Journal for the Interdisciplinary Art and Education, Special Issue: Mevlana's Philosophy and Art, 97-108, Dec 2024 e-ISSN: 2717-8870 dergipark.org.tr/jiae

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Research Article

An examination of the trends in thesis research focused on "Mevlana's Philosophy and Art" in Turkiye

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Article Info

Received: 29 October 2024 Accepted: 29 Dec 2024 Available online: 30 Dec 2024

Keywords

Mevlana's Philosophy Mevlana's philosophy and art theses Research trend

Research trend Turkiye

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Abstract

Turkiye is the place where Mevlana's philosophy was born and flourished. The influence of this philosophy is seen not only in the East but also in the West and around the world. The research problem in this study is to determine the trend of theses written on Mevlana's philosophy and art axis in Turkiye higher education. In this context, I identified the graduate theses related to Mevlana and art that have been conducted in Turkiye since 2002. A total of 22 theses were identified, and they were analyzed in terms of discipline area, university type, thesis type, years of completion, keywords, and thesis topics. The results showed that the majority of the theses were in the field of art history, followed by music, and the third category was bookbinding. Most of these theses (18) were done at state universities, while 4 were at private universities. Seven of these theses were conducted in Konya, the city where the Mevlana Museum is located. The majority of the theses were master's theses (18), with only 4 being doctoral theses. The year with the highest number of theses was 2019. While no definite reason can be identified, the popularity of Turkish historical TV series, especially in the last 10-15 years, which generated high income, might be a contributing factor. The keywords in the theses are mostly from the music discipline. Two of these theses are related to fashion, either directly or indirectly. Upon examining these theses, it is noteworthy that only two of them presented original works with their own style and design after describing the existing scientific research.

To cite this article

Tortop, H.S. (2024). An examination of the trends in thesis research focused on "Mevlana's Philosophy and Art" in Turkiye. *Journal for the Interdisciplinary Art and Education, Special Issue: Mevlana's Philosophy and Art*, 97-108. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14594044

Introduction

Mevlana, although appearing as a mystical figure, is an important personality whose philosophy has influenced many fields regardless of time, as discussed in the works of one of the world's most respected Orientalists, Annemarie Schimmel (Schimmel, 1975; Schimmel, 1996). While tracing Mevlana's philosophy, Schimmel has also thoroughly understood its impact on various domains.



Photo 1. Annemarie Schimmel; Orientalist famous for her studies on Mevlana's philosophy, 1922-2003 (Web 1)

It is certain that art, as a human product, serves as a mirror to the development of human humanity, and, in this sense, is also a symbol of the power of civilizations. With the depth of human aspects in Mevlana's philosophy, even in the newest forms of art fields, such as the plastic arts (Bal, 2007), and works like Menakib Al Arifin (Yazıcı, 1972), traces of this philosophy can be observed.

The study of Mevlana's philosophy by scientific research institutions could facilitate the transfer of knowledge and practices to the intellectual elite of society. From this perspective, the research behavior dynamics of these scientific research institutions and the positioning of new researchers based on the emerging research trends can be observed. In my research, let's examine the institutions conducting scientific studies on Mevlana.

Selçuk University Rumi Studies Institute (Web 1): This institution is located within Selçuk University and was established in 2005. It conducts scientific research on Mevlana. It is noted that this institution started publishing an academic journal called *The Journal of Rumi Studies* in 2007. However, it is quite unfortunate that this journal is no longer continuing. Additionally, the institution organizes scientific congresses and symposiums on Mevlana research. The institute also offers a master's program.

Dokuz Eylül University Mevlana Application and Research Center (Web 2): This institution is part of Dokuz Eylül University and was established in 2015. It is managed by scholars in the fields of fine arts and theology.

Graduate and doctoral research related to Mevlana is carried out in various faculties of universities. These theses can be accessed openly from the National Thesis Database (Web 3) in Turkiye. Academic research on Mevlana is also conducted in academic journals in Turkiye. However, this study aims to determine the trends in graduate theses, which are significant publications for academic promotion. The reason for this is to identify the general trends in how scholars reflect Mevlana's philosophy on artistic practices.

