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Jazz as Soft Power in Turkey–US Relations During the Early Cold War Period

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ABSTRACT

The 1950s was an era when Turkish-US relations were developing in various arenas. In addition to hard power instruments, such as NATO membership, the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid, elements of soft power were also being used to promote the relationship between the two states. One element of this latter power was jazz which became tool of US public diplomacy used to export its cultural values. This paper explores how jazz was used as such in Turkey–US relations in the 1950s. The original aspect of this article lies in its dealing with the influence of jazz music, a relatively little mentioned soft power element in Turkey–US relations of tis period. The main finding of the article may be conceptualized as follows: Turkey’s relationship with the US was based not only on economic and military interests, but also cultural ties between the two which were also crucial to strengthening their bilateral relations. In this context, musicians were key agents of cultural diplomacy with their music and songs legitimizing a new and different 20th century.

Introduction

The Cold War divided the world into a bipolar system of two ideological camps: The Communist and Capitalist blocs. Although the two powers at the centre of this bipolar world the US and the former USSR did not directly wage war against each other, there were occasions when they appeared to be on the brink of doing so, most notably in the 1962 Cuba Missile Crisis. The Cold War was a war not only of military capacity, technology and economy, but also it was a war of ideologies that wished to spread their viewpoint and cultural values. Thus during the Cold War, non-military means were actively and effectively used as tools of foreign policy. These included instruments such as propaganda and policy making to influence public opinion in both hostile and friendly nations.¹ Cold War diplomacy often boiled down to governments dispensing information through radio, exhibitions, and libraries.

Both the USSR and US used soft power to shape the behaviour of countries on the periphery. Since music can effectively transmit cultural, social, and political messages, both states used it extensively. In this sense, jazz became a means of soft power for the US in its fight against Communism. As part of plans to persuade countries to become part of

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the Western bloc and adopt liberal values, jazz tours were organized. Turkey was one such country. It had been trying to Westernize itself since its foundation and was aligned with the Western Bloc during the Cold War. As an element of US cultural diplomacy American jazz musicians visited Turkey in the 1950s. However, it could be argued that, in Turkey's case, rather than fulfilling its primary purpose of promoting anti-Communism jazz led rather to cooperation between Turkish and American musicians.

This article discusses how jazz was used as a soft power instrument by the US on Turkey. In doing so it first defines the concept of soft power and public diplomacy. The article then focuses on American jazz musicians' visits and jazz music's journey in Turkey in the early Cold War period. In this context, early Cold War relationship between the two states will be considered in order to provide a background. As for sources, official 1950s documents of the United States Information Agency (USIA), the United States Information Service (USIS) and the US National Security Council (NSC), are used to demonstrate how the US government sought to use soft power. To understand the impact of American soft power via the use of jazz music in Turkey, newspaper accounts, interviews with Turkish musicians and their memoirs in online sources, journals and books are used as primary sources. Through a descriptive content analysis, this paper seeks to find out how jazz was used as a tool of public diplomacy in the relationship between Turkey and the US in the early Cold War era, especially the 1950s, and how this process was perceived in Turkey.

Soft power and public diplomacy

Power, one of the oldest concepts in international relations, has been approached from many perspectives, but especially realism. This approach is nourished by the idea that, similarly to individuals, states look out for their interests always attempting to increase their power vis-à-vis rival states. While this power struggle is strongly based on military and economic power and geopolitical superiority, strong alliances are also important.² In time with different approaches in international relations cultural impact, cooperation, diplomatic relations, economic relations got involved into the concept of power. In the concept of power, the basic classification is made as 'hard' and 'soft power'. While the initial one includes military, economic capacity and relations that rest on inducements or threats, the second one includes cultural, diplomatic relations based on consent.³

Soft power is based on shaping preferences with policies that are legitimate and morally acceptable, and by using cultural, diplomatic, and political-institutional channels. Although most soft power practices are based on influencing others, Nye emphasizes that 'it is also the ability to entice and attract' the kind of power used to look attractive as a role model. It has three principles: power holders' values; the country's social, economic, and cultural institutions; and the execution of foreign policy (either unilaterally or multilaterally).⁴

Achieving the desired results without the threat of punishment is the most prominent feature of soft power. For this, influencing others and creating an agenda are the most important elements. As such, soft power is the ability to shape the choices of others. Persuasion and charm are important here.⁵ While the success of soft power is largely based on creating an agenda, the most important resources may be said to be values, institutions, policies and culture. The soft power of a country depends on its culture,

which must appeal to others, the mass reach of its political values at home and abroad and its foreign policy which must be considered legitimate and morally appropriate.⁶ Elite and popular culture, trade, policies pursued by governments, and domestic and foreign policy components are very important to the success of soft power. It should be noted, however, that this is not just government policy, but a product of socio-economic conditions and non-profit organizations. At this point, factors such as democracy, human rights, openness, and respect for others, and differences emerge as important elements in the formation of soft power policies.⁷ Films, sports, the fast food industry, and television programmes are also effective in spreading soft power.⁸ Soft power may be understood as a long-term process based on propaganda and discourse production.⁹ In order to analyse soft power deeply, its most effective instrument should be evaluated first: Public diplomacy.

