

MUSICOLOGIST

International Journal of Music Studies

Vol: 9
Issue: 1
June 2025

Masthead

Musicologist: *International Journal of Music Studies*

Volume 9 Issue 1 **June 2025**

Musicologist is a biannually, peer-reviewed, open access, online periodical published in English by Trabzon University State Conservatory, in Trabzon, Türkiye.

e-ISSN: 2618-5652

Owner on behalf of Trabzon University State Conservatory
Ayşegül ERGENE (Director)

Editor-In-Chief
Abdullah AKAT (İstanbul University – Türkiye)

Deputy Editor
Merve EKEN KÜÇÜKAKSOY (Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University – Türkiye)

Technical Editor
Emrah ERGENE (Trabzon University – Türkiye)

Language Editor
Jim SAMSON (Royal Holloway, University of London – UK)

Editorial Assistant
Gökhan ALTINBAŞ (Trabzon University – Türkiye)

Contacts

Address: Trabzon Üniversitesi Devlet Konservatuvarı Müdürlüğü,
Fatih Kampüsü, Söğütlü 61335 Akçaabat/Trabzon, Türkiye
Web: www.musicologistjournal.com
Email: musicologistjournal@gmail.com

All rights reserved.

The authors are responsible for all visual elements, including tables, figures, graphics and pictures. They are also responsible for any scholarly citations. Trabzon University does not assume any legal responsibility for the use of any of these materials.

©2017-2025 **Trabzon University State Conservatory**

Editorial Board

Alper Maral	Ankara Music and Fine Arts University – Türkiye
Caroline Bithell	The University of Manchester – UK
Ekaterine Diasamidze	Tbilisi State University – Georgia
Elif Damla Yavuz	Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University – Türkiye
Erol Köymen	The University of Chicago – USA
Gözde Çolakoğlu Sarı	Istanbul Technical University – Türkiye
Hande Sağlam	University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna – Austria
Henry Stobart	Royal Holloway, University of London – UK
Irene Markoff	York University – Canada
Ivanka Vlaeva	South-West University "Neofit Rilski" – Bulgaria
Janos Sipos	Hungarian Academy of Sciences – Hungary
Jim Samson	Royal Holloway, University of London – UK
John Rink	University of Cambridge – UK
Marija Dumnic	Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts – Serbia
Marina Frolova-Walker	University of Cambridge – UK
Mojca Kovacic	Scientific Research Center of Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts – Slovenia
Razia Sultanova	University of Cambridge – UK
Saida Daukeyeva	Wesleyan University – USA
Sanubar Baghirova	Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences – Azerbaijan
Terada Yoshitaka (2017-2023)	National Museum of Ethnology – Japan
Velika Stojkova Serafimovska	Saints Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje – Macedonia
Wai Ling Cheong	The Chinese University of Hong Kong – China

Table of Contents

Articles

WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT THE GRAMMAR OF TRADITIONAL GEORGIAN VOCAL MUSIC FROM COMPUTATIONAL SCORE ANALYSIS?

Frank Scherbaum, Simha Arom, Florent Caron Darras 1

THE JOURNEY OF A MUSICAL IDEA: AN INVESTIGATION INTO A MUSICAL FORM THROUGH SOCIETY AND TIME

Cem Çırak 30

THE EFFECT OF RAP MUSIC ON YOUTH' DRUG USE: TURKISH RAP SONGS PERSPECTIVE

Elif Hazal Tuncer, Zekai Genç, Ümit Ertem, Alihan Kocabaş, Sevil Atasoy 57

AN INVESTIGATION INTO HEMODYNAMIC ACTIVITY IN THE BRAIN DURING GUITAR PERFORMANCE USING THE fNIRS METHOD

Şevki Özer Akçay, Fatih Ağduman 92

THE ENERGY OF “FEMALE” MUSIC: GENDER STATISTICS AND CULTURAL PREREQUISITES FOR GENDER EQUALITY AMONG KAZAKH COMPOSERS

Aizhan Kalibayeva, Valeriya Nedlina, Anton Somov 121

THE DISCOURSE OF THE 14 MAY 2023 ELECTION SONGS IN TURKEY: THE CASE OF THE NATION ALLIANCE AND THE PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE

S. Yankı Özcan 158

LIBERATION THROUGH CONSTRAINT: DISCOVERING A ‘DANCE SELF’ THROUGH KAMIGATAMAI

Şebnem Sözer Özdemir 192

VIEWS OF MUSIC WORKERS IN TURKEY ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: WHAT DO MUSIC WORKERS SAY?

Mert Ergül, Şevval Satıcı, Ahmet Serkan Ece 214

**CHALLENGES OF ARTISTIC CREATIVITY IN THE CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE
ACTIVITIES**

*Marzhan Yelubayeva, Ioannis Kaisidi, Gulnara Jerdimaliyeva,
Bagim Mukhitdenova, Aman Kulbayev*

243

**THE PHENOMENON OF AGE IN WESTERN ANATOLIA LOCAL DANCE CULTURE
IN TURKEY**

Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin, Füsün Aşkar

259

FRANK SCHERBAUM

Potsdam University, Germany

fs@geo.uni-potsdam.de

orcid.org/0000-0002-5050-7331

SIMHA AROM

Paris Diderot University, France

simha.arom@mnhn.fr

orcid.org/0000-0002-2129-9190

FLORENT CARON DARRAS

PSL University, France

florentcarondarras@gmail.com

orcid.org/0000-0003-3869-1399

What Can We Learn About the Grammar of Traditional Georgian Vocal Music from Computational Score Analysis?

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the current status of a long-term project aimed at understanding the chordal syntax of traditional Georgian vocal music by analyzing sheet music in Western 5-line staff notation. As an important milestone, we present a generative grammar model based on the self-learning Kohonen model (Kohonen, 1989) in a prefix tree (Antonov, 2018; 2023) framework. This represents a significant improvement over the classical Markov model, as it allows for the influence of different context lengths for each chord in a chord sequence. We used this model to generate a large number of chord sequences, all conforming to the same grammatical production rules as our corpus. These were then used as training data for an artificial neural network to test whether, as in large language models (LLMs), 'linguistic relationships' could be identified by visually analyzing the embedding space of the network. The results for chord-to-chord relationships are inconclusive, as the spatial structure of the embedding map for individual chords cannot be interpreted unambiguously. The embedding map for whole songs, however, shows a pronounced spatial clustering which reflects the different classes of our corpus. This suggests that the structure of the embedding map reflects the similarities and dissimilarities of the chordal syntax of the individual songs, which the network has learned in an unsupervised way.

KEYWORDS

Traditional
Georgian Vocal
Music
Musical Grammar
Machine Learning
Kohonen grammar

Introduction

The country of Georgia, located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, has an incredibly rich heritage of musical traditions that have been passed down for centuries through oral tradition. In this context, regular communal singing, which is still actively practiced, at least in part, in some rural areas of the country, has proven to be a crucial mechanism. It has preserved the transmission of knowledge between generations and helped maintain the vitality of this music. While — through many years of practice and continuous exposure — this mechanism has led to the development of an intuitive understanding of the music's grammar (tonal organisation, musical syntax, and other important elements), this knowledge, as long as it is not formalized, represents a cultural heritage that remains immaterial in the truest sense of the word. However, what does exist in material form are numerous transcriptions of performances in the form of musical scores in Western 5-line staff notation.

The focus of our collaboration, which began in 2014, is the question of how knowledge about the chordal syntax of traditional Georgian vocal music can be gained — at least in part — from such transcriptions, with the help of tools from computational ethnomusicology, computational linguistics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence (AI) research.

Our work, which can be seen as a follow-up study to the papers by Arom and Vallejo (2008; 2010), raised a large number of questions along the way, for which there was no clear answer in terms of an existing "best practice". For example:

How should one compare songs notated in different keys? Should all songs be transposed to the same key prior to analysis, or not? Should one work with a) absolute pitches, b) relative pitches, or c) scale degrees relative to a chosen reference note? In the case of c), what reference note should be chosen? Should scores be reduced to their presumed harmonic pillars prior to analysis, or not? If so, would that not bias the results by adding too much subjectivity? If not, how could one manage the enormous amount of information? Should one work with the original scores in Western notation at all, or should they be transformed into a more unbiased representation?

At times, ad hoc choices needed to be made, some of which led to conceptual dead ends,

requiring a time-consuming rethinking of the entire processing chain. Based on the results of acoustical studies on the tonal organization of traditional Georgian music (Scherbaum, et al., 2020; Scherbaum et al., 2022; Tsereteli and Veshapidze, 2014; 2015), we realized that analyzing traditional Georgian music in terms of Western church modes, as attempted by Arom and Vallejo (2008), could result in artifacts that were distorted by the transcription process and needed to be abandoned. In order to at least partially correct the available scores (which are all notated in 12-TET tuning in different keys) for the distortions caused by the transcription process, we finally adopted the procedure of Scherbaum et al. (2024). It is based on first transforming the original pitches into scale degree indices (SDI) with respect to the notated key, which can then subsequently be transformed into any heptatonic tuning system. In this context, the SDI notation represents the pitches in a manner that remains independent of the details of the actual tuning system, as long it is heptatonic. For more details see Scherbaum et al. (2024).

Despite these challenges – and even during the pandemic when we could only communicate remotely – we managed to continue our collaboration and make progress. For example, a comparative study of a small collection of Georgian and Medieval polyphonic songs (Arom et al., 2018) taught us that it is mainly the chordal syntax and not the chord inventory that structurally distinguishes the two collections. This gave some direction to our research. By the time the Covid restrictions ended, and we could finally meet in person again, we had significantly expanded our digital corpus to more than 450 songs. This turned out to be a large enough cohort to demonstrate that different regional and stylistic subsets in the corpus could be computationally distinguished through differences in their chord-progression patterns (Scherbaum et al., 2024).

Since the public release of ChatGPT in November 2022, it has become clear that new developments in the field of natural language processing have much to offer for the questions we seek to answer within our collaboration. As a result, we have started to explore how to utilize these developments in our analysis.

In the following sections, we will discuss what we believe can be learned about the grammar, in particular the chordal syntax, of Georgian traditional vocal music by analyzing musical scores using a variety of tools and approaches available today. Rather than simply presenting the results for our current corpus, the details of which will evolve

as the corpus grows, we aim to focus on the discussion of the main concepts underlying our perspective.

Overall, we view this work as a feasibility study with the long-term goal of developing building blocks for an optimal workflow to decode and better understand the rules underlying the chordal syntax of traditional Georgian vocal music.

Methodological Considerations

Understanding the grammar of a language or musical system requires knowledge of its intrinsic structural patterns. Only when we know these can we form intelligible and grammatically correct sentences. For the following considerations, we define — following linguistic practice — the search for the grammar of Georgian traditional music as the search for the set of rules that describe the construction and structure of this music. In the context of our project, in which the focus is on chordal syntax, we have explored several perspectives for representing songs, each of which has different advantages and disadvantages.

Songs as sequences of images

It is well known that humans are generally very skilled at recognizing visual structures. Sometimes, this ability is so powerful that it leads to the phenomenon of pareidolia¹—the erroneous assignment of familiar patterns, such as faces, to diffuse perceived structures, like clouds. To apply this sensitivity to visual pattern recognition to our task, one of the approaches we pursued was converting musical chords into images, which were then analyzed visually. The challenge in this context was finding forms of visualization that did not significantly reduce the information content of a score while remaining easily perceivable in their entirety. Not all of these representations were convincing in terms of their applicability to collections of songs, but most proved to be quite useful for the structural analysis of individual scores. Moreover, many of these visualizations were aesthetically fascinating in their own right, including Harmonygrams (Scherbaum, 2024; Scherbaum et al., 2024; Scherbaum and Mzhavanadze, 2024).

As an example, Fig. 1 shows a Harmonygram for the chant *Dghres Saghvtoman Madlman*, in which the individual phrases are arranged vertically. The melodies of the three voices

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pareidolia>

are displayed in Global Notation (Killick, 2021), while the colored interval columns indicate —from top to bottom— the harmonic intervals between the top and middle voices, the middle and bass voices, and the bass and top voices, respectively. Each chord is associated with a unique colored pattern. The colored rounded rectangles mark segments of the chant that are identical (marked by identical colors) or similar (marked by similar colors, e.g., green) to help identify related chord progression sequences.

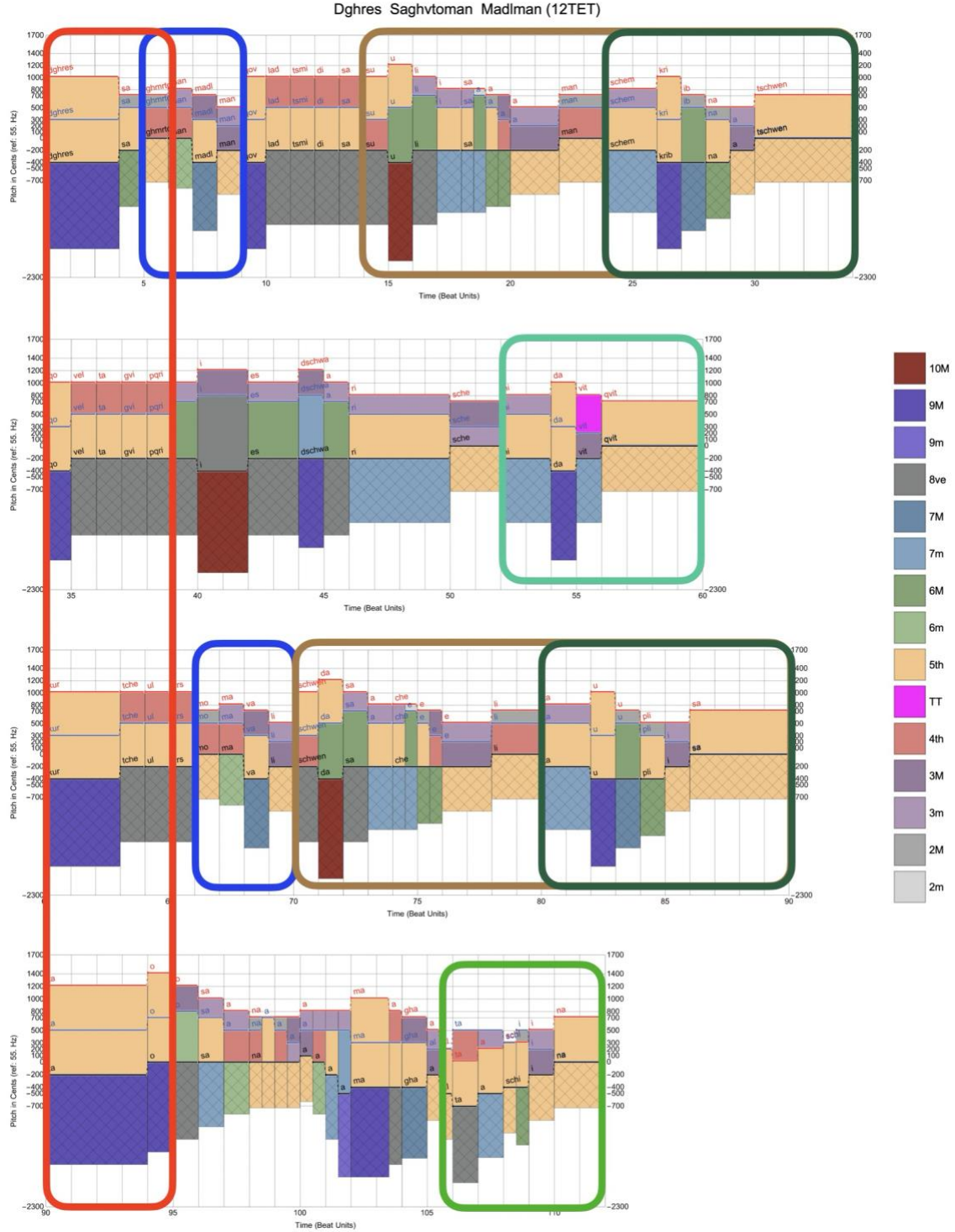


Figure 1. Harmonygram of the chant *Dghres Saghvroman Madlman*. For detailed explanation see text and (Scherbaum, 2024; Scherbaum et al., 2024; Scherbaum and Mzhavanadze, 2024).

The only graphical approach for structural analysis that holds essentially the same power for analyzing individual songs as it does for an entire corpus is the representation of

songs as directed graphs (or ‘song paths’ on a ‘chordscape’)² (Scherbaum et al., 2016a; 2016b). Graphs effectively visualize the temporal structure of chord progression sequences, while simultaneously allowing for mathematical analysis. In other words, they can be used as mathematical objects that can be manipulated algorithmically. For example, one can calculate distances between graphs, which, in turn, allows for the quantitative exploration of neighborhood relations and similarities between the underlying sequences. Analyzing songs as directed graphs allowed us to demonstrate that the differences between medieval and Georgian songs are primarily differences in the syntax of chord progressions rather than in the chord distributions themselves (Arom et al., 2018).

One of the open problems with the ‘graph approach’ is that a musically meaningful solution to the graph layout problem has yet to be found. This is the main reason we have not yet applied it to the analysis of our entire corpus.

Songs as sequences of string tokens

For the analysis of our entire corpus and its subsets, we exploited the fact that a song can also be written as a sequence of so-called string tokens, which, for our purposes, can be treated like words in a natural language. For example, a chord represented by the notes C4, E4, and G4 (in scientific pitch notation³) and a duration of 2.5 quarter notes could be expressed as the string token ‘C4_E4_G4_(2.5)’ and then converted back to its original representation without losing any information. As a result, a whole song, expressed as a sequence of string tokens, can be computationally processed like a sentence in an unknown language. Just as text fragments contain information about the grammar of the language in which they were written, we assume that musical scores contain information about the grammar of the music encoded within them, and that this information can be extracted in a similar way.

For subsequent analysis, all the scores were transformed into sequences of string tokens so that they could be modeled using the same tools that are used for natural language processing —such as those used to produce so-called language models. Language models

²<https://www.uni-potsdam.de/de/soundscapelab/computational-ethnomusicology/scores-chordscapes-and-song-paths>

³ An alternative which is better suited for algorithmic processing is the representation of the note pitches in scale degree index (SDI) notation described in detail in (Scherbaum et al., 2024).

are generative probabilistic models that predict the next word in a sentence based on the preceding words. What is currently referred to as large language models (LLMs) are special types of artificial neural networks (ANNs), trained on vast amounts of text, such as books, articles, and websites. One remarkable feature of these models is their apparent deep understanding of how language works, including grammar, vocabulary, and various topics. With massive training data (for instance, OpenAI's GPT-3 model was trained on hundreds of gigabytes of text), these LLMs can generate human-like responses that seem coherent and contextually appropriate.

One of the questions we pursued in our work was to what degree we could benefit from these modern developments, despite the fact that our datasets are tiny in comparison to the vast amounts of data typically used to train LLMs, making direct training of an LLM from our data unfeasible. However, other types of statistical models, such as n-gram models or the Kohonen model (Kohonen, 1989), though lacking some of the power of LLMs, turned out to offer significant advantages while being far less demanding in terms of data size.

For this study, these models were implemented using a special data structure called prefix trees, or tries (Antonov, 2018; 2023). The trie representation is known to be extremely efficient for tasks like automatic word completion during text input in word processing programs. In our case, when combined with the Kohonen model, it proved useful for two different purposes: first, as part of a generative model for producing synthetically generated, grammatically correct new songs; and second, for the analysis and visualization of the rule set of the detected Kohonen grammar, as will be described below.

From Markov to Kohonen

Kohonen's self-learning musical grammar model (Kohonen, 1989) can be seen as an extension of Markov chain models, also known as n-gram models (Scherbaum et al., 2024; Scherbaum et al., 2015). Markov models operate on the so-called 'Markov assumption,' which states that the probability of a future state in a sequence (e.g., a chord in a song) depends on the current state and —depending on the order of the Markov process— a few predecessor states. In other words, in the context of language modeling, n-gram models predict the next word based on the current word and the n-1 prior words. The

probability of a particular transition can be derived from a set of example data by a simple bookkeeping exercise on their n-gram set. Kohonen's self-learning grammar model (Kohonen, 1989), on the other hand, goes beyond plain Markov models by dynamically expanding its rule-set context based on the input it receives, allowing it to capture some long-range dependencies individually (based on what Kohonen called 'logical conflicts' in the production rules (Kohonen, 1989)).

To explain the principles, let's assume we have a sequence of 'states'—for now represented by different letters—that have been produced according to rules unknown to us. From the Markov model perspective, one assumes that the occurrence of a particular state at position k in the sequence depends on a) the particular state and b) possibly what has happened prior to position k .

In the unigram (1-gram) model, it is assumed that it does not matter at all what has happened prior to position k and that the probability of occurrence of a particular 'state' – let's say state X – depends only on the overall 'probability' of state X occurring. $\text{Prob}(\text{seq}[[k]] \text{ equals } X) = \text{Prob}(X)$.

In the bigram (2-gram) model, it is assumed that the probability of occurrence of a particular state at position k in the sequence depends on the previous state of the sequence $\text{seq}[[k-1]]$ at position $k-1$, and the transition probability from the previous state of the sequence to X . One can also say that in the bigram model, one considers a context of length 1 for the state of interest.

The trigram (3-gram) model follows the same construction principle, except that the context length is extended to 2. Finally, in the general case of an n-gram model, one considers a context length of $n-1$. In other words, one assumes that each state in a sequence has been influenced by $n-1$ previous states. The length of the considered context, namely the value of $n-1$, is also referred to as the order of the Markov process.

All the constituents of the n-gram models can be calculated by simple bookkeeping exercises from 'training data,' which represent a particular set of sequences, e.g., words, notes, or chord sequences. Despite its simplicity, n-gram models have been quite successful in music analysis, such as for the classification of musical scores (Scherbaum et al., 2024).

However, n-gram models are missing something very important, particularly for the analysis of music, by making the assumption that the length of the relevant prior context is fixed. This is rather unrealistic. Some chords in a musical chord sequence may reasonably be modeled as being influenced only by the previous chord, while others may have been influenced by two, three, or more prior chords. Therefore, it is much more realistic to assume that the length of the relevant prior context of a particular state will depend on the state itself.

This is where the Kohonen model performs much better, because it does not assume a fixed-length context. Instead, within the Kohonen framework, it is assumed that the number of predecessor states on which the ‘next state’ depends —referred to as the ‘relevant context’ of the current state— may vary. Similar to the n-gram model, all the necessary ingredients of the Kohonen model can be determined (learned) from training data. The lengths of the relevant contexts for a particular training data set are determined dynamically based on logical conflicts that occur in the training examples [Kohonen, 1989].

To see what this means in practice, let’s look at the example sequence of states from Kohonen’s paper, which is shown in Fig. 2a.

Sequence of states: {A, B, C, D, E, F, G, I, K, F, H, L, E, F, J}				a)
List of all bigrams: {{A, B}} {{B, C}} {{C, D}} {{D, E}} {{E, F}}, {{E, F}} {{F, G}}, {{F, H}}, {{F, J}} {{G, I}} {{I, K}} {{K, F}} {{H, L}} {{L, E}}	Extended contexts by one step for all appearances of F: {{E, F, G}}, {{E, F, J}} {{K, F, H}}	Extended contexts by one more step for all appearances of {E, F}: {{D, E, F, G}} {{L, E, F, J}}	‘unique/deterministic’-rules {{A, B}}, {{B, C}}, {{C, D}}, {{D, E}}, {{E, F}} {{G, I}}, {{H, L}}, {{I, K}}, {{K, F}}, {{L, E}} {{K, F, H}}, {{D, E, F, G}}, {{L, E, F, J}} ‘conflicting/aleatory’-rules {{F, G}}, {{F, H}}, {{F, J}}, {{E, F, G}}, {{E, F, J}}	b) c) d) e)

Figure 2. The determination of the production rules for a sequence of states in the Kohonen model.

Fig. 2b) shows the list of all the bigrams in this sequence, sorted according to their first element. One can immediately see that there is a logical conflict in the transition from the letter F because F goes to G once, to H once, and to J once. All the other letters are always

followed by the same next letter. The transition from E to F appears twice, which is not a logical problem; on the contrary, it could suggest this being a strong rule.

Therefore, F is what Kohonen would refer to as a ‘conflict’ case. To resolve this, Kohonen dynamically extends the contexts for all instances of the letter F by one. The result is shown in Fig. 2c). You can see that one of the conflicts is resolved this way: If F is preceded by the letter K, the next state is H, and the conflict is resolved! However, this does not help when F is preceded by the letter E. In this case, the next state in the token sequence is G once and J once. Thus, in this case, the context still needs to be extended one more step further. The result is shown in Fig. 2d).

Now, all conflicts are resolved. If F is preceded by an E which is preceded by a D, the next letter is G, while if F is preceded by an E, which is preceded by an L, the next letter is J.

As a result, instead of representing a sequence of tokens by a sequence of sub-sequences of fixed lengths (i.e., a sequence of n-grams), Kohonen’s approach leads to the representation of the input sequence by a sequence of sub-sequences of variable lengths, representing unique ‘production rules’. These rules, which for this example are shown in the top panel of Fig. 2e), can also be seen as deterministic production rules or ‘always’ rules, because their contexts will always lead to the same ‘next state’.

However, the contexts that still contain conflicts are also important structural elements! They represent what one could call ‘sometimes’ rules, or aleatory rules, and are shown for our example in the bottom panel of Fig. 2e). These rules indicate that a particular sub-sequence is sometimes followed by, for example, state X, and sometimes by state Y. If we count the number of times each of the ‘sometimes’ states occurs, we have all the information needed about the statistics of these aleatory rules.

In conclusion, the Kohonen model allows for the determination of a set of (deterministic and aleatory) production rules for a sequence of states. These rules can be encoded in a simple table, which is referred to as Kohonen’s ‘memory,’ as shown in Fig. 3a).

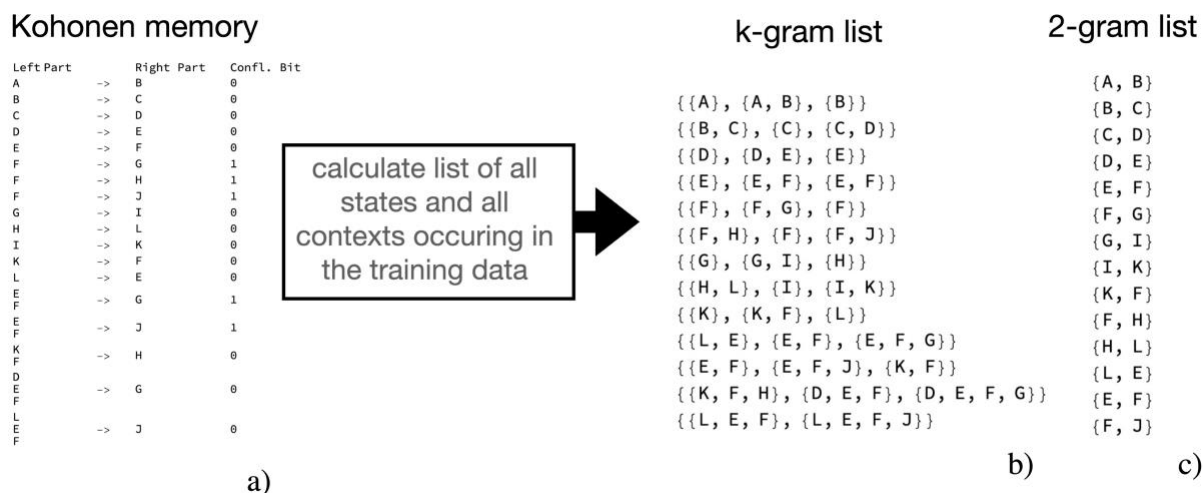


Figure 3. From the Kohonen memory table to the k-gram list.

Each line in the Kohonen memory table corresponds to a transition that is realized in the training data. The right column in Fig. 3a), labeled the ‘conflict bit,’ indicates whether the transition is part of an aleatory rule (conflict bit is ON) or a deterministic rule (conflict bit is OFF).

With the information now available, it is a simple bookkeeping exercise to calculate the list of all states and contexts occurring in the training data. If this is done in such a way that the elements of this list occur in the same proportion as in the training sequence, one obtains what we refer to as the k-gram list shown in Fig. 3b). In this context, the ‘k’ stands for Kohonen. The k-gram list can be seen as the repository for the ‘building blocks of the syntax’ that represent the rules of the learned grammar. At first glance, it looks like a mixture of 1-grams, 2-grams, 3-grams, and 4-grams. In Markov chain terms, the complete set of 1-grams generated from a sequence of tokens tells us how often a particular token is present in it, while the set of 2-grams represents the frequency-of-occurrence distribution of transitions from one token to another, and so forth. The k-gram list, however, combines subsets of n-grams of different orders. The selection occurs based on logical conflicts—in other words, situations where the transition from a particular state to the next is not uniquely defined unless the number of predecessor states included in the context is increased. The maximum length of a k-gram is determined by how many prior states the algorithm has to consider until the ‘Kohonen memory’ (see above), which is built up during the learning phase, no longer changes.

Comparing the k-gram list to the bigram list shown in Fig. 3c), one can immediately see how Kohonen’s model extends the Markov chain model, leading to a much richer representation of the syntax of the training data.

Prefix trees

Applied to a corpus of songs, the Kohonen grammar model contains everything — assuming that only the immediate prior context is relevant— that can be determined from a corpus of scores about the syntactic structure of the music it represents. However, the way it is represented in the computer, either as a Kohonen memory table or as a k-gram list, results in a large table that requires additional tools for analysis and visualization. The solution to this challenge is a data structure called a prefix tree, or simply a trie (Antonov, 2018; 2023).

To illustrate the principle of constructing the prefix tree for our example, the various contexts in the k-gram list are first grouped according to their first elements and sorted vertically from bottom to top: A, B, etc., as shown in Fig. 4a).

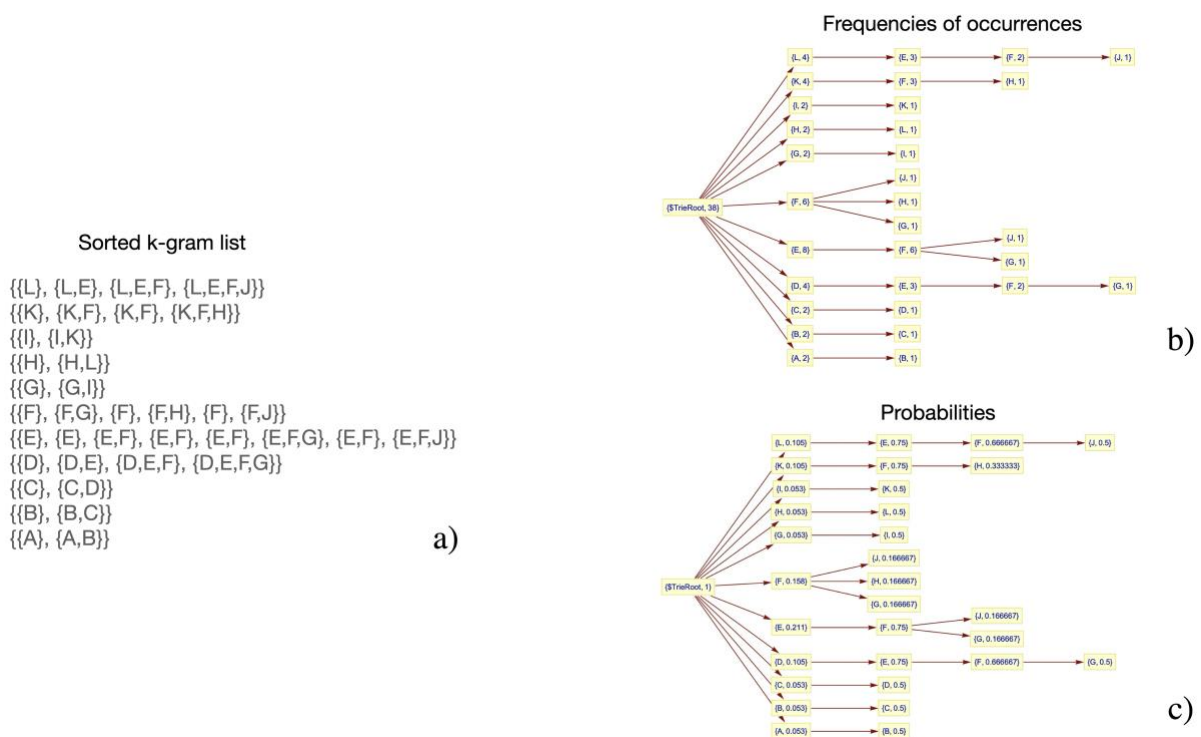


Figure 4 a) Sorted k-gram list, b) prefix tree for frequencies of occurrence, and c) for probabilities, respectively, are shown for the running example.

Fig. 4b) shows the corresponding prefix tree. The root node (labeled \$Trieroot)

represents the head of the tree. The children of this node represent all unique starting letters of all determined context lists. The information in the i -th row of the sorted k -gram list is mapped to the i -th branch of the prefix tree. The numerical values associated with each node simply indicate the number of occurrences of each element in a subsequence. The information given for each node is easily extracted from the values in the curly brackets. For example, the sub-sequence in the topmost branch, which starts with L, contains 4 Ls, 3 Es, 2 Fs, and one J.

By dividing the number of occurrences of a particular node in each of the sub-sequences in Fig. 4b) by the number of occurrences of the node above it, we obtain the conditional probability of reaching that particular node from the node above. The corresponding prefix tree is shown in Fig. 4c). As a result, for each node, we can now immediately calculate which letter could follow and with what probability. A common application of prefix trees is for the completion of word sequences typed into a mobile phone or word processing program, where the prefix tree has been trained with the complete vocabulary of the used language.

In our context, the prefix-tree structure has proven to be extremely efficient in two ways. First, as an engine of a generative model to produce synthetic, grammatically correct new scores (simply by randomly selecting root-to-leaf paths), and second, for the analysis and visualization of the rule set of the detected grammar, as illustrated in Fig. 5.

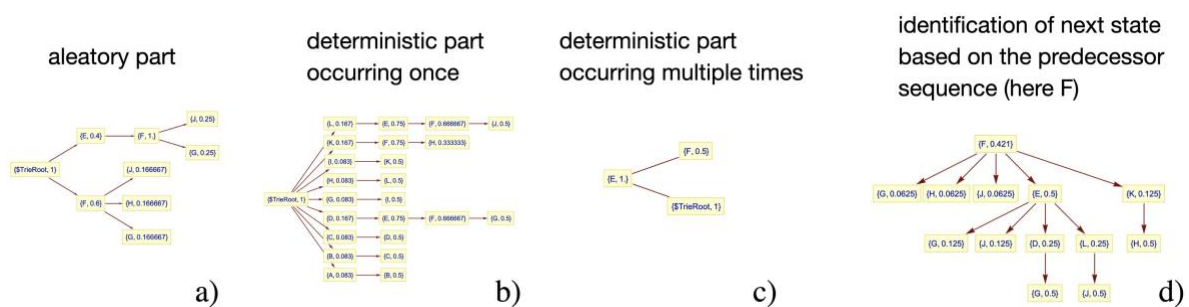


Figure 5. Exploring the rule set of the determined grammar according to different criteria.

It is now fairly easy to explore the tree structure according to certain criteria. For example, we can isolate the aleatory part, shown in Fig. 5a) ; the deterministic part occurring just once, shown in Fig. 5b) ; or the deterministic part occurring multiple times, as shown in Fig. 5c). Additionally, we can display the next state based on the predecessor

sequences, as shown in Fig. 5d).

Application: the Erkomaishvili dataset

In the following, we will discuss the application of the Kohonen model to a set of roughly 100 liturgical chants from the Shemokmedi Monastery in Western Georgia (Shugliashvili, 2014). This corpus is based on audio recordings of the master chanter Artem Erkomaishvili from 1966. For several reasons, this is currently our preferred study object for score-based corpus analysis. First, the transcriptions by David Shugliashvili are publicly available in digital form (Rosenzweig et al., 2020; Shugliashvili, 2014). Second, we have already used this dataset in several prior studies (Rosenzweig et al., 2020; Scherbaum et al., 2020; Scherbaum et al., , 2021; 2023) and are therefore familiar with some of its characteristics. Finally, the transcriptions by David Shugliashvili mark the individual phrases of each chant, which allows us to also use the full Harmonygram perspective (Scherbaum, 2024; Scherbaum et al., 2024; Scherbaum and Mzhavanadze, 2024) for each of the chants as an additional means of analysis.

The determination of the Kohonen grammar for this dataset results in a total of nearly 14,000 production rules. These can easily be stored in a prefix tree, but it is obvious that they cannot be analyzed simply by visual inspection. Even restricting ourselves to the deterministic rules that occur more than once does not solve this problem, as there are still more than 3,000 such rules. This is because, within the Kohonen model framework, every single chord in the corpus is modeled as the result of applying a production rule. Obviously, not all the rules are equally representative of the underlying grammar. Some of them, perhaps even the majority, may simply represent ornamental elements, which are only of secondary interest to us at this time.

Given this challenge, we felt it necessary to develop and explore various strategies for further action. For one, we are currently exploring to what degree ornamental elements of a chant can be removed from a score with the help of Harmonygram analysis. This is a very time-consuming, manual process for which we do not yet have final answers, as we have only recently started with this approach (Arom and Scherbaum, 2024).

Additionally, we have begun to investigate the Kohonen model of the Erkomaishvili corpus through what could be termed ‘specific questioning’, which is done in a way that

allows the answers to be computed with the help of the prefix tree. The questions we have considered specifically with respect to the Erkomaishvili corpus are, for example: What are the most often used production rules? What are typical cadences? What are the most likely chords to follow a particular chord? This line of inquiry leads directly to the problem of using the production rules as a generative model. In the following, we will consider these questions one by one.

What are the most often used production rules?

Figure 6 shows the “root-to-leaf-path representation” of the 30 most frequently used deterministic production rules in the Erkomaishvili corpus. The numerical values in the string tokens in Figure 6a are in scale degree index (SDI) notation, as described in Scherbaum et al (2024)

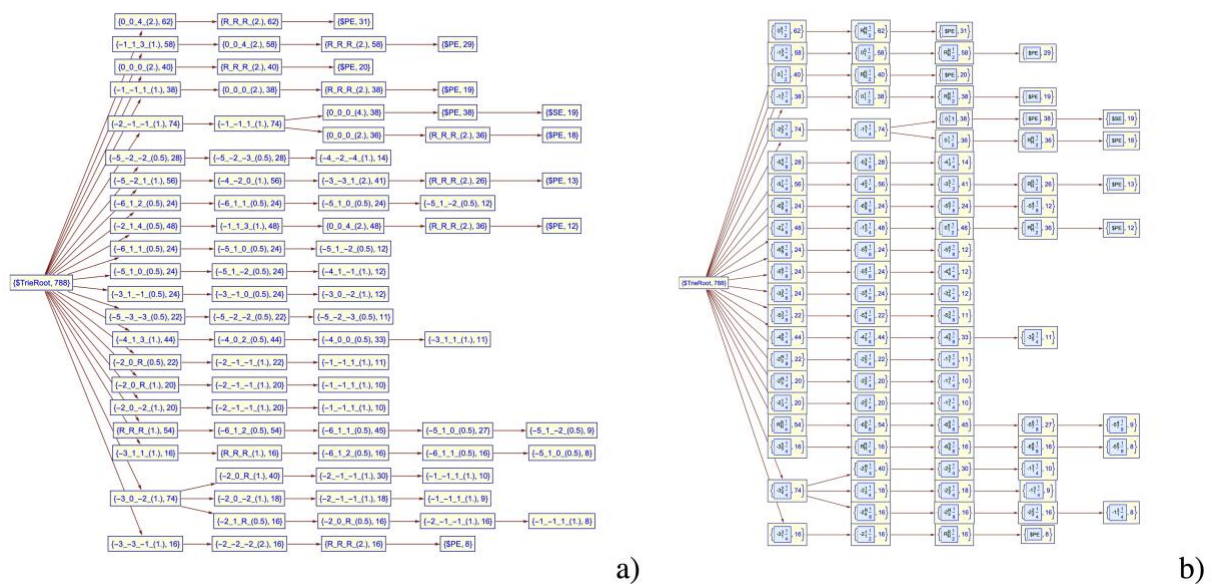


Figure 6. “Root-to-leaf-path representation” of the 30 most frequently used deterministic production rules in the Erkomaishvili corpus. The corresponding tree nodes are shown as string tokens and subscript-superscript chord symbols and in figure a) and b), respectively.

Although Figure 6 contains complete information about the chord progressions in each of the production rules, this form of visualization is difficult to perceive because one must read the information for each node sequentially and retain it in memory. Even with practice, this remains a “slow” process in the Kahneman sense (Kahneman, 2013). Perception becomes slightly faster if the nodes are written in subscript-superscript chord notation (Figure 6b), but the fundamental perceptual problem persists.

A much faster way to perceive the information in Figure 6, which also facilitates the comparison of individual production rules, is to display the nodes in the individual root-to-leaf paths as Harmonygram icons, underlain by the number of times each chord appears in the tree branch under consideration. Additional symbols, which are easy to recognize, are used for rests, as well as for song and phrase starts and endings. This concept is illustrated in Figure 7.

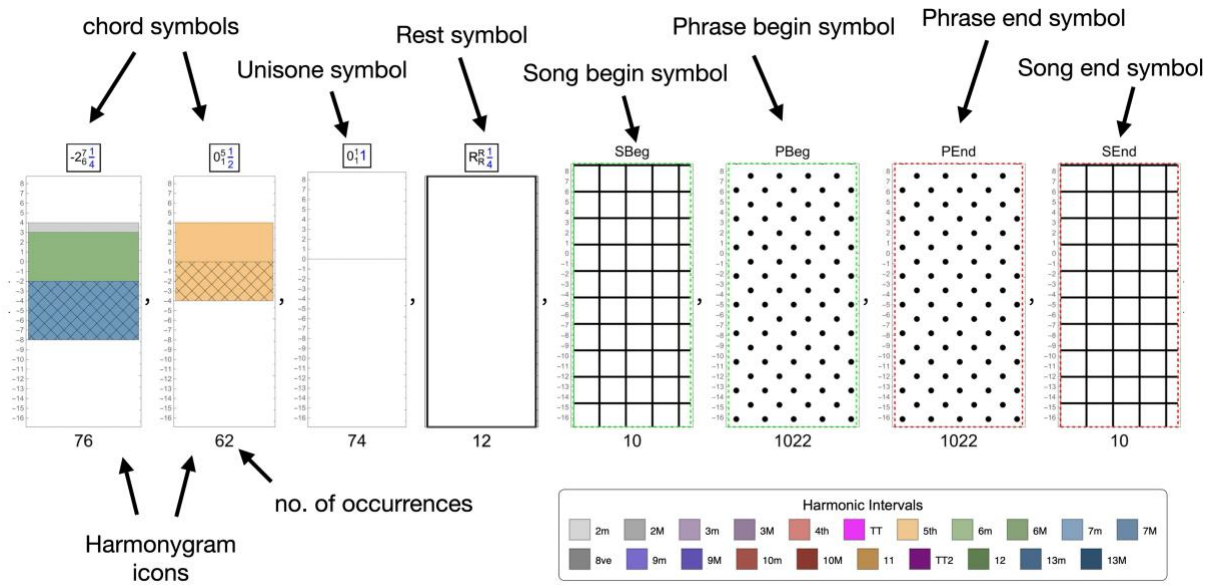


Figure 7. Representation of the nodes of the root-to-leaf-paths as Harmonygram icons with additional information. The icon label explains each icon verbally while the number below the icon indicates the number of times a particular chord or symbol appears in the root-to-leaf-path considered (here randomly assigned for illustration only).

As an implementation of this concept, Figure 8 shows the “root-to-leaf-path representation” of the 30 most frequently used deterministic production rules in the Erkomaishvili corpus using the Harmonygram icon representation.

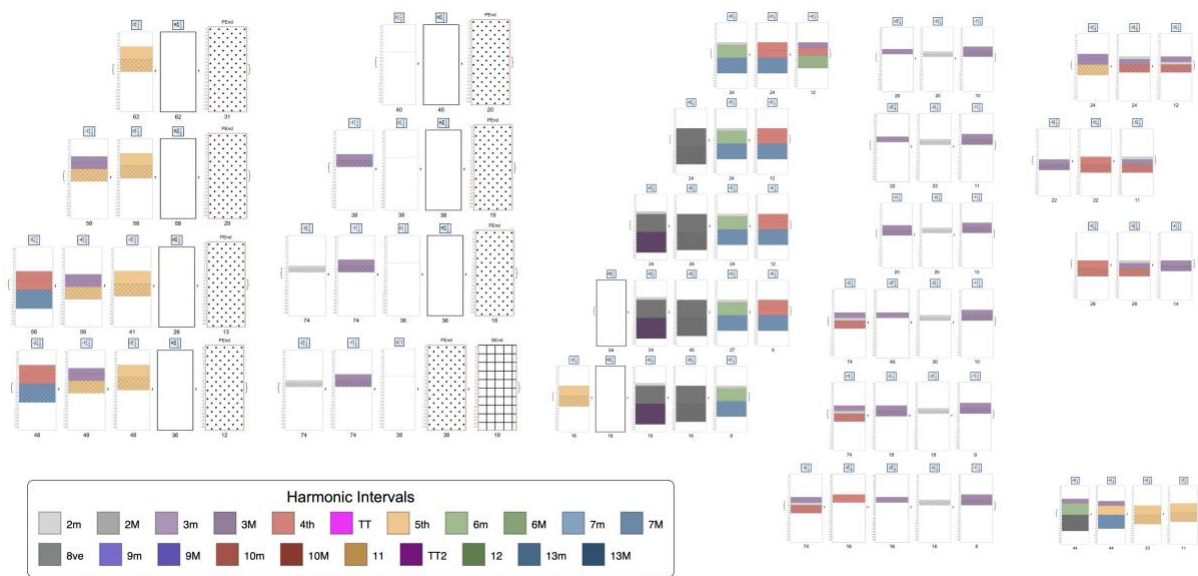


Figure 8. Representation of the nodes of the root-to-leaf-paths of the 30 most often used deterministic production rules in the Erkomaishvili corpus in Harmonygram icon representation.

Figure 8 demonstrates that the complete information in Figure 6 can now be visually perceived instantly, effectively making it a ‘fast process’ in the Kahneman sense (Kahneman, 2013). It also becomes immediately apparent that relationships between the individual production rules exist, and they can be grouped into six different categories with similar chord progression characteristics. We refrain from further interpretation at this point and move on to the discussion of cadences.

What are typical cadences?

Figure 9 shows the most frequently used cadences in the Erkomaishvili corpus.

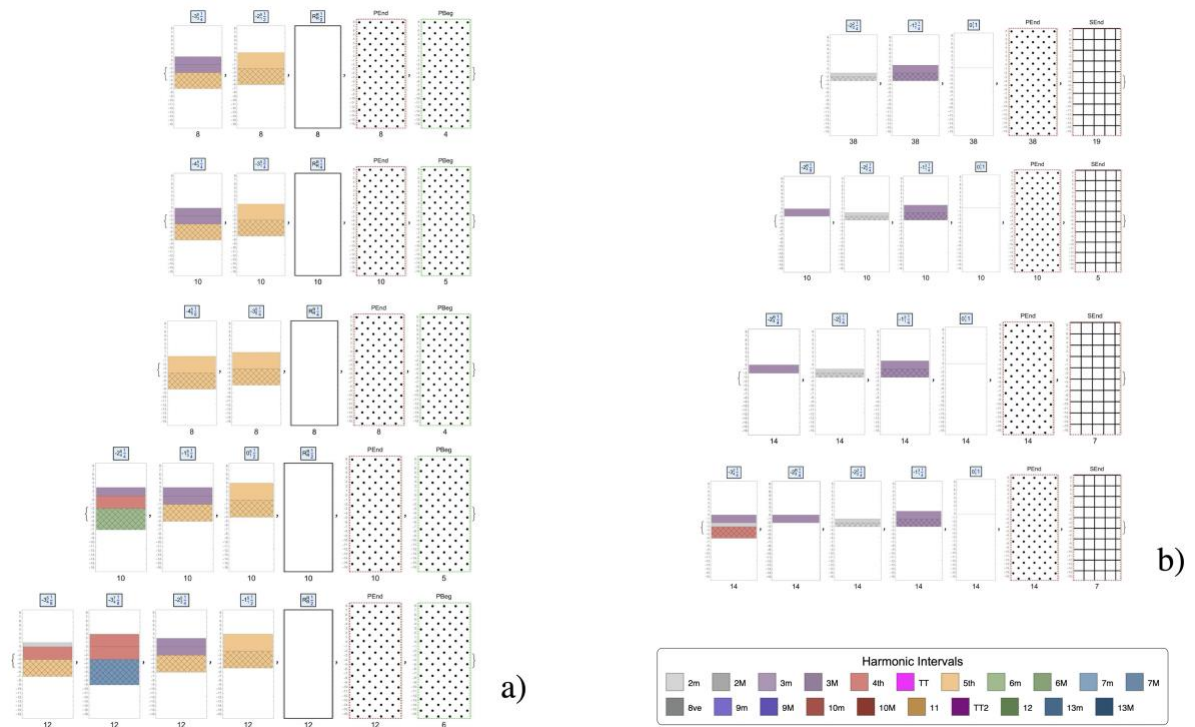


Figure 9. Most often used phrase cadences (a) and song cadences (b) in the Erkomaishvili corpus in Harmonygram icon representation.

It is evident that phrases most often end on a fifth, followed by a rest. This contrasts with song cadences, which typically end on unison.

Using the production rules as a generative model

Finally, one of the most natural applications of the production rules derived from the Kohonen model is to use them as generative models to create new songs similar to (Sheikholharam and Teshnehlal, 2008). Figure 10 shows six such examples as piano roll displays.

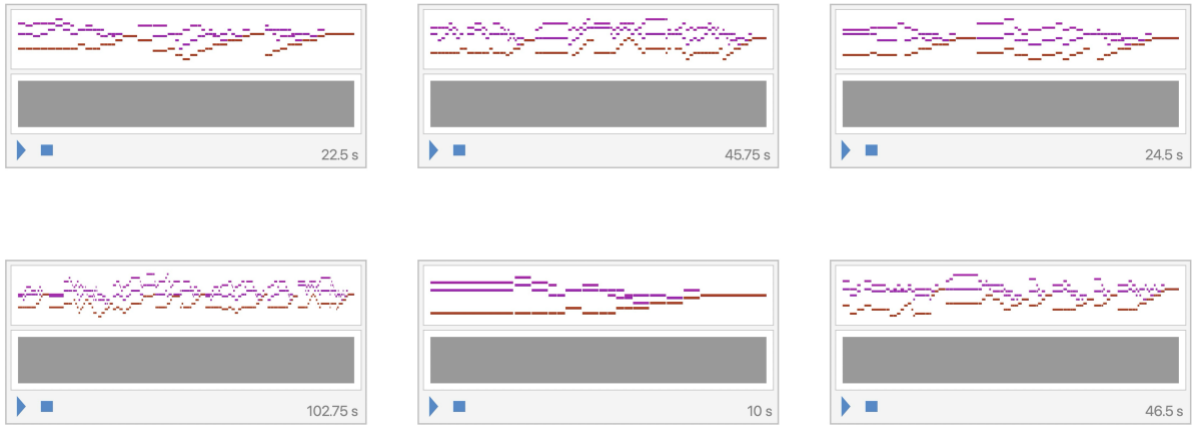


Figure 10. Piano-roll display of 6 synthetic songs, generated from prefix tree of the production rule set of the Erkomaishvili corpus.

In these examples, one can observe the complexity of the voicings and the development of the coda, often characterized by a typical stepwise upward movement in the bass voice, which frequently concludes in unison with the middle and top voices. However, sometimes the model seems to get stuck temporarily in very repetitive patterns, until it finds a way out of it, as seen in the lower-right example.

Can we benefit from the recent developments in AI research?

Towards the end of 2022, new developments in computer science, particularly the public availability of OpenAI’s ChatGPT model, generated significant excitement within the scientific community and beyond. By now, discussions about the possible implications of these developments have also reached the field of ethnomusicology (Morales et al., 2024). In the following, we will discuss what we currently⁴ believe could be concrete consequences for our work.

ChatGPT is a specialized artificial neural network (ANN) designed to model language. For our purposes, it suffices to understand language models (LMs) simply as probabilistic models trained to perform one task: predict the next word in a sentence based on the preceding words. In this sense, the prefix tree representation of the Kohonen grammar used earlier to generate synthetic songs, as shown in Figure 10, is also a language model, albeit a very small one. In contrast, at the core of ChatGPT is a Large Language Model

⁴ Since this field is developing at an astonishing rate and new tools appear in rapid succession, please note that what is considered as the best approach today may be obsolete tomorrow.

(LLM), which is trained on vast amounts of data and possesses some initially surprising properties. These properties arise because, during their training process, LLMs do not only learn the syntax rules of a language, which they use to complete sentences, but also acquire ‘semantic concepts’ or ‘meanings’. This phenomenon is related to the concept of ‘embeddings’, which will be explained below.

Within a neural network trained on text, each word or token is represented by a long list of numbers, known as a feature vector. These vectors can be imagined as ‘points’ in a high-dimensional ‘feature space’, also referred to as the ‘embedding space’. The numbers initially assigned to a word or token in this space are unique, but their actual values don’t have any intrinsic meaning. However, during training, as the network learns to predict the next words, the numerical values of these feature vectors change. Once training is complete, words that are somehow ‘similar in meaning’ also end up being close to each other in this embedding or feature space. As Stephen Wolfram beautifully illustrates in his blog⁵ *What is ChatGPT Doing—and Why Does It Work?*, which is also available as a book (Wolfram, 2023), an embedding can be thought of as a way to represent the ‘essence’ of something by lists of numbers, with the property that ‘similar things’ are represented by lists with similar numbers.

To visualize these high-dimensional feature vectors, they must be projected into two dimensions. In Stephen Wolfram’s blog (mentioned above), one can observe how words corresponding to different parts of speech are laid out in an embedding. For example, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are well separated.

Driven more by curiosity than by a justified conviction that it would work, we decided to explore whether we might also detect some ‘linguistic relations’ through the visual inspection of the embedding space of an artificial neural network trained on our data. To address the fact that the size of our corpus is far too small to train any artificial neural network directly, we used a technique called ‘data augmentation’. For the training data, we used the Erkomaishvili dataset and restricted ourselves to the deterministic rule-set of the Kohonen grammar model as discussed earlier. We employed a recurrent neural network (LSTM network) trained on 80,000 synthetic songs generated from this rule set,

⁵ <https://writings.stephenwolfram.com/2023/02/what-is-chatgpt-doing-and-why-does-it-work/>

similar to the examples shown in Figure 10.

Figure 11a shows the chord embedding map for all the chords in the Erkomaishvili corpus before the network was trained. Consequently, the spatial distribution is random, reflecting how these vectors were initially initialized. After the network was trained — meaning it had learned to complete chord sequences — the spatial structure was no longer random (Figure 11b). However, it was still difficult to assign any specific interpretation to it.

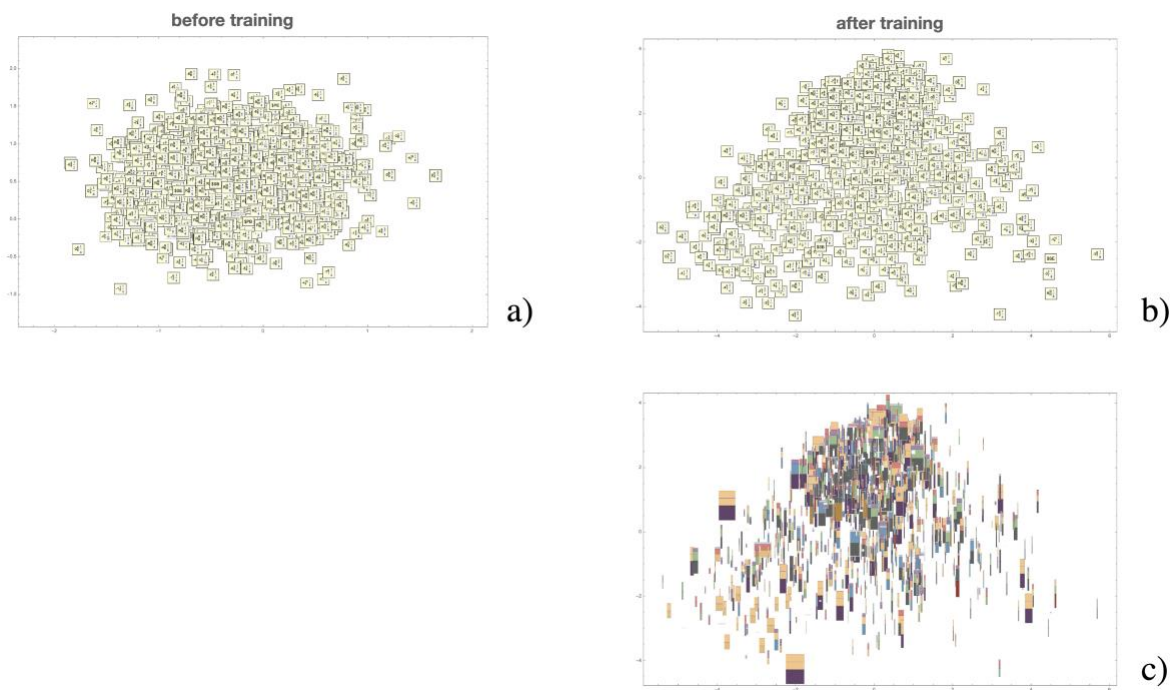


Figure 11. Chord embeddings for all chords in the Erkomaishvili dataset, based on the deterministic rules occurring more than once in the Kohonen grammar model.

When all the chords are shown as Harmonygram icons (Figures 11c and 12), the embedding map becomes slightly more informative. Figure 12 presents this map in higher resolution.

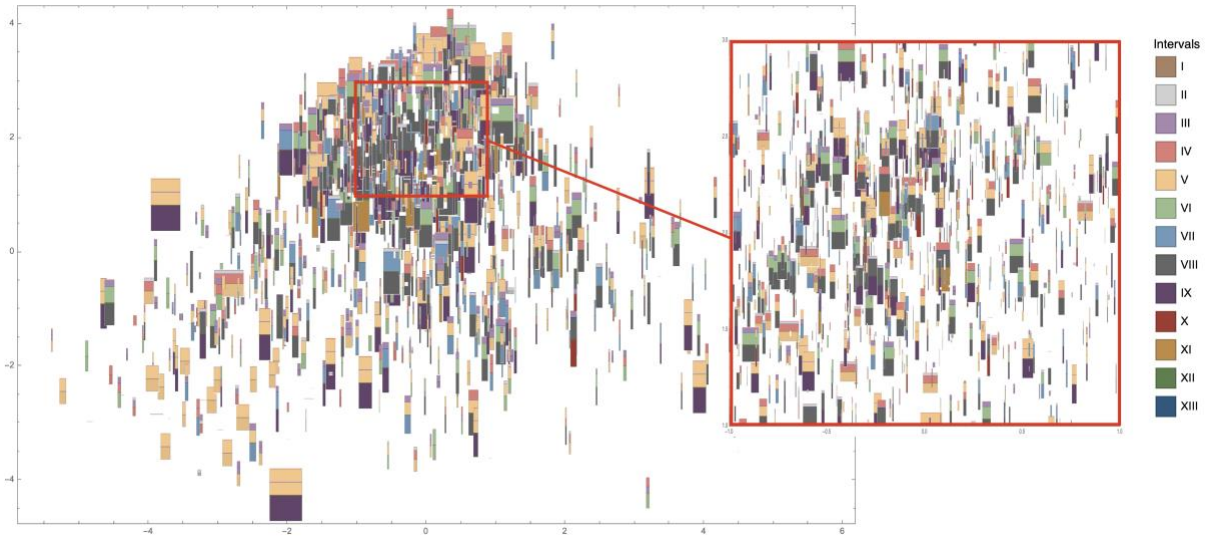


Figure 12. Same as Fig. 11 c), but in higher resolution for better visibility.

In Figure 12, one can observe that the chords in the upper central part of the embedding map generally have longer durations and display greater diversity in type compared to the majority of the chords in the lower left. Given the still relatively small dataset size (in comparison to the massive data volumes used for training Large Language Models or LLMs), we should avoid overinterpreting this map. However, it is fair to say that the map is clearly structured and less random. For instance, in the lower left, we see many single interval chords forming a fifth (represented by sand-colored bars with a horizontal line in the middle). In the Erkomaishvili corpus, these chords frequently appear as segment cadences (cf. Figure 9a). This could explain their distinct positions in the embedding map due to their different functional roles in the song structure.

We want to emphasize that the remarks above should be seen more as speculations than as conclusions. What we feel we can take away from these plots at this point in time is that there is some structure in the embedding map that might be meaningful, but we are not yet at a stage where we can interpret it in a sound way. This may be due to the limited size of the dataset, but it could also suggest that the assumption of ‘linguistic’ relationships between individual chords, which could be inferred through visual inspection of the embedding space, might not be applicable—at least not for the chords we are interested in.

But what about differences in the syntax of individual songs? Could we detect these in the

embedding map of the songs, as opposed to the embedding maps for chords? Our complete corpus consists of a total of 452 songs, which can be categorized into different classes. Some of these classes are regional, while others are associated with specific liturgical schools, such as Shemokmedi and Gelati, two monasteries in western Georgia. From a recent classification study, we know that the chord progression sequences in the songs differ across these classes (Scherbaum et al., 2024).

As a final experiment, we trained a Generative Transformer Network—essentially the same type of model that powers ChatGPT—using the complete corpus. To address the challenge of our corpus’s small size, we again employed ‘data augmentation,’ following a similar approach as before. Since we know all the production rules that define our corpus according to the Kohonen model, we can generate an unlimited number of additional synthetic songs and assume that these correspond to songs that simply have not yet been produced. These synthetic songs were then combined with the real ones.

We skip the technical details, which are irrelevant to the following discussion, and jump straight to the resulting embedding map, shown in Figure 13.

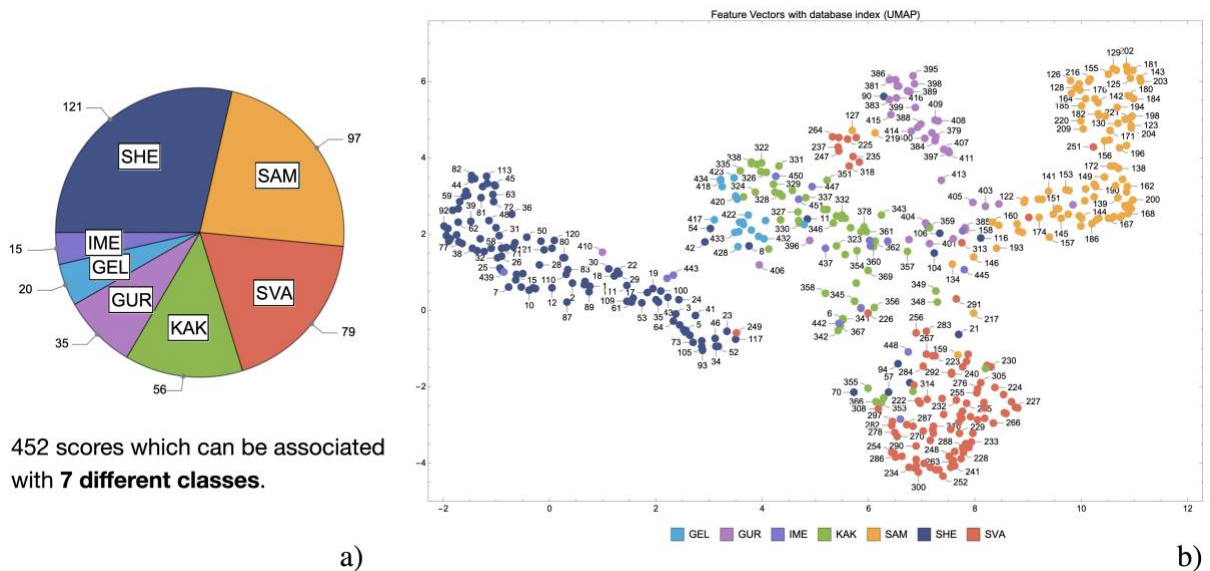


Figure 13. Feature map (embedding) for the songs in the complete corpus. Fig. 13 a) shows the partitioning into different classes. Fig. 13b) displays the individual feature vectors projected into 2 dimensions. The acronyms IME, GEL, GUR, KAK, SVA, SAM, and SHE stand for Imereti, Gelati, Guria, Kakheti, Svaneti, Smaegrelo, and Shemokmedi, respectively.

Each point in Figure 13b represents a song, while the different colors correspond to different classes or subsets within our corpus. You can see that the different classes are

well-separated in this map⁶. This suggests that in general the temporal chord progression structures between these classes are systematically different. In other words, the network effectively captures the differences between the individual subsets of the corpus. It is worth noting that, in contrast to the n-gram based classification (Scherbaum et al., 2024), this differentiation was achieved in a completely unsupervised manner.

Discussion and conclusions

The interdisciplinary project presented here has come a long way, overcoming many challenges along the way. The ultimate goal, the quantitative description of the chordal syntax of traditional Georgian vocal music, still lies ahead of us. However, we believe that with the results presented here, we have reached an important intermediate milestone. The self-learning Kohonen model represents a significant improvement over the classical Markov model, as it allows for the influence of different context lengths for each chord in a chord sequence. It provides a complete description of the production rules governing chord sequences, assuming that only the immediate context of a chord is relevant for its generation. With the representation of the Kohonen model in the form of prefix trees, we now have an efficient generative model that allows for the generation of an unlimited number of synthetic songs, all adhering to the rules of the dataset used to train the model.

Technically, the limitation to the immediate context can now be overcome using artificial neural networks based on transformers, as employed in models like ChatGPT. However, the amount of data necessary for their training far exceeds what is typically available in ethnomusicological research. This is certainly true for traditional Georgian vocal music, and it is unlikely that this limitation will ever be overcome. Therefore, it is probably fair to say that the current model has methodologically achieved what—at least with today’s methods— can be extracted from musical notation, which also answers the question posed by the title.

Our project has provided us, in addition to the generation of the Kohonen model, with several important insights. As an interdisciplinary team without a common theoretical background, we have come to appreciate the great importance of visual analyses, such as

⁶ Individual songs represented by points whose color does not match that of adjacent points appear to deviate from this pattern. The reason for this will have to be investigated in detail, but this will have to be done outside the scope of this work.

the representation of songs as Harmonygrams and chords as Harmonygram icons, as these are intuitively understandable.

From our perspective, two important tasks remain to be addressed next. First, the Kohonen model represents every part of a song as equally important, meaning it does not differentiate between ornamental and grammatically essential aspects. As a result, the model is somewhat 'overloaded' and difficult to interpret. We are still in the early stages of addressing this problem (Arom and Scherbaum, 2024). Secondly, all models have so far been culturally unvalidated. This means that their results have not yet been tested by an audience familiar with Georgian music, and their ethnomusicological relevance remains to be evaluated.

Acknowledgments

Part of this work was supported by the German Research Foundation (DFG MU 2686/13-1, SCHE 280/20-1).

REFERENCES

Antonov, Anton. (2018). Tries With Frequencies Mathematica package. Retrieved from <https://github.com/antononcube/MathematicaForPrediction>

Antonov, Anton. (2023). Using Prefix trees for Markov chain text generation. Retrieved from <https://community.wolfram.com/groups/-/m/t/2819012>

Arom, Simha; Scherbaum, Frank. (2024). *Towards a Theory of the Chord Syntax of Georgian Polyphony: New Tools, New Perspectives and New Results*. Paper presented at the 12th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony: Tbilisi, Georgia, 25-28 September, 2024.

Arom, Simha; Scherbaum, Frank and Darras, Florent. (2018). "Structural Analysis and Modeling of Georgian and Medieval Polyphonies." *Proceedings of the 9th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony*. [9. International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony, Oct 30 - Nov 3, 2018, Tbilisi, Georgia] Eds. Rusudan Tsurtsumia and Joseph Jordania: pp. 203–319. Tbilisi: International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony

of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

Arom, Simha; Vallejo, Polo. (2008). "Towards a theory of the chord syntax of Georgian Polyphony" *Proceeding of the 4th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony*. [The Fourth International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony]. Eds. Rusudan Tsurtsumia and Joseph Jordania: pp. 321–335. Tbilisi: International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

Arom, Simha; Vallejo, Polo. (2010). "Outline of a syntax of chords in some songs from Samegrelo" *Proceeding of the 5th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony*. [The Fifth International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony] Eds. Rusudan Tsurtsumia and Joseph Jordania: pp. 266–277. Tbilisi: International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

Kahneman, Daniel. (2013). *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Killick, Andrew. (2021). *Global Notation as a Tool for Cross-Cultural and Comparative Music Analysis*. Retrieved from https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/151037/3/Killick_AAWM_Vol_8_2.pdf

Kohonen, Teuvo. (1989). "A self learning musical grammar, or "Associative memory of the second kind" *International Joint Conference on Neural Networks*. 1: pp. 1-5, Washington: International Neural Network Society.

Morales, Glinore S.; Perez, Mary Leigh Ann C. and Tabuena, Almighty C. (2024). "Artificial Intelligence and the Integration of the Industrial Revolution 6.0 in Ethnomusicology: Demands, Interventions and Implications" *Musicologist*. 8(1): 75-107. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/musicologist/issue/85473/1286472>

Rosenzweig, Sebastian; Scherbaum, Frank; Shugliashvili, David; Arifi-Müller, Vlora and Müller, Meinard. (2020). "Erkomaishvili Dataset: A Curated Corpus of Traditional Georgian Vocal Music for Computational Musicology" *Transactions of the International Society for Music Information Retrieval*. 3(1): 31-41. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.5334/tismir.44>

Scherbaum, Frank. (2024). *Going Beyond Western Scores: An Alternative Notation System*

for Traditional Georgian Vocal Music. Paper presented at the 12th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony. Tbilisi, Georgia. 25-28 September, 2024.

