

TURKISH-ARMENIAN CULTURAL RELATIONS

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Nations that live under a single administration in the same country for many years or as neighbours are influenced by each other's cultures. Cultural exchanges between societies sometimes even occur among those who reside in faraway lands. There are words that have been unconsciously inherited by our culture from people who have lived in ancient historical periods—elements of clothing, customs and similar things. For example, the Euphrates River originates as the Karasu in the Dumlu Mountains to the north of the Erzurum plain and, after uniting with the waters of the Murat, flows through the lands of Syria and Iraq to the Gulf of Basra (the Persian Gulf), a trip of 2,330 km. The Sumerians called this the “Bu-ra-nu-nu” which carries the meaning of “swift flowing water”. This name becomes “Ufratu” in Old Persian, “Frat” in Middle Persian, “el-Furat” in Arabic, and finally “Frat” in Turkish. The change in this name over the centuries is a typical example of the ancient cultural heritage we have inherited from historical times.¹

İstanbul Patriarch Nestorius (428-431) at the Council of Ephesus (431) propounded the doctrine “Jesus had two identities: human and divine. Because of this Mary is the mother of Jesus, but not of God”. Missionaries and traders (Nestorians) who subscribed to these thoughts tried to spread his ideas to Iran, Central Asia and even as far as China; along with their tenets they brought the Syriani alphabet and saw it accepted.

In the 8th and 7th centuries B.C., it has been emphasised that the Greeks benefited from the Egyptian, Phoenician, Assyrian and Hittite cultures and Urartian influence has to be added where the

¹ There are articles on the “Euphrates” in the **slâm Ansiklopedisi** (hereafter **A**) and the **Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı slâm Ansiklopedisi** (hereafter **DV A**). For words in Turkish borrowed from Greek, Slav, Arabic and Persian roots, see Andreas Tietze, **Worterbuch der griechischen, slavischen, arabischen und persischen Lehnwörter im Anatolischen Türkisch**, İstanbul, Simurg Yayınları, 1999.

arts are concerned; the Greek poet Hesiod who lived in these same times wrote a book, **Theogonia**, on the appearance of the gods which was inspired by Hittite sources.²

Turks and Armenians for approximately more than a thousand years have lived sometimes as neighbours and sometimes under the roof of the same government. The first encounter between them was undoubtedly when the Abbasid Caliph Mutevekkil appointed the Turkish commander, Boğa el-Kebir, to suppress a rebellion that had broken out in the province of Ermeniyye³ (851-852).⁴ During the time of the Abbasid Caliph Mu'tasim (833-842), the commanders in the Islamic army who were appointed to the Anatolian front were chosen from Turkish *beys* and chieftains. Aside from Boğa el-Kebir who was the most famous of these, there was also Afflin, Ömer from Ferghana, and so on.⁵ The Seljuks arrived in the neighbourhood of Lake Van first in the 11th century (1015-1021) and, in the aftermath of the Battle at Malazgirt and their victory there (1071) contacts increased in a short time between the two communities and those who controlled Anatolia. There were political relations between the Armenian Kingdom of Çukurova whose center was Sis (today Kozan) and the Anatolian Seljuk state. During the times when the Seljuks were powerful, the Armenian Kingdom was required to give tribute. And in the former's weak periods the Armenians either behaved hostilely or cooperated with their rivals, the Mongols. During the time of the Ottomans, the Armenians were recognized as the loyal community (*millet-i sâd ka*), and especially from the 18th century onwards they were assigned important duties.

In this regard, the memoirs of the then German Captain, but later Field Marshal, Helmuth von Moltke (1800-1891) who came to Turkey in 1835 are interesting. In a letter dated 9 February 1836, he was a guest in the İstanbul home of War Minister Mehmet Hüsrev Pafla's chief translator Mardiraki. This individual, that is,

² Ekrem Akurgal, **Hatti ve Hitit Uygarlıklar**, İstanbul, İzmir, Tükelmat Yayınları, 1995, pp. 105-106; ____, **Türkiye'nin Kültür Sorunları**, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1998, p. 68n.

³ This province takes its name from Arminiye, one of three regions that Arab historians called *sugur*. Its main cities were Erzurum (Kalikala), Bitlis, Malazgirt, Ahlat, Ercis and Kemah. Mükrimin Halil Ynanç, **Türkiye Tarihi, Selçuklular Devri: I. Anadolu'nun Fethi**, İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1944, p. 26.

⁴ Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, "Abbasiler devrinde Türk kumandanları: I. Boğa el-kebir et-Türki", **Türk Kültür Araştırmaları**, Ankara, II (1965), pp. 195-203.

⁵ Ynanç, **op. cit.**, p. 20.

“Little Martin”, was a wealthy Armenian living in Arnavutköy. Moltke writes: “Basically, it is possible to call these Armenians ‘Christian Turks’. They have taken so many things from the customs of the ruling nation and even from its language. Their religion, that is Christianity, permits their taking one woman. But this woman is immediately kept away from view like Turkish women. When Armenian women go out, only their eyes and the upper part of their nose can be seen”.⁶ He stayed with this Armenian family for two weeks as a guest and provided information about their life such as: “All of the food is based on lamb and rice in the Turkish style. One of the two of the many dishes offered is certain to be a dessert”.⁷

One can see that there are cultural ties between the Turks and the Armenians in regard to language, various artistic fields, a number of customs and daily life. From this standpoint, it is essential to offer the reader some examples and draw attention to them.

Turkish-Armenian Exchanges in Language

The well-known Turkologist Andreas Tietze said: “The Turkish they spoke seemed to them to be more convenient for this purpose and easier,” when discussing the use of Turkish in the daily life of Armenians living in İstanbul in his foreword to Vartan Pafla’s work entitled **Akabi Hikâyesi** that he acknowledges as the “first Turkish novel”.⁸ He also pointed out the difficulties of using Arabic letters, of texts written in an ancient language being read to them in their schools and the problem of expressing the life of their own times in that language. Tietze added, in his foreword, the following:

“If [Vartan Pafla] had written in the archaic Armenian used in church books of that period, no one would have been able to read it comfortably and he himself would not have been satisfied. Given such a situation, he decided to write his book in Turkish. Because his community members who read little found Arabic letters difficult and because the Armenians in Anatolia wrote in Turkish, he used the Armenian alphabet that had been in continual use for a long time; he committed his

⁶ Helmuth von Moltke, **Moltke’nin Türkiye Mektupları**, tr. Hayrullah Örs, İstanbul, Varlık Yayınları, 1969, p. 35.

