

## ***AN ETNOCOREOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF REGIONAL FOLK DANCE OF ŞİRVANİ***

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Muzaffer SÜMBÜL  
Çukurova Üniversitesi  
Devlet Konservatuarı  
Sahne Sanatları Bölümü  
[msumbul@cu.edu.tr](mailto:msumbul@cu.edu.tr)

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper looks at Etnocoreological local variants of folk dance called ``ŞİRVANİ`` within Adana, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, Kilis, Kahramanmaraş and Hatay region. In this context, Şirvani was analyzed within the perspective dance culture ranging from dance structure to musical characteristics.

The above mentioned because the provinces in the same region have share same historical and cultural basis, dance of this provinces are called as “regional dances”.

There is a strong relationship between the name of the dance and the region. This relationship can also be seen in Şirvani dances.

Şirvani dances have Etnocoreological characteristics of conversion of body movements into dances, such as, style, solo and step character. Style of the individual performing the dances is the main characteristics shaping the regional dances. Şirvani is a typical example of dances which reflect the general characteristic of regional dances. Therefore, all details as movement structure of the region and dance style can be seen in these dances. Solos are performed by males, as improvisations. Step characteristics of regional dances consist of three main parts: movement of leg, arm and shoulder.

One of the distinguishing features of the Şirvani in terms of the dance culture perspectives is the music.

In this study, particular attention was paid to assess the survey findings in connection with the theoretical arguments of Etnocoreological approach.

**Key Words:** Etnocoreology, Regional folk dances, Folk dance of Adana, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis & Osmaniye, Şirvani

### **ÖZET**

Bu çalışmada, Adana, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, Kilis, Kahrmanmaraş ve Hatay bölgesi halk oyunlarından Şirvaniler etnokoreojik bakımdan incelenmektedir. Bu bağlamda Şirvaniler, oyun kültüründen oyunun yapısı ve müziksel özelliklerine kadar uzanan bir perspektifte analiz edilmiştir.

Bölge illerinin ortak tarihsel ve kültürel yapıya sahip olmaları nedeniyle bu illerde oynanan oyunlara bölgesel halk oyunları denilmektedir.

Coğrafi yer adlarıyla oyun adları arasında sıkı bir ilişki bulunmaktadır. Bu özelliğin bölge oyunları içerisinde Şirvani'ye de yansıdığı görülür.

Şirvaniler bedensel hareketlerin dansa dönüştüğü; sitil, solo ve adım gibi etnokoreolojik çeşitli özelliklere sahiptir. Halk oyunlarının bireysel icrasındaki sitil bölge oyun karakterinin biçimlenmesinde temel özelliktir. Şirvani bölgenin genel oyun karakterini yansıtan tipik örneklerden biridir. Bu nedenle bu oyunun icrasında bölge oyun özellikleri ve oyun sitilinin tüm ayrıntıları görülmektedir. Adım özellikleri bacak, kol ve omuz olmak üzere üç temel bölümden oluşur. Sololar özellikle erkekler tarafından doğaçlama olarak icra edilmektedir.

Oyun kültürü perspektifi bakımından Şirvanilerin temel ayırıştırıcı özelliklerinden biri de müziktir.

Bu çalışmada, alan araştırması bulgularının kuramsal bağlarının kurulmasına özellikle dikkat edilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Etnokoreoloji, Bölgesel oyunlar, Adana, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis ve Osmaniye Halk oyunları, Şirvani

## **Introduction**

Şirvani performed throughout to Turkey. In this paper were analyzed variants of Adana, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, Kilis, Kahramanmaraş and Hatay region.

The region pointed out above, constitutes the population of the study. Şirvani dances of the region which was collected by the researchers by applying structured and unstructured procedure over the period of 1989-2006, on the other hand, structure the sample of this study.