Method

In this research, the document analysis technique, a type of qualitative research, was used. Accordingly, graduate theses prepared in Turkey after the year 2000 were identified as the data for the study. The theses were selected by searching the relevant thesis portal using the keyword "Mevlana" (326 results found), and only the theses in the field of art were included in the scope of the study. These theses were numbered, and they were analyzed in terms of their subject, keywords, and art fields and reported. A total of 22 graduate theses within this scope were identified (See Appendix 1).

Results

The number of graduate theses on Mevlana's philosophy and art over the last 23 years, totaling 22, is relatively low considering the number of universities in Turkey. I have now analyzed these graduate theses based on the identified themes.

Disciplinary Field

It was determined that some of the graduate theses on Mevlana's philosophy and art are not limited to a single disciplinary field or subject but instead involve multiple subjects. These fields include Art History (11), Music (8), Binding Craft (5), Clothing Industry (2), Gastronomy and Culinary Arts (2), Fine Arts (2), Philosophy (1), and Architecture (1). It can be observed that, after Art History, the most frequently studied subject is Music, followed by Craft.

University Type

In Turkiye, the higher education system consists of two types of universities: public and private (foundation) universities. The theses were prepared at 18 public universities and 4 private universities. These include: Necmettin Erbakan University (3), Selçuk University (3), Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University (3), Dokuz Eylül University (2), Ankara University (1), Istanbul Ayvansaray University (1), Başkent University (1), Düzce University (1), Erciyes University (1), Gazi University (1), İbni Haldun University (1), Konya Karatay University (1), Mimar Sinan Fine Art University (1), Sivas Cumhuriyet University (1), Suleyman Demirel University (1), Selçuk University, Necmettin Erbakan University, and Konya Karatay University are located in Konya, the city where the Mevlana Museum is situated.

Thesis Type

Among the graduate theses related to Mevlana's philosophy and art, 4 are doctoral theses, and 18 are master's theses. All the doctoral theses were conducted at public universities. The higher number of master's theses can be interpreted as a sign that this field has not been given much priority.

Theses's Years

The years in which the graduate theses on Mevlana's philosophy and art were completed are as follows: 2019 (9 theses), 2015 (2 theses), 2022 (2 theses), 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2020, 2023 (1 thesis each) The year 2019 is particularly striking.

Theses's Keywords

When analyzing the keywords in the theses; Mevlana (16), Mawlawiyya (9), House of Mevlevis (5), Mevlana Museum (3), Music Works (3), Turkish mysticism music (4), Art (2), Artisans (3), Book cover (2), Classical Turkish music (1), Mevlevi ceremony (2), Music (2), Music culture (2), Mystic (2), Ottoman Period (2), Tercüme-i Sevakıb-ı Menakıb (2), Mevlevi ceremony (2) are listed, along with other words (1 time each); 15th Century, 16th Century, Afyonkarahisar, Art activities, Art trends, Beautiful, Beverages, Book binding, Cardigan, Ceiling painting, Chishtiyya, Classical Turkish music, Clothing, Clothing pattern, Composers, Compositions, Çanakkale-Gelibolu, Dishes, Food culture, Gastrostomy, Handicrafts, Health, Human, Illumination art, India, İsmail Dede Efendi Hammamizade, Kitchen, Konya, Literature of mysticism, Manuscripts, Mathnawi, Menagip, Menakibu'l Arifin, Metaphor, Mevlevi clothes, Miniature, Museology, Museums, Music descriptions, Music education, Musical instruments, Mystical elements, Mystical life, Neva mode, Orientalism, Ottoman State, Painters, Painting art, Philosophy, Philosophy of mysticism, Prosody poet, Psychology, Qawwali, Rauf Yekta Bey, Rebab, Religious music, Religious orders, Rhythm, Sherbet, Sirkencübin, Tambstones, Tercüme-i Menakıb-ı Mevlana, Tombs, Truth, Turkish illumination art, Wall paintings.

