

Echoes of Home:
The Diasporic Performer and the Quest for “Armenianness”

By

Michael Turabian

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Supervised by Dr. Dillon Parmer

Department of Music

Faculty of Arts

University of Ottawa

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Abstract

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Current scholarship recognizes that music is a powerful channel that can manifest individual identity. But such research takes for granted music as a symbol of collective cultural identity, and, therefore, neglects examining how music in general, but musical performance in particular, functions to produce and reproduce a society at large. Indeed, what is missing is a rigorous understanding of not only how the act of performing forms collective identity, but also how it acts as an agency, indeed, perhaps the only agency that enables this process. As Thomas Turino suggests, externalized musical practice can facilitate the creation of emergent cultural identities, and help in forming life in new cultural surroundings. The present thesis examines the dynamics between cultural identity and music from the perspective of the performing musician. By examining musical situations in the context of the Armenian – Canadian diaspora, I will show how performers themselves both evoke feelings of nostalgia for the homeland and maintain the traditions of their culture through the performance event, while simultaneously serving as cultural ambassadors for the Armenian – Canadian community. My thesis outlines four key themes that are crucial in understanding the roles of musicians in Armenian culture. They are tradition bearer, educator, cultural ambassador, and artisan. As boundaries between peoples and nations progressively blur, I conclude that performance proves a vital medium where a search for national identity can occur, frequently resulting in the realization of one’s ethnic identity. Ultimately, without the labors of the performing musician, music would be unable to do the social work that is necessary in forming cultural, social, or even personal identities.

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certainly keep their questions in mind and apply their suggestions to my work in Armenian musicology.

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Chapter One

“Bringing it all Back Home”:

Musical Performance and the Construction of Armenian Diasporic Identity

In Search of Cultural Identity

Then take me disappearin' through the smoke rings of my mind,
Down the foggy ruins of time, far past the frozen leaves,
The haunted frightened trees, out to the windy beach,
Far from the twisted reach of crazy sorrow,
Yes, to dance beneath the diamond sky with one hand waving free,
Silhouetted by the sea, circled by the circus sands,
With all memory and fate, driven deep beneath the waves,
Let me forget about today until tomorrow.

Hey Mister Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to.
Hey Mister Tambourine Man, play a song for me,
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come following you.
-Bob Dylan, *Hey Mr. Tambourine Man*-¹

Echoes are potent forms of social and cultural communication. By acting them out, one can recount ancient tales of heroes and villains, peoples and places, and evoke rich imagery of one's lost home. They also convey broad cultural ideas and identities, as well as provide a space in which these identities can be sustained and disseminated for the benefit of future generations. Ultimately, they exhibit a powerful capacity to contribute towards social and cultural cohesiveness, and are critical in cultivating what Benedict Anderson terms an “imagined community.”² Through the process of re-enactment, echoes come to speak for the original, carrying over the residue of a cultural past that subsequently affect and dialectically shape the

¹ Christopher Ricks, *Dylan's Visions of Sin* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 140.

² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

environment of the present. This study is a result of a long-standing interest in Armenian folk and classical music in general, and on issues surrounding the performer's role in the construction and maintenance of an Armenian diasporic identity in particular.

In our age of global culture, as nations and peoples continue to interact and traverse, there exists an increased urgency in which a quest for one's own cultural identity takes place. Just as language can mediate the construction and negotiation of emergent identities, music too can operate as a source of cultural communication.³ As such, music has a profound influence on developing our identities, our values, and our belief systems. As Thomas Turino suggests, musical practice facilitates the formation of individual, as well as group identities, and plays a significant role in mediating life in especially new social and cultural surroundings.⁴

The focus of this thesis project centers on how music is used in an effort to disseminate cultural identity, while at the same time examining the role of the performer as the chief architect of this process. I stress that without the social work carried out by the performing musician, music would be unable to shape identities, or indeed influence culture in the way current

³ Benedict Anderson states that language is able to mediate the construction of an imagined community: "Languages thus appear rooted beyond almost anything else in contemporary societies. At the same time, nothing connects us affectively to the dead more than language . . . there is a special kind of contemporaneous community which language alone suggests – above all in the form of poetry and songs. Take national anthems, for example, sung on national holidays. No matter how banal the words and mediocre the tunes, there is in this singing an experience of simultaneity. At precisely such moments, people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody. The image: unisonance. Singing the Marseillaise, Waltzing Matilda, and Indonesia Raya provide occasions for unisonality, for the echoes physical realization of the imagined community." Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: UK, Verso, 1983), 144-45.

⁴ Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology, 2008), 32.

scholarship claims.⁵ For without the performer and the performance, the abstract concept of the echo would remain just that, an abstract concept rather than a reality. In much the same way as the *Tambourine Man* emerges as a musical leader, acting as an almost shamanistic figure for his audience, the musician works in a similar fashion, as standard bearer of a culture's traditions, as educator, and as artisan. Consequently, from a strictly cultural perspective, the musician is elevated to the status of cultural hero.

Volunteering as the organist for the St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church in Ottawa, I have become increasingly aware of how important actual musical practice is in maintaining the cohesion of culture and identity. By examining the roles of various Armenian – Canadian musicians as case examples, as well as calling upon my own performative experiences, I reveal how performers evoke feelings and tropes associated with nostalgia, and facilitate identity construction through their steadfast engagement in the musical event. In order to give some guiding coordinates for this journey to performative and cultural discovery, this chapter will chart the interconnections between music, performance, and identity, thus sketching out the terrain to be explored in more detail in the subsequent chapters. I will begin however, by providing a brief synopsis of the historical background of Armenian culture.

Armenia: A Brief Historical Background

The Armenian people recognize a cultural history that extends back three millennia in regions encompassing present-day Turkey, Iran, and parts of the Caucasus that were formerly

⁵ Within certain pockets of scholarly discourse, there is an ease at which the terms “culture” and “music” become synonymous with one another, to such an extent that music is merely constructed as a reflection of culture, rather than an active participant within a particular cultural construct.

under Soviet rule. Following a lineage that incorporates several ancient civilizations, among them the Urartian Empire (Sixth Century B.C.), the borders of Armenia have frequently fluctuated over its long and rather tumultuous history. Despite periods of relative autonomy, over the centuries Armenia was subjected to Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Persian, Ottoman, and Soviet conquest.⁶

In 1915, during the course of World War I, and under the auspices of the Young Turk Government, Ottoman Turkey instituted a policy of forced resettlement. Coupled with ruthless practices, this attempt to purge Armenian presence in Western, as well as parts of Eastern Armenia, resulted in an estimated one million Armenian deaths (accounts of the number of deaths vary depending on the source).⁷ Together with other de-stabilizing factors throughout Armenia's long history, what has come to be called the Armenian Genocide eventually gave rise to a diasporic narrative within Armenian cultural identity, one that continues to leave its marks in the psyche of present-day Armenians. In an effort to validate their own national and ethnic identities, contemporary Armenians continue to work in maintaining their culture not only within the borders of their existing homeland, the Republic of Armenia, but also, and more to the point of my argument, across the diaspora.

The wandering way of life is one of several themes associated with the Armenian diaspora, a theme that is reinforced by the rediasporization of Armenians from areas in the Middle East to Europe and North America. Since the Genocide, the dominant discourse portrayed the diaspora as a temporary condition and the guiding rhetoric was an eventual return

⁶ Isabel Churchill-Kaprielian, *A History of Armenians in Canada* (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2005), xxxviii-xli.

⁷ *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Armenia."

to the homeland.⁸ Yet, the rhetoric associated with this return is just that, pure rhetoric. While the romance of a return home is a palpable feeling among most diasporic Armenians, for the most part, the return has yet to be realized at a very large scale. The discourse associated with the return to the homeland serves more as a cultural unifier than a fully invested practical objective. While prolonged exile may well evoke nostalgia and promote yearning to return to the homeland, the notion remains purely hypothetical and highly romantic at best.⁹ This perspective is in line with William Safran's definition of diaspora, in which he suggests that the idea of the homeland is born out of a "collective memory" and "vision" and that there is a certain "myth" with respect to returning to the homeland.¹⁰

Musical *Souvenirs* and the Mythical Journey Home

To see a poet in exile – as opposed to reading the poetry of exile – is to see exile's antinomies embodied and endured with a unique intensity. Several years ago I spent some time with Faiz Ahmad Faiz, the greatest of contemporary Urdu poets. He was exiled from his native Pakistan by Zia's military regime, and found a welcome of sorts in strife-torn Beirut. Naturally his closest friends were Palestinian, but I sensed that, although there was an affinity of spirit between them, nothing quite matched – language, poetic convention, or life-history. Only once, when Eqbal Ahmad, a Pakistani friend and fellow exile, came to Beirut, did Faiz seem to overcome his sense of constant estrangement. The three of us sat in a dingy Beirut restaurant late one night, while Faiz recited poems. After a time, he and Eqbal stopped translating his verses for my benefit, but as the night wore on it did not matter.

⁸ Denise Aghanian, *The Armenian Diaspora: Cohesion and Fracture* (Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 2007), 165.

⁹ Ani Yazedjian. "Reconstructing the Armenian: The Genocide as a Cultural Marker in the Reification of Armenian Identity," in *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, ed. Thomas Turino and James Lea (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 39-50.

¹⁰ Safran explores the role of the memories and myths of a lost homeland in each of the following communities (Jewish, Armenian, Polish, Turkish, Palestinian, Corsican, "black American," Gypsy or Romani, Parsi, Polish, Chinese, Cuban, and Indian) examining the differences between those that seek a physical return to their homeland and those that extend support and solidarity to it while struggling to maintain their culture in the host country.

What I watched required no translation: it was an *enactment* of a homecoming expressed through defiance and loss, as if to say, “Zia, we are here”.¹¹

Through poetic enactment, the exiled Pakistani poet Faiz was able to elicit images and reminiscences of *home*, thereby forming a connection between his own exilic reality, and his highly nostalgic and poetically-constructed imagined homeland. While initially, both Faiz and his compatriot Iqbal provided Edward Said, the famous Palestinian born cultural commentator and literary critic, with direct translations of the poetry selections (although Said exhibited countless talents, speaking Urdu was not among them), the enactments were so powerful and engaging that even a non-Urdu speaker like Said would not be in need of a full translation of the poetry selections. Although this experience was, for all intents and purposes, a poetry reading, the term “reading” is a glaring misnomer bearing in mind the performative nature of this poetic encounter. As Said submitted in his written account, he was essentially witness to a bona fide performance of identity. As Said attests early on in his account, “to see a poet in exile, as opposed to reading the poetry of exile, is to see exile’s antinomies embodied and endured with a unique intensity.” Indeed similar parallels can be drawn to encompass music, as witnessing a performer embody exile through the visceral engagement of musical performance is a monumentally different experience than that of listening to a recording of exilic music, or, more to the point, reading a score of music about some exilic narrative. Like poetic enactment, musical performances can also evoke images, memories, and echoes associated with a particular place and time, echoes prompting strong feelings of cultural representation and *algia* [longing] for

¹¹ Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, ed. Edward Said (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 174-75.

home.¹² As Turino and Lea suggest, music has a unique place in realizing and presenting identity because, as is the case with all art, music is framed as a heightened form of representation, which, through public performance yields particularly complex emotional and psychological effects.¹³ Indeed, once externalized through public artistic forums, music constructs individual subjective meanings which directly shape the dynamics of both group and individual identities. Such is the potency of music that it can transcend both time and space, and through its performance, can transport the listening audience back to their imagined homeland. In the Armenian diaspora this transportation involves a mythical return to *Hayastan* [Armenia]. However, this return is short-lived, for as soon as the performances end, the audience members are abruptly brought back to the present, at which point they experience feelings of *algia* once again.

Such a phenomenon aligns closely with what Susan Stewart's calls the "souvenir."

According to Stewart, the souvenir has the inherent power to collapse both time and space. In Stewart's words:

The souvenir seeks distance (the exotic in time and space), but it does so in order to transform and collapse distance into proximity or with approximation with the self. . . . The souvenir is not simply an object appearing out of context, an object from the past incongruously surviving in the present: rather, its function is to envelop the present within the past. Souvenirs are magical objects because of this transformation. Yet the magic of the souvenir is a kind of failed magic . . . The place of origin must remain unavailable in order for desire to be generated.¹⁴

¹² Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xv.

¹³ Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology, 2008), 32.

¹⁴ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984), 132-55.

Although Stewart's theory regards the souvenir as a physical object, the analogy is nevertheless applicable to music, and is useful in describing how music is used to unify members of particular social or ethnic groups. In the Armenian diaspora, musical souvenirs externalized through public artistic forums both aid in the reification of Armenian identity and reinforce the ties that exist between the diaspora and the mythical Armenian Homeland.

In an effort to explain how musical performances elicit strong feelings of home, I turn to the work of Georgina Born who contends that, "it is because music lacks denotative meaning in contrast with visual and literary arts, that it has particular powers of connotation."¹⁵ Born continues:

Music's hyperconnotative character, its intense cognitive, cultural, and emotional associations, and its abstraction, are perhaps what give it a unique role in the imaginary constitution of cross-cultural and intersubjective desire, of exotic charge for the other culture or music in social fantasy. But these qualities are also means for *self*-idealization and, through repetition of the existing tropes and genres of identity-in-music (national anthems, patriotic songs), for the reinforcement of extant collective identities.¹⁶

According to Sylvia Alajaji, this lack of denotative meaning gives music the power to "appeal directly to emotional sensibilities that can ultimately influence how individuals think and feel at any given time."¹⁷ It is this capability present in music, that when performed in public forums, can result in feelings of nostalgia, evoke childhood memories, and under extraordinary circumstances, mythically transport the listening audience back to their homeland.

¹⁵ Georgina Born, "Music and the Representation: Articulation of Sociocultural Identities," in *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 32.

¹⁶ Ibid., 33.

¹⁷ Sylvia Alajaji, "Diasporic Communities and Negotiated Identities: Trauma, Recovery, and the Search for the Armenian Musical Voice" (PhD diss., University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music, 2009), 2-3.

Music, Identity, and the Quest for “Armenianness”

Recently, musicology has turned its attention to issues of identity and its many interconnections with music. An example is the International Musicological Society, the 19th Congress of which is entirely dedicated to *Musics, Cultures and Identities*. The call for proposals, for instance, explains how identity shapes and is shaped by musical activity, as well as providing some key insight to musicology’s move to a more identity-centered perspective:

In an age that calls itself “multicultural,” and with the rise or renewal of ethnic and religious conflicts, the problems of identity construction have gained the center of world attention. Moreover, “identity” operates at multiple levels of the human experience, not only ethnic and religious, but political, sexual, generational, and so on. Furthermore, and throughout most of its history, musicology has relied on the assumption – itself more or less consciously “identity-related” one – that its object of study was the Western art music tradition, to which Other traditions were to be compared. It is only in relatively recent years that musicology has systematically addressed questions of identity, recognizing that music is one of the means through which different identities are shaped and enter into relational networks.¹⁸

This move towards identity-centered scholarship is perhaps indicative of the increasing progressive nature witnessed within the discipline. However, there remain a few concerns that need to be elaborated regarding the relationship between identity and music. Much of the literature that centers on this issue, while it admits that music has a complex relationship with ethnic or social identities, nevertheless does not theorize the relationship with sufficient rigor. A notable exception is found in the work of Richard Middleton, who suggests that the central idea behind identity-centered studies is the misconception that some sort of homology exists between music and social or cultural structures.¹⁹ Middleton heavily criticizes scholarship’s rather un-

¹⁸ International Musicological Society 19th Congress, “Musics, Cultures, and Identities,” <http://www.ims2012.net/calls> (accessed 27 February, 2011).

¹⁹ Richard Middleton, “‘I heard it through the grapevine.’ Popular music in culture,” in *Studying Popular Music* (Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press, 1990), 166.

nuanced view that situates music as simply a representation or reflection of culture and identity. Middleton puts forward the argument that cultural meanings are achieved through the act of musical practice alone, and is not simply just expressed within the work itself. His argument really echoes Anthony Stokes' perspective who puts forward the argument that in order to achieve a fully fleshed out understanding of the interrelationships between music and identity, one would need to fully understand music's place without dissociating music from its concrete social or cultural environment, in short, understanding the relationships between music and identity through the guise of musical performance. I fully endorse this position as espoused by both Middleton and Stokes, a view that situates music as an active participant in the influencing of culture. Rather than endorsing the often held view that privileges culture's influence over music, Middleton and Stokes essentially flip this paradigm. Another issue that exists is the ease with which certain pockets of scholarship situate "culture" as a universal trope implicit in any artistic practice and represented as pre-formed entities. Regarding the place of culture in music Middleton states the following:

A tendency to treat the category of "culture" as transparent and universal, and therefore its accommodation as purely pragmatic, needs to be brought up against its historicity: as Francis Mulhern has pointed out, "culture" is a *topic*, and, as one of the most successful topics of late-modern discourse, has assumed the status of a commonplace – one of "those places in discourse in which an entire group meets and recognizes itself" (Bourdieu). It is this dimension of the commonsensical that explains how culture can so often still be taken for granted.²⁰

Poststructuralist accounts often criticize the culturalist position for seeing culture as a pre-constituted entity that can simply be expressed through artistic means. The poststructuralists

²⁰ Richard Middleton, "Introduction," in *The Cultural Study of Music: a critical introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (London: Routledge Press, 2003), 3.

adopt the perspective that cultural meanings are generated through the process of enactment or interpretation.²¹

As noted earlier, Stokes suggests that “some social events are thought to need an atmosphere which can be created only by music (and dance). This gives us a way of seeing how meanings are generated in the process of signification without divorcing them from a concrete social context.”²² Fundamentally, what lies at the heart of Stokes argument is that through public expression of music (and dance), individuals are able to generate cultural meanings that influence the dynamics of the culture in question. As I argue in my thesis, externalized musical performance is crucial in facilitating identity construction and shaping the cultural milieu of any culture group, not least of all the Armenian diasporic community. Over the course of this thesis I adopt Hall’s broader notion of identity which includes personal, social or cultural identity and sees them as always being in a state of flux:

Perhaps, instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a “production,” which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation.²³

Before moving any further, it is necessary to define ‘Armenianness’ and how the term will be used in the context of this thesis. Armenianness was first coined by Anny Bakalian in *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian*. In her work, Bakalian addresses how

²¹ Richard Middleton, “‘I heard it through the grapevine.’ Popular music in culture,” in *Studying Popular Music* (Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press, 1990), 168.

²² Martin Stokes, “Introduction,” in *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), 124.

²³ Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” in *Identity: Community, Culture, and Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 392.

Armenians are able to sustain their cultural identity in the American meltingpot, balancing their dual identity as Armenian-Americans. Her study examines how assimilation from an Armenian cultural perspective is a form of cultural suicide. She states that by maintaining certain cultural markers such as language, and religious practices, that this would ultimately stave off the possibility of assimilating into the broader American meltingpot. As such she establishes Armenianness as a way in which individuals of said culture can maintain their ethnic identity and engage with it on a highly emotional level. As the title of her work suggests, Armenianness is a result of a process that would take an individual on a journey from *being* to *feeling* Armenian.²⁴ This definition I feel is inadequate and leaves me with more questions rather than answers, so I would like to build on Bakalian's definition.

The main question is this, what is the catalyst that leads one on a journey to *feeling* Armenian? What is missing from Bakalian's definition is an intermediary between *being* and *feeling*. I believe the intermediary is disguised in the form of an event or action. While she addresses church-based events as highly important in the construct of the Armenian community, at no point does she address externalized events such as musical concerts, or any other forms of public artistic practices. In essence, I adopt the perspective that Armenianness can only be achieved through a practice of sorts, one that can emotionally connect the individual closer to their culture. This is often achieved through physical engagement in certain cultural practices. From a musical perspective this would be achieved through one's interaction with performance, whether as an audience member, or crucially as a performer. Keeping these terms in mind, I define Armenianness as a contemporary condition achieved by a visceral and/or emotional

²⁴ Anny Bakalian, *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1993).

participation in a cultural practice that forms a deep seated connection between the individual and the Armenian culture, thus signaling a move from *being* to *feeling* Armenian.

Music as Performative Culture vs. Music as Text

Multiculturalism has prompted the field of musicology to explore how other cultures have influenced the Western Cultural Tradition. This move from “music and culture” to “music *as* culture” is hardly news at all, but is nevertheless significant. In the words of Lawrence Kramer, musicology has “rescinded the exemptions from social utility formerly used to separate classical music from popular music and culture.”²⁵ Although the discipline has opened and evolved since the 1980s, many musicologists remain wedded to the concept of the musical work and text-based analysis. From the early-to-mid eighteenth century onwards, musical works became the basic unit of artistic production and consumption. This was largely due to the increased links between music and state institutions, and the public's ever-widening access to *art music*.²⁶ Significant to the conventional understanding of the musical work is the existence of the musical score. Its purpose of which is to preserve the music in question, but also, and perhaps more crucially, facilitate its reproduction. However, there has been a growing movement away from the score. Stanley Boorman, among others, has contested that the musical score is an imprecise medium and merely functions as a starting point for performance. He argues that even

²⁵ Lawrence Kramer, *Interpreting Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 20-23.

²⁶ Nicholas Cook, *Music: A Brief Insight* (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2010), 105.

the most conservative of scores, such as Urtext editions do not adequately represent the work in question. They only provide the necessary elements on which a performance can be created.²⁷

I am sympathetic to Boorman's central claims that the score merely offers the outline of the musical work, and that the work itself cannot be realized by purely analyzing the textual representation of the music alone. As I argue in my thesis, the work can only be fully understood by experiencing the music firsthand through performing, and that performance itself facilitates the formation and maintenance of musical and cultural identity, an action that can, in extreme cases, transport the listening individual to their imagined homeland. Although the work concept has established a sense of permanence in Western-Art music, and has played a significant role in the development of the field of musicology, the work concept has come at a cost to a performance-oriented musicology. Indeed, a great deal of the critical work accomplished in the field has stressed and elevated the role of the composer and the score over that of the interpreter (musician). However, more recently there has been a shift to performance centered understanding, perhaps mirroring the post-structuralists of the 1960s.

Poststructuralism and the Move Towards Performativity

A comparable kind of thinking was present in literary studies during the first half of the twentieth century. Here, the author was considered far superior to that of the reader or critic. But, during the 1950s various American literary scholars separated authors from their texts in order to clear the way for new kinds of readings of literature. This separation was subsequently expanded albeit in a different manner by, among others, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Roland

²⁷ Stanley Boorman, "The Musical Text," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everest (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 413.

Barthes.²⁸ The crux of their argument was that multiple meanings could be achieved through interpreting any text. This philosophy undermined the belief that a literary work is a fixed and absolute object. Barthes in particular argued on the part of interpretation, stating that textual meaning could only be accomplished through interpretation, thereby elevating the reader's position over the author's. This was particularly evident in his seminal work "Death of the Author."²⁹

In recent years, these widely held beliefs have found their way into music scholarship. There has been a growing rejection of fetishizing the music as text, and an increased consideration of the musician's role as interpreter and cultural disseminator.³⁰ This ultimately has resulted in questioning the work-centered concept by musicologists who have undertaken to examine music from a more performance-based standpoint. For instance, John Rink emphasizes the study of music from the perspective of *sound* and *event*, speaking from a more performance oriented perspective. In "The State of Play in Performance Studies" for instance, Rink states that "this healthy state of affairs partly reflects changes within musicology at large – among others, challenges to the 'work concept' and the presumed identity between score and music; thus, there is a renewed emphasis on music as sound and event."³¹ In addition to Rink's performance oriented perspective, Nicholas Cook expresses his desire to incorporate a reception-based approach to the study of music rather than the dominant work-centered ideology:

²⁸ James Marshall, ed., *Poststructuralism, Philosophy, Pedagogy*, (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Press, 2004).

