

CONTESTATIONS, CONFLICTS AND MUSIC-POWER: MEVLEVI SUFISM IN THE
21ST CENTURY TURKEY

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Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Prof. Dr. Sibel Kalaycıođlu
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ően
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zana ıtak (METU, IR) _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ően (METU, SOC) _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cenk Gray (YBU, MUS) _____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Yelda zen (YBU, SOC) _____

Assist. Prof. Dr. ađatay Topal (METU, SOC) _____



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Name, Last name: Nevin Şahin

Signature:

ABSTRACT

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Şahin, Nevin

PhD. Department of Sociology

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Şen

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Established as a Sufi order in central Anatolia following the death of Rumi, Mevlevi Sufism has influenced the spirituality of people for over 8 centuries. Having strong ties with the Ottoman state, Mevlevi Sufism gradually moved from a Sufi order into a historicity subject to museumification, cultural heritage of national and international value, and stage performance for tourist attraction. This transition was triggered by the law no. 677 implemented in 1925 for the closure of Sufi lodges and convents. Bringing the dervish lineage and Sufi service to an end, the law also played role on the contemporary discussions regarding Mevlevi Sufism. While practitioners of Mevlevi music reject a Mevlevi identity, the state embraces Mevlevi Sufism with a claim of state visibility in issues like cultural heritage and spiritual tourism. This duality between the state and practitioners on the one hand reflect the conflicting modes of spirituality within the order, and on the other hand affect the contemporary controversies concerning the claim of conserving the centuries old tradition. The data collected through an ethnographic field research of 15 months among Sufi circles and performances in different parts of Turkey and Europe reveal that state institutions, non-governmental foundations,

entrepreneurs, stage performers and the audience as actors are politically involved in the field of struggle for power in Bourdieusian sense over the sema field. The interplays of power reflect the circularity of Mevlevi Sufism which is influenced by even the earliest religious practices and is embodied in the circular movement of whirling dervishes.

Keywords: Mevlevi Sufism, Whirling Dervishes, Music-power, Cultural Heritage, Consumerism



ÖZ

ÇEKİŞMELER, ÇATIŞMALAR VE MÜZİK-İKTİDAR: 21. YÜZYIL TÜRKİYESİ'NDE MEVLEVİLİK

Şahin, Nevin

Doktora, Sosyoloji Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Mustafa Şen

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Mevlana'nın ardından Anadolu'da kurulan ve Osmanlı devletine yakın duran Mevlevilik, 1925 tarihli tekke ve zaviyelerin kapatılması kanununun etkisiyle, bir tarikattan müzeleştirilen bir tarihi değere, ulusal ve uluslararası bir kültür mirasına ve turistleri etkileyen bir sahne performansına dönüşmüştür. Hem derviş silsilesi hem de dergâh çilesi kesintiye uğramıştır ancak tartışmalar sonlanmamıştır. Müziğini icra edenler Mevlevi kimliğini reddederken devlet Mevleviliği kültürel miras ve manevi turizm düzeyinde kucaklamaktadır. İcracılar ve devlet arasındaki bu ikilik geleneği muhafaza etme iddiasına ilişkin uzlaşmazlıklara da işaret etmektedir. Türkiye ve Avrupa'nın farklı yerlerinde 15 ay süren etnografik saha araştırmasıyla derlenen veri, devlet kurumlarının, vakıf ve derneklerin, girişimcilerin, sahne sanatçılarının ve seyircilerin sema meydanındaki Bourdieucu iktidar mücadelesine katıldıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Söz konusu iktidar etkileşimleri, Mevleviliğin en eski dini pratiklerden etkilenmiş olan ve semazenlerin devirlerinde vücut bulan döngüsellikini yansıtmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mevlevilik, Semazenler, Müzik-iktidar, Kültürel Miras, Tüketim



To olive trees

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Now listen to this reed-flute's deep lament
About the heartache being apart has meant
(Masnavi, Book 1)

The global turmoil of the 21st century, crystallized for most in 9/11, brought together the lament for religion, especially for Islam which was detached from its roots and all of a sudden became associated with terror in the eyes of those left heartbroken if not dead. Semitic religions have for long lost their meaning for the new generations in the West whose past were dominated by wars, while religious traditions of the East have gained trendy and cool meanings. With the East and the West getting intertwined, the borderline between sacred and secular getting blurred, religious rituals turning into secular events of cultural heritage, and secular states becoming pro-religion, sociology of religion becomes crucial in understanding the daily controversies of modern societies.

The hot agenda of politics related to the sectarian conflicts and Islamophobia tends to occupy more space in the minds of researchers than the mild significance of religion in the cultural domain. Although not directly touching upon religion, Bourdieu by complaining that he will be blamed for exaggeration if he says culture is in danger (2003: 64), attracts attention to culture, turning his lantern towards the dimmed topic. The same light illuminates John Street's

claim that although not an entirely new argument, politics of music is a neglected one (2012: 1). This claim is echoing Martin Stokes, who was also disturbed by the “tone-deafness” of anthropology towards music (1994: 1) and even Jacques Attali, blaming the Western knowledge for only looking upon the world in an effort to understand, not listening to the audible (2003: 3).

It has been decades since the silence of music in social sciences was recognized, but there are still many points arousing curiosity concerning music especially in relation with religion and power. The sound of the reed-flute (*ney*) has been heard behind the whirling dervishes of a Sufi order attached to the teachings of the Persian poet and mystic, Rumi (Mevlana) for centuries. Although the mystical practices of Mevlevi Sufism have virtually ceased to exist, the order keeps filling the backstage of the religious, cultural and political agenda of the 21st century Turkey. This dissertation aims at listening to the *ney* behind and understanding the current representations of the old order of Sufism through an ethnographic lens. How have the understandings and practices of Mevlevi Sufism occurred and transformed throughout the republican period of Turkey? How is Mevlevi Sufism being re-produced and consumed today in the Turkish context? How do the “official Mevlevi”, who are employed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and other state institutions as *semazen* (whirling dervishes) and *mutrib* (musicians), and the “unofficial Mevlevi”, who perform the rituals as members of Mevlevi foundations and associations, perceive and interpret Mevlevi Sufism today? How is the state represented in performances and practices of Mevlevi Sufism and how are the dynamics of power relations displayed within the Mevlevi context? With historical and self-reflexive perspectives, I sought answers to these questions in an effort to understand the contestations and controversies of religion, music and power behind contemporary Mevlevi Sufism in Turkey.

1.1. From Personal Experience to Academic Interest

2004 was a significant year for Turkey in terms of cultural tourism. First of all, Sertab Erener brought the first and ever Eurovision championship to Turkey with her song “Everyway that I can” in 2003 and thanks to her success, the contest took place in İstanbul in May 2004. This was one great opportunity for the country in terms of touristic representation. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism put great effort in representing the country’s cultural and touristic features with a reception for the contesting countries in Dolmabahçe Palace, presents including souvenirs for the delegates of these countries, and 46 postcards from different parts of the country to be shown before the performances of each country (Selcuk, 2004). The performances throughout the contest also carried an effort to contribute to touristic appeal. The performance of Anatolian Fire, which is a modern dance show including local themes and figures from Anatolian folk dances with peculiar music, before the results of voting, was appreciated by the audience (Üstünel, 2004). My own interest in this contest was due to the fact that Sertab Erener was my favorite singer by then and I was fond of opportunities to listen to her.

What was striking concerning Sertab Erener’s opening performance was her insistence on accompaniment of whirling dervishes. She performed a medley including the winning song and the more operatic “Leave”, the original version of which was released in 1999 with the title “Aşk”. The vivid and rhythmic song was accompanied by belly dancers as was in the performance in Riga back in 2003, and the lyrical ballad with Sufi connotations (Vicente, 2007: 234-235) was accompanied by female and male whirling dervishes. Sertab Erener’s preference of female whirling dervishes led to a bureaucratic crisis, which could only be solved days before the contest. The general coordinator of the contest, Bülent Osma, argued that they did not favor female whirling dervishes

as it is not in line with the tradition but they decided to have both male and female dervishes as it was only a show, not a religious ritual. The decision was taken due to the fact that Sertab Erener insisted on female whirling dervishes, and the crisis was over as “the general director of National Radio Television Broadcast Institution (TRT), Şenol Demiröz is a tolerant person and Sertab Erener is a wise artist” (Altuntaş, 2004).

Although the bureaucratic crisis was over, the institutional debate did not cease. The vice president of International Mevlana Foundation, Esin Çelebi told that Sertab Erener was informed on the fact that women can also whirl but it is not appropriate to have men and women whirling together. She confessed their sorrow because Sertab Erener insisted on her fault (Gülmez, 2004). Another member of the foundation, Işın Çelebi once more emphasized that whirling is not a show but a ritual. She said Zeki Müren and Madonna consulted them years ago on having female whirling dervishes with colorful dresses in their performances, their elders told them the meaning of whirling ceremony, and both Madonna and Zeki Müren quitted the idea of whirling in their stage shows (Haber Vitriini, 2004). For many people, and for me as a young undergraduate raising initial interest in social sciences, this whirling dervish crisis was the first largely recognized debate over Mevlevi Sufism in the context of popular culture.

Whirling dervishes have long been recognized in Konya due to the fact that Rumi’s mausoleum is located there and the first ever Mevlevi rituals took place there. The year 2004 was as significant in Konya as in İstanbul due to the opening ceremony of Mevlana Cultural Center (Vicente, 2007: 153-183), which was built by the municipality solely for whirling ceremonies taking place regularly since 1950s. The opening ceremony took place on Sunday, December 12, with fireworks and an excessive crowd which could be compared to the

actual *Şeb-i Arus* (Wedding Night) celebrations on December 17. The Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was there to honor the opening ceremony and was being applauded by the crowd while he was crossing the stage where the whirling ceremony was to take place. Victor A. Vicente felt shocked on seeing the prime minister's "inappropriate behavior to cross the *semahane* in a linear way" as only the *postnişin*, the dervish with hierarchically highest position representing Rumi on the *meydan*, is the only person traditionally allowed to do so (ibid. 159).¹ He was also astounded by the emcees' warning the audience to respect the sacred ritual by turning off cell phones, not using cameras, not applauding and not leaving seats so as to secure the tranquility of the ceremony. He was "struck by how far the secular government has gone to promote the sacredness of this event" (ibid. 160).

The relationship of the state and Mevlevi Sufism that struck Vicente, attracted my attention first in 2009. I was already a member of the Mevlevi music circles in Ankara since 2007, performing my frame drum and *kudüm*, and even my oud when there was no other player to perform a plucked string, so I was already familiar with the music of the ritual and some musicians who were employed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. However, until the state ceremony in the garden of CerModern organized for Ramadan, I did not pay any attention to the state in the context of Mevlevi Sufism. I was just accepted to the PhD program with my research proposal on the transnationalization of Mevlevi Sufism and was lucky enough to attend this event for celebrating my academic performance with my musician professors, some of whom were to perform that evening.

¹ See Appendix 1 for the details of the Mevlevi ritual and musical composition named *Mevlevi ayini*, including the related sections of the dervish lodge, different missions of dervishes involved in the ritual, different parts of the ritual and features of the composition performed to accompany the ritual.

CerModern was previously an atelier where trains were maintained (with the previous name *Cer Atölyeleri*, meaning traction workshops) and was abandoned for years before it was restored by the ministry. At the very center of the city, the turning of this abandoned atelier into an art gallery was really good news for the residents and the audience was enthusiastic for the open air Ramadan event there, including one *Mevlevi ayini* in makam Acemaşiran on the Monday evening, September 14. The Prime Minister Erdoğan was among the protocol, and unfortunately he was about 45 minutes late for the performance. As it has become a state tradition to delay performances until the protocol arrives, the state musicians were made to wait for the prime minister on stage. The weather was windy and the instruments were going out of tune, the audience was getting angry with the delay and the applause accompanied the rumble as the disappointment of the delay grew bigger and bigger. The organizers were trying to calm the audience down by making the *neyzens* (reed-flute players) improvise. As *ney* is associated largely with mysticism, Sufism and religious ritual, it is common to listen to the *ney* silently. The audience immediately stopped clapping their hands once they heard of the *ney*. The *neyzens* were not happy performing politically to “shut the audience down” and the musicians were also rumbling as some of them came from other cities that day and were actually tired. Eventually the prime minister arrived, walked among the audience towards the front with loud applause by standing audience, just like in the ceremony Vicente observed, and the performance began with a calm atmosphere. Unfortunately I had a presentation early in the morning the other day, so I had to leave the event before the *ayin* started. I was so occupied by my presentation that I could not realize the importance of my experience in understanding Mevlevi Sufism in the Turkish context in the 21st century.

This discrete event did not inspire me concerning my research that day. But I was still aware of the significance of the topic in terms of cultural heritage and popular culture. The year 2007, as being the 800th anniversary of Rumi's birth, was celebrated globally as the Mevlana year, facing hundreds of events including whirling ceremonies, Mevlevi Sufism themed concerts, album releases, book publications, art exhibits... Only a few years later, 2010 was celebrated as İstanbul European Capital of Culture, which of course included several events related to Mevlevi Sufism. Year 2012 faced international celebrations promoted by UNESCO related to Mevlevi Sufism again, this time under the title Itri year, referring to the 300th anniversary of the Mevlevi composer Buhurizade Mustafa Itri's demise. Having such an enormous cultural context, Mevlevi Sufism would offer me fascinating research opportunities so as to discuss issues on transnationality, globalism, popular culture, cultural heritage policies, consumerism, state and power relations. Besides the abundance of research topics, Mevlevi Sufism would also offer me the music that I liked to hear, perform and enjoy, which touched my soul as the breath through *ney* touched the audience in CerModern. Whirling around topics related to Mevlevi Sufism and its music, I detached myself from transnationality as a key concept and moved closer to power relations throughout my field research in 2013 and 2014.

1.2. The World is Whirling: Context of the Research

Franklin Lewis in his extensive study on Mevlevi Sufism, starts by referring to the Rumi cassettes; the Americans who got stressed during rush hour traffic jam would try to tranquilize themselves by listening to the mystical poems of Rumi (2010: 31). This integrity of a medieval Middle Eastern poet to the modern everyday life of 20th century North America actually has its roots in the history of Sufism and its relationship with the normative religion.

When digging into the history of religions, it is inevitable to come across a different religious realm before the emergence of monotheistic religions. The deities were believed to have the ultimate knowledge of nature, and the only way to get in touch with deities was through knowledge itself. Music was largely benefitted from in order to gain an understanding of nature, as in Pythagoras' (6th century BC) theory which finds ratios between frequencies of musical notes and the distance between planets and stars.

Pythagoras' theory was related to the idea that the world is a miniature of the universe and reaching the knowledge of the universe can be a tool for purification of the soul. The notion of purifying the soul was borrowed from Orphism, which as a belief system was affected by the images of the Ancient Greek and Anatolian gods (Betegh, 2014: 159-166). The Anatolian goddess Cybele, together with taming wild lions, ruled music and was depicted with two musicians in a Phrygian sculpture (12-7th centuries BC) (Alp, 1999: 37). The Greek god of grape harvest, Dionysus was worshipped with rituals of music and dance (8th-1st centuries BC). The Greek god of wisdom, Apollo connected himself with nature through his lyre (Güray, 2012a: 28-29). Furthermore, Orpheus who was claimed to be the son of Apollo was depicted as a musician ruling the nature by Shakespeare in his 1623 dated play Henry VIII:

Orpheus with his lute made trees,
And the mountain tops that freeze,
Bow themselves when he did sing:
To his music plants and flowers
Ever sprung; as sun and showers
There had made a lasting spring

This divine connection between nature and music was theorized by Greek pre-Socratic philosopher Empedocles (5th century BC) in the theory of classical elements. The immortal elements of earth, water, air and fire according to his theory combined in definite ratios so as to form the universe and its harmony

in musical sense. The idea that the soul could reach immortality through the divine knowledge of nature was also paralleled in the Croton school of philosophy founded by Pythagoras and this knowledge was delivered through certain rules of dance and music.

The idea of immortality also touches upon Gnosticism, according to which there are gods of infinity, and esoteric knowledge is sought in order to reach oneness with these gods. According to Eliade, Gnosticism might re-emerge in all religious structures in a cyclic manner (2003: 340). The priority of exoteric knowledge in monotheistic religions exists in touch with revelations, which relate to esoteric knowledge. The idea that the soul was separated from god and will return to its roots through eternal knowledge points to the cyclic reemergence of Gnosticism, and is closely connected with the circular structure of rhythm, music and dance. The background information on ancient religions accompanies the fact that whirling was a common ritual practice back in ancient Anatolian and Greek belief systems (Güray, 2012a: 7). At this point, it is of crucial importance to remember that Rumi's *Masnavi* carries traces of the ancient belief systems and mythologies. The song of the reed, for instance, is actually a remake of the story of King Midas with the donkey's ears. Schimmel is not surprised that Konya is a close town to Gordion, King Midas's old residence, and that *ney* has gained popularity in the lands where the Phrygian flute had been famous since Greek times (2004: 334-335).

In the context of Islam, Sufism (*tasavvuf*) is claimed to have emerged either during the time of Prophet Mohammad (Schimmel, 2004: 27) or during the 8th century with Abu Hashim of Kufa (d. 776). Because the Sufis of the time used to wear woolen clothes as a sign of asceticism and clearing themselves from worldly wealth and joy (Kara, 2011: 27), the roots of the word Sufi was sought, together with Arabic *sfw* and Turkish *saf* meaning pure (Atay, 2012: 16-17), in

the Arabic word *suf*, meaning wool. According to Karamustafa, for instance, the term Sufi emerged to separate the renunciants wearing wool from others who wore clothes made by other material, and Sufis kept being referred to as *zahid*, *nasik* and *abid* until the meaning of the word Sufi changed from “wool-wearer” to “renunciant, devoted, mystic” (2007: 1-7). However, as stated above, the will to reach the divine knowledge of nature might as well have resulted in the usage of woolen clothes by Sufis as there was such a connection between spirituality and woolen clothes much before the emergence of Islam (Lings, 1977: 46).

Starting from the 8th century, normative Islam and Sufism positioned themselves against each other and the historical process of this conflict might well shed light on the rise of Sufism in modern world. During the Umayyad caliphate, due to the resentment of Muslims from the extravagance of the ruling dynasty and to the reactions against the legalistic and normative Islam of the ulema, the scholarly clergy who remained on the side of the court (Schimmel, 2004: 29-30), Sufism emerged in the late 8th century. Against the normative Islam which was repressive on communal basis, Sufism emphasized the private aspect of religious experience, and in this sense it is inevitable to accept that Sufism reflects Gnosticism in terms of the relationship between exoteric and esoteric knowledge. While the Islamic scholars represented the exoteric and formal knowledge of Islam and strove to regulate the community of believers, the esoteric knowledge of Sufism possessed by Sufi masters grew as an alternative (Atay, 2012: 17).

The conflict between formal Islam and Sufism resulted mainly in repressive policies of the ulema such as prohibiting dance and music for being haram regardless of the practice of Prophet Mohammad (Uludağ, 2005: 39-84). As in the case of Hallaj al-Mansur, who said *En el-Hak* (I am God) and was executed

by the ulema (Kara, 2011: 23), the conflict sometimes moved towards extremes. While *En el-Hak* was an extreme expression in depicting the reunion in God in this case, execution was an extreme implementation in return. In the late 11th century, with the effort of Imam al-Gazzali (d. 1111) the conflict started to resolve and Sufism gained a new position against normative Islam. Although there remained extremities on both sides, Sufism now was positioned as complementary, instead of contradictory, to the formal religion of ulemas (Atay, 2012: 18-19). Rumi was a Sufi who lived during this reconciliation period; the timelessness and vividness of his sayings might as well touch upon the positive aura of the reconciliation. Gathering all the mystical knowledge and practices back in centuries, Mevlevi Sufism which was established after Rumi unsurprisingly embraced whirling as a ritual for prayer (Schimmel, 2004: 179-180). Of course the climate was not soft and mild in every Sufi order. The Naqshbandiya, which took its name from a 14th century Sufi, practiced Sufism according to the Sharia and is sometimes claimed to be “the order of the Ulema” (Algar, 1976: 140). Within the context of Islamic mysticism, the Mevlevi order kept to be one of the mildest as it welcomed even total outsiders under the name *muhip* (lover); they weren’t supposed to practice any of the challenges while they could still enjoy the rituals (Hâlet Çelebi, 2006: 103-105). This mildness played role in the state’s attitude towards Mevlevi Sufism; while Sufi orders that were found radical by the state were cut off, Mevlevi Sufism was usually regarded as mild enough to be tolerated as it posed little or no threat to the state power compared to the radicals.

Despite the efforts of some Sufi masters for reconciliation, there remained a rift between the formal Islam of the ulema and the mystical Islam of the Sufis mainly because of a struggle for power and influence (Atay, 2012: 20). We can see a rift between the two in the case that the ritual of the Mevlevis, *sema* was regarded as haram by the ulema (Hâlet Çelebi, 2006: 129). Looking at the 21st

century Turkey, we can recognize the existence of a similar rift between formal Islam and Sufism embodied within the state. Once the republic was established as a secular state, one of the first executions of the state was to put formal religion under state control by the Presidency of Religious Affairs which was founded on March 3, 1924. The relationship of the new state with formal religion resulted in outlawing of Sufi orders with the law no. 677. Accepted on November 30, 1925 and implemented on December 13, 1925, the law dissolved all Sufi orders within the borders of the country and closed all local and central dervish lodges. Sufi orders legally ceased to exist due to this law but there emerged a variety of legal structures like foundations and faith-based organizations. Right wing governments on the one hand associated themselves more into an Islamic identity and on the other hand promoted Sufism by opening Sufi tombs and shrines since 1950s (Summer-Boyd & Freelay, 1989: 257). This changing attitude was again related to the mildness of Mevlevi Sufism, which can be observed in the privilege the Konya Lodge enjoyed. Gülen Movement,² the leader of which is associated with Rumi (Michel, 2007) besides the promotion of Mevlevi Sufism under the association named Rumi Forum in the United States, for instance, supported the ruling Islamist-rooted party of today back in early 2000s. The 2013 corruption crisis³ resulted in the break of

² Hizmet Movement or Gülen Movement is comprised by the followers of Fethullah Gülen, who was a follower of Said Nursi, a Sufi critical of Sufi orders. Although Gülen Movement is mainly a faith-based organization with neoliberal entrepreneurs in different sectors like education and broadcast, the organization is resembled to a Sufi brotherhood in the popular culture, sometimes referred to as *Cemaat* (community of the order) and *tarikât* (Sufi order) (See Şen, 2007).

³ On the last day of the Şeb-i Arus Festival in Konya in 2013, tapes related to several ministers embezzling money were leaked and a thorough investigation on bribery was initiated by a republican prosecutor. Some of the ministers resigned and on December 25, the new cabinet was announced. The investigation resulted in the liberation of all detainees in 2014. The investigation was interpreted by the Prime Minister Erdoğan as a “juridical coup”, and Gülen Movement was blamed for manipulating the police and being backed by foreigners who were jealous of his success (The Guardian, 2014).

friendly relationship between the government and the Cemaat. Recently, the supporters of the ruling party started asking the government to legislate away the law no. 677 and regain control over Sufi orders, targeting the Cemaat.⁴ Interpretation of Gülen Movement as a state project (Şen, 2007) also gives an idea related to the interplays of power in the religious domain in and by the state. Mevlevi Sufism with its ritual officially supported by the state and with its stable positionality towards the state despite changing power dynamics, thus, fits into the debate on power relations and the state in 21st century Turkey.

Turning back to the history of Islamic Sufism, we can have hints concerning the popularity of Mevlevi Sufism in the West. Thinking in Marxist concepts, the mystical character of commodities and the resemblance of fetishism to religion (Marx, 1990: 164-65) gives an idea about the possibility of the commodification of religion. To clarify this point, it is also necessary to touch upon the Weberian approach to religion. According to this approach, the Protestant work ethic led to the rise of worldly values; working hard in this world would be awarded with heaven after death, thus wealth became the target instead of religious virtue (Weber, 2005: 108-115).⁵ This change in the approach towards religion was reflected in the change from production to consumption.

According to Vincent Miller, “contemporary religion has been transformed into a narcissistic, therapeutic enterprise by generations of rootless ‘seekers’ who

⁴ Twitter caption, October 29, 2015.

⁵ It should be kept in mind that even in Weber’s own analysis the Protestant morality was not the one and only factor leading towards capitalism, the work ethic was instead part of a causal chain throughout history which led towards the emergence of modern capitalism, which is actually in dialogue with Marxist ideas (Swatos, 1995: 50).

lack allegiance to religious institutions or communities” (2012: 85). Consumerism in touch with this feeling of rootlessness nourished the mysticism market especially in the West. People getting exhausted by the demands of puritan religion as well as their competitive job environment, decided to turn their face to the east, dig into the mystical traditions and religions in China, India and the Middle East.

In Houston Smith’s 1980 film *Islamic Mysticism: The Sufi Way*, the overlapping of zikr sounds of the dervishes and the call for prayer from the mosque is intoned. Someone passing by the dervishes in zikr attempts to chastise them for not showing respect to the prayer call as they do not stop chanting, and the sheikh in response tells him that what he tries to stop is the prayer itself. What Earle Waugh sees in this scene is that the way Sufism confronts formal Islam is the actual way the West wants to see Islamic mysticism (2014: 57-58). Although that way of appearance on the film is not fictitious in the context of Islam due to the fact that the first Sufi traditions emerged as reaction to the misbehavior of the representatives of the official religion, the film helped create an illusion of militant Islam and pacifist Sufism concerning the Moroccan context, where the case is actually just the opposite (Waugh, 2014: 58-65).

It is clear that the same illusion is benefitted in translations of Rumi. In 1995, Coleman Barks published his version of Rumi translations which immediately became a bestseller. The problem with *The Essential Rumi* was that Barks neither read nor spoke Persian and he only domesticized the existing translations in English with little academic and linguistic value. But the text addressed to the American consumer so well that not only his poems but also fictionalized biographies of Rumi became popular afterwards (Furlanetto, 2013: 201-203). Compared to the translations of Rumi into French, a country with history of Muslim colonies, which do not hesitate to show the historical

connections of Mevlevi Sufism and Islam, the English translations especially in the United States de-Islamize Rumi's identity so as to make his poetry more and more popular (Elmarsafy, 2013: 264-265). This differentiation between normative/militant Islam and Islamic mysticism calling for peace and tolerance/pacifist Sufism especially gained importance after 9/11 which was also regarded as a "clash of civilizations", pulling normative Islam closer to terrorism and putting clear-cut borders between religion and Sufism. Elif Shafak's novel, *Forty Rules of Love* (*Aşk* in Turkish translation) came out in such an environment and became a quick bestseller thanks to the representation of the division between Islam and Sufism and putting Rumi on the latter edge, "Americanizing" him (Furlanetto, 2013: 204-205). Surprising enough, the novel became a bestseller in Turkey after the US, signaling the same need for separating Sufism from normative Islam and that consuming Sufism is also in rise in the Turkish context.

1.3. Literature on the Sociology of Mevlevi Sufism in Modern Turkey

The context of the research which has reflections from the millennia of religious history and which touches both upon power relations and consumerism, relates to the Turkish context in a narrower sense, where there is an abundant literature on Rumi and Mevlevi Sufism. Especially during 2007, which was announced as Mevlana Year by UNESCO, an enormous number of books, theatre plays and musicals, CDs and concerts came out for celebrating the 800th anniversary of Rumi's birth. As one of the bestselling poets ever, Rumi has always been a topic of interest for arts and humanities; thus the extensive literature related to his life and contribution to Sufism at one point necessitated cataloging, as a result of which bibliographies started to compile as another literature. This abundance of sources forces me to limit this part of the chapter

to works related to the sociological analyses of Mevlevi Sufism in Modern Turkey.

Franklin Lewis's extensive study (2010) on Rumi in this sense stays as a touchstone on the path towards understanding Mevlevi Sufism in modern era. Besides being a biographical-and bibliographical- work, Lewis's book also covers the sociocultural context of the United States in the chapter "Rumi-mania", and mentions the Turkish context together with contemporary topics like Rumi's representations on the internet.

Yaprak Melike Uyar's research among the members of The Foundation of Universal Lovers of Mevlana (*Evrensel Mevlana Aşıkları Vakfı-EMAV*, called *Çağdaş Mevlana Aşıkları* interchangeably) (2009, 2014) has the claim of bringing a musicological and ethnographic perspective to the commodification of whirling dervish rituals. Comparing the ritual performance and the touristic show, she touches upon authenticity, cultural heritage, world music and commodification. She regards recent representations as a mimesis of the ritual and takes Mevlevi Music as a new genre under world music no matter how much connected it is or it can be to the traditional music of the sema ritual, *Mevlevi ayini*. She is one of the first researchers concerned with the musical scene of current representations of whirling dervish rituals.

Hasan Dede, who has the claim of looking after the 700 year old *post*⁶ from Rumi's time (EMAV, 2010), is a controversial figure for allowing male and female dervishes to whirl together. Several documentaries were shot

⁶ Post is a ceremonial sheepskin used in sema rituals, connecting directly to the relationship of wool and Sufism. While the whirling dervishes sit on white sheepskin before and after whirling, the sheikh uses a red one which is believed to represent Rumi. I was told that the renowned actor Semih Serger made the ministry staff dig for a red *post* all around Ankara before the play *Mevlana: Aşk ve Barış Çığılığı* (Mevlana: Scream of Love and Peace) premiered the state theatre in 2013, because he wanted Rumi to be represented on stage and this would only be possible with a red *post* (Fieldnotes, March 13, 2014).

concerning the female whirling dervishes of EMAV (Journeyman Pictures, 2008). Sheenagh Pietrobruno (2015), emphasizing the unofficial (illegal) status of Hasan Çıkar's usage of the title *Dede*, combines her ethnographic field research with internet culture and digital heritage, and concludes that YouTube produces a living archive of intangible heritage while successfully challenging gendered narratives proposed by nation states and officially admitted by UNESCO.

Another study focusing on gender is Catharina Raudvere's ethnography on Gönen Foundation (2002). Providing an in-depth analysis of the socio-political context of the Turkish republic which led to the emergence of this foundation, she proceeds to her field experience among female whirling dervishes. She does not hesitate to emphasize the political aspect of Gönen Foundation and cleverly connects the personal side of Sufism with the social side of political representation of the foundation. Her most insightful observations, however, cover the female Sufi zikir. Since her fieldwork took place between 1993 and 1998, her work lacks an analysis of the contemporary politics of the country, which was deeply transformed in the following decade.

One of the first inspiring studies related to social aspects of Mevlevi Sufism was again supported by the Swedish Research Institute in İstanbul. The proceedings of the conference held in November 1997, were published in 2001 by the institute and the articles in the book cover a wide range of topics from the history of Sufism to the music revolution of the republic. Although none of the articles directly touched upon Mevlevi Sufism and the contemporary socio-political context, the book still suggests an evolutionary path of discussions around Mevlevi Sufism in the 1990s.

Following the path opened by Swedish Institute's proceedings book, Victor A. Vicente conducted his field research in Turkey in 2004, just before sema was

put on the intangible cultural heritage list by UNESCO. His observations (2007) throughout the fieldwork, which coincided the Eurovision Song Contest in İstanbul and the opening of Mevlana Cultural Center in Konya are crucial concerning the social and political dynamics surrounding the context of Mevlevi Sufism in 21st century Turkey. Related to the narratives proposed by nation states on cultural heritage for recognition by UNESCO, Bahar Aykan (2012) focuses on three different intangible heritage processes in Turkey, Mevlevi sema ceremony, Kurdish nevrüz festival and Alevi-Bektaşî semah ceremony. Taking the political structure as a basis, she concludes that the same nationalist agenda of the governing party results in politics of recognition, nonrecognition and misrecognition in different cases of intangible cultural heritage. During the research, she conducted interviews with performers of both sema and semah besides officers of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and UNESCO officers.

Besides Vicente, Raudvere and Aykan, whirling performances of contemporary Mevlevi Sufism in Turkey intrigued other social anthropologists from the West. Sinibaldo de Rosa (2007) and Eline Hegerstrøm (2012) conducted ethnographic research in Turkey so as to understand the transformation of sema from religious ritual to touristic attraction and folkloric performance. While both researchers mainly focused on İstanbul (EMAV in particular) and Konya, de Rosa's research made him move towards Cappadocia and Hegerstrøm compared performances of Sufis in Bursa and dancers in Antalya.⁷

⁷ Unfortunately there were linguistic handicaps in having an overall understanding of these two works since the former was in Italian and the latter in Norwegian. The information I have concerning these two ethnographies relies mostly on online translation tools, thus I hesitate to comment on their analyses of the socio-political context although they both provide a background for the evolution of whirling into show business. I met Sinibaldo in person and he had moved towards studying-and performing-the Alevi ritual semah, leaving his experience in Mevlevi sema back, by then.

Yet another study on the performativity of Mevlevi Sufism is that of Esra Çizmeci (2013). She does not openly state among which Sufi group she conducted her four month field research, but she probably attended performances of EMAV, which stands out as the most researched contemporary Mevlevi organization within the literature. In spite of the similar methodology and findings with Uyar, Çizmeci accepts touristic performances as contributing to the publicity of spirituality in cultural life.

Together with its music and ritual, Mevlevi Sufism's central shrine and monument, Mevlana Museum of today, has recently turned into an academic interest. Rose Aslan (2014) and Rabia Harmanşah and colleagues (2015), deal with the contestation of space and the politics of museumification of a sacred place, the former in the context of Mevlana Museum in Konya and the latter in comparison with Hacı Bektaş Museum in Hacibektaş, Nevşehir. The second paper mainly compares the practices of state officers and visitors in two museums through the antagonistic tolerance model put forward by Robert Hayden, coming to the conclusion that it might never be possible to secularize the unsecularizable.

Concerning the spatial aspect; faith, welfare and tourism are other crucial points of concern in the context of Konya. Özgür Sarı's research (2010) focuses on the importance of Sufi tourism in the development of the city. He argues that Mevlana tourism is not the main sector developing the city, but it instead helps the city gain global value with an urban identity based on Rumi and Sufism.

Globalization is also the concern of Koray Değirmenci (2013), who differs from other researchers in that he solely focuses on music. His interviews with globally renowned ney players Süleyman Erguner and Mercan Dede show that the music of Mevlevi Sufism has its share in world music market independently from the ritual. Comparing Sufi music with Roman music, Değirmenci claims

that addressing the global audience with Sufi music necessitates a complex process of appropriation, enhancing locality while sacrificing authenticity. Nevertheless, separating the music from the ritual has its hints in discussions around authenticity and is striking both on levels of data and analysis.

All in all, literature on the sociology of Mevlevi Sufism in modern Turkey has a wide range of foci, which again indicates the magnitude of agendas related to Mevlevi Sufism in social, cultural and political contexts together with local and global perspectives. Although many works cited above refer in detail to the political processes in early republican period, there is little emphasis on the contemporary politics of Mevlevi Sufism especially in touch with the decade long pro-Islamic government. Furthermore, the capital and political center of the country is largely ignored in studies on Mevlevi Sufism despite its significance in decision making processes related to the un-authorization and re-authorization of sema rituals. My field research which was mainly conducted in Ankara, in this sense, has a potential of innovative contribution to the literature. Furthermore, my analyses concerning the state and Sufism relations in the 21st century Turkey adds a new perspective to discussions of power relations.

1.4. Organization of Chapters

Aiming at understanding Mevlevi Sufism in the 21st century Turkey, my research evolved around questions related to personal ritual experiences of attendees, historical interpretations of the republican representations of Mevlevi Sufism, and contemporary cases in concert (and sports?) halls, newspapers and on the internet. In an effort to find answers and alternative questions, I spent 15 months in the field among sema performances and performers of Mevlevi rituals.

Details of my field research is provided in the next chapter together with a historical account of the field. The significance of Konya, İstanbul and Ankara in understanding the contemporary dynamics around Mevlevi Sufism is only meaningful with the historical context as they are the three capital cities throughout the history of Mevlevi Sufism in Turkey. Furthermore, this context played role in determining my route during my field research. I haven't included the most frequently researched Mevlevi circle EMAY not only due to the fact that there is already a bunch of analyses related to the dynamics around Hasan Dede, but also to the inner and outer constrains of my field research. While the gender roles prevented me from collecting data related to the experiences of whirling dervishes, I made a decision on not including the circles I was already an insider of, resulting in a shrunk field. Administrative conditions related to my affiliation and the uprisings all around the country further affected my field experience. I thus included self-reflexive remarks in explaining my relationship with the field as a researcher plus performer.

The third chapter connects the Turkish case of Mevlevi Sufism with similar cases around the world, which not only puts the research in a contemporary context on a global basis but also opens up theoretical concerns related to the commonalities of different rituals and performances of cultural heritage. Examples from India to Mexico in contexts varying from education to mystic tourism are analyzed in this chapter in terms of similarities with the contemporary representations of Mevlevi Sufism in Turkey around the key concepts of cultural heritage, locality and nationalism, consumerism, nostalgia, and power and the state.

The fourth chapter is where the field data are extensively analyzed. Contemporary images of the whirling dervish, contemporary representations of Mevlevi music and contemporary power relations are explained through

findings related to my interlocutors, my observations and my own experience. I dig into details from the interviews I conducted throughout my research together with the material I collected on the field or on my armchair sitting before my computer, searching extracts from newspapers, cartoons of whirling dervishes, videoclips, social media comments and *ayin* scores.



CHAPTER 2

THE FIELD

The seeds which you sow after that will yield
Herbs, tulips, and wild roses in your field.
(Masnavi, Book 2)

2.1. Mevlevi Sufism Spreading from Konya: a Historical Perspective

To have an idea on the 21st century sites of Mevlevi Sufism concerning concepts of heritage, popularity, consumerism and power, it is necessary to look at the historical expansion of the order from Konya where it all started towards the USA. The historical expansion of Mevlevi Sufism sheds light on where to seek today's Mevlevis and how to "construct the field" (Amit, 2000).

Rumi (Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Balkhī) was one significant Sufi during his time as well as his father Bahauddīn Veled. Born into a Sufi family in Balkh, Rumi started receiving education on Sufism from his father and after their migration to Konya, he started receiving formal education, which he continued in Aleppo and Damascus (Ösen, 2015: 29-30). Konya was a significant choice concerning the 13th century, since it was the capital of the Sultanate of Rum, the cultural and art center of the state (Ocak, 2012: 199-200). Also, as many scholars, artists and Sufis sought peace in Konya when escaping the Mongolian invasion, they enhanced an inspiring intellectual and religious life during Rumi's time

(Schimmel, 2004: 329). His contemporary Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli, for instance, was also an escapee of the invasion and he was also influenced by the Malamatis of Greater Khorasan. Although he settled in a small county in Cappadocia (now named after him, Hacıbektaş), it is claimed that he contacted Rumi despite the distance and played role in his relationship with Shams of Tabriz (Gölpınarlı, 2006: 270-280). The renunciation of Sufis as a reaction to the orthodox Islam of the Ulama as mentioned in Chapter 1, resulted in a deviant individualism, not only framing the mystic understanding of Malamatis, but also Qalandars and Haydaris who influenced the spirituality of a wide geography from Asia Minor to India, determining Shams's non-conformist character (Karamustafa, 1994: 30-32, 51-63). Meeting Shams was one turning point in Rumi's life; Shams used to perform sema back in Persia and he influenced Rumi in whirling as a way of zikir. After the disappearance of Shams in 1245, Rumi started spending much of his time in sema, usually in trance and usually in company of musicians (Uludağ, 2005: 257-8). Later on Rumi's sema turned into an event of a crowd of musicians, sema performers and audience, which was enjoyed by the notables of the time comprised both by people from sharia and tariqah and by the officials of the city (Yazıcı, 2003: 275-278).

