

STATE POWER AS PERFORMANCE:
ROYAL WEDDING FESTIVITIES AND THE OTTOMAN SPECTACULAR STATE
DURING THE PERIOD OF MAHMUD II

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

State Power as Performance: Royal Wedding Festivities and the Ottoman Spectacular State During the Period of Mahmud II

This thesis examines two imperial wedding festivals organized during the reign of Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839): the festival of 1834, which was organized for the wedding of Saliha Sultan (d. 1843), and the festival of 1836, which was organized for the wedding of Mihrimah Sultan (d. 1838). By utilizing the methods and theories of performance studies, this thesis explores the ways in which celebratory patterns of the Ottoman state changed during the period of Mahmud II. In this analysis, how the state during the period of Mahmud II made use of its performativity, and how these performative patterns through royal wedding festivities constitute the major focal point. This transition is examined through changes in the ceremonial practices, festival spaces, and dramatic performances as well as changes in documenting the practices of these festivals. By considering the historicity of the state's performativity, how imperial festivities were used to re-invent and re-define the representation of state power is problematized within the broader social, cultural and political context of the nineteenth century.

ÖZET

Bir Performans Alanı Olarak Devletin Gücü: İmparatorluk Düğünleri ve II. Mahmud Dönemindeki Osmanlı Gösterimsel Devleti

Bu tez, II. Mahmud dönemindeki iki imparatorluk düğünü için düzenlenen şenlikleri incelemektedir: Saliha Sultan'ın (ö. 1843) düğünü için organize edilen 1834 şenliği ve Mihrimah Sultan'ın (ö. 1838) düğünü için organize edilen 1836 şenliği. Bununla birlikte, burada performans çalışmalarının yöntem ve teorilerinden yararlanarak II. Mahmud döneminde Osmanlı Devleti'nin tören organize etme biçimlerinde meydana gelen değişiklikler araştırılmaktadır. Bu incelemenin odağını II. Mahmud döneminde, devletin imparatorluk düğünleri aracılığıyla gösterim gücünü nasıl kullandığı ve bu gösterim şekillerinin nasıl değiştiği oluşturmaktadır. Bu dönüşümler, törensel pratiklerdeki, festival mekanlarındaki ve festivalleri kayıt altına alma yöntemlerindeki değişiklikler aracılığıyla incelenmektedir. Devletin gösterim gücünün tarihselliği göz önünde bulundurularak, imparatorluk şenliklerinin devletin gücünün sunumlanmasını nasıl yeniden tanımlayıp icat ettiği ise, on dokuzuncu yüzyılın daha geniş sosyal, kültürel ve politik bağlamı içerisinde ele alınıp sorunsallaştırılmaktadır.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It can easily be argued that for any kind of political entity around the world, demonstrating power by way of symbolism has always been crucial in its aim to claim its legitimacy over its subjects and its neighboring political adversaries. With that stated, mass performances appear to be among the most important symbolic acts for states to demonstrate their legitimacy. The Ottoman Empire was no exception to this rule. From its inception, it utilized a variety of celebratory patterns such as accession ceremonies (*cülûs*), ceremonies of girding sword (*kılıç kuşanma*), receptions for accepting ambassadors, ceremonies for the Friday prayer (*Cuma selamlığı*) and other religious ceremonies in order to legitimize its rule. Royal wedding and circumcision festivals were also regarded as major public performances, bringing together all classes of the empire simultaneously in representing the state's power in an encapsulated time.

Taking the foundational myths of the dynasty into consideration, namely the story of Osman Gazi's marriage to Şeyh Edebali's daughter, one might claim that for the Ottoman dynasty, royal marriages had always been considered major political events. Although the significance of the sultans' own marriages had been replaced by those of other members of the dynasty after the earlier stages of the Ottoman state, marriages and circumcision festivities remained pivotal symbolic events to publicly demonstrate the power of the Ottoman Empire. From the foundation of the dynasty, the Ottomans celebrated princes' circumcisions (*sâr-i hitân*) and princesses' weddings (*sâr-i cihâz*) as well as the children's births (*vilâdet-i hümayun*) and the start of their education (*bed'i besmele*) with glorious festive events. Murad I's sons

Yakub Çelebi and Savcı Bey's circumcision celebrations have been noted as one of the earliest royal circumcision festivities.¹ The circumcision of Murad II's sons, Alaeddin and Mehmed's, and his daughter's being marrying off to the prince of İsfendiyar Bey; Murad I's sons' marriages to three Byzantine princesses in 1389; Mehmed II's sons, Bayezid and Mustafa's circumcisions in 1457; Cem Sultan's circumcision in 1472; Kanuni Sultan Süleyman's princes' circumcision festivals and his sister Hatice Sultan's marriage to İbrahim Pasha are notable examples of some other major festival events of the empire in the earlier periods.²

The festival of 1582 that was organized for the royal circumcision of Sultan Murad III's son, prince Mehmed (who later acceded to the throne as Sultan Mehmed III) was the longest and the most lavish festival in the Ottoman realm, and this has been duly documented. This festival was also the beginning of a new tradition of recording the festivities in a separate genre, known as the *sûrnâme* (festival book). The festival of 1675 in Edirne, which was organized for Mehmed IV's princes Mustafa's (later Mustafa II), Ahmed's (later Ahmed II) circumcisions and his daughter Hatice Sultan's wedding; the Festival of 1710 for Mustafa II's daughters' wedding; the Festival of 1720, which was organized for Ahmed III's sons' circumcisions; the Festival of 1724, which was organized to celebrate Ahmed III's three daughters' weddings; the Festival of 1759, which was organized to celebrate the birth of Mustafa III's daughter Hibetullah Sultan; the Festival of 1776, which was organized to celebrate the birth of Abdülhamid I's daughter, Hatice Sultan; the Festivals of 1834 and 1836, which were organized to celebrate Mahmud II's daughters Saliha Sultan and Mihrimah Sultan's weddings respectively; the

¹ And, *40 gün 40 gece: Osmanlı Düğünleri, Şenlikleri, Geçit Alayları*, 30.

² *Ibid.*, 31.

Festival of 1847 which was organized for Abdülmecid's princes Mehmed Murad and Abdülhamid II's circumcisions, and lastly the Festivals of 1858, which were organized to celebrate the weddings of Abdülmecid's daughters Cemile Sultan and Minure Sultan are the festivals that were recorded in the *sûrnâme* genre.

Focusing on two great festive events organized during the reign of Mahmud II, the wedding festivals of Mahmud II's daughters Saliha Sultan and Mihrimah Sultan in 1834 and 1836 respectively, this thesis aims to examine the early nineteenth-century Ottoman state as a performance. In doing so, it will intend to explore the changing patterns in the festival tradition in the Ottoman realm. Hereby, it will be argued that Saliha Sultan's marriage to Halil Rifat Pasha in 1834 and Mihrimah Sultan's marriage to Mehmed Said Pasha in 1836 might be interpreted as the reflection of Mahmud II's spectacle state,³ which encapsulates the state ideology in a festive form. Additionally, it will also aim to explore the changes in the practice of documenting the festivals in the nineteenth century by examining the festival book tradition since the emergence of *sûrnâme* genre in accordance with the different forms of documentation practice in the nineteenth century such as newspapers and travelers' accounts.

Within this broader framework, what it means to celebrate an imperial wedding or circumcision festival in nineteenth-century Istanbul will be the primary question of this thesis. How these events might be described and why the Ottoman state needed to organize these kinds of glorious celebrations will be explored. Regarding these questions, one of the primary aims of this thesis is to inquire as to which cultural forms emerged through these royal celebratory events: which ones

³ See for the theory of spectacle state: Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*; Adams, *The Spectacular State: Culture and National Identity in Uzbekistan*; MacAloon, *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals Toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*; Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre state in Nineteenth-century Bali*.

transformed or re-defined. By cultural forms, I will refer to the variety of forms such as visual, material, performative or literary ones that are circulated in the process of change in a particular cultural and historical conjuncture.

In this regard, two wedding ceremonies, the festival of 1834 which was organized for the wedding of Saliha Sultan, one of Mahmud II's daughters and Halil Rif'at Pasha, a higher military officer and the festival of 1836, which was organized for the wedding of his other daughter, Mihrimah Sultan and Mehmed Sa'id Pasha, a higher officer in the court, will be explored with the purpose of analyzing how the Ottoman state turned into a state of spectacle in the early nineteenth century and abandoned the early modern forms of performing state power. Therefore, it will be argued that while nineteenth-century Ottoman state started to be more "modern" and yet more centralized, the state began to use more spectacular forms of performance rather than the earlier carnivalesque ones. This transition will be examined by witnessing the changes in ceremonial practices, the geography of the festivals, as well as changes in performance during these festivities in order to explore how the Ottoman state during the period of Mahmud II used its performativity through royal wedding ceremonies, while re-inventing and re-defining the ceremonial patterns of the state in order to reiterate its power and grandeur.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Regarding royal wedding festivities in the Ottoman court as major political and cultural performances, this chapter aims to explore how these royal events might be approached as performances. Since these royal events were publicly performed, similar to other courtly celebrations of the Ottoman Empire, these weddings invited the participants to perform the grandeur of the state. By doing so, the events themselves turn into a performative act of exhibiting the changing notions about the policies of the particular political environment as well. However, these performative forms of the state, by definition, are not resistant to the changes in the ways of the government. They are subject to being revised, and yet, to be invented and redefined depending on contextual changes.

Similar to the other monarchies surrounding it, as Ilakan Karateke points out, the sixth century of the Ottoman Empire might be redefined as being in a rather different stage in its history, since the state fell into a crisis of legitimacy due to the after-effects of the French Revolution.⁴ After the French Revolution, especially in Europe and the world around it, the states have started to search for new definitions to their relationship vis-à-vis their subjects. This meant changes in the representation of the states themselves as well as in the ways in which the states communicated with their publics.⁵ The sovereigns that found the source of legitimacy from a divine power started to lose their nature of sorcery. Therefore, they initiated various reforms

⁴ See for further discussion, Karateke, *Padişahım Çok Yaşa*, 251; *An Ottoman Protocol Register*, 1-42.

⁵ See Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 7-20; McClelland, "The Crowd in History," 1-33.

in their ways of ruling, in their control over everyday practices and inevitably in their ways of performing their power.⁶

In order to examine these changes in the celebratory forms of the Ottoman state, first of all, it is important to explore how performance studies provide us with a theoretical background for historical performances in the Ottoman realm. In this regard, this chapter focuses on the idea of the performativity of the state by exploring how these festive events are parts and parcels of politics as performance. First of all, recent studies on performance will be reviewed here in order to present an approach to these weddings as a performance.

2.1 How to approach public festivities as performance: “Performative Turn” in the studies of historical performance

In order to contextualize Ottoman royal weddings as political performances, first of all, how the term “performance” emerged as a sub-branch of anthropological and theatrical studies will be explored by following the evolution of performance studies as a way of interpreting individual everyday performance as well as mass performance events.

However, what performance is and what might be regarded as performance are quite complex questions. Mary Strine, Beverly Long and Mary Hopkins claim that it is “an essentially contested concept.”⁷ Richard Bauman defines the term performance as “a mode of communicative behavior and a type of communicative

⁶ See for further discussion, Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*.

⁷ See Strine et al., “Research in interpretation and performance studies: Trends, issues, priorities,” 181–204.

event.”⁸ For him, performance is an act of aesthetic communication that — framed in a special way — is displayed for an audience.⁹ On the other hand, Bauman suggests that all performance acts include a sense of duality: one is the actual execution of the action and the other is the mental consciousness of this action.¹⁰ As Carlson points out, “performance is always a performance for someone, some audience that recognizes and validates it as performance even when, as is occasionally the case, that the audience is the self.”¹¹ Regarding these explanations of the term “performance,” it should be noted that the performance itself has a substantial agenda, either for the performer himself or herself or the audience. More importantly, performance is a contested phenomenon that both the performer and the audience engage in, and often these two sides of performative action receive different messages.

Within the framework of these questions, the term “performance,” and the discipline of performance studies are now utilized in various fields of the social sciences, especially in anthropology and sociology since the 1960’s and 1970’s. Anthropologists such as Victor Turner and Dwight Conquergood, sociologist Erving Goffman, and theatre scholar Richard Schechner have made great contributions to unveil the intersectionality between anthropology, sociology and traditional theatrical studies.¹²

⁸ Bauman, “Performance,” 41.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁰ Carlson, “What is performance,” 71.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹² See also Schechner and Turner, *Between Theater and Anthropology*, 3-34.

In this respect, Richard Schechner lists the areas where performance studies and the social sciences coincide as follows:

“...performance in everyday life; the structure of sports, ritual, play, and public political behaviors: analysis of various modes of communication; semiotics: connections between human and animal behavior patterns with an emphasis on play and ritualized behavior; aspects of psychotherapy that emphasize person-to-person interaction, acting out, and body awareness; ethnography and prehistory- both of exotic and familiar cultures; constitution of unified theories of performance, which are, in fact, theories of behavior...”¹³

In this regard, Erving Goffman, as he discussed in his seminal works *The Representation of the Self in Everyday Life* and *Frame Analysis*, is among the first scholars whom presents that theatricality, as a framework can be a pattern to examine non-theatrical actions of human conditions.¹⁴ For Erving Goffman, “a ‘performance’ may be defined as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants.”¹⁵ Emphasizing the modifying nature of a performance, Erving Goffman asserts that the social and political roles of human beings may themselves be regarded as performances. In this respect, Goffman believes that in terms of constructing and staging their identities and realities, people perform their roles every single day.¹⁶

Following this argument and pointing out the comprehensiveness of the term “performance,” Carlson claims that “our lives are structured according to repeated and socially sanctioned modes of behavior that raise the possibility of all human

¹³ Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 13-14.

¹⁴ See for further discussion, Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience; The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 21-39; see also Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 57.

¹⁵ Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 15.

¹⁶ Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, x.

activity having the potential to be considered as “performance”, or at least all the activity carried out with a consciousness of itself.”¹⁷

Regarding these kinds of performances, R. Schechner also indicates that the functions of the performance are “to entertain, to make something that is beautiful, to mark or change the identity, to make or foster community, to heal, to teach, persuade, or convince, to deal with the sacred and/or the demonic.”¹⁸

Referring to changes in performance studies — developed from an older idea of society as theatre — Peter Burke, in his article “Performing History: The Importance of Occasions,” refers to a “performative turn” in historical studies that defines culture as a performance.¹⁹ In this article, he starts the historiography of performance studies with the dramaturgical models of 1940’s and 1950’s. The pioneers of this model, Kenneth Burke, Michel Leiris, Victor Turner, and Goffman argue that spatially, temporally and audience-bounded human beings dramatized themselves as a way of representation. As Burke indicates, this model affected other intellectual fields such as politics, linguistics, history and so forth.²⁰

Intellectual historians such as Hayden White used this model to explain the history of political thought as the study of “speech acts”.²¹ Cultural historians and art historians also followed this trend. However, over the past twenty years, performance studies have come a long way and the dramaturgical model, which has

¹⁷ Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*, 4-5.

¹⁸ Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 38.

¹⁹ Burke, “Performing History: The Importance of Occasions,” 35.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

²¹ *Ibid.*

developed out of the “society as theatre model,”²² has started to lose its popularity. Instead, the term “performance” has started to be circulated and discussed among anthropologists and historians. Therefore, the meaning and applications of the term “performance” have been expanded. Peter Burke explains this phenomenon as a “performative turn” in the studies of history. Therefore, history has started to be regarded as performance. Concordantly, there has been an increase in the studies of rituals and festivals. As opposed to the dramaturgical model, new approaches to the concept of performance changed the analogies between society and the theatre, and blurred the boundaries between them.²³

As Burke points out:

Rituals and festivals are now being approached in a more open way. Older studies of rituals and festivals often assumed that they followed scripts, literally as well as metaphorically. By contrast, recent anthropological studies of ritual emphasize that “performance is never mere enactment” or expression, but has an active role to play. We see a shift from the study of “ritual” as a separate category of human action to the examination of all human behaviors as more or less “ritualized”.²⁴

As it is illustrated above, performance studies and the idea of performance may contribute a great deal to almost every kind of study in the humanities, including anthropology, ethnography, psychology, linguistics, literature and even history. In this regard, historicizing the performance obviously opens new venues for the studies of festivals, public rituals, mass spectacles and other celebrations. In Richard Schechner’s terminology, “like any behavior, event, action, or thing” public rituals and celebrations might be studied “as” performance.²⁵ The following section

²² See also Schechner and Turner, *Between Theater and Anthropology*, 4.

²³ Burke, “Performing History: The Importance of Occasions,” 41.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 32.

will explore how Ottoman festivities may be approached as performance by means of historicizing these performative events.

2.2 What is "Festival": Alessandro Falassi's morphological definition and the Ottoman festival tradition

Burke sets out to emphasize each individual participant's role in any given performative event as well as the blurred nature of distinct categories such as festivals, carnivals, or mass spectacles.²⁶ Here it is important to explore how Ottoman royal weddings and circumcision ceremonies might fall into different categories of performance. With regard to this, Alessandro Falassi's morphological definition of "festival" provides us with a structural analysis for categorizing the Ottoman performative acts in the royal festivities. As he indicates in his book *Time out of Time*, "the term 'festival' covers a wide range of events from sacred to profane, public to private, traditional to innovational, nostalgic revival to survival of the most archaic folk customs."²⁷ More importantly he emphasizes consolidating the nature of these festivals for all participants from a variety of backgrounds. Consequentially, it is important to note that Falassi defines the festival as "a periodically recurrent, social occasion in which, through a multiplicity of forms and a series of coordinated events, participate directly or indirectly and to various degrees, all members of a whole community, united by ethnic, linguistic, religious, historical bonds, and sharing a world view."²⁸

²⁶ See Burke, "Performing History: The Importance of Occasions," 35–52.

²⁷ Falassi, "Festival: Definition and Morphology," 1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

Despite the diversity present in their range of events, all festivals contain some common constituent parts called “ritual acts” or “rites”.²⁹ Taking Ottoman festivals into consideration, it is possible to see similar patterns present in the ritual acts, as Falassi points out. For instance, pre-festival activities are common practice for all Ottoman royal weddings and circumcision festivals. The Sultan’s edict initiates the preparations. Appointing a director for organizing festivities, (*Sâr emini*), and starting to supply necessary substances for banqueting or other festival organizations are among the other pre-festival arrangements. All these preparations create a clear distinction between ordinary life and the festive moments that Falassi defines as “valorization”.³⁰ Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that although other rites had changed throughout time, pre-festival activities at Ottoman festivals follow this similar pattern in the nineteenth century as well.

Falassi also refers to Van Gennep’s and Victor Turner’s idea of “rites of passages” as one with the most significance for the dimensions of Ottoman festivities. These rites usually symbolized passing from childhood to adulthood, which is the substantial reason for the celebrations. Festivities actually came to an end right after the rite of passage stage was closed in Ottoman festivals. For circumcision festivals, the festivities ended with the final circumcision ritual and for the wedding festivities, the celebrations closed down after the arrival of the bride at her new residence with a glorious procession.

Moreover, “the rite of conspicuous consumption” includes over-consumption of food and drinks. In Ottoman festivities, we see three different forms of this rite based on the hierarchical order of the conspicuous event, which are called *ziyafet* (the

²⁹ Falassi, “Festival: Definition and Morphology,” 3.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

feast), *çanak yağması* (food plunder) and *altın ve gümüş yağması* (the scramble of gold and silver). *Ziyafet* was given in the honor of the sultan for the elite invitees in order to demonstrate the sultanate's power to outsiders; however, *çanak yağması* and *altın ve gümüş yağması* were organized for the commoners to symbolize the prosperity and glorious nature of the state and the sultan. Moreover, the turmoil that occurs in "*çanak yağması*" was a dramatic representation for contrasting the poverty of the commoners with the wealth of the sultan. The rite of conspicuous consumption evolved in different formats in the nineteenth century. While the banquets remained a prominent part of nineteenth-century celebrations, the scramble for silver and gold as part of the festival seemed to vanish. Because no festival book mentions this detail in the nineteenth century, it might be said that those rites were practiced less publicly.

Furthermore, one of the most notable rites of the classical age of Ottoman festivals is the rite of conspicuous display. The displaying of *nahıls*, gigantic puppets, large-scale models of architectural constructions (of a mountain, a rook, a galley etc.), and exotic animals such as elephants and giraffes were part of the festival. They served a purpose of glorifying the grandeur of the state. Moreover, as Metin And demonstrates, these forms of the rite of the conspicuous displays were also closely associated with ancient Turkic sacred symbols.³¹ In the nineteenth century, while the *nahıls* were still visible at the festivals, the gigantic puppets and the architectural constructions lost their relatively important places in the festivities, instead of those kinds of displays; various kinds of processions became central to the ceremonies.

³¹ And, *Turkish Dancing*, 133-151.

The rite of competition also took place at Ottoman festivities and they were still observed in the nineteenth-century ceremonial domain. In this sense, especially at imperial weddings or circumcision festivals, highly militaristic sports such as wrestling, archery, javelin throwing or horseback riding were performed to symbolize hierarchical roles in terms of the “winner and loser” relationship. In Falassi’s terms, these games represented how equality may be turned into hierarchy.³² However, these games also underline a kind of sacred meaning in terms of fighting for the sultan, “the shadow of God on earth” in the Ottoman sense.

2.3 Ottoman royal festivities as cultural performance

Ottoman royal festivities were also cultural performances, which reflected their rooted culture in a defined time span and place. It would be convenient to briefly examine the theoretical approaches to exploring cultural performances as such. In Milton Singer’s term, public enactments such as festivals, rituals, ceremonies or spectacles are called “cultural performances”. He defines cultural performances as “isolatable segments of activity, which are considered by a group of people to be encapsulations of their culture which they can exhibit to visitors and to themselves.”³³ In these events, as M. Singer emphasizes that a culture is “encapsulated, enacted and placed on display for itself and for outsiders. Each performance constitutes a discrete complex event, characterized by a definite time span, an organized program of activity, performers, audience, place and occasion which focuses on a prominent theme in the experience of the social group”³⁴ For

³² Falassi, “Festival: Definition and Morphology,” 5.

³³ Singer, “The Cultural Pattern of India,” 23-26.

³⁴ Stoeltje and Bauman, “The Semiotics of Folkloric Performance,” 589.

Milton Singer, traditional theatre and dance, concerts, recitations, religious festivals, weddings and so forth may be regarded as "cultural performance".³⁵

Moreover, Singer points out that cultural performances share a set of characteristic features. In a sense, all events are scheduled, temporally and spatially bounded, programmed and they are coordinated by public occasions. Taking this into consideration, one of the most important features of the cultural performances for the studies of society is that they were reflexive instruments of cultural expression, as Babcock indicates.³⁶ Within this framework, cultural performance creates an opportunity for individual members of a community to assume a special performative role that is different from everyday life and also increases the consciousness of the self in terms of intensifying the social identity.³⁷

On the other hand, Carlson thinks that Singer's "features" of cultural performances, especially his emphasis on "set apartness" in time, place and occasion could be categorized as a conservative interpretation of the role of performance in culture.³⁸ In this regard, he supports Turner's idea of "social drama" more in contrast to Singer's separation of performance from everyday life and emphasizes the "in-betweenness" of the performance and its counterpart; ordinary life.³⁹

Therefore, cultural performances that present an area of reset for the community, and a reversal of the ordinary roles, increase the consciousness of the

³⁵ Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*, 16.

³⁶ Bauman, "Performance," 46-47.

³⁷ Stoctje and Bauman, "The Semiotics of Folkloric Performance," 590.

³⁸ Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*, 16.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

individual. However, as Turner points out, cultural performances also coincide with everyday life.⁴⁰

2.4 The dramatic power of the state and the functions of public performances

Within this framework, politics as performance is another theoretical concept that needs to be explored. In accordance with the theatricality of everyday life, many scholars have discussed dramatic patterns of the state. Geertz, in his work *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali*⁴¹ regarded the idea of the state as performance and examines the nineteenth-century Balinese state as an organization of enactment.

By making use of the term “theatre state,”⁴² Geertz suggests that the state is an organized performance that reflects itself through public rituals and ceremonies. That is to say, the state as a performance reproduces itself in accordance with its symbolic and mythical power. This ceremonial state is not an imitation of the current social circumstances; rather, it is the social circumstances—at least partially, themselves.⁴³

2.5 Theoretical approaches to the state of spectacle

By treating the idea of a theatrical state as a starting point, this section will attempt to discuss the terms “festival” and “spectacle” for a comprehensive analysis of the royal

⁴⁰ See also Schickner and Turner, *Between Theater and Anthropology*, 35-40.

⁴¹ See for further discussion Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre state in Nineteenth-century Bali*, 3-10.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 13.

weddings of the Mahmudian state and how different forms of performativity may well define the performativity of the state. Here it is argued that not only festivals but also spectacles are feasible genres to categorize these royal weddings and may illustrate the nineteenth-century Ottoman state as a performance.