When carefully examined, it is seen that 26 keywords are related to the field of music. Therefore, in terms of keywords, it can be observed that the theses related to Mevlana philosophy and art focus most on the field of music.

Thesis Topics

Aktaş (2007) examined the garments created with the influence of the Mevlana philosophy of the time, which are found in the Mevlana Museum, and made their classification and analysis.





Photo 1. Front and back view of the entari garment at the Mevlana Museum (Aktaş, 2007:104)

Budak (2009), examined the binding and covers of 56 books from the Mevlana period found in the Mevlana Complex, focusing on the materials used, as well as the solar-Sertap-miktep, scale-border-in-zencirek techniques, the materials, and the decoration style.



Photo 2. Interior back cover decorations of the Divan-1 Kebir book, a work of Mevlana (Budak, 2009: 215)

Taşel (2011), examined the wall and ceiling paintings in the Mevlana Museum, focusing on the decoration techniques, patterns, and composition features.





Photo 3. Ceiling and wall paintings found in the Mevlana Museum (Taşel, 2011: 50)

İrden (2012), made a musical analysis of the hymns composed by Dede Efendi in Mevlevi music based on his own developed makam and form analysis.

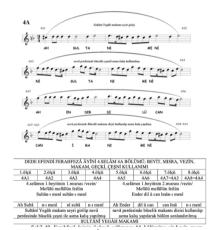


Photo 4. An example of the musical analysis made by İrden (2012: 315) based on his own developed form analysis of Dede Efendi's hymns.

Haral (2014), examined the miniatures (small paintings) found in books influenced by Mevlana's philosophy (Menâkıbü'l-ârifîn and Tercüme-i Sevâkıb-ı Menâkıb) from an iconographic perspective.

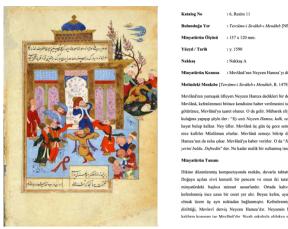


Photo 5. An iconographic analysis of one of the miniatures in the book Tercüme-i Sevâkıb-ı Menâkıb in Haral's (2014: 81-82) study

Tuna (2015), examined 9 Mesnevi books found in the Mevlana Museum in terms of their binding, paper characteristics, writing dimensions, and decorations.

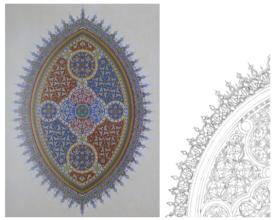


Photo 6. In Tuna's (2015: 47) study, the examination of the illumination (decoration) in the Mesnevi books

Duran (2016), classified the miniatures in two books written under the influence of Mevlana philosophy (Menâkıbü'l-ârifîn and Tercüme-i Sevâkıb-ı Menâkıb) and created new miniature designs.





Photo 7. In Duran's (2016) study, an example of a miniature from Tercüme-i Sevâkıb-ı Menâkıb (on the left, p.10) and an example of a miniature designed by the researcher (on the right, p.138).

Kara (2016), examined the binding features of 149 books found in the Mevlana Museum according to the art of bookbinding.



Photo 8. The covers of the Mesnevi books featured in Kara's (2016: 622) study

Akın-Urkmez (2017), examined the tombstones and inscriptions found in the Mevlevi Complex in Afyonkarahisar in terms of their transcription and decoration.



Photo 9. An example from Akın-Urkmez's (2017: Appendix, p. 51) study on the transcription and decoration analysis of the tombstones and inscriptions found in the Mevlana Complex in Afyonkarahisar

Sutekin (2019), examined the impressions gained by 30 Western artists and travelers who were influenced by Mevlana's philosophy and observed the music and rituals created as a result. This study describes the impressions of people from different cultures regarding Mevlana's philosophy and the art that emerged.