Scherbaum, Frank; Arom, Simha; Caron Darras, Florent; Lolashvili, Ana and Kane, Frank. (2024). "On the Classification of Traditional Georgian Vocal Music by Computer-Assisted Score Analysis" *Musicologist*. 8(1): 28-54. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/musicologist/issue/85473/1246886>

Scherbaum, Frank; Arom, Simha and Kane, Frank. (2015). "On the feasibility of Markov Model based analysis of Georgian vocal polyphonic music" *Proceedings of the 5th International Workshop on Folk Music Analysis, [The 5th International Workshop on Folk Music Analysis]*. (pp. 94-98). Paris: University Pierre and Marie Curie

Scherbaum, Frank; Arom, Simha and Kane, Frank. (2016a). "A graph-theoretical approach to the harmonic analysis of Georgian vocal polyphonic music" *Proceedings of the 6th International Workshop Folk Music Analysis, [The 6th International Workshop Folk Music Analysis]* Beauguitte, Pierre; Duggan, Bryan; Kelleher, John D. (Eds.), (pp. 59-60). Dublin: Technological University.

Scherbaum, Frank; Arom, Simha and Kane, Frank. (2016b). "Graphical comparative analysis of the harmonic structure of the Akhobadze corpus of Svan songs" *Proceeding of the 8th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony*. [Paper presented at the 8th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony on September 26-30, 2016, Tbilisi, Georgia]. Tsurtssumia, Rusudan and Jordania, Joseph (Eds.), (pp. 170-189). Retrieved from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tQ_qDqY5xLWpOF8S3Ns54_ChCb_Wf72D/view

Scherbaum, Frank; Mzhavanadze, Nana. (2024). "Harmonygrams: A Graphical Notation System for Three-Voiced Music Facilitating the Perception of Harmonies" [Paper presented at the Eighth International Conference on Analytical Approaches to World Musics (AAWM 2024). Bologna, Italy, June 10-14, 2024]. Retrieved from https://youtu.be/8pWl9z_SSUM

Scherbaum, Frank; Mzhavanadze, Nana; Arom, Simha; Rosenzweig, Sebastian and Müller, Meinard. (2020). Tonal Organization of the Erkomaishvili Dataset: Pitches, Scales, Melodies and Harmonies. Potsdam: Universitätsverlag Potsdam.

Scherbaum, Frank; Mzhavanadze, Nana; Arom, Simha; Rosenzweig, Sebastian and Müller, Meinard. (2021). *Analysis of Tonal Organization and Intonation Practice in the Tbilisi State Conservatory Recordings of Artem Erkomaishvili of 1966*. [Paper presented at the Sixth Analytical Approaches to World Music Conference, June 9-12, 2021, Paris, France]. Special Session in Honor of Simha Arom. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfjy_q71WUQ

Scherbaum, Frank; Mzhavanadze, Nana; Arom, Simha; Rosenzweig, Sebastian and Müller, Meinard. (2023). "Tonal Organization of the Erkomaishvili Dataset: Pitches, Scales, Melodies and Harmonies". *Anzor Erkomaishvili and Contemporary Trends in the Study of Traditional and Sacred Georgian Music*, Eds. Jordania, Joseph and Tsurtssumia, Rusudan: pp. 53-88. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Scherbaum, Frank; Mzhavanadze, Nana; Rosenzweig, Sebastian and Müller, Meinard. (2022). "Tuning Systems of Traditional Georgian Singing Determined From a New Corpus of Field Recordings" *Musicologist*. 6(2): 142-168. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/musicologist/issue/74133/1068947> .

Sheikholharam, Peyman; Teshnehlal, Mohammad. (2008). "Music Composition Using Combination of Genetic Algorithms and Kohonen Grammar | IEEE Conference Publication | IEEE Xplore" *2008 International Symposium on Computational Intelligence and Design*. Retrieved from <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/4725603>

Shugliashvili, Davit. (2014). *Georgian Church Hymns*, Shemokmedi School. Tbilisi: Georgian Chanting Foundation & Tbilisi State Conservatory.

Tsereteli, Zaal; Veshapidze, Levan. (2014). "On the Georgian traditional scale" [The Seventh International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony] Eds. Rusudan Tsurtssumia and Joseph Jordania: pp. 288–295. Tbilisi: International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony of Tbilisi State Conservatoire

Tsereteli, Zaal; Veshapidze, Levan. (2015). "Video of the presentation "The empirical research of a Georgian sound scale" 2015 IAML/IMS Congress. New York City, USA.

Wolfram, Stephen. (2023). *What Is ChatGPT Doing and Why Does It Work?* Illinois: Wolfram Media.

CEM ÇIRAK

İzmir Katip Çelebi University, Türkiye

cemcirak@gmail.com

orcid.org/0000-0002-9527-0550

The Journey of a Musical Idea: An Investigation into a Musical Form Through Society and Time

ABSTRACT

In the story and reconstruction of cultural traditions, active notions such as individual memory and social memory play a significant role. It is widely accepted that the various elements constituting a tradition must have been produced or practiced by an individual first before they are spread around the society they are related to. It follows that this product or practice can only start to be rooted in its place within the related tradition through other individuals' conscious memory, before it takes roots deeper into the unconscious levels of both the individuals and the society. Accordingly, a musical idea generated by Hacı Arif Bey, who is generally accepted as the founder of "the song reform", is identified, analyzed, and traced down throughout the modern age of a reconstructed/reformed traditional Turkish art music in this essay. The solution he found for composing a specific *vezin* (*mef'ûlü mef'âilü mef'âilü fe'ûlün/fa'lün*) with the *usul Türk Aksağı* which is scaled with a 5/8 rhythmic structure is the main element of this study and is analyzed structurally and functionally. Hypothetically, this musical idea is accepted as 'the origin', because no similar ideas have been found in a scan of traditional Turkish art music repertoire. This musical idea is investigated throughout the *meşk* chain (or other musical relations), which is the teacher-student sequence. The spread of the musical idea is also analyzed to explain how the continuity of the *meşk* chain's is achieved. As a result of this study, a demonstration of a musical idea that gets transferred throughout the generations is made, and as a side result, structural plans of the songs constructed with the *usul Türk Aksağı* and the *vezin* '*mef'ûlü mef'âilü mef'âilü fe'ûlün/fa'lün*' are given.

KEYWORDS

Hacı Arif Bey

Türk Aksağı

Structural Analysis

Functional Analysis

Tradition

Turkish Art Music

Traditional Turkish art music (also known as Classical Turkish Music) has its own theories and practices, which can differ to a greater or lesser extent among its sub-genres. Within all genres and subgenres of traditional Turkish music, there have always been composers and artists who shape forms and practices, adding key elements to their respective traditions. Even if this situation looks anti-traditional, in reality, it is traditional. Based on the fact that any materialized phenomenon is in a process of decay -and according to Plato, is also imperfect - a tradition constantly needs renovation to survive. This renovation process always comes to life via composers and players within a musical tradition.

Of course, a ‘musical thing¹’ cannot be considered as a material object because of music’s ambiguous ontology. However, if we understand music as “harmonically energized vibrations”, its elements, such as structure, style, and timbre... become material enough to accept their appearance in the physical world. More clearly, we cannot consider a musical structure in a ‘material’ way but rather in an ‘orderly’ way. A structure can only be viewed in the text of a musical piece or explained metaphorically. That approach explains a behavioural specificity of musical material but not its whole physicality, and this will be enough for the present study’s context. With this little touch of materialization, a musical thing (in this case, a musical structure) can be defined as having a lifespan and several stages of existence.

The lifespan of a musical idea is most likely related to its aesthetic quality and structural consistency, which, in turn, affects its acceptance by other followers of the tradition, as well as certain social phantasmagorias (Çırak, 2021). The stages of its existence begin with an individual mind, which must work with its own individual memory.

Although it is already difficult to explain all its aspects, individual memory is more easily understandable if we relate it to social memory. Arguments about memory are defined from two points of view: traditional models and process-oriented modern models. Traditional models systemize memory with storage, place, and retrieval. On the other hand, process-oriented models focus on neuronal connectivity, the neuronal system’s internal activities, and external experience. Available connectable pathways in this

¹ The term ‘musical thing’ can be defined as something that exists or pre-exists musically. Read this article for more: (Çırak, 2021: 85).

system respond to 'the new' with irritation and approach it with uncertainty. According to this argument, memory is not a storage system that has a specific place (Schmidt, 2008: 191-192). It is "*the establishing of relevant and enduring cognition structures which serve to constitute order in the brain and synthesize human behavior*" (Schmidt, 2008: 191-192). Memory can also be described simply as finding a way back through these pathways.

Considering these arguments, it is evident that 'the new' for an individual should not be completely different from its antecedents to avoid causing 'irritation'. Rather, it should include some possible pathways that are ready to connect with older ones. This same logic applies to musical ideas as well.

Social memory is a type of memory that creates a collective identity and connects a society's past and present through repetition. It occurs within interrelated groups and is based on historical and logical/hypothetical foundations. The transformation of individual memory into social memory is relatively simple: when someone talks about it, the idea becomes socialized (Fentress and Wickham, 1992: IX, X). An idea that is produced by an individual becomes a social idea as soon as it is realised in the material realm. The lifespan and power of the idea's effects are determined by socio-cultural and aesthetic properties, which may vary depending on the idea's degree of certainty and consciousness. Socialized ideas have both conscious and unconscious levels and can serve as sources of knowledge (Fentress and Wickham, 1992: 25-26) because they include many individual ideas that can be combined and gradually levelled out to create a composite collective idea.

This study focuses on a musical-structural idea and its journey in individual and social memory, as invented or popularised by Hacı Arif Bey. His songs, composed in the form of '*şarki*', with the 5/8 meter of the *usul Türk Aksağı*, and with lyrics built with the *vezin* '*mef'ûlü mefâîlü mefâîlü feûlün/fa'lün*', are songs generated from that musical idea. They are analyzed using a text-centred structural approach. After acquiring the structural schema and *usûl-vezin* synchronization from the songs, the study proceeds to trace this particular musical idea within the tradition predominantly shaped by Hacı Arif Bey's musical style.

The text-critical method is not applied to the sheet music of the works during the analytical process. The editions of the songs are obtained from Aytaç Ergen's special

NOTAM digital archive (Ergen, 2023), with the most internally consistent editions of the songs selected. Just the opening musical sentences of the songs are given as examples while researching the antecedents and descendants of the musical idea because of the structural repetitions of these musical sentences within the songs.

As each musical piece needs a special analytic approach because of its specificities, traditional Turkish art music as a whole must be analyzed using a different structural analysis method than the methods used in Western art music. In this approach, musical sentences are primarily evaluated based on the verbal content (lyrical content) of the songs: the melody of one verse of a lyric generally defines a musical sentence, except where the composer decides to combine two verses into one. Musical sentences typically end with a cadence. Of course, while talking about *makam* music, the notion of cadence must be understood a little bit differently from tonal cadences in Western music. Here a phenomenological approach² is needed. We should assess the cadence type based on its perceivable consistency. Form, *usul*, and lyrics also affect the definitions of the musical structure's formal units, including sentences, phrases, sub-phrases, and even motives. Linguistic meanings of 'sentence' and 'phrase' are preserved in this musical analysis in the same relational way. A complex musical unit that ends with a strong cadence is defined as a sentence. Its weak cadenced sub-units structured with multiple motives are defined as 'phrases'. Sentences are represented by lower case letters; phrases are represented by numbers.

It can easily be argued that musical traditions also depend on the linguistic culture from which they developed. When we examine the period of Hacı Arif Bey, we observe that in literature, official and scientific articles in the Turkish language are constructed using lengthy sentences. Probably this runs parallel to the musical tradition's classic period because of the harmonic relations between music and linguistic theories. Musical sentences had considerable dimensions, measured with scales like 28/4, 32/4, 48/4, 64/4, 120/4, etc. (they are also based on a special rhythmic structure called *usul*) in the classic works. These big and complex sentences gave way to simpler and smaller versions when Hacı Arif Bey's romantic reform started. However, that complexity is still somehow inherited and shows itself phantasmagorically (Çırak, 2021) in Hacı Arif Bey's songs. His

² For more information about phenomenological musical analysis: (Ferrara, 1984).

musical sentence structures are obviously more aesthetically stylized and more complex than his premises suggest. Also, this is the way that he raised the form '*şarkı*' (and himself) to the high point of the tradition's popularity (İnal, 1955: 70). Thus, both specialist and casual listeners were able to appreciate his works' aesthetic value. On the other hand, the transformation he demonstrated with his songs was directly affected by the social, cultural, and perhaps even political transformation that occurred in the last period of the Ottoman Empire and the founding period of modern Türkiye (Ergur and Aydın, 2006). Even though there were strict standards about composing in classical forms, *şarkı*s only started to be standardized in this era. This standardization was also connected to the process of social transformation and rationalization in traditional Turkish music culture (Ergur and Doğrusöz, 2015).

This study is based on one of Hacı Arif Bey's musical-structural ideas in these contexts. Hopefully, we will understand through it how repetitive a tradition can be and how it can produce originality within that repetition even if this remains somewhat hidden from view.

Hacı Arif Bey and the *şarkı* form

Hacı Arif Bey, who lived between 1831 and 1885, is considered by music historians to be one of the most defining figures in traditional Turkish art music. Many people acknowledge him as a pivotal figure in the shift from the classical era to the romantic era (Uslu, 2015: 100) or to the popularization period when the *şarkı* form became more widespread (Uslu, 2015: 106), a trend that persists even today. Of course, after Hacı Arif Bey's artistic impact as a composer and performer, the classical style did not immediately disappear; classical forms and styles just began to fade away and lose popularity. Hacı Arif Bey's school, which was largely organized by his students and followers, emerged and spread on the foundation built by classical composers. Also, in his songs, there is a strong flavour of the classical repertoire. Even though it may not be readily apparent, the same process is still valid today, for current trends are still deeply indebted to the classics.

This new musical art stream became popular and successful by focusing on a specific form: '*şarkı*,' or in direct translation, 'song'.

The *sarkı*'s lyrical themes are generally accepted as in the frame of love and worldly

feelings, but because of the strong mystical culture of the Turkish people, there are many songs referring to this mystical realm.

The history of this form has yet to be fully uncovered. ‘Şarkı’ as a title can only be seen in the 17th century in Ali Ufki’s *Mecmua-i Saz u Söz* (Cevher, 1995: 51), and Dimitrie Cantemir’s *Kitabu İlmi’l Musiki ala Vechi’l-Hurufat* (Kantemiroğlu, 2001: 186). There is some basic structural information about the form in these sources. The earliest and clearest source about the form can be found in Alaeddin Yavaşca’s *Türk Musikisinde Kompozisyon ve Beste Biçimleri* (*Composition and Composition Forms in Turkish Music*) (Özen, 2013: 25). Hypothetically, the etymology of the word *şarkı* may be considered from several different points of view. Two main ideas stand out among them: one based on the ‘şark/west’ word, the other one based on the word “şar/city”. According to the first approach, *şarkı* means “something that belongs to and/or is about the west”, whereas the other approach suggests that *şarkı* means “city song or city music”. Simply, the musical structure that is built via musical sentences in the *şarkı* form is the same as a poetic form (which is written in four lines) in literature known by the same name (Çırak, 2015: 19-20): ‘abcb’ (Çırak, 2015: 83). This undoubtedly is the most familiar organization of the *şarkı* form in the tradition. There are specifically composed musical sentences for the first three lines of the poem, while the second and the fourth lines are the same and end with a resolution. Bekir Sıdkı Sezgin, who is one of the most important performers and lecturers, defines these lines in order of *zemin* (ground, base), *zaman* (time), *meyan* (middle or medium), *nakarat* (repetition) (Çırak, 2015: 21). But Hacı Arif Bey also manipulated this form to compose lyrics written in more than four lines. That solution generated a sub-category of the *şarkı* form named as ‘nev-zemin (new ground, new base)’ (Çırak, 2015: 119).

Hacı Arif Bey’s compositions using the *usul* Türk Aksağı and the *vezin* ‘mefûlü mefâ’ilü mefâ’ilü feül’

Usul and *vezin*, as two significant elements of this essay, are similar aspects structurally. *Usul* invests the melody with a specific style and *vezin* invests the lyrics with a specific style.

The *usul* Türk Aksağı is in 5/8 time scale: with one strong quarter note beat, one weak quarter note beat, and one weak eighth note beat. *Vezins* are based on whether the

syllables are open or closed. If a word ends with a consonant or a long vowel (like ‘â’, ‘û’...), then the syllable is assessed as a closed syllable and counts as long in time. In the other situation, if a word ends with a vowel, it is classified as an open syllable and counts as short in time. As a general method, open syllables are represented by ‘.’, and closed syllables are represented by “-”³. Based on this brief information, the aforementioned *vezin* is represented by these symbols:

“- - - - - -”

When we analyze the *vezin* with its *tefîles* (each pattern-word in the *vezin*, for example, “*mef’ûlû*”- is referred to as *tefîle*), the symbolic notation comes out like this:

“- . . / . - . . / . - . . / . - -”

This is the method called ‘taktî’ in its simplest form.

A basic pattern of a sequential line of syllables as two long and two short syllables emerges with the help of this method. At first glance, this pattern is fully compatible with the beats of the *usul Türk Aksağı*, especially in its initial section.

With this brief instruction, we can now analyze Hacı Arif Bey’s three songs, which possess these features and were found in our source archive (Ergen, 2023). In traditional Turkish art music songs are labelled by their *makam* and first line; either in full or partially. The first song is *Nihavend* song *Ben bûy-i vefâ bekler iken*; the second, *Hüzzam* song *Meftûn olalı*; and the third, *Uşşak* song *Sâkî içelim câm-ı musaffâ-yı keremden*.

The *Nihavend* song is built on a widely used *şarkı* structure; with lyrics consisting of four lines and musical sentences arranged as ‘abcb’.

The *Hüzzam* song differs slightly from the *Nihavend* song; with lyrics consisting of five lines and musical sentences arranged as ‘abcdb’. As we can see from the general structural formula, *zemin*, *zaman*, *meyan*, “the second *meyan*”, and *nakarat* compensate for the five lines.

The *Uşşak* song has even more *meyans* than the *Hüzzam* song. Its lyrics consist of eight

³ For detailed information about *vezin*: (Tanrıkorur, 1991) Another source in English (transcription and symbols may differ from culture to culture): (Ranking, 1885)

lines, and the musical sentences are arranged as 'abcdefgb'.

These are the most general structural aspects of the songs, highlighting their differences. When it comes to a more detailed analysis, we observe a recurring sentence structure pattern that is the same in all the songs. We see this pattern as designed in periodic sentences in the sheet music. However, in performance tradition, the repeat of the sentences may or may not be used. Sheet music editions are written with this situation in mind, meaning that some of them include repetition while others do not.

The pattern as seen in the comparative analytic sheet below is structurally very consistent between the first sentences of the songs:

Figure 1. Comparative structural analysis of the first sentences of Hacı Arif Bey's three songs⁴ (Transcribed by Cem Çırak, 2023).

This structural design of the first sentences can be formulated⁵ as: a (1(1,2) + 2(3,4) + 3(5,6) + 4(7,8)). This sentence structure is repeated exactly in the other sentences of all the other songs.

After identifying the general structure, we may now analyze the first sentences in more

⁴ Comparative figures are made with the editions from (Ergen, 2023)'s archive.

⁵ 'a' for the musical sentence, italic number for the phrase, the other numbers are for the location of the phrases.

detail through with a comparative examination. The subunits of the sentences can be clearly segmented into their separate elements, except for the endings of their third phrases. Clear cadences can be observed here, which also form (lyrical) clauses that could potentially stand alone as sentences. For example, in the *Uşşak şarkı, Saki içelim... / Saki*⁶, let's have a drink... the melodic structures support the verbal integrity with a strong cadence. Likewise, in the *Hüzzam şarkı, Meftûn olalı / Ever since I was enchanted...* there is a verbal unit accompanied by a musical unit. So, these two measure-long phrases are all supported by verbal meaning in some way, and they typically conclude with strong cadences. Again, a similar situation is observed in the *Nihavend* song. The first line of the lyrics of the song is *Ben bû-yi vefâ bekler iken sû-yi çemenden / As I wait for the scent of fidelity from where grass stands*⁷ (the earth as a metaphor). The song's first phrase (which, in the approach adopted here, is a subunit of the musical sentence), numbered as '1', includes *Ben bû-yi vefâ... / I, the scent of fidelity....* Here, there is not a verbal phrase but a musical phrase with a strong cadence. However, the lyrics still constitute a verbal meaning group. This situation is even clearer in the *Uşşak* song, as above.

We can see the same process in the second phrases, which serve as the amplifiers of the first phrases. Additionally, the second phrases exhibit a high density-quotient. Here, the *Nihavend* song's lyrics again form a verbal meaning group that completes the previous one: *bekler iken/as waiting*. However, in the other songs, musical phrases cut across the verbal meanings, and even the words: *Sen şeh-i hu[bâna]/To you queen of sweet[hearts]*, and *câm-ı musaff[fâyı]/The purified glass*. These characteristics suggest that there is a strong chance for this musical structural idea being based on the *Nihavend* song because of the compatibility of the musical and verbal structures of this song.

The most interesting aspect of the third phrases is found at the verbal level. The melody here in these phrases is accompanied by only one syllable. There are very weak cadences at the end, where we also need to take a breath while singing. These breathing points help to segment the musical sentences neatly. There is something different about the texture in the *Nihavend* song's third phrase. The density decreases dramatically here. This is a parallel approach to the density of the first sentences in this song. Therefore, we can expect an interaction between the first and third phrases, as well as between the second

⁶ The one who delivers drinks, or the one who does that in a metaphorical way.

⁷ Mildly out of the context, this metaphor can take us aesthetically to Walt Whitman's *Leaves of grass*.

and fourth phrases. In other words, consecutive double phrases are related to each other within the musical sentence.

The fourth phrases of the first sentences have strong, descending, and predictable cadences. Additionally, there are instrumental connecting motives that make the sentences periodic at the end.

Figure 2 displays two systems of musical notation for the second sentences of Hacı Arif Bey's three songs. The first system (measures 10-13) shows three staves with lyrics in Turkish. The second system (measures 14-17) also shows three staves with lyrics. Brackets and numbers (5, 6, 7, 8) indicate phrase boundaries. A 'b' symbol is used for the first ending of the second system.

Figure 2. Comparative structural analysis of the second sentences of Hacı Arif Bey's three songs (Transcribed by Cem Çırak, 2023).

The 'b' sentences follow the same structural pattern as the 'a' sentences. The textural specificity of the third phrase of the *Nihavend* song (sentence 'a') can be observed here in the corresponding position in the *Uşşak* song. There is also an exemption about the structural division of the *Hüzzam* song's sentence 'b'. The third and fourth phrases cannot be segmented neatly into two distinct parts. However, with the assistance of the structural simulation theory⁸ that has been developed to explain situations like this in our previous studies, we can make predictions about the ambiguous segmentation the composer may have sought.

The quantity of *meyan* sections, which is determined by the number of sections between the *zaman* and *nakarat* (or the first and last *nakarat*) sections, varies from song to song.

⁸ Micro-structural plans affect their ensuing ones in a way that they tend to simulate themselves.

However, the 'c' sentences and the other *meyan* sentences follow the same structure as the previous sentences. Even the density change is kept with the third (11th of the song) phrase of the *Uşşak* song:

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 19-22) features three staves. The top staff has lyrics 'A za ri he zâr et se de vaz', the middle staff 'Hay ran e de li aş be ni hüs', and the bottom staff 'Lut fey le sa fâ yab o la hm'. The second system (measures 23-26) also has three staves. The top staff has lyrics 'geç nün biz', the middle staff 'se de ben den', the bottom staff 'de ki â na(+1 Meyan)', and a final line 'den(+4 Meyan)'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines, and is labeled with measure numbers 9, 10, 11, 12, 1. c, and 2. %.

Figure 3. Comparative structural analysis of the second sentences of Hacı Arif Bey's three songs (Transcribed by Cem Çırak, 2023)

The musical sentence structure of Hacı Arif Bey, which he used in the songs with that specific *usul* and *vezin*, is obviously a strictly applied rule for him. There is one further element to analyze in this structural plan: the syllabic formation of the melody and the *usul*.

The Usul Türk Aksağı

The image displays two staves of musical notation for 'The Usul Türk Aksağı'. The top staff is labeled 'Strong Beat' and 'Weak Beat' with a 5/8 time signature. The bottom staff is labeled 'Vezin' with a 5/8 time signature. The melody is written on a five-line staff with notes and rests. Below the notes, the lyrics are written in Turkish: 'mef û lü me fâ î lü me fâ' on the first line and 'î lü fe û lün' on the second line. The lyrics are aligned with the notes, with some notes having multiple syllables underneath them. The notation includes various musical symbols such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, as well as a '5' above the first measure of the second staff.

Figure 4. The syllabic formation of this structural plan on the melody and *usul* (Transcribed by Cem Çırak, 2023).

This refers to the arrangement of the syllables of the *vezins* on the *usul*. Hacı Arif Bey used this formation and the sentence formula $[x(1(1,2) + 2(3,4) + 3(5,6) + 4(7,8))]$ without exception. Consequently, various structural, melodic, syllabic, and other functional elements have been identified, presenting the framework of these songs, which are likely to have been invented by him. Collectively, this knowledge defines the musical idea that is being investigated in this study.

Possible antecedents of the musical idea

I discovered a work in the archive, which was probably composed before Hacı Arif Bey's era. This song, composed by Şakir Ağa (1779-1840) (İnal, 1955:168), exhibits the same *usul*⁹ and *vezin* as the previously mentioned musical idea. Its *vezin* is just one *tefile* shorter than that structure.

⁹ This edition defines the *usul* as *Aksak Semai* as a mistake, although, the editor gave the measures with 5/8 timings.



Figure 5. The first sentence of *Müsteâr* Song by Şakir Ağa (Ergen, 2023)

At first glance, we notice a distinct difference in the syllabic arrangement. This plan has a more direct relation to the beats of the *usul*. There are no measures with one syllable, which would give the composer more freedom to create motives. Additionally, the melodic structure is different. The first sentence is built with two phrases; however, the phrases still consist of two measures, similar to Hacı Arif Bey's musical idea. Suggesting that this song may be an antecedent is speculative, since many other small-scaled songs include two-measures-long phrases. The repeating sentence formula of this song can be formulized like this: $x(1(1,2)+2(3,4))$

Nikoğos Ağa (1820-1890) (Özcan, 2007), used the exact same structure in his song, as seen below:



Figure 6. The first sentence of *Ferahnâk* song by Nikoğos Ağa (Ergen, 2023).

Here, we have another song with the same *usul* and *vezin*, composed by Hacı Faik Bey (1831 -1891) (İnal, 1955: 184), who lived nearly at the same time as Hacı Arif Bey (1831-1885).

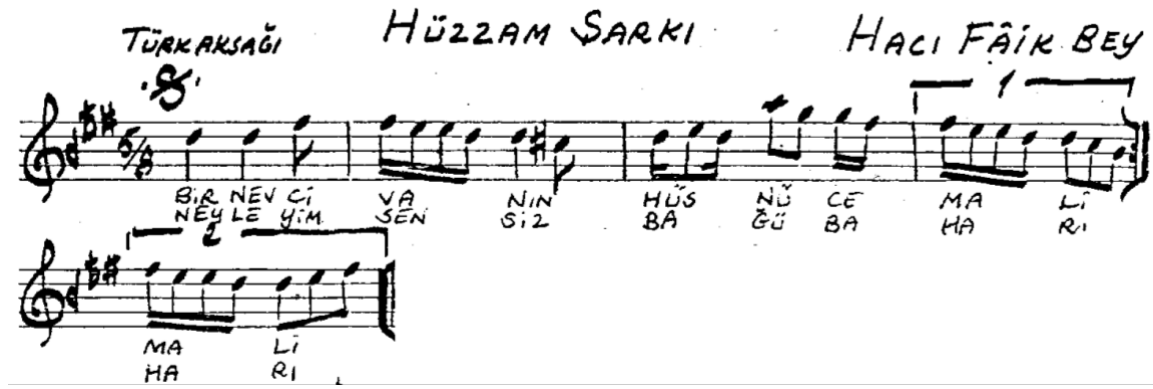


Figure 7. The first sentence of *Hüzzam* song by Hacı Faik Bey (Ergen, 2023).

We can see that this song's first sentence is structurally the same as the two previous ones, with just a slight difference in the lyrics. The *vezin* is the shorter version of the main examples.

In the next example, the *vezin* is slightly different but surprisingly shares some features with Hacı Arif Bey's structural plan, following the same formula:

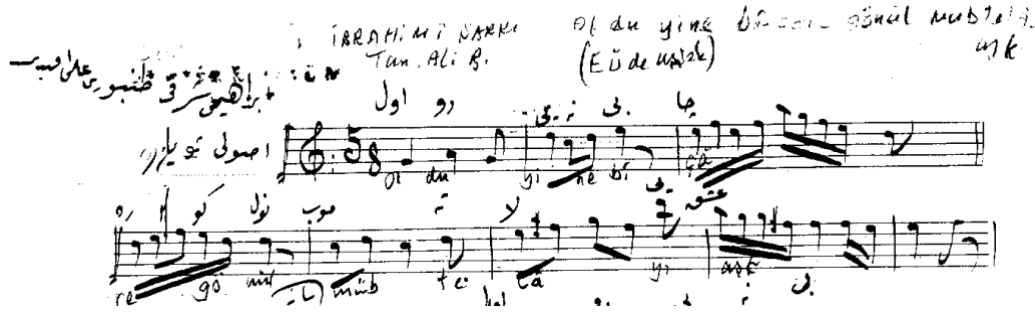


Figure 8. The first sentence of *Uşşak* song by Tanburi Ali Efendi (Ergen, 2023).

Tanburi Ali Efendi's (1836-1902) (Tutu, 2017: 85) *Uşşak* Song is the same as the first three measures of the structural plan of Hacı Arif Bey. This could easily have been accepted as the main source of our research material, but according to many other sources, Tanburi Ali Efendi composed most of his works during his time in İzmir (after 1885) (Tutu, 2017: 89-90). Therefore, the date gives this source a high possibility to be a descendant of the musical idea we are investigating.

In addition, there is also a strong suggestion that Tanburi Ali Efendi's songs may have been influenced by both Sadullah Ağa and Hacı Arif Bey (Tutu, 2017: 89).

Furthermore, upon considering this song that he composed using the same musical idea, we can conclude that Tanburi Ali Efendi composed songs that are both antecedents of and descendants of Hacı Arif Bey's musical idea:



Figure 9. The first sentence of *Uşşak* song by Tanburi Ali Efendi (Ergen, 2023).

Descendants of the musical idea

Naturally, to find similarly constructed musical works, one should look at the repertoire composed by Hacı Arif Bey's students as an obvious starting point.

Two songs by Lem'i Atlı (1870-1945) (İnal, 1955:213), with the aforementioned elements can be identified:

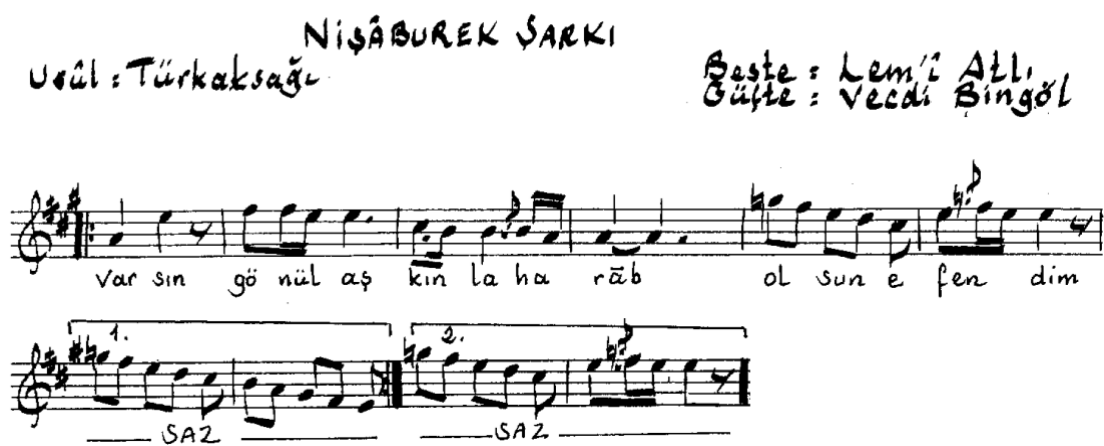


Figure 10. The first sentence of *Nişaburek* song by Lem'i Atlı (Ergen, 2023).

This song has four phrases, but one of them (the last one) is an instrumental phrase. Due to a different syllabic arrangement, a two-measure-long phrase with only one syllable

does not appear here. So, Lem'i Atlı filled that space with a two-measure-long instrumental bridge passage. The number of measures is also equal to Hacı Arif Bey's songs. The original copy of this song also includes an *aranağme*/intro. In conclusion, we cannot see the same musical idea here. The other song by Lem'i Atlı is very likely the same as this one.



Figure 11. The first sentence of *Rast* song by Lem'i Atlı (Ergen, 2023).

As we can see, the song is built with the same structural plan as the previous one. There is also an intro in this one.

Interestingly, Lem'i Atlı (who also took lessons from Leon Hancıyan) didn't use Hacı Arif Bey's plan when it came to bringing these elements together, a matter that will be considered in the last section.

Among other works inspired by Hacı Arif Bey¹⁰, we can find a famous song with the same elements. Its composer, Leon Hancıyan (who died in 1947) (Zilciyan, 2020), was the one who wrote out most of Hacı Arif Bey's songs. He was also a supportive friend of his in his depressive and economically challenging days (Ak, 2009: 126).

¹⁰ He was not one of his students but was educated by the same teachers as Hacı Arif Bey and he was in an intense musical relationship with him.

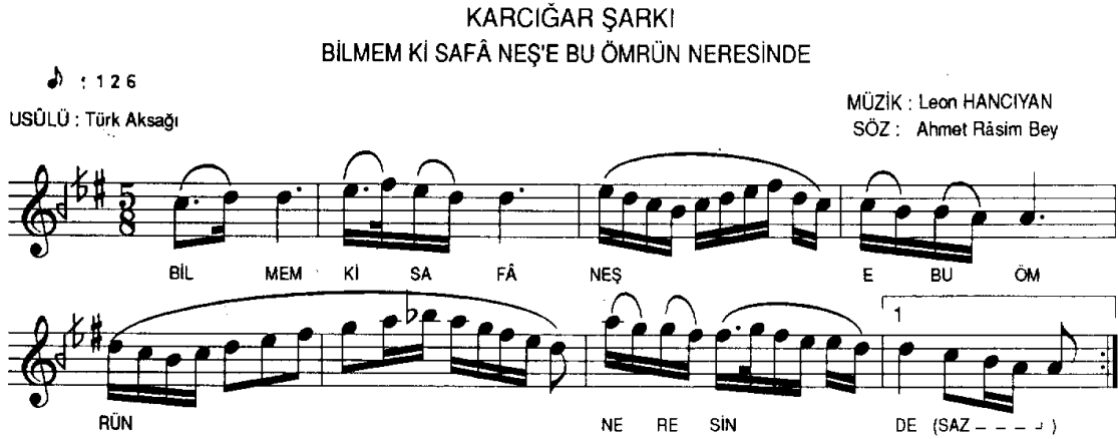


Figure 12. The first sentence of *Karçıgar* song by Leon Hancıyan (Ergen, 2023).

Here we can see exactly what Hacı Arif Bey did with these shared elements. Even though dividing the word 'ömrün' into two, Leon Hancıyan followed the same plan. This song is the most popular work of the composer.

Leon Hancıyan also helped establish a lineage – a continuity – between Hacı Arif Bey's time and our own. Obviously, with all the music of Hacı Arif Bey he wrote out, he also studied his works in an academic way (Zilciyan, 2020). So, it is perhaps not surprising to find resemblances between his songs and those of Hacı Arif Bey.

As we move forward through Hacı Arif Bey's era within the timeline of the tradition, there are still different structural plans that are observed using these same elements as the first steps. This is an example of them composed by Zeki Arif Ataergin (1896-1964):



Figure 13. The first sentence of *Şevkefza* song by Zeki Arif Ataergin (Ergen, 2023).

The differences here can be understood in relation to this composer's manifold educational activities (Karataş, 220: 173), but this song can still be considered as an antecedent of our principal idea even though it was composed after Hacı Arif Bey.

Let us limit the number of songs to those close to the main source of our study so as not to exceed the limits of the work.

So far, we have only encountered the aforementioned musical idea in Leon Hancıyan's *Karcıgar* song. Yet Hacı Arif Bey's musical idea began to spread through the tradition of this musical lineage. His student, also one of the most popular 'song' composers of the tradition, Osman Nihat Akın used the same plan in his famous *Nihavend* Song:

NIHÂVEND ŞARKI

Usûlü: TÜRK AKSAĞI (Körfezdeki dalgın suya bir bak göreceksin) Güfte : Y. Kemâl BEYATLI
Beste : Osman Nihat AKIN (1905 - 1959)

(♩ = 100)

Kör fez de ki dal gın

su ya bir bak

gö re cek sin (SAZ) sin (SAZ)

Figure 14. The first sentence of *Nihavend* song by Osman Nihat Akın (Ergen, 2023).

Rakım Elkutlu (~1870-1948) was a composer from a different city and a different musical lineage (Neyzen Emin Efendi, Tanburi Ali Efendi, and Santo (Şem Tov) Şikari (Sezgin, 1995: 55-56), but he used the same musical plan with the exception of the 5/4 meter. It's possible that he composed his songs under the influence of Hacı Arif Bey.

HÜZZAM ŞARKI
AŞKIN BANA BİR GİZLİ ELEM OLDU GÜZEL YÂR

USÛL: TÜRK AKSAĞI MÜZİK: RÂKİM ELKUTLU
♩ = 72 SÖZ : NÂHİT HİLMİ ÖZEREN

Figure 15. The first sentence of *Hüzam* song by Rakım Elcutlu (Ergen, 2023).

As we look at the late examples with the same *vezin* and *usul* we can see how dominant that musical idea is in the tradition. Even in a random search among them, many songs can be identified easily. Here are some examples:

SÜZ-İDİL ŞARKI
(Aqmıştı alevler gibi çehrendeki gâller)

TÜRK AKSAĞI BÜSTE: ALİ RIZA AVNİ

Figure 16. The first sentence of *Suzidil* song by Ali Rıza Avni (Ergen, 2023).

Ali Rıza Avni's *Suzidil* song follows the structural plan faithfully even if the words are separated by musical phrases. The first and second phrases divide the word '*alev/ler*', the second and third phrases divide the word '*çeh/ren...*', and the third and fourth phrases divide the same word as the one before '*(çeh)ren/deki*'. As we can see, this lyric makes more demands on the composer than the earlier examples, but Ali Rıza Avni shows a strict obedience to the plan. That is why we find very weak cadences at the ends of the musical phrases. The other examples below also follow the same approach, with the cadences very weak, and the segmentations often ambiguous.

Münir Nurettin Selçuk's *Nişaburek* song (without the intro):

NİŞABUREK

U. Türk Aksağı Bir söz dedi cânân ki keramet var içinde M. NUREDDİN SELÇUK

Birşöz de di cânân ki ke ra met
var i çin de (SAZ) de (SAZ)

Figure 17. The first sentence of *Nişaburek* song by Münir Nurettin Selçuk (Ergen, 2023).

Muallim Kazım Uz's *Hicazaşiran* song:

Ruhumda behârimda acay tulu emelsin

بسته کاری: معلم کاظمیک

روحمده بازیده آجان جازعشیران

Muallim Par Kazım Bey Rouhoumda beharimda Hicaz Achiran

Ru humda ba ha rimda a ca y tu lu e mel sin
روحمده بازیده آجان

Figure 18. The first sentence of *Hicazaşiran* song by Muallim Kazım Uz (Ergen, 2023).

Cinuçen Tanrıkorur's *Ferahfeza* song with just a longer instrumental bridge:

FERAHFEZÂ ŞARKI
(Vecd-i İlticâ)

Türkaksâğı (orta)
(2/152)

Gülte: M. Nâfiz Irmak
Beste: Cinuçen Tanrıkorur

Rû- hum- da o ses ar- şa yû-cel- dık-
ce yûcel dım
(Saz...) (Saz...)
...)

Figure 19. The first sentence of *Ferafheza* song by Cinuçen Tanrıkorur (Ergen, 2023).

Yorgo Bacanos' *Hüzzam* Song:

5 Hüzzam Şarkı Yorgo Bacanos.

SEV- DA- SI HE-NÜZ- SI-
NE DE GÖN- LÜM
Gİ-Bİ SAG

Figure 20. The first sentence of *Hüzzam* song by Yorgo Bacanos (Ergen, 2023).

It is possible to add further examples. As a result of this repertoire scanning, it can be concluded that Hacı Arif Bey's aforementioned musical idea became a dominant traditional element in later decades. Nearly all composers applied his plan in their songs with the same *usul* and *vezin*. This musical sentence plan is exemplified with the first musical sentences of the songs in the analyses, to avoid exceeding the essay's space limit and to make the study easy to read since nearly all the other sentences of the songs are

also composed with the same plan. There are noticeable exceptions that demonstrate strict adherence to the plan while presenting alternative solutions that can arise with different lyrics. Naturally, these exceptions occur at the fifth and sixth measures of the musical sentences where the syllable must be appropriate. This obligation comes from modern prosody theories. According to these theories, musical phrases should not divide the words. The following example illustrates this situation:



Figure 21. The first sentence of *Hüzam* song by Mustafa Nafiz Irmak (Ergen, 2023).

Musical phrases can be segmented neatly, and they divide the words in this song. The first and second ones divide the word 'ağ/lat'. There is the word 'aş/kın' between the second and third phrases. According to the plan, the '-kın' syllable must be two measures long. Instead, the composer repeated both '-aş' and '-kın' in the second measure.

Conclusion and Discussion

All the elements of a culture we call traditional should have a starting point, though we cannot really call it a point zero, of course, since we do not know the whole of human experience chronologically. That starting point must be constructed based on antecedents because, according to theories of memory, something 100% new is an irritation to both the mind and society. So, if we accept something 'new', it is absolutely

not completely new. Rather it represents the point where a musical idea is born individually and begins to spread. Individual and social memory processes are in service at the same time, synchronically.

This process is fully in tune with the social-autopoiesis theory. Even the composer, himself/herself, does not fully intervene in the process of composition in the deeper meaning of this theory (Çırak, 2021: 82). The present study has investigated a musical idea that is widely used nowadays. Possible antecedents and descendants have been analyzed. Hacı Arif Bey's 5/8 songs with the *vezin* '*mef'ûlü mefâîlü mefâîlü feûlün/fa'lün*' were accepted as the starting point of the musical idea aforementioned with a strong musical legacy.

The antecedents of the musical idea were different and more syllabic. Therefore, they demonstrated smaller structures in analyses. Nevertheless, using the same *vezin* with the same *usul* as this musical idea as well as two-measure-long phrases was identified as common. Also, these possible antecedents were consistent with one another. In conclusion, it has been determined that a previously established structural plan within the tradition utilized the same *usul* with the same *vezin* prior to Hacı Arif Bey's idea. This structural plan was used by even some of the composers who lived in the same era as Hacı Arif Bey.

Experts in traditional Turkish art music, musical analysts and historians often acknowledge that a school is formed primarily through teacher-student relationships in the *meşk* chain. This approach does carry some conviction. The doctrines of a school are transferred to its students, and they in turn apply these teachings. However, a student may not or cannot use all of them individually. Also, a teacher may not transfer some of the knowledge he/she maintains. Knowledge from outside the school may create a different path which also survives through time. So, a composer not placed in the *meşk* chain may internalize some of these doctrines, or even the whole ethos of the school, and may transfer them to the next generations, as in certain examples in this article.

During the preliminary research stage of this study, there was an inevitable hypothesis about the musical idea's spread. Hacı Arif Bey was a well-known composer, he lectured many students, and many of them engaged in composition. So, it was obvious that the musical idea -probably- invented by him and dominant in the tradition today, would have

been spread through traditional Turkish music community by way of his students. This hypothesis surprisingly collapsed during the analysis processes of his descendants. His students did not use his idea. There may be several reasons. A student cannot or will not copy all the teacher's doctrines, and even if he/she does, he/she may not compose works using all of them. Interestingly, Hacı Arif Bey's students, who composed musical pieces using the *usul* and *vezin* did not follow his plan. Instead, it was one of his followers and friends, Leon Hancıyan, who understood and implemented his musical concept. However, this situation has a strong motive since he was very close to Hacı Arif Bey and copied his music in manuscript.

It is possible that Leon Hancıyan had a deeper understanding of the musical structures in his music than the actual students of Hacı Arif Bey, due to his analytical work. This new hypothesis also suggests that a school can evolve with followers who are not students of the master. Hacı Arif Bey's influence on the tradition might not have been spread only with his students, and Leon Hancıyan probably played an important role here. Because when we look through the prism of this musical idea, it seems his school had a more characteristic line through Leon Hancıyan than through his students, and several successful songs were produced within this line. The *Nihavend* and *Hüzzam* song was especially popular among the followers of the tradition, while Leon Hancıyan's *Karcığâr* song, and his student, Osman Nihat Akın's *Nihavend* song also maintain high popularity.

Tanburi Ali Efendi's songs also provided us with an interesting insight into the spread of the musical idea. He composed both an antecedent to, and a descendant of, Hacı Arif Bey's musical idea, experiencing and practising both the past and the present of the musical idea, just like Hacı Arif Bey himself.

According to the above assessments, a new musical idea that is produced by an individual memory needs decades to become traditional and part of socially memory (İlhan, 2015: 1396-1397). When it forms itself in an individual memory and achieves success, it also does not replace its antecedents abruptly. So, we can spot a time lag here as a musical idea achieves the status of a tradition. It must have antecedents that are somehow connected to itself in order to be accepted by society. This process is related to the theories of individual and social memory mentioned earlier. On the other hand, all this information can be explained in the context of cultural memory (Akın, 2018: 101-102),

with its sub-units of remembrance and cultural continuity.

The song form became the most popular form during the modern stage of traditional Turkish music. As the number of songs in the traditional repertoire increased, composers required new structural plans to give them more space to produce musical motives without being strictly tied to traditional syllabic formations. Hacı Arif Bey's structural plan represented an appropriate response to this need. It must be one of the reasons why his musical idea was used and accepted by other composers.

The quality of a magnum opus also rebounds on the tradition in which it is produced. Tradition produces the work, and the work then influences the future of the tradition. Maybe if Leon Hancıyan's and Osman Nihat Akın's songs had not been successful after Hacı Arif Bey, this musical idea would not have been so dominant in the tradition.

The present study aimed to explore a frequently employed structure in traditional Turkish music which has yet to be extensively investigated in scholarship. Furthermore, this research sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of how this specific musical concept has evolved within the cultural context it originates from.

REFERENCES

- Ak, Ahmet Şahin. (2009). *Türk Musikisi Tarihi* (History of Turkish Music). Ankara: Akçağ Yayınları.
- Akın, Bülent. (2018). Cultural Memory and Music. *Eurasian Journal of Music and Dance*, s. 101-117.
- Cevher, Mehmet Hakan. (1995). "*Ali Ufki Bey ve Haza Mecmü'a-i Saz ü Söz*" (Ali Ufki Bey's Compendium of Music). PhD Dissertation, Ege University, İzmir: TÜRKİYE
- Çırak, Cem. (2015). "*Composition of Hacı Arif Bey in the framework of his creations Kürdîli Hicazkar makam*" Master Dissertation, Ege University, İzmir: TÜRKİYE .
- Çırak, Cem. (2021). Phantasmagoria in Composition: Some Mental and Social Dynamics of Composition in Traditional Turkish Music. *Eurasian Journal of Music and Dance*, s. 76-

105.

Ergen, Aytaç. (2023). NOTAM Special Digital Archive. İstanbul.

Ergur, Ali., and Aydin, Yiğit. (2006). "Patterns of modernization in Turkish music as indicators of a changing society" *Musicae Scientiae*, 1(10): 89-108.

Ergur, Ali., and Doğrusöz, Nilgün. (2015). "Resistance and Adoption towards Written Music at the Crossroads of Modernity: Gradual Passage to Notation in Turkish Makam Music" *International Review of The Aesthetics And Sociology of Music*, 46(1): 145-174.

Fentress, James., and Wickham, Chris. (1992). *Social Memory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ferrara, Lawrence. (1984). "Phenomenology as a tool for musical analysis. *Musical Quarterly*" 70(3):355-373.

İlhan, Emir. (2015). "Tradition and Remembrance: A Discussion on The Cultural Reconstruction of Memory" *Turkish Studies*, (10): 1395-1408.

İnal, İbnülemin Mahmut. (1955). *Hoş Sada* (Gracious Voice). İstanbul: Maarif Basımevi.

Kantemiroğlu, Dimitri. (2001). *Kitâbu 'İlmi'l-Mûsıkî 'alâ vechi'l Hurûfât* (Book of the Science of Music by Means of Letters). (Tura, Yalçın Trans.) İstanbul: YKY.

Karataş, Özgür Sadık. (2020). "Beste ve Güftesi Zeki Ârif Ataergin'e ait Sûzinâk Makamındaki Eserlerin Prozodi Analizi" (The Prosody Analysis of The Works of Sûzinâk Tune Belonging to Zeki Ârif Ataergin Compositions and Lyrics) *AKRA Kültür Sanat ve Edebiyat Dergisi*, 8(21): 171-189.

Özcan, Nuri. (2007). "Nikoğos Ağa". *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (33:p.117-118). Ankara: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi.

Özen, Elif. (2013). "Evaluation And Analysis Of Şarkı Form In Turkish Makam Music" Master Thesis. İstanbul Technical University. İstanbul: Türkiye

Ranking, George Spiers. (1885). *The Elements Of Arabic & Persian Prosody. A Short Treatise On Persian Prosody Together With A Tr. Of The 'aruz-i-saifî*. Oxford: Education Society's Press. Retrieved from

https://books.google.com.tr/books/about/The_elements_of_Arabic_Persian_prosody_A.html?id=-j5bAAAAQAAJ&redir_esc=y

Schmidt, Josef. (2008). Memory and Remembrance: A Constructivist Approach. A. Erll, & A. Nünning içinde, *Cultural memory studies: an international and interdisciplinary handbook* (s. 191-201). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co.

Sezgin, Bekir Sıtkı. (1995). "Elkutlu, Mehmet Rakım". *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (11): 55-56. Ankara: TDV İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi.

Tanrıkorur, Cinuçen. (1991). *Türk Mûsikîsinde Usûl-Vezin Münasebeti* (The Relationship Between Usûl and Vezin in Turkish Music). Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Başkanlığı.

Tutu, Sıtkı Bahadır. (2017). "A Composer Three City: Tanburi Ali Efendi" *Eurasian Journal of Music and Dance*, (11): 85-92.

Uslu, Recep. (2015). "A New Periodization Suggestion In History of Turkish Music" *Medeniyet Sanat Dergisi*, 1(2):91-109.

Zilciyan, Varujan. (2020). "Hancıyan, Leon" *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, (p.531). Ankara: Türk Diyanet Vakfı.

ELİF HAZAL TEKDEMİR TUNCER

Uskudar University, Türkiye

hazaltekdemir@gmail.com

orcid.org/0000-0002-8356-0753

ÜMİT ERTEM

Uskudar University, Türkiye

umit.ertem@uskudar.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0002-9052-2480

SEVİL ATASOY

Uskudar University, Türkiye

atasoy@uskudar.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0002-0236-0267

ZEKAI GENÇ

Uskudar University, Türkiye

zekai.genc@uskudar.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0002-4725-5356

ALİHAN KOCABAS

Uskudar University, Türkiye

alihan.kocabas@uskudar.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0002-7251-0726

The Effect of Rap Music on Youth Drug Use: The Case of Turkish Rap Songs

ABSTRACT

In recent decades, technological developments that have increased communication channels among cultures on a global scale have contributed to the emergence and spread of various music genres. One of these is rap music, along with the hip-hop culture that has developed with it. Rap music, which often expresses reactions to social conditions and to a quest for identity, holds a significant place in the formation of subcultures, particularly among youth. Due to its rebellious ethos, rap music can influence the attitudes of young people toward drug use, in both positive and negative ways. Drug users, who break away from the dominant cultural norms of society, form a distinct drug-based subculture characterized by its own language, clothing styles, lifestyles, and musical preferences. Rap music, which is the focus of this study, is considered a subcultural form of music making with a unique identity. This research analyzes rap songs that both encourage and criticize the drug subculture. A total of fourteen songs, seven promoting and seven opposing substance use, were selected and analyzed using the content analysis method, with reference to their availability on YouTube. In conclusion, the study compiled statements from both groups that either reflect or criticize drug use.

KEYWORDS

Forensic sciences
Drugs
Drug subculture
Rap music
Youth culture

Introduction

Music and drugs have existed since time immemorial. Throughout history, there have been moments when their paths have intersected, with the origins of this connection traceable to antiquity and to the shamanic rituals of various regions in the world (Jerotic et al., 2024). At times, this intersection became so significant that people regarded music and drugs as their 'travel companions', with each influencing the other profoundly. As a result of this reciprocal relationship, it is not uncommon for music, lyrics and musicians to be closely associated with drug use (Ögel and Tamar Gürol, 2010).

The transformation of the concept of entertainment from past to present has also naturally affected patterns of drug use. As people moved from concert halls to nightclubs, both drug consumption and the variety of substances used increased (Palamar et al., 2022). The lifestyles and lyrics of musicians who use drugs can also influence their audiences toward similar behavior. In fact, the desire of individuals to accept, adopt and imitate those that they admire, lays the groundwork for drug use. When young people idolize musicians and view them as role models, they may be more inclined to adopt drug use as a way to feel a sense of connection with them (Yörükoğlu, 1989; Özyıldız and Uçaner Çifdalöz, 2019).

In this regard, it is essential to understand the sociological aspect of youth culture, where youth is defined as “a socially constructed intermediary phase that stands between childhood and adulthood” (Furlong, 2013). Since this is a transitional period, it is also marked by psychosocial changes (Gezek, 2007). Adolescence, a stage often characterized by emotional fluctuations, is a time when young people may find life challenging and tend to overreact to events. The rapid physical and psychological changes experienced during this period make it difficult to predict the responses of individuals in this age group (Patton and Viner, 2007). The simultaneous strengthening of the desire for independence, coupled with a growing distance from family life, also intensifies the need to be understood. As a result, in their efforts to assert independence, gain acceptance and popularity among peers, and to search for self-identity, young individuals may be more inclined to engage in antisocial behavior and criminal activities, as well as turn to alcohol, cigarettes, stimulants, and drugs (İlhan, 2016; Sağır, 2020).

In this connection, the dissatisfaction experienced during adolescence, particularly in the

search for a peer group, is one of the fundamental elements underlying youth subcultures, which primarily respond to the diverse needs of younger generations. Feelings of powerlessness, insignificance, and aimlessness, often experienced during this stage, can lead young individuals to a sense of estrangement. Since moral values are still being shaped during this developmental period, young people in such a turbulent emotional state are more susceptible to external influences (Yaman, 2013; Bağış, 2019). Accordingly, the concept of a subculture is also used to describe individuals who are perceived to use drugs and who hold views that differ from the dominant norms of society. This includes young people whose form of speech or musical preferences differ from those of the broader community (Journet, 2009; Kurt, 2020).

The emergence of rap music and the hip-hop subculture constitutes a significant example that aligns with the theoretical background presented above. In the early 1970s, the Bronx, which experienced a drastic decline in nearly every respect, became New York City's poorest and most troubled district. This area was the birthplace of rap music, nourished by a social malaise caused by unemployment, exclusion, alienation, economic hardship, racism, and poverty, all faced by marginalized youth (McCoy, 2017). These challenges, combined with the social unrest of the local population, contributed to an increase in theft, drug trafficking, and other criminal activities. In response to these conditions, rap music and hip-hop culture emerged as forms of expression for the oppressed masses. Scholars have defined the resulting hip-hop culture as an underground movement shaped by the harsh realities of its environment (Watkins, 2005; Barnes, 2008).

In accordance with the definition proposed by Tylor in 1871, which is still considered valid, culture or civilization is described as “the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society” (Jenks, 2005). Within this framework, hip-hop culture comprises rap music, an associated clothing style, graffiti and breakdancing (McCoy, 2017), with rap music emerging as the voice of this culture (Blanchard, 1999). Rap songs are built around rhythm, which aligns closely with the accompanying sounds. As for the lyrics, rhyme is commonly used, and the content often addresses social and political issues, expressed through explicit and sometimes violent language (Hebdige, 2003; Rose, 1994).

Today, as in previous periods of radical change in history, social values in Turkey are changing rapidly, as exemplified by the emergence of rap music in the Bronx during the 1970s. This transformation has resulted in contradictions and conflicts between the generations, largely due to inherited value judgments. For reasons beyond the scope of this study, these generational tensions, which include both social and cultural aspects, have led many young people to seek new values and alternative cultural expressions (Yaman, 2013).

Several elements can be identified when defining the drug subculture with which some young people become involved. Coping strategies, musical preferences, language use, and belief systems are frequently cited when describing individuals who use drugs and are excluded from mainstream society. When young people engage with the drug subculture through one or more of these factors, they often begin by adopting patterns of substance acquisition and use, followed by the lifestyle associated with the group that uses these substances (Arslan and Kırlioğlu, 2019).

As explained above, it is common for drugs to be associated with songs, listeners, and performers. In the case of rap music, research conducted by Chen et al. revealed that listening to rap music is linked to alcohol and drug use, as well as to aggressive behavior (Chen et al., 2006). This finding was later confirmed by Stickle, who, in the context of rap music in the United States, highlighted the increasing popularity of drug-related rap songs after 2006 (Stickle, 2021). Regarding the situation in Turkey, the study by Arslan and Kırlioğlu offers a comprehensive overview of the relationship between rap music and the drug subculture (Arslan and Kırlioğlu, 2019). However, considering the developments that have occurred since the publication of that study in 2019, it has become necessary to re-examine the current relationship between Turkish rap songs and the drug subculture, and to assess whether these songs influence drug use among young people.

In the early 1990s, Turkish rap emerged in Germany as a distinct genre through the work of Turkish migrant rap artists. The release of the album *Cartel* in 1995 marked a milestone, leading to the spread of Turkish rap from Germany to Turkey (Elflein, 1998). In the late 1990s, artists such as *Ceza*, *Sagopa Kajmer*, *Dr. Fuchs*, *Yener*, and *Fuat Ergin*, who were among the first representatives of rap in Turkey, set an example for young people by popularizing amateur rap music. In the following years, particularly in the first

half of the 2000s, the widespread use of the internet enabled young artists to reach larger audiences (Elbir, 2021).

In rap songs produced in Turkey, the main aim of young people can be described as expressing their identities to society, resisting authority, forming emotional bonds with peers, and voicing problems they cannot share with their families. In summary, the primary motivation for Turkish youth to produce rap music is often rooted in personal and individual struggles (Budak and Ergun, 2022).

The fact that rap music is easily accessible for young people to produce has brought certain problems to light or made existing issues more visible to the public. From the perspective of young people, the spread of amateur rap music provided an accessible platform for self-expression. At the same time, this phenomenon has been thought to allow concepts, emotions, and ideas to be expressed without restrictions (Bayrak, 2011). As rap music is often performed without limitations, the issues affecting youth have become more visible, including but not limited to the drug subculture and drug use.

Rap songs that openly mention specific drugs, describe patterns of use, and employ drug-related terminology may influence young listeners' attitudes and behavior. The blending of a drug-related subculture with a hip-hop culture through rap music can lead to a misinterpretation and distorted perception of hip-hop culture among young people (Yörükoğlu, 1989; Biçer and Ertan, 2017). With the widespread use of social media, rap music now reaches a broader audience, particularly among adolescents. As a result, the presence of lyrics that legitimize drug use and violence may contribute to the normalization of these behaviors among young people (Çetinöz, 2019).

Beyond the relationship between Turkish rap songs and the drug subculture discussed above, drug use and drug-related criminal offenses represent a significant issue on their own among the challenges that Turkey has faced in recent years. The sharp increase in the percentage of individuals who have used substances at least once in their lifetime has been further aggravated by a decreasing average age of first-time drug users. This phenomenon has been confirmed by scholars, journalists, and official institutions (Üsküdar University, 2025; Duvar English, 2024; Le Monde, 2024; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2003; EMCDDA, 2019; Turkish National Police, Counter Narcotics Department, 2024).

The actions of Turkish law enforcement agencies in addressing drug-related criminal offenses have not been limited to targeting users and dealers. In some instances, Turkish rappers have found themselves at the center of public controversy. Artists such as *Ezhel*, *Khontkar*, *Burrry Soprano*, and *Heijan* were detained on charges of "encouraging and facilitating drug use" under Article 190 of the Turkish Penal Code (TCK), due to the content of their song lyrics (Hürriyet, 2018; Diken, 2018; Bianet, 2021; CNN Türk, 2017).

Ezhel, who was arrested under Article 190/2 of the TCK, stated in his defense that the lyrics in question were chosen purely for their rhyme and rhythm, and that he did not intend to promote drug use (DHA, 2018). As a result of the trial, he was sentenced to one year and eight months in prison (Anadolu Ajansı, 2019; Yaşar et al., 2018; Yılmaz, 2018). During a search of a residence belonging to another rapper, *Khontkar*, police seized packaged marijuana prepared for use and sale, along with smoking devices and grinders (Diken, 2018). He was later sentenced to four years and two months in prison (Independent Türkçe, 2019).

An indictment was also filed against a rapper known by the pseudonym *Murda*, on the charge of "encouraging the use of drugs." The prosecutor requested a prison sentence of up to ten years, and at the conclusion of the trial, he was sentenced to four years and two months (Sağır, 2020; BirGün, 2022).

On the other hand, in Turkey rap songs have also been utilized as part of drug prevention efforts, which have become increasingly common in recent years. Several initiatives have been organized in the hope of reducing drug use among young people. For example, in 2021 the Turkish Ministry of the Interior launched a rap song competition titled *Rap Burada!* (Rap Is Here!) to raise awareness about the harms of drug use among youth (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Interior, 2021). These efforts have not been limited to government initiatives. In some cases, individual rap artists or groups have released songs as part of their personal social responsibility projects aimed at combating drug use. Notable examples include the release of the album *UDDY Proje (Uyuşturucuya Dur Diyen Yok – There Is Nobody Saying No to Drugs)* in 2021, which features several anti-drug rap songs (Müzikonair, 2021), as well as *Düşme (Don't Fall)* by *Heijan* and *Muti* (Song Number 8 in this study) and *'Beyaz Ölüm' (White Death)* by *Zifir* (Song Number 10 in this study).

The aforementioned examples, along with others not included in this study, illustrate how

rap songs have become associated with the drug subculture in ways that have drawn significant public attention. As a result, the need for a contemporary study has become evident, particularly with regard to examining the potential effects of Turkish rap music on drug use among young people. In this context, rather than briefly listing and summarizing numerous songs, it is more effective to conduct an in-depth analysis of selected tracks in order to highlight the specific characteristics of Turkish rap songs related to the drug subculture.

To maintain a balance between offering a comprehensive overview and providing a detailed analysis of each song, the present study focuses on a total of fourteen songs. This includes seven songs that appear to encourage the drug subculture and seven songs that take a critical stance against it. Within the framework of the drug subculture, the lyrics will be examined based on criteria identified by researchers, including the promotion of drug use, the criticism of addiction as a socially and physically harmful form of behavior, the use of drug-related terminology, and the mention of specific substances.

Drawing on both the analysis of lyrics and publicly available data regarding the popularity of these songs, this study aims to investigate the possible influence of Turkish rap music on drug use among young people in Turkey.

Material and Method

Research Model

This research is a descriptive study based on the collection of data from rap songs using the content analysis method. According to the definition made by Berelson, content analysis is described as “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of the communication” (Berelson, 1952). Content analysis involves the detailed consideration of the content of written or oral communication tools, while maintaining the principles of being systematic and impartial (Koçak and Arun, 2006).

Population and Sample

The research population in this study consists of Turkish rap songs, regardless of their stance on drug use. At the beginning of the study, all rap songs were accepted as potential candidates without any filtering. A systematic sampling method was applied to select the

final sample songs, resulting in a total of fourteen tracks: seven that promote drug use and seven that oppose it. The selected songs were evaluated to ensure that, from a critical perspective, they did not differ significantly from other songs with similar themes, nor did they omit relevant examples outside the sample group.

Inclusion Criteria and Data Collection

All the fourteen songs used in the study were evaluated and found to share a common ground, namely their connection to the drug subculture. In the first stage, the selected songs were divided into two categories: those that 'encourage drug use' and those that 'criticize drug use'. In the second stage, the songs in each category were analyzed based on subthemes related to the drug subculture.

The themes in songs that encourage drug use include an emphasis on substance use, specific drug names, methods of consumption, drug supply, criminal involvement, pessimism, poverty, death, subcultural jargon, and betrayal. In contrast, songs that criticize drug use focus on themes such as bodily harm, moral and financial losses, treatment, family relationships, pessimism, regret, despair, and the negative effects of drugs.

To provide a comprehensive overview of Turkish rap and its relationship with the drug subculture, the study prioritized a balanced representation of all potential subthemes rather than selecting songs solely on view counts. The analyzed lyrics were evaluated impartially and systematically, and a total of nineteen subthemes were identified as potentially impactful on listeners. The most frequent of these themes are shown in Figure 1.

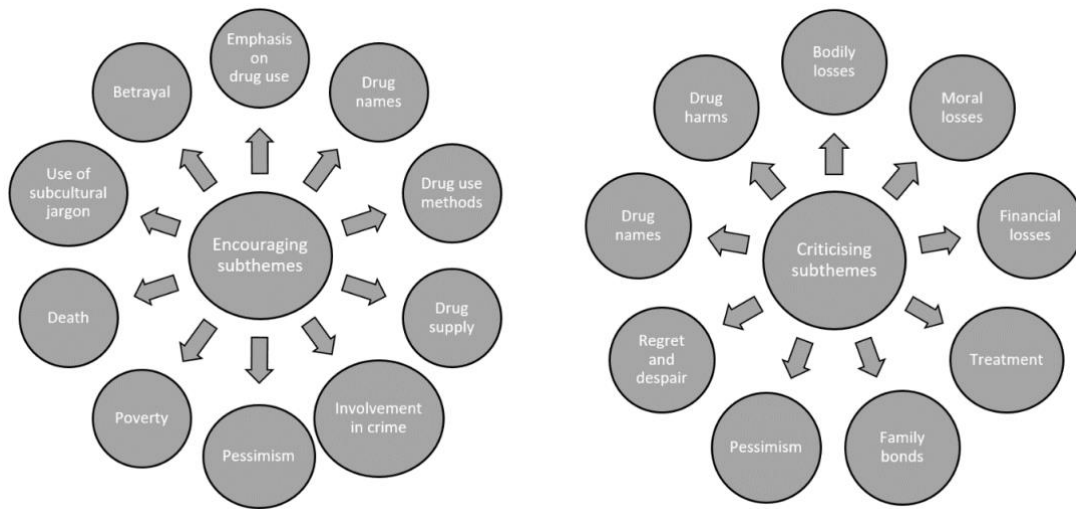


Figure 1. Subthemes of songs that encourage and criticize drug use

Among the songs that address drug-related themes, those with the highest number of views on YouTube as of March 2024 were evaluated, provided that they collectively met the criterion of comprehensiveness in terms of subthemes, as previously explained. Within the scope of this research, all Turkish rap songs were accessed via YouTube, the most widely used video-sharing platform globally, which was selected due to its status as the most preferred sharing network (Kemp, 2024). In addition to the seven rap songs identified as promoting the drug subculture and containing expressions related to drug use and addiction, seven songs that take a critical stance against the drug subculture, drug use, and addiction constitute the second pillar of our comparison.

Although all song lyrics were comprehensively analyzed during the preparatory phase of the study to avoid overlooking any direct or implicit references to the drug subculture, the results presented below will be limited to discussing only those parts of the songs directly relevant to our inquiry.

Results

Several Turkish rap songs identified as encouraging the drug subculture include references to drugs and addiction. In some of these songs, drug names are mentioned explicitly, while in others, such references are conveyed through informal slang developed by youth within the context of the drug subculture. In addition, these songs address themes such as death, alienation, pessimism, betrayal, hopelessness, and cultural differences, which are commonly expressed within the drug subculture (Arslan and

Kırlıoğlu, 2019).

Lyrics encouraging or criticizing substance use were selected from the songs and analyzed alongside other themes emphasized by the drug subculture. Table 1 presents the songs evaluated in the study, along with their YouTube view counts at the time of data collection. The songs in Table 1 are listed in descending order based on the number of views. The only exception here is *Heijan's 'Genemi Amcalar'* (Blue Suits Again), which was removed from YouTube due to its overtly drug-related lyrics. The song was no longer available on YouTube as of March 2024. Therefore, its view count was retrieved from a link archived in August 2017 (Çatı Müzik, 2016). Considering the fact that the archived video reached more than 12 million views in a year, the number of views of that music video would likely have been higher if the original link had still been active at the time of the research.

