



Bartok's Influence on Saygun: Collaboration and Transmutations*

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Abstract

This paper aims to show the significance and the idiosyncrasies of the collaboration between Turkish composer Ahmet Adnan Saygun and Hungarian composer, pianist, and ethnomusicologist Bela Bartok during and after Bartok's Anatolian field trip in 1936. This exchange was particularly important because of the praxis of theory and fieldwork. Although both Saygun and Bartok were known for their Western art music compositions, ethnomusicological studies profoundly impacted their creativity; thus, they were truly bi-musical.

Their fieldtrip findings, both published at the same time—40 years later, are important documents in terms of their authors' aesthetic, national, and educational attitude towards the musical/cultural material. Thus, this paper traces their historical motives and approaches to the collaborations in the midst of heightened nationalism; it also shows the methods and the process of the transmutation of peasant music to national music; and ultimately the paper attempts to substantiate the profound effect Bartok had on Saygun.

Keywords: Bela Bartok, Ahmet Adnan Saygun, Anatolian fieldwork, folk songs, transmutation

Bartok'un Saygun Üzerindeki Etkileri: İşbirliği ve Müzikal Dönüşüm

Özet

Bu çalışma, Türk besteci Ahmet Adnan Saygun ile Macar besteci, piyanist ve etnomüzikolog Bela Bartok arasındaki ilişkiyi ve Macar bestecinin 1936 tarihinde Anadolu'da gerçekleştirdiği saha çalışması öncesi ve sonrası bu besteciler arasında gelişen işbirliğinin önemini ve özel durumunu göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu ilişki, özellikle araştırma gezisi pratiği ve uygulaması açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Her ne kadar hem Saygun, hem de Bartok klasik Batı müziği bestecileri olarak tanınıyor olsalar da, etno-

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müzikoloji çalışmaları her iki bestecinin de yaratıcılığını çok derinden etkilemiştir ve bu derin etkileşim nedeniyle her iki besteci de gerçek anlamda çift müziktir.

Bu iki bestecinin Anadolu saha çalışmaları bulguları, tam 40 yıl sonra aynı yıl basılmıştır ve bu kitaplar, yazarlarının müzik/kültür malzemesine karşı olan estetik, ulusalcı ve pedagojik yaklaşımlarını göstermesi sebebiyle son derece önemlidir. Böylelikle, bu çalışma esas olarak üç konuya odaklanmıştır: bu iki besteci/araştırmacının ulusalcılığın en yüksek noktasında gerçekleştirdikleri işbirliğine olan yaklaşımları ve bu işbirliğinin tarihsel sebeplerinin yanı sıra, halk müziğinin ulusal müziğe dönüşümü yolunda takip edilen metotlar ve süreçler beraber, Bela Bartok'un Ahmet Adnan Saygun üzerindeki derin etkilerinin izlerini sürmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bela Bartok, Ahmet Adnan Saygun, Anadolu Saha Çalışması, Halk Müziği, Müzikal Dönüşüm

Saygun-Bartók Collaborations

Although it was Atatürk who set Saygun's musical career in motion, it was the Hungarian composer Bela Bartók and their collaboration that musically influenced him most significantly. This collaboration formed Saygun both as an ethnomusicologist and as a nationalist artist deeply involved in his country's nationalist art politics. Some of Bartók's ideas on folk and national music, method of categorisation, use of indigenous idiom, and transmutational techniques left a profound imprint on Saygun's writings and compositions. One can even argue that through Saygun's musical oeuvre, Bartók influenced the future of Turkish national music more than anybody else.

The publication of Saygun's book in 1936, *Türk Halk Musikisinde Pentatonizm* (Pentatonism in Turkish Folk Music), would lead to an unexpected musical and personal relationship with Bartok, opening a surprising door in his career. It would not be an overstatement to say that Saygun deliberately walked in the footsteps of Bartók. His collaboration with Bartók shaped not only Saygun's preference of local source materials and how to transform them but also his ethnomusicological, musical, and political ideas. Furthermore, this influence could be observed even in Saygun's pedagogical publications like *Töresel Müzik* (1967).

Like Bartók, Saygun never lost his interest in ethnomusicological research. Other than using these materials as one of his main components in his compositional process, Saygun used peasant materials and constructions as a part of his music pedagogy. In his original compositions, Saygun followed Bartók's method and created musical ideas that sound like authentic peasant melodies. For example, Bartók in "Evening in Transylvania"¹ assimilated and

¹ In Bartok's "Evening in Transylvania, through imitating the descending line-ending scheme rather than on melodic contour and other specific structural attributes,

imitated the structural attributes of the old-Hungarian peasant materials, such as eleven-syllable verse lines, anhemitone-pentatonic scale, and dotted rhythm in *parlando-rubato* style (Suchoff B. , Folk Sources in Bartok Works, 1984). Thus, he created authentic sounding musical materials. Saygun applied similar strategies to produce a peasant ambiance. This strategy became the backbone of the creation of Turkish national music politically and aesthetically.

Historical and Linguistic Connections between Hungary and Turkey

In addition to Hungarian folk music, Bartók was attracted to the folk music of linguistically related and neighbouring peoples.² According to him, these materials would provide extensive data on his own native culture and music. His comparative study focused on folk music's style, construction, origin, and dissemination, as well as the musical relations of the neighbouring peoples.³ Long before his Anatolia expedition, Bartók even hypothesized that there must be a strong link between the Hungarian and Turkic folk music cultures because of the linguistic and historical connections (Sipos, 2007)⁴. Sipos (2000) and Ujfalussy (1971) show that because of the similar pentatonic structure of Hungarian and Cheremiss⁵ folksongs, Bartók was convinced that the origin of the pentatonic style was "Asian and points toward the northern Turks" (in Ujfalussy, 1971, p. 303).

