THE FUNCTIONS OF STORYTELLING PRACTICES: CURRENT STORYTELLING NIGHTS IN ISTANBUL

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ABSTRACT

THE FUNCTIONS OF STORYTELLING PRACTICES: CURRENT STORYTELLING NIGHTS IN ISTANBUL

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The article studies current storytelling practices in Istanbul consisting of continuities and the change of the storytelling practices and thereby reflect a hybrid structure. This hybrid structure of the storytelling performances is evaluated under the discussion of context and text. In this discussion, the transmission of storytelling towards the market and consumption separates the text from its context. The paper defines and locates the current storytelling nights among these discussions. Focusing on the current storytelling nights happen periodically, the study highlights the functions and motivations of the performances. These needs change the motivations of the storytelling practice. Importantly, these needs that storytellers promise to fulfill for their audiences, becomes the main motivation of the storytelling practices. In addition to highlighting, the reasons behind these current functions and the motivations is analyzed from the audience's perspective.

Keywords: Current Storytelling Practices, Storytelling Nights, The Functions of the Storytelling

ÖZ

Masal Anlatıcılığının Toplumdaki İşlevleri: İstanbul Masal Geceleri

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Bu tez, İstanbul'daki güncel masal anlatım pratiklerinin geçmişten gelen ve günümüze uyarlanan özellikleriyle yeni yaratılan özellerinin birleşiminden oluşan bir pratiği anlatmaktadır. Masal anlatım performanslarının bu karma yapısı bağlam ve metin tartışması kapsamında değerlendirilir. Bu tartışmada, masal anlatımının piyasa ve tüketim ile olan ilişkisi, metni bağlamından ayırır. Bu araştırma, bu tartışmaların içinde güncel masal gecelerini yeniden tanımlar ve konumlandırır. Periyodik olarak gerçekleştirilen güncel masal anlatım gecelerine odaklanarak, bu performansların toplumdaki işlevlerini ve motivasyonları ve de izleyicilerin ihtiyaçları analiz edilmiştir. Bu ihtiyaçlar hikaye anlatım pratiğinin motivasyonlarını da değiştirmiştir. Önemlisi, masal anlatıcılarının izleyicileri için yerine getirmeyi vaat ettikleri bu ihtiyaçlar masal anlatıcılığının sonucu olmaktan çıkıp bu pratiğin ana motivasyonu haline gelir. Bu mevcut işlevlerin ve motivasyonların arkasındaki sebepler seyirci perspektifinden analiz edilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Masal Anlatıcılığı, Masal Geceleri, Masal Anlatıcılığının İşlevleri

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The storytelling practice is a rooted endeavor deriving connections from the past cultures to the present. In this sense, current storytelling practices in Istanbul give the audience a way to relate themselves with it. As it was seen in the oral traditions, storytelling proposes some attention-grabbing motives for the audience. The point that I analyze throughout this thesis is that**,** there might be a relational tie between current storytelling and the audiences. I infer that the way audience relate themselves to the storytelling intermingles with the motivations of the storytelling and storytellers. Even though these motivations are independent of the storytelling practices, storytelling serves these as its function within itself.

*Motivation*s and *function*s are the common keywords throughout this thesis. It is important to show how they are used and differentiated in relation to eachother. *Motivation* is defined as the act of providing motive that causes someone to act (Shanks, 2012, p. 24). I use motivation to represent the reasons that occur prior to the storytelling practice. It questions the reasons behind the audience's attendance to the storytelling practices and storyteller's desire to pursue this tradition. *Function* on the other hand, is used as the purpose of the action and the things that it gives to the audience both socially and morally. Functions could be the outcomes of the storytelling, which reveal after the narrative tradition is performed. Consequently, it is possible to state that the *motivation* is based on before the tradition whereas *function* takes in effect afterwards.

I support the idea that as Barnard (2004) claims it is problematic to see the social institution could purpose only one function in the imputed structure. If we classify storytelling as social institution in which people share their common interests, storytelling would have various motivations depending on the individual needs. This

way of analysis, focuses on the individual action and need which they have their own freedom of choice in order to understand significance of the storytelling nights in Istanbul as well as the rise in this phenomenon. It helps develop an understanding of the motivations and the functions of these nights, as well as evaluates the demand of storytelling nights among the society.

Turkish and Ottoman history have a fruitful past in the oral traditions. Before starting the discussion on the oral traditions and oral performance, it is needed to classify what those are. Some of the oral performances could be exemplified as *ashik/ozan*, *hikaye* tellers, storytellers, *meddahs* and so on. In the following chapters, it is possible to see that there are comparisons of the current storytelling and the traditional oral performances. Storytelling as a term is used spesifically for the performance in which folktales and fairy tales are being told. Storytelling differs from other oral performances since it is fictional whereas *hikaye* tellers, *meddah* and *ashik* tell some real cases in their stories. In the past, the storytelling was practiced both among acquaintances within the smaller communities or people who got acquainted with the help of regular storytelling practices however, now it is transforming into an artistic performance which welcomes the "audiences" into the stage with theatrical elements such as decoration, music, and bodily expressions.

Within the changes of the tradition through time, it brought some questions about the core of the storytelling. It is also questionable that how we can evaluate the current value of the storytelling in the market in compared to the past. The changes and the continuity were always on the discussion for cultural products and traditions. To be able to use "storytelling" for these nights, it is important to look at how it locates itself around traditional storytelling practices.

By research on the performance of the storytelling, I intend to fill the gap in the academia by showing how current storytelling nights demonstrate the society's expectations or "needs". As mentioned above, the popularity of these storytelling nights are increasing day by day. This increase demonstrates that demand to these storytelling nights show that people are more interested with these performances since they are satisfied with storytelling in different ways. As Ben-Amos uses the method

of “functional interpretation” (1992, p. 115), it is important to see folktales and their functions when they are told since they “purports to explain their significance in terms of a contribution to social and cultural cohesion” (*ibid*).

In this research, I get the issue of storytelling not by separating its context from the text but analyzing the relations of the text and the context of the storytelling practices. This approach attempts to fill the gap in the academia, which takes storytelling as a text rather than as a performance aspect.

These oral traditions were happened within expressions communicative behaviors. In this sense we accept the performance an aesthetical way of communication, which happen for the audience in a bounded time and space. When I try to analyse these storytelling performances, I try to focus on the social and cultural aspects, such as gathering people, transfering information, counseling people, of this communicative process in which the storyteller is a vehicle for the articulation of the narration (Bauman, 1992, p. 41; Ben-Amos, 1992, p. 111).

There are many kinds of research on the topic that collects compilations of the stories. To “secure” these oral traditions, people start to collect these stories and write them. For this reason, there are many thesises that were written on the stories. People collect these stories from a spesific city and categorize them according to these cities.

When we see the storytelling, which is a hot topic in today’s world, it is helpful for our current existential or social issues with the wisdom it includes. It replies to question that have been asked for several centuries and gives lessons about being faithful. Moreover, stories change time to time as their messages or struggles. In this way, it could be considered the transmission of the present to the next generations since it includes current struggles of the society.

People transmit their cultures, their ways of living, values orally and it lasts till today through stories. Goody claims, “in a nonliterate societies, oral traditions consist of everything handed down through the oral channel” (Goody, 1992, p. 13). Contrary to this natural process, oral traditions face a risk to be marginalized because of its orality. Goody gave an example that when religious practices and beliefs are based on scriptures in literate cultures, the oral tradition is a magic rather than a religion

(Goody, 1992, p. 13). This shows that how written forms are respected when it is compared with the oral culture.

Current storytellers in Istanbul, indicate that technology is rising rapidly, and machines are ruling our lives. They assume that by mechanizing in our work spaces, we ended up being dehumanized. Moreover, they also argue that the increase in the widespread use of the technology and industrialization has led to a deprivation of the human sensations. The storytelling nights offer redemption by reminding how the life would be in another societal condition. Another view on the technology-storytelling relation would be that the fast popularization of a modernized version of the practice is a direct product of technological advancements.

The storytelling nights as a rising folklore point out how society demands their needs by transforming the tradition in their own ways. The current changes in the storytelling practices shows what society wants to see or experience in these storytelling nights. The popularity and continuity of these nights depends on the satisfaction of the audience's needs. It is possible to say that there is a reciprocal relation between the audience and changes of storytelling practice. The audience wants to fulfilment of their needs in the storytelling practices. These needs change the motivations of the storytelling practice. Importantly, these needs that storytellers promise to fulfill for their audiences, becomes the main motivation of the storytelling practices. In other words, the audience affects the functions of the storytelling since they demand fulfillment for their needs and the storytelling practice continues if it satisfies the audience.

The benefit that other artistic events do not give to the audience is gathering with the people in addition to physical space, which they share. The research focuses on the storytelling as a performance regardless of the story. In the increasing number of the storytellers and the storytelling events, which expand to the different areas such as corporate life and education, it is possible to assume the storytelling practices become widespread. This research highlights the reason for this rise by looking at the demands of the audience and the promises of the storyteller. In other words, it is important to answer what people demand from the storytelling nights, which they do not provide

by themselves and the methods that storytellers use behind the promises of the storytellers, which assume that the need of the audiences would be given through storytelling.

Moreover, the question of the necessity of the storytelling practices that has been asked for ages is examined again in the current situation of the storytelling with series of the questions based on where we locate the storytelling in the tradition.

Current storytelling practices lean towards a direction that favors "marketable[1]" performances rather than oral narratives that based on moral value. In the area where people have their demands to be met and desires to be accomplished based on the events, storytelling nights might turn into a manipulation to make monetary profit by using the "trending" or demanded topics. In other words, storytelling is trying to convey some moral ideas to the audience. If storytellers start to adjust those moral ideas to make more money, they might erode the main pillars of the storytelling. These pillars might be moral values that storytelling give and the utility of the storytelling practice. In addition to moral ideas, the function of the storytelling that has been changed is important. There might be a problem in the traditions if they used as a periodically and transitory entertainment or tool for transposing an ideology which depends on the storyteller by using the demands of the audience. If the functions of the storytelling change depending on the demands of the society for making more profit, it may lose its importance in the future where those demands do not exist anymore.

It is important to define current storytelling as a contemporary performance form or as a revival of the tradition to be able to discuss the issues in this rising performance. If we say that it is a revival of the tradition and its functions do not meet with the traditional version, then its essence is changed a lot. On the other hand, it is not a newly established performance form that the region is not familiar with. Therefore, I

[1] By marketable, I suggest that the performances which increase the monetary profit of the storytelling nights.

outline a hybrid form combining these two aspects by securing the form such as narrative structure, and changing the functions.

After the debates on the stance of the storytelling practice as an oral tradition, the discussion is shifted to how oral narratives are structured in unique ways. Since storytelling is an oral tradition, I analyze these narrative structures in origins and the processes of the storytelling practices today under the title of Istanbul Storytelling Nights. The atmosphere, performance features that storytellers apply, the structuration of the time and place in the nights, interaction between the audience and the storyteller are some of the characteristics that I discuss about the storytelling nights in Istanbul. Moreover, the reasons and the effects of the women dominance in the practice of storytelling are examined in the Gender section.

The third chapter shows the functions that come from the past and have effects in the today's storytelling events. The functions of the storytelling derived from past may not have direct effect to the current functions but I display the shifts in these functions. Stories have functions on the transposition of the culture, taboos of the society and the effects on the creation of the identity. Today, these functions change into other ways in which social and political conditions of the day. Storytellers support the messenger and entertainer role of the storytelling as the functions of the current storytelling. There could be links between the today's storytelling practice and these roles, which is the topic of the third chapter. Mainly the fourth chapter shows the main functions of the current storytelling nights and their effects on and the relations with the audience.

This thesis has been built upon three major hypotheses while explaining the motivations and the functions of the current storytelling. These hypotheses are based on the storytelling's role of giving hope, social gathering and providing spirituality. I analyze the promises of the storytellers in order to see their relationship with attitudes and talks based on giving hope, the motivations for gathering people in the city life and also the healing themselves to serve a way to deal with the pressures that they face in their everyday lives.

1.1. Methodology

To be able to do comprehensive research on the research question that, I have participated in storytelling nights to observe the system based on three main pillars: the story, the storyteller and the audience. I have chosen to join storytelling nights since they are the form of the traditional practice of today via participant observation method that is used throughout this research. It was important to attend these storytelling nights to be able to analyze the functions of the storytelling, which are promised by storytellers, as we understand throughout their speeches. In other words, articulation of the motivations of the storytelling was observed in their speeches in the storytelling nights.

Storytelling events which are called "storytelling nights" resemble each other regarding their procedures and processes. Storyteller opens a stage by talking with the audience and welcoming them. "The night" starts with a game or a play and after that, rhyme stories started.

I focus on the storytellers in Istanbul since they have similar backgrounds and visions on storytelling. In addition, it is the most crowdest city of Turkey which serves lots of artistic choices for its inhabitants. Moreover, I also followed the storytellers who went to other cities since I believe the only variable is the place.

Although this thesis focuses on the storytelling in Istanbul, I followed the storytelling sessions in Istanbul and going on a tour to other cities are also followed in these different cities since the only variable is the place.

Nazlı Çevik Azazi was the first storyteller in Turkey in recent years. Similar to most storytellers, she attended the creative drama and theatre courses. She was educated at Berlin School of Storytelling and started to tell stories in 2013. After a period, she began to raise storytellers in Turkey through courses and workshops.

To increase the awareness for the storytelling practices in Turkey, Çevik Azazi started her tellings with different concepts. *Oyuncu Masallar*[2] is conducted by Nazlı Çevik Azazi in a library-cafe. This is an example of the entertainment aspect of the current

[2] Playful Stories

storytelling practices. In this event, there was an interactive practice that combined storytelling and illustration. While Çevik Azazi was telling a story, an illustrator draws images with these inspirations as the product of the day. In this event, before Çevik Azazi told the story whole crowd in the room shared a memory from their lives. Two days before the event, the team of *Oyuncu Masallar* sent e-mail to the audience about a play they prepared for their first event, which required participants to pick random 20 words by a random book on participants' personal libraries and also pick 20 more words from the newspaper of the day. Later, expected participants were asked to mix these words and randomly stick those words to a paper-sheet and bring that sheet to the event. Secondly, expected participants were asked to estimate the story by an illustration which was attached to the e-mail. Thirdly, participants were asked to bring "a thing" that means something special for themselves.

All participants were asked to introduce themselves by using these words and their "thing" to express themselves personally one by one. After all the participants introduced themselves, Nazlı Çevik Azazi told a story by referencing some points from each participant's story. This improvisation is one of the most interactive performance that I have attended since every participant finds something from themselves in the main story told by the storyteller.

Moreover, Ayşe Senem Donatan, one of the early students of Nazlı Çevik Azazi, is a co-founder of Seiba International Storytelling Center with Nazlı Çevik Azazi in Istanbul. Ayşe Senem Donatan played in theatres, but mostly she worked on the backstage as dramaturg more than six years. Both of these storytellers got trained in storytelling with European instructors and institutions.

There are many different courses, which aim at teaching to tell story. In addition to the storytelling sessions, it was important to attend these courses to see the backstage of the storytelling. Senem Donatan conducted a beginner course of storytelling in the theatre hall, Düşkapanı Arts Center. This course lasts two days in the weekend and teaches basics/strategies of the storytelling. After I attended some storytelling nights, this academic education about storytelling gained importance to see the facts behind

the curtains, their aims, tactics that they use for attacking the audience and common features in telling stories.

As Seiba International Storytelling Center, Nazlı Çevik Azazi and Senem Donatan organized their nights in DAM which is a space for artistic and cultural activities, group meetings, and workshops. The night was called "İki Dünya Arasında"[3], and in this night, Nazlı Çevik Azazi told a compound story about convergence of a deep-rooted tree and a whale. Integrated story combines more than one story. The storyteller composes a main story in which character of the story also tells stories. In this way, storyteller tells related stories within a main story.

DAM hosted Seiba International Storytelling Center and its audiences a few times more. In the Stories of Wisdom, they invited their audiences as follows:

> The root of the storytellers is their words. With their words and voice, they take root and stretch out a branch to their audience. In every branch, there are thousands of fruits. Moreover, every fruit keeps a secret inside it. Does mystery belong to the voice, to the word or to the story? Is it in the storyteller, or in the audience?
>
> Just as the voice waits for the word to exist, the word waits for the story, and the story waits to be heard, the storytellers wait for their audiences. We, the storytellers of Seiba, are full of the Wisdom Stories this time. Come and take your shares from these stories and salute the rest. Hug each other with the word and eye.

In this night, all storytellers of the Center picked a proverb by the lot. Nazlı Çevik Azazi, Senem Donatan, and Aslı Hazar told the stories deriving from these proverbs in three rounds.

The owner of Düşkapanı Arts Center organized another storytelling night this time by Didem Köktaş after the event of Donatan, in which people were very interested. Didem Köktaş is a storyteller who defined herself as a "mother of stories[4]". Her

[3] Between Two Worlds

[4] Masal Anaları in English

grandmother raised Köktaş by telling her stories, and now she is telling stories with the aim of healing people.

With her quiet and soft style, she told three stories named “Skeleton Woman, Fish Fairy Girl and Mennarüv and Toragay” in Düş Kapanı Arts Center. Her voice and accent were so smooth taking audiences to the world that she creates. She was creating a coherent harmony with all elements she was using and wearing. These elements completed each other in her performance. Another storytelling event that was observed by Köktaş was in a cafe in the Syrian Passage. In this small cafe, she told the same stories as the previous storytelling night.

After the storytelling night in Düşkapanı Arts Center, the audience did not leave the hall so as to chat with her and she invited all to the café of the theatre. The entire audience agreed about her plain in her style and her concentration of telling the atmosphere. She said “I am living in that world when I am telling. When I connect with you by looking into your eyes, I feel you in that world” (D. Köktaş, personal communication, May 13, 2016). In this way, she created an intimate atmosphere in the place, and she is one of the most successful storytellers in terms of her eye contact with the audience. She also mentioned the healing function, which could be communicated through teller to the public when their eyes met.

Another storytelling night, which was observed, was the Stories for Adults with Esranka. Esranka is the nickname of Esra Debreli Deniz who is a storyteller, performer, instructor of dance and movement. She performed in Müjgan, which is famous café among students in 100. Yıl neighborhood. In the Esranka’s performance even if her storytelling was aimed at adults, she as her accent as if she was telling stories to children. She used strong accents at the end of the words, and this created a melodic atmosphere in the cafe.

In addition to this melodic atmosphere, her body postures and imitation of the characters also reflect the environment of the tale. While she works on the voice and body, her face remained unanimated, almost without mimics. Her body is so ready to move in relation to her voice, including some dancing figures. Esranka’s performance makes me focus on also interactivity which might be a part of atmosphere creation or

breaking. From the first moment, Esranka requested silence and passiveness from the audience, as far as I observed.

Judith Liberman is another key figure in storytelling in Turkey. She published a book "Storytelling Therapy" in Turkish with stories that were collected and their messages to give. She trained in Conservatoire de Paris on storytelling. She started to work in Turkey, learned the language and tells stories from all over the world. She is also working with universities and UNESCO to be able to revive the storytelling tradition in Turkey.

