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A Study on Compilation of Religious Musical Works: The Case of Anatolia And Balkans

Dinî Mûsikî Derleme Kültürü Üzerine: Anadolu ve Balkanlar Örneği

Ubeydullah Sezikli

Doç.Dr., İstanbul Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi, İslam Tarihi ve Sanatları Anabilim Dalı Assoc. Prof. Dr., Istanbul Univ, Fac of Theology, Department of Islamic History and Arts Istanbul, Turkey ubeydullahsezikli@hotmail.com orcid.org/0000-0001-7312-6737

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A Study on Compilation of Religious Musical Works: The Case of Anatolia And Balkans Abstract: Compilation of religious musical works is a survey that needs to be implemented promptly. In order to carry out such a survey, a connection is to be established between the last representatives of a great civilization and the modern members of the same society. To forge a link between these two groups of people is an incumbent upon the people of today. If we cannot derive the musical culture from the last representatives of this great civilization this musical and cultural heritage will be lost forever. In this respect source persons are of great importance in this process. They preseve the heritage in their memories. Other cultural assets such as; mosques, bridges and books can be restored decades later whereas the oral tradition and musical culture living in the memories of source persons gets lost in such a time. The lifetime of source persons comes out as a significant criteria in the urgency and importance of the issue. As a result, collection of oral tradition and musical culture has a higher ranking of importance among the other cultural assets beforementioned. In this study rules and methods of compiling religious musical works will be examined.

Keywords: Religious Music, Compilation, Hymn, Sufi Lodges, Balkans, Anatolia, Oral Tradition.

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Öz; Dini mûsikî ilmî çalışma sahasında yapılacak olan çalışmalar arasında en acil ve önemli olanı derleme çalışmalarıdır. Böyle çalışmaların icrası, büyük ve köklü medeniyetimizin son temsicileri ile günümüz insanı ilgilileri arasında kurulacak bir bağ ile mümkün olabilir. Bu bağı kurmak günümüz insanının aslî vazifelerindendir. Eğer bizler bu muazzam medeniyetin mûsikî mirasını son temsilcilerinden derleyip kayıt altına almazsak bu kültür mirası yok olacaktır. Bu bağlamda mûsikî mirasımızı hâvi kaynak kişiler çok büyük önem arz etmektedirler. Bu kuşak kaybolduğu zaman artık zaten ilahilerden ve geçmişin mûsikî kültüründen söz edemeyiz. Camiler, köprüler gibi taşınamayan kültürel varlıklar ve kitaplar gibi yazılı kaynaklar on yıllar sonra da restrore edilip ihya edilebilir fakat kaynak kişilerin hafızasında saklı sözlü gelenek ve mûsikî kültürü böyle bir zamanda kaybolmaya mahkumdur. Aslında bu olay zamana karşı nasıl bir yarış içerisinde olduğumuzu da göstermektedir. Bu noktada insan ömrü meselenin aciliyetini ve ehemmiyetini belirleyen en önemli kriter olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Sonuç olarak sözlü geleneğin ve mûsikî kültürünün derlenmesi zaman, tahrif edilme ve hatta yok olma tehlikesinden ötürü bahsedilen diğer kültürel varlıklardan ehem ve mühim sıralamasında daha önde gelmektedir. Kültürel varlıkların muhafazası hususunda sırayı bu şartlar belirler. Bu çalışma sözlü gelenek ve mûsikî kültürü, husûsen dinî mûsikî derleme çalışmalarının nasıl yapılacağını, derleme çalışmaları sırasında riayet edilecek kuralları ve uygulanacak metodları ele almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dinî Mûsikî, Derleme, İlahi, Tekke, Balkanlar, Anadolu, Sözlü Gelenek.