Becoming part of the art scene of the city, Mevlevi Sufism started to establish as an order again in Konya. Following Rumi's death on December 17, 1273, his son Sultan Veled became the founding father of the Mevlevi order. Rumi's first successor, Hüsametdin Çelebi (d. 1284), who was significant for making Masnavi taken down before Rumi passed away, decided to build a mausoleum for him, which was another significant incident for the future of the order (Gölpınarlı, 2006: 36-37). The mausoleum turned into the first lodge of the order in Konya, which later became the administrative center of the order. The order gradually became more structured and the first written work on the

history of the order, *İbtidânâme* (Ibtidā-nāma) was composed by Sultan Veled, around 1291 (Ambrosio, 2012: 39).

The Mevlevi order, which was first embraced in villages, retreated back to cities after the 16th century and new lodges in cities were built by state support, turning the order into a state institution after the 17th century (Gölpınarlı, 2006: 228-230). This retreat also has to do with the elitism inherent in the order, different from its contemporary Bektashism, with the Masnavi written in Persian, a language incomprehensible for the Anatolian villagers, and the ritual with its sophisticated musical structure, which needs artistic training peculiar to the context of the city and the royal court. Parallel to the process of becoming a state institution, Mevlevi Sufism started spreading into the Ottoman dynasty in the late 14th century and it consequently became a tradition for the Ottoman sultans to take their swords from the Mevlevi sheikh on accession to the throne (Özönder, 1996: 70; Schimmel, 2004: 341). Some Mevlevi Sultans like Selim the 3rd were reformists and they were trying to eradicate certain Ottoman institutions like the Janissary band, but it is significant that they didn't touch the lodges of the order even though they from time to time had trouble with the Mevlevis.¹ By the end of the 19th century, the order had already expanded towards the Balkans and the Middle East. There already were 3 lodges in İstanbul, which was then the cultural and art center of the Ottoman Empire and Konya lost its significance concerning Mevlevi practices. Nevertheless, *Asitane* (i.e. the administrative center of the whole brotherhood) was still in Konya.

¹Yet much before Selim the 3rd, Vanî Mehmed Efendi was a significant figure in the Ulema-Sufi conflict during the 17th century for being on the Ulema's side. He was claimed to be responsible for the closure of several dervish lodges together with those of the Mevlevi, and the deportation of Sufi poet Niyâzî-i Mısırî (Pazarbaşı, 2003: 458-459).

The close relationship between the state and the Mevlevis, which was even called kinship, came to a strict end by the foundation of the Turkish Republic; the new republic in an effort to establish a firm ground for the nation-state, abolished Ottoman institutions and traditions by law and separated its roots from the already dead empire. The law number 677, which was accepted by the parliament in the last third of 1925, outlawed all dervish lodges together with those of the Mevlevi (Haksever, 2009: 185). Nevertheless, the officials of the new republic also shared the values of Rumi like their predecessors did; the Konya lodge was reopened as a museum only two years after the implementation of the law (ibid. 192). But since the lodges were no more of religious function, several of them were sacrificed for the sake of the rising symbols of the nation-state, like the Ankara lodge which was demolished for building a highway and a park (Zaman, 2013).

This reopening of the *Asitane* was in fact a very strategic display of the power of the state: Mevlevi Sufism was now totally under state control in Turkey. Once the conservative Democrat Party gained majority in the parliament, they allowed sema ceremony for celebrating *Şeb-i Arus* (Wedding Night) in Konya (Ambrosio, 2012: 57). This was due to the fact that the ambassador of the USA asked for Mevlevis during a visit to Konya in 1950s and the government felt obliged to entertain the ambassador with whirling dervishes.² This triggered the rise of Mevlevi Sufism in the republican Turkish context. The state pioneered annual celebrations on the 700th anniversary of Rumi's death in 1973 by the influence of UNESCO (Ambrosio, 2012; 59), Galata lodge was reopened in 1975 although only as a literature museum, and lastly the new

² Interview with Kudsi Erguner, April 20, 2013 & interview with Ferhat, May 22, 2014. However, in the band recording by Doğan Ergin in 1971, Erguner's father Ulvi Erguner stated that the Swedish king Gustav asked for a Mevlevi movie and two sema ceremonies were filmed that year, one in Istanbul and one in Konya (Erguner, 2005: 164-165).

headquarters of the state-controlled-Mevlevi order, *Mevlana Kültür Merkezi* (Mevlana Cultural Center), was opened by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, then the prime minister of the pro-Islamic ruling party, during the *Şeb-i Arus* Festival of 2004 (Vicente, 2007: 104-110). Following the conservative valorization of Mevlevi Sufism, several other lodges were reopened and Galata lodge was restored to be opened as a Mevlevi museum, even allowing whirling performances in 2011. Lastly, a new Mevlana Cultural Center was opened in Keçiören, Ankara in 2013 with an opening ceremony including an orchestrated sema performance.

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the Rumi effect kept its significance in Europe and the United States. Besides the influence of Rumi poems on literature, Mevlevi music spread beyond the borders of the Ottoman Empire. The Classical-Romantic composer Ludwig van Beethoven, for instance, although he never listened to a single *Mevlevi Ayini*, was claimed to be influenced by the transcription of part of the ayin in makam Dügah which was notated and translated by Sieur Jean Antoine du Loir, a French merchant and traveler, in the 17th century, and he composed the *Chor der Derwische* (The Choir of Dervishes) part of his *Die Ruinen von Athen* (Ruins of Athens) under this influence (Tansuğ, 2010).³ Furthermore, Rumi was an influential figure in the emergence of New Age movements. George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff (d. 1949), although a Naqshbandi, studied the sema of Mevlevis and following his escape from Russian Revolution, brought his knowledge and inspiration to France in 1922 and the United States in 1923. Later on, Merwan Sheriar Irani, better known as Meher Baba (d. 1969), promoted the formation of dervish groups in

³ Bülent Aksoy states that it is impossible to find clear connections between the notation by du Loir and the part of the ayin in makam Dügah. He says this might belong to a hymn performed before the ayin, which cannot belong to Itrî, whose naat is performed today. This ambiguity of the notation, together with du Loir's letter, gives clues about the differences of the ritual more than three centuries ago (Aksoy, 2003: 58-62).

the States and in Australia (Lewis, 2003: 513-5). In Europe, furthermore, a Berlin-based Sufi received his authorization from the Mevlevihane in Aleppo and turned a deserted farm into a new lodge in Trebbus, Germany (Klinkhammer, 2009).

While Mevlevi practices were hindered in the Turkish Republic, they were becoming rooted in other ends of the world, and World Music also has its share from Mevlevi music. Years before the periodical ceremonies in Konya, concerts of Mevlevi music were organized, mainly by Gurdjieff lovers, in Europe and the USA, and musicians from Turkey attended concert tours starting with the first concert in Paris in 1968 (Erguner, 2010: 99).

Although it turned visible as quickly as it was sent away from sight on the state level, Mevlevi Sufism never became a state institution as during the Ottoman time again. Instead foundations got hold of the representation of the order. First, Mevlana Culture and Art Foundation (*Mevlana Kültür ve Sanat Vakfı, MEKÜSAV*) was established in Ankara in 1991 by Andaç Arbaş in an effort to preserve the original ritual and spread the Mevlevi Sufi culture to curious civilians. Following the death of Dr. Celaleddin Bakır Çelebi in 1996, the Çelebi family who are the descendants of Rumi decided to establish the International Mevlana Foundation. The foundation put great effort in the international recognition of Mevlevi Sufism as cultural heritage; 2007 was internationally celebrated as Mevlana Year for the sake of the 800th anniversary of Rumi's birth, Sema ceremony was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008, "Exposition of Mevlevi Culture and Sema Ceremony" project was included to the celebrations of İstanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture by the effort of the foundation, which was accredited by UNESCO in 2009 (International Mevlana Foundation: 2010). Nowadays, Mevlevi Sufism on the level of cultural heritage is performed

both by non-governmental organizations and the state. Konya Ensemble of Turkish Sufi Music, for instance, performs periodically in Konya Mevlana Cultural Center, mostly appearing on stage with a sema ritual. MEKÜSAV, furthermore, has its own ensemble monthly performing in Galata Lodge. These two institutions (NGOs and the state) were the starting point of my research; I planned to conduct comparative interviews with members of the state ensembles and NGO ensembles so as to get an idea on the Turkish context of Mevlevi Sufism in the 21st century.

2.2. The Spectrum of the Research: MEKÜSAV and Others

Taking the historical expansion of Mevlevi Sufism into consideration, initiating the research in Ankara was meaningful due to several facts. First of all, being the administrative capital of the Republic of Turkey, Ankara is the quarters of several music ensembles under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. According to my original research plan, I could seek “official” Mevlevi in those ensembles who from time to time perform in Mevlevi music events although the most prominent Mevlevi music ensemble is settled in Konya. Furthermore, the first foundation related to Rumi established is still active in Ankara. The second step of my research covering the “non-official” Mevlevi had much to do with this first ever foundation.

The second part of the research was easier to give a start when compared to the bureaucratic requirements of conducting a research among civil servants affiliated with the Ministry. Since I have already been active in Ankara music scene for several years, I had met several musicians who frequently attend the events of MEKÜSAV much before I initiated my field research. When I told some of them about my dissertation, they immediately volunteered to become my

gatekeepers. Belma⁴ was one of the first. Having received a Bachelor's in engineering and having worked in several different companies in the private sector, Belma recognized that this life path was not suitable for her. Thus she first quitted her job, then trained herself in yoga, and became interested in Sufism. She travelled across several Sufi organizations mainly in Ankara, and decided to become a committed member of those Sufi circles. She kept attending the Saturday practices and Masnavi reading events of MEKÜSAV while joining the seminars of *Türk Musikisini Araştırma ve Tanıtma Grubu* (The Group of Researching and Promoting Turkish Music-TÜMATA) when and where available.

During a Masnavi reading event in Hamamönü Kabakçı Konağı on a Wednesday evening, we came across each other and she immediately recognized that I was there for my dissertation research. Before the event started, she offered me a drive to MEKÜSAV's building in Batıkent for attending a Saturday practice, praising the practice and saying "You should be there if you want to conduct a qualified research!" The following Saturday, Belma introduced me to MEKÜSAV people. Some of them already knew about my being a frame drum performer and asked me to join the practice with my instrument. Since Gülden Arbaş, the vice president of the foundation, was the leading figure with her *kudüm* during the practice, other percussion players were expected to sit next to her. My instrument hence helped me meet Gülden Abla as quickly as possible. After the practice, I asked her if it was ok for them to have a researcher in their practices and other events, and she as the leading officer of the foundation approved of

⁴ Names of the interlocutors, apart from the public figures like world-renown musicians, are changed.

my rapport by opening her arms. She said “Our doors are open to anybody, who has the soul to come are welcome.”⁵

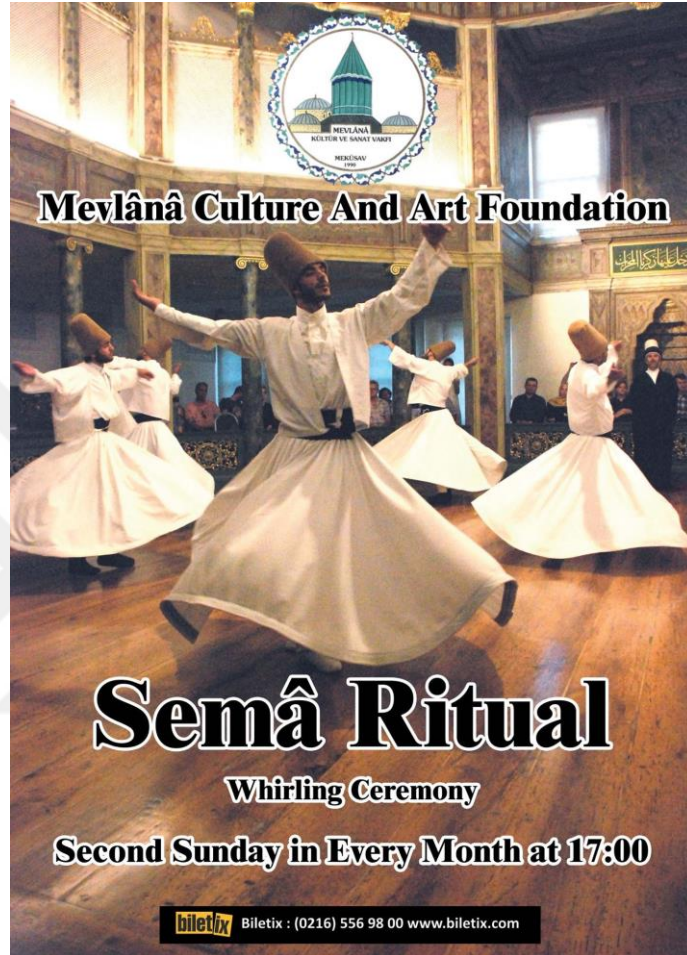


Figure 2.1. MEKÛSAV's banner for periodical performances at Galata Lodge, addressing international audience

My being a performer in classical Turkish music circles in Ankara opened doors for the first part of my research. State-recruited musicians based in Ankara usually attend amateur music events of choirs as leading musicians since the

⁵ Fieldnotes, March 16, 2013.

choirs seldom have good instrumentists among them.⁶ Attending choirs as a singer, percussion player, emcee and researcher since my undergraduate years, I had chance to meet some instrumentists who work in state ensembles organizing Mevlevi music events or who are invited by other state ensembles and non-governmental foundations to perform in Mevlevi rituals. Via a state ensemble percussionist with whom I performed in concerts of several amateur choirs, I met Tevfik Soyata, the director of Ankara State Choir of Classical Turkish Music. I was lucky enough to learn that the micro ensemble he conducted that season did not have a single percussionist and he needed even two percussionists. My percussionist colleague and I performed in his concert back in 2011 and this reference helped me arrange an in-depth interview with him immediately. I visited him in his office at Atatürk Cultural Center, where the Ankara state ensembles of the ministry are located, and listened to his memories of 1990s, when the first Mevlevi music ensemble emerged, while the ministry staff were serving me tea and snacks and looking strangely at my notes.

Ankara was the most important site of my research which provided me with musicians in both domains I was in search of. Being the administrative center of the republic, Ankara offered me the opportunity to experience several events

⁶ I believe this has become a tradition for amateur Turkish music choirs to invite professional musicians to their concerts. The first choirs emerged during the republican period with conductors who are better known for their voice rather than their instrument. The amateur choirs offer people opportunity to sing on stage no matter what quality their voice is. However, since the music tradition was transmitted from one generation to another with instruments, it is not likely to attract audience's attention with an a Capella concert style. That is why most conductors, many of whom are already state-recruited musicians, invite their colleagues to their concerts "to save the performance" (Şahin, 2011). Since the concert sector has its own informal economic dynamics, state-employed musicians are happy to help amateurs during their concerts. This was the case even in Berlin, Germany when I was conducting my thesis research among Turkish music circles. The oldest Turkish music choir in Berlin invited İstanbul Sazendeleri, whose members are employed in İstanbul State Ensemble of Classical Turkish Music, for their concert and put their name on the concert flyer as "guest musicians".

organized especially for the state protocol. The ayin performance in makam Acemaşiran that I told before soon became one inspiration for me to focus on the relationship between Mevlevi Sufism and the state. Unfortunately, those protocol events moved largely to İstanbul and Konya before I initiated my research. As those cities were already in the scope of my multi-sited ethnographic research design (Marcus, 1995), this shift of protocol events made me include another perspective to my visits to those cities. I visited Konya more for experiencing the protocol events than for conducting interviews. Furthermore, I arranged some of my interviews to be conducted in İstanbul during those protocol events in Konya. This was due to the fact that state ensembles usually host musicians from other state ensembles; a kemençe player working in an İstanbul ensemble for instance can be appointed by the ministry to perform in a protocol event in Ankara. Since the *Şeb-i Arus* festival in Konya is a rather weighty organization covering 10 days of ayin performances, the musicians of Konya ensemble need support from other ensembles. On the opening day of the festival, I met musicians who work in one state ensemble with my percussionist colleague in İstanbul. They told me that they were in Konya for just a few days, they would be travelling to Ankara to perform in MEKÜSAV's *Şeb-i Arus* event and come back to Konya for the final performance of the festival.⁷ Such small chitchat with musicians after ayin performances also offered me a widening perspective on the interpersonal and inter-institutional relations concerning the organizations of Mevlevi music events.

Together with state ensembles and Mevlevi foundations, I came across one more actor in the organizations of Mevlevi music events. They were tourism entrepreneurs and they mainly “manipulated” Mevlevi Sufism for the sake of

⁷ Fieldnotes, December 7, 2013.

touristic reasons. Keeping in mind that many events organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism also serve touristic objectives, I found this presentation rather pejorative; however this criticism came from one musician performing in a “private sector” ensemble solely for tourists in Cappadocia.⁸ Many tourists visit Cappadocia for its peculiar land form and for its historical significance for Christianity. Serdar told me that in the last decade, several Mevlevi ensembles emerged in Cappadocia and were included in the tour programs with the claim that “Whirling dervishes first emerged in Cappadocia”. Of course some of the tourists who were interested in Sufism knew the origins of Mevlevi Sufism better than the entrepreneurs and humiliated them by their post-performance questions. Nevertheless, Mevlevi Sufism keeps selling in Cappadocia. Serdar performed the ayin in makam Acemaşiran⁹ in a caravanserai, which probably had no historical affiliation with any Mevlevi lodge. Part of the caravanserai was decorated like the *meydan* of Mevlevi lodges with one sheepskin dyed in red, and instead of a sheikh, a small tabby cat was occupying the sheepskin as the *postnişin* during my visit to the site. Cats were of course important figures not only in the Cervansarai in Cappadocia. Gülden Abla fed stray cats in the garden of her house, and my interest in cats helped arrange a second meeting with her for a follow-up interview at her house.¹⁰ Furthermore, she told me the myth of Fasih Dede’s cats as another sign of rapport in the graveyard of Galata

⁸ Interview with Serdar, August 2, 2013.

⁹ Serdar was really fed up with performing the same ayin every evening but he had no chance since the other members of the ensemble were not educated musicians. They somehow memorized this ayin by Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede as it is among the simplest ayin compositions, and “they did not bother to memorize another one, because they were still able to earn their money by playing this piece, why trouble themselves with another long piece of music?” He was seeking an academic position in the state university recently established in Niğde, he believed he would be able to perform more in academia and “get rid of that *déformation professionnelle* which stopped him from improvising for *taksims*.”

¹⁰ Fieldnotes, May 17, 2013.

Lodge. According to that myth, Fasih Dede as one of the first sheikhs of that lodge fed cats in the garden. His favorite cat died immediately after his demise and a little stone appeared next to his gravestone soon afterwards; that was the gravestone of his cat and the stone travelled around the graveyard just like a cat walking around in purrs. The cats now occupying Galata Lodge's garden were the "grandkids" of Fasih Dede's cats.¹¹

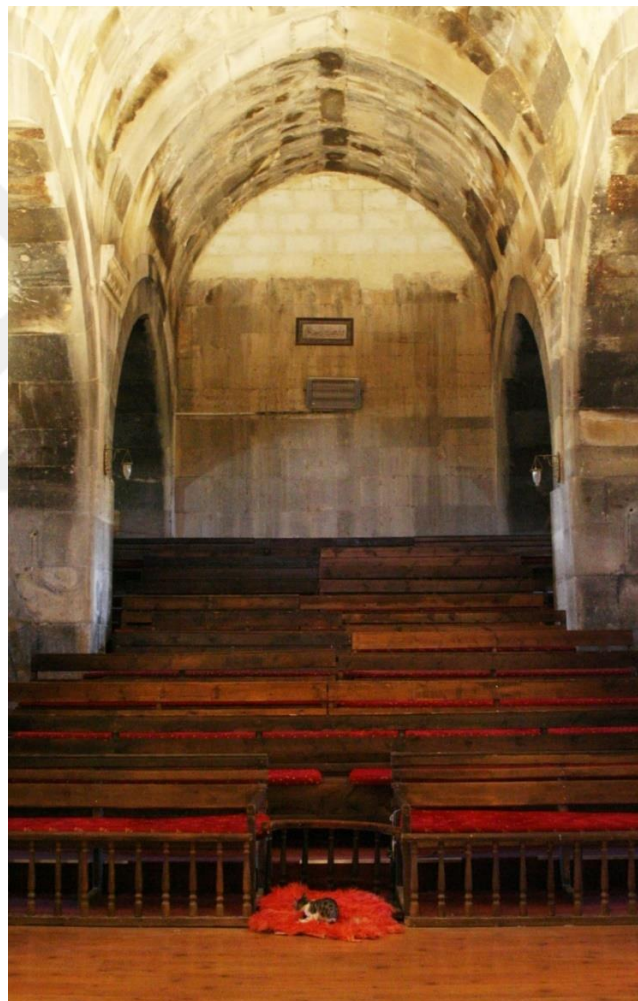


Figure 2.2. A view from the *meydan* in the Cervansarai in Cappadocia with a cat on the *post*, August 2, 2015

¹¹ Fieldnotes, July 14, 2013.



Figure 2.3. One descendant of Fasih Dede's mythical cat chilling out outside the graveyard (*Hamuşan*) of Galata Lodge, July 14, 2013.

Of course Cappadocia was not the only site where Mevlevi tourism was going on. İstanbul had the biggest slice off the cake with especially tourist events in restaurants in Sultanahmet. I tried to get in touch with musicians who performed in Mevlevi tourism events in İstanbul but my struggle was in vain. I only have second hand information related to those musicians, telling that they were as unhappy performing in such events as Serdar in Cappadocia.¹²

I found another event with mostly international audience in a very small district in Yalova. Based in Sultanahmet İstanbul, TÛMATA organized a seven-day-long whirling event in Yalova. The name of the group carries some camouflage since the main focus of the group is music therapy and their leader Rahmi Oruç Güvenç is an internationally recognized Sufi with *icazet* of different orders, which means he has the right to become the sheikh of these orders.

¹² Interview with Ahmet Hoca, February 12, 2014.

Since dervish lodges are still banned within the republic, TMATA might be using this very name in an effort to hide its informal dervish lodge structure. The event took place in Mehmet Rasim Mutlu Cultural Center, named after the donor and the designer for the construction of the center, and the center was designed especially for this whirling event. There were several rooms for accommodation on the entrance floor together with a kitchen, bathroom and a large hall for *sohbet* (talking) evenings, and the second floor was especially designed for whirling. The head of Sufi Ideas Association (*Tasavvuf Fikirleri Derneđi*) in İstanbul, Mehmet Rasim Mutlu was revered by the mainly international audience attending the whirling event as “Mutlu Baba”, a title with reference to important Sufi fathers. The event took place every summer, turning the small district into a tourist attraction besides its thermal popularity, and there were hotel constructions going on next to the cultural center when I attended the event during my field research in 2013.



Figure 2.4. Second floor of Mehmet Rasim Mutlu Cultural Center in Yalova, just before the 7 day-7night sema is initiated by Rahmi Oruđ Gvenç, August 16, 2013

My initial research design when applying for a PhD was to conduct research abroad, mainly in the United States, so as to have comparative data concerning the events of the Mevlevi lodge established there by Süleyman Hayati Dede with the Mevlevi events in Turkey. Due to financial shortcomings I had to change my research design, but I still had chance to travel to Europe where Mevlevi Sufism is gradually turning into a trending topic, especially among the Turkish communities, which can be understood from the whirling dervishes in the especially conservative wedding ceremonies in Germany and the Netherlands¹³. I deliberately kept the wedding industry out of the scope of my research¹⁴, but I was nevertheless interested in the European music scene in the context of Mevlevi Sufism. I got in touch with Kudsi Erguner, the famous *ney* player of the Erguner family who lives in France for several decades already and who was among the first musicians introducing Mevlevi music to the world music scene, through a musician friend of mine who attended his Ottoman Music Seminar in Venice the year before. I managed to attend his seminar on Armenian Ottoman Musicians during my research and had chance to meet

¹³ Grup Erler, a group of musicians and dancers based in Hanau, Germany, and their leader Mehmet Demir are among significant figures in the Turkish immigrants' music scene in Europe. They have many videoclips available online, from the wedding and circumcision ceremonies they performed. They claim on their Facebook page that they are celebrating their 25th anniversary in 2015. <https://www.facebook.com/GrupErler>

¹⁴ The conservative wedding industry is in rise for the last two decades and their favorite figure for entertainment is the whirling dervish. Hikmet Abi who from time to time performed in such wedding ceremonies claimed that since the modern understanding of entertainment which includes dancing and consuming food and beverages extravagantly does not fit the Islamic conservative way of life, they seek conservative entertainment alternatives in their wedding ceremonies. He continued by saying that they prefer whirling dervishes like regular dancers since this is a Sufi (i.e. Islamic) image for them and this image does not contradict with their norms (Interview, May 10, 2013). Both in Turkey and in Europe, the conservative wedding ceremonies are dominated by whirling dervish figures. The dynamics of those conservative wedding organizations and the relationship between the musicians, the whirling dancers, the organizers and the consumers (the families and friends of the groom and the veiled bride) is a rather extensive topic which deserves a separate research project.

international musicians who either performed or were interested in performing in Mevlevi music events. Although Venice seems to have nothing to do with Mevlevi Sufism at all, my attending the Ottoman Music Seminar was an important part of my research on the level of multi-sitedness. In Konya during the *Şeb-i Arus* festival, I came across a Belgian musician I met during the seminar in Venice and arranged an interview through his contact people. The next year, he performed in an album which included compositions of Mevlevi musicians in the 18th and 19th century İstanbul, among an Ottoman Music ensemble with several Turkish and international musicians.



Figure 2.5. Kudsi Erguner's Bîrûn Ensemble after the seminar's final concert, me next to Dr. Erguner, April 20, 2013 (Photo by Serdar Kaşıkçılar)

All in all, I conducted an ethnographic field research among Mevlevi music circles from February 2013 to May 2014 mainly in Ankara, but I also paid visits

to Konya, İstanbul, Nevşehir, Yalova and Venice for ethnographic observation and in-depth interviews. I conducted my last interview in April 2015. My main site in Ankara was MEKÜSAV's center in Batıkent and I regularly attended their Saturday practices for 6 months. I joined their travels to Konya and İstanbul besides my individual visits to those cities. I also attended their Masnavi reading evenings for one season in Hamamönü Kabakçı Konağı. I was not able to visit the foundation's Antalya branch, but I interviewed an active member of that branch when he was in Ankara. Throughout my research, I had 25 in-depth interviews mainly with musicians, part of whom were state ensemble staff, in an effort to reach the oral history of Mevlevi Sufism in the republican period and the life stories of the actors in the oral history of Mevlevi Sufism. I attended 10 Mevlevi ayini performances in different makams by state ensembles, foundations or individual organizations in Ankara, Konya and İstanbul (See Appendix-2). In May 2014, I myself participated in an ayin performance with my frame drum and I kept fieldnotes of my experience in a self-reflexive manner although I kept the ensemble I performed with outside my research. My motivation in self-reflexivity was both the concern of "epistemocentrism" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 254), accepting the advantage of "being at home", and the potential for returning the field for further research (O-Reilly, 2012: 531). I had several concerns when excluding the ensemble I performed with from my research. Together with my personal concerns, I had several other issues which affected the course of my research process.

2.3. Constraints of the Field

2.3.1. Outer Factors

I conducted my field research mainly in 2013, when I had a full-time job in an administrative position. This was the year before the local elections and the presidency elections in Turkey. The local scene was politically turbulent

throughout the year, facing Gezi protests in the summer and the leakage of corruption tapes towards the end of the year. These had their reflections on my research and my understanding of the topic.

My full-time job cost me loss of much field time and money. I was working as a research assistant at an administrative department of my university together with 6 other research assistants in the same office. I decided to turn my dissertation into a research project and I received funding from the university for my travel expenses. But when I took my permission licenses signed by my chief to the uppermost authority at the rectorate for approval, I was rejected with no legitimate explanation. I could only manage to receive official allowance for my Venice visit and one İstanbul visit and the rest of my allowance requests were turned down. My chief offered that I use my annual leave for the fieldwork in order to avoid a bureaucratic crisis. This was not an actual solution because I could not use my fund if I travelled using my annual leave, but still I had to pay visits to Konya and other cities. Following several quarrels with my chief, I ended up not being able to use my travel budget. Instead of giving a short break to an intensive field research and enjoy a few days of holiday, I had to use my rather limited annual leave for field visits and sacrifice intensity in the field. This shortage of time resulted in lack of data related to foundations in Konya and İstanbul, and not being able to get in touch with the Çelebi family and important figures like Cemalnur Sargut¹⁵ and Ömer

¹⁵ President of the İstanbul Branch of Cultural Association of Turkish Women (*Türk Kadınları Kültür Derneği, TÜRKAD*), student of Samiha Ayverdi and follower of Kenan Rifai. Kenan Rifai was a modern Sufi, he established his own order and locked his lodge after the law no. 677 is implemented. Samiha Ayverdi was his successor and played role in the establishment of both Kubbealtı Foundation and TÜRKAD. She encouraged Sargut to focus on Masnavi, turning her into one leading figure of Mevlevi Sufism in 21st century Turkey with her Masnavi talks. Kudsi Erguner categorizes her with Hayat Nur Artıran, foster child of Şefik Can who worked on Masnavi with the support of Gülen, and Esin Çelebi Bayru, vice president of International Mevlana Foundation and descendant of Rumi, as so-called *şeykâ* (female sheikh) and openly despises her (Interview, April 20, 2013).

Tuğrul İnançer¹⁶ were unfortunate shortcomings of my full-time job in my research. I from time to time had to find bureaucratic detours for my leaves to the field sites because I did not want to miss several important opportunities for observation and interviews; compared to the “illegality” of anthropologists’ research experiences on border crossings and human trafficking (Khosravi, 2010), my bureaucratic tricks for the sake of field research seemed relatively innocent.

I did not bother to receive any budget for my field visits in Ankara and just oral permission was enough for my leaving the office. Unfortunately this resulted in mobbing by my office mates; they treated me like a liar who kept talking about fieldwork but who did so for just escaping office work. Towards the end of the year, I had to move to another office because the mobbing started to hinder me not only from my motivation for office work but also from my enthusiasm for field research. Another colleague of mine suffered from the same treatment and at the end of the year and we both quitted our jobs for other positions. I was more comfortable in 2014 concerning office conditions and was able to pay several more visits to İstanbul. But since I was not able to submit any permission licenses, I could not receive the rest of my travel budget, resulting in an unsuccessful project report.

During 2013, the turbulent aura of Turkish politics also affected my field performance. In June, the time when my office workload became minimum so I could spend most of my energy for my research, Gezi protests spread all around the country. There were police attacks in metropolitan cities and the

¹⁶ Retiree of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, previous director of İstanbul Ensemble of Historical Turkish Music (*İstanbul Tarihi Türk Müziği Topluluğu, İTTMT*) and a prominent figure among the Cerrahi community in İstanbul. He is claimed to have authorization in Mevlevi Sufism (*icazet*), he frequently offers Masnavi talks and participated in sema performances as postnişin.

protests resulted in academic tension, making several academicians lose their jobs if not their eyes.¹⁷ The permission license crisis first came out during June at my institution. I thought I was being stopped because I was a potential protester. That was actually not the case but I could only manage to visit Istanbul in late June. Nevertheless, my interviews were dominated by interlocutors' comments on the protesters during that visit, and some interlocutors even did not respond to my calls although we had appointments beforehand. That visit in late June, concerning data collection, terribly failed due to Gezi protests.

Meanwhile MEKÜSAV people were situating themselves closer and closer to the police. On May 1, the anniversary of Nezih Uzel's demise, a percussion player with Sufi background who as a master influenced many members of the foundation, they were to dedicate one ayin to his memory in Galata Lodge but they were not allowed to enter Taksim due to the protests. One member of the foundation showed his police ID and got the permission to enter the lodge, thus they were feeling gratitude to that member solely for being a policeman.¹⁸ They ignored all the violence of the police faced by the protesters and compared every single policeman to the helpful member. The travel to İstanbul in July was

¹⁷ In May 2013, Erdoğan declared that they would build Topçu Barrack, one military base of the Ottoman Empire which was demolished in the beginning of the 20th century, in its original location, which is now Gezi Park in Taksim, no matter what. This was part of the "delirious project" on İstanbul, including the construction of an airport and a highway in the middle of the Northern Forests, which would deteriorate the ecosystem and toxicate İstanbul's already unhealthy air. Towards the end of the month, caterpillars arrived the park for cutting the trees off. People who protested the caterpillars because Gezi Park was the last green spot in central İstanbul and they would not let the trees cut were attacked by the police. This attack triggered a nationwide uprising throughout the summer of 2013 with rallies in almost all the cities of Turkey, with the occupation of Gezi Park by the protesters, with neighborhood forums, and with bloody involvement of the police resulting in deaths and injuries. See Özkırmılı, 2014; Öğütle & Göker, 2014; Koç & Aksu, 2015 for further details.

¹⁸ Fieldnotes, May 4, 2013.

dominated by discussions on the protests as one member did not agree with them on the helpfulness of the police.¹⁹ Since my home was in a district where the police frequently choked with teargas, I experienced the violence every single day and felt very disturbed by the affirmative comments of MEKÜSAV members concerning the police. This tension decreased my motivation to travel to Batıkent for every practice, and I gradually departed the field site. Gülden Abla, whenever we came across in concerts, asked me to come back because they needed people like me, and I kept responding “I will turn back after I’m done with the dissertation”.

The 740th anniversary of *Şeb-i Arus* faced the corruption crisis and the event in İstanbul was dominated by the protests of the audience instead of the ayin performance (see chapter 4 for a comparative analysis of the 740th *Şeb-i Arus* events in Ankara, Konya and İstanbul). On the last day of the festival in Konya, I received the news on the train and started to get anxious about my journey. I knew about the protocol speeches and the crowd of the very last performance, and decided to leave the city before the last performance, but I got seriously worried about being arrested for trying to escape the city. When I jumped down the train, I preferred to walk across the city towards Mevlana Cultural Center and what I saw all around the city were billboards covered with whirling dervish figures and police vehicles. There was an opening ceremony going on with the participation of the prime minister at that moment and the police were probably there for security issues, but the aura of surveillance was strongly felt all around the city. The day performance was rather weak and the audience was uninterested. It turned out to be one of the calmest final days of the festival. A few days later, the bigger crisis broke out and the political relationship between the ruling party and the opposition got unbalanced until the local

¹⁹ Fieldnotes, July 14, 2013.

elections. The most important outcome of these incidents was that the political aura made me move away from popular culture towards power relations in terms of theoretical perspective. In a way, they reshaped my research interests and my interview strategies changed in 2014 due to these incidents.

2.3.2. Inner Factors

Besides the outer constraints concerning my research, issues directly related to me played a role in the course of my fieldwork. First of all, my being female closed the doors of “official” whirling dervishes to me. One musicologist and musician colleague told that the real fieldwork starts behind the stage.²⁰ The actual interaction mostly takes place in the dressing room, and in the whirling dervishes case I have no access at all to that private area. I was able to perform in an ayin among an ensemble but that ensemble once made the ministry write a long denunciation text to the institution which hosted their event due to the fact that there was a female performer among the whirling dervishes. Although there are different Mevlevi music circles where female performers are welcome to the stage, there is only one in Ankara. MEKÜSAV as the oldest foundation in Ankara, although hosts female performers in practices and Hamamönü events, does not allow female musicians or whirling dervishes in their ayin performances. On the state level, there are no female performers recruited in Sufi music or historical music ensembles and women are never hosted in *Şeb-i Arus* festivals in Konya.

This is usually related to the Mevlevi traditions, but I came across different points of view during my research. One *neyzen* interlocutor, Burcu Karadağ told her appreciation of not being able to perform in official ayins due to the tradition and she showed respect by saying that her few decades of

²⁰ Personal interview with Salah Eddin Maraqa, February 28, 2014.

performance would not be able to deal with many centuries of the Mevlevi tradition.²¹ Another *neyzen* interlocutor, on the other hand, told that it is the sheikh's decision to allow mixed gender performances or not.²² He referred to Rumi's time when male and female dervishes would not mix but Rumi himself would accompany female whirling dervishes.²³

My exclusion of the only circle in Ankara allowing female performers on stage is not related to gender though. My first interaction with Mevlevi music was back in 2005, on the 5th anniversary of Cinuçen Tanrıkorur's demise. His contribution to Turkish music was revered by the performance of *ayin* in makam Bayatiaraban, conducted by Timuçin Çevikoğlu. Later on, I attended his practices at the Yegâh Association for Turkish Music Education and Culture and became an official member of the association. Many members became my close friends; I stayed up with them all night, hosted them in my house, and celebrated their weddings together... Although I had not been attending their practices for a few years when I started my field research and Timuçin Çevikoğlu was no more teaching at the association, my close friends were still there as the most important figures of the association. Keeping in mind Amid's criticism on that ethnographic fieldworkers still exploit the intimacy between their friends, neighbors, advisers and informants as an investigative tool (2000: 3), I felt the necessity to exclude this circle from my research despite

²¹ Interview with Burcu Karadağ, November 14, 2013.

²² Interview with Mutlu Abi, May 8, 2013.

²³ Contrary to Mutlu Abi's approach, Hasan Çıkar's performances were harshly criticized back in 1990s (Eren, 1995). Becoming once the *postnişin* in a *Şeb-i Arus* festival in Konya and establishing the Universal Mevlana Lovers Foundation (EMAV), Hasan Dede claims to have descended from sheikhs of the Skopje Lodge (EMAV, 2010) and promotes mixed gender *ayin* performances by saying that women and men are equal at God's level. In May 2005, yet another documentary was filmed on Hasan Dede's performances with EMAV by ABC Australia, the criticisms aimed at Hasan Dede and his defense together with his devotees' comments (Journeyman Pictures, 2007).

their significance in Ankara Mevlevi music scene and despite the fact that I intended to conduct a focus group with members of that circle. Including the association to my research design would not be ethical in that I would be too much of an insider to recognize the ethnographic dynamics, which did not stop me from observing their ayin performance in Ulus but which stopped me from participating their practices and interviewing people among them. In fact my being their close friend only made my ayin performance possible in May 2014, but again I chose to exclude the association from my research and I only took my own performance experience down into my fieldnotes²⁴.