She told stories in METU Architecture Amphitheatre, which has approximately 500 people capacities (J. Liberman, personal communication, April 29, 2016). This was the most crowded storytelling event that I have attended. Liberman trained in Conservatoire de Paris on storytelling. She started to work in Turkey, in universities and UNESCO to be able to revive the storytelling tradition in Turkey.

Liberman told a compound story about a king without her shoes. One of the musicians is also the singer of the event; he has a smooth voice with his bağlama playing Mediterranean tunes. Her storytelling within this authenticated atmosphere with decors and music was turned into kind of stand-up which made audiences enjoyed very much. Nazım Hikmet Cultural Center and Kumbaracı 50, which is an alternative theatre hall, mostly host the storytelling nights of Judith Liberman.

Masal Yolunda[5] is the name of series of storytelling nights in which their themes are changeable. Judith Liberman calls her audiences with this passage via Facebook:

> "When did you listen to a story? You know, in the past we were gathering around the fire to share the word, the music, the story and a charming moment. Well, do you think is it possible to have this story time in the middle of this chaotic city life? All aboard, we are going. We take a road in the pursuit of stories. We invite you to the adventure, which occurs in the place where stories and music merge. In this magical way of stories, we encourage all adults to open up the doors of their imaginations." (Liberman, 2015)

[5] Being on the path to story

In addition to the *Masal Yolunda*, which was performed in the Kumbaracı50 periodically, she organized storytelling nights based on themes. Hope Stories and Love Stories are two of these that I have attended. Moreover, she told stories in different cities such as Antalya, in a valley mostly alternative music festivals and yoga camps were held. Soul Carnival - A Nature and Art Retreat- is one of these festivals, which serve people reclusion with the Sofi poems and stories by Liberman.

The Educational Seminar for preschool teachers, which was organized by Şişli Municipality and Bütün Çocuklar Bizim Foundation. Nazlı Çevik Azazi gave a little lecture about the storytelling and its importance after her myth about the origin of storytelling, which claims a combination of imagination and reality (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, June 14, 2017).

National Storytelling Congress[6], which was held on 5-6 May, hosts many storytellers, academicians on storytelling and stories, instructors. Since Faculty of Education of Yıldız Technical University organized it, the central theme of the Congress was the "Storytelling as a Method/Technique" and "Instructors as Storytellers." Nazlı Çevik Azazi made the opening talk by mentioning the importance of the storytelling in our lives, at the closing ceremony Beyza Akyüz and Judith Liberman shares the stage to discuss the connection of stories in the society and tell a story (B. Akyüz& J. Liberman, personal communication, May 6, 2017). Many other speakers gave talks on a different aspect of the storytelling, and storytelling in education.

After UHAK, I attended the nights of Beyza Akyüz who is a storyteller organizing storytelling nights called "Şifahen Masallar Kervanı." [7] The historical place in Sultanahmet is chosen for this evening. The event's concept was story, music[8] and

[6] *Ulusal Hikaye Anlatıcılığı Kongresi*

[7] Karavan of Oral Stories

[8] Musiki in Turkish

dance[9], which she invites the audience to dance and sing with the little orchestra they have (B. Akyüz, personal communication, May 11, 2017).

I choose current storytelling practices on these groups since within their education and style they already differ from oral narrative traditions. Moreover, it is possible to see how storytelling evolved today might be possible by observing people called themselves storytellers as professionals.

In addition to the storytelling nights, storytelling events such as course and the speeches about storytelling gain importance. Since I wish to analyze the motivation of the audience and the storytellers, their declarations in these nights become crucial. The methodology is mostly based on the statements of the storytellers since they talk about their motivations publicly on the nights. In addition, storytellers have their stages to talk and express their thoughts as followed by the observer. On the other hand, the discussions on the thoughts of the audience mostly are in private talks among close friends. For this reason, they are hard to achieve by the observation. The expressions of the audience are rare but they may ask permission to share their feelings and thoughts. In this thesis, audience' thoughts were collected in those moments.

I focus on the usage of the body language, which includes gestures, mimics and the expression of the emotions, also the external items such as music or songs. Moreover, the interactions between the storyteller and the audience are important to understand the motivations of the performance. These factors show that kind of performance storytellers want to achieve and their position on this performance.

Moreover, storytellers actively use their Facebook channels to be able to publish their events. For this reason, I looked at their Facebook posts, which are mostly based their event's invitation. Since storytellers often meet their audiences to talk after their telling, there are after-telling discussions mostly between the audience and storyteller. After I introduced myself as a student who is writing her thesis on storytelling, they talked more about my motivations of the thesis when they saw me.

[9] Raks in Turkish

It is obvious that there might be exceptions on the storytelling nights, which have distinct functions and motivation. Moreover, storytellers could have unique styles and vision as we as audience who have different needs. The regard of audiences could be based on the mood of the person, the concentration capacity, the social environment, their expectation, the values and the vision. Rather than generalizing on these functions, without regarding the exceptions, there are suggestions based on the observations throughout out the storytelling events.

The reactions of audiences were used through the methodology of this research, however, there are some limitations of the investigation since I focus on the public declarations of the audience. With the interviews of them, this research could be enhanced and be reached more subjective evaluation for the public's' side. It is possible to see that audiences show their emotions or declarations when they have many positive feelings and thoughts about the storytelling nights. The audiences who did not share their thoughts publicly on these nights, could not either be an outspoken enough to speak publicly or they were in the situation that they did not really engage in the night.

Additionaly, I experienced segmented and occasional field. While in the ethnography of performance, it was hard to take notes or record since it distracts the performer. On the other hand, it was very easy in order to get acceptance in the field with a ticket as an audience. After I introduce myself as a researcher, they justify themselves by comparing their styles in relation with traditional storytelling. Storytellers were very welcoming to spread their nights. Therefore, they spend their times after storytelling nights to explain what they are doing.

CHAPTER 2

STORYTELLING AS AN ORAL TRADITION

This chapter aims to highlight the position of the storytelling in relation with other oral traditions since storytelling is an old tradition in Turkey showing similarities and differences with oral traditions such as *meddah, ozan* and the traditional form of storytelling. This analysis leads us to see how the storytelling categorized under the notions of tradition, cultural production, oral narrative and performance. In this perspective, Cashman, Mould, and Pravina claim that tradition, which influences the society, turns into a product such as art, craft, communication, performance or folklore (2011, p. 3). The classification of the storytelling under these notions also gives us its indispensible feature of it.

These tradition, cultural production, oral narrative and performance, which storytelling belong, have some structures that shape the storytelling practices which were based on these structures diplaying some information about the process.

2.1. Tradition

To continue to use the word tradition, it is better to define it. Shils states that tradition is explained as something created, performed, believed in the past and transmitted (Shils, 1981, p. 13). With this definition of the tradition, it is obvious to put the tradition into the past by omitting any connection to the present or even to the future, but it is valuable to analyze its current effects. Another concern that arises from the tradition is the frequently used word *traditional*. It has been used broadly in the academia. In this paper, I use it to refer to the initial forms of storytelling, where the current practices of storytelling were originated from.

Alexander discusses the definitions of the tradition by different scholars to analyze what is common and what is not. In addition, he explains the notion of tradition by

combining these definitions: “In tradition, […], there may be a core, there may be a canon, and there is always some sort of continuity. The core of a tradition, […], is a proclamation, […], which is divine in origin, or as if divine, something which comes from beyond us,” (Alexander, 2016, p. 24).

Alexander stresses the key point in the tradition by questioning how we relate action such as performance, to the tradition. By following Shils, he says that “traditions are not actions, they frame actions” (Alexander, 2016, p. 10). In this case, the continuity of the tradition could not be denied since doing the same action could not be the tradition (Shils, 1981, p. 13). Actions could be tradition only if their models, rules and legitimations re-enact but not the whole action (Shils, 1981, p. 13). While we consider this performative tradition, which are based on the actions, it could not be forgetten that it is impossible to see “the same” within a performative action but their rules could be stable in these.

While it defined the tradition in Turkish, it becomes etymologically problematic as Glassie suggests (Cashman et. al. quoted Glassie, 2011, p. 3). He explains *gelenek*[10] as “handing on of an object from one person to another”, nevertheless, this granted concept of the tradition lacked in the liberties of the individual and the art itself (Cashman et al. quoted Glassie, 2011, p. 4). Contrarily to this Turkish definition of the tradition stated above, Eliot suggests that tradition could be shaped under the effect of the creativity of the person and inspirations (Cashman et al. quoted Eliot, 2011, p. 3). In this sense, tradition should be understood as a dynamic notion, which leaves place of a change. When the tradition is defined as a concept for deriving the future from the past, it neglects the agency of the storyteller and audience, which could shape the tradition (Cashman et. al. quoted Glassie, 2011, p. 3).

[10] “tradition” in Turkish

2.1.1. Change and Continuity in Tradition

This thesis supports the idea of balance between change and continuity in tradition in which there are controversial debates on the notion of tradition, based on its changebility and continuity. The change and the continuities of the tradition is discussed based on motivations or functions and external elements of the storytelling practice.

Storytelling is also changed to something new with the conditions of the era. Tradition as a term is used for both the process of transmission of an isolable cultural element through time whereas the elements themselves that are transmitted through this process (Bauman, 1992, p. 31). In this case, Bauman discusses the tradition as "having temporal continuity, rooted in the past but persisting into the present in the manner of a natural object" (Bauman, 1992, p. 32). Moreover, he suggests tradition as a symbolic creation of a connection between the aspect of the present and interpretation of the past *(ibid)*.

When we look at the tradition and its aspect of the continuity, storytelling nights could be the heritors of the traditional storytelling practices mostly taking place in rural areas. The changes in the external factors of the tradition or the functions of the practice that are highlighted, could be understood by examining the conditions of the period that storytelling nights happen.

Therefore, De Caro (2013) describes "folklore's messiness" which occurs when folklore transported into other, non-folk contexts, artistic, intellectual, and otherwise (p. 3). In this case, storytelling could be assumed as a folklore, which is transported into artistic means or non-folk-context as it is discussed later. What he asserts is that this transition towards something "different from their usual, normative, historical contexts". He adds there might be an assimilation of the folklore when it performed outside the context and oral tradition (De Caro, 2013, p. 3). As De Caro indicates

when folklore was taken away from its context, it led to the exploitation of the folklore.

Traditions are regarded as a way of connection with our pasts, linkage to our ethnic and religious identity by many scholars (Sims&Stephen, 2011, p. 74 & Cashman et. al. quoted Glassie, 2011, p. 3). To keep this connection between past and today or today and future, it is important to provide the sustainability of the tradition by adapting it to the conditions of the day. This sustainability brings the change along with it.

Most scholars who work on cultural products (Jassal, 2012; Kuruoğlu & Ger, 2014; Artun, 2009) discuss the changes of the oral traditions which based on technological effects such as recording. While it may increase the popularity of the tradition with increased accessibility, these recordings may put the tradition into another context and sometimes changes its functions. For example, Artun indicates that *aşıks* do not follow the master and apprentice relationship anymore since they may learn the tradition from the technological recordings. In this way, it changes the transposition and teaching of the tradition which have a meaning in the structure of the tradition (Artun, 2011, p. 4).

The debates on the traditions about their continuity and changes have been a discussion for a long time. In this case, it is important to protect the core and let it renovate itself with the conditions of the era. Since storytelling tradition is created in the past and is transmitted to the present, it is possible to say that there is both continuity and change in this tradition today. This makes the storytelling tradition, deriving from the past, necessary for analysis. Current storytelling practices, which are performed under the title of "Storytelling Nights", are the examples of the traditions, which show both continuity and change within itself.

In the storytelling practices which occurred today, there might be some exploitations based on the changed context of the storytelling practices which lead them a consumed tradition. On the other hand, this altered context could be related with the situations of the current life style of the people and bringings of the era.

Alexander claims that the tradition could be categorized as the same tradition with one condition that is “as long as we remain convinced that tradition has not changed beyond recognition (Alexandar, 2016, p. 24). In the current storytelling practices that are categorized under oral traditions, it is critical to look at the practice and question if we could tell these changes are legitimate or not in the tradition.

2.2. Storytelling as a Cultural Product

Edward Burnett Tylor defines culture as a "complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Burnett Tylor, p. 1, 1871). As Matsumoto indicates, transmission and sharing are fundamental attitudes for culture (1996). These key figures create an understanding of the culture slightly based on its overarching, expressive and transmitted features.

Contrarily, some scholars such as Geertz (1973) and Lila Abu-Lughod (1991) criticize these standardized definitions of the culture. For them, culture is a complex concept, which requires effort to describe, and to work on it. Abu-Lughod, in her piece *Writing Against Culture*, supports that ethnography is stuck in the generalizations and standardization. By offering this “ethnography of particular” (Abu-Lughod, 1991, p. 470), she suggests the idea that generalizations between a person and “the other” are justified under the concept of “culture.” The discourse on the culture, which is homogenous and stable, creates a culture, which is not “natural” as it was, however, a superficial one.

On the other hand, Geertz in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Geertz, 1973) criticizes these mainstream ideas of the definitions of the culture. He supports the idea that it is vital to see culture as a “context, something within which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be intelligibly described rather than seeing culture as a power to determine these concepts,” (Geertz, 1973, p. 14). In other words, it is possible to say that culture could not be considered a product of the society solely but a production of it. Moreover, Geertz states that:

> "Believing, (…), that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (1973, p. 5).

In this sense, it is significant to analyze current storytelling nights in Istanbul by asking what their "import" is in this social event. In other words, taking the symbols of the storytelling as a text, it could be possible to read its meanings and motivations. It is only possible to understand the actions and the behaviours of the people by analyzing the aims and the meaning that they attributed to their actions. In this case, by analyzing the actions and context that storytellers created for their stories, we may achieve why the current storytelling practices exist.

As Bauman and Braid suggest that folk tales are interpreted, and explained with their importance in the society and observed by participating in the life of "traditional people" (1998). These stories are explaining themselves, their existence, their fantasies and their past, nevertheless, they only satisfy in the case of the corresponding stories to their worldviews. Importantly, they emphasize the importance of the observations of social conduct, analysis of language and religious symbols, and information about socio-political structure and history to make these interpretations of folk tales valid (Bauman & Braid, 1998, p. 114).

While it was stressed that stories are vital for the transmission of thoughts as Bauman and Braid supports, the importance of performance is denied. Bascom defines folklore which is a product of the culture as for learning about the society rather than teaching the society (Bascom, 1954). The performance aspect of the storytelling could be utilized in order to learn about the society. With the light of Bascom's understanding of folklore, in addition to analyzing the stories to be able to find what it transforms, storytelling could be the tool to understand the significance of this phenomenon today. In other words, the fact that storytelling is a practice, where stories are used, does not make storytelling is an event where only stories have importance. For instance, most of the oral narratives and oral cultural products are accepted as forms of cultural heritage according to Ministy of Culture and Tourism whereas the performances of these texts are not. In this regard, storytelling as a social event has many dimensions

which combines the text and performance. As Bauman and Braid suggest that oral traditions mostly analyzed if they are only "textual items which are collectively shaped, traditional texts that could diffuse across the landscape, persist through time, fill up collections and archives or reflect culture" (Bauman & Braid, 1998, p. 106). The thing that is dismissed mostly is the performance side of the oral traditions, which has persisted through time and reflects the culture. Similarly, as it stresses the idea that oral narrations are not texts but social events by many folklorists, Bauman and Braid stress the idea that performance is a key factor in the oral traditions since their primary existence lays on the action of people and their roots are in social and cultural life (Bauman & Braid, 1998, p. 107).

2.3. Performance

Richard Bauman defines the performance as "a mode of spoken verbal communication that consists in the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence" in *Verbal Art as Performance* (1977, p. 11). The communicative aspect of the performance was explained by showing the classic communication model as: "sender-channel-code-receiver" which exists in the performance (Harris&Reichl, 2012, p. 142). There is a difference between every day speaking and performance since performance utilizes the theatrical elements such as gestures, instruments and music (Bauman, 1992, p. 41). Similarly, Deborah Kapchan defines performance circulating its place around "aestetic practices, patters of behavior, ways of speking, manners of bodily comportment with its necessity with the object" (Kapchan, 1995, p. 497). The object does not necessarily a physical one but could be a text within the colors of it. It could not only about text since it combines with the non-verbal items such as sound, taste, shape, color and height (*ibid*). These definitions emphasis the importance of the context of the performance in order to claim its performativity (Harris& Reichl, 2012, p. 143).

In the oral traditions, the main aim is to tell the story to the audience within these non-verbal items such as body and voice and without any decor. In addition to the music and voice, the body is an important element in the performance studies. In storytelling

nights, body mostly stands firm. Storytellers perform and/or tell their stories with their body posture which is mostly standing in natural form.

It is very important to see the performance as vivid, artistic ad communicative social action. It is in interaction with the social environment such as political regime of the government, the audience, the media, time and place of the event (Başgöz, 2002, p. 104). Performances combine several sociocultural trajectories, weaving together differences to create a new design out of old materials (Kapchan, 1995, p. 484). The sociocultural trajectories or political environment makes performance "culture-bounded even though cross-cultural general features are sought" (Harris& Reihl, 2012, p. 143).

Performance focuses on the temporality by combining the past with the present. Moreover, context of the performance is always open to change since it depends on the social environment. In this way, this performance tradition is on change as it was in the notion of "tradition". As it was discussed above performative traditions are open to change since they continue the core but it is changed with the uniqueness of action. It is emergent in its nature of folklore performances with the flexibility and sensivity to changing circumstances (Harris& Reichl quoted Bauman, 2012, p. 143).

Storytelling is a performance based on telling by describing and transposing the action or character rather than animating it. For example, storytellers describe the situation that the character is in but the theatre shows it physically. In this case, they differ from each other based on the performance theory.

Thus, the actor and the storyteller are different since the storyteller becomes the experience itself. On the other hand, actor is the element of the performance (Spaulding, 2011, p. 10). Bauman explains the relation among the audience and the storyteller in the performance as such:

> "It is part of the essence of performance that it offers to the participants a special enhancemenet of experience, bringing with it a heightened intensity of communicative interaction which binds the audience to the performer in a specific to performance as a mode of communication" (Bauman, 1977, p. 43).

The notion of experience was discussed among the performance issue. For Benjamin, performances are the experiences that the audience could get as he stated in his article *The Storyteller* (Benjamin, 1969). Since "experience" something that lost its value because of the lack of communicative actions, storytelling also lost its value according to him (Benjamin, 1969). These decreasing communications among people came after the moral corruptions such as wars (Benjamin, 1969, p. 83-84). People talked less about their experiences and indeed their ability of sharing their experiences decreased. This affects the storytelling which is based on the people's experiences and this decrease took the function of counseling that storytelling gives. People are consulted by stories since people need to tell and listen real cases based on trying in order to cope with the interpretation of the real.

Even though he was very pessimistic about the future of the storytelling, storytelling is rising in the performance arena as it was mentioned above. Since we could not link this increase only with the role of the experience, Benjamin's theory might not be a comprehensive evaluation for storytelling nights in Istanbul. In this case, this increased popularity of the storytelling events may have relation with the meaning that people give to their communication needs and experience.

