symbolic meanings of the musical structure of national anthems in general and how the Ottoman anthems can be interpreted with reference to such understanding.

In her empirical research on the musical structures, measured on the basis of frequency, magnitude, method of movement and ornamentation, of 154 national anthems composed in the Western musical tradition, Cerulo (1989) investigated the relationships between musical structure and sociopolitical control. At the outset, she explained that national symbols come from "a long tradition in which groups or ruling houses used banners, crests, fanfares, etc. as a form of announcement and identification" and that "the phenomenon of nations adopting a single set of symbols" began in the nineteenth century (Cerulo, 1989, p. 77). In view of this remark, one may argue that, referring back to the announcement scene described by De Kay at the beginning, the Ottoman practice of using anthems as late as the nineteenth century reflected a primitive form of such practices as they were still references to the individual monarch, and not even to ruling houses. Elsewhere Cerulo argued that "in modernizing

nations, leaders must convince a heterogeneous citizenry that they are now a part of a larger, more cohesive unit – one that transcends old tribal, group, or regional loyalties" (Cerulo, 1993, p. 249). Even though a process of modernization seemed to be underway in the Ottoman state in the nineteenth century, the functions of national anthems remained very much pre-modern, and this was most probably because the Ottoman sultans refused to transfer sovereignty to the people.

Cerulo's study on musical structures resulted in the definition of two categories of musical codes, "basic" and "embellished" (Cerulo, 1989, p. 79), and their association with 'high' and 'low' levels of sociopolitical control, respectively, as exerted by the political elites who authorize national anthems. According to the findings,

> Basic musical codes are characterized as highly stable, constant and fixed. Composers achieve stability by limiting the available range of musical motion. In moving from one point to another, the composer chooses the most direct route. To create constancy, the composer uses repetition to enhance predictability, refraining from variation and ornamentation of simple musical patterns (Cerulo, 1989, p. 79).

Accordingly, most of the time, national anthems adopted during or representing periods of high level sociopolitical control, such as fragmentation, conflict, independence movements, or in strictly authoritarian regimes would involve basic musical codes (Cerulo, 1989, pp. 80-84). With their directness, repetition and predictability, the Ottoman anthems in consideration here are also examples of the anthems with basic musical codes, and the association of this structural feature with strict and authoritarian regimes definitely supports the argument that Ottoman anthems were symbolic resistance to constitutionalism by the Ottoman sultans who did not wish to lose their absolute authority especially in a time when their empire was collapsing due to demands for independence and other forms of internal strife. For purposes of comparison, among the 154 anthems, God Save the King was found to be the most basic anthem in Cerulo's study (Cerulo, 1989, p. 90), which may be surprising at the first glance. However, the study persuasively interprets the result by relating the 'basic' character of the British anthem to the "international control" Britain enjoyed as an imperial power (Cerulo, 1989, p. 82). Another striking finding in the study is that among the sample group of 154 anthems, the İstiklal Marşı, the national anthem of the Republic of Turkey is the one with the second most 'embellished' musical codes[9] (Cerulo, 1989, p. 91), meaning that it implies weaker

[9] In Cerulo's 1989 study, the national anthem of Ecuador was found to be the most embellished and therefore the least authoritative anthem.

sociopolitical control, less authoritarianism, greater flexibility, and more individualized interpretation (Cerulo, 1989, p. 81). In other words, by the criteria employed in Cerulo's study, the İstiklal Marşı is the second most successful musical expression of a modern nation-state and all of the values attached to that notion.

In conclusion, the Ottoman adaptation of the nineteenth-century European practice of using national anthems to legitimize the sovereignty of states and to forge national identities seems to have deliberately distorted the main function of national anthems. Appropriating, rather than adapting, the Western practice as exemplified here with reference to the British national anthem God Save the King, in order to serve the assertion of the individual monarch as the sole source and center of the state, Ottoman national anthems seem to have been instruments by which successive Ottoman sultans symbolically resisted against the establishment of constitutionalism in their imperial realm. With regard to universally accepted and recognized features and functions of modern national symbols, Ottoman 'royal/national' anthems represented primitive forms of symbolic communication; had alienating effects and even humiliating implications; structurally promoted strict authoritarianism and high level of sociopolitical control; and were far from creating and maintaining unison in the society that they claimed to represent. In view of this conclusion, it also needs to be firmly expressed here that there may be elements in the Ottoman past from which modern Turkey can find inspiration to become a more respected member of the family of nations, but as the present study of Ottoman royal/national anthems shows, yearning for and promoting an imperial and monarchical revival, whether under the name of New Ottomanism or some other fashionable discourse, certainly should not be among those. Likewise, centers of cultural production in contemporary Turkey, first and foremost among which is the print and broadcast media, should refrain from invoking and then exploiting images and elements of the Ottoman past for the sake of mere material gain, without thoroughly scrutinizing possible sociopolitical and cultural effects, which may prove to be dangerous for the well-being of the nation.

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