

**International Congress of Aesthetics 2007  
“Aesthetics Bridging Cultures”**

**Women Composers in Turkish Classical  
(Allaturca) Music**

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In this study, my aim is to examine the importance of master-apprentice relationship (traditional education of a student by a master without school) during the early periods of Turkish classical music beside the importance of academic education in the late periods of Turkish classical music in the context of “women composers”.

In this respect, I selected five women composers whom are well-known, from the different periods of Turkish classical music history and analyzed the importance of women composers' role in Turkish classical music history over their biographies. Those composers are;. Esma Sultan (1778), Leyla Saz (1850), Neveser K kdeŒ (1900), Y ksel Kip (1937), Mediha Œen Sancakođlu (1941) and Pınar K KSAL (1946).

### **Introduction**

Music is a communication medium messaging biological and psychological moods to arouse affections. There are only two important classical music systems in the World; World Classic Music; as a sculpture that has three dimensions and Turkish Classical Music (allaturca) that has variety of colorful mosaics on a single plane. The history of Turks has been coming for 2500 years whom have been engaging with music in their different daily events and activities.

According to Schopenhauer, the musical art is the highest art since it is not based on real existence and space category; and also the willing is related with objectifying.

A Turkish Classical Music (allaturca) Piece is a complex of impression based on subject-object relation whenever it is composed in the history. A Turkish Classical Music (allaturca) has two sphere existences;

- 1- Its real structure is made of tonality, monophonic and variety of modals.
- 2- Its unreal structure is the human relationship; platonic love, separation and romantism.

Its aesthetic value always reaches on an optimistic final with tones as an indicator from reality of life.

Master-apprentice relations (traditional education of a student by a master without school) were important during the early periods of Turkish classical music besides the importance of academic education in the late periods of Turkish classical music in the context of “women composers”. As we saw once the examples of the corporation between master and apprentice in the guilds of Florence in the Middle Age and then ‘schools of painting’ in the fifteenth century in Germany.

Female Composers in Turkish Classical Music (allaturca) were very successful and there was an authority of men over women. Although male hegemony that women did/do not engage in the ‘real world’ but are kept safe at home or in traditional ‘female occupations’, Female Composers as their emotional nurturers are accomplished such vocal compositions by means of their isolation and objectification, yet as reflections of the male desire to control the world.

In this respect, I selected five women composers whom are well-known, from the different periods of Turkish classical music history and analyzed the importance of women composers’ role in Turkish classical music history over their biographies. Those composers are; Esma Sultan (1778), Leyla Saz (1850), Neveser K kdeŒ (1900), Y ksel Kip (1937), Mediha Œen Sancakođlu (1941) and Pınar K KSAL (1946). At that point, it would be relevant to make a general review of these composers:

## **ESMA SULTAN**

Born in 1778 in Istanbul.

She took master-apprentice education.

She was the daughter of Sultan Abdulhamit the 1st. Her cousin was Sultan Selim the 3rd of the Ottoman Empire.

She made only one composition registered TRT (Turkish Radio Television Institution) repertoire.

Song name : “Ey afitab-ı bezm-i nur”

By TRT (Turkish Radio Television Institution) performers

## **LEYLA SAZ**

Born in 1850 in Istanbul.

She took master-apprentice education.

She has lived in the Ottoman Palace until the age of 11 after being a bridesmaid for the 4th daughter of Sultan Abdulmacid the 1st, where she had a chance to take an education with the sultans.

She learned playing piano from Madame Romano.

She learned French and Greek Language besides Arabic and Persian Language when her father was the Cretan (Girit) Mayor in 1861.

She wrote poetry since the age of 16.

Song name : “Seni sevda çiçeğim ”

Performer : Nevin Demirdöven.

## **NEVESER KÖKDEŞ**

Born in 1900 in İstanbul.

She took master-apprentice education.

She made her first composition in the age of 13 while she was studying in Notre Dame de Sion.

She was playing piano, guitar and tanbur. She made more than 500 tango, vals, operet and songs. She was known by an inspiration to her master Mesut Cemil Bey in waltzes called “Neveser Music”. This waltz style tried to bring a novelty to Turkish Classical Music.

Current number of compositions exceeds over 500 of which are in the TRT (Turkish Radio Television Institution) repertoire.

She is in the top two of the 250 women composers since the 1600s.

She died in 1962.

Song name : “Sevmek seni bir suç ise affet günahımı ey sevgili ”

Performer : Orhan Şener.

## **YÜKSEL KİP**

Born in 1937 in İstanbul.

She took academic education.

She graduated in 1957 from İstanbul Municipality Music School (Music Academy) where she first has took musical technical notion from the great masters; Mes'ud Cemil, Nevzat Atlıđ, Munir Nurettin Selçuk, Emin Ongan, Şive Baykut, Nurten Sürelsan.

She worked in Ankara Radio House as a singer for a while.

She became the conductor of women chorus “Kadınlar Topluluđu” between 1977-1982.

She awarded a mansion with her song named “Yüce dađlar ne heybetli ve haşmetli durursunuz” in TRT (Turkish Radio Television) -1978 Composition Contest.

Song name : “Yüce dađlar ne heybetli ve haşmetli durursunuz”

Performer : Şeniz Güneş.

