



Importance of Italian Musicians in the Training of Turkish Military Music in the Imperial Music with Giuseppe Donizetti as Maestro and the Present State of Turkish Military Music

Oğuz Karakaya

oguzkarakaya1@gmail.com

Dilek Sabancı State Conservatory of Selçuk University (Turkey)

Abstract

The Ottoman Empire's institution for the training and execution of military music was Mehterhane-i Hümayun (Imperial Janissary Band). Selection of the people who would play these instruments was conducted from among the soldiers who had a talent for music. Sultan Mahmud 2nd established Muzıka-yı Hümayun, or The Imperial Music in 1826 with a view to setting up a western style military order and band. Italian Giuseppe Donizetti (1788-1856) was appointed as head of this institution. Giuseppe Donizetti brought along with him various instruments and musicians when he came to the Ottoman palace in 1828. Turkish military music education and execution underwent a radical change with this cadre and both the instrument and note system and music teaching and training were fields where this change was most visible.

Muzıka-yı Hümayun was transferred to Ankara in 1924 by order of Atatürk with the name "Presidential Music Board" whereas it was previously an institution of the Ottoman. Today, this institution continues its activities in affiliation to Turkish Armed Forces Band Schools Command.

Conference topic of this paper is music education. Although this is a qualitative study, it aims to reveal the radical changes that took place in the Turkish military music training from the 19th century onwards, the place and significance of Italian musicians in this process. Review of literature and interview methods are being used in the study. Interviews are underway with trainers at Konya Band and Music School. Moreover, content analysis will be performed on the interviews.

1- Introduction

The military music organization of the State of Ottoman (1299-1923) was 'Mehterhane-i Hümayun' (Imperial Janissary Band). The name of this institution that goes on until the late period of Ottoman Empire (1826) was 'Tabılhane'¹ during the period Seljuk. It is the continuation of military musical organizations of Turkish States which go back to Middle Asia. Nevertheless, it is clear that both diversity of the instruments and the style of execution are much more developed than previous ages. Ottoman Sultan, Mahmut the II (the period of sultanate (1808-1839), closed Imperial Janissary Band in 1826 after the case that is known as 'Vaka-i Hayriye' (the Fortunate Event). The Imperial Music Band was established in order to organize and train the bands formed to provide music for the Regiments of Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye; the head of it were Ahmed Ağa and Ahmet Usta previously, and French Manguel² afterwards. This institution functioned as a conservatory which includes Turkish Music and Western Music departments.³ When the primary efforts here failed to give the desired results, a search for a master teacher started through embassies. Since Italy was in an advanced level related to this matter, an Italian maestro-teacher was assumed to be profitable. With this purpose, Hüsrev Paşa interviewed Marchese Gropallo, the İstanbul representative of the

¹ Gazimihal, M.R., (1975), Türk Vurmalı Çalgıları

² Aracı, 2006, Donizetti Paşa

³ Öztuna, Y., 2006, Türk Musikisi Akademik Klasik Türk Sanat Musikisi'nin Ansiklopedik Sözlüğü



Kingdom of Sardinia and Piemonte and asked him to suggest an appropriate maestro. Related to this, Gropallo did correspondences with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Torino⁴ and Giuseppe Donizetti, brother of Gaetano Donizetti, was appointed as a military bandmaster⁵ and he was sent to İstanbul with the title of 'the General Trainer of Ottoman Imperial Bands' with an official correspondence dated November, 7, 1827.⁶ According to the citation of Aracı (2006) from Charles MacFarlane related to the coming of Donizetti with a war vessel named 'Aurora', it is said that 'a Genoese ship coming from Italy brought a cargo-load of musical instruments and musicians for the Sultan and his troops'. It is possible that this cargo contained the necessary instruments and other vehicles to be used by the members of the band that will be newly established. Besides, it is understood that Donizetti wasn't alone and he brought other trainers too.

First of all, Donizetti and the concomitant committee taught the notes with portrait in an original and short way.⁷ According to an article by A. Bacolla, published in the Journal of Piemonte in Torino in 1911 translated by Aksoy (2006), Donizetti found out that the students used the traditional note writing system (the note of Hamparsum) and assumed this writing style as hieroglyph letters that are similar to the 'neums' of Greeks. Every hieroglyph letter was written on a piece of paper through the help of a dervish, and the equivalent note was shown on the signs. In this way, he prepared a table that he could teach notes.

Again from the sources, we learn that Donizetti made headway in the short time. As an example for this, according to the citation of Gazimihal (1955); a British military officer, Adolphus Salde and his two friends (Gobbi and Calosso) heard that the band of palace played a piece by Rossini perfectly while they were scrolling on the shore he mentioned about this in his daybook. Although this success is especially attributed to Donizetti, it can be said the musicians in the imperial band received a condensed music education previously. Thus, since these musician that are especially chosen for the imperial band use the sound system of Turkish music, serials of modes and types of notating based on letters (the note of Nasır Dede and Hamparsum note), they didn't have difficulty related to new notating style and sound system.

