Akdeniz Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi, Sayı 14a, Yıl 2013, s.402-409
Mediterranean Journal of Educational Research, Issue 14a, Year 2013, pp. 402-409

The Socio-Cultural Contributions of the Local Governments to the Urban Life: Example of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Orchestra Management Office

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Abstract: Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Orchestra Management Office, which has been providing hundreds of students from different age groups with education for years, is the most competent authority giving Turkish Music Education in Bursa. The institution has been training many students in Bursa which comprises four departments named Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Band, Turkish Classical Music, Turkish Folk Music and Dances, and Performer's School-Romani Orchestra. Students learn about Turkish Music Culture and take part in the chorus and orchestras as well. By means of concerts organized periodically, the institute, which unites scholars, students and successful guest musicians together at the same stage, has great contributions to socio-cultural life of Bursa. The aim of this study is to analyze the historical development of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Orchestra Management Office since its establishment, its concept of education and its effects on Popular Culture in Bursa and Socio-Cultural Life by examining student profiles, and activities performed.

Keywords: Bursa Metropolitan Municipality; Orchestra Management Office; Conservatory; Socio-cultural Life.

Humankind is born in an environment which it does not know anything about and in which it cannot make selections and which it cannot change willingly for that moment. A human faces with mother-father, siblings, and relatives at the first stage, and then different communities like friends, teachers, environment, school, work, and family are added into the world of the human as it grows up. All of the communities in which the human survives, which consist of various regions, which have a common share point, or which live together in natural ways constitute the "society", and all of the lives of the society in which the human is also included constitute the "culture".

The fact that the concept of culture includes everything which belongs to the lives and to the society means that the culture owns infinite elements. Traditions, family and relative relations, information, production-consumption, religion-state, law, human, language and communication, and natural environment and settlements are the factors and concepts which constitute the key elements of the culture (Güvenç, 2004). All elements of the culture are definitely connected to each other, and each of them affects each other. The human carries out all these vital activities which are assumed as the key elements of the culture in the settlement places like village, town, district, city etc. which we name as "settlements". In this regard, the settlement places are among the important culture elements in which the cultural heritage coming from the past survives, and which contains the cultural elements of present moment, and keeps the human together around a common ground.

As is known, the largest settlement place is the city. The cities are the places where the needs of the society like settlement, housing, working, transportation, and entertainment are met, the agricultural activities occur rarely, there are minor neighbourhood relations, the population density is higher than the villages, and which are in the process of development constantly (Keleş, 1980). The

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management of the cities is provided by municipalities in Turkey. While cities with the population less than at least 5,000 are governed by the municipalities (Municipal Law [ML], 2005: Article 2), the ones with the population at least 750,000 are governed by the metropolitan municipalities (Metropolitan Municipality Law [MML], 2004: Article 3). So, it can be claimed that the metropolitan municipalities are further open to development in terms of social, economic, cultural and many other elements, and are even developed. In this study, it is aimed to investigate the artistic contributions by the local governments to the urban life, and Bursa Metropolitan Municipality is selected as a model.

Bursa, developing constantly with its cultural and social activities besides its geographical location, and drawing attention with these features, is among the metropolitan municipalities which can be a model in this regard. In this investigation, it is aimed to examine the socio-cultural contributions by the Orchestra Management Office subordinate to Directorate of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Culture and Social Affairs, drawing attention by its studies on especially the Turkish music, to the urban life and Bursa popular culture, by addressing its historical development, the understanding of education, student profiles, and the activities comprehensively.

History of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Orchestra Management Office

After the foundation of the Republic, Bursa Turkish Music Community (Bursa Türk Musiki Cemiyeti), starting its action on 16/06/1949 officially, has been one of the most important formations in the field of Turkish music in Bursa. This community, at which the well known Turkish Music perfomers like Zeki Müren, Burhan Dikencik, and Yıldırım Gürses were students for a period (E. Çelikkol, personal interview, August 24, 2012), is known as one of the first music communities which were founded in Turkey.

