CARNIVAL CELEBRATIONS IN ISTANBUL:

THE CHANGING PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE OF

APOKRIES AND *BAKLAHORANI*

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CARNIVAL CELEBRATIONS IN ISTANBUL: THE CHANGING PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE OF *APOKRIES* AND *BAKLAHORANI*

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

Carnival Celebrations in Istanbul:

The Changing Perception and Experience of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani*

This thesis examines the transformation in the perception and experience of the carnival celebrations in Istanbul during the late Ottoman and Republican era. I attempt to problematize the nostalgia and revitalization of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani,* and situate it in the socio-political context in which it transformed. Methodologically, I approach the celebrations from within to discover the experience from the voices of the real subjects of history by incorporating first person narratives and contemporary newspapers.

Carnival celebrations in Istanbul provided opportunity for public manifestation of identities, ideas and memories through material culture and performances of *maskara*s. The socio-political transformations in the early Republican era had resulted in an expansion of the festivities but at the same time emergence of a negative perception of the celebrations. This has further intensified with the traumas of the second half of the 20th century. As a result *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* disappeared from the public space, but continued to be practiced in the private spheres. It turned from a carnivalesque celebration to a commemorative ritual within the Rum community. The recent attempts to revive *Baklahorani* in urban sphere in 2000s were short-lived experiences restricted with the contemporary socio-political conditions in Turkey.

Overall, by looking at the entertainment culture and everyday life of the ordinary people in the city, this thesis attempts to understand the Rums' urban experience in Istanbul and collective memory.

ÖZET

İstanbul'da Karnaval Kutlamaları:

Apokries ve *Baklahorani*'nin Değişen Algısı ve Deneyimi

Bu tez geç Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet dönemi İstanbul'unda değişmekte olan karnaval deneyimi ve algısını ele almaktadır. Nostaljik yaklaşımları ve yeniden canlandırılma girişimlerini sorunsallaştırarak *Apokries* ve *Baklahorani*'yi dönüşüme uğradığı sosyo-politik bağlam içinde ele almayı amaçlamaktayım. Bu araştırma içeriden bir bakış açısı benimseyerek karnaval deneyimini, sözlü tarih görüşmeleri de aracılığıyla, gerçek öznelerin sesinden dinlemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

İstanbul'daki karnaval kutlamaları kimliklerin, fikirlerin ve hafızların kamusal ifadesi için bir fırsat sağlamaktaydı. Erken Cumhuriyet döneminde karnaval eğlenceleri mekânsal bir genişleme elde etse de sosyo-politik gelişmeler sebebiyle kamusal alanda olumsuz bir aldı ortaya çıkmaktaydı. Bu algı 20. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında yaşanan travmalarla birlikte daha da güçlendi. Sonuç olarak *Apokries* ve *Baklahorani* kamusal alandan özel alana çekildi. Karnavelsk bir eğlenceden Rum cemaatinin anma amaçlı bir ritüeline dönüştü. 2000'lerin sonundan itibaren gerçekleşen *Baklahorani'*yi kamusal alanda yeniden canlandırma girişimleri kısa süreli ve Türkiye'nin sosyo-politik durumu tarafından kısıtlanan deneyimler olmaktan ileri gidemedi.

Sonuç olarak, bu tez İstanbul'un eğlence kültürüne ve günlük yaşamına bakarak Rumların kentsel deneyimlerini ve kolektif hafızalarını anlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is attempts to understand the experience and perception of the carnival festivities in Istanbul during the late Ottoman and Republican era. It takes the carnivalesque atmosphere in the urban context as a framework through which the encounters and confrontations in everyday life in the continually transforming society are analyzed. Carnival is taken not only as an exuberant form of entertainment but also as a public manifestation of identities, memories, ideas through masks, costumes and cultural performances. The carnivalesque atmosphere and behavior allow ordinary people to convey their perception about the changing socio-political environment around them the way they would not do on a normal day. As a non-Muslim ritual in Istanbul, the public festivities of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* has not been appreciated by the majority, especially during the time of political turmoil. Having disappeared from the public realm in the early 1940s, the carnival shrunk into the private spaces of the households of the Greek-Orthodox of Istanbul, namely Rums. Therefore, not only the experience but also the memory and re-enactment of it becomes an arena for one's expression of sustaining the collective past and identity.

Through detailed survey of a disarray of sources spread to a long period from the late Ottoman era until today, I attempt to answer the following questions. To what extent the experience of *Apokries* in Istanbul reflect the social and political transformations in the city? In which social context and through what kind of a process did the public festivities shrunk intro the private space? Finally, what does

the memory of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* among the Rum community today tell us about the relationship between rituals, collective memory and identity in Istanbul?

The phenomenon of an urban carnival in Istanbul is highly perceived as the lost and joyful tradition of the city's cosmopolitan past. With the increasing interest in the culture and history of Kurtuluş, this nostalgic reminiscence has further taken the form of revitalizing the tradition in the 2010s. However, my interest relied much more on the real experience beyond this nostalgia and revitalization. It was the curiosity for the real experience and atmosphere of excess in Istanbul, and to learn it from the real agents.

What is unique about these festivities is the carnivalesque atmosphere that enables a catharsis of society's norms and rules in a limited time and space. The participants experiment with different sets of behavior, emotions and identities that were not accepted as usual. Besides all these, in the context of Istanbul, it is associated with the Rum population due to the social structure of the main centers of the festivities, namely Tatavla and Beyoğlu, which are dominantly Christian neighborhoods. Therefore, the experience of the carnival becomes related to the ethnoreligious identity of non-Muslims in Istanbul. Especially with the nation-state building and socio-political transformations in the 20th century, the carnival becomes a space for encounters and confrontations in the public sphere. The festive atmosphere had embraced tensions but also combined festive spirit of Muslims and Christians in the years in which Ramadan Feast overlapped with the carnival.

Class and ethnicity become prevalent both in the experience and the perception of the carnival. These are distinguished between the different levels of the festivities, which also take private and elite forms by the rising middle class, and bourgeois. The confrontations occur not only between the minority and the majority

but also among the Christians, between the east and west, urban and rural through material culture and cultural performances. It becomes essential to ask what the dynamics of these interactions and appropriations were. What does it tell us about the intercommunal and intracommunal relations? How were they reflected in the performances in the context of late Ottoman and Republican Istanbul?

Carnival festivities are not independent of these transformations. Besides, they are reflexive of the change through unconventional means of expression. The cultural performances, use of space, and the urban experience of the carnival serve as a lens to understand the ordinary people's experience and response to the city in transformation. Pursuing this is unique because it allows access to the voice of the real agents of history, which is, most of the time, silenced and ignored by the official historiography.

The context is especially significant in terms of the experience of the non-Muslim minorities amongst the rising nationalism. Although Rums have been an integral part of the city since the Byzantine period, things started to change with the 19th century. In 1821, Greece had gained its independence from the Ottoman Empire. After that, the majority of Rums chose to remain in Istanbul and Asia Minor. However, the difference was that now there was a Greek nation-state to associate with. The new Greek nation-state had a relatively lower impact on the remaining Rums of the Empire for most of the 19th century because of the reformist atmosphere. However, with the turn of the century, the nationalist sentiments increased and wars intensified. As a result, the atmosphere for the non-Muslims of the Empire became more oppressive.

In the Republican period, the Rum population in Anatolia had shrunken to the community in Istanbul and Thrace due to the population exchange agreement with

Greece. Besides, the new regime and its people had inherited the trauma of the war. The interwar period in Istanbul was a period for a social transformation that aimed to create a homogeneous Turkish-Muslim society, with western values. The carnival experience in this context was unique because it witnessed the transition that the society went through. The public perception of the carnival in that period, in a sense, foreshadowed the upcoming traumatic decades for the Rum community. Thus, the carnival festivities had disappeared from the public sphere, as Rums' visibility decreased due to the violence and discrimination they faced from the state and society at large.

Although the carnival has disappeared from the public space, it did not mean an end to its history. I argue that the carnivalesque had been replaced by the ritualistic aspects of the carnival period. It became limited to the private spaces of households and associations of the community. The tradition had become something related to the concepts of collective identity and memory, which maintained continuity with the collective past. Similarly, the urban revival attempts in recent years were part of the memory politics at work in Turkey. Acts of remembrances and performances of memory, especially from the 1980s onwards, illustrate the perception of the past and festivities from a different angle.

One of the challenges of this thesis had been to gather information about the issues stated above. Resources on everyday life are scattered, which requires an archeology of sources and a careful approach to each one of them. Besides, not all of them cover all aspects of social life. Therefore, I used a wide range of sources from various medium and languages to fill the gaps and connect the issues. Among them are newspapers published in Istanbul in Turkish, French, English and Greek language; memoirs of Rums and foreigners published during the Ottoman and

Republican period; Ottoman state archives. Significantly, oral history interviews also constitute an essential part of my sources on the memory and experience of the carnival, as well as my methodology to approach the historical tradition.

This thesis is structured to trace the questions mentioned above and issues in a wide range of sources. The second chapter sets the theoretical and conceptual framework, through which the thesis navigates and gives a detailed explanation of how the sources were accessed, approached and incorporated. Theories on carnivalesque and festival will be summarized. The conceptual lines of terms like carnival, *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* will be drawn together with their historical background. This thesis tackles the performance of carnivals to look at the Ottoman and Republican society.

Chapter 3 focuses on the *Apokries* festivities on the street level during the late Ottoman period. This chapter gives a spatial analysis of Tatavla and Beyoğlu as the main centers of festivities. After that, the carnivalesque atmosphere's main elements, namely the material culture and cultural performances, are analyzed. It attempts to explain the function of the masks and costumes in carnivalesque, how they were accessed and used. Besides, various plays by *maskaras* in the urban context are analyzed in terms of their connotations and manifestations they contain. Lastly, having accepted that carnival on the street level was relatively a marginal entertainment, the perception of the Ottoman authorities and the broader public will be analyzed in the light of newspapers and the state archives.

Chapter 4 tackles the celebrations in the private spheres in Istanbul. The festivities in private spaces of Rum households, benevolent societies, embassies and the dance halls are distinguished from the street festivities in terms of class and also performances. In this chapter, private celebrations are described and analyzed by

drawing information from newspapers and memoirs. These private carnival festivities had become a ground for display of power and prestige for the middle class and the elite. The relatively positive perception that foreshadows their partial continuity into the Republican era is also analyzed.

Chapter 5 focuses on the Republican era, particularly the period between 1923 and 1942. This chapter is predominantly based on the articles that appeared on the contemporary Turkish press. The first half of the chapter discusses the carnival experience on the street level during the Republican era in which the festive atmosphere has experienced an expansion. This expansion was enhanced by the broader use of transportation technologies, the appropriation of the season's spirit by the institutions of the new regime and during unique occasions in which Ramadan and *Apokries* festivities were combined on the secular, urban spheres. Whereas the second half mainly focuses on the public perception that is shaped around national and religious sentiments as portrayed by the Turkish press. Besides, this chapter discusses the issue of whether the carnival was banned by the state or disappeared naturally as part of the socio-political atmosphere of the Second World War.

Finally, Chapter 6 focuses on the period between the 1940s and 2020, in light of the oral history interviews. This chapter mainly deals with the transmission of the traumatic memory of violent pogroms and migrations, the acts of remembrances in the 1980s and urban revival attempts of the 2000s. This chapter tries to understand how *Apokries* has continued in closed circles of the Rum community, which also enabled maintaining and sustaining the Rum identity and sense of belonging. The final chapter ends with a discussion of the urban revival of *Baklahorani* between 2009 – 2014 and recent, yet unsuccessful attempt in 2020, as a nostalgic commemoration.

CHAPTER 2

FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is an introductory section to the detailed analysis of the periods under study. The theories, concepts and sources referred to in this chapter constitute the backbone of the research to trace the carnivalesque in Istanbul. First of all, it is crucial to theorize and conceptualize the terminology. Therefore, carnival is first approached as part of the broader discipline of performance studies. First of all, this chapter provides a theoretical definition of carnival as a part of the larger genre of festivals and a specific behavioral model of carnivalesque. Following the theoretical framework, carnival is defined as a folk ritual belonging to a liturgical genre for a better understanding of what type of meaning it entails for the participants. Carnival festivities are highly connected with the church's calendar and other Christian rituals. This chapter discusses the origin of carnivals and defines the terms carnival, *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* used by society and as in this thesis.

After a theoretical and conceptual framework, the chapter continues with the overview of the scholarly works covering carnival festivities in Istanbul within the larger literature of social and entertainment history of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. A literary review is followed by a detailed outline of the sources utilized. Since the sources used for this thesis come from a diverse range of medium, it is crucial to explain my approach to each type with a close consideration of their limitations and advantages. In creating the larger narrative of this thesis, written sources, namely state archives, memoirs and newspapers, and oral sources, complement each other.

2.2 Carnival as a concept of Performance Studies

This thesis is a study of performance in the form of a carnival festivity. Therefore, it requires a closer look into the performance studies' relevant theories to frame the performativity both in the public and private realm for a better understanding of society. Richard Schechner emphasizes the importance of performances in his book titled *Performance Studies: An Introduction* published in 2006, as marking identities, bending time and telling stories about the everyday life.[1] According to Alessandro Falassi, festivities as a performative form of this sort are defined by social sciences as the following:

> Periodically recurrent, social occasions 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.[2]

Additionally, carnival as a festive genre, having conformed to the definition mentioned above, has its own set of behavior and performativity at work during the limited time and space in which it occurs. Therefore, a closer look into the festive structure proposed by Alessandro Falassi and the carnivalesque behavior by Mikhael Bakhtin is required before going into their reflections in Istanbul.

2.2.1 Festive structure

Falassi provides typologies of a festival for a better understanding of its structure and process. According to him, the different typologies distinguish between the context, function and social relations of a festival. For example, in terms of the setting, festivals can be urban, which "celebrate prosperity in less archaic forms" or rural, based on "fertility rites and cosmogony myths."[3] At the same time, they can be

[1] Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction,* 28.
[2] Falassi, *Time out of Time,* 2.
[3] Falassi, *Time out of Time,* 3

religious or secular. Besides, another typology is centered around the social roles of power and class relations. This typology distinguishes between festivals "given by the people for the people; given by the establishment for itself; held by the people for the establishment; by the establishment for the people and by the people against the establishment".[4] However, as stated by Falassi, these typologies opposing each other do not exist in a vacuum, but "each type includes elements of the other."[5]

Falassi also proposes a morphology of a festival to provide an archetype for all festivals. He divides festivals into building blocks of rites. Festivals occur in a specific and often exceptional time and space, often through a shift of frame from everyday life, which provides a ground for a temporal and spatial change in the lenses through which people see and react to the world.[6] Falassi calls this rites of valorization, a framing ritual of a festival that modifies the daily time and reclaims a spatial area.[7] The second archetype of all festivals is rites of purification, which is the cleansing of the festive space by water, air or fire to get rid of the evil, the negative or the prohibited.[8] Clean Monday in the orthodox tradition is the most obvious example to this, during which house and utensils are cleared off from the remnants of the food that is no longer allowed during the Lent.

Another rite that belongs to a limited group of festive occasions and rituals is rites of passages that allow people to transform from one stage of their life to another, namely weddings, baptisms or funerals.[9] The most crucial characteristic of carnival behavior consists of rites of reversal, which are symbolic and temporary inversions of the everyday roles in the society, such as gender roles, social order, the

[4] Ibid, 2.
[5] Ibid, 3.
[6] Stoeltje, "Festival," 263.
[7] Falassi, *Time out of Time,* 4.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Falassi, *Time out of Time,* 4.

hierarchy and even space.[10] Inversion is most of the time made possible through masking and wearing costumes, which provide anonymity and disguise.[11] The conspicuous display is another essential rite. What is displayed is sometimes the sacred and the most symbolic element in the society, such as the festive decorations of flowers, lights and flags. Sometimes it is the rulers of the society displaying themselves as guardians and heroes.[12] Festivals symbolically display society's values, social prestige, economy, public statements, special skills and ethnicity is displayed too.[13]

What lies at the heart of the carnival and most of the festivals is conspicuous consumption, which involves excessive drinking and eating. Festivals are eloquent occasions to enjoy an abundance of food.[14] Goode suggests that planning of feasts or special food events are particularly significant for communicating the identity, status and power of a group, family or individual.[15] Food also becomes a medium of exchange, which is also another rite in Falassi's morphology. Rites of exchange, such as fairs, feasts, picnics, gift-giving and visits, serve to create a community.[16] The commensality of food and exchange is symbolically a tool for unifying people and creating a community.[17]

Ritual drama is another aspect of the festivals, which may involve as Falassi suggests staged performances, plays, dance and music. These performances constitute the festive communication through performative methods. These performative and symbolic forms permit the communication of a large quantity of

[10] Ibid.
[11] Magliocco, "Ritual Creativity, Emotions and Body," 36.
[12] Falassi, *Time out of Time,* 4.
[13] Magliocco, "Ritual Creativity, Emotions and Body," 29-30. Beverly J. Stoeltje, "Festival," 267.
[14] Falassi, *Time out of Time*, 4.
[15] Goode, "Food," 239-240.
[16] Falassi, *Time out of Time,* 5.
[17] Boylston, "Food, Life and Material Religion in Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity," 260.

cultural knowledge through shared experience which actively engage the participants.[18] Another rite that is also related to drama and play is rites of competition, which is not necessarily a part of every type of festival. However, competitions serve to create a cathartic moment through the end of the festivals. Games are played and the winners are chosen, the best dancers, best costumes and best singers are selected, which creates another hierarchy within the festive atmosphere itself.[19] Games and competition serve as a transition back to the usual order through the rites of devalorization, which marks the end return to the regular temporal and spatial order.[20] Therefore, Falassi's typologies and morphology help us to categorize and analyze festivals, as a more general category, in a more structured manner. In the light of this structure, *Apokries* festivities in Istanbul can be interpreted as urban festivals organized by the people for the people in the specific space of Tatavla, Pera and Galata. It predominantly involves rites of reversal, drama and play, as well as conspicuous consumption. The details of these rites in the context of Istanbul will be explained in the following chapter.

2.2.2 Bakhtin and carnivalesque

In particular, carnival, following the festive structure, offers a unique atmosphere in which a particular set of behavior are performed. The first theorist to conceptualize the behavior in the carnival setting and see its reminiscences in everyday life and the market place was Michael Bakhtin. He analyzed carnivalesque by looking at Rabelais' literary works on medieval Europe in 1965. Today, Bakhtin's works still stand as an essential work that "affected historical and anthropological studies about

[18] Stoeltje, "Festival," 262 – 263.
[19] Falassi, *Time out of Time,* 5.
[20] Ibid*,* 6.

carnival and carnival-type festivals".[21] In his work, Bakhtin "works through his own experience to provide conceptual categories for the aid of others finding themselves in a similar gap between cosmologies".[22]

Bakhtin believes that one of the ways through which folk culture was manifested was ritual spectacles, namely the carnival pageants, comic shows of the market place.[23] He extends the folk elements of the atmosphere of proper carnivals to other feasts and festivities. Among the peculiar traits of the carnivalesque atmosphere that Bakhtin links laughter, which he sees as an act liberating from any dogmatism in the society. Secondly, the carnivalesque stands somewhere between art and life because of its sensuous character and a strong element of play. Accordingly, this is the reason why the carnivalesque does not distinguish between the spectator and the actor. In other words, it is a participatory performance.[24] In this play and performances, clowns and fools play a central role, as representatives of the carnival spirit. Another trait of the carnivalesque is a temporary suspension of everyday life, which allows people second life, where the order of the world is turned inside out.[25] The logic of the world inside out lies in the continuous shift "from bottom to top, from front to rear, of numerous parodies and transvestites, humiliations, profanations, comic crowning and uncrowning".[26]

Bakhtinian sense of carnivalesque provides a theoretical framework for a better understanding of the behavior in the carnival setting. His theory helps differentiate between everyday life, which is governed by norms and rules, and the carnivalesque, which provides anonymity and space for exuberance. As Bakhtin and

[21] Testa, "Rethinking the Festival: Power and Politics," 50.
[22] Holquist, "Prologue," xiv.
[23] Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World,* 5.
[24] Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World,* 7.
[25] Ibid*,* 8-10.
[26] Ibid, 11.

Falassi emphasize the time and space is very critical in the performance of such behavior. The valorization has been implemented by cycles of nature in pagan cultures and later on by the Christian calendar. To better understand the evolution of the carnival tradition, its historical roots and divergences in the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches.

Overall, in this thesis, the theoretical definition of the carnival is used as the following: the particular festive setting which permits the type of behavior that would not be normally acceptable in everyday life to be performed, in a limited time and space, through different modalities of performances and rites.

2.3 Origins of carnival as a liturgical genre

Carnival is a folk ritual. It is argued that it has pagan origins, the modern carnival of 19th and 20th century is governed along the lines of Christianity. For that reason, it is crucial to define carnival, *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* in liturgical terms to understand what kind of meaning they entailed for the people.

There are two views regarding the origin of the carnivals, one emphasizing the pagan roots and the other suggesting that it is a medieval phenomenon. The view considering that similar festivities may be traced back to the ancient Mediterranean base this on the idea that some festivals of the ancient world resemble the Carnivals of today in numerous ways.[27] For example, Dionysus festivals of the Ancient Greeks each year in spring, honored the god of wine, pleasure, fertility and theatre, through festivities of food, drinks, music and theatrical events.[28] The ancient Romans' corresponding god and festival was Bacchus, a celebration of the beginning of the

[27] Gulevich, *Encyclopedia of Easter, Carnival and Lent,* 54.
[28] Shafto, *Carnival,* 3.

new planting season. Ancient Rome was also home to Saturnalia celebrations, during which people walked on the streets often in the disguise of costumes and turned the social hierarchy upside down for a while, and Lupercalia, in which young men dressed in animal skins and run wild in the streets.[29] Not only these but also "Babylonian and Mesopotamian New Year Festivals, rowdy celebrations that took place in mid-spring, also featured street masquerades." Besides, Purim, the Jewish people's spring holiday, was a similar event that people dressed up in disguise in the pre-Christian period. However, Harris states that the historians have found "no documentable evidence of such a connection with the ancient and pagan rituals" with the carnival.[30]

On the other hand, some writers believe that instead of an uninterrupted continuity from the ancient society, the Roman Catholic Church played an important role in carrying the exuberance of these festivities to today's carnivals. This appropriation was done through the Roman Catholic Church's incorporation of the local festivals into religious ones. It resulted in the carnival festivities growing more popular as time passed.[31] Therefore, even though carnivals share some aspects of ancient festivals, it was more of a medieval European invention. One of the reasons for that the ancient festivals disappeared 400 years before 965 AD, when the first mention of the carnival in a historical document happened.[32] Instead of establishing such continuity from ancient times to the Middle Ages, the view is to date the origin of the carnival from the 11th century onwards. It was not until the social and

[29] Gulevich, *Encyclopedia of Easter, Carnival and Lent,* 55.
[30] Harris, *Carnival and Other Christian Festivals,* 139.
[31] Shafto, *Carnival,* 6-7.
[32] Gulevich, *Encyclopedia of Easter, Carnival and Lent,* 55. The reason for that was the Roman Catholic Church converted Lupercalia into Feast of the Purification. This means that such festivities were no longer called with their ancient names, but with Christian terms. However, until 965 AD, they weren't replace with the term carnival.

intellectual transformation of the 14th and 16th centuries that the European carnivals gained its characteristics.

The Renaissance mentality increased the value of "the light-hearted foolishness as a means of counterbalancing the artificial social demands and seriousness required of people in everyday life."[33] During this era, dressing up as clowns, playing pranks, and mockery became the characteristics of the period. In the 16th century, well-to-do Italian families introduced to Europe the courtly Carnival trend by hosting costume balls. This trend was replicated on the streets through more local and structured celebrations of beautiful floats, large parades.

In this sense carnival created a contrast with Lent, a period of "extreme piety, penance, abstinence and self-restraint."[34] In other words, carnival and Lent were in a seasonal battle each year, as in the famous painting of the Dutch Renaissance painter Pieter Breughel, "The Fight Between Carnival and Lent" (Figure 1). That was part of the reason why by the mid 15th century, criticisms of excessive consumption and creating public disorder began to be raised by the Catholic Church. Active repression occurred in the 17th and 18th centuries as the church introduced new customs to hold services in the church simultaneously with the festivities, intending to invite people for the forgiveness of their sins during the carnival. Despite this repression and discontent from the authorities, carnival celebrations continued and transformed.[35]

In some regions, the celebrations faded away. However, in much of southern Europe, they continued. As the Romantic movement of the 18th and 19th century tended to idealize the traditions, the dirty and aggressive customs of the carnivals, like throwing oranges, water or flour, were replaced with cleaner and gentler customs

[33] Ibid.
[34] Shafto, *Carnival,* 7.
[35] Gulevich, *Encyclopedia of Easter, Carnival and Lent,* 56.

of tossing confetti and flowers. As the parades grew further, the carnivals gained more institutionalized and structured characteristics in Europe.[36]

Figure 1. Pieter Breughel, The Fight Between Carnival and Lent, 1559.

2.4 Defining the terms: Carnival, *Apokries* and *Baklahorani*

Carnival is a specific period of festivities that is marked in the liturgical calendar of the Christian world. Although it exists in Catholic and Orthodox traditions, they have divergences in terms of terminology, timing and rituals around that period. Therefore, it is important to clearly define the terms carnival, *Apokries* and *Baklahorani*, as they are going to be used in this thesis, together with their historical development and meaning in their subsequent cultures.

2.4.1 Carnival: Catholic tradition

Carnival is also used as a general name given to the period starting with January 6, Epiphany and ends with Ash Wednesday or Clean Monday, preceding the Lent, which is the 40 days of fasting before the Easter celebrations. Although Lent and

[36] Ibid, 57.

Easter are part of the institutionalized Christianity, which commemorates and celebrates the resurrection, the carnival comes from a more folkloric background. To illustrate, Lent is the 40 days period during which Christians replicate Jesus' sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert leading up to the crucifixion. The custom in this period is to fast from animal products and any festivities. Following Lent is the Easter Sunday, which is the day for celebrating the resurrection of Jesus and the Easter Week.[37] Consequently, this period marks the transition from "fasting to feasting, mourning to rejoicing, from darkness to dawn."[38]

Rather than completing this Biblical story, Carnival stands as a response to religious observance and functions as "the last fling before these hardships" of Lent.[39] The last three days through the end always mark the climax of the festivities.[40] Hence, regarding the religious calendar, Carnival serves as a transition from Christmas to Easter. It is also a ritual on its own to celebrate the transition from winter to spring. In other words, Carnival is a kind of rebellion against the norms and rules of the institutionalized religion, but through being attached to the religious calendar.

The rituals associated with Carnival season are most commonly related to food and festivities. One proof of this lies in the etymology of the word 'carnival.' It is a combination of Latin words *caro*/*carn*, meaning flesh or meat, and *levare*, meaning to put away.[41] Therefore, the period signals that Lent is coming and, subsequently, quitting animal product consumption. One of the reasons why the food is so central is that people use this opportunity to indulge in the food for the last time

[37] BBC, "Lent," *BBC*, 22 June, 2009. https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/holydays/lent_1.shtml accessed on 24.03.2020.
[38] Gulevich, *Encyclopedia of Easter, Carnival and Lent,* xiii.
[39] Ibid*,* 51.
[40] Shafto, *Carnival,* 9.
[41] Oxford dictionary https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/carnival

before it is prohibited: “meat, alcohol, eggs, milk and sugar.”[42] That’s why the days leading up to Lent, Fat Thursday or Fat Tuesday (*Mardi Gras*),[43] “earned the nickname fat because people try to use up animal fat on those days”[44] and similar customs exist on other parts of the Christian world. In addition to food, music, dancing, parades, balls are among the period's special activities. The custom is to dress up in disguise and attempt to hide one’s identity from one another.[45] The anonymity allows people to engage in a spontaneous play-acting with other participants. The topsy-turvy nature of the atmosphere provides a space for mockery and exuberant behavior outside of the norms of social conduct.[46] In Western Europe and the Catholic communities, carnivals evolved more in the urban milieu, whereas in Eastern Europe, carnival tradition developed more as a rural tradition.[47]

Although the word has a Latin and Catholic origin, it refers not only to the specific Catholic rituals today. Nevertheless, instead, it is used as an all-embracing word to refer to all similar traditions. Therefore, in this thesis, the word carnival is used as a general term referring to all types of pre-Lenten celebrations occurring in the broader Christian world.

2.4.2 *Apokries*: Carnivalesque in the Greek-Orthodox liturgy

In the Greek-Orthodox world, the corresponding period and festivities are called *Apokria* (*αποκριά,* singular) or *Apokries* (*απόκριες,* plural). Linguistically *Apokries* is the Greek equivalent of the word carnival. *Apo* means from, and *kreas* means meat. Therefore, *Apokries,* in Greek, signals the coming of Lent and getting away from

[42] Shafto, *Carnival,* 11.
[43] Tania Gulevich, *Encyclopedia of Easter, Carnival and Lent,* 51-52.
[44] Ibid*,* 51-52.
[45] Shafto, *Carnival,* 11.
[46] Gulevich, *Encyclopedia of Easter, Carnival and Lent,* 52.
[47] Mesnil, “Place and Time in the Carnivalesque Festival,” 186.

meat, and at the same time, the period marking the festivities. In Greek, the word *Karnavali* (*Καρναβάλι*) also have referred to the same period and been used interchangeably with *Apokries.* In this thesis, I will use the word *Apokries* when primarily referring to the Greek-Orthodox celebrations on the street level in Istanbul.

Apokries is part of the broader context of European and Mediterranean carnivals. Connections in the broader Mediterranean world allowed encounters and interactions. It has also been reflected in the realm of the festivities. The Ionian islands, which had been a Venetian territory until the 18th century and cities like Patras, which was under the Venetian influence, have had a longer carnival tradition. For example, Athens never had such a tradition under the Ottoman rule before the Greek revolution in 1821.[48] However, northern Greece and the islands on the Aegean Sea had their rural traditions, with more pagan associations, under the Ottoman rule.

Like in the western carnival tradition, *Apokries* had attracted discontent. The Eastern Orthodox Church opposed it because of its pagan aspects.[49] Especially from the second half of the 19th century onwards, the urban carnivals went through a transformation similar to that of Europe, in which the carnival tradition turned into a modernized, civilized and institutionalized parades.[50] Although the folk tradition continues in many parts of Greece, one of the most popular, grand and institutionalized parades takes place in Patras and in northern Greece, such as Xanthi.

Although carnivals in Catholic societies and the Greek-Orthodox tradition come from the same root, the religio-cultural background causes slight divergences in rituals and customs. In contrast to Catholics, the Greek-Orthodox custom is to

[48] Potamianos, "The carnival of Athens, 1800-1940. Popular culture, bourgeois culture, hegemony" *RCHumanities.gr*. https://www.rchumanities.gr/en/nikos-potamianos/ accessed on 26.03.2020.
[49] Cowan, "Women, Men and Pre-Lenten Carnival in Northern Greece," 200.
[50] Potamianos, "The carnival of Athens, 1800-1940. Popular culture, bourgeois culture, hegemony" *RCHumanities.gr*. https://www.rchumanities.gr/en/nikos-potamianos/ accessed on 26.03.2020.

begin cutting particular food in the pre-Lenten period. Therefore, it allows different rituals around food to be incorporated into *Apokries* celebrations. The first week of *Apokries*, which begins with the 'opening of Triodion', a book of hymns to be chanted on Sunday, is a fast-free week. The second week, called *Kreatini*, is the last week to consume meat until the Meatfare Sunday, or Sunday of the Last Judgement in biblical terms. The most famous event in this week is known as *Tsiknopempti* or Barbeque Thursday. Large quantities of meat are barbequed and shared with friends and family in fields, taverns and houses. The third and the last week of *Apokries* is called *Tyrofagou*, which means that it is the last moment to consume dairy products. The Sunday of this week, Cheesefare Sunday or the Sunday of Forgiveness in biblical terms, is the final day of *Apokries*, and the last day to consume dairy products.[51] However, unlike in Europe, *Apokries* does not end on this last Sunday but instead extends to the first Monday of Lent, called *Kathari Deftera* in Greek, and Clean Monday in English.

2.4.3 *Kathari Deftera* (Clean Monday): Last day of *Apokries*, first day of Lent

Kathari Deftera has a very paradoxical nature. The reasons for that is it is both the first day of Lent, the period for fasting and the last day of *Apokries*, the period of festivities and exuberance. In other words, it serves as a transition between two different periods. On *Kathari Deftera*, one of the primary purposes is to clean the house and have a mental preparation for the 40 days of fasting.[52] At the same time, joy is not completely abandoned, as it is also the tradition of the day to participate in the festivities for the last time. As a combination of the two rituals, on *Kathari*

[51] "Greek Customs," *Hellenic Republic* https://www.mfa.gr/missionsabroad/en/about-greece/history-and-culture/culture.html?page=8 accessed on 26.03.2020.

Deftera, people go outside as a family, have a picnic with foods special for fasting period, fly kites if the weather allows and enjoy the festivities.[53]

There are also very local customs and performances on *Kathari Deftera* which vary from region to region, such as *karnavalia*, people wearing a unique costume of goatskin, shepherd's bells and colorful headdresses in Sohos[54]; *Boules*, a mock wedding performance from Naoussa[55]; *Agas* celebration, a mock trial of the villagers by an Ottoman Pasha, in Mesta Village on Chios Island[56]; daubing in Xanthi[57], masquerading in Skyros Island[58].

2.5 Carnivalesque and *Apokries* in Asia Minor

Carnivalesque was not foreign to the society in Asia Minor and, more particularly, Istanbul. The carnivalesque behavior was not limited to the three weeks of the carnival period but was also performed during other rites. Metin And writes in his book on Dionysos and the villagers in Asia Minor that in these Dionysiac revelries, Turks, Rum, Greeks from Asia Minor, were intertwined, especially in Thrace and Black Sea region.[59]

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[53] Menzel, "Clean Monday, Everything You Need to Know," *Greek Reporter Greece,* March 2, 2014. https://greece.greekreporter.com/2014/03/02/clean-monday-everything-you-need-to-know/ accessed on 26.03.2020.
[54] Cowan, "Women, Men and Pre-Lenten Carnival in Northern Greece," 195, 200.
[55] Babali, "Boules: The Carnival of Naousa. Folklore or Symbolism?," 230-233. This performance is today a commemoration of the Greek revolution. During the revolution, young Greeks used to make sound with their coins to show their enthusiasm and support the revolution. Also, the performance used to be a way to make Turks believe that it is a real wedding so that Greeks would collect money and food for the rebels, send messages to mountains and recruit new people for the fight without their purpose being revealed.
[56] "Clean Monday Celebrations from Greece," *The Greek Observer,* February 19, 2018. https://thegreekobserver.com/blog/2018/02/19/clean-monday-celebrations-greece/ accessed on 26.03.2020
[57] "Clean Monday Celebrations from Greece," *The Greek Observer,* February 19, 2018. https://thegreekobserver.com/blog/2018/02/19/clean-monday-celebrations-greece/ accessed on 26.03.2020
[58] Amanatidis, ""Coming into Being": Metaphors of Self and Becoming in Carnival, on the Aegean Island of Skyros".
[59] And, *Dionisos ve Anadolu Köylüsü,* 41.

Carnivalesque was not limited to the *Apokries* period. It used to be a central element of entertainment in the rituals during the Christmas period, especially in the medieval and early modern era. For example, as Max Harris quotes from Tilliot, an 18th-century historian, "as early as the ninth century, a mock patriarch was elected in Constantinople, burlesquing the Eucharist and riding through the city streets on an ass."[60] Another example is the mummers of the Black Sea region, which have survived until this day. Mummers, which are people disguised in goatskin and imitating a goat, wander around the villages after New Year's Eve, especially around January 6, as And writes. An essential element in these carnivalesque plays in the Black Sea region was sacrificing the mummer. And further states that in these festivities, Turkish and Rum figures were co-existent.[61] It can be said that carnivalesque behavior was not limited to a specific period, but instead was prevalent in the society in different forms and period.

On the other hand, certain parts of Asia Minor were known to have hosted *Apokries* festivities. The information on the carnival tradition in Thrace comes from R. M. Dawkins, a British archaeologist who served as the director of the British School at Athens between 1906 – 1913. In his article "The Modern Carnival in Thrace and the Cult of Dionysus," published in 1906, he accounts for his observations of the carnival in a specific town called Vize, which, as he notes, was at the center of the Christian villages. Although the festivities were no longer in "its fullest" at the time Dawkins visited, he was still able to take note of the masquerades in the city.[62] Among them were two *kalogeri* (*καλογὲροι*), whose disguise was a headdress of goatskin stuffed out with hay, a mask, sheep-bells tied to the waist; two

[60] Harris, *Carnival and Other Christian Festivals,* 140.
[61] And, *Dionisos ve Anadolu Köylüsü,* 43.
[62] Dawkins, "The Modern Carnival in Thrace and the Cult of Dionysus," 193.

boys dressed as girls or brides; a third female character called *Babo*, who is a man dressed as older women; gypsies; and policemen or gendarmes.[63] According to And, a similar festivity takes place in Edirne. On the last day of the carnival, probably on *Kathari Deftera*, a fire is started. The central figure, called *Köpek Bey*, puts a basket full of garlic and onion on his head. He throws seeds around and holds a stick with horseradish attached, reminding of Phallus as And writes, in the light of the accounts of foreign travelers.[64]

Regarding the festivities on the Aegean coast, a graphic book titled *Ayvali* illustrates a narrative of the carnival festivities in Ayvalık. The book, which was in 2015, is an illustrated edition of narratives by four different writers across three generations. Part of the narratives belongs to Photis Kontoglou, a Greek writer and painter who lived between 1895 – 1965. He narrates *Apokries* festivities in Ayvalık, his home, as part of the joyful memories of the past and portrays them as an opportunity in which "Helen spirit" was enjoyed.[65] Kontoglou's narrative goes further in the details of the costumes, such as Greek military uniforms, Great Alexander, Hector or other Ancient Greek gods and goddesses.[66] Different groups would perform plays about ancient tales. The carnivalesque atmosphere would be enhanced by alcohol consumption, especially *Mastika*.[67] Music, traditional dances and revelry would prevail in the town until the next day, *Kathari Deftera*, during which they eat all day long on a beach or an island.[68]

It is hard to date the beginning of celebrations in Istanbul. The earliest written documents in Ottoman archives and newspapers go back as earliest as the end of the

[63] Ibid, 193-197.
[64] And, *Dionisos ve Anadolu Köylüsü,* 42.
[65] Soloup, *Ayvali,* 72.
[66] Ibid*,* 73.
[67] Soloup, *Ayvali,* 79.
[68] Ibid*,* 94.

1840s and beginning of the 1850s. Charalambos Theodorelis Rigas writes in his Ph.D. thesis that in the three volumes of Skarlatos Byzantinos' account on Constantinople, written in the 1860s, there is no mention of the carnival. He suggests that this is either "an omission and carnival customs have existed in continuity since Byzantine times or they were re-invented in the 19th century". He also writes that Koukoules provided evidence for the carnival tradition in the Byzantine era as the Greek-Orthodox church stood against it due to its pagan past.[69] Instead of a proper chronology, what can be said here is that carnival tradition might not have been continuous through centuries. On top of that, the late 19th-century public space emergence might have resulted in its revitalization and popularization again.

In Istanbul, the celebrations did not occur all over the city but mainly in places where the Rum population predominantly resided. Regarding the larger city of Istanbul, two specific places stand out as the main centers of the celebrations: Heybeliada, one of the Prince's Islands on the Marmara Sea, also known as *Halki* in Greek, and Tatavla, an exclusively Rum neighborhood in the mainland Istanbul, within the borders of Beyoğlu municipal region. On *Apokries* festivities in Heybeliada, the recently translated book by Akillas Millas gives detailed first-person narratives on the festivities. He states that the festivities in Çam Limanı, Heybeliada, used to be the second most popular festivities in Istanbul.[70] During the three weeks, people would not sleep; the gardens would be wide open for the masquerades to enter and visit the households.[71] On Çam Limanı, people would eat and drink in taverns, play music and dance, and perform some significant plays. The most prominent one, as he narrates, was a turtle float made from cardboard and rotten

[69] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century," 113
[70] Milas, *Heybeliada,* 341.
[71] Ibid, 341.

lemon peels. The young and drunk boys of the island would go underneath the float and move it slowly through the island.[72] Similar to the other places, the festivities and revelry would continue until the morning light.[73]

On mainland Istanbul, the leading center for similar *Apokries* festivities was Tatavla, which spread to neighboring Pera and Galata. Although the festivities in Pera and Galata was more of an international character with the involvement of Christians from other backgrounds, Tatavla portrayed a Rum and Orthodox character. Although the revelry continued throughout the three weeks, the climax and the most famous event of the whole period was the fair in Tatavla on *Kathari Deftera*, also called *Baklahorani*.

