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The Comparison of Flute Education in Undergraduate Studies in Turkey and in the United States of America

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to compile opinions of flute instructors giving education in undergraduate studies in Turkey and in the U.S.A. to assess flute education in line with these opinions, and to determine and compare teaching methods, techniques and materials used. The data collected through "Flute Pedagogy Survey" were interpreted and comparatively assessed in terms of demographic characteristics of instructors, physical conditions of educational institutions, and flute techniques and teaching methods. The "Flute Pedagogy Survey" was applied to 63 instructors in the USA and 34 instructors in Turkey. Academic articles, books, thesis, and online resources published in Turkey and in the USA were reviewed within the scope of literature review. At the end of the study, it was observed that the majority of the instructors do not take lessons for flute pedagogy during their education in both sampling groups. While methods used in teaching flute techniques show similarities in both groups, the results of the study indicated that the lack of Turkish resources creates a serious problem for instructors in Turkey. It was seen that the institutions where instructors work in the U.S.A. sampling group are better in terms of physical conditions (music library, flute types etc.) and they benefit from different materials such as Naxos, Smart Music and tuning CD, online resources and computer programs in flute teaching.

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1. Introduction

In the Ottoman Empire era, the general and vocational music education was given in the Schools of Enderun which were important education institutions. Tabilhane, Mehterhane and Muzıka-i Humayun (Imperial Military Band) were the military institutions that provided formal music education in the same period as well. Giving of

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music lessons in schools during imperial period was first started in 1869 by coming into effect of the General Education Charter (Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi) (Uçan, 1997).

After the proclamation of the republic, the Music Teachers' School (Musiki Muallim Mektebi) which was founded on September 1, 1924 and started to provide education and training on November 1, 1924 would be the foundation of all vocational music training institutions of the Turkish Republic (Tarman, 2006). The Music Teachers' School would be the core of the Ankara State Conservatory founded in 1936 (Mimaroglu, 1987). The Ankara State Conservatory was followed by the State Conservatories opened in Izmir and Istanbul in 1958 and 1969 respectively; and in 1975, the State Conservatory of Turkish Music was founded in Istanbul (Uçan, 1997). The number of conservatories which are among the primary higher education institutions providing performance training has reached up to twenty seven today.

In the USA however, the first music school was established in Boston in 1717 to teach church music. It can be said that the movement called "Singing School" is the starting point in the history of music education of the USA. Lowell Mason (1792-1872) and George Webb (1803-1887) founded the Boston Academy of Music for the purpose of providing music theory, music teaching methods and vocal training in 1832. The Boston School Committee allowed Mason to give music lessons tentatively in Hawes Gramer School in Boston in years 1837-1838 (Abeles, Hoffer and Klotman, 1994). Upon getting success and winning recognition of this trial, music lessons were started to be added to the programs of public schools in the USA as from 1838 (Pernberton, 1988). The first institution to grant bachelor degree in the Music Education field in the USA is the Oberlin Conservatory that was founded in 1865. It was followed by the New England Conservatory founded in 1867.

These developments in the music area had significant effects on the flute area as well. Georges Barrère (1876-1944), Georges Laurent (1886-1964) and Marcel Moyse (1889-1984) who are among the important educators who formed the basis of the flute education in the USA, received education in Paris Conservatory with Paul Taffanel (1844-1908), the distinguished flutist of the era (Fair, 2003).

Following these first generation flutists who migrated from France to the USA, the first famous flutist and flute trainer born and raised in the USA is William M. Kincaid (1895-1967). Kincaid, who is also accepted as the "Father of the American Flute School", was one of the students of Georges Barrère in the Institute of Musical Art in New York City and inherited the legacy of Taffanel (Toff, 1995).

Vocational music education is an area requiring both general education knowledge and personal talent. Instrument training has an important place in higher education institutions providing vocational music education. The aim of the instrument training is to gain performance skills at a certain technical level and improve them (Uçan, 1996). The students in the institutions providing vocational music education gain technical knowledge and skills regarding the instruments they are trained on, improve their performance skills, and reach a certain level in line with their skills and the education aims of the school. Many instruments are being trained on in universities within the scope of instrument training. One of the important branches of the instrument training given in these institutions is flute training. Effective flute training requires not only the ability to play artistically-advanced pieces, but also having a deep knowledge in the needs regarding the particular situation of each student.

The purpose of this study is to reveal the similarities and differences between the major music schools in the USA and the equivalent institutions in Turkey regarding flute training in line with the opinions of instructors, and to make contribution to the flute training in Turkey by means of analyzing pedagogically the flute lectures given in the mentioned institutions.

2. Methodology

The problem statement of the study is determined as "What are the similarities and differences between the methods and techniques adopted in flute training and the flute training applied in the undergraduate music schools in Turkey and the USA?" The data in this study are collected with the survey method. The *Flute Pedagogy* questionnaire that was prepared in Turkish and English was developed based on Linda Karen Lancaster's doctoral

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