



CRC 1369 “Cultures of Vigilance”, LMU Munich, Project B05

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Two Modes of Vigilance, Two Logics of Prohibition: Spiritual and Social Vigilance of Bektāṣī Sufis after the Bans of 1826 and 1925

Changing Conditions, Changing Discourse: *Bektashis and Other Sufis in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic Turkey, 1826 to 1950.*

Munich, IBZ, Amalienstraße 38, 80799 München

July 21st and 22nd, 2025

The workshop will focus on Sufis' response to their dramatically changing social and political setting in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey from 1826 to 1950. The goal of the meeting is to deepen an understanding of how Sufi communities reacted to a changing environment that brought tightened state-surveillance, prohibitions of Sufi activities, systematic state intervention in and regulation of Islamic endowments (*evkaf*), the emergence of a modern public and a new media-landscape. A focus will be directed to the re-organisation of communication both within and outside of Sufi communities. The Bektashi order may receive special attention as this order was prohibited not only once, in 1925, but also a century earlier, in 1826.

That the Sufi orders by and large survived prohibitions and persecutions cannot only be explained with practices of vigilance, secrecy and state inefficiency, but needs also a comprehension of their intellectual, spiritual and doctrinal reaction, in short: the changes in their discourse and self-expression within the constantly changing socio-political landscape.

Sufi orders are a longstanding topic in the Ottoman studies, present already when matters Turkish were largely regarded a part of Islamic (or, rather, Arabic) philology. This approach has always paid attention

to mystical theology, doctrines and rites as well as devotional literature. In recent decades, research has concentrated on institutional change and the social history of Sufism. Relatively neglected have been intellectual reactions to different forms of modernity, active adaption to new legal and social challenges, and cooperative interactions between communities. Likewise, people at the margins of the orders, namely sympathizers without or with only a low-level initiation, or those with a multiple affiliation have rarely been considered.

At the workshop, we will attempt to illuminate the Sufi perspective on changing realities, tracing their transformation through sources such as ego documents, Sufi publications, fictional works, and more. We welcome especially contributions addressing the following questions:

- How did Sufi orders, both as organizations or represented by individual members, experience and respond to the aforementioned events and to the concomitant change of discourses?
- In what manner has the format of their communications evolved? How did Sufis share their individual experience within their communities? Which external actors were attracted, which co-operations were established?



Program

Monday, July 21st

9:30–10:00

Welcome and Introduction

Christoph K. Neumann

LMU Munich and Orient-Institut Istanbul

Panel 1: Historicising Bektashi Religiosity

Chaired by Christoph K. Neumann

10:00–11:00

Historicising Alevis and Bektashis Separately, without Heterodoxy or Shamanism

Gökçen B. Dinç

Utrecht University

Uncovering the Invisible Legacy of Turkey's "Popular" Historians Scholarship on Alevis and Bektashis in the Republican era—prior to the "Alevi revival"—often overlooks "popular" history and "folk" literature authored by Alevis and Bektashis, instead prioritizing canonical texts as primary sources. This presentation will focus on the books published by a particular network, that of İstanbul Maarif Kitaphanesi, owned by the Iranian Naci Kasım (Açıkel), and the works of two of its authors, Ziya Şakir and Tevfik Oytan. In particular, attention will be given to Şakir's novel *Şah İsmail*, which recounts Ottoman-Safavid relations prior the reign of Sultan Yavuz Sultan Selim, and Oytan's *Bektaşiliğin İç Yüzü*, which explores the history of the Bektashi order. Both were published between the late 1930s and early

1940s. By analyzing Kasım's perspective and his motivations for publishing these books, their experience in the publishing scene following Law 677 (1925) and the alphabet reform of 1928 will be traced. It will be argued that these authors and their publisher developed a distinctive strategy, collaboratively adapting to changing political circumstances and engage a broader audience by framing their publications as "folk books". a tactic that allowed them to evade state surveillance, albeit to a certain extent. A close reading of these texts, along with an exploration of their sources—manuscripts, *mecmuas*, lithographs, and canonical Alevi/Bektashi texts—further reveals a distinctive approach to historiography. Rather than engaging with themes or using terminology that would later dominate the field, these authors presented the history of Alevis and Bektashis as a separate narrative, without any references to heterodoxy, shamanism, or Central Asian "remnants".