2.4. Colleague-interlocutors: Tangling of Research and Experience

During an online search for recent news related to Mevlevi music, I came across one colleague's work on ethnography of *meşk*, the traditional teaching method of Turkish music which is based on oral transmission and memorization of music. A post-doctoral researcher in Australia, Banu was paying regular visits to İstanbul to meet *ney* players and conducting an ethnographic research in a workshop of one *ney* master. Having conducted research among Turkish music choir members in Australia as a *ney* player (Şenay, 2013), Banu had a very similar course of research to mine. After several mail exchanges, we met in İstanbul and exchanged our field experiences, especially the ones related to *ney* players. She had trouble with the *ney* players I had trouble with and she built rapport with some others as I did. The common point we reached throughout our own research was that conducting research among musicians can be really

²⁴ I also excluded Timuçin Çevikoğlu and instead conducted an interview with one of his students, Ferhat, whom I did not meet before (May 22, 2014). However, many of my interviews ended in a call for an interview with him. My interlocutors kept telling me that the necessary information I am seeking for lies in his palms. If I were able to realize my first research design, then I would have to get in touch with him since he is a prominent figure in the American Mevlevi music scene, but as I mentioned before, I did not include that scene to my research project due to financial shortcomings.

heartbreaking since the power dynamics are usually on personal level and the Sufi images attributed to them might be only stage identities. Two *ney* masters who do not get on well with each other made her go crazy with their caprice related to her research.²⁵ At that point I realized that my effort to anonymize my interlocutors was not only saving their public persona, but also my academic and mental health.

My experience exchange with Banu led me towards Erdem, who was also conducting research with *ney* players as a *ney* player. She became a devotee of another workshop, this time of a *kanun* player, during her research and she brought me to her master's workshop as Banu brought me to her own. Being at the *kanun* master's workshop was an enlightening experience but I somehow felt uncomfortable in the *ney* master's workshop. Banu had warned me not to talk about my research at all because the master did not value academic research as much as his students devotion to music learning, but unfortunately I received this warning after having mailed the master about my research. It did not even take ten minutes for him to start criticizing me and humiliating another researcher. "I told her 'Don't come to my workshop once more!', and she couldn't dare doing so again." he said, which was actually disturbing.²⁶ After I met Erdem I realized that he had been talking about her, and her negotiation for survival in the field was that she took this exclamation as positive. She thought she was not ready enough to join his *sohbet* yet, and she was taking her time for another chance.²⁷ I myself did not seek another chance, the door of that workshop was closed for me forever. Before we left the

²⁵ Interview with Banu Şenay, January 21, 2014.

²⁶ Fieldnotes, January 21, 2014.

²⁷ Interview with Erdem İlgi Akter, February 12, 2014.

workshop, Banu hesitantly invited the master to her talk at Orient Institut İstanbul which was to take place the other day, and I was sure that this effort of postponing the invitation to the very last minute was yet another negotiation of survival in the field.

One *ney* player whom Banu advised me to get in touch with, became a crucial figure for me after the 740th *Şeb-i Arus* as he was among the performers of the İstanbul ceremony. She advised me to interview him because he had an academic background and he would be considerate when I told about my research. Ahmet Hoca actually was, and he intimately told about his *Şeb-i Arus* experience. But at one point he started to warn me about my writing style, telling that “a researcher woman from another continent” just spoiled their personal relationships within the İstanbul *ney* circle with what she wrote and how she wrote it.²⁸ He was gossiping about Banu, which also was disturbing.

I felt guilty on behalf of my colleague interlocutors when those *ney* players backchatted them with the prejudice that I do not know them in person. But they were still polite enough to hide my colleagues’ identities. This ethnographic strategy of anonymizing identities became a lifestyle among İstanbulian musicians and this was clear evidence for the outcome of our experience exchange with Banu. Our researcher roles were intermingling with our experiencer roles and it was sometimes becoming so complex and contesting that our roles and negotiation skills were determining our rapport in the field. All in all, the field was about the ethnographer’s autobiography (Knowles, 2000: 59). I had constraints related to my own research but being based in İstanbul would have been even a bigger constraint, and the tension of my personal roles might have forced me to put more energy in negotiation than

²⁸ Interview with Ahmet Hoca, February 12, 2014.

actually conducting the fieldwork, which made me appreciate Banu's and Erdem's research even more.

2.5. Concluding Remarks

Mevlevi Sufism, although attributed to Rumi, was founded as a Sufi order after Rumi's death. The residence of Rumi in Konya and the establishment of the central headquarter of the order around his mausoleum is meaningful when the fact is kept in mind that Konya was the capital of the Sultanate of Rum by then, the intellectual, cultural and artistic capital of Anatolia with enhanced inspiration by the intellectual escapees from the Mongolian invasion in Asia in the 13th century. The cultural identity of Konya could not be conserved for a long time after the downfall of the Sultanate. The Ottoman Empire settled down in different capital cities until Sultan Mehmet the 2nd took İstanbul over in the 15th century, which made the 2nd center of Mevlevi Sufism, Galata Lodge, emerge there. Throughout centuries, the rise of the order in İstanbul helped spread around Europe and the Middle East, keep rubbing shoulders with the palace and provide İstanbul with artistic prosperity with poets, composers, players and music masters. The multilateral closeness of the order and the palace in İstanbul resulted in the "stateification" of the order. The end of the Ottoman Empire moved the bureaucracy to Ankara as the new capital, but the Ankara lodge could not gain such value as İstanbul lodges. Despite the change of the authority, the order's closeness to state power did not cease to exist. The new republic sacrificed Mevlevi Sufism in the name of modernization together with all the dervish lodges and banned the music and ritual so as to eradicate the remnants of the defeated palace. Nevertheless, the order soon gained recognition as cultural heritage by Ankara, making Mevlevi Sufism the first order in terms of state recognition, and has been supported (and controlled) by the state since then. The historical connection of these three cities made me

conduct a multi-sited ethnography in the search of the oral history of the order during the republican period and life stories of the followers. My fieldwork of 15 months spent in between different cities, of 25 interviews and of a range of events either on stage or in shrine-like structures brought together analyses on cultural heritage, locality and nationality, consumerism and power. The next chapter will relate similar cases from different parts of the world and different cultural backgrounds to Mevlevi Sufism around these concepts.

My field research, which itself came out of my personal experience as mentioned in Chapter 1, led towards self-reflexive discoveries especially through the interaction between colleagues. I had to disguise parts of my researcher and musician identity and my affinities during my field visits and interviews, which still was not enough to save the interaction with several İstanbulian musicians within the Mevlevi music circles. Ankara also had the potential of intimacy crises, and I myself had ethical concerns related to my field research in Ankara. I overcame both by excluding one circle from my Ankara field but still my only participatory experience concerning the ritual of the order was among that circle. In chapter 4, I will go into further detail of the self-reflexive observations and interpretations together with analyses on the contemporary images of the dervish, representations of Mevlevi music and contemporary power relations.

CHAPTER 3

CASES AND KEY CONCEPTS WITH THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL PARALLELS

Sharing a language is a bond so deep,
With foreigners we're prisoners in their keep,
(Masnavi, Book 1)

3.1. Ritual as Cultural Heritage

When an archaeological discovery such as the Moai statues of Easter Island is made, it is easy on global level to recognize the importance of such monuments in terms of cultural existence of people throughout history. But the case is not the same concerning performances for their being intangible. Before 1990s, there claimed to be little or no concern related to intangible heritage; it was only when globalism was regarded as a threat to local values and loss of diversity became an issue on cultural preservation that intangible heritage entered the agenda of international organizations (Logan, 2007: 36). In 1990s intangible cultural heritage became a crucial issue in the agenda of UNESCO, and the 2008 convention of UNESCO urged countries to work on lists of intangible cultural heritage and to implement necessary actions to preserve potential heritage (UNESCO, 2008).

Turkey took action and efforts of Mevlevi NGOs together with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism¹ resulted in the proclamation of Mevlevi sema ceremony on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2005 and inscription in 2008. Thus the religious ritual performed after a Medieval Middle Eastern Sufi was officially recognized as intangible cultural heritage on worldwide scale. Another religious ritual to be taken into account in this part is from India, which also worked for the global recognition of its local values. *Durga Puja* from the Bengal region of the country, a ritual dedicated to the Hindu goddess Durga, was submitted to UNESCO as a candidate of the representative list in 2012, and is on the pending list as of 2015 (UNESCO, 2015).

During the beginning of autumn, a public festival for days, even weeks is dedicated to Durga, the goddess for fertility depicted as having ten arms, in West Bengal, mainly in its capital city Kolkata, formerly named as Calcutta (Ghosh, 2000; Chattopadhyay, 2013). Temporary makeshift structures named *pandal* are set up all around the city for the temporary abode of Durga, in which people pray and around which cultural events like singing and dancing performances take place. The ritual traces back to the 16th century, to Raja Kansanarayan of Taherpur (Ghosh, 2000: 295) and there are records of Durga puja in the 17th century, but these were solely high class events; the wealthy Bengali Hindu families celebrated Durga puja at their household by then and no foreigners were allowed inside the sacred space where the Durga idol was located (Chattopadhyay, 2013: 196).

¹ Interview with Zülküf Bey, August 20, 2013. He showed me the huge file prepared for UNESCO concerning the application of sema and promised to provide me with a copy of the file, and claimed that he himself prepared all the file for the sake of International Mevlana Foundation, the foundation based in Konya and directed by the descendants of Rumi.

The ritual turned into a public, *baroari* event in the 18th century and started to include activities for entertainment together with the religious ritual while the household rituals continued among the wealthy families. The class differences resulted in conflicts during baroari Durga pujas and these conflicts led to a decline on participation in the public rituals, causing only few baroari pujas to survive until the 20th century (Ghosh, 2000: 296). However, not only class segregation but also the colonial structure resulted in conflicts during rituals, the latter leading to nationalistic acts. In 1926, for instance, Indian nationalists organized a Durga puja with the buffalo demon *Mahishashura* and the goddess Durga defeating Mahishashura. The striking point in this puja was that Mahishashura was made up like a British officer and Durga was presented as mother India, defeating the British Mahishashura and liberating India from colonial rule. The puja was interrupted by the police and this nationalistic act of religion ended up by the demolition of the idols in the hands of the British rule (Chattoadhyay, 2013: 197). It is also recorded that the pujas in Baghbazar district of Kolkata were banned for some years by the British government, mainly due to nationalist acts (Ghosh, 2000: 297).

After the independence in 1947, the ritual gained value as heritage and celebrations became widespread once more. Nowadays, theme-pujas take place every year, more public and secular than ever. The festivals are sponsored by secular associations, open to participation of everyone no matter if they are Hindus or not, with a specific theme from the global agenda ranging from global warming to Jurassic Park, turning the ritual into a commodified cultural event (Chattopadhyay, 2013: 197-199). In 2015, the themes of pujas were women's empowerment and India's rich heritage (PTI, 2015).

The history and ethnographic present of Durga puja have parallels to those of Mevlevi sema ceremony. The urban organization of Mevlevi lodges in the 17th

century mentioned in Chapter 2 has connotations of segregation, based on location if not on class. In 1925, Mevlevi lodges were closed by the law implemented by the new republic, which can as well be interpreted as a nationalistic act besides being an act of controlling religious practices. In 1950s, likewise, sema ceremonies started to take place publicly with an understanding of cultural heritage. Nowadays, there are tremendous Şeb-i Arus festivals taking place mainly in Konya and İstanbul in December, sponsored by ministries, municipalities and secular organizations, which are preceded by concerts and other cultural events like exhibitions and seminars. The resemblance can be exaggerated to the level that the one practical difference between two rituals is Mevlevi sema ceremony's being inscribed as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO and Durga Puja's still being on the pending list.

The concept heritage puts forward discussions on power and nationality. UNESCO's 2008 convention empowered states in determining what is to be regarded as cultural heritage and preserving those determined by the state, which resulted in "over-representation of nationalist government interests in the intangible cultural heritage management" (Aykan: 2012: 2). This case reminds the idea that heritage does not have intrinsic value, but it gains cultural value through socio-political construction, especially with the emphasis on "culture" (Byrne, 2009: 229). Thus the construction of heritage is itself a political act (Kenny, 2009: 152), having a range of power dynamics within. In other words, the state authorities "skillfully appropriate the cultural heritage, turn it into an instrument of power and use it to their own advantage" (During, 2005: 144).

The inscription of the Mevlevi ritual on UNESCO's representative list of intangible cultural heritage, not surprisingly, brought the Turkish state power

over the ritual. In the same year, the Ministry of Culture of Tourism emitted a notice on Mevlevi sema ceremony, emphasizing the heritage value of the ritual as a whole. The notice warned that institutions and associations which do not abide by the ritual's original structure will be penalized for disserving an international cultural heritage (TÜRSAB, 2013). This was an effort to "tame" the wildly popularized festival and as UNESCO urged, to preserve the original ritual. Durga puja's being a candidate for the representative list of intangible cultural heritage might as well have to do with the uncontrollable growth of popularity concerning the ritual and India might as well use the power of government in order to take similar precautions if the ritual is inscribed in the representative list.

While empowering the state over the ritual, UNESCO's decision challenged the power dynamics within the state. Throughout my field research, possibly the only case related to the notice affected my affiliated university; the conservatory received a letter of warning from the ministry for "including female whirling dervishes to the ritual which in original has exclusively male dervishes", which is believed to be written by an officer out of jealousy rather than by the ministry for the sake of preservation of cultural heritage.² The notice was related to the performance of Yegah and actually has power of addressing me as a performer since I participated another ritual of them which also had the elements criticized by the ministry letter. There were divergences concerning the clothes on both rituals and lacking parts of whirling dervish performances in the former ritual, which I believe were on purpose, a sign of having a claim on not being members of the Mevlevi tariqah, not dressing like them and not contradicting the law no. 677.³ Besides my university receiving a

² Personal communication with Dr. Cenk Güray, July 19, 2013.

³ Fieldnotes, May 28, 2013. I also noted that there might happen something related to the 2008 notice of the ministry, but what I was concerned were the uncontrollable recording of the

warning letter from the ministry and myself being under risk of penalty due to that letter, touristic performances of whirling rituals have not been affected so far. A French wine company, for instance, held a promotion event in İstanbul for their new champagne with whirling dervishes wearing pink clothes so as to be in harmony with the product, and only few journalists bothered themselves to criticize this presentation of Mevlevi Sufism. The event was immediately forgotten, without being warned by the ministry (Millî Gazete, 2013).

3.2. Locality as Nationality

As Ken Hirschkop argues, “music is most satisfying when it is part of the collective identity of a group which knows it has a long struggle ahead” (1989: 303). This satisfaction makes sense when the changes in musical understandings paralleled with political changes are taken into consideration.

In the Mexican case, 10 years of revolutionary civil wars took place following the 35 year long dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. When the war came to an end in 1920, the nation-state formation process necessitated the unification of “a disparate and diverse patchwork of peoples” (Hellier-Tinoco, 2005: 48). This unification process brought together a “myth of origin” for the sake of meeting the unification of peoples under one national identity which fits the ideology of the new state. In this post-revolutionary discourse, music inevitably played a significant role in uniting diverse peoples. One of the first implications of the new state was to organize the National Congress of Music in 1926, where concepts related to nationality and modernity were discussed in an effort to

performance and the possibility of editing and publicizing the recordings. Furthermore, the convergence of clothes and whirling dervish performance reminded me of a ney-playing character from İhsan Oktay Anar’s novel *Suskunlar*, who deliberately made mistakes in between his near-perfect performance and who in response to critics said: “Imperfection is my signature”.

establish the national Mexican music which would abide perfectly by the ideology of the new state (Madrid, 2008: 4).

The process of nationalization came together with folklorization. The local dance of the P'urhépecha old men of Lake Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, which is performed together with local musicians, gradually gained national value by state support. The indigenous people of the region thus became integrated into the Mexican national identity through the promotion of their dance and music. In early 1920s, immediately after the end of the war, a poor young man from a village of Lake Pátzcuaro, Nicolás Bartolo Juárez was assigned by the government to teach the *Viejitos* dance of his region to a group of students and was brought to Mexico City. The students, after learning the local dance from Nicolás would then perform before a delegation of Chilean officers (Hellier-Tinoco, 2005: 49). Meanwhile, the avant-garde composer of the time, Carlos Chávez was labelled as a nationalist composer within the post-revolutionary discourse of Mexico in an effort to fit the revolutionary myth of origin (Madrid, 2008: 12-13).

A few years later, the *Viejitos* dancers crossed the borders again with a purpose of claiming national identity. For the Dia de la Raza celebrations in 1938, P'urhépecha musicians and dancers were sent by the state to San Antonio, Texas to meet the Mexicans living abroad. The effort was to unify Mexicans under the national identity no matter where they lived (Hellier-Tinoco, 2005: 50). The promotion of a local dance and music style as national, together with the labelling of Chávez's compositions as nationalistic, in one way reflect the multi-ideological ambiguity of the post-revolutionary Mexico (Madrid, 2008: 155) and in another way show the state power in action in the context of establishing a new national identity, subjectifying musicians in Foucauldian sense. In the current practice, the local dance and music of Lake Pátzcuaro can

appear in hotels and restaurants for tourists under state-organized events and can find place in Mexican pavilions during world fairs in terms of national representation of folkloric richness while the P'urhépecha people of the region still suffer from discrimination and poverty (Hellier-Tinoco, 2005: 47, 60).

Having parallels with the Mexican case, the 1920s of the Turkish case faced the establishment of a new republic. Considering the Ottoman music tradition, it must be kept in mind that the establishment of the new republic gradually wiped all official channels of transmitting the music tradition⁴ out. Before the establishment of the new republic in 1923, *Enderûn*, the royal school where court music of the Ottoman Empire was also taught, and *Mehterhane*, the military band of the empire where traditional music was also taught, had already been closed. The law no. 677 resulted in the closure of Mevlevi lodges, which were as well important music education centers besides being centers for Sufi practices. One year later in 1926, *Dârü'l-Elhan* (the house of melodies), the first official conservatory of the Ottoman Empire, was closed. It was reopened as the municipal conservatory next year, but Turkish music was excluded from the curriculum. Actually Turkish music education was banned in all schools during that time (Ayas, 2014: 96-133). Furthermore, Turkish music broadcast was banned from the radio in 1934, resulting in the fact that the only way of learning traditional Turkish music left was Mevlevi Ayini scores (Tanrıkorur, 2005: 30). This eradication of Ottoman music was due to the

⁴ The music tradition I refer to has its roots in the Ancient Greek and Mesopotamian music traditions which were prominent in the lands of the Ottoman Empire throughout history (Güray, 2012b). During the Ottoman time, the name of traditional music was "*mûsikî*" and musicians from different ethnic and religious backgrounds contributed to the tradition. After the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, there emerged a variety of names concerning the genre. Turkish music, Turkish classical music and Turkish art music are several of them, each of which have political rather than musicological roots. Due to this fact, I prefer to use different names for the same music genre interchangeably in an effort to escape political connotations. Kudsi Erguner suffered from the Turkish cultural politics in naming the genre when he was performing his ney in Europe and he frankly confesses that the solution he found to escape the political oppression by then was to use the name "Ottoman music" (2010: 134).

cultural ideologies of Ziya Gökalp which influenced the political elites founding the nation-state. He defined three categories of music: the music of the East, folk music and the music of the West. He believed the only possible way to establish a national music for Turkey was to blend folk music into the music of the West (Gökalp, 2007: 127-128). The founding ideologies of Ziya Gökalp kept influential mainly in the first 30 years of the republic. Kudsi Erguner remembers attending a radio program for children when he was in primary school, before the decline of the founding ideology started. He was planning to perform three traditional examples of Turkish music with his ney in the program which he was to participate with his piano-playing classmate when suddenly an officer came in shouting and kicked him out while letting his classmate play his piano. The legitimization of the officer's act was that there was no room for Ottoman music in programs addressing children, and the young generation should never be encouraged to deal with this music belonging to the past (Erguner, 2010: 81-83).

The decline of the founding ideology began with the Democrat Party, which was rightist and conservative contrary to the founding Republican People's Party, gaining the majority of the parliament in 1950. The state power was then embodied by traditional-liberals instead of the statist-elitists, which was interpreted as the democratization of national music (Durgun, 2010: 94-100). The performance of the first official Mevlevi ritual, which was mentioned in Chapter 2, was possible only after the change of political ideology. Similar to the first performance of Viejitos mentioned above, this first official Mevlevi ritual was performed for the sake of entertaining a US officer. Later on, the once rejected music of Mevlevi Sufism became part of the musical identity of the nation. In 2012, for instance, when the anniversary of Mevlevi composer İtrî's demise was celebrated, the concert hall of Republican Symphonic Orchestra (*Cumhurbaşkanlığı Senfoni Orkestrası-CSO*) was used for the performance of a

state ensemble comprised by Itrî's mainly religious compositions, which was regarded by some as the conquest of the republican elite's castle by the nation (Kakan, 2012).

As Schimmel emphasizes that Turkish people never admit that Rumi was not a Turk (2004: 343), Mevlevi Sufism's becoming part of the representations of Turkish identity remains meaningful in the context of nationalist ideologies. The current representations of Mevlevi music and ritual by the state evoke the Mexican case in that the ritual is largely represented as national value of the country, a cultural heritage while Sufis are forced to sell tickets for practicing their ritual (Uyar, 2009: 42). Criticism on large-scale sema ceremonies supported by the state that "a religious ritual is treated as if it were a folkloric event" (Zaman, 2014) also reflects the resemblance of both cases.

The changing discourses related to certain music genres and rituals attach intensely to the changing discourses of political power. Parallel to Foucault's subjection with two meanings, the former focusing on the individual being subject to someone else by control and dependence (1982), Handler discusses cultural objectification with two levels (1984), the latter focusing on ideology. Both can be interpreted in the sense that folklorization of certain practices as well as attributing national values to local rituals, just like the process of claiming cultural heritage, are results of the power dynamics behind the political acts. As Hellier-Tinoco summarizes, locality is manipulated by governments and institutions for the sake of identity-construction, unification and nationalization, which is directly connected to control and power relations (2005: 52).

3.3. Religion, popular culture and consumerism

Encounters of peoples brought together interaction with daily practices, religion and politics throughout history. Tradition sometimes became part of religion and occasionally remained contradictory to religion, usually in touch with the political dynamics. But when it came to the neoliberal present, it turned out that traditional practices, whether religious or not, sell well because of the nostalgic value gained through historical changes like post-colonial developments.

When talking about the commodification of culture, David Harvey defines direct and indirect monopoly rent, in the latter of which cultural uniqueness of a practice leads to surplus value. Besides the authenticity and originality as in the case of Rembrandt's paintings, discursive constructions upon historical narratives and collective memories affect the value of the cultural practice in issue. The collective symbolic and cultural capital in Bourdieusian terms of the artefacts and practices provides great economic advantage for which struggle emerges and the power of monopoly creates guardians of collective symbolic capital, like museums and universities as in the case of the state (Harvey, 2001: 396-406). The discursive construction of collective memories, in response, makes ground for tourism of nostalgia. Capitalism in constant need of creating new commodities for consumption, helps nostalgia turn into a mechanism commodifying tradition (Özyürek, 2006: 18).

In Trinidad for instance, certain practices of the slave communities could only survive in the form of religious rituals as the colonial authorities would ban their dance and entertainment due to the idea that they would get tired and become too lazy to work. In the post-colonial Trinidad, such a dance named soca regained its entertainment value and attracted attention of tourists. That attention enhanced the popularity of the dance so much that the number and

scale of *Soca fêtes* organizations rose to an extreme level. Some Soca fêtes organizations are unaffordable for lower classes, some organizations cause terrible congestion in traffic due to the gigantic number of attendants, and some organization companies started VIP treatment in an effort to make even more money out of the nostalgic dance (Guilbaut, 2010). Similarly, the runaway slaves of the colonial past of Brazil create collective cultural capital in the post-colonial context. The *remanescente de quilombo* of Brazil have traditionally gained their living by making pots. The government which for long rejected to identify members of the community who couldn't provide evidence of their past slavery with colonial documents, has rather recently legitimized identification through oral history and collective memory, while making money through their lifestyle and pottery under the name of heritage tourism (Kenny, 2009).

North America also gained economic advantage out of its traditional minorities. The Amish who reject modern way of living totally, attract attention of millions of tourists every year in different parts of the USA through different understandings of nostalgia. The Amish of Walnut Creek and Berlin promote themselves in nostalgia of hope, promising tourists that they can change their lives towards a better future if they take the Amish as an example. The Amish of Sugarcreek, on the other hand, gain popularity through nostalgia of loss, implying that the good days are now in the past and there is no way for the tourists towards happiness (Trollinger, 2012). It can be interpreted that tourism entrepreneurs subjectify the Amish in Foucauldian sense as they earn out of the traditional Amish lifestyle, but it should not be forgotten that the tourists win by exploring new perspectives and the Amish also win by fulfilling their missionary service. Thus, there are multifaceted power dynamics in the tourism of nostalgia in the Amish context.

Another example is from the north of Europe. The traditional Sami non-verbal singing style performed with a percussion, *yoik*, which was once banned by the church for being “sinful”, gradually lost its social function through modernization and came to the point of being forgotten. But then Finland became an EU member in 1995 and started to prioritize this singing style in an effort to emphasize Finnish cultural identity. This attention could only make education of yoik in schools of Sami minorities possible. The social function of yoiking did not come back by state effort, but nevertheless, the style of collective memory developed in world music as jazzy yoiks and yoik-raps and made money (Tirkko, 2010).

The context of Mevlevi Sufism has parallels with these examples from different parts of the world in terms of popularization and consumerism. Tremendous whirling events supported by the state, examples of which from Konya and İstanbul will be discussed in the following chapter, puts the state in the owner position of the monopoly rent. Süleyman Erguner, parallel to Harvey’s analysis (2001), claims that İstanbul is the free market of Mevlevi Sufism while Konya is the monopoly of the state.⁵ The value of nostalgia and heritage tourism of Mevlevi Sufism appeal to many tourists. Meanwhile, tourism entrepreneurs in Cappadocia try to benefit from this collective cultural capital through a “myth of origin” as mentioned in Chapter 2. The popularization of whirling dervishes resulted in performances for tourists especially in Sultanahmet starting with whirling dervishes and ending with belly dancers.⁶ Interesting enough, this pattern was embraced by the state during Eurovision Song Contest 2004, in which whirling dervishes followed Sertab Erener’s belly dancers and preceded the belly dancers of the dance show, Fire of Anatolia. The whirling dervish,

⁵ Interview with Süleyman Erguner, August 19, 2013.

⁶ Interview with Ahmet Hoca, February 12, 2014.

besides being a tourist attraction with the performance, became a well sold tourist item, both for locals and internationals. Throughout my research, I came across Mevlevi souvenirs in coach stations and airports in Ankara, İstanbul, Kütahya and Bolu and had chance to enjoy my Turkish coffee in a dervish-ornamented cup at the house of a colleague.⁷ Besides the touristic value, whirling dervishes and the sound of ney as the main instrument of Mevlevi music have gained entertainment value in the wedding and circumcision ceremonies of some Sunni-oriented conservative families.⁸ Traditional Marxists are criticized for misinterpreting capitalism through attaching power relations solely to the context of production; consumption can and should be taken into consideration in explaining capitalist ties of power (Nava, 1991: 167). The context of consuming Mevlevi Sufism, similar to the cases in Trinidad, Brazil, North America and Finland, show that consumers can become political actors taking their share in the struggle for power of monopoly.

Yael Navaro-Yashin does not hesitate to clarify that “[c]ommodification proved to be a context and activity that was historically shared by Islamists and secularists alike, rather than a domain that divided them” (2002: 79). In that sense, it is not surprising to come across whirling dervishes in a variety of contexts of consumption from state events to touristic performances and circumcision ceremonies. Mevlevi Sufism turns out to be a big cake slices of which are appealing to many consumers and profiteers. All in all, the popularity and widespread consumption of Mevlevi Sufism in a variety of forms and discourses relate to power dynamics concerning the state, tourism

⁷ Fieldnotes, August 19, 2013.

⁸ Interview with Hikmet Abi, May 10, 2013.

entrepreneurs, souvenir producers, wedding musicians, tourists and religious individuals.



Figure 3.1. A whirling dervish souvenir with almond candies inside at a shop in a stopover coach station in Bolu, October 12, 2013.

3.4. Power and the state

David Martin reminds that “religion, political ideology and nationalism flood into each other, even though they are different” (2014: 143). In the contexts of cultural heritage, locality and tourism of nostalgia which were opened up above, the power relations in between those three frequently come to the fore.

Graham Ward generalizes that religion is always a social product, but still, the socialization processes of religion and the economies of its desires relate to the ideologies of hegemonic capitalism either as acceptance or resistance (2003: 61).

The two-way relation of religion and capitalism mentioned by Ward parallels Gramsci's binary understanding of power relations in which always some will dominate (Daldal, 2014: 152). But it should not be forgotten that Gramsci's conceptualization of power was never that simple. Keeping in mind the Marxist understanding of class struggles in the context of political economy, Gramsci contributed that culture also has its share in the power relations (2000: 395; Crehan, 2002: 98-104) and it is not only a relation of domination and subordination between classes but there is also intellectual and moral leadership, which constitutes hegemony (Femia, 1987: 24). As a Marxist theoretician, Gramsci focused on the expansion of domination in the bourgeoisie compared to other dominating classes in that they succeeded in ideological terms, and he defined the state as "practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules" (Carnoy, 1984: 65). Thus, power is not determined solely by the coercion of the state but also by the consent of the subordinate classes according to Gramsci.

Although not as central as in Gramsci's arguments, Foucault also pays much attention to power. He takes power as omnipresent and has a discursive approach. Despite the difference in approach towards the concept, Foucault comes to terms with Gramsci in his definition of pastoral power. He suggests pastoral power as a technique in response to the struggle against subjection, the most important aspect of which is that it "cannot be exercised without knowing the inside of people's minds, without exploring their souls, without

making them reveal their innermost secrets” (Foucault, 1982: 782-783). It is also important that he defines pastoral power through the inspiration of the techniques of Christianity, making two out of the three concepts emphasized by Martin meet.

Such a resemblance resting in Gramsci and Foucault’s approaches can be found in Michael Mann’s understanding of state power and Louis Althusser’s state apparatuses. Mann defines two meanings of state power: the first one is the despotic power, in which the state elite has unlimited power to dominate the civil society, and the second one is infrastructural power, in which there is no direct power exertion but a capacity of the state to penetrate into civil society (1984: 190-191). Althusser, while contributing to Gramsci’s conceptualization of ideology by materialization, in a way opens up his notion of hegemonic civil society by defining state apparatuses. Starting his arguments on modes of production, Althusser states that material production of the tools to transform nature is only possible through the reproduction of the conditions of production, that is not only the reproduction of necessary skills but also the reproduction of the subjection to the ruling ideology, the ideological reproduction (1977: 123-129). This ideological reproduction is possible either through coercion in Gramscian sense or through the interpellation of subjects so that they can “freely” submit to the commandments of the Subject, connoting Foucault’s subjection. The state apparatuses Althusser defines are Repressive State Apparatuses and Ideological State Apparatuses, the former paralleling Mann’s despotic power and the latter attributing to infrastructural power. He explains that what he calls RSAs are the state apparatuses defined in Marxist theory, i.e. the army, the police, courts, prisons and other apparatuses that function by violence. In comparison, the ISAs have plurality, affect subjects mainly in the private domain and function by ideology (Althusser, 1977: 137-141). The ideas of these thinkers can be summarized in one sentence by saying

that “interpellation” of subjects to the state through ISAs like religious loci and cultural constituents ensure the “infrastructural power” of “hegemonic civil society”.

In the light of this argument, it can be said that the manipulation of the state over rituals and traditions in the examples discussed above turn those rituals and traditions into ideological state apparatuses. The folklorization of Viejitos in Mexico, the nationalization of yoiks in Finland, the popularization of soca and the appreciation of these processes by citizens can be all read in this perspective but this would be too narrow a conceptualization. Pierre Bourdieu criticizes the widespread acceptance of the concept of apparatus in social theory and interprets this acceptance as the “Trojan horse of ‘pessimistic functionalism’”. He subtly announces that “[t]his fantasy of the conspiracy, the idea that an evil will is responsible for everything that happens in the social world, haunts critical social thought” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 102). Bourdieu’s conceptualization of fields of struggle for power provides a more fluid and permeable understanding for power relations. This fluidity comes from the acceptance that power is not a separate domain but rather the center of all social life; every expression of sociability exists in attachment with its constitutive power relations (Swartz, 1997: 6). In Bourdieusian framework, cultural capital plays as significant a role as economic and political capital in determining power relations (Esgin, 2012: 173). Bourdieu usually compares the power relations in the field to a card game the entrance to which necessitates the pre-acceptance of the rules of the game, and Loïc Wacquant interprets this comparison as a *battlefield*, where bases of identity and hierarchy are constantly disputed (2008: 268, emphasis original).

Ayhan Erol takes a Bourdieusian stand in understanding the Turkish modernization and discusses the processes of “modernization from above” as

processes of “reshaping public taste”. He thinks the music reform, which encompasses the ban of Turkish music broadcast from the radios together with hindrance of Sufi music performances in an effort to adapt the “universal” music of the West as the music of the nation-state, was one of the most important examples of symbolic violence intended to impose the ideology of the state (Erol, 2012: 40). But as mentioned before, the Bourdieusian field is where identifications are constantly challenged and power relations are fluid. The construction of the monopoly of the state over physical and symbolic violence, which can be compared to Althusser’s RSAs and ISAs, thus brings together the construction of the field of struggle for the monopoly aiming at the advantages constructed together with the monopoly (Bourdieu, 1998: 58-59). Erol does not miss the point related to the construction of the field of struggle and relates the emergence of arabesk to the symbolic violence within the music reform, which was imposed by the state by ignoring the musical tastes of the public, inevitably causing unrest and emergence of new (and officially unappreciated) genres as a sign of failure (Erol, 2012: 49).

Michael Burawoy (2012), on the other hand, finds Bourdieu’s field limited and states that it fails to comprehend the case of Hungarian workers during the collapse of the Soviet regime. As a solution, he offers the *interaction* of fields (Burawoy, 2012: 201, emphasis original), which helps identify the power dynamics within and in-between different fields of struggle. I believe this contribution is to the point and beneficial for the case of Mevlevi Sufism that I focused on throughout my research. The complexity of power dynamics in the case of Mevlevi Sufism in contemporary Turkey can be discussed through different levels of power relations and interaction of fields each of which have different opposing teams as in Bourdieu’s game analogy. In my case, I prefer to take Mevlevi Sufism as the large field within which fields of different levels interact, and this perspective provides me with the opportunity to identify

different levels of power struggles within the large struggle for power. At this point I want to focus on music within those power struggles and discuss music-power as one level under the larger ground of struggle for power. As Jacques Attali asserts, “music localizes and specifies power... thus, it heralds the supervision of both the existing code and power in the making, well before the latter is in place” (2003: 20). The power’s constant interest in music and its potential to affect individuals in communication and unification (Erol, 2012: 36) helps states focus ideologically on music; impose music-power over their nations as in the case of Soviet Bulgaria which organized music contestations in an effort to control the folkloric music production and impose a new “folk music of the state” (Kirilov, 2010: 114), struggle for the monopoly of music as in the case of Mexico which assembled a national music congress immediately after the establishment of the post-revolutionary state, and surprisingly get disempowered by the music as in the case of Soviet Russia which denounced Shostakovich for writing inappropriate music for the country followed by the ban on most of his works and his dismissal from the conservatory but which could not prevent the international success of the composer with his critical compositions on the Soviet state (Wilson, 2006).

Nevertheless, the warnings of social scientists on the existence of the state should be kept in mind when analyzing power relations concerning the state. Philip Abrams rejects the idea of the state as an entity of research and prefers to call the power of the state as politically organized subjection (1988: 63), paralleling Althusser. He says that it is not the state but the political practice that is real, and sociologists’ task is to demystify the illusion of the state as reality (ibid. 82). Michael Taussig, in a similar sense, talks about political power of the fiction of the State (1992: 113). Taking his stance from back to Durkheim’s totem as society in his famous *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, he offers State fetishism as a concept by saying that the idea of God is gradually

replaced by the idea of the state, turning state into a revered object just like the totems (ibid. 114). This idea comes to the fore after Clifford Geertz's fieldwork in Bali as well, where he experienced people treat the lord as an icon and his palace as a temple with spectacular stage performances (1980: 109-116). Following the idea that all practices of state power by the apparatuses serve for the reification of the state (Taussig, 1992: 132), Navaro-Yashin also agrees that "[t]he state is the greatest fetish of contemporary society" (2002: 157). Comparing the commodification practices of Islamists and secularists, she states that state fetishism similarly exists in contemporary Turkey (ibid. 161). Referring to the Turkish modernization project in relation with religion, Buket Türkmen uses the term "Kemalist Islam", giving a clue on the contestation of political power in different reifications of the state within the religious domain (2012: 52-54). The fetishization of the state and the contestation of different religiosities can be observed in the representations of Mevlevi Sufism during Şeb-i Arus celebrations.

3.5. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I tried to compare similar cases to Mevlevi Sufism from all around the world. The Durga puja rituals from India as the first case I discussed above, turned from an indoor ritual of wealthy families to a days-long festival with tourists and secular sponsors together with believers. The claim for registering Durga puja as cultural heritage relates to the power exerted by the state over the universal recognition of the religious ritual. The Viejitos dance from Mexico, in a different context, experienced state power throughout the nation-state formation process following the war of revolution. State promoting a local practice as national value, the folklorization of practices of indigenous people, again bring forward discussions on power. The commodification of post-colonial memories of Trinidad and Brazil, the tourism

of nostalgia related to the Amish of North America, and the introduction of Finnish yoik to the world music scene all tell about the struggle for monopoly on the collective symbolic capital. The concepts of cultural heritage, locality and nationality, consumerism and popular culture which were taken into consideration through the similarities of different cases with Mevlevi Sufism, all bring about power relations between state and actors.

The music reform of Turkey and the nation-state formation which resulted in the closure of Mevlevi lodges and the disappearance of whirling rituals in the country, then the nationalization of the ritual under the influence of its value as cultural heritage, and the popularization and commodification of Mevlevi music, ritual, and images led me towards an understanding of power in light of Gramsci, Althusser, Foucault and Bourdieu. Gramsci's hegemony in touch with Foucault's subjection makes Althusser's contribution to Marxist categorization of state apparatuses meaningful. The repressive state apparatuses and the ideological state apparatuses paralleling Mann's categorization of state power in despotic and infrastructural power make sense when Mevlevi Sufism is regarded as an ideological state apparatus, working for the reproduction of state ideology through the appreciation of Mevlevi performances by the citizens. Bourdieu's conceptualization of field and Burawoy's extension of the concept into interaction of fields, provides flexibility compared to the one-sided understanding of state power through hegemony and interpellation. There are different fields of struggle for monopoly on Mevlevi Sufism and the interactions of those fields result in a complexity of power dynamics. In the next chapter, I will open up this complexity with discussions of my field data.

