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Dr. Öğr. Üyesi İsmail Güngör
<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-0050-3051>
İstanbul Okan Üniversitesi, Konservatuvar/ Müzik Bölümü, İstanbul / TÜRKİYE
ROR Id: <https://ror.org/054d5vq03>

Mourning as a Civic Pedagogy: *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* **Bir Yurttaşlık Pedagojisi Olarak Yas: *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e***

ABSTRACT

One of the most striking musical genres of the Alevi tradition is the group of *deyiş* known as *Fazilet Ağzı* in the Emlek region of Sivas, where Âşık Veysel grew up. Epic in character, their lyrics praise the deeds and virtues of Ali ibn Abi Talib and the *Ehl-i beyt* and are sung over traditional melodic patterns. Focusing on Veysel's *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, the article argues that the piece rearticulates the *Fazilet Ağzı* in a national and secular register, aligning Atatürk with the sacred charisma associated with Ali and making Veysel's engagement with Kemalist ideals one of the basic reference points later adopted by many Alevi âşiks and musicians. Methodologically, the study combines comparative musical analysis, close reading of poetic features, and a historical perspective on mediation informed by civil religion and cultural capital. A comparison between *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* and the *Fazilet Ağzı deyiş* beginning *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan* shows how a shared melodic template is preserved while its lexicon is redirected toward factories, transport, diplomacy, and the military. The article concludes that this melodic-poetic profile, together with media, repertory boards, and Turkish folk music ensembles, constructs grief as guardianship of the republic and codifies a civic pedagogy of mourning.

Keywords: Âşık Veysel, Ağlayalım Atatürk'e, Fazilet Ağzı.

ÖZET

Alevi geleneğinin en çarpıcı müzikal türlerinden biri, Âşık Veysel'in yetiştiği Sivas'ın Emlek yöresinde *Fazilet Ağzı* olarak bilinen deyişlerdir. Epik nitelikte olan bu deyişlerin sözleri, Ali ibn Ebi Talib ve Ehl-i Beyt'in faziletlerini ve kahramanlıklarını övgüyle anlatır ve geleneksel kalıp ezgilerin üzerine döşenerek icra edilir. Nitekim Veysel'in *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* adlı eserine odaklanan bu makale, eserin, *Fazilet Ağzı*'ni millî ve seküler bir söyleme eklemlendirdiğini, Ali'ye atfedilen kutsal karizmayı Atatürk'e projekte ettiğini ve Veysel'in Kemalist ideallerle kurduğu ilişkiyi, daha sonra pek çok Alevi âşık ve müzisyen tarafından benimsenen temel bir referans noktası hâline getirdiğini ileri sürmektedir. Çalışma, metodolojik olarak karşılaştırmalı bir müzikal analizi, şiirsel özelliklerin yakından okunmasını ve sivil din ve kültürel sermaye kavramlarının teorik içerimlerini ve aracılığa süreçlerine yönelik tarihsel bir bakış açısını bir araya getirmektedir. Bu minvalde, *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* ile *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan* mısraı ile başlayan *Fazilet Ağzı* deyiş arasındaki karşılaştırma, ortak bir geleneksel kalıp ezgi çekirdeğinin korunduğunu, buna karşın, söz dağarının, fabrikalar, ulaşım, diplomasi ve orduya doğru nasıl angaje olduğunu göstermektedir. Hâsılı makale, bu melodik-poetik profilin, medya, repertuar kurulları ve Türk halk müziği topluluklarıyla birlikte, yas duygusunu cumhuriyetin bekçiliği olarak kurduğu ve yurttaşlık temelli bir yas pedagojisinin kodlarını oluşturduğu sonucuna varmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Âşık Veysel, Ağlayalım Atatürk'e, Fazilet Ağzı.

1. INTRODUCTION

The death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on 10 November 1938 created a historical moment in which lamentation moved from predominantly local, ritualized settings into a mass-mediated public soundscape. Among the numerous sonic responses that emerged in this historico-political conjuncture, Veysel's *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* (Let Us Cry for Atatürk) has a privileged analytical position because it combines the rich melodic-poetic patterns of the Alevi *deyiş* tradition with an ethic that appeals to a homogeneous mass, namely the Turkish society and the national Turkish identity. The imperative and hortative entries that organize stanzaic motion invite auditors to perform grief as a collective responsibility rather than a pathos of immobilization. Monorhyme with *redif* consolidates this invitation through incremental cadence and ritual reiteration, so that affect is steered toward action aligned with protection, reconstruction, and stewardship.

The central claim advanced herein is that *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* can be considered as a national and secular instance of *Fazilet Ağzı*. In the traditional Alevi poetic and musical practice, this label typically refers to a cluster of *deyiş* that praise the virtues (*fazilet*) and exemplary actions of Ali İbn Abi Talib, cousin of the Prophet Muhammad and the fourth caliph of Islam, and his descendants. In the Emlek region of Sivas,¹ such texts are generally cast in syllabic metre, organized into quatrains, and sung over a relatively stable stock of traditional melodic patterns. Their epic and panegyric tone is reinforced by declamatory delivery and by performance contexts in which they mediate between devotional instruction and communal memory. Within these frames, allegiance to Ali and his descendants is not just narrated but is ritually renewed.

