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Introduction

This special issue of *Musicological Annual* reflects the acknowledgment and celebration of the official recognition (2021) by the International Council of Traditional Music's Executive Board of the new Study Group, **Sacred and Spiritual Sounds and Practices**. The peer-reviewed articles found herein are revised versions of papers presented at the international, multidisciplinary symposium **Music – Religion – Spirituality**. Held online from August 26–28, 2021 (Ljubljana), with generous funding and support from various Slovenian agencies and institutions, the symposium served to fulfill a requirement for new ICTM Study Group affiliation.

As was the case with the twenty-two symposium papers, the eight articles in this publication exhibit diverse interests and expertise and investigate themes such as degrees of rapture, rupture, and disjuncture in Ghanaian Ewe royal funerary and installation ceremonies; music's role as a "spiritual tool" in Hindu rites of passage ceremonies in Bali and in Hindu-based South Asian devotional worship (*arati*); the crucial role of Sufi texts as supports for socio-spiritual relationships in the Egyptian *ḥaḍra*; the construction of a possible ethics of hospitality viewed through the prism of Alevi teachings and musical heritage in Turkey; public and audio-visual media presentations of Alevi-Bektashi ritual music and kinetic forms in Bulgaria; media replacements for Catholic rites suspended by the pandemic in Central Italy; Slovenian Catholic musical traditions in the Swiss diaspora; aspects of the historical development of messianic concepts of the *Nueva Canción Chilena* in Victor Jara's *Plegaria a un labrador*.

I conclude with an expression of indebtedness to my co-editor Maja Bjelica for her editorial competence, indefatigable efforts, and warm collegiality. We both highly appreciate the gracious and unfailing assistance and guidance of *Musicological Annual*'s editor, Katarina Šter, and technical editor, Špela Lah who are committed to maintaining the journal's standards of excellence. I extend a final gesture of gratitude to Svanibor Pettan, ICTM's current president, whose breadth of vision and organizational efforts contributed to the symposium, the establishment of the new ICTM Study Group, and the publication of these thought-provoking scholarly works.

Irene Markoff, editor

Uvod

Pričujoča posebna številka *Muzikološkega zbornika* obeležuje ustanovitev nove študijske skupine, imenovane **Sveti in duhovni zvoki in prakse**, ki jo je v preteklem letu potrdil izvršni odbora Mednarodnega sveta za tradicijsko glasbo (Intenational Council for Traditional Music, ICTM). V tej številki zbrani, za objavo predelani, razširjeni in recenzirani znanstveni članki so bili najprej zasnovani kot referati, predstavljeni na mednarodnem, večdisciplinarnem simpoziju **Glasba – Religija – Duhovnost**. Simpozij je bil izveden po spletu, med 26. in 28. avgustom 2021, s podporo različnih slovenskih agencij in ustanov pa je bil sicer organiziran v Ljubljani in je bil osnova vzpostavitve nove študijske skupine v okviru ICTM.

Tako kot je veljalo za dvaindvajset simpozijskih predstavitev, tudi pričujoči članki izkazujejo raznolike interese in strokovna znanja. Raziskujejo teme, kot so prelomi, spoji in razlike v ganskih kraljevskih pogrebnih in umestitvenih obredih ljudstva Ewe; vlogo glasbe kot »duhovnega orodja« v hindujskih obredih prehoda na Baliju in v hindujsko utemeljenem južnoazijskem verskem čaščenju (*arati*); ključno vlogo sufijskih besedil kot podpore družbeno-duhovnih odnosov v egipčanskem obredu *ḥaḍra*; grajenje možne etike gostoljubja z vidika alevijskih naukov in alevijske glasbene dediščine v Turčiji; javne in avdio-vizualne medijske predstavitve obredne glasbe in kinetičnih oblik Alevi-Bektašev v Bolgariji; medijske nadomestitve katoliških obredov, ki so bili prekinjeni tekom pandemije v osrednji Italiji; katoliško glasbeno tradicijo slovenskih izseljencev v švicarski diaspori; ter nenazadnje vidike zgodovinskega razvoja mesijanskih konceptov gibanja *Nueva Canción Chilena* v pesmi *Plegaria a un labrador* avtorja Víctorja Jara.

Naj za zaključek izrazim zahvalo moji souredniki Maji Bjelica za njeno uredniško strokovnost, neutrudno prizadevanje in toplo kolegialnost. Obe zelo ceniva prijazno in neomajno pomoč in vodenje urednice *Muzikološkega zbornika*, Katarine Šter, in tehnične urednice Špele Lah, ki se zavzemata za ohranjanje standardov odličnosti revije. Nazadnje namenjam besedo zahvale še Svaniborju Pettanu, trenutnemu predsedniku ICTM. Njegova daljnosežna vizija in organizacijska prizadevanja so prispevali k simpoziju, ustanovitvi nove študijske skupine ICTM in objavi teh znanstvenih del, ki širijo naša obzorja.

Irene Markoff, urednica
Prevedla Maja Bjelica, urednica

Ruptures, Junctures, and Difference: The Role of Music and Ritual Performance in Framing "Tradition" in Contemporary Royal Ceremonies, Ghana

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ABSTRACT

Royal rituals and festivities are vibrant sites of cultural continuity among the Ewe of Ghana. The rituals exhibit elements of hyperreal, sonic, and sacred/secular sensibilities that frame performance and embodied affectivity. The royal event complex engages the multisensory, the carnivalesque and interstices of the sacred/secular in Ewe spirituality and religious outlook.

Keywords: sonic affectivity, sacred-secular continuum, multisensory, contestations, Ewe performance

IZVLEČEK

Kraljevski obredi in praznovanja so živahna okolja kulturne kontinuitete ljudstva Ewe v Gani. Izvedbo in utelešeno afektivnost teh obredov zaobjemajo elementi hiperrealnih zvočnih in sakralnih/sekularnih senzibilnosti. Kraljevski večplastni dogodki prepletajo multisenzorič-nost, karnevalskost in vmesnost sakralne/sekularne duhovnosti in religioznosti ljudstva Ewe.

Ključne besede: zvočna afektivnost, sakralno-sekularni kontinuum, multisenzoričnost, tek-movalnost, performativnost ljudstva Ewe

Introduction

Since the 1980s there has been significant growth and diversification of religious expression in Ghana which is associated primarily with Ghanaian Christianity (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005; Meyer 1999, 2015; Wijsen 2017).[1] Some of these developments are reflected in national political campaigns and cultural programs closely linked to the larger project of Ghanaian postcolonial national identity reconstruction (Chazan 1982, 2019; Heaton, James and Oheneba-Sakyi 2009; Meyer 1998). I have investigated and articulated in great detail the sphere of religion and spirituality in everyday Ghanaian experience during recent field research projects on Ewe royal ritual and performance traditions that highlight the significant place of sonic manifestations within the complex interweaving of the multimodal and the multisensory. Drawing from the research conducted, the narrative of the present study will gradually introduce, clarify, and justify the use of terms and concepts such as rupture, rapture, disruption, eruption, and disjuncture. These concepts will be particularly useful for explicating how the complex multimedia and multimodal arena of performance facilitates the mediation and contestation of authenticity, cultural authority, (re)invention, difference, and politics of in/exclusion in the royal events.

This paper argues further for a reconsideration of sacred and secular dichotomies in light of fieldwork data on Ewe royal traditions and recent scholarship on African religions, spirituality, and local cosmologies (Olupona 2014; Olupona and Chiorazzi 2015; Platvoet 2004; Platvoet and van Rinsum 2003; Shaw 1990; Wiredu 2011; Zielińska 2013). Specific aspects of musical performance, ritual and related enactments are examined to demonstrate not only their affective impact but also how they alter the qualities of ongoing interpersonal transactions and ritual flow. By isolating and interrelating the expressive-aesthetic mediums and resources of sound, movement, gesture, proxemics and the sensorium, this essay also demonstrates how and why the Ewe contexts of religion, spirituality, and cultural norms refine analytical notions and assumptions in the interdisciplinary fields of performance, sound, sensory, religious, and ritual studies. Thus, a secondary purpose of the paper is to provide new

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1 In Ghanaian and in general African histories, the "Cross preceded the Crescent," that is, Christianity reached Africa before Islam. In Ghana, the years 1471 and 1482 are often noted as the period in which Portuguese Christian missionary work began in the country, formerly known as the Gold Coast. Since then, Christianity has grown to become the dominant religion, with recent statistics showing 70% of Ghana's population as Christian. Ghanaian Christianity is further distributed along several denominational and independent church affiliations, especially as indicated in Sasu (2012), in a census report by the Ghana Statistical Services (2012), by the World Religions Index (Index Mundi 2020), John S. Pobee (1975), and Hans Werner Debrunner (1967). Recent publications by Meera Venkatachalam (2015) and several texts by Birgit Meyer (1999, 2002, 2012), illuminate the specific location of the Ewe people in the Ghanaian Christian heritage. There is also a small segment of Ghanaian Christian population that is represented by Rastafarianism and Ethiopianism (MacLeod 2014).

insights and challenges that will broaden and enrich perspectives on religion and spirituality, with important implications and suggestions for rethinking conventional methodological approaches.

Much of the general domain of religion and spirituality in everyday Ghanaian life shares many features with most other African societies, past and present. There are, however, certain features that seem more pronounced in the contemporary Ghanaian context and the following examples serve to articulate such differences.

Religion and Spirituality in Contemporary Ghana: Secularizing the Sacred, Sacralizing the Secular

It is a very common to see and read Biblical and Quranic verses in paraphrased form and inscribed boldly on the back of private cars and public transportation vehicles. Very often these diverse snippets of scripture coincide with and thus reflect and reinforce indigenous belief systems and cosmological orientations. For example, recent favorites include "God First," "Grace," and their local variants such as *Adom* (Akan), *Dromɔ* (Ga), and *Amenuveve* (Ewe) and many others that find parallels and correspondences in local onomastics where indigenous beliefs and attributes of a Supreme Being and Destiny are adduced and affirmed.[2] Similar practices are found in privately-owned and other businesses that are in turn complemented by other everyday practices; one example is the relative freedom in playing or broadcasting Christian music and devotional readings from the Bible in secular public or government spaces such as bank offices, supermarkets, etc. By comparison, the performance or broadcasting of specific types of indigenous shrine music out of its traditional context is not favored because of the expected contextual requirements, and the exposure to diverse non-shrine audiences and/or the uninitiated.

In Ghana, religion, spirituality, and the reinscription of the sacred in secular public spaces as a performative spectacle is easily observed and often commented on by visitors from neighboring African countries. A sentiment of interest, for example, was observed by an African scholar in the following comment by Burkinabé who stated "[…] even taxis are born-again."[3] This singular observation, however, does not seem to consider the indigenous worldview

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2   Ghana is multilingual and multiethnic, but a large segment of the national population can speak more than one language and many individuals are thus able to decipher these inscriptions with much ease. The concept of a "Supreme Being" is common in many (indigenous) African religious systems and worldviews and coincides in many ways with the Christian "God." An alternative viewpoint on relationships between the indigenous idea of a "Supreme Being" and the Christian "God" is presented in Greene (1996). As indicated elsewhere, Ghana is overwhelmingly Christian, with Pentecostals and "charismatic" denominations leading in popularity.

3   Dr. Mercy Akrofi-Ansah of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, shared this story with me (Personal communication, February 2022).

within which the varieties of Ghanaian Christianity and their related symbols, ideas, and retranslations are located. Similarly, such foregrounded readings can also obscure hidden or overt proselytizing intentions behind these inscriptions – i.e., "to win souls for Christ," as often expressed in the Ghanaian context.

Figure 1: Contemporary Charismatic or Pentecostal Christianity shares some basic beliefs and Old Testament theological orientations with local versions of Rastafarianism/Ethiopianism (see "Lion of Judah").[4]

Figure 2: Grocery shop with street vending. Note the coexistence of the Christ-centered affirmation and the food/drink advertisement: "Restore Your Energy."

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4   All the photographs were taken by the author, except when stated otherwise.

Figure 3: "Chop Bar" (rustic and informal restaurant or food vending outlet). While the immediate "Great Provider" context references God/Christ, there is also the possibility of an advertising subtext, such as the *chop bar* "provides great service and great food."

Figure 4: Alternative, intertextual reading of a public favorite inscription often found in funeral brochures and posters – "What a Shock."[5]

Figure 5: According to the provisional 2021 census, between 17 and 20% of Ghana's population is Muslim.

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5   "What a Shock" and "A Life Well Lived" are common expressions employed when sharing deaths and funeral notices.

Finally, in this preliminary study designed to better understand contexts for Ghanaian religion and spirituality, one must also consider the dynamics and dialectics of culture and tradition, and postcolonial efforts to establish cultural autonomy, a sense of national unity and progress, and local articulations of modernity. For example, it is a common practice during the national holiday, Ghana's Independence Day (March 6) that religious leaders from different faiths and religious orientations (i.e., indigenous, Christian, and Muslim) are invited to take turns in offering intercessory prayers. One invited Baptist minister told me he decided not to attend the event and recite a prayer because he might have to share the same platform or space with an indigenous priest. But since that particular incident in the 1980s, adherents of diverse faiths and religious expression have become more tolerant in such contexts, as they align with the national goals of unity in a multiethnic (pluralistic) society.[6] This is not surprising as there is an overwhelming consensus on the dominant place of religion and ethnicity in Ghanaian national politics (Aidoo and Botchway 2021; Langer and Ukiwo 2008; McCauley 2014). In the discussion that follows, it will become increasingly clear that there is a deeply embedded disposition in Ghanaian society towards the blending of the sacred and the secular into one stream as observed in the previous examples of textualization in public and mobile spaces/sites. The case examples from contemporary royal ceremonies will illuminate shifting sites where indigenous traditions are reproduced, thus ensuring significant continuities, especially with music and ritual performance as the enduring core.

Contemporary Royal Funeral and Installation Rituals and Ceremonies[7]

Most royal funeral and new chief installation ceremonies and rituals in the diverse multiethnic Ghanaian contexts and histories possess common core features. First, there is a general pattern and sequence of procedures that include ritual confinement or seclusion. The number of days of confinement and

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6   In April 2022, one of my field projects as part of the Easter festivities included the installation and final public display of two new "development" queen mothers (i.e., honorary titles not strictly designated through royal lineage, the role of the honorary queens being the encouragement of projects to advance a town's socioeconomic and sociocultural progress) in Alakple, an Ewe interlacustrine town. During the installation ceremony an indigenous religious expert and a Catholic Rev. Father (Catholicism began officially in 1930 in Alakple and remains a predominant denomination in the town) took turns to say prayers for the success, safety, progress, and prosperity of the new queens and for the entire town. Details on the Catholic missionary work in Alakple is available in Francis Fiakpornu (2013).

7   Secondary sources that confirm and elaborate on the historicity, diversity and yet rootedness and enduring values and practices in past and contemporary chieftaincy and associated rituals in the multi-ethnic Ghanaian context include Adotey (2021), Arhin and Brempong (2002), and Hagan and Odotei (2001).

details concerning specific private rituals, including the time before public display (known in Ghana as "outdooring") vary from one community to another, and are also dependent on past histories and contemporary exigencies and pragmatic concerns.[8]

Other stages of the royal funeral and installation rituals include swearing of oaths twice: one during the confinement period and private ritual of installation, and a second that is often a formal response to each oath during the public display of the new chief or king. In the case of royal funerals and in the Ewe context, there is a private "withdrawal" or "taking away" of names given during initiation or installation (as often encountered in rites of passage in other world cultures) and this also occurs in oathlike fashion. Similar practices are also found in non-royal rituals, especially in the installation of new indigenous spiritual leaders or priests, or in "releasing safely" into the world of ancestors and into "former states" in the case of funerary rites.[9] The official installation rituals are always preceded by a dramaturgical "capture" or "arrest" of the new-chief-to-be for the confinement rituals, a practice that recalls elopement rituals of several cultures. Thus, in any of these cases, royal and non-royal, there are important symbolic performances that mark transition and change of status, including aspects of liminal stages that are often identified with rites of passage, especially in the works of van Gennep (1909), Victor Turner (1968, 1974), and Richard Schechner (2022).[10]

I have chosen to focus on five select cases which represent important aspects of ritual and general performance practices that are common to most of the four royal funeral and installation ceremonies that I researched within a six-month period from July 2021 to January 2022. These ceremonies involved the final funerals and subsequent installations, as presented in Table 1.[11]

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8   Today, most royal, and non-rituals such as widowhood rites that would require individual confinement for several months are now being adumbrated due to several changing factors such as vocational and socioeconomic considerations. Similarly, there are now shifting criteria for selection that privilege wealth and advanced education over established heredity and line of succession.

9   The taking on and assignment of a new name in many rites of passage is integral to the expected transformation, change or reversal of status, including rebirth – i.e., symbolic enactment of dying and being reborn, critical moments in liminal states and necessary achieving the desired transformation that is central to some rites of passages worldwide.

10 See Avorgbedor (1999) for a comparative overview of the structure, content, and function of rites of passage.

11 There are hierarchies in local chieftaincy and in indigenous rule and governance. Briefly, and for the purpose of this paper, the top of the hierarchy in the Ewe system includes a paramount chief (*Togbegā*, for the northern Ewe, and *Awoamefia* for the Southern Anlo Ewe) who is the overall head of a cluster of village or town units and districts, and the *Dufia*, the head chief of subchiefs of a particular town. Paramount chiefs can also serve as clan heads (there are several clans composing southern and northern Ewe societies and lineages). Within the town and at the level of a confederation of towns and chiefdoms, there are also special military-style formations (common in ancient wartime), known as Left, Middle, and Right wings and led by the respective chiefs.

Table 1: List of royal funerals and installations

Royalty	Status/Rank/Position	Event type	Area/Location
Togbui* Gligui Tengey Dzokoto VI[12]	Paramount Chief, Dufia (town chief) and Head of Bate Clan	Funeral	Anyako, Volta Region of Ghana
Togbui Gligui Tengey Dzokoto VII	Paramount Chief, Dufia and Head of Bate Clan	Installation	Anyako, Volta Region of Ghana
Togbui Nyaho Tamakloe VI	Paramount Chief, Miafiagā (Left Wing commander),** Dufia and Head of Adzovia Clan	Installation	Whuti, Volta Region of Ghana
Togbegā*** Gabusu VI	Paramount Chief and Head of Torkoni Clan	Funeral	Gbi-Hohoe, Volta Region of Ghana
Mamagā Dewotornyo I (buried July 2021)****	Paramount Queen Mother	Funeral	Gbi-Hohoe, Volta Region of Ghana

Comments for Table 1:

* "Togbui" is the southern Ewe dialectal variation and orthography; "Togbe" is the northern Ewe designation. These are indigenous titular designations for a chief, elder, ruler, etc. "Mama" is the female equivalent in both southern and northern Ewe contexts. The suffix "gā" is the alternative local designation for "Paramount."

** See Footnote 11 for details on the military formations, hierarchies and responsibilities pertaining to civic, social, and spiritual welfare and jurisdictional matters.

*** There is no new installation yet.

**** Mamagā Agoe Dewotornyo I succeeded the late Mamagā Dewotornyo I.

Shared and Common Features of the Ceremonies

Some features common to these events include the spread of the events over several days, processions, open and closed rituals, administration of oaths, multiple and concurrent music, dance, and theatrical performances presented on multiple stages and sometimes at different times; media promotion and coverage of the event (print social media, and drone aerial photography);[13] involvement in and knowledge of local church affairs; stool[14] candidates with

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12 These Roman numerals designate positions in linear succession, such as in King George I, II, or IV.

13 Details on the growing interest in drone technology and its possibilities in enhancing general ethnographic and visually-oriented research are documented in Adotey (2021).

14 This church service, known as a Thanksgiving Service, is also routinely held for general non-royal funeral occasions. Families of the deceased come forward to render special appreciation verbally; sometimes the chosen speaker initiates spontaneous singing which the entire congregation may join in on. The song is usually related to the theme of gratitude, both to God, pastors, and to the entire congregation. In the case of the Thanksgiving Service terminating a royal event, the chief or someone else is designated to perform this role.

considerable formal education and wealth; symbols of power and status (royal drums); the presence of MCs; and a church service called "Thanksgiving Service" to close the event.

Table 2: Types, levels and varieties of performances (limited to royal contexts)

Sonic form, source, type	Special traits or performance engagement	Special subcontexts, comments, observations
Royal ensembles, such as *atrikpui, atompani, afli*, etc.	There are surrogate instruments such as animal horns and talking drums (*lāklēvu*) that imitate the snarl of a leopard and perform appellations and honorifics.	The royal ensembles continue to play sporadically throughout the entire event.
Special sonic articulations such as: *aseyetsoto, bobokpakpa* (involving disguised voice and falsetto) *asifunu* (ululation employing vocal and bilabial vibrations activated by the palm) and others	These are performed mostly by women.	They are performed to signal moments of grave danger, spectacular accomplishment, arrival, and departure of royalty and to signal the climax or conclusion of special rituals such as prayers and offerings to tutelary spirits.
Speech surrogates (instruments such as whistles of Western origins, animal horns and talking drums (*lāklēvu*, lit., wild animal drum) that imitate spoken forms	These are performed sporadically and they imitate the snarl of a leopard and perform appellations and honorifics. They are an important accompaniment to royal processions.	The leopard, its voice/sound, and skin are all significant status symbols in many West, East, Central, and Southern African royal traditions.
Hyperreal, exotic, innovative and modified musical instruments	Musical and surrogate instruments (including drums, and other percussion instruments) receive further symbolic visual exaggeration and decoration through the attachment of ritual paraphernalia such as cowries, miniature copper bells, raffia, etc. together with the dressing of these instruments in ritual color combinations of white, red, indigo, and black.	

Sonic form, source, type	Special traits or performance engagement	Special subcontexts, comments, observations
Guest and professional (hired) groups	They perform mixed and specialized repertoire such as contemporary neo-traditional and popular ensembles and include brass bands, DJs, and special guest performers of other ethnic origins.	The brass band that performed at the Dzokoto funeral blended indigenous *agbadza* styles with the general brass band repertoire of martial music – marches, and popular tunes. In the case of Togbui Dzokoto funeral a special divination society (*afa*) performed their repertoire.
Special guests or acts	These include non-royal ensembles and emerging popular groups such as the neo-traditional style known as *Borborbor*.	In the case of Togbui Nyaho Tamakloe's final installation ceremonies a very popular musician called Samini appeared and took everyone by surprise, especially when he performed songs familiar to the audience.
Musketry, variety, comedic, magical acts, prayers, libations, eulogies, appellations, etc.		Some of the eulogies witnessed demonstrate high-level competence, skill, and close familiarity with tradition; they are serious performances.
Christian repertoire	The emphasis and source of music depends largely on church affiliations and membership of the royalty.	A church service called Thanksgiving Service is held on the last Sunday of the week(s) of the festivities. In the case of an installation the new chief may present the thanksgiving in a form of a mini sermon.

Figure 6: Program of activities for day 9, last day of
Togbegā Gabusu VI funeral (Hohoe).[15]

The diversity and spatio-temporal locations of these events and their ultimate qualitative feel and sensibilities may quickly suggest the common analytical category of "cultural performance." The Ewe royal examples, in particular, possess a propensity of complex and extended features that would enrich conventional notions and applications of "cultural performance." For example, (a) the total event occurs over several days; (b) the nestedness of sub-performance events sometimes creates temporary affective highpoints, bringing the events to the forefront; (c) the events manifest much complexity, intensity, plurality, and simultaneity, including their length and distribution in time, space, and place; (d) open, nonlinear structures encourage unexpected, but significantly emergent choreographies, and the staggered arrivals of special performing groups that enhance levels of expectation, anticipation, and the overall qualitative impact; (e) large, mixed audiences who attend are often drawn to the events through longstanding, institutionalized and reciprocal arrangements

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15 Such artworks for the various daily activities for the burial rites are available for download at the official web page of Gbidukɔ Development Union: https://gbidukor.org/details. cfm?Download-Artworks-for-Daily-Activities---Burial-of-Togbega-Gabusu-VI&corpnews_ scatid=12&corpnews_catid=5&corpnews_scatlinkid=181.

and facilitated further through national and regional associations and networks of chiefs as well as national and foreign dignitaries.

Sonic and Corporeal Sensorialities and Out-of-Body Experiences in Royal Ritual Ceremonies

The variety of symbols and regalia closely associated with Ewe royal or chieftaincy institutions privileges both symbolic and highly constituted musical and "non-musical" sounds, instruments, and ensembles. In Ewe society, this variety is further enriched by extant traditions and genres of music and dance, including those reserved for religious spaces such as those devoted to ancestral, tutelary, and divination spirits (e.g., *yevevu*, *afavu*, *adevu*, *kɔkuvu*, and a more inclusive terminology or nomenclature of *trɔvu or voduvu*; i.e., the general category of music and dance associated with a broad range of the Ewe world of religion and spirituality).[16] Corporeal sensoriality would seem to be the most plausible means to conceptualize and represent the complex range of events, both private and public that unfold during royal ceremonies and ultimately endow the ritual performances with experiences of awe, deep affect, and eidetic memory.[17] Within this broad domain of the bodily (ritual embodiment) reside and emanate the close constituents of sonic and gestural manifestations. It is within this broader conception and reality of corporeal sensoriality that we can easily reconfigure and thus better appreciate the meanings of conventional terms often associated with sonic-centered events (e.g., not just "verbal," especially in the case of formulaic, heightened, or patterned utterances) such as "paramusical" and "paralinguistic." Examples from the afore-mentioned royal contexts will also further illuminate current directions in deeper explorations

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16 General characteristics, genres, functions and contexts of Ewe music and dance repertoire are found in Amegago (2012), Fiagbedzi (1977), and Gbolonyo (2009). For additional sources on the generation, employment and function of special sonic expressivities and symbolisms among the Anlo-Ewe, see Avorgbedor (2004, 2020). For details on the general spiritual phenomenon including shrines among the Ewe, see Friedson (2009), Greene (2002), and Montgomery and Vannier (2017).

17 One of the early, promising studies concerning the nature of eidetic memory and the place of the senses was based on research in Ghana (Feldman 1968). Unfortunately, very little has been accomplished since then. I hope, with Henry Drewal's current research interests in what he calls "sensiotics" (Drewal [n. d.]) much progress can be made, especially when the African data is the focus. Part of the expected outcomes of this essay is thus to invigorate and broaden current research in sensory ethnography, especially the project at the Centre for Sensory Studies (https://centreforsensorystudies.org) and interdisciplinary research in Sensory Studies (https://www.sensorystudies.org), including key publications such as *Ways of Sensing: Understanding the Senses in Society* (Howes and Classen 2014), *Ritual, Performance and the Senses* (Bull and Mitchell 2015), *The Life of the Senses: Introduction to Modal Anthropology* (Laplantine 2015), and *Doing Sensory Ethnography* (Pink 2009). My essay, "Körperliche und nicht-körperliche Expressivität in der afrikanischen Performance" (Avorgbedor 2013) explores several dimensions of performance, the performative, and the intersensory in extended contexts of Anlo-Ewe performance and in everyday life.

of "performance," "cultural performance," the "performative," and "sensory ethnography," etc.

Case Example I: *Hatudada*[18]

Musketry is an intense and elaborate technique and practice; it is suggestive of infinite temporality and thus an "out-of-this-world" experience, considering the reach and extended audiation associated with the resulting "sonic booms." The "reach" is best understood in relation to the sheer amount of aerial, geophysical and bodily vibrations/reverberations that erupt and accompany the firings. Because the northern Ewe are well known for their special skills and technology in local gun manufacturing, they exhibit spectacular prowess that is far superior to the southern Ewe. In my recent field experiences with royal funerals among the northern Ewe (e.g., Hohoe) I observed physical destruction by the debris and aftershock of each firing session:[19] for example, parts of one expensive royal umbrella were torn by live ammunition (the use was generally proscribed, however), and the perturbations. Individual audience members felt as if they were literally being lifted off-ground by the sudden booms, to the point where one of my research fellows suggested carrying along earmuffs (such as those used on long-haul flights) to subsequent events like these.

It is difficult to fully narrate the scope of intensity, frequency, and overall impact of musketry to someone who has never witnessed the tradition, especially in case examples 3 and 4 (Gbi-Hohoe) and surrounding areas of northern Ewe communities. Unfortunately, it was virtually impossible to capture the sonic booms and reverberations with audiovisual equipment.

There are broader cosmological foundations and applications of gunshots, which are sometimes employed in ritual cleansing, healing, and exorcism rituals. The overall impact of both the sonic reach and the proxemics and semioaesthetics in which the shots are framed can be better understood by locating *hatudada* in its systematic procedures, techniques, ambience, skill, and audienceship which includes the audience's frequent comments. Gunners assume, in sequence, linear, half-circle, and finally squatting positions, and in both prescribed and intuitive fashion; they target clouds, tree branches, corners, etc. They often simulate the shooting of an animal or hunt, and merge seamlessly with ongoing *asafo* (i.e, music and dance of warrior groups who exhibit gestures and songs of bravery and taunt); this further encourages the simulation since the *asafo* dance form and its prescriptions privilege innovative and creative

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18   This term means musketry, salvo or literally, group gun-firing.

19   The firing intensifies at some critical stages of rituals, such as before the onset and at the conclusion of, for example, the final journey with the royal corpse to the funeral service or burial site, initial announcement of death, before a procession from the sacred installation space, at the conclusion of a midnight ritual, etc.

gestures and movements, including those of hunters performing their normal *adevu* dance (hunters' music and dance).[20] In this non-hunting performance context – i.e., royal rituals and festivities – the gun thus becomes a prop but at the same time completes the sense of "authenticity." Since much of the *asafo* repertoire draws on *adevvu* (or shares many of its music, dance, and costume features), the connotations and dialogics of appropriation and reinterpretation regarding *hatudada* are relevant here.

It is now important to address *hatudada* and the issues of safety, in the sense of possible physical-neurological damage to individuals and material entities, and general ecocritical considerations. *Hatudada* is a performance, and by extension a highly and sensuously framed type of performativity. The sonic varieties, including their affective intensities, are enriched and diversified through the use of a variety of gun and rifle types, including their specific techniques, timbre, and capacity.[21] For example, a notable variety of gun type is the *aprim*, a miniature cannon derived from early Portuguese prototypes which were once stationed close to slave forts dotting the Ghanaian coast to ward off competing enemy traders.[22] The *aprim* has been quickly appropriated and reinvented to serve local purposes and the creativity continues to improve on the level and reach of the sound product. The musketeers are sometimes hired and work as professionals; they wear distinct uniforms, whether amateur, semi-professional or professional, especially on these special occasions.[23] The number, frequency and overall accompanying choreographies or bodily maneuvers are determined also by the status of the deceased (i.e., in both royal and non-royal funerals), general community relevance and ritual type. For example, one of the most impressive displays of sonic "violence" and "timed" explosive rupture-rapture scenes occurred on one of the funeral days reserved for a special ritual called *dɔdada* (curing/healing of illness or disease, which is more prevalent in northern than southern Ewe communities).[24] In this royal practice, *dɔdada* is both a

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20   Audio examples are replete in the performance videos that are publicly available on YouTube, for example, and are cited in different segments of this paper.

21   There is an increasing interest in sound studies, especially those associated with warfare and violence. My field examples and their unique traits would complement and at the same time extend arguments and theoretical conclusions found in, for example, Abe (2016), Goodman (2010), and Thompson and Biddle (2013).

22   For details of the *aprim* and related firearms, see Kea (1971) and Ijoma (1982).

23   The uniform is integral to the armaments and expected visual display.

24   This practice and its associated beliefs represent a very complex subject which is yet to receive full attention and satisfactory explanation, especially when some of the details are formulated in esoteric language. In addition, both researcher and informant(s) must use much discretion, especially when some aspects of the rituals are protected and are not accessible to the general public. At the moment, there is at least one PhD student with a religious studies background researching the topic at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. One team researcher, Dr. Edem Adotey, spent much of the night witnessing aspects of the ritual, but outside of the immediate precinct, and managed to engage in conversation with some key participants.

simulacrum and a surreal and dramaturgical reinterpretation of normative or generic *dɔdada*. Although the ruler or chief may be clinically dead, such deaths are not publicly announced immediately, and even when finally announced the message is usually couched in special metaphors (or culturally appropriate codings), such as *fia mu zi* (the chief has tilted the stool and *fia yi kɔfe* (the chief has gone to the village). There are many tactical and deeply cosmological foundations for such retranslations and characterizations that are beyond the scope of this paper. For example, it is necessary to locate and thus elaborate on the understanding of *dɔdada* within the more complex existential realities and rituals associated with "divine kingship" in African societies.[25]

Three factors account for the unusual framing of this funerary ritual, with significant sonic markings at its core: it is not open to the public, it is held at night and consummated at midnight.[26] The midnight salvos set out denouement and confirmation of the *de facto* status of the deceased, thus opening the way for the rest of the event to unfold.

Case Example 2: Sonic Imaginaries, Surreal and Hyperreal

The overall proxemics (i.e., creative approaches to place, space, placement and the dynamics of such arrangements and their interaction with and impact on ongoing frames of communication and performance moment), site of activity/setting, and the spectacular sonic articulations (salvos, royal drums, ululations) that close the ritual but continue sporadically throughout the rest of the night elevate levels of anxiety and surprise; previous states of anxiety, on the other hand, lose momentum with the closure of the ritual, at least temporarily. The cathartic and supersensory consummation of the acoustically destabilized ritual at midnight enables the sudden eruption of moments of rapture, and the state of being ushered into a *new day* with the sense of an altered self. A more recent example, observed while writing this paper, masterfully reveals the closing moments of the official ritualistic formal opening of the funeral for the late subchief Togbe Kwasi Afele II at Ho, a town located about 77 km or 47 miles from Hohoe. Videos of this event began to appear on YouTube, and the footage[27] beginning at 4:38 onwards illustrates how the traditional libation (i.e., pouring of a special liquid in symbolic and patterned ways to the accompaniment of the formulaic recitation of prayer, petition, etc., and directed

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25   For details on divine kinship in the African context, see Fagg (1978), Meyerowitz (1960), and Olupona (2014).

26   Both relative time reckoning (i.e., identifying a moment in history but relative to some other event or situation such as "around the time of the last solar eclipse" or "when a performing ensemble was being formed") and chronomic-solar, temporal orientations are employed in ritual, everyday social and formal transactions.

27   Available at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nmQ4g-CcG0 ("The Most Feared [...]" [2022]).

to ancestral and disembodied spirits) is soon followed by salvos and ulula-
tion, a consummation of the opening segment of the broader ceremony. The
aesthetic/symbolic and general cultural significance of ululation, performed
mostly by women, functions also in situations of great adulation, impressive
music and dance performance, danger, alarm, or catastrophes (especially those
at the threshold of life and death). Other forms of unique, surrealistic and
hyperrealistic sounds frequently encountered in these royal performances in-
clude falsetto or disguised voice types, such as those employed to welcome
and terminate a royal or ritual circuit (i.e, processions, or entourages where
priests and devotees visit sacred places in succession), or in conversation with
the spirit world.[28]

The inherent spirituality and symbolism in these contexts acknowledge
expected cultural norms and beliefs about the supernatural. Such norms and
beliefs are related to the fact that the royal head is also an embodiment of
ancestral and guardian spirits that seek to ensure the welfare and security of
the people, as noted under "divine kingship."[29] Sacerdotal functions and re-
sources are further consolidated and ensured through court priests and divin-
ers, often seen in close proximity to chiefs during public events; their role is
to attend to the spiritual welfare of the chiefs. In addition, many Ewe com-
munities normally identify with at least one guardian spirit at the town level.[30]
The choreographed, dramaturgical placement of the midnight ritual climax
also demonstrates and expands on popular notions about the cathartic rami-
fications of beliefs and experiences associated with the mystical "meeting" or
"knocking together" of year[s] often referred to as *fe-kpekpe* (literally, old and
new years colliding) – that is, the passing of the Old Year and transitioning
(collision) into the New Year. An affective-experiential state, *fe-kpekpe*, is also
identified with a sonic imaginary that mediates and reifies that phenomenal
experience.[31] *Fetatɔtrɔ* (i.e., turning over of the end of the year and ushering in
of the new but mostly in non-Christian contexts), as often observed in general
indigenous religious households, is another important annual cosmic, spiritual

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28   Details of some of the unique sonic articulations in ritual contexts and in world shamanism are
       provided in Avorgbedor (2004, 2020).

29   See Footnote 24 for details on "divine kingship."

30   In many southern Ewe towns, it was common practice to have three guardian spirits (*dulēgba*):
       one located at the center of the town/village, and two in the north and south areas, respectively
       (Cudjoe-Calvocoressi 1974; Gilbert 1982).

31   "Sonic imaginary," as used here refers to the sound that is associated with the colliding of the
       old and new year at the critical midnight moment. While there is no actual physical sound that
       is heard in relation to this transitioning/collision, there are times when observers at a midnight
       watch would hear coincidental sounds emanating from the action of winds blowing through tree
       branches, especially those that ruffle the roofs of the meeting space. This imagining and identifi-
       cation of natural, coincidental sounds with those of the general repertoire of folk belief and su-
       perstition, nevertheless, have an important influence on beliefs about physical, social, and spiritual
       wholesomeness, and are hence phenomenal.

phenomenon that is well celebrated through an elaborate, and all-night music-making vigil.[32] As detailed elsewhere, there are other nocturnal and midnight, performative events that involve deeply affective sonic expressions, such as the employment of disguised voices and timbres, sounds of livestock at the threshold of death, and extreme cacophonies designed to alter and improve relationships between mortals and the spiritual realm, including personal and social well-being. Thus, both experimental and pragmatic criteria are instantly involved in the material, dramaturgical, and multisensory constitution, and exploration of hyperrealities of sound effects, both in royal and other indigenous ritual contexts (Avorgbedor 2020).

Figure 7: Hyperritualized drum in a procession with paraphernalia played on the back of a porter (left) who symbolizes a "path-clearing" spiritual guide with ritual paraphernalia on his head.[33]

These ritual and symbolic performances thus form a critical corpus or catalogue of performance expressions, sonic manifestations, and related beliefs that are creatively engaged in ensuring the efficacy, continuity, and general social, physical, moral, and spiritual well-being, both of individuals and communities. While some observers and analysts may view these performance activities and their affective outcomes as creating commotion, disturbance and a breach of peace, the institutional and cultural framework with its rootedness in the world of spirits would caution such premature conclusions. In addition, these "sanctioned" or necessary private or public cultural events are legitimated further through procuring an appropriate police permit; in fact, the police also

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32 See Friedson (2009) for contemporary versions of *ʃetatɔtrɔ*. "Shrine" here refers to a constellation of spirit-based beliefs and practices often loosely referred as *vodu* or *voodoo* in Ewe societies.

33 Photo by the research team member Sela Adjei.

provide security at many levels. These symbolic and conventional sounds and the mechanisms that produce them are the central or primary defining parameters that distinguish formal royal events from the everyday or ordinary ones.

Figure 8: Female musketeer in prescribed costume on the left (Togbegā Gabusu funeral, Hohoe).[34]

Figure 9: Male musketeers in "white" costumes appropriate for auspicious contexts (i.e., not for mourning the dead but celebrating an event that is pleasurable and instills a sense of happiness) such as an installation ceremony (Anyako, installation of Dufia Togbui Tenge Dzokoto VI).

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34   Photo by the research team member Sela Adjei.

Case Example 3: Reflections on Gender, Musical Production, and the Role of Women in Ghanaian Expressive Culture

The range of sound practices and the audience's related liminal states in *hatudada* are further enriched through strategic, yet seemingly theatrical moments when women are recruited to perform in the traditionally all-male tradition.[35] As part of contemporary forms of negotiating tradition in response to the forces of modernization and everyday realities, there is a growing tendency toward revising former attitudes and practices that uphold the separation of male and female spaces socially, musically, and in political, educational and religious (indigenous, Christianity, Islam, etc.) contexts. For example, since the 1990s, local news media, the elite class, and global forces have encouraged active discourse concerning more conscious advocacy and appreciation of the role of women and their contributions to Ghanaian society. Although there is no sure way to measure the level of impact this advocacy has had in indigenous circles, independent studies confirm a growing presence and participation of women in contexts and spaces once reserved for men, including some indigenous performing ensembles. A deeper understanding of the ritual ceremonial examples presented can be achieved by noting the power, reach and influence of the media in disseminating information about the increasing organization of new music and dance ensembles that serve multiple purposes, including the highlighting of women as lead drummers, etc.[36] However, new directions and innovative tendencies in contemporary Ghanaian culture and society include this new tendency in which the sudden translocation of female power and visibility is received both with much acclaim and consternation, as indicated in this news item: "Rare Act: Female Pallbearers at Tafi Agome."[37]

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35 In my updated (i.e., December 2021 and June 2022) conversations with Madam Beta Sarfo, one of the leading female kingmakers and cultural knowledge experts of the Gbi-Hohoe area and who is often closely involved in performing installation rituals, explained that sometimes women who never gave birth are allowed special moments to display courage and bravery by taking part in the musketry. There are, however, many deeper and hidden aspects to her narrative and I intend to explore them further through engagements with additional independent cultural experts, including males. With her explanation in view, one could readily see some socio-psychotherapeutic values of this female participation.
On June 19, 2022, I spoke briefly with Mr. C. K. Galley, a well-known kingmaker and installation expert in the southern Ewe community. He played a central role in a March 2022 royal installation ritual at Dzita. At that event, a procession of women was led by a woman with a rifle. When I asked Mr. Galley about the symbolic import of this gesture, often reserved for men, he simply (in my estimation) said, "once they show courage and are interested, we allow them."

36 There are, however, indigenous practices where, for example, women ritual leaders take full responsibility for preparing the corpse and serve as pallbearers, a responsibility usually reserved for men, as I have often witnessed in non-royal funeral contexts.

37 This issue of *The Spectator* includes a picture of women pallbearers – coffin aloft on their heads – ion the way to the graveyard ("Rare Act [...]" 2022).

Although the number of female gunners involved in each musketry moment is still much smaller than that of males, their presence and overall performance skills not only reinforce consternation and local debates; they also introduce useful "cognitive dissonance" that also enables sites of useful ruptures. Such ruptures are prerequisites for transforming moments of raptures associated with the sublime and the liminal; they also are among markers of the highpoints of excess and ecstasy (i.e., extreme joy, overpowering emotion, pleasure or "rapturous delight," according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary) that occur during these events.[38] With the presence and participation of women in such contexts, however, the powers and privileges associated with virility are complemented but through subtle insertions of the seemingly subversive, sacrilegious-transgressive, or disruptive. I suggest that the example of a female "transgressor" who "transgresses" when performing "sacred" or tabooed drums cannot and should not be interpreted as a symbolic reversal or questioning of a male-centered practice. This is because the materialities, sensibilities, and beliefs about sound practices and those contexts generally associated with "artistic license" in many cultures often complicate assumptions and criteria about what is appropriate, sacred, acceptable, etc.

As intimated in the media report referred to above ("Rare Act […]" 2022), the audience's visual gaze of the female drummer seems to confirm her performance display as a "rare, transgressive act," as suggested in the newspaper report headline about the female pallbearers. One can even postulate that she is performing double transgressivity as a female drummer, on special sacred royal drums, a practice that is normally considered to be taboo. Although conventional practice dictates that royal deaths are officially communicated to the

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38 Examples of "rupture" includes moments of disagreements on ritual procedures, uncertainties concerning the appropriation and integration of Christian values; magical, exotic, and daredevil performance acts that challenge the audience's expectations and leave them psychologically and emotionally disoriented because they are unable to find a reasonable explanation for such acts and their impact. A rupture is also denoted in the examples of gun bullets, sonic booms and reverberations that can tear down event canopies and pose a significant threat to the human hearing system. Raptures are more about the positive reception and appraisal of general performance affects, including deep satisfaction and emotional attunement with the flow of performance moments. Both "sublime" and "liminal" would thus be appropriate in characterizing these highpoints of artistic-aesthetic moments. Music and dance performances in ordinary, non-ritual contexts among the Ewe also encourage moments of exhilaration and highpoints. Rapture is also the state of being ushered into a new day with the sense of an altered self.

There are different stages of the liminal, often associated with rites of passage where stages and moments of initiation situate initiands at the threshold of life and death, or as summarized by Richard Schechner (2022, 66), one of the leading scholars on performance studies as follows: "During the liminal phase of a ritual two things are accomplished: First, those undergoing the ritual temporarily become 'nothing,' put into a state of extreme vulnerability where they are open to change. Persons are stripped of their former identities and positions in the social world; they enter a time-place where they are not-this-not-that, neither here nor there, in the midst of a journey from one social self to another."

Figure 10: Female drummer (Yaa Godogbe) playing the sacred royal *atompani* (widely known in the literature as "talking drum") pair to the audience's awe and amazement.[39] Such drums and performance roles are normally a female taboo.[40]

public through print media and social media videos, the female drummer contributed to the sensorial level of disseminating the news through narrating it by means of the talking drum. Because the video of her performance (see Footnote 36) circulated virtually, albeit briefly, I was fortunate to see the drummer physically perform on day two of the nine-day funeral event.

The performance by the female drummer who was a special guest mainly due to her popularity as a drummer in the community, must be read within and along with other acts involving the carnivalesque that often characterize these events. Her courage and display of competence parallel and complement those of ambulatory magicians, etc., all in pursuit of an audience's enchantment, ritual efficacy, and the quest for out-of-the-norm experiences. The cumulative effects of these experiences and anticipations contribute toward effectual transformative experiences, mediated through sonic affect and related sites of affectivities.[41] These ritual contexts, therefore, constitute an ideal arena for enacting and displaying the peculiar, avant-garde, "out-of-this-world," and the hyperreal.

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39 Video footage of this performance is available via the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmK1Q_j4RDc&t=97s ("Tribute from […]" 2021).

40 Photo by the research team member Dr. Edem Adotey.

41 At first sight, these types of encounters may seem to disrupt the flow of events and thus suggest instances of chaos in which the audience must re-orient themselves to better appraise and contain these moments beyond seemingly subversive-transgressive and secularizing impressions.

Figure 11: Masked individual in funeral and *asafo* costume.
The "white" face introduces and adds to the ruptures of exoticism, imagination,
and inclusion but enacts visuality as difference.

Figure 12: Female performing groups play several other performance roles.
Here, the visual is stressed, as well as the kinesthetic and the playing of
the typical *akaye* (gourd-shaker) used in the funerary *aviha* genre.

Case Example 4: The All-Female *Aviha* Genre

The *aviha* (literally, crying song or song of sorrow) is one of the preferred, all-female genres closely identified with funeral occasions in northern Ewe communities; *akpalu* is the generic parallel among the southern Ewe.[42] It is part of a parade or procession where effigies or enlarged photos of the deceased are displayed. Segments in the procession include the head portage, the singing and playing of both school-type hand bells and the singing of women's singing band songs (i.e., performed by older women's choirs popular in many mainstream Protestant denominations), and hybrid sub-performance elements with Christian, indigenous, and popular characteristics. Even when such hybridity is privileged or appropriate, expanding the concept to address specific processes and their interrelationships would be useful. For example, despite the significant place of Christian gestures (i.e., prayers, sermons, performance of final rites of interment, etc.), ideas and performances in these royal contexts, it is very important to consider how they are re-sacralized (i.e., made acceptable or appropriate) through different levels and types of recontextualization, or just through tacit consent. More so, the analyst needs to account for the state and quality of these hybridities by locating them in an essential historical continuum that includes shared cultural values, and, by attending to why they are located and emphasized in specific spatio-temporalities. The subversive, transgressive, transmedial, multisensory acts, together with sonic elements and meanings and beliefs associated with these hybridities, are useful for understanding how they provide safe, malleable, and yet significantly transformative spaces for realizing, and thus ensuring the validity and continuity of tradition and ritual.

Hybridities, Visualities, and Corporealities

While current postcolonial critical and revised theories of hybridity clearly caution and expand earlier boundaries, perspectives and contexts, the examples discussed here add new insights, especially in explaining how they demonstrate the interaction and transcendence of dichotomies of sacred-secular, profane/grotesque-sacred, male-female, etc.[43] For example, female pallbearers

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42 For details on the phenomenon of death and dying and related rituals and performance types among the southern and northern Ewe societies see Adjandeh (2019), Anyidoho (1982), and Verdon (1982). For Akan and Ga ethnic groups of Ghana, see Addai (2016) and Potočnik (2017).

43 Any serious and updated discourse of postcolonial hybridities must necessarily engage the sacred-secular continuum as part of the everyday, and yet an essential way of being-in-the-world in many African sociocultural contexts. Even Steven Terpenning's brilliant analysis (Terpenning 2016) falls short of any significant insights, due to the lack of any awareness and appreciation of the sacred-secular and how it informs and influences sites, processes and meanings associated with conditions of hybridity. Such failures are too common, especially with Western analysts' categories that insist on binaries and linearity. The emerging corpus of literature devoted to a deeper

and drummers transform the ritual and proscribed spaces discussed into dramaturgic, creative choreographies that facilitate the crossing and inhabiting of such liminal and proscribed spaces safely, even if some voices show disapproval. Pallbearing in Ghana, in general, has also assumed new dimensions, both as art-entertainment and as sacred performance. For example, it is now very common to hire professional pallbearers who not only dress in exquisite costumes but are also competent and impressive dancers. Apart from their ability to delight those attending, they sometimes transport the appreciative audience into further liminal-interstitial zones as they display their performance skills, sometimes accidentally dropping the casket and even exposing its contents in the process.[44] In such a "failed," disastrous case, the "sacred" status of the performance is violated, both from the viewpoint of secular adjudication and moral appraisal, and from the immediate ritual exigencies as well. Nevertheless, the "dancing corpse" (by association), the pallbearers, and the audience are normally able to negotiate the status of the sacred performance/duty, its purity and efficacy within popular culture, thus loosening and entangling, or one could say blending the strands of the sacred, secular, and the profane, all at once.[45] For example, such entertainment-oriented choreographic performance, an emergent tradition, would suggest triviality, play, and grotesque and even extreme secularity, but as seen in other contexts discussed above, the transcendent performative essence and intentionality of this "serious-sacred" performance of pallbearing possesses flexible borders, both generically and across experiential domains.

