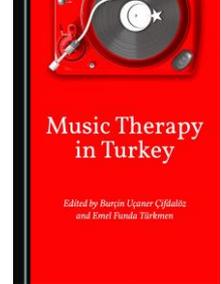


BOOK REVIEW

Music therapy in Turkey (Çifdalöz & Türkmen, Eds.)

Reviewed by Fatma Nil Özalp

Independent scholar, Turkey



Title: Music therapy in Turkey **Editors:** Burçin Uçaner Çifdalöz & Emel Funda Türkmen **Publication year:** 2019 **Publisher:** Cambridge Scholars Publishing **Pages:** 115 **ISBN:** (10):1-52752446-9 / (13):978-1-5275-2446-0

REVIEWER BIOGRAPHY

Fatma Nil Özalp, MA is a researcher with a particular focus on music and health. Nil's special interest in better understanding the effects of music in human life led her to research and publish on the subject. She has experience of working with patients and medical surgeons. She practises as a researcher at the training and research hospital in Muğla, working with medical oncologists. She presented her clinical work at the European Music Therapy Congress in 2016 and the World Music Therapy Congress in 2014. She is a co-founder of Researchturk RTD Company and also works at the music department of Fine Arts High School in Muğla, Turkey. [nil.ozalp@researchturk.com]

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An intrinsic part of Turkish culture, the relationship between music and health dates back to pre-history and the time of shamanism. The practice of using music as a tool for healing has long been part of old Turkic tradition, and today, it remains a traditional element. Scientific requirements for the use of music as a therapy, however, have not yet been met in Turkey.

In recent years, some activities have been organised to raise awareness of music therapy. One of these was the 7th International Hisarlı Ahmet Symposium. It was held with the title "Music Therapy" in 2016. The chapters in this book have been chosen from the papers presented at this symposium. The book is comprised of seven chapters. Each chapter is significantly different and independent from each other in terms of topic, method, and content. Except for the first three, the other chapters seem inconsistent considering the title of the book. Below, I give a brief outline of the chapters in three sub-sections before offering a critical evaluation of the book.

OUTLINE

Music therapy studies in Turkey

The first chapter is presented by Burçin Uçaner Çifdalöz. She briefly outlines the progress and current state of music therapy studies in Turkey. The study consists of the analysis of theses and articles

written between 1985 and 2016 which are listed in the official site of the National thesis database. The most notable finding is that the researchers only studied patients listening to music as music therapy. For readers who are curious about the general perception of music therapy in academic circles in Turkey, this finding is of interest.

In his chapter, ethnomusicologist Barış Gürkan considers “how the statement ‘music therapy as a science discipline’ positions its scientific boundaries between the two main paradigms of modernism, and postmodernism and how it is depicted in Turkey” (p. 22). Gürkan analysed which elements of the paradigms of modernism and postmodernism are used by music therapy and discusses the topic within the scope of a conceptual framework. The definition of what modernism and postmodernism concepts are and their relationship with science constitute the general focus of the study. He identified four different groups of researchers who conducted studies related to music therapy in Turkey. He found that there are major differences, refutations, and conflicts among distinct music therapy circles in Turkey as well as in their own methods. His study argues that there is not balanced progress in the study of music therapy in Turkey.

Practical music therapy studies

Özgür Salur investigates the clinical benefits of eclectic music therapy within a clinical environment involving six patients diagnosed with schizophrenia or schizophrenia-like disorders in a Turkish university hospital. This study appears to be the first case study in Turkey that is conducted by a music therapist. He has used musical games based on metaphors. Salur provides the details of the data gathering tools and describes the design of the study.

Giray Koçaslan introduces the history of the musical activities in a mental hospital called Powick Asylum by the famous composer Edward Elgar between 1879 and 1884 in Britain. Stating that the pieces which Elgar composed for the asylum have not been performed for many years, the author suggests that music therapy experts could conduct research concerning the use of these pieces today. The chapter also contains the tone and form analyses of the aforementioned pieces.