²⁹ David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, *Musicology: The Key Concepts*, s.v. "musical work" (London: Routledge Press, 2005), 141-45.

³⁰ Carolyn Abbate, "Music Drastic or Gnostic?" *Critical Inquiry* 30, no. 3 (Spring, 2004): 505-36.

³¹ John Rink, "The State of Play in Performance Studies," in *The Music Practitioner: Research for the Music Performer, Teacher, and Listener*, ed. Jane Davidson (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 37-40.

Instead of the detached, nonparticipant viewpoint of the traditional histories and appreciation texts, the reception-based approach says that we can best understand music by being in the middle of it. The reception-based approach assumes that to study music is to study our own participation in it.³²

In Carolyn Abbate's article, "Music Drastic or Gnostic?" she offers a reappraisal of the value of hermeneutic musicological scholarship, ultimately favoring studies that view music as performance [drastic] rather than a textual representation encoded in meaning [gnostic]. In her opening paragraph she opens with a set of questions that are worthy of consideration:

What does it mean to write about performed music? About an opera live and unfolding in time and not an operatic work? Shouldn't this be what we do, since we love music for its reality, for voices and sounds that linger long after they are no longer there? Would considering actual performances simply involve concert or record reviews? And would musicology – which generally bypasses performance, seeking meanings or formal designs in the immortal musical work itself – find itself a wallflower at the ball?³³

By discussing the Armenian performer as my representative example, I will demonstrate how performers work not only to preserve identity, but also establish it within their new cultural surroundings. Rather than constructing music as an object, I speak of music from a participatory perspective.³⁴ This point of view will shed light on the cultural role performers' play in their communities, while enhancing scholarship on the Armenian musical tradition. As Kay Kaufman Shelemay suggests "the ultimate aim of musicology is to contribute to the general study of what can be known of people and their modes of musical expression in relation to other domains of experience."³⁵ From an ethnic perspective the performed event becomes not an alternative subject for study but an essential cultural marker. Examining its workings gives us, the

³² Nicholas Cook, *Music: A Brief Insight* (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2010), 105.

³³ Carolyn Abbate, "Music Drastic or Gnostic?" *Critical Inquiry* 30, no. 3 (Spring, 2004): 505-36.

³⁴ Nicholas Cook, "Analyzing Performance and Performing Analysis," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 239-61.

³⁵ Kay Kaufman Shelemay, "Crossing Boundaries in Music and Musical Scholarship: A Perspective from Ethnomusicology," *The Musical Quarterly* 80, no. 1 (Spring, 1996): 29-30.

musicological community, a more humane approach than that allowed for the ‘work-centered’ and ‘text-based’ approaches to music scholarship.

Literature Review

Although research on Armenian music appears in dissertations and books, much of it is still in languages other than the standard European languages constitutive of mainstream musicology (most of the sources available are either in Russian or Armenian). Perhaps the best-known resource is Vrej Nersessian’s *Essays on Armenian Music*.³⁶ This collection includes articles in English, French and German, all by a host of Armenian musicologists and is therefore considered a significant starting point for research. More recently, translations of older studies have become available as in Komitas Vartabed’s *Armenian Sacred and Folk Music*, which is still considered amongst the most important resources written on the history of the Armenian musical tradition.³⁷

Even more recently, Sylvia Alajaji’s work investigates how notable musical figures in the early twentieth century shaped the Armenian musical discourse. Although her focus remains the Armenian diaspora in Lebanon and the United States, her work not only reveals how music was and, indeed continues to be used to shape the diasporic sense of self and identity, but also speaks of the complex dynamics between diasporic and geographic Armenia, and their relations to other cultures:

³⁶ Vrej Nersessian, ed., *Essays on Armenian Music* (London: Kahn and Averill, 1978).

³⁷ Komitas Vartabed, *Komitas: Essays and Articles*, trans., Vatsche Barsoumian (Pasadena, CA: Drazarck Press, 2001).

I propose that since the nineteenth century, boundaries of what defines Armenian music (from pop to folk to classical) have been continually redrawn, adjusting to the realities presented by years of occupation, the genocide and its aftermath.³⁸

Jonathan Ray McCollom examines the relationships between music, music-making, and ritual performance in the Armenian Apostolic Church. By looking at music-making as a ritual symbol of faith, he explains the meaning of liturgical music practice and its function in teaching the fundamentals of faith. Drawing on the fields of ethnomusicology, theology, and ritual studies, McCollom explores the theoretical orientations and methodological strategies that assist in the interpretation of music in ritual contexts:

I believe music does evoke meaningful representations that are grounded in symbolic performance. Music has the power to refer to other things outside of the music itself and I believe it is this power of association that we may find the most useful method to determine the importance of liturgical music in ritual action, mainly with identity.³⁹

Finally, Ian Goldstein's study looks at music's role in cultural transmission, change, and in maintaining a diasporic collective identity in New England's Armenian community. Drawing on his ethnographic research, Goldstein conveys personal experiences of several "traditional culture bearers," and musicians active in the community, illuminating the various methods in which these members pass on their music, and with it, a sense of personal and communal identity.⁴⁰

There are many resources outside the area of Armenian musicology that deal with the role of the musician in ethnic cultures. For instance, Natalie Zelensky's dissertation, examines the function of Russian popular and sacred music in the greater New York metropolitan area. She distinguishes between four social processes: constructing an authentically "Russian" imagined

³⁸ Sylvia Alajaji, "Diasporic Communities and Negotiated Identities: Trauma, Recovery, and the Search for the Armenian Musical Voice" (PhD diss., University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music, 2009), 2-3.

³⁹ Jonathan Ray McCollum, "Music, Ritual and Diasporic Identity: A Case Study of the Armenian Apostolic Church" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2004), 31.

⁴⁰ Ian Goldstein, "*Echoes of Armenia*: Diasporic Music, Transmission, and Social Memory in New England" (M.A. Thesis, Tufts University, 2010).

community; creating, negotiating and dissolving preexisting social boundaries; preserving an “authentic” Russian culture; and performing multiple, and potentially contested diasporic identities. In an effort to interpret her findings, Zelensky employs musical analysis as well as incorporates theories related to nostalgia (such as those put forward by Svetlana Boym), diaspora, and studies relating to emotion.⁴¹ Zelensky’s research demonstrates the importance of music in enabling a delicate interplay between communal expressions of a mythic homeland and the forging of new identities. Her dissertation points to two broader findings: the importance between communal versus individual expressions of identity, and the need for understanding and studying the role that emotion plays in understanding identity formation, particularly among later-generation diasporans.⁴²

Turino and James Lea co-edited a collection of essays entitled *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, which was borne out of a two-semester interdisciplinary seminar held during the spring and fall semesters of 1998 at the University of Illinois. In his opening essay, Turino discusses the role of literature, visual arts, architecture, and music and their respective place in diasporic communities. Turino observes that physical signs such as facial expressions, body motion, posture, physical articulation of the music, and inner feeling become evident during performance. All of these elements make the musical performance a rich semiotic field that has the capability of producing particularly complex emotional, physical and psychological

⁴¹ A very interesting account on the study of nostalgia was put together by Svetlana Boym. In her work she guides the reader through the post-communist cities, such as Moscow and Berlin, and explores the imagined homelands of writers and artists like Vladimir Nabokov and Ilya Kabakov. She also examines the souvenir collections of ordinary immigrants. In doing so, Boym sheds light on the history and affect of nostalgia as a symbol of our modern human condition. Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xv.

⁴² Natalie Zelensky, “Music in exile, Constructing the Russian Diaspora in New York through Russian Popular and Sacred Music” (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 2009), 278.

effects. His conclusion is that all of these elements culminating together provide a perfect means in representing and articulating diasporic identities.⁴³

Turino suggests that although artistic practices are sources of pleasure, that pleasure alone does not explain why human beings have been moved to, among other things, enact dramas, recite poetry, make musical sounds, engage in the visceral, and at times ritualistic nature of dance, and build tall architectural wonders that do far more than provide shelter. Turino adopts the view shared by anthropologist and scientist Gregory Bateson, who argues that public forms of artistic expression enable people to articulate the collective identities that are fundamental in forming and sustaining social and cultural identities. Bateson and Turino argue that artists communicate through the presentation of forms and patterns that serve as, in the words of Bateson “integrated maps of sensation, imagination, and experience.”⁴⁴ Turino expands on Bateson’s perspective by stating that the arts have the potential to unite social and cultural groups, thus strengthening the collective identities shared by these groups.

John Baily's essay *The Role of Music in the Creation of an Afghan National Identity, 1923-73*, provides interesting insight on how musical practice has shaped the formation of the Afghan culture. Baily discusses how music is disseminated from generation to generation, and how music functions as a way of giving a people a sense of collective identity:

The Child begins to learn the musical style of his culture as he [or she] acquires the language and the emotional patterns of his [or her] people. This style is thus an important link between an individual and his [or her] culture, and later in life brings back to the adult unconscious the emotional texture of the world which formed his [or her] personality . . . Thus from the point of view of its social function, the primary effect of music is to give the listener a feeling of security, for it symbolizes the place where he [or she] was born, his [or her] earliest childhood

⁴³ Thomas Turino, “Introduction,” in *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, ed. Thomas Turino and James Lea (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 17.

⁴⁴ Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology, 2008), 53.

satisfactions, his [or her] religious experience, his [or her] pleasure in community doings – any or all of these personality-shaping experiences.⁴⁵

The concept of cultural identity and how music works to express it remains the main theme throughout this body of research. But such research, because it takes for granted music as a symbol of identity, fails to address how music is disseminated to a culture at large. Indeed, what is missing is a rigorous understanding of not only how music making itself facilitates the formation of identity, but also who precisely is responsible for facilitating this formative process.

Research Methodology

In order to provide evidence for my thesis topic, I will be employing a number of research methodologies. Primarily, I will analyze musicological and ethnomusicological resources that focus on how music functions in diasporic communities, and how performers themselves disseminate their cultural music in new social and cultural settings. Since my topic centers on Armenian music, I will be working closely with Armenian scholarship, building on the concept of identity by stressing the importance of the performer as a preserver of said culture. A portion of my research will deal with primary documentation written on the Armenian music tradition.

Fortunately, I have been able to connect with music societies throughout Canada and the United States who have a wealth of resources on aspects of Armenian cultural life. One major source I came across is Isabel Churchill-Kaprielian's study on Armenians and their history in Canada entitled *Like Our Mountains, A History of Armenians in Canada*. Although her work

⁴⁵ John Baily, "Music and the Afghan National Identity," in *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), 45-60.

does not explicitly focus on the music of the culture, she addresses how music as well as other forms of cultural activities functioned as the diaspora in Canada grew.⁴⁶ *The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research* based in Boston, MA, boasts a plethora of resources on the topics of Armenian culture and history. From this research facility, I was able to track down a recent translation of Komitas Vartabed's *Essays on Armenian Music*, which presents a wealth of information on the subject at hand. I was also able to come across a copy of Vrej Nercessian's *Essays on Armenian Music*. By working through these and other resources, I will address and highlight the importance of performance and the musical event from a cultural perspective.

My investigation would not be complete without the voices of the Armenian – Canadian cultural and music community. As my thesis centers on Armenian music and the role of the performer, I will draw on the perspectives from all areas of the music discipline represented in the Armenian – Canadian community, as well as other members of the diaspora, thus incorporating a fieldwork component in my paper. The fieldwork for this study will be primarily conducted in Ottawa and Toronto. I am focusing on these two cities not only for the sheer number of Armenians residing in them, but also because many prominent Armenian – Canadian musicians reside there. As performative discussions are beginning to find their feet in musicology, fieldwork offers a human element in our discussions of the musical experience, whether it is borne out of our own practice, or that of a specific group of people. Although I focus my fieldwork on professionally trained musicians, I think it is just as crucial to interview non-musician members of the community, for it is their relationship and reactions to

⁴⁶ Isabel Churchill-Kaprielian, *Like Our Mountains, A History of Armenians in Canada* (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2005), 237-40.

the music produced by the performer that will aid in understanding the role both music and the performer plays in forming a cultural identity. An analysis of these interviews should give a clear image of the Armenian musical community in Canada, and how they have helped maintain their cultural tradition in Canada, both from a historical and contemporary perspective.

Breakdown of Chapters

The following chapter addresses the diasporic narrative in the Armenian folk and classical music canon. Here, I examine how the performance of music associated with exile results in particularly intense feelings of Armenianness that on some level reinforce the pervading discourse associated with a return to the homeland. In an effort to demonstrate how the diasporic narrative is imbued within Armenian folk and classical music I examine two of Komitas' vocal works ("Krun" and "Anduni") from his *Anduni* song cycle [Songs of Yearning]. I provide two forms of analysis for each work. The first is grounded in text and score based analysis, while the second form of analysis is born out of a more performative interpretation. By examining both perspectives I highlight the importance of also looking at these works from the perspective of enactment.

The third chapter situates the musical event as a site for an evocative homecoming. By examining Komitas' *Seven Armenian Dances*, I make a case that this suite possesses certain impressionistic qualities in that they convey certain ethno-symbolic references of the Armenian homeland that when externalized present the audience with an opportunity to engineer a

symbolic return to the Armenian homeland.⁴⁷ Throughout the narrative of this chapter, I situate the performer as being solely responsible in conveying these cultural references to their audience, through such things as manipulation of musical gesture, and exploitation of touch.

The Fourth Chapter is a result of my fieldwork excursions. In this chapter, not only do I employ my own voice, but incorporate the voices of both the Armenian – Canadian and Canadian music community. The questions that reside at the heart of this chapter are: how does musical practice facilitate a search for meaning that culminates in a spiritual return home and simultaneously build towards a new-found identity in the diaspora? And, for a culture that is predicated upon preserving their ethnic identity and other various cultural traditions, how do such things as musical practice assist in this cultural realization? In this chapter, not only do I express that the performer is front and center at the heart of this negotiation process for cultural identity, but also promote fieldwork as a very compelling and personally invested mode of analysis.

⁴⁷ The term “ethno-symbolic” was first coined by Anthony Smith. He defines it as a moveable form of culture that enables people outside of a particular locale to indulge in their own culture. For more information on “Ethno-Symbolic” please consult the following: Anthony Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 9.

Chapter Two

Performing the Past through the Looking Glass of Exile

[The relationship] to the past is not a simple, essential one – it is a constructed one. It is constructed in history, it is constructed politically in part. It is part of narrative. We tell ourselves the stories of the parts of our roots in order to come into contact, creatively, with it. So this new kind of ethnicity – the emergent ethnicities – has a relationship to the past, but it is a relationship that is partly through memory, partly through narrative, one that has to be recovered. It is an act of cultural recovery.⁴⁸
-Stuart Hall-

A hush of expectancy greets the audience as the eminent Armenian – Canadian soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian and her musical collaborator and life partner Serouj Kradjian take to the stage to perform a selection from Komitas' *Anduni* song cycle [Songs of Yearning].⁴⁹ There is a palpable feeling in the audience that what we are about to experience is something unique. Could it be an enactment of identity? Indeed, as Stuart Hall claims, creative expressions of culture allow for a culturally-unified community to come in direct contact with their shared history. This is undoubtedly the case with this communally-invested musical experience. Shifting nervously in the church pew underneath me, I look around at the faces in the audience as the applause continues to thunder, resounding to a crescendo-like climax. Even before a single note is produced, I notice a few of the older-generation Armenians in the pews across from mine

⁴⁸ Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, and Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 392 - 403.

⁴⁹ According to the liner notes of the album entitled *Gomidas Songs*, the *Anduni* song cycle is referred to as "Songs of Yearning," whereas "Anduni," one of the songs in the cycle, is known as "Without a Home." Serouj Kradjian, liner notes, *Gomidas Songs*, Isabel Bayrakdarian (soprano), Nonesuch Records 511487-2, 2008, compact disc.

overcome with a sense of grief, their faces painted with sadness. Suddenly the music begins. Ms. Bayrakdarian delivers the opening words of the majestic folk song, “Krunk” (Crane), in an almost plea-like exclamation, “Krunk, usti k’ugas?” [Crane, where do you come from?]. I gaze over one more time to notice that the facial expressions that were only moments ago awash with sadness are now beaming with a sense of pride. This continuous mixing of emotion is evident in the audience throughout the course of the performance, as gestures signifying sadness are coupled with signs and motions of exaltation.

Reflecting on this performance, it was clear to me that the audience, regardless of ethnicity seemed emotionally dumbfounded by this musical encounter. Although the program insert featured English translations of Komitas’ *Anduni* song cycle, a translation was not necessary. What we were witness to was an enactment of culture.⁵⁰ To my mind, this performance was of broad cultural importance. On a universal level, witnessing or taking part in it, and other performances like it enable the diaspora to stamp their identity on the new communities in which they reside. By doing so, diasporic Armenians are brought face to face with their culture and the narratives of their past. By confronting their past, they are able to bring about collectively a new space in which Armenian identity can be expressed. For the Armenians in the audience, watching Ms. Bayrakdarian’s performance reconnected them to their homeland. Following along the lines of Stewart’s souvenir theory, by bringing the music to life, the

⁵⁰ This musical experience was somewhat parallel to the poetic encounter Said experienced with Pakistani poet Faiz and his compatriot Eqbal. “After a time, he [Faiz] and Eqbal stopped translating his verses for my benefit, but as the night wore on it did not matter. What I watched required no translation: it was an *enactment* of a homecoming.” Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, ed. Edward Said (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 174-76.

performance helped bridge the gap between the homeland and the members of the Armenian diaspora.⁵¹ This ultimately resulted in a transient, albeit necessary return home.

The notions of place and time become of utmost importance when discussing how musical performances help bridge the gap between old and new cultures. On this subject, Stokes, while making reference to Giddens states “that one distinct consequence of modernity is the ‘phantasmagoric’ separation of space from place, as places become ‘thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them.’ This dislocation requires an anxiety ridden process of relocation, or, to use Giddens’ term, ‘reembedding.’”⁵² This is where Bayrakdarian’s performance of the *Anduni* song cycle comes into play. Her performance rearticulated Armenian identity in the Armenian – Canadian diaspora by confronting some of the tropes associated with Armenian identity, primarily the tropes associated with displacement. As dislocation is a dominant trait within the Armenian cultural narrative, performing music that parallels this condition helps on some level to construct an authentically “Armenian” community in the diaspora. The majority of the pieces that Ms. Bayrakdarian performed focused on the exilic narrative. On a certain level, I found it peculiar that performing music associated with exile and loss of identity would result in a reaffirmation of Armenianness. Yet this is exactly what took place. The theme of exile coupled with the notion of cultural formation seems to be two very disparate pieces in a complex puzzle, and yet together they form a kind of symbiotic relationship.

⁵¹ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984), xii.

⁵² Martin Stokes, “Introduction,” in *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), 3.

Throughout the course of this thesis, I argue that a form of “cultural recovery” is at play – “play” employed as the most appropriate word in this performative context. As I argue throughout the course of this thesis, at the heart of this cultural retrieval resides the place of music, but also, and more to the point of my argument, the incredibly potent environment of the culturally invested public spectacle. The critical questions still remain: how is this cultural recovery achieved musically? How is Armenian identity imbued within the narratives of its music? And ultimately, how do enactments of displacement and exile result in the reification of Armenian identity in the diaspora? In this chapter, I argue that performing music that is laced with the tropes and signifiers associated with the Armenian diasporic condition results the reification of Armenian identity in the diaspora. But how is this achieved? To use a term attributed to Said, I think that this reification process takes place, in part, through the “contrapuntal juxtaposition” that is achieved only in musical performance.⁵³ The juxtaposition I am alluding to is a meeting ground in which the past and present become blurred to the point that they occur simultaneously, moving concurrently with one another. Performance serves as that juncture in which the narratives of the past are re-expressed onto a canvas of the present. This juxtaposition ultimately results in a process of reexamination, one that leads to an eventual renegotiation of Armenian identity in the diaspora.

Performing music associated with the exilic narrative is quite popular among both performers and audience members in the Armenian diaspora. Thus the music upon which I draw

⁵³ Contrapuntal Juxtaposition: This term was first used in Said’s essay “Reflections on Exile.” “For an exile, habits of life, expression, or activity in the new environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment. Thus both the new and the old environments are vivid, actual, occurring together contrapuntally. There is a unique pleasure in this sort of apprehension, especially if the exile is conscious of other contrapuntal juxtapositions that diminish orthodox judgment and elevate appreciative sympathy.” Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, ed. Edward Said (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 186.

to punctuate my narrative will occupy the place of displacement and exile. To begin this journey, the opening section of this chapter will examine how the medium of music has the potential to embody the exilic narrative. This section will draw on the work of both Said and Thomas Turino. The second section of the chapter examines two of Komitas' songs from his *Anduni* song cycle; "Krunk" and "Anduni" (for full scores of both Krunk and Anduni please consult pages 114 and 116 respectively). Here, I illustrate how the diasporic narrative has become embedded in much of the Armenian folk and classical music traditions. The third section will demonstrate my own reading of "Krunk" and "Anduni" from two perspectives. The first will be rooted in verbal analogy and score-based modes of analysis, both of which are closely aligned with mainstream musicology. The second will examine the same two vocal pieces, but from a more performance-oriented standpoint. By doing so, I will illustrate how examining these pieces from a performative approach results in a greater understanding of these pieces, and offers a richer, arguably more beneficial perspective than what one would come to expect when examining this music from a purely work-oriented or score-based mode of analysis. By and large, this chapter will address how social work is achieved through the performance of this music. Ultimately, I stress that by looking at performance as both a cultural apparatus used to mark ethnic identity, and as a compelling mode of musical analysis, that this scholarly methodology leads to a greater understanding of the role that expressive practice boasts in forming an authentically imagined community, be it Armenian or otherwise. The fourth and final section of this chapter looks closely at exile in Armenian music, and the how performing the music associated with displacement results in a strengthening of Armenian ethnic identity in the diaspora. Also I address how the performer helps facilitate a communal feeling of "home" through their

enactment of this music. This section will build on Susan Stewart's souvenir theory, while also addressing Svetlana Boym's seminal study on nostalgia.

Music as the Embodiment of Exile

Members of diasporic communities are principally aware of at least two places of significance, their homeland (whether mythic or real) and their present land.⁵⁴ For these diasporic groups, musical performance can be seen as a very compelling cultural tool that marks a group's identity in new cultural communities. As Bohlman suggests, "music exhibits a powerful capacity to contribute to social and communal cohesiveness. It contributes to the building of community, but even more powerfully, it articulates the bulwark that distinguishes one community from another."⁵⁵ The echoes that are a byproduct of performance are present phenomena, while the music that is being externalized is essentially embedded in the past. Musical performances are essentially modern articulations of age-old melodies and harmonies that, when externalized, produce a kind of social work.⁵⁶ The past-present dichotomy associated with performance enables members of diasporic communities to address their respective pasts, while simultaneously negotiating their identities in the present. As Said writes:

Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home; exiles are aware of at least two, and this plurality of vision gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions, an awareness that, to borrow a phrase

⁵⁴ Edward Said, "Reflections on Exile," in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, ed. Edward Said (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 186.