Christianity and the Anyako Dzokoto Funeral and Installation-Related Performances

In the Anyako Dzokoto funeral and installation performances, the issues of absence and partiality, in deference to accommodation of historical and

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understanding and explication of African and African-derived cultures is promising, especially those examples which highlight and situate the sacred-secular continuum alongside questions of circular/linear/non-linear in indigenous African modes of time reckoning and "oral-literating" (my new terminology) of history. See, for example, Adjaye (1994), and Fulop and Raboteau (1997). Three sources that illuminate debates surrounding the origins and transmutations of "syncretism" (and ultimately updated in discourses of hybridity) include Bhabha (1994), Shaw and Stewart (1994), and Stewart (1999).

44   There was at least one such situation when the video circulated on social media. One could see and hear a bereaved family member wailing with grave concern over the accidental fall and exposure of the contents of the casket. See pre-dance movements of Chief Dzokoto's pallbearers at 1:17:00 and also at 1:27:48 of the video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szqI1DLoM0s ("Togbe Dzokoto Anyako Funeral Part 7" 2021). In this and in other royal contexts extra care is taken not to trivialize or secularize the sacred royal institution beyond expected norms, and hence the original YouTube video which captured and depicted the pallbearers' more "worldly" dance maneuvers was taken offline.

45   For details on modes and foundations of interactions of the sacred and secular in Ghanaian popular culture, see Collins (2004).

contemporary Christian values and practices, emerged on multiple occasions. During an interview session, one subchief of Anyako explained why he would not allow certain ritual procedures because of his Christian background and membership in Ghana's Christian Chiefs' Association – GCCA (Haun 2019; Kallinen 2021; "Tribal Chiefs […]" 2019; Wee 2014; Yeboah 2016). I was privy to many expressions of dissatisfaction with instances of the omission, sequencing, time-placement, duration, and substitutions concerning music and ritual performances that were once central to these royal events, including ancient war music-dances such as *kpegisu* and *atrikpui*. However, there was one momentous dramaturgical formulation and translation of this challenge or contestation. This occurred when an *afli* (also known as *akɔfadɛ,* the Anlo Ewe *asafo* music and dance associated with the royal court) dancer improvised, according to a choreography that encourages improvisation with linguistically coded gestures, metaphorical movements, and facial expressions. During this dance, a copy of the Christian Bible was displayed and accompanied by several nonverbal interrogative gestures, the questions and concerns communicated through dance movements.

Figure 13: Dancer (middle) with Bible and ritual stool choreographic demonstration of "incompatibilities" of some Christian values and those of indigenous chieftaincy.

Simply understood, the message to the audience could be read as, "Why bring in these Christian values and practices, especially the music, prayers, and the clergy?" As suggested earlier, such spectacular embodiment of the contestations and issues of the crossing and mixing of the secular, sacred, profane, indigenous sacred, Christian sacred, Christian secular, indigenous secular, etc. are best approached and understood within a broader and larger fundamental local ontology in which the sacred and the secular operate as a continuum. For example, when the Anyako Dzokoto event included some *kpegisu* (war and royal ritual music-dance), the performers had to borrow one indigenous

drum used in a local church, The Apostolic Revelation Society.[46] While such "crossing/mixing" may not be intentional, but strategic and by convenience, it nevertheless evokes a more subtle and yet profound context for examining the relevance of the above concepts such as sacred-sacred, sacred-profane, sacred-secular-popular, indigenous sacred-Christian sacred, and "contingent sacred" in both indigenous and Christian contexts. The danced disputation and its integral sonic details discussed possessed both rhetoric and yet affectivities and competence that united to situate the entire performance experience in the multisensory, and in the kaleidoscopic sites of collisions, coalitions, disruptions, eruptions, disjunctions, ruptures, raptures, and resolutions.

The women's processional performance (Figure 12) with emphasis on the kinetic, the sonic, color saturation, and elevated visualization of the framed royal portraits contributes to the overall lure and sensorial framing of the event. The procession's multiple purposes, both in the case of indigenous royal music and the hybrid forms integrated the following elements: heralding or publicizing the event; confirming the visible participation and identity of women; enhancing the overall grandeur, diversity and richness of the event; refreshing the general complementarity, reciprocity, and mutual engagement between male and female domains; fulfilling specific role assignments specified in items on the agenda for each event, and amplifying through space and time, visuality and the kinesthetic and overall bodily engagements that are emphasized in Ewe performance practice.

Figure 14: Part of a burial ceremony for a queen mother
(Mamagā, Gbi-Hohoe, July 17, 2021). Note the gendering of female
sensualities through aesthetic black-red contrasts and saturations.

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46   Details about A. R. S. are provided in Avorgbedor (1997). A. R. S. is an AIC (i.e., African-Initiated, African Independent Church, or African Indigenous Church) founded in 1939 by local charismatic leader the late Rev. C. K. Wovenu (d. 1999).

Figure 15: Aerial view of women's performance arrangement and proxemics
(cf. also with Figure 14).[47]

Even in the case of details provided in Figures 14 and 15, the description and analytical summaries remain porous, at best. For example, the angle of independent aerial (drone) photography captures the rotating, concentric and silhouetted circular movement of the same group of women mourners/performers as they intersect by means of express, fortuitous design. Such phenomena are imbued with further sensorial force through the predominance of the female body, the vibrant dynamism of color-coded gestures and shapes in tandem with the visual aura of sensuous movements. All these elements are a significant part of the socio-performative choreographies that symbolize the ideals, traits, and magnificence of local femininities, especially as emphasized in the context of the queen-mother's funeral. The agility, resilience, prowess and overwhelming bodily affectivities and sensualities are projected further through imaginative choreographing.[48] This mode of staging clearly privileges plurality of expression. It creates a synthesis of multiple sensory inputs (Hall 1966; Hobeika 2017) through a kaleidoscope of sonic and bodily gestures, and techniques of silhouetting in the spirit of proxemics. The saturation of colors, the photo-realistic and malleable bodily architectures within which sonic varieties are engendered situate this all-female performance at the edge of worldly sensibilities and those of the spiritual.

Case Example 5: Eruptions, Disruptions and *Zangbetɔ*

A final case example involves the appearance of *zangbetɔ*, which is an aspect of *vodu*, the official state religion in Benin which has become a growing tourist

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47   Footage from the video of a Ho, Kuʄuʄu Anyi, official announcement of the funeral (day 1) of Togbe Kwasi Afele II, provided by Krelo Pictures is available at the following link: https://youtu.be/3nmQ4g-CcG0 ("The Most Feared […]" [2022]).

48   For example, under the direction of the leader in Figure 15 (performance circle) participants observe and perform silence, jump, clap, place their hands over their heads, sing game-like songs and recitations, and perform mime, etc.

attraction among the Ewe and the Fon of Benin, Togo, and Ghana. *Zangbetɔ*'s newfound presence and popularity can be viewed as the manifestation of a dissonant, cataclysmic (unexpected, unplanned) eruption as in my experience it occurred in the arena where the funeral church service (i.e., for the late Togbegā Gabusu, Hohoe) was in progress. It creates dissonance because, *vodu* (*vodun*, *voodoo*, etc.) is supposedly antithetical to the Christian faith and akin to heathenism. On the other hand, *zangbetɔ*'s growing popularity and spectacular appeal and the enchantment associated with the "magical" transmutations, rotations, and sheer kinesthetic force executed by its adepts, often adds to the overall awe and affective-cathartic moments experienced by onlookers.[49] The eruption-disruption that occurred with the *zangbetɔ* performance at the royal funeral I attended, constitutes an unforgettable moment, especially since the performance continued concurrently with the church service held within the premises of the funeral.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have presented examples of various degrees of rapture, rupture, and disjuncture in Ewe royal funerary and installation ritual ceremonial events. These occurrences can be experienced and understood as sonic elements with their affective reach and potential neurological repercussions (musketry, drumming); gender-related taboos such as the appearance of female drummers and dancing female pallbearers; debates concerning authenticity and merchandising strategies of a commercial nature; interjected elements of the grotesque associated with choreographed theatricality, etc. Disagreements regarding ritual procedures such as the omission and substitution of ritual symbols and practices, the absence of expected or invited delegates and challenges associated with a growing presence of Christian values (and the dilemma posed by "Christian" chiefs),[50] and dissatisfaction with the performance of music and dance of other Ghanaian ethnic sources, are among the factors that support the premises of rupture and disjuncture. The large and diverse repertoire of music and dance which privileges skillful execution in these royal contexts combines with the extraordinary moments of magic and unexpected novel acts to raise the overall

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49 *Zangbetɔ* is now performed (or provides guest appearances) in national and non-Ewe contexts – there are several examples on YouTube, for example: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TyBJHVEVMn0&t=21s ("Zangbeto's Part 2 […]" 2020); https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7dVUUgGjr0 ("Zangbetos, Magia […]" 2020); https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baX849Ug9EM (Nomi 2015); https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XT-iEjnO2s&t=1043s (Agbayanou 2019).

50 In a provocative essay, a published version of a public lecture by a local Akan chief Nana Susubiribi Krobea Asante, we witness advocation for the legitimization of a "Christian chief," highlighting traditions, practices and beliefs that in his opinion support or are shared by some biblical examples. He then concludes, "I find unrelenting and indiscriminate condemnation of chieftaincy by some Christians somewhat puzzling in view of the enormous contributions made by traditional leaders over the years to the reception of Christianity and Western education in Ghana" (Asante 2018, 45).

affectivities and expectations concerning ritual efficacy and performance excellence. The field data pose challenges to current technologies, perspectives, and practices in visual and sensory ethnographies; they also clarify and uphold the dynamics and close interaction of religion and spirituality in African contexts. With new compelling data, the study illuminates the growing field of sonic studies and calls for close attention to and a deeper understanding and appreciation of local cosmologies within which ritual and performance traditions are enacted; it also acknowledges the limits of conventional research paradigms and tools concerning the world of religion and spirituality.

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POVZETEK

Prelomi, spoji in razlika: vloga glasbe in obredne performativnosti pri določanju »tradicije« v sodobnih kraljevskih slovesnostih v Gani

Prispevek se opira na primere izbranih kontekstov kraljevskih pogrebnih in umestitvenih slovesnosti in performativnosti v skupnostih ljudstva Ewe v južni Gani, pri čemer so v ospredju raziskave dogodkov v letih 2021 in 2022. Analize teh dogodkov temeljijo na mnogih, a medsebojno tesno povezanih analitičnih perspektivah: zvok (zlasti zvočni afekti), senzorične študije, študije performativnosti, avtohtoni estetski konstrukti in prakse, postkolonialne kritike in določanje hibridnosti ter fenomenologija religije in duhovnosti. Primeri poudarjajo perspektive, ki preizprašujejo sakralno-sekularne binarnosti.

Avtor meni, da sodelujoči obredne dogodke nadvse skrbno načrtujejo in izvajajo, ob tem pa še dodatno dajejo prednost izraziti ustvarjalnosti in združevanju različnih oblik izvedbenih praks ter mnogim simbolom s področja multisenzoričnega in hiperrealnega, da bi tako dosegli največji afektivni učinek doživetega dogodka. Analiza nadalje proučuje izrazito kreativnost (ter njen končni cilj), ki jo povezuje s spreminjajočo se prostorsko-časovno sestavo udeleženih v dogodkih, z njihovim izkustvom zvočnih in gibalnih manifestacij, ter jo opazuje kot poudarjeno na osnovi udejanjanja domačnosti, izjemnega, groteksnega, eksotičnega ipd. Premise preloma, zanosa, razdora, razlike in zbliževanja so nepogrešljive pri razumevanju tega, kako udeleženci določajo vmesnost in multisenzoričnost izvedbe, pa tudi, kako medsebojno delujejo, da omogočijo cilje obredne učinkovitosti in odličnosti izvedbe. Pri identificiranju sodobnih avtohtonih obrednih in performativnih tradicij ljudstva Ewe so pomembni sledeči vidiki ustvarjalnega pogleda in sodobnosti: soočanje krščanskih in avtohtonih verskih vrednot, opuščanje in nadomeščanje obrednih ter izvajalskih konvencij ter njihove specifične vsebine. Prispevek razpravlja o različnih značilnostih, mehanizmih in izvajalskih strategijah, ki utelešajo in razkrivajo napredne in prožne pristope k vprašanjem spola in pripadnosti celo v obrednih ali svetih kontekstih, ki so sicer poznani kot zelo konservativni.

Zbrani terenski podatki postavljajo izzive sodobnim tehnologijam, perspektivam in praksam v vizualnih in senzoričnih etnografijah, obenem pa razjasnjujejo in potrjujejo dinamike in vzajemno delovanje religije in duhovnosti v afriških kontekstih. Raziskava dodaja sveže podatke in osvetljuje rastoče polje zvočnih študij, poleg tega pa poziva k večji pozornosti, globljemu razumevanju ter ovrednotenju lokalnih kozmologij, znotraj katerih se udejanjajo obredne in izvajalske tradicije. Obenem prepoznava omejitve konvencionalnih paradigem in orodij pri raziskovanju sveta religije in duhovnosti.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DANIEL KODZO AVORGBEDOR (perazimm@gmail.com) completed his PhD degree at Indiana University (Bloomington) in 1986 and is a retired Associate Professor who currently teaches and conducts research on a contractual basis in the School of Performing Arts and the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon. Previous positions include a joint appointment in the School of Music and the Department of African-American and African Studies at The Ohio State University, Columbus (1995–2010) where he also served as coordinator of the Ethnomusicology program from 2004–2008. Professor Avorgbedor is past President of the Midwest Chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology and was recently appointed as Vice-Chair of ICTM's Study Group on Sacred and Spiritual Sounds and Practices, and Editor-in-Chief of a new journal, *Analytical Approaches to African Music*. Professor Avorgbedor has received major grants from the H. F. Guggenheim and Wenner-Gren Foundatons; Carnegie-Mellon (team), and the National Endowment for the Humanities (team). He guest-edited a special issue of *The World of Music* devoted to Cross-Cultural Aesthetics (2003) and his research focuses on urban ethnomusicology, African Diaspora studies, and bodily expressivity and the multisensory in Anlo-Ewe performance practices.

O AVTORJU

DANIEL KODZO AVORGBEDOR (perazimm@gmail.com) je doktoriral leta 1986 na Univerzi Indiana (Bloomington) in je upokojeni izredni profesor, ki trenutno poučuje in raziskuje na Šoli za uprizarjajoče umetnosti in Inštitutu za afriške študije na Univerzi v Gani (Legon). Predhodne zaposlitve vključujejo poučevanje na Fakultetni šoli za glasbo in Oddelku za afroameriške in afriške študije Državne univerze Ohio v Columbusu (1995–2010), kjer je bil med letoma 2004–2008 tudi koordinator programa etnomuzikologije. Profesor Avorgbedor je nekdanji predsednik Srednjezahodnega oddelka Etnomuzikološkega društva (Midwest Chapter of Society for Ethnomusicology) in je bil pred kratkim imenovan za podpredsednika Študijske skupine za Sakralne in duhovne zvoke in prakse, delujoče pod okriljem Mednarodnega sveta za tradicijsko glasbo (ICTM), ter glavnega urednika nove revije *Analytical Approaches to African Music* (*Analitični pristopi k afriški glasbi*). Profesor Avorgbedor je prejemnik večjih štipendij fundacij H. F. Guggenheim in Wenner-Gren ter štipendij za raziskovalne skupine Carnegie-Mellon in National Endowment for the Humanities. Bil je gostujoči urednik medkulturni etiki posvečene posebne številke revije *The World of Music* (*Svet glasbe*, 2003). Njegovo raziskovalno delo se osredotoča na urbano etnomuzikologijo, študije afriške diaspore ter telesno izraznost in multisenzoričnost izvajalskih praks skupnosti Anlo-Ewe.

Musical Ritual and Ritual Music: Music as a Spiritual Tool and Religious Ritual Accompaniment

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ABSTRACT

This article explores music as a religious ritual accompaniment within the realm of Balinese Hinduism in Bali, Indonesia, and the spiritual dimensions of music as a "tool" and a "ritual" in itself, within the Hindu-based Siddha Yoga practices and philosophies of sacred sound and the devotional worship of *arati*.

Keywords: musical ritual, spiritual tool, sacred sound practices, *arati*, *gender wayang*

IZVLEČEK

Članek proučuje glasbo kot spremljavo verskega obreda v okviru balijskega hinduizma na Baliju v Indoneziji. V okviru na hinduizmu utemeljenih Siddha joga praks ter filozofij svetega zvoka in obrednega čaščenja v pesmih zvrsti *arati* raziskuje duhovne dimenzije glasbe, ki je sama po sebi »orodje« in »obred.«

Ključne besede: glasbeni obred, duhovno orodje, študije svetega zvoka, *arati*, *gender wayang*

Introduction

Guy Beck (1993, 2006, 2013) has provided years of serious scholarship on sacred sound and ritual music practices in India and within Indian traditions generally. While building on the foundational work of Beck, Lewis Rowell (1992), and Joyce Irwin (1983), this article applies Indian concepts of sacred sound and ritual music practices to new locations and new areas of research. This study explores music as a religious ritual accompaniment within the realm of Balinese Hinduism in Bali, Indonesia, and the spiritual dimensions of music as a "tool" and a "ritual" in itself, within the Hindu-based Siddha Yoga practices and philosophies of sacred sound and the devotional worship of *arati*.

In this article I distinguish between ritual music generally (music that accompanies a ritual or ceremony) and a distinctly *musical ritual* to denote sacred text and sacred music that functions as a fundamental aspect of the ritual itself. To this end I investigate the sounds of *arati*[1] – often used to honor a teacher within a Hindu, Buddhist, or yogic lineage – as a case study of music that functions as a ritual, or in other words, a *musical ritual*. In fact, this delineation of terms – between ritual music and a musical ritual – provides a key incentive for comparing these two case studies.

Arati has an inner dimension facilitated by musical devotion (in both the music and the text it supports), whereas the more ritualistic culture of Bali may cause practitioners to focus directly on the ritual elements and ceremonial requirements needed to complete a given religious, human, or spiritual obligation, rather than concentrating on the inner transformation it affords. Of course, there are exceptions. When the spirit or soul of a deceased person in Bali is accompanied by *gender wayang* music[2] during a cremation procession, then transition and transformation from one place and one state to another is paramount. In addition, certain theatrical performers in Bali such as *dalang* (shadow play puppeteers) may engage in spiritual practices in order to develop *taksu*, a kind of divine charm that enables them to keep their audiences enrapt from the beginning to the end of a performance. However, these spiritual practices by individual performers may not involve instrumental music but rather prayer, meditation, or mantra repetition. By contrast, the widespread use and expectation of the instrumental *gender wayang* ensemble to facilitate or accompany rites of passage ceremonies in Bali is a factor that assists in and enhances the performance of such ritual ceremonies. The association of the ensemble

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1   *Arati* is a devotional hymn with a refrain and multiple stanzas that honor one's teacher. The performance of *arati* provides a "*means for the enactment of devotion*" and may be "*evocative of the inner experience* that the gurus extend to devotees" (Brooks et al. 1997, 298).

2   *Gender wayang* refers to both the ensemble and the shadow play music in Bali, Indonesia, where *gender* is a ten-keyed metallophone performed in pairs of two or four instruments, and *wayang* refers to both the shadow play theater in Indonesia, and the shadow play puppets. *Wayang kulit* indicates carved leather puppets typically used in Balinese shadow play performances.

and its repertoire with religious culture of a ceremonial nature accords it a sacred connotation that differs from its usual association with shadow puppet theatre, even though *wayang* (the shadow play) is also performed predominantly for temple festivals so the sacred context is not lost even when *wayang* is performed at Odalan (temple anniversary festivals) as a form of evening entertainment (Heimarck 2003, 71).[3]

In this article, I discuss the concept of music as a "tool" in religious or spiritual contexts. For those on a spiritual path, music can function as a "spiritual tool," a religious tool, a ceremonial tool, a ritual tool, or a tool of emancipation, transformation, or consciousness-raising. In addition to focusing on music as a spiritual tool, and music as an accompaniment to religious ceremonies, I will define the potential for music – including the recitation of sacred text – to serve as a ritual in itself, as a *musical ritual*. I will discuss the musical ritual that embodies devotion known as *arati* within Hindu, Buddhist, and yogic traditions in South Asia, East Asia, and diasporic or transplanted traditions in new locations. I will also investigate music that accompanies rites of passage in Bali, Indonesia, namely the *gender wayang* accompaniment to tooth-filing ceremonies, weddings, and cremation ceremonies.[4] Music or mantra repetition in the context of meditation, or group chanting in the context of *satsang* (a program within a Hindu-based tradition) will complete this exploration of music as a religious, ceremonial, and spiritual tool embodying inner and outer devotion, transition, and transformation.[5]

Changing Geographies of Religion

In "Global Shifts, Theoretical Shifts: Changing Geographies of Religion," geographer Lily Kong (2010, 756) makes note of new approaches to the study of religion such as "different sites of religious practice beyond the 'officially sacred,' different sensuous sacred geographies." These are just some of the postsecular developments that call for our attention as scholars. The current article investigates *arati* practices that may occur in a yoga center located in an urban building reconstructed to serve as a music and meditation hall. These new iterations of yogic practices occurring in the United States over the past forty to

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3   See individual performers' accounts in *Balinese Discourses on Music and Modernization: Village Voices and Urban Views* (Heimarck 2003).

4   These social ceremonies and rites of passage occur within the broader context of Balinese religion, known as *Agama Tirtha* (the Religion of Holy Water), which is a unique form of Hinduism practiced in Bali.

5   Roy Rappaport (1999, 25) notes that just as "all ritual is not religious, not all religious acts are ritual." The same holds true for ceremonies. While all religions have ceremonies and rituals, not every religious act constitutes a ceremony or ritual, and not all ceremonies or rituals are religious. There are secular ceremonies, such as political inaugurations; there are social ceremonies such as birthdays and anniversary celebrations; there are economic rituals or ceremonies such as a certain number of years acknowledged at a job, and so on; these are not religious.

fifty years represent "different sites of religious practice […] different historical and place-specific contexts […] and different constituents of population" (Kong 2010, 756), and assist in our understanding of postsecular strategies in the U.S.

Theory and Practice

One fundamental trait that ritual practices and yogic traditions have in common is the intention to put theory into practice. Within these practices, the outer physical ritual act also includes an inner experience. Thus, there is a three-part cycle of theory, practice, and experience.[6] Yogic theories and philosophies concerning inner sounds and sacred resonances can be found in the Hatha Yoga *Pradipika* of the fifteenth century, and earlier treatises of South Asia, where "bells, drums, thunder, the conch, and the primordial sound AUM" describe "the divine sounds [known as Nada] that arise from within during meditation" (Siddhananda 2014, 2). While these inner sounds clearly derive from an inner source, it is notable that several of the instruments mentioned may be sounded during the outer ritual worship known as *arati*, and their vibrations are believed to have a "purifying effect on the mind and body" (SYDA Foundation 1996, 1).[7]

Putting yogic theories and philosophies into practice, enabling a direct experience of and union with God or the inner Self is the goal of yoga[8] and connects closely with Tantric aims and practices as well. According to S. K. Ramachandra Rao (1979, 21) in *Tantra Mantra Yantra: The Tantra Psychology*, *Tantra* can be seen as the "translation of theory into practice." Shankara[9] is considered the great unifier who brought Vedic wisdom and theories of the cosmos together with Tantric traditions and practices that were contemplative and focused on the individual. Consequently, most monistic tantras believed that Reality is simultaneously transcendent and immanent (Rastogi 1979, 38). Further to this merging of Vedic influence with Tantric tradition, in Shankara's

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6   This cycle then returns as experience informs theories, which may change or adapt and be integrated into the practices of ritual.

7   For example, bells, conches, and drums may precede or accompany the sung prayer (SYDA Foundation 1996, 1). Thus, certain instruments are performed as part of the outer ritual, while also evoking the inner sounds known as Nada or sacred sound that may arise "from within during meditation" (Siddhananda 2014, 2).

8   Aubrey Menen (1974, 101) translates the term 'yoga' as 'a bridge,' "with the understanding that it is a bridge to learning about the true self." He notes that "The sages of the Upanishads did not set up a religion. They had no God. 'Brahman' was not the name of deity: it was the name of something you discovered in your self" (Menen 1974, 113).

9   Another transliteration from Sanskrit into English for Shankara is Samkara, as used by Rao. For consistency, I have relied on the common English usage of the name Shankara for this renowned figure, now believed to have lived between 788 and 820 C.E., though there is still some debate concerning his dates.

interpretation of the philosophical school of Advaita-vedanta,[10] "Advaita was not meant to be a mere intellectual discipline; it was not only an approach to Reality (a *darsana*) but a means to reach it (an *upasana*)"[11] (Rao 1979, 21). There are deep intersecting and overlapping threads connecting Tantric Saivism, Sakta Tantra (Goddess/es), and Vaisnavite Tantric thought and practices with yogic practices of sacred sound.[12] For example, in India and the West today, Siddha Yoga ashrams incorporate many Hindu ceremonies, hymns, and ritual worship such as *arati* into their daily schedule, as well as meditation and contemplation. In yogic sacred sound practices, Hindu, Buddhist, and tantric traditions, recitation of sacred mantras is a means to assist the practitioner in reaching the goal of liberation.[13] Within tantric and yogic concepts of sacred sound, mantra represents a sonic threshold into a deeper form of body awareness, and a pathway to enlightened states of consciousness.[14]

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10 According to the Introduction by Debabrata Sinha (1983, xvi) to *The Metaphysic of Experience in Advaita Vedanta: A Phenomenological Approach* "the Advaita school of Vedanta, founded by ´Sankara, and followed up, developed, and ramified by post-´Sankara authors through the centuries (from ninth century A.D. onward), is generally represented as a full-fledged metaphysics of Being. Its uncompromising monistic doctrine is singularly focused on the concept of Absolute, that is Brahman, the all-engulfing ultimate." "The very equivalence of the highest Reality with the essence of consciousness – *Sat* that is *Cit* – promotes a unique dimension to the Advaitic ontology" (Sinha 1983, xviii); where *sat* refers to existence or Being, and *cit* indicates Consciousness or pure Consciousness (Sinha 1983, xvii).

11 Shankara also recognized that Sankhya was styled as a 'tantra' (Rao 1979, 16–17). Broadly speaking, Tantrism is present in Sankhya-Yoga, Ayurveda and the early Upanishadic texts (Rao 1979, 14–15).

12 In *A Concise Dictionary of Indian Philosophy: Sanskrit Terms Defined in English* John Grimes (1996, 314) provides several definitions for 'Tantra': "rule; ritual; scripture; religious treatise; loom; warp (from the root "*tan*" = "do in detail" + "*tra*" = "to protect")." I will cite three of the five definitions for 'Tantra' provided by Grimes (1996, 314–315), as they relate to some of the texts and topics under discussion: "1. As religious treatises, they are usually in the form of a dialogue between ´Siva and ´Sakti. Sometimes they are referred to as the 'fifth Veda.' They posit an esoteric spiritual discipline which worships ´Sakti, the creative power of the Absolute, as the Divine Mother through the practice of rituals, *mantras*, and *yantras*. The goal of *tantra* is attaining Self-realization through *Kundalini* awakening and through uniting the two principles, ´Siva and ´Sakti. *Tantras* are divinely revealed scriptures revealing the secrets of knowledge, meditation, and devotion to the *guru*, and practices for the attainment of Self-realization. […] 4. They are practical treatises on religion. By means of worship of images (*arca*), diagrams (*yantra*), repetition of mystic syllables (*mantra*), and meditation (*upasana*), they provide courses for developing the hidden, latent power in individuals leading to realization. They may also be used for attaining worldly desires. 5. An initial characterization of tantric texts is a text which presents itself as revealed without attaching itself in any way to the Veda. A second aspect of *tantra* is that it has a strong reaction against Upanishadic renunciation. It strives for both liberation (*mukti*) and enjoyment (*bhukti*). Third, *tantra* establishes a series of correlations between human beings, the universe, the gods, and rituals. Finally, *tantra* stresses the centrality of the goddess or divine power (´Sakti) in all its forms."

13 In *From the Finite to the Infinite*, vol. 1, Swami Muktananda (1989, s.v. "mantra") defines "mantra" as "sacred words or sounds invested with the power to protect and transform the one who repeats them; the sound body of God." It is important to recognize here that mantra may refer to both sacred words and sacred syllables.

14 Whether through chanting or meditating on or with these mantras, these sacred sounds – inner or outer – are believed to be efficacious. For example, Siddha Yoga meditation intensives frequently

Music as a Spiritual Tool

Most religious ceremonies, especially lengthy ones, require some form of musical accompaniment; but beyond this primary religious role, music also acts as a spiritual tool in many traditions. Let us consider what is meant by the term "tool." Certainly, musical instruments may serve as ritual tools in certain contexts; for example, percussion instruments such as conches and idiophones (rattles, shakers) enliven particular South Asian *arati* chants and may be seen to function as ritual tools in this setting, since I am defining *arati* as a ritual, and these percussive sounds are required accompaniments to this ritual in particular cases of *arati* chants. In these instances, the percussion enhances the effectiveness of the chant.

But let me return to my use of the term "tool" in this investigation. What do I mean by a "spiritual tool"? A tool may be defined as a device or implement, thing, or even person used to carry out a purpose. For example, tools of one's trade would be things used in an occupation or pursuit. In a religious or spiritual context, we might find tools used to further spiritual goals, for example incense, sounds or silence for meditation, and so on. I suggest that music and mantra are tools – things used to carry out a spiritual purpose – that further the goals of ceremonial events and spiritual illumination within the Hindu-based traditions of Bali, Indonesia and South Asian tantric and yogic traditions practiced in diverse locations.[15]

Music as Ritual Action or Ritual Performance

Beyond ritual or spiritual tools, I would also like to consider ways in which music may constitute a ritual action or ritual performance. In "The Many Dimensions of Ritual," Marc Verhoeven examines different definitions for ritual, noting the ideas of archaeologists Colin Renfrew and Evangelos Kyriakidis who defined ritual as "practices that are time-structured and involve performance, with the repetition of words and actions in formalized ways" (Renfrew 2007, 109–110; quoted in Verhoeven 2011, 116); "an etic category that refers to set activities with a special (not-normal) intention-in-action, and which are specific to a group of people" (Kyriakidis 2007, 294; quoted in Verhoeven 2011, 116).

After noting certain key attributes of ritual, Verhoeven (2011, 118) offers his own definition with regard to the *form* of rituals:

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engage in chanting the Names of God through short-text chants known as *namasankirtana*, and may also chant the core mantra of this lineage to lead into meditation.

15 For a history of tantric thought and influences as well as aesthetics in medieval Java (eighth through sixteenth centuries C.E.), in addition to the influx of Sufi Islam and later more orthodox ideologies see Becker (1993).

I define ritual as performances which are distinguished in both space and time, marked by explicit material and immaterial symbolism, often (but not always) related to the supernatural, in which behaviour is guided and restricted by tradition, rules and repetition […]. With regard to function and meaning I propose that rituals are practices in which symbolic communication serves to establish relationships between humans and/or supernatural beings.

Within practice-based approaches to ritual, Verhoeven (2011, 122) notes that "ritual is social action." Humphrey and Laidlaw (1994; quoted in Verhoeven 2011, 123) further clarify that "ritual is a quality that actions can come to have." Most importantly, it is "through ritual action that religious beliefs are communicated, negotiated, and transmitted" (Verhoeven 2011, 126).

In *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Catherine Bell ([1992] 2009, xv) notes the tendency to cast ritual "as action in opposition to thought and theory," with a concentration on ritual performances. She later clarifies that action and thought are integrated in ritual; you cannot have action divorced from thought in human activity (Bell [1992] 2009, 23). Therefore, ritual action involves both action and thought; clearly this enables an interdependence between the practices of ritual and the meanings attributed to the text, music, and ritual actions.

If we combine the key contributions of Renfrew and Kyriakidis above, we could define ritual as "practices that are time-structured and involve performance, with the repetition of words and actions in formalized ways" (Renfrew 2007, 109–110), often meant to foster a special intention that is "specific to a group of people" (Kyriakidis 2007, 294).

Clearly *arati* as a musical form of worship involves practices that are time-structured and involve performance, with the repetition of words and actions in formalized ways; and it is meant to foster a special intention that is specific to a group of people, that of honoring their teacher and connecting to the divine in some form through this ritual act. Therefore, the performance of *arati* by the musicians, chanters, and *devi* – the ritual practitioner who is waving the tray, often seen as an embodiment of the goddess – would appear to be a ritual performance, and thus a ritual act.

While rules and regulations or specifications are often noted in diverse forms of rituals, there is no question that the performance of *arati* follows some formal constraints. There are specific melodies played for a set period of time; there are certain instruments involved as well as chanters that may be divided into lead and response; or in the case of "Sadguru Ki Arati" following recitation of the Guru Gita in Siddha Yoga, each verse begins with the women chanting the first two lines, followed by the men chanting the same two lines of text, then the remainder of the verse and the refrain are chanted all together. In addition, symbolic objects are held and waved by the ritual practitioner. In this and other ritual performances, the music creates a sense of time and space through the enactment of sound over a select period of time; it also allows for the presence

of sound within distinct spatial boundaries.[16] At the same time, in many musical rituals and in the case of *arati*, texts expressing spiritual beliefs are chanted along with the musical accompaniment, adding to the complex symbolism of this ritual event.[17]

Beyond these formal considerations, in their Introduction to *Music and Ritual: Bridging Material and Living Cultures,* Raquel Jimenez Pasalodos, Rupert Till, and Mark Howell (2013, 19) define "ritual as a human action linked with religious beliefs or spiritual needs." Music performed as a fundamental component of a sacred ritual may be interpreted as a human action tied to the realms of religion and spirituality. By this definition, the music for *arati* fulfills the role of a ritual and might be further defined as a *musical ritual*, especially when the instrumental accompaniment and sung text provide the primary means of expressing a set of religious beliefs or realizing particular spiritual needs.

Ritual performances might include additional human actions beyond the musical and/or textual performance, including gestures, as well as material objects required for certain ritual acts; nonetheless, the music and sung or recited text plays a significant part. In some instances, such as *arati*, the other ritual acts – such as waving of the tray – could not take place without the music.

I will give two case studies from my own fieldwork. One represents ritual music in Bali, Indonesia, where the music accompanies a religious ceremony but is not absolutely required – the cremation procession, wedding, or tooth-filing will occur regardless of the music, though the *gender wayang* accompaniment is the preferred musical accompaniment for these ceremonies in Bali.[18] The second case study concerns the devotional hymn known as *arati*, which I refer to as a *musical ritual* because of the central importance of the music and chanted text to the meaning and experience of the ritual itself.[19]

Case Example I: Balinese Cremation Ceremony

Rites of passage are one category of ritual action noted by Bell ([1997] 2009), also known as life-cycle rituals: birth, puberty rituals, marriage, and death

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16 When you close the doors to a music hall for example, the sounds may be contained within those spatial boundaries, but if you open the doors or windows to that space, the sounds may travel beyond those borders.

17 Once again, action and thought – music and text – are combined in this musical ritual. For *puja* (worship) certain elements may be placed on a tray that is waved during *arati*. For example, flowers, a small lamp, candle, or tea light, yellow turmeric, rice, and red Kumkum or red turmeric powder. These are symbolic offerings to the deity, image, or guru, and to the inner Self. In addition, offering water and food may be part of a *puja* ritual worship (see Beck 2012, s.vv. 'Arati,' 'Puja').

18 The author has conducted more than three years of fieldwork in Bali over multiple visits of varying lengths (1985–1987, 1988, 1990, 1994, 1996, 2006), studying the complex, sacred ceremonial music of *gender wayang* with the virtuoso musician Bapak I Wayan Loceng in the village of Sukawati.

19 The author has participated in and researched Siddha Yoga music and conducted interviews on peoples' experiences since 1989.

Figure 1: Author's video footage of a cremation tower in Sukawati
with *gender wayang* accompaniment.[20]

(Verhoeven 2011, 118). My first example concerns Balinese ritual music, focusing on the musical accompaniment to a high-status cremation ceremony in Bali where musicians may be asked to perform by sitting on a platform carried by dozens of men as part of an elaborate cremation tower. Two *gender wayang*[21] musicians may perform this sweet and haunting music while the procession carries the deceased from the family compound to the cremation grounds. In part, this depends on the availability of *gender wayang* musicians,

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20   In the author's video footage (Heimarck 2006) of a cremation tower in Sukawati with *gender wayang* accompaniment you may notice the presence of marching gamelan music *beleganjur* playing at the same time. *Beleganjur* is a common accompaniment for Balinese cremation processions to the cemetery, and when performing alongside *gender wayang* on the cremation tower this helps to create the preferred aesthetic known as *ramai*, which means "busy, crowded, or hectic" referring to the crowds of people and often noisy or loud overlapping of different types of music playing simultaneously. The video is available on the following link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qasrQ-p7T8JxB--V5uCuiMgNO6XQSOEA/view?usp=sharing.

21   *Gender wayang* is a quartet of ten-keyed metallophones used in Bali, Indonesia to accompany the evening shadow play theater and many different ceremonies: weddings, cremations, tooth-filing ceremonies. There are two pairs of instruments tuned slightly apart to create a shimmering effect: two larger *gender*, and two smaller *gender* that sound an octave higher. Each pair has one person playing the *polos* or basic melody part, and one person playing the *sangsih* or counterpart. Each person plays with hard, wooden, round disc-tipped mallets one in each hand, and they dampen the keys as they play with the side of the palm. The metal keys are suspended over bamboo resonators that help to amplify this delicate sounding and intricate music. In the case of the cremation tower above, clearly only two *gender* players can fit on the cremation tower as a special setting for this music. In addition, in certain villages in North Bali and elsewhere they may perform this music with just two *gender*.

because of the extreme difficulty of this particular genre of Balinese music; the width and size of the cremation tower, in order to provide room for the musicians; and the status of the deceased based on either social class or renown. For the cremation of my *gender wayang* teacher, the internationally respected performer Bapak I Wayan Loceng, in the village best known for the shadow play tradition, with family lineages representing more than six generations of *gender wayang* performers and *dalang* (puppeteers), clearly there were *gender wayang* players on the cremation tower. "The *polos* player sits on the left side of the tower, and the *sangsih* player sits on the right. In this way, *gender wayang* music is believed to accompany the soul of the dead person as it departs for the heavens" (Heimarck 2015, 16). The *polos* part represents the basic melody part with both hands interacting in various musical textures, and the *sangsih* part represents the counterpart, often enhancing the *polos* melodies and rhythmic patterns with contrary motion, interlocking parts, and syncopation.

Case Example II: *Arati*

The second example I will consider is the chanting of a devotional text known as *Arati Karun*,[22] that relates to the wider practice of this devotional ritual in many parts of India, other parts of Asia, and recontextualized traditions within the diaspora. *Arati* combines sacred devotional text that is chanted, with a gestural ritual in which a dedicated *devi* (goddess) or ritual practitioner waves a tray or ritual object with one or more lit flames and often additional ritual components. This combination of music and ritual in *arati* represents a unique form of *musical devotion*. The tray or ritual object is waved in front of the Guru, image,[23] or deity, up and around in a circular motion. This ritual worship honors the Guru or deity while asking them to awaken the fire of knowledge within.[24] This musical ritual combines gesture in a circular motion, light, and sacred text with musical accompaniment:

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22 In Siddha Yoga the text for Arati Karun – listed in *The Nectar of Chanting* book as "Sadguru Ki Arati" – was written by a devotee of Baba Muktananda and this honorific hymn is practiced regularly within the Ashram schedule and is often a part of regular programs. The Arati Karun text is published in a book entitled *The Nectar of Chanting* along with the Guru Gita long-text chant, and many others. Some background to the scriptural and non-scriptural texts that inform Siddha Yoga has been provided in *Meditation Revolution* (Brooks et al. 1997, 298–299) as follows: "*The Nectar of Chanting*, first published by Shree Gurudev Ashram in 1972, is a compilation of texts that is the primary example of Siddha Yoga scriptural canon-making. Its sources are drawn from across the spectrum of the exoteric and esoteric canon of Hindu-based spirituality. Sometimes works are taken in their entirety, like the Visnu Sahasranama, or in part, like the so-called 'Introductory Mantras,' the 'Arati,' and the 'Upanishad Mantras,' which come from a variety of sources and oral lore."

23 For example, the Vedanta Society meeting hall located close to Boston University has been known to place the Sanskrit letters for AUM on the altar or *puja*.

24 Verse 23 of Sri Guru Gita notes that the Guru carries the disciple from the darkness (*gu*) of ignorance, into the light (*ru*) of supreme knowledge and consciousness (Muktananda 1983, 13).

often harmonium (pump organ) accompanying the melody, and the North Indian *tabla* drums or the South Indian double-headed, barrel-shaped *mridangam* drum, as well as hand cymbals, and at times a conch and additional percussion punctuating the rhythmic cycle. Each verse returns to the refrain for the *arati* being sung.[25]

Whereas there is only one – or occasionally several – ritual practitioners waving the tray in an *arati* worship practice, everyone else present will participate in singing the hymn honoring the teacher, deity, or guru, therefore the vast majority of participants in this musical ritual join in the musical portion, chanting the sacred text, but do not participate in the gestural choreography of waving the tray or dressing as a *devi* (goddess) or devotee in a given tradition, as seen in the representative video of BAPS Swaminarayan new aarti. In fact, the ritual practitioner or *arati devi* will generally not sing at all; rather, they are focused on the inner dimensions of offering the chant to their teacher or mentor.[26]

Different Hindu, Buddhist, or yogic communities may all have their own versions of *arati* performance or dress, and select musicians may accompany the chant in each given case, yet I have noticed that certain musical melodies that accompany *arati* may be used in more than one tradition, even when the text has been adapted or changed. There are also different versions of *arati* within individual communities, such as a morning *arati*, noon-time *arati*, or afternoon-evening *arati* that have different text, music, and percussive accompaniments. However, an in-depth explanation of all these different chants is beyond the scope of this article that is more focused on *arati* as a spiritual tool and musical ritual.

A large part of the power behind a musical ritual is the intention behind it, known in Sanskrit as *sankalpa*. If a person sets an intention – mental prayer, aim, or purpose – before they start to chant, they may have an even more powerful experience.[27] Traditionally, *sankalpa* refers to the intentionality of the guru (to make a certain scripture canonical (Brooks et al. 1997, 298, 300), to give a certain experience to a devotee, and so on). This is different from the intention of the devotee while engaging in spiritual practices; nonetheless intentionality is a key factor in creating an impactful experience. A distinction may also be made between group actions and intentions and "the internal feelings

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25 For the text and translation into English of one version of *arati* see "Sadguru Ki Arati" (Muktananda 1983, 69–72).

26 To view an example of an *arati* perfomed by devotees of Swami Narayan see the BAPS Swaminarayan new *arati* video (Patel 2018), available on the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0oH_EG7Jpc.

27 "A sacred chant is ´sabda brahman, God in the tangible form of sound. When we chant sincerely, it is like two mighty rivers – deity and disciple – coming together and creating a tremendous surge of spiritual energy and blessing. To further strengthen one's participation in a sacred chant, one can make a *sankalpa*, an intention, before beginning" ("Chanting with Intention […]" 1997, 56).

and imaginative concepts of the individual actor" (Munn 1973, 583; quoted in Bell [1992] 2009, 23–24).

Yogic Traditions of Meditation and Inner Reflection

On the more contemplative side, while sitting silently for meditation, some yogic practitioners may repeat mantras to themselves inwardly. This represents yet another dimension of sacred sound and the spiritual use of mantra or sacred syllables within the South Asian yogic tradition of meditation and inner reflection. Sacred sound that is unvoiced outwardly, still circulates powerfully within the inner realms of contemplation and meditation. *Ajapa Mantra*[28] or silent repetition of mantras may occur within the inner spaces of the mind, representing the ancient spiritual discipline of unvoiced sacred sound in the Indian tradition.[29]

Uses and Functions of Music

John Kaemmer distinguishes between the uses and functions of music in different settings, and it might be worth considering these distinctions for a moment. Kaemmer (1993, 149–150) defines "uses" of music as the purpose or goal of including music in a particular event. By contrast, he defines "function" as the "consequences or results" of music in a given occasion. If I apply these definitions to the two case studies noted above, I could say that in the case of *arati*, the goal may be to honor one's teacher or guru, but the function or consequence could be an inner experience of devotion through the actions of this musical ritual.

In the case of Balinese *gender wayang* ritual music accompanying rites of passage ceremonies, the goal may be to accompany the individual, couple, or spirit through a transitional time from one phase of life to another, but the function or consequence of the *gender wayang* music may also be emotional support, aesthetic layering, and musical beauty and poignancy during an emotionally significant time, such as tooth-filing ceremonies (which metaphorically tame one's animal nature by filing down the canine teeth, preferably before one gets married), weddings (which benefit from the delicate and often interlocking sounds of *gender wayang*), and cremation processions for a high caste or renowned person. All of these significant rites of passage in Bali rely on the beautiful and contrapuntally complex sounds of *gender wayang* ceremonial music.[30]

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28   Whereas *ajapa mantra* is unuttered, *japa mantra* refers to the repetition of mantras, or the recitation of the name of God. *Japa mantra* "may be practiced orally, whispered, or mentally" (Grimes 1996, 145).

29   The thirteenth-century treatise the *Sangitaratnakara of Sarngadeva* (Raja 1945, 10) notes the presence of both *Ahata* and *Anahata Nada*, that is audible and inaudible sounds.

30   Kaemmer's argument may be further illuminated by the following comparison: the intention of music in a religious ceremony or ritual may be to entertain the participants or audience and therefore encourage them to attend the ritual or ceremony, but the actual consequence or function could be to move the participants on an inner, spiritual level and provide an inner experience of

In conclusion, what is clear from these investigations of the Hindu-based traditions of South Asia and the sacred music associated with rites of passage ceremonies in Bali, Indonesia is that these sacred sound practices are required or preferred for the South Asian devotional ritual known as *arati*, and as a religious ritual accompaniment for high-status cremation processions in Bali to accompany the soul to its ultimate destination. Furthermore, in tantric and yogic traditions, it is believed that sacred sound practices, including mantra repetition, and the inner or outer experience of sacred sounds can lead to Self-realization. Music is one of the most powerful tools we know of in both religious and spiritual traditions to support, accompany, and enact the goals of spiritual realization, transition through rites of passage or states of consciousness, and inner transformation. Musical devotion plays a significant role in these emancipatory practices, and musical rituals are perhaps the most fundamental practice for devotional worship and to facilitate transformation, as sacred sound permeates the inner worlds and connects the practitioner and all those listening to the experiential embodiment of divinity through sound. In the case of *arati*, this divinity might be interpreted as the guru or renowned teacher of a tradition; knowledge, insights or experiences imparted by the Guru; a deity or protection of a deity; the inner Self; or sacred sound. In the case of the ritual accompaniment of *gender wayang* for a high-status Balinese cremation ceremony and procession, this sacred ceremonial music is believed to accompany and facilitate spiritual transformation for the deceased.

While scholars have noted the loss of ritual in a "secular age" (Taylor 2007), or the "return of ritual" in popular music customs (Till 2013), this article seeks to address the role of music as a "spiritual tool" within certain ritual contexts that emphasize mystical union with God or the inner Self.

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the ritual. Or it could be the reverse! The intention could be to move the audience to have a profound experience of the religion through music, but the actual function or consequence could be entertainment, or social value in the form of community.

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POVZETEK

Glasbeni obred in obredna glasba: glasba kot duhovno orodje in spremljava verskega obreda

Guy Beck (1993, 2006, 2013) se je vrsto let posvečal znanstvenim raziskavam svetega zvoka in obredne glasbene prakse v Indiji in znotraj indijskih tradicij. Pričujoči članek izhaja iz njegovega temeljnega dela ter iz del Lewisa Rowella (1992) in Joyce Irwin (1983), obenem pa indijske koncepte svetega zvoka in obrednih glasbenih praks aplicira na nove kraje in nova raziskovalna področja. Ta študija tako proučuje glasbo kot spremljavo verskega obreda v balijskem hinduizmu na Baliju v Indoneziji. Pri tem raziskuje duhovne dimenzije glasbe, ki je sama po sebi »orodje« in »obred«, v okviru na hinduizmu utemeljenih Siddha joga praks ter filozofij svetega zvoka in obrednega čaščenja v pesmih zvrsti *arati*. *Arati* je nabožna himna na čast izbranemu učitelju z refrenom in več kiticami. Brooks in drugi (1997, 298) poudarjajo, da izvedba *arati*ja omogoča »*način za udejanjenje pobožnosti*« (»*means for the enactment of devotion*«) in lahko »*prikliče notranjo izkušnjo*« (»may be *evocative of the inner experience*«), ki jo guruji razširijo na vernike.

Obredni fokus balijskega hinduizma uporablja sveto glasbo, kot je *gender wayang* (glasba senčnega gledališča) za spremljavo verskih obredov ali ceremonij obredov prehoda. Siddha joga kot jogijska disciplina pa sveti zvok – vključno z glasbo, notranjim ali zunanjim ponavljanjem manter, speve oz. petje dolgih besedil, himne in speve *namasankirtana* s kratkimi besedili, ki poveličujejo božja imena – uporablja ob zavestno izpeljani poti v samouresničenje.

V članku zavestno razlikujem med obredno glasbo na splošno (tj. glasbo, ki spremlja obred ali ceremonijo) in natančno določenim *glasbenim ritualom* oz. *glasbenim obredom*, s čimer označujem péta sveta besedila in sveto glasbo, ki so bistveni del samega obreda. Na podlagi dveh v članku opisanih študij primera je predstavljena razlika med tema dvema izrazoma in obrednimi konteksti. S tem namenom najprej proučujem zvoke *arati*jev, ki so pogosto poklon učiteljem v hinduističnih, budističnih ali jogijskih tradicijah oz. linijah in so študija primera glasbe, ki sama deluje kot obred oz. *glasbeni obred*. Prvi primer glasbo pojmuje tudi kot duhovno orodje, ki udejanja notranjo in zunanjo pobožnost oz. vernost. Druga študija primera se nanaša na balijsko ceremonialno glasbo za obrede prehoda in osvetljuje glasbo *gender wayang* kot sveto ceremonialno tradicijo, ki spodbuja prehod in zaključitev obreda. Medtem ko raziskovalci govorijo o izgubi obrednega v »posvetni« oz. »sekularni dobi« (»secular age«) (Taylor 2007) ali »vračanju ritualnega« (»return of ritual«) v običajih popularne glasbe (Till 2013), ta članek naslavlja vlogo glasbe kot »duhovnega orodja« znotraj določenih obrednih kontekstov, ki poudarjajo mistično zvezo z Bogom in notranjim jazom.