Table 1. The number of YouTube views for the songs examined in the study, as of March 2024

<i>Number of the Song</i>	<i>Pseudonym of the Rapper</i>	<i>Title of the Song</i>	<i>Number of the YouTube Views as of March 2024</i>
3	İsyan Tetick	<i>Adana Merkez</i> (Center of Adana)	78.808.642
4	İsyan Tetick	<i>Patlamaya Devam</i> (Keep on Blasting)	41.094.583
8	Heijan feat Muti	<i>Düşme</i> (Don't Fall)	31.983.026
1	Heijan	<i>Genemi Amcalar</i> (Blue Suits Again)	12,948,132
2	Ceyhan Prensi	<i>Sen Parfüm Ben Esrar Kokarım</i> (You Smell Perfume I Smell Marijuana)	7.384.180
7	Burri Soprano	<i>Mary Jane</i> (Mary Jane)	6.000.582
6	Tuhan	<i>Esenyurt Trap Pafküf</i> (Esenyurt Trap Smoke Up)	5.050.522
5	Asi Styla	<i>Ot Kubar Hergün Dönüyor Dünya</i> (Weed, Marijuana, The World turns everyday)	2.541.452
11	Ogeday	<i>Kaybettim Seni</i> (I Lost You)	1.148.374
9	Misal	<i>Tut Elimden</i> (Hold My Hand)	298.330
12	Sansür	<i>Uyuşturucuya Hayır</i> (No to Drugs)	183.748
10	Zifir	<i>Beyaz Ölüm</i> (White Death)	58.124
13	Okan İlhan	<i>Bir Keredem</i> (For Once)	9.149
14	Çelebi	<i>Pes Etme</i> (Don't Give Up)	7.009

The first seven rap songs were examined with respect to the following subthemes: emphasis on drug use, drug names, drug use methods, drug supply, involvement in crime, pessimism, poverty, death, use of subcultural jargon, and betrayal, as indicated in Table 2.

The most dominant themes in these seven, along with the song in which each theme occurs most frequently, are shown in the chart in Figure 2.

Table 2. Findings related to songs that emphasize drug use

Examined Subthemes	Number of Mentions in Songs						
	1 st Song	2 nd Song	3 rd Song	4 th Song	5 th Song	6 th Song	7 th Song
Emphasis on drug use	4	1	3	8	4	6	9
Drug names	8	4	6	1	4	3	1
Drug use methods	2	1	1	1	2	5	1
Drug supply	2	-	3	1	-	-	-
Involvement in crime (extortion, bodily harm, violence)	1	-	4	3	-	1	-
Pessimism	-	3	-	-	6	1	2
Poverty	2	3	-	-	-	1	-
Death	-	2	-	-	5	-	-
Use of subcultural jargon	7	1	11	7	1	4	2
Betrayal	-	4	-	-	-	-	1

While Table 2 shows how many times these sub-themes are highlighted in each particular song, Figure 1 displays a total of 10 sub-themes used in rap songs that encourage drug use.

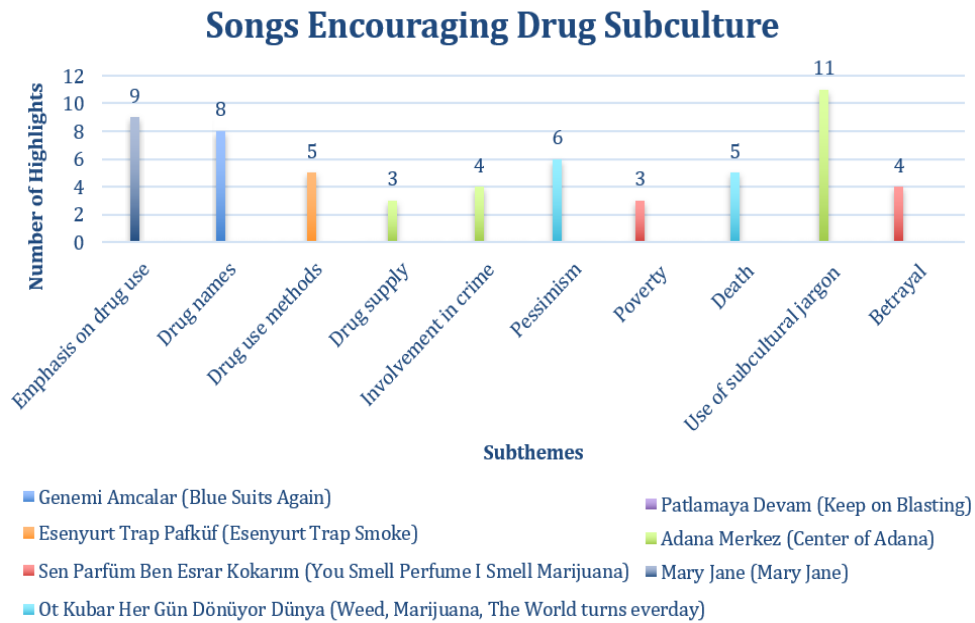


Figure 2. Display of dominant themes in songs encouraging the drug subculture

While Figure 1 shows a total of nine sub-themes used in the second group of seven songs, which criticize the drug subculture, Table 3 presents the frequency of these sub-themes in each song.

Table 3. Findings related to songs that criticize drug use

Examined Subthemes	Number of Mentions in Songs						
	8 th Song	9 th Song	10 th Song	11 th Song	12 th Song	13 th Song	14 th Song
Bodily losses (e.g., deprivation, physical weakening, death)	1	2	8	3	3	2	1
Moral losses (e.g., family, friends, spouse, loved ones)	2	2	2	1	4	2	-
Financial losses (e.g., job, money)	2	-	2	3	-	1	-
Treatment	1	-	-	1	1	2	2
Family bonds	3	2	1	1	-	-	-
Pessimism	-	-	8	1	-	-	3
Regret and despair	2	6	-	1	-	5	2
Drug names	-	-	3	3	-	-	-
Drug harms	3	2	2	3	4	1	4

The most dominant themes in the second set of seven songs were examined and the frequency with which these themes are encountered is shown in the Figure 3.

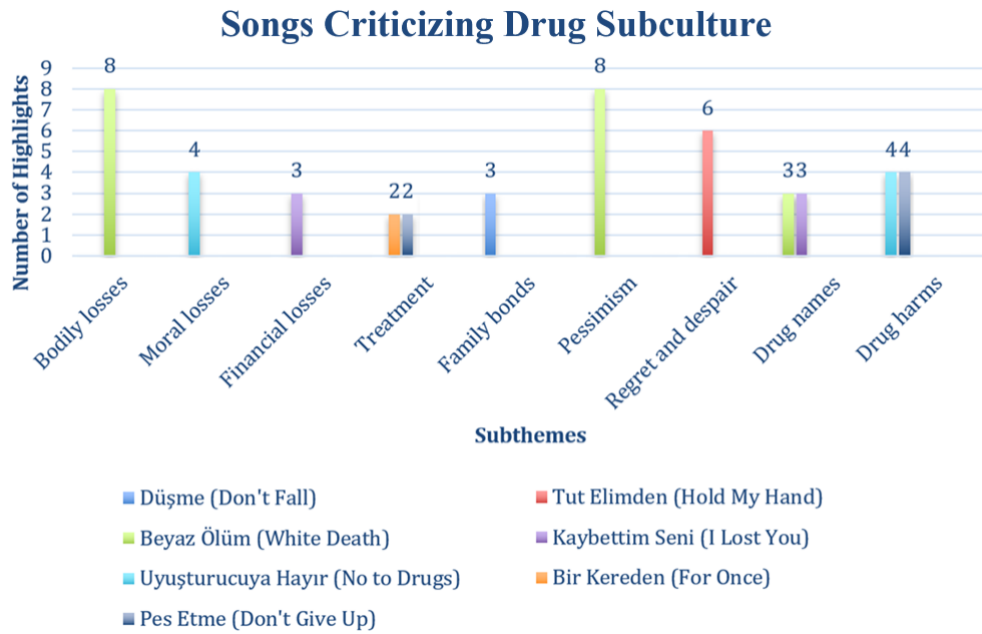


Figure 3. Display of dominant themes in songs criticizing drug subculture

While explaining the lyrics, the Turkish originals and English translations, prepared by the authors of this study, will be presented respectively. Following this, the words related to the drug subculture will be explained separately. The grammatical mistakes and nonstandard use of Turkish in the lyrics were preserved exactly as they appeared.

Songs Encouraging the Drug Subculture

Heijan / Genemi Amcalar (Blue Suits Again): This song was published on YouTube in 2014. *Heijan* was detained in 2017 for sharing content promoting drug use on the internet (CNN Türk, 2017). As of March 2024, when the data for this study was collected, all songs by *Heijan* deemed to promote drug use were no longer accessible on the rapper's YouTube channel. However, after his arrest, *Heijan* has been producing anti-drug rap songs for some time, such as '*Düşme*' (*Don't Fall*), which is also analyzed in this study (Song Number 8).

<i>Ver malı baba ben harmanım,</i>	Give me the stuff, man, I'm out of weed,
<i>Cep-te yok kene yok bir yolunu bulmalı,</i>	Got nothing in my pocket, not even a roach, I
<i>Torbacı veresiye tutmalı yapmalı,</i>	need to find a way
<i>Bu gece kafam bu zirveyi bulmalı.</i>	The dealer should give it on the credit,
	Tonight my head needs to reach that peak.

The first stanza selected from the song expresses both a desire to obtain drugs and a lack of money to purchase them. Financial hardship is a common theme in the rap songs analyzed and identified as encouraging the drug subculture. The slang term '*harman olmak*' (literally 'to get the wind', in the drug subculture 'to be out of weed') in this stanza refers to the desire to smoke marijuana. In addition, since there is no money to buy drugs, the lyrics suggest that the '*torbacı*' (dealer) should provide them on credit in order to achieve '*zirveyi bulmak*' (reaching the peak) through drug use.

<i>Hadi semte gidek baba piyasa yapak,</i>	Let's head to the neighborhood man, make an
<i>Bir iki duman alıp hapi patlatak.</i>	appearance
<i>Hap var rapimde hap var, içersen ot var,</i>	Take a few drags and pop a pill
<i>Bir dumanla patlar bonz var, ölüm var.</i>	There are pills in my rap, and if you want
<i>Burda hayat seni zorlar,</i>	there's weed too
<i>Yaramıyorsa koçum sana boş sigara var.</i>	One hit and you're gone, there's bonsai
	(synthetic weed), there's death

Life hits you hard around here

If you can't handle it bro, there's always an empty cigarette.

The slang term '*piyasa yapmak*' (to make an appearance) in this part of the song is a common expression in almost all youth subcultures and corresponds to the concept of socialization in its general and common meaning: for example, young people getting together with both the opposite sex and their own gender, meeting in different locations, including parties, cafés, streets, and derelict buildings. Within the language of the drug subculture, it also refers to doing business with a drug dealer. Again, according to the same subculture, this expression also encompasses drug use (Yaman, 2013).

In the line '*bir iki duman alıp hapi patlatacak*' (take a few drags and pop a pill), the concept of '*patlamak*' (pop) is noted as a means to prolong the effect and duration of the drug used. This is thought to refer to a drug such as ecstasy, dope, etc., as it is described as a pill that is believed to have been taken beforehand. Likewise, the expression '*duman almak*' (to smoke) in this sentence is also equivalent to smoking cannabis. In short, it is suggested that the effect of the pill, when combined with cannabis, will last longer in the body. The term '*boş sigara*' (empty cigarette) emphasizes that the cigarette does not contain any drugs.

Ceyhan Prensi / Sen Parfüm Ben Esrar Kokarım (You Smell Perfume I Smell Marijuana): The rapper, known by the pseudonym *Ceyhan Prensi* (Prince of Ceyhan), is popular despite the amateur production quality of his music video and voice-over. The song *You Smell Perfume I Smell Marijuana*, which was once widely known among young people, is still not available on the artist's personal YouTube channel in either video or audio format. Nevertheless, the original and popular version remains accessible on various other YouTube channels as of the time of writing.

Sevme kızım beni, ben bir serseriyim.

Don't fall in love with me, girl, I'm a drifter

Esrar ve duman kokarım,

I smell like weed and smoke

Ben şarkı türkü bilmem, esrar sararım, kova yaparım.

I don't know songs or ballads, I roll joints, I make bongs

Sen yatakta yatarken, ben sokakta kalırım.

While you're in bed, I'm out on the street
You wake up at 10, I'm up at dawn

<i>Sen saat 10'da, ben şafakta kalkarım.</i>	You smell perfume, I smell marijuana
<i>Sen parfüm, ben esrar kokarım,</i>	Don't make plans with me, babe, I'll be out of
<i>Randevu verme güzelim, ben o saatte</i>	weed then.
<i>harman olmuşum.</i>	

The theme of 'impossible love' is presented alongside references to '*esrar*' (marijuana), '*kova*' (bong), and '*harman olmak*' (to be out of weed), which are standard expressions from the Turkish drug subculture, is used to capture the listener's attention. The concept of 'being people from different worlds', which appears not only in music but also across various branches of art, has inspired and supported many musical compositions. In rap songs, there is often a focus on themes such as rebellion, romantic suffering, physical pain, injustice and separation. In addition to references to drug use, the themes of unfulfilled love, betrayal, and social difference are also prominently featured. It is possible to assert that the second song analyzed is a telling example of these elements.

İsyan Tetick / Adana Merkez (Center of Adana): The music video by the rapper known as *İsyan Tetick*, published on YouTube in 2015, was filmed on the streets of Adana and serves as a clear example of an amateur-produced rap song. The full title of the song uploaded to YouTube was recorded as '*Adana Merkez Patlıyor Herkes*' (Center of Adana, Everyone is Blasting). Quotes from the song, as well as the title itself, have become frequently repeated phrases within youth subculture, regardless of whether individuals are directly involved in rap music. The rapid spread and integration of such a phrase, originating from an amateur song, into the language of subculture and everyday speech highlights the challenge of regulating mass media platforms such as YouTube. Young people often turn to alternative channels like YouTube as a source of entertainment, which makes accessing this type of content particularly easy.

<i>Adana merkez, patlıyor herkes.</i>	Center of Adana, everyone is blasting.
<i>Şekeri atan kopmalık açıyor son ses.</i>	Drop a candy, crank the music to the max
<i>Hemen şimdi cigara mevzusuna dönelim,</i>	Now let's get back to the joint talk
<i>İçiyorsak susmayı tercih ederim,</i>	If we're smoking, I'd rather keep quiet
<i>Kafamız güzelken mahkemeye gidelim,</i>	Let's go the courthouse while we're high
<i>Şekerin üstüne ben cigarayı çok severim.</i>	I really love a joint on top of a candy.

The word '*şeker*' (candy) in this excerpt refers to the drug also known as '*hap*' (pill). In the language of the drug subculture, these terms are commonly used to describe substances such as ecstasy and crack. Furthermore, in this song, the words '*hap*' (pill) and '*şeker*' (candy) are used interchangeably. The line '*kafamız güzelken mahkemeye gidelim*' (*let's go to the courthouse while we're high*) suggests that the judicial system is not taken seriously by young individuals within the drug subculture. To them, actions that would constitute a crime under the law are not seen as problematic. In fact, going to prison, or getting into confrontations with law enforcement officers, are viewed as status symbols within this subculture.

İsyan Tetick / Patlamaya Devam (Keep on Blasting): Due to its lyrics, this song contains references to the rapper's previous song, '*Adana Merkez*', discussed above. Originally published on the rapper's YouTube channel in 2019, the song gained popularity through another video-sharing platform, TikTok, in early 2020. Through this platform, the song '*Adana Merkez*' reached a much wider audience.

<i>Ses ver Adana, zirveden selam.</i>	Make some noise, Adana, greetings from the peak
<i>Durmak yok "homie", patlamaya devam.</i>	Don't stop "homie", keep on blasting
<i>Yok bundan sonra size sigara filan,</i>	No more cigarettes for you from now on
<i>Uçuyor yıldızlara müptezel bayan.</i>	That junkie girl is flying up to the stars
<i>Harmanım, baba nerde çarşafım,</i>	I'm out of weed man, where's my rolling paper
<i>Gördüğün bu paketler benim dermanım.</i>	These packs you see are what keep me sane

In the parts of the song shared above and widely known by young people, words such as '*müptezel*' (junkie), '*harman olmak*' (be out of weed), and '*çarşaf*' (rolling paper) stand out. These are high-frequency terms commonly used within the drug subculture. When examined in terms of musical structure, '*Adana Merkez*' shares more characteristics with pop music than with other rap songs. Its upbeat and catchy melody serves as a gateway, encouraging young listeners to become familiar with the vocabulary of the drug subculture.

In addition, the word '*homie*', a common English greeting among youth, appears in the song without any change in meaning. This usage can be seen as evidence of young people's

interest in and openness to foreign cultural elements. Although the song is popular and appreciated by young people for its energetic musical background, it may also be considered problematic from a legal perspective because of its lyrics related to the drug subculture.

Asi Styla / Ot Kubar Hergün Dönüyor Dünya (Weed, Marijuana, The World turns everyday): The song written by the rapper using the pseudonym *Asi Styla* can be classified as ‘*Arabesk rap*’, a genre that combines elements of *Arabesk* music and rap. In addition to being centered around the theme of death, the song contains numerous references to the drug subculture and substance addiction. The *Arabesk* rap style amplifies the emotional intensity of themes such as death, separation, and the inability to reunite, making them particularly dominant in this piece. (Sağır, 2020).

<i>Hep dert verdi yüce Rabbim,</i>	The Lord has only given me pain
<i>Ot kubar her gün beynime çekerim,</i>	I pull weed and hash into my head every day
<i>Çeker de kaderime feryadı ederim,</i>	I smoke and cry out to my fate
<i>Ağlama gardaş böyle de gülelim,</i>	Don't cry, brother, let's laugh even like this
<i>İki kapak ver de damardan alsam,</i>	Give me two pills so I can shoot it straight in
<i>İkiye bölündü tek kocaman dünyam.</i>	My one big world has split in two.

The selected part resembles the syntax of a classical *Arabesk* song, with a clear expression of rebellion against both God and life. The words ‘*ot*’ and ‘*kubar*’ (weed and hash, respectively) are slang terms referring to types of drugs. The expression ‘*damardan almak*’ (shoot straight in; literally, to take something intravenously) is used to describe the method of injecting drugs. The song and its music video, in which the theme of death is dominant, generally portray drug use as a response to emotional pain. The line ‘*Allah'ım beni tek koydun sen, maddeleri bana arkadaş ettin*’ (My God, you left me alone, and made the substances my friends) from a later part of the song supports this interpretation. When considered as a whole, the lyrics of this fifth song can be interpreted as a rebellion against life and social order.

Tuhan / Esenyurt Trap Pafküf (Esenyurt Trap Smoke Up): The rapper known by the pseudonym *Tuhan* produced this song, whose lyrics and music are directly connected to the drug subculture, particularly through its title. ‘*Pafküf*’, a slang term in the Turkish drug subculture meaning ‘using marijuana’ or ‘smoking up’, is repeated multiple times in the

chorus. In the same chorus, 'Sprite' and 'codeine' are mentioned together, referring to the combination of a soft drink and codeine or a codeine-based substance.

<i>Sprite, Kodein</i>	Sprite, codeine
<i>Saçlarım semt modeli.</i>	My hair's in the neighborhood style.
<i>Ya, ya, ya</i>	Yeah, yeah, yeah
<i>Sprite, Kodein</i>	Sprite, codeine
<i>Saçlarım semt modeli.</i>	My hair's in the neighborhood style.
<i>Altüst, altüst</i>	Upside down, upside down
<i>Altüst, hayatımız altüst.</i>	Our life is upside down.
<i>7/24 pafküf, pafküf</i>	24/7 we smoke up, smoke up
<i>7/24 pafküf, pafküf</i>	24/7 we smoke up, smoke up

The music video for the song contains numerous visuals related to drug use. Cocaine and cannabis consumption are explicitly shown to the audience through gestures. Additionally, the rapper's use of tobacco products, represented by a hookah, can be interpreted as a visual reference to the slang expression 'smoking up'.

<i>Düştü aklar saçlarıma, morlar da göz altlarıma.</i>	White hairs fell into my hair, and purples under my eyes.
<i>Esenyurt Trap,</i>	Esenyurt Trap,
<i>Trap, trap, trap,</i>	Trap, trap, trap,
<i>Uyamadım Allah'ım planlarına.</i>	My God, I couldn't follow your plans.
<i>Otomatik yanımda (rahat ol),</i>	The automatic gun's on me (stay cool),
<i>Adrenalin kanımda (hiçbi' şey),</i>	Adrenaline's in my blood (nothing),
<i>MDMA yanında (bunun),</i>	MDMA is with you (this),
<i>BMW'nin camından.</i>	From the window of a BMW.

References to drug use, which appear throughout the song, are reinforced by the frequent use of subcultural jargon in the lyrics. *MDMA* (methylenedioxymethamphetamine) is the chemical name for the drug commonly known as 'ecstasy', and in this song, the term *MDMA* is used explicitly to refer to the substance. Additionally, automatic weapons mentioned directly in the lyrics are rapid-firing firearms that are illegal for private ownership in most countries. These weapons are often associated with criminal gangs and drug-related activity.

Burrry Soprano / Mary Jane: The song ‘*Mary Jane*’ is performed by the rapper using the pseudonym *Burrry Soprano*. In 2021, the artist was sentenced to 4 years and 2 months in prison for ‘encouraging the use of drugs’, but was released shortly after his arrest (Susma24, 2021). The music video, available on YouTube, contains no visual imagery related to the drug subculture. It consists solely of the song’s lyrics and images of the rapper. However, when the lyrics are analyzed in terms of content, they include expressions from subculture drug jargon to a degree that reportedly justified the artist’s arrest. The song *Mary Jane* reached a broader audience following the release of its rearranged version, ‘*Mary Jane Remix*’.

<i>Çek bir duman bana dön bunu,</i>	Take a hit and pass it to me
<i>Her tadan aklını kaybedecek.</i>	Everyone who tastes it will lose their mind
<i>Harmanın içmedim on gündür,</i>	I am out of weed, I haven’t smoked in ten days
<i>Bu durum beni mahvedecek.</i>	This is gonna ruin me
<i>Senin her türün ayrı bir zevk,</i>	Every kind of you has its own pleasure
<i>Mary Jane, Mary Jane, Mary Jane.</i>	Mary Jane, Mary Jane, Mary Jane
<i>Seni istiyorum yanımda her gün,</i>	I want you with me every day
<i>Bu durum beni mahvedecek.</i>	This is gonna ruin me.

In the selection above, one can encounter specific examples of drug subculture jargon. Moreover, ‘*Mary Jane*’, which is frequently mentioned in the song, may appear to be a woman’s name; however, it is actually a slang term for cannabis (Işık, 2018). The act of smoking marijuana is hinted at by ‘*duman çekmek*’ (to take a hit) in the song, and ‘*dönmek*’ (to pass) refers to the sharing of the same cannabis cigarette, which is common in such environments. The phrase ‘*harman olmak*’ (be out of weed) in the song is also a form of expression used in the jargon of the drug subculture, frequently found in songs that praise drug use, and is used to describe the lack of cannabis.

It can be said that the seven songs examined share common themes: references that encourage the drug subculture, and frequent mentions of drug names appear in all of them. These representatives of the drug subculture, who all developed a unique language, often use terms such as ‘*esrar*’ (cannabis), ‘*kubar*’ (powdered marijuana), ‘*ex*’ (thizz), ‘*taş*’ (crack), ‘*harman olmak*’ (to be out of weed), ‘*kova*’ (bong), ‘*çarşaf*’ (rolling paper), ‘*torbacı*’ (dealer), ‘*amca*’ (blue suits) in their lyrics. In addition to drug-related references, themes

such as complaints about injustice, social exclusion, emotional pain and rebellion against life are also common, especially in *Arabesk* rap songs.

Young people often develop ways of speaking that only they can understand, which can evolve into specific subcultural jargon over time. Similarly, through the use of this jargon, they are able to communicate in a kind of private code to conceal situations that they do not want to be understood in environments where that particular subculture is not dominant. The development of subcultural language in this context occurred as expected, especially given the use and sale of drugs, which are strictly prohibited by law. For example, the word ‘*amca*’ (uncle), which typically refers to a father's brother or an older male, is used in the drug subculture to refer to the police. Words such as ‘*çarşaf*’ (rolling paper), ‘*kova*’ (bong), ‘*kapak*’ (cover), ‘*taş*’ (crack) and ‘*şeker*’ (candy), which are frequently used in the songs, further support this observation (Yaman, 2013).

Songs Criticizing the Drug Subculture

Heijan feat. Muti / Düşme (Don't Fall): The first of the seven songs that take a stand against the drug subculture and criticize drug use addiction is the song ‘*Don't Fall*’ by rappers *Heijan* and *Muti*. An example of *Heijan*’s earlier work was examined in the first part of the study. The two rappers had previously been taken into custody due to their songs ‘*Genemi Amcalar*’ (Blue Suits Again) and ‘*Bonzai Bom*’ (Bonsai Boom), which were seen as promoting drug use. As part of a social responsibility project, they later collaborated on a rap that addresses the harms of drug abuse (Sağır, 2020).

The music video for the song begins with a teenager lying in a hospital room and continues by presenting scenes from the daily life of this young person, their surroundings, and their drug use. In this song, as in the previous ones, drug use is associated with themes of loneliness, desperation and rebellion. Although the lyrics do not contain any slang terms, images of drug use are shown in the music video. The harms of drug use are expressed in the following lines:

*Aklım oyunlar oynuyor,
Kalbim bayağıdır seninle değil.
Şeytan her zaman yanında,
Her dumanda gülümsüyor.*

My mind is playing games
My heart hasn't been with you for a long time
The devil is always by your side
He smiles with every hit
Wake up, kid, your mother is crying at your

<i>Uyan çocuk, annen başucunda ağlıyor.</i>	bedside
<i>Feleğin heybesinde tükenmiş huzuru maddelerde arama artık,</i>	Don't look for the peace that fate has taken from you in substances anymore
<i>Ölümden öteye başka bir köy yok.</i>	There's no village beyond death
<i>Senden aldıklarını geriye verecek hiçbir madde hiçbir alkol hiçbir zehir.</i>	No drug, no alcohol, no poison will give back what it took from you.

These song lyrics indicate that drugs consume the life of the person struggling with addiction. In this context, both the lyrics and the music video highlight the lives lost when individuals who want to escape from pain and hardship turn to drugs. The purpose of the song is to raise awareness by reaching out to young people who are addicted to drugs.

Misal / Tut Elimden (Hold My Hand): The music video for the song 'Tut Elimden' (Hold My Hand) by the singer using the pseudonym *Misal*, was filmed in and around an abandoned building, chosen to highlight the negative aspects of the subculture that promotes drug use. In the video, people addicted to drugs are depicted in this derelict setting. Although drug use is not shown directly, the tremors of individuals suffering from withdrawal symptoms, who are unable to obtain drugs, are clearly visible. The lyrics of the song, some of which are quoted below, illustrate how drug use negatively affects life and damages social relationships, particularly within families. The helplessness of addicted individuals and their desire to escape their situation are expressed through the sentence 'tut elimden' (hold my hand). In addition, drugs, whose harmful consequences are clearly emphasized, are described as being like an 'iblis' (demon).

<i>Yanlışlar arar, yılan gibi sarar,</i>	It looks for mistakes, wraps you like a snake,
<i>Sana verir zarar, adına alır karar.</i>	It hurts you, makes your choices for you.
<i>Gecelerdir mekânım, terk etmiş herkes,</i>	The night has been my only place,
<i>Sizi geç anladım ama bu illetmiş merkez.</i>	everyone's abandoned me
<i>Böyle değildim elbet, doğmadım serkeş,</i>	I realized too late, but this poison was the
<i>Gülümse, tut elimden kurtar beni kardeş.</i>	center of all
<i>İnan ki istemedim bunun böyle olmasını,</i>	I wasn't always like this, I wasn't born a
<i>Gözlerimin kararıp gönlümün solmasını,</i>	rebel,
<i>Her şeyimi gasp ettiler dünyam karardı.</i>	Smile, hold my hand, save me brother
	Believe me, I never wanted it to turn out this
	way
	For my eyes to go dark, for my heart to fade

They stole everything from me, my world
has gone dark.

Another point to be noted in the lyrics and the message they convey is that the harm experienced by addicts is not limited to themselves. The presence of a drug-addicted family member means that the entire family shares in the consequences of addiction. While friends can more easily end their relationship with the person struggling with addiction, family members often do not have that option. For this reason, it is more accurate to consider addiction as a ‘family disease’ that affects the entire family rather than just a personal issue. As explained in this song, the appropriate approach by the family toward the addicted individual, and the willingness to support that person in all circumstances, can only be achieved with professional help (Ögel and Tamar Gürol, 2010).

Zifir / Beyaz Ölüm (White Death): The third song critical of the drug subculture differs from the others in that it is a rap song with Islamic elements. Released by the group named *Mavera* on their own YouTube channel, the song is described by the group as a social responsibility project. It is performed by the rapper who goes by the nickname *Zifir*. The video, similar to those of other songs in this category, depicts the daily life of a teenager addicted to drugs. In addition, the psychological and physiological harms of drug use are addressed, and it is stated that overcoming addiction is possible by turning to spirituality as a solution. These lines clearly reflect the stance of the song and the group toward the drug subculture.

The following portion of the song depicts the drug as ‘*zehir*’ (poison), presenting the narcotic substance as toxic and harmful. While this section portrays drug use by addicts as a means of escaping daily problems, it emphasizes that the personal, material and moral values lost through drug use cannot be regained in any way.

*Al seccadeni yönel Rabbine, yen bu tuzağı,
Yıkma annenin sırtını yasladığı şu dağı.
Yaktığın ahiretin dostum, bu bir çıra değil,
Bırak şu zehirleri de git secdede eğil.
Derdine çare bedeni uyuşturmak değil,
Huzur için Rabbine bak, etmelisin meyl.*

Take your prayer rug and turn to your
Lord, break this trap,
Don’t destroy the mountain your mother
leans her back on.
The afterlife you’re burning, my friend,
this isn’t just a spark
Leave these poisons behind and bow down
in prostration

Numbing your body won't cure your pain
If you're seeking peace, turn to your Lord,
you should open your heart.

As mentioned above and discussed elsewhere in the song, freedom from drugs is presented as something that can be achieved by the addicted person through turning to spirituality. When parts of this song are examined, it becomes clear through the use of religious motifs that the singer recommends spirituality as a method of treatment for addiction.

Ogeday / Kaybettim Seni (I Lost You): Although it is the fourth song critical of the drug subculture in the context of this study, it is actually the first song to take a critical stance chronologically. '*Kaybettim Seni*' (I Lost You), was performed by the rapper *Ogeday* in 2003. The song tells the story of a teenage girl who uses drugs and a friend of hers who does not. This particular song does not contain any overt symbols, expressions or slang terms associated with the drug subculture. Only the setting shown in the video, which resembles a nightclub and its surrounding environment, suggests a connection to parties often associated with drug use.

<i>Bir bela bu kaçınmak zor,</i>	This is a curse, hard to avoid
<i>Bir fena bu, onu öldürüyor.</i>	It's something awful, it's killing him
<i>Genç beyinlere saldırıyor,</i>	It attacks young minds
<i>Kandırıp onları harcıyor.</i>	Tricks them and wastes them
<i>Kapılıp düşenler, gidenler çok,</i>	Many get caught up and fall, many are gone
<i>Gidip de geri gelenler hiç yok.</i>	No one returns once they're gone
<i>Bir nevi katil bunu bil,</i>	Know this, it's a kind of killer
<i>Uyanık ol işte benden sana yol.</i>	Stay sharp, that's the road I'm giving you
<i>Arkadaşını seç çocuk bak çocuk,</i>	Choose your friends wisely, kid, look, kid
<i>Zaman kötü gel çocuk ölüm soğuk.</i>	Times are bad, kid, death is cold
<i>Gülen yüzler sana hep dost değil,</i>	Not every smiling face is your friend
<i>Sıcak sözler sana tek söz değil.</i>	Not every sweet word means something real
<i>Sürekli uçuyor sanırlar onlar,</i>	They always think they're flying high
<i>Süratli düşerler fark etmezler.</i>	But they fall fast and don't even notice
<i>Bilmezler hayat bu kadar basit mi,</i>	They don't realize life isn't that simple
<i>Değer mi paraya fani dünya?</i>	Is it really worth chasing money in the mortal world?

The words chosen from the song and shown above strongly reflect the themes of hopelessness, desperation and pessimism. At the same time, the song reveals the lives consumed by the drug subculture. Even the title of the song refers to lives lost as a result of drug use. When evaluated chronologically, this song by *Ogeday* is one of the first to take a negative stance toward the drug subculture. In the early 2000s, drawing attention to drug use, which was not as common as it is today, can be considered a very important message.

Sansür / Uyuşturucuya Hayır (No to Drugs): The fifth song, '*Uyuşturucuya Hayır*' (No to Drugs), is performed by a rap artist using the nickname Sansür. At the beginning of the song, the drug addiction stories of real addicts are heard in their own words. The music video features the rapper performing the song directly to a young drug addict sitting across from him. Selected parts of the song are as follows:

<i>Bak bir gününü verme ona yazık.</i>	Don't give even a day of your life to it, it's a shame
<i>Boş ver içme onu be mutluluk sanıp,</i>	
<i>Folyoya doldurup veyahut sarıp,</i>	Forget it, don't smoke it thinking it brings happiness
<i>Babanın parası o ter akıtıp alıp.</i>	Filling foil or rolling it up
<i>Bir kapak daha yapaydı dostum demekle.</i>	That's your dad's money, earned through sweat
<i>Onu içersen eğer ki o beden paslanır.</i>	
<i>Emin ol sen hiçbir şey kazanmıyorsun,</i>	Wishing for one more hit
<i>Kazanan tek kişi satıcısıdır.</i>	If you use it, your body starts to rust
	Believe me, you're not gaining anything
	The only one winning is the dealer.

This part selected from the song reflects the negative effects of drugs and their use on both the addicted person and their family, as in other songs that take a critical approach. The physical harm caused by drug use is also described in this section. The line '*Uyuşturucu yaşatmaz, öldürür!*' (Drugs don't keep you alive death, they kill!) aligns with the title of the song and clearly expresses the singer's anti-drug stance.

Okan İlhan / Bir Kereden (For Once): The thirteenth song that we examined was created for a rap music competition held to support the prevention of drug use. The competition, organized by the Republic of Turkey, is titled '*Rap Burada*' (Rap is Here) and is an award-winning event coordinated by the Department of Combating Narcotic Crimes under the

authority of the General Directorate of Security. It is part of the '*Narko Yarışma Projesi*' (Narcotic Competition Project) conducted by the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Turkey (CNN Türk, 2021).

The rap song '*Bir Kereden*' (For Once) is performed by the rapper known as *Nasihat* and was written by a police officer Okan İlhan, who serves in the Anti-Narcotic Crimes Branch of the Istanbul Police Department. Therefore, as he criticizes drug use and the drug subculture in his role as a member of the law enforcement agencies fighting against drug-related crimes, the song holds a particular place among those critical to the drug subculture, which led to its inclusion in the scope of this study.

<i>Neden dedim düştün bu illete?</i>	Why did you fall into this mess, I asked
<i>Dedi abi eğitimsiziz,</i>	He said, "Bro, we're uneducated"
<i>İnsanız tabii hataya meyilliyiz.</i>	We're human, of course we're prone to mistakes
<i>İtmeye dursun biri düşeriz.</i>	If someone just gives a push, we fall"
<i>En yakınım dedi en yakınım,</i>	My closest, he said, my closest
<i>En yakınımdaki bildiklerim,</i>	The people I thought were closest
<i>Teslim olmayıp cenk etseydim,</i>	If only I had fought instead of giving in
<i>İçime de sevgiyi zerk etseydim."</i>	If only I had injected love into myself instead
<i>"Bir bende var sanırdım dert keder,</i>	"I used to think pain and sorrow were mine alone
<i>Bu illetmiş asıl dert keder.</i>	But this poison is the real pain and sorrow
<i>Tedavi ol dedim kardeşim geçer,</i>	I told, brother, go get treatment, it'll pass
<i>Ağlamanın gözü yaşlı anneler.</i>	So mothers with tearful eyes won't have to cry
<i>Türk gençleri bak bu işi halleder,</i>	Look, Turkish youth can handle this
<i>Sönüp gitmesin ülkemde gençler.</i>	Let our young people not fade away in this
<i>Bir kereden bir şey olmaz derler.</i>	country
<i>Hiç başlama diyenleriniz haklı.</i>	They say "one time won't hurt"
<i>Boşaltır tabii ki de önce cüzdanı,</i>	But the ones who say "never start", they're right
<i>Yeminler ederler, azdır tutanı.</i>	Of course it empties your wallet first
	They swear they'll quit, but few can keep their promises.

The song titled '*Bir Kereden*' (For Once) holds a distinctive position compared to other songs, as it was created by the General Directorate of Security itself. Throughout the song, as reflected in the lyrics above, a strong belief in the potential of youth is frequently

expressed. The lyrics consistently highlight the harms caused by drug use, aiming to deter young people from drugs by drawing attention to these negative aspects.

Çelebi / Pes Etme (Don't Give Up): The last song that we examined is 'Pes Etme' (Don't Give Up), which was published on the YouTube channel of the group *Nefer*, on 26 June 2021, coinciding with the 'International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking'. It was released following the rap music competition organized by the Department for Combating Narcotic Crimes. While the rapper using the pseudonym *Çelebi* performed the song, one of the nine different musical backtracks prepared for the 'Rap Burada' (Rap is Here) competition was used as its instrumental background.

<i>Yıkılma asla, duvarlar üstüne gelebilir inatla.</i>	Never collapse, the walls may come down on you with stubborn force
<i>Her gecenin bir sabahı vardır,</i>	But every night has its morning
<i>Gel, umuda gözlerini kapatma.</i>	Come on, don't close your eyes to hope
<i>Söyle, deniz aranır mı çölde,</i>	Tell me, would you search for the sea in a desert
<i>Suda yol alınır mı yürümele?</i>	Can you move through water just by walking
<i>Dertlerini kucakla, burası dünya,</i>	Embrace your troubles, this is the world
<i>Sonsuz huzur cennette.</i>	True and endless peace is in paradise
<i>Pes etme, dik dur eğilme,</i>	Don't give up, stand tall, don't bow your head
<i>Hadi dur de gidişata o koca yüreğinle.</i>	Tell things to stop with your big heart
<i>Sabah geceyi ışıklarında boğacaktır,</i>	Morning will drown the night in its light
<i>Sabır güneşin kapılarını açacaktır.</i>	Patience will open the doors to the sun.

This final song reviewed, 'Pes Etme' (Don't Give Up), can be considered an official initiative, as it was produced as part of the 'Rap Burada' (Rap is Here) competition. As in the previous song, the detrimental effects of drug use are emphasized, with strong language and paired with the theme of regret. Additionally, individuals who supply drugs are sharply criticized in the lyrics.

The second group of seven songs examined also share a common denominator: all of these songs emphasize that people who use drugs not only harm themselves but also those around them, that a strong belief system can help individuals recover from this self-

destructive path, and that the only ones who benefit are the drug dealers who profit financially. In these songs, which take a critical stance toward the drug subculture, the names of drugs or depictions of their use are not directly mentioned. Although there is no explicit evidence that the rappers adopted this approach intentionally, it allowed them to focus on various themes related to the drug subculture, such as the harms resulting from drug use, and ways to prevent or overcome addiction.

Discussion

Within the scope of this research, rap songs were examined through content analysis in relation to the drug subculture. The study claims that a significant portion of rap music reflects and reinforces elements of the drug subculture, and the selected songs were evaluated with this objective in mind. In the first part of the study, numerous references to the drug subculture were identified. Based on the presence of specific sub-themes, it was concluded that a significant portion of rap music reflects and reinforces elements of the drug subculture.

In the second phase of the study, songs that criticize the drug subculture were analyzed. These rap songs were evaluated in terms of themes such as bodily harm, moral and material losses, referral for treatment, orientation toward spirituality, expressions of regret, references to substance names, and the harm inflicted on users and their families. In this group of songs, slang terms were rarely encountered. Instead, the emphasis was placed on the losses experienced or likely to be experienced by addicts, as a means of highlighting the negative consequences of drug use.

Prior to the analysis of the selected fourteen songs, it was stated that the primary criterion for their selection was not the viewing figures, but the presence of subthemes related to the drug subculture. The viewing figures were considered as a secondary criterion. Nonetheless, when the figures for all fourteen selected songs are examined, it becomes evident that the group of seven songs considered as encouraging drug use reached a much wider audience. Six of the songs in the group that criticize drug use ranked at the bottom of the list in terms of views. The only exception was '*Düşme*' by *Heijan* and *Muti* (Song Number 8), which ranked third among all fourteen songs.

The findings related to the viewing figures of the fourteen songs analyzed in this study do

not represent a coincidence unique to this sample. According to recent statistics on Turkish rap music, songs that encourage drug use have consistently been more popular than those that take a critical stance toward the drug subculture (Çakmak, 2024; Rapertuar, 2024). It would be an oversimplification to attribute the popularity of such songs solely to the overall increase in drug use in recent decades. Songs that adopt a positive stance toward the drug subculture may also contribute to shaping attitudes and behavior regarding drug use among young people. In this regard, as Miller et al. noted, “the direction of the relationship is not specified” (Miller et al., 2016).

Although rap songs that contain lyrics praising drug use may not lead young people to use drugs in the short term (Harakeh and Ter Bogt, 2018), their long-term influence has been widely acknowledged (Chen et al., 2006). Ultimately, this influence may contribute to a snowball effect in Turkey, potentially exacerbating drug use among the youth population.

In pro-drug subculture songs, specific drug-related terms, violent content, and slang expressions are more commonly used. On the other hand, themes such as hopelessness, pessimism, and helplessness appear in the lyrics of both pro-drug and anti-drug songs. In rap songs that are critical of the drug subculture, the negative effects of drug use on individuals are emphasized, and suggestions for overcoming addiction are often included. The detention of rappers who produced songs encouraging drug use drew public attention beyond their typical audiences. This, in turn, sparked greater curiosity about the content of the songs that led to criminal prosecution, as well as the specific substances referenced in their lyrics.

It is widely accepted that lyrics from songs by artists admired and taken as role models by adolescents and young adults can have a significant impact. This age group, in which the search for identity is most intense, is particularly susceptible to external influences. In this context, it can be reasonably argued that songs aimed at preventing drug use may have a strong deterrent effect on young people. However, these songs often occupy a weaker and less influential position.

The songs critical of the drug subculture, analyzed in the second category of this study, are largely in reactive mode to those that promote drug use. The latter tend to be more popular and appealing among youth familiar with or influenced by the drug subculture. Moreover, the fact that a considerable number of anti-drug songs are produced through

governmental initiatives or non-governmental social responsibility projects suggests that they may sometimes lack a genuine emotional or cultural connection with their target audience. As a result, they may be less effective in influencing behavioral change. This complex dynamic, as revealed through a comprehensive assessment of the selected songs, highlights a phenomenon that warrants further investigation in future research.

In conclusion, it can be stated that songs emphasizing drug-related themes are more prominent and widely listened to by young people in Turkey, which presents a concerning trend for those already familiar with or exposed to the drug subculture. Although a number of anti-drug songs aim to highlight the harms of substance use, they remain in the minority compared to songs that praise or encourage drug use. Beyond this quantitative imbalance, the relative disconnection between anti-drug songs and the youth subculture is another factor that limits their effectiveness in influencing young audiences.

REFERENCES

- Anadolu Ajansı (AA). (2019, 27 June). “Ezhel'e uyuşturucu kullanmaktan hapis cezası” (Prison Sentence for Ezhel on Drug Use Charges). Retrieved from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/ezhele-uyusturucu-kullanmaktan-hapis-cezasi/1517044>
- Arslan, Hatice; Kırhoğlu, Mehmet. (2019). “Drug Subculture as a Way of Expression: Rap Music” *Addicta: The Turkish Journal on Addictions*. 6(3): 821-845.
- Bağış, Radiye Canan. (2019). “Bir Alt Kültür Grubu Olarak Denizli Graffiti Gençliği” (Denizli Graffiti Youth as a Sub-Cultural Group). *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*. 18(4): 1287-1309.
- Barnes, Sandra L. (2008). “Religion and Rap Music: An analysis of black church usage” *Review of Religious Research*. 49(3): 319-338.
- Bayrak, Merve Betül. (2011). “Muhafazakâr Gençliğin Bir İfade Biçimi Olarak Türkçe Rap ve Türkiye'de Hip-Hop Kültürü” (Turkish rap and hip-hop culture in Turkey as a means of expression for the conservative youth), Master’s Thesis, Marmara University, Istanbul:

Türkiye.

Berelson, Bernard. (1952). *Content analysis in communication research*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Bianet. (2021, 13 March). “Rapçi Burry Soprano tutuklandı” (Rapper Burry Soprano Arrested). Retrieved from <https://bianet.org/haber/rapci-burry-soprano-tutuklandi-240763>

Biçer, Serkan; Ertan, Tülay. (2017). “Arafta Kalan Gençlik: Arsız Bela Hayranları Üzerine Etnografik Bir Çalışma” (Youth in Limbo: An Ethnographic Study on Fans of Arsız Bela). *Kurgu*. 25(3): 96-119.

BirGün. (2022, 19 April). “Şarkıcı Murda’ya 4 yıl 2 ay hapis” (Rapper Murda Sentenced to 4 Years and 2 Months in Prison). Retrieved from <https://www.birgun.net/haber/sarkici-murda-ya-4-yil-2-ay-hapis-384823>

Blanchard, Becky. (1999). *The Social Significance of Rap & Hip-Hop Culture*. Retrieved from https://web.stanford.edu/class/e297c/poverty_prejudice/mediarace/socialsignificance.htm

Budak, Celalettin; Ergun Levent. (2022). “Yeraltı (Underground)-Ana Akım (Mainstream) Etkileşimi Bağlamında İzmir Rap Scene” (The İzmir Rap Scene in the Context of the Underground–Mainstream Interaction) *Yedi*. Special Issue: 1-14.

Chen, Meng-Jinn; Miller, Brenda A; Grube, Joel W and Waiters, Elizabeth D. (2006). “Music, substance use, and aggression” *Journal of studies on alcohol*. 67(3): 373-381.

CNN Türk. (2017, 28 November). “Yansın Geceler’le tanınan ‘Heijan’ gözaltına alındı” (‘Heijan,’ Known for ‘Yansın Geceler,’ Detained). Retrieved from <https://www.cnnturk.com/turkiye/yansin-gecelerle-taninan-heijan-gozaltina-alindi-705057>

CNN Türk. (2021, 23 April). “Narkotik polisinden uyuşturucuyla mücadele için rap müzikli klip” (Narcotics Police Release Rap Music Video to Combat Drug Use). Retrieved from <https://www.cnnturk.com/video/turkiye/narkotik-polisinden-uyusturucuyla-mucadele-icin-rap-muzikli-klip-1646968>

Çakmak, Muhammet N. (2024). "2014- 2023 Spotify Top 10 Listelerinin Bağımlılık Sosyolojisi Bağlamında İncelenmesi" (An Analysis of Spotify Top 10 Charts (2014–2023) in the Context of the Sociology of Addiction) *Olgu Sosyoloji Dergisi*. 3(2): 49-62.

Çatı Müzik. (2016). *Heijan – Genemi Amcalar 2014 Klip Online*. [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170801075803/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-TlXrLv7t4>

Çetinöz, Esra. (2019). *Türkiye ve Dünyada Uyuşturucu ile Mücadele* (The Fight Against Drugs in Türkiye and the World). Ankara: Police Academy Publications.

DHA. (2018, July 11)., "Ezhele'e büyük şok" (A Major Shock for Ezhele). Retrieved from <https://www.dha.com.tr/saglik-yasam/ezhele-buyuk-sok-1589283>

Diken. (2018, 1 June). "Rapçilere bir 'uyuşturucuyu özendirme' operasyonu daha: Khontkar tutuklandı" (Another Operation on Rappers for 'Encouraging Drug Use': Khontkar Arrested). Retrieved from <https://www.diken.com.tr/rapcilere-bir-uyusturucuyu-ozendirme-operasyonu-daha-khontkar-tutuklandi/>

Duvar English. (2024, September 4). "Annual police report: Methamphetamine threat ravages Turkey". Retrieved from <https://www.duvarenglish.com/annual-police-report-methamphetamine-threat-ravages-turkey-news-64908>

Elbir, İrem. (2021). "Turkish Rap Music within the Grip of Popular Culture" Master's thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara: Türkiye.

Elflein, Dietmar. (1998). "From Krauts with attitudes to Turks with attitudes: some aspects of hip-hop history in Germany" *Popular Music*. 17(3): 255–265.

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) (2019). *Turkey Country Drug Report 2019*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Furlong, Andy. (2013). *Youth Studies: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.

Gezek, Funda. (2007). "Sokakta Yaşayan Gençlerin Aile Yapısı ve Madde Bağımlılığı Arasındaki İlişki" (The Relationship Between Family Structure and Substance Addiction Among Homeless Youth), Master's Thesis, Marmara University, Istanbul: Türkiye.

Harakeh, Zeena; Ter Bogt, Tom F.M. (2018). "The Effect of Rap/Hip-Hop music on young adult smoking: an experimental study" *Substance Use & Misuse*. 53(11): 1819–1825.

Hebdige, Dick. (2003). *Kes Yapıştır: Kültür, Kimlik ve Karayip Müziği* (Cut 'n' Mix Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music). (Gülabioğlu, Çağatay, Trans.). Istanbul: Ayrıntı Publishing House.

Hürriyet. (2018, 24 May). "Son dakika... Fenomen rapçi Ezhel tutuklandı" (Breaking News... Rapper Ezhel Detained). Retrieved from <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/son-dakika-fenomen-rapci-ezhel-tutuklandi-40847455>

Independent Türkçe. (2019, 26 September). "Rapçi Khontkar'a uyuşturucuya özendirmeden 4 yıl 2 ay hapis cezası" (Rapper Khontkar Sentenced to 4 Years and 2 Months in Prison for Inciting Drug Use). Retrieved from <https://www.indyturk.com/node/74786/haber/rap%C3%A7i-khontkara-uyu%C5%9Fturucuya-%C3%B6zendirmeden-4-y%C4%B1l-2-ay-hapis-cezas%C4%B1>

Işık, Mehmet. (2018). "Madde Kullanımını Öven Popüler Şarkı Sözlerinde Dil, İdeoloji ve Özne (An Analysis of Language, Ideology, and the Construction of the Subject in Popular Songs Glorifying Substance Use)". *Dil Bilimleri / Klasik Sorunlar – Güncel Tartışmalar* (Linguistics: Classical Issues – Contemporary Debates), Eds. Nesim Doru and Ömer Bozkurt: pp. 783-800. Mardin: Artuklu University Publications

İlhan, Ramazan. (2016). "Üniversite Öğrencilerinde Madde Kullanımı ve Suç İlişkisi" (The Relationship Between Substance Use and Criminal Behavior Among University Students), Master's Thesis, Cumhuriyet University, Sivas: Türkiye.

Jenks, Chris. (2005). *Altkültür / Toplumsalın Parçalanışı* (Subculture: The Fragmentation of the Social). (Demirkol, Nihal, Trans.). Istanbul: Ayrıntı Publishing House.

Jerotic, Katarina; Vuust, Peter and Kringelbach, Morten L. (2024). "Psychedelia: The interplay of music and psychedelics" *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 1531(1): 12–28.

Journet, Nicolas. (2009). *Evrenselden Özele Kültür* (Culture: From the Universal to the

Particular). (Sezen, Yumni, Trans.). Istanbul: İz Publishing House.

Kemp, Simon. (2024, October 23). *Digital 2024 October Global Statshot Report*. Retrieved from <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-october-global-statshot>

Koçak, Abdullah; Arun, Özgür. (2006). "İçerik Analizi Çalışmalarında Örneklem Sorunu" (The Sampling Problem in Content Analysis Studies) *Journal of Selçuk Communications*. 4(3): 21-28.

Kurt, Begüm. (2020). "Farklı Kültürel Zeminlerde Benzer İfade Biçimleri: Âşıklık Geleneği ve Rap Müzik" (Parallel Modes of Expression Across Cultural Contexts: The Âşık Tradition and Rap Music) *Folklore Academy Journal*. 3(1): 16-35.

Le Monde (2024, 10 February). "Drug use soars in Turkey". Retrieved from https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/02/10/drug-use-soars-in-turkey_6510646_4.html

McCoy, Austin. (2017). "Rap Music". *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Miller, Erin Morris; Kelley, Brian M; Midgett, Christian and Parent, Chelsea. (2016). "Substance use references in college students' diverse personal music libraries predicts substance use behavior" *Cogent Psychology*. 3(1): 1220446.

Müzikonair. (2021). "Ceza, Fuat ve CARTEL Grubu'ndan "Uyuşturucuya Hayır" Projesi" (The "Say No to Drugs" Project by Ceza, Fuat, and the Group CARTEL). Retrieved from <https://muzikonair.com/ceza-fuat-ve-cartel-grubundan-uyusturucuya-hayir-projesi/>

Ögel, Kültegin; Tamar Gürol, Defne. (2010). "Aile ve Bağımlılık" (Family and Addiction) *Sigara, Alkol ve Madde Kullanım Bozuklukları: Tanı, Tedavi ve Önleme* (Tobacco, Alcohol, and Substance Use Disorders: Diagnosis, Treatment, and Prevention), İstanbul: Yeniden Publications.

Özyıldız, Aslı; Uçaner Çifdalöz, Burçin. (2019). "Bağımlılıkla Mücadelede Müzik Terapi" (Music Therapy in the Fight Against Addiction) *Journal of International Social Research*. 12(63): 576-587.

Palamar, Joseph J; Rutherford, Caroline; Cleland, Charles M and Keyes, Katherine M. (2022). "Concerts, bars, parties, and raves: Differential risk for drug use among high school seniors according to venue attendance" *Substance Abuse*. 43(1): 785–791.

Patton, George C; Viner, Russell. (2007). "Pubertal transitions in health" *The Lancet*. 369(9567): 1130–1139.

Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Interior (2021, 30 January). "Madde Bağımlılığıyla Mücadeleye Müziğinle Destek Olmak İçin Rap Burada!" (Rap Is Here to Support the Fight Against Substance Addiction Through Music!). Retrieved from <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/rap-burada-muzik-yarismasi>

Turkish National Police, Counter Narcotics Department. (2024). *2024 Turkish Drug Report: Trends and Developments*. Retrieved from <https://www.narkotik.pol.tr/kurumlar/narkotik.pol.tr/Duyurular/2024/Eylul/TURKISH DRUG REPORT.PDF>

Rose, Tricia. (1994). *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Sağır, Adem. (2020). "Yeni Bir Ergen Kültürü Olarak Arabesk Rapin Kimlik Dışa Vurumları" (Identity Expressions of Arabesk Rap as a New Youth Subculture) *OPUS International Journal of Society Researches*. 15(21): 145-182.

Rapertuar. (2024, 4 December). "Spotify Wrapped açıklandı, 2024'ün en'leri ortaya çıktı!" (Spotify Wrapped Released – 2024 Wrapped Reveals the Year's Greatest Hits!). Retrieved from <https://www.rapertuar.com/turkce-rap/spotify-wrapped-aciklandi-2024un-enleri-ortaya-cikti/>

Stickle, Ben. (2021). "A High Note: Drug Misuse in Popular Rap Music" *Substance Use & Misuse*. 56(10): 1448–1456.

Susma24. (2021, 19 March). "Tutuklanan Rap müzisyeni Burry Soprano hakkında beraat kararı verildi" (Acquittal Issued for Arrested Rap Musician Burry Soprano). Retrieved from <https://susma24.com/rap-muzisyeni-burry-soprano-tutuklandi/>

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2003). *National Assessment on Drug Abuse:*

Health Services, Education & Community Action – Preventing Drug Abuse in Turkey.

Retrieved from https://www.unodc.org/pdf/gap_turkey_drug_abuse_report.pdf

Üsküdar University. (2025, 4 March.). ““Birleşmiş Milletler Dünya 2024 Uyuşturucu Raporu” açıklandı” (The United Nations World Drug Report 2024 Has Been Released).

Retrieved from <https://uskudar.edu.tr/tr/icerik/59445/birlesmis-milletler-dunya-2024-uyusturucu-raporu-aciklandi>

Watkins, S. Craig. (2005). *Hip-hop Matters: Politics, Pop Culture, and the Struggle for the Soul of a Movement*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Yaman, Ömer Miraç. (2013). *Apaçi Gençlik – Gençlerin Toplumsal Davranış ve Yönelimleri: İstanbul'da "Apaçi" Altkültür Grupları Üzerine Nitel Bir Çalışma* (Apaçi Youth – Social Behaviors and Orientations of Young People: A Qualitative Study on "Apaçi" Subcultural Groups in Istanbul). Istanbul: Turkish Green Crescent Society.

Yaşar, Yusuf; İçer, Zafer and Yazıcılar, Tarık T. (2018). “Uyuşturucu ve Uyarıcı Madde Kullanılmasını Özendirme Suçu (TCK m. 190/2)” (The Crime of Promoting the Use of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances (Turkish Penal Code Article 190/2)) *Istanbul Law Review*. 76(2): 691-724.

Yılmaz, Enes. (2018). “Uyuşturucu veya Uyarıcı Madde Kullanılmasını Kolaylaştırma ve Özendirme Suçları (TCK m.190)” (Crimes of Promoting and Facilitating Drug or Stimulant Use (Turkish Penal Code Article 190)) *Journal of the Turkish Justice Academy*. 9(34): 345-374.

Yörükoğlu, Atalay. (1989). *Çocuk Ruh Sağlığı* (Pediatric Mental Health). İstanbul: Özgür Publications.

ŞEVKİ ÖZER AKÇAY

Atatürk University, Türkiye

akcay_ozer@yahoo.com

orcid.org/0000-0002-0493-9897

FATİH AĞDUMAN

Atatürk University, Türkiye

f.agduman@atauni.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0002-5744-7191

An Investigation into Hemodynamic Activity in the Brain During Guitar Performance Using the fNIRS Method

ABSTRACT

The goal of this study is to reveal the relationships between brain activation and the quality of guitarists' solo performances by using Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS). Students' brain hemodynamics were measured with fNIRS while playing the guitar, and there was an attempt to determine hemodynamic activity occurring in four different regions of the brain during the best and worst performances. Video recordings were taken during the students' performances, and their performance levels were evaluated using the Guitar Performance Rating Scale [GPRS]. The fNIRS data obtained during guitar performances was analyzed by comparing the hemodynamic (OxyHb) activity in different regions of the cerebral cortex. Also, following this, the t-values of the data were calculated through the MATLAB software, and were visualized in the form of a cerebral cortex heat map. As a result of the fNIRS measurements, it was observed that significant activations occurred in all regions of the participants' brains, and activity was recorded in the regions expected to be activated in tasks associated with music. Especially in the parietal region, it was determined that there was more OxyHb activity during the worst performances than during the best performances. The same situation was observed in the occipital region during the best performances. While intense OxyHb activity was seen in the right hemisphere in the prefrontal cortex region during the best performance, it was determined that the intensity of activity changed towards the left hemisphere during the worst performances. In the temporal cortex region, high OxyHb activity was detected in both hemispheres, although it was more intense and spread over a wider area in the right hemisphere during the best performances. During the worst performances, it was determined that while the activity area in both hemispheres remained the same, the intensity of OxyHb activity decreased.

KEYWORDS

Music

Neuromusicology

Brain

fNIRS

Guitar performance

Brain Activity in Music

Traditionally, it is assumed that certain regions of the brain are allocated for certain tasks, with different areas being labeled and classified according to their functions. However, this model is increasingly viewed as too simplistic. A more nuanced perspective considers the brain a dynamic system that continuously adapts its circuits to accommodate environmental conditions and bodily needs (Eagleman, 2021). According to modern neuroscience and neuromusicological research, many different regions of the brain engage in simultaneous interactions during processes related to music. These areas include the motor, sensory, visual, auditory, and prefrontal cortices, cerebellum, corpus callosum, hippocampus, nucleus accumbens, and amygdala (Levitin, 2015). All musical sounds are generated from an instrument-like mechanism through actions such as striking, pulling and rubbing, or from a person using their own voice for musical purposes. Therefore, it can be said that music making and movement are inseparable phenomena. According to Levitin (2013), mirror neurons located in the brain's motor cortex become active when listening to music, prompting the individual to engage in a movement associated with music. This movement can involve making music or dancing. The body's movement with music leads to activities in the premotor cortex, motor cortex, cerebellum, and basal ganglia in the brain. For example, fMRI results during a performance involving the right-hand part of a piano piece have shown that the contralateral primary motor cortex and posterior parietal cortex areas of the participants are bilaterally (in both hemispheres) activated (Meister et al., 2004).

Brain Regions Activated During Guitar Performance

The guitar's suitability for both solo performance and accompaniment, its amenability to harmonic functions, its affordability, and its ease of transport are important factors in its widespread use. For many years, numerous practices and studies have been conducted at national and international levels focusing on guitar performance, developing methods, and attempting to elevate guitar performance to higher levels with new methods and techniques. "The study of the neuronal substrate of human social behavior is currently gaining momentum in the young field of social neuroscience. In this context, some researchers argue that music performance is a suitable experimental paradigm to study human interaction and co-operation" (Acquadro et al., 2016). From this perspective, studies focusing on the cognitive/mental processes of guitar performance are

increasingly considered to be of growing importance (Akçay, 2016; Butler et al, 2021). The ability of a person playing the guitar to execute numerous complex tasks simultaneously and harmoniously is directly related to the accurate, timely, and flawless inter-regional coordination of processes in the brain. While each region of the brain is responsible for different operations, some regions can also undertake multiple tasks during performance. "Functional brain imaging studies prove that all actions related to music, such as listening to music and playing an instrument, take place in close interaction with many non-musical functions such as movement, perception, attention, memory, and mood in the brain" (Torun, 2016: 68).

Music is a complex activity that encourages different regions of the brain to work together in harmony. This versatility complicates our understanding of the effects of music education and performance on the brain. This study aims to fill this gap, given the guitar's widespread use and its capacity to encompass various styles. Due to the potential of activities like singing to stimulate the speech center and the likelihood of blurring the distinction between speech and musical activity in the results obtained, the focus has been solely on instrumental performance. The guitar was chosen because its performance requires the use of the fingers of both hands. It is thought that more detailed results can be obtained from guitar performances than from those of other instruments such as the violin, where one hand's finger movement is more prevalent.

The Method of Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS) and Its Use in Music Research

Recent advances in neuroimaging techniques have allowed researchers to track the changes that occur in the brain when learning a new skill based on performance or behavior (Heinze et al., 2019). Functional near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS) is a safe and non-invasive technique that measures hemodynamic responses to brain activation in a particular region by detecting the absorption or scattering of light. Compared to other neuroimaging techniques (fMRI, PET, EEG, and MEG), the fNIRS method offers biochemical specificity by measuring the concentrations of various biochemical substances (such as oxy-Hb, deoxy-Hb, and CO redox) (Villringer and Chance, 1997). OxyHb indicates an increase in blood flow in the relevant area, while deoxyHb signals a decrease. This hemodynamic activity is associated with the task/function assigned to the relevant brain region. In addition, the fNIRS method is relatively resistant to variables

such as head movement, muscle artifacts, blinking, speech, and environmental electrical noise (Balardin et al., 2017). In cognitive neuroscience, optical methods can be useful in localizing brain activity, especially when other methods cannot be applied. Optical measurements can be made under natural conditions (such as making music, playing a musical instrument, etc.) that are not easily accessible using other functional methods (Villringer and Chance, 1997). One of the main reasons for using the fNIRS method in social neuroscience is that it is cheaper compared to traditional neuroimaging systems with high initial costs such as multi-million-dollar fMRI. A second reason is the low cost of managing the participants in the research. And finally, fNIRS systems are relatively insensitive to participant movement and have a portable, compact, and ever smaller design. This means that fNIRS can be used flexibly in natural environments for improved ecological validity (Di Domenico et al., 2019).

The fNIRS method is used in many studies where music is examined from a neuroscientific perspective. In the literature, along with studies focusing on the detection of brain regions activated in active/passive music listening (Iwasaka et al., 2007; Wakatsuki et al., 2009), activation of various emotions with music (Moghim et al., 2012), or creating musical images (Power et al., 2010) using the fNIRS method, there are also studies focusing on violinists and pianists using motor and music images to assess neural differences in music perception (Prychitko, 2017); brain function analysis of pianists' sonic environment perception and performance control (Matsuo et al., 2016); measurement of functional neural activity in violin duet performance (Vanzela et al., 2019); focus on prefrontal hemodynamic signals in response to piano chord sequences training (Heinze et al., 2019); examining frontal lobe activity in piano performance (Hashimoto et al., 2006), and measuring the effect of singing in music therapy (Tanaka and Nogawa, 2015). Furthermore, it can be said that the results of studies evaluating hemodynamic concentration changes in primary and premotor cortices as a result of hand gripping and sequential finger movement tasks (Kashou et al., 2016), although not directly in the field of music, represent a significant accumulation of research clarifying the subject as they study hand and finger movements that could explain an important part of the motor movement dimension of music.

The Objective

This study aims to contribute to this evolving perspective by examining hemodynamic

activity during guitar performance. The goal of the study is to reveal the relationships between brain activation and the quality of guitarists' solo performances using Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS). In line with this goal, the study sought to address the following question, "What is the hemodynamic activity in the prefrontal, temporal, parietal, and occipital regions of the brain during the guitar performances of 8 participants?"

The Methodology

Participants

The participants in the study were 8 guitar students (4 female, 4 male) who are receiving undergraduate education in the Music Sciences Department of Atatürk University's Faculty of Fine Arts, are not left-handed, and do not have a history of any neurological health problems. The study group was selected according to the criterion sampling method, which is one of the non-random sampling methods.

Data Collection Procedure

The neurobiological data of the research (fNIRS measurements) were collected using the NIRX NIRSport II device located at Atatürk University Sports Sciences Application and Research Center. Participants gave their performances in a specially prepared room in the fNIRS laboratory at the research center, under normal light, sitting on a standard instrument stool. During rest periods, the sound level in the room was determined to be a maximum of 48.9 dB and an average of 38 dB. Written commands related to task periods (rest or perform) were given from a screen approximately 2 m away from the participants, and a sound warning was given simultaneously (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The room where fNIRS measurements were made, the equipment used, and the participant placement

In addition to neurobiological data related to guitar performance, participants' performances were recorded using video recording and these recordings were evaluated using the Guitar Performance Rating Scale developed by Akçay (2011). The video images of the participants' guitar performances were recorded using an iPad Pro 9.7 inch (model no. MLMV2TU/A) tablet at a resolution of 1080p HD, 60 frames/sec. Audio recordings of the performances were also made separately in Logic Pro X using a condenser microphone (Lewitt LCT 441-Flex multipattern condenser) in sync with the video recordings. Audio and video recordings were combined in Logic Pro X. No effects, filters, etc., and signal processors were applied to the audio files.

In the data collection process of the research, each participant repeatedly performed the piece they had chosen (the one which they think they perform best) for 4 separate regional measurements, with 2 blocks per regional measurement. Allowing participants to play a piece they chose themselves and think they play best was favoured to increase diversity and create a natural performance environment. Since the device used for fNIRS measurements is not suitable for measuring all regions at once, it was decided that to obtain more detailed information in each region, separate measurements would be made for four different brain regions on different days for participants. For each performance phase, a specially designed cap was used to detect hemodynamic activity in the relevant brain region (1. Frontal, 2. Temporal, 3. Parietal, and 4. Occipital) with fNIRS. Each stage

consists of 2 repetitions of a measurement block consisting of 60-seconds rest (R) and 60-seconds guitar performance task (T) parts (1 block = R + T + R + T + R + T + R = 7 min.).

During fNIRS measurements, a calibration process was applied before each stage to ensure that all optodes worked correctly for each participant. The measurement of 1 phase for a participant, including solving signal transmission problems originating from the structure of the hair (dark color, density, length, etc.) in optodes with disturbed signal transmission, took about 15-30 minutes during the calibration process. For each participant, only a single brain region measurement was made in one day. The measurements lasted for 2 weeks, 1 week in June 2021 for male participants and 1 week in November 2021 for females. Measurements were made on Monday (frontal) and Tuesday (temporal), a break on Wednesday, and other measurements on Thursday (parietal) and Friday (occipital). The device used for fNIRS measurements during participants' guitar performances has 16 optodes, 8 light sources, and 8 detectors. A separate cap and optode placement model with different numbers/arrangements were used for each stage in the experimental procedure. This study was approved by the Committee on Fine Arts Ethic of Ataturk University with judgement 4 numbered and dated 15th February 2021.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data, the Guitar Performance Rating Scale (GPRS) was used to determine the performance levels of the participants, and all measurements for all brain regions were evaluated according to the order of measurement. The scores obtained from the measurements performed sequentially for each region were listed, and the best and worst performances of each participant were determined. The fNIRS data of these performances were selected and relevant relational statistical analyses were performed.

In the study, oxyhemoglobin values from cerebral cortex hemodynamic data measured at a light wavelength of 760 nm with the fNIRS device during the guitar performance of participants were analyzed. Before starting the analysis, the data quality of the channels (gain = 1, variation coefficient = %7.5) was checked using the nirsLAB software. After determining no major physiological artifacts were present, it was decided to include all channels in the analysis. Functions from the Homer II interface with MATLAB were used in the data pre-processing steps. A Butterworth filter was used to eliminate potential

respiration and heart rate signals and unwanted high-frequency noise (Huppert et al., 2009). As a first step, the Butterworth band-pass (0.005 – 0.08 Hz) filter was applied with the `hmrBandpassFilt` function. Afterwards, to reduce the movement artifacts in the signal, the CBSI (Correlation Based Signal Improvement) method was applied using the `hmrMotionCorrectCbsi` function.

In fNIRS analyses, the block average technique was used. The block average method is used to minimize the chance that cerebral activity during the task may be random. The OxyHb activation in different regions of the cerebral cortex during the guitar performance was analyzed by comparing it to the resting state through the fNIRS recording. Moreover, after calculating the t-values of the data through MATLAB software, they were visualized as a cerebral cortex heat map.