Public diplomacy is an important concept for soft power and may be defined as the work of conveying the messages that a country has determined to the people of another country.¹⁰ Public diplomacy is based on influencing public opinion by using marketing, public relations, and image creation techniques. Daily communication, strategic communication and conferences, and education are among its basic elements.¹¹ In public diplomacy, interstate communication, evolves into communication between states-individuals/groups and thus switches from the macro to the micro level.¹²

According to Nicholas Cull, public diplomacy is an attempt by international actors to conduct their foreign policy by engaging with foreign publics using five core practices: listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, and international broadcasting.¹³ Listening includes research, analysis, and feedback of that information which is to be incorporated into the policy process. Advocacy means the creation and dissemination of information materials to construct the discourse of a policy or an issue. It may, for example, take the form of an embassy press conference. Cultural diplomacy uses cultural practices as a mechanism to promote the interests of international actors, while exchange diplomacy means an exchange of people such as college students for example among international actors. Lastly, international broadcasting means the transmission of balanced news over state-funded international radio.¹⁴

During the Cold War, this kind of power and its instruments were used by both super powers. However, this article is specifically focused on US actions. Thus, next section underlines some important points in the use of US public diplomacy in the 1950s. The US government agreed to support exchange programmes for students and artists under the 1936 Convention for the Promotion of Inter-American Cultural Relations, which became the model for numerous exchange programmes integral to public diplomacy during the Cold War. American media, especially Voice of America (VOA) radio, took this a step further by reaching more audiences and beaming 75% of its total radio programming into the Soviet Union, the European Satellite states, China, and other Communist-dominated Asian states. This radio was established on 24 February 1942, about 3 months after the Pearl Harbor.¹⁵ It was part of a kind of modern information and propaganda battle to reach the hearts and minds of people which was organized by the US State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency and VOA. These institutions made several attempts to reach their aims but within the limits of this article the most prominent ones were the use of international radio news and music including overseas jazz concerts, to devise a narrative suited to US national security interests.¹⁶

In 1947, VOA began broadcastings into the Soviet Union, and in 1950, Radio Free Europe began its broadcasts into Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Albania. While VOA was speeding up its propaganda, the CIA channelled confidential funds and policy control to Radio Free Europe and made similar efforts to control Radio Liberty which was broadcasting directly Soviet people. All these state-controlled technological propaganda channels were a useful way to reach more people in a hostile world and were also coherent with the idea of psychological warfare.¹⁷

In 1950, the United States Objectives and Programs for National Security (NSC-68) was adopted. This included the acceptance of psychological activities as one of the basic elements of foreign policy, alongside, military, economic, and diplomatic activities. As a reaction to the Communist revolution in China and the Soviet detonation of an atomic bomb, the Truman administration began restructuring its foreign policy by placing more importance on economic, military, and political advances. In the NSC-68 document, it was underlined that the USSR was able to establish his power over Eastern Europe due to the former's its unchanging nature.¹⁸ In the mid-1950s, the US adopted a new international policy that made it appear as a qualified and desirable leader in the political arena.¹⁹ The US used globalized short-wave radio stations and popular live music programmes such as jazz tours to win support for American style democracy and consumption.²⁰

There was a cultural Cold War between the US and USSR. It was not only economic and military aids that were used in the international propaganda war to create the 'Western democratic bloc' but also several institutions such as the CIA and VOA, which could reach and win hearts and minds of people.²¹ Charles E. Bohlen, US Ambassador to Moscow in the early 1950s, informed the government that jazz could be used in the Eastern Bloc for political targets because the Soviet youth was hungry for jazz.²² This triggered the creation of the USIA in 1953. Art, education, music, and cinema played an important role in spreading the American lifestyle to other countries. As the USIA director Theodore Streibert proudly announced in a promotional film in 1954: 'Our job is to tell the world who we are, what we stand for and what we believe in'.²³ The duty of the agency was described as: "The agency's mission was not 'to get foreign people to support the United States, or to sell our ideas abroad'. Rather, it was to show the people of other lands through communication techniques that our objectives and policies are in harmony with and will advance their legitimate aspirations for freedom, progress, and peace, meaning that we are trying to identify ourselves with the aims and aspirations of these other people to establish a mutuality of interests".²⁴ According to an NSC report; The US aimed to attempt to not only fight against communism but stand for things with human values and devote itself to human progress.²⁵

Images of racial discrimination in the US posed a challenge for the US' attempt to build a positive image. In this context, the agency's discourse was based on the understanding that, in the US, democratic processes and the rights of individuals were secured, and that basic American unity remained strong. By 1956, "US foreign policy could be summarized as to protect peace by deterrence of war and aggression, the encouragement Free World's nations' political and economic development, the encouragement of developments within the communist bloc which would bring them liberation, destroying the effect of communism, promoting peaceful change for a secure future world. All these

were regarded as being not aggressive and for the interest of people all over the globe by a strategy that included objective, calm and confident tones".²⁶

Nonetheless, at least as far as race was concerned, the USIS had an entirely different job. The institutionalization of propaganda tools and the use of cultural symbols and images in other words the utilization of the soft power means, gained more importance. The bipolar world became an area where cultural symbols and images fought with each other. With the official VOA and its programme 'Music of the USA', American music gained audiences all over the world. D.J. Willis Conover, the director of the programme, became a popular jazz ambassador at this time²⁷ as jazz became a symbol alluding to equality, freedom, and democracy.²⁸ It was seen as proof that freedom and democracy could survive in a highly cultivated artistic sensibility.²⁹