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Textual Dimensions of the Public *Ḥaḍra* in Egyptian Sufism

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ABSTRACT

The article explores the crucial role of text in Sufism, especially in the central corporate ritual, *ḥaḍra*. Using Egypt as a case study, and thoroughly analyzing one particular *ḥaḍra* performance, the article uses concepts of intertext and interauthor to demonstrate how text supports socio-spiritual relationships.

Keywords: Sufism, Islam, ritual, poetry, mysticism

IZVLEČEK

Članek proučuje ključno vlogo besedil v sufizmu, predvsem v osrednjem obredu, ki se imenuje *ḥaḍra*. Na podlagi Egipta kot študije primera in s poglobljeno analizo izbrane izvedbe obreda *ḥaḍra* razprava s pomočjo konceptov medbesedilnosti in medavtorstva prikaže, kako besedilo podpira družbeno-duhovna razmerja.

Ključne besede: sufizem, islam, obred, poezija, misticizem

How do textual dimensions of the public *ḥaḍra* – Egypt's most socially salient musical ritual – express and maintain mystical Islam – Sufism – in Egypt? And what is the crucial role of the *ḥaḍra* text, particularly poetry in performance? I answer these questions in three steps: first, an overview of Egyptian Sufism; next, an interpretation of Sufi music and poetry; finally, a close analysis, transcription, and translation of a typical *ḥaḍra*, showing how its performed text both reflects and supports Sufism's web of socio-spiritual and intertextual connections.

I. Egyptian Sufism: Theology and Ritual

"What is Sufism?" This was the question I continually asked while performing ethnomusicologicial fieldwork in Egypt, from 1992 to 1998. Tersely, many Sufis merely replied "Sufism is love (*ḥubb*)," or "Sufism is the essence (*gawhar*) of Islam." A deeper answer required patience and long-term immersion in their socio-spiritual world.

Sufism (*taṣawwuf*, or *al-ṣūfiyya*)[1] offers a highly personal and experiential approach to religion, emphasizing sincere intention and heartfelt devotion. Participation is buttressed, guided, and deepened by camaraderie in connections: socio-spiritual solidarity, linking contemporary seekers *(murīdīn)* and spiritual leaders (*murshidīn*, or shaykhs), as well as the great teachers and holy men and women of the past (the *awliyā'*, those "close" – *walī* – to God), especially the Prophet Muhammad's family (*Āl al-Bayt* or *Ahl al-Bayt:* literally, "the kin of the house"; also *Āl Bayt al-Nabi*, "the kin of the Prophet's house"), as well as the Prophet himself (see Hoffman-Ladd 1992).

At its core, Sufism in Egypt is a quest for spiritual closeness, a desire to connect to beloved holy figures – as well as like-minded seekers – in order to experience the Divine Realities (*al-ḥaqīqa*, literally "Truth") in this life, driven by Divine love (*al-ḥubb al-ilāhi*) in the present (*al-waqt*), rather than fear (*khawf*) of God's wrath, or hope (*rajā'*) for His Paradise in the future. Such Realities are beautiful, as attested by a famous saying of the Prophet, "God is beautiful and loves beauty" (Nawawi 2014, hadith #389).

As Rabi'a 'Adawiyya (d. 801), the famous female mystic, wrote:

> Oh Lord! If I worship Thee on account of fear of Hell, burn me in Hell, and if I worship Thee with the hope of Paradise, exclude me from it, but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, then withhold not from me Thine eternal beauty. (Qadri 2006, 29)

Thus many Sufis regard earthly beauty as Divinely sanctioned, a pale reflection of the Divine. Consequently, *taṣawwuf* often incorporates the arts

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1   Several of the best general introductions to Sufism are by William Chittick (2000), Carl Ernst (1997), Alexander Knysh (2019), Martin Lings (1999), Annemarie Schimmel (1975), and J. Spencer Trimingham (1998). For Sufism in Egypt, see Frishkopf (1999, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2013), Gilsenan (1973), Hoffman (1995), Jong (1976, 1978, 2000), and Waugh (1989).

– visual, auditory, or literary. Yet such arts are never ends in themselves. Spiritually, they are functional, a means to a higher purpose, a lodestar for the spiritual path.

Literally, Islam means "submission" to God, affirming His unity and uniqueness (*tawḥīd*), through worship, the purpose of our creation. As God says in the Qur'an, the message (*risāla*) vouchsafed to mankind through the Prophet Muhammad: "I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me" (51:56).[2] Towards that end the Qur'an often underscores the importance of "remembering God" (*dhikr Allah*). Remembrance through submission is performed daily in obligatory prayer (*salāh*), especially at the moment of prostration (*sujūd*), as well as during the other legal pillars of Islam, including the Ramadan fast (*sawm*), almsgiving (*zakāh*), pilgrimage (*ḥajj*), and when uttering the testimony of faith: "there is no deity but Allah, and Muhammad is His Prophet" (*lā ilāha illa Allah, Muhammad rasul Allah*).[3]

While many Muslims submit out of fear and hope, in deference to law (*sharīʿa*), the Sufi is drawn to Divine beauty, submitting out of love. Only the spiritually advanced Muslim submits fully, out of a love and longing springing from inner faith (*imān*). To reach this state, the ego, governed by worldly desires (*shahawāt*), must be purified, for this fallible self (*al-nafs al-ammara bi suʾ*), straining towards the objects of its desire, barely restrained by fear and hope, can never submit fully. Only the serene self (*al-nafs al-muʾmaʾinna*), drawn by Divine love, and remembering the Primordial Covenant (*mīthāq*),[4] can perform *islām* completely. For the ordinary Muslim, as for the Sufi novice, the outward (*ẓāhir*) performance of obligatory prayer is a physical remembrance that promotes inner (*bāṭin*) faith and remembrance, taming the self. By contrast, for the mature Sufi the outward act of prayer simply *expresses* inner faith and remembrance.

Thus, the Sufi progresses along a spiritual path (*ṭarīqa*) from outward *islām* to inward *imān*, culminating in *iḥsān* (excellence): continual remembrance, through continuous love sustained by the constant felt presence of the Divine.

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2   All Qur'anic references are given numerically as X:Y meaning *sūra* (chapter) X, *āya* (verse) Y (with translations from Abdel Haleem 2011). In Islamic cosmology, the jinn are invisible beings created from "smokeless fire," whereas human beings are created from clay. See Qur'an 55:14, 55:15.

3   E.g. Qur'an 62:9-10: "Believers! When the call to prayer [*salāh*] is made on the day of congregation [Friday], hurry towards the reminder [*dhikr*] of God and leave off your trading – that is better for you, if only you knew. Then when the prayer has ended, disperse in the land and seek out God's bounty. Remember God often so that you may prosper."

4   That moment in pre-creation (*al-ʿālam al-azali*), sometimes called the "Day of *Alastu*" (Schimmel 1975, 24), when God asked all the future descendants of Adam: "Am I not your Lord?" ("Alastu bi rabbikum?"), to which they replied "Indeed you are, we testify" ("Qālū balā shahidnā") (Qur'an 7:172). All *dhikr* harkens back to this moment, sometimes understood as a musical exchange, and an archetypal memory music can reawaken (perhaps in *ḥaḍra*). See line 21 in the *ḥaḍra* text transcribed below, alluding to this crucial moment of *alastu*.

In another common formulation, the Sufi path leads the seeker (*murīd*) from law (*sharīʿa*) to Divine Reality (*ḥaqīqa*). That journey proceeds through purification of the self (*tazkiyat al-nafs*), raising the spirit (*tarqiyat al-rūḥ*) towards its source in God, under the guidance of a spiritual teacher (*murshid* or shaykh). The path traverses a series of stations (*maqāmāt*)[5] punctuated by moments of intense emotional insight (*aḥwāl*, singular *ḥāl*), culminating – for the spiritual elect – in the annihilation (*fanāʾ*) of the ego-self and subsistence (*baqāʾ*) with God. Others may aim instead for annihilation in the Prophet, saint, or shaykh (Hoffman 1999). In any case, with the dissolution of the self's boundaries comes intensified spiritual connection.

Over time, this guided journey led to the formulation of various supererogatory forms of ritual devotion, beyond daily obligatory prayer (*salāh*), designed to accelerate spiritual progress, starting with self-purification (e.g. asceticism, *zuhd*; requests for forgiveness, *istighfār*; repentance, *tawba*) and centered on remembrance (*dhikr*) in a direct form: the chanting of God's Names, accompanied by recitation of religious poetry, as a form of worship enabling one to experience God's closeness, as affirmed in Qurʾan 50:16: "We are closer to him than his jugular vein." Throughout, one's guides and exemplars are the Prophet, his family, and the *awliyāʾ*, all spiritually active – as well as one's contemporary shaykh.[6]

From the early thirteenth century or so, formal Sufi orders (*ṭuruq*; singular *ṭarīqa*) arose, linking Sufis, synchronically and diachronically, in new sodalities (Trimingham 1998, 10). Members (also called *murīdīn*; singular *murīd*) join with an oath (*ʿahd*) of allegiance to a living shaykh or *murshid*, thereby linking to a spiritual lineage (*silsila*, literally "chain") stretching back to the Prophet himself. These socio-spiritual networks are tightly woven, and infused with affection. A form of fictive kinship applies to spiritual relationships, modeled as familial love (Frishkopf 2003b). The shaykh is the spiritual parent (usually father, rarely mother); ascendants are grandparents; fellow *muridīn* are siblings. Sometimes the *silsila* diverges, as a charismatic follower starts a new branch; sometimes branches converge, when a Sufi receives spiritual guidance from more than one shaykh. But the orders are (ideally at least) not competing. Rather, they harmoniously coexist, different paths for different people, with a single objective. I often heard the *ṭuruq* likened to spokes of a wheel (*sharīʿa*) all leading to the hub (*ḥaqīqa*). Some seventy-two such orders are officially registered in Egypt today (ʿAbd al-Hadi 2022); many others exist informally but they are all interconnected through the branching *silsila* (see Figure 1).[7]

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5   Confusingly, the word *maqām* (plural *maqāmāt*) carries three different meanings in this paper: (a) a spiritual station, (b) a saint's shrine (not always the burial location), and (c) a melodic mode.

6   On saints in Egypt, see Jong (1976), Gilsenan (1973), Hoffman (1995), Reeves (1995), and Taylor (1998).

7   For a general introduction to Sufism and saint veneration in Egypt, see Hoffman-Ladd (1992), Hoffman (1995) and Waugh (1989).

Extending beyond formal *ṭariqa* membership lie the informal loving relationships that predate the orders, connecting Sufis to each other and to the saints (*awliyāʾ*), in what western scholars sometimes call "popular religion." This more extensive socio-spiritual network is renewed in ritual performances, held both within the *ṭuruq* and outside them. The informal followers of a saint are known as her or his *muḥibbīn* (lovers), and they gather *en masse* alongside *murīdīn* participating as members of a formalized *ṭariqa*, particularly during saint festivals (*mawālid*), events that are likewise permeated by a collective sense of love and care for one another. The number of Sufi *murīdīn* and *muḥibbīn* in Egypt has been loosely estimated at over six million.

This socio-spiritual network plays a central and dynamic role in lived experience. For the Sufi, the saints (*awliyāʾ*) – including founders of Egypt's major *ṭarīqa* lines, ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jilani (1077–1166), Ahmad al-Rifaʿi (1106–1182), Ibrahim al-Dasuqi (d. 1296), Ahmad al-Badawi (d. 1276), and
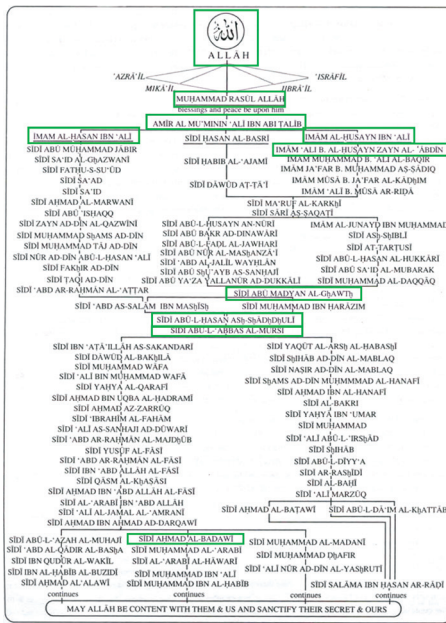
Figure 1: The *silsila* of the *Shadhiliyya ṭarīqa*, as represented by a contemporary branch (*Shadhiliyya Darqawiyya*) based in Syria and led by one Shaykh Yaʿqūbi.
Left: the *silsila* in a textual form, from Allah and the angels at the top, to various twentieth century figures at the bottom; those mentioned or implied in the *ḥaḍra* transcribed below are indicated by green boxes. Right: a typical portrayal of the *silsila* as a family tree, with Muhammad at the top; the uppermost dark green leaf represents Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili.

Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili (1196–1258)[8] – as well as the Prophet Muhammad and his family (the *Āl al-Bayt*, especially Imam al-Husayn and Sayyida Zaynab), are alive, interacting with the *muḥibbīn*, who develop deeply personal relationships with many of them, mediated by a visit (*ziyāra*) to the shrine (also called *maqām*), a vision (*ru'ya*, waking or in dreams), recounting a miracle story (*karāma*), entreating spiritual assistance (*madad*), blessing (*baraka*) or intercession (*tawassul*), sometimes through a vow (*nadhr*) to be fulfilled upon delivery (and thereby extending and deepening the relationship), attending festivals (*mawālid*), and reciting sacred texts (poetry and prose). Non-Muslims may regard the authors of Sufi poetry as mere poets, but for the Sufi, they are saints first and foremost; poetry is merely a side-effect, an overflowing (*fayḍ*) of spirituality into language, and a guide for the seeker. Authorship of Sufi poetry is distributed – as a linked interauthor – insofar as their texts are linked as intertext (Frishkopf 2003a; Homerin 2001; Schimmel 1982).

The primary corporate Sufi ritual is called *ḥaḍra* (literally, presence). Overtly, the *ṭarīqa ḥaḍra* (i.e. the *ḥaḍra* liturgy as performed within each Sufi order) is populated by the physical presence of members, including shaykhs and their disciples (*murīdīn*), but it is understood also to include invisible spiritual presences, including angels, the Prophet, and saints from the *ʿālam al-arwāḥ* (spirit world). Typically following ordinary congregational prayer (Sufism in Egypt extends, never replaces, mainstream Islam), the *ḥaḍra* centers on language performance (Frishkopf 2013), including recitation of prayers particular to the order (*ḥizb*, *awrād*), supplications (especially *ṣalawāt*, requests for blessings upon the Prophet); recitation of the Qur'an; religious lessons or sermons; *dhikr*: chanting the Names of God (sometimes with movements, bowing or swaying); and melodic chanting of Sufi poetry (*inshād*), performed by a *munshid*. Often *dhikr* and *inshād* are combined, generating the *ḥaḍra*'s most emotionally intense, unified moments.

Most *ṭuruq* perform *ḥaḍra* twice weekly, under the direction of the shaykh who controls *inshād* and *dhikr*, carefully regulating its range and emotional amplitude, so as to maintain propriety and avoid ecstatic excess. Sung poetry is composed, selected, or at least authorized by the shaykh or *ṭarīqa* founder. Expression of extreme mystical ideas (such as union with God, *ittiḥād*) and excessively emotional behaviors, are either concealed or forbidden, in favor of that which overtly conforms to *sharīʿa*.[9] Musical aspects of the

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8   In Egypt the first four of these are known as the "four axes" (*aqṭāb*; sing. *quṭb*), and the latter three are buried there. According to medieval Islamic hagiography, in each era an "axial" saint presides over the entire saintly hierarchy. All but ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jilani are invoked in the *ḥaḍra* described below.

9   Most Egyptians Muslims consider certain acts, e.g. ecstatic sayings (*shaṭḥiyāt*) or trance behaviors (*jadhb*), to constitute *bidʿa* (heresy) or even *kufr* (unbelief), violations of religious law. Most famously, al-Hallaj (857–922), mystic of Baghdad, expressing his sense of self-annihilation and union with the Divine, exclaimed "Ana al-Haqq" (I am the Truth, tantamount to saying "I am God") and was thereafter executed for heresy (see Ernst 1994; Salamah-Qudsi 2018).

ḥaḍra are also constrained. For instance, instruments other than the voice are usually proscribed, improvisation is constrained, and length is limited. Often *inshād* is reduced to intoning the text in a narrow ambit, using a simple repetitive melody, and a slow, steady pulse. The typical *ḥaḍra* lasts only an hour (Frishkopf 1999, 2013).

But Sufi ritual extends far beyond the *ṭarīqa ḥaḍra*, flourishing in the freewheeling realm of popular religion, beyond the control of *ṭarīqa* shaykhs. This broader *taṣawwuf* of the *muḥibbīn* finds its most spectacular expression in annual saint festivals (*mawālid*) centered on a saint's shrine (*maqām*), which can attract over a million pilgrims.[10] The public *ḥaḍra ʿamma*, sometimes called *laila diniyya* (religious night) or simply *laila*, is central at these festivals, and is also performed for public life cycle events attended by the *muḥibbin*, such as circumcisions, weddings, and memorials.

Unlike the private *ṭarīqa ḥaḍra*, with its complex liturgy, the public *ḥaḍra* centers entirely on *inshād* and its accompanying music, together with *dhikr* chant and movement. Here, the *munshid* presides as if shaykh, assuming full control over the proceedings, including selection and arrangement of poetry, and controlling musical variables, especially tempo, meter, and *maqām* (melodic mode), directing a musical group comprising percussive and melodic instruments. The *munshid* of the *ṭarīqa ḥaḍra* is typically an ordinary member, performing in service to his *ṭarīqa* organization, and drawing on poetry associated with it. By contrast, the *munshid* of the public *ḥaḍra* is a professional, often dedicated full-time to *inshād*, with a vast, ecumenical repertoire. *Muḥibbīn* (affiliated with a variety of *ṭuruq*) attend to be moved, and the *munshid* aims to move them, using all the spiritual-aesthetic resources at his disposal, including familiarity with the principal *ṭuruq* and their liturgies.[11] Poetry, music, and *dhikr* induce states (*aḥwāl*) of intense emotion – *wajd* or *nashwa* (ecstasy) – thought to offer a taste (*dhawq*) of the Divine Reality. The generation of emotion is paramount in the public *ḥaḍra*, which may last for many hours, often beginning late in the evening and continuing until dawn, providing plenty of time for the emotional buildup.[12]

Some participants sway and chant *dhikr* while others simply listen, as in the medieval *samāʿ* (spiritual audition). Unlike the *ṭarīqa ḥaḍra*, with its relatively fixed liturgy, limited participation, constrained texts and behaviors, and comparative brevity, the public *ḥaḍra* is open, free and flexible in nearly every way. A popular *munshid* such as Shaykh Yasin al-Tuhami can gather and move

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10   The largest is the *mawlid* of Sayyid al-Badawi in Tanta (Schielke 2006, 125).

11   The public *ḥaḍra munshid* performs gratis for religious festivals (e.g. *mawālid*), though the lesser ones may accept *nuqūṭ* (tips); they take a performance fee when performing for life cycle rituals (mostly weddings).

12   Sometimes the secular term for musical emotion, *ṭarab*, is also used (see Racy 2003). For an extensive discussion of Sufism, music, and *ṭarab* in Egypt see Frishkopf (2001a).

tens of thousands of people through the affective power of his performance (Frishkopf 1998, 2002, 2009; Waugh and Frishkopf 2011).[13]

The *munshid* selects poetry, often of the most intensely mystical sort, from multiple sources, weaving a new text out of old threads, curating and collaging his repertoire to express his state and intensify emotional responses (by reading his audience), culminating in *madad*, towards the mass generation of *nashwa* (spiritual ecstasy).[14] Meanwhile *dhakkīra* (those performing *dhikr*) and listeners are free to express themselves in their own language: through chant and exclamation, combined with postures, movements, gestures, and countenances. These expressions, reaching the *munshid*, complete an expressive feedback loop, promoting the interactive development of intensive emotion adapted to the context. The *munshid* develops his text in response to his perception (physical and spiritual) of those arrayed before him, and they respond to him and to each other.[15] The text of the public *ḥaḍra* is thus highly conducive to generation of spiritual emotion, which also serves to bind the group. That text is woven, spontaneously, as a consequence, reflecting and shaping both the participating group, and the long intertwined history of Sufi poetry. It is an intertext, assembled by, and reflecting, what I have termed the "interauthor": Sufism's socio-spiritual network, invoked by every *ḥaḍra*, in which every attendee participates.[16]

II. Sufi Music and Poetry

The Centrality of the Word

Generally speaking, ritual use of *mūsīqā* (approximately "music") is highly controversial in Islam (Al Faruqi and Qaradawi 1994). But if "music" is defined

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13   I spent several years attending and recording Shaykh Yasin's *ḥaḍra* performances, as well as visiting his home, where I conducted interviews. I present and analyze one such performance below.

14   *Madad*, a noun meaning "spiritual assistance," abbreviates a verbal phrase ("I entreat [someone] to grant us *madad*") in an illocutionary speech act invoking and supplicating one of the many spiritually omnipresent saints. To take a frequent example, Egypt's Sufis often say: "*madad ya Sayyidna al-Husayn*," literally: "I implore you to help us, oh Sayyidna al-Husayn," invoking and petitioning the Prophet's grandson Husayn. On the Sufi practice, see Hoffman-Ladd (1992, 626). For more on the illocutionary speech act, including its five-fold classifications, see John L. Austin's *How to do Things with Words* (1962, 155), where in "Lecture XII" he defines "entreat" as an instance of the "exercitive" class.

15   A note on pronouns: women certainly participate in Egyptian Sufism, but mainly in private spaces. The overwhelming majority of *munshidīn* are men. The female *munshida* usually performs *qiṣaṣ* (religious stories) rather than leading *dhikr*. While some women serve as highly respected spiritual leaders for other women in all-female gatherings, all *ḥaḍras* I ever attended – public or private – were led by men as shaykhs and *munshidīn*. (Similarly, women never lead prayer in public.) On occasion women do participate freely in the public *ḥaḍra*, but only in lower Egypt (the Delta), or if very elderly. On the other hand, there are many female saints whose shrines are frequently visited; most of these are members of the *Āl al-Bayt*.

16   For a fuller analysis of this phenomenon see Frishkopf (2003a).

etically as referring to the use of pitch and time to clarify and emotionally heighten texts (rather than be reflexively translated by its cognate *mūsīqā*), then it is pervasive within the broader sphere of Islamic language performance (Frishkopf 2013), though religious performance types are conceptually isolated through the use of specialized terms, scrupulously avoiding the words *mūsīqā* or *ghinā'* (singing).

In Egypt, metric *inshād* is common in many mainstream Muslim contexts (i.e. when celebrating the Prophet's Birthday, or the two Eids); ametric, melodic, poetic supplications (*ibtihālāt*) are performed before dawn prayers, and the recitation of Qur'an (*tilāwa*), call to prayer (*adhān*), even the prayer rite itself (*ṣalāh*), are almost universally performed using melodic vocalizations (Frishkopf 2008, 2018, 2021). Purely vocal forms are most acceptable; accompanying percussion less so – and only for *inshād* – and use of melodic instruments least of all. But even with a full orchestra, it is always text that remains central.

However within the sphere of Islamic language performance, Sufi contexts undoubtedly provide more musical freedom than any others. In contrast to mainstream Islam, music (as an etic concept) plays a key role in many Sufi traditions, as a form of worship; as a means of developing and expressing mystical experience; and as spiritual pedagogy (*tarbiya*), rendering teachings more memorable, affective, and participatory. Finally, music develops socio-spiritual solidarity within the participating group, strengthening the socio-spiritual network. This latter function is especially important in informal settings where there is no shaykh or *ṭarīqa* to constrain the proceedings, especially in the public *ḥaḍra*.

Sufi music has recently enjoyed a considerable popularity among outsiders, mainly world arts and culture *aficionados*. These non-participants in Sufi beliefs and practices nevertheless resonate with the music's sonic contours: its entrancing beats, chants, movements, melodies, and timbres (particularly that of the plaintive reed flute, the *nay*), conditioned by a general understanding of its spiritual ethos. But for the Sufi these non-linguistic sounds merely provide the affective base upon which is laid the core of musical meaning. As Shaykh Yasin affirmed for me again and again, the semantic core of this music is language, in Arabic: *al-kalima*, the word.

The centrality of "the word" extends far beyond Sufi music, and in two directions. Beyond Sufism it is a general characteristic of Islam, with its ritual focus on langue performance (Frishkopf 2018). Beyond Sufi music of Egypt it is also characteristic of Arabic music generally, to the point that wordless instrumental music is often called *musiqa ṣāmita*, silent music.

But poetry is far more crucial in Sufi music than in either Islam or Arabic music generally, due to its range, significance, sincerity, and central function. Mainstream Islamic *inshād* is less prominent within ritual practice, and limited

to conventional, unambiguous themes, mainly glorification and supplication of God, praise and blessings for the Prophet, religious or moralistic stories (*sira nabawiyya*, *qiṣaṣ*), and exhortations to proper belief and practice. Most of mainstream Islam centers on fixed, lucid texts specified by, and reflecting, the dictates of *sharī'a* (though some Qur'anic passages are esoteric and open to interpretation), contrasting sharply with the ambiguous, evocative poetry of Sufism.

For Sufi *inshād*, the word – its form, its ambiguous meaning, its infinite potency, its authenticity, its authority through the *silsila* – is absolutely central to experience. Shaykh Yasin underscores the importance of "living with the words" (*mu'aysha ma'a al-kalima*) before he can perform them. "These are the words that express my life," he told me. For this reason, the *munshid*'s words are heard not as ritual repetitions, but rather as authentic projections of inner feeling, from the heart. In this way, they develop greater affective power, for, as the Sufis always say, "that which comes from the heart, reaches the heart."

The Idiosyncratic Power of Sufi Poetry

In many interviews and informal conversations, Sufis explained to me the nature of meaning and emotion in Sufi poetry. Such poetry is always novel (*bikr*; "a world of meaning in every word" said one), and this unbounded reservoir of meaning is there for the listener to discover, quite independent of what the putative author intended. Such interpretation is affective more than cognitive, intimation more than denotation. As Shaykh Yasin told me, the poetry of the great Sufis (*asyādnā*, "our masters") is felt, rather than explained (*yuḥass la yufassar*). For Sufis, its semiotic mechanism is evocation rather than communication, hinging on symbolism (*ramz*) and allusion (*ishāra*), authorized and emotionally powered by the author's high spiritual station (*maqām*), not literary skill, proficiency, or stature. Such poetry thus arouses variegated meanings in its hearers, conditioned by individual relationships to the putative author or reciter (*asyādnā*), rather than transmitting a literary message.[17]

These attitudes are long-standing. Writing on Sufism, the eleventh century theologian Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (one of whose poems is performed in the *laila* transcribed below) noted seven reasons why "singing is more powerful than Qur'an in arousing to ecstasy…" (MacDonald and al-Ghazzali 1901, 738–745), enumerating them as follows:

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17   In an effort to help a friend and respected shaykh, 'Abd al-'Alim al-Nakhayli, publish his Sufi poems (widely performed by *munshidīn*, but never printed), we brought his *dīwān* (poetry collection) to the al-Azhar University Research Division for official approval, a necessary condition for publication in Egypt. There an editor corrected many small technical errors in *'arūḍ* (meter). Such "mistakes" were irrelevant to the many Sufis who had performed and listened to them for years! In the end we ignored the "improved" version and the book was never published, though his poetry continues to circulate orally to this day.

(1) Because the Qur'an must be understood as God intended and cannot be interpreted by the listener to suit his own state, as in the case of poetry. (2) Because the Qur'an is fixed and well-known. That which is new makes a greater impression. (3) Because poetic meters create an impression on the soul; the Qur'an lacks meter. (4) Because poetry is sung with variable melodies, whose application depends on being able to shorten and lengthen words, which is forbidden for the Qur'an. (5) Because sung poetry may be accompanied with beaten drums. (6) Because poetry can be tailored by the singer to the audience, and its meaning can be interpreted. According to the listener's whim; these things are disallowed for the Qur'an. (7) Because poetry being created can be understood by the created, whereas the Qur'an is uncreated.[18] (Paraphrased in Frishkopf 1999, 745)

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali adds that "it is not incumbent on the hearer that he should consider what the poet intended in his words. For every saying has different aspects, and every man of understanding has his own fortune" (MacDonald and al-Ghazzali 1901, 707).

Meanings are felt to be authentic expressions of mystical experience, but also infinitely adaptable to the individual. For example, the ambiguous pronouns strewn throughout Sufi poetry referencing the universal "beloved" may be instantiated in many different ways to match the listener's inner state (*ḥāl*): as one's shaykh or saint; as the Prophet or some member of the Prophet's family; or as the Divine Essence (*al-dhāt al-ilāhiyya*).

Likewise, the impossibility of casting ineffable mystical-emotional experience into language means that ambiguous, even paradoxical, tropes are often deployed, rendering the poem both more powerful and more flexible; since meanings of such expressions are not clear-cut, each listener can apply them to his own *ḥāl*. While texts are full of convention, meanings are infinitely variable.

Sufi poetry is thus at once emotionally powerful, highly personal and personalizable, and interpreted in the context of one's relation to the putative author or reciter.

Sufi Poetry, Sufi Poets, and Connection: Intertext and Interauthor

Yet, processes of composition and reception in Sufi contexts also both reflect and promote an interconnected collective as well. Sufi poetry is a literary art, but is never art for art's sake. Rather, its aim is functional: the expression and evocation of mystical feeling, towards spiritual advancement. There is thus no

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18   This point references a long-standing debate between theological schools in Islam. The Muʿtazila held that the Qur'an is created by God, whereas the dominant Ashʿari school, to which most Sunni Muslims adhere today, considered the Qur'an as one of God's attributes, and hence uncreated.

premium on originality. Rather, authors seek to express and to move by deploying a common vocabulary, reiterating thoughts and feelings in a conventional form capable of touching many people simultaneously, if differently. Further, this common vocabulary is not simply a conventional literary style, but emerges from Sufism's very essence, including a socio-spiritual fabric that tends to erase individuality.

In its essence, Sufism transcends the myriad details of Islamic belief to express deeper, more universal truths at the inner (*bāṭini*) core of Islam, beyond superficial outward (*ẓāhiri*) differences of sect or tradition. Moving towards this core, multiplicity disappears, like Divine Unicity itself. Inner knowledge (*maʿrifa*) is unified and affective, preverbal and essentially ineffable, but finds limited expression in poetry, which also serves to evoke it. Sufi poetry expresses these universal mystical ideas and, not surprisingly, has developed a core vocabulary of symbols, metaphors, and images for doing so.

This vocabulary has flowed down to the present through the centuries-long socio-spiritual network of Sufis, each putative author inspired by others (sometimes in dreams, sometimes following *ḥaḍra* performance) to re-express feeling in similar words, the process culminating in the *munshid* himself, who lives the words and makes them his own before releasing them into the *ḥaḍra*. He too is a kind of author. Yet in a sense there are no individual authors – such texts are original to no one, but rather emerge as a collective product of the entire tradition, the socio-spiritual network itself, blessed and authorized by the great spiritual figures who forward it through the ages.

Many stories exist of Sufis spontaneously reciting a poem while in an intensive emotional state (*ḥāl*, *wajd*, *nashwa*), following *ḥaḍra*, inspired by their experiences of connection to the Beloved in the world of spirit (*ʿālam al-arwāḥ*), while disciples memorize it, or hastily copy it down, perhaps reworking it in the process. Such poems may even be attributed to a temporary state of "union" (*ittiḥād*) with the Divine.

Furthermore, various genres of poetic commentary emerged, such as *tashṭīr* and *takhmīs*, enabling a poet to weave one poem around another, thereby producing complex multiauthorial texts, and the same line may therefore be found in multiple versions.[19] There is also a tendency to imitate poems, maintaining meter, rhyme, and theme, using a technique called *nahj*.[20] For all these reasons, ascertaining an "author" can be difficult, in theory as well as practice.

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19 For instance, in *tashṭīr* (literally "bisecting") a poet weaves a new poem into an existing one by separating the hemistiches of each line, and inserting new poetic material between them.

20 An example is the *Nahj al-Burda* (sung by Egypt's greatest singer, Umm Kulthum), composed by Ahmed Shawqi (1870–1932), based on the medieval poem in praise of the Prophet by al-Busiri (1213–1294), a celebrated Sufi saint of the Shadhili order and a disciple of Mursi Abu al-ʿAbbas (a saint mentioned in the *ḥaḍra* described below). Busiri's *Burda*, recited globally, and often heralded as the most famous poem in Islam, has inspired *tashṭīr* and *takhmīs* as well as *nahj* imitations (see Stetkevych 2010).

What all this means is that Sufi poetry is intrinsically intertextual; repetition and ambiguity are paramount, and considerations of authorship, originality, artistic greatness, or literary authority secondary. The goal of Sufi poetry is Islamic mystical expression and training (*tarbiya*), not art, and if the Sufi poet seeks any status it is not as poet *per se*, but rather as teacher. In Egypt I met many shaykhs who composed poetry but did not care for literary recognition; in several cases (as for Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAlim al-Nakhayli) their fragments were distributed and sung without attribution. Indeed this negation of the authorial self is consistent with Sufi values of humility, *khushūʿ* reaching its extreme in *fanāʾ*, the dissolution of the ego-self.

Clearly the intertextuality of Sufi poetry – a network of texts – reflects a corresponding socio-spiritual network. But the intertextual network also *induces* socio-spiritual connectivity, through its invocation of a spiritual spectrum of referents: God, the Prophet, the *Āl al-Bayt*, and the *awliyāʾ*, as well as the putative authors, entering the *ḥaḍra* through their texts, each of whom bestows a particular mystical fragrance: the theosophical ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jili (disciple of the "greatest shaykh," Ibn ʿArabi), the theologian Abu Hamid al-Ghazali.

Sufi Poetry in the Public Ḥaḍra

The public *ḥaḍra* enables an additional layer of dense textual collaging, the re-weaving of a textual tapestry (to use a slightly different, equally apropos, visual metaphor), as the *munshid* – free to adjust text to suit his spiritual mood and that of his listeners, intercalates poetic excerpts from multiple sources, jumping from one to another, and sometimes back, permuting lines, as well as introducing his own textual modifications and commentary. In performance the *munshid* spontaneously weaves an intertext, addressing his own spiritual state (*ḥāl*) as well as those of other participants, who react not only to the text but also to the portion of the socio-spiritual network it invokes: its putative (or assumed) authors, and its referents. This performative intertext thus reflects the long Sufi spiritual tradition as well as addressing the here-and-now of *ḥaḍra*, not only those physically present but also the whole world of spiritual participation evoked by text and context.

These idiosyncratic interpretations are nevertheless connected, through collective participation in the social reality of performance, as well as the observable fact of meaningfulness: everyone is moved (albeit differently), and everyone understands that this is so. If the identity of the Beloved is private and personal, the emotion of love is shared. Participants express their inner states through a reverse flow of signs rooted in individual experience – a continuous series of gestures, verbal expressions, movements, cries – signifying connections throughout the socio-spiritual network. Whether actively moving

and chanting in *dhikr* or merely listening, *ḥaḍra* participants are effectively writers as well as readers. To use a term introduced by literary theorist Roland Barthes, the Sufi intertext is "writerly."[21]

The *munshid* reads these texts and responds, closing a feedback loop, and drawing everyone closer together; ego-boundaries are dissolved (at least ephemerally) through this shared affective experience, amplified by the theoretical mystical objective, *fanā'*. As they write and read each other, the intertext shapes, as well as reflects, the socio-spiritual network in real time, drawing it together in cohesive solidarity. Intertext and interauthor are intricately, intimately interlocked.[22]

Due to the importance of poetry in the expressions and communications of saints and shaykhs, along with their spiritual influence on one another, Sufi poetry emerges, across the centuries, as an intertext mirroring Sufism's socio-spiritual network. Now we see that this intertext is also (re)produced in performance itself, through feedback, and so the concept of interauthor can be extended to include all participants in such events. At the same time the intertext shapes the socio-spiritual network, by conditioning Sufis' relationships with each other, particularly in performance, and so we come to the conclusion that an intertext and an interauthor exist in a mutually constitutive, dynamic and dialectical relationships, each shaping the other.

In sum: Sufi poetry is both personal, and collective. Its idiosyncratic meanings are a key source of its connective power. It is also highly intertextual, and its intertexual network reflects the socio-spiritual network at the heart of Sufi life and practice, a network which underlies poetic generation and which I therefore term the interauthor. Further, the intertext actively conditions that interauthor, and indeed the socio-spiritual network as a whole. Intertext and interauthor are logical duals: Sufis connect texts, and texts connect Sufis, both outside and within performance. Language binds Sufis in solidarity, and Sufis glue together myriad textual fragments into an intertextual whole. The emergent text is an expression of the socio-spiritual network, as read by the *munshid*. But it is also imprinted on the assembled group, moving them individually (emotionally), and moving them together (socially).

By carefully analyzing the collaging of a performed text – the poetic tapestry of performance – we may gain a deeper understanding of Sufism as both a textual and a socio-spiritual reality. These facts motivate the detailed consideration of a particular *ḥaḍra* in what follows.

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21   "Why is the writerly our value? Because the goal of literary work (of literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text" (Barthes 2006, 4). Despite its medieval roots, the Sufi tradition is surprisingly "postmodern."

22   I have analyzed the paradoxical connection between individual and collective aspects of Sufi authorship, in and out of *ḥaḍra* performance, in an extended article (Frishkopf 2003a).

III. A Typical Public *Ḥaḍra*: Shaykh Yasin al-Tuhami Performs for the Fortieth Day Memorial (*Arbaʿīn*) of Shaykh Abu Shama, 8 February 1996[23]

In the second half of this paper I unpack the dynamic construction of intertext and interauthor, through an analysis of a particular performance by Egypt's most celebrated public *ḥaḍra munshid*, Shaykh Yasin al-Tuhami.

Hailing from the village of Hawatka, near Assiut in Upper Egypt, Shaykh Yasin has been performing the *ḥaḍra ʿamma* at *mawālid* and life cycle occasions throughout the country since the mid-1970s, and has become widely known and imitated as the primary exponent of an Upper Egyptian style of *inshād* centered on classical Arabic poetry.[24] Rather than affiliate to a specific Sufi order, Shaykh Yasin is a *muḥibb*, singing for them all.

The *ḥaḍra* took place on February 8, 1996, on the occasion of the 40th day memorial (*arbaʿīn*) for a locally celebrated shaykh of the Rifaʿiyya[25] order, Shaykh Abu Shama, in Bedari, a small town not far from the large city of Assiut in Upper Egypt (the *Ṣaʿīd*). I had been visiting Shaykh Yasin at his home in nearby Hawatka, and he brought me with him to this *laila*. As Shaykh Abu Shama was greatly beloved, and due to the profusion of Sufi *munshidīn* in Upper Egypt, this particular *laila* was somewhat unusual, comprising a sequence of different performers taking the stage in sequence, each performing a shorter than usual *ḥaḍra*. Several thousand men were in attendance (women appear rarely in *ḥaḍra*, especially in Upper Egypt).

I recorded Shaykh Yasin's eighty-minute performance using a single video camera, doing my best to capture scenes of the *dhikr* as well as the performers, and later obtaining a complete textual transcript from my research assistant, Taha Gad Salim. Subsequently I tracked down nearly every line of poetry to its putative source, though the task is practically difficult and, in some sense, doomed to failure in principle, due to the interauthorial origins of the Sufi intertext. Shaykh Yasin performs only classical (*fuṣḥa*) Arabic poetry, together

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23 The video is available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgRDDPTiue8 (Frishkopf 1996); timing information in the table below (see Table 1) enaables the reader to navigate to each poem.

24 Other styles of *inshād* center on colloquial poetry, but Shaykh Yasin performs only in classical Arabic (*fuṣḥa*). Besides traditional contexts in Egypt, since the latter 1990s he has also performed for a world-music crowd at festivals and concerts in Europe and the Middle East, and he has published many dozens of recordings, including a high-end production on the French Long Distance label (al-Tuhami 1998). Information about Shaykh Yasin, as well as recordings, is available on the internet as well as in scholarship (see Frishkopf 2000, 2001a, 2002, 2009; Waugh 1989).

25 Egyptians consider Sidi Ahmad al-Rifaʿi (1106–1182) an "axial saint" (*quṭb*), and his order is widespread throughout rural Egypt, though highly ramified through dozens of subsidiary orders, each tracing to Sidi Ahmad through their *silsila*. A large Rifaʿi mosque in Cairo centers the saint's *mawlid*, but his burial place is Iraq, and Rifaʿi Sufis can be found throughout the Muslim world, from South Asia to the Middle East and Balkans, as well as in western diasporas. As a whole, the order enjoys a reputation for ecstatic ritual (Campo 2009).

with *madad* (supplications to the saints). Most classical poetry follows the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* form,[26] each ode featuring a single meter and rhyme, and thus it is not difficult to detect the boundary between poems, even if the mystical content is more continuous (though the *munshid* can also create textual continuities by maintaining meter and rhyme between juxtaposed poems; see video stills in Figure 2, and the video in Frishkopf 1996).

Figure 2: The Shaykh Abu Shama *laila*, February 8, 1996.
Clockwise from top left: (a) Shaykh Yasin performs, (b) thousands of *dhakkīra*,
(c) percussionists playing frame drum, *riqq*, and hourglass drum, *ṭabla*, and
(d) melodic instrumentalists (violin and, in the background, a reed flute, called *kawala*).

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26 The *qaṣīda* is the essential form of classical Arabic poetry. While in contemporary contexts the word simply means "poem," since pre-Islamic times it also has a more restricted definition: a series of lines (*abyāt*; sing. *bayt*), each divided into two hemistiches (*ashṭur*; sing. *shaṭra*), in a single meter (*baḥr*), each line terminating in the same end rhyme (*qāfiya*), a construction centered on a primary rhyme letter (*ḥarf al-rawi*) (Wright et al. 1996, 352). All poetry performed in the *laila* and transcribed below is in the *qaṣīda* form. As an example, consider lines 20 and 21, excerpted from al-Ghazali's lengthy *Tāʾiyya* (poem rhyming in the letter "t") in his *Maʿarij al-Quds* (al-Ghazali 1988, 196), here presented in transliteration. A dash follows the first *shaṭra* of each line, and the end rhyme in "ti" is apparent. In line 21, Shaykh Yasin transforms *fanāʾ* (annihilation) into the morphologically equivalent *ghināʾ* (song), in a self-referential move consistent with the meaning of the poem (*ṭarab*, musical ecstasy; *naghamāt*, melodies) and the *ḥaḍra* performance itself. See Table 3 below for further context and explanation.
Line 20: "Arā kulla dhi sukrin sa yashū mini-l-hawā – illā anā fasaḥwi fika ʿillatu sakratī" ("Every drunkard will awaken from love – except me, for my wakefulness in you intoxicates me")
Line 21: "Mā aṭraba-l-arwāḥa minna ladā-l-ghināʾ– siwā naghamātin adrakathā qadīmati" ("What enraptures the spirits when there's singing – but melodies they knew in ancient times?")

Poetic Sources in Shaykh Yasin's Ḥaḍra for Shaykh Abu Shama[27]

As I have already explained, Sufi poetry is notoriously difficult to source, for both practical and theoretical reasons. Even assuming that a poem can reasonably be attributed to a single original author, it is difficult to ascertain who that author may be. One finds written sources providing different authorial attributions, "traditional" attributions ("from some of the *muḥibbīn*"), lacking any attribution, or implicitly attributed to the author of a book. Sometimes attribution is only implied; often a poem is included in a larger prose work to illustrate a theme, but in such cases it is not clear if the prose author is claiming authorship of the poem or simply quoting from it. Sufi poems are often generated and transmitted orally, evolving through the transmission process, and perhaps only later written down, by which time many others have contributed and the original author's identity has been lost.

Making the process even more complex, the poem may have developed collaboratively across multiple authors or performers, each of whom may introduce small variations or permutations, which commonly appear as differences between printed collections. Inspiration blurs authorship as well. Another form of collaboration is metaphysical. Miraculous stories emerge of poets being inspired by other figures, who convey poetry "on the tongue" (*'ala lisan*) of someone else, such spiritual inspiration – by one's shaykh or *quṭb* ("axial" saint; see Footnotes 8 and 25) – being enabled by the belief system in which such poetry is embedded. Was a poem really written by Ibn Sab'in, or did he inspire one of his disciples to write it in his name?

The Poetic Collage: A Schematic

Shaykh Yasin's eighty-minute performance comprises eight different mystical poems (in the *qaṣīda* form) thought to be composed by seven different poets, connected both through their *silsilas* and their literary ideas. Though these poems present different meters and rhyme schemes, semantically they are woven together in a continuous brocade. In the following schematic, each shade or color represents an excerpt from a different poetic source, though all the sources are connected through the single Sufi intertext and interauthor, reflecting a unified meaning and socio-spiritual tradition. In performance Shaykh Yasin repeats lines in different improvisational settings, and frequently jumps back in the sequence, sometimes even returning to a previous poem (as at line 15) before resuming (as at line 19). (See Table 1.)

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27   Many thanks to my friend Taha Gad who transcribed the text in full, and to my wife Iman Mersal who assisted in the translation.

Table 1: A schematic of the poetic collage for the Shaykh Abu Shama laila
Shading or color matches to poems. Sources are provided in Table 2, and poetry itself
in Table 3. Times indicate the first occurrence of each line (most lines are repeated, often
following recitation of subsequent lines) and refer to the video (Frishkopf 1996).[28]

Line	Time	Poem	Rhyme letter	Author
1	4:36	1	R	Unknown
2	7:30	2	L	Ibn Sabaʿin
3	9:14			
4	9:36			
5	14:16			
6	15:25			
7	15:41			
8	18:09	3	B	al-Mulla Hasan al-Bazzaz al-Mawsili
9	18:43			
10	22:59	4	H	ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jili
11	23:49			
12	24:17			
13	32:06	5	B	ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jili
14	32:44			
15	43.38	4	H	
16	48:26			
17	50:31			
18	51:07			
19	1:01:14	5	B	
20	1:01:07	6	T	Abu Hamid al-Ghazali
21	1:08:11			
22	1:11:18	7	N	Abu Madyan
23	1:12:25			
24	1:13:05			
25	1:16:32			
26	1:17:03	8	M	Abu al-Mawahib
27	1:17:47			
28	1:18:13			
29	1:18:34			
30	1:18:47			

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28 The video is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgRDDPTiue8.

The Interauthor and Its Authors

All the presumed authors are Sufis, hailing from many different places and eras, and yet interconnected through intersecting Sufi lineages, influencing each other directly or indirectly through their writings and oral teachings. Several are widely known as saints or scholar-teachers. Poetry (whether to guide or to express) and authorship was secondary to their spiritual mission and socio-spiritual connections, as reflected in their writings. It should be noted too that predominantly prose Arabic works often contain poetic excerpts, providing a different register for communication to the reader; such is the case for instance for poetry by al-Jili and al-Ghazali (see below). Below they are presented in temporal order, by year of birth.

Yet, though I spent an inordinate amount of time hunting through the internet in search of the poetic lines assembled by Shaykh Yasin in performance, I could never be sure that these are really *the* authors, only that the poems appear in books (sometimes websites) with their names on them. Who really wrote these poems? Do they truly have unique authors? Or are these figures best considered merely as prominent nodes within a broader interauthorial network? All of this poetry is part of the Sufi tradition, a reflection of the interauthor, the literary aspect of a socio-spiritual network generating, and supported by, the Sufi intertext.

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali[29] (1058–1111) was born in Khurasan. Trained in Islamic law, he eventually moved to Baghdad where he taught at the famous Nizamiyya until suffering a nervous breakdown that caused him to leave his professorship and seek a deeper truth through Sufi teachers in Syria, before returning to his academic role. He is widely revered as the greatest theologian of Sunni Islam, the singular figure to reconcile law (*sharīʿ*) and mysticism (*taṣawwuf*), as formulated in his massive and renowned *Iḥyaʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* (Revival of the Religious Sciences), a powerful influence upon Islam to the present. However it is another substantial writing (he is credited with hundreds), *Maʿārij al-Quds fi Madārij Maʿrifat al-Nafs* (*The Ascent to the Divine Through the Path of Self-Knowledge*) that concludes with his lengthy *tāʾiyya* (poem rhyming in the letter "t") from which Shaykh Yasin draws two lines (al-Ghazali 1988, 182–199; Watt 2012).[30]

Abu Madyan Shuʿayb "al-Ghawth" (1126–1197) was born in Cantillana, near Seville, and represents a crucial figure of western Sufism, as he taught the founders of multiple Sufi *silsilas*. Memorizing the Qurʾan at an early age, he moved to Fez (Morocco) where he studied with local Sufi masters. Later he moved eastward, meeting Ahmad al-Rifaʿi in Baghdad, then continued

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29 Sometimes written "Ghazzali"; there is no agreement as to whether the letter "z" carries a *shadda*.

30 This rhyme came to possess intertextual significance in itself, being chosen for ʿUmar ibn al-Farid's long *Nazm al-Suluk* (*The Poem of the Way*), and many subsequent emulators.

onwards to perform the *hajj* in Mecca, where he studied al-Ghazali and appears to have met the founder of the Qadriyya Sufi line, ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jilani, at Mecca. Abu Madyan is known as patron saint of Tilimsān (Tlemcen) (Marçais 2012; Trimingham 1998, 46–48). The entire Shadhili tradition also connects to Abu Madyan, via ʿAbd al-Salam ibn Mashish (d. 1228), spiritual guide (*murshid*) for Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili (d. 1258) himself. Ibn ʿArabi also bears Abu Madyan's influence (Schimmel 1975, 250; 1982, 46; Tourneau 2012; Trimingham 1998, 47).

