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Music in Mevlevi Rituals in the Mevlevi Tekke (Lodge) in Nuremberg / Germany

ABSTRACT

The Mevlevi Order, which emerged in Konya towards the end of the 13th century, is a religious order that arouses the curiosity of, and is followed quite closely by, many people from all around the world, both for its philosophy and for its performance rituals. Although 750 years have passed since the death of Mevlana, the culture and traditions of the Mevlevi are kept alive not only in Turkey but in different countries of the world. In Germany, Mevlevism attracts the interest of people of Turkish origin, but also people of other ethnic origins, and its traditions continue in both traditional and modern interpretations. The Mevlevi Association in Nuremberg, which is one of the two Mevlevi centers in Germany, has been operating since 1990 with the aim of preserving the Mevlevi tradition, while at the same time establishing dialogues between different cultures.

The purpose of this article is to examine the Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke* (lodge) in Germany from historical, cultural and artistic perspectives. I will provide information about the establishment and development of the Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke*. And I will also try to provide information about the Mevlevi Sema ritual and about the music performed both in the lodge and in public places, referring to established published scholarship, as well as to my own field research.

KEYWORDS

Nuremberg Mevlevi Tekke

Mevlevi Ritual and Music

German Mevlevi Order

Sufism

Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi

Introduction

Mevlânâ Celâleddin Rumî, the founder of the Mevlevi Order, is an important religious figure in the Islamic-Sufi tradition. He was a thirteenth-century Islamic scholar, a Sufi sheikh, and a poet. Based on the teachings of Rumi, and with the aim of bringing people closer to *Allah* through the religious principles of Islam, the Mevlevi Order is a sect that emerged in Anatolia in the 13th century as a mystical interpretation of Islam.

Mevlevi is the name of a belief and tradition that has influenced and inspired millions of people living in many parts of the world, especially in Turkey, with its philosophy, its ritual 'whirling', which is a type of dhikr called *sema*, and its music, which forms the most important element of the ritual. With its unique rules, ceremonies and dhikr practice, the Mevlevi order initially spread to important centers within Anatolia, before it was disseminated to Rumelia and other Islamic countries under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire.

The decision, made on November 30, 1925, to ban all dervish lodges, resulted in the closure of all dervish lodges of the Mevlevi order. However, despite this decision, the Mevlevi culture and tradition has survived until today through private initiatives and the special privilege granted by the state to the Mevlevis. Especially during the last century, interest in the Mevlevis from Muslim and other societies has increased considerably, and today they are known all over the world. During this period, Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi became the focus of attention of European and American researchers as well as those in pursuit of the spiritual life. After the translations of the Mevlana texts made by important researchers and writers of the last century, such as Reynold A. Nicholson (1868-1945), Annemarie Schimmel (1922-2003), Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch (1909-1999), Coleman Bryan Barks (1937-) and Robert Bly (1926-2021), the fame of Mevlana and Mevlevism spread widely across the world. In addition, Sufis who emigrated to other countries contributed greatly to the interest in Mevlana, who is widely regarded as a key figure in Islamic discourse (Sağlam, 2017: 87).

In Europe and America, Mevlevi beliefs have been adopted not only in religious circles, but also as a culture and philosophy. This is why New Age followers and those with other religious or mystical tendencies, as well as those who devote themselves to Sufism, have had a significant interest in Mevlana (Lewis, 2000: 7, 527).

The Mevlevi Order became more widely recognized in the world following the UNESCO designation of the ‘*Sema* ceremony and Sufi music’ as a Representative of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2005, as well as the Year of Rumi in 2007, which marked the 800th anniversary of the birth of Rumi. During that year, *Mevlevi Ayini* and conferences, panels, and workshops about the Mevlevi order were held in European countries and the United States, resulting in the establishments of new Mevlevi lodges. Today, Mevlevi associations, foundations and centers organize various activities designed to preserve and disseminate Mevlevi culture in both Europe and America.