CHAPTER 4

MEVLEVI SUFISM IN CONTEMPORARY TURKEY: COMPARISONS, CONTROVERSIES, DISPLAYS OF POWER

Pining for him the people all went mad
Missing tales of experiences he'd had;
(Masnavi, Book 1)

4.1. Identifications with Mevlevi Sufism

How should a Mevlevi identity be defined? Before I started my fieldwork, my opinion was that taking part in Mevlevi rituals as semazen, mutrib or postnişin would be enough for identification with Mevlevi Sufism in the contemporary Turkish context. I was aware that my definition was rather narrow and I wanted to expand my categorization with my fieldwork, reach the Mevlevi Sufi belongings of contemporary Turkey through the perceptions and experiences of my interlocutors. I framed my research on the pre-acceptance that I would interview official Mevlevis, who were employed by the state for taking part in rituals and unofficial Mevlevis, who played their instrument, chanted the lyrics or whirled throughout the ritual without being paid by the state for doing so. I still believe there is ground for discussion, especially in the context of power, for state employment in Mevlevi rituals. Faruk Hemdem Çelebi, the recent president of International Mevlana Foundation and descendant of Rumi, has a similar point of view concerning state employment. In one interview he stated

that he did not attend the Şeb-i Arus festivals anymore and deliberately called the ritual a “ceremony”. The reason for this naming was that it was no longer prayer but merely a state ceremony, and the participants were civil servants who formed into factions, which made him withdraw state ceremonies (Saribaş, 2003). Despite this approach towards the state, I cannot argue anymore on the relevance of my preliminary approach on identification with Mevlevi Sufism and calling oneself Mevlevi.

Among the 25 interviews I conducted, virtually all of my interlocutors have participated in sema rituals and some of them have been paid for their Sufi performance. But none of them preferred to call themselves as Mevlevi when talking about their relationship with Mevlevi Sufism as I perceived at the beginning of my research. This, however, does not directly have to do with the law no. 677 as in the case of Hasan Çıkar unofficially using the title “Dede” (Pietrobruno, 2015: 19). Kudsi Erguner’s explanation for the avoidance of naming oneself as Mevlevi was that the law no. 677 caused the Mevlevi lineage break at some point, eliminating the possibility of brotherhood service and transmission of the religious tradition through peculiar practices at the lodges. As no one was able to proceed to the Mevlevi identity, it was no more possible for people to identify themselves as Mevlevi.¹

The most frequent way of identification related to Mevlevi Sufism I came across was rejection. Some of my interlocutors just loved the music and found themselves in Mevlevi music without any religious or Sufi connection.² Serhan, who was also mainly interested in the music, told that he was attending events of a range of Sufi organizations for the sake of “saturating himself with

¹ Interview with Kudsi Erguner, April 20, 2013.

² Interviews August 2, 2013; November 14, 2013.

tranquility”.³ Yet there were examples in which music education was hand in hand with Sufi initiation.⁴ The mildness that Halet Çelebi talked about was still in action; rejecting Mevlevi Sufism as an identity did not hinder claims of being a muhip.⁵ Nevertheless, there was ground for the rejection of a Mevlevi identity due to the law no. 677, the ones who still called themselves Mevlevi despite this law were “mere liars”.⁶

What I heard from my interlocutors could be interpreted that identifying someone as Mevlevi would not be appropriate both on legal level and on ethical level. Still, the state representations evoke that there are contemporary Mevlevis around and in a great number. I came across one Facebook comment after my fieldwork as a funny interpretation of the state representations. The anonymous commentator stated that the dervish lodges are legally closed and that is why there are no Mevlevis; he continued that it is prohibited to drink and drive and to drive beyond certain speed limits, and that is why these are not practiced; he concluded with a smiley.⁷

The Bursa-based Sufi organization, which was previously researched by Hegerstrøm (2013), went to Edirne in 2014 for a rally, demanding that Muradiye lodge be reopened by the state. Wearing their black woolen coats (*hırka*) and putting on their tall woolen hoods (*sikke*), the members of the organization walked from the Old Mosque to the Muradiye Mosque behind their leader Mustafa Özbağ and sang hymns. What is more striking than a

³ Interview, February 19, 2013.

⁴ Interviews August 19, 2013; November 26, 2013.

⁵ Interviews January 20, 2014; January 21, 2014.

⁶ Interview, April 20, 2013.

⁷ Facebook caption, July 27, 2015.

religious demand turning into a political demand accompanied by a rally with hymns instead of slogans was that the national public broadcaster TRT publicized this news with the title announcing that “it was the Mevlevis who marched this time” (TRT, 2014). Different from Hasan Çıkar, Mustafa Özbağ uses the title *Üstad*, a contemporary and usually secular title which does not contradict with the law no. 677, and the organization is located in Karabaş-ı Veli Cultural Center, which is again named in a secular manner. The broadcasting organ of the state, while the Sufi organization itself hesitates to claim a Mevlevi identity, does not bother using the Mevlevi identity as a marker.

As mentioned in Chapters 1 and 2, the association of Mevlevi Sufism with Sunni Islam found itself space within music and appeared again on TRT. Doruk Somunkıran’s Sufi Videoclips project appeared on TRT during Ramadan in 2009. The project came out with the disturbance that religious music could only appear on TV with “natural” images like flowers, the sun and volcanoes. This project had a claim of putting religious music in the context of everyday life, with “real” images alternative to the “natural” images (Somunkıran, 2009). Those real images were, besides the streets and city walls of İstanbul, whirling dervishes. A hard rock musician with Armenian origin, Hayko Cepkin also appeared in one of those Sufi videoclips, he sang a Bektashi hymn, and whirled with his Mohawk and blue ends in accompany with whirling dervishes. The image of the dervish within such a combination of unrelated identifications, carried the idea that Mevlevis are part of contemporary Turkish daily life. Kudsi Erguner in one of his interviews, condemned the situation by ironically stating that people have recently become Mevlevis (İlter, 2013).



Figure 4.1. QR code for the Sufi Videoclips playlist of TRT on Youtube

My field data hinders me from talking about Mevlevis in daily life, but the representations of the whirling dervish image influence the perception that everyday life is surrounded by Mevlevis. Cartoonist Yiğit Özgür reflects this perception in his cartoons. In one example, ignoring all the asceticism involved in Sufi practices, Özgür represents a whirling dervish throwing car keys to a by-passer who asks the owner of the car that blocks the road. It is quite possible to confront a by-passer ask such a question in daily life, but having a whirling dervish response makes this cartoon absurd and funny.



Figure 4.2. Cartoon of a whirling dervish (Özgür, 2015: 52)

Against the backdrop of this fun, Konya-based young cartoonists put the whirling dervish image in a political context. In an effort to protest the Israeli military flights at the NATO simulation in Konya, the cartoonists drew an angry whirling dervish slap Israeli airplanes on the cover of their magazine. Israel's cancelling their flights coincided with the release of the magazine, and the cartoonists shared their happiness in putting effort on stopping those flights; they believed their cartoon played role in a political victory of their beloved country over the tyrant Israeli state (Çetinkaya, 2009).



Figure 4.3. Cover of Çıt Magazine Issue 1, 2009

Whether for the sake of political activism, for a claim of representing everyday life reality or for pure absurdity, those representations mentioned above are disconnected from everyday reality. This disconnectedness also finds space for representation on TV, this time with a touch upon the absurdity actually experienced in everyday life. In 2011, for instance, while Turkey's effort to join the EU was one top issue on the state agenda, TRT inaugurated a series titled *Avrupa Avrupa*. On the 1st episode which was broadcast on September 25, the excitement of the people upon Turkey's eventual accession to the EU was to be celebrated. While the residents of *Avrupa Apartment House* were waiting for the Minister of European Union for celebrations, Durul Bazan starring the supporting actor, came in with two musicians and a whirling dervish. The musicians started to play one part of Beethoven's 9th symphony, he sang the Turkish lyrics pleading for fraternity, and the whirling dervish started performing his *sema*. The appearance of a religious figure in a secular celebration disturbed the leading actor and received Durul Bazan's response asserting that whirling dervishes were so trendy that people made them whirl anywhere. This absurd scene immediately made its way through news, providing ground for discussion on the popularity of whirling dervishes (Şimşek, 2011).



Figure 4.4. QR code for the 1st episode of *Avrupa Avrupa* on TRT's official Youtube channel

This popularity was also criticized on another TV series, *İşler Güçler*, which was broadcast on Star TV next year. The leading actors who were striving to broadcast a documentary on professions lost contact with their director of photography. On episode 6 on August 2, Ahmet Kural found him in Sultanahmet shooting a Sufi videoclip for Ramadan. Ezel Akay's disappearance was due to the fact that the Sufi videoclip producers paid him better than Ahmet Kural's team. He had to disguise his drunkard identity because the producers were religious people, and he was shooting the videoclip in Sultanahmet because the whirling dervishes were already there, employed by the municipality for the sake of Ramadan entertainment. He claimed that there was such a large community consuming Sufi products that a Sufi singer made more money than the world-famous pop singer Tarkan. When he asked Ahmet Kural not to talk about his Sufi videoclip directorship to anybody, he could not help laughing because there was "at least three-months-worth fun to make jokes of". This scene on Star TV was much less absurd than that on TRT, and the criticism made between the lines was harsher. Whirling dervish image was already deep into the religious scene and there were a variety of actors abusing this popularity.



Figure 4.5. QR code for the 6th episode of *İşler Güçler* on the series' official Youtube channel

Such abuse was caricatured by cartoonist Umut Sarıkaya. With a mixture of titles implying the public confusion about differences among Sufi orders mentioned in Chapter 2, he shows two sad dervishes, the former hierarchically lower than the latter. The elderly dervish tells the young that he has to expel him from the lodge due to the divergence of his whirling motivations, from religious ecstasy to tourist attraction. If he does not do so, he will lose his hierarchically superior status within the lodge. In this cartoonification, Sarıkaya cleverly puts the popularity criticism into the context of power.



Figure 4.6. Umut Sarıkaya's cartoon of whirling dervishes (2013: 51)

The state representations of Mevlevi Sufism is not limited to whirling dervishes out of context as criticized in TV series and cartoons. The whirling sculptures have recently become a commonly used tool for symbolizing a claim for Mevlevi Sufism. The Dönerler Mosque in Kütahya, named after the whirling

dervishes, was previously a Mevlevi lodge and in order to symbolize this historicity, the municipality put a fountain in front of the mosque, with a whirling robot inside. Although Mevlevi rituals were not appreciated by the attendees of the mosque,⁸ the mosque was inevitably associated with a Mevlevi identity.



Figure 4.7. View from Dönenler Mosque, Kütahya (Photo by Cenk Güray)

The whirling sculptures have gradually become the easiest way to relate to Konya and Rumi. The Directory of Urban Aesthetics under Ankara

⁸ Interview, April 20, 2013.

Metropolitan Municipality decided to implement sculptures on the pedestrian bridges related to the names of the roads in 2011, the first one of which was the Konya Road, named officially as Mevlana Boulevard. The inspiring sculpture was unquestionably a whirling dervish (Hürriyet, 2011). During my fieldwork, the highway was partially closed for broadening and addition of the bus lane. Since people were not familiar with the official name, they could only make out from the whirling sculptures on the pedestrian bridge that the road to be closed was actually the Konya Road.⁹ Yet another example, in Keçiören the municipality built a facility named Mevlana Cultural Center and put a fountain with a whirling sculpture in the front. The opening ceremony of the facility which comprised a bride's room together with conference halls included a performance of Acembuselik ayin with Musa Göçmen's chamber orchestra and a few whirling dervishes. Hikmet Abi was among the performers and he really appreciated the whirling sculpture inside the pool. "They are good, we should engage them on stage as well" he said, "they don't faint away, they don't tangle themselves with the curtains, and they don't ask for money".¹⁰ The whirling sculptures, thus, were surreal images entering deeply into everyday reality. I felt the intermingling of surreal images and reality most in Ulus, passing by a shop which produces and sells garden decorations, where I saw a whirling sculpture next to a Disney princess and Santa Claus's reindeers.¹¹

⁹ Fieldnotes, April 16, 2013.

¹⁰ Fieldnotes, October 11, 2013.

¹¹ Fieldnotes, January 8, 2014.



Figure 4.8. Pedestrian bridge on Mevlana Boulevard with whirling sculptures, April 5, 2013.



Figure 4.9. Whirling sculpture inside the pool in front of Mevlana Cultural Center, with the logo of Keçiören Municipality behind, October 11, 2013



Figure 4.10. Whirling sculpture in a shop in Ulus, January 8, 2014.

Catharina Raudvere during her field research in İstanbul recognized that the sounds of arabesk and ezan both echoed in the streets of the city as indisputable parts of contemporary culture (2002: 34), pointing to the intermingling of identifications on the musical and religious domains. The fluidity between rejection of Mevlevi identity by practitioners of its rituals and state institutions' embracing Mevlevi identity, transition between reality and surreal, even absurd representations, have a lot to do with the recent history of the order. Mutlu Abi's first ney master, for instance, was such a humble man that he did not bother walking in circles in the house while teaching peşrev to his students.¹² He was imitating the walk of the dervishes so as to teach his students the importance of *Devr-i Veledi*, the first and rather long part of the

¹² Interview, May 8, 2013.

ritual. This part is shortened during state representations by leaving most of the dervishes aside and making only a small number perform the Devr-i Veledi walk. As Ahmet Hoca affirmed, this shortening was in an effort to stop the audience from getting bored before the flamboyant whirling part starts.¹³ The manipulation of the ritual in state representations for the sake of audience satisfaction clearly shows how the collective symbolic capital in sema performances is taken care of. Meanwhile, Mutlu Abi's being born in 1975¹⁴ implies that he learned Devr-i Veledi from his master in late 1980s, which provides hints that the leap of consumerism might not have been experienced up until the recent representations. The recent history of Mevlevi Sufism in the Turkish context, thus gains importance in understanding the popularity of and the power dynamics behind Mevlevi Sufism.

4.2. Oral History of Mevlevi Sufism

4.2.1. Nostalgia of "İhtifaller"

The first thing Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror ordered after entering İstanbul was that Masnavi be read, which resulted in the building of the second Mevlevi lodge ever in İstanbul, the Galata lodge.¹⁵ Since then, the interest of the state in Mevlevi Sufism and the support by Mevlevi Sufism of the state existed in balance. Thus the Mevlevis went underground without hesitation once the republic was established and the law no. 677 was implemented.¹⁶ However, it is also believed that the law only moved the Mevlevis underground and did not

¹³ Interview, February 12, 2014.

¹⁴ Interview, May 8, 2013.

¹⁵ Interview, July 25, 2013.

¹⁶ Interview, July 25, 2013.

have any impact at all on other orders.¹⁷ This underground life did not last long thanks to Democrat Party; *Mevlana ihtifalleri* (commemoration ceremonies for Rumi) started in 1946 according to Ambrosio (2012: 57), in 1954-55 according to Erguner (2010: 86) and in 1956, 1958 and 1960s according to interviews.¹⁸ Süleyman Erguner claims that the law no. 677 and the first ihtifal were two critical turning points in the history of contemporary Mevlevi Sufism. His father Ulvi Erguner was a military officer by then, and he was threatened by one of his colleagues of detention. He responded that there was no official ban thus he could not do anything to arrest him, which resulted in a terrorized performance.¹⁹

Those first performances in the memories of attendants “tasted” better than the performances during the festivals nowadays.²⁰ People involved in Mevlevi practices from İstanbul and Ankara would travel to Konya every December to participate in the ihtifals. The ayin in 1967, for instance, was the Rûy-i Irak ayin performed by the volunteers who covered their own travel expenses. They would fill 3 cars of the train from İstanbul to Konya with the accompany of the sheikh of Özbekler convent, where Kudsi Erguner met Mevlevi music first, and their clothes were sewn by the community of Samiha Ayverdi.²¹ People from Ankara would also travel to Konya by train and during snowy days it would take as long as 9 hours to arrive at Konya. Students would collect their allowances so as to spend for travelling to Konya and officers would save their

¹⁷ Interview, August 19, 2013.

¹⁸ Fieldnotes, February 23, 2013; interviews April 20, 2013; July 25, 2013; August 19, 2013.

¹⁹ Interview, August 19, 2013.

²⁰ Interviews January 20, 2014; January 21, 2014.

²¹ Interview, April 20, 2013.

annual leave for that part of the year.²² The masters who grew up in lodges were still alive by then, and the travels to Konya would turn into travels of joy for reunion with the masters. Although it was just a show in the eyes of the state institutions,²³ the performance was the ritual for the participants.

The masters were venerated by travelers from İstanbul and Ankara. Since the Sufi activities of all kinds were pushed underground, they would gather in the houses of the masters for Sufi meetings. Süleyman Hayati Dede was one of those; people would come together in his two-story house for *sohbet*.²⁴ His son, Celaledin Loras was not that much appreciated. It is told that when Americans came to invite Süleyman Hayati Dede for reviving Mevlevi Sufism in the States, he told that he was too old to travel and help them but they could take Celaledin and practice *sema* with him. He believed that his naughty son would mature among those people, but unexpectedly he became the sheikh of the Mevlevi Order of America.²⁵

The household Sufi meetings are still held in Konya. When I travelled there with the members of MEKÜSAV, we visited Ali Baba's house in Meram for delivering Serhan's wedding invitation card.²⁶ The aim was both reuniting with a Sufi

²² Interview, July 25, 2013.

²³ The governor of Konya province threatened the participants by reminding that the performance was a show, not a religious ritual, and he would immediately cancel it if he ever heard or felt them say Allah (Erguner, 2010: 87).

²⁴ According to Nezih Uzel, Süleyman Hayati Dede was not actually a successor of Mevlevi sheiks. After the last sheikh of Konya Lodge, Mehmet Dede, who was surprisingly employed by the state at the museum for the sake of his loyalty to the lodge, passed away, there were no Dede left in Konya. İzzet Yenge, one elderly descendant of Rumi, offered him the title "*Aşçı Dede*" (dervish of the kitchen) since he owned a restaurant (Uzel, 2010).

²⁵ Interviews January 20, 2014; May 22, 2014.

²⁶ Fieldnotes, July 28, 2013.

master, enjoy his conversation and receive approval for the forthcoming wedding. Gülden Abla mentioned their love and reverence for Süleyman Hayati Dede several times and Ali Baba appreciated. Nevertheless, I felt like the meeting was more of daily chitchat rather than a Sufi conversation. People who experienced the end of institutional Mevlevi Sufism used to interpret the ceremonies of state support in 1960s as that “the time of sema ended already, it is the time of Charleston dance now”.²⁷ My feelings of that sohbet experience paralleled their criticism.

4.2.2. Wind of Change Hits

In late 1980s and early 1990s, the institutionalization of republican era Mevlevi Sufism took place. After the joyful reunions in Konya during 60s and 70s, the popularity of whirling dervish image enhanced and the interest in Mevlevi music and rituals grew to such a level that urge to put things back under control occurred. During that decade, both state institutions and non-governmental foundations were established in the three key cities of Mevlevi Sufism in Turkey; Ankara, Konya and İstanbul. Below I tried to draw out the details of that decade according to the interviews. That decade reflected the transformation of power relations from individual level to institutional level, which can be interpreted as Burawoy’s (2012) interaction of fields, marked with leading figures in the three prominent cities.

Once the masters in Konya started to pass away one by one, the ihtifals in Konya had already become world famous and the collective symbolic capital in Harvey’s sense grew up to a level of manipulation. Upon the corruption of the ceremonies in Konya, Selman Tüzün Dede, the last sheikh of Bahariye Lodge in İstanbul, only a few years before his demise, drew attention to the problem of

²⁷ Interview, April 20, 2013.

representation (Uzel, 1995). His proposal was establishment of a Mevlevi foundation and Andaç Arbaş received this proposal as a command. In the 1989 ihtifal in Konya, it was declared that the foundation (MEKÜSAV) was established. Some participants were happy with the establishment while some others were disturbed, but everyone was surprised. In 1990, Andaç Bey officially established the foundation together with Doğan Ergin, the *neyzenbaşı* of Konya ceremonies for years, and invited Rumi's descendant Celaleddin Bakır Çelebi as honorary member, in an effort to pull his attention towards the preservation of Mevlevi Sufism.²⁸

Meanwhile, Kudsi Erguner's popularity in world music scene was crossing borders. He remembers Celaleddin Bakır Çelebi from 1961. He was a rather rich man in Hatay by then; people would ask for reeds so as to make neys, but he would not care. Believing that he would show mercy to a young boy, the elder would send Erguner to him to ask for reeds, and he would not care either. But his growing reputation made them meet again. When he was invited with his percussionist colleague Nezih Uzel by the Masonic lodge Grand Orient in Paris to perform their mystic music, they accepted the performance on the condition that every audience be accepted into the lodge. Çelebi heard about this performance through the Masonic network and got in touch with Erguner, but he found a way to escape this attention. Later on Çelebi recognized the value of being a descendant of Rumi, invited Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı to teach him Mevlevi Sufism, self-declared a Mevlevi identity and started to authorize people for Mevlevi practices.²⁹

²⁸ Interview, July 25, 2013.

²⁹ Interview, April 20, 2013.

The year 1989 was also the year when Konya Ensemble of Turkish Sufi Music (*Konya Türk Tasavvuf Müziği Topluluğu, KTTMT*) was established. Before that, yet another person of Masonic origin according to Erguner, Fevzi Halıcı established the Konya Tourism Association under the municipality, with the belief that Konya could produce its own performances without the support from Ankara or Konya.³⁰ The association wrote letters to people from İstanbul and Ankara that they did not need their help anymore but they could of course attend the performance if they wished in 1970s, which was extremely rude but still the people from Ankara and İstanbul tolerated this rudeness.³¹ Against the backdrop of this rudeness, Halıcı is still revered for serving Mevlevi Sufism despite his effort to turn the ritual into tourist attraction.³² When the association became corrupted, the İstanbul group comprised by musicians like Cüneyt Kosal, Doğan Ergin and Ahmet Özhan started to dominate the performances in Konya in 1980s. Ahmet Özhan's manager, Tuğrul İnancer was also there; he was a leading figure among the Cerrahi community by then³³ and he later received authorization of Mevlevi Sufism as a nice gesture (*teberrüken*).³⁴ But the municipality had trouble with the Özhan community, resulting in their non-attendance to the following ihtifals.³⁵ The corruption of the association was the motivation for the establishment of both MEKÜSAV and KTTMT; the foundation selected a qualified staff for performances in Konya

³⁰ Interview, April 20, 2013.

³¹ Interviews, April 20, 2013; July 25, 2013.

³² Interview, July 25, 2013.

³³ Interview, August 19, 2013.

³⁴ Interview, May 17, 2013.

³⁵ Interview, August 19, 2013.

and Dođan Ergin selected Tevfik Soyata for directorship.³⁶ Nevertheless, this new staff in Konya could not make peace with the “ihtifalist” İstanbul community. Once they were to travel abroad for a sema performance and they came across the İstanbul community at the airport, who were going to perform on their behalf.³⁷ While he was working for TRT, Soyata confronted several political conflicts in Erzurum and Ankara. So as to escape the conflicts he accepted the directorship in Konya, but he was not content with the Konya community either. He believed the staff selected by Andaç Arbaş, Dođan Ergin and colleagues were not qualified at all and the “ihtifalist” İstanbul community were politically engaged.³⁸

The conflict between the Konya staff and the İstanbul community resulted in the establishment of İstanbul Ensemble of Historical Turkish Music (*İstanbul Tarihi Türk Müziđi Topluluđu, İTTMT*) in 1991, again under the Ministry of Culture as in the case of KTTMT. Allegedly the İstanbul community, which also had Masonic ties, engaged themselves with Çelebi and İTTMT was established through the Masonic ties.³⁹ In the same year, probably before KTTMT took the official sema performances over, the municipality only invited Selman Tüzün Dede and he did not attend the ihtifal that year in reaction towards the rudeness. That was the incidence ending the relationship between MEKÜSAV

³⁶ Interview, July 25, 2013.

³⁷ Interview, November 26, 2013.

³⁸ Interview, November 26, 2013. Süleyman Erguner believed that this political engagement was with the centre-right party ANAP (Interview, August 19, 2013).

³⁹ Interview, April 20, 2013.

and Konya community. Meanwhile, collision of ideas among the members of MEKÜSAV also emerged and some people left the foundation.⁴⁰

The İstanbul community also started to crack down in the beginning of 1990s, Ahmet Özhan after gaining hierarchical superiority and state power by the establishment of İTTMT sidelined Doğan Ergin, who in revenge came close to Çelebi and played role in the establishment of International Mevlana Foundation in İstanbul in 1996.⁴¹ MEKÜSAV was also established in İstanbul because Selman Tüzün Dede was there.⁴² The foundation started to meet in Ankara, Bahçelievler in 1992 and after a tour to the United States in 1998, the house in Batıkent was bought. Taking Süleyman Hayati Dede's house in Konya as a model, they designed the Batıkent center as simple and pure as possible. The Çelebi family was supporting MEKÜSAV by then, only morally because they did not have enough money.⁴³ Shortly after, the family established the foundation in İstanbul, moved to Konya and organized an International Mevlana Symposium with Tuğrul İnançer. MEKÜSAV was not invited to the event, their paper proposals (and those of theology professors) were not accepted either.⁴⁴

What I inferred from the interviews was that the institutionalization of Mevlevi Sufism brought together power struggles within the triangle having Ankara, İstanbul and Konya on the corners. İstanbul was the place where separatist

⁴⁰ Interview, July 25, 2013.

⁴¹ Interview, April 20, 2013.

⁴² Interview, July 25, 2013.

⁴³ Interview, July 25, 2013.

⁴⁴ Interview, May 17, 2013.

initiatives emerged on personal level. Those initiatives affected the scene in Konya and state support from Ankara resulted in establishment of new institutions in all of the cities. The actors of these institutionalization processes were mostly musicians and the flow of music-power between persons and the state led towards two state institutions and two non-governmental foundations emerge around the struggle for power over Mevlevi Sufism. The key figure in institutionalized Mevlevi Sufism of Konya, Tefvik Soyata ended up escaping the circle of Mevlevi music totally and moved to a more secular position in Ankara. The influential figures in Konya, then became the Çelebi family and the key figures of İstanbul, Tuğrul İnançer and Ahmet Özhan ended up becoming officials in İstanbulian institutions and the celebrities of festivals in Konya. Andaç Arbaş passed away after becoming the revered person in Ankara, leaving yet another institution behind.

The conflicts between the state institutions and non-governmental foundations in 1990s seem to have dissolved throughout the following decades. The festival in Konya now gives place for both İTTMT and KTTMT; first İTTMT offers a concert of religious music with Ahmet Özhan as the soloist, then Tuğrul İnançer as a retiree of İTTMT delivers a speech on Masnavi, and KTTMT performs the sema in the end. The International Mevlana Foundation of Çelebi family took action with the state for the UNESCO inscription and Esin Çelebi Bayru as a leading figure of the foundation is honored by the state during festivals in Konya.⁴⁵ During our visit to Konya before Serhan's wedding, Gülden Abla left us in the garden of Rumi's mausoleum for paying a visit to the Çelebis as a sign of mutual respect.⁴⁶ But as Atilla Abi told, the power struggles still continue within those institutions. KTTMT now has a large staff of mutrib and semazen

⁴⁵ Fieldnotes, September 30, 2013; December 7, 2013.

⁴⁶ Fieldnotes, July 28, 2013.

enough to perform several ayins simultaneously. The performance requests are covered through auction method; the best offers are considered for the most qualified groups and offers for smaller amounts receive less qualified performers of the institution. He told one story to shed light on the struggle. One young neyzen from Atilla Abi's ensemble, who is employed at KTTMT, informed him that he would not be available at the ensemble's next concert due to a performance abroad by the institution. Interesting enough, he showed up at sound check and surprised Atilla Abi. When he wanted to learn what happened to the performance abroad, the neyzen told him that his team needed new passports which created the problem. The other team already had passports, who did not need to pay an extra amount for the bureaucracy, and the institution decided to send the second (and cheaper) team to the performance, which meant that the institution could make even more money out of that performance.⁴⁷ Still KTTMT was the institution of most traditional and highest quality performances of Mevlevi music according to him; "Let's not think about the others if this freak is the best", he concluded.

4.2.3. Alternative Memories, Gossips and Controversies

My calling the genre as Mevlevi music created one conflict during my research. After we entered the troublesome ney workshop of Banu's master which I mentioned in Chapter 2, the eyes turned on me as if I were the suspect to be interrogated. Repeating several times that my job was really difficult, the ney master asked me whom I had interviews with so far. Being frank to this question would result in the students of the master kicking me out of the workshop as I already knew that there was tension between the ney master and several of my interlocutors. In an effort to escape this bitter end, I responded by saying that I interviewed several musicians involved in Mevlevi

⁴⁷ Interview, November 2, 2013.

music. This mild response received an extraordinarily harsh criticism. “There is nothing called Mevlevi music!” he shouted, “All is music, Mevlevi ayins are categorized under convent music which is under religious music and which is all under Turkish music.” Besides repeating the common classification explained by Cinuçen Tanrıkorur (2005) as if I were too ignorant to be aware of it, he asserted that he was next to his own master for 30 years and never heard of him use such a phrase. Before retelling that my job was really difficult, he told me to bring whoever used that phrase to him.⁴⁸ Ironical enough, one of the key figures of the recent history of Mevlevi Sufism, Nezih Uzel (2008) spared much of one article to explain why the genre should be called Mevlevi music. He was disturbed by the ministry using the phrase “Mevlevi musics” in an effort to avoid “Mevlevi ayins”, and this was according to him only one fault among the many within the 2008 notice.

The criticism and the claim of the ney master which was refuted by yet another master reminded me of another conflict about the world-famous ney player and DJ, Mercan Dede, mentioned in Değirmenci. The ney master’s own master Niyazi Sayın, upon the claims about him teaching ney to Mercan Dede, denies such a relationship by claiming that he does not give lessons to street musicians. The controversy is that Mercan Dede has never performed in the streets and has only claimed receiving ebru lessons from Sayın (Değirmenci, 2013: 94).

The inconsistency of the ney masters gives clues about the alternative, even conflicting memories related to the republican period of Mevlevi Sufism. The variety of dates offered for the first ihtifal in Konya as mentioned above,

⁴⁸ Fieldnotes, January 21, 2014.

already implies that the oral history I collected during my fieldwork might not be the only alternative concerning the recent history.

One such alternative came out during the research. Concerning the whirling dervishes employed by KTTMT, Tevfik Soyata claimed that the selection process was not fair; the tall basketball players were selected for whirling because they would look better on the stage and actual whirling dervishes were ignored. This unfair selection was because of the drunkenness of the jury, which later on resulted in Andaç Bey criticizing the whirling dervishes that he himself selected for the institution.⁴⁹ He claimed that this criticism was published in *Nokta* magazine but neither I nor Soyata himself could find the related issue. One *tanbur* player I met during the seminar in Venice, who was the son of a Sufi, told me that he grew up among the *Mevlevis*⁵⁰ in California. He was in touch with the Sufi communities in Konya and knew many whirling dervishes of KTTMT in person. Contrary to what Soyata argued, he said that he did not know whether the musicians were so but he was sure that the whirling dervishes were of Sufi lineage (*silsileden*), successors of the dervishes from lodges.⁵¹ This controversy might mean that the first whirling team was unrelated but later on successors of dervishes joined the institution. The alternative story would fit Atilla Abi's frame claiming that the most traditional performances are held by KTTMT. But looking at the power struggles in 1990s between Ankara, İstanbul and Konya, I would not expect such a calm transition. One musician colleague, who suddenly ended his relationship with Soyata, told

⁴⁹ Interview, November 26, 2013.

⁵⁰ He said that he knew Erguner's claim on Mevlevi Sufism coming to an end by the law no. 677, but he believed that the Mevlevi Sufism was still alive; "It is really complicated" he said (Fieldnotes, April 18, 2013).

⁵¹ Fieldnotes, April 18, 2013.

me one incidence which made him lose his trust on Soyata and advised me not to believe in what he told. This was signaling yet another conflict on personal level and the unavailable copy of Nokta magazine might have turned what he told to me into mere gossip.

One other alternative came out related to Tuğrul İnançer. I made my way to İstanbul and participated in a concert succeeding his speech so as to arrange an interview, but he escaped the concert hall so quickly that Zülküf Bey could not even get in touch with him on the phone.⁵² This was one of my several unsuccessful attempts to interview him, so I only have what people told in my hand. He was referred to as one secular man regularly drinking alcohol and managing Ahmet Özhan's professional program in 1980s; later on he recognized the money and prestige he could make out of Mevlevi Sufism and became the director of İTTMT.⁵³ He was also referred to as a respectable Sufi having the authorization of several orders and conducting an interview with him would aggrandize my research.⁵⁴ He was a respected figure among MEKÜSAV people, but they did not hesitate to criticize İnançer upon his scandalous commentary on pregnant women⁵⁵ which was broadcast on TRT during a Ramadan talk show.⁵⁶ The last incident showed that there was no ultimate surrender to his authority as a sheikh, but still the conflicting

⁵² Fieldnotes, February 23, 2013.

⁵³ Interviews, April 20, 2013; November 26, 2013.

⁵⁴ Interview, May 17, 2013.

⁵⁵ On the show named Joy of Ramadan (*Ramazan Sevinci*) broadcast on July 23, he told that pregnant women should stay at home because their showing off with their bellies disturbs believers. This comment created turmoil on social media, especially in the context of secularism and religious conservatism.

⁵⁶ Fieldnotes, July 27, 2013.

memories related to him signal the effect of personal relations on history telling. As in the case of Masonry related to the Çelebi family, furthermore, it was only Kudsi Erguner who talked about such ties. No approval or denial related to the identity of the Çelebi family came out throughout my interviews, which might also turn the borderline between reality and gossip blurred.

These alternatives I mentioned indicate that individual power relations might turn into markers in narrations as the narration process is based on personal experience. But it might not be a good idea to treat personal experience independent from politics and individual power struggles independent from state power. Agah Oktay Güner, one of the previous ministers of culture from the Nationalist Movement Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, MHP*), for instance, is also a respected figure among MEKÜSAV people and he was frequently invited to the Masnavi reading events in Hamamönü. His being engaged in state politics might not have to do with the respect shown to him, but one member of the foundation appreciating the support of the police during Gezi time openly stated that he grew up within the organization of Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi, ANAP*),⁵⁷ referring to closer relations of non-governmental foundations of Mevlevi Sufism with centre-right politics. This engagement also reflected the intermingling embodiment of religion and Sufism within the state, thus making the transformation of power from individual level to institutional level in the context of contemporary Mevlevi Sufism more engrossing with the contemporary history of the meanings attached in mind. Moving towards a focus of power on institutional level, I compared three performances from the three cities in December 2013 for Şeb-i Arus celebrations, in which the state fetishism and power displays of different religiosities mentioned in Chapter 3 are exemplified.

⁵⁷ Fieldnotes, July 14, 2013.



Figure 4.11. Agah Oktay Güner giving a speech during Masnavi talk at Hamamönü Kabakçı Konağı, December 25, 2013.

4.3. Music-power and Actors: 2013 Cases

On the morning of December 17, 2012, high officials as usual were in Konya for attending the Şeb-i Arus ceremony. That year, interestingly, the protocol speeches were taken out of the program at the last minute, which was criticized by the leader of the opposition party, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. In his meeting with the press, he said that the officials do not actually talk about politics during their protocol speeches at Şeb-i Arus since Rumi is the common ground for not only politicians but all the 74 million citizens and an important element of the cultural heritage. The removal of protocol speeches from the program, according to him, was not a common decision but the imposition of the government (TRT, 2012). This disturbance on protocol speeches can be

interpreted as the importance of Mevlevi rituals on the state level in that they provide a wonderful opportunity for visibility of state power and provide yet another ground for contestation of the Islamic government and “Kemalist Islam”.

After years of staying as a project, Mevlana Cultural Center was finished and the opening ceremony was held by the honoring of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the prime minister by then, in the Şeb-i Arus of 2004 (Vicente, 2007: 104-110). It is claimed that he was disturbed by the performances held in sports halls and commanded that the cultural center be completed by the Şeb-i Arus so as to save the memory of Rumi from the baskets.⁵⁸ Just after 9 years, he showed up in the opening ceremony of a sports hall in Konya during Şeb-i Arus and all of a sudden the performances of most crowded days were moved to the new sports hall; in 2014 Rumi’s memory was back under baskets. Those quick changes in the realization of Şeb-i Arus performances relate to the permeability of power relations on the sema ground.

4.3.1. Konya: The Military and the Celebrity

As Tia DeNora asserts, “music’s presence is clearly political in every sense that the political can be conceived” (2000: 163). The Şeb-i Arus festival of 2013 held in Konya was fitting perfectly into DeNora’s frame. There was music everywhere in Konya, and there was a sign of state power next to music. The very cold Saturday morning I jumped off the train, on December 7, the beginning day of the festival, I could not have imagined how much of the state I was to be exposed to.

During the festival which is held between December 7 and 17 in Konya, two ayin performances (matinee and soiree) take place every day. As mentioned

⁵⁸ Fieldnotes, September 24, 2013.

before, the ayin performances are preceded by İTTMT's religious music concert and Tuğrul İnançer's talk. The first day witnesses an opening ceremony comprised of "Candle awakening", "The march for love and tolerance", openings of several exhibitions and award ceremonies for several related contests. Instead of matinee performance, a small sema ceremony is held within the Mevlana Museum and the soiree takes place in Mevlana Cultural Center, which is approximately 1 km away from the museum. KTTMT performs an ayin in Mevlana Cultural Center every Saturday free of charge, but during the festival people have to buy tickets for attending sema performances in Mevlana Cultural center. The ticket prices for 2013 were between 10 and 50 Turkish liras, the most expensive ones covering the final performance. In 2012, e-ticket portal of the municipality started to operate and most performances were sold out immediately after the tickets were made available on the portal in 2013. I already attended two sema performances in the center; the former was a Saturday performance and the latter was the closing ceremony of Mystic Music Festival on September 30. As I came across some protocol speeches and an award ceremony during my second experience of the center, I thought I knew about the amount of state visibility. But the official festival dedicated to Rumi held much more of what I had already experienced.

I bought tickets for the first soiree and the last matinee. The first soiree was important for its succession of the opening ceremony and I preferred the last matinee instead of the soiree because I was warned about the over-representation of the protocol and the extreme crowds.⁵⁹ Although I knew about the performances at the center, I had no idea about the opening ceremony. What I came across throughout the opening ceremony was a context dominated by the state instead of Rumi to whom the festival is dedicated.