2.5.1 *Baklahorani*: *Kathari Deftera* tradition of Rums in Tatavla

Baklahorani (*Μπακλαχορανι*) is exclusively used for naming the fair and the festivities on *Kathari Deftera* only in Tatavla during the 19th and the early 20th century. In other words, a similar event with the same name does not exist elsewhere in Greece and Asia Minor. This is what makes it a unique and local event. Also, the name itself is reflexive of these characteristics, which gets its form from the very locality it is happening. The word *Baklahorani* does not have a correspondence in Modern Greek. It is a combination of the words bakla, name of a specific vegetable highly consumed during the fasting period, and horan, which is not a meaningful word by itself but has a disputable origin. Melisinos Hristodulu, mentions the origin of the name in the footnotes of his book on the history of Tatavla. He suggests that *horan* comes from the Farsi word *hudern*, which means "I eat."[74] Therefore,

[72] Ibid, 342.
[73] Ibid, 342.
[74] Hristodulu, *Tatavla Tarihi,* 65.

according to Hristodulu's definition, *Baklahorani* refers to eating *bakla*, or those who eat *bakla*. On the other hand, some suggest that *horan* comes from the Greek word for dance, *horos* (*xorós*). Therefore, this suggests a meaning referring to the dances during the festivities. However, the name itself might have a metaphoric connotation. In his memoir, Haris Spataris suggests that the word might be referring to 'freedom in the season of bakla'.[75] Thus, it would not be wrong to conclude that *Baklahorani* of Tatavla reflected its local yet cosmopolitan and festive character through its name and the costumes, masks, and performances it hosted in its festive space. That is why it has been subject to various scholarly and non-scholarly studies as an urban phenomenon of the late Ottoman and early Republican Istanbul.

2.6 Literary review

The literature on the carnival festivities in Istanbul is found in the works focusing on the city's social history. There is a lack of monographic works on *Apokries* or *Baklahorani* either in Turkish, in English or Greek. Among the works which give information and narratives about the festivities are scholarly works on the history of entertainment and social history of Istanbul and especially of the Rum community; works of independent researchers on Beyoğlu and Tatavla; and pieces on the food culture.

The works on the history of entertainment focus mostly on imperial celebrations and festivals and other performances such as shadow puppets and theatres. The imperial celebrations and festivals were organized and sponsored by the palace for the special occasions of the prince's circumcision ceremony or the princess' weddings and had many carnivalesque elements in play. Historian Derin

[75] Spataris, *Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz,* 37.

Terzioğlu's article on the imperial circumcision festival of 1582 utilizes Bakhtin's carnivalesque in analyzing the festivities on the street level during the imperial celebrations of 1582.[76] Similarly, the substantial part of "Celebration, Entertainment, and Theatre in the Ottoman World" edited by historians Suraiya Faroqhi and Arzu Öztürkmen in 2004 focuses on imperial festivities. However, carnival as a genre is not in the scope of any of the works except for Meropi Anastassiadou's article "Marking Urban Identity, Dividing up Urban Time: Festivities among the Greeks of Istanbul in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." The article focuses on the history of the Greek-Orthodox religious festivals and their relation to the expression of group identity. She approaches carnival and *Baklahorani* as part of the festivities taking place in the urban context of the Ottoman Istanbul and forming an important place in the city's urban memory. She also briefly mentions how it started to transform with the end of the empire and disappeared, especially after the fire in Tatavla in 1929.[77] It is described as part of the disappearance of the broader Rum festivities from the public eye, including the Ephiphany, January 6, which has recently been revived. She does not only focus on the public aspect but also touches on the food culture, as part of the rituals of *Kathari Deftera*, which most often occur in private households.[78] Anastassiadou's piece provides a valuable framework for studying *Apokries* as part of the Greek-Orthodox urban experience.

A recent Ph.D. thesis by Charalambos Theodorelis Rigas titled "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century", reads the transformation of Kurtuluş through the carnival tradition.[79] He

[76] Terzioglu, "The Ottoman Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation," 84-100.
[77] Anastassiadou, "Marking urban identity, dividing up urban time," 241-242.
[78] Anastassiadou, "Marking urban identity, dividing up urban time," 245.
[79] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century," 109-126.

does not only outline the dynamics behind the neighborhood's decay and revival but also historicize the carnival tradition. His significant contribution to the existing literature is that he looks at the Greek author's writings like Skarlatos Byzantinos, Koukoules and Leandros Mihas. Besides, he looks at the revival attempts between 2009-2014 as an attempt to reclaim Tatavla again.

Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet's book titled *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul* also mentions *Apokries* scenes. They utilize the examples of costumed people, dances and alcohol consumption in Beyoğlu, to illustrate the life in a foreign quarter and the transformation that Istanbul was going through in the 19th century.[80] On the other hand, historian Hakan Kaynar uses the case of the carnival as an example of the new nation state's modernization project in Istanbul, in a cosmopolitan city. He suggests that as the demography has changed, the traditions have transformed and adapted to new environments. However, the collective identity of being an Istanbulite remained as in the example of the Rums carnival becoming a Turkish space from the 1930s onwards, as people from Aksaray, Topkapı, Edirnekapı flowed to Kurtuluş for the revelry.[81] Both works, focusing on different periods in the city's history, take the festivities as an example to understand the transformation that the society and the city is going through.

Last but not least, not only the discipline of history but also anthropology is interested in the carnival in terms of its ritualistic aspects. Nurdan Türker's Ph.D. thesis published in 2015 focuses on the relation between space, memory and ritual among the Rum community. Her work is limited on 3 essential festivities in the Greek-Orthodox tradition: *Dodekaimeron,* Easter period and *Hagion Miron, Apokries* and *Baklahorani* are only briefly mentioned as part of the Easter rituals,

[80] Boyar and Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul,* 315-316.
[81] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme,* 272.

which comprise a more significant place in the Greek-Orthodox memory due to its broader religious importance.[82] She focuses on the meaning of the carnival rituals in a short section, as expressed by Rums in interviews. A significant contribution she makes is to state that although the celebrations had been interrupted for more than 70 years now, the public celebrations have been carried out in the domestic spaces of schools and associations.[83] Her argument provides a challenging view of the assumption that *Apokries* was banned or lost in Istanbul.

Independent researchers have contributed the literature through the works on the history of Kurtuluş. They are mostly monographic works focusing on Greek neighborhoods in Istanbul, namely Beyoglu, Tatavla and Halki, and Greek cuisine. Orhan Türker, an independent researcher and tourist guide, had published several volumes on the historical transformation that the neighborhood in Istanbul went through starting from 1993. His monographs focus on one neighborhood with significant Rum heritage and how they transformed into what they are in the present. Some of them are titled *From Pera to Beyoğlu*, *From Tatavla to Kurtuluş*, *From Halki to Heybeliada*. These books give place to the carnival celebrations in these regions, by deriving information from Turkish and Greek newspapers and memoirs of the time. His work focuses on the celebrations on the street level.

Similarly, Sula Bozis, who is an independent researcher on the Greek culture and the Greek cuisine, collected her researches and interviews in a book on Istanbul's Rum cuisine. Her book focuses on the food rituals around *Kathari Deftera* and the carnival celebrations in the ballrooms and on the streets as Greek newspapers of the time write. The works of these two independent researchers

[82] Türker, *Vatanım Yok Memleketim Var,* 138.
[83] Ibid, 140.

provide Turkish quotations from Greek primary sources. That's why they stand as very valuable and the most accessible sources on the carnival.

On top of that, all these secondary studies mentioned above provide valuable introductions to different aspects of the carnival celebrations in Istanbul. Although they are not comprehensive works on the carnival culture, they are valuable in the sense that they recognize a minority ritual and tradition as part of Istanbul's culture. However, the overall picture that they together paint has setbacks and leaves gaps in the detailed and historical picture of the carnival, which I tend to focus on. First of all, they lack a thick description of the carnivalesque cosmology in Istanbul's carnivals. Instead of contextualizing and historicizing the structural details of carnivals, they use descriptive narratives to illustrate the period under study. This risks falling into a nostalgic understanding of the past.

Secondly, the explanation for the transformation that the carnival tradition went through with the republican period remains vague. Such a transformation needs to be linked with the social, cultural and political developments in the larger society. Interpreting such a transformation as a loss, or disappearance runs the risk of completely silencing the power of the ritual that still finds a way to exist, especially in the private spaces. Therefore, such silencing also means completely removing the human agency and non-Muslim's agency from history. Besides, since these works date earlier, they also do not incorporate the celebrations from the 1980s onwards and especially the recent attempts in the last ten years to revive it again. Therefore, for more comprehensive research of the carnivals in Istanbul, this thesis uses several primary sources and methodologies.

2.7 Primary sources

The search for carnivals in Istanbul in contemporary sources produced during the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic is challenging. One important reason is the language barrier. Since I focus on the Greek-Orthodox carnivals, language stands out as a crucial barrier in accessing sources.[84] This thesis utilizes documents in Ottoman-Turkish, Modern Turkish, English, French and Greek. Another reason is that as a popular entertainment, carnivals have never left a single and in-depth account, such as the surname tradition of the imperial ceremonies.[85] Instead, the primary sources mentioning the carnival festivities in Istanbul are very dispersed to a wide range of materials, including state archives, newspapers and memoirs.

On the other hand, the written documents alone do not fill the gaps in the general narrative. One reason for that is *Apokries*, although transformed, is still a living tradition in a different form. Therefore, it is still alive in the memories of the Rums alive today, as transmitted through generations. Therefore, oral history interviews provide an essential set of narratives to illustrate, especially after the 1950s. By incorporating the oral history interviews, not only the experience of the period after the 1950s is accessed, but also the function of the rituals in the formation of the collective identity and memory is understood better.

[84] Before 1970s, Katheravusa, an old version of Greek language, was used in literary circles and newspapers. It is not only Greek but the old Greek that creates a double barrier. The literacy rate of Katheravusa is very low among Rum community in Istanbul.

[85] The accounts of imperial ceremonies of the Ottoman court were written down and illustrated in Surname (festival books). See Öztürkmen, "Performance, Iconography and Narrative in Ottoman Festive Events"; Terzioglu, "The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation"; Yelçe, "Evaluating Three Imperial Festivals: 1524, 1530 and 1539"; Sevinçli, "Festivals and their documentation: surnames covering the festivities of 1675 and 1724"; Zarinebaf, "Asserting military power in a world turned upside down: the Istanbul Festivals of 1582 and 1638"; Serin, "Festivals of the 'July 10' in the Young Turk Era"; Çavuş, "State power as performance: Royal wedding festivities and the Ottoman spectacular state during the Period of Mahmud II".

Therefore, before diving deep into the analysis of the written and oral sources, it would be useful to explain how they were approached. This is a crucial point to make because all the sources utilized in this thesis come from different medium, therefore having their advantages and limitations. In other words, each type of primary source illuminates a different aspect of the overall phenomenon. For a critical approach to these sources, a detailed overview of written and oral sources will be given.

2.7.1 Written sources

Written sources of different sorts have unique characteristics that should be approached critically. The fact that written sources, which had been put down on a paper by someone on a particular time and place, have survived until today, does not assign the sources any extra credibility and accuracy. First of all, it is important to acknowledge that written sources had been written by someone with a particular motivation and agenda for a specific audience. Therefore, what is crucial in approaching these written documents is to keep in mind the author's motivation and intended audience, specific to the time and place in which the document was produced. In this thesis, the written documents used are state documents, newspapers, and memoirs, all of which have different motivations and audiences. In this section, the advantages and limitations of each sort of written documents will be overviewed.

First of all, the official state documents of the Ottoman Empire in the Ottoman State Archives of the President of the Turkish Republic in Istanbul provide the state's perspective, mostly offering a top-down narrative. The documents listed under the keywords like *karnaval*, *panayır*, *Apukurya*, *kostüm*, *maske*, *maskara* and

Tatavla regarding Istanbul belonged to institutions concerning the security of the city like

General Directorate of Security (*Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti and Zabtiye Nezareti*) in Yıldız Palace archives; imperial decrees issued by Supreme Court (*Meclis-i Vala*), which was responsible for issuing new law and controlling their application; and documents from the Office of Private Secretary *(Mabeyn Başkitabeti*) which was responsible for presenting the recent news to the Sultan in Yıldız Palace. For this reason, these documents projected the authority's point of view about the events and people that were to be concerned about, namely those that were against the public order and security.[86] Although the language of these documents is restrictive in accessing the voice of the ordinary people, they partially allow us scenes from the carnival venues with unique details, that are often neglected in memoirs and newspapers. Namely, the places, affiliation of the people, costumes and where they have acquired them are given in detail in the police reports and the interrogations of these people. In this sense, these state documents are valuable sources to see the margins of the carnival, which involved Muslim people, people with threatening costumes and venues which state paid utmost attention for security.

Secondly, newspapers provide a unique perspective into the life on the streets and the details of the elite events closed to the public. For the scope of this thesis, I surveyed the newspapers in English and French, newspapers in Greek published in Ottoman Istanbul, newspapers in Ottoman Turkish and the Turkish newspapers from the Republican era, limited to the three weeks of carnival

and *Apokries* including *Kathari Deftera*. Each type of newspaper was written for a different audience. Foreign newspapers, namely *Journal de Constantinople* in French

[86] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme*, 14.

and *Levant Herald* in French and English, provide announcements about the upcoming balls and also published detailed descriptions of the balls organized by the embassies and associations. Through these newspapers, the details about the balls such as the exact time and place, the decorations in the buildings, food and drinks served, guest lists, guests' costumes, gifts distributed, dances, songs and performances are accessed.

Similarly, in Greek newspapers of the period, namely *Neologos* and *Tachydromos,* similar announcements of the association balls and the information like the dress code, entrance fee, and host of the ball are given. As the non-Turkish newspapers in the Ottoman Empire shed light on the festivities indoors, the Turkish publications in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic focus more on the streets. In *İkdam*, a daily published from 1894 to 1927 in Istanbul, it is possible to see ads announcing the ordinary dance parties thrown during the carnival period and also simple announcements regarding the period like the fair in Tatavla or the holiday for the Greek newspapers due to *Kathari Deftera*.

On the other hand, in *Servet-i Fünun*, a literary magazine published between 1891 and 1944, there were longer and more detailed pieces, most of them written by Ahmet İhsan, about the history of the carnivals and the carnival celebrations in Istanbul, in which carnival tradition is mostly conveyed as the Rum and foreign tradition. From the early republican period, newspapers such as *Akşam*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Tan*, *Tanin* and *Yeni Adam* have published articles focusing on the origins of the carnivals and description of the carnival scenes from Tatavla together with photos. From the second half of the 30s onwards, the articles started to focus more on the discomfort that revelries created and the criminal activities during the carnival period.

It is also important to mention the prominent journalists of the early 20th century. They were followers of the trend called city letters (*şehir mektupları*), in which stories from daily life in Istanbul were written. Today, we can access most of these pieces, thanks to the publication of books that compile the author's articles in various newspapers. These are valuable sources in the way they account the streets of Istanbul from the first-person perspective. However, these sources are also critical in the sense that they provide Muslims' perspectives. Ahmet Rasim was one of the pioneers of this trend of corresponding from the everyday life of the city. His piece in *Old Obscenity* (*Fuhş-i Atik*), which is also published under the item *Apukurya* in Reşat Ekrem Koçu's *Encyclopedia of Istanbul* (*İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*) and *City Letters* (*Şehir Mektupları*), provides a perspective of a slightly less prejudiced view of a young and curious Ottoman boy of the revelries in the carnival. Sermet Muhtar Alus, who also submitted a short description for *Encyclopedia of Istanbul* compiled his newspaper articles in a book. As can be understood from the title of his book, his articles on the carnival period, written in the 1940s about early 20th century Ottoman Istanbul and published in various newspapers, were somewhat nostalgic reminiscences of his youth and lively carnival atmosphere in the city with interesting details. Similarly, Refik Ahmet Sevengil, Ahmet Cemalettin Saraçoğlu, Balıkhane Nazırı Ali Rıza Efendi provide valuable sources on the Muslim perspective and the revelries in Istanbul during the carnival period. Regarding the carnivalesque cosmology, they constitute a rich source. However, I approach them with attention because they give this information from the perspective of an outsider and loaded with prejudices.

The last set of written sources that I used in my thesis extensively is memoirs, which are especially crucial for conveying the voice and experience of the real

agents of the past carnivals in Istanbul. In this sense, memoirs distinguish from the state archives and newspaper articles. However, the critical thing in approaching memoirs is to acknowledge that they are written a certain period later than the actual events. Therefore, the dynamics of memory and remembrances should be taken into account. Most of the memoirs are nostalgic in the sense that they praise the good, happy days of cosmopolitan Istanbul, where everyone tolerates each other. The memoirs I used in my thesis belonged to different people from different backgrounds. Among them were Rums, Turkish, Levantines and foreigners, who lived in Greek and foreign neighborhoods like Tatavla, Beyoğlu and Halki or were from the elite circles. Therefore, each one of them had a unique voice.

The earliest memoirs come from foreigners living in Istanbul. Among them was Said Duhani, a Syrian-Lebanese Christian who spent his youth in Istanbul because of his father's position in the Ottoman state as the minister of foreign affairs. Duhani's memoir accounting his experiences between 1860 and 1920, narrates the life of the bourgeoisie in Beyoglu and their balls. On the other hand, Fredrich Schrader a German philologist, art historian and professor who lived in Istanbul between 1891 and 1918, published his memoirs in Germany in 1917. He provides a more learned perspective to his observations of the oriental carnival as he links the carnivals in Istanbul to its Byzantine past and gives a short history of Tatavla. In other words, his interpretation of the festivities is, in a way, draws a continuity from the Byzantine Constantinople. Another foreigner was Harrison Griswold Dwight, an American, born in Istanbul in 1875, who published his memoirs of Istanbul in 1913. He narrates the Greek traditions of *Apokries* and *Kathari Deftera* in the city compared to its Italian counterpart, as a bridge between the east and the west.

The Rum subjects who left memoirs were not homogeneous in terms of their background neither. This diversity allows a broader perspective of the Rum carnivals. For example, Yorgo Zarifi, born in 1880 in Istanbul, was a prominent member of a banker family, wrote in his memoir about his mother's charity balls given during the carnival period in the first decades of the 20th century. On the other hand, corresponding to the same period was Haris Spataris, who accounts for his memoirs as a child secretly going to *Baklahorani*, which was prohibited for the underage by teachers and families because of the open sexuality performed during the festivities. Thanks to the memoirs of Maria Yordanidou and Eleni Halkusi, women's perspective about the Ottoman carnivals, especially the festivities in Tatavla is not missing. Marianna Yerasimos' memoir and recipe book that she recently published in 2019 serves as a valuable source. It allows us to get an idea about how *Kathari Deftera* was celebrated in private households, thanks to Yerasimos' accounts of her grandparents. Another valuable source that offers unique narratives from Halki, another important venue in Istanbul where Rum community lived predominantly and celebrated Apokreas and *Baklahorani*, comes from Akillas Millas' recently translated book titled Halki, in which he accounts the memoirs of the elders of the island as transmitted to him. Late Giovanni Scagnamillo's memoirs titled *Memories of a Levantine from Beyoğlu* (*Bir Levanten'in Beyoğlu Anıları*) is also unique in the sense that it conveys the experience and the perspective of the Levantines in Beyoğlu in the Ottoman period, from his mother's perspective and at the beginning of the republic from his perspective. The Greek and Levantine memoirs are much more detailed, in a sense that it attempts to record and preserve the past as it exists in their memories, which will never come back.

Lastly, Turkish authors' memoirs from the republican period are valuable in the sense that they convey the Turkish-Muslim point of view and reflect the social transformation that Turkey has been going through. For example, Hüseyin Irmak, born in Sivas and moved to Kurtuluş with his family when he was 2 in the early 60s, wrote his first-hand witness accounts of the transformation Kurtuluş went demographically. Irmak, experiencing this transformation from within, wrote about the carnival as a lost tradition of what was once a cosmopolitan and peaceful city as he heard from his neighbors and which would have become grand like Rio or Venice carnivals. He also was among the initiators of the revival movement in the 2000s. Fıstık Ahmet, a tavern owner and writer from Büyükada, writes about his memory of flying kites with the kids in the island on *Kathari Deftera* despite it being a Christian festivity. However, the Turkish memoirs' discourse aims to "revive the faded colors of Kurtuluş" and the Rum heritage in the city.

2.7.2 Oral sources

A substantial part of the information in this thesis comes from oral history interviews conducted by me between 2017 and 2020 with Rum and Turkish people, mostly from Kurtuluş. Today, the unofficial number of Rums living in Istanbul is around 2000. My target group was those who, at least as kids, have seen the carnival being celebrated on the streets or listened to the memories of their elders. Together with that, I also included those who continued the tradition after the 1940s in their private households or the associations. Therefore, this target group left me with a tiny proportion of the overall Rum population.

To access the potential interviewees, I used the snowball method. I was an outsider to the community as I came from a Muslim and Turkish background. I

started without having known anyone from the community. However, thanks to the growing number of publications by Rum people and translations to Turkish and public events like book launches, I found the opportunity to get to know people and introduce myself. Istos Publishing House in Istanbul, which was founded by people from the Rum community to contribute to the works on the culture, history and the daily life of the community in Istanbul, and their café in Beyoğlu in which they held these public events have been a famous venue for this reason. Besides, associations in Istanbul whose works focused on preserving and interpreting the collective memory and the alternative history of the city, such as Karakutu Association and Hrant Dink Association, provided a valuable network.

A turning point for my thesis was being invited by one of my interviewees to an exclusive *Apokries* lunch at Moda Culture Association (Tr. Moda Kültür Derneği) in 2019, where I could have chance to observe the way the tradition continues today and get to know more people who were willing to share their memories. Another significant opportunity for my thesis that I had recently gained was joining the organizing committee of *Tatavla Karnavalı*, which was a revival of the carnival tradition in today's Kurtuluş with the cooperation of Şişli Municipality and Aya Dimitri Church Association in February 2020. Although the three days long program was canceled due to the high number of casualties in the Turkish Army in Syria, the organization period that lasted for almost 1,5 months was an exciting and fruitful experience for me to observe the revival movement, the dynamics behind such organizations and meet people living in Kurtuluş for generations who were eager to contribute to my research. However, due to the time limits and the recent pandemic, I was not able to conduct proper interviews with some of the people I met recently. Until April 2020, I have interviewed 14 people, among them only 1 of them was a

Kurdish and the others were Rums living in Istanbul and Athens. Their ages differed from 40s to 70s, nine of them were males, and five were females. I kept their names confidential and only provided necessary personal information in APPENDIX A.

The interview process is equally important as the outcome and the end narrative, as oral historians Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembryzcki write.[87] It is crucial to explain how interviews developed and how it evolved for a better understanding of the content. Generally, people's reaction when I wanted to interview was so positive that they appreciated my effort in discovering a lost tradition that had been part of their identity. However, the interview process was not an easy one as it requires a sense of trust to be built for them to share their personal and intimate memories of the past comfortably. In the beginning, I could sense that the interviewees wanted to know more about my identity and the reason for my interest in this matter to ease their anxiety about talking to a stranger and be more comfortable about how far they could share the intimacy of their memories. Being an outsider to their community and culture, I had to open up myself to build trust. Coming from a prominent university and conducting research under prominent professors' supervision had been an important factor in gaining their appreciation and trust. Secondly, at some point during the interviews, as I revealed my background from an Aegean town in western Anatolia and with ancestors who immigrated from Bosnia and Thessaloniki. This created a different kind of historical bond between us. Thirdly, carnival as a subject was relatively easy to talk about compared to more traumatic events in the 20th century. Remembering the festive moments in their lives during the interview helped to break the ice and feel better about talking about their

[87] Sheftel and Zembrzycki, "Introduction", 4.

personal memories, which resulted in partially sharing their experiences in times of and after pogroms and "hard times."

The interviews were not structured as life narratives but focused on one single tradition, *Apokries* and *Baklahorani*. Before the interview, interviewees were already informed that my research was on *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* specifically. In that sense, the interview's opening always began by telling me whatever they know about the tradition. My aim in the interviews was to keep myself as distant as possible to allow the interviewees to engage in a free-flow of whatever they want to tell me and remember, rather than a strict questionnaire.[88] Instead of a list of questions, I had a sequence of topics in mind: whether or not they had heard anything from their parents about the carnivals in Istanbul; what they remember from their childhood and how; how they celebrated it throughout their lives; how is it celebrated today; what kind of a meaning they assign to the carnivals.

Besides, my aim was also to get their perception about its ban and why they think it was no longer celebrated on the streets. I made sure that they see that I am interested and respectful to them, showing sympathy and willingness to listen to them.[89] This enabled me also to record how they speak about it, what they miss out, how they order the narrative, what they emphasize and the words they choose.[90] During some of the interviews, we were not one to one, but there were other people, like relatives and friends accompanying us. Although the ideal environment for such an interview is one-to-one and private conversation so that the narrative is not pressurized towards a socially acceptable narrative, such company of the relatives, friends and colleagues were most of the time to my main interviewee's advantage.

[88] Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 227-231.
[89] Ibid, 222.
[90] Ibid, 227.

Because most of the time, they provided corrections, stimulated each other's memories, or even came out with their memories.[91] Besides, it was a pleasant experience to observe how memory was performed as they started singing and dancing while talking about their memories of the past.

When it comes to interpreting the oral history interviews, it differs from that of the written documents. First of all, orality is a critical element. It is important to distinguish between the act of remembrance while writing a memoir and while speaking a memory aloud in an interview. Walter J. Ong writes "orally sustained memory is redundant, echoic, non-linear and never verbatim."[92] For that reason, the act of remembrances occurring during the interviews for my thesis was highly thematic, rather than chronologic. It is crucial to acknowledge these themes as linkages that interviewees establish with the past, their collective identity and memory.

Another critical characteristic of the oral history interviews that should be kept in mind when interpreting is that they tell less about events than their meaning.[93] Instead of searching for facts and accuracy in oral history interviews, what is more valuable is how the narrative is constructed and the past is remembered. The interviews I made provided a perspective for anti-history, which challenges "established understandings of history" and more history, which is the "undocumented or unrecorded aspects of the past" as put forth by oral historian Michael Frisch.[94] Therefore, I approach the interviews to fill the gaps in the narrative that the written sources create and provide a unique perspective of the real agents of

[91] Ibid, 234.
[92] Ong, "Oral Remembering and Narrative Structures," 22.
[93] Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different?," 63-74.
[94] Öztürkmen and Bornat, "Oral History," 433-435.

history that were not publicly available before. The factual information is of secondary importance.

Lastly, in the interviews, intergenerational narratives were highly at work. The reason for that was the generation that I interviewed has little memory of the public festivities. Therefore, their memory relied on transmitted experience and memory. This created setbacks and also advantages. On the one hand, it was hard to differentiate their eye witness accounts from the cumulative knowledge and collective memory transmitted through generations. But on the other hand, this cumulative knowledge and collective memory narrated in the interviews became a vibrant source of many years and experiences.

Because *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* itself was not once in a lifetime event, but a repeated and annual ritual that was based on the collective experience of it. The narratives in the interviews were highly reflective of it.

2.8 Conclusion

As a result, a theoretical and conceptual framework to understand how carnival operated and meant is crucial to analyze the historical transformation. Its link with the church and the folkloric religion helps people in the modern urban context associate themselves with the festivities. On the other hand, the topsy turvy atmosphere and the exuberant behavior is best understood by looking at the theories of festival and carnivalesque. This thesis looks how these concepts are at work in Istanbul, transforming from the capital of an empire to the multicultural city of a new nation-state. The disarray of sources from written and oral accounts creates an inclusive and broad perspective into the experience and perception of carnivalesque in Istanbul during the late Ottoman and Republican era.

CHAPTER 3

APOKRIES ON THE STREET LEVEL IN THE OTTOMAN ERA

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the *Apokries* festivities on the street level in the Ottoman Istanbul during the late 19th and the early 20th century. It is the period that most of the documentation about the festivities comes. These documentations used in this chapter are contemporary or later newspaper articles, memoirs and police reports. The wide array of sources provide different perspectives but at the same time, give unique information about the festive scenery, which becomes very crucial to understand the perception and the experience of the carnival.

In order to understand that, firstly, it is essential to draw the spatial characteristics of carnivalesque. This is because the history and the social structure of Tatavla, Pera and Galata play a vital role in creating the festive space and the main activities. Although they sound as separate neighborhoods, their festive space was closely linked with each other through significant routes and to the rest of the city through public transportation. The legacy of *Tatavla Panayırı* or *Baklahorani* as the climax of the carnival period is rooted in the region's characteristics. Secondly, it is important to understand who participated in these festivities. As the sources are analyzed in detail in the following sections, it is revealed that the social structure is blurred in the festive space. One thing that allowed this was the anonymity provided by the use of material culture products like costumes and masks, which reflect a wide range of representations. Disguise is utilized as a marker of becoming *maskara* and playing, which created ambiguous scenery in the public space. The dramatic plays and mimicry during the carnival reflect the diverse social structure of Istanbul after

decades of transformations. Besides, this is also reflected in the music and dance performed on the streets. Although the overall picture of the carnivalesque in the Ottoman Istanbul draws a naïve, entertaining picture, it was not a tradition enjoyed by everyone. For a better understanding of the carnivalesque, *maskara*s and performances, the public and official perception will be analyzed at the end of this chapter.

3.2 Placing the carnival: Tatavla; Pera and Galata as the festive space

The creation of the festive space is essential to the carnivalesque atmosphere. As Falassi suggests, a temporal shift that provides "time out of time" in the carnival context goes hand in hand with a spatial shift. In other words, a spatial frame is needed for the carnival atmosphere and the festivities to begin. Two neighborhoods on the European side of Istanbul will be focused to situate the carnival festivities on the street level in Istanbul, namely Beyoğlu and Tatavla. These regions are firmly connected and serve as the main center of the festivities. To understand how the festive space was formed and how these two centers were connected, a closer look into Tatavla and Beyoğlu is needed.

3.2.1 Tatavla

Tatavla is a unique neighborhood in Istanbul, with a strong Rum-Orthodox and working-class character, which contributed to the creation of a festive and carnivalesque space in times of *Apokries* during the Ottoman Empire. It was set on the foothills of a hill of Kasımpaşa, surrounded with today's Yenişehir, Dolapdere, Sinemköy, Feriköy and Cinderesi, near Beyoğlu (See Figure 2).[95] The accounts of

[95] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe,* 10.

early travelers refer to the region as *Aya Dimitrios,* referring to the local Ayios Dimitrios Church, which was moved to its place on top of the hill today after the original one was converted into a mosque.[96]

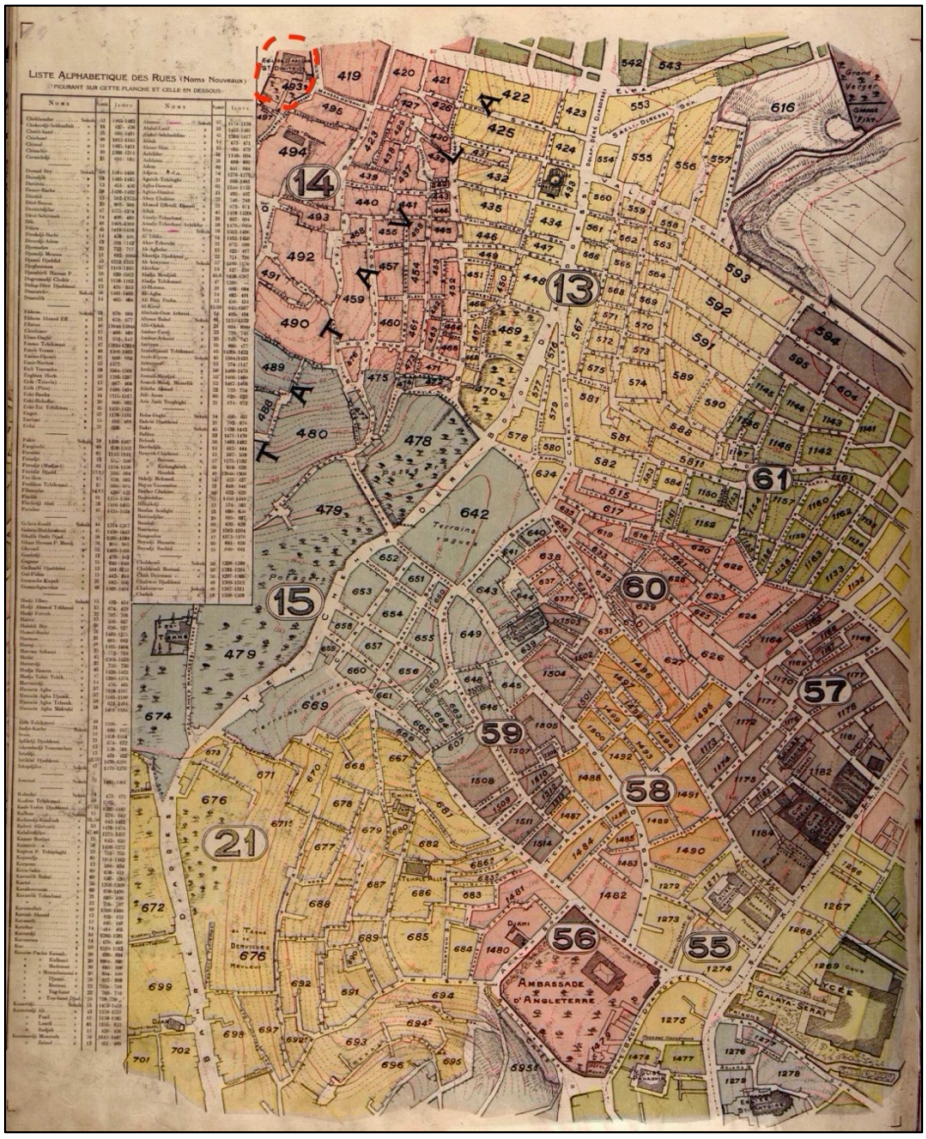

Figure 2. Map of Tatavla by Jaqcues Pervititich, prepared in 1925.
Ayios Dimitrios Church marked with red, by the author.
Source: SALT Research Archives

How and when the name Tatavla started to be used remains disputed. Pasture lands in Tatavla thought to be used by the Genoese as stables during the Byzantine Empire, and later on by the Ottoman palace. As Melisinos Hristodulu, the bishop of

[96] Theodorelis Rigas, "Identıty, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in The Twenty-First Century," 111.

the Pamphylia region in Asia Minor, accounts in his work on the history of Tatavla published in 1913, that the name Tatavla comes from the Greek word for stable: *I stavli* (*I σταυλι*). He further suggests that also "Tavla in Turkish means stable. As the elders say, the name Ta-Tavla comes from this."[97] Although spelled differently throughout the years, the usage of Tatavla was settled as such from 17th century onwards.[98]

Regarding the first settlements in the neighborhood, Hristodulu argues that there is no mention of the region in Byzantine sources. Drawing upon the information that the first church was built in 1576, Hristodulu further suggests that the neighborhood was established a century after the Ottoman's capture of the city.[99] However, the first settlements began around Kanuni's reign in the mid 16th century by the prisoners of war captured during the campaigns in the Mediterranean. According to Skarlatos Vizandios quoted in Hristodulu, the first settlers of the neighborhood were initially the Greek-Orthodox prisoners or slaves from Chios and the Peloponnese, especially Mani, working in the shipyards down the hill. Besides, apart from the workers, merchants from Chios settled in the neighborhood to live among their community. Together with the other migrants, the neighborhood expanded to north and west.[100] Turker suggests that it was through this connection between the islands and the larger Mediterranean world that brought *Apokries* traditions to Tatavla.[101]

Tatavla enjoyed relatively autonomous and isolated governance. First of all, it was an exclusively Rum neighborhood. Based on an official report of the community

[97] Hristodulu, *Tatavla Tarihi,* 29.
[98] Ibid, 29.
[99] Ibid, 31.
[100] Ibid, 31-32.
[101] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe,* 64.

in 1793, Hristodulu argues that the state banned settlements other than that of Rums upon the demand of the community.[102] This official decision has been interpreted as an important factor that allowed a degree of autonomy to the neighborhood. Rigas writes that thanks to this decree, "what had started as a humble, working-class would become a major settlement site for Greeks from all over the empire."[103]

This autonomy further gained strength because, as Irmak writes, the state officials, especially the police, did not intervene in the neighborhood affairs. Although four police stations surrounded the neighborhood, the communication and the link with the authorities was maintained through the different local agents in the Rum community, such as the verger of the church.[104] Besides, Hristodulu also writes that the neighborhood used to be under the control of the Chief Admiral (*Kaptan-ı Derya*), as the leading shipyard was situated in proximity to Tatavla.[105] Thanks to this privileged status, a unique lifestyle had developed in the neighborhood.

Tatavla was known for its unique lifestyle, especially in entertainment. In Vizandios' words quoted in Hristodulu, "the residents of Tatavla were joyous, lively people, who were fond of beauty, physical education, songs, music, entertainment, crowds, spectacles, fairs and holidays," and touches upon their generosity and sense of cooperation in charity activities.[106] Through time Tatavla developed its own kind of unique music, which was a combination of that of the Aegean Islands and Istanbul, performed by instruments like *mandolin*, *armonika*, *kanun*, *ud*, *santur* and played by *laterna*. Besides, Tatavla had its unique way of performing Greek dances

[102] Hristodulu, *Tatavla Tarihi,* 37.
[103] Theodorelis Rigas, "Identıty, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in The Twenty-First Century," 112.
[104] Irmak, *Tatavla'dan Kurtuluş'a,* 22-23.
[105] Hristodulu, *Tatavla Tarihi,* 73.
[106] Hristodulu, *Tatavla Tarihi,* 39.

like *Sirto*, *Kasapiko* and *Zeybekiko*.[107] The most common place where the music and dances were performed was taverns, which had open spaces like gardens and closed spaces. Irmak lists the most famous ones as *Ararat*, *Lemonia*, *Treandofilos*, *Akropoli* and *Madam Despina'nın Yeri*.[108] The joyous lifestyle and the comfort enjoyed in the neighborhood resulted in unique entertainment culture in the neighborhood, which attracted attention.

The lifestyle in the neighborhood was not enjoyed by everyone, and associated with the overlooked values of the working class. The Italian traveler Edmondo de Amicis writes about Tatavla's taverns as scary, full of Rum and Armenian lower class people, but surprisingly safe.[109] Similarly, as Türker quotes from Hammer's work from 1822, Tatavla was the place where people of low morale took shelter, which became the center for *cümbüş*[110] of the lower class people.[111] Although Tatavla was seen as a fun neighborhood, it was not always secure to navigate for the outsiders.

Tatavla remained as a Rum neighborhood for more than three centuries. This character was preserved until the beginning of the 20th century. With the city growing and transforming from the 18th century onwards, the neighborhoods adjacent to Tatavla, such as Sinemköy and Pangaltı gain Levantine, French and Italian character, which also reinforced Tatavla's Christian character. Overall, it would not be wrong to interpret that the neighborhood's special status and social structure contributed to Tatavla becoming a center for the carnival festivities in the city, especially with *panayır*, also known as *Baklahorani* on Clean Monday.

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[107] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe,* 23-24.
[108] Irmak, *Tatavla'dan Kurtuluş'a,* 27.
[109] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe,* 24.
[110] A Turkish word meaning entertainment, livelihood and enthusiasm. It derived from the Farsi word, *cunbiş* which means wriggling and movement.
[111] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe,* 15.

3.2.2 *Panayır*[112]: The epitome of life in Tatavla

Besides Tatavla's social character that contributed to it becoming a center for *Baklahorani* festivities, its geographical characteristics allowed the creation of a festive space. It was spread on top of the hill of Tatavla with both urban and rural atmospheres.[113] The festivities took place on the main square adjacent to Ayios Dimitrios Church, marked with red in Figure 3. The square was surrounded by an open area of fields and gardens that allowed large crowds to gather. People used this space to create a festive center through different means. An essential visual mark for the festive space was flying kites in this open area during *Apokries* and *Baklahorani*.[114]

The open space around Ayios Dimitrios Church allowed *panayır*s to be established on *Kathari Deftera*, creating a festive space around the market. In terms of structure, *Tatavla Panayırı*, as it was called, does not resemble the type of Ottoman fairs in Balkans and Anatolia. They were large scale market places attracting traders and a wide range of products from around the empire. Local authorities controlled their organization and establishment.[115] Although we don't have valid and official information about whether any authorities were involved in the establishment of *Tatavla Panayırı* or not, the narratives suggest that it was more like a local initiative in Tatavla. According to *Ikdam*, a Turkish newspaper, an oyster fair was set as part of the *panayır*.[116] Based on the narratives of Sermet Muhtar Alus,

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[112] *Panayır* is the Turkish Word for fair, which comes from the Greek word πανεγύριον. The word etymologically derived from πᾶς, παν(τ)- all, and ágyris/agorá άγυρις/αγορά getting together, crowd. https://nisanyansozluk.com/?k=panay%C4%B1r

[113] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe,* 25.