It can be said that a new age started officially in Turkish music life with the activation of Imperial Music Band under the management of Donizetti Pasha, polyphonic music and methods for teaching them (vocal-instrumental) was supported by the state. In relation with music, the formation of a military music band⁸ in European style as an extension to the reforms carried out under the management of Donizetti can be another indicator of this situation. With coming of Donizetti, Italian school settled into the palace; this situation replaced with French school through Spanish D' Arenda who joined the Imperial Music Band in 1880.⁹ It is clear that Donizetti is an important maestro. Although he is not talented as his brother, he is a composer too. He has composed the march of 'Mahmudiye' for Sultan Mahmut the Second; the march of 'Mecidiye' for Sultan Abdulmecid and 'Marş-ı Sultani' (the March of Sultan) for Resad the Sultan.¹⁰ Donizetti died on February the 12'th 1856¹¹ and another Italian maestro Callisto Guatelli was appointed for his position.

Sultan Abdülmecid was a sultan who ascended after Sultan Mahmud the II., loved Western music, listened to Franz List in his palace and made his sons and daughters learn Western music.¹² Sultan Abdülmecid who watched opera performances both inside and outside the palace, admired Callisto Guatelli, the conductor of an Italian opera group that executed performance in the theatre of (Michael) Naum and appointed him as the head conductor of the palace.¹³

During the sovereignty of Sultan Abdülmecid, the works of Italian Opera Performances, especially the works belong to Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868) are known to be approved in both environments of palace and İstanbul region. Two most important representatives of Italian 'bel canto' besides Rossini

⁴ Aracı, 2006, Donizetti Paşa

⁵ Aracı, 2006, Donizetti Paşa

⁶ Aksoy, 1994, Yabancı Gezginlerin Gözüyle Osmanlılarda Musiki

⁷ Gazimihal, 1955, Türk Askeri Muzikaları Tarihi

⁸ Reinhard, 2007, Çeviren: Sun, S., Türkiye'nin Müziği, Sun Yayınevi, Ankara

⁹ Ergin, 1999, Yıldız Sarayı'nda Müzik,

¹⁰ Tuğlacı, 1986, Mehterhaneden Bandoya, İstanbul

¹¹ Aracı, 2006, age

¹² Yener, F., (1983), Müzik, Apa Ofset Basımevi

¹³ Gazimihal, 1955, age



are Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835) and Gaetano Donizetti¹⁴ (1797-1848); and the works of these composers have been frequently played in İstanbul.

The maestros, masters and apprentices that have been brought to the palace from Italy with the beginning of tanzimat reforms brought the term of 'alla Turca' and used it as the name of Fasil music. In response to this, they have taught the term of 'alla Franca'.¹⁵ Besides, most of the terms that entered into Turkish music language through Italian musicians remained same as it was in Italian pronunciation. The terms such as "Nota, Scala, Battuta, Tempo, Canto, Musika, Banda, Prima Donna, Alla Turca and Falso" can be given as examples to it. Some of these terms underwent changes in public language. Musika became Mızıka and Banda turned into Bando¹⁶; they still remain their existence in Turkish music terminology.

European musicians, especially Italian musicians who worked in Ottoman Palace such as Donizetti, Guatelli and others couldn't be indifferent to the interest of the palace towards them and their art and composed works which they dedicated to Sultans and Pashas. Nicola Vensel from Napoli composed 'Mecidiye Marşı' (the March of Mecidiye) to present to Sultan Abdülmecid; Guatelli composed 'Osmaniye Marşı' (the March of Osmaniye) to present Sultan Abdülaziz; Johannes Heyer composed 'Dolmabahçe Marşı' (the March of Dolmabahçe) to present Sultan Abdülhamid the II; Pianist Italo Selvelli composed Zafer Marşı (the March of Victory) (for piano) to present to Münir Pasha; Carlo d'Alpino Capocelli composed 'Kurultay Marşı' (the March of General Assembly); N. Baldi harmonized and arranged 'Sivastopol Marşı' (the March of Sivastopol) for piano; and B. Pisani composed 'Büyük Doğu Marşı' (the March of Great East) to present to Sultan Abdülhamid the II.¹⁷

