

Music in the Ottoman Imperial Harem and the Life of Composer Leyla Saz (1850-1936)

By Kathryn Woodard

The Ottoman Imperial Harem conjures up many images in the West, and the concept of ‘harem’ has been a central fixture in any attempt to portray the backwardness of Islam, both historically and as the precursor to the treatment of women in Muslim countries today. The memoirs of Ottoman composer Leyla Saz provide a much more complicated picture of the Imperial Harem, both in terms of the status of women and the role that music played there. I first came across Saz’s music and memoirs in 1998 while researching the Turkish composer Ahmed Adnan Saygun in Istanbul.¹ *The Imperial Harem of the Sultans: Memoirs of Leyla (Saz) Hanimefendi* is readily available in Turkish and English as are several publications including her Ottoman classical compositions.² Intrigued by a chapter about both Turkish and Western music in the Harem, I read the book with the preconceived notion that Leyla Saz was a courtesan entertaining Sultans, which required her to learn music. However, her memoirs contradict this notion. The writing of memoirs was not commonplace during Ottoman times, and therefore Leyla Saz’s recollections offer a rare personal account of life in the Imperial Harem by a woman who became a prominent composer of Ottoman classical music.³



Leyla Saz, circa 1930

Leyla Saz was born in 1850 in Istanbul. She was four years old when she was brought to the harem along with her sister. They did not enter the harem as captured slaves, but rather were allowed to reside in the harem since their father, Hekim Ismail, served as the palace’s Chief Surgeon. Leyla’s exact position while she was in the harem is not particularly clear. She describes herself as a “maid of honor” to the Sultan’s daughters, and she remained close companions with some of them throughout her life.

Although Leyla’s life in the palace can be considered one of privilege, her father’s path to the palace was a complex one. Explaining his rise to such a prominent position helps shed light on definitions of power and position within the Ottoman palace. In fact, Hekim Ismail was bought as a Greek slave in Izmir, the Aegean coastal city. He first learned the practice of medicine from his owner, a Jewish physician, and went on to become one of the first graduates of the Istanbul

School of Medicine. His wife and Leyla's mother, Nefise, was from the Crimea with a Tatar family heritage.

That a slave could rise to the position of Chief Surgeon of the palace was not an anomaly during Ottoman times, and many non-Muslim slaves came to fill prominent positions within the Ottoman palace, including mothers of Sultans who bore the title Sultan Valide and reigned over the Imperial harem. Bernard Lewis points out that concubines of the Imperial harem "were in principle of alien origin...since Muslim law categorically prohibits the enslavement of free Muslims." He adds that "mothers [of Sultans] were...nameless slave concubines [whose] personalities and origins were of no concern, and indeed of no interest to historians and others."⁴ In Turkish sources, however, particularly in the field of music, female family members of various Sultans are named and recognized for their contributions.⁵ Saz's memoirs identify many harem residents not only by naming mothers, daughters and other relatives of Sultans but also by discussing the origins and circumstances of slaves brought to the harem.

Certainly the harem was a sequestered world, separating female servants, slaves and members of the Sultan's family from the rest of the palace and the outside world. However, Leslie Peirce, in her study of the Imperial Harem at Topkapi Palace during the early centuries of the Ottoman Empire, posits that it was considered a privilege to be raised and educated there, an opportunity that was reserved for women who would marry high-ranking officials in the Ottoman government.⁶ Leyla Saz, observing the Harem from a later period, supports this point by describing the "girls of the Serail...who were all recruited it is true among young Circassian slaves, but brought up and educated with the greatest care."⁷ In fact, Leyla Saz later married a Governor General, Sirra Pasha, who served at various posts in the Ottoman Empire, including Baghdad. Although such a position of privilege was established through a woman's relationships with men (with father and husband in the case of Leyla) and not through a woman's own achievements, Leyla Saz's musical life provides us with an important exception to this societal rule.

