

SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION OF MUSIC PRACTICE IN ISTANBUL: REPOSITIONING OF SUBJECTIVITIES

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Abstract

This article analyzes changes in pedagogical practices of Sufi music in Istanbul based on socio-spatial reorganizations imposed by the Turkish State on the Ottoman society in the 1930s and their impact on the construction of current musicians' subjectivities. Spatial secularization of Ottoman places intended to amend the social ties, redirecting those cultivated loyalties between the sonic and spiritual scenery towards academic agreements, promoted within new places for music learning produced by the Turkish State. This process, which was at the same time physical, material, social and cognitive of space, generated practices of resistance and struggles still unresolved, not only for the Turkish State, but for the modalities of subjective experience of teachers, musicians and audiences seeking to reposition themselves in the contemporary context of Istanbul.

Approach to Sufi musical practice from its places for teaching

The notion of "curvature" is a concept developed by Castro Nogueira in 1997 to analyze dynamics of the social space-time in specific contexts. His theorization about space, social practice and representations provides us with explanatory tools to understand spatial transformations and their resonance within subjectification processes. Briefly, the concept includes an "external" and an "internal" curvature. The "external curvature" involves the physical and material production of social space and the production of social visibility of a specific era. Meanwhile, with "internal curvature" Castro groups the orientation of subjects in the margins of cognitive cartographies, modalities of subjective experience and their relation with power and finally the inner space-time or personal interiority (Castro 1997: 33-38).

Before the foundation of the Turkish Republic, the Turk-Ottoman social space-time – with all its frailties– was articulated by a system of spatialities and territorialities. One of them was related to aural practices, discourses and representations that gravitated around Muslim spirituality. In order to develop their religious life, Sufi orders promoted a highly sophisticated kind of sonic thought and practice that has been cultivated in Anatolia for over two hundred years. Thanks to the activities developed by these institutions, they consolidated one of the tensors of Ottoman spatiality.

In a city like Istanbul before the Republic, besides other places like libraries, harbors, bureaucratic buildings, Koranic schools and mosques, Sufi lodges or *tekkeles* also determined the spatiotemporal habitats where the inhabitants of Istanbul lived their everyday lives. They attended Sufi lodges assiduously to participate in ceremonies and religious meetings every week. In these activities, ecstasy, meditation, advice and the hospitality of every saint was dispensed to each participant. Henri Corbin used to say that "sufis must sing in order to speak" (Corbin 2005: 134).

By the time of foundation of the Turkish Republic, musical activities involved spirituality and Islamic esotericism and were coordinated by the mystical Mevlevi order in places like Cairo, Bosnia Herzegovina, Hungary, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Yugoslavia, Greece,

Cyprus, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Mecca and Medina, as well as in the entire Anatolian peninsula (Küçük 2003: 177). Although the Mevlevi order has been the largest institution that has raised music and spirituality to their highest expression and professionalization, the same conjunction of music and spirituality was also cultivated in meeting places of other mystical orders in Istanbul. These institutions cultivated an esoteric tradition simultaneously, created the most important centers for the professionalization of musicians and worked on the consolidation of the Ottoman esthetic thought. For example, discussions on the relation between music theory and cosmology or between architecture and spiritual evolution were held in those places (Bakhtiar 1976: 106; Feldman 1996: 85-87; Puerta 1997: 750; Uslu 2008: 22).

In addition to songs and people, discursive forms also circulated in these places and they were not stated elsewhere. One of the most important features of these places was the accumulation of knowledge, memory and numinous power, a certain feature that is called *baraka* in Turkish and Arabic. This is a quality that is lodged in those spaces where pious activities have been performed for a long time and this quality can be potentially felt, collected and taken. In short, it is a quality with the possibility of transforming and building personal interiority, simply by the fact of having been there, having prayed there or having sung there. Thus, visiting, living and walking in places like mausoleums and lodges periodically were relevant in those daily pilgrimages. Music practices were implemented and carried out based on pedagogical non-monetary relations inside the lodges. In this type of spirituality, sound, word and musical gesture revolved around dense listening, endowed with cognition (Hirschkind 2006: 18) and, most importantly, the capacity to generate ethical, moral and esthetic positioning of subjectivity inside the social space-time (Castrillon 2012: 137). The arrival of the Turkish national project brought about the definition of the ideological position of pro-Western institutions, such as universities and cultural centers. Following the directives of this new ideological position, educational institutions were closed and one of the most active tensors of Ottoman spatiality was weakened, the tensor that was under the direction of the Sufi orders for more than three hundred years: the sacred space formed by Sufi music practice.