Later, in 1954, American cultural tours were initiated. That same year, Eisenhower called for a worldwide exchange programme in the performing arts in order to improve the perception of American culture and politics in the world.³⁰ To legitimize this, reports were prepared to prove how effective the combination of different power elements could be in power politics. With the NSC 5501 report in 1955, the US took on a more active role in building a free world by combining military, political, economic, and propaganda policies.³¹ This situation created a chance for the US to strengthen its informational, cultural, educational policies, and exchange programmes. In 1956, Adam Clayton Powell Jr, a US Baptist minister and civil rights activist from Harlem, suggested that 'America could send its greatest jazz musicians overseas as cultural emissaries. The State Department warmed to the idea, believing that touring mixed-race jazz groups could help deflect attention from the spiralling civil rights abuses and present a uniquely American art form with which Russians couldn't compete'.³²

Jazz as soft power

The spread of jazz may be seen more clearly by understanding the musicians and the conditions into which they were born.³³ The position of African American jazz musicians was critical as it revealed the music's potential as a Cold War weapon and the image of a politically and culturally changing US, where the struggle for racial equality was at the centre both internal and international politics. With these jazz tours, the US was especially trying to convince new African and Asian states that there was no discrimination against different races and that despite the continued existence of segregationist regulations the US was a democratic country.³⁴ In the early Cold War period, jazz was not only the expression and vision of one nation and its musicians not only tool of foreign policy. Rather they were cultural translators who inspired their followers and constitute themselves as jazz ambassadors. While they were sometimes supported by US state departments, they challenged their priorities by insisting on their right to play for the people. They also used tours as a global platform to promote the culture of African American people in the US and abroad.³⁵

During the early Cold War, this situation was used by the Soviet Union and its allies' propaganda to show the world how violent and racially discriminatory a country the US was although it pretended to be democratic. This forced the US to reform its image in international politics. For this purpose, the Eisenhower government undertook 'psychological warfare' by establishing the USIA and the VOA. In the government's budget

planning, there were special expenditure items for these organizations. 'In August 1954, Congress approved Eisenhower's request to pass Public Law 663 which gave birth to the President's Emergency Fund for International Affairs. The fund was allocated in three categories: the Department of Commerce received \$2,592,000 to develop and facilitate US involvement in international trade fairs; the State Department received \$2,250,000 for representations of American dance, theatre, music, and sports; and, USIA was granted \$157,000 to help publicize performing arts and sporting events'. In 1956, the fund was made permanent under Public Law 860, the International Cultural Exchange and Trade Fair Participation Act.³⁶

The 1950s were years that saw the creation of several new programmes and funds: the President's Emergency Fund for Participation, the International Cultural Exchange and Trade Fair Participation Act, the Cultural Presentations Program, and the Advisory Committee on the Arts.³⁷ In 1954, the President's Fund authorized the State Department to select performers for overseas tours in regions where they could create a maximum psychological impact. 'The state funded all tours, and each host country's USIA secured local sponsors and generated publicity for events. Among the areas targeted for particular interest was the Near and Middle East. From 1955 to 1960, jazz bands led by Dizzy Gillespie, Dave Brubeck, Jack Teagarden, and Red Nichols toured the region'.³⁸

Jazz was of course not restricted to tours. With the help of VOA, it could reach larger international audiences. In 1955, animator Willis Conover started a jazz programme on VOA's 'Music USA' and it continued for 25 years. His broadcast was one hour each day, seven days in a week. Through his efforts, jazz became one of the most valuable commodities being exported from the US. However, he was not the only one, there were also Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, US officials and media analysts that followed in the path of VOA.³⁹

Jazz music was significant in its uniqueness too. Unlike classical music, theatre or ballet, jazz was regarded as an originally American art that was also the symbol of racial equality.⁴⁰ Many of the jazz artists were African American and thus had the dual roles of musician and showing that they were living in an equal and just world in which they were free to express themselves and become part of free market capitalism.⁴¹ But this was problematic in a country where segregation continued unabated in daily life. The government tried to emphasize that even African American people could be cultural ambassadors, surely a sign of democracy and equality. On the other hand, there was continuing segregation that even musicians had to defend themselves against. They were regarded as 'separate but equal' a perception clearly open to criticism. What made jazz bands real was the fact that they were racially mixed organizations based on a platform of freestyle singing and playing.⁴² These African American musicians underlined that they supported their nation in their freedom. With these tours, they would not only get recognition from their own country but would have the chance to spread their music to abroad. They saw themselves not only the transmitter of the US message, but also viewed the tours as a chance to advance their own musical and racial perspectives.⁴³

During this period, the US also organized tours for American jazz artists as a national effort to increase attraction around the world for the US against the USSR.⁴⁴ Jazz artists were considered ambassadors that artistically provided freedom of expression. The goodwill ambassador tours by African-American jazz musicians

were among the State Department's cultural efforts. As Hatschek (2011) said: 'Jazz was not only one of America's most popular commodities but the art form most frequently acknowledged by American foreign missions as being recognized around the world as uniquely American'. Indeed, he wrote: 'the Soviets had no ready response to counter the styles and attitude of jazz or its greatest artists'.⁴⁵ Foreign Service officials in host countries reported about the success of these tours, on the behaviours of the musicians, and their local impact. Officials at US embassies in the recipient countries tried to participate as much as they could by publicizing concerts and holding receptions where musicians could meet local figures. Performances were also broadcast on radio and TV, and interviews conducted with the musicians.⁴⁶