Until the 1990s, the Mevlevi Order could only be studied through publications in Germany. Shortly thereafter, it was organized for the first time under the aegis of a foundation, and Mevlevi rules and practices were brought into action in dervish lodges that were opened in two different regions. Today in Germany, there are two different Mevlevi groups in Trebbus and Nuremberg. The Nuremberg Branch is part of the International Mevlana Foundation, with headquarters in Istanbul, and is represented by Sheikh Süleyman Wolf Bahn.¹ The Trebbus Mevlevi are represented by Sheikh Abdullah Halis, who claims to belong to the Kubrevi sect as well as the Mevlevi Order. Mevlevi living in different regions of Germany such as Munich, Frankfurt, Berlin, and Köln are all followers of these two sheikhs. Thus, the two different Mevlevi *tekkes* in Trebbus and Nuremberg are represented today by two German sheikhs, who grew up in a culture outside that of the Mevlevi Order's homeland in Turkey (Öksüzoğlu, 2019: 78, 79).

The Mevlevi *Tekke* in Nuremberg

The Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke* was founded by Süleyman Wolf Bahn and a group of his friends under the name of the Mevlana Foundation (Mevlanâ Verein e. V.) in 1991. They rented a two-story private building on Peyerstrasse 30, which they thought at the time would be an appropriate building for the lodge. They held their meetings, devoted both

¹ The purpose of this foundation founded on March 14, 1996 in Istanbul, is to investigate the works and ideas of Jalâl ad-Dîn Rûmî, to pass on his ideas to future generations and to facilitate domestic and international studies in this field (http://mevlanafoundation.com/about_tr.html). Especially *the International Mevlana Foundation*, as a social organization, makes serious efforts to protect and maintain the traditions of the Mevlevi Order with the representatives of the Celebi family today. The foundation keeps the rules and conventions of the Mevlevi Order alive and makes every effort to keep its progress on traditional lines. It aims to gather all Mevlevi lodges around the world into one center, keeping the communication between the people in charge of the lodges alive and disallowing non-loyal people to be Mevlevi Sheikhs in the rites (International Mevlana Foundation, n.d.).

to conversation and to the performance of dhikr, initially in Bahn's house and then in the newly acquired building on Friday evenings. Actually, the decision to establish such a lodge was taken in the course of a dhikr meeting. The idea of moving these regular dhikr meetings, which a number of German and Turkish people had held in Bahn's house, to a private place and maintaining it under the name of a foundation also ensured that followers of Bahn could easily and comfortably reach him (Kavaklı, 2013: 23).

Süleyman Wolf Bahn is the sheikh and president of the foundation of the Nuremberg lodge. Bahn aims at teaching, adopting and practicing Islam in workshops and seminars held in the Mevlevi lodge. He has stated that he continues his Masnavi talks based on the philosophy and teachings of Rumi, educates people about the Sema and tries to explain what Mevlevi rules and conventions mean (Osman Öksüzoğlu, personal communication, February 23, 2018). And he believes that they are followers of Mevlevi traditions which had been kept alive for more than seven centuries along the path illuminated by Rumi himself (Mevlana Verein e.V., n.d.-b). In this lodge, being a Muslim is the only condition of becoming a follower of Bahn and becoming a member of the foundation. In 2001, the Nuremberg Mevlana Foundation came under the aegis of the International Mevlana Foundation headquartered in Istanbul, and since then it has continued its activities both as a local foundation and as a branch of the international foundation.

The Nuremberg Lodge is located on a rectangular area of approximately 40 square meters (See Figure 1, 2). The upper story of the building is furnished with carpets, and with floor and bench cushions in mostly traditional Ottoman patterns (See in Figure 3, 4). The floor consists of bright and large wooden areas that are suitable for the Sema. During the Sema, the carpets on the floor are removed and the performance takes place on this wooden floor. The sheikh's maqam is located right opposite the door to the room, at one corner of the rectangle. During conversations, dhikr and sema, Süleyman Efendi sits there.