Ibn Sabʿin (1217–1279). Born in Murcia (Spain) and died in Mecca, he was a scientist (medicine, alchemy), Aristotelian philosopher and Sufi, who gathered a group of ascetic followers called al-*Sabʿiniyya* (the Seventy). Exiled from his homeland due to his monist inclinations, he sought refuge in Ceuta, but was again forced out for his teachings. Moving to Bougie (Bijaya, Algeria) he met al-Shushtari, who became a disciple. He finally found refuge at Mecca. His disciple al-Shushtari praised him in poetry, including a *qaṣīda* presenting the *silsila* of his *ṭarīqa*, which included al-Hallaj and Abu Madyan. All three (al-Shushtari, al-Hallaj, and Abu Madyan) wrote poetry sung by Shaykh Yasin, including a poem by Abu Madyan in this *laila* (Faure 2012). Authorial attributions to Ibn Sabʿin are particularly weak, however, as I found them only online.

ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jili (1365–1428) was a Sufi who lived in many parts of the Muslim world, including Yemen and India. A descendant of ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jilani, he likely participated in the Qadiriyya order. Mainly, he is closely associated with the "Shaykh al-Akbar" (greatest shaykh), Ibn ʿArabi (1165–1240), writing a commentary on the latter's *Futuhat al-Makkiyya* (*The Meccan Revelations*), and devoted to the concept of *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*, the Unity of Being. He wrote numerous books, most notably the influential *al-Insan al-Kamil* (*The Perfect Man*), i.e. one who has realized oneness with God (including prophets and saints), including prose and poetry (al-Jili 1997). al-Jili was highly connected, spiritually: he spoke with angels, through auditions and visions, and even met the Prophet Muhammad, as well as other prophets and saints (Nicholson 2005, 57–124; Ritter 2012).

Abu al-Mawahib al-Shadhili al-Tunisi (1417–1477), was born in Tunisia and died in Cairo. He was a follower of Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili and an influential member of the Shadhiliyya *tariqa*, and his poetry has often been recited at saints' festivals (*mawalid*) and mosques. His influential treatise, *Qawanin Hikam al-Ishraq* (*The Laws of Illumination*), a largely prose work containing several poems, has been translated into English (Abu al-Mawahib and Jurji 1978; Ahmed [n. d.]; Ghanem 2019).

Hasan al-Bazzaz (1845–1887) was born in Mosul (Iraq). He memorized the Qur'an as a child, and wrote poetry in the local Sufi tradition, focusing on love for the Prophet, his family, and the Sufi saints. He is said to have joined

both the Rifāʿiyya and the Naqshabandiyya Sufi orders. In the *laila* documented below, Shaykh Yasin recites several lines from one of Hasan's poems praising Sidi Ahmad al-Rifāʿi, connecting both author and *munshid* to the Rifāʿiyya Sufi tradition of Shaykh Abu Shama (ʿAllaf 2021; "Hasan Al-Bazzaz" [n. d.]; "Qalbi Ilaykum" [n. d.]).

Scattered across more than eight centuries, these authors, representing only a small sampling of Shaykh Yasin's corpus (especially because the *laila* was relatively short), are closely linked to the *awliyāʾ* (saints) mentioned in the *madad* sections, either as disciples or teachers (e.g. Abu Madyan as the spiritual progenitor of the Shadhiliyya tradition; Mulla Hasan Bazzaz as the follower of Sidi Ahmad al-Rifāʿi), as well as to other authors represented in Shaykh Yasin's repertoire, and in this way are closely linked with each other as well. On the other hand, it can never be said, definitively, that these are the authors at all, for they merely participate in the intertext, borrowing each other's ideas, symbols, metaphors, and phrases, even entire poems, collaging ideas, and quoting without attribution, linked as interauthor.

The Poetic Tapestry

Shaykh Yasin weaves together eight poetic sources, differing in formal structure (rhyme and meter) but constantly reiterating the same intertextual themes, consistently deploying ambiguous metaphors and pronouns ("you," "they," "he" or "she") referring to the spiritual Beloved (whose identity remains unclear: God? Prophet? Prophet's family? Saints? Shaykhs?), enabling each listener to interpret the lines idiosyncratically, according to their individual experience. Poetry expresses this experience, centering upon the persistent, painful longing for reunion with the Beloved (often as female: God's *dhāt*, or Essence, beyond attributes (*ṣifāt*), is grammatically feminine, whereas Allah is grammatically masculine), and obstacles and ecstasies of the spiritual path (*ṭarīqa*). The powerful experiences of spiritual intoxication are expressed through metaphors of drink, drunkenness, music, and dance; estrangement from those who (remaining on the exoteric path of Law) cannot understand; the desire or experience of self-annihilation (*fanāʾ*) and ultimately union (*wuṣūl*) with the Beloved. Throughout Shaykh Yasin takes liberties with the printed (original?[31]) poems (whether spontaneously or as planned in advance one cannot be sure): excerpting lines, permuting their ordering, and through small variations by which he can better express himself and reach his listeners (see Tables 2 and 3).

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31   We do not know whether the printed poems are "original," or even if it is possible to identify an "original" given the complexities of the intertext.

Table 2: Poetic sources, by line number in the performed text

Every source is in the *qaṣīda* form. Shaykh Yasin draws only a few lines from each one.

Lines	Poem	Source
1	1	Unknown
2–7	2	Many websites cite poetry of Ibn Sabaʿin ("Qasaʾid li-l-Hallaj […]" 2015; "Ahbab Sidi Ahmad…" [n. d.]; al-Tariqa al-Hashimiyya [n. d.]; "Allah rabbi wa al-islam dini" [n. d.]; "Atef Elhawa" [n. d.]; "Dirasat fi al-Turath" [n. d.]). But one book cites al-Damrawi as the author (Maqrizi and Ghalili 2002).
8–9	3	From a poem by al-Mulla Hasan al-Bazzaz al-Mawsili (1845–1887) (The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs 2018; "Qalbi Ilaykum" [n. d.]; Abu al-Huda al-Sayyadi 1980, 243–244; "Hasan Al-Bazzaz" [n. d.]).
10, 11, 12, 15–18	4	From the fifth chapter of ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jili's *al-Insan al-Kamil*, on Unity (*fi al-Ahadiyya*) (al-Jili 1997, 48; "al-Jili 5" [n. d.]).
13–14, 19	5	From the thirteenth chapter of ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jili's *al-Insan al-Kamil*, on the manifestation of the Names (*fi tajalli al-asmaʾ*) (al-Jili 1997, 65; "Al-Jili 13" [n. d.]).
20	6	From al-Ghazali's *Tāʾiyya* in his *Maʿarij al-Quds* (al-Ghazali 1988, 196).
21		From al-Ghazali's *Tāʾiyya* in his *Maʿarij al-Quds* (al-Ghazali 1988, 194).
22–25	7	From the *dīwān* of Abu Madyan (Abu Madyan 2011, 37).
26–30	8	From a poem by Abu al-Mawahib al-Tunisi, as cited in Ibn Ajiba's *Iqaz al-Himam*, lines 5–9, with slight modifications (Ibn ʿAjibah 1985, 299); the (original?) poem in Abu al-Mawahib's *dīwān* is slightly different and Shaykh Yasin sings a permuted version of it (corresponding to lines 7, 8, 9, 4, and 5; see Abu al-Mawahib 1998, 116–117).

Table 3: Poetry as presented in performance
Words in parentheses are recited as alternatives when the line is repeated.

Translation		Second hemistich	First hemistich
Your[32] memory is a fingerprint, inscribed by needlepoint beyond the horizons of vision	1	فنون الإبر فوق آماق البصر	ذكراك بصمات نقشتها
He who hinted about reaching him is not like the one who walked with him until he arrived	2	كالذي سير به حتى وصل	فليس من نوه بالوصل له
No, and the one who reaches me is not like the one who knocked on the door, and entered the house	3	كالذي طرق الباب وللدار دخل	لا ولا الواصل عندي
No, nor is the one who entered like the one they seated at the beginning	4	كالذي أجلسوه عندهم في المستهل	لا ولا الداخل عندي
No, nor is the one they seated among them like the one they confided in, for it is a place for the secret	5	كالذي سارّوه فهو للسر محل	لا ولا من أجلسوه عندهم
No, nor is the one who they confided in like the one who confided in them, so leave that argument	6	كالذي سار إياهم فدع ذاك الجدل	لا ولا من سارره
This is a matter to which the heart is attached; as soon as any of it appears, it kills[33]	7	ما تبدى بعضه إلا قتل	فذاك أمرٌ علق القلب به
O my heart, be patient with the abandonment of loved ones, do not be afraid of that, for some abandonment is discipline	8	تجزع لذاك فبعض الهجر تأديبُ	يا قلبي صبرًا على هجر الأحبةِ لا

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32 Note that throughout "you" is ambiguous, as is typical of Arabic poetry; the pronoun could refer to God, the Prophet, the Prophet's family (*Āl al-Bayt*), the saints *(awliyāʾ)*, or the spiritual world (*ʿālam al-arwāḥ*) generally. Pronominal antecedents are often left for the listener to fill in, flexible connectors enabling poetry to resonate simultaneously with a diverse audience on many levels, their meanings depending on spiritual state.

33 I.e. kills the ego-self (*nafs*), producing *fanāʾ* (self-annihilation).

Translation		Second hemistich	First hemistich
The soul and the heart, indeed all of me is a gift for them, and how can something gifted be lost?	9	وكيف يضيع³⁴ شيٌّ وهو موهوب	فالروح والقلب بل كَلّي لهم هبةٌ
My eyes for you are purified in her, and sanctified in her name and attributes	10	وتقدست في اسمها وصفاتها	عيني لنفسك نُزِّهت في ذاتها
So recognize her as she deserves, and do not say that I deserved her goodness	11	نفسي استحقت حسنها بثباتها	فأشهد لها ما تستحق ولا تقل
Fill your glasses with wine (drink your wine in glasses)³⁵ and do not say "leave the wine in her tavern"	12	يوماً بترك الراح في حاناتها	واملأ كؤوسك بالمدام (واشرب مدامك بالكؤوس) ولا تقل
First _madad_ section (see the section below)			مدد ١
And what can that mean but that we are one spirit, that heals us in two bodies – how wondrous!	13	تداوى لنا جسمان وهو عجيب	وما ذاك إلا أنا روح واحدٍ
My essence is for her, my name is her name, and my state is with her in a strange union	14	وحالي بها في الاتحاد غريبُ	فذاتي لها ذاتٌ واسمي اسمها
Jili, my unveiling [_jalwati_] is burnished [_yunjala_] so I praise him [_ujilluhu_]³⁶			جيلي يُنجلى جلوتي فأُجِلُّهُ

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34   Shaykh Yasin skips the preceding line and changes _yarjaʿ_ (return) to _yaḍīʿ_ (be lost).

35   Shaykh Yasin repeats the line substituting the text in parentheses. Wine is a frequent metaphor for the path to mystical intoxication in love.

36   This line is not poetry, but Shaykh Yasin's interjection: a metacommentary referencing the poem's author, ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jili, disciple of _al-shaykh al-akbar_ (the greatest shaykh), Muhiy al-Din Ibn ʿArabi, using the fact that Jili's name (literally "from Jil") resembles several words carrying mystical significance: unveiling (_jalwati_; the moment of Divine connection), being burnished (_yunjala_; burnishing better reflects the Divine), and praising (_ujillu_). Such an exclamation underlines authorial authority in the performed text, and also constitutes a _de facto_ invocation of the author, regarded as a spiritual presence in the _ḥaḍra_. But the pronoun in "praise him" is ambiguous and could also refer to God, the Prophet, or any saint.

Translation		Second hemistich	First hemistich
What is the harm in making her name your metaphor and preserving the sanctity of her essence? [37]	15	عنك اسمها وحفظتَ حُرمة ذاتها	ماذا يضرك لو جعلت كنايةً
And You revealed the Essence of Your Name, and Glory is the manifestation of Her Name and attributes (features)	16	والعز مظهر اسمها وصفاتها (سماتها)	وجعلت مجلى الذات لاسمك مظهرا
And you built (erected) its stones over your treasure, so that the ignorant one would not see its sanctities	17	كي لا يشاهد جاهل حرماتها	وبنيتَ (وأقمتَ) فوق الكنز منك حجارها
Be the best protector of this trust, and do not let its secrets slip away	18	ولا تدع أسرارها لوشاتها	هذِي الأمانة كن بها نِعْمَ الامين
Second *madad* section (see the section below)			مدد ٢
As a person who has two names and one self, which one does the self call from in order to reach [the other]?	19	بأي تنادى الذات منه تصيب	كشخصٍ له اسمان والذات واحد
Everything has a door, and the door to God is Muhammad, God's Prophet[38]			لكل شيء باب وباب الله محمدٌ رسول الله

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37   There follows a *lazima* (plural *lawāzim*; a musical interlude featuring instruments, though all may sing along on "ah"), the beautiful opening to a religious song *Khushū'* (*Humility*), originally performed by Egyptian singer Yasmine El Khayam. All may sing this and other *lawāzim*. Shaykh Yasin adds "Allah", turning the song into a *dhikr*. This particular song was composed by popular artists 'Amar al-Shari'i with lyrics by 'Abd al-Wahhab Muhammad. The Egyptian singer Yasmine El Khayam, daughter of the famous Qur'an reciter Shaykh Muhammad Khalil al-Husari, was well-known for religious and nationalistic songs, performed with a respectable comportment. In 1990 she retired from music for religious reasons. By the same logic of musical respectability, *lawāzim* from Umm Kulthum's songs are also a frequent choice for *inshād*.

38   Another instance of the *munshid*'s non-poetic interjections. Some are non-lexical exclamations, such as "ah," to be interpreted as emotional expressions; others, such as this one, are absolutely clear in meaning. Either type can quickly raise the emotional level, providing a respite from more abstruse, even paradoxical Sufi poetry, as in the preceding line.

Translation		Second hemistich	First hemistich
Every drunkard will awaken from love except me, for my wakefulness in you intoxicates me[39]	20	إلا أنا فصحوي فيك علة سكرتي	أرى كل ذي سكر سيصحو من الهوى
What can enrapture[40] the spirits when there's singing[41] except melodies they knew in ancient times?[42]	21	سوى نغماتٍ أدركتها قديمةٍ	ما أطرب الأرواح منّا لدى الغنا
We awaken by remembering you; though we do not see you, the remembrance of loved ones refreshes us	22	ألا إن تذكار الأحبة ينعشنا	نحيا بذكراكم إذا لم نراكم
We are moved by remembrance of *hadith*s about you, and had it not been for your love in our hearts, we would not have moved	23	ولولا هواكم في الحشا ما تحركنا	يحركنا ذكر الأحاديث عنكم
If souls are shaken with longing for the meeting, yes the spirits dance, oh you who are ignorant of the meaning[43]	24	نعم ترقص الأشباح يا جاهل المعنى	إذا اهتزت الأرواح شوقاً إلى اللقا

39　Again we see two features typical of Sufi poetry: the metaphor of love as intoxication (interpretable in a deeper sense as *fanā'*: self-annihilation), and paradox, fracturing reason in search of a deeper non-discursive truth, like a Zen *koan*. Sufi theorists often distinguished binary oppositions along the mystical path, such as intoxication (*sukr*) and wakefulness or sobriety (*saḥw*), arising following an ecstatic mystical experience (al-Qushayri 2011, 93); here the latter is held to cause the former.

40　Literally, "causes to feel *ṭarab*" (musical emotion).

41　Here is an instance of transformations wrought by the *munshid* tradition, if not Shaykh Yasin himself. What appears to be the original poem, as published in a modern edition, has the word *fanā'*, the mystical state of self-annhiliation. The *munshid* sings the morphologically equivalent, rhyming word *ghinā'*, singing.

42　This line, explicitly invoking *ṭarab*, references the time of the Primordial Covenant, *mīthāq* (here *qadīma*, "ancient times") using the metaphor of song to represent *dhikr* as remembrance of a prior communion with the Divine. This line also acts deictically, pointing to the unfolding *ḥaḍra* and self-referentially referring to Shaykh Yasin's unfolding performance.

43　Shaykh Yasin permutes the lines; this one would be the last of those recited, according to the published poem (though establishing an authoritative form is admittedly difficult).

Translation		Second hemistich	First hemistich
Tell the one who forbids his people: if you do not taste the meaning of God's drink (love's drink) then leave us	25	إذا لم تذق معنى شراب الله (الهوا) دعنا	قل للذي ينهي عن الوجد أهله
If I spoke, I would not speak to anyone but you, and all my heart is occupied[44] with your love	26	وكل قلبي مشغول بحبكم	أنا إن تكلمت لم أنطق بغيركم
You took my soul from me gently, for I have not known others since I have known you	27	فلست أعرف غيراً مذ عرفتكم	أخذتم روحي مني في ملاطفةٍ
I forgot every path I knew except for the path that leads me to your quarter	28	إلا طريقاً تؤديني لربعكم	نسيت كل طريق كنت أعرفها
What use are houses if you do not occupy them? What use are homes, abandoned places, tentsites?[45]	29	ما الديار ما الأطلال ما الخيم	ما المساكن لولا أن تحلّوا بها
Were it not for you,[46] I would have yearned for neither neighborhood nor ruins, nor would my legs have carried me to the sanctuary	30	ولا سعت بي إلى نحو الحمى قدم	لولاكم ما شاقني ربعٌ ولا طلل
Third (final) *madad* **section** (see the section below)			مدد ٣

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44   The printed edition has *mashghūf*, possessed; Shaykh Yasin may have felt *mashghūl* (preoccupied) would be easier to understand, less controversial, or both.

45   The implication is "Nothing has meaning without your presence." Abandoned ruins of old encampments (*aṭlāl*, a common trope of pre-Islamic poetry as site of nostalgia for the absent beloved) are frequented by Sufi ascetics, and thus acquire a spiritual significance as places of retreat (*khilwa*), for contemplation and remembrance – but even they have no meaning. Here he exchanges *manāzil* (homes) for *masākin* (houses), perhaps to emphasize the point, though the two words are close in meaning and morphology.

46   Shaykh Yasin uses the plural form, implying (for many Egyptian Sufis) the *Āl al-Bayt*, while the original poem has the more ambiguous singular "you."

Madad: A Spiritual Journey in Time, Space, and *Silsila*

At the culmination of each poetic segment a *madad* section occurs, performed at the fastest tempos, offering an ecstatic interlude through a readily comprehensible text, its lucidity contrasting sharply with the preceding esoteric poetry. *Madad* evokes an outpouring of emotion, both because it is an explicit and deeply-felt prayer, entreating spiritual assistance and blessing, and because it invokes familiar, beloved spiritual personnages. In each madad section, Shaykh Yasin petitions a series of saints (*awliyā'*) in the form "*Madad yā* X" (help us, oh X), where X is replaced by the name of a *walī* or saint, often implicitly praised by the addition of an epithet (*laqab*). Unlike the opacities of Sufi poetry, these invocations are completely transparent. Every *laila* concludes with *madad*.

Textually, the names and epithets of invocation are clear. While some listeners may not be familiar with all of them, most are recognized, and their mention also invokes a personal relationship to those they know, particularly the primary saints – and especially the *Āl al-Bayt*, who are universally beloved and deeply embedded in Sufis' lives. The impact of mentioning a very local saint may be more limited, but they are important in connecting with the local population. The *munshid* prepares himself with hagiographic knowledge (sometimes through consultations with the *laila*'s hosts) in order to perform *madad* relevant to the *ḥaḍra* location.[47]

The mention of these spiritually charged names and epithets serves immediately to evoke emotion, particularly for followers of the named saint, or those from his or her spiritual lineage, or who live in his or her precinct (*riḥāb*), and who thus enjoy the saint's *baraka* (blessing) and protection as "patron saint." Relationships with saints are highly individual, and listeners are affected in very personal ways, depending on the particular history of their spiritual relationship with the figure named, often mediated through *ziyāra*, attendance at *mawālid*, or appearance in dreams. But even if everyone is not equally affected by a particular *madad*, emotion released into the shared performance space serves to raise the general emotional level, intensifying the *dhikr*, and feeding back to performers.

The epithet, signifying stature or personal qualities, may also amplify the effect, for instance Sayyida Nafisa (the Prophet's great-granddaughter) is invoked as *Sitt al-Karima* (the generous lady), and her Cairo shrine is one of the most oft-visited by *muḥibbīn* seeking spiritual or material support. At a *laila*, mention of her name invokes her presence, evoking and amplifying the love *muḥibbīn* feel for her, while recalling prior visits, as well as the positive outcomes that followed, underscoring her generous nature.

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47   Shaykh Yasin told me that sometimes he is unsure about which local shaykhs and saints to mention in the course of the *laila*; local organizers hand him slips of paper with their names.

Saints are believed to inhabit the world of spirits (*ʿālam al-arwāḥ*), free to instantly move anywhere (or be present everywhere). At the same time, they are strongly linked to their shrines[48] where they are thought to be more strongly present,[49] and thus there is always an emphasis on those with Egyptian shrines, who are frequently visited, whose *mawālid* are well-attended, and whose mention thus evokes memories of such events and all the people involved.

The *munshid* presents *madad* in a logical spiritual-chronological-geographical sequence that traces the spiritual lineages (*silsilas*) of Islam, from their origins in the Prophet's family and companions, to the saints who founded primary *ṭarīqa* lines (*aqṭāb*), to lesser known local saints who are nevertheless deeply meaningful for attendees interacting with them on a daily basis. Reciting *madad* for these saints thus traces a journey across a spiritual topography, through branching *silsilas* that lead, ultimately, to the particular locale and community of performance. Those with Egyptian shrines are marked with an asterisk in what follows (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: The spiritual topography of *madad*. Shaykh Yasin begins with several
of the *Āl al-Bayt* (green) before proceeding to remember and petition
awliyāʾ (saints), following lines of descent, genealogical (*nasab*)
or spiritual (*silsila*). Shaykh Abu Shama is in blue.[50]

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48   Usually, but not always, the shrine marks the gravesite.

49   One Egyptian Sufi explained this paradox of saints being both "here" (at the shrine) and "everywhere" as analogous to a quantum mechanical wave function!

50   See online map available at the following link: https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/edit?mid=1ro--TB-4XyFkvIzMOLiqmXaDTvCtytRL&ll=28.066548005158964%2C37.09885490000002&z=7.

Madad *1*

This first section focuses on the Prophet's family (*Āl al-Bayt*) and companions (*ṣaḥāba*), some of whom have Cairo shrines, before concluding with three local saints, including Shaykh Abu Shama himself, and a major saint of Upper Egypt, Sidi Farghal of Abu Tig (see Table 4).

Table 4: *Madad* section 1[51]

Supplicating	Meaning	Supplicating
Āl Bayt al-Nabi	The Prophet's family, including his immediate family members and descendants	آل بيت النبي
Sayyidna al-Imam 'Ali	Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law	سيدنا الإمام علي
Sayyidna al-Hamza	Hamza, the Prophet's paternal uncle	سيدنا الحمزة
Sayyidna al-'Abbas	'Abbas, the Prophet's paternal uncle	سيدنا العباس
Sittina *al-zahrā' ya batūl*	The Prophet's daughter, Fatima, referred to by her nicknames *zahrā'* (shining) and *batūl* (pure)	ستنا الزهراء يا بتول
Ahl al-ṭahāra ahl al-'affa	The people of purity (addressing the Prophet's family generally)	أهل الطهارة أهل العفة
Mawlana Sayyidina al-Hasan	Hasan, the Prophet's grandson	مولانا سيدنا الحسن
Mawlana Sayyidina al-Husayn	Husayn, the Prophet's grandson*	مولانا سيدنا الحسين
Sitt al-Karima *ṣāḥibat al-shūra yā karīmat al-dārayn sittina* al-Sayyida Nafisa	Nafisa, the Prophet's great-great-great-granddaughter, referred to here also as "possessor of wisdom," "generous lady," "generous one of the two abodes"*	ست الكريمة صاحبة الشورى يا كريمة الدارين ستنا السيدة نفيسة
Yā Sīdī 'Ali *murabbi al-aytām*	'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin, the Prophet's great-grandson, referred to as "the one who raises orphans"*	يا سيدي علي مربي الأيتام

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51   Beginning at 24:33 of the video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgRDDPTiue8 (Frishkopf 1996).

Supplicating	Meaning	Supplicating
Sitt Fātima al-Nabawiyya *bint al-Imam*	The Prophet's great-grandaughter, Fatima (Husayn's daughter)*	ست فاطمة النبوية بنت الإمام
Ya ṣāḥib al-dhikrā shaykhanā yā Abu ʿUmar	Shaykh Abu Shama, in whose honor the *ḥaḍra* is held*	يا صاحب الذكرى شيخنا يا أبا عمر
Sayyidna al-ʿAryan	A local saint*	سيدنا العريان
ʿAmm yā Farghal	A great saint of Abu Tig, a nearby town, about 17 km away*	عم يا فرغل

*The saint has a shrine in Egypt.

Madad *2*

In this sequence Shaykh Yasin traces the main spiritual *silsilas* via the four "axes" (*aqṭāb*), the axial saint (*quṭb*) being the highest of his age. (A similar station is that of "*ghawth*" (savior), attributed to Abu Madyan; see Table 5.)

Table 5: *Madad* section 2[52]

Supplicating	Meaning	Supplicating
Sīdī *yā abā al-ʿālamayn* ʿamm yā Rifaʿi	Ahmad al-Rifaʿi ("possessor of the two worlds"), founder of the *Rifaʿiyya tariqa**	سيدي يا أبا العلمين عم يا رفاعي
Sīdī *yā abā al-ʿaynayn* sīdī Ibrahim ʿamm ya Dasuqi	Ibrahim al-Dasuqi ("possessor of two eyes"), founder of the *Burhamiyya tariqa**	سيدي يا أبا العينين سيدي إبراهيم عم يا دسوقي
Shaykh al-ʿArab ʿamm yā sayyid yā abā majāhid	Ahmad al-Badawi, "shaykh of the Arabs," founder of the *Badawiyya tariqa*, originally initiated as a Rifaʿi*	شيخ العرب عم يا سيد يا أبا مجاهد
Sīdī abā al-Hasan ʿamm ya Shadhili	Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili, founder of the *Shadhiliyya tariqa**	سيدي أبا الحسن عم يا شاذلي
Sīdī abā al-ʿAbbas ʿAmm yā Mursi	Abu al-ʿAbbas al-Mursi, disciple of Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili*	سيدي أبا العباس عم يا مرسي

52　Beginning at 51:40 of the video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgRDDPTiue8 (Frishkopf 1996).

Supplicating	Meaning	Supplicating
Sīdī abā al-sibāʿ *abā al-ḍayfa*n	A local saint*	سيدي أبا السباع أبا الضيفان
Saʿd al-Din yā Jibali	A local saint*	سعد الدين يا جبالي
Shaykh ʿAbd al-Naʿim	A local saint*	شيخ عبد النعيم
Yā shaykh ʿAlwan shaykh ʿAbdallah	A local saint*	يا شيخ علوان شيخ عبد الله
Sayyidna al-Duwayli	A local saint*	سيدنا الدويلي
Yā Abā ʿAbd al-Daʾim	A local saint*	يا أبا عبد الدائم

*The saint has a shrine in Egypt.

Madad *3*

The concluding *madad* section is very short, focusing on Shaykh Abu Shama, and introducing two other local saints (see Table 6).

Table 6: *Madad* section 3[53]

Supplicating	Meaning	Supplicating
ṣāḥib al-dhikrā *shaykhanā yā* Abu ʿUmar	Shaykh Abu Shama, in whose honor the *ḥaḍra* is held*	صاحب الذكرى شيخنا أبو شامة
Sidi ʿAbd al-Nabi	A local saint*	سيدي عبد النبي
Sayyidina al-ʿAryan	A local saint*	سيدنا العريان

*The saint has a shrine in Egypt.

Conclusion

A close analysis of the *ḥaḍra* text provides a fascinating glimpse into the nature and meaning of Egyptian Sufism, as well as suggesting how its spiritual-social and ideational structures are maintained through ritual.

This complex, compound text, woven through performance in response to a socio-spiritual dynamic, reflects the relationships of those present – whether physically or spiritually, invoking the entire socio-spiritual network. Meanwhile the text also serves to shape that network, injecting and conditioning meaning and Sufis' relationships to one another. Words of a shaykh or *munshid* trigger meaning at multiple levels: for what they say, for whom they reference, and to whom they are attributed. Sufis interpret them as authentic,

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53   Beginning at 1:19:03 of the video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgRDDPTiue8 (Frishkopf 1996).

representing genuine mystical experience (including the *munshid*'s own), rendered in linguistic form, and applied to their own. This fact adds to their idiosyncratic potency. Yet they act on the gathered company in multiple ways. Abstract symbols can address many people at once, linking them, while allowing each to bring a unique interpretation, whereas the more transparent segments of *madad* evoke personal relationships. The triggering of listeners' *ḥāl* is somewhat unpredictable; as the *munshid* sings, it is as if he trips landmines of spiritual emotion, each invisibly affecting only a particular group of people, different each time, in different places throughout the performance space, whose passion pours forth to enliven the gathering.

But ultimately everyone is moved, and the resulting emotion – expressed in various ways: words, gestures, or movements – pours back into the collective context, gathering everyone together as one. Through potent but ambiguous and hence highly adaptable and polyvalent Sufi symbols and allusions, and a recognition of the collective generation of the performed text, combined with the feedback process guiding its assembly, Sufis are united spiritually and socially. The performed text, an instance of the larger intertext, thus reinforces the interauthor that inspired it. Just as the author disappears into the interauthor in a kind of self-annihilation (*fanāʾ*), so the text disappears into the intertext, as the drop into the ocean. Both author and text are suspended in webs, socio-spiritual, or semantic, their individuality revealed as illusory, dissolved in a larger collectivity, a higher unity. This is the essence of *taṣawwuf*, Sufism. And, as Egyptian Sufis say, Sufism is the *gawhar* (essence) of Islam.

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POVZETEK

Besedilne dimenzije javnega obreda *ḥaḍra* v egiptovskem sufizmu

Članek preučuje ključno vlogo besedil v sufizmu, predvsem v njegovem osrednjem obredu, ki se imenuje *ḥaḍra*. Na podlagi Egipta kot študije primera in s poglobljeno analizo izbrane izvedbe obreda *ḥaḍra*, ki ga vodi *munshid* (obredni pevec), članek s pomočjo konceptov medbesedilnosti (»intertext«) in medavtorstva (»interauthor«) prikaže, kako besedilo podpira družbeno-duhovna razmerja. Natančna analiza besedila obreda ponuja fascinanten vpogled v naravo in pomen egiptovskega sufizma, obenem pa poskuša razložiti, kako se slednji ohranja skozi ritual.

Kompleksno zgrajeno besedilo se v izvedbi obreda odziva na družbeno-duhovno dinamiko in odraža razmerja med navzočimi – naj bodo fizična ali duhovna – ter tako prikliče na plano celotno družbeno-duhovno mrežo. Obenem besedilo s tem, ko dodaja in pogojuje pomene ter medsebojne odnose sufijev, mrežo tudi oblikuje. Besede šejka ali *munshid*a vzbujajo pomene na več ravneh: o vsebini sporočanega, na koga se besede nanašajo in komu so pripisane. Vedno se jih razlaga kot avtentične besede, ki predstavljajo pristno mistično izkušnjo (vključno z *munshid*ovo), podano v jezikovni obliki. To dejstvo krepi njihovo moč. Pa vendar na zbrano družbo vplivajo na različne načine. Abstraktni simboli lahko naenkrat nagovorijo veliko število ljudi, od katerih si jih vsakdo razlaga po svoje, medtem ko bolj neposredni deli rituala *ḥaḍra*, imenovani *madad*, govorijo o medosebnih odnosih. Sproženje notranjih čustvenih stanj (*ḥāl*) med poslušalci je nekoliko nepredvidljivo; ko *munshid* poje, je, kot bi stopal med minami duhovnih čustev, ob različnih časih za različne ljudi. A nazadnje so vsi ganjeni, končno čustvo – izraženo na različne načine, naj bo v besedah, z gestami ali gibi – pa se zliva nazaj v kolektivni kontekst in vse združi v eno.

Sufiji se povezujejo duhovno in družbeno z močnimi, obenem pa dvoumnimi in zato zelo prilagodljivimi in večpomenskimi sufijskimi simboli in aluzijami ter s prepoznavanjem kolektivnega ustvarjanja besedila, ki ga soustvarja tudi proces odziva poslušalcev. Izvedba besedila, ki je primer širšega medbesedila, tako krepi medavtorstvo, ki ga je navdihnilo. Kakor avtor v neke vrste samoizničenju (*fanāʾ*) »izgine« v medavtorja, tako tudi besedilo izgine v medbesedilo. Avtor in besedilo obvisita v družbeno-duhovnih ali pomenskih mrežah, identiteta obeh pa se izkaže kot iluzorna, razpršena v širši kolektivnosti in višji eno(vito)sti, ki je bistvo *taṣawwuf*a, mistične tradicije sufizma.

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O AVTORJU

MICHAEL FRISHKOPF (michaelf@ualberta.ca, frishkopf.org) je profesor glasbe, direktor Kanadskega etnomuzikološkega centra, izredni profesor medicine in izredni profesor Študij religije na Univerzi v Alberti. Raziskovalno se posveča zvokom islama, arabskega sveta in zahodne Afrike ter glasbi za globalni razvoj človeštva (m4ghd.org). Je urednik monografije *Music and Media in the Arab World* (*Glasba in mediji v arabskem svetu*, 2010) in sourednik dela *Music, Sound, and Architecture in Islam* (*Glasba, zvok in arhitektura v islamu*, University of Texas Press, 2018). Na teme zvoka, glasbe in islama je objavil številne znanstvene članke in poglavja v monografijah. Razvil je tudi interpretacije islamskih zvočnih krajin (t. i. *soundscapes*) v razširjenih in virtualnih resničnostih; med njimi izstopata »Virtual Sonic Architecture« (»Virtualna zvočna arhitektura«, bit.ly/vsahipm) in »Sounding the Garden« (»Zveneti vrt«) za Vrt Aga Kana na Univerzi v Alberti (http://bit.ly/soundingthegarden). Trenutno razvija spletni digitalni repozitorij »Sounds of Islam« (»Zvoki islama«). Dr. Frishkopf je tudi skladatelj-improvizator, ki igra *nay*, glasbila s tipkami in druge instrumente.

Aleviness, Music, and Hospitality

Maja Bjelica

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines urban Alevi traditional culture in Turkey as a possible example of an ethics of hospitality, drawing mainly from Alevi teachings and musical heritage. Through an examination of the lyrics of selected Alevi sacred songs the author presents various accounts of hospitality that are integral to Aleviness.

Keywords: Aleviness, Alevi Music, Hospitality, *nefes*, *deyiş*

IZVLEČEK

Članek proučuje urbano kulturo tradicije Alevijev v Turčiji kot primer možnosti etike gostoljubja, pri čemer se naslanja predvsem na alevijske nauke in glasbeno dediščino. Z analizo besedil izbranih alevijskih mističnih pesmi avtorica predstavi različne primere gostoljubja, ki so vtkani v alevijstvo.

Ključne besede: alevijstvo, alevijska glasba, gostoljubje, *nefes*, *deyiş*

Researching Hospitality as Ethics

The present case example of the place of hospitality in Alevi expressive culture is part of a larger research project that aims to explore the ethics of hospitality; that is, an ethics that can be founded on aspects of hospitality, such as acceptance, welcoming, and guest-host relations, where guests can be strangers, foreigners, or others. This study is grounded in the fields of philosophy and anthropology as the starting base, but its overarching transdisciplinary orientation also draws from religious studies and ethnomusicology, which function as strong pillars, and other disciplines such as musicology and ethnography, for example. The theoretical focus was inspired by philosophers such as Jacques Derrida, and his aporetic notion of hospitality, being possible only as *the* impossible, on the one hand, and his understanding of hospitality as ethics *per se*, on the other. His thought directed the research towards openness, "being-with," and saying "yes" to the unknown.[1] The philosophic thought of Emmanuel Levinas also contributed to the unfolding of the research with his approach to understanding the primacy of welcoming the other and one's individual responsibility in every face-to-face encounter.[2] Equally important are recent anthropological accounts acknowledging that hospitality historically has not been a focus of study and that ethnography, as a foundational part of anthropological methodology, is intrinsically linked to hospitality and experienced in every encounter during the fieldwork process (Candea and da Col 2012).

My choice to explore the Alevis of Turkey and their religious, musical, and cultural traditions as a case study for investigating the notion of an ethics of hospitality was inspired by my personal experience of being welcomed by the Alevi community in Istanbul while conducting research on Alevi musical heritage in the spring of 2009. Because the Alevis were so accommodating and welcoming in assisting me with my investigative goals, I decided to refocus my attention on the elements that expose Aleviness[3] as a tradition that fosters the ethics of hospitality.

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1   Derrida's account of hospitality is presented in my article "Asylum as Hospitality: Relistening to Derrida" (Bjelica 2018a) to which I direct the reader if they are interested in Derrida's understanding of hospitality and its ethics. More detailed accounts can be found in his works such as *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas* (Derrida 1999) or *Of Hospitality* (Derrida 2000) and others.

2   For Levinas's account of hospitality and ethics, see especially *Totality and Infinity* (Levinas 1979) and *Otherwise than Being* (Levinas 1994).

3   The Turkish umbrella term for Alevi religion or tradition is *Alevilik*, which in English publications is often translated as "Alevism." However, since the ending '-*lik*' in the Turkish language indicates a relation to the core noun, the term will be translated here as "Aleviness." Further, the term *Alevilik* is inclusive of Alevi doctrines and ideologies of faith, cultural tradition, ethics, worldview, and way of life. Although the term Aleviness is not widely used, it can be found in some publications in the field of Alevi studies (Massicard 2016; Yocum 2005, 584). This research, being also grounded in ethnographic fieldwork, allowed me to converse with individuals who consider themselves to be Alevis but do not necessarily accept Alevism as their faith. As Markussen (2010, 7) explains: "Considering oneself Alevi may include a sense of Aleviness that defines personal and collective

While investigating the tradition of the Turkish Alevis, especially during my fieldwork research,[4] I had the opportunity to explore Alevi identity formation and self-identification (Bjelica 2017, 2020b), the social and interpersonal aspects of Alevi music, Alevis' espousal of social justice (Bjelica 2018b), their propensity to engage in interfaith dialogue, their ability to listen ethically (Bjelica 2020a), and the embodiment of the culture of breath in their rituals (Bjelica 2021), among others. In the present article I draw partly from these themes but center the analysis on Alevi hospitality as one of the pillars of Alevi ethics which is also ever-present in Alevi music and ritual practices. When referring to music in this paper I am using the concept holistically, as inclusive of traditionally sung poetry in the vernacular, usually accompanied by the long-necked folk lute, called *saz* or *bağlama*, and sometimes with sacred movements, such as "turning" (*semah dönmek*).

Encountering Aleviness

The Alevis, the largest religious minority in Turkey, are recognized by the Turkish government only as a cultural group that with their heritage represents a specific part of "Turkishness."[5] The publicly recognized cultural aspect of Alevi heritage and way of life, however, is only part of the religious minority's identity, which is rooted in oral tradition, and is not fixed or unified, as the political realm would indicate. The lack of a unified presence of elements of Aleviness today can be revealed in the pronounced diversity of

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identities in terms of one or several aspects of *Alevilik*, but it does not necessarily mean embracing Alevism as a system of beliefs and practices." Rather than excluding the doctrines of Alevism, my research tries to investigate Aleviness as an experience of cohabitation, encounters, and hospitality.

4   The extensive part of the fieldwork research on Alevi hospitality was carried out in urban areas of Istanbul in the spring of 2015. More details about it will be presented further along in the article.

5   In the available literature and sources after the year 2000, it was observed that recent discussions of the Alevis were largely devoted to the political and social situation in Turkey – especially in connection with the fact that the Alevis are still not recognized by the Turkish government as a separate religious community in their own country. In spite of the process termed "Alevi revival" (an extensive emergence of the Alevis in public and media, especially since the 1990s; a movement focusing on empowerment through networking, increased visibility and organizational activities) and the recognition of their existence and way of life, the Turkish government does not treat them as a separate religious community, but merely as an integral part of "Turkish nationality," a part of Turkish cultural heritage (Dinçer 2000; Poyraz 2005; Tambar 2010). The Alevi identity-based claims were officially considered by the governing Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP) with the initiative launched in 2007 and termed "Alevi opening" (*Alevi açılımı*), aiming "to reconcile the Turkish state and the marginalized segments of Turkish society" (Kose 2010, 5). The most serious engagement by the AKP happened in 2009 when seven workshops on Alevi issues were organized, unfortunately without significant consultation with Alevi groups; and, moreover, the workshops were still closely controlled by the government. These workshops contributed to a systematization of the Alevi demands, such as benefitting on an equal basis from state resources, equal citizenship rights, religious freedom, but unfortunately resulted in no major change of the political and social position of the Alevis in Turkey (Borovalı and Boyraz 2010).

Alevi worship practices (*ibadet*) and the variety of adaptations of their rituals to the contemporary world that differ from regional practices (Bjelica 2017; Dressler 2013; Shankland 2003b). Ethnic diversity within the broader community does not impede the ability of Alevis to coexist as a community from the perspective of world view, philosophy, and the ethical standpoint that promotes the equality between all human (and other) beings, who should coexist as brothers and sisters (Hanoğlu 2017; Issa 2017b). This was often expressed also by the religious guides (*dedeler*, pl., *dede*, sing.) who provided guidance (*öğüt*) during the Alevi rituals. One of the ritual leaders, *dede* Hünkâr Uğurlu, emphasized the importance of respect towards everyone with the exception of those who do harm: "I am respectful towards all humans. But until when do I feel respect? If you harm people… If you harm nature or animals, we will not feel respect for [you if you are] such a person"[6] (Uğurlu 2015). Doing harm to any living being is not acceptable for the Alevi "path" (*yol*); therefore, it is not worthy of the respect that would otherwise be granted to all people, all living beings.[7]

It is difficult to construct a homogeneous account of the expressive culture of Turkish Alevis because of regional differences related to the culture's oral transmission.[8] The politicization of Alevi identity, which was unfolding and developing throughout the twentieth century, produced many different views and definitions of Alevis. Thus, it is difficult to define Aleviness exclusively as a unified belief system, despite the existence of core beliefs that are shared by all communities, be they urban or rural-based. As Alevi teachings, culture, and expressive practices have been passed down over time, changes have occurred. Alevi beliefs often turn out to be complex and multidimensional, requiring further attention to properly understand them. That is why only a few aspects of this issue will be presented in this paper, those that are important for the study of the ethics of hospitality present in Aleviness.

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6   Translated by the author from the audio transcription of an introductory talk at an Alevi communal gathering (*cem*): "Bütün insanları saygı duyuyorum. Ama ne zamana kadar saygı duyuyorum? Eğer zarar veriyorsan insanlara… Doğaya, hayvanlara zarar veriyorsa, o insana saygı duymayacağız."

7   The Alevi community is also supportive of environmental and animal ethics. After his claim about granting respect to all living beings, Hünkâr *dede* told the story of another *dede* who denied entry into a place of worship to a believer who kicked a dog lying at the entrance. The *dede* instructed him to return to the dog and apologize, as this is the only way believers are capable of true prayer and worship – if they show respect to all living beings, which requires love and compassion (Uğurlu 2015).

8   The differences are evident not only through the Alevi ritual praxis, but also in the different names of their communities, such as *Bektashi*, *Çepni*, *Kızılbaş*, *Tahtacı*, that in the 20th Century were unified under the term Alevi (Dressler 2013). One main differentiation regards ethnicity in that some Alevis are Turkish, others Kurdish. More about the Kurdish Alevis can be found in Martin van Bruinessen's research (1996; Cetin et al. 2020). This topic exceeds the scope of this article, but I dedicated more attention to to it in my other writings (Bjelica 2017, 2018b, 2020).

According to some definitions, which usually reflect political connotations, as was evident in the available literature, Alevism occurs in non-orthodox Islamic religious communities which draw from Shi'i and Sufi Islamic beliefs. Alevism can even be seen as a belief system that predates Islam, supposedly having been formed in Anatolia and Mesopotamia before Islam's appearance in the seventh century (Hanoğlu 2017, 13–14; Issa 2017b, 1). The connection with Islam comes from the worship of Imam 'Ali,[9] the Prophet Muhammed's Family (*Ehlibeyt*) and the Twelve Imams (*Oniki Imamlar*) (Hanoğlu 2017, 17); this focus in worship is the foundation of Alevi practices, and therefore cannot be overlooked. Some Alevis, nevertheless, deny affiliation with Shi'i Islam while still upholding the almightiness of Imam 'Ali, as was the case with *dede* Hünkâr Uğurlu, the leader of the Esentepe Alevi community. During my field research, I attended his talk[10] on the morality and righteousness of Alevi life, when he also emphasized that "we are neither Sunni nor Shi'i!" (Uğurlu 2015). By contrast, some sources claim that some Alevis feel their religion to be the "true" Islam (Şener 2009, 19). In many cases, Alevis in Turkey identify themselves as separate from the majority Sunni population, as stated by anthropologist David Shanklad (2003a, 20): "they maintain that belief in the Sunni God is based on fear, but that the Alevi base their faith in love, a love which is within all people and that can be found within them." This statement contrasts the image of an authoritarian and patriarchal God in Sunni Islam with that of a loving and understanding God in Alevi belief, which can be reached through sincere faith and esoteric rituals.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is not to define Alevi religion or culture, but rather to provide insights into some aspects of the belief system that promote and solidify an ethics of hospitality. Despite great diversity in Alevi beliefs and rituals, Tözün Issa (2017a, 3), the editor of a recent publication dealing mainly with Alevis in the European diaspora, concluded that certain philosophical principles are shared by all Alevis. One principle, for example, that encourages hospitable encounters is the Alevi perception of humanity (*insanlık*) and humanitarianism as a pillar of their worldview. This central virtue is connected to the mystical "path" (*yol*) towards perfection that is accomplished through many stages in achieving ultimate union with the Divine and thus becoming the perfect or "complete" human (*insan-ı kamil*). The Alevis interpret the image of a perfect human experientially, as everyone is supposed to have control over their self-centered or selfish tendencies, to treat all people equally and to serve the needs and interests of others. This is another important aspect of the Alevi code of conduct, expressed in the simple maxim: "To be master of one's own hand, tongue,

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9   Imam 'Ali, fully named 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, was the Prophet Muhammed's nephew and son-in-law.
10   This talk, held at one of the community gatherings I attended, was an introduction to the ritual (*cem*).

and loin." ("Eline, diline, beline sahip olmak.") With this ethical saying, the Alevis constantly remind themselves that they, themselves, have the power to refrain from theft, lies, and adultery. This includes avoiding any kind of violence, and therefore it is a call for ethical gestures in their daily lives and on the mystical path they set forth on. This path is accepted by every individual initiated into Alevi faith (Soileau 2019, 6), including the sacrifices it might require. Yet the pervasive Alevi epithet is "Yol birdir, sürek binbir!," meaning "The path is one, the routes many!" (Hanoğlu 2017, 19), indicating a possibility for the individual to choose their own path in accordance with Alevi teachings. The inference here is that tolerance is required when one is faced with someone else's path and accepting or not accepting it. This expression intersects with the belief that one should approach others as a soulmate or *can* (pron. jan), and as a reflection of unity with the Divine on earth, also referred to as Oneness of Being (*vahdet-i vücut*). The Alevi elders, during the communities' regular gatherings, often talked about the Alevi path, most often acknowledging its difficulty and complexity, but at the same time they described it as the right one, as it is a path of goodness and cohabitation. One of the elders, Aşur Nergis *dede*, explained: "This path is the right path. This path is the path of love. This path is the path of sharing. This path is a path of beauty, the beauty of everything. […] Our path […] lessens the pain when it is shared and increases shared love"[11] (Nergis 2015b). Here, a parallel to Derrida's thought can be established: the philosopher understands the binding aspect of religiosity as a gathering, which is primarily a gathering within oneself. Following Levinas, Derrida (1999, 28) understands gathering in oneself as the first condition for a welcome and thus also a precondition for unfolding gathering in a religious community. Another fundamental principle in the Alevi code of behavior is the maxim "to look at seventy-two nations with the same gaze" ("Yetmiş iki millete bir gözle bakmak"),[12] which illustrates Alevi aspirations to equality and non-discrimination; this therefore alludes to a possibility of a gathering also outside their original communities (Kılıç 2015b).

These principles, encouraging ethical conduct, clearly promote tolerance and acceptance, not only among the members of Alevi communities, but also toward foreigners, strangers, and others. The Alevis are therefore open to welcoming the unknown and believe in a loving God that might be disguised in many forms. Thus, Aleviness allows for hospitable encounters to happen. It is possible that understanding Aleviness as a tradition of hospitality or

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11   Translated by the author from the audio transcription of a talk at an Alevi gathering (*cem*): "Bu yolu doğru bir yolu. Bu yol sevgi yolu. Bu yol paylaşım yolu. Bu yol güzellik yolu, güzelliğine her şey yolu. […] Bizim yolumuz […] acılar paylaştıkça azalır, sevgiler paylaştıkça çoğalır."

12   As a diverse region, Anatolia is known as the land of the "seventy-two peoples" (Hanoğlu 2017, 18).

humanitarianism can be revealed through the combination of the afore-mentioned principles, and the discussion of Alevi music, culture, and rituals will contribute to further revealing this hypothesis.