[114] Bozis, *İstanbul Lezzeti,* 42.

[115] Sel Turhan, "The Fair of Uzuncaabad in the Ottoman Empire during the Eighteenth Century," 24.

[116] İkdam, "Karnavalın son haftası olmak münasebetiyle bugün Tatavla'da istiridye panayırı olacaktır", *İkdam*, February 25, 1895.

a Turkish journalist writing in the early republican period, together with that there were the local businesses, such as taverns, pubs and coffee shops, who extended their service through spreading their tables and bars to the streets or by building mobile barracks on the fields during *Tatavla Panayırı*.[117] Not only commercial but also non-commercial activity of picnickers who shared the food they prepared explicitly for the fasting period like mezes made from olive oil, vegetables such as bakla, deserts like helva, was important markers of the festive space.[118]

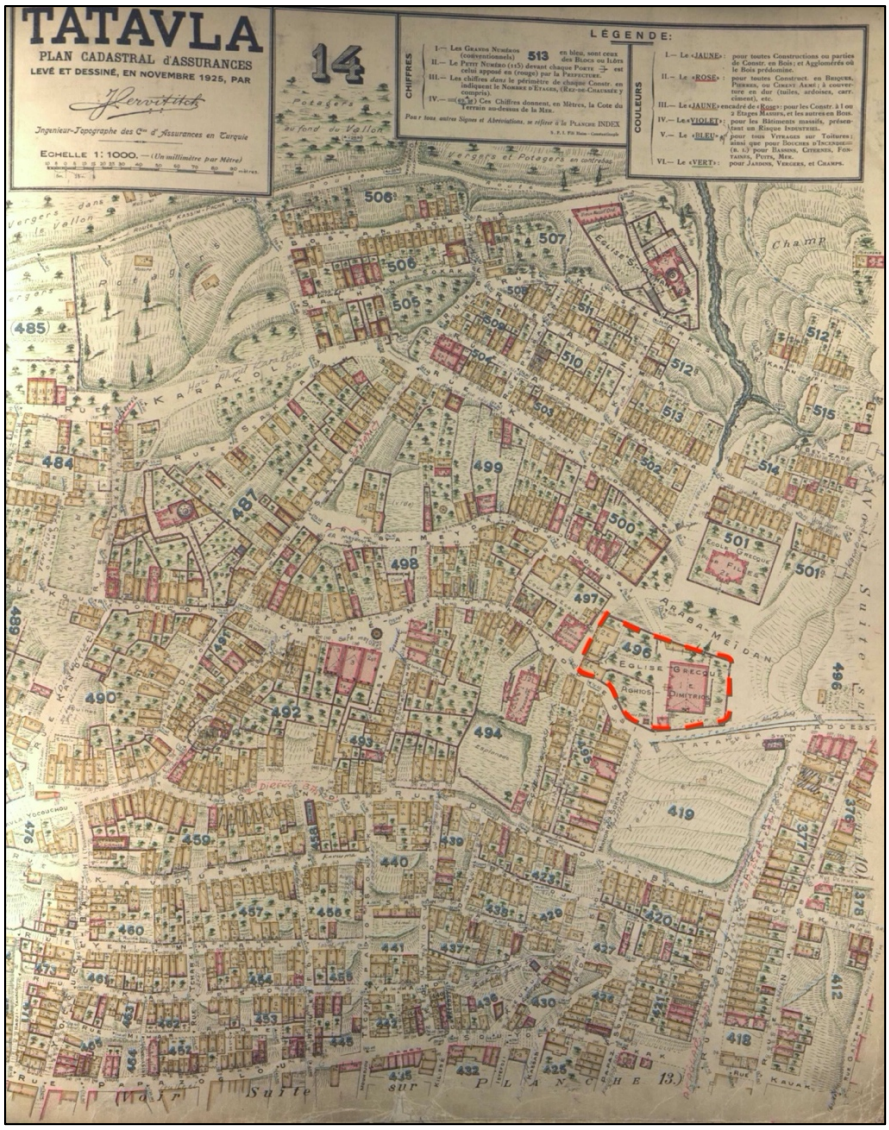

Figure 3. Map of Tatavla Hill, prepared by Jacques Pervititich in 1925.
Ayios Dimitrios Church marked with red, by the author.
Source: SALT Research Archives

[117] Alus, *İstanbul Yazıları,* 124.
[118] Bozis, *İstanbul Lezzeti*, 43.

Tatavla, due to its social and geographical structure, became an important center of *Apokries* and the only center of *Baklahorani* or *Tatavla Panayırı* on Clean Monday. However, the festive space was not limited to Tatavla but spread to its surroundings, namely Pera and Galata, which hosted carnivalesque scenes in the season.

3.2.3 Pera and Galata

Although Pera and Galata were not as famous as Tatavla for being the main center of carnival festivities, they served as the last stop before the final entertainment in Tatavla (See Figure 4). According to Irmak, people came from Yeşilköy, Kumkapı, Samatya via Unkapanı Bridge. Pera and Galata was the last stop to give a break and warm-up for the festivities before going to Tatavla.[119] Therefore it is critical to understand how the festive space was created in Pera and Galata and how the region's characteristics served to the festivities.

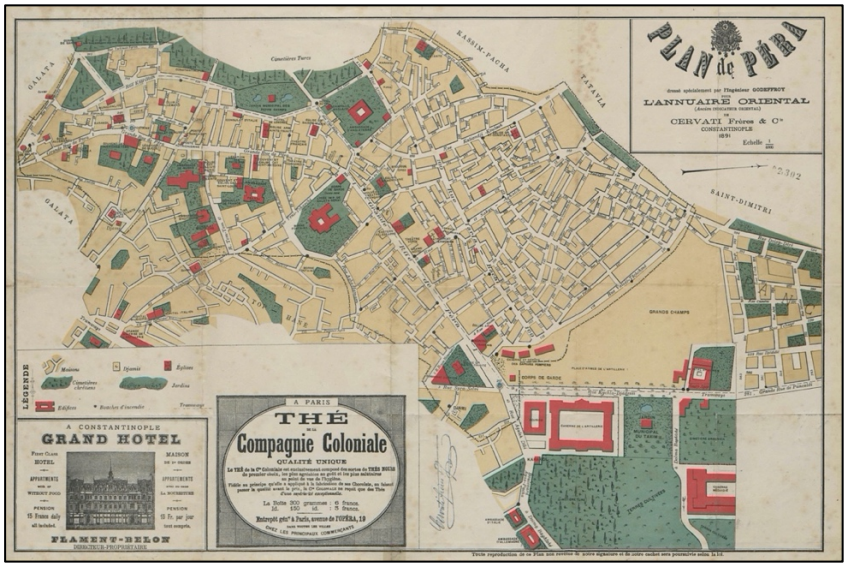

Figure 4. Plan of Pera, created by Engineer Godeffroy for the Freres Brother's Oriental Directory in 1891. Source: SALT Research Archives

[119] Irmak, *Tatavla'dan Kurtuluş'a,* 25-26.

First of all, the social structure of Pera and Galata is an essential factor to consider. Compared to predominantly Greek and working-class Tatavla, Professor Nur Akın writes in his book on the 19th century, Pera and Galata had a more cosmopolitan and elite lifestyle. Europeans and Levantines predominantly resided the region since the Byzantine period.[120] Among this group, the number of Italian origin people, especially those from Venice, was higher. Fredrich Schrader, a German orientalist, writes in his book on Istanbul, which was published in 1917 in German and translated to Turkish in 2015, that the custom of carnival traveled from Venice during the Palaiologan period when Venetians set up a colony in Constantinople. Therefore, the characters from Italian Commedia dell'Arte "Brighella, Faching king Pantelone and his ganghes, man in women's clothes, Matticacinis in colorful clothes" traveled from Rialto to Constantinople.[121] Similarly, in his book, *Constantinople Old and New* published in 1913, Harrison Griswold Dwight writes that carnivals in Istanbul were a "pale copy of the Italian original, imported perhaps by the Venetians and Genoese."[122] Therefore, it can be said that due to the long Venetian presence since the Byzantine period, the carnival culture had long been established to some extent in Pera and Galata long before the Ottoman Empire.

Although Muslim neighborhoods were created around Pera and Galata from the period under Fatih Sultan Mehmet's reign, they preserved their cosmopolitan and elite characteristics during the Ottoman Empire.[123] Especially from the 18th century onwards, the number of European embassies, foreigners and non-Muslim subjects

[120] Akın, *19. Yüzyılın Yarısında Galata ve Pera,* 11.
[121] Schrader, *İstanbul 100 Yıl Öncesine Bir Bakış,* 137.
[122] Dwight, *Constantinople Old and New,* 323.
[123] Akın, *19. Yüzyılın Yarısında Galata ve Pera,* 11.

living in Pera and Galata has risen, which gave way to the emergence of a western lifestyle, in which French had gained a more substantial influence besides the Venetians.[124] Vis-à-vis the powerful elite and cosmopolitan lifestyle in most of Pera and Galata, some parts of Galata present the "dark side of the picture" with "taverns, brothels, and sleazy hostels." As historian Edhem Eldem points out, these two poles consisted of a "silent majority of modest employees, shopkeepers, a petty bourgeoisie, and a near proletariat squeezed" in the back streets of the district.[125] It can be said that besides the elite and indoor carnivals in the region, the public space belonged to the ordinary people, who contributed to the creation of the festive space on the streets.

Similarly, the growing number of Western-style restaurants, bars, and pubs in Pera and Galata also contributed to the festive space. Although they were semi-public spaces compared to the streets, they were open to everyone to stop by, drink, eat and continue the revelry on the streets. Besides, the indoor spaces provided an opportunity to get warm in stiff winter nights. In those places, people also kept up the spirit through music and dances. For example, Ahmet Rasim, a Turkish journalist, writes about his first experience in the carnival. He enters a couple of bars and pubs, which did not necessarily require a special invitation like in the private parties. Among the places which Rasim and his friends enter that night were a Bartoli Beer Hall in Tepebaşı, where there was live music playing; in the foyer of Odeon theatre, where there was drinks, tea, coffee and live music separate from the ball inside; the beerhouse of Konkordiya theatre where they ate something and slept a little; and then an ordinary *gazino*.[126] Looking at Rasim's account, it can be said

[124] Ibid., 12.
[125] Eldem, "Ottoman Galata and Pera Between Myth and Reality," 25.
[126] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik*, 129-154.

that the carnival festivities on the streets were extended to and supported by the inner spaces of bars and pubs, which were open to ordinary people in Pera and Galata.

Another vital factor contributing to the creation of the festive space was the expansion of the nocturnal sociability. As historian Avner Wishnitzer states, there was a "systematic effort to illuminate the streets in a regular manner" from the second half of the 19th century onwards in Galata and Pera.[127] According to him, until the 1840s, the city was not completely dark at night, but the lighting was possible only "locally and momentarily."[128] Nevertheless, the introduction of systematic and public lighting of Pera and Galata also introduced a new nightlife mode.[129] The systematic illumination of the streets contributed to a spatial and temporal expansion of the carnival festivities. For example, Ahmet Rasim's account of his first encounter with a *maskara alayı* describes a very theatrical scene which was, to a large extend, supported by the lighting: "The lantern of Şişhane Police Station was dimly illuminating the square as *laterna* started playing and people started dancing the polka…"[130] Besides the public lighting, during the carnival, participants carried lanterns to illuminate their respectable plays and costumes.[131] In other words, in Pera and Galata from the middle 19th century onwards, public lighting had contributed to the creation of the festive space and enhanced it with the help of the spectacular influence in the nighttime.

[127] Wishnitzer, "Shedding New Light," 75.
[128] Wishnitzer, "Into the Dark: Power, Light and Nocturnal Life in 18th Century Istanbul," 526.
[129] Wishnitzer, "Shedding New Light," 81.
[130] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik,* 133.
[131] Ibid, 134.

3.2.4 Festivities spreading to the city and connecting the two centers

The two festive spaces presented above should not be thought of as two separate and confined centers where the carnivalesque was enjoyed. They were physically connected through various roads and streets, which served as an extension of the festive space. Not only the residents participated in the carnival, but people from all over the city came to enjoy it. Specific meeting points of these people coming from other parts of the city had also been the locations of extended festive space. Therefore, the participants moved from one place to another, formed pageants and contributed to the city's festive atmosphere.

According to the narratives, participants in the carnival were in constant movement, always transgressing the borders of Pera, Galata and Tatavla (Figure 5). Ahmet Rasim's narratives reflect this dynamism and movement in a very dazzling way. His carnival adventure begins in Meyyit Hill in Şişhane and wanders through the Municipality Building, Tepebaşı, the side roads, Beyoğlu Caddesi as they stop by *gazino*s, pubs and cafes until stopping by the oyster fair in Tatavla the next morning.[132] Rasim, in a later account in Şehir Mektupları, also writes that how worn out he was after the carnival because he kept roaming and wandering during the carnival until his knees and feet started to feel week.[133] His accounts represent how the carnivalesque and the festive space moved from one space to another with the pageants.

In this dynamism of the pageants, certain roads and locations stand out as primary connections between Tatavla and Pera and Galata. The main route was walking down to Dolapdere via various streets and then climbing up to the hill that

[132] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik*, 129-154.
[133] Rasim, *Şehir Mektupları*, 61.

Tatavla took place and vice versa. As Alus writes, pageants from all directions would "go down the steep, narrow, and dark streets from Tatavla, Pangaltı, Taksim, Tarlabaşı to Dolapdere and climb up again."[134] In this sense, Dolapdere was an intersection point of the streets connecting the two hills of Tatavla and Beyoğlu. Among these streets, some of them stand out as the main venues where pageants pass. Kalyoncu Kulluğu street which connected Asmalımescit to Yenişehir via Papaz Köprüsü bridge was one of them. Akarca Hill, a very steep uphill connecting Dolapdere directly to Ayios Dimitrios square where the climax of the festivities occurred in Tatavla, was one of the main artery roads to the climax in Tatavla. On the other hand, Pangaltı served as a critical meeting point for those coming from Büyükdere and Tarabya, before they walk down to Tatavla.[135]

A significant development that allowed flocks of people to flow to the festive spaces from other parts of Istanbul was advancements in building bridges and public transportation. As in Rasim's accounts, Unkapanı bridge, built in 1839, connected the old city to Beyoğlu and served as one of the main arteries that people used to move in the city by foot. Along with the bridges that connect both shores of Golden Horn, Şirket-i Hayriye's public transportation service by ferries from the end of the 19th century onwards connected the villages on the Bosphorus and the Asian side to Beyoğlu.[136] Ahmet Rasim, in his later account, writes that because of the carnival, he missed the Kadıköy ferry and had to stay in his friends'.[137] Similarly, Haris Spataris, who wrote his memoirs from in Istanbul between 1906-1923, narrates

[134] Alus, *İstanbul Yazıları*, 124.
[135] Irmak, *Tatavla'dan Kurtuluş'a,* 25-26.
[136] Akın, *19. Yüzyılın Yarısında Galata ve Pera,* 142. Before Şirket-i Hayriye sea transportation was done through small boats like kayık, and mavna. For example, Orhan Türker writes that during *Apokries*, people living on the Asian coast in places like Kartal, Pendik and Bostancı, took *mavna* and *kayık* to participate in celebrations in Halki. Orhan Türker, *Halki'den Heybeliada'ya*, 31.
[137] Rasim, *Şehir Mektupları*, 61.

that as high school kids they went to *Baklahorani* out of curiosity. Early in the morning, they crossed Haliç by ferry and landed to Kasımpaşa, walked up among the cemeteries to Pera Palace, and walked to Ayios Dimitrios square.[138] The introduction of the electric trams replaced horse trams accessible for a limited group of people, in the second half of the 19th century in Beyoğlu.[139] By the end of the century tram line connected Galata, Pera and Şişli.[140] On the other hand, it was not until 1911 that the tram line was extended to Tatavla, and in 1914 electric trams were put in use in this line. This new line connected Tünel through Galatasaray-Taksim-Harbiye and Pangaltı to Ayios Dimitrios Church in Tatavla.[141]

Overall, it would not be wrong to say that Tatavla and Pera-Galata had been represented as the main centers where the carnival festivities took place. However, taking Tatavla-Pera-Galata as the carnival's main axis would be much better to understand the dynamism and the dispersion of the festive space in the city. It was the constant movement of the pageants in this axis and their transgression of this axis to a certain extent that expanded the festive space to side roads, narrow streets and neighboring regions such as Yenişehir, Dolapdere and Pangaltı. An important implication of this spatial use and expansion was the gathering of people from diverse backgrounds in the festive space.

[138] Spataris, *Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz,* 40.
[139] Akın, *19. Yüzyılın Yarısında Galata ve Pera*, 145.
[140] Ibid, 146.
[141] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 146.

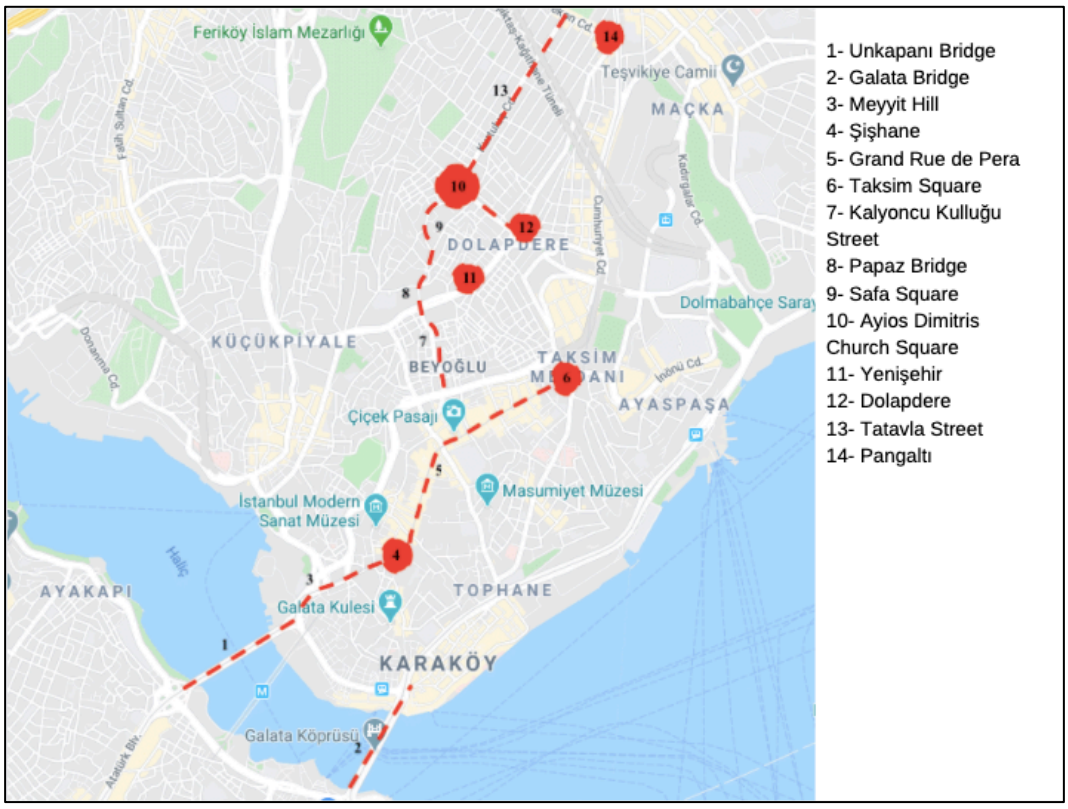

Figure 5. Map illustrating the movements between Galata, Pera and Tatavla during the carnivals in the Ottoman Era based on the narratives in written documents..
Source: Prepared by the author

3.3 Blurred structures: Intermingling in the carnival

The carnival festivities on the streets were mainly a lower class and male venue, but not exclusively. It is hard to talk about a strict and obvious distinction of lower-class people entertaining themselves on the streets and the upper class entertaining on a different level. Instead, these distinctions were blurred in different ways. The carnival atmosphere did not distinguish between the spectators and the main actors, as Bakhtin suggests.[142] This means that even being a passer-by in Beyoglu or Tatavla meant that those people could be withdrawn into the festivities through plays, music and dances. Akillas Millas writes, the residents of Beyoglu would get on the phaeton in the evening and go nearby Tatavla to watch from distance what was going on.[143]

[142] Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World,* 7.
[143] Millas, *Heylbeliada Halki, Dimonisos,* 341.

Similarly, as Spataris writes in his memoirs, "the petty bourgeoisie always found a way to participate in *Baklahorani*… They were enjoying the entertainment in their carts and carriages, and contributed to the atmosphere."[144] Therefore, it can be said that in the carnivals on the street level, no one was exclusive of the festivities in the sense that it was open to everyone. Besides, the upper-class elite was also curious about the street level and enjoyed being part of it.

Another way through which the carnivalesque atmosphere allowed people from different backgrounds to participate in the festivities was the disguise provided by the masks and costumes. Alus writes that "merchants, small shop owners, and richer people from the Grand Bazaar, like goldsmiths, dry-goods dealers, külhanbeyi, whimsical officers, gentlemen, even imams, dervishes from lodges" in costumes and masks would also be enjoying the festivities in Beyoğlu and Tatavla.[145] The freedom and the anonymity provided by the carnivalesque atmosphere had implications in terms of gender. The carnival atmosphere was an opportunity for the lower-class women and prostitutes to leave the infamous streets that they usually inhabited such as Büyük Ziba, Küçük Ziba, Büyük Kırlangıç, Küçük Kırlangıç, Beyzade, Şeftali, Karaoğlan, Arkadi, Arapoğlan and Zürefa, and join the festivities in the streets of Beyoglu and Tatavla.[146] Not only them, but also the elite women enjoyed this opportunity as Eleni Halkusi accounts in her memoirs. She writes that the well-known women would wear masks and go to famous taverns like *Akrapol* and *Ararat* and have short affairs with men whom they just met there, which would turn into massive scandals among the upper class after the carnival period.[147] Therefore, the carnivalesque atmosphere was one of the ways and methods through which the lower

[144] Spataris, *Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz,* 39.
[145] Alus, *İstanbul Yazıları*, 125.
[146] Ibid, 124.
[147] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 68.

class and upper-class women of the Ottoman society found ways to be active and visible in the public space.[148]

Finally, it is hard to talk about the carnival on the street level as an exclusively Christian space. Muslims were not independent of the factors of the carnivalesque atmosphere that allowed freedom and anonymity. One proof to that is the articles of the Turkish and Muslim journalists who wrote their experiences from within the carnival atmosphere as participants like Ahmet Rasim. Besides the journalists interested in documenting the everyday life of the city, the carnival was also an opportunity for entertainment and leisure time for the upper-class Muslims and state officials, whose information comes from a handful of sources. As Dumont writes, Said Bey, for example, as an upper-class bureaucrat, goes to the Greek carnival in Beyoğlu after having rakı in Tokatlıyan Hotel in 1902. Similarly, the documents in the Ottoman state archive about the Ottoman state officials of different ranks, such as scribe, collector, upper-class people like the son of a state official, or ordinary artisans who had been recorded as being caught in the carnival in clothes against Islam, reveal the Muslim interest in the festivities.

Therefore the social hierarchy in the carnivalesque on the street level was pretty much blurred but not disappeared entirely like in the sense of medieval European carnivals. Although it was predominantly lower-class activity, people from different distinctive hierarchies and backgrounds participated in the carnivals through their own and unique ways of enjoying it. In other words, we can talk about ambiguity in terms of the participants. A similar ambiguity and permeability were also reflected in the creation of a festive space.

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[148] The new historiography on the late Ottoman women challenge the reductionist and dualistic approach to the women's role in the public and private sphere. It is observed that "the private space is not as private as it earlier appeared and the public space is not strictly delineated". Köksal and Falierou, "Introduction," 11.

3.4 Material culture of carnivalesque in Istanbul: Costumes and masks

The material culture was an essential factor that strengthened the carnivalesque atmosphere in terms of the participants' spirit and visually. Masks of various kinds and disguises as different creatures and characters provided anonymity, which increased revelry and inversion in the festivities. With these, wearing traditional and national costumes, clothes that would not be acceptable in public on a typical day, especially for women, and cross-dressing were among the most common ways of participating in the festivities.

The masks and costumes for the carnival festivities could be obtained from the shops in Pera and Galata. As Nur Akin writes, thanks to the neighborhood's commercial links with the West, the materials in these shops were quite diverse.[149] For example, Bon Marche, a famous confectionary with branches in other European cities, was one of the famous shops where carnival costumes and masks were sold.[150] The shop windows had contributed to the festive atmosphere by reminding that the season has come. Sermet Muhtar writes, when the carnival season had come, the windows of the shops like Bon Marche and Pazar Alman would be full of "colorful carnival costumes and all kinds of masks."[151] Not only the large and highly commercial shops but also a couple of small ones in the passages and *han*s around Asmalımescit sold and rented western costumes. Compared to the big shops, these rented ones would be worn out and stained.[152] Therefore, the commercial links with the West contributed to the material culture of the carnival celebrations in Istanbul.

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[149] Akın, *19. Yüzyılın Yarısında Galata ve Pera*, 220.
[150] Ibid, 223.
[151] Alus, "Bugünden, Dünden: Şubat", *Akşam*. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13436 (Alus wrote for *Akşam* between 1945 – 1948.)
[152] Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full

Masks did not function to cover the face physically but also worked to hide the real identity of those who enjoyed the festivities. The narratives illustrate how essential the masks were for the festive atmosphere. Schrader writes, "the protection of the mask was a call to joy and forgetting" the real world.[153] Similarly, Rasim expresses the importance of masks that "if masks weren't, you wouldn't be able to play in public."[154] There was a wide variety of masks. Sermet Muhtar lists the different types of masks that he has seen on shop windows:

> chubby faces, pop-eyed, long-nosed, large-mouthed, without a mustache, with a mustache, bearded, black-faced like a negro, gray-faced like an Ethiopian, yellow like a Chinese. Some were woven with cotton or thin wire, bird, goat and cow heads… Fake mustaches and sideburns to be attached with a rubber band.[155] (Appendix B, 1)

People did not only buy the masks mentioned in the above quotation but also covered their faces with the materials they have at hand.[156] Another common practice was painting the face entirely to black with shoe paint or white using powder or flour or smeared with *galibarda*, a reddish color.[157] As can be seen from the above examples, masks were among the quickest and most accessible ways to take on a disguise. Costumes of various kinds often supported masks.

Most of the time, masks were supported by various costumes of different characters and figures. Popular costumes that were bought or rented were mostly western characters. The most common ones were Columbina, Arlecchino and Pierrot

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[153] Schrader, *İstanbul 100 Yıl Öncesine Bir Bakış,* 135.
[154] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik*, 133.
[155] Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full
[156] Scognamillo, *Beyoğlu'nda Fuhuş*, 37.
[157] Yordanidou, *Loksandra İstanbul Düşü,* 63. Ahmet Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik*, 135. Sermet Muhtar Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full

from the Italian Comedia dell'Arte, as narrated by Alus.[158] Schrader emphasizes the Venetian influence and writes epically that "impertinent Brighella, Fasching king Pantalone, and his subordinate ganghes, Mattacini in colorful clothes boarded from Venice and came to Istanbul."[159] Scognamillo writes that a practical and straightforward way was to cover oneself with Domino, a large cloak worn on top of the regular clothes, and a simple mask covering the eyes only.[160] It can be interpreted that the cultural and commercial encounters with the west, especially Italy, influenced the material culture of the carnival festivities in Istanbul.

Alongside the western looks, there were also other sorts of disguises that were in a more complex and ambiguous character. During the carnival, it was possible to come across a man disguised as a bear, with huge nails and a chain on his nose in the middle of Şişhane as Rasim writes. He also illustrates a scary man with "a white face, with puffy collars like a hedgehog wearing a large white shirt" wandering around.[161] Alus writes that in the pageants there would be some people who put a sharp conical hat, a copper pot, a chair or a lambskin on their heads; or some people who wore a jacket worn inside out; or some in gypsy clothes; or some covered with bearskin.[162] What can be interpreted from these is that people pushed the limits of their imagination hard, probably using the most easily accessible materials possible if they did not rent or buy a proper costume from the shops in Beyoğlu.

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[158] Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full
[159] Fredrich Schrader, *İstanbul 100 Yıl Öncesine Bir Bakış,* 136.
[160] Scognamillo, *Beyoğlu'nda Fuhuş*, 37.
[161] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik*, 135.
[162] Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full

Besides, the carnivalesque also provided opportunities for playing with the idea and politics of clothing in Ottoman Istanbul. As Donald Quartet writes, until the law issued in 1829, "clothing and headgear helped to give status and a sense of identity to members of the specific religious, ethnic, and occupational communities in Ottoman society."[163] The clothing regulations prohibited people from specific confessional backgrounds from wearing certain colors, patterns and materials. However, after the clothing law in 1829, the state policy became interested in "uniformity in dress instead of distinctiveness" by initially eliminating the visible symbols.[164] The examples reveal that the carnival created an opportunity to challenge these regulations and rules regarding clothing in Ottoman society.

A handful of narratives illustrate Rums enjoying the carnivalesque revelry in Greek national costume, called Fustanella, in the late 19th century Istanbul. It was initially an Albanian dress that became the national and military uniform of Greece after its independence in 1839.[165] Regarding the period, it would be partial to interpret Fustanella as only a carnival dress worn for disguise. We do not have any information about whether wearing Fustanella was prohibited by the Ottoman state. Wearing a Fustanella in the Ottoman context during the time Greek nationalism was on the rise in Greece, would be interpreted as a strong manifestation of solidarity with Greek democracy, as Lisa Welters suggests.[166] A report from Yıldız Palace archive in 1901 recorded "a group of *maskara* in Fustanella passing from Galata to Istanbul, who might have another purpose and require special attention." It illustrates how Fustanella, in the festive space, created concerns on the part of the Ottoman

[163] Quartet, "Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829," 407.
[164] Ibid, 420.
[165] Welters, "Ethnicity in Greek Dress", 56.
[166] Ibid, 75-76.

authorities.[167] It can be said that the inversion of the carnivalesque provided a space for making the Greek identity visible in the spatial and temporal limits of the carnival. Such manifestation would not be seen as acceptable as in normal life.

Secondly, an essential and widely recorded part of the material culture of the carnivals in Istanbul was the dresses of the lower class women, which would not be acceptable to be seen in the public space out of the carnival context. According to the historian Müge Özbek, these women were mostly poor women, who migrated to Istanbul to find a job. Their unattended visibility in the urban context created ambiguities regarding their status.[168] This ambiguity is also reflected in the festive space, which provided women larger visibility and performative environment. Alus calls these women "*kokona*"[169] and describes their revealing appearance in carnival: "although it is still winter, they wore red, blue, green and yellow dresses revealing their breasts and arms."[170] Türker defines these women as wanton and writes that they wore velvet tailleur and short pants. They complete their look with velvet and brocaded sailor hats, stockings of black silk, and a velvet or silk mask.[171] The costumes and masks were a tool for the lower class women to go public and be visible further. On the other hand, elite women took advantage of the carnivalesque and utilized the opportunity to disguise by wearing masks for socializing in the male spaces like taverns, as Eleni Halkusi narrated in her memoir.[172] Therefore, women of

[167] COA, Y..PRK.ZB.. / 26 – 80.
[168] These were mostly poor and unattended women, who migrated to Istanbul to find a job. These women most of the time limited alternatives and moved between domestic works, begging, prostitution and short lasting marriages. Müge Özbek, "Son dönem Osmanlı İstanbul'unda yoksul ve yalnız kadınlar," 69.
[169] A term used for old, respectable women according to Nişanyan Sözlük: https://www.nisanyansozluk.com/?k=kokona But it became a pejorative term for old, fancy and non-Muslim women, mostly prostitutes.
[170] Alus, *İstanbul Yazıları*, 124.
[171] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 65.
[172] Ibid, 68.

different classes played with the material culture as a tool for visibility in the public space.

The carnivalesque space and material culture were not always gendered. Cross-dressing created ambiguity and also enhanced the inversion and revelry of the festivities. Rasim writes how curios he was while watching people to discover their real sex as they move their masks. This serves as an example of how cross-dressing created a carnivalesque experience.[173] When he was wandering on the streets, he was harassed by someone trying to arrange a girl. Rasim first thinks that the person is a man, but when he spoke in a very high tone like a woman's, the ambiguity of the person's sex and harassment left Rasim in fear.[174] Similarly, Said Duhani writes in his memoirs that love dealer (*aşk taciri)* women in men's clothes and wearing fez would walk down to Dolapdere and climb the hill to Tatavla during the carnival season.[175] Along with any disguise, cross-dressing did not only provided a much freer space for women in the carnivalesque but also it might have allowed everyone to experiment with different gender roles, which would have been hard in other days.

Cross-dressing was not only preferred by Christians but also Muslims too. The information on this comes from the state archives, which recorded prominent names like state officials. For example, a certain Mehmet Hikmet Efendi, the son of a certain Muhtar Bey, a state official in the cavalry unit of the Ministry of War, was caught by the police during the carnival upon being recognized by the state officials in Grand Rue de Pera with his friend Alexandre. He was recorded as wearing a straw hat with a white net and red rose; red mask; red dress, brown sweater special for women, a scarf made of fox fur, and a white umbrella special for women.[176] which

[173] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik,* 138.
[174] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik,* 136.
[175] Duhani, *Beyoğlu'nun Adı Pera İken,* 70.
[176] COA, DH.EUM.KADL.10.21.5.

he said he borrowed from his landlady Madame Manik in 1911.[177] It is recorded that after the interrogation, he was warned for his misbehavior and discharged.

Another record from the state archive reports a certain Osman Efendi, a scribe in the fiscal directorate, and İbrahim Nail Efendi, tax-collector of Hasköy. They were recorded to have bought "women's dress in black; a black headwear and a black mask" for two mecidiye, from a guy named Hristo who rented "*maskara* dresses" in his shop. They were caught in Tepebaşı in these clothes as they were heading to Tarlabaşı Garden on March 6, 1911.[178] The document states that they were caught by a local watchman who recognized the two in women's clothes in a coffee house. After accepting that what they had done was against Islam, their report was forwarded to the Central Directory of Security.

Both examples illustrate that Muslim men had chosen to participate in the carnival festivities. Besides, they were capable of accessing the means to take on a disguise to follow the spirit of the festivities. This shows that their participation was probably not coincidental but intentional. However, what requires attention here is how the two incidents found its way to the state archive. The reason might be that these people took the police's attention to the extent that they represented the state mechanism. So it would not be proper to draw any generalizations from here about the Muslim men's participation and crossdressing habits in the carnival. However, what can be said is that the material culture of the carnival, which was mostly accessible in the city, allowed people from different backgrounds and genders to find a disguise and hide their identity. Metin And suggests changing clothes and taking on a different identity serves as an important way to engage in plays.[179]

[177] COA, DH.EUM.KADL.10.21.6.
[178] COA, DH.EUM.KADL. 10.15.5.
[179] And, *Oyun ve Bügü,* 29.

3.5 Cultural performances of carnivalesque in Istanbul: *Apukurya Maskarası* and play

The concept of *maskara* and play requires a closer look for a better understanding of the specific examples of the performances which reflected the cultural, political and technological matters in the society. The etymological origin of the term is vague. According to *Nişanyan Dictionary*, the word *maskara* has two origins and meanings. First one is the Arabic word *masxara* (مسخرة) meaning buffoonery, fool and carnival. The second one is the Italian Word *maschera* which means a mask.[180] Furthermore, the first listing in the current Turkish dictionary under *maskara* is "amusing, cute, humorous person, fool." The secondary meaning is "carnival mask." The last listing is "(defamation) dishonest, dishonorable, disreputable, rascal."[181] Although the origin is vague, it is evident that the word is used in a different way to refer to the performances relating to the carnival context. Besides, through time it came to refer to the exuberant behavior in everyday life.

Maskara was not exclusively a term for the Christian carnival period, but a more general term to the same playfulness in any festive period. Ahmet Refik Sevengil writes in his book on the entertainment culture of Istanbul that "one of the entertaining characters of the old times were *mudhik-maskara*," which means someone amusing. According to him, some of these characters came from the storytelling tradition called *meddah* or shadow puppetry tradition, but in a clumsier and less appropriate way. In his words, some were freeriding vulgar trumps through making people laugh, frightening and tricking them. The context in which these maskaras appeared most of the time was a festivity, namely a royal

[180] Nişanyan sözlük. https://www.nisanyansozluk.com/?k=*maskara*
[181] TDK Sözlük https://sozluk.gov.tr/

celebration.[182] The term used to distinguish the *maskara* of the carnival period was *Apukurya maskarası*, which meant the *maskara* of *Apokries*, in a Turkified pronunciation, referring to a person dressed weirdly.[183] It can be interpreted that becoming a *maskara* and doing *maskaralık* was not a new concept in Ottoman society. Although *Apukurya maskara*sı differed in terms of the period, one of the essential elements of the concept was a strong sense of play.

The play in *maskara*lık, as Schechner writes, is voluntary, permissive, but at the same time, "double-edged, ambiguous and moving in several directions."[184] He further defines the ambiguity as having "multiple realities with porous boundaries."[185] As And writes, the most characteristic element in the play is the tension and the uncertainty about its end.[186] In other words, play is a performance that goes along a thin and continuous line of reality and dramatic. The plays during the carnival season in Istanbul reflect this vagueness. According to the narratives, they involve mimicry of the animals, covert sexuality, and humorous simulations of real-life issues and characters.

One of the common plays in Istanbul that we encounter in written accounts is the mimicry of animals, which were not unique to the capital but existed in Anatolia too.[187] According to the written accounts, the bear play was performed during the carnival in Istanbul. There are variations in bear play but, according to Metin And, the overall tradition was to dress someone as a bear and link a chain on his nose, and have someone else in gypsy guise with a tambourine and stick who tries to make the

[182] Sevengil, *İstanbul Nasıl Eğleniyordu?,* 57.
[183] http://www.lugatim.com/s/apukurya
[184] Schechner, *Performance Studies,* 89.
[185] Ibid, 91.
[186] And*, Oyun ve Bügü*, 31.
[187] See And, *Dionysos ve Anadolu Köylüsü*, 83.

bear move and dance.[188] Similarly, bear play in Istanbul, as Alus writes, involved a man who wrapped his head with lambskin and put a ring in his mouth. A gypsy guise wore fez without a fringe and a worn-out salta[189], with a tambourine and stick in his hand. Men in the bear costume move as if it is a bear who is standing on two feet. As Ayıcı, the owner of the bear, shouts out loud "play black son" and waves his stick, the bear jumps and simulates what ayıcı asks: "How do today's girls flirt? How do new brides get shy in hamam? What do old ladies do when they get angry?"[190] Another example of a similar play of animal mimicry is camel play from Tatavla, which was again an essential tradition in certain places in Anatolia like Ankara, Kars, Erzurum, Konya and Burdur.[191] According to Dwight's account procession of a camel, "each of whose leg is a man" was "a common one in Tatavla that descended directly from pagan Dionysia."[192] In this play, the camel carries "a load of charcoal and garlic" and is led by the driver whose face is painted in blue.[193] Therefore, animal mimicry performed during the carnival incorporated different types of material culture for disguises and involved dramatic elements. Thanks to that, such plays' connection with the Anatolia and pagan past can be drawn.