The oral traditions were performances but today external factors such as market of storytelling and its motivation of entertainment make them performative art shows. They turn it into something, which resembles stand up show including imitations, mocking and animating a character or mood.

As Spaulding (2011) and Benjamin (1969) mention, the storytelling is known as an art form. Gökalp also saw storytellers as an artist (Gökalp, 1922, p. 114). These scholars emphasis the aesthetic feature of the storytelling which makes storytelling an art. Storytelling may not provide a physical object but it gives an abstract imagination of a whole world. In this way, the art also happens in the mind of the audience since they enter the world of visualizations. The storyteller, who creates this world with some clues is not an ordinary person but an artist who conduct the telling in an artistic way. Moreover, artist is someone who could transfer the emotions that s/he felt to

others via action, color, sound or words (Önkol quoted Tolstoy, 2015, p. 19). Storytellers try to revive the atmosphere of the story in their performances with the help of emotions.

2.4. Storytelling as Oral Narrative

Narrative is mostly related with the written forms as well as literature. Storytelling serves us oral narratives, which are not based on written forms but oral transmissions. Orality is a key figure in the storytelling since it affects its changes and features. At first, stories spreaded by orally without any written forms in the nonliterate cultures. This is the original way for people to remember these stories and interpret them in their own ways. Years after writing became common; they realized that writing is assurance while memory could forget.

Importantly, oral narratives are derived from the "oral traditions." According to Barber, there is a dilemma on the oral text since it is both "the outcome of a concerted effort to fix words and make them outlast the here-and-now" and on the other side their features as emergent and improvisatory (2007, p. 67). In other words, while oral texts are conscious work to produce, on the other side, it is open the unconscious efforts. Since today, most things transfer into writing; this tradition ceased to continue through oral practice. The education of the oral tradition is started to carry on the courses built on books and theories, which is discussed later.

After the written forms of culture were spreded and became popular, the debates on oral and written culture have been started. Slymovics indicates that written culture is believed as superior to the oral (1998, p. 269). This understanding affects the collecting of folk literature and also losing original of the folk tales by rewriting, simplifying, censoring for creating a written text (Slymovics, 1998, p. 270).

Zumthor claims that oral texts, which are transcribed later, expect from us to give them back their volume (Bradbury quoted Zumthor, 1998, p. 136). Storytellers in Istanbul actualize this desire of Zumthor by performing the stories which are originally oral. Arpacı who is a storyteller said that oral narrations are not the "real

narration" when they are written on the paper. They needed to be told, and in this way, it revived (Arpacı, 2016) He told that there is a necessity to create that world which has different rules than the real world in the minds of the audience by telling it orally.

Moreover, Benjamin explains the decline in the storytelling because of the fact that oral narrations left their places to the written culture, which is novel. While storytelling is an experience for the audience, consisting of many anonymous voices in it, novel creates its own "solitary self" which bounds the story to the book (Benjamin, 1969, p. 87). Moreover, Ong (2010) compares written and the oral from social and structural perspective. In oral traditions, there is a real communication between the audience and the storyteller and persistency of the text is tied to this communication. The audience determines the permanence of the oral communication according to their experience. In other words, the permanence of the text is not always related with the written culture but also the effects on the audience. Additionally, orality gathers people while reading and writing are the actions, which make people individualized (Ong, 2010, p. 85-87). While the transition to the written from the oral was criticized by most of the scholars, it is not that easy to sustain the oral culture in today's world. Education and the education based on writing were dominated the memory which affects memory.

The remembering and the memory are crucial factors for orality and telling oral stories. As Goody claims oral culture are depended on the head of the adults who makes the store of information lies in human memories. These memories are susceptible according to him for selective forgetting and remembering (Goody, 1992, p. 15-16). In this kind of narrative traditions, Degh stresses that the storyteller's main characteristics is his/her perfect memory and/or qualified remembering skills. Memory is one of the important things in the oral culture since it assists to spread it according to Degh and also for the teller (Degh, 2010, p. 211). According to her, storyteller should keep many stories in his/her memory (*ibid*).

Dalyrmple (2006) shows the relation between the memory and the literacy. While a person who cannot have a better sense of smell, the poet who can not write and read

have better memory to keep those ballads in his mind. He gave an example of a poet who decided to write his poets into his notebook in order to help him to remember. After a while, he started to check his notebook consistently before the start whereas other tellers who do not increase their literacy remember without any written help (Dalyrmple, 2006).

For this reason, in the theoretical education of storytelling, it was focused that there is a necessity to transform written tradition into the oral tradition. To be able to do this, the first attempt is creating your own visual language and transferring to the oral form. What storytelling is trying to do is reversing the transition from written to the oral. They read the written forms of the folktales and fairy tales and than create their own imagination of the process of the story. In other words, they create images and the songs about the phases of the stories in their minds to share their imagined world of the stories. Current storytellers do not memorize or try to remember the words or the sentence but they try to reflect their imaginations of the world of the story to the audience. Additionally, storytellers do not call stories with the titles. Donatan stresses that stories are not entitled since they belong to the oral culture. After they turned into the written culture, they started to be known by their titles (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 17, 2016).

In this way, current storytelling makes a room for creativity and originality. As Ong suggests that writing makes fixed the thoughts when it is expressed with the words which have visible marks signaling the thought (Ong, 2010, p. 11). In other words, words restrict the thoughts which are abstract and open to interpretation. He suggests "written words are residue" where "oral tradition has no such residue or deposit," (*ibid*).

When recording of the storytelling nights were discussed, storytellers always support the idea to make audience record this experience in their minds not in their cameras or notebooks. This understanding takes its roots from the residues of the tradition, which has a core to remember, but not all the actions. As Ong (2010) discussed it, the experience is much more appreciated by current storytellers rather than the residues of these events.

Moreover, as the debates between the orality and the written culture there is an important debate between emotions and rationality in these oral narratives and oral performances. People try to express their feelings and try to transmit them orally. The dependance on the oral, it gives them a chance to create a flexible word which consists of their expressions, feelings and emotions.

2.4.1. Emotions

It is crucial to see the emotions as expression in an oral performance where emotions are reflected and revealed. In the study of anthropology and sociology emotions are sometimes neglected since they are perceived as opposed to the rationality. In the rising of the storytelling nights, emotions have a signicant place. As Lutz and White suggest, to have fuller view of the ethnography, emotions should be looked at (2001, p. 431). They criticize the over-rated value of the rationality, which based on the Western thought, which is used for analyzing the social norms and the culture. This over-rated value of the rationality comes from the fact that scientific data trust on the evidence taken from experiments (Lutz &White, 2001; Reddy, 2001). Since emotions cannot be proven scientificly, people who are not in this Western-based rational thought considered as irrational beings (Lutz&White, 2001). Additionally, they support the idea that without considering emotions people turn into "mechanical information processors" (Lutz& White, 2001, p. 405).

Lutz and White discuss the debates on emotions and suggests that emotions inherently involved in dichotomies such as both meaning and feeling, mind and body, both culture and biology (2001, p. 406) They combine feeling, meaning and thinking to be able to analyse emotions. Lutz and White use the emotions as bodily feelings, which derive from the biological facts. In this way of emotions, they are "experience socially, symbolically produced, expressed and felt" (2001, p. 532).

Rituals and myths are important to evoke the emotions and release the shared sentiments (Lutz&White quoted Radcliffe-Brown, 1922). This kind of performances -not only values or the thoughts of the audience- are manipulated whereas their feelings are also manipulated (Lutz&White, 2001). In these collective performances,

it is important to see the emotions as a communicative and shared rather than private (Perkins, 1972).

Moreover, to be able to see the emotions as cultural facts rather than universal, Abu-Lughod shows the way in which Islamic community, who is under the pressure of hiding their emotions, could express their emotion. For instance, the poetry of Bedouin becomes the vehicle for people to express their feelings (Abu-Lughod, 2016). When the rationalized or oppressed society does not open to reflect their emotions, some cultural products may undertake this role. In this case, the expression of emotions or feeling of these emotions takes an important place in the current storytelling nights.

Current storytelling nights in Istanbul do not only help people to share the common sentiments but also teach audience about the emotions. When rational mind does not pay attention to emotions, storytelling fills this gap in people's lives according to most of the storytellers. Through current storytelling nights, the emotions, the morals usually taught and transfered to children are now being communicated to adults. These things that are thought coud be the ways to express their taboos and also their emotions. The audience is confronted with the expression of the emotions by characters in the storytelling nights as opposed to the current debates which ignore the emotions. Therefore, not only children but adults also learn their emotions and their expressions through this theory.

Moreover, in relation to the idea that rational thinking underestimates the emotions, Sylomovics stated that rational thinking also underestimates the oral literature, oral culture, and the oral traditions. The reason behind this derives from the relations between the senses, let say emotions, and these oral products of the culture even there is a rising popularity of these practices (Sylomovics, 1998, p. 269). This turning from the written culture to the oral culture may give clues about the rising of the storytelling nights since it frees the emotional expressions and feelings.

2.5. The Structure of the Oral Narrative

Oral narratives were created according to a structure which has some rules and order to follow (Sims & Stephens, 2001, p. 77). Oral narratives have some common features in terms of introduction, development, and conclusion. These paths progress with a set of characters and actions. In this issue, most of the scholars assumed that oral narration has its skeleton, which storytellers build upon it (Gottschall, 2013, p. 52). In this sense, we analyze the stories, myths under the category of the oral narration to see them from their traditional roots that they are derived from.

Başgöz raises an important point about the *aşık* tradition by saying: "In each performance, a teller-singer named as *aşık* carries a traditional *hikaye*[11] (2008). They continue their tradition until it ceases to exist by taking the *hikaye* from other *aşık* who told it. He emphasizes the characteristics of storytelling as being recognizable in its form and in thematic content or in subject matter. Similarly, when storytelling is defined as a performance, it is easy to see the clear settings and recognizable structures which indicate to participants that a performance is taking place (Sims&Stephens, 2011, p. 128).

In the traditional folk idioms, there is a saying that emphasizes this system based on the three pillars: "*Gökten üç elma düştü. Biri bana, biri size, biri de masala*"[12]. While storyteller and audience are constant in this ternary system, the third factor could be the compiler of story, writer of the story, all good characters of the world who will win at the end or people who do no evil deed. This saying was repeated most of the time at the end of the stories.

When it is considered to structures of the oral narrations, Olrik makes the structuredness of cultural products a theory by explaining with laws of folk narrative

[11] Traditional version of the 'story' in Turkish

[12] "Three apples are felt by sky. One of them is for me, one of them is for you and the other one is for the story."

(Olrik, 1965). He tries to categorize the rules that surround cultural products, specificically for the folktales. While there seem to be very different ways of storytelling depending on the teller, audience, and atmosphere, there are some structures which gather folk tales or in general cultural products under the same roof.

Proverbs in the storytelling practices serve the function of regulation in the structure of the practice (Dundes, 1967). Proverbs and rymes provide stories to enter to the world of the story. It is explained that there is the law of opening and closing, which determines these entrances and exists which cannot be sudden but could be in the process (Dundes, 1965, p. 131).

Storytellers invite the audience by stating that this is an unreal world that they will enter. Rhymes are an essential part of the storytelling events. "Once there was, once there was not"[13] is one of the mostly used rhymes for storytellers in Istanbul. It may show an alteration in its endurance, but it generally continues as "Griddles in the hay when the camels are the barber and while I was shaking my father/mother's cradle as '*tıngır mıngır'*, the rope broke and the cradle was toppled, my father/mother's head was cracked." This rhyme was cut, mostly after the part which ends with "*tıngır mıngır*" and storytellers start their stories by saying "there was …" which introduces the character of the story or the space of the story.

On the other hand, in storytelling proverbs are crucial to make audience ready for another world to listen and live in that world. Boratav says that proverbs are the preparation of listening to the fiction and fabrication (Boratav, 1946). Within this entrance to another world in the performances, the atmosphere was formed by both narrator and audience created by believing the characters, locations and the actions of the story to be historically and geographically true" (Başgöz, 2008, p. 116).

Storytellers may be responsible for collecting these rhymes from various sources to surprise audiences into thinking about the rhyme. The rhymes give audience to the

[13] *Bir varmış, bir yokmuş* in Turkish

sense that they are impossible occurences. In parallel to that, they may interpret the unrealistic features of the story that is to follow. Moreover, rhymes are not only used at the beginning of the stories but sometimes are interspersed within the story. When the fantastic action could happen in the story or at the end, storytellers may use "as the story would have it"[14] to remind us that we are in the unreal world of the story.

In addition to the law of opening, there is law of the three in oral narratives (Dundes, 1965, p. 132). Since there are repetitions in the structure of the folk tales about actions or features, these repetitions are attributed to some repetitive numbers. The law of three is well known in Turkish oral narrative since the system based on the three pillars take place in the stories. Storytellers use repetitions by reiterating the same words one after another in order to demonstrate a sense of progress and passing time. Repetitions help both the storytellers and the audience to concentrate and follow.

"She walked, she walked, she walked" is one type of repetition which can be formalized in *x, x, x*. Second mostly seen type of repetition could be formalized as $x \rightarrow a, y \rightarrow a, z \rightarrow a$. For instance, the storyteller may use this type of repetition to show collective action or following action such as "cat went, goat went, rat went." This type of repetition is also used by Liberman when she wants to stress the "masculinity" of a man by saying, "his smell is manly, his posture is manly, his food is manly" (J. Liberman, personal communication, April 29, 2016). These repetitive sentences are mostly formed in a very short fashion to emphasize the action or the situation by exaggerating it.

Moreover, there are laws of contrast (Olrik, 1965, p. 135) in the folk tales so as to create an imaginative world in the minds of the audience. These oppositions in which everything is perceived in relation with their opposites, show themselves in the stories, as well. Social structures, the characteristics of the characters of the stories are defined and exeggareted by their contrasts when the storyteller tells the story. Moreover, Bauman indicates these binary oppositions in the stories based on legends and good-

[14] Masal bu ya!

bad conflicts have transcended through time periods and national boundaries since they show a community and a nation tracking down and killing the evil person with their strength and power (Bauman, 1977, p. 52). The laws of contrast are also used in storytelling nights to enhance the telling and listening experiences. One simple example could be the use of interior or exterior spaces to create a more accurate and vivid imagery of the world on the audience's mind.

In this case, Bryant discusses how stories consist of both art and message. The storyteller has a role for carrying, interpreting the message and transferring it to the audience with a surprising effect at the end (Bryant, 2009, p. 98-99). While carrier and transmitter role is suitable for the audience's active agency, interpreting the message may contradict with this idea since storyteller is not responsible for interpreting the message or changing the story. Storyteller, story, and audience share the same precedence levels in the journey.

2.5.1. Motifs

The message that is carried through story is embedded into a narrative structure. In the narrative theory, the story and its structure are discussed many times. The main point of this section is to show existence of the indespensable motifs of the stories in storytelling practice. Campbell explains that the narrative provides a journey from the known to the unknown world in The Hero's Journey (Campbell, 1949) with the repetitive actions that could be seen in every folktales and fairy tales.

All of the members of the audience are the heroes of their own journeys if they are willing to participate in this journey. The audience follows the path of adventure on three pillars, which are their emotions, credibility of the speaker and reasoning. There is a transposition to the unknown beginning from the known, which will end up in becoming a hero as Campbell explains. Not only the elements in the storytelling may have a structured frame but also stories do with the help of these motifs. In continuation of the structuredness, Campbell (1949) describes how the journey of the hero is preceded from one place to another that is the known to the unknown.

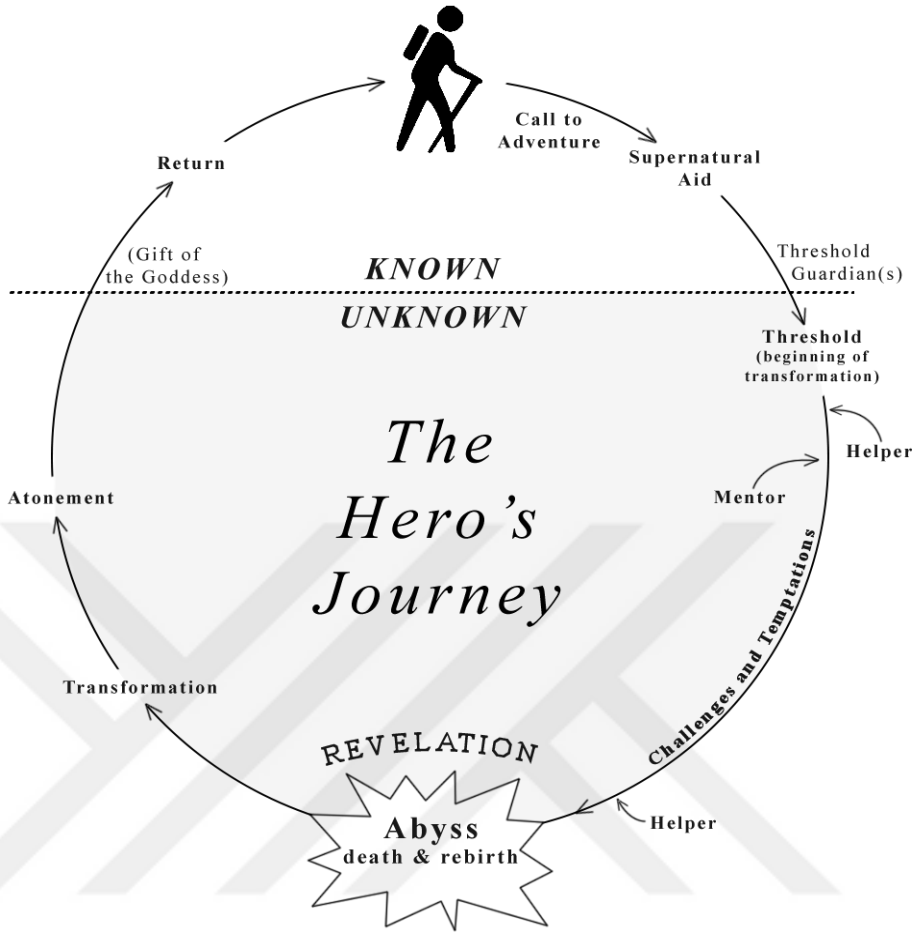


Figure 1: The Hero's Journey by Campbell

Campbell explains the adventure of the hero in three categories: departure, initiation, and return. He structured the narrations of myths, dreams, tragedies, and comedies but this is also very applicable to the folk tales and fairy tales.

Based on just a little chance, the unknown world opens for a main character in the story. At first encounter with a person or an action, there is a call for adventure even after the character's possible rejection, and then it takes supernatural assistance for the same endeavor. After these elements, in the process of departure from the known world to the unknown world the character crosses the first threshold and reaches the

“belly of the whale.” This part comes after the character reaches the border of own worlds and sees another threshold of the world. Belly of the whale is an adventure in itself that the character is tested several times. It is a motif that is used several times for the renewal of life. In these stories, the rebirth of character is displayed rather than going outside of the visible world.