Findings

Findings Related to Guitar Performance Levels

According to the results obtained, the average Guitar Performance Rating Scale (GPRS) scores during the prefrontal brain region measurements of the participants ranged from 48.33 to 80.33. The lowest score received was 41 (Participant 3), and the highest score was 86 (Participant 4). The averages of the temporal brain region scores ranged from 49.33 to 78.66, with the lowest score 38 (Participant 3), and the highest score 83 (Participant 4). The average scores for the parietal region ranged from 51.16 to 78.16. The lowest score was 47 (Participant 3), and the highest score was 81 (Participant 4 and Participant 8). The averages of the occipital region scores ranged from 54.00 to 78.66. The lowest score was 51 (Participant 3), and the highest score was 88 (Participant 4). The data obtained with GPRS (Table 1) indicates that the average scores related to poor performance of the participants gradually increased from the first day when the prefrontal region measurements were made to the last day when the occipital region measurements were made (respectively prefrontal-48.33, temporal-49.33, parietal-51.16 and occipital-54.00), but the best performance scores did not change significantly (even though there was a very small decrease, this decrease was considered insignificant).

Table 1. GPRS scores of participants

Participant	Cortex	Lowest score / Measurement	Highest score / Measurement	Average score
P1	Prefrontal	62p/3 rd measurement	68p/1 st measurement	65.16
P2		43p/4 th measurement	60p/6 th measurement	53.66
P3		41p/3rd measurement	58p/1 st measurement	48.33
P4		72p/6 th measurement	86p/3rd measurement	80.33
P5		52p/3 rd measurement	63p/4 th measurement	57.50
P6		52p/1 st measurement	69p/6 th measurement	59.33
P7		59p/2 nd measurement	65p/6 th measurement	63.33
P8		70p/6 th measurement	79p/2 nd measurement	73.16
P1	Temporal	60p/4 th measurement	68p/6 th measurement	65.16
P2		46p/5 th measurement	57p/3 rd measurement	51.66
P3		38p/3rd measurement	63p/4 th measurement	49.33
P4		71p/2 nd measurement	83p/5th measurement	78.66
P5		59p/6 th measurement	72p/3 rd measurement	65.00
P6		58p/6 th measurement	66p/2 nd measurement	63.00
P7		62p/4 th measurement	68p/6 th measurement	64.00
P8		68p/2 nd measurement	76p/4 th measurement	69.83
P1	Parietal	65p/3 rd measurement	71p/1 st measurement	67.66
P2		55p/3 rd measurement	72p/4 th measurement	61.33
P3		47p/3rd measurement	56p/1 st measurement	51.16
P4		74p/3 rd measurement	81p/2nd measurement	77.83
P5		56p/4 th measurement	65p/6 th measurement	60.16
P6		55p/1 st measurement	65p/6 th measurement	60.83
P7		63p/3 rd measurement	65p/6 th measurement	64.00
P8		74p/1 st measurement	81p/3rd measurement	78.16
P1	Occipital	68p/5 th measurement	75p/2 nd measurement	70.16
P2		57p/3 rd measurement	66p/5 th measurement	61.16
P3		51p/3rd measurement	56p/4 th measurement	54.00
P4		71p/3 rd measurement	88p/1st measurement	78.66
P5		63p/6 th measurement	70p/2 nd measurement	66.33
P6		60p/2 nd measurement	70p/4 th measurement	66.00
P7		67p/6 th measurement	71p/2 nd measurement	69.33
P8		75p/2 nd measurement	81p/3 rd measurement	77.83

Accordingly, it can be said that the participants showed slight improvements in their poor performances due to the influence of their practice and to repeated measurements taken

during the process, but their best performance levels remained unchanged. In other words, it can be said that they corrected their mistakes and improved their poor performances as they repeatedly played the same piece during repeated measurements. Whether the musical activity is listening to music or making music, it is clear that a series of intense activations in many regions of the brain are triggered. The time spent in these musical activities and the level of immersion in the activity (concentration, interest-desire, motivation, flow, etc. intrinsic factors) may be decisive in the formation of new neural networks in the brain, strengthening existing neural networks, and turning into anatomical changes as practice increases. As the duration and the quality of the duration increase, the change and transformation occurring in the brain can also increase (Akçay, 2021).

Findings on Hemodynamic Activity in the Prefrontal Region

According to fNIRS measurements, it has been determined that there is OxyHb activity in 11 channels during the best performances and in 8 channels during the worst performances in the prefrontal region (Figure 2). It has been identified that there is an increase in activation in the *agranular frontal, opercular (Broca), frontopolar (DLPFC¹), orbital, intermediate frontal, and middle frontal gyri* in the participants' brains during guitar performance

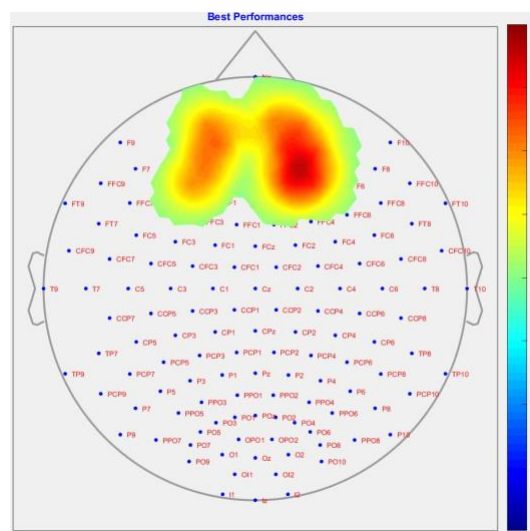


Figure 2. OxyHb activity observed in the prefrontal region during the best performances

¹ Dorsolateral prefrontal cortex

In Figure 2, more OxyHb activity is seen in the prefrontal region of the right hemisphere during the best performance. In the study by Iwasaka et al. (2007), it was stated that playing the strings with both hands on stringed instruments creates a fundamental effect that increases blood or OxyHb volume in the frontal lobe, near the positions F3, F7 or F4, F8² in the 10-20 system. The same study presents data that there is an increase in frontal lobe OxyHb activity during tone production in vocal and instrumental performance. While activations occurring in the prefrontal region in both hemispheres during musical tasks cannot be fully explained, there is some evidence that regions that play an active role in language-related processes are also activated in musical processes. Since the prefrontal cortex also plays a mediating role in accessing the hippocampus, it mediates access to long-term and working memory for music (Akçay, 2021). The left prefrontal cortical region is usually an area active in functions such as encoding new aspects of information retrieval from semantic (meaningful) memory (Matsuo et al., 2016). In an fNIRS study investigating the prefrontal hemodynamic response during a single left-hand arpeggio learning session in piano performance, a statistically significant hemodynamic response difference was detected in the right medial orbitofrontal cortex during the execution of the arpeggio task compared to being at rest. It has been suggested that right hemisphere lateralization could be explained by the use of the left hand to play the chords. Additionally, a theory regarding the involvement of the orbitofrontal cortex, possibly related to the control of motor responses and error monitoring, is supported by literature that identifies this area as a top-down motor controller (Heinze et al., 2019).

² F3-F4: Intermediate frontal gyrus (includes frontal eye fields), F7-F8: Orbital gyrus

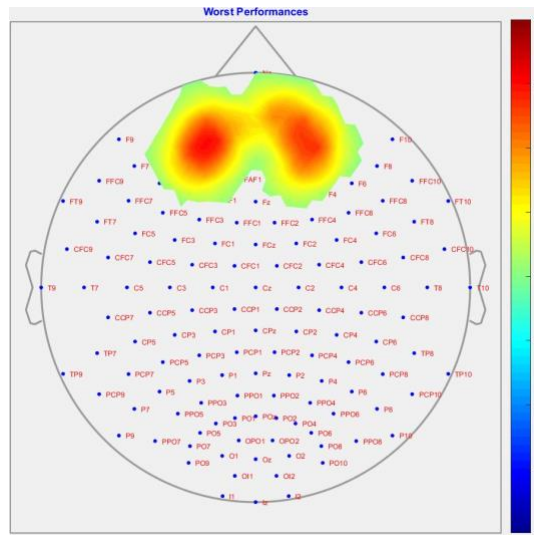


Figure 3. OxyHb activity observed in the prefrontal region during the worst performances

As seen in Figure 3, the regions where OxyHb activity is observed and the intensity of the activation during a poor performance are different when compared to a good performance. It is observed that the OxyHb activity, which is intense in the right hemisphere during a good performance, is at a lower level during a poor performance, and the area where the activity spreads has relatively shrunk. However, an increase in OxyHb activity is seen in the left hemisphere. This shift in the hemodynamic response during the worst performances can suggest underlying neural mechanisms responding to the less accurate execution of the musical piece. The differentiation in prefrontal activation between the best and worst performances may be a new contribution to our understanding of musical cognition, especially since it is related to motor control, error monitoring, and possibly emotional regulation during the performance. Hemodynamic activity in the prefrontal region during guitar performance provides unique insights into the cognitive and emotional processes involved in music performance. This study, utilizing fNIRS, provides valuable information that is consistent with current research about complex brain dynamics during music performance and sheds new light on the interactions between motor control, error detection, memory access, and emotional response. Findings not only emphasize the importance of the prefrontal region in musical tasks, but also present a new perspective on the complex relationship between music, memory, and emotion. Future research can expand these findings by exploring other musical instruments or integrating additional brain imaging techniques for a more comprehensive understanding of the neural basis of musical expression.

Hemodynamic Activity Findings in the Temporal Region

During the best performances, it was found that there was OxyHb activity in 12 channels in the temporal region measurements, while during the worst performances, it was in 11 channels (Figure 4). During the best guitar performance, it was observed that there was OxyHb activity in the *Broca area, orbital gyrus, anterior & posterior transverse temporal, middle temporal gyrus, supramarginal gyrus, angular gyrus, and Heschl's gyrus (primary auditory cortex)* regions of the brain.

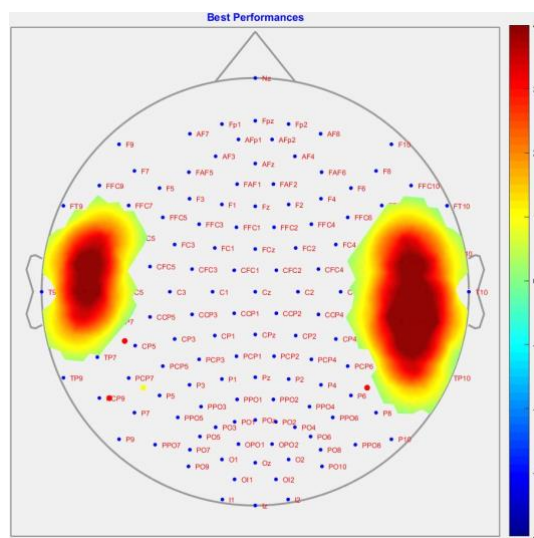


Figure 4. OxyHb activity seen in the temporal region during the best performances

In Figure 4, it can be seen that there is more OxyHb activity in the temporal region of the right hemisphere during the best performance. Auditory pathways do not just go up and down to the cortex; there are many important connections between the auditory cortices in the left and right hemispheres through the corpus callosum. These connections between hemispheres are organized tonotopically. There are also cortico-cortical pathways that allow the integration of auditory processes with other sensory systems, working and long-term memory processes, stored memories, and information. Along with ascending and descending pathways, cortical pathways represent complex connection patterns that are critical not only for processing sound but also for integrating information into other regions of the brain (Baars and Gage, 2010). When musicians perform music, they need to focus on the music they are performing without allowing distracting stimuli from their environment to hinder them. For this, executive inhibition is a very important cognitive function (İnal, 2019: 17).

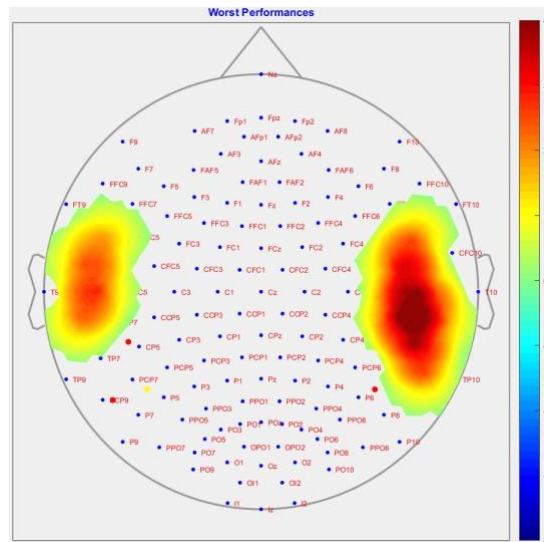


Figure 5. OxyHb activity seen in the temporal region during the worst performances

As can be seen in Figure 5, it has been determined that the level of OxyHb in the temporal cortex regions in both hemispheres is lower when compared to the best performances. In the temporal cortex, the most functionally important regions in terms of musical tasks can be said to be the auditory cortex, the Broca and Wernicke areas, which are language processing areas, the planum temporale, and the middle temporal gyrus. The auditory cortex is not a single brain area, it consists of several structural (anatomical) areas that differ in their roles in decoding the sound. The auditory cortex is a region specialized for sound processing within the cortex. It is located within the Sylvian fissure on the surface of the Supratemporal plane and upper parts of the superior temporal gyrus in each hemisphere. Although the role of each area in the human auditory cortex is not fully understood, work is ongoing to map the areas within the auditory cortex and their corresponding roles in perception. Researchers have noted that the language function tends to be lateralized to the left hemisphere and have proposed that the larger left hemisphere planum temporale (PT) reflects its role in decoding auditory language (Baars and Gage, 2010). Early anatomical studies provide significant evidence that the PT in the human auditory cortex is much larger in the left hemisphere in individuals using their right hand. The prevalence of this asymmetry and its proximity to Wernicke's speech comprehension area in the auditory fields suggests the hypothesis that the PT is an auditory speech and language processing area. This idea is supported by neuroimaging studies investigating the functional role of the PT in speech perception. However, neuroimaging studies of the PT's response to different speech classes and non-speech

sounds also support the idea that the functional role of the PT is not limited to speech sounds. Recognized sounds among environmental sounds activate the regions in the superior temporal sulcus and the middle temporal gyrus (MTG) in both hemispheres (Baars and Gage, 2010).

There are many similarities in speech and music perception: music has complex expression structures, and its perception involves matching sound to meaning (and emotion). Music perception allows for the recognition of melodies despite differences in instruments, tonalities, and tempos; therefore, it cannot be a system based on absolutes but must be represented through relativities. The fundamental difference between speech and music perception is that all typically developing humans master speech perception. People are not only good at perceiving speech, they are masters at it! The situation is not the same in music perception. There is much more variability in music perception ability and it involves significant explicit learning processes along with a degree of musical acumen. The variability in music perception ability combined with many levels of music education and skill has made the study of music perception challenging due to these intrinsic differences. Music perception is quite different from speech perception, as many musical signals do not contain any lyrics. Therefore, music perception processes likely have a more abstract (non-linguistic) representational basis. The structure in music is resolved in a broader network of brain areas in both hemispheres. Some aspects of music perception, especially musical structure (syntax) and musical meaning (semantics), share the same neural area with brain areas specialized for language processing (Baars and Gage, 2010). In the literature, there are studies associating the activity of listening to music with the right hemisphere, and the activity of hearing music with the left hemisphere. In a study where music perception in professional musicians was investigated with the fMRI method, the activation determined in the left superior temporal gyrus region while listening to music of the type in which they specialize, was defined as "hearing music" and associated with familiarity with music. The activation observed in the right superior temporal gyrus region while listening to music of types in which they do not specialize was defined as "listening to music" and, it is argued, is the result of analytical listening (Bozkır, 2009).

Hemodynamic Activity Findings in the Parietal Region

The best performances during parietal region measurements revealed OxyHb activity in

2 channels (Figure 6), while the worst performances displayed OxyHb activity in 7 channels (Figure 7). By looking at the difference in OxyHb levels between the best and worst performances, activation was detected in 2 areas (Figure 8). *The angular gyrus* and *peristriate (tertiary or associative visual cortex, V3)* regions were found to be activated during the best guitar performances.

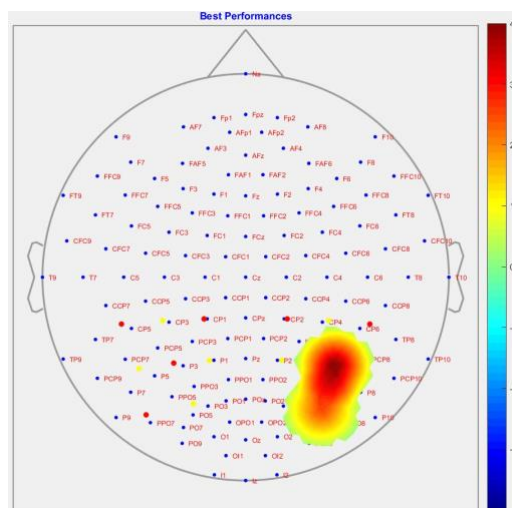


Figure 6. OxyHb activity in the parietal region during the best performances

Figure 6 shows intense OxyHb activity in the right parietal region. This may be related to the fact that playing the guitar requires more intricate motor movements in the left hand.

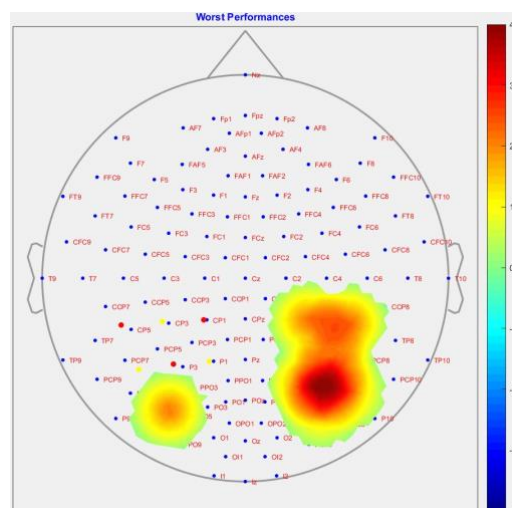


Figure 7. OxyHb activity in the parietal region during the worst performances

In the worst performances, in addition to the areas active during the best performances, the preparietal (somatosensory assoc. cortex) and supramarginal gyrus regions were

found to be activated. Figure 7 shows that the OxyHb activity in the right parietal region was spread over a wider area compared to the best performances, and OxyHb activation occurred in the peristriate (tertiary or associative visual cortex, V3) region in the left hemisphere, which is active in processing visual information. This suggests that the increase in these areas may be due to the compensation made for errors during poor performances, and the processing of visual information regarding whether the positions of hands and fingers are correct.

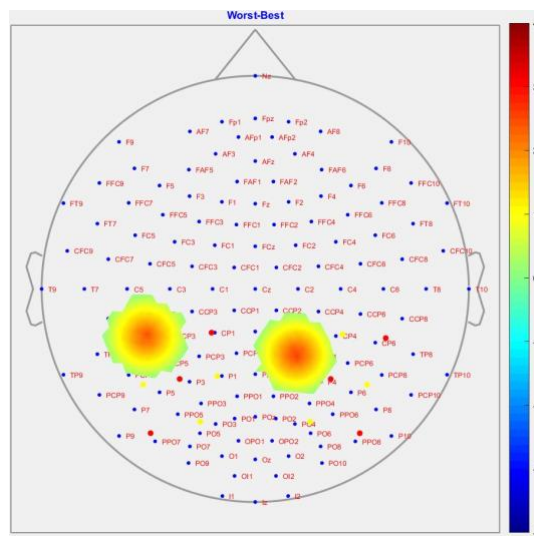


Figure 8. The difference in OxyHb activity of the best and worst performances in the parietal region

When looking at the difference between performances, it was found that in the gigantopyramidal (primary motor cortex) and intermediate, caudal, and rostral postcentral (primary somatosensory cortex) regions, there was more OxyHb activity in the worst performances than in the best.

The parietal lobe is closely associated with processes related to the sense of touch. It has a map-like structure where the body is represented, and in the parietal lobe, the representation of the fingers occupies a larger area than do other limbs (e.g., arms, feet, toes) (Baştuğ-Şen, 2002: 113; Yağışan, 2008: 70). The areas of difference seen in Figure 8 are the gigantopyramidal (primary motor cortex) in the left hemisphere and the preparietal (somatosensory assoc. cortex) and superior parietal (somatosensory assoc. cortex) regions in the right hemisphere. These areas are brain regions that are activated in motor movements, touch, saccadic movements, primary motor movements, motor imagery in the left hemisphere; moving fingers, hands, and arms, processing pain

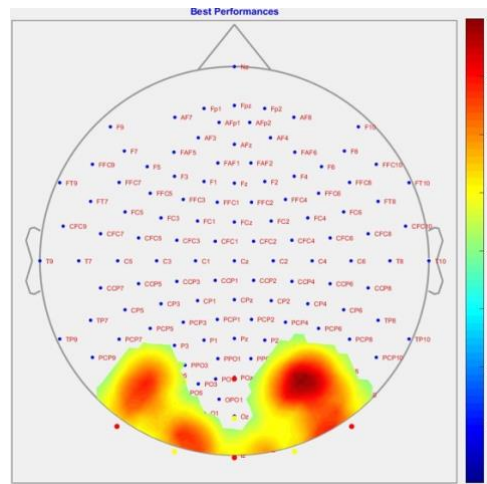
information, visuomotor attention, motor imagery, and working memory functions in the right hemisphere. The level of OxyHb in these areas was found to be higher in the worst performances than in the best performances. This is thought to be due to the planning and execution of motor movements during poor performance, and to visual attention given to the hands and fingers related to these movements.

In particular, the activation in the inferior temporal gyrus region is thought to be due to the participants' movement dependent on visual stimuli, such as focusing on the instrument and hands-fingers while playing the guitar, not making mistakes or compensating for the mistakes made (Gaser and Schlaug, 2003). The parietal lobe in the right hemisphere plays a crucial role in the perception of spatial relationships. Perception of spatial relationships between objects, drawing, playing an instrument, etc. are important for these movements.

The behavior of a musician in performance requires numerous complex skills such as translating the visual data of the note into motor movements where both hands are used in a coordinated manner; processing multiple sensory data; developing good movements for the metrical precision of the non-dominant hand, and evaluating the auditory feedback of the performance (melodic, harmonic and rhythmic accuracy, intonation, etc.) (Schlaug, 2015). Therefore, it can be said that a person playing the guitar needs to perform complex behaviors such as reading the notes, understanding the notes, making the movements demanded by the notes, remembering the musical situations and movements not written in the notes, listening other musician/musicians if playing with them, and listening to their own playing. Making music and enacting movements are inseparable phenomena. The body's movement with music leads to activities in the regions of the brain related to movement. Therefore, one of the dimensions related to playing the guitar can be defined as a broad organization of movement involving the muscular and skeletal systems. The degree of harmony and automation in the coordination of these movements is considered to be directly proportional to the excellence of the guitar performance (Akçay, 2016). Therefore, it can be thought that as the guitarist's performance is perfected, the hemodynamic activity in the parietal region will decrease. More controlled studies are needed for this.

Findings of Hemodynamic Activity in the Occipital Region

During the best performances, OxyHb activity was detected in 10 channels in the occipital region measurements (Figure 9), and during the worst performances, in 4 channels (Figure 10). Looking at the difference in OxyHb levels between the best and worst performances, it was determined that there was more OxyHb activity in 1 channel (Figure 11) in the best performances than in the worst. During the best guitar performance, OxyHb activity was observed in *the angular gyrus; peristriate (tertiary or associative visual cortex, V3), on the left fusiform gyrus and on the right precuneus; parastriate gyrus (secondary visual cortex, V1); on the left middle occipital gyrus and on the right inferior occipital gyrus; striate gyrus (primary visual cortex, V1) regions of the brain.*



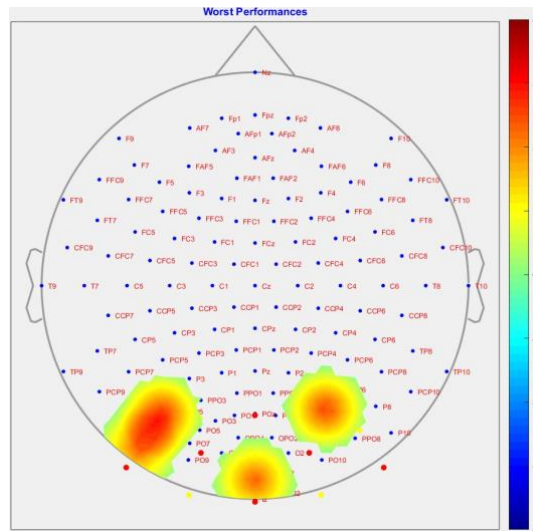


Figure 10. OxyHb activity observed in the occipital region during the worst performances

In Figure 10, more intense OxyHb activity is seen in the left occipital region. This could be related to the right-hand movements in guitar playing being in a narrower area (just moving from string to string) and being mostly finger movement.

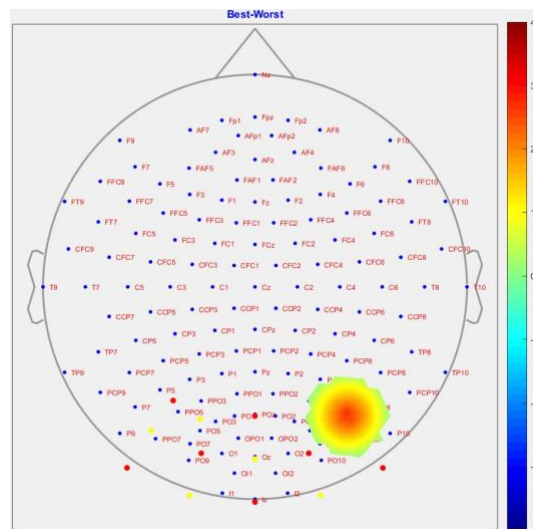


Figure 11. The difference in OxyHb activity of the best and worst performances observed in the occipital region

The occipital lobe is usually closely related to processes related to the processing of visual and visual-spatial information. In particular, the right occipital lobe is more active in the processing of visual-spatial information (Inal, 2019: 6). The understanding of the position of an object in space together with its features takes place via two neural pathways that are related but independent. Both neural pathways are associated with the primary visual cortex. The neural pathway that enables the evaluation of object features is defined as the

occipitotemporal pathway, and the pathway that allows the evaluation of the object's position in space and its relation to its surroundings is defined as the occipitoparietal pathway. The 'what' and 'where' information coming from these two pathways merges in the prefrontal cortex. It is associated with the assumption that musicians have better-than-average eye-hand coordination and respond more quickly to visual stimuli (İnal, 2019: 7-16). During a musician's performance, activations resulting from activities such as reading music, decoding information to play/sing, and monitoring the instrument's performance (Ata, 2015: 16) occur in the visual cortex. In this study, as there were no tasks such as reading music, decoding, etc., it was accepted that the determined hemodynamic activity originated from the guitarist's monitoring of his/her own performance.

Results and Discussion

The fNIRS measurements of the study revealed that significant activations occurred in all regions of the participants' brains, and that activity was recorded in areas expected to be activated in tasks associated with music. According to the measurements related to the prefrontal cortex region, it was shown that the activity during the best performance was intense in the right hemisphere, while in the worst performances, the density in the right hemisphere decreased and the density in the left hemisphere increased. This situation may have arisen from the fact that the left prefrontal region is generally associated with semantic (meaningful) memory and the right prefrontal region with functions such as controlling motor responses. In the context of musical skills, while rhythms, intervals, pitches, and melodic structures are processed analytically in the left hemisphere, meaning-making processes that determine behaviors such as emotional excitement, appreciation, etc. occur in the right hemisphere (Akçay, 2016; Sachs et al, 2016). Sachs and colleagues (2016), using a combination of survey data, behavioral and psychophysiological measurements and diffusion tensor imaging, found that the white matter connectivity between the sensory processing regions in the superior temporal gyrus and the emotional and social processing regions in the insula and medial prefrontal cortex explains individual differences in reward sensitivity to music. The researchers suggest that individual differences in sensory access to the reward system have a neural basis and that social-emotional communication through the auditory channel may provide an evolutionary foundation for music-making as an aesthetically rewarding

function in humans. In a study of a decoding approach aimed at predicting an individual listener's musicianship class from the dynamic neural processing of musical features, the brain regions chosen by the decoder that best individually differentiated between musicians and non-musicians were identified as the bilateral anterior cingulate and paracingulate gyrus (ACG), which form the opercular part of the right inferior frontal gyrus, and the right superior temporal gyrus (rSTG). This group of areas can be considered as core areas that are most affected by musical education and as a result, exhibit the highest discrimination power in processing musical features among all brain areas (Saari et al., 2018).

According to the measurement results related to the temporal cortex region, it was determined that there was intense OxyHb activity in the brain regions activated in functions such as understanding pitches in the brain, listening or remembering song lyrics, rhythm, tempo, timbre, pitch tracking, musical syntax, tonal expectations and semantic recall, episodic memory, interval and melody processing, musical memory (planum temporale), decoding the code of auditory language, decoding the code of spatial position, auditory object identification, musical performance, calculation/planning, behavioral control (inhibition), somatosensory integration, consciousness, and attention, regardless of whether the performance is good or bad. There are also cortico-cortical pathways that enable the integration of auditory processes with other sensory systems, working memory and long-term memory processes, stored memories, and information. Together with ascending and descending paths, cortical pathways represent complex connection patterns that are critical not only for processing sound but also for integrating information into other areas of the brain (Baars and Gage, 2010). When musicians perform music, they need to focus on the music they perform without allowing distracting stimuli from their surroundings to inhibit them. Executive inhibition is a very important cognitive function for this (İnal, 2019: 17).

Playing a musical instrument typically requires the simultaneous integration of multimodal sensory and motor information with multimodal sensory feedback mechanisms to monitor performance. It is known that motor-related regions such as the premotor and cerebellar cortex play a critical role in planning, preparing, executing, and controlling bimanual sequential finger movements. In particular, it is known that the superior parietal region plays an important role in integrating multimodal sensory

information (e.g., visual, auditory, and somatosensory) and guiding motor operations through intense reciprocal connections with the premotor cortex (Gaser and Schlaug, 2003). The parietal lobe is often closely associated with processes related to the sense of touch. According to the measurement results related to the parietal cortex region, during the best performances of the participants, intense OxyHb activation was observed in the brain regions activated in connecting different subsystems to each other, semantic memory, consciousness attention, control of behaviors, planning, and processing of visual information. During the worst performances, in addition to these regions, intense OxyHb activation was observed in brain regions activated in functions such as moving fingers, hands and arms, visuomotor attention, motor movement images, working memory, musical memory, and calculation/planning. In a comparative MRI study on a sample consisting of professional musicians, amateur musicians, and non-musicians, it was determined that the gray matter density in the primary motor and somatosensory area, premotor area, anterior superior parietal area, and inferior temporal gyrus (bilaterally) was high in professional musicians, medium in amateur musicians, and low in non-musicians (Gaser and Schlaug, 2003).

According to the measurement results related to the occipital cortex region, it was observed that during the best and worst performances, one of the main connection centers connecting different subsystems to each other in the brain was activated: the region activated during semantic memory, familiarity/similarity, consciousness, visual attention, and biological visual movement in the right hemisphere; visual perception, visual scanning in the left hemisphere, saccadic eye movement; visual centers associated with wide line/pattern models in the right hemisphere. This can be said to be due to the guitarist focusing on finger and fret positions in his/her left hand and string transitions in his/her right hand while playing, and the change of these focuses (saccadic eye movements). Furthermore, regarding the processing of visual information, the intense OxyHb activity recorded in the right occipital region during the best performance may be associated with the fact that the motor movements related to playing the guitar are more delicate and complex in the left hand, and as a result, hand movements are made in a wider area (the guitar keyboard is about 45 cm). The intense OxyHb activity recorded in the left occipital region during the worst performance may be related to the fact that the right-hand movements related to playing the guitar are in a narrower area (only from string to

string) and are predominantly finger movements.

In textbooks, advertisements, and popular culture, the brain is often depicted as an organ with different regions dedicated to specific tasks. All brain regions can be labeled and classified according to certain tasks and functions. However, this model is inadequate and overlooks the most important characteristic of the brain. This is because the brain is a dynamic system that continuously changes its circuits to adapt to the requirements of environmental conditions and the capabilities of the body (Eagleman, 2021). “The very recent application of network science algorithms to brain research allows an insight into the functional connectivity between brain regions. These studies in network neuroscience have identified distinct circuits that function during goal-directed tasks and resting states” (Reybrouck et al, 2018). Especially starting music education at an early age or engaging in music-related activities for a long time is counted among the activities (such as reading books, doing sports, learning a new language, or being interested in other branches of art, etc.) that affect the most in this dynamic process where the brain reorganizes itself and constantly changes its circuits. The main reason why music is one of the most influential activities is that it activates many regions in almost the entirety of the brain sequentially and simultaneously. More controlled research is needed to understand the details of the effects of music education and engaging with music on the brain. Especially in the context of connectomics, understanding what is happening in the brain during musical tasks and investigating how much performance in non-musical tasks and functions is affected by music education/engaging in musical activities can provide evidence that will open new ways for music education programs and music education strategies to be designed and updated in the future.

Funding

This work was supported by Research Fund of the Ataturk University. Project Number: SAB-2021-9047.

REFERENCES

Acquadro, Michaël A. S.; Congedo, Marco and De Riddeer, Dirk. (2016). “Music Performance As an Experimental Approach to Hyperscanning Studies”. *Frontiers in*

Human Neuroscience, 10: 242. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2016.00242>

Akçay, Şevki Özer. (2011). "A Study of Developing Performance Scale in Guitar Education". Master's Thesis, Atatürk University, Erzurum: TÜRKİYE

Akçay, Şevki Özer (2016). "Brain Functions During Guitar Performance". *International Music Symposium: Performance in Music*. Göğüş Gülay and Varlı, Ersen (Eds.) (pp. 66-78). Uludağ University State Conservatory, Bursa, Türkiye.

Akçay, Şevki Özer (2021). "*Nöromüzikolojide Araştırma Yöntem ve Teknikleri* (Research Methods and Techniques in Neuromusicology)". Ankara: Nobel Bilimsel Publishing.

Ata, Yasemin. (2015). "Musician's Brain and the Structural Differences in White/Grey Matters: A DT-MRI Study". PhD. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül University, Türkiye: İzmir.

Baars, Bernard. J.; Gage, Nicole M. (2010). *Cognition, Brain and Consciousness. Introduction to Cognitive Neuroscience*. USA: Academic Press.

Balardin, Joana Bisol; Morais, Guilherme Augusto Zimeo; Furuch, Rogerio Akira; Trambaioli, Lucas Romualdo and Sato, Joao Ricardo. (2017). "Impact of Communicative Head Movements on the Quality of Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy Signals: Negligible Effects for Affirmative and Negative Gestures and Consistent Artifacts Related to Raising Eyebrows". *Journal of Biomedical Optics*, 22(4): 46010. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1117/1.JBO.22.4.046010>

Baştuğ-Şen, Seba. (2022). *Piyano Tekniğinin Biyomekanik Temeli*. İstanbul: Pan Publications.

Bozkır, Barbaros. (2009). "Musical Perception Differences in Professional Musicians: an fMRI Study". PhD. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir: TÜRKİYE

Butler, Andrew J.; James, Thomas; Pavisian, Bennis and James, Karin H. (2021). "Neural differences in expert guitarists during over-learned non-standard visuomotor mapping of abstract versus concrete information". *Neuroscience Letters*, 750: 135624. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neulet.2021.135624>

Di Domenico, Stefano I.; Rodrigo, Achala H.; Dong, Mengxi; Fournier, Marc A.; Ayaz, Hasan; Ryan, Richard M. and Ruocco, Anthony C. (2019). "Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy: Proof of Concept for its Application in Social Neuroscience". *Neuroergonomics, the Brain at Work and in Everyday Life*, Eds. Ayaz, Hasan, and Dehais, Frederich: pp. 169-173. USA: Elsevier Inc.

Eagleman, David. (2021). *Livewired* (Zeynep Arık Tozar, Trans.) İstanbul: Domingo Publications. [Original work published 2020].

Gaser, Christian; Schlaug, Gottfried. (2003). "Brain Structures Differ Between Musicians and Non-Musicians". *The Journal of Neuroscience*, 23(27): 9240-9245.

Hashimoto, Keiji; Tategami, Shoko; Okamoto, Tagatsuku; Seta, Hiroshi; Abo, Masahiro and Ohashi, Masahiro (2006). "Examination by Near-Infrared Spectroscopy for Evaluation of Piano Performance as a Frontal Lobe Activation Task". *European Neurology*, 55(1): 16-21.

Heinze, Rafael Alves; Vanzella, Patricia; Morais, Guilherme Augusto Zimeo and Sato, Joao Ricardo. (2019). "Hand Motor Learning in a Musical Context and Prefrontal Cortex Hemodynamic Response: A Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS) Study". *Cognitive Processing*, 20: 507–513. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10339-019-00925-y>

Huppert, Theodore J.; Diamond, Solomon G.; Franceschini, Maria A. and Boas, David A. (2009). "HomER: a Review of Time-Series Analysis Methods for Near-Infrared Spectroscopy of the Brain". *Applied Optics*, 48(10): D280-D298. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1364/ao.48.00d280>

Iwasaka, Masakazu; Ishii, Takuro; Uehara, Takao; Shimo, Madoka; Agehara, Sachiko and Sugita, Katsuo. (2007). "Cerebral Blood Flow Patterns Synchronization with Time Sequences of Music". *Proceedings of the 23rd Annual Meeting of the International Society for Psychophysics*. S. Mori, T. Miyaoka, & W. Wong, (Eds.). Tokyo, Japan.

İnal, Şayeste Çağıl (2019). "Effect of Music Performance on Cognitive Functions and its Relation with BDNF val66met and COMT val158met Polymorphisms". Master's Thesis, Ankara University, Ankara: TÜRKİYE.

Kashou, Nasser H.; Giacherio, Brenna M.; Nahhas, Ramzi W. and Jadcherla, Sudarshan R. (2016). "Hand-grasping and Finger Tapping Induced Similar Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy Cortical Responses". *Neurophotonics*, 3(2): 1-9. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1117/1.NPh.3.2.025006>

Levitin, Daniel J. (2013). "Neural Correlates of Musical Behaviors, A Brief Overview". *Music Therapy Perspectives*, (31): 15-24.

Levitin, Daniel J. (2015). *This is Your Brain on Music*. (Sinan Çulhaoğlu, Trans.) İstanbul: Pegasus Publications.

Matsuo, Ayako; Akita, Takeshi and Sano, Naoko (2016). "A research on Understanding of Piano Players' Perception of Sonic Environment and Control of Performance Through Brain Function Analysis and Interview". *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress on Acoustics*, Miyara, Federico; Accolti, Ernesto; Pasch, Vivian and Vechiatti (Eds.), (pp. 1-9). Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Meister, Ingo Gerrit; Krings, Timo; Foltys, Henrik; Boroojerdi, Babak; Müller, Mareike Töpper, Rudolf F. and Thron, Armin K. (2004). "Playing Piano in the Mind—an fMRI Study on Music Imagery and Performance in Pianists". *Cognitive Brain Research*, 19(3): 219-228. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cogbrainres.2003.12.005>

Moghim, Saba; Kushki, Azadeh; Power, Sarah; Guerguerian, Anne Marie and Chau, Tom (2012). "Automatic Detection of a Prefrontal Cortical Response to Emotionally Rated Music Using Multi-Channel Near-Infrared Spectroscopy". *Journal of Neural Engineering*, 9(2): 1-8. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1088/1741-2560/9/2/026022>

Power, Sarah D.; Falk, Tiago H. and Chau, Tom (2010). "Classification of prefrontal activity due to mental arithmetic and music imagery using hidden Markov models and frequency domain near-infrared spectroscopy". *Journal of Neural Engineering*, 7(2): 1-9. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1088/1741-2560/7/2/026002>

Prychitko, Sonja J. (2017). "A NIRS Study of Violonists And Pianists Employing Motor and Music Imageries to Assess Neural Differences in Music Perception". Master's Thesis, Northern Michigan University, Michigan: USA.

Reybrouck, Mark; Vuust; Peter and Brattico, Elvira (2018). "Brain Connectivity Networks and the Aesthetic Experience of Music". *Brain Sciences*, 8(6): 107. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci8060107>

Saari, Pasi; Burunat, Iballa; Brattico, Elvira and Toivianien, Petri (2018). "Decoding Musical Training from Dynamic Processing of Musical Features in the Brain". *Scientific Reports*, (8): 708. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-018-19177-5>

Sachs, Matthew E.; Ellis, Robert J.; Schlaug, Gottfried and Loui, Psyche (2016). "Brain Connectivity Reflects Human Aesthetic Responses to Music". *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 11(6): 884-891. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsw009>

Schlaug, Gottfried (2015). "Musicians and music making as a model for the study of brain plasticity". *Progress in Brain Research*, 217: 37-55. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/bs.pbr.2014.11.020>

Tanaka, Yuki; Nogawa, Hiroki (2015). "Evaluating the effects of singing songs in ethnic music therapy for dementia patients with a novel near-infrared spectroscopy (data analysing method)". *International Journal of Gerontology*, 9(1): 7-14. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijge.2014.01.006>

Torun, Şükrü. (2016). "Müziğin beynimizdeki yolculuğu (The Journey of Music in our Brain)". *Osmangazi Journal of Medicine* 38 (Special Issue): 66-70. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/otd/issue/20472/218035>

Vanzela, Patricia; Balardin, Joana B.; Furucho, Rogério A.; Morais, Guilherme Augusto Zimeo; Janzen, Thenille Braun; Sammler, Daniela and Sato, João R. (2019). "fNIRS Responses in Professional Violinists while Playing Duets: Evidence for Distinct Leader and Follower Roles at the Brain Level". *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10(164): 1-9. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00164>

Villringer, Arno; Chance, Britton (1997). "Non-invasive Optical Spectroscopy and Imaging of Human Brain Function". *Trends Neurosci.* (20): 435-442.

Wakatsuki, Junichiro; Akashi, Kazuhiro and Uozumi, Takashi (2009). "Changes in concentration of oxygenated hemoglobin in the prefrontal cortex while absorbed in

listening to music". *International Conference on Biometrics and Kansei Engineering*, (pp. 195-200).

Yağıřan, Nihan (2008). *Keman almanın Biomekanik Analizi* (Boimechanic Analaysis of Playing Violin). Konya: Eđitim Kitabevi Publications.

AIZHAN KALIBAYEVA

Kurmangazy Kazakh National
Conservatory, Kazakhstan

aizhanakalibayeva@gmail.com

orcid.org/0000-0002-8021-496X

VALERIYA NEDLINA

Kurmangazy Kazakh National
Conservatory, Kazakhstan

leranedlin@gmail.com

orcid.org/0000-0002-4200-5702

ANTON SOMOV

Kurmangazy Kazakh National
Conservatory, Kazakhstan

somov.a.lg1g@gmail.com

orcid.org/0009-0000-2444-2813

The Energy of “Female” Music: Gender Statistics and Cultural Prerequisites for Gender Equality Among Kazakh Composers

ABSTRACT

Since ancient times, musical and poetic creativity in Turko-Mongolian nomadic cultures – including that of the Kazakhs – has functioned as a relatively gender-inclusive sphere. Kazakh women, alongside men, historically participated in the musical culture as bearers of sacred (*baksy*), vocal (*akyn*), epic (*zhyrau*), and instrumental (*kuishi*) traditions. This legacy continues to shape contemporary musical culture in Kazakhstan. However, ongoing gender disparities in other areas of socio-political life may still limit the time and opportunities available to women for creative self-realisation. This article examines how the ambivalence between cultural equality and structural inequality has influenced the careers and artistic identities of contemporary Kazakh women composers. Drawing on interviews and case studies, the research explores the extent to which gender influences their compositional style and professional trajectories. Statistical analysis reveals that since the early 20th century, women have accounted for 21.9% of Kazakh composers, a figure significantly higher than the global average. Furthermore, this proportion has grown steadily in recent decades. Importantly, the gender dimension of composition in Kazakhstan has not previously been compared to other cultural contexts. This study adopts an interdisciplinary approach rooted in the humanities, and integrating methods from music history, cultural studies, sociology and gender theory. It also incorporates musical-sociological tools such as statistical, sampling, and graphic analysis. Despite challenges in obtaining comprehensive data, the analysis of sources – including *Grove Music Online*, *The Living Composers Project*, Wikipedia, and composer unions in Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, and Turkic-speaking Central Asian countries – reveals Kazakhstan’s distinctive profile in terms of gender representation in composition.

KEYWORDS

Women composers

Music of
Kazakhstan

Gender and music

Female creativity

Gender statistics in
music

Introduction

Kazakh musical culture is notable for the longstanding participation of women, both within the oral ethnic tradition and in the context of Westernised music. The professional tradition of Western composition in Kazakhstan is approximately 100 years old. During this relatively short period, 66 women have emerged as composers, representing a significant proportion –21.9% – compared to global averages.

Studying gender in Kazakh music through sociological and historical lenses helps deepen our understanding of cultural dynamics in Kazakhstan, where women have traditionally occupied a dual position: subordinate in domestic life, yet granted relative equality in the arts. Within the professional community, it is widely believed that the role of women in Kazakh artistic culture has been more autonomous than in many other societies, shaped by the ethnic worldview and the cultural specificity of Kazakh traditions.

This observation prompts several questions. Is the relatively high proportion of women composers in Kazakhstan unique or part of a broader trend? Does this phenomenon stem from Kazakh cultural and ethnic foundations, or was it shaped primarily by Soviet-era policy? How did the perception and status of women in Kazakh composition evolve over time, and how does it align with global gender patterns in music?

Although gender studies have gained prominence in Western humanities since the second half of the 20th century, in Kazakhstan this topic remains insufficiently explored. Nevertheless, in recent decades, scholars in Kazakhstani arts and humanities have begun to close this gap by developing interdisciplinary and gender-aware methodologies. The current study seeks to contribute to that effort.

The nomadic communities of Eurasia, including the Kazakh people, present a unique gender paradox. Traditional societies are often viewed as limiting women's rights and public roles, an assumption reinforced by historical and religious norms. Gulzhauhar Chumbalova (1992: 11), referencing Sergei Rybakov's 1901 recording *Sokyr Kyzdyn Ani* (Song of a Blind Girl), describes the prevailing ideology of female subordination in pre-revolutionary Kazakh life:

The ideology of the subordination of the Kazakh woman, as well as the women of other eastern peoples, to destiny sent to them. And in this respect, it is an important document

characterising the oppressed position of a Kazakh woman in pre-revolutionary life.

As practice shows, women were subjected to stricter moral control than men, with actions permissible for men often considered unacceptable for women. In many traditional Muslim societies, gender stereotypes shaped by religious beliefs still influence public life today. Historically, these social norms restricted women's access to artistic professions. However, in contrast to neighboring sedentary cultures, Kazakh women were comparatively more visible in public creativity and artistic expression. They had near-equal access to education and were able to participate in public events.

Historical and ethnographic sources offer ample evidence of women's artistic involvement, particularly in poetic and musical competitions. For example, women-*akyns* (poet-singers) actively participated in musical and poetry competition *aitys*, and women-*kuishi* (instrumentalists) competed in instrumental competitions *tartys*. As Yedige Tursunov writes:

There are both men and women among akyns. Even if we list only aityses fixed in books, among their participants, we meet women-akyns – Togzhan, Aksulu, Sara, Ryszhan, Aikumis, Tabiya, etc. Women were opponents of men-akyns in 20 of the 37 aitys-contests, which texts were included in only the first volume of the academic publication of *aitys*. One of these women-akyn was so skilful in a poetic dispute that she competed simultaneously with eight men-akyns (Tursunov 1999: 111–112).

These examples are supported by the recognition of prominent women from Kazakh ethnic traditions such as the singers Sarah Tastanbekova (1853–1907), Mayra Shamsutdinova (1890–1927), and the *kuishi* Dina Nurpeisova (1861–1955). Their presence illustrates that women's artistic agency was not an exception but a culturally rooted phenomenon.

This value system, shaped by a traditional worldview and nomadic heritage, is echoed in the creative careers of modern women composers, including Gaziza Zhubanova (1927–1993), Aida Isakova (1940–2012), Aktoty Raimkulova (b. 1964), Gulzhan Uzenbayeva (b. 1964), Jamilya Jazylbekova (b. 1971), Kadisha Onalbayeva (b. 1972), Angelina Ershova (b. 1977), Nargiz Khinkov-Aitbayeva (b. 1984), Shirin Bazarkulova (b. 1989), and Togzhan Karatai (b. 1994), among others. Appealing to the work of women composers,

comparative analysis in this creative field of different national cultures will reveal the specifics of female musical creativity in Kazakh society and trace the changes that have taken place over the past hundred years.

Through analysis of their work and comparison with global trends, this article explores the specific features of women's musical creativity in Kazakh society and traces its evolution over the past century. The discussion focuses on gender representation in traditional Kazakh society, the impact of cultural mentality on creative practice, and the interplay between global and national gender discourses in contemporary Kazakh musical culture.

Methodology

Given that this study addresses the roles of men and women in various spheres of society – social, political, economic, and cultural – an interdisciplinary approach grounded in the humanities was essential. The research integrates methods from sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, art history, linguistics, economics, anthropology and history. Each of these fields offers distinct perspectives on gender, while their integration allows for a more comprehensive analytical framework.

The study primarily employs a musicological-historical approach, which enables an evaluation of the significance of women's creative contributions within both contemporary and historical Kazakh culture. Since the study focuses on the producers of the 'cultural text', a comparative historical perspective is also applied. This allows the gender dimension to be situated in relation to broader global and regional trends, as well as to local musical practices.

In recent decades, scholarly attention to gender in the arts has grown significantly, particularly in Western academic circles. This development is closely linked to feminist movements advocating equal rights and representation. Key contributions have come, *inter alia*, from Susan McClary (1991), Marcia J. Citron (1993), James Briscoe (1997), Pirkko Moisala (1999), Aisling Kenny (2009), Ellen Koskoff (2014), Desmond C. Sergeant and Evangelos Himonides (2016). These scholars have shaped the fields of feminist musicology and gender-based music historiography.

However, much of the research in feminist musicology remains qualitative. Only a limited number of studies incorporate quantitative or statistical data. Notable exceptions include research based on data from institutions such as the British Music Information Center and the American Composers Alliance. According to Jennifer Fowler's 2006 survey, women made up approximately 17–20% of contemporary composers in the United Kingdom. In the American Composers Alliance database, the proportion of women is even lower – just 12% (62 out of 515 composers). Data from the Canadian Music Centre indicates that 149 of 695 registered composers (17.6%) are women.

Ethnographic literature also provides valuable insights into the creative roles of women in traditional musical cultures. Studies by Alexander Zatayevich (1925), Akhmet Zhubanov (1962), and Boris Yerkovich (1979) offer early documentation of women's participation in Kazakh musical life. More recent works by Saida Yelemanova (2000) and Saule Utegaliyeva (2013) directly address gender-related questions. For comparative purposes, this study also draws on analyses of gender roles in other Turkic-speaking cultures, using data from research by Zoya Kyrgys (2002), Yekaterina Karelina (2009), Yelena Vasilchenko (2014), Raziya Sultanova (2014) and Tanya Merchant (2015). These works explore female musical genres, performance practices, and cultural taboos across Central Asia.

Despite these contributions, research explicitly focused on gender in Kazakh music remains sparse. Scattered observations can be found in studies on broader topics related to women in traditional culture, such as works by Zira Naurzbayeva (2010), Inga Stasevich (2011), Zhanerke Shaigozova and Madina Sultanova (2014), Gulfairuz Zhapekova (2014), Zhainagul Kadyrkulova (2017), and Zhanat Kundakbayeva (2017). Biographical and analytical studies of individual female composers also exist, authored by Sarah Kuzembay (1982), Umitzhan Jumakova (1982), Svetlana Shubina (2003), Nurgiyana Ketegenova (2009), Tamara Jumaliyeva (2013), Valeria Nedlina (2013) and Moldir Kisamedenova (2015), among others. However, these works focus more on individual achievements than on systemic gender analysis.

Thus, this study addresses an underexplored topic in Kazakhstani musicology by combining statistical, ethnographic, and comparative approaches to assess the scope and specifics of female participation in composition.

Procedures

Based on the methodological framework outlined above, the research was carried out in three interrelated stages, each employing distinct approaches to address the multifaceted nature of gender representation in music.

- 1) First stage – the collection and comparative analysis of statistical data on the number and proportion of women composers in Kazakhstan and globally over the past century, based on multiple open sources to minimize bias.
- 2) Second stage – the study of ethnographic and cultural-historical materials to classify gender roles in traditional musical genres and practices across Turkic-speaking societies, identifying their influence on women’s creative participation.
- 3) Third stage – case studies of contemporary Kazakh women composers based on interviews, focusing on career development, personal attitudes toward gender, and the differences between Soviet and post-Soviet contexts. Data collection was carried out by interviewing living female composers from different generations.

The First Stage of Research: Statistical Analysis

The primary objective of the first research stage was to compare the gender dynamics in Kazakh composition with global trends during the period of the development of Western-style composition in Kazakhstan, beginning in the early 20th century. Given the sociological scope of the inquiry, appropriate quantitative methods were applied, including statistical analysis, data sampling, and graphical representation.

To achieve this, data on male and female composers over the past century were collected from a range of open sources and archival materials, including:

- 1) *Grove Music Online* – an authoritative music encyclopedia, published by Oxford University Press, with over 51,000 articles;
- 2) *The Living Composers Project* (founded by Daniel Albertson) – a database covering living composers from 99 countries;
- 3) *Wikipedia* – specifically the categories “List of 20th Century Classical Composers” and “Women Composers”;

- 4) *National Composers' Unions* – publicly available lists from Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Azerbaijan;
- 5) *Historical sources* – including the essay *Composition Department of the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory (1944–1994)* by N. Akzhigitova and B. Bayakhunov (2012);
- 6) *Archival data* – lists of graduates from the composition department at the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory;
- 7) *Foundational texts* – including *Essays on the History of Kazakh Soviet Music* (1962) and *Kazakh Composers* (2013).

Due to the differing methodologies used in the compilation of these databases, absolute numbers across sources are not directly comparable (see Figure 1). This visualization demonstrates that methodological approaches to data selection in encyclopedic and specialized databases often result in a distorted representation of gender proportions in the culture, failing to reflect the objective reality.

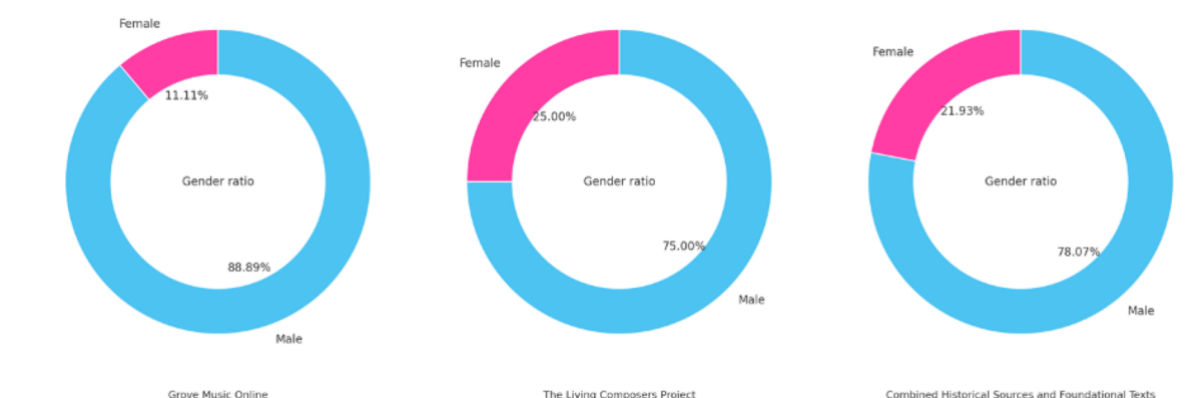


Figure 1. Methodological Bias in Gender Representation: Kazakhstani Composers Across Data Sources

Consequently, this study focuses on gender ratios rather than total composer counts, which vary significantly by country and source. This relative measure provides a more meaningful cross-national comparison.

To ensure consistency and transparency in data processing, the following principles were adopted:

- 1) *Temporal Scope*: the dataset included composers born between 1900 and the present, aligning with the emergence of Western-style composition in Kazakhstan.
- 2) *Generational Analysis*: composers were grouped into generational cohorts based on the model by Neil Howe and William Strauss, which has been locally adapted by Umitzhan Jumakova (2003) in the periodisation of Kazakh composition history.
- 3) *Gender Categorisation*: composers were classified as male or female based on names and pronouns used in reference sources. Non-binary gender identities were not accounted for due to a lack of representation and explicit labeling in the consulted databases (except for limited self-identification on *Wikipedia*).
- 4) *Country Selection Criteria*: countries were selected to provide contrast between regions with long-established compositional traditions and those whose composition schools emerged during the 20th century, particularly in relation to varying levels of gender equality.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations inherent in this type of data. The total number of composers is difficult to estimate comprehensively. Ideally, accurate statistics would require complete records from all composition departments globally – data which are not currently available. Many of the sources, especially encyclopedic references, reflect the editorial judgment of experts, often privileging composers of recognized prominence. As a result, emerging or less publicly visible composers, especially women, may be underrepresented.

Despite these limitations, triangulating multiple sources yielded a relatively consistent picture. Even the most optimistic assessments – such as Wikipedia’s estimate of 15.8% female composers – underscore that composition remains a predominantly male profession worldwide. However, a longitudinal analysis reveals a gradual increase in the proportion of female composers across generations.

Comparative Analysis of Gender Representation in Composer Databases

The statistical data collected from *Grove Music Online*, *The Living Composers Project*, *Wikipedia*, and regional sources provide a multi-perspective view of gender distribution in the field of composition over the past century. While the absolute figures differ

depending on the source and its methodology, several consistent patterns can be identified.

For example, the *Grove Music Online* data were sorted by birth cohort (pre-1930, 1931–1950, 1951–1970, 1971–present), gender, and country. This data was then compiled into tables to enable comparison of generational shifts in gender representation.

Table 1. The Gender Split According to *Grove Music Online*

Period	Men	Women	Total	Share of women
1900-1930	1431	88	1519	5.7%
1931-1950	861	72	933	7.7%
1951-1970	433	60	493	12.1%
1971-1990	23	2	25	8%
Total	2748	222	2970	7.4%

The *Grove Music Online* dataset reveals a persistent gender imbalance, with women making up only 7.4% of composers overall. There is a modest upward trend in representation across generations, peaking at 12.1% for those born between 1951 and 1970. However, the drop in the 1971–1990 cohort (to 8%) is most likely due to the underrepresentation of more recent composers in the database, rather than an actual decline in participation.

Table 2. The Gender Split According to *The Living Composers Project*

Men	Women	Total	Share of women
4012	642	4654	13.7%

Unlike *Grove*, *The Living Composers Project* does not sort composers by birth year or generation. Nonetheless, it shows a higher overall proportion of female composers – 13.7% – suggesting that women are more visible among currently active professionals. The broader scope and real-time updates of this platform likely contribute to the increased representation.

Table 3. The Gender Split According to *Wikipedia*

Period	Men	Women	Total	Share of women
1900-1930	968	140	1108	12.6%
1931-1950	559	113	672	16.8%
1951-1970	325	89	414	21.4%
1971-1990	82	22	104	21.1%
1991-2005	11	2	13	15.3%
Total	1945	366	2311	15.8%

Wikipedia, as an open-source platform, reflects more inclusive and up-to-date data, with women representing 15.8% of composers. The generational trend is clearly upward, particularly between 1931 and 1990, where women's share exceeds 20%. This growth suggests a broader cultural shift toward gender inclusivity, although *Wikipedia's* variable standards of reliability and its crowd-sourced nature introduce certain inconsistencies.

Table 4. The Gender Split in Kazakhstan

Period	Men	Women	Total	Share of women
1900-1930	43	1	44	2.3%
1931-1950	57	6	63	9.5%
1951-1970	60	18	78	23%
1971-1991	31	19	50	38%
1991-present	44	22	66	33.3%
Total	235	66	301	21.9%

Kazakhstan demonstrates a distinctly positive trend in female representation. From just 2.3% in the early 20th century, the proportion of women composers rose steadily, reaching 38% in the late Soviet period. The current figure of 33.3% (1991–present) remains significantly above the international average. This is likely the result of both traditional Kazakh cultural practices and Soviet-era policies promoting gender equality in education and professions.

Table 5. The Gender Split in Russia, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan

Country	Men	Women	Total	Share of women
Russia	296	113	409	(27.6%)
Belarus	68	33	101	(32.6%)
Uzbekistan	109	13	122	(10.6%)
Kyrgyzstan	58	5	63	(7.9%)
Azerbaijan	83	11	94	(11.7%)
Kazakhstan	235	66	301	(21.9%)

Regional comparisons provide further context. Kazakhstan’s proportion of women composers (21.9%) exceeds that of other Central Asian countries such as Uzbekistan (10.6%), Kyrgyzstan (7.9%), and Azerbaijan (11.7%). However, it is still below the levels seen in Eastern Slavic countries like Belarus (32.6%) and Russia (27.6%). These differences highlight both shared Soviet legacies and unique national factors – such as cultural traditions, institutional support, and societal attitudes – that shape women’s participation in the arts.

Analysis

None of the encyclopedic sources used in this study can be considered entirely objective or comprehensive. Several factors contribute to this limitation. First, such reference works tend to prioritize the most prominent and historically recognized figures, which means that many lesser-known or emerging composers – particularly women – may be omitted. Selection criteria often favor visibility, accolades, or institutional affiliations, inadvertently reproducing existing gender biases.

Secondly, encyclopedic and biographical dictionaries are subject to historical lag. The representation of younger generations is significantly lower, not necessarily due to a lack of creative activity, but because inclusion in such sources often requires a retrospective assessment of achievement. As a result, recent composers – especially those still developing their careers – are often absent from established academic publications.

Conversely, entries from earlier periods tend to appear more frequently, especially when

they have already been canonized through scholarly consensus. This creates a paradox: the closer we are to the present, the less complete the available encyclopedic data becomes. On the other hand, sources covering the early to mid-20th century (before 1971) provide a more stable and representative picture of gender distribution in composition, despite their own historical biases.

Importantly, statistical data on conservatory graduates and national composers' unions tell a different story. By the end of the 20th century, the number of active composers – both male and female – increased significantly compared to the early decades. This growth is not yet fully reflected in traditional reference sources. The discrepancy highlights the temporal gap between artistic activity and institutional recognition, and it disproportionately affects underrepresented groups such as women composers.

Therefore, while encyclopedic sources remain valuable for long-term comparative analysis, their limitations must be clearly acknowledged. The patterns identified – particularly those showing lower female representation in recent decades – should not be interpreted as actual decline, but rather as evidence of documentation practices. For more accurate and current insights, complementary sources such as academic databases, institutional records, and digital platforms should be integrated into future research.

According to the data from *Grove Music Online*, the global share of female composers remained below 8% until the mid-20th century – 5.7% for those born between 1900 and 1930, and 7.7% between 1931 and 1950. In the second half of the century, this figure increased to 12.1% among those born between 1951 and 1970, indicating gradual progress toward gender inclusion in the field of composition (see Figure 2). However, the data for the most recent generation (post-1970) is incomplete and shows a decline to 8%, which is likely attributable to the underrepresentation of younger or currently active composers in traditional reference works. As such, while the *Grove* dataset offers valuable insight into long-term trends, it provides only partial and indirect evidence for assessing contemporary gender dynamics in the profession.

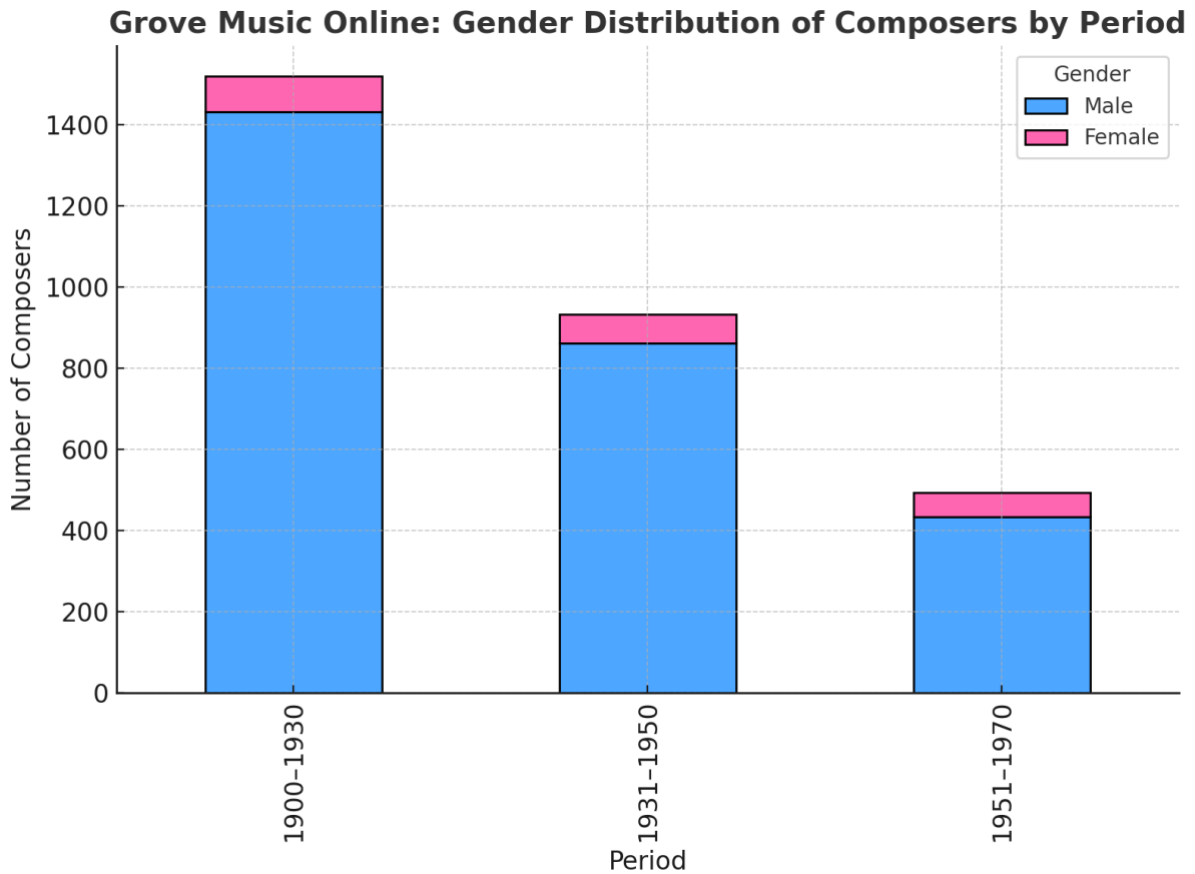


Figure 2. The Number of Composers and the Gender Ratio According to *Grove Music Online*

Thus, the aggregate data from *Grove Music Online* indicate that, over the past century, women have comprised approximately 7.4% of composers globally – 222 women out of a total of 2,970 entries (see Figure 3). While this percentage reflects a persistent gender imbalance, significant regional disparities are evident. For example, Poland shows a relatively high level of female representation, with women accounting for 11.1% of listed composers (11 out of 99). In contrast, Austria demonstrates markedly lower representation, with only 2 female composers among 90 entries (2.1%). These variations suggest that national contexts, institutional policies, and historical legacies play a crucial role in shaping gender dynamics within compositional traditions.

It is also noteworthy that *Grove Music Online* includes only 9 composers from Kazakhstan, of whom just one is a woman – Gaziza Zhubanova. This limited representation likely reflects broader editorial and historical biases within the sample, rather than the actual scope of Kazakh compositional activity. Such omissions underscore the importance of supplementing international databases with national and regional sources to achieve a

more accurate and inclusive picture.

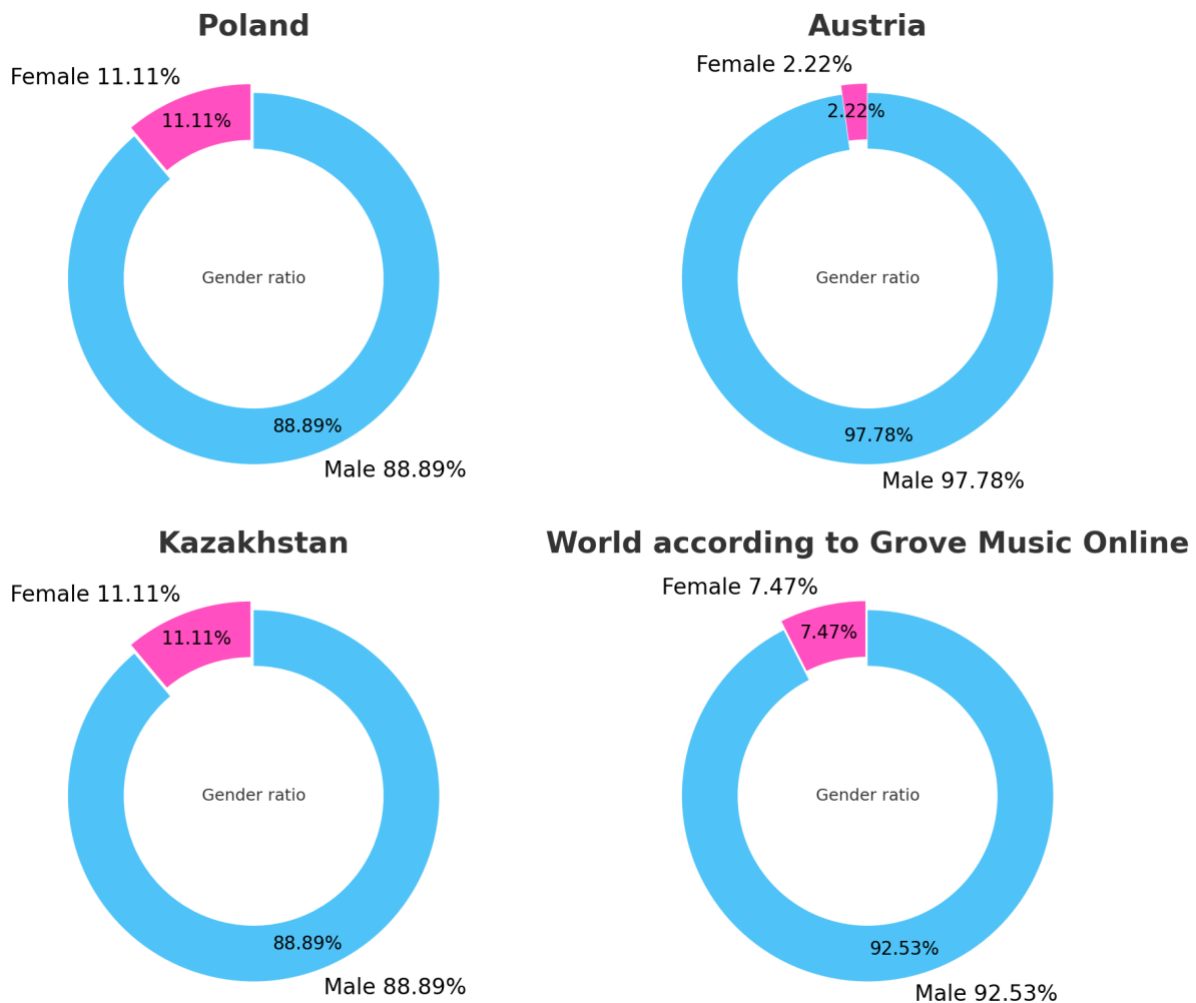


Figure 3. Share of Women Composers According to *Grove Music Online*

Data from *The Living Composers Project* indicate that, of the 4,654 composers listed as active from 1900 to the present, 642 are women – representing 13.7% of the total. This proportion is notably higher than in traditional encyclopedic sources and likely reflects the database’s broader inclusion criteria and its focus on living composers.