The Ottoman cultural project was developed by an urban intellectual elite settled in Syria, Iran and Central Asia Central (Popescou-Judet 2004: xvi). The link between the Ottoman Empire and this kind of society, developed by intellectuals and educators in the Muslim tradition will be later modified by one of the central objectives implemented by Atatürk: the building of a society at the height of Enlightenment-era values as a powerful antidote to the lack of governance and sovereignty suffered by the Sultanate in the late 19th Century. As a consequence, the closure of Sufi architectural complexes, the change to the Roman alphabet and the linguistic reform (which occurred in 1928) were included in the project of imagining a new rationality and a better situation for a society that was dying. But also –and that is what this article emphasizes– all of these changes included a transformation to dismantle and reshape the internal curvature of the Ottoman socio-spatiality: the axis and the point of reference of the current repositioning of subjectivity associated with the sonic/religious in contemporary Istanbul.

The changes developed by Atatürk involved spatial processes in many directions, so much so that many inhabitants of the Anatolian peninsula began to feel that they were no longer living in the Ottoman world. During the Republic most Sufi lodges were changed into schools and these, in turn, have now been transformed into museums. Returning to Castro's approach,

the internal curvature of Ottoman Sufi music practice was modified by four situations: the closing of places of learning (Sufi lodges, Palace school); the creation of curricular programs of music teaching; the production of practices and musical representations in conservatories and universities; and finally, the promotion of social contracts and other non-religious forms of interaction in pedagogical contexts.

Social interactions were immunized against any type of *baraka* other than the Turkish national spirit, away from any specter of influence from the Ottoman past. As a result, many demolitions were conducted, Ottoman buildings were closed or their roles were changed, looking for new discourses and new hierarchies of the Turkish national space and its respective forms of spatiality. This process also promoted a project of oblivion with regard to what Anatolia had been before the advent of Turkey. The Turkish wound and its relationship with the social forms of amnesia—in aural sense also—with regard to the Ottomans and other neighbors (Kurds, Christians, Jews and Armenians), have not only been the thematic axis of social research, but also one of the most relevant themes of Turkish great novelists such as Nobel-prize winner Orhan Pamuk and his colleague Elif Şafak: Their novels deal with the lives of ordinary citizens and their search for their present and past among ruins, bridges and highways. But beyond any form of academic nostalgia, this question about the spatial transformation and the repositioning of the subjectivities of musicians tries to understand and analyze the cultural realities in Turkey, without mentioning the determinisms of the cultural or socio-economic identity.

Currently, the practice of Sufi music in Istanbul has five tensors: The emergence of pedagogical books as new scenarios where the musical lineages vie for legitimacy; the changes in aural representations and the Turk-Ottoman musical thought; the thinning of the psychological density in musicians and the fracture of the ties with those who had been their teachers; the relocation of Muslim spirituality to the exteriority of public space and finally, the effort to cultivate teaching habits coming from lineages of long duration. In contrast to these five tensors, it must be stressed that the implementation of the music conservatory did not succeed in completely displacing the sonic relation between Muslim spirituality and pedagogical loyalties in those people interested in learning to play Ottoman instruments like the Ney reed flute.

Religious Practice Written with the Letter “e” of Ethnicity

Religious and moral education and instruction shall be conducted under state supervision and control. Instruction in religious culture and morals shall be one of the compulsory lessons in the curricula of primary and secondary schools. Other religious education and instruction shall be subject to the individual's own desire, and in the case of minors, to the request of their legal representatives.