In the initiation part, the first path is the road of trials. In this part, the character enters a world which is full of uncertainty. Before the character enters this path, the supernatural aids the character with recommendations and secret tools. It is the good-hearted power, which will support the character in the superhuman path. The meeting follows the initiation path with the Goddess, hearing the temptress and atoning with the father. In the way of apotheosis, the character takes an ultimate boon which may derive from childhood fantasies such as unlimited foods.

In the third part, the character again refuses to return. The character is responsible for the return from this adventure, which will change her life. The thing that the character is looking for should be a tool to bring him/her back into the human-world. The return to the real world actualizes with the magic flight. He is rescued from the unreal world by the real world itself. The character crosses the return threshold for the real world. Even if the character goes to the unknown or deific world for adventure, the return is described as once again re-establishing ties of humanity. When the character finally returns to the place where she starts with the discovery of the deity world, s/he realizes that s/he is beginning to be a master of the both two worlds and feels free to live.

With the common motifs, Propp (1968) builds a formula including the skeleton of the fairy tales. While he criticizes the categories of the oral narrative, for his formula, he uses fairy tales. The motifs and events are described as functions in Propp’s theory. Propp makes his formula in 31 functions of the fairy tales by giving all these functions some abbreviations and explaining them with examples. Propp stated that even if all the functions are present in the folk tale, they should be in an order that he explains (Propp, 1968, p. 22). Even functions are not changed; the name of the characters could change (Propp, 1968, p. 20). In addition, Propp (1968) mentions about seven

character-roles, which is *dramatis personae*, which should appear in the fairy tales to make these functions exist, while Campbell (1949) explains eight archetypes as characters that do exist in monomyths. Propp's definitions and categories are very restrictive in the sense that the functions restraint the characters or even ignore their existence in stories as a factor.

In Başgöz's article, Propp's understanding of fairy tales is discussed. While he suggests Russian folk tales are derived from a single pattern, some scholars challenged this understanding since Propp ignored the content according to them (Başgöz, 2008 p. 119). Since Propp emphasizes the importance of the function of the elements in the folk tales, he suggests analyzing what the story is before the groupings are based on a content (Propp, 1968, p. 5). These groupings are hard to decide, according to Propp, since the elements that are specified to a special oral narration category could be found in any of others.

As Propp indicates, there are regular sequences in the folk tales. By focusing on the Russian folk tales, Propp suggests that the folk tales derive from single pattern whereas some scholars such as Campbell, Raglan, and Hahn do not agree on (Başgöz, 2008, p. 119). While Campbell also theorizes the hero/heroine and their transformations throughout the story in a scheme, Propp was criticized since he excludes all vital elements of the folk tale, which are, as Başgöz indicates, character, aesthetic, audience, and the storyteller (*ibid*). Propp discusses the narrative theory from the structuralist perspective, in this analysis; it is possible to say that there are generalizations which are based on universality rather than cultural analysis. Propp rejects social and cultural context of the stories by his generalized form of the theory and universalistic approach. He ignores the fact that actions and the functions in the stories are not that stable to categorize in addition to ignoring to concern the cultural and social motivations behind these actions.

Although in recent years, it was discussed among folklorists that there are no regular sequences of folk tales, in current storytelling practice, the workshops offer specific theorizations, which are established to tell the stories better. There are differences and

variations in the folk tales and storytelling practice itself; sometimes these are classified in a specific route to be followed.

2.5.2. Three Pillars

In these recognizable structures of the oral narrations, there are essential parts, which should continue to keep this practice as a tradition. The storyteller, the audience, and the story create a triangle, so that these three elements interact with each other as essential factors of the storytelling tradition. This triangle could be explained easily with the use of Aristotle's rhetorical triangle.

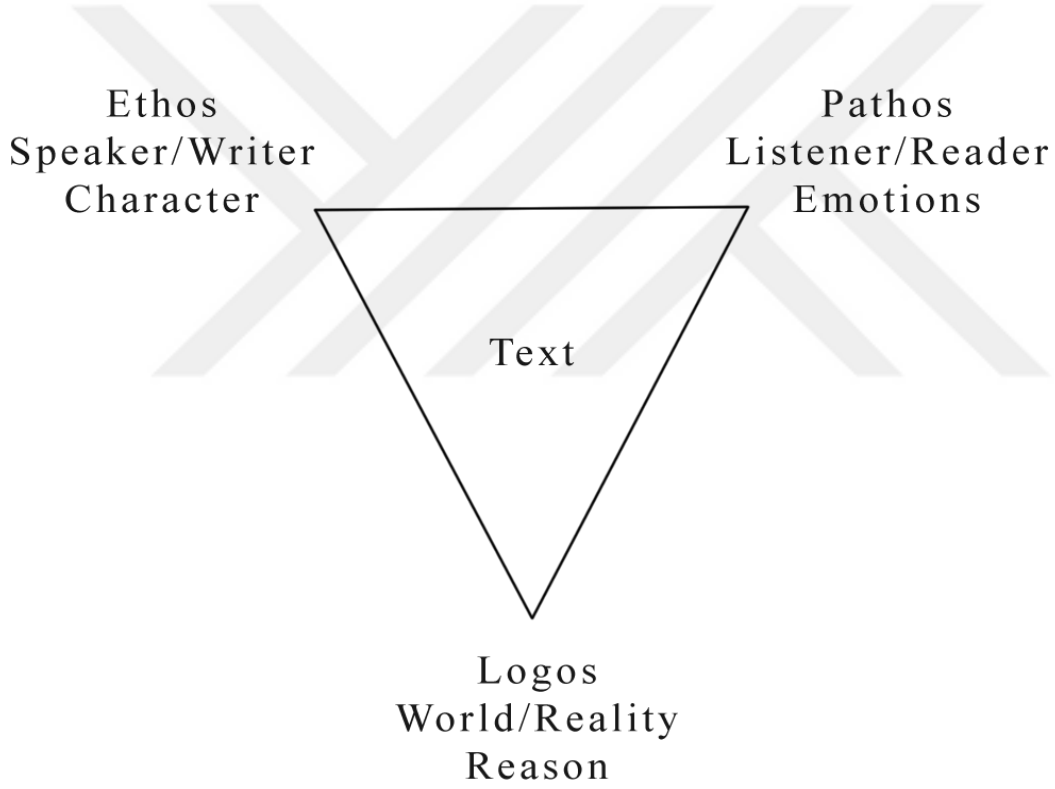


Figure 2: Aristotle's Rhetorical Triangle

Aristotle defines three modes of persuasion under the rhetorical triangle. These three components are absolute in the rhetoric. He defines these three modes of persuasion with correlating subjects to their roles in the existence in this rhetorical triangle.

> "The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself" (Aristotle, 2012, 1356a).

The first persuasion way, *ethos*, comes from the personal character of the speaker if they build a speech by making people think that they are credible. The storyteller has an effect on the audience and the ability to persuade it through the use of gesture, voice, atmosphere creation and space. This does not arise from the character of the speaker but credibility is built up during their speech, as Aristotle describes. In this case, it is logical that *aşık* becomes one of the prestigious men in the villages since he provides the only achievable art to the society. This provides the storyteller's credibility and the trust effortlessly between the storyteller and the audience. The audience respect to the tellers since it is performance that they could rarely see. Moreover, the wisdom and the knowledge that tellers serve to the community, makes tellers credible for the audiences. On the other hand, the current storytellers become responsible for creating credibility and the trust for the audiences since there are many artisctic performances to attend. In this way, the credibility becomes a necessity or a duty for current storytellers to accomplish whereas the tellers in the village effortlessly provide this connection with the audience thanks to the lack of artistic performances.

The second persuasion, *logos*, may derive from the speech itself if proofs and values are served during the speech. In other words, the values that the oral narration carries and the messages that the story wants to give belong to the *logos* in this triangular structure. A story has a skeleton, which is credible in it, to provide argumentation to the audience and the storyteller. In this case, this skeleton should continue in a way that is consistent by presenting the values that the stories include from the beginning till the end.

The third persuasion, *pathos*, may come from the audience itself if the speech and the speaker create enthusiasm. *Pathos* which is the taste and ornaments of the story is in relation with the invisible bond among the storyteller and the audience. It is based on the emotions that show up through the touch of the text. Since emotions have a significant place in the transposition of story, pathos assist audience to feel themselves in the character of the story. In current storytelling, there is a close relationship between the *pathos* and the *ethos*, since they both create emotions together with each other's help.

In this chapter, the characteristics of the storytelling which based on the structural orders has been discussed. These structures and debates on the storytelling are also valid for the current storytelling practices. In the next chapter I expand on these issues more while discussing the tradition of storytelling in Turkey.

CHAPTER 3

TURKISH ORAL TRADITIONS

In Turkish culture, oral narratives and oral performances had a prominent place. Oral traditions which based on performances of telling oral narratives are derived from the Central Asia's oral culture. Since Central Asia adopted oral culture because they are nomads, the Turkish migration into Asia Minor from ninth century also adopted oral tradition as well as lots of tales (Halman, 2013, p. 55).

In this migration, Turks acquiared Anatolian heritages, cultures, cults, and epic imagination as well as the Islamic narrative tradition. These narratives were told at homes and the gatherings after the mid-sixteenth century (Halman, 2013, p. 56). As Halman states that it is possible to analyze the popularity of the storytelling among Turkish communities by various genres of oral narrative such as *hikaye*, *masal*, *fıkra*, *efsane*, *mesel*, *menkıbe* etc. (*ibid*).

There is a transition between these oral products in different eras having various social conditions. Pertev Naili Boratav (1946) claims that folk tales came up after the legends which did not meet the social situations of the coming era and lost their functions in the society. These transitions show that oral products are used with a demand and social conditions of the eras. Legends, which are based on legendary, left its place to folk tales, which differ in context by including also love stories. Moreover, with the transition to the permanent settlement narratives also changed from the epics which are based on heroic stories to the stories that based on everyday life (Başgöz, 1968, p. 7).

As well as various genres of narrative, there are different categories of tellers. *Meddahs, ozan*/*aşıks* and storytellers are some of these categories that is discussed. *Meddah* were the entertainers who were public storytellers in the traditional Turkish oral performance. They perform what they tell by imitating the characters with

external elements such as costumes, clothes and other elements (And, 2014, p. 8). They intertwined the orality and literacy by reading and telling the popular narratives (Reichl, 2016, p. 696). They entertain the society by enacting the comical situations with their humor and observation skills (Reichl, 2016, p. 696).

The tradition of *aşık* actually derived from the practices, which took place in pre-Islamic society (Köprülü, 1989, p. 159). Pre-Islamic Turkish epics that happen after feasts and hunting took place in religious and Sufi folk tales by *aşıks* (Artun, 2009, p. 593). This transition from ozans to aşıks is coming from adopting permanent settlements and constituting the urban life (*ibid*).

Aşık tradition is correlated most of the time with the *Alevis* in Turkey. Until 15th century *ozan*s were responsible for telling real cases including disasters, heroism, triumphs that they heard (Coşkun, p. 97). For the ozan tradition, Sivas is an important city in the central Turkey. In the recognition of this tradition, *Alevi- Bektaşi* belief has a huge place which has a strong connection with Sivas. In the tradition, *ozan* do not name themselves but it takes its name by the society which makes them strongly connected to the society.

These oral traditions become the vehicle of social memories in Turkish and Islamic culture. *Aşıks* traveled to transmit the shared code of conduct and tastes among Turkish regions (Yavuz, 2008, p.136). In the transposing of the culture, they also become respected as it was mentioned before. Özdemir reminds the saying in Turkish: "*Aşığın sözü, Kuran'ın özüdür*[15]"(Alevilerin Dışavurumu, 2017). While they were telling, religious beliefs and thoughts are also spreaded (Yavuz, 2008, p. 136) hand in hand with the cultural codes.

In Islam, telling has significant place. There were carriers of the Islamic tradition in the Central Asia and this mythical Islam is very common among villagers and some city dwellers. These narrations are incorporated the beliefs which are taken from the Qur'an and the rituals, religious rites, predating Islam (Yavuz, p. 135). The oral

[15] The telling of *aşık* is the core of *Qur'an.*

tradition of Central Asia is very infused with Islamic history, ethics, and theology. Moreover, Zwettler (1978) claims that in Islamic cultures, orations and oral transmissions are very important. For instance, he claims that with the rhytmic style of Quran, which makes it easy to memorize and it was transmitted orally (p. 14) while in Christianity, it was transmitted with the visual expressions and icons (Grießmayer, 2009, p. 48). Moreover, Herzog explains how orality is predominant in the Islamic culture.

> Arab culture is an originally oral culture in which the spoken word occupies a central position. All important foundation texts of Arab culture are orally performed and transmitted texts: pre-Islamic poetry and prose, the Qurʾān – which according to Islamic tradition was finally written down more than three decades after the first revelations – and tales about the 'heroic age' of the Muslims, the conquest of the Prophet and the early Muslims (Herzog, 2012, p. 629).

In the Arabic East before the Ottoman, the public spaces such as hamams[16], stress and in front of the mosques and the men's social gatherings in the evening, there were told religious stories and biography of the Prophet (Herzog, 2012, p. 639). After the Ottoman period, these biographical memories of the important religious people[17] were moved to the coffee-houses of the common people where people gather without being obliged to pay something (Herzog, 2012, p. 639-640).

When telling stories are regarded as social gathering for men in the traditional Turkish oral narratives, the gender perspective of the storytelling is open to debate.

3.1. Gender

In oral narrative traditions, it was regarded that men mostly dominate these traditions as tellers. Oppositely, most storytellers are women while there are few exceptions[18].

[16] Public bath

[17] Siyar

[18] Interested reader is referred to Mazgirtli bir Masal Anlatıcısı: Süleyman Gül by Ebru Şenocak

It is possible to differentiate women's storytelling practices and men's (Ben-Amos, 1992, p. 111) but when I said the traditional storytelling practices I mean the women storytellers who tell stories in the villages. "*Masal anaları*"[19] is a widely used expression for these women storytellers in the literature and folklore (Ergün, 2014).

Eflatun Cem Güney who is a famous folklorist of Turkey, define the tradition with the *masal anaları* who are *ocaktan yetişme*[20]. They tell in the villages and neighborhoods in the winter nights among their neighbors and acquistances (Guney, p. 92) or gather in the working space (Sakaoglu, 2012). They do not only tell the well-known folktales but they also revise them by adding them new colors and new motifs. In addition to the *masal anaları,* there were "*story sellers*" which were raised by these *masal anaları. Story sellers* told their stories by telling folktales that they learned by *masal anaları* without adding anything or interpreting (Güney, p. 92-93). Ziya Gökalp defined *masal anaları* as a continuation of *ozan* tradition by the women (Gökalp, p. 114). At this point, *ozan*s and *masal anaları* resemble each other by performing oral tradition but it is not possible to say that they are continuations of the *ozan*s. While women have their own way of expressions or communications such as storytelling, it was accepted as the continuation as if they do not authorize in the oral performances.

These separate categories of oral performances are based on different processes. Since in the family rituals women are responsible for sleeping time care in Turkey telling stories to the child becomes the women's duties (Basgöz, 2011& Guney, p. 92). This understanding attributes the role of telling stories to the mother first and then to the women in general as it was supposed. Moreover, *hikaye* tradition derived from father to son, Sakaoğlu and Ergün indicate that storytelling derives from mother to daughter (Sakaoğlu, 2012; Ergün, 2014) which shows its dominance among women.

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[19] Mother of Stories

[20] Form of education which based on practical knowledge by experiencing rather than theoretical education.

Commemorating stories with women in oral narratives are not the only reason that people continue the same understanding of the past. Catherine Lutz supports the idea that the people identify emotion as irrational as well as their acceptance of women as the emotional gender stereotypically. This correlation subjugates the women's stance in the society (Lutz, 2010, p. 54). Similarly, when it is asked to storytellers about the dominance of the women in the field, they answer by claiming the women's ability on expressing emotions, giving values to the senses (Çevik Azazi). This shows that, the understanding of the women dominance in the storyrtelling is still valid in Istanbul storytelling nights.

Since people commemorated rational thinking with the man stereotypically, men might stand off themselves this field, which mostly proceeds with emotions and imagination. Contrarily ozan and ashiks could be shown as an example of this imaginative field but folktales and fairy tales are different since they do not express real or heroic cases. It is fair to say that women and men have their different worlds of telling which differs in the content of the oral narrations.

Tewari Jassal (2012) and Lila Abu-Lughod (2016) in their anthropological pieces on the women who produce oral culture show that these products are often the voices of subaltern women. They resist the pressure, male dominance and injustices. Lila Abu-Lughod (2016) shows the ways which Bedouin women uses to express their feelings and emotions which is a private area for the society. Moreover, Tewari Jassal (2012) shows that how folksongs become an important field for women for their expression of values, desires, critiques and thoughts which are not mostly welcomed publicly for specific regions. Similarly, Artun suggests that women tellers in Anatolia utilized songs and poems to relieve themselves from the troubles that come with the early age marriages (Artun, 2011, p. 2). In this social critique that women express through oral narrations, it should be considered that these expressions based on orality. Women communicate their needs, concerns and complainings to other women in order to share without lefting any proof which may cause a problem among men.

Besides women tellers, women characters in the stories are also important to analyze. Boratav suggests that women characters symbolize the war that women were involved in for their own rights (Boratav, 1997, p. 90). Therefore, women characters who are brave, determined and powerful are as powerful as male characters (Günay, 1992, p.327). This characterization is explained by the role of the women in the storytelling since women adopt the role of telling and spreading storytelling (Arıcı, p. 2004, p. 167). In this case, women tellers may express their desires and hopes about their rights through these fictional characters during storytelling sessions.

The claim that I am making is not that the women dominated all oral traditions but it is pivotal to see that women have an important role in the storytelling, which performs the folktales and fairy tales. Currently, although this tradition is not reflecting the voice of the subaltern women as in the past, storytelling practices are still conducted by the dominance of the women in Istanbul.

In addition to the reasons of the dominance of the women in the storytelling practice, there are results which effect itself. As Weigle explains in her writing on the *Women's Expressive Forms* that the oral products are not researched since most field workers are men and not allowed to study alone with women (1998, p. 298-299). When it was analyzed in Turkey, it is hard to find resources on the *masal anaları* although *meddah*, *ozan* and other man oral tellers are studied.

Moreover, as opposed to the general idea, there are also women *aşık* or *ozan* in Anatolia even if they are rare or they are not accepted as *ozan/aşık* in the public eye. As Artun indicates, although women are essential representative of the *aşık* tradition in Çukurova, they are not regarded as *aşık* since women are not appreciated when they tell and sing in a place where men exist (Artun, 2011, p. 1) because of the fact that Islam seperates women and men (Artun, 2011, p. 1). Additionally, they cannot be accepted as *ozan* since they do not complete the teaching of tradition, which are given by men step by step (Artun, 2011, p. 1-4).

The reason of the importance of the storytelling for women could be explained by their oppression in the society. Women could not be the "lover" who is *aşık* but only

could be *maşuk* who is been loved (Artun, 2011, p. 2). Since in Anataolia, women do not have authority because of the religion, they would not express their ideas because of the social pressures. For this reason, they sing their *hikaye* and tell their poems among women. More importantly, they remain anonymous even if they wrote the piece that they are told (*ibid*).

