



(LAS 7289)

TURKISH FOLK MUSIC

The recordings on this album were made in and around Sivrialan, a village approximately one hundred kilometers southwest of the city of Sivas and about twenty kilometers from the nearest town, Sarkisla. Sivrialan is made up of roughly 160 households or 1200 people, most of whom adhere to the *Alevi* sect of Islam. The majority of the inhabitants depend on farming for their income.

Professional and non-professional musicians alike in a number of situations perform music in the village. The primary musically creative force in the rural areas of Central Anatolia is the *asik*, a bard who functions as a poet, composer, singer, instrumentalist, philosopher, religious leader, and social commentator.

The village musical repertoire can be divided between the two categories of religious and secular music. The religious events at which music is commonly performed are weddings, funerals, Mohammed's birthday (known in Sivrialan as *Sultan navruz*), *kurban bayrami*, and other quasi-religious parties called *cem*. Most religious music is performed by the males, with the village *asiks* heading the ceremonies. As in many cultures, the females are responsible for the *agit* or laments, which are sung during funerals and weddings.

Secular music can be further categorized into two groups: functional and entertainment. Functional music includes harvest songs, milking songs and the *ninni* or lullaby. Entertainment music is performed at social gatherings on summer evenings or during the idle hours of winter. Male musicians dominate such gatherings and the pieces performed are generally compositions by *asiks*, which are known as *asiklamalar*. Most Central Anatolian pieces are composed in a *makam* similar to the *buseyni makam* of Turkish classical music which utilizes the following scale: E F# G A B C# D. Here E serves as the tonic.

INSTRUMENTS

Saz: The *saz* is a long-necked lute with a pear-shaped body. It is a plucked lute with movable frets and three courses of strings. The *saz* has four distinct size types: (from smallest to largest) *cura*, *baglama*,

divan sazi, and *meydan sazi*. In Central Anatolia the most frequently used forms of the *saz* are the *baglama* and the *divan sazi*.

Zurna: The *zurna* is a conical bore, double-reeded aerophone with eight finger holes, seven in front and one in back. It is often performed using the circular breathing technique and is commonly accompanied by the *davul*.

Davul: The *davul* is a large two-headed cylindrical drum. The principal accents are struck on the top head with a hooked or knobbed beater, which is held in the right hand, while the secondary beats, are struck on the bottom head with a cane switch held in the left hand.

Duduk: The *duduk* is a small cane end-blown flute.

TRACKS

1. *Behey Karlik dagi* (Hey Mount Karlik); performer: Hatin Hiz, voice; text: Asik Huseyin; song type: *uzun hava*.

The *uzun hava* (literally “long melody”), is a song type distinguished musically rather than textually. Characteristically, it consists of long, descending phrases, and its treatment of melodic lines is essentially rhythmically free in the sense that there is no regular pulse. In the text Asik Huseyin speaks to Mt. Karlik of the sufferings it has inflicted upon him.

2. *Zalimin zulmunden yikildi ciban* (From a tyrant’s work the world was made); performer: Asik Hidir Guc, voice and *baglama*; text: Asik Hummeti; song type; *fazilet agzi*.

A *fazilet agzi* (literally a “speech of merit”) is a type of *uzun hava*. It is a song of praise and heroism and generally concerns the activities of Mohammed and his twelve *imams* or prophets. This particular *fazilet agzi* tells of the battle of Karbala in 680 A.D. when the prophet Husain and a small group of his relatives and disciples were slaughtered by the Umayyad army.

3. *Su kanli zalimin ettigi isler* (That bloody tyrant’s works); performer: Asik Fazli Iyigoze, voice and *baglama*; text: Pir Sultan Abdal; music; Asik Mahsuni Serif; song type *asiklama*.

This *asiklama*’s text was written by Pir Sultan Abdal, an *asik* of the sixteenth century and one of the first and most widely celebrated *asiks*. His texts are used by many present-day bards. Asik Mahsuni Serif, a well-known contemporary bard, composed this particular arrangement of the piece.

4. *Duduk instrumental*; performer: *Ali Can*, *duduk*. This performance consists of melodic interpretations of various melodies common to the area.

5. *Tarlalari degirmi* (Are the fields oval?); performers: Zuhre Bozkurt, Fadik Bulun, Yeter Basboga, Huseyin Tufan, voices; song type; harvest song.

This and other similar pieces are sung during the harvest by work teams who perform the work by hand.

6. *Gonul arzu eyliyor dosta gitmegi* (My affection goes to my lover); performer: Asik Hidir Guc, voice and *baglama*; song type; *kirkklar sema*.

The *kirkklar sema* (literally “dance of the forty”) is a village version of the dance music of the Turkish dervish orders. It is commonly performed at religious ceremonies such as Mohammed’s birthday (*Sultan navruz*).

7. *Gelin aglatmasi*, a wedding lament; performers; Gelin Zuhre, relatives, and friends, voices.

At the climax of a Central Anatolian wedding ceremony the bride is at home with her family and friends awaiting the arrival of the groom who will carry off his new spouse to his own home. Preparing to leave her home, the bride and her family sing the *Gelin aglatmasi*, or “bride’s cry”, lamenting the fact that she must be separated from her loved ones.

8. *Sol cennetin irmaklari* (The rivers of paradise); performers: Haydar Tuts and Dervis Gulseven, voices; text: Yunus Emre; song type: *mevlud*.

A *mevlud* is a poem in honor of Mohammed’s birthday. This particular one is sung by the groom, the village *dede* or religious leader, and the groom’s male relatives during the groom’s religious wedding ceremony at the mosque. It is also sung during the memorial service forty days after a death.

9. *Aksam oldu gunes batti* (Evening came, the sun set); performers: Hatun Hiz and Zuhre Bozkurt, voices; song type: *agit* and *ninni*.

This selection was originally an *agit* or lament for the death of a young child. In order to keep the memory of the dead one alive, an *agit* is often used by the family as a *ninni* or lullaby, as is the case with this piece. In this way the small children listen to the *ninni* as both a means of going to sleep and an oral record of the lives of their ancestors.

10. *Davul-zurna* dance music for a wedding; performers; Tufan Ertegun, *zurna*, and Hasan Ertegun, *davul*; song type; *Sivas balay*.

The *Sivas balay* is a dance form common to the Sivas region of Central Anatolia.

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- Michael G. Kaloyanides



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PO Box 1977 Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10011 Ph: 212 404 8290 Fax: 212 404 8291
email: nick@lyrichord.com Web: www.lyrichord.com

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