In this sense, *Fazilet Ağzı* names not only a literary label or a melodic pattern but a performance regime that configures expectations about who may speak, on whose behalf, and with what religious weight. This article argues that, except for certain esoteric expressions such as *Tanrı'nın Aslanı*/The Lion of God,² Veysel's piece largely strips this regime of its Alevi doctrinal content and redirects it toward a civic teleology centered on the republic, its founder, and its institutions. The piece retains its traditional melodic pattern inherited from *Fazilet Ağzı*. Still, much of its rhetorical grammar and predicates are now articulated in a lexicon of factories, transport infrastructures, diplomatic bodies, military ranks, and national youth.

On the other hand, *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* is not an isolated act of individual genius. Its emergence and diffusion are entangled with early Republican projects of folk music canon formation, with radio and recording infrastructures, and with pedagogical practices in ensembles and schools. In this context, following American sociologist Robert N. Bellah, one may speak of a civil religious register in Veysel's piece that sacralizes certain narratives and obligations without requiring sectarian assent (2005, pp. 42-43). In this way, it works as a sonic script through which republican virtues are almost ceremonially exalted within this register. In this respect, *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* occupies a singular position in Veysel's oeuvre as one of the most concrete musical indications of his active engagement with Kemalist republican ideology, insofar as it reworks the *Fazilet Ağzı* into a public act of mourning that partially transfers to Atatürk the sacred charisma associated with Ali and gestures toward a quasi-messianic hope for national renewal, thereby establishing a paradigmatic model that many later Alevi *âşık*s and musicians would take as a crucial point of reference in their own negotiations of faith, nation, and modernity.

A remarkable point about the above-mentioned melodic borrowing and modern lexical network, which will be discussed later on, is that they are not the only brainiac of a single artist. Modern paratexts, programs for commemorative events, and recordings made later, all of them, more than once, present *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* as a typical case, among others, of how Alevi devotional idioms could be used for republican memory, and it is this refunctioning that has been clarified through the following analytical sections that are situated historically.

Following this, the next section presents the methodological framework and analytical concepts that the article uses to investigate the ways in which melodic inheritance, prosodic design, and institutional mediation permit the composition to express a more modern, republican, and collective responsibility-oriented ethic.

¹ Emlek, where many Alevi *âşık*s, including Veysel, grew up, is a region encompassing the particular villages of Sivas, Yozgat, and Kayseri provinces and is predominantly inhabited by Alevi communities.

² In Alevi tradition, the lion is one of the symbols of Ali.

2. METHODOLOGY

The analysis proceeds in three coordinated dimensions that bring musical structure, poetic form, and institutional mediation into a single comparative frame. Each of the following paragraphs specifies one of these dimensions in turn.

The first step was to prepare vocal transcriptions of the two performances from YouTube recordings (see *Emlek Yöresi – Sivrialan – Hıdır Güç Dede – Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan* [Video], n.d.; *Âşık Veysel – Atatürk'e Ağıt* [Video], n.d.). These transcriptions form the basis for the comparative analysis of contour, phrase grouping, cadential tones, and characteristic melodic motifs rather than of micro-intonational detail. In addition, a commercial recording of Fazilet Ağzı performed by Feyzullah Çınar in 1966, though not part of the primary comparative corpus, was consulted as a stylistic reference (see Feyzullah Çınar – Fazilet, 45'lik plak orijinal kayıt [Video], n.d.).

Second, the poem *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* is analyzed through close reading, with attention to stanzaic symmetry, rhyme, and *redif* organization, and a set of syntactic and lexical categories. This reading relies on the aforementioned recording of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, from which Veysel prepared an original lyric transcription for analytical purposes, and Table 1 summarizes these features across the poem.

Third, the analysis draws on ethnomusicological studies of professional Turkish folk musicians and radio repertory by Irene Markoff (1990-1991) and on Eliot Bates's (2010) analysis of studio aesthetics in arranged traditional music to conceptualize how canonical pieces circulate across different media and listening habits. The institutional aspect is further framed by Bellah's idea of civil religion, which explains how something sacred to the public can give moral force to symbols and obligations without depending on the confessional doctrine (2005, pp. 42-44), and Pierre Bourdieu's view of cultural capital as the competence that is accumulated, embodied, and institutionalized, which in turns allows actors to define what is good taste and what is not and the corresponding repertory (1986, pp. 243-245, 248). All these theoretical approaches make it possible to see *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* as not only the manifestation of Veysel's unique individual talent, but also as a discourse layer where melodic patterns, textual devices, and institutional settings come together to create a lasting script of civic mourning.³

3. RESULTS

3.1 Veysel's Art Between Alevi Âşık Tradition and Turkish Folk Music Canon

Süleyman Şenel, known for his academic publications in the field of music folklore, describes Veysel as follows in the annotated booklet accompanying the album *Âşık Veysel: Bana da Banaz'da Pir Sultan Derler*, which he prepared under the label Kalan Müzik (2017, p. 1):

Âşık Veysel [Şatıroğlu] is one of the early folk artists who contributed numerous Turkish-language pieces rooted in traditional foundations to our archives, playing his stringed instrument with a pear-shaped body, a long neck, frets, and a "plectrum." And from the early 1930s until he died in 1973, over a period of more than forty years, he gifted our society with the folk art/âşık art products he kept alive in his memory and produced in line with tradition, securing his place at the forefront of our recent cultural history.