11:00–11:30 **Coffee Break**

11:30–12:30

The Bektashi Secret in Difficult Times: A Journey of Discovery and Revelation

Adeliia Davletova

LMU Munich

Certain concepts acquire a central role in particular movements, by simultaneously taking a representative function and functioning as organizational frameworks and markers of collective identity. In the case of Bektashism during the late Ottoman and early Republican periods, the concept of the *secrecy*—whether by internal choice or external imposition—acquired such a pivotal place. In the context of global shifts in Bektashi discourse, this concept, at times even departing from its original esoteric context, has undergone modifications and adopted diverse connotations, eventually acquiring relevance within broader social and political contexts. By analysing monographic and periodical publications, this presentation traces the conceptual trajectory of secrecy as perceived by the Bektashi community itself, and seeks to contextualise its genealogy. The study will encompass several fields. Key figures to be examined include religious actors, folklorists and literary authors such as *Mehmed Ali Hilmi Baba*, *Ahmed Rifat*, *Ahmed Rifki*, *Hacıbeyzade Ahmed Muhtar*, *M.Tevfik Oytan*,

*Yusuf Fahri Baba, Vahit Lutfi Salcı, and others. The research project, from which this contributes evolves, is part of CRC 1369 *Vigilant Cultures*. It aims to further explore the relationship between secrecy and vigilance by giving attention to their character as dynamic concepts and interdependent phenomena.*

12:30–13:30

From Confraternal Religion to Instrumental Theology: ideological reversal between heterodoxy and orthodoxy in the political history of Bektashism

Albert Doja

University of Lille

The system of beliefs and practices related to Bektashism seems to have corresponded to a kind of liberation theology, whereas the structure of Bektashi groups corresponded more or less to the type of religious organization conventionally known as charismatic groups. Bektashism is likely the mystical Islamic order that most clearly exemplifies a transformative pattern of heterodoxy, encompassing theological, ideological, cultural, social, and political dimensions. Heretics and mystics can sometimes be dangerous and at other times reliable, depending on the political context—as was the case with Bektashism in Ottoman Anatolia, Republican Turkey, and independent, post-communist Albania. While they do not partake of or express class struggle, their heresy, mysticism, and millenarianism, over and beyond the intensity and the power of their beliefs and the radical character of their opposition to the established religion, always and necessarily crystallise political, social, and cultural discontent. As a result, their spiritual tendency could, at times, connect with and meet social, cultural, and national perspectives. In turn, when members of the previously persecuted religious minority acquire a degree of religious and political respectability within society at large, the doctrines of heterodoxy and liberation theology fade into the background. In the end, the heirs of the heterodox promoters of spiritual reform and social movement turn into followers and faithful defenders of a legitimate authority. They become the spokespeople for an institutionalized orthodoxy whose support is sought by the political regime.

13:30–14:30

Lunch Break

14:30–15:30

Durbalı Sultan's Bosnian Vestiges: The Asitane of Ireni/Asprogeia, and the Thessalian Bektashi Diaspora in the Austrian Administered Bosnia in the Light of Some Newly Discovered Manuscript Sources

Slobodan Ilic

University of Nicosia

The Bektashi tekke of Durbalı Sultan in Asprogeia, near Farsala (Greece), has long been regarded until nowadays as one of most revered sacred sites among the Albanian Bektashis. Traditionally, its foundation is attributed to the late 15th century and to its legendary namesake, *Durbalı Baba*, who is said to have served as its first sheikh for more than twenty years. However, the earliest documented evidence of the tekke's existence dates only to the late 18th century. The modern researchers, most notably Recepi (1970), Kiel (2005), and Mavrommatis (2008) diverge significantly both in dating of the original foundation, and in their attempts of reconstruction of the spiritual lineage (*silsile*) of the postnishins. In the absence of the archival sources, they relied either on the oral Bektashi tradition, or the scarce in situ available epigraphic material. It is well known that following the vak'a-i hayriyye decree of 1826, and the official ban on the Bektashi order, some dervishes took refuge abroad. Less well known, however, is that among the places they maintained the activities was Bosnia and Herzegovina under Austrian rule. The manuscript codices RS-344, RS-708 and RS-826, housed in the National Library in Sarajevo and dating from the late 19th century, originally belonged to the tiny local offshoot of the Durbalı asitane. These manuscripts contain notes on related events and figures, including the sheikhs, as well as Bektashi hymns (*nefes*), mostly belonging to poets associated with the convent. Drawing on these sources, the paper aims to provide some new information on the social and intellectual activities of the tekke, in particular during and after the interim period when it briefly came under the Nakshibendi administration.