INTRODUCTION

Turkish culture has achieved a new perspective with the adoption of "Islam" and this perspective has shown its effects more particularly in the field of art. The existing knowledge and the experience before "Islam" has been reinterpreted within the boundaries of religion. The new understanding has been effective in the emergence of a civilization of love and tolerance

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which we call as "wisdom". The love and tolerance; main components of our civilization, have reached today with the language of art. Today, one can still come across the extensions of this civilization in the Balkans. For this reason, these extensions which are mainly; cultural assets, oral tradition and musical culture (religious music & folk music), needs to be studied, recorded and collected. Detailed information on collecting religious musical works from the Balkans will be given in latter pages.

In order to mention about the existence of a civilization in some place, the need for science, culture and art is relatedly more obvious than the people inhabitated there, stuck among the stones, land and buildings. Also for the settlement of a civilization in such place there is need for people with spiritual ripeness who we call as "Mânâ Erenleri"¹. The presence of these people is the fact that revives the place and saves it from being just a heap of stones. These people, friends of God, are a life-giving spirit for the land they live on. They convert the society into a civilization by glorifying the values it already has. They gave life, blood and spirit to the land they live on and enlightened there as a candle continuously. They also contributed to science, art and culture but obviously the contribution has not been limited only with aforementioned.²

The culture of "wisdom" stands in the center of the life of Anatolian people. This culture has constituted the masterpieces of art, aesthetic and wisdom in its basin with the heritage of thousands of years in which the proverbs, mânis, hymns and the folk songs are merged into each other. Therefore, Anatolia is the name of the land where the soil is watered with the wisdom of "İslam".³

A nation can only preserve itself by adopting its cultural values and preventing them of being lost.⁴ The birth of a culture or civilization happens on its own motion in social environments if not intervented. However, the outputs of them should be recorded. Throughout the history mankind has always tried to collect the products of culture and civilization. The oral tradition has been collected, the written works has been collected but the music has always been neglected and been the least collected phenomenon. In this article we will seek answers to the questions: Why music has been neglected? What are the reasons beyond this? How the collection of musical works should be done? Why it needs to be done immediately?

To begin with, the first notion is the dominance of popular culture over tradition. The ruthless effect of popular culture on our traditional culture has created a fear in our minds that, traditional culture is going to be forgotten and lost. When looked in retrospect, especially the last century, it is almost impossible to come across with newly produced traditional musical works. In this respect, collection activities of oral tradition and musical culture transferred through decades are of great importance.

Poetry, a sub-branch of oral tradition, has always been together with music before and after the Islam. Anonymous poem, minstrel and lodge poem have always been with melodies.

¹ People with divine wisdom and profundity.

² Eren Köksal, Amasya'da Dinî Mûsikî Geleneği (Master's Thesis, Istanbul University, 2015), 7.

³ Ender Doğan Sivas Türküleri'nde İrfani Boyut (Master's Thesis, Istanbul University, 2015), 3.

⁴ Coşkun Polat, Başlangıcından Günümüze Ülkemizde Derleme Çalışmaları (Master's Thesis, Hacettepe University, 1999), 2.

Musical instruments have differentiated in time but the poetry has never been aparted from melodies.⁵ In collecting oral tradition, it should be noted that the "word" or "poem" can be told in a poetic measure and recorded or memorized easily but for he music it is not the same.

Once to record the music was very difficult. Firstly, there were not enough technological equipments and opportunities as we have today. Secondly the perspective then was not suitable for such a study. The education system called "Meşk" that is simply: to learn traditional music with personal and one to one guidance of a master, has continued to operate until the beginning of our century. At the beginning of the century the World with growing wars and evolving technology has been the biggest enemy of the tradition in fact.