⁵⁹ Interview, August 19, 2013.



Figure 4.12. Caption of my e-ticket for the first soiree, decorated with Rumi's mausoleum within the museum, a whirling dervish and a dastar

The “Candle awakening” was a small ceremony of lighting the candle located on the main street close to Alâeddin Hill, which symbolized the place where Rumi and Shams of Tabriz first met. The name “awakening” was chosen in light of Mevlevi traditions as the Mevlevi hesitated to use verbs with negative connotations like to light (*yakmak*). The verb to awaken (*uyandırmak*) was preferred for lighting candles, and MEKÜSAV people, in courtesy, used the same verb for turning on the lights in the foundation building in Batıkent.⁶⁰ Although the name was properly selected, the ceremony did not care that much about Mevlevi Sufism. The candle was surrounded by press members and men in Mevlevi dervish clothes when I arrived there, and the name of the ceremony was really unfamiliar for the attendees since they were not provided with any explanatory material. One woman just learned what awakening meant and she was shouting to her friend “can you imagine, they are going to burn a candle!” I thought the candle would be awakened by the dervishes around, but I was wrong. Men in black suits (the bodyguards of state representatives) arrived at

⁶⁰ Fieldnotes, March 16, 2013.

the candle, pushed the press members and the dervishes away, opened space for the protocol members, checked around during the protocol speeches and disappeared. I could not understand when the candle was awakened, probably it was the least important part of the ceremony despite its name.



Figure 4.13. The Candle of “Maraj al-Bahrain” before the awakening ceremony, December 7, 2013

The attendees’ unfamiliarity with the ceremony was not related solely to the candle awakening part. There was little or no promotion of the festival addressing the city dwellers. There were no signs showing where the march would be initiated, for instance. I came across two boys dressed in bright green costumes, thought they were representatives of something for the march and followed them towards Alâeddin Hill. There were many boys in special costumes around the candle, most of whom had black skin or eye folds, carrying

flags of several countries and mass produced banners with Rumi's sayings. Boys from all around the world were ready for the march of love and tolerance; the message of universality was clear, but the way it was represented seemed a little racist to me.



Figure 4.14. One banner left behind during the performance of the Janissary band before the proconsulate building, December 7, 2013

There was actually a march from Alâeddin Hill to the proconsulate building. After the candle was awakened, the Janissary band started to play one of the most famous marches referring to the "bravery of the Turkish nation". The military band preceded the dervishes, then came the press members walking

backwards, they were followed by the protocol and the banner carrying boys at the rear. The cortege stopped before the proconsulate building and the military band offered a small concert of military repertory, including an animation of a war scene. Only a small part of the protocol continued towards Mevlana Museum after the concert. Meanwhile, the police were surrounding the ceremony area and the men in black suits were manhandling an old man walking near the area so as to open the road for the protocol.⁶¹ There was no love but gallantry, no tolerance but repression. Despite its name, the march aimed less at values of Mevlevi Sufism than at visualization of state power. All in all, it was a militarized state ceremony like the celebrations for the foundation of the republic on October 29 when jet fighter aircrafts are flown.

Since it was a Saturday evening, Mevlana Cultural Center hosted not only the protocol and the tourists, but also people who wanted to attend the regular performance of KTTMT. They were disappointed when the controllers asked for their tickets. I believe such coincidences happened frequently because of the lack of information about the festival addressing locals. After the opening of the sports hall by Erdoğan on December 17, the Saturday performances of the festival were also moved from Mevlana Cultural Center. Although many guest musicians join KTTMT during the festival, and although they are crowded enough to perform in several ayins simultaneously, KTTMT does not offer their regular free performance during the festival. Compared to the opening day of the festival, the final day of the festival faced even a denser representation of the state power. As the protocol of the closing ceremony included the prime minister and the day was also spared for the opening ceremony of the sports hall, there were even more policemen all around the city on December 17. Most of the billboards related to the festival were replaced by the photos of Erdoğan,

⁶¹ Fieldnotes, December 7, 2013.

calling people to attend the opening ceremony of the sports hall. The state was fetishized both within and despite Mevlevi Sufism in Konya during that festival. I could not help but write “I am state-overdosed” in my field log that afternoon.⁶²

The soiree and the matinee I attended at Mevlana Cultural Center did not turn into a fetishized ritual of the state probably because the state dominated only the closing ceremony with the honoring of the prime minister and a larger protocol. Both performances of İTTMT preceding the ayin were enjoyed largely by the female audience. Ahmet Özhan was treated like a superstar rather than a state-employed musician; he was loudly applauded and some women among the audience responded by shouting to his greetings. The women sitting behind me were appreciating his looks; he was still as handsome as his youth. The women did not stop appreciating him throughout his performance and the music was from time to time outtalked by the murmur of the audience. Özhan and İTTMT seemed happy with this appreciation; the musicians kept smiling and chatting throughout the concert while Özhan kept moving as if he were dancing. Once the concert of İTTMT was over, women started to leave the center without waiting for even the beginning of the sema ceremony. The popularity of Ahmet Özhan among women overpowered the representation of Mevlevi Sufism on the stage of a center dedicated to Rumi. Probably this was not the case on the closing ceremony due to the domination of the protocol among the audience, but especially the matinee I attended looked almost like the matinees in the gazinos⁶³ with a male solo singer, plays of colorful lights and attendance of mainly women.

⁶² Fieldnotes, December 17, 2013.

⁶³ Gazino is a music hall where people both listen to the performance of famous singers called *assolist* and have their meal on the tables, different from concert halls. The gazino was very



Figure 4.15. Ahmet Özhan singing a hymn with dance-like gestures under blue and purple lights in the main hall of Mevlana Cultural Center, evoking gazino performances, December 7, 2013.

Following İTTMT's concert on the first soiree, Tuğrul İnançer came to the stage for Masnavi talk. He started his speech by referring to the first word of Masnavi, bishnav (listen). After emphasizing the importance of listening in Mevlevi Sufism, he left the Masnavi aside and started criticizing the state. He claimed

common especially in İstanbul entertainment scene in 1970s and 1980s. The matinees in gazinos were women-exclusive.

that this year the Masnavi part was added to the ceremony program for the first time. He referred to the Mevlevi tradition in logdes where they first conducted the namaz prayer in the sema ground, then had a Masnavi lecture and lastly initiated the ayin and sema. He then blamed the state for interrupting the ritual by omitting the Masnavi part. The state regained visibility on the stage, this time in the form of criticism.

The ayin performances of both programs I attended cared for the comfort of the audience, which can be interpreted as the power of the consumers also shaped the field of Mevlevi Sufism in the context of Konya. The Devr-i Veledi was cut short by the participation of only one third of the whirling dervishes, the ayin was performed in a high tempo, the stage was illuminated in different colors (red, white, green and blue) during each selam, and the dervishes whirled on a choreographic pattern. During the ayin performance on the first soiree, the audience already lost their interest and the hall was almost empty towards the end. On the matinee, it was even worse. Among the few women remaining in the hall, two started quarreling upon a phone call while the ritual was still on. Although the emcees announced that the performance was a religious ritual not a show and asked the audience not to applaud, both performances faced applause. On the matinee, the dervishes bowing before the red post were treated as if they were greeting the audience and the applause started even before the ritual came to an end. The audience's intervention with the ritual signaled yet another display of power compared to the state, that of the consumers. In the Konya scene of the 740th anniversary of Rumi's wedding night, the military marches, the popular hymns and the ayin in makam çargah all provided background music for displays of power.



Figure 4.16. Detail from the 2nd selam of KTTMT's performance, three dervishes choreographically whirl in the center under white light, December 17, 2013

4.3.2. Ankara: Humility and Criticism

Compared to the enhanced and fetishized visibility of the state in Konya, MEKÜSAV's Şeb-i Arus program carried the humility as a performance of a non-governmental foundation. The program consisted only of Gülden Abla's opening speech and the ayin in makam ferahfeza. The program was held in MEB Şura Hall, one of the largest halls in Ankara established by Sevda-Cenap And Music Foundation and operated by the Ministry of National Education, having the signature of Kemal Atatürk, founding president of the republic, right above the stage. Having performances previously in halls like Turkish-American Association, the foundation was giving a deeply Kemalist message that year not only with Gülden Abla's opening speech with a reverence to the founding father of the republic but also with the selection of the performance hall. The tickets for the event were 23 and 34 Turkish liras, between the lowest

and highest prices for Konya tickets. Some guest musicians in Konya came to Ankara for this program and several other state-employed professionals joined the MEKÜSAV ensemble.

Gülden Abla's opening speech lasted shorter compared to the sum of protocol speeches in Konya. She dedicated part of her speech to criticizing other sema performances. She blamed the conservationists for corrupting the ritual instead of conserving it. Not only the state but also the private sector played role in this corruption, she stated. The ritual was turned into a dance show for the sake of popularity and making money according to her; she was crying for the sorrow of the ritual and her voice was trilling.⁶⁴

This criticism on the non-conservation of the conservationists also carried the claim of the foundation on conserving the original ritual. The candle awakening was humbly performed behind the prayer and followed by Quran citation. The comfort of the audience was not cared for as much as in the Konya case; all the dervishes joined the Devr-i Veledi and the ayin was not performed too quickly for the dervishes to start whirling, which instead happened in the 4th selam of several ayin performances of KTTMT. In the end, the dervishes turned their back to the audience, a very unusual behavior for performers on the stage, and started the last prayer. There occurred a small applause but it ended in seconds. The foundation's claim for conserving the ritual was reflected on their stage performance where they almost ignored the presence of the audience. This claim brought together yet another actor in the power struggles on the sema field, the non-governmental foundations.

Another non-governmental ayin performance took place in Ankara the following week. This time there was a smaller ensemble on the stage, which

⁶⁴ Fieldnotes, December 13, 2013.

was made possible by an academic of Hacettepe University. Some performers in MEKÜSAV's event were also performing in the event at Hacettepe University. The event was free of charge and it was not publicly promoted as much as MEKÜSAV's event. The audience was mainly comprised of Hacettepe students and the M Hall in Sıhhiye was not as crowded as MEB Şura Hall. The ayin in makam Acembuselik was preceded by a concert of hymns, similar to the program during the festival in Konya. During the interval, the musicians changed to their dervish costumes and the same ensemble appeared on the stage in the second half as a different ensemble. Small informative flyers were provided for the audience, turning the event into an introductory applied seminar for the audience who might have encountered a Mevlevi ritual for the first time. Again for the comfort of the audience, the ensemble performed the ayin in the fastest tempo they could, turning the music of the ritual into a catastrophe by the help of the sound system. The performance reminded me of several Mevlana Research Institutions established in universities around the country which frequently organized scholarly meetings, published books and journals, and offered undergraduate courses on Mevlevi Sufism together with graduate degrees. Hacettepe University, despite lacking such an institution, performed an academic mission related to Mevlevi Sufism on the stage. The music was marking another actor on the sema field, the academia.



Figure 4.17. The last prayer of the ritual during MEKÜSAV's program, dervishes on their back, the post and the candle on the left, December 13, 2013

4.3.3. İstanbul: Magnificent Protestival

Since I attended MEKÜSAV's event in Ankara on December 13, I missed the opportunity of attending the Şeb-i Arus event organized by AdStation in İstanbul. I still preferred to include the event into my analysis because I interviewed a performer of that evening on the following days and the event aroused public attention. The event was supported by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism together with İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, and it was sponsored by many companies. The event took place in Ülker Sports Arena in Ataşehir, with a capacity of 15000 audience. This was the second time AdStation's Şeb-i Arus organization took place in İstanbul; the previous one in 2012 was promoted with the motto that "Rumi's wedding night will be celebrated outside Konya for the first time" (Vatan, 2012). The motto was referring to the official festival in Konya and had the claim of being the second

official celebration, but still it sounded like there had never been Şeb-i Arus celebrations in Mevlevi lodges outside Konya throughout history, which was misleading.

AdStation claimed that they covered İstanbul with Outdoor TV ads, billboards, pedestrian bridge ads, and posters on public transport. Compared to the lack of public promotion of the festival in Konya, Şeb-i Arus İstanbul can easily be treated as a PR success on that sense. Since this event was supported by the state although it was a private organization, the night was honored by protocol including the prime minister. Despite being a sponsored event, Şeb-i Arus İstanbul aroused criticism for its ticket prices, which ranged between 23 and 235 Turkish liras, nearly five times more expensive than the most expensive tickets mentioned so far. Besides being the most expensive performance of the year, Şeb-i Arus İstanbul was also the event with the highest number of celebrities on stage. Pop singers and TV stars who appeared in Show TV series like Doktorlar and Cennet Mahallesi, Kutsi and Alişan shared the stage with Sami Savni Özer in the first part of the event. Sami Savni Özer, popular for his religious music albums together with his Cerrahi connections, also became a celebrity with his performances for comedian Cem Yılmaz's movies, including the songs Psikopat and Süpermen. The three celebrities' sharing the stage for performing a religious music concert before a sema performance resembled Hayko Cepkin's appearance on a Sufi Videoclip; both were the combination of totally unrelated contexts. The un-relatedness continued with Özer's sharing the microphone with Erdoğan during the performance of the same Bektashi hymn that was performed by Hayko Cepkin on the videoclip. Such un-relatedness also occurred in AdStations's 2014 program, this time with even a higher number of celebrities on stage, and it was harshly criticized for turning Şeb-i Arus into Show of Arus (Zaman, 2014).



Figure 4.18. QR Code for the promotion video after Şeb-i Arus İstanbul 2013 by AdStation on Youtube

The audience, just like during Ahmet Özhan's performances in Konya, also involved in the program during Şeb-i Arus İstanbul. This time the context was much more political. While Erdoğan was giving his opening speech, which only included a salutation to Rumi different from his other speeches that never skipped promotion of his party's implementations and achievements and which was unusually short, he was protested by the whistling and clapping of the audience. Yet there was another group among the audience who were disturbed by the protest and they started a pro-Erdoğan slogan. Erdoğan's speech, the slogans and the whistles scrambled into each other before the stage was left to the whirling dervishes (Radikal, 2013). This involvement of the audience was a summary of the political turmoil of the year. Graham St John referred to alternative, countercultural festivals which aimed political action as "protestival" in an effort to emphasize the simultaneity of negative/positive, transgressive/progressive, and aesthetic/instrumental aspects of political representations within (2015: 130-133). Şeb-i Arus İstanbul, although being a state-supported mainstream festival of a religious music concert and sema performance in December, turned into a protestival in that sense, with the displays of power by the state, entrepreneurs and consumers. Wacquant's (2008) interpretation of the field as a battlefield fit well into this case; it was as if a multi-lateral war for power was going on in the sema field.



Figure 4.19. QR Code for DHA's video on the protests of Erdoğan's talk during Şeb-i Arus İstanbul on Youtube

When I interviewed Ahmet Hoca, he also comparted the performances in Konya and İstanbul. He said that performances in Konya are folkloric and addressing a closed community. He could never perform in Konya because of the collaboration of the ministry and TRT. Owning a PhD in music, he accepted performing in this event because he trusted in the ensemble performing the ayin in makam hüzzam. He asserted that there were no “market-musicians” (*piyasacı*) among the ensemble; according to him they played pasty in the market and did not attend rehearsals, that was the reason they could not play an ayin properly and should not be included in ayin ensembles. The performers in the ensemble were criticized because of the appearance of Alişan in the program, but they preferred to ignore those criticisms. The celebrities performed in their part with their own ensemble, they did not join the ayin, and the criticisms were addressing the celebrities not their ensemble. He was confident that the ayin performance was excellent and the critics shut up once they heard the ayin.⁶⁵ Since the performance of 2013 was not broadcast on TV or released in DVD format, I could only see a small part of the performance from the 1st selam. What I heard was well tuned and synchronized musicians, a professional arrangement of partitions and a nice sound reaching the audience

⁶⁵ Interview, February 12, 2014.

through the sound system. The magnificence of the event met the excellence of the ritual's music on the sema field which witnessed aggressive displays of power.

4.4. Analysis of Ayin compositions and performances

The performances in Konya, Ankara and İstanbul in December 2013 discussed above, all faced displays of power by different actors with different claims. In each case, but especially in Şeb-i Arus İstanbul, it is obvious that the Mevlevi ritual was somehow pushed behind the political claims and power struggles. The instrumentalization of Mevlevi ritual was also a tactic of Gülen movement in late 1990s in the USA (Hermansen, 2009: 31), and the conflicts between organizations related to Mevlevi Sufism in the three cities in 1990s might have prepared the ground for the field of power struggles in Bourdieusian sense (1998). The ritual's turning from the main motive of the organizations to the background music of power struggles urged me to take a musicological gaze into the rituals performed.

Throughout my research, I attended 10 ayin performances and participated in one of them with my frame drum. Besides those, I took into account two more performances: the ayin in makam hüzzam in Şeb-i Arus İstanbul which clashed with MEKÜSAV's event, and the ayin in makam mahur performed on December 14 by KTTMT during the festival in Konya different from the rest of the festival. I confronted the ayins in makam ferahfeza and makam acembuselik three times, the ayin in makam çargah twice, the ayins in makam hüseyini and makam acemaşiran once, and I included the ayins in makam mahur and makam hüzzam to the analysis.

First of all, apart from one, all the known composers of the ayins performed were the most prominent Mevlevi musicians of history and were connected to

one another through musical ties. Hammamizade İsmail Dede Efendi's (1778-1846) ayins in makam ferahfeza and makam hüzzam were performed in Ankara and İstanbul. He was the leading composer during late classical and neo-classical periods of Turkish music and his compositions were known for their artistry (Özcan, 2001: 93-95). Nasır Abdülbaki Dede's (1765-1820) ayin in makam acembuselik was performed three times in Ankara. He was Dede Efendi's master in Yenikapı lodge and was a theoretician besides being a composer (Özcan, 1988: 199). Kutbünnayi Osman Dede's (1652-1729) ayin in makam çargah was performed in Konya during the Şeb-i Arus festival. Being Nasır Abdülbaki Dede's grandfather, Osman Dede was the sheikh in Galata lodge until his death (Erguner, 2007: 461-462). Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede's (1854-1922) ayin in makam acemaşiran was performed in İstanbul and I attended practices of this ayin in MEKÜSAV. Fahreddin Dede learned music from the students of İsmail Dede, thus he joined the musical lineage of Osman Dede and Abdülbaki Dede. He received the name Hüseyin because the ayin in makam hüseyini was being performed in the Beşiktaş lodge when he was born there (Özcan, 1998: 546-547). The ayin in makam hüseyini, whose composer is not known, is one of the oldest ayins available and it was performed once in Ankara. The musical connection of the Mevlevi composers who were all based in the lodges in İstanbul makes it possible to talk about an İstanbulian ayin tradition which is temporarily adopted and appreciated. The only ayin not belonging to this musical lineage is the ayin in makam mahur, composed by Zeki Atkoşar, an Eskişehir-based academic also involved in Mevlevi music in the 21st century. Atkoşar's ayin inevitably attracted my attention because of the composer's being away from the historical ayin tradition, and definitely his being alive.

The 46 ayins composed until the closure of Mevlevi lodges in 1925 have been analyzed by Mevlevi music researchers and the contemporary ones are

excluded because they could not experience the traditional ritual in lodges (Çevikoğlu, 2011; Hatipoğlu, 2011). Atkoşar's ayins have thus not been analyzed. He is not the only 21st century ayin composer who is still alive, and his contemporaries to my knowledge have not been honored during the festivals in Konya. What I thought the first moment I recognized his name on the program was that this was a terrible composition just being performed for the sake of honoring the composer and this performance had political rather than musical concerns.

The musical findings told a different story, though. His ayin was not the most ornamented one but it had approximately the same number of modulations in the 3rd selam with the 3rd selam of the ayins in makams çargah and hüzzam. Also the 4th selam of Atkoşar's ayin in makam mahur was as plain and modest as the 4th selam of the ayins in makams ferahfeza and acemaşiran. Atkoşar is an award-winning ayin composer and Cinuçen Tanrıkorur referred to him in his memories related to the ayin contest which he won and Atkoşar received the 3rd degree with his ayin in makam acemkürdi. He was glad to meet this young composer from Eskişehir, who could not join the musical lineage of the masters but who still was gifted excellent composition skills. He believed the Mevlevi tradition never ceased to exist and it suddenly blossomed in the composition of this young man from Anatolia (2003a: 242).

What was significant in Atkoşar's ayin in makam mahur was that it was shorter than the traditional ayins performed throughout the year. This shortness reminded me of Burhan Kul, an Afyon based composer who released an album dedicated to Rumi in 2008 for the 800th anniversary of his demise and the Mevlana Year celebrated in 2007. His composition named *Yedi Öğüt* (Seven Advice) resembled the ayin structure in terms of melodic form and rhythmic patterns, but it was so short that one music master named the form of the

composition as *ayinçe* (short ayin) (Kakan, 2008). In the 7 years following the introduction of the form *ayinçe*, no other compositions have been announced as *ayinçes* and the form has never met whirling dervishes on the sema field. But as Ahmet Hoca admitted, the performers feel the necessity to keep the ayin as short as possible so as not to lose any audience.⁶⁶ The shortness of Atkoşar's ayin might have been the actual reason behind its inclusion to the festival repertory.



Figure 4.20. Devr-i Veledi during the performance of KTTMT in Mystic Music Festival, only a small number of dervishes participate so as to cut the performance short, September 30, 2013.

Furthermore, the ayin in makam *çargah* which was performed in F (*sipürde ahengi*) during the festival is one of the most difficult ayins and the tone selected for performance makes it even more difficult to perform. The performance of the KTTMT in the first soiree, probably due to the difficulty of

⁶⁶ Interview, February 12, 2014.

the ayin, was fairly erroneous. Mostly the makam is referred to only for marking the specific composition but in the case of ayin in makam çargah there is also a myth related to the makam of the ayin; it was believed that the makam çargah was cursed and whichever lodge the ayin in makam çargah was performed in immediately burned down in blaze. After my fieldwork, I even came across comments that the corruption crisis occurred during the Şeb-i Arus of 2013 in Konya because the ayin in makam çargah was being performed during the festival. Necati Hoca did not believe in that myth, but he accepted that the ayin was terribly difficult. "People might have died because of its difficulty and the survivors might have attributed a curse to the ayin in response", he said giggling.⁶⁷ Atkoşar's short ayin possibly relieved the performers from the difficulty of the ayin in makam çargah.

I recorded parts of the ayins I attended for comparison (see Appendix 3). Besides the oddness of Atkoşar's ayin, I could not really observe serious differences in terms of tempo or transcription in my recordings. The ayin in makam acembuselik performed in Hacettepe University on December 21 was slightly faster than every other ayin. When I compared this performance with an older recording from the respected cantor Kani Karaca, I saw that it was almost twice as fast as the latter. This acceleration was again aiming at the contention of the audience.

The musicological discussion also reveals that the differences of power displays among the ayins I discussed above neither affected nor reflected the musical performance of the ayins. The different contexts of performances including the state, the organizers, the city and the hall where the organization was held, the performers on stage and the audience resulted in different

⁶⁷ Fieldnotes, December 7, 2013.

instrumentalizations of the ritual. Those displays of power affected the musicians; Atila Abi, for instance, decided to escape the organizations which offered incredible amounts of money to the performers.⁶⁸ Özgün Hoca said that he felt better with the audience who did not pay anything; he believed that they shared more feelings with the audience when money did not interrupt.⁶⁹ The ayin I performed was ticketless, but did I actually share any feelings with the audience?

4.5. My Own Experience of Contemporary Mevlevi Sufism

I have been performing percussion on stage for 10 years and I have performed with a variety of amateur and professional ensembles. I also appeared in ayin performances before. With this much stage experience and research experience in the field, I believed I would be able to recognize the meanings attached to Mevlevi Sufism by performers and the audience, and share the common feelings. Thus I decided to reflect on my own experience on the stage. When a friend of mine from Yegah called me to tell that one of their percussionists would go under surgery on their performance day and they needed a percussionist on his behalf, I responded I would love to help them. The ayin to be performed was that in makam acembuselik, which I practiced previously, listened to with my mp3 player frequently, attended several performances of and performed already on stage. I had absolutely no concerns related to the composition.

I attended the last rehearsal of the group and everything was fine. But things did not go that fine on the performance day even from the beginning. The

⁶⁸ Interview, November 2, 2013.

⁶⁹ Interview, April 15, 2015.

rectorate hall of Gazi University was selected for the performance. When I arrived there for sound check, the security hesitated to let me in. I told them I was performing on the event in the evening and showed them the case of my frame drum but they did not believe me. I was already stressed when I entered the hall.

I quickly greeted the performers waiting for the sound check and started to seek a place to change. No proper dressing rooms were available in the backstage but I had to wear my white shirt before the sound check started since I did not want to leave changing after sound check which usually ended seconds before the actual performance. My feet already started hurting and I was sweating terribly. I was also suffering from a stomach ache, I had never become such nervous before a performance.

The sound check was one of the worst I had ever faced. The system was not enough for everybody so some condenser microphones were used for the groups of vocals, new players and guest professionals. The ensemble was a compilation of amateurs and as in the case of amateur choirs mentioned in Chapter 2, they needed professional support so as to save the night. After them, no microphones were left for percussions. I was sitting between two excited players; the one on my right side was performing for the first time so she was extremely nervous, the one on my left, on the other hand, was more experienced than me but had a bad habit of humming all the melody and was blocking my view of the leading percussionist. No scores were left for the three of us, and the lucky ones were not able to benefit from their scores because they were fastened to the stands. The whirling dervishes created an air current which made the scores fly away, but the solution they found for the current resulted in totally useless scores. They also powdered the ground to help the dervishes whirl easily, but the dust made me constantly sneeze. The leading

ney player treated the condenser as if an instrument microphone for herself and the loudness of her ney irritated me a lot. Since the percussions had no microphones, the whirling dervishes and the other musicians could not hear the critical attacks. There were only four dervishes, the leading one was very nervous because she would be leading the group for the first time. There was no postnişin either. The sound check ended by every single person on the stage warning the other for more attention.

The whirling dervishes tried to imitate the greetings and bowings of the ritual. Upon this, I decided to ask the musicians if we would be imitating the ritual as well. One ney player responded by saying that this was not a real ritual, we were not even wearing proper clothes, those greetings and bowings occurred in real rituals not in ours. That moment I realized that it was not our gestures which would be missing only. There was not a sheikh, we were not dervishes, the stage was not a lodge; what we performed could only possibly be a concert.



Figure 4.21. Yegah's performance at Gazi University, me nervously playing the frame drum on the right, May 9, 2014 (Photo by anonymous member of the association)

When the program started, some more members of the association joined the whirling dervishes for Devr-i Veledi. This was the exact opposite of the common practice; normally dervishes stayed aside for this part of the ritual to end earlier. Our performance would be too short with only 4 dervishes so they decided to add more dervishes to the walk. It was still short, we could not perform the whole peşrev once. We the percussionists still did not have any microphones and nobody on the stage were hearing us although we tried to perform as loudly as we could. I could not follow the composition at all, I made so many mistakes, I performed terribly. The ayin ended very quickly and the only thing I could feel in the end was how terribly I performed. I behaved like a “market-musician”, I only played the music and had no feelings related to the performance at all, and played really badly. I did not know how many more felt as disappointed as I did afterwards. I tried to escape the hall as soon as possible so as to overcome this embarrassment. Once I got out, I walked past MEB Şura Hall. I remembered MEKÜSAV’s performance, TÛMATA’s performances, how frequently I visited the hall for my research and felt embarrassed about my performing experience once more. What I performed turned out to be a mere concert, a bad one.⁷⁰

Remembering TÛMATA’s performances made me recognize the relationship of the experience with the music. I first listened to their live performance in a hotel in Ankara, for the Nowruz seminar. They were playing instruments like rebap and kopuz, which do not frequently appear on Turkish music performances, and the sound was horrible. They were not in tune, the players were not good at their instruments, and the music they made was more of cacophony. Nevertheless, the little daughter of two performers liked the music

⁷⁰ Fieldnotes, May 9, 2014.

a lot; she kept whirling throughout the seminar and enjoyed the appreciation of the audience.⁷¹

The performance in MEB Şura Hall included many more musicians and had a claim of showing the transition from shamanic dances to sema. Four languages were used during the rehearsal because the ensemble had many international members. The sound was still unbearable for me so I could not stay until the end of the performance.⁷² Oruç Hoca's one aim was to bring people to the roots of Rumi's sema in the 13th century, when there was no ritual and no ayin compositions. This aim first sounded commercial to me because I paid a lot for the Nowruz seminar and was expected to donate for the concert at MEB Şura Hall. One year later, during the performance at Gazi University, I recognized what this aim was for. People who could not play the ayin composition properly, who did not have the dervish costumes or who could not find a lodge for service should still have the right to whirl and enter into the religious ecstasy according to him. What we made during the performance of the ayin in makam acembuselik was not much different from the sema they performed in MEB Şura Hall.

The same aim worked in Yalova as well. In the 7 day-7 night sema event, Oruç Hoca started by referring to one seminar in Switzerland 14 years ago. There an attendant asked how Rumi himself practiced sema and why they did not practice the same sema but try to fit into the ritual. As a response, they whirled for 3 days and nights there. The second floor of Mehmet Rasim Mutlu Cultural Center was spared for whirling and the people to stay up there were warned not to occupy the sema field. Based on Oruç Hoca's research related to music-

⁷¹ Fieldnotes, March 21, 2013.

⁷² Fieldnotes, May 9, 2013.

therapy, he determined a music plan. Every two hours the musicians would change the makam and one leading musician would decide what to play in that makam. Some of the attendees were whirling for the first time while there were some people whirling in such a good posture that I thought they were professional dancers.⁷³ Nobody was condemned for being there, neither the whirler with sexy curves nor the uninterested who played his bağlama and sang folk songs downstairs.



Figure 4.22. Initiation of 7 day-7 night sema in Yalova, August 16, 2013.

The music stopped from time to time because they could not decide what to perform and the whirling people had a hard time. At one point, when the makam was rast, I heard them perform one famous song *Eski Dostlar* (Old Pals),

⁷³ Fieldnotes, August 16, 2013.

which was not a hymn or a song with religious connotations. They were not disturbed by the song at all, the whirlers kept whirling in ecstasy and the musicians kept playing without losing concentration. I could easily start laughing at the scene but preferred to appreciate the commitment of the people instead. The receptionist in the hotel next to the center experienced the attendance of international participants for the first time and he was mesmerized. He greeted one friend when I was checking out, the friend started giggling. “Have you seen my boy, the lunatics came together up there” he shouted.⁷⁴ I could not help but smile that moment, I remembered the holy fools of Russia. They were lunatics but were respected by the locals because they believed that this lunacy was a gift from God. Two days later, Süleyman Erguner gave me a call to remind me of the “freak” going on in Yalova. I told him I knew about the event, but did not mention that I felt appreciation at one point.⁷⁵

I experienced a similar controversy during the Masnavi talks of MEKÜSAV in Hamamönü. The talk started by the reading of Masnavi’s issued part, then came the discussion on this part with usually Öznur Hoca from a theology department, and the program usually ended with a small performance of hymns. The Masnavi part would be read after reciting Muslim initiation words for prayer. Reciting this initiation before reading Quran was familiar but starting to read Masnavi this was a bit strange for me. It was a book of poems in the end, not a holy text. One day there was an attendee who knew Persian and Gülden Abla asked him to read the original text. The poem sounded much better in Persian and everybody loved this version. Gülden Abla thanked him and said this was a more proper version of reading Masnavi. Rumi’s poems

⁷⁴ Fieldnotes, August 17, 2013.

⁷⁵ Fieldnotes, August 19, 2013.

were actually treated like holy texts that day.⁷⁶ Although Hamamönü was a notorious district before restoration and people were still afraid of the district from time to time, there were more women attending Masnavi talks than men. Before the last part started, MEKÜSAV people would offer pages of lyrics to the attendees so that everybody could join the hymns. Those sessions ended with a lovely female chorus, reminding me of the Mevlid practices of my childhood when many women gathered and joined the hymns sung by the elderly.



Figure 4.23. Closure of Masnavi talk season in Hamamönü, women outnumber men again, me at the back standing, May 29, 2013 (Photo by anonymous member of the foundation)

Semih Sergen's play in State Theatre in Ankara, like many of his other works, was about the life story of Rumi. As an honorary member of MEKÜSAV, Sergen took Rumi seriously and warned his colleagues to be as serious. Despite the effort he put in writing and directing the play, the audience appreciated the

⁷⁶ Fieldnotes, April 24, 2013.

work because it was in line with Elif Shafak's novel.⁷⁷ What was fictional and what was treated as reality were once more intermingled into each other.

During April, towards the end of my field research, a similar festival to Mystic Music Festival held in Konya in September was organized by the same team in Ankara for the sake of the holy birth week of Prophet Mohammad. The opening event was the performance of Sufi Nile, they were to perform the Sufi ritual of Egyptian tradition with musicians and dancers. The dance was similar to whirling and Egyptian music was similar to Turkish music. Nevertheless, their ritual was not as calm and humble as the Mevlevi ritual. The music was enthusiastic, they had shisha-like equipment on stage in which they blew and smoke came out, the dance was wilder. I remembered Dionysus rituals which were more of entertainment than of prayer. If the name of the event did not have the word Sufi, I would not be able to understand whether this was a religious ritual or a male-exclusive entertainment event. I got the feeling that there was no difference between a religious ritual and an entertainment ritual at the beginning, the sacred was profane and the profane was sacred until they were separated through power struggles. Or I was mesmerized by the smoke, the wild dance and the clapping of the audience. I was sitting next to Serhan that evening, and I came back to today's time when he asked the most conclusive question of my research: "Are the guys smoking their shisha on the corner going to be paid as much as the dancers who have been jumping and sweating for minutes now?" Yes it was today's time, there was a performance going on at the stage and the performance had its payoff. Ali Ergur was right, we were now a society which could consume the stage performance quickly instead of understanding the Sufi side of the ritual (2009: 21-25). A few seconds later, the most enthusiastic Sufi dancing on the right side checked his watch for

⁷⁷ Fieldnotes, March 13, 2014.

the time. He looked like more concerned about the second half of the performance, their flight the other day, and the next performance in whichever part of the world; I felt that he was not in the zikir but in a rush.⁷⁸ Nezh Uzel (2010) referred to one response he received upon asking if the people he met were doing sema in ayins; the response was “no, we are performance Mevlevi”. That evening I realized the vanity of emcees’ warning the audience not to applause; that was the actual controversy, the audience was there to applause the performance.

4.6. Concluding Remarks

The identifications with Mevlevi Sufism in contemporary Turkey have conflicting aspects. While my interlocutors unanimously declared that they could not identify themselves as Mevlevi because there were no sheikhs or lodges left after the law no. 677 closing all dervish lodges, the state representations of Mevlevi images aroused the feeling that Mevlevi Sufism is something alive and into the daily life. This controversy was mocked in TV series and cartoons either in an absurd way or in harsh criticism. The rejection of Mevlevi identity by individuals and the acceptance, appreciation and promotion of Mevlevi identity by the state marked the necessity to look into the recent history of Mevlevi Sufism.

There were conflicting memories related to the first public performance of the Mevlevi ritual allowed by the republican state after 1925, the year of the law no. 677. A time span of two decades was referred to concerning the first performance held in Konya. Despite the time, memories related to the experience were clear; those good old days were beautiful and tasty, things were not as popular and corrupted by then.

⁷⁸ Fieldnotes, April 15, 2014.

When the scene in Konya started to change, international attention rose to a level of unmanageable crowds, and the institution organizing the Şeb-i Arus event started to get corrupted, people decided to take action to save the ritual from deterioration. First action came from Ankara based individuals and the first foundation of Mevlevi Sufism, MEKÜSAV was established. This was followed by the action of the descendants of Rumi, the Çelebi family, and the second foundation, International Mevlana Foundation was established. Meanwhile Konya based state musicians and İstanbul based state musicians were facing conflicts, which resulted in the establishment of KTTMT in Konya and İTTMT in İstanbul successively. The one decade when all those foundations and institutions were established also reflects conflicting memories on the priorities of individuals, their personal interests and their characters. After 1990s, it seems the tension on the fields was relieved and the conflicts between Konya, Ankara and İstanbul were resolved. But the performances of 2013 show that the conflicts were not totally resolved, the struggles for power over Mevlevi Sufism did not cease to exist, and the borderline between Sufi ritual and stage performance remained blurred.

The official Şeb-i Arus festival held in Konya in December 7-17 faced the fetishized representation of the state. “The march for love and tolerance” was dominated by the military music of the Janissary band and the vulgar behavior of the guards of the protocol. On the closing day of the festival, the city was concentrated with policemen. Local promotion of the festival was ignored to a large extent and Ahmet Özhan’s performance attracted more attention than the Mevlevi ritual. Still, the interruption of the audience from time to time rose to such a level that they became the other actor claiming for power over Mevlevi Sufism in Konya besides the state. The state was always on the stage, either as the promoter of Mevlevi Sufism or as the cause of the divergence from the traditional ritual.

In Ankara, MEKÜSAV's Şeb-i Arus ceremony was marked with humility. Compared to the ceremonies in Konya where the comfort of the audience was cared to the extent of manipulating the ritual and the performance at Hacettepe University where instructiveness overpowered ritualistic-ness, MEKÜSAV's ceremony did not care for the audience much. Following the claim of conservation against the corrupting conservationists, the performers on the stage stuck to the ritual's essentials at the expense of ignoring the existence of the audience.

In İstanbul, where state and the capital met, AdStation started to organize Şeb-i Arus ceremonies hand in hand with state institutions for the people who could not attend the one in Konya. The program involved celebrities singing hymns, protocol speeches of the prime minister, and a magnificent whirling ceremony in a gigantic sports hall with irrational ticket prices. Resembling the structure of ceremonies in Konya, the ceremony in İstanbul was denser in every sense. The promotion of the event was made more meticulously, the audience was more crowded, the political involvement of the audience was more striking, the ayin performance was more fabulous and the criticism received was tougher. The actors of struggle for power over Mevlevi Sufism, the state, the entrepreneurs, the musicians, and the audience all turned the stage into a battlefield in Wacquant's words, and the whirling dervishes into warriors. This was the image of the dervish depicted by cartoonists of Konya upon the Israeli conflict.

The conflict was not carried through music, though. The performances included an excellent selection of ayins from Mevlevi composers of the same musical lineage apart from Zeki Atkoşar, whose composition was of no less quality than those of the Dedes except for its shortness. The ayins were performed in similar quality to one another, but the power displays differed contextually. The music

of the ritual was instrumentalized by different actors in each case, music-power filled in the gap between the Sufi ritual and stage performance.

I as the researcher reflexively experienced the gap of controversy. What professional performers found soothing in the ritual was nerve-cracking for me. What my interlocutors found crappy would turn out to be respectable for me. What was aimed to be ritualistic could not escape being spectacular and easily consumable. My mind went back to Dionysus and found an entertaining connection.