Experiencing Hospitality among the Turkish Alevis

During my fieldwork in Istanbul, carried out mainly in the spring of 2015, I came to understand that hospitality is one of the main characteristics of Turkish culture in general. Because of this longstanding traditional stance, Turks are deeply aware of the many needs of their guests. Interestingly, the Turkish words for hospitality, *misafirperverlik* and *konukseverlik*, are far less frequently used in colloquial language than the more common words in use to denote a guest, *misafir* and *mihman*, and greetings to welcome a guest, such as *hoşgeldin* or *hoşgeldiniz* (sing. and pl. forms for "welcome," respectively). This unbalanced word usage coincides with the Turkish inclination or preference to experience hospitality, to welcome guests with concrete shared gestures, instead of wasting words on concepts or definitions of hospitality as a term, noun, or idea.

"In Turkey, hospitality is a national virtue" (Delaney 1991, xi). Such a statement is a typical description of Turkey, and the Turks themselves also agree that they are a very hospitable nation. Nonetheless, the literature on hospitality in Turkey is meager, so there was no study found that could add perspective to the present inquiry. Another account to consider in researching hospitality is the effect of its tradition on the experience itself – the welcome, offered merely as a result of a custom might be experienced as less hospitable as the one offered sincerely, out of affection and fondness towards another (human) being. Therefore, while conducting research, a researcher should also keep in mind the need to take a step back, distance oneself in order to understand whether hospitable gestures are sincere and therefore might represent a possible foundation for an ethics of hospitality. My research with Alevis in Istanbul revealed their hospitality to be genuine, multi-layered, and always applied at several levels: their attention towards others included listening, considering each other's and guests' wishes, preparing space for visitors and newcomers, and accepting the beliefs of people who think differently.

Most of my fieldwork related to research on hospitality in Istanbul in 2015 was conducted through involvement in some specific activities of two religio-cultural associations, the Gaziosmanpaşa Hoca Ahmet Yesevi Cem Evi İnanç ve Kültür Derneği[13] and the Hz. Ali Cem Evi İnanç ve Kültür Derneği (in the district of Esentepe). Members of these associations gather in what is referred

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13   In 2014, this Alevi cultural and religious association was formed in order to ensure its status as a legal entity and the basic means for financial and material activities (Nergis 2015a). As already mentioned, the Alevis are not recognized as a religious community, thus they can only obtain state funds as conservators of Turkish cultural heritage.

to as a *cemevi*,[14] meaning a space of assembly or worship where religious rituals, *cemler* (pl. of *cem*), occur. Members of both communities[15] gather on Thursdays to participate in *cemler* where young people are encouraged to attend so that they can be introduced to and learn traditional Alevi religious practices. In addition to Thursday gatherings, the community organizes and participates in other events, particularly on special occasions that are celebrated to reminisce, preserve, and recreate their traditions.

These gatherings, *cemler*, are usually led by the hereditary spiritual guides of the community, the *dedeler*.[16] The *dede* usually arrives ahead of the worshippers, who then greet him by bowing, indicating a kissing of his hand, or actually kissing his hand or kissing of the floor in front of him.[17] *Dedeler* are usually descendants of the lineages (*ocaklar*, pl. of *ocak*)[18] tracing back to the Twelve Shi'i Imams, which, according to their specific cosmologies, place them closer to God. Similarly, female elders are attributed great importance, but they are less apparent as leaders of *cemler*. The female descendant of the sacred lineages is referred to as *ana* or *bacı* and is respected by the communities as equally as the *dede*. In everyday life, however, the *dede* has the visible and leading role in the community.[19] The characteristics of a wise and therefore respected *dede* are quite specific. He must have a modest character, use his words cautiously, be honest in relations with others, master his abilities, skillfully mediate between

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14 A *cemevi* (a literal translation would be "the house of *cem*," or "the home of *cem*"), a house or space where the *cem* (religious ritual) takes place is very important for the modern social organization of the Alevis, since a *cemevi* is not only a place of ritual and worship, but also represents the center of the community (Hanoğlu 2017, 22). A *cemevi* can be any place comfortable and hospitable enough to host the complete Alevi community. For an in-depth account of *cemler* and *cemeviler* see Irene Markoff's (2018) article on Alevi-Bektashi ritual space.

15 The Ahmet Yesevi Alevi community, situated in the Gaziosmanpaşa district of Istanbul gathers in a single-room space located on the first floor of a commercial building. The Hz. Ali Alevi community from the Esentepe district meet in a simple ground-floor room in a residential apartment complex.

16 David Shankland (2003b, 104–111) offers an in-depth insight into the role of *dedeler* as part of his ethnographic research illustrating differences among regional Alevi communities.

17 These gestures of respect toward *dedeler* were common in most of the *cemler*. When the *dede* was late, worshippers stood up upon his arrival as a sign of respect.

18 In Turkish the word stands for "family," but can also mean a fireplace, stove, household, family, meeting place, gathering, meeting, or center (Yaman 2011).

19 During "careful" conversations with some members of the community, I encountered rather ambiguous reactions when facing questions about prevalent male visibility. Interlocutors explained that *analar* (pl. of *ana*) had taken leading roles in the past, and that women are now assuming the roles of musicians (*zakirler*, pl. of *zakir*) at the *cemler*. One of the opinions encountered was that women could certainly take the leading roles, but they do not want to (Kılıç 2015a). It was also interesting to hear an opinion during an informal dialogue that in the past, the role of spiritual leaders might have been taken over by men because women were preoccupied with caring for their families, which men were not capable of. I have touched upon the issue of gender equality in my recent paper about the Alevi culture of breath (Bjelica 2021), but it is still an important and subtle theme to be developed further.

groups and individuals, master the Alevi rituals and interpret them rationally, and, finally, be hospitable (Shankland 2003b, 104–105). An ethnographic study in Thrace among Alevi-related Bektashi communities[20] (Sipos and Csáki 2009) revealed examples of the hospitality of one Bektashi *baba* (elder, equivalent to the Alevi *dede*); the researchers observe him

> calmly put up a prisoner released that very day for the night in his own house, then take him to the bus terminal the next morning and buy him a ticket to home. He welcomes and puts up Christians as well, gives his last blanket to orphaned Roma children, gives a large sum in advance to Gypsy musicians and is certain that however long he has to wait, the musicians will come as they promised. He is exemplary in rejecting prejudice and truly respecting people. (Sipos and Csáki 2009, 37)

The *dede* or *baba* is a role model of ethical conduct which includes the essential characteristics of hospitality. This is related to Levinas' understanding of ethics as a primary welcome, essential responsibility for the other. In this sense, it is possible to explain the non-reciprocity of responsibility primarily from the point of view of Levinas' ethics: in order for a subject to act ethically, they cannot count on responsibility, the ethics of others, but must take responsibility upon themselves. *Dedeler* as role models take on such responsibilities themselves, which was evident in my experience participating in Alevi *cemler*. During field research, it was not possible to confine myself to observing only the gestures and dynamics of hospitality that the members of the community practiced with each other and with the external visitors. Rather, the most notable hospitality was that which they showed me – a young female researcher, ethnographer, and photographer from Europe whose interest in Alevi beliefs and culture would result in the dissemination of the results of her scholarly investigation through presentations at home and abroad. The participant observation research was made possible especially because the *dedeler* of both communities, Aşur Nergis and Hünkâr Uğurlu, welcomed me warmly to each *cem* I attended. Especially hospitable was Aşur *dede*, who showed a great degree of interest in my research, and also in my personal beliefs, which he did not dispute, despite their difference from Alevi beliefs.[21] He invited me to sit in privileged spaces and to take part in moments of the *cem*, even though I was not accustomed to the ritual process. While participating at the *cemler*, I was always welcomed by the leader (*dede*), the musician (*zakir*) or other representatives of the community. I would sit in places close to the *dede*, so I would be able to observe the event in more detail, which was very helpful, as I

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20 Despite some specific differences among these communities, the Alevis and Bektashis share many beliefs and customs (Markoff 2018; Soileau 2021, 115–117).

21 During an informal conversation before a *cem* I attended, Aşur *dede* asked me if I believe in the existence of God. I responded that I was not really sure about it, and he replied that we all have our own path, including me, referring to the *yol*, path of affection that all Alevis embrace.

was able to record with audio and video, and also photograph everything that was happening around me. Moreover, I was regularly approached by several members of the community, asking me if I needed anything, inviting me to sit closer, offering me additional pillows to sit more comfortably – it seemed that they all cared about me feeling at ease among them, despite my being a stranger. Such gestures acclaiming the guest are not rare in a *cem*. Irene Markoff (2018, 101), when describing a *cem* she attended, refers to "a *nefes* sung in my honor as the guest (*mihman*) who had come from afar to honor the saint and the community."

    Cem is an event that can be interpreted as a welcoming place, where guests and others are welcomed and accepted. Music plays a central role by creating an environment that provides a hospitable space for Alevi community members and their guests.

Cem: A Musical Welcome

The basic name of the Alevi ritual is *cem*, which denominates a gathering, integration, even a group or a community. This is the fundamental spiritual religious practice of the Alevis; that is, a regular gathering during which males and females engage through the form of spiritual events in communal worship. Moreover, in the urban context of a big city such as Istanbul, these gatherings are an opportunity for members of Alevi communities to socialize and get to know each other,[22] thus establishing mutual relations that enable them to enjoy everyday coexistence. "Most of the Alevi rituals are communal because the rituals mainly aim to foster unity and love within the society" (Hanoğlu 2017, 21). During these rituals, they become acquainted with their faith and with the history of their traditions. At the same time, these rituals present a fundamental starting point for the formation of Alevi ethics. Namely, this is the framework for the teachings about compassion, fraternity, tolerance, and other virtues and moral guidelines that the Alevis are encouraged to develop and adopt. *Cemler* represent the central space for the establishment of inter-subjective and social ties, and thus the fundamental and potential source of enabling mutual hospitality. At the same time, the rituals offer an opportunity for the members of the community to examine any potential resentments between individuals or to discipline any potentially harmful or violent acts (*düşkünlük*). The entire community can learn in this way and aim towards an appropriate application of Alevi ethics. When researching the changes in performing a *cem* in the urban environment, Fahriye Dinçer (2000, 34) noticed the following

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22   I am indebted to the anonymous reviewer who pointed out that rituals in urban and rural contexts can differ greatly due to the fact that in the rural context the communities are smaller and more connected or unified, while in urban contexts the members might be living far away from each other and therefore the *cem* provides an additional opportunity to spend time together, as was evident in my experience, when observing the culture of the two Alevi communities in Istanbul.

important aspect: "The *cems* could be conceived as the public gathering of the Alevi masses who have not been able to express themselves and their identities within the framework of the prevailing social order, and have come to live outside that order."

In reflecting on the *cem* it is possible to say that music plays a central role in the establishment of a community space of coexistence, hospitable mutual acceptance of the faithful, and the spreading of wisdom and established guidelines and rules (*erkan*) regarding behavior and relationships in everyday life. Although the *cem* is led by the *dede*, the significance of the *zakir*, the instrumentalist and singer at the *cem*, also referred to as *aşık*[23] or *ozan*, is of great importance. I noticed that the participants of the *cem* accorded him the same respect they did to the *dede* (cf. also Dinçer 2000, 37–38). This is important to note because the *zakir*, in cooperation with the *dede*, creates a specific atmosphere in the *cem* with his selection[24] of music and lyrics that convey particular religious stories about Alevi saints or other specific messages about the Alevi *yol*. The *zakir* contributes significantly to the creation of a suitable mood for the *cem* by selecting a repertoire of which the lyrics or melodies are well known to the members, thus making the group more receptive to the music. Because of this, the participants are able to somehow join in performing the pre-established sacred songs, accompanying the *zakir* with their own, more open interpretations and individual feelings.

Music, as the central activity of the Alevi ritual, is the basic vehicle for spreading and reinforcing beliefs and wisdom for everyday community life. More specifically, the mystical poetry of dervish lodge poets and sometimes more contemporary Alevi minstrels is sung to the accompaniment of the sacred plucked folk lute, the *bağlama* or *saz*, performed by the *zakir*. The instrument has been referred to by some Alevis as the *telli Kuran* (stringed Koran), as it replaces scriptural sources found in other faiths.[25] It is through music that the Alevis welcome and express acceptance of the participants in the *cem*. Through

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23　The term *aşık* refers to the wandering bards of Anatolia who traditionally performed folk music in the rural context. Through their sung poetry they spread messages of humanity, love, hospitality, brotherhood, and similar themes, as will be emphasized further in this study. The term *aşık* means "the lover" or, more appropriately, "the one who is in love." The importance of the bards for Alevi culture can be appreciated, for example, from the Alevi saying "Kuran'ın özü, aşığın sözü," which means "the essence of the Koran is the word of the *aşık*." This also coincides with the Alevi belief that wisdom is not "hidden in the Book," but mainly in people themselves and in their everyday stories (Neyzi 2002, 102).

24　The performed repertoire usually corresponds to the specific segment of the ritual, so the choice is far from being random, but the *zakir*'s selection of the music nonetheless influences the soundscape of the ritual space.

25　This instrument symbolically represents Imam 'Ali. The neck of the *bağlama* can also represent Imam 'Ali's sword, *Zülfikar*, while the twelve frets, appearing in some versions of the instrument, represent the twelve Imams (Ayışıt Onatça 2007, 56). The *bağlama* is also a central symbol for the oral tradition of the whole Alevi population (Hanoğlu 2017, 25, n41).

evidence of the lyrics of their songs, which reinforce ideas of love, affection, friendship, solidarity, and humanity, it is possible to say that Alevi music creates an environment of integrated hospitality.

For centuries in Anatolia, sung poetry, mostly preserved in oral tradition, has been authored and performed by well-known or anonymous travelling Anatolian bards known as *aşıklar* (pl. of *aşık*).[26] In their mystical songs, called *deyiş* or *nefes* (Alevi or Bektashi terms, respectively), they not only refer to elements of Islamic mysticism, Alevi belief system and morals, but also convey messages about friendship, peace, affection, tolerance, hospitality, love, destiny. Some songs may also take the form of advice or satire (Duygulu 1997, 61ff).[27] These themes provide a deeper understanding of the beliefs and lifestyle of Alevis. That multiple themes appear in the sung poetry of the *cem* confirms that Alevis put great emphasis on the meaning of life while they live it, teaching goodness, fairness, and solidarity. The expression of compassion, fraternity, philanthropy, and affection in the Alevi songs has a great influence on the lives of community members. The presence of these messages in their mystical songs, messages of almost universal value and ethical significance, enable the ability to reach a wider range of listeners and believers, spreading beyond Alevi communities. In addition, most of these songs "contain clearly understandable, generally valid advice. They are gladly sung irrespective of the occasions, e.g., grannies sing them to their grandchildren and thus they are passed down from one generation to the other" (Sipos and Csáki 2009, 60).

An insight into the anthology of the Bektashi *nefesler* (pl. of *nefes*), presented as part of a 1990s ethnographic study in the region of the Turkish province of Thrace by János Sipos and Éva Csáki (2009, 109–610), revealed that some *nefesler* speak directly about hospitality. Their lyrics emphasize its importance and highlight the privileged position of the guest in every Alevi community. The following *nefes*, *Yine mihman geldi* (*A Guest Has Arrived Again*) explicitly welcomes guests, who are always accepted by the Alevi hosts with pleasure and delight, as brothers and sisters:

> A guest has arrived, my heart's rejoicing.
> *Ref.*: Guests, you're welcome,
> Brethren, you're welcome!

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26 The *aşıklar* of Anatolia are followers of Alevism or Sunni Islam, but they all recite epics as well as perform their own sung poetry accompanied by the *bağlama*.

27 Based on the analysis of the content of the representative lyrics of the songs, Duygulu (1997, 61–152) classified the songs into three groups. The first covers the compositions with religious, mystical or philosophical content, the second includes didactic and lyrical songs, while the third comprises songs with diverse or mixed content. In the further definition of the second group, there are six themes, one of which is hospitality.

No guest comes to a sad home,
He may shout and scream, his misery will never end,
He's invited all over, but won't go anywhere. *Ref.*

The guest even opens the inner door,
The guest is the rose of the master,
God's guest, my saint, Ali. *Ref.*

Be gracious, come to see us again,
Not only the big or the small, but all of us,
Food doesn't matter, let our eyes laugh. *Ref.*

(Sipos and Csáki 2009, 522)[28]

After a direct welcome to the guests in the chorus, the verses of the *nefes* welcoming the *mihman* above all divulge the conditions that would foster their coming. For a guest to visit the house, the latter must be bright; that is, happy, positively oriented, and must represent the good-natured environment that will welcome the guests. The guests, regardless of their need to be hosted, and no matter how much any house or any host would desire the visit, will not pay a visit if the circumstances do not enable hospitality to emerge. Furthermore, in the third verse the song indicates that the guest is the one who has locked the door to the interior ("Misafirdir iç kapının kilidi"); that is, the interior of the Alevi spiritual path (*yol*) developed and cultivated by the members of the community. Since the guest has locked the door, only the guest can unlock it. Alevi hosts see the guest as a rose – someone valuable and beautiful but at the same time fragile and in need of care. In mentioning the divine guest, Ali himself, the *nefes* presents the possibility that each guest could be God, and because of this potential, according to Alevi belief, the guest always represents something divine, a presence of God.[29] The song ends with an invitation for a gracious visit by all members of the community, irrespective of their mutual differences, since it is important they make each other happy no matter what and how much they can share.

It seems that the lyrics of the song *Yine mihman geldi* (*A Guest Has Arrived Again*) suggest some sort of turning point in the perception of hospitality, which is usually conditioned by the nature or appropriateness of the guest:

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28 This is the translation provided by the authors of the research upon the following original text in Turkish language: "Yine mihman geldi, gönlüm şaz oldu. / *Refr*. Mihmanlar siz bize hoşça geldiniz, / Kardaşlar siz bize sefa geldiniz. // Kara olan eve misafir gelmez, / Bağırsa, çağırsa eksiği bitmez. / Her yere çağrılır bir yere gitmez. *Refr*. // Misafirdir iç kapının kilidi, / Misafirdir, sahibinin gülüdür / Tanrı misafiri pirim Ali'dir. *Refr*. // Kerem hümmet eyle gene gel bize, / Büyük kücük deme cümlemiz bile, / Yavan yahşi deme yüzümüz güle. *Refr*."

29 Again, I am indebted to the anonymous reviewer who pointed out that this is due to the Alevi belief in the Oneness of Being (*vahdet-i vücut*), as promoted by Ibn Arabi and alluding to the unity of the human being with God.

Alevi hosts would always unconditionally accept their guests, but in order to be able to do this, they must meet certain conditions – the hosts are those who must have a sufficiently pure heart, possess enough goodness, a sufficiently open soul to be visited by the guests. This brings us to Derrida's aporetic understanding of hospitality: if conditioned by laws or restrictions, hospitality cannot be "true" hospitality, i.e., one that could justify the ethics of human action. Ethics of hospitality could be based solely on an absolute, unconditional hospitality represented by the everlasting "yes" to everyone at every meeting. This kind of hospitality, however, is virtually impossible, as the danger of unconditional acceptance of the enemy is always implicit (Derrida 2000).

This unconditional law of hospitality, if such a thing is thinkable, would then be a law without imperative, without order and without duty. A law without law, in short. For if I practice hospitality "out of duty" (and not only "in conforming with duty"), this hospitality of paying up is no longer an absolute hospitality, it is no longer graciously offered beyond debt and economy, offered to the other, a hospitality invented for the singularity of the new arrival, of the unexpected visitor (Derrida 2000b, 81, 83). It is possible to conclude that Alevi paradigmatic hospitality is enabled precisely by the desire for the host to take care of the other as a part of the journey to achieve the ideal of a "complete human" (*insan-ı kamil*).

Furthermore, the lyrics of the various collected *nefesler* for the purposes of the study of Sipos and Csáki (2009, 480, 529, 538, 572, 600, 602, 604) illustrate that the people who visit and are always welcome know the mystery of God's righteousness – they are arriving at the love fair, as a message written in light; that guests open wide sacred spaces, purify and fill with joy the hosts' home, while the hosts sacrifice their own souls; that guests are holy people to whom one should show that they are good hosts, and that one should accept anyone as a brother or a sister; that there any instances of conceit disappear when guests arrive and that winter turns into spring; that guests illuminate homes; that the company of the guests and attention towards them is interpreted as pleasure and love. One particular *nefes* explicitly states that the believers are also very grateful for any hospitality offered to them by a particular community, since they are recognized as equal, and able to worship and pray freely (Sipos and Csáki 2009, 528). Similarly, the lyrics of some *nefesler* state that the members of a community are "all one soul" and as such are "guests in this house," where the house is thought to be the entire (God's) world (Sipos and Csáki 2009, 553–555).

The foregoing interpretation of the selected *nefesler*'s lyrics offers evidence that the Alevis do not see meeting a guest, an unknown foreigner, as a danger, but rather as a chance to approach the divine, following the principle of *insan-ı kamil* ("complete human"). Through regular prayer, the Alevis thus establish a relationship with infinity, with the unknown, to which they constantly turn,

despite the uncertainty of the latter. Thus, it can be said that when meeting a stranger, an unknown newcomer, they do not look on them as a danger, but above all as an opportunity to become divine – namely, it is divine to love a stranger. It is in this respect that the foundations of Alevi hospitality can be discerned also in terms of Derrida's unconditional hospitality and Levinas' responsible welcome to the other. It is precisely in this regard that the foundations of Alevi hospitality can be identified. Aleviness does not consider hospitality only in terms of being part of Alevi philosophy about living in unity, the acceptance of other, or general mutual affection; rather, the believers address hospitality directly, sometimes as the central theme expressed in the lyrics of sung poetry as well.

What is encouraging for identifying hospitality and hospitable intersubjective relationships is that they are not merely present in Alevi poetry, but also reflected in musical forms and elements integral to the *cem*. These too provide a lens to understand different ways of establishing hospitable intersubjective spaces, spaces, where members of the Alevi communities can meet as its equal subjects, as *canlar* (souls) in sharing.

Among the Alevi musical genres, one is called *karşılama*, which in Turkish translates as a meeting, reception, and greeting. This term also refers to a secular folk dance where the dancers face one another[30] when performing. It is performed when welcoming or receiving guests and particularly when a new resident is admitted to a new home, usually a bride (Sipos and Csáki 2009, 620). This gesture of individuals facing one another reminds one of Levinas' ethics, where encountering "the face of the other" is always accompanied by acceptance and welcome. A special musical form and sacred movement form carried out in the *cem* is *semah*,[31] which includes turning or moving in circular formation along with musical accompaniment and singing (Ayışıt Onatça 2007, 47–55). The initial of the three parts of the *semah*, characteristically its slow section, is called *ağırlama*, a term which can be interpreted as a welcome, since this is the moment when participants in the sacred movement meet at the center (*meydan*) and start turning or circling together (Ayışıt Onatça 2007, 70).

Alevi faith emphasizes the importance of mutual hospitality not only in its beliefs, but also in its music, passing this message on to the community for daily life. Spreading messages through music has the potential to influence the formation of relationships and views of any community. Alevi music calls for affection, friendship, love, solidarity, and humanity, and enables the feelings of welcoming acceptance.

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30   The word *karşı* means facing something or being across from.

31   Due to the spirituality and sanctity of this movement, which would be described as a dance by any external observer, the Alevis avoid using such a description, since the *semah* is anything but an ordinary social dance, which is why a common description of this custom is "turning," or sacred movement, referred to as *ibadet*.

Aleviness as a Possible Ethics of Hospitality

Through my observations and participation in two Alevi community associations, I determined that hospitality was deeply embedded in Alevi behavior, mutual relations, and, simply, their whole beings. Alevis themselves, however, do not conceptualize a discrete notion of hospitality, thus it is difficult to determine why it is so pervasive. Nonetheless, the observed aspects of welcoming gestures along with the principle of acceptance (*rızalık*) have been shown to be firmly embedded in the beliefs and practices of Alevi communities, and strongly influence their social order. These elements offer a fitting basis for the establishment of gestures of hospitality. The described religious, philosophical, and social circumstances seem to foster and encourage the development of ethical gestures, called upon by philosophers as Levinas and Derrida, such as responsibility, welcoming, affirmation, and acceptance. Derrida's exposure of the religious as a relationship without a relationship – the believer does not know the being they believe in, and therefore they cannot define their relationship – adds to the possibility for Alevis to establish a relationship with foreigners, strangers, without certainty. Any relationship with God is uncertain, a non-relationship (Derrida 1999, 29).

> What would faith or devotion be when directed toward a God who would not be able to abandon me? Of whom I would be absolutely certain, assured of his concern? A God who could not but give to me or give himself to me? Who could not not choose me? (Derrida 1999, 104)

With their sympathy and attention to others, and due to tolerance and acceptance, Alevis are examples of hospitable hosts, and thus embody the paradigm of hospitality (*misafirperverlik*). Derrida (1999, 103), following Levinas, presents God as the one who loves the stranger, even without reciprocity. Greeting is intended for infinity, even if the existence of a god is not necessary. It is a desire of God for a stranger, an unknown, a desire beyond being; a greeting calling from the desire for love for a stranger.

An analysis of the hospitality-related theme appearing in the lyrics of selected traditional Alevi songs demonstrated the importance that Alevis attribute to the welcoming of guests, who are believed to deserve hospitality almost unconditionally. Alevi poetry and its accompanying music as an oral tradition also passes down messages of welcome and acceptance. At the same time, it represents a medium, and space, for the expression of both an individual and a collective Alevi specificity, without fear of being rejected because of difference or otherness.

The aim of this paper was not to formulate a definitive analysis explicating Aleviness as a paradigm for an ethics of hospitality. Its purpose was rather to acknowledge that hospitality, as demonstrated in various welcoming rituals

of Alevi communities, is implicitly embedded in Alevi everyday worship praxis, and may indeed represent one of the community's most emblematic features.

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POVZETEK

Alevijstvo, glasba in gostoljubje

Članek predstavlja del obširnejše raziskave o etiki gostoljubja, ki jo je avtorica izvajala v času svojega doktorskega študija, in se osredotoča na študijski primer gostoljubja turških alevijskih skupnosti, ki jih je proučevala v Istanbulu. Izsledki proučevanja temeljijo na avtoričinem osebnem izkustvu, njenem etnografskem terenskem delu in obsežnih raziskavah literature s področja alevijskih študij ter pričajo o strpnosti in odprtosti alevijskih skupnosti do drugosti, drugačnosti, tujosti, do neznanega. Opisani pristop do raznolikosti se kaže skozi gostoljubne prakse, ki jih pripadnice in pripadniki alevijskih skupnosti izkazujejo njim znanim in neznanim gostom in gostjam. Slednjim aleviji in alevijke namenjajo posebno pozornost in jim nudijo brezpogojno pomoč.

Prispevek zagovarja hipotezo, da so turške alevijske skupnosti zaradi svojih religijskih in sekularnih prepričanj, svetovnega nazora in etičnih gest paradigmatski primer snovanja etike gostoljubja, o kateri so pisali pripadniki kontinentalne filozofije, kot sta na primer Emanuel Levinas in Jacques Derrida. Vtkanost gostoljubja v alevijsko življenjsko prakso avtorica predstavi tako na osnovi izsledkov svojega terenskega dela – opazovanja z udeležbo v istanbulskih alevijskih skupnostih –, kot tudi s preučevanjem vloge glasbe v alevijskem ritualu, imenovanem *cem*. Posebna pozornost je pri tem namenjena analizi besedil izbranih alevijskih mističnih pesmi, imenovanih *deyiş* oziroma *nefes*, kjer se omenjajo gostoljubje, odnos do gostov ter njihov pomen za alevijske skupnosti.

Alevijska glasba predstavlja jedro alevijskega obredja. Skozi stoletja se je prenašala ustno in je predstavljala sredstvo ohranjanja alevijske kulture in religije ter njihove identitete. Glasbena izvajalska praksa vključuje mistične in sakralne uglasbene pesmi anatolijskih potujočih pevcev, imenovanih *aşık*, ki so tovrstno glasbo izvajali predvsem na ruralnem področju Anatolije. Peta besedila običajno spremlja izvajanje na turško ljudsko dolgovrato lutnjo, imenovano *saz* oziroma *bağlama*. Na alevijskih obredih se ob glasbi redno pojavlja tudi telesno gibanje, sakralni gibi v obliki vrtenja in kroženja, imenovani *semah*.

Uvid v značilnosti alevijske glasbe ter predvsem v njena besedila ponuja možnost razumevanja alevijske težnje po miroljubnem in empatičnem sobivanju z drugimi religijami kot osrednji del alevijske tradicije, utemeljene na človekoljubju. Študijski primer alevijske etike gostoljubja, predstavljen v tem prispevku na osnovi uvida v alevijsko glasbeno tradicijo, pa predoči možnost razumevanja alevijskih skupnosti kot vzora za vzpostavljanje etike gostoljubja.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MAJA BJELICA (maja.bjelica@zrs-kp.si) is a Research Associate at the Institute for Philosophical Studies at the Science and Research Centre Koper, Slovenia. Her interest in the field of Turkish Alevi studies formed during her research concerning Alevi music in Istanbul in 2009. She later focused on aspects of Alevi ethics and hospitality that she presented as a case study in her doctoral dissertation, "A Philosophical-Anthropological Study of the Possibilities of the Ethics of Hospitality: Breath, Silence, and Listening in Spaces of Intersubjectivity," which draws from the disciplines of philosophy and anthropology. Her research interests include ethics of hospitality, applied ethnomusicology, ethics of listening, community music, intercultural philosophy, and transdisciplinarity.

O AVTORICI

MAJA BJELICA (maja.bjelica@zrs-kp.si) je znanstvena sodelavka na Inštitutu za filozofske študije Znanstveno-raziskovalnega središča Koper. Njeno zanimanje za proučevanje turškega alevijstva se je razvilo tekom njene raziskave o alevijski glasbi v Istanbulu, leta 2009. Kasneje je pozornost preusmerila v alevijsko etiko in gostoljubje, ki ju je kot študijski primer vključila v svojo doktorsko disertacijo s področij antropologije in filozofije, z naslovom "Filozofsko-antropološka študija možnosti etike gostoljubja: dih, tišina in poslušanje v prostorih intersubjektivnosti." Njeno znanstveno-raziskovalno zanimanje zajema etiko gostoljubja, aplikativno etnomuzikologijo, etiko poslušanja, skupnostno glasbo ter transdisciplinarnost.

Revealing the Secret Sounds and Movements: Presentations of Alevi-Bektashi *Nefes*es and *Semah*s from Bulgaria

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ABSTRACT

The article examines how public and audio-visual media presentations of Alevi-Bektashi ritual music and *semah*s in Bulgaria act as a bridge between the community and outsider audience. Special attention is paid to the advantages of using the innovative format of the virtual tour for revealing a little known and still somewhat closed ethno-religious minority that is apprehensive about outside scrutiny.

Keywords: Alevi-Bektashi ritual, *nefes*, *semah*, Bulgaria, virtual tour

IZVLEČEK

Članek proučuje, kako javne in avdio-vizualne medijske predstavitve obrednih pesmi (*nefes*) in gibov (*semah*) skupnosti alevi-bektašev v Bolgariji vzpostavljajo mostove med to skupnostjo in zunanjimi deležniki. Posebna pozornost je namenjena prednostim uporabe inovativnih oblik virtualnih ogledov pri razkrivanju malo poznane in še vedno zaprte etno-religijske manjšine, ki je občutljiva na pogled od zunaj.

Ključne besede: alevi-bektaški obred, *nefes*, *semah*, Bolgarija, virtualni ogled

Introduction

The topic of the present article, implied in title's keywords "secret," "reveal," and "presentation," concerns the complex process affording marginalized communities to achieve public visibility through mediatized display as viewed through the lens of applied ethnomusicology. This process is encapsulated in a triadic construct of relationships – community-mediator-audience – that will be utilized in a case example of the still thriving sacred ritual culture of Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria.[1] The clandestine nature of the religious ceremonies has allowed for their preservation, and by extension, the continuity of the esoteric meanings embedded in the religious minority's expressive culture which has no analogue in the pluralistic context in which it currently exists.

The topic at hand is of special and personal significance for me, as my research with Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria left an indelible mark on my first experiences as an ethnomusicologist. A life-long memory is my fieldwork "initiation" at an Alevi gathering in 1999, when my novice excitement was increased in response to the officiating religious leader's final metaphoric dictate: "Our path is a very secret path. You must not tell anyone what we have done here! […] All we have talked about; all we have done here – everything must remain here on that table. Let us now walk back on our steps in the snow – nobody should know where we were." Not straying from this research project in the following twenty-two years, I had the opportunity to notice how the cloud of secrecy gradually lifted and the Alevi-Bektashis began to share their religious knowledge and ritual expressions with outsiders. The liturgical songs (*nefes*es) accompanied by the plucked folk lute (*saz*) and the kinetic forms (*semah*s) occasionally left the limited circle of insider audiences and stepped into public and media contexts, which added another dimension to their functionality in that they became tools for social and cultural visibility and identity markers for the Alevi-Bektashi community.

The focus of the present study is therefore to investigate how the aforementioned tools are constructed and how they operate. In other words, the analysis will examine how public, scholarly, and audio-visual media presentations of Alevi-Bektashi ritual music and *semah*s in Bulgaria act as a bridge between the community and outsider audiences. I will do this by discussing several interconnected subjects including motives for crossing the centuries-valid

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1 Alevi-Bektashi is a cover term for non-orthodox, Sufi and Shi'i-related communities in Turkey and Bulgaria that are identified with the Alevis of Turkey, formerly known as *Kızılbaş*, and the Bektashi order of dervishes. The communities in Bulgaria are Turkish-speaking and live mostly in compact villages in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains and in North-Eastern Bulgaria. There are two main subgroups in both regions – the Baba'is and Bektashis (and Musahips – in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains), which share common religious doctrines and ritual structure, but differ in some ritual elements and expressive forms. Today they use the self-designations "Alevi" or "Aliani" and sometimes *Kızılbaş* (in North-Eastern Bulgaria) that encompass all their subgroups, including the Bektashis, Baba'is and Musahips.

taboos concerning *nefes*es and *semah*s, approaches to, and manner of presentation, and finally, the effects of the resulting visibility.

A Brief Discussion of Alevi-Bektashis and Their Expressive Culture

The collective term Alevi-Bektashi has been used in the scientific literature in the last twenty to twenty-five years to designate certain Muslim groups mostly from Asia Minor and the Balkans, together with the diaspora in Western Europe and North America, which differ from mainstream Islamic communities in terms of religious doctrine, ritual practices, and way of life (Margaritova and Gramatikova 2020, 132). Alevi-Bektashi doctrines are too complex to be sufficiently expanded on here, but two of the most important factors to be reminded of are: the cult of Ali ibn Abu Talib, the nephew and son-in-law of the prophet Muhammed (related to Shi'a Islam), and the search for, and maintenance of a deep, inner sense of faith that is allied to a *bāṭini* (esoteric) interpretation of Islam. The nature of the doctrine – comprising elements of moderate and marginal Shi'a beliefs, Islamic mysticism, and pre-Islamic Turkic religious views (Dressler 2008; Gramatikova 2011, 20), is secret and esoteric such that the set of beliefs is revealed only to initiated members of the community, who are guided by religious leaders (*dede*/*baba*) on their religious path (*yol*).

The individual religious sentiments are powered by and intensified through collective ritual contexts**,** in which initiated men and women participate together. All the meetings, traditionally held in secret, have a common structure of several highly symbolic activities. These activities are performed during every sacred gathering and include prayers, recitations from the Qur'an, discussions concerning religious and community life, the lighting of candles, limited consumption of alcohol, shared meals, and songs with and without movement, according to regional practices. These confessional practices are quite different from those of the politically dominant Sunnis; their obvious and hidden doctrinal and ritual peculiarities are still veiled in mystery and met with suspicion; when coupled with historic confrontations between the Shi'a and the Sunnis, the result has been continued prejudice. These factors cemented the Alevi-Bektashi immanent principle of *takiye* (Turkish; *taqiyah*, Arabic), or "a masking of true identity in hostile environments" (Markoff 2009), resulted in feelings of unjustified rejection and misunderstanding, and prolonged the predominantly rural-based community's self-imposed isolation. The preservation of this closed religious minority's religious views and ritual expressions was a necessary survival strategy.

In the 1980s, Alevi-Bektashi activists in Turkey and Western Europe initiated the so-called "Alevi movement" (or "Alevi revival"), insisting on the recognition of Alevism (Sökefeld 2008). Steps in this direction were open discussions on doctrinal topics and the public performances of rituals, including

music and *semah*s – acts, which are commonly interpreted by the researchers as putting an end to *takiye*.

These processes impacted the related communities in Bulgaria, though nearly twenty years later. Heirs of settlers predominantly from the Ottoman times,[2] their complex social position there was of a double minority in terms of their position *vis-à-vis* the ethnic Bulgarian majority and the large minority of Sunni Turks who the local Alevi-Bektashis refer to as "the others." In the aftermath of Bulgarian independence in 1878, the Alevi-Bektashi community have had to adapt to the inconsistent politics of changing governments. Extensive scholarship is devoted to the socialist period in Bulgaria (1944–1989), when the initial cultural and political tolerance towards ethnic minorities was replaced by intensified pressure on their identity in the 70s (Buechsenschutz 2000). The peak was reached in 1984–1989 during the so called "revival process," when the authorities ruthlessly implemented measures to erase all the ethnic and religious markers of Turks in the state.[3] The ensuing voluntary or forced mass migration of Bulgarian Turks to Turkey in 1989 greatly impacted the political, economic, and social life in Bulgaria. Of those Alevi-Bektashis who chose to stay in their places of birth, particularly those in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains, their reduced number and the changed structure of their religious communities opened the door to the decline of their religious life and the transformation of their ritual culture.

After Bulgaria's transition to democracy in 1989, ethnic and religious rights were restored and the "revival process" was officially recognized as a "historic mistake." This smoothed the way for the opening of the closed Alevi-Bektashi community and at the end of twentieth century the echo of the Alevi revival resonated in Bulgaria through contacts with relatives and friends abroad. The process was institutionally shaped by two local Alevi-Bektashi organizations: the Cem foundation – Razgrad (Cem Vakfı – Razgrad, founded in 2003 and chaired by Veysel Bayram) and the Cem foundation – Southern Bulgaria (Cem Vakfı – Southern Bulgaria, founded in 2006 and chaired by Mustafa Mustafa). Later, in 2013, a second organization in North-Eastern Bulgaria was established – the Cem foundation in the village of Bradvari (Cem Vakfı – Yeni

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2   Bulgarian historians consider that the majority of "non-orthodox" Muslims, who settled in the Balkans and on Bulgarian territory, were *Kızılbaş* Turkmen exiled during the Ottoman-Persian wars and the anti-feudal fights in Asia Minor in the sixteenth century. Other ways of spreading "non-orthodox" Islam involved the settlement of nomadic and semi-nomadic Turkic (mostly *Yörük*) tribes from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, the activity of *Abdalan-ı Rum* dervishes from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, and the Janissary corps connected with the Bektashi order of dervishes, for example (Gramatikova 2011, 141–230).

3   Using the argumentation that the Turks in Bulgaria were of Bulgarian origin, the state prohibited (or secularized) Turkish religious rituals and festivals, forbade the usage of the Turkish language in public (including the performance of Turkish songs and music), and enforced the changing of Turkish and Islamic names to Bulgarian and Slavic ones, etc.

Baltacı Köy). With the help of these institutions, cult sites were renovated, local religious festivals organized, and pilgrimages in Bulgaria and abroad arranged. These activities had a double effect on the community – on the one hand, they strengthened its internal structure and essence, and on the other hand, they made it more visible to outsiders.

The overcoming of the centuries-old restrictions is evident also on an everyday level in the sense that local Alevi-Bektashis are more willing to share elements of their faith and ritual culture. They occasionally discuss their beliefs with outsiders such as Bulgarians and non-Alevi Turks and allow visitors to observe their rituals and festivals honoring and venerating local saints.[4] At a *maye* fifteen years ago, for example, an Alevi asked me emotionally, "Do you see what good people we are, and how beautiful our traditions are?"[5] These sentiments illustrate how eager members of this minority within a minority are to be viewed in a positive way.

The possibilities for and occasions of open manifestations of Alevi-Bektashi expressive culture, or as I articulate it "revival through revealing" (Margaritova 2010, 208), still occur within limits. Needless to say, restrictions vary according to the individuals involved – be they insiders or outsiders – and the contexts in which negotiations occur. More importantly, decisions are dependent on the vision of local religious guides and more generally on discussions within the leadership of community councils. In this connection, there have been several waves of openings and closures of the community for the last twenty years, defined by Alevi-Bektashi leaders in response to social (and perhaps political) factors. In essence, today Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria decide in accordance with the views of their religious leaders when, how, and to whom to reveal (parts of) their religious views and practices. Paraphrasing the political anthropologist Hande Sözer, *takiye* still exists – but not in the sense of the total group concealment of the past, rather as a viable and flexible collective tactic of controlled visibility (Sözer 2014, 2).

To summarize, the motives of Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria for crossing the century-old lines of concealing their identity, religious views, and ritual practices lie in their desire to break the stigma of the negative attitude towards them and to achieve social and cultural equality. This chosen pathway to recognition and equality has been conditioned by the changing political, social, and cultural climate in Bulgaria, and stimulated by connections with related communities in Turkey and the European diaspora. As has been determined, Bulgarian Alevi-Bektashis chose the path of visibility, or controlled access to the expression of their religious values, the most revered values being the sacred sung poetry (*nefes*es) and the ritual kinetic forms (*semah*s).

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4   These festivals are called *maye* (or close phonetic variants) by the Alevi-Bektashis in South-Eastern Bulgaria.

5   The original statement of the anonymous interlocutor: "Vizhdash li kakvi dobri hora sme nie i kolko hubavi s ani adetite?" (Personal communication, May 26, 2001).

The Important Role of *Nefes*es and *Semah*s in Alevi-Bektashi Culture

Before analyzing the specifics of public presentations of *nefes*es and *semah*s, the question of what makes them such an important part of Alevi-Bektashi culture needs to be answered. One basic reason is certainly the fact that they are the steadfast building blocks of the ritual, as no ritual ceremony can occur without the singing of *nefes*es accompanied by the *saz* or the "turning" of *semah* (for Southern Bulgaria). But what underlies this structural connection is that the songs and the kinetic movements are one of the most powerful means for transferring clandestine religious knowledge. Both ritual music and *semah*s are based on poems in the Turkish vernacular for the most part ascribed to fifteenth century poet Kul Himmet and sixteenth century poets Pir Sultan Abdal, Nesimi, and Hatayi. These poems encapsulate essential Alevi-Bektashi doctrinal, ethical and social issues (Markoff 2002, 796; Gramatikova 2016, 563–582). Their sacred character is implicit in their common local names – *nefes* (meaning breath or hymn) or *quran* (meaning the holy book of Muslims). The performance of *nefes*es during the first part of the ritual gatherings[6] is intended specifically for the transmission and perception of sacred scriptures and doctrines. During this time, the religious leader expects full attention from the worshippers in the *cemevi* (the space for the ceremonies), while the ritual music specialists clearly enunciate the lyrics sung to melodies performed at a slow tempo.

Figure 1: Performance of an *oturak nefesi* by Cafer Cafer,
Elmalı Baba tekkesi (a *kurban*[7] ceremony, March 2020).

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6   These *nefes*es are called *oturak nefesi* ("*nefes*es performed while seated") in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains (see Figure 1).
7   *Kurban* (Turkish, from *qurban* – Arabic) – a ritual animal sacrifice.

Singing and playing *nefes*es also accompanies the performance of the several varieties of *semah*, with tempos that increase in speed. A central element of the *semah* is the movements of barefoot participants, positioned in the middle of the ritual space who pass around each other (more common in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains) or move in a circle or in lines in sync with the strict rhythm of the music, not touching each other and not turning their backs to the religious leader. Their individual steps and gestures, as well as the figures that emerge from their collective movements, are said to encode important symbols of the Alevi-Bektashi belief system. For example, the most sacred *semah* type *Kırklar* (the Forty) was described by my interlocutors from the Eastern Rhodope Mountains as a representation either of the suffering and death of Imam Ali's son Hüseyin at the battle of Kerbala (Sadula Hairula from the village of Gorna Krepost (Karalar), 2000), or the motif of the ascension of Muhammed to heaven (Kyazim Salif from the village of Chiflik (Çiflik), 2001).[8]

The dissemination of Alevi-Bektashi knowledge in the expressive forms of the *nefes*es and the *semah*s (i.e., in mystical poetry and in sacred movement), occurs through the mediation of music. The local tradition has established several melody types known as *makam* (sing.; *makam*s – pl.), as well as instrumental techniques, which are learned through oral tradition from master musicians referred to as *zakir*s or *İmam Cafer*s. These male music specialists are highly respected in the Alevi-Bektashi community as transmitters of knowledge and for their crucial role within rituals to perform the meaningful *nefes*es so that they elicit affective responses and to synchronize their instrumental accompaniment with the movements of the *semah*s. Though they differ in their vocal, instrumental, and improvisational abilities, all of them try to follow the fixed melodic models as reproducing traditional musical styles and movements during the ritual ensures the perpetuation of the religious ideas they are connected with.

In summary, the lyrics and accompanying music of the *nefes*es and *semah*s continue to act as traditional channels for the transmission of Alevi-Bektashi sacred beliefs and world view in the context of rituals where the music, performed by the *zakir*s/*Imam Cafer*s serves to intensify the emotional climate insider worshippers are immersed in.

Non-Traditional Contexts for Alevi-Bektashi Ritual Music and Kinetic Forms

This section of the paper addresses questions concerning types of public display of Alevi expressive forms in contexts such as stage performances, performances organized for scientific research, and media presentations. These questions include the following: What happens when the ritual music and kinetic

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8   John Kingsley Birge discusses the first interpretation (Birge 1937, 216), and Irène Mélikoff the second one (quoted in Mikov 1988, 34).

forms are presented in non-traditional contexts that include the attendance of outsiders – on stage, in the audio-visual media, or for scholarly research? What are the strategies of the people involved (insider performers and/or outsider organizers, researchers, journalists, and filmmakers)? To what extent are the secret Alevi-Bektashi beliefs revealed or do they remain hidden or distorted? And finally, how does this visibility affect the Alevi-Bektashi community?

Public presentations of Alevi-Bektashi music and *semah*s began at the turn of the twenty-first century, with the start of the Bulgarian Alevi revival and the community's striving for visibility, following similar initiatives in Turkey. The first shifts of the *nefes*es and *semah*s from the ritual context happened because of transnational interactions that included participation in public displays of Alevi expressive forms in Turkey for insider audiences who highly appreciated the authenticity of the regionally-based village repertoire. To accommodate the new needs of "representation" for the community, Alevi-Bektashi organizations in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains and in North-Eastern Bulgaria strategically chose to establish *semah* groups, which gave performances in Turkey and Bulgaria.

According to media publications, two *semah* groups in North-Eastern Bulgaria appear to be the most operative – those in the village of Chernik (Karalar) and in the village of Bradvari (Yeni Baltacı Köy), formed through the institutional support of community cultural centres known as *chitalishta*. These groups maintain a regular presence at public festivals and celebratory events in the region and in Turkey. Although some of the events referred to were certainly secular, the sacred nature of the "ritual dance," as it is designated on the website of the *chitalishte* in Chernik (Karalar), is not hidden – it is described as rhythmic and synchronized mystical and aesthetic body movements, grounded in the religious conception of unity with God ("Grupa za Semah […]" [n. d.]). These phrases (in Bulgarian) are in fact translations of the official text of the inscription of the *semah* genre in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO (UNESCO [n. d.]).

As opposed to North-Eastern Bulgaria, public performances of *nefes*es and *semah*s in Southern Bulgaria occur rarely, and during special occasions as presented in the following section.

Case Examples of the Staging of Alevi-Bektashi Sacred Musical Repertoire and Kinetic Forms

One of the most significant examples of the staging of ritual expressive culture on stage in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains occurred in 2011, at a religious festival (*maye*) in celebration of the newly renovated Bektashi shrine complex Elmalı Baba Tekkesi, near the village of Bivolyane (Mandacılar). Together with *zakir*s/*Imam Cafer*s from the region, a *semah* group affiliated with the

Cem Foundation (Cem Vakfı) of Southern Bulgaria performed for political and religious figures from Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, Romania, and Macedonia and thousands of other visitors, demonstrating the continuity of local Alevi-Bektashi ritual practices.

Four years earlier, in 2007, the same *semah* group participated in a concert celebrating one of the most important Muslim celebratory religious festivals or holidays known as Kurban Bayramı (Festival of the Sacrifice) along with local performers of Bulgarian and Turkish traditional music. As the concert was organized by the municipality of Kŭrdzhali (Kırcali) in the province of the same name, whose administration consisted mostly of Sunni Turks and Bulgarians and whose cultural politics were directed towards promoting regional cultural diversity, it is not strange that the Alevi-Bektashi performers were introduced as "a folk dance group." In fact, the stage performance of *nefes*es and *semah*s was notably close to that found in the ritual context. The religious leader was present throughout, chanting relevant prayers, and observing the correct execution of prescribed ritual etiquette that included prostrations and bows.

Figure 2: Muharem Aliosman, director of the culture house
in the village of Zvinitza, Eastern Rhodope Mountains.

A step towards popularizing the local Alevi-Bektashi community through its ritual expressive culture was a *semah* demonstration which occurred in the Regional Historical Museum – Kŭrdzhali in the spring of 2013. The demonstration was organized by a local village culture house, chaired by

university educated, Bektashi Muharem Aliosman (see Figure 2), in cooperation with the museum.[9] Aliosman also prepared the nomination documents for inscription of the *nefes*es from his home village of Zvinitza in the former "Living Human Treasures – Bulgaria" list for 2014 (part of the UNESCO program of the same name). His greatest desire was to receive support for transmission of the ritual musical and poetic traditions to the more and more disinterested and decreasing younger generation. The nomination was not successful at the national level, but passed the regional one, displacing a proposed Bulgarian tradition. Given the fact that the assessors were ethnic Bulgarian, non-Muslim experts, the regional success was a sign of a good level of (at least) local institutional recognition of the *nefes*es as a traditional cultural phenomenon of value.