Of course, the most distinctive characteristic of Veysel, one of the strongest representatives of the âşık tradition in the 20th century, as Şenel also emphasizes, is that he has carried various examples of folk and âşık music from the past to the present, almost like a bridge. However, as a visually impaired artist who grew up within the Alevi âşık tradition in the Emlek region and who first appeared before the public on the occasion of the *Sivas Halk Şairleri Bayramı/Sivas Folk Poets Festival* in 1931, Veysel is not only the representative of the Alevi âşık tradition but also of a national and secular musical identity that was a product of a historico-political problematization and called Turkish folk music (TFM) in the 20th century.

Focusing on how a national musical identity can be created, the first seeds of this problematization were laid toward the end of the 19th century (Yazıksız, 1897, pp. 1065-1066; Yekta, 1898, p. 3). After the first quarter of the 20th century (Gökalp, 1968 [1923], pp. 130-131), it largely influenced the cultural and artistic policies of the Turkish nation-state. Essentially, it became a primary source for early Turkish folklore and musicology, as well as for the *Musiki İnkılâbı/Music Revolution*, transforming many Alevi âşıks and musicians, such as Veysel, into both subjects and objects of TFM. Therefore, it is safe to say that

³ For a recent ethnomusicological study addressing the phenomenon of mourning in another context, see Söylemez (2019); see also Söylemez (2020).

the main reason we can consider Veysel one of the most prominent representatives of both the Alevi âşık tradition and the TFM corpus in the 20th century is the Sivas Folk Poets Festival, which built upon early Turkish folklore and musicology efforts and contributed to his growing popularity, starting from the Emlek Region where he was born and raised. Figure 1 is a unique souvenir of this festival.



Figure 1. Âşıks participating in the Sivas Folk Poets Festival [first row from the right, Âşık Veysel, Revani, Süzani, Âşık Süleyman, Hikâyecî Ağa Dayı, Karşlı Mehmet; second row, Âşık Müştak, Yarım Ali, Talibi, Yusuf, San'atı, Âşık Ali]. (Tecer, 1932, p. 3)

Following this festival, Veysel became increasingly known nationwide for his poems in the *Ülkü Halkevleri Magazine*, his performances on state radio, his contributions as a resource person to official and unofficial folk music compilation activities, his records and concerts, and his educational workshops at *Köy Enstitüleri/Village Institutes*. He became a prominent subject of films, documentaries, newspapers, and both popular and academic literature, and his pieces were interpreted by both Turkish folk music ensembles of state institutions and various figures in the music industry. After his death, he gained great fame both at home and abroad.

In his article titled “Âşık Veysel’in Gelenek Taşıyıcılığı ve Müzik Üretim Biçimleri Üzerine Tespitler,” musicologist Eray Cömert describes the cultural and artistic legacy Veysel left behind after his 79-year-long extraordinary life as follows (2022, p. 264):

As a strong memory of the rich cultural environment in which he lived, Âşık Veysel performed pieces in the anonymous folk music style, based on anonymous folk literature, and in the âşık music style, based on âşık literature. He ensured the continuity of the tradition by adding lyrics to the anonymous standard melodies of the âşık music style, and nourished it by creating new melodies in line with the melodic styles of that tradition. For nearly a century, he has been one of the artists who enliven the cultural and artistic fountainheads of Turkey. Considering his repertoire, which has survived to the present day through over one hundred and twenty recordings, it is clear that Âşık Veysel was a folk artist deeply rooted in tradition, not only in his literary but also in his musical art.

Undoubtedly, as Cömert also mentions, one of the most striking aspects of Veysel is that he is a skilled âşık who is well-versed in the cultural codes of the Emlek region, and who draws inspiration from and interprets tradition not only from a literary perspective but also from a musical perspective. Some of the unique examples of this perspective, which embody the fundamental characteristics of the Emlek Region, consist of anonymous repertoire elements, that is, folk songs, some are ritual-centered pieces belonging to the Alevi tradition, and others are Veysel’s poems in the âşık style, composed based on his own melodies or traditional melodic patterns. Therefore, just as with many of his contemporary âşıks, one of the most complicated issues encountered when analyzing Veysel’s repertoire and performance is how he draws on tradition in his art and exactly what kind of individual creativity he displays.

This problem has both musical and literary aspects, and it is not only related to how Veysel drew on tradition in his compositions or performances, but also to the question of how to separate the traditional elements in his poems from the individual elements. But the musical aspect of this issue is much more complex than its literary aspect. In other words, to analyze to whom a piece in the *âşık* style belongs, it is first necessary to determine to what extent the composition or the melodic pattern on which it is laid stems from tradition and to what extent it stems from individual creativity.