It was decided during a Municipal Council stated meeting dated 28/10/1982 that a Municipality Conservatory would be opened, and then the conservatory started its actions on 04/03/1983 at the Bursa Setbaşı Marriage Office saloon officially with the efforts by Ekrem Barışık, the Mayor of that period (Çelikkol, 2012). İlhan Çağlı was the director, Erdinç Çelikkol was the conductor, and Serdar Kaşıkçılar and Altun Altun were assistant conductors when the conservatory which started its actions with the skeleton of the Bursa Turkish Music Community was first founded (Çelikkol, 2012). The institute, performing services at different locations in the city since its foundation in 1983, and has been continuing its actions s at Merinos Atatürk Congress Culture Centre, built by Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, since 2008 (S. Berkmen, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

The conservatory, continuing its actions under the name of Performers' Group (İcra Heyeti) until 1985 started its education actions in the field of Turkish Classical Music from 01/10/1985 on (Çelikkol, 2012). The Department of Turkish Folk Music was added in 1993 to the institute while the Department of Performer's School-Romani Orchestra was added in 2010. The institute performed its services under the name of Municipality Conservatory in 1983 when it was founded, took the name of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Orchestra Management Office with the amendment made in 2007. The Orchestra Management Office, continuing its actions with the same vein since its foundation, still continues its actions as 4 departments: The departments of Municipality Band, Turkish Classical Music, Turkish Folk Music and Dance, and Performer's School-Romani Orchestra.

As stated in the Regulation which determines the Mission, Responsibility, and Authority Principals of Directorate of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Culture and Social Affairs; the mission, authority, and responsibilities of the Orchestra Management Office includes the items like contributing to the development of the society in terms of cultural and aesthetic ways by means of art and education; introducing the local, national, and universal culture elements throughout the country

and world; carrying out workshop actions towards the young and the children; discovering the talented young and providing them with infrastructure (Bursa Metropolitan Municipality [BMM], 2012b).

Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Band

The history of band music in Bursa goes back to Ottoman Empire. The first band actions in the city began with the Bursa Industry School Band (*Bursa Sanayi Mektebi Bandosu*) in 1897. The band, continuing its actions also after the foundation of the Republic, was closed down by the order of the Ministry of National Education in 1928 (Gazimihal, 2008). The first band actions, which were subordinate to the municipality, started by the contributions of Governor Şefik Soyer and Bursa Mayor Cemil Öz in the district of Yeşil, and Halil Teker being the conductor and Halil Akönder being the bandmaster, with 18 personnel in 1936 (M. Aydın, personal interview, September 10, 2012). The band, continuing its actions by joining the Directorate of Conservatory in 1983, maintains its actions as a department under the Orchestra Management Office at the present time (2012). The Department of Municipality Band, continuing its actions in the various districts of Bursa between 1936 and 2008, has been continuing its actions at Merinos Atatürk Congress Culture Centre since 2008 (M. Aydın, personal interview, September 10, 2012).

The first conductor was Halil Teker, and the following conductors are İsmail İçtensev, Yaşar Kalıt, Hasan Emir, and Metin Yılmaz respectively; the present conductor is Şaban Gülşen since 2011, and 28 band musicians have been performing as of 2012 (M. Aydın, personal interview, September 10, 2012).

The band performs during official holidays and ceremonies, welcoming-farewell ceremonies, opening and ground-breaking ceremonies, and martyr funeral ceremonies, and also takes part in the cultural, social and sport activities (BMM, 2012d). In addition, the band organizes various programs as the concert band, and gives public concerts, open air concerts, and evening concerts on certain days and during the summers at the city centres and various settlement places of the city; and the band performs services to the people of Bursa by carrying out 100 programs on average annually (BMM, 2012c). The band introduces the brass instruments which are not commonly used in the Turkish folk music, and allows different musical elements to be introduced and opens new horizons for the audience from this aspect.