While residing in the Imperial Harem at Çiragan Palace, Leyla learned to speak French, Persian, Arabic and Greek in addition to Ottoman Turkish and received music lessons in both Ottoman and Western styles.⁸ Most of the palace instructors were masters of Ottoman classical music, which had long been the favored music of the Ottoman court, patronized as well as practiced by many Sultans. But Leyla lived at a time when several Sultans were interested in opening the Ottoman court to Western influence, including the introduction of Western music to the palace. Sultan Mahmud II (r.1808-39) invited several European musicians to reside and teach in the palace as part of his extensive reforms of palace life. First among them was Giuseppe Donizetti, brother of the opera composer. He was charged with reforming Ottoman military music after Mahmud abolished the Janissary corps along with their music in 1826. Donizetti led the first European-style wind band at the palace, established the Imperial music school, *Muzika-i Hümayun*, which offered instruction in Western instruments, and later formed a European orchestra of palace musicians.⁹

As a result of Mahmud's reforms, Ottoman and Western music existed side by side in the palace, as Leyla Saz describes in her memoirs: "The orchestra for Western music and the brass band practiced together two times a week and the orchestra for Turkish music only one time."¹⁰ Here she is referring specifically to the ensembles of the Imperial harem, including the brass band. These groups existed separately from the all-male court ensembles, but also performed at official court functions. Leyla Saz also describes a performance of the "fanfare," or wind

ensemble of the harem, on the occasion of the first day of Bayram, the festival marking the end of Ramadan in the Muslim calendar.

The fanfare of the Imperial Harem was composed of eighty young lady musicians who took their place in the great hall of the Harem. The musicians, preceded by their drum major, who was a tall and beautiful girl, marched into the room in good order and arranged themselves on one of the sides of the hall. In the first rank, the flutes were placed along with the clarinets and the little trumpets with valves. In the second and third rank[s], there were the heavy instruments of brass, the bass drums and the cymbals. At the two extremities of this group were placed instruments called ‘Chinese Pavilions’ which consisted of little bells suspended on small brass bars in the form of an umbrella. For this reason they were often called ‘Japanese Umbrellas.’...Disposed in this fashion the orchestra awaited the arrival of the Sultan.”¹¹

Besides the astonishing fact that harem musicians played “heavy” brass instruments and bass drums, what stands out in this excerpt is the reference to the instrument that Leyla Saz calls “Chinese Pavilions.” In fact, the instrument is not of Chinese origin but rather a recognizable feature of Ottoman military music, or Janissary music, known as the “Turkish Crescent” or “Jingling Johnny,” and evoked by Mozart and Beethoven in works such as *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Die Ruinen von Athen*. The instrument remained a part of the Ottoman Imperial wind band even after the Janissary corps was abolished by Sultan Mahmud II, because it had already become a part of European military music through its adoption in the eighteenth century. One reason Leyla Saz uses the name “Chinese Pavilions” could be that she integrated the French name for the instrument in the French edition of her memoirs. It is also possible that new names, which suggest more distant places of origin, i.e., Chinese and Japanese, were used for the instrument even among Ottoman musicians, as a way to legitimize its inclusion in an ensemble that was intended to replace the Janissary corps ensemble.

Leyla Saz describes one occasion at which both the Imperial orchestra and the Harem orchestra performed—a party commemorating the birth of Sultan Abdülmecid’s son, Prince Vahiddedin. She mentions that the Harem orchestra “played tunes from *William Tell* and *La Traviata* which were very much in favor those days in Istanbul.”¹² At this same event, Leyla and her sister were called upon to embark on a mission in service of “the lady musicians of the Harem Orchestra [who] were curious to know what their masculine colleagues thought of their playing.” She continues:

In order to find out they asked us—we were just little girls—to run to the other side of the screen and listen a bit to what the men were saying. We accomplished our mission with discretion and without anybody noticing us, we were able to hear the men saying: “How can these women play so well? They played almost as well as we do!” This observation, although a little condescending, nevertheless was a singular homage rendered to the talent of the lady musicians of the Harem. We hastened to tell them about it and they were very flattered.¹³