Nevertheless, this matter of belonging largely loses its importance when the topic is traditional melodic patterns. Because, although these kinds of melodic patterns acquire very different stylistic features and nuances with the individual contributions of the performers, they are direct reflections of tradition, and they have an anonymous identity in the last instance. Of course, one of Veysel's unique pieces that are based on traditional melodic patterns is his famous *deyiş*, *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, also known as *Atatürk'ün Ağıtı*/Atatürk's Lament, which was released by the Columbia record company in 1939. Figures 2 and 3 are historical documents related to this record.



Figure 2. Ad for the record titled Atatürk's Lament in the Cumhuriyet dated 06.07.1939

(*Atatürk'ün Ağıtı* [Advertisement], 1939).⁴



Figure 3. Photos from the first and second parts of the record, *Atatürk's Lament*.⁵

In short, for the reasons stated above, the following sections take *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* as an exemplary case through which the re-articulation of a *Fazilet Ağzı* in a national and secular register can be traced in detail.

3.2 Musical Analysis

Ağlayalım Atatürk'e, composed after Atatürk's death, is built on a variation of a melodic pattern that closely tracks the core melody of a series of *deyiş* in the Alevi tradition known as *Fazilet Ağzı*, performed under different pseudonyms such as *Ağâhî*, *Seyranî*, *Ruhsafî*, *Hamdullah*, *Hasretî*, and *Hümmetî*. One of the clearest manifestations of this kinship appears in the melodic structure of *Zalimîn Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan* (The Tyrant's Oppression Destroyed the World). For this reason, a comparative analysis of the two pieces is required to demonstrate the relationship in detail, and Figures 4 and 5 make this affinity audible and visible in notated form.

⁴ I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ulaş Özdemir for making me aware of this ad.

⁵ I would like to take this opportunity to thank Celal Volkan Kaya for helping me obtain these photos.

In light of such observations, the present article proceeds from the premise that in both recordings the *505aglama* accompaniment largely reinforces the vocal line and mobilizes a melodic design already familiar from *Fazilet Ağzı deyiş* in the Alevi repertory. So, although notation is intended as a pictorial representation rather than an exhaustive recording of performance nuances, and the characteristic *505aglama* timbre is treated as a constant of the performance context, only the vocal lines are transcribed, and the *505aglama* partitions are not included in the transcription in Figures 4 and 5.

Additionally, in the transcriptions below, Hıdır Güç Dede's performance of *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan* is notated with a tone corresponding approximately to D in diapason pitch, whereas Âşık Veysel's *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* cadences on G. Although these absolute pitch levels thus differ (approximately D and G), the vocal lines in Figures 4 and 5 are notated according to the A-based (*La-Eksenli*) convention widely adopted in Turkish folk-music circles to facilitate readability for performers and readers. The comparative argument, however, concerns contour, phrase grouping, and relative cadential functions rather than absolute pitch.

□□□ ≅ (Re)
(♩ = 140)

A.....
Ah Za li min zul mun dan yı kıl dı ci han

B.....
4 Hak ha bi bi Mus ta fa ya di gel sin

C.....
7 Dört kö şe yi al dı a düv i bi di n(?)

10.....
Şah A liy yel Mür te za ya di gel sin hey dost dost dost

D.....
17 Dört kö şe yi al dı a düv i bi di n(?)

20.....
Şah A liy yel Mür te za ya di gel sin hey dost dost dost

Figure 4. Transcription of the opening quatrain of *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan*.

[] = (Sof)

 (♩ = 160)

A'

 Ağ la ya hm A ta tür ke

B'

 Bu ün dün ya kan ağ la dı

C

 Şüp he siz bu dün ya fa ni

D'

 Şüp he siz bu dün ya fa ni

Tan rı nın as la nı ha ni

İn sü cin ni ce mi mah lük

He pi si bir den ağ la dı

Tan rı nın as la nı ha ni

İn sü cin ni ce mi mah lük

He pi si bir den ağ la dı

Figure 5. Transcription of the first two quatrains of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*.

In brief, the asymmetric 13/8, 7/8, and 8/8 groupings through which the shared *Fazilet Ağzı* contour is articulated do not function merely as regional color or as a decorative reference to Anatolian rhythm.⁶ Rather, their irregularity punctuates cadences, underlines key textual tokens, and shapes points of line extension that render grief recitable, collective, and bodily inscribed.

At a more schematic level, the kinship between the two pieces can be seen in the way their phrases can be segmented into corresponding units. In Figure 4, the four phrases of *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan* are indicated by the letters A, B, C, and D, whereas in Figure 5, the phrases of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, which are in the same position, are denoted by the letters A', B', C', and D'. The observation that A and A', B and B', C and C', and D and D' have nearly the same contour shapes and are based on a small number of melodic nuclei possibly gives the clearest evidence of the fact that the renditions of Hıdır Güç Dede and Veysel are virtually following the same pattern and are built around common melodic cores.

