During the 1990s, satellite TV and the Internet brought contemporary Turkish culture right into Turkish living rooms in Germany and the recently developed Turkish pop music spread throughout the immigrant community. German politicians and public media, however, did not share the enthusiasm for Turkish pop music. For example, Rita Süssmuth, former president of the German parliament and chair of the immigration committee founded by the German government in 2000, recommended preventing the opening of Turkish discotheques because they would hinder the integration of Turkish youths into German society.1 Yet, hardly anything is known about Turkish discotheques in Germany or, in a more general perspective, what a preference for Turkish popular music reveals about the migrants’ attitudes towards their lives in Germany. The following, after a short introduction into Turkish popular music, outlines the development and current situation of Turkish popular music (not German-Turkish hip-hop) in Germany and its use by Turkish youths. Also, it addresses the importance of Turkish popular music for Turkish youths and their position as 2nd or 3rd generation migrants in Germany.

1. Popular music in Turkey

Since the founding of the Republic of Turkey, music has been a central aspect of Turkish cultural and modernization policies. The aim of these policies was to create a modern Turkish nation-state identity. Considering the ethnic and cultural diversity of the former Ottoman Empire, creating such an identity was a difficult task. The cultural policy was strongly influenced by the cultural theorist Ziya Gökalp. He addressed

the issue of music in his keynote work *Türkcülüğün Esasları* (The Principles of Turkism) as follows:

Today, we are thus confronted with three kinds of music: Eastern, Western, and folk. I wonder which of them is our real national music? We have already noted that Eastern music is both sick and non-national, whereas neither folk nor Western music is foreign to us since the first is the music of our culture and the second that of our new civilization. I submit, therefore, that our national music will be born of a marriage between folk and Western music. Our folk music has given us many melodies. If we collect these and harmonize them in the Western manner, we shall have both a national and a European music.

Turkish folk music was regarded as the original Turkish music that ought to constitute the basis for a modern and Western Turkish-European music. Action was taken against types of music such as the classical art music of the Ottoman court or its more popular counterpart, popular art music. They were regarded as representing the ethnic diversity of the Ottoman Empire, the detested Orient and backwardness itself. By means such as a radio ban on Turkish and especially Ottoman music in 1934 and free lessons in Western music by European teachers, the Turkish government tried to edge out the Eastern, Ottoman music and force a West-East synthesis blending Turkish folk music with Western music into a new and modern Turkish music.

The heavily-promoted music of the new composers educated in Western music and the Western classical music did not gain any popularity among the Turkish population. The radio ban was lifted after 20 months and changed into a system of strict control. Due to a state monopoly of broadcasting that lasted until the 1990s, TRT (*Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu*, Turkish radio and television company) was the only station to broadcast the formerly banned music.

After the lift of the radio ban, TRT attended to the Turkish folk music, the supposed ‘original’ Turkish music. TRT sent musicologists throughout the country to search for the ‘real’ Turkish music and record it. It was written down and at the same time ‘corrected’: Pieces were adapted to

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4 Tekelioglu, *Historical Background of Turkish Popular Music*, 207.