⁵⁵ Philip Bohlman, "Ontologies of Music," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 20-21.

⁵⁶ Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 32.

from music, is *contrapuntal*. For an exile, habits of life, expression, or activity in the new environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment.⁵⁷

I think it is of great significance that Said uses a musical term (contrapuntal) to articulate the “dimensions” of diasporic reality. While Said concedes he is merely borrowing “a *phrase* from music”, it is conceivable to think that perhaps, on an unconscious level, Said realizes that an important association exists between the diasporic condition and the art of music. It is almost as if he were saying that together they would make an ideal marriage of both subject [diaspora] and medium [music]. Perhaps I am making too much of Said’s fleeting reference to music. But what remains unquestionably clear in my mind is that music serves as an intersection, one that simultaneously symbolizes the past while being expressed in the present. Music’s lack of denotative meaning also makes it an ideal medium in maneuvering between what Said terms as “simultaneous dimensions” of diasporic reality. As Georgina Born contends, it is music’s “hyperconnotative” character, coupled with its propensity to evoke intense cognitive and emotionally charged human effects that results in the formation of identities, whether social, cultural, or personal in nature.⁵⁸

The latter half of Said’s quotation is worthy of further consideration. He articulates that for an exile, “expressions” or “activities” in new environments occur in counterpoint to the memory of these experiences in the old environment. The past-present dichotomy associated with the diasporic condition is marked explicitly within Said’s passage. Musically speaking, the echoes presented during performances are created through the images of the past, but at the same

⁵⁷ Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, ed. Edward Said (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 186.

⁵⁸ Georgina Born, “Music and the Representation: Articulation of Sociocultural Identities,” in *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (Berkley: University of California Press, 2000), 32.

time are undoubtedly shaped by the air and time through which they travel [present]. In order for these echoes to be understood, an “expression” or “activity” must be literally performed or embodied. From a musical perspective, the activity in question is the musical performance. This enactment ultimately takes place “against the memory” of the past.⁵⁹ Amongst members of diasporic communities, this often results in heightened feelings of nostalgia and belonging, and in certain cases, distance and dislocation (recalling the poetic enactments of Faiz from the opening chapter).⁶⁰ As Stokes suggests, the musical event evokes and organizes collective memories and presents experiences of place by expressing music associated with the narratives of the past.⁶¹ Without this expression of identity, small or marginalized cultural communities, like the Armenian diaspora, would struggle to assert their identities outside of their own homeland. Engaging in performative acts, whether musical or otherwise, ensures the continuation and survival of these diasporic culture communities.

For the local Armenian diasporic community, the importance of the musical experience cannot be understated. As Turino maintains, “externalized artistic practices and experiences foreground the crucial interplay of the “possible” with the “actual”, an interplay that is, in fact, basic to all experience and yet which often goes unnoticed.”⁶² I would like to append another dimension that Turino neglects to articulate that is specific to the global diasporic narrative; the

⁵⁹ Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, ed. Edward Said (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 185.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 186-89.

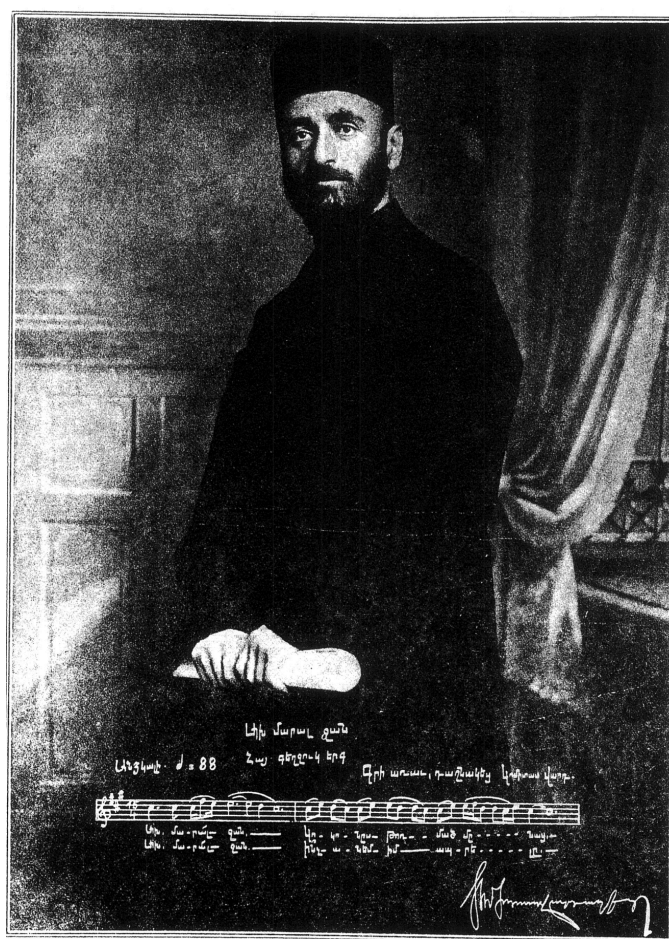
⁶¹ Martin Stokes, “Introduction,” in *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), 3.

⁶² Thomas Turino, “Introduction,” in *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, ed. Thomas Turino and James Lea (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 10.

dimension of the *imaginary*. Let me elaborate. Implicit in any diasporic or exilic group, is the tacit desire to return to the homeland (this is of course in cases where an actual physical homeland exists). As discussed in the previous chapter, the discourse associated with the Armenian diasporic narrative is crafted around the notion of an eventual return home, thus making the diasporic narrative for the world-wide Armenian culture, a thing of the past. Ultimately, the discourse situates the diasporic condition as not an end [exile], but rather a means to an end [homecoming]. However, as we have seen through the theories of Safran, and Aghanian, among others, this return is an unlikely event and therefore the idea of home must be constructed or negotiated through some form of enactment. By engaging in such an enactment, an imaginary representation of home is created in the environment of the diasporic community. This is where the musical event serves its greatest purpose. The performance acts as a site of cultural reconstruction and of temporary solace for those who might not have the opportunity to physically return home. Although the audience fails to viscerally return to their homeland, performing this music that is imbued with the signs and signifiers of the Armenian homeland, allows for an imaginary homeland to be constructed, and also allows for the members of the audience to reify their respective identities as well as return albeit mythically to their musically constructed homeland. But one question remains above all else. How does performing music that dwells in the place of displacement work to reaffirm Armenian identity, not to mention construct an identity specific to new cultural communities? To answer this question, it is necessary to examine a recurring trope present in the narrative of Armenian classical and folk music.

The Diasporic Narrative in Armenian Music

While conducting fieldwork research in rural Armenia, Komitas identified a recurring theme in many of the folk songs he discovered, that of displacement and dislocation. Arguably the most widely known song representing this theme in the Armenian classical and folk music canon is Komitas' "Krunk" (Crane).



ԿՈՄԻՏԱՍ ՎԱՐԴԱՊԵՏ
1869-1935

Figure 2.1 Photograph of Komitas Vartabed, c. 1910. Courtesy of Torkom Manoogian. *The Genius of Komitas*. (New York: T. Manoogian, 1987).

Based on a poem by Hovhaness Toumanian's written in 1896, "Ghartakani Ergn" [Song of the Émigré] presents a text about a love of homeland that is imbued with tropes associated with loss and distance. The text of Toumanian's poem is given below.

Ghartakani Ergn

Groonkn erkinqum champa khani.
Kyyr-kyyr dzen kuta en khavar ambum:
Gharib molorel' chide inch ani
Angut ashkharqum, antsanot champum.

A~kh, es sev chmpen, es djvar champen.
Ardyoq ur kerta, ardyoq shat mnats?
Vorter kjatni es orn ardyoq?
Virter khangchen votners hognats.

Ey~, barov gnas, sireli trchun,
Garun kbacvi, het ku gas depi tun,
Dzaqov-unkerov ku gas depi tun,
Qo bunn hervan, chinaru glkhin . . .

Akh~ es bnaver, unkats sare-sar,
Ou qash em gali, ou qash em gali,
Anqun djri pes dipchum qare-qar,
Anshunch qarin el ernek em tali.

Amen qar, astva~ts, ir teghn e anjaj,
Hents es em menak terits glorvel,
Amen havq, angoo~t, ir bunn uni,
Hents es em gharib champum molorvel . . .

A~kh es sev champen, es djar champen
Ardyoq oor kerta, ardyoq chat mnats?
Vorter khatni es orn ardjoq,
Vorter khangchenvotners hognats . . .

Song of the Émigré

A Crane has lost its way across the heavens,
From yonder stormy cloud I hear him cry,
A traveler o'er an unknown pathway driven,
In a cold world unheeded he doth fly.

Ah, whither leads this pathway long and dark,
My God, where ends it, thus with fears obsessed?
When shall night end this day's last glimmering spark?
Where shall my weary feet tonight find rest?

Farewell, beloved bird, where'er thou roam
Spring shall return and bring thee back once more,
With thy sweet mate and young ones, to thy home
Thy last year's nest upon the sycamore.

But I am exiled from my ruined nest,
And roam with faltering steps from hill to hill,
Like to the birds of heaven in my unrest
Envying the boulders motionless and still.

Each boulder unassailed stands in its place,
But I from mine must wander tempest tossed
And every bird its homeward way can trace,
But I must roam in darkness, lone and lost.

Ah, whither leads this pathway long and dark,
My God, where ends it, thus with fears obsessed?
When shall night end this day's last glimmering spark?
Where shall my weary feet tonight find rest?⁶³

⁶³ Armenian Enlightenment Chronicle, "The Crane," Selected Works of Hovhaness Toumanian, <http://www.armenianhighland.com/main.html> (accessed 27 July 2011).

This poem portrays an Armenian homeland that is desolate and bare, defined by such haunting images as “the sycamore”, “birds from heaven” and “boulders motionless and still.” By superimposing traditional Armenian imagery onto the medium of traditional Armenian songs, the music assumes a formative role in forming associations between the diaspora and the Armenian homeland. Although Toumanian’s poem evokes a feeling of nostalgia and addresses tropes such as displacement, Komitas’ musical adaptation of Toumanian’s text illustrates dispossession by featuring the exile as the sole protagonist in the poem’s narrative. Komitas’ adaptation is articulated as a lamentation. Toumanian’s poem however, features both the exile and the crane as two of the protagonists within the poem’s narrative. This is evidenced by lyrics to Komitas’ adaptation of Toumanian’s epic poem:

Krunk, oosdi gookas,
Dzara em tsaynit,
Krunk, mer ashkharhen kharbrig m choonis?

Oh crane, where do you come from,
I am a slave to your voice,
Oh crane, don’t you have news from our homeland?

Ints badaskhan chdvir, yelar knatsir,
Krunk, mer ashkharhen, de kna, heratsir.
Krunk, mer ashkharhen kharbrig m choonis?

You did not answer me and you flew away,
Oh crane, go, fly away from our land.
Oh crane, don’t you have news from our homeland?⁶⁴

In “Krunk,” the crane acts as a sort of failed mediating party between the exiled individual and the Armenian homeland. The narrative of the song takes the form of a monologue delivered by the exile. One must make note of the disconnection between the exile and the crane. Given the disconnected nature of Krunk, the crane does not provide any moral support or solace to the exiled individual. Rather, the crane is presented as a symbol of the homeland and the tropes and signifiers associated with the Armenian diasporic condition (i.e. displacement, disconnection, loss and nostalgia). The disconnected nature of the song is made ever clearer by the subsequent

⁶⁴ Serouj Kradjian, liner notes, *Gomidaz Songs*, Isabel Bayrakdarian (soprano), Nonesuch Records 511487-2, 2008, compact disc.

line, “ints badaskhan chdvir, yelar knatsir” [You did not answer me and you flew away].

Although the protagonist is sung by a single person, the exile is, on a larger level, representative of the global Armenian diasporic community. Birds, particularly migratory birds are of great significance in Armenian folk imagery, an example of which we can plainly see in “Krunk.” The reason for this attachment towards migratory birds surely reflects the Armenians as a migratory people.⁶⁵ Since the pervading discourse represents diaspora as a temporary condition that centers on an eventual return home, the crane that perennially returns to the Armenian homeland, serves as a symbolic model for the Armenian diasporic people.⁶⁶

Another piece that, as we will see, follows many of the same tropes as “Krunk” is Komitas’ song “Anduni” which also belongs to his *Anduni* song cycle. Quite clearly, the exilic narrative is embedded heavily within the narrative of the song as evidenced by the title and words of the folk song – the words of which are given below:

Sirds nman e en pladz dner,
Godrer kernner, khakhder sner,
Poon bidi tnen mech vayri havker,
Yertam tsi talem en yelman keder,
Elnim tsgeneroo tsakeratsn ger.

Ay, do lag dnaver!

Sev dzov mem dese, sibdagn er polor,
Alin g zarner, cher kharni hiror.

Alin g zarner, cher kharni hiror.
En vorne dese meg dzovn yergtavor,
Anduni sirdn e bghdor oo molor.
Akh, isgi mi lnik srdig seavor.

My heart is like those ruined homes,
The broken beams and collapsed columns,
Where wild birds build their nests,
Let me throw myself in the flooded rivers,
And become food for the little fish

Oh to be without a home!

I’ve seen a black sea turned white all over,
The waves raging, yet the colours not blending.

The waves raging, yet the colours not blending.
Tell me, who has ever seen a sea with such colours?
The heart of the homeless is gloomy and errant.
Ah! May your heart never be so black with grief.

⁶⁵ Sylvia Alajaji, “Diasporic Communities and Negotiated Identities: Trauma, Recovery, and the Search for the Armenian Musical Voice” (PhD diss., University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music, 2009), 33.

⁶⁶ Anny Bakalian, *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1993), 40.

Ay, do lag dnaver!

Oh! To be without a home!⁶⁷

The following section presents two forms of analysis of Komitas' "Krunk" and "Anduni" from his *Anduni* song cycle. The first is rooted in verbal analogy, while the second form of analysis will be more performative in nature. By showing both forms of analysis I will convey to the reader how a more performative reading of these pieces results in a greater understanding of these works, while still demonstrating the diasporic narrative and its presence in the Armenian folk and classical music canon.

Verbal Analogy as a Mode of Musical Analysis

Both vocal works, "Krunk" and "Anduni," are written in a quasi-improvisatory fashion, as is made explicitly clear in the sparse yet languid style of the piano accompaniment and the quasi-recitative style of the vocal line, which is sung with a kind of spoken elocution. Indeed, both works come across as improvisational in style. This is in fact endemic of the entire *Anduni* song cycle. The tempo markings for both songs articulate an improvisational style. In "Krunk" the tempo marking suggests a *Larghetto* approach throughout, and in the case of "Anduni," a *Largo ad libitum* feel, this signifying a degree of performative freedom. Both works exhibit a degree of openness and breadth of sound quality that in both "Krunk" and "Anduni" is first manifested in the opening utterances of the respective piano accompaniments. A closer look at "Krunk" shows that the opening measures feature the piano centering on the key of D. Although, upon first listen, the introductory four-bar motive does not appear to be of extraordinary

⁶⁷ Serouj Kradjian, liner notes, *Gomidas Songs*, Isabel Bayrakdarian (soprano), Nonesuch Records 511487-2, 2008, compact disc.

consequence, this pianistic motive, which appears on two separate occasions in the score, establishes the musical characteristics of exile that are imbued in the sung text and all-around narrative of the piece. But, one is led to ask, how are these tropes associated with exile represented musically? One of the ways is through the use of large intervals on the piano, as is exploited in great detail in both “KrunK” and “Anduni.” The use of vast intervallic separation can be seen in the opening measures of “KrunK,” in which the entire range of the keyboard is being musically exploited (the opening motif spans from D¹ to D⁶). Using verbal analogy here, it is possible that the intervallic distance from one note to the other could be said to parallel the physical distance between the exile [soprano] and the crane [homeland] and also the emotional turmoil experienced by the exile once she has come the realization that the crane is unable hear her very poignant cry [“KrunK, mer ashkharhen kharbrig m choonis?”]. Here, the use of intervallic separation can also stress the tangible distance between the global Armenian diasporic community and their homeland. With respect to the exploitation of wide intervals, a similar parallel can be extended to include “Anduni,” the opening pianistic motif of which extends from its lowest point, C¹, to its highest point, C⁶. This breadth of sound and extreme use of registral timbre is omnipresent throughout the course of this vocal work. In much the same way as “KrunK” musically represents exile through the use of extreme registers, this same practice, as in the case of “Anduni,” represents the inherent tensions that are a consequence of the physical disconnect between the protagonist in the song [exile] and her now-distanced homeland.

Another feature represented in both works is the use of long sustained notes found in the opening motif of “KrunK” and festooned throughout the entire accompaniment of “Anduni.” Once again, applying verbal analogy here as a mode an analysis, I view this succession of long notes as representative of the passing of time; perhaps even of the time that the exile has spent

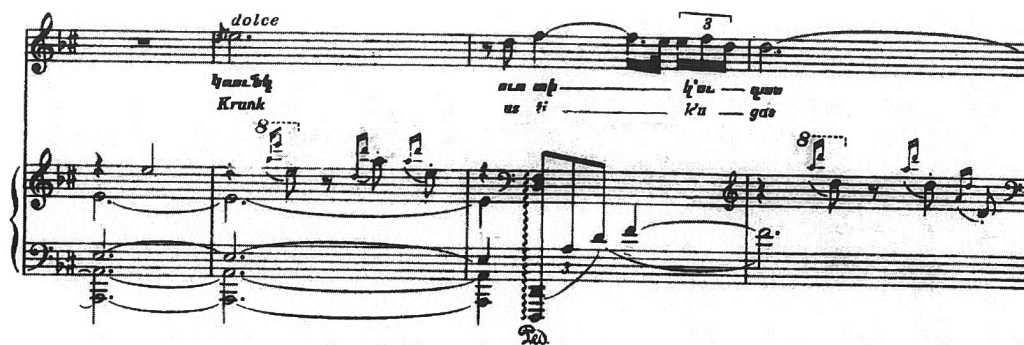
away from the homeland. In “Krunk” this exaggeration of length also appears predominantly in the latter half of the piece from mm. 20 - 24 and from m. 27 to the end. The final crucial element present in the opening four-bar motive in “Krunk” is its resolution. In the middle of measure three, once the right hand melody reaches the summit at D⁶, the melodic line falls rather poignantly back to the site of origin, returning to D² then finally finding rest at D¹. Interestingly enough the final chord of the piece also finds resolution in the same position [D² and D¹]. Unlike the introduction of “Krunk” however, “Anduni” remains in a period of harmonic stasis, residing in the key center of C. While staying in the same key center may give off an air of stability, within this harmonic stability is a certain degree of volatility and unresolved-ness that I think aptly reflects the unyielding circularity that is associated with the diasporic condition.

Overall, both “Krunk” and “Anduni” exhibit a lamenting tone as evidenced by the use of the augmented 2nd interval. Both works come across as mournful and almost chant-like in nature employing both syllabic and neumatic forms of sung text in the vocal line.⁶⁸ Looking closer at “Krunk,” the vocal line in m. 12 fixates on the word “tsaynit” [your sound]. Upon uttering the first syllable “tsay” the vocal line meanders from its starting point F, and passes through a long succession of notes [five notes in total] before finding rest at E, where the second syllable “nit” is uttered at the end of the measure. This relatively lengthy uninterrupted grouping of notes overtop of a single word [“tsaynit”] is somewhat similar to the *grouping* or *neumatic* style that is attributed to Gregorian chant. We can chart another chant-like example in m. 13 of “Anduni” where combinations of syllabic and neumatic styles of sung text are employed. In the first

⁶⁸ The Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music on the subject of Gregorian chant states that three musical styles are attributed to chant: *syllabic*, *group* or *neumatic*, and *melismatic*. “This system, together with certain other features of the chant, was imported from Eastern Christendom.” *The Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music*, 4th ed., s.v. “Gregorian Chant.”

strophe, the words “Godrer kernner, khakhder, sner” are uttered. Each syllable of text leading up to the final “ner” [*sner*] is accompanied with a single note [“God-rer ker-nner, khakh-der, s-ner”]. Upon reaching the final syllable, “ner,” is accompanied by a long succession of grouped or neumatic notes. We also see this once again when m. 13 repeats, but with the words, “Alin g zarner, cher kharni hiror” [“A-lin g zar-ner, cher khar-ni hi-ror”]. Moving on from chant, I would like to draw your attention to two pianistic motives, the first of which I attribute to “Krunk.” This motive appears in mm. 7, 9, 16, and 24 and might be called the “crane theme.” Apart from m. 9, this theme is employed whenever the vocalist refers to the “Krunk” directly in the text. Although it serves to unify what might at first seem to be a disconnect between the vocal line and the piano accompaniment, the theme also works as a rhetorical device, one that metaphorically symbolizes a crane call. While the sound of this theme is not exactly reminiscent of an actual crane call, Komitas is trying to impress upon the listener to associate this fleeting pianistic motif with that of an actual cry of a crane. Here, Armenian homeland is being represented through the guise of this migratory bird.

Figure 2.2 Komitas, “Krunk,” mm. 6 - 9. Courtesy of Torkom Manoogian. *The Genius of Komitas*. (New York: T. Manoogian, 1987), 176. For full score of “Krunk” please consult Appendix A, pg. 114.



The second pianistic motif is in fact less of a motif, but rather an omnipresent theme that pervades the entire piano accompaniment of “Anduni.” Throughout the course of the piece, the right hand held notes seem to mimic chime-like effects. Here, the tolling effect perhaps symbolizes the death of the possibility of a return home: the bell tolls for the exiled Armenian community.

Figure 2.3 Komitas, “Anduni,” mm. 1 - 8. Courtesy of Torkom Manoogian. *The Genius of Komitas*. (New York: T. Manoogian, 1987), 183. For full score of “Anduni” please consult Appendix A, pg. 116.

The musical score for Komitas's "Anduni" (mm. 1-8) is presented in a three-staff format. The top staff is for the vocal line, marked "Largo ad libitum. J. 68". It contains two verses of lyrics in Armenian. The middle staff is for the piano accompaniment, featuring a prominent motif of sustained notes in the right hand, creating a chime-like effect. The bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment, featuring a more active bass line. Dynamics range from *mf* to *ppp*.