Having followed these cases over many years, it seemed to me that the stage presentation of *nefes*es and *semah*s would legitimize them as the "public face" of the Alevi-Bektashi community in the region. On the contrary, they remained exceptions for the Eastern Rhodope Mountains. Even the *semah* group, once the official representative of the ritual music and *semah* traditions in Southern Bulgaria, ceased its activities. As my interlocuters revealed, the main reason was the generally distanced attitude of the local community and its leaders towards the public display of elements of ritual and its predesigned choreography for the stage. In particular, the Alevi-Bektashis mistrusted the motives of the outsider organizers, one stating "they just use us to gain popularity" (Margaritova 2016, 64). They also shared that they could not accept the time restrictions imposed on their participation in the events. In other words, they refused being used as pawns for political purposes and rejected the perceived desecration of their ritual traditions in secular contexts. In short, they refused (and still refuse) to be visible in secular contexts. Their position is so firm, that even the *maye* at the Elmalı Baba Tekkesi, the organization of which is in the hands of insiders, now takes place with Alevi-Bektashi *zakir*s from Turkey rather than local *Imam Cafer*s.

It can be concluded from the discussion above, that in both regions of compact Alevi-Bektashi settlement in Bulgaria, the regular or rare occurrence of *nefes* and *semah* stage presentations has helped the community be acknowledged for its unique means of cultural expression. What seems to be lacking, however, is a deeper understanding of the expressive culture in its ritual context that continues to be concealed by the Alevi-Bektashis themselves and/or is not fully recognized or understood by outsiders.

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9   The proclaimed centuries-old ritual traditions were presented in a non-traditional way by Muharrem and his sister who are not yet formally initiated into the local Bektashi community: the musical accompaniment consisted of recordings as the village *zakir* fell ill and the demonstration covered only a part of a typical *semah* performance that normally occurs within rituals.

Alevi-Bektashi Demonstrations of Expressive Culture for Researchers

Another example of *nefes* and *semah* presentations is that which is connected to scientific research. What makes me place such presentations in a separate category is the objectives of the researchers (mostly outsiders) not only to document and gain insights into the poems and the ritual kinetic forms, but more importantly to understand the specific contexts in which they take place.

It is worth noting that as early as the 1950s, during a period of ideologically and politically-motivated hardline atheistic propaganda, Bulgarian folklorists conducted research in some North-Eastern Alevi-Bektashi villages and managed to describe or record elements of the rituals observed (Marinov, Dimitrov, and Koev 1955, 95–216; Marinov 1956). The researchers were obviously able to get close enough to members of the community to receive and publish data about music as an integral part of the ritual, about the importance of the *nefes*es for the transmission of religious knowledge, and about the high position of the *zakir* in the religious community, as well as to give a general description of *semah*. Several archival recordings of *nefes*es from the 60s and 70s are also available in the Sound Archives of the Institute of Art Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, but the details concerning how the recordings were made is scant (Vlaeva 2008, 131–138). Despite the existence of these early documents, the political and ethnocentric orientation of the humanities in socialist Bulgaria imposed constraints on continuing research devoted to ethnic and religious minorities in the country, including Alevi-Bektashis until 1989. That was the reason for the delayed publishing of the results from an interdisciplinary project concerning the *Aliani* (Alevis) in North-Eastern Bulgaria, carried out at the end of the 1980s (Georgieva 1991). Among the abundant ethnographic data, valuable information about the so-called Aliani religious system and ritual practices, including the *nefes*es and *semah*, also found a place.

The limited amount of published scientific literature about Alevi-Bektashism was insufficient to prepare me for understanding this deep and complex phenomenon, when I made my first visit to communities in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains in 1999,[10] experiencing what I partly referred to at the beginning of the article. It took me years of regular visits to gain the trust of the local people and to be allowed access to more of their doctrinal and ritual practices, which I tried to systematize in my PhD thesis (Margaritova 2013; see also Figure 3). Some of my fieldwork research was accomplished together with prof. Irene Markoff – an ethnomusicologist from York University, Canada, whose expertise, *saz* performing abilities, and delicate approach towards

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10   I took part in the multi-disciplinary project of the New Bulgarian University *Perperek and its Adjoining Microregion – a Joint Investigation of a Millenary Multireligious Centre in the East Rhodope Mountains*, led by Professor Valeria Fol.

the local people easily ingratiated them.[11] My experiences in the field as well as hers prove that when deep interest and appreciation is shown, corresponding loyalty is earned and the scholars (regardless of their ethnicity and religion) can be received and appreciated as precious guests (Markoff 2018). And, valid at least for Southern Bulgaria, is the established syncretic connection of ritual music with the other elements of the ceremonies that is still vital, even in these non-traditional contexts as the performances of *nefes*es and *semah*s in response to our research interests, always happened as part of *kurban* ceremonies or within informal conversations, but along with other elements of ritual such as prayers, restricted drinking of alcohol, and a shared meal. It seemed that the musicians turned such interviews into a reduced model of the ritual.

Erenler meclisinde kırklar ceminde...

Figure 3: One of the *oturak nefes*es (*makam*s) in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains.[12] Transcription from the performance of Sebahtin Ahmed (1942–2014), a *zakir* from the subgroup of the *Baba'i* from the village of Zvinitza (Boyacıklar).

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11 Irene Markoff has shared her observations and analyses in three publications (Markoff 2007; Markoff 2016, 50–60; Markoff 2018, 23–31). Another valuable contribution to the topic is that of Alevi historian Nevena Gramatikova (see Figure 4), who wrote an important article with field data concerning the ritual music, poetic traditions, and *semah*s of Alevi-Bektashis from North-Eastern Bulgaria, that also included a comprehensive historical account with many sources (Gramatikova 2016, 531–591).

12 The melody (*makam*) of the *nefes* is typical for the repertoire of the Alevis-Bektashis in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains and is not performed in Northern Bulgaria. It is distinguished by its

In reflecting on my personal experiences and observations, I must admit that despite the respectful approach of outsider researchers and their attempts to validate the ritual music and kinetic forms in their complex forms, meaning and functions, the resulting publications involving their scientific efforts are rarely accessible to the local people who find the accounts to be incomprehensible. Thus, even if the local Alevi-Bektashis are appreciated and their ritual expressive culture has been properly contextualized, they may experience the lack of increased visibility and could question a semblance of communicative reciprocity with the researchers they interact with.

Alevi-Bektashi Expressive Culture and Audio-Visual Media

With regards to increased visibility of the Alevi-Bektashi community, the most effective mediators are unquestionably the audio-visual media. Of particular interest in this study is recent visual presentations of *nefes*es and *semah*s found in a number of Bulgarian-produced documentary films that will be introduced briefly as follows.[13]

The first film, *Hand over the Heart* (*Rŭka na sŭrtseto*), directed by Verginia Kostadinova and financed by the Bulgarian National Film Center, appeared before the rise of the Alevi revival in Bulgaria, in 1996.[14] It was made in the first years of democracy in Bulgaria, shortly after the Revival Process. In these times of intense ethnic tension, major political efforts were directed towards achieving social balance, through the arts. Thus, the main idea of the film was to mitigate the confrontation, by positioning the unknown Alevi-Bektashi community as a bridge between Bulgarians and Turks, and between Christians and Muslims. Not only were some of the mysteries surrounding the community revealed, but performances of the secret *ilahi*s[15] (hymns of Sunni dervish orders) and *nefes*es were also presented to a general audience for the first time. In addition, they were properly contextualized, as the film director secured the services of Alevi historian Nevena Gramatikova (see Figure 4) to act as a translator and consultant.[16]

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formal and melodic structure, and especially by the asymmetric meter 11/16 (2–2–3–2–2). In his performance, the *zakir* set the poem *Erenler meclisinde* (*In the Gathering of the Forty Saints* – concerning the ascension of the Prophet to heaven when he beheld the manifestation of Divine Reality in Ali during the Gathering of the Forty Saints) to the melody. According to local practice, any *nefes* lyrics with the same syllable-line structure can be used with the same *makam*.

13 Links to some of the films are found in the References.

14 I am grateful to Nevena Gramatikova for supplying me with information about the film, which is not available online.

15 *Ilahi*s are hymns of Sunni dervish orders, which were included in the repertoire of the Alevis-Bektashis from North-Eastern Bulgaria because of the historic connections between both communities on the local level.

16 Two of the *nefes* performers were Gramatikova's talented grandfather – the *zakir* Gafil, and her grandmother from the village of Sevar (Caferler); see also Footnote 9.

Figure 4: Nevena Gramatikova, an Alevi historian.[17]

The next two documentaries about Alevi-Bektashis in North-Eastern Bulgaria – *Mezhdu polumesetsa i krŭsta* (*Between the Crescent and the Cross*, scripted by Stoyan Radulov, 2011),[18] and *Alianite ot selo Bisertsi* (*The Aliani from the Village of Bisertsi*, author Teodor Stamboliev,[19] directed by Elena Mishkova, 2018)[20] share a similar perspective with *Hand over the Heart* in their search for parallels between different faiths and ethnicities in Bulgaria. "Authentic music" also finds a place within the discussions of Alevi-Bektashi doctrines, religious structure, and ritual practices. Moreover, interlocutors' interpretations of expressive culture influenced by Turkish media sources (TV, the internet, etc.) are presented. For example, the *semah* genre is equated with the "universe" and viewed as a means for achieving spiritual ecstasy and purification, and the participants' circular kinetic movements are interpreted as a symbol of the equality between people and the trajectory of the planets, etc. (Mishkova 2018).

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17   Photo by Nikola Boshnakov, used with the permission of the author.

18   The film (Radulov 2011) was produced and broadcast by the private broadcaster Television Tourism (Televiziya Turizŭm), but was enthusiastically received by an engaged audience at the Second Ethnography and Anthropology Film Festival in Sofia (Bulgaria) in 2011. Again, Nevena Gramatikova was a consultant.

19   Teodor Stamboliev is an opera director based in the city of Rousse (one of the biggest regional centers in North-Eastern Bulgaria).

20   The film (Mishkova 2018) was produced by Bulgarian National Television 2 for its weekly travel series.

The community in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains remained undiscovered for the audio-visual media for a considerable amount of time. It wasn't until 2015 that the first film was shot there, in the village of Gorna Krepost – the village of my first encounter with the Alevis. *Alianite* (*Aliani*) produced by Bulgarian National Television for the popular series *Otblizo – s Mira Dobreva* (*Up Close with Mira Dobreva*, Dobreva 2016) gained popularity among Bulgarians, but the lack of sensitivity of the author, a famous Bulgarian journalist, during the shooting process, as well as the misinterpretations of the improperly chosen main interviewee, offended the local Alevis and the curtains were drawn again.

In contrast with the search for exoticism of the previously discussed film, and despite the difficulties in finding interlocuters, the next one under discussion – *Siyanieto na Dvanadesette* (*The Radiance of the Twelve*, directed and written by Tzvetan Simeonov, 2020) gives perhaps the most profound and comprehensive view of the philosophy and religion of the Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria.[21] *Nefes* and *semah* performances are also included as illustrations, and the clarifications about their meaning and significance are woven into the philosophical tapestry of the film, rather than like dabs of paint added to a canvas for a more colorful picture.

The newest documentaries on Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria – *Aşk* (*Love*), 2021 and *Hayır* (*No*), 2001 directed by Vladimir Andonov, portray two *zakir*s from the Eastern Rhodope Mountains, telling their human stories with warmth and empathy.

To summarize, the way Bulgarian directors and authors present *nefes*es and *semah*s in films depends on their motivations, interests, creative abilities, and approaches. Included in the footage as merely excerpts, these ritual expressive forms appear either as an integral, socially meaningful, and deeply religious part of community culture, as artistic activities, or just as sonic and visual components. These different approaches affect the community, enabling them to reevaluate their attitudes towards visibility.

New Directions: A Virtual Tour of Alevi *Nefes*es and *Semah*s

A new audio-visual project involving Alevi-Bektashi expressive culture emerged when Vladimir Andonov viewed the film *Aliani* mentioned above. Perceived as unsatisfactory by the insider community, but intriguing for uninformed outsiders, Andonov, as an uninformed outsider was captivated by the film as it resonated with his own search for the lost values and hidden wisdom lacking in contemporary society. As a result, he looked for opportunities to meet with the community and contacted freelance film-maker Nikola

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21   Muharem Aliosman, the active Bektashi from the village of Zvinitza (Boyacıklar) introduced above, mediated between the director and the community.

Boshnakov, the afore-mentioned Alevi historian Nevena Gramatikova, and me as potential collaborators. Andonov had formulated a vision for a project that would creatively and ethically reproduce Alevi-Bektashi devotional practices but realized that it might not be suitable because of the sacred ritual context in which the *nefes*es and *semah*s played such an important role. The focus of the project eventually became audio-visual presentations of Alevi-Bektashi sacred music and kinetic forms from the Eastern Rhodope Mountains. Our aim, as a collaborative team, was to document the current state of the ritual traditions, as well as to arouse deeper outsider interest in the little-known culture through virtual immersion into some of its most intriguing elements. In this way we hoped to assist the local community in their efforts to shift away from its marginal social status in the region.

In 2019 our team, under the institutional cover of ALOS,[22] got support from the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture,[23] so we managed to make several short-term visits to villages with active Alevi-Bektashi ritual music specialists. In general, the local people were positive about our work and intentions and cooperated with us because most of them knew and trusted me and Nevena Gramatikova. They were also driven by the desire to preserve their heritage that was threatened by loss, or with the hope that they would receive a positive response both inside and outside the community. Nevertheless, a few *zakir*s and *İmam Cafer*s refused to share their musical knowledge with us or in front of the camera as they were still bound by the old rules of *takiye* trying to protect the tradition from outsiders who might interpret them incorrectly.

Fortunately, we were able to document community events, such as an *Aşure*[24] gathering, a *maye* festival, and a *kurban* ritual. We were also able to negotiate the recording of a demonstration of ritual music repertoire. Our observations proved that the Alevi-Bektashi ritual expressive culture in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains was still vital and well preserved, rooted in the old local repertoire and enriched with several popular *deyiş*es (mystical sung poetry in the vernacular) imported from Turkey.[25] In general, the musicians, most of whom were self-taught in the sense of listening and observing elder *zakir*s and *Imam Cafer*s, were not *saz* virtuosos, but did try to maintain a good level of musical expertise.

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22   Center for Informal Education and Cultural Activities ALOS, https://alos.bg/en/.

23   The project was named "The Unknown *Other* Close to You: Alevi Ritual Music and Dance from the Eastern Rhodopes" and was financed by the National Culture Fund of Bulgarian Ministry of Culture.

24   *Aşure* (Ashura) is an Islamic holiday, which is celebrated by the Alevi-Bektashis (and by the Shi'a Muslims) in commemoration of the martyrdom of Ali's son Hüseyin.

25   Some of the beloved *deyiş*es of that kind are *Çeke Çeke* and *Dostum Dostum*.
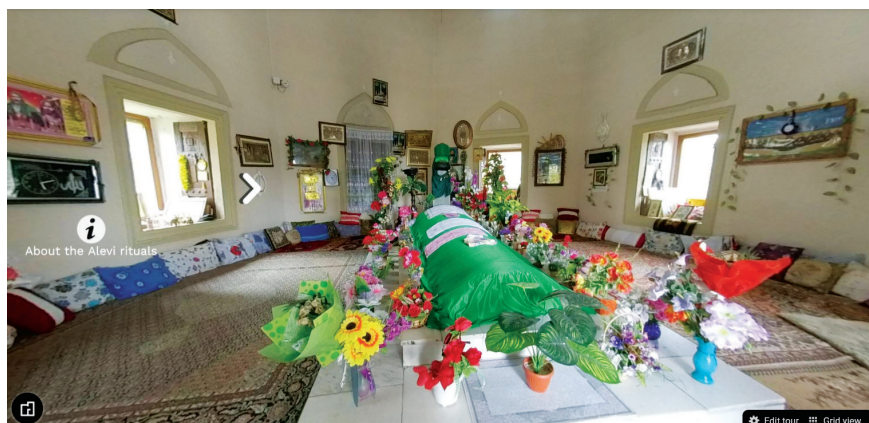
Figure 5: A snapshot from the virtual tour "Ritual Songs and *Semahlar* of
the Alevis and Bektashis from the Eastern Rhodope Mountains."

According to the project objectives, the recorded material had to be presented in live interactive multimedia exhibitions in several Bulgarian cities. This was impossible with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 so we decided to introduce the material in two virtual tours for two[26] of the community subgroups in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains (the Baba'is and the Bektashis). Seeking a more integrated presentation of Alevi-Bektashi ritual expressive culture in Bulgaria, we combined text, audio and video recordings of ritual music and *semah*s, as well as interviews, with panoramic photos of cult sites such as saints' tombs (*türbe*s) and dervish lodges (*tekke*s), in the region (see Figure 5). In other words, we tried to provide in a concise, comprehensive, and graphic way, highlights of our knowledge of and respect towards the Alevi-Bektashis.

Initially we utilized the Kuula platform,[27] generally used for real estate, architecture, construction sites, museums, etc., trying to adapt it to our needs. Apart from its advantages (easy manipulation, possibilities for attaching different types of multimedia, etc.), it did not allow for embedding videos and playing VR footage,[28] which made the virtual tour run slowly and with hitches. The required monthly subscription for the platform needed to support the tours was also an obstacle, given the financial limitations of the project. Searching for a new permanent decision,[29] we released only the first virtual tour that was dedicated to the Baba'is.

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26 The third group, known as *musahip*s, is generally considered as the most closed subgroup in the Eastern Rhodope Mountains, so including them was not possible.

27 https://kuula.co/.

28 Part of our material was shot with a VR camera.

29 The links to the final versions of the virtual tours will be announced on the site of ALOS, alos. bg. In June 2022 our team released a new virtual tour concerning Alevi-Bektashi ritual music and semahs from North-Eastern Bulgaria: alevineb.artstudies.bg.

Before making our project public, we searched out the opinion of the local people. The generally supportive feedback was encouraging, but two remarks stood out. The first one was made by an Alevi, who questioned the appropriateness of including the ambient sound of a cow mooing, viewing it as a sign of profanity and lack of respect towards the sacred *nefes* genre as it is heard in its traditional context. This fear of the debasement of sacred music clearly demonstrates the community's deep sensitivity towards outsiders' misconceptions of its culture's true nature. The second comment was made by a Bektashi who criticized the terms used for Baba'i and Bektashi musicians (*zakir* vs. *Imam Cafer*) and of the number of religious duties during rituals of the two subgroups (seven for the Baba'is vs. twelve for the Bektashis). He insisted on the superior correctness of the Bektashi interpretation of both issues, neglecting the ethnographic (and perhaps historic) realities.[30] This sentiment could be read in light of current attempts of the Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria to demonstrate a solid front in order to be accepted as a united community.

The virtual tour was also presented to a Bulgarian audience in May of 2021, during the *Dzhoben festival – Festival na kratkite formi v izkustvoto* (Pocket Festival – Festival for Short Forms of Art in Sofia). The mostly young public, free of ethnic and religious prejudices, reacted with a strong interest towards the unfamiliar community and with excitement about gaining access to the profound and universal messages of Alevi-Bektashi faith, culture, and traditions. The virtual tour proved to be an effective tool for approaching "the unknown other."

Laying the topic of the Alevi-Bektashi ritual music and *semah*s aside, I will try to give an objective assessment of this innovative audio-visual format, considering its potential use in applied ethnomusicology. The virtual tour stands between ethnographic film and ethnographic exhibition and falls into the category of interactive and immersive documentaries known as i-docs (Vannini 2020, 8). It is up to the user to navigate through the tour in a non-linear manner, following his/her own interests and perceptions. This is certainly one of its advantages. Others lie in the possibilities for adding or editing content, thus enriching, or improving a presentation over time. On the other hand, constantly changing technologies can make the content vulnerable because of the inability to update the materials in a timely fashion. A second disadvantage is that presenting data (in the virtual tour) instead of telling a story (as the case would be in ethnographic film) does not necessarily provoke an emotional response in the audience – which is preferable to just provide information. But, as our experience indicates, a virtual tour

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30 As pointed out above, the Baba'is and Bektashis in Bulgaria are subgroups of a homogenizing community which shares common religious views and ritual structure, but still differs in some doctrinal and ritual elements which can be observed using an ethnographic approach. Nevena Gramatikova states that the differences are a result of historical, geographical, and psychological factors (Gramatikova 2011, 230). Given the current state of written and oral sources, such differences are probably hard to trace.

can at least provide media content for the correct audio-visual presentations of cultures that are a part of closed communities.

Concluding Remarks

Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria do want to be socially and culturally accepted and appreciated, but in their pursuit of this goal they may need to abandon or transform the rules of *takiye*. A basic tool for gaining visibility is the public presentation of their *nefes*es and kinetic forms, *semah*s that until recently were not allowed exposure to the view of outsiders. Extracted from rituals and performed on stage at concerts or at festivals, analyzed in scientific journals, or showcased in films or in innovative formats such as virtual tours, the presentations of *nefes*es and *semah*s help Alevi-Bektashis in Bulgaria become more understood. But as the community is still sensitive to and somewhat suspicious of others' observations and interpretations, its increased visibility can be interpreted affirmatively or offensively by its members, depending on the degree of understanding and approach of outsider researchers, filmmakers, and other cultural agents. For a more positive effect, ethical concerns should be at the forefront for outsider culture brokers as they engage in the social mediation of representation and exchange of insider knowledge.

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POVZETEK

Razkrivanje skrivnih zvokov in gibov: predstavitve zvrsti *nefes* in *semah* iz Bolgarije

Živa obredna kultura alevi-bektašev v Bolgariji je stoletja ostajala tajna, kar je omogočilo ohranjanje vanjo vtkanih pomenov. Njeni bistveni elementi so pesmi (*nefes*, ed.), ki jih spremlja *saz* (lutnja), in posebne kinetične oblike (*semah*, ed.), ki v okviru obredja delujejo kot tradicionalni elementi za prenašanje alevi-bektaškega skrivnega izročila preko besed, dejanj ter interakcije med glasbeniki (*zakir*ji / *İmam Cafer*ji) in poslušalstvom, preplavljenim s čustvi, ki jih sproža ali krepi moč glasbe.

Z željo, da bi presegli stigmo negativnega odnosa do njih in dosegli družbeno in kulturno enakopravnost, so alevi-bektaši izbrali pot vidnosti oziroma nadzorovanega dostopanja do njihovih religijskih vrednot – med najbolj cenjenimi so religijska uglasbena poezija (*nefes*) in obredne kinetične oblike (*semah*). Občasno so zapustili omejen krog poslušalstva svojih skupnosti in prešli v javne in medijske kontekste, ki so njihovemu delovanju dali dodatno dimenzijo, saj so postali orodja alevi-bektaške družbene in kulturne prepoznavnosti ter označevalci identitete njihove skupnosti.

Zvrsti *nefes* in *semah*, vzeti iz obredja in izvajani na koncertnih ali festivalskih odrih, analizirani v znanstveni literaturi ter predstavljeni v filmih ali inovativnih oblikah, kakor je virtualni ogled, sta pripomogli k razumevanju in prepoznavanju bolgarskih alevi-bektašev. A ker je skupnost še vedno občutljiva in nekoliko nezaupljiva do opazovanj in interpretacij drugih, tovrstno pozornost lahko interpretira kot razumevajočo ali žaljivo, odvisno od stopnje razumevanja in pristopa zunanjih raziskovalcev, filmskih ustvarjalcev in drugih kulturnih agentov. Za bolj pozitiven učinek mora biti etična skrb za zunanje kulturne posrednike vedno na prvem mestu, saj sodelujejo pri družbenem posredovanju predstavljanja in izmenjavi znanja o kulturi alevi-bektašev.

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O AVTORICI

RUMIANA MARGARITOVA (rumiana_margaritova@yahoo.com) je docentka na Inštitutu za umetnostne študije Bolgarske akademije znanosti. Magistrirala je iz muzikologije na Nacionalni akademiji za glasbo »Prof. Pancho Vladigerov« v Sofiji, doktorirala pa iz etnomuzikologije na Inštitutu za umetnostne študije Bolgarske akademije znanosti. Njeni raziskovalni interesi in objave so osredotočeni na turško tradicionalno glasbo v Bolgariji, alevi-bektaško obredno glasbo ter tradicionalno glasbo v večkulturnih okoljih.

Can Social Media Replace a Suspended Rite?
An Example from Central Italy

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ABSTRACT

In 2020 and 2021, the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic suspended or limited important rites and the web became the place to fill the void. In March 2020, I started to conduct virtual fieldwork on this development from the perspective of what happened to the pilgrimage to the Holy Trinity of Vallepietra (Central Italy).

Keywords: Covid-19, pilgrimage, virtual compensation, *communitas*, devotional music

IZVLEČEK

V letih 2020 in 2021 so bili številni pomembni verski obredi zaradi pandemije Covid-19 prekinjeni ali omejeni. Splet je postal prostor, ki je zapolnil nastalo praznino. Od marca 2020 sem nastale izredne razmere raziskovala s terenskim delom na spletu in opazovala razvoj dogodkov ob romanju k Sv. Trojici v kraju Vallepietra v osrednji Italiji.

Ključne besede: Covid-19, romanje, virtualna kompenzacija, *communitas*, nabožna glasba

The contemporary scenario, in which media and technologies are more and more ubiquitous, has led ethnomusicologists to move more and more towards the study of the impact of technology on musical performance (Giannattasio 2017).

For some time now, the pervasiveness of the "media of live forms" (Hannerz 1992) has been used by individuals or groups to invent virtual lives or to reverberate in the network of what happens in specific places (Wood 2008). The world of religion has also benefitted extensively from social networking (Ingalls 2019) and as a result many traditional rites had to enter somehow in dialogue with the internet (Macchiarella 2017).

The extraordinary situation of the global lockdown necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic offered in 2020 and 2021 an unprecedented context in which to investigate the role of the media of life forms in contemporary society. In Italy, for example, people were forced to stay at home for a very long period,[1] and the use of the social media grew exponentially.

As a case in point, many important religious and other calendrical rites in Italy were inevitably suspended during the various Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020 and 2021. In some cases, however, cultural associations, brotherhoods, religious societies, or single individuals used the internet to fill the void created by the suspension of a rite by both promoting actions from home and sharing recordings of previous events online.

Since March 2020, when the lockdown necessitated that everyone stay at home, I began creating a remote ethnography (Podjed 2021) or virtual fieldwork (Cooley, Meizel, and Syed 2008). In the process I collected web user behavior concerning various contexts and repertoires of ethnomusicological interest and paid particular attention to some of the Catholic ritual calendar events that were suspended at the time.

In this paper, I will concentrate on the pilgrimage to the Santuario della Santissima Trinità di Vallepietra (Holy Trinity Shrine in Vallepietra) in Central Italy, a ritual that I know well from previous fieldwork undertaken between 1999 and 2009 that was devoted to the role of music in this specific pilgrimage (Caruso 2008, 2015). This has allowed me to orient myself in understanding the behaviors produced by the pandemic and in the analysis of whether they are aligned to the behaviors customarily observed by the pilgrims during their visit to the sanctuary.

In March 2020, I started an "ethnography of the digital" (Podjed 2021), recording what was happening on social media, in particular the Facebook

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1   In response to the growing pandemic of Covid-19 in the country, the Italian Government imposed the first severe national lockdown on March 9, 2020, restricting the movement of the population except for circumstances pertaining to necessity, work, and health. This lasted until June 15, 2020. In October 2020, a second progressively more restrictive lockdown came into force, lasting until the end of April 2021. A third less restrictive lockdown started March 6, 2021, terminating on July 31. After that, restrictions were aimed only at those who had not had vaccinations.

pages devoted to the shrine, and contacted some of the pilgrims, now friends, to better understand what was happening. I wanted to understand if pilgrims would have used those pages to somehow compensate for the absence of the *visita* (visit) and how. I was preoccupied with the following questions: Did the traditional songs performed at the shrine have a role and which role? Which songs formed a part of the repertoire? Did the significant distancing from the ritual practice have an impact on their performances? Did the nature of the visit change once the lockdown ended? From March 2020 to July 2021, I continued monitoring those Facebook pages and was able to collect sufficient information to find some answers to the questions formulated.

The Pilgrimage to the Holy Trinity of Vallepietra

On a cliff of Mount Autore, situated between the Italian regions of Lazio and Abruzzo, at a height of 1.300 meters, there are caves which, during the twelfth century, were adorned with frescoes of sacred images, probably the work of Benedictine monks. The main fresco offers an image of the Holy Trinity, crafted according to the Byzantine tradition. The fresco depicts three identical Christs who make the gesture of blessing by the folding of the thumb and ring finger of the right hand over each other. This sanctuary has been a place of ritual importance since the Neolithic Period, as revealed by archaeological evidence (Brelich 1955); it has risen in prominence from the early nineteenth century onwards (Simeoni 2006).

The steep ledge on which the sacred site is situated has been the centuries-long object of pilgrimage for villagers from neighboring regions (Lazio, Abruzzo and Campania), located within a radius of approximately hundred kilometers.

Many pilgrims still travel to the sanctuary on foot, covering tens of kilometers, often at night. Normally the *visita* takes place with groups of people from the same village, called *compagnie*.[2] Those who travel there by car wait for those who come on foot in the proximity of the sanctuary, in order to make the *visita* together.

The sanctuary is open from May 1 to November 1, a period during which pilgrims visit the shrine. The moment of greatest influx of pilgrims coincides with the two main feasts linked to the sanctuary: the feasts of the Holy Trinity and of St. Anna. The first is movable and takes place on the Sunday following Pentecost (also movable, therefore in a period from April to June); the second is on July 26.

Differently from the other devotees, the inhabitants of Vallepietra perform their devotions twice through specific processions. The first occurs every

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2   Devotees of the Holy Trinity shrine of Vallepietra are normally grouped into *compagnie*; the exception is devotees from Vallepietra and Subiaco, who are organized into official brotherhoods.

February 16, to celebrate the appearance of the image of the Trinity at the shrine; the second coincides with the opening on May 1. The rest of the opening period is dedicated to welcoming pilgrims both to the village and the shrine.

As I witnessed during my previous fieldwork, pilgrims' thoughts are focused on the pilgrimage all year long. The most intense moment is the brief instant when the worshippers' gaze meets the eyes of the Trinity in the fresco within the cave, but the whole journey and especially being at, and near, the sanctuary is crucial. The importance of the physical place clearly emerges in the sentiments expressed by shrine devotees. Its beauty, the difficulty in reaching it (especially for those who arrive by foot), the emotion it evokes, and the number of people that take part are all key elements of the *visita*. As in every pilgrimage (Turner 1978), it is a remarkable journey in which all the senses, heightened by the effort shown by pilgrims, play a crucial role. In my study of this specific pilgrimage, however, hearing has a very important – probably the most important – one.

It is not by chance that the founding legends of the sanctuary are so well expressed in the main song, the *Canzonetta in lode alla Santissima Trinità* (*Song in Praise of the Holy Trinity*), and that this song is performed again and again by all the *compagnie* during their *visita*. The *Canzonetta* consists of twenty-seven verses – octosyllabic-line quatrains with a consistent rhyme scheme (envelope rhyme scheme) and a truncated fourth line (ABBX) – alternating with a refrain also composed of octosyllabic lines with a consistent rhyme scheme and yet again shortened last line (ABBX). Neither the author nor the date of composition of the song's lyrics is known. In terms of the stanza, the meter and the language, the song would not appear to date from before the second half of the nineteenth century, suggesting that it is probably a modification of earlier songs and texts.

The lyrics of the first verse followed by the refrain are as follows:

Italian original	English translation
Tutti quanti genuflessi	All of us genuflected
Siamo noi qui venuti	We came here
Onde tutti a noi ci aiuti	Where all of us will be helped
O Santissima Trinità	By the Holy Trinity
Viva viva sempre viva	Live live always live
Quelle Tre Person Divine	Those three divine Persons
Quelle Tre Person Divine	Those three divine Persons
La Santissima Trinità	The Holy Trinity

The basic way to perform the song is quite simple, the pitches encompassing the interval of a fifth and moving in stepwise fashion. A four-measure phrase

is repeated in almost identical fashion every two lines of the text for both the verse and the refrain. The treatment of the text is syllabic, the rhythm following the accents of the words.

Each *compagnia* can sing the *Canzonetta* in unison or polyphonically; the singing can be accompanied or not by one or more instruments, the instruments sometimes forming a band. The nature of the musical performance depends on the ability of the *compagnia* to present itself compactly and in a different way from the other *compagnie*.

Through the paradigmatic analysis of hundreds of versions collected over the years, I was able to identify the two most used versions of the melody (see Figures 1 and 2), which are performed with dozens of variations[3] from *compagnia* to *compagnia* either separately or alternated between verse and chorus. Pilgrims confirmed my view that once the two versions were performed together, superimposed to create polyphony. The main versions are found in the examples provided below.

Figure 1: The more widespread version of the song.[4]

Figure 2: The second main version of the song.

Other songs performed at the sanctuary include the *Canzone sul miracolo eseguito da S. Anna* (*Song about the Miracle Performed by St. Anne*), that is sung by the *compagnie* who make the *visita* to the shrine in the period close to the

3   At least 26 and 17 variants respectively.
4   In Figures 1 and 2, the syllables in the Italian word "person" are divided as "pe-rson" rather than "per-son" to reflect the exact manner of performance concerning which syllables correspond to which pitches.

day of the commemoration of St. Anne. Its poetic and musical structure is analogous to that of the *Canzonetta*. Pilgrims also sing specific songs to the Holy Images prior to leaving. These songs are not typical of this sanctuary but can be found in other sanctuaries in the same area of Central Italy, changing only small parts of the text.[5]

All these songs, mixed with prayers, invocations, voices, and Mass celebrations, overlap with the whispering of people who have made their *visita* and are talking, singing, playing, and taking great delight in being there (see Figure 3). During the Holy Trinity and St. Anne feasts in particular, the huge number of pilgrims and the sounds they make create an amazing soundscape, amplified by the structure of the cliff with its very high and concave rocky wall.

Figure 3: Feast of the Holy Trinity, June 10, 2006. The *compagnia* of Anagni leaves the shrine accompanied by its band, while other *compagnie* are waiting to get into the cave of the fresco of the Holy Trinity.

The singing reaches its climax at the shrine but accompanies the whole pilgrimage, from the departure from the pilgrims' hometowns to their return.

The sanctuary's identity is clearly affirmed in the verses from *Canzonetta in lode alla Santissima Trinità*: "La montagna risuona di canti" ("The mountain resounds with songs"). It is through the different renditions of the *Canzonetta* that the *compagnia* demonstrates its presence and faith, adapting the song to its specific needs at any given moment, depending on the place, the emotions conveyed, and the composition of the group itself, but also on the composition and renditions of the surrounding *compagnie*.

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5   For a more detailed description of all these songs see Caruso 2008 and 2015.

In the words of Giovambattista, a pilgrim from the village of Anticoli Corrado:

> *Here it feels as if you were a bearer of the faith and the performance of the song is powerful because I am expressing all this power, this joy with the Supreme Being. In this moment, the only thing that exists for me is the* compagnia, *my group, even though there are others. It is one single entity in which personal identity no longer exists.* (Interviewed by the author in October 2007)[6]

The words of this pilgrim clearly express the need to create *communitas* that is specific to the experience of the pilgrimage (Turner 1978). To share the same devotion at the sanctuary creates a special bond that becomes stronger within the *compagnia* that shares the entire experience from home to the shrine.

In February 2020 the usual procession of Vallepietra took place, but after a few days everything had to be suspended due to the introduction of the lockdown. The sanctuary could not open on the first of May and all events were canceled. At the end of June, as we slowly exited the lockdown and the sanctuary reopened, *visite* resumed, but with safety measures[7] that discouraged many pilgrims until September when the rules were loosened.

Unfortunately, November of 2020 brought new forms of closures, and restrictions continued until the opening of 2021, which took place only with the prior and a few representatives of the various *compagnie*. *Visite* continued to be regulated by the prior, allowing only small groups (from one family up to fifteen people) to make the *visita* to the Holy Trinity.

Virtual and Real Pilgrimage in the Time of Pandemic

The first lockdown happened shortly before Easter. This had quite an impact on places which have strong performative traditions linked to the Easter celebrations. Having undertaken several fieldwork expeditions dealing with numerous Easter processions, I began asking my friends how they were managing with the suspension of all rites. Through these discussions it became clear to me that the internet had become an arena that could compensate in some way for the absence of the rites. I then started to do e-fieldwork, observing, documenting, and reflecting on what brotherhoods, *compagnie* and cultural associations were creating on the web regarding religious rituals, and continued researching also after Easter.

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6   Original statement of the interlocutor: "Qui è come se fosse un portare la fede e la manifestazione del canto è forte perché io esprimo tutta questa forza, questa gioia con il Supremo. In quel momento ci sono solo io Compagnia, il mio Gruppo, anche se ci sono altri. È tutta una massa fusa in cui il personale non esiste più."

7   Only small groups, wearing masks, and maintaining social distance, were admitted to the Holy Trinity, and they could not stay at the shrine after the visit or sleep there, or nearby.

I observed what was happening on the Facebook pages of the three main institutions that in various ways revolve around the sanctuary of Vallepietra:[8] These institutions/pages include the following: the Confraternità S.S. Trinità Vallepietra (Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity of Vallepietra, created and administered by Prior Paolo De Santis in 2014); the Santuario Santissima Trinità (The Holy Trinity Sanctuary, created in 2016 by Don Alberto, rector of the sanctuary), and Fede e tradizione al Santuario della Santissima Trinità – Vallepietra (Faith and Tradition at the Sanctuary of the Holy Trinity – Vallepietra, created and administered by Filippo Graziosi, active member of the Center for Studies and Documentation of the Sanctuary of the Holy Trinity, in 2018).

What happened on these Facebook pages? The first two, in particular, reacted quickly to the situation and became a strong point of reference for devotees who were in lockdown at home.

On March 10, 2020, a letter from the mayor of Vallepietra and the rector of the sanctuary was posted on all the afore-mentioned Facebook pages:

> *Given the restrictions that have also been applied to places of worship, in agreement with Don Alberto we decided to pray to the Holy Trinity on Sunday, March 15 at 10:30, each from their own home or place of work, to get this important message of faith to God the Trinity.*[9]

The initiative was welcomed by many who posted short videos on that day, and videos continued to be shared on all three Facebook pages in the days that followed.

The inhabitants of Vallepietra participated at first by posting videos in which women were singing the *Canzonetta* or the final part of the *Pianto delle zitelle* (*Lament of the Spinsters*; a lament about the death of Christ sung only by the women of Vallepietra at the shrine on the Sunday of the Holy Trinity feast), showing the sanctuary from the village.[10] Vallepietra residents then started to post videos showing the streets of Vallepietra with the faithful looking out from their homes singing the *Canzonetta*. The idea was to pay homage to the devotees who do not live near the sanctuary, allowing them to at least see the holy place. Every Sunday, in fact, the president of the brotherhood posted short videos showing the sanctuary.

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8   The web pages normally only provide official information, while the Facebook pages of communities, as those examined here, host a chorus of voices and emotions through posts, photos and videos.

9   Original post: "Date le restrizioni anche ai luoghi di preghiera, d'accordo con Don Alberto abbiamo deciso di pregare la Santissima Trinità domenica 15 marzo alle 10.30 ognuno dalla propria casa o luogo di lavoro, per inviare questo importante messaggio di fede a Dio Trinità."

10 An example posted on March 15, 2020, can be found here: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=485168332365544 (Confraternità S.S. Trinità [n. d.]).

After March 15, the devotees started to post videos recorded in their homes or courtyards, with individual renditions of the *Canzonetta*. These renditions were instrumental, depending on the type of instrument the pilgrim had at their disposal at home. We have to consider that people were in self-isolation and could only perform alone for the most part, and with the instruments they had at home, if available.[11]

In the following days, another kind of video appeared on the Facebook pages: photos of devotees with audio examples of sanctuary-related devotional songs recorded live during previous pilgrimages edited and mixed into the video footage. Some were photos of previous *visite*, some were photos taken for use in the video, and included drawings of rainbows, the symbol in Italy for "everything will be fine" which began to adorn the balconies and windows of the whole country.[12]

This compensation through Facebook continued throughout the entire first lockdown. For the Holy Friday of Easter 2020 (April 10), Don Alberto, both the rector of the sanctuary and the parish priest of the church in the village of Vallepietra, decided to make up for the absence of the usual procession by playing a recording of a performance of the *Pianto delle Zitelle* over the parish bells amplification system. The event was recorded, showing the empty streets of the village and reproducing the audio of the *Pianto* and posted the same day on Facebook (also that of the Municipality).[13]

To avoid gatherings that could be dangerous since Covid-19 was not completely defeated, the shrine opened on June 15, after the feast of the Trinity (which in 2020 fell on June 7), and slowly pilgrims began to visit the sanctuary again. The rector established strict rules for the *visite* that severely limited the influx.

During this period, the pilgrims' requests to post photos and videos on the brotherhood and sanctuary webpages attesting their *visite* increased significantly. The photos generally show the pilgrims after their *visita*, posing in the forecourt of the shrine, while the videos show small *compagnie* singing as they approach the holy cave of the sanctuary. The posts reached their peak in September, when less stringent restrictions enticed many more devotees to go to the sanctuary. Only one video from home was posted in July.[14]

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11 An example posted on March 15, 2020, can be found here: https://www.facebook.com/alessio.deangelis.792/videos/10218892530297063 (Confraternità S.S. Trinità [n. d.]).

12 An example posted on March 19, 2020, can be found here: https://www.facebook.com/1429536853955845/videos/202372934349382 (Confraternità S.S. Trinità [n. d.]).

13 The video is in the following link: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=734421453760307&external_log_id=fd94a5d3-8a87-4068-851f-e6874fc3cf7c&q=Comune%20di%20Vallepietra (Comune di Vallepietra [n. d.]).

14 The video is in the following link: https://www.facebook.com/renato.iacobelli/videos/3177118292334978 (Iacobelli 2020). It is not explained in the video, but the pandemic restrictions were stronger for some inhabitants of specific regions or for unvaccinated people.

I had seen in the past that many *compagnie* often filmed their *visite*, especially since smartphones became popular. However, these documentations were rarely posted online. The sharp increase in posts was determined by the conditions created by the pandemic.

The sanctuary, as usual, closed at the end of October. Unfortunately, Covid-19 spread again, and the 2021 opening was also affected by closures and restrictions such that pilgrimages on foot, gatherings and overnight stays around the sanctuary were prohibited. The rector of the sanctuary established a calendar of *visite* with the *compagnie* from May to September that allowed for restricted attendance.

The February procession of Vallepietra took place but was limited to only a few people from Vallepietra and was live streamed on Facebook. The same thing happened for the opening of the sanctuary on the first of May. To compensate, some images and videos of the February 2020 procession, when 3.000 people participated, were uploaded to Facebook. In the following months all relevant religious events were broadcast live on Facebook.

In 2021, the proliferation of video clips of previous and present *visite* continued, while the *ad hoc* production of renditions from home ceased. This is probably because the requirement to isolate at home has not occurred so peremptorily.

The photos and videos resemble those posted in 2020. There are selfies or pictures of the *compagnia* taken by another visitor showing the group after their *visita*, photos or selfies taken in front of the caves, videos of the *compagnia* approaching the sanctuary, and walking, singing and playing, with the *compagnia*'s banner in front.

Media Compensations

To summarize, during the first period of lockdown (March–May 2020), the posts uploaded to Facebook found new ways to somehow perform the traditional songs of the pilgrimage, even if at home, mixing them with the national rhetoric *#andràtuttobene* (everything will be fine). The reactions during that time were part of the need to create a "great narrative" that was seen throughout social and traditional media (Affuso et al. 2020) that all Italians were experiencing. But the pilgrims of Vallepietra contributed to the narrative with an already consolidated musical repertoire, using the traditional songs of the shrine. After that period ended, every post from home stopped and only documentation of what had happened or was happening at the shrine was posted.

The sense of what happened is expressed well in the words of a devotee who had left Italy many years ago, and emigrated to Canada:

> *When I was little, I always went with my* mamma *to the sanctuary. Unfortunately, we can no longer do this, but I still have the best memories of my mum on the bus. I know technology is good, because in minutes we know what we are all doing and where we are, but remember, memories are what keep us going and allow us to always remember.* (Comment to a Facebook post on the page of the brotherhood)[15]

We can learn about pilgrimage through reading related literature, but as I witnessed in my previous fieldwork, pilgrimage has a strong impact on the bodies of the participants. The deep feelings evoked during the *visita*, the intense involvement of the senses fix the experience not only in the mind but in the body itself. Posts on Facebook – both during the first lockdown and when the sanctuary reopened – were meant to reactivate the memories held from previous *visite*. That's also why the videos only show a fragment of the *visita* and do not reveal the entire process involved in the visitation or present a montage of it in a kind of documentary format. There is no need for a long video or professional and creative editing to revive memories of the visit.

In the above-mentioned video of July 12, 2020 (see Footnote 9), a devotee playing the *Canzonetta* from home even though the shrine was open, stated: "How much I miss not having been to the Holy Trinity. It is an emotion that touches you inside. WWW The Holy Trinity."[16] As Regula Qureshi (2000, 810–811) so profoundly articulates:

> *The physical sensation of sound not only activates feeling, it also activates links with others who feel. In an instant, the sound of music can create bonds of shared responses that are as deep and intimate as they are broad and universal. The ephemeral bond of a sonic event does not commit to physical contact – though it may elicit it. Experiencing music together leaves the personal, individual, and interior domain unviolated. At the same time, the experience becomes public, shared, and exterior. Such a reification of feeling and sensation, in turn, endows musical sound with a social existence coded as identity ("our" music) and with shared associations and connotations coded as aesthetics (art)* [...].

Even though participating, feeling emotions, exchanging impressions, and meeting old friends, are all crucial parts of the sanctuary visit, singing with friends and playing for friends is the primary way to convey these emotions and translate them into a shared expressive code.

In the case of the videos posted in 2020 and 2021 when the sanctuary was re-opened, it is important to consider which moment of the ritual process was

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15   This quote is a revised version of the original post.

16   The inscription "WWW" is used by Italians to signify "*Evviva!*" – a word that is the equivalent of praising or honoring an individual. The most used sentence at the shrine is in fact "*Evviva la Santissima Trinità*" ("May the Holy Trinity be Praised!"). The original post in Italian: "Quanto mi manca di non essere stato alla Santissima Trinità è un'emozione che ti tocca dentro WWW La Santissima Trinità."

chosen. It is interesting that all the videos show the most emotional moment: when the *compagnia* has almost reached the cave with the Holy Trinity. It is in this crucial moment that the singing becomes intense, and emotions take over. As Giuseppe, from Anticoli Corrado, told me, "When you get to the Holy image, everything is done. You have already spoken with the Holy Trinity along the way. At that moment there is only silence."[17]

In more than ten years of documentation of the pilgrimage I was able to witness how the emotions intensify as the pilgrims reach the cave of the image of the Holy Trinity. The emotion explodes when they arrive at the threshold of the cave and the singing gives way to silence or crying. Once inside, crossing the gaze of the three identical Christs, the emotions slowly diminish.

The experience of pilgrimage is strictly codified in every mode of behavior, from the way to dress to the ways to affirm the presence that includes small stones left at the foot of specific crosses, small ephemeral crosses made from twigs and secured with bracelets, and hair clips or other personal items left near the cliff's ledge. Souvenirs are also bought at the stands to be given to those who were not able to go to the sanctuary or to keep as a reminder at home. Posting documentation of the visit online is a new way to affirm one's presence there, but it cannot replace the visit itself.

Concluding Reflections

As Turner and Turner (1978) suggest, a pilgrimage is like a staging, and it happens best when it is shared with many people. As this study has illustrated, during the lockdown, the presence of aspects of the ritual pilgrimage to the Holy Trinity of Vallepietra on Facebook became the means to "be there" somehow, reproducing the core of the ritual: the musical performances.

Part of the emotions, that emerged in interviews as well as the comments expressed on several posts, involved the profound depth of feelings of being together with thousands of people, and sharing the same form of devotion and emotional response to the visit. The reopening of the sacred site with a limited number of visitors produced the need to share their *visita* on Facebook, to share the experience with those who could not participate, and with all the pilgrims that stayed at home.

No other Facebook page was created: the faithful accorded the pages of the sanctuary, of the village and of the brotherhood a status of officiality not bestowed on others. No music other than the traditional songs of the sanctuary were performed.

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17 Interview conducted on March 12, 2006. Original statement of the interlocutor: "Quando arrivi all'immagine santa è tutto finito. Hai già detto tutto alla Trinità lungo la strada. In quel momento c'è solo silenzio."

The virtual presence at the shrine through the Facebook pages and its associated rituals circumvented the curtailing by the pandemic of physical presence and participation. Produced and packaged in a format directed to a specific socio-cultural milieu, the videos speak exclusively to those already familiar with the ritual who can be easily moved by these images through the memories they evoke. In this way the virtual world depicts behaviors enacted in the same fashion for centuries at the shrine, thus stimulating and recreating the *communitas* that normally occurs physically at the shrine.

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POVZETEK

Ali lahko družbena omrežja nadomestijo prekinjeno izvajanje obredov? Primer iz osrednje Italije

»Live media forms« (Hannerz 1992) oz. »žive medijske oblike« ponujajo orodja, ki so pomembno spremenila ustvarjanje glasbe in način uživanja v njej. Spremenila se je tudi vloga glasbe v vsakdanjem življenju, predvsem v pomembnih obrednih trenutkih (Giannattasio 2017). Italijo je pandemija Covid-19 od marca do maja leta 2020 potisnila v popolno zaprtje. Temu so sledile še številne stroge omejitve do konca leta 2020 in v večjem delu leta 2021. Vsi pomembni obredi katoliškega cerkvenega leta so bili v tem času odpovedani. Kulturna združenja, bratovščine, verska društva ali posamezniki so v nekaterih primerih odpoved obredov v živo nadomestili z virtualnimi obredi. Marca 2020 sem začela opazovati, zbirati in analizirati spletne objave pripadnikov teh skupin, predvsem na Facebooku, in poseben poudarek namenila njihovemu glasbenemu vedenju. V opazovani vsebini sem našla izseke iz posnetkov preteklih obredov, ki vključujejo zvočne posnetke in fotografije, pa tudi na novo ustvarjeno in posneto vsebino. V nekaterih primerih je šlo za neposredno spletno poročanje iz manjših dogodkov. Veliko družbenih akterjev je internet že uporabljalo kot orodje za ozaveščanje o lokalnih tradicijah med popolnim zaprtjem in poznejšimi ukrepi za preprečitev širjenja korona virusa, v tem času pa je splet obenem postal prostor, kjer so mnogi našli zatočišče pred občutkom osamljenosti. Zanimivo je bilo opazovati, kateri vidiki ritualnosti so bili v procesu virtualizacije obredov bistveni in so morali biti nujno prisotni tudi v novi obliki. Izkazalo se je, da je glasba v različnih oblikah osrednjega pomena za izražanje pobožnosti. Po obdobju poglobljenega virtualnega terenskega dela sem se osredotočila na določene dogodke, ki sem jih preučevala v okviru terenskega dela pred pandemijo: to so procesije velikega tedna in romanje k Sv. Trojici v Vallepietri v osrednji Italiji.