Figure 1, 2. Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke* (Individual archive, 2017)



Figure 3, 4. Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke* Prayer Room (Individual archive, 2017)

The downstairs consists of two parts. The small part on the right of the entrance is for ablutions and changing clothes. The left part is used as a kitchen, and in some meetings meals are cooked and eaten here (See in Figure 5, 6).

In Mevlevi culture, the kitchen is a sacred place, and it was partly an analogy between cooking a meal and a spiritual journey that allowed rituals to emerge (Gölpınarlı, 1963: 126) (İyiyol, 2014: 591). In the Mevlevi lodges called *Âsitâne* (central Sufi house), the kitchen is the place dedicated to dervishes to undergo a period of spiritual hardship and endurance, where they continue their Mevlevi education and learn relevant rules and conventions (Arpaguş, 2009: 130). Just like the preparation of food and cooking, a dervish is also spiritually ‘cooked’ and ‘matured’ here. That is why, according to the Mevlevi, the kitchen is the soul of the Mevlevi lodges (Gölpınarlı, 1983: 396). The Mevlevi use the expressions *matbah* or *matbah-i serif* for the kitchen where they are physically and spiritually fed, as well as the term *somat* for food (Aksoy, Akbulut, & Nurhayat, 2016: 97).

In the Nuremberg Mevlevi *tekke* it is not possible to enact fully this analogy between kitchen culture and spiritual education associated with the *Âsitâne*. The kitchen here is only for cooking and eating. Yet although these traditional rituals practiced in the past are not valid here today, the followers of Bahn state that they know the importance of *matbah* in Mevlevi culture, and accordingly give special importance to the kitchen. They carry out a number of tasks such as preparation of the food, cooking, laying the table and clearing it in cooperation and solidarity.



Figure 5, 6. The Kitchen of the Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke* (Individual archive, 2017)

Since the building was not purpose-designed as a Mevlevi *tekke*, there are not rooms such as a harem for the sheikh and his family to stay, rooms for male visitors, sheikh and dervish cells, and a hardship and endurance room. Besides, since the lodge is used only for meetings, neither the sheikh and his family nor the followers live here permanently. Only those followers coming from other cities are accommodated here for a few nights after the meetings, depending on the situation. 1001-day hardship and endurance training, which is a Mevlevi education method, is not practiced here.

Sheikh Süleyman Wolf Bahn



Figure 7. Süleyman Wolf Bahn (Mevlana Verein e.V., n.d.-a)

Süleyman Wolf Bahn has a very interesting life story. He was born into a Catholic family in Austria in 1944 and was named Wolf by his family. Due to the conservative nature of his family, he had a strict religious education on Catholic principles from a very young age. According to him, he had a more religious background than most of his friends due to this education. In 1964 he came to Munich to study at the Academy of Fine Arts (*Akademie der Bildenden Künste*) and studied there with Professor Franz Nagel until his graduation in 1968. During this period, he started moving away from his native religion and began to pose existential questions, and to explore the meaning of *Allah* (Kavaklı, 2013: 12). During this questioning period, he encountered Rumi and interested himself in the Mevlevi order and in the form of Islam promoted by the order. In 1973, he went to Mevlana Museum in Konya both to have a holiday and to find a Sufi teacher. However, Bahn did not know that the Mevlevi *tekke* had been closed and converted to a museum. Yet although he was disappointed to find the *tekke* closed, he met with Süleyman Hayati Dede, who tried to preserve Mevlevi culture and tradition in Konya, during his visit to the Mevlana museum, and with the help of a translator received an education on Mevlevi rules and conventions from him. In 1981, he was ordained by Süleyman Hayati Dede, and in 1995 he received a further Mevlevi ordination from Huseyin Top. He established the Mevlevi lodge (Mevlânâ Verein e.V.) in Nuremberg, Germany in 1991, and initiated teachings based on the Mevlevi order. In 1997, the *Masnavi* by Rumi, which Bahn translated into German, was published by the O.W. Barth publishing house. This book, published as *Dschalaloddin Rumi – Das Mesnevi*, is the first complete German translation of the *Masnavi*. In 2001, he was appointed as a Mevlevi ambassador of sheikhdom to Germany by Faruk Hemden Celebi Efendi, the president of International Mevlevi

Foundation.