Although Leyla Saz describes these particular events, she is less forthcoming with information about her own musical education. She names several masters of Ottoman music

whom she met during her time at the palace, including Rifat Bey, Santurcu Ismet Aga, and Hacı Arif Bey, one of the most revered Ottoman composers of the 19th century. She singles out Rifat Bey as “her illustrious teacher,” and according to other sources she began her studies with Nikogos Aga at the age of nine.¹⁴ She names two “professors” of Western music in the palace, Kadri Bey, a Hungarian musician, and Necib Pasha, who also composed Ottoman music. Saz also names a piano teacher with whom she studied outside of the palace, Therese Roma, who lived in the Kadiköy section of Istanbul. Because it was still so unusual within Muslim communities for someone to have learned the piano, Leyla Saz and her sister were often called upon to entertain members of the Sultan’s family at the palace, and she even gave piano lessons to Refia, Münire and Behice, daughters of Sultan Abdülmecid.¹⁵

Early in her description of palace musical life, Leyla Saz explains the distinct difference between the teaching methods of each tradition: “Western music was taught with notes and Turkish music without them; as had always been the custom, Turkish music was learned by ear alone.”¹⁶ At this time, however, when Western notation was introduced to court musicians, it also became common practice to document Ottoman melodies in the new system of notation. Leyla Saz was particularly active in collecting and transcribing Ottoman music, including many pieces from earlier periods that were of historical interest. Unfortunately, many of these transcriptions, along with manuscripts of her own compositions, were lost in a fire at her residence in the 1890s.¹⁷

Among the papers lost in the fire was the original manuscript of her memoirs, completed in 1895. In the “Introduction” to the published version of her memoirs from 1920, Saz laments the loss of her original manuscript and recounts the difficulties in trying to recapture memories that were so carefully recorded at an earlier time in her life. The reconstructed version of her memoirs was serialized in a Turkish newspaper from 1920 to 1921. The English version that I found in 1998, which is still being published, is a translation by Landon Thomas of a French version from 1925. It is organized into seemingly unrelated subjects, such as “Furniture of the Harem,” “Weddings of Imperial Princesses,” “Music and Dance at the Serail,” and “Circassian Slaves,” resulting in a disjointed and rather bizarre document. Leyla Saz’s great-grandson, Ali Halim Neyzi, notes in an epilogue to the English edition how complex the process was in preparing the book for publication. He points out that Yusuf Razi, who was Leyla Saz’s son and the editor and translator of the French edition, “had revised his mother’s notes to suit French tastes.”¹⁸ And Yusuf Razi himself explains in the preface that this was done “in accordance with Leyla Hanim’s advice [since] certain passages...offer little interest to the French (foreign) reader.”¹⁹ Although some discrepancies remain, the current edition reflects Ali Halim Neyzi’s interest in restoring some of the lost passages from the original Ottoman Turkish.²⁰

One subject, however, still strikes the reader as conspicuously absent. The subject of relations between the sexes is treated sparingly in the book and couched in such discreet language that it betrays an almost Victorian sensibility. Note the following passage, which describes circumstances surrounding the Harem music lessons:

There is a question which naturally arises with respect to these young ladies of the Serail who were so completely separated from the external world and around whom were still permitted the presence of music professors who were naturally men. One wonders whether there were never a little feeling of sympathy between the masters and their beautiful young pupils who were naturally surrounded by an

aura of mystery; if there was never a furtive exchange of glances between them in spite of the attentive and severe eunuchs who were always present.²¹

Was this cloaked approach the result of her upbringing in the Harem and thus reflective of how relations were described in that context? Or would these passages have been constructed with a specific (possibly Western) readership in mind? This is a particularly interesting question, given that the harem was a prominent subject in European artistic and literary works of the 19th century, a subject that served as a vehicle for framing the Orient as the “other,” and in turn as debauched and decadent. Leyla Saz’s treatment of male-female relations provides the reader with quite a different view of harem life, and one wonders if she consciously took it upon herself to respond to European views of the institution. She never comments on European views of the harem, Imperial or otherwise, in her memoirs.