Many of the religious musical works, left to rot in the dusty pages of history, do not live at the moment. We come across many immovable cultural assets in the Ottoman Empire as it was a state founded as a civilization of waqfs. Ottomans builded elements of this civilizations everywhere under its governance such as places of worship, public baths, libraries, madrasahs and sufi lodges. However, these architectural elements were loaded with culture and civilization. For sure these buildings bear importance for us. They are symbols of Ottoman lands standing over different geoghraphical areas today. But one issue we need to consider is the collection of the oral culture of a civilization, accumulated for centuries in these structures. One of the biggest mistakes we do is the belief that we urgently need to restore still standing buildings. This is a false perception. What really urgent is the collection of trasferrable oral culture. Recording this culture is a race against time literally. What we experienced repeatedly in the periods of our collecting projects, was to see that the souce persons we derive this oral tradition passed away till our next visit there. Merely, people competent in art and culture can understand the importance of this issue. As a country you can only have a say in the future if you own and protect your past oral tradition because the works collected are the heritage of the centuries. It will bring us nothing to spend this heritage as a spendthrift, instead we need to earn this heritage and bring it to light.

Religious music actually developed parallel to the Qur'an. It has continuously renewed and developed itself within the circle Islam allowed. To adopt and collect religious musical works, will bring us a lot academically and enrich our repertoire. This will be understood more smoothly with the statistics to be given latter.

1. COMPILATION EFFORTS OF MUSIC IN ANATOLIA

In the recent past, the collection activities started with a questionnairre about folk melodies and information about Folk Music made by "Darülelhân", the first official music school of Ottoman Empire, in 1922. This is the first formal attempt of folk music studies in Turkey.⁶ There has been no remarkable improvement on behalf of our music untill the congress of music held in 1934

⁵ Umay Günay, Aşık Tarzı Şiir Geleneği ve Rüya Motifi (Ankara: Ataturk High Council of Culture, Language and History, 1986), 13.

⁶ Halil Bedi Yönetken, "Folklor Dersleri (III)". Orkestra 95 (1971): 34-35

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Music policy, shaped with the idea of improvement of musical life, led to the establishment of State Conservatory at Ankara University which can be regarded as the first important step. This was decided at the first Music Congress convened with Atatürk's order in 1934. ⁷

After the establishment of a State Conservatory at Ankara University in 1936, a "Folklore Archives Office" was established within the conservatory. The organizational goals and tasks of this Office were: to plan field researches all around the country, compile musical Works and take records of them, to create a database, to classify obtained data, prepare academic publications, collect information (documents - intruments and related material about music tradition) and protect them.⁸

Today we urgently need an institution of "Religion and Music" to function as "Folklore Archives Office" and to perform the same tasks. This institute should also be the center for all compilation activities.

Talking of the music compilation activities in Anatolia, Turkish Folk Music comes to mind first. Bela Bartok, a composer, pianist and a specilist in compiling folk music, is sent to Turkey by Hungarian Government to compile folk music. Bartok visited fourteen places for compilation activities. He seeked for information about Turkish Folk Music from the printed publications and other sources available in Budapest before coming to Turkey and had knowledgeable of the field. He started to learn Turkish. During his visits through Anatolia Ahmed Adnan Saygun joined Bartok in compilation activities. To find source persons and convince them to sing to the phonographs was a huge problem needs to be solved. They thought that "sound recording device" was a "tool of satan". Considering the social and traditional structrure of Anatolia, it was an important obstacle to overcome then. However they managed to compile many folk songs from thirty people in fourteen different places and recorded them by phonographs.⁹

Although compilation activities started with Bela Bartok, it is Muzaffer Sarısözen who compiled the folk songs in a broader sense. He has made the biggest movement of the last century on behalf of Turkish Music by compiling ten thousand musical works.

However Sarısözen and his team could not collect much religious musical works apart from some Bektashi hymns we cannot say that the political situation between 1938-1955 has no effect on this because at that time nothing related with "wisdom" such as "hymns" or "religious musical works" was recorded. Moreover such musical works registered in the repertoire were not even allowed to be performed.

In this respect, people doing compilation activities with such ideology cannot be expected to compile works of religious music. Today this ideology has come to an end and the value of religious music is appreciated more.

⁷ Süleyman Şenel, İstanbul Çevresi Alan Araştırmaları (Ankara: Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 1988), 55.

⁸ Şenel "İstanbul Çevresi Alan Araştırmaları", 55.