Another play that appeared in Tatavla that is worth mentioning here is mummers or *momoyer* in the local language, which was a traditional play in the Pontus area in the Christmas season.[194] It was initially part of the Christmas festivities, in which young boys dressed as and mimicked the half-human half-animal

[188] And, *Dionysos ve Anadolu Köylüsü*, 88.
[189] A short, collarless, buttonless jacket with large arms. https://sozce.com/nedir/270912-salta
[190] Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full
[191] And, *Dionisos ve Anadolu Köylüsü*, 84.
[192] Dwight, *Constantinople Old and New,* 324-325.
[193] Ibid, 325.
[194] Alat, "Anadolu ve Kafkasya Kavşağında Geleneksel Bir Yılbaşı Kutlaması: Kalandar," 98. Kantarcı, "Kalandar Kutlaması: Livera (Yazlık) Köyü Örneği," 494.

creature called *Kalikantzar*i or *momoyer*, which is believed to be haunting at night during the Christmas season.[195] The group of *momoyer*s goes around with music and dance, wearing different variations of "a long dress of goatskin, a leather mask and a conical leather hat, at the tip of it hung a little bell, while round their waist hung other little bells, heads of garlic, cabbages, spoons, and leather straps."[196] Although *momoyer* was a significant figure of an earlier religious period, its carnivalesque character was appropriated during the carnivals in Istanbul. As Dwight says, the custom as it is did not survive in Constantinople in its proper format. However, he narrates that *momoyer*-like plays in Tatavla during the carnival season as part of a more extensive play:

> They (Epirotes) form rings in the middle of the crowd, which is kept back by one of their number called the Shephard. Like the Christmas mummers of the Greek Islands, he wears skins, and has a big bronze sheep or camel bell fastened to some part of him. He carries a staff to which is attached a bunch of garlic for good luck. He often wears a mask, as well, or otherwise is disguised, and his clowneries give great amusement.[197]

As seen from this example, other elements from the rural, Dionysiac festivities were incorporated into the plays in Istanbul, reflecting the multicultural and interwoven character of the carnivalesque in Istanbul.

Not every play had pagan and rural origins, but some were very urban and significant to Istanbul. Among them is the plays that mimicked certain professions of the lower-class in the Ottoman society. One of them was the mimicry of porters (*hamal*), who were unskilled workers who migrated from the Eastern provinces due to the rising urbanization of the 19th century and to support their families back at home.[198] They worked near the ports like Kasımpaşa and lived in cellar dormitories

[195] And, *Dionisus ve Anadolu Köylüsü*, 64.
[196] Morgan, "The Mummers of Pontus," 149.
[197] Dwight, *Constantinople Old and New*, 326.
[198] Riedler, "Armenian Labour Migration to Istanbul and the Migration Crisis of the 1890s," 164-165.

of bachelor quarters, in extreme misery and often engaging in drinking, smoking and gambling.[199] Like the other migrant workers living in bachelor rooms, porters were seen as the others in Ottoman Istanbul, due to their unattended lifestyle. Therefore they were started to be seen as a threat in the 19th century.[200] Until the end of the 19th century, porters were mostly Armenians from Bitlis, Van and Harput.[201] However, after the massacres following the Ottoman Bank takeover in Istanbul in 1896, many Armenian porters were replaced by Kurdish migrants.[202] Therefore the image of porter in Ottoman Istanbul was associated with migrants from the East, poverty and controversial rivalries between ethnic groups.

The porter play in the carnival was a mimicry of the occupation exaggeratedly and humorously. A group of *maskara*, dressed up as *porters* would mock their occupation and manners while carrying loads around. *Maskara*s would wear traditional clothes like *şalvar, potur* and *sarık*. Ten of them would stand in line in pairs. Each pair would put a long stick on their shoulders, and hang only one egg with a thick chain. They would act as if their load is so heavy, give breaks and wipe their sweats.[203] The play can be interpreted as contemptuous that the work that *porter*s were undertaking was considered unimportant. Besides, the uncompromising and uptight attitude that *porter*s put in their work was undervalued in the plays. The *porter* play was a mockery of the class and cultural values of the *occupational* group associated with migrant and lower-class males.

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[199] Ibid., 164-165. Robert Tatoyan, "Moush-Sassoun-Bitlis – Migrant Workers, Emigration, and Homecomings," *Houshamadyan.org,* February 15, 2018. https://www.houshamadyan.org/mapottomanempire/vilayet-of-bitlispaghesh/sassoun/locale/population-movements.html
[200] Çokuğraş, "Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Bekar Odaları," 30.
[201] Riedler, "Armenian Labour Migration to Istanbul and the Migration Crisis of the 1890s," 164-165.
[202] Tatoyan, "Moush-Sassoun-Bitlis – Migrant Workers, Emigration, and Homecomings," *Houshamadyan.org,* February 15, 2018. https://www.houshamadyan.org/mapottomanempire/vilayet-of-bitlispaghesh/sassoun/locale/population-movements.html Verheij, "Ermeni Hamalların Yerini Kürt Hamallar Nasıl Aldı?," *Agos,* December 27, 2011.
[203] Bozis, *İstanbul Lezzeti,* 43. Ahmet Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik*, 134.

Another professional group mocked in the carnival plays was fire brigades (*tulumbacı)*, who were recruited from their respective neighborhoods. Before the 18th century, it was the janissaries who were functioning as firefighters when needed. However, with the destruction of janissaries in 1826, each neighborhood became responsible for providing a *tulumba*, an engine used to extinguish the fire, and create a fire brigade unit.[204] Fire brigades usually had different occupations, or were mostly unemployed, and called out to duty when there was a fire. What distinguished them from any other service sector worker that they had a special place in the society with the manners and characteristics attributed to the occupation. They were brave, serious and loyal men who pursued the protection and well-being of their fellow fire brigades and the whole neighborhood. They even watched out for prostitution in the neighborhood and drove them away.[205] Their special attire consisted of a fez, a vest on their back, a jacket with purple velvet arms, a special knife, a wool belt, trousers with wide legs and velvet decoration with kneepads, pointy-toed and Cuban heeled shoes.[206] The strength and aggressiveness required for the duty attributed them "frowning countenance" and attracted many *külhanbeyis* to the units.[207] They were known to get in rivalry with other units and even engage in violent fights that fleeing from a fight meant cowardice and shame.[208] Rum fire brigades in Tatavla were among the most famous in terms of their strength at the turn of the century. The Church supported the unit and the Iraklis Sports Club provided the tulumba.[209]

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[204] Boyar and Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul,* 83-84.
[205] Ibid, 85.
[206] Alus, "Eski Tulumbacılar," *Yeni Mecmua*, July 28, 1939.
[207] Boyar and Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul,* 85. Sarper Yılmaz, "Külhanbeyi Kavramı Üzerine," 63.
[208] Melisinos, *Tatavla Tarihi,* 67.
[209] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 63.

Due to their significant character and place in society, fire brigades were targets of the plays. Alus writes about hearing a Greek cry and sees *maskara*s dressed as fire brigades coming from the corner of the street by shouting out fake names of neighborhoods that they were supposed to belong "Aftospiyoslular!... Kıtıpiyoslar!...". They pretend to have control of the shaft of the machine they are carrying, but not move forward. Instead, they pretend like they have been exhausted and wipe their sweats. Instead of a tulumba, they carry a small chest with a beanpole nailed on top. The plumber is carrying a tiny pipe. The lantern keeper has a tiny paper lantern. The hose keeper has a very long and thin robe. The chief appears riding and whipping a naked donkey.[210] As Alus thoroughly narrates, fire brigades' play reflects the social structure of the Ottoman Istanbul in which the authority attributed to the masculinity and strength to the local males was mocked and ridiculed. This is an example of how the norms and order of everyday life is ridiculed and criticized through mockery of the masculinity.

The social structure and the technological developments that occurred in the 19th and 20th-century Ottoman society were also reflected in the plays. A float of a ferry, a late 19th-century phenomenon in Ottoman Istanbul, was often mentioned in narratives as a figure that appeared on Beyoğlu during the carnival. In the carnival context, it did not only allow access to the festive space from other parts of the city but also its very unique experience was turned into a play. In Rasim and Alus' narratives, a ferry is illustrated as being carried on Grand Rue de Pera during the carnival. It is described as a scratchy model of a ferry built with cardboard and cloth, a chimney made from a stovepipe, two poles, and life vests hanging from the sides. It

[210] Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full

was put on wheels and rode through the streets. Its captain, with a fake mustache, fez, *fustanell*a and shoes with pompoms, would give loud directions: "go ahead, return, full speed" (*tornayt, tornistan, filispit*). People would even pretend to buy tickets and go inside. The rest would wave goodbye to the passengers and cry as if they are sending away a beloved one.[211] As the narratives show, it was not only the technological introduction of the ferry in Ottoman Istanbul, but also the new behaviors, characters, and feelings around the ferry's experience, as Wishnitzer suggests.[212] The carnivalesque atmosphere provided a unique medium for the people to manifest their perception of these novelties through mockery and exaggeration.

Lastly, the carnivalesque atmosphere provided an opportunity for wider visibility for women, as discussed in the section under material culture. Through the various disguises that allowed anonymity for the women, they were easily engaged with plays that mainly contained sexual connotations. Giovanni Scagnamillo defines these women as "brothel capital, girls of clandestine brothels, roses of taverns and youngsters seeking one night stands…"[213] As quoted in Bozis', Pavlis Moshakis, a painter from Istanbul narrates that "Brothels joined the pageant. Most of the women were Rum and Armenian. Polish prostitutes followed them. They would be riding horses in Pierrot or Spanish Knight costume of expensive velvet."[214] Similarly, Haris Spataris writes in his memoirs the time he went secretly to *Tatavla Panayırı* as a teenager in the 1910s:

> A group of women who were like the girls we saw in Abanoz but more impudent then them, riding horses and imitating the Amazons. They revealed their legs from their ripped off pants. At the time, it wasn't even imaginable for women to wear pants. They were making impudent moves with the

[211] Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full
[212] Wishnitzer, "Ferry Tales," 149-150.
[213] Scognamillo, *Beyoğlu'nda Fuhuş,* 38.
[214] Bozis, *İstanbul Lezzeti*, 43.

> carrots and cucumbers at their hands and jiggled them in front of their trousers as if they were males. The procurer walking along with them was also helping out.[215] (Appendix B, 2)

This shows that carnivalesque was not only an opportunity to display their bodies but also to engage in plays freely. Scognamillo also narrates that "they would imitate the cancan girls of Moulin Rouge. They would escalate the atmosphere with the bottles of wine, *uzo*, cognac, and Champaign. After that, it would be all about catcalls, compliments, loud bargains, swears and molestations."[216] These narratives also illustrate that the carnivalesque atmosphere laid somewhere in between reality and the imaginary, which was enhanced by the strong element of play. The women's participation, whose status was almost equally vague as the carnivalesque plays, contributed to this atmosphere. Their visibility in the festive space stood somewhere between being an Apukurya *Maskara*sı and performing their occupation openly.

Overall, the cultural performances of *maskara's* plays during the carnival in Ottoman Istanbul reflect a complex representation of the society. The narratives from memoirs and newspaper articles display a wide range of elements being incorporated into the plays. The existence of elements from the rural, together with the public figures and developments, and the women's participation can be interpreted as manifestations of different responses to social transformation that Istanbul was going through in the late 19th and early 20th century.

3.5.1 Music and dance

Alongside *maskaras* and play, dance and music were central elements of the carnivalesque atmosphere. Unlike in Greece, *Apokries* in Istanbul did not leave

[215] Spataris, *Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz,* 40.
[216] Scognamillo, *Beyoğlu'nda Fuhuş,* 38.

behind any significant form and genre of musical tradition. The carnival songs collected by the Greek ethnomusicologist Domna Samiu in Greece contain highly satirical and indecent elements.[217] On the website of Domna Samiu's album for carnival songs, it is quoted from Professor M. Meraklis that these songs were silenced and ignored by "the bourgeois morals" for a long time.[218] Besides, on the same website, the article by another ethnomusicologist Lambros Liavas, states that the study and collection of "indecent songs" had remained marginalized.[219] Drawing from the example of Greece, it would not be wrong to assume that even if Istanbul had a similar song tradition specific for carnivals, it might not be documented well and recorded due to its unconventional content.[220] However, we know from the narratives that a wide range of musical traditions was utilized in the carnivals in Istanbul.

As historian Merih Erol writes in the introduction of her book on the Greek-Orthodox Music in Ottoman Istanbul, the Ottoman music was diverse in terms of "the ethnic, confessional, and social origins of its practitioners."[221] The soundscape of Pera, Galata and Tatavla reflected this diversity in instruments and genre of songs. These songs were often associated with a specific dance and accompanied by specific instruments. Türker writes that musicians mostly played traditional songs or Polka. Young Greek boys would play *Sirto* and *Kasapiko*. The square in front of the church would be full of people dancing *Kasapiko*.[222] On the other hand, Polka, a

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[217] "Carnival Songs," *Domnasamiu.gr*. https://www.domnasamiou.gr/?i=portal.en.albums&id=21
[218] Ibid.
[219] Liavas, "The Greek Rite of Spring," *Domnasamiu.gr.* https://www.domnasamiou.gr/?i=portal.en.albums&id=21
[220] A similar study on *Baklahorani* music and songs in Istanbul is undertaken by Stelyo Berber, a musician from Istanbul. The first outcome of the study, a *Baklahorani* performance premiered in Athens on February 24-25, 2020. In our personal conversation, Berber stated that in his research for the performance, he didn't come across to a specific *Baklahorani* genre, but rather a combination of songs from different origins and traditions.
[221] Erol, *Greek Othodox Music in Ottoman Istanbul,* 5.
[222] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 69.

western dance that emerged and became popular in the mid 19th century, was also popular among the people in Ottoman Istanbul. Alus illustrates how all these music and dances were performed alongside: "*ikitelli*, *köçek* and Polka were performed with a vengeance. People kicked and jumped in hora."[223]

The presence of the different instruments and devices also reflects how diverse the soundscape was. Alus' narrative nicely illustrates this: "A *laterna* appears and *kokona*s dance polka as they twirl. Using *zurna*, *klarnet* and *zillimaşa*, they play a Coptic folk song."[224] *Laterna*, as appeared in the above narrative, was one of the most iconic symbols of the carnival scene. It was a portable music player, introduced from the second half of the 19th century onwards and widely used until the invention of gramophone and the radio. A wooden cylinder with musical notes hammered on it activated the *laterna*. The use of *laterna* allowed different songs to be played by changing the cylinders in the festive space. Another practical benefit of *laterna* was that it was quickly moved around by someone carrying it on their back. That enabled the device and the music to be incorporated into the plays of *maskara*s wandering around. For example, in Ahmet Rasim's account, *laterna* is always in front of the groups of *maskaras*. The group stops when *laterna* stops, and then follow it further in the street.[225] In other words, *laterna* functions as setting up the rhythm of the *maskara*s. Overall, it can be said that music and dancing had an essential impact on creating the festive atmosphere and marking the space. Rather than a classical carnival genre, the soundscape of the carnivals in Istanbul was more shaped by the popular culture of the period, which was a combination of the different local music.

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[223] Alus, *İstanbul Yazıları,* 125.
[224] Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*. Retrieved from http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/handle/11498/13441?show=full
[225] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik*, 129-154.

3.6 Public and official perception

Although the carnivalesque atmosphere seemed like a fun and entertaining occasion, not everyone enjoyed and appreciated the revelry on the streets. The main reason for that was it was associated with a particular lifestyle by the bourgeoisie and the state, which created disorder or spread immorality in the city. Although not directly targeted during the Ottoman era, it was marginalized and ignored to some extent. The festivities on the streets took the state's attention when there was a matter of security concerns and when the renown Muslims were involved. On the other hand, among the Christian and especially Rum community, the streets and Tatavla was associated with lower-class entertainment that was overlooked.

First of all, carnivals were tolerated by the Ottoman state. However, as seen from the archival documents, the state was highly watchful of the public celebrations on the streets to the extent that they posed a threat to public order. There were not any strict prohibitions. As the historian Meropi Anastassiadou quotes Gedeon, the only prohibition was to dress up as Turks and as religious figures.[226] However, it seems like there was not any systematic mechanism to check and prevent this. Instead, the state remained tolerant but kept the surveillance during the celebrations.

In the light of official documents, one concern of the state was the presence and visibility of the Muslims participating in the carnival. As the police were maintaining close surveillance, the public was also very sensitive about this and reported to the police about potential suspects. For example, a police report from 1911 states that a certain Şevket and his friend Ömer were brought to the police station.[227] They were suspected to be Muslim while wandering in *maskara* clothes among the Christians in Grand Rue de Pera. They were turned into the police by

[226] Anastassiadou, "Marking Urban Identity, Dividing up Urban Life," 241.
[227] COA, DH.EUM.KADL. 9.14.

some Muslim people, as both friends refused to give their names.[228] The reason of their capture was wearing costumes that are "against the morals and customs of Islam" as explained in the report.[229] In the interrogation, they were asked why they wore the costumes and whether they knew wearing *maskara* clothes was against Islam or not. Their answer was "This is what I desire," and they did not know it was against Islam.[230] After the interrogation and collection of necessary papers, their reports were forwarded to the Central Directory of Security.

This example illustrates the perception of the Muslim population and the police very well. Not every Muslim enjoyed the revelry and appreciated other Muslim's participation. Besides, the police's statement that disguise as *maskara* is against Islam may be reflecting the official point of view to a certain extent. However, what is understood from Şevket and Ömer's answers is that this opposition was not something ensured by the law. It might well be a non-written rule that people could find a way around to participate in the carnival as long as they were not recognized.

The police reports show that the authorities' surveillance of the festive space was much more extensive. Another concern of the police was the *maskara*s in Fustanella, the national uniform of Greece. One report from 1901 states that "a group of *maskara* in Greek military uniform passed from Galata and to the Istanbul side via the bridge walking in line as pairs." The report states further that although it is normal that see *maskara* like this because of the occasion of Tatavla *Panayır*ı, the crowd in military uniform may have a different purpose. The group was taken into a close investigation because there may be Armenians among the local Rums.[231] This

[228] COA, DH.EUM.KADL. 9.14.7.
[229] COA, DH.EUM.KADL. 9.14.5.
[230] COA, DH.EUM.KADL. 9.14.7.2.
[231] COA, Y.PRK.ZB.26.80.

report is an example of how the state tolerated the *maskara*s but, at the same time, remain on the watch for possible threats. Besides, this shows that the authorities were well aware of the ambiguity created by this manifest behavior in the public space during the carnival.

The authorities maintained a similar attitude regarding the crowds in Tatavla. Police did not intervene but took the necessary precautions to maintain the order. For example, a report from 1889 states that 15 units of soldiers were to put in duty in Dolapdere to prevent inappropriate behavior among the people and provide security.[232] This suggests that the state was taking the necessary precautions to ensure security more or less systematically every year for a while. Although closely watching the celebrations, they were more or less passive in taking any action. It was the large crowds that the authorities were concerned about.

The public perception is expressed much more thanks to the memoirs published later and newspaper articles. As stated above, the revelry of the carnivalesque was not approved by everyone. First of all, as stated in Akillas Millas' book on Halki, the crowd in Tatavla was composed of people from "lower echelons of the society" compared to the respected and elite families having fun in Halki port.[233] Other narratives illustrate what elements of this lower-class entertainment created discomfort and uneasiness among the outsiders to the festivities. One factor was that it was associated with being too informal and disgraceful. As Spataris describes *Baklahorani* as "a real *cümbüş* of the Istanbul and Rum underground world, " these entertainments were not always in line with Ottoman society's public morality.[234] The discontent was directed more specifically to *maskara*s annoying the

[232] COA, Y..PRK.BŞK.15.18.
[233] Millas, *Halki*, 341
[234] Spataris, *Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz,* 38.

people around, excessive drinking and sexuality. Said Duhani, who was often attending the private carnival balls, for example, finds the public celebrations in Istanbul far more degrading than those in abroad and resembles the fun on the streets to an "unbearable uproar."[235] One of the characteristics of this uproar was harassing passers-by by shouting or blocking their ways. Richard Webb, a British Navy officer and Assistant High Commissioner at Constantinople from 1918 to 1920, write in one of his reports in 1919 during the carnival that *maskara*s that "no doubt out of pure exuberance of spirits, have constantly molested passers-by naval, military and civilian, myself among the numbers."[236] Overall, the carnivalesque behavior was overlooked and refrained from as its exuberance disturbed or pulled others involuntarily.

Lastly, the narratives emphasize the extent of sexuality and nakedness on the streets during the carnival as unconventional and shameful. It was mostly reflected in the discourse about the women participating in the festivities. For example, Balıkhane Nazırı Ali Rıza Bey writes that many terrible incidents occurred during the carnival because the lavender smell and vivacity of girls from brothels would "attract boys' hearts. They would be ready to do anything out of love, passions and jealousness".[237] Not only the Muslim-Turkish writers but also Rum newspapers describe the scenery from the carnival that involves obscene women with revealing clothes and filthy accompany as "tragic."[238] These narratives illustrate that the discomfort with the carnivalesque behavior went beyond the ethnoreligious identities. The carnival's upside-down atmosphere was not regarded as appropriate by the reserved and conventional community.

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[235] Duhani, *Beyoğlu'nun Adı Pera İken,* 70.
[236] Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974,* 58.
[237] Balıkhane Nazırı, *Eski Zamanlarda İstanbul Hayatı,,* 191.
[238] Millas, *Halki,* 341.

3.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, by incorporating a wide range of sources, this chapter aimed to describe the carnivalesque experience in the city and discuss the public and official perceptions. This has allowed an understanding of the carnival beyond the nostalgic reminiscences of the present time. Although the carnivalesque propose a "time out of time," it is not entirely independent from the context that it is taking place. It is especially crucial to acknowledge that it was an exuberant, obscene and indecent activity in a predominantly Muslim country when nationalism was on the rise. This is partially the reason why it was marginalized in the public space. However, although it was overlooked by the elite or watched from a distance, as Haris Spataris narrate, "the watchers of this revelry could not enjoy it openly, instead, they confined themselves to the accustomed and decent abundance of the elite" in their private spheres.[239]

[239] Spataris, *Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz,* 38.

CHAPTER 4

PRIVATE FESTIVITIES DURING THE *APOKRIES* SEASON IN THE OTTOMAN ERA

4.1 Introduction

The carnival celebrations also took place in private spaces during the Ottoman era. Those places were the private houses of the ordinary people, ballrooms and theatres, and foreign embassies. Therefore, the type of entertainment differed from those in the streets. In these places, gatherings and entertaining activities were organized and institutionalized. The main organizers were foreign ambassadors, other notables or charities, which had fundraising purposes. These were not open to everyone but a limited number of people. These people would be family members and close friends; invitees only; members of a particular association; or those who could afford a ticket. It is hard to talk about a kind of exuberance and play like in the streets, but rather a courtly and more reserved entertainment. In other words, the carnival celebrations in private spheres were less about turning the world upside down but rather seen as an opportunity to come together, share, have fun, and display prestige most of the time. In this sense, the private celebrations differed from the streets. It is worth looking at the family gatherings, embassy balls, charity balls, the dances and plays performed here for a better and a comprehensive understanding of the carnival period in the Ottoman Empire.

4.2 Intimate gatherings: Family feasts and rituals of food in Rum households

Apokries and Clean Monday had another set of rituals among the relatives, close friends and neighbors in the households of Rums. The information about Rum

households in Istanbul is limited due to the inaccuracy of the sources in the 19th century, as historian Meropi Anastassiadou writes.[240] Her article on the Greek-Orthodox households in Beyoğlu district based on the census of 1907 gives an overview of the families' structure. Due to the increasing migration, the majority of the Rum population was composed of immigrants, which resulted in small households and fractured families, with a significant number of female-headed households. She further states that the extended and composite families of the 1850s were replaced by large nuclear families of parental couples and children. Traditional family patterns of the rural areas were diminishing "in the Constantinopolitan urban and multi-cultural context."[241] Therefore, it would be wrong to assume that there was a homogenous Rum family in Istanbul. This also suggests that *Apokries* and Clean Monday rituals were subject to change based on the family structure and values.

First of all, the private gatherings in Rum households were not merely limited to the domestic space only. One of the main activities of the period among families and friends was to pay ad-hoc visits by getting in disguise. As Rigas writes, these activities were called *vengeres*, "a trick-or-treat type of visits to friends houses, during which house owners would welcome the disguised with treats, exchange bawdy jokes and quips, while trying to discover the identity of each *maskara*."[242] People were not only confined to their houses. They appeared in disguise on the streets but enjoyed this opportunity among their closed circles. In these closed circles, disguise's sole purpose was not anonymity but rather entertainment among friends and family.

[240] Anastassiadou, "Greek-Orthodox Households in Istanbul," 399.
[241] Ibid, 420.
[242] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century," 118.

The narratives of Rums illustrate the ideal ritual as the commensality around food. The rituals of *Apokries* and Clean Monday did not always have religious meaning, but rather it was utilized as an occasion to come together and eat together. These would happen especially during the last weekend and on Clean Monday. The first thing was to clean the house. Secondly, desserts and food would always be ready if some people with costumes popped up in front of their door for *vengeres.* Sula Bozis writes that dessert was necessary: "Syrupy desserts like dried fruit rolls with walnut, sweet semolina pastry, *baklava*, *kadayıf* dessert, *kadayıf* dessert with cream, toasted bread with jam on, and semolina dessert would be served alongside with liqueur."[243] Besides, Lenten food, which was animal product-free, was prepared. These meals consisted mostly of dishes of vegetables cooked with olive oil.[244] These show that the one level of the festivities taking place in the private spaces was family gatherings and the gatherings of the small and more intimate groups, which mostly occurred around the commensality of the Lenten food.

4.3 Entertainment and social good: Fund raising balls of the benevolent societies

The other level in which the festivities took place in the private level involved the broader Rum community through the charity organizations and benevolent societies. *Apokries* season provided opportunities for such organizations and societies to raise funds by organizing balls to help the poor. As historian Haris Exertzoglou write, charitable activity in the Greek-Orthodox community was seen as "a private religious duty." Nevertheless, it was only in the second half of the 19th

[243] Bozis, *İstanbul Lezzeti,* 41.
[244] Yerasimos, *İstanbullu Rum Bir Ailenin Mutfak Serüveni,* 140.

century, when poverty was established as a valid category in the Ottoman society that the charitable activities took a systematic and centralized form. In other words, the private duty of helping the poor was replaced by "impersonal strategies."[245] He further states that these activities in the Rum community in Istanbul were organized as the initiatives of the local elites, professional groups and the rising middle class. The charity activities were planned to serve to "the growing uncertainties of the middle classes" and assist the poor.[246] Therefore, the balls organized during the carnival season for charitable purposes can be considered in this context of rising poverty and the rising need for representation on the part of the middle class.

The function of these associations was not only helping others but also sustaining the Rum identity of the late 19th century Ottoman Istanbul. Rigas writes that "the Rum philanthropic system has emerged as the foundational, constitutive institution of group-membership and self-administration."[247] Philanthropy, as associated with patriotism in Rum culture, was highly related with both forming Rum identity in the Ottoman society, and also reinforcing the inter-communal relations and solidarity.[248] This system was further enhanced by extensive advertisements in newspapers of the activities and the benefactors. One of these philanthropic activities of benevolent societies highly advertised in newspapers was balls organized during *Apokries* season.

The charity balls allowed the middle class and the elite to create an excuse for the revelry. An article on *Journal de Constantinople*, a Francophone newspaper published in Istanbul, on February 24, 1854 describes the purpose of the balls as

[245] Exertzoglou, "Medicine, Philanthropy and the Construction of Poverty," 253-54.
[246] Ibid, 260.
[247] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century," 62.
[248] Ibid.

"sanctifying the profane amusement of the carnival and dedicating the price to the relief of the miserable."[249] It can be said that these balls were a compromise between the carnivalesque of the period and the etiquette of the emerging middle class. In other words, the genre of the balls involved the material culture and the cultural performances related to the carnival, on a much more reserved level than the streets, and also utilized the opportunity for a charitable purpose. Their unique structure may be better understood through a detailed analysis.

Among the prominent charity organizations was Tatavla Benevolent Society, (*Φιλοπτωχη Αδελποτητα Ταταουλων*). Hristodulu writes that it was established in 1862 to help the poor. Since its establishment, the society was under the protection of the Russian Embassy in Istanbul. The society's revenue reaches up to 50.000 *kuruş* thanks to its real estate, balls, membership fees, and extraordinary income.[250] The announcements of the annual carnival balls of the society were published in the foreign and Rum newspapers. For example, *Levant Herald*, a Francophone and Anglophone newspaper published in Istanbul, announced consecutively in 1867, 1868 and 1869 that the annual ball of the Tatavla Benevolent Society is to take place in Crystal Palace, under the patronage of the Russian ambassador, General Ignatieff, "for the total benefit of the poor," during the carnival season.[251] What constituted these ball's relation with the carnival season was that they were "Bal masque", in other words, masked balls. Similarly, the announcement published on *Neologos* in 1874, a Rum newspaper published in Istanbul, release that the balls organize for the benefit of Tatavla Benevolent Society were to masked

[249] "Nouvelles Diverses," *Journal de Constantinople*, February 24, 1854.
[250] Hristodulu, *Tatavla Tarihi*, 361.
[251] "Societe de Bienfaisance de Tatavla," *Levant Herald*, March 12, 1867. "Grand Bal," *Levant Herald,* February 15, 1868. "Un Grand Bal Pare et Masque," *Levant Herald,* February 25, 1869.

dances.[252] These announcements illustrate that the carnivalesque spirit was incorporated in these balls through the "masked ball" concept. Besides, the publication of the announcements in various media shows that they targeted a wide range of participants since the ball constituted an essential part of their revenue.

Not only the Rum organizations had these kinds of balls, but individuals and organizations from different backgrounds hosted such philanthropic events. Foreign representatives and Ottoman officials often hosted the balls for various organizations. For example, on February 19, 1853, an announcement appeared on *Journal de Constantinople* that Lady Canning, the wife of the British Ambassador, hosted a "dress and mask" ball in the grand salon of Hotel d'Angleterre, for the profit of the Benevolent Commercial and Artisanal Association and the poor Greeks and Protestants of Pera.[253] Also, as it was announced on *Neologos* on February 19, 1876, General Muhsin Han, the Iranian Ambassador in Istanbul have participated as the patron of the ball organized for the benefit of Büyükdere Benevolent Society.[254] Not only the foreign representatives but also Turkish officials often hosted such balls during the carnival. An interesting example is the Minister of Security (*Zaptiye Nazırı*) Husni Pasha. On February 28, 1870, *Levant Herald* published an announcement of a "dress and mask ball" that was organized under the patronage of Husni Pasha for the benefit of the La Société l'Amie du Travail in the Naum Theatre.[255] The examples given are just samples from the range of the philanthropic balls given during the carnival season in the 19th century Ottoman Istanbul. The balls were places for individuals and communities to

[252] "Χορος," *Neologos,* February 19, 1874.
[253] "Mardi derniere a eu lieu dans la grand salon de l'Hotel Angleterre un bal pare et deguise," *Journal de Constantinople,* February 19, 1852.
[254] "Χορος," *Neologos,* February 19, 1876.
[255] "Bal Pare et Masque," *Levant Herald,* February 28, 1870.

display their philanthropic engagement in the newly emerging centers for entertainment and display.

These balls were most of the time held in theatres and ballrooms, which are 19th-century phenomena. Most famous venues were theatres in Beyoglu. For example, Naum Theatre, founded in 1840 in Beyoğlu, has an important place in the city's cultural history. It used to be an critical venue for western performance art, especially Italian opera performances.[256] Until being destroyed by a fire in 1870, it also functioned as an important venue for carnival balls. In the newspapers, Naum Theatre is often acclaimed for the beautiful decorations and bright lights.[257] French Theatre can be given as another example of the popular venues. It was built in 1827 by the Genoese on Cadde-i Kebir in Beyoğlu. After the fire in 1831, a ballroom named Cyrstal Palace became a ball venue, was built at the entrance of the French Theatre.[258] Among the other places that are recurrently mentioned in newspaper announcements are Concordia Theatre[259], Odeon Theatre[260], Tepebaşı Municipality Theatre[261], Alcazar Lyrique[262], Le Grand Casin de Pera[263], etc. These performative arts and entertainment venues illustrate that the charity ball during the carnival season was part of the emerging entertainment culture of Ottoman Istanbul in the late 19th century and early 20th century.

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[256] It is a theatre that served between 1840-1870 on Grand Rue de Pera in Beyoglu. It was founded by Naum Duhani. Many Italian plays had been performed. It is known that among the audience were Sultan Abdulmecid and Abdulaziz. The building was destroyed in a fire in 1870. Cite de Pera, or Çiçek Pasajı as known today, stands at its place. Aracı, *Naum Tiyatrosu 19. Yüzyıl İstanbul'unun İtalyan Operası*, 13.
[257] "Nouvelles Diverses,"*Journal de Constantinople*, February 24, 1854.
[258] Uras, "Cine Alhambra Yandı," *Milliyet,* February 16, 1999. https://www.milliyet.com.tr/yazarlar/gungor-uras/cine-alhambra-yandi-5256796
[259] "Gran Ballo," *Levant Herald,* March 5, 1867.
[260] "Son Balo," *İkdam,* March 11, 1902.
[261] İhsan, "İstanbul Postası," *Servet-i Fünun,* January 20, 1898.
[262] "μεγασ χοροσ," *Neologos,* March 15, 1869.
[263] "Nouvelles Diverses," *Journal de Constantinople,* March 4, 1851.

The participants of balls were those who could afford the tickets. Tickets were mostly sold in the offices of newspapers like *Neologos*.[264] Some had fixed prices of 20 francs, 2 silver mecidiye, 1 lira. For example, in Husni Pasha's ball at Naum Theatre in 1870, there were 3 different prices based on the lodge's place. It derived from 40 to 15 francs.[265] The rest were thereupon special invitations. That also explains the diversity in the balls. In other words, it was where the bureaucratic and civil society came together.

Together with the philanthropic activities, these balls were also a place for communicating political messages. Yorgo Zarifi, the son of the famous Rum banker family, writes in his memoirs that in the balls of the foreigners, their ambassador would always be present. This gained the charity balls of associations a diplomatic character and turned the balls into a stage for political rivalry and manifestation.[266] An example of this comes from the article published on *Levant Herald* March 1891. In the ball given for the benefit of Greek Schools in Galata, the Ottoman minister of education Munif Paşa and charge d'affaires of Greece sits on the lodges across each other. Upon the arrival of Munif Paşa, the orchestra starts playing the national anthem of Greece.[267] This shows that the ball served as a place for such confrontations and indirect expressions of national solidarity.

The activities that participants engaged in these balls were less carnivalesque than that of the streets but still contained a certain level of revelry and performativity. One of the focuses of the balls was costumes and dresses. The central theme in these balls was most of the time masks, but people were free to come without one. Yorgo Zarifi writes that "men and women didn't find it appropriate to

[264] "Bal Pare et Masque," *Levant Herald,* February 28, 1870.
[265] "Bal Pare et Masque," *Levant Herald,* February 28, 1870.
[266] Zarifi, *Hatıralarım,* 373.
[267] "Les Ecoles Greques de Galata," *Levant Herald,* March 16, 1891.

go to a public ball with nightgowns, revealing their real identity. They participated by wearing masks and Dominoes".[268] Newspapers write that people were in "lively and cute dominos full of mischief and gaiety."[269] However, in the 20th century, the rule was loosened. Zarifi remembers his mother organizing a ball that people would come with their evening gowns instead of costumes, but had to convince people to participate because this was not what people were used to.[270] *Levant Herald,* on February 24, 1906, describes Madam Zarifi's and her friends' dresses in detail:

> Mme Zarifi was beautifully dressed in black wearing a diamond tiara. She was assisted by Madame Pangıri, also attired in black and wearing pearls, and Madame Cartali in white veiled in black lace trimmed with blue bows, and Madame Eliasco in grey mousseline taffeta velvet trimmed with lace.[271]

Therefore, balls were also a place for displaying one's wealth and prestige.

The main entertainment was dancing and distributing gifts. The dances began with a signal and were led by the notables in the ball. For example, in the Philoptocos Ball in 1906, the first dance was led by M. Kirico, Mm. Georges, Leon Zarifi, with Mme Cartali, Mme Pangiri and Mme Eliasco, the important figures in the charity as *Levant Herald* writes.[272] Then "the cheerful and intriguing" crowd followed the lead.[273] Exciting plays would be introduced during the dances. For example, *Levant Herald* writes 1906 that in the Italian Ball there was,

> a little wind-mill, cleverly designed by Mlle de Kirico, appeared on the stage. It was tastefully lighted with colored lanterns and out of it came Mlle Mathilde Lombardo looking exceedingly graceful in the garb of the miller's wife. At a given signal, a gay and never-ending string of ladies and their partners was formed and the dancers walked in procession round the hall and up the stage After a while, the gifts would be distributed by the hosts of the ball. In the same ball Mlle Lombardo distributes floral favours and sachets

[268] Zarifi, *Hatıralarım,* 371.
[269] "Nouvelles Diverses," *Journal de Constantinople,* February 24, 1854.
[270] Yorgo Zarifi, *Hatıralarım,* 373.
[271] "The Italian Ball," *Levant Herald,* February 24, 1906.
[272] "The Philoptochos Ball," *Levant Herald,* February 24, 1906.
[273] "Nouvelles Diverses," *Journal de Constantinople,* February 24, 1854.

provided by the Marquise Imperiali.[274]

Similarly, in the Philoptochos Ball, "the ladies brought in baskets full of artificial flowers and cherries distributed to the gentlemen for their partners. Blue, pink, and mauve bead necklaces and many China and silver-topped vases and pincushions were also distributed". The cotillon in Philoptochos ball in 1906 ended with presenting each lady a pretty scarf.[275] These examples also show that women were mostly at the center of the main performative activities.

The balls were, most of the time, very successful in collecting large amounts of money. The funds were often raised through the lottery or by playing tombola. As Yorgo Zarifi writes in his memoirs, their ancestors "didn't know any other way than donations to collect money. After a while, donations remained insufficient and lotteries, concerts, fairs and performances were organized."[276] For example, in the ball given in the Crystal Palace in 1868 for the Cretan refugees, 20.000 francs were raised.[277] Yorgo Zarifi accounts that the Philoptochos Balls that his mother organized raised generally more than 1000 liras.[278] Therefore, collecting money in the balls was incorporated in the entertainment and play process. This had allowed the participants to enjoy themselves and feel satisfied that they are doing this for a good cause.

Overall, the charity balls organized during the carnival season were part of the middle-class efforts to display their wealth while being active in civil society. Although these balls were not specific to the carnival period, it can be said that the carnivalesque atmosphere in the city contributed to the spirit and the methods in these balls. The experience of the carnivalesque was in a more reserved and western

[274] "The Italian Ball," *Levant Herald,* February 17, 1906.
[275] "The Philoptochos Ball," *Levant Herald,* February 24, 1906.
[276] Zarifi, *Hatıralarım,* 371.
[277] "Latest Intelligence," *Levant Herald,* February 25, 1868.
[278] Zarifi, *Hatıralarım,* 372.

style. Masks, costumes and disguise was not the primary purpose, but rather a tool for attending these occasions. Dresses, dances, gifts and decorations were more emphasized. Raising money was playfully incorporated into the entertainment, which initially resulted in constituting a large amount of these association's revenue.

4.4 Display of power through entertainment: Courtly carnival balls of the foreign embassies in Istanbul

During the carnival season, the balls continued on an international level in the private buildings of the foreign embassies in Beyoğlu. Although the embassies hosted other balls in other times of the year, these were especially emphasized as ending or as celebrating the end of the carnival. Therefore, although the ball itself did not resemble anything like the carnivals on the streets, carnival was an occasion to host non-bureaucratic and entertaining events. The exuberance of the streets was replaced with the diplomatic representations and relations in these balls. They were held to display the prestige of the subsequent embassies' presence in the city.

From the second half of the 19th century onwards, the embassies that organize parties during the carnival period were French, British, Austrian, Russian based on the articles on contemporary newspapers. In the 20th century, the German Embassy joined the tradition. The hosts of these balls were the ambassadors and their wives. For example, *Journal de Constantinople* writes that "the lively carnival season in Constantinople is closed by the brilliant dancing evening by M. General Baraguey d'Hilliers, French ambassador." It was given in the embassy building and the elite of Pera was invited.[279] As *Levant Herald* published, in 1868, despite "the troubled politics and uneasy finance," the Austrian ambassador Baron Prokesch,

[279] "Nouvelles Diverses," *Journal de Constantinople,* March 4, 1854.

together with his daughter, hosted four balls. “With a very brilliant ball at the Austrian embassy, the Carnival festivities of Pera came to a close.”[280] Similarly, it was announced that the Russian Embassy closed the carnival period with “a very brilliant soirée” in 1872.[281] In 1906, the German Embassy was praised by the newspapers for organizing the most brilliant and successful ball in recent years.[282] As seen from these examples, the carnival season was another opportunity for the foreign representatives to open their doors to a selected crowd.