She does, however, express clearly her intentions behind writing the memoirs as a way to preserve a memory of the “life, customs and organization of the Imperial harem.”²² Ironically, the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 that she supported and commemorated with the *Victory March* (discussed below) set into motion changes that would lead to the end of the Ottoman Empire, and hence the end of palace life and the harem. Although the secular Turkish Republic was founded relatively soon after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, when Leyla Saz first published her memoirs in 1920-21, Istanbul was still occupied by Allied forces, and the future of the city and its institutions was uncertain. Given this context it is easy to identify with Leyla Saz’s desire to preserve the memory of the Ottoman Imperial harem. In fact, the whole of her memoirs is marked by a distinct nostalgia for that period of her life, and at one point she states: “I may say that it was there that I spent the happiest years of my infancy and of my early youth.”²³

When I first became aware of Leyla Saz through her memoirs it was not difficult to find publications with examples of her music. Also, over the past few years there has been a growing interest in Ottoman music in Turkey, resulting in several new recordings of historic repertoire as well as the release of historic recordings of Ottoman music. Several of these include works by Leyla Saz. I have chosen two pieces to discuss here which exist in both written and recorded form and which provide examples of both Ottoman and Western-influenced styles.

The first work is a *şarkı* (pronounced “sharkuh”), an Ottoman song form. (See reprinted score at the end of the article.) Ottoman classical music, as a modal tradition, is predominantly monophonic; hence the score consists of a single melody, which is sung and played by an ensemble that can include instruments such as the ud, kanun, tanbur, kemençe, ney and frame drums. The title given, *Hüzzam şarkı*, refers to the *makam*, or mode, of the song. The series of pitches that make up *Hüzzam makam* is roughly equivalent to the pitches B, C, D, E-flat, F-sharp, G, A, B, with the symbols in the key signature denoting tunings outside the Western tempered system. The backwards flat indicates a “B” that is one comma flat (closer to a B than a B-flat), an E that is four commas flat and an F that is four commas sharp, both of which are rather close to the tempered E-flat and F-sharp. The tonic or central note of the *makam* is the B (or slightly flat B). Another important feature of Ottoman music is the rhythmic mode, or *usul*, often noted in the top left-hand corner of score, *Ağır Aksak*. It is an irregular cycle of nine beats divided as 4 + 5 or 2 + 2 + 2 + 3. It is a common meter in Ottoman music and can be translated quite literally as “heavy limp” referring to its slow irregular pulse. (A streaming audio file of the work is available at www.soniccrossroads.com/research_audio)

Hüzzâm Şarkı

Ağır Aksak

Leylâ Hanım

EY SA BA - HI HÜSNÜ
A. NI. N A Fİ TA. BI.
E N VE Rİ SAZ
EY ZE RÂ FE
BEN BU HA LI
T BA ĞI NI N SE
M LE DE SE V Dİ
N BÜLBÜ LÜ NA
M SENGİ Bİ Rİ
Zİ K TE Rİ SAZ
Dİ L BE Rİ
K TE Rİ SAZ YÖKKEN AS LA.
GÖNLÜ MÜ N KA
L Bİ LÂ Tİ Fİ N
DE YE Rİ SAZ
KARAR
BE Rİ SAZ e.unal

Ey sabah-ı hüsn ü ânin âfirâb-ı enveri
Ey zerâfet bağının çen bülbülü nâzîk teri
Yökken aslâ gönlümün kalb-i hâşiminde yerî
Ben bu hâşimle ne sevdim sen gibi bir dilberî

As with much of her music, this song is a setting of Leyla Saz's own poetry in Ottoman Turkish, the older form of Turkish that predated the language reforms of the 1920s at the time of the founding of the Turkish Republic. A collection of her poetry was published in 1996 in Istanbul, and it includes several poems designated as *şarkı*s with the names of *makams* that Leyla Saz used to set them.²⁴ A loose translation of the poem is:

The morning brings the beauty of the sun.

The nightingale lingers in the elegant garden.

How was it possible for me to love you
In this state with no room in my heart?

I found the score for this *Hüzzâm şarkı* in several sources, including *Türk Musikisi Nazariyatı ve Usulleri* [Turkish Music Theory and Methods].²⁵ This comprehensive text that explains the modal and rhythmic practices of Turkish music relies on over 100 examples from the Ottoman classical repertoire to demonstrate different *makams* and *usuls*. Leyla Saz's *Hüzzâm şarkı* is the designated example for the 9/4 rhythmic mode, *Ağır Aksak*, explained above. She is one of only two women among all the composers of the text's musical examples. This demonstrates Leyla Saz's stature in the Ottoman musical

world, while at the same time making it clear that the majority of composers regarded as examples within the tradition are men.

