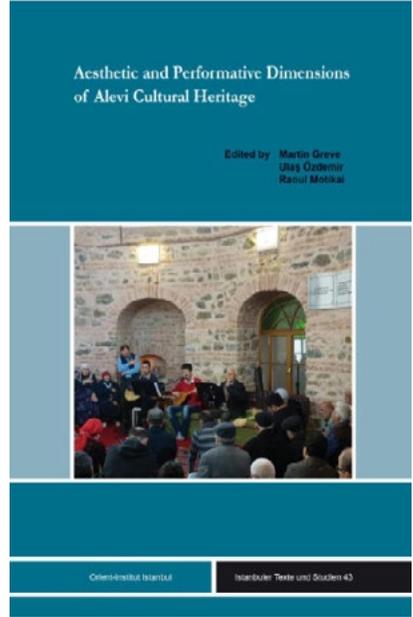


Martin Greve, Ulaş Özdemir, Raoul Motika, Aesthetic and Performative Dimensions of Alevi Cultural Heritage, Ergon-Verlag, Würzburg, 2020*

Erhan TEKİN**

The book consists of three parts. The headings of the section and the article titles and authors respectively; “Introduction” by Martin Greve, Ulaş Özdemir, Raoul Motika; Part one: Ritual, Body and Aesthetic. First article “The Aesthetics of Contemporary Flame Religious Practice: A Bodily-and-Material Cultures’ Approach” by Robert Langer, secondly “The Drinking Dervishes. An Inquiry into Ritual Inebriation in a Bektashi Congregation” by Nicolas Elias, thirdly “Movement and Adaptation of the Alevi Semah for the Stage: From Fellowship Ceremony-Samah to ‘We’” by Sinibaldo De Rosa. Second part: Ritual and Musical Performance; first article “The Life of a Ritual Repertoire and its Aesthetic: Cem Ceremonies in Tekke Village, the Village of Abdal Musa” by Jérôme Cler, secondly “Miracles and Tears. Religious Music in Dersim / Tunceli” by Martin Greve, third, “With or Without Bağlama? A Religious Aesthetic Debate on ‘Music’ Performance in Funerals” by Ulaş Özdemir; in the third part: Written Sources of Alevi Cultural Heritage; first article “Ali Ufuği’s Notation Collections as Sources for ‘Âşık’ Culture and Literature” by Judith I. Haug, secondly “The Materiality of Alevi Written Heritage: Beautiful Objects, Valuable Manuscripts, and Ordinary Books” by Janina Karolewski and last title Contributors.



The work examines the aesthetic and apparent real dimensions of the Alevi cultural heritage in an interdisciplinary framework under many different theories such as sociological, anthropological, religious, political, ethnomusicological and literary, from historical traditions to the present day. In all departments, Alevi cultural structures are analyzed based on oral and written sources within the social, religious and cultural phenomena of dance, music and identity elements within Alevism culture in a wider context with modern applications in local, regional, national and transnational authentic village and urban life.

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In general, Alevi, Bektashi, Kızılbaş, Tahtacı and similar communities, various and complex aspects and phenomena are presented and gathered under a single 'Alevi' as an umbrella term. The main purpose of the book is to examine the facts that Alevis accept as their cultural heritage, diversified in terms of aesthetics and performance. Nor does it follow an approach based on a particular aesthetic theory; rather, each article discusses the aesthetic and performative dimensions according to its particular context. At the same time, the concept of 'performance' used in the title of the book focuses on how Alevis fulfill any form of piety or spirituality in their community life. When looked under general headings, the comparison of urban Alevi practices that change with local authentic Alevi rituals such as Dersim, under two different and opposite concepts such as village-urban, written-oral, tradition-modern, religious-social and domestic-abroad, different from Alevi cem rituel tradition singing and playing music in the funeral tradition, comparing inter-metricity in written and spoken sources, formation of identity as ethnic culture, movement and cultural harmony within performance and dance, theatrical and choreographic analysis, and poetic discourse tradition in the tradition of minstrelsy, for example by Edip Harabi;

We become candles at night. (Kandil geceleri kandil oluruz)

We become a wick in the oil lamp. (Kandilin içinde fitil oluruz)

We become evidence to show God (Hakkı göstermeye delil oluruz)

But those who are blind do not see this state (Fakat kör olanlar görmez bu hali)

Martin Grave, Raoul Motika and Ulas Ozdemir as editors Robert Langer, Nicolas Elias, Sinibaldo De Rosa, Jerome Cler, Judith Haug, Janina Karolewski and others, each with different perspectives coming from different disciplines, and they deal with external case together. With an interdisciplinary approach, the editors and writers have done research both domestically and abroad in the fields of Islamic cultures, Central Asian societies, traditional Anatolian cultures and music, Ottoman music, orientalism, Turkish cultures and migration, and the authors themselves or jointly, there are academic publications and book studies published on these topics. The book, prepared by Raoul Motika, who has been the director of Orient Istanbul for many years, Martin Greve, known for his studies on Dersim music, and Ulaş Özdemir, who has many studies on Alevi music, contributes to international academic studies on Alevism as an internal and external perspective.

The articles in the book, while ritual and performance practices regarding Alevism are examined in modern, local and regional dimensions, they also shed light on historical documents such as textual sources. This book, in which the traditional, contemporary and transnational dynamics of the Alevi cultural heritage are analyzed comparatively, is an important resource on how theoretical approaches are used and the textual writing and interpretation of cultural studies, especially for those who do cultural studies and research in the fields of ethnomusicology, anthropology, and

sociology. Therefore, if the book is translated into Turkish, it will be an important resource for a wide Turkish audience and for students and researchers who do cultural studies in our country. The combination of internal and external perspectives on the Alevi-Bektashi cultural study, which is handled by foreign cultural researchers and writers growing in culture, gives the book a distinct academic depth.