Here the terminology that the Ottomans used to describe these events may highlight how different genres of performance are convenient for these state ceremonies. In the state documents, a Persian word *sâr-i cihaz* is used to describe royal weddings. *Sâr* means a banquet, feast or entertainment, and *cihaz*, which means dowry or trousseau, refers to the festivity organized for a female member of the imperial household. On the other hand, in colloquial language, royal weddings were expressed by the words *donamma* and *şenlik*; the first means decorating a place with candles and other luminary objects, and the art of fire works; the latter means festival or festive gathering. It is important to note that the vernacular terminology also indicates the spectacular aspects of the performance. Therefore, it may not be wrong to claim that along with the festival-like nature of these royal weddings, the spectacularity of these mass events begs to be explored.

MacAloon, in his study on the Olympic games, provides us with an insightful analysis. He suggests that the genres of performance that the Olympics include—spectacle, festival, ritual, and games—are “ramified performances of symbolic action.”⁴⁴ These mega-genres or meta-genres of cultural performance,⁴⁵ therefore, suggest different frames for different aspects of the performance for “linking organically distinguished forms of symbolic action into new wholes by means of a common spatiotemporal location, expressive theme, affective style, ideological

⁴⁴ MacAloon, “Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle,” 241-280.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 250.

intention, or social function.”⁴⁶ For this reason, festivals fall short of explaining the Olympics as a whole, since the festival is about participation as well as joyfulness. However, spectacle “by prescribing only watching, and leaving the rest to the dialogue between the observer and the ‘sights,’⁴⁷ opens a venue for “optionality and individual choice,” which are, as MacAloon indicates, widespread modern values. This is, by definition, is an ambiguous relationship between “image and reality, appearing and being,” which MacAloon regards as a “double dynamic.”⁴⁸ More importantly, for MacAloon, a spectacle is a contextual performativity that depends on the content, its history and the given sociocultural conjuncture. Therefore, a spectacle allows not only the manipulation of the very message of a given performance, but also its appropriation by the audience.

On the other hand, Debord, in his *The Society of the Spectacle*, posits that a modern society may be approached as a society of spectacle, representing itself through various means of images.⁴⁹ Debord’s idea of a spectacle society shows parallelism with Geertz’ concept of “theatre state,”⁵⁰ which proposes an idea of a state that employs its power through various symbolic acts. Debord and Geertz are among the pioneers who propose that the festivities were representational events of the state itself.

Here it is also important to discuss Pollock’s approach to history as an act of performance. In her introduction to *Exceptional Spaces: Essays in*

⁴⁶ MacAloon, “Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle,” 250.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 270.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 270-275.

⁴⁹ See for further discussion Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, 12.

⁵⁰ For further discussion Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre state in Nineteenth-century Bali*, 12.

Performance & History, she argues that performance makes history rather “ahistorical” by turning history into a vague representation of what it had actually been. As she indicates, “[p]erformance makes history go sometimes by making it seem to go away, by exercising its representational tactics so vigorously that history can no longer be seen.”⁵¹ Thus, although the performance turns the past into a spectacle, it devalues its authenticity by adding contemporary agendas and concerns. Thus, it may be argued that in nineteenth-century royal weddings, former performative forms of the eighteenth century in particular were brought into a contemporary context in a more ahistorical way in terms of re-inventing celebratory patterns, as will be discussed in the following chapters.

Additionally, Adams, in her book *The Spectacular State: Culture and National Identity in Uzbekistan*, urges us to notice how spectacles control communication by using various technologies and they monopolize the meaning that the participants are expected to infer by silencing their response.⁵² In this regard, one should also note that state manipulates the meaning of the public performances in order to serve performativity for its own purposes. This process ultimately requires redefining its subjects as well as its relations with the performance itself. Royal weddings in the nineteenth-century Ottoman realm functioned as an object of the present state of the politics and were therefore re-invented in the public life through various ways.

Here it is also important to mention Eric Hobsbawm’s concept of invented tradition. In the introduction of his co-edited book, *The Invention of Tradition*, he defines the “invented tradition” as “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly

⁵¹ Pollock, *Exceptional Spaces: Essays in Performance and History*, 27.

⁵² Adams, “Politics of Culture in Uzbekistan, 1991-2002,” 3.

or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past."⁵³ In relation to this, the process of inventing traditions implies that when traditions are invented, they take on new meanings and values of the current political situations. Interestingly enough, invented traditions are not regarded as fabricated traditions; they are easily approved in the eyes of communities. Maybe more importantly, these invented traditions are not totally new discoveries; they are mostly rooted in the previous traditions of the given society.

Besides its opening new venues for the histories of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and especially nationalism studies further on, it is important to note that Hobsbawm's work is an important "call for action" piece for both history and anthropology in terms of illustrating how performativity plays an important role in bringing the past into present contexts. Hobsbawm illustrates how the past comes into existence in the present contexts as an act of performance. In this process, as he notes, ritualistic forms play an important role in inventing traditions. He emphasizes that anthropology may help historians to elucidate the invented and old traditional practices as well as the symbolic nature of the given state's performativity through a variety of channel. In this respect, it may be argued that wedding ceremonies turned into a symbolic allegiance to the state itself through various symbolic acts. In fact, the re-invention of the grandeur of the Ottoman state became one of most visible and significant aspects of this newly imagined model of socio-political context during nineteenth century.

In this regard, this thesis argues that royal wedding festivities in the nineteenth century, as events which crystallized the Ottoman imagination of the state

⁵³ Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

and its relations with its subjects, were re-adopted according to the contemporary political discourse. The representation of these wedding festivities, therefore, was re-invented through new forms over and over again. The processes of re-invention of the Ottoman state through various cultural forms, therefore, will be examined in detail in the following chapters.

2.6 Approaches to practice of documenting Ottoman festivities: genre, text and possible interpretations

At this point, it is important to underline that documented evidence of these wedding festivities, which rely mostly on festival books, requires an attention to form a theoretical framework for a coherent genre analysis in order to approach these texts as performance as well. For a better theoretical discussion, the term genre itself will first be explored in this section.

It is known that since the ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle, the issue of genre has been a matter of discussion within the circle of literature and history. Poststructuralists and interpretative anthropologists consider culture itself as a text that can be read. This approach permeated cultural studies as well as performance studies. In this regard, texts can be read as coherent systems of communication—writing, visual art, music, and theatre. Even a city or historical epoch may be read as a coherent text. Many of semioticians argue for a very broad definition of text. In fact, during the past half-century, the concept of text has been greatly expanded.

In this respect, as de Marinis indicates, the text designates not only a coherent and complete series of linguistic statements, whether oral or written, but also every

unit of discourse, whether verbal, nonverbal or mixed, that results from coexistence of several codes and possesses the constitutive prerequisites of completeness and coherence.⁵⁴ Therefore, even units of performances can be considered as texts and may thus become the object of textual analysis.⁵⁵ In this regard, it may be pointed out a text is closely related to previous texts and culture as well as the oral tradition and cultural context of a given society.

In this regard, in order to better analyze the relationship between *sûrnâmes* in the nineteenth century and socio-cultural as well as the political context that they belong to, Bauman's analysis might provide an insightful analysis. According to Bauman, "genres are not solely as classificatory categories for the organization of cultural objects but also orienting frameworks for organization of ways of producing and interpreting discourse."⁵⁶ In this perspective, he emphasizes dimensions of interrelationships that organize communicative production and reception. This new and more open-ended approach views genres as flexible and negotiable orienting frameworks, and focuses on discursive practice in the conduct of social life".⁵⁷ Therefore, it may not be wrong to claim that textual performance is, in a sense, a sum of the tools of communication that are closely related to the context and intertextuality of the text. This thesis will aim to pursue this kind of theoretical perspective, which follows a "textual genres as performance" approach in order to analyze the textual evidence of nineteenth-century royal weddings.

⁵⁴ See for further discussion de Marinis, *The Semiotics of Performance*, 2-14.

⁵⁵ Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 192-193.

⁵⁶ See Bauman, "Genre," 53-59.

⁵⁷ Öztürkmen. "Orality and Performance in Late Medieval Turkish Texts: Epic tales, Hagiographies and Chronicles," 327-345.

Regarding this theoretical framework that is mentioned briefly above, this thesis is divided into two parts: historiographical debates on the practice of recording imperial festivities on the occasion of wedding ceremonies and the changing cultural forms (including textual ones) of those imperial festivals in the nineteenth-century Ottoman realm from a performance-centered perspective. In doing so, it will aim to explore the re-invention and re-definition of the Ottoman state during the reign of Mahmud II through royal wedding ceremonies and how the Mahmudian state turned into a state of spectacle.

Within this broader framework, turning royal wedding ceremonies into more spectacular performances may be regarded as a deliberate action of the state to convey its message to the audience, which made its grandeur publicly visible. However, demonstrating this grandeur with a spectacle in combination with other genres of performance meant something else: this was a strategic decision that aimed to be visible but in a more non-participatory manner. Therefore, "spectacular state" may more correctly identify performativity of the nineteenth-century Ottoman state since the spectacle intends to manipulate the audience rather than allowing direct participation in a given performance. More importantly, spectacle is a modern device to employ the state's ideology. For this reason, while the nineteenth-century Ottoman state modernized itself through centralizing its apparatuses, its performativity shifted towards a spectacular one. However, as MacAloon emphasizes, it does not mean that other genres of performance were not included these state ceremonies. In fact, the festivals also may help us to distinguish the ceremonial space and time from the ordinary life as well as to frame the transformation through engaging the audience with entertaining performances. However, it is hard to find carnivalesque

performances, which turn the usual order of the life upside down, in nineteenth-century royal weddings since these were more control-based spectacular events.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ See for further discussion von Geldern, *Bolshevik Festivals: 1917-1920*, 1-13.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF OTTOMAN FESTIVITIES

3.1 Emergence of the studies on the historical performance in the field of Ottoman studies

Celebrations in the Ottoman realm have always been attractive to scholars with a variety of interests. The scholars of the old Turkish literature discipline, art historians, social and cultural historians, and scholars of the performing arts have been interested in these celebrations as well as literary and art historical productions of these festivities. However, there was a lack of interdisciplinary approach to these historical performances on the one hand. Until recently, art historians explored only visual productions of the celebrations without concerning the textual analysis, or the literary scholars neglected visual or contextual details about these festivities. On the other, so far, studying performance as a historical representation has been almost disregarded in the field of Ottoman studies.

Öztürkmen, in her article "Performance in the Ottoman World: Thoughts on Folklore and History," explores how approaching folklore as performance offers new venues for the "historical process" of cultural forms, which may be examined and re-contextualized the communal practices of celebrations.⁵⁹ She indicates that examining spectacles such as festivals and ceremonies, as well as dramaturgical nature of daily life, and politics, which have been discussed in sociology and

⁵⁹ Öztürkmen, "Performance in the Ottoman World: Thoughts on Folklore and History," 3-23.

anthropology during the last few decades, may open new ways for historians who examine cultural performances in accordance with their historical context.⁶⁰

This thesis aims to pursue this kind of approach in order to explore early nineteenth-century royal wedding festivities of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, it will follow the path of “performative turn” in the historical studies as it has been discussed in the previous chapter. In doing so, it is among the main intentions of this thesis to approach the history of these celebrations “as” performance, as Richard Schechner indicates.⁶¹

As indicated in the previous chapter, Schechner claims that any event may be examined “as” performance. Compared to the examination of a certain event “is” performance, using the category “as” performance has advantages to explore the historical context of the events;⁶² while approaching to festivities in “‘is’ performance-model refers to more definite, bounded events marked by context, convention, usage and tradition.⁶³ In this respect, this chapter, first and foremost, aims to explore previous studies that deal with festivities in the Ottoman realm. After reviewing previous studies on Ottoman festivities, it also intends to discuss the “performative turn” in the field of the Ottoman studies.

From its beginning to the end of the empire, Ottomans organized celebrations and festivals for imperial births, circumcisions, and weddings as well as other religious and military occasions. Those festivals were recorded by contemporary and near-contemporary chroniclers, historians, poets as well as foreign visitors or

⁶⁰ Öztürkmen, “Performance in the Ottoman World: Thoughts on Folklore and History,” 3

⁶¹ Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 25

⁶² Öztürkmen, “Performance in the Ottoman World: Thoughts on Folklore and History,” 4.

⁶³ Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 41-42; see also Öztürkmen, “Performance in the Ottoman World: Thoughts on Folklore and History,” 3-23.

diplomats. Although there were many other festivities for the occasions of imperial birth, circumcision and wedding ceremonies in the Ottoman realm, only eleven celebrations were recorded in the form of the *sûrnâme* (book of festivals) genre by contemporary or near-contemporary writers and poets. *Sûrnâme* is a unique genre used in Ottoman literature to record imperial birth, circumcision or wedding ceremonies either in the form of prose, poetry or together in both prose and poetry. *Sûrriye kasides* (eulogies for the festivities) and *sûrriye tarihleri* (chronicles of festivals) were other contemporary sources that described the festivities.

Contemporary or nearly contemporary sources about those festivities will be discussed in detail in the following chapters. In this chapter, the scholarship on the festivals will be discussed in order to present a thorough historiographical analysis. In this respect, it will attempt to contextualize the growing literature on these celebrations and to survey ways in which scholars have examined Ottoman festivities. In doing so, a chronological categorization of the literature will be another concern of the present chapter.

3.2 Early studies

As Faroqhi, in her introduction to a recent publication *Celebration, Entertainment and Theater in the Ottoman World*⁶⁴ points out, festivities were a neglected field in Ottoman studies in its beginnings. This area, which had been studied so far by art historians, specialists of the theater, and cultural historians as well as scholars of Old Turkish Literature, was first discovered by a prolific journalist, Refik Ahmet Sevengil (1903-1970). In his two studies, *İstanbul Nasıl Eğleniyordu* (1927) and

⁶⁴ Faroqhi, "Research on Ottoman Festivities and Performances," 24-68.

Türk Tiyatrosu Tarihi,⁶⁵ he has explored ways Istanbulis celebrated their various festivities and the forms of traditional performances. As Faroqhi indicates, it is important to note that Sevengil's was the first attempt to consider festivities as a broader cultural form.⁶⁶

Until the end of the 1950's, Sevengil's works and a few other studies dominated the field of festivals. Sermiha's thesis on *sûrnâmes*⁶⁷ and Hilmi Uran's *Sultan Üçüncü Mehmed'in Sünnet Düğünü*⁶⁸ are among the studies that remain rather descriptive.

3.3 Metin And and his followers

Metin And (b. 1927), a pioneer theatre historian, dominated the field until he passed away in 2008. His survey-like study that was first published in 1959, *Kırk Gün Kırk Gece: Eski Donanma ve Şenliklerde Seyirlik Oyunları*⁶⁹ may be considered the first attempt to cover all the festivals and processions for circumcision and wedding ceremonies in the Ottoman realm; it gives the reader an opportunity to look the celebrations in terms of performing arts in a detailed way. Following this study, Metin And published various books and articles. Among these, *A History of Theatre and Popular Entertainment in Turkey*⁷⁰ and *Osmanlı Şenliklerinde Türk Sanatları*⁷¹ remain prominent for a thorough understanding of the performances as a part of

⁶⁵ See Sevengil, *İstanbul Nasıl Eğleniyordu? Fetih'ten Zamanımıza Kadar*.

⁶⁶ Faroqhi, "Research on Ottoman Festivities and Performances," 32-34.

⁶⁷ See Sermiha, "Surnameler."

⁶⁸ See Uran, *Sultan Üçüncü Mehmed'in Sünnet Düğünü*.

⁶⁹ See And, *Kırk Gün, Kırk Gece: Eski Donanma ve Şenliklerde Seyirlik Oyunları*.

⁷⁰ See And, *A History of Theatre and Popular Entertainment in Turkey*.

⁷¹ See And, *Osmanlı Şenliklerinde Türk Sanatları*.

everyday life in a broader cultural context. His studies are also important in terms of documenting various European sources about Ottoman festivities as well as looking at the performances of the Ottoman realm through a comparative approach.⁷²

An American historian of theatre, Stout, following the path of And, wrote a doctoral dissertation on the most glorious Ottoman festival, namely the festivals of 1582 that were organized to celebrate the circumcisions of Sultan Murad III's princes.⁷³ Stout's doctoral dissertation explores all the elaborate performative events of these circumcision festivities and reviews a wide range of literature on those ceremonies. Moreover, it contains an analysis on the miniatures of the festival book and an overview of the daily life and ceremonial practices in the Ottoman classical ages. More importantly, Stout attempted to see Ottoman festivals in relation to European and Islamic celebratory traditions.

Nutku is another pioneer historian of the Ottoman theatre who has worked mostly on the festivities of 1675 in Edirne. In his monograph *IV. Mehmed'in Edirne Şenliği, 1675*,⁷⁴ Nutku explores contemporary and near contemporary Ottoman and foreign primary sources of these festivities, that is to say, the *sûrnâmes* about the festivals, and the memoirs of an English doctor, John Covel. Although rather descriptive, Nutku's monograph and his various articles give the reader an opportunity to follow the paths of prolific primary sources in a comparative approach. His approach to dealing with how the performance might be examined

⁷² Metin And also published several articles on his researches covering the festivals during 1960's: And, "1582 Şenliği Üzerine Önemli Bir Belge," 166; "Gene 1582 Şenliği Üzerine," 168; "XVI. Yüzyılda Şehzadelerin Sünnet Düğünü."; "Eski Osmanlı Şenlikleri Üzerine Üç İtalyan Kaynağı," 14.

⁷³ Stout, "The Sûr-i-Hilmiyyun of Murad III: A Study of Ottoman Pageantry and Entertainment."

⁷⁴ Nutku, *IV. Mehmet'in Edirne şenliği, (1675)*.

through these celebrations is also important for performance studies in the Ottoman realm.⁷⁵

3.4 Art historical approaches: Sezer Tansuğ, Esin Atıl, Nurhan Atasoy, Gülru Naccipoğlu

The art historical aspect of Ottoman festivities is another well-explored area of research. Major Ottoman festivities were recorded in the form of miniaturized festival books. In these “books of art” projects⁷⁶, artists of miniature painting (*nakkaş*) illustrated almost every sequence of the festivities. These visuals are among the unique sources for interpreting the festivities. From this perspective, the motions of the processions, parades, clothes, and various displays have been studied by various art historians such as Sezer Tansuğ, Esin Atıl, and Nurhan Atasoy.⁷⁷ On the other hand, the relationship between these illustrations and the texts that described the festival events in the form of *sûrnâme* may provide an important venue for the intertextuality of the texts and the image. More importantly, these kinds of studies may allow scholars to interpret texts and images as performance. However, these areas of study have not been explored in detail yet.

⁷⁵ See also Nutku, “Edirne’deki Büyük Şenlik”; “Edirne’de Düzenlenen Şenlikler.” These two articles cover the previous work of Nutku and give the reader an opportunity to read a summary of the celebrations. Moreover, his critical approach on the cultural history of these celebrations may also illustrate the growing literature on the festivals.

⁷⁶ See for further information on the idea of “book of art:” Atıl, *Turkish Art*. See also Atıl, *Levni and the Surname: The Story of an Eighteenth-century Ottoman Festival*; Atasoy et al., *Turkish Miniature Painting*.

⁷⁷ Besides these art historians, the following studies are also important to look beyond the images of the festivals: Ünver, *Levni, Hayatı ve Eserleri*; İreçioğlu, *Levni, Nakış, Şiir ve Renk*. Both of these works contains a detailed analysis of Levni. See also Elmas, “Nakkaş Osman ve Levniye ait Surname Minyatürlerinin Kompozisyon ve Renk Açısından İncelenmesi.” Eroğlu, “Surname-i Hümayun ve Surname-i Vehbi bağlamında Nakkaş Osman ve Nakkaş Levni.” Tekbaş, “Surname-i Vehbi Minyatürlerindeki Eğlence Sahnelerinin Resim Eğitimi Açısından İncelenmesi.”

Tansuğ's *Şenlikname Düzeni*, first published in 1961, is one of the earliest studies on the art historical productions of the festivities.⁷⁸ Tansuğ's study covers both the 1582 and 1720 festivals and examines the miniatures of these ceremonies to reconstruct the celebration and the artistic tradition behind them in detail. In doing so, he questions the way in which the painters of these two festivals, Nakkaş Osman and Levni had illustrated these celebrations in comparison to the Persian miniature tradition.

Atıl's doctoral dissertation and her other publications⁷⁹ based on her dissertation have dominated the scholarship on the festivals of 1720 as well as the prominent Ottoman miniaturist Levnî. Her critical approach on the way Levni illustrated that festival and how it is relevant for the changing tradition of Ottoman painting still remains among the important studies in the field of art historical productions of the Ottoman festivals. More importantly, her analysis on this particular festival, in accordance with Levni's cinematographic movement technique, may help future scholars to reconstruct the festivities in accordance with visual and performative forms. Lastly, her idea of the "art of the book," which presents a reading of these artistic productions in combination with their literary styles, calligraphic forms, their illustrations and even with their style of binding is another contribution of her to the scholarship.⁸⁰

Atasoy is another art historian who contributes greatly to the analysis of the miniatures of the festivals and the festival book of 1582. It also contains the memories of people who observed the ceremonies and excerpts from written

⁷⁸ Tansuğ, *Şenlikname Düzeni: Türk Minyatüründe Gerçekçi Duyuş Ve Gelişme*.

⁷⁹ See also Atıl, "The Story of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Festival," 181–200; "Surname-i Vehbi: An Eighteenth Century Ottoman Book Of Festivals."

⁸⁰ See also, Atıl, *Turkish Art*.

accounts. More importantly, the analysis of the craftsmen and the higher elite at the end of the book based on the miniatures offers an important visual repertoire for the cultural life of the sixteenth century.⁸¹

3.5 Literary approaches

As it is indicated above, *sûrnâmes* (book of festivals) are some of the most important contemporary or near contemporary sources of information on the Ottoman festivals. Although the sources mention that the earliest Ottoman festival dated as far back as as the end of thirteenth century,⁸² the festival of 1582 that was organized on the occasion of the circumcision of Sultan Murad's sons was the first festival that was recorded in the genre of *sûrnâme*.

Sûrnâmes are among the most studied Ottoman genres by scholars of Ottoman literature. Until recently, almost all the known festival books had been transcribed and published as a critical edition. Most of the scholars who worked on the texts of these festivities focused on the language and the points of view of the particular authors. These descriptive studies generally addressed the sequence of the festivities, the kinds of performances, and the position of the author during the festivities. However, many of the literary studies on the festival books lack an interdisciplinary approach for interpreting the texts of *sûrnâmes* in accordance with their contexts.

⁸¹ Atasoy, *Surname-i Hümayun: Düğün Kitabı*; "III. Murad Şehinşahnamesi, Sünnet Düğünü Bölümü ve Philadelphia Free, Library'deki İki Minyatürlü Sayfa," 358-87.

⁸² Arslan in his article, "Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri ve Bu Konuda Yazılan Eserler: Surnameler" claims that the first marriage festival of the Ottoman realm was Orhan Ghazi's marriage ceremonies in 1298. As he notes, the first circumcision festival was for Murad I's prince Bayezid (Yıldırım) in 1365. The dates may be controversial, however, it indicates that the tradition of organizing festivals dated back as early as the beginning of the empire.

The following eleven wedding and circumcision festivals (including nine wedding and seven circumcision festivals) were recorded in this genre of *sûrnâme* and studied by scholars of Ottoman literature.

3.5.1 The festival of 1582

As mentioned above, the tradition of recording the festivals in the genre of *sûrnâme* began with the glorious festival of 1582, the circumcision festival for Murad III's son, Şehzade Mehmed, that lasted 52 days and nights. For this festivity, two festival books were written by İntizami and the famous historian Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali. İntizami's *Sûrnâme-i Hümayun* was written in prose form and included more than 400 miniatures illustrated by Nakkaş Osman and his team. Mustafa Ali's *Camiü'l-Buhur der-Mecalis-i Sur*,⁸³ on the other hand, was written in verse style and it provides a comparative historiographical account that also mentions the previous celebrations of the Kanuni's era.

Mehmet Arslan's doctoral dissertation "Divan Edebiyatı'nda Manzum Surnameler",⁸⁴ includes all the *sûrnâmes* written in verse form. Among others, Mustafa Ali's *Camiü'l-Buhur der-Mecalis-i Sur* was first transcribed into modern Turkish in his doctoral dissertation.

Following his research, literary studies on the *sûrnâme* genre gained acceleration. In 1995, İntizami's *Sûrnâme-i Hümayun* was transcribed and published

⁸³ BDK- Veliyüddin Efendi 1916; Kahire 1K- 222; Nuruosmaniye Ktp. 4318; TSMK- Bağdad Kışkı 203; Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony Of Saliha Sultan, 1834: Textual Analysis, Critical Edition and Facsimile*, 3.