Bartók's invitation to Turkey in 1936 to conduct field research and give three lectures served two purposes for Bartók: to research the common source of pentatonic melodies and to explore prehistoric connections of Turkish and Hungarian peasant music (Aji, 2011, p. 17). Ujfalussy also shows that this trip was a part of Bartók's decades long "scientific programme" (Ujfalussy, 1971, p. 303). According to Bartók, because both of these peoples

Bartok could project a distinctive Transylvanian character. (Gollin, 2008, p. 67).

² His study *Our Folk Music and the Folk Music of Neighbouring People's* has particular significance.

³ "The ancient cultural relations of peoples who have been scattered far and wide, could and should be discovered. There is much to be revealed about ancient settlements and the as yet unsolved problems of history. It is now possible to discover what contact there was between neighbouring peoples, in what way they were linked, or perhaps separated, by spiritual beliefs." (Bela Bartók in Ujfalussy, 1971, 301. Although Ujfalussy indicated that this quotation is taken from one of the late study of Bartok, he, unfortunately, did not indicate the source.

⁴ Sipos points out that both Hungarian and Turkish have their origin in the Uralic- Altaic language family: Hungarian is Finno-Ugrian in origin and Turkish is Altaic. According to Sipos, Bartok believed that many Turkic groups played an important role in terms of the emergence of the Hungarian ethnicity (Sipos 2007, 205).

⁵ (Mari) A Finno-Ugric people living in the Volga region.

were historically and linguistically interconnected, it is not surprising that Hungarian culture contains many Turkic elements. For Bartók, the wealth of similarities in music led to crucial questions: Are these similarities just coincidence? Are these people genetically related? Is it possible to find these musical similarities in the folk music of other peoples?

Even though Hungarian is Finno-Ugrian in origin, it mixed with a great number of Turkic elements during the "ethnogenesis," as Sipos (2000, p. 171) proposes. According to the Ural-Altai hypothesis, both Turkish and Hungarian belong to a large Ural-Altai language family. To investigate that linguistic connection was the main reason for Bartók's field trip: "I first traced Finno-Ugrian-Turkish resemblances to the people of the Volga region, and from there finally to Turkey" (Bartók in Ujfalussy, 1971, p. 303). This Turkish-Hungarian contact can be traced back to the 4th century AD with the first settlements of Turkic groups in the Hunnish Empire. During the migration waves, these people must have mixed with the Hungarians who were mixed with the polyethnic population of the Khazar Empire; thus, they had been quite familiar with various Turkic tongues⁶ for centuries (Sipos, 2000, p. 172).

Around AD 567, the Turkic-speaking Avars, who also played a role in the development of the Hungarian ethnic group, pushed into the Carpathian Basin. In the 11th and 12th centuries, Sipos points out, Pechenegs of the Kipchak Turks, the most historically significant group whose language and culture were greatly influential, settled in the area of the Hungarian Kingdom. Bartók argues for the Turkic influence on the alphabet of the Székely people, a subgroup of the Hungarians, living in eastern Transylvania, Romania:

We have known for several decades that the ancient Székely-Hungarian alphabet, a kind of runic or scored alphabet, first discovered in a document in the church of the Székely-Hungarian village Énlaka (Transylvania), is in close relation to a similar alphabet found in inner Asia, at the dwelling place of certain ancient Turkish tribes (inscriptions from A.D. 500-700). (Bartók, 1976, p. 39).

Since there were many linguistic connections, Bartók, Saygun, and Sipos all agreed that the similarities between Hungarian and Turkish music must date back to the pre-Ottoman era. Saygun believed that despite the Ottoman influence on all strata of Hungarian culture, during the two-centuries-long Ottoman occupation of Hungary⁷ in the 16th-17th century, it was quite unlikely that there was strong social interaction between the Ottoman troops and the local population. Furthermore, it is almost impossible to talk about a real musical influence because of the structure of these janissary dominated tro-

⁶ Such as Savirs, Onogurs, and Khazars

⁷ The Ottomans were pushed back out of Budapest in 1686 and withdrew completely in 1718.

ops. If one considers the janissary troop soldiers' background and their training, it is easy to see there was no homogenous musical style they were all exposed to other than the music of *mehterhâne* (Saygun A. A., 1976, pp. xiii-ix). Bartók adds that, in fact, many Hungarians left their invaded hometowns as they did not want to continue to live in those areas, causing these small villages in central Hungary to vanish. Thus, both composers agreed that the musical and linguistic influences were not attributable to the Ottoman occupation; therefore, these effects must be the result of a much more ancient relationship (Bartok, 1976, p. 41).

Bartók's Research on Turkish Folk Music

Saygun also provided historical corrections with his field discoveries. In 1935, after a discussion on Benedict Szabolsci's Hungarian monograph and its folklore area map, which erroneously shows the Anatolian peninsula "as belonging to the Arabo-Persian region" (Saygun A. A., 1976, p. 5), Saygun and his ethnomusicologist colleague Mahmut Ragip Gazimihal decided to correct the mistake by publishing booklets individually. Saygun published his *Pentatonism in Turkish Folk Music* (1936), in which he made bold assumptions such as "pentatonism is the seal of Turkish music and where it does exist, the people there are Turks" (Saygun A. A., 1936, p. 6). Gazimihal published two booklets the same year, *Türk Halk Musikisinin Tonal Hususiyetleri Meselesi* (On the Issue of the Tonal Characteristics of Turkish Folk Music) (Gazimihal, 1936) and *Türk Halk Musikisinin Kökeni Meselesi* (On the Issue of the Origins of Folk Music). The booklets included the "true pentatonic structure" and the central Asian origin of Turkish and Hungarian folk music.⁸ These booklets were distributed nationally and internationally, and Saygun and Gazimihal also sent copies to the Hungarian author of the monograph.