Psychologist Aslı Özyıldız gives a detailed analysis on the concept of “Sound Identity” developed by the Argentinian psychiatrist Rolando Benenzon. She emphasises that the listening skills of the therapist constitute an important point in the relationship between the therapist and the client.

Music therapy and education

Bilgehan Eren presents the philosophy, technical schema, application methods and techniques of the Orff-Schulwerk music therapy approach. He also discusses the instruments used and the session organisation in the approach in a detailed way.

The last chapter is written by Lilian Maria Tonella Tüzün. She summarises the development of music therapy in Brazil and details a music therapy practice carried out with refugee children in Sao Paulo. The author conveys the thoughts of four music teachers in the city of Afyon, Turkey, concerning the participation of their refugee students in the choir. It is not clear how the author links such musical activity with music therapy.

A CRITICAL EVALUATION

The title of the book, *Music Therapy in Turkey*, is both general and inclusive. It creates an expectation that the book will provide information concerning the historical background, current clinical studies, association activities, and music therapy education or certificated programmes in Turkey. However, only a small percentage of the content fulfils this expectation. Therefore, the title does not fully reflect the content of the book.

It would be beneficial to include discussions which could serve as a bridge between the topics for understanding the perspectives of the authors. Furthermore, it would be valuable for future potential editions if the editors could explain how the chapters relate to the book title and explore the implications of the book content. This disconnectedness constitutes the weakest aspect of the book. Moreover, the lack of methodology and systematic exploration, and the vagueness of the target audience can be noted as other weak points of the text. A strength is that the book is the collective product of work in the field of music therapy and that it reflects the opening steps of music therapy as a scientific discipline in Turkey. In spite of the fact that music has traditionally been used for *healing* on Anatolian lands for a very long time, the development of music therapy in Turkey, in terms of music therapy professionals and academic research publications, is not fully developed.

Recently, the Ministry of Health launched an initiative to recognise the field of music therapy. "Music therapy" was included as a subtitle in "Complementary Medical Practice" in 2016. In addition there have been attempts to offer music therapy certificates under specific courses by some private universities. There are two associations in Turkey: The Music Therapy Association (MUZTED) founded by Çifdalöz, who is one of the editors of the book, and most of the members of which are from the field of music; and the Applied Music Therapy Association (UMTED), with a membership mainly comprised of medical doctors. There is also a platform called the Music Therapy Academy which was founded by Özgür Salur who wrote one of the book chapters. The Music Therapy Academy and the associations have organised international and national activities, inviting expert speakers which have increased the awareness of the music therapy field in Turkey.

There were some events in Turkey held with the title "Music and Therapy" (i.e., World Music Therapy Day, 2020; Eskişehir; Evrensel ve Bilimsel: Müzik Terapi, 2019, İstanbul; Uluslararası Müzik Terapi Sempozyumu, 2016, İstanbul) and these are important for gathering international and national scholars, experts, students and institutions, and for raising awareness about what music therapy is or is not. At these events, I have observed that medical professionals have shown as much interest as the participants from the field of music. This is quite encouraging and serves as a valuable basis for developing the field of music therapy with the cooperation of medicine and music disciplines. In support of this interest, a study which determined the attitudes of 112 medical oncologists in Turkey concerning music therapy found that oncologists considered it positive to use music therapy for their patients (Aydemir & Tanrıverdi, 2014; Tanrıverdi & Aydemir, 2013). Musical interventions in which health workers or musicians are utilising music-based practices in dementia and end-of-life care in Turkey can be also counted as other examples of this interest (Çifdalöz, 2020).

As interest and awareness of music therapy in Turkey grows, international collaborations could increase, and the field could develop in accordance with the fundamentals of the profession of music

therapy. In the future, I anticipate that attention will also be given to developing music therapy education standards in Turkey.

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