This does not mean that only a few women were active as composers of Ottoman music. One source that establishes the breadth of women's involvement in this tradition is the publication *Kadın Bestecileri* [Women Composers] by Turhan Tasan.²⁶ It gives brief biographies and lists of works and resources for 184 composers of Turkish classical music. More than half of them were born after 1920 and therefore lived under the reformed conditions of the Turkish Republic, but

the other significant portion of the composers listed (about 80) represent earlier epochs, including Leyla Saz and others who received their musical training in the Imperial Harem. Several of these composers' works have been recorded (including Leyla Saz's *Hüzzam sarkı*) and released on compilation CDs featuring Turkish women composers.²⁷

After finding scores and recordings of Leyla Saz's Ottoman music, the more formidable task for my research was to locate her Western-style compositions alluded to in her memoirs. Through the publisher of the latest edition of her memoirs, I was able to contact Ayfer Neyzi, the widow of one of Leyla Saz's great-grandsons, Nezih Neyzi, who was instrumental in having Leyla Saz's memoirs reprinted in English and Turkish. Ms. Neyzi provided me with two marches by Leyla Saz that she found in her papers. One is entitled *Neside-i Zafer Marşı*, or *Victory March*. (The original melody is provided at the end of the article.) The march is a typical Western genre of the Ottoman reform period, since new music had to be composed for the Imperial military bands. Saz's *Victory March* has lyrics written in commemoration of the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, and so it dates from a later period of her life, long after she had left the harem. The lyrics in transliterated Ottoman and in English translated are below:

Vicdanı muazzam olan osmanlılarız biz
Peymanına kanun koyan osmanlılarız biz
Arzusunu pek güç bulan osmanlılarız biz
Azminde sebatkar olan osmanlılarız biz
Enverle Niyazi unutulmaz bu isimler
Şunu semedaniye emanet o çisimler
Yaşa vatan çok yaşa, Yaşa millet çok yaşa!
Yaşasın osmanlılar, yaşasın şanlı ordu!

We are the Ottomans of great conscience.
We are the Ottomans who make just laws.
We are the Ottomans who are strong-willed.
We are the Ottomans of great determination.
The names Enver and Niyazi will not be forgotten.
Their matters will be held in safekeeping.
Long live the homeland, long live the state!
Long live the Ottomans, long live the honored army!

The names Enver and Niyazi refer to leaders of the revolution who instituted a new constitutional government, deposed the corrupt Sultan Abdülhamid and replaced him with Mehmed V. By composing this march Leyla Saz clearly expresses her support of the new government, which is considered to be a precursor to the founding of the Turkish Republic.

What struck me about the score is that it consists only of the melody line, similar to scores for Ottoman art music. I was fully expecting a piano score or some other arrangement of the march. After all, early marches written for the Imperial military bands by the likes of Donizetti and others must have been polyphonic. I have since searched for and found several explanations for the format of the score. The most definitive explanation came from a historic recording of this piece and other Ottoman marches that I found during my most recent trip to Istanbul in November 2003.

Neşide-i Zafer Marşı

Leyla (Saz) Hanımefendi
(c. 1850-1936)

Instrumental -----Zirgüleli Hicaz makam-----

45 Az - min - de se - bat - kar - o - lan o - s - man - li - la - ri - z

51 biz En - ver - le Ni - ya - zı u - nu - tu - l -

57 maz bu i - si - m - ler Su - nu se - me - da -

63 ni - ye e - ma - - - net o ci - si - m - ler

69 Ya - şa va - tan çok ya - şa Ya - şa mil - let çok ya - şa

73 Ya - şa - sım os - man - li - lar ya - şa - sım san - li or - du

77 Instrumental

81

5 Vic - da - ni mu - az - zam ol - an o - s - man - li - la - ri - z biz

12 Vic - da - ni mu - az - zam o - lan o - s - man - li - la - ri - z

19 biz Pey - ma - ni - na ka - nun ko - yan o - s - man - li - la -

26 n - z biz Pey - ma - ni - na ka - nun ko - yan o - s -

33 man - li - la - ri - z biz Ar - zu - su - nu pek

39 güç bu - lan o - s - man - li - la - ri - z biz

Victory March by Leyla Saz. Original version, 1908.