In a similar vein, Eisenhower emphasized the importance of foreign tours, in that 'they demonstrated the superiority of products and cultural values of the free enterprise system'. It also helped the US validate its cultural and artistic accomplishments.⁴⁷ Dave Brubeck, Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, and Duke Ellington each performed around the world. Gillespie and his orchestra were the first American jazz band sent abroad by the State Department to Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and South America.⁴⁸ They made stops in Iran, Lebanon, Persia, Pakistan, Turkey, Yugoslavia, and later South America. It is noteworthy that all of these countries had treaties with the US or had a US military base on their soil.⁴⁹

Marshall Stearnes explained the popularity of Gillespie's band by its having an anti-authoritarian ethos that transcended rules and regulations. In Athens, for example, a group of opposition students were excited by Gillespie's music and lifted him onto their shoulders at the end of the concert.⁵⁰ In this sense, he was a 'jam-bassador', someone who had not only won friends for the US, but also had succeeded in elevating the art of jazz to a music that transcends all the barriers of language and social norms.⁵¹ Despite his tour's success, there was criticism at home about the amount of money spent and whether Gillespie was the right person for this delicate job. In this context, the State Department decided to promote Benny Goodman, a much more conventional musician positioned on the opposite end of the jazz spectrum for a seven-week tour in late 1956.⁵²

By participating in the State Department's Cultural Program, Gillespie was expected to positively influence the audience for the US and fight against Soviet propagandists that highlighted poor living conditions in the southern US. As a response, the State Department sent African American authors, athletes, and musicians abroad.⁵³ According to Gillespie, his group's trip to the Middle East served as successful propaganda against Communism, especially since jazz is the music that transcends social and linguistic borders.⁵⁴ As Davenport stated: 'As the Cold War intensified, jazz diplomacy aimed to portray several important themes about American culture. First, it brought forward the softer, more civilized side of American society. Secondly, it conveyed the idea that in an era rife with racial conflict, culture wars, and race relations, it could engender peace and interracial harmony. Thirdly, it exemplified the country's concrete attempts to improve the status of African-Americans even amidst social repression. Equally important, the tours helped enhance American prestige and credibility because they elevated culture above the fray of politics and race'.⁵⁵

As a country trying to become a part of the Capitalist bloc, Turkey's relation with the US during the 1950s may be considered in terms of soft power and public diplomacy. Jazz

was one of the tools used as in the bilateral relationship and several tours were organized to perform in Turkey. The next section evaluates the general state of foreign and domestic affairs in Turkey in this period in order to understand the use of jazz in a relationship between two states.

Turkey's Western identity and Turkey- US bilateral relationships during the early cold war

While the Republic of Turkey struggled to establish its main existence by protecting the lands and population it had taken over from the Ottoman Empire, it also tried to adapt to changing conditions, and within this framework, restructured itself according to Western civilization.⁵⁶ Maintaining the status quo in the international arena and using balance of power politics are the most important components of Turkish foreign policy.⁵⁷ However, the policy of staying in balance by using one European power against another was not a policy that could be sustained in the Cold War. It was not possible for Turkey to maintain a position outside the blocs without feeling the threat of one of the two super powers. In other words, Turkey had to choose a side.⁵⁸ Against the threat of the great power nearby the USSR, the balance was achieved with the great power in distance the US. Since it was not possible to maintain the security of the country with own resources, it became important to get support from the Western Bloc.⁵⁹ This, in turn, became a way of being included in the US's periphery, which then reduced Turkey's room for manoeuvre in foreign policy and thus its ability to act independently.⁶⁰ In this framework, Turkey clearly shifted its direction to the Western Bloc axis with the onset of the Cold War. In this period, the US and the values it represented gained importance in both domestic and foreign policy in Turkey.⁶¹

Although Turkey did not directly take part in World War II, the economic contractions it experienced after 1939, when war began to spread, and the increasing tensions within the social classes resulted in a fall in social support for the single-party government. This, coupled with democratization demands in the same period, made the transition to multi-party life easier. Declaring war with the aim of being included in the Western bloc after the end of the war, Turkey decided in favour of liberal capitalism in the post-war order. The US, which assumed the leadership of this order, stated that the development of relations between with the two countries depended on individuals having the right to freely choose their political, economic, and social paths, equality of opportunity in trade, freedom of the press, and protection of the rights of US citizens and US educational institutions in Turkey.⁶²

The notes of August 22 and 18 October 1946, conveying the demands of the Soviet Union were as influential as the legacy of Westernization inherited by Turkey in determining this direction taken by the country.⁶³ In this period, both the United Kingdom and the US increased their diplomatic relations with Turkey. It was not a coincidence that the Missouri battleship carrying the body of Minür Ertegün occurred during this period and that the US made statements emphasizing the economic and political importance it attached to the Middle East and the Straits.⁶⁴ The visit of the Missouri battleship was interpreted as US support for Turkey and Greece against the USSR.⁶⁵