⁸⁴ Arslan, "Osmanlı Saray Döğünleri ve Şenlikleri." Later it is published under the name of *Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Surnameler*.

by Gisela Procházka-Eisl.⁸⁵ Procházka-Eisl's work is based on the manuscripts in the Vienna National Library. In 1996, Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli's *Camiü'l-Buhur der-Mecalis-i Sur* was first published in critical edition format by Öztekin.⁸⁶

Mehmet Arslan still dominates the publications of transcribed *sûrnâmes*. In recent years, he published transcriptions of various *sûrnâmes* in the volumes of *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri* and republished both Gelibolulu Ali's and İntizami's *sûrnâmes*.⁸⁷ Comparing Mehmet Arslan's study with Öztekin's critical edition, one might say that Arslan's more recent work may be regarded as a more elaborate attempt to transcribe Âli's text since it reduces the mistakes that Öztekin's edition had. Each of these works contains an index, which is very helpful for the researcher to classify the celebration in a more accurate way.

Mehmet Arslan's other recent critical edition⁸⁸ includes İntizâmî's *Sûrnâme-i Hümayun*, which is based on the transcriptions of the manuscripts in Topkapı Palace and the Süleymaniye Library. It also provides a comparative analysis of the other two known manuscripts placed in the Vienna National Library and the Leiden Library.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Procházka-Eisl, *Das Sûrnâme-i Hümayûn: Die Wiener Handschrift In Transkription, Mit Kommentar Und Indices Versehen*.

⁸⁶ Arslan, *Türk edebiyatında manzum surnameler: Osmanlı saray düğünleri ve şenlikleri*.

⁸⁷ Arslan's *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 1 (Manzum Surnameler)* (Istanbul: Sarayburnu Kitaphâğı, 2009) also contains Mustafa Ali's *Camiü'l-Buhur der- Mecalis-i Sur*.

⁸⁸ Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 2 (Ciltli) (İntizami Surnamesi)*.

⁸⁹ Other studies on the festival of 1582 are Öztekin, "Ali Surnamesi'nde Vezin Değişiklikleri," 183-193; Boyraz, *Surname-i Hümayun'da Folklorik Unsurlar*." Arslan, "Osmanlı'da Bir Muhteşem Şenlik: Şehzade Sultan Mehmed'in (III Mehmed) Sünnet Düğünü," 169-189.

3.5.2 The festival of 1675

The Edirne festival of 1675, which was the circumcision festival for Mehmed IV's Şehzades sons Mustafa and Ahmed; it also includes the wedding ceremony of his daughter Hatice Sultan and Musahip Mustafa Pasha, was another festival that the scholars mostly worked on. For this celebration we have two *sûrnâmes* written by Nabi in verse, *Vekay-i Hıtan-ı Şehzadegan-ı Hazret-i Sultan Muhammed-i Gazi* and by Abdi, *Sûrnâme-i Abdi* in prose.

Salih Zorlutuna's article "XVII.Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Edirne'nin Sahne Olduğu Şâhânc Sünnet ve Evlenme Düğünleri" in *Edirne / Edirne'nin 600. Fetih Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı*⁹⁰ is the earliest study on the Edirne festival and coincides with an increase in the number of studies on the celebration in the Ottoman realm.

The earliest literary study specifically on Edirne festivals is the linguist, Göksel's M.A. thesis "The *sûrnâme* of Abdi as a sample of old Turkish Prose."⁹¹ This study is a transcription of Abdi's work and also includes an analysis of its style. From 1990's onwards, it may be said that there has been a lack of interest on this particular celebrations in general. The studies published from the 1990's onwards are often the re-transcription of the *sûrnâmes* on this particular festival. Arslan's publications also include Nabi's *Sûrnâme* in verse.⁹² Abdi's *Sûrnâme* was also published recently in *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 4-5*.⁹³

⁹⁰ In *Edirne: Edirne'nin 600. Fetih Yıldönümü armağan kitabı*, 265-296.

⁹¹ See Göksel, "The surname of Abdi as a sample of Old Turkish Prose."

⁹² See also Arslan's *Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Surnameler*.

⁹³ Arslan, *Lebib Surnamesi Hafız Mehmed Efendi (Hazin) Surnamesi - Abdi Surnamesi - Telhisü'l-Beyan'ın Surname Kısmı*; see also BDK- Genel 10391; Bibliothèque Nationale Ancient Fonds, Suppl. 501, 880, 1045; Edirne Selimiye 2315; Millet Kütüphanesi- Tarih 343; TSMK- Hazine 1573, Revan 823; National Library in Vienna- H.O. 1072; Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony Of Salih Sultan, 1834*, 3.

On the other hand, Arslan's article "1675 Edirne Şenliği Üzerine Üç Öncmlü Eser ve Bu Eserlerdeki 'Hediyeler' Bölümü"⁹⁴ also mentions the gifting sections of these festival books. In recent years, Efdal Sevinçli published an article "Şenliklerimiz ve Surnamelerimiz: 1675 ve 1724 Şenliklerine İlişkin İki Surname."⁹⁵ His article gives a summary of the previous works, especially for Nutku's study and remains a relevant study for the survey on the literature about celebrations.

3.5.3 The festival of 1710

For the wedding festival for Mustafa II's daughter, Safiye Sultan and Ali Paşa, there are two *sûrnâmes* in prose style whose authors are unknown. There are a few studies on this festivity besides Arslan's serial of transcriptions were published in his *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 6-7*.⁹⁶

3.5.4 The festival of 1720

The circumcision festival that was organized for Ahmed III's sons, Şehzade Süleyman, Mustafa and Ahmed in 1720, was the second glorious celebration in the Ottoman realm. It lasted almost fifteen days. For this circumcision festival, there are two *sûrnâmes* that are in prose style: Vehbi's *Sûrnâme-i Vehbi* and Hazin's *Sûrnâme-i Hazin*. Vehbi's *sûrnâme* includes more than 200 miniatures illustrated by the famous *nakkas*, Levni. It is an important example of eighteenth-century sophisticated

⁹⁴ Arslan, "1675 Edirne Şenliği Üzerine Üç Öncmlü Eser ve Bu Eserlerdeki 'Hediyeler' Bölümü", 92-121.

⁹⁵ Sevinçli, "Şenliklerimiz ve Surnamelerimiz: 1675 ve 1724 Şenliklerine İlişkin İki Surname," 377-416.

⁹⁶ Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 6-7*.

prose style. Levni's illustrations are, on the other hand, considered as an instance of the Westernization of Ottoman painting.

Taking into consideration the studies on the 1720 festivals, one might say that the most prominent studies were published by art historians. In these studies, the emphasis was mostly on Levni's illustrations until recent years. Derman's article, "Surname'nin resimlenmesine dair bir belge,"⁹⁷ on the other hand, studies an important document about funding for the *sûrnâme*'s writer and gives clues about the patronage system in the eighteenth century.

Similar to studies on other festivals, since the late 1980's, old Turkish literature specialists have published transcribed versions of the *sûrnâmes* written about the 1720 celebrations. In this regard, Kızıltan's M.A. thesis was the first attempt to transcribe one of the texts: "The *sûrnâme* of Mehmed Hazin as a sample of old Turkish prose."⁹⁸

3.5.5 Other festivals in the eighteenth century

There were other festivities and *sûrnâmes* for the eighteenth century; however, they were not studied as extensively as the festival of 1720. In this regard, it is important to note that the *sûrnâme* for the festival of 1724 (the wedding ceremonies for Ahmed III's daughters Ümmügülsüm Sultan, Hatice Sultan and Atika Sultan); Haşmet's *Viladetname-i Hümayun* (prose) for the festival of 1759 (for the birth of Mustafa

⁹⁷ Derman, "Surname'nin resimlenmesine dair bir belge," 120-129.

⁹⁸ Kızıltan, "The "Surname" of Mehmed Hazin As A Sample Of Old Turkish Prose. See also the recent studies that follow this approach: Tulum, *Sûrnâme: Sultan Ahmet'in Düğün kitabı*. Arslan also published both of *surnames* on the 1720 festival: *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 4-5 (Lebib Surnamesi Hafız Mehmed Efendi (Hazin) Surnamesi - Abdi Surnamesi - Telhisü'l-Beyan'ın Surname Kısmı); Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 1 (Vehbi Surnamesi)*.

III's daughter Hıbetullah Sultan); and Melek İbrahim's *Vilâdetname-i Hatice Sultan* for the festival of 1776 (for the birth of Abdülhamid I's daughter Hatice Sultan) have been only attracted researchers in the old Turkish literature field.⁹⁹

3.5.6 Festivals in the nineteenth century

For the studies on nineteenth-century festivities, there are four festivals that were recorded in *sûrnâme* genre: For the festival of 1834 that was organized for the wedding ceremony of Mahmud II's daughter Saliha Sultan and Halil Fırat Pasha, three *sûrnâmes* were written: Rifat's *Sûrnâme -i Rifat* (verse), Es'ad's *Sûrnâme* (verse), and a *Sûrnâme* that was written by an unknown author (prose). For the festival of 1836, which was organized for the wedding ceremony of Mahmud II's daughter, Mihrimah Sultan and Ferik Mehmed Said Pasha (also included the circumcision festival for Mahmud II's sons, Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz) there are three *sûrnâmes*: Lebib's *Sûrnâme -i Lebib* (prose), Hızır's *Sûrnâme -i Hızır* (verse) and another *sûrnâme* that is written by an unknown author (prose). For the festival of 1847 that was organized for the circumcision festival for Abdülmecid's sons Mehmed Murat and Abdulhamid), Tahsin's *Sûrnâme-i Tahsin* (verse) is the only source written in *sûrnâme* form. The festival of 1858, which was organized for the wedding ceremonies for Abdülmecid's daughters Cemile Sultan and Münire Sultan, is the last festivity that was recorded in the *sûrnâme* genre. In this regard, Nafi's *Sûrnâme -i Selâtin* is the last known *sûrnâme* written in the Ottoman realm. (*Peyam-ı Sur*) (prose).

⁹⁹ Koçu, *Vilâdetname (Üçüncü Mustafa'nın Kızı Hıbetullah Sultanın Doğum Donanması) / İlâve: Selânikli Mustafa Ve Peçevili İbrahim, Üçüncü Muradın Oğlunun Silâmet Düğünü*; Arslan and Soyak *Haşmet külliyyatı*.

Until recently, nineteenth-century festivals that were recorded in *sûrnâme* genre were studied mostly by specialists of old Turkish literature. Aynur, who first transcribed the *sûrnâmes* of the 1834 festival in an M.A. thesis¹⁰⁰ is among the pioneers who studied nineteenth-century *sûrnâmes*. Her study is among the few literary studies that integrate the cultural history of festivities into a literary perspective.

Aynur's article, "Saliha Sultan'ın Düğün Töreni ve Şenlikler",¹⁰¹ in this regard, mentions the novelties that come up in the Mahmudian Era. More importantly, she sees the entire event as a product of cultural life of the nineteenth century.

Another article of Aynur, "Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri Edebiyata Yansıması,"¹⁰² explores the evolution of *sûrnâme* as a genre in the literature history of Ottoman Empire and deeply examines the nineteenth-century celebrations based on the *sûrnâmes* that she transcribed.¹⁰³ For the festival of 1836, Arslan also re-published the *sûrnâmes* in his *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri* scrics.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Aynur, "Sultan II. Mahmud'un Kızı Saliha Sultan ile Tophane Müşiri Halil Rıf'at Paşa'nın Düğün Törenini Anlatan Surnameler."

¹⁰¹ Aynur, "Saliha Sultan'ın Düğün Töreni ve Şenlikler," 303-339.

¹⁰² Aynur, *Sözden Yazıya*, 25-32.

¹⁰³ See also, Aynur, "Padişah Kızlarının Evliliklerine Bir Bakış ve Saliha Sultan'ın çehizi." This article covers mainly the third *Surname* written for the festival of 1834 and deeply examines the *çeyiz* of Saliha Sultan. It is an important study for the material culture of the weddings.

¹⁰⁴ Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 1 (Manzum Surnameler); Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 4-5 (Lebib Surnamesi Hafız Mehmed Efendi (Hazin) Surnamesi - Abdî Surnamesi - Telhisü'l-Beyan'ın Surname Kısmı)*.

3.6 Towards a performative turn in Ottoman studies

As it is illustrated above, until recently, Nufku and And's studies have dominated the field, especially in terms of the historical roots of traditional performances in Ottoman studies. These studies have been influential in providing descriptive information as well as approaching Ottoman festivities as a broader area of cultural performance. Concordantly, Terzioğlu's significant article, "The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation,"¹⁰⁵ provided a new venue for reading the festivities as cultural historical entities. Her Bakhtinian close reading of the primary sources about the festival of 1582 and the way she considered the festivities of the Ottoman realm as carnival-like events remains a pathbreaker in this field.

In 2004 and 2006, Faroqhi, a prominent social and economic historian, and Öztürkmen, a folklorist and historian of the performing arts, organized two workshops entitled "Festivities in the Ottoman Empire and Today's Turkey"¹⁰⁶, and "Temaşa: Performances in the Ottoman World".¹⁰⁷ These workshops were significant attempts to bring together scholars who study festivities in various fields and to provide a theoretical background for exploring the historical process of celebrations and the evolution of the cultural forms in the Ottoman realm. The above-mentioned introduction written by Öztürkmen may be considered a reflection of these recent approaches to Ottoman festivities. Her other publications such as "Performance, Iconography, and Narrative in Ottoman Festive Events" in *Imagining Dance: Visual*

¹⁰⁵ Terzioğlu, "The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation," 84–100.

¹⁰⁶ 9th Annual Workshop on Ottoman Material Culture, October 8-9, 2004, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul

¹⁰⁷ The presentations in this workshop have been recently published under the title of *Celebrations, Entertainment and Theater in the Ottoman World*.

*Representations of Dancers and Dancing*¹⁰⁸, “A Comparative Look at European and Ottoman Forms of Courtly Celebrations: Mutual Perceptions and Interaction (16th-18th Centuries)”¹⁰⁹, and “Reading Dance Images: Rethinking the Iconography of Grotesque Dancers/Performers”¹¹⁰ applied a morphological approach to the interpretation of the performative forms. These studies also enable scholars to imagine broader historical-ethnographical readings.

Ottoman festivities were also an important venue for studies on consumption and material culture. As indicated in the previous chapter, the rites of conspicuous displays were also important for Ottoman festivals. The preparation of the food and drink as well as their distribution required a large-scale organization. In Ottoman festivities, when a certain festive event was being organized, first and foremost, a chief of festivities, (*sûr emini*), who was in charge of providing supplies, had to be appointed. However, the organization of the festivities and the material aspect of the festivities have not been well explored yet. Faroqi’s studies, “When the sultan ordered a great feast, was everybody in a festive mood?”¹¹¹ and “Fireworks in Seventeenth-century Istanbul”¹¹² are among the first attempts to explore the material aspects of these celebrations.

Artan, an art historian who also works on the consumption culture of the Ottoman elites has made an important contribution to the exploration of public performances as political dramas in combination with their geographical spaces and

¹⁰⁸ In Spati et al, *Imaging Dance: Visual Representations of Dancers and Dancing*.

¹⁰⁹ A delivered paper in *Romance Studies Colloquium: “Celebration!”* October 14-16, 2004, Montclair State University, New Jersey.

¹¹⁰ A delivered paper in the 9th Annual Workshop on Ottoman Material Culture, October 8-9, 2004, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul.

¹¹¹ In *Celebrations, Entertainment and Theater in the Ottoman World*, 208-224.

¹¹² In Vitz and Öztürkmen, *Medieval and Early Modern Performance in the Eastern Mediterranean*.

material aspects. Among her studies, “Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate: Institutional and Symbolic Change in the Eighteenth Century”,¹¹³ “Aspects of the Ottoman Elite’s Food Consumption: Looking for “staples”, “luxuries”, and “delicacies”, in a changing century”¹¹⁴, and “Forms and Forums of Expression: Istanbul and beyond, 1600-1800”¹¹⁵ provide the reader with an opportunity to explore various forms of the festivities as political displays of wealth and power.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to survey the historiography of performance studies in the field of Ottoman studies. Here it is important to underline that since the beginning of the 1960’s the literature on celebrations in the fields of old Turkish literature, art history and cultural history has been growing. However, performance studies taking into consideration both *sîrnâme* and their political conjunctures remain limited. The following chapters of this thesis will be a modest attempt to bring the interdisciplinary approaches together in order to reconstruct the nineteenth-century festivities as performative forms.

¹¹³ In Duindam et al., *Royal Courts in Dynastic States And Empires: A Global Perspective*.

¹¹⁴ In Quataert, *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922: An Introduction*.

¹¹⁵ In Artan, *Forms and Forums of Expression: Istanbul and Beyond, 1600-1800*.

CHAPTER 4
TOWARDS A STATE OF SPECTACLE: ROYAL WEDDING FESTIVITIES
DURING THE PERIOD OF MAHMUD II

To perform the ruler's legitimacy and the regime's stability as well as to convey the particular ideology of the sovereign may be considered among the primary objectives of states all around the world. Similar to rulers of other states, Ottoman rulers needed to find a variety of ways to provide legitimacy for their sovereignty through various symbols and forms of performance. State ceremonies, in this regard, were among the most important areas of legitimizing and representing the power of the Ottoman sovereign. From the beginnings of the Ottoman Empire, ceremonies such as the ones which were organized for royal births, princes' starting their education, princes' circumcisions, accession to the throne, religious festivities, Friday salutations, receptions for envoys, as well as princesses' weddings, were all designed to receive the symbolic image of the ruler to various audiences through a variety of channels. However, these performative forms of the state, by definition, are not resistant to the changes in the ways of governing. They were subjected to revision, and yet, to be invented, re-invented, and redefined over and over again, depending on contextual changes. In this regard, how the forms of performance changed in the Ottoman court festivities in the early nineteenth century will be the primary question of this present chapter.

Focusing on two great festive events that took place during the reign of Mahmud II, the wedding festivities of Mahmud II's daughters Saliha Sultan and Mihrimah Sultan in 1834 and 1836, respectively, this chapter intends to explore the changing patterns in the festival tradition in the nineteenth-century Ottoman realm.

In this regard, it will be argued that these royal wedding festivals may be interpreted as a way of representing Mahmud II's "spectacular state" which encapsulated the state ideology in a festive form. That is to say, parallel to the socio-political changes in the Mahmudian state, cultural conjuncture was in transition as well. Regarding these transitions, it may be argued here that the present political representation of Mahmudian period towards public, imperial notables as well as foreign states might be explored through royal wedding festivities of 1834 and 1836. In this respect, this chapter, will first aim to inquire how the festivities in the early nineteenth-century Ottoman realm may be approached as performance and how the Mahmudian state defined itself as a spectacle state.

By exploring changes in performative forms, ceremonial practices, representations of the Sultan's power, ceremonial order, and changes in the spatiality of these spectacles, this chapter will also explore how the Mahmudian state used its performativity, generally by re-inventing and re-defining the ceremonial patterns of the state. In this regard, this chapter will argue that while the Ottoman state became more centralized and modernized, the carnivalesque performances of the classical age were abandoned and the royal festivities turned into a more spectacular form of performance in which the role of the audience was passivized.

4.1 Political conjuncture

The long nineteenth century of the Ottoman Empire, 1798-1922, is identified as the age of transformation and change. Although the tools of legitimacy of the state had started to change long before the eighteenth century, during the early nineteenth century, namely during the period of the Mahmudian state (r. 1808-1838), the

Empire continued to experience transformations. In fact, it would not be wrong to note that the early nineteenth century resembled that of the late eighteenth century as well. On the other hand, during the nineteenth century, especially starting with the second half of the reign of Mahmud II, the centralization of the state had been more visible in the everyday lives of the subjects. Moreover, the state expanded its influence through bureaucratic and military tools. The abolition of the Janissary army in 1826 and the weakening the power of urban guilds allowed the Mahmudian state to exercise its power more directly on the subjects, on the one hand. On the other, in the 1830's, a state surveillance system was expanded; therefore, the state was able to control public opinion.¹¹⁶ In fact, the public opinion and public sphere became one of the main concerns of this re-defined state as well.

In 1829, a new clothing law changed the difference between the male subjects of various confessional communities, at least on paper. The adaptation of the new headgear, the *fez*, was also a sign of direct control of the state upon its subjects.¹¹⁷ Moreover, a state official (*mühtesib*) had been introduced to supervise the public sphere and to maintain social order.¹¹⁸ All these changes aimed to increase control over the public. On the other hand, similar to his ancestors, Mahmud II continued the tradition of legitimizing his power through controlling the architectural and the religious urban space of Istanbul. The building of the Nusretiye (Victory) Mosque in 1828 thus aimed both to commemorate the abolition of the Janissary corps and to exercise the Mahmudian state's power over space.¹¹⁹ Moreover, constructing the Dolmabahçe Summer Palace and the old Çırağan Palace in the

¹¹⁶ Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*, 63.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 168.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 96.

1830's were further reflections of this project. In this regard, one should note that the power center of the Mahmudian state was moved to the shores of the Bosphorus rather than the older centers on the Sarayburnu peninsula, especially after the 1830's.

The re-definition and re-invention of the state's ceremonial power was another important aspect of this newly imagined centralized state of Mahmud II. Therefore, the state's ceremonies were framed from this perspective. In this respect, it is important to note that there was an increase in the number of major festivities during this age in order to maintain the dramatic power of the state. In this regard, one should note that, similar to the festivals of 1834 and 1836, there were ten more major festival events organized until the end of the reign of Sultan Mahmud II.

These were the festivities organized on the occasion of the birthday of Fatma Sultan (1809), festivities organized on the occasion of the birth of Saliha Sultan (1812), festivities organized on the occasion of the birth of Mihrimah Sultan (1815), festivities organized on the occasion of the birth of Zeynep Sultan (1823), festivities organized on the occasion of the birth of Abdülnejad (1823), festivities organized on the occasion of the birth of Atiye Sultan (1830), festivities organized on the occasion of the birth of Hayriye Sultan (1832), festivities organized on the occasion of Abdülmecid starting his education (1832), festivities organized on the occasion of the marriage of Saliha Sultan (1834) and festivities organized on the occasion of the marriage of Mihrimah Sultan (1836).¹²⁰

The royal wedding festivals organized during the reign of Mahmud II, therefore, reflected this agenda of state's performativity. The mass spectacles of 1834 and 1836 were major representations of re-producing and re-invention of the

¹²⁰ See also Nutku, "Major Festivities Organized During the Reign of Mahmud II, 829-840.

state in order to maintain its power of performance. Within this broader historical conjuncture, the royal marriages became one of the most important patterns of the Ottoman spectacle state. These royal weddings provided a representation of the centralized Ottoman state's grandeur in the eyes of its subjects as well as foreign states and imperial notables. In this regard, how legitimization through performativity was established in the nineteenth century will be explored in the following section. In doing so, it will be argued that the Mahmudian state used royal marriage festivities to re-invent and re-define the ceremonial patterns of earlier stages of the state.

4.2 The re-invention of tradition in nineteenth-century royal wedding festivities

Hobsbawm indicates that to claim a divine right to rule was no longer enough for monarchies, and they were bound to find new ways of legitimacy in order to survive after the French Revolution.¹²¹ As noted above, this meant changes in "the public image of the state"¹²² and its representation. Thus, states attempted to find new ways of legitimacy. Similar to the states around it, the Ottoman Empire attempted to transform the representation of state power. In this regard, the nineteenth century might be regarded as the time when changes in the representation of the state's power were accelerated and crystalized.¹²³ Deringil explains these new ways of representations as the re-invention of "neo-traditions"¹²⁴. In this respect, the

¹²¹ Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1808 to 1908," 3; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 84.

¹²² Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire," 4.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

ceremonial power of the state started to evolve into a different phase during the time of Mahmud II (r.1808-39). The re-invention of the Ottoman coat of arms, *arma-i Osmani*, the traditionally oriental headgear, the *fez*, the emergence of the national anthem, and the imperial band, as well as mass spectacles organized for the occasions of royal weddings were, among the important aspects of the newly established ceremonial state power.

It may be argued that all these trends in the representation of state power might be explained by an idea of state's performativity. In this regard, Geertz described the state itself as a way of representation and explained this political performance with the term "theatre state".¹²⁵ Geertz, examining the nineteenth-century Balinese state, proposed that the state is an organized performance that reflected itself through public rituals and ceremonies.¹²⁶ For him, "the dramas of the theatre state, mimetic of themselves, were, in the end, neither illusions nor lies, neither sleight-of-hand nor make-believe. They were what there was."¹²⁷ That is to say, the state as performance reproduces itself in accordance with all of its symbolic and mythical power; this ceremonial state is not an imitation of the current social circumstances; it *is* the social circumstances, or at least partially, themselves.

Therefore, the festival of 1834 that was organized for the wedding of Saliha Sultan, Mahmud II's daughter and Halil Rif'at Pasha, *müeyir* of Tophane and the festival of 1836, which was organized for the wedding of Mihrimah Sultan and Mehmed Sa'id Pasha may be regarded as a representation of the Mahmudian state's performative power. Moreover, this performative representation of the state also

¹²⁵ See Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali*, 12.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 136.

coincided with the socio-political changes started in the late eighteenth century and crystalized during the period of Mahmud II.