Followers of Sheikh Süleyman Wolf Bahn

Süleyman Wolf Bahn is followed by a group of approximately 40 people, consisting of doctors, engineers, physiotherapists, teachers, and students. The majority of this educated group of women and men are university graduates and they are mostly young or middle-aged. The German population are in the majority in the group, but it also includes Turks and Spaniards. Some of them live in Nuremberg, while some live in other German cities such as Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Stuttgart. Most of them learned about the Mevlevi order from books, documentaries, conferences, and panels, and then become followers of Bahn and members of the foundation.

Ritual and Music in the Regular Meetings of the Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke*

There are two separate cycles for regular meetings in the Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke*, one weekly and the other every six weeks. Friday nights are dedicated to the weekly meetings of followers living in Nuremberg. Bahn has two reasons for choosing Friday nights. The first is that Fridays are sacred to Muslims and the other is that Saturdays are holidays, so that people can stay in the lodge until the late hours and follow the ritual. These meetings occur every week with few exceptions. During the summer months, the meetings are held once a month or there may be a break for a while. Followers gather in the lodge for the Friday meetings after five in the evening. The rituals in these meetings are *Masnavi* readings, prayers, dhikr, and *sema*, respectively.

In the *Masnavi* readings, a four-volume *Masnavi (Dschalaloddin Rumi - Das Mesnevi)*, translated to German by Bahn, is used. A couple of pages from the book are read at each meeting and discussed. The entire conversation based on this four-volume *Masnavi* took 10 years to complete, at which point Bahn started over again from the first volume.



Figure 8. Masnavi conversations (Mevlana Verein e.V., n.d.-a)

After the Masnavi conversations, the group prays in congregation under the imamate of Bahn in the lodge. And following that they begin the dhikr as a group. The dhikr is performed sometimes in a sitting position and sometimes vocally in a standing position. A specific order including *Estagfirullah*, Word Tawhid (*La Ilaha Illallah*) and ‘naming of God’ from *Asma-ul Husna* (the 99 names of *Allah*) is followed during the dhikr performed in the lodge. Bahn states that he decides which wordings and names will be in the dhikr and how many times to repeat them. He follows the same order during the dhikr in the meetings and this order very rarely changes. The order of the wordings and ‘naming of God’ in the dhikr performed in the lodge is as follows: *Estagfirullah*, *La Ilaha Illallah*, *Allah*, *Hay* and *Hu*. Sometimes, *Sema* is also performed at the same time with the dhikr.

After the dhikr, the ritual *Sema* continues. Since there is no musician in the lodge, the *Sema* is performed with the *Mevlevi Âyini* played from a CD. Due to limitations of time, only some parts of the *âyin*, not the whole *âyin*, are played from the recordings, and the *Sema* is performed with these. Bahn also decides which maqam the *Mevlevi Âyin* will use for the *Sema* ceremony. Weekly meetings end with the *Sema* which is a part of the ritual.

The general plan is to gather with the followers from the other cities such as Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Munich, and Dortmund in meetings held on Saturdays every six weeks.² The followers living in Nuremberg also attend these meetings. We can see how the ritual proceeds in the meetings held every six weeks from these two e-mails that Bahn sent to his followers:

² These meetings sometimes occur once in two months.

November 11, 2017

10.30 Certain helpers arrive earlier and are scheduled for specific services

11.30 Beginning *Semâ* training (compulsory for all seminaries)

13.00 Eat soup

14.00 Beginning of the meeting

16.00 *Sohbet*

18.00 *Sema*

19.30 Dinner together

20:30 Washing, cleaning the *Dergâh* then night prayer

February 10, 2018

11:00 The Nuremberg Dervishes meet earlier, to prepare the rooms

12:00 *Sema* training for everyone who wants to learn the *sema* better

13:00 last preparations and lunch

14:00 Start of the general meeting: Welcome, Dhikr,

15:00 *Sohbet*

16:00 Annual General Meeting

17:30 dhikr with *Sema*

19:00 Dinner together

21:00 Washing, cleaning the *Dergâh* together, Finally Night prayer.