In the eyes of the Western Bloc, Turkey was a country that perceived the threat from the USSR that was expected to adopt the principles and democratic values of the modern world, and seek out international alliances for this, and also a country in need of foreign aid and financial support to adopt liberalism in its economy. In this period, the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid Plans were utilized in efforts to integrate Turkey with the West. The increasing Soviet threat in the Mediterranean and the Middle East brought the continuation of aid and support to both countries in the process from the US, which wanted to keep control of these regions.⁶⁶ In this context, while Turkey was developing its relations with the US, it began following a pro-Western and pro-US policy path in terms of Middle East policies. In Turkey's domestic politics, entrepreneurs such as Vehbi Koç ensured that American products such as automobiles and refrigerators had privileges in entering the domestic market, dependent on the development of relations created by the Truman doctrine. American movies and cartoons too spread to the masses more in this period and the effect of American values began to be seen not only in terms of economy but also in terms of social life and lifestyles.⁶⁷

The transition to democracy started by 1945s.⁶⁸ While the establishment of the Democratic Party (DP) in 1946 and the first multi-party the same year elections were interpreted as the establishment of democracy in domestic politics, it should not be forgotten that this includes an effort to adopt the values of the democratic West. These efforts, paved the way for Turkey's acceptance by the Western bloc, especially by the US.⁶⁹ Turkey became a member of the IMF and the World Bank in 1947, and the opening up of the Turkish economy which would later turn into foreign dependency that was a necessity of liberal capitalism in this period.⁷⁰ In line with Marshall Plan, Turkey became the raw material and food supplier ('grocer') of Western Europe.⁷¹ It became a member of the European Economic Cooperation Organization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development within the framework of Marshall Aid.⁷² In the US reports from this period that offering suggestions with respect to Turkey, there are references to abandoning statism, selling Karabük, making steel slings instead of locomotives, using artificial fertilizers, not giving priority to industry, not engaging in planning, and keeping the development rate low by giving priority to agriculture.⁷³ The Foreign Capital Encouragement and Petroleum Law, which was prepared in parallel to reports, is an extension of similar concerns. At the 1948 Economics Congress, demands for the support of the private sector came to the fore. In the period between 1948 and 1953, while the terms of trade turned in favour of agricultural products, the balance of payments relaxed, and the growth rate increased. In this context, as the way was paved for the liberalization of foreign trade, the Industrial Development Bank was established within a framework of steps taken to encourage the private sector with cheap credit opportunities.⁷⁴

The DP emerged as the representative of an intellectual structure in which liberalism and religion came to the forefront in the face of strict statism and a weakening in the influence of religion.⁷⁵ The DP's understanding of liberalism found its expression in a multi-party life that was shaped by a free participation environment where each individual could choose their own representative, rather than by pluralistic participation.⁷⁶ In economic terms, the supporters of private property put forward a perspective that adopted the liberal economic development model and placed priority on material enrichment.⁷⁷ The DP set out a policy that considered the

recommendations outlined in the US reports. For instance, according to the 1949 Thornburg report, the DP adopted a liberal foreign policy based on privatization and agricultural exports.⁷⁸ For this reason, while giving importance to ventures and investments, it aimed to increase financial support from the US.⁷⁹ The support of the US and the World Bank was used in the establishment of banks related to agriculture and industry; in addition, attempts were to abolish the legal regulations disrupting foreign investment.⁸⁰ Turkey followed the American reports not only in economic terms, but also evaluated the suggestions in other fields such as culture and education. With the initial aid provided activities such as student sponsorship and teacher exchange programmes were implemented. Bilateral agreements were made in some university education programmes. For example, the Faculty of Business Administration at Istanbul University was supported by the Ford Foundation at Harvard University, while the English language teaching programme at the former university was run by Georgetown University and sponsored by the International Cooperation Agency. Some universities, on the other hand, were inspired by the American model. Middle East Technical University is an example of this in terms of its structure. Atatürk University, on the other hand, was established to provide an order which targeted rural development, similarly to the University of Nebraska. Secondary education in Turkey was planned in a similar way to high-school education in the US. Another institution that was revised in line with the opinions of American experts is the army. Given that Turkey had become a member of NATO, the protocols of the army were arranged in line with the views of American experts in terms of technique, training and equipment.⁸¹

Reconciling the modernization project with religious, cultural, and local values emerged as one of the DP's important goal.⁸² In this framework, during the DP period of rule, Islam was used as an antidote in the struggle against Communism traditions and beliefs, with discourses on religion, 'the force that stops Communism', and 'the religion that makes Communists tremble'.⁸³

During the DP rule, Turkey's efforts to be included in the Western Bloc culminated in its by joining NATO in 1951. NATO was the bulwark against the Soviet threat, and Turkey won its struggle to enter NATO by being involved in the Korean War.⁸⁴ The threat posed by the Soviet demands in 1946 could only be overcome by joining NATO. In addition, it was important to be included in NATO in order to firmly base Turkey's relations with the Western bloc in the bipolar system, modernize the military structure, increase security, and ensure the continuity of aid.⁸⁵ Joining NATO also brought about the institutionalization of Western identity, and thus, it became easier to adopt a Western identity not only militarily but also ideologically.⁸⁶

In order to bolster relations, organizations and institutions were established among them the Turkish-American Women's Culture Association and the Turkish-American Union. In 1949, Turkey and the US signed a Cultural Treaty under which information exchange especially that of the kind that used in technical programmes, would be increased; cultural and informational relations would be intensified; and the number of Turkish students studying in the US would be increased through the Fulbright programme.⁸⁷

Hence, Turkey and the US relations became much stronger in the early Cold War Period and this was not limited to economic and military aid that were hard power

instruments. In Turkey, there was a cultural and ideological acceptance of Western/American life style in several areas. Music was one of them that was inspired by this bilateral relationship.