4.3 Early eighteenth-century festivities as footprints of nineteenth-century state performances

By examining the reinvention of tradition through wedding ceremonies during the reign of Ahmed III (1703-1730), Artan, in her article "Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate: Institutional a Symbolic Change in the Early Eighteenth Century," argues that after the long periods of crisis that led to a break with previous Ottoman rites of power in the seventeenth century, "the ceremonial practices of the early eighteenth represented both a return to the past and something new, with their innovative side being introduced, as would seem to be the case with all such moments of 'the invention of tradition', under the guise of conformity with ancient law and custom."¹²⁸ Regarding those weddings as indicators of political alliances,¹²⁹ Artan also indicates that it was not a new phenomenon for royal princesses to be married off to the highest-ranking officials by organizing a glorious imperial festival. However, those glorious festivals were practiced for a hundred years or so. Before that, princesses had married members of other influential dynasties or to significant statesmen. However, after the Ottomans threw all their rivals away and started to identify themselves as an imperial power in the sixteenth century, former marriage

¹²⁸ Artan, "Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate: Institutional a Symbolic Change in the Early Eighteenth Century," 339.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 340.

practices were abandoned.¹³⁰ Instead, the princesses started to marry office holders such as grand viziers and grand admirals.

More importantly, eighteenth century wedding festivities were organized not just on a vaster scale than in earlier periods, but also in a qualitatively new way that expanded beyond the boundaries of the Topkapı Palace and other lesser scale palaces and mansions in the historical peninsula of Istanbul. The celebrations linked these palaces to the urban centers and popular arteries.¹³¹ As Artan indicates, the processions of betrothal tokens (*Alay-ı nişan*), trousseaus (*alay-ı cihaz*), and bridal processions (*alay-ı arus*) were, in this regard, parts and parcels of that new agenda bearing new kind of visibility and accessibility of the imperial household.¹³²

Before the eighteenth century, royal weddings were, similar to circumcision festivities, celebrated through various performance events such as acrobatic performances, sporting competitions, theatrical performances, banquets, nightly entertainment, musical performances and so forth. However, those performances took place within the borders of the imperial palaces, unlike circumcision festivities that were celebrated more publicly outside the palace. As Artan demonstrates, “there is, however, a paradox, in that in stark contrast to all these massive celebrations and festivities, at least part of which were very much in the public eye, the same royal marriages, including especially the names of the royal women who were being married off, went unrecorded and unreported in period’s chronicles.” Thus, as Artan also notes, “princesses’ marriages were more like private family affairs.”¹³³

¹³⁰ Artan, “Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate,” 342.

¹³¹ Ibid., 340.

¹³² Ibid., 340-342.

¹³³ Ibid., 343.

Interestingly enough, the contemporary chronicles such as Celalzade, Solakzade or Peçevi were all silent about the wedding ceremony of Mihrimah Sultan and Rüstem Pasha while they gave great detail about the circumcision festivals of princes in 1539.¹³⁴ On the other hand, during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century periods of crisis, marriage alliances were not as glorious as those of earlier periods due to “the general chaos and mediocrity of these unsettled times.”¹³⁵

By the mid-seventeenth century, princesses began to be married off to the boon companions of their fathers, *müşahibs*. Artan explains this as a rather different path to create a new kind of court society.¹³⁶ During the earlier seventeenth century, representation of the sultan’s power was rather modest, and publicity about him remained limited. Princesses’ marriage alliances with rather lower ranking officers were also the reflection of this trend of visibility of the imperial power or lack of it. However, during the reign of Mustafa II (r. 1695-1703), the court protocols had started to be reorganized. *Defter-i Teyrifat*, the first Ottoman Book of Ceremonics, penned by Mehmed bin Ahmed Ni’imeti, represents this new ceremonial visibility of the imperial power. Here it is important to underline that wedding ceremonies of royal princesses started to be included in court rituals.¹³⁷ During the reign of Mustafa II’s brother, Ahmed III, this new kind of visibility and redefinition of imperial power began to be established. Marriage alliances of the female members of the dynasty were not excluded from this re-establishment of the imperial visibility. As Artan notes, “all this was in full conformity with the re-inscription of the court and the

¹³⁴ Artan, “Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate,” 343.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 349.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 349-352.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 353.

dynasty into the capital, and the re-legitimation of the post-1703 sultanate in the wake of resettling in Istanbul.”¹³⁸

Early eighteenth-century wedding ceremonies, therefore, aimed to resettle the imperial image of the capital and the sultan. It had led to the establishment of new ways of celebrating urban rituals: “new processional routes, new festival grounds, and new ceremonial procedures.”¹³⁹ The contemporary festival books also served to complete and impose this new ideology.¹⁴⁰ In this regard, it is also important to note that well-documented early eighteenth-century royal wedding festivities of 1720, 1724 and 1728 were the reflections of Sultan Ahmed III’s re-invention of his legitimation with strong planning and designing.¹⁴¹ These weddings ceremonies, therefore, turned into a series of public performances.

The Vienna *sûrnâme* that mentioned the 1724 wedding festival, thus, differs from previous accounts that were hardly silent about royal weddings. More importantly, the Vienna *sûrnâme* acknowledged the various procession routes, “included the marching orders for all top dignitaries, secondary officials, guards, and servants that participated in each processions as well as the descriptions of the head-gear and costume that each statesman, functionary and attendant wore on the occasions.”¹⁴² These details of the *sûrnâme* of 1724 were similar to the above-mentioned *Defter-i Teşrifat* of 1695. The detailed lists of the royal brides’

¹³⁸ Artan, “Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate,” 354.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 355-356.

¹⁴⁰ See for the transcriptions of these texts, Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri; Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Surnameler: Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri Ve Şenlikleri*; Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony Of Saliha Sultan, 1834: Textual Analysis, Critical Edition And Facsimile*.

¹⁴¹ Artan, “Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate,” 361.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 363.

trousseaux, the gifts presented to the sultans, comprehensive details of the *nişan*, *cihaz* and *arûs* processions, and palace rituals were also recorded in this *sûrnâme*.¹⁴³ The most important center of the ceremonies from the ancient times onwards, the Hippodrome/Atmeydanı, was the main ceremonial area of those festivities as well. In short, the ways in which the celebrations of these series of marriages organized a new protocol and the former rules were re-organized and enhanced by the new actors such as the grand vizier.

In this regard, it is important to note that the royal wedding festivities of 1834 and 1836 followed this new understanding of state's performativity. First and foremost, there were no royal wedding festivities celebrated with larger scale ceremonies for over a hundred years. Although circumcision festivities continued to be celebrated as great festive events—the festival of 1720 was the second glorious festivity in Ottoman history—the festivals of 1834 and 1836 were the only royal wedding festivities that were organized after one hundred years. As it will be discussed below in detail, it may be argued that the organizational patterns, the representation of the state's performative ways, and even the recording practices for the festivities of 1834 and 1836 took on the celebratory patterns of the early eighteenth century as an example. Therefore, this present chapter argues that the early nineteenth-century festivities might be regarded as the revival of the early eighteenth-century re-invention of tradition in the state's performative power, in accordance with the newly defined modernization trends.

Rahimi, in his article "Nâhîs, Circumcision Rituals and the Theatre State," also refers to a similar phenomenon. By examining the festivals of 1582 and 1721, he argues that the socio-economic transformations of the eighteenth century were also

¹⁴³ Artan, "Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate," 366.

represented in the imperial ceremonies such as circumcision festivals. According to Rahimi, like early modern Western states, the Ottoman Empire, from the late fifteenth century to the eighteenth century, was based on "territorial statism" that was characterized by territorial expansion, institutionalization of the state administration, increases in taxation and a rise in the military, on the one hand; on the other, as Rahimi argues, "one feature that the European states also shared with the Ottomans was the need to devise cultural strategies for constructing collective identities with a view to building and stabilizing individuals capable of interacting with each other in a productive manner, thus creating territorially bounded and stable communities under the hegemony of the state."¹⁴⁴ For him, the increasing number of ceremonies was an integral part of these new territorial states's evoking a cohesive imagery of the state power. Public performances also fostered a feeling of collective incorporation and solidarity in which individuals imagined and experienced the presence of a transcendent community of shared emotions and ideals.¹⁴⁵ As an important part of the early modern Ottoman theatre state, circumcision rituals, in Rahimi's words, "provided a mobile public stage on which, with the circumcision of a young prince as the future sultan, the sacred body of the sultan became a symbolic object of celebration."¹⁴⁶ According to Rahimi, "theatre state" refers to a set of invented or reconstructed ceremonies aimed at enacting and representing power through ritual performance."¹⁴⁷

Within the broader framework explored above, how these royal weddings provided a representation of the state in the eyes of its subjects and how the

¹⁴⁴ Rahimi, "Nahils, Circumcision Rituals and the Theatre State," 94.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.

legitimization was established in the nineteenth century will be explored in the following section. In doing so, it will be argued that the Mahmudian state used the royal marriage festivities to re-invent and re-define the ceremonial patterns of the earlier state. Here it is important to note that although Rahimi's Geertzian way of interpreting the state's performativity opens an important venue to imagine the Mahmudian state as performance, as it will be discussed below, the Mahmudian state's performativity was rather different from that of the eighteenth-century Ottoman state since the early nineteenth-century state represented its power through more spectacle-like performativity rather than a carnivalesque or festival one.

4.4 Royal wedding ceremonies in the early nineteenth century: Saliha Sultan's wedding in 1834 and Mihrimah Sultan's wedding in 1836

The first Ottoman rulers married off the princesses to either heirs to throne of other principalities' such as Karamanoğlu, Candaroğlu or Akkoyunlu's or else imperial officials. When the state completed its institutionalization process, the rule changed and the princesses started being married off to higher-ranking officials. Therefore, viziers, admirals, and other pashas became potential royal bridegrooms of the dynasty. When the Sultan decided to marry off either his daughter or sister, he issued an imperial edict (*hatt-ı hümayun*) to the grand vizier to start the preparations. Usually, this imperial edict required the prospective royal bridegroom to send a trousseau (*mehr-i müecce*).¹⁴⁸

Moreover, Abdülhamid II's daughter Ayşe Sultan mentions in her memoirs that until the era of Mahmud II, the princesses had no right to express their

¹⁴⁸ Uluçay, *Harem*, 89-90.

preference about these marriages. However, she stated that during the periods of Mahmud II, Abdülmccid and Abdülhamid II, it was seen that the princesses were able to marry whomever they fell in love with.¹⁴⁹ Meanwhile, royal bridegrooms were referred to as imperial grooms (*damad-ı şehriyari*) and never allowed to marry anyone else. They had no right to have their own *harem*.¹⁵⁰

The princesses could be married off before puberty, but usually they were married between the ages of 14 and 16. However, it has been recorded that some princesses were married in their childhood. Mahmud II changed this rule and, during his reign, it was accepted that the age of marriage became the age of puberty again.¹⁵¹ On the other hand, it was up to the sultan's decision as to how many times a certain princess would be married. Hence, unlike her imperial groom, it was possible for a princess to marry several times.

All the expanses of the imperial household were covered by a private treasury called the *Ceyb-i Hümayun*. For the preparation of wedding ceremonies, a certain amount of money was taken from the imperial treasury in the name of the imperial groom. All the expenses of the wedding, such as gifts, betrothals and so forth were covered by the treasury. For instance, for Mahmud II's daughter Mihrimah Sultan's wedding, 48,500 *kuruş* was spent for wedding gifts.¹⁵²

Usually, the chief authority in religious affairs (*şeyhülislam*) was responsible for solemnizing the marriage. The bridegroom and the sultan did not attend the

¹⁴⁹ See Osmanoglu, *Babam Abdülhamid*, 160; Uluçay, *Harem*, 91.

¹⁵⁰ See also Dumas, "Tanım ve Kullanımlarıyla: Klasik Çağda Dâmâd-ı Şehriyârî," 34-40; "Bir Prenses bir Kulla Evlenirse II: Osmanlıların Sıradışı Evlilik Sistemi (15. Yüzyıl Ortalarından 16. Yüzyıl Ortalarına)," 36-42.

¹⁵¹ Uluçay, *Harem*, 93.

¹⁵² See Uluçay, *Harem*, 94; He refers to the following document: Top Arş. E. No. 3100.

marriage ceremony in person; rather, their representatives and a vizier for the groom and the chief of the black eunuchs for the sultan participated in the solemnizing ceremony.

The place for the solemnizing ceremony was the *Hırka-yı Şerife* (Holy Mantle) chamber in Topkapı Palace. Either on Thursday or Monday, the solemnizing ceremony was held in *Hırka-yı Şerife* chamber. This tradition continued until the Tanzimat Era. For instance, the marriage ceremony of Mihrimah Sultan in 1836 was solemnized on 6 April (Zilhicce 19, Thursday, 1251) in the *Hırka-i Şerife* chamber. *The şeyhülislam* Mecki-zade Mustafa Nazım Efendi was the one responsible for solemnizing the marriage. *Serasker* Pasha and Darüssade Ağası Abdullah Ağa were the representatives of the imperial bridegroom and Mihrimah Sultan, respectively. Damad Halil Rıfat Pasha, husband of Saliha Sultan and Ahmed Fevzi Pasha were the witnesses to the marriage. It was the tradition to serve rosewater and incense (*gülâb* and *buhur*) for the participants of the ceremony.¹⁵³

Processions played an important role in visualizing the dynasty's power to the audience. Usually three processions—the processions of betrothal tokens (*Alay-ı nişan*), trousseaus (*alay-ı cihaz*), and bridal processions (*alay-ı arus*)—were organized until the end of festivities. Usually, the procession of betrothal token was held before the solemnizing ceremony. However, Mihrimah Sultan's procession was delayed until after the ceremony since the chief astrologer (*müneccimbaşı*) claimed that the fortunate hour for the procession was after the ceremony.¹⁵⁴ In this first procession, valuable jewelry (*mıhr-ı müeccel*) and a lot of other valuable items were given to the harem.

¹⁵³ See *Lehib Surnamesi*, I. 10b-11a, in Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri*, 67. See also Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan, and Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1836*, 242-243.

¹⁵⁴ See *Lehib Surnamesi*, I. 12a, in Arslan, *Osmanlı saray düğünleri ve şenlikleri*, 68.

The duration of the wedding festivities depended on various factors. Especially the Sultan's favorite daughters and sisters' wedding festivals lasted longer. Moreover, during the reign of Ahmed III, princesses' weddings were celebrated on a larger scale by including public performances in the major celebrations. In this respect, it is important to note that royal weddings of Ahmed III's three daughters and Mahmud II's two daughters were among the most glorious festivities organized for the princesses in the entire history of the Ottoman Empire. As it is noted above, it will be argued that Mahmud II might be regarded as a follower of Ahmed III's re-invention of tradition in the organization of the state's performativity.

4.4.1 Saliha Sultan and the festival of 1834

Saliha Sultan was Mahmud II's eldest of his four daughters. Her mother was Aşûbcan Kadınefendi. Ottoman chroniclers *Tarih-i Şânizade* and *Cevdet Tarihi* claim that she was born in Cemaziyelevvel 25, 1226 (h.) (June 16, 1811). Three days of festivities were organized in honor of her birth. On May 1, 1834 Saliha Sultan, at the age of 23, was married to Halil Rif'at Pasha, *müşir* of Tophane. Halil Rif'at Pasha was of Georgian origin and he was under the patronage of Koca Hüseyin Pasha. There is no exact data about his place and date of birth.¹⁵⁵ The festivities for the wedding started on May 24, 1834 (Muharrem 15, 1250) and lasted thirteen days.

Before starting the preparation, Sultan Mahmud II enacted a decree (*firman*) to start the organization of receptions and invitations and various other details of the

¹⁵⁵ See also Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları: Valide Sultanlar, Hatunlar, Hasekiler, Kadınefendiler, Sultanefendiler*; Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*; Süreyya Bey, *Sicill-i Osmanî*.

festivity.¹⁵⁶ The higher officers all around the Empire, religious leaders, foreign representatives, and other notables were invited to the wedding. Local notables who attended from outside Istanbul were accommodated by various higher officers of Istanbul. Meanwhile, based on the registers of Istanbul's dervish lodges, invitations for the royal festivity were sent to various dervish lodges in Istanbul.¹⁵⁷ Archival records indicate that besides governors, pashas, religious officials and other notables were invited, including the Russian Romanov Czar Nicholas I, the Austrian emperor Franz Joseph, the French king Louis Philippe I, the British emperor William IV, the Prussian king Frederick William III.¹⁵⁸ These invitations might be regarded as an attempt to reach foreign publicity. Additionally, according to Ahmed Lütfi Efendi's chronicle, due to this festive event, a general amnesty for prisoners was declared.¹⁵⁹

As Ahmed Lütfi Efendi indicates, although according to traditional protocol rules marriage ceremonies were held around the gate of imperial harem, the solemnizing ceremony for this wedding was held in the *Hırka-yı Şerif* chamber in

¹⁵⁶ See BOA/HAT, no. 1439/59124, Mirimiran Yusuf İzzet Pasha's letter of thanks for his being invited to the wedding of Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha, dated H. 13 Zilhicce 1249; BOA/HAT, no. 1439/59126B, this document show the registered gifts of four invitees, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1249; BOA/HAT, no. 1439/59127, *Mutasarrıf* of Scopia, Mehmed Yaşar Pasha's letter of thanks for his being invited to the wedding of Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1249; BOA/HAT, no. 1439/59131, *Muhasıl* of Maraş, Süleyman Pasha's letter of thanks for his being invited to the wedding of Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha, dated 29 Zilhicce 1249; BOA/HAT, no.485/23808, a document about writing invitations for the ones who will participate in banquets during the imperial festivities, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1251.

¹⁵⁷ Aynur, *The wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 23.

¹⁵⁸ See BOA/HAT, no. 1165/46114A, the translation of the letter of thanks which was sent by Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Kont Nesselrud, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1251; BOA/HAT, no. 487/23883, the translation of the invitation letter in French which was sent to Russian Empire, dated 29 Zilhicce 1251; BOA/HAT, no. 487/23877, Russian Empire's answer, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1251; BOA/HAT, no. 1208/47370T, King of Prussia's congratulation letter for the weddings of Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha, dated H. 23 Ramazan 1250; BOA/HAT, no. 486/23830, Congratulation letters of Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kont Deslerved and Austrian Charge d'affairs, Mavroyani, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1249.

¹⁵⁹ Ahmed Lütfi Efendi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, Vol. 4-5, 805, 1.140.

Topkapı Palace.¹⁶⁰ This small change in protocol might be regarded as a policy toward changing the traditional protocol spaces. Similar to the other parts of this wedding festivity, the change in the ceremonial space coincided with both a shift in and a preservation of traditional ceremonial spaces, since Topkapı Palace was still the official space of protocol, although the exact place of the solemnizing ceremony was changed. It is important to note that this change in ceremonial space was also noted by the official newspaper, *Takvîm-i Vekâyi*.¹⁶¹

After the solemnizing ceremony that was held on May 1, 1834, Sultan Mahmud II moved from the Çırağan Palace to Beşiktaş Palace on May 24. This move was the indicator of the beginning of the festivities and was celebrated by fireworks. As it is noted, one of the most significant features of festivals is that they are different from an ordinary life moment. In this regard, the festive event usually manipulated space and time; it did so not only by continuing the past forms but also by separating itself from the past as well as the present time.¹⁶² In this regard, at a symbolic level, the Sultan's moving to the festival space might be interpreted as the separation of festival time and space.

The procession of betrothal tokens started from Bab-ı Scraskeri, the slave market, and followed the route of the Divan Road through the St. Sophia and on to Topkapı Palace.¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi Tarihi*, 806.

¹⁶¹ *Takvim-i Vekayi*, no. 82, 6 May 1834, 1, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 22.

¹⁶² See von Geldern, *Bolshevik Festivals: 1917-1920*, 1-13.

¹⁶³ In Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 76, l. 14.

However, the festivities were held at the new palace and around: the Dolmabahçe Seaside Palace and the square around the palace. Saliha Sultan's trousseaus were exhibited to the notable participants in the Dolmabahçe Seaside Palace and the procession of trousseaus followed the route from Ortaköy as far as Neşetabad Palace in Arnavutköy.¹⁶⁴

Ten months after the wedding festivities, Sultanzade Abdülhamid Hafidi Bey, Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha's first child was born in 1835, on March 22.¹⁶⁵ After nine years, Saliha Sultan died on February 5, 1843, and was buried in her father's (Sultan Mahmud II's) shrine. It has been said that Saliha Sultan lived an unhappy life after her father and son's loss and died in sorrow. Her younger sister, Adile Sultan, wrote a poem about her life in misery as well as how she was such a sincere sultan.¹⁶⁶

4.4.2 Mihrimah Sultan and the festival of 1836

Mihrimah Sultan was born on June 6, 1812. Her mother was Hoşyâr Kadıncıfendi, Mahmud II's second wife. Upon Sultan Mahmud II's order, when she was 23 years old, she got engaged to Bursalı Seyyid Sa'id Mehmed Pasha, the Asakir-i Hassa Feriki (lieutenant general) in 1835.

¹⁶⁴ Sakaoglu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları*, 402. Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*, 129.

¹⁶⁵ Sakaoglu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları*, 403.

¹⁶⁶ See Sakaoglu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları*, 403: "One of my sisters, Saliha Sultan/The one who is the shiny-moon like face of the sky of the state/Her dearest mother, Aşûbcan separated desperately from her precious/ Our father, the Sultan bestowed on her/ He married her off to Halil Pasha/ She suffered from secession/ Reproachment upset her wounded hearth/ Her morality was innocent/ The late sultan was quite merciful."

Similar to Saliha Sultan's wedding festivities, Mihrimah Sultan's wedding was among the most glorious festivals in the nineteenth century. As per tradition, the solemnization ceremony was held in the *Hırka-yı Saadet* (Blessed Mantle) chamber in Topkapı Palace; the festivities were held at Dolmabahçe Square and around the Bayıldım Kiosk and ended up in Mihrimah Sultan's palace near the Bosphorus. The wedding festivities lasted more than one week and after that, the circumcision festivities of Şehzade Abdülmecid and Abdülhamid started in the Ok Meydanı square. Similar to Saliha Sultan's royal wedding festivities, notables from all around the Empire as well as foreign kings and emperors were invited to the festivities. However, it is important to note that the British Emperor rejected the invitation while the others sent representatives as well as letters of thanks.¹⁶⁷

Mihrimah Sultan's fate was similar to that of Saliha Sultan. First of all, her husband Sa'id Pasha was exiled to Bursa in 1837. It has been said that Mihrimah Sultan suffered so much from this exile that after two years, she died while she was giving birth. Reportedly, she was suffering from tuberculosis. She was buried at her grandmother's (Nakşidil Valide Sultan's) shrine in the Fatih district. Mahmud II had a fountain constructed on behalf of his daughter in 1838. On the inscription, written a poem by Rûfi indicates the date of her death.¹⁶⁸ Upon her unexpected loss Adile Sultan wrote a poem about the unfortunate life of Mihrimah Sultan as well.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ See HAT 1181 46638; HAT 1181 46645.

¹⁶⁸ Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülküm Kadın Sultanları*, 403: "Bende Rûfi söyledi bir beyt ile/ Mısra'm da tarih oldu 'ayan/Üyledi bu dilcû çeşmeyi/Mihrimah Sultan-çün Mahmud Han."

¹⁶⁹ Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülküm Kadın Sultanları*, 404: "Ol ikinci kardeşim sultan âh-Nur-i kalbim çeşm-i cânım Mihrümâlu/Hacc Hüşyâr Kadınânın mâderi- Babamızın hem ikinci hem-seri/Ânı da Mahmud Han etdi atâ- Bende-i hassı Sa'id Paşaya ta/İlaftalarca sür ü ienlik edüb- Duhterin gönüln alun memnun edüb/Çünkü çok gördü felek bu halcri- Ol meydâna saldı nâr-ı firkati/Hastalandı oldu mâncendi hilal/Anlaşıldı geldi vakt-i irtihal/Âkıbet civân iken ol bedr-i tâb/Münhasif oldu yerin etdi turâb."

The following section will attempt to trace the changing practices of performing the state in the nineteenth century, but it will attempt also to explore the ways in which the traditional forms were used, re-used and re-defined in terms of the wedding ceremonies of the princesses:

4.5 Changes in the performative power of the state through royal wedding festivals

4.5.1 Changes in the festival spaces

Although the celebrations have been taking place all around the empire, the center for all the festivities obviously was the capital, Istanbul. However, some important festivities such as the 1675 festival were held in Edirne due to the moving of the Palace's household to Edirne. In Istanbul, the places of celebrations have varied throughout history. In the nineteenth century, although many changes took place in the processions and the spaces of celebrations, some important classical areas of celebrations were preserved.