Hence, the change is not in the contour but rather in the pronunciation of accent and contour that are made in accordance with the content of the text. In *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan*, the deadlock tension is kept for the poetic lines that mention the cosmic upheaval and the Divine justice, thus the melodic highs come at the spots where Ali, the *Ehl-i beyt*, and eschatological reckoning get mentioned. On the contrary, in the case of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, the same melodic peaks now come together with the mentions of Atatürk, republican institutions, and the larger world created by the stanzas. The hortative-optative *ağlayalım* in the first line gets a definite anacrusic lead-in and a little durational stretching at its peak, thus making the act of mourning the common point of entry and highlighting it.

In the middle stanzas of the poem, where *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* lists bureaucratic positions (*mebusan, amir, memur*), diplomatic institutions (*Cemiyet-i Akvam*), and technologies (*fabrikalar, tren hattı, tayyareler*), the contour keeps on reserving its upper pitch for the noun that specifies the bureaucracy or the technology in question. The result, audible in the transcriptions and in the canonical recordings, is to associate melodic prominence with the semantic burden of civic infrastructure. To put it differently, the inherited *Fazilet Ağzı* contour is not just borrowed; it has been recalibrated so that the institutional and technological tokens' prosodic and melodic climaxes resonate beyond the initial quatrain.

From the standpoint of performance practice, both pieces are characterized by a relatively austere dynamic profile, clear syllable articulation, and restrained ornamentation. Phrase endings are marked not by elaborate melismas but by slightly lengthened final syllables with minimal vibrato, and internal turns are rendered with a controlled, almost spoken delivery rather than with a virtuosic flourish. These features correspond closely to Markoff's descriptions of professional Turkish folk music renderings that draw on Alevi and regional repertoires while conforming to Ankara Radio's expectations of clarity and control (1990-1991, pp. 134, 136-137, 142-143). The consistency of this performance habitus across both pieces further supports hearing *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* not as a radical departure from the *Fazilet Ağzı* sound world but as its national-secular refashioning.

3.3 Poetics, Prosody, and Modes of Address

The ethical force of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* rests not only on melodic inheritance but also on its prosodic and rhetorical organization. While its lyrics articulate a national and secular discourse, they simultaneously harbor residual esoteric resonances grounded in Alevi theology and ritual practice, so that doctrinal content is displaced into a civic register even as traces of the inherited melodic-prosodic idiom remain. The piece draws on the melodic structure of a religious theme from this tradition, albeit with textual and melodic variation. Formally, the poem can be divided into eleven stanzas, nine of which take the form of quatrains while the third and fourth stanzas expand to five lines. In this sense, it is cast in a semi-regular eight-syllable stanzaic structure with monorhyme, and each stanza closes with the *redif ağladı*, which creates a predictable cadential slot that can be easily anticipated and echoed by listeners. These formal features make the piece apt for collective performance in settings where participation is graded and partially improvised, such as commemorative gatherings and mass-mediated ceremonies.

Although the comparative framework of this article involves two performances, its detailed poetic and prosodic analysis is deliberately restricted to the text of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* rather than offering a stanza-by-stanza exegesis of *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan*. Hıdır Güç Dede's performance, in the context of the research inquiry, functions mainly as a representative of the *Fazilet Ağzı* repertoire, which is already the subject of extensive studies focusing on its thematic and rhetorical profile, including panegyric praise of Ali and the *Ehl-i beyt*, narratives of injustice and retribution, and an eschatological horizon. To prevent

⁶ For a recent discussion of changing rhythmic structures in Veysel's repertoire, see Özdemir (2024).

unnecessary repetition and to keep the focus on how the idiom is rearticulated in a national and secular register, the close reading thus zeroes in on the verses of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, while treating *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan* as a paradigmatic background textually, where the borrowing of the melody and the semantic reorientation can be heard. Phrases from *Zalimin Zulmünden Yıkıldı Cihan* are brought in only when they help to make certain correspondences in contour, cadential placement, or thematic emphasis more transparent.

The opening stanza establishes the fundamental pattern:

*Ağlayalım Atatürk'e
Bütün dünya kan ağladı
Başbuğ olmuştun mülke
Geldi ecel can ağladı*

The second stanza restages this pattern in a theological and cosmological frame, invoking the transience of the world, the figure of *Tanrı'nın aslanı*, and the totality of creation as witnesses to grief while preserving the same hortative prosodic skeleton:

*Şüphesiz bu dünya fani
Tanrı'nın aslanı hani
İnsi cinsi cem'i mahlûk
Hepsi birden ağladı*

The third stanza scales the address, so that what is at issue is not only one village or region but the entire nation and, indirectly, the wider world:

*Doğu batı cenup şimal
Aman tanrım bu nasıl hal
Atatürk'e erdi zeval
Amir memur altın kürsü
Yas çekip mebsan ağladı*

The fourth stanza ties the poem explicitly to the international order by insisting that the founder is known in every nation, a formulation that evokes both Turkey's desired position in the world and the international visibility of its loss:

*İskender-i Zülkarneyin
Çalışmadı bunca leğın
Her millet Atatürk deyin
Cemiyet-i Akvam ağladı*