### **MEDİHA ŞEN SANCAKOĐLU**

Born in 1941 in Babaeski.

She took master-apprentice education.

She has been working as soloist in İstanbul Radio since 1968.

She first has got musical training with her father in law in 1990 by the effect of strong sadness after loss of her brother. In the period of 5 years she has composed 1650 songs and poetries.

Current number of her compositions exceeds 350. 161 of them are in the TRT (Turkish Radio Television Institution) repertoire.

She is on the top of the women composers list since the 1600s.

She lives in İstanbul.

Song name : “Türk Kadını Marşı” (a march dedicated to Turkish Women)

Performer : Mediha Şen Sancakođu.

### **AYŞE PINAR KÖKSAL**

Born in 1946 Adana.

She took master-apprentice education.

She studied philosophy one year.

She studied pharmacy. She worked on that field untill 1982. She has been working as a Vice President of the Executive Board for PET HOLDING in Ankara and is Holding Partner.

2001-2007 was elected as a first member of the Punishment and Execution Establishments and Custodies Monitoring Board, left in April 2007 enter politics.

1992-2007 she became the president of Köksal Foundation for Education and Board Vice Chair.

1996-2001 became the owner and president of the Petcos Company – Petya Health Care Tourism Center Inc./ Datça ( first center to perform dialysis, treatment and health tourism in Turkey ).

1970-1982 became the owner of Etlik Pharmacy in Ankara.

1972-1976 became the General Secretary of Ankara Chamber of Pharmacy.

1969-1970 became the pharmacist of Hacettepe University Hospital Pharmacy.

She took her first music training when she was 10 years old. She was playing violin, accordion, mandolin and taking piano lessons.

Currently she plays the lute.

She took her first Turkish Classical Music (allaturca) training from composer Mr. Sadi Hoşses.

She has been training the theory of Turkish Classical Music (allaturca), its repertory and composer with the tanburist Yılmaz Pakalınlar.

She is composing the “Mutlukluk Valsi” ( waltz of happiness ).

Current number of her compositions exceeds 110, 74 of them are in the TRT (Turkish Radio Television Institution) repertoire.

She is among the top three of the 250 women composers since the 1600s.

She speaks English, Russian and German.

She lives in Ankara.

Song-1 name: “Şarkılar Söylüyorsun” in Turkish Classic Music (allaturca) format

Song-2 name: “Şarkılar Söylüyorsun” World Classic Music format

Performer: Hakan Aysev (opera singer).

**TURHAN TAŞAN**

Born in 1948 in Samsun.

He studied in the Faculty of Economy and Commerce Sciences in İstanbul.

He took master-apprentice education on Turkish classical music (allaturca ).

He is the member of the union of the Turkish Classical Music Composers-MESAM.

He awarded ten times for his songs “Kalb kalbe karşı derler”, “Aynı çatı altında”, “Biraz geç kalmadın mı”, “üzüldüğün şeye bak”, “Öptüm yanaklarından”, “Sarsam diyorum”, “Oldu mu ya”, “Gözlerin kaldı” in the “Top Ten Contest” by Milliyet Newspaper.

He awarded a mansion with her song named “Sarsam diyorum” in the TRT Composition Contest in 1990.

His book titled “Women Composers” including 184 women composers.

The themes of the work featured in her exhibits are brilliantly painted figures on hand-made paper and copper foil . They symbolize the copper mines, which were first used in domestic work during the Copper and Stone Ages between 6000-2500 BC in the area of Anatolia. Her use of sand along with acrylic colors on canvases symbolizes eternity , fertility and the earth.

The works are manifestations of the Hittite goddess of fertility, the Anatolian Mother Goddess Kybele; fertility can be felt from the sand-designed forms of the figures. Similar references can be seen in works on other deities who were worshipped during her time.

Her concepts for Kybele do not directly correspond with the traditional Anatolian Mother Goddess Kybele and other deities; they are meant to emphasize the movement of the collective spirit for fertility which Kybele embodies.

Historically the Anatolian Mother Goddess Kybele is not known only for fertility but also for her preeminence. During the era of the great Hittite civilization, the social life of women had an exalted position until the 5th century BC when the Greek male gods altered the importance of the Mother Goddess. The respect for female culture that was dominant in the beginning of 1700 BC ended due to a patriarchal civilization based on a male theology.

Her intention in these themes was to present contrasting perspectives from the main ideas of my works in order to cause the spectators to approach the works in their opposite meanings. This makes us think and search for solutions that improve the social life of women in order to establish a healthier quality of life for all generations throughout the world.

The above text is the result of personal spoken and written communications via the Internet with the New York artist, Mr. Amir Bey in the year 2003. In 2002 he had a performance at Galeri X in Istanbul, which was dedicated to the ancient Egyptian goddess Hatora during the time that she was conducting research on the goddess Kybele.

In conclusion, I analyzed biographies and works of five Turkish women composers from the different periods of Turkish classical music history. I examined the subject by looking at the importance of master-apprentice relations during the early periods and the importance of academic education in the late periods of Turkish Classical music. In this context, it is possible to state that, despite the dominance of male composers and masters in this arena, Turkish women composers became successful and created important works for the Turkish Classical music.

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