It is again important to consider that the access of the women's field is mostly problematic since the researches are men who study storytelling traditions. Since the traditional storytelling of *masal anaları* lack researchers for the abovementioned reason, the current storytelling practices were compared mostly with the Turkish oral traditions in general but not the traditional storytelling especially. This thesis is an effort to fill this gap on the storytelling practices which are in close relation with the women.

3.2. Istanbul Storytelling Nights

The storytelling practice in Istanbul continues as events, which happen at nights, and for this reason, they are usually referred as storytelling nights. As opposed to the traditional storytelling events, this could be seen as performance shows. In the past stories are told spontaneously without deciding when and where to tell beforehand. They have more informal atmosphere with cuts of the audience and natural effects that may come from the outside of the space. Current storytelling events have fixed schedule and limit on the number of the audience in order to sustain in the city. This could be seen as a necessarily change of the tradition to sustain within the effects of the urbanization and the conditions of the era but it could not be denied that these changes effect the performance and the functions of the tradition.

In Istanbul, storytellers could choose folk tales, myths, fairy tales, wisdom stories and myths to tell. Ben-Amos defines these different genres of oral products in relation to the cultural conceptions of truth and reality and based on narrative figures, times and locations (Ben-Amos, 1992, p. 102). Importantly, different socities categorize their oral narratives differently based on the "cultural ideas, conventions, means and meanings of narratives," (*ibid*). Myths are believed to be true, and they answer the

questions about universe and existence of supernatural beings beyond the boundaries of human time (*ibid*). On the other hand, folk tales are unreal and do not have identifiable social, historical or geographical terms. This feature makes them open to suspending reality and fantasy rule (*ibid*). Fairy tales are different than folk tales with their metaphorical stories and having magical items embedded in the story to transfer values of the humanity. Wisdom stories are told for their messages and the moral that stresses values of humanity (Wolff, 2001).

Storytellers choose their stories respecting some features for their storytelling nights. According to their themes, they may choose their stories based on hidden messages lying in the stories. There are various variables for storytellers to choose a story to tell. It might be a *motif,* which is used in the story several times such as a snake; it might be national folk tales, which include specific character names and characteristics about the elements of the story. Storytellers may choose a story, which is very rooted in the history, or they could write or create a story to tell.

Storytellers usually pick a theme by month or season to tell of a specific concept in their stories. These themes may depend on the specific time periods. Performances and tradition have their structures, which also include a function. In March, they could choose women's stories and myths while in February they may choose love stories. In this way, they may tell the same stories on a weekly basis. The themes may vary such as hope, peace, love, and wisdom and so forth. They may spell out their themes in the stories as they announce them. Storytellers do not have to tell their stories in the same place, they could travel to other cities with the same theme to be able to reach more people.

3.2.1. Structured Time and Place

Sims and Stephens suggest that some performances such as rituals could be "predetermined time and place and announcement or other signal opens and closes performance" (Sims&Stephens, 2011, p. 128). Storytelling nights are not ritualized today since the commercial concerns of the storytellers and the way of living of the people in the city are bounded current storytelling by time and space. In addition to

these, performances both artistic and the cultural ones are bounded with the time and the space to make people come together in the collective participation (Bauman, 1992, p. 46).

Although current storytelling practices are taken as "fixed performances" as it was discussed in this thesis, this does not necesarily related with this boundedness. It is inevitable that the audience and the storyteller should be in the same place at the same time. Oğuz claims that it is questionable to understand the text into the context that depends on the natural place of the text in the folklore studies (Oğuz, 2000, p. 35). It is important to look at the place and the time since it affects the telling process.

The current storytelling nights closes itself to the natural process of telling which based on spontaneoity. In other words, storytelling practices fix the time and place and pick the audience accordingly by closing it to the collective gathering, which consists of the rest of the audience. Moreover, it may break the bond between the text and the context when we take the place, such as stages, and limits for the telling time. This fixity of the performance derives from the scheduledness of the event which decides the story to tell, place to tell, time to gather.

Stories are mostly told in nights since the night symbolizes the "unknown world" which includes the legends and unreal characters of the stories (Ergün, p. 36). Similarly, storytelling in the past provide people to gather and listen to the stories in the long nights in winter around the tandoori *(ibid*).

Today, some storytellers choose one spot to tell for weekly or monthly narratives, and some may use cafes, or alternative theatre halls. They make events in centers for art and cultural events, museum and open spaces that are used for seminars and concerts. Some storytelling events are built in accordance with the space. If space is historical or the event includes dinner, stories are chosen according to the event's concept. While space varies according to the storyteller's genre, it is mostly small and indoors. The spaces are small, or storytellers try to achieve greater intimacy with the audience within the specified space in order to be closer to the audience.

The stage or the area in which the storytelling activity occurs is decorated and placed preferably not far from the audiences and not raised. In case of a big crowd, the chairs might be raised with platforms. In the cultural centers, the space could be initially blank to free according to the teller. In these empty spaces, audiences could sit cross-legged. In these cases, there needs to be some gap between audience and teller so that in following teller, the head is not raised much. People may sit in a circle around the teller or in the shape of semi circle surrounding the teller. Storytellers usually do not prefer big stages since it creates a hierarchy between teller and listener. They may perform on alternative stages that are relatively close. If a stage is large or storytellers prefer more intimate spaces, they may use the elevation of the stage but not the whole part behind the curtain.

In cafes, space is more fixed according to the regular order of the café. In some storytelling nights, space stays in their regular order. In this order, storytellers choose for themselves a place, table, chair, or a corner to tell and audiences shape the scene accordingly. But for some cafes, chairs are arranged beforehand according to the corner from which thestoryteller tells.

The storytelling nights I attended were held during the night and were aimed at adults. The audiences' ages varied between 18 and 60. The attendance of children was not much expected at these performances but in some rare cases, parents brought their children. Storytelling performance aimed at children mostly take place on weekends at libraries, the children's playgrounds or in the kindergartens. Storytellers also create conceptual events for children, which usually take place in the countryside.

The duration of the story depends on the length of the story and telling style of the storyteller. Most of the time, storytelling events take 50 minutes to 90 minutes without a break. If the storytelling night includes more than one storyteller, it could take more than 90 minutes, and they may have a break between changing parts, although this version is rare since storytellers mostly work independently.

The duration of the stories changes concerning the number of stories that storytellers tell. Most of the time, they tell three stories independent of each other. They may

choose to link these 2 or 3 stories in a common narrative arch. To be able to stay focused for audience and storyteller, the duration is an important component to be decided by storytellers. For this reason, experienced storytellers tell compound stories. In this regard, storytellers may assume that telling a compound story shows the ability of the storyteller.

These compound stories start with the main story that includes more stories in it. In such compound stories, mostly main character in the story suggests telling 2 or 3 stories to be able to survive from the tough situation that s/he faces. After the main character told these two or three stories, storyteller turns to the main story to tell the end of it. In other words, storyteller tells more than one story but s/he show some of these are told by the main character of the main story. Compound stories may be selected independently from different regions, but have something in common such as a message to give. This message could be opposing whereby two characters attempt to give each other opposite messages through the compound story.

Exceptionally, sometimes storytellers choose to continue a story over a week. This is one of the traditional ways of telling stories in rural places. For this reason, storyteller may continue a tradition and make the event more attractive as well as satisfying the curiosity of audiences. For the same week, at the same place, at the same time, they gather to share the progress of the story. For instance, Köktaş has created her own conceptual theme night of storytelling by telling the same story in pieces over the whole week in the same place.

3.2.2. External Factors of the Storytelling Nights

Bauman and Braid argue that performance of the oral texts is not simply presented but both text and context could be in relation with each other since they both are emergent (Bauman & Braid, p. 112). The important part is that the context of the text could not be used as a creative manipulation in shaping the emergent text according to the audience expectations (*ibid*).

To be able to create an authentic atmosphere, the environment of the storytelling places resembles each other without any connection to the story that is told. The external factors and items are repetitive. Before the telling, the audience is already drawn in a mood with the context. This helps the storyteller since the external factor is creating a mood for audience but it makes hard to analyze the sole effect of the teller and her/his ability. In this case, it is possible to say that context tries to make the audience experience the atmosphere but it manipulates the emergent text. The important thing becomes the experience and the audience took it as a performative art show without taking the text in its context.

It is possible to assume that, the external factors of the storytelling include motivations for making the place more homely and familiar. These items are not only "external" but they transmit cultural baggage with told stories as well as providing knowledge for everyday lives. On the other hand, MacDonald suggests that in storytelling events there is and there should be an artificial magical atmosphere with the warm light of a floor or table lamp to enhance the story area, or a magical "story candle" may be used (MacDonald, 1993, p. 32). Candle or rings that are used in the storytelling sessions mean sessions are meant to open a new magical world with the sound or light according to storytellers. However, MacDonald gives an idea to expected storytellers to use these items -after his chapter on *Learning the Story in One Hour* (!)- to "sell" the storytelling to the audience as a creative manipulation.

Invitation

Storytellers and audiences in today do not gather spontaneously, but by appointment. Storytellers create and publish their events mostly on the Facebook, using either their institutions' or their personal pages. This is mostly based on storytellers' choice, whether they have a community official, and they may use the community name to they create their event. Independent storytellers use their names or stage names in their events. Also, in the conceptual storytelling nights based on a specific theme or a season, they could make announcement using their event's name.

If the storytelling event is held in an art-and-culture space or a cafe, its public announcements gain greater publicity through official venue advertisements such as posters and monthly event booklets. If the storytelling night is in held in an alternative theatre hall, it is more likely to reach the larger audiences that follow the theatre hall's montly programs online. In this case, audiences have already reached the expected audience via the monthly program of the theatre hall while storytellers who are on their own would try to reach audiences through their personal channels, mostly the social media.

Market of the Storytelling Nights

Moreover, while in theatre halls and art spaces, renting a place periodically necessitates rentals depending on the frequency of events; in cafes, the fee for the event may also include a soft drink. In this case, the café also gets reimbursed even when not taking a rental fee for the event. Sometimes cafes also desire such events so as to advertise themselves as an art-friendly café. Besides, they reach out to wider audiences to catch them for the future.

The fees and the ways of buying ticket vary based on the event and the places. If the event is in a theatre hall, the tickets could be reachable online via websites that sell tickets, or the website of theatre hall. The way to attend these events in cafes is making a reservation through Facebook page or e-mail address of the coordinator.

The fee of these events depends on the space and concept of the event. In general, fees are 25-30 TL and sometimes, offer discounts to students of up to %40. Storytellers who could perform on a monthly basis may organize free-entrance events, often based on donations. Audiences offer whatever they are inclined to pay at all. Occasionally, some events may require around 100 TL, if held in the forest or in the countryside.

As a theatre stage, storytellers change places seasonally. In summer, they mostly choose the countryside, or places that people visit for holidays. During these months they may give seminars, short-term certificate programs, and courses. In these spaces, they also tell stories. Such courses that take place in natural settings cost

approximately 1.000-2.000 Turkish Liras for five days to ten days. The courses given in winter for two days are valued mostly 300 Turkish Liras. If the duration increases up to 1 year long, it may cost upto 2.000 Turkish Liras approximately. These educational programs have different levels starting from the beginner tellers who may specialize in the education of telling for children later. It is not necessary for every storyteller to arrange a course to educate people but it is preferable if the storyteller is an experienced one. This has advantages both economically and morally. While in telling they do not earn much money, the courses could provide a monthly salary. On the other hand, storytellers may wish to teach storytelling techniques so as to transmit storytelling traditions to homemakers and professionals.

While in different spaces the decoration changes, the background images resemble each other in most storytelling nights. Since storytellers prefer telling while barefoot, authentic rugs are used. These rugs mostly have oriental designs and *motif*s. With these rugs, there may be an attempt to create an atmosphere resembling the rural places from where storytelling is largely derived. In addition to the authentic rugs, there are other items that create an authentic atmosphere. These could be dream-catchers, hanging ties, which could have patterns, scented candles, knitted pillows or low-sitting platforms, African decorated instruments and also other portable musical instruments as items of decoration.

Music and Sound

Storytelling events are supported by the music via musicians on the stage. These musicians are dressed in a formal way or in traditional costumes with regard to the storyteller's choice. They are located close to the storyteller. Musical instruments are chosen according to their resonance, and in harmony with the fantastic atmosphere of the stories. Arbane is the most used instrument in the storytelling nights. It is a percussion instrument mostly played in Mesopotamia. Its resonance resembles the sound of the spiritual world. *Baglama* is a Turkic instrument that musicians play on the stage, and storytellers could use xylophone, maracas or kalimba. To be able to

sustain the “nostalgic” atmosphere of telling sessions, *baglama* became an important figure in storytelling as a décor when it is not used.

While *baglama* is used in the part when storytellers get ready, arbane and xylophone may be used during the narration to stress the emotions and transitions. Setar and oud are string instruments deriving from Persian and the Arabian Peninsula. The guitar is also used in accordance with the story. Classic kamancha is also a rarely used instrument part of a composition.

Music is an optional choice in the storytelling nights. Most storytellers use music and songs with or without musical instruments. If storytellers or anyone on the stage does not play any musical instruments, storytellers could create their own songs mostly based on repetitions. These songs are expected to sing by audiences to accompany the telling.

Storytellers use their voices also as a musical instrument in their telling. The use of voice depends on the part of the story and the mood that storyteller tries to transmit. The constant factor is the use of voice without any electrical devices. This is also a reason to choose alternative stages or smaller spaces so as to be closer to audiences.

In the process of telling, storytellers change their level of voice to be able to catch the story’s ups and down points. Their forms of expression affect their level of voice. In the descriptive expressions of space and character, they use a hoarse voice to create the appropriate atmosphere. In the expressions of acts, they may enhance their voices to create an exciting atmosphere. They emphasize the action and excitement also by accelerating their speech in the telling process.

Opening up a new space while telling is mostly expressed with a silence, pause or decreased level of voice. In the theoretical education of storytelling in Istanbul, storytelling is defined as the knitting together of words and silence. To be able to explain the transformation and change, the story needs some gaps rather than sudden beginnings and ends. Thresholds are also stated with silence and pauses. Since change and transformation take time to occur, the gap before this period of change gives a

sense of the passing of time. These changes could be the change of situation that the character is in, emotional mode, work, and place.

Storytellers who teach storytelling practice state that story requires the pause which occurs when describing the change of places in the story. These silences prepare the audience to the next level, whatever will come. In the storytelling training she gives, Donatan explains these silent moments by saying: “If we make audience walk around the story, we can not say “run, run, come and see. We should give these moments to the audience to make them find their ways”. Moreover, curiosity levels may rise through these little gaps.

There is an understanding among storytellers that under the same roof and without any border, people could share the same feelings and the same space that is created in the teller’s mind. In order to be a good teller, making people live in another world is something crucial. The elements that are used are mostly concerned with this issue. All adjustments, in the end are an attempt to tie the audiences into the fantasy world of the stories.

Interactions between The Audience and The Storyteller

For the audience, it may be hard to focus on the narration passively[21]. It is also hard to expect that all audiences would concentrate for 50 minutes of storytelling without any distraction. To be able to keep audiences’ attention while they are merely listening, the storytellers shape narrations and their elements, according to this fact.

[21] By “passively” I mean that without any active contribution.

All other factors that have been discussed in the subsequent chapter will be linked with the motivation to keep audience within the fantasy world of the stories.

Storytelling based on 3 pillars as it was mentioned above. The relations between any two of these three pillars should have some limits. Storytellers are only responsible for transferring the story to the audience. They do not enter the tie between audience and the story. The Amy Spaulding supports that respecting the agency of the audience is important. She supports the idea that storytellers should be "translucent" to be able to leave an area where the audience creates their own imaginations (Spaulding, 2011, p. 9). Spaulding uses the word "translucent" in order to stress the role of the storyteller who should not impose their truths and/or imaginations on the audience. Importantly, performance should be "objectified and open to the scrutiny by an audience" (Bauman, 1992, p. 44). Since there is a close communicative relation between the audience and the storyteller in the storytelling practices it needs more attention. Performances "give license to the audience to regard the performance and the performer with special intensity" as Bauman indicates (1992, p. 44).

Audiences are responsible for creating their own vision of the unreal world while storyteller guides them through the story. They are the mentors of the audiences and the transponder of the stories in Aristotle's triangle. While storyteller is describing the characters and the stories' unknown world, they do not detail their own vision of the story. All agents in the storytelling are active, rather than someone leading others. Audiences separately lead their stories' visions, which they create with the guidance of the storyteller.

Some of the storytellers build this interactive bond with the audience before a night begins. One of the storytellers stated that she could tell better in an intimate space so she invited the audience closer to her to be with them eyes to eyes (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 17, 2016). Moreover, she got the opinions of the audience when they arranged the light of the stage and the hall. After having waited for one of the audience members to close his cellphone, the story began. Rather than

assuming the existence of a wall between audience and the performer, storytellers break this idea by interacting with the audience frequently.

This interaction does not necessarily take place only at the beginning or end. Rather than this, storytellers continue their performances with interaction. A storyteller might say welcome to someone who is late or says, “Bless you!” when an audience sneezes during performances. In the storytelling nights, the audience does not forget itself nor accept that it is invisible. The audience turns into an active agent with the right to give an opinion, contribute views to the story, much like the storyteller herself.

On the other hand, storytellers may advice the audiences during these storytelling nights. When there is an ethical issue in the story, they may suggest audience to do so. For instance, if the character of the story follows a dangerous path the storyteller may caution “so, keep in mind to not go that way if you see the risk.” There is no need to have an ethical issue to comment on at all the times.

Moreover, Çevik Azazi, in her performance, gives water to an audience who is coughing by saying, “Drink this! Are you okay?” to an audience who holding the cough. She cuts short her story to express her instant connection with the audience or to warn, and gets back to the story.

Storytellers create borders to accept interactions at the specific times that they are needed. While audiences are active agents in these performances, storytellers have the power over audiences to lead them. They ask the audience to reply to their questions or guidance at the beginning of the performance. This request mostly comes after the opening ritual, which storyteller and audience attends jointly. Storytellers could introduce a melody, mantra-like song or a syllable, which is also an echo and ask the audience to join him/her to repeat. For example, a storyteller asks for repeating “cric” by the audience every time she says “crac” with the same melody or tone. These games could be played during the performance to be able to make audience concentrate and feel immersed in the story.

Before starting the storytelling nights, most storytellers welcome the audience and say a few sentences. It could be about the weather, the traffic, and the space in general, or daily issues that are discussed with friends. One of these nights, Çevik Azazi explained how important the audiences were (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, January 17, 2017). She said that storytelling is like improvising. If she rounds on to the audience, she means it and desires an answer or reaction to return.

The interaction could happen in different ways. Storytellers demand some help when they are attached to a word which is wrong, could not find a word for an action. For instance, Donatan in the same storytelling event said that: "Oops, sorry. So, what could he have done with the clouds?" Storyteller demands help by the audience to find a verb to use in the sentence and also asks for audience advice to find the right one. Storytellers not only demand help for advice but also for their motivation. Çevik Azazi in one of her storyteller sessions calls on to the audience, warning them about refreshing themselves. This exchange of ideas comes up in an interactive stage, and audiences feel their contribution to the performance.