The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey. Art. 24

The teaching of the Ney reed flute is an activity immersed in multiple ways in the formation of the Turkish nation in general and in the tension between secularism and ethnicity in particular. Turkey is perhaps the secular country with the biggest number of Muslim citizens in the world. This social situation has meant that, since the establishment of the Republic in 1924, the role of cultural institutions has been constantly instrumentalized in two ways: from the ethnicity side, understood as the way in which the National State allows its citizens to have other orders of experience within the State itself; and from the secularism side, understood as the way in which the Turkish national culture imagines and presents itself as different from other orders of experience. The mediation

of Ney teachers in these contexts is interesting because they do not accentuate **one** national identity. In fact, they accentuate strong Ottoman tastes and values, although these, together with spirituality and Arabic calligraphy, were considered as obstacles and threats to progress and the new civilization by the nationalist hearings.

Today, Ottoman music teaching is widely accepted by academics. Nevertheless, it has become a decisive space once again where political affinities and nation representations compete and are considered. In sum, all the necessary elements to leave the enclosures of spirituality, go to the balconies of ethnicity and finally come back once more. After the coup d'état in the 1980s, the Turkish government implemented a new political strategy for the visibilization of the ethnic and cultural values of its citizens. After the collapse of a political strategy based on classical bipartisanship and when the Turkish people had lost their confidence in their social aspirations, the government promoted new clauses for the citizens' demands. For these reasons, Ferhat Kentel proposes that the Turkish political experience currently has two kinds of bipartisanship: secularism and ethnicity. The former type is represented by political uncertainties and the latter type is represented by religious certainties (Kentel 2006: 3). After the proclamation of the Republic by political elites represented by the People's Republican Party (CHP) and the setting in motion of the secularization of Turkish society in the image of the West, the State took the monopoly of Religion.

As a result, the State established the official religion represented by all the management, organization and administration of the Direction of Religious Affairs (DIB) as opposed to the people's religion represented by the Sufi orders (*Tarikatlar*), considered as traditionalist and reactionary by the State. From this point of view Religion was produced by the Turkish State with a simultaneously double and exclusive definition: It would have to tolerate the values coming from modernity or else it would become an obstacle to it. Kentel notes that: "it is in this apparently bipolar conflict of a religious nature, where the Turkish society is looking for pluralism starting from individualization processes" (Kentel 2006: 2).

The matter at stake here is not social practices themselves, but the role they play in the new order of political experience. And this is specifically what this text proposes: Religion institutions in Turkey sway from one side to the other, but they do not entirely lose their fundamental aspects related to Muslim spirituality. A decade after the foundation of the Republic, Sufi practices as well as their musical and mystical activities were banned and persecuted by the police (Erguner 2000: 56). Currently, those Sufi orders that were not included in the ethnicity box are tolerated with suspicion, while the others operate as cultural centers (*kültür merkezi*). In short, with the simultaneous emergence of these two parallel concepts there were also modalities through which they could be articulated within the public arena: the mediations to naturalize cultural practices, in this case music practice¹.

The avoidance or the participation of the Ney reed flute teachers in this mediation is one of the political alternatives that their work implements in Istanbul. Kentel's approach allows us to clarify another "regime of truth" (pace Foucault 2003) from which we can understand the roles of Sufi music practice in this specific context. In fact, it is a context where the activities of Muslim

1- In South America it sounds paradoxical to use the term ethnic to designate forms of exclusion/inclusion within the same religion or to talk about religious differences. In our society the emergence of the term ethnicity originally was synonymous with natural, racial, then economic and political and finally cultural difference.

spirituality related to music have been permitted, not persecuted, because they are harmless to the social order and because they have become ethnic and cultural activities only. As we can see, thinking about religious practices as ethnic activities could suggest many transformations at several levels. This article is focused on the relations between students and teachers and asks the questions: What type of link is there between them? Does religion disappear from musical practice and ethnicity shows up?