Interestingly, this figure aligns closely with the findings of Richard O’Bannon (2014), who analyzed programming trends in American symphony orchestras during the 2014–2015 season. His study revealed that 14.8% of the works performed were composed by women. Although not a direct measure of the number of composers, this statistic offers complementary evidence of women’s growing presence and recognition in contemporary concert life. The similarity in proportions suggests that performance practice and

composer visibility are increasingly reflective of actual gender participation rates – at least in some national contexts.



Figure 4. Map: Share of Women Composers According to *The Living Composers*¹

Countries with very small sample sizes – fewer than ten composers – were excluded from comparative analysis in this article, as such cases do not provide statistically reliable information (see Figure 4). Nonetheless, even among countries with moderate representation in *The Living Composers Project*, substantial variation is observed in gender distribution.

For instance, South Korea shows the highest share of female composers in the dataset, with women comprising 54.5% (12 out of 22 composers). In contrast, the Czech Republic exhibits a much lower proportion, with only 7.7% of the composers listed comprising women (2 out of 24). These extremes highlight how national contexts – including cultural attitudes, institutional support, and policies related to gender equality – can significantly influence the representation of women in professional composition (see Figure 5). However, these figures should be interpreted with caution due to the relatively small sample sizes involved.

¹ <https://prezi.com/i/m4oyb8u5mmrt/>

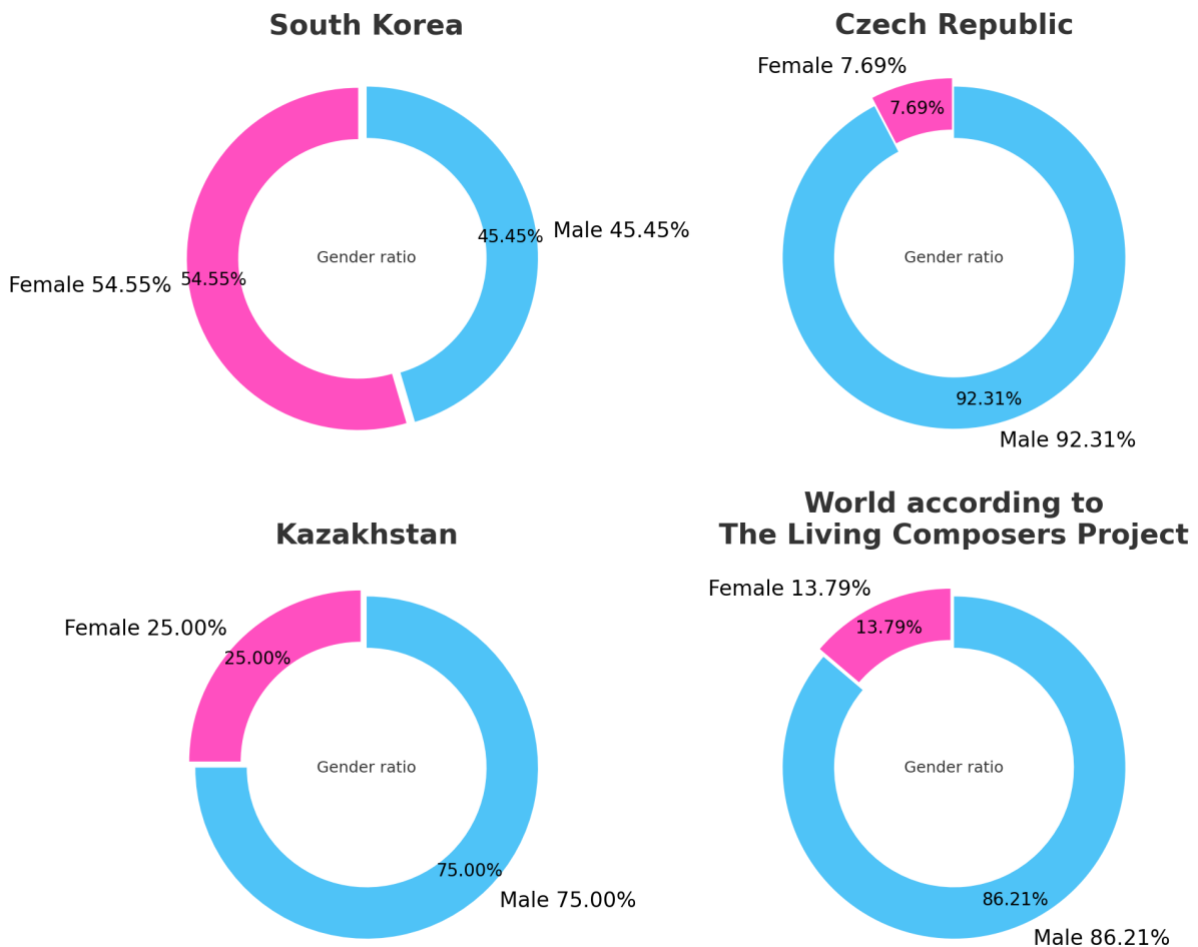


Figure 5. Share of Women Composers According to *The Living Composers Project*

According to data from the online encyclopedia *Wikipedia*, the proportion of female composers has shown a steady increase throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries. Between 1900 and 1930, women accounted for 12.6% of composers (100 out of 767). In the subsequent generation (1931–1950), this figure rose to 16.8% (113 out of 672). The trend continued, reaching 21% in the following two decades (1951–1970). Overall, across the entire sample of 2,311 composers, women represent 15.8% (366) of the total (see Figure 6).

Unlike traditional encyclopedic sources, *Wikipedia* includes a specific gender category – ‘Women composers’ – which distinguishes female figures explicitly. This editorial feature enhances the visibility of women but also introduces methodological inconsistencies. Notably, the number of composers listed in the ‘Women Composers’ category (902) far exceeds the number of female names found within the general category of ‘20th Century

Classical Composers.’ Moreover, *Wikipedia* does not maintain a corresponding ‘Men composers’ category, making it difficult to establish a reliable denominator for comparative analysis.

These discrepancies point to a broader issue: *Wikipedia*’s structure relies on decentralized, crowd-sourced contributions, which leads to non-uniform standards in list curation. As a result, while the upward trend in female representation is notable, the absolute numbers must be interpreted with caution. The overall number of composers – particularly male – is likely higher than reflected in the formal category listings, suggesting that the actual share of women may be lower than *Wikipedia* statistics imply.

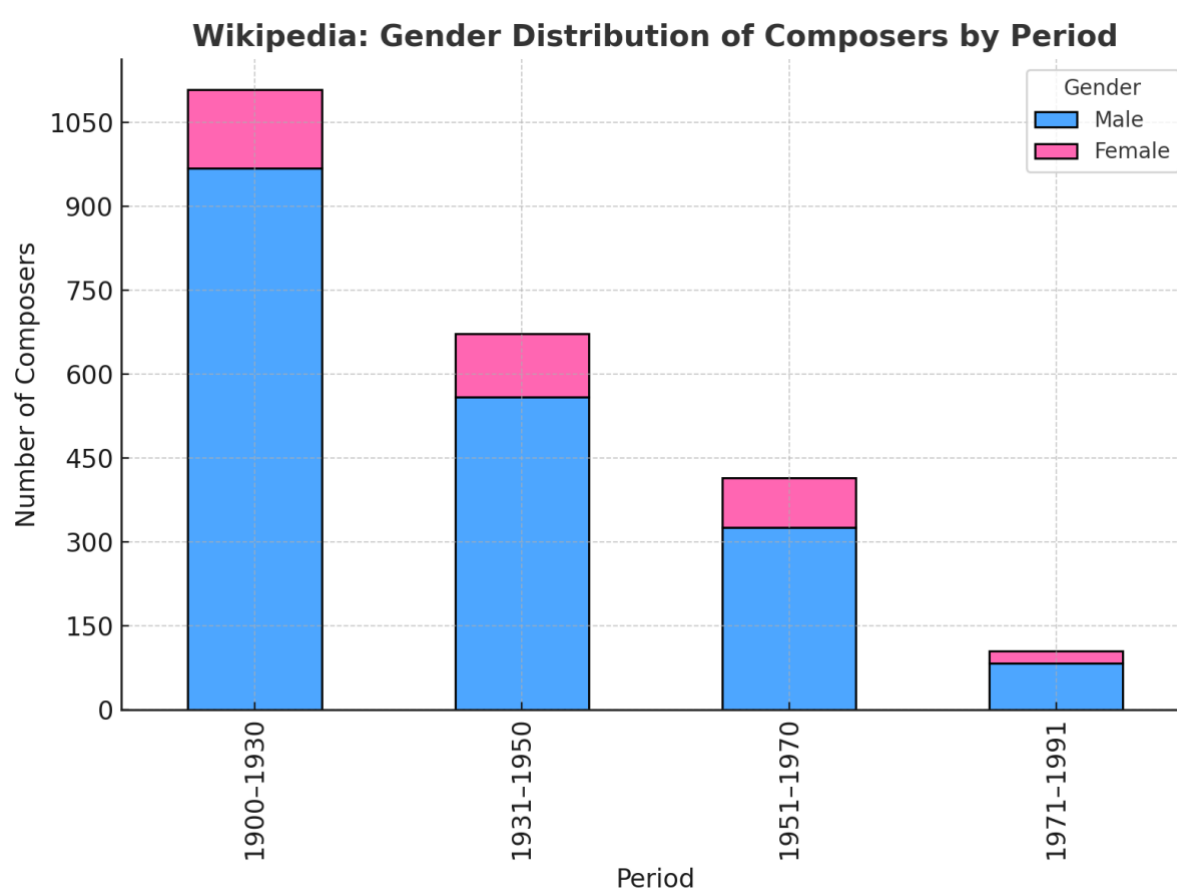


Figure 6. Gender Ratio According to *Wikipedia*

A comparison between the gender representation trends in *Wikipedia* and the Kazakhstan dataset reveals growth in both cases, though the Kazakhstani sample demonstrates a more stable and consistent upward trajectory (see Figure 7). While *Wikipedia* data show notable fluctuations across generations – partly due to

inconsistencies in category curation – the Kazakhstani data reflect a more linear and sustained increase in the proportion of female composers over time.

Despite this positive dynamic, it is important to emphasize that, on a global scale, the share of women in the field of composition remains relatively low. Across all examined sources, the average proportion of female composers rarely exceeds 22%, underscoring the persistence of gender imbalance in professional music composition.

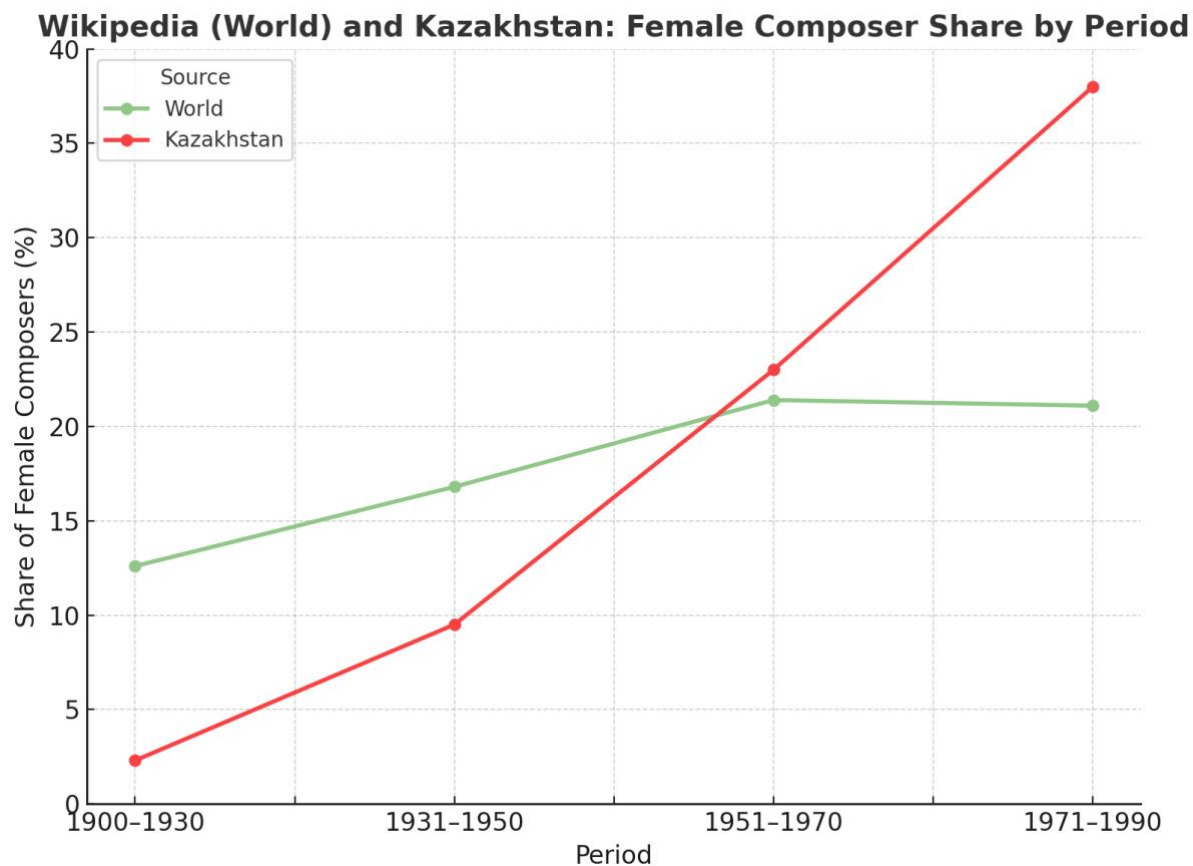


Figure 7. The Growth of Women Composers' Share

The gender balance in composition on a global scale differs markedly from that observed in Kazakhstan. Data analysis reveals that, at the beginning of the 20th century, when professional composition was just emerging in Kazakhstan, women were virtually absent from the field. Gaziza Zhubanova stands out as the only prominent female composer of her generation. However, by the end of the century, the share of women among younger generations had risen substantially, reaching 38%.

This development raises two key questions: To what extent can Kazakhstan's relatively favorable environment for women composers be attributed to cultural traditions? And how much is it a product of the broader Soviet system within which the national school of composition was formed? In search of answers, Kazakhstan's data were compared with that of other post-Soviet countries – both culturally similar and different.

To establish a wide range of comparison, the study considered Eastern European, non-Turkic, and non-nomadic states such as Russia and Belarus, where national composition schools had developed earlier. At the same time, the comparison included culturally closer Central Asian countries – Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Azerbaijan – whose composition traditions also emerged during the Soviet era.

The Composers' Union websites of Russia and Belarus indicate relatively high female representation. In Russia, 113 out of 409 composers are women (27.6%), and in Belarus, 33 out of 101 (32.6%). By contrast, in Uzbekistan, women make up only 10.6% of the total – 13 out of 122 composers. A similar pattern is observed in Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan: 5 women out of 58 composers (8.6%) and 11 out of 94 (11.7%), respectively (see Figure 8).

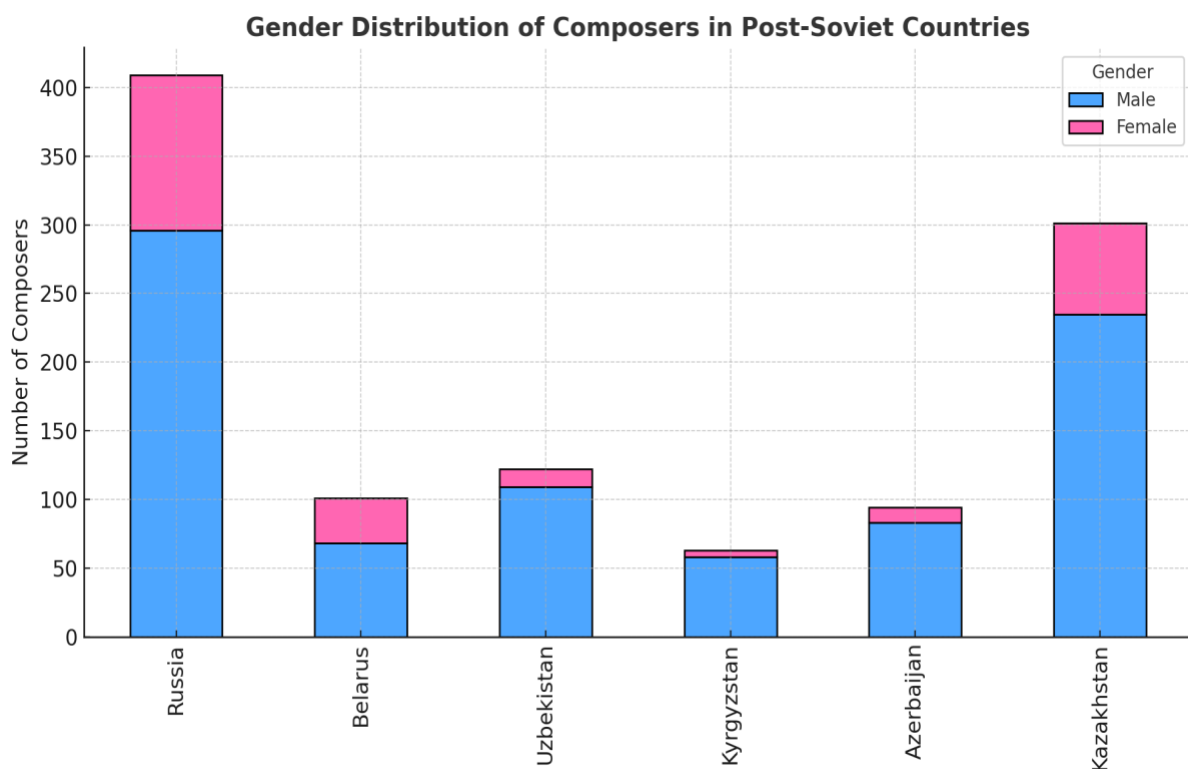


Figure 8. The Number of Composers and the Gender Ratio in Post-Soviet Countries

These disparities suggest that while Soviet-era educational and institutional systems promoted a degree of gender equality, their outcomes varied significantly depending on cultural, regional, and perhaps linguistic factors. Kazakhstan's position – intermediate between Slavic republics and other Turkic-speaking Central Asian nations – reflects the interplay between shared ideological structures and distinctive national traditions.

Results of the First Stage of Research

Despite the previously acknowledged methodological limitations and biases in the available sources, the comparative statistical data enable several meaningful conclusions. Most notably, the gender composition in Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan appears significantly more balanced than the global average. This suggests that the relatively high proportion of women composers in Kazakhstan should not be attributed solely to cultural or national mentalities, but also to the broader ideological framework of the Soviet Union.

The socialist worldview, particularly its emphasis on gender equality in the workforce, played a crucial role in shaping these outcomes. As one of the union republics, Kazakhstan was integrated into a system where professional roles – aside from physically demanding occupations – were not explicitly gendered. This ideological foundation provided women with more opportunities to choose careers in the arts, including composition. This point is underscored by the well-known composer Sofia Gubaidulina, who reflected in an interview:

There are many women composers in America. They have created special societies because they feel some kind of discrimination against women who have chosen music as their life's work. When I was asked about the female composer's position in the USSR, I replied that we do not have such a problem; therefore, there are no such societies either (Vlasova and Zeyfas, 1996: 6).

Indeed, the Soviet educational and institutional system created conditions that facilitated the emergence of women composers. However, even in this seemingly progressive environment, the proportion of women in the profession rarely exceeded 30%. This limitation likely reflects the inertia of social consciousness and persistent gender stereotypes. Gaziza Zhubanova, one of Kazakhstan's most prominent composers, commented on this contradiction:

I did not take girls into my class. Not because they cannot be composers. It is just that this profession is so difficult, not only in a professional sense but maybe even more difficult in the struggle 'for survival'. From century to century, this profession was considered purely male, and I myself think so today. But in the 20th century, especially in the second half of it, women proved their latent creative potential – female composers appeared, in terms of talent and skill, not only not inferior to men, but sometimes even superior to them (Zhubanova, 1996: 247).

At the same time, comparisons with culturally similar Turkic-speaking countries that were also part of the Soviet Union – such as Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Azerbaijan – reveal significantly lower proportions of women composers. This contrast suggests that Kazakh culture may possess distinctive features that supported women's creative participation more strongly than in neighboring societies. Among these features are deep-rooted traditions of public female artistic expression and a historically inclusive musical culture. Composer Gulzhan Uzenbayeva supports this interpretation, noting: "The impressive number of women composers in Kazakhstan is due to the interpenetration of national traditions and new forms of creative expression in the 20th century" (Gulzhan Uzenbayeva, personal communication, February 10, 2023).

In this context, the Kazakh case illustrates a complex interplay between Soviet institutional support and pre-existing cultural attitudes that favored women's creative self-realization. These factors together contributed to a gender profile in composition that is notably more inclusive than in many other parts of the world.

The Second Stage of Research: Ethnographic and Cultural Context

The vast cultural space of the Turkic-speaking world – from Siberia to the Mediterranean – encompasses a wide array of ethnic groups and musical traditions, including those of the Yakuts, Tuvans, Khakas, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Uighurs, Turkmens, Karakalpaks, Azerbaijanis, Tatars, Bashkirs, and Turks. Historical and ethnographic sources confirm that, throughout centuries, women participated in musical creation and held important roles in both nomadic and settled societies of Central Asia.

Based on an analysis of musical practices across Turkic-speaking cultures, the following typology of gender-related genre structures and performance traditions is proposed:

- 1) Gender-segregated systems, where genres are strictly divided by sex and public performance by women, especially before men, is taboo;
- 2) Genre division with performance neutrality, where genres are traditionally associated with one gender, but public performance is not formally restricted;
- 3) Gender-neutral systems, in which musical genres and performance practices are equally open to all genders.

As Yelena Vasilchenko (2014: 51) observes, gender stereotypes – and the limitations they impose – are not uniform across cultures: “Practically every confession, including Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Islam, in its own way limited the participation of women in social life (and music is one of the most important forms of socialisation) by a certain set of rules.”

In *the first category*, gender inequality is linked to strong religious or ritual taboos. For example, in many Central Asian settled communities, women were traditionally secluded and restricted from public performance. As noted by Raziya Sultanova (2014), Tanya Merchant (2015), and Gulbakhor Makhkamova (2004), women were permitted to sing only at private gatherings – such as weddings, women’s councils (*gap*), lullabies, or funerals – and exclusively in front of other women and children. Religious customs, particularly Islamic norms of gender separation, also gave rise to female-dominated spheres such as *shamanic* healing, where only women could treat other women.

In *the second type*, prohibitions are more conditional. For instance, in Tuvan culture, women were traditionally discouraged from performing *khoomi* (throat singing). While often explained as a religious taboo, researcher Yekaterina Karelina (2009: 84) suggests physiological justifications: “Significant physical effort during throat singing is harmful to the female body, the main function of which is the birth of healthy offspring.” Yet, in recent decades, the revival of national traditions has led to growing acceptance of women performers of *khorekteer* (chest voice throat singing), and the profession of *khoomizhi* is gaining prestige among women. Interestingly, even genres historically viewed as female-only in Kazakh culture, such as *tusau kesu* (a child’s first steps ceremony) and *zhoktau* (lamentation), have been recorded in male performance – suggesting that such taboos are not absolute but culturally adaptive.

The third type – gender-neutral genres – is predominantly found in nomadic cultures, such as that of the Kazakhs. Numerous travelers and ethnographers have noted the remarkable freedom and public activity of Kazakh women compared to women in more orthodox Islamic societies. As early as the Middle Ages, writers such as Ahmed Ibn Fadlan and Ibn Battuta remarked on the relatively equal status of women in Turkic nomadic communities. The Russian orientalist Vladimir Tiesenhausen cites Ibn Battuta's impression: "In this region, I saw miracles in terms of the great honour in which women are held" (1941: 87). Zhanat Kundakbayeva (2017: 56) reinforces this interpretation by noting that: "Patriarchal relations in Kazakh society are considered not so much as relations of domination and subordination but as a mechanism for maintaining the balance of the social relations system in the conditions of nomadic life."

These gender dynamics may be rooted in Tengrism, the spiritual belief system of early Turkic peoples. Raziya Sultanova emphasizes the synthesis of Islamic and pre-Islamic female figures, tracing them back to the dual-gender cosmology of *Tengri* (*Tanir*) – the Sky God. The female principle, *Tengri Umai* (also known as *Ot Ana*, or Mother Fire), was associated with warmth, family, and creativity. Later, these beliefs were transformed into the Islamic cults of mother Aisha, the wife of the Prophet Muhammad, and mother Fatima, his daughter.

Musical genres in Kazakh culture often reflect this balance. Mixed-gender participation was common in both *aitys* (poetic duels) and *tartys* (instrumental competitions). Alibi Abdinurov et al. describe an example of *tartys* between the renowned *kuishi* Tattimbet and a girl from the Naiman tribe, known for her dombra playing. After exhausting their repertoires, Tattimbet composed a new *kui* (Kazakh musical piece) on the spot – *Sylkyldak* (Laughing) – and was declared the winner. Whether the girl yielded out of respect or was genuinely outplayed remains a matter of legend (2021: 69).

The Soviet era introduced a new context for women in music, emphasizing ideological emancipation through access to education and professional institutions. However, ethnographic data suggest that Kazakhstan's pre-Soviet cultural foundations already supported women's participation in music, making the Soviet push for gender equality more effective and less culturally disruptive than in neighboring societies.

Today, scholarly debate continues over whether the strong representation of women in Kazakh composition reflects traditional cultural patterns or is primarily a legacy of Soviet policy. The case studies of women composers presented in the next section aim to address this question by examining the intersection of gender, tradition, and artistic agency.

In sum, the ethnographic findings support and extend the statistical patterns identified in the first stage of the research. Kazakhstan stands out from neighboring Central Asian countries in offering women greater access to musical self-realization, both historically and in contemporary practice. The nature of musical genres, their gendered or gender-neutral characteristics and the cultural worldview embedded in nomadic life, continue to shape the role of women in national compositional traditions.

The Third Stage of Research: Gender Balance as Perceived by Modern Women Composers

When analyzing the cases of individual composers, the specificity of gender dynamics in Kazakhstan becomes particularly apparent. Equally relevant is how women themselves perceive gender relations in the country's musical sphere. The selected composers represent two generations: the older, whose careers began during the Soviet period – Aktoty Raimkulova, Gulzhan Uzenbayeva, and Kadisha Onalbayeva – and the younger, whose professional development took place in the years following Kazakhstan's independence – Nargiz Khinkov-Aitbayeva, Shirin Bazarkulova, and Togzhan Karatai.

To ensure consistency in the study, each participant was asked a similar set of questions covering key topics such as the position of women in Kazakh society, the influence of traditional responsibilities, career development, societal attitudes, stylistic features related to gender, the legacy of Soviet ideology, and comparisons with other cultural contexts. Notably, their responses showed a high degree of convergence, suggesting a coherent and internally consistent view of gender among Kazakh women composers.

Assessing the position of women in Kazakh society, all respondents noted the exceptional freedom and the role of gendered responsibilities in preserving intergenerational continuity. At the same time, they observed a clear trend in contemporary Kazakhstan: more women are becoming socially and professionally independent, achieving success in areas such as business, art, education, and public administration. As Aktoty Raimkulova put it:

In ancient times, the survival of the entire extended family depended on the observance of gender roles. Now, when it seems life has become easier, and it is no longer necessary to maintain the viability of the family with hard work, Kazakh women keenly feel their unique mission in transferring the values of the nomadic culture to the new generation. (Aktoty Raimkulova, personal communication, February 04, 2023)

Representatives of the younger generation pointed to a cultural tension between the historically patriarchal image of Kazakh women and the actual roles they occupy in today's society. According to Togzhan Karatai:

In 21st century, a 'Kazakh woman' can work in several places simultaneously, provide for herself and her children without being tied to a man, and successfully overcome various barriers to building her career. (Togzhan Karatai, personal communication, March 15, 2023)

For most respondents, traditional female responsibilities have not been an obstacle to professional self-realisation. Rather, many view them as integrated into their success. Aktoty Raimkulova drew parallels between the family and the professional spheres, stressing that understanding social hierarchy and embracing appropriate roles has helped in career development. With age, she noted, societal pressure decreases, and women gain greater autonomy in choosing their own balance between family and professional life.

The respondents highlighted that pursuing a career in music, despite its demanding nature, has been possible largely due to the preservation of traditional family values. Many cited the common Kazakh practice of shared responsibility, where elder family members assist in raising children, allowing women more flexibility in their careers. As Kadisha Onalbayeva noted:

On the one hand, a woman's self-actualisation in her career interferes with the performance of household chores. On the other hand, it provides the means to solve these issues differently by delegating household issues. (Kadisha Onalbayeva, personal communication, September 13, 2022)

Nearly all respondents expressed a strong connection with Kazakh traditional culture. They encountered folk music, *kui*, and national instruments early in life, and these experiences continue to influence their individual compositional styles. Togzhan Karatai is a professional *kobyz* (Kazakh musical instrument) player and represents a lineage of traditional musicians. Shirin Bazarkulova, who began with *dombra*, recalled:

While studying at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, I learnt traditional music with even greater interest, trying to delve into the roots and genres of Kazakh music. It is what distinguished my work from other young composers. (Togzhan Karatai, personal communication, March 15, 2023)

The environment in which the older generation studied contributed to their openness and tolerance, both culturally and in terms of gender. Gulzhan Uzenbayeva reflected:

There was no difference. It is essential, I think, to note that Uzbeks, Russians, Armenians, Georgians, Jews, Poles, Kazakhs, Tatars, Germans and so on studied in our class ... Of course, there were no questions about the equality of nations. (Gulzhan Uzenbayeva, personal communication, February 10, 2023)

The Soviet educational model prioritised broad, interdisciplinary competence over gender identity. Students were encouraged to combine specialisations and deepen their theoretical and compositional understanding. All interviewees from the older generation regretted the erosion of this model in the post-Soviet period, though none perceived gender equality to have worsened. The Soviet ideological framework, according to several respondents, supported independent thinking and allowed artists to focus on creativity without financial pressures. As Aktoty Raimkulova stated: “The most enthusiastic remain in the profession.” (Aktoty Raimkulova, personal communication, February 04, 2023)

This point was echoed by Gulzhan Uzenbayeva and Kadisha Onalbayeva, the latter of whom experienced the collapse of the USSR during her transition from school to conservatory. Despite this, her values remained rooted in Soviet ideals. She recalled:

It used to be better. Composers wrote a lot. They wrote much more than today. At school, we sang modern music in the choir, Gaziza Zhubanova’s oratorios ... Who is singing

oratorios now? There are no commissions, no operas, no ballets. (Kadisha Onalbayeva, personal communication, September 13, 2022)

Younger composers, trained by teachers with Soviet backgrounds, also reflect on today's challenging conditions for composers. Financial constraints, lack of commissions, and limited institutional support often discourage large-scale creative undertakings. Nargiz Khinkov-Aitbayeva remarked:

Time has changed. Economic changes lead to people of creativity or science having to deal with 'earning money'. (Nargiz Khinkov-Aitbayeva, personal communication, March 05, 2022)

As for gender-based challenges, some respondents recalled experiencing different attitudes toward boys and girls in performance training – due to assumptions about strength and stamina – but unanimously agreed that composition instruction is gender-neutral. As Togzhan Karatai noted:

Like many others, the 'composer' profession is gradually erasing its gender binding – as a purely 'male' profession. (Togzhan Karatai, personal communication, March 15, 2023)

Still, some stereotypes persist. Aktoty Raimkulova spoke about the deeply embedded image of the composer as male, and the resulting pressure women feel to prove themselves:

Serving music involves some sacrifice and a different arrangement of priorities. For a woman, family and children always come first. We subconsciously had to constantly prove our compliance with the high title of 'composer'. (Aktoty Raimkulova, personal communication, February 04, 2023)

Opinions varied on the question of whether music itself reflects gender. Some composers perceived women's music as more intuitive, emotionally complex, and uniquely expressive:

Some remarkable depth, and a different feeling of space, while 'female' music can be fragile and strong, like 'male' music. It is a unique combination. (Kadisha Onalbayeva, personal communication, September 13, 2022)

Others insisted that music transcends gender, echoing the views of composers like Sofia Gubaidulina and Galina Ustvolskaya:

It is unlikely that, while hearing this or that composition for the first time, it will be possible to say with certainty that a woman or a man wrote it. We are all human, first and foremost. We all have the same values – universal. (Aktoty Raimkulova, personal communication, February 04, 2023)

In comparing Kazakhstan with neighboring Central Asian countries, the interviewees agreed that Kazakh society is more open and liberal regarding gender. This was especially noted by Gulzhan Uzenbayeva and Nargiz Khinkov-Aitbayeva, both of whom were born and educated in Uzbekistan:

Kazakh women were more free, courageous and open personalities, not afraid of conventions, compared to Uzbek women. In Kazakhstan, as nowhere else, there is active female composer creativity. (Gulzhan Uzenbayeva, personal communication, February 10, 2023)

In Uzbekistan, meeting a girl who aspires to be realised in her career was rare. The women there are very busy. In Kazakhstan, people are freer. (Nargiz Khinkov-Aitbayeva, personal communication, March 05, 2022)

Taken together, the responses point to two major conclusions: on one hand, patriarchal structures and gender expectations continue to shape women's experiences; on the other, modern Kazakh women composers exhibit a high degree of flexibility and adaptability. Their ability to integrate multiple roles – professional, cultural, and familial – is seen not as a limitation but as a strength. This multivectorial engagement with both artistic and everyday life is viewed by the composers themselves as a competitive advantage, one that enables them to navigate and succeed in an evolving cultural environment.

Results and Discussion

The responses of the interviewed composers demonstrate a clear adherence to traditional cultural values, including those related to gender, and allow for several generalisations regarding the conditions of women's participation in professional composition in Kazakhstan.

First, the dominance of the second and third types of gender structures in Kazakh traditional musical culture – those involving *gendered genre divisions without performance restrictions*, and fully *gender-neutral systems* – has historically precluded the emergence of gender-based limitations in music-making. Kazakh girls are socialised from an early age to adapt to multiple social roles, moving fluidly between life stages that require various forms of responsibility and engagement. This social flexibility has translated into cultural norms where women experience creative freedom regardless of the make-up of audiences. The absence of gender taboos in public performance has contributed to a lack of internal psychological barriers to artistic self-expression.

Secondly, during the Soviet period, Kazakh women gained full access to education and the freedom to choose their profession and lifestyle. Urbanisation and extended family support systems allowed many domestic responsibilities to be delegated, creating more favorable conditions for women's participation in professional and cultural life. In this context, the egalitarian values of socialism complemented the egalitarian features already embedded in Kazakh nomadic traditions. In contemporary society, these culturally rooted gender roles continue to function as a competitive advantage, allowing women to adapt successfully to changing social and economic conditions.

Thirdly, this adaptability became especially important in the post-Soviet period, when many composers could no longer rely exclusively on composing as a source of income. Women with additional competencies in performance, teaching, or administration were better positioned to sustain their careers. All interviewed composers acknowledged both the objective obstacles facing women in the field and the flexibility and multifunctionality that characterize their professional lives.

Analysis of successful careers indicates that versatility is a major factor in professional sustainability, regardless of gender. The most competitively positioned individuals are those able to engage simultaneously in multiple roles: composing, performing, teaching, or administration. Among Kazakh women composers, this pattern is especially pronounced. Gulzhan Uzenbayeva, Kadisha Onalbayeva, and Nargiz Khinkov-Aitbayeva actively combine composition with performance and teaching; Aktoty Raimkulova balances creative work with high-level administrative responsibilities. Younger composers such as Shirin Bazarkulova, Togzhan Karatai, and Aigerim Seilova earn their

livelihood exclusively through artistic practice.

However, it would be inaccurate to conclude that versatility alone determines success, or that this applies only to women. Many male composers, including Serik Yerkinbekov, Tolegen Mukhamedzhanov, Adilzhan Tolukpayev, Satzhan Shamenov, and Rinat Gaysin, have also built prominent, multifaceted careers. Overall, very few Kazakhstani composers – regardless of gender – rely solely on composition as a primary source of income today.

Interestingly, younger composers are more likely to pursue purely creative careers, though often in popular or commercial genres rather than in ‘art’ music. This reflects broader shifts in the musical landscape, where mass genres offer greater financial opportunities and social visibility. The transformation of musical culture has thus changed the career structure for emerging generations of musicians.

The strong orientation toward versatility in both male and female careers reflects the influence of Soviet educational ideals, which encouraged the integration of multiple competencies. At the same time, the shift in ideological values since independence has not significantly disrupted gender dynamics in composition. Women in Kazakhstan continue to enjoy equal opportunities for creative self-realisation, suggesting that traditional cultural foundations remain a decisive factor.

The combination of traditional gender norms with Soviet institutional frameworks appears to have laid the groundwork for a sustained and relatively high representation of women in Kazakhstan’s compositional community. In comparison with culturally similar regions, this balance stands out and reflects both the resilience of national values and the legacy of a system that enabled women to pursue artistic careers on an equal footing with men.

Conclusions

This study of gender dynamics in Kazakhstani art music reveals not only patterns specific to Kazakhstan but also broader challenges and trends shared by many national music cultures. The relatively high proportion of women involved in professional composition in Kazakhstan can be attributed to a combination of interrelated factors:

- 1) The structure of the traditional genre system, which historically allowed for gender-

neutral or inclusive performance practices;

- 2) The traditional way of life, in which women were socially prepared to navigate multiple roles and responsibilities;
- 3) The Soviet legacy, particularly its emphasis on gender equality in education and professional life;
- 4) The versatility of artistic practice, which allows composers to combine multiple forms of creative and professional engagement.

The statistical analysis supports the conclusion that Kazakhstan, in comparison with culturally similar Central Asian countries, demonstrates a more favourable gender balance in the field of composition. This is due not only to the influence of Soviet ideological frameworks but also to deeper cultural traditions that never imposed rigid prohibitions on women's creative expression.

The uniqueness of Kazakhstan's gender balance lies in the successful convergence of a traditional worldview and the Soviet system's egalitarian infrastructure. Together, they fostered an environment in which women gained equal access to professional training and cultural participation. According to the interview data, contemporary Kazakh women composers report neither discrimination nor discomfort related to their gender. On the contrary, their adaptability, multifunctionality, and cultural fluency appear to give them a relative advantage in navigating the modern musical environment.

Although men continue to dominate the global composition profession, the Soviet legacy suggests that institutional frameworks – such as state-sponsored music education and cultural programming – can influence gender representation in meaningful ways. This observation may be particularly relevant in national contexts where patriarchal norms persist alongside a degree of openness in the creative sphere. The case of Kazakhstan illustrates how targeted support for cultural participation can foster greater gender inclusivity, even within traditionally hierarchical or male-dominated environments.

Nonetheless, it is important to emphasize that women composers remain significantly underrepresented compared to their male counterparts, both globally and regionally. While Kazakhstan shows a more balanced profile, the proportion of women still rarely

exceeds one-third, even in the most progressive generations. It remains unclear to what extent this disparity is a result of social inertia – the persistence of long-standing gender norms – or broader socio-economic factors that shape access to professional and creative opportunities. This issue calls for dedicated scholarly inquiry to disentangle the complex interplay of cultural, institutional, and economic dynamics that continue to affect gender equity in composition.

Future research could benefit from a systematic analysis of the thematic content of works composed by women, with particular attention to the subjects, conceptual frameworks, and recurring motifs that characterize their creative output. Such inquiry would help assess whether and how gendered experience, social positioning, or cultural identity are reflected in artistic choices. It would also contribute to broader feminist musicological debates on whether there exists a distinctly “female” voice in composition, and how this voice evolves in different cultural and historical contexts.

Furthermore, the role of versatility – as noted among Kazakhstani women composers – deserves closer analytical attention. While often framed as a competitive advantage, this multifunctionality may also be a response to structural constraints, such as lack of institutional commissions, financial insecurity, or limited support for full-time composition careers. Interrogating the gendered dimensions of this flexibility can shed light on how women adapt to systemic challenges, and whether such strategies reinforce or resist existing inequalities.

Thus, the case of Kazakhstan provides a compelling model for understanding how structural, historical, and cultural factors can interact to foster gender balance in artistic professions. The trends observed here point to the potential for even broader participation of women in composition, making Kazakhstan a unique and instructive example within the Central Asian region.

REFERENCES

Abdinurov, Alibi; Bazhenееva, Sanija and Toktagan, Ajtolkyn. (2021). “Дина Нурпеисова как представительница женщин-кюйши в казахской музыкальной культуре” (Dina

Nurpeisova as a Representative of Women-Kuishi in the Kazakh Musical Culture). In *Problems of Oriental Studies*. 3: 65-71.

Akzhigitova, Nailya; Bayakhunov, Bakir. (2012). *Кафедра композиции КНК им. Курмангазы (1944-1994). Очерк* (Composition Department of the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory (1944-1994). Essay). Almaty: Volkov.

Bagysbek, Kuat. (2013). *Қазақ композиторлары* (Kazakh Composers). Almaty: Bolashak.

Briscoe, James R. (1997). *A Contemporary Anthology of Music by Women*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Chumbalova, Gulzhaukhar. (1992). "Очерк по истории записи и изучения казахской музыки дореволюционного периода" (Essay on the History of Recording and Studying Kazakh Music of the Pre-Revolutionary Period) *Kazakh Music: Traditions and Modernity*, Ed. A. Mukhambetova: 11. Almaty: Print.

Citron, Marcia J. (1993). *Gender and the Musical Canon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fowler, Jennifer. (2006). "The Proms 2006: Where are the Women" *Women in Music*. Retrieved from <http://www.womeninmusic.org.uk/PROMS06.htm>

Jumakova, Umitzhan. (2003). *Творчество композиторов Казахстана 1920-1980-х годов. Проблемы истории, смысла и ценности*. (Creativity of Composers of Kazakhstan in the 1920-1980s. Problems of History, Meaning and Value). Astana: Foliant.

Jumaliyeva, Tamara. (2013). Gulzhan Uzenbayeva. *Essays on the composers of Kazakhstan*, ed. Aizada Nusupova: pp. 442-469. Almaty: Bolashak.

Kadyrkulova, Zhajnagul (2017). Гендерные аспекты традиционной культуры тюркского народа в современном обществе (Gender aspects of the traditional culture of the Turkic people in modern society). *Materials of the Scientific and Humanitarian Forum 'Uly Dala'*. pp. 762-770. Astana: Galym. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/118561421/Документальность как метод и формы смешения](https://www.academia.edu/118561421/Документальность_как_метод_и_формы_смешения)

Karelina, Yekaterina. (2009). *История тувинской музыки от падения династии Цин и до наших дней* (The History of Tuvan Music From the Fall of the Qing Dynasty to the Present Day). Moscow: Kompozitor.

Kenny, Aisling. (2009). "Integration or Isolation? Considering Implications of the Designation 'Woman Composer'", *British Postgraduate Musicology*. 10: 1-11

Ketegenova, Nurgiyana. (2009). Gaziza Zhubanova. *Creative portraits of composers of Kazakhstan. Essays (To the 70th anniversary of the Kazakhstan Composers Union)*. Almaty: Alatau.

Kisamedenova, Moldir. (2015). XIX – XXI ғғ. Батыс Қазақстан күйшілік дәстүріндегі қыз-келіншектер күйлерінің музыкалық-стильдік ерекшеліктері (Musical and stylistic features of women's Kui in the West Kazakhstan Kui tradition in 19-21 centuries). *Bulletin Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatoire*. 4(9): 44-52.

Koskoff, Ellen. (2014). *A Feminist Ethnomusicology: Writings on Music and Gender*. USA: University of Illinois Press.

Krachkovskij, Ignatij. (2012). *Путешествие Ибн-Фадлана на Волгу* (Journey of Ibn-Fadlan to the Volga). Moscow, Leningrad: Izd-vo Akad. nauk USSR.

Kundakbayeva, Zhanat. (2017). *Модернизация ранней советской эпохи в судьбах женщин Казахстана, 1920-1930 годы* (Modernization of the Early Soviet Era in the Fate of Women in Kazakhstan, 1920-1930). Almaty: Al-Farabi KazNU.

Kyrgys, Zoya. (2002). *Тувинское горловое пение: Этномузыковедческое исследование* (Tuva Throat Singing: An Ethnomusicological Study). Novosibirsk: Nauka.

Makhkamova, Gulbakhor. (2004). "История развития сценического искусства Таджикистана в 20-60 годы XX века: гендерный аспект" (History of the development of the performing arts of Tajikistan in the 20s-60s of the 20th century: the gender aspect), PhD. dissertation., A. Donish Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography. Dushanbe: Tajikistan.

McClary, Susan. (1991). *Feminine Endings*. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press.

Merchant, Tanya. (2015). *Women Musicians of Uzbekistan. From Courtyard to Conservatory*. USA: University of Illinois Press

Moisala, Pirkko. (1999). Musical Gender in Performance, Women & Music. 1. Retrieved from <https://scispace.com/papers/musical-gender-in-performance-3mzyo3oo4a>

Naurzbayeva, Zira. (2010). Архетип женщины-медиатора в традиционной казахской культуре (The archetype of a woman–mediator in traditional Kazakh culture). *The eternal sky of the Kazakhs*. Ed. Gaukhar Shangitbayeva: pp. 203-212. Almaty: SaGa.

Nedlina, Valeria. (2013). Aktoty Raimkulova. *Essays on the composers of Kazakhstan*, Ed. Aizada Nusupova: pp. 417-441. Almaty: Bolashak.

New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

O'Bannon, Richard. (2014). "The 2014-15 Orchestra Season by the Numbers" *Website Baltimore Symphony Orchestra*. Retrieved from <https://www.bsomusic.org/stories/the-2014-15-orchestra-season-by-the-numbers.aspx>.

Sergeant, Desmond C., and Himonides, Evangelos. (2016). "Gender and Music Composition: A Study of Music, and the Gendering of Meanings", *Frontiers in Psychology* 7. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00411>

Shubina, Svetlana. (2003). Газиза Жубанова и балет "Карагоз" (Gaziza Zhubanova and ballet 'Karagoz'). *Life in art. Composer Gaziza Zhubanova*. Ed. Nurgiyana Ketegenova: pp. 267-273. Almaty: Oner

Stasevich, Inga. (2011). *Социальный статус женщины у казахов: традиции и современность* (The social status of a woman among the Kazakhs: traditions and modernity). Saint Petersburg: Nauka

Sultanova, Madina and Zhanerke Shaigozova. (2014). Душевная закалка в казахской культуре (девочка-девушка-женщина-мать) [Mental hardening in Kazakh culture (girl–woman–mother)]. *Materials of the International Scientific and Practical Conference 'Argynbaev Readings'*. Ed. Galymkayir Mutanov: pp. 343-348. Almaty: Kazakh Universiteti

Sultanova, Raziya. (2014). *From Shamanism to Sufism: Women, Islam and Culture in Central Asia*. London: I.B. Tauris.

The Living Composers Project. (2000-2025) *A nonprofit database of living composers*. (Founded by Daniel Albertson). Retrieved from <http://www.composers21.com>.

Tiesenhausen, Vladimir. (1941). *Коллекция материалов, относящихся к истории Золотой Орды* (Collection of Materials Relating to the History of the Golden Horde). Moscow, Leningrad: Izd-vo Akad. nauk USSR.

Tursunov, Yedige. (1999). *Возникновение баксы, акынов, сэри и жырау* (The Emergence of Baksy, Akyns, Seri and Zhyrau). Astana: Foliant.

Utegalieva, Saule. (2013). *Звуковой мир музыки тюркских народов: теория, история, практика (на материале инструментальных традиций Центральной Азии)* (The sound world of the Turkic peoples' music: theory, history, practice (based on the instrumental traditions of Central Asia)). Moscow: Kompozitor.

Vasilchenko, Yelena. (2014). "Gender Theme in Musical Cultures of World Civilizations" (Гендерная тема в музыкальных культурах мировых цивилизаций) *The Space of Art and Cultural Life* 1:49-55.

Vlasova, Yelena and Zeyfas, Nikolai. (1996). "USSR – USA: 'Making Music Together'" (СССР – США: "Делаем музыку вместе"). In *Music Academy* 7: 5-8.

Yelemanova, Saida. (2000). *Казахское традиционное песенное искусство* (Kazakh traditional song art). Almaty: Dajk-Press.

Yerzakovich, Boris. (1979). *Музыкальное наследие казахского народа* (Musical heritage of the Kazakh people). Alma-Ata: Nauka

Zatayevich, Aleksandr. (1925). *1000 песен киргизского народа* (1000 songs of the Kyrgyz people). Orenburg: Kirgizskoe gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo

Zharekova, Gulfajruz. (2014). "Статус женщины в традиционном казахском обществе" (The status of a woman in traditional Kazakh society). *Bulletin Al Farabi KazNU*. 1: 78-86.

Zhubanov, Akhmet. (1962). "Музыка казахского народа до Великой Октябрьской социалистической революции" (Music of the Kazakh people before the Great October Socialist Revolution). *Essays on the history of Kazakh Soviet music*. Alma-Ata: Kaz. gos. izd. hud. Lit.,

Zhubanova, Gaziza. (1996). *Мир мой – Музыка* (My World – Music). Almaty: Aksim.

S. YANKI ÖZCAN

Ankara University, Türkiye

ozcanyanki@gmail.com

orcid.org/0000-0002-0229-3914

The Discourse of the 14 May 2023 Election Songs in Turkey: The Case of the Nation Alliance and the People's Alliance

ABSTRACT

This article explores the role of music as a political communication strategy in the presidential and parliamentary elections in Turkey, 14 May 2023. It acknowledges the lack of existing research analyzing the discourse of election songs in these elections and aims to fill that gap. Using a qualitative research approach and Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis framework, the study focuses on songs from the Republican People's Party, the Good Party, and the Justice and Development Party within the Nation Alliance and the People's Alliance. Music, as used in films and advertising, has the power to evoke emotions and influence voters on an emotional level. I argue that if music can educate, it can also mobilize people to support political movements to a level beyond intellectual and emotional empathy. The research methodology involves collecting data from YouTube by listening to election campaign songs, while discourse analysis is applied to examine the ideological and social implications of the discourse. My aim is to explicate how political parties convey their campaigns and construct their identities through songs. In terms of thematic analysis, the names and content of the songs are consistent. There is no use of complex words or complex syntax. While the Justice and Development Party tried to reach voters with different musical tastes by using different melodies and tempos in its election songs, the Nation Alliance preferred to reach voters by way of a melancholic tone and a harmony of medium-fast and fast tempos.

KEYWORDS

Election songs

Van Dijk

Critical discourse analysis

Propaganda

Political communication

Introduction

In modern democracies, political parties, despite their ideological differences, generally adhere to the constitutional rules of the political system to convince the public of their own truths, advance their goals, and periodically test their proposed policies through elections. As McNair points out, the smooth functioning of this process primarily depends on the ability of parties to communicate with, those who will vote for them, and to persuade those voters of their legitimacy (2011: 5). Political communication involves the transmission, reception, and processing of messages that potentially have indirect or direct impacts on politics, essentially encompassing the construction of the intended message (Graber and Smith, 2006: 479). In elections, winning votes and gaining power are primary goals, and diverse strategies are used to achieve these goals. Elements such as colors, slogans, symbols, and posters are employed to create an institutional image and fulfill these objectives. Music is also employed as a political communication strategy in election campaigns.

Just as music in films or advertisements can evoke specific moods and emotional states, campaign music is also used to influence voters on an emotional level (Street, 2003: 114). If music can educate, it should also be able to harness people, encouraging them to join a movement or support a movement, extending some way beyond intellectual awareness and emotional sympathy (Rosenthal, 2008: 13). Songs with lyrics added to music are highly important in elections as they aim to evoke the emotions of voters. These political campaign songs create a sense of identity and connection between the electorate and the candidate or party they represent.

Music has an emotional impact on the listener and functions to bolster a sense of identity as well as to help define a sense of self (Volgsten, 2014: 117-118). Political campaigns do not only consist of words; political parties brand themselves and create support groups through music (Behr, 2022: 31). Robert Walser emphasized the value of theorizing music as discourse. According to him, this enables the musical and social aspects of music to be analyzed as a whole (Walser, 1993: 28; cited in Gilbert and Pearson, 1999: 50). It is important to show how the music that political parties use to establish a strong connection with the electorate plays a role in today's political climate. Campaign music tries to increase its value for listeners by reflecting an era in order to influence the course

of events. Thus, candidates use campaign music that reflects the current cultural climate to connect more with voters (Silber, 1971: 15; as cited in Bogers, 2019: 1).

The Presidential Election and the 28th Term General Election of Members of Parliament were held on Sunday 14 May, 2023, according to Decision No. 2023/99 and the approval of the Supreme Electoral Council (YSK, 2023). The results of the presidential and parliamentary elections are significant in terms of indicating the direction of a 20-year-long rule. In such a crucial election, the songs used in parties' political campaigns also hold importance.

In Turkey, the music used in elections held between 1965-1995, 2011, 2015, and 2017 has been a subject of research in various contexts. Some studies have focused on the impact of election music on voters, while others have discussed the extent to which it contributes to party propaganda within the scope of political communication (Tanyıldızı, 2012; Bakır et al., 2018; Kızılkaya, 2021; Işık, 2017; Aydemir, 2021; Ünal and İmİK, 2019; Budak, 2018; Yavuz and Sezer, 2018). Furthermore, there are master's theses that examine election music and the transmission of ideological discourse to the public (Kumpasoğlu, 2017; Receptoğlu, 2019; İzci, 2019; Girgin, 2020; Peterson, 2018). The topic of election music has also been addressed in studies conducted abroad, including Nigeria, Jamaica, Canada, and the United Kingdom (Adebayo, 2017; Charles, 2006; Behr, 2022, Heisbourg and Feitosa, 2021).

A review of the literature reveals that there is no existing study that provides a discursive analysis of the election songs used in the presidential and parliamentary elections held on 14 May, 2023. The aim of this study is to examine how political parties convey their campaigns to the electorate through songs and through the discourse employed in these songs.

This study employs qualitative research methodology. The necessary data for the study is collected by listening to the songs created for election campaigns through YouTube. Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis is chosen as the analytical framework for examining the songs.

Critical discourse analysis points to social issues, indicating that discourse is an ideological endeavor that shapes both society and culture. Historical discourse

constitutes a particular form of social action. Critical discourse analysis focuses on the ways in which discourse structures legitimize, reproduce, and challenge power relations and dominance in society (van Dijk, 2001: 353).

For the 14 May elections, six political parties, namely *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican People's Party), *İyi Parti* (Good Party), *Saadet Partisi* (Felicity Party), *Gelecek Partisi* (Future Party), *Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi* (Democratic and Progress Party), and *Demokrat Parti* (Democratic Party), formed the Nation Alliance (Sevilir, 2023). The People's Alliance, on the other hand, comprises *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party), *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Nationalist Movement Party), *Yeniden Refah Partisi* (New Welfare Good Party), and *Büyük Birlik Partisi* (Grand Unity Party) (Cumhuriyet, 2023). On the ballot papers, the Republican People's Party and Good Party were listed under the Nation Alliance, while the four parties' names were listed under the People's Alliance. As the most visible, the most active during the election campaign process, and possessing a significant majority in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, a number of election songs from the parties were chosen as the sample for this study. Accordingly, an examination was conducted on the axis of the illusion of life paradigm using van Dijk's discourse analysis on the election songs titled *Sana Söz* (*Promise You*), *Haydi* (Let's Go!), *Tarihi Sen Yaz* (You Write History), *Söyle* (Tell Me), *Doğruya Doğru* (Towards the Righteous), and *Bu Yüzyılın Adı Türkiye Olsun* (Let Turkey Be the Name of This Century) from the Republican People's Party and Good Party within the Nation Alliance, as well as the Justice and Development Party within the People's Alliance.

The Energizing and Motivating Power of Emotions: Music

The question of how music becomes embedded in social life is significant. Approaching music solely as an activity or object carries the risk of treating it as a self-contained entity (Bohlman, 1999; as cited in Roy and Dowd, 2010: 187). People use music to make sense of their own words and outlook (Roy and Dowd, 2010: 187). Thus, music represents social relationships within societal life and contributes to the creation of shared meanings.

More than half of the music consists of word arrangements. Accordingly, the relationship between music and language, which can be called two parallel but interconnected spheres, is a phenomenon as old as music itself. Literature, like music, has rhythms and

thus the two can understand each other (Henze, 1982: 84, 86). If the text cannot be easily translated into song, if it becomes difficult to sing the song, it becomes difficult to convey the message. At this point, it is important to keep in mind the idea of a 'hook' in music, which is defined as a musical or lyrical phrase that attracts attention and is easily recognizable (Monaco and Riordan, 1980: 178; cited in Schoening and Kasper, 2011). The most recognizable hook in a song can often be the chorus lyrics that convey the main message of the song. The most effective way to do this is to write music and text that work together to create a memorable hook for voters. Music, which can be consumed over and over again, can be understood as a constellation of tensions generated from within itself (Henze, 1982: 87). Thematic elements, rhythms, chords and timbres should be designed around the purpose and need of the work (Henze, 1982: 91). Music can be seen as a destabilizing and dangerous force when it is not connected to words and given a regular and fixed meaning through language (Gilbert and Pearson, 1999: 40).

Music with rhythmic patterns energizes our moral emotions. Songs that arise from the combination of music and lyrics possess the ability to positively activate people's emotions. The experience of singing songs and the repetition within them captivate individuals, creating new identities and meanings, arousing communities, and mobilizing them (Bennett, 2001: 6). The words should be approached as a form of rhetoric and oratory in terms of their power to persuade listeners. As Frith stated, songs do not exist to convey the meaning of words; rather, words exist to convey the meaning of the song (1996: 166). Therefore, song language is used to say something about the singer and the listeners.

Rhythm and rhyme are material tools that regulate and shape emotions and desires. Thus, songs offer listeners new ways to transform their daily life. Songs are narratives that refer to a story and may have a conversational tone (Frith, 1996:166). Song lyrics are concerned with internal observation, and in this sense, songs can be compared to theater (Frith, 1996: 169-170). They may address social issues, arguments, abstractions, and various phenomena. Reflecting the fact that individuals exist within a social context, songs may thus encapsulate the events and situations encountered in the public sphere.

A song becomes an interaction through carefully written and contextually relevant lyrics and arrangements (Mambwe, 2019: 180-181). As a form of interaction between the

author and the listeners, written lyrics carry a message to motivate the listeners to think (Dallin, 1994: 15; as cited in Mambwe, 2019: 181). Musical sounds, which play an important role in creating meaning, indicate certain emotions that are difficult or impossible to express in more propositional linguistic texts or images (Cook, 1998). Building on Teo van Leeuwen's (1999) research on the meaning potential of sound, McKerrell and Way (2017) argued that musical sounds are a form of communication, and that the presence of sound gives a strong emotional role in communication (Way, 2019: 6). Context plays an important role in shaping the meaning potential of musical sounds. Even if they are less descriptive than written language, the importance of musical sounds in determining discourse has been recognized in many studies (Goodwin 1993; Shuker 2001; Railton and Watson 2011; cited in Way, 2019: 6).

The melody must interact with the spoken message, so that the melody matches the words in tone and elicits maximum physiological and psychological responses from the listener (Kizer, 1983: 9). The rhetorical importance of musical messages is visible in the relationship of harmony or alternatively dissonance between music and lyrics (Sellnow and Sellnow, 2001: 412). Rousseau, who distinguishes between pure sound and music, states that music is valued as soon as it transcends the physicality of sound. Accordingly, a melody affects us not only as a sound but also as a sign of emotions. In this way, the desired emotions are evoked (Le Huray and Day, 1981: 99; cited in Gilbert and Pearson, 1999: 41).

Sounds exist to generate an emotional response to a political party (Street, 2003: 114). Music, which can be seen as an abstract representation of the geometry of social structure and social organization, not only represents social relationships or makes sense of ideological dilemmas, but also enlivens social relationships (Leeuwen, 1998: 38). The formation of music, including songs, arises from communal progression. Utilizing rhythmic elements to mirror occurrences and circumstances within a given society holds importance as it facilitates both effortless memorization and recollection of overlooked elements.

Music as a Political Expression

Musical codes find their place within the technologies and ideologies of the period that produced them. Music, which is a form of organization of sounds, has the characteristics

of creating and reinforcing community (Feldman, 2002: x-xi). While the eye stimulates the first sight of something, the ear limits our response and gives us time to form thoughts and a second sight of something. Sound evokes images. Thoughts echo through images (Waterman, 2006; cited in Kearney, 2009: 1). Music, which deeply affects emotions and thoughts, is used in many fields and one of these is politics. Music offers an environment of freedom by enabling the construction of an idea of transcendence. Through music, which is positioned as both a source of rebellion and a tool of power, political authorities have an impact on their subjects.

The collective act of making music helps uplift the morale of those involved in collective social activities. Nearly all scholars writing on this topic agree that music serves this purpose; it can be referred to as emotional care or rejuvenation (Rosenthal, 2008: 11). Culture, art, including music, are both forms of knowledge and forms of action. Music is part of the interpretational and representational frames that influence broader social culture produced within society during social movements (Eyerman & Jamison, 1998: 23-24). The music played during election campaigns serves a propaganda function to some extent. Just as politicians gain advantages from the support of film or television stars in their election campaigns, music also has the power to evoke certain associations and images (Street, 2003: 114). Music, which directly influences our emotions, can be considered a potent weapon.

Specifically, persuasive songs used in election campaigns can be said to serve six main objectives (Denisoff, 1966: 582). First, a song promotes external support and sympathy for a social or political movement, thus acting as a mobilizing factor. Secondly, the song reinforces the value system of individuals who actively support the social movement or ideology. Thirdly, the song fosters harmony, solidarity, and high morale within an organization or movement in ways that align with its own worldview. Fourthly, the song may be a deliberate attempt to encourage individuals to participate in a specific social movement. Fifthly, the song proposes solutions to real or imaginary social problems in terms of action to achieve a desired goal. And lastly, the song often addresses certain social issues or dissatisfactions in emotional terms. All these functions are accomplished through two styles of propaganda songs, which may be labelled 'magnetic' and 'rhetorical' (Denisoff, 1966: 584; Denisoff, 1968: 230). The magnetic propaganda song creates a sense of social harmony or solidarity among members or supporters of a movement or

ideological group, both emotionally and intellectually, by persuading them to support or participate in the writer's and the song's affiliated organization or movement. This is often achieved by utilizing popular or familiar melodies adapted to new lyrics. It emphasizes a sense of shared experience and accelerates communication in terms of perceived social discontent (Denisoff, 1966: 584). On the other hand, a rhetorical propaganda song is one written by a folk entrepreneur to pose a critical question or dissent regarding social institutions and practices—such as taxes or strikes—without directly calling listeners to embrace a specific ideology, organization, or course of action. Requiring minimal engagement, this form of song raises awareness by alluding to both universal and particular events; it can transcend time and place or focus on a single historical incident. Functioning more as a protest song, rhetorical songs contribute to the formation of social opinion but, by offering no organizational call to action, may have limited or even negative impact on audiences outside of the movement (Denisoff, 1966: 584-585).

Through art, culture, and music, there is an opportunity to preserve the past. Therefore, there should be a harmony between the traditions embodied in a specific musical piece and the ideas and ideals of a social movement (Eyerma & Jamison, 1998: 46). Just as not every political ideology will resonate with every individual, not every musical piece will be suitable for use as propaganda in every social movement or election campaign.

Music creates public action not by chance or cultural context, but through the convergence of specific processes. Within the strong connection between music and political participation, three aspects need to be considered: organization, legitimation, and performance (Street et al., 2008). Understanding the relationship between music and politics requires knowledge of economic, social, and cultural capital in society. Recognizing the role of music in political participation depends on understanding the underlying structural arrangements that enable it. Simply relying on popular music or famous singers may not be enough to exert political influence. The media's approach to election music and how it is utilized play a vital role in creating such capacities. This process contributes to legitimization. It's important to acknowledge that musical works have qualities that go beyond conveying lyrics, as gestures and expressions during performances also hold significance.

The relationship of music to political goals and movements is often analyzed by focusing on the emotions expressed in the lyrics of a particular piece of music and the ways in which these emotions coincide with the political goals of the participants. In this context, music's function as a means of social and political expression and encouraging support for a particular ideology or movement is central to the analysis (Street et al., 2008: 274). As Street (2011) emphasizes, music is a political expression, and it can be said that campaign songs have an important place in this axis. Music brings to the forefront a number of constitutive elements - assumptions and beliefs - that shape society and define character (Mattern, 1998: 15). Music can be more unifying and effective than other forms of political campaigning since it overcomes many barriers, including language, socioeconomic and cultural barriers (Johnson et al., 2021: 769). Music, which is as relevant to politics as other cultural forms, creates a sense of belonging and place, evoking collective memories (Smith, 1996 236; Cohen, 1995; Stokes, 1994: 3; as cited in Kearney, 2009: 236). The songs chosen in political campaigns can shape attitudes and beliefs. In the context of its use in the organization of political action as a form of communication, three modes are mentioned: deliberative, which allows for discussion about collective identity; pragmatic, which promotes a range of interests; and confrontational, which applies to a situation where communities oppose each other (Mattern, 1998: 25-32).

Music serves as a cornerstone for nationalist movements by expressing ethnic identities and employing cultural symbols. In this context, Anthony Smith's concept of ethnosymbolism explains the role of music in nationalism as a component of ethnic and cultural roots. As Smith (2009: 16) points out, ethnosymbolists emphasize the role of symbolic and subjective resources in highlighting collective actions and ideologies. This approach aims to penetrate individuals' inner worlds to understand their perceptions and visions. Music is crucial in disseminating authentic national images to a wider audience (Smith, A., 1996: 67). In other words, it can be argued that ethnosymbolism highlights the importance of cultural and ethnic symbols present in campaign music. Through these symbols, campaign music underscores a nation's history, shared values, and culture, thereby reinforcing national identity and collective memory. According to Ernest Gellner's (2008: 38) theory of nationalism, cultural homogeneity and a shared national identity are critically important for the success of political movements in modern societies. Campaign music can be employed as a tool to reinforce this shared

identity and to convey a specific nationalist message to the masses. The campaign music of political parties aims to foster identification with the party by emphasizing national values and a sense of unity among voters.

The primary purpose of music, beyond discovering and creating commonalities within a community, is communication. Accordingly, musical expression in social movements can be considered a form of cognitive practice (Eyerman & Jamison, 1998: 7). Music should be viewed as an expression of collective memory, acting as a carrier of truth. Politics thus complements music, which is itself seen as a form of knowledge and action (Eyerman & Jamison, 1998: 21-24). Music should be regarded as one of the means of conveying values that represent and reproduce politics.

It cannot be definitively stated that the music used in election campaigns has a direct and significant impact on voters in terms of voting for a particular candidate or party. However, as Akçay emphasizes (2016: 868-869), there are situations where individuals' attention is drawn to political messages, they remember those messages, and their loyalty to political parties or candidates is reinforced. Factors such as conveying political messages through an emphasis on specific concepts in campaign music and fostering a collective sense of excitement, emotion, and thought during rallies through the power of melodies can, albeit indirectly, undoubtedly influence voters.

Analysis of Songs Prepared for Propaganda in the 14 May, 2023 Election by the People's Alliance and the Nation Alliance

The illusion of life is a useful methodological approach as it enhances our understanding of how discursive linguistic symbols, along with non-discursive aesthetic symbols—such as the lyrics and musical form of a song—work together to communicate and persuade in music (Sellnow and Sellnow, 2001). A campaign song becomes a rhetorical tactic for conveying persuasive political messages to its audience; thus, analyzing political campaign songs along the axis of the interaction between both the song's lyrics and the music can yield more comprehensive results. According to this approach, music rhetorically positions itself within the listener's psyche by creating a representation of life driven by the experiences and emotions it conveys both musically and lyrically. A song is considered coherent when the emotional messages of the music and the conceptual message of the lyrics come together, reinforce one another, and make the overall message

more compelling.

Critical research on discourse does not only aim to describe discourse structures but also seeks to explain them in terms of social interaction and particularly the characteristics of social structure (van Dijk, 2001: 353). Van Dijk divides his discourse analysis model into two structures: macro and micro. Macro structures are divided into schematic and thematic analysis, while micro structures focus on words, sounds, sentence patterns, and meanings (van Dijk, 1988a: 14-15; van Dijk, 1988b: 26). The aspects of discourse can be discussed in terms of speech acts, sentence forms, and semantic meanings. Van Dijk emphasizes the need for a global definition of discourse for all its parts or for a global definition of all discourses, stating that discourses usually have a theme or topic, and that this semantic aspect cannot be simply explained in terms of isolated sentence semantics. Therefore, he suggests that we need some form of macro structures to deal with these types of global meanings that allow us to define the meanings of entire paragraphs, sections, or chapters of written discourse and a type of macro syntax to characterize the overall forms of discourse (van Dijk, 1988b: 26).