Department of Turkish Classical Music

The Department, having performed only concerts under the name of Bursa Municipality Conservatory Performers' Group in 1983 when it was founded, incorporated educational actions beginning from 1985 and has been continuing its actions together with the concerts and education activities (Çelikkol, 2012). At the Department having started its actions Erdinç Çelikkol being the head/conductor and Serdar Kaşıkçılar and Altun Altun being assistant conductors, Çelikkol performed as department head, conductor, and art director, between the stage of institute 1982 and 2000, and handed over his batons to Turkish Classical Music National Artist İnci Çayırlı in 2000. Çayırlı continued this mission for 1 year, and then Mümtaz Doğan and Salih Berkmen performed as head/conductor until 2004. Between the years 2004 and 2008, Erdinç Çelikkol again performed as head/conductor, and then Mustafa Can and Salih Berkmen continued this position (E. Çelikkol, personal interview, August 24, 2012). At the Department at which Salih Berkmen still performs as head/conductor, 40 performers work, and all of the performers working at there are graduates of various state and municipality conservatories (S. Berkmen, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

Students are admitted to the department which continues its educational actions within a four-year plan and program by an aptitude test carried out basing on audience, and the students who are

entitled to be graduated at the end of 4 years are given a "Certificate" that they received education at this institute. The curriculum of the department was prepared by Erdinç Çelikkol by benefiting from Istanbul Technical University State Conservatory and Samsun Municipality Conservatory curriculums, and the source named "Türk Musikisi Bilgileri" (Turkish Music Knowledge), prepared by Erdinç Çelikkol and consisting of 2 volumes and 1300 pages was used before 2006. The said source was rearranged as one volume with 560 pages and was converted into a textbook, and this version of this source has been used since 2006-2007 academic year (BMM, 2012f). This source includes these subjects being convenient with the education given at the department: "Core Knowledge, Solfeggio, Introduction to Turkish Music, Basic Turkish Music Modes (*Makams*) including Transposed and Combined Makams, and Meters (*Usuller*), (BMM, 2012f & S. Berkmen, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

In addition to the theoretical lessons, there are also instrument lessons at the weekends at the department; and these instrument lessons consist of the education of various traditional Turkish instruments like *klasik kemençe, kanun, ud, yaylı tambur, ney, kudüm, daire, def* and so on. The instrument education starts on the 2nd year at the department, yet any student with a point grade average of 80 at the first term of the 1st year, s/he can receive the instrument lessons beginning from the 2nd term of the 1st year if s/he desires (S. Berkmen, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

The lessons are given at three different course hours as morning, afternoon, and evening sessions on two days a week at the department, and students at the age of 6-12 and at the age of 12-15 and over receive education in accordance with the education program. Only the Children's Choir activities are performed with the students at the age interval of 6-12. At the department where the students at the age of 12-15 and over can benefit from the education program, it is observed that the density of the students at the ages between 18-35 is higher (S. Berkmen, personal interview, September 04, 2012). In addition to the Children's Choir, Student's Choir perform actions at the department on one day of the week in addition to the theoretical lessons and instrument lessons (BMM, 2012f). The Student's Choir consists of the voluntary students who continue their education actions at the department. The students find the opportunity to exhibit their performance which they studied within the year through the Children's Choir, Student's Choir, and Ensembles during the season-end concert of the department held in May (S. Berkmen, personal interview, September 04, 2012). In addition, the department performs its activities every year with 6 classes and 500 students on average. For example, 338 students received education at the department during 2011-2012 academic year (BMM, 2012a).

The Performers' Group, continuing its actions professionally, organizes concerts at *Tayyare Culture Centre* in the second week of each month between October and May, and performs 8 concerts at each season. One each performer from Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) or state choirs also meets with the audience during these concerts besides the Performers' Group. In addition, the group has organized concert programs abroad in the states like Germany, Finland, and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (BMM, 2012f).