15:30–16:30

Shifting Power Narratives: Sufi Orders and State Control in Ottoman Bosnia in 19th century

Saadet Demiroğlu

Boğazici University

The 19th century is widely recognized as a period of significant transformations in the governance of Ottoman Empire marjed by profound changes in the social, political, economic and administrative spheres. In this process, the consolidation of power mechanisms inevitably affected Sufi orders, which had long permeated the capillary circuits of Ottoman society. While Sufi orders were faced with state supervision and intervention, particular attention should be paid to the case of Bosnia – a region characterized by a rich diversity of Sufi orders that, over time, developed a closely intertwined relationship with the state. The nature of this relationship naturally evolved in accordance with the shifting political landscape and social dynamics of the era. In this paper, the case of Naqshbandi order in 19th-century Bosnia will be analyzed as a part of the interplay of local alliances and negotiated autonomy between the Sufi orders and the Ottoman state. Through the cases of *Abdurrahman Sirri* and *Abdülvehhab İlhami*, an emerging model of governance will be discussed within a multilayered framework of historical contingencies. While these socio-religious agents belonged to the same tradition as the disciples of sheikh *Huseyin Baba Zukić*, *Abdurrahman Sirri* managed to secure a leading position and easily adopted to the new legal and social challenges, while his close equivalent *Abdülvehhab İlhami Baba* - was brutally executed by local rulers having been identified as deviant or heretic. Relying on Ottoman archival documents, ego documents and literary works of these sheikhs, this study will examine the underlying reasons that contributed to this divergence in their trajectories. In examining the “carrot and stick” policy toward Sufi orders, this study focuses on the case of Naqshbandi sheikhs and highlights three main aspects: the allocation of patronage and economic concessions, adherence to the Sunni orthodox discourse of the imperial center, and the sheikhs’ mediating role between local communities and state authority. Through this analysis, the paper seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of how Sufi orders in a frontier region navigated shifting power dynamics amid the profound transformations of the 19th century.

16:30–17:00 **Coffee Break**

17:00–18:00

Revelation and Concealment: Naqshbandi Conduct between Sufi Populism and the Public Sphere in Late Ottoman Damascus

Itzhak Weismann

Haifa University

The Naqshbandi brotherhood had played a conspicuous role in the religious life of Damascus following the arrival of *Shaykh Khalid* in 1823. During the Tanzimat era, the Damascene Naqshbandiyya-Khalidiyya was divided between two family lines: one of *Muhammad al-Khani*, Khalid's major local deputy, the other of *Mahmud al-Sahib*, his nephew who contested the brotherhood's leadership. The rivalry between the two branches intensified during Abdülhamid II's reign, as adepts of the Khani line were involved in the formation of the Salafi trend, whereas *As'ad al-Sahib* was harnessed to the service of the autocratic ruler. Superseding both was a third branch established at the time in Damascus by the immigrant *Shaykh 'Isa al-Kurdi*, who revived Naqshbandi activity in the city. In this presentation, the ideas and conduct of these Naqshbandi shaykhs will be examined in relation to two contradictory trends characterizing the Hamidian era: the flourishing of popular Sufism and the emergence of a local public sphere. To strengthen the Ottoman state, Sultan Abdülhamid accelerated the path of reform, promoting the formation of a public school system, improving communications, facilitating the press and allowing the introduction of Western ideas, sciences and institutions. The reforms created a new urban educated class interested in the affairs of society and state. To buttress his authoritarian rule *Abdülhamid* stressed his role as Caliph and mobilized the Sufis to convey his claim to the people. With reference to Sufi tropes of revelation and concealment, the biographies and treatises of the *Khanis*', *Sahibs*' and *'Isa al-Kurdi*'s will be analysed to trace their respective attitudes toward the state, their involvement in public debates, and the modifications they made to their Sufi doctrines, modes of disseminating the path, and intended audiences.

18:00–19:00

Albanian Bektashi From Mysticism to Nationalism

Rigels Lenja

LMU Munich

Bektashi order was officially banned in 1826 in the Ottoman Empire, however, it not only survived, but also experienced growth in territories of what currently compose the Albanian state and Albanian-speaking territories. In contrast to other Sufi groups within the empire, the Albanian Bektashis adopted a distinct strategy for survival: they aligned themselves with the emerging national movement. In doing so, they positioned themselves at the forefront of Albanian nationalism. The presentation will examine the reasons behind the Bektashi order's decision to support the national course, the organizational strategy it employed, and the outcomes it sought to achieve. Notably, this transformation was not initiated by Bektashi clerics themselves, but rather by national poets and intellectuals – most prominently the Fräshery brothers. The Bektashis were closer to Albanian nationalism, accepting the Albanian language in Latin script rather than Arabic or Cyril as was the case with Sunni and Orthodox Communities, and they even endorsed the idea of being an Albanian national religion. Currently, the Bektashi Community is independent, contrary to all other Sufi order in Turkey or in other successors states of the Ottoman Empire, where they are organized as part of the Sunni Community.