The crowds consisted of bureaucratic elites mostly. Among the guests were representatives of other foreign nations and Ottoman officials. The names of the guests were published in newspapers. For example, in 1848, the French Embassy gave a ball in the grand saloon of reception in the embassy. The article in *Journal de Constantinople* writes that there were more than 500 guests. Among them were “a very large number of Ottoman officials, several Greek and Armenian families and the elite of the European society in Pera, together with the Iranian Ambassador Mirzi[a] Mehmed Ali Khan.” Among the Ottoman officials were ministers, members of the justice council, palace translators.[283] Similarly in the German Embassy’s ball in 1906, the grand vizier, minister of foreign affairs and other ministers were present. Other foreign representatives of Austria, Russia, Italy, Iran, France, Belgium, the United States, Sweden and Romania were also participating.[284] Considering the status of the invitees, the activities they engaged during the balls were concerned with displaying prestige through a more reserved and courtly entertainment.

[280] “Latest Intelligence,” *Levant Herald,* February 25, 1868.
[281] “Theatricals at the Russian Embassy,” *Levant Herald,* March 11, 1872.
[282] “Ball at the German Embassy,” *Levant Herald,* March 3, 1906.
[283] “Nouvelles Diverses,” *Journal de Constantinople,* March 6, 1848.
[284] “Ball at the German Embassy,” *Levant Herald,* March 3, 1906.

Based on the newspaper articles, it can be interpreted that a great effort was given for the decoration of the rooms. These balls were most of the time held in the embassies' reception halls, in the entrance, which the hosts welcomed the guests. The decoration of these rooms, especially lighting, was most of the time emphasized in newspapers. Historian Nurçin İleri writes that until 1873, the streets of Beyoğlu was illuminated with coal gas. Public utilization of electricity began in the 1910s. That is partly why the indoor illumination was a representation of "luxury, celebration of authority and patrimonial power specific to that site or individual."[285] The prestige and excitement attributed to the embassies' indoor illumination were reflected in the newspaper articles. *Journal de Constantinople* writes in 1848 that the French Embassy opened the doors of its large reception room, which was "decorated with true royal luxury" for the first time for the Pera society.[286] Similarly, the ball of the French Embassy in 1858 was described as nothing like its predecessors. "It was a luxury of flowers, lights, and sparkle of diamonds."[287] As seen in the examples, the use of new technologies by foreign embassies in Istanbul became a tool for displaying prestige and advancement. Besides, the illumination also affected the performances during the ball through the spectacle created by the brilliancy.

The dresses of the hosts and the guests served a similar purpose. The guests wore western-style ball gowns and suits, with their official accessories attached. For example, in a ball given at the German Embassy in 1906, the ambassador Baron von Marschall wore "the broad ribbon of the Order of the Red Eagle, with Star and other decorations." Baroness von Marschall's appearance was described as "white tulle spangled with silver and mother-of-pearl paillettes, the only touch of color being a

[285] İleri, "Allure of the Light, Fear of the Dark," 284-287.
[286] "Nouvelles Diverses," *Journal de Constantinople,* March 6, 1848.
[287] "Nouvelles Diverses," *Journal de Constantinople,* February 13, 1858.

tastefully arranged bow of pale mauve on the front of the bodice continued to the waist." She also had a hair ornament made of diamonds, a pearl necklace and the Order of the *Şefkat*[288] on her left shoulder.[289] Based on the narratives of the newspapers, it is clear that the appearance of the hosts and guests were paid a significant amount of attention. The material culture, together with political and social symbols, was part of the whole performance and display in the balls.

The performances in the embassy balls consisted of dramatic plays and dances. Compared to the playfulness on the streets, the performances in these balls were more theatrical and courtlier. The dramatic plays were theatrical pieces performed on stage by professional actors and actresses. For example, the opening event of the Russian Embassy's ball on March 9, 1872, was a couple of performances of an amateur theatre group. A stage was formed "by the large drawing-room and prettily mounted bijou stage that did similar duty last year." Three French plays were performed.[290] Similarly, in 1906, in a "brilliant" ball given by the British Ambassador Sir Nicholas and Lady O'Conor, "the guests were entertained by a theatrical performance in the ball-room, where a stage was erected for the occasion." One children's play and another play from British literature was performed.[291] he dances began through midnight. Waltz, Quadrille, Cotillon and Mazurka were among the most popular dances. *Levant Herald* on March 3, 1906 writes about the German Embassy's ball that "at one o'clock the signal for the Quadrille-Cotillon which was ably led by Baron Franz de Calice and Mlle von Bieberstein."[292] The performances in the embassy balls suggest that, contrary to

[288] Order of Şefkat (Tr. Şefkat Nişanı) was given by Abdulhamit II to women engaged in charity activities.
[289] "Ball at the German Embassy," *Levant Herald,* March 3, 1906.
[290] "Theatricals at Russian Embassy," *Levant Herald,* February 11, 1872.
[291] "Ball at the German Embassy," *Levant Herald,* March 3, 1906.
[292] "Ball at the German Embassy," *Levant Herald,* March 3, 1906.

what Bakhtin suggests about carnivalesque, the line between the performer and the spectator was clearly drawn in these balls. This was done through the means of stages, professional dramatic plays and the structured dances. It was the embodiment of the social and diplomatic structure that enhanced the patrimonial presence of the foreign representatives.

Overall, the carnival season also allowed the creation of a slightly different spirit on the elite and official levels. The spirit of the carnival was appropriated by the bureaucratic elite to exhibit their material culture and the courtly values. This was done in the private sphere and within a closed group. Therefore, rather than an exuberant carnivalesque, the performativities in these balls consisted of rather reserved and structured styles. The foreign embassies' exhibition of power and authority had attracted a significant amount of attention, especially in the foreign press. This has further expanded the display to the public sphere.

4.5 Between public and private: Independent dance balls in theatres

Lastly, the dance balls organized in the closed spaces of theatres, gardens and hotels, and open to the public through paid participation needs to be mentioned. Although these are not exclusive events as in the previous examples, they are neither public events organized on the streets by the people. These events occur on another level between public and private, which are open to everyone unless the ticket is paid. Besides, they are organized and structured events contrary to the disorganized manner of the street revelry. These balls are structured around the popular dances of the period, competitions and wearing costumes.

The decorations were crucial in the creation of the festive space. Confetti and serpentines provided a colorful and cheerful atmosphere. Ahmet Ihsan’s article

on *Servet-i Fünun* perfectly describes the dynamism of the atmosphere as the following:

> Fortunately, confetti made of tiny and colorful pieces of paper was invented to pour down their head. Wouldn't it be nice to watch the colorful rain of the papers over the bright shoulders of this woman who covered her face with a piece of velvet, and then imagine papers going down between her corset and dress? What about the serpentines? How elegant the scenery that serpentines create as they are thrown around in colorful lines when the dancers move with them.[293] (Appendix B, 3)

Compared to the illumination of the embassy balls, confetti and serpentines made of paper and ribbons constituted the main spectacle of these dance balls. This also illustrates the extent that these dance balls were distinguished from the other elite entertainments during the carnival.

One similarity with the street level entertainment was the extensive use of masks and the costumes. Giovanni Scognamillo accounts her mother's memories of these balls and the two costumes that she wore in these balls. One was a Triboulet (*soytarı*) costume and a scepter. The other one was a dancer costume inspired by the Folies Bergeres of the 1910s, with a short skirt, low neck and lots of feathers.[294] Although not as exuberant as the streets, the disguise and anonymity was preferred by the participants in these balls. This allowed the members of the elite to participate. Yorgo Zarifi narrates that her mother had never worn a mask or a "domino" before. After her father's death, her brother-in-law offers her to go to one of these balls. However, since they were still in the mourning period, they did not want to be recognized by other guests in the ball in the Mnimatakia Theatre in Tarlabaşı. She had prepared herself a beautiful "domino" and a mask.[295] These examples show how people from different backgrounds preferred these kinds of more secure balls instead

[293] İhsan, "İstabul Postası," *Servet-i Fünun,* March 10, 1898.
[294] Scognamillo, *Bir Levanten'in Beyoğlu Anıları,* 15.
[295] Zarifi, *Hatıralarım* 371-372.

of street revelry. Compared to the community and embassy balls, these diverse balls had provided the opportunity to experiment with the different disguises and taste the experience of anonymity.

In these balls, dancing was the central activity in which people gathered together. The big theatres like Odeon and Tepebaşı would rent their saloons to dance instructors to organize big dance balls. Monsieur Salla was one of these names who organized dance balls, which became known as *Salla Balosu*. Dancers were explicitly chosen for these events. When he died, his student Monsieur Psalti carried on the tradition. These balls were later called as Terziler Balosu and Midinet Balosu, according to Said Duhani.[296] Taksim Bahçesi was another popular venue for such dances. *Ikdam* writes on February 23, 1901, that two carnival celebrations are organized by dance instructor "Mösyö Jozef" similar to those in Paris.[297] In these dance balls, competitions would be held. For example, in 1912, a ball that people could participate with or without masks, the dance instructor Apesyalis Koçuyanopolus was to perform the best dances of Paris with 40 dancers. At the end of the ball, the best mask and the best dancer was to receive a present.[298] The narratives provide evidence that the western lifestyle and entertainment highly influenced the dance activities. The balls were somewhere in between the structured and disorganized manner. However, at the same time, these balls in the private spaces of theatres and gardens can be regarded as the first attempts of institutionalizing the carnival experience around structured dance schools and instructions for a diverse public.

[296] Duhani, *Beyoğlu'nun Adı Pera iken,* 67-68.
[297] "Taksim Bahçesi," *İkdam,* February 23, 1901.
[298] "Beyoğlu'nda Odeon Tiyatrosu," *İkdam,* February 20, 1912.

Lastly, the children parties during the carnival, although not frequently mentioned in the newspapers, stands out as a significant form that carnival season has appropriated. For example, as *Levant Herald* wrote in 1906, a children's dance took place at Tokatlıyan Hotel, organized by a committee of ladies. It started at 4 pm and lasted until 8 pm. Children were in fancy dresses, original and tasteful. Pupils from the English High School for Girls danced under the leadership of Miss Norrington. Girls danced around a maypole while their partners jumped high to secure the candies packed on top of the pole.[299] The children's ball opens up the carnivalesque realm for the children and the women and incorporates them to the revelry. In other words, the carnival season was an occasion for children and their mothers to be public and join the entertainment in the city through certain institutions such as schools.

Finally, these dance balls in the closed spaces but open to a diverse public can be interpreted as semi-private carnival celebrations. Their ambiguous level among private celebrations provided space for a semi-carnivalesque experience for people from diverse backgrounds. What enabled this was the use of masks and costumes that allowed anonymity for the participants. However, compared to the street level, these were dance events with western influence. It would not be wrong to conclude that the carnival season's spirit was diverse but, at the same time, permeable to a certain extent. As in Ahmet Rasim's experience, it was acceptable to enjoy the streets and join one of these balls on the same night.[300]

[299] "The Italian Ball," *Levant Herald*, February 17, 1906.
[300] Rasim, *Fuhş-i Atik,* 129-154.

4.6 Official and public perception

As well as the carnivalesque experience in the urban context, it is critical to understand the perception of the carnivalesque by the state and the rest of the public. Although not exuberant as the street festivities, these private celebrations were criticized by their subsequent communities. Besides, the state was in a position that did not interrupt the process but still watched to a certain extent.

Although most of the balls were praised for their success, there were occasionally criticisms of the community balls. These criticisms targeted the luxury and the excessive consumption of the charity balls. As Exertzoglou writes, "the luxurious show off was viewed as a threat to the social cohesion of Orthodox communities."[301] That is why spending on a good cause instead of useless luxury became popular among the middle class.[302] However, during the carnival, the charity balls could not escape from the criticism of being too luxurious from time to time. For example, the ball for the benefit of Les Sociétés-Unies Arméniennes in 1891 was criticized by *Levant Herald* for being too luxurious:

> In our opinion, it is wrong and if we wanted to aim at savings, which is de rigueur in such cases. Many things were superfluous. We will only mention one: the mirrors with the candelabras with three candles placed in the first two rows of the boxes.[303] (Appendix B, 4)

This shows that as the charity balls turned into a place for display and entertainment, they were criticized by certain circles for diverging from the primary purpose.

Regarding the dance balls in Beyoğlu, the perception of them was similar to the street festivities. The harm to public morals and order was one of the common criticisms. Duhani writes that the dance balls in Beyoglu were famous for not being

[301] Exertzoglou, "The Cultural Uses of Consumption," 82.
[302] Ibid, 84.
[303] "Les Sociétés-Unies Arméniennes," *Levant Herald*, March 16, 1891.

improper for the social moral.[304] Similarly, Balıkhane Nazırı Ali Rıza writes that it became a new trend to gather as crowds in ballrooms and clubs until early in the morning, in a critical tone.[305] However, these criticisms were not specific to these balls. The concept of the carnival itself and the public celebrations received similar criticisms.

The state's attitude, on the other hand, is not very clear. However, a few documents in the state archive illustrate that at the beginning of the 1850s, the organizers of private celebrations got permission to organize balls. For example, Monsieur Naum's, owner of the Naum Theatre, writes a petition to the state saying that he wanted permission to organize a theatrical play for the carnival in his theatre in 1851.[306] Similarly, Monsieur Mısıri, the director of Hotel d'Angleterre, asks for permission to hold a ball in his restaurant in Beyoglu in 1853.[307] Although it is hard to generalize these two unique documents to a whole century, it is interesting to see that organizers sought the confirmation of the state. It is hard to say that the state had controlled the private balls. Rather, it might be the initiative of the organizers to inform the state to play safely.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter illustrated the different levels of celebrations behind closed doors and for small circles. These celebrations and street festivities evolved from the same spirit and in the same period of the year. Besides, they evolved in relation to each other and appropriated the material culture and cultural performances of the streets. The public and official attitudes towards each festivity are critical to understanding

[304] Duhani, *Beyoğlu'nun Adı Pera İken,* 70.
[305] Balıkhane Nazırı, *Eski Zamanlarda İstanbul Hayatı,* 181.
[306] COA, A.MKT.MVL.37 – 82.
[307] COA, HR.MKT.55.100.

the following period. These perceptions that evolved in the late Ottoman era, together with the Republican era's traumas, contributed to the transformation of the carnival in Istanbul.

CHAPTER 5

APOKRIES IN THE EARLY REPUBLICAN ERA AND THEIR REPRESENTATIONS IN THE TURKISH PRESS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the festivities between 1923 and 1942, mostly through an analysis of the newspapers in the Turkish press. The main question around which the analyses evolve is how the festivities transformed with the new regime and how this was experienced in society. To be able to do that, I searched through the Turkish newspapers of the period, namely *Son Posta*, *Akşam*, *Milliyet* and *Cumhuriyet*. The newspapers allowed to understand how the public sphere became a space for the contestation of the past and present. Not only the festive atmosphere but also the violent and repressive atmosphere that Rums of the period experienced is evident in the transformation that carnival festivities went through.

The newspapers illustrate that the carnival festivities in the public space during the Republican era had experienced an expansion of the festive space. The festive atmosphere was appropriated by the Turkish institutions to raise funds for the new nation's needs. The private celebrations in the households and associations of the Rum community had continued. On the other hand, the urban experience of the festivities in the public space was enhanced by using new means of transportation in the city. Another instance that the experience was extended to a more massive crowd was the significant year that Ramadan Feasts and Carnival coincided the same period. In the second part of this chapter, the focus shifts to the discourse adopted by the newspapers illustrating the carnivalesque. One implication of the new technologies in the press was the widespread use of photography, which emphasized female visibility in the carnival space. On top of that, most of the narratives focus on

the exuberance of the festivities, which imply criminality. Lastly, these will lead to a discussion of carnival's fate in 1942, which remains vague, whether it was banned by the state or disappeared naturally.

5.2 From Tatavla to Kurtuluş: Social and urban transformation in the early Republican era

What shaped the experience and perception of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* in the early decades of the Republic was the social and urban transformation that Istanbul underwent. By establishing the Turkish Republic in 1923, people living in Istanbul had already been going through a drastic change through a series of events and wars. The new regime brought a more institutionalized approach for a transformation towards a modern nation-state through a series of reforms. On top of that, Hakan Kaynar suggests that the change in Istanbul also occurred independently from the state's desire and in an unplanned way.[308] In that sense, this transformation was related to the official efforts, the social relations and responses within the society.

First of all, in the Republican era, Istanbul lost its status as the imperial capital, which had important implications. The new capital of the nation-state became Ankara in 1923. This break in history has contributed to the creation of a contrast between the two cities. As the center of the national struggle after the World War I, Ankara "became the embodiment of patriotism and progress" as the historian Zeynep Kezer writes.[309] On the other hand, as the symbol of the imperial past, Istanbul was assigned a negative image. The most critical aspect of this negative image was Istanbul's connection with foreign influences and its cosmopolitan

[308] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme*, 12.
[309] Kezer, *Building Modern Turkey,* 20.

population. As a consequence of this, the nationalists targeted the Ottoman legacy that Istanbul represented. This legacy was related not only to the imperial symbols but also to the non-Muslim population in the city.[310] This had profoundly shaped Rums' experience of the city during the early Republican era.

In his book on the history of the Greeks, Herkül Millas states that the republican regime inherited a population of 280.000 Rums in 1 million people living in Istanbul in 1924. Rums living in Anatolia were relocated to Greece by 1925 as part of the population exchange agreement, in which Istanbul and Thrace were left as an exception.[311] Kezer states that despite the Lozan Treaty, which granted equal rights to non-Muslim citizens of the Turkish Republic, non-Muslims continued to be seen as foreign, and their loyalty to the nation was questioned due to the fresh memory of the previous wars.[312] An implication of that was the minoritization process of non-Muslim citizens, which involved "conspicuous performance of difference," according to Kezer.[313] In that sense, the new regime targeted the symbols indicating difference and non-Muslim legacy in the society and put effort to eliminate them.

On the part of Rums, their dominance in commercial activity and entertainment life had been highly affected. Rums owned and run bars, restaurants and taverns mostly in Beyoğlu. Kaynar argues that in 1924, half of the businesses in Beyoğlu had been shot down and the other half was eliminated in favor of the Turks, leaving Rums' bars low in number.[314] The aim was to Turkify the entertainment sector and nightlife and the other realms of daily life. These efforts to homogenize

[310] İbid, 21.
[311] Millas, *Geçmişten Bugüne Yunanlılar Dil, Din ve Kimlikleri*, 224.
[312] Kezer, *Building Modern Turkey,* 119.
[313] Ibid.
[314] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme,* 274.

the society had implications in the experience of *Apokries.* The venues where carnivalesque used to be freely enjoyed was no longer Rum realms.

Tatavla was not independent of the transformation in the early decades of the Republican era. Tatavla went through a demographic change. Teachers, journalists, authors and the elite in Tatavla who supported Venizelos, the current president of Greece, moved to Pireaus, Alexandria or Marseille. As the news that the immigrants in Greece suffered from hard conditions spread, many chose to remain in Tatavla and even Rums, who did not feel secure in other neighborhoods, moved to Tatavla, as stated by Orhan Türker.[315] As Rigas writes, the perception of Tatavla remained as "little Athens."[316] Not only Greeks but the Armenians of the empire and republic also migrated to Tatavla throughout the years. This had an impact on breaking the isolation and the autonomy of the neighborhood, according to Turker.[317] "Tatavla spirit," however, was not yet lost. But the occasional revival and performance of this spirit were seen as a threat to national unity.[318]

Language was another symbol that the new regime aimed to homogenize in the public space. The use of languages other than Turkish, mostly Armenian, Greek and Ladino, were aimed to eliminated to reinforce the national presence. Parallel to switching to Latin alphabet from Arabic in 1928 and putting efforts to purify the Turkish language, measures to eradicate foreign languages from the public spheres were taken.[319] Although not a state initiative, the social actors started a campaign in 1928 called "Citizen, Speak Turkish!" aiming to eliminate the use of languages other than Turkish. The campaign continued through the 1930s, and according to Fatma

[315] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 97-98.
[316] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century," 110.
[317] Türker, Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla, 98.
[318] Kabagöz, *Eğlenirken Modernleşmek* ,204.
[319] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme Cumhuriyet İstanbul'undan Gündelik Fragmanlar*, 278.

Müge Göcek, it "generated the most significant pressure on non-Muslim minorities within urban space."[320] Göcek further states that the newspaper articles and theatre performances mocked and ridiculed the dialects, customs and habits of non-Muslims.[321] The social control in the society resulted in a clash of the traditional values with the new national and religious sentiments.

Not only in daily language but also in the city's toponym, the efforts to eradicate the non-Muslim legacy were felt. Ümit Fırat Açıkgöz writes in his Ph.D. thesis that by the mid-1930s, Istanbul was transformed from Ottoman city into a republican one due to the series of symbolic and physical appropriations in the urban scale.[322] The destructive fires mostly enabled changing urban toponymy. Fires created large urban swaths, which paved the way for large scale urban planning projects. Parallel to that, an extensive project was undertaken to change the place names reminding the non-Muslim's legacy in the city throughout the 1920s and 1930s, as Açıkgöz writes.[323] The new toponymy of the city "represented the ideals of the new regime."[324]

An irrevocable rupture with the past in Tatavla occurred after the fire in 1929, which resulted in changing the neighborhood's name. Although Tatavla suffered a series of fires in 1905, 1907, 1909 and 1912, they never resulted in large scale destruction.[325] Hüseyin Irmak, an independent researcher and author from Kurtuluş, writes that the fire on January 21, 1929, destroyed 500 households.[326] Community institutions like the sports club and the church was saved. Although there were no

[320] Göcek, *Denial of Violence,* 305.
[321] Ibid., 306.
[322] Açıkgöz, "Global Locality, National Modernity: Negotiating Urban Transformation in Early Republican Istanbul (1923-1949)," 79.
[323] Ibid, 98.
[324] Ibid, 114.
[325] Türker*, Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 102.
[326] Irmak, *Tatavla'dan Kurtuluş'a*, 38.

casualties, it was a traumatic event for the residents of the neighborhoods.[327] The reason for such destruction remains controversial based on the Turkish sources cited in Türker's book, which state that the reason was lack of water resources and the neighborhood's structure, and the Greek sources write that Turkish fire brigands took it slow on purpose.[328]

After the fire, the municipality changed the neighborhood's name from Tatavla, to Kurtuluş, which means salvation in Turkish. The street names in the neighborhood followed. Russian street was renamed as Bozkurt Street, with reference to the mythical grey wolf that led Turks from Central Asia as in the Ergenekon epic. French Cemetery Avenue was named after the epic as Ergenekon Street. Armenian Church Avenue had become Şehadet (martyrdom) with implications of religious war. Finally, Tatavla Street, which ended in the main square where festivities took place, was named Kurtuluş Street.[329] As Türker asks, the question of whether it refers to salvation from the Rums or the fire remains unanswered.[330]

From the late 1920s onwards, Turkey's relations with its neighbors were improved and got to a peaceful situation until World War II. Although Turkey did not officially enter the war, it kept its domestic affairs and the press under tight control.[331] The Greek, Armenian and Jewish citizens of the country suffered from discriminating measures in this period. In May 1941, as the Germans proceeded in the Balkans, Greek, Armenian and Jewish citizens between 25-45 years old living in

[327] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 111.
[328] Ibid, 102.
[329] Açıkgöz, "Global Locality, National Modernity: Negotiating Urban Transformation in Early Republican Istanbul (1923-1949)," 114.
[330] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 103.
[331] Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türiye'nin Tarihi*, 256. Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Yeni Hayat İnkılap ve Travma 1908-1928*, 297-301.

Istanbul and Thrace were conscripted in the Turkish army without any notice. The conscripts mostly worked in construction works in Anatolia under psychological pressure and hard physical conditions until their release in July 1942. According to Dilek Güven, a scholar specialized in the minority politics in Turkey, the main reason behind this conscription was to "control the non-Muslim's activities against the state in case Turkey entered the war. Besides, it achieved the aim to raise a Muslim bourgeoisie in the absence of the non-Muslims who were active in the commercial and artisanal life".[332] However, before this trauma was healed, the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish populations experienced the trauma of another administrative decision.

On November 11, 1942, a new wealth tax was introduced by the Turkish state, which in theory, aimed to tax the illegal profit made during the war through the black market. However, according to Güven, in application, the tax targeted only Greeks, Armenians, Jews and left them under an unrealistic economic burden. People either sold their properties immediately, or people who could not pay by the deadline were sent to working camps in Aşkale, in Eastern Anatolia.[333] The discriminatory decisions and measures of the period further restricted the Rums' activity and movement in daily life. Not only that, but also left behind many traumatic memories that even effected the following generations.

Consequently, the first two decades of the republic have gained an essential place in the collective memory of the society, especially that of Greeks, Armenians and Jewish. The traumas and the memories have shaped the way people experienced urban life and adopted to the novelties. Not only that, but also the nationalist sentiments resulted in an intensifying discriminatory discourse and criticism towards

[332] Güven, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Azınlık Politikaları Bağlamında 6-7 Eylül Olayları*, 106-108.
[333] Ibid., 108-116.

these groups. Kezer writes, “the exclusionary practices and discriminatory policies cumulatively defined the boundaries of what constituted membership in the modern Turkish nation.”[334] Carnival period and *Apokries* celebrations in the urban sphere had challenged these boundaries but, at the same time, became the arena for contestations regarding the sensibilities that these boundaries created. The implications of these can be seen in how the experience of carnivalesque has transformed following the developments of the two decades and the way newspapers’ effort to shape the majority's public opinion.

5.3 Spatial expansion of the festive atmosphere

There are continuities and divergences in the carnival festivities in the early Republican period compared with the previous period. The distinction between the streets and private spaces continues. However, in this distinction, there is a new player additional to Rum charity balls and household gathering: the new regime's institutions. These institutions, which are highly Turkish and Muslim, benefit from the festive spirit of the carnival period during which balls for raising funds to help the needy was organized since the Ottoman Empire. Although not directly associated most of the time, the carnival season provides an opportunity to raise money to help the new nation. Apart from that, on the street level the spatial expansion is achieved through the widespread use of new means of transportation, which not only connects the former remote parts of the city but also contributes to the festive atmosphere. Lastly, the years in which Ramadan festivities and carnival coincide serves as an example to the festive atmosphere being reinforced on the urban context.

[334] Kezer, *Building Modern Turkey,* 152.

5.3.1 Festive spirit expanding to the Turkish realm: Ball season for the new institutions of the Republic

What can be interpreted as a significant change was the appropriation of the season's spirit by the new regime's institutions, which have a national character. This proliferation in the number of balls organized by Turkish institutions is evident in the number of newspaper ads and articles that show a significant rise in the republican period. The ball tradition in Istanbul was associated with the foreign and non-Muslim elements in society most of the time. Koçu writes that balls gained its "real identity" in the republican period.[335] This "real identity" of the balls served the new nation's modern image and the economic needs to build up the society. The proliferation of the ball tradition in Turkish society was also part of the "new life" style introduced by the regime, which indoctrinated new values that were much closer to the western style of living.[336] Although not directly associated with the carnival, a couple of weeks in February and March had been referred to as "the ball season," during which costume parties and mask balls were organized. They were organized mostly for raising funds for the new institutions of the new regime. Among the institutions were Aircraft Association (*Tayyare Cemiyeti*) and People's Houses (*Halk Evleri*) and the older institutions which continued to operate under the republic like Institution for the Protection of Children (*Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti/Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*), Press Association (*Matbuat Cemiyeti*), Turkish Red Crescent (*Hilaliahmer/Kızılay*) and Association for Fighting Tuberculosis (*Veremle Savaş Cemiyeti*). These balls were structured either only as fun gatherings or as fundraising campaigns to finance the charity activities of these associations.

[335] Koçu, *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi,* 2061.
[336] Toprak, *Türiye'de Yeni Hayat*, 15.

Aircraft Association, which was founded in 1925 and changed into the Turkish Air Association (*Türk Hava Kurumu*) in 1935, was part of the steps taken towards the development of the aircraft industry in the face of airspace security gaining importance in the interwar period. Aircraft Association utilized many propaganda methods to invite people to make donations for the development of the new nation's aircraft industry. The most prominent among these occasions were Aircraft Lottery (*Tayyare Piyangosu*) and Aircraft festivities on every August 30 stand out.[337] Another occasion was balls organized during the carnival seasons. These balls stand out as having appropriated the spirit of the season. The preparations began weeks before the actual ball, and members of the ruling party would take an active part in the organizations.[338] Although not always associated with the carnival, some adds on newspapers openly expressed such an association, by stating that "we are sure that our people won't miss this opportunity to help Aircraft Association and enjoy the carnival festivities" on March 1935.[339] The use of venues in Beyoğlu, such as Perapalas Hotel[340] or Maksim Gazinosu[341], for the balls, also presented a continuity with the previous decades. The activities in the balls involved giving away various presents through lottery[342], *varyete*, which was a musical show[343], other activities such as a painting performance by a painter[344]. B Besides, the use of *kotiyon*, colorful papers like confetti, were especially stressed out as adding up to the fun. For example, Aircraft Ball (*Tayyare Balosu*) claimed that it will be the most cheerful and entertaining ball of the season" as "rich and

[337] Aslan, "Tayyare Cemiyeti'nin Propoganda Faaliyetleri ve Tayyare Bayramları," 141.
[338] "Tayyare Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* January 12, 1930.
[339] "Karnaval Eğlenceleri Başlıyor," *Cumhuriyet,* March 6, 1935.
[340] "Tayyare Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* January 3, 1933.
[341] "Tayyare Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* January 12, 1930.
[342] "Tayyare Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* February 4, 1934.
[343] "Karnaval Eğlenceleri Başlıyor," *Cumhuriyet,* March 6, 1935.
[344] "Tayyare Cemiyeti Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* February 13, 1930.

various *kotiyon* will be spread around."[345] Although organized in the carnival season, exuberance was not part of these balls but instead they were portrayed as "decent"[346] and "peaceful"[347].

Apart from the technological and military developments, the new regime's institutions also focused on the cultural realm through People's Houses through which "infusing the Republic's reforms to citizens" was aimed.[348] It was composed of many sections responsible for different realms such as Language, History and Literature; Fine Arts; Sports; Public Classes. One of them was social help section which was responsible for raising funds for the poor by organizing balls.[349] It seems from the newspaper adds during the carnival season that People's Houses also utilized the spirit of the season to organize fundraising events. The balls organized by CHF, the ruling party, were called "social help" balls and took place in famous venues like Pera Palas Hotel or Tokatlıyan Hotel.[350] The funds were raised through the donations made by the commercial institutions of various scales such as "Afitap Kırtasiye," "İşbankası," "Kolombiya Mağazası," and "Lebon"; or individuals from all backgrounds such as "Hacı Mühittinzade Kazım Bey," "Kiğork Acemyan Efendi," "Rikardo Levi Efendi," and "Zaharyadis."[351] Apart from the social help, the balls of People's Houses during the carnival season was seen as "an opportunity for an exceptional entertainment."[352] Therefore, it can be interpreted that the nation-

[345] Ibid.
[346] Koçu, *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi,* 2061.
[347] "Tayyare Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* February 27, 1938.
[348] Öztürkmen, "The Role of People's Houses in the Making of National Culture in Turkey," 162.
[349] Ibid," 163-164. Arzu Öztürkmen, *Halk Evleri 1940*, 17-18.
[350] "Halk Evleri Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* March 18, 1937. "Halkevi İçtimai Yardım Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* March 12, 1934.
[351] "Halkevi'nin Teşekkürü," *Cumhuriyet,* March 2, 1933.
[352] "Halkevleri Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* January 30, 1940.

state's cultural institutions utilized the charity balls in the carnival season as a way to "pay a highly national and humanitarian debt back."[353]

Another highly national responsibility, which was addressed during the carnival season, was taking care of the orphans. The efforts to take care of the children of the martyrs of the 20th-century wars began during the Ottoman Empire. However, the new parliament in Ankara restructured Institution for the Protection of Children in 1921. It took over the responsibility of the orphans.[354] Like previous examples, balls were one of the many ways the organization raised money to help the children of the nation.[355] For example, in 1934, in costume balls, they raised 5000 liras, "despite the economic crises and the proliferation in the number of balls in the city."[356] Similarly, in an announcement in 1935, the association makes a call asking their guests to participate in costumes.[357] Therefore, this proves that the season was not only appropriated through organizing balls for fundraising but also the cultural performance of dressing up and getting in disguise was utilized as an entertainment.

Another occasion was the Press Ball, an annual ball organized by Press Association, first established during the constitutional period when press freedom was gained. These balls resembled the balls of the elite in the Ottoman period. As understood from the newspapers, the institutions competed to organize the best ball in the city. Press Ball was often presented in the newspapers as "the best ball of the year in our city"[358] or "the biggest incident of the season."[359] Apart from the press employees and newspaper owners, the ball attracted considerable attention from the

[353] "Halkevi İçtimai Yardım Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* March 12, 1934.
[354] Makbule Sarıkaya,"Savaş Yıllarında Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti'nin Çocuk Misafirhanesi ve Çocuklar," 194.
[355] Ibid, 330.
[356] "İstanbul Himayeietfal Kongresi Dün Toplandı," *Cumhuriyet,* March 25, 1934.
[357] "Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* February 6, 1935.
[358] "Matbuat Balosu Cumartesi Akşamı Veriliyor," *Cumhuriyet*, February 9, 1937.
[359] "Matbuat Balosu," *Cumhuriyet*, February 25, 1936.

foreign representatives in Ankara.[360] The newspapers emphasized that the balls were crowded with people from the elite classes of the city.[361] This group of people was entertained until early in the morning. The activities involved distributing gifts donated by the newspaper owners, the organizing committee and some commercial organizations, and the gifts were valuable objects like clocks, vases, gramophone, radio, etc.[362] Western music was a central component. In 1931, a jazz band famous in the USA and Europe, which was expected to stop by in Istanbul, was invited to join.[363] What added up to the "perfection" of the festive atmosphere was of course, *kotiyon*. It was produced in collaboration with the other institutions of the new regime. In 1937, the supply of *kotiyon* was provided by Girl's Art School in Cağaloğlu's production specific for Press Ball.[364] This continuity and appropriation of the tradition in a more reserved and courtly manner served these institutions' association with the modernity and the western lifestyle, also served them financially with the funds raised.

Apart from these famous balls of the season, there were also those organized by Turkish Red Crescent, the humanitarian organization founded in 1868, for helping the poor students[365]; and by Association for Fighting Tuberculosis, founded in 1918, for establishing new tuberculosis dispensary in Istanbul[366]. Besides the professional or charity associations, the theatres and cinemas enjoyed the spirit by organizing mask balls. For example, Süreyya Ball, "the best mask ball of the season" for which various musical shows and surprises were prepared was given in Süreyya Movie

[360] "Matbuat Balosu," *Cumhuriyet*, March 4, 1936.
[361] "Matbuat Balosuna Ait Bir İntiba," *Cumhuriyet,* January 31, 1931.
[362] "Matbuat Balosuna Ait Bir İntiba," Cumhuriyet, January 31, 1931. "Matbuat Balosu", *Cumhuriyet,* January 5, 1931. "Matbuat Cemiyetinin Teşekkürleri", *Cumhuriyet,* February 2, 1931.
[363] "Matbuat Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* January 5, 1931.
[364] "Matbuat Balosu Cumartesi Akşamı Veriliyor", *Cumhuriyet,* February 9, 1937.
[365] "Talebelere Yardım İçin," *Cumhuriyet,* January 15, 1936.
[366] "Verem Mücadele Cemiyetinin Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* February 8, 1941.

Theatre in Kadıköy in 1930. Last and an exciting example is Karagöz Ball in 1931, which combined the traditional Turkish shadow puppet performance with the carnival season by Hazım Bey, an actor in Darülbedayi, the municipality theatre conservatory. The door and the windows of Tepebaşı Theatre were decorated with Karagöz and Hacivat of different sizes. Besides, a shadow puppet performance was to be done by the actors of the theatre, whose names were listed on the newspaper article announcing the ball.[367] Thus, the examples above prove that the carnival season was not something Christian but also a very Turkish and Muslim realm to the extent that the opportunity for raising funds to help the people was utilized.

5.3.2 Festive spirit in Rum households and charity organizations

The emergence of the organizations with a Turkish and Muslim character did not mean that the Greek-Orthodox completely disappeared. From the Turkish newspapers and memoirs, it is possible to have an insight into the annual community balls and household gatherings. For example, in the annual ball of the Pera's Rum community in 1929, two Montenegrin doormen in their traditional costumes welcome the guests, the janitor of Zografion Greek School watch the room, which was decorated with colorful *kotiyon* and *serpentine*, large crowds dance Charleston, and ladies in beautiful dresses attract attention.[368] In 1928, a charity ball was given in Tepebaşı Tiyatrosu for the benefit of Greek Schools in Galata.[369] In 1931, another ball for the benefit of Maraşlı Greek School was given in Kılburnu Casino in Fener, where, according to an article on *Milliyet*, Rums and Turks got into a fight over a Greek girl Eleni, who was dancing with Greek boys but refused to dance with

[367] "Karagöz Balosu," *Cumhuriyet,* February 23, 1931.
[368] Bozis, *İstanbul Lezzeti*, 41.
[369] "Rum Balosundan Ceza," *İkdam,* February 28, 1928.

Kemal.[370] There was a continuity in the Greek balls and charity events during the carnival season. However, they entered the Turkish newspapers' pages to the extent that they involved a criminal event. This shows that the balls of the Greek community had also become a realm for ethnic confrontations as well as the clash of the new and the old lifestyle.

At the same time, gatherings and visits of friends and relatives in the private households continued. In a recent interview, Eva Kazalidis, born in 1934 in Kurtuluş, accounts that their doors would be wide open for *maskara*s visiting during *Apokries*. Once, when she was 8 or 9, she put *maskara* clothes on and was waiting home. Two *maskara*s, playing guitar and accordion, entered their house. When one of them was singing, his father pushed a stuffed pepper (*dolma*) in his mouth and said, "let's sing with this in your mouth." He could not. They played, went ahead and others came. She stated that she never forgot these visits.[371] Kazalidis' narrative illustrates a connection between the excess of the streets and the intimate spaces of Rum households. These traditional visits created a very local and unique carnivalesque experience connecting the private sphere and the public revelry on the street level.

At the same time, the narratives also reveal that people preferred to dress up inside their households, especially in places other than Tatavla (Figure 6). It shows that disguise lost its primary purpose of bringing anonymity for the exuberance in private households. However, dressing up despite that is proof that although the carnivalesque was decontextualized from the streets and the urban setting, people still followed the ritual for entertainment purposes. This served well for the survival of the spirit, although in a different form, as *Apoyevmatini* in 1942 writes when referring to the disappearance of the carnival from Tatavla square: "The only

[370] "Fener'de Kılburnu Gazinosunda Feci Bir Hadise," *Milliyet,* February 22, 1931.
[371] Estukyan, "Eva Kazalidis'ten Tatavla anıları: "Hepsini yaşadım"," *Agos,* February 14, 2020.

livelihood in Akarca Hill, Köyiçi and Ayios Athanasios Church was visits paid to the relatives and friends."[372]

Figure 6. *Apokries* festivities in a house in Çengelköy in 1940.
Source: Sula Bozis, *İstanbul Lezzeti*, 42.

5.3.3 Connecting the festive space and the city: Cars and electric trams

The descriptions of the festive spaces were closely related to the relatively novel means of transportations in everyday life of the ordinary people in Istanbul: cars and electric trams. They contributed to increasing contact between the masses in the city.[373] Although automobiles and electric trams were already in use by the republican period, it was their widespread accessibility and use in the republican period that impacted the carnival space. From the beginning of the 20th century, automobiles became part of Istanbul's urban life, often utilized by the state officials and foreign representatives. However, their widespread use began in the Republican era, as the number of automobiles rose from 110 in 1914 to over 1000.[374] Railroads

[372] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe*, 70.
[373] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme* ,46.
[374] Akay, "20. Yüzyıl Başında İstanbul'da Otomobil, Kazalar ve Trafik Düzenlemeleri," 551.

used by horsecars could only be connected with the introduction of the electric trams, as professor İlhan Tekeli states.[375] The use of electric trams in Istanbul was enabled by the establishment of an electric power plant in Silahtarağa, Dolapdere in 1913.[376] Istanbul was set on hilly ground and as Kaynar suggests, trams allowed climbing numerous hills easier.[377] Finally, the Tünel-Tatavla line connected Beyoğlu and Tatavla, another two hills of the city. It was constructed as part of the 1915-1926 project.[378] It would not be wrong to deduce that although the new transportation technologies were introduced in the early 20th century, the republican period after 1923 saw a relatively more widespread utilization of these technologies. This affected the scale of the crowds and the experience of transportation to festivities in Beyoğlu and Tatavla/Kurtuluş.