Photo 10. A person, George Montbard, from Sutekin's (2019: 86) study on individuals influenced by Mevlana's philosophy

Hidayetoğlu (2019), examined the artists who were influenced by Mevlana's philosophy and trained in the 17th-19th centuries.



Photo 11. Hidayetoğlu's (2019: 148) study on artists influenced by Mevlana's philosophy in the 17th-19th centuries: The painting "Neyzen" by İbrahim Çelli

Kunduroğlu-Erat (2019), examined 8 hymns composed by Zeki Atkoşar, one of the composers influenced by Mevlana's philosophy and the Mevlevi music, analyzing the relationship between the rhythms used and the meters of the lyrics written in the Aruz form.

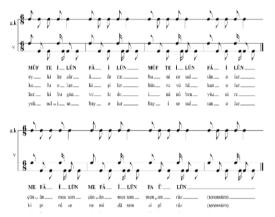


Photo 12. Musical analysis examples of the compositions by Zeki Atkoşar, a composer of Mevlevi music, in Kunduroğlu-Erat's (2019: 59) study

Gevaş (2019), compared Mevlevi music with the Kavvali music (Indian) genre.

| Mevlevî (Semâ') Âyini | Kavvâli (Mahfil-e Semâ') |
|---|--|
| Semâ' Kur'an-ı Kerim okunmasıyla başlamaktadır. | Zikir Kur'an-ı Kerim okunmasıyla başlamaktadır. |
| Zikrulláha tövbe-i istigfar ile başlanır. Farklı birkaç istigfar da eklenir. Daha sonra bir miktar besmele-i şerif okunur. Bir miktar Esmâu'l-häsnā (Allah'ın en gözel isimleri) okunur. Sonrasında "Salavid-ı şerife' okunur. Salavid-ı şerife'den sonra üç defa "Kelime-i tevhlid" dört elif miktarı uzatlıp okunur (Özbağ, 2010, s. 6-11) Mevlevi Tarikatının en mülim tarafı "semä'' ve | Çiştîler zikirlerinde şehâdet kelimesine yoğunlaşıp 'İllallah' sözüne vargu yaparak zikrederler (El- Hafni, 2006, s. 149). Sesli ve gizli zikir, içsel muhasebe, |
| çile" dir (Öztuna, 1989, s. 254) | semâ' ve çile Çiştî Tarikatının başlıca usûl ve kaidelerindendir (Nizami, 1993, s. 345) |
| Tarikata ait giysiler bulunmaktadır. | Yün giymek esas olmak kaydıyla kendine has bir başlıkları bulunur. |
| Mevlevî Tarikatında Mesnevinin birçok yerinde tövbe, oruç, riyazet, kanaat gibi hususlar anlatılırken bazı kötü alışkanlıklardan çekimme tavsiye edilir. Ayrıca Mevlânâ, oruç ile ilgili şu ifadelere yer verir. "Oruç tutarak kötü huylardan gereği gibi temizlenirsen, ermiş kişilerin peşine düşer, göklere yüksellirsin, | Tarikata girmek isteyen mürit iki rekât namaz kılar ve "tövbe alır". Müride riyazet, kanaat ve fakr kelimeleri telkin edilir. Kırk gün oruç tutma, içki, sigara |

Photo 13. Gevaş's (2019: 109) study on the comparison of Mevlevi and Kavvali rituals

Pişkin (2019), examined the musicians who worked on Mevlevi music at the Gallipoli Mevlevihane, focusing on their compositions, the calligraphy in the building, and the paintings drawn.



Photo 14. Pişkin's (2019) study on the musicians trained at Gallipoli Mevlevihane (from left to right); Neyzen Aziz Dede (p. 116), Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede (p. 118), Ahmet Celaleddin Dede (p. 120), Neyzen Mehmed Emin Yazıcı Dede (p. 122).