In an era where authoritarian leaders are on the rise, it has been argued that Honorable President Erdogan's removal through democratic means could serve as an effective demonstration to democrats worldwide that authoritarian leaders can be defeated (The Economist, 2023). There has been a strong emphasis on the hopes that the future government will lead Turkey towards social, cultural, and economic progress and repair relations with the West. In such an atmosphere, the analysis of the discourse conveyed by the election songs used in the election holds significance in terms of social and political communication.

Due to its role as a carrier of many traditions, music produces open-ended images and symbols, distinguishing it from ideology. The music of social movements resembles ideology in that it functions as a carrier of symbols and images. Both music and ideology promote action through symbolic representation, but ideology tends to be more explicit. When interpreting music, there is an implicit directive aspect of ideology (Eyerman & Jamison, 1998: 46). Propaganda songs primarily reflect the attitudes of a particular movement, and most of them receive support – sometimes hidden from view – from within the movement (Denisoff, 1966: 588).

Songs, driven by commercial motives and aided by communication technologies, are widely used in society, serving various functions. In political elections, they have become essential in campaigns, instilling ideas, and evoking emotions.

Campaign songs facilitate the establishment of a connection between the candidate and the electorate while also forming part of a larger rhetorical action (Brummett, 1994; Foss, 1989; as cited in Johnson et al., 2021: 770). This is because the selection of specific music has the ability to influence listeners as they receive a message. As Kizer (1983) notes, this form of persuasion occurs subconsciously while listeners absorb the lyrics and rhythm. In the recent election in Turkey, only the logos of the Republican People's Party and Good Party, which are part of the Nation Alliance, appeared on the ballot. Other alliance members such as the Felicity Party, Democrat Party, Democratic and Progress Party, and Future Party nominated their candidates through the Republican People's Party's list. Therefore, this analysis examines the common campaign songs for the Nation Alliance's candidate, Kılıçdaroğlu, and the parliamentary election song of the Good Party. Additionally, the songs of the Justice and Development Party, a member of the People's Alliance currently in power in Turkey, are also included. Within this context, the focus is placed on the direction of the musical discourse that constitutes the core of the study. Furthermore, to achieve a comprehensive analysis, the study evaluates the political messages and ideologies conveyed by the campaign songs through a detailed linguistic analysis of the lyrics and a visual analysis of the music videos.

Analysis of the 2023 Election Songs of the Nation Alliance

A form of communication that disregards the sound, rhythm, and words created by music is unhelpful. If music plays a role in political participation, its unique qualities must be acknowledged (Kelley, 1997: 37; as cited in Street et al., 2008: 276). When preparing campaign songs, musical elements such as rhythm, tempo, melody, and orchestration are designed to convey the political message as clearly as possible, as each of these elements carries explicit or implicit social meanings and connotations. Therefore, it is important to examine the technical characteristics of the songs used in election campaigns.

Within the scope of the May 14, 2023, elections, the People's Alliance introduced two songs to the Turkish voters: *Sana Söz* (CHP, 2023b) and *Haydi* (CHP, 2023a; T24, 2023).

The song titled *Sana Söz* is composed in the key of G minor at a tempo of 145.17 BPM. G minor, which denotes the natural minor (Aeolian) mode, generally creates a melancholic and introspective emotional atmosphere. This key allows the song *Sana Söz Baharlar Gelecek* to express a perspective that addresses social issues and offers hope for the future. A song in this mode can have a profound emotional impact while addressing themes of social change, hope, and aspiration. The tempo of 145.17 BPM indicates that the song has a fast pace. This high tempo creates a dynamic and energetic atmosphere, enhancing the song's energy and movement, and providing an exciting experience for the listeners. In a political context, the fast tempo ensures that the song grabs attention powerfully and expresses the candidate's vision in an energetic manner. Additionally, this tempo offers encouragement and motivation to voters for action and change. With a noise level of -5 dB, the song is also quite prominent in terms of volume, making it attention-grabbing and effective for large events. Following the technical analysis, the Nation Alliance's *Sana Söz* election song has been examined from a macro-structural perspective.

The dark weather depicted at the beginning of the video represents Turkey's state before the election, which later gives way to a bright and vibrant atmosphere symbolizing the Turkey that lies beyond the election. The thematic structure emphasizes the idea of a bright future. It highlights the need to vote for Kılıçdaroğlu to achieve a respected, happy, and prosperous life in Turkey. Consequently, the intended meaning aligns with the visual content of the video.

From a schematic perspective, the video clip begins with the portrayal of a young girl who is frightened by lightning during dark and rainy weather. Subsequently, a plant sprouting, accompanied by bird song, is shown. The same young girl, awakening to a new morning, opens the closed curtains and hears her mother's voice saying, 'Spring will come again, I promise.' The clip features happy children picking flowers amidst the greenery. It also includes scenes of workers cooperating and sharing their bread, a group enjoying concerts, students and teachers in a university setting, and an Atatürk statue. The presence of a child in the kitchen with her mother creates a sense of warmth and intimacy in the video.

The inclusion of joyful youth going to school and a university environment emphasizes the significance of education and prioritizes an administration that values education and

science. Not only family and education but also the working ethos is highlighted. The importance of workers' collaboration in a fraternal and secure environment is emphasized. Furthermore, the video includes people celebrating in the streets after sports matches. Considering recent canceled concerts, the inclusion of individuals singing, playing music, and attending concerts in the video can be seen as positively influencing the public.

The video clip incorporates elements that resonate with individuals' own lives. Particularly significant is the attention given to children who have the potential to shape the future. All the individuals in the video are shown with smiling faces and filled with hope. The video touches upon various aspects of life, including sports, education, science, social life, and entertainment, reaching every domain and segment of society. It emphasizes the ideal of a happy and prosperous society that Turkey and humanity envision. The video concludes with Kılıçdaroğlu shaking hands with all the candidates of the People's Alliance, symbolizing unity, and tolerance. Additionally, Kılıçdaroğlu giving a flower to a young child under a blossoming tree and reaffirming that 'Spring will come again' signifies the need for change and the effort to prevent difficult situations for children in the future.

A micro analysis of the election song *Sana Söz* has also been conducted. The syntactic structure of the song lyrics predominantly consists of active sentences, and the phrase 'promise you' itself is in the active voice, addressing the recipient from the perspective of the first person singular. Throughout the song, a process of making promises takes place. Adjectives such as fearless, outspoken, not remaining a spectator, singing songs out loud, believing in art and the future, respecting expertise, and having a solid foundation are all used to describe the Turkey for which they are coming together as a first-person plural. The intention is to convey the idea of accomplishing all these promises together, emphasizing a sense of unity.

In general, active sentences are preferred to enhance comprehensibility. The song consists of simple and short sentences. The sentences expressing how the Republican People's Party envisions Turkey are voiced by Kılıçdaroğlu. As a presidential candidate, the phrase 'Mr. Kemal will not turn back on his word' also provides assurance to the public.

Lexically, the choice of adjectives such as fearless, outspoken, not remaining a spectator, singing songs out loud, believing in art and the future, respecting expertise, and having a solid foundation carries positive connotations. Words such as spring, hope, future, and promise also serve to reinforce feelings of hope and trust.

The song titled *Haydi* was composed in an E-minor key at a tempo of 105.36 BPM. Modal-wise, E minor is typically recognized in the natural minor (Aeolian mode). This key creates a melancholic and reflective atmosphere, providing deep emotional impacts. E minor is often chosen to express themes of sadness, longing, and internal struggle. It has the potential to effectively convey the candidate's deep empathy for social issues and determination to address these problems. The tempo of 105.36 BPM gives the song a moderate pace, which draws listeners' attention, balances the song's emotional intensity, and makes it easier for voters to listen to and understand the song's message carefully.

The macro analysis of the song *Haydi* involves a thematic analysis followed by a schematic examination. In terms of the relationship between what is conveyed and what is depicted, a coherence can be observed thematically. The video encourages voters to cast their votes on May 14th. In addition to motivating people to vote, the lyrics also depict the crisis in Turkey. The visuals also show people happily and unitedly going to vote.

From a schematic perspective, the video includes visuals of an Anatolian house with modest economic conditions, a luxury apartment in the city, a distant village, and children herding sheep. People from all corners of Turkey are highlighted in the video, without any discrimination based on disability, rural or urban living, occupation, student status, or religious head-covering. By showing people from different backgrounds and urging them to vote, the video emphasizes the importance of this election. The image of a sign saying 'I went to vote, I'll be back' hanging on a shop window conveys the message of actively participating in the election. The inclusion of Kılıçdaroğlu's efforts to communicate with young people through social media is significant. The economic crisis affecting the people is also depicted through a scene of a greengrocer saying, 'How much for onions?' while holding onions in his hand.

Moreover, the message of the video is clearly demonstrated through the depiction of people herding sheep, riding motorcycles, and people of all ages going to vote, regardless of whether they are old or young. There is a strong emphasis on the critical importance

of people voting and the impact of this on Turkey's future. The presence of individuals playing musical instruments such as *saz*, *tulum*, clarinet, and violin reflects an inclusive perspective that encompasses various art forms and diverse segments of society. From one perspective, the video portrays election day. The phrase '*haydi*' – let's go to the ballot box together – is reinforced with visuals. The portrayal of people eagerly going to the ballot box aims to encourage voters. The embrace between a mother and child, the hands of young people on each other's shoulders, and the depiction of a family going to vote together by car highlight the significance and excitement of election day, indicating the possibility of a new horizon opening in all areas for Turkey. At the end of the video, Kılıçdaroğlu and the leaders of the alliance stand in the foreground, while children and young people are shown under a tree with blooming pink flowers in the background. The video concludes with the statement 'Turkey will win.' The words of unity, solidarity, future, happiness, and hope are reinforced through visuals.

Analysis of the Election Song *Haydi* reveals that the lyrics sung to the melody prominently feature the statements of individuals appearing in the video. The use of first-person plural pronouns such as 'let's fulfill our duty' and 'let's finish it in the first round' is prevalent. In the melodic part of the song, phrases like 'let's win,' 'we're tired and fed up,' and 'we've had enough' also utilize the first-person plural. This emphasizes the idea of accomplishing everything together and conveys the message that success in the election can only be achieved with the support and participation of the people. The majority of the song's lyrics are simple in structure. Campbell and Brody (2008: 14; as cited in Schoening & Kasper, 2011) explain that hooks are valuable to songwriters because they embed themselves in the listener's memory, much like a hook catching in a fish's mouth at the end of a line. Accordingly, the word 'let's go!' is the most frequently used word in the song and symbolizes a call to action. There is a strong emphasis on the call for people to vote, as the main theme of the song is to rescue Turkey from its challenging circumstances by voting together. The choice to use active and simple sentence structures instead of passive and complex ones aims to achieve this fundamental purpose. As is evident from the use of words such as 'tomorrow,' 'justice,' 'promise,' and 'let's go,' the song emphasizes the importance of the election for the Turkish people and urges them to act by voting. The video ends with the display of Kılıçdaroğlu's name.

In the music video of the election song *Sana Söz* the presidential candidate of the Nation

Alliance, Kılıçdaroğlu, stands out with his voice. Additionally, his presence is reinforced by his appearance at the end of the video. The other election song *Haydi* is more focused on the general parliamentary elections; therefore, all the leaders of the Nation Alliance are featured in the video. The message conveyed is the need for an election where people come together without party divisions, emphasizing that Turkey's problems can only be resolved through unity. No party is highlighted in the songs. Instead, the focus is on the people and their concerns, with particular emphasis on the importance of the future for young people and children.

In the international press, news articles have highlighted both Honorable President Erdogan's weakest days in his 20-year rule and the possibility of a comprehensive reshaping of Turkey in the 14 May elections. For example, one article emphasized that a calm campaign was conducted by Kılıçdaroğlu, in contrast to Honorable President Erdogan's confrontational attitudes and flashy statements. It was suggested that the target audience of the campaign comprised voters who had become tired of Honorable President Erdogan's 20-year rule and practices (Hubbard & Harman, 2023; *Independent Türkçe*, 2023).

The Good Party is part of the Nation Alliance, and its leader, Akşener, is not a presidential candidate. However, the fact that the Good Party is included alongside the Republican People's Party on the ballot paper for the parliamentary elections demonstrates the party's confidence in its potential votes. The election song, which is one of the factors that will help them secure the desired number of votes, is significant in this regard. The Good Party presented a campaign song titled *Tarihi Sen Yaz* (*İYİ Parti*, 2023) to the Turkish voters for the 14 May elections.

The election song *Tarihi Sen Yaz* is a modified version of Ajda Pekkan's song *Write Write Write* (Netd music, 2014), tailored to fit the Good Party.

The song titled *Tarihi Sen Yaz* was composed in the key of F minor at a tempo of 147 BPM. In F minor, the song is in the natural minor (Aeolian) mode. F minor creates a deep and melancholic emotional atmosphere. The use of this key emphasizes a serious and emotional perspective on social issues and on the need for change. The tempo of 147 BPM indicates a fast pace. The combination of a fast tempo and the F minor key has the potential to make a strong call for active change. These musical features can convey to

voters that the candidate adopts a determined and energetic approach to social issues. With a noise level of -5 dB, the song is relatively loud. This makes it particularly effective in outdoor rallies or events with large audiences, as it ensures that the music stands out and helps convey the message more powerfully.

The video includes footage of people preparing to vote and casting their ballots, like the *Haydi* music video of the Republican People's Party. In the macro analysis conducted thematically and schematically on the election song *Tarihi Sen Yaz*, it can be said that the intended meaning and the depicted visuals are aligned. Thematically, the focus is on the morning of the election day and the encouragement of people to vote. The video conveys an overall cheerful and lively atmosphere.

From a schematic perspective, the opening of the video shows the morning of 14 May, with the phrase '14 May morning' written on the screen. The video starts with a young girl waking up in the morning, followed by scenes of voters setting their alarms to go and vote. The urgency displayed by family members at the breakfast table, pointing to the time, signifies the importance of voting and the eagerness of voters for change to come. Like the election song videos of the Republican People's Party, the video includes older and younger voters from various segments of society, without any distinction based on social status or other factors. Both urban and rural dwellers are depicted, highlighting their enthusiastic participation in the voting process. The video strongly conveys a sense of unity and togetherness, bringing together voters from all walks of life. The inclusion of a paper with the message 'I went to write history, I'll be back' (with the sun, the emblem of the Good Party, drawn underneath) hanging on a shop window is like the scene in the *Haydi* video where the phrase 'I went to vote, I'll be back' is displayed on a shop window.

The Good Party's election campaign video features the act of stamping the ballot paper for the Good Party while the lyrics simultaneously mention phrases like 'stamp the seal for Good Party, give power to the people.' Afterwards, the video shows the stamp of approval placed under the names of Kılıçdaroğlu and the Good Party on the ballot paper. The focus is on the voters casting their votes in the ballot box. At the end of the video, alongside the phrase 'Turkey Will Write History in the Historic Election of May 14th!' there is the emblem of Good Party and a picture of Akşener.

In the micro analysis of the election song *Tarihi Sen Yaz* it is observed that active and

simple sentence structures are used syntactically. This allows for a clear language to be presented to the listeners, as in the election songs of the Republican People's Party. The use of first-person plural pronouns like 'Why are we dividing? Why aren't we living freely and humanely?' is prevalent. In the overall lyrics, second-person singular pronouns are used, such as 'Write history, stamp the ballot paper, give power to the people.' Here, the second-person singular pronoun encompasses both individuals and the entire voting population. Words like respect, brotherhood, love, the sun will rise, and faces will smile convey the desired outcome after the election.

The act of singing, in some cases, enables individuals to express certain ideas that they may be hesitant to articulate otherwise, allowing them to hear themselves while doing so (Rosenthal, 2008: 14). The song highlights that the country's current state does not possess positive attributes as portrayed in the lyrics and emphasizes that voters can change this situation by casting their votes.

It can be said that the original versions of the songs *Sana Söz* and *Tarihi Sen Yaz* have a collective and nostalgic meaning for Turkish society. These songs are musical artefacts that evoke the social memory of a certain period and carry a broad appeal to large masses. Music is considered not only a means of individual emotion, but also as an important carrier of collective memory and social identity (Anderson, 2006: 6-7). In this context, these songs have been adopted by various segments of the Turkish society over time, associated with a specific period or event, and have gained a place in the collective social memory.

Especially when used in political campaigns, such songs not only convey the message of a political movement to the masses, but also appeal to past experiences, ideals and common feelings of society at large (Cohen, 1995 422-423). The original versions of songs such as *Sana Söz* and *Tarihi Sen Yaz* create a social common ground, creating a nostalgic bond between individuals. This nostalgia in turn provides the opportunity to make comparisons between today's social and political conditions and those of the original period of the songs. Thus, these songs not only provide a musical background, but also reshape listeners' memories of the past by reviving them and thus playing a role in the continuous reconstruction of social memory.

In this election of songs of the Nation Alliance, including the Good Party, an active attitude

is demonstrated, where the listener is made aware of the present problematic situation. These songs provide a solution or an action plan to improve things. Many of these songs, also known as magnetic propaganda songs, are suitable for group singing, thereby further involving the listener in the reality of the situation, and increasing their identification with social action (Denisoff, 1966: 586). The focus is on offering a solution within the movement and attempting to engage people intellectually and emotionally in social action.

Analysis of the Justice and Development Party's 2023 Election Songs

The songs *Söyle* (AK Parti, 2023a), composed by Yücel Arzen, *Doğruya Doğru* (AK Parti, 2023c) and *Bu Yüzyılın Adı Türkiye Olsun* (AK Parti, 2023b) composed by Uğur Işılak are the election songs of the Justice and Development Party.

The song titled *Söyle* was composed in the key of B \flat minor at a tempo of 74.63 BPM. B \flat minor provides a natural minor mode (Aeolian mode), creating a typically melancholic and introspective atmosphere. The use of B \flat minor in the campaign song fosters an environment conducive to deep reflection on social issues. This key is suitable for expressing themes of loss, longing, or internal struggle, and can enhance the depth of the song's social message. The tempo of 74.63 BPM indicates a slow pace, which contributes to a deep and contemplative atmosphere. A slower tempo can effectively highlight the emotional content of the song, making voters feel that the candidate offers a comprehensive understanding of, and empathy towards, social issues. Additionally, the slow tempo allows listeners to engage with and evaluate the song's message more attentively.

In the macro analysis, thematically the song reflects a sense of Turkishness, with an emphasis on war, and on the spirit of the national struggle. When analyzed schematically, the video and the intended meanings align. The video starts with the Turkish flag waving. It emphasizes the need to keep hope alive and states that the sun rises upon the nation. A scene with the rays of the sun shining is shown. The rhythm of the song gradually increases. The lyrics mention horses running at full speed, which is complemented by visual footage of running horses. These visuals are reinforced with the phrase 'Remember, you are the hero who writes history.' In this way, references are made to the challenging wars of the past, emphasizing that the country was not easily won and needs

to be rebuilt together once again. The video includes footage of Atatürk's Mausoleum and marching soldiers. It showcases Anatolian people by showing an Anatolian woman serving meals on plates. The video highlights Turkishness, with abundant Turkish flags and crowds at rallies. Honorable President Erdoğan appears, reciting the Turkish National Anthem.

Singer Yücel Arzen stated that his song *Söyle* carries the spirit of the national struggle (A Haber, 2023). Arzen's song, as he emphasized, makes references to past wars and the spirit of resistance.

In the micro analysis of the song *Söyle*, syntactically it can be observed that second-person singular pronouns are predominantly used. Phrases like 'Do not be afraid, my nation, who will stop you, feel your heart' address the people, referring to them as 'you'. The use of first-person plural pronouns is more prevalent in phrases like 'Let's rebuild the national struggle, the sun has risen upon us.' The lyrics also feature active sentence structures. The word choices such as Anatolia, freedom, fear not, and national struggle align with the intended message. The song does not specifically highlight voting or the election.

In conclusion, the Justice and Development Party chose election songs that heavily emphasize the spirit of Turkishness and the national struggle. The songs aim to mobilize emotions and have a strong anthem-like quality. The lyrics focus on the nation's resilience and the historical struggles it has overcome. The songs do not specifically address voting or the election.

The song titled *Doğruya Doğru* was composed in the key of C# major / D \flat major, at a tempo of 106.76 BPM. Major keys (Ionian mode) typically create a bright, positive, and energetic atmosphere. The use of C# major in *Doğruya Doğru* allows the song to convey an optimistic and positive message. This key can express a positive outlook on social issues and a solution-oriented approach. Additionally, major keys have the potential to generate a positive mood among listeners. The tempo of 106.76 BPM indicates a moderately fast pace. In a political context, this tempo creates an energetic atmosphere and can inspire courage for action and change among listeners. Additionally, the song has a noise level of -11 dB, indicating a relatively low noise level. This suggests that the song may have a calmer and more introspective quality. The lower volume can be used to

create a more personal and intimate atmosphere.

In the macro analysis of the election song *Doğruya Doğru*, it can be said that the visuals and meanings are consistent with each other. The song emphasizes the Justice and Development Party's message to the people that they have done everything for the nation and will continue this path.

Black and white footage is used to present news about Istanbul's water and waste problems and headlines related to the indigenous automobile produced by Turkish engineers in 129 days and the 'revolutionary' car. People sitting in a café are dissatisfied with this news. While these visuals are shown, the lyrics 'say what it is, straight to the truth' can be heard. It is emphasized that false news is being spread and that the Justice and Development Party will never deviate from the truth. The video also includes the Turkish-made Togg automobile.

The unfortunate events that occurred during the presentations of previous governments' experimental and revolutionary cars are portrayed as a great mistake. These visuals are accompanied by the lyrics 'look at what we've seen, what we've been through, the shadows have changed, the balances have shifted,' completing the message. The focus shifts to the current Togg car, its speed, the road conditions, and a happy family traveling in it, while a comparison is made to the cars produced during the previous governments' period, which couldn't move due to a lack of fuel. The lyrics also include the phrase 'we never abandoned,' while showing images of hospitals and doctors, which can be interpreted as a reference to doctors who want to leave the country due to challenging working conditions in recent times. The lyrics include references to domestic and national achievements, supported by visuals of the Baykar Bayraktar Kızılelma unmanned combat drone, the Kanuni drilling ship, and other images. The previous governments, especially during the Republican People's Party's era, are criticized by presenting newspaper headlines from that time. Honorable President Erdoğan himself is not present in the Justice and Development Party's election songs, except for a single appearance on a poster displayed in a hospital.

Syntactically, active and simple sentence structures are used. This enhances the comprehensibility of the lyrics. The first-person plural pronouns are predominantly used throughout the song. Words like indigenous, national, nation, truth, and Turkey are

chosen to emphasize Turkey and the concept of truth. The phrase ‘what it was before the beginning’ refers to the previous governments, implying a strategy of criticizing the opposing side.

The lyrics and music of the song *Bu Yüzyılın Adı Türkiye Olsun* belong to Uğur Işılak. The song has been described as the Century Anthem. It focuses on Turkey and its celebration of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Republic in 2023.

The song ‘This Century's Name is Turkey’ is composed in the key of C# minor (D \flat minor), natural minor (Aeolian) mode, tempo 120 BPM. The mode suggests a melancholic and contemplative emotional expression. C# minor allows the song to create a deep, introspective, and sorrowful atmosphere. Accordingly, the song may reflect a serious perspective on social change and the future. Minor keys generally encourage deep reflection on social issues and political change. The tempo of 120 BPM indicates a moderately fast pace. Medium tempos create a dynamic yet balanced atmosphere. C# minor key and 120 BPM tempo create a strong impact when addressing themes of social change and hope. *Bu Yüzyılın Adı Türkiye Olsun* could be effective in highlighting important topics such as social justice, national identity, and social reforms. The song may encourage listeners to reflect on national issues and strengthen their commitment to the candidate's vision. With a noise level of -9 dB, the song has a moderately high volume. This ensures that the song is attention-grabbing while still providing a strong impact without overwhelming the listener.

Macro analysis reveals that the visuals used in the song align with its intended meaning. It showcases Honorable President Erdoğan and his wife greeting the public, highlighting the Turkish-made Togg car. The lyrics emphasize Turkey's achievements, accompanied by visuals of various accomplishments such as the Baykar Bayraktar Kızılelma drone, airport openings, high-speed trains, and metros. Honorable President Erdoğan is shown welding on the Togg car, and the video features the Abdulhamid Han drilling ship with advanced technology. The visuals also include the Bosphorus Bridge, Turkish flags, and footage from political rallies.

The lyrics include Turkey, history, Republic, state, and nation as subjects. Phrases like ‘sacred state,’ ‘glorious history,’ and ‘the Republic's centenary’ reinforce the intended

message. Words like hope and love are used for Turkey. The lyrics emphasize that 2023 will be Turkey's year and convey the message that greater achievements are yet to come. The lyrics include phrases like 'the century began with the sacred state,' 'the great nation's ambitious goals,' and 'in the centenary of the Republic,' employing inverted sentence structures to maintain rhyme in the lyrics. The lyrics feature active sentence structures, and complex sentence structures are avoided.

In the 2023 general elections on May 14th, the Justice and Development Party emerged as the winner in the parliamentary elections. The second round of the presidential election, in which the candidate of the People's Alliance, Honorable President Erdoğan, participated, was repeated on May 28, 2023. Honorable President Erdoğan won the election with 52.18% of the vote (YSK, 2023).

Conclusion

Politicians employ numerous public relations companies to influence the public and keep voters under an ideological bombardment through elements such as television advertisements, social media campaigns, posters, and election songs. Given that major politicians utilize similar tactics, it is reasonable to assume a competition in capturing the attention of voters. Election songs constitute a crucial component of political parties' campaigns in this regard. By combining lyrics and melodies in a rhythmic manner, songs help evoke people's emotions and stir up enthusiasm. Moreover, their easily memorable structure allows for the delivery of societal messages in a more lasting way.

Music may transition from being an art form to an ideology or propaganda tool. In the context of political communication, both political leaders and parties aim to influence undecided voters to vote in their favor. It is important to have a visible presence in the media to shape voters' opinions and alleviate their indecisiveness. Music elicits emotions and facilitates a genuine connection with individuals. Therefore, music is utilized to establish an emotional bond between the party and the voter during political communication campaigns.

The Nation Alliance prioritizes reestablishing the independence of state institutions and strengthening public confidence in Turkish democracy, focusing on sensitivity to public concerns and standing by the people. President Erdoğan has maintained his leadership

role in Turkey since 2003 and aims to run for a third five-year term in the 2023 elections. Kılıçdaroğlu, on the other hand, has put forward his candidacy for the presidency with the intention of presenting a different approach to governance. The reflection of this social and political atmosphere in election songs highlights the significant interplay between politics and culture.

On 14 May, 2023, both the presidential election and the 28th term parliamentary general election were held. The song *Sana Söz* included in the sample was prepared for the presidential election of the Nation Alliance's joint candidate Kılıçdaroğlu. As Kılıçdaroğlu is a Republican People's Party member, the party's emblem appears in the video of the song. The song *Haydi* is the joint campaign song of the Nation Alliance, and it features the leaders of all parties within the alliance in the video. Both songs emphasize the crucial importance of Turkey's future and the necessity of voting. They generally attempt to address the problems Turkey is facing and highlight that these problems can only be addressed by voting for the Nation Alliance. Particularly, by focusing on young people and children who will shape the future, it is stated that they are the ones who will determine it. No social or economic distinction is made. The language used is peaceful and constructive. The words used in the songs are understandable, and the constructed sentences are in a simple structure. With its easy memorability, the songs facilitate memorization by the voters. The words 'let's go!' and 'promise you' create both an activating and reassuring connotation.

The election song of the Good Party, *Tarihi Sen Yaz*, shows thematic similarities to the other two songs prepared jointly by the Nation Alliance. The song expresses discomfort with polarizing practices and emphasizes the importance of voting. The phrase 'you write history' signifies that duty and responsibility belong to the people.

Overall, the language of the songs prepared by the Nation Alliance is constructive and unifying. The focus of the songs, which address both the resolution of the country's problems and a concerned, forward-looking society, is on Turkey's future and the necessity for change. Most importantly, the songs emphasize that citizens' votes are critical in this election. In this regard, the Nation Alliance opted for magnetic propaganda songs. The songs used evoke a sense of solidarity based on dissatisfaction with the current situation in the country and ways to overcome it.

Three songs prepared for the Justice and Development Party were examined. These songs highlight their past accomplishments and emphasize Turkishness. The actions of previous governments are addressed in these songs. Honorable President Erdogan is visible in the videos of the three songs, while other alliance candidates are not featured. The songs serve as propaganda for Honorable President Erdogan. Efforts have been made to construct sentences in an effective and understandable manner. The songs highlight a march-like melody.

In terms of thematic analysis, it is observed that the titles of the examined songs are consistent with their content. They do not feature complex words or sentence structures from a syntactic perspective.

In the Nation Alliance's election songs, minor keys have been favored and supported by fast to moderate tempos. This combination of deep, melancholic tones with corresponding tempos has reinforced the emotional intensity of the music. In contrast, the Justice and Development Party, part of the People's Alliance, has employed different musical choices in their election songs.

For instance, in the song *Söyle*, a minor key and a slow tempo are used to emphasize the candidate's empathy towards social issues. In *Doğruya Doğru*, a major key and a moderate tempo create an energetic musical atmosphere. The song *Bu Yüzyılın Adı Türkiye Olsun* features a minor key and a moderate tempo, similar to those used by the Nation Alliance.

Overall, the People's Alliance's election songs utilize a variety of keys and tempos to create diverse emotional states and reach a broad range of voters. On the other hand, the Nation Alliance highlights the harmony between melancholic tones and fast tempos in their songs, aiming to balance emotional depth and convey a dynamic, resolute image of their candidate amidst a complex political climate.

In conclusion, music has been used to enhance a candidate's image and influence audiences through vocal and rhythmic performance, as well as to communicate the messages contained in the lyrics. Music, in political campaigns, has the potential to express crucial themes like social change, hope, and justice, going beyond merely being an entertainment element. The role of music in election campaigns is thus a significant

area for future research. Specifically, studying the impact of different musical structures and emotional atmospheres on voter behavior is an important topic for deeper investigation. Analyzing the production processes of songs, the media channels through which they are broadcast (and the inequalities created by the media landscape), the actors involved, and their intentions, as well as understanding how voters receive and incorporate these cultural products into their daily lives, could provide more comprehensive insights. Ethnographic methods could be valuable in this context for future studies.

REFERENCES

Anderson, Benedict. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso Books.

A Haber. (2023). “İşte AK Parti’nin yeni seçim şarkısı: Söyle” (“Here is the AK Party’s new election song: Tell me”). Retrieved from <https://www.ahaber.com.tr/video/gundem-videolari/iste-ak-partinin-yeni-secim-sarkisi-soyle>

Adebayo, Joseph Olusegun. (2017). Vote not Fight’: Examining music’s role in fostering non-violent elections in Nigeria. *African Journals Online*, 17(1): 55-77.

AK Parti. (2023a, May 13). *Söyle Milletim! Kim Durduracak Anasından Hür Doğanı | AK Parti*. (Tell Me, My Nation! Who Can Stop Someone Born Free? | AK Party) [Video File] Retrieved 2023, from AK Parti: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Do6NV9rc9u4&t=2s&ab_channel=AKParti

AK Parti. (2023b, May 13). *Bu Yüzyılın Adı Türkiye Olsun - Uğur Işılak | Yeni Müzik | AK Parti* (Let the Name of This Century Be Turkey – Uğur Işılak | New Music | AK Party). [Video File] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGU6-M6YNOQ&ab_channel=AKParti

AK Parti. (2023c, May 13). *Doğruya Doğru - Uğur Işılak | Yeni Klip | AK Parti* (Towards the Righteous – Uğur Işılak | New Music Video | AK Party). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7 ORD0JICe4&ab_channel=AKParti

Akçay, Şevki Özer (2016). Seçim Çalışmalarında Müzik Kullanımının Seçmenlerin Oy Tercihlerine Etkileri [The Effects of Music Use in Election Campaigns on Voters' Voting Preferences]. 1. Erzurum Ulusal Müzik Bilimleri Sempozyumu Bildiriler [1st Symposium of National Musicology] Emrah Lehimler and Koray Çelenk (Eds.), (pp. 868-869). Erzurum: Atatürk University.

Aydemir, Aslı. (2021). Siyasal Kampanya Aracı Olarak Seçim Müzikleri: 2017 Referandum Örneği (Election Music as a Political Campaign Tool: The 2017 Referendum Example). *Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi SBE Dergisi*, 11(3): 1298-1315.

Bakır, Zeynep Nihan, Aydın, Gülten Adalı, and Birol, Murat. (2018). 2017 Anayasa Değişikliği Halk Oylaması Çerçevesinde Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi İle Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Referandum Şarkıları Üzerine Bir Söylem Analizi (Discourse Analysis of the Justice and Development Party and the Republican People's Party Referendum Songs within the Framework of the 2017 Constitutional Amendment Referendum). *Gümüşhane Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Elektronik Dergisi*, 6(1): 398-427.

Behr, Adam. (2022). Music, Digitalization, and Democratic Elections: The Changing Soundtrack of Electoral Politics in the UK. *Popular Music and Society*, 45(1): 31-47. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/03007766.2021.1984020>

Bennett, Jane (2001). *The Enchantment of Modern Life- Attachments, Crossings and Ethics*. United Kingdom: Princeton University Press.

Bogers, Gary. (2019). "Music and the Presidency: How Campaign Songs Sold the Image of Presidential Candidates" Bachelor of Arts, University of Central Florida. Florida: USA. Retrieved from <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorstheses/511>

Budak, Emrah. (2018). Siyasal İletişimde Propaganda Aracı Olarak Seçim Müzikleri: 24 Haziran 2018 Seçimleri Örneği (Election Music as a Propaganda Tool in Political Communication: The Case of the June 24, 2018 Elections). *Siyaset, Ekonomi Ve Yönetim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 6(5): 31-45.

Charles, Christopher (2006). The Psychology of Music and Electioneering in The 2002 Jamaican Election. *Social and Economic Studies*: 133-166. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27866461>

CHP – Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi. (01.05.2023a). *İlk Turda Bitirelim #Haydi (Let's Finish It in the First Round #Let'sGo)* [Video File]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSVeWvEYUA&t=15s&ab_channel=CHP-CumhuriyetHalkPartisi

T24. (04.05.2023). *Kılıçdaroğlu, seçim şarkısının tamamını paylaştı: Haydi! (Kılıçdaroğlu shared the full election song: Let's Go!)* [Video File]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPmqSrvrhL8&t=4s&ab_channel=T24

CHP – Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi. (27.03.2023b). *Sana Söz Yine Baharlar Gelecek (Promise You, Spring Will Come Again)*. [Video File]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEOZYJr4Xm8&ab_channel=CHP-CumhuriyetHalkPartisi

Cohen, Sara. (1995). "Sounding out the City: Music and the Sensuous Production of Place" *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 20(4): 434-446.

Cook, Nicholas. (1998). *Music: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cumhuriyet. (2023, March 24). "Cumhur İttifakı'nı oluşturan 4 partiden YSK önünde açıklama" (Statement in front of the Supreme Election Council by the four parties forming the People's Alliance) Retrieved from <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/siyaset/cumhur-ittifakini-olusturan-4-partiden-ysk-onunde-aciklama-2064530>

Denisoff, Serge. (1966). "Songs of Persuasion: A Sociological Analysis of Urban Propaganda Songs" *The Journal of American Folklore*, 79(314): 581-589. doi:10.2307/538223

Denisoff, Serge. (1968). "Protest Movements: Class Consciousness and the Propaganda Song" *The Sociological Quarterly*, 9(2): 228-247. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4105044>

Eyerman, Ron, and Jamison, Andrew. (1998). *Music and social movements- Mobilizing traditions in the twentieth century*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Feldman, Martha. (2002). "Foreword" *Musics and Marx: Ideas Practice Politics*, Ed. Regula Burckhardt Qureshi: pp. ix-xiii. New York: Routledge.

Frith, Simon. (1996). *Performing Rites- On The Value of Popular Music*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Gellner, Ernest. (2008). *Nations and Nationalism*. New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Gilbert, Jeremy, and Pearson, Ewan. (1999). *Discographies/ Dance music, culture and the politics of sound*. England: Routledge.

Girgin, Özlem. (2020). "Doksanlı Yıllarda Müzik ve Siyaset: Seçim Şarkıları Üzerine Bir Araştırma" (Music and Politics in the 1990s: A Study on Election Songs) Master Thesis, Necmettin Erbakan University Konya: TÜRKİYE

Graber, Doris, and Smith, James. (2006). "Political Communication Faces the 21st Century" *Journal of Communication*: 479-507. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2005.tb02682.x

Heisbourg, Emmanuel, and Feitosa, Fernando. (2021). "Does music affect citizens' evaluations of candidates?" *Politics and the Life Sciences*, 40(2): 172-178 Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1017/pls.2021.22>

Henze, Hans Werner. (1982). *Music and Politics Collected Writings 1953-81*. (Labanyi, P. Trans.) New York: Cornell University Press.

Hubbard, Ben, and Harman, Gulsin. (2023, April 16). "Taking On Erdogan, Turkish Opposition Leader Banks on Everyman Appeal" Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/16/world/middleeast/turkey-elections-erdogan-kilicdaroglu.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage§ion=World%20News>

Independent Türkçe. (2023, April 16). "New York Times'tan Kılıçdaroğlu analizi: '5 yıl sonra emekli olacak sıradan biri gibi davranıyor'" (A New York Times Analysis of Kılıçdaroğlu: 'He Acts Like an Ordinary Person Who Will Retire in Five Years'). Retrieved from <https://www.indyturk.com/node/624651/d%C3%BCn%C3%BCn%C3%A7daro%C4%9Flu-analizi-5-y%C4%B1l-sonra-emekli-olacak-s%C4%B1radan-biri-gibi>

Işık, Gülcan (2017). 2015 "Genel Seçimlerinde AK Parti'nin Seçim Şarkılarında 'Milli Birlik Ve Beraberlik' Temalı Metaforik Yapılar" (Metaphorical Constructions with the

Theme of 'National Unity and Solidarity' in the AK Party's Election Songs during General Elections) *International Journal of Eurasia Social Sciences*, 8(28): 750-765.

İYİ Parti. (2023, May 13). *Tarihi Seçimde #TarihiSenYaz! (In the Historic Election: #YouWriteHistory!)*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jwYQIYhRU&t=8s&ab_channel=%C4%B0Y%C4%B0Parti

İzci, Süleyman Çağatay. (2019). "Seçim Meydanlarında Müzik" (Music at Election Rallies) Master's Thesis, Niğde Ömer Halis Demir University, Niğde: TÜRKİYE.

Johnson, Lottie Elizabeth, Church, Scott Haden and Randle, Quint. (2021). (In)congruities between Political Messages and Popular Music: An Analysis of Campaign Songs in U.S. Presidential Elections. *Communication Studies*, 72(4): 769-783.

Kearney, Daithí. (2009). I can't believe the news today': Music and the politics of change. *Chimera*, 24: 122-140.

Kizer, Elizabeth. (1983). Protest song lyrics as rhetoric. *Popular Music and Society*, 9(1): 3-11. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/03007768308591202>

Kızılkaya, Rıdvan. (2021). "Türk Siyasal Hayatında İkna Aracı: Seçim Müzikleri (1965-1995)" (Election Music as a Tool of Persuasion in Turkish Political Life (1965–1995)). *Anasay*, (16): 151-176.

Kumpasoğlu, Bekir Bora. (2017). "Müziğin Pragmatik Kullanımı Bağlamında Türkiye'de Seçim Şarkıları: 2014 Seçimleri Örneği" (Election Songs in Turkey in the Context of the Pragmatic Use of Music: The Case of the 2014 Elections) Master's Thesis. Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir: TÜRKİYE.

Leeuwen, Theo van. (1998). "Music and ideology: Notes toward a sociosemiotics of mass media music" *Popular Music and Society*, 22(4):25-54.

Mambwe, Elastus. (2019). "The Discursive Role of Music in African Elections: A Perspective From Zambia" *Music and Messaging in the African Political Arena* Ed. Uche T. Onyebadi: pp. 166-184. New York/ USA: IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Mattern, Mark. (1998). *Acting in concert: Music, community, and political action*. London: Rutgers University Press.

McNair, Brian. (2011). *An Introduction to Political Communication*. New York: Routledge, Tylor & Francis.

Netd music. (2014). *Ajda Pekkan - Yaz Yaz Yaz (Ajda Pekkan- Write Write Write) [Video File]*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93wsynxLMLk&ab_channel=netdm%C3%BCzik

Peterson, Lottie Elizabeth. (2018). "A Rhetorical Analysis of Campaign Songs in Modern Elections". Master's Thesis, Brigham Young University, Utah: USA Retrieved from <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/6718>

Recepoğlu, Sebahattin. (2019). "Müzik Aracılığı İle İdeolojik Sölemin Topluma Aktarılması: 1 Kasım 2015 Genel Seçimlerinde AK Parti Ve HDP Seçim Şarkıları Üzerine Bir İnceleme" (Conveying Ideological Discourse to Society through Music: An Examination of AK Party and HDP Election Songs in the November 1, 2015 General Elections). Master's Thesis, İnönü University, Malatya: TÜRKİYE

Rosenthal, Rob. (2008). "Serving the movement: The role(s) of music" *Popular Music & Society*, 25(3-4): 11-24.

Roy, William, and Dowd, Timothy (2010). What Is Sociological about Music? *The Annual Review of Sociology*, 36(1): 183-203.

Schoening, Benjamin and Kasper, Eric. (2011). *Don't Stop Thinking About the Music: The Politics of Songs and Musicians in Presidential Campaigns*. Publication place: Lexington Books.

Sellnow, Deanna, and Sellnow, Timothy. (2001). "The "Illusion of Life" rhetorical perspective: An integrated approach to the study of music as communication" *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 18(4): 395-415.

Sevilir, Mete Ertunç. (2023, April 7). Millet İttifakı partileri kimler? 2023 seçimlerinde Millet İttifakı'nda hangi partiler var? (Which parties make up the Nation Alliance? Which parties were part of the Nation Alliance in the 2023 elections?) Haber Türk. Retrieved

from <https://www.haberturk.com/millet-ittifaki-partileri-kimler-2023-secimlerinde-millet-ittifaki-nda-hangi-partiler-var-3580560/2>

Smith, Anthony. (1996). *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Smith, Anthony. (2009). *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism/ A cultural approach*. London: Routledge.

Street, John. (2003). "‘Fight the Power’: The Politics of Music and the Music of Politics" *Government and Opposition*, 38(1): 113-130.

Street, John. (2011). *Music and politics*. Cambridge: Polity.

Street, John, Hague, Seth, and Savigny, Heather. (2008). "Playing to the Crowd: The Role of Music and Musicians in Political Participation" *Political Studies Association BJPIR*, 10: 269-285.

Tanyıldızı, Nural İmik. (2012). "Siyasal İletişimde Müzik Kullanımı: 2011 Genel Seçim Şarkılarının Seçmene Etkisi" ("Use of Music in Political Communication: The Impact of the 2011 General Election Songs on Voters") *Selçuk İletişim*, 7(2): 97-110.

The Economist. (2023, May 4). "If Turkey sacks its strongman, democrats everywhere should take heart" Retrieved from <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2023/05/04/if-turkey-sacks-its-strongman-democrats-everywhere-should-take-heart>

Ünal, Ahmet, and İmik, Ünal. (2019). "Seçim Kampanyalarında Kullanılan Seçim Müziklerin Analizine Yönelik Bir Araştırma" ("A Study on the Analysis of Music Used in Election Campaigns") *İnönü University International Journal of Social Sciences & İnönü Üniversitesi Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi (INIJOSS)*, 8(2): 571-581.

van Dijk, Teun. (1988a). *News Analysis: Case Studies of international and National News in the Press*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

van Dijk, Teun. (1988b). *News as Discourse*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.

van Dijk, Teun. (2001). Critical Discourse Analysis. *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*.

Eds. Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen, and Heidi E. Hamilton: pp. 352-371. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.

Volgsten, Ulrik. (2014). "Music, Culture, Politics - Communicating Identity, Authenticity and Quality in the 21st Century" *Nordisk kulturpolitisk tidsskrift*, 17(1): 114-131.

Way, Lyndon. (2019). *Popular Music and Multimodal Critical Discourse Studies/ Ideology, Control, and Resistance in Turkey Since 2002*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Yavuz, Cahit, and Küpçük, Selçuk. (2018). "Use of Election Music for Propaganda and The Song "Dombıra" Sample In The Local Elections 2014" *MANAS Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 7(2): 375-387.

Yavuz, Cahit, and Sezer, Selim (2018). "Siyasi Partilerin 2015 Seçim Çalışmalarında Kullandığı Propaganda Müziklerinin Seçmenlerin Tercihini Yönlendirmede Rolü" ("The Role of Propaganda Music Used by Political Parties in Their 2015 Election Campaigns in Influencing Voter Preferences") *Ordu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 8(1): 29-34.

YSK. (05.06.2023). "Cumhurbaşkanı Seçimi ve 28. Dönem Milletvekili Genel Seçimi" ("The Presidential Election and the 28th Term General Election of Members of Parliament") Retrieved from <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/14-mayis-2023-secimleri/82491>

ŞEBNEM SÖZER ÖZDEMİR

Düzce University, Türkiye

sebnemsozerozdemir@yahoo.com.tr

orcid.org/0000-0001-5957-4306

Liberation Through Constraint: Discovering a 'Dance Self' Through *Kamigatamai*¹

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the learning experience of Japanese dance practitioners in relation to well-being. It is based on the researcher's fieldwork in Kyoto, particularly at the regular classes given by Nao Yoshimura in kamigatamai. The discussion revolves around unstructured accounts of Nao sensei's (Japanese, female) students concerning their reasons for starting and continuing kamigatamai classes, and how this has changed/enhanced their lives. Supported by observation of the classes, these accounts demonstrate that learning kamigatamai induces pleasure that grows out of experiences such as feeling a sense of achievement in developing new skills, attaining self-awareness and self-efficacy, finding a purpose in life (ikigai), finding a valuable distraction during the difficult time of the pandemic, belonging to a group, being able to express inner experiences through dancing, and getting in touch with one's own culture. Whereas prior studies on Japanese dance training connected it to different aspects of self-development, this research argues that learning kamigatamai in this specific context involves an affective becoming, which is achieved through the transformation of the students' bodies, manners, and values in compliance within the strict frame of the tradition in question. Yet this process also brings about a sense of liberation, as it opens up to its students an opportunity to discover a new 'dance self' that goes beyond the constraining norms of daily social life and thereby contributes to their well-being.

KEYWORDS

Dance

Well-being

Kamigatamai

¹ The draft of this article was presented orally at the Anthropology of Japan (AJJ) Annual Meeting 2022 (Kyoto, Japan). The research was based on the project titled 'Embodied Transmission of Culture through Dance: A Practice-based Investigation of *Nihonbuyō* Training' carried out at Osaka University (Japan) between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. It was supported by the 2219-International Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program (no. 1059B192001007) provided by The Scientific and Technical Research Council of Türkiye (TUBİTAK).

Introduction: The Alluring Beauty of *Jiuta*

Get off the underground train, climb the stairs to reach the daylight of central Kyoto, head towards the narrow streets just next to the busy avenue. Just a few minutes walking distance from the Apple Store and Louis Vuitton, you will reach a shop in a traditional town house, which has been producing and selling hand-made Japanese folding fans for a century. When you reach the entrance area in the courtyard and sit down to take off your shoes, you will hear from the depths the tranquil sound of a *jiuta* song (a genre of traditional Japanese music). Upstairs, there is a *kamigatamai* dance lesson. Silenced by listening to the arhythmic beats of the *shamisen* (a three-stringed lute) that is perfectly harmonized with the expressive voice of the singer, you go up the dimly-lit narrow stairs and sit in front of the sliding paper door in the traditional Japanese greeting posture. When the door opens, what greets you is an empty *tatami* (traditional Japanese wooden mat) room with the sound of the *jiuta* and with two women in *kimonos* (traditional Japanese outfit) —a *sensei* (master) and a student— dancing to it. I am here, in this fan shop, to observe the Kyoto-based professional dancer and teacher Nao Yoshimura's private classes of *kamigatamai*.

“The kimono covers my body completely. Likewise, the *jiuta*. They envelope me. Like a cocoon. No, better to say, they embrace me”.² These are the words of Indigo san³, a retired English teacher, who started learning *kamigatamai* five years ago in her early seventies. It was the time after her mother died and left her *kimonos* to her as an inheritance. Until that time, Indigo san was not interested in traditional Japanese dance or music at all; indeed, she even did not know how to wear a *kimono*. Being a divorced women with no daughters, but two unmarried sons, she started to worry about what will happen to these *kimonos* when she herself dies. Then she decided to start taking traditional dance lessons so that they could be worn for a good, meaningful reason. Indigo san is quite sure that her mother's *kimonos* are happy to be worn during her *kamigatamai* practice.

² The accounts of *kamigatamai* students are edited excerpts that were taken from interviews and casual talks made with them by the researcher. These conversations were in oral and written form, in English and Japanese. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from Japanese to English are made by the author.

³ The names used here are nicknames given to the students by the author according to the connection of each with *kamigatamai*; the name of the dance piece they study (Pure Clementine san, Bamboo san), the figure on their dancing fan (Moonlight san), their favourite color in *kimono* (Tea Green san), and a traditional tale they mention in relation to their learning experience (Indigo san). *San* is the honorable suffix used in Japanese, meaning Mr/Ms.

“When I was a college student, I did an internship in France for three months. When I came back to Japan, I thought I should get to know my culture more”, says Pure Clementine san, a working middle-aged woman, who started learning *kamigatamai* almost a year ago. Although she first intended to take Japanese dance classes, eventually she practised instead *jiuta-shamisen* for a year. Then she practised *ikebana* (the Japanese art of flower arrangement) as well, and even got a licence for it. One and a half years ago, she went to a traditional Japanese music concert and was fascinated by *jiuta* once again. Although she had not played the *shamisen* for many years, she wanted to restart lessons. As playing instruments is not allowed in her current apartment, this time she decided to learn *kamigatamai* instead as an alternative way of enjoying *jiuta*. For her, these two are the same, as they both possess ‘*nihon bunka no kokoro* (the spirit of Japanese culture)’, which is, according to her, characterized by a special connection with nature.

“I have been interested in watching Japanese theatre, including Japanese dance, for 50 years. But I had no intention of practising it myself”, says Tea Green san, a professional tour guide in her 60s. During the winter just before the pandemic, she found in her mail box a leaflet and instead of throwing it away as she usually does, she decided to go to a trial lesson of *kamigatamai* thinking that it would be interesting to experience it at least once. Eventually, she started taking Nao sensei’s classes without being sure how long she could continue due to her irregular work schedule. As an irony of fate, the Japanese borders were closed to tourism in the following spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing her to follow the classes regularly until October, 2022. “Within these stagnant two and a half years of the pandemic, without having *kamigatamai* classes, life would be quite boring,” says Tea Green San.

“I love *kimonos* and was wondering if there was anything I could do in *kimonos*, when I saw a poster of Nao sensei’s dance class”. This is how Bamboo san, a nurse in her 50s, who got her *natori* (professional dancer) licence in the autumn of 2021, explains how she started *kamigatamai* classes eight years ago. According to her, the primary change that *kamigatamai* made to her life was learning to express herself in a feminine way in compliance with the norms of traditional Japanese beauty: “I am happy when I learn how to dance and learn how to dance more beautifully. I like it more and more with time”.

Similarly, Moonlight san, another middle-aged nurse who started Nao sensei’s classes six

years ago and has been practicing Japanese dance for about sixteen years, relates her interest in *kamigatamai* with her love of wearing *kimonos*, as well as her connection with other Japanese traditions: “Since I was a child, I have been blessed with opportunities to experience Japanese culture, such as watching *kabuki* (a form of traditional Japanese drama) and tea ceremonies, and it was wonderful to wear a *kimono*”.

All these accounts belong to the students of Nao sensei, whose classes I observed between May 2022 and February 2023 as a part of a one-year research programme that focuses on the transmission of traditional Japanese dance. In this study, I would like to look closely at the data I collected for initiating a discussion about the connection of Japanese dance practice to well-being in contemporary Japan.

Research Context and Methodology

Kamigatamai is a genre of traditional Japanese dance that falls within the broader category of *nihonbuyō*. Whereas *buyō* (舞踊) is a word for dance, the term *nihonbuyō*, which literally means Japanese dance, is employed at the beginning of the 20th century in order to distinguish classical repertoire from other forms. It combines two characters — *mai* (舞/circular) and *odori* (踊り/leaping)— which, together with *furi* (mime), refer to three different movement styles that *nihonbuyō* inherits from older forms of shrine, court, and folk dance (Griffith and Mariko, 2016: 141). The *mai* style has its own characteristics, distinguishing it from more dynamic style of *odori* and more mimetic style of *furi*:

The word *mai* comes from the verb *mau* (舞う), a contraction of *mawaru* (to rotate), signifying slow and deliberate circling movements. The body is held stiffly, the center of gravity low, knees bent slightly, while the soles of the feet are in continuous contact with the floor (*suriashi*). This strong relationship between dancer and floor is further emphasized by occasional stamping. The origins of *mai* can be traced back to the earliest forms of *miko kagura* in which shrine priestesses circle around to reach a state of trance, as well as *bugaku*, the stately court dance imported from China. *Mai* became the principal movement style in the *noh* theatre, [...], then subsequently exerted a major influence on popular *kabuki* dance (Griffith and Mariko, 2016: 141–142).

Kamigatamai, as the name suggests, originates from the Osaka-Kyoto region called Kamigata. It dates back to the Edo period (1603-1868). Since it was nurtured in the pleasure quarters of the region at that time, dancers were mainly women such as

courtesans and *geisha*. Today, one of the four main schools of *kamigatamai* is Inoue school, which has developed the *kyomai* style that is performed by the *geiko* (generally known as *geisha* outside of Kyoto) and *maiko* (apprentice *geiko*) of Kyoto. It is typically practised as solo performances accompanied by traditional *jiuta* songs, originally in small-scale Japanese-style *tatami* (a rush-covered straw mat) rooms (*zashiki*), and is therefore also known as *jiutamai* and *zashikimai*. In contrast to kabuki music that is performed by several *shamisen* (a traditional Japanese three-stringed lute) players, singers, and percussionists, *jiuta* is usually performed by a single *shamisen* player who sings at the same time. Subdued in character, it reflects the Japanese aesthetic of *wabi* and *sabi* (impermanence and melancholy). Shaped under the influence of these characteristics of *jiuta*, compared to other genres of Japanese dance, *kamigatamai* is known for its serenity, subtle minimalist movements, and an emphasis on the inner expression of the practitioners (Griffith and Mariko, 2016: 143–144; Japanese-English Bilingual Corpus of Wikipedia's Kyoto Articles, n.d; Kamigatamai Yoshimura-ryu Association, n.d; Yoshimura, 2012).

During my one-year research on the transmission of *nihonbuyō*, I observed the classes of an *odori* style master (Yayoi Wakayagi) as well. But, considering the defining characteristics of *kamigatamai*, in this research that investigates the place of well-being in learning Japanese dance, I have opted to focus on Nao sensei's classes. As defined in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, the concept of *wabi* denotes simple, austere, understated beauty that best manifests itself in the emptiness and elegant simplicity of the Japanese tea house, especially in the beauty of its modestly designed alcove which is “[a] simple structure, but a special and evocative one, a place of deeply philosophical depths” (Parkes and Loughnane, 2024). On the other hand, *sabi* refers to the beauty in aging well as a result of close connection with nature. It has a connotation of desolateness, which is revealed in the subdued grace of a solitary cypress tree that exists in contrast to colourful blossoming trees. Here there is “a significant existential consideration: the sheen of older things connects us with the past in ways that shiny products of modern technology simply cannot” (Parkes and Loughnane, 2024). Based on the aesthetic of *wabi* and *sabi*, *jiuta* music and *kamigatamai* are meant to touch the depths of one's inner self.

Nao sensei, whose teaching constitutes the scope of this research, acquired her *natori* licence in 2009, and her teaching licence in 2014 from the Yoshimura school of

kamigatamai. Besides performing professionally, she gives one-to-one private classes three times a month at a rented *tatami* room in a fan shop or a temple in Kyoto. Her classes are open to any age, gender, and nationality (Yoshimura, 2012). During my fieldwork period, she had ten different students with varying levels of dance abilities, skills, and experience. Within the scope of this research, the experiences of five of her students, who were relatively regular and long-standing at the time of my fieldwork, are taken as samples. All are female adults and started learning *kamigatamai* as a hobby that promised a good change in their lives. Despite the limitation of the study to a small sample of students of one teacher, my uninterrupted observation of their private classes and continuous communication with them that deepened over time, allowed me to collect enough data to make a thorough analysis on the connection of their learning experience with well-being.



Figure 1. Nao Yoshimura (Yoshimura, 2012)

Ever since its emergence, the transmission of *nihonbuyō*, as in other Japanese performing arts, is based on the Japanese master-pupil system called *iemoto*, in which the pupils learn by observing and emulating as faithfully as possible the live performance of their master. Nao sensei's classes follow this basic principle. The duration of the dances learned is around three to ten minutes and learning a new dance usually takes from three to six months (sometimes more according to the abilities of the student). In the world of Japanese dance, as an unspoken rule, the dance that will be learned is chosen by the

teacher. Certainly, the degree of difficulty is a factor in this selection and the teacher considers the current level of the student. In the case of Nao sensei, the suitability of the dance to the student was also a factor. Although her thoughts and intentions behind this are not completely clear, thanks to the non-direct communication style that is typical of the relation between the teacher and the students in traditional Japanese culture, the decision is not made only according to a student's bodily features such as look, strength or abilities, but also according to their personal characteristics and needs. For example, after studying for a long time an emotional and melancholic dance that will be discussed in the following pages, Indigo san was advised by Nao sensei to take a break and learn a less emotionally challenging dance, in which the character happily remembers the good old days. On the other hand, Pure Clementine san first studied a dance about love to which she related well. Then she was encouraged by Nao sensei to study a new dance that portrays a teenager *maiko* who enjoys the beauty of nature.

During my fieldwork, I used the well-known method in qualitative research, participant observation, in which the researcher collects data not only by observing others, but also by experiencing what they research in person (Kawulich, 2005). Although I could not take dance classes from Nao sensei due to health problems, I observed her classes regularly by being a part of the training space so that I was able to communicate closely with the students. For collecting data for my research, I also used interviews, bearing in mind the remark of Brenda Farnell (1999) on the limits of participant observation in doing research on a movement practice —that observing others and experiencing the movement are necessary, but not sufficient for understanding the perspective of other practitioners without speaking with them about their own experience. To allow space for spontaneous conversations as well, I conducted semi-structured interviews that involved both pre-prepared and spontaneous questions (see Appendix I). For this study, I specially focus in these interviews on the accounts that are related to the students' personal connection with *kamigatamai*, about why they started and continued learning this tradition, and what kind of impact this experience had on their lives. In this way, I aimed to uncover both similar and different motivations behind learning *kamigatamai*, as well the transforming power of this process. Besides this, I made video recordings of the classes in order to do movement analyses that might help me understand the learning process of the students better and compare the learning experience of different practitioners.

Dance and Well-Being

There are a number of studies that discuss the connection of dance with well-being. In an article that makes a comprehensive review of the publications between 2000 and 2019 on this subject, Kerry Chappell, Emma Redding, Ursula Crickmay, Rebecca Stancliffe, Veronica Jobbins, and Sue Smith identify seven interrelated contributions of dance to health and well-being: “embodiment, identity, belonging, self-worth, aesthetics, affective responses and creativity” (2021: 1). As they articulate, the practice of dance induces well-being through the development of (personal, cultural, and/or artistic) self-identity, a process that is connected to an increase in self-esteem, as well as agential, self-expressive and creative capacities. Through dancing, the practitioners are enabled to create links to affective experiences of their past and present, as well as of their past or future selves. Consequently, positive effects such as the regulation of emotions, the enhancement of life by providing a purpose, feeling more in control of daily lives, and even an opportunity to reclaim humanity or to restore an inner self emerge (Chappell et al., 2021: 8–9). Dance also creates a sense of ‘belonging’ to a group by increasing positive social interaction and meaningful communication with others (Chappell et al., 2021: 9). It enhances ‘self-worth’ as a result of a sense of achievement, learning and development while practising dance, and thereby contributes to the practitioners’ self-confidence, self-assurance, self-awareness, and self-efficacy (Chappell et al., 2021: 9–10). These are all connected with an increase in the practitioners’ ‘creativity’ and imagination (Chappell et al., 2021: 10–11), as well as their ‘aesthetic appreciation of dance’ (Chappell et al., 2021: 11–12). The practitioners experience a positive change as a result of the ‘embodied’ quality in dance activities that connect mind, body and spirit and provide an alternative way of expressing emotions (Chappell et al., 2021: 11). Dancing creates ‘affective responses’ such as happiness, hopefulness, positivity, enthusiasm, pleasure, and enjoyment that help the practitioners cope with stress and difficulties in life (Chappell et al., 2021: 11).

Regarding their experiences of learning *kamigatamai*, the students of Nao sensei expressed many thoughts and feelings that touch these interwoven themes in one way or another. Considering the multi-layered and complicated nature of these experiences, I would like to employ an inclusive frame, that is, the discovery of a ‘dance self’, which is also touched on by previous studies on Japanese dance training (Deschênes and Eguchi, 2018; Hahn, 1995; Sellers-Young, 1993). I argue that learning *kamigatamai* in this specific

context, opens for the practitioners a new space for self-realization that goes beyond the constraining norms of daily social life and thereby acts as a means for well-being.

Discovering a 'Dance Self' through the Search for Beauty

In her article *The Power of Dance: Health and Healing*, Judith L. Hanna argues that dance contributes to healing by enabling its practitioners to “gain a sense of control” (1995: 325) in four different ways: “(1) Possession by the spiritual manifested in dance, (2) mastery of movement, (3) escape or diversion from stress and pain, and (4) confronting stressors to work through ways of handling their effects” (1995: 326). The first is the way of the healers, who help their patients by using the supernatural power of a deity or spirit by being possessed by it. Hannah underlines that, among other treatments of the healer, there is also the mediation of social conflicts that patients are not able to remedy by themselves (1995: 326). Secondly, the mastering of dance movements induces a positive self-perception, self-esteem, and self-confidence by increasing the practitioner’s bodily awareness (Hannah, 1995: 326). Thirdly, dancing brings some changes in physical capability, emotions, and state of consciousness so that the practitioners experience a change of focus from pain and stress to pleasure, which induces a sense of release, relief, and well-being. It also provides an opportunity to move into a fantasy world (to be a princess, animal, etc.), “offering escape from the task of attempting to change an often difficult and ugly world” (Hannah, 1995: 326–327). Lastly, the act of pretending in dance enables practitioners to experience past, current and future events and emotions without feeling the impact of real life, and to confront stressful situations in a playful and protected environment (Hannah, 1995: 327–328).

When I started my fieldwork, Indigo san was studying a well-known Japanese dance piece called *Kurokami* (Raven Hair). The character in this piece is a mistress longing for her lover who does not come on that winter day. Indigo san learned this piece some years ago, but Nao sensei suggested that she should study it again instead of starting a new piece so that it would improve. The lyrics of the *jiuta* are quite suggestive, gradually unfolding the sorrow and melancholy in the character’s heart:

It is the pillow
We shared that night,
When I let down
My jet-black hair.

That is the cause of my lament.
When I sleep alone
With my single robe
To cover me.
“You are mine,” he said.

(interlude)

Not knowing the heart
Of a simple girl
The voice of a temple bell,
Sound into the quiet night.

Awakening from an empty dream
In the morning,
How lovely, sweet,
And helpless is my longing.
Before I know it
The silver snow has piled up (Tsuge, 1983: 81).



Figure 2. Indigo san practicing *Kurokami* (Sözer Özdemir, 2022b)

The piece starts in a half sitting pose, during which the performer’s gaze is directed forwards and downwards with her arms crossed on her belly, while her hands are concealed inside the sleeves of the kimono. This introverted pose allows spectators to

sense the silent desolation of the character. During the first stanza, the dancer's body slowly unfolds itself in a two forward one back rhythm, implying the gradual opening of the character's heart to her lover. The arms are opened and closed and then opened again. The dancer stands up and takes some steps forward and back. In the following parts of the song, the dancing fan turns into certain things that are mentioned in the lyrics. While the lyrics talk about the pillow she shares with her lover, the dancer grabs the closed dancing fan in the kimono's sash and shows it to the spectators in a gentle pose, as if it is the special pillow that has witnessed this great love. When the lyrics talk about the character's lover holding her, the dancer opens the fan fully, and turns it into some kind of being she loves. Through such movements and poses, rather emotional moments, which recall both past memories and future hopes and express both nostalgia and longing, are created. Towards the end, the dancer's body gradually turns inward and the piece ends again with a half sitting pose, but this time with the fan lying on the floor, as the dancer drops it a little later the lyrics talk about awakening from an empty dream. Throughout the piece, the movements of the dancer are slow, soft and tranquil, so that the character is portrayed as graceful. Indigo san expresses her experience of learning *Kurokami* as such:

Kurokami is very emotional. It is not an easy dance. But having a story that impresses me makes it easier for me, as I can give my heart to the story. The song is very serene, and it also has some deep emotion. I practiced it a lot at my house since the last class and today I thought I danced it perfectly. But the teacher pointed out many things that are still not good enough. The deeper I practice it, the deeper it goes, there is no end. But I enjoy it more, when I go deeper and deeper. My movements improve little by little and the teacher instructs me more and more. When I started to learn this dance, I thought that I was the lady in the story. I said to myself 'I am this girl'. From the first moment, I practiced it by adopting the *kimochi* (mood/feeling) of the character. As my waist went down, as my neck tilted a little bit and so on, I became this character more and more. I hope I can do it better and better and better, until I die. I have the sensation that *Kurokami* is my beloved ones. I don't know how to say this. I will be very happy if I can dance this piece until I die. I really like it.

This heartfelt account of Indigo san shows that she somehow had a connection with her deeper emotions while learning *Kurokami*. The actions in the piece seem to have made her remember, rethink, and even relive the experiences with her beloved ones. Besides,

portraying such a character induced her not only to understand, but also to be able to express her inner self. I cannot help but connect Indigo san's words above with a story she told during my interview with her. When I asked about her other hobbies such as reading folk tales, she had a good long talk about a Canadian folk tale that she was reading at that moment. This is the story of a little girl called Indigo:

Indigo knew very well how to extract colours from nature. Her colours were so beautiful that whoever wears the cloths dyed with these colours becomes healthy, younger and happier. One day, the king asked her to bring him the colour indigo. She got anxious, as until then she had not been able to find this rare, precious colour. She tried in vain to seek it everywhere. One day, the god of colours told her that she could find indigo in a remote place that was very hard to access. As the king refused to go there, Indigo herself went. But she did not come back, and no one knows what happened to her. Did she find the colour indigo, did she die or is she still searching for it?

This is certainly a story about the search for one's true self.

Reconsidering the above-mentioned literature on dance and well-being, Indigo san's practice of *kamigatamai* definitely contributes to her well-being by providing "a sense of control" that works against the difficulties and loss of control in daily life. As she says, all her hobbies (reading folk tales, gymnastics for old people, playing guitar, English for old people, and *kamigatamai*) are "*omoshiroi* (interesting, amusing)" for her. In this way, they certainly create a change of focus to pleasure. But this does not mean that there is no stress in *kamigatamai* classes. Indigo san always says that the training of *kamigatamai* is challenging for her in many ways, including the difficulty of memorizing the detailed movements, pushing physical boundaries, etc. Nevertheless, in a manner particular to *kamigatamai* and different from her other hobbies, she notes that enduring the never-ending search for perfection, as in Indigo's search, have made her feel less anger in daily life. Moreover, her identification with *Kurokami* seems to provide her with an opportunity to experience and express difficult emotions in a controlled environment, that is, within a protective cocoon created by *kimono* and *jiuta*. The result is the emergence of a new 'dance self', which is liberated from both her past and present selves, and, in this manner, enables Indigo san to make peace with her past and present, and even her future. She also says that learning *kamigatamai* works as an *ikigai* for her, which is a term in Japanese that can be translated as 'purpose in life'.

At this point, one might reasonably argue that *Kurokami* repeats the dependent, helpless stereotypical identity of a woman within the traditional male-dominated Japanese social system and ask how practising it can promise liberation from the restrictions Japanese women experience in daily life. However, arts, and especially dance, do not work with reason alone. In her book *Sensational Knowledge: Embodying Culture through Japanese Dance*, Tomie Hahn argues that, contrary to common preconceptions, the stereotypical characterizations in Japanese dance do not constrict the practitioners' "sense of individual identity", but instead, "reinforce an expanded image of self", as they allow the practitioners to act out many different characters beyond their real life (2007: 160–161). In this sense, learning Japanese dance becomes a liberating activity, as it "offers [...] powerful expressive means to transcend the boundaries that might confine" the practitioners in their daily life and empowers women in particular "through transformative, shared, embodied experience of multiple identities as well as flexible notions of self, within a society that had historically restricted their expression" (Hahn, 2007: 162).

The piece that Moonlight san was practising during the first months of my fieldwork was *Guchi* (Complaining), in which the character is a woman suffering from jealousy. But portraying of such negative emotions in a *kamigatamai* dance does not result in imprisoning the practitioner within a notorious female stereotype and its related sense of ill-being. *Guchi*, as a more advanced level *kamigatamai* piece, involves challenging circling movements, during which the dancer struggles to spin around repeatedly by keeping her hips quite close to the ground. Besides, at some moments, the dancer completely or partly conceals herself by holding the open fan in front of her face. As a result, spectators see the portrayal of a woman who is somehow trapped in a loop of her own emotions. Moonlight san speaks about dancing *Guchi* this way: "I think that *Guchi* is a piece that elegantly represents a sad woman's heart and feelings that are difficult to express. 'Don't be too lewd.' " Although Moonlight san's motivation to start learning *kamigatamai* is not as emotional as Indigo san's, but is related to a general interest in traditional Japanese arts, these words show that she appropriates the ethical aspect of these arts. Portraying a troubled and distressed character opens a way for her to regulate emotions, and thus contributes to her well-being.