⁷ **Ibid.**, p. 40.

⁸ Vartan Pafla, **Akabi Hikâyesi: İlk Türkçe Roman (1851)**, ed. A. Tietze, İstanbul, Eren Yayınevi, 1991, p. ix.

work to paper and completed it in a form that suited Turkish. In this way, he produced a book that could be read easily and comfortably by Ottoman Armenians”.⁹

At the same time, it ought not be forgotten that a book of religious instruction was written in Kipçak Turkish but with Armenian letters. The person who penned this work notes that he had translated it from Latin into “his own different language”.¹⁰ Edmond Schütz also published a prayer book. The work was written in 1618 in Lvov and was in Kipçak Turkish but with Armenian letters.¹¹ One sees quite a number of religious, literary and historical works of the same type.

According to Omeljan Pritsak,¹² the total accumulation of works that have been described as Kipçak-Armenian occur in the middle of the 11th century at the end of the Seljuk assaults. When the Armenian Bagratid state in north-east Anatolia was destroyed, the Armenians migrated in big groups and settled in the Crimea. They gave the area such names as Greater Armenia (*Armenia Magna*) and Maritime Armenia (*Armenia Maritima*) in the 13th and 14th centuries. The main cities were Keefe (modern Feodosia), Solhat and Sudak, the last-mentioned a very important commercial center. They were frequently and continually involved in relations with the Kipçak Turks and as a result they appropriated Kipçak Turkish as their administrative and church language; however, they were able to maintain their religion, alphabet and Armenian expressions to a great extent. Some of these migrated again in 1280 on the invitation of Leo I, the king of Galatia and Lodomeria in western Ukraine, and later Poland took them in. Ever since 1496 the main center has been the city of Kamenez-Podolsk.

Edmond Schütz stands on the hypothesis concerning the Armenians settling in the Crimea. Küçük Ioannesow, an educator from Moscow’s Lazarev Institute, discovered 150 Armenian gravestones in the Crimea between 1895 and 1896, and he dated the earliest two of these as 1027 and 1047. Schütz notes that it is necessary to make these dates 1357 and 1557 because of mistakes

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. x.

¹⁰ Marian Lewicki and Renata Kohnowa, “La version turque-kiptchak du code des lois des Arméniens polonais”, *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, XXI (1957), pp. 153-300.

¹¹ Edmond Schütz, “Armeno-Kipchak Texts from Lvov (A. D. 1618)”, *Armeno-Turcica: Selected Studies*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1998, Article 4.

¹² O. Pritsak, “Armenisch-Kiptschakisch”, *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, eds., Jean Deny, Kaare Gronbech, Helmuth Scheel, Zeki Velidi Togan, Wiesbaden, I (1959), p. 81.

in the way they were read. According to documents, the Armenians settled in the Crimea between 1280 and 1290. In this too, the commercial interests of the Genoese and the Armenian traders were factors. Armenian businessmen established close commercial ties with Iran and the east *via* Trabzon and in the south through Egypt.¹³

When Fatih Sultan Mehmed conquered the Crimea (1475), it is noted that he sent 40,000 people to İstanbul and of these most were Armenians. One part of the Armenians also moved to Poland and Moldavia. Despite this movement, Chardin, a well-known French traveller of the 17th century, mentions that in 1673 there were 800 Christian families in the Crimea of which a portion were of Greek origin and the rest Armenian. The Armenians were traders, artisans and gardeners. In the years following the Küçük Kaynarca Agreement of 1774 and after the Russians established their control over the Crimea, the Greek people there were forced to migrate to Ekaterinoslav by the Tsarist regime, and the Armenians went to eight villages in Nor Nahchevan and its vicinity near Rostov on the shore of the Don River.¹⁴

This group which was known as the Kipçak Armenians -if they were not members of the Turkish-based Gregorian church-remained under the very deep influence of Turkish culture, and, as Omeljan Pritsak points out,¹⁵ they became a community which kept its religion, alphabet and some Armenian expressions but forgot its mother tongue. Those who migrated to Poland and settled there were catholicized.

Edmond Schütz in a different article notes that nearly 40 of the 100 Armenian magazines being published in İstanbul ever since 1840 used Armenian letters with a Turkish text, on the basis of a book which G. Stepanian published in 1963 in Yerevan (Erivan). Among these were the novels of Xavier de Montepin and Alexander Dumas. In the work by Simeon the same writer registers more than 800 words taken from Turkish.¹⁶ There is likewise evidence for 806 basic words in Turkish that have been taken from

¹³ Edmond Schütz, "The Stages of Armenian Settlements in the Crimea", *ibid.*, p. 199.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 132-136.

¹⁵ Pritsak, "Armenisch-Kipçakisch", *op. cit.*, I, p. 81.

¹⁶ E. Schütz, "The Turkish Loanwords in Simeon Lehaci's Travel Accounts", *Armeno-Turcica*, IX, p. 307, fn. 2, p. 310. The Turkish translation of the travel account under discussion was made by Hrand D. Andreasyan, *Ermeni Seyyah Polonyal Simeon'un Seyahatnamesi: 1608-1619*, İstanbul, Osman Yalçın Matbaası, 1953.

Armenian. One of the main sources for Robert Dankoff who carried out this research is the **Türkiye’de Halk Ağz ından Söz Derleme Dergisi**.¹⁷

The Influence of Turkish Literature on Armenian Literature

In an article¹⁸ H[ayk] Berberian (Bérbérian) suggests that the Armenians who lived for many centuries in Anatolia with the Turks and spoke Turkish should be recognized as “turcophone” while those who resided with other peoples in the same way abandoned their own language and spoke that of the others, were a sociological phenomenon. The Armenians who speak Turkish have a literature. This can be separated into the following five categories.