Tuesday, July 22nd

Panel 3: Nineteenth Bektashi Spiritualities

Chaired by Albert Doja

9:30–10:30

Between Alevism and Bektashism: Social and Religious Changes among the Bektashis in the Post-1826 Central Anatolia

Ufuk Erol

Leibnitz Institute of European History

This paper examines the Bektashi attempts to expand their influence and network among Qizilbash-Alevi communities in the post-1826 period. The prohibition of the Bektashi order and the confiscation of its properties might have compelled specifically the Çelebis to seek new grounds to restore their authority. Those Qizilbash-Alevi communities who migrated to central Anatolia in the 18th and early 19th centuries provided a potential socio-religious base for the Bektashis to reorganize and expand their follower networks. The encounter of the Bektashis with Qizilbash-Alevis resulted in a mutual transformation. While the former experienced a rapprochement with certain Qizilbash-Alevi ritual practices, the latter became disaffiliated with their older Qizilbash-Alevi *ocak* identity and, instead, they aligned themselves with the Bektashis. Consequently, the Qizilbash identity, which was partly affiliated with the Ardabil-Safavid collective memory, waned; yet these communities retained Alevi identity. Although they have considered the Çelebis as their new supreme religious authority, they have not identified themselves as Bektashi since the 19th century. This paper will analyse such changes in religious practices and identities through Alevi and Bektashi family documents and oral history. The first category of sources include *buyruk* writings. A comparative reading of those pre-19th and post-19th century *buyruks* preserved by central Anatolian Alevis sheds light on how Bektashi discourse penetrated into certain Qizilbash-Alevi writings in the 19th century. While using *buyruks*, this paper will also examine oral accounts to understand the expansion of Bektashi influence among the Qizilbash-Alevis in central Anatolia.

10:30–11:30

Writing Changes: The Late Ottoman Sufi Atmosphere in Bektashi Manuscripts

Mark Soileau

University of Hamburg

The century from 1826 to 1925 was consequential in Ottoman history, and had a profound impact on Sufi organizations. Perhaps most affected were the Bektashis, who, always treated with suspicion in certain circles, were banned twice, resulting in an underground period followed by a cautious resurfacing followed by another underground period. The turbulence of the time brought changes in the public visibility of Bektashis, as well as in the physical settings of their interaction, the patterns of their patronage, and the expression of their identity, as they blended with other Sufi orders and had growing interest in other religious and mystical traditions and contact with Westerners. During this time we also see an increase in manuscript production among Bektashis, in the form of hagiographies, mystical treatises, ritual manuals, and poetry collections, and even early attempts at printing Bektashi works. This raises important questions about how the changing socio-political and cultural climate shaped the content and form of Bektashi writings. This study will look for the ways events and changing attitudes of the late Ottoman and early Republican era of reform from Mahmud II to Atatürk, especially those affecting Sufi institutions, were reflected in the manuscripts produced by and circulating among Bektashis of the period. It will explore the questions of what Bektashis were writing, who specifically was writing and where they were doing so, and how they were expressing their identities, through colophons and other manuscript features. Particular attention will be given to *Vilayetname* manuscripts, hagiographical texts devoted to *Hacı Bektaş*, which were especially plentiful in the nineteenth century and continued even into the twentieth.

11:30 – 12:00 **Coffee Break**

12:00–13:00

The Dervish Who Never Gave Up His Saz: Pesendî's Spiritual Journey between Bektashism and Mevlevism