The newspapers published in the 1930s put a specific emphasis on the extent of the crowds. For example, in 1932, *İkdam* writes about Kurtuluş *Panayırı* that "this year's *panayır* was more crowded than the previous years. The street from Feriköy to Kurtuluş was full of people in colorful costumes."[379] Similarly, *Apoyevmatini* writes in 1938:

> Down Akarca hill and Kurtuluş Street, thousands of people flew to Tatavla. The area between Catholic Cemetery in Pangaltı to Ayios Dimitrios Church in Kurtuluş was overcrowded. The center of the fun was Ararat Gazinosu, as usual. The square in front of the church turned into a fair with people dancing K*asapiko.* The mobile photographers were quite busy with the people who wanted to have their souvenir photo taken as they leaned on the wall of the Church.[380] (Appendix B, 5)

Besides, it was not only the Rums and people from the neighboring places but also the remote neighborhoods of the city, not necessarily the Rum neighborhoods. For

[375] Tekeli, *İstanbul ve Ankara için Kent içi Ulaşım Tarihi Yazıları,* 28-29.
[376] Aksoy, *Silahtarağa Elektrik Santrali 1910-2004,* 23.
[377] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme*, 51.
[378] Çolak, "XX. Yüzyıl Başlarında İstanbul'da Trafik ve Tramvay," 78.
[379] "Kurtuluş Panayırı," *Akşam,* Feburary 28, 1933.
[380] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 69.

example, in 1933, *Akşam* wrote that the carnival crowd consisted of people "Aksaray, Fatih, Topkapı, Beyazıt, Edirnekapı," the predominantly Muslim neighborhoods in Istanbul.[381] Although it is not certain whether the picture drawn here is an exaggeration of the editors, it would not be wrong to suggest that automobiles and trams made a difference in accessing the festive space, if not the technological developments dominated the narratives about the carnivalesque.

The reason for that is the area between Beyoğlu and Tatavla/Kurtuluş was a hilly ground and covering that distance by foot was a tiring experience. Especially the electric tram which connected Beyoğlu and Tatavla/Kurtuluş was very useful for *maskara*s to move quickly and easily. In 1933, Necati writes his observations

> I will take the Kurtuluş tram from Taksim, but do it if you can… It looked like long-distance trains during World War I. The only difference was that the top of the cars was empty. Some *maskara*s, who rather preferred to get tired in *Kurtuluş Panayırı,* were waiting for the tram.[382] (Appendix B, 6)

The same year, *Akşam* writes that because of the crowds on the streets, trams could not reach the last station but turned back from Sinemköy. The demand for the trams had been so high that the trams in the other lines were employed for Kurtuluş-Eminönü line to transport the people going to *Kurtuluş Panayır*ı. However, "despite all the measure, it was an important problem to get on the tram."[383] As seen in the newspapers, trams did not only transport the larger masses than before but also became part of the festive space transporting that involved the exuberant and costumed participants and the passers-by.

Additional to trams, there are often narratives mentioning the automobiles in the festive space and used to get to the festive space. Compared to the tram, automobiles provided a more extensive connection with the rest of the city, as people

[381] "Kurtuluş Panayırı," *Akşam,* February 28, 1933.
[382] Necati, "Kurtuluş'ta Bir Alem," *Milliyet*, February 28, 1933.
[383] "Kurtuluş Panayırı," *Akşam,* February 28, 1933.

came "with automobiles from every part of the city."[384] Even the lower class women of the infamous neighborhood in Beyoğlu who rode horses, started to be seen driving automobiles to the carnival in Tatavla.[385] This shows that participating in the carnival from the protected space of the cars, which used to be a privilege of the elite, turned into a lower-class activity. Therefore, like trams, automobiles contributed to the carnivalesque atmosphere and also became part of the carnivalesque itself as they were part of the plays and the exuberance.

Consequently, although it is hard to come to a conclusion comparing the role of the public and private transportation between the two periods, the technological developments in the city certainly provided a different experience of moving in the city, and accordingly a different experience accessing the carnival in Tatavla/Kurtuluş, which used to be a remoter neighborhood.

5.3.4 Combined festive spirit: Ramadan feast coinciding with *Apokries*

What has further expanded the festive spirit in the urban sphere was the spirit of Ramadan Feast joining *Apokries.* The newspapers indicate that in the years 1929, 1930 and 1931, three days of the Islamic holiday of Ramadan, which celebrated the end of the fasting period, coincided with the same period as the carnival season. This combined spirit was not new to the Republican era. Sibel Zandi-Sayek writes in her book on Ottoman Izmir that in the mid 19th century, the Greek-Orthodox Lent, the fasting period after *Apokries*, and Ramadan month coincided.The whole month had experienced an engulfed spirit. But at the end, during the feasts of Ramadan and Easter, it used to be an exceptionally festive holiday period with the two traditions

[384] "Tatavla Panayırı Eğlenceli Oldu," *Cumhuriyet*, March 16, 1937.
[385] "Tatavla Dün Çeşit Çeşit İnsanlarla Doldu," *Cumhuriyet*, March 8, 1927.

combining their spirit.[386] However, in the Republican era, we have the climax periods of the subsequent traditions overlapping in the context of nationalist efforts to eliminate non-Muslim visibilities on the urban sphere.

The two festivities had separate localities in Istanbul, Ramadan in Direklerarası and *Apokries,* mainly in Tatavla. However, they were not confined to these spaces but intermingled mostly in Beyoğlu and its surrounding. For example, in 1930, Clean Monday, the last day of the *Apokries* season, coincide with the first day of Ramadan Feast (*Bayram),* three days of holiday after an entire month of fasting. *Cumhuriyet* depicts a picture of the day as having combined religious, national and secular spirit of festivities when people were heading to the mosques early in the morning, the flying red Turkish flag was coloring the dawn. Cannon shots were being fired and people were shouting *Allahuakbar*. After the prayer, the streets were filled with drums, and especially with children collecting gifts. Through the night, cinemas, theatres, beer halls and pubs in Beyoglu were full… These entertainment places were more crowded than the main festive space... *Cumhuriyet* further writes "Christians' carnival has coincided with our feast. The community of strange clothes in pairs and groups has invaded even the Istanbul side."[387]

This overlap is also a critical case to see how the festive spirit functioned for the reversal of the everyday life and transgression of confessional borders in society. The combined festive spirit challenged and played with the new regime's efforts. These cases show the popular responses to official efforts. In 1931, the climax of carnival coincided with Ramadan Feast on February 19, 20 and 21. The newspapers point out to the joined spirit of festivities with expressions such as "Ramadan Feast

[386] Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir,* 154.
[387] "Dünkü Bayram Gününün İntibaları," *Cumhuriyet*, March 3, 1930.

and carnival joining hands have increased the revelry"[388] and "Carnival and feast coming together have increased the liveliness."[389] This shows that the experience of the carnival transgressed the borders of the norms put by the nation-state. This was due not only to the carnivalesque of *Apokries*, but also the incorporation of Ramadan's secular festivities into the carnivalesque. These cases also illustrate how festivals encapsulated the popular culture and behavior occurring vis-à-vis the official efforts.

5.4 Material culture and performances visualized: Photography as a new source into the carnivalesque

The proliferating practice of photojournalism in the early years of the republic provides valuable visual descriptions of the material culture and carnivalesque performances. It was through the end of the 19th century that the camera found its way into the Empire's realm through European travelers.[390] The Ottoman state adopted the technology for its ideological use in creating a new representational image for the Empire.[391] The use of photography in newspapers accompanying the news items started with *Resimli Gazete* and *Servet-i Fünun* at the turn of the century. After a long break in the war period due to the economic shortage, photography became popular again in the Republic's early years.[392] A critical change in this period was that the Christian and Jewish domination in the photography was being replaced by Turkish-Muslim photographers, who were devoted "to informing and detecting

[388] "Maskara Hikayeleri," *Milliyet*, February 23, 1931.
[389] "Karnaval Mevsimi," *Son Posta*, February 18, 1931.
[390] Çetin, "Photographs of Ataturk in the early Republican Press: how his image was used to visualize events?," 701.
[391] Shaw, "Ottoman Photography of the Late Nineteenth Century: An 'Innocent' Modernism?," 82.
[392] Kavas, "Osmanlı'dan Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemine – Fotoğrafta Öne Çıkanlar ve Basında Fotoğrafın Kullanımı," 6-8.

the moment" through photography. The photojournalists were employed by the newspapers and, most of the time, published without any signature on their works.[393] However, individual names like Selahattin Giz, a famous photojournalist working for *Cumhuriyet* from 1931 to 1973, stand out. Giz was devoted to capturing the moments from everyday life, photographing everyone "from the ambassador to the poor."[394] In parallel with the developments in photography, in the newspapers published in the 1930s, we encounter a substantial amount of photographs from the carnival scenes in Beyoğlu and Tatavla/Kurtuluş, which were unsigned but most probably belonging to Giz's camera, together with written narratives describing the scene or announcing the beginning and the closing of the carnival season. The photographs published in newspapers depict the *maskara*s wandering around and proceeding to Tatatvla/Kurtuluş, and the festive space in Tatavla/Kurtuluş with closer and wider shots.

The photos of groups walking in Beyoğlu or Tatavla/Kurtuluş depict how the *maskara*s and the carnivalesque body looked in the Republican and urban Istanbul (Figures 7, 8 and 9). These photos give us an idea about the streets where *maskara*s and locals mingled together. The streets leading to Tatavla/Kurtuluş looked not completely carnivalesque, but somewhat resembled a divided realm between the carnivalesque and the regular day, as the other residents of the city continued their daily life.

[393] Ak, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Fotoğrafı 1923-1960*, 17-18.
[394] Ibid, 159-160.

Figure 7. A photo of *maskara*s in Beyoğlu, published in 1934
Source: *Akşam,* February 16, 1934

Figure 8. A photo of *maskara*s walking on the streets in 1931.
Source: "Karnaval Bugün Artık Dini Bir Adet Değil, Beynelmilel Bir Eğlencedir," *Milliyet*, February 22, 1931.

Karnaval başladı. Beyoğlu caddesinde sık sık maskelilere rastlanıyor. Resmimiz bunlardan bir kafileyi göstermektedir.

Figure 9. A group of *maskara*s in various clothes and masks in 1935.[395]
Source: "Karnaval Başladı,"*Akşam*, March 8, 1935.

Besides, the way *maskaras* walk and mingle on the streets, as shown in the photos, reveals the comfort of being anonymous. The depictions provided by the written narratives of these groups support the visuals: disguises by masks, face paints and costumes were common, red costumes with a face painted to red, dressed as a Laz[396] or colorful cone hats and many bizarre clothes[397] or clothes with pale undercoats, old clothes of wool and velvet[398] and colorful dominos and wide hats.[399] In addition to the costumes and masks, there is frequent mention of musical instruments like guitar, *laterna* and *mandolin*.[400] These groups are mentioned to be wandering from night till morning, having fun and playing.[401] Necati writes that "*maskara*s who wander the streets of Beyoğlu as they play mandolin and guitar,

[395] "Carnival has started. It is possible to come across people with masks on Beyoğlu Street. Our photo shows one of these groups".

[396] Necati, "Kurtuluş'ta Bir Alem," *Milliyet*, February 28, 1933.
[397] "Karnaval Bugün Artık Dini Bir Adet Değil, Beynelmilel Bir Eğlencedir," *Milliyet*, February 22, 1931.
[398] "Baklakıran*," Cumhuriyet*, February 24, 1934.
[399] "Karnavalın Son Haftası," *Milliyet*, March 12, 1932.
[400] Necati, "Kurtuluş'ta Bir Alem," *Milliyet*, February 28, 1933.
[401] "Karnaval Bugün Artık Dini Bir Adet Değil, Beynelmilel Bir Eğlencedir," *Milliyet*, February 22, 1931.

sing-along and shout out loud, doze off for a couple of hours and make their way for Kurtuluş *Panayır*ı."[402]

The photos from the main space of carnivalesque are wider shots showing the extend of the crowds and closer shots with details of the material culture, performances. The photos of the crowds are published along with news about the last day of the carnival, *Baklahorani* or *Panayır* (Figures 10, 11 and 12). These photos allow us to comprehend the extent of the flocks of people often described in written narratives as bursting at the seams on the specific landscape of Tatavla/Kurtuluş.

Figure 10. A wide shot of the crowd in Tatavla Square in 1927.[403]
Source: "*Tatavla Dün Çeşit Çeşit İnsanlarla Doldu,*" Cumhuriyet*, March 8, 1927.*

For example, in Figure 10, we can situate the crowd between the area in the main square of Tatavla/Kurtuluş adjacent to the Ayios Dimitrios Church's outer

[402] Necati, "Kurtuluş'ta Bir Alem," *Milliyet*, February 28, 1933.
[403] "A view from the crowd in Tatavla yesterday"

walls on the upper right corner, right across which Akarca Yokuşu ends. Besides, these photos also allow us to visualize the organization of the festive space with tents, swings and with people forming small groups.

Figure 11. A wide shot of the crowd in Tatavla in 1930.
Source: "Maskaralar," *Cumhuriyet*, March 4, 1930.

Figure 12. A wide shot of the crowd in Tatavla in 1933.[404]
Source: "Karnavalın Son Günü Neş'eli Geçti," *Cumhuriyet,* February 28, 1933.

[404] "The large crowd that gathered in Kurtuluş yesterday".

The details of these crowds are also depicted in other photos with closer shots that are unique in the way they show how people come together in *panayır*, play and consume (Figures 13-17). What is depicted is most often a large group of people gathered around a table or a dancing participant. Although it is hard to tell exactly what is on the plates, they may be fasting food specific to Clean Monday. The bottles and the glasses hint alcohol consumption, as it is also mentioned in written narratives that describe people as "having fun by getting drunk."[405] Besides, looking at the people sitting down around the tables, it is possible to assume that there was some preparation for this occasion by the cafes, restaurants and *gazinos*. We know that *gazinos* like Ararat offered special entertainments.[406] When it comes to disguises, it is visible that not everyone is wearing masks and costumes. In terms of the masks and costumes, there are a variety of disguises. One thing that stands out in visuals and narratives is the use of a specific broom with a long stick (*tavan süpürgesi*), which points out the use of everyday materials as part of the carnivalesque appearances (Figures 15 and 16).[407] Besides, the widespread arms and smiling faces in the photos suggest the extent of the dances and revelry enjoyed. Although it is hard to detect from the photos what types of dances they are, the written narratives state that people dance "*Kasapiko* in the church square,"[408] "young boys dancing the polka as they chant along."[409] What is also visible in the photos is that not everyone is wearing costumes and masks. However, unlike in the photos from Beyoğlu, these people do not look like spectators but more like participants as they seem to enjoy, play and consume. This suggests that the festive space was more

[405] "Dünkü Bayram Gününün İntibaları," *Cumhuriyet*, March 3, 1930.
[406] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 70.
[407] "*Maskara* Hikayeleri," *Milliyet*, February 23, 1931.
[408] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 69.
[409] "Karnavalın Son Gününde Meşhur Kurtuluş Tatavla Panayırı," *Tan*, February 25, 1936.

or less consolidated in Tatavla/Kurtuluş, which made the carnivalesque spirit to be experienced more autonomously than any other part of the city.


Karnavalın son günü

Dün karnavalın son günü idi. Bu münasebetle Kurtuluştaki panayır çok kalabalık olmuştur. Yukarıdaki resimde Kurtuluş panayırına iştirak edenlerden bir kısmı görünüyor.

Figure 13. Groups of *maskara*s, gathered around a table in Kurtuluş in 1939.[410]
Source: "Karnavalın Son Günü," *Akşam*, *February 21, 1939.*

[410] "Yesterday was the last day o the carnival. For that purpose, there was a large crowd in Kurtuluş. In the photo above, there is a group of people who participated in the carnival in Kurtuluş."

Karnaval dün bitti

Karnaval dün bitmiş, maskaralar Kurtuluştaki panayır yerinde toplanarak orada yiyip içmişler ve eğlenmişlerdir. Resmimiz, Kurtuluş panayırında toplananları göstermektedir.

Figure 14. A group of *maskara*s, gathered and dancing in Kurtuluş in 1936.[411]
Source: "Karnaval Dün Bitti," *Cumhuriyet*, February 25, 1936.

Ortodokslar büyük perhize girdiler

Figure 15. A group of *maskara* in various clothes posing for the cameras in Kurtuluş in 1935.[412]
Source: "Ortodokslar Büyük Perhize Girdiler," *Milliyet,* March 12, 1935.

[411] "Carnival has ended yesterday. *Maskaras* gathered aroun the fair space in Kurtuluş, ate, drank and had fun. Our picture illustrates those who gathered in *Kurtuluş Panayırı*".
[412] "Orthodox has started their great fast".

Figure 16. A cartoon depicting the *maskara*s in Istanbul.[413]
Source: "Karnaval Mevsimi," *Son Posta*, February 28, 1933.

Figure 17. A photo of *maskara*s in Kurtuluş, gathered around a table, drinking and playing music.
Source: Hakan Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme,* Cover.

[413] "Carnival Season"

5.5 Increasing female visibility in the carnivalesque space

The written narratives and the visual materials in the newspapers present increasing visibility of women in the carnival festivities, most of the time to the extent that women's behavior creates an ambiguity in the face of the new role assigned to the women of the new regime. Women's visibility in the public space and the festive space was not a new thing. Since the second constitutional period in 1908, the freedom enjoyed by women had turned into something institutionalized by the new regime, which was insistent on women's contribution to social life.[414] The new regime's search for a new identity for its women resulted in a distinction between the perfect mother, who took responsibility in economic, social, humanitarian realms and the prostitute.[415] There was a thin line in women's visibility in the public sphere. Whether they were enjoying the liberty proposed by the new regime or exploiting it through immoral behavior remained ambiguous.[416]

The implication of this is seen in women's rising visibility in the carnival space as Burhan Felek asked in 1932: "I couldn't get why women like becoming *maskara* so much" and answers "Just the way they get naked in *hamam*, they take off all the shame and pudicity by becoming *maskara.*"[417] However, the identity of these women is not certain. They can either be ordinary women enjoying the liberty to go outside and have fun freely or from the ambiguous class of women unless they were registered, prostitutes. Besides, the carnivalesque increased this ambiguity as it allowed women to further play with their roles and visibility in the public space. However, it should not be assumed that this freedom was not entirely

[414] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme*, 208.
[415] Toprak, *Yeni Hayat*, 119.
[416] Kaynar, *Projesiz Modernleşme*, 223.
[417] Felek, "Maskaralık," *Cumhuriyet,* March 15, 1932.

away from public criticism. This is proven in the newspaper's discourse on the number of women in general and drunk women in particular.

In parallel with the carnivalesque spirit, dressing up and masks were one of the ways through which women made themselves visible and active in the festive space and played with the ideas of the new regime and new women. For example, traditional veils like *peçe* and *yaşmak*, which were not in conformity with the new regime's dress code that implied unveiling or removing the face cover, were used by carnivalesque women and this stands out as a significant choice.[418] (See Figure 17 above) Besides, covering the face in disguise was enabled by masks and costumes of various kinds, used extensively by women. Necati writes that women *maskara*s with their faces covered dance *çiftetelli* to the sound of zurna in Kurtuluş *Panayır*ı. He also gives other descriptions of various disguises by women like "a fat woman in a white jockey costume, riding a horse" or "a *maskara* madam in a gypsy costume carrying a doll."[419]

These disguises allow women to engage in various plays, which brings further ambiguity in the editors' eyes. In these plays, surrounding men also take part as they mock, shout at or even harass the women. For example, in 1933, Necati writes in *Akşam* about "a fat women her face covered and in a jockey costume, rides a horse down the street." We understand that she is Greek from her accent when she shouts: "Move aside. This is me. Mis Dünya. The queen is coming!" However, Necati cannot decide whether this is her real identity or she is a *maskara* with her overdressed *kokona* look, ambiguity. The choir of men follows her by shouting. From the crowd rises a shout of another woman saying, "don't, you will pull of my

[418] Yılmaz, "Becoming Turkish: Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in the Early Republican Turkey, 1923-45," 88.
[419] Necati, "Kurtuluş'ta Bir Alem," *Milliyet*, February 28, 1933.

flesh" to a man who is harassing her. Another man approaches a gypsy girl holding a doll and says "who is the father?"[420] This narrative shows that women's public visibility was also a source of sexual tensions rising in the public space.

These tensions in the carnival context also turn into a play between the gender roles assigned to femininity and masculinity. Another scene that challenges these roles were mentioned in *Akşam* in 1932 as the following:

> A cavalry came our way. A young woman is whipping the donkey that she is riding. It is a man who wore a donkey costume and he is crawling on all fours. For a moment, the donkey raised his head and said: Oh, my dear wife, could you please get off so that I can walk. The saddle hurt my back. Cavalry got very angry and said: You are such an impertinent man. We are having fun… and whipped again.[421] (Appendix B, 7) (see Figure 18)

This scene illustrates how the carnivalesque provided space for playing and experimenting with gender roles in general, even beyond the public discussion of women's place as a perfect mother and wife.

However, the carnivalesque visibility of women was not something easily accepted. Drunkenness in the carnival, as it is in daily life, attracted criticisms and negative views. Besides, it was one of the ways through which women actors who did not conform to social norms entered the pages of the newspapers and made themselves visible to the public eye. These women were represented with different typologies such as *sermaye*, meaning capital in Turkish, which was one of the names used for the prostitutes in the press.[422] For example, *Cumhuriyet* writes in 1927 that "the capital of the certain neighborhoods of Beyoğlu, with or without masks, gather here as they make too much noise. In the open coffeehouses of Tatavla, masked women put their bottles on their masks, and constantly dance to the sound of clarinet and tambourine". They did not only dance and drink but also were accompanied by

[420] Necati, "Kurtuluş'ta Bir Alem," *Milliyet*, February 28, 1933.
[421] "Tatavla *Panayırı*," *Son,* March 15, 1932.
[422] Toprak, Yeni Hayat, 279.

men of all ages. As expected, one of the drunk women, "who was unable to stand still rebelled against the municipality police and had to be taken to the police station as she was captured from her legs and arms."[423] It can be understood from this example that women getting drunk and having fun with men in the public space was not acceptable or normal in the public eye. The carnival context, which provided an opportunity for such an encounter and promoted immoral behavior, was an important venue for newspapers to degrade the ambiguous women of the new regime.

Figure 18. Masked cavalry of women in Kurtuluş in 1932.
Source: "Tatavla Panayırı," *Son*, March 15, 1932.

Consequently, the women's increasing visibility in the carnival context was closely related to the new regime's emphasis on the women's role in the public space. Although this new image focused on healing and helping the nation with the help of perfect mothers and wives, all the other women were left in ambiguity. The carnival context had been the best place to observe this ambiguity and how these women enjoyed this ambiguity by playing with the different roles, appearances and

[423] "Tatavla Dün Çeşit Çeşit İnsanlarla Doldu," *Cumhuriyet*, March, 8, 1927.

performances. However, the newspapers reveal that women's freedom was not left without any criticism, which also extends to the *maskara*s in general.

5.6 Identity politics over carnivalesque: Criminal implications of otherization of *Maskara*s in the Turkish press

The Turkish newspapers published in the late 1920s, 1930 and early 1940s provide an essential source to understand how these festivities found a place in the public opinion of the transforming society and city. As society transformed into a more Turkish and Muslim realm than the beginning of the century, the confrontations in daily life have gained a different character. The carnival context, being one of the confrontation spaces in the early republican period, serves as a unique context where mostly Rum minorities and the majority, consisting of the authority, the ordinary Turkish-Muslim people on the streets and the newspapers. The opinions that were born out of these confrontations in an exuberant spirit and published in the newspapers, not only serve as a rich source to understand the identity politics of the time but also help us answer the question of what happened to the carnival. In the light of the newspapers, the main issues that the carnival festivities attract attention and mostly the criticism sheds light on the economic conditions of the time and the national sensibilities, which see the participants in the carnival as foreign and a threat to national pride and religious sentiments. Apart from the newspaper articles' discourse, this is achieved through the particular emphasis paid on the criminal activities taking place during the carnival season.

One of the main concerns of the new regime was restoring the country’s economy after a series of wars in the first decades of the 20th century and protecting the economy during the Second World War. Society was suffering from poverty and

limited resources. As Toprak puts, debauchery and poverty were experienced together.[424] This was well reflected in the newspapers' language, which compared the poverty of the society with the degree of revelry that people were having in the carnival as if there were no economic problems. For example, the article on *Milliyet* in 1931 that has a subtitle of "The carnival is more intense than before despite the austerity measures" writes that "it is worth being surprised by the way that everyone, from children to elders, join the excessive revelry in this time of economic crisis when it is getting harder to live by."[425] An opinion piece in 1932, focuses on the beauty and elegance of costumes in the carnival despite the crisis and poverty.[426] However, according to a different newspaper, the lack of money made people pour outside for the festivities instead of going to casinos or bars. The writer asks an Armenian the reason why casinos are empty, and he answers "*mangızın*[427] *nanay olması münasebetile"* in slang, which may translate as "because of the money not existing." The writer adds that because of the shortage of money, people did not pay any interest in paid entertainment, but instead went outside and had fun by shouting, running and singing.[428] As understood from these examples that the economic crisis of the period was not efficient in downgrading the degree of entertainment. But the fact that the streets offered free entertainment made the exuberance and revelry publicly visible, which attracted the newspapers' attention.

The most significant emphasis on the newspapers was done on the Christian and "foreign" character of the carnival festivities. This is evident in editor's choice of words to define the festivities and how it was compared with the western

[424] Toprak, Yeni Hayat, 15.
[425] "Karnaval bugün artık dini bir adet değil, beynelmilel bir eğlencedir," *Milliyet,* Feburary 22, 1931.
[426] "Maskaralık," *Milliyet,* March 15, 1932.
[427] The word "mangız" is a slang usage of the term "mangır" which means Money, according to Nişanyan Sözlük. https://www.nisanyansozluk.com/?k=mangiz&lnk=1
[428] "Tatavla Panayırı," *Akşam,* March 15, 1932.

counterparts. The common aspect in all the definitions is the emphasis put on the festivities' Christian and Rum origin, and often from an Islamic perspective. The statements varied, such as "Christian carnival feast,"[429] "Christian's Easter Ramadan has started"[430] or "after the carnival, the Orthodox has celebrated *Baklahorani* feast."[431] Not only the festivity itself but also the neighborhoods and people have been associated with being Christian. Carnival was defined as being celebrated in the Christian neighborhoods of Istanbul, like Beyoğlu, Taksim and Harbiye Caddesi.[432] The participants were also labeled as Christians who are "drinking alcohol and having fun."[433] One step further was denying the history of the carnival festivities in Istanbul and attributing it a foreign and outsider character. *Milliyet* writes in 1931 that "our motherland is not used to these old *maskara*s" and in 1933 "although the exact history is unknown, it is obvious that this is not a Turkish entertainment and tradition."[434] On top of that, the "Christian carnival" in Istanbul was separated from the fancy and touristic counterparts in Europe in the sense that carnival in Istanbul is "fake, far-fetched, unnatural, and annoying."[435] These examples above not only associate the carnival with the Christians and Rums but also put it on the lowest and worst levels in the hierarchy of Western carnivals, which had become a tourist attraction in the West. It was this association that prepared the ground for bringing up the issue of the recent traumas.

Public visibility and exuberance during the carnival, which is associated with the Christian and Rum citizens in the society, were seen as a threat to national unity.

[429] "Bu Hafta Hristiyanların Karnaval Yortularıdır," *Akşam*, February 23, 1936.
[430] "Kurtuluş'ta bir Alem," *Milliyet,* February 28, 1933.
[431] "Baklakıran," *Cumhuriyet*, February 24, 1934.
[432] "Karnaval Mevsimi," *Son Posta*, Feburary 18, 1931.
[433] "Maskaralar," *Cumhuriyet,* March 4, 1930.
[434] Felek, "*Maskara* Hikayeleri," *Milliyet*, February 23, 1931.
[435] "Baklakıran," *Cumhuriyet,* February 24, 1934.

Therefore it resulted in a discourse that revives the previous traumas in society. The festivities are seen as a political expression by the Rums citizens, mostly through the use of Greek language. *Tan*, in 1936, writes, "this was not used to be a fair entertainment, but a spectacle with a national character by one of the minorities. From time to time, it even turned into a victory celebration."[436] It was this national character attributed to the carnival that offended "national pride and religious sentiments." The festivities were interpreted as having "treacherous aims of resembling Istanbul to the Greek cities."[437] Similarly, the exuberance and revelry of the festivities were seen as reminding the freedom Rum citizens had during the Independence War when Istanbul was under the Allied forces' control.[438] However, when the revelry level was relatively lower, the Rum citizens were appreciated: "The thing I like the most about *panayır* was the Rum citizens' demure behavior. For the first time, I wanted to shout let Tatavla die, long live Kurtuluş!"[439] This shows that the discourse portraying the festivities as a threat targets the participants associated with the minorities in the city. The fact that festivities provided higher and exuberant visibility to the Christian subjects in the city was portrayed as something against the homogeneity of the society, often reviving the traumas from the previous wars. Thus, an extra effort was put to bring forth the way *maskara*s break the social order and the incidents in which police got involved.

The main concern regarding the social order was mostly related to *taşkınlık*[440] in public space and hygiene. *Taşkınlık* comes up as an ambiguous term used by the newspapers, mostly refers to drunkenness, making noise and disturbing the people,

[436] "Karnavalın Son Gününde Meşhur Kurtuluş Tatavla Panayırı," *Tan,* Feburary 25, 1936.
[437] "Dünkü Bayram Gününün İntibaları," *Cumhuriyet,* March 3, 1930.
[438] "Dünkü Bayram Gününün İntibaları," *Cumhuriyet,* March 3, 1930.
[439] "Karnavalın Son Gününde Meşhur Kurtuluş Tatavla Panayırı," *Tan,* Feburary 25, 1936.
[440] It means committing excessive behaviour in Turkish.

and associated with *maskara*s. In 1929, Burhan Felek complained that "this year *maskara*lık has been on the rise in Beyoğlu."[441] Apparently, his complaints have not been heard and he asks again in 1931: "how are they allowed to make noise at night, knock the doors and run away, disturb our sleep and comfort?"[442] In 1933, he complained further about "*maskara*s' transgressive behavior that even made itself in the calendars, which is equally scandalous." He explains the reason for that "for the last couple of years, the largest streets of Beyoğlu is full of *maskara*s who lack apprehension and education… Once the midnight comes, people wake up from their sleep by various shouts, songs and cries."[443] Apart from that, hygiene seems to be part of the concerns about breaking the social order and well-being. The reason for that was bad hygiene conditions in the shops that rented costumes during the carnival. In 1931, *Cumhuriyet* writes about a new regulation concerning the shops which were required to clean the clothes and label them before the carnival season. The article further adds: "Those who were reported by the police for having failed to do so were to be punished."[444] Focusing on disturbing behavior of *maskara*s and the threat posed the hygiene standards in the city was a way through which the newspapers marginalized the carnival.

Another way to marginalize the *maskara*s and carnival festivities was by focusing on criminal activities attempted during the carnival and the incidents in which police got involved. This news served to criminalize the festivities and *maskara*s. The criminal activities in the carnival were related to fights between participants and Muslim people, inappropriate costumes and theft during the festivities. For example, the two incidents from 1930 and 1936 illustrate how fights

[441] Felek, "Yine Yazı Çıktı," *Milliyet,* March 18, 1929.
[442] Felek, "*Maskara* Hikayeleri," *Milliyet*, February 23, 1931.
[443] Felek, "Takvime Geçen Kepazelik," *Milliyet*, February 26, 1933.
[444] "Karnaval Elbiseleri Temizlenecek," *Cumhuriyet*, Februar 11, 1931.

began between *maskara*s and Muslim people. The article in 1930 begins with these words: "Lately, *maskara*s in ridiculous clothes that fill the streets of Beyoğlu and even Istanbul engage in various *maskara*lık and excess" and continues "that is the reason why an injury incident occurred." The incident occurred between "Mister and Missus Heranos, Sonoryo, Kegam and Haçık," whom we understand from their names are from non-Muslim communities, who were walking as a group down the street in Langa, a neighborhood in the historical peninsula and certain "Kemal, Mustafa and Halil." The reason is not stated but at the end, *maskara*s were beaten and also wounded.[445] A very similar incident occurred in 1936, as the newspaper accounts "Haçik, Koço, Kalyopi and Eleni" who were in *maskara* clothes entered a bar in Beyoğlu and disturbed the other customers by making so much noise. Despite the warnings, they continue, and "Kemal, Mustafa and Cahit" beat the *maskara*s. As a result, Eleni is brought to a hospital and the police arrest Cahit, Kemal and Mustafa.[446] It is hard to know if these two stories were real or made up by the editors. These stories reflect the tension between the *maskara*s and Muslim males on the street or in the bars. In parallel with that, violence in the carnival becomes the target. This narrative proposes the danger lying in the carnivalesque atmosphere that threatens both parties.

As understood from the newspapers, the costumes of the *maskara*s were kept under surveillance from time to time. It is hard to say that there was a systematic check on the costumes or set of regulations regarding which costumes to be allowed or prohibited. But one newspaper article in 1937 can be given as an example to that. Three Rum girls named Marika, Eleni and Antuvanet "were caught by the police because they were wearing a navy uniform." In the police station in Beyoğlu, "two of

[445] "Maskaralar," *Cumhuriyet,* March 4, 1930.
[446] "Karnaval Biterken," *Cumhuriyet,* February 26, 1936.

the girls state that they had not known that wearing a navy costume was illicit." However, Antuvanet opposed and stated that it was not a navy costume but a costume inspired by a photography of the actress Martha Eggert.[447] It is possible that wearing a navy uniform was seen as a threat to national unity and this was what the newspaper wanted to emphasize. But the carnivalesque's ambiguous realm allowed the girls to play with the idea of a national uniform and disguise as an actress.

Lastly, carnival festivities were portrayed as providing an opportunity for theft and robbery. The view was that it became easier to engage in illicit acts as the criminal disguised his/her real identity behind masks and costumes. In 1930, *Cumhuriyet* published a story, probably a fictional one, about a guy disguised in women's clothes, who takes the opportunity of the carnival period and steals from a women's clothing store in Beyoğlu. When the police caught him, he refuses and says I am just a *maskara*.[448] In 1936, in Kurtuluş *Panayır*ı, two incidents were published by *Cumhuriyet*. One of them is about a street peddler selling watches who realize that 2 of his watches are missing. Later on during the day, a boy of 12, named Vasil, of Rum origin, is caught selling the watches by the police. The same day, Yorgi, a costume vendor, realizes that a *maskara* is wearing a costume that was stolen from Yorgi's shop a year ago. The thief, whose name is Paskal, is turned over to the police.[449] These examples further enhance the criminalization of the festive space, the participants in the crowds as a potential threat and criminals. The public opinion created by the newspapers follow the transforming city and society, which aimed to homogenize the country. As understood from these examples, the carnival posed a threat to these aims. Therefore, newspapers attempted to shape public views about

[447] "Bahriye Elbisesi Giyen Rum Kızları," *Cumhuriyet,* March 19, 1937.
[448] "Değilsen Bile Oldun," *Cumhuriyet,* March 15, 1930.
[449] "Karnaval Biterken," *Cumhuriyet,* February 26, 1936.

the festivities towards a negative, marginal and even criminal image. It would not be wrong to assume that the carnival's disappearance could be closely related to the public opinion proposed in the newspapers.

5.7 Banned or disappeared: The discussion of what happened to *Tatavla/Kurtuluş Panayırı*

The exact date and the reason for the carnival festivities to stop remains vague. Although the general view is that it ended at the beginning of the 1940s, the details about the exact date and reason vary. Problematizing these different narratives in published works helps us achieve a broader perspective to speculate on the timing and reason of the carnival's end and therefore, come up with less biased opinions. A strong and wide-spread argument is that İsmet İnönü's government banned it for security concerns in 1941.[450] It was portrayed as "having been interrupted," in a manner that hides the real context behind its interruption.[451] Besides, there is no consensus on which year it was last celebrated. Some sources write that in 1942, a small group went to Kurtuluş for the last time, despite the ban in the previous year. Irmak writes that in 1942, police intervened and stopped the festivities with arrest threats.[452] *Apoyevmatini*, a Greek newspaper published in Istanbul, writes on February 17, 1942, that "This year carnival festivities occurred in a moody atmosphere. Yesterday evening, the large square on the right side of Ayios Dimitrios Church was almost empty… Shortly, there was no carnival yesterday. Carnival is

[450] Irmak, *Tatavla'dan Kurtuluş'a*, 26. Yorgo Demir, "İnönü'nün yasakladığı Rum festivali yeniden hayat buluyor," Agos, March 1, 2014. Özbek, "Tatavla'da Yeniden Karnaval Zamanı," Agos, February 27, 2020. Korucu, "Rum Karnavalı İnönü'ye Rağmen Yaşıyor," Agos, March 4, 2014. BBC, "İstanbul'un 'Unutulmayan' Tatavla Karnavalı," BBC, March 4, 2014

[451] Birgün, "'Tatavla'da Yeniden Karnaval," Birgün, February 02, 2020.

[452] Irmak, *Tatavla'dan Kurtuluş'a*, 26.

only in our memories."[453] The same newspaper in 1944 also writes that "The muddy roads of Yenişehir were empty yesterday… *For* whose sake the schools used to be on holiday, Baklahorani gave its last breath and yesterday was its annual memorial… *Baklahorani*, which left all those memories, was dead now."[454] In parallel to this, the most reasonable explanation comes from Türker: "Since Rums were dispirited with the negative effects of World War II, which resulted in blackouts, conscriptions and Wealth Tax, the festivities shrunk from the streets to the indoors of *gazinos* and taverns".[455]

Problematizing the existing narratives circulating in the public realm about the fate of the carnival requires checking the validity of the arguments, contextualization, and a better understanding of the collective memory of the carnival's real agents. First of all, an official ban by the state targeting specifically the carnival festivities does not exist when the records between 1941-1942 are checked in *Resmi Gazete* (the official newspaper of the state), which is the official newspaper of the Turkish Republic publishing the new laws and regulations. Besides, with the Municipality Law issued in 1930, the control of the public places was delegated to the municipalities. However, this law does not involve any item about the ban on carnival or any public gatherings.[456] However, what can be considered is the war conditions, which resulted in necessary economic and security measures to be taken in the country, especially in large cities. National Security Law in 1940 was developed as an instrument to govern the country's economy by controlling the supply and demand, work conditions, and consumption of certain goods.[457] In

[453] Türker*, Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 70.
[454] Bozis, *İstanbul Lezzeti İstanbullu Rumların Mutfak Kültürü*, 43.
[455] Türker*, Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 70.
[456] Resmi Gazete, "Belediye Kanunu, İkinci Fasıl, Madde 3," April 14, 1930. Resmi Gazete, "1580 numaralı Belediye Kanununa ek Kanun," April 19, 1941.
[457] Tekeli and İlkin, *İkinci Dünya Savaşı Türkiyesi*, 83-85.

parallel to that, Passive Protection Precautions were taken as a precaution against the possible air attacks to the big cities in 1939. Throughout much of the war period, unannounced drills occurred.[458] The drill plans required people in the streets and squares to go hiding in their homes once they hear the call, wear masks in case of poisonous gas, and never leave the house or lean out of the window to see the planes.[459] If the drill occurred at night, all the light sources needed to be covered.[460] After the first general drill occurred in 1941 in whole Istanbul, the decision to have partial drills neighborhood by neighborhood in the rest of the year was taken.[461] Therefore, instead of a ban targeting the carnival, it would not be wrong to assume that it was the pressure created by the economic situation and the security measures which might have complicated going out freely, revel and consume excessively. However, this alone is not enough for explaining the possible reason why 1941 was the end.

The collective memory and trauma created by the conscription and Wealth Tax might also be among the reasons behind the carnival's end on the street level. In other words, it might have been a result of the response of the carnival's real agents to the war conditions as well as the discriminatory measures they faced in 1941 and 1942, which left a traumatic memory. As Özgur Kaymak states in her published Ph.D. thesis on the memory of minorities in Turkey, the conscription in 1941 was a derogatory experience for Greeks, Armenians and Jewish, which resembled the concentration camps of Nazi Germany. On top of that, the Wealth Tax resulted in a more profound sense of injustice, discrimination and disappointment.[462] It can be

[458] Karabulut, "Davetsiz Misafiri Beklerken İkinci Dünya Savaşı Türkiye'sinde Pasif Güvenlik Önlemleri (1939-1940)," 201, 214.
[459] "Alarm Tecrübesi Nasıl Yapılacak?," *Cumhuriyet,* January 7, 1941.
[460] "Pasif Müdafa Tecrübesi," *Cumhuriyet*, January 30, 1941.
[461] "Hava Tehlikesi," *Cumhuriyet,* January 31, 1941. "Yeni Kararlar," *Cumhuriyet*, February 6, 1941.
[462] Kaymak, *İstanbul'da Azınlık Olmak Gündelik Hayatta Rumlar, Yahudiler, Ermeniler*, 49-50.

said that people might have had other priorities within the global experience of going through a deadly war and the fear and insecurity of being a Christian minority in the 1940s Istanbul. This might have resulted in refraining from being visible on the public space, if not officially banned. From 1941 onwards, the news about the carnival on the street level disappeared from the Turkish newspapers. Only a couple of articles appeared on *Apoyevmatini* about the sad atmosphere in Kurtuluş. Only livelihood was visits paid to relatives and friends' houses in 1942.[463]

5.8 Conclusion

As illustrated in this chapter, the experience of the first decades of the Republican era was repressive but at the same time maintained a continuity with the previous period. The transformations were reflected in the way Rum community continued their festivities during *Apokries* and in *Baklahorani*. However, the newspapers reveal the clashes between the new lifestyle and identities offered by the Republic and the existing ones like Rums. 1942 marks the turning point in which these clashes reveal itself as state policy and systematic discrimination. It is the experience of this period which will shape the traumas and the transformations in the festive tradition in the following period.