Throughout the course of both works, descriptive words like “ruined homes” [*pladz dne*] and “collapsed columns” [“khakhder sner”] (as in the case of “Anduni”), and “the waves raging” [“Alin g zarnar”] and “the heart of the homeless” [“Anduni sirdn e bghdor”] (as in the case of “Krunck”) paints a very bleak picture within the narratives of both folk songs. Whether you read the words of “Krunck” or “Anduni” in their original language or in English translation, they are essentially crafted as artistic expressions of grief. It is evident that permeated within the narratives of these songs are several ethno-symbolic references that are designed to conjure up images of the Armenian homeland. For instance, in *Krunck*, the absent crane, which only makes fleeting appearances in the piano accompaniment, serves as an ethno-symbolic reference of the

Armenian homeland, while the exile in both “KrunK” and “Anduni” are singular representations of the worldwide Armenian diaspora. According to Anthony Smith writes:

What gives nationalism its power are the myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritages and the way in which a popular *living past* has been, and can be, rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias. It is from these elements of myth, memory, symbol, and tradition that modern national identities are reconstituted in each generation, as the nation becomes more inclusive and as its members cope with new challenges.⁶⁹

Smith argues that by literally embodying cultural identity in the form of “myths”, “memories”, “symbols”, and “traditions”, ethno-symbolism affords a space onto which nationalist sentiments can be produced outside of the homeland. The keywords in Smith’s explanation are “reinterpreted” and “rediscovered”. Essentially what I think Smith is pointing towards is an *enactment* of culture that, to use a term synonymous with Benedict Anderson, results in a formation of an “imagined community.”⁷⁰ Here, using the score and verbal analogy as my principle tool, I have been able to construct how the narrative of this work, one that is laced in exile and the resulting tropes associated with this condition (disconnection, displacement, etc.), is represented in a musical fashion. However, more in line with Smith’s argument of “reinterpretation” and “rediscovery,” the section that follows will discuss both works, but from a performance-oriented perspective. By doing so, I will broach the impact that performing this music has on the Armenian diasporic community at large. After all, it is only when performed that the characteristics of exile are ultimately brought to life. Performing is, after all, more than just a mere aural representation of what one reads or experiences from looking at a score. It is the expression of culture that is to be experienced in a visceral manner.

⁶⁹ Anthony Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 9.

⁷⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

A Performative Reading of “Krunk” and “Anduni”

For those of us who are satisfied with examining the score and engaging in an exhaustive reading of the lyrics in “Krunk” and “Anduni,” my analysis in the previous section should come across as reasonably straight forward. In the preceding section I addressed two central themes: how the diasporic narrative permeates within certain examples of the Armenian classical and folk music tradition, as well as how the tropes associated with exile and dispossession, a theme that is truly reflective of Armenian diasporic identity, are articulated explicitly within the score of both folk songs (recall the “crane theme” present in “Krunk” and the chime-like effect that pervades the entire right hand piano accompaniment of “Anduni”). Thus far, what remains missing from my analysis is a rigorous understanding of how performers express these tropes (exile and dispossession) through their visceral engagement in this music. Admittedly, the term “performative reading” is somewhat of a misnomer. While this oxymoronic turn of phrase was intentional on my part, this section is completely embedded within the performative side of my argument; the term “reading” is really just another word for “interpretation.” In this section, I prescribe how best to perform these works in a stylistically informed and culturally compelling manner. Here, my performance-based analysis of both “Krunk” and “Anduni” are based on my performative experiences, as well as the various listening encounters I have been able to fashion for myself (in regards to my listening encounters, my initial understandings of these two vocal pieces have been largely formed from Ms. Bayrakdarian’s performances of this music as well as her much celebrated 2008 audio recording entitled *Gomidas Songs*, which features the entire *Anduni* song cycle among other vocal works attributed to the great master). Given the similarities between both works the following analysis will talk about both works in tandem with one another, as was done in the preceding section.

Both “Krunk” and “Anduni” exhibit a certain solemnity and wistfulness in character that as we have come to notice, serves as a pervasive theme in these works. Of course, the emotionality of the words coupled with the vivid modal harmonies in the piano accompaniment help, at least on a surface level, to construct a musically vibrant encounter. Certainly, going beyond a surface level appreciation of this music requires a more fully invested understanding of what pianistic or vocal techniques are necessary to adopt in order to produce an overall compelling performative experience. I would like to first dwell on the use of vocal vibrato, which is universal to both “Krunk” and “Anduni.” Given the haunting nature that is expressed in the narrative of these songs, the use of vocal vibrato really helps in italicizing the underlying sadness that is embedded at the heart of these pieces. Looking closer at “Krunk,” when the soprano reaches the devastating line, “Ints badaskhan chdvir, yelar knatsir” [you did not answer me and you flew away], the final word, “knatsir,” must be delivered with an abundance of vibrato. Here, the use of vibrato is not only an aesthetic tool used to symbolize sadness, but is employed to italicize specific words that are central in the narrative of the poem. Similarly, in “Anduni” the use of vocal vibrato is necessary when underlying words such as “Alin g zarner” [the waves are raging], “sirdn” [heart] and the heartbreaking confession “Ay, do lag dnaver!” [Oh to be without a home!]. As is articulated here, the use of vocal vibrato is necessary on two fronts, vocally demonstrating the underlying sadness associated with the poetry, and highlighting specific words that are front and center in the narrative of the poetry. Although, at no point in the score does it indicate the use of vibrato in the vocal line, I think in order to achieve a fully absorbing musical experience, the soprano must employ some form of vibrato to help colour her overall performance.

I would like to now move to the piano accompaniment of “Krunk” and discuss the importance of musical gesture, and why it is central in conveying specific mental images that, on some level, pianistically represent the diasporic narrative. However, before going into the gestural examination of “Krunk,” it is necessary to define musical gesture. Here, I turn to Robert Hatten who discusses that musical gestures are mental entities that can be evoked from musical sounds. He writes:

Musical gesture is biologically and culturally grounded in communicative human movement. Gesture draws upon the close interaction (and intermodality) of a range of human perceptual and motor systems to synthesize the energetic shaping of motion through time into significant events with unique expressive force. The biological and cultural motivations of musical gesture are further negotiated within the conventions of a musical style, whose elements include both the discrete (pitch, rhythm, meter) and the analog (dynamics, articulation, temporal pacing). Musical gestures are emergent gestalts that convey affective motion, emotion, and agency by fusing otherwise separate elements into continuities of shape and force.⁷¹

Fundamentally musical gestures are any physical movements that may be interpreted as significant.⁷² In Hatten’s quote he makes reference to the experience of the gesture through the score or the musical sound, but does not explicitly address the bodily movement that creates the sound in great detail. On the subject of the body and the production of sound, Barthes writes:

⁷¹ Alexander Refsum Jensenius and others, “Musical Gestures: Concepts and Methods in Research,” in *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*, ed. Rolf Inge Godoy and Marc Leman (London, Routledge Press, 2010), 17-19.

⁷² “The music you play depends not so much on an auditive as on a manual (hence much more sensuous) activity; it is the music you or I can play, alone or among friends, with no audience but its participants (i.e., with no risk of theater, no hysterical temptation); it is a muscular music; in it the auditive sense has only a degree of sanction: as if the body was listening, not the “soul”; this music is not played “by heart”; confronting the keyboard or the music stand, the body proposes, leads, coordinates – the body itself must transcribe what it reads: it fabricates sound and sense: it is the scriptor, not the receiver; the decoder.” This quote was taken from the following source: Roland Barthes, “Musica Practica,” in *Image – Music – Text: Selected Essays*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 142.

In Schumann's *Kreisleriana* (Opus 16; 1838), I actually hear no note, no theme, no contour, no grammar, no meaning, nothing which would permit me to reconstruct an intelligible structure of the work. No, what I hear are blows: I hear what beats in the body, what beats the body, or better: I hear this body that beats.⁷³

Here I address the kinesthetic nature of musical gesture and its role in creating a specific mental image. I construct the gesture as a kind of parallel metaphor in what is going on in the music.

Looking closer at “Krunk,” when performing the piano part, despite its relatively sparse and ephemeral quality, the music nevertheless demands upon the performer to employ the necessary gestures that allow for the audience to construct mental images that are born out of a performer's physical expressions. Looking closer at the piano accompaniment of “Krunk,” the most obvious mental image that comes to mind is that of the crane, particularly when it is referenced in the “crane theme” which appears in mm. 7, 9, 16, and 24. Of course, as I address earlier in my discussion, the “crane theme” is employed whenever the vocalist refers to the “Krunk” directly in the text.⁷⁴ While this theme is relatively fleeting, the pianist must not underestimate the importance of the theme in respect to the overall work. Keeping in mind that the crane is constantly being referred to in the narrative of the poem, but makes no actual appearance, this theme serves as a tangible reference to the largely absent crane. But the question remains, how is an image of a crane induced pianistically through musical gesture? Based on my own experiences performing this particular work, I have experienced the challenges of inducing these mental images by way of my own bodily movement. However, this is how I feel the gesture aids in forming the mental image of the crane. Upon the first statement of the crane

⁷³ Roland Barthes, “Rasch,” in *Image – Music – Text: Selected Essays*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 299.

⁷⁴ From my previous section, “Verbal Analogy as a Mode of Musical Analysis” I state: “Although it serves to unify what might at first seem to be a disconnect between the vocal line and the piano accompaniment, the theme also works as a rhetorical device, one that metaphorically symbolizes a crane call.”

theme, my right hand remains in a constant state of movement as I travel from the beginning to the end of the motif. Since this theme is musically symbolizing a movement of sorts (the migratory flight of the crane), my right hand remains in a constant state of motion as if it were mimicking the movement of the crane. Here, not only am I musically representing the movement associated with the crane's migratory journey, but also physically articulating this journey by remaining in a constant state of kinetic motion. What is working at the heart of this matrix is the musical gesture in action.

While examining both “KrunK” and “Anduni” from score-based perspectives provides some key musical insights, particularly in matters of musical structure, I also believe that we must also have grounding in more performance-oriented forms of analysis. This way, we could have a concrete understanding of matters of musical structure, as well as establish a fully invested awareness with respect to the interpreter and his/her role in disseminating this music to a cultural identity at large.

Performing Cultural Construction

I would like take this opportunity to address a question posed at the beginning of this chapter: how does performing music that dwells in the place of displacement result in reaffirming Armenian identity in the diaspora? The answer will involve examining performance from the mindset of nostalgia. By looking at Stewart's souvenir theory as well as examine Boym's seminal study on the inner-workings of nostalgia (restorative and reflective nostalgia), I will answer this question.

Although both “Krunk” and “Anduni” are born out of the exilic narrative, externalizing these pieces through performance results in the conjuring up of images and symbols associated with the Armenian homeland. As an historical artifact, performing the *Anduni* song cycle brings the exterior world of the Armenian homeland into the interior, and personalizes them on an individual as well as communal level. Along these lines, Stewart argues that this transformation gives rise to a spatial and temporal collapse. Given music’s lack of denotative meaning, and its inherent power in conjuring up of images, places, peoples, and emotions, the world of the musical souvenir becomes miniaturized in the space of one’s own personal meaning. Stewart describes this process as follows:

The miniature linked to nostalgic versions of childhood and history, presents a diminutive, and thereby manipulatable version of experience, a version which is domesticated and protected from contamination. It marks the pure body, the inorganic body of the machine and its *repetition* of a death that is thereby not a death.⁷⁵

In addition to being artifacts, both “Krunk” and “Anduni” once performed also hold amulet-like qualities in that by performing them, the individuals experiencing this music are transported mythically back to the Armenian homeland. The performance, however, serves as a mere sample of a now remote past. On the one hand, the performance eases nostalgia by bringing the homeland into present focus, but on the other, the audience is left wanting more from the performance. Also, given the very nature of the music, the audience also feels an inevitable sense of loss. Once the performance has come to an end, the homeland that has made present in the performance vanishes back into memory where it is recognized as in the past. But, by repeatedly engaging in performative “activities”, the past is continually redrawn and rearticulated, thus

⁷⁵ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984), 69.

resulting in a constant negotiation of Armenian identity in the diaspora. Whether the music performed during musical events deal with the exilic narrative or other aspects of the Armenian cultural condition, the performance itself evokes feelings of nostalgia among its listeners. However, by performing music that is wedded in the narratives of displacement and exile, the feelings of nostalgia that are imbued in this music and are a natural byproduct of any given performance become doubly compounded. This results in a more extreme human response towards these performances. The process of externalizing the music associated with a lost homeland through public interaction becomes akin to a form of cultural remembrance, a throwback to an old world, an “imagined community”, or a revisiting of a lost albeit not forgotten home. Musically revisiting this “imagined community”, particularly from the point of view of exile, establishes intense sentiments of a return to origin among the Armenian diasporic community. As we can plainly see, the discourse associated with a return to the homeland has reared its head once again. But as I claimed earlier on in this chapter, there is no possibility of a return, it remains an unattainable dream, one that can only be realized through witnessing or taking part in musical enactments that serve to connect the Armenian diasporic community to their homeland.

Considering nostalgia’s role within the context of this chapter, I would like to invoke Boym, who distinguishes between two forms of nostalgia, the reflective and the restorative. Reflective nostalgia “dwells in *algia*, in longing and loss, the imperfect process of remembrance . . . and lingers in the ruins, the patina of time and history, in the dreams of another place and another time.”⁷⁶ While restorative nostalgia “puts emphasis on *nostos* and proposes to rebuild the

⁷⁶ Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 49.

lost home and patch up the memory gaps . . . it requires a total reconstruction of the monuments of the past.”⁷⁷ For members of exilic or diasporic communities, there is a tendency to romanticize their conceptions of the past, whether they are born out of communal or individual impressions. The diaspora often view the present through the looking glass of the past, often regarding the past with feelings of nostalgia and loss. The diaspora quite clearly align with Boym’s definition of reflective nostalgia. For the Armenian diasporic community the past is viewed with an unrelenting sense of “longing” and “loss”, the same sort of tropes that we come across when looking at “KrunK” and “Anduni”.⁷⁸ The performer on the other hand does not align with the reflective form of nostalgia. She is more concerned about reconstructing a community through musical performance. In the case of music, the monuments that Boym alludes to are in fact the pieces that are enacted during performance. Looking briefly at both “KrunK” and “Anduni” as monuments of the Armenian culture, they act, in the words of Stewart, as souvenirs of an old world.⁷⁹ In order for these musical monuments (or souvenirs) to be reconstructed, it is necessary to engage in an enactment, or to use Said’s term “activity”.⁸⁰ Since performance is regarded as a “reconstruction of the (musical) monuments of the past”, the activity or musical enactment of creating this music becomes an example of reconstructive nostalgia. Through

⁷⁷ *Nostos* is defined as a home that no longer exists, or never has existed. Citing Boym she defines *nostos* as “a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one’s own fantasy. Nostalgic love can only survive in a long distant relationship.” Ibid., xiii.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 50

⁷⁹ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984).

⁸⁰ Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, ed. Edward Said (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 186.

musical reproduction, the musician assumes the role of chief architect in rebuilding an authentically Armenian culture in the diaspora.

Looking at “KrunK” as an example, once enacted in performance, the piece impresses upon the soprano and pianist to assume two critical functions. On one hand, the both vocalist and pianist act as representatives of the Armenian diasporic community, however, certain musical themes, like the “crane theme” act as symbols, or ethno-symbolic references that are used to embody the homeland.⁸¹ Examining the part of the vocalist, for instance, we see that she is singing on the part of the exile and acts as a ‘live’ representation of the Armenian diasporic condition. Although I maintain that the performer is responsible in reconstructing the monuments of the Armenian culture, the fact that the performers in “KrunK” act as ‘live’ representations of the Armenian diasporic community, they unconsciously become aligned to a more reflective form of nostalgia through their respective characters on stage. Yet again, we notice a contrapuntal juxtaposition that comes as a result of performance. It is not only an issue of the past and present occurring simultaneously, but also, the reflective and reconstructive forms of nostalgia that are produced concurrently while in the moment of performance. By expressing loss and displacement through musical means, the vocalist and pianist serve as sources of comfort for the audience for whom the performance is directed. Essentially, what the crane fails to achieve for the exile, the performers do for the audience. Although the performers do not literally “bring back news from the homeland” [“KrunK, mer ashkharhen kharbrig m choonis”], the musicians form associations between the Armenian homeland, and the individuals who experienced the performance of the “KrunK” by externalizing this song publically.

⁸¹ Anthony Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 9.

I will end this chapter by returning to its beginning, the performance of the *Anduni* song cycle by Ms. Bayrakdarian. Her performance of “KrunK”, conjured up images and thoughts of nostalgia associated with the Armenian homeland, all of which were made even clearer by the range of emotions exhibited in the audience. I was very fortunate to speak with a few members of the audience afterwards. There was a consistent feeling amongst those with whom I spoke that experiencing this music was one of the few ways that the Armenian diasporic community could establish a direct connection with their lost homeland. For them, going to the recital acted as a sort of spiritual return home. By experiencing the musical event, it provided them with the opportunity to reinforce their identity as Armenian – Canadians. Ms. Bayrakdarian’s performance of the *Anduni* cycle resulted in bringing the homeland into present focus. By performing music associated with the narratives that make up the Armenian identity, particularly that of displacement, the performance helped to bring to light the struggles and stories of the Armenian diasporic peoples and resulted in an examination process to occur. This reexamination process ultimately resulted in the affirmation of Armenian identity among the Armenian – Canadian diasporic community.

Chapter Three

Performing Souvenirs and the Impersonation of Home

I have returned there
Where I had never been.
Nothing has changed from how it was not.
On the table (on the checkered tablecloth)
Half-full
I found again the glass never filled.
All has remained just as I had never left it.⁸²

Sitting in the audience at the Armenian General Benevolent Union Hall in Montreal, I can hear the sonic echoes of a culture resonate as Armenian pianist Vahan Mardirossian produces the initial utterances of “Manushaki of Vagharshapat” (the first dance of Komitas’ *Seven Armenian Dances*). Concealed within his performance are the tales, legends, and mythological fantasies of a now distant past. During this enactment it is as if I, to quote the great Italian lyricist and poet Giorgio Caproni, “returned there, [to a place] where I had never been.” Suddenly, I found myself face-to-face with a particular locale and while it was not quite home for me in the most literal of senses, this musical encounter did impart the overall impressions of a sort of evocative homecoming. This was particularly true for members of the older generation Armenians who were present among the spectatorship. Overall, there was a palpable sensation in the audience that we were witnessing more than just a musical enactment. This musical encounter was an acting-out of a cultural identity. The powerful nature of this performance, through its purely sonic expression, revealed souvenirs of the Armenian culture that vicariously led the audience (myself included), to the particular place and time that these works are said to represent. Whilst this musical performance did not result in a bona fide homecoming, it did help

⁸² Giorgio Caproni, “The Last Homecoming.” In *Poesie 1932-1986* (Milano, 1989), 392, quoted in Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, trans. Svetlana Boym and Toma Tasovac (New York: Basic Books, 2001).

create a space in which the audience could form an emotionally compelling relationship with their cultural home, and, on some level, negotiate a sense of nation-ness in the environment where the performance took place. The enactment ultimately resulted in a kind of make-shift construction of the Armenian homeland.

While the pervading rhetoric portrays the diasporic condition as a journey, one that eventually culminates in an actual return to the homeland, the musical event provides the diasporic community with an incomplete or secondhand representation of home. This representation is rather fleeting in its very nature and can only be experienced over the course of an actual performance. While the journey constructed by musical performance lacks a viscerally compelling objective, i.e. the actual homeland, it does present diasporic communities with an opportunity to form a spiritual relationship with their culture, and in doing so it provides these communities with temporary relief from an ever-present nostalgia symptomatic of their diasporic existence. Before addressing the evocative nature of the music on show in this chapter and introducing my central argument that situates the performer as chiefly responsible in imparting these musical souvenirs, I would like to address briefly the place of performance within the context of musicology as well as draw upon the discipline's markedly conscious move towards a more culturally informed line of thinking.

Performing Identity, Constructing Community

Community is a meeting ground that features different voices exchanging, debating, and articulating both their private and communal experiences. Music is among the many matrix of

this process. As Chanan puts it, “music is a form of social (as well as cultural) communication.”⁸³ Musicology can no longer afford to ignore the critical insights offered by examining the aesthetic dimensions of cultural life, and the numerous ways music helps in constructing and negotiating both personal and communal identities in that life. Certainly music as an abstraction cannot negotiate any form of identity construction. Rather, it is through the viscerally compelling and culturally inclusive act that is musical performance, where these identities are able to be constructed and negotiated. Essentially, the musical event gives rise to a physically dynamic act of remembering. It evokes images and cultural relics of the past through sonic means, and in doing so, shapes the community’s present circumstances.

In recent years musicologists spurred on by developments in ethnomusicology, anthropology, and cultural studies have addressed the many positions of “culture” and “enactment” within scholarly discourse. Richard Middleton, for instance, poses these two highly pointed questions: “Does anyone still believe that musicology is the study of the scores of the great masters and nothing more? [And] Aren’t we all, to a greater or lesser extent, culturalists now?”⁸⁴ Embedded within Middleton’s questions, I feel, is an inherent belief that a more culturally informed perspective is finally present within the discipline of musicology, and that the text based approaches that have dominated the discourse for so long have been overtaken, or are on the verge of being overtaken, by a more performance-oriented outlook. Examining music through a performance-centered lens has resulted in an overall opening up of the discipline, one

⁸³ Michael Chanan, *Musica Practica: The Social Practice of Western Music from Gregorian Chant to Postmodernism* (London: Verso, 1994), 23.

⁸⁴ Richard Middleton, “Introduction,” in *The Cultural Study of Music: a critical introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (London: Routledge Press, 2003), 2-3.

that now incorporates a more socially and culturally informed point of view.⁸⁵ To reiterate Middleton's first question: "Does anyone still believe that musicology is the study of the scores of the great masters and nothing more?" Whether we are all culturalists now or not may be a point up for debate, but what remains undoubtedly clear, at least from my own perspective, is that externalized cultural practices play shape-shifting functions for social and cultural identities. Moreover, considering that we now live in an epoch of transnational and global culture, one in which diverse ethnic and social groups struggle to mark their respective identities in their own communities, it is even more important to examine how musical enactment helps to form and negotiate their respective social and cultural identities. Essentially for any ethnic group, not least of all the Armenian ethnic community, the musical event provides a compelling intersection, one that, to quote Stewart, "envelopes the present within [the context of] the past."⁸⁶ If not for the act of performance, not only would the negotiation of these identities prove to be even more exigent in nature, but the rich repertoire of these cultures would be forced to rot under glass cases for all of eternity, relegated to the ever so occasional museum exhibit.

⁸⁵ Examples of these culturally and performatively driven studies are among others: Georgina Born, "Music and the Representation: Articulation of Sociocultural Identities," in *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); and Richard Middleton, "Introduction," in *The Cultural Study of Music: a critical introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (London: Routledge Press, 2003).

⁸⁶ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984), 51.