History of jazz music and its impact on the Turkey–US relationship in the early cold war period

The beginnings of jazz music's journey at Turkey can be traced to earlier than the onset of the Cold War. In the daily language of Turkey's Early Republican years, the word 'jazz' had a negative connotations: 'Don't make jazz (Caz Yapma)' meant 'Western music is not our music don't play it' or 'focus on your work, don't chatter unnecessarily'.⁸⁸ In this negative environment jazz was regarded as an oppressive elite group music. The spread of jazz music to a wider audience started with 1920 and 30s radio broadcasts. Jazz records exported from the US were played to fill programme schedules especially during summer months when local bands were on vacation.⁸⁹ This was also the period when jazz records were sold overseas. However, in Turkey, only wealthy families' sons who went to the US for education and returned home could have and bring these records to Turkey.⁹⁰

In the Republican Era, the regime maintained its top down ideology, which may be summarized as its Westernization project.⁹¹ Turkey was highly affected by the European view of jazz, which was critical and kept its distance. In the 1920s Leon Avigdor, an Armenian musician, visited Paris and created a quartet called the Ronald Quartet with a White Russian Kolya Yokolf/Yakofley.⁹² Ayten's Place (Ayten'in Yeri) in İstanbul was owned by two White Russians and was a venue where jazz music was performed.⁹³ In the 1930s, minority ethnic groups played an important role in the development of jazz in Turkey. Arto Hacaturyan, Cüneyt Sermet, and Arif Mardin established the Turkish Big Band and performed concerts at İnci Cinema and the Armenian Association.⁹⁴ The Beyoğlu neighbourhood was a place where you could experience the multiculturalism. Musical instruments and record shops were mostly owned by non-Muslims, especially Jews, Albanians, and Armenians. Indeed, Jews and Armenians were the leaders of jazz in Turkey.⁹⁵ It must be noted that the Turkish Republic was established on the same geography as the former Ottoman Empire, in which different cultural values had lived together and in which non-Muslim society had contact more with Western culture than with Turks. Hence, jazz was regarded by many as a minority group's entertainment music.⁹⁶ These musicians played this Western entertainment music instead of Western classical music.⁹⁷

With the modernization project, came government-sponsored community centres named 'Halkevi (People's House)' which became places where western types of music were learned and performed. For example, Kadıköy Halkevi boasted important musicians such as Necdet Alpün and Hulki Soner, the latter of which created a jazz band with four saxophones, two trumpets, two trombones, a piano, a bass, and drums. The most interesting of the jazz concerts in Kadıköy Halkevi were those of the Necdet Alpün Orchestra. It had three brass and woodwind instruments, which created a special harmony, while Alpün and İlhan Mimaroglu played harmonica, Erdem Buri the drums, and Fazıl Abrak the guitar.⁹⁸ Canlı Balık in Sarıyer was another place where jazz music was played by İlham Gencer, Turhan Taner, and Cüneyt Sermet.⁹⁹ The Princes' Islands, Caddebostan, Arnavutköy, Bebek, Sarıyer and Moda were places where jazz music was

performed and cinemas (Saray, Şan, İnci, Süreyye) also had an important role as cultural centres where jazz and other groups gave concerts.¹⁰⁰

According to Hülya Tunçağ and Sadettin Davran, Turkish jazz began with Gregor Kelakyan, a friend of Louis Armstrong. In 1936, Kelakyan founded his own band in Istanbul, the Gregor Jazz Band). In these years, groups who played orchestra music were accepted as jazz musicians. Although Kelakyan's influence on jazz in Turkey should not be underestimated, he was initially discounted by Cüneyt Sermet. Similarly, Violinist Leon Avigdor, another important figure, founded a quartet and started performing at Pera at the Union Française on returning to Istanbul after his education in France.¹⁰¹ He was the first recorded jazz musician in Turkey.¹⁰² Stella, at the Tokatlıyan Hotel, was another important venue where jazz was performed for Jewish, Armenian, and Greek audiences. With the opening of Maksim in Taksim, a band of black musician called 'Seven Palm Beach' started to perform.¹⁰³ During the interwar period, some Jewish musicians fleeing anti-Semitism came to Turkey and contributed to jazz music. One was Gido Kornfilt who established a big band in Turkey.¹⁰⁴ It would appear that non-Muslim and minority groups were more attracted to jazz than the Turks in the early years, as was the case in other branches of art. The Great Haçaturyan Orchestra (Büyük Haçaturyan Orkestrası) established by Arto Haçaturyan, Cüneyt Sermet and Arif Mardin in the Jewish community, and including Hrant Lusigyan proved to be turning point for jazz music in Turkey.¹⁰⁵