The booklets have many musical examples to show the central Asian origin of the folk music under scrutiny. Although Saygun later changed his arguments, in his personal correspondence and a 1989 dated letter to Gülper

⁸ During that period, the issue of the pentatonic structure of the Turkish folk music attracted to other ethnomusicologists of the time. Ferruh Ersunar published *Anadolu'nun Pentatonik Melodileri Hakkında Birkaç Not* (Couple Notes on Pentatonic Melodies in Anatolia), in 1937; and *Tunceli-Dersim Halk Türküleri ve Pentatonik* (The Folksongs of Tunceli-Dersim and Pentatonic) in the same year. Other than his published books, Gazimihal contributed to the issue by his article in *Encyclopedia of Music Asya Türk Halk Musikisinde Pentatonism* (Pentatonism in Asian-Turkish Folk Music) in 1947. The other contributors were Sadi Yaver Ataman; in 1947, for *Encyclopedia of Music* his article *Türk Halk Musikisinin Bir-İki Karakteristiği ve Pentatonism Meselesi* (Some Characteristics of Turkish Folk Music and the Problem of Pentatonism).

Refiğ (1991), on pentatonicism and that all pentatonic music has a Turkic origin, the booklets reflected the new nationalist ideals and an eagerness to find a representation of distinct cultural and historical background (O'Connell, 2005, p. 10). Using Benedict Szabolsci's copy, Bartók could examine the musical examples of Gazimihal's booklet and the pentatonic structures of this folk music. Bartók was excited to see all the pentatonic examples. The authors did not know that Bartók was already researching the linguistically connected areas to determine a further musical and historical connection. A few weeks after they sent the pamphlets to Hungary,⁹ Saygun and Gazimihal received a letter from Bartók, who also attached some music to his letter and wanted to know whether Turkish folk songs exhibited a particular "turn of phrase" (Saygun A. A., 1976).

Even though these booklets were focused on music, they reveal to some degree their writer's political ideology. Saygun's map of pentatonicism suggests the spread of Pentatonic structure from central Asia, echoing the linguistics and historical theories of *Güneş-Dil Teorisi* (the Sun language theory) and suggesting that all languages derived from one primal Turkic language. Both Saygun and Gazimihal were quite convinced in the accuracy of this theory; in these booklets, music and political ideology coincided. Even though both authors were trying to produce a relatively objective scientific document, they contributed to the process of rewriting national past.

In December of 1935, Bartók received a letter from Hungarian philologist László Rásonyi, a professor at the University of Ankara, who wanted to know if Bartók would be interested in giving lectures¹⁰ in Turkey and collecting folk music (Bartok, 1976). In his reply, Bartók expressed a "desire to undertake a trip through Anatolia, [his] only request... a second-class round-trip ticket" (Bartok, 1976, p. 93). Bartók was enthusiastic to go to Turkey to confirm his theories on the connections between Turkish and Hungarian peasant music.

Interestingly, Rásonyi's unofficial invitation and the publication of Saygun's and Gazimihal's booklets coincided. These simultaneous publications could be considered as the reflections of the political atmosphere of their time. In Turkey, as a part of the nationalist discourse, folkloric and ethnographic research was highly encouraged. Two similar publications were regarded as the endorsement of the official narrative of Turkish history.

Before his trip to Turkey in 1936, Bartók requested some folk music examples to examine. Rásonyi sent some publications edited by Gazimihal to

⁹ Unfortunately, Saygun did not provide an exact date, but it must be after May 1936.

¹⁰ "Rásonyi asks Bartok to lecture on three questions: 1) the connection between Hungarian and Turkish music, 2) the development of Hungarian music and its apparent state, and 3) how a Turkish national music could develop." (Bartok, 1976, p. 3).

show Bartók what had been done in the area of folk music. After scrutinizing these folk music examples, Bartók said:

...when we settled to this work we became convinced that...the origin of the pentatonic style pointed to Asian and northern Turkic peoples.... Apart from Hungarian tunes that were variants of Cheremiss songs, we also found Hungarian tunes that were variants of north Turkic tunes derived from around Kazan. I have recently received Mahmut Ragıp Kösemihal's¹¹ book.... *The Tonal Specificities of Turkish Folk Music*' in which I also found some melodies of this kind.... Obviously, all tunes of this kind derive from a common source, and this source was the old central north-Turkic culture. (Bartók in Sipos, 2000, p. 13)

Musically these words show that Bartók was already convinced that he would probably find great evidence to prove his theories on the origin of the pentatonic style. On another level, however, this musical theory was used by education and cultural ministry officers and music researchers to validate the official ideology of a Turkic past.

The search for such cultural materials was widespread in Turkey in this era. Folk music and other folkloric materials were collected at the beginning of the century by Turkish intellectuals as a part of the method of raising national consciousness. Folk music, in fact, was the first area folklore studies pursued (Mirzaoglu, 2007, pp. 101-102). As a part of these studies, the first articles published appeared in March 1915 in *Yeni Mecmua* (the New Journal) by Musa Süreyya, in 1916 in the newspaper *İkdam* by Ahmet Cevdet (Onan), and in the journal *Türk Yurdu* (the Turkish Homeland) in the same year by Necip Asım. These articles highlighted the necessity to collect folk songs (Mirzaoglu, 2007, pp. 101-102), and such efforts could be considered as nationalist attempts at the cultural materialization of a nation.