Today, the teaching of the Ney flute is done in secular institutions as well as conservatories and universities, stores in shopping malls, web forums, cultural centers and private associations sprinkled with Sufi spirituality and long-term loyalties. In spite of the emphasis of the government on monitoring education and secularizing it, many associations and music academies are run by people that do not consider the idea of secularization a seductive and powerful strategy to develop their pedagogical projects. It is important to emphasize that many Ney flute teachers that who work in conservatories were educated in these associations, getting to be part of long-term lineages. Therefore, the early participation in this type of pedagogical loyalties questions the habitual idea about Turkey as a country that has a strict system of secular education, as Turkey imagines itself in the Constitution of 1982.

In the last thirty years this ethnic boom has made the books of poems by Rumi visible popular. But this fact, together with the construction of the Mevlana Cultural Center in the city of Konya (in order to relocate the dervishes to a more decent site, a site that is very different from the sports coliseum, the only place in the city where they could perform publicly), the proliferation of record labels, the organization of international meetings of Ney flute players and the success that sufi tours have had does not necessarily imply the total disappearance of the character of the practices mentioned here or their drowning in the ocean of "spectacles" (pace Guy Debord 1999). If all this were shown only in this way, a sociological interpretation of the circulation of cultural assets would be enough to exhaust the analysis. What my ethnographic study found was that all those ethnic aspects invoke a political climate within the country. A climate where the separation of powers and the modernization of the country do not necessarily imply the disenchantment of the world, or the death of Allah, and by no means the disappearance of the relationship between music and mysticism at the level of teachers and Ney flute students.

The Teachers

Thinking that the role of the places of musical education produced by secularism and the character of educative experience itself are the same prevents us from analyzing the complexity of Sufi music teaching in Istanbul. The teachers do dynamize a change in that direction because they agreed to develop curricular programs within non-religious institutions. However, they simultaneously present values and a kind of ethics based on religious certainties and bring them up to date. Below I will give an example to illustrate their mediation as agents of change and agents of cultural transmission.

In Istanbul, Ahmed Şahin is a teacher that considers that the Ney is a tool to produce good people and a tool of knowledge of themselves. Ahmed Şahin graduated from the Ney program at the State Conservatory of Turkish Music in the Technical University in Istanbul. He is now a Ney teacher at the Koca Mustafa Paşa Art Library, he works for the Turkish National Radio as a singer and he has helped to recover the musical program that was used by the Ottomans in the mosques

in the month of fasting and offer it to the public at large². Ahmed Şahin says that in his classes “students learn humanity, respect, cultivation of themselves and they develop their souls.” Ali Tan also graduated from the Ney program and was teacher at the same university. In his classes there are students who are registered in the program in order to follow in the footsteps of Jalaluddin Rumi’s philosophical legacy through the Ney, students who are registered in order to learn to play an instrument because there are other people in their families who like music, and other students who are registered because they just simply like the Ney. There are also teachers, as Arif Şenyuz, Ferhat Özden, Cemil Baştürk and Ayşe Sultan, who teach melodies and specific repertoires to itinerant students in cultural centers or in family homes.

With regard to universities and long-term loyalties, the cases of Ahmed Şahin and Ali Tan show us the way the tension between secularism and ethnicity is articulated at the level of private associations and music conservatories. Ahmed Şahin was Ali Tan’s first teacher, long before he entered the conservatory to study the Ney with Niyazi Sayın. Ali Tan took classes in Koca Mustafa Paşa Art Library. By 1983, Ahmed Şahin had already graduated at the same music conservatory and had been taught by Niyazi Sayın. Ali Tan was a teacher at the Religious Art Library –together with Ahmed Şahin– and was also a teacher at the Technical University in Istanbul, where he taught after the retirement of Niyazi Sayın. The teachers are still under the guidance of Niyazi Sayın. He is the living link of a lineage of Ney masters (*meşk silsilesi*) that dates back to the 18th century. Sencer Derya, Aka Gündüz Kutbay and Süleyman Erguner are also living links with others lineages. These teachers, Arif Şenyuz, Ferhat Özden, Cemil Baştürk, and Ayşe Sultan, although they also teach Sufi music, did not inherit their roles through a long-term lineage. Finally, how could it be argued that with the abolition of the Ottoman music teaching places and the creation of the conservatory, those institutions and social frameworks based on contracts (known as *ruhani* or spiritual by those who participate and live in them) have disappeared?