The Erteğün's family had a special place in Turkish-American jazz music relations. In 1947, Ahmet Erteğün and Herb Amarson founded Atlantic Records with some money borrowed from a friend of the Erteğüns. Then, Nasuhi Erteğün joined the company in 1956. Many jazz musicians released records on Atlantic, which subsequently contributed to the building of cultural relations between the American and Turkish peoples.¹⁰⁶ While The Modern Jazz Quartet, Herbie Mann, Hank Crawford, Mose Allison, Nat Adderley, Charles Mingus, Eddie Harris, and many others became known with the help of Nasuhi Erteğün, Bobby Darin, Ray Charles, Sonny and Cher; The Young Rascals also found fame thanks to him and Atlantic Records. The collaboration manifested on the other side, too. Turkish musicians such as Arif Mardin also worked with American singers under Atlantic Records. Having started out as an assistant of Nasuhi Erteğün, Mardin later became the assistant director before eventually continuing his career at EMI.¹⁰⁷

With an increase in the audience listening to radio broadcasts in the 1940s, jazz music became more popular, and orchestras performing live jazz were established at radio stations in İstanbul and Ankara in 1949. Erdem Buri was one of the producers who inspired young people with jazz music. These programmes broadcast from Ankara and İstanbul radios were hugely influential in the spread of jazz during these years.¹⁰⁸

Under the influence of America, Turkish musicians started to place importance on big bands and performed along with other musicians by organizing jam sessions. The memorable opening of a branch of the Hilton Hotel chain in İstanbul in 1955 was led by a jazz concert that brought the 'big band' concept into the Turkish jazz world. The hotel became a well-known jazz performance venue until the opening of the 306 Jazz Club. Here, jazz was performed in an elite entertainment atmosphere created by an American brand.¹⁰⁹ The club opened by Hasan Kocamaz in 1956 by Hasan Kocamaz was near Robert's College. Muvaffak Falay and İsmet Sıral's groups were popular in that era. Sıral's band consisted of alto saxophonist Hrant Lusigyan,

pianist Nejat Cendeli, bassist Selçuk Sun, drummer Vasfi Uçaroğlu, vocalist Sevinç Tevs, and Sıral himself on tenor saxophone. Hasan Kocamaz, who won the Toots Thielemans' harmonica competition in Paris, also guest participated in the group.¹¹⁰ In the capital of the Turkey, Ankara, jazz music was played in jam sessions in a venue in Yenışehir by Turkish musicians like Selçuk Sun, Muvaffak (Maffy) Falay and Erol Pekcan in the early 1950s. In order to draw attention to the quality of the venue Muvaffak (Maffy) Falay pointed out that 'Highly intellectual people came, sat and listened to us'.¹¹¹

Jazz was also performed in bars visited by the American navy in Istanbul, Izmir, and ports of call. Turkish musicians also had a chance to visit the US and perform on TV.¹¹² Radio was also an instrument used to reach a wider audience and spread jazz. For example, Cüneyt Sermet made jazz programmes for Ankara Radio's Western Music Department, while Arif Mardin's compositions became popular in VOA.¹¹³ In the 1950s Faruk Akel's Orchestra played jazz on TRT (Turkish Radio and Television).¹¹⁴ Celal İnce was another musician that found himself in the public spotlight when his success on VOA was widely covered at the time.¹¹⁵

In this atmosphere, Dizzy Gillespie was the first jazz musician to visit Turkey in 1956. A dream come true, for many Turks it was their first chance to listen live to a real jazz orchestra. Musicians and jazz lovers welcomed him at Ankara's Esenboğa Airport on 22 April. A day later he performed at the Turkish American Society. A member from his orchestra even gave a jazz music conference at the Faculty of Political Science of Ankara University.¹¹⁶ Before his concert at the Turkish American Club, he noticed a small crowd outside the hall. After convincing the authorities that the concert should not be VIPs only, he performed for everyone that wanted to listen.¹¹⁷ He also played at the Taksim Municipal Casino, Saray Cinema, and organized a jam session with various Turkish jazz musicians. Throughout the voyage, Turkish and American musicians competed musically. Gillespie's goal was to introduce jazz to new audiences, his actions such as playing for all and collaborating with local musicians show how his vision was more democratic and inclusive than that of the State Department.¹¹⁸

Another aspect of this cultural diplomacy was to find out which cultural values of the targeted country could help strengthen the bilateral relationship. In this context, - Gillespie's meeting with a Turkish trumpeter Muvaffak (Maffy) Falay and his gift of Turkish slippers are exemplary. According to Falay, Gillespie was astonished when he listened Falay's trumpet playing when musicians went to meet him at the airport playing a song called 'American Goodbye'.¹¹⁹ Gillespie was regarded as 'an effective demonstration of the creativity and vitality of American life'.¹²⁰ Gillespie, Quincy Jones, and Cüneyt Sermet developed a friendship and had time to talk about jazz, play ches, and drink. Education was also an important issue for musicians, so when Cüneyt Sermet was accepted to Berklee College of Music, he wrote a book about jazz.¹²¹ Arif Mardin also had a conversation with Quincy Jones in which they exchanged both music and ideas. Quincy Jones took Mardin's musical arrangements, compositions to the US and as a result of Quincy's efforts VOA ordered three musical arrangement from Mardin.¹²² These relationships were strengthened after Jones sponsored Mardin to study at Berklee under his eponymous scholarship.¹²³