What Nezh Uzel (2010) was concerned about performance Mevlevis was in fact the Mevlevis of America. According to him, the people who are respected today should in fact be blamed for corrupting the ritual, separating the performance from its Muslim roots. The tanbur player I met in Venice grew up among the people Uzel mentioned, he was glad to know them and he believed Mevlevi Sufism was still alive thanks to them. Cengiz Hoca claimed that Timuçin Çevikoğlu was now gaining the sheikh position among the American Mevlevis,⁷⁹ but what Ferhat told was another story. One time he visited the States with Çevikoğlu and attended his seminar. At one point the American Mevlevis stood up and held each other's hands, and he poked Ferhat. "Look, they will start playing 'écoutez écoutez pensez' now", he said.⁸⁰ The American Mevlevis they talked about did not resemble the ones Tanrıkorur visited and happily took down (2003b: 122-127). The freak they made fun of did not resemble what I experienced in Yalova. All in all, separating the ritual from the show and understanding who dominated the power struggles on the sema field

⁷⁹ Interview, August 14, 2013.

⁸⁰ Interview, May 22, 2014.

started to become impossible. The circularity of whirling scrambled them into each other.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Before this story can reach its conclusion
An envious man's stench has made an intrusion,
(Masnavi, Book 3)

Mevlevi Sufism from its very beginning, “harbored two conflicting modes of spirituality” between the followers of the conformist Sultan Veled and the deviant Shams of Tabriz (Karamustafa, 1994: 82). My effort to understand contemporary Mevlevi Sufism started from as early as Dionysus rituals and through the experience of the conflicting duality that Karamustafa mentioned, I found myself back at Dionysus rituals towards the end of my research. The historicity of the 8-century-old Sufi tradition, having its connections with ancient religious practices, had its context of domination in the 21st century Turkey. The ties of Mevlevi Sufism with the state, which existed even when Rumi himself was alive, transformed into a web of power relations with music playing at the background. The intertwining of what is ritual and what is stage show, what is history and what is fiction, what is memory and what is gossip, what is revered and what is despised both affected and reflected the heritage-ification, nationalization, folklorization and popularization of the Mevlevi ritual. The institutionalization of Mevlevi Sufism in the republican period was triggered by these processes which have counterparts among a variety of

ritualistic practices around the world, and the emergence of state institutions and non-governmental foundations in return triggered large-scale power struggles for the promotion and conservation of the ritual. The scrambling of values and monopolies brought forward confusion together with contestation, creating fabulous stage performances while inducing tension upon ignominy. Cengiz Hoca was thus feeling sorrow for the mock-prayers of *semazenbaşı* which turned into “*Semâ râ, safâ râ, vefâ râ, Opel Vectrâ*”, replacing the salutation for spiritual ecstasy (*vecd*) with a car brand, and still received unconscious applause from the audience.¹

People have whirled in ecstasy almost from the beginning of recorded history. The circular movement between the divine knowledge of the universe and the humane experience of life also molded Mevlevi Sufism upon Rumi’s meeting Shams of Tabriz. Gülden Abla found a divine balance in Mevlevi Sufism in terms of the relationship between religion and Sufism, belief and ritual, and the order and the state; they all circulated one another in balance.² Musa Göçmen found the balance in becoming part of the performance rather than leading, directing and owning the performance. Mevlevi Sufism would not preclude what it encountered according to him, it would encompass. That was why whirling became the ritual and polyphony was tested in Edirne Lodge. His orchestration was also embraced; he encountered Rumi-lovers, classical musicians encountered Turkish religious musicians, and he became the “simultaneous music translator” between the encounters. He translated the orchestration to the traditional instruments, the traditional music to the orchestra members, and the circularity of the “encounters” of the project to the municipalities which

¹ Interview, August 14, 2013.

² Interview, May 17, 2013.

wanted dervishes whirling on short hymns and to international organizations which invited the symphonic sema project to cocktails.³

It can also be said that there is a circular relationship between Konya, İstanbul and Ankara in the context of Mevlevi Sufism. The cultural capital of the Sultanate of Rum hosted Rumi in the 13th century and the first lodge of the order was built around Rumi's mausoleum in Konya. When the Sultanate of Rum collapsed and the Ottoman Empire gained rule over İstanbul, both the political and the cultural center of the empire moved there. One of the first achievements of the empire in İstanbul was building Galata lodge. In the following centuries, Mevlevi Sufism turned into a "state institution" with two more lodges in İstanbul. When the end of the Ottoman Empire came and the Republic of Turkey was established, the political center moved to Ankara and the decision closing dervish lodges was made in the national assembly in Ankara. Shortly afterwards, Konya once more became the center of Mevlevi Sufism with the rising interest in the cultural heritage value of the Mevlevi ritual. Rumi-lovers and practitioners of Mevlevi music from Ankara and İstanbul visited the city in every commemoration ceremony allowed by the state until the end of 1980s. The cycle then found the center in İstanbul once more as the masters like Selman Tüzün Dede decided not to go to Konya due to the corruption in the representation of the ritual in the hands of the tourism association. Two foundations emerged in a short period of time with the mission of conserving the ritual and Mevlevi Sufism in İstanbul. The cycle of Mevlevi Sufism continued its circular motion after İstanbul just like the whirling of the dervishes. The first foundation, MEKÜSAV moved to Ankara

³ Interview, November 11, 2013.

while the second one, International Mevlana Foundation preferred to settle down in Konya.

When I looked into the Şeb-i Arus celebrations in the three cities, I encountered different levels of representation concerning the state and different power dynamics. It was clear that Konya is the state-declared official center for Şeb-i Arus celebrations. A festival of ten days is prepared and promoted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the employees of the ministry perform in the ceremonies and a protocol is invited including the prime minister, several other ministers, heads of opposing parties in the parliament, mayor of Konya municipality, and vice president of International Mevlana Foundation Esin Çelebi Bayru, although the foundation is not a representative of the state. The foundation's effort with the ministry to inscribe the ritual on the representative list of intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO might have led to her invitation to the protocol. MEKÜSAV, on the other hand, is not invited neither to the festival organized by the state nor meetings organized by International Mevlana Foundation. But still, Gülden Abla did not hesitate to salute International Mevlana Foundation when in Konya, and several musicians of the state assigned to the performances during the festival did not hesitate to take one day off in an effort to perform in MEKÜSAV's ceremony in Ankara.⁴ Again a state-employed musician, this time in the radio of the national broadcast channel TRT, Mustafa Doğan Dikmen directed the ayin performed in the ceremony in İstanbul. The ensemble was a private ensemble and the ceremony was a sponsored event although it was supported both by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality. The difference of a state event and a sponsored event was reflected on the ticket prices; the VIP tickets in İstanbul were sold almost five times as expensive as the tickets of the

⁴ Fieldnotes, December 7, 2013.

last soiree in Konya. The state support in the ceremony in İstanbul became visible when the celebrities on the stage turned the microphone to the prime minister for singing a hymn together. Compared to the audience in Konya who interacted with Ahmet Özhan in need of appreciating a celebrity, the audience in İstanbul already paid for appreciating celebrities. What they did was criticizing, condemning the political power represented on the stage by the prime minister and supporting it with slogans praising him. It was not only the audience who were politically involved in the ceremony. The Masnavi talk in the first soiree of Konya included İnançer's condemning the state for impairing the ritual by omitting the Masnavi part up to day. On the other hand, the ritual ended with prayer saluting the state, the president and the government, which at some point of history banned the ritual and re-allowed the performance in a folkloric format, by saying "Cumhûriyettü't-Türkiyye, selâmet-i re'îs-i devlet ve hükûmet ve vükelâ-yı millet râ". This politicization of the prayer inevitably reminded me of the ney players who were forced to improvise in order to mute the audience until the arrival of the prime minister in CerModern. Not only the audience and the speaker, but also the dervishes on the stage had their claims of power, which is crystallized by the performance of Ziya Azazi in Gezi Park. The actors of struggle for power in different fields interacted in the İstanbul context, turning the sema field into a spectacular battlefield.



Figure 5.1. Ziya Azazi whirling with a gas mask and a toxic green colored tennure in Gezi Park, protesting the police attacks during Gezi uprising (Photo by Arda Bengü)

The ceremony in Ankara did not face any involvement of the audience except for the short clapping which was again muted by the audience themselves. The state, together with the sponsors and entrepreneurs of touristic sema performances, were condemned for corrupting the ritual in the name of conservatism; it was as if Gülden Abla criticized both of the festivals in Konya and in İstanbul besides the organizations “which did not understand the meaning of Mevlevi Sufism, which could not encounter” that Musa Göçmen rejected, and the private organizations which Atilla Abi regretted being part of in the past. The state’s claim of visibility, the dervishes’ final prayer with political connotations, the entrepreneurs’ claim of “bringing the spirituality of Konya to the feet of İstanbulian audience”, the foundations’ claim of conserving as in the case of MEKÜSAV’s condemnation on the stage in Ankara and that of

Esin Çelebi Bayru who stated that they as the foundation had to interrupt at one point when they saw the state failed to conserve the original Mevlevi Sufism, and the audience's claim for political representation as well as their demand for shorter, less boring performances with more celebrities turned the sema field into a Bourdieusian field of struggles for power. When Abrams's words (1988) related to the existence of the state are taken into account, the non-identification of people with Mevlevi Sufism and the web of power relations can be interpreted as that what actually exists is not Mevlevi Sufism but the political practices that create the illusion of Mevlevi Sufism hidden behind the mask of displays of power.



Figure 5.2. QR Code for Esin Çelebi Bayru's interview broadcast on Kanal D on December 5, 2014.

Keeping the power relations in mind, I can claim that the cycle of Mevlevi Sufism might once more turn towards Ankara as MEKÜSAV's ceremony had the potential to bring musicians from İstanbul and Konya to Ankara as in the ihtifal days of Konya in 1960s and 1970s. Besides the foundation's enchantment, the discussions on the law no. 677 might bring together new decisions concerning the promotion of the Mevlevi ritual. Different from the demand of pro-AKP attorneys mentioned in Chapter 1, one deputy of Peoples' Democratic Party (*Halkların Demokratik Partisi, HDP*) Altan Tan brought his second bill of law for dismantling the law no. 677 in 2015. His reasons were that the law

unfortunately limited the religious diversity and multiculturalism in the country by banning the dervish lodges, and that the Sufi orders which de facto function can gain legal status as a result (T24, 2015). The power of the state, which can change directions as easily as in the case of the festival in Konya being saved from the baskets in sports halls and being put back under those baskets in a period shorter than a decade, might as well turn to another direction concerning the legality of Mevlevi Sufism and the conservation of the Mevlevi ritual, whether in the form of cultural heritage or not.

We can recognize the potential of the circularity clearly again in the memories. Özgün Hoca remembers meeting the Naqshbandi sheikh Nazım Kıbrısı in Konya in his first years of service in KTTMT. During that time, Konya people were far away from understanding and appreciating whirling dervishes and the Mevlevi ritual was regarded as betrayal against God. When he came to the backstage for greeting Özgün Hoca, one follower approached the sheikh and asked: “Sheikh Efendi, is music haram or halal? Is sema haram or halal?” He in response immediately referred to the Sufi saying that music enhances the love of the lover and the sin of the sinner. He smiled and continued in his Cypriot accent: “Where did the sema you just watched address? It addressed my heart, my soul. If it addressed yet another part of your body, then it is haram for you, do not watch sema!”⁵ The sheikh of “the order of the Ulema”, which never allows music in religious rituals, brought the bigot into line according to Özgün Hoca with the power of music. In his obituary after Nazım Kıbrısı, Atay (2014) referred to him as the sheikh globalizing and popularizing the order by being different from his predecessors in his tolerance, considerateness and flexibility. His different and flexible (and radical) point of view, actually played role in the wide-scale acceptance of KTTMT’s performances. Such a turn in the

⁵ Interview, April 15, 2015.

appreciation of Mevlevi music and ritual within another Sufi order might signal changes in representations of Mevlevi Sufism, some of which are constantly criticized by Rumi-lovers, members of foundations, the state delivering a notice, and even TV series. The dismantling of the law no. 677, for instance, might relieve the re-opened Mevlevi lodges from the forms of museums and cultural centers, as the state's guardians of collective symbolic capital in David Harvey's (2001) sense. Gülden Abla was sorry for the Yenikapı and Bahariye lodges which were reopened in İstanbul because the monopoly rent of these lodges were in the hands of people with political interests. She believed that one "nephew" of the prime minister assigned the Yenikapı lodge and while he himself enjoyed the lodge for his talks, he would not let MEKÜSAV to perform an ayin there.⁶ Differently, Atilla Abi was happy about the restoration of a Mevlevi lodge in Antalya because there was the potential of MEKÜSAV's Antalya branch to receive rights to use the lodge for sema ceremonies. He was also sorry for the İstanbulian lodges but he felt safe for the Antalya lodge since Antalya did not have such a high monopoly rent as in İstanbul.⁷

The dervish lineage, which has been broken for about a century now, is nevertheless a question. The controversies concerning the whirling dervishes of KTTMT mentioned in Chapter 4 are an example. Nezih Uzel's comments on sheikhs signal that there is already a struggle for power on the spiritual leadership. Upon Ahmet Özhan's criticism about the popularity of Mevlevi Sufism, Uzel claimed some so-called Dedes like Hasan Dede occupy the Galata lodge with alcohol, and Hasan Çıkar immediately rejected the accusation

⁶ Fieldnotes, June 28, 2013. She also referred to the problem of Mevlevi lodges in the opening speech of MEKÜSAV's Şeb-i Arus ceremony in 2015. She stated that it would be more proper to hold the ceremony in a lodge but the state could not manage to restore the Ankara lodge so they were "imprisoned" in concert halls.

⁷ Interview, November 2, 2013.

(Kaplan, 2002). His accusations about Süleyman Hayati Dede (Uzel, 2010) in spite of MEKÜSAV's appreciation of both Uzel and Süleyman Hayati Dede, and the American Mevlevi Sufism being directed towards New Age movements (Hermansen, 2009: 32) make things even more complicated. There might be a potential of emergent mock-sheikhs creating their mock-lineages in the name of reviving the original ritual, and they might seek for their own share in the monopoly rent, putting the Mevlevi lodges into deeper struggle for power. Museumification of Mevlevi lodges, however, as criticized by MEKÜSAV people, keeps empowering the state and disturbing other actors like the foundations. But still, the potential of transnationality concerning these sheikhs and the potential of relationship of Mevlevi Sufism with other lodges, together with the popular concept of wedding and circumcision ceremonies with whirling dervishes, remain as questions for further research.

Still, it is not reasonable to discuss those power struggles outside the circularity of Mevlevi Sufism and its historical whirling with state power. Musa Göçmen believed that what we experienced as deterioration and corruption of the Mevlevi ritual was also part of the circularity. The curve of the circle would eventually take the ritual upwards in terms of better representations and more qualified appreciation. The pure ritual would be discovered by the ones seeking for purity among all the appalling representations and freaks of today.⁸ This articulation of circularity makes it possible to imagine a different future for the Mevlevi music, ritual and images. What is known to day is that there are multi-faceted power dynamics behind each representation of Mevlevi Sufism in the 21st century Turkish context with a range of actors from the state in different levels as municipalities and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to foundations honored or ignored by the state, from musicians of different backgrounds to

⁸ Interview, November 11, 2013.

individuals self-claiming spiritual leadership. The power struggles on Mevlevi Sufism seem to evolve into different forms in different contexts. The Mevlevi tradition, on the other hand, is rediscovered, reinterpreted and re-assembled in continuation of the circularity, turning the order both into an illusionary spectacle and a lively Sufi path.



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APPENDICES

A: STRUCTURE OF MEVLEVİ AYİNİ, RITUAL AND COMPOSITION

Mevlevi Ayini is the name of the largest music form categorized under religious Turkish music. This magnitude of the form is usually compared to the symphony in classical music. Composed in 4 sub-forms named *Selam*, preceded by *Peşrev* and succeeded by *Son Peşrev* and *Son Yürük Semai*, all of which are instrumental forms, *Mevlevi Ayini* comprises the musical part of the ritual. The music is performed with *Sema*, the whirling of the dervishes, as the practice of *zikir* in *Mevlevi* order. The ritual as a whole, can be referred to with a variety of names as *Sema Mukabelesi*, *Sema Töreni*, *Mevlana İhtifali*, *Vuslat Töreni* and *Mevlevi Ayini*. Some names like *Vuslat Töreni* were invented in correspondence with the law no. 677. Due to the discussions on whether what is performed on stage is actually the ritual or just an audio-visual performance, names like *Sema Gösterisi* also emerged.

The ritual includes the whirling dervishes, the musician dervishes, and the sheikh. The two prominent instrument groups, the percussive and the wind instruments have their leading dervishes just like the whirling dervishes. *Kudümzenbaşı* is the name given to the leading percussion, who always plays the *kudüm*. *Kudüm* is the instrument of two copper bowls with camel skin on and it is played with drumstick-like sticks named *zahme*. There are other percussive instruments traditionally performed in *Mevlevi* lodges like *bendir* (frame drum) and *halile* (cymbals). Similarly, *Neyzenbaşı* is the name of the

leading wind instrument, who always plays the *ney*. Ney is made out of reed with 9 nodes; 7 holes are opened on the reed, a piece called *başpare* is added on the side of the reed where it is blown and a piece called *parazvane* is attached to the other side. There are other wind instruments like *girift* traditionally performed in Mevlevi lodges, and other instruments like *tanbur* (a type of long-necked lute) and *kanun* (a type of zither) are also performed but they never had leading dervishes. Several instruments like the piano were also tested in Mevlevi lodges, and the ones which could adapt the peculiar intervals of the music and the sound of the ensemble like the violin were welcome. The leading whirling dervish is called *Semazenbaşı* and the sheikh is usually referred to as *Postnişin*. Rumi is also represented on the sema ground with a red sheepskin named *Post*, this sheepskin is regarded as sacred and the dervishes never turn their back to the post. There are white sheepskin for the dervishes to sit on around the sema ground called *meydan*. The ritual is performed in the *Semahane* part of the lodge which is in circular shape.

The dervishes wear special costumes of three main parts. *Hırka*, the woolen coat, is a black coat worn at the beginning and at the end of the ritual, symbolizing the earth where the deceased are buried. The whirling dervishes take their coats off when they start whirling and the dervishes who do not whirl stay with their coats on. Inside the coat, the costume with a shirt, a flared skirt and pants named *Tennure* is worn. The white costume symbolizes the cloth with which the deceased are wrapped before burying. On their head, the dervishes have woolen hoods named *Sikke*, which symbolize the grave stone. The sheikh has a special cloth wrapped around his hood, named *Dastar*. On their feet, the dervishes have special indoor leather boots named *Mesh*.

The dervishes starting from *Neyzenbaşı*, *Kudümzenbaşı* and the ensemble (*Mutrib heyeti*), greet the sema ground by bowing (*baş kesmek*) before the Post.

Then come Semazenbaşı and the whirling dervishes (*Sema heyeti*). Lastly Postnişin comes on the sema ground greeting Rumi. Due to the Islamic roots, the Ayin starts after the namaz prayer and Masnavi reading. The ritual starts with *Na't*, in which Prophet Mohammad is honored. This part is performed by a cantor named *Na'than* alone, and the composition of Buhurizade Mustafa Itri in makam rast is performed.

When na't is complete, one single attack is heard from kudüm, symbolizing the first command of God to the universe for being. This attack is followed by the *Taksim* (improvisation) of Neyzenbaşı in the makam of the ayin to be performed. This taksim symbolizes the holy breath which vitalized the universe. When the taksim is over, the peşrev is performed tutti by the ensemble. The whirling dervishes who sat on their sheepskin until that part hit the ground with their hands and stand up, symbolizing the incarnation. Starting from the postnişin in hierarchical order, all the whirling dervishes greet each other by bowing in front of the red post. They walk around the sema ground clockwise for three times, greeting each other in every confrontation before the post. This walk is named *Devr-i Veledi*, after Rumi's son Sultan Veled who founded the order. There is an imaginary line starting from the red post and dividing the sema ground into two as the visible universe and the invisible universe, named *Hatt-ı İstiva*. This line is regarded as sacred just like the red post and the whirling dervishes never step on this line; they greet one another before the post and greet the line on the other side of the sema ground during Devr-i Veledi. The peşrev, which is comprised of parts named as *Hane* and *Mülazime*, is replayed from the beginning until the 3 cycles of Devr-i Veledi is completed.

Upon the completion of Devr-i Veledi, the peşrev is cut without completing the part played, and Neyzenbaşı plays a small taksim for bringing the last note

performed in the peşrev to the first note of the 1st Selam of the ayin. The cantors start singing when the ayin starts, which is usually composed upon the poems of Rumi.

The whirling dervishes take their coats off, hold their arms close to their body for resembling the number 1, symbolizing the oneness of the God. They ask the postnişin for whirling permission by kissing his hand, he kisses the hoods of the dervishes in response, and they start whirling. This permission part is repeated at the beginning of each selam. The dervishes hold their right arms upwards with their right hands facing the sky and their left arms downwards with their left hands facing the earth, they whirl counter-clockwise with their right feet towards their heart, symbolizing the spiritual journey.

The 4 selams symbolize different aspects of the spiritual journey of human beings. The 1st selam refers to the recognition of reality, the holy creator, and the servitude. The 2nd selam symbolizes the adoration of the Almighty and the order and balance in creation. The 3rd selam is about the transformation of this adoration into love, unification with the Beloved, rising to divinity. Lastly, the 4th selam symbolizes the completion of the spiritual journey and turning back to servitude. In this selam, postnişin and semazenbaşı who normally do not whirl, join the whirling. The makam and usul (rhythmic pattern) selections and the mood of the composition is determined accordingly. The 3rd selam, for instance, is composed in a succession from larger to smaller usuls and the tempo is accelerated from andante to presto throughout the selam. After the 4th selam, the instrumental parts son peşrev in usul düyek and son yürük semai in usul yürük semai are performed. At the end of son yürük semai, one of the musician dervishes perform another taksim. When the last taksim ends, the whirling dervishes stop, take their coats and sit on their posts for Quran recitation named *Aşr-ı Şerif*. Following Quran citation, the dervishes pray for

Rumi, the composer, previous dervishes and their values, like their country. They greet each other by saying “Hu!”, greet Rumi and the sema ground, and leave Semahane at the end of the ritual by walking backwards. If the ritual is performed for the sake of *Şeb-i Arus* (Wedding Night), for commemorating the day when Rumi passed away and became one with the Beloved, one special hymn is also performed before Quran recitation. For further details see Gölpınarlı 2006.



B: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

	Name	Info	Date
1	Serhan	Engineer, officer at a ministry, plays the ney at MEKÜSAV's and TÛMATA's events	19.02.2013
2	Kudsi Erguner	Ney player, PhD in Architecture, world-renown, based in France, teaches in the Netherlands and Italy	20.04 2013
3	Mutlu Abi	Ney player, previously employed in state television, performs in large-scale events of MEKÜSAV, teaches ney	08.05.2013
4	Rahmi Oruç Güvenç (Oruç Hoca)	Master of TÛMATA, sheikh with entrusts from several Mevlevi lodges, PhD in music-therapy, organizes sema events in Turkey and abroad	09.05.2013
5	Hikmet Abi	Percussionist, previously state-employed officer, now in state television, performs regularly in MEKÜSAV, teaches kudüm	10.05.2013
6	Gülden Arbaş (Gülden Abla)	Vice president of MEKÜSAV, Andaç Arbaş's daughter, lead player on Saturday practices	17.05.2013
7	Mehmet Hoca	Rebab player, cellist in state television, teaches kemençe, attends professional performances	18.06.2013
8	Gülden Arbaş	Follow-up interview	25.07.2013
9	Serdar	Ney player, daily performs at a cervansarai in Cappadocia	02.08.2013
10	Cengiz Hoca	Ney player, performs in transnational ensembles, performs in large-scale events of MEKÜSAV	14.08.2013

11	Süleyman Erguner	Ney player, world-renown, Kudsi Erguner's brother, once music director of state television	19.08.2013
12	Zülküf Bey	Author of several music books, close to Çelebiler, prepared UNESCO report for sema	20.08.2013
13	Atilla Abi	Tanbur player, active in Antalya MEKÜSAV	02.11.2013
14	Musa Göçmen	Conductor, orchestrated the ayin in makam Acembuselik	11.11.2013
15	Burcu Karadağ	Ney player, employed in state television, performs with her own ensemble	14.11.2013
16	Tevfik Soyata	Tanbur player, director in state ensemble	26.11.2013
17	Necati Çelik (Necati Hoca)	Oud player, employed in state ensemble, performed in Konya on 740 th Şeb-i Arus	20.01.2014
18	Aziz Şenol Filiz	Ney player, employed in state ensemble, has several private ensembles, albums on Mevlevi music	21.01.2014
19	Banu Şenay	Ney player, PhD in Anthropology, researcher among İstanbul ney circles	21.01.2014
20	Ahmet Hoca	Ney player, PhD in Music, teaches at a state university in İstanbul	12.02.2014
21	Erdem İlgi Akter	Ney player, PhD candidate in Anthropology, researcher among İstanbul Sufi music circles	12.02.2014
22	Semih Sergen	Actor and poet, has plays on Rumi, honorary member of MEKÜSAV	04.04.2014
23	Michael Hoca	PhD in Musicology, researcher of Turkish music	11.04.2014
24	Ferhat	Curator, organizing music festivals including Mevlevi music	22.05.2014
25	Özgün Hoca	Cantor, employed in state ensemble, performed in Konya in 740 th Şeb-i Arus	15.04.2015

LIST OF AYİN PERFORMANCES

	Date	Location	Performer	Composition
1	28.05.2013	Ulus Ankara	Yegah	Hüseyini kadim ayin
2	14.07.2013	Taksim İstanbul	MEKÜSAV & guests	Acemaşiran ayin-Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede
3	30.09.2013	Karatay Konya	Konya State Ensemble of Sufi Music	Ferahfeza ayin-İsmail Dede Efendi
4	11.10.2013	Keçiören Ankara	Musa Göçmen Orchestra & guests	Acembuselik ayin-Nasır Abdülbaki Dede
5	13.10.2013	Taksim İstanbul	MEKÜSAV & guests	Ferahfeza ayin-İsmail Dede Efendi
6	07.12.2013	Karatay Konya	Konya State Ensemble of Sufi Music & guests	Çargah Ayin-Kutbünnayi Osman Dede
7	13.12.2013	Beşevler Ankara	MEKÜSAV & guests	Ferahfeza Ayin-İsmail Dede Efendi
8	17.12.2013	Karatay Konya	Konya State Ensemble of Sufi Music & Guests	Çargah Ayin-Kutbünnayi Osman Dede
9	21.12.2013	Sıhhiye Ankara	Mehmet Demirer's discrete ensemble	Acembuselik Ayin-Nasır Abdülbaki Dede
10	09.05.2014	Beşevler Ankara	Yegah	Acembuselik Ayin-Nasır Abdülbaki Dede

- Hammamizade İsmail Dede Efendi's ayin in makam hüzzam, which was performed in the event named "Şeb-i Arus İstanbul" on December 13, 2013 in İstanbul, is also taken into account throughout analyses.

LIST OF OTHER EVENTS

	Date	Location	Name	Content
1	27.02.2013	Keçiören Ankara	Yunus Emre Okumaları-Mustafa Tatçı	Reading and discussion of Sufi texts
2	21.03.2013	Kavaklıdere Ankara	Nevruz Semineri- Rahmi Oruç Güvenç	Seminar on Sufism and music-therapy
3	17- 20.04.2013	Venice Italy	Bîrûn Seminar on Ottoman Armenian Composers-Kudsi Erguner	Music seminar, concert rehearsal and concert
4	09.05.2013	Beşevler Ankara	Işığın Sesi Konseri- TÜMATA	Mystic music and dance
5	16- 17.08.2013	Gökçedere Yalova	7 gün 7 gece sema- TÜMATA	Sufism and music-therapy
6	24.09.2013	Karatay Konya	Movements Foundation- Gurdjiyeff	Mystic music and dance
7	30.10.2013	Mithatpaşa Ankara	Mevlana-Aşk ve Barış Çılgılığı	Reading theatre with Mevlevi music
8	22.01.2014	Cihangir İstanbul	Listen to the ney and the tale it tells: Ethical becoming through musical learning	Musicological and anthropological seminar of Dr. Banu Şenay
9	13.03.2014	Mithatpaşa Ankara	Mevlana-Aşk ve Barış Çılgılığı	Reading theatre with Mevlevi music
10	15.04.2014	Söğütözü Ankara	Nil Sufileri	Mystic music and dance

C: MUSICOLOGICAL FINDINGS

Tempos of the recordings (in bpm)

Ayin in makam ferahfeza, 3 rd selam	
30.09.2013	13.10.2013
Devr-i kebir part: 98 Aksak semai part: 112 Yürük semai part: 112 starting	Devr-i kebir part: 98 Aksak semai part: 105 Yürük semai part: 112 starting
13.12.2013	
Yürük semai part: 120-> 154-> 194	

Ayin in makam çargah, 3 rd selam	
07.12.2013	17.12.2013
Yürük semai part: 116-> 144-> 172-> 244	Yürük semai part: 118-> 148-> 176-> 248

Ayin in makam acembuselik, 3 rd selam	
21.12.2013	Kani Karaca's performance (no date info available)
Yürük semai part: 138-> 170-> 200 -> 250	Yürük semai part: 110 starting-> 160 ending, acceleration without attack points

Modulations in the 3rd selams

Ayin in makam mahur	Ayin in makam çargah	Ayin in makam hüzzam
Mahur	Çargah	Hüzzam
Segah	Saba	Neveser
Buselik	Acem	Bayatiaraban
Nikriz	Hicaz-ı rumi	Uşşak-maye
Araban/Bayati		Rast

See Hatipoğlu 2011 for further details

Scores for the 3rd and 4th selams of the ayin in makam mahur by Zeki Atkoşar

(MÂHÛR MEVLEVÎ ÂYİN-İ ŞERİFİ-8.SAYFA)

ÜÇÜNCÜ SELÂM

DEVİR-İ KEBİR

Á ES - ŞI - - - - KAN DER
ES - SA - - - - LÂ EY

KÛ - - - - Yİ CÁ - - - - NÂN
Á - - - - ŞI - KAN NÂN DER

ES - - - - SA - - - - LÂ DOST
KÛ - - - - Yİ

BE - Lİ YÂ - - - - Rİ MEN
BE - Lİ YÂ - - - - Rİ MEN

SÛ - Yİ - - - - AN HUR
ES - SA - - - - LÂ CÂN

Şİ - - - - Dİ TÂ - - - - BÂN
ES - - - - SA - - - - LÂ CÂN

ES - - - - SA - - - - LÂ
ES - - - - SA - - - - LÂ

DE - Lİ YÂ - - - - Rİ MEN
BE - Lİ YÂ - - - - Rİ MEN

(MÂHÛR MEVLEVÎ ÂYÎN-İ ŞERÎFÎ-9.SAYFA)

SEM - Sİ TEB - - - - - Rİ - .

zi zi BÂ - - - LÂ - - - .

Yİ FE - - - - - LEK

BE - Lİ YÂ - - - Rİ MEN

HER ZA - - - - - MÂ - - - - - Nİ Mİ - .

KE - - - ŞED HAN

AKSAK SEMÂÎ

ES - - - SA - LÂ (TERENNÛM)

(MÂHÛR MEVLEVÎ ÂYİN-İ ŞERÎFİ-10.SAYFA)

YÜRÛK SEMÂÎ



(MÂHÛR MEVLEVÎ ÂYİN-i ŞERÎFİ-11.SAYFA)



(MÁHÜR MEVLEVÍ ÁYÍN-İ ŞERİFİ-12.SAYFA)



BÂ TÛ ÇÛ-NÂ - NEM EY NÎ-GÂ - RI HÛ-TE-NÎ VAY KEN -
DER GA-LA-REM KÎ MEN TÛ-EM YÂ TÛ ME-NÎ VAY NÎ
MEN ME-NE-MÛ NÎ TÛ TÛ-YÎ NÎ TÛ ME-NÎ VAY HEM
MEN ME-NE-MÛ HEM TÛ TÛ-YÎ HEM TÛ ME-NÎ VAY

DÖRDÜNCÜ SELÂM

EVFER



ÂH SUL - TÂ - - NI ME-NÎ
ÂH DER MEN BÎ - - DE-MÎ
(SAZ... ..) SUL - TÂ - NI ME - NÎ
MEN ZİN - DE ŞE - VEM
NÎ EN - DER ÂH DÎ - LÛ CÂN
VEM YEK CÂN ÂH Çİ - ŞE - VED
CÂN İ - MÁ - NI ME-NÎ
VED SAD - CÁ - NI ME-NÎ
ÂH İ - MÁ - NI ME-NÎ

Scores for the 3rd selam of the ayin in makam çargah by Kutbunnayi Osman Dede

Üçüncü Selâm

Deorikebir

Hey yi, ey şeh di nu
Ey yi pak ez he me
nu şim ah le bet
Ey yi bin şin ki
ta ta ba zi
si ted çeş mem
zi hun

ey . ja . . . lü lü . ae . . . gi
Terennüm.. x

Ey ki he zar a fe rin bu ni ce sul
 Her ki bu gun ve le de i na nu ben

tan o lur ku li o lan ki si ler cã . nim
 yuz sü te yok sul i se bay o lur cã nim

(bay i)
 hus re vü ha kano lur hus re vü ha kano lur
 Terendim! se sul tan o lur bay i se sul tan o lur

in ha ne ki peyves te de ru çen gü ce ga nest
Ez ha ce bi pür sid . ki in ha ne ci ha nest
Cün ru zi ki ya met ki ke si ra se ri kes nist .
yer . . . yer Ez zeikne da nes tü fü lâ nes tü fü lâ
nest ya ri men yar ah ya ri men yar
ah ya ri men ya ri me ra dost ya ri men uay
TERENNÜM.
Bis neu tü zi ney ci ha ci ha mi gü . yed
Es' ra ri mü haf te kib'ri ya mi gü . yed
Rah zer di de rün te hi vü ser da de be bad . . . Bi
nut ku ze ban hu da hu da mi gü . yed bi
nut ku ze ban hu da hu da mi gü . yed

Mevlâ yi e net ta i bû mim mâ se le fe Helyuk belâ öz
 rû â şî kın kad te le fe . . . İn kâ ne ne de me ti su de
 den ve ce fe . . . Mevlâ yi a fel le hû a fel
 le hû a fe . . . Mevlâ yi a fel le hû a fel
 le hû a fe . . . Baz . re si dîm zi mey han e mest
 yar Bez re hi dîm zi ba lâ uû pest ya ri yar
 ah ya ri men yar ah ya ri men ya ri me ra dost ya ri men uay
 Terennûm.
 Baz e zan kû hi kaf a me dî en ka yi esk
 Baz ber a med zi cân na re i hey he yi esk
 Hik ni de yi bû lend ke rd be e uâ zi pest
 Key di li ba lâ ni ger . der ka di ba lâ yi esk . .

bi gâ . ne mi ba şem . cü nin
 be aş kı ez des ti fi ten
 hey yi hey sul ta ri men hey hün kâ ri men . . .
 hey hey hey hey yi hey mäk bu - li men

Scores for the 3rd selam of the ayin in makam hüzzam by Hammamizade İsmail Dede Efendi

Üçüncü Selâm

Deyirkebir

deu le tet pa yen de ba

da . . . ey . sú . . . var be li
 yā . ri . men Ra him . . kún
 . . . ber ā sí . . . kan . . .
 mā' za ri der be li
 x
 yā ri . men Cún te . leb
 . . . ker . di be . cūd a med . . .
 na zar be li yā . . ri .
 men Cūd ha . zu ne . . kú
 . . . ned cú . . nin . . ta
 med ha ber
 Terennúm.
 hey yi hey yā rim

Ey ki he zar, ve fe rin ah . . bu ni ce sul
 Her ki bu gun ve fe de ah i na nu ben
 Ten o lur Ku li o lan ki si ler
 yuz su re yoksul i se bay o lur
 ah hus re uü ha kan o lur
 ah bay i se sul fan o lur
 hus re uü ha kan o lur
 bay i se sul fan o lur
 Terenada
 ze hi aşk ze hi aşk
 ki ma rast hu da ya ki ma ra uü ci han ra

bi ya rast hu da ya ah ah
 ah be li yā rim çî bez mest çî sa kist
 çî ba dest ki hur dim çî nak lest çî nuk lest
 çî hur mast hu da ya ah ah
 ah be li yā rim çî lût fest çî zev kast
 çî ru yest çî bû yest çî hal kast çî hul kast çî si mast
 hu da ya ah ah ah be li yā
 rim ve led ra me sel kû de va nist be çev kân
 be den su ki ne der ya ne sah rast hu da ya
 ah ah ah be li yā rim
 Terennüm.

Ey an ki tũ yi muradi mat
 lub hes ti te ri cũm le hal ki mah bũb . . . hes
 ti te ri cũm le hal ki mah bũb Ey yu sũ fũ hũs
 nũ ez fi ra kat ey yu sũ fũ hũs nũ ez fi ra
 kat der na le vũ gir ye em çũ yã' kub . . . der na le vũ gir
 ye em çũ ya' kub Tec rid . bi cu ve led' zi a lem tec
 rid . bi cu ve led' zi a lem ta hem çũ mü cer
 re den se vi hub . ta hem çũ mü cer re den se vi hub
 ah bũl bũ li aşk . . . Ez se her a ga zi kerd
 Pi ş i gũ lis . . . ten se her a ga zi kerd
 pi ş i gũ lis . . . ten se her a ga zi kerd

... Ez pe si her perde vü nağ me ki güft
... ez pe si her perde vü nağ
me ki güft nağ me i ho
bú di ğer a ga zi kerd nağ me i ho
... bú di ğer a ga zi kerd

Scores for the 4th selam of the ayin in makam ferahfeza by Hammamizade İsmail Dede Efendi

DÖRDÜNCÜ SELÂM

Evfer

AH SUL TA NI ME Nİ

Nİ SUL TA NI ME Nİ

AH EN DER Dİ LÜ CAN

CAN İ MA NI ME Nİ

AH DER MEN Bİ DE Mİ

Mİ MEN ZİN DE ŞE VEM

AH YEK CAN Çİ ŞE VED

VED SAD CA NI ME Nİ

Scores for the 4th selam of the ayin in makam acemaşiran by Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede

Dördüncü Selâm

Erfer.

Ah Sul-tā-ni-bi me-ni de mi-zi
men zin de meni se vem
En der di lü can şe ved
can ved i sad ma ni me ni

D: LEADING QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS: EXAMPLES

Musa Göçmen, 11.11.2013

1. Tasavvuf/Mevlevi müziğine önceden ilgisi var mıydı?
2. Senfonik Sema ne zaman ortaya çıktı? 800. Yılda sahnelenmesi planlı mıydı?
3. Sahneleme sürecinde neler yaşadı?
 - a. Ayini icra edecek sazende bulma aşaması
 - b. Ayini seslendirecek ayinhan bulma aşaması
 - c. Semazen bulma aşaması
 - d. Orkestrayla sema ekibini buluşturma aşaması
4. Senfonik Sema deneyimi ile orchestra deneyimleri arasında nasıl bir fark var?