Built between 196 BC and 203 AD, the Hippodrome (*At Meydanı*) was the main square of the city. The main festivities, sport performances, and all other shows were held in this square, especially until the early seventeenth century. Moreover, the Divanyolu (Road of the Imperial Council), the main avenue from Topkapı Palace to the Hippodrome, was the major processional artery of the city.¹⁷⁰ However, after the

¹⁷⁰ And, *40 Gün 40 Gece*, 46.

mid-seventeenth century, the coasts of Bosphorus and Golden Horn started to be used for the major festivities.¹⁷¹

After the mid-seventeenth century, the hills of Dolmabahçe, Okmeydanı, Kağıthane, İbrahim Ağa Fields, Kuşdili Fields, Beykoz, as well as Veliefendi started being used for major festivities.¹⁷² During the Tulip Age in particular, Kağıthane, Okmeydanı and the coasts of Haliç gained importance. For instance, the festival of 1720 took taken place on the hills of Haliç and Okmeydanı simultaneously.¹⁷³

On the other hand, when the newly established Beşiktaş Scaside Palace became the residence of the imperial household in the 1830's, the venues of the festivities moved to the places near this imperial residence.¹⁷⁴ Constructing various summer mansions and small palaces on the two shores of the Bosphorus also made important changes in the celebration spaces. For instance, Dolmabahçe Square, the square near the new palace of Beşiktaş, was the main venue for the festivals of 1834. Moreover, unlike previous festivities that were held in one major center, the nineteenth-century celebrations expanded all throughout the capital. As the author of the festival book of 1836 indicates, the festivities expanded from the main fish market of the city (around Pera) to Topkapı, the Golden Horn, Galata, Tophane, Beşiktaş and the Bosphorus as well as to the other side of Bosphorus, the shores of Üsküdar, and even to Çamlıca.¹⁷⁵ In this respect, the new arteries of the capital, from Pera to the edges of Bosphorus, were added to the festive spaces.

¹⁷¹ Nutku, "Festivities in Atmeydanı," 71-95; 72-73.

¹⁷² Ibid., 72-73.

¹⁷³ *And, 40 Gün 40 Gece*, 46.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 46-47.

¹⁷⁵ Nutku, "Festivities in Atmeydanı," 71-95.

During the spectacles of 1834, while the festival events were being expanded to the whole city, the people were expected—or rather, ordered—to get involved in decorating the city for the festivities.¹⁷⁶ In fact, it was an attempt to have the subjects participate in the festivities in the direction of what the state expected. For this new way of thinking, through this kind of participation in which the limits were drawn deliberately by the state, the subjects of the sultan were being targeted to confirm the power through various symbolic ways. Decorating one's house with candles upon an imperial order may be regarded as one of these symbolic actions.¹⁷⁷

In this regard, it is also important to point out that changing the square-like celebrations taking place at the ancient center of the city towards the more linear, seaside routes of Bosphorus also indicates an important aspect of the spectacular state. To hold a performance in a square inevitably requires more engagement with the audience. However, it may not be wrong to argue that a linear route of procession pushes the audience to the sides of the road and therefore cuts the audience's communication vis-à-vis the procession itself. Hence, the processions' being related more to visibility derives also from this spatial arrangement.

Another aspect of the ceremonial spaces is that they are the memorial sites of the city, which encapsulate an organic relationship between the space, the performance, and the memory, as Lefebvre and Nora argue in different

¹⁷⁶ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 191.

¹⁷⁷ *Lehîb Surnamesi*, I. 33a-33b, quoted from Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri*: “Zikr olunan çar-şenbe gününün ahşamı ve sur-ı hümayunun ikinci penc-şenbe gicesinden bed' ile sur-ı zîfâf-ı mcymenet-ittisafın gayetî ve cum'a gicesi sabahına kadar asitane-i 'aliyye hısı ebvabından Bahk Pazarı kapusundan saray-ı vala-yı hümayun-ı şahanenin Topkapusına ve Halic-i sur ve Galata ve Top-hane ve Beşiktaş ve Boğaziçi'nin yemin ü yesarı ve Üskudar sevahili ve Çamlıca 'Tağı bi'l cümle ve ca-bc-ca veralarda olan mahalleler enva-i eşkal-i zibende-i hatır-rüba ve gına-gün rüsum-i bedi'a-i dil-güşalar ibda' u icadıyla bir derece tezyin olundu.”

terminologies.¹⁷⁸ Therefore, to change a ceremonial space also means an attempt to replace both its place in the collective memory and its performativity. Moving away from the historical ceremonial spaces, in this regard, refers to the changing perception of the state towards its traditional memorial sites. Here it may not be wrong to claim that this change is also related to modernizing the state with its all devices.

Taking into consideration all these points discussed above, one might argue that the choice of the festival places might be regarded as symbolic acts of the sovereign. Through these symbolic manners, the ruler may perform his power relying on both tradition and renovation, as Mahmud II did. On the other hand, to claim a power upon all these places of festivities through imperial orders and instructions was another sign of the dramatic nature of the state. With these instructions, the state attempted to maintain the order of every single sequence of the ceremonies as well as to control every act of the participants.

4.5.2 Changes in performances

And refers to four major types of traditional performances: the folk performance tradition, the popular performance tradition, the court performance tradition and performance in the Western tradition.¹⁷⁹ Wedding and circumcision festivities belonged both to the popular performance and the court performance tradition. Traditional popular performance was a distinct genre, based primarily in large cities, especially in Istanbul, for an urban middle-class audience. And claims that the

¹⁷⁸ See Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," 7-24; Nield, "Siting the People," 219-232.

¹⁷⁹ And, "Traditional Performances," 982-1007.

traditional court performances were not individualized or distinctive performances and they primarily imitated the popular performance tradition. However, court performances were not limited to the palace and to entertain the royal household. In fact, many of the court ceremonies such as the accession of a new ruler, the birth of a new prince or princesses, circumcisions or weddings and so forth were performed outside the palace as well and were aimed at amusing both the palace household and the ordinary people.¹⁸⁰

The Ottoman festivities generally included parades, giant-size puppet displays, illuminations, fireworks, equestrian games and hunting, as well as dancing, music, poetic recitations, theatrical performances, shadow theatre, and performances by jugglers, mountebanks and buffons.¹⁸¹ In this section, I aim to explore changes in the performances in nineteenth-century celebrations.

For the festivities of 1834, Rıf'at, the author of *Gülşen-i Hurremi/Sûrnâme-i Rıf'at*, allocated different sections for every single sequence of the performances, classifying them by using different subtitles: "Description of musicians and singers" (*Der-Ta'rif-i Hanendegan u Sazendegan*), "description of dancers" (*Der-Ta'rif-i Rakkasan*), "description of male dancers" (*Der-Beyan-ı Kuçekçıyan*), and "description of acrobats" (*Der-Ta'rif-i Can-bazan*), "description of jugglers" (*Der-Ta'rif-i Hokkabazan*), "description of various fireworks" (*Der-Ta'rif-i Enva-i Fiyenk*), description of candle displays (*Der-Ta'rif-i Donanma-yı Kandil*).¹⁸²

As it is indicated above, for the description of the acrobats, jugglers, and all kinds of dancers, the author of *Gülşen-i Hurremi*, Rıf'at, follows a pattern of listing

¹⁸⁰ And, "Traditional Performances," 983.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 984.

¹⁸² *Surname-i Rıf'at*, 1.10a-14a, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony Of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 53-55.

the names of the performers, as well as listing their forms of performance. However, since it is a rather short account of the festivities of 1834, *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad*, does not cover as many performances as *Gülşen-i Hurremi* does. On the other hand, it is important to note that, as And also points out, *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad* is the first *sûrnâme* that mentions an entertainment staged in the middle place (*Orta oyunu*) as a separate genre of dramatical displays.¹⁸³ Since *Orta oyunu* was included in the performances of previous festivities with different forms, it may be argued that this is aimed at a different kind of audience in the festivities as well as different yet crystalized genres of performances in the early nineteenth century.¹⁸⁴

The *sûrnâmes* about the festival of 1836 follow a similar pattern. However, the descriptions of the performances were given in more detail in the *sûrnâme* than in prose style, *Sûrnâme-i Lebîb*. Lebîb Efendi recounts various shows of acrobats that were held in Dolmabahçe Square. Each day of festivities, famous local and Persian, French, and Austrian acrobats performed their shows. For every reception, a group of musicians and singers performed their repertoire.

Fireworks were another important component of the festival performances. For the festival of 1836, all Istanbul was decorated with candles, firebrands and mosque illuminations (*mahyas*). Moreover, many decorated floats with fireworks displayed in the sea near Beşiktaş Palace and the Neçetabad seaside mansion. As Claridge notes, "some of the boats presented sea-horses, — others, dolphins,

¹⁸³ *Surname-i Es'ad*, I, 88, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony Of Saliha Sultan, 1834*: "Leb-i etraf-nişin-i meydan/ Oldu orta oyunundan handan."

¹⁸⁴ I owe this term, "genres-in-progress," to Arzu Öztürkmen's article "Orality and Performance in Late Medieval Turkish Texts: Epic Tales, Hagiographies, and Chronicles," 327-345.

carriages, and various other fanciful forms...¹⁸⁵ Another important part of the traditional performances, giant-size castles, and displaying a certain war scene were displayed in various days of festivities.

Bufoen-like security guards (*tulumcus*) were another important part of traditional performative elements of the Ottoman festivities. Although the state took control of the festivities in many different modern devices, *tulumcus*, who walked among the performers and the public while carrying inflated leather skins in their hands, were in charge of keeping the distance between the audience and performers. Pardoe describes these buffoon-like security guards as follows:

“...Among the crowd was a mob led by a clown. They wore caps made of sheepskin and three ornaments made of the foxtail. Their clothes were sewn of curried leather. These men were in an attempt to draw back the public in order to maintain the social order and they were running all around. All were like bandits. Each was dressed in his own style. Their thick long moustaches and their curly hair seen at the very bottom of their caps, added to their wild appearance...”¹⁸⁶

As illustrated above, while the various performances were being preserved during the festivals of 1834 and 1836, Westernization of the state was reflected in the festivities as well. Introduction to the military band and national anthem in these festivities might be regarded as signs of these changes. However, performances of traditional dancers, acrobats, jugglers, as well as bufoons, although in different forms, were preserved in the Mahmudian state's festivities.

¹⁸⁵ Claridge, *A Guide along the Danube: From Vienna to Constantinople, Smyrna, Athens, the Morea, the Ionian Islands, and Venice: From the Notes of a Journey Made in the Year 1836*, 157.

¹⁸⁶ In Nutku, “Major Festivities Organized during the Reign of Mahmud II,” 829–40, 833.

4.5.2.1 The modernization of musical performances

In a festival book of 1834, namely in Rıf'at's *sûrnâme*, the parts describing musicians included the names of the musicians and singers as well as which types of melodies (*makams*) were played during the performances. In each musical gathering the types of instruments that were played are also listed in Rıf'at's festival book of 1834. Moreover, in these festival books, it is seen that Western contemporary musical forms were included in the performances in both the festival of 1834 and 1836.¹⁸⁷ In Rıf'at's festival book, it is also mentioned that European-inspired forms of music were also played in the festivities of 1834.¹⁸⁸

The modernization process of Ottoman music was started during the reign of Selim III (r. 1789-1807) who was a well-known composer (he invented a *makam* as well; *suzidilara*) and a *ney* player himself. Moreover, he commissioned an Armenian composer, Baba Hapsarsum Limonciyan, to create a notation system for Ottoman music. Selim III's attempts were carried out by his successor Mahmud II as well. After the abolition of the Janissary army in 1826, the classical military band of the army, the *mehter*, was replaced by the *Muzika-i İlimayun*, the Imperial Band. Guiseppe Donizetti, a well-known Italian composer, was invited to Istanbul to train European-style musicians, and to organize a military band. Mahmud II also commissioned Donizetti to write a national anthem.¹⁸⁹ Therefore, the first national anthem of the empire, the *Mahmudiye Marşı*, became the official anthem of the Empire for eleven years. In this respect, as an encapsulated form of cultural

¹⁸⁷ See Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*; Arslan, *Osmanlı saray düğünleri ve şenlikleri* 4-5.

¹⁸⁸ *Surname-i Rıf'at*, I, 185, "Geh mars gchi alafranga/Düzd-i gama urdular pranga," quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 53.

¹⁸⁹ Signel, "The Modernization Process in Two Oriental Music Cultures: Turkish and Japanese," 72-102; 74.

performances, the national anthem and the newly founded imperial military band became major participants of the festivities of 1834. The introduction of these modern genres of music, therefore, might well illustrate how the state's ideology affected the organization of the festivities.

4.5.2.2 From guild parades to procession-centered performances

Especially before the nineteenth century, guild parades were among the most important sequences of the Ottoman festivities. Before the departure of the army for a military campaign, for the reception of a certain foreign ambassador, for a victory celebration or a court festivity for a royal circumcision or weddings, these guild parades were held.¹⁹⁰ As Procházka-Eisl indicates, "besides their aspect as a time for amusement and change in the daily life of the masses, these parades were a good opportunity for the government to obtain a general view of its economic reserves and also to demonstrate economic power and wealth to representatives of foreign, mostly European states."¹⁹¹

Until the eighteenth century, guild parades, performing every single guild's talent during the procession, were among the popular performing acts. The festival of 1582 and the festival of 1720 were famous for their guild parade performances. The author of the *Sûrnâme-i Hümayun*, İntizamî, and the author of *Sûrnâme-i Vehbi*, Vehbi, described these parades in detail.

Vehbi, in his *sûrnâme*, mentions the beginning of the parades on the sixth day, when the procession of artisans began in a hierarchical order and ended on the twelfth day. The farmers, barbers, bread makers, jewel makers, shoemakers and so

¹⁹⁰ Procházka-Eisl, "Guild Parades in Ottoman Literature: The *Sûrnâme* of 1582," 41-54, 41.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

forth attended the festival by displaying all their talent while they were passing through the festival area. While describing the procession of artisans, Vehbî adds some lines that refer to a relevant story or a proverb about their groups. In this respect, while the farmers were passing, he described their processions with the lines “Utlubu’r-rızka fı habâya’l-arzı”,¹⁹² which means that the one should search the basic substances of the earth on the grains. Or else, for their greeting of Sultan, he says that “Selam-ı rüstâyî bî- garaz nîst”,¹⁹³ meaning it is not a coincidence that the peasant greets someone worth greeting.

On the other hand, especially for the narrative of the eighth day of ceremonies (the processions), Vehbi says that every artisan guild sang a song or poem while they were passing. These songs or poems were very much like the *mani* genre of the folk literature tradition.¹⁹⁴ In fact, until at least the eighteenth century, there was a strong connection between the guild parades and the oral tradition as well as with the socio-political circumstances of the given period. Therefore, it may be argued that the organization of the guild parades, first and foremost, represented the state’s economic control over its urban subjects. In this regard, it may be said that the guild parades were the mediators between state’s power and the tradition that they belonged to.

The guild parades first included the festival performances with the festival of 1582. As Terzioğlu indicates, the introduction of the guild parades were a reflection

¹⁹² Tulum, *Sûrnâme: Sultan Ahmet’in Düğün Kitabı*, 556.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 557.

¹⁹⁴ For instance, for the bakery artisans: “Furun gibi ne acib nar-ı aşka yansak biz/Görünce ol bîit-i habbazı aldık etmeğimiz,” quoted from Tulum, *Sûrnâme: Sultan Ahmet’in Düğün Kitabı*, 559. Or elsewhere, for the barbering artisans: “Âb-rûy-ı düde-i Selâmân-ı Pâk/Çeşmi satl-ı berber-âsâ gırye-nâk/Ser-tıraşım sığayup nâz ile sîmîn bileğın/Müşterîsiyle gelip bir yere verdi dılcğın,” in Tulum, *Sûrnâme: Sultan Ahmet’in Düğün Kitabı*, 562-563.

of the gradual strengthening of the guilds as the intermediary institution between the artisans and the state.¹⁹⁵ Although there were a lot of formal differences between major guild processions until the end of the eighteenth century, the basic symbolic acts of these parades were similar: to express the powerful relations between the state and the urban artisanship, or in other words, the economic growth.

Later on, during the nineteenth century, the focus of festivities changed and other kinds of performances gained importance.¹⁹⁶ During the first major festivities of the nineteenth century, for instance in the festival of 1834, there was no mention in the festival books about guild parades or receptions for the representatives of the certain artisan guilds. None of the three *sûrnâme* that recorded the festival refers to any kind of guild appearance.¹⁹⁷

For the festival of 1836, Lebib Efendi does not mention any of these guild parades, either. However, Lebib only mentions that the representatives of certain guilds were invited to the banquets of the ceremonies. Lebib Efendi listed 167 artisan guilds that were invited the festivities. Similar to the invitees in Lebib's account, it is mentioned which guild representative would stay with which court member in detail.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Terzioğlu, "The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation," 84-100, 90.

¹⁹⁶ Procházka-Eisl, "Guild Parades in Ottoman Literature," 41.

¹⁹⁷ See Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*; Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri*, 4-5.

¹⁹⁸ *Surname-i Lebib*, l. 116b-117a, quoted from Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri*, 4-5, 170: "Sur-ı mes'adet-mevfur-ı hitana der-sa'adetde ka'in bi'l-cümle esnaf ve ehl-i hırcı kethüda ve sahib-karlarının da'vet olunmaları usul-i sabıka-i müstahsene-i mcr'iyeden olmagla, sur-i hitanın altıncı ve mah-ı muharrremü'l-haramın yügürmü tokuzuncı günü bedestan kethüdası Ömer Ağa, sandal bedestanı kethüdası Mehmed Ağa, bedesten-i atik ikinci kethüdası ağa, sahhaflar şeyhi efendi, simkeş-hane emini Es'ad Efendi, kağıdıbaşı Fasih Efendi, devletlü ser-Asker paşa hazretlerinin haymelerine..."

As indicated above, Mahmud II's centralization policies influenced the long-standing relationship between the state and the guilds. Following the abolition of the Janissaries in 1826, the artisan guilds had started to lose their power like the other notables of the society such as provincial elites and tribal leaders. By doing so, the Mahmudian state attempted to eliminate any kind of intermediaries between the state and the society in order to establish direct control over the people. Guilds were self-protective urban groups that dominate the economic activities all around the empire. Especially before the severe economic crises of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was a relationship based on mutual interest between the state and the guilds. However, the guilds' restricting the production and controlling the prices especially during the periods of economic crisis obliterated the ties irrecoverably.¹⁹⁹ Mahmud II's agenda to control the state's economic power, in this regard, conflicted with the semiautonomous structure of the guilds as well. Therefore, the Mahmudian state took many precautions to increase control over the guilds. Therefore, parallel to the changes in this relationship, the guild parades disappeared from royal weddings.

In this regard, the absence of the guild parades was not an unexpected phenomenon for the festivities that were being held during the 1830's. It may be argued that this was a conscious result of the dissolved relationship between the state and the guilds. In the 1830's, the Mahmudian state was re-defining itself as the one and only power over its subjects and it did not intend to share it with any kind of intermediaries. Due to the fact that the strong ties between the state and the urban guilds were severed, it is not surprising that the glorious artisan processions organized between sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in order to reflect the harmonious relations between the state and the urban class were absent in the

¹⁹⁹ See for further discussion Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*, 63-65.

nineteenth century. However, the representatives of the guilds were invited to the banquets of the festivities. This may be regarded as a new kind of symbolic act of re-invented traditions of the state. Before the nineteenth century, the guilds were the active performers of the festivities, they were performing their talents, and they were reflecting either their satisfaction or dissatisfaction about the sovereign through various symbolic ways. However, with the festivals of 1834 and 1836, they turned into passive guests that had to confirm the performativity of the state.

Moreover, while the parades were being abolished, the processions gained visibility in the nineteenth century. In this regard, the organization of a variety of processions such as the procession of betrothal tokens (*Alay-ı nişan*), the procession of trousseau (*alay-ı cihaz*), and bridal processions (*alay-ı arus*) became part and parcel of that new agenda bearing a new kind of visibility and accessibility of the imperial grandeur.²⁰⁰ In this regard, Claridge describes a procession that the Sultan himself attended for the festivities of 1836 as follows:

“The Sultan had a phaeton, with four small chesnut horses, which he drove about the grounds of his palace at Beshicktash, whither the ladies of his Harems were taken in covered wagons, of a hearse-like form, having windows on each side, gilt in a most extravagant manner. Each vehicle was drawn by a pair of oxen, gaudily caroused, with small looking glasses in their foreheads. Four sultanas rode in each wagon, and were guarded by as many eunuchs...”²⁰¹

Here it is important to underline that the changes in performances from parades to processions may well illustrate the change in the performativity of the state from a carnivalesque performance towards a spectacular one since the processions were related to visibility rather than active engagement of the audience.

²⁰⁰ See also, And, *Istanbul in the 16th Century: The City, the Palace, Daily Life; 40 Days and Nights: Ottoman Weddings and Processions*.

²⁰¹ Claridge, *A Guide along the Danube*, 158.

As it is mentioned above, in the parades of earlier centuries, there was a more equal relationship between the state and the guilds, since the guilds were able to convey their own message to the state as well. However, processions were to be watched rather than to be participated in. Procession as a spectacular subgenre, therefore, does allow the state to manipulate the communication vis-à-vis the audience. For this reason, it may be argued that the above-mentioned processions organized in the given royal weddings turned into strategic apparatuses of the spectacular state of Mahmud II.

4.5.3 Changes in devices of maintaining order

Ottoman protocol was based mainly on traditional rules that were maintained by the chief of ceremonies (*teşrifatçı*) and recorded in protocol registers (*teşrifat defterleri*). The chief of ceremonies was in charge of recording all the ceremonies including accounts of all expenses, royal gifts such as the ceremonial *kaftans* presented as gifts as well as other presents sent by the sultan. The *teşrifatçı* who was attached to *Divan-ı Hümayun* had to organize all the rules of the protocol and maintain the order of the state ceremonies of every kind.²⁰² The rules that maintain the relationship between the sovereign and officials as well as other participants were based on a strict hierarchy and rank. However, ceremonies are not unchanging performances. In this regard, protocol registers recorded not only the information about the correct version of a particular ceremony but also the possible changes and mistakes. Therefore, the

²⁰² See for further discussion Atasoy, "Processions and Protocol in Ottoman Istanbul," 169-195.

changes in necessities and political strategies led to the changes in protocol throughout the history of the dynasty.²⁰³

In the festivities of 1834 and 1836, it might be said that the rules of protocols emphasized the performative power of the state. For instance, the letter of exhortations (*Tembihnames*) that was published in *Takvim-i Vekayi* represented this emergent understanding of maintaining order. The state had started to maintain the protocol order by a new apparatus: the official newspaper. Publishing in the official newspaper those rules that every participant of the festivities should obey was a modern phenomenon. It meant that the state maintained the order not only by laws, *firman*s, and protocol registers but also a certain kind of propaganda tool that a wider audience might be reached.²⁰⁴ Archival records documented all the participants that were invited to those festivities by royal invitation. However, publishing the list of invitees in the official newspaper was another reflection of how the Mahmudian State was using modern state tools and combining them with traditional ones. On the other hand, festival books written for the festivities of 1834 and 1836 included certain details about these imperial admonitions. The *sûrnâmes* written in prose form, specifically the *sûrnâme* of the 1834 festivities written by an unknown author and *Sûrnâme -i Lebîb* of the 1836 festival might, in this regard, aim to reach a rather different audience, and eventually reflected an aim of propaganda of the state.

In this regard, it might not be wrong to say that the Mahmudian state employed both the traditional forms of protocol such as *teşrifat* registers, imperial decrees, and newly emergent modern apparatuses such as newspaper instructions,

²⁰³ See Karateke, *An Ottoman Protocol Register*, 5.

²⁰⁴ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*; "Saliha Sultan'ın Doğum Törcü ve Şenlikler," 30-39.

and festival books. Similar to the other aspects of the festivities of the Mahmudian state, it is important to note that the rules of protocol were important reflections how the state used the traditional forms and re-invented and re-defined them.

Moreover, the orders were published in the official newspaper of the Empire, the *Takvim-i Vekayi*, and were distributed to the people living in the festival districts separately.²⁰⁵ Moreover, these imperial included instructions about what the participant should do during the festivities. According to these imperial orders of admonition, the participants were expected to behave ethically and politely.²⁰⁶

The bridal procession of 1834 departed from Dolmabahçe Palace toward the Neşat-abad mansion, located in Arnavutköy. Although there was a direct way to Arnavuköy, the bride's residence, they chose a route that went from Dolmabahçe Square to Maçka Barrack, to Nişantaşı, the Balmumcu Farm, Yıldız Palace, and from this place to Maşatlık and Ortaköy and finally Arnavutköy.²⁰⁷ In this imperial instruction published in the *Takvim-i Vekayi*, it was claimed that for over one

²⁰⁵ Aynur, "Saliha Sultan'ın Düğün Töreni ve Şenlikler," 31; See also, *Takvim-i Vekayi*, 6 May 1834 (11. 26 Zilhicce 1249) 82, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*: "... herkes Tolmabağçe meydanından Ortaköy üzerinde olan Maşatlık'a varıncaya kadar alay-ı hümayunun müdür edeceği salifu'z-zikr yolların ctrafi olan vasi' mahaller ve sahralarda 'ırz ve edebleriyle turup zinhar ve zinhar mahallat arasında kaldırım üzerinde ve tar olan yerlerde turmamaları cümlelerin ma'lumu olmak için her bir mahallat imamları mahallesi ahaliherinc anladip gereği gibi ifade ve telhim cylemeleri zımında işbu tenbihname tab'u temsil ve neşr ü i'lan olundi. Her kim mugayyiri hareket ederse günah ve vebali boynundadır..."