1. The works of the minstrels. There are works composed by more than 400 Armenian saz-poets from the 17th century up to the 1840s. The majority of these works that were played and sung to the accompaniment of the saz were in Armenian and Turkish while a portion of them were in Turkish only. Berberian divides the Armenian saz-poets into three groups - the Iranian, Turkish and Georgian Schools and cites as examples Körođlu, Afık Garip, Kerem and Aslı, Fahri and Gülizar, Melikfah and Güllü Hanım, and Hurfid and Mihri. In order to be able to better know some of the minstrels of Armenian origin whose names can only be given by relying on researchers such as Fuad Köprülü, Ahmet Rasim and Hasan Hancer and some Armenian writers, it is necessary to be able to specify what kind of influence Turkish minstrel literature had on the Armenians.

Mesihî was an Armenian who lived in Diyarbakır in the 16th century. According to Afık Çelebi,¹⁹ this individual who wrote the *talik* script well and poeticized in Persian travelled as a merchant to İstanbul, Edirne and finally, to Venice.

Mirzacan, Raci Damaci²⁰ notes, was born in the Karabağ village of Çanakçı, lived at the beginning of the 19th century and knew Russian, Turkish and Persian well in addition to his native language of Armenian. Fuat Köprülü writes that this individual

¹⁷ Robert Dankoff, **Armenian Loanwords in Turkish**, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 1995, pp. 8-10.

¹⁸ H. Bérbérian, “La littérature arméno-turque”, **Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta**, II, pp. 809-819.

¹⁹ Fuad Köprülü, “Türk Edebiyat ının Ermeni Edebiyat ı Üzerindeki Te’sirat”, **Darülfünun Edebiyat Fakültesi Mecmuası**, I (1922), pp. 23-24.

²⁰ “Mirzacan Bey, General Valeryan Grigorovich Medetof”, **Türk Folklor Ara tırmaları**, I/13 (1950), p. 202.

knew the legends that belonged to the history of mysticism.²¹ Mirzacan praised Turkishness and the Turks in every meeting and as a result ended up in prison because of the slanders of his co-religioners and people. Damaci passes on a poem that he wrote in prison:

There's no one to share grief, no friend for those in woe;
All acquaintances have turned into strangers now.
Fate – you shut me up in a dungeon in the end
And never freed my soul from distress and sorrow.

Sarkis Zeki was born in 1842 in Sungurlu, completed his elementary education in the Armenian school and later continued on to a *medrese*. He held a number of different official positions and died in 1891. Fuat Köprülü writes that he believed this person was also a sincere Bektaflı-Hurufi dervish.²²

When Ahmet Rasim discusses the minstrels he says that Armenians were to be found among them and gives quite a few names: Derviş Hampar, Meydani, Lenkiya, Bidadi, Harabat Haçık, Afk firini, Mihri and Puryani whom he characterizes as the last minstrels of the 19th century. Sevda'i, Saliki, Sabriya, Enveri, Nutkiya, Resmi, Ahteri and Namiya are also among those who were famous for playing and singing.²³

Fikret Türkmen provides information based on the works of Azeri researchers on Turkish folk tales published among the Armenians.²⁴ In one article also he refers to Armenian Minstrel Literature. The Armenian Aflug Emir who died in 1882 has the very meaningful quatrain below:

Our faiths are apart, we are strong brothers:
For our destiny, we share each other's.
United we're a mountain, one arm, one hand;
We're feeble slaves if divided we stand.²⁵

Aflug Emir talks about Turkish and Armenian brotherhood in these lines as if they were deeply involved in friendly relations, in

²¹ Köprülü, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

²² *Id.*, *op. cit.*, p. 27. In addition see: İzzet Ulvi, "Halk fiairi Zeki", *Türk Yurdu*, II, 31, pp. 121-123, Ankara, Tutubay Yayınlar, 1999.

²³ Ahmet Rasim, *Muharrir Bu Ya*, İstanbul, Rey Yayınları, 1927, p. 255.

²⁴ Fikret Türkmen, "Ermeniler Arasında Türk Halk Hikâyeleri", *Atatürk Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Araştırma Dergisi*, 7, pp. 17-23.

²⁵ Fikret Türkmen, "Türk-Ermeni Afk Edebiyatı Üstüklükleri", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, III (1982), p. 20.

helping each other and, if separated, easily damaged. How beautifully these lines express that both became great and well off as peoples belonging to two different religions but supporting each other.

Fuat Köprülü praises a work of Arflak Çobanian's entitled **Les Trouvères arméniens** (1906) on "Armenian Aflug (Aflık) Literature". The writer in this book points out the deep and powerful influences that Turkish literature had on Armenian literature. In the Middle Ages in France those who addressed the aristocratic class were known as troubadours. They sang lyric poetry to the accompaniment of a lute. In the East too, the saz-poets recited poetry to the sound of the lute or saz at fairs, weddings, convents, coffeehouses and military parades.²⁶ Fuat Köprülü relates that those who provided information about Çobanian and from him on the Armenian *A uqlar* say that those who were blind from birth performed their art at weddings, banquets, holidays or death ceremonies.²⁷

2. Literary Works. Of these Berberian discusses Hohannes who was born in the Diyarbakır village of Tel-Göran (today attached to the Derik district of Mardin) and lived between the 14th and 15th centuries, and in later periods the Armenian poets who wrote Turkish poems in the Crimea and İstanbul. For example, the poem of Pagdasar Dpir (1683-1768) below is attractive in its own way:

My best wishes for long life to those who love me,
For now my friends might as well forget about me.
May their faces always beam with light, happily;
For a while, my friends might just as well forget me. ²⁸

There are literary and historical texts such as Vartan Pafla's²⁹ **Akabi Hikâyesi** discussed above among the works with Turkish texts in Armenian letters and published by A. Tietze (Eren Kitabevi)

²⁶ Fuad Köprülü, **Türk Saz aırleri**, 2nd pr., Ankara, Milli Kültür Yayınları, 1962, I, pp. 55ff.