Ritual and Music in the Day of *Şeb-i Arus*

The death of Rumi is considered not a separation but a reunion. According to the Mevlevi followers, the day he passed away is named *Şeb-i Arus* which means the reunion of two lovers, and it has become a tradition to gather and perform *Mevlevi Âyini* (Gölpınarlı, 1983: 424). This tradition could not be performed for a long time due to prohibition in Turkey, but it started to be performed again in the 1960s. The *Şeb-i Arus* ceremonies held in Konya between 7-17 December every year, together with events such as panels, symposiums and exhibitions held during this week, have been under a conservation order from the State for many years. Besides Konya, in the Istanbul Galata and Yenikapı Mevlevi *tekkes*, with the support of municipalities, charities, foundations and some

private groups, Rumi is commemorated and the shining light of his love and toleration for the world is remembered.

Along with the regular meetings held weekly and every six weeks, The Nuremberg Mevlevi followers get together once a year on this important date of the Mevlevi order. In the past Süleyman Wolf Bahn spent this commemoration week in Konya, but after the Nuremberg Mevlevi *tekke* became active, the followers and visitors in the *tekke* spend the *Şeb-i Arus* week together with some activities there.

The Nuremberg Mevlevi association usually organizes two events during the week of *Şeb-i Arus*. The first of these is the Mevlevi *Sema* Ceremony, which is open to the public in Nuremberg, and is usually held in the concert hall of the AEG cultural center with a capacity of 200 people. A musical group for the performance of the *Mevlevi Âyini* is invited for this event. This group performs the Mevlevi Ayini together with the Whirling Dervishes, consisting of Sheikh Bahn, his followers and visitors. The other event is the program that Bahn makes with his followers in the Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke*.

The *Şeb-i Arus* program at the Mevlevi *Tekke* that I attended in 2017 progressed as follows: Süleyman Wolf Bahn and his 25 followers assembled at the Nuremberg Mevlevi *tekke* on 17 December 2017 *Şeb-i Arus* night. Süleyman Wolf Bahn summarized the ritual that would be performed at the commemoration night dedicated to Rumi in his e-mail to the followers:

Between 13.00-15.00, we will gather at the Mevlevi lodge and the preparations will start. It is necessary to finish the preparations by 14.30 and to be seated quietly at the place of the ceremony at 15.00. Those arriving after 15.00 will be seated silently after receiving permission. After 15.30, there will not be a tea service and the meditation will start. The meditation will be performed until 16.15 in seated position and silently. Then, dhikr will start. Firstly, it will be silent dhikr, followed by audible dhikr and finally ecstatic dhikr. There will be a break at 17.00 and during the break, there will be tea service with cookies and chocolate. We will have conversations with our friends but taking the importance of the night into account, we should behave discreetly so as not to disturb anybody and not to lose the atmosphere. We will start dhikr again at 18.00. Whirling dervishes must wear the appropriate clothes because we will perform Sema and dhikr at the same time as we have done previously. After completing the dhikr, there will be dinner (Tekke Pilaf) between 19.00 and 19.30.

The *Şeb-i Arus* night continued in line with the schedule Bahn shared with his followers. I noted here that the ritual included two principal dhikr-based parts. In the first part, meditation and dhikr were performed, and in the second part, without Mevlevi music, *Sema* was performed at the same time with the dhikr.

In the first part, meditation and dhikr were practiced with the transitions from Süleyman Yardım's *Ney Taksimleri & Dervished Music*. The group waited silently with eyes shut in seated position, and with no physical movement during the Meditation which lasted about 45 minutes. No special sitting style like a circle was created for meditation and dhikr either at this time or at the other times when the dhikr was performed. People sat randomly around the four sides of the rectangular room without any limitations or classification. After the meditation, the 'naming of God', using the names *Allah, Hay, and Hu*, took place with a soft tone of voice in the dhikr, while listening to the *ney* transitions. After the dhikr, a woman whirling dervish read *Aşr-ı Şerif*, ten surahs from the Quran. And then surah *Al-Fatihah* was given by the sheikh. The *Salawat* was read loud by a group but *Fatiha* was read silently. This part ended with the Mevlevi *Gülbank*³ read by Bahn. The dhikr here was performed on a single voice within syllable-timed rhythm.