Subsequent stanzas continue this logic of cumulative listing; factories, railways, airplanes, and similar tokens mark sites where mourning is translated into guardianship, work, and vigilance:

*Atatürk'ün eserleri
Söylenecek bundan geri
Bütün dünyanın her yeri
Ah çekti vatan ağladı*

*Fabrikalar icat etti
Atalığın ispat etti
Varlığın Türk'e terk etti
Döndü çark devran ağladı*

*Bu ne kuvvet bu ne kudret
Vardı bunda bir hikmet
Bütün Türkler İnönü İsmet
Gözlerinden kan ağladı*

*Tren hattı tayyareler
Türkler giydi hep karalar
Semerkand'ı Buhara'lar
İştitti her yan ağladı*

From a discourse-oriented historical perspective, these enumerations do not simply describe modernity; rather, they stage a script in which mourning is inseparable from work, protection, and alertness:

*Siz sağ olun Türk gençleri
Çalışanlar kalmaz geri
Mareşal Fevzi'nin askerleri
Ordular teğmen ağladı*

*Zannetme ağlayan gülmez
Aslan yatağı boş kalmaz
Yalnız gidenler gelmez
Felek-el mevt'in elinden
Her gelen insan ağladı*

*Uzatma Veysel bu sözü
Dayanmaz herkesin özü
Koruyalım yurdumuzu
Dost değil düşman ağladı*

The hortative-optative *ağlayalım* not only includes a plural subject but also shows mourning as a collective task instead of a personal feeling. After this pattern is set in the first stanza, the rest of the stanzas can drop the explicit hortative but still follow the same rhythmic and cadential frame. The *redif ağladı*, which comes at the end of every line or stanza, serves as a refrain that reconnects each newly introduced token, including persons, institutions, technologies, and places, to the central act of mourning with little cognitive effort required from the listener.

Table 1 below outlines in a schematic way how the different types of directives, the cadential *redif*, and the key lexical tokens come into alignment to express civic predicates throughout the eleven stanzas of the poem.

Table 1. Prosodic and semantic features by stanza.

Stanza	Directive(s)	Cadential <i>redif</i> on <i>ağladı</i>	Key tokens (Institutions, persons, technologies)	Civic predicate foregrounded
1	Hortative-Optative (<i>Ağlayalım</i>)	+	–	Collective mourning as action
2	–	+	–	Anthropological universality of grief
3	–	+	<i>mebusan, amir, memur</i>	Bureaucratic mourning and national scope
4	Imperative (... <i>deyin</i>)	+	<i>Cemiyet-i Akvam</i>	Cosmopolitan recognition
5	–	+	Implicitly (<i>Atatürk'ün eserleri, vatan</i>)	National patrimony grieving
6	–	+	<i>Fabrikalar</i>	Industrial labor as virtue
7	–	+	İsmet İnönü	Republican stewardship
8	–	+	<i>Tren hattı, tayyareler</i>	Speed, mobility, vigilance
9	Benediction (<i>Siz sağ olun...</i>)	+	<i>Türk gençleri, Mareşal Fevzi, ordular/teğmen</i>	Labor discipline and defense
10	Imperative (<i>Zannetme...</i>)	+	–	Stoic ethics and mortality
11	Imperative (<i>Uzatma...</i>); Hortative, Performative (Self-address)	+	Veysel as voice	Guardianship and closure

As soon as the hortative-imperative pattern is established, the poem transitions smoothly between benediction (*Siz sağ olun*), imperative warning (*Zannetme ağlayan gülmez*), and performative self-address (*Uzatma Veysel bu sözü*) while maintaining its core prosodic frame. The line *Koruyalım yurdumuzu* is especially revealing, as it condenses the article's main issue into one exhortation, where mourning turns into guardianship. Grief is not just a matter of suffering; it is channeled as an act of vigilance and labor aimed at the protection of the country.

Thematic proper nouns referring to institutions (*Cemiyet-i Akvam*, different state officials' ranks), technologies (*fabrikalar, tren hattı, tayyareler*), and locations (*Doğu batı cenup şimal, Semerkand, Buhara*) are all found within metrically and melodically remarkable places. These signs function as a language that links the poem to the modern state, industrial production, transport infrastructures, and territorial guardianship. The stanzas thus create a semantic network wherein grief becomes intertwined with work, mobility, diplomacy, and the defense of borders.

Applying Bellah's terminology, one might argue that vigilance, labor, and guardianship are given an almost sacred quality as civic duties directed towards republican institutions and future responsibilities (2005, pp. 42-44). Even though the poem does not directly theologize these obligations, it still attributes to them a weight comparable to that of traditional *Fazilet Ağzı* praises by intertwining them in the same melodic and cadential mould. What was a foundation-hymnic celebration of Ali and the *Ehl-i beyt* has now been reconfigured as an exaltation of factories, transport networks, and military formations as the places where the founder's legacy is to be kept.