²⁷ Köprülü, "Türk Edebiyat'ının Ermeni Edebiyat Üzerindeki Te'sirât", **op. cit.**, p. 3.

²⁸ Bérberian, **op. cit.**, p. 814.

²⁹ Vartan Pafla (real name: Hovsep Vartanian) lived between 1815 and 1879. He was educated in Vienna and worked as the translator and later chief translator at the *Saray* (Palace) dockyards and in *Bahriye* (Naval Office). He is an Ottoman intellectual who wrote books entitled **Napoleon'un Hayat** and **Risale-i Telgraf** and was the editor-in-chief for a time of periodicals like **Manzume-i Efkâr** (1866-1896) and **Tercüman- Efkâr** (1878-1884). R. Y. G. Çark, **Osmanlı Devleti Hizmetinde Ermeniler, 1453-1953**, İstanbul, Yeni Matbaa, 1953, p. 173; Bérberian, **op. cit.**, p. 817.

and Tanburi Arutin's **Tahmaskulu Han n Tevarihi**.³⁰ Kevork Pamukciyan has published articles on books with Turkish texts in the Armenian alphabet in journals such **Tarih ve Edebiyat, Hayat Tarih Mecmuas , Türk Folkloru, Belleten, Müteferrika, Folklor ve Etnografya Ara t rmlar** and **Tarih ve Toplum**.³¹

3. Translations made by Armenians. These are Turkish texts written or printed in the Armenian alphabet. Among these works are Aesop's **Fables**, Cervantes' **Don Quixote** and Daniel Defoe's **Robinson Crusoe**. Friedrich Kraelitz-Greifenhorst, Enno Littmann, Otto Spies and Eugeniusz Sluszkiewicz concentrated on literary works and publications of this same type.³² In Jean Deny and Edward Tryjarski's small article entitled "La literature armeno-kiptchak"³³ the topic of discussion is the written products of the community that lived in Poland and Ukraine. They were called Kipçak-Armenians and produced works in Turkish with Armenian letters. Fikret Türkmen, also, in some of his works aside from those discussed above, talks about Turkish-Armenian cultural relations and especially the influences in the people's and minstrels' literature of these two peoples who lived together or as neighbours for many centuries, and he noted that the first ones shaped what happened to the later ones.³⁴ Since most of the Armenian minstrels, with a few exceptions, are known to have lived in the 19th century, the information that Fuad Köprülü provides indicates that the poet-musicians who travelled in the 13th century among the different classes of people and the migratory tribes with musical instruments called *çöğür* (lute or guitar) in hand and for that reason were called *çöğürçü*. This information never puts in doubt the fact that the Turkish minstrels had existed earlier and had served as the example that shaped and formed the Armenians and their type of literature. Köprülü pointed out that ever since the reign of Murat IV (1623-1640) the minstrels had increased in number and the poems of the famous ones spread and were recited as far as the boundaries of Baghdad and throughout the length of the Danube and Ozi. The 17th century was a golden age for Ottoman minstrels. Bahfli who participated in

³⁰ The text in the Latin alphabet of this work, previously (1800) published in Venice, was printed by the Turkish Historical Society (Ankara, 1942).

³¹ "Kevork Pamukciyan Bibliyografyas", 1956-1996: **Tarih ve Toplum** D'fndaki Makaleler", **Tarih ve Toplum**, 153 (Sept. 1996), pp. 46-47.

³² Berberian, **op. cit.**, p. 818.

³³ **Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta**, II, pp. 801-808.

³⁴ **Türk Halk Edebiyat n n Ermeni Kültürüne Tesiri**, zmir, Akademi Kitabevi, 1992.

the Iranian and Egyptian expeditions of Yavuz Selim, Kul Mehmed (death: 1606), Öksüz Dede and so on are Ottoman minstrels known to belong to the 16th century.³⁵

4. Newspapers and periodicals. Berberian gives a list of this type of publications and registers the publishers and the dates. Among these but aside from the ones in İstanbul, some appeared in Amasya (**Amasia**, 1911-1914), Bursa (**Hüdavendigâr**, 1869), Erzurum (**Envar- arkiyye** 1867-1877), Kayseri (**Rehber**, 1912-1913), Ayıntap (**Mendor**, 1884) and in some other cities.³⁶

There is another type of Armenian literature that Berberian does not discuss: Armenian satirical literature. The publications in this field are divided into three sections: the *Tanzimat* period (1839-1876), the Young Turk period (1908-1914) and later. In the press of the *Tanzimat* era, the letters are in the Armenian alphabet and the texts in Turkish. This is further proof that the great majority of the İstanbul Armenians used Turkish as their mother language.

According to Anahide Ter-Minassian³⁷ whom I have benefited from on this subject, there were 18 satirical Armenian newspapers in İstanbul between 1908 and 1914. One of these was **Gavro** . It was published between 1908 and 1914 under this name and later under another name for a short time. Its owner Yervant Toloyan was an Armenian, his father a journalist too. Yervant studied in Armenian schools and at Saint-Benoit. He published his newspaper in Paris between 1925 and 1935. In **Gavro** he did not hesitate about criticizing, not just Ottoman society and its administrators, but also the Armenian Church, those who served in all of its offices, the hangers-on and the revolutionary Armenian organisations, Dashnag and Hinchag. In 1936, he immigrated to Soviet Armenia and was arrested a few months later. From 1937 onwards nothing further was heard of him.

5. Grave stones. Berberian refers to them very briefly. He notes publications connected with the gravestones with Armenian letters

³⁵ Fuad Köprülü, "Türk Edebiyatında Afk Tarzı'nın Menfle'i ve Tekamülü", **Milli Tettebular Mecmuas** , İstanbul, I (1331/1915), pp. 16-22. Also see Fuad Köprülü, **Türk Saz airleri**, I-II; _____, "Türkler (Türk Edebiyat)", **A**, XII/2, pp. 533, 562-565.

³⁶ Berberian, op.cit., pp. 816-817.