Before the proclamation of the Republic in 1920, *Hars Dairesi* (the Cultural Office), as part of the Ministry of National Education, started to collect and compile folk songs. In 1925, the Ministry published the first field trip report conducted in Western Anatolia by the Seyfettin and Sezai brothers. Between 1927 and 1929, the Istanbul Conservatory commenced four field trips to a number of Anatolian regions and published two books by Gazimiha: *Anadolu Türküleri ve Musiki İstikbalimiz* (Anatolian Folk Songs and the Future of Our Music, 1928) and *Şarkî Anadolu Türkü ve Oyunları* (Eastern Anatolian Folk Songs and Dances, 1929). In addition to Gazimiha, well-known ethnomusicologists such as Rauf Yekta, Yusuf Ziya Demircioğlu, and Ferruh Arsunar took part in the field trips (Mirzaoglu, 2007, p. 102). The collected 850 folk songs were published as 14 volumes of *Halk Türküleri* (Folk Songs).

¹¹ Mahmut Ragıp Gazimiha also used the surname Kösemihal.

It was into this ethos of re-discovery of the “folk” that Bartók arrived in Istanbul on November 2, 1936 amidst a surge of interest in this musical folk material. He stayed almost a week to listen to folk songs in the archives of the Istanbul Municipal Conservatory.¹² Almost 130 tunes were recorded in the early 1930s on commission from the city and produced by His Master's Voice and Columbia. Although Bartók was highly satisfied with their technical quality, there were other major methodological problems: these recordings were the first collection, and thus the selected material was unsystematic; there was no written text and consequently some parts were incomprehensible; the melodies were not notated so the problematic parts could not be corrected; and the main issue for Bartók, the musicians were wandering musicians who could not be “reliable sources” of peasant music that is necessarily local (Suchoff & Bartok, 1993, pp. 137-138).

After the problems of the existing folk music recordings were identified, Saygun, commissioned by the *Halkevi*, accompanied Bartók with the task of collecting data from the performers as well as the phonetic transcription of the text (Saygun A. A., 1951). In addition to Saygun, two other members of the Turkish Five, Ulvi Cemal Erkin and Necil Kazım Akses, joined Bartók as observers to survey the methods of collecting musical folklore on site.

While in Ankara, Bartók gave a concert and held three lectures; in the last presentation he offered three ways in which *köylü/halk müziği* (peasant music) can be assimilated into “modern music” and/or national music. In this era, interestingly, “modern” and “national” were conflated. This amalgamation was made by the Turkish nationalists who viewed the new Republic as modern and/or national in opposition to the Ottoman Empire. These ideas had ultimate significance particularly for Saygun's generation of composers. Bartók's first method uses an unchanged or slightly changed peasant melody and writes opening and concluding phrases along with an accompaniment; in this case, all elements but the peasant tune are secondary. In the second method of transmutation, the composer creates an “imaginary” folk music through assimilating the structural elements. In this case, the transition of the peasant melody “become[s] purely a symbol, and the essential thing is its setting” (Moreux, 1974, pp. 73-74). In the final method, the composer uses neither a peasant tune nor an imitation, but he creates such an atmosphere that the peasant feeling pervades throughout (Bartok, 1998, pp. 74-75). The presentation was significant not only for the methods of the transmutation of peasant music, but also because Bartók consolidated Ziya Gökalp's position on creating Turkish national music. The state was pleased because what he proposed was compatible with Gökalp. Thus, having a synthesis of Turkish and Western music in creating Turkish national music became the only pos-

¹² Before Bartók's arrival, folk song studies were run by *Halkevleri*, the Community Centers.

sible option. This resonance with Gökalp's thoughts solidified the means of the national music.

On November 18 1936, Bartók and Saygun sought out musical authenticity where they might find it. They went to Adana Osmaniye, the territory where nomadic Turkish tribes lived, to transcribe folk songs. As these people still lived in "primitive circumstances," Bartók was hoping that all the characteristics of the "ancient music" could still be found there (Suchoff & Bartok, 1993, p. 139). Since the local customs encouraged insular behaviour,¹³ Saygun proposed to create familiarity through linguistic connection—to persuade the peasants that Bartók and/or the Hungarians were "only Turks who settled somewhere else, they had always spoken Turkish, but that evidently in the course of centuries their accent had become more or less different" (Bartok, 1976, p. 6). To encourage fraternization, Saygun constructed a sentence consisting of common words of both languages; Bartók only needed to say the sentence to the peasants to show that there was no need to be reluctant in front of him. Although almost meaningless and funny, the sentence¹⁴ allowed Bartok as an acceptable Turkic foreigner to continue his research.

On the first day, Bartók recorded two Edison wax cylinders (Sipos, 2000, p. 16). The songs revealed great similarities between old Hungarian tunes, confirming his initial theories:

I was secretly very happy that at last I was doing on-the-spot collection, at last I was going to a peasant house again! The host, Ali Bekir oğlu Bekir, aged 70 welcomed us warmly. The old man burst into a song without any reluctance there in the court, singing some old war story:

*Kurt pasa ciki Gozana
Akil yetmez bu duzene.*

I could hardly believe my ears: good heavens, this is like a variant of an old Hungarian tune! Pleased as I was...the second tune I heard Bekir sing was again the kin of a Hungarian tune: that's quite shocking, I thought (Bartók in Sipos 2000, p. 173-181).

In the following days, Bartók and Saygun continued to collect both vocal and instrumental tunes, some of which were again Hungarian-like melodies.

Unlike the first half, the second half of the expedition was not satisfactory for Bartók for many reasons: the lack of recorded songs from women who rejected singing in front of strange men for both religious and customary reasons; the lack of information on whether the peasants sang in choirs because

¹³ Because the field work took place during the month of Ramadan, it may have contributed to the peasants' apprehension and unwillingness to help.