⁹ Mûsikî Dergisi, "Bela Bartok (1881-1945): "Türkiye'deki Derleme Gezilerim 1936", 08 January 2018, www.musikidergisi.net/?p=2019.

2. EFFORTS AND ACADEMIC STUDIES ABOUT RELIGIOUS MUSIC COMPILATION

As a result of the situation stated above we can say that Safer Dal, the Jerrahi Sheikh, is the first person to do compilation activities in religious music field. Safer Dal, born in 1926, became a dervish of Jerrahi Sheikh Fahreddin Efendi, after his military service in 1950. He has collected hymns from the Sheikhs coming from Balkans to visit the lodge and from some other sheikhs he visited who knew a lot of hymns. In this way he recorded many hymns. In order to compile more hymns sometimes he gave little presents to source persons. For example a case in point with his own words from my interview with Hakan Alvan: "*This sheikh loves Turkish delight with rose flavor. Let's take some to him so that he sings us some hymns*". Safer Dal has made many contributions to religious music by compiling many hymns, but unfortunately there is no inventory of the hymns he compiled in the Jerrahi Lodge archives.

An important regional study on the subject is of Urfa region. The study called "Sanlıurfa'da Dinî Mûsikî written by Hüseyin Akpınar. From this study we see that regions with strong folk music culture has strong religious musical culture as well. Another compilation study all around Anatolia is done by Fatih Koca in 2017 named "İslam Medeniyetinde Salâ ve Salavat Geleneği". He compiled many different examples of "salâ"¹⁰, an important form of religious music, performed in many cities of Anatolia and published as a book. Some researchers published articles on compiled religious music forms and works of different regions. "Tamjid" is another of these forms. Ferdi Koç published an article about the tamjid performed in Sakarya named "Türk Din Mûsikîsi'nde Temcidler ve Sakarya İli Taraklı İlçesinde Okunan Temcid Örnekleri". Eren Köksal has compiled the tamjid and tamjid hymns performed in Ziyaret Town of Amasya in his study named "Amasyalı Fahrî Müezzin Hacı Yunus Atak Beyefendi'den Derlenen Amasya İlâhîleri ve Temcid Kültürü (Ziyaret Kasabası Örneği)". Ahmet Hakkı Turabi has many studies about the religious musical culture of Amasya and compiled many hymns from the region some of which are published in the article named "Keçeci Hoca'nın Hayatı ve İlahileri" and the music album "İlahi Anadolu – Amasya İlahileri". Mehmet Nuri Uygun has compiled hymns from Kütahya and published books and music albums named "Kütahya İlahileri" and "Halvetî (Şa'bânî) İlâhîleri (Eskişehir, Uşak, Kütahya)" from Eskişehir and Uşak.

In 2009, we compiled a few hymns in Çorum and made a music album consisting of our compilations as a cultural service with the support of the municipality but it was actually just a spark. Later on we have compiled a magnificient tradition and our studies has turned into book "Religious Music Tradition in Çorum" and three serialized music albums "ilahi Anadolu Çorum ilahileri 1 (2010), İlahi Anadolu Çorum İlahileri 2 (2011) (The musical writing of one of the hymns in this album "Allah Adın Uludur" is givern in appendix 1), İlahi Anadolu Çorum İlahileri 3 (2013)" where we have performed the hymns other forms of religious music we compiled from the region.

At the same time the master theses prepared in our consultation makes a sum: "Religious Music Tradition in Amasya"; a study on religious musical life and regional practises of religious music forms of the city; "The Research of Sufism Understanding of Khalwati Sheikh Mehmet

¹⁰ Texts that wish the Prophet Mohammad (peace and blessings be upon him) mercy and salutation from God, eulogize him and wish his intercession. Performed as improvisation or compositions.

Dumlu Kutahyevî as Part of Guide and Music Relevance"; a study on religious music tradition of Kütahya are some of the completed studies.