³⁷ Anahide Ter-Minassian, "Ermeni Dergisi **Gavro** 'ta Karikatür ve Hiciv (1908-1920)", **Doğu'da Mizah**, ed., Irène Feoglio and François Georgeon, tr. Ali Berktaş, İstanbul, Yap ve Kredi Bankası Yayınları, 2000, pp. 115-135.

and Turkish texts (armeno-turc) in Kayseri, Bursa, Ankara, İstanbul, Befliktafl and Yeni Mahalle.³⁸

Music

Sadun Aksüt³⁹ separates Turkish music into two parts on the basis of the system: (1) “Turkish Music composed of Turkish rules and tunes based on the Turkish system, that is, on Turkish progressions and requiring Turkish saz or hand-played instruments and Turkish voices. (2) Turkish Music composed using the fundamentals of the Western system, that is, on Western tempo progressions and requiring Western instruments”. The writer has called the former “Traditional Turkish Music” in order to differentiate one from the other. There are those who claim that this music has Iranian, Arabic, Greek or Byzantine roots. Hüseyin Sadettin Arel (1880-1955) proves, in his work entitled **Türk Musikisi Kimindir**, that this music is not of foreign origin,⁴⁰ but to the contrary, the aforementioned countries were influenced by this music and abandoned their earlier music systems. Ercümen Berker (born 1920) also says:

“The Turkish music system is one that the Turks brought from Central Asia and developed in the Near East. It was not taken from the Arabs, Iranians or Greeks...This music is presented to us in the city, the palace and the mansion as introductory pieces, composition, vocal music and songs; in the mosque as the call to prayer, prayers, Mevlevi services vocal sections and religious compositions; in the convent as eulogy poems, religious prayer, religious musical service, a form of religious music, hymns and Bektaflı hymns; in the village as folk songs, folk music without a rhythmic pattern, dance music and musical work composed for dancing; on the borders as the frontier folk song; and in the military barracks as military band music”.⁴¹

Among the composers too are sultans, statesmen, convent shaikhs, palace attendants, members of the Janissary corps, rich

³⁸ Berberian, **op. cit.**, p. 818.

³⁹ **Türk Musikisi**, I, İstanbul, Kervan Yayınlar, 1983, p. 7.

⁴⁰ İstanbul, Milli Eğitim Bakanlık Devlet Kitaplar, 1969. Preface, Dr. Nevzat Atlı. This work is a collection of 14 articles that H. S. Arel previously published in **Türklük Mecmuas** (April 1939-November 1940), first printing in 1969 in İstanbul (preface: Dr. Nevzat Atlı), second printing in 1988 in Ankara (preface: Yılmaz Öztuna) in book form.

⁴¹ Aksüt, **op. cit.**, pp. 8-9.

people and landowners and people of Armenian, Greek or Jewish origin.

O angel-face, heart and soul I am in love with you;
Darling, could anyone love you the way I do?
I want you in private for a moment or two:
It's been many days since the last time I saw you.

The song in the Persian-Kurdish style that begins with these lines was taken from a poem by the famous statesman and poet of Mahmut II's reign, Mehmed Sait Pertev Pafla (1785-1837).⁴² The composer Nikogos Ağa (1836-1885) was an Ottoman Armenian born in İstanbul in Hasköy. He took lessons from Hammami-zade İsmail Dede Efendi (1778-1846) and his student Dellal-zade İsmail Efendi (1797-1869). Yılmaz Öztuna,⁴³ speaking of Armenian-language sources such as Kevork Pamukciyan and some Armenian writers and relying on what they told him, notes that Nikogos Ağa also learned Turkish music "because Armenian church music uses Turkish musical lines and rules". Sixty-three songs by this composer who went on to visit the *Mevlevihanes* and sang songs there reached our day and Öztuna in his article gives the tunes and the first verses.

The words of one of Tanburi Nikogos Ağa's *Hicazkâr* tune is by the celebrated Ottoman poet Ziya Pafla:

Soon nightfall will be here and light of day will be all through;
On the riverbank, the shepherd will play his flute, all blue;
You are young and tender, may your creator protect you.
Run and join your herd lest the wolf snatch you,
my lovely lamb;
Come, don't lose your lover, come, my little one, here I am.⁴⁴

It is also understood that he himself wrote the words to some of his songs.

You are the sovereign among all beauties – and
At your door, as a slave of yours I stand:
I beg you, do not let go of my hand.
My master, my sovereign, my sultan,
May my life be sacrificed to you.⁴⁵

⁴² fierafettin Turan, "Pertev Pafla", **A**, IX, pp. 554-556.

⁴³ **Türk Musikisi Ansiklopedisi**, İstanbul, Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1974, II, pp. 82-84.

⁴⁴ Etem Ruhi Üngör, **Türk Musikisi Güfteler Antolojisi**, I, İstanbul, Eren Yayinevi, 1981, p. 337; Aksüt, **op. cit.**, I, p. 335.

⁴⁵ Üngör, **op. cit.**, p. 494.

One of the very famous Turkish music composers of Armenian origin to whom we have frequently listened with great pleasure on the radio or some television programs is Bimen fien (1872-1943). The real name of this individual, who was born in Bursa, was Dergazaryan. The fourth son of a priest, his father, mother and brothers, according to Bimen himself who could play the saz, did not buy him a single musical instrument, and he did not even know a single note. He had his songs written down as compositions in a single-beat style and later had them scored. When he was eight years old, he began to sing the prayers in the church. Muslim prayer leaders, Qur'an reciters and dervishes began to attend church services to hear his beautiful voice. In 1884 Hac Arif Bey came to Bursa to hear him, and on his recommendation Bimen, who was fourteen at the time, set out for Istanbul over the opposition of his family. Having had financial difficulties, he found work singing prayers in a church. He himself states that he had more than 600 works.⁴⁶ Some of his famous songs are the following:

I know you are a tiny little thing yet:
My heart fell in love with you, what could you say?
How long will you play coy and hard to get?
My heart is in love with you, what can you say?⁴⁷

* *

Like a river, my life serenely flows away:
My heart is enslaved to an enchanting old flame.
I stand aloof to the changes of night and day:
My heart is enslaved to an enchanting old flame.⁴⁸

* *

Months and years roll by and yet your voice stays afar,
My heart writhes craving you, but who knows where you are.
Should my heart keep telling you over and over?
My heart writhes craving you, but who knows where you are.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ İbnülemin Mahmut Kemâl İnal, **Ho Seda: Son As r Türk Musiki inaslar**, İstanbul, Türkiye İfl Bankası, 1958, pp. 106-108. I am very grateful to Mrs. Güzin Gürefl who introduced me to this work that proved to be very valuable.