²⁰⁶ *Takvim-i Vekayi*, 6 May 1834 (H. 26 Zilhicce 1249) no. 82, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 190: "... ve saye-i şevket-vaye-i hazret-i şahanece işbu sur-i pür-sürur-i hümayuna bi't-tekrar müdavemet cylemek üzre zükur ve inasdan küçük ve büyük oyun mahallerine gelip ırz ve edebleriyle olarak seyr ü temaşa cylemeleri..."

²⁰⁷ See *Takvim-i Vekayi*, 6 May 1834, no. 81, 1, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 191: "Beşiktaş saray-ı hümayundan kerime-i mükerreme-i cenab-ı mülükhanec devletlü ismetlü sultan-ı aliyyeti'ş-şan hazretlerinin Ortaköy ilçesinde vaki Neşat-abad nam saraylarına nakl ü isal olunacak cihaz-ı vala-tırazları ve gerek bi'z-zat teşrif-i ismet-redifleri için tertib buyurulan cihaz ve arus alay-ı valaları bi mennihi ta'ala Beşiktaş saray-ı hümayunundan Tolmabağçe meydanından kır yoluyla Maçka Kışla-yı hümayunu ve İhlamur'un üst tarafında Nişantaşı pişhahından mürur ile Okmeydanı ve Kağıthane yolları sol tarafla kalarak togruca Balmumcu Çilligi önünden ve Yıldız Kasr-ı Hümayunu arkasında olan yoldan geçilip ondan dahi Ortaköy üzerinde olan Maşatlık önünden gûzar birle Ortaköy'e inilip Ortaköy deresi köprüsünden ve hamam pişhahından geçilerek Neşat-abad saray-ı muallasına gidilmesi hususların irade-i seniye-i hazret-i cihandari müte'allik buyurulmuştur."

hundred years, with reference to the Tulip age festivities, no festivities took place on such grand scale as the festival of 1834 and the route of the procession was expanded in order to make more people participated in appreciating the Sultan's favor.²⁰⁸ The instructions were also to provide security for the processions. The audiences of the processions were expected to obey certain rules: not to block the route, to stay on the sidewalks, not to make unnecessary noise and so forth. Otherwise, it added that regardless of their gender, the audience would be punished by the state.²⁰⁹

These instructions published in the official newspaper, first and foremost aimed to control the audience's participation of the festivities. On the other, they were reflections of the ways in which the state exercised power over the subjects through these festivities. In this regard, these royal festivities were not the festivals where all the roles between state and its subjects were turned upside down. Rather, the state itself, as it is discussed above, achieved to control the dynamics of the festivities in order to convey the exact message that it desired: the glory of the state.

Maintaining the order at the festivals was not limited to the audiences. The invitees for particular ceremonies, namely the various notables from all around the Empire had to obey the rules as well. Because it was not possible to have all of the

²⁰⁸ See *Takvim-i Vekayi*, 6 May 1834, no. 81, 1, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 191: "Cümle ile malum olduğu üzere Beşiktaş'dan Ortaköy ve daha ilerilere togruca gidiliyor asl-ı cadde var iken alay-ı mezkurların zikr olunan veçhile tolaşdırılması çünkü cedd-i emcedleri cennet-mekan Sultan Ahmed Han hazretlerinin zaman-ı saltanatlarında işbu avaz-ı sa'd-iktirana gelince yüz seneden berü işbu sur-ı feyz-i mefur-ı hümayunun bu veçhile vuku'ı olmayıp bu madde-i mücerred veli-nimet bi-minnetimiz veli-nimet-i alem-i şevket-me'ab efendimiz hazretlerine ve saye-i zilliyet-vaye-i mülükhanelerinde mustazill olan kullara Allah-ı azimetü's-şanın bir ihsanı olduğuna şübhe olmadığından bu ihsan-ı celilin şükürünü eda zmnında herkes memnun ve mesrur olarak sur-ı pür-sürur-ı hümayunun ve alay-ı vala-yı mezkurlarını ziyaret ve tamaşasında rağbet edecekler..."

²⁰⁹ Quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834*, 192: "İşbu tenbihden hariç hareket ile zukaclar ve mahallat arasında haldırım üzerinde turarak gelip geçecek erbab-ı resm-i alaya çaparazlık vermeğe cccaret eyler ise her kim olur ise olsun gerek crkek ve gerek nisa zabitan taraflarından ahz ve kangı mahalle ahalisinden olduğu tahkik olunup gerek ol şahs ve gerek mahallesinin imam ve muhtaramı te'dib olunacaklar..."

guests over in one day and the festivities would last longer, it was an obligation to arrange the receptions day by day and guest by guest. Therefore, for the festival of 1836, reminders were sent to every guest about the details of the ceremonies.²¹⁰

On the other hand, while the wedding festivities took place at the Bosphorus both in the festival of 1834 and 1836, the circumcisions were still held in former festival places such as Okmeydanı and Kağıthane. This was another reflection of both re-invention of the tradition and re-defining it. In other words, while some festival practices changed such as the places of the festivities for the wedding ceremonies, others had been preserved as in the case of circumcision ceremonies that were still held in the traditional festival spaces. The other reason why traditional festival places such as Kağıthane and Okmeydanı were still in use during the Mahmudian state may have been to celebrate and remind people about the glorious eighteenth-century festivities in order to claim sovereignty over this tradition.

4.5.4 The representation of women

In many ways, princesses of the Ottoman dynasty had more privileges and freedom compared to other women of the imperial household. A certain princess could go outside of the *harem* easily, she had right to visit the wife of a certain vizier, she could accept visitors and, more importantly, she could have her own residential palace once she married.²¹¹

²¹⁰See *Surname - i Lehib*, I, 25a-25b, quoted from Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri*, 4-5, 81: "... davetli ve fi'l-asl mevcut olan vüzera-yı izam ve meşayih-i kiram ve ulema-yı a'lam hazeratı zikri ati eyyam-ı surun yevm ü sa'atlerine taksim ile davet olunmaları için ibarat-ı fasiha ve tabirat-ı meliha ile her birlerine yevm ü sa'at-i da'vetlerinin izahıyla sükkerin-i mütala'ası halavate-bahş-ı za'ika-i istibşar ve her bir harfî mczak-ı şadmanide kand-i mükerrerden bir-ter leziz ü hoş-güvar, 'alamratibihim tezkireler tahrir ve ol ntvîd-i beşaret memurlar yediyle mahallerine tesyir olundu."

²¹¹ Davis, *Osmanlı Hanımı: 1718'den 1918'e Bir Toplumsal Tarih*, 29-36.

Princesses' marriages had always been a tool of political power of the dynasty. As discussed above, after beginning to marry off the princesses to viziers and other important statesmen, the Ottoman sovereign guaranteed the loyalty of the imperial bridegrooms. Moreover, as Peirce indicates, "the weddings of princesses helped to fill the ceremonial gap left by the absence of wedding ceremonies of the sultan and princes, who by the end of the fifteenth century no longer contracted marriage. While royal weddings of this period were not intended primarily to enhance the status of princesses, the latter inevitably enjoyed greater influence on their fathers, mothers, brothers, and husbands because of the vital political links forged by their marriages."²¹²

On the other hand, celebrating a female member of the dynasty as a large-scale festivity reflected a change in the representation preferences of the imperial household. As it is discussed above, during the period of Ahmed III, the female members of the dynasty started to play an important role in the public image of the sultan. Building seaside mansions on the shores of the Bosphorus for one certain princess and upon her death, reassigning that mansion to another one, as an "official residence" was an important sign of this change.²¹³ As Faroqhi indicates, "unlike the female partners of the sultans who lived in the palace and had few contacts with the outside world, some of the married daughters and sisters of eighteenth or nineteenth-century sultans were thus able to create a public persona for themselves."²¹⁴

²¹² Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, 68.

²¹³ See for further discussion, Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*, 2-23; Artan, "Boğaziçi'nin Çehresini Değiştiren Soylu Kadınlar ve Sultancendi Sarayları," 109-118; "Gender Problems of Legalism and Political Legitimation in the Ottoman Empire," 169-180; Faroqhi "Women in the Ottoman World: Mid-18th to Early 20th Century," 153-163, 155.

²¹⁴ Faroqhi, "Women in the Ottoman World," 155.

Claridge (c. 1797-1857), a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, confirms this changing perception on the representation of the female members of the imperial household in his account, *A Guide Along the Danube from Vienna to Constantinople*.²¹⁵

Harems are no longer state prisons; the fair inmates are allowed to walk out at pleasure, and to adorn themselves with jewelry. On the marriage of the Sultan's daughter with Ali Pasha, Mahmood pledged himself that the male issue should no longer be destroyed, and that the princess should not be forced to leave the capital after three years, as had previously been the barbarous custom.²¹⁶

They acted as patronesses of the arts and they established pious foundations. For instance, Fatma Sultan, daughter of Ahmed III, constructed a *medrese* in Eyüp. In the mid-nineteenth century, Hüseyar Hatun, mother of Mihrimah Sultan, established a *medrese* for the memories of Mihrimah and Zeynep Sultans.²¹⁷

Moreover, in the nineteenth century, marrying off child princesses to older members of the court was abolished. Mahmud II's daughters Saliha Sultan and Mihrimah Sultan were married off to relatively younger royal bridegrooms Halil Rif'at Pasha and Mehmed Sa'id Pasha, respectively. Moreover, it is important to note that these two princesses were over 22 years old when they married the above-mentioned pashas. On the other hand, it is reported that the princesses had started to express their preferences about the candidates. It is said that Mihrimah Sultan decided to approve her marriage with Sa'id Pasha after she saw a picture of him.²¹⁸

Furthermore, for the wedding festivities of Saliha and Mihrimah Sultans, it was seen that women had gained a relative visibility. The women members of the

²¹⁵ Claridge, *A Guide along the Danube*, 135-136.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, *A Guide along the Danube*, 135.

²¹⁷ Fanny Davis, *Osmanlı Hanımı*, 241.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

dynasty and their household attended all the processions of the wedding at various times. These instances might be regarded as modernization processes of the Empire, which affected and enhanced the status of the royal princesses, which was far better than that of other household members of the dynasty.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter was a modest attempt on how the early nineteenth-century Ottoman state might be explored as performance. In this regard, it has been argued that the state ideology was encapsulated in the forms of performance. In other words, the state represented itself through royal wedding festivities. However, the dominant form of the state's performativity in these wedding festivities was spectacle since a spectacle as a meta-genre allowed the state to convey its very message by manipulating audience participation. In this regard, first of all, changing the traditional places of the ceremonies from the square-centered celebrations of the Hippodrome to the more linear route from Beşiktaş Palace to Neşetabad, which is more suitable for procession-centered performances, allowed the state to impose direct control over the audience. In accordance with the procession-centered public display, the disappearance of guild parades in the festivities was another significant change in these royal festivities. The lack of guild parades also obstructed the participation in favor of direct state control. Publishing festival orders in the official newspaper and distributing them to the people living along the festival route were other modern control devices of the state, which it employed through these royal festivities. Changes in performances such as the introduction of a national anthem and instrumenting a modern military band instead of the traditional *mehter* band also

affected the ways in which the celebratory patterns of the state were represented through these festive events.

Regarding these changes, it is important to conclude that modern and centralized state of Mahmud II might be interpreted as a state of spectacle rather than early modern festive one.

CHAPTER 5

CONTINUITY AND CHANGES IN THE GENRE OF FESTIVAL BOOK:

SÛRNÂMES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

5.1 Introduction

Ottoman festivities were documented in a specific genre named *sûrnâme* (festival book). The word “*sûr*” has a variety of meanings including festival, banquet, wedding and illumination; the word *name*, on the other, means letter or book. The *sûrnâmes* may recount a royal circumcision festival (*sûr-ı hitân*), a royal birth (*vilâdet-i hümayun*) or a royal wedding (*sûr-ı arûs*, *sûr-ı velîme*, or *sûr-ı cihâz*). The tradition of documenting royal festivities in *sûrname* genre dates back to the sixteenth century. Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali’s book on the 1582 festival, *Cami’ül-Buhûr der Mecâlis-i Sûr* (Gatherer of the Seas in the Gatherings of the Festival), is considered the first instance of this genre. The last *sûrnâme* was *sûrnâme-i Selâtin* (The Festival of the Sultans or *Peyâm-ı Sûr*, The news of the Festival), which was written by Nâfi in 1858.²¹⁹

Written either in prose or verse, the festival books documented the major celebrations of the Ottoman realm in a separate genre from the sixteenth century onwards. Depending on their authors’ perspective and personal choices, the festival books recount the given festivities in more detailed way compared to the contemporary historians’ accounts.

As it is discussed in the previous chapters, *sûrnâmes* have attracted many literary scholars. These literary scholars first identified the *sûrnâmes* in various

²¹⁹ See Arslan, *Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Surnâmeler: Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri*, 5.

manuscript libraries of Turkey and Europe and transcribed many of these accounts into modern Turkish. Additionally, these literary historians take the *sûrnâmes* within the broader framework of the literary production in the Ottoman realm. In many ways these scholars contributed immensely to the historians who utilized these sources from a historical perspective.

This chapter intends to pursue a historical approach in examining the literary genre of *sûrnâmes* within the broader framework of the early nineteenth-century cultural currents, particularly during the period of Mahmud II. In doing so, it largely benefits from the approach and contributions of literary scholars, especially Aynur and Arslan. The *sûrnâmes* examined here are chosen from the transcriptions of Aynur and Arslan, respectively. Meanwhile, the literary perspectives of these scholars contributed greatly to the conclusions drawn in this chapter in terms of examining the literary quality of these texts. On the other hand, it might be said that aside from their many contributions, the works of these literary scholars lack a historical perspective. In fact, nineteenth-century *sûrnâmes* have not been taken into consideration within their social, political and cultural contexts. This chapter will, thus, be a modest attempt to take these *sûrnâmes* in accordance with the centralization of the Ottoman state beginning in the period of Mahmud II.

Arslan argues that literary ability had a secondary role in these festival books.²²⁰ Yerasimos, on the other hand, argues that the Ottoman festivities and the literary works that documented those events were two distinct elements that do not completely agree with one another. For Yerasimos, narrating the events had a secondary role in many of the accounts written in *sûrnâme* genre. In fact, he argues

²²⁰ Arslan, *The Kinds, Subject and Nature of the 'Sürname's'*, 45-68; 46.

that documenting the events in a particular stylistic narrative had a major role in those narratives:

“Far more than being an account of a festival however, a *sûrnâme* employs overwrought and adulatory phrasing to highlight (or gloss over) events so as to ensure that they are recorded for history in the most favorable light.”²²¹

When we examine nineteenth-century *sûrnâmes* within the broader framework of these discussions, one might claim that the purpose of documentation preponderates over the literary style. Before the nineteenth century, *sûrnâmes* were considered among the major books of art projects that included artistic and literary representations of the festivities. In the nineteenth century, however, it may be argued that the agenda of documenting the events and praising the state and the sultan became more important than the literary style.

The festivities also started to be recorded in the pages of official newspapers. *Takvîm-i Vekâyî* included the details of the festivities of 1834 and 1836 in different issues. Here it is important to note that the official newspaper started to be published in order to record the historical events as they occurred. Therefore, it carried a rather historical agenda. It may be said that this agenda of documenting the events also coincided with the aim of the *sûrnâmes* of the period. The following news report from *Takvîm-i Vekâyî* on the wedding of Saliha Sultan in 1834 illustrates well that the aims of the *sûrnâmes* and the newspaper intersected with each other:

“Even though it is decided that the *sûrnâme* of this wedding will be written, we give a summary of this wedding.”²²²

²²¹ Yerasimos, “The Imperial Procession: Recreating a World’s Order,” 7-12, 8.

²²² *Takvîm-i Vekâyî*, June 17, 1834, 1: “Sûr-ı hümayûnun keyfiyyet-ı tafsilî bî-mennihi ta’âlâ surnâme olmak üzere müstakilen kaleme alınmak musammem ise de icmâlidir...”

With regard to these discussions, the present chapter will be an attempt to discuss the emergence of the *sûrnâme* tradition in the Ottoman context as well as its evolution in the nineteenth century. By doing so, it aims to focus on how the ideology of the Ottoman state during the period of Mahmud II and this literary tradition intersected and intermingled. Taking into consideration the language and style of nineteenth-century *sûrnâmes*, this present chapter will argue that the practice of recording Ottoman festivities changed in accordance with the changes in the representation of the state during the period of Mahmud II.

In the nineteenth century, there are eight *sûrnâmes* that documented the imperial weddings and circumcision ceremonies: Three of them were written for the wedding of Mahmud II's daughter Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha in 1834. These are the ones written by Mir Alemzade Rifat, Sahhaflar Şeyhizade Mehmed Es'ad Efendi and an unknown author, respectively. The other three *sûrnâmes* were written for the wedding of Mahmud II's daughter Mihrimah Sultan and Mehmed Said Pasha, and also include the circumcision of Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz in 1836. Ruznamçecizade Lebib, Sahhaf Hızri or Hızır and an unknown author were the authors of these festival books. On the other hand, there is another *sûrnâme* that was written for the circumcision of Abdülmecid's princes, Mehmed Murad and Abdülhamid in 1847. The author of this festival book was Tahsin. The last one was written by Nafi for the weddings of Abdülmecid's daughters Cemile and Münire Sultan in 1858. This thesis and this present chapter specifically deal only with the *sûrnâmes* that were written during the Mahmud II's reign. Examining these *sûrnâmes*, therefore, this chapter delves into questioning how the authors of these *sûrnâmes* positioned themselves in the historical context in which they were written.

As a point of departure for the analysis in this chapter, it is essential to mention Auslander's distinction between two categories of documenting performance. For Auslander, performance documentation encompasses both documentary and theatrical dimensions of the performances under consideration. As he indicates, "the documentation of the performance event provides both a record of it through which it can be reconstructed and evidence that it actually occurred."²²³ The connection between the actual performance and the documenting of it reveals that there is an ideological dimension of recording the events. The nineteenth-century festival books that will be examined below reflect this dimension.

In order to illustrate the ways in which the *sûrnâme* genre is represented the political currents of the period of Mahmud II, this chapter first examines how the *sûrnâme* genre came into existence and how it evolved.

5.2 The emergence of the *sûrnâme* as an independent genre: two possible interpretations

Although there were other imperial festivals in the Ottoman realm before the glorious festival in 1582 organized to celebrate the circumcision of Murad III's son Prince Mehmed, beginning with the festival of 1582, a specific genre called *sûrname* (book of the festival) was introduced into the Ottoman literature. For the festival of 1582, the notable historian Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli wrote a long verse called *Cami'ül-Buhûr der-Mecâlis-i Sûr* (Gatherer of the Seas in the Gatherings of the Festival). Mustafa Âli finished this book of festival within six months and presented it to the court in 1583. In fact, in the last lines of the book, Mustafa Âli demonstrated

²²³ Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance," *PAJ* 84 (2006): 1–10, 1.

that before him no one had written a work specifically about festivities in this genre.²²⁴

Moreover, Fleischer refers to a testimonial letter written by the governor of Aleppo, Üveys Pasha to Prince Mehmed seeking patronage for Mustafa Âli. In this letter, Üveys Pasha praises Mustafa Âli for documenting the events of this festival in such a way that the previous historians did not write about.²²⁵ Although we know that Ottoman poets wrote eulogies to gain the patronage of sultans or other elites in the courtly circle, it might be said that Âli's *Cami'ül-Buhûr der Mecâlis-i Sûr* has a different generic structure in terms of its subject. Even though *sûrnâme* as a genre does not differ from other Ottoman literary genres such as *kaside* or *mesnevi* in terms of its formal structure, what makes it different is the choice of subject—its being only about royal festivities.

Interestingly enough, possibly due to the fact that Âli's verse did not attract the expected attention, the official court historiographer (*şehnameci*) of the court, İntizâmî's work, which was written in prose after Âli finished his first manuscript, included an imperial book project called *Sûrnâme -i Hümayun*, which contains more than 400 miniatures illustrated by Nakkaş Osman and his workshop team. In any case, İntizâmî's prose and Mustafa Âli's verse were known as the first instances of the *sûrnâme* genre.

Agâh Sırrı Levend, in his *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi I*, refers to Figanî's "Surriye Kasidesi" (Eulogy for the Festival), which covers the circumcision festival of Süleyman I's sons Princes Mustafa, Mehmet, and Selim as the first prototype for the

²²⁴ Quoted from Arslan, *Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sûrnâmeler*, 588-589: "Kimse bu resme bir eser komadı/Sûr için nazm-ı mu'teber komadı/ Ki bunuñ gibi bir risale diye/ Nazm-ı mergûb-ı nîm-sâle diye."

²²⁵ Fleischer, *Tarihçi Mustafa Ali: Bir Osmanlı Aydın ve Bürokrati*, 109-110.

sûrname genre.²²⁶ Sezer Tansuğ, on the other hand, in his book *Şenlikname Düzeni*, asserts that the roots of the *sûrnâme* genre are based upon the tradition of recording the gifts in the weddings in old Turkish tradition.²²⁷ Tansuğ's argument may well illustrate the evolution of the genre since almost all the *sûrnâmes* contain this sort of lists, even if in a different format.²²⁸ Zarinebaf indicates that there are also similarities between illustrated *şahnâmes* (Book of Princes) and *sûrnâmes*. She argues that the circulation of the Persian *şahnâmes* within the Ottoman court have affected the emergence of this new genre.²²⁹

All these interpretations of the origins of the *sûrnâme* genre may reveal that documenting the royal festivities in the form of the specific *sûrnâm* genre was unique to the Ottoman literary tradition. This genre, however, was influenced by the earlier recording practices of the wedding festivities and similar genres aiming to eulogize a particular event or person, as in the case of the Perso-Islamic literary tradition which records royal events.

5.3 Other similar genres to *sûrnâmes*

Before the tradition of *sûrnâme* emerged as an independent genre in the sixteenth-century Ottoman court, festivals had also been recorded in other genres. *Teyrifat*

²²⁶ Levend, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, 158-159.

²²⁷ See Tansuğ, *Şenlikname Düzeni: Türk Minyatüründe Gerçekçi Duyuş ve Gelişme*, 10-12.

²²⁸ Tansuğ, *Şenlikname Düzeni*, 13: "...Düğün çenliklerini ele alan yazmalara Osmanlılar'dan başka çevrelerde rastlanmaz. Bu yazmaların Türk göçebe geleneklerine kadar uzandığını ve daha sonraları yerleşik koşullarda da yeri olan düğün kayıt defterlerine bağlı olduğunu tahmin ediyorum. Sûrnâme metninde her bölüm sonunda padişaha verilen hediyelerin özenle belirtilmiş olması da bunun bir kanıtı..."

²²⁹ See Zarinebaf-Shahr, "Cross-Cultural Contacts in Eurasia: Persianate Art in Ottoman Istanbul," 530-541; "Asserting Military Power in a World Turned Upside Down: The Istanbul Festivals of 1582 and 1638," 173-85.

defteri (book of protocol registers), which regulates and records rules of the ceremonial protocols, is one of the similar genres that documented state ceremonies. In fact, the rules of state ceremonies started being compiled during the reign of Mehmed II under his *Kanunname*. Later on, during the reign of Süleyman I, these registers started to be documented as separate compilations for the office of protocols. *Teşrifati-i Divan-ı Hümayun* (the court officer of protocol) was responsible for recording the expenses of the ceremonies and the rules on how the state ceremonies should be held. Teşrifatizade Mehmed Efendi first compiled these rules of protocol under the name of *Defter-i Teşrifat* in 1695.²³⁰ The office of *teşrifat* continued to work as the only office for regulating the protocol rules until the period of the Tanzimat. However, later on, the duties of the office had been separated into the various other offices. As it is noted, *teşrifat* registers had been prepared by the officers of the state itself and they have carried a more historical agenda rather than the documentation of festivities in a more stylistic way compared to *sûrnâmes*. Here it is important to note that the many of the *sûrnâme* authors were aware of these registers and made use of the. For instance, Aynur, in her work on Saliha Sultan's wedding, indicates a number of similarities between the anonymous festival book written in prose that documented the wedding of Saliha Sultan and the protocol registers for this particular wedding.²³¹ As it will be seen below, in the nineteenth century, these registers may have been used by *sûrnâme* authors for organizing their narratives.

The *kaside* genre is similar to *sûrnâmes* in verse in terms of their eulogistic structures. Similar to *kasides*, *sûrnâmes* in verse always start with praise to God, the

²³⁰ Çalışkan, "Defter-i Teşrifât," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 4, 94.

²³¹ Aynur, *The wedding ceremony of Saliha Sultan, 1834: textual analysis, critical edition and facsimile*, 33.

prophet, and the Sultan they were written for. There are also specific types of *kasides*, which mention specific festivities including royal births, circumcisions or weddings; these *kasides* were called *surriye kasideleri* (the festival eulogics). These *surriye kasideleri*, as opposed to *sûrnâmes*, could be found either in *divans* or *mecmu'as* of various authors. Hayali Bey's, Cevri's, Yahya Bey's, Figani's and Nev'i's *surriye kasideleri* are among the best known poems of this genre.²³² Compared to *sûrnâmes*, however, the length of *kasides* is limited.