3. RELIGIOUS MUSIC (MOSQUES AND SUFI LODGES) AND FOLK MUSIC COMPILATION PROJECT IN BALKAN REGION: MACEDONIA – BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA

All the reasons mentioned above about the urgency and the importance of compilation of religious musical works led us to take resposibility on the issue. Up to this project we have made many studies in Anatolia and had a lot of experiences about the compilation of religious musical works and still there is a huge sum of musical heritage waiting to be compiled. On the other hand and gladsomely there was a huge sum waiting to be compiled in Balkan region too. As a region stayed under the influence of the Ottoman civilization for a long time Balkans had the same musical cultural heritage inherent even today despite the Ottoman administration's abscence. Therefore we decided to carry out a project of compilation regarding this region. We have conducted a Project in coopoeration with the Scientific Research Project Department of Istanbul University and T.R.T. Our research team has made visits two times to the Balkan region and we mostly visited the sufi lodges that are still alive and preserve the cultural and musical heritage of Ottoman civilization. Our primary concern in this Project was to record the musical culture and undestand the cultural ties between Turkey and Balkan region today. We have come up with very interesting results at the end of our project. We have seen that the sufi lodge culture is still alive as in the past and they preserve what they inherited from their elders. Sufi traditions, hymns perfomed in *dhikr* ceremonies and other musical forms of religious music can be listed as preserved traditional cultural assets.

As the musical outcome of the Project we have compiled over a thousand hymns from the sufi lodges in Macedonia (Struga-Skopje-Tetovo-Strumica-Gostivar) and Bosnia Herzegovina (Sarajevo-Kačuni). Some of these hymns were published as music album named as "İlahi Nga Ballkani – Hymns of Balkan Region" (In two compact disks including twenty nine hymns compiled from the region in Turkish and other languages spoken in the region.) (The musical writing of two of the hymns in this album "O Inalti Perendi" and "Ölümden Kaçarsın" are given in appendix 2-3)

In another phase of the Project we have shooted a documentary film about the sufi culture and religious music culture of the Balkan region named "Sounds of the Balkans" broadcasted in TRT Music Channel in thirtheen episodes. We have documented the sufi lodges we visited and made interviews with responsibles and dervishes of these lodges. We have recorded the source persons performing the hymns and sufi culture existing in the sufi lodges.

Aforementioned project deliverables have proved us that our concern at the benginnig was accurate and necessary. During the project we have experienced many difficulties. In some phases of the compilation process and we needed to find sudden solutions to these problems. In order to inform researchers doing compiling activities we wanted to give an outline plan of the compiling process to overcome possible emerging problems.

There are some points needed to be paid much attention in such a long and tiring academic study or field research. These can be listed as below:

1. Source persons should be determined in advance.

2. Determined source persons must be knowledgeable in the field.

3. Researchers compiling the musical works and putting them into notation must be specialists of the subjects.

4. The lyrics of the compiled musical works must be found in diwans (traditional book for poems) or other poetry books and matched with the original text because they are deformed since transferred orally from person to person. It is a common problem to encounter.

5. Some source persons have lyrics notebook. Photographs of them must be taken. Your source person could not remember some of the hymns or musical piece but some other person can remember it.

6. Women are important source persons. They gather in religious nights and for other social events more often than men. They perform the hymns and other musical pieces in these gatherings within themselves repeatedly. They preserve many hymns, etc.

7. Determine the authenticity of the compiled religious musical work of the region.

8. One should not regard language as an obstacle while compiling religious musicial works since the geoghraphical areas Ottoman Empire governed were multi-lingual areas. The music should be the main element compiled. Works in every language should recorded and put into notation.

- 9. Musical and mystical history of the areas must be researched in advance.
- 10. Audio and video recording must be done in compilation activities.