⁴⁷ Üngör, **op. cit.**, I, p. 463; Aksüt, **op. cit.**, I, p. 435.

⁴⁸ **Ibid.**, p. 449; **ibid.**, p. 424.

⁴⁹ **Ibid.**, p. 387; **ibid.**, p. 370. The words of this song belong to Fazl Ahmet Aykaç. İbnülemin Mahmut Kemâl İnal liked this song very much, and one evening while Bimen fien was giving a concert in the theater, he went where the artist was seated and wrote in his memoirs: "Whatever song he wanted, he should openly say so that he could sing it

Bimen fien was also delighted to sing in the presence of Atatürk. His last name (meaning: joy) too has its source in one of his most famous songs.

My face is full of joy, my memory, my circle of friends; a rose-garden is my place

My heart is full of cheer, so are boon companions and compatriots, so are all friends

This soul of mine rejoices at our revelries where we drink to our hearts' content-what else

Drinkers are full of joy, singers and listeners are full of joy, so are friends and strangers.⁵⁰

That Bimen fien composed three marches has also been noted. The first of these marches, although we could not find their complete texts, is the Çanakkale March (1915) whose first line is "Allies, all of you are even such", the second which begins "Again the enemy is ambushing the homeland I have established", and the third is the *Harb-i Umumi* (First World War) march: "The main war has been declared, the day has broken for the combatants".⁵¹ These lines are evidence of how Bimen fien had assimilated so much of Turkish culture even while being of Armenian origin.

Bimen fien relates another memory about Naci Sadullah, the editor-in-chief of **Yeni Gün Mecmuas**. "During a *rak* party Süleyman Nazif wrote this line on a card and gave it to me":

He is the eternal creator of our vocal art;

Praise and kisses to Master Bimen's mouth deep from our heart.⁵²

Patriot poet Süleyman Nazif (1870-1927)⁵³ recognized Bimen fien as "the immortal arranger of our art of song and master"⁵⁴ and truly praised him since it is clear that fien must have shared in the

for him right away". At his request, he executed a very lovely performance of this song that he had not sung for a long time. <nal, **op.cit.**, p. 108.

⁵⁰ Üngör, **op. cit.**, I, p. 576; Aksüt, **op. cit.**, I, p. 588.

⁵¹ Öztuna, **op. cit.**, p. 278. E. R. Üngör, **Türk Mar lar**, Ankara, Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1966, p. 62.

⁵² <nal, **op. cit.**, p. 107.

⁵³ İbrahim Alâettin, **Süleyman Nazif: Hayat, Kitaplar, Mektuplar, F kralar ve Nükteleleri**, İstanbul, İstanbul Yayinevi, 1933.

⁵⁴ Basically "the art of lamenting" is an art form declaimed in a loud voice. After songs were read in a loud voice Süleyman Nazif felt it necessary to discuss this expression in the form of "the art of song".

feelings that he expressed from his heart in his marches and his patriotic feelings because his songs and compositions are so beautiful.

Of the Armenian composers it is also necessary to remember Kemani Tatyos (1858-1927),⁵⁵ Levon Hancıyan (1857-1947)⁵⁶ and Artaki Candan (1885-1948).⁵⁷ There is significant evidence for how these composers were involved and immersed in Turkish music and Turkish literature. Those like Nikogos Ağa chose the text of his works from Pertev Pafla and Ziya Pafla and those like Bimen fien from Faik Ali Ozansoy⁵⁸ (1875-1950), Süleyman Nazif⁵⁹ and Orhan Seyfi Orhon⁶⁰ (1890-1972).

Hamparsum Limonciyan (1768-1839) who was from Harput on his father's side but was born in İstanbul, was supported at an early age by an Armenian jeweler family, the Düzyans.⁶¹ He participated in the music world at the Düzyans' *yal s* at Kuruçeflme and as well at the Befliktafl *Mevlevihanesi*. He attracted the attention of one of the greatest Turkish composers Hammami-zade İsmail Dede (1778-1846). He wrote down his musical tunes with the use of certain special signs that were more suitable than what had been used previously. He was admitted to the presence of Sultan Selim III, and with his encouragement he recorded the notes that bear his name.⁶²

Theater

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, while discussing 19th century Turkish literature, says: "Abdülmeçid's curiosity and love for everything coming from the West led after 1840 to the construction of a small Palace Theater, where some plays, operas and operettas were

⁵⁵ Çinal, **op. cit.**, pp. 280-282; Öztuna, **op. cit.**, II/2, pp. 308-310.

⁵⁶ **Ibid.**, p. 215 (Levon Hancıyan); **ibid.**, p. 249.

⁵⁷ **Ibid.**, p. 75; **ibid.**, p. 121.

⁵⁸ Üngör, **op. cit.**, I, p. 221. "Come, my heart's ruin. Don't you know what sorrow is? Don't the ignorant know quite what the heart's sweetheart is?" *Hicaz* song.

⁵⁹ Süleyman Nazif's poem that begins "I spilled my pain on the ocean, I moaned to the skies" was used in Bimen fien's composition for the *Bestenigâr* tune. fiefif İçli's *Hicaz* composition is more famous. Üngör, **Güfteler Antolojisi**, I, p. 178.

⁶⁰ Bimen fien again set to music in his *Hicaz* tune a poem that began with the lines "I wonder are you cheerful, do you have a fate - how distressed I am, do you feel it?" Üngör, **op. cit.**, I, p. 207.

⁶¹ For the Düzyan family, Çark, **op. cit.**, pp. 51-64.