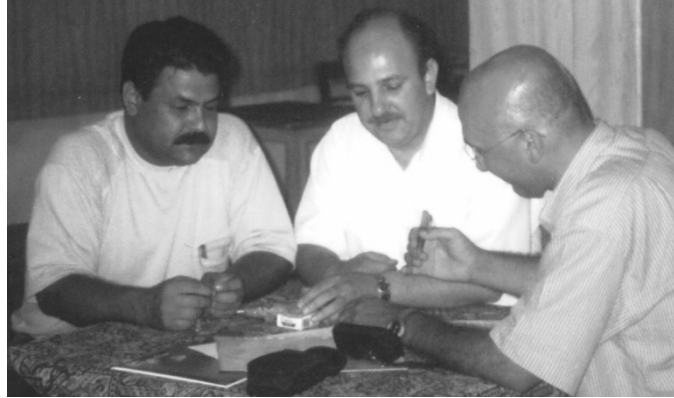
Region of Adana, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, Kilis, Kahramanmaraş and Hatay have rather similar cultural structure. Another word, a regional cultural structure was established due to existing strong relationship between the people living the region over the thousands of years. That is, "remaining margin" (marginal survivals)" assumption of Diffusionist approach and regional dance culture seems to be overlapping. According to the diffusionist, a new cultural element in a region spreads over the other regions like the waves caused by the stone thrown in the water (**SARAN, 1993: 281-288**). As such, a new folk dance occurred in region spreads over the other region that have closer ties, which then resulted in regional folk dances. This may well be seen in the researched region where 38 dances were performed commonly and they are called as "**regional folk dances**" (**SÜMBÜL, 2004: 279**). One of the "**regional folk dances**" performed in this region is named "Şirvani".

**Table 1. Distribution of the Regional Şirvani Folk Dances**

Region	ŞİRVANİ		TOTAL
	Unknown	Know	
Adana-Osmaniye	3	37	40
Gaziantep-Kilis	6	25	31
Hatay	3	29	32
Kahramanmaraş	2	34	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	14	125	139

As shown table 1 125 informant of 139 (See SÜMBÜL, 2004:277) participated on field research said that Şirvani folk dance is their region. Therefore, in the light of this information, it can be said that Şirvani folk dance is widely known in all region of the region

**Figure 1 Informant Cumali Zurnacı & Ali Ekici from Gaziantep-2003**



As a result of the above mentioned structure, regional folk dances had spread out to Adana, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, Kilis, Kahramanmaras and Hatay region. Looking at it from the historical perspective, the settlement policy of Ottoman Empire had an imported impact on cultural structure of the region. Such impact can still be observed at present. This is because, such settlement policy created an “ethnic mosaic” which in turn shaped the cultural structure. One of the most important settlement movement which have been affecting various expect of region is called Firka-i Islahiye. As a result of the settlement policy, Turkmens, who used to be nomadic and semi-nomadic, were settled in research region.

### Şirvani, Variants and Diffusion

Şirvani has got very important role at the folk dance in Adana-Osmaniye-Gaziantep-Kilis-Kahramanmaraş and Hatay. It always was performed by the old dancer at that region. Şirvani, has got two meanings at regional folk dance culture First, speed of dance second, name of the dance. As a dance style, Şirvani is an indicator of speed. That is, it is performed in mid speed. As the mane of the dance, Şirvani has got differ variants such as; Barazi, Com, Aşey, Islahiye, Gavurdağı, and Musabeyli.

**Figure 2 Regional Folk Dance Şirvani (MARAŞ-OSMANİYE-1994)**



The relationship between name given to folk dances and location can be seen in Şirvani dances in the region. Particularly, dance name after specific geographical regions Güzelbey is a good example which gives an explanation of the name given to dances.

**“(…) Şirvan, It is the name of the place between Gaziantep and Nizip. The rich and large villages situated within the Nizip province, i.e. Hiyam, Keret, Canakci, Cagit, and Kertise at present, were used to be belonged to the Gaziantep province. (...) Şirvan is small city center situated north of Siirt. There is also a mosque in Gazintep named Sirvan. Com is a villages in Hatay “(GUZELBEY, 1959: 18)**

It may also possible to see the relationships between the name of the cities Hatay, Gaziantep, Siirt and Şirvani dances. Such similarity with region in Iranian”Şirvan” shows that the relationship between name of dance and region are carried out abroad as well. Hence, there is a strong relationship between the name of the dance and the region that dances is performed. Name given to by the region, to certain

extent, has been reflected to dances over the years. For instance, Şirvani dance performed in Com village of Hatay is called as “Com Şirvani”.

