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| Modernist Music in Turkey (1923--) |
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| Modernist music in Turkey owes its foundations to the late bourgeoisie revolution in 1923. The young republic, motivated by the building a modern nation-state, rejected the traditional Ottoman music and sought to synthesize Turkish folk music and Western classical music through what is known as the ‘Music Revolution.’ The first generation of modern composers, [Cemal Reşit Rey](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cemal_Re%C5%9Fit_Rey) (1904-1972), [Hasan Ferid Alnar](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hasan_Ferit_Alnar) (1906-1978), [Ulvi Cemal Erkin](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulvi_Cemal_Erkin) (1906-1972), [Ahmet Adnan Saygun](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmet_Adnan_Saygun) (1907-1991) and [Necil Kazım Akses](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Necil_Kaz%C4%B1m_Akses) (1908-1999) were called the ‘Turkish Five.’ These talented musicians attended European conservatories in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, and Prague. A second generation of composers, including Bülent Arel (1919-1990), İlhan Usmanbaş (1921-), and İlhan Mimaroğlu (1926-2012) followed a different path by appreciating recent trends in modernist music, ranging from serial to electronic music. While a similar trend continued in the next generations of composers, each generation also appreciated the traditional Ottoman and Turkish folk music. However, the ‘Music Revolution’ ultimately failed due to the musical policies of right-wing governments. |
| File: mmt1.jpg  Right to left: Bülent Arel, Alice Shields, Otto Luehning, Vladimir Essachevsky, Milton Babbitt, Mario Davidovsky, Pril Smiley. Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Studio, 1970, New York.  Modernist music in Turkey owes its foundations to the late bourgeoisie revolution in 1923. The young republic, motivated by the building a modern nation-state, rejected the traditional Ottoman music and sought to synthesize Turkish folk music and Western classical music through what is known as the ‘Music Revolution.’ The first generation of modern composers, [Cemal Reşit Rey](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cemal_Re%C5%9Fit_Rey) (1904-1972), [Hasan Ferid Alnar](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hasan_Ferit_Alnar) (1906-1978), [Ulvi Cemal Erkin](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulvi_Cemal_Erkin) (1906-1972), [Ahmet Adnan Saygun](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmet_Adnan_Saygun) (1907-1991) and [Necil Kazım Akses](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Necil_Kaz%C4%B1m_Akses) (1908-1999) were called the ‘Turkish Five.’ These talented musicians attended European conservatories in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, and Prague. A second generation of composers, including Bülent Arel (1919-1990), İlhan Usmanbaş (1921-), and İlhan Mimaroğlu (1926-2012) followed a different path by appreciating recent trends in modernist music, ranging from serial to electronic music. While a similar trend continued in the next generations of composers, each generation also appreciated the traditional Ottoman and Turkish folk music. However, the ‘Music Revolution’ ultimately failed due to the musical policies of right-wing governments.  File: mmt2.jpg  Bela Bartok and Ahmed Adnan Saygun in rural Anatolia for folk music research (1939).  The failure of the ‘Music Revolution’ is closely related to late modernisation, a period in which rulers act with the knowledge of past modernisation processes in Europe (Çulhaoğlu 2002). The Westernization and nationalization of cultural life not only shaped modernist music but musical culture as a whole in Turkey (Gedik and Bozkurt 2009). The invention of Turkish folk music, combined with an appreciation for Western classical music, accorded with the socio-political ideal of the construction of a modern Turkish society. During this period, the first conservatory and the first orchestra of Western classical music were founded, and recordings from all periods were broadcast on state radio stations. The most prominent figures of modernist music, such as Hindemith, Bartok, and Shostakovich, contributed to the revolution by visiting Turkey. Distinguished performers, such as soprano Leyla Gencer (1928-2008), violinist Suna Kan (1936-), pianists İdil Biret (1941-) and the Pekinels (1953-) and conductor Gürer Aykal (1942-) came out of these new musical institutions.  As a result, it is difficuly to say that any generation of composers constituted a musical school, apart from the attempts of Kemal İlerici (1910-1986), who wrote a theory for the harmonization of traditional Turkish music (Oransay 1993). Although prominent modernist composers are still emerging, over the course of the last decade Turkey’s ruling party has attempted to suppress modern musical institutions, as seen in the censorship of outstanding modernist composer and pianist Fazıl Say (1970-) in 2012 and 2003.  File: mmt3.jpg  Figure Photo of Fazil Say |
| Further reading:  (Çulhaoğlu)  (Ergur)  (Erol)  (Gedik)  (Hindemith)  (İlyasoğlu)  (Oransay)  (Tekelioğlu) |