Jalaluddin Rumi and the Roman Students

Many of the main disciples of Jalal have related that he explained the reasons for including or: reasons he included the musical dancing services of his order. Among them was the following: God made Romans a fundamental receptacle of his mercy [...], as an answer to the prayer of the first caliph Abu Bakr. But the inhabitants of that land [Asia Minor] were completely deprived of any idea of wealth which implies a love towards God and the taste of inner life and spiritual delights. [...] When I realized that they were not inclined to the practice of religious austerities or any form of knowledge of the divine mysteries, I thought it might be possible to create metric sermons and music services as something captivating for the human minds and especially for Romans, who have a natural disposition for and enjoyment of intricate arguments. The same way a sick child is forced to take a healthy medicine, although nauseating, Romans were invited by art to acquire a taste for spiritual truth” (Eflaki 1976: 54).³

Let’s examine this fragment in order to enrich our analysis of the mediation of Ney teachers between curricular programs and students’ demands and also, to provide a less simplified idea of the tension between secularism and ethnicity among the people that promote sonic representations in Istanbul. Up to this point in the discussion, it is clear that secularized or

2- See <https://www.facebook.com/enderunteravihi>

3- Translation by the author.

ethnic is not a quality of something, but a term used to refer to the role of some practices in a specific social order.

Analyzing Eflaki's text written in the mid-13th Century allows us to identify a feature of the project of Jalaluddin Rumi's musical institution, characterized by the pairing of musical services and a kind of love towards God, accompanied by certain forms of inner and spiritual life. It is also suggestive to read that fragment hand in hand with a "policy of taste or value" –in the sense proposed by Simon Frith– that treatment that Romans receive, in spite of the differentiation that this unnamed other has, and whence Eflaki writes⁴. In the quoted fragment, we read that the consideration that makes the Roman people a fundamental receptacle of divine mercy depends more on an intention that is external to the Romans. In other words, it is a judgment, because nobody has questioned the Roman people to confirm their adhesion to a form of mercy that is expressed in Persian since the first centuries of Islam. In this fragment Eflaki says that the practices undertaken by Jalaluddin Rumi were institutionalized in a place where there was not, at first, an audience to receive them. The fragment also says that this attempt was successful and that there was a moment in which some practices became The Practices, a moment when they were institutionalized, that is, they began to occupy a reference and prominent place in relation to the musical institution in general: The practice of religious austerities and a sophisticated form of knowledge of divine mysteries, continued and supported by the Seljuk, Turkish and Ottoman sultanates.

How do we read that inclusion of the Roman people in the musical institution of the Muslim Persian people, if it has been described as completely stripped of any idea of wealth that implies a kind of love towards God? In other words, the re-ethnicization of Ney teaching –if such exists– is not a recent invention of contemporary Turkey. But let's ask our amanuensis: What is at stake in this conversion of taste of the Roman people present in Asia Minor, in exchange for the delights of inner and spiritual life of the Persian people? Who is imposed upon whom? Is there a project to institutionalize forms of Muslim spirituality within the Roman people? Is there a cultural change politically articulated by the displaced Persians in 13th Century Anatolia? This article does not find an answer to that point, but it offers elements to think widely outside the box about that which appears as secular and ethnic in modern-day Anatolia, where various kinds of differences are also exchanged and adapted. As I have stated before, there were transformations and institutionalizations of taste in Anatolia much earlier than the foundation of the Turkish Republic. In my opinion, these categories are pairs of relations through which we can understand the tension between different values at specific moments in the life of societies. Beyond all essentialization of ethnic and secular values the role of that which appears as the summit at a specific moment, tells us more about "the interaction fields" (Bourdieu 1990: 229) and not so much about cultural features of musical practices themselves. The same way the oscillation nodes in a wave do not make any reference to the nature of the wave itself, but to the distance of the points that tense it.

4- Simon Frith tells us that the arguments of value about something (here, the shape of the musical institution) are not simple conversational catchphrases of the form I like it/you like it. These judgments also tell us about the people who make it and the type of relation that they want to have –or avoid- with others, based on the objects and the situations that are valued. That is, he talks about political relations expressed from socialization (Frith 1998:169).