[463] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 70.

CHAPTER 6

REMEMBERING *APOKRIES* AND THE REVIVAL OF *BAKLAHORANI* IN KURTULUŞ

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the remembrances of *Apokries* in the Rum community in Istanbul through oral history interviews by putting the relationship between ritual, identity and memory at its center. This chapter aims to connect the celebrations in the previous periods to the late Republican era and the present. In the pursuit of the memory of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani*, I collected 14 interviewees between December 2017 – April 2020. As the celebrations have become privatized, the information on them also became privatized in the personal memories of the people.

Oral historian, Michael Frisch, puts forward two concepts that oral history interviews adopt as an approach: more history and anti-history, which are both at work in this chapter. The interviews used here reveal "more history," which is the "undocumented or unrecorded aspects of the past."[464] At the same time, they contribute to the concept of "anti-history," which challenges "established understandings of history."[465] Based on the interviews, I argue that, contrary to the "established understanding", *Apokries* did not get lost, but survived in the private sphere in a different form. Also, the interviews reveal the "undocumented" narratives and performances of *Apokries* in the private space, establishing a connection with the past that is no longer publicly available.

The narratives do not only reveal about *Apokries* but also the traumas of the period which Rum community went through. Therefore, this chapter begins with an

[464] Öztürkmen and Bornat, "Oral History", 433.
[465] Ibid, 434.

overview of the socio-political transformations and traumas of the 1950s until today. Although *Apokries* is an entertaining occasion, the interviews reveal that these traumas have shaped the Rum's perception of the past, through which they interpret the disappearance of the festivities from the public space. Apart from that, the transmission of memory is crucial in the continuity of the tradition. Most of the interviews acknowledge that the ritual was transmitted to the next generations through oral narratives, the urban memory of belonging to Kurtuluş, and the gendered realm of food and costume making. In 1980s, *Apokries* has turned into an isolated ritual performance, which in the words of anthropologist Paul Connerton "conveyed and sustained the past."[466] In its later form, the ritual was reduced to a communal gathering, as a commensality of food and costume making performance. Finally, the last decade of the 2000s has experienced an urban revival of *Baklahorani* in Kurtuluş initiated by mostly the recent residents of the neighborhood with nostalgic reminiscences.

6.2 The socio-political context of a traumatic era: 1950s-2000s

The period after the 1950s had seen rising violence and discrimination, which resulted in the gradual migration of the Rum population from Istanbul. For that reason, Kurtuluş has experienced a crucial demographic change. In this period, Turkey's socio-political context had more apparent implications on the daily lives of non-Muslims in Istanbul. The pogrom of 1955, political conflicts over Cyprus in 1960s and 1970s had resulted in the migration of the majority of Rums to Greece. Due to this demographic shift and the rising urban migration to Istanbul from rural areas, the social and demographic structure of Kurtuluş has started to change. These

[466] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*.

three decades of traumas had been formative of the Rum experience and memory in Istanbul. Whereas the period after the 1980s had seen a relatively liberal environment, which turned into a more democratic environment. The process of Turkey's accession to the European Union and Istanbul's designation as a European Capital of Culture in 2010 further enhanced this liberalization. The city's multicultural past had been utilized for branding, which had implications on the revitalization efforts in the 2010s. However, after Gezi Parkı Protests in 2013 and a coup attempt in 2016, the social life restrictions have increased. Therefore, for a better understanding of the remembrances and revival efforts in this period, I will first briefly outline the events and processes that have shaped it.

The period between 1950 and 1960 had experienced a critical turning point in the history of Turkish politics and a traumatic pogrom targeting non-Muslims citizens. The sociologist Çağlar Keyder stated that the 1950 elections, in which Democrat Party came to power, was a "fundamental break in Turkish history."[467] The first years of their rule were marked by "radical economic and political transformations," which resulted in the introduction of "a mentality of geographical and social mobility."[468] However, Feroz Ahmad comments that the second term of DP after 1954, Democrats and Prime Minister Menderes gained a more populist persona, which influenced the political climate.[469] The non-Muslim citizens were not independent of the changing political climate.

Political scientist and historian Herkül Millas states that the period between 1945 and 1954 was a relatively peaceful period for Rums. However, this only lasted until September 6-7, 1955, when protesters demonstrating against Greece's position

[467] Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey,* 124.
[468] Ibid., 127-135.
[469] Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy, 1950-1975,* 50.

in Cyprus plundered and destroyed households, businesses, and churches belonging to non-Muslims and especially Rums.[470] Özgür Kaymak wrote that the trauma of 1955 created the feeling of betrayal and lack of confidence in the collective memory. This had resulted in a more isolated Rum community that preferred to obscure their real identity in the public sphere.[471]

Another discriminatory incident that further created trauma and hardship in the daily life of Rums was in 1964 when the Cyprus issue was intensified again. Due to the crisis, the Turkish state did not renew the residence permits of the Greek citizens living in Turkey, who were mostly Rums having roots in Istanbul. As Millas writes, 8000 Rums had to leave the country in a short period and the number of migrants had risen to 15.000 with the families following them.[472] Kaymak observes that 1964 exile is a very dominant trauma in the collective memory of the Rums. The reason was the feeling of humiliation created with the unjust application of the regulation, which forced people to migrate in harsh conditions.[473] Furthermore, the last significant migration happened in 1974 as the result of the panic and fear that Turkish army's landing on the Cyprus island created among Rums.[474] The memory of 1955, 1964 and 1974 had resulted in a demographic shift and pressure by the state. This was also reflected in the attitudes in the public sphere.

When it came to the 1980s, Turkey had experienced another coup d'état. But the second half of the 80s was characterized by a relatively more liberal, modern and civil government.[475] This period's overall cultural climate was unique in the sense that it allowed the society to enjoy a different sort of freedom. Nurdan Gurbilek, a

[470] Millas, *Geçmişten Bugüne Yunanlılar,* 225-226.
[471] Kaymak, *İstanbul'da Az(ınlık) Olmak,* 55.
[472] Millas, *Geçmişten Bugüne Yunanlılar, 226.*
[473] Kaymak, *İstanbul'da Az(ınlık) Olmak,* 64.
[474] Millas, *Geçmişten Bugüne Yunanlılar, 226.*
[475] Gürbilek, *Vitrinde Yaşamak,* 13.

literary critique, argues that 1980s was the period when freedom was restricted at the highest degree, but at the same time, it was the period when people felt the freest.[476] The cultural atmosphere of the 1980s allowed "cultural identities which used to be locked in ideologies to be freed."[477] This cultural proliferation, despite the political oppression, had implications within the Rum community, but in an isolated way. On top of that, in the 1990s, as Baskın Oran writes, the efforts for a cautious approach Turkey-Greece relations culminated well despite the continuing problems regarding Cyprus and the Aegean Sea.[478] Therefore, it can be said that from the 1980s onwards, Rums also began to enjoy the relatively liberal everyday life due to the cultural transformation in the country and the political improvements.

At the beginning of the 2000s, the government's interest in its past gained new momentum. The first term of the AKP government, as scholars Yeşim Arat and Şevket Pamuk stated in their book that the first term of the new government was marked by efforts to democratize the country due to Turkey's drive for membership in the European Union.[479] The union commission required Turkey to meet the criteria that included economic reform, human rights and the protection of minorities, as Ahmad wrote.[480] One implication of the efforts for accession to the EU in the cultural realm was Istanbul's designation as a European Capital of Culture in 2010. Scholars interpreted this as a year-long spectacle that "aimed to foster Turkey's ties to Europe and via Europe to the World," by emphasizing the multicultural character of the country.[481] The implications of these have resulted in an increasing interest in Turkey's cosmopolitan past and attempts to revitalize it.

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[476] Ibid*, 14-15.*
[477] Ibid, 102.
[478] Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası Cilt III,* 560.
[479] Arat and Şevket, *Turkey Between Democracy and Authoritarianism,* 4.
[480] Ahmad, *The Quest for Identity,* 175.
[481] Göktürk, Soysal and Türeli, *Orienting Istanbul,* 4-7.

This nostalgia "privatized and commodified" the image and concepts regarding the Rum legacy in Istanbul.[482]

However, these efforts were not continuous. Major shifts had been experienced with the Gezi Parkı protests in June 2013 and the military coup attempt of July 2016. Arat and Pamuk write that, following these events, the AKP government grew more authoritarian as the rule of law was ignored, the separation of powers was undermined and the control over media and judiciary system was deepened.[483] In social life, this was felt as restrictions against public gatherings, demonstrations and entertainment. Together with that, a growing effort has started to be put in rewriting the past. One of the latest implications of that was turning Hagio Sophia Museum, an essential symbol of the Greek-Orthodox heritage in the city, back into a mosque in July 2020.

These events and developments since the 1950s had severe implications on Rum's daily life in general and on Kurtuluş. According to Millas, after the two big waves of migration, the Rum population decreased drastically to 2000-3000 in Istanbul by the 21st century.[484] The historian Meropi Anastassiadou comments that language and religion remain as an essential component of Rum culture to maintain the survival of their identity today.[485] According to a newspaper article published in 2019, today, there are only 4 Rum schools in Istanbul, with approximately 40-50 students in each.[486] The status of the Theological School of Halki in Heybeliada, which was closed in 1971, remains a contested issue.[487] It is possible to say that the

[482] Özyürek, *Nostalgia for the Modern,* 10.
[483] YArat and Pamuk, *Turkey Between Democracy and Authoritarianism,* 6.
[484] Millas, *Geçmişten Bugüne Yunanlılar, 226.*
[485] Anastassiadou, "İstanbul Rumlarının Kültürel Varlığı: Değerlenme ve Gelişme Tahayyülleri," 202-204.
[486] Çapan, "Asırlık Okullar 280 Öğrencisiyle Kapanmamak İçin Direniyor," Avlaremoz, September 20, 2019.
[487] Hürriyet, "Çipras'tan Heybeliada Ruhban Okulu Çağrısı," February 6, 2019.

space that Rums navigated has shrunk in parallel with their population through the years. However, in recent years the Rum community began to enjoy religious freedom more. The rituals taking place in the public space, such as the commemoration of Epiphany on January 6, have been permitted again.[488] However, the traumas of the past decades remain.

Kurtuluş, on the other hand, is no longer a Rum neighborhood today. However, it transformed into a hub for cross-cultural circulations and encounters. The Rum population in the neighborhood has decreased to a few households. The early comer Armenians from Anatolia were joined by Turks and Kurds from Anatolia, starting mainly from the 1950s onwards. Besides, international migrants from the former Soviet countries and sub-Saharan Africa have settled in the neighborhood in recent decades.[489] Due to its central location and relatively affordable accommodation opportunities compared to its surroundings, many university students and intellectuals prefer to live in Kurtuluş. The non-Muslim institutions behind the tall walls still serve as essential sites of memory and representation of non-Muslim legacy. Regarding Rum institutions, the still-functioning institutions are Ayios Dimitrios Church, Kurtuluş Sports Club and Ayios Eleftherios Cemetary. Kurtuluş Greek School had stopped eduction in 2003 due to the lack of students.

Overall, the period between the 1950s until today was very complex in terms of socio-political life. It is the period in which the performance of the Rum identity in public had traumatic consequences. Both psychologically and emotionally, this period had left essential marks on the collective identity and memory of the Rum community. On the public level, the interest in Rum culture has increased due to the

[488] Daily Sabah, "Turkey's Orthodox Community Marks Epiphany," January 6, 2020.
[489] Martin, "Une réécriture urbaine. La mise en mémoire du quartier de Kurtuluş à Istanbul," 2.

efforts in branding the city in recent years. However, they remained impartial in comprehending the Rum experience.

6.3 "*Apokries* was gone, because Rums were gone": Memory of the traumas in the oral narratives of *Apokries*

Although carnival is entertainment that involves fun and memorable events, it is not independent of the traumas of the century. Rums interviewed for this thesis were born after the Second World War. Therefore they have neither experienced *Apokries* on the street level nor have any personal memory about its disappearance. However, interestingly, almost all of them interpreted the *Apokries'* disappearance by referring to the traumas from their past, instead of a state ban. As these traumas involved the emotions of fear and insecurity, *Apokries* became impossible as an explicit manifestation of their identity. Therefore, it is important to understand how these traumas dominated their collective memory and perception of the past.

First of all, the interviewees tended to use the traumatic events which left a significant mark in their family history for periodizing the cease of *Apokries* on the street level. These memories are, most of the time, site-specific. For example, the fire in 1929 constitutes an important place in one of the interviewee's memories, born and raised in Kurtuluş. Although he was born in 1951, the memory of the fire was transmitted from his family who suffered from it:

> My grandfather was living in a house below Ayios Dimitrios Church. Someone called out that fire was coming towards their house. They took whatever they can to a relative's house in another street. But the fire spread and the house that they took shelter was burned down too. They couldn't save anything. Later on, they rented a house on Kurtuluş Street and started from scratch. Nothing, not even any family heritage, remained after the fire. (Interviewee 1, Appendix B, 8)

The fire did destroy not only their house and wealth but also their past. It was transmitted through generations as one of the most dramatic events that happened in the family that the interviewee assumes that the pain and destruction caused by fire might have been the reason for the cease of *Apokries*: "In such a period, it wasn't possible to say 'let's change clothes and go dancing and singing on the streets'. I guess there wasn't any excitement or desire left." (Interviewee 1) Although Tatavla has changed drastically, the newspapers in the 1930s emphasize the crowds in Kurtuluş during the carnival and *Baklahorani*, as it is mentioned in the previous chapter. However, this shows that the trauma of the fire was so intense that it dominated the social and economic life of the people affected.

Wealth Tax in 1942 comes out as another important cornerstone in another interviewee's memory, as the event that changed everything. He does not associate a direct link between the carnival festivities and the trauma that Wealth Tax created. However, it becomes an event that symbolizes a drastic change in their daily life. During the interview, he refers to one of his articles he wrote ten years ago about what they have been through:

> Before we could relax, there was another trouble: Wealth Tax!... My father, who was confined to bed since 1939 and unable to work, was imposed the tax. Under these circumstances, this astronomic number couldn't be paid. As a result, sequestrates came and took everything. They even took the bedstead after putting down my father together with the sheet. In these war conditions, the dream of justice was non-existent in the world. After all of these, our apartment in Tarlabaşı was gone. We moved to my mother's house in Çengelköy. (Interviewee 2, Appendix B, 9)[490]

This narrative shows that losing wealth and moving to another neighborhood was a radical rupture in one's identity and connection with cultural values. Therefore, it makes sense that in the personal history of this interviewee, breaking the ties with the

[490] Retrieved from an unpublished article written by the interviewee, sent via e-mail by him after the interview.

place that *Apokries* was known to be a major event meant breaking the ties with one's cultural tradition. Therefore he says, "I had never experienced it because my childhood coincides with the Second World War." (Interviewee 2)

Another narrative emphasized the date 1955 as being the turning point of the *Apokries* festivities. The interviewee, who was born in 1948 in Balat and moved to Kurtuluş when he was 2, argues that *Apokries* festivities continued on the streets until September 6-7 events. He remembers that in February 1955, six months before the events, he has seen prostitutes pouring down to the square from his window in Sefa Meydanı:

> One day I was sitting on the window… My mom called out to my father and said, 'look, they are passing by on horses.' We were living in Sefa Meydanı. I was just a child, a little one. I looked and there were real women on horses. Some wore weird things. Some were half-naked. They were going to the square. It was the first time I got acquainted with *Baklahorani*. However, that was the last year that *Baklahorani* was celebrated in Kurtuluş. Because it wasn't celebrated after September 6-7 in 1955. It was the last one… (Interviewee 3, Appendix B, 10)

It is hard to confirm the accuracy of this information. It is strongly possible that his mind was somehow misleading him. However, asking why he remembered that way reveals a different story. He chose 1955 as an essential turning point. The reason for that is September 6-7 constitutes a significant trauma in their family memory as his grandmother's house in Balat was destroyed during the violent pogrom. He narrates the trauma:

> When we went to my grandmother's house two days later, there was only the walls. My grandmother had gone to Zehra Hanım, her neighbor. When they destroyed her house, Zehra was holding the flag and my grandmother was applauding, hoping that they wouldn't realize she was a Rum. She watched her house destroyed as she was applauding.[491] (Appendix B, 11)

This is the narrative of yet another trauma, after which the public presence of one's identity became fearful. Therefore, in the personal and familial memory of this

[491] Parizyanos and Francis, "Anneannem Evinin Yıkılışını Alkışlayarak İzledi," *Bianet,* September 4, 2015.

interviewee, it is not surprising that 1955 might mark the end for freedom in the public space and yet *Apokries*, which is its most exuberant expression. Beyond the accuracy of his memory, it was important to see how these traumas governed the way people remembered the past.

Traumas were not only caused by specific incidents but also by everyday politics. For one interviewee, the use of Greek in the public sphere constituted a childhood trauma. She remembers being told by her mother not to speak Greek on the street. Her mother would use a different name to call her once they come back to Istanbul from the islands. Having remembered how restrictive the public space was, she says that they would not even dare to wear costumes and go public. (Interviewee 4) Her narrative illustrates that public visibility was highly related to the use of Rum's native language in the public realm. With that, *Apokries* was seen as one's expression of identity on the public sphere, which became harder and harder with the republican period. The traumas and challenging experiences on the other spheres of life have somehow affected how Rums perceived the past and practiced their rituals.

The decline in the Rum population was another issue that the interviewees justified the disappearance of *Apokries*, as one interviewee said, "*Apokries* was gone, because Rums were gone." (Interviewee 13) The series of events were reduced to the expression of "hard times," as one of the interviewees stated: "I don't think it continued in hard times. Due to the political situation… Some things were not allowed. Entertainment was not the priority. The priority was the correct functioning of the education system." (Interviewee 5) The "hard times" were also defined by the decreased population: "Back then we were 15-20 thousand. However, now we are only 3000, or 2000. Who will have fun? Can I take my grandmother there now? It was done in the past." (Interviewee 6) This decline in the number of Rums in the city

meant less security when one wanted to have fun in the public space, and also collective forgetting:

> Population exchange happened. September 6-7, 1955. Cyprus issue. Expatriation. Blow after blow. We ended up like this. Right now, there are 2000-2500 people in Istanbul. More than half are elders. Under these circumstances, you get erased. It is as if you do not exist. However, we have maintained other traditions, such as Rum cuisine. It is still a part of Istanbul. (Interviewee 7, Appendix B, 12)

These narratives show that as the population decreased due to the period's political conditions, Rum's manifestation of their identity shrank from the streets to private realms. In these private environments, food plays an essential role in transmitting and sustaining their culture, which will be further discussed in this chapter.

These narratives connect the issue to the discussion of whether *Apokries* was banned by the state in 1941 or disappeared. Thanks to the oral history interviews, the experience of the real subjects of this process contribute to the existing knowledge. Even though their narratives do not give a factual explanation to end the discussion, their experiences and collective traumas allow us to see the deeper dynamics of the issue. The emotions of fear and insecurity that are personally experienced and also transmitted through generations had an impact on people's daily life and practices. They were so critical to the extent that people perceived their past and historicized their lives. Therefore, the remembrances of *Apokries* as a carnivalesque event which allowed an exuberant and free expression of one's being and identity was obscured by more painful and fearful memories and experiences. It would not be wrong to say, as psychiatrists state, "many who were left in horror, terror and despair by state-inflicted social trauma were antagonized to such a degree that they had to suffer their losses silently in their private spheres, not in public."[492] One of the implications was

[492] Kaptanoğlu, "Psychology and Social Identity," 252.

shrinking of *Apokries* to private spheres of associations and schools, and reducing practices to only costumes and food.

6.4 Transmission of the memory: Oral narratives, places, food and costumes

The fact that the interviewees were not first-hand witnesses of the carnivalesque on the streets does not mean it was not part of their identity. As explained in the previous chapters, *Apokries* is not only a street festivity but also a religious ritual transmitted through generations. Nurdan Türker argues in her Ph.D. thesis published in 2015, that the religious rituals have had strong, non-religious connotations for the Rum-Orthodox community in Istanbul, who have been living in a dominantly Muslim country.[493] A quote in Türker's book from one of her interviewees illustrates this meaning attributed to rituals: "I think that the continuity of our traditions and customs is the continuity of our existence."[494] Although the socio-political conditions no longer allowed the proper practice of certain rituals, the strong link between rituals, identity and sense of belonging enabled the transmission of the traditions through generations. Regarding *Apokries*, this was not only done through oral narratives but also food and costumes; and the spatial experience of being from Kurtuluş. These transmissions took place in the private celebrations of associations and families (Figure 19).

6.4.1 The role of the oral narratives and sense of belonging to Kurtuluş in the transmission of memory

The stories told by the interviewee's parents about *Apokries* festivities involve carnivalesque elements in a way to attract a kid's attention. For example, one

[493] Türker, *Vatanım Yok Memleketim Var,* 145.
[494] Ibid, 138.

interviewee remembers her mother's stories to keep him interested when he was creating trouble to eat as a kid. One of the stories was from the carnival period:

> Let's say a group of 4, with masks, enter someone's house. They catcall each other. However, one of them pays court to the lady of the house, in a disturbing way. One of the guests, uninvited guests, stands up firmly and says, take off your masks. We came ten but there are 11 here. There is a stranger among us. Everyone takes off their masks. The 11th was the husband of the lady who owned the house. He wore a mask to make fun of her. He is harassing her wife. However, more than that, he is fooling the uninvited guests. (Interviewee 1, Appendix B, 13)

As the interviewee says, this story was told to his mother as a kid in 1920. So it might be possible that it happened in the 1920s or earlier. On the other hand, the whole story or some parts of it may be fictional. But, this story from the interviewee's childhood was the only piece of memory that enabled him to imagine the carnivalesque.

Figure 19. A photo of friends in various costumes celebrating *Apokries* at home in 1951.
Source: Marianna Yerasimos, *İstanbullu Rum Bir Ailenin Mutfak Serüveni,* 201.

Another story is an incident the interviewee's mother as a kid experienced in the *Apokries* festivities in Kurtuluş:

> I remember what my mother told me. She was born on 1923 in Osmanbey. They were living on Samanyolu street. They were close to Kurtuluş. They belonged to the community of twelve apostles. I mean they were in Feriköy. When she was a kid, they went to *Baklahorani* until 1930s. I remember that once she got lost. It was so crowded that she got lost. She started crying. Some guy took her to the municipality police. They asked why she is crying. She said I lost my mother, my father. They asked whose daughter she is. I am the daughter of Bakkal Anastas. Where? They had a grocery store in Osmanbey. This was how she was found. She used to tell me this. (Interviewee 9, Appendix B, 14)

This narrative transmitted from mother to son is a different experience of the carnivalesque, which seems like a scary memory of the carnival atmosphere from a kid's point of view. However, this memorable yet scary experience from *Baklahorani* served as a way to transmit the memory to the next generation, which never had a similar experience.

In the transmission of the memory of *Apokries,* being from Kurtuluş (*Kurtuluşlu olmak)* stands out as an important factor. Interviewees, who were born and raised in other parts of the city, express that they neither they nor their parents have a specific memory of the carnivalesque because they were not in Kurtuluş. In other words, the spatial experience of specific neighborhoods were associated with different experiences. For example, one interviewee, whose family was from Kadıköy, on the Asian side of the city, said:

> We were in Kadıköy. We didn't live in an exclusively Rum community. We had a more cosmopolitan life with Armenians and Turks living side by side. We weren't typical Rums. Kadıköy back then was really like a village. How can you go to the European side? Let's say you did, but there was no means of transportation to come back. No ferries, no ferries for cars. You have to stay on the European side if you did go. (Interviewee 8, Appendix B, 15)

Not only distance, but the social structure of the neighborhood mattered. For example, one interviewee was from Hasköy. She defines it as "more modern and

isolated compared to Kurtuluş." It was a much more diverse neighborhood. She states that in Hasköy such excess behavior would not be allowed. (Interviewee 7) This shows that it was the cultural and social environment in Kurtuluş that allowed the excess behavior of *Apokries.* In places other than Kurtuluş, the heterogeneous population did not permit these kinds of celebrations entailing non-Muslim presence and excess.

On the other hand, the social structure of Kurtuluş and places in the neighborhood that conveyed and sustained the Rum identity enabled a different *Apokries* experience in the period after 1950s, despite the traumas. Although streets were no longer a place for such a performance of one's identity, Kurtuluş Spor Kulübü, became a lieu de memoir for the young generation in 1960s. The sports club, situated across the Ayios Dimitrios Church, where the festivities on the street level used to take place, was founded in 1896 as Iraklis Sports Club and took the name Kurtuluş Sports Club in the republican period. It has not only raised important athletes in the Ottoman Empire but also trained the kids of the neighborhood in different branches.[495]

Kurtuluş Sports Club was an important place where kids met and socialized during the 1950s and 1960s. That is the reason why it constitutes an essential place in the urban memory of Kurtuluş and the childhood memories of the kids from Kurtuluş. One of the interviewees narrates that when they started going to school, the tradition was to enroll the kids in the sports club as a side activity. School, sports club and the church constituted the main spaces where kids socialized. (Interviewee 3) Thus, with its historical legacy, the sports club was one of the places where Rums freely performed their identity. In parallel with that it is also an important site of

[495] Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan bir Köşe Tatavla,* 73-75.

memory for *Apokries* celebrations. In the club they would have costume parties for the kids. (Interviewee 9) The festivities also spread to the streets as the kids proceeded to the club in costumes on Kurtuluş Street. The memory of *Apokries* was transmitted by the spatial memory of Kurtuluş that was preserved by its institutions and the collective sense of belonging.

It is critical to note here that the Rum community is not homogeneous and *Apokries* was not appreciated at the same level by everyone. When compared to Easter or Christmas, *Apokries* was less important. It was only reduced to Clean Monday, the first day of the fasting. In that sense, lifestyle of the family mattered in the creation and transmission of memory of *Apokries.* For example, the interviewee from Kadıköy told:

> Most of my friends' mothers and fathers did these kind of things. In our home, there were no arrangements in that sort. My aunt, for example, has never seen anything like that. They didn't do it. They were reserved people. My father had a very shy personality. (Interviwee 8, Appendix B, 16)

As another interviewee said that his mother was not allowed to go outside on her own as a teenager, therefore she could not experience *Apokries* on the streets. (Interviewee 1) From another perspective, it is also possible that people may have wanted to keep their experiences secret, as *Apokries* involved the type of entertainment that required anonymity and not much approved by society. Although the carnivalesque remained relatively silent, the ritual found its way in the memory and the practices of the next generation by transmitting the rites around food and dressing up.

6.4.2 Grandmothers' feasts and mothers' costumes: The gendered transmission of sensual memory

Although the sense of belonging to Kurtuluş made a difference in the transmission of the memory, *Apokries* was also an important occasion celebrated within the small and closed circles of families and friends. Therefore, regardless of their location in the city, households constituted an important hub for the transmission of the memory. The memory was transmitted through the sensory and gendered experiences of food and the performance of making costumes. As Nadia Seremetakis writes in her that "memory is stored in substances that are shared, just as substances are stored in social memory which is sensory."[496] This is why the sensual experience and commensality of food and costume making become an important mnemonic device through which memory and tradition are transmitted.

As Beatrice Hendrich writes, food that is prepared, distributed, or consumed together is perceived as the remembrance of historical experience. This remembrance is intensified with its repetition on certain days of the year.[497] As Tom Boylston suggests, the meal serves as an occasion to "gather repeatedly and establish a basic pattern of togetherness." This commensality of food in meals and feasts "contributes to the formation of those who eat."[498] During *Apokries* and especially on Clean Monday, part of the ritual is concerned with consumption of fasting food. In the remembrances of the old Clean Monday feasts, we see that food is a commemorative instrument through which people connect to their collective past by sharing the same table and the same sensual experience.

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[496] Seremetakis, "The Memory of the Senses, Part II: Still Acts," 24.
[497] Hendrich, "Mario Levi ve Mıgırdiç Margosyan'da Yemek Hatırlama ve Hatırlama Yemekleri," 92.
[498] Boylston, "Food, Life and Material Religion in Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity," 260-261.

The narratives of these feasts show us that it was an occasion in which people connected with their collective past and manifested their identity through sharing the same sensual experience. As Marianna Yerasimos writes in her book, the feast was a commemorative activity. Her grandmother strictly prepared the food specific for Clean Monday: "many dishes of meze with olive oil; fake stuffed peppers, fava, taramosalata, dried mackerel salad, dried mackerel balls (grandfather's favorite), stewed fava beans, pickles and onions."[499] The reminiscences of Yerasimos's grandmother's feast are an example of commensality and its relation with Rum identity. The annual repetition of the occasion, the collective experience of consuming together and the association of the specific food with certain individuals in the family renders it a tradition and therefore a memorable event.

Although the carnivalesque is no longer a part of the ritual after the 1950s, dressing up remains as an important entertainment. The costumes constitute the most memorable elements of *Apokries* celebrations. For example, Marianna Yerasimos writes about a cat costume that she wore when she was 3 in a ball given by the Zappeion Highschool Alumni Association at Taksim Municipality Gazino in 1950 (Figure 20). She writes that "on every carnival, my mother used to dress me in various disguises with the costumes that she designed and made. I think she used to have much more fun than I had". She remembers her mother telling her how she used to ask whether cats on the streets have a zipper like she had in her cat costume.[500]

[499] Yerasimos, *İstanbullu Rum bir Ailenin Mutfak Serüveni,* 140.
[500] Yerasimos, *İstanbullu Rum bir Ailenin Mutfak Serüveni,* 161.

Figure 20. A child in a cat costume in 1950.
Source: Marianna Yerasimos, *İstanbullu Rum Bir Ailenin Mutfak Serüveni*, 161.

According to the interviewees, most of the time, the costumes were made at home by the mothers. The weeks' long efforts to make a costume involve sensual experiences of imagining, finding the right materials already available at home, painting, sewing, etc. The story and effort behind a costume reveal itself as memorable as the costume itself for the interviewees. For example, one interviewee remembers when she was around nine, her mother prepared a costume by sewing the old laces that she was keeping in the chest, over the edges of her coat. She also tied ribbons on her new leather shoes (Interviewee 8). It was sometimes a cooperative production between the kid and the mother. One interviewee remembers her mother sewing the overall Cleopatra costume and she made the embroidering on the front (Interviewee 1).

Sewing publications were used for inspiration. An interviewee expressed that the images are still vivid in her mind:

> My mom had a magazine with only carnival costumes: *Burda*. I was 6 or 7. It was like a photonovela for me. I really enjoyed looking into its images… There was a strawberry costume. A little girl. All her clothes were like

> strawberry. I still have her image in front of my eyes. It was so sweet. I used to aspire it. (Interviewee 4, Appendix B, 17)

The narratives show that the very practice of costume making for *Apokries* season was a sensual and bodily experience for the kid and the mother. This experience involved a creative production and diving into the closed boxes and chests in the house, in which old clothes and decorative pieces piled up through the years.

What is transmitted here through food and costumes was not only the practical skill of cooking or sewing, but also the sensual and emotional experience. Like in Melissa Bilal's argument that the transmission of the Armenian lullabies conveys "all the emotional attachment that is evoked through sweet words, looks and smiles, through bodily interactions."[501] Therefore, the sensual and bodily experience of making a costume entails "the desires, dreams and hopes" of the mother and "the way she perceives herself as well as the way she knows and relates to life".[502] *Apokries* as a ritual becomes an occasion in which the emotions, experiences, and identities of the generations are transmitted to next generations both orally and bodily. From the 1980s onwards, the second generation had begun to re-enact this memory and knowledge.

6.5 Commemorating the community's past: Solidarity in *Apokries* parties of 1980s and re-enactment of the past

As Gurbilek suggested, the 1980s were the period when Turkey experimented with new lifestyles and expressions in cultural life.[503] In parallel with that, according to the interviewees' narratives, there was a proliferation in the number of occasions in which the Rum community had started to celebrate *Apokries* again. This was a new

[501] Bilal, "The Lost Lullaby and Other Stories About Being an Armenian in Turkey," 71.
[502] Ibid, 72.
[503] Gürbilek, *Vitrinde Yaşamak,* 15.

experience for a generation that had no personal memory of *Apokries*, but a transmitted knowledge and memory. The ritual performance that Rums engage during *Apokries*, as Connerton states, "convey and sustain the images of the past and the recollected knowledge of the past."[504] That is the reason why I argue that the new form that *Apokries* had taken in the 1980s carried a commemorative character. More than a carnivalesque atmosphere, *Apokries* had become an occasion where the community is "reminded of its identity" and "re-enact the past."[505]

In the second half of the 1980s, associations such as Moda Culture Association and the Zeppeion Highschool Alumni Association had begun organizing *Apokries* parties for the community. These associations were two of the few that tied the community together and sustained the links with the past. Special days and holidays served for that purpose. For example, Moda Kültür Derneği, situated in the Asian part of the city, is famous for its *Apokries* parties. One interviewee told that they took the responsibility of carrying on this tradition. An important reason to do that was raising money for the association. (Interviewee 1) Similarly, the Zappeion Highschool Alumni Association organized parties not only for its students and alumni but for the whole community, as an interviewee stated. (Interviewee 5) As expressed by the interviewees, these associations have taken the role of revitalizing *Apokries*, turning it into their institutional tradition and creating an occasion to bring people together.

The new tradition was not a celebration of the coming of the fasting period but rather an occasion to show solidarity with the community and connect with the collective past. This is evident in the narratives explaining the motivation for attending these parties. For example, according to one interviewee, the reason he had

[504] Connerton, *How Societies Remember?,* 4.
[505] Ibid, 70.

attended these parties was to maintain friendly relations with the rest of the community (Interviewee 10). The solidarity experienced in these parties by coming together physically in the same space enabled "to remember the old days" and "to make the presence of the community remembered" as expressed by the interviewees. (Interviewee 4 & 10) These narratives prove that the repetition of *Apokries* parties in the late 1980s were occasions for the community to commemorate their collective past and enhance their sense of belonging.

Another memorable place that interviewees associate with *Apokries* in the late 1980s was the house of a particular friend, who hosted *Apokries* parties every year for 5-6 years. These parties were organized at the end of *Apokries* period, with a specific themes, such as brothel, wild west, ancient Greece, eastern civilizations, Ottoman Empire or religions. The guests matched their costumes with these themes and decorated the house accordingly. The idea first came up when the owner of the house could not find a proper date to celebrate his name day at the end of January and his birthday at the end of February. He says that at the time, various associations were organizing costume balls in *gazinos* and sending invitations. He appropriated that spirit and invited his friends over for a "*Baklahorani* party" with costumes on a specific Saturday during the *Apokries* period. (Interviewee 1) Another interviewee who used to participate in these parties remembers there would be around 40 people in the house. Everyone would be dressed according to the theme they decided every year. They would feast, play music, dance and enjoy the day. However she accounts that these parties stopped some time at the beginning of 1990s and it is getting harder to do it every year as they got old and some of them have passed away. (Interviewee 4) This was one of the most memorable gatherings in a private household and as a friendly event. Although it was not a fully anonymous atmosphere, what was unique

was that participants still played around the carnivalesque by wearing costumes. Costume making and wearing stands out as a unique performative act of remembrance in the narratives.

The narratives unfold the performances around these *Apokries* parties as re-enactments of the past. What is especially significant in female interviewee's narratives is the process of preparing the costume that comes with the memory and experience transmitted from the mother. Costume making was not only something that prepared them for a fun activity but was seen as a creative journey. One interviewee stated:

> Preparation is important. The journey is important. Cavafy has a poem.[506] It ismy favorite. What is important is the journey, not the erect point. It says that you have learned a lot on the way. It is what you gain. (Interviewee 8, Appendix B 18)

She explains how she started to compile materials at a young age to make costumes. (Interviewee 8) One of her favorite costume that she made herself was a wish tree. She gave needles and papers to the guests and asked them to write their wishes and attach them on her costume. (Interviewee 8) As this narrative shows, costume making is an accumulative performance. It spreads from the past into the present in a new and creative form of a costume. This performance of costume making was a habit transmitted from the mother, as the interviewee's first memories about *Apokries* show. It can be said that dressing up as a ritual of *Apokries* functions as a re-enactment of past experiences, thus commemorating one's identity and history.

[506] Ithaka by Constantine Cavafy: "…Keep Ithaka always in your mind./Arriving there is what you're destined for./But don't hurry the journey at all./Better if it lasts for years,/so you're old by the time you reach the island,/wealthy with all you've gained on the way,/not expecting Ithaka to make you rich…"

6.6 Transgressive grotesque appearances in the public space in 1980s

Although the public space was almost closed for entertainment, the grotesque behavior that carnival enabled appeared in snapshots of transgression in the public space. This is most visible in the interviewees' narratives in which they tell how strange it felt to commute from their home to where the party was in their disguises. It was not as grotesque and carnivalesque as in the Ottoman or the early Republican era. But, these moments were significant in the sense that they represented the survival of the grotesque behavior despite the lack of a proper carnival tradition. In Bakhtin's words, the grotesque body is "unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits".[507] The grotesque body's appearances in the public space in the 1980s was a transgressive of the norms. Although the 1980s provided a relatively liberal cultural environment for the manifestation of different identities, as Nurdan Gurbilek suggested,[508] transient grotesque exposures still caused tensions.

The narratives of these grotesque moments, shed light on the concerns and tensions of visibility in the public space. For example, one interviewee narrates her journey of going from the Asian side to the European side disguised as a procurer:

> Once I became a brothel madam with another girl. We had to go from Kadıköy to where the party is. We found a taxi driver that we knew. We were driving and decided to stop by and visit a couple of houses in Kadıköy. In one of the houses, they asked if we have our ID card with us. We shouldn't go out like this without our ID. I called my mom and said we are coming down and asked her to bring my ID. She saw us, didn't recognize and said to herself, what a weird period we are living in, look at the kind of people wandering around. (Interviewee 8, Appendix B, 19)

Similarly, another male interviewee narrates driving in a car in women's clothes and having remembered people staring at him. (Interviewee 3) These narratives illustrate how the experience of carnivalesque has transformed with the republican period.

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[507] Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World,* 26.
[508] Gürbilek, *Vitrinde Yaşamak,* 102-103.

Grotesque behavior and exuberance brought by anonymity are replaced by the need for security and being less anomalous. Although *Apokries* continued in the private spheres, the public experience of it was interrupted. However, in the 2000s, with the efforts to revive the urban memory of *Baklahorani*, such carnivalesque scenes had become possible again in the streets of Kurtuluş.

6.7 *Baklahorani* in 2009-2014 and 2020: Attempts to revive the urban memory of the multicultural past of Kurtuluş

The long-gone *Baklahorani* in Kurtuluş had been attempted to be revived two times in 2000s. First attempt was successful but short-lived from 2009 to 2014, with an exception in 2013. The second and the most recent attempt was planned to occur on February 28 – March 1, the weekend before Clean Monday. However, it had to be canceled one day earlier due to the high number of casualties in the Turkish army fighting in Syria. The two attempts were more structured and institutionalized than *Baklahorani* in the early 20th century, which was a festivity from below in a relatively autonomous neighborhood. However, in Sabina Magliocco's words, "when social reality changes, those changes are, in turn, reflected in the rituals."[509] In parallel with that, the actors, participants and the performances have transformed. Therefore, it can be said that what has been experienced in the 2010s was a new form of *Baklahorani*.

