

Therapeutic Effectiveness of Music Therapy

According to the view of experts who have done research on music; music existed before language. Abstract concepts, memory, symbols, associations, analogical relations necessary for conversation and speech have evolved and matured with humanity. Together with this, there is in every particle in nature, a unity of melody and rhythm which continues with great order and harmony. In the harmony and rhythm perfection of bird sounds, in the movement of atoms, electrons and galaxies and in the amplified sounds of the fluids of our body, we can observe the relation and association of music with the created world at large.

Music and music therapy history understanding of the present world, directs us to collaborate with sciences like anthropology, history, ethnotherapy, ethnomedicine, psychology, pedagogy, sociology, spirituality and parapsychology.

When we enter the subject through the scope of history, we have to venture into very ancient times. The dancing figures in the Gobustan rocks in Azerbaijan, presents us with a reality of music and dance which dates back at least 12 to 14 thousand years. Mingyar rock drawings on the banks of river Mulche which is near the Hoten City's administrative subdivision of Cherchen belonging to the Uigur Turks, dates back 6 to 8 thousand years. When we observe the disposition of history and culture accumulation which transmits us to very ancient times through the scope of Proto-Turkish culture, the findings of German scientist Dr. Wolfram become important and these findings document the effect of Turkish culture on Chinese culture in the areas of music, dance, ceramics, theatre and taming animals in the 3rd millenium BC. According to the findings of French researcher Maurice Curan which are based on Chinese sources, published in the Lavinniac Music Encyclopedia, ancient Turkish musical enstruments and pentatonic musical performance affected Chinese culture deeply.

Researchers like Eduard Chavannes, Bela Bartok, Robert Lach, Ahmed Adnan Saygun , Ferruh Arsunar and great Turkish ethnomusicolog Mahmut Ragip Gazimihal, have made important studies in this area and have documented the effects of Turkish music culture on Chinese culture, and its Central Asia-Anatolia connection. According to these studies, the important epicenters of proto-Turkish culture are Sensi and Kansu provinces. Hakas-Tuva culture and Altai-Turkish culture send us back to the 3rd millenium BC. In the beginning of the 20th century, Soviet researchers Rudenko and Griaznov, discovered a musical instrument

called 'Cheng' under the ice of Pazirik valley in Altai region. According to Rudenko the proto-Turkish culture which the instrument belongs to, dates back 3700 years.

Music therapy supports medical cure of patients

Music therapy has been Administered for ages, music therapy is now being as a technique by Turkish doctors to cure patients. “We can treat depressed patients and high blood pressure in 15 minutes with music therapy,” leading Turkish heart and cardiovascular surgeon Bingür Sönmez said. Sönmez, president of Memorial Hospital Cardiovascular Surgery Department, said Europeans who had psychological problems were punished during the Middle Ages, but in the Selçuk and Ottoman empires, they were treated with Sufi music.

Currently, the hospital is administering the same kind of therapy twice daily. Patients listen to a live reed flute for 15 minutes each morning and night. “People who are treated with music become a different person within a very short period of time,” Sönmez added. Doctors following patients on the hypertension monitor have seen patients’ high blood pressure decrease even though they did not take their pills, according to Sönmez. Even the pulse changes, he added. “Live music makes the patients less stressed and makes their high blood pressure to come a normal level. Depression and anxiety also diminish with music therapy,” said Sönmez.

The tune changes from patient to patient, he said. “This is something like prescribing drugs, or we can say this is a prescription. Different patients need different tunes and different tunes create different effects in a patient.” “That’s why we first meet and interview the patient. They determine the tune that they would like to hear. We receive good results because we tailor [the treatment].”

Sönmez said drugs and pills were essential for treatment, but music therapy is a supportive technique. Research conducted in Europe revealed patients with high blood pressure who listen to music have fewer hypertension problems. “We also use fewer sleeping pills and more music for our patients in the intensive care unit. With this technique we also use fewer tension pills. After listening to music, the patients sleep better,” added Sönmez. Noting that music lowers the adrenaline level, prevents spasms and lowers tension, Sönmez said, “What we do is not a treatment, but a support to modern medicine.”

Each tune has an exclusive use

Music therapy aims to diminish the fears and anxiety of the patient, said Erol Can, a medical doctor. Noting that they usually administer this treatment to the patients in the intensive care unit, Can said: “The patients that are coming from anesthesia need music therapy. With this treatment their heart condition returns to normal faster.” Patients in comas also receive music therapy. “We talk to their families and ask what they like. According to their musical taste we apply music therapy,” said Can. “I prefer that patients listen to calm music. Once, one of our patients, who was 86 years old, wanted to listen to Şakşuka.”

A few years ago they conducted research, testing patients before listening to music. The patients who listened to music calmed down and had less tension after 20 minutes, Can said, as well as higher oxygen levels. He said stress levels of six or seven decreased to three after the therapy.

Music therapy also works for anorexic patients. Can said each tune worked differently on patients. “For example, the Turkish ‘rast’ melody works for anorexia and the ‘Hejaz’ melody mostly works for patients who are on a diet.”

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