Tuncer (2019), in his study in the field of philosophy of art, examined the symbols related to art in the *Mesnevi* from a philosophical perspective.

Can (2019), re-composed two musical works from a manuscript (No. 1907) written with Mevlana's philosophy, according to the stylistic features of the period.

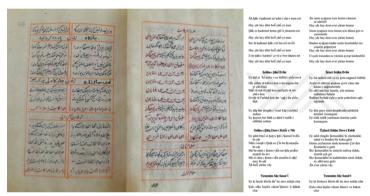


Photo 15. Can's (2019) page from the manuscript No. 1907 (p. 261) and the translation (p. 218) with the work of re-composing the musical piece

Bahadır (2020), examined the metaphors of the rebab, a musical instrument used in Mevlevi rituals, in Mevlana's works from the perspective of music philosophy.

Orhan (2020), conducted a study on Oxymel or Sirkencübin (a mixture of honey, vinegar, and water), a beverage shaped by Mevlana's philosophy.

Taiai (2019), studied manuscripts related to the kitchens in Mevlevi lodges (16th-17th centuries) shaped by Mevlana's philosophy, from the perspective of gastronomy and culinary arts.



Photo 16. A miniature from one of the manuscripts studied by Taiai (2019: 90) on Mevlevi kitchens and meals

Orakçıoğlu (2022), examined the miniatures in rituals (Sema ceremony) shaped by Mevlana's philosophy and the musical instruments used by musicians of the time, both from the perspective of fashion and organology.



Photo 17. Example of Orakçıoğlu's (2022: 71) fashion and organological analysis through miniatures Akpak (2022), analyzed the concepts related to Mevlana in his own books from a music philosophy perspective. Kaya (2023), conducted a study on the psychological impact of visitors to the Mevlana Museum (located in Konya), and offered suggestions based on findings related to the design of the building.

Conclusion

In this study, which analyzes the reflection of the impact of Mevlana's philosophy on art in thesis works in Turkish universities and the resulting trends, 22 graduate theses have been identified. Most of these studies are in the field of art history, followed by music, and thirdly, book binding. The majority of the theses (18) were carried out at state universities, with 4 at private universities. Seven of these theses are from the city of Konya, where the Mevlana Museum is located. Most of the theses are master's theses (18), with only 4 being doctoral theses. The year when the most theses were conducted is 2019. While no exact reason can be determined, news about the high revenue from Turkish series, particularly historical ones, in the last 10-15 years may explain this trend. Turkey's position as the third-largest exporter of TV series is quite significant (Serbestiye, February 2024). The majority of the keywords in these theses are related to the music discipline. Two of the theses are indirectly related to fashion, which is important for potential future globally successful projects and works in this field.

A notable point when examining these theses is the work of Duran (2016) and Can (2019), who, after describing the existing scientific research, created new and original products with their own style and designs. These studies are important for taking Mevlana and art research beyond just historical research of the period. Similarly, Kaya's (2023) work in music is also significant. Orakçıoğlu (2022) and Aktaş (2007) worked on fashion and design, which can serve as important resources for areas such as cinema and TV industries. Moreover, the value of other studies can be enhanced by incorporating artificial intelligence-based research and technology, which could lead to an increase in these types of studies.

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Academia.edu: https://independent.academia.edu/HTORTOP

ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Hasan-Tortop-2

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Web 2. https://www.selcuk.edu.tr/Birim/enstituler/mevlana_arastirma_ens/1838