Colouring the Homeland

In a lecture on the Armenian folk music canon, the distinguished Armenian composer Komitas once asked:

What is national music? What provides the subject matter for national folk song? Could it be the proud mountains, the deep valleys, the fields, the varied climate, the many historical events and happenings, the internal and external life of the people? Yes indeed all of these constitute the materials for national music, in a word, everything that affects the minds and feelings of that nation.⁸⁷

Whether one reads this particular passage in English or in its original Armenian, by using such lush vocabulary like “the fields,” “the proud mountains,” and “the deep valleys,” it is clear that Komitas evokes a sort of pastoral imagery of the Armenian homeland. While the general timbre of Komitas’ passage is almost Nabokovesque in its nature, his brand of nostalgic expression is not just limited to his various scholarly writings, but is also imbued within his musical compositions. Although these compositions do not belong under the blanket of impressionism, they are nevertheless evocative of an exotic locale, and indeed conjure up memories of a sort of nostalgic time. In *Seven Armenian Dances*, for instance, Komitas employs a litany of sonic Armenian cultural souvenirs that, when externalized, make way for a formative connection between the diasporic audience and their lost homeland. Of course, the place that is being evoked during a performance of this particular work is not representative of the Armenian homeland of today, but rather that of the early 20th century. While public performances of this cultural music possess a certain degree of nostalgia, imbued within the narrative of the music itself is a great deal of nostalgic resonance. Because of the nostalgic nature of both the performance and the works expressed during these cultural events, being witness to these enactments result in an

⁸⁷ Komitas Vartabed. “Armenian Folk Songs and Church Songs,” in *Komitas: Essays and Articles*, trans. Vatsche Barsoumian (Pasadena, CA: Drazarck Press, 2001), 163.

exponentially more powerful cultural meaning, especially for those who belong to the Armenian diasporic cultural community.⁸⁸ As this chapter will attest, in Komitas' *Seven Armenian Dances* places the performer in the critical position of imparting the evocations and impressions of the Armenian homeland to the diasporic audience. By expressing these musically mythic symbols, the performer provides the Armenian ethnic community with the means to define itself and its boundaries that encapsulate the diasporic community. This claim that performance resembles a form of cultural recovery will be further explored in this chapter. The critical questions still remain: what is implicit within the musical works that when performed result in a face-to-face meeting ground between the diasporic audience and its homeland? And how does the enactment of this music that is so rooted in the Armenian homeland, appeal to the diaspora's steadfast yet largely unattainable quest for home? These questions directly suggest that externalized musical culture plays a significant role in creating, shaping and maintaining personal, social and cultural identities.⁸⁹

The remainder of this chapter is divided into two major sections and is organized as follows. The first section presents one of my past performances of "Shoror of Karin" from Komitas' *Seven Armenian Dances* (For the full score of "Shoror of Karin" please consult Appendix A, pages 123 through 128). I address my musical account from a rather nostalgic viewpoint, describing in detail the multifarious conceptual images that are born out of the sounds

⁸⁸ On the subject of nostalgia Svetlana Boym provides us with a compelling definition: "Nostalgia is a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed. Nostalgia is a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one's own fantasy. Nostalgic love can only survive in a long – distance relationship. A cinematic image of nostalgia is a double expression, or a superimposition of two images – of home and abroad, past and present, dream and everyday life." Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xiii – xvi.

⁸⁹ Thomas Turino, "Introduction," in *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, ed. Thomas Turino and James Lea (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 10.

that I produce over the course of the performance. On the subject of the image I briefly turn to Atom Egoyan's film short, *Diaspora*. Doing so establishes how Egoyan uses both images and musical motifs to form a culturally compelling and impressionistic representation of the Armenian homeland. I bring the performance back into the argument to say that while the film medium has the luxury of the real image to aid its overall meaning, musical performance must rely on sound quality alone in order to produce the conceptual images that are born out of the performances of these pieces. The more evocative the sounds produced by the performer during the enactment, the more vibrant the images subjectively produced by the individuals experiencing the performance. This section draws upon Stewart's souvenir theory as well as Boym's study on nostalgia.

The second section provides an overall analysis of the *Seven Armenian Dances* as well as draws upon the compositional and performative similarities that appear between the *Seven Armenian Dances* and "La Soirée dans Grenade", from Debussy's *Estampes* suite. Both of these works employ similar compositional and stylistic techniques that represent souvenirs associated with the respective cultures. After, I take up the argument that basing an entire performance on what is purely indicated in the score often results in an unsatisfactory and under-nuanced performance. The final part of this section focuses on my own performative examination of "Manushaki of Vagharshapat" (For the full score of "Manushaki of Vagharshapat" please consult Appendix A, pages 119 through 121). In doing so, I maintain that discussing these pieces from the perspective of enactment provides a far more beneficial understanding of these works than that afforded by a more text-oriented analysis. After all, the cultural souvenirs embedded within these works can only really be expressed in the moment of performance. For the benefit of the reader, I have provided a table of all the *Seven Armenian Dances* below.

Table 3.1 Complete Seven Armenian Dances.

Title	Region	Instrument Style	Tempo Marking
Manushaki	Vagharshapat	dap ⁹⁰	Leggiero
Yerangi	Yerevan	nay ⁹¹ and tar ⁹²	Grazioso
Unabi	Shushi	tar and dap	Grazioso e planato
Marali	Shushi	Dap	Fiero e tutuoso
Shushiki	Vagharshapat	tar and dap	Giocoso e con teneramente
Het U Araj	Karin	horn and drums	Nobile e grazioso
Shoror	Karin	horns, drums and dap	Nobile ed eroico

Idyllic Referents and Cultural Souvenirs of Home

As I sit poised at the piano, producing the first few evocative sounds of “Shoror of Karin”, the final dance in the *Seven Armenian Dances*, my mind becomes flooded with a variegation of idyllic images and a whole litany of nostalgic referents representing the Armenian culture in one form or another. I continually address my gestural movements and lightness of touch in order to produce the desired soundscape representative of each of the dance movements. In doing so, I produce a whole range of sounds that not only evoke the impressions of the places representative of each of these pieces, but also generate the sounds and the images of the physical souvenirs that are evocative of these places. These include such souvenirs as the various

⁹⁰ Dap: An Armenian folk tambourine without cymbals.

⁹¹ Nay: Hollow reed instrument

⁹² Tar: An Armenian folk double-stringed, long-necked lute held on the chest when played.

musical instruments of those regions as well as the breathtaking pastoral landscapes of the Armenian countryside. For instance, although the opening notes in the left hand of “Shoror of Karin” are marked staccato in the score, in order to impart the sounds of a tambourine or drum, I must over-exaggerate the placement of the note. I employ the same gesture to the keyboard as I would in playing a purely percussive instrument (i.e. not keyboard based). By doing so, I am able to impart a certain sonic-visual aid to my audience. Here, my gesture bears a metaphoric or symbolic quality, in that not only does my gesture result in the sounds of drums or tambourines being summoned, but mimics the gesture that one must employ when performing a non-melodic percussive instrument, like, for instance, the drum or tambourine. Throughout my performance, I experiment with the various timbres and instrumental techniques that are basically a result of my gesture. While I attempt to create this sensation of rhythmic drive in my left hand passagework, my own bodily rhythms that are articulated through physical gesture significantly influence my performance. As Barthes states, “I hear this body that beats.”⁹³

Moving beyond musical gesture, buried within the inner recesses of my mind, my performance recalls highly evocative images and referents of the Armenian homeland. In the far-off distant landscape I can see the mountains as the clouds surrounding the mountain peaks begin to waft and dissipate into a kind of nothingness. I can hear the melancholic cry of a crane as it soars through the air with great majesty, making its annual pilgrimage to the Armenian homeland and taking up residency on the rooftops of houses long since devoid from any human contact. Within these deserted homes, a personal memory museum exists where past cultural souvenirs remain untouched, including various overexposed photographs, outdated calendars and

⁹³ Roland Barthes, “Rasch,” in *Image – Music – Text: Selected Essays*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 299.

ornamental knickknacks that festoon the walls, bookshelves and other furniture pieces that reside in the chambers of these haunted dwellings. Within earshot I can hear a group of local villagers performing on authentic Armenian instruments such as the *nay*, *tambourine* and *drum* attempting to reestablish a nostalgic connection to their respective pasts by enacting sonic echoes or reverberations representative of their culture.⁹⁴ Without great notice, I come to realize that I am in fact performing home, impersonating it [home], cloaking it within the contrived setting of the concert hall. This performance transforms the hall into a sonically driven pastoral tableau of the Armenian homeland, and in doing so allows the members of the audience to synthesize images that are born out of their own subjective impressions of this place. As I approach the final iteration of the melodic and rhythmic theme in “Shoror of Karin”, followed shortly after by a rather poignant cadencial passage that brings the *Seven Armenian Dances* to a delightful close, the evocative images that were produced over the course of this performance disappear into the air in almost as quickly a fashion as they were when synthesized.

⁹⁴ Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 340.

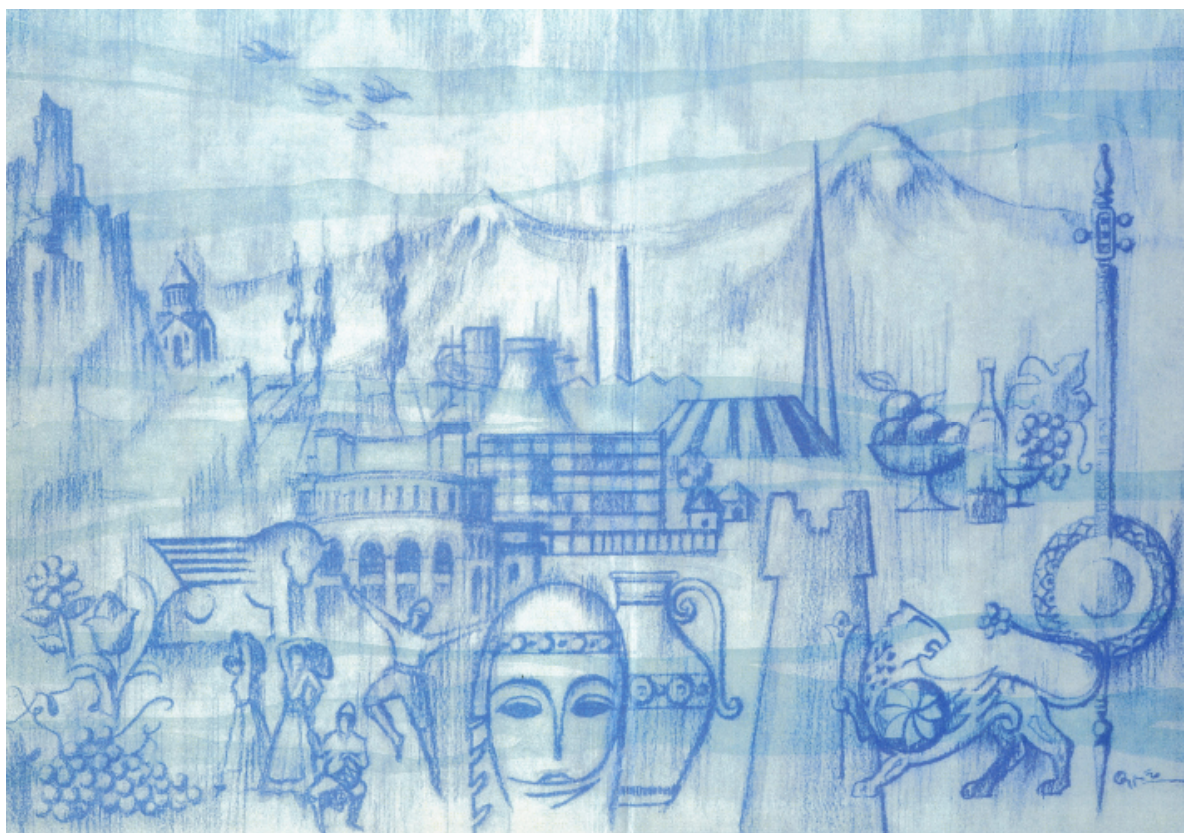


Figure 3.1 A romantic depiction of the Armenian countryside. Picture courtesy of Ohanness Hannessian. *Shirag Songbook IV (Taynakrial Yerkaran) Popular and Classic Armenian songs with music*. (Beirut, Lebanon: Shirak Press, 1981).

While some may disapprove of my highly romanticized musical account, I think what we can all agree on is that throughout the course of my enactment, as a result of my musical gestures, the evocative sights, sounds, and smells of the Armenian countryside were brought to life. In doing so, the formation of a temporary mythical conception of home took place among members of the diasporic audience. Speaking of home, Morse puts forward a rather compelling argument that situates the concept of home as an overall impression that is brought about when one is exposed to something from our *sensory world*, be it a taste, a lingering smell, or a distant melody that one can distinguish from earshot.⁹⁵ The objects of the sensory world that are

⁹⁵ Margaret Morse, "Home: smell, taste, posture, gleam," in *Home, Exile, Homeland: Film, Media, and the Politics of Place*, ed. Hamid Naficy (London: Routledge Press, 1999), 63.

expressed in Morse's argument take on the form of a souvenir.⁹⁶ Regarding the appeal of souvenir culture in ethnic communities Egoyan was once on record as saying: "there is . . . nostalgia for a world which exists as image, and which has itself as referent. You can always go back to an image. But you can't just go back to a land."⁹⁷ Similarly, Debussy in a private conversation with André Messager, a composer in his own right, once declared "if one cannot afford to travel, one substitutes the imagination."⁹⁸ Both of these quotes represent the souvenir as a conceptualized image that is a byproduct of an actual object or a specific act, whether musical or otherwise.

Analogous to my performance of the *Seven Armenian Dances*, Egoyan's film short, *Diaspora*, also evokes general impressions of the Armenian homeland by employing both sonic and visual souvenirs throughout the course of his eight-minute experimental work. Although the images and the melodic fragments that feature in Egoyan's work do not explicitly convey the diasporic condition in isolation, when accompanied together they form a general impression of the Armenian diaspora, and vicariously through the representation of the diaspora, the Armenian homeland. A major feature of this film is Egoyan's use of repetition. By employing a limited set of images and melodic motifs that repeat relentlessly over the course of the work, the audience forms an overall impression of the unrelenting circularity associated with the diasporic condition. From the perspective of the audience, it is only until the whole film is expressed that the true

⁹⁶ The souvenir can be anything that is a physical or audible representation of a particular culture that brings about a feeling of home. These souvenirs are mobile in nature.

⁹⁷ Marie-Aude Baronian, "History and Memory, Repetition and Epistolarity," in *Image and Territory: Essays on Atom Egoyan*, ed. Monique Tschofen and Jennifer Burwell (Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2007), 159.

⁹⁸ Claude Debussy, "La Soirée Dans Grenade," in *Estampes Piano Suite*, ed. Ernst – Günter Heinemann (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1988), 10-16.

meaning of the work truly emerges. The images that Egoyan employs in his film are relatively unclear and, at times, overexposed. They are somewhat reminiscent of a Jacques-Henri Lartigue photograph. Instead of making his subjects freeze in his frame, Lartigue was renowned for portraying his subjects in movement, letting them elude his camera frame, leaving hazy overexposed shadows on the dark background. The imperfect nature of Lartigue's photographs added a kind of nostalgic impression to each image. By employing such images in his work, it is clear that Egoyan is attempting to represent a cultural past shrouded in a sort of mystery and, indeed, nostalgia. Despite the fact that the souvenirs expressed in the film do not physically belong to the audience, by incorporating these images in this audio-visual work, Egoyan's audience forms an emotionally compelling association with these very romantic souvenirs, almost to the extent that they become personally vested within these cultural relics. Rather than explicitly denote a particular place, these images as well as the accompanying musical motifs collectively act as *referents* or overall *impressions* of the Armenian homeland. Egoyan moves away from plot-related themes or other narrative devices to employ both aural and pictorial souvenirs in constructing his overall impression of the Armenian homeland. While I used gesture to generate evocations of the Armenian homeland in my performance of the *Seven Armenian Dances*, here Egoyan is employing both images and sounds to convey his overall vision of this particular place.

One can trace a few commonalities between this film and any given performance of the *Seven Armenian Dances*. Both articulate and construct the homeland. Through the use of "Armenian" cultural souvenirs as a means of colouring his film's narrative, Egoyan compels his audience both to imagine overall impressions of the diasporic condition, and to negotiate a subjectively formed impression of the Armenian homeland. As a result, the film's spectators are

drawn into these cultural souvenirs and in an almost mythical fashion, are brought face-to-face with their lost home. Likewise, my performance of “Shoror of Karin,” or Bayrakdarian’s performance of the *Anduni* song cycle discussed in the previous chapter, creates a mythically – fashioned representation of the Armenian homeland for the members of the audience. Much like Egoyan’s film, these performances ultimately culminated in a spiritual homecoming. For those present during the enactment another similarity between these two artistic expressions of identity is that the mythical homeland constructed as a result of these expressions can only last over the course of any given performance or film viewing. The souvenirs that are subjectively imagined by the audience, as a direct consequence of both the performance and film viewing, disappear into the air as soon these artistic expressions come to an end. As a result, the audience’s reunion with their homeland is cut short and the nostalgia that was temporarily alleviated over the course of these artistic experiences, are brought back to haunt the diasporic audience once again.

Despite these compelling similarities there exists one fundamental difference between Egoyan’s film and my performance of “Shoror of Karin”. Both are essentially considered articulations of identity, but whereas Egoyan’s film employs real – life images coupled with musical motifs, my performance, perhaps any given performance relies on the production of sound alone in order to manufacture the conceptual images that accompany the audience over the course of the musical event. The only aspect that is physically overt during my own musical enactment is indeed the gestures that I employ in order to create my desired sound quality. Taking again my performance, the production of evocative sounds compelled the audience to construct its own imaginative impressions of the Armenian homeland. While the film medium has the benefit of the physical image to enhance the meaning associated with the work, the musical medium must rely on the physical gesture and the sound quality that together produce

the abstract conceptual images that are an essential byproduct of any musical event. What I would like to press home here is the fact that the performer plays a critical role in articulating the appropriate sounds of these cultural souvenirs and in doing so impart evocative conceptual images to the members of his/her audience. Expressing the music in this fashion allows the audience members to reify their Armenianness within the diaspora, and revisit their mythically constructed homeland. As Stewart's theory attests, the imaginary and sonic cultural relics expressed during my performance encapsulated the present within the world of these *musical souvenirs* [past].⁹⁹ Essentially these sonic and conceptual cultural referents expressed during my performance became, for a brief moment, a dialectic part of the Armenian – Canadian cultural community.

Seven Armenian Dances: Music as Text? Music as Enactment!

Folk dances express the specific traits of each nation, especially its glory and the extent to which its civilization is advanced, and what is inside [the soul] of its people.¹⁰⁰

To begin this section, I will draw some parallels between the *Seven Armenian Dances* and Debussy's "La Soirée dans Grenade" from his *Estampes* piano suite. Upon close examination, three primary similarities appear between both of these works. Both are evocative of exotic locations; both employ dance rhythms that are representative of their respective regions; and both employ sounds of musical instruments native of those geographic places.

⁹⁹ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984), 51.

¹⁰⁰ Komitas Vartabed, "Armenian Folk Songs and Church Songs," in *Komitas: Essays and Articles*, trans. Vatsche Barsoumian (Pasadena, CA: Drazarck Press, 2001), 163.

Following this opening section I will argue that performing the *Seven Armenian Dances* based on what is purely written in the score will more often than not result in a rather unsatisfactory and watered-down interpretation of this work. I conclude this section, and indeed chapter, by providing a performative analysis of “Manushaki of Vagharshapat” and in doing so, hope to prove that examining this music from the perspective of sound and act results in a more comprehensive understanding of how music does social work, rather than that afforded by engaging in score-reading. It is one thing expressing these works on paper, and a completely different thing enacting them in real-life performative situations.

While the concept of place holds great appeal among ethnomusicologists and other cultural theorists, the evocative and exotic has always held an interest in Western music culture. For instance, Debussy’s “La Soirée dans Grenade” is an example of a composition that is clearly influenced by notions of the exotic. As the title suggests, Debussy paints an overall impression of the Spanish city of Grenada. The habanera dance rhythm plays a pervasive role in this movement and helps in forming an overall impression of the Andalucian countryside. From my own performative experiences, I see the opening six – bar introduction as evocative of a gentle sunset over the city of Grenada. Given the dance-like nature of the habanera rhythm, I articulate the opening measures by employing a flowing type of gesture in my own performance. I begin the piece by using a large up and down gesture as I approach the opening C-sharp octaves. At no point are my fingers wedded to the keys. Rather, there is a continuous feeling of movement. Upon the completion of those measures, a sparkling quality still remains, but at this point I see the repeating C-sharp octaves in the right hand as reminiscent of the stars in the night sky. Here my gesture changes from a fluid and moving motion to a sharp articulated one, as I approach the keys with a more pointed approach. In employing this gesture, I produce a thin but bright sound.

Debussy presents “a night in Granada” in an almost pastoral semi-pictorial fashion by employing a wash of sounds and colouristic timbres. Keeping in mind the importance of one’s gestures, the images associated with Grenada quickly come to life.

Figure 3.2 Debussy, “La Soirée dans Grenade,” mm. 1 - 5. Courtesy of Claude Debussy. “La Soirée dans Grenade” from *Estampes Piano Suite*, Ed. Ernst – Günter Heinemann (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1988), 10.



Through the sonic experience that is musical performance, the audience members are able to witness the sights, hear the sounds, even indulge in the smells of the Andalucian culture. In the same way Komitas evokes an impression of the Armenian countryside, Debussy is suggesting a specific place in his composition, but this is not where the similarities end. Upon further examination of “La Soirée dans Grenade,” we see how the tempo marking changes to *Léger et lointain* (mm. 109 – 112). In this section, Debussy is impressing upon the performer to adopt a light sound quality, and in doing so give off the notion that the sound is emerging from a distant locale. Here, using the same form of touch, the pianist is expected to imitate the timbre of a guitar. This guitar-like imitation occurs once more in mm. 115 – 117. Of course, how the performer articulates this passage to produce the desired soundscape depends on the caliber of the performance. For without technique, merely playing the gesture falls short of evoking the

overall impression.¹⁰¹ As important as the score markings are in indicating the overall nature of the piece, as in the case of the *Seven Armenian Dances*, the performer is solely responsible for translating these markings into the desired sound effect, thus disseminating the musically represented cultural souvenirs, such as the musical instruments signified in both “La Soirée dans Grenade” and the *Seven Armenian Dances*, to their desired audience. In order to do so, however, the performer must have a fully invested understanding of the physical or musical gestures that are necessary to employ in order to achieve a desired soundscape.

Figure 3.3 Debussy, “La Soirée dans Grenade,” mm. 109 - 117. Courtesy of Claude Debussy. “La Soirée dans Grenade” from *Estampes Piano Suite*, Ed. Ernst – Günter Heinemann (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1988), 15.

The image displays a page from a musical score for Claude Debussy's "La Soirée dans Grenade" from the *Estampes Piano Suite*. The page contains measures 109 through 117. The music is written for piano in 3/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The score includes several dynamic markings: *pp* (pianissimo) at measures 109 and 111, *p* (piano) at measure 113, *più p* (pianissimo) at measures 111 and 116, and *pp* again at measure 117. Tempo markings include "Léger et lointain" at the beginning and "Tempo I°" at measure 113. The score features various musical notations, including triplets, slurs, and articulation marks. The page is numbered 15 at the bottom right.

¹⁰¹ Paul Roberts, *Images: The Piano Music of Claude Debussy* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1996), 45-70.