They might also exchange their personal ideas with the audience in the storytelling events. For instance, Donatan in her storytelling night was telling an Armenian folk tale. While she was telling a part about persistence of serving food to guests, she said that: "You know they are Armenians, so they are the same insistent culture in Armenia, too. Storytelling in this sense, in addition to transposing a narration from folk tales, which have some surreal elements, turns into real life cases including views and opinions which are discussed in daily lives.

Additionally, storytellers sometimes could give some information about the story or stories in general. While Çevik Azazi was telling a story, she stopped and explained a *motif* in the storytelling which is "rescuing the character with condition" correspondingly in one of her storytelling nights. This feature also makes combinations of real or truth with the imagination in the real-time by reaching the imagined time frame and cutting it with interaction which gives the real-time again.

The audience might be seen in “open stage events” after the telling session in these nights. The storyteller mostly opens up the stage for the performance or contributions of the audience. They may share folktales or real-life circumstances. This is also another way of interacting with the audience by listening them as a storyteller who mostly tells but does not listen much. Regarding with any other kind of performative art, it is a rare occasion in which audience could reach to the stage to perform. The power that performer has the utmost importance and could not be exceeded in most of the performing arts.

In order to tell comprehensively, storytellers use different styles of expression. They may use their daily speech or more spiritual styles with a voice with old words. In common, stories are told by making the audience live in it and transforming this experience by eye contact with the audience.

In a descriptive expression, storytellers tend to make the audience “feel” the story with their sense organs rather than only hearing it. Eye contact opens up the space of the story to the audience by mirror neurons as educator storytellers say (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 17, 2016). In descriptions, audiences are more prone to enter the world of the imagination. As it was discussed above, there is a line between defining all the details and sketching an outline of elements of the story. Since audience should be free to imagine in their own ways the characteristics of place, characters and another external component; the storyteller does not interrupt them by giving too many details. On the other hand, storyteller led audiences by descriptive expression.

In the expression of acts, storytellers focus on integrating actions by rhytmic sentences and words. As in the structure of oral narration, repetitions are important in these rhytmic ways of expression. In emotional expressions, the emotions of the characters were tried to transfer to the audiences. For the audience, emotions should be animated in this expression style.

All these styles could be reinforced by sarcasm or humor. In the storytelling courses, it was stressed that storytellers should develop themselves in the style that they are

good at it. Moreover, all these expression styles are necessary to constitute a proper story. These expression styles are also split into parts even if it is not so concrete. For instance, descriptive expressions are used in introductions to constitute the roof of the story while the expressions of acts are used in the development part of the story where actions are important for taking the story forward. Emotional expressions could be used either at the end while the message is taken by the character, or any part which necessitates transposing the emotional conditions that the character live in.

Since oral products are regarded as part of the communication, it is possible to see this communication among storytellers and the audience as non-physical interaction. Storytelling provides another way of communication between the audience and the storyteller. In addition to the daily narratives among friends and/or families, telling stories could also be attributed to the communication aspect (Langellier &Peterson, 2004). Telling a story, poem or a song became the performance including communication with bodily participation, voicing and gesturing (Langellier & Peterson, 2004, p. 8). To see and to be seen by the other people during telling sessions, make people collectively understand each other, which becomes the experience of people (*ibid*).

Another nonphysical but a biological way of interaction is explained by Donatan who has Ph.D. in biology and tells stories as her profession. Since storytelling provides and storytellers expect to give this way of interaction, this turns into the function of the storytelling. Donatan mentions the fact that storytelling creates a bond between listener and storyteller with the contributions of "mirror neurons." She says "mirror neurons in our brains help us to correlate with somebody else when they are telling something descriptive. We start to empathy, create their vision in our minds" (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 16 2016). Donatan stresses the idea that, storytelling creates an invisible world and then makes people walk around it. Moreover, she stresses the idea that this function of storytelling could be explained by mirror neurons indeed.

Similarly, Mojandas and Rajmohan claim “Mirror neuron system is a group of specialized neurons that “mirrors” the actions and behaviour of others,” (2007). This supports the idea that the visual observations that people do turn into their knowledge that they achieve at the end. Imitation is a key figure in empathetic relationship according to Mojandas and Rajmohan.

Storytelling becomes a practice which both listener and teller’s brain are synchronized via mirror neurons (Keefe, 2014). Additionally, in this process when listeners are affected emotionally by the storytelling, it helps to create empathy with the listener and the character in the story *(ibid*). Mojandas and Rajmohan support this idea by claiming “empathy is a process which involves the effective sharing of self and others, adopting the perspective of others and the ability for the self-agency and the self-regulation”(Mojandas&Rajmohan, 2007). In this way, the imaginary world of the stories and emotions could be shared and mirror neurons are the one of the explanation of this sharing for storytellers. In other words, mirror neurons make people connect with their face-to-face communication and escape the real during storytelling nights.

3.3. Functions of Turkish Oral Narratives

From the past to present, storytelling in Turkey has different various functions and motivations to be pursued as oral traditions. Storytelling in unique styles, spaces and time have some common functions to serve the society. Storytellers may focus on these functions to transmit consciously or unconsciously through their performances.

When it was looked at the tales, they constitute a strategy for living and surviving in a harsh world (Halman, 2013, p. 60). They may also provide a diversion or an entertainment for common people oppressed by poverty and other deprivations. For this aim, storytellers tell some cases which are worst than real world (*ibid*) whereas they may tell better than real life cases to make them live in a hopeful world momentarily. In this case, folktales become the “resistance against tyranny, inequality, or any iniquity” while they bring fulfillment of dreams and wishes, and even achieving the impossible (Halman, 2013, p. 60).

According to Donatan and Çevik Azazi, stories build our relations with the past since they have some clues about the past **(**S. Donatan & N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, March 17, 2017). Ben-Amos supports this idea by claiming "stories are the tales people tell themselves about themselves, their fantasies, and their past" (Ben-Amos, 1992, p. 114).

Donatan and Çevik Azazi explain their primary motivation as reviving this disapperaing oral tradition. They claim that people should give importance to this revival of the tradition since storytelling is used as an item to provide benefits to the society in past. On the other hand, it should be considered that traditional storytelling practices most of the time provided benefits to the society unintentionally. Although the oral traditions as *meddah*, *ozan* and *aşık* may have intentional motivations for the society with their stories based on real cases, traditional storytelling could be seen as an expression.

Current storytelling tries to sustain these functions coming from the past but they provide these functions as a motiovation that could be achieved. There are expectations for the gainings. In other words, the traditional storytelling did not impose something or promise for giving something to the audience but these performances provided moral profits to the storyteller and the audience. Today, current storytellers expect these outcomes of the past and promise them to the audience intentionally.

Regarding the functions of the oral production, there are many different functions of these oral products. For example, Ramlila is considered as traditional Indian festival which takes place a month and gives celebrants from all classes of people and people re-enacts the life of the Rama who is an Indian God (Schneider, 2009, p. 20). As well as the oral traditions, Ramlila also could not be reduced to a single meaning. People get together to socialize with purpose that is shared, meditate themselves within en-actments of the life of Ram. Moreover, people devote to this performance, which combines entertainment and religious act, to the gratitude and pilgrimage (Schechner,

p. 137). As it was shown in this example, oral traditions have several functions and motivations that happen at the single performance.

In the oral traditions including current storytelling, the same understanding is valid since it depends on the audience and their expectations. It could be various functions depending on these expectations and/or promises by the storytellers. In order to understand these current motivations, which make storytelling nights appealing for the audience, it is important to analyze how the functions of the traditional storytelling is derived today. In this chapter, some of the functions that derived from the past are highlighted as well as their changes. These changes could be intentionally by storytellers to sustain the tradition or not.

Moreover, as I discussed above, traditional storytelling, which belongs to the *Masal Anaları*, did not studied in depth. For this reason, the functions of the storytelling coming from the past are analyzed in relation also with the oral traditions such as *meddah*, *aşık* and *ozan*.

3.3.1. Transposition

The functions of the stories are important according to their role of transposition of the culture. Pertev Boratav mentioned in his book how stories, which contain useful knowledge to be transferred to next generations, took place in a society (Boratav, 1969). For example, in the stories that Boratav analyzes, there are useful informations about how the sheep are important to survive or how to play a pipe as some of the examples.

Ilın and Segal say that there is a decreasing interest in storytelling because the stories do not give an essential and necessary knowledge to the people. While in past, there are myths and folk tales, which depend on the natural activities such as rain, thunder, wild animals and birds, people do not believe the myths of the explanation of the natural activities by scientific truths today (Segal&İlin, 2009, p. 74). Even though it is hard to support the idea that scientific truth makes people away from the myths and stories that explain the nature and make sense of the existence of human, it could be

a reason to not to continue this tradition as active as in the past. Moreover, with the messages in the stories, they could lose their practical usages and it could lead to devaluing of the stories and storytelling practice. On the other hand, by suggesting that storytelling is depopulated because of the fact that stories do not give any practical knowledge for the society, İlın and Segal rejects the importance of the performance side of the storytelling. Current storytelling nights gain popularity not because they provide useful feedback to the audience, but storytelling practice itself means something to the audience, as it is discussed later. In other words, İlın and Segal state (Segal & Ilin, 2009) that the stories lose their values since people do not need them but the practical usage is not the only thing that people "need" the storytelling events.

Moreover, Aslihaman says myths and all other kinds of folk literature represent beliefs of the society. Asliman also claims that, within the entertainment aspect, it also teaches people functional knowledge to promote and preserve cultural and personal values (Ashliman, 2004, p. 4).

Schechner in his article, also mentions the same by saying narrative transmits "information and values concerning sacred history and geography, social hierarchy, ethics, personalities of heroes and demons" (2009, p. 134). Oral traditions and memory tried to preserve the culture and they preserved according to its current utility. It creates a relationship with past which takes place in the present.

Even though it is hard to mention to transmit the culture of the rural life since audiences do not take it as a utility in their city life, morals, beliefs, and rituals are still significant and make sense to audiences. Nazlı Çevik Azazi, in her speech at Medipol University mentioned about the benefits of storytelling in transferring the culture (Çevik Azazi). She said that: "It teaches us virtues and moralities." In one of the interviews with her, she equates storytelling to DNA codes since they include the accumulations of the past, wisdom that they achieve by their past actions, their desires, dreams and envision of the world. Their guidance as a compass for the audience is combining since they both include the experiences of the lives in past and cultural codes of today. In this way, it becomes an act of creation and a connection with people

from the past who we never knew (Spaulding, 2011, p. 13). This anonymity came from the fact that individual tellers contribute to the stories but their signatures do not remain for long because of the very nature of oral transmission over time (Goody, p. 15). What is remained and transposed belong to the collective core rather than referring to someone. On the other hand, the effects of the teller could not be denied. The identity of the teller is important since s/he may transpose the part that is important for her/him. Dundes stresses the need that for the compilations storytellers and their opinions about the stories should be listened to be able to analyze the importance of the text (Dundes, 1980, 20-32).

Moreover, today people consciously want to transmit their cultures by making their existence immortal for the people. Williams indicates that the thing that people could leave for the future is not graveyards or marble stones or monuments but their efforts at telling stories. In this way, they would be unforgettable for their acquaintances (Ben-Amos quoted Williams, 1971). This shows that in addition to stories, the experience also transmits the culture, which makes storytelling nights appealing. Similarly, Stoller also suggests the idea that even though stories are forgotten, the experience that they transmit in the atmosphere is not forgettable within the group of people (Vos et al. quoted Stoller, 2003, p. XXVII).

The transposition of the culture or identity is provided through messages that stories are giving secretly. These messages that teller tries to give are strategies for people to cope with the tough situations of the world (Jorgenson & Bochner, p. 527; Jackson, p. 18). Denzin points out the fact that people gain humanitarian values by these messages (Jorgenson & Bochner quoted Denzin, 1993, p. 5). In this case, it is possible to assume that people may try to accommodate themselves with these messages and this accomodation might make people manipulate even they do not intentionally agree with the action of the character. In other words, while storytelling leaves place to the audience for their imaginations, the messages are unified and open to manipulate. Contrarily, Jorgenson and Bochner supports that people could not just take these messages since they are not passive agents in the storytelling activities. According to them, audiences also interpret the stories and define themselves by these stories in

their own ways (Jorgenson & Bochner, 1993, p. 527). Bauman and Braid indicate that performance is assisted with the interpretive frames to open a space for the audience to create their own right ways (Bauman & Braid, p. 110).

The messages could be coming to existence to teach of the youngster about protection and their emotions as well as to adults in today's world. As Ashliman indicates, stories may teach children to keep away from strangers, mostly for girls (Ashliman, 2004, p. 49), escaping to a fantasy world, wish fulfillment, and existence of hope for a second chance.

Storytelling does not only transpose the culture but also the emotions, fears and taboos of the society. As we could exemplify from the journey of the hero, while the audience is listening the stories with the hero, people pass into the unreal world to escaping the reality. The characters of tales and their problems are real even if solutions may be unthinkable. They wish to handle the situation to go back to the real world by wishing and hoping for the change. Secondly, tales give society a chance to express their taboos and fears as we have witnessed in the repetitive fearful symbols or motifs of tales such as wars and death.

Moreover, children face with taboos and fears in the stories, which cannot be mentioned in social life (Ashliman, p. 2). In the National Storytelling Congress, which took place in Istanbul, Judith Liberman said that storytelling exists for managing the process of life and protection of our emotions (J. Liberman, personal communication, May 6, 2017). She clarifies her theory by giving examples from her life. She says that she always encountered the families who try to protect their children from "scary" items of the stories. These items could be the death of a character, hurting a character physically or morally, and actions of revenge in return of evil. Even though people want to see the beauties of the life most of the time in stories, it is undeniable that storytelling includes these items (J. Liberman, personal communication, April 29, 2016).

Liberman told that for once, Liberman tried to take out all the "sad, scary and bad" elements in the story when she was telling a story to a little child since their parents

requested Liberman to do so. She started to development part of her revised story. "The girl encountered a rabbit in the forest suddenly. Yet**,**[22]the rabbit is very good and it continues her route and she encountered the wolf but wolf also treated her very nicely then she saw a house and entered it and[23] she saw a witch inside the home." At this point, the child screams as "bad witch!!" but she continues "No, she is also a good witch. They sat together and talked to each other and the story end in here." She said that the stories exist to teach us evil, injustices or unfair actions (*ibid*).

Liberman gave another example by her colleagues' attempt to change the stories. They tried to abolish the revenge from Cinderella, one of the classics of story. She told that "If developing a particular attitude to someone who hurts you is a bad thing to do, then your children could not teach themselves about protection of their emotions or stance in life (*ibid*).

Nazlı Çevik Azazi in her speech in Şişli (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, June 14, 2017) mentions that storytelling and especially the skeleton of the stories cannot be changed. There is a demand that people mostly do not want to hear or share the parts of the story, which include violence or death. Çevik Azazi supports that the revised story without these indispensable actions or situations for the skeleton cannot give the same meaning and/or feeling. She continues with an example of a teller who tells Little Red Riding Hood but with a change in the final part. In this revised version, the wolf does not eat the grandmother and it does not deceive Little Red Riding Hood while in original she does. Çevik Azazi says that all the elements in the story have some meaning and codes and subtracting the violent parts does not give a new meaning but contrarily destroys the story itself (N. Azazi Çevik, personal communication, June 14, 2017)

[22] Storyteller said this word by stretching it to make the audience excite more.

[23] Storyteller said this word by stretching it to make the audience excite more.

Moreover, Liberman asks that if stories and storytelling did not mention any of this violence, and especially death, how people struggle the idea of that when their acquaintances faced it (Masallar Diyarına Yolculuk, 2013). They may start to go psychiatrist to explain death to their children and themselves to believe it (J. Liberman, personal communication, April 29, 2016). Stories and storytelling prepare people for life for facing such issues. They give a real-life case in the non-existent time. Additionally, Çevik Azazi equates the stories and storytelling to the self-help books of past. Since these books help people to develop themselves for life and its circumstances, they are meant to help people's lives as their mentors (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, May 6, 2017).

Çevik Azazi, Liberman and Donatan support the idea that rationality captures the world. Çevik Azazi and Donatan support their ideas with the outcomes of the Industrial Revolution. After the rational mind and thinking were spreaded very fast, society accepted the principles of the rational mind for their daily lives. Although rational thinking keeps people apart from stories and storytelling, the effects of it for the society could not be denied according to them (S. Donatan& N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, April 12, 2017). Rather than self-help books or psychiatrists, stories and storytelling exist for humans to make sense of life and their existence. Çevik Azazi said once in a seminar, "Rational mind pull of us from the Sanctus and the universe and make us mechanical. We left our essence and try to raise generations which serve to the machines" (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, June 14, 2017).

Moreover, Donatan told a story based on the senses and the feelings before she has started her main story in Ankara. She said it summarizes the essence of the storytelling by its context since it criticizes the rational mind (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 17, 2016).

> All along the meadow where the cows grazed and the horses ran, there was an old stonewall. In that wall not far from the barn and the granary, a chatty family of field mice had their home. But the farmers had moved away the barn was abandoned, and the granary stood empty. And since winter was not far

> off, the little mice began to gather corn and nuts and wheat and straw. They all worked day and night. All -except Frederick-.
>
> At this time Frederick collected sun, colors, and words after a detailed observation. When winter came and all foods that were collected were eaten, mice were bored and started to talk with Frederick in the book. They said that it is Frederick's turn to show her abilities sarcastically. Frederick asked mice to close their eyes and starts to tell the sun, which makes them warmer later. She made mice think about the color by reminding objects and also reading poems to them by using words (Lionni, 2017, p. 1-3).

In this little story that Donatan told, rather than a rational mind that tries to fulfill our stomach our aesthetic capacities and needs were considered (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 17, 2016). People socialize by sharing, telling and listening. Not only nourishment but also telling stories are depicted as vital in this story. It is possible to say that storytelling collects the dreams, emotions, words, and thoughts of the society as a heritage to transfer.

3.3.2. Identity

Same as transposing a culture, subaltern groups create their identities through storytelling practices since it keeps the main elements of that identity (Tewari Jassal, 2012; Abu-Lughod, 2016). This understanding gives minority people a right to speak. It helps people to create their cultural awarenesses.

Ildikó Farkas states that nation is socially constructed and ultimately imagined by the people who perceive themselves to be part of that groups (Ildikó Farkas, 2006, p. 34) In this way, she quoted Hobsbawm which uses invention of tradition which becomes important for the emergence of the modern nation-state (Ildikó Farkas quoted Hobsbawm, 2006, p. 34). Culture-boundedness of the tradition, may assist people to create their own identities with their sense of belonging to these traditions. On the other hand, people choose their preferences for the traditions based on some priorities. Sims and Stephens indicate that people could choose their groups in their social lives based on the appealing and similarities that they share with those group's traditions (p. 67). In this case, the "invention of tradition" was shaped by the intentions of the group of people, audiences and creates their own group identities opposed to the

national identity that oppresses them. The audience, who miss the nature and natural way of life, desires healing becoming the audience group of the storytelling events today.