After many years of work in the field searching and trying to compile and record religious musical works, we have come up with some outputs. Here are some features of the religious musical works compiled from Anatolia and Balkans as below;

- 1. Compiled religious musical works (hymns, other musical forms) are closer to folk music.
- 2. These musical works are hymns sang for centuries within the influence area of Ottoman civilization.
- 3. These works are generally preserved in sufi lodges in Balkans and in Anatolia they are preserved by women and religious officers.
- 4. Differences in tune when analyzed according to maqam and other musical criteria, show us the local musical characteristics of the region musical piece compiled & recorded from.
- 5. These works should be classified according to the region compiled from in order to constitute an inventory. They should be named as the city or town performed and recorded. As an example: Hymns of Bosnia, Hymns of Çorum, Hymns Of Tetovo.
- 6. These works generally have simple rhythm scales (Nim Sofyan, Semâî, Sofyan) however they show us the characteristics of local musical culture. As an example: In Balkan region syncopated rhythm scales (Aksak) are more common in use.

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7. Lyrics are sometimes translated from Turkish to other languages.

The regions we went to do compilation activities have important figures of dhikr as important as hymns. Additionaly the prayers reached up today is another important issue. We are actually forming the inventory of a civilization. Compilation of religious music is truly one of the most important things to be done on behalf of the religion and music. We understand this from the reaction of people in Balkans during our compilation project there. They asked us: *"Have you really come all this way here just to collect these hymns?"* with eyes full of tears. This reaction proves that what we do is quiet a right job but a very late one.

Compilation is a race against time and must urgently be done. A simple example is enough to explain the urgency of the situation. When we went to a Khalwati sufi lodge to collect hymns in Tiran Albania, they told us that an old person died four months ago who knew three hundred hymns. We asked if they had any records of these hymns but they had no records. However they told us that the son of this person lives in Italy and he might have the records of these hymns. They called his son but unfortunately we learned that there were only a few hymns recorded at a casette. As understood from this example three months of delay has costed us three hundred hymns.

CONCLUSION

The religious musical tradition which have lived continuously in mosques and sufi lodges, have reached today from generation to generation by the means of oral culture. Naturally this transferring process has changed the formation of the musical works, lyrics of the hymns and the other oral cultural assets up to a point and caused losses in the oral cultural mind. The deformation in the musical works compiled confronts in two ways. One is the melodical destruction or loss depending on the geography you study on. The other is the distortion of the lyrics stemming from the difference of language spoken in the area and the difference of mother tongue between the close generations. Compilation of these cultural assets enable to treat the deformed cultural disorders. This is exactly the same as the restoration of historical structures. What we have made is the restoration of the musical and oral culture and renovation of cultural codes. This is the most fundamental step to be taken in closing the gap between the generations.

As explained above; collection of religious musical works is a survey that needs to be implemented urgently in many parts of Anatolia and the geography that İslamic Civilization has flourished and lived all around the world. In this study we tried to analyse the collection & compilation process of musical & oral culture. We tried to explain the important points to be considered in this process. Depending upon our experiences, we have tried to give the striking examples we have experienced in our compilation activities. The common features of our compilations from Anatolia and Balkan region are listed as well. Finally we wanted to give few examples of our compilations from Anatolia and Balkan region and raise awareness on the significance of the issue. This study will be a guideline for the musicologists, musicians, compilers and the researchers from other related sub-branches of social sciences.



Appendix 1

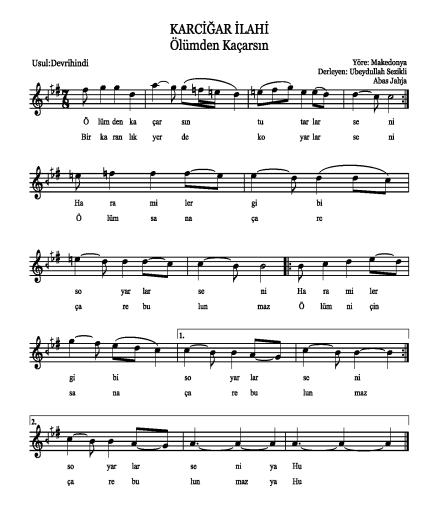
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Appendix 2



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Appendix 3



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