Figure 3. Moonlight san practicing *Guchi* (Sözer Özdemir, 2022c)

With her motivation for learning *kamigatamai* similar to Moonlight san's, Pure Clementine san's experience of learning this tradition involved a liberating expansion in self-image as well as self-expression. The dance she was practising when we made the interview is called *Oboko Giku* (Pure Clementine), in which the character is a lovely, pretty, young girl. Consequently, the dance movements include *kawai* (cute, pretty) gestures that she cannot act out in real life, but that she really enjoys embodying during the practice. She relates her experience thus: "I imagine a teenager *maiko* at Pontocho [an area at the center of Kyoto known for its *geikos* and *maikos*], looking at clementines in the garden. Recently, Indigo san told me that this piece suits me. I also think that it suits me. Though I am much older, a kind of girlish part of me sleeping deep inside of me awakens. Japanese people like *kawai* things, you know." The piece that Pure Clementine san had practised before was *Tsuru no Koe* (The Voice of the Crane), which is based on the emotional love story of a man and a woman who experience a one-night affair on a rainy day in a small hotel by the sea. There, they have a long talk, hear the voice of the crane together and become closer. Before she meets the man, the woman watches the raindrops falling from

the roof of the hotel, dreaming to meet the lover she had wished to have for a long time. Pure Clementine san says that, at first, she did not understand why she performs such a long gaze at the beginning of the dance. Then she understood this very emotional moment by connecting the movements with the lyrics. This led her to dance better, and that was the time that Nao sensei was finally satisfied with her performance. Referring to such experiences Pure Clementine san remarks that *kamigatamai* can be described as “the release of humanity”. She also mentions that she would like to express more of such sensitive feelings, after she gets used more to dancing. As one can see, practising *kamigatamai* gives the students the opportunity to experience a variety of emotions so that they can discover their own deep emotions and inner self.



Figure 4. Pure Clementine San practicing a cute pose in *Oboko Giku* (Sözer Özdemir, 2022d)

As mentioned above, Tea Green san started *kamigatamai* classes within the gloomy atmosphere of the pandemic. Unlike other students, what predominantly provided ‘a sense of control’ to Tea Green san through learning *kamigatami* was her gradual mastery of the movements.

At the beginning, I thought it is totally impossible to imitate Nao sensei’s movements, setting my own level too low with the feeling of resignation, but after getting more serious in taking lessons, I found a joy in becoming able to

do some particular movements that I could not do at all after repeating the same part again and again. Thus, I learned that one's efforts can be rewarded.

Tea Green san would like to continue practising *kamigatamai* as long as she can, and her wish, although it still seems impossible to her, is to get closer —even a little bit— to the beauty of Nao sensei's dancing.



Figure 5. Tea Green San learns by imitating Nao sensei (Sözer Özdemir, 2022e)

As one can see, for the students, learning *kamigatamai*, is above all a never-ending search for beauty, which is tough but which always contributes to their well-being by allowing them to discover a 'dance self'. As in the tale of *Indigo*, one cannot be sure if they can attain this beauty, but the search itself promises inner peace, healing and well-being. Here the patient and the healer are not separate; the patients are their own healers who seek to be possessed by the tacit beauty of the *kamigatami* dance they learn by devoting themselves to embodying the strict frame of the tradition in question.



Figure 6. Bamboo San in a graceful pose (Sözer Özdemir, 2022a)

Conclusion

The literature on dance and well-being is largely centred around studies done at the Western world. Besides, it mostly focuses on the practice of modern or popular dance forms. There are no studies that investigate well-being in *kamigatami*. Nevertheless, as discussed throughout this study, the learning experience of Nao sensei's students largely overlaps with the findings conveyed in this literature that are summarized above through these keywords; a) identity (self-esteem, self-expression, agential capacity; links to past, present, and future; emotional regulation, enhancement of life, sense of control, finding purpose in life), b) belonging (positive social interaction, meaningful communication), c) self-worth (a sense of achievement, self-confidence, self-assurance, self-awareness, self-efficacy), d) creativity, e) aesthetics, f) embodiment (connection of mind, body and spirit), and f) affective responses (happiness, hopefulness, positivity, enthusiasm, pleasure, and enjoyment; coping with stress). But what specially stands out in the experience of learning *kamigatamai* is the development of self-identity, which is somehow related to all these themes and is formulated in this study as the discovery of a 'dance self'.

The concept 'dance self' is closely related to building a connection with one's inner self, as well as to deeper thoughts, emotions, beliefs, etc. that are not easily expressed in words. Through embodying the actions of the characters that go much beyond their daily life, the

learners of *kamigatamai* enter an unseen, unknown realm, in which they will discover and be able to express a newly liberated self through dancing. Even though it seems surprising, this happens through the repetition of already-established patterns instead of free improvisation. This method of learning might look constraining at first sight, but is in fact the opposite and provides an opportunity for practitioners to liberate themselves from their everyday identities by connecting them with their deeper selves. Indigo san, Pure Clementine san, Tee Green san, Moonlight san, and Bamboo san become in effect different selves from those who had not yet started learning *kamigatamai*. They all added a precious dancing identity to their lives. Although she even got the licence of a professional dancer, Bamboo san told me that she did not share her experience in *kamigatamai* with everybody around her, but only with those who can understand and appreciate it.

As discussed above, the discovery of a 'dance self' in *kamigatami* is related with a search for beauty as well. This is not only about looking, dressing, or moving beautifully, but about acting in a beautiful manner, that parallels the aesthetic ideals of *wabi* and *sabi*. Embodying the simplicity, the modesty, the gracefulness, the nostalgia, the awareness of impermanence, and even the serene joy in *kamigatamai*, the students of Nao sensei make peace with their past, future, inner self and (even negative) emotions so that a way towards well-being is opened for them.

Certainly, this study has its own limitations. Future studies, which would include learners of *kamigatamai* from different genders, ages, classes, places, etc., are needed. Besides, conducting fieldwork at professional environments might possibly reach different results and provide findings that would allow researchers to make meaningful comparisons. I hope that this study might act as a pioneer and provide an incentive for new studies and further discussions on the subject.

REFERENCES

Chappell, Kerry; Redding, Emma; Crickmay, Ursula; Stancliffe, Rebecca; Jobbins, Veronica and Smith, Sue. (2021). "The Aesthetic, Artistic and Creative Contributions of Dance for Health and Wellbeing across the Lifecourse: A Systematic Review" *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*. 16: 1–20.

Deschênes, Bruno; Eguchi, Yuko. (2018). "Embodied Orality: Transmission in Traditional Japanese Music" *Asian Music*. 49(1): 58–79.

Farnell, Brenda. (1999). "It Goes without Saying – But Not Always" *Dance in the Field: Theory, Methods and Issues in Dance Ethnography*, Ed. Theresa Buckland: pp. 145–160. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Griffith, Paul; Okada, Mariko. (2016). "Interlude: Nihonbuyo: classical Dance" *A History of Japanese Theatre*, Ed. Jonah Salz: pp. 141–149. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hahn, Tomie. (2007). *Sensational Knowledge: Embodying Culture through Japanese Dance*. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.

Hanna, Judith L. (1995). "The Power of Dance: Health and Healing" *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. 1(4): 323–331.

Japanese-English Bilingual Corpus of Wikipedia's Kyoto Articles. (n.d.). *Kamigatamai* (上方舞). Access on December, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.japanese-wiki-corpus.org/culture/Kamigatamai.html>.

Kamigatamai Yoshimura-ryu Association. (n.d.). *What is Jiutamai (kamigatamai)?* Access on December, 2022. Retrieved from <https://yoshimura-ryu.com/en/what.html>.

Kawulich, Barbara B. (2005). "Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method" *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 2(6): -. Retrived from <https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/466/997>

Parkes, Graham; Loughnane, Adam. (Spring 2024). "Japanese Aesthetics" *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Ed. Edward N. Zalta; Uri Nodelman: - . Retrieved from <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2024/entries/japanese-aesthetics/>

Sellers-Young, Barbara. (1993). *Teaching Personality with Gracefulness: The Transmission of Japanese Cultural Values through Japanese Dance Theatre*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America.

Sözer Özdemir, Şebnem. [videographer] (2022a). Nao Yoshimura's Private Class with Bamboo san [Video field recordings of dance]. July 12, 2022. Kyoto, Japan: Private

Collection.

Sözer Özdemir, Şebnem. [videographer] (2022b). Nao Yoshimura's Private Class with Indigo san [Video field recordings of dance]. October 11, 2022. Kyoto, Japan: Private Collection.

Sözer Özdemir, Şebnem. [videographer] (2022c). Nao Yoshimura's Private Class with Moonlight san [Video field recordings of dance]. September 27, 2022. Kyoto, Japan: Private Collection.

Sözer Özdemir, Şebnem. [videographer] (2022d). Nao Yoshimura's Private Class with Pure Clementine san [Video field recordings of dance]. August 2, 2022. Kyoto, Japan: Private Collection.

Sözer Özdemir, Şebnem. [videographer] (2022e). Nao Yoshimura's Private Class with Tea Green san [Video field recordings of dance]. November 16, 2022. Kyoto, Japan: Private Collection.

Tsuge, Gen'ichi. (1983). *Anthology of Sōkyoku and Jiuta Song Texts*. Tokyo: Academia Music Ltd.

Yoshimura, Nao. (2012). *Kamigatamai Yoshimura Nao*. Retrieved from <https://www.yoshimuranao.com/>. (Access on December, 2022).

APPENDIX I- Pre-Prepared Interview Questions to *Kamigatamai* Students of Nao Yoshimura

- Could you introduce and talk about yourself?
- When did you start learning *kamigatamai*? Have you had lessons regularly without a break? Is Nao sensei your first sensei? How many *mai* pieces you have learned till now?
- Why did you start learning *kamigatamai*?
- Do you plan being professional? What did you do/are you doing for this?
- What does learning in general mean to you? Do you like learning in general? Is learning *kamigatamai* different from other learning experiences?
- What was/is easier and harder in learning *kamigatamai*? Did these change in time?
- What do you like in learning *kamigatamai*? Did these change in time?
- Did learning *kamigatamai* change something in your life; in your body, in your soul, in your thoughts and emotions about dancing and the world?
- If there are no *kamigatamai* lessons in your life, would it be different? What would be different?
- Which *mai* do you learn right now?
- How is *mai* you would learn selected?
- Do you observe other students/performers? Why?
- How would you describe the teacher-student relationship in *kamigatamai*?
- How would you describe a good *kamigatamai* learner?
- Is performing different from learning? How? Are these connected?
- What is/was hard in the performance process? Did these features change in time?
- What do you like in performance process? Did these features change in time?
- How would you describe a good *kamigatamai* performer?
- What does *kamigatamai* mean to you? If you were to answer with a single sentence, what would you say?
- Did learning *kamigatamai* teach you also something else?
- What is your motivation for continuing the classes?

- Is there anything that you did not tell before to anybody about your *kamigatamai* learning experience? Will you share it with me or others or do you prefer to keep it to yourself?

MERT ERGÜL

Ankara Music and Fine Arts University,
Türkiye

mertergul@mgu.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0002-8885-4136

ŞEVVAL SATICI

Karabük University, Türkiye

sevvalsatici@karabuk.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0003-3412-1743

AHMET SERKAN ECE

Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University,
Türkiye

ece_a@ibu.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0002-1369-5812

Views of Music Workers in Türkiye About Their Experiences Before, During and After the Covid-19 Pandemic: What Do Music Workers Say?¹

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to reveal the opinions of music workers (musician, DJ, tonmeister, roadie, lighting technician, studio employee, stage manager, etc.) in Türkiye, who experienced the negative effects of the covid-19 pandemic in their professional lives. They speak about their musical lives before, during and after the covid-19 pandemic. The subjects of the research, which was designed as a survey model using the descriptive analysis method, were music workers in various fields of the music industry in Türkiye. A snowball sampling method was used to determine the sample group. Within the scope of the research, 132 participants were approached. The survey questions, whose validity study was completed and developed in the collection of research data, were prepared and applied via Google Forms. In light of the findings, it was concluded that the pandemic period negatively affected the music industry and music workers. In addition, it was concluded that music workers needed financial assistance because they could not work, that there was a decrease in the frequency of working in the post-pandemic period compared to the pre-pandemic period, that the music ban restricted their working arenas, and that several music workers could not benefit from the aid provided during the pandemic period because they did not have insurance.

KEYWORDS

Musician
Music Industry
Global Pandemic
Music Workers
Covid-19 Pandemic

¹ Dedicated to the music workers who ended their lives during the pandemic period...

Introduction

The status and importance of the problem

It is clear that epidemics have spread to large masses of people from time to time in world history and have seriously affected humanity. The Coronavirus (Covid-19) epidemic, which affected the whole world on a global scale in recent years, has greatly affected humanity not only in terms of health, but also economically and psychologically. Covid-19 (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Health, n.d.), which was first identified as a type of virus on 13 January, 2020 as a result of research conducted on a group of patients in Wuhan, China in late 2019, was identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March, 2020, and was declared a global epidemic. 11 March, 2020 was also recorded as the date when the first case was seen in Türkiye. The declaration of a global epidemic caused great panic and fear in Türkiye, as well as throughout the world.

Considering the progress of the epidemic in Türkiye, it was observed that the quarantines and restrictions declared in order to give protection from the negative effects of the disease and to reduce the excess burden on health institutions, directly affected society psychologically and economically as well as socially (Tanyel Başar, 2021: 52; Çakmak, 2020: 92). 5 days after the date of the first case in Türkiye (16.03.2020), 149,382 workplaces suspended their activities with an "Additional Circular on Coronavirus Measures" (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Interior, 2020) sent by the Ministry of Interior to 81 Provincial Governorships (Arıcı and Özbay, 2021: 14). As a result of the measures and restrictions taken, the cessation of active work in the entertainment, tourism and education sectors brought these sectors to a halt, causing devastating effects, and especially so in the entertainment sector.

One of the sectors greatly affected by the global epidemic in Türkiye was the music industry. 18,836 of the workplaces closed due to the global epidemic are places where music workers are employed work (bars, pubs, musical restaurants, cafes, casinos, nightclubs, performance centers, concert halls, pavilions, etc.) (Arıcı and Özbay, 2021: 14). Some of the workplaces whose activities were suspended on 16.03.2020 (restaurants, cafes, restaurants, tea gardens, wedding halls, show centers, etc.) were opened conditionally as of 1 June 2020 (see the Circular of the Ministry of Internal Affairs published on 30.05.2020), while bars, nightclubs, discos and other licensed workplaces remained closed.

With the circular of the same date, the music ban was implemented. Workplaces that were opened conditionally as of 1 June, 2020 were closed again within the scope of 'full closure measures' implemented between 29.04.2021 and 17.05.2021, but on 01.06.2021, the above-mentioned workplaces were reopened, while bars, nightclubs, discos and some other workplaces were opened as of 01.07.2021.

When the restriction process is examined, it is clear that workplaces such as bars, nightclubs and discos completely suspended their activities for '15 and a half months' between 16.03.2020 and 01.07.2021, and therefore, a serious blow was dealt to the music industry and especially to music workers who make their living from it. At the same time, the music ban, which was first implemented after 00:00 on 01.06.2020, was updated to 01:00 with the circular published on 10.05.2022. For the first time, the music ban for Antalya province was completely lifted by the Antalya Provincial General Hygiene Board on 16.06.2023, on a unanimous decision. Secondly, according to the decision taken by the majority vote of the Izmir Governorship Local Environmental Board on 22.06.2023, the music ban in closed spaces was changed from 01:00 to 04:00. The music ban was completely lifted across Türkiye on 23.06.2023. The fact that the music ban continued for more than three years, despite the fact that all restrictions and bans regarding the global epidemic had been lifted, has led to discussions by many sections of the public, and has been criticized especially by music workers and the non-governmental organizations and professional associations to which music workers are affiliated.

Although various support initiatives were taken by state and private institutions for music workers during the pandemic period, a relatively large portion of music workers was not able to benefit from the assistance provided during the epidemic because they were not insured. Some of the music workers who received aid found this aid inadequate. When the status of 310 musicians benefiting from social aid provided by the state and local governments was examined, 69.3% of the participants stated that they did not benefit from aid, 21.2% did not apply for aid, and 9.5% stated that they received aid. This process greatly affected music workers economically and psychologically, and according to Music-Sen data, more than 100 music workers ended their own lives.

When the music sector, which forms the conceptual framework of this study, is examined, the word sector is defined as "a community doing the same job" (Turkish Language Association, 2022). Based on this definition, the music industry can be defined as 'a

community that does the same job in the field of music'. Considering that the music industry is a very broad field, it is possible to examine the music industry in two main areas: the 'recorded music field' and the 'live music field'. While the recorded music field is defined as the field that brings music to the consumer via records, cassettes, CDs or nowadays mostly digital platforms, the live music field can be defined as the field that brings music to consumers live in bars, nightclubs, performance centers, concert halls and digital environments. The term 'music workers', which can be used to refer to music industry employees, describes people working in a wide range of areas, including instrumentalists, vocal performers, DJs, tonmeisters, roadies, lighting technicians, studio employees, stage managers, arrangers, composers, producers, organizers, publishing company employees, managers, artists agency employees, album production company employees, phonogram producers, distribution company employees, concert hall/entertainment venue employees working in ticket sales etc. For this research, the concept of 'music workers' is limited to 'instrumentalists, voice performers, DJ, tonmeisters, roadies, lighting technicians, studio employees and stage managers'.

When the relevant literature in Türkiye is examined, various studies were found, including those dealing with the health problems of musicians during the pandemic period (Avcı et al., 2021: 10), the ways in which artists express themselves during the pandemic period and the transmission of artistic production to the audience (Tanyel Başar, 2021: 51), the spatial effect of the pandemic period on music festivals (Boyacıoğlu, 2020: 295), how the effects of the pandemic can be overcome by listening to and performing music + (Çakmak, 2020: 90), the evaluations of the informal sector and creative labor within the framework of musicians (Ersöz, 2021: 164), an examination of the pandemic and live music experiences in digital socialization (Güzle and Girgin, 2020: 27), the socio-economic situation of wedding musicians and the effect of the epidemic (Ertan Hacısüleymanoğlu and Sağer, 2022: 59), the healing effects of music (Karakoç, 2021: 562), the psychological analysis of corona-themed musical works produced during the epidemic period (Kuyucu, 2020: 323), and the situation of the culture and arts sector (Özarslan, 2021: 371) during the pandemic period. In addition to these studies, there are also many sources of news, documentaries, interviews, etc. When the literature on the subject is considered, no study has been found that reveals the experiences and opinions of music workers before, during and after the pandemic period.

From this point of view, this study is thought to be important in terms of revealing the problems experienced in the music industry in Türkiye before, during and after the pandemic period and offering solutions to these problems, as well as raising awareness on this issue and laying the groundwork for research to be conducted in the field of the music industry.

Purpose of the research

Based on the problem outlined above, the aim of this study is to reveal the opinions of music workers in Türkiye, who have experienced the effects of the global epidemic in their professional lives, regarding their experiences before, during and after the pandemic. In line with this aim, the statement of the problem and the research questions are given here:

Statement of the problem

‘What are the views of music workers in Türkiye about their lives before, during and after the pandemic?’

Research questions

1. What is the frequency of work for music workers in Türkiye in the music industry before, during and after the pandemic period?
2. What are their views on meeting their economic needs before, during and after the pandemic period?
3. What are their views on their experiences in the music industry before, during and after the pandemic period?
4. What are their views on the positive and negative effects of the restrictions during the pandemic period?
5. What are their opinions and suggestions for the music industry after the pandemic period?

Method

Model of the research

This research is a descriptive study based on a screening model to determine the opinions of music workers in Türkiye about their lives in the music industry before, during and after the pandemic period. In this research, past and present lives of the participants were

compared by using both retrospective scanning and instant scanning models (Büyükoztürk et al., 2016: 179-180).

Personnel and sample

The personnel of the research consists of music workers working as ‘instrumentalists, vocal performers, DJs, tonmeisters, roadies, lighting technicians, studio workers, stage managers’ in the music industry in Türkiye. Snowball sampling method, one of the most purposeful sampling methods, was used to determine the sample group. The snowball technique is “used in cases where it is difficult to access the units that make up the universe or when information about the universe (size and depth of information, etc.) is incomplete” (Patton, 2005; as cited in Baltacı, 2018). In the research, the snowball technique was used to access more data and make an unbiased choice. The sample group was determined by reaching 134 music workers from the research population. It was determined that one participant was under the age of 18 and one participant was not included in the scope of ‘music workers’ determined for this research and was removed from the sample group. As a result, 132 participants constitute the sample group of the research.

Table 1. Distribution of participants by cities

Cities of Participants	<i>f</i>	%	Cities of Participants	<i>f</i>	%
Ankara	77	58.3	Kocaeli	2	1.5
İstanbul	13	9.8	Antalya	1	0.8
Bolu	8	6.1	Balıkesir	1	0.8
İzmir	5	3.8	Burdur	1	0.8
Karabük	5	3.8	Çorum	1	0.8
Bartın	3	2.3	Mersin	1	0.8
Isparta	3	2.3	Muğla	1	0.8
Zonguldak	3	2.3	Şırnak	1	0.8
Bursa	2	1.5	Tokat	1	0.8
Eskişehir	2	1.5	Van	1	0.8
Total				132	100

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the distribution of the participants according to cities is 58.3% in Ankara, 9.8% in İstanbul, 6.1% in Bolu and 25.8% in other provinces of Türkiye. When the distribution of participants by city is examined, it is thought that

Ankara is the city with the highest number of participants due to the snowball sampling method.

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of the participants

	<i>f</i>	%
Gender		
Female	19	14.4
Male	111	84.1
Unwilling to specify	2	1.5
Age		
18-24	26	19.7
25-34	53	40.2
35-44	34	25.8
45-54	18	13.6
65 and over	1	0.8
Educational background		
Primary school graduate	2	1.5
High school graduate	31	23.5
Graduate from a university	85	64.4
Post graduate	14	10.6
Total	132	100

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the distribution of the participants by gender is as follows: 84.1% are men, 14.4% are women and 1.5% unwilling to specify. Most of the participants were between the ages of 25-34 with 40.2% ($f = 53$); it is seen that other participants mainly answered 35-44 years old 25.8%, 18-24 years old 19.7% and 45-54 years old 13.6%. When the educational status of the participants is examined, it is seen that 64.4% are university graduates, 23.5% are high school graduates, 10.6% are post graduate and 1.5% are primary school graduates.

Table 3. Distribution of participants according to their working status in the sector

	<i>f</i>	%
Working area		
Instrumentalist	94	71.2
Voice performer	29	22
Tonmaister	2	2.3
DJ	1	0.8
Roadie	1	0.8
Lighting technician	1	0.8
Studio worker	1	0.8
Stage manager	1	0.8
Service Time		
Less than 3 years	4	3
3-10 year	42	31.8
11-20 year	49	37.1
21-30 year	30	22.7
31 years and above	7	5.3
Most frequently employed workplace		
Concert halls	69	52.3
Bars	100	75.8
Cafes, restaurants, etc.	66	50
Night clubs, etc.	46	34.8
Taverns, etc.	26	19.7
Weddings	61	46.2
Hotels	48	36.4
Public spaces	19	14.4

The distribution of the participants according to their fields of work in the music industry is as follows: 71.2% are instrumentalists, 22% are vocal performers, 2.3% are tonmeisters and 6.3% are in other fields; the answer distributions given according to their service period in the music industry are 37.1% 11-20 years, 31.8% 3-10 years, 22.7% 21-30 years, 5.3% are 31 years or more and 3% are less than 3 years. When the place(s) where the participants worked most frequently were examined, it was observed that most of them answered 75.8% bars, 52.3% concert halls, 50% cafes, restaurants etc. and 46.2% weddings.

Table 4. Distribution of instrumentalists by instrument

Instrument	<i>f</i>	%
Drum	20	21.3
Bass Guitar	18	19.1
Guitar	16	17
Keyboard	14	14.9
Violin	7	7.4
Percussion	5	5.3
Bağlama	4	4.3
Flute	4	4.3
Saxophone	3	3.2
Clarinet	1	1.1
Violoncello	1	1.1
Kabak kemane	1	1.1
Total	94	100

It is seen that the response distribution of the instrument players regarding their instruments is 21.3% drum, 19.1% bass guitar, 17% guitar, 14.9% keyboard, 7.4% violin, 5.3% percussion, 4.3% bağlama, 4.3% flute, 3.2% saxophone and 3.3% other instruments.

Table 5. Distribution of participants' knowledge outside the music industry

	<i>f</i>	%
Having a source of income outside the music industry		
Yes	55	41.7
No	77	58.3
Participants' professions outside the music industry		
Teacher	23	-
Retired	4	-
Other	24	-
No profession	-	-
Number of dependents		
No	64	48.5
1	31	23.5
2	23	17.4
3 and more	14	10.6

When examining their source of income outside the music industry, it is seen that 58.3% of the participants answered 'no, there is no source of income' and 41.7% said yes. It is

seen that most of them are teachers, from different professional groups and retired, but 83 people didn't answer this question. When the number of dependents in their families is examined, it is seen that 48.5% answered 'no', 23.5% said '1 person', 17.4% answered '2 people' and 10.6% answered '14 people'.

Table 6. Distribution of the participants regarding their social insurance and the non-governmental organizations they are members of

	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Do you have social insurance?		
Yes	72	54.5
No	60	45.5
What is your social insurance?		
SGK/SSI	36	-
SSK/Social insurance institution	9	-
Bağkur/social security organization for artisans and the self-employed	3	-
Government retirement fund	4	-
Private health insurance	3	-
Are there any non-governmental organizations you are a member of?		
Yes	41	31.1
No	91	68.9

The answers given by the participants regarding their status of having social security were 54.5% yes and 45.5% no; in addition, it is seen that the social security they have is mostly stated as SGK/SSI and SSK/Social insurance institution.

Data collection tool

A survey prepared by the researchers was used as a data collection tool in the study. 28 questions were selected in accordance with the research questions from the question pool created by scanning the relevant literature. For the content validity of the survey, a total of 4 expert opinions were consulted, one each from the fields of musicology, sociology, measurement and evaluation, and Turkish grammar. In line with expert opinions, the survey questions were increased from 28 questions to 34 questions. In addition, one further option was added to each of the four questions in the survey, the option names in one question were edited, and an option was removed from one of the questions. Before

the data collection phase, a pilot application was conducted with 15 participants, and some questions and options were revised in line with the participants' feedback and made clearer and more understandable in terms of meaning.

Table 7. Question categories, items and numbers in the data collection tool

<i>Question Categories</i>	<i>Question Item</i>	<i>Number of Question</i>
Demographic information questions	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 11 - 12	7
Questions about areas of work in the music industry	6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - 13 -14	7
Working conditions in the music industry before the pandemic	15 - 16 - 17 - 18 -19	5
Working conditions in the music industry during the pandemic period	20 - 21 - 22 - 23 - 24 -25	6
Working conditions in the music industry in the post-pandemic period	26 - 27 - 28 - 29 -30	5
Positive and negative effects of the pandemic and open-ended questions about the music industry	31 - 32 - 33 -34	4

When Table 7 is examined, the data collection tool includes 7 questions regarding demographic information, 7 questions regarding working areas in the music industry, 5 questions regarding working conditions in the music industry in the pre-pandemic period, 6 questions regarding working conditions in the music industry during the pandemic period, 7 questions regarding working conditions in the music industry in the post-pandemic period, 4 open-ended questions regarding the positive and negative effects of the pandemic and the music industry.

Collection of data

The data was collected by answering the survey questions prepared via 'Google Forms' by sharing them with various social networks, and by sharing the survey digitally with the music workers they could reach, using the snowball sampling method.

Analysis of data

Frequency-percentage values were used in the analysis of the quantitative data obtained from the survey by using the descriptive analysis method; descriptive analysis and content analysis were used in qualitative data analysis. While conducting descriptive analysis, participant opinions were included 'directly'. While conducting content analysis, codes and themes were used to make implicit expressions that could not be reached in the descriptive analysis more understandable. In order to encourage a more common understanding, the codes were analyzed by two different researchers, the data were re-read many times and discussed again, and the codes were categorized for the next stage. The researchers discussed whether the categorized codes formed a meaningful integrity and it was decided that harmony was achieved. As a result of the examination for external consistency, it is seen that the themes differ among themselves and reflect the data meaningfully. Additionally, codes such as K85, K100, etc. were used when directly expressing participant opinions.

Findings and interpretation

This section includes the findings and comments obtained from the research.

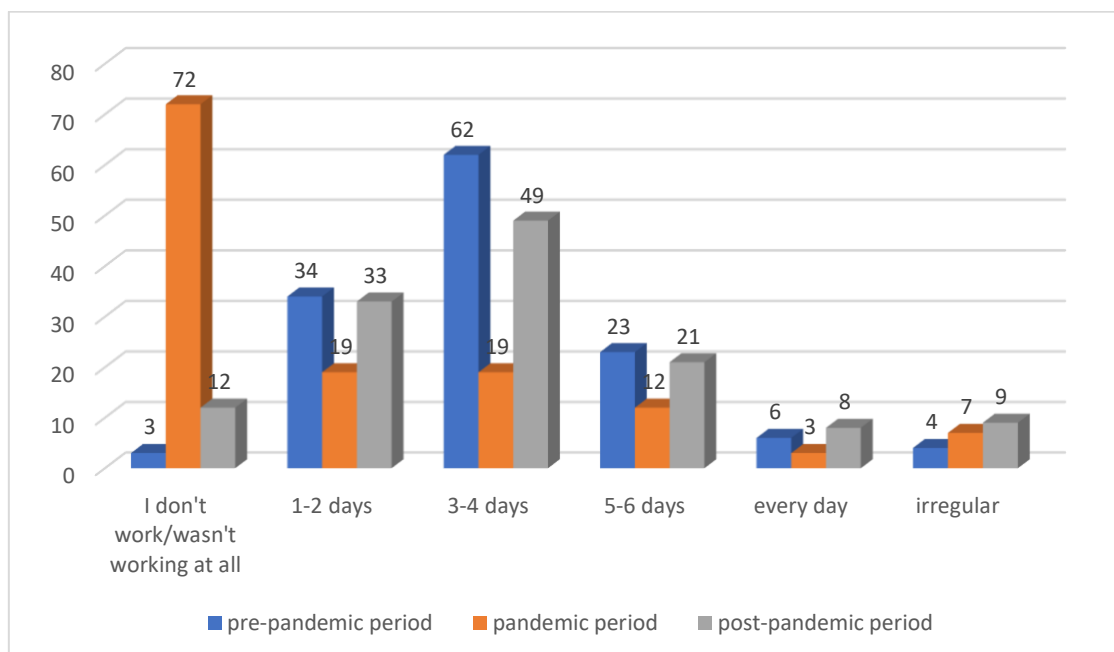


Figure 1. Working frequencies of participants before, during and after the pandemic.

When Figure 1 is examined, we see that before the pandemic period 3 of the participants didn't work at all, 34 worked 1-2 days, 62 worked 3-4 days, 23 worked 5-6 days, 6 worked

every day and 4 worked irregularly. During the pandemic period 72 of them didn't work at all, 19 of them worked 1-2 days, 19 of them worked 3-4 days, 12 of them worked 5-6 days, 3 of them worked every day and 7 of them worked irregularly. After the pandemic period 12 of them didn't work at all, 33 of them worked 1-2 days, 49 of them worked 3-4 days, 21 of them worked 5-6 days, 8 of them worked every day and 9 of them worked irregularly.

Based on the findings obtained from the graph, the number of days that the participants worked the most before and after the pandemic period was determined to be 3-4 days, 1-2 days and 5-6 days, respectively. During the pandemic period 72 of the participants stated that they didn't work at all. In addition, after the pandemic period there is a decrease in the number of people working 3-4 days compared to before the pandemic period, while there is an increase in the number of people not working at all.

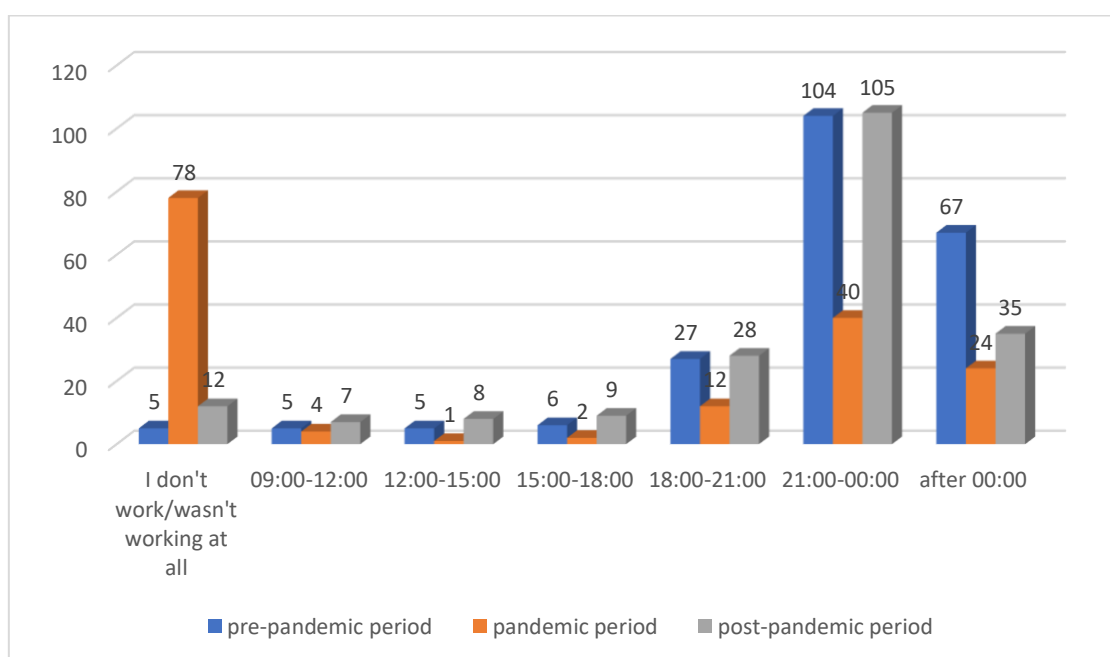


Figure 2. Working hours of participants before, during and after the pandemic.

When Figure 2 is examined, in the pre-pandemic period, we see that 5 participants didn't work, 5 worked between 09:00-12:00, 5 worked between 12:00-15:00, and 6 worked between 15:00-18:00, 27 of the participants worked between 18:00-21:00, 104 of them worked between 21:00-00:00 and 67 of them worked after 00:00. During the pandemic period 78 participants didn't work, 4 worked between 09:00-12:00, 1 worked between 12:00-15:00, 2 worked between 15:00-18:00, and 12 of them worked between 18:00-

21:00, 40 of the participants worked between 21:00-00:00 and 24 of them worked after 00:00. In the post-pandemic period 12 didn't work, 7 worked between 09:00-12:00, 8 worked between 12:00-15:00, 9 worked between 15:00-18:00, 28 of the participants worked between 18:00-21:00, 105 worked between 21:00-00:00 and 35 worked after 00:00.

When the graphic is examined, we see that participants worked most intensively between 21:00 and 00:00 in the pre- and post-pandemic period. Working hours after 00:00 and between 18:00-21:00, respectively, were worked more intensively than other hours. In the post-pandemic period, there was a decrease in working hours after 00:00 compared to the pre-pandemic period.

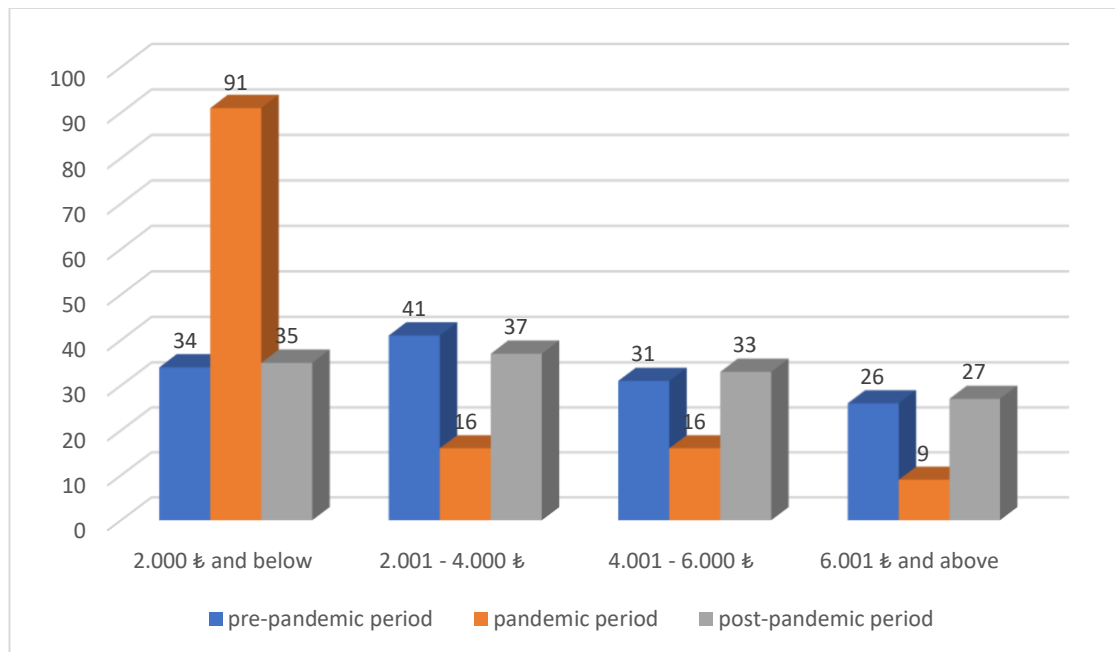


Figure 3. Participants' average monthly income from the music industry before, during and after the pandemic.

Figure 3 shows the average monthly income levels of participants from the music industry before, during and after the pandemic. When the graphic is examined, it is observed that before the pandemic period 34 of the participants had an income of 2000 ₺ and below, 41 of them had an income of 2001 - 4000 ₺, 31 of them had an income of 4001 - 6000 ₺ and 26 of them had an income of 6001 ₺ and above. During the pandemic period 91 of the participants stated that they had an income of 2000 ₺ or less, 16 of them had an income of 2001 - 4000 ₺, 16 of them had an income of 4001 - 6000 ₺ and 9 of them had an income

of 6001 ₺ and above. After the pandemic period 35 of the participants stated that they had an income of 2000 ₺ and below, 37 of them had an income of 2001 - 4000 ₺, 33 of them had an income of 4001 - 6000 ₺ and 27 of them had an income of 6001 ₺ and above.

When the graphic is examined, we see that there is a similar income distribution when comparing the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic periods, and that the income obtained in general is distributed quite closely. When the pandemic period is examined, it is seen that the monthly income of the majority of participants from the music industry is 2000 ₺ or less.

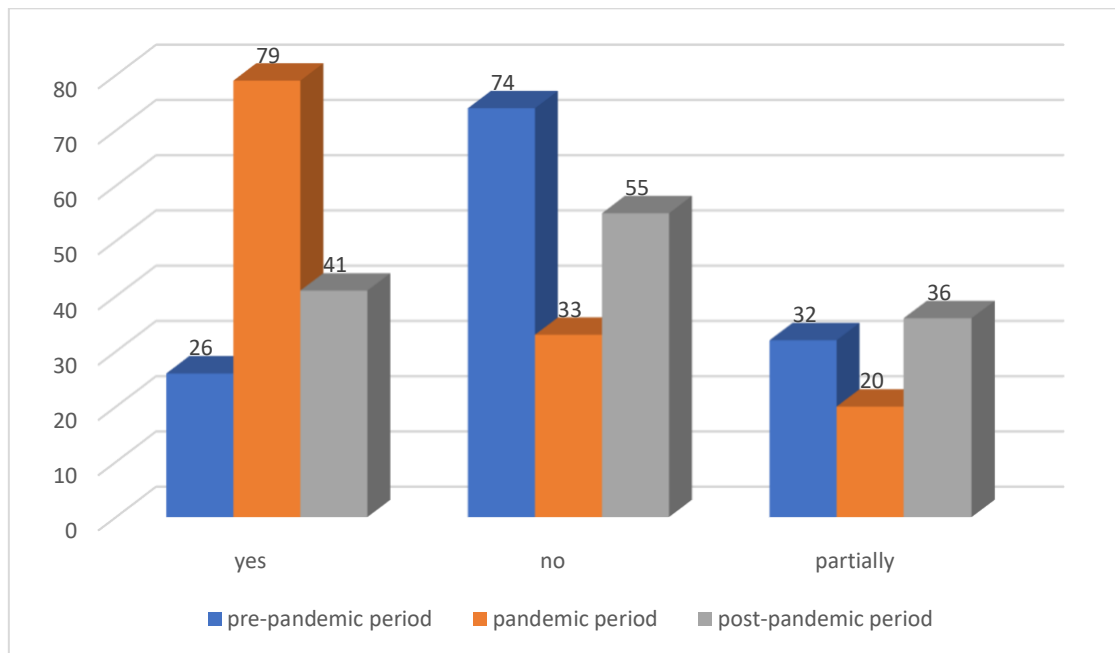


Figure 4. Participants' need for financial aid before, during and after the pandemic.

When Figure 4 is examined, before the pandemic period 26 of the participants stated that they needed financial aid, 74 of them stated that they didn't need financial aid, and 32 of them stated that they partially needed financial aid. During the pandemic period 79 of the participants stated that they needed financial aid, 33 of them stated that they didn't need financial aid, and 20 of them stated that they partially needed financial aid. After the pandemic period, 41 of the participants stated that they needed financial aid, 55 of them stated that they didn't need financial aid, and 36 of them stated that they partially needed financial aid.

When the graphic is examined, we see that while the majority of people stated that they didn't need financial aid in the pre-pandemic period, a high rate of financial aid was

needed, especially during the pandemic period. In addition, there is an increase in the need for financial assistance in the post-pandemic period compared to the pre-pandemic period.

Table 8. Participants' ability to meet their basic needs during the pandemic period

Responses	<i>f</i>
Financial family support	27
A job with a steady salary	26
Private lesson	16
Additional jobs	15
Social aids	15
Spending of savings	10
Return to family	9
Get into debt	9
Inability to meet basic needs	7
Receive government aid	7
Receive municipal aid	5
Take the stage, even if limited	4

When Table 8 is examined, we see that according to participants' responses on making a living during the pandemic period, they mostly survived by receiving family support, a fixed income outside the music industry, private lessons, additional jobs, social aids, past savings and borrowing. In addition, there were also participants who worked in the music industry, albeit to a limited extent, and stated that they could not make a living.

Sample expressions from the participants' answers to the question about their ability to provide their basic needs during the pandemic period are as follows:

K100: *"I spent my savings. I sold instruments"*

K55: *"I returned to the family home"*

K123: *"I was with my family and got by by asking them for money. And even though the aid was little, it helped me get by because I was with my family..."*

K76: *"Since I saved the money I earned before, I had to spend the money I saved during that period."*

K37: “I benefited from state and municipal support, but mostly I made my living with friend support and loans.”

Table 9. Participants' opinions about their experiences in the music industry before the pandemic period

Positive opinions	<i>f</i>	Neither positive nor negative opinions	<i>f</i>	Negative opinions	<i>f</i>
Good	23	Normal	10	Conditions were not good	18
Not having financial difficulties	12	Good enough	5	Unsafe	5
Pleasant	9	Intense	5	Wages are low	5
Good purchasing power	4			Purchasing power has decreased over time	3
Comfortable	4				

When Table 9 is examined we see that the participants' responses on their experiences in the music industry before the pandemic period were mostly positive. When content analysis was conducted on participant responses, three categories were created – ‘positive opinions’, ‘neither positive nor negative opinions’ and ‘negative opinions’ – and codes for these categories were determined. Participants generally described the pre-pandemic period with the code ‘good’, and it was observed that they expressed a more positive opinion in economic terms, with the codes ‘not having financial difficulties’, ‘pleasant’, ‘good purchasing power’ and ‘comfortable’, *inter alia*. When the codes in the negative category are examined, we see that some of the participants focused on the code ‘conditions were not good’. Other codes in the negative opinions category are ‘unsafe’, ‘wages are low’ and ‘purchasing power has decreased over time’. When the category that is neither positive nor negative is examined, we see that the participants created the codes ‘normal’, ‘good enough’ and ‘intense’.

When the categories and codes created are examined, the majority of the participants evaluated their experiences in the music industry before the pandemic period as economically and psychologically positive, while some stated that the professional conditions were not good enough and were also economically negative. Some participants gave more neutral answers on this issue.

Sample expressions from the participants' answers to the question about their experiences in the music industry before the pandemic period are as follows:

K5: *"I was living a very enjoyable, peaceful life without needing financial help..."*

K46: *"... in my general life, I am a family doctor, but before the pandemic, I was performing 3-4 days a week and it made me happier than my real job."*

K77: *"I could perform my music freely. "The financial value of the money I earned was much higher."*

K100: *"More respectable, more stable, more efficient and without financial worries."*

K90: *"Unsafe and overtime working environment."*

Table 10. Participants' opinions about their experiences in the music industry during the pandemic period

Neither positive nor negative opinions	<i>f</i>	Negative opinions	<i>f</i>
Average	5	I couldn't work	30
		Compelling	15
		Disaster	12
		Financial difficulties	12
		Worthless	10
		Bad	9
		Psychological difficulty	9
		Unsafe	9
		Withdrawal from profession	5
		Turning to different jobs	5
		Limited	4

When Table 10 is examined, we see that the participants didn't express any positive opinions about their experiences in the music industry during the pandemic period. Participants expressed a very negative opinion. As a result of the content analysis, the answers were divided into two categories: 'neither positive nor negative opinions' and 'negative opinions'. 11 codes were created in the negative opinions category. In line with the participants' answers, the codes 'I couldn't work', "compelling", "disaster", "financial difficulties" came to the fore the most. Other codes belonging to the negative opinions category are 'worthless', 'bad', 'psychological difficulty', 'unsafe', 'withdrawal from

profession', 'turning to different jobs' and 'limited'. The code in the 'neither positive nor negative opinions' category, which was formed by a small number of participants, is 'average'.

When the categories and codes are examined, the majority of the participants stated that they experienced economic and psychological difficulties because they could not work in the music industry during the pandemic period, and it was also observed that some of the participants left their profession and turned to different sectors. Very few of the participants gave average answers.

Sample expressions from the participants' answers to the question about their experiences in the music industry during the pandemic period are as follows:

K90: *"I often hesitated whether to quit this profession or not. I realized that being a musician in a country like Türkiye is one of the most challenging professions."*

K91: *"Due to the pandemic period, the closure of bars and the fact that music bans have not been lifted yet, I had to put more effort into another job. For this reason, the time I spend on music has decreased. Naturally, the development of my musical life slowed down."*

K3: *"During the pandemic period, due to the closure of all venues and the bans, I didn't work at all for a year and a half and had no financial income, so this was a very bad period for musicians."*

K123: *"It sucks. My professional life was literally terrible. I hope such days will never happen again and I hope that music, musicianship, art and all branches of art will find the value they deserve and live."*

Table 11. Participants' opinions about their experiences in the music industry after the pandemic period

Positive opinions	<i>f</i>	Neither positive nor negative opinions	<i>f</i>	Negative opinions	<i>f</i>
Good	14	Less than ideal	6	Low purchasing power	16
It's just getting better	5	Intense	6	Insufficient earnings	15
		Same as before	5	Negative effects of the music restriction	12
				Sectoral contraction	12
				Psychological concerns	9
				Bad	8
				I am having financial difficulties	7
				Discrediting the profession	6
				Hard	4
				Tiring	4
				I am unhappy	3
				Inefficient	3
				No sectoral recovery	3
				I left the profession and turned to different business areas	3
				I couldn't return to the sector due to the pandemic	3
				Alienation from the profession	3

When Table 11 is examined, according to the findings obtained from the participants regarding their experiences in the music industry after the pandemic period, three categories were created: 'positive opinions', 'neither positive nor negative opinions' and 'negative opinions'. While some of the participants used the codes 'good' and 'it's just getting better' from the positive opinions category, some expressed their opinions with the codes 'less than ideal', 'intensive' and 'same as before' from the neither positive nor negative categories. The majority of the participants expressed their opinions regarding the codes 'low purchasing power', 'insufficient earnings', 'negative effects of the music restriction' and 'sectoral contraction' in the negative opinions category. Other codes in the negative opinions category are 'psychological concerns', 'bad', 'I am having financial difficulties', 'discrediting the profession', 'hard', 'tiring', 'I am unhappy', 'inefficient', 'no

sectoral recovery', 'I left the profession and turned to different business areas', 'I couldn't return to the sector due to the pandemic' and 'Alienation from the profession'. Among the negative opinions, it seems that there are mostly negative opinions in terms of economic and psychological aspects. In addition, there are general negative opinions about the sector, in addition to individual negativities, such as the discrediting of the music industry, alienation from the profession and turning to different jobs.

Sample expressions from the participants' answers to the question about their experiences in the music industry after the pandemic period are as follows:

K3: *"I returned to my family during the pandemic period, so I stayed away from the city and the music industry where I had worked. This meant that I was unable to find a job when I returned to the music industry, so I am not working now. "I also get financial support from my family."*

K104: *"Inadequate earnings, moving away from making music, sectoral decline, lack of participation due to the financial situation of the listeners and increasing costs, and the resulting alienation from the profession."*

K20: *"I work less than before the pandemic, the stamps are low, the 2019 stamps are still offered, it is no good, since we were the most affected by the pandemic period of the sector, our professional reputation has been damaged and we are less respected than before."*

K23: *"We are in a better situation now than during the pandemic period, but worse than before the pandemic. "Before the pandemic, we could go to two jobs and work double shifts, especially on Fridays and Saturdays, before and after 12 at night, but this opportunity was taken away from us."*

Table 12. Situations that participants found positive during the pandemic period

Responses	<i>f</i>
There was no positive side	53
I had the opportunity to improve myself by working in the field	35
It contributed to my personal development	9
I gained experience in different business fields	7
Musical production increased	6
People's interest in music has increased compared to the past	6
I realized the negative effects of the industry and my self-worth increased.	3
I realized the value of my profession	3

When Table 12 is examined, it was observed that while some of the participants viewed the situations as positive for the pandemic period, others expressed their opinion that there was no positive aspect. Some stated that they had the opportunity to improve themselves in their field, to pursue their personal development, gain experience in different business fields, increase their musical production, increase their interest in music when compared to the past, and enhance their self-esteem by realizing the negative effects of the sector and understanding the value of their profession.

K77: *"I saw that I shouldn't just rely on the stage and make a life. I devoted more time to the music business. I tried to acquire new skills."*

K30: *"Understanding the importance of solidarity and organization"*

K100: *"It allowed me to practice instruments. My productivity increased."*

K132: *"I listened to myself, I improved myself much more"*

K80: *"I realized how much I love my profession"*

Table 13. Situations that participants found negative during the pandemic period

Responses	<i>f</i>
I had financial difficulties	71
I couldn't do my job	40
My psychology was badly affected	20
I walked away from my profession/instrument	13
My performance has decreased	10
My social interaction has decreased	9
Spiritual negativities	7
Time restriction	5
My professional reputation has diminished	5
I had anxiety about the future	3
My motivation has dropped	3
I had to turn to other work	3

When Table 13 is examined, we see that the participants experience high financial difficulties, cannot practice their profession and are badly affected psychologically.

Sample expressions from the participants' answers to the question about the situations they found negative during the pandemic period are as follows:

K33: *“Hangouts keep musicians' fees low with the idea that ‘they need it anyway’; however, due to economic conditions, musicians' wages are low as a result of customers spending less, and they can only go to one job a day due to night working hours being brought forward.”*

K46: *“I can't express to you in words the devastation it caused me. I was a healthcare worker who got away from my main profession thanks to music. And the pandemic devastated me.”*

K8: *“During the pandemic period, our profession was not even seen as a profession. Fears such as financial difficulties and worries about the future almost took us away from our instruments... If we didn't have an emotional connection, we might have already lost our faith.”*

Table 14. Participants' suggestions for regulations in their work areas

Suggestion	<i>f</i>
Social insurance should be provided	37
Time limitation should be removed	32
Pricing should be improved	29
Professional unity should be increased	15
State-supported job opportunities should be provided	13
Music workers should be given official identity	11
Working hours should be regulated	11
Professional reputation should be increased	11
Musicians' rights must be protected	10
Base wage regulation should be made	9
Working conditions should be regulated	7
Professional associations should work more actively	5
The number of hangouts should be increased	5
Technical equipment in hangouts should be improved	4
Certain criteria should be sought in musicians	4

When Table 14 is examined, we see that the participants express their opinions that they need more social insurance, that the hour limit should be removed and that remuneration should be improved.

Sample expressions from the participants' answers to the question regarding their suggestions for regulations in their work areas are as follows:

K116: *“Musicians are recognized by the state, they are registered, their production is*

supported, the wage policy is determined and appropriate taxes are collected, working conditions are inspected. Consumption-oriented works or artistic works can be handled separately and necessary protection, regulation and support programs can be made."

K129: "Public performance should not be given below a certain fee. Insurance conditions must be met, even if temporarily. Everyone should not be a musician who picks up a guitar..."

K62: "The ban on working hours should be lifted. A professional association for performers should be established, the union should be more active and musicians should be encouraged to become members of these institutions. Proficiency should be sought in the profession."

Table 15. Participants' opinions and suggestions regarding the music ban

Opinions	<i>f</i>	Suggestions	<i>f</i>
Nonsense	47	Location arrangement for hangouts with live music	4
Ideological	21	Implementation should be abandoned	33
Political	17	Necessary arrangements should be made	3
Intervention in lifestyle	11		
It negatively affects music workers (economic/psychological, etc.)	9		
Unnecessary	7		
It's not about the pandemic	7		
Meaningless	5		
Oppressive	4		
Arbitrary	3		

When the opinions and suggestions of the music workers in Table 15 regarding the music ban are examined, they mostly described the ban as 'nonsense', 'ideological' and 'political' and stated that the practice should be abandoned to a large extent.

Sample expressions from the participants' answers to the question regarding their opinions and suggestions regarding the music ban are as follows:

K101: "An important indicator and pressure regarding the restriction of social freedoms..."

K8: "It is a completely illogical and unnecessary practice due to ideological reasons; In addition, a ban imposed with a mind that is far behind the times, to harm music workers..."

K33: *"It affects musicians directly and negatively, it needs to be removed urgently"*

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research, the following conclusions were reached:

The majority of the participants stated that the places they worked in most were 'bars' and stated that bars were the places that remained closed for the longest time as a result of the restrictions during the pandemic period. In addition, most of the participants stated that they had no source of income other than the music industry and that they had at least 1 or more dependents other than themselves. All of these reveal that the pandemic period negatively affected the music industry and its workers. According to other findings, the fact that the majority of participants stated that they didn't work at all during the pandemic period and that they needed financial assistance supports this result.

When the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic periods are compared, there is a decrease in the number of studies in the post-pandemic period compared to the pre-pandemic period. The reasons for this situation can be given as the closure of hangouts, the shrinkage of working areas due to the music ban, the inability of some music workers who returned to their hometowns during the pandemic period to return to the cities due to the economic contraction they experienced, etc.

Another result obtained from the research is that after the pandemic, there was a decrease in working hours after 00:00 in the music industry compared to the pre-pandemic period. The reason for this may be that the music ban was determined as 00:00 within the scope of the restrictions imposed during the pandemic period, and this ban continued after the pandemic period by being updated to 01:00. However, the fact that the second most worked hour after the pandemic period is after 00:00 also shows that the ban is not fully complied with.

While the majority of participants stated that they did not need financial aid before the pandemic period, they stated that they needed financial aid after it. When their monthly income from the music industry is examined, the distributions before and after the pandemic period seem quite close to each other. The reason for this situation can be said to be the decrease in purchasing power and the decrease in working frequency even though working wages increase.

Suggestions

Although all bans imposed during the pandemic period in Türkiye have been lifted, the fact that the music ban continued for more than three years and was completely lifted only on 23.06.2023 has attracted great criticism from all music workers and the non-governmental organizations they are affiliated with. However, it is noteworthy that non-governmental organizations or similar professional associations didn't make any major efforts to lift this ban throughout the process. Syndicate, organizations or unions to protect the labor of music workers need to draw attention to relevant issues by taking greater steps towards a common goal and uniting when necessary.

When research on the subject is examined we see that most of the music workers in Türkiye work 'without insurance' and therefore can not benefit from the aid provided by the state and private institutions during the pandemic period. Despite this, no major attempts have been made to 'formalize the work' after the pandemic period. It is necessary to draw attention to the importance of this issue urgently.

In Türkiye, the music industry should be accepted, supervised and supported by the state as a workforce, and music workers should be identified and formalized.

It is thought that 'identifying sector employees' will provide a general solution to the problems of music sector employees in Türkiye, who are not able to receive benefits, especially during the pandemic period, as mentioned many times in the study, and that this will be effective in protecting the rights of workers in this sector that is not controlled by the state.

Rather than seeing the workers in the sector only as 'those on the stage', it is thought that the rights of those 'in the background' should also be defended in the same way.

Base fees for the stage must be controlled by unions, non-governmental organizations and similar institutions, or, if identified, by the state, and certain sanctions must be imposed on those who do not adhere to this practice.

Finally, within the scope of the purpose of this research, since the studies and solution suggestions in the relevant literature are not sufficient, it is recommended to increase research, workshops, etc. on the problems related to the subject.

REFERENCES

Arıcı, Ezgi Tekin and Özbay Cansu (Eds). (2021). *Müzişyenlerin Uğradığı Hak İhlallerini İzliyoruz* (We Monitor the Rights Violation Musicians). Ankara: Anatolian Music Cultures Association. Retrieved from <https://anadolumuzikkulturleri.com/muzisyenlerin-ugradigi-hak-ihlallerini-izliyoruz-raporu-2021/>

Avcı, Şebnem; Acar, Ece; İnal, Büşra and Sönmez, Mehmet. (2021). “Covid-19 Pandemisinde Müzişyen Olmak” (Being Musician in Covid-19 Pandemic). *EJONS International Journal on Mathematic, Engineering and Natural Sciences*. 5(17): 10-21. Retrieved from <https://ejons.org/index.php/ejons/article/view/180/166>

Baltacı, Ali. (2018). “Nitel Araştırmalarda Örnekleme Yöntemleri ve Örnek Hacmi Sorunsalı Üzerine Kavramsal Bir İnceleme” (A Conceptual Review of Sampling Methods and Sample Size Problems in Qualitative Research). *Bitlis Eren University Social Science Journal*. 7(1): 231-274. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/497090>

Boyacıoğlu, Ö. Ayça. (2020). “Covid-19 Pandemisinin Müzik Festivallerine Mekansal Etkisi: ‘Virtual Festival’” (Spatial Effect of COVID-19 Pandemic Over Music Festivals: “Virtual Festival”). *Ethnomusicology Journal*. 3(2): 295-311. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/1377034>

Büyüköztürk, Şener; Kılıç Çakmak, Ebru; and Demirel, Funda. (2016). *Eğitimde Bilimsel Araştırma Yöntemleri* (Scientific Research Methods in Education). Ankara/Türkiye: Pegem Akademi Publications.

Çakmak, Songül. (2020). “Pandemi Döneminde (Covid-19 Salgını Süresince) Müzik Dinleme ve İcra Etme Pratikleri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme” (An Evaluation on Music Listening and Performance Practices in the Pandemic Period [During the Covid-19 Outbreak]). *Universe Culture*. (40): 90-123. Retrieved from <https://avesis.yyu.edu.tr/yayin/8824a5fc-3cf5-4a55-b7d2-0c5b359a37e5/pandemidoneminde-covid-19-salgini-suresince-muzik-dinleme-ve-icra-etme-pratikleri-uzerine-bir-degerlendirme>

Ersöz, Batuhan. (2021). “Covid-19 Sürecinde Enformel Sektör ve Yaratıcı Emek:

Müziyenler Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme” (Informal Sector and Creative Labor During Covid-19: An Evaluation on Musicians) *Covid-19 ve Sosyal Politika: Pandemi Sürecinde Yaşanan Sosyo-Politik Sorunlar*, Ed. Özlem Demir: pp. 163-196. Ankara/Türkiye: Son Çağ Publications.

Güzle, Yağmur and Girgin, Gonca. (2020). “Dijital Sosyalleşmede Yeni Bir Dönem: Pandemi ve Canlı Müzik Deneyimi” [A New Era in the Digital Socialization: Pandemic and Live Music Experience]. [Paper presented at the International Online Ethnomusicology Symposium on May 29-31, 2020, Bursa, Türkiye] Varlı, Özlem Doğuş (Ed.), (pp. 27-37) Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/44363972/2th International Online Ethnomusicology Symposium Proceedings Book Past Present and Future of Ethnomusicology in the World and Turkey](https://www.academia.edu/44363972/2th_International_Online_Ethnomusicology_Symposium_Proceedings_Book_Past_Present_and_Future_of_Ethnomusicology_in_the_World_and_Turkey)

Ertan Hacısüleymanoğlu, Gürcan and Sağır, Turan. (2022). “Türkiye’de Müzik Sosyolojisinde Önemli Bir Unsur Olan Düğünde Çalan Müziyenlerin Sosyo-Ekonomik Durumları ve Pandeminin Etkisi Hakkında Bir Durum Çalışması: Safranbolu Örneği” (A Case Study on the Socio-Economic Status of the Musicians Playing at the Wedding, an Important Element in the Sociology of Music in Türkiye, and the Effect of the Pandemic: The Case of Safranbolu) *Rast Musicology Journal*. 10(1): 59-77. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/2243049>

Karakoç, Elvan. (2021). “Pandemi Sürecinde Müziğin İyileştirici Etkileri” (The Improving Effects of Music in The Pandemia Process) *Journal of Social Research and Behavioral Sciences*. 7(13): 562-576. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.52096/jsrbs.6.1.7.13.28>

Kuyucu, Mihalıs. (2020). “Türk Müzik Endüstrisinde Covid-19 Pandemi Döneminde Üretilen Korona Temalı Müzik Eserlerinin Psikolojik Analizi” (Psychological Analysis of Corona-Themed Musical Works Produced in the Turkish Music Industry During the Covid-19 Pandemic Period). [Paper presented at the III. International Conference on Covid-19 Studies on December 25-27, 2020, Ankara, Türkiye] Çiftçi, Hasan and Tampubolon, Manotar (Eds.), (pp. 323-346). Retrieved from <http://repository.uki.ac.id/6556/1/T%C3%9CRKM%C3%9CZ%C4%B0KEND%C3%9CSTR%C4%B0S%C4%B0NDECOVID19.pdf>

Özarslan, Zeynep. (2021). “Yaratıcı ve Kültürel Endüstriler ve Covid-19 Pandemi Döneminde Türkiye’de Kültür ve Sanat Sektörlerinin Durumu” (Creative and Cultural

Industries and the State of Art of the Arts and Culture Sectors in Türkiye During Covid-19 Pandemic) *Alternative Politics*. 13(2): 371-408. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.53376/ap.2021.13>

Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Interior. (March, 2020). “81 İl Valiliğine Coronavirüs Tedbirleri Konulu Ek Bir Genelge Daha Gönderildi” (An Additional Circular on Coronavirus Measures was Sent to 81 Provincial Governorships) Accessed on August 2, 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/81-il-valiligine-koronavirus-tedbirleri-konulu-ek-genelge-gonderildi>

Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Health. (n.d.) “Covid-19 Nedir?” (What is Covid-19?) Accessed on July 27, 2023. Retrieved from <https://covid19.saglik.gov.tr/TR-66300/covid-19-nedir-.html>

Tanyel Başar, Çiğdem. (2021). “Pandeminin Gölgesinde Sanat-Sanatçı-İzleyici” (Art-Artist-Viewer in the Shadow of Pandemic) *Yedi: Journal of Art, Design and Science*. 25: 51-67. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/1117166>

Turkish Language Association. (2022). “Sektör” (Sector). Accessed on March 22, 2023. Retrieved from <https://sozluk.gov.tr/>

MARZHAN YELUBAYEVA

T.K. Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy
of Arts, Republic of Kazakhstan

marzhyelubayeva@gmail.com

orcid.org/0009-0001-0043-6002

GULNARA JERDIMALIYEVA

National Higher Institute of Music,
Algeria

gm.jerdimaliyeva@yahoo.com

orcid.org/0009-0000-5511-4732

AMAN KULBAYEV

T.K. Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy
of Arts, Republic of Kazakhstan

aman-kulbayev@hotmail.com

orcid.org/0009-0005-6399-7623

IOANNIS KAISIDI

T.K. Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy
of Arts, Republic of Kazakhstan

ioan.kaisidi@outlook.com

orcid.org/0009-0009-3947-8478

BAGIM MUKHITDENOVA

T.K. Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy
of Arts, Republic of Kazakhstan

b_mukhitdenova@outlook.com

orcid.org/0009-0001-8580-9022

Challenges of Artistic Creativity in the Context of Performance Activities

ABSTRACT

This study examines the psychological aspects of artistic creativity in the performing arts, emphasising its role in societal and individual development. Understanding and appreciating artistic endeavours is crucial to modern society, and addressing the challenges of creativity in performance can enhance its conscious application. The research aims to analyse the psychological dimensions of creativity in various performance roles using scientific analysis and psychological modelling, informed by literature from psychology, philosophy, and art history. A comparative analysis with Russian and international studies shows that while Russian research tends to focus on theoretical aspects, other international studies emphasise empirical research into the creative process. Our results will help develop a better understanding of the challenges in artistic creativity and propose methods to mitigate the negative effects of external factors on performers. The research offers valuable insights for professionals into the performing arts, facilitating more productive collaboration and deeper engagement with the creative process.

KEYWORDS

Art

Musicology

Aesthetic
disciplines

Musical thinking

Introduction

In aesthetic theory, the problems of artistic creativity have always occupied a special place. Artistic creativity can be viewed from two points of view – psychological and philosophical. In psychology, artistic creation is an activity that may result in a new material or spiritual value. That is, psychology emphasises the ‘mechanism’ of the appearance or embodiment of an act of creativity (Kapsetaki and Easmon, 2017: 541-549). Philosophical approaches raise rather the question of the essence of creativity. Thus, studies of artistic creativity can be divided into psychological and philosophical categories, dealing respectively with the creation of value and the essence of value. When studying creativity, it is important to consider its forms. Forms of creativity can be distinguished by many features, according to the specificity of the artist's work. Then, artistic creativity involves two processes-direct and indirect. This division helps us determine how much individuality is attributable to the music in itself (the art of the composer) and how much lies in the execution (the art of the performer). With the mechanism of implementation, some types of art involve the mandatory use of performing activities.

Performance is a form of artistic and creative activity in which the works of the so-called ‘primary’ creativity are materialized by way of a particular system of signs intended for translation into a particular material form (Kerber, 2016). Performing arts include creative activities: actors and directors, reciters, musicians, singers, instrumentalists, conductors and dancers. There are no performing elements in the visual arts, architecture and applied arts. Performing arts began to arise in the course of the development of artistic culture, as a result of the collapse of folklore, which is characterized by the inseparability of the creation of a work and its performance. Also, their emergence was facilitated by the appearance of methods of notating verbal and musical compositions in a fixed form. One of the most important philosophical problems of performing activity is its dualism. The artistic performer does not mechanically translate the work into another form, but reincarnates it, and that incorporates the performer’s own creative potential in all its aspects. It is especially difficult to separate direct and indirect creative activity in the psychology of artistic perception. The concept of the author of an artistic product in the form in which a person perceives it includes both the primary author and the performer.

Creativity as a process and as an object is an extremely complex and multifaceted concept. In order to get closer to understanding psychological and philosophical issues, it is necessary to consider in more detail the mechanism at work for each individual artist. It is impossible to cover the entire spectrum of artistic activity in one article. According to Lederman (1998: 45-51), the problems of artistic creativity in relation to performing activity are especially broad due to the dualism of the creative and performing process.

The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the psychology of artistic creativity for certain types of performing activities. The allocation of individual types of activities allows a more detailed and conscious approach to the consideration of the issue. In the early stages of performing activity, the author bore a great responsibility for the success of the implementation of the creative process. Freedom of interpretation was not allowed in the activities of musical performers, singers, instrumentalists and other stage artists. In ancient theatres, actors wore masks, which deprived the performers of their individuality. In the Middle Ages, the public attitude to actors and dancers left much to be desired, while authors and composers were valued quite highly. Today, performing activity in artistic creativity is highly valued, and rightly so. Each performance of a musical or theatrical text becomes unique, since the content is embodied in the individual creative and uniquely personal capacities of the performer. The relevance of the work is due to two important components. Art has a great impact on the cultural development of both society and the individual. The ability to understand and appreciate the products of artistic activity is an important attribute of people today. Consideration of how creativity is embodied in performing activities will bring the perception of creativity to a new, more conscious, level. In addition, this work will be useful for those engaged in performing and authoring activities, enabling more fruitful cooperation.

Materials and Methods

In this work, the method of scientific analysis and psychological modelling is used. When preparing the article, an analysis of theoretical scholarly literature on psychology, philosophy, and the history of performance was carried out. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of the research is to describe the problems of artistic creativity for certain forms of performing activities. In the first stage of the study, the authors identified forms. Performing arts include the activities of reciters, singers, dancers, instrumentalists,

actors, musicians, conductors and directors. According to Duckworth et al. (2007: 1087-1101), the model of the 'primary' creative process looks like this: the appearance and development of the idea; finding forms and ways to implement the idea; implementation of the idea.