Surriye tarihi (the chronicle of festivities) is another genre that documented festivals. Although they were not as detailed narratives as independent *sûrnâmes*, these chronicles, usually written in verse, included the details of the date that the festive event took place and also a rather limited background about the festival event. Similar to *surriye kasides*, these chronicle accounts can be found in either *divans* or *mecmu'as*.

The above-mentioned interpretations on the emergence of *sûrnâme* genre and the similarities among different genres reveal a resemblance with the idea of "genre-in-progress," the genres that gradually crystalize and separated from each other during the course of time.²³³ On the other hand, as it is underlined in previous chapters, genres are contextual phenomena that are also products of their historical context as well as of their interactions with other similar genres. In this regard, a folkloristic approach for the genre analysis, which takes the genres into consideration not as static entities, but rather organic units in accordance with their historical

²³² Aynur, "Sûrnâme," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 37, 565-567.

²³³ See Öztürkmen's "Orality and Performance in Late Medieval Turkish Texts: Epic Tales, Hagiographies, and Chronicles," 327-45.

settings, may contribute greatly to historians who may analyze them in a more elaborate way.

5.4 Changes in the practices of documenting the royal weddings: nineteenth-century *sûrnâmes*

As Zarinebaf underlines, early modern Ottoman festivities had a lot of similarities to European celebrations and Iranian royal festivities.²³⁴ Yet, in these festivities, it is possible to observe the carnivalesque “the world turn upside down” model, as in the case of the military rebellion that occurred near the end of the festival of 1582 as well as the Patrona Halil rebellion that occurred after the festival of 1720.²³⁵ The nineteenth-century festivities of the Ottoman realm, as it is argued here, became more structured and strict celebrations which did not often allow “upside down” moments. As it is discussed above, these were the ceremonies where the dynasty reflected its power with the help of all its apparatuses.

In the following sub-sections, it will be argued that similar to the festivals of the nineteenth century, the *sûrnâmes* of these festivals were the product of their historical context of the Mahmudian state, so they reflected the centralized perspective of the state. In fact, the six festival books written in the period of Mahmud II for two distinct royal weddings served to document the festivities from the state perspective. These *sûrnâmes* in that sense may be regarded as a part of re-invention of the tradition of the state towards a more centralized and modern one.

²³⁴ Zarinebaf, “Asserting Military Power in a World Turned Upside Down,” 174-75.

²³⁵ See Terzioğlu, “The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation,” 84-100.

Almost a hundred years after the last royal festival events, royal weddings in the period of Mahmud II were the first celebrations that were documented in the *sûrnâme* genre. Moreover, after a hundred years, these festivities were organized particularly for the wedding ceremonies. For the festivals of 1834 and 1836, there are six festival books (two are in prose, the other four are in verse). The narration styles and forms of those festival books, as it will be argued below, were not different from previous festival books; however, the ways in which they presented the details of those weddings reflected the re-invention of the tradition of their age.

Not accidentally, both royal weddings coincided with the stabilization period of Mahmud II's reign, the period around the 1830's. As discussed in the previous chapter, the first years of Mahmud II's state might be defined as a state of struggle between the military corps and local notables. However, after the abolition of the Janissaries in 1826, the Ottoman state initiated a series of regulations to maintain a more centralized and modern bureaucratic state. In fact, it may be argued that this more centralized state of Mahmud II was crowned by those royal festivities. Thus, the documenting practices of these royal festivities, mainly the *sûrnâmes*, reflected the ideology behind the centralized state. Therefore, it will be argued in this chapter that the *sûrnâmes* in the nineteenth century, especially the ones written in prose, turned into more archival materials and official historical narratives, unlike the *sûrnâmes* of the early modern period, which were more literary and artistic representation of the festivities that they documented.

5.4.1 *Sûrnâmes* on the wedding festivities of 1834

For the wedding ceremony of Saliha Sultan, the daughter of Mahmud II, there are two *sûrnâmes* written in verse form; one of them was written by the director of the *Takvîm-i Vekâyi* and the court historian (*vakanîvis*) Mehmed Es'ad Efendi; the other is written by a religious official, Rıfat Efendi. The other *sûrnâme* for this wedding is written in prose by an anonymous author.

5.4.1.1 *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad*

The author of *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad* was Mehmed Es'ad Efendi, who is also known as Sahhaflar Şeyhizade Mehmed Es'ad. Mehmed Es'ad Efendi, an important nineteenth-century historian and statesman, was born in Istanbul in 1789.²³⁶ He served at the Ottoman court in a variety of positions including the judge of the army (*kadi asker*), a director and editor-in-chief of the official newspaper *Takvim-i Vekayi*, as well as official chronicler of the court. While he was working as the director of *Meclis-i Maarif-i Umumiye*, he died in Istanbul in 1848.²³⁷

Apart from his various works, he was also known as an important book collector. As Aynur indicates, his book collection is now located in the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library.²³⁸ Among others, he is the author of *Üss-i Zafer*, an account of the abolition of the Janissary army; *Teşrifat-ı Kadime*, an important work on the courtly ceremonies; a biographical account, *Bağçe-i Hinduz*; a *Münşeât* and a *Divan*. During the festival of 1834, he was the director and author of *Takvim-i Vakayi*, as he

²³⁶ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 10.

²³⁷ Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, 53-55.

²³⁸ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 10.

indicates in his *sûrnâme*.²³⁹ The only copy of *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad* is located in the Central Library of Istanbul University.²⁴⁰

Although Es'ad's *sûrnâme* can be considered a relatively short festival book written in verse, compared to the other *sûrnâmes* written for the festival of 1834, it follows the rules of *sûrnâme* genre. Within a rather limited perspective, it also includes the details of the festive events. The eulogy to the Sultan Mahmud II and the well-being of the state, however, placed in the center of the narrative.

Es'ad opens his *sûrnâme* with a eulogistic part to the God, to the prophet Muhammed, and then the Sultan. This part, in fact, was identical for all the poems written in the *sûrnâme* genre. He continues his *sûrnâme* in accordance with the process of the wedding: the Sultan's enactment, foreign representatives' visits, elites and higher officials' attending the various ceremonies, the beginning of the festivities, the order of processions, the beginning of spectacles, fireworks, the closing events. In the end, he adds a section explaining the reason he wrote this poem. According to And, it was the first account that the term *ortaoyunu* was used:²⁴¹

After the eulogy section, Es'ad begins referring on the events that took place during reign of Mahmud II and explains the reasons behind organizing such a festive event. First and foremost, he regards the wedding as an execution of the Prophet's word, *summah*.²⁴² Then he praises Mahmud II's sense of justice, and how he

²³⁹ Quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 11-12: "...Kırktokuz salı vuku'atına bu /Oldu ser-firka-i fal-i nigü/ Kilk-i şikeste-zeban-ı Es'ad/ Kıldı tafsinile engüştünü med..."

²⁴⁰ Sahaflar Şeyhizade Mehmed Es'ad Efendi, İÜK-İY 3022.

²⁴¹ And, *40 Gün 40 Gece*, 202.

²⁴² *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*, l. 8, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*: "Zatı

succeeded in defeating the enemies of the state as well as making the country prosperous.²⁴³ After the periods of struggle, as Es'ad states, it was time to organize a festival.

He then begins praising the imperial groom (*damad-ı şehriyari*) Halil Rıf'at Pasha; he emphasizes how Halil Rıfat Pasha was such a loyal, intelligent and compassionate courtier.²⁴⁴ Subsequently, Es'ad mentions the preparations: the Grand vizier's and Serasker Pasha's receiving the Sultan's edict, the solemnizing of the marriage by the chief religious officer (*seyhülislam*), and the subsequent ceremonies. In this part, Es'ad Efendi mostly stresses the "order" of the state. In fact, this is one of the main themes of his narrative. To him, the festival was held to maintain order.²⁴⁵ Here it is important to underline that these ceremonies were considered as the indicators of how the state was powerful and how they reflected the "order" (*nizam-ı âlem*).

After this introduction, he mentions the festival in detail. Descriptions of the festive spaces, the preparations, banquets, the order of the receptions, the hierarchical arranging of the visitors, special receptions for the sheikhs and foreign visitors as well as the women's procession were among important sequences of these festival proceedings.

'alemlere oldu rahmet/ Sünneti badi-i sur-ı ümmet..."

²⁴³ *Sürnâme -i Es'ad*, I. 21, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 45: "Hamdilillah deva'i-i terah/Ber-taraf oldu huruş etti ferah/ Oldu etraf emin-i ckdar/l'tilaf eyledi yekser agyar..."

²⁴⁴ *Sürnâme -i Es'ad*, I. 33, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 45: Buldu Rı'fat o halilü'l-vüzerâ/ Oldu bu halvete el-hak ahra..."

²⁴⁵ *Sürnâme -i Es'ad*, I. 37, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 45: "Surgaha vcrlip sonra nizam/ Oldu esbab-ı mcserat tamam..."

In the narration of the performances, the author mostly stresses the conspicuous events and the magnificence of the organization. The grandeur of visitors' tents, the plenitude of banquets and the emphasis on the prosperity of the state and society were most of the time repeated in the narrative. Firework displays, which emphasize the spectacular aspect of these mass festivities rather than being actively participated in, were also an important part of these performances. As Es'ad Efendi indicates, the entire city was full of lights and candles during the celebrations.²⁴⁶ *Mahyas, kandils*, shows on the sea and on land, representations of battles were also emphasized frequently in the course of the narrative.²⁴⁷ After the firework displays, when Es'ad Efendi mentioned the dramatical performances, he talks about "*ortaoyumu*", the performances of European and Persian style *canbazs* and *hokkabazs*. However, since this is a relatively short poem, he does not mention the performances in great detail.

He devotes the last part to glorifying the festivities and to thank the Sultan for giving him an opportunity to write this poem about the festivities. He concludes his poem by praising the Sultan and his order, as well as the state's welfare.²⁴⁸

As it is illustrated above, details of the ceremonial sequences and performances have a rather secondary place in this relatively short *sûrnâme*; the major aim of the poem is to describe the grandeur of the period, the Sultan's reforms, and the state's idea of justice. In this regard, it may be argued that similar to the other festival books in the nineteenth century, this poem aimed to reflect the ideology of the state, rather than proposing a detailed analysis of the performances. As it is noted

²⁴⁶ *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*, l. 65-70, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 46.

²⁴⁷ *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*, l. 71, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 46.

²⁴⁸ *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*, l. 110-115, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 47.

above, the festive events were generally utilized by the state to legitimize the order and to glorify the era.²⁴⁹ Here it is important to note that the festivities usually coincided with either times of crisis or post-crisis periods. The festive events, in this regard, served the purpose of transforming the society through a “time out of time” moment, and aimed to reduce the tension of society.²⁵⁰ It may not be wrong to claim that the festival of 1834 shared those agendas as well.

On the other hand, it may be argued that the *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad* had a similar aim of praising the period. As it is illustrated above, this narrative focuses more on eulogizing the state and the sultan, rather than narrating every single detail of the festive events. This might be regarded, first of all, as an instance of the ideological dimension of this narrative. Second, when it is taken into consideration that the author of this *sûrnâme*, Es'ad Efendi, was the chief editor of the official newspaper, *Takvim-i Vekayi* at that time, it may be argued that he might have left narrating the events in detail to the newspaper, and aimed to present a rather eulogizing account in the *sûrnâme*.

5.4.1.2 *Sûrnâme-i Rıf'at*

Halil İbrahim Rıf'at Bey was born in İskeçe (Xanthi). He was also known as Mir Alcmzade or Topuzluzade. His father, Mir Alem Topuzlu Mustafa Ağa, was among the notables of İskeçe. After completing his education in Istanbul, Rıf'at Bey became

²⁴⁹ *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*, l. 23, quoted in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 45: “Gayrı geldi sırası aramın/ Sur ile feth-i der-i ikramın...”

²⁵⁰ See also Turner's concepts of “communitas” and “anticommunitas” in Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, 273-4.

the *molla* of Eyüp in 1834 and died in 1835.²⁵¹ His *Sûrnâme*, *Dîvan* and *Ayine-i Zafer*, a panegyric account on the events occurring during the reign of Mahmud II, were his known works. In the epilogue of his *Sûrnâme*, he counts the festival book within the genre of history, together with *Ayine-i Zafer*,²⁵²

As Aynur indicates, the only copy of *Sûrnâme-i Rif'at*, dated 1834, is now in the Central Library of Istanbul University.²⁵³ This *sûrnâme* recounts the events day by day and provides more elaborate details of the festivities compared to *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad*. This *sûrnâme* also shares a similar order with *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad*. However, it may be said that it reflects the socio-political currents of the period in a more elaborate way. Unlike *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad*, it recounts the changes in the order of the festivities. For instance, the imperial band's playing the national anthem during the processions, the public's composition, the festive spaces, as well as the composition of women are all mentioned in Rif'at's *sûrnâme*.

Similar to *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*, *Sûrnâme -i Rif'at* begins with a eulogy to God and the Prophet.²⁵⁴ Then Rif'at begins praising Sultan Mahmud II. In this section, he mentions Mahmud II's achievements: how he brought such an order to the Ottoman realm as well as how he made his realm prosper loom large in this eulogy section.²⁵⁵ Here he describes the Sultan as if he were a mythical figure. He refers to the reign of Mahmud II as incomparable. In this particular part of the poem he also celebrates the

²⁵¹ See Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 12-13; Süreyya Bey, *Sicill-i Osmani*, vol.1, 404-5.

²⁵² *Sûrnâme -i Rif'at*, l. 769-770, and 772, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 69: "Bir Ayinc-i Zafer yazıldı/Ol sahaya mu'teber yazıldı/Şindi yine etti ol sâhan-sâ/Bu Gülşen-i Hurremi inşa...Tarih ikisinin de name/Ol vech ile buldular nizamı..."

²⁵³ See Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 14.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ *Sûrnâme -i Rif'at*, l. 49-70, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 49-50.

abolition of the Janissary corps.²⁵⁶ As one might also see throughout the narrative, praising the Sultan's grandeur is among the main themes of this *sûrnâme*. Similar to the previous *sûrnâme* that was explored in this chapter, the new order in the army appears as one of the strongest themes in this festival book aiming to legitimize the Sultans' order.²⁵⁷

After these praising parts, Rıf'at begins describing the sequences of the festive events. He first mentions the ceremony of the marriage agreement, which took place in the room of *Hırka-yı Saadet*. The writer first describes the beauty of the room and its importance, and then begins recounting the ceremony itself. He includes some details about the ceremony: who attended the marriage agreement, who witnessed and executed the ceremony loom large in this part. According to the tradition, the *seyhülislam* was in charge of executing the ceremony, and the *imams* of important mosques such as Eyüb and Ayasofya were in charge of praying for this occasion.²⁵⁸

The eulogistic part for the imperial groom Rıf'at Halil Pasha comes after the description of the agreement ceremony. In this section, Rı'fat mentions the imperial groom's wisdom and loyalty as well as how he was such a well-educated and well-mannered member of the imperial household.²⁵⁹

This section of Rıf'at's account follows by description of the engagement procession. The procession of the soldiers and imperial officials, and the imperial

²⁵⁶ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 57, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 49.

²⁵⁷ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 57, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 49: "Bi-gayc asakir etti tezyin/Ol muhyi-i resm-i devlet ü din..."

²⁵⁸ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 71-95, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 50.

²⁵⁹ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 96-109, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 50-1.

band were among the most important parts of this procession.²⁶⁰ After mentioning the engagement procession, Rıf'at accounts the visits of viziers, religious officials and prominent sheiks of the various religious orders to the palace. Here the author emphasizes the hierarchical order that the imperial visitors followed.

After the religious leaders' honoring the Palace, Rıf'at begins recounting the Sultan's visit to the Holy Relics in Topkapı Palace, which was a prominent protocol tradition for the Ottoman Sultans. As Rıf'at indicates, after the Friday prayers, Sultan Mahmud II visited the Sacred Relics as a way of showing his respect to state tradition.²⁶¹

Then Rıf'at directs his attention to the performances. First, he mentions the performances of musicians (*sazende* and *hanendeler*).²⁶² Interestingly, he uses a very detailed language when he describes the performance sequences: the names of the singers, the kinds of the instruments and even the form of melodies, *makams*, figure significantly in this part of the account.²⁶³

As it is indicated in the previous chapter, Mahmud II attempted to modernize the entire state apparatuses, starting with the abolition of the Janissary corps in 1826. In accordance with the abolition of the Janissary corps, he appointed Guiseppe Donizetti as court musician to compose a national march and to organize an imperial

²⁶⁰ *S Sürnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 110-11; 136, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 50-1.

²⁶¹ *Sürnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 57, quoted in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 52: "Avdet buyurup saraya o şah/Hırka Otası'na girdi çün mah/Hier an o şehe bu idi adet/Ta'zim ile eyledi ziyaret..."

²⁶² Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 53.

²⁶³ *Sürnâme -i Rıf'at* l. 174-177, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 53: "Yorgaki o hoş sadalı üstad/ Eylerdi nice nevalar icad/ Tanbur u keman u nay u kanun/ Onda o Koca Kemani Mirün/ Gah çalmıp düğah ü şchnaz/Gahice seğah olurdu icra/Kürdi çahnrdı gah a'la..."

military band. These changes in the state order also found a place in Rıf'at's account.²⁶⁴

After describing the musical performances, Rıf'at begins describing the dancers and the dance performances. As he did with the musical performances, he took a quite detailed approach in this section. He refers to each dancer by his name, and gives details about folk dance styles. In doing so, he provides an important portrayal of nineteenth-century urban folklore.²⁶⁵

After this part of the narrative, the writer begins describing the performances of magicians and acrobats as well as the firework displays.²⁶⁶ Here one might claim that most of the traditional performances of the classical age such as tightrope walking, showing talent on the tightrope—including playing backgammon—holding animals while walking, and holding some large object, continued in the nineteenth-century festivities.²⁶⁷

Firework displays, similar to the earlier festivities, were one of the most important events of conspicuous consumption. The fireworks covered the entire city from the shores of Bosphorus to the inner city, including Topkapı Palace, Beşiktaş Palace, and Çırağan Palace. As the author indicates, the inhabitants of Istanbul had to

²⁶⁴ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 186, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 53: "Geh marş gchi alafranga/Düzd-i gama urdular pranga..."

²⁶⁵ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 190-202, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 53.

²⁶⁶ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 203 and 265, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 53-55.

²⁶⁷ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 54.

decorate their houses with candles to show their support for the festivities; it was a way of congratulating for the festive events.²⁶⁸

Unlike the parts about the performances, which did not pursue a chronological structure, Rıf'at begins recounting the banquets given for the prominent visitors on a daily basis. Unlike the sections describing performances, this part of the narrative is written in chronological order. In fact, he describes these visitors by using individual sections. The viziers, the *ulema*, and the leaders of various religious orders were described in detail and most of the time by name. This part of the narrative mentions the rules of protocol as well.²⁶⁹ In doing so, it functions as an archival narrative.

Here it is also important to underline that Rıf'at himself attended the banquet of the fourth day of celebrations in the company of other scholars and poets as well as historians in the tent of Arif Bey. As he indicates, many of the poets and historians who wrote something special for the festival were invited into the same tent. In this particular sequence of festivities, Rıf'at was no longer in a position of observing the performances and celebrations; he rather positioned himself as a participant.²⁷⁰

After these banquet sequences, the procession of Saliha Sultan's dowry had started. This part is divided by subtitles as well. Here it is important to note that the

²⁶⁸ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 260, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 55: "Her yalı donanmış idi a'la/Pür-şa'şa'a idi ruy-ı derya/Resmi kiminin olurdu pek nik/ Kimisi ederdi suru tebrik..."

²⁶⁹ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 55.

²⁷⁰ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 260, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 55: "Her yalı donanmış idi a'la/Pür-şa'şa'a idi ruy-ı derya/Resmi kiminin olurdu pek nik/ Kimisi ederdi suru tebrik..."

²⁷⁰ *Sûrnâme -i Rıf'at*, l. 340, quoted from Aynur, *The wedding ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 57: "Hatta bu fakir ilc beraber/On danc müderris-i hünerver/Ol yevm-i ferah nihayesinde/ Arif Beğefendi haymesinde/Davetli idik şch-i cihana/Vasfın alayım biraz beyana..."

author allocates distinct parts for each important visitor by also considering the hierarchical order: First and foremost, the Sultan Mahmud II, the grand vizier Rauf Pasha, Müftül Ümem, Serasker Pasha, Kapudan Tahir Pasha, Mütşir-i Hassa Fevzi Pasha, the Viziers, Ferik-i Hassa Fethi Pasha, and the other state officers were described in accordance with their ranks.²⁷¹

Upon the completion of these visits, the dowry of Saliha Sultan departed from the Beşiktaş Palace to the Neşetabat Mansion in Bebek. In this procession for the Sultan's dowry, the women also participated the ceremonies.²⁷² As Rıfat indicates, similar to the other parts of the festivities, every attendee dressed in their most beautiful and valuable clothes to participate in the ceremonies. Then he listed the contents of the dowry that was going to the sultan's residence. This might be regarded as a sign of the changes in documenting practices of the imperial festivities since this section also functions as an archival resource.²⁷³ Here it is also important to note that the author refers to himself in the first person. As it is mentioned above, generally Rıfat is in the omniscient position, using third person narrative; however, in this part the author observes the procession in person and narrates it using the first person.

The day after the procession for Saliha Sultan's dowry, the wedding procession started. The protocol members' departing to Neşetabad Palace with the same order was also recounted in this part of narrative. Here the author emphasizes

²⁷¹ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 61.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 62.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 63-5.

that the state combined the traditional protocol rules with the modern facilities such as imperial band.²⁷⁴

This procession was followed by a banquet organized in the honor of the imperial groom. In this part, the visitors who attended the banquet were listed by taking hierarchical order into consideration: state officials, the officials of *enderun* including *teşrifati*, *mektubi efendis*, *reis efendi*, *kethuda* of the sultan, were among the others, ready for the banquet and ready to praise the imperial groom in this sequence.²⁷⁵

The imperial groom's visit to the Sultan's palace followed the protocol rule that was required for royal wedding festivities. In this part of the ceremonial order, in order to thank the Sultan, the imperial groom was accepted to the Sultan's private chamber. As a favor, and a sign of his pleasure, the Sultan gave the groom a valuable ring. After this ceremony the Sultan visited Neşetabad Palace to congratulate his daughter, Saliha Sultan. The imperial groom accompanied to the Sultan in this procession. This was one of the last sequences of the festivities. Then the imperial groom welcomed Sultan Mahmud II in the courtyard of their palace and gave the Sultan a valuable horse as a gift.²⁷⁶

Probably since this was the last ceremony before the closure, the author adds a particular poem to praise the Sultan and the entire festivities. After that, the author recounts the medal and gift ceremony organized for the important participants in the

²⁷⁴ *Sûrnâme -i Rif'at*, I. 648, Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 66: "Muzika göründü yine tekrar/Eyler idi nev-usul izhar..."

²⁷⁵ *Sûrnâme -i Rif'at*, I. 665, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 66.

²⁷⁶ *Sûrnâme -i Rif'at*, I. 710, quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 68: "Zinetli bir esb olup tchiyye/ Arz ettiler ol şehe hediyye..."

ceremonies.²⁷⁷ In this ceremony, the author emphasizes particularly that shcikhs and religious officials were given gifts by the Sultan. It seems that this was a political choice and not surprisingly, this section was followed by a separate poem praising the new army of Sultan Mahmud II.²⁷⁸

In a festival book that is devoted to describe the entire events of the ceremonies, the author's preference also reflects how he saw the political conjuncture of the period. Similar to what he wrote in the previous *sûrnâme*, Rif'at's account seems to function as a protagonist of the state's reforms. Therefore, it mainly serves to glorify the era, and the sultan. Unlike Es'ad Efendi, however, Rif'at demonstrates this in a rather elaborate and sophisticated way.

5.4.1.3 *Sûrnâme* by an unknown author

The other *sûrnâme* that will be explored in this chapter is an anonymous *sûrnâme* written in prose form. As it will be illustrated below, this *sûrnâme* functions as an official record of the festival instead of being a stylistically well-written narrative. In fact, as Aynur points out, the lists of visitors and gifts that are included in the narrative resemble the official records kept in the Topkapı Palace Archive. As Aynur indicates, the registers of the Topkapı Palace Archive are similar to this *sûrnâme* in terms of both writing and calligraphic style. Here it may be argued that the author of this *sûrnâme* had access to these registers kept in Topkapı Palace.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 69.

²⁷⁸ *Sûrnâme -i Rif'at*, l. 766-783, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 69-70.

²⁷⁹ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 17-18.