Mustafa Ozağaç

Istanbul University

This study examines the tension between art, music and sect affiliation in 19th-century Ottoman Sufi circles through the life of the poet Pesendî (1841-1913) from Kütahya. Despite his madrasa education, Pesendî, who was interested in folk poetry and music, became a student of the instrumental poet Ârifi and was known for his Bektashi tendencies. However, he was ostracized by the Sufi circles in Kütahya because of his saz playing and his Bektashi identity, preventing full acceptance by any master or murshid. This process of ostracization led him to meet Hasan Dede, the master at the Eskisehir Mevlevihane. When Pesendî expressed his desire to become Hasan Dede's disciple but admitted that no murshid would accept him because he would not give up his saz, Hasan Dede challenged him to name a virtue that defined him. Pesendî's reply – "I have never yawned in my life" – captured Hasan Dede's attention, leading to Pesendî's tutelage under him in Eskisehir for several years. Upon his return to Kutahya, Pesendî had become a Mevlevi dervish and was bestowed the title "Dede". Through an analysis of Pesendî's transformation, this study addresses key questions: How did 19th century orders such as Bektashism and Mevlevism negotiate the relationship between artistic practice and individual identity? How does Pesendî's process of exclusion and acceptance reflect the flexibility and boundaries of Ottoman Sufi culture? What is the significance of this process for understanding the fluidity between institutional Sufi structures and individual spiritual trajectories within the Ottoman Empire? By drawing on Pesendî's poetry, contemporaneous Sufi sources and the literature on the interaction between orders during Ottoman modernization, the study aims to illuminate the evolving dynamics of individual identity, artistic expression and spiritual belonging in the 19th-century Ottoman Sufi milieu.

13:00 – 14:00: **Lunch Break**

Panel 4: After the Prohibition of 1925
Chaired by Slobodan İlic

14:00–15:00

Was Hacı Bektaş Veli Celibate? The Chelebi-Babagan Bipartition of the Bektashi Sufi Order under Prohibition (1826–1941)

Riza Yıldırım

University of Vienna

While scholars have explored various aspects of the abolition of the Bektashi Sufi Order in 1826, its profound impact on the order's internal structure has yet to be systematically analysed. Since its foundation in the late fifteenth century, the Bektashi Sufi Order was organized around two principal branches: the *Chelebi* (*Dedegan*) and the *Babagan*. Prior to 1826, when the order was semi-officially integrated into the Ottoman religio-political system, the Ottoman state recognized the leader of the Chelebi Family—who claimed descent from Hacı Bektaş Veli—as the official head of the order. Meanwhile, the *Babagan* branch, led by the *dedebaba*, was primarily responsible for spiritual training within Bektashi *tekkes*, despite lacking formal state recognition. The symbiotic and mutually reinforcing relationship between these two branches was fundamentally disrupted following the official dissolution of the order in 1826. As the designated head of the order, the *Chelebi* Family and its leadership were expelled from the central *tekke* and prohibited from engaging in Sufi activities, while the *Babagan* dervishes, due to their unofficial status, remained in the *tekkes*. This shift enabled the *Babagan* branch to challenge the *Chelebi* Family's authority, leading to an internal struggle for dominance over the Bektashi *ṭarīqa*. Central to this power struggle was the polemical debate surrounding the alleged celibacy of Hacı Bektaş Veli. By analysing key texts from this period—most notably *Müdafaa* by Cemaleddin Çelebi and *Bektaşî Sırrı* by Ahmet Rıfki—this study examines how the shifting external dynamics during the banned years facilitated *Babagan* dominance and reshaped the internal structure of the Bektashi Sufi Order. Furthermore, it explores how this restructuring has influenced modern historiographical narratives concerning the origin of the order.

15:00–16:00

Revisiting the Bektashis' Responses to the Abolition of Religious Orders in Turkey in 1925

Rabia Harmanşah

Leuphana University

This paper revisits the author's master's thesis on the Bektashis' responses to the abolition of religious orders in Turkey in 1925, along with her subsequent ethnographic and archival research with Bektashis in Ankara and Hacıbektaş at various intervals between 2004 and 2010. In the thesis, she explored the diverse ways in which Bektashis developed alternative narratives to make sense of and justify the abolition of their religious order while acknowledging the diversity within their responses. Their attempts to accommodate the legislation were shaped by their self-perception as distinct from other Sufi orders, their alignment with the modern secular republic, and their reverence and loyalty to the founder of the Turkish Republic, Atatürk. Thus, they reframed this historical event in ways that aligned with their interpretations, making the circumstances more bearable by drawing on their sobriety in mystic tradition and the flexibility inherent in their cosmologies. This paper is a reflection on an attempt to provide an emic account of Bektashis' perspectives on the abolition of their religious order as an outsider scholar and anthropologist drawing on the author's intermittent yet ongoing engagement with Alevi studies.