To return to the teachers once more, one of the interaction fields between the teachers and their students is not determined by questioning if music is permitted or not in Islam, but by the forms of nomination and the statutes of recognition needed to select a person as the Master of Masters of an era. Another node of this wave is related to each teacher's effectiveness in musical education, how they are able to promote their teaching as a process of subjective transformation, as a way to go to Allah, to divinity. This is what characterizes the relationships between students and teachers and simultaneously, it is the differentiating factor between the Ney and other types of flutes, according to teachers. In other fields of interaction, between musicians and audiences, between musical industries, radio and television, the tensions are different: for example, between nostalgia, musicology and history (Stokes 1996, 1997), and between identity, folklore and the Turkish nation (Bryant 2005), as other investigators have indicated. Therefore this text suggests that it is not possible to determine this relation in only one way.

Antinodes and Curvature Oscillations

Who Yields to Whom?

Let's talk once more about the teachers and their role in this undulating movement. Kentel talks about the recomposition of the religious in Turkey as renovation and not as reinvention. "This renovation,"—says the author— "would consist not so much as a rupture but as a continuity in time and an articulation in the present. Upon this base which combines past and present, continuity and movement, what has been abandoned and has been reintroduced from the system and the Islamic community, a responsible and active individual takes his place" (Kentel 2006: 14).

The place of Ney teachers presented here as 'active' and 'responsible' individuals and 'mediators' between changes of the representations about the sonic, accumulated since the time of the Ottomans and agitated by the reforms to music teaching in modern-day Turkey, is a good example of how "the resistance changes its meaning with the circumstance" (Frith 1998: 169). The place of the teachers is dispersed, the way bipartisanship was in the eighties. Their voices go in different directions and the same happens with long and short-term lineages and who they refer to, in order to guarantee the status of their teaching.

With the emergence and formation of the Turkish Republic in 1924, the institutions that articulated the changes of these representations in the realm of the sonic, met with certain obstacles. The latter suspended their practices, while the former moved the social and ontological places and finally, these places modified the quality of musical practice and Muslim spirituality presented here in, without causing their disappearance or their reinvention. It is in this struggle that all the efforts of those who take care of this practice, who live in it and from it, are located and make sense. In the following sections I will give detailed examples of such undulations and their relevance in our understanding of the cultural change from the viewpoint of musicology.

The North Pole of the Ney

After having presented the context of Ney teaching in modern-day Istanbul, let us understand that everything related to Muslim spirituality, that is, the primordial relations between the divinity, nature and the human being —the reciprocity, empathy, interrelation, dependence, as well as emotive and ontological coordinates that unite them in order to be lived and suffered—, all of them have their genesis in the Quran, understood as the primordial extension of the world where the human

beings live, interact and not only as a religious book. Thus, when we take a look at the musical practice of Ney what we see is a constellation of practices that –not without frailties– are oriented to a specialized hermeneutics, articulated by a sonic technicity. Those who have theorized on it currently say that the Ney is a sonic object and is also the doorway to a varied number of references, beginning with Jalaluddin Rumi and continuing through the Ottoman musical way of thinking enriched by philosophy, theology and mystical anthropology, up to a technology that amplifies subjectivity itself. 5

Therefore, this first undulation is related to the new places that bring together young performers. As I have stressed before, the cultural revolution promoted by the establishment of the Turkish national state as it is depicted shown in music, displaced the spatial order where its teaching and its practice used to take place. During the field phases I verified that just a few people go to places properly immersed in Muslim spirituality to learn about the Ney. The revolution was very successful in this aspect, because it democratized the access to musical education with the opening of public conservatories and other organizations under the idea of artistic and cultural benefit. Currently, a person can study the Ney without necessarily be involved in any kind of relational link religiously ruled as such, as I have shown before.