### **Leader of dance**

There is a leader dancer in performance of regional folk dance. (See, **SÜMBÜL, 1994: 168**); **SÜMBÜL, 2004: 89-98**) A leader dancer is called the “head of halay”, “team leader” or “main dancer”. The leader dancer leads to Şirvani folk dances as well.

Figure 3 Leader of dance in Osmaniye-1994

The leader dancer can easily be distinguished from other performers due to his personal performing style and knowledge of the dance performance abilities. His improvisation brings more colorfulness, much energy, much fun and more structure to Şirvani folk dance. Besides, during the performance the leader himself shows his personal dancing skills. The symbol of leadership is the handkerchief since only the leader carries the handkerchief throughout the performance.



### **Tradition**

Dance, especially folk dance, has a lot of roles and functions in every society. It prevents people from the daily routine stress making their life more pleasant, and it arises the togetherness feeling within the society Royce explains relations between people’s dance and their perceptions;

**“What we, as Anthropologists, must consider are people’s perceptions and explanations of the features that make up their particular universe. This, at least, is the starting point from which all further analysis, comparison, and generalizations proceeds.”(ROYCE, 2002: 9)**

Almost all folk dances in the region show a great cooperative and collaborative communal gathering of the society within any ceremony. For instance, in a wedding ceremony even if only bride and groom, as individuals, seem to be the main part of the ceremony, in fact the most important part is the social event taking place around these two people.

Each folk dance; however, has its own performing characteristics, which is called “performing tradition” which varies from region to region.

Style of the individual performing the dances is the main characteristics shaping the regional dances. This is because style links the dancer with spectators by increasing their joy. This is the case all regional dances including Şirvani.

### **Style**

Style is the combination of local dancers' regional movement structure with mechanical ability and individual personal emotion that the dance is performed with emotions. As such, regional dance style occurs when the elements of melody rhythm and dance traditions are combined. Every dancer establishes his own style by creating figures on the basis of his/her physical ability. Physical ability depends upon a number of factors such of individual dance rhythmic perception, movement coordination and melodically hearing. Therefore, improvisation which is so much directly related with the individual's emotion at appoint in time, occurs differently in each body. Such an application, which is entirely individualistic, becomes anonym when the individuals imitate each other over the years. Therefore, style has got individualistic and anonym characteristics. Şirvani is a typical example of dances which reflect the general characteristic of regional dances. Therefore, performing in these dances is seen all details as movement structure of the region and dance style in this dance.

### **Solo Performance**

All the characteristics of regional movement structure can be observed at the performing of solo. Solo dance, which is performed by males, consisted of improvisations. Males' dominance in the society, self confidence and relaxed appearance can be observed in the improvisation section of Şirvani.

**Figure 4 Solos performed in Folk Dance Şirvani in Ceyhan-Adana- 2009**



### **The Steps and the Characteristics of The Body Movement**

The steps, constituted the regional folk dance style consist of the transformations of routine daily life movement such as walking, jumping, collapse, and turning. Such transformations together with gestures and postures constitute the regional folk dance movement structure.

Step characteristics of regional dances consist of three main parts: movement of leg, arm and shoulder. These steps constituted leg turn, knee pounce, side walk, front

& back heel actions. The dancer performed in these steps by slowly, speedily, soft, and hard movement.

In the valley villages of province of Adana, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, Kilis, Hatay and Kahramanmaraş, where Şirvani dances are performed, the steps are smooth and slow. On the other hand, Şirvani is performed rather fast and hard steps in the Gaziantep and Kilis region as much as mountain part of Kahramanmaraş, Hatay and Osmaniye. Şirvani in Gaziantep and Kilis as well as mountainous parts of Kahramanmaraş, Hatay & Osmaniye province, are performed by hard and speedy. The differences in the pointed out movement can be seen particularly steps. Therefore, steps in the folk dance performed in the mountain regions are rather hard and speedy.