During the break, the carpet on the floor was removed to create space for the *Sema*. Sheepskin rugs were put right opposite the sheikh, and three women and one man (whirling dervishes), all with their *sema* costumes, took their places on the rugs. This part consisted of dhikr, *sema* and the congregational night prayer.

The *Sema* and dhikr performed in this part of the ritual occurred in two different ways. Firstly, the group accompanied the dhikr and hymns played from the CD called *Oruç Güvenç & Tümeta: Ocean of Remembrance Sufi Improvisations and Zhikrs*. The *Sema* and dhikr were performed at the same time that night when no Mevlevi music was played either live or on tape (See in Figure 9-12). The whirling dervishes performed the *Sema* in groups of two on sheikh Bahn's signal since the area was not spacious. First, these four

³ *Gülbank* is the name of the arranged prayers. These are the prayer texts written for wishing goodness and auspiciousness of work, health, well-being, and success, and also for begging and pleading with *Allah* with stereotyped expressions. There are different *Gülbanks* in the Mevlevi order. *Gülbank* read by Süleyman Wolf Bahn is as follows: *Allah, Allah, Allah, Allah, Allah, Allah vakti şerifler hayrola, hayırlar feth ola, şerler def ola. Allah-ı Azim-i şanın ismi ile kalbimiz tahir, mütahir pak ola. Demler sefalar müjdat ola, Kulübü aşikan baki şadu handan ola. dem-i hazret-i Mevlana, sırrı cenab-ı şemsi tebrizi keremi imam-ı Ali şefaati Muhammedin resulullahi nebi huuu...* See (Uzun, 1996).

whirling dervishes, complete with *Sema* costumes, started performing the *Sema*, followed by 8 followers from the group which Bahn signaled during the dhikr. The other eight dervishes in the *Sema* were not in Mevlevi costumes (*tennure*, *hırka* or *sikke*), but instead in their everyday clothes. In the dhikr, following the recording, *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim* (Basmala), *La ilahailallah* (the word of Tawhid/*shahada*, "there is no God but God"), *Allah* (Name of the God) and *Elhamdulillah* were named.



Figure 9, 10. Sema in Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke* (Individual archive, 2017)



Figure 11, 12. Sema in Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke* (Individual archive, 2017)

After the dhikr, the CD player was stopped and the group continued the dhikr aloud with the guidance of sheikh Bahn. In this part, the wordings and naming of God, *Elhamdulillah*, *Allah*, *Hay*, *Hayyul Kayyum Allah* and *Hu*, were mentioned in the dhikr. Following that, *Aşr-ı Şerif*, *Fatiha*, *Takbir*, *Salawat*, *Surah Al-Fatihah*, *Surah Al-Ikhlâs* (3 times) were read and after that sheikh Bahn read the Mevlevi *Gülbank*.⁴ Finally, the group performed the Night

⁴ *Gülbank* (Sheikh Efendi reads)

*Vakt-i şerifler hayrola, Hayırlar fethola, Şerler defola
Kulüb-ı âşıkân güşâd ola. Demler, safâlar ziyâde ola,
Dem-i Hazret-i Mevlâna, sırr-ı cenâb-ı Şems-i Tebrizi,
kerem-i İmâm-ı Ali Şefaâti Muhammed-i nebi
hu diyelim!*

prayer together. After the prayer, the group ate traditional *Tekke Pilaf* in the kitchen and the night ended there.⁵ Note transcription of the Salawat read with the wordings and Names of *Allah* in the dhikr is as follows:



Figure 13. Transcription of Dhikr- *Basmala* (Transcribed by Osman Öksüzoğlu)



Figure 14. Transcription of Dhikr- *Word Tawhid* (Transcribed by Osman Öksüzoğlu)