¹⁴ English translation of the sentence: In the cotton field are much barley and many apples, camels, tents, axes, boots, and young goats. In Hungarian: *Pamuk tarlón sok árpa, alma, teve, sátor, balta, csizma, kicsi, kecske van*; in Turkish: *Pamuk tarlasında çok arpa, alma, deve, çadır, balta, çizme, küçük keçi var*.

of unclear communication through an interpreter; and technical difficulties with the Edison monograph, which could not record the vocal and the instrumental parts simultaneously (Saygun A. A., 1951, p. 7), and it had wax cylinders with 2 minute recording limitations (Bartok, 1976, p. 259). The transcription process was finished by May 1937, but the translation issues forced the collection to be suspended temporarily.

Bartók's Findings on Turkish Folk Music

Melodic similarities between Turkish and Hungarian peasants' tunes revealed a common past for the two peoples. After listening to some of the Turkish peasant tunes, Bartók found recognition of some melodic variants of old Hungarian tunes. A small number of the melodies were almost identical, causing Bartók to state this as "irrefutable proof of the age of these melodies: it shows the way back to the sixth or seventh century" (Bartok, 1976, p. 39). Of the melodies in Bartók's collection, 21 of 93 were mainly in descending construction,¹⁵ a structure similar to but more ornamented when compared with old Hungarian eight-syllable section melodies (Suchoff & Bartok, 1993, p. 146). Bartók's two examples of Turkish and Hungarian descending tunes can be seen below in examples (Suchoff & Bartok, 1993, pp. 144-145).¹⁶

Bartók found it interesting that other than the ornamentations, there were almost no Arabic influence, although these nomadic tribes lived in the Taurus Mountains during the summer and near the Syrian border during the winter. Other structural findings were also evident: four melodies were identical, six were variants, and eleven revealed similar structures to particular types of Hungarian tunes. Just as in other eastern-European folk music, Turkish rural folk music lacked upbeats but frequently some syllables are used as "pseudo-upbeats" (Bartok, 1976, p. 46). The melodies were mainly *parlando* style. In the *Bela Bartók Studies in Ethnomusicology* in which Bartók discussed Hungarian folk music, he pointed out that in terms of the rhythmic structure the *parlando* melodies are the most important ones because these melodies had played a significant role in the development of the "category of new melodies" (Suchoff B. , 1997, p. 175). In his original music, Saygun exploited the full potential of the *parlando* structure by using folk and religious idioms, for example in his *Yunus Emre Oratorio* (1942), to create rhythmic instability and undefined structure.

¹⁵ Bartok explains this structure as the tunes starts on the highest pitch and descends up to its lowest point when it approaches the cadence: "The Hungarian melodies start on the octave and frequently progress on or two notes below the *tonus finalis*; the Turkish melodies, on the other hand, begin on the tenth, and their *tonus finalis* is the lowest" (Suchoff & Bartok, 1993, p. 145).

¹⁶ The tunes were collected respectively by Belá Vikár and Zentelke Erdőkövesd. Ibid.

Their transcriptions of the peasant melodies revealed that some have Dorian and Aeolian modes (Bartok, 1976, p. 8), which can be transformed versions of a pentatonic scale. Due to the discrepancies between the tempered system and Pythagorean temperament, Saygun indicated that it might be misleading to interpret the modal peculiarities of these melodic structures as ecclesiastical modes (Saygun A. A., 1976, p. 225).¹⁷ Bartók shows that some melodies display “buried” pentatonic structure (Bartok, 1976),¹⁸ but when compared to old Hungarian melodies, the Turkish melodies used fewer. Accordingly, his findings changed the belief that *all* Turkish folk music carries pentatonic roots.

Bartók’s influence on Saygun

The collaboration with Bartók left an imprint on Saygun that presented itself in different areas. Although local sources began playing a role in Saygun’s music during his Paris years, most likely because of Vincent d’Indy’s influence, Bartók undeniably guided him to discover the rich cultural and nationalistic possibilities of these materials. Bartók’s influence can be observed in Saygun’s approach to the following three areas: 1) folk idiom as national music, 2) ethnomusicological research and applications as national treasure, and 3) folk materials as pedagogical tools.

In tracing Bartok’s influence in the area of the creation of national music, it is necessary to recall the use of folk idioms as national music. The nineteenth century was the demarcation point in the patriotic use of peasant tunes

¹⁷ “...Bartok resorts to modal terms in their ecclesiastic sense such as Dorian, Phrygian, etc...Personally, I am wary of these terms, which can easily lead misunderstanding and are not easily adaptable to folk melodies... If these scales or melodies conceived on them were played on a piano one would immediately notice their strangeness due to their non-conformity to reality of Turkish folk music. In other words, the westerns tempered system is completely foreign to the music which is the object of our study... as a method of showing the peculiarities of these scalar constructions, western musicologists are using the system of cents.... In other words, those musicologists use a basis for their transcription which very rarely corresponds to reality. As a consequence of the method of transcription which Bartok had used all his life, he, in the transcriptions of Turkish folk melodies, does not seem to have taken into account this point which is of capital importance for better understanding of musical language. Thus, for example, the *b flat* placed by Bartók at the key of most of the melodies in this collection should, in reality, from a minor third expressed by 32/27 which is less than the minor third of the tempered system.” (Saygun A. A., 1976, p. 225).