This initial success also brought about a general concealment of the relevance of that spiritual protection that having a Ney implies. These representations isolated in select groups of performers, polarizing and undermining the relations between those who currently occupy the highest places in education at universities. Thus, that religiosity that seemed to be buried with the foundation of the Republic now appears as a struggle and a constant tension, to such an extent that the relations among teachers themselves and among students themselves have been fractured. For example, even today, after the old institutions (*Mehterhane*, *Mevlevihane*, *Enderun* and *Meşkhane*) were abolished as part of the reforms applied to the conversion of the taste of the Turk-Ottoman people in Anatolia, in favor of the delights of the European fine arts and polyphonic music, there is still a conflict over the election of the Pole in the North of the Ney –the person around which the other Ney players revolve– as it was established since the 13th Century. In his time, Jalaluddin Rumi, our character from the quoted text, identified the Persian Hamza Dede as Master of Masters of his era.

The *Kutb-i Nâyi* refers to that individual who is considered as the Pole in the North before whom the sky revolves far from the hierarchic pyramid with its wide and steady base, the metaphor of the pole refers to a different order: the order of spiritual personalities that curved certain folds of space-time in the horizon of Islamic societies, in which they used to be present without belonging to them. Let us pause here to mention what Pierre Bourdieu thinks about who is the subject of the artistic creation. In his article “And who created the creators?” we can identify the reference to an “I habitus” as such a subject, that is not a singular person nor a social group, but a theoretical reality proposed to explain that part of the artistic creation that is not mentioned in the inner history of art nor in the biographies of artists (Bourdieu 1990:229,230). As for the teaching of the Ney, I identify three emblematic subjects, singular persons that co-order the practice of the Ney, more than the artistic creation: the *Kutb-i Nâyi*, the *Neyzenbaşı* and the *Neyzen*. The term *neyzenbaşı* names the person in charge of the direction of the Ney performers in ceremonies and other activities that

5- About the listening of the Prophet Muhammad and how that inaugurates an acoustemology and unfolds another spatial dimension's layer of the Revelation, see (Castrillon 2012: 119-127).

were programed by the Mevlevi order before it became a cultural center. I want to point out that the intra-field tensions that Bourdieu invites us not to forget as investigators make reference to the permanence of this form of musical institution as a process of subjective transformation, as a way to be intimate with Allah, with the divinity, more than the permanence of the status of individual persons who make it possible.

Even modern development, to remember what Garcia Canclini says, did not abolish the conflicts inside the traditional teaching of the Ney, but it provided new scenarios and new audiences based on a cultural market with a long history (Garcia Canclini 1990: 200). There is no doubt that the proliferation of Ney methods since the mid-nineties designed by well known performers has broadened the market for Ney makers as well as for teachers and recording companies. However, this has been one of those subjects where the conflict about the legitimacy of Ney teaching has continued. The teaching of the Ney is understood as an institution that combines, even today, music theory, liturgical use of music and forms of love towards Allah expressed in religious forms where music models the sensibilities of musicians and audiences.

For example, while Süleyman Erguner in his *Ney metodu* presents his grandfather and his father as the *Kutb-i Nâyi* of his time –late 19th Century, mid-20th Century– (Erguner 2002: 17,18), Şenol Filiz in his “Ney, the sound of love” reprimands those who carelessly assign those ranks to members of their families (Filiz 2008: 189). The comments of the Ney teachers in the oral field of social relations add up to these kind of fights in the learned groups. Ali Tan, for example, says that Niyazi Sayin is the teacher of at least ten others well-known Ney teachers and that he is more valued as a great amateur painter than as The Master of Masters of today. I do not want to present the teachers as if some of them controlled others, whether when Ahmed Şahin is quoted or when it is said that there are other subordinate teachers that do not get to be placed in the initiation genealogies of long duration. No, I am not interested in presenting and detailing the types of mediations and conflicts, when the teachers dance to the rhythm of secularism and ethnicity in Turkish Style, around a piece of reed called Ney (*Arondo Donax L*), rhizome of the aesthetic production of Sufi music in Istanbul.