Dave Brubeck was another musician whose tour included several concerts in Turkey in March 1958, including shows in İzmir, Ankara, and İstanbul. Sometimes

distinctions were made between the aims of the states and the musicians. For example, from the State Department's point of view, Brubeck was just 'one more front in the Cold War'. Brubeck, however, preferred to think of his music as an 'instrument for peace, rather than a Cold War weapon'.¹²⁴ He himself remained committed to a brand of cultural diplomacy that emphasized the relationship between jazz, America, freedom, and democracy.¹²⁵ He was the first musician to be sent across the Iron Curtain into East Germany without a visa.¹²⁶ On his Turkey tour, he received reviews that were both musical and personal. (As the band departed, for example, two boys at the airport shook their fists at the plane). 'The band also attended receptions and informal talks and mingled with Turkish musicians, composers, and jazz enthusiasts in Turkey's largest urban centres',¹²⁷ giving jazz audiences a chance to learn more about their interests.

Dave Brubeck's visit, in particular, was regarded as a chance for audiences and musicians. There was a large amount of information about his lifestyle and music. As the quartet arrived in İstanbul, they were greeted by a Turkish band who serenaded them with the quartet's own arrangement of 'Tea for Two'. They played with Turkish, French, Italian musicians in Ankara.¹²⁸ 'Based on this recording and his recollections of Turkey, Brubeck composed "The Golden Horn", whose title is the name of the inlet of the Bosphorus that divides İstanbul'.¹²⁹ He tried to build a bridge between Europe and Asia by combining local characteristics of Turkish music with Western harmony.¹³⁰ In his Ankara concert Paul Desmond and Dave Brubeck played with Erol Pekcan, Selçuk Sun and Melih Gürel.¹³¹ He performed concerts in Ankara, İstanbul and İzmir. His visit to Ankara was emphasized in newspapers as a joyful event, especially for NATO members and jazz fans. There, it became clear that institutions like the Turkish American Association and the American Library had had an important role in arranging the meeting of the quartet with the local press and audiences.¹³² Louis Armstrong, then regarded as the King of Jazz, also visited Turkey in 1959. His and Gene Kruppa's visits were kind of a propaganda tour organized by the government to send musicians to Europe, the Middle East and the Far East.¹³³

As discussed above, jazz music became an element of US soft power during the early Cold War period for use on foreign political targets. The US benefited significantly from this cultural tool in its relations with Turkey, which had a long history of Westernization. The relationship between the two states was based not only on economic and military interests, but on cultural ties which were crucial to strengthening the relationship. In this sense, musicians were the key agents of cultural diplomacy by singing their songs and legitimizing new and different 20th century.

Conclusion

Although jazz music has a long history in Turkey, it gained special importance and became more popular among Turkish musicians after the 1950s. Along with exchange diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and international broadcasting, it was used to consciously strengthen the Turkey-US relationship. Though not used alone, it was a major use of soft power at a time when it was becoming clear that military power was losing importance. As the voice of different cultural values, music was effective in getting a wider message to a larger audience than many traditional avenues of communication.

Even though its impact may be considered limited, jazz's popularity was also related to the political, social and economic conditions in Turkey. When the capitalist liberal economic Western model was accepted, it became much easier to accept the latter's cultural values. Looking at where this music was performed and its audiences: it would appear that at least in the 1950s, jazz was limited to university students and intellectuals in Turkey's large cities. With national and international festivals, and developments in communication systems, jazz music audiences and listeners in the 1990s or 2000s are those who have adopted a Western identity/lifestyle through Western style education, and know English. The ongoing interest in jazz music in the Turkish urban community (especially among university students and intellectuals) shows that the Cold War public diplomacy investment in Turkey is still valid, thus illustrating that soft power is a long-term investment in another country's population

The original aspect of this article is its dealing with the influence of jazz music, a little mentioned element of the exercise of soft power by the US in its relationship with Turkey during the early Cold War period. In this context, article made use of official documents, newspapers, journals, online sources to reveal how cultural diplomacy was, and continues to be, perceived and transferred by states, musicians and the public in bilateral relations.

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- [122] Batu Akyol, *Joe Mardin* in *Caz Çok Zor Söyleşiler*, (İstanbul: Kara Plak Yayınları, 2016) p.120
- [123] When Arif Mardin returned from America. He met with Emin Fındıkoğlu and gave him lesson about music. With his return to America, he arranged a scholarship from Berklee for Fındıkoğlu. For details: Batu Akyol, *Emin Fındıkoğlu* in *Caz Çok Zor Söyleşiler*, (İstanbul: Kara Plak Yayınları, 2016), p. 54. This is another important example about how musicians use their network and contribute to each other’s career.
- [124] Stephen A. Crist, ‘Jazz as Democracy? Dave Brubeck and Cold War Politics’, *The Journal of Musicology* 26 (2) (2009), p.137. Originally received from: Dave Brubeck, ‘A Time to Remember’ (unpublished autobiography, co-authored with Iola Brubeck).
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