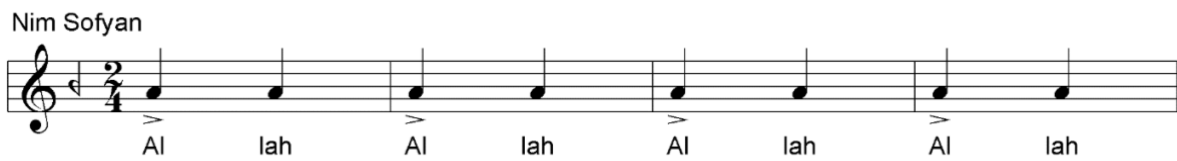


Figure 15. Transcription of Dhikr- *Allah* (Transcribed by Osman Öksüzoğlu)



Figure 16. Transcription of Dhikr- *Elhamdülillah* (Transcribed by Osman Öksüzoğlu)



Figure 17. Transcription of Dhikr- *Hay* (Transcribed by Osman Öksüzoğlu)

(Altogether) huuuuuu.

⁵ Gölpinarlı stated that this pilaf, made of chickpeas, onions, carrots, chestnuts and fatty meat, was originally Belh - Uzbek pilaf and has become a tradition since Rumi's time (Gölpinarlı, 1983: 416-417).

Nuremberg Mevlevi followers make use of technology and they provide the ritual music on a CD player. Thus, they try to fill the musical deficiency by making use of current records during Sema and dhikr. Before public Sema ceremonies at the cultural centers, the Mevlevi *Âyin* to be performed is played on the CD player and they rehearse for the ceremony by practicing Sema with this recording. In the past Sema ceremonies without musicians were performed with the Mevlevi *Âyin* records played from a CD player. Today, musicians are invited to these ceremonies to perform Mevlevi *Âyin* for a fee. They rehearse the Mevlevi *Âyin* in the *makam* to be performed among themselves separate from the whirling dervishes. Later on, the dervishes and musicians come together in the concert hall and perform the ceremony together. Although these musicians perform Mevlevi music, they are not members of Nuremberg Mevlana Association or any Mevlevi group.

It is a major concern for the group that they do not have musicians in the *tekke*; because of this, they cannot create their own music group and have to invite musicians to perform in Sema ceremonies for a fee! Süleyman Wolf Bahn states this situation in his article called *The Mevlevi Order in Germany Today* as follows:

[...]In the meantime, we have a big Sema group now. Sometimes we perform Sema in official places. This usually happens in dialogue meetings. Unfortunately, we are in need of musicians who perform for a fee and do not belong to our organization. We hope to have our own music group (Mutrib Committee) soon (Şimşekler & Bayru, 2012: 72).

Although as of the time of writing it has been 11 years since this statement, there is still no music group here. There may be different reasons for this, such as the absence of the Turkish musicians in this area, or the fact that musicians do not want to participate in such religious groups.

In addition to this, the Nuremberg Mevlevi followers perform some of the *Sema* ceremonies in several places in Germany which have a Turkish music association. These performances are either the common activity of two different associations or an activity to which the Nuremberg Mevlevi association has been invited. In these common ceremonies, the Sema is performed by the Nuremberg Mevlevi followers but the Mevlevi *Âyin*/music is performed by the choir of the other association. Professional musicians from Turkey are sometimes invited to these common ceremonies of the associations.

Again, the whirling dervishes make their preparations in the lodge before the ceremony with the CD recording of the *Âyin* to be performed.

For instance, in 2018, the Nuremberg Mevlevi *Tekke* organized two events with other associations. Three different groups united for the Sema ceremony performed in the first part of the concerts named *Aşka Davet*, organized by the Stuttgart Turkuaz association in Stuttgart and Augsburg on February 23 and 25. The event included six professional instrumentalists from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, the amateur choir of Germany Turkuaz Foundation consisting of ten women and eight men, and two instrumentalists and seven whirling dervishes from the Nuremberg Mevlana Association under the leadership of Süleyman Wolf Bahn. The Nuremberg Mevlevi *tekke* followers performed a Sema ceremony in the first part of the concert, which included the *Hüzzam Mevlevi Âyin* (See in Figure 20, 21).