Necati Çelik, 20.01.2014

1. Mevlevilikle ilgili bir aile geçmişi var mı?
2. Müzikle ilişkisinde Konya'nın rolü neydi?
3. İhtifallere ne zaman katılmaya başladı?
4. Yer aldığı törenlerle ilgili (bakanlık vs özel) hissiyatları nasıl?
5. World music piyasasında Mevlevi müziği icra ediyor mu?
6. Dünden bugüne Mevleviliğe dair ne gibi değişiklikler gözlemlemiş/deneyimlemiş?

Aziz Şenol Filiz, 21.01.2014

1. Ney ne kadar bilinçli bir tercih oldu? Kendi mi istedi yoksa ailesi/hocaları tarafından ona mı yönlendirildi?
2. İhtifallerde yer aldı mı? Davet edildi mi?
3. Neye dair bu kadar popüler bir figure dönüşmesinin faydalarını/zararlarını gördü mü?
4. 40 Ney 1 Nefes ve Mızrabın Nefesi projeleriyle ilgili aldığı tepkiler?
5. 5 Ayın projesiyle ilgili aldığı tepkiler?

Ahmet Hoca, 12.02.2014

1. Neyle ilişkisi nasıl başladı?
2. Akademik çalışma düşüncesi nasıl oluştu?
3. Ayın deneyimleri (Hiç Konya'da ihtifallerde ya da Galata vs. mevlevihanelerde çaldı mı?)
4. İstanbul'daki Şeb-i Arus organizasyonunda ne kadar yer aldı?
5. İzlenimleri/deneyimleri nasıldı?
6. Ayın deneyimleri karşılaştırması

Ferhat, 22.05.2014

1. İş tanımı nedir? Kültür Bakanlığı personeli mi?
2. Konya ve Ankara festivalleri dışında küratörlüğü var mı?
3. Mistik müzikler özel bir iş alanı mı?
4. Bakanlığa iş yapmanın getirileri neler?
5. Yeni ve radikal bir işi devlete kabul ettirme süreci oluyor mu?
6. Festivallere dair olumlu/olumsuz tepkiler alıyor mu?

E: SELF-REFLEXIVE FIELDNOTES: EXAMPLES

1. Gökçedere, Yalova, 16-17 Ağustos 2013, 11.00-23.30

Sabah Belma ve arkadaşlarıyla 5 kişi saat 8'de yola çıkacaktık. Saat 10'a alınmasını teklif etti gece. Sabah 10'da aradığımda bir durumlar olduğunu söyledi. 11 gibi bulduğumuzda tek gelmişti, arkadaşı Ayşin'le otoparkta kavga etmiş ve ona otobüsle gelmesini söylemiş. Diğerlerinden haberim yok. Yol boyu sema etkinliğinde nasıl huşu dolduğunu falan anlattı, Ayşin'i niye orada bıraktın o zaman diye sormadım artık, görünen o ki Ayşin gelmemiş, gelmişse bile Belma'dan uzak duruyor. Yolda odak grup yaparım ne güzel diye kurmuştum kafamda, o da patladı.

Yolda Oruç Hocanın 6 farklı yoldan icazet aldığını söyledi, tam Kuranın dediği gibi insan sayısı artıyor ama güvenip bir yolu emanet edebileceğin kişi sayısı azalıyor dedi. Oruç Hocanın omzunda çok fazla yolun sorumluluğu yük olarak binmiş dedi, o yüzden mi kambur bu adam? Tuğrul İnançer'in Mevlevi icazeti de olduğunu söylediğimde yüzü buruştu ama. Benim de iş olsun, tez için çıkmak bilmeyen izinler olsun çok fazla stres altında olduğumu, tez dışında da Oruç Hocanın yoluna girersem rahat edeceğimi söyledi, misyonerliğin dozu yer yer taşmaktaydı.

Mekâna vardığımızda akıl almaz bir kalabalık vardı, ne alt katta ne de semahane de yatacak yer kalmamıştı, bahçede-hatta komşu evlerin bahçelerinde bile-çadır kuracak yer kalmamıştı. Dergâha çok yakın bir yere otel inşa edilmiş, henüz açılışı tam yapılmamış olsa da misafir kabul ediyordu,

burada kalmaya karar verdik. (Akşamın ilerleyen saatlerinde tası tarağı toplayıp giden çok insan oldu, Mahmut Bey ve bazı başkaları gidip geldi).

Yemek başlamıştı dergâha geri döndüğümüzde, hatta bitmişti bile, biz de pidelerden aldık. Onları yerken önce Mahmut Bey Belma'yla konuşmaya geldi, beni hatırlamıyordu, kendini tekrar tanıttı. Bir süre sonra Belma'ya başka biri daha yaklaştı, sarılıp selamlaştıklarını saymıyorum bile. Neyzen Fehim'miş bu gelen, onunla konuşup o çalarken kudüme geçmemi söyledi. Yemek biterken kendimi tanıttım ona tekrar, çaldığı saatin çok pis olduğunu ama ona katılmamdan zevk duyacağını söyledi. Derken Mutlu Baba geldi, sonra Bahadır tribe başladı falan ve ne açılış anlarında ne de Fehim'in icrası sırasında semahannede olamadım. Fotoğraf çekmeye müsaade edilen 10 dakikalık zaman diliminde biraz bulunabildim orada, genelde tennureye benzetebilmek için beyaz etek giymiş insanlar semaya çıkıyordu, ama orada ilk kez şansını deneyen, semaya dair hiçbir fikri olmayan insanlar da vardı, duruşları ve dönüşleriyle profesyonel dansçı olduğunu hissettiren tipler de. Hatta Mutlu Babaya yakın bir yerde daracık siyah bluzuyla bütün vücut hatları meydanda olan sarışın bir hatun saçlarını savura savura ve değişik kol hareketleri yapa yapa dönüyordu, çok seksiydi. Sabah onun erkek versiyonu meydandaydı; üstünde daracık bir atlet, altında tennureye benzesin diye giyilmiş bordo bir etek, ayağında mesh, kaslarını sergileye sergileye ve çok güzel bir postürle dönüyordu, eşit derecede seksiydi. Yapılan şey bir yandan çok dünyeviymiş, dergâhın dışında duvara oturmuş bağlama çalan birinin etrafına toplanmışlardı semanın ilk saatlerinde, türkü söylüyorlardı. Keza bu sabah da alt katta yine bağlama çalan birinin etrafına toplanmış türkü söyleyen bir grup vardı. Başka bir grup dergâhın önündeki verandada laflıyordu, Belma orası semadan yorulanların dinlenmesi için diyerek kızıyordu. Sabaha karşı sadece iki kişi kalmış sema eden, Belma'nın ilk sarıldığı insanlardan biri görev bize düştü yine diyerek söyleniyordu. Öğlen Oruç Hoca gidip de Mutlu Baba

geldiğinde başka bir seksi oğlan çıktı, müzisyenler korkunç bir uyumsuzluk içinde Eski Dostlar'ı çalarken gövdesini öne eğip kollarını arkaya uzatarak, semaha benzer hareketler içinde dönüyordu. Bir ara bir kaptı su gelmişti, semadan yorulan terli bir erkek neye geçince bir başkası da suyun başına geçmişti, standart TÛMATA olayları.

O sırada Oruç Hoca her şey sudan gelir, Kuranda böyle yazıyor demişti, akşamki sohbette semahaneye abdestsiz çıkılmamasını salık vermiş ve nasıl abdest alınacağını anlatmıştı. Mevlana tasavvufunun İslamdan ayrı düşünülemediği her fırsatta vurgulanıyordu ama o Eski Dostlar çalınırken sema eden (Küba'dan geldiğini söyleyen galiba akşam kaç ülkeden insan var diye sorulduğunda) oğlan semaya çıkmadan önce beline bir eteklik dolayıp üstüne göbek deliği hizasında haç işlemesi olan bir kemer takmış, başına da değişik bir örtü bağlamıştı. El ele yürüyen kadınlar vardı gece dışarıda, her yer hippie zaten, rainbowcular Yunanistan'dan çıkmış geliyormuş falan, hiç kimseyi ötekileştirip uzaklaştırmadılar. Seksi seksi sema edenlere hop yavrum ulvi bir iş yapıyorsun az kendine çeki düzen ver diyen olmadı. İyi görmek isteyen "ay ne güzel, her milletten her renkten her inançtan insan var (semahanede meditasyon yapan da vardı, Sufizm üzerine kitap okuyan da, öğlenin bir vakti ya da akşamın bir vakti göbeğini kaşıya kaşıya uyuyan da, Oruç hoca hay dedikçe coşa gelip zıplamaya başlayan da, sema ederken yere düşen ve onun yardımına koşan da, piyasa semazeni gibi şekilli şekilli dönen de, götü göbeği açık hoplaya zıplaya dönen de), ne olurlarsa olsunlar gelmişler iman buluyorlar" deyip sevinebilir. Kötü görmek isteyen "bu ne nizamsızlık bu ne uyumsuzluk bu ne kepezelik" de diyebilir. Oruç Hoca civar evlerden oda tutup katılımcılarına fahiş fiyatlara kiraliyormuş Belma'nın anlattığına göre, oradan gelen surplus da hipileri doyurmaya gidiyormuş. Her saate uygun makamda müzik çalınıyor demişti bir de (TÛMATA ve Zirefkend sözcükleri geliyor aklıma, bu ne kepezelik seviyesindeyim) hiçbir makamsal ilişki gözetilmiyordu. Bir ara konserde

çalınan İngilizce ilahiler gitar ve yanflüt eşliğinde çalınmaya başlandı, Oruç Hoca ney, kopuz ve keman çaldı sırayla, en son pentatonik bir şeyler çalıyordu Western filmlerinin müzikleri edasında, o gidince gelen kadın arp çalmaya başladı, arkada onlarca uyumsuz bendir. Duyduğum modern tınılar bana hiç de Mevlana dönemini çağrıştırmıyordu, hani o dönemin semasını canlandırıyorlardı? Gerçi Mevlana'nın bakırcıların tokmak sesine sema ettiği aktarılmış kaynaklarda (kapı gıcirtısına oynuyor misali), bazen müzik durur gibi oluyor, eserler arası geçişlerde sıcıyor falan, o sıcısta sema duracak gibi oluyor, insanlar dönmeye devam edebilmek için kendini zorluyor, ama bir şeyler oluyor işte. Belma o iki üç sene önceki gelişinde gördüğü derbeder tiplerin yüzlerinin nurlandığını söyleyip mutlu oldu, "biz çok kalabalık nasıl olacak diye endişelenirken Oruç Hoca herkese kucak açıyor, gerekirse iki katta birden sema olacak diyor, kimseye kızmıyor ne büyük adam" falan yaptı. Buraya sadece çağrılıların gelebildiğini, yolda başımıza bir işler gelirse şaşırmamız gerektiğini söylemişti. Bahadır'ın saçma sapan kavgasından sonra demek kapılar bana açılmamış diye düşünebilirim.

Belma dün gece sema etmiş ve sonrasında Fehim'le laflamışlar, kurtulabilmek için beni bahane etmiş ve Fehim "aa duymadın mı o saatlerdir çöpün yanında ileri geri sallanıp duruyor, delirmiş herhalde" demiş. Kavgada insanlardan kaçmaya çalışırken herkesin ağzına sakız olmak da gerçekten harika oldu. Fehim'le görüşme yapmak istiyordum, o da patladı, gerçekten ne harika bir araştırma oldu!

Belma araştırmama dair "ilgisizliğimle" ilgili habire söylenince "herhalde görmemem gerekiyormuş, vardır bir hikmeti" dedim. "Oruç Hoca izlemek için izin istediğimde buyur izle, kapımız herkese açık demişti gerçi" dediğimde, "tabi o kapıyı açmıştır sen sığıp geçememişsindir, araştırmanla ilgili her şeyi kenara koy kendini kendin olarak at içeri, bak nasıl güzel olur o zaman" dedi.

Kaldığım otelin resepsiyonistinin arkadaşları geldi, bu olaydan hiçbirinin haberi yokmuş (otel sahibi dâhil), “oğlum gördün mü deliler toplanmış” diyerek büyük bir şaşkınlıkla gülmeye başladılar. İşte nasıl bakarsan öyle görüyorsun. Önümden de kasasında TUZCU yazan ve içinde torba torba tuzları olan bir kamyon geçti, tuz biber niyetine.



2. Congressium, Ankara, 15 Nisan 2014, 19.45-21.45

Nil Sufileri konseri için Congressium'a gittim, yürüme mesafesinde bir festival olması tezim açısından çok hayırlı oldu bence.

Konya gibi bir ortam değil tabi, beton karıcı kamyonların sergilendiği alandan über-teknolojik merdivenlerle konser alanına ilerledim ve önce Serhan'ı sonra da Murat Hocayı gördüm. Hoca protokol modunda sessizce gülümsüyordu, yarın Polonya'yla diplomatik ilişkilerin başlangıcını kutlayacakları konser için prova yapmışlar buradan önce, burada da Güzel Sanatlar Genel Müdürü sıfatıyla bulunuyordu.

Serhan arkadaşlarını beklemek üzere dışarıda kalırken ben içeri geçip önce Timuçin Hocayı sonra da onun çoğu organizasyonda görevli olan öğrencilerini gördüm. Ben salona girmeye çalışırken Sincan Hanımlar Lokali misali bir kadın grubu liderlerini takip ederek oturacak yerlerini bulmaya çalışıyordu. Serhan'ın benden önce girip en öne oturduğunu gördüm, Zekai Tunca'ya benzeyen peruklu bir dayı oranın protokol yeri olduğunu söyleyip onu kaldırdı. Birlikte 2. sıraya oturduk. Yalova'dan falan konuştuk hippilerin buraya da geldiğini görünce. Sonra Serhan yine öne geçmeyi önerdi ve yine Zekai Tunca tipli adama çattı. "Ben protokolüm" demesi adamı ikna etmeye yetmemişti.

Etkinlik Murat Hocanın muhtemelen o sırada salona yeni girmiş olan gürültücü liseli ekibin etkisiyle dağılmış dikkati yüzünden, başı sonu belli olmayan cümlelerle dolu kısacık konuşmasından sonra başladı. Bu sırada sahnedeki perdeye zikir görüntüleri yansıtılırken sahnenin sağ tarafında iki kişi oturuyor, sol tarafında da üç kişi nargile yakıyordu, dumanlar yükselmeye çoktan başlamıştı. Serhan "kafalar güzel olacak herhalde" dedi.

Performans sırasında seyirci neredeyse hiç susmadı, zaten Murat Hocanın protokol konuşması bile alkışlara karışan ısıklarla başlamıştı. Semih Sergen'in "sinema mı burası pezevenk" lafı aklıma geldi. Adamların performansı da yerli yersiz seyirci alkışlarıyla bölünmüştü.

İlk yarıda 4 hanende, kendi çaldıkları bendir (yoksa kitapçıklarda adı yazan başka bir şey mi?), raqlar ve neyle rasta benzer bir makamda yavaştan hızlıya bir müzik yaptı. Müziğin bir yerinde ortada oturan 4 kişi ayağa kalkıp semanın dönüşünü andıran hareketler yapmaya başladı, bu sırada tütsü ve nargile dumanları sol taraftan yükselmeye devam ediyordu. Zikrin gerektirdiği esrik hal için her şey vardı pekâlâ; oksijeni yakıp bitiren tütsü ve nargile, belki onların dumanına karışan esrar, güçlü bir düyek ve bol bol ritim, tam tur olmasa da 180 derecelik dönüşler, köpek hırlamasına benzeyen sesler çıkardıkları, beyne oksijen gitmesini engelleyen nefes hareketleri, zıplamalar, birbirini tekrarlayan melodiler, köpek havlamasını andıran tok çığlıklar... Coşku giderek yükseldi, etkinlik Kutlu Doğum Haftası etkinliği olmasa, içeriğinin tasavvufi olduğu broşürlerde yazmasa ve öyle anons edilmese, sıra gecesindeki eğlence müziğini andıran bir coşkusu vardı.

Oradan aklıma Kemal'in kısa filmi geldi, oldukça eğlenceli bir Hint müziği üzerine çimenlerde zıplaya zıplaya oynayan gençler. Bir Hintli arkadaşına courtesy olarak filmi gösterdiğinde arkadaşı çok sinirlenmiş, böyle kutsal bir eseri nasıl böyle bir şebeklik için kullandığına anlam verememiş ve derhal filmi imha etmesini istemişti bana anlattığına göre. Burada da benzer bir hava vardı, içeriğini bilmeseydi insan bu müziği raki sofrasında dinlemek ve kalkıp oynamak ister. Nitekim arkadaki gürültücü liseli grubu Serdar Ortaç'a alkış tutar gibi hanendelerin ve dansçıların (zakir?) performansına eşlik ediyor, akıllı telefonların ışığıyla çakmak sallar gibi hareketler yapıyordu. Bir yerden sonra bütün seyirciler alkışlara dâhil olmuştu, Nil Sufileri değil Dionysos eğlencesi

mübarek. Şimdi ben bu hiç tanımadığım Sufi ritüeli hakkında bunları aklıma getirirken alakasız bir seyirci kitlesinin sema ayini izlerken neler düşünebileceğini tasavvur etmeye çalıştım. Sanki ta en başında eğlence ve din aynı şeydi ve bugün de durum çok farklı değildi. Ama belki ben bunları düşünürken kendi tahayyülümde her şeyi yanlış anlıyordum. Sahnedekiler belki benim gördüğümde çok daha farklı şeyler görüyordu seyircide. Geertz'in Java adalarında nasıl aciz düştüğünü ve yöre halkının onu polise "bu bizim antropoloğumuz" diye anlatmak zorunda kaldığını hatırladım. Ben de kendi düşüncemde kaybolup aciz mi düşüyordum acaba?

Derken Serhan bana doğru eğilip, belki de artık araştırmama nokta koymam gerektiğini hatırlatırcasına, şu soruyu sordu; zikir doruk noktasına ulaşmış, zil sesleri havlama gibi olan çığlık seslerine karışmış, seyirci kopmuştu: "Ya şu kenarda durup nargile tütürenler bu ortada zıplayanlarla aynı parayı mı alacak şimdi?"

Burası gayet gerçek dünyaydı, sahnede bir performans ve bu performansın bir karşılığı vardı. Ali Ergur'un modern-sonrası toplumla ilgili anlattıkları yerindeydi, biz artık olayın Sufi boyutunu anlayabilecek değil sahne performansını çabuk çabuk tüketecek bir toplumduk, Demirkafes'in karşısındaki kongre merkezinde, ayağımıza kadar getirilmiş Nil Sufileri'ni izleyerek mesai sonrası zamanımızı renklendiriyorduk. Zaten bu sorudan birkaç dakika sonra en kendinden geçmiş görünen en sağdaki zakir (dansçı?) saatine baktı. Sanki zikri burada bitirip ikinci yarıya, oradan yarınki uçağa, oradan da dünyanın bilmem neresindeki performansa yetişecekti de geç kalıyordu. Ne global, ne transnational idik biz.

Sahneden inmeden ikinci yarı başladı, nargileler kalktı sazlar geldi, ortada bir ud, haydi bakalım ver coşkuyu. Aynı düşünceler kafamda büyüdükçe büyüyordu. Performansın sonunda Bis için sahneye geri döndüler. Ben de

başından sonuna alkış tutarken buldum kendimi, tütsüler içeriyi pek güzel kokutmuştu.

Çıkarken Serhan'ın Zekai Tunca'yı Timuçin Hocadan aldığı gazla azarlarken gördüm. Galata ayını öncesi gelip gelmeyeceği hala kesinleşmemiş olan müzisyenlerle ilgili "ama insanda azıcık disiplin olacak, böyle son dakikada olmaz ki" diye sinirlenen Nedim Abi ve Gülden Ablayı "bu iş gönül işi, gönülde disiplin arayıp öfkelenmemeli" diyerek sakinleştirmeye çalışan Serhan, kongre salonunda tam bir devlet adamına dönüşmüş, "ben müfettişim, Güzel Sanatlar Genel Müdürü olsun festivalin sanat yönetmeni olsun tanıdığım insanlar hocalarım, böyle ortamlarda ben hep protokolüm, o adam kim ki benim en önden izlememe engel oluyor" diye sinirlenmişti.

Serhan'ın Zekai Tunca'yla atışması süredursun Nil Sufileri fuayeye çıkmış, onları tebrik eden gürültücü liselilerle selfie çektiriyordu. Konya'dan hippiler kalkıp gelmiş, Serhan onlarla bir şeyler çalıp neşveyab olmak için ODTÜ'ye yürümeye karar veriverdi. Salondan çıkarken bana Belma dedikodusu yapan Zuhale Abla gitmişti ve karşılaşmış bulduğum Belma Zuhale Abla'nın dedikodusunu bana yapmaya başlamıştı. Nasıl oldu anlamadım, bir anda kendimi arabuluculuk yaparken buldum. Deleuze dönüyor aklımın bir köşesinde ama Zuhale Abla öyle demek istememiştir ama Belma o sırada başka bir şey hatırlamıştır aslında kimse kimseyi kırmadı diye insanları teselli ederken, reel dünyayla o tasavvufun uçmuş dünyası ne kadar akışkan ve birbirine geçmiş aslında.

3. Gazi Üniversitesi, Ankara, 9 Mayıs 2014, 17.30-21.00

Yegâh'ın Gazi'de acembuselik ayin konseri olacaktı. Orhan Abinin son dakika ameliyata gireceği ortaya çıkmış, Merve onun yerine benim çalmamı istedi. Yıllar önce uzun süre birlikte ayin çalıştığım bu ekibin böyle bir ricasına hayır diyemezdim. Yegâh'ı araştırmamın dışında tutmaya çalıştım. Timuçin Hoca dâhil oradan hiç kimseyle görüşme yapmadım (Merve'nin heyecan dolu beklentisine rağmen). Şimdi böyle bir ricayla karşı karşıya kalmak beni düşündürdü, ben de araştırmam kapsamında ilk kez bir ayinde sahne alacak olmanın gerginliğiyle bu deneyimimi oto-etnografik bir nota dökmeye karar verdim.

Sahne beyaz hâkim yaka gömlek, siyah pantolon ve siyah haydariye giyilecekti. Saatlerce aramama rağmen beyaz hâkim yaka gömlek bulamadım; beyaz olanlar hâkim yaka değildi, hâkim yaka olanlar da beyaz değildi. Ben de yakalarını içe kıvrırmak üzere düz bir gömlek aldım. Prova saatinde Gazi'ye ulaştığımda insanların o beyaz değil diye beğenmediğim 80-90 liralık gömleklerle geldiğini gördüm, fazla mı kasmıştım acaba?

Gazi'nin girişini oldum olası sevmem, kampusun orasını burasını bölen otoyollar, tek bir yaya geçidi bile olmaması... Elimde koca sazla hayli travmatik oldu Beşevler metrosundan konser salonuna ulaşmam. Girişe yakın bir yerde ayinin kocaman bez afişini gördüğümü hatırlıyorum. O maceralı yürüyüşten sonra kimse girişte beni sallamaz diye düşünüyordum ki güvenliğin beni fark edeceği tuttu. Konserde görevliyim demeye çalıştım, dilim de dönmedi.

Gördüğüm tanıdıklara selam verip içeri ilerledim, salon daha önce konser verdiği bir yer olduğu için az çok neyle karşılaşacağımı biliyordum, ama tahmin etmediğim şeylerle de karşılaştım. Merve ses sistemiyle

debelenmekteydi; yeterli mikrofon yoktu, monitör hiç yoktu, mikrofonlar sazlara uygun değildi, sorunu çözebilecek donanımda bir tonmayster de yoktu.

Giyinecek yer aradım, bulamayınca su damacanelerinin olduğu bir odaya saklanıp üstümü değiştirdim. Nasıl da terlemiştim, her şey üstüme yapıştı, kendimi sahnede yer almak için fazla pis hissettim.

Eşyaları koyacak yer de yoktu, uzun çabalar sonunda sahneden çekemedikleri piyanonun altına çantamı saklamayı başardım. Derneğe yeni katılmış (yani benden daha sonra) olan Sevim Ablayla yan yana çalacaktık, her gören akraba olduğumuzu sanıyordu, nasıl tatlı bir kadın, esprili ve çok heyecanlı. Ne yapacağımızı bilmez halde oturduk, sol yanımda halilesiyle Turgut vardı ve kudümleri görmemi engelliyordu. Ritimlerde mikrofon da yoktu işin kötüsü. Daha da kötüsü sabahları müsli yemenden dolayı mıdır nedir karın ağrım var bir süredir ve konser öncesi şiştim de şiştim. Sevim Ablaya itiraf ettim durumu provanın başlamasını beklerken, mahvolduk der gibi bir bakış attı. Her fırsatta tuvalete gidip rahatlamaya çalıştım ama pek işe yaramadı, acayip bir karın ağrısıyla konsere çıkacaktım.

Durum bir amatör koro konserinden çok da farklı değildi, konseri kurtarsın diye takviye sazlar ve sesler çağırılmıştı, bazıları ilk kez provaya geliyordu, üstelik teknik ekipman yetersizliği nedeniyle sadece onlara mikrofon verilmişti. Neredeyse bir yıldır bu konsere hazırlananların mikrofon talep etme hakkı bile yoktu. Prova tam kaotik oldu, 4 semazen dönecek diye bütün sahne pudralanmıştı, bir yandan da hapsiriyordum. Semazenlerden çıkan rüzgâr notaları uçurmasın diye sayfaları sehpağa bağlamışlardı ama bu kez de notalar çevrilmiyordu. Sevim Ablayla bana nota sehpağa da kalmamıştı, üstelik kulağımdaki ayinden farklı bir referans üzere çaldıkları için afallayıp duruyordum. Sazlar ve hanendeler sesimizi duysun diye ritimlere abanıyorduk ama işe yaramıyordu. Semazen kardeşler Turgut'a daha fazla cıslatması için

işaret yapıyordu, Turgut da mikrofon yoksa benden bir şey beklemeyin diyordu (zaten Turgut'un hımlayarak çalmasından oldum olası rahatsız oluyorum, bir de o dikkatimi dağıttı halilenin über-volumü yanında). Ritimlerden bağımsız bir prova oldu, herkes birbirini uyardı durdu ritimlere uyulsun diye. Nurgül Abla Yasemin Ablaya nasıl hareket edeceğini anlatıyordu, "heyecanlanma Yaso" diye uyarıp duruyordu, zira semazenbaşığıydı ve ilk kez Devr-i Veledeye çıkacaklardı. Hayali bir posta selam selam vereceklerdi, postnişin falan zaten yok. Gerginlikleri yüzlerinden okunuyordu.

Kötü geçen provanın ardından konserin başlamasını beklemeye koyulduk arkada. Ben ayine çıkıyorum sade olmam lazım diye makyaj yapmaktan bile kaçınırken fönlü saçları ve şeker kız Candy yanaklarıyla süslü kızlar görmek büyük hayal kırıklığı yarattı bende.

Semazenlerin ritüele uygun davranmaya çalıştıklarını gördüğüm için "sahneye çıkarken biz de selam verecek miyiz" diye sordum. ODTÜlü ekip arasında bir infial yarattım ama herkes sallamadı. Erhan "bu gerçek ayin değil ki, hırka bile giymedik, gerçek ayinde olur o" diye cevap verdi ve herkes bir sakinleşti. Sahi ya, her şeyimiz noksandı bir de selamımız noksan kalıversindi. Ne şeyh var ne postnişin, ne burası bir dergâh, ne de biz dervişiz, yaptığımız şey ancak bir konser olabilir. Ritüel bu denli oturmadan önce de böyle miydi acaba, 15. Yyda falan, besteli ayin olmayan zamanlarda? Oruç Güvenç'in yaptığı işe duyduğum saygı birden arttı.

Aylar yıllardır görmediğim arkadaşlarla muhabbet ederken Merve bizi etrafına toplayıp "şöyle yapacağız böyle yapacağız" diye direktif verdi, paniğe gerek yoktu, standart koro konseri prosedürü işleyecekti, karnım ağrımaya devam ediyordu.

Ve ayin başladı, heyecandan sesi titreyen Burcu bir metin okudu, na't başladı, kafasına göre dönen slaytlarda ayinle ilgili bir şeyler geçti. O da ne? Emrah Bey ve birkaç kişi daha Devr-i Veledi için semazenlere katılmıştı! Konya'da semazen çok diye azaltılanlar burada Devr-i Veledi kuş kadar kalmasın diye artırılmıştı! Yine de peşrev tam bitmeden bitti sanki. Çok fazla uyararla sarılıydım, ney sesi lüzumsuz baskındı, çünkü Merve geniş mikrofonu kendi mikrofonu gibi abanmıştı, Turgut bir yandan, semazenlerin yüzündeki gerginlik bir yandan, ritimler duyulsun diye abanmamız bir yandan, of ne biçim de yanlış yanlış çaldım!

Musa Göçmen'le de aynı ayini çalmıştım, üstelik orada bize eşlik eden oda orkestrası da vardı, onlarla da toplamda 2 prova almıştık sadece, ama orada çok daha iyi çalmıştım. Hikmet Abinin verdiği güven miydi, önümde nota olmasının rahatlığı mıydı (yanımda Şule halile çalıyordu ama Turgut kadar rahatsız etmemişti, Mert'in aşırı derecede uyumsuz bulduğu polifoni bile rahatsız etmemişti, hiç dikkatim dağılmadan çalmıştım orada) bilmiyorum. Burada çok çok kötü çaldım.

Ayin çabucak bitiverdi, semazenler posta selam durup sahneyi terk edecekken Emrah Beyler yine katıldı, ayin boyunca nerede ne yaptılar bilmiyorum, çok acayıpti. Biterken herkesten özür dilemem gerektiğini hissediyordum, çok kötü çalmış olmam dışında bir şey düşünemiyordum. Mp3 çalarımdaya dinlerken gözlerimi yaşartan bu ayine karşı tek hissiyatımın kötü çalmam olması da büyük hayal kırıklığıydı, ekstracı gibi işime bakmış çalıp sahneden inmişim, tühtü bana.

Kuliste Serhan'ı gördüm, tebrik edip hemen başkalarını aradı, sonra Nedret Hocayı gördüm. Gazili tabi gelip dinlemiş. Epeydir MEKÜSAV'a uğramadığım için beni unutmuş galiba, yüzüme bile bakmadan yürüyüp gitti seslenmeme rağmen. Hatırlamaması iyi oldu bence, yeniden MEKÜSAV'a gittiğimde bizimle

hiç çalmanın da onlarla ne işin vardı diye Gülden Abla sorarsa mahcup hissederim, çalmamı istediği oldu çünkü Hamamönü programlarında.

Canım Esra ve Elnur oradaydı, uzun uzun muhabbet ettik onlarla, ikisini de nasıl özlemişim. Demedim onlara işte tez gözlem falan diye, kendi kendimin ajanı oldum, bir daha tühtü bana.

Nedense oradan kaçarak uzaklaşmak istedim, yoksa beni eve bırakacak insan çoktu. Hemen vedalaşıp geldiğim yoldan geri döndüm. MEB Şura'nın önünden geçerken Oruç Hocayı, Gülden Ablayı, tez için oraya ne sık gidip durduğumu filan hep hatırladım. Sonra çok açtım, benzincideki Burger King'e oturup bir Whopper söyledim. Ah ulusaşırılık, ah antropoloji, ah kavramlar... O patatesleri tek tek yerken kafa durmadı hiç.

F: VITA

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Şahin, Nevin
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
Date and Place of Birth: 13 October, 1985, Bulgaria
Marital Status: Single
Phone: +90 312 466 75 33/ 3507
email: nevinsahin@ybu.edu.tr

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU Social Anthropology	2009
BS	METU Foreign Language Education	2007
BS	Anadolu University Sociology	2015
High School	Çapa Anatolian Teacher Training High School, İstanbul	2003

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2014- Present	Yıldırım Beyazıt University Department of Sociology	Research Assistant
2011-2014	METU Directorate of Student Affairs	Research Assistant
2007-2008	Ufuk University Prep School	Instructor of English

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Elementary German, Beginner Greek, Beginner Ottoman

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G: TURKISH SUMMARY

Bu çalışma 21. Yüzyıl Türkiye'sinde Mevleviliğe dair deneyimleri anlama amacı taşımaktadır. Seküler devletlerin dine yakınlaştığı ve dini etkinliklerin seküler bağlamlarda kültürel miras etkinliklerine dönüştüğü günümüzde sosyal bilimlerin müziği duymaya ve anlamaya olan çabasının hala genişleyecek alanlara sahip olmasının etkisiyle böyle bir araştırma konusuna yönelme gereği doğmuştur. Mevleviliğe dair anlayış ve pratiklerin Türkiye'nin cumhuriyet döneminde nasıl görünür olduğu ve dönüşüme uğradığı, Türkiye bağlamında Mevleviliğin nasıl yeniden üretildiği ve tüketildiği, devlet kurumlarında semazen ve mutrib olarak istihdam edilen "resmi Mevleviler" ile Mevlevilikle ilişkili vakıf ve derneklerde faaliyetlerini sürdüren "gayri resmi Mevlevilerin" günümüzde Mevleviliği nasıl anladığı ve yorumladığı, Mevlevilikle ilişkili etkinliklerde devletin nasıl temsil edildiği ve iktidar dinamiklerinin Mevlevilik bağlamında nasıl sergilendiği sorularına etnografik ve özdüşünsel bir yaklaşımla yanıtlar aranmıştır.

Bu araştırma konusunu belirlememde kişisel deneyimin etkisi oldu. 2003 yılında Sertab Erener'in Eurovision'da aldığı birincilik sonucu 2004 yılında Türkiye'de gerçekleştirilen yarışma finalinde sahnede semazenlerin yer alması ve semazenlerinin cinsiyetinin o dönemde epey tartışma konusu olması Mevleviliğin günümüz bağlamındaki anlamlarına dikkat çevirmemi sağlayan ilk olay oldu. Aynı yıl, Konya'da Mevlana Kültür Merkezi'nin törenle açıldığı yıldı. O dönem Türkiye'de saha çalışması yapmış olan Victor A. Vicente, bu açılışı gözlemlemiş ve tören boyunca devletin Mevleviliğin sunumuna dair gösterdiği çabaya ilişkin gözüne çarpan detayları tezinde anlatmıştı. Bu ilişkiyi

benim fark etmem 2009 yılında CerModern'in açılışı öncesi gerçekleştirilen Ramazan programında oldu. Başbakanın törene gecikmesi nedeniyle törenin geç başlatılması, beklemekten yorulan seyircinin protestolarını susturmak üzere sahnedeki Kültür Bakanlığı sanatçılarının ney taksimeleri yapmak zorunda bırakılması sahnedeki iktidar dinamiklerinin birer yansımasıydı. Mevlana'nın doğumunun 800. yılı şerefine 2007'nin Mevlana yılı ilan edilmesi, 2010 İstanbul Avrupa Kültür Başkenti etkinliklerinin sema performansları içermesi, 2012 yılının Mevlevî bestekâr Buhurizade Mustafa İtrî Efendi'nin ölümünün 300. yılı anısına İtrî yılı olarak kutlanması gibi olaylar, Mevlevîliğin ne kadar büyük bir bağlamı olduğunu gözler önüne seriyordu. Deneyimlerim ışığında önce Mevlevîliğin popülerleşmesini araştırmaya karar verdim, ardından araştırmam Mevlevîlik ve iktidar dinamikleri üzerine yoğunlaştı.

Mevlevîliği anlayabilmek için öncelikle dinler tarihinin derinliklerine doğru inmek gerekir. Tek tanrılı dinler öncesi inanışlarda tanrıların doğanın bilgisine hâkim olduğu ve tanrılara erişebilmenin yegâne yolunun bilgi aracılığıyla olduğu görüşü hâkimdir. Bilgiye ulaşabilmek için müzik sıklıkla bir araç olarak kullanılmıştır. Pythagoras'ın gezegenler ve yıldızlar arasındaki mesafelerle müzik notalarının frekansları arasındaki oranları hesapladığı kuramı bu açıdan değerlendirilebilir. Antik Yunan ve Anadolu tanrılarında bilgelik çoğu kez müzikle ilişkilendirilmiştir ve Dionysus ayinleri gibi örneklerde de görüleceği üzere tanrılara tapınmak için müzik ve danstan oluşan ritüeller uygulanmıştır. Ruhun tanrıdan ayrıldığı ve ilahi bilgiye ulaşarak köklerine yani tanrıya geri döneceği şeklindeki Gnostik inanış, bir döngüsellığe işaret etmekle birlikte, tek tanrılı dinlerde bu inanışın yeniden ortaya çıkması da bir döngüsellik sonucudur. Söz konusu döngüsellik semadaki dönme hareketinde cisimleşir ki dönerek ibadet etme de eski inanışlarda mevcuttur.

İslam'daki kökenlerine bakıldığında Sufi sözcüğü ile Arapçada yün anlamına gelen suf sözcüğünün ilişkili olduğu görülmektedir. Bir asketizm işareti olarak yün kıyafetler giyen mutasavvıflar, inançlarını ortaya koymanın farklı yollarını aramakla kalmıyor, devlet erkânıyla yakın münasebetleri sebebiyle rahatsız oldukları normatif İslam temsilcileri olan ulemaya da tepki gösteriyorlardı. Zahiri bilgi ve topluluk pratiklerine odaklanan ulemanın karşısındaki batını bilgiye ve dini deneyimin bireyselliğine odaklanan mutasavvıflar arasındaki fark yüzyıllardır varlığını sürdüren bir çatışmaya da zemin hazırladı. Müzik ve dansla ibadet etmenin yasaklanmasından mutasavvıfların ulema emriyle öldürülmesine kadar çeşitli sonuçları olan bu çatışma, 11. yüzyıl mutasavvıfların çabalarıyla yumuşatıldı. Mevlevilik bir tasavvuf inancı olarak bu ılımlı dönemde ortaya çıktı. Ortaya çıktığı andan itibaren hep devletle yakın ilişki içinde olan ve ılımlı duruşuyla radikal tarikatlardan farklı duran Mevlevilik, ne normatif dine ne de dini devlete bir tehdit oluşturmaması sayesinde bir iktidar dengesi oluşturup korumayı başardı. Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun yıkılıp Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin kurulduğu ve devletin dinle ilişkisinin değişip dönüştüğü süreçte bile Mevlevilik, ibadethanelerinin müzeleştirilmesi ve ibadetinin kültürel miras olarak tanınması yoluyla diğer tarikatlardan farklı bir noktada durmaya devam etti.