Department of Turkish Folk Music and Dance

The Department of Turkish Folk Music (TFM) was incorporated to the institute in 1993. The Performers' Group and education actions started at the department in the same year, and the first performers to work at the department are Murat Kara, Kemal Kamalı, and Yaşar Yokuş. Murat Kara, Rakibe Karabolat, Yücel Paşmakçı, Kemal Kamalı, and Murat Coşkun performed as head of department since the department was founded; and at the present day Altan Göl has been the head of department since 2011. The Department of Turkish Folk Music started Folk Dances actions within its

own body in 2004 and since then, the department began to be called as the Department of Turkish Folk Music and Dances (A. Göl, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

Yücel Paşmakçı and Ali Yılmaz supported the department effectively after a few years when the department was founded, and they continued their effectiveness at the department until 2005-2006 academic year. A total of 42 performers work at the department at the present day (2012), five of which are the performers from Azerbaijan (A. Göl, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

The courses of "Basic Solfeggio, TFM Solfeggio, TFM Knowledge, Dictation-Sight Reading, TFM Repertoire, Rhythm Knowledge, Dance Knowledge, Rhythm Techniques, Stage Techniques, Assessment and Evaluation, and Practice was given at the department towards the education at the department (BMM, 2012e & A. Göl, personal interview, September 04, 2012). The "Temel Solfej" (Basic Solfeggio) book by Muammer Sun and the Repertoire of TRT Turkish Folk Music are used as sources for the Department of Turkish Folk Music and Dance curriculum.

The weekly lesson activities and student profiles of the department show parallelism with the Department of Turkish Classical Music (BMM, 2012c), and about 5700 students have benefited from the education activities of the department since its foundation (A. Göl, personal interview, September 04, 2012). The students who are entitled to be graduated at the end of four-year education program are given a "Certificate" that they received education at this institute, and the number of the students who have been graduated so far is 370 (A. Göl, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

During the instrument education which is given at the department for four years, the education of traditional folk music instruments like *bağlama, mey, kaval, zurna, tar, garmon, akordiyon, klarinet, kabak kemane, kemençe, nağara* is given. In addition, the training of the Children's Choir and Student's Choir is performed at the department on one day of the week. The students can take part in these choirs as orchestra member as well as chorister, and the students find the opportunity to exhibit their performance which they studied within the year through the Children's Choir, Student's Choir, and Ensembles during the season-end concert of the department held in May (BMM, 2012e & A. Göl, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

The department further performs the activities of collecting and researching the folk music with the conscious of transmitting the popular culture from generation to generation, keeping it alive, and continuing it. The first collection studies was carried out in the *Dağgüney* Village, *Orhaneli* district, Bursa in 2002, and then new studies were carried out in the various villages in Bursa and in *Tavşanlı* district in Kütahya, thus the collected ballads were allowed to enter in the archive of TRT (A. Göl, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

The activities of the department include a project which has been continuing for 2 years. The folk melodies of the Turks living in the Balkans are collected within the scope of this special project which is conducted with the support by the municipality. Only the Macedonian and Bulgarian steps of the project have been completed, and the project will be continued in the other Balkan countries (A. Göl, personal interview, September 04, 2012).

The musicians of the Performers' Group which is included in the department are admitted to the body of the institute by an examination which is applied by a commission formed by the academicians of various universities. The Turkish Folk Music Department Performers' Group organizes a total of 8 concerts which are held in the third or fourth weeks of each month between October and May every season at *Tayyare Culture Centre*. A guest artist who is competent in her/his field is invited to the concerts which are held by the Performers' Group periodically. In addition, the department has held various abroad and domestic concerts so far (BMM, 2012e).

Performer's School-Romani Orchestra

The Performer's School-Romani Orchestra, starting its actions in 2009 as a social responsibility project which is conducted by Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, has continuing its actions being subordinate to the Orchestra Management Office since 2010. The Performer's School is the last department to have been added to the Orchestra Management Office. 14 Romani musicians perform at the department, the Head of Department of which is Yavuz İbiş Bıçakçı (Y. İ. Bıçakçı, personal interview, September 10, 2012).

The Romani people have always stood out with their inborn musical talents; however their experiences have not been benefited much in the environments of education and culture generally, yet now they organize free public concerts every year in Bursa through the Performer's School. In addition, the Performer's School-Romani Orchestra is known as the first and unique formation to be included within the local government body in Turkey (Y. İ. Bıçakçı, personal interview, September 10, 2012).