¹⁸ In his “Harvard Lectures,” in 1943, while Bartok was lecturing about the characteristics of Hungarian folk music, he highlights that the “‘Old’ Hungarian pentatonic music is a branch of the great Central-Asiatic Turkish, Mongolian and Chinese pentatonic centre” (Suchoff B. , 1976, p. 371).

and materials, but Bartók was not the only composer significantly using folk idiom. However, unlike the previous generation's composers, he did not only use these materials to create a folk atmosphere. Instead, he systematized and categorized the tunes, identified the particular regional characteristics, and, most importantly, tried to create a national consciousness. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Bartók's awareness of the ideological importance of music matured:

The spirit of nationalism was stirring in Hungary at the time and making itself felt in art too. The idea arose that it might be possible to create a specifically Hungarian type of music. This idea took root in my mind and I found myself turning to Hungarian folk music. (Bartók in Ujfalussy, 1971, p. 42)

As his words indicate, the inspiration of folk music in Bartók was two-directional. In order to create Hungarian national music, he constructed his music around Hungarian folk tunes. His aim "to create a specifically Hungarian type of music" shows also his consciousness of the ideological functionality of folk music and his politicized social stance. Like Bartók, Saygun was fully aware of and employed this dual function of the folk tunes, providing him with his nationalist lexicon.

Additionally, incorporating and modelling upon folk music and other structural elements of these local sourced tunes allowed Bartók the possibility to compose without being restricted by the boundaries of the major-minor tonality:

The outcome of these studies was of decisive upon my work, because it freed me from tyrannical rule of the major and minor keys. The greater part of the collected treasure, and the more valuable part, was in old ecclesiastical or old Greek modes, or based on more primitive (pentatonic) scales, and the melodies were full of most free and varied rhythmic phrases and changes of tempi, played both *rubato* and *giusto*. It became clear to me that the old modes, which had been forgotten in our music, had lost nothing of their vigor. Their new employment made new rhythmic combinations possible. The new way of using the diatonic scale brought freedom from the rigid use of the major and minor keys, and eventually led to a new conception of the chromatic scale, every tone of which came to be considered of equal value and could be used freely and independently. (Suchoff & Bartók, 1993, p. 410)

Bartók's approach had a strong echo in Saygun's music, such as in the use of non-diatonic modal scale constructions. While Saygun was creating his nationalist style, he used the polarity of the folk and art music constructions, which enabled him to exploit the syntactical and grammatical possibilities of both traditions along with Western art music. Although the new cultural politics were echoed in Saygun's creativity, without any hesitation he used art

music in his synthesis: “together with Anatolian music, I have assimilated many aspects of our art music. Because it is also ours..., I make use of it, too” (Saygun in Akdil, 1987, p. 26). This fusion represented different periods of Saygun’s life: Turkish art music belonged to his childhood, Western art music belonged to his Paris years, and folk music belonged to his mature period (Woodard, 1999, p. 49). According to Woodard, it was Saygun’s inspirational sources that made him special among other nationalist composers.¹⁹

In using Western art music, Saygun and Bartók were similar not only in their use of folk materials in nationalist discourse but in their shared similar ideological and aesthetical values. The process of systematizing and using these tunes as a major compositional medium, as Bartók mentioned in his letters, required an aesthetic decision;²⁰ for example, in his folk music arrangements Bartók preferred to use only certain types of Hungarian melodies. In his own composition, Bartók modified and altered some of the melodies so that these melodies became almost unrecognizable (Lampert, 1981). Bartók explained his design: “to collect from the Hungarian folksongs the most beautiful ones and, providing them with the best piano accompaniment possible, to elevate them, as it were, to the level of art song,” adding that “such a collection would serve the goal to let Hungarian folk music be known abroad” (Lampert, 1981, p. 339). Bartók’s statement was a more or less a common feeling and thought among nationalist composers that exhibited the complicated desire for national music to be “international” (Curtis, 2008), thus changing the functionality of folk music. Creating an East and West synthesis was the purpose of both composers. In the case of Saygun, this aim also matched Gökalp’s Turkist agenda. It is unknown whether he was also influenced by Gökalp’s ideas, but as early as 1929 Bartók expressed a similar goal to his biographer Serge Moreux, which was reiterated later by Karpati: “Kodaly and I [Bartók] wanted to realize a synthesis of East and West” (Karpati, 1964, p. 179). Such a synthesis also reflects a national pride as well as disavowal of the past and articulation of a future.

During the compositional process of Turkish national music, Bartók’s three tenets²¹ were widely used by the younger generation. Although Saygun was mostly using the last two methods, there are some exceptional cases in which Saygun shows an example of the first method. The tune “Mavilim” is one of the melodies collected during Bartók’s fieldwork. The example below

¹⁹ A similar attitude can be observed in Cemal Resit Rey’s oeuvre.

²⁰ Letter to his sister, Elza, December 26, 1904. In *Bela Bartok családi levelei* [Bela Bartok’s Family Letters], ed. By Bela Bartok, Jr., 125. Original in Hungarian. From (Lampert, 2006).

²¹ As stated above, Bartok proposed three possibilities during creation a national music: 1- using an original peasant melody, 2- transmutation through assimilating the structural elements, 3- the composer creates a peasant feeling.

shows the excerpt from Bartók's transcription and as a part of Saygun's composition, Op. 41 *Ten Folk Songs* for Baritone and Orchestra (1968). Saygun preferred a simplified version in which he eliminated all the ornamentations and altered the rhythmic structure. Saygun's end-accented construction made the melody memorable because of the bouncing dance rhythm allusions.