In short, what attempted to realize a possibility in the beginning has today brought about a variety of points of reference that provide legitimacy to Ney teachers and performers, but this legitimacy does not have anything to do specifically with music teaching, axes such as the participation in international cycles of concerts, the signature of contracts in record productions of long duration and the participation in productions where fusion music, world music and jazz have their place. Before the Republic, the professionalization of musical practice and the interference of teachers and performers in different fields were oriented by Sufi orders and by musicians in the Ottoman palace. The lack of institutions of this kind does not mean there is a hierarchical chaos where people do what they want and can. It means there is a legitimacy given by the participation or non participation in working places, mainly in universities. In this field, the conflict about whether someone is the *Kutb-i Nâyi*, is completely out of the range of common interest. But we must know that this conflict becomes hidden in an intimate framework, publicly defenseless, but socially endowed with a growing and very strong political power: the heart of the young performers that will accompany and support their teachers in cultural, economic and social conflicts, very close to Istanbul and Turkey in general. That secular country located on the shores of the Bosphorus that, being secretly Muslim, has kept afloat compared to the Muslim societies of neighboring countries.

Neva and La 440

Another undulation related to the tension that we have been analyzing refers to the changes of paradigm with regard to theory and current musical speculation. The Turkish national project transferred music practice to other socio-spatial coordinates, but as we have seen it also moved the epistemological axes that nourished the theory and ideas of that time. The references to music practice outside the technical field of instrumental interpretation currently constitute subjective appraisal that without a doubt enhances the experience of the performers, but in no way gives them a special status as preferred in order to get a job in Istanbul. This means another separation of fields which were once related and a constituent of the person of the performer without any doubt, another achievement of the cultural revolution. This thinning of the psychological and speculative density in the performers enriches the technical development of music performance and makes it more complex, but at the same time, impoverishes the discernment and the competence in other fields where ideas, history and sociology feed on a musical culture.

The lack of competence for the understanding situations where, willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly, young players are inserted as performers, is usually reprimanded by the teachers. One of the most common conflicts is that of the participation of ensembles of fusion music, jazz or other projects with their reed instruments. For those teachers who see this as something their students must avoid, it is clear that those situations are not the most propitious ones for the purposes for which the Ney exists and from which it obtains its whole sonority and meaning.

However, there are also those for whom the Ney is only a musical instrument with sonic characteristics and determined execution, whereby the quality of the performer will be that which saves him when he is in contact with other esthetics and auralities. There are also those who, as performers, win over audiences when they are on the stage and with their record labels and audio-visual productions. They win over the most democratized audiences, those who are farthest from the Ottoman musical, cultural and esthetic world. Beyond the formal discussion about the fusion of sounds, what agitates the social interactions between teachers and students is the absence of that modesty, knowledge, decency, elegance and depth of those performers that have been fixed in the memory of the golden age of Ottoman music.

This is the point where the teaching of the Ney in Istanbul will take a role of resistance according to a modernity expressed in sounds added in the vacuum and packed in shining cases. I am not talking about the vacuum of the recording studios, but the human frailties in a society that, in its struggle for its past, has bumped into the immersion of its land in a process of growth and economic flow that is very fast, faster than any person who is trying to take the Turk-Ottoman musical thought and turn it into an acceptable interpretation of its simple instrument. The teachers emphasize this, but in several cases they do not know the character and intention of this context that is extra-musical but will not cease to impact them.

Teslim

People take the musical territory with them and diffuse it as much as they can, in articulation with the folds of the socio-spatial curvature that provides the most tension. Today, Ney teachers act as those *Meşkhane* where the system of religious certainties that becomes audible through Ottoman music and instruments feebly finds shelter. Thus, reading the growing process of individualization

channeled by different vertices also includes the positioning of Ney teachers before an emotional horizon, punctuated with practices and discourses channeled towards cultural values and traits that some Turkish identify with the traits of the Ottoman society. There are values, climates, sonorities and compositions of place that paradoxically used to be condemned and buried decades before and now appear in the most unexpected places: because of a simple piece of reed with sound, the mystical epic poem of the human being who is returning to his primordial home in Islam becomes audible and opens that Turkish debt with its Ottoman past once more. A wound that manifests other ways to hear the time, to see the scenes of socio-spatial change in Sufi music practice and that opens the possibility of standing actively before it.

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