16:00–16:30

Coffee Break

16:30–17:30

Obedient Resistance: Authorial Activities of Mevlevî Writers After the Closure of Tekkes

Yasir Islam Kaplan

LMU, Munich

Law No 677, which mandated the closure of dervish lodges and *zawiyas* in Türkiye, has now been in effect for 100 years. Ironically, Sufi groups and their lodges have persisted throughout this period. It is increasingly evident that the closure constituted only a temporary bottleneck in the long history of Sufism on Turkish soil, with Sufi communities adapting and circumventing the ban over time. The perseverance of the early Republican-era Sufis was pivotal in ensuring the survival of Sufism under restrictive conditions, as well as in preserving and transmitting Sufi knowledge and culture from the Ottoman era into the republic of Türkiye. Writing, publishing, and, more broadly, contributing to intellectual life with various ways were among the key survival strategies for Sufism during which Sufis lost their legitimacy and reputation. In this regard, this presentation aims to enrich the discussion on Sufi responses to the ban by analysing the authorial activities of Mevlevi dervishes following the closure of the *tekkes*—roughly until the 1950s, when Mevlevism began to be folklorized. Even before 1925, Mevlevi publishing had gained momentum, particularly from the 1890s onward. However, the prohibition of Sufi lodges and ceremonies, along with the anti-religious reforms of the early Republican regime, severely disrupted these activities until the dissolution of the single-party era—despite the Mevlevis’ relatively privileged status under Kemalist rule. During this period, key Mevlevi figures who had pioneered Mevlevi publishing, such as Veled Çelebi İzbudak, Tahir Olgun, Ahmed Remzi Akyürek, Ahmet Avni Konuk, Midhat Bahari Beytur, and Feridun Nafiz Uzluk, were still alive. Although they largely refrained from publishing, they continued to contribute modestly to intellectual and cultural life through writing and collaborations with other intellectuals. This study explores how the conditions shaped the Mevlevis’ writing strategies and textual outcome. It examines the types of writings they produced, thematic and discursive trends within their texts, main obstacles they encountered in publishing activities and the strategies they developed to overcome them. Additionally, the study examines their intellectual networks and

other contributions to the broader cultural sphere. Addressing these issues will provide valuable clues about the Mevlevis' intellectual response to the prohibitions and persecutions in the early Republican period.

17:30–18:30

Culture and madrasa: Sufi responses to Atatürk-led revolutions

Yusuf Selman İnanç

Central European University

This study examines the divergent paths taken by Sufi orders in Turkey following the closure of the Sufi lodges in 1925. It identifies two main responses to the Atatürk-led secularizing reforms. The first was the attempt to incorporate Sufism into national heritage, a phenomenon here termed “cultural Sufism.” This approach was embodied by figures such as *Veled Çelebi İzbudak* (d. 1953), *Midhat Baharî Beytur* (d. 1971), and *Nurullah Kılıç* (d. 1977). These individuals aligned themselves with the new regime's emphasis on national heritage, striving to integrate Sufism into Turkish cultural identity. They translated the works of prominent Sufis like *Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi* and promoted figures like Yunus Emre as Turkish counterparts to Western humanists. Additionally, *Fahreddin Erenden* (d. 1960) of Cerrahi branch of Khalwati order preserved Sufi music by recording and transcribing hundreds of pieces using modern musical notation. The second response combined the madrasa tradition with Sufism, focusing on preserving the core Islamic teachings amidst the secularization policies. This approach is conceptualized here as the creation of “Sufism-inspired Islamic communities.” It laid the ground for contemporary Sufi communities, known as *cemaats*. Prominent sheikhs such as Ali Haydar Gürbüzler (d. 1960), *Sami Ramazanoğlu* (d. 1984), and *Mehmed Zahid Kotku* (d. 1980) used mosques as hubs for their religious and Sufi activities—preaching, recruiting disciples, and encouraging followers to become imams or scholars. Their publishing efforts primarily centred on fundamental Islamic texts, including Quran commentaries and catechisms, rather than Sufi doctrines. This article mainly deals with how Gürbüzler, a Naqshbandi sheikh, managed to maintain his Sufi activities and eventually led to the formation of the *İsmail Ağa* community, and with how *Erenden* managed to transmit

the musical and folkloric knowledge to coming generations, and eventually led to the formation of a Sufi music group within the ministry of culture. While doing so, it examines the documents in *İsmet Efendi Tekkesi Vakfı* where Gürbüzler was the last official sheikh and uses interviews with members of the *Turkish Sufi Music and Folklore Research and Sustenance Foundation*, that was the Cerrahi lodge where Erenden served as the last official sheikh.

18:30 – 19:30 Final Discussion and Statements