Whereas Bartók exploited the possibilities of Eastern European peasant music's structural elements and the potential of the "new ways of harmonization" suggested by the peasant music (Bartók, 1998, p. 75), Saygun used, in addition to folk tunes, the components of *Klasik Türk Müziği* (Turkish art music).²² He expressed that he was using *makam* as a color, which enabled him to use different sonorities and chromatic inflations and dissonant sound structures outside of the realm of the major-minor tonality:

Makam for me is only a color. I don't use it as in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. I could, but then I would lose the ability to use all Western instruments. Because *makam* is only a color for me, a tool, I can use it within the Western tempered tuning system. By doing this I have all instruments at my disposal. (Akdil, 1987, p. 26)²³

In using this "tool," Saygun nationalizes the properties of *makam* music. Because of different tunings, Saygun used the characteristic intervals. Of course these "*makams*" were not the original since it is impossible to perform the quarter tones and commas. But because of these characteristic intervals, it is possible to evoke certain *makams*. Since he was not using these scalar constructions in their original *seyir* or melodic progress, he managed to create the *makam* feeling without emphasizing their Ottomanness; sometimes this feeling of Ottomanness was the exact feeling he wanted to evoke. Using *makams*, even as an abstract concept, allowed him to integrate the Turkish musical properties from all ages. Thus, for Saygun, *makam* was not only a compositional instrument; it was one of the main parts of his musical mediation: pentatonic structures from a central Asian Turkic distant past, *makam* from the remembered Ottoman past (even though it was modified), and folk constructions from the present Republic are all brought together in Saygun's compositional practice, specifically in the *Yunus Emre Oratorio*.

After Bartók

In spite of Saygun's diplomatic success of his opera, Saygun's career had an unexpected setback in 1935. He became a *persona non grata* upon Paul Hindemith's arrival in Ankara. Hindemith's belief that German musical pedagogy should serve as the basis of the new musical institutions of the Re-

²² Turkish art music also known as *sanat müziği* (art music), *ince saz* (delicate melodies), *enderun müziği*.

²³ Translation is mine.

public conflicted, not surprisingly, with Saygun's French educational training; adding to that, Saygun's collaboration with Bela Bartók was the culminating incident that bothered the senior composer. Due to a hostile report by Hindemith, Saygun became an "untouchable" and left Ankara in 1936 for Istanbul hoping for a more hospitable reception. The whole incident was devastating for the composer. In his memoirs, Saygun expresses his frustration towards Hindemith's unreasonable hostile attitude:

I later learnt and read the document myself: Hindemith came to Turkey to establish the State Conservatory during my illness and he prepared a report for the National Education Ministry on me, whom he had never met, and he said that "during the time that we are trying to establish the Conservatory, it is necessary to expel this person, who has no value as a composer or as a teacher, not only from the school but also from Ankara." (Saygun in Aracı 2001, 83)²⁴

Even though Hindemith's attitude frustrated Saygun, he said he did not let these unfortunate incidents discourage him (Tanju, 2011).

Saygun's further folk music research

Having literally and figuratively been run out of the capital, Saygun continued his pursuit of folk music begun with Bartók, transforming it into a desire to know his people. Saygun explained the necessity to continue folk music studies in an article in 1983:

In order to understand people's souls and psychology and, of course, to understand myself and my own problems, I decided I had to understand the people and villages of Anatolia. So I traveled throughout the country and lived among the people in villages. (Saygun in Ozer 1987, 34)

As his words suggest, Saygun was trying to gain emic perspective and become an insider. Woodard draws a parallel between his Paris years and field work periods, arguing that similar circumstances led to similar experiences for Saygun. After Bartók's visit, Saygun published his findings in several research studies related to music of different areas of Anatolia. In particular, two of his books²⁵ focused on peculiarities of folk tunes and dances of the Black Sea and Kars regions. The studies were considered the most significant research on the region because of his detailed analysis. The regional sound structure was so influential on Saygun's creativity that in order to perform

²⁴ However, Saygun adds, there is nothing about me [Saygun] on the report that is known as Hindemith report today (Tanju, 2011, p. 10)

²⁵ *Rize, Artvin ve Kars Havalisi Türkü, Saz ve Oyun Havaları* (Folk songs, instruments, and folk dances of Rize, Artvin, and Kars region in 1937; *Yedi Karadeniz Türküsü ve Bir Horon* (Seven Black Sea region folk songs and a *Horon* in 1938.

Saygun's music it is crucial to know the peculiarities necessary for performance practice. Among all other regional instruments, musical forms, choreographic components, and timbral characteristics, it would not be an overstatement to say that the stylistic constituents of the Black Sea region affected his music the most.²⁶

Saygun's other important ethnomusicological publication was *Bela Bartók's Folk Music Research in Turkey* (1976), whose genesis was Bartók's 1936 Anatolian field trip forty years earlier. However, because of the particular circumstances of the war, the German invasion of Austria in 1939, Bartók decided to leave Hungary and sent a letter to Saygun to ask if there was any possibility for him to find a job and minimum salary as a researcher in Turkey. Bartók had finished working on his Turkish folk music collection in 1938, but he could not find any publisher willing to publish his Turkish and Rumanian materials. With Turkey's changed foreign policies, Bartók's immigration request was rejected; the consequences of this request contributing to Saygun's status as *persona non grata* in Ankara.

Using Folk Sources as Pedagogical Tool

Saygun's use of folk or folk-like tunes in pedagogy also reveals Bartók's influence. Although his main pedagogical writings date back to 1951, *Lise Müzik Kitabı* (Music Book for High Schools), his *İnci'nin Kitabı* Op.10 (Inci's Book, 1934),²⁷ and *Halkevlerinde Musiki* (Music in People's Houses, 1940) should be considered in their pedagogical context. Although *İnci's Book* dates before his collaboration with Bartók, as his first book it is a great example indicating Saygun's position on using folk materials in pedagogy. This seven short piece collection, just as Bartók's *Mikrokosmos; For Children* and his other children's music education, had didactic intentions. Even though *İnci's Book* is quite a small collection, we can observe some similarities with *Mikrokosmos*: irregular rhythms, time changes, ostinato figures, various scale systems, and counterpointal devices. In both collections, the composers aimed to familiarize the pupil with certain kinds of musicianship skills through the structural peculiarities of musical culture of their society. While using these peculiarities, they were considering the aesthetic potential and intrinsic values of music as well as extra-musical factors, such as training the new generations with nationalist values.