The CD “Ottoman Marches” was released as part of an archival series by the Turkish recording label Kalan, and it consists of a collection of historic recordings from 1909-12 of Ottoman military music performed by members of the Imperial palace ensembles, *Muzika-i Hümayun*.²⁸ Several of the works are by palace composers mentioned earlier, such as Donizetti, Necib Pasha and Rifat Bey. Other composers include Callisto Guatelli, another Italian musician invited to the palace during the early Ottoman reform period, and Ismail Hakki Bey, a composer known for his Ottoman compositions but also for works that cross genres and stylistic boundaries. In fact, these recordings provide examples of how the seemingly Western genre of military march became transformed to suit various performing circumstances, also reflecting a trend toward creating a synthesis of Western and Ottoman music.

While some of the marches are performed by a complete wind ensemble with distinct parts for each instrument, several of the works are performed monophonically by a smaller chamber ensemble that often includes Ottoman instruments. Such is the case for Leyla Saz’s *Victory March*, which is performed by a vocalist, violinist, clarinetist and ud player, much in the style of a *sarki* but with the characteristic rhythms, meter and tempo of a march. Besides this evidence of two different settings for Ottoman marches, the recording specifies that one march was composed by Rifat Bey but *harmonized* by Guatelli, making it clear that a completed march in this context meant simply composing the melody, and that the harmonization was optional and could be added later.

Another aspect of Leyla Saz’s march that points to a synthesis of styles is her use of modes and references to *makam* throughout the work. The opening phrase of the march can be

considered an approximation of *Zirgüleli Hicaz makam* with the pitches G, A-flat, B, C, D, E-flat, F-sharp, G. However, the alternative symbols for the tuning of the *makam* as seen in the previous piece are missing, and Leyla Saz relies on strict Western notation for this piece. She also adheres to the convention of one sharp in the key signature for the key of G major, even though several forms of a G scale appear in the piece and not one of them matches the G major scale. Examples of several modulations can also be found in the piece, although these are not modulations that would be considered typical within a Western framework, but rather modulations between *makams*, a typical feature of any 19th-century Ottoman composition. Saz's *Victory March* clearly represents a unique hybrid style of composition resulting from the coexistence of Ottoman and Western music in 19th-century Istanbul. That she and others were exposed to these styles at an early age in the Ottoman Imperial harem indicates a more meaningful and influential role for women within Ottoman cultural life than has been previously acknowledged, at least among Western scholars. (A streaming audio file of the archival recording of *Victory March* is available at www.soniccrossroads.com/research_audio)

Discovering the March among Saz's papers and pondering the questions it raised about Western-style composition in Istanbul during this period prompted me to try my hand at a harmonization of the March melody. I owe much to my knowledge of later Turkish composers including Adnan Saygun and Muammer Sun in my approach to harmonizing the modal phrases. Traditional tonic, dominant and subdominant chords work well within the overall G major/minor modality, but I often found quartal harmonies the best option when the melody veered into other territories. Also, I set the opening as a conscious nod to the first movement of Mozart's Sonata in A Minor, K. 310, given the similar opening rhythmic motive. Although the sonata is not known as a Turkish-influenced work of Mozart, perhaps a retrospective glance is in order especially considering that the same key, A Minor, was used in the famous *Rondo alla turca* and the march-like rhythm is so prominent.

W.A.Mozart



Probably the most interesting lesson learned from such an example is that musical trends, as well as historical trends, percolate and develop at different paces within different cultures. While Western music history is most often taught as a linear development with 1908 representing a seminal turning point for the central European understanding of tonality (and rife with social and political overtones), Leyla Saz's *Victory March* points toward equally significant developments in the Middle East and in multiple arenas - musical, cultural and socio-political.

Victory March (1908)

Leyla Saz (1850-1936)
Arranged for piano by Kathryn Woodard

Alla marcia

f *mf* *mp* *mf* *p*

36 *mf*

43 *f* *mf*

50 *f*

57 *p*

64 (2nd time *f*) *p*

71 (2nd time rit.)