Conclusion

The Orchestra Management Office, continuing its actions in the different fields of music since 1983, has had played an active role in the cultural life of the city since it was founded. The institute firstly continued its actions with the Departments of Municipality Band and Turkish Classical Music, and then the Department of Turkish Folk Music was added into its body; one of the most valuable contributions by it to Bursa is the fact that it addresses the studies towards the Turkish music well-disciplined, seriously, and institutionally. The Performer's School- Romani Orchestra, at which the music which is not accustomed to be observed at the institutes and which belongs to the Romani tradition is continued, started as a social responsibility project and then was added to the Orchestra Management Office. The Romanies living in the city are encouraged by being supported by the municipality and the Romani culture is allowed to be kept alive in better conditions by means of this project which can be a model for the other cities. The institute still leads the way among the most authorized institutes which carries out Turkish music activities in Bursa.

At the present, the Orchestra Management Office has 4 departments and its main function is to reach the people by means of the concert organizations held by the different departments within its body and to contribute to the cultural life in Bursa. For instance, the Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Band, continuing its actions within the body of the institute, fills the gap of band music in Bursa and performs at many ceremonies as a concert band, makes the people hear the timbres of the brass instruments to which the Bursa people are not accustomed, and they become an alternative source of entertainment for the people by means of the concerts they give.

Thousands of people have benefited from the education activities which are carried out at the institute since 1985 so far. Students of various ages and profiles receive education and many people from different regions and cultures sit side by side at the departments the curriculums of which were formed by taking the curriculums of the state and municipality conservatories as model. This institute, having a function towards continuing the cultural values, solidifies the cultural interaction in terms of the fact that it gathers the people from different cultural and social environments. The students who receive a well-supported education in the field of Turkish music by means of the education studies carried out within the scope of the institution receive theoretical knowledge and instrument education, and they are awarded with a Certificate when they complete their education. When the students who find the opportunity to exhibit their choir and instrument works they studied for a term during the season-end concerts participate in the concerts, they experience the stage performance and

excitement; and the feedback of the education given in the year would be received. The institute, addressing the Turkish music in a serious way with especially its education studies, allows the Turkish music to be transmitted to the next generations in a correct way, and grows the young up with their own culture consciousness and gains the talented young for the music education. The contribution by the institute to Bursa is great considering from this aspect.

The folk melodies existing in the folk culture are gained for the repertoire of TRT before they are forgotten and disappear by means of the collection studies carried out by the Department of Turkish Folk Music and Dance. Thus, the condition of the folk music can be detected in and around Bursa, the music can be recorded and processed by the professional persons, and they can be gained for the repertoire of TRT. The institute allows the elements belonging to the folk culture to be preserved and to be transmitted into the next generations by means of this study. The institute gains pieces of works of very high value for Bursa and even for our national culture from this perspective.

In conclusion, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Orchestra Management Office reaches thousands of people with different profiles in Bursa by means of the activities held in the four departments with different characteristics from each other within its body, and continues its studies towards introducing, performing, enhancing, and surviving our popular culture. These studies, being carried out within the body of Directorate of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Cultural and Social Affairs, reach thousands of people living in the city, contribute much to the social and cultural life of the city as both quantitative and qualitative, and constitutes an example for the cultural activities carried out in Turkey on the base of local government from this perspective. In this sense, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality covers a long distance to reach its cultural aims under the skin of the institute to reach the elements it aimed. In addition to all of these, the fact that the music which is a branch of art is being reached to the people in Bursa by means of various ways adds a plus value to the studies carried out by the Bursa local government towards its socio-cultural responsibilities.

In addition to all these, it can be proposed add some departments which include different genres of music to the Orchestra Management Office which continues its actions in different fields of the Turkish music and which stands out with its actions especially towards the Turkish music. For example, an orchestra subordinate to Bursa Metropolitan Municipality which may be an alternative to the Bursa Regional State Symphony Orchestra of the Ministry of Culture in Bursa, and again a department at which polyphonic choir studies can be carried out can be founded. By this means, the employment towards the artistic potential existing in Bursa would be provided, and at the same time a livelier environment for the polyphonic music audience would be created in terms of culture. In addition, Theoretical and Instrument courses towards the polyphonic music from which the children, the young, and even the adults can benefit can be given at the departments to be opened. Thus, the society would be presented a cultural service and the talented children and young would be discovered and they are directed into this field.

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