Şirvani performed by males by hard but relaxed steps. When female joins the dance which is rather rare, Şirvani is performed with smooth steps.

### **Characteristic of Şirvani dances Music**

Music, together with the body movements, is two of the main characteristics. One, music is an internal factor as the body structuring feature while movements. Second, music is external factors affecting dance which complete movement.

One of the distinguishing features of the Şirvani from the dance culture perspectives is the music. At the beginning of the Şirvani dance presentation, musician called "Zurnacı" plays opening melody "açış (introduction)". That is an improvisation, which can be seen all the regions. While performing of the Şirvani, which reflects the dancer's emotion and thought, musicians as well as dancers may sing a song called "uzun hava".

### **CONCLUSION**

In this study, particular attention was paid to assess the survey findings in connection with the theoretical arguments of Etnocoreological approach.

One of the main findings of this research is that that folk dance called "Şirvani" is a dance common in Adana, Osmaniye-Gaziantep, Kilis, Kahramanmaraş and Hatay which have rather similar cultural structure. This would support the "remaining margin" or (marginal survivals)" assumption of Diffusion approach, which suggests a new cultural element in a region, spreads over the other region. That is, a new folk dance occurred in region spreads over the other region that have closer ties, which then resulted in regional folk dances.

In this study, we also found that the name of the Şirvani is also the name of the region, indicating a strong relationship between the folk dance and locations, which in turn indicate the importance of the folk dances in the people's daily live.

We found another result that Şirvani folk dances has similar performing characters at that region, which is including step, solo and style.

We finally said that Şirvani folk dances perform similar music at the region which is cover Adana, Osmaniye, Kilis, Gaziantep, Hatay and Kahramanmaraş.

**INFORMANTS**

<b><u>NAME-SIRNAME</u></b>	<b><u>BIRT PLACE- DAY</u></b>	<b><u>EDUCATION</u></b>	<b><u>OCCUPATIO N</u></b>
Ali Kara	Tumlu-1945	Elementary School	Farmer
Ali Süslü	Kozan-1940	Elementary School	Musician (Drummer)
Ali Ekici	Gaziantep-1966	University	Accountant
Arif Bolat	Düziçi-1948	Elementary School	Musician (Drummer)
Aydın Göçer	Adana-1967	Elementary School	Musician (Drummer)
Abdullah Demir	İslahiye-1933	Illiterate	Retired Worker
Celal Çetinçer	Kadirli-1932	Elementary School	Farmer
Celal Göçer	Ceyhan-1956	Elementary School	Musician (Drummer)
Cuma Zurnacı	Gaziantep- 1963	Elementary School	Musician (Drummer)
Hilmi Çetin	Kozan-1958	Illiterate	Musician (Zurnacı)
Ercan Çalgıcı	Maraş-1972	Elementary School	Musician (Zurnacı)
Hamit Maraşlıoğlu	Kilis-1969	University	Teacher
Hüsnü Polat	Bahçe-1938	Illiterate	Musician (Zurnacı)
İbrahim Demir	İslâhiye-1928	Elementary School	Farmer
M. Akif Bilmez	Reyhanlı-1973	University	Engineer



<u>NAME-SIRNAME</u>	<u>BIRT PLACE- DAY</u>	<u>EDUCATION</u>	<u>OCCUPATIO N</u>
M. Hakan Gökalp	Gaziantep-1972	University	Teacher
Mehmet Danışman	Hatay-1967	High school	Worker
Nuray Şener	Yayladağ-1959	High school	Trainer
Osman Gül	Bahçe-1937	University	Teacher
Sait Koca	İslâhiye-1970	High school	Trainer
Yusuf Gündoğdu	Kahramanmaraş19 59	High school	Teacher

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