NOTES:

1. This article was first published in the *Journal of the International Association of Women in Music* (Vol. 11, No.1) after presenting a paper version at the Hildegard Festival of Women in the Arts at the University of California-Stanislaus, March 2003 and at the College Music Society National Meeting in Miami, October 2003. I would like to thank Ms. Ayfer Neyzi of Istanbul for her generous support of my research by providing me with invaluable resources for this publication.
2. Leyla (Saz) Hanimefendi, *The Imperial Harem of the Sultans: The Memoirs of Leyla (Saz) Hanimefendi* (Istanbul: Peva Publications, 1994). Note: “Hanimefendi” is an honorific title, not a surname. “Saz,” which is placed in parentheses in the title of her memoirs, is the surname she took when it was required to adopt one in Turkey after the founding of the Republic in 1923. The word “saz” in Turkish means “musical instrument” in a general sense but also refers specifically to a long-necked lute. I have chosen to refer to her as “Leyla Saz” throughout the article (rather than just “Saz”) because that is how she is referred to in Turkey, where first names are still the most common form of address for both women and men, either together with surnames or with titles, e.g., “Leyla Hanım.”
3. The term “Ottoman” simply refers to any practice or person associated with the Ottoman Empire and does not imply a certain ethnicity. Because Ottoman society was so pluralistic and minorities played such a major role in all facets of Ottoman cultural and political life, “Ottoman” rather than “Turkish” is the most accurate term to describe musical practices of the period.
4. Bernard Lewis, *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East* (London: Phoenix Books, 1998), 40-41.
5. One example is the recent publication: Turhan Tasan, *Kadin Bestecileri* [Women Composers], (Istanbul: Pan Yayincilik, 2000).
6. Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 19. In addition, Saz’s descriptions of outings taken by harem residents and her own lengthy sojourns outside of the harem while traveling with her father point to a less sequestered existence than may be assumed by Westerners.
7. Leyla (Saz) Hanimefendi, 22.
8. All of the events that she recounts from her childhood occurred at the new Çiragan Palace, which was begun by Sultan Abdülmecid (r. 1839-61) and modeled on European residences rather than the labyrinthine structure of the old palace at Topkapı. This palace and the Dolmabahçe Palace of the same period are both located in the Pera quarter of Istanbul, where the European communities of the city were centered. Shifting the location of the palaces was part of the reforms, since it put the Sultan and palace residents in closer contact with the European communities of the city.
9. Mahmud Gazimihal, *Türk Avrupa Musiki Münasebetleri* (Ankara: 1939), 100.
10. Leyla (Saz) Hanimefendi, 42.
11. Ibid, 137. 12. Ibid, 44. 13. Ibid, 43. 14. Turhan Tasan, 108.
15. Nezih H. Neyzi, *Kiziltoprak Stories* (Istanbul: Peva Publications, 2000), 22. I was not able to locate a reference to the name of Leyla Saz’s sister, either in this source or in others.
16. Leyla (Saz) Hanimefendi, 42. 17. Ibid, 20. 18. Ibid, 220. 19. Ibid, 13.
20. Ibid, 220. In *Kiziltoprak Stories* (see note 13), Leyla Saz’s great-grandson, Nezih H. Neyzi includes still other passages from Saz’s memoirs that were not published in the recent edition and that his mother transcribed and translated from Saz’s Ottoman writings.
21. Leyla (Saz) Hanimefendi, 44. 22. Ibid, 19. 23. Ibid, 22.
24. Leyla Hanım, *Solmus Çiçekler* (Istanbul: Peva Yayinlari, 1996).
25. Ismail Hakki Özkan, *Türk Musikisi Nazariyatı ve Usulleri* (Istanbul: Ötüken Nesriyat, 2000).
26. Turhan Tasan, *Kadin Bestecileri* [Women Composers], (Istanbul: Pan Yayincilik, 2000).
27. *Kadin Bestecilerimiz / Turkish Woman Composers*, CD 107 Cemre Müzik, 1998. *Osmanli Mozaigi: Kadin Bestekarlar 1 & 2 (Women Composers)*, CD Sony Music (Türkiye), 2001. www.sonymusic.com.tr
28. *Osmanli Marslari: The Ottoman Military Music in 78 rpm Records* (Istanbul: Kalan CD 150, no date). www.kalan.com