Not surprisingly, the first piece of the collection, *İnci*, although having a

²⁶ The characteristics of the regional dance are particularly identifiable through the instrumentation, the extreme tempo, and the predominantly irregular rhythms. For instance ♩=300, ♩=320, the metronome speed is ca. 690. According to Saygun, the speed could range from 428 to 906.

²⁷ The collection was dedicated to Madam Eugène Borrel.

limited range displays strong pentatonic and modal construction. A hemitonic pentatonic construction collides with Aeolian, as can be seen in Bartók's children's collection.



Example 1. *İnci'nin Kitabı, Op.10a- İnci (A Pentatonic), mm. 1-9*

In the second piece, *Afacan Kedi* (Mischievous Cat), Saygun displays his *Schola Cantorum* background through using several linear baroque techniques, such as imitation, inversion, and augmentation of the theme. The piece starts with an ostinato motive, which uses C-D-E-G tetrachord from C diatonic pentatonic (C-D-E-G-A) scale. Saygun used this perfect 5th ambitus ostinato as the core idea of the piece.



Example 2. *Afacan Kedi- Mischievous Cat from İnci'nin Kitabı mm.1-5*

Masal (Tale), the final example, presents Saygun's clear but subtle use of folk idioms in *İnci'nin Kitabı*. The repetitive m2 (E-F) left hand accompaniment functions as drone; the melodic line, on the other hand, explicitly uses traditional Anatolian bards' melodic construction. This structure centered a single note, and using metrically short valued anacrusis, Saygun emphasized even more the upbeat A to increase the expectation of B. A B A form is constructed melodically, texturally, metrically, and tonally.

Töresel Musiki (Traditional Music) (1967) is one of Adnan Saygun's most important works. Here, he showed his use of modal structures and indigenous rhythmic materials as pedagogical tools. Saygun's theoretical and other writings provide significant insight into his perspective on musical materials, his aesthetical and political positioning, and his musical and political motivations. Although his *Töresel Musiki* was designed as an aural skills textbook showing Saygun's approach to music education, he wanted to add pure Turkish musical materials to the music pedagogy for future generations. The book also demonstrates how Saygun transformed simple materials to sophisticated constructions and how he blended different parameters. His approach to music pedagogy shows itself in his textbook content as well as his most complex works. Even though Saygun altered his views on Pentatonicism from those presented in *Pentatonism in Turkish Folk Music*, he continued to use extensive pentatonic structures in his compositions, from his oratorio to the children's book *İnci'nin Kitabı*

Published long after Turkish nationalism had solidified, *Töresel Musiki* (1967) reveals that Saygun's stance on the interplay between music and ideology has changed little. As a textbook it contains a collection of melodies organized in categories of anhemitonic and hemitonic pentatonic melodies as well as ecclesiastical²⁸ Dorian, Phrygian, and Lydian melodies, graduated in terms of rhythmic and melodic difficulty and frequency of clef changes. Saygun arranged these 150 melodies, used for solfege for voice,²⁹ mainly into three sections: pre-tradition melodies that contain melodies only within a tetrachord or in trichord; traditional melodies that contain pentatonic and other modal structured melodies; and the combination of different traditions. The pre-tradition section contains only 18 pieces, slow or moderate in tempo with simple, compound, and *aksak* limping meters. Intervallic properties are M/m2, M/m3, P4, P5, M/m7, and P8 in treble clef. In section two, traditional melodies are organised as sub-sections: 7 hemitonic/anhemitonic pentatonic, 11 Phrygian, 12 Lydian, and 10 Dorian melodies. Unlike section 1, in section 2 melodies are written in different clefs (such as soprano, alto, tenor, baritone and bass) and rhythmic structures, which are more demanding, moderate to fast in tempo, and use mixed clefs in every melody. Section 3 contains the most advanced melodies. Unlike the first two sections, in the third, Saygun did not indicate any specific mode; the melodies show extreme frequent clef changing and the combinations of simple, compound, and *aksak* meters, mostly in fast tempo.

²⁸ Even though Saygun himself explained that Anatolian modes were not exactly the same as ecclesiastical, it was almost impossible to distinguish the difference.

²⁹ The book correspond with the French method, the Dannhauser Lemoine collections used extensively in France through the 19th century and to this day; essentially. This kind of collection is used for solfege.

This paper has examined and contextualized the collaboration between Ahmet Adnan Saygun and Bela Bartók; furthermore it delved into the circumstances and consequences of this relationship and the resulting influence Bartók had on Saygun. Even Saygun's most mature pieces carry some trace of this influence—not necessarily musical, but sometimes aesthetic, sometimes political, and sometimes pedagogical. During Saygun's career, several significant external influences complicated his progress and artistic intentions. The effects of some of these influences were quite discouraging for Saygun; on the other hand, some of these influences were so strong and positive that it is possible to observe them even in Saygun's most mature works. His Paris years and the collaboration with Bartók were, without a doubt, the most significant contributions to his aesthetic and musical education. Bartók's understanding of national music and how to create it inspired Saygun to develop and mature his musical lexicon. This maturity resulted in Saygun freeing himself from the boundaries of political ideologies, allowing him to make peace with the past and use his musical materials to mediate a politically polarized past and the promising present of the Republic.

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