As Propp mentions in his book, folklore does not isolate from class or nation somehow. In this case, he suggests that folklore becomes the national property of the country (Propp, 1968, p. 5). Folktales and in general folklore could be easily correlated with nationalism since these oral products are the source of the nation (*ibid*). It is important to say that even oral products are universal and Propp (1968) mentioned the cultural attributions on oral products as every "nation" shape it in their customs.

In Turkey, there is an also different ideology, which is surrounded by nationalism and cultural products of traditional Turkey (Öztürkmen, 2016). Governments mostly use the cultural products from which aspect they want to emphasize the society. In this case, it is obvious that ideologies and different regimes shape the folklore within the values of these governments and could ignore some (Öztürkmen, 2016).

The oral traditions that we see the identity creation could be exemplified as *aşık* for *Alevi* belief. For instance, it is encountered once that *Alevi* audience describes storytelling as *Cem* ceremony since it transfers the culture. A person from the audience mentions that for the *Alevi*s in Turkey, *aşık* tradition and *Cem* ceremony are only things to sustain their cultural practices. It is true that oral traditions such as *aşık* hold an important place in Alevism in order to sustain it.

Cultural identity is in close relation with the oral traditions including music in *Alevi* belief. These traditions play a very role for construction, acceptance and supporting the cultural identity (Poyraz, 2007, p. 75-76). The *Alevi* oral traditions that take place in the religious practices in rural became the most effective identity indicator in the urban life in addition to the transposition vehicle of life styles and beliefs (Gunes, 2014, p. 61).

In the current storytelling practices in Istanbul, it is hard to mention that there is ideological pressure on the audience to convey the messages about the identity but there might be items of the story that conveys the message underhand. These storytelling nights also turn into a subculture, which is overwhelming under the pressure of the social and political life in Turkey. As in this case, there is group identity created in those nights, which makes these events a "selective tradition" which is used by Raymond Williams (1998). In this case, not nations but group create their own identities by selecting from the past to explain their acts in the today. Hobsbawm and Ranger also say that people choose customs, practices and the heroes of their cultural past to be able to make sense of their current existence to themselves.

In this way, storytelling nights help people to confirm and strengthen their identities in the group identity as subaltern people who try to become relax. The sharing in the group creates an identity, which has a special connection as a group (Sims & Stephens,2011, p. 66). Also, they indicate the traditions, which shared by sharing the same air with artistic mentor teaches us what we need to know.

When performances were analyzed in the oral traditions, it is mostly mentioned that in the process of the performance there is a break in the isolation that people feel and live (Başgöz, 2008, p. 100). Society does not live together like today's urban settlement but rather, they are local settlers. To be able to reach the knowledge and the news, messengers such as *aşık*, ozan, and storytellers convey the messages with storytelling, which is one of the oldest ways of the conveying messages. As a function of the oral traditions, *aşık* not only an artist but he is a traveler who brought villagers news from far away about politics. Without technology, it is possible to say that storytellers are the ones who bridge the society and fill the gaps among the society. As another function of these performances, *aşık* brings "the colorful art worlds, music and storytelling within the social context of the village to make people escape the boredom, problems, and monotony of the village life" (Başgöz, 2008, p. 110). In this perspective, these performances become entertainment for the society in the village.

3.3.3. Entertainment

Başgöz shows that *aşık* and *hikaye* tradition is the only way that people see the artistic activity in the village (Başgöz, 2008, p. 144). Within the isolated atmosphere in rural, where there is no technology, both *hikaye*, *aşık* tellers were the satisfying entertainment form for the village communities.

Another perspective was raised by Metin and who is a Turkish folklorist. He shows the function of the storytelling as an entertainment for centuries. He describes the ways of performance to creating the atmosphere which storyteller utilized. A Storyteller could "inserting pauses, switching from conversational speech to changing, moving his arms and head in sweeping festures, whispering, shouting, screaming clapping hands and punding feet" (And, 2014, p. 5). He mentions *meddah* tradition that is imitating characters that are told about. Rather than describing, he transforms into the character or object of interest with clothes and other elements (And, 2014, p. 8).

Entertainment is the requirement for the storytelling events as Spaulding supports. Within the messages and the knowledge that are trying to transfer, storytelling is close to the lesson. Spaulding differentiates educational part of the storytelling form the storytelling by entertainment. She says that without entertainment, no story works, and it becomes the lecture (2011, p. 4). There is no aim to educate in the storytelling nights, but only a transferring the knowledge, which is stuck to the stories. Since storytelling practices allow the audience to imagine and allow an idea to grow naturally, it is in contrast with the formal education (*ibid*).

3.3.4. Escaping from the Real

In today's storytelling nights, escaping the real life and its sorrows continue its functions since the world in the stories are still safer than the chaotic world that people live in. Since storytelling promise audience to the happiness with its happy endings and justice principle, people may enjoy the moments that they have while listening. Since escaping the real world is still crucial function that storytelling serves the audience, it is discussed in the following chapter in depth.

Most of the time, subaltern people challenge the hierarchies in the world order. While they are challenging it, they create their own cultural products. For example, Bakhtin (1984) describes carnival, which is an event, promises to natural without fake attitudes and broken-hierarchy for the society. This broken hierarchy turns into a communal performance, which gathers people. People release their tensions coming from the hierarchies; in the carnaval that everything is permitted.

> "Carnival celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions. Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change and renewal" (Bakhtin, p. 10).

In this case, the performance of carnival is renewal of subaltern identities for a short time. In this case, it is possible to see the connection with the oral traditions in Turkey. Although people do not participate in the created world in the storytelling events, they found themselves in that world which gives them a mood of freshness. They feel free to imagine and they escape their everyday tensions in the current storytelling nights. The audience escapes from the chaotic world to a safer world. The safer world is a better place, but it could be anything that is needed and expected. In the *hikaye* and *aşık* traditions that are dominated by men, Başgöz historically takes the escape to a fantasy world with erotic desires or imaginations. He suggests that unhappy individuals find shelter for themselves in the fantasy world (Başgöz, 2008, p. 144).

3.3.5. Functions of Storytelling in the Family Life

Storytelling in daily lives reserves a huge place in family life. The functions that are faced by families are very similar to functions in storytelling events in Istanbul. For this reason, is important to see how storytelling rituals function in a family atmosphere first. It will derive from the family to the society for some functions such as cultural transposition, therapy, social gathering. With the light of the functions of storytelling rituals in the family, we arrive at the functions of the storytelling nights that storytellers give to the society.

Stories mostly are taken as granted for children or are learned by books by the families. For this reason, this became a practice depending on sharing in the homes. This sharing might base on emotions, a time together, thoughts and values. Langellier and Peterson suggested that storytelling turns into an event in which families create their own values and preserve, develop their relations (2006). While they define these actions in "doing family", Carey finds these actions compulsory for "relating and caring for children" in an alternative way (Carey, 2010, p. 5).

Importantly, the only thing is significant on the storytelling in families is not the stories that carry messages but also the performance that reveals the messages. In this case, as Schieffelin indicates facial expressions, performance elements that are used in storytelling such as gestures, voice control could be an effective work during these practices (1998, p. 15).

Not stories but storytelling practices give this sharing atmosphere and "doing family" function among family members (Langellier & Peterson, 2006). This experience among family members becomes rituals by repeating these events on a daily or weekly basis. This ritualized storytelling assists to protecting and sustaining family forms by gathering around this practice (Jorgenson & Bochner, 2004, p. 517).

Even though it was emphasized the performativity of the storytelling, stories could not be underestimated since they have common values among families. These common values could be functions and also identities (Kellas & Trees, 2006, p. 51). Moreover, stories and telling them to have a function to serve the people about expectations that are created within families to act properly depending on these values. People unconsciously became informed about this expectation by the hidden meanings and messages, which are captured in stories (Carey, 2010, p. 5).

In the same way, stories and rituals are important to produce meanings and values to keep the family in continuity. As Jorgenson and Bochner quoted Gills, the contemporary family is asked to create and preserve its own myths, rituals, and images (Jorgenson & Bochner, 2004).

CHAPTER 4

WHAT STORYTELLING SERVES US

The functions of storytelling practices that have been mentioned in the previous chapter are reviewed in the light of academic literature which is created in this regard. It must be acknowledged, that the given functions of storytelling practices depend on the audience. To be clearer, the functions that are manifested during or as the result of these experiences may vary from one person to another, since without an exception, the whole of the audience possess different personalities, backgrounds, and perceptions regarding any input they come across. Besides, it must be admitted that the outcome of storytelling practices on the audience is highly vulnerable to what extent each person is willing to embrace it at that certain moment. However, there may arise certain generalizations arise with regard to its functions such as the ones that were examined in the previous chapter. This chapter for that matter offers three propositions regarding functions of the storytelling practices, which have been proposed regarding 15 storytelling events that I have personally attended.

Çevik Azazi suggests that storytelling of today does not show any differences in the core of the tradition (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, April 15, 2016). In the details, there might be some changes such as the education of the tradition and the spaces that are used to tell. Although these could be seen as external factors of tradition, these changes might affect the core of the tradition. Since the core could not be separated from the function of the practice, it is important to see the functions of the storytelling, which changed in today's practices.

4.1. Hope

Hope, theoretically became a topic to discuss among some scholars such as Crapanzano, Bloch, and Miyazaki. A structural definition of the *hope* is required for

articulation of the concept. First of all, as Crapanzano (2003) supports that the aim is not the fix and creates a standard definition of the hope. He creates a panoramic view of hope rather than a single argument. He mentioned that it is important to discuss what we take as a hope and focus the idea that hope does not always necessarily about the future in opposition to Miyazaki and Bloch. Later Crapanzano discussed the hope from teleological part in the *Reflections on Hope as a Category of Social and Psychological Analysis* (Crapanzano, 2003, p. 4).

While he uses hope, he correlates hope with the desire with a difference. This difference is that "desire is an effective" whereas "hope is a passive counterpart" (Crapanzano, 2003, p. 6). Even though Crapanzano supports hope does not depend on the agency as desire, it also depends on some other agency such as a god, fate, chance" (*ibid*). On the other hand, Rorty (1999) and Bloch (1986) reject the idea of the God and claims that hope could get from the human rather than any other thing.

Importantly in the hope discussion, Miyazaki and Bloch express the idea that hope is a kind of perspective or ability rather than an emotion. While Bloch uses emotion for hope (1986, p. 3), later he gets the hope as something people could develop. He takes hope as a necessity to act and make people act. In this case, hope becomes a kind of illusion that keeps people going. Also, it gives a desire to reach to a better world.

Bloch distinguishes daydreaming and real evolutionary hope. In this case, by daydreaming, people combine their intuitive of today and dreams about the future. Because of the reason daydreaming consider people's thoughts or intuitive it should not be taken as something illogical or meaningless as Bloch. From this perspective, Bloch also differentiates daydream and utopia. Utopian hope could be revolutionary hope, which is hard to achieve, but daydream serves people a dreaming of a "better world" (Bloch, 1986, p. 2).

In this chapter, I use hope as daydreaming for the future and having or creating a good vision of the future. This hope makes the audiences breath with the imposed crisis atmosphere of the humanity and the world. Even they do not clearly imagine a way to create a better world, they only hope for the future. In this case, this could be matched

with the utopian hope, even if it is not revolutionary. In opposite, it releases the tension that is integrated for most of the audience, by listening to the stories for a moment.

The hope becomes one of the main functions of the stories and the storytelling events. Since stories are paths, which have beginnings, obstacles and happy endings; stories give the function of hope on its own. “Story supports hope: it gives courage to fight when needed, laughter when the unexpected happens, and a kind of verbal sanctuary of wisdom to ponder in times of quiet. Everything is transitory” (Spaulding, 2011, p. 5). In this way, stories resemble the self-help books on the behaviors, which tell people how to behave in the situation of crisis.

As it was mentioned before, since the struggles in the stories are predominant, people match themselves with the struggle in which the character lives. Because of the reason that stories could not stop halfway through the telling according to Liberman, the audience completes the circle from the beginning to the end (J. Liberman, personal communication, April 29, 2016). The happy endings of the character of the story after a crucial conflict that the audience have faced recently, lead them to hope about solutions or ends in their current struggles according to storytellers. In other words, the audiences who get into this imagined world of the stories acquire some expectations about the future both in story and their life. Çevik Azazi claims in one of her interviews that stories, tell people that if they appeal for aid, life opens new doors and lend a hand (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, June 14, 2017). In this way, storytelling nights in Istanbul, creating hope for people to the motivation for trying harder in life and keep going on in their lives within their own struggles.

In order to analyze the hope function in the storytelling events, it is obvious that the role of the stories is undeniable but also it is important to discuss to how storytelling events give this function of hope to the people of itself. First, since storytelling derives from oral narrative traditions, story realizes itself and kind of activate when it is told. Storytelling from the past to present gather people at the same place and travels to the different places. After the stories are put down on paper, reading a story -to someone

else or yourself- become “normal” in some societies. In real, stories are notonly a category of the literature but also a performance tradition.

Storytellers in their events stress the notion of hope consciously or unconsciously in order to serve the function of giving hopes to the audiences. They help the audience to daydream in their realtime schedule. Audience travels in time, to their hopes in life by defeating the bad and finding the solution to rescue them.

Secondly, people not only get hope from the words but also the vision that is imagined between their and storyteller’s mind. This visual imagination, with the combination of the content of the story, opens a road for the audience to integrate this hope emotionally and physically. In this way, hope becomes an experience for the audience to live. While stories make audience look to the “hope”, storytelling event creates an atmosphere which audience live in the hope by creating the images and witnessing the moment.

Storytellers in their performances mention about the evil that people face in today’s world. It could be political tensions and social polarization that Turkey is in or injustices that innocent people are in, individualization, losses about some values (i.e. tolerance, hospitality, helpfulness) about the society. Sometimes they mention this kind of thoughts by creating awareness and say: “Are you aware of …?” or “Did you hear about …?” or joke sarcastically about the issues on the topic. These conversations mostly are mostly followed by stories told, and their capacity to provide hope and being hopeful about the future. In this chaotic world that they draw social and political life upon audiences’ eyes, they claim that storytelling becomes a cure to solve these problems. Since we want to believe that future is going to be better than today, good win the evil and justice will be served, we want to believe stories by missing these actions from the first human being as Beyza states.

Once, prior to a storytelling night, Donatan told a myth about Phoenix, the mythical bird. “It was the king of the birds, Phoenix. […] The symbol for justice and wisdom and power.” When the bird feels that the time for death is coming, she builds a nest from dried branches at the top of the tree. She waits the sun to ignite these dried

branches and to be burned with them. At the end, she also starts to burn. Then, she is born from her ashes. After this little opening myth ended, Donatan continued: “So, I hope all of you get rid of your concerns and burn them. By burning them, I wish you to be born from your ashes after this night in these bad days that we live through” (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 17, 2016).

This excerpt that has been told by Donatan is a strong example of how storytellers consciously bring along hope into their narrations. At this point, it is important to acknowledge the relation between hoping and dreaming. This relation between hoping and dreaming is definitely reciprocal. Besides this reciprocity, it is of critical importance to acknowledge the important component of the story itself that is being told. In other words, the story as the base leads the audience to dream about what is next which in certain points bring along hope with it, and in reciprocity, which again leads the audience to dream further with the motivation of hoping to hear the expected outcomes to happen. The concept of dreaming, which is clearly an outcome of the process of hope brought along with the plot of the story, is embraced by several storytellers themselves, along with its relation to the practice of storytelling.

4.1.1. Dream

Nazlı Çevik Azazi who is a well-known storyteller defines the storytelling as “the art to make people dream” (Masalcı Nazlı, 2015). She also defines storytelling as “the best school of dreaming”. Çevik Azazi continues to tell about the process that “storyteller revives the world of the story in her/his mind once again and then draws this colorful world to the audience’s soul and mind as a painter” (*ibid*). In other words, there is a common imagination among audience and storyteller, which could show the difference. This process of creating common world including different imaginations based on the person who exists through dreaming. In this process, Çevik Azazi stresses the idea in relation with dreaming that audience use their “muscle of imagination” to dream and it strengths more every time (Sözcüklerle Resim, 2016).

Importantly, the human agency in the dreams has an important role in storytelling events as it was mentioned. Liberman said in the National Storytelling Congress that

storytelling nights are different than any other art such as theatre or cinema since it provides gaps to people to fill in their imagination. This thought is in a close relation with the debates between the orality and literacy as it was discussed in the Chapter 2. People create their own imagined worlds in the world of stories. “When I say a delicious meal or a handsome boy, people create their own delicious meals or handsome boys which could be based their own personal preferences” (J. Liberman, personal communication, May 6, 2017). In this case, the audience lives the experience by dreaming in addition to the listening.

This way of dreamful art gives people a hope for the possibility of their actualization. Dreaming is becoming a way, which is much preferred rather than living in the moment since it is bad and storytellers think that people need storytelling to escape from the real world. A person among the audience indicated in one of the storytelling courses by saying that “audiences dream to escape from the current situation that they are in and they escape from social and political pressures by dreaming an alternative world. They feel like they live the world that they imagine and that feeling makes people hopeful about life.” Additionally, in one of the congresses, a woman from the audience indicated that she identifies herself with the hero so, she feels and even becomes the hero herself while listening to the story. She continued to explain that she overflows with the idea of overcoming the evil and doing favors for society.

These examples show that dream for a better world; something unreal or something not about their lives gives people strength by feeling successful. This satisfaction could be the result of the deeds that they want to change for them and their acquaintances and also hard to change the situation they live. These things that are hard to change are mostly about the city life and its bringing, social and political pressures according to their complaints. Since stories provide the principle of the justice with their happy endings for heroes of the story, audiences release their tensions by dreaming to live in a just society or become a just.

Hoping becomes an act for change into a better world while people could not change their lives in real life easily. As the woman in the audience indicated that she feels like as if she makes these changes in her life and lives in that very place, in which the story happens. She defines this power of overcoming the difficulties as voicing up to the cruel.

4.1.2. Change

Audiences hope, dream by hoping and hope in order to change. Storytellers might create hope for a change in the storytelling events. It is believed that stories have the power to transform people in these storytelling nights. Liberman says that "the thing that we live in the way of the dream have the capacity to change as indeed. Even we do not realize, the journeys that we experience in the stories call us to be more brave and intimate in our lives. Moreover, she indicates that "if stories which we listen change then society also change"(J. Liberman, personal communication, Feb 22, 2017). In this way hoping becomes an act for change with the idea of a better world.

Since change occurs on a time scale, storytelling becomes a summary of this time scale for audiences. They witness the starting point, development and appropriate conditions for change to occur on. By witnessing the change in the story, they become familiar with the idea of change. Change in their characteristics, destinies, life paths and emotional conditions do not seem that far.

Beyza Akyüz raised another viewpoint on the issue of change in the storytelling nights. She emphasized the characteristics of the story that it eliminates the racism, which discriminates people in the society (Akyüz, 2016). According to her, stories are borderless. There are no countries, ethnic origins but only a human being. In this case, she shows the storytelling nights and stories which have the power to change as opposed to racism. Storytelling nights create a borderless world utopia which focuses on the human being by not to mention any of their identities with a very rare exception. People in the storytelling events start to hope for the change in the current situation of the world. The utopian sense of the world is created isolated from racism and races in

storytelling nights through stories that are universal even if they inspired by the cultures. The dream of peace spreads through the audiences in this way.