Mevleviliğin Batı'daki popülerliği ile ilişkili olaraksa din ve fetişizm arasındaki ilişkiyi düşünmek önemlidir. Ayrıca Protestan Etiğindeki sonraki hayata yatırım amaçlı bu dünyada çok çalışma fikrinden ileri gelen dünyevileşme de fetişizm ve metalaşmayla bağlantılıdır. Püriten dinin taleplerinden yorgun düşen Batılıların Doğu'daki mistik geleneklere ilgi göstermesi tasavvufun tüketim nesnesine dönüşmesinde etkili olmuştur. Tasavvufla ilgili yapılan filmler, yazılan kitaplar ve çeviriler radikal ve şeriatı benimseyen tarikatlardan ziyade Mevleviliğin ılımlılığını Batı dünyasına yansıtarak Mevleviliğe olan ilgiyi bir nevi koşullandırmıştır. Elif Şafak'ın Aşk romanının Batı tüketicisine hitaben

yazılmış olmasına rağmen Türkiye’de de çok satanlar arasında yerini alması Türkiye’de de benzer bir popülerleşme ve metalaşma sürecinin mevcudiyetine işaret etmektedir.

Mevlevilikle ilgili Türkiye bağlamında yakın zamanda yürütülmüş çalışmalar ağırlıklı olarak toplumsal cinsiyet ve Mevlevilikle diğer tarikatların ritüel ve mekan açısından karşılaştırılması üzerinde durmuştur. Ayrıca gösterim, kültür mirası ve dünya müziği etrafında tartışmalar yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmalarda ağırlıklı olarak İstanbul odaklı incelemeler yapılmıştır. İktidar ilişkilerine odaklanan ve yoğun olarak Ankara’da gerçekleştirilen saha araştırmasına dayanan bu çalışma, literatüre hem kavramsal hem de yöntemsel katkılar sunma potansiyeline sahiptir.

Mevleviliğin 21. yüzyılına ilişkin kültür mirası, popülerlik, tüketim ve iktidar gibi kavramları tartışacak sahayı tanıyabilmek için Mevleviliğin geçmişine bakmak gerekmektedir. Ailesiyle Moğol işgalinden kaçarak Anadolu’ya gelen Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi’nin tasavvuf anlayışını kökenlerinin olduğu Horasan’daki Melamilik ve Kalenderilik gibi inanışların beslediğini hatırlamak önemlidir. Söz konusu işgalden sadece mutasavvıflar değil sanatçılar ve bilim insanları da kaçmıştır. Selçuklu Devleti’nin başkenti olan Konya’ya sığınan bu mülteciler, kentin entelektüel ve dini çehresini zenginleştirmiştir. Bu zengin kültürel havayı soluyan Mevlana, aldığı eğitimin de etkisiyle kentin önemli mutasavvıflarından biri konumuna yükselmiştir. Yine Horasan kökenli olan Şems-i Tebrizi’yle karşılaşması semayla tanışmasını sağlamış, onun yokluğunda sıklıkla esrik halde sema etmeye başlamıştır. Zamanla kendi etrafında dönerek kendinden geçtiği bu ritüel, müzisyenlerin eşlik ettiği ve seyircilerin katıldığı büyük bir ayine dönüşmüştür. Mevlana’nın 17 Aralık 1273’te vefat etmesini takiben oğlu Sultan Veled tarafından Mevlevilik bir

tarikât olarak kurulmuştur. Mevlana için yapılan türbe aynı zamanda tarikâtın ilk dergâhı olmuştur.

Önce köylerde yapılanan Mevlevilik, 16. yüzyıldan itibaren kentlere çekilmeye başlamıştır. Devletin yaptırdığı Mevlevihanelerde yerleşen tarikât zamanla bir devlet tarikâtına dönüşmekle kalmamış, Osmanlı hanedanının da içine girmiştir. Mevlevî şeyhinden kılıç kuşanarak tahta oturan padişahlar ve Mevlevî ayini besteleyen padişahlar Osmanlı tarihinde karşımıza çıkmaktadır. İmparatorluğun başkenti İstanbul'a taşınınca kültürel ve sanatsal cazibe merkezi de İstanbul olmuştur, ancak tarikâtın kurulduğu Konya Asitane'nin orada olması itibarıyla tarikâtın merkezi olmayı sürdürmüştür.

Cumhuriyetin kurulmasıyla birlikte laik devletin ilk icraatlarından biri Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı'nı oluşturarak formel dini pratikleri devlet kontrolüne tabi kılmak, bir diğeri de 677 sayılı tekke ve zaviyelerin kapatılması kanunuyla tarikâtlara son vermek olmuştur. Kapatılan dergâh yapılarının bir bölümü yeni cumhuriyetin kalkınma simgesi olan yapıların inşası esnasında yıkılmıştır. Mevlevilik bu süreçte Ankara Mevlevihanesi gibi bazı yapılarla birlikte silsilesini ve dergâh çilesi imkânlarını kaybetmiştir, ancak kanunun yürürlüğe girmesinin hemen ardından Konya Mevlevihanesi müze olarak yeniden açılmıştır. 1950lerde muhafazakâr hükümetin devletin dinle ilgili tutumuna yönelik değişiklikler sağlamasıyla birlikte Mevlevî ayinleri yeniden sema eşliğinde icra edilmeye başlamıştır. İlerleyen yıllarda Mevlana'ya dair kutlamaların yapılması, UNESCO destekli etkinlikler, kültürel miras olarak semanın tanınması, kapatılan Mevlevihanelerin müze ve kültür merkezi olarak yeniden açılması ve Mevlana adıyla yeni kültür merkezlerinin inşa edilmesi gibi gelişmeler, Ankara'dan alınan kararlarla tetiklenmiştir. Ancak Mevleviliğin hiçbir zaman Osmanlı'daki gibi bir devlet kurumu haline gelmemesi Mevlevilikle ilişkili vakıf ve derneklerin ortaya çıkmasına neden olmuştur.

Konya, İstanbul ve Ankara'nın tarihsel önemi bu çalışmanın sahasında bu üç kentin öne çıkmasında etkili oldu. Ankara'da tam zamanlı çalışıyor olmam, görüşmeye çalıştığım "resmi Mevlevilerin" merkezi Ankara'da olan kurumlarda çalışıyor olması gibi nedenlerle araştırmamda özellikle Ankara'da yoğunlaştım. Mevlevilikle ilgili ilk vakıf olan Mevlana Kültür ve Sanat Vakfı (MEKÜSAV), merkezinin Ankara'da olması nedeniyle "gayri resmi Mevlevilere" ulaşma amacıyla araştırmamda en çok yer verdiğim kurum oldu. Devletin yoğunlukla temsil edildiği etkinliklerin daha çok Konya ve İstanbul'a kaymış olması sebebiyle bu kentlerde Ankara'dakinden farklı saha deneyimlerim oldu, örneğin Konya'da yoğun olarak gözlemler yaparken İstanbul'da yoğun olarak görüşmeler yaptım. Mevlevilikle ilgili etkinlikler gerçekleştiren devlet kurumları ve Mevlevi vakıf ve derneklerinin yanı sıra yatırımcıların da peşine düşerek sahamı Kapadokya'ya genişlettim. Görüşme ve gözlem olanaklarımı genişletebildiğim noktada Yalova ve Venedik'e ziyaretlerde bulundum. Çokmekânlı saha çalışmamda sahamı kurmak için eşik-bekçilerinin yanı sıra müzisyen kimliğimle zaten irtibat halinde olduğum kişilerden yardım aldım. Örneğin Venedik'e sonucunda konser yapılacak olan bir müzik seminerinde yer almak üzere gidebildim ve seminerden kalan zamanda görüşmeler gerçekleştirdim. Şubat 2013-Mayıs 2014 arası gerçekleştirdiğim saha çalışmasında MEKÜSAV'ın Batıkent'teki merkezinde 6 ay boyunca cumartesi çalışmalarına ve bir sezon boyunca Hamamönü'nde gerçekleştirdikleri Mesnevi okumalarına katıldım. Sonuncusu Nisan 2015'te olmak üzere 25 derinlemesine görüşme gerçekleştirerek ağırlıklı olarak müzisyenlerden nitel veri topladım. Devlet kurumlarının, vakıfların ya da özel oluşumların sahnelediği 10 Mevlevi ayini izledim ve Mayıs 2014'te bir ayinde mutrib heyetinde sahnede yer aldım. Gerek "epistemosantrizmden" kaçmak, gerek "evde" olmanın avantajından yararlanmak, gerekse ileri araştırmalar için sahaya dönme potansiyelini korumak amacıyla çalışmamda özdüşünümselliği ön planda tuttum. Tam zamanlı işimden ve yerel seçimler öncesi ülkenin politik

hareketliliğinden kaynaklanan aksaklıklar nedeniyle saha çalışmamda kısıtlılıklar ortaya çıktı. Ayrıca kadın olmam itibarıyla sadece erkeklerin erişimine açık olan kulis gibi alanlarda veri toplama şansım olmadı; araştırmam öncesinde üyesi olduğum grupları da etik gerekçelerde araştırmamın dışında bıraktım. Ancak sahnede yer aldığım etkinlik bu gruplardan biri tarafından gerçekleştirildiği için o etkinlikte kendi deneyimimi özdeşünümsel olarak kaydetmeyi ve grubu yine de sahamın dışında bırakmayı tercih ettim. Benimle benzer araştırmalar yapan araştırmacılarla İstanbul'da bir araya gelerek saha deneyimlerimizi paylaştım ve gerek araştırmacı olarak kendi kimliklerimizi, gerekse görüştüğümüz kişilerin kimliklerini birbirinden gizlemenin bir sahada var olma stratejisine dönüştüğünü gözlemledim.

Mevlevilikle ilgili bu çalışmada kültür mirası, yerellik ve ulusallık, popülerlik, tüketim ve iktidar anahtar kavramlar olarak öne çıktı. Bu kavramların kuramsal çerçevesini oluştururken dünya üzerindeki Mevleviliğe benzer örnekleri de ele aldım.

Mevleviliğin UNESCO tarafından kültür mirası olarak kabul edilmesi, kültür mirasına dair tartışmaları incelemeyi gerektirmektedir. Hindistan'ın UNESCO'nun kültürel miras listesine aday olarak gösterdiği ve halen listeye alınmak için beklemede bulunan Durga Puja ritüeli, Mevlevilikle benzer bağlamlar barındırmaktadır. Kökleri 16. yüzyıla dayanan ve bir süre sadece üst sınıfların evlerinde gerçekleştirdikleri bir ritüel olan Durga Puja, 18. yüzyılda halka açık hale geldi. Kolkata'nın on kollu bereket tanrıçası Durga şerefine gerçekleştirilen birkaç günlük bu ritüel, Hindistan'ın İngiliz sömürgesinden kurtulma sürecinde politik bir vasıf da kazandı ve İngiliz yetkililerce 1920lerde yasaklandı. 1947'deki bağımsızlığı takiben Durga Puja kültür mirası olarak değer kazanmaya başladı ve günümüzde oldukça geniş çaplı bir festival olarak bu ritüel gerçekleştirilmeye devam ediyor. Benzer şekilde, sınıf temelli olmasa

da mekân temelli olarak Mevlevilikte 18. yüzyıl öncesinde bir ayrım vardı. 1920lerde cumhuriyetin kurulmasıyla yasaklanan Mevleviliğin ritüeli 1950lerde kültür mirası olarak yeniden görünürlük kazandı. Günümüzde Konya’da 10 gün süren bir festivalle Mevlana’nın “düğün gecesi” olarak gördüğü ölümü, vuslat törenleri adıyla kutlanıyor. Uluslararası dikkat çeken bu festival tıpkı Durga Puja gibi geniş kitlelere hitap ediyor ve tüketim nesnesi haline geliyor. UNESCO’nun kültür mirası ile ilgili aldığı son kararlar ulus-devletlerin neyin miras olarak değerlendirileceği konusunda haddinden fazla söz sahibi olmasının önünü açmıştır. Bu durum, kültürel mirasın kendine özgü bir değer taşımadığı aksine bu değerın sosyal ve politik olarak kurulduğu ve kültürel mirasın politik bir eylem olduğu düşüncesini desteklemektedir. Bu da kültürel miras süreçlerinin iktidar dinamikleriyle belirlendiği fikrini akıllara getirmektedir.

Müziğin bir ideal peşindeki insanlar üzerindeki birleştirici rolü ulusallık tartışmalarında ön plana çıkmaktadır. Meksika örneğinde, devletin bağımsızlığını kazandığı noktada bir ulus-devlet inşa süreci başlar. Bu süreçte farklı etnik kimliklere sahip olan insanları aynı kimlikte birleştirebilmek adına bir ulusal Meksika müziği tanımlama ihtiyacı doğar ve 1926’da Ulusal Müzik Kongresi toplanır. Bu ulus-devlet inşa süreci “folklorlaştırma” sürecini de beraberinde getirir. Meksika’nın küçük bir bölümünde yaşayan yerli halkın dansının ulusal Meksika kimliğine mal edilerek günümüzde devlet organizasyonlarında ülkeyi temsil amacıyla kullanılan ve turistlere pazarlanan bir etkinliğe dönüşmesi bu folklorlaştırma sürecinin bir parçasıdır. Türkiye’de milli müziğin oluşturulması süreci de benzer bir ulus-devlet kimliği inşası esnasında gerçekleşir. Mevlevi tarikatına özgü olan ritüel ve müzik de milli kimliğin bir parçası haline getirilerek benzer tüketim süreçlerinde metalaştırılmıştır. Geniş katılımlı sema törenlerinin halk oyunu gösterisi muamelesi görmesi üzerinden eleştirilmesi de Meksika örneği ile Türkiye

örneğini buluşturan bir konu olmuştur. Kültürel nesneleştirilmedeki ideolojik arka plan, bir ritüelin ulusa mal edilmesinde devlet iktidarının etkin olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Geleneğin tüketilmesi bir tekelleşme mücadelesini de beraberinde getirir. Sömürge zamanında sadece dini ritüel olarak var olmasına izin verilen danslar sömürge sonrası dönemde eğlence değeri kazanarak turistlerin de tüketimine açılmıştır. Trinidad'daki soca örneğinde şehrin dengesini bozacak büyüklükte festivallerin gerçekleşmesi ve yatırımcıların katılımcıları memnun edecek stratejilere yönelmesi söz konusu olmuştur. Brezilya'daki sömürge kökenli quilombo halkının ürettiği çanak çömlekten devletin para kazanırken bu kimliği tanımamak için mücadele etmesi gibi örnekler Mevlevilikle benzerlikler taşımaktadır. Devletin tarikat olarak faaliyetlerini engellediği Mevleviliğin ritüeli, devletin organize ettiği törenlerle uluslararası izleyici kitlesine ulaşmaktadır. Bu bağlamda devletin özellikle Konya'daki etkinliklerde tekelleştiği söylenebilir. Ayrıca ritüelin metalaştırılmasının yanında Mevleviliğe dair semazen gibi imgelerin de hediyelik eşya olarak metalaştırılması söz konusudur. Gerek dindarların gerekse sekülerlerin tüketim süreçlerinde Mevlevilik imgelerinin benzer şekilde karşımıza çıkması, devletin yanı sıra girişimcilerin, hediyelik eşya üreticilerinin, turistlerin ve yerli halkın da pastadan pay almaya çalıştığına ilişkin bir göstergedir.

Politik ideoloji, milliyetçilik ve dinin kültürel miras, yerellik ve nostalji turizmi bağlamlarında iç içe geçtiği görülür. Devleti bu bağlamda tartışmak gerekirse ikili iktidar ilişkilerinde bir tarafın diğer tarafa hükmettiği bakış ilk akla gelendir. Gramsci'de bu tahakküm anlayışına alternatif olarak egemenlik ve itaat ilişkisinin yanı sıra entelektüel ve ahlaki liderliğin de mümkün olduğu ve hegemonya ilişkisinden söz edilebileceği tartışılır. Devlet erki bu açıdan Mann tarafından baskıcı ve altyapısal iktidar olarak ele alınır. Althusser'in bu noktada

önerdiği kavramlar devlet aygıtlarıdır, baskıcı aygıtlar baskıcı iktidarı gerçekleştirirken ideolojik aygıtlar hegemonya kurarak altyapısal iktidarı gerçekleştirir. Althusser'in çerçevesinden bakıldığında devletin ritüel ve geleneklere uyguladığı manipülasyon sonucunda bu ritüel ve gelenekler devletin ideolojik aygıtlarına dönüşür. Ancak bu bakış çok dar ve tek taraflıdır. Bourdieu iktidar mücadelesinin sürdüğü alanlar tanımlayarak iktidar ilişkilerinin geçirgenliğine vurgu yapar. Wacquant, kimlik ve hiyerarşilerin sürekli olarak çekiştiği alanları savaş meydanına benzetir. Burawoy alanların etkileşimine vurgu yaparak farklı düzeylerde iktidar ilişkileri tanımlamanın önünü açar. Bu çerçevede kişisel ve kurumsal düzeylerde Mevleviliğe dair söz sahibi olma adına süren iktidar mücadeleleri tanımlanabilir. Ancak devlet fitrat olarak kabul edilmemelidir. Devleti bir yanılısama olarak gören ve devlet denilen şeyin politik pratiklerden ibaret olduğunu her daim göz önünde bulundurmayı salık veren tartışmalar, devletin de fetişleştirildiği vurgusunu taşır. Devletin ilahlaştırıldığı bir anlayışta devlete dair temsillerin göz kamaştırıcı sahne performanslarına dönüştüğü iddia edilir. Devlet ve din ilişkisinde Kemalist İslam kavramı karşımıza çıkar, farklı dindarlıkların çatışmaları devletin fetişleştirilmesinde de gözlemlenmektedir.

Bu kavramsal çerçevede öncelikle Mevlevi kimliği irdelenmiştir. Devlet Mevleviliği gerek aralık ayında gerçekleştirilen yoğun katılımlı festivaller, gerekse semazen heykelleriyle cisimleştirilen Mevlevilik çağrışımları vasıtasıyla kucaklamaktadır. Ancak Mevlevi müziği icra edenlerin kendilerini Mevlevi diye tanımlamaktan katiyetle kaçındıkları gözlemlenmiştir. Mevlana soyundan gelen ve Konya merkezli Uluslararası Mevlana Vakfı'nın başkanlığını yapan Faruk Hemdem Çelebi, devlet tarafından gerçekleştirilen etkinliklere ayin değil tören demeyi bu yüzden tercih etmektedir. Gerek 677 sayılı kanunla Mevleviliğin silsilesinin kopması ve dergâh çilesi imkânının ortadan kalkmasıyla Mevlevi kimliğine sahip olmayı mümkün kılacak pratiklerin yok

olması, gerekse aynı kanunun Mevleviliğe dair kimlik ifadelerini yasaklaması sebebiyle Mevlevi ritüelinin içindeki görüşmecilerim Mevleviliği bir kimlik olarak benimsememektedir. Devletin Mevleviliği kucaklamasıysa devlet televizyonlarında semazenlerin günlük hayatın bir parçasıymışçasına kullanılması çelişkili bir durumu ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Bu çelişki karikatürlerde ve televizyon dizilerinde espri malzemesi olmuştur. Bununla birlikte semazen figürüne politik anlamlar da yüklenmiş, semazenin devletle ilişkisi yine karikatür aracılığıyla eleştirilmiştir. Konya'ya dair her şeye devlet eliyle Mevlana ve semazen kavramlarının iliştilmesi Konya bağlamındaki tekelleşmeye de işaret etmektedir. Aynı zamanda bu iliştilmelerin havuzda dönen semazen heykeli gibi saçma denebilecek noktalara geldiği de gözlemlenmektedir.

Mevlevi kimliğinin reddedilmesi ve kucaklanması arasındaki geçişkenlik, Mevleviliğin yakın geçmişinin sözlü tarihini incelemeye değer kılmaktadır. İstanbul fethedildiği zaman kentte gerçekleştirilen ilk çalışmalardan birinin Mevlevihane inşası olması devletin Mevlevilikle yakın ilişkisine dair çarpıcı bir örnektir. 677 sayılı kanundan sonra Mevlevilik ciddi kesintiye uğramış olsa da Mevlana İhtifalleri adıyla ritüel yeniden görünürlük kazanmıştır. Ancak bunun ilk ne zaman olduğuna dair farklı iddialar mevcuttur; 1946, 1954-55, 1956, 1958 gibi tarihler ilk ihtifal için verilmektedir. Laik devletin Mevleviliğin ritüelini sadece kültürel bir gösterim olarak ele alması, ibadet olduğunu çağrıştıracak herhangi bir fısıldaşmanın bile etkinliğin yasaklanmasına yol açacağı tehdidiyle ayin sahnelenmesi gibi gerginlikleri beraberinde getirmiştir. İlk ihtifallerin yapıldığı dönem güzel günler olarak yâd edilmekte, günümüzdeki hiçbir etkinliğin o zamanlardaki coşkuyu taşımadığı ve o tadı vermediği söylenmektedir.

1970lere gelindiğinde Mevlana İhtifallerinin dünya çapında duyulması nedeniyle katılım çok yoğunlaşmış ve organizasyon çarpıklaşmaya başlayarak eski tadını yitirmiştir. Bu dönemde Konya'daki önemli üstatlar bir bir yaşamlarını yitirirken geride kalanların ritüeli koruyabilmek adına örgütlenmesinin gerekliliği dillendirilmiştir. 1980lerde dile getirilen bu gereklilik kişi düzeyinde iktidar mücadelelerinin yoğunlaşmasını beraberinde getirmiştir. Ankara'da MEKÜSAV'ın kurulmasıyla sonuçlanan bu talebi İstanbul ve Konya ekipleri arasında bir çatışma çıkması takip etmiştir. Sözü edilen çatışma bazı grupların Konya'yı desteklememesiyle sonuçlanmıştır. Devlete yakın duran isimler Konya ve İstanbul'da iki farklı devlet topluluğunun oluşmasında öncü olmuştur. Ankara'daki vakfı takiben Konya'da da Mevlana soyundan gelenler bir vakıf kurmuştur. 1980lerin sonu 1990ların başında gerçekleşen bu kurumsallaşma süreci, 2000lere gelindiğinde çatışmanın sona erdiği çağrışımını taşımaktadır. Günümüzde Konya'da gerçekleştirilen festivalde hem İstanbul'daki hem de Konya'daki topluluk programın kendilerine ayrılan kısmında sahne almaktadır. Konya'daki vakıf semanın kültür mirası listesine alınması için çaba sarf etmiştir, Ankara'daki vakıfısa gerek Ankara'da gerek İstanbul'da gerekse uluslararası ölçekte Mevlevi ayinleri sahnelemektedir. Kurumsallaşma sürecinde Konya-İstanbul mücadelesinin dışında kalmak isteyenlerin Ankara'da kendilerine yer bulması bu üç kentin tarihsel öneminin günümüzde de yansımaları olduğunu gözler önüne sermektedir. Kişisel düzeydeki alanın mücadelesiyle kurumsal düzeydeki alanın mücadelesi arasında Burawoy'un dikkati çektiği etkileşim gözlenebilmektedir. Ancak anlatılan tarihsel ayrıntılardaki çelişkiler sürecin dayanışma-çatışma-dayanışma şeklinde gelişmesi fikrinin kesinlikle doğru olmayabileceğini çağırıştırır. Günümüz vakıflarının merkez-sağ siyasetle yakın ilişki içinde olması devletle ilişkili iktidar mücadelelerinin tartışılmasını önemli kılar. Bu kapsamda saha çalışmam esnasında Şeb-i Arus kapsamında üç farklı kentte gerçekleştirilen üç etkinliği karşılaştırdım.

Protokol konuşmalarının bir anda vuslat töreni programından çıkarılması ve muhalefetin buna tepki göstermesi, ayinlerin spor salonlarından kurtarılması için kültür merkezi inşa edilmesi ve bir anda ayinlerin yeniden spor salonunda yapılmaya başlanması gibi gelişmeler, iktidar ilişkilerinin akışkan ve geçirgen haline işaret eder.

2013 yılında Konya'daki Şeb-i Arus törenleri bir nevi devletin sahnelendiği bir etkinliğe dönüştü. Kent merkezindeki kandil uyandırma merasimi töreni bekleyen kalabalık kitleye rağmen sadece protokolün takip edebildiği bir etkinliğe dönüşürken merkezden Mevlana müzesine doğru gerçekleştirilen Sevgi ve Hoşgörü Yürüyüşü adındaki etkinlik Mehteran bölüğünün önde askeri marşlar çaldığı, arkada korumaları eşliğinde protokolün yürüdüğü, sevgi ve hoşgörüden ziyade devlet erkinin sergilendiği bir yürüyüşe dönüştü. Valilik önündeki protokol töreninde Mehteran bölüğü yine askeri bir repertuarı seslendirirken korumalar protokole yol açmak için yoldan yürüyen insanları tartaklıyordu. Festivalin açılışı halka açıkken ayin performansları, normalde her hafta halka açık performansların gerçekleştirildiği Mevlana Kültür Merkezi'nde, biletli olarak gerçekleştirildi. Bu nedenle yerelde festival için kapsamlı duyurular yapılmamasıyla bağlantılı olarak haftalık halka açık performansı izlemeye gelenler biletsiz oldukları için geri gönderildiler.

10 günlük festival kapsamındaki ilk suare ve son matineyi biletli olarak izledim. Esas protokol son suarede bulunduğu ve kent çok kalabalık olduğu için bu iki performansı izlemeyi tercih ettim. Protokol bulunmadığı için iki etkinlik de görece sakindi. 10 TL ila 50 TL arasında biletleri satılan festival için dünyanın dört bir yanından katılım bekleniyordu, ancak izlediğim suarede salon dolup taşmazken matinede salonun görece boş kaldığını gördüm. Ahmet Özhan solistliğindeki İstanbul Tarihi Türk Müziği Topluluğu konseriyle başlayan program Ömer Tuğrul İnançer'in Mesnevi sohbetiyle devam ediyor ve Konya

Türk Tasavvuf Müziği Topluluğunun ayin icrasıyla son buluyordu. Seyircilerin Ahmet Özhan'la iletişim kurmaya çalışmaları ve Ahmet Özhan'ın performansının ardından festivali anlamlı kılan Mevlevi ayini performansı başlamadan salonun boşalmaya başlaması, seyircilerin mücadelesinin sıkıcı bir dini ritüeldense meşhur bir şarkıcının coşkulu performansı için olduğu mesajını veriyordu. Ritüelde seyirci sıkılmasın diye yapılan bütün sadeleştirmeler bu tutumla boşa çıkmış oluyordu. İzlediğim iki performansta da protokol bulunmadığı için yoğun bir devlet temsili söz konusu değildi. Hatta ilk suarede Ömer Tuğrul İnançer'in devleti bugüne kadar ritüeli Mesnevi kısmını koymadan gerçekleştirmekle, yani ritüelin aslını bozmakla suçlaması sahnenin de iktidar mücadelesinin bir parçası olduğunu gösteriyordu.

Konya'dakinden farklı olarak Ankara'daki tören göz alıcı bir sahne performansına dönüşen devlete karşılık oldukça sade bir temsilden oluşuyordu. MEKÜSAV'ın Sevda Cenap And Vakfı tarafından kurulan MEB Şura Salonunda gerçekleştirdiği Şeb-i Arus töreni, vakfı temsilen Gülden Ablanın yaptığı konuşmadan ve Mevlevi ayininden ibaretti. Biletleri 23 TL ila 34 TL arasında satılmış olan bu etkinlik, Konya etkinliklerine göre ortalama bir fiyata sahipti. Gülden Ablanın oldukça kısa olan konuşması ritüeli muhafaza ettiğini iddia ederek onu bozan kurumlara eleştiriler taşıyordu. Semanın turistik bir dans gösterisine dönüşmesinin müsebbipleri arasında devlet de özel kuruluşlar da vardı. Vakfın orijinal ritüeli sürdürme iddiası, seyircilerin varlığını yok sayma pahasına ayinin gerçekleşmesine neden oldu. Hızlandırılmamış bir tempoda icra edilen ayin seyircilere hitap eden hiçbir kısaltma içermiyordu, ayrıca ayinin sonundaki dua kısmında semazenler seyircilere sırtlarını dönerek kendi içlerine kapandılar. Konya'dakinden farklı olarak sahnede bir koreografi olduğu izlenimi de bulunmuyordu. Ankara'daki bir diğer etkinlikse üniversite bünyesinde gerçekleştirilen ve öğreticilik boyutunun çok ön planda olduğu bir etkinlikti. Üniversite yerleşkesinde ve

ücretsiz gerçekleştirilen etkinliğe MEKÜSAV'ın etkinliğine kıyasla daha az ilgi gösterilmişti. Konya'daki törene benzetilmiş olan programda ilk yarı ilahilerden oluşan bir dini müzik dinletisi, ikinci yarı da ayin şeklindeydi. Aynı müzisyenler sahne aldığı için arada kıyafet değiştirdiler. Öğreticilik çabası ritüelistik çabanın da müzikal çabanın da önüne geçmişti ve ortaya dinlemekte zorlandığım bir ayin icrası çıkmıştı.

İstanbul'daki etkinlik Konya'dakinden farklı olarak bütünüyle bir devlet etkinliği değildi, Ankara'dakinden farklı olarak bir vakıf ya da üniversite etkinliği de değildi. Pek çok sponsor tarafından desteklenen, çok büyük ölçekli bir organizasyon söz konusuydu. Ankara'daki ayinle çakıştığı için birebir izleyemediğim bu etkinlikten görüşmelerim ve derlediğim haberler vasıtasıyla bahsedebiliyorum. Yine Konya'daki törene benzetilmiş bir program söz konusuydu, ancak Konya'dakinden ciddi bir fiyat farkı vardı. 15000 kişilik kapasitesi olan salonda gerçekleştirilen etkinlik için en düşük bilet fiyatı 23 TL iken en yüksek fiyat 235 TL'yi bulmuştu. Aradaki uçurum etkinliğin kapsamıyla doğrudan ilgiliydi. Konya'dakine kıyasla çok daha meşhur isimlerin ilk yarısında yer aldığı program kısa bir protokol konuşması içeriyor, son olarak da bir ayin icrasıyla tamamlanıyordu. Konya'daki bol falsolu ayine kıyasla oldukça ustalıklı ayinin icra edildiği programda protokol konuşması başbakan tarafından yapılmış ve dönemin politik gündeminin etkisiyle konuşma tezahürat ve protesto alkışlarıyla kesilmişti. Seyircinin bir bölümü başbakanı protesto ederken diğer bölümü başbakanı desteklemek için slogan atıyordu. Bu açılarından bakıldığında İstanbul'daki etkinlik bir "protestival" havasına bürünmüştü; politik temsiller sahnede yoğunlaşmadan seyircide yoğunlaşmış, etkinliğin tüketicisi olan seyirciler politik aktörler olarak sema bir iktidar mücadelesi alanına çevirmişlerdi. Her üç kentte de Mevlevi ayini mücadelenin arkasındaki fon müziğine dönüşmüştü.

Müziğe odaklandığımda karşıma başka bir manzara çıkıyordu. İzlediğim performanslarda icra edilen ayinler İstanbullu ve aynı silsileden yetişmiş Mevlevi bestekârların eserleriydi. Tek istisna Zeki Atkoşar'ın mahur makamındaki ayiniydi. Konya programının bir gününde bu ayinin çalınması aklıma bestekârın iktidar mücadelesine ilişkin sorular getirdi. Bestekârın ayini diğer ayinlerden müzikal açıdan daha aşağıda değildi, sadece diğer ayinlerden daha kısaydı. Bu kısalık memnuniyeti gözetilen seyirci için bir avantaj sağlamış da olabilir, icra edilen ayinin zorluğundan yorgun düşen müzisyenleri dinlendirmek için araç olarak kullanılmış da olabilir.

Sahne deneyiminden görüşmecilerimin çıkardıkları sonuç her icrada bulunmanın iyi bir şey olmadığı şeklindeydi. Genelde ücretsiz etkinliklerde sahne almaya çalışıyorlar, ritüele çok müdahale eden kurumlarla çalışmayı sevmiyorlardı. Buna ilişkin bir deneyimim olup olmayacağını kendi sahne performansımda sorguladım.

10 yıllık icra geçmişim ve daha önce icra etmiş olduğum bir ayinde çalacak olmanın etkisiyle sahne deneyimindeki maneviyat üzerinde gözlemlerim olabileceğini düşündüm, ancak sahne arkası o kadar sahne deneyiminin önüne geçmişti ki deneyimim bir maneviyat taşımaktan çok uzaktı. Ses sisteminden kaynaklanan sorunlar, mutribanın çok kalabalık olması, sahne içinde herkesin birbirini duyamaması sonucu provada yaşanan aksaklıkların yarattığı gerginlik ayin bitene kadar bir şey düşünüp hissetmemi engellemişti ve İstanbul bağlamında eleştirilen “ayinde çalmaması gereken piyasa icracısı” konumuna düşmüştüm. Öte yandan icracılar arasında sahnede gerçekleştireceğimiz performansın ritüel değil performans olduğuna dair net bir bilinç söz konusuydu ve ritüelin gerekliliklerini yerine getirme kaygısı besteyi düzgün icra etme kaygısının gerisine düşmüştü.

Benzer bir deneyimi Ankara'da kutlu doğum haftası için gerçekleştirilen festival kapsamında sahneye çıkan Nil Sufileri'nde yaşadım. Sahnedeki ritüeli yoğunlaştırabilmek için ayinin müziğini ve dansını icra edenlerin yanı sıra nargile benzeri duman çıkaran aletleri kullanan kişiler de sahnede idi. Ancak bütün çabaya rağmen sahne performansının ritüel olmadığı hem seyirci hem de sahnedekiler tarafından hissediliyordu. Ayinin bir yerinde dansı icra edenlerden birinin saatine bakması ritüelin ezoterikliğinin yaşanmadığının en açık göstergesiydi.

Türk Musikisini Araştırma ve Tanıtma Grubunun etkinliklerinde sahnenin ritüelle ilişkisi bulanıklaşıyordu. MEB Şura salonunda gerçekleştirdikleri konserde sahnedekilerin birbiriyle etkileşimi ve sahnenin yoğun kullanımı seyircilere hitaben iyi bir müzik icra etmekten başka kaygıları olduğunu gösteriyordu. Benzer şekilde Yalova Mehmet Rasim Mutlu Kültür Merkezinde gerçekleştirdikleri sema etkinliğinde müziğin ritüelle ilişkisi dönüşmüştü. Mevlevi ayinini bütün kurallarına uyarak gerçekleştirmek gibi bir dertleri yoktu, Mevlana zamanının semasını arama iddiasıyla ayin formu ortaya çıkmadan önceki ibadetin nasıl olduğuna dair performatif yorumlar yapıyorlardı. Bu yorum dini içeriği olmayan müzikler eşliğinde sema edilmesini mümkün kılıyordu. Duyduğum Eski Dostlar örneği bir yandan çok sarsıcıyken diğer yandan ritüele getirdikleri esnekliğin düzeyini ortaya çok net koyması itibarıyla anlamlıydı.

MEKÜSAV'ın Mesnevi okumalarında bu esnekliğin tam zıddı bir durumla karşılaştım. Mesneviden okunan bir bölümün Farsçasının bir konuktan okunması istendikten sonra Gülden Abla böyle okumanın daha makbul olduğunu söylemiş, seyirciler de onaylamıştı. Metnin yazıldığı dildeki hali nazım formunda olduğu için kulağa daha ahenkli geliyordu ancak makbulden

kasit dini anlamda daha uygun olmasıydı. Mevlana'nın yazdığı metne kutsiyet addedilmesi en az Eski Dostlar örneği kadar sarsıcıydı.

Semih Sergen'in Mevlana'nın hayatını anlattığı oyununda seyircilerin Elif Şafak'ın romanını referans alarak oyunun ne kadar gerçekçi olduğunu tartışmaları ritüelle sahne performansının iç içe geçmişliğinin yanı sıra tarihle kurgunun da iç içe geçmişliğine işaret ediyordu. Semih Sergen olabildiğince gerçekçi bir temsil peşinde sahneye koyacak kırmızı post ararken seyircinin onun metninin romanla paralelliğini gözetmesi sadece sahnede bulunanlar için değil sahne performansını tüketenler için de çizgilerin silikleştiğini gösteriyordu.

Gülden Ablanın görüşmelerde vurguladığı üzere Mevlevilik dengeye dayanıyordu. Kurulduğu günden bu yana devletle ilişkisini dengede tutmuş olan bu tarikatın ritüeli, bugün alternatif sahne performansları arasında bir denge bulmaya çalışıyor. Millileştirilen ve folklorlaştırılan ayin bir yandan tüketim nesnesine dönüşürken diğer yandan ayinin korunması üzerine farklı kuruluşların farklı mücadelelerine sahne oluyor. Devlet kurumları özellikle Konya'daki ritüellerin tekeli elinde bulundururken vakıflar ayini muhafaza etme iddiasını taşıyor. Hatta devletin muhafaza görevini yerine getiremediği noktada vakıfların devreye girdiği iddiası da devletle vakıflar arasındaki mücadeleye ışık tutuyor. Ayrıca girişimciler özellikle turistlere yönelik gerçekleştirdikleri etkinliklerle pastadan bir dilim kapmaya çalışırken, ritüelle seyirciler için yapılan müdahalelere karşılık seyirciler alkışları, tezahüratları, salonu terk etmeleriyle mücadeleye katılıyor. Mevleviliğin cumhuriyet dönemindeki kurumsallaşma sürecinde kişisel düzeydeki mücadelelerin kurumlar arası mücadeleye dönüşmesi ve mücadelenin sahne düzenlemesiyle uzlaşmaya dönüşmesi Mevlevilik alanının yakın tarihine ışık tutuyor. Öğretim

çabasıyla akademi de alana müdahil olurken sahnedekilerin performans sanatçısı olduğu gerçeği ritüelin önüne geçiyor.

Ritüelin korunması için UNESCO'dan alınan desteğin yanı sıra 677 sayılı kanunla ilgili süregelen tartışmalar Mevlevilikle ilgili yeni bir gidişatın gelişip gelişmeyeceği sorularını akıllara getiriyor. Yasanın kaldırılması durumunda yaşanabilecek gelişmeler Mevlevilikle ilgili yeni araştırma sahalarının oluşabileceği ihtimalini çağrıştırıyor. Mevleviliğin Batı'daki yaygınlığının ulusaşırılık bağlamında ele alınması sonraki araştırmalar için bir potansiyel oluştururken Mevleviliğin günümüzde diğer tarikatlarla ilişkisi incelenmeyi bekleyen konular arasında bulunuyor.

Kadim inanç sistemlerinde görülen döngüsellik Mevleviliğin ritüelinin en önemli parçasını oluşturmakla birlikte Mevlevilik bağlamındaki bozulma ve çarpıklaşmaya da bir açıklama getirebiliyor. Bu sürecin ritüelin çemberin dibine doğru inmesinden doğduğu ve yeniden yükselişe geçtiğinde daha güzel ve umut dolu ritüellerin ortaya çıkacağı ifade edilirken iktidar dinamiklerinin de değişip dönüşeceği çağrıştırılıyor.

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