⁶² **Ibid.**, pp. 188-189; Öztuna, **op. cit.**, I, p. 248.

performed”.⁶³ Basically, the first opera in Ottoman lands was in the 18th century performed by Armenians in the Eflâk Palace nearly thirty years after its first performances in Italy.⁶⁴ Mahmud II was interested in the theater and had the texts of up to 500 theatrical works brought to the Palace Library in 1836. The two amphitheatres built in İstanbul were filled with viewers despite high prices, and the palace supported these activities. In 1843 a part of the Valide Sultan Palace was turned into a theater where Donizetti's opera “Belisario” was performed.⁶⁵

The İstanbul Armenians began to be involved in theatrical activities starting from 1810, and presentations were made in the homes of some rich Armenians and in certain schools. The first theater in İstanbul (fiark Theater, Beyoğlu) opened in 1861. A theater building was constructed in İzmir at the same time. While the first plays were in Armenian or a foreign language, with time, works in Turkish that attracted more customers became important.⁶⁶

When the fiark Theater was closed in 1876, the famous artist Agop Vartoviyani (Güllü Agop,⁶⁷ 1840-1902) worked in a variety of other companies. He got permission to open theaters in Gedikpafla, Bağlarbafl, Beyoğlu and Tophane and to stage works in Turkish there.⁶⁸ This individual later on was appointed to the palace, and he became Yakup Efendi, voluntarily becoming a Muslim. He established an important first in Turkish theater history. These artists, who were Armenian writers and players in the beginning, became the leaders in establishing and developing the Turkish theater in later years.

Architecture

In the Ottoman state in the 15th and 16th centuries, among the imperial architects the chief architects like Ayas Ağa (death,

⁶³ Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, **XIX. As r Türk Edebiyat Tarihi**, 2nd pr., İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1956, p. 118.

⁶⁴ Andreas Tietze, “Nuovi dati sui primordi dell’opera in Turchia”, **Il Veltro**, XXIII-XXIV, pp. 363-369.

⁶⁵ Metin And, **Tanzimat ve stibdat Döneminde Türk Tiyatrosu, 1839-1908**, Ankara, Türkiye İfl Bankası, 1972, p. 24.

⁶⁶ **Ibid.**, pp. 50-52, 113-152.

⁶⁷ Mustafa Nihat Özün, Baha Dürder, **Türk Tiyatrosu Ansiklopedisi**, İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi, 1967, p. 200.

⁶⁸ And, **op. cit.**, pp. 238-239.

1487),⁶⁹ Davud Ağa (d. 1598),⁷⁰ Mimar Sinan (d. 1588)⁷¹ and Kasım Ağa (d. 1660)⁷² were all *dev irme*; there were Christians but the majority were Muslim.⁷³ It is also known that Mimar Sinan was from the people of Ağırnas village in the neighbourhood of Kayseri. One meets people carrying completely Turkish names among the people of this village because there were those among his own relatives who were named in the same fashion. It has been suggested that he could have been a Karamanlı or to express it in another way, a “Christian Turk”.⁷⁴

In the 19th century, a series of Armenian chief architects from the Balyan family stamped their signature on many structures. The eldest of the family, Bali Balyan from the Balen village of Karaman, was appointed to replace an Armenian palace architect whose son-in-law he was. When he died, his son Magar took his place, and this individual was sent into exile in Bayburt at the time of Mahmut I (1730-1754). Magar’s son was Krikor (1764-1831) and his son, Garabet Balyan (1800-1866). His children were Serkis (1835-1899), Agop (1838-1875) and Nikogos (1826-1858). The most famous and magnificent of the works of father-son Garabet and Nikogos is the Dolmabahçe Palace (1842-1856) and that of Serkis Balyan is the Beylerbeyi Palace (1861-1865). The architectural works of this family includes quite a few palaces, mansions, mosques, and the like.⁷⁵

Armenians Who Carried Turkish Culture to Europe

It is known that Armenian traders in İzmir in the 19th century established a monopoly in Iranian goods and particularly in the silk trade and they supervised the caravans that came over the Erzurum-Tokat-Sivas-Ankara route; their chief rivals were Turkish traders.⁷⁶ The cultures meshed either through the commercial route or as the result of journeys.

⁶⁹ Zeki Sönmez, “Ayas Ağa”, **DV A**, IV, p. 201.

⁷⁰ Semavi Eyice, “Davud Ağa”, **DV A**, IX, pp. 24-26.

⁷¹ Oktay Aslanapa, “Sinan”, **A**, X, pp. 655-661.

⁷² Şmet Parmaksızoğlu, “Kasım Ağa”, **A**, VI, pp. 379-380.

⁷³ İlerafettin Turan, “Osmanlı Tefkilâtında Hassa Mimarlar”, **Tarih Ara t rmlar Dergisi**, Ankara, Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Cografya Fakültesi, I(1963), pp. 157-202.

⁷⁴ Nejat Göyünç, “Mimar Sinan’ın Aslı Hakkında”, **Tarih ve Toplum**, IV/19 (1985), pp. 38-40.

⁷⁵ Çark, **op. cit.**, pp. 70-75. Pars Tuğlacı, **Osmanlı Mimarlığı nda Batı İ la ma Dönemi ve Balyan Ailesi**, İstanbul, İnkılâp ve Ata Kitabevleri, 1981.

⁷⁶ François Georjeon-Paul Dumont, **Osmanlı İ mparatorluğu'nda Ya amak**, tr. Maide Selen, İstanbul, İletifim Yayınları, 1997, pp. 228-229.