The text's melancholy is carried by the repeated *redif ağladı*, which marks the cadential positions of each line and turns grief into a reusable predicate that can be attached to different subjects and institutional actors both within the poem and in commemorative programs that address broad audiences. For instance, in the third stanza, the deictic expansion *Doğu batı cenup şimal* and the imperative *Her millet Atatürk deyin* jointly enlarge the address from a local audience to the entire nation and, implicitly, to a broader world.

Taken together, these lists function as performative scripts of collective mourning that orient listeners toward action rather than withdrawal. Bellah's idea of civil religion helps to explain how solemn tone, shared vocabulary, and recurring cadences can authorize obligation without an explicit doctrinal reference (Bellah, 2005, pp. 41-49). In *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, imperative and hortative forms placed at cadential points repeatedly direct mourning toward an ethic of civic obligation and contribute to the civic obligation vocabulary examined in the next section.

3.4 Semantic Fields of Modernity and Civic Teleology

The vocabulary of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* densely mobilizes a modernist lexicon, with factories, railways, airplanes, parliament, international organizations, and modern army ranks recurring across the eleven stanzas. These cumulative lists act as hinges that relocate mourning to sites of labor, vigilance, and guardianship.

From this angle, the poem does not merely name institutions and technologies; it repositions them as agents of responsibility. The objects, namely factories, railways, and airplanes, appear as symbols of national modernization, while the subject positions are cast as guardians or supervisors rather than passive beneficiaries. The poem's strategies thus condense a broader discourse of vigilance and labor into reusable predicates so that mourning becomes a way of working, protecting, and remaining alert.

In such settings, the poem's sonic quality becomes a major avenue through which suffering is continuously channeled into disciplined engagements with industrial, military, and diplomatic projects. The repetitive rhythms guide the hearers in their learning that the proper way of mourning is to turn it into work, watchfulness, and caretaking, which means that the very formal characteristics of the work have a special teaching power attached to them.

The deictic expansions that reach addressees in the directions of east, west, south, and north, together with the enumerations of factories, parliament, soldiers, and international organizations, sketch a national and transnational listening field that coincides with radio coverage and diplomatic ambition. In this configuration, the city becomes the place where the appropriate response to death is not withdrawal but a renewed commitment to industrial production, military defense, and diplomatic engagement.

3.5 Mediation, Canon, and Cultural Capital

The very existence of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* within Turkey's commemorative soundscape cannot be comprehended primarily by its text and melody alone. It relies upon the existing arrangements that transform local sound indexation into national listening and finally to institutional practice. The state radio was the key player in this matter. As Markoff has indicated, Ankara Radio's folk music units engaged professionals who were already trained and programmed for optimal deployment of regional repertoires (1990-1991, pp. 129-131, 141). The programming format gave priority to lyrics that could be pronounced clearly, evenly, and with a moderate, easily reproducible tempo so that the songs would come through to the audience with the least possible friction. In this situation, the work *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, with its typical strophe structure, constant melody, and readily intelligible *redif ağladı*, was more than just legible; it was programmable as well.

Repertory committees and editorial boards confirmed and stabilized certain melodic and textual variants as de facto standards. Their selections were favored by those compositions whose text and melody could be the reference points for notation, teaching, and future performances. Over time, these committee decisions

created such expectations that the knowledge of particular arrangements and readings of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* became ingrained in the minds of society and subjects as a competent participant in the music making and commemoration that the state has authorized.

In fact, *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, registered with the number 4387 in the TFM repertoire of the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation [TRT], is presented to a wide audience on TRT screens every November 10th, in line with the neo-Kemalist policies that have increasingly risen in the last 20 years, and its ideological-ethical content has gained new historical meanings in the public space. Reconstructed in TRT notation with a long introductory melody, this unique piece has been performed sometimes with choir and orchestra accompaniment, and sometimes with solo performances by veteran state radio artists specializing in Veysel's repertoire, such as Cengiz Özkan. Figure 6 illustrates this long introductory melody.

T R T MÜZİK DAİRESİ YAYINLARI
T H M REPERTUAR NO : 4387
İNCELEME TARİHİ : 3. 7. 2003

DERLEYEN
TRT MÜZ. DAİ. BŞK. LIĞI
THM MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

YÖRESİ
SİVAS / Şarkışla - Sivrialan

DERLEME TARİHİ

KİMDEN ALINDIĞI
AŞIK VEYSEL ŞATIROĞLU

NOTAYA ALAN
AHMET TURAN ŞAN

SÜRESİ:

AĞLAYALIM ATATÜRK'E

A TA TÜR KE BÜ TÜN DÜN YA KA NAĞ LA DI

AĞ LA YA LIM

Figure 6. A snippet from the TRT notation of the piece *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*. (see Repertükül, n.d.)

Bates's detailed observation of the studio practice in arranged traditional music of Turkey has brought to light a similar process in the TRT recording of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*. He illustrates how the aesthetic ideals which have been explained in the local language as *parlak* and *büyük ses* are achieved through microphone placement, equalization, and mixing methods that give priority to clarity, brightness, and control over intensity (Bates, 2010, pp. 81, 84-86, 91-94, 98-99). Such compositions with even stress, steady beat, and clear-cut closure consonants are perfectly adapted to this kind of music. One of the canonical recordings, *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, very closely adheres to these standards, which in turn enhances its distribution not only in different media formats but also through different generations.