Additionally, this *sûrnâme* also includes the *firman* of the Sultan that officially announced the festival, which can be found in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive.²⁸⁰ Additionally, all visitors, gifts and their values are well documented in this account. In fact, this *sûrnâme* is the only festival book that includes pre-festival details: the edict of the Sultan to call the court for organizing a royal wedding festivity, sending invitations to the foreign representatives and other elites, notables and important state officials, appointing a director of the festival (*sur emini*), and the process of determining festival spaces were among these pre-festival protocols that are documented in this narrative.²⁸¹ Visitors were also recorded by name. On the other hand, it is important to note that unlike the previous *sûrnâmes* discussed here, this one represents the perspective of the state more directly. The rules of the procession were also included in the narrative. In fact, as Aynur also points out, many details of this narrative reveal that this *sûrnâme* most of the time recounts how a festival should be celebrated instead of what actually occurred.²⁸²

In relation to these, it may not be surprising that the *sûrnâme* begins with a chronicle-like opening: the date of Saliha Sultan's birth and the time when the Sultan decided to marry her off as well as pre-organizational details about the festival such as the Sultan's edicts receiving by the courtiers were all mentioned in the prologue.²⁸³

As a part of receiving the Sultan's edict, some of the court members were given gifts. The gifts and their values are listed in the narrative. In the next section,

²⁸⁰ BOA/İİAT, no. 1598/23, On the organization of the wedding of Mihrimah Sultan and the circumcisions of Abdülaziz and Abdülmecid, dated. H. 18 Muharrem 1252.

²⁸¹ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 72.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 19, 20.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 72.

the narrative includes a copy of the Sultan's order that was found in the court registers.²⁸⁴

This part is followed by describing the details of the invitations sent to the representatives of other states and the higher officers and religious elites who were out of the capital at the time of the festival. The invitations sent to the other states overlap with the archival records.²⁸⁵ In this part, the places where the elites who would come from outside the capital were accommodated are also listed. Here it is important to note that the pre-organized program which the imperial visitors should follow was also included in the narrative. Thus, who was to be accommodated by whom is listed in that part. As Aynur notes, it is possible to trace the prominent members of the elites through these lists.²⁸⁶ This might also be regarded as a sign that the function of recoding the events in this *sûrnâme* surpasses the agenda of writing a sophisticated account of the festivities.²⁸⁷

After the lists similar to the guest registers, the narrative continues with the details about the solemnizing ceremony and the procession of betrothal. The courtiers, who attended to the solemnizing ceremony and procession, were given

²⁸⁴ BOA/CSM, no. 103/5188, The ceremony of wedding and marriage of the daughter of Sultan Mahmud II, Saliha Sultan and the *müşir* of Tophane, Halil Rifat Pasha, dated 11. 13 Zilhicce, 1249.

²⁸⁵ BOA/IIAT no. 1165/46114A, Translation of the letter of congratulation on the wedding of Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha, which is sent by the Russian minister of foreign affairs, Count Neselrud to the charge d'affaires of Istanbul, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1249; BOA/IIAT, no. 487/23883A, Translation of a French letter from the Russian Empire which is an answer to an imperial letter which is sent on the occasion of the wedding of Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1250; BOA/IIAT, no. 487/23877, On the issue that the arrival of the answer sent to the Russian Empire on the occasion of the imperial wedding, dated H. 29 Zilhicce 1251; BOA/IIAT, no. 1208/47370T, Translation of a letter of congratulation sent by the King of Prussia on the occasion of Saliha Sultan and Halil Rifat Pasha, dated H. 23 Ramazan 1250; BOA/IIAT, no. 486/23830, On sending response to the Austrian charge d'affaires Mavroyan' and Russian Foreign Minister Count Denslerverd on the occasion of imperial wedding, dated. 29 Zilhicce 1249.

²⁸⁶ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 77-80.

²⁸⁷ Mensur *Sûrnâme*, l. 2-5, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 73.

gifts by the Sultan. These gifts were also recorded person by person in accordance with their expenditures.²⁸⁸ Following the Friday Salutation that took place in the Aya Sofya Mosque, these courtiers appeared before the Sultan to receive their gifts.²⁸⁹ The day after this ceremony of receiving gifts, the Sultan moved from Çırağan to the Beşiktaş Sahil Palace. This was an official sign to start the festivities. The places around the Beşiktaş Palace were decorated with ceremonial tents to receive guests for banquets and other festival receptions. While the guests were being received in the ceremonial tents, the places around the Beşiktaş Palace and Dolmabahçe Square were allocated for dramatic performances. At that moment, fireworks, dance and musical performances, imperial military band performances as well as gigantic puppet displays and displays at sea were already started.²⁹⁰

This part of narrative was followed by visits of various religious orders and receiving gifts. In fact, this part of the narrative includes an important record of who represented which religious order; thus, it is possible to trace the contemporary conditions of various religious orders. This sequence also took a large space in the previous *sûrnâme*. As it is noted, sheiks of the Mevlevi, Nakşîyye Celvetiyye, Sünbûliyye, Halvetiyye, Gülşeniyye, Bayramiyye, Sinaniyye, Uşşakiyye, Kadiriyye, Şabaniyye, and Sa'diyye orders as well as the Ri'faiyye orders were received in various tents and they are given various gifts. This detailed register for various religious orders may represent the ways in which the state communicated with these religious orders.²⁹¹ Here it is important to note that after the abolition of Jannisary Army in 1826, the state took rigorous precautions towards the Bektasiyye order in order to cut

²⁸⁸ Mensur *Sûrnâme*, 7b-9b, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 78-80.

²⁸⁹ Mensur *Sûrnâme*, 1.10a, in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 81.

²⁹⁰ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 82.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 83-130.

the link between Janissaries and this religious order. Here it may be argued that receiving the above-mentioned orders name-by-name and lodge-by-lodge and allocating an important part in the narrative of *sûrnâme* might be an illustration of these religious orders' performing loyalty to the Ottoman state. Through the festival, they might show their allegiance to the Sultan and the State.

After the reception for various religious leaders, the gifts from the governor of Egypt and the ambassador of Iran were received by the *serasker* Pasha. Following these receptions, a banquet was given to honor the religious leaders of the Empire's confessional communities, including the Armenian and Greek Patriarchs and the Jewish Rabbi. Following these receptions, the French, English, Austrian, Greek, Prussian, Sicilian, and Sardinian, Denmark, Russian, Swedish, Flemish, Spanish, and American ambassadors as well as other representatives were accepted for a banquet organization in *Kasr-ı Hümayun*. Here it is important to mention that the wives of these representatives also attended this reception. Unlike traditional Ottoman banquets, this one was organized in the European style. Moreover, these representatives chanted for the honor of Mahmud II while drinking wine. This scene was complemented by the performance of newly modernized European-style Ottoman military band. This part in particular reflects the ways in which nineteenth-century festivals were modernized.²⁹²

This part of the narrative is followed by another long list of guests and expenditures. After that, the author begins recounting the procession of trousseaus (*alay-ı cihaz*), and bridal procession (*alay-ı arus*), both of which follow the route through Dolmabahçe square, the Yıldız Kiosk, Ortaköy and the Neşetabad Sea

²⁹² Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 133.

Palace, the official residence of Saliha Sultan and Halil Rif'at Pasha. In this part of the narrative, gifts, participants and protocol rules were recorded in detail.²⁹³

From this point onward, the narrative turns into an official document on the rules, guests and gifts. In fact, these parts of the *sûrnâme* were not in the form of a narrative but rather of a list. The *sûrnâme* ends with the calculation of the expenditures and other chronological details.

Here it might be argued that the above-mentioned *sûrnâme* represents, first of all, the state's official perspective. For instance, there was no mention of the details about the performances. In fact, the narrative parts of the *sûrnâme* focus more on the details of the processions, participants, and the hierarchical order of the ceremonies. As it is illustrated above, it might be said that this *sûrnâme* represents how the festival book tradition in the nineteenth century turned into the state's documentary practices rather than a literary narrative.

5.4.2 *Sûrnâmes* on the wedding festivities of 1836

The festival of 1836 was organized for the royal wedding of Mihrimah Sultan and Mehmed Said Pasha, together with the circumcisions of princes Abdülmecid and Abdulaziz. There are three *sûrnâmes* written about the festivities of 1836. *Sûrnâme-i Lebîb*,²⁹⁴ written in prose, is the most extensive account of the celebrations of 1836 since it covers both the royal wedding and circumcision festivities. On the other hand, the second *sûrnâme*,²⁹⁵ which is written in verse by Hızır, only covers the royal circumcision festivities. The last *sûrnâme* was written by an anonymous author. This

²⁹³ See I. 142 in Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 139.

²⁹⁴ Lebîb, *Sûrnâme -i Lebîb*, İÜK-TY 6097.

²⁹⁵ Hızır, *Sûrnâme -i Hızır*, İÜK-TY 6122.

sûrnâme is now in the private collection of Nedret İşli. Aynur puts forth that this *sûrnâme* is quite similar to the anonymous *sûrnâme* written for the festival of 1834 in terms of its style, narrative and story line.²⁹⁶

Since *Sûrnâme-i Hzır* covers only the royal circumcision festivities and the second anonymous *sûrnâme* is in a private collection, this section will only examine *Sûrnâme-i Lebib* in order to provide an illustration of how the recording practices of the nineteenth-century festivities have changed.

5.4.2.1 *Sûrnâme-i Lebib*

One of three *sûrnâme* written for the festivals of 1836 is written in prose by the director of the *Tersane-yi Amire* (Imperial shipyard), Ruznamçcizade Lebib Efendi. Mehmed Lebib Efendi was born in 1785 in Istanbul. After completing his education, he started to work as an officer in his father's office of *ruznamce*, the office that is in charge of recording daily expenditures of the court. Upon his father's death in 1813, he was appointed to his father's position. In 1826, he was exiled to Kütahya and worked as military officer at various ranks until 1836. In 1838, he became a member of the *Şûra-yı Bâb-ı Âli* (Council of Sublime Porte). In 1849, he became *defterdar* (provincial treasurer) of Aleppo. He died in 1866 in Istanbul and was buried in Eyüp.²⁹⁷

Lebib begins his narrative with a long *kaside* to explain the reason he wrote this book and to praise God, the prophet, and the sultan. He continues his narrative with the pre-ceremonial details. According to Lebib, II. Mahmud wanted to marry

²⁹⁶ Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 5, footnote18.

²⁹⁷ Süreyya Bey, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, vol.3, 901.

off his daughter Mihrimah—who had reached the age of 22 at that time—to a vizier. However, he was indecisive about whom he should choose. For that reason, he organized a casting of lots among his viziers. From that lot, Mehmed Said Pasha's name came out and the Sultan married off his daughter to Mehmed Said Pasha.²⁹⁸ Interestingly enough, this detail about the wedding overlaps with the narrative of Pardoe as she recounts in her *The City of The Sultan and the Domestic Manner*. Both writers' recounting the same story may remind the readers that anecdote was part of the oral culture of the age:

He caused the names of the seven candidates to be inscribed on as many separate shreds of parchment; and on the following Friday, when he visited the mosque he cast them all in a mass beneath his prayer-carpet, where they remained during the service; at whose close, he put up a prayer to Allah and the Prophet to aid him in the hour of trial, by enabling him to withdraw the name of the individual whose alliance would prove the most beneficial, alike to his Empire and to his daughter. Whether the prayer was heard and answered, I know not; but the Sublime fingers closed over the parchment, which was inscribed with the cypher of Said Pasha of the Dardanelles.²⁹⁹

After the arrival of Mehmet Said Pasha to Istanbul and his being declared as *damad-ı şehriyari* (imperial groom), the preparations for the royal wedding started. As Lebib indicates, the grand vizier received the imperial edict on the festival; the imperial groom visited him in the company of a conspicuous procession as well as a performance of the imperial band. On that visit they agreed on the day of the marriage.³⁰⁰

The wedding festivities took place at the edge of Bosphorus. The road from Beşiktaş Palace to Mihrimah Sultan's mansion in Bebek was the main area of processions and festivities. On the other hand, the celebrations for the circumcision

²⁹⁸ *Lebib Sürnâmesi*, l. 6a-6b, in Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 4-5: Lebib Sürnâmesi Hafız Mehmed Efendi (Hazin) Sürnâmesi - Abdi Sürnâmesi - Telhisü'l-Beyan'ın Sürnâme Kısmı*, 63.

²⁹⁹ Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan: And Domestic Manners of the Turks, in 1836*, 251-52.

³⁰⁰ In Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri 4-5*.

took place in the old ceremonial space, on the shores of Golden Horn, including Sadabad.³⁰¹

Lebib refers to the rules of protocol for both wedding and circumcision celebrations in a detailed way. He includes the whole text of the imperial edicts into his narrative³⁰² and he gives all the names of the officials commissioned for every single part of the festivities. He also lists all the gifts that the visitors presented to the Sultan, Mihrimah Sultan and Mehmed Said Pasha by name. In fact, his lists of visitors, the gifts, and the protocol rules was corroborated with the archival records as well as the news about the festivities in the official newspaper. For instance, the internal affairs section of *Takvim-i Vekayi*'s 128th issue provides the details about the day of marriage, the ceremonial patterns and the participants in a way similar to Lebib's festival book.

As Aynur indicated, for the anonymous *sûrnâme* written for the festival of 1834, it is known that some of the authors of *sûrnâmes* benefited from protocol registers, gift registers, dowry registers and expense registers as primary sources for their narrative. In fact, some of them even directly copy those records.³⁰³ Here it may also be argued that Lebib Efendi might have made use of those newspaper reports and the protocol registers as a primary source for his narrative.

As it is mentioned before, Lebib Efendi was quite enthusiastic about recounting every single detail of the festival: the preparations, the visitors, the renovations in the city, the decorations of various palaces and streets, the

³⁰¹ In Arslan, *Osmanlı Saray Düğünleri ve Şenlikleri* 4-5

³⁰² BOA/HAT, no. 1598/23, On the occasion of the wedding ceremony of Mihrimah Sultan and Mehmed Said Pasha, dated. H. 18 Muharrem 1252.

³⁰³ BOA/CSM, no. 103/5188, on the occasion of the marriage of the daughter of Sultan Mahmud II and Halil Rifat Pasha, dated. H. 13 Zilhicce 1249.

processions, the participation of women, the details about material culture including gifts, the sultan's dowry, and banquets as well as the details about the performances, their names, origins, the stories about them, the shows of acrobats, dancers and musicians, imperial band, fireworks loom large in the narrative in a quiet elaborate way. Lebib Efendi even mentions the details of the sultan's and grand vizier's clothes for the processions. On the other hand, he also refers to impressions of the audiences. More interestingly, he includes the other poet's works such as *kasides* or *surriye tarihîs* about the festival at the end of the book as well.

All those details about his narrative might be regarded as a sign of modernization in festival book tradition since the author attempted to prepare an encyclopedia-like account for the festival. In fact, it can be said that Lebib Efendi aimed to give an extensive panorama for every single sequence of the festival.

5.5 Changes in the *sîrnâme* genre

The illustrated book tradition started to disappear in the nineteenth century and thus, the festival books were no longer part of imperial books of art projects.³⁰⁴ In relation to this, it might be said that the introduction of modern European painting to the Ottoman court, then photography, might have accelerated the disappearance of this tradition as well as the crystallization of the written and illustrated genres. Therefore, it might be said that the stylish illustrations of the previous festival books were transformed into a different format in the nineteenth century. In the last part of this chapter, I will attempt to discuss the ways in which the textual narratives of the above-mentioned festival books provide us a rather different type of authorship.

³⁰⁴See Atıl, "Book of Art," 23.

As it is illustrated above, in *Sûrnâme-i Es'ad*, the details of the performances were not at the center of the narrative. His narrative aims mainly to praise the sultan and his period. In fact, Es'ad intended to illustrate how the festival of 1834 reflected the grandeur of the state and the Sultan. Nevertheless, he very briefly mentions the fireworks,³⁰⁵ the shows of acrobats³⁰⁶ and dance performances³⁰⁷ as well as theatrical performances.³⁰⁸

Rıfat's *sûrnâme*, on the other hand, contains more lively descriptions of the performances. Rıfat separates his narrative into parts by subtitles and in many parts he pursues a chronological order. The fireworks, the shows in the circus, the music shows, the dances, and the processions are recounted in great detail. The names of the dancers and musicians, the kinds of plays, the instruments, and even some parts of the lyrics appeared in the narrative.³⁰⁹

However, neither of these festival books takes the performances into the center of the narrative. The anonymous *sûrnâme* in prose style, on the other hand, was quite different from these *sûrnâmes* written in verse. The anonymous *sûrnâme* focuses more on ceremonial patterns and protocol rules rather than performances. Thus, it might be said that the details about the Sultan's dowry, the gifts and the names of participants were at the center of the narrative. Moreover, as mentioned

³⁰⁵ For the descriptions of fireworks see: "Bir gece berden atıp Tophane/Bir gece saldan atıp Tersane/Çıktı kandil-i hevayı feleğe/Bakdırırsa nola ayı feleğe..." quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, l. 76-78, 46.

³⁰⁶ Quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, l.89, 46: "Yürüdü menzil ipinde can-baz/Sanat ibrazına kıldı agaz..."

³⁰⁷ Quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 46: "Çengilci eyledi raksa ikdam/Toldu cümbüş ile meydan-ı hiyam..."

³⁰⁸ Quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 46: "Leb-i etraf-nişin-i meydan/Oldu orta oyunundan handan..."

³⁰⁹ Quoted from Aynur, *The Wedding Ceremony of Saliha Sultan*, 56-60: "Tanbur u keman u nay u kanun/Onda o Koca Kemani Mirün/Gahice acem gchice mahur/Gehice hicaz u geh nişabur/Geh mars gehi alafranga/Düzd-i gama urdular pranga..."

before, some details in the narrative overlap with other sources such as *teşrifat* registers.

More importantly, as mentioned in the previous chapter, there was a shift in the performances of the festivities towards a procession-centered spectacle model in the early nineteenth century. With regard to the centralization of the ceremonial pattern, it may be argued that this *sûrnâme*'s focus shifts more to the processions and ceremonial rules as well as list of guests and expenditures.

The anonymous *sûrnâme* was quite similar to *Sûrnâme-i Lebîb* in terms of its focus on the processions, protocol rules and its listing the participants of various ceremonial sequences of the festivities. In fact, it may be argued that *Lebib*'s *sûrnâme* also has a documentary agenda rather than a narrational perspective.

5.6 Conclusion

Taken the above-mentioned *sûrnâmes* into consideration, it may be argued that, similar to the spectacles for the royal weddings of the nineteenth century, the books that recorded these festivals reflect the changing socio-political environment of the Ottoman state during the period of Mahmud II. As the state became more and more centralized, it might be said that the narrative of the festival books covering these spectacles turned into more official, court registry-like narratives.

Here it is important to note that the earlier festival books were acknowledged for their literary style, outstanding illustrations as well as their critical standpoints towards either the state or the organization itself. A closer examination of nineteenth-century festival books, however, may reveal that first and foremost, the festival books became the voice of the state in the nineteenth century. More importantly, instead of providing a literary narrative of a given festivity, it might be argued that

they became archive-like documents. When the details of these festival books are compared to the archival documents on these festivals discussed here, one might see a great number of parallels. The disappearance of illustrations from these books also marks a different authorship, which may also be regarded as the reflection of the state ideology. Here it may be concluded that the recording practices of the festivities changed in accordance with the centralization of the spectacular state of Mahmud II.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis intended to explore the royal wedding festivities of 1834 and 1836, which were organized to celebrate the wedding of Mahmud II's daughters Saliha Sultan and Mihrimah Sultan, respectively as performances that encapsulated the ideology of the Mahmudian State into a festive form. Therefore, it aimed to pursue a performance-centered approach, which has emerged as an alternative reading to the historical performances since the 1960's in order to examine these royal weddings. In doing so, it explored ways in which the performative forms of the Ottoman state in the early nineteenth century were re-invented and re-defined. Concordantly, it argued that the modernization of state apparatuses affected state ceremonies as such. Thus, early modern carnivalesque performative practices turned into spectacular performances in these wedding festivities.

In this regard, the spectularity of the Mahmudian state has been discussed through the changing patterns in festival spaces, performances, devices of maintaining the festival order, and recording practices. Additionally, the disappearance of guild parades, which were among the major performative events of the classical Ottoman festivities, and the organization of festivities around processions were considered other important dimensions of the spectacular performances, which put the audience into a rather passive position.

In this regard, this thesis made use of a performance-centered approach as away of interpreting these royal wedding festivities. Inspired by recent theoretical debates in performance studies, it attempted to explore the early nineteenth-century

Ottoman state's performativity in relation to the changing socio-political conjuncture, by pointing out the historicity of the performance. In doing so, it used Fallasi's morphological definition of festival, Milton Singer's approach to cultural performances, Gecertz' idea of the "theatre-state," MacAlloon's theory of spectacle and Bauman's genre analysis. Here it is important to underline that MacAlloon's theory of spectacle in particular and Bauman's genre analysis formed the core theoretical approach of the thesis. MacAlloon's theory provided a framework for interpreting the given royal festivities as venues of performance where the audience was manipulated—instead of participating actively in the festivities—to comprehend the very message of the state ceremonies, which is to convey the grandeur and the contemporary politics of the state. Meanwhile, Bauman's genre analysis allowed this thesis to pursue a contextual approach for interpreting the emergent literary and cultural genres of these performativities within an organic relationship between the text and its context.

Therefore, regarding this theoretical framework, this thesis mainly attempted to offer an alternative reading to the given royal wedding festivities as historical performances. That is to say, these royal weddings of the period of Mahmud II might be considered as venues that the state represented, re-invented and re-defined itself. In this regard, it aimed to employ a "performative turn" in Ottoman studies. In doing so, it examined the festivities of 1834 and 1836 as historical performative processes.

As this thesis has discussed, in accordance with the changing state apparatuses, royal wedding festivities in the early nineteenth century turned into more spectacular performances, which allowed the state to manifest its ideology more directly, unlike in the carnivalesque celebrations of previous centuries. Thus, choosing mass spectacles as a meta-genre of performance was a conscious decision

of the state in order to manipulate and to limit the audience's participation. This was reflected in the sequences of the performances. The disappearance of guild parades in the festivities, therefore, was one of the most prominent signs of the spectacular state of Mahmud II, since the lack of this particular performative form prevented the urban classes from participating in the festivities so as to convey their messages directly to the state. In these spectacles, guild parades were replaced by state processions. Unlike parades, through the processions, the state easily controlled the course of celebrations since in the processions, the audiences only watched the performances rather than actively engaging in festivities. Changing the festival spaces, on the other hand, allowed the state to manifest itself in newly established venues of performances. Therefore, the collective memory of the previous spaces was replaced by the emergent ones. Moreover, the introduction of modern forms of performance such as a national anthem and military band performances allowed the state to convey its grandeur deliberately to the audiences. Modern controlling devices of the ceremonies, such as publishing orders on how the audience should behave in the festivities, were also parts and parcels of these changes.

In the last section of this thesis, recording practices of these festivities were examined. Three *sûrnâmes* written for the wedding of Saliha Sultan in 1834, namely *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*, *Sûrnâme -i Rif'at*, and an anonymous *sûrnâme*, as well as one *sûrnâme* written for the wedding of Mihrimah Sultan, *Sûrnâme-i Lebîb*, were examined in this thesis. It is argued here that the literary works which documented these weddings turned into accounts similar to the state registries, unlike the previous centuries' literary and visual books of art projects. In this regard, it may not be wrong to claim that the festival book lost its literary qualities and critical standing.

For instance, in *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*, Sultan Mahmud II, instead of the celebrations and festive events, was placed at the center. In doing so, this *sûrnâme* functioned as a eulogy to the reign of Mahmud II, as it presents a poetic representation of political currents.

Sûrnâme -i Rif'at, on the other hand, gives a rather elaborate perspective on the festive events, compared to *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*. The procession, the invitees, the space allocated for the invitees and the banquets were all recounted in this *sûrnâme*. On the other, in this *sûrnâme*, praising the sultan also occupies a larger place in comparison with *Sûrnâme -i Es'ad*.

It might be said that the anonymous *sûrnâme* is the narrative that is most similar to archival documents. Unlike the previous *sûrnâmes* in prose, which were quite stylish accounts written by famous masters of Ottoman prose, this *sûrnâme* was more of a registry form. In fact, almost half of the narrative includes lists and expenditures in non-narrative form.

Similar to the anonymous *sûrnâme*, *Sûrnâme-i Lehib* resembles the archival records as well as the news in the official newspaper. In fact one of the edicts of Sultan Mahmud II was included in the narrative of this *sûrnâme*. Additionally, these two *sûrnâmes* give detailed lists of the participants, expenditures and the festive details day by day.

Taking all these into consideration, it might be said that these *sûrnâmes* serve to document the imperial festivals and to praise the ideology of the reign of Mahmud II.

To conclude, it might be said that all the above-mentioned changes in state performances were strategic devices of the state for controlling the subjects through festivities. Although how successful the state was in achieving these aims is yet

another discussion, the nineteenth-century Ottoman state practiced modern forms of performativity in order to survive in the period after the French Revolution. This was not unique to the Ottoman state. Further research approaching other modern states as performances may well reveal how these forms of performativity were common to various contemporary states.

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