Web 3. https://deumam.deu.edu.tr/

Appendix 1. Graduate theses included in the research scope

No Thesis information

- T1 Aktaş, A. (2007). The study of the clothes of mevlevi and the clothes ascribed to Mevlana in Mevlana Museum in aspect of the branch of garment art. Master thesis. Selcuk University, Konya, Turkiye.
- T2 Budak, A. (2009). Konya Mevlana Museum İhtisas Library of XV-XVI. century book covers. Master thesis. Erciyes University, Kayseri, Turkiye.
- T3 Taşel, Z. (2011). To examine wall and ceiling figures at Museum of Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi in Konya. Master Thesis. Gazi University, Ankara, Turkiye.
- T4 İrden, S. (2012). The effects of modal and form concept of Hammâmîzâde İsmâil Dede Efendi Mevlevî Rituals on the Turkish religious music. Doctoral dissertation. Ankara University, Ankara, Turkiye.
- T5 Haral, H. (2014). The life story of Mevlânâ in Otoman miniature painting: Manâkib al-ârifîn and Tarjuma-i Thawâqib-i Manâqib copies. Doctoral dissertation. Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul, Turkiye.
- Tuna, N. (2015). Illumination of Mathnawies in Mevlana Museum. Master thesis. Necmettin Erbakan University, Konya, Turkiye.
- T7 Duran, F. (2016). The composition layout of miniatures of Sevâkıb-ı Menâkıb and Unique Designs (TSM R.1479) and new designs. Master thesis. Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir, Türkiye.
- **T8** Kara, H. (2016). Ottoman era bindings in curatorial department of Konya Mevlana Museum. Doctoral dissertatio. Selcuk University, Konya, Turkiye.
- **T9** Akın-Urkmez, S. (2017). Afyonkarahisar Mevlevi lodge and its gravestones that were transferred from its cemetery to museums. Master thesis. Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir, Türkiye.
- **T10** Sutekin, A. (2019). To be involved the philosophy of Hz. Mevlana and Mevleviyeh in the artworks of western artists as a topic. Master thesis. Necmettin Erbakan University, Konya, Turkiye.
- **T11** Hidayetoğlu, M.B. (2019). XVII XIX century Mevlevi artists. Master thesis. Selcuk University, Konya, Turkiye.
- T12 Kunduroğlu-Erat, Z. (2019). The investigation of The Mevleves that is introduced by Zeki Atkoşar from the relationship between the us and the army and their relationship. Master thesis. Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, Ankara, Turkiye.
- T13 Gevaş, İ. (2019). In the sect of chistiyyah and Mawlaviyyah to the context of between similarities 'the examination of religious music genre of Qawwali. Master thesis. Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, Ankara, Turkiye.
- **T14** Pişkin, T. (2019). The lives, works and contributions of the musicals of the Gallipoli mevlevihane. Master thesis. Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, Ankara, Turkiye.
- T15 Tuncer, Z. (2019). Art and truth in Mevlana. Master thesis. Necmetin Erbakan University, Konya, Turkiye.
- T16 Can, M. (2019). Mawlavi rituals in the 1907 numbered manuscript in the Library of Theology Faculty of İzmir Dokuz Eylul University (Text And analysis). Master thesis. Duzce University, Duzce, Turkiye.
- T17 Bahadır, B.H. (2020). A study of the rebab instrument as a metaphorical element in the context of Rumi's works. Master Thesis. Suleyman Demirel University, Isparta, Turkiye
- T18 Orhan, H.I. (2020). Investigation of relationship among Maulana and ancient sherbet sirkencübin (oxymel) from gastronomy and health perspectives. Master thesis. Istanbul Ayvansaray UNiversity, Istanbul, Turkiye.
- T19 Taiai, S. (2019). "Hamdım, Piştim, Yandım": The outer and inner roles of the mevlevî kitchen. Master thesis. İbn Haldun University. Istanbul, Turkiye
- **T20** Orakçıoğlu, M. (2022). Mevlevi tarikat kültüründe kıyafetler ve sembolik anlamları. Master thesis. Başkent University, Ankara, Turkiye.
- **T21** Akpak, M.Y. (2022). Reflections of music in the thought of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi. Doctoral dissertation. Sivas Cumhuriyet University, Sivas, Turkiye.
- **T22** Kaya, F. (2023). Investigation of Mevlana museum in the context of psycho-social quality by age and gender. Master thesis. Karatay University, Konya, Turkiye.