Komitas' *Seven Armenian Dances* was composed over a four year period and was finally completed in 1902. The cycle was subsequently debuted by Komitas in Paris four years later. It may come as a surprise to some that this is in fact the only known published solo piano work that exists in Komitas' entire compositional oeuvre.¹⁰² Each of its movements bears a title indicating the ethnographic as well as choreographic characteristics of the various regions representative of early 20th Century Armenia.¹⁰³ Whether one listens to the many recordings of this work, engages in the act of performance, or just reads the score, what one will immediately encounter is not Komitas' reliance on technical virtuosity or pianistic bravura, but rather his exploitation of evocative harmonies and cascading sonic colours that when rendered in performance, generate overall impressions of the regions represented in this suite. In fact, the very musical identities of these movements are essentially shaped by the pianist's impersonation and interpretation of the various Armenian folk instruments represented throughout the work.¹⁰⁴ However, omitting the score's stylistic marking ("in the style of *X*") given at the beginning of each of the dance movements, and the few performative aids that decorate certain passages in the music, the score does not adequately equip the performer with a comprehensive understanding of how to approximate such sounds through the guise of the piano. A good case in point appears in "Shoror of Karin" where the score provides markings that attempt to aid the performer's overall approach to the piano, but unfortunately these markings can be construed as open-ended and casual in nature. For instance, in m. 1, the score demarcates the term "calmly." By m. 7 the score

¹⁰² Robert At'ayan, *The Armenian Neume System of Notation*, trans. Vrej Nersessian (Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 1999), 160.

¹⁰³ For full scores of "Manushaki of Vagharshapat" and "Shoror of Karin" please consult Appendix A, pages 119 and 123 respectively.

¹⁰⁴ Although dances are invoked within the scope of each movement, I focus on how the performer, through his or her use of gesture and sound quality must render the sounds of the exotic instruments that are invoked in each of the movements, thus externalizing the sonic souvenirs of these instruments to their audience.

explicitly indicates that the “melody is somewhat marked,” and in m. 17 the score suggests that an even “more marked” sound quality is required. The final stylistic marking appears in m. 20 where the term “delicate” is used to indicate to the performer that a more sustained singing melodic line is required. However, after m. 20 no other performative aids or stylistic markings are provided. Given that “Shoror of Karin” is a 62 measure long movement, I find the score’s complete lack of performative instruction very telling for my argument. What is even more of a concern is that in the score to “Manushaki of Vagharshapat”, no stylistic markings appear at any point in the score. Given the highly generalized, or in certain cases, complete lack of performative markings provided in the score, the performer is left with significant room for interpretative variation. Overall, my unguarded criticism of the score should not be taken as a direct criticism of this work. Rather, by criticizing the score, I want to dispel the commonly held belief that the musical text contains all of the musical and performative answers. I also want to dismiss the related argument that by only engaging in a reading of the score, one is able to attain a fully comprehensive and fleshed out understanding of the work in question. I believe that a balance should be met between understanding music from the perspective of text, as well as music from the perspective of enactment.

Now steering away from the score to my own experiences as both a performer and as a listener of this work, what remains apparent is that the overall soundscape of the work does, at times compel the musician to embrace a rather unpianistic sound quality. Instead of producing an archetypal pianistic sound to represent these evocative instruments, the musician must continually renegotiate the sound quality of each and every note produced on the piano, and in doing so impart the desired soundscape evocative of these instruments to one’s audience.

Among the many recordings of the *Seven Armenian Dances* I rank Grigoryan’s as one of the best

for this very reason: while other performers have a tendency to approach the *Seven Armenian Dances* as strictly a piano composition that is at best, loosely representative of certain evocative folk instruments, Grigoryan takes the performance of these dances to a whole other level. She does this by fully embracing the exotic sounds of these instruments, transforming the medium of the piano into something that is much richer and more culturally compelling.¹⁰⁵ In her recordings, the piano becomes a kind of orchestra out of which the highly exotic instrumental sounds are called to mind. Quite clearly Grigoryan possesses a concrete bona fide understanding of what these Armenian folk instruments actually sound like, and thus is able to express them through the medium of the piano. She is not merely basing her entire performance on what is purely written in the musical score, or indeed providing her own extemporizations of what she believes the sounds of these evocative folk instruments to be. If that were the case, her recordings would appear less persuasive and would, most probably, fall in the same category as the performances and recordings that I mentioned in counterpoint to Grigoryan's. What is very clear is that by merely looking at the score, without possessing any concrete understanding what sounds these folk instruments impart, it becomes a great challenge to create a truly evocative and culturally informed performance experience. Once again we are confronted by the, at times, incomplete nature of the musical score.

I would like to end this chapter by looking at my own performance-oriented interpretation of "Manushaki of Vagharshapat". Given the free and quasi-improvisational nature of the movement, the pianist must approach the work in a flowing and extemporized manner. The initial 8 – measure introduction in the left hand features an open chord configuration. I feel

¹⁰⁵ Komitas Vartabed, *Complete Piano Compositions*, Lusine Grigoryan, Naregatsi Art Institute, Compact Disc, 2004.

this configuration not only provides the harmonic basis for this movement as a whole but also, and in the same way that the habanera dance theme evokes the Andalusian countryside in “La Soirée dans Grenada,” this passage forms an overall impression of the region of *Vagharshapat*. From my own performative perspective I find the open fifth sonorities and spaciousness of the left-hand voicing in the opening eight measures evocative of the nostalgic homeland. The desired sound quality of this opening left-hand passage requires a ringing almost *sforzandi* articulation. While the sound produced in the left hand must not come across as very loud, it must nevertheless boast a certain round and resonant quality. In order to create this sound quality the performer must adopt an accentuated gesture when pressing down on the keys. As soon as the note is depressed the pianist must let go of the weight from his or her arm and release it into the key. In doing so an increased resonance is made possible on the instrument. Given that the piece is to be played “in the style of *dap*”, perhaps the most dominant feature of “Manushaki of *Vagharshapat*” is the rhythmic configuration that is first introduced in the opening measures of the piece in the right hand. This rhythmic theme is evocative of the Armenian instrument, *dap*, which is a percussive instrument resembling a kind of a tambourine. Although the *dap* is a percussive instrument, the sound of the instrument has a deep, dark and hauntingly melodic quality. The *dap* theme appears in two varied forms over the course of this opening movement. The first time the theme is introduced is in m. 1, where the rhythmic configuration bears two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note, while the second version of this theme bears a sixteenth note followed by two sixteenth notes and an eighth note. The first time the drum theme appears in the left hand is from mm. 9 through 26. I feel the gentle trills are evoking a general impression of a steady drum beat. After three measures of steady trills, the drum beat is extended into a melodic ornamental passage. This ornamental extension takes place four times from mm. 9

– 26. I feel that this section between mm. 9 – 26 has a certain degree of development that the performer must exploit. The three measure left hand trills are slow moving and on each occasion continually develop towards the extended melodic ornamental passage. On a larger level the performer must continually crescendo starting from m. 9 and building up until the climax in the final trill in m. 26. Upon completion of the left hand trill passagework in m. 26, mm. 27 – 68 act as an extension of the opening eight measures of the piece where a resonant sound quality is once again required. Following m. 68, mm. 72, 76, 80, and 84 feature a rhythmic configuration of two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note. On the one hand this motif is evocative of the *dap*, but at the same time this rhythmic configuration resembles a delicate dance gesture. Given the delicate nature of this theme, the pianist must approach this brief melodic motif in a very short and delicate manner. It bears a certain airy and, at the same time bouncy quality. This rhythmic motif also appears in mm. 109-110, 104, 108, 112, and 116 and resembles the same dance and instrumental qualities as expressed previously. In both occasions, these rhythmic motifs are interrupted by trills that appear earlier on in the movement. As is symptomatic of the work as a whole, this piece concludes in a very somber setting. In the closing five measures the pianist must make use of the intervallic distance between the left and right hands. While the majority of the work necessitates a round sound quality, the closing eight measures require a thin sound production. In the closing section the performer must embrace a sound quality that almost bears the impression that the sound is emanating from an exotic location.

Some Final Thoughts

The musical souvenirs that are imbued in Komitas' *Seven Armenian Dances* can only exist through the realm of the sonic. In view of the fact that this collection of dances are strictly performance pieces, examining this music from the perspective of *act* and *sound* results in a more comprehensive understanding of how music does its socio-cultural work, in a more compelling manner than that afforded by engaging in a text-based reading. While my performative account of "Manushaki of Vagharshapat" does refer to the score, I regard the text as not an end, but rather the means to an end, the end being the performance. Looking at this music from a purely cultural perspective, expressing these musical souvenirs on a public forum provides a necessary tonic for the members of the diasporic audience in that it provides them with a kind of *secondhand* representation of their culture and for a temporary period of time, eases their collective nostalgia for home. Additionally these performances give the diasporic audience an opportunity to negotiate their Armenianness and reaffirm their own personal identities in the environments in which they reside. The performer essentially takes the mantle of musical as well as cultural *custodian* of the Armenian diasporic community. As referenced in the opening chapter, in much the same way as Bob Dylan's *Tambourine Man* emerges as a leader of his people, the Armenian performer becomes among the standard bearers of the culture's traditions. While the performer is regarded with a certain degree of reverence among members of his or her community, this public adoration is not devoid of any burden. As we saw over the course of this chapter, in performing music like the *Seven Armenian Dances* the performer must appropriately interpret and disseminate the sounds of the Armenian folk instruments as well as the dance characteristics through the guise of the piano. The performer must have a fully invested understanding of the sound qualities of these instruments and articulate them in an

authentic manner. By articulating these musically represented cultural souvenirs the performer is able to evoke a poetic universe of distant lands and landscapes, translating them to an audience far removed from the places the pieces are said to represent. In doing so the performance constructs a formative connection between the diasporic individuals and the long gone, yet not forgotten Armenian homeland.

Chapter Four

Resonating Home and the “Acting-Out” of Diasporic Membership:

A View from the Field

[Music] is such a great and exceedingly fine art, its effect on man's innermost nature is so powerful, and it is so completely and profoundly understood by him in his innermost being as an entirely universal language, whose distinctness surpasses even that of the world of perception itself..¹⁰⁶

-Arthur Schopenhauer-

I finally succumbed to my “Armenianness” upon arriving in Ottawa. This was hardly a startling development. After all, my work as organist at the Ottawa St. Mesrob Armenian Orthodox Church not only allowed me to cultivate my own identity through intensive musical practice, it also permitted me the many opportunities to foster relationships with members of the Ottawa-Armenian and Armenian – Canadian community. As a direct consequence of my concerted musical involvement, I acquired a certain foothold in the Armenian community of Ottawa, one which helped me tremendously to confront and realize my own Armenianness, as well as develop an appreciation for the various trajectories that I, as a musician, could inhabit within the overall construct of this diasporic group. Born out of my musical, cultural, and indeed research-based experiences, I found that music and identity are, in fact, inextricably tied-up with one another. The public spectacle is just the meeting-ground of this identity-centered negotiation. While I appreciated the positive cultural implications and relationships vis-à-vis music and cultural identity, I concerned myself with discerning the place of the performer in this musico-cultural milieu. Taking into consideration my own role as musician within this milieu, my fieldwork, and indeed personal research experiences, have allowed me to witness first-hand, the formidable role that the performer plays in articulating, imparting and acting-out this cultural

¹⁰⁶ David Edward Cooper, “Arthur Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Representation, Vol. II, Chapter 18,” in *Aesthetics: the classic readings*, trans. E. F. J. Payne (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 201.

dialogue, one that takes place between the Armenian culture, its music, and its adherents.

Although I now have a more intimate understanding of my Armenianness, and, above all, of the cultural responsibility placed upon the musician within the construct of this imagined community, this appreciation was not always well elucidated on my part. It was a result of a lifelong development and continual process of discovery.

A Search for “Self”

My own story really finds its beginnings in the small town of Brandon, Manitoba where I spent the better part of my life. While growing up in the middle of the prairies in a town of 40,000 people [Brandon, Manitoba], I did not have the opportunity to get a sense of my “Armenianness.” Without any form of public cultural expression, I was unable to come to terms with, or embrace it on any meaningful level. At the time, I was primarily concerned with “fitting-in” within the local community, rather than erecting cultural boundaries, thus separating myself from my immediate surroundings. Despite my relatively unconscious desire to homogenize within the backdrop of my immediate surroundings, I managed to establish a relationship with my heritage through the limited musical experiences I was able to fashion for myself. These experiences were primarily born out of listening encounters and the occasional performance. The listening encounters were recordings that I was able to access, such as those by the Armenian – Canadian duo, soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian and pianist Serouj Kradjian. My performances focused on the works of Komitas and Khatchaturian, as well as other less notable Armenian composers. However, these performances were strictly in the company of my own family, for I encountered a certain degree of anxiety when expressing my cultural heritage, musical or

otherwise, to those who were not of the same cultural persuasion as I, and indeed did not share the similar inclinations or interests.

Apart from the performances I engaged in over the course of my undergraduate degree in piano performance, I was, at least from a culturally vested perspective, severed from the experiences of the culturally compelling public spectacle. While I understood, both in theoretical and practical terms, the critical role of musical performance within the backdrop of Western Classical music, I was largely unaware of just where to situate the musical enactment within various ethnic or culture groups, Armenian included. While in theory I appreciated, albeit from a rather detached and third-person perspective, the importance of cultural exhibitions and, indeed, the positive implications of such expressions of culture, I did not have the means to experience such phenomenon first-hand. However, even within the rather contrived settings of my own private family performances and my second-hand listening encounters, I was able to foster a certain musico-cultural association, one that helped to serve me in my initial steps towards fulfilling my Armenianness. As I am left reflecting on this formative period in my life, it has become clear to me that even at that stage of my development, music played a central role in forming my relationship with, and an understanding of, the Armenian culture at large. It was during this period that I first pondered the questions underlying this thesis: “how does the musical spectacle help formulate a connection, emotional or otherwise, to one’s own culture?” and “how does artistic practice shape displaced or marginalized cultural identities?” While the overall narrative and language of these questions have certainly evolved over time, in many respects the nucleus of these questions remains largely unaltered. I believe it was during this very critical juncture in my own development that the initial seeds of my research project were planted, albeit unknowingly. Little would I know that these embryonic questions, which at the

time were limited to my private mental life, would manifest in a full on quest to understand the many functions of expressive musical culture in the Armenian diaspora, as well as the multifarious roles that are assumed on the part of the performer within the overall mechanism of this very unique ethnic community.

Fieldwork: Coming Clean

Before charting my fieldwork journey, I must confess that when setting out on this musico-cultural excursion, the very notion of engaging in the personally invested process of fieldwork did not appear as a plausible or attractive research methodology. The mere thought of fieldwork and all the activities associated with it, from conducting and transcribing field interviews, to observing and taking part in the musical happenings of the Armenian – Canadian community, brought about profound feelings of discomfort, and every so often, periods of self-critical examination. During the initial stages of my research process and writing phase, I placed a great deal of faith in existing scholarly resources, festooning and at times suffocating my work's narrative with an abundance of heady over-contextualized descriptions and profound quotations from various musicologists (from Bohlman to Turino) and musically-inclined philosophers (like Adorno, Said, and in the most recent case, Schopenhauer). Consequently, my own research design was heavily constructed through the guise of other peoples' experiences, observations, theoretical frameworks, and personal biases. Without knowing it, I was co-opted into adopting a third-person approach to my work's narrative. However, as my research evolved, my overall attitude towards my own work began to move in a new direction, towards a more

personally invested and practically applied process of analysis, perhaps fitting my practically-centered theoretical argument.

While I continued to cite Turino, Stewart, Schopenhauer and the like, I began to acknowledge the powerful nature of my own voice within the overarching narrative of my thesis. I took into account the musico-cultural duality that I possess as both a member of the broader Armenian – Canadian community, as well as my own status as a musician within the unique surroundings of the Ottawa-Armenian ethnic Gemeinschaft. While I remained steadfast in my quest to fully appreciate the formative cultural responsibilities placed on the performer, as well as the cultural implications that are a direct resultant of these cultural spectacles, I became increasingly aware that in order to attain a comprehensive understanding of these issues presented in my thesis, I should engage in a more hands on form of analysis, such as that afforded by fieldwork. Taking into consideration my own theoretical argument, I became very conscious that if I were to exclude a more hands-on approach over the course of this thesis, I would, on a certain level, be expounding the very same brand of armchair musicianship that I have come to discourage throughout the course of my work. I took my leave from the highly isolationist surroundings of the ivory tower where I took residency, and indulged in the culturally fertile grounds of the Canadian, and more to the point, Armenian – Canadian music community.

Bearing in mind that the Armenian ethnic community is predicated upon preserving what it regards as “true” Armenian culture – or, as expressed in Armenian, “eesgagan Haygagan meshagout” – I turned my attention towards just how precisely this desire to maintain an

authentically constructed culture translates on a culturally externalized musical platform.¹⁰⁷ In many ways, my privileged insider status within the environment of the larger Armenian – Canadian diasporic community greatly facilitated my research process.¹⁰⁸ Given that status and all-around knowledge of the Armenian community, I was able to quickly gain access to both my target audience and the necessary resources that helped to construct my overall musico-cultural world-view. At the same time I was able to carefully consider the questions that have taken me years of personal reflection and silent rumination to formulate and finally verbalize. At this point in my research, I came to terms with my topic and its need to engage in actual work in the field. I came to realize that not only was my own voice at stake within the course of this chapter, but those of my research participants and the broader Armenian – Canadian community. There came a certain point in my fieldwork where I could not separate my private life from that of my research. Every choir practice, performance event, church service [*Sourp Badarak*], all of these components of my personal life also became inextricably bound up in my research. As quoted by McLean and Leibing in *The Shadow Side of Fieldwork*, the borders between my “personal life and formal [musical] ethnography [began] to blur and the research field [lost] its boundedness.”¹⁰⁹ As a result of the faint borders between my fieldwork and private life,

¹⁰⁷ *eesgagan Haygagan meshagout* is an Armenian phrase that is loosely translated as “true Armenian culture.”

¹⁰⁸ Regarding the place of the insider, Baily places great importance on understanding the community from an emic, or insider’s perspective. He states that “one of the crucial lessons that anthropology has taught ethnomusicology [and musicology to a degree] is the importance of trying to understand things from the inside, to explore the emic view, the folk view, actor’s view, evaluation, explanation, model, representation: there are lots of terms for it.” For more information regarding the differences between ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ research in ethnomusicology please consult the following: Andy Nercessian, *Postmodernism and Globalization in Ethnomusicology: An Epistemological Approach* (London: The Scarecrow Press, 2002), 12.

¹⁰⁹ Gillian Goslinga and Gelya Frank, “Forward,” to *In the Shadows: Anthropological Encounters with Modernity*, ed. Athena McLean and Annette Leibing (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), xi.

introspection became an important part of my work, reflecting the apparent tensions between my own role as fieldworker and engaged participant [performer].

While engaging in field interviews has fostered a more culturally-inclusive understanding of the function of the Armenian performer in his or her cultural and social milieu, during my initial interviews, I made the mistake of expecting certain answers from my research participants. I did not realize this until I began listening to some of my earlier interviews, only to find I had regularly disrupted the flow of the conversation by periodically interjecting my own personal perspectives that steered the direction of the conversations so as to suit my own scholarly interests. This realization forced me to approach my interviews and their interpretation in a more open and honest manner. In this chapter I will reflect this approach by presenting the opinions and perspectives of my participants as transparently as possible, while interweaving my own thoughts and feelings throughout the narrative of this chapter. While all the participants shared the same perspective as I regarding my theoretical argument, each was able to bring to light their own thoughtful views, perspectives, and experiences. This made the fieldwork process even more compelling and enjoyable for me.

The main questions that were broached during course of these interviews are as follows:

1. What is so unique about musical practice that through engaging in it, an individual or culture group can negotiate or uphold their respective cultural identities?

2. How does musical practice facilitate a search for meaning that culminates in a spiritual return home and simultaneously build towards a new-found identity in the diaspora?
3. What is so unique about musical performance or expressive culture in general that the enactment is able to construct a form of social and/or cultural membership?
4. And finally, for a culture that is predicated upon preserving their identity [“eesgagan Haygagan meshagout”] and other various cultural traditions, how do such things as musical practice assist in this cultural realization?

This chapter is essentially charting the coordinates of my fieldwork journey, illustrating not just my own perspectives, but those that collectively make up a portion of the Canadian and Armenian – Canadian musical landscape. I employ a cartographic metaphor here because with each successive interview and field excursion I was, at least in my own mind, charting new musical terrain within the scope of this cultural context. And, as has been the case throughout my thesis, my theoretical framework is essentially crafted around the idea of music from the perspective of doing, a result of real-life musical engagement. As has been the case throughout the narrative of my thesis, I urge the reader to embrace the idea of musical performance as more than just the mechanism out of which an individual or group can externalize so-called “musical works” or “musical objects”, but rather to see musical performance as part of a personally and communally invested process, at the heart of which resides a negotiation for some form of social and/or cultural membership.

Performing Fieldwork and the Sonic Inscriptions of Cultural Membership

Late at night, after returning from the weekly Friday night choir rehearsal in preparation for the upcoming Sourp Badarak [Armenian Church service], I sit at my desk, the light of my computer screen illuminating a portion of the room, my fingers poised over the keyboard as I attempt to will them into action. Upon reflection I am first reminded of the overwhelming smell of the choreg (an Armenian pastry) coupled with the rich aroma of Armenian coffee [Haygagan sourj] which often greets me at each and every rehearsal as I make my entrance through the large corridor of the St. Mesrob Orthodox Church (St. Marks Anglican Church). The choir rehearsal begins normally enough. As the members of the choir gradually shuffle in for practice, I spend my time negotiating the sound of the organ so as to establish a balance between the choir and the instrument. As the choir practice begins, it is as if the music transforms the gray walls of the church into another land entirely. The music becomes both a talisman, and a souvenir of an old world culture, one that only exists through the engagement of these communal musical practices. While these weekly rehearsals are generally designed as practice sessions in preparation for the monthly Armenian Church services, with each and every passing week it becomes even clearer that these choir rehearsals also bear significant social as well as cultural implications. During tonight's rehearsal, for instance, I was struck by the sheer volume of people sitting in the pews just for the sake of watching our practice, experiencing, albeit from an observational perspective, the musical and cultural work so central to negotiating and reifying the community's sense of its own Armenianness. Indeed, those who sit in the pews are largely part of the older generation of the community. Here, it is clear that the desire for membership resides at the heart of these expressive cultural practices, whether one is an invested social actor or if one is just an interested onlooker. It raises the question, how does music specifically help create this idea of cultural membership? And furthermore, in what ways does practicing, or in the case of the members in the pews, observing the musical activities of the community establish what Benedict Anderson would call an "imagined [Armenian] community"? In order to answer these questions, I am constantly retreating within myself, expecting answers to emanate within, from a connection between my fingers and the keyboard. I quickly realize that this question is more deserving of further examination, not only within the privatized space of my own mind, but also within the scope of my field interviews.