V pričujoči raziskavi se osredotočam na obred romanja k Sv. Trojici in nadaljnje raziskave sledečih vprašanj: Kaj se je zgodilo, ko so bile individualne, osebne prakse pobožnosti, povezane s čaščenjem na svetih krajih, prenesene v virtualno obliko? Kateri elementi ritualnega so bili preneseni na splet in kako? Ali je virtualni način izvajanja obredov spremenil doživljanje ritualnega s strani romarjev? Po krajšem uvodu o uporabi virtualnega prostora opišem romanje k Sv. Trojici v Vallepietri, ki temelji na mojem predhodnem terenskem delu in pridobljeni dokumentaciji. Nato opišem, kaj se je dogajalo med popolnim zaprtjem države od marca do maja leta 2020 in med nadaljnjimi omejitvami. Članek zaključim z analizo virtualnih nadomestkov obreda, izvajanega v živo, ter analizo pridobljenih rezultatov.

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FULVIA CARUSO (fulvia.caruso@unipv.it) graduated with honors in Ethnomusicology from the Sapienza University of Rome, where she also obtained a PhD in Cultural Anthropology. She is currently Associate Professor in Ethnomusicology at Pavia University, where she is also the rector's delegate for the third mission in Cremona. In 2017 she was Visiting Professor at the University of Jordan and at Tufts University. From 2016 to 2019, she was President of Pavia University's five-year Master program in the Conservation and Restoration of Musical Instruments, and Scientific and Technical Instruments. Her fields of research include music and migration, intangible heritage and its heritagization, music and rite, oral poetry and narrative styles, and visual ethnomusicology.

O AVTORICI

FULVIA CARUSO (fulvia.caruso@unipv.it) je na Univerzi Sapienza v Rimu z odliko diplomirala iz etnomuzikologije in doktorirala iz kulturne antropologije. Trenutno je izredna profesorica za etnomuzikologijo na Univerzi v Pavii, kjer je tudi rektorjeva predstavnica v Cremoni. Bila je gostujoča profesorica na Univerzi v Jordaniji in Univerzi v Medfordu (Tufts University). Med letoma 2016 in 2019 je bila predstojnica petletnega magistrskega programa za konserviranje in restavriranje glasbil ter programa za znanstvena in tehnična orodja na Univerzi v Pavii. Njena raziskovalna področja so glasba in migracije, nesnovna dediščina in dediščinjenje, glasba in obredje, poezija ustnega izročila in narativni slogi ter vizualna etnomuzikologija.

Sacred Folk Songs and the Slovenian Immigrant Community in Switzerland

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ABSTRACT

The article presents the role of sacred folk songs in the liturgy of the Slovenian Catholic Mission in Switzerland. It presents active singing as local ethnic cultural forms that have been transmitted from the "original homeland" and serve to create temporal and local continuity in the diasporic Slovenian Catholic community in Switzerland.

Keywords: singing, sacred folk songs, Slovenian immigrants, Slovenian Catholic community, Switzerland

IZVLEČEK

Članek predstavlja vlogo cerkvenih ljudskih pesmi v liturgiji Slovenske katoliške misije v Švici. Petje predstavi kot lokalne etnične kulturne oblike, ki so se prenesle iz okolja »prvotne domovine« in ustvarjajo časovno in lokalno kontinuiteto v diasporični slovenski katoliški skupnosti v Švici.

Ključne besede: petje, cerkvene ljudske pesmi, slovenski izseljenci, slovenska katoliška skupnost, Švica

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Introduction

"Without music there is no liturgy," emphatically stated Friar Robert Podgoršek, "Friar with a Guitar," as he introduced himself to me when I asked him about his work and sacred music in Switzerland's Slovenian community. "Yes, it has to be, and you can't do it without singing,"[1] parish priest Father David Taljat told me when I asked him about his musical ministry, about music in the Slovenian Catholic community and about singing during Sunday religious services. "Yes, these church songs are very beautiful to me," replied my interlocuter M. M. when I asked her what she thought and how she experienced folk singing that is performed during Sunday church services.[2]

The main objective of my research conducted with the Slovenian community in Switzerland was securing data concerning sacred musical practices, and more specifically singing at Sunday church services. Singing is perceived by most Christians as the center of Christian life and worship, and in the case of the Slovenian Swiss diaspora always performed in the Slovenian vernacular language by church parishioners. When interviewing my interlocuters, we discussed singing as it remains a continuous musical practice in Switzerland's relatively small Slovenian[3] community.

In my research, I proceeded from the assumption that music, in its various interpretive forms, remains a central element of religious life. I was interested in which specific kind of music – vocal music in my research case – complements and supports the liturgy and is in line with the life of the congregation, which is expected to participate actively. The purpose of the study was to find out what defines this music and what it is that the Slovenian Church in Switzerland preserves today from the continuum of tradition to create a richer and stronger common experience through musical collaboration. And moreover, I was interested in the nature of "musical locality" that is "locally meaningful and useful in the construction of Christian beliefs, theology, practice, and identity" (Ingalls et al. 2018, 3) in the Slovenian Catholic community in Switzerland. If faith is enacted through culture and in a particular culture, in this case the community in Switzerland, then the facts about which musical practices and contents develop a dialogue between faith and culture and which music reflects this dialogue are significant. It is also important to ask what this music means to the faithful who, in their regular weekly or monthly meetings, gather around the universal, Christian idea of the celebration of the Last Supper and

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1   David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, May 3, 2013).

2   Interlocutor M. M., in discussion with the author (Bern, February 9, 2021). M. M. moved to Switzerland a few years ago to gain new knowledge and life experience. One of the communities she has found in Switzerland is the Slovenian Catholic community, where she is one of the few young immigrant women to have joined.

3   Today, around 150 people attend Slovenian Sunday services in Switzerland.

the sacrifice of Calvary, and thus participate in the liturgy to which Christians have both a right and a duty.

Before discussing the sacred folk songs in the liturgy of the Slovenian Catholic Mission in Switzerland, the role of the Slovenian Church in caring for Slovenian communities around the world is presented. A brief historical overview and an analysis of the importance of the Slovenian Catholic Mission for the Slovenian community in Switzerland is followed by a few words on the founding of the Slovenian Catholic community, which coexists in the multi-ethnic and multicultural environment of Switzerland. A brief insight into who in the Swiss Confederation is responsible for the Catholic pastoral care of immigrants and in what form is also provided.

For several years, I have been collecting information on musical practices within the Slovenian Catholic community, which is united under the Slovenian Catholic Mission. I visited the communities in Zurich, Amriswil, Olten, Winterthur, Basel, Rüti and Geneva between 2014 and 2016. I also visited the community in Bremgarten near Bern on numerous occasions between 2016 and 2022, and as a result was able to gain deeper insights into that community's liturgical practices and its sacred songs. Therefore, the singing analyzed in the present paper focuses on the traditions and performance practices of Bremgarten's community. During the two periods of research, I interviewed various members of the Slovenian Catholic Church (2015 and 2021), the former head of the Slovenian Catholic Mission, Capuchin Friar Robert Podgoršek (2014), and since 2013 I have been communicating with the diocesan priest and parish priest David Taljat, the mission's current leader who provided most of the information presented in this paper.

The Slovenian Catholic Community

Slovenian religious communities in Switzerland were first established in the 1960s due to the growing influx of people who arrived in the country to work but wanted to continue their religious life in a new environment using their native language. Missions, however, were established in line with the post-conciliar idea, which increasingly focused attention on the holistic pastoral care among the migrants, in order to continue the Church's missionary activity. In 1969, the document "Instructio de pastorali migratorum cura" (Instructio 1969) was published, which sets out the Catholic Church's position on human migration and the development of civilization; the document also calls for the Church's task, among other things, to bring about fraternity among people.

The Swiss Bishops' Conference[4] was one of the first organizations to respond to the strong labor migration in the post-war period and today its

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4   In 1965, the bishops approved the creation of the Swiss Catholic Association for Foreign Workers (SKAF), which in 2000 changed its name to Migratio – Commission of the Swiss Bishops'

mission is still the social and religious care of immigrant Catholics.[5] Almost 40% of Swiss Catholics have a migrant background and are a vital and growing part of the Swiss Catholic Church, which can therefore be perceived as a multinational community (Hofer 2020, 82; Schweizerisches Pastoralsoziologisches Institut – SPI 2021).[6] The Slovenian Catholic Mission in Switzerland is one of a number of Catholic missions and pastoral groups spread across six Swiss dioceses.[7] The changing dynamics of immigration from other countries are influencing the relationship between religions in Switzerland: whereas in the past Swiss cities were more Protestant and the countryside more Catholic, today the structure of religious confession in the cities exhibits an orientation in favor of the Catholic faith due to the immigration of Catholics (Schmid 2011).[8] The Swiss Church thus pays special attention to migrant Catholics, funding priests who offer services in more than twenty languages, dedicating space for services and for other pastoral work; it is concerned – in the words of Marc Schmid, Director of Migratio for several years – with "how to approach these people who find themselves in a new world, how to act so that they feel accepted in the local Church, so that they find their second home there" (Schmid 2011).[9]

Today, approximately 150 Slovenians are actively involved in the church life of the Slovenian Catholic Mission in Switzerland, making it one of the smallest of the "foreign" Catholic missions in Switzerland. Because most of the members are still from the first immigrant community, the mission is made up of members who immigrated to Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein by the 1980s, and younger individuals or families are rarely present at religious services. As a rule, first-generation immigrants are integrated into

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Conference for Migration. This name was intended to emphasize more clearly its mandate as an ecclesiastical commission.

5   The Swiss Bishops' Conference was one of the first institutions in Switzerland to respond to the strong labour migration in the post-war period with a commission. In 1965, it founded the Schweizerische Katholische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Fremdarbeiter SKA (Swiss Working Group for Foreign Workers) as its staff commission for migration. Its task was to draw public attention to the growing number of immigrants and their problems, and to provide social and religious care for them and their families. In 2000, the Bishops' Conference commission was renamed Migratio and still operates under that name with the same task (Schweizer Bischofskonferenz, 2021).

6   The church in the Canton of Zurich states, for example, that their church includes worshippers of 150 nationalities (Katholische Kirche im Kanton Zürich 2021).

7   Thus, in 2017, over 21.000 Catholic religious services were held in more than twenty languages (Pfeifer 2019).

8   Due to the growing shortage of Swiss priests, the Swiss Church is also looking for priests abroad, and more and more of them are coming from Russia, Africa, and India (Hofer 2020, 82).

9   Marco Schmid is the son of Slovenian parents, belongs to the second generation of immigrants in Switzerland and worked as Head of Migratio, the Office of the Swiss Bishops' Conference – Pastoral Care for Migrants, between 2008 and 2013. He then worked as Deputy Secretary General of the Swiss Episcopal Conference, and described his work by saying, "I was recruited by the Swiss Episcopal Conference to help immigrants live their faith" (Schmid 2011).

the Catholic community, but not subsequent generations. Second and third generation immigrants usually join the local Catholic Swiss church and no longer the Slovenian church of their parents. From interviews with some of them it is clear that they do not join the Slovenian diasporic church for two reasons: partly because the Slovenian Catholic Mission is not able/does not have the means to organize religious classes for youth, and also because church services performed in the Slovenian vernacular and according to traditional culture no longer fulfil their needs and expectations for religious experience. As individuals born in Switzerland and therefore integrated into the Swiss environment, they feel a sense of belonging to the local, Swiss Catholic Church. This also echoes the aspirations of the Swiss Catholic Church leadership who state: "Our aim is that after a certain period of time, the immigrants integrate into the parishes, that they overcome social, cultural, or even racial differences with the locals […] breaking down racial and religious prejudices is also our task" (Schmid 2011).[10]

The Slovenian Catholic Mission is active in Switzerland, the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Austrian region of Vorarlberg and is overseen by Father Taljat.[11] In addition to the regular weekly or monthly religious services, there are also annual pilgrimages organized by Father Taljat.[12]

Twice a year, members of the Slovenian Catholic community receive the newsletter *Kažipot* (*Signpost*) by mail, which keeps them informed about events. Father Taljat also sends information via the website of the Slovenian Catholic Mission and social networking sites (Facebook, WhatsApp). In addition to the regular weekly liturgy, Father Taljat also carries out other pastoral tasks such as adult education, visiting the sick, house blessing, preparing individuals for the sacraments of the Church, etc. Until 2019, he was also very active in the field of music, as a composer, and in his own sound studio as a music producer and sound engineer. He has released several CDs of his own compositions and has published several original videos of Christian popular

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10 Due to its geographical location, Vorarlberg is also more culturally connected to Switzerland than to Austria; even the teaching of the supplementary Slovenian language classes, which take place in both Switzerland and Austria, is carried out by a teacher from Switzerland rather than Austria. The priest also conducts services for Slovenian communities in other nearby countries where there is a shortage of pastors. Slovenian priests working abroad generally help each other in their pastoral work.

11 So far, pilgrimages have been made to various holy places, such as Lourdes in France, Fatima in Portugal, Compostela in Spain, Vadstena in Sweden, Altötting in Bavaria, Passau and Regensburg in Germany, as well as Rome, and Međugorje in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

12 These pilgrimages include the annual Marian Pilgrimage in the month of May to Kappelle Ahorn in Schwende (Canton Appenzell Innerrhoden), the summer pilgrimage abroad, which is held in a different location each time, and the nationwide pilgrimage to Einsiedeln. In recent years, the pilgrimage to Einsiedeln has been the largest Slovenian event in Switzerland; it was organised continuously until 2020, when it was cancelled due to the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, and in 2021 it was organised again, albeit slightly curtailed.

music via YouTube,[13] with the aim of bringing the Gospel message to a wider audience through new media and through Christian pop.

Music Practices of the Slovenian Catholic Community in Switzerland

When asked about today's musical practices among the Slovenian Catholic community, Father Taljat replied that it is the singing at Mass that constitutes the main musical practice. Singing remains a continuous musical practice in the relatively small Catholic community in Switzerland; the priest's task is to promote and preserve the faith among Slovenians in Switzerland and to find a balance between the regulated general Catholic liturgical rite, the knowledge and abilities of the members of the community, and the most appropriate forms of expression of the local faith through native Slovenian culture. Through this approach, the priest links religion with Slovenian cultural practices in which the religious life of the community has been shaped and formed according to Slovenian local particularities. In this way, Father Taljat chooses a repertoire that supports the identity of the members of the Slovenian diasporic church, while reflecting the inculturation of the faith in the places of origin and the time in which those present in the Swiss diaspora acquired their faith.

By my use of the term sacred church folk songs (*cerkvene ljudske pesmi*), I mean those songs that are sung by congregants in the church nave, usually without printed musical notation. These are songs that are sung and transmitted by the people (Pisk 2019, 87), mostly through oral tradition, either learned by the congregants in their youth in the place they emigrated from, or acquired in a new environment through singing them with other Slovenian-speaking congregants during worship in Switzerland.

The songs sung by participants during religious services are grouped according to the seasons of the liturgical year of the Roman Catholic Church. They are divided into songs for Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time 1 (between Christmas and Lent), Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Ordinary Time 2 (from Pentecost Sunday to the first Sunday of Advent), and the songs of the Virgin Mary, the songs of All Saints and the songs sung at funerals. This repertoire is sung during the liturgy and each liturgy consists of an entrance song, an offertory song, a communion song and a closing song at the end of the service.[14] Between the readings of the liturgy of the Word, one stanza of the entrance song is usually sung, as decided by Father Taljat. After the reading comes the singing of the choral alleluia without an additional verse. As Father Taljat explains, "We always sing it in the same way, because that's what they know."[15]

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13   See for example Father Taljat's video *Jezus, vate zaupam* (*Jesus, I Trust in You*) on the following link: https://youtu.be/HEKrwH4KfOA.

14   On the structure and the meaning of the Mass see Krajnc (1996).

15   David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, February 14, 2022).

The sacred church folk songs chosen by Father Taljat[16] (see Appendix 1) are found in the church hymnal *Slavimo Gospoda* (*Praise the Lord*) (Smolik and Škulj 1996), with lyrics only, since at Mass services the melody is introduced by Father Taljat, and the congregation, knowing the melodies, responds antiphonally. The collected and individually printed texts that Father Taljat brings with him each time replace the church hymnals that the congregation normally has in church during Mass. In this way, Father Taljat has found a practical solution for song choice during the liturgy, with a predetermined uniform repertoire for specific times within the church liturgical calendar. The pastor chooses the songs according to the knowledge of the worship attendees but also according to their singing abilities as most are not active singers.

The singing in the liturgies is performed in unison or in two parts, the latter in parallel thirds or sixths, and rarely with a bass line. Because the worshippers are elderly for the most part and their tonal range is rather limited, their pitch is not always accurate, nor is the timbre of their voices. Since they sing without instrumental accompaniment, their folk aesthetic of singing is prominent: they sing relatively loudly, without dynamic changes, in a relaxed way, and in a slow tempo. When the priest is not singing with the singing congregants, i.e. when they lose the singing lead that maintains the tempo, the slowing down of tempo becomes even more evident. One can observe this musical aesthetic, for example, in the song *Gospod, usmili se* (*Lord, Have Mercy*), which is sung alternately by the priest and the congregation. The chant alternates between the relatively fast-paced, rhythmically precise style of the priest and the distinctive slow-paced, rubato style of the congregation that is characteristic of their internalized aesthetic perception. An interesting phenomenon that occurs in some of the songs, is that 3/4 meter is altered by the shortening of the second pulse so that is becomes an eighth note (Kumer 2002, 57); this results in the formation of 5/8 meter that is typical of the Slovenian folk song tradition.

The repertoire is oriented towards the knowledge and preservation of the main Christological and soteriological truths, and the sacred folk songs to the Virgin Mary are frequent, emphasizing her mediatorial role in salvation.[17] The large presence of songs to Mary, with lyrics printed on individual sheets, is intended for the many feasts dedicated to the Blessed Mother throughout the year. Father Taljat explained that it is "simply because they know them" because "most pilgrimages are made to shrines dedicated to Mary, most feasts in the year are dedicated to Mary, so songs to Mary are the ones most often sung." Father Taljat considers it important to include "one sacred song to Mary in

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16   The texts of the sacred folk song were printed by David Taljat on A3 paper and laminated to make the print last longer. The colours of the paper vary according to the time of the church year.

17   The veneration of the Virgin Mary is very characteristic of the Slovenian poetic tradition and "has its roots in the beginnings of Christianity in Slovenia. The first church in the Slovenian settlement territory […] built around 768, was dedicated to Mary" (Kumer 2000, 227).

every Mass of the Slovenian liturgy; this is Slovenian spirituality, I can say, Mary's spirituality."[18]

Most of the congregation knows the sacred folk songs sung from their youth when they lived in their country of origin, so the printed lyrics are only a support allowing them to participate more easily in the singing. In Father Taljat's words, "I try to make room for as much singing as possible during the Mass."[19] This is an understandable strategy as the active participation of the faithful in worship plays an important role (Turino 2008). It constitutes musical localization (Ingalls et al. 2018, 3), understood as a "process whereby Christian communities take a variety of musical practices" and thus make them meaningful and useful for the renewal and continuation of Christian beliefs, practices, and identity (Reily and Dueck 2016, 13; quoted in Ingalls et al. 2018, 3). The whole congregation is therefore involved in the ritual which transmits messages to them "encoded in sound, lyrics, genre, and gesture" (Reily and Dueck 2016, 13; quoted in Ingalls et al. 2018, 3). The annual, recurring song repertoire, oriented to the liturgical year, conveys a rich variety of messages to the migrant community through musical and textual imagery. As Father Taljat pointed out in conversation, "When you hear repetition, you internalize it [...] with sacred music, its centuries, millennia of repetition [...] music is inscribed in the soul of a person through repetition, and you, when you sing these songs, you are not focused on the songs, you are rather in the presence of the holy and absorbed in the spiritual."[20]

The believers are thus not only passive listeners, but co-creators of the events; again and again, in common gatherings, as well as through singing, the faith is consolidated and persists, establishing continuity with the belief system that ensures consistency among believers themselves. By attending worship services in a (new) setting that are part of contemporary life, believers enter a timelessness that connects them to Christian truths through the culture of origin. Through the songs performed, the believers have thus not stepped out of their familiar, local, Slovenian environment, but the songs show them the way to their "origin and beginning." The community has thus created a certain timelessness in a (new) space, which is an important characteristic of religious diaspora communities (Bohlman 1997, 2013, 14–16, 108).

The Role of Singing in the Religious Rites of the Roman Catholic Church

Singing is an "integral part of the solemn liturgy," as stated in the Constitution on Sacred Worship of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (Paul VI

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18   David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, February 14, 2022).
19   David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, February 14, 2022).
20   David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, February 11, 2021).

1963). In the Old Testament scriptures, for example, the prophet and saint Zephaniah (3:17) writes, "The Lord […] will rejoice over you in singing." In addition, St Paul, in his Letter to the Colossians, wrote "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts" (Col 3:16). The importance of music and singing has always been of great importance throughout the history of the Roman Catholic Church and has been the subject of much debate. A case in point is The Vatican meetings of church leaders that have always renewed views and instructions on the inclusion of music in services but singing has always been given great importance (Dyer 2001). Pope Benedict XVI reiterates this view by stating, "The importance of music in biblical religion is shown very simply by the fact that the verb 'to sing' (with related words such as 'song,' and so forth) is one of the most commonly-used words in the Bible. It occurs 309 times in the Old Testament and thirty-six in the New" (Benedict XVI 2014).

Church singing has also served as a medium for Slovenians to communicate Christian ideas beginning with the Christianization of the ancestors of contemporary Slovenians, in the eighth century (Kumer 2000, 226).[21] Singing in the Catholic Church in Slovenia represents a special, supreme form of prayer and has (almost continuously) accompanied the liturgy since the earliest Christian communities and remains an important element of it even today. The task of music in the church is to serve the liturgy, and its role is understood as "part of the liturgy, not its ornament" (Oblonšek 2018, 141). This was also the guiding principle of the liturgical renewal after the Second Vatican Council, which ordered active participation "Actuosa participio" (Paul VI 1963 – Sacrosanctum Concilium Art. 14). Thus, any form of Church sacred music is "to be considered the more holy in proportion as it is more closely connected with the liturgical action, whether it adds delight to prayer, fosters unity of minds, or confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites" (Paul VI 1963). When asked what importance he attached to singing in Slovenian worship, Father Taljat described it as: "impossible that it should be without singing, […] a celebration is a celebration, without music there is no celebration, none, neither civil, nor spiritual, nor Christian."[22]

Music, which has the task of contributing to the continuity and stability of culture (Merriam 2000, 179), also contributes to the transmission of religious doctrine and religious thought from one generation to the next, and to the reconstruction of personal and communal identity. Processes of transmission of religious doctrine continue after individuals move, and when the local church of origin moves with them, because as individuals move and relocate, places

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21   For more on the history of the singing of the Slovenian people in worship and devotions, see Kumer (2000, 225–242).

22   David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, February 11, 2021).

move and relocate (Gregorič Bon et al. 2013, i). Liturgies in the Christian world differ from one another, they have a local character, and the purpose of the relocated churches – as is the case with the church of the relocated Slovenians under discussion – is to transfer the local character of the original place to the new place. By continuing to adapt and reconfigure their thought processes, the Slovenian priests in diaspora enable the Slovenian community to remain a partly singular, one could say "Slovenian" Catholic community, thanks to the renewal of linguistic and cultural elements. In this respect, (church) singing plays an important role as a part of culture. This is because "the relationship between religion and culture [is] a component of every religion, since religion is received, lived and transmitted in a cultural form" (Bahovec 2009, 322), and in this form it is also transmitted and continued in a new environment, in my case in Switzerland.

The Role and Importance of Singing for the Slovenian Catholic Community in Switzerland

Folk singing in the Slovenian language remains an important pillar of worship in the Slovenian community. The Slovenian Catholic Mission supports and encourages it and pays "special attention to liturgical education and folk singing" (Štuhec et al. 2002, 33), because it believes that if the gathering for worship moves away from communal singing, the essential bond created between the participants is lost.

The choice of song repertoire that accompanies Slovenian liturgical services in Switzerland is not random; this is because as the priest, Father Taljat, adapts himself to the faithful, viewing his role and that of the priesthood as motivational, as expressed in the phrase "we are mobilizers."[23] By taking this philosophical stance, he acknowledges his sensitivity to, and knowledge of the community's cultural identity, and takes innovative action by incorporating their customs and traditions into worship contexts, on the basis of an ongoing process of dialogue (Bahovec 2009, 343). Since most of the attendees of Slovenian liturgies in Switzerland are older,[24] the song repertoire consists of sacred folk songs with familiar forms and repetitive structures, which the congregants learned and internalized during religious instruction and liturgy attendance in their youth in Slovenia.

At the beginning of his ministry in Switzerland, Father Taljat wanted to revisit and refresh the sacred song repertoire and teach the congregation some new songs, but, as he told me, "It didn't work, and there is not enough time," because he only meets with each community once a month, due to the services he leads in rotation throughout Switzerland. In discussing some of his unsuccessful

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23 David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, February 11, 2021).

24 Most of the worshippers are over 70 years old.

initiatives to renew the repertoire,[25] he provided reasons related to the older worshippers remarking that "you're not going to teach them any new sacred songs; they listen, but they don't sing […]."[26] To facilitate the participation of the majority, he picks those sacred folk songs that are known to all, since "people only know one or two" songs for each part of the liturgy (see Appendix 1).

The role of church songs has been and remains "to be sung together in liturgical and paraliturgical devotions" (Pisk 2019, 86), and the unified structure allows "people from different parishes and countries to sing together" (Pisk 2019, 86). Likewise, for the faithful, an established repertoire allows for a shared, repeated, and desired experience, since, in the words of the Father Taljat, "everyone young and old, everyone clings to this (sacred) folk songbook [church hymnal][27] […] when you hear the melody of the song, you connect it to the [liturgical] season […] it connects you directly to the liturgy."[28] This also points to the perception and interpretation of different musical styles for encounters between the Gospel message and culture of the place, where it is important that "the central conditions of genuine inculturation are spiritual discernment, distinguishing between the immutable contents of faith and the diversity of cultural expressions of faith, and developing a genuine dialogue between faith and cultures" (Bahovec 2019). Singing takes the role of a religious practice, which is a performative practice and, by constantly renewing itself, it continuously redefines, directs and assigns meanings to what is performed (Anidjar 2009, 368; quoted in Ingalls et al. 2013, 3).

Today's song repertoire (see Appendix 1) in the Slovenian Church in Switzerland is meaningful as a document of the times; it communicates which songs are known in the whole Slovenian area and unites singers from the whole Slovenian environment.

Some of the songs from the collection *Slavimo Gospoda* are still sung in worship in most churches in Slovenia today, as they appear in church hymnal that are still in use in Slovenia. At the same time, Slovenia, the country of origin, still has a varied musical repertoire, which is made possible by the greater ability to find and include better singers and musicians in the liturgical rite. In Slovenia, the repertoire also includes newly-composed musical works that are more relevant to contemporary church congregations, which differ in terms of the possibilities and age structure of the congregation in Switzerland.[29]

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25 For example, he told me of a younger congregant who wanted the liturgy to be sung with new hymns she had learned from youth groups in Slovenia, but the rest of the church did not know the hymns and therefore did not want to sing them.

26 David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, February 11, 2021).

27 The church hymnal *Slavimo Gospoda* (*Praise the Lord*) (Smolik and Škulj 1996).

28 David Taljat, in discussion with the author (Zurich, February 11, 2021).

29 I would like to thank the choirmaster and singer Bogdan Brecelj for the information he provided about church singing in Slovenia.

A review of the repertoire is also interesting from the point of view of the church folk aesthetics that took shape among the fifty-year-old Slovenian immigrant Catholic community; it reveals that the congregants and the faithful "have at all times preferred to stick to tradition and sing 'old' church folk songs" (Kumer 2000, 234). The repertoire is traditional (see Appendix 1) and in line with the guidelines of the Roman Catholic Church. This means that in the liturgical context new genres of music cannot be introduced into the liturgy as is the case with some Protestant churches (Porter 2013, 201–217; Arnold 2013). In this respect, the Roman Catholic Church remains much more cautious, believing that "we cannot say that one song is as good as another. Generic improvisation or the introduction of musical genres which fail to respect the meaning of the liturgy should be avoided" (Benedict XVI 2007, 45–46).[30]

Caution in introducing new musical genres or styles for liturgical purposes was also affirmed at the 2017 conference *Music and the Church: Cult and Culture 50 years after* Musicam Sacram,[31] but the introduction of new musical trends in different local and national churches also shows differences in the interpretation of the Vatican's instructions (Oblonšek 2018).[32]

Today, the Slovenian Catholic Mission in Switzerland is a permanent Slovenian entity, within the wider Slovenian community in the country. This entity is formed on the basis of ethnic and religious affiliation, although the active practice of religion is not a prerequisite for joining the community. Some individuals attend religious services within the Catholic Mission only to socialize, as they hardly or never attended church in Slovenia.[33] The permanent, structured and familiar community for most Slovenians who have moved to the Swiss diaspora provides a strong link to Catholicism, and for some individuals even represents, more importantly, a connection with "Slovenianness." For example, because A. P. missed communicating in the Slovenian language,

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30 The Catholic Church remains cautious about introducing more modern styles of music, not least because of the fear that this would introduce stardom or showmanship into the liturgy, which is not in line with the Roman Catholic doctrine on the celebration of the liturgy.

31 The conference was held in 2017 at the Vatican, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the publication of the document *Musicam Sacram* (Azevedo and Rouse 2017).

32 The Catholic Church's position does not prevent new versions of popular songs from entering the Church's Catholic and parish life, but it is strict about introductions into the liturgy. In Slovenia, the phenomenon of popular sacred music has been in existence since the late 1960s, culminating in the festival Ritem duha (Rhythm of the Spirit) in Maribor that began in 2002. Since 2014 the festival has been held in Ljubljana and renamed Ritem srca (Rhythm of the Heart; more about this at http://ritemsrca.ognjisce.si/o_festivalu/ritem-srca-2014/).

33 There are also some who have not received the sacraments (baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist/holy communion) of initiation. In the past, according to my interlocutors, the social life of Slovenians, organised by the Slovenian Catholic Mission, was livelier. This topic was addressed by Ana Lepoša in her field research in Switzerland for her master's thesis, when her interviewee told her: "It was more of a party. Then a Friar came with us because they had such a party. It was singing, dancing. It was more of a social gathering than really worshipping and having Mass" (Lepoša 2014, 27).

she took an interest in the Slovenian Catholic Mission, as she mentioned to me, "My mother even told me that if I missed the Slovenian [language] and the company, I should go to Mass."[34]

It is clear that the role of religious ritual, carried out by the Slovenian Catholic Mission, is also an important part of the social life of some Slovenians in Switzerland. The liturgical rite, which has been continuously present and provided with a permanent structure since its foundation in 1968, renews the cohesion between the members of the community, connects the religious community with the past and contributes to the shaping of the present (Bohlman 2013, 107). It also preserves Catholic and Slovenian identity, and has a cohesive social function (Repič 2013, 154–160) among the members of the Slovenian community. This sentiment was also emphasised by Friar Robert Podgoršek who stated, "Yes, the unifying power of the Church remains."[35]

The community formed under the umbrella of the Slovenian Catholic Mission maintains its autonomy, which is understood in a purist, traditional and also isolated (Pettan 2019, 43) form of continuing religious life, as it does not associate with other Christian communities in the country.[36] The entire religious ritual – including the musical selections – is identical to that of the country of origin and is performed unchanged during the weekly Sunday and feast days liturgy that the members of the community have learned in their native environment.

The main goal of the Slovenian Catholic Mission is fulfilled by the fact that the religious practices of Slovenians living in Switzerland are not integrated into the new environment, despite having to adapt to mainstream culture. The immigrants' religion rather remains an expression of their identity in the Slovenian homeland, thus placing them outside of the mainstream, albeit in a self-contained manner. This orientation was and still is valid for the first generation of immigrants, who had a stronger inner urge, an intrinsic motivation to continue their religious life in a new country.

The closed nature of Catholic communities in Switzerland is reflective of the desire of parishioners to maintain their Slovenian identity when confronted with a new culture. By singing a selected repertoire of Slovenian sacred songs at the weekly liturgy, worshippers nurture and confirm their values and perception of the world. The liturgy is part of their affirmation of a true way of life, which they have had to redefine in their new surroundings. It is also engendering the sense of ethnic belonging to a religious community that is associated with the Slovenian Catholic Church. The liturgy represents their belief in the efficacy of sound and musical style as the right way to convey

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34   A. P., in discussion with the author (Basel, May 17, 2014).

35   Robert Podgoršek, in discussion with the author (Škofja Loka, May 19, 2014).

36   This does not discount the fact that individuals are also active in local, Swiss Roman Catholic churches.

and achieve religious truths and to guide them towards the 'right' way of life (Engelhardt 2009, 36) as part of the broader experience of being in a new place (Ingalls et al. 2013, 10).

Conclusion

Worship services within the Slovenian Church in Switzerland enable the continuation and renewal of the community's cultural heritage. In order to achieve a richer and stronger common experience, the Head of the Slovenian Catholic Mission seeks a balance between the prescribed Catholic liturgical rite, the identity, knowledge and skills of the community, and the most appropriate forms of expression of the local faith. The leader of the ecclesial community embraces the customs and traditions of the Slovene environment from which the community originates, and the processes of transmission of religious doctrine continue even after leaving the place of origin.

Though relatively small, the Slovenian Catholic community in Switzerland actively participates in liturgical services through singing, which remains a continuous musical practice. Singing, namely church singing, constitutes the only continuous musical activity of the wider Slovenian community in Switzerland as it is the only type of Slovenian vocal performance practice that is still performed regularly in the country on a weekly basis. Active involvement in the services represents an important participatory role for the congregants. It is particularly important for the worshippers who sing "old" religious songs, which convey messages to the diaspora community through musical, aural and textual imagery. Music is positioned as relevant and useful for the persistence of religiosity; through singing, the community connects religion with the Slovenian cultural sphere in which religious life has emerged, influenced by local Slovenian particularities. In this way, the intention of the Slovenian Catholic Mission is fulfilled, namely that the original religion of the Slovenians living in Switzerland, despite living and facing the culture of the new environment, is being integrated and continued in a new environment. This is especially true for the Catholic community in question, which is made up of first-generation immigrants. This community carries an inner urge and motivation to continue perpetuating their heritage.

The continued life of local musical forms, transferred from their original environment, creates continuity between the past and the present, between the original place and the new place of residence, and within the newly created mono-ethnic ecclesial community; it creates a "timelessness," which is an important and general feature of religious diasporic communities (Bohlman 2013, 14–16). United in the Slovenian Catholic community, Slovenian immigrants in the Swiss diaspora have chosen to preserve the integrated expression of their faith through the language and traditional music of the homeland,

both important elements of Slovenian cultural heritage. In making this choice, they maintain a traditional, purist stance that is in line with their sense of religious belonging. By actively participating in the singing of "old" Slovenian religious songs during weekly religious services, which constitutes the right medium for them to accept religious truths, they nurture and confirm their values and perception of the world. This music is therefore part of their perception and experience of a new "true" way of being, redefined through necessity, that is part of the wider experience of living in a new environment which for most has already become home.

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Appendix 1

The song repertoire of the Slovenian Catholic Mission in Switzerland from the book
Slavimo Gospoda *(*Praise the Lord*)*

The songs from the collection *Slavimo Gospoda* are grouped here according to the time of the liturgical year when they are sung. Besides their title in Slovenian and English and their consecutive number in the collection, the names of the composer and text-writer are also given in separate columns ("Composer" and "Text" respectively; where no name is listed, the author of the music or text is unknown).

Season in the Liturgical Year	Title	Number of the song	Composer	Text
Advent	*Je angel Gospodov* (*The Lord's Angel*)	171		
	Vi, oblaki, ga rosite (*The Dew from Heaven*)	21	Gregor Rihar	Blaž Potočnik
	Poslan z nebes je angel (*The Angel is Sent from Heaven*)	19		Martin Železnik
	Zdaj razsvetljena je noč (*The Night is Now Illuminated*)	25, 26		Simon Gaberc
Christmas	*Sveta noč* (*Silent Night*)	57	Franz Gruber	Radoslav Silvester
	Rajske strune (*The Heavenly Strings*)	54	Valentin Štolcer	Josip Levičnik
	Poslušajte, vsi ljudje (*Listen, All People*)	50		
	Božji nam je rojen Sin (*The Son of God is Born*)	40	Ivan Zupan	
	Glej zvezdice božje (*Look, the Stars of God*)	42	Leopold Belar	Andrej Praprotnik
	Kaj se vam zdi, pastirci vi (*What do You Think, Shepherds*)	45		Luka Dolinar in Hilarij Zorn
	Tam stoji pa hlevček (*There is a Small Stable*)	56		

Season in the Liturgical Year	Title	Number of the song	Composer	Text
Ordinary Time 1.A (between Christmas and Lent)	*Oče večni v visokosti* (*Eternal, Heavenly Father*)	292	Josef Fabian	Andrej Praprotnik
	K tebi, Bog in naš Gospod (*We Are Coming to You, God, and Our Lord*)	385	Lojze Mav	
	K tebi, Jezus ljubeznivi (*I Wish to Come to You, Dear Jesus*)	428	Andrej Vavken	
	Mogočno se dvigni (*Lift Up Mightily*)	433	Josip Čerin	Krizostom Sekovanič
	Tebe ljubi moja duša (*My Soul Loves You*)	452		
	Še gori ljubezen (*Love Still Burns*)	207	Franc Kimovec	
	Veš, o Marija, moje veselje (*Do You Know My Joy, O Mary*)	215	Blaž Potočnik	
	Marija, pomagaj nam sleherni čas (*Mary, Help Us Every Day*)	184		
Ordinary Time 1.B (between Christmas and Lent)	*Bog, pred tvojim veličastvom* (*God, In Front of Your Majesty*)	383	Gregor Rihar	Janez Jurkovič
	Oče večni, na oltar (*Eternal Father, to the Altar*)	410	Franc Kimovec	Gregor Mali
	Hvali, svet, Odrešenika (*All Praise the Saviour*)	425		Anton Martin Slomšek
	Jezus, ti si vinska trta (*Jesus, You Are the Vine*)	472		
	Lepa si, lepa si, roža Marija (*Beautiful, Beautiful You Are, Rose Mary*)	176		

Season in the Liturgical Year	Title	Number of the song	Composer	Text
Lent	*Daj mi, Jezus, da žalujem* (*Jesus, Allow Me to Mourn*)	65		
	Kraljevo znamenje (*Sign of the King*)	66	Andrej Vavken	
	Oljsko goro tiha noč pokriva (*A Silent Night Lies over the Mount of Olives*)	81		
	Duša, le pojdi z mano (*Soul, Just Come with Me*)	778		
	Oh, prizanesi, Oče premili (*Save Me, Dear Father*)	77		
	Mati žalostna je stala (*The Sorrowful Mother Was Standing*)	73		
Easter	*Dan presveti, dan veselja* (*Holy Day, a Day of Joy*)	12	Andrej Vavken	
	O, Marija, bodi zdrava (*O Mary, Be Well*)	121	Karlo Adamič	
	Jezus naš je vstal od smrti (*Our Jesus has Risen from the Dead*)	124	Gregor Rihar	
	Zapoj veselo, o Kristjan (*Sing Joyfully, O Christian*)	127	Andrej Vavken	
	Raduj, nebeška se Gospa (*Rejoice, Lady of Heaven*)	130		
	Skalovje groba se razgane (*The Tomb was Opened*)	133	Leopold Cvek	
	S skupno pesmijo prosimo (*We Ask with a Communal Hymn*)	140		Andrej Praprotnik
	Hvali, svet, Odrešenika (*All Praise the Saviour*)	425		Anton Martin Slomšek
	Lepa si, lepa si, roža Marija (*Beautiful, Beautiful You Are, Rose Mary*)	176		

Season in the Liturgical Year	Title	Number of the song	Composer	Text
Ordinary Time 2.A (from Pentecost Sunday to the first Sunday of Advent)	*Bog, pred tvojim veličastvom* (*God, in Front of Your Majesty*)	383	Gregor Rihar	Blaž Potočnik
	Oče večni, na oltar (*Eternal Father, to the Altar*)	410	Franc Kimovec	Gregor Mali
	S skupno pesmijo prosimo (*We Ask with a Communal Hymn*)	140		Andrej Praprotnik
	Hvali, svet, Odrešenika (*All Praise the Saviour*)	425		Anton Martin Slomšek
	Jezus, ti si vinska trta (*Jesus, You Are the Vine*)	472		
	Lepa si, lepa si, roža Marija (*Beautiful, Beautiful You Are, Rose Mary*)	176		
	Marija, mati ljubljena (*Beloved Mother Mary*)	180		Andrej Praprotnik
	Ti, o Marija (*You, O Mary*)	212	Angelik Hribar	
Ordinary Time 2.B (from Pentecost Sunday to the first Sunday of Advent)	*K tebi, Bog in naš Gospod* (*We Are Coming to You, God, and Our Lord*)	358		
	Mašnik k darovanju (*The Priest Invites Us*)	408	Lojze Mav	Gregor Mali
	Jezus naj živi (*Long Live Jesus*)	419		s. Fančiška Grizold
	Tebe ljubi moja duša (*My Soul Loves You*)	452		
	Ti, o Marija (*You, O Mary*)	212		Angelik Hribar

Season in the Liturgical Year	Title	Number of the song	Composer	Text
Songs of the Virgin Mary	*Kraljica venca rožnega* (*Queen of the Rosary*)	175		
	Bodi nam pozdravljena (*We Welcome You*)	160	Ignacij Hladnik	Anton Dolinar
	Ti, o Marija (*You, O Mary*)	212	Angelik Hribar	
	Veš, o Marija, moje veselje (*You Know My Joy, O Mary*)	217	Blaž Potočnik	Jožef Virk
	O, Marija, naša ljuba mati (*O Mary, Our Beloved Mother*)	199	Gregor Riha	Luka Jeran
	Marija, pomagaj nam sleherni čas (*Mary, Help Us Every Day*)	184		
	Še gori ljubezen (*Love Still Burns*)	207		Franc Kimovec
	Marija, mati ljubljena (*Beloved Mother Mary*)	180		Andrej Praprotnik
	Lepa si, lepa si, roža Marija (*Beautiful, Beautiful You Are, Rose Mary*)	176		
The songs of All Saints and the songs sung at funerals	*V nebesih sem doma* (*I Am Home in Heaven*)	539		
	K tebi želim, moj Bog (*Nearer, My God, to Thee*)	429	Sarah F. Adams	Stanko Premrl
	Usmiljeni Jezus (*Merciful Jesus*)	454	Ignacij Hladnik/ Gregorij Pečjak	
	Lepa si, lepa si, roža Marija (*Beautiful, Beautiful You Are, Rose Mary*)	176		
	Zvonovi zvonijo (*The Bells are Ringing*)	222		Simon Gaberc

POVZETEK

Ljudske cerkvene pesmi in slovenska izseljenska skupnost v Švici

Prispevek predstavlja vlogo cerkvenih ljudskih pesmi v liturgiji slovenske katoliške misije v Švici. Slovenska katoliška misija v Švici je bila ustanovljena konec 60. let ob številčnejšem izseljevanju iz slovenskega okolja na začasno delo v Švici. Nastala je z namenom, da slovenskim migrantom nudi versko oskrbo v domačem jeziku in kulturi. Znotraj širše slovenske skupnosti se je osnovala slovenska katoliška skupnost, združevala se je tako na verski kot tudi – ali celo predvsem – na etnični osnovi. Današnjo skupnost sestavljajo pretežno člani prve ustanovljene skupnosti, ki so svoj prvotni namen začasne migracije spremenili v stalno bivanje v Švici. Redna srečanja pri bogoslužju z letno ponavljajočo se strukturo, ki temelji na skupni etnično-verski pripadnosti, so za njene člane še vedno pomembna. Nekoč bogatejše glasbeno življenje skupnosti se je danes skrčilo na aktivno petje cerkvenih slovenskih pesmi pri liturgiji, ki so osrednjega pomena za identiteto slovenske katoliške diaspore. Obenem to cerkveno petje predstavlja edino redno in kontinuirano glasbeno dejavnost širše slovenske skupnosti v Švici. Članek te pesmi obravnava kot lokalne etnične kulturne oblike, prenesene iz okolja »prvotne domovine,« ki ustvarjajo kontinuiteto med preteklostjo in sedanjostjo, med prvotnim in novim krajem bivanja, v brezčasnosti slovenske katoliške skupnosti, ki je nastala v Švici.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MAŠA K. MARTY (masamarty@gmail.com) completed her undergraduate studies at the Academy of Music in Ljubljana, Slovenia. In 1995, she joined the Institute of Ethnomusicology ZRC SAZU (Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts) as a research ethnomusicologist and completed her postgraduate studies at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. During this time she has been researching traditional music in past and contemporary culture in Slovenia. In recent years, she has focused on musical practices in relation to identity and space, new musical phenomena in various cultural settings, the music of ethnic groups and minority related problematics. As part of her PhD studies at the Department of Musicology, Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, she is studying the context of musical developments in migrant environments and researching the cultural life of immigrants from Slovenia in Switzerland, where she has been living for the last few years.

O AVTORICI

MAŠA K. MARTY (masamarty@gmail.com) je diplomirala na Akademiji za glasbo v Ljubljani. Leta 1995 se je zaposlila kot raziskovalka-etnomuzikologinja na Glasbenonarodopisnem inštitutu ZRC SAZU ter v okviru podiplomskega študija zaključila magisterij na Oddelku za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani. V tem času je raziskovala tradicijsko glasbo v pretekli in sodobni kulturi na Slovenskem. V zadnjih letih se posveča glasbenim praksam v povezavi z identiteto in prostorom, novim glasbenim pojavom v raznih kulturnih okoljih ter glasbi etničnih skupin in z njo povezano manjšinsko problematiko. V okviru doktorskega študija na Oddelku za muzikologijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani proučuje kontekst glasbenih dogajanj v migrantskih okoljih in se posveča raziskovanju kulturnega življenja slovenskih skupnosti v Švici, kjer zadnja leta tudi živi.

A Classless Society or Your Kingdom Come?
Plegaria a un labrador and the *Nueva Canción Chilena*

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ABSTRACT

The article focuses on the case of *Plegaria a un labrador* by Víctor Jara and its social biography as a song to show how the utopia of a classless society converges with the idea of the kingdom of God on earth in the *Nueva Canción Chilena*.

Keywords: kingdom of God, messianism, *Nueva Canción Chilena*, religious atheism, Unidad Popular

IZVLEČEK

Ta članek se osredotoča na primer pesmi *Plegaria a un labrador* (*Molitev k poljedelcu*) avtorja Víctorja Jara ter na njeno družbeno biografijo. S tem primerom pokaže, kako se utopija brezrazredne družbe združuje z idejo o božjem kraljestvu na Zemlji v glasbenem gibanju *Nueva Canción Chilena* (nova čilenska pesem).

Ključne besede: božje kraljestvo, mesijanizem, *Nueva Canción Chilena*, verski ateizem, Unidad Popular

Introduction

The *Nueva Canción Chilena* (Chilean New Song) is a musical movement that was born in the Chilean socio-political context of the 1960s and subsequently spread across Latin America. The movement can be understood as an aesthetic response to a Chile dogged by inequality and, in this context, it aspired to convey not only criticism but also hope. The movement has not only been historically linked to the political left but has also exhibited important religious and spiritual elements both in its sonic forms and conceptual ambitions. Although still little researched, these dimensions within the Nueva Canción were widely practiced and firmly established. As I argued in a study of the song *El hombre* (*The Man*) by Rolando Alarcón and its intertextual comparison with other works such as *Despierta niñito Dios* (*Wake Up Little Child God*) by Héctor Pavez (1967), the *Oratorio para el pueblo* (*Oratorio for the People*) by Ángel Parra (1965), the album *Requiem* by Fernando Ugarte (1970) or the version of *Camilo Torres* by Víctor Jara (1969), among many others, the religious aspects of the movement are not only observed in the repertoire's lyrics, but also in its musical structure or its melodic features (Rojas 2020). As proposed in another article, I draw attention to the fact that several supposedly atheist musicians and groups such as Víctor Jara, Rolando Alarcón, Juan Capra and Tiemponuevo demonstrated great interest in religious figures and, from this perspective, the relationship between religion and Nueva Canción can be understood through the lens of religious atheism (Rojas 2022). As Michael Löwy (2015, 37–38) explains, religious atheism is a category pertaining to those who distance themselves from traditional forms of religion but, nevertheless, do not remove all ties to it. Thus, the category explains the paradoxical situation in which the sacred and the profane find a point of convergence, namely, in precisely that messianism that shines through in the Nueva Canción. In this sense, the religious dimension stays present at the core of the political imaginary and is explicit in the revolutionary discourse, charging it with a spirituality that escapes the usual distinctions between the sacred and the profane, the transcendent and the immanent. In this way, the religious remained at the very heart of the Nueva Canción Chilena and was inserted into the political proclamations of the movement, connecting the roots of popular Christianity[1] with the strong Marxist influences of the movement.[2] As might be supposed, these religious and messianic aspects of the Nueva Canción

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1   Popular Christianity constitutes a "religious field" on its own, with relative autonomy, which should not be confused with the official sacerdotal religion. It has its own subjective popular beliefs, symbols, rites, behaviors and cultural productions, which are the result of the historical capability of the people to construct and reconstruct the structures of their own faith (Dussel 1986; Gímenez 2013).

