

BOOK REVIEWS

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Merih Erol, *Greek Orthodox Music in Ottoman Istanbul: Nation and Community in the Era of Reform*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015. xix + 264 pages.

Merih Erol's *Greek Orthodox Music in Ottoman Istanbul* conducts a thematic and chronological survey of Greek Orthodox liturgical music in İstanbul between the 1860s and 1922. The book aims to analyze the social and cultural history of the Greek Orthodox community in İstanbul by taking music as its vantage point. Its main themes can be counted as the relation of the middle class and the upper-class élite with music and its institutions; means of representation and appropriation of music; the balance of power between lay and ecclesiastical communities; attempts within and outside the church to reform the music, particularly so as to use it as a tool for political discourse; and the intellectual debates surrounding these reform attempts. Erol's research arises from very meticulous study of a rich variety of sources, including newspapers, journals, periodicals, treatises, correspondence, musical collections, and the official patriarchal and Ottoman archives.

The book is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 presents the political context in which İstanbul's Greek Orthodox lived during and after the Tanzimat period. Challenging the discourse of separate ethnoreligious identities, this chapter emphasizes how a hallmark of the pre-Hamidian period was an élite coalition between the Greeks and the ruling Ottomans within a cosmopolitan and liberal atmosphere that created a Helleno-Ottomanist identity (p. 25). Chapter 2 presents the various strata within the Greek Orthodox urban classes and explains in what ways these strata were related to the liturgical music. This chapter also opens up discussion about the musical reforms that were shaped during the pursuit of a national discourse. It underlines how, for this era, considering musical reform was in fact a common phenomenon for minority groups in Europe in search of their own self-image (p. 40). Increasing discontent with the church at this time encouraged voluntary societies and music clubs to become an active part of the reform attempts, which eventually led to professionalization in the sphere of church chanting (p. 50). Chapter 3 takes up the question of reform through a presentation of the debates among contemporary Greek musicologists about the origins of

Greek Orthodox liturgical music. In the third quarter of the nineteenth century, systematic examination of Byzantine, Jewish, Asian-Turkish, and European influences on Greek music—as well as lively debates about the music’s authenticity—resulted in a number of institutional efforts on the part of Greek communities outside the patriarchate, such as the preparation of a musicological lexicon (p. 84). Chapter 4 focuses on another aspect of the late nineteenth-century musicological debates; namely, the conflict between the means of reform and the definition(s) of tradition. In this period, rather than focusing on technical aspects of the music and its performance, the call for reform instead aimed to establish a national identity. This chapter identifies one main dynamic of this debate as the “changing balance of power between clerical and lay groups” (p. 113). As a hallmark of the era, the invention of the tradition was also adopted by the church and its musicians with the challenging task of reaching the music’s “authenticity” while simultaneously reforming it. Chapter 5 devotes more attention to the relationship between the music and national identity. With the deepening ethnoreligious cleavages of the late nineteenth century, the Greek Orthodox community sought a cultural homogeneity (p. 128). The lively contemporary debate among Ottoman and Greek musicologists is an especially striking part of the chapter, with the former arguing for the similarity between the two traditions and the latter rejecting such similarity (p. 131). Eventually, the Orthodox community came to detach itself more and more from Ottoman identity, consolidating around the patriarchate. The patriarchate, while maintaining its relations with the Orthodox voluntary societies, went on to expand its influence significantly, particularly by supervising the system of musical education (p. 147). Finally, Chapter 6 focuses on the Hamidian era’s state-led surveillance over and censorship of music and its public performance. This chapter presents a number of examples of the staging of Greek lay music in İstanbul. Utilizing the Ottoman state archives, particularly spy reports, in this chapter Erol examines official state views of the Greek community and its participation in musical performances.

Overall, *Greek Orthodox Music in Ottoman İstanbul* successfully shows that Orthodox church music is a subject that goes well beyond the strict confines of the church and the music. Combining different disciplines—including historiography, intellectual history, and urban social history—and explaining them within their contemporary political context, the book provides a significant methodological contribution to the field of cultural history. In addition, even though its primary focus is not on the music itself, it does provide detailed explanations of a number of technical aspects of the music, such as notation and polyphony vs. monophony. Furthermore, it uses a very innovative method to enable readers to actually experience the music, as certain rare recordings

referred to in the book can be listened to via the online database of the Ethnomusicology Multimedia project.