The introduction of Turkish coffee to Vienna by Armenians is a typical example of cultural trade *via* a commercial route. In 1665 Kara Mehmed Pafla was sent to Vienna as the Ottoman ambassador. The embassy was estimated by Evliya Çelebi to be very crowded (268 people). The members of the embassy settled in some guesthouses in the district known as Leopoldstadt, and they regaled their visitors with coffee, *sherbet* and the like. In 1683 following Kara Mustafa Pafla's retreat before Vienna, the bags of raw coffee beans that fell into their hands as booty were thought to be animal fodder because in those days the Viennese still were not acquainted with coffee. In 1697 Sahak Lucasian who was an Ottoman Armenian (and who became famous as Isaak de Luca) opened a shop in Vienna for drinking coffee. It was thus that Turkish coffee was introduced in Vienna.⁷⁷

Conclusion

In language, literature, music and almost every branch of the arts, Turks and Armenians were closely involved with each other, and sometimes in government service, in printing and in press Armenian contribution benefited the Turkish community. The following dedication that R. Y. G. Çark, the son of an Armenian citizen and the author of **Türk Devleti Hizmetinde Ermeniler** (Armenians in the Service of the Turkish State), put in his book is meaningful:

“For the Motherland/Overlooking the Apple of the Eye/a Farewell for the Young/a Thousand Sacrifices for the Country/a Legend on the Mouth/a Saga for All/to the Heroes of the Turkish Land/to the Martyrs of Çanakkale/amongst whom is My Beloved Father”.

Is there any other way of expressing more openly than the dedication that Çark, who lost his father in the fighting at Çanakkale (1915-16), wrote on Turkish-Armenian closeness and affection, in other words, the mutual cultural influence? Can one accuse a country of genocide when it did not even hesitate to write down the name of a Greek doctor on the Martyr's List at the battle of Çanakkale?⁷⁸ On the other hand, there were also those who were

⁷⁷ Karl Teply, **Die Einführung des Kaffees in Wien (Forschungen und Beiträge zur Wiener Stadtgeschichte No. 6)**, Vienna, 1980.

⁷⁸ Ekrem Boz, **Ad m Ad m Çanakkale Sava Alanlar**, 5th pr., Çanakkale, 1998, p. 70 in the list of martyred officers of the 57th Regiment is “Regiment Doctor Capt. Dimitriyoti - stanbul”.

acting against the state among the Armenian officers and doctors serving in the Ottoman army during World War I.⁷⁹

In 1915, the Armenians, some of whom were engaged in activities against the state and living in areas near the battlefields and in neighbouring areas in İstanbul and in Anatolia, were exiled to more secure areas within the Ottoman boundaries of that time. It was not denied that some distasteful events took place then, but one must never overlook that the Turks themselves punished 1,397 people for their unapprovable activities.⁸⁰ While these events are used as pretexts today, it is a duty and responsibility to remind people of what some Armenians did against the Turks during the same period and the baseless accusations and mounting efforts against the Turks later. Following the ceasefire of Mondros (Mudros) on 30 October 1918, what the Armenian Legion that entered Adana and Saimbeyli (Hacin) did while wearing French uniforms caused the revolt even of the celebrated French man of letters Pierre Loti who wrote that the claims of Armenian genocide "were in fact invented by the British (*inventés par les anglais*)".⁸¹ The archival documents have been published in English and Turkish as to how Armenians killed hundreds of thousands of Turks and Muslims between 1906 and 1922 in the Caucasus and in Anatolia and who were the killers, how and where.⁸² The barbaric and inhuman murders and activities that the Armenians carried out in Anatolia have even entered Turkish folk legends and laments. One of these is called the "Lament of Hacin:"

They are the ones that mowed us down that day,
They impaled us on slaughterhouse hooks too.
Let all this be known to Doğan Bey:
They are the ones that raided Urumlu.

Go to sleep, sleep, my son Osman,
A well of blood is what was Hacin village;
We failed to take it though we attacked on:
Sultan's Stream is a token of the pillage.

They flayed Brave Genco:

⁷⁹ Ufuk Gülsoy, **Osmanlı Gayri-müslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni**, İstanbul, Simurg Yayınları, 2000, p. 169.

⁸⁰ Nejat Göyünç, **Osmanlı daresinde Ermeniler**, İstanbul, Gültepe Yayınları, 1983, p. 20.

⁸¹ Pierre Loti, **Lettres pour la Turquie ; Türkiye için Mektuplar**, Ankara, Kültür Bakanlığı, 2000, p. 170. Letter dated 5 March 1920.

⁸² **Ar iv Belgelerine Göre Kafkaslar'da ve Anadolu'da Ermeni Mezalimi**, 4 vols., Ankara, Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1995-1998.

His flesh is all bruised and burnt;
They murdered the Chief Clerk,
Bludgeoned him to death with their cudgels.

They set up infernal cauldrons
In which they boiled babies;
They rounded up innocent young ladies,
At bayonet point they made them dance.⁸³

In 1920 the Armenians who were members of the French Legion and who came to the village of Doğanbeyli near Kozan and to Hacin burned both of the two settlements and tortured the Turkish people to death in a hideous fashion. The “Lament” above is for Hacin. The following year it was the turn of the Nationalist Forces to surround Hacin for nine months and ‘took revenge’ on the Armenians for what had happened the previous year. The “Doğan Bey” who is mentioned in the “Lament” is the same person as Capt. Kemâl Bey who was appointed to the command of the Nationalist Forces of this region by Mustafa Kemâl Pafla while he was in Sivas in October 1919.⁸⁴ Armenian massacres did not remain unreciprocated. Every calamity produces a responsive disaster, and the Armenians at times paid the price for the cruelties they perpetrated. Do these kinds of reciprocal events, presented as if only one side carried out a strike, help anything other than satisfying those addicted to one-sided politics? Why not emphasise instead the deep cultural ties between the two peoples? What does it serve to incite enmity and hatred and ignore the mutual influences that have enriched the centuries-old ties? What does it serve to dwell on claims that nourish a policy that the Turks carried out “genocide” against the Armenians and to unilaterally exaggerate sporadic violent events that occurred between the two communities? There is no place in science for attitudes harboring one-sided prejudice to serve unbalanced claims.

⁸³ Ali Rıza Yalman (Yalkın), ed., Sabahat Emir, **Cenupla Türkmen Oymaklar**, Vol. I, Ankara, Kültür Bakanlığı, 1977, pp. 80-668; II, pp. 259-260.

⁸⁴ **Ibid.**, II, pp. 172-174.