To come to an understanding of the issues of performing activity, we will highlight the components of this activity, as the second stage of the study. According to Gembris et al. (2018: 9), there is a perceptual component associated with the sensations and perceptions of the primary work; mnemonic, associated with the memorization and mental reproduction of music, literature, and performing moves; mental, associated with the creation of an ideal (mental) image, comprehending the form of a musical work; imaginative, associated with imagination, with the composition of a new work or a new image in a new interpretation; and finally, motor. Naturally, in this case, the activity cannot be considered as a simple sum of the actions performed by the musician. Rather the actions are combined into an integral system for creating spiritual value. Psychological and philosophical problems can arise both in the very structure of creative and performing activities, and in the interaction with other performers and other authors. In other words, the effectiveness of a person's creative activity, as in any other activity, depends on external and internal factors.

At the third stage, we identify and describe the factors that raise potential issues. External factors can be divided into a subgroup of factors from the material environment, and a subgroup of factors from the socio-psychological environment. The material factors include: the quality and condition of a musical instrument; acoustics, temperature and other features associated with the stage; literature, props necessary in the process of preparation, etc. The factors of the socio-psychological environment include: the audience, the characteristics of the group (collective), the teacher (consultant) and the particularity of relationships with teacher/consultant, society as a whole and the immediate social environment of the performer. The internal factors that determine the effectiveness of creative and performing activities include human capacities that depend on innate and acquired characteristics. The first determine the potential of a person, while the second, in combination with the first, determines the available opportunities. Internal factors are a reflection of both biological and social factors in human development. The social factor of the performer's development as a person manifests

itself in the form of relationships and motives, in the form of knowledge and skills (including individual styles of activity), in the form of the effects produced by the development of professionally important qualities. The biological factor of the performer's development is mainly considered as genotypical, i.e., determining the innate features of individual morphological features (for example, the structure of the hand), innate physiological features (vital lung capacity, maximum oxygen consumption, etc.), psychophysiological features (properties of the nervous system, functional asymmetry of the cerebral hemispheres), mental processes, physical qualities.

Results

According to Ignatiadis et al. (2008: 176-179), the main task of the performing artist is mediation between the author, who has clearly recorded their work (in the form of text or notes) and the viewer, the listener. The performer needs to understand the author's intention, translate it into an accessible language for the audience and convey the artistic work to the listener (viewer). These three components of artistic performing activity unite all its types. Each stage of the mechanism of reproducing the author's idea corresponds to its own set of potential issues. A model of performing activity and the corresponding environmental factors (Figure 1).

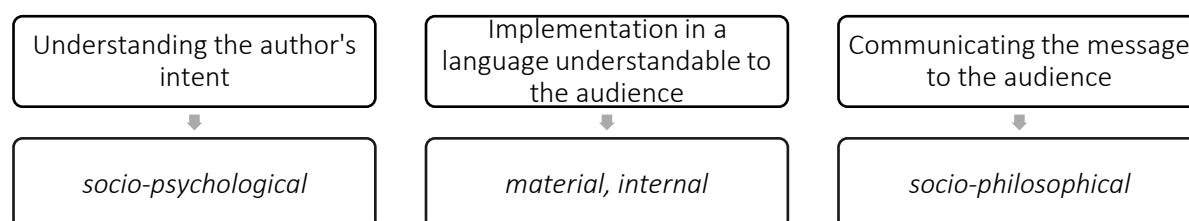


Figure 1. A model of performing activity and the corresponding environmental factors

When understanding the author's idea, the psychological context of communication with the author is of great importance. There are two sides to the process of explanation and understanding. The author of the work is certainly responsible for the depth and accuracy of understanding their own ideas, if, of course, communication with the author is available to the performer. The inability to communicate with the author on the one hand simplifies, and on the other hand complicates the process of familiarization with the creative product. In the latter case, a great responsibility for the interpretation of the creative idea lies with the performer. The main component of performing activity is the

processing and reincarnation of the primary author's idea, presented in a symbolic form in music, dance, theatrical production. Internal factors and the problems associated with them play an important role here. Psychological and personal issues, as well as creative problems of experiencing the work are certainly important. The performer experiences, interprets, so that the idea is reborn. The performer must present the work to the audience so that there would be no visible differences between life and imitation of life, genuine and illusory. But for the actor, musician, or director, the psychological line between the degree of familiarisation with the spiritual consciousness of the work and an understanding of the practical realities of what is happening is important.

Difficulties and problems on the way to the embodiment of the work will help the performer to master the methods of performing art and the features of the performing language. For maintaining psychological health, a comfortable atmosphere for the performance of a work is an important part of the creative process. In creative and performing activities, experience, intuition, emotional attitude, artistic and imaginative thinking are involved. The artist's role is complex and multifaceted. The identification of the boundaries between environmental factors and the principles of determining the sources of potential problems is to some extent conditional. When implementing a work, any performer faces the problem of limitations, meaning the limitations of the form of the work, of the traditions of its performance and of the language of performance (to a greater or lesser extent). The performing language is understood as a set of expressive and visual means, an arsenal of possibilities that the artistic system has at this stage of the development of civilization. The expressive means of the performer are subtle, and sometimes elusive in terms of the tools of external consciousness, such as intonation, timbre, gesture or facial expressions, to which an individual contributes to a particular action, thought or feeling. These are the internal psychological components of the issues of artistic and performing activity. It is also necessary to mention the physiological and biological component of the process of execution. Physical fitness and endurance are extremely important. Without the physical ability to conduct and participate in many hours of rehearsals, the mental substance of creative activity is also lost. Material components are also responsible for maintaining a fruitful rehearsal atmosphere. A well-thought-out, comfortable environment can improve the quality of creative activity. When considering the stage of creative and performing activity, socio-philosophical aspects

come out in the first place. Note that for most performers, the final performance to the audience takes place in a stressful environment. It is also common for most performers to work with a team of other performers who are equal in importance (from the point of view of reproducing a creative idea), as well as with representatives of other, related disciplines.

Earlier in the article, the authors identified different forms of performance activities: readers, singers, musicians, actors, conductors and directors. We will now present the main issues of creative and performing activities in the context of each of these forms. The issues taking into account the stages of the three selected stages of activity will be described (Figure 1). When getting acquainted with literary works, in most cases there is no opportunity to conduct a dialogue with the author. Readers are very limited in their expressive methods. Performers need to maintain vocal abilities. It can be difficult for readers to compete with other types of executive professions in matters of public response. Actors, having many expressive means in their arsenal, can attract a wider audience. In order to win the response of the public, readers need experience, creative intuition, and mastery of interpretation. Singers have similar creative issues. The singers are still limited, if less so, in their expressive means. They need to take care of their voice, and the concert format of the performance of the work is associated with stress. There may also be problems of a socio-psychological nature when interacting with composers, arrangers, musicians.

Moving on to the issues of artistic creativity in the context of performance by musicians, we note that music itself is a very complex and profound phenomenon. The musician needs to transform a series of written symbols into sound. There is an interpretation of a work created for the ear, but recorded by symbols for the eye. To understand musical information, extraordinary skills are needed. They are commonly called musical hearing, musical imagination or musical thinking. Note that the complete loss of physiological hearing does not entail the loss of musical hearing. There are many examples of musicians who have lost their hearing, but are still able to play and create masterpieces. The same principle lies in the understanding of musical thinking, which may not be related to psychological thinking. Thus, at the first stage of the familiarization and acceptance of the author's idea by musicians, this is associated with the special features and issues associated with musical thinking. The embodiment of the author's idea takes the form of

a direct performance of a musical work. Here it is appropriate to highlight the physiological internal problems of the performer – endurance, physical strength, coordination, muscle memory. A suitable material base for rehearsals significantly helps to maintain the psychological health of the musician. During rehearsal and concert activities, there are social problems of interaction with a group of musicians, including soloists and conductors.

There are two main problems in acting. There is the socio-psychological problem of interaction with the director and the philosophical and psychological problem of immersion, of playing a character. Should an actor experience what they portray, or is acting the ultimate imitation of an ideal model? This issue has been called the Diderot paradox. The question of the internal state of the actor during a stage play is the central node of the whole problem. In the artistic activity of directors and conductors, there is one main common feature – the dualism of the author and the performer. Interpreting literary or musical works (thus being performers), they are also the authors of an already modified, revised work. And the playback of the model of the performing process is repeated once again, where the actors or musicians are already demanding the director's (conductor's) idea. At the same time, the director's interpretation of the primary idea often differs from more common interpretations. As an intermediate link between the primary author and the audience, the conductor and director must, on one hand, make their own creative contribution, while on the other hand, submitting the author's ideas to the viewer. Directors and actors, conductors and musicians do not just work together on a piece; rather, the synthesis of their activities can be safely called co-creation. In these types of professions, the issues of socio-psychological creative interaction are very acute. The process of creating a theatrical production or a movie is multifaceted. Directors need to interact fruitfully with cameramen, lighting specialists, and solve material problems. In directing, the psychological problems of the key figure are more pronounced. For a conductor, the qualities of an informed leader are certainly important. It is worth emphasizing once again the problem of the stressful atmosphere of the concert – as the environment for the final presentation of the work.

Discussion

Based on the analysis carried out, the main problems of artistic and performing creativity,

both in general and for representatives of specific performing disciplines, are highlighted in the work. Creative problems and factors of influence on performing activity are described for three main components of the creative and performing process (understanding the author's idea - processing it – presenting it to the audience). Despite the fact that such a division certainly takes place, in some cases it is conditional. Some researchers do not divide the creative process into separate components. Among existing views, it is worth noting one based on the combination of creation and development: “Creativity is an integral activity, the result of which is the discovery (creation, invention, presentation) of something new, previously unknown” (Ivcevic et al., 2020: 7). In general, the presentation of the problems of the performing activity of any one work is in good agreement with the works of other authors. Most of the works from this scholarly branch are devoted to the problems of musical creativity. World researchers are not only trying to describe the range of problems of musical performance, but also to find ways of solving those problems. For example, scholars have studied the psychological state of musicians, based not only on theoretical analysis, but also on practical conversations, interviewing representatives of musical professions selected for research (Jacobson, 1936). The results show that special events for musicians help them prepare psychologically for key moments of transition, for competitions and for professional comparisons.

For the complex solution of a wide range of the designated problems, an approach is proposed (Jaque et al., 2015: 192), an important feature of which is the synthesis of key psychological and physical skills. The paper by Kenny et al. (2018: 43), as well as the present article, raise issues of internal physiological problems of musicians concerning endurance and coordination. Among European studies, many works are devoted to a medical problem, such as occupational diseases of the hands (Komurdzhi, 2017). These developments provide a detailed analysis of medical monitoring for 15 years. Characteristic diseases were identified depending on the particularities of a musical instrument (MacNamara et al., 2010a: 68). It is noted that many musicians accept pain as a result of their work or avoid showing their symptoms for fear of consequences for their career. Orthopaedic surgeons should be aware that diseases of the hands and upper limbs of musicians should not be treated surgically. The recognition and treatment of disorders of the hands and upper extremities should include knowledge of music-specific disorders, prevention, advice on posture and training techniques and performances, proper warm-

up and regular breaks, as well as 'cooling off', as in athletes after training.

Another important problem is raised in MacNamara et al. (2010b: 92). The authors describe the problem of digestive disorders and weight control in musicians on the basis of theoretical and empirical studies. A large study of the physical health of musicians and conductors was carried out in Germany (Nadyrova, 2014). Data on 2,536 musicians and 133 conductors were analysed in terms of health indicators. Various health problems were also studied in relation to health-related behaviours, including preventive measures taken (nutrition, sleep, etc.). The results showed that more than half (55%) of the musicians who took part in the survey suffered from time to time from physical issues that affected their performance. The prevalence increased significantly with the age of the musicians. Most of the complaints were received from musicians playing stringed instruments. An interesting fact is that there was no significant correlation between the severity of problems and various approaches to health care (visiting a doctor, taking preventive measures). As was noted in the work, the number of complaints of physical malaise during performance increased with age. However, in another study (Pecen et al., 2018), old age does not have an excessive negative impact on the physical and psychological health or the performing skills of professional musicians. But the decline in the number of older age groups may indicate a 'survival' effect, when those who develop significant age-related disorders may have to stop their professional activities at an earlier age.

In research by Sarkar and Fletcher (2014: 1420), a comparison was made between the physical and psychological health of musicians (in general) and representatives of other professions – engineers, doctors, and a mixed group. The data showed that the physical health indicators of musicians are higher. But the general background of psychological health, the level of anxiety (established with the help of tests, questionnaires, conversations) turned out to be worse than in the control groups. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a clear problem of psychological health for musical performers, which affects the creative process. The performance activity of the conductors was also studied to identify the psychological and physiological effects of performance. As has been noted repeatedly above, musicians and conductors present a work to the public in a stressful context. Indicators of stress in work by Thomson and Jaque (2012: 361-369) are measured quantitatively. The number of heartbeats per second was used as the main

indicator of stress. Based on the heart rate, the physiological requirements of professional behaviour reflect the intensity of work that is considered 'hard'. The data indicate the need for further study and medical monitoring of anxiety, respiratory diseases and cardiovascular risks in vocal performers and conductors. In response to the need for medical support for creative performers, a separate speciality emerged in the United States in 1985, known as performing arts medicine. The researchers described the psychological characteristics of different groups of dancers (ballet/modern dance/musical dancers), which differed significantly in relation to the creative requirements associated with the corresponding dance style. The groups were compared in terms of psychometrically determined creativity, and general mental development. The results showed that modern dancers, who are often required to improvise freely on stage, demonstrate a relatively high level of verbal and imaginative creativity (assessed using psychological tests), followed by performers of musicals and, finally, ballet dancers. As for personality, modern dancers can be characterized as less conscious, more prone to psychoticism and more open to experience than other experimental groups. If we compare this work devoted to the problems of creative and performing arts, s between the work of Russian researchers and other world researchers, then the obvious priority of foreign (non-Russian) work on the empirical components of research can be seen (Thomson and Jaque, 2012: 361-369).

Russian philosophical and psychological science is rich in theoretical approaches to the field of acting. World researchers pay more attention to empirical approaches: interviewing, questionnaires, socio-psychological testing. In the study by Tubiana and Chamagne (1993: 205), the results of a psychological test for vulnerability to stress are presented. Having conducted interviews with 41 professional actors, focusing on the connection with loss and trauma, Thomson and Jacques compared the results with a control group of specialists drawn from other artistic disciplines, as well as athletes and art enthusiasts. They found that actors were more likely to struggle to discuss past traumas, suggesting that they have a harder time resolving emotional problems. Despite the fact that there was no difference between the two groups regarding past traumatic events, the researchers wrote, more actors were unable to maintain narrative consistency when discussing memories of past injuries and losses. Actors may have expanded their imagination through the practice of acting, it seems, or perhaps they

turned to a career that supported their increased predisposition to fantasy. Similar results were obtained in work by Voltmer et al. (2012: 9-14). Research analysis has shown that creative achievements are predicted by the interaction of high vulnerability and resources, and that this effect significantly exceeds the predictive power of openness to experience and age. The authors of this work named the Diderot paradox as one of the main creative problems of acting. Western researchers, as can be concluded from the above analysis, resort mainly to empirical methods of studying the issue.

Speaking about the creative problems of actors and directors, it is impossible not to mention the work of the theatre director, teacher and theorist Konstantin Stanislavsky. He created a theory of acting on which many scientific works have been based to this day. Stanislavsky tried to rethink the actor's performing creativity as such. In his ideas and research, he largely relied on the achievements of science, especially psychological science – ‘art should be on good terms with science’, highlighting three main parts of performance: craft, the art of representation and the art of experience. The craft part refers to the mastery of expressive means. Stanislavsky tried to describe and formalize the mechanics of the game in order to make mastering the means of the game more accessible to actors. The art of representation is presented as follows – in the process of numerous rehearsals, the actor experiences genuine experiences that gradually create a clear form of representation, a ‘costume of the role’. At the final performance, the performer no longer experiences real emotions, but only puts on this costume. Thus, Stanislavski divided Diderot's paradox into two stages – rehearsal and demonstration.

To describe the versatility and complexity of the director's activity, Stanislavsky introduced the concept of the ‘super task’, also emphasizing the importance of good leadership qualities for the director. There are two main components of the ‘super task’: it is connected to, and may partly embody, the director's worldview, but it does not completely coincide with their position. The super-task, as the idea of the primary author, cannot be fully conveyed in its unchanged original form by words or other means. This leads to the existence of different interpretations of the primary idea. In the work by Yatsenko (1999), the results of an empirical study are presented on how well the methods of Stanislavsky are understood and used by the American Actors Guild. Determining the purpose of the character in each segment of the play (or movie) is an extremely important principle in preparation for a role. Through understanding the goal, you can get closer to

understanding the psychology of the character, the researchers note. The problem of competent preparation and training of musicians, actors, and directors does not apply directly to the creative problems of performing activities. However, the process of training personnel is directly related to the success of performing activities.

By discussing and analyzing the experience of theoretical and psychological work on the problems of creative performance activity, world researchers have devised a set of measures aimed at reducing problems of different genesis. This work highlights both complex, philosophical issues of creative activity, and private, material issues of narrow groups of performers. Reducing the number and depth of internal psychological and philosophical issues of the performer as an individual is an extremely difficult task. For many reasons, it is easier to work with external factors. Reducing the negative impact of the external environment will inevitably lead to an increase in the overall creative potential of the performer. The method of reducing problems is aimed at minimizing the negative external influence on the process of performing activities and at the same time maintaining one's own psychological and physical health. Creating a congenial atmosphere for rehearsal activities will significantly increase the creative potential of the performer. The method includes visits and consultations with medical specialists to maintain physical health. Quality rest also helps reduce anxiety among artists. For a more fruitful interpretation of this work, the recommendation is to outline a clear set of expressive means. Consultations with specialists-psychologists will help reduce social problems among the creative team. Compliance with these measures will lead to an increase in the emotional health and creative potential of performers.

Conclusions

This paper describes the problems of artistic creativity in the aspect of performance activity. The main components of performance are highlighted: understanding the author's idea (or the primary idea), translating the idea into the language of expressive means (music, dance, acting) and communicating the idea to the audience. The main factors influencing each stage are named: psychological, social, material. The problems of artistic creativity are described for each of the selected types of performing activities: musicians, instrumental and vocal performers, conductors, dancers, actors, directors and readers. The work highlights both complex, philosophical issues of creative activity, and

private, material issues of narrow groups of performers. The socio-psychological, material, internal, psychological and philosophical factors of influence on the creative process are named. Many performers, since their activities are collective, face social problems of creativity. There is also a problem of limitations in expressive means. There are two main problems in musical performance and acting. One is a socio-psychological problem of interaction with the director and the other a philosophical and psychological problem of immersion, playing a character. Many musicians face problems with musical thinking. There are also a number of important material problems in the creative process, including fear of the stage, and the influence of a stressful situation when presenting a work that can create increased psychological anxiety.

The analysis of the results of this article and the works on this topic by Russian researchers has shown that in Russian practice more attention is paid to the theoretical aspect of the question. These studies on the psychology of creativity have clear priority over other world researchers, who favour empirical research on the practical psychology of the creative and performing process. The medical conditions of performing professions are singled out as a separate specialty, which, of course, contributes to maintaining the physical health of musicians, dancers, and other representatives of the creative professions. It is shown that musicians and actors have a high level of anxiety. The authors of this article hope that the study of the issues of performing creativity will be continued. In future work, it would be extremely interesting to turn to empirical research. Surveys, psychological tests conducted with readers, musicians, actors, dancers would allow a deeper understanding of the psychological problems of performers. Control and monitoring of physical indicators are also extremely important. The results contribute to a better understanding of the issues of artistic creativity and, therefore, their reduction. Based on the identified complex and particular issues of performers, a method is proposed to reduce the negative impact of external factors.

REFERENCES

Duckworth, Angela; Peterson, Christopher; Matthews, Michael and Kelly, Dennis. (2007). "Grit, Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 92: 1087-1101.

Gembris, Heiner; Heye, Andreas and Seifert, Andreas. (2018). "Health Problems of Orchestral Musicians from a Life-Span Perspective: Results of a Large-Scale Study" *Music & Science*. 1: 1-20.

Ignatiadis, Ioannis; Mavrogenis, Andreas and Vasilas, Sokratis. (2008). "Disorders of the Musicians' Hand. Institute de la Main" *Clinique Jovenet*. 59(3): 176-179.

Ivcevic, Zorana; Grossman, Eliana and Ranjan, Aparna. (2020). "Patterns of Psychological Vulnerabilities and Resources in Artists and Nonartists" *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*. 1: 1-12.

Jacobson, Pavel. (1936). *Psychology of the Actor's Stage Feelings*. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura.

Jaque, Victoria; Karamanukyan, Isabel and Thomson, Paula. (2015). "A Psychophysiological Case Study of Orchestra Conductor" *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*. 30(4): 189-196.

Kapsetaki, Marianna and Easmon, Charlie. (2017). "Eating Disorders in Musicians: A Survey Investigating Self-Reported Eating Disorders of Musicians" *Eating and Weight Disorders*. 24(3): 541-549.

Kenny, Dianna; Driscoll, Tim and Ackermann, Bronwen. (2018). "Effects of Aging on Musical Performance in Professional Orchestral Musicians" *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*. 33(1): 39-46.

Kerber, Timothy. (2016). *A Study of the Stanislavski 'System' in Modern Practice*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

Komurdzhi, Rustem. (2017). *The Problem of Performing Interpretation of Musical Works*. Volgograd: Peremena.

Lederman, Robert. (1998). "Occupational Cramp in Instrumental Musicians" *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*. 3(2): 45-51.

MacNamara, Aine; Button, Angela and Collins, Dave. (2010a). "The Role of Psychological Characteristics in Facilitating the Pathway to Elite Performance Part 1: Identifying Mental

Skills and Behaviors” *Sport Psychologist*. 24(1): 52-73.

MacNamara, Aine; Button, Angela and Collins, Dave. (2010b). “The Role of Psychological Characteristics in Facilitating the Pathway to Elite Performance Part 2: Examining Environmental and Stage-Related Differences in Skills and Behaviors” *Sport Psychologist*. 24(1): 74-96.

Nadyrova, Damilya. (2014). *Work on the Artistic Image of a Piece of Music*. Kazan: Institute of Continuing Professional Education.

Pecen, Ellis; Collins, David and MacNamara, Áine. (2018). ““It’s Your Problem. Deal with It.” Performers’ Experiences of Psychological Challenges in Music” *Frontiers in Psychology*. 8: 2374.

Sarkar, Mustafa and Fletcher, David. (2014). “Psychological Resilience in Sport Performers: A Review of Stressors and Protective Factors” *Journal of Sports Sciences*. 32: 1419-1434.

Thomson, Paula and Jaque, Victoria. (2012). “Holding a Mirror Up to Nature: Psychological Vulnerability in Actors” *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*. 6(4): 361-369.

Tubiana, Rene and Chamagne, Pierre. (1993). “Occupational Arm Ailments in Musicians” *Bulletin de L’Académie Nationale de Médecine*. 177(2): 203-216.

Voltmer, Edgar; Fisher, Joachim; Zander, Mark; Kudielka, Brigitte; Richter, Bernhard and Spahn, Claudia. (2012). “Physical and Mental Health of Different Types of Orchestra Musicians Compared to Other Professions” *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*. 27(1): 9-14.

Yatsenko, Nikolai. (1999). *Explanatory Dictionary of Art History Terms*. St. Petersburg: Lan.

MEHMET ÖCAL ÖZBİLGİN

Ege University, Türkiye

ocal.ozbilgin@ege.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0002-3695-4928

FÜSUN AŞKAR

Ege University, Türkiye

fusun.askar@ege.edu.tr

orcid.org/0000-0003-3901-9705

The Phenomenon of Age in Western Anatolia Local Dance Culture in Turkey

ABSTRACT

Age is an important factor in traditional dance in Turkey. In particular, the concept of dancing in a specific order depending on age, signifies certain value systems that vary from locality to locality. In these cases, biological age is transformed into a more fluid and dynamic concept by a discourse of the body, determined by the social structure. More specifically, during their life cycle, children, teenagers, adults and elderly people perform different tasks in traditional dance contexts. While the individual is presenting his/her own persona through dancing, he/she also illustrates the expectations of the position within the society to which he/she belongs. For this reason, age-related dance information, such as the expectations of skills within local dance cultures, the relationships between certain age groups, traditional forms of dancing, and the transmission of dance knowledge from generation to generation, facilitates an understanding of the social relationship between the individual and society. Therefore, to observe dancing longitudinally over time and across the generations is to provide us with important information that explains how and why traditional dance contexts are created. This paper will introduce age-related "male village chamber institutions" that continue to exist in Anatolia. The function of these institutions in traditional dance culture will be discussed using the example of Izmir-Bergama region, Kozluca village. Drawing on field research carried out in 2009, the paper includes qualitative description based on participatory observation and information obtained through oral history studies regarding the traditional dance environments organised by various age groups. It explores the relations between people in the different age groups, and in doing so it analyzes the relationship between individuals and society in traditional dance contexts in terms of age.

KEYWORDS

Dance

Tradition

Age

Youth institution

Turkey

Introduction

Conceptual Framework: Traditional Dance, Identity and Age

Traditional dance represents the cultural heritage of civilizations from earlier historical periods. It changes over time, in relation to changing socio-political contexts and cultural systems. The socio-political and economic changes within societies, demand the redefinition of traditional dance concepts. For example, the boundaries of the meaning of traditional dance concept in Turkey were redefined with the establishment of the nation-state system, and these boundaries include *ethnic, linguistic, cultural* determinants, each of which registered changes within traditional practices.

Since the 1950s, in parallel to discussions of issues such as ‘urbanization’, ‘migration’ and ‘westernization’ in the socio-political sphere, Turkey witnessed significant developments and changes regarding the local dances of traditional societies. Certain dances, which had previously been particular to certain groups of people (especially ritual dances that were part of religious practice) were introduced to the wider public sphere. Conventional dance practices gained ‘accessibility’ and ‘visibility’ from these new contexts, through open-air festivals, stage shows and popular media. The first reason for this change is that since the Proclamation of the Republic in 1923, popular dances became one of the most important unifying emblems in the creation of the nation state. Secondly, the dance practices of local communities interacted in a very different way from the natural developments of the public arena - especially in the lifestyles of traditional societies - through global communication and global media. However, despite modernization and drastic changes in dance environments, traditional dance practices in Turkey maintained, albeit decreasingly, their original forms in ways that were compatible with modern life.

The traditional dance concept adopted in this study refers to a process of construction, and not to some essentialized concept. This approach also applies to all identity-related concepts, including age, social group and social status. These concepts will be briefly discussed below, with special reference to the concept of age, and its relation to traditional dance as a social identifier.

Research Question: How do social organizations that are shaped by age groups in traditional village societies in Western Anatolia construct, shape and transform traditional dance practices?

Hypothesis: Social constructs organised by age in the rural communities of Western Anatolia (such as village ‘chambers’, to reference a rather specific institution that will be contextualized later in this article) shape the way in which individuals learn, perform and transmit traditional dances by determining their participation in dance practice, thereby contributing to both individual identity formation and a sense of belonging in dance.

Methodologies in the sociology of village life are considered a strategic entry point for the study of society and culture as a whole. The work in this area is seen as a factor that triggers productivity in sociology, extending beyond ethnological knowledge about a single village. Thus, according to Srinivas (1955: 98), rural life for anthropologists provides a basic starting point for answering a basic sociological question, as well as providing insights into the community concerned. However, this view in sociology, understood within the framework of a presumed gradual evolution, such as the transition from small societies such as village, clan, etc. to civilized societies, has been largely abandoned. According to Edles (2002: 12-13, 28), in the 1930s Radcliffe-Brown characterized culture as an *ambiguous abstraction*, while structuralist sociologists of the 1970s recognized culture as a consequence, not a cause, of social change (Edles, 2002), while Clifford Geertz defined culture as a system of shared symbols and/or meanings (Geertz, 1973). The acceptance of culture as shared systems of meaning, emphasizes that it is a collective, shared through symbolic phenomena. All societies have an economic system in which goods and services are produced and distributed, and a political system in which power is created and policy formed. On the other hand, in all societies people have cultural (or symbolic) systems that *understand* and *give a meaning* to the world (as cited in Göncü Şavran, 2016a).

Charles Pierce indicates that symbols are signs (as cited in Rappaport, 1992: 249-261). In short, there are a few symbols pointing to performative and even ritual traditions, and, when examined in detail, they contain and represent a number of features that may be regarded as a set of rules or cultural structures, not explicitly stated in the community or culture (as cited in Eken Küçükaksoy and Beşiroğlu, 2013). Dance, as an important form among these cultural expressions, manifests itself in the form of practices, customs and observances. From this point of view, again referencing Geertz, it can be said that the reasons for the operation of the complex communication network with symbolic meanings - formed by the data of multiple semantic systems organized at the higher level,

such as body language, art, and religion - can be analyzed in relation to views of traditional dance culture, integrated within everyday life.

Deschamps and Doise (1978) point out that the position of individuals in the real and symbolic hierarchies that order the social world affects the way in which this social world is defined. When the individual is socially privileged and dominant, he/she is generally more active in the interface with the environment. The environment is thought to be more flexible and formable (as cited in Soylu: 1999).

In Dance, the values, attitudes, opinions, and the patterns, the stereotypes and indicators they create, are socio-psychological. Dance relates people to other people, events and objects, and mediates the formation of social identity. Social Identity Theory is a theory of social psychology, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner on the concepts of membership, group formation and processes and group relations in 1970s. It focuses on the perceptual and cognitive bases of group membership, specializing in social psychology of the relationship between individuals and groups (Abrams and Hogg, 1990: 195–228). The tendency of people to classify themselves and others into social categories such as nationality, religion, ethnicity, age, occupation, and organizational membership is addressed in this Social Identity Theory (Soylu, 1999: 53-73). And within this perspective, Turner (1985) specifies that the concept of self that emanates from the emotional meaning of the dancing individual's knowledge of belonging to a certain group or groups and the values attached to that membership is called *social identity*. According to Veysel Bozkurt;

Self is the thought of one's own identity and personal characteristics. This idea largely evolves according to how other people define his place in society and what he expects from him in that status. (...)The role is expected from the person who occupies a certain status. Norms in a culture are learned through roles. Few norms apply to all members of society. For example, the norm that is appropriate for a status may be wrong for the other (Bozkurt, 2009).

Social status is a term used to denote the place within the community where a person is located. It represents the position that other people objectively consider about the individual. This position gives the person certain rights and obligations. It specifies a location within the social hierarchy. Social status does not reveal what a person thinks

about him/herself. On the contrary, it reveals what other people think of him/her. Everyone in a society has more than one status: teenager, the older child of the family, the lowest employee of the market, the leader of the group of friends, and so on.

In a society, social status identifies various factors, such as family, wealth, education, work, color, age and gender. Whether a status is more or less respectable is also determined by society. In traditional societies, coming from a *noble* family meant a superior status, while birth in a *lower-class* family was a sufficient condition to be assigned a *low-class* status. However, in contemporary societies, one's own endeavors can give an individual status within social communities determined by success and ability. We can separate the social status into two components, the innate and the acquired. Some age-linked innate statuses are childhood, youth, and old, while acquired statuses are ones such as being a politician, a policeman, or a master of carpenters.

Turner's (1985) views on Social Identity Theory are that it classifies people according to different categories, with different individuals benefiting from different categorization schemes under the Theory (as cited in Soylu: 1999). A social role is a type of behavior that one is expected to exhibit in accordance with the social status of the person. Thus, the social roles resulting from dance environments are shaped by the social status and position of the person in the society. In traditional societies, it seems that the innate status (such as being a girl, boy, elderly or young) are more prominent in the behavioral patterns necessary for socializing. Considering socialization as a process of significant role formation, age turns out to be extremely important when social role behaviors are dominated by the members of social communities such as traditional societies.

Each traditional society, as a separate entity, has some age-related subjective qualities and uses. Age-related social norms are determined by a consensus within the community concerning mutually recognized and sustained obligations. In society, traditional norms play a vital role in socialization and as social control institutions. Moreover, different communities living in a region are culturally connected with each other; with integrated economic, social and ritual models around commonly accepted conventions. This provides an organization that links the village itself to the external world, meaning the neighborhood and the village's immediate surroundings, as well as providing an internal system of classes or groups within the community. For Dube (1955, 2018), the village is

a structural entity that enables some control over the behavior of individuals. However, he also notes that underlying similarities of structure do not mean that all the peasants in a society have a similar pattern across the country.

Village chamber-like gatherings in traditional societies can be included in various aspects of the *primary* and *secondary group* terms in sociology. With the quotation from Veysel Bozkurt;

The primary group consists of the regular interaction of people in long-term and close relationships. (...)While pre-industrial societies groups such as family, relatives and friends are dominant; secondary groups become important in industrial and post-industrial societies. The secondary group is the interaction of two or more people in an impersonal way to achieve a specific purpose. (...)Interactions are limited, and rules are important in secondary relations. People's associations are shaped into specific roles (Bozkurt, 2009).

Table 1. Comparison Between Primary and Secondary Groups (R.D. Shapiro, as cited in Bozkurt, 2009)

Important Features	Primary Groups	Secondary Groups
Size of the group	Less members	(Generally) large number of members
Foundations of the relationship	Personal	Not personal; roles and status
Equating oneself to another	High level	Low level
Social control	Informal	Formal (rational-legal)
Expressions of feelings	Spontaneously / Natural	Limited
Goal	Ambiguous	Specific / Definite
Groups	Family, social circles of friends and neighbours, fractions in the workplace	Companies, religious institutions, governmental units, associations

The forms of human relations in village chamber contexts have both primary and secondary character. Participants in village chambers have particular family, blood and neighborhood relations, and at the same time it is understood that the roles and statuses among the individuals are extremely important.

The other two phenomena to be considered in the study of dance environments according to age groups, are the concepts of *gemeinschaft* / *community* and *gessellschaft* / *associated*

society of Tönnies (2001). The law of society, contract, monetary economy and rationality come to the forefront in *associated societies*. In spite of that, the concept of *community* refers to human societies with common past life experiences that are peculiar to pre-industrial societies. The most important characteristic feature of the *community* concept in the field of sociology is solidarity. According to Mustafa Bulut, the purpose of establishing village chambers in accordance with this characteristic is summarized as follows: “The village chambers come together with social and cultural purposes such as weddings, feast celebrations, conversations, funerals, military ceremonies, education matters etc.” (Bulut, 2017).

Dance meetings organized by male communities in the Turkish entertainment culture are very diverse¹. The phenomenon of age in these meetings is the main element of social organization. It is an important social sign that young people and adults are members of different segments of the community and that differences in social gatherings are revealed. In these meetings we can also call *village chamber* activities in general terms. Thus, the categorization schemes that range from seating arrangements to the application of various rituals, vary between older and younger individuals².

Methodological Approach: Fieldwork and Oral History Interviews

According to Hancock, cultural analysis, rooted in the operations tradition of anthropology, examines individual perceptions and behaviors alongside cultural components such as social interactions, organizational structures, operations, values, and norms (2004). This research is based on cultural analysis using these research designs, with fieldwork and oral history interviews conducted in the Izmir-Bergama region between 1996-2018. They include short and spontaneous interviews in Bergama dance environments and the critical examination of audio-visual records, as well as participant

¹ Among the common ones are *gezek*, *sıra* visits, *sıra nights*, *sıra invitations*, *erfane*, *ferfane*, *ferfene*, *ârifane*, *erfene*, *örfene*, *goose parties*, *chat*, *chatting*, *chat rooms*, *halva conversations*, *yaren assemblings*, *sıra yareni*, *gün*, banquets, parties to sit down and talk (Özdemir, 2005: 52-53) and *barana* gatherings.

² For example, in Konya Akören village chambers, there is a seating tradition and when the person arrives at the chamber he is greeted when he comes in from the door. If he is younger than the other person, he sits in the lower part of the room. If he is older, he sits in the higher part, lining up according to age. If there are boys of a very young age, they are not allowed into the room when very important matters are discussed, on account of the fact that they would might gossip about the issues. (This footnote is a quotation. For further information please see A. Özkan, From Past to Present in the District of Konya Province Akoren Village Rooms, KMÜ Social and Economic Studies Journal, 14 (22): 1-4, 2012).

observations made in Bergama in traditional dance ceremonies and festivals³.

During the field research, we tried to document traditions, dances performed in the field, and social, blood-relative and age-concerned relations within the village chamber practices of the people interviewed. However, these data should not be regarded as the main elements regulating the major research questions of this study, which focuses above all on the role of age groups in the process of building, shaping and transforming public dance in traditional settings. This process has been analyzed in relation to the conditions in which the young people of Izmir-Bergama-Kozluca village are located and in connection with the socio-cultural and political systems affecting the identity formations appertaining to dance.

Social Organization by Age in the Western Anatolian Traditional Societies: The Concept of Chamber

Social units defined as *chambers* in rural areas of western Anatolia are traditional, non-governmental organizations that have social and educational functions where village men gather according to age groups. In this social structure where a certain hierarchical order is seen, the tasks that the members undertake vary according to the circumstances. Several places function as the village chamber room for the social groups to meet and socialize. The most important places for groups according to age in Bergama province of Izmir, are village coffee-houses. For example, individuals older than age 65, meet in coffeehouses close to the mosque, and have conversation mainly include religious topics. Distribution of duty for religious ceremonies, such as funeral ceremonies are distributed within this institution for social applications.

Old people dancing in traditional dance environments, is a rare occurrence. The physical exhaustion old age produces is the first reason usually shown for not dancing. Once the elderly person reaches a certain level, he tends to turn to religious actions rather than secular ones. For this reason, although elderly individuals are not physically very active in traditional entertainments; their status is considered very valuable in the sense of

³ Oral history interviews were held with approximately 50 villagers between November 26th-30th and December 1st, 2009; and also, on November 30th, 2018. Averaging 4 hours of recording, the interviews were undertaken in the Izmir Bergama region, Kozluca village; as a part of Ege University State Turkish Music Conservatory Turkish Folklore Department, Prof. M. Öcal Özbilgin, Lecturer Abdurrahim Karademir, Lecturer Aykut Mis, Lecturer Barış Sarıkaya, Research Assistant İdris Ersan Küçük, student and graduate Fatih Sultan Keskin, Şehim Çiftçi and Faik Talay

analyzing symbolic messages in dancers' movements and the dance itself. The elderly individual acts as an expert (referee), commenting on the dancer's movements. Besides, the dance of an elderly person in a dancing environment is a great honor for the people therein.

Adults, on the other hand, meet with their peers to talk over socio-economic and socio-political issues and actions in the chamber rooms. There can be more than one adult chamber room in any village. The number is often determined by social interests such as hunting, shooting etc., and can be quite large. In addition, coffee-houses designated according to certain age categories are places where adults may gather with their peers. The coffee-houses which take on the role of chamber rooms do not seem to develop an official identity in relation to this role. In the fieldwork, we noted that single adults (ages 20-30), newly married adults (ages 25-35), and married adults for 5-10 years (aged 40-50) all tend to gather in separate locations.

The most important phase in the acceptance of an individual as an adult, is determined by whether or not he has completed his military service. In addition to the education received within the community, it is assumed that the individual will have reached maturity through military service. If military service has been completed, it is thought that he will be ready to assume economic and social responsibilities such as marriage, management of goods and services. The influence of socio-political status is also reflected in traditional dance practices. Dancing solo or in a group in a specified order, designates an adult person's position in society. For this reason, when an adult is dancing in Western Anatolian societies, the intervention of another person in the dance is perceived as an attack on the social status of the dancer. Many events, even leading to death, have been reported due to this.

The youth chamber is separated from others by its places specially designed for young people. It can be separated from the others by facilities designed solely for the young, and is usually equipped with a kitchen, for those individuals who have not yet reached competence after 12 years of age. The refrigerator, TV, carpet, and oven etc. are all purchased using the donations of the *young* and the *adults*. All such equipment is the common property of the room. As a closed group, the management establishes certain rules and the sequence of actions is hierarchical, by people who skipped certain stages.

The circumcision of male children in Turkey is the first step towards transition to youth. Individuals who arrive at this stage are considered ready to receive education from their community, rather than the basic education from their families. To help the family in farming, to start working in any business, to undertake small tasks in social ceremonies are the social roles common at this age. Especially at wedding ceremonies, young people are encouraged to dance. In order for the traditional dance to be carried out, youth-specific learning and practising systems are introduced. By means of applications that are intertwined with the age levels seen in the youth, young people are socialized in determinate stages. In traditional society, the first environments that enable young people to appear as an individual, are traditional dance environments.

It is known that dance activities, which have a very important place in the traditional culture of Western Anatolian societies, are carried out by age groups affiliated to institutions connected with village chambers. Kozluca village in Bergama Region constitutes a very good example, so it has been chosen for the fieldwork of this study.

An Analysis of Social Organization According to Age in the Context of Dance in Izmir Bergama Kozluca Village

The people of Kozluca village were originally Karakeçili nomads and information about the settlement of the village is based on the Karesioğulları Principality (1296-1361) period. Bergama belonged to the province of Aydın during the Ottoman period. 25 km distant from the Bergama district lies Kozluca, a village composed of 150 houses. The population is around 350 people. Primary sources of incomes are picking cotton, olives, tobacco and corn, as well as tending livestock.

In the village of Kozluca, three different parts of the male chamber room, determined by age, are organized, ranging from small to big, thus: a *youth* chamber, a *köseler* chamber and a *mosque* chamber. In terms of the boundaries of the locality, in this study village chambers will only be considered in relation to dance activities. Western Anatolia as a whole is known to have organized many women in the context of traditional dance. But in this study, the focus was placed on the structural organization of the male village chambers, and the dances performed by women were excluded.

The Bergama Kozluca Village Room System

Youth Chamber

The *youth* chamber houses a closed group in which the teenagers, who have now left childhood behind, can socialize with each other. The members of this group gather in the room every evening and socialize. In the meetings held in the room, in addition to daily routine sharing, the *youth* share information on subjects varying from the spectator games to things that need to be done at a funeral. This meeting is given the name **erken-erken**⁴. It is also a leading event held in a room where you can watch TV, eat food, or play chess games, in addition to chatting.

A structure was established in order to ensure the smooth operation of the room. Three names are given to the administrator of the chamber; *Efebaşı* (the head efe), *Sözbilen* (wise man) and *Mırmır* (hummer) and these three names are assigned to the same person. The *Efebaşı* is elected democratically through a vote in the chamber. It is usually kept secret who the *The Efebaşı* is, among the group. All the work done by the *youth* and the *lumberjacks* of the chamber is inspected by *The Efebaşı*. He makes decisions about what should be done, makes judgments about the people in other positions and about the work they do. If one of the *youth* falls in love with a girl, he conveys this special status to the *Head Efe*. He conducts research to get the girl's approval and gives the families the chance to go to the Family (*dünürcü*, ask for a girl as a bride). As can be understood from this example, the *The Head Efe* is not only the economic and managerial, but also the social, leader of the group.

The sanctions of the *youth* room are very severe. The *youth* should be in the room every evening, and they should certainly make it known if they can not. If one of the members does not follow the rules of the group, he may face heavy penalties. One of the worst crimes of the chamber is to spread the matters which are spoken of in the chamber to those outside. Punishments are given both physically and socially: As an example of physical punishment, we may cite hitting under the feet with a bat (*bastinado*) a specified number of times by the *The Efebaşı*; as an example of social punishment, we may count travelling around the village sitting backwards on a donkey. Despite warnings and punishment, if the person does not obey the rules; he will be thrown out of the chamber

⁴ Erkan: 1. Notable people in a community, elders, seniors. 2. Way, method (TDK Dictionary).

of the *youth*. It would be very difficult to get back in the chamber. However, if a person donates money, around 1000 Euros today, he would be able to return to the chamber.

There is no obligation for all young people of the village to join the chamber. But it is considered a great prestige to be a member of the *youth* chamber for young people and their families. Information as to the positive and negative effects of joining the *youth* chamber has been obtained. The first negative report concerns the drinking and smoking habits gained in the chamber environment. Among the benefits, it is stated that solidarity and solid social ties among *youth* will be established by way of this room.

With marriage, the direct relation between the *youth* and the room ends. In the past, as people finished their education after primary school and married at the age of 20-21, relations were cut earlier. Our interviews with people over the age of 60 today, have shown that the average chamber membership lasted for 6-7 years in the period they were in the *youth* chamber. However, membership duration now is much longer. "Those we met in the Kozluca *youth* chamber during research were not married both in our interviews in 2009 and 2018 and still seemed to be on active duty in the *youth* chamber. The interview concluded that those who were older than themselves had been born in 1983, but most of these people seemed to be members because they were not only married, but that there were no chamber relations" (Talip Ay⁵, personal communication, January 21, 2018).

From a numerical perspective, 85% of the *youth* chamber is made up of senior *youth*, and 15% of the youth are new members. This ratio is always protected because one cannot be a senior member if noone comes as a new member. By 2018, it has been determined that there are an average of 30 active members and 5 *lumberjacks* (freshers, new members) in Kozluca Youth Chamber.

Lumberjacks (Oduncular)

Lumberjacks are teenagers between the ages 12-15. After finishing elementary school, the teenager becomes a member of the chamber as a *lumberjack*, as long as he brings a gift for the room. 1kg of sugar and 1kg of tea is enough to enter the chamber. The

⁵ Talip Ay, born 1991, member of youth chamber (2007), and a two-year Lumberjack, a university student, Kozluca village.

registration to the *youth* group is conclusive proof that a lumberjack is no longer a child, but a young person. Because of lumberjacks being the freshers of the chamber, they are responsible for the simplest duties around the room: lighting the stove, preparing and serving food and drinks, moving materials from one place to another, and so on. At the same time, *lumberjacks* learn the traditional dances of the village from the *youth* and the *köse* members in the chamber. Their mistakes never remain unpunished, and this situation can lead to them being thrown out from the chamber. Every day they must come to the room until *yatsı* prayer (two hours after sunset), or they must inform people if they can not come. The *lumberjacks* have to take care of everything, with the authority given by the chamber. Only after a new member attends the chamber as a fresher, the oldest member goes from a lumberjack status to a senior *youth* level (for general information: Karaca⁶; Yavaş⁷; Acar⁸ and Varoğlu⁹, personal communication, January 21, 2018).

The Youth (Gençler)

Their position in the hierarchical order is one step higher than *lumberjacks*. They work in all social organizations. Apart from the wedding ceremonies, they especially work during the Feast of Sacrifice in village theater pieces¹⁰, performed every single day of the Feast.

⁶ Karaca, Mustafa. born 2001, member of youth chamber (2016), Lumberjack, Kozluca village.

⁷ Alihan Yavaş, born 1999, member of youth chamber (2014), he did one year as a Lumberjack, Kozluca village.

⁸ Hamit Acar, born 2000, member of youth chamber (2017), Lumberjack, Kozluca village.

⁹ Mert Varoğlu, born 2002, member of youth chamber (2017), Lumberjack, Kozluca village.

¹⁰ Day 1: On day 1, a *camel game* is played in Kozluca Village. In camel game, 3 people enter from the bottom of the stage. 1 person plays the role of the owner of the camel, 1 or 2 people play the roles of those trying to move the so-called flapper. A heavy coarse fabric, wood fragments, boots and rope are the materials used in the construction of the camel. The fabric covers the people so that they can't be seen down to their knees. On top of these people pieces of wood are placed that constitute the haunches of the camel. These 3 people wear boots. The camel's head is also covered with a boot, cut at its tip. The camel's owner leads it around the whole village; in the end he passes by the coffee-house and people gather at village square. At the square, they present village theater pieces. In one piece, the camel crouches and stands on all fours again and again, depending on the actors' talents and imaginations; and in the end, it faints. The owner of the camel calls for a doctor; so, chosen people among the villagers arrive by the camel and they pretend to treat it. This cycle of events is repeated a few more times. Whenever the camel pleases, it gets to its feet again, and dances a variety of steps.

Day 2: In the evening of the second day of the Feast, there are a total of 5 people in village theater piece called the *kavurmacı* (the roaster): One man in a woman's costume, the roaster, *bezirgan* (the trader), the gardener and the drunk. The roaster comes to the person dressed in a woman's costume and shouts out to her:

"Roasting roaster, 40 years roast, Aaaah look at me in the backyard!"

The girl turns her head to the other side and shows interest in another handyman for another job. After the roaster, other people arrives and all of them repeats the same scene. Finally, the drunk comes by crawling with a beer or wine bottle in his hand and shouts out at the girl:

"Drunken drunk, 40 years of drunk, Aaah look back at me!"

The girl turns around to the drunk and goes nearby him. She shows interest in him. And the village theater piece comes to an end this way.

Dancing and miming practices in the village of Kozluca are still being sustained. The decor, make-up, and dancing job belong to the *youth* of the chamber. Material gathered by the *lumberjacks* is organized by the *youth*. Certain members of the *youth* perform local zeybek dances before the village theater piece is presented. In the meantime, they gather money and food by hanging a ring on the edge of a stick. In the upcoming days they use this money to prepare a *youth* feast and eat together. They use the tips they receive at the entire Feast days for the expenses of the chamber.

The primary duty of *youth* is to train and educate the *lumberjacks* and audit their work and social behavior in daily life. *Lumberjacks* learn about the traditions and customs from the *youth*.

Members of the *youth* do the organization together by giving duties to the *lumberjacks* in dance activities, teaching the local folk dances to them as experienced elders in the *youth* room. It is known that sometimes the members called *köse* members who have been married for 2-3 years and have still not departed the *youth chamber* come to the room and teach the dances to the *youth*.

The main task of the *youth* is to provide entertainment activities with dance. When a bride

Day 3: The village theater piece called *hodja* is presented. 1 person becomes the hodja, a 2nd becomes a golddigger and 3 or more people play the role of satans. A beard made from cotton is provided for the hodja, along with a fez – and a black material used in order to cook meals in houses called *dran* is prepared for his head. While the hodja is reading from his book, golddiggers come and ask him "hodja, where is the money?". The hodja points to a place with his finger and the golddiggers rush to that very point, starting to dig immediately. But they find nothing there. So the hodja continues reading, and they ask the same question. The hodja blows on some paper among his book's pages and the papers fall to the ground. The golddiggers start digging at the point where the papers fall. But they again find nothing. Events repeat again and again, until in the end the golddiggers ask the hodja a final time: "Hodja, where is the money? Blow on so that we can find it, otherwise the satans are going to come." The satans, wearing white undergarments, start bustling around hodja, crashing the knives in their hands to one another. They hit the *dran* on the hodja's head with it. The hodja is afraid and shows it with his moves. The golddiggers, who could not find the money, grab at the hodja's beard, and the theater piece comes to an end.

Day 4: A village theater piece called bear is presented. 1 person plays the role of the bear and the other person plays the role as its owner. In order to prepare a bear costume easily, an ingredient of dry herbs is dampened. It is tied with dry weed all around, in order not to show the bear. Balls of herbs are then tied in a way that make up two main parts of the clothing. Two long sticks called *çatal çomak* are also tightly tied with herbs and given the shape of a head. The owner makes the bear perform many kinds of imitations in the village square. For example, he asks: "How do women faint at hamams (Turkish baths)? How do women knead dough? What does the mother-in-law do when she sees her bride? What does the bride do when she sees her mother-in-law?" As such questions are asked, the people watch the imitations done by the bear. During these, the bear runs through the people, hugs them and dances to various kinds of music (Benli; Benli C. and Kalaycı, personal communication, January 21, 2018). [Resource persons: Ferit Benli. born 1966, Bergama Atmaca quarter, Musician (clarinet); Cenk Benli, born 1986, Bergama Atmaca quarter, Musician (Drum) and Ahmet Kalaycı, born 1971, Bergama Atmaca quarter, (Drum)].

is taken around the village before the wedding, the *youth* are supposed to stop at certain places in the village within a certain schedule and dance there. From time to time the *youth* of other villages also participate in the dance performance. But the main duty concerning dance belongs to the *youth* of the village.

Chamber of the *Köse* (newly married) Members

Newly married men are called *köse*. After a *Köse* marries, he leaves the *youth* chamber. However, he remains closely in contact with it. In case of need, *köse* members teach the *youth* traditional dances and theater pieces to maintain their position as trainers. When teaching these dances, they apply certain methods they've developed for themselves, such as starting from the simplest dances and proceeding to the difficult ones.

Chamber of The Mosque

The place where the *elders* meet is the closest coffee-house to the mosque. It is an environment where people over the age of 60 meet and socialize while waiting for their worship at the mosque. *Elder people* rooms have no direct connection to traditional dances.

The Dance Tradition and Social Status According to Age Phenomenon in Kozluca Village Entertainment Ceremonies

The *youth* actively take part in the wedding ceremonies in Kozluca Village. The person who organizes the duty assignments of the *youth* in the wedding organization, is the person called the 'flag-bearer' (*Bayraktar*), who is chosen among the members of the *youth*.

Being a 'flag-bearer' has a different status from that of a 'head efe'. The *head efe* represents the presidency of the *youth* chamber. The 'flag-bearer' should be a person within this chamber, who has organizing skills and social competence; whilst 'the Head Efe' is selected in chamber's own hierarchical layout and remains hidden. Unlike the head efe, the flag-bearer is elected every two years by a vote of the village. The owner of the wedding has the right to change the flag-bearer at his own wedding if he wishes. However, this situation is not really approved by the people of the village.

The flag-bearer deals with everything from the food served to the location of the guests in the organization, and he receives help from the *youth* and the *lumberjacks* in the

chamber for many things done – in henna nights and weddings. Weddings takes two days in Bergama district, and in addition to inviting relatives and guests, it is usual to invite neighboring villages' *youth* chambers in the district. The *youths* carrying the flags of their own villages are welcomed, with the flag-bearer carrying the flag of his village at the front. The 'flag-bearer' organizes the accommodation of the neighbouring *youths* and plans the correct seating arrangements. The 'youth' chamber flies its' flag with a ceremony for the wedding to start. This flag is a very important symbol for the entire village and the 'flag-bearer' is responsible for the protection of the flag.

The 'flag-bearer' needs to be a good dancer, first and foremost, because it is an unwritten policy that the 'flag-bearer' dances as the first person at a wedding. He arranges the dancing order according to certain rules. In the hena night, which is the first night of the wedding, he starts performing a solo zeybek dance. In this region, where people mostly dance as collectives, dancing solo, gives prestige to the individual. After the 'flag-bearer' dances solo, he stops the music and talks to the public, as 'shooting guns is forbidden. We will go in from the right and go out from the left, do not be offended' and explains the rules of dancing. The village has no restrictions on dancing for its own people. *Elders* are the only audience in wedding entertainments, and the *köse* members join as dancers, only. They do not take an active role in terms of organization, as do the *youth*. Under the control of the 'flag-bearer', every village performs its own local dance when they arrive at the wedding. The 'flag-bearer' also gives the right to the *youths* from other villages to dance. If it is the same people's turn again, they may dance one more time under the control of the 'flag-bearer'. But the guests from other villages do not dance with the people of the village they are in. Even if they want to, the 'flag-bearer' won't allow it. The wedding ends with the Bergama *Hora*, with the *youth* dancing. At the closing ceremony, the *youth* hoist the flag up to about 3 meters high in a ceremonial manner, along with a performance of the National Anthem. Thus, every stage of the two-day Kozluca wedding takes place under the supervision of the *youth* (Mehmet Emin Özen¹¹; Osman Tabak¹²;

¹¹ Mehmet Emin Özen, born 1962, Headman of Kozluca village (hammersmith) and Hayrullah Özen, born 1962, Head of primary school, Kozluca village.

¹² Osman Tabak, born 1951, farmer, Kozluca village.

Ceyhan Şen¹³ and Osman Çobanlar¹⁴, personal communication, January 21, 2018).

The issue of associating field findings with theories can be summarized as follows:

Tönnies (Gemeinschaft – Gesellschaft): Age Groups and Social Solidarity

Tönnies' concept of '*Gemeinschaft*' (community) is very helpful in understanding the room system in the village of Kozluca, organised on the basis of age. According to Tönnies (2001), *Gemeinschaft* is an organic form of solidarity in which individuals form relations through a common past, a sense of belonging, emotional and trust-based bonds. The *youth* chamber, '*köse*' chamber and mosque chamber in Kozluca fit this description one by one:

- A *youth* chamber is a community structure where individuals are shaped by social norms, where a sense of belonging is reinforced by rituals and where hierarchy is considered natural.
- The levels symbolizing status transitions such as '*Oduncular*' (Loggers) and the rituals in these transitions (gift-bringing, punishment systems, etc.) account for the size of the chamber communities.
- The use of dance here as a 'social acceptance' and 'status building' tool overlaps with the 'symbolic community rituals' seen in the *Gemeinschaft* societies.

Thus, in Tönnies' view, the dance environment in the Kozluca represents the traditional communal structure in which the individual processes their age-based status development within a collective system of belonging.

Parekh (Cultural Identity and Multitude): Social Roles and Identity Formation Based on Age

Bhikhu Parekh defines cultural identity not as a static element, but as a plural and negotiable structure shaped by social interactions. Dance practices in Kozluca are likewise spaces where the individual reconstructs their identity through social roles defined by age.

¹³ Ceyhan Şen, born 1983, owner of coffeshop, Kozluca village.

¹⁴ Osman Çobanlar, born 1944, Bergama Akçenger village and Hüseyin Çobanlar, Bergama Akçenger village (Head of Bergama Nomads Assosation)

- For example, roles such as *efebaşı* or *bayraktar* (flag bearer) are not only shaped by age, but also by social skills, leadership, and dance competence.
- This shows that identity is not only shaped by the roles that the community assigns, but also by individual performance. In this respect, the fact that the cultural identity emphasized by Parekh is open to negotiation is also observed in the context of dance.

Furthermore, the fact that youngsters from different villages can attend weddings in Kozluca with their own dances while mixed dances are not allowed, demonstrates that cultural boundaries in dance are drawn through the body, and that these boundaries play an important role in the negotiation of identity. Parekh's emphasis on the "encounter and separation of identities" has been concretely observed in the field.

Rheingold (Communities and Media): The Room System and Knowledge Transfer

Howard Rheingold's view that "communities are reshaped through media" is useful in understanding modes of knowledge transfer, particularly among the youth, within the traditional oda (room) system.

- The use of television, stove, carpet, kitchen, and other objects of common ownership, together with media tools in the *youth* chamber in Kozluca, demonstrate how the transfer of traditional knowledge is blended with contemporary tools
- Here, Rheingold's idea that "media reproduces the cultural capital of the community" (1993) comes into play: the *youth* chamber now transmits identity and dance knowledge between generations not only through oral transmission, but also through visual and auditory experiences.

Additionally, the fact that the ways in which dances are learned and performed according to the hierarchy in the room suggests that the community blends cultural transmission with both modern media-based and traditional methods. In this context, the table below will serve as a simple guide for directly linking the theoretical framework to the field findings and for explaining it along the age-identity-dance axis.

Table 2. The practical reflections of theoretical approaches

Theorist	Concept	Reflection in the Field Findings
Tönnies	Gemeinschaft	Rooms organised based on age groups; belonging, solidarity and social norms
Parekh	Cultural Identity	Roles such as bayraktar and efebaşı shaping identity; dance's individual and collective production of identity
Rheingold	Media and Community	Television, collective object use and media-supported knowledge transfer

Conclusion

This study examined how traditional dance practices are organised and maintained in the context of age and identity through the example of Kozluca Village in Bergama, Western Anatolia. The field data obtained revealed in detail the relationship between age-based social structures and dance. At the same time, this process made visible the role of dance practices in the construction of cultural identity, within the wider context of social strata. The methodological approach focusing on age in this geographically restricted study contributes to the comparative analysis of social community structures. This from of research offers a broad perspective on comprehensive research that might be conducted on all types of socio-cultural issues.

Parekh's definition of culture is: "Culture is a system of beliefs and customs created by a system of meaning and significance created in history, or, in other words, in the sense of organizing the individual and collective life of a group of people. It is also a way of understanding and regulating human life" (2001: 184). Parekh also emphasizes that the cultures provide consistency in life, guiding the world by providing the resources necessary to achieve meaningful values and ideals (as cited in Bozkurt: 2009). The social order, which is legitimized by culturally created meaning and a system of norms, provides more benefits to some groups within the society than others, resulting in conflicting interests and goals. For this reason, conflicts exist between different classes, genders, cultural societies and generations in all cultures. Therefore, culture is not only a passive heritage, but is also a dynamic structure in which members are constantly seeking a balance as these conflicts shape their consciousness.

Parekh's understanding of cultural change, included in the theoretical framework used in

the study, is associated with the fieldwork results not only on the axis of pluralism, but also in its belief that culture can be transformed through internal dynamics.

In the Kozluca Village example, both the preservation and reshaping of traditional dance practices within semi-formal structures such as youth chambers concretize Parekh's view that cultural change is not a stable but an interactive process.

Similarly, Rheingold's understanding of "production of social capital in the context of community" helps explain the relationships of belonging and status that youngsters establish through dance.

On the other hand, Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* distinction contributes to our understanding of the process whereby the room system in the village evolves from its traditional (*Gemeinschaft*) characteristics toward the looser social ties (*Gesellschaft*) that come with digitalisation.

Each of these theoretical approaches provide important frameworks for making sense of the age, identity and traditional dance relationship observed in the fieldwork, and are directly associated with our results.

Since most of the property in Kozluca Village belongs to older people, this age group provides the financial resources for occasions that include traditional dance, such as marriage and circumcision ceremony. This brings the elderly to a leadership position in economic terms, and as a result they have many things to say even about such particular matters as the choice of a spouse. Because of their economic importance in traditional dance environments they are at the top in the hierarchy. *Köse* members, who take the most active role in the production process, are in the age group that produces the most profit economically. By working in jobs that require bodily strength, they can perform better than others in farming. This gives an advantage to *köse* members in dance environments. Performing a dance that includes economic and political symbols for Western Anatolian society, the order of people dancing, the money tipped to the band during the dance, and the meals and drinks offered in the entertainment environment are all indications of an individual's place in society. Getting to the top of this position for *köse* members is a very desirable position.

Every culture is at the same time a system of inspection. It regulates the behavior and lifestyle of society, taking a role as a protector of values and norms with rewards and the punishments. The Kozluca *youth* chamber disciplines young people about behaving appropriately within societal norms in accordance with age. At the same time, the *youth* chamber, which serves almost as a full-time educational institution, provides training for the next generations - meaning the *youth* and the *lumberjacks* - to pass on their traditions and customs to future generations. Duties and tasks for young men to accomplish at the entertainments enable them to show their capacities. It is known that in the past punishments such as beating and caning the feet were effectively used in the group because of the strictness of the system. In today's world, given approaches in educational sociology, the punishment methods of *youth* chambers have been softened. However, since people of Kozluca still consider traditional dance to be a most prestigious activity, young people are very eager to learn and perform local dances. Pinar points out that he misses the training at the *youth* chamber because he is a student at the Ege University, so he tries to catch up with what he missed by taking special classes in Izmir city center (Furkan Pinar¹⁵, personal communication, January 21, 2018).

In Kozluca Village, dancing in entertainments for sacrificial feasts and wedding ceremonies brings social status to *youth* by village society. The 'flag-bearer' who works in the wedding ceremonies has the most prestigious position as the *organizer* who designs the entertainments. In addition to his community-favored personal touches, his skill at dancing moves him to the top. Nowadays, Kozluca Village continues to gain social status through wedding ceremonies and festive entertainments. Dance practices, which constitute an important environment for marriage, form the most ideal environment for young men to esteem each other through the choice of their spouses.

Until 2000, it was known that individuals in Kozluca started working in farming immediately after elementary school. Due to the early start of their working life in the past, most of them were married after their military service (at 20-21 years old) and they were known to end their dance training in the *youth* chamber. Today, however, the extension of educational life in rural areas has changed the age-dependent nature of traditional dance practices. In recent years, the average age of marriage has been shifted

¹⁵ Furkan Pinar, born 1995, member of youth chamber (2015), Lumberjack, Kozluca village.

to 25, which has shifted the end of the membership of the *youth* 4-5 years on. However, young people choosing big cities like Bergama or Izmir for their education have reduced their physical connection to the chamber. Gatherings of the chamber, which were once supposed to be every single night, decreased and are now just at weekends. It is understood that the *youth's* need to get together to discuss dance-related issues is satisfied by sharing a virtual environment via the internet.

Since the 1990s, the concept of internet communities or virtual communities has been the subject of contemporary social group work in proportion to the rapid development of communication technologies. Howard Rheingold, in his 1993 book, points to the *virtual community*, which is a computer-based communication *via* internet networks, as a new formation in people's social life. Rheingold, referring to the concepts of Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* and *Gessellschaft*, states that people in virtual communities have many characteristics that people in an ordinary congregation have, but do not communicate face to face. On the other hand, virtual communities do not have time or space limitations for individuals to communicate with one another (Şavran, 2016b). Rheingold, who studied the people of Oldenburg in three different environments (Oldenburg, 1989), considering where they lived throughout their lives, where they worked, and where they gathered for entertainment, sees virtual communities as congenial places where sociability is built and sustained. Groups and pages on social communication networks such as WhatsApp and Facebook, satisfy the needs and the social space of the *youth* chamber of earlier times, where people gained experience by shareing a special group together, talking with friends in a familiar environment. For this reason, it is clear that in order to recreate and rebuild this area (Rheingold, 1993:10), Kozluca youth also go to online communities on the internet, meeting with people in modern societies where close social ties have been abandoned. Today, the rapid development of communication technologies, especially the easy access to internet, the increased availability of different channels on TV platforms has led to differences in the acquisition of dance cultures. It is known that while the *youth* members practice in the dance room, the young musicians who accompany the dance have often been replaced by music downloaded to mobile phones. This situation is beneficial for the *youth* members in terms of the costs and also quality in sound etc. At the same time, music and dance cultures belonging to other communities or other urban societies can be encountered by the *youth* of Kozluca through

cultural interaction. Today, access to other cultures via the internet channels, the increasing population movement of the members of the community and the acceleration of immigration, has brought new repertoires to the dance cultures of the youth. In the fieldwork conducted in 2018, it was shown that members of the *youth* have a different repertoire from the dances they learned in the folk-dance clubs of the school as well as the traditional games they learned in the chamber.

The construction and practice of traditional dance in Western Anatolian local communities carry important symbolic values in society. The definition of social roles and the social status of the society presents very decisive data about dance practices in terms of age. Traditional dance functions effectively in establishing and carrying out social relations between individuals such as marriage, neighborhood, and friendship etc.

In addition to its social function for society today, dance itself has gained importance as an artistic and cultural value in its own terms. For example, the culture of dance specific to Kozluca is considered in the context of 'intangible cultural heritage' by the society. For this reason, village *youth* express their intention to perform their dances in local festivals as well as their traditional context as a stage performance, since they think they are better at protecting their dances when compared to surrounding communities.

REFERENCES

- Abrams, Dominic, and Hogg, Michael A. (1990). Social Identification, Self-Categorization and Social Influence. *European Review of Social Psychology*.
- Bozkurt, Veysel. (2009). *Değişen Dünyada Sosyoloji (Sociology in a Changing World)*. Bursa: Ekin Basım Dağıtım.
- Bulut, Mustafa. (2017). *Sivas İlbeyli Köy Odaları (Village Chambers of İlbeyli, Sivas)* *MUTAD*, I(IV): 13-31.
- Dube, Shyama Charan. (1955, 2018). *Indian Village*. New York: Routledge.
- Edles, Laura Desfor. (2002). *Cultural Sociology in Practice*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Eken Küçükaksoy, F. Merve and Beşiroğlu, Şehvar. (2013). "Kültürel Gösterim

Biçimlerinde Müzikal Semboller: Kemaliye (Eğin)'de Geleneksel Evlenme Ritüelleri" (Musical Symbols in Cultural Performances: Traditional wedding rituals in Kemaliye (Eğin)). *Porte Akademik Müzik ve Dans Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (8): 139-154.

Geertz, Clifford. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Oldenburg, Ray (1989). *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Community Centers, Beauty Parlors, General Stores, Bars, Hangouts, and How They Get You Through the Day*. New York: Paragon House.

Özdemir, Nurettin (2005). *Sosyal Değişme Sürecinde Geleneksel Toplumsal Dayanışma Biçimleri: Sıra Geceleri ve Barana Toplantıları* (Traditional Forms of Social Solidarity in the Process of Social Change: Sıra Geceleri and Barana Meetings). Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları.

Özkan, Adem (2012). "Geçmişten Günümüze Konya İli Akören İlçesinde Bulunan Köy Odaları" (Village Chamber in the Akören District of Konya Province from the Past to the Present). *Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 2012(1), 1-4.

Parekh, Bhikhu (2001). "Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory", *Ethnicities*, 1(1): 109-115. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/146879680100100112>

Rappaport, Roy Abraham. (1992) "Ritual" *Folklore, Cultural Performances and Popular Entertainments*, Ed. Bauman, Richard: pp. 249-260. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rheingold, Howard. (1993). *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.

Shapiro, Ruth. (1977). *Foundation for Sociology* (Veysel Bozkurt, Trans.). Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company.

Soylu, Suat. (1999). "İşletmelerde Sosyal Kategorizasyon ve Sosyal Kimlik" ("Social Categorization and Social Identity in Businesses") *Gruplararası İlişkiler ve Sosyal Kimlik Teorisi* (Intergroup Relations and Social Identity Theory), Ed. Arkonaç, Sibel. İstanbul: Alfa Basım Dağıtım.

Srinivas, Mysore Narasimhachar (Ed.) (1955). *India's Villages*. Bengal: West Bengal Government Press.

Şavran, Temmuz Gönç. (2016b). "Sağlık, Hastalık ve Toplum" (Health, Illness, and Society), İnsan ve Toplum (Human and Society). Unit 7. Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi

Tönnies, Ferdinand. (2001). *Community and Society*. (Trans. Cambridge University,) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Turkish Language Association. (n.d.). *Türkçe sözlük* [Turkish dictionary]. <https://sozluk.gov.tr/>

Turner, John. (1985), *Social Categorization and the Self Concept*. Greenwich JT: JAT Press.