The intellectual debates that surrounded Greek Orthodox liturgical music, especially after 1870, constitute the major part of the book. In its examination of these debates, the book combines the views of different actors and groups among the İstanbulite Greek Orthodox community concerning not only their music, but also Ottoman court music, Western music, Byzantine music, and Russian Orthodox music. Erol's study also presents the ideas of Western Europeans and Greek societies outside of İstanbul on Greek Orthodox music. It should be noted, however, that the contribution of Turkish court musicians and intellectuals to the debate are rather briefly given; one would like to have had more on this alluring subject. It would also have been interesting to know the opinion of musicians from Islamic religious orders and any interaction they may have had with the Orthodox clergy. Additionally, Chapter 6 remains rather disconnected from the rest of the book in that it makes a rapid transition from intellectual debates about the liturgical music to the state's surveillance over public musical performances. The book's use of official Ottoman sources are limited to this chapter, although the Ottoman state archives could have also provided further explanations for Chapter 1, which focuses on the 1860s when the church and state had more liberal relations, or for Chapter 5, which discusses the patriarchate's expanding influence on the education of the Orthodox community.

The book effectively fulfills its promise to explain Greek Orthodox ecclesiastical music as a cultural practice during the period from the 1860s to the 1920s. While it also provides a very rich and detailed analysis of the upper élite of clerics and intellectuals, the experience of the middle class could have been explored in more detail. For instance, Chapter 2's main theme is the relation of the middle class to liturgical music during the 1860s and 1870s. Nevertheless, the aesthetic opinions of the middle class—most of which focused on discontent with the church—are represented only through the picture drawn by well-known journalists and intellectuals in the Orthodox community. As a result, we do not observe how ordinary members of the community experienced and expressed such discontent, and how they participated in reform attempts. Although one of the important achievements of this chapter is to present the career path of a number of cantors—that is, how a son of a middle-class family was raised for a career in liturgical music—this is hardly representative of the whole of the middle class. The rest of the book, by mostly focusing on the intellectual debates held among prominent members of society, gives a picture of the upper élites rather than the middle class. Additionally, while Orthodox folk music and its interactions with liturgical music were not one of the book's main research aims, they are nevertheless touched upon in Chapter 5, and

could well serve as an avenue of further research able to provide additional insights into the middle class' cultural production and participation.

Greek Orthodox Music in Ottoman Istanbul is an important contribution to the fields of both history and musicology. In presenting a little known area of the cultural and intellectual history of İstanbul, it also manages to portray social and political changes in the late Ottoman Empire through its analysis of certain aspects of the transformation of the Orthodox community, both within itself and *vis-à-vis* the patriarchal and Ottoman state authorities. In methodological terms, Erol's achievement of bringing together distinct archives and areas of research in Greek and Turkish studies opens up new possibilities for further dialogue between students of the two disciplines. In even broader terms, the book encourages all members of both societies to engage in just such a dialogue by showing that their quest for identity cannot be achieved without an exploration of their common past.

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Begüm Adalet, *Hotels and Highways: The Construction of Modernization Theory in Cold War Turkey*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018, xi + 286 pages.

Hotels and Highways is a story of experts' encounters between the United States and Turkey and of the concomitant production of modernization theory in the 1950s. The critique of modernization theory has been taken on faith in academia, so much so that it is simply viewed as an abstract fallacy that, on the ground, worked only as a top-down tool of American global governance during the Cold War. Begüm Adalet's fascinating work clears the aura around the theory by putting flesh on the bones of modernization's theorists and practitioners, while also debunking the idea of modernization as an American export one-sidedly imposed on other countries. In regards to American-Turkish relations, modernization theory was constructed by an intense dialogue, albeit an unequal one, between the experts of the two countries. Far from being a eureka moment, though, the formative phase of the model was in fact full of hesitations, U-turns, uncertainties, disagreements, and mutual criticisms. As a result, Turkey emerged as a laboratory both for defining the theory and for testing it, together with all its paradoxes. Was she not, after all, the most modern non-modern country in the Middle East?