I believe it was the highly respected ethnomusicologist Gregory Barz who once put forward the argument that field research is akin to a performative art-form. Taking Barz's argument, writing about field research in the form of musical ethnographies, field diaries, and fieldnotes (see my own account above), when taken together, re-performs or reenacts the environment of the field thus allowing the reader to reconstruct or construct, in his or her own mind, the place, time, and overall context of the culturally-dynamic *field* in question. The

primary thrust of fieldwork is, therefore to essentially re-perform or re-situate the field, but through the guise of written language alone. Through the narrative of my own fieldwork account above, I was able to reconstruct the environment of the St. Mesrob Armenian Orthodox Church by discussing the various cultural practices and traditions that take place during the course of these rehearsals. Of course, it must be said that at times like these that I wish I could provide the reader with a less abstract method of conveying the environment of the Ottawa-Armenian community, such as that of video or audio recordings.¹¹⁰ Of course, this becomes one of the major hurdles of fieldwork, taking real-life experiences and bona fide situations, and translating them into a known, shared-discourse. Moving back to the performative nature of fieldwork, Barz also suggests that within the context of our post-postmodernist ethos, “the social sciences can no longer claim that the fieldworker escapes significant participation in the total cultural performance of field research. Performance is, after all, according to Johannes Fabian, ‘not what they do and we observe; we are both engaged [and invested] in it.’”¹¹¹ Had I crafted my fieldwork account from the perspective of the audience member, I would have been engaging in exactly what Fabian was guarding against. Rather, imbued within the context of my own fieldwork account and, indeed, my entire fieldwork are my own personally invested musical experiences in addition to my thoughtfully-crafted observations. Much of what is written in this

¹¹⁰ Baudrillard also shares in this perspective regarding the limitations of language in conveying a particular real-life scenario. He states: “Snapshots aren’t enough. We’d need the whole film of the trip in real time, including the unbearable heat and the music. We’d have to replay all from end to end at home in a darkened room, rediscover the magic of the freeways and the distance and the ice-cold alcohol in the desert and the speed and live it all again on video at home in real time, not simply for the pleasure of remembering but because the fascination of senseless repetition is already present in the abstraction of the journey. The unfolding of the desert is infinitely close to the timelessness of film . . .” Jean Baudrillard, *America* (New York: Verso, 1986), 1.

¹¹¹ Gregory Barz, “Confronting the Field(note) In and Out of the Field: Music, Voices, Texts, and Experiences in Dialogue,” in *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, ed. Gregory Barz and Timothy J. Cooley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 206-23.

chapter is based on my many experiences, fieldnotes and interviews, out of which the voices of my friends, informants, and teachers emerge in the context of this socially-driven and culturally – charged musical drama, at the heart of which resides the musical performer as the chief social actor.

Tia DeNora addresses how people regard music as a device that is used to construct some form of identity or group membership.¹¹² Indeed, precisely because I was taking part in the week-to-week happenings of the Ottawa-Armenian Church and Community Choir, I was able to see first-hand, its social and cultural dynamics. As such, my fieldwork brings two principle motifs to light: the diaspora's connection to the homeland, and the quest for cultural membership. Throughout the narrative of my fieldwork account, I underline the gap between the present and the past, and the role that music-making plays in engulfing the past [Armenian homeland] within the construct of the present [diaspora] (*"As the choir practice begins it is as the music transforms the walls of the church into another land entirely. The music becomes both a talisman, and a souvenir of an old world culture, one that only exists through the engagement of these communal musical practice"*). Although my fieldnote is a relatively elaborate account of the social, musical, and cultural happenings within the Ottawa-Armenian community, what remains clear is the underlying nostalgia with which these evenings are imbued. The emphasis of the community's connection to *Hayastan* [Armenian homeland], for instance, is very clearly demarcated within the context of these week-to-week rehearsals. Cultural membership also plays a central role in these practices (*"While these weekly rehearsals are generally designed as practice sessions in preparation for the monthly Armenian Church services, with each and every*

¹¹² Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 163.

passing week it becomes even clearer that these choir rehearsals also bear significant social as well as cultural implications. During tonight's rehearsal, for instance, I was struck by the sheer volume of people sitting in the pews just for the sake of watching our practice, experiencing, albeit from an observational perspective, the musical and cultural work so central to negotiating and reifying the community's sense of its own Armenianness."'). Indeed over the course of these choir rehearsals, the desire for membership is continuously being played-out. It is indeed a performance in and of itself, a communal enactment of identity. Essentially, the main purposes for these culturally binding displays are rooted in the community's desire to establish a shared sense of ethnic and historical identity as Armenian – Canadians, an identity that is achieved by performing the same cultural music from one week to the next. In other words, tradition supersedes all things contemporary.¹¹³ As my fieldnote suggests, these choir practices are less and less about establishing a form of musical profundity, and more and more about providing the local Armenian community with a means to cling, however doggedly, to their traditional musics, and, vicariously, through their musical engagement, maintain some semblance of their respective identities as Armenian – Canadians. In an effort to attain a comprehensive understanding of music's role in establishing a form of membership, I turn to my research participants to provide me with their individual perspectives and personal experiences on the interrelationships between music and membership. Ultimately, what emerges from these accounts is a clearer picture of the

¹¹³ Regarding the link between music and identity John Baily writes: "Ideas about the special link between music and identity are frequently offered to explain why a particular social group – a community, a population, a nation – cultivates outmoded and seemingly irrelevant musical practices. Quoting Blacking, Baily states: "The most interesting and characteristically human features of music are not stylistic change and individual variations in performance, but non-change and the repetition of carefully rehearsed passages of music. . . . Although Blacking was addressing here problems of musical change, the 'ethnic identity' hypothesis can readily be invoked to explain the 'repetition of carefully rehearsed passages of music'. This argument is sometimes put forward to explain why immigrant groups in large multi-cultural cities . . . cling to their traditional music." John Baily, "Music and the Afghan National Identity," in *Ethnicity Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), 45-60.

work of music in achieving what Turino phrased, “creating and maintaining social identities.”¹¹⁴

Confronted by the question, “how does musical practice facilitate in a feeling of cultural membership?,” my first of interview participant, Dr. Patrick Carrabré, the well-known Canadian composer and my former music history and composition professor, had this to say:

Right! Well, I mean regarding the importance of musical performance and music in general when it comes to constructing identity, I think that’s obviously true and we see it in a variety of ways, particularly in the new world. This is because people bring cultural baggage with them, and it helps to define membership in a community because you have a kind of shared sense of a meaning for something. I think all kinds of social or culture groups use knowledge of a musical repertoire as a means of confirming their membership, whether the music is speed metal, or more aligned with a particular cultural community. If you understand that particular musical genre, then you kind of associate yourself with that particular group. As a result you hold a certain membership to that group. Culturally speaking, we certainly see this in places where larger clumps of immigrants have settled together. For instance, I remember when I was growing up, you could always tell who was Ukrainian or Polish based on their individual dance or musical styles. When going to a social [cultural event] you could tell which people knew the authentic practices of their culture, and likewise, those that did not. This helped to define their membership to their particular cultural group. Now that’s a pro and a con in the new world, you know what I mean, because a lot of the immigrants try and blend in rather than make their cultural history obvious. We have seen this in musical circles. For instance, Bartok, in order to express his Hungarianness started dressing in more traditional Hungarian dress and employ Hungarian folksongs in his compositions, even though he had not grown up with any of that stuff. He was a city boy who spoke German at home and played Strauss. Similar to the Armenian diasporic community, Bartok used his knowledge of a particular type of music in order for him to reconstruct or construct an identity for himself as a Hungarian. We have seen it a number of times that music can be really important in facilitating this process. I would say that people, particularly in North America tend to really admire others who are in touch with their cultural roots that they can use the music to help identify with that culture. Out here we do not have so many Armenians, whereas in Toronto there would be a bigger community. In Winnipeg I notice it more with the South Asian community, the Hindi community, the Pakistani community, they use musicians brought from the old country as a means of defining their cultural unit. So they have a big concert with a big name artist with a big dinner and all kinds of other cultural things, people will come in traditional dress, they will eat traditional food, things that they would not necessarily do on an everyday basis. So I think that is certainly where there are enough people where music and the arts can really be a major focus for that kind of activity.¹¹⁵

I do find Dr. Carrabré’s comments very much aligned with my own philosophical and musical perspectives. The idea of membership and the collective desire to belong to or associate with a particular group, resides at the crux of his remarks. Dr. Carrabré’s reference to how physical expressions of identity are necessary in confirming one’s membership to a particular culture is quite compelling. He reveals that while music is used in order to confirm a social or cultural

¹¹⁴ Martin Stokes, “Introduction,” in *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), 2.

¹¹⁵ Dr. T. Patrick Carrabré, Interview by author, Brandon, Manitoba, 9 July 2011.

group's membership, that often other expressive articulations of identity (such as dance, language, or culturally traditional clothing) are also necessary in achieving a communally vested sense of membership. On the subject of community and all things communal, Dr. Carrabr  suggests that negotiating identity is not only a personal quest, but involves a community of socially invested actors working together to achieve the same desired goal. This is why perhaps the communal practice of music-making, such as that afforded by singing in a choir, results in a more heightened and collective feeling of membership. This is certainly the case with respect to the Ottawa-Armenian Church and Community Choir. By and large Dr. Carrabr 's argument parallels that of Turino who puts forward the case that the meanings subjectively produced through artistic practice become part of the larger environment that shapes both the community in question, as well as the individuals that belong to that particular community.¹¹⁶

Upon engaging in a weekend fieldwork excursion to Toronto, I had the pleasure of sitting down and conducting an interview with musicologist and local music teacher Dr. Araxie Altounian. She provided me with a compelling argument for placing the performer in an important position within the scope of the Armenian diaspora. In her interview she suggests that without the cultural work undertaken by the performer, the Armenian culture in general would struggle to maintain their collective Armenianness. What I liked about this interview in particular was that Dr. Altounian called upon her own memories of her childhood and development in Lebanon, discussing how music allowed her to maintain her own Armenianness, outside the realms of the Armenian homeland. Her account reads as follows:

¹¹⁶ Thomas Turino, "Introduction," in *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, ed. Thomas Turino and James Lea (Warren: MI, Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 10.

Especially in the case of Armenians, where, I would say more than 80% of Armenians are living within the diaspora, which is a very unique case; our music serves as a reminder of who we are as a nation and as a culture. It [music] reminds us of who we are because we live in foreign cultures and are easily influenced by the things we see around us. I remember when I was a young girl, I was fascinated by the French Chansonniers, because in Lebanon we used to hear a lot of these singers; Mireille Mathieu, François Hardi, Gilbert Beauld. Later on we were influenced by American pop music. My favorite singer was Neil Diamond. We never openly thought about “Armenianness”. If it weren’t for the Armenian musicians who would come and perform our music, we would have easily dissolved into other cultures. This still remains the case today. Because, as young people we are open to anything we see in front of us, we are impressed by anything that is available “out there”, and because we are not living in “our land”, we are not going out and saying “hello” in Armenian to the cab driver, or to the postman, the bank teller, or the cashier. We don’t have Armenians around us. It is not like living in your own land. So if it isn’t for these artists who would come and perform Armenian music for us, we would easily forget our “Armenianness” very quickly and very easily.¹¹⁷

Reflecting briefly on Dr. Altounian’s account, what I find both refreshing and crucial within the context of my study is her emphasis on the musician as a kind of standard bearer of a culture’s traditions. She really orients the performer as being one of the safeguards of Armenian identity particularly from the perspective of diaspora. What makes Dr. Altounian’s account interesting from a diasporic perspective is that while members of the Armenian diaspora are often swayed by the cultural practices of their immediate environment, she states that by engaging or experiencing first-hand Armenian musical encounters, these culturally-invested practices stave off the possibility of freely “dissolving” within the immediate environment of the host community.¹¹⁸ Before moving on, I would like to dwell for a moment on both Dr. Carrabré’s and Dr. Altounian’s respective accounts. Indeed, contained within both accounts is the notion that artistic practice plays a central role in creating this concept of membership. Ultimately, the idea of membership is a result of a human desire to “fit in”. It remains remarkable, at least in my own mind, that music plays such a pivotal role in achieving the concept of community or membership. To conclude this section on diasporic membership, what we must take from both

¹¹⁷ Dr. Araxie Altounian, Interview by author. Toronto, Ontario, 21 May 2011.

¹¹⁸ For more information on the relationship between a diasporic group and their host community please refer to the following: Thomas Turino, “Introduction,” in *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, ed. Thomas Turino and James Lea (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 6.

field accounts above is that the survival of these diasporic cultures are predicated upon the notion of cultural practice which remains a fundamental theme in the realization of one's social or cultural membership. I would like to end this section with a quotation from Stokes, who pinpoints music's role in forming community and membership:

We might perhaps first look at what musics often *do* rather than what they are held to represent. Musics are invariably communal activities that bring people together in specific alignments, whether as musicians, dancers, or listening audiences. The "tuning in" through music of these social [and cultural] alignments can provide a powerful affective experience in which social [and cultural] identity is literally embodied. The relationships which are activated through music might involve the community as a whole – indeed one of the only occasions on which the community does come together. . . . Thus, in certain societies, music . . . is the only means by which the wider community appears as such to itself.¹¹⁹

Musically Reconstructing Home in the Field

In the previous chapters, we have seen how imbued within the context of much of the Armenian classical and folk music is this pervading narrative associated with the diasporic condition, often incorporating references that are directly associated with the Armenian homeland (the "Krun" [crane] comes to mind from the *Anduni* song cycle). Although I have briefly touched on the concept of home, in this chapter, and have engaged in more comprehensive examinations of this phenomenon in my previous chapters, I think it is necessary to revisit this trope as it relates to my study. Clear evidence for this desire to achieve a sense of home is explicitly articulated in the e-mail bulletin for the Ottawa-Armenian Church and Community Choir:

Within the St. Mark's Anglican Church in Ottawa is an old world culture, the fragments and remains of a place and time long since forgotten. . . . This is just a friendly reminder to all members of the Ottawa Armenian Choir. Please note we will be gathering tomorrow for our weekly rehearsal. Come and join us for one hour of folksongs, and one

¹¹⁹ Martin Stokes, "Introduction," in *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), 12.

hour of hymns. We have made tremendous progress since our humble beginnings in May 2010. For those who are considering joining the choir, remember that engaging in the happenings of the choir gives you the many opportunities to hear your language, and engage in the songs that have shaped the Armenian diasporic experience, both spiritual and folkloric. For those who enjoy in the singing and comradeship of like-cultured people, please come and join us in our musical and culturally-rich experience.¹²⁰

The rhetoric emphasizes the distance between the émigrés and their homeland, and the ability for communal musical practices to bridge this spatial and temporal divide separating the diaspora from its highly romanticized Armenian homeland. The bulletin delivers a promise that those who actively take part in the week-to-week practices, events, and musical performances would be constructing the idea of home. This is essentially achieved by engaging in a shared musical language. Indeed, this example serves as a model paradigm of Benedict Anderson's imagined communities. By using musical symbols of the past and externalizing them through a communal method of expression [choir], a quote unquote Armenian *imagined community* is constructed within the realms of the multi-ethnic apparatus that is the broader Ottawa community.

As I mentioned in earlier chapters the idea of home remains, in my mind at least, a mythical conception.¹²¹ Musically speaking, home is created through engagement in the musical enactment, whether that engagement is observational, or more crucially, performative. I decided once again to further examine the concept of home by addressing this trope within the scope of my fieldwork. In each of my interviews I asked the following question: "Since the Genocide the dominant discourse portrayed the 'diaspora' as a temporary condition and the guiding rhetoric was the aspiration of returning to the homeland. The discourse associated with the return to the

¹²⁰ Mrs. Marlene Iskedjian, e-mail message received, 27 May 2010.

¹²¹ For more information regarding the diasporic narrative please refer to the following: Denise Aghanian, *The Armenian Diaspora: Cohesion and Fracture* (Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 2007), 165.

homeland takes on a mythical almost spiritual-like quality, serving as a cultural unifier more than an actual planned objective. The question remains, does musical performance facilitate a connection between the diaspora and the Armenian homeland?" Each of my research participants helped me in fully understanding the concept of home and music's role in facilitating this connectedness to home. In some cases, I was provided with interesting historical background as to why the diasporic narrative is centered on the idea of an eventual return to the homeland. I will start, however, by providing Dr. Carrabr 's perspective with respect to this diasporic motif rooted around the idea of home. His account reads as follows:

The desire for *home* is a pretty common theme when any kind of group has been pushed out of their homeland for whatever kind of reason. You really see it with the Jewish people, and they did go home, it took a long time but they went home. So you never know what will happen in the future as to how these things go, but it seems to me that the sense of home seems so attractive when you don't have one, and I think this is one of the things about Canada that is so amazing because it has become home for so many people that have come for so many different reasons. A large number of these people came because they were persecuted some place. Whether it was the non – English factions in the UK, the Scottish and the Irish who were dominated by the English, there was the Potato Famine in Ireland all of these things resulted in those people coming to Canada. I think we have lost a bit of historical perspective as to how many people came here as a result of persecution. I think Canada has a particularly unique approach to that, compared to the US. I think we have celebrated the retention of culture from the past in the way that the Americans don't. The Americans are all about the Melting Pot, "your all American now, forget about that cultural stuff." Whereas in Canada it became cultural policy here about forty years ago or however long ago it was. Multiculturalism became our national policy, and it was seen as a benefit for people to try and retain some of their old cultural identity and share that, so I think that has been something about Canadian music that we have tried to find ways to make it possible for that to happen. Whereas in America it's a different story, and so as a result they have a different approach to it, yet it still happens in the big centers . . . Yes it is absolutely okay to look at your own ethnicity! You can get a government grant if you are an Armenian composer and you want to retain some of your heritage in your music. You are not discriminated against you are actually supported quite often. Ultimately music can create that sense of home, with that I agree entirely.¹²²

Ultimately, what resides at the heart of Dr. Carrabr 's account is that the use of a homeland serves as the basis for a group's identification, and that music can often create this otherworldly sense that, for ethnic groups living abroad, serves as a vital linkage between the "Old Country" and the "New." Dr. Carrabr 's account parallels that of Turino who states: "for our purposes, a sufficient criterion for thinking about diaspora is the use of a homeland – real or imagined – as

¹²² Dr. T. Patrick Carrabr , Interview by author. Brandon, Manitoba, 9 July 2011.

the basis of group identification, social action, and cultural practice.”¹²³ Throughout the course of Dr. Carrabr  ’s account, he also provides an interesting perspective as to how Canada’s national policy is very encouraging towards those who make the concerted effort to come to terms their own cultural roots, whether it is achieved through artistic practice, or other means of expression. While my thesis addresses how musical performance allows identities, like the Armenian diasporic community, to tenaciously negotiate their nation-ness within the backdrop of their current environment, Dr. Carrabr  ’s account really situates that this negotiation for cultural identity is very important with respect to the overall Canadian identity and that Canadian music has benefited greatly from the influence of other cultural musics.

I also had the opportunity to ask the same question to Dr. Altounian. Her account reads as follows:

For me this idea of home is partly rhetoric and partly real, although, I do have mixed feelings about it. The “homeland” of Western Armenians no longer exists. Today’s Armenia is Eastern Armenia. For us, Western Armenians, the language is different and the place is different as well. I would be treated as an *odar* [foreigner]. However, I would like to go. It would be the closest thing to home that I would know of. . . . But in regards to present circumstances, it is the role of the performer to educate both Armenian audiences as well as non-Armenian audiences. Music can express the most intense and the most primal feelings. It brings about intense emotions. It evokes feelings of nostalgia and affects us to the core. This is what makes music such a powerful medium. It is more powerful than speech, or the written word, it is a visceral form of communication, and certainly creates this notion of *home* and belonging.¹²⁴

Looking into this account in more detail, Dr. Altounian clearly articulates that musical performance provides diasporic Armenians with a kind of second-hand representation of home, one that facilitates some semblance of connection to home even though no actual homecoming is

¹²³ Thomas Turino, “Introduction,” in *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, ed. Thomas Turino and James Lea (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 6.

¹²⁴ Dr. Araxie Altounian. Interview by author. Toronto, Ontario, 21 May 2011.

forthcoming.¹²⁵ While Dr. Altounian certainly has designs on returning to her ancestral homeland at some point, music in the meantime serves as a very important connection to her native *Hayastan* [Armenia]. By and large, Dr. Altounian's representation of music as a heightened form of visceral communication aligns quite nicely with my own musical values and philosophical standpoints. Dr. Altounian also provided me with a fascinating perspective regarding the connection between the diaspora and the homeland, which, although it does not trump my argument that this homecoming is a mythical concept, she provides the opposing view:

The return to the homeland may be rhetoric for many, but not for all. A return to the homeland was impossible for many decades because Western Armenia was no longer accessible to Armenians, and Eastern Armenia had become a Soviet republic. In the 1930's and 40's a large number of refugee Armenians were repatriated to Soviet Armenia until Stalin put an end to this movement. Today, although an organized repatriation of Armenians does not exist, thousands of diasporic Armenians have chosen to live in present day Armenia. Moreover, the Armenian Government has created a Ministry of the Diaspora that helps establish very solid relations with the diaspora, be it for business, culture, financial aid, immigration, and repatriation for those who so desire. The hope that an important number of Armenians will return is very real, and is behind the organized work lead by the Ministry.

In another interview, John Sarkissian, the Ottawa-based composer and president of the Ottawa New Music Creators Board of Directors shared his perspectives on the subject of music and its ability in construction a sense of home. He states: "yes absolutely, musical performance plays a central role in constructing a mythical home. However, it doesn't have to be at the Sourp Garabed church. It can be at the NAC [National Arts Center]. The idea of a homecoming is not wedded to a particular venue."¹²⁶ In another meeting Mr. Serouj Kradjian, the Armenian – Canadian pianist and member of the Toronto Amici Trio stated the following:

¹²⁵ Dr. Araxie Altounian. Interview by author. Toronto, Ontario, 21 May 2011. My perspective regarding the 'myth' of *home* is shaped by both Safran and Clifford who both situate the diasporic idea of home as wrought with nostalgic and quasi-mythical undercurrents. For more information, please consult the following: James Clifford, "Diasporas." *Cultural Anthropology* 9, no. 3 (1994): 302 -338. William Safran, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return." *Diaspora* 1, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 83-84.

¹²⁶ Mr. John Sarkissian, Interview by author. Ottawa, Ontario, 23 May 2011.

The performance serves as a spiritual return to a home that is lost. You can't physically go back. The belonging is towards the homeland that we have lost as diasporic Armenians. In a way spiritually the performance does transport you to this home that is lost. For most ethnic groups this return is something emotional, but in our case there is immense pain associated with this homecoming. It is not merely a longing for the past. There is a huge tragedy that is connected with our feelings of nostalgia.¹²⁷

At the risk of being repetitive, I will conclude by affirming that each of my research participants were in unanimous agreement that musical performance creates a mythical conception of home, and that the musician, in turn, occupies a very important position as a standard bearer of a culture's traditions. In brief, the musical performance continues to provide the Armenian diasporic community with a temporary stop-gap, an intermediary construction of home, in which the narratives of the past are not only expressed in the present, but also go a long way in shaping both the present and ultimately future of the community.¹²⁸ Without this publically externalized, artistically fashioned negotiation process, at the heart of which the musician resides as chief social actor, the community would struggle to come to terms with their own identity, and would risk, in the words of Dr. Altounian, "dissolving" into their immediate surroundings. This is why externalized artistic practice plays such a centralized role within the construct of a diasporic community. Along these lines, I would like to conclude this section by leaving you with a very poignant quote by Dr. Altounian that I feel contextualizes my argument very nicely. "We never openly thought about "Armenianness". If it weren't for the Armenian musicians who would come and perform our music, we would have easily dissolved into other cultures. This still remains the case today."¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Mr. Serouj Kradjian, Interview by author. Toronto, Ontario, 21 May 2011.