Figure 20, 21: Sema Ceremony, Stuttgart (Individual archive, 2018)

In this part were performed the *Hüzzam Mevlevi Âyin of Naat*, the first *Taksim*, *Peshrev*, Salute to the Post, the First *Selam*, the Second *Selam*, the Third *Selam*, the Fourth *Selam*, the *Niyaz Ilahisi*, the Last *Taksim*, *Aşr-ı Şerif* (Quran recitation) and the Post prayer, in accordance with the tradition.

In the archives of the *tekke*, there are the *Mevlevi Âyin of Ferahfeza*, *Hüzzam*, and *Suzidilara* which they listen to during the *Sema* ceremonies. The recordings of the *Mevlevi Âyins of Ferahfeza* by Ismail Dede Efendi and *Suzidilara* by Selim III were made by the Konya Turkish Sufi Music Choir, sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The *Hüzzam Mevlevi Âyin* composed by Ismail Dede Efendi and performed by Kani Karaca was produced by Uluçınar Music under the artistic direction of Gürsel Koçak in 2000. Besides

these *Âyin* albums, the CDs they listen to during the *Sema*, dhikr, and therapy at the *tekke* are: *Ney Taksimleri & Dervished Music* by Süleyman Yardım, an anonymous album consisting of ney transitions by Sadreddin Özçimi, the CD named *Orunç Güvenç & Tûmata Ocean of Remembrance Sufi Improvisations and Zhikrs* and *Zikir İlahileri* Sufi Music Concert recording performed at the 9th Konya Mystic Music Festival by the Ministry of Culture Konya Turkish Sufi Music Ensemble.

Conclusion

Mevlevi *Sema* and Mevlevi music are considered the most important elements of the ritual in Mevlevism. As a result of this study, it was understood that although an intense *Sema* training is given in the Nuremberg Mevlevi *tekke*, there is no musical training, since there is nobody to perform a *Mevlevi Âyin*. The music during the *Sema* is played from a *Mevlevi Âyin* CD recorded in Turkey. For the *Sema* organizations in other places, a music group is invited to perform *Mevlevi Âyin* for a fee.

Apart from *Sema* there is another type of dhikr in Mevlevi tradition that is the 'naming of God' (*Allah*) ritual. Traditionally this usually took place after morning prayers (Gölpınarlı, 1983: 411). Although there is no other type of dhikr apart from these two, the Nuremberg *Tekke* uses also the words of Tawhid (*La ilahe illallah*), *Estagfirullah* and other names of God (*Hay, Hu, Hayyul Kayyum Allah*) for dhikr. This kind of dhikr you can usually find in other tariqas, such as the Qadiri or Rifai and Jarrahi, but not in traditional Mevlevism (Feldman, 1992: 196).

It has to be pointed out that in the Nuremberg lodge the *Sema* is also performed during the dhikr (*La ilahe illallah, Hay, Hu, Hayyul Kayyum Allah*, etc.). In the Mevlevi tradition, *Sema* is performed only with Mevlevi music, so this dhikr and *sema* are never performed at the same time. It is not customary in the Mevlevi tradition to combine a loud dhikr with *sema*. Moreover, dhikr as a separate mystical performance is not a general practice. This is a new type of dhikr together with *sema* for Mevlevism, which can be found not only in the Nuremberg lodge but also in Turkey (to my knowledge only in Yalova with the Orunç Güvenç *Tûmata* group). It is understood from this that when the Mevlevi tradition is followed in the culture of a different country, it may have such additions, changes and transformations, and other departures from tradition.

In the end, I understood that there is no training on Mevlevi music for several reasons.

Sheikh Süleyman wants to encourage musicians to perform Mevlevi music during *Sema*, but is not able to do it mainly because of the lack of musicians capable of playing Mevlevi music. Therefore, he either uses CDs or invites external music groups for the ritual.

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