2   According to available evidence, the religious aspect of the Nueva Canción Chilena precedes Liberation Theology (Rojas 2020, 278–279).

Chilena are in open ideological tension with a clerical or official religiosity. Within this context, one interesting striking aspect is that the Nueva Canción Chilena, in a certain way, imagined the political project of the *Unidad Popular* (*Popular Unity*), of which it became a part, as the realization of the kingdom of God. To examine this issue further, I have chosen the excellent example of Víctor Jara's song *Plegaria a un labrador* (*Prayer to a Peasant*), the primary focus of this paper, because it exemplifies the ideas and concepts expressed by the Nueva Canción.

The choice of this particular song is based on the one hand, on the considerable analytical potential it presents for investigating religion, spirituality, messianism and eschatology in the Nueva Canción and on the other hand, on the extensive prominence it has been accorded within the Nueva Canción Chilena movement. Moreover, I am not simply referring to the fact that it was one of the winning songs of the First Festival of the Nueva Canción Chilena in 1969 but also that it became one of the most widely disseminated and covered songs of the movement.[3] In the following section, I will conduct a conceptual analysis of the song, examining the most arresting words and terms concerning the religious and the messianic. I will also address other musical aspects such as melody, tempo and vocality (voice usage in diverse musical experiences) and relate these elements to other songs of the Nueva Canción Chilena and to the political project of Unidad Popular, a conglomerate of left-wing movements and parties whose candidate Salvador Allende was eventually elected president in 1970. Thus, I will look at the meaning of certain terms and how Nueva Canción Chilena interprets and uses them. In a second section, I will take the concept of the social biography of songs to refer to the new paths taken by *Plegaria a un labrador* and the ideas expressed therein after the 1973 *coup d'état* with particular reference to the case of ecclesial base communities. In this way, I seek to demonstrate how the messianic ideas of *Plegaria a un labrador* developed historically in a context of political oppression.

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3   The following artists are just some of those who have recorded a version of *Plegaria a un labrador*: Quilapayún (Chile, multiple versions), Cecilia (Chile, 1970), Los Emigrantes (Chile, 1970), Los Lazos (Chile, 1971), Mercedes Sosa (Argentina, 1972 and 1980), César Isella (Argentina, 1973), Los Calchakis (France, 1974), Los Cañas (Cuba, 1974), Los Folkloristas (Mexico, 1974 and 1996), Aparcoa (Chile, 1975), Claudina and Alberto Gambino (Argentina, 1975), Guillermo Basterrechea (Chile, 1975), Hugo Arévalo (Chile, 1975), Paola Contavalli (Italy, 1975), Gloria del Paraguay (Paraguay, 1976), Grupo Jatari (Ecuador, 1976), Judy Collins (USA, 1976), Grupo Iquique (Spain/Chile, 1977), María Farantoúri (Greece, 1977), Nannie Porres (Sweden, 1977), Tarancón (Brazil, 1977), América Libre (Colombia, 1979), Voces Oscuras Choir (Venezuela, 1980), Roberto Bravo (Chile, 1985), Duo Simón Bolívar (West Germany/Chile, 1987), Los Miserables (Chile, 1994), Compostela (Japan, 1997), León Gieco (Argentina, 1998), Vientosur (International, 2000), Reincidentes (Spain, 2001 and 2002), Illapu (Chile, 2002 and 2003), Guy Pion, Delphine Gardin and Roberto Cordova (Belgium, 2004), Symphonic Orchestra and Choir of the University of Concepción (Chile, 2008), Chancho en Piedra (Chile, 2011), Mario Lecaros (Chile, 2012), Hank Woji (USA, 2014), Shin Sasakubo (Japan, 2017), Hans Stein (Chile/Czech Republic, [n. d.]) and Ranquil (Sweden/Chile, [n. d.]).

Before proceeding further, I should like to underline that although the final judges of musical meaning are listeners of the Nueva Canción (and other music) in particular socio-cultural contexts, this does not exclude the possibility of establishing interpretations, hypotheses or readings of this musical movement, such as what I present here from the perspective of sounds, concepts and the biography of *Plegaria a un labrador* and its connection to messianism. Naturally, no narrative is neutral or exempt from mediations,[4] so that other interpretations based on the same material are also fully possible. As Diego García (2017, 34) points out, any analysis will always be mediated by readings, constructed from the present time as a starting point. In the following analysis, however, I will attempt to sustain a particular interpretation which I believe is both appropriate and timely.

Plegaria a un labrador and the Messianic

Plegaria a un labrador by Víctor Jara is an important milestone in the Nueva Canción and its messianic ideas. In her biographic book[5] about the musician Joan Jara writes that the form of *Plegaria a un labrador* is reminiscent of the Lord's Prayer and "reflected Víctor Jara's interest in the poetry and humanistic values of the Bible at a time when the understanding between progressive Catholics and Marxists in Latin America was deepening."[6] Some scholars, for their part, underlined the intertextual references in *Plegaria a un labrador* not only to the Our Father prayer, but also to the Hail Mary (Dubuc 2008, 84; Guerra 2014, 81).[7] In a certain way, the song re-signifies both the objective as well as the structure and order of the Eucharistic prayer of the Catholic rite; it rescues the sacrificial, messianic character, as in the symbolic act of eating the bread (the body) and drinking the wine (the blood, through which life circulates) in the Eucharist. In addition, there is an exhortation to response and action with a resolute "Amen" at the end (Rojas 2020, 264–265).

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4   According to Maurice Beuchot (2016), facts and events are never presented to us chaotically in the world, but always through our own interpretations.

5   Although a comprehensive biography is beyond the scope of this article, it is worth mentioning that Jara met and learned popular Chilean religious music (*Canto a lo Divino*, folk-religious songs, etc.) during his childhood and adolescence, and later during his participation in the group *Cuncumén*. He also participated in Catholic Action and entered a seminary in 1950 where he was particularly drawn to religious chants and the performative elements of the liturgy. However, the isolation from the world, the morbid self-flagellations and the contempt for the corporeal led him to leave the seminary two years later. He then severed all ties with official Catholicism. In 1970 he actively participated in the election campaign of the Unidad Popular and after three years of intense social and cultural activity he was brutally tortured and murdered in the Estadio Chile concentration camp after the 1973 coup (Jara 2008).

6   Original: "Su forma, que recordaba el padrenuestro, era un reflejo del renovado interés de Víctor por la poesía y los valores humanistas de la Biblia, en una época en que se estaba acrecentando la comprensión entre católicos progresistas y marxistas en Latinoamérica" (Jara 2008, 137).

7   Peter Gould (2002, 155) also proposes a link between the first verse of the song and Psalm 121: "I will lift up mine eyes unto to the hills."

Table 1: Lyrics of *Plegaria a un labrador* in Spanish and English translation

Section	Line	Original text	English translation
Verse 1	1	Levántate y mira la montaña	Arise and look at the mountain
	2	de donde viene el viento, el sol y el agua.	where the wind, sun and water come from.
	3	Tú que manejas el curso de los ríos.	You who direct the course of the rivers.
	4	Tú que sembraste el vuelo de tu alma.	You who sowed the flight of your soul.
Verse 2	5	Levántate y mírate las manos.	Arise and look at your hands.
	6	Para crecer estréchala a tu hermano.	To grow, reach them out to your brother.
	7	Juntos iremos unidos en la sangre.	Together we will go united in blood.
	8	Hoy es el tiempo que puede ser mañana.	Today is the time that can be tomorrow.
Refrain	9	Líbranos de aquel que nos domina en la miseria.	Liberate us from him who dominates us in misery.
	10	Tráenos tu reino de justicia e igualdad.	Bring us your kingdom of justice and equality.
	11	Sopla como el viento la flor de la quebrada.	Blow like the wind, the flower of the ravine.
	12	Limpia como el fuego el cañón de mi fusil.	Clean like fire the barrel of my rifle.
	13	Hágase por fin tu voluntad aquí en la tierra.	Your will be done finally here on earth.
	14	Danos tu fuerza y tu valor al combatir.	Give us your strength and courage in battle.
	15	Sopla como el viento la flor de la quebrada.	Blow like the wind, the flower of the ravine.
	16	Limpia como el fuego el cañón de mi fusil.	Clean like fire the barrel of my rifle.
Verse 2'	17	Levántate y mírate las manos.	Arise and look at your hands.
	18	Para crecer estréchala a tu hermano.	To grow, reach them out to your brother.
	19	Juntos iremos unidos en la sangre,	Together we will go united in blood.
	20	ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte.	Now and at the hour of our death.
	21	Amén.	Amen.

The first elements of the song's text that attract attention are the intertextual references to the Lord's Prayer (lines 10 and 13) and the Hail Mary (line 20), mentioned above. While the reference to the end of the Hail Mary remains unchanged, the "Your will be done" of the Lord's Prayer focuses on the urgency of the present time and on the earth, omitting the mention of heaven. It is useful to refer at this juncture to Jara's song *Qué saco rogar al Cielo* (*What is the Point of Praying to Heaven*, 1967). In this song, the earth is foregrounded in its physicality and functions as a direct critique of an escapist theology that despises today's world. The song ends with an allusion to the idea of shared bread which is the fruit of, and right accruing to, human labor on earth: "if we harvest it together / great will be our bread."

In similar fashion, Jara in lines 7 and 19 utilizes a similar concept with the phrase "together we will go united in blood." Referring to ideas such as solidarity, these lines also address the importance of the concept of blood in Jara's work which take on new dimensions in his song *Vientos del pueblo* (*Winds of the People*, 1974).[8] This song draws direct parallels between the feeding of the

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8   This song is based on the poem of the same name by Miguel Hernández. It is significant that this mention of the feeding of the multitude, as well as the reference to the cross of Christ, are original contributions by Víctor Jara.

multitude[9] to the giving of blood: "Thousands upon thousands / have already given their blood / and multiplied the loaves / in bountiful abundance." From this example, it can be deduced that blood does not mean ancestry, but life. Tamar Dubuc (2008, 90) notes also that verses 7 and 19 of the song "may be considered inclusive in that the addressor addresses a collective rather than an individual, a collective to which he belongs as per his own assertion."

Other noteworthy verses are 5, 6, 17 and 18 which reinforce the idea of brotherhood and solidarity and establish the hand as a central symbol of solidarity. As Verena Knöpfle (2016, 70–82) suggests, the word "hands" in the world view of Víctor Jara mainly represents four metaphors: 1) hands reaching out as a symbol of solidarity; 2) hand as a creative tool and symbol of non-alienated labor, 3) soiled or stained hands as a sign of violence and 4) the fist as a sign of struggle and revolution. All four metaphors are united in *Plegaria a un labrador* although the first predominates, as I suggested above. The idea of hands as a creative tool and symbol of non-alienated labor can be associated with lines 9 and 10 in which there are direct references to liberation, justice, and equality. The fist metaphor is not explicitly mentioned in the song, but in the chorus (especially in line 14) where there are clear references to revolution and struggle. Finally, the metaphor of dirty hands as a sign of violence has a clear connection to the peasantry, as well as to the concept of domination (line 9). The potency of this motif can be seen most clearly in Jara's 1969 album *Pongo en tus manos abiertas* (*I Put in Your Open Hands*) whose cover shows the dirty palms of a peasant or worker.

What is interesting here is that the cover image is closely linked to the content of all the songs on the album, several of which have a deeply religious and messianic meaning. I would like to mention only two for the time being. Ruben Ortiz's 1969 composition *Zamba del Che* (*Che's Zamba*), for example, refers to the guerrillero Ernesto Guevara as the "saint" Ernesto de la Higuera, giving him a certain messianic status. In addition, *Camilo Torres* alludes to the figure of the guerrilla priest and his role in left-wing Christianity in Latin America. Víctor Jara's version (the original version is by Daniel Viglietti) is very evocative because it plays with representations of the *Jetztzeit* (now-time) by changing the time signature, the tempo and the rhythmic motif of the guitar when he sings: "It was God who shouted: revolution!"

Line 8 contains perhaps one of the most important phrases in relation to the messianism of *Plegaria a un labrador*. This applies not only to the poetic text – suggesting a contraction of time in which a hoped-for future is already becoming a possibility – but also to the fact that the phrase, at this precise moment, leads directly to the refrain and marks the arrival of a "new (musical)

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9   Cf. Matthew 14:13–21; Matthew 15:32–39; Mark 6:31–44; Mark 8:1–9; Luke 9:10–17; and John 6:1–14.

time." It is precisely at the word "tomorrow" that the tonality transitions from F minor to F Mixolydian, the meter from 6/8 to 3/4 and the tempo from ♩. ~ 69 to ♩~ 126, (that is, from ♪ ~ 207 to ♪ ~ 252), all the simultaneous changes marking the beginning of an accelerando.[10] These elements can be related to Benjamin's *Jetztzeit*, which, in contrast to homogeneous time, refers to that moment that stops the course of history and opens a door through which the messiah can enter (Benjamin 1991, 701–704). Thus, the instant that the word "tomorrow" is established, it can be understood as a miniature model of the passage from habitual time to messianic time.[11]

Before commenting on the song's refrain, I should like to mention one last element that is present in the second stanza (lines 5 to 8): it is a vocal accompaniment to the main melody that refers in virtual form to a mystical acoustic space, a religious space. The distribution of voices (the soloist sings relatively rapidly while other voices accompany at a slower pace) and the absence of text in the vocal accompaniment (the accompanying voices sing "ah") supports this idea.[12] This rightly suggests that *Plegaria a un labrador* is not a mere secularization of religious references, if lines 3 and 4, which make mention of certain divine attributes, are also taken into account. Indeed, lines 5 to 8 could even be understood rhetorically as a proposition against the first 4 lines, insofar as they offer a shift in person and proposition concerning the divine attributes of the first stanza (i.e., the repeated "you" of lines 3 and 4 becomes the "we" of line 7).

The refrain of *Plegaria a un labrador*, exactly where the prayer takes place, contains further suggestive elements. Jara asks for liberation through the imperative (line 9) and for the kingdom of justice and equality to be "brought" (line 10). The latter is interesting because the usual "your kingdom come" of the Lord's Prayer is replaced by a "bring us your kingdom." It suggests, in a way, a more active messianic intervention in the coming of the kingdom of God. Here, Jara also emphasizes the category of the kingdom that, based on the ideas of justice and equality, is to be realized on earth for the betterment of the world.

This refrain is sung by the soloist in a style related to plainchant, in particular the so-called liturgical recitative (lines 9, 10, 13 and 14). The vocal liturgical recitative is syllabic, utilizes repeated pitches, and has religious connotations

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10 As Dubuc (2008, 98) notes, "changes in dynamics, timbral quality, tempo and musical texture combine to create an overall impression of progressive urgency," which is particularly evident at this point between stanza and chorus. In other versions by Jara himself, such as the one performed at his concert in Lima in 1973, there is also a slight accelerando between verses 7 and 8, precisely preparing this moment of "now-time."

11 These types of musical arrangements are not so common in the Nueva Canción Chilena and are also present in other songs with an intense messianic meaning, such as Víctor Jara's *Camilo Torres* or Rolando Alarcón's *El hombre*.

12 About this kind of vocal accompaniment and its significance in the Nueva Canción, see my article "Sonido, religión y Nueva Canción Chilena" (Rojas 2020, 258–264).

due to its development in the history of Western Christianity.[13] Thus, the use of this seemingly intoned melody can also be viewed as a paradoxical connection between the religious and the profane.

It is worth noting that some sources indicate that parts of the chorus were composed in conjunction with Patricio Castillo (Jara 2008, 138; Rodríguez 1988, 80–81). In my opinion, lines 11, 12, 15 and 16 could be the result of this collaboration. This is suggested by both the lyrics and the shaping of the melodic material of the refrain. The incorporation of Castillo's ideas in this section are suggested by a pronounced change in the style of the text, namely the dominance of the dactylic metrical foot of the verse. His influence can also be seen in the acceleration of the harmonic rhythm, and melodic leap of a third (the only accented ascending leap in the whole song).

It should also be mentioned that in the altered repetition of the second stanza (where the last verse changes), the guitar playing is modified. Instead of the initial arpeggio, the last verse maintains the strumming used in the refrain which not only intensifies the section, but also modifies the meaning of the verse: it no longer represents the moment before the arrival of a messianic time, but is inserted within it, bringing to mind what was expressed in the refrain.

Finally, the "Amen" with which *Plegaria a un labrador* ends, should be highlighted. Of course, it is very rare to find this word in non-ritual music. Here it not only fulfils the function of a closing formula of the prayer, but also opens up the hope of making a better tomorrow from now on. The use of the Picardy third, commonly used by the Nueva Canción to express the idea of hope, also reaffirms this idea.[14]

The Realization of the Kingdom in the Popular Unity (1970–1973)

The Unidad Popular was formed by several left-wing parties and movements in connection with the elections for 1970 whose candidate, Salvador Allende, won the presidency in the popular vote. Through the so-called Chilean road to socialism, the Unidad Popular wanted to conduct a democratic and non-violent transition to a society without antagonism between social classes, i.e., to a classless society. In a way, this road to socialism was identified with the realization of Christian hopes and aspirations. There were, for example, Christian sectors such as the first MAPU (Popular Unitary Action Movement), the Izquierda Cristiana (Christian Left) and the movement Cristianos por el

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13   A detailed analysis of the liturgical recitative in the Nueva Canción can be found in my article "Sonido, religión y Nueva Canción Chilena" (Rojas 2020). It is worth noting that this liturgical recitative is not constituted as "sacred sound" because of its "immanent" properties, but because of the widespread use that was historically given to such recitatives in the Roman Church.

14   The Picardy third corresponds to the introduction of a major tonic chord in a composition in a minor key, generally at the end of a piece of music. For the use of the Picardy third in the Nueva Canción, see Rojas (2020).

Socialismo (Christians for Socialism) that not only considered Christianity and socialism to be compatible, but they understood that the socialist project was very close to their Christian values and identified the struggle to overcome capitalism as a Christian duty ("Izquierda Cristiana" [n. d.]; Miranda 2020, 50). It is worth mentioning that Allende himself, in his May Day speech in 1971, greeted Chilean Catholics in this way: "Receive the affection from the people because increasingly your word is closer to the thought of Christ."[15]

There are thus significant elements that indicate that the Nueva Canción Chilena interpreted the Unidad Popular as the realization of the kingdom of God. First of all, many Nueva Canción musicians actively participated in the campaign and the subsequent government of the Unidad Popular (McSherry 2017; Rolle 2000; Schmiedecke 2013, 2017). But not only that. The scholar Natalia Schmiedecke (2013, 181–182) has suggested that in the Nueva Canción Chilena two ways of interpreting the present can be distinguished which are closely related to the political situation: until 1970, the hope for future change predominates, whereas between 1970 and 1973 the emphasis is on the break with yesterday under the idea of bringing "today" closer to "tomorrow." *Plegaria a un labrador* is precisely one of the songs that create the transition between the two moments.

Thus, from 1970 onwards, various songs emerged that celebrated the coming to power of the Unidad Popular and identified it as the moment when the people achieved their liberation and overcame the past of hatred and exploitation (Schmiedecke 2013, 181–182). For example, in the song *Marcha de los pobladores* (*March of the Settlers*, 1972) by Víctor Jara, this connection becomes clear by explicitly linking the Unidad Popular "with the flags of the people's government" and the fulfilment of the basic material needs of food, drink, housing, clothing, which are closely related to the criteria of the Last Times (cf. Matthew 25, 35–36). And all this is expressed in a collective voice that aspires to signaling mass participation.

In a way, there is a notion of a messianic path in the Nueva Canción in which the realization of the kingdom is understood as resulting from a process. For example, in the above mentioned *Marcha de los pobladores*, the use of the grammatical future tense and the idea of "marching together towards the future" are predominant. Another salient example is Víctor Jara's song *Vamos por ancho camino* (*Let Us Take the Wide Path*, 1971) in which the present is interpreted as the hope of a way to walk: "Come, come, come with me / We are on a wide path / A new destiny will be born, come." For this reason, the Nueva Canción Chilena should not be understood as a historical messianism, insofar as it does not interpret the present as the millennial kingdom and the

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15   Original: "Recibe el cariño popular porque cada vez su verbo está más cerca del pensamiento de Cristo" (Allende 2020, 105).

last age of humanity. Unidad Popular's identification with the kingdom is not yet complete: it is not yet the kingdom itself but, crucially, the possibility of building it. From this perspective, the 1973 film *La tierra prometida* (*Promised Land*) directed by Miguel Littin, with a soundtrack composed by Ángel Parra, stands out. As Guerrero and Vusković (2018, 323) point out, the film (but especially the soundtrack) reflects on the redemptive sense of a coming revolution in which all sacrifices would become meaningful. These authors also refer to the biblical and messianic meanings the revolutionary struggle would acquire from the film's title (*Promised Land* in English), such meanings clearly expressed in the songs *Cuando amanece el día* (*When the Day Dawns*),[16] *Vengo de un lugar* (*I Come from a Place*), *Tierra prometida* or *Levántense, compañeros* (*Rise Up, Comrades*) (Guerrero and Vusković 2018, 285).

At this point I should like to return to *Plegaria a un labrador* and address an issue that has not yet been discussed. To whom is the prayer of intercession addressed? What representational role might peasants play? It seems that the figure of the peasant embodies the messianic task of beginning to build a new world full of justice and equality. In this sense, the term *labrador*, which usually emphasizes the sense of someone who works the land, does not only refer here to the worker of the land (Dubuc 2008, 81), but to the underprivileged and oppressed who are working for a longed-for liberation. I should, therefore, like to explore some of the correspondences between the peasant figure and the different messiahs conceived in the Unidad Popular.

Of course, the idea of a messiah embodied in Salvador Allende had a specific trajectory in the Nueva Canción. It is true that after the coup of September 11, 1973, Allende attained the status of the redeeming Christ with particular intensity, sacrificing himself for the poor and oppressed, just as Jesus did (Ortúzar et al. 2009, 231–247). But there are songs of the Nueva Canción that already exhibit this idea. A clear example is Rolando Alarcón's *Compañero presidente* (*Comrade President*, 1971). Probably because of certain perception of Allende as a messiah, Allende himself declared in a speech in 1971: "I am not an apostle and I am not a messiah, I am not a martyr, I am a social fighter fulfilling a task, the task given to me by the people."[17] It is interesting to note that Allende repeated exactly the same words on the day of the coup when he was killed (Allende 2020, 513).

In tandem with Allende, there are also frequent instances of songs that conceive of Ernesto "Che" Guevara as the messiah. Some examples are Víctor

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16   It is interesting that this song appears for the first time on the album *Se cumple un año, ¡y se cumple!* (*One Year Has Passed, and We Comply!*, 1971), a collective work released as a homage to the first year of the Unidad Popular government.

17   Original: "Yo no tengo pasta de apóstol ni tengo pasta de Mesías, no tengo condiciones de mártir, soy un luchador social que cumple una tarea, la tarea que el pueblo me ha dado" (Allende 2020, 231).

Jara's aforementioned *Zamba del Che* and Quilmay's *El hombre nuevo* (*The New Man*). The latter song compares Guevara to Jesus of Nazareth through the alternation of elements characteristic of each: "The new man / Christ Guevara / Love and struggle / Cheek and bullet." Of course, one can also encounter allusions to Jesus as the messiah. Pertinent examples include Ángel Parra's *Oratorio para el pueblo* (*Oratorio for the People*) from 1965 and *Passion selon Saint Jean* (*Saint John Passion*) from 1974;[18] and Fernando Ugarte's *El cristo cercano* (*The Close Christ*, 1970) whose text reads, "Christ Guerrillero of Justice and Peace, Christ of Freedom."[19]

Finally, and according to the Marxist eschatology, in the Nueva Canción the people, broadly speaking, are also interpreted as the messiah. That is, the people emerge here as the subject of their self-liberation. The song *Vientos del pueblo* is an example of where the people as messiah carry the "same cross that Christ dragged." So in this case it is the people as messiah that makes the miracle of feeding the multitude possible.

Considering this overview, I would like to suggest that the *labrador* to whom the prayer is sung in *Plegaria a un labrador* is a kind of distillation of all these possible messiahs. The idea of the peasant as "one who works for libera-tion" allows his significance to be expanded in this way. Thus, in *Plegaria a un labrador* the messianism as a path is more important than the messiah himself; a path that would be realized in the Unidad Popular.

Plegaria a un labrador and the Christian Base Communities During the Dictatorship (1973–1990)

As I have already mentioned, this "realization of the kingdom" was interrupted after the coup of 11 September 1973. From that moment on, the sympathizers of Unidad Popular adopted an attitude like the first Christians: while being persecuted, exiled and killed, they expected a restoration of the kingdom and a kind of second coming of Allende. As Laura Jordán explains, this period is characterized by the use of music as a form of resistance which wandered be-tween the public sphere and the private and clandestine space (Jordán 2009, 77–102). In this context, *Plegaria a un labrador* continued to be played in the following years in Chile and Latin America where the song acquired new dimensions.

To refer to these new paths of the song, I shall adopt Julio Mendívil's no-tion of the social biographies of songs. This author proposes, in contrast to an Adornian conception of music, that music listeners are not condemned to pas-sivity. On the contrary, music acquires its values and meanings not only at the

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18   Original title in French, although the music is in Spanish.

19   At least until 1970, Ugarte was a priest of the Catholic Church and recorded his first three records as a priest.

moment of production, but also in its reception, consumption and use. Thus, the social biographies of songs correspond to "the different interpretations and adaptations that can be given to a song when it is inserted into collective life stories beyond its status as a commodity" (Mendívil 2013, 6).

Although *Plegaria a un labrador* took many paths (as can be surmised from the long list of covers of the song, see Footnote 2), I should like to examine the case of the Christian base communities in Chile because they show with great intensity the messianic tension that the song developed.[20] These Christian base communities, persecuted by the dictatorship, wrote new pages in the social biography of *Plegaria a un labrador*, using the song in their almost clandestine meetings as well as in the so-called People's Way of the Cross. The arrival of the aforementioned coup in 1973 coincided with a period of development of ecclesial base communities. As Esteban Miranda (2019, 58) explains, although the new situation was one of discouragement and crisis, popular communities were gradually opening "cracks and windows." One of these windows was the People's Way of the Cross which took place every Good Friday from 1980 onwards as part of protests against the "signs of death" of the Chilean dictatorship. These Way of the Cross events were structured by a correlation between the stations of Jesus' Via Dolorosa and the situation of human rights violations in Chile. *Plegaria a un labrador* thus took on new meanings through its widespread use during these popular Way of the Cross processions where participants intoned it "with mysticism," as Esteban Valenzuela (2014, 75) reports. Some sources even indicate that, in this context, this song was called the Latin American Lord's Prayer (Valenzuela 2014, 74).

In this way, *Plegaria a un labrador*, originally conceived as a concert piece, began to be used in popular religious contexts where its meanings arguably expanded: lines like 9 ("Liberate us from him who dominates us in misery") or 14 ("Give us your strength and courage in battle") took on new implications as a direct critique of the dictatorship, while lines 19 and 20 ("Together we will go united in blood / Now and at the hour of our death") were no longer as abstract as before, but referred to the immanence of the real danger of death. In a sense, the song is here embedded into a Christian eschatological messianism[21] where prayer is now elevated to a divinity understood in Christian terms and the kingdom is urgently hoped for as the alternative future to the present.

Furthermore, I should like to point out that during these years (1980–1990) *Plegaria a un labrador* was not only sung during the People's Ways of the Cross

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20 Christian base communities (also known as Ecclesial base communities) are a model of "being Church" that spread widely in Latin America, especially between the 1970s and 1980s. This model is characterized by small groups that regularly read and reflect on the Bible and connect it with social reality. They have a strong popular character, committing themselves to solidarity and the struggle for social justice (Boff 1981; Miranda 2019).

21 Following Moltmann's terminology (Moltmann 2005).

but also at other meetings of base communities.[22] María (personal communication, 2020), member of one of these base communities,[23] reports that the song was also used during the years of the dictatorship in all the meetings of the Christian base communities and in the small persecuted communities that met almost clandestinely. In this context, *Plegaria a un labrador* and other Nueva Canción songs began to appear in various songbooks of Chilean Catholic parishes.[24] Valenzuela indicates that mimeographed songbooks circulated in the parishes of Chile which contained hymns despised by the dictatorship and the segments of Chilean society that supported it who remained uncomfortable at Sunday Mass when the youth raised their voices to sing gospel songs too reminiscent of the songs of the Unidad Popular (Valenzuela 2014, 73). Since these songbooks sometimes had to be sanctioned by the church authorities, the refrain of *Plegaria a un labrador* is of course modified in most versions. Line 12 and its repetition ("Clean like fire the barrel of my rifle") is modified by a text that avoids mentioning armed struggle. Thus, it is common to find the phrase "Delete like fire the power of wickedness" as a substitute. However, some base communities restored the original text directly with a pen, as shown in the following copy I found in the songbook *Vamos a cantar: Libro de cantos de la comunidad cristiana* (*Let Us Sing: The Book of Songs of the Christian Community*) in the Cristo Liberador community of the western zone of Santiago de Chile (see Figures 1 and 2).

This restoration of the original content of the song suggests a correlation between the hopes of this community and the resistance through all forms of struggle against the Chilean dictatorship in which, once again, the political dimensions take on a religious meaning and vice versa. It is worth noting that during this period several members of this Catholic community belonged to political organizations that fought militarily against the dictatorship, such as the Revolutionary Left Movement or the Communist Party. In this way, cases like that of this community and its adaptation of *Plegaria a un labrador* suggest the notion that the realm of justice and equality that had begun to be realized in the Unidad Popular was to be restored.

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22   It is worth mentioning that the use of Nueva Canción Chilena songs by Christian base communities goes back at least to the time of Christians for Socialism (from 1971).

23   The Cristo Liberador community in Santiago de Chile.

24   For example, in my research in the Cristo Liberador community in Santiago de Chile, *Plegaria a un labrador* appears in three of the four songbooks of this period: *La Iglesia canta: Cancionero comunitario* (*The Church Sings: Community Songbook*); *La comunidad de los pobres le canta a su señor* (*The Community of the Poor Sings to Their Lord*; appears under the title *Levántate y mira la montaña*); and *Vamos a cantar: Libro de cantos de la comunidad cristiana*, and in many others from other base communities. Naturally, there were also pro-dictatorship sectors in the Church that censored these songbooks and any music that was considered subversive or too close to the Nueva Canción (Valenzuela 2014, 73).

Figure 1: Cover of the songbook *Vamos a cantar: Libro de cantos de la comunidad cristiana*.
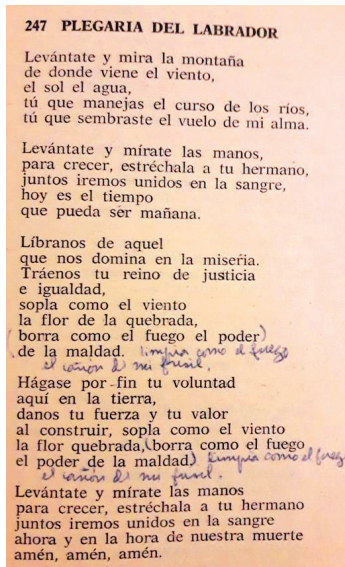

Figure 2: Restoration of the original lyrics of *Plegaria a un labrador* in
the songbook *Vamos a cantar: Libro de cantos de la comunidad cristiana*
found at Comunidad Cristo Liberador (Santiago de Chile).[25]

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25 The National Library of Chile estimates that the book was published in 1982, but indicates this
    information in its catalog with a question mark. http://www.bncatalogo.cl/F/FVMH8E1G-
    6KRXSS8CGQ9LSPYG4QXS48YJ6PFY5F4SCFVFT8H134-05367?func=full-set-set&set_
    number=096225&set_entry=000001&format=999.

Conclusion

As can be observed, both the origin and the social biography of *Plegaria a un labrador* show how messianic concepts of the Nueva Canción Chilena developed historically. If at the beginning there was a correlation between the historical turning point that existed with the entry of the Unidad Popular into government and the idea of realizing the kingdom of God, later, during the dictatorship, the idea of liberation from oppression took on particular weight.

Of course, a uniform eschatology cannot be found in the Nueva Canción Chilena. On the contrary, one can observe views ranging from the most orthodox Marxism (self-liberation in history through class struggle) to popular Christianity where messianic intervention is not only necessary but urgent. But are we therefore confronted by a secularization of the religious? It is not an orthodox Christianity. But it is not just a secularization either. The profane images have a sacral counterpart, without which they lose their meaning. *Plegaria a un labrador* is an excellent example of a composition that cries out for divine intervention in the world. At the same time it represents and establishes a break in the progression of history. Through the song and its social biography, a messianic future emerges, opening up different perspectives on a future that was already planned and projected by the "current" state of the world. A door opens in history in which the messiah can break through. The goal of the history thus finds its meaning in *Plegaria a un labrador* at the point where both the images of a classless society and the idea of the kingdom of God on earth converge.

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POVZETEK

Brezrazredna družba ali prihod tvojega kraljestva?
Plegaria a un labrador in Nueva Canción Chilena

Glasbeno gibanje *Nueva Canción Chilena* je zgodovinsko povezano s politično levico, poleg tega pa vključuje v svoje zvočne oblike in konceptualna prizadevanja tudi pomembne religiozne elemente. Pomembni člani gibanja so te elemente prevzeli iz ljudske religije v Čilu, razumeti pa jih smemo tudi v smislu verskega ateizma, s katerim si navsezadnje lahko razložimo pojave paradoksalnih oblik, v katerih se stikata sakralno in posvetno.

Pričujoča študija razkriva, da je bila verska komponenta prisotna v samem jedru gibanja Nueva Canción Chilena in da je bila eksplicitno zakoreninjena v revolucionarnem diskurzu gibanja. Presenetljivo, a obenem značilno stališče tega diskurza je, da si je gibanje Nueva Canción Chilena predstavljalo politični projekt Unidad Popular (katerega del je nova čilenska pesem tudi postala) kot uresničitev božjega kraljestva. Tako kaže pričujoči članek, ki jemlje kot izhodišče pesem *Plegaria a un labrador* (*Molitev k poljedelcu*) Víctorja Jare in njeno družbeno biografijo, kako se je okoli gibanja Nueva Canción Chilena razvila ideja t. i. »kraljestva,« ki združuje utopijo brezrazredne družbe in predstavo o božjem kraljestvu na zemlji.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

PABLO ROJAS SAHURIE (pablo.rojas@univie.ac.at) holds a doctoral fellowship from the Austrian Academy of Sciences at the Institute of Musicology of the University of Vienna. He received his Bachelor's degree in Music Theory (2016) and his Master's degree in Musicology (2018) from the University of Chile. His main research interests are music, philosophy and religion, Nueva Canción, popular musicians, and Latin American music. In 2022 he received the Otto Mayer-Serra Award for Music Research. He is currently working on a doctoral thesis focusing on messianism and the *Nueva Canción Chilena*.

O AVTORJU

PABLO ROJAS SAHURIE (pablo.rojas@univie.ac.at) je raziskovalec na doktorskem študiju Avstrijske akademije znanosti na Inštitutu za muzikologijo Univerze na Dunaju. Na Univerzi v Čilu je leta 2016 diplomiral iz glasbene teorije, nato pa leta 2018 še magistriral iz muzikologije. Njegovi osrednji raziskovalni interesi so glasba, filozofija in religija, nova čilenska pesem (*Nueva Canción Chilena*) popularni glasbeniki in latinsko-ameriška glasba. Leta 2022 je prejel nagrado Otta Mayerja-Serra za raziskave v glasbi. Trenutno piše doktorsko disertacijo na temo mesijanizma in nove čilenske pesmi.

In Memory of Józef Pacholczyk (1938–2021)

It was truly a life experience, a pleasure and a privilege to be one of Józef Pacholczyk's PhD students in the graduate program in ethnomusicology he established in the 1980s at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, in the United States. As an expression of heartfelt respect, love, and gratitude, I chose to share memories of my mentor's unique personal and professional qualities that deserve to be made known to the broader public and can most assuredly serve as a valuable inspiration to future generations of young scholars. This tribute follows his life in A–B–A form from A, an early career as a classical concert pianist to B, his academic accomplishments in ethnomusicology, and A, a return to piano performances. When Józef's wife Talitha informed me of his death, I decided to write a somewhat unusual obituary, recalling his views, values, and accomplishments as informed by thoughts from some of his colleagues and students.

Józef Marcin Pacholczyk's main interests during his student days in his hometown of Warsaw, Poland, were philology and music. He earned his master's degree from the University of Warsaw with the thesis "Arabic Lexical Elements in Sejarah Melayu" and a piano diploma from what is now the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music. He then received fellowships in Egypt and Italy, and then moved to the United States to pursue doctoral studies in ethnomusicology at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). After earning his doctorate with the dissertation "Regulative Principles in the Koran [Qur'anic] Chant of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Bāsiṭ 'Abdu'ṣ-Ṣamad," he held various positions at UCLA and a teaching position at the University of Ottawa in Canada. In the 1980s, he founded a respectable graduate program in ethnomusicology at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, which attracted a rich variety of international students, and was acknowledged for its frequent guest lecturers and local community outreach initiatives. After the program closed due to new plans by the university leadership, he joined the music faculty at the University of Maryland, College Park and taught there until his retirement. After moving to Tucson, Arizona, for health reasons, he returned to piano playing and pursued a career as an artist specializing in European classical music.

Józef Pacholczyk's areas of interest in ethnomusicology largely included the world of Islam, from Morocco and Egypt to Central Asia, Indonesia, and Indian Kashmir. He is the author of *Ṣūfyāna mūsīqī: The Classical Music of Kashmir* (1996) and other books, articles, encyclopedia entries, and conference papers. Within the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM), he was

particularly active in the Study Group on Maqām. Jürgen Elsner, its founder and long-time chairman, appreciated Pacholczyk's

> *open-mindedness, commitment, and ability to communicate and create understanding, for which he was able to use his East-West linguistic skills. Through his research in Central Asia, he was well-established in the world of maqām and greatly expanded the scope of the study group. The musical traditions of Kashmir, which he explored through extensive fieldwork and source study, led him to far-reaching reflections on the intercontinental existence of the maqām phenomenon. I have fond memories of his honest, friendly and highly professional personality.*

As Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, past president of ICTM, recalls:

> *I met him for the first time at the eighteenth annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology in 1973. He asked me if I was related to the Egyptian composer Aziz El-Shawan. When I replied that he was my father, his face lit up and he told me about his time in Cairo in the 1960s and his meeting with Aziz El-Shawan, who was instrumental in organizing his piano concerts there. I share with many colleagues the admiration for his extraordinary human and professional qualities and am grateful for his friendship.*

In the words of Cheng Te-Yuan, Józef's student from Taiwan who founded the UMBC-inspired ethnomusicology program at the Taiwan National University of the Arts (TNNUA) in 2003:

> *One thing I will remember all my life. Prof. Pacholczyk said to me that if I stay in America for a few more years, I will learn more about ethnomusicology, but if I return to Taiwan sooner, I will definitely be able to realize my dream. I took his advice and built the first ethnomusicology program there.*

Ethnomusicology at TNNUA was strengthened by the subsequent appointments of Ted Tsung-Te Tsai and Made Mantle Hood, both linked to UMBC; hosting several international scholarly gatherings further contributed to its growing reputation. As Tsai reflects,

> *Dr. Pacholczyk's friendly face keeps popping up in my mind. A scholar, educator, and pianist who was strong in both theory and practice, he was always passionate about ethnomusicology and was a respectable music practitioner.*

Philip Schuyler joined the UMBC faculty during my studies there and I vividly recall his outstanding courses. In his words, "Creating a program staffed by friends and colleagues was Józef's dream." Indeed, Pacholczyk brought his well-known former professor, Ki Mantle Hood, from UCLA, and later Karl Signell and Philip Schuyler (see the photo). Schuyler continues his thoughts as follows:

When that dream ended with the closing of the program at UMBC, he found solace in his gradual return to the piano. For him, collegiality was always more important than ideology. He was a devoted mentor and loyal friend. Finally, there is an interesting fact concerning his sense of smell. It was so pronounced that he could identify individual students even on the stairs to the corridor outside his office.

I remember with gratitude the warm welcome I received from my future mentor and the first few weeks in his home after I arrived in the USA in 1988 to begin my doctoral studies. I remember his eye-opening classes, Indian music events at his house, and especially his compassion and motivational power during the time when the writing of my dissertation paralleled the wars in the territories of the former Yugoslavia, including the places where I lived and where I conducted research. At the end of my doctoral studies, I asked him how I could ever repay him for his generosity. His answer still echoes in my mind and influences my actions: "If you think you have gotten something valuable from me, make sure you share your preciousness in the best possible way with your students and colleagues."

May he rest in peace!

Svanibor Pettan

From left to right: Józef M. Pacholczyk, Karl Signell, Svanibor Pettan, Philip Schuyler, and Ki Mantle Hood celebrating the end of Pettan's doctoral studies at the Pacholczyks' home in 1992. (Photo by Hanna Pacholczyk.)

V spomin na Józefa Pacholczyka (1938–2021)

Biti eden izmed doktorskih študentov Józefa Pacholczyka v okviru programa etnomuzikologije, ki ga je utemeljil v 80. letih 20. stoletja na Univerzi v Marylandu v Okrožju Baltimore v Združenih državah Amerike, je bila resnično velika življenjska izkušnja, veselje in privilegij. V znak srčnega spoštovanja, ljubezni in hvaležnosti želim deliti spomine na mentorjeve edinstvene osebne in poklicne vrline, ki si zaslužijo, da jih širša javnost bolje spozna, in so nedvomno lahko dragocen navdih prihodnjim generacijam mladih raziskovalcev. Pričujoče posvetilo sledi njegovemu življenju v tridelni obliki A–B–A: od A, zgodnje kariere koncertnega pianista klasične glasbe, do B, njegovih akademskih dosežkov v etnomuzikologiji, in nato ponovnega A, njegove vrnitve k pianističnemu izvajanju. Ko mi je Józefova žena Talitha sporočila novico o njegovi smrti, sem se odločil napisati ta nekoliko nenavaden nekrolog, s katerim sem se želel spomniti na njegova stališča, vrednote in dosežke, tudi skozi misli in besede nekaterih njegovih kolegov in študentov.

Józef Marcin Pacholczyk se je v svoji domači Varšavi na Poljskem v študentskih letih zanimal predvsem za filologijo in glasbo. Na Univerzi v Varšavi je magistriral s tezo »Arabski leksikalni elementi v Sejarah Melayu«,[1] diplomo iz klavirja pa si je pridobil na Univerzi za glasbo Fryderyka Chopina, kakor se ustanova imenuje danes. Nato je raziskovalno deloval v Egiptu in Italiji, zatem pa se je preselil v Združene države Amerike, kjer se je vpisal na doktorski študij etnomuzikologije na Univerzi v Kaliforniji v Los Angelesu (UCLA). Potem ko je doktoriral s tezo »Regulativna načela v petju Korana šejka ʾAbduʾl-Bāsiṭa ʾAbduʾṣ-Ṣamada« (»Regulative Principles in the Koran Chant of Shaikh ʾAbduʾl-Bāsiṭ ʾAbduʾṣ-Ṣamad«) je služboval na različnih položajih na Univerzi v Kaliforniji v Los Angelesu ter učil na Univerzi v Ottawi v Kanadi. V 80. letih 20. stoletja je ustanovil ugleden diplomski program v etnomuzikologiji na Univerzi v Marylandu v Okrožju Baltimore. Program je pritegnil vrsto mednarodnih študentov in je bil znan po pogostih gostujočih predavanjih in iniciativah po povezovanju in sodelovanju z lokalno skupnostjo. Ko je vodstvo univerze zaradi novih načrtov program ukinilo, se je Pacholczyk pridružil glasbeni fakulteti Univerze v Marylandu v College Parku in tam učil do upokojitve. Potem ko se je zaradi zdravstvenih razlogov preselil v Tucson v Arizoni, se je vrnil k igranju klavirja in svojo kariero nadaljeval kot umetnik, specializiran za evropsko klasično glasbo.

Etnomuzikološko zanimanje Józefa Pacholczyka je v največji meri veljalo svetu islama od Maroka in Egipta do Osrednje Azije, Indonezije in indijskega Kašmirja. Je avtor dela *Ṣūfyāna mūsīqī: The Classical Music of Kashmir* (*Ṣūfyāna*

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1   Tj. v Malajskih analih, op. uredništva.

mūsīqī: Klasična glasba Kašmirja, 1996) in številnih drugih knjig, člankov, gesel v enciklopedijah in prispevkov na konferencah. V okviru Mednarodnega sveta za tradicijsko glasbo (International Council for Traditional Music – ICTM) je bil še posebej aktiven v Študijski skupini za makam. Jürgen Elsner, ustanovitelj te skupine in njen dolgoletni predsednik, je cenil Pacholczykovo

> *odprtost, predanost, in sposobnost, da je posredoval in ustvarjal razumevanje, za kar je lahko uporabil svoje vzhodno-zahodne lingvistične sposobnosti. S svojimi raziskavami o osrednji Aziji se je v svetu makama zelo uveljavil in je močno razširil obzorje študijske skupine. Obsežno terensko delo in študij virov o glasbenih tradicijah Kašmirja sta ga vodila k daljnosežnim spoznanjem o medcelinskem obstoju pojava makama. Na njegovo pošteno, prijateljsko in izjemno profesionalno osebnost imam lepe spomine.*

Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, nekdanja predsednica ICTM, pa se spominja:

> *Prvikrat sem ga srečala na osemnajstem letnem srečanju Etnomuzikološkega društva leta 1973. Vprašal me je, če sem v sorodu z egipčanskim skladateljem Azizom El-Shawanom. Ko sem odgovorila, da je to moj oče, mu je obraz zasijal in povedal mi je, kako je bil v 60. letih [20. stoletja] v Kairu in kako je srečal Aziza El-Shawana, ki je bil med glavnimi organizatorji njegovih koncertov v tem mestu. Tako sama kakor številni moji kolegi občudujemo njegove izjemne človeške in profesionalne lastnosti in hvaležna sem za njegovo prijateljstvo.*

V besedah Chenga Te-Yuana, Józefovega študenta s Tajvana, ki je po navdihu etnomuzikološkega programa na Unverzi v Marylandu ustanovil Tajvansko nacionalno univerzo za umetnosti (Taiwan National University of the Arts – TNNUA, 2003):

> *Ena stvar je, ki se je bom spominjal vse življenje. Profesor Pacholczyk mi je dejal, da če ostanem v Ameriki še nekaj let, se bom več naučil o etnomuzikologiji, toda če se prej vrnem na Tajvan, bom zagotovo lahko uresničil svoje sanje. Poslušal sem njegov nasvet in tu ustanovil prvi etnomuzikološki program.*

Etnomuzikologijo na TNNUA so z novimi imenovanji okrepile strokovne sile, povezane z Univerzo v Marylandu: Ted Tsung-Te Tsai in Made Mantle Hood sta gostila več mednarodnih znanstvenih srečanj, ki so nadalje prispevala k naraščajočemu ugledu te ustanove. Kot se spominja Tsai:

> *Prijateljski obraz dr. Pacholczyka se mi kar naprej prikazuje v mislih. Bil je znanstvenik, pedagog in pianist, ki je bil močan tako v teoriji kakor praksi, vedno vnet za etnomuzikologijo in tudi ugleden glasbeni izvajalec.*

Philip Schuyler se je pridružil osebju Univerze v Marylandu med mojim študijem in živo se spominjam njegovih odličnih predavanj. Po njegovih besedah je bila »ustanovitev programa, v katerem bi bili zaposleni prijatelji in kolegi, Józefov sen.« Pacholczyk je na Univerzo v Marylandu z Univerze v Kaliforniji pripeljal

celo svojega uglednega nekdanjega profesorja Kija Mantla Hooda, kasneje pa še Karla Signella in Philipa Schuylerja (glej fotografijo). Schuyler nadaljuje:

> *Ko so se te sanje z ukinitvijo programa na Univerzi v Marylandu končale, je tolažbo našel v postopnem vračanju h klavirju. Kolegialnost je bila zanj vedno bolj pomembna kakor ideologija. Bil je predan mentor in zvest prijatelj. Nenazadnje pa je tu še zanimiv podatek o njegovem čutu za vonj: bil je tako izostren, da je lahko posamezne študente prepoznal celo, če so bili na stopnicah pred hodnikom, ki je vodil k njegovi pisarni.*

S hvaležnostjo se spominjam prisrčnega sprejema, ki sem ga bil od svojega bodočega mentorja deležen v prvih tednih na njegovem domu, ko sem leta 1988 prispel v ZDA, da bi tam začel z doktorskim študijem. Spominjam se njegovih predavanj, ki so študentom odpirala oči, indijskih glasbenih dogodkov na njegovem domu, predvsem pa njegovega sočutja in motiviranja v času pisanja moje doktorske disertacije, ki je sovpadal s potekom vojne na območju nekdanje Jugoslavije, tudi v krajih, kjer sem prej živel in raziskoval. Ob koncu doktorskega študija sem ga vprašal, kako se mu bom lahko kdaj oddolžil za njegovo velikodušnost. Njegov odgovor mi še vedno odzvanja v mislih in vpliva na moja dejanja: »Če misliš, da si od mene dobil kaj vrednega, poskrbi, da boš svojo dragocenost na najboljši možni način delil s svojimi študenti in kolegi.«

Naj počiva v miru!

Svanibor Pettan, Univerza v Ljubljani
Prevedla Katarina Šter

Od leve proti desni: Józef M. Pacholczyk, Karl Signell, Svanibor Pettan, Philip Schuyler in Ki Mantle Hood ob zaključku Pettanovega doktorskega študija na Pacholczykovem domu leta 1992. (Fotografija Hanne Pacholczyk.)