¹²⁸ "When we long for the past, we long for what might have been as well as what was; it is only by incorporating such longing into our narratives that we can suspend the past and ultimately change its meanings in the present" taken from: Vijay Agnew, "Introduction," in *Diaspora, Memory, and Identity: A Search for Home*, ed. Vijay Agnew (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 9.

¹²⁹ Dr. Araxie Altounian. Interview by author. Toronto, Ontario, 21 May 2011.

Closing Thoughts and Reflections

As I reach the end of this musico-cultural journey, I would like to assess the path I have taken by providing the reader with some closing thoughts and pointing to some areas for future consideration. Throughout my narrative, I have argued that music and, especially, musical performance are essential for maintaining a diaspora as they present a means through which a cultural group can publically represent, perform, and negotiate its own sense of nation-ness. By privileging the musical performance, as I have done in relation to the Armenian diaspora in Canada, I evoked two distinct but interrelated topics. By advocating for actual musical enactment, I have asserted that performance functions as the principle purveyor of cultural meaning (i.e. cultural identity as the product of such enactment). Further, I have argued that the sense of “Armenianness,” which is a most potent and emotionally charged cultural abstraction that connects diasporans to their culture, is a fundamental byproduct of these culturally motivated musical encounters. As a mode of communication that elicits and reinforces intense emotional reactions, music provides a compelling – yet simultaneously open-ended medium for imbuing its listeners with a sense of cultural identity. Given music’s lack of denotative meaning, the performance presents diasporans with an opportunity to simultaneously connect with one another, as well as the broader global Armenian diasporic community. As such, this thesis points to three broad findings: the significance of public or externalized artistic practices in facilitating a musically fashioned imagined community, the necessity of studying the role of the musician as an essential agency within this formative process, and the basic need to recognize the role that nostalgia occupies when it comes to the performance and reception of this culturally-embedded music. In other words, my research indicates that the desire for preserving an authentic Armenian culture in tandem with the expressions of that culture remains crucial for the Armenian diaspora.

By studying how symbols of Armenian identity are inscribed within such works as Komitas' *Anduni* song cycle and his *Seven Armenian Dances*, I reveal that the diaspora becomes reliant upon these symbols, and that this reliance gives way to a reification of an imaginary Armenian diasporic identity. Of course, it is through the performance that such symbols are imparted to a culture at large. These very symbols, which are inextricably tied up with the Armenia of the past, emerge as necessary to the construction and maintenance of the present-day Armenian diasporic identity. In essence, without the interpreter or the event itself, these cultural symbols would remain fixed within these works, and thus, would not be made accessible to the Armenian community, a community which remains dependent upon these highly potent cultural displays.

On the subject of identity, my thesis attempts to redefine its place within music by looking at how performative expressions result in a construction of cultural identity. I do not merely accept the culturalist position that simply acknowledges identity's place within music. Rather, I regard identity as an essential byproduct of the performative process. As I address it in my abstract, scholarship tends to recognize music as "a powerful channel that can manifest identities", and that by the same token this same scholarship "takes for granted music as a symbol of identity" – without examining to what extent music and identity coexist with one another. Furthermore, this scholarship fails to acknowledge whether music has the potential to ensnare listeners and help shape their respective individual and communal cultural identities. Indeed, the simple answer "yes" in response to the question "does musical performance allow for a construction of cultural identity to take place?" is perhaps the most succinct and straight forward of answers. But it is this response that may have kept certain pockets of music scholarship from examining how music and identity intertwine in actual musical situations.

While I accept that a formative relationship exists between music and identity, my own examination argues that for a culture that is predicated upon preserving its collective “Armenianness” particularly within a diasporic milieu, such events as musical performances and other publically externalized expressions of culture reside at a higher echelon with respect to the overall practices of the community. Considering that diasporic communities in general continually play-out their respective identities within the backdrop of their current environments, the publicly fashioned musical event provides a space in which communities of like-cultured individuals congregate together to express their ethnicity in a public display of shared identity. We certainly saw this trope develop over the course of this fieldwork chapter, particularly when discussing the week-to-week observances of the Ottawa-Armenian Community and Church Choir, as well as within the interview accounts provided by my research participants. Ultimately, the Armenian diaspora use music as a necessary tool to fulfill the rather human desire for membership and belonging, and to retain a potent cultural memory that seems to shape the very fiber of this ethnically unique cultural community. In this last section I would like to examine a few potential directions that I would like to investigate in future research, as well as provide some final thoughts with regards to my thesis.

Directions for Future Research

Considering the breadth of this study, my work opens up a range of topics and questions designed for further inquiry. For instance, I think it would be beneficial to examine the role that the Internet has occupied in forming a musically imagined community. Over the course of my fieldwork, I found that younger generation diasporans remain dependent on the Internet as a way of forging their respective relationships with their cultural musics and indeed cultural pasts. For

instance, videos such as those presented on YouTube, feature a variety of Armenian musical performances, some of which actually take place in historic Armenian venues featuring authentic Armenian instrumentation such as the duduk. Arguably the most notable of these performances features Isabel Bayrakdarian's collaboration with the Minassian Duduk Quartet which was set in what looks to be the ruins of an ancient abandoned amphitheater residing in the rural Armenian countryside. While my thesis presents the Armenian homeland as an abstraction, a romantic byproduct of a diasporic performative event, these videos present the Armenian homeland as the actual stage on which these cultural performances are enacted. Here, the audience is not only presented with an aural encounter of the Armenian culture but are also confronted with the physicality of present-day Armenian homeland. By investigating these videos, I am curious as to how the duality of aural space [music] and physical space [the actual Armenian homeland] juxtapose together, and how this juxtaposition helps to shape emergent diasporic subjectivities.

Beyond presenting a study on how the Internet contributes in the formation of a musically imagined community, particularly among the emergent generation of Armenian diasporans, I also would like to delve more deeply into the interplay between music, identity, and nostalgia. In order to fully comprehend this interplay, it would be necessary to engage in a more comprehensive fieldwork examination, one that would allow me to examine a wider range of Armenian diasporic communities, and investigate how and why these communities use music as a way of defining the bulwark that separates them from other unique cultural structures.

Final Conclusion

Living in an age where nations, peoples, and cultures continually traverse and interact, the musical event takes on an increased urgency where smaller, potentially threatened cultural constructs are able to negotiate their collective “selves,” and thus ensure the survival of these culturally unique groups. At this point, I feel it necessary to conclude my thesis by addressing a paradox that resonates throughout the course of my theoretical argument. On the one hand I am critiquing the concept of the musical work (an abstraction, a mental construct) by advocating for concrete musical performance (the sounds themselves, the occasion, the ritual, the gestures of playing/singing), which I regard as the principle purveyor of cultural meaning and the site where cultural identity can be constructed and negotiated. On the other hand, when addressing concepts such as home, nostalgia, and Armenianness, I am essentially favoring a cultural abstraction over the actual or the concrete. The underlying reason for this is because, for many Armenians living abroad, the relationship that they forge with their culture is often constructed emotionally rather than born out of a physical association (i.e. the global diaspora’s relationship with the actual present-day homeland). While the relationship between the performative and the culturally-imaginary is indeed paradoxical, the diaspora’s abstract association towards their cultural past, in tandem with the very present and concrete nature of musical performance, both come together to help construct and negotiate an Armenian diasporic identity. This inherent contradiction between the tangible (musical performance) and the culturally-imaginary (home, nostalgia) lies at the heart of my overall argument. I would like to now take you back to the beginning of my thesis where I first made reference to This thesis began with a reference towards musical and cultural

echoes and their ability to communicate and sustain cultural ideas, and subsequently, identities.

Indeed these echoes are still tolling in the distance. Just be sure to listen carefully!

Memory is the key to identity.

And perhaps the key to resurrection.¹³⁰

-Northrop Fry-

¹³⁰Northrop Fry and Robert D. Denham, *Northrop Frye's Notebooks and Lectures on the Bible and Other Religious Texts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 109.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Complete Scores

Complete Score of “KrunK” from Komitas’ *Anduni* Song Cycle [Songs of Yearning]

ԳՌՈՂՍԿ

KRUNK
(Chant d’Émigré)

Larghetto

Larghetto

p

dolce

ԿՐԱՆԿ
KrunK

us ti k'u gas

ԿՐԱՆԿ
KrunK

tsa-ra em dsat nid

*



Կառնկ
 krank

մեր աշխարհէն,
 mèr. ash - ha - rên,



Խապ - ըիկ - մը չ'ա Նիս Կառնկ
 hap - rik - me ch'u nis krank



մեր աշխարհէն, Խապ ըիկ մը
 mèr. ash - ha - rên, hap rik me



չ'ա Նիս
 ch'u nis

Complete Score for "Anduni" from Komitas' *Anduni Song Cycle* [Songs of Yearning]

ԱՆՏՈՒՆԻ

Chant d'émigré

Largo ad libitum. ♩ = 58

Canto.

mf *p* *pp*

1. Սիր - արա նր - ման է

mf *p* *pp*

2. Սկ ծով մ'իմ տե - - - սե,

Piano.

pp *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp*

mf *p* *f* *mf*

cresc.

mp *>p* *>p*

էն քե - լած ար - ներ,

mp

սիւս - տակն էր թո - - - լոր.

cresc.

p

stretto *mf* *f* *a tempo* *pp*

Կո-տրե՛ր զե-րան - ներ, խախ-տե՛ր - է սը - ներ.
 Ա - լին կը-զար - ներ, չէ՛ր խառ - նի լի - բոր.

decreso. *p* *pp*

Red.

mf *ff*

Յու՛ն պի-տի զը - նեն մէջ վայ - ըի հաւ - քեր.
 էն ո՛րն է տե - սե մէջ ծովն երկ-թա -ւոր.

mf *p* *ff* *cresc.*

Red. *Red.* *Red.*

p accelerando *rallentando* *espirando*

նը - թա՛մ չի թա - լե՛մ էն ել - ման զե - տեր.
 Ան - տղւ - նի սիրտն է պըղ-տոր ու մո - լոր.

pp *pp* *ppp*

Red.

Complete Score for “Manushaki of Vagharshapat” from Komitas’ *Seven Armenian Dances*

ՄԱՆՈՒՇԱԿԻ
ՎԱԴԱՐՇԱՊԱՏԻ
(Դափի ոճով)

Յոթ պար
SEVEN DANCES

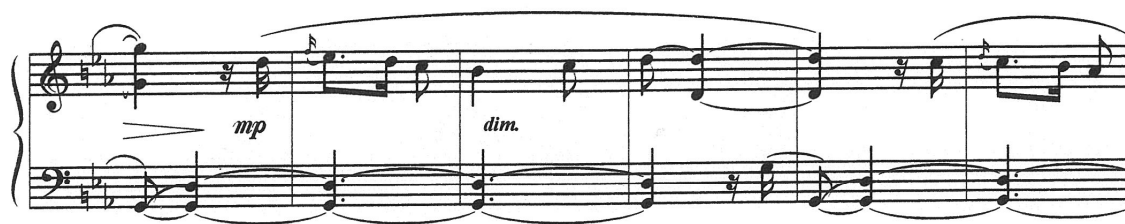
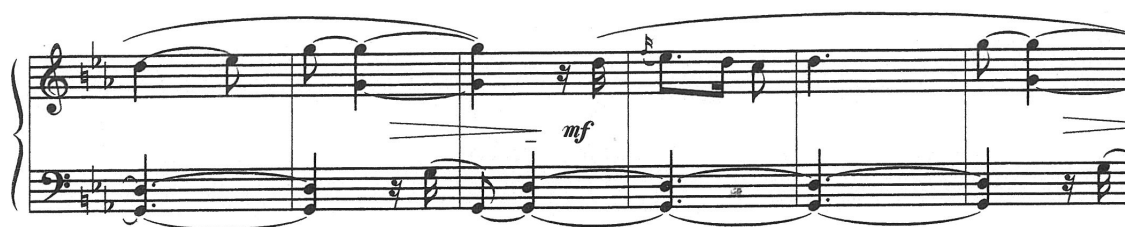
Երկրորդ խմբագրություն
Second Edition

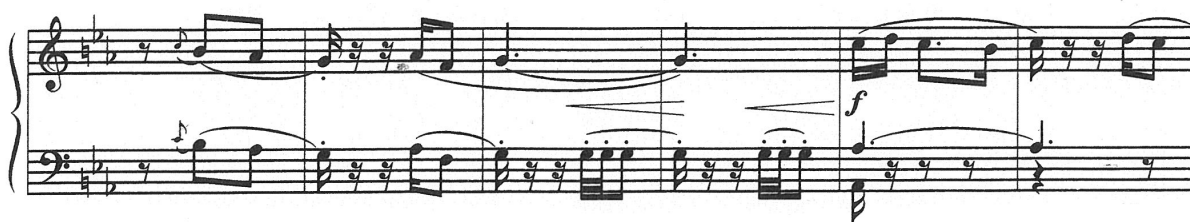
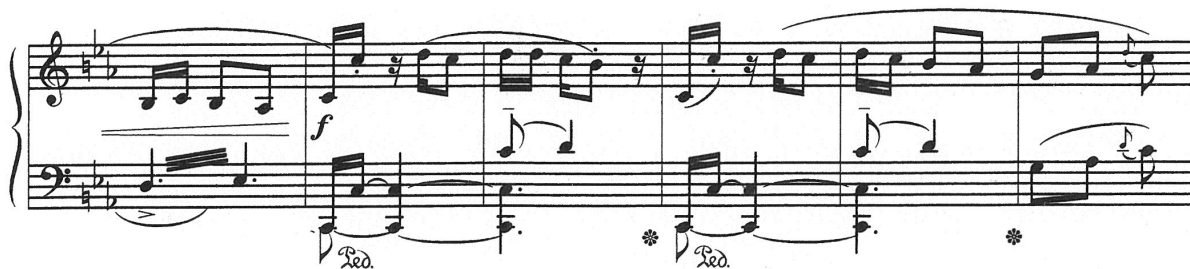
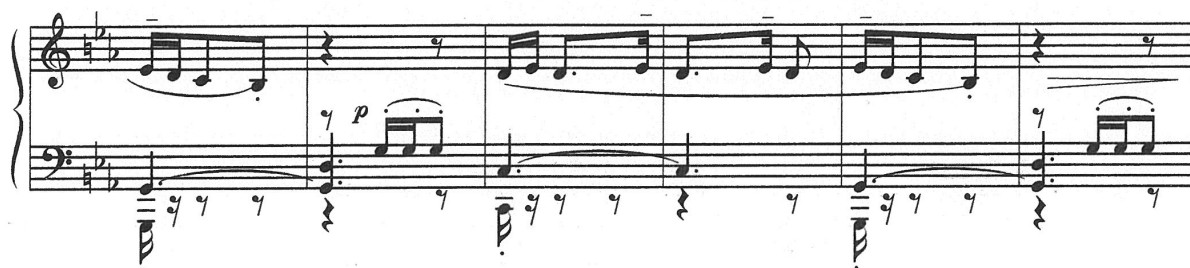
MANUSHAKI
VAGHARSHAPAT
(In the style of dap)

(Թեթև և սահուն)

Leggiero ♩. = 52 - 55

The musical score is written for piano in 3/8 time. It features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score is divided into five systems, each with a grand staff. Dynamics include *mf*, *p*, *mp*, and *f*. There are also accents (>) and slurs throughout the piece.





First system of musical notation. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A *mf* dynamic marking is present in the right hand. The system concludes with the instruction *(poco rall.)*.

Second system of musical notation. The tempo is marked *(a tempo)*. The right hand continues the melodic development, and the left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment. A *p* (piano) dynamic marking is indicated in the right hand.

Third system of musical notation. The right hand shows a melodic line with some rests, and the left hand continues the accompaniment. Dynamics of *p* and *mf* are used in the right hand.

Fourth system of musical notation. The right hand features a more active melodic line. A *f* (forte) dynamic marking is present. The system includes the instruction *Red.* (Ritardando) and a repeat sign.

Fifth system of musical notation. The system begins with a *Sua* (Sustained) marking above the staff. The right hand has a melodic line, and the left hand continues the accompaniment. A *p* dynamic marking is present in the right hand.

Complete Score for "Shoror of Karin" from Komitas' *Seven Armenian Dances*

ՇՈՐՈՐ

ԿԱՐԻՆՈՅ

(փողի , թմբուկի եւ դափի ոճով)

SHOROR

OF ERZURUM

(In the idiom of the shepherd's flute, drum and tambourine)

6

Noble and Heroic $\text{♩} = 108$

վեհեղ եւ հերոսաբար

p խաղաղ *Calmly*

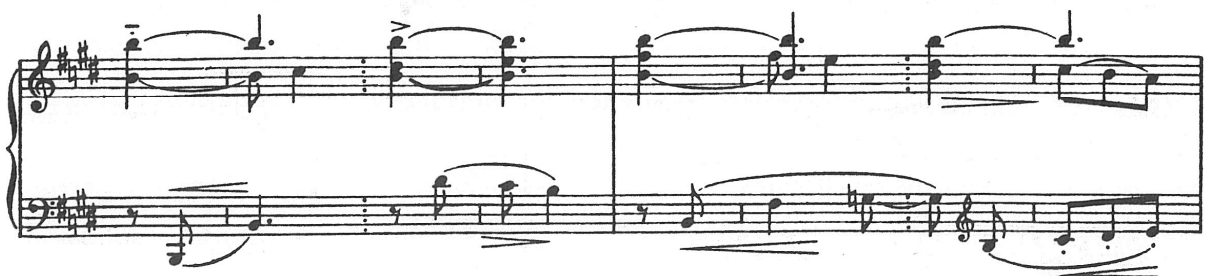
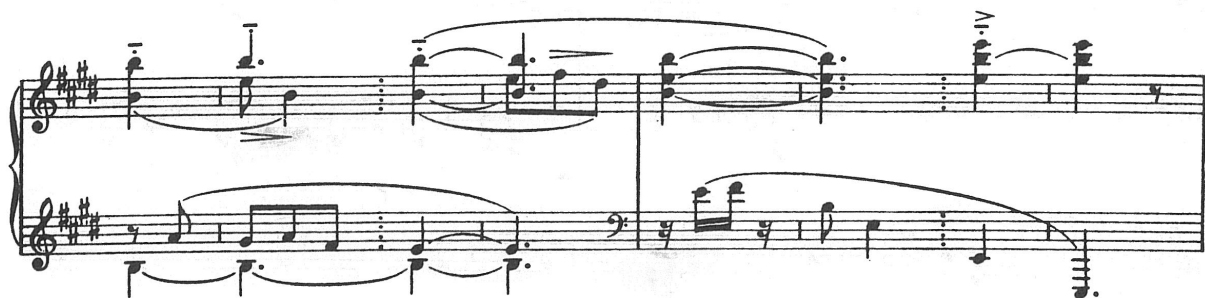
Դի քիչ 'երեւելով *Melody somewhat marked*

The image displays a page of musical notation, likely for piano, consisting of five systems of staves. Each system contains a treble staff and a bass staff, both with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The first system shows a complex melodic line in the treble staff with many beamed notes and a more active bass line. The second system continues this complexity with similar melodic and harmonic patterns. The third system features a more rhythmic, dotted-note melody in the treble and a steady bass accompaniment. The fourth system shows a similar rhythmic pattern with some melodic variation. The fifth system includes a dynamic marking "More marked" and a corresponding instruction in Armenian: "Գին աւելի երկուշտով" (Gin aveyli erikushov).

Գին աւելի երկուշտով *More marked*





This page of musical notation, numbered 127, contains seven systems of staves. Each system consists of a treble staff and a bass staff, both in the key of F# (three sharps). The notation includes various musical elements such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings. The first four systems are in 4/4 time, while the fifth and sixth systems are in 3/4 time, and the seventh system is in 4/4 time. The music is written in a style typical of classical piano repertoire, with a focus on melodic and harmonic development.

This page of musical notation, numbered 128, contains six systems of piano music. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The notation includes various musical elements such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first system features a melodic line in the treble and a more active bass line. The second system shows a more sustained melody in the treble with a rhythmic bass line. The third system continues the melodic development in the treble. The fourth system introduces a more complex texture with multiple voices in the treble. The fifth system features a more active bass line with a melodic treble. The sixth system concludes the page with a final melodic phrase in the treble and a rhythmic bass line.

Appendix B: Sample Interview Questionnaire:

1. As nations and peoples continue to interact and traverse in our globalized culture, do you feel that music can help facilitate a search for a group's identity?
2. In the case of the Armenian diaspora, do you feel the performer has an important role in preserving an Armenian ethnic identity?
3. As the term diaspora has become readily associated with Armenian cultural life, how have musical practices (i.e. performance) assisted in the formation and maintenance of an Armenian ethnic identity in the diaspora?
4. What responsibilities do you feel the performer has when playing this music in front of a culturally diverse audience? Does it differ from playing in front of an exclusively Armenian audience?
5. In line with the previous question, in the previous interviews I conducted, one of the interviewees felt that performing Armenian music for a diverse audience would greater benefit the Armenian community rather than staying exclusively within the community. The interviewee felt that performing this music for a diverse audience would, in essence, advertise Armenian music to a wider audience. What are your views regarding this perspective? Do you agree, or is a balance between playing for an exclusive Armenian audience, and performing in front of a diverse audience?
6. Since the Genocide the dominant discourse portrayed the Diaspora as a temporary condition and the guiding rhetoric was the aspiration of returning to the homeland. The discourse associated with the return to the homeland takes on a mythical almost spiritual-like quality, serving as a cultural unifier more than an actual planned objective. The question remains, does musical performance facilitate a connection between the diaspora and the Armenian homeland?
7. Svetlana Boym, author of *The Future of Nostalgia*, defined two forms of nostalgia. Restorative nostalgia, which puts emphasis on *nostos* and proposes to rebuild the lost home and patch up the memory gaps, and reflective nostalgia, which dwells in *algia*, in longing and loss, the imperfect process of remembrance. In regards to Armenian music and the function of the performer, is it fair to say that the performer belongs in the "restorative nostalgia" category? Reason being, the past for the restorative nostalgic is not a duration but a perfect snapshot. Moreover, the past is not supposed to reveal any signs of decay; it has to be freshly painted in its "original image".
8. Musical examples such as Komitas' "Anduni" and "Krunk" are examples of pieces that follow the Armenian diasporic narrative, and in the case of "Krunk", has become a sort of anthem for the twentieth and the twenty-first century Armenian diaspora. Are there any

other Armenian musical examples that follow this diasporic narrative that has a prominent place in the Armenian musical canon?

9. In addition to playing a vital role in identity construction and maintenance, do you feel the performer also serves as an educator for the Armenian diasporic community? If so, in what ways do they serve as educator? I'm reminded of the work that is currently being done by Isabel Bayrakdarian and Serouj Kradjian.
10. Komitas was well known for organizing and performing in concerts and lectures in the Armenian diaspora, thus educating Armenians who were far removed from their homeland. Are Armenian performers today continuing these traditions that Komitas set forth?