Turkish musicians who were trained during Imperial Music Band that Donizetti and Guatelli Pashas conducted can be named as the first generation; while the musicians who were trained during the period of maestro D' Arenda can be called as the second generation. Many precious musicians were grown up during this period. These musicians answered the need of administrators and chefs as both performers and trainers in Turkish military music and non-military institutions for music education during the following periods. Saffet Atabinen, Zati Arca, Zeki Üngör, Veli Kanık and İhsan Künçer can be given as examples.¹⁸ The Imperial orchestra was conjoined to Sultan Abdülmecid who was appointed as 'halife-i müslimin' (the Khalif of Muslims) by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1922; then brought to Ankara with the direction of Atatürk and was named as 'Riyaset-i Cumhur Musiki Heyeti' (the Musical Committee of Presidency), later on it became 'the Philharmonic Orchestra of Presidency'. Thus, the first official orchestra of Turkish Republic is the imperial orchestra that is the final institution of sweeping military music depositions of Ottoman State. Nowadays, this institution functions as a sub-unit of Harmonic Music Command of Turkish Armed Forces.¹⁹

In this study, it was aimed to reveal the place and importance of Italian musicians in Turkish Military music tradition and their contribution to Turkish music life.

2. Material and Methods

Since this study included the changes and development that have been seen in Turkish military music tradition since 1828, it was prepared through the method of 'easily accessible state sampling' among the literature scanning and qualitative research methods. The sampling of the study is Regional Band Command of Konya Anti-aircraft School and Training Center.

3. Findings and Interpretation

The Imperial Band that has started with Giuseppe Donizetti and Guatelli and D' Arenda Pashas is known to be a complete military band. The reason for conjoining this institution to Turkish Armed Forces during the Turkish Republic period can be attributed to that truth. Nowadays, the need of military bands for staff is answered from the people who were trained in the Command of Schools for

¹⁴ Mimaroglu, 1970,

¹⁵ Kösemihal, 1939, Türkiye Avrupa Musiki Münasebetleri, İstanbul

¹⁶ Gazimihal, 1955, age

¹⁷ Tuğlacı, 1986, age

¹⁸ Gazimihal, 1955, age

¹⁹ Aracı, 2006, age



Band of Turkish Armed Forces. Sergeant preparation school for band, centered in Ankara, trains the staff of military band besides giving three years of basic education. The staffs who were trained here work in the bands that were formed in military units all over the country. The students succeed here can work as chiefs of military bands with the rank of officer after they completed a four-year undergraduate study at conservatories of universities – again as military students – through an exam. Vocational music education given in the band schools is performed through methodological manners that have been formed with an experience of past. The methods and etudes in other vocational music training such as theory, solfege, harmony and instrumental training are given according to their class levels.

In the repertoire of the band; the marches, especially national anthems, national anthems of other countries, waltzes, suits, concertos, the works of folk-music and classical Turkish music that is convenient for harmonization of their harmony of modes.

The band takes charge in duties of as military and official ceremonies, such as welcoming, farewell, the oath of enlistment, commencements, change of command, the activities and ceremonies held within national festivals, international sports competitions, open air concerts for public on special days and weeks, the concerts to introduce the military band at primary and high schools of national educational institutions.

When assigned position of the military band is considered, it can be said to have an important place and role in social life. Besides these activities and concerts, it can be said to contribute the musical culture of the society when the works in its repertoire are considered.

The works that the band will play is previously distributed to the band members. The employees in charge individually work their partition on the song and they individually work on chords and exercises that the song requires. Afterwards, collected work starts and the work is performed with the participation of all the instruments. The activities for unity and performance are mentioned under the control of the chef.

Since military bands are basically open air orchestras and there is the dominance of percussion instruments and brass instruments, there is a problem of chording. When we consider that these orchestras contain numerous brass instruments and there is a difficulty in perform the different partitions convenient to the structure of the instruments, it is necessary to take an advanced education of music and instruments.

During the collective work before the performance of works, the band rehearses through passing long sound blowing, related etudes, etudes with tongues, twenty four gamuts and the etudes approved by the chef of the band. With this application, the employees in charge are expected to provide their dominance on vocal, breath and accord, thus he can execute the unity and performance of the work in a polyphonic manner.

4. Conclusion

It is seen that the Imperial Music Band established by Sultan Mahmud the II. Instead of Enderun is an important cornerstone of change in Turkish music life.

It is also seen that Giuseppe Donizetti, Guatelli and other Italian musician have great contribution in the development of the Imperial Music Band and training of the staff.

It is seen that Italian chefs and musicians provided numerous works to our musical repertoire such as marches and other forms.

The musicians of first and second generations who were trained by Italian chefs and musicians participated in as performers or trainers and chefs during the following periods. Even, it is seen that they pioneered in opening preparation schools for band staff that train their own staff.

When numerous works with different forms in the repertoire of the bands and effective area of the band are considered, it is seen to form an important part of the social life and it contributed to music culture of the society.

Resources

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