According to Bourdieu, the phenomena described above can be interpreted as tools by which certain combinations of prosody and melody are transformed into cultural capital and symbolic power (1986, pp. 248, 252-253). The radio producers, the heads of the ensembles, and the music teachers are all implicitly aware that the dispositions of clarity, discipline, and solemnity are the traits of the right taste in folk music. The ideological and ethical project expressed in *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, namely vigilance, labor, and guardianship, thus becomes inseparable from the very criteria by which musical excellence and authenticity are judged today. The ceremonial calendars, school programs, and anniversary broadcasts serve as predictable avenues through which selected pieces recirculate, and *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* has persistently been assigned to such occasions.

4. DISCUSSION

The analyses presented above support the claim that *Fazilet Ağzı* finds one of its most enduring modern realizations in *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e*, a piece that continues to resonate with contemporary audiences, radio listeners, and today's consumers of recorded music. In melodic terms, the song reworks a recognizable *Fazilet Ağzı* contour and phrase structure within a modern recording and broadcasting environment. In poetic terms, alliteration, *redif*, hortative and imperative forms, and a cohesive stanzaic progression bind together a lexicon of mourning and civic duty. In institutional terms, the piece's ethical thrust is inseparable from its circulation through radio repertory committees, studio practices, educational institutions, and commemorative programs, which have chosen, arranged, and disseminated it as part of the national canon.

Viewed through Bellah's notion of civil religion (2005, pp. 41-49) and Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital (1986, pp. 241-258), *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* can be heard as a sonic script in which mourning, thanksgiving, and guardianship are endowed with public authority and converted into symbolic resources that circulate through radiophonic, educational, and commemorative fields. Rather than functioning merely as a discrete piece, it anchors a small but influential repertoire of sounds, dispositions, and competencies that mark participation in national memory practices, exemplifying how ethical injunctions and musical taste can be mutually reinforcing within a shared civic horizon.

From this perspective, the ability to recite, perform, or recognize *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* in memorial ceremonies becomes an index of familiarity with this civil-religious repertoire and with the embodied dispositions that form part of its cultural capital. Such competence grants access to particular arenas of cultural production, including school rituals, broadcasting schedules, and commemorative concerts, without needing to be articulated explicitly as doctrine or ideology. In this context, historiography is affected in at least two ways. First, cadence and diction, which are often treated in formalist analyses as purely musical matters of phrase structure, contour, and harmonic implication, emerge here as devices that organize ethical agency and dispositions. The very features that musicologists and ethnomusicologists usually describe in technical terms are shown to be indispensable for the broadcast formats, educational methods, and commemorative practices examined in this article. Second, analyses of national mourning repertoires can no longer treat republican reforms as a simple break with vernacular religious forms. On the contrary, *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* suggests that modern civic pedagogy may be developed by rearticulating existing idioms such as *Fazilet Ağzı*, leaving their melodic and prosodic cores largely intact while altering their lexical and institutional associations.

5. CONCLUSION

The reading of *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* unveils a secularized *Fazilet Ağzı*, which organizes mourning as secular instruction. The song utilizes a recognizable Emlek Alevi melodic template, transforming it with words of factories, transport infrastructures, diplomatic bodies, and military formations, thus fusing mourning with civic work and guardianship. The melody of the repeated cadential *ağladı* turns the lament into a rhythmic hinge that links every new institutional or technological token with the founding figure and with the republican project he represents.

The longevity of the piece is not independent of the institutional infrastructures that have magnified it. Radio transmissions, ensemble trainings, studio aesthetics, and memorial programming have together allowed *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* to be recognized not only as a historical artifact but also as a living script on how to deal with loss. According to this script, the right reaction to death is neither giving up without a struggle nor pure private grief but rather the revival of one's pledge to work, be vigilant, and protect the country.

By placing *Ağlayalım Atatürk'e* within the context of Alevi *Fazilet Ağzı* practice, early Republican projects of canon formation, contemporary theories of civil religion, and cultural capital, the article has demonstrated that even a single piece can encapsulate a complex pedagogy of mourning in some cases. It is not just a matter of individual talent belonging to Veysel himself; rather, the piece provides an ideal standpoint from which to revisit the interplay of the concepts of faith and citizenship, tradition and modernity, mourning and work in 20th-century Turkey. Taken together, these findings suggest that in this unique piece Veysel does not simply honor Atatürk as a statesman but symbolically aligns him with the figure of Ali and, at moments, with a Mahdi-like redeemer whose imagined task is to secure justice, avenge wrongs, and consolidate the moral order of the republican community, while at the same time bequeathing to subsequent generations of Alevi âşiks and performers a strong ideological perspective of how inherited devotional idioms can be refunctioned within a Kemalist, nation-centered frame. Future research could extend this perspective to other *Fazilet Ağzı* settings and to further republican and post-republican mourning repertoires, tracing how inherited devotional idioms are reconfigured across different political conjunctures and media environments.

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