Anthropologist Laurent Sebastien Fournier argues that "festivals have changed and taken on new functions and new meanings in our contemporary societies."[510] The festivals today fall into the category of leisure activity with a

[509] Magliocco, "Introduction: Ritual Creativity, Emotions and the Body," 4.
[510] Fournier, "Traditional Festivals: From European Ethnology to Festive Studies," 17.

strong connection to the entertainment market and territorial ideologies. "Revitalization, commodification and heritagization" policies created the most significant change in the festivals today.[511] Therefore, the analysis of this new form that *Baklahorani* has taken requires a different set of methodologies and tools that exceeds the limits of this thesis. In this last part, a short overview of the revival process will be given.

On March 2, 2009, two separate groups gathered in two different locations in Istanbul to celebrate *Apokries*. One group of *maskaras* reveled in a historic tavern in Beyoğlu and another, a smaller group in Madam Despina's in Kurtuluş.[512] One of my interviewees were among the organizers. In the interview he stated:

> The carnival had a heartbreaking story. If they didn't destroy it, Istanbul would have a real carnival as a touristic attraction… This is the only carnival in Muslim geography. However, Istanbul has lost its chance to achieve what Venice and Rio has achieved. What I had in mind was that if only we could revive this again. (Interviewee 11, Appendix B, 20)

Next year, in 2010, when Istanbul was designated as the European Capital of Culture, they had taken the benefit of the trend to emphasize the city's cultural heritage and multicultural past, as he stated. They took advantage of this atmosphere and planned a procession route from Pangaltı, walking down Bozkurt Street until the square adjacent to the church and ending with a costume party in Kurtuluş Sports Club. In 2011, the Ayios Dimitrios Church Foundation joined the organizations.

The procession on the street and the celebrations had attracted a respectable crowd. A representative from Ayios Dimitrios Church Association expressed that the atmosphere of the procession and the celebration in the Sports Club was so pleasant:

> We have seen many people enjoying the procession although they didn't join it. The shop owners, people looking down from the windows of their apartments… Everyone followed with smiling faces and enjoyed the music. It

[511] Ibid, 18.
[512] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century", 123.

was so joyous. The celebration in the sports club was also beautiful. Foods special to *Baklahorani* was prepared… It was a successful organization. There were a lot of people… Someone brought their *laterna*. 4 or 5 different bands played… People believed something old was being revived. (Interviewee 12, Appendix B, 21)

In 2012, the celebration occurred in Tatavla Restaurant in Kurtuluş Son Durak. Tickets were sold for the entrance (Figure 21).

Figure 21. Ticket for *Baklahorani* celebration in Tatavla Restaurant in Kurtuluş in 2012.[513]
Source: From the personal archive of an interviewee.

The organizer states that due to some inner conflicts, they could not organize a celebration in 2013. Despite the still-fresh memory of Gezi Parkı protests in May and June 2013, the procession in 2014 was more crowded than the previous years. He says that there was a tight police control despite the 1200 people on the streets. (Interviewee 11) Rigas writes that after 2014 the celebrations in Kurtuluş had stopped. Part of the reason was strongly related to the negative image of public protests and drinking, created mainly after the Gezi Parkı protests.[514]

Since *Baklahorani* celebrations in Kurtuluş involved a public gathering of an unconventional type and relatively excessive behavior, people refrained from any

[513] "Baklahorani, the Carnival of Tatavla"
[514] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century", 123.

confrontation with the police. Besides, as one of the interviewees suggests, one of the biggest concerns was the discomfort of local Rums in the neighborhood: "We can organize it and satisfy ourselves. However, there are many gangs there. If the next day, one of them attacks those old people, I will feel its burden." (Interviewee 11) On the other hand, the church association had other concerns:

> Such an organization is beyond the capabilities of our association. Because if you are to repeat it every year you need sponsors. Besides we bought the royalty of the name '*Baklahorani*'. We felt uncomfortable when other activities were done under the name '*Baklahorani*'. This concept doesn't belong to us as the church but we thought we would protect it better and that we are the correct address if someone wants to organize such an event. (Interviewee 12, Appendix B, 22)

Both interviewees stated that they had contacted Şişli Municipality, which Kurtuluş is located, after 2014 to sponsor the organizations. However, due to the local elections in 2014 and disagreement within the municipality, no one took up the project.

The participation in these revived celebrations was diverse but limited to a small portion of the larger society. In the celebrations between 2009-2014, the participants were mostly Rums, Greeks, expats, Turkish university students and young professionals aged between 24-45.[515] Groups on social media platforms, especially on Facebook, were the main enablers of this sort of participation by young people and those from outside the neighborhood.[516] Martin states that the reception among the residents of the neighborhood was low.[517] In parallel with that, many of the Rum interviewees that I spoke expressed that although they heard of the revival project in Kurtuluş, they did not have a chance to attend. One reason was they preferred to attend the private celebrations in Moda, or they already had plans to

[515] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century", 123.
[516] Martin, "Une réécriture urbaine. La mise en mémoire du quartier de Kurtuluş à Istanbul", 8.
[517] Ibid, 9.

attend the celebrations in Greece. (Interviewee 4) Another reason for not attending street celebrations in Kurtuluş was that the revival attempt was seen as being organized by "a couple of enthusiastic kids" and an impermanent attempt. (Interviewee 7) It seems that older Rums preferred to enjoy their established gatherings, with the people that they are already acquainted with.

The revival attempt of 2009-2014 also received criticisms on different aspects. One target of the criticisms was the inauthenticity of the celebrations. *Baklahorani* in Kurtuluş was initially a lower class, popular entertainment. The role of institutions, such as the church, used to be minimal.[518] This new version was seen as "clean-cut" and "middle class," as Rigas writes.[519] Therefore, it risks the folklorization of *Baklahorani.* On another end, it was criticized for having a "limited direct impact and involvement of non-Rum residents" of the neighborhood.[520] This was seen as risky concerning the sustainability of the celebrations. Since the revival had been the initiative of a few individuals, their withdrawal might result in its disappearance again.[521] Plus, the branding of Kurtuluş as a "funky neighborhood of tolerance and fun" may further bring pressure and discomfort to the residents.[522] Nevertheless, another organization on the urban level was not undertaken until the re-emergence of the idea at the end of 2019.

The municipality finally takes up the responsibility after the local elections in 2019, comes up with a project under the title "Tatavla Karnavalı." The initiative was taken by City Council, a voluntary unit composed of different components in the

[518] Martin, "Une réécriture urbaine. La mise en mémoire du quartier de Kurtuluş à Istanbul", 9.
[519] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century", 125.
[520] Ibid, 125.
[521] Martin, "Une réécriture urbaine. La mise en mémoire du quartier de Kurtuluş à Istanbul", 9.
[522] Theodorelis-Rigas, "Identity, Informal Institutions and Collective Action in Istanbul's Rum Community in the 21st Century", 126.

municipality area, and Bellek Şişli, a municipality initiative to preserve the collective memory of the municipality area. The aim was expressed by Kostas Eftimiyadis, a member of the organizing committee, on a newspaper interview: "It is important to connect Kurtuluş with the city's past. We aim to establish a link with the past and contribute to the present, to function as a bridge".[523] Compared to the previous attempts, in 2020 there was a more institutionalized organization structure with the involvement of Ayios Dimitrios Church Association, Feriköy Culture and Art Association and *Kurtuluş Environment Group* along with the members of Şişli City Council and *Bellek Şişli*. In terms of expenditures, the municipality provided support. Also, part of the budget was provided by the European Union Delegation to Turkey. (Interviewee 13)

The planned program was spread to 3 days. The activities of *Tatavla Karnavalı* involved guided tours of the neighborhood, a meze festival in the former Kurtuluş Greek School, where there was to be concerts and talks, a fair, and finally "*maskara* alayı" on Sunday. The procession was planned to start from Kurtuluş Last Stop, the main square where *Baklahorani* festivities in the past used to occur, and proceed until the open field in Bomonti, which belongs to the Georgian Catholic Association. The procession was planned as the climax of the three days festival, with people in masks, costumes, giant puppets and mummers from the Black Sea Region, accompanied by traditional music. The procession was to end with a dance performance of *Kasapiko*, and concerts by Turkish, Rum and Armenian bands.[524] However, the whole program had to be postponed one day before its start with the decision of the organizing committee and the municipality due to the high number of

[523] Eftimiyadis and Kurt Öncel, "Tatavla'da Yeniden Karnaval Zamanı," *Bianet,* February 27, 2020.
[524] "Tüm Program", *karnavaltatavla.org,* Retrieved from https://karnavaltatavla.org/tum-program/

casualties in the Turkish Army in Syria in an attack on the night of February 27, 2020. As the representative from the organizing committee stated:

> This was a necessary requirement of being a nation. It is important to show solidarity in hard times, as it is in good and happy days. As non-Muslims, we are always associated with those who stabbed Turkey from the back… Carnival could not be organized when there was such a huge pain. (Interviewee 13, Appendix B, 23)

The postponement decision was later on updated as a cancellation for 2020, and the program will be revised in 2021.[525]

The attempts between 2009-2014 and 2020 aimed to revive the urban memory of the city's multicultural past. These revival attempts involved a nostalgic approach, as Millas writes, the recent reminiscences about the Rum culture has forgotten the unpleasant memories of national conflicts and focused on happy memories involving taverns.[526] In parallel with that, the efforts to revive *Apokries* were nostalgic reminiscence of the past as tolerant and pleasant realm. What these efforts lacked were a popular support from the Rum citizens in the neighborhood and the city. This shows that, the rupture that *Baklahorani* experienced was more profound than a short-lived revival can overcome. The Rum community replaced the festivities with safer and more isolated methods. As a result, the revival of *Baklahorani* in the urban space is a modern and nostalgic representation of the past.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has brought the transformation of *Apokries*, and *Baklahorani* festivities has taken until this day. This chapter aimed to give voice to the real agents of this

[525] Many carnival festivities around the World, including in Greek cities and Venice, were cancelled due to the covid-19 epidemic.
[526] Millas, *Geçmişten Bugüne Yunanlılar,* 227.

transformation. The memory and emotions behind this transformation shed light on the experience of Rums in Istanbul. As a result of the trauma of pogroms and migrations, the Rum identity has shrunk into performances in private and isolated spaces. However, the mnemonic devices of rituals and spaces associated with the community's identity have assured the continuity of members' connection with their past and identity. On the other hand, the urban revival occurs in a different realm, where this tradition and ritual are aimed to be re-enacted in a more institutionalized, structured and nostalgic way.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The quest for exploring the popular celebrations of carnival in Istanbul has been an exciting and challenging experience. Not only the concept of carnival, through which I have insistently aimed to look at the past, has been a difficult one, but also methodologically, it has required elaborative research in historical narratives. The material I could collect through the time of my MA program was very diverse. It provided a careful approach to put them all into a meaningful narrative. As a result, this thesis put together the existing and dispersed sources into a more organized and structured narrative. Nevertheless, it has also provided a unique perspective into the experiences, traumas and emotions in everyday life in Istanbul.

At first, carnival as a genre seems to be a fun concept to work with, but it is a very illusionary category. It is time out of time and a break from everyday life in limited time and space. However, it is not a staged performance of fictional scenarios. On the contrary, it gets its materials and atmosphere from the real issues, people and narratives in everyday life. Besides, it also feeds into everyday life with its cathartic function. In that sense, everyday life and carnivalesque are very intertwined. What Carnivalesque provides is a distinct medium for expression, that normalizes the unaccepted and unconventional. Therefore, carnivalesque embodies real life but performs it in its unique forms of disguise and play. Looking at the past through carnival celebrations initially required a clear understanding of the carnival's structure, meaning and function for the people who enjoyed it.

Theoretically speaking, carnival structure is best understood by looking at how the broader category of festivals works. Carnival entails different sorts of rituals and dynamics, which are common in all types of festive occasions. Valorization of time

and space is imperative for a festive structure. In this clear temporal and spatial zone, the festive rituals of reversal, exchange, consumption, and display occur. The specific behavior and atmosphere that is defined as carnivalesque, on the other hand, is a useful concept to understand the cosmology in this limited time and space. The carnivalesque cosmology allows what has been suppressed. The grotesque behavior of laughing, mockery and sexuality emerges as the unique means of expression in the context of carnivals. Therefore, theoretically, I interpret carnival as the particular festive setting that permits the type of behavior that would not be normally acceptable in everyday life to be performed in a limited time and space through different performances. However, in the modern world, the carnival is a folk ritual closely associated with Christian liturgy. It is argued that carnivals have pagan origins descending back from Ancient Greece and Rome. However, the 19th and the 20th-century phenomenon of the carnival is highly governed along the lines of Christian churches. Therefore, approaching carnival as a liturgical genre has also been useful for understanding what it has entailed for the people. Besides, the carnival tradition in Istanbul is highly associated with the Christian population and especially the Greek-Orthodox Rums. Understanding the historical and unique aspects of Greek-Orthodox *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* of Tatavla is essential to contextualize the carnivalesque cosmology better. In that sense, *Apokries* is seen as the last opportunity for fun and excess before the long abstinence period. The three weeks long festive atmosphere is finalized with Clean Monday fair, which used to be called as *Baklahorani* in Tatavla. The climax of the whole period is governed through the rituals around food and disguised plays. As a ritual, *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* in Istanbul were not unchanging and standardized celebrations, but they were closely related to the transformation happening in the

society. In other words, to go beyond the nostalgic reminiscences and interpret *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* for their own sake, they need to be put in their historical context in which they operated.

What I aimed in this thesis was to explore *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* from the narratives of the people who experienced it. They are celebrations from below, therefore writing their history required voices from below. The existing scholarly and non-academic literature on the study of carnival celebrations in Istanbul is limited. The scholarly works utilize the example of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* to illustrate the cosmopolitan life in Istanbul. On the other hand, the recent popular interest in the history of Kurtuluş results in a nostalgic reminiscence of *Baklahorani* as the lost and joyful tradition of the city's good old days. Looking at the contemporary sources was critical for distancing from nostalgia and the discourse on cosmopolitanism, and approach the celebrations from within.

In terms of sources, this thesis has utilized the contemporary newspapers, Ottoman state documents, memoirs and also oral history interviews conducted by me. The information on the celebrations was very dispersed. Therefore, this study has required a survey of a wide range of sources. Each type of document provided a different set of information in their unique languages. A combination of this information into a meaningful narrative required a careful approach. Ottoman state archives revealed the official perception and cautions regarding the celebrations. Newspapers reflected the public opinion as well as documented the factual details of the festive occasions. Memoirs, on the other hand, written mostly by Rums, presented the real experience from within. Together with these, oral history functioned both as a methodology and as a source. I utilized oral history, especially to hear Rums' voice, who were, although historically, real subjects of the topic under

study. A study without their words, emotions and perceptions about *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* would be partial. Therefore, the interviews did not only provide the undocumented aspects of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani,* but also helped to challenge the nostalgic reminiscences built around the popular narrative of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* in Istanbul. However, methodologically speaking, this research could have been taken further. This will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

In light of these sources, I looked at the period between the mid 19th century until today. Although the origin of the celebrations in Istanbul is unknown, the reason for starting from the mid 19th century is that it is the earliest date that can be traced in the written documents. On top of that, exploring the celebrations would be partial without mentioning the recent revival attempts in the 2010s and 2020. Therefore, in terms of structure, I preferred to divide the main sections of the chapters chronologically. I aimed to illustrate the change in experience and perspective through time by looking at the celebrations in the late Ottoman era, early Republican era and the period after the 1950s.

The Ottoman period's analysis was divided into two chapters that focused on the celebrations on the street level and in private spheres. The two levels had similarities and differences. The similarities were based on the interactions between the ordinary people and the elite based on cultural performances and material culture. On the streets level, I attempted to contextualize the material culture and the cultural performances of carnivalesque. I approached the narratives in the newspapers and memoirs not only as colorful and joyful representations of the past. However, instead, I interpreted them as responses and reflections of the people to the world around them.

The use of the material culture and the mockery of the issues in the cultural performances of *maskara*s revealed how the socio-political and technological developments affected the everyday lives of the ordinary people in Istanbul. The mockery of *porter* and *fire brigade* and the ferry float, were not something coincidental or merely entertaining. They embodied the collective response and emotions towards the rising migration and working class and the new habits brought by the introduction of new means of transportation. In that sense, exploration of the carnivalesque cosmology contributed to the existing literature by revealing the social relations, tensions and confrontations on the street level.

On top of that, the state's perception revealed that the carnival was not a peaceful occasion in Istanbul. The state maintained close surveillance of the celebrations and *maskara*s against any threat to the public order and security. Therefore, it can be said that the state was relatively aware that *Apokries* was a period that allowed certain liberty for public expression, which would involve discontent with the authorities. Not only that, but also, the state defined the borders of *Apokries* as belonging to a Christian realm. Although not systematically, Muslim's presence and open participation in celebrations were something that the state did not appreciate. Although control of the public space had become a prominent interest of the state in the late Ottoman era, the carnival case shows how state operated in the public sphere. Besides, the ambiguities created by the carnival provided relatively free and liberal realms for playing and experimenting with the norms of the state and the society on the street level.

The newspapers and the state documents from the late Ottoman era have also revealed that celebrations during the carnival period were not limited to the streets of Tatavla, Pera and Galata. The Ottoman era had a prominent tradition of carnival balls

in the form of fundraising and costume ball events. The primary purpose of these balls, especially foreign ambassadors and benevolent societies, was the display of power and wealth through the festive occasion of the carnival period. Although carnivalesque was not the central aspect of these private balls, they are equally important to trace the continuities and similarities into the Republican era.

The fifth chapter on the first decades of the Republican era illustrated how the socio-political transformation was reflected on the experience and perception of *Apokries.* In the early years, the carnival season's spirit continued with a relatively positive image. The new regime's institutions had appropriated the season's spirit for organizing balls to raise money for the needy and destitute of the new nation. Besides, there were specific years in which carnival and Ramadan Feast coincided and reinforced the festive spirit in the city. However, starting from the second half of the 1930s and intensifying with the World War II period, public perception has changed negatively. *Apokries* and *maskara*s were represented as being associated with foreignness, which disturbed the society's national and religious sentiments. Not only that, but also *maskara*s were portrayed as engaging in criminal activities and created an insecure atmosphere during the celebrations. These implications were highly related to the confrontations and tensions in the society, which went parallel with the traumas that discriminatory measures of the state created. The 1930s was a unique period to understand how, after the 1950s, *Apokries* has transformed in form and function. The implications of the early Republican memory was well reflected in the collective memory of Rums.

In light of the oral history interviews with Rums, I explored how this collective memory of the past has been reflected in the community's experience of *Apokries* in the late 20th century. Contrary to the prevalent view that *Apokries* was

banned and lost in the early 1940s, the interviews have shown that it has only disappeared in the public space. As a result of traumas and repression in the public sphere, it shrank into the communal spheres of Rums in Istanbul. As an implication of this, *Apokries* transformed from an urban phenomenon into a solely Greek-Orthodox ritual. This has also resulted in a change in its form and function. The interviewees have revealed that celebrating *Apokries* became a way to sustain their collective identity and memory through re-enacting the past in rituals concerning dressing up and food. Recently, *Baklahorani*, a popular celebration in Kurtuluş, attempted to be revived in the urban sphere between 2009-2014 and 2020. However, these attempts remained very limited to individual initiatives and small circles. These short-lived attempts have shown that public gatherings of these sorts are still not independent from Turkey's socio-political situation, which continues to profoundly affect and shape everyday life, relations, and encounters in the public space. This does not only happen through *Apokries* and *Baklahorani,* but memory and identity politics in Turkey operate in various realms and ways.

Overall, this thesis attempted to look at the past from the perspective of ordinary people, not only through the authorities and elite's eyes. *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* in Istanbul, as a folk ritual, used to be a celebration from below and shaped by folk cosmology. Trying to hear the voices and understand the experiences of the ordinary people in *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* also shed light on the emotions, traumas and views of the ordinary people. However, methodologically this thesis could be taken further by incorporating a more extensive set of sources.

Given the limits of an MA program, this thesis had several methodological constraints. Although I have already looked at a diverse range of sources, there are

other ways to enlarge the scope of the research. First of all, timewise, I only checked the three weeks period involving *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* in contemporary newspapers. However, the news and repercussions of the celebrations are not necessarily limited to the period of 3 weeks in which they took place. Surveying a couple of weeks before and after these three weeks might provide new materials. The news from the period before the carnival might provide more information about the preparations and actors involved in private celebrations. Besides, they may also reveal the concerns and precautionary measures based on the experience from the previous years.

On the other hand, the festivities' repercussions might well continue in the weeks following the carnival. In that sense, the news after the carnival period might reveal people's perception of that year's festivities as well as the complaints and suandabout the celebrations. Readers' letters, which could only be published weeks after they were sent, could be a valuable source in also accessing the voice of the ordinary people. Therefore, a further study should look at a larger period for a more comprehensive grasp of the season's spirit regarding the newspaper survey.

The second issue regarding the newspapers was that they were not representative of the Ottoman society at large. I have mainly utilized newspapers published in Ottoman Turkish, French, English and Greek. However, regarding the Greek newspapers published in Istanbul, the number of Greek newspapers surveyed could be increased. Besides, such a survey could be extended to the whole newspaper and not left limited to only the ads section. In Istanbul, the newspaper archives are dispersed in different institutions. Not only the public and state libraries but also the archive of the Ecumenic Patriarchate and the private archives of the newspapers that are still published such as *IHO* (*ΗΧΩ*) and *Apoyevmatini* should be

surveyed. Surveying the Greek newspapers is critical in the sense that it will provide a unique perspective to see how the Rum population responded to the repressions and traumas in the public sphere in the realm of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani.*

This thesis claims to give voice to the real agents of the celebrations and society in general. However, the diversity of voices is limited. Although it is taken as a Rum tradition, it is not only Rums who get effected or shape the celebrations. The non-Muslim population could have been included more. In terms of newspapers, Armenian and Jewish newspapers could also be checked to see how different communities celebrated in their communal circles and how they responded to the public festivities. Surveying the newspapers in Armenian and Judeo-Spanish, which were published in Istanbul, might provide a unique perspective to the communal relations and tension in everyday life as encapsulated in carnivalesque festivities.

Diversity and representation of different communal groups were limited in memoirs too. This thesis has surveyed the memoirs mainly by Rums, which are translated into English or Turkish. However, Armenians, Jews, Turks, Kurds and Levantines are an integral part of the everyday life, culture and collective memory in Kurtuluş and Istanbul, in general. Even though the memoirs might not provide narratives directly from *Apokries* or *Baklahorani*, they may still serve as sources to understand the emotions, tensions and main issues of the period as perceived by the authors. Incorporating the voices of Turks, Kurds, Armenians, Jews and Armenians might provide a larger and more comprehensive picture of the period under study. Therefore, instead of limiting carnival to the memory of one confessional community, it can be taken as part of the urban memory shaped by all actors in society.

Lastly, oral history interviews conducted for this thesis were not fully representative of the Rum society at large. Firstly, Rum's collective memory is not limited to Istanbul, but mainly located in Greece. Interviewing Rums in Istanbul remains only partial to comprehend this collective memory. *Apokries* and *Baklahorani's collective memory* has migrated mainly to Athens, and it continues to be practiced there. Therefore, the story of celebrations in Istanbul is highly connected with Athens. Interviews conducted with people in Athens could not only provide more about Istanbul but also how the ritual has migrated to Greece and operated there. Not only conducting new interviews but also utilizing the oral history archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies in Athens could provide a valuable source to compare the practices and rituals in Istanbul with those in Asia Minor. In that sense, this thesis was mainly limited to the memory in and of Istanbul.

Therefore, this thesis has been a preliminary attempt to understand *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* celebrations in Istanbul. This study could further be extended in various ways, together with the possible methodological improvements mentioned above. One suggestion is adopting a comparative approach. *Apokries* and *Baklahorani* in Istanbul can further be studied in relation to the larger Greek-Orthodox world. *Apokries* is not only a phenomenon belonging to Istanbul, but also the Greek-Orthodox in Asia Minor, Greece, Islands and Balkans. Looking at the larger Greek-Orthodox and post-Ottoman territory might contribute well into understanding the local differences in practices and rituals, and socio-political relations and developments in the society.

On top of that, further research may situate the case of Istanbul in the broader context of Mediterranean carnivals and similar rituals. It may be useful to look at the

other examples of marginalized and disappeared popular celebrations in Southern Europe, North Africa and the Levant. This would reveal also reveal how migration, memory politics and rituals operate in relation to different cultures and geographies.

Lastly, it should be kept in mind that carnivalesque is not only limited to the period of *Apokries* and *Baklahorani*. Carnivalesque cosmology has been an integral part of many folk rituals and practices in the broader culture of Asia Minor and Thrace. They are not only Christian or Muslim rituals but a product of a religious syncretism on a folkloric level. Therefore, further research may include the larger carnivalesque practices beyond confessional borders as a tool through which folk culture and everyday life can be understood. Therefore, this thesis is an early attempt for a more extensive analysis of the history of popular celebrations and socio-political developments in the larger Greek and Mediterranean world.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Interviewee 1: Male, 69, retired business man. Interviewed on 05.04.2019, at his office.

Interviewee 2: Male, 81, journalist. Interviewed on 06.04.2019, in his house.

Interviewee 3: Male, 73, retired teacher. Interviewed on 09.04.2019, at his office.

Interviewee 4: Female, 65, retired graphic designer & singer. Interviewed on 19.03.2019, in a café.

Interviewee 5: Female, 48, teacher. Interviewed on 16.04.2019, at her office.

Interviewee 6: Male, 84, retired teacher. Interviewed on 16.04.2019, at his office.

Interviewee 7: Female, 48, writer. Interviewed on 17.05.2018, in a café.

Interviewee 8: Female, 67, professor. Interviewed on 17.03.2019, at her office.

Interviewee 9: Male, 69, architect. Interviewed on 22.11.2019, in a café.

Interviewee 10: Male, 73, professor. Interviewed on 14.03.2019, at his office.

Interviewee 11: Male, 59, press consultant. Interviewed on 19.12.2017, at his office.

Interviewee 12: Male, 46, teacher. Interviewed on 17.12.2017, at his office.

Interviewee 13: Male, 50, physics engineer & translator. Interviewed on 14.04.2020, on the phone.

Interviewee 14: Female, 73, writer. Interviewed on 16.12.2019, in a café.

APPENDIX B

ORIGINAL QUOTATIONS

1. Ablak yüzlüsü, patlak gözlüsü, kaval burunlusu, faraş ağızlısı; bıyıksızı, bıyıklısı, sakallısı; zenci yüzü gibi kapkara. Habeşinki gibi boz, Çinlininki gibi sapsarı. Bunların pamuk ipliğinden, yahut ince telden örmeleri, kuş, keçi, inek suratlıları… Lastik bağ ile surata takılacak iğreti bıyıklar, sakallar, favuriler." Sermet Muhtar Alus, "Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki: Eski İstanbul'da Apukurya ve *Maskara*lar," *Son Posta,* 1943-1945. Newspaper cutting from Taha Toros Archive, Dossier No: 312. *İstanbul Şehir University Online Archive*.

2. Abanoz'un kapılarında gördüğümüz kızlar tipinde, hatta daha da arsızlarından bir grup atlara binmiş amazonları taklit ediyorlardı. Bacakları, yırtık pantolonlarından görünüyordu (erkekler dışında pantolon giymek hayal edilemezdi). Ellerindeki havuç ve hıyarlarla edepsiz hareketler yapıyorlar ya da bunları erkekmiş gibi pantolonların ön kısımlarından gösteriyorlardı. Birlikte yürüyen pezevenklerde onlara yardımcı oluyordu. Haris Spataris, *Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz,* 40.

3. Bereket versin, onların başından aşağı dökmek için o ufacık ama pek ufacık kâğıt parçalarından yapılmış mütelevvin konfeti icat olunmuş. Bakınız, taze çehresini bir siyah kadife parçası arkasına gizleyip onun ufacık iki deliğinden fırlayan enzar-ı neşve-darıyla her yanından geçenin kalbini tatlı tatlı gıcıklayan şu güzel kadının mücella omuzlarından aşağı bir avuç o baran-ı

rengareng-i yabisten dökmek, o mütelevvin parçaların saçlar içinde, korse arasında, esvabın kıvrımlarında mevcelendiği kendinin de üzerine gelen bu hücum-ı sevda-perveraneden işvebazane bir tavır ile kaçtığını seyretmek hoşa gitmez mi? Ya o serpantinler, bir taraftan bir tarafa fırlatılıp atılan, çıktığı elden gittiği yere kadar rengin, rakik bir hat resmeden o ince kâğıtlar rakkaseleri sağdan soldan ihata ettikçe ne kadar zarif bir levha teşkil eyler. Ahmed İhsan, "İstabul Postası," *Servet-i Fünun,* March 10, 1898.

4. A notre avis, C'est un tort et si l'on voulait viser aux economies, ce qui est de rigueur dans des cas pareils. Il y a beaucoup de choses qui etaient superflues. Nous n'en citerons qu'une: Les miroirs aves les candelabres a trois bougies places dans les deux premiers rangs des loges. "Les Sociétés-Unies Arméniennes," *Levant Herald*, March 16, 1891.

5. Akarca Yokuşu'ndan ve Kurtuluş Caddesi'nden binlerce insan Tatavla'ya aktı. Pangaltı Katolik Mezarlığı'ndan Kurtuluş Ayios Dimitrios Kilisesi'ne kadar yol kalabalıktan geçilmiyordu. Eğlencenin merkezi her zamanki gibi Ararat gazinosu civarıydı. Kilisenin önündeki meydan, oynanan kasap havaları ile panayır yerine dönerken, kilisenin duvarına dayanarak hatıra fotoğrafı çektirecek müşteri bekleyen seyyar fotoğrafçılar da iyi iş yaptılar. *Apoyevmatini*, March 8, 1938. Quoted from Orhan Türker, *Osmanlı İstanbul'undan Bir Köşe Tatavla*, 69.

6. Taksim'den Kurtuluş tramvayına bineceğim amama, binebilirsen bin… Harbi umumideki uzak yolcu trenlerine benziyordu. Bir farkla, ki yalnız arabaların üstleri boştu. Daha fazla yorgunluğu Kurtuluş panayırına bırakan bazı

maskaralar da tramvay bekliyorlardı. Tevfik Necati, “Kurtuluş’ta Bir Alem,” *Milliyet*, February 28, 1933.

7. Tatavla’ya panayırın önüne geldiğimiz zaman yolumuzun üstüne bir süvari çıktı. Bir genç kadın altındaki merkebi ha bire kamçılıyor. Eşek sahici değil… Eşek vücuduna benziyen garip bir mayonun içine bir adam girmiş. Emekleye emekleye yürüyor. Bir aralık eşek müteellimane bir eda ile başını kaldırdı: Ah karıcığım… İn artık da biraz ben yürüyeyim. Semer sırtımı pek acıttı. Süvari buna fena halde kızdı: Ama ne münasebetsiz adamsın. Ne güzel tatlı tatlı eğleniyoruz işte. Yürü bakalım. Dehh.. “Tatavla *Panayır*ı,” *Son,* March 15, 1932.

8. Benim dedemin Aya Dimitri’nin altında, evi varmış, orada oturuyorlarmış. Yangın dediler. Yangın bize doğru geliyor demişler. Apar topar, ne taşıyabiliyorlarsa başka bir mahalledeki bir tanıdıklarının evine götürmüşler. O evde yanmış daha sonra o tarafa da sıçramış. Orası da yanmış, oradan hiçbir şey kurtaramamışlar. Sonra Kurtuluş Caddesi üzerinde bir daire kiralanmış ve her şey sıfırdan alınmış. Benim dedemin evinde yangından önce kalan herhangi bir mobilya, bir aile yadigarı vesairesi yoktu. (Interviewee 1)

9. Ancak doğru dürüst nefes alamadan yeni belâ geldi de çattı: Varlık Vergisi! Tahakkuklar ardı ardına kesilmeye başlandı. Bu aslında başlı başına incelenmesi gereken bir konu. Bu yazıyla ilgisiyse, 1939 yılından beri yatalak olan ve çalışamayan babama da vergi tarh edilmesi. O şartlar altında astronomik olan bu vergi ödenemedi. Sonuçta haciz memurları gelip her şeyi

alıp götürdüler; karyolayı bile! Üstünde yatmakta olan babamı şilteyle yere indirdikten sonra. Zaman o zaman, şartlar savaş şartları; insaf denen mevhum o dönemde, dünyada bulunmaz metaaydı... Bütün bunlardan sonra aile artık Tarlabaşı'daki dairede kalamadı, Çengelköy'deki ana evine taşındı. (Interviewee 2)

10. Annem babama dedi ki gel bak dedi geçiyorlar, atlarla geçiyorlar. Sefa meydanında oturuyorduk. Ben de gittim. Çocuğum, küçücüğüm. Baktım hakikaten kadınlar at üstünde. Bazısı böyle tuhaf şeyler giymiş. Bazısı yarı çıplak böyle. Gidiyorlardı meydana. Orada ilk tanımıştım Baklahorani'yi. Fakat o sene Tatavla'daki, Kurtuluş, Tatavla'daki Baklahorani kutlandığı son yıldı. Çünkü 1955 yılında 6-7 Eylül'den sonra bir daha kutlanmadı. (Interviewee 3)

11. İki gün sonra anneannemin Balat'taki evine gittiğimizde ev dört duvar kalmıştı. Anneannem karşıdaki komşusu Zehra Hanım'a gitmişti. Evini yıktıkları zaman komşusu Zehra bayrağı tutuyor, anneannem de alkışlıyormuş ki belli olmasın Rum olduğu. Kendi evinin yıkılışını alkışlayarak izlemiş yani.
Andon Parizyanos, Taki Francis, "Anneannem Evinin Yıkılışını Alkışlayarak İzledi," *Bianet,* September 4, 2015.

12. Mübadeleler oluyor. 6-7 Eylül, 55'te. Kıbrıs olayları oluyor. Vatandaşlıktan çıkarma. Darbe üstüne darbe. Gide gide gide böyle kalıyoruz. Şu anda 2000-2500 kişi kadar İstanbul'da. Bunların çoğu, yarısından çoğu da ihtiyar. İş

böyle olunca da yani silin. Yok gibi bir şey. Ama tabi ki Rumların İstanbul'a kattığı adet, gelenekler var. Rum mutfağı mesela. (Interviewee 7)

13. Bir grup diyelim ki, 4 kişilik bir grup, maskeli falan, birinin evine giriyorlar. Orada birbirine laf atıyorlar, ediyorlar falan. Ama bir tanesi evin sahibesine fazla yakınlık gösteriyor diyelim. Onu rahatsız edecek biçimde şey ediyor. Diğer davetlilerden, hoş davetsiz misafirlerden biri, ayağa fırlıyor. Herkes maskesini çıkarsın diyor. Biz 10 kişi geldik. Burada 11 kişi var. Yabancı biri karıştı aramıza. Herkes maskesini indiriyor. Kadının kendi kocası. Dalga olsun, gırgır olsun diye o da gitmiş hemen bir maske giymiş. O da kendi karısını taciz ediyor diyelim. Ama kendi karısını taciz etmekten çok davetsiz olarak eve gelenlere bir şaka yapıyor. (Interviewee 1)

14. Benim hatırladığım annemin anlattıkları. Annem 1923 Osmanbey doğumlu. Samanyolu'nda oturuyorlardı. Kurtuluş'a yakındılar ama Rum cemiyeti olarak On iki havari cemiyetindeyiler. Yani Feriköy'ündeydiler. Küçükken 1930'lara kadar Baklahorani'ye gidiyordu. En iyi hatırladığım şey, bir defa kaybolmuştu. O kadar kalabalık vardı ki, kayboldu. Ağlamaya başladı. Bir bey zabıtaya götürdü. Niye ağlıyorsun kızım dedi. Ben annemi kaybettim, babamı kaybettim falan. Kimin kızısın diye sordu. Bakkal Anastas'ın kızıyım. Nerede? OSmanbey'de dükkan vardı. Böylece bulundu. Onu anlatırdı. (Interviewee 9)

15. Çünkü biz Kadıköy'deydik. Yani biz Rum toplumu içinde yaşamış insanlar değildik. Daha genel yaşadık. Ermeniler Türkler falan daha kozmopolit bir yaşamımız oldu. Böyle çok klasik Rum değildik. Bir de o dönemlerde

Kadıköy'de yaşayınca, Kadıköy gerçekten bir köy gibiydi. Nasıl gideceksin? Gittin diyelim, dönüş yok. Vapur yok, arabalı vapur yok. Kalman lazım öteki tarafta. (Interviewee 8)

16. Yani çoğu arkadaşın annesinin babasının yapıtğı şeylerdi. Bizim evimizde hiç öyle bir tertip yoktu. Halam mesela hiç görmemiş böyle bir şeyi. Yapmamışlar. Daha reserved insanlardı. Babam çok çekingen bir insandı. Korkunç çekingen bir insandı. (Interviewee 8)

17. Annemim sırf karnaval kıyafetleri olan bir dergisi vardı. Burda. Ben de işte o zaman 6-7 yaşlarındaydım. O benim sanki fotoromanım gibiydi. Ona bakıp böyle, ona bakıp böyle onu seyretmek çok hoşuma giderdi… Bir tane çilek vardı o çok hoşuma giderdi. Ufak bir kız, kızın bütün kıyafetleri çilek. Hala gözümün önünde yani o. Çok şeker böyle bir şeydi, özenirdim işte öyle. (Interviewee 4)

18. Hazırlık önemli. The journey is important. Zaten Kavafis'in bir şiiri var. En bayıldığım şiiri. Kitabıma da aldım onu. Önemli olan yolculuktur, erect noktası değildir. Erect noktasına hiç varmasan da önemli değil, yolda geçirdiğin deneyimlerdir insanları olgunlaştıran, güzelleştiren. Erect önemli değil. Erect senin beklentilerini karşılayamayabilir. Karşılamasa bile sen yolda o kadar çok şey öğrendin ki o senin için kazançtır, diyor. (Interviewee 8)

19. Bir sefer şey olmuştum ben. Genelev maması. Bir başka kız da öyle. Kadıköy'den partinin olacağı eve gideceğiz. Tanıdık bir taksi şoförü bulduk.

Taksiyle gidiyoruz ama birkaç evi dolaşalım dedik Kadıköy'de. Bir evde fark ettiler dediler ki kimlik var mı yanında? Aaa yok dedik. Bir de bu halde kimliksiz nasıl olur. Şimdi annemi aradık. Anne sokağa çık, biz taksiyle geçeceğiz sen kimliğimi aşağı indir. Annem, evden çıkmış olduğum halde arabanın içinde görünce, ne zamanlara kaldık, insanlar nasıl dolaşıyor demiş. (Interviewee 8)

20. Hicranlı bir hikayesi var aslında… İstanbul'un belki şimdi, bir turizm çekim noktası olan ciddi bir karnaval vardı... Müslüman coğrafyadaki tek karnaval. Ve Istanbul, hani Venedik'in ve Rio'nun elde ettiği başarıyı yakalama şansını da kaybetmiş oluyor o zaman. Neyse, şeyde, hani bunu da bir şekilde yakalayabilir miyiz, başlayabilir miyiz falan gibi bir düşünce de var kafamda. (Interviewee 11)

21. Yürüyüş esnasında bizim çok hoşumuza giden yürüyüşe katılmayan ama bu yürüyüşten çok keyif alan insanları gördük. Esnaf olsun. Dairesinde, apartmanında oturan insanlar olsun. Hepsi güler yüzle takip ettiler. Müziklere eşlik ettiler. Çok çok keyifliydi. Eğlence çok güzeldi. Baklahorani'ye uygun yemekler hazırlandı.... Çok fazla insan geldi... Laternasını getirenler oldu… 4-5 tane farklı grup müzik yaptılar ve çok büyük keyif aldılar... Eski bir şeyi tekrar canlandırdığına inandı insanlar. (Interviewee 12)

22. Organizasyon anlamında da bazı şeyler bizi aşıyor kurum olarak. Her sene yapılmasını istiyorsanız ciddi anlamda sponsorların da bulunması gerekiyor. … Çünkü dediğim gibi Baklahorani, Tatavla Karnavalı'nın isim hakkını biz aldık. Çünkü farklı eğlenceler Baklahorani adı altında yapılmaya

başlandığında bizi rahatsız etti. Çünkü Baklahorani zaten bize ait olan bir kavram değil. Ama bu kavramı biz daha iyi koruyabileceğimizi düşündük veya bu kavramla ilgili organizasyon yapma anlamında bizim daha doğru bir adres olduğumuzu düşündük. (Interviewee 12)

23. Millet olmanın gerekliliği bu. Sağlıkta, mutlulukta olduğu gibi zor günde de bir ve beraber olmak. Bizler gayrimüslimler olarak biz hep Türkiye'yi sırtından hançerleyenler olarak geçiyoruz. Bu kadar genel bir acı varken, bir karnaval yapılamazdı. (Interviewee 13)

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