In this way it is possible to say that sometimes storytelling events could be seen as social movement through activism to reflect their ideas and ideologies. While, Davis advice to research more on the narration and storytelling in the works of social movements in the times of "cultural turn" (2002, p. 4); in the *Culture, Social Movements and Protest,* Johnston indicates (2010, p. 33) that stories have a powerful role in the social movements:

This power of the story does not come from clarity of their moral messages but from their allusiveness, indeed, their ambiguity. The other is that activists' ability to tell effective stories is shaped as much by the norms of stories' use and evaluation as by the norms of their content.

As social movements and protests use the storytelling to convey stories in the crowds by utilizing their characteristic of adaptation and the focus on salvation; storytellers sometimes tell their stories to utter for the issues that are not happy with.

Moreover, another feature of the social movements is the social critique which spreads the ideas and ideologies. As Başgöz (2011) discusses that in lullabies, which is told by mothers, these oral traditions could be a social critique, which is shared in this way. While lullabies express, values, expectation and the feelings of the mother (Başgöz, 2011, p. 353), storytelling might serve this kind of meaning. There is turning into real world's discourse escaping from stories' world contrarily. As Başgöz quotes Kağıtbaşı on discussion of issue of gendered roles and values (2011, p. 354), the storytelling practices in Turkey today also serves a place for social critique. While mother shares her sorrow and angry with her child at night while telling lullabies, storyteller tells stories, which include social critiques in today. Within adaptations and interpretations in stories, storytellers also resist oppressive social and political climate of the present. In this way, social critiques that born in the oral traditions transmit through this performance to the audience while in past it was only a reflection.

Even though storytelling nights in Istanbul have an attempt to create hope and even though it is understood to be successful from the expressions of the audience, it is important to look at the "aim of giving hope" from a critical perspective. I argue that, the audience feels like their hope has been restored at the end of a storytelling night only because storytellers begin with making them feel desperate in the first place, by telling how horrible the world is. As it was mentioned in previous quotes and examples, storytellers focus on the idea of the chaotic world and the corrupt system that people live in. Unguided urbanization, pollution, human rights violations could easily be the discussion topic of these nights in their speech before the story begins. This increases the level of anxiety, despair and later, they tell a story with a happy ending and give hope.

Another critical point that was raised by Bottigheimer on the storytelling is the relation between function of giving hope and the characteristic of the happy ending of the stories. Contrary to what is believed, not all stories have happy endings at the end originally but people prefer happy ending for the therapy that they need or the motivation of hope in the stories. He suggests that since “hope” sells more in the markets, the ends are restored with their happy versions (Bottigheimer, 2009, p. 108).

As it was mentioned before the approaches of the current discussions that are raised by the people on the storytelling events for children are very suitable for this idea. Since parents do not want to make their children learn-if it is something learnable- any other emotions different than happiness and excitement, they react not even unhappy ending but anything could be related with the unhappiness.

Even though these social and political problems are over there, part of the reality, not created by storytellers; their emphasis on them sometimes dramatizes the situation. The audience who comes to the session with the expectation of escaping the reality; first faces the current problems and feels hopeless and then regains hope with the contributions of the storyteller. This emphasis on the current problems that people face could be seen as activism as well but at the same time storytellers try to release the tension rather than create a better world image in reality. This created image of

hope is not real, and not permanent, therefore it might create a more differentiated worldview for audiences who satisfy themselves for a brief moment of storytelling. In this case, even it seems like they create awareness about the current issues of the world by their speech, they entail people to the hopeless world indeed.

4.2. Social Gathering

Stories could not get from one dimension such as giving hope with its context. Functions of the storytelling in current storytelling events in Istanbul correlate with each other. Hope, dream and change are also in relation with the motivation of social gathering for people in Istanbul storytelling nights. They interact with each other to activate their motivations in the storytelling.

Donatan emphasized the idea that stories are the glue that holds society together. Since stories carry the cultural properties of the society, there are values that the people find elements by them. In addition to the functions that they serve individually, storytelling has a function, which affects audience collectively. When we see the audience as a whole, they have some dynamics among them and this dynamic compound them reciprocally as a community.

In the storytelling nights, storytellers give people a chance to socialize with the people who you share the space. Not only physical space but also with the contribution of the created atmosphere of the story in the mind give people a chance to socialize with the people who you share the space with. As mostly indicated that people are isolated today, the performance also socializes people with others in the space. It is not necessarily creating a relationship with the other audiences but small talks are made during the storytelling nights, courses and workshops. Nazlı Çevik Azazi tells how much importance they give to gather in their nights:

> Ceiba means tree of life in Mayan mythology. In the shadow of the our Ceiba tree without any discrimination towards age, gender, language, race we tell stories by desiring that meeting with the audiences, to coincide, being in the same conditions under the roof of stories. We are descendants of Mevlana, Yunus Emre, Ahmet Yesevi, Haci Bektasi Veli. We use these wise people's

> statements of unity and try to share their philosophy of life (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, March 16, 2017).

In this quote Çevik Azazi claims that there are distant from the discussion of discrimination in the society who are very polarized in the discourses of present (Hale&Özbudan, p. XIV). The names are common in the Islamic Sufism, which try to explain the relationships between God and the human, the human with other human and the human with her/himself[24]. Regardless of their religious side, the motivation that Çevik Azazi uses Islamic Sufism is related with the oneness, banding together as a whole.

One of the very important factors of the social gathering in storytelling is a conversation circle[25], which people ready to talk. Çevik Azazi mentioned that one of her storytelling night, people are getting more and more isolated and alone (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, March 16, 2017). Storytelling nights do not only give them stories to listen but also conversation circles to share and gather. The gathering becomes an experience for the audience as team supporters who prefer to be in a stadium at the back rather than watching all the positions in the television.

This gathering in the circles occurs not only in the physical space that they take but also in the world of the story in which storyteller and the audience forgets the real world as Çevik Azazi mentioned. She also describes storytelling as coinciding and having conversations. In this case, Çevik Azazi used *muhabbet* as the conversation but in a more spiritual way. She explains the word etymologically:

> Well, what is this *muhabbet*? It derives from the root "hubb" which is love, favor, and affinity. And *muhabbet* means the connection that is constituted through love and companionship that may be created through love. Art of telling is the art of *muhabbet*. In this way, it is possible to say that story telling and listening are actions that only could be done with love. Art of telling is out in the place where the love exists. Storytellers could be a leader if they love

[24] Interested reader can refer to Nasr (2008)

[25] Muhabbet Çemberi

> themselves, their stories and people. Only in this way they have *muhabbet* (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, April 18, 2017).

Another aspect of the social gathering function of the storytelling is the opportunity to talk and respond to the performer during the performance is very rare at theatre, concerts, and entertainment. This shows that people become more hearable in these nights. In this way, audience also becomes more relaxed to communicate with other audiences.

Additionally, storytellers also encourage audience to meet with the people who sit behind or in the circle. This circular sitting position makes people confident to the have conversations with other audiences and the performer by making eye contact. The interaction among audiences could be seen as a part of opening games for the audience. Storytellers make people greet each other and make small talk. This collective action and being in the same place creates an atmosphere, which people open to sharing. The forgotten habits like saying "welcome, good bye, bless you, enjoy the night" revive in these nights by gathering people in the same place. They listen to the same thing in their separate lives, which gathers them together.

In most of the workshops, storytellers ask people to introduce themselves briefly to the other audiences. In some cases, they change a stone, an item from hand-to-hand by passing their rows to the next person. In some other cases, the storyteller would demand an item beforehand and ask to introduce themselves or characteristics that they want to mention by correlating with the item that they brought. These practices might not be evaluated introducing them to other people but in this practice storytellers also encourage participants to tell brief stories about themselves. In this way, not only audience gets knowledge about the person who is telling, but also the person realizes his/her capacity and what characteristics are important for her/him to tell.

Not only introducing themselves by turns but also games that are played before the storytelling nights have an effect on gatherings in the storytelling events. These games are expected to play collectively, so rather than the individual effort on the games

collective effort is appreciated. Storytellers try to highlight a collectivity by making people connect each other. Sometimes audience becomes so dedicated by reacting together to their missions that they got by the storyteller.

An audience said, “It is a total relief to meet audience who sits next to you. In an ideal case, people greet each other. Since we lose this habit, we are nervous when we are sitting close to someone else depending on the issue of greeting or not greeting. In this little play that we greet each other and meet, I feel like we are really sharing the same atmosphere at that moment.”

4.2.1. Community Creation

People had the chance to meet “strangers” which it is not that possible to do in their daily lives. It is possible to assume that this atmosphere gives them a place to socialize, to listen and to have listened importantly. All together they imagine the world which other audiences have the impact on it. These “previous strangers” enter the world of the story by their mental, verbal or physical contributions and they become acquaintances. This way of gathering in a space creates a community, which is sometimes mostly temporarily but sometimes permanent. Liberman says that:

> “Atmosphere is very nice. At the beginning, we were about 20 people in Kadıköy. We started in a tiny hall but we moved to a bigger hall each time. Because the people who came come again and bring their friends also. I am very happy because of the reason that storytelling nights increase organically. After a night where 150 people gather in Nazım Hikmet Cultural Center, a woman came to my side and said: “I come here for the first time and I do not know anybody. Where is this, a course or something?” And I said this something like this, we gather and tell stories. Most of the people came here without knowing anybody but everybody looks like knowing each other. Since they come every month, they know each other. This makes me so happy. In a city like Istanbul where is anonymous and no one looks to others’ faces, people go storytelling nights, ask a person if s/he does not attend at that time and wonder. This is really nice. This is an atmosphere in which people share something with heart, creating a connection face to face or even eye to eye with the people they do not know, lose in their lives on their owns, share their stories that make them excited or anything that they try and they could not achieve it” (Liberman, 2016).

This quote shows that storytelling nights are not the people separately going there to listen to stories but they have their own communal dynamics. As it was discussed stories have a rule of three, which is based on storyteller, story and the audience. In this kind of storytelling nights, people not only gather with the story and the storyteller but they also interact each other and know their existence rather than ignoring it. Storytelling night gives them a chance to the special and emotional moment, which full of sorrows, hopes, excitements etc. When they open themselves to face these emotions, they become also emotionally connected to the people who share the same space and the same emotional mood. The thought that they face the same struggle in the story, might give them a feeling that they share common concerns. At once, a person from audience expresses her feelings as such: "We mention about sorrows which are even hard to explain to my acquaintances. I feel like we share the same conditions and other audiences understand me." Audiences who open their "mind and soul" to these stories, might open their hearts to the people who surround them. The loneliness; that is not shared, not talked and maybe not thought, left them when they have a chance to coincide with people.

4.2.2. The Need of the Society

Seiba Storytelling Institute focuses the idea that storytelling does not something come up and start to rise surprisingly. They claim that this rising in the tradition derives from our needs, rather than external factors. Donatan and Çevik Azazi separately indicate that the idea that people necessitate this telling culture, which they have forgotten, and storytelling serve the needs of society (S. Donatan& N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication). These needs that catching people into these nights rather than other performances or musical events, are explained broadly as the need for listening and speaking, even not physically. This need for speaking could derive such as interacting with other audience or speaking with himself or herself.

It is possible to explain the process of social gathering with the ongoing tradition of gathering people in the same place and dreaming together but individually. They aim at reaching all the people from different classes, age groups, genders, and professions.

Since art and sense of humor may differ in these groups mostly storyteller aims at gathering these group together. Different than other stage performances or good art, this was not seen as high-class in society. Storytelling could be achieved as more basis when it compared to other artistic areas since it does not necessitate any kind of background such as aesthetic perception or knowledge about the techniques. These entire properties make the storytelling is for public sake rather than art sake.

As communal characteristics, Liberman focuses that the integrative factor of the storytelling nights was since the age group deriving from 2 to 80 (Liberman, 2016). She says that "In this era, we are always divided and drifted apart from each other. We need to gather around the same story, the same narration." In other words, social gathering function is not an external factor, which could be actualized, but it becomes a necessity in today's world, which leads people to individualize.

In this case, storytelling nights dissociate from stories since storytelling nights serve this necessity which stories could not give solely. Spaulding also discusses the reasons of this necessity. She supports the same idea as Liberman by focusing on the decreasing face-to-face communication skills and advices storytelling for feeling liveliness and "appealingness" rather than stress and exhaustion (Spaulding, 2011, p. 17).

Rather than gathering and sharing, telling also becomes a necessity. Çevik Azazi defines herself as needed to tell her and share with the development of language. She explains the need of telling that: "Even though time passes the main search and the needs do not change in my opinion. When we try to make sense of the world and our existence we always create a world. You ask and talk, you tell and try to express the world that you created. You want to communicate, share and gather" (Çevik Azazi, 2016).

Even, storytelling nights in Istanbul make the function of social gathering; there might be some exceptional points in this function to mention. While it is indicated that storytelling is among storyteller, story and the audience, there is a commercial concern for storyteller if the audience is under some amount. If storytelling nights gather

people and tell is a need, it could gather even a person could become audience without any commercial concern.

For example, fixed performances such as oral poetry tradition of the past, are not accessible for all members of the society. Cultural conventions determine who to attend and what should be delivered to whom (Finnegan, 1992, p. 125). The accessibility of the performances is important since performance exists with the people except for the performer. The current storytelling's accessibility is discussed deeply within these frameworks.

Secondly, it is important to see the diversity of the audience to be able to say it is a featured social gathering. At the beginning of the storytelling nights, storyteller introduces herself/himself and asks who are new to these nights. It is very rare to see people new if they do not have acquaintances to bring them to the night. Even though storytellers claim people who are gathered in the storytelling nights derive from different ages or various "groups", it is hard to observe in the storytelling nights in Istanbul actually. Either the same people go to these nights or people from the same social and cultural classes attend these nights even if the nights' fee is optional to give. Without any regard to economic situations, the similar groups follow these events. In one of the storytelling night in which fee is optional, there are 6 men who are aged nearly 20 leading their 2 girl friends and attend the storytelling night for the first time. As usual, storyteller asks people to interact with her in her questions towards the audience. In the following of the nights, they were very active to distract and even mocking the storyteller with their comments, sexist humor. People always hush to these guys, roll their eyes or change their seats to the distant places from them. Storyteller also ignores these guys even they interact with her. With the light of this case, it is possible to say that storytelling nights are open to the audience which is specifically described with the unwritten laws.

4.3. Imposed Spirituality

Storytellers stress the idea that "human beings, are all dearie, special and should realize and know their value" in their events. This kind of transfers is likely to embrace

the audience to feel better and feel precious. The events itself turn into a therapy collectively but at the same time separately. As it was mentioned before they show the characteristics of the self-help books in order to advise people to do or to feel something about them in the world.

Nazlı Çevik Azazi indicates that myths and stories reply to the questions that people are asking over the centuries (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, April 17, 2017). They derive through transferring generationally by spreading abroad. This makes the stories include the variety of wisdom. Azazi resembles stories to philosophical schools, which give us to a light while we live in a giant chaos. They help people to find themselves and meanings about their existence through storytelling according to the storytellers.

4.3.1. Healing

As Stoller (1989) mentions about the speech and sound she mentions how words could be used as a magical power to heal people. Words have power in their sounds. It is possible to see this therapy or healing understanding attached with the storytelling nights in Istanbul. They aim at reaching the souls and they use relaxing music and voice in their performances. In this case, it is possible to correlate storytelling nights with meditation, which gives people a relaxation from the current situations they live and moving away from the carnal reality.

Judith Liberman explains the mood of the audience who are being in the space in which stories are being told. She says that: “Storytelling nights pass in a mood which is a slight trance. We are both in the space that we exist and also in the world of the story taking a road with the hero and tracing a treasury. Indeed, every story is a symbolic journey on way to love and the wisdom” (Liberman, 2017).

Stories are important in this spiritual function since they help people to overcome their difficult experiences (Kellas&Trees, 2006, p. 49). Current storytellers see storytelling as an activity, which may heal people and society by calling their practice sometimes “storytelling therapy”. Stories are analyzed mostly with this healing function of them

and also combining it with the caring. Storytelling becomes a place for make people heal for either storyteller or the audience. (Vos et al., 2003, p. 5) As it was mentioned before stories define people a struggle or a crisis and it gives the clues about the emancipation of it, in itself (Jorgenson&Bochner, 2004).

Storytelling event makes people relaxed and it discharges their minds from the daily hassle. Didem Köktaş supports the idea that storytelling is healing for the souls of the audience (D. Köktaş, personal communication, April 11, 2017). One of the audiences after her storytelling night expressed this experience as a therapy since he feels more comfortable after the telling. Beyza Akyüz claims the same idea of the therapy function of the storytelling nights and calls her audience to get rid of their burdens. She invites their audience through her Facebook group as following:

> In this night, the story of people who try to get rid of their burdens and the secret of the unknown world of the undersea will be told. We wish a strength to the feet and the lightness to the hearts of people who want to desire to come and listen.

As it was discussed before, most storytellers support the idea of getting rid of rational world that modern world holds. Since oral traditions focus on the intuitional and alternative life; it is taken as a healing since people get rid of their rational selves for a moment and explore themselves during the storytelling nights. In other words, living in an imagined unrational world of the story becomes a therapy itself for the audience.

Not only storytelling events serve a therapy for the audiences but also recently therapies used storytelling since its affects on the patient. As psychiatrist Milton Erickson explains that storytelling is used as a method for patience by making them choose the end they wish (Spaulding, 2011, p. 5-6). This turns back us to the hope function by making the patience dream about the happy end and creating their own therapy by themselves.

Moreover, in this therapy function there is the mentality of living in the moment, which could be explained as escaping the real-world function, respectively. Storytelling purifies audiences from their anxieties, concerns by causing them to

escape into an unreal world of stories. Since this unreal world captures them, the living in the moment becomes an important motto for the storytellers. Once upon, a person from the audience describes her feelings about the storytelling in the Congress: “It is hard to describe but this was a very different experiment I have lived. I even could not describe, I may say. I think compared to other performance arts, storytelling gives you to focus on the time, not how you will return to your home, why your workmate got angry with you, guessing how much money you will pay for your electric bill.”

Liberman emphasizes the increased importance of the storytelling in relation to the increased technology usage, alienation in the society and disconnection of the ties among people. She says “For every 5 hours that we had time on Facebook, we need storytelling session for 5 hours. Because, Facebook provides us to transfer or share practical knowledge but not emotions. All this information is stored in our minds and stayed there” (J. Liberman, personal communication, April 29, 2017).

In other words, the cleansing that we need because of the technology could be actualized with the contributions of the storytelling according to the storyteller. They claim and counsel audiences to focus on their heart, souls and in general their spiritual sides to be able to refresh themselves and relax. Storytelling nights not only give up following the rational routine that people maintain but also free the minds of the people by creating a space for them to imagine and dream. These processes help audience to work their minds, which are made lazy in this era according to the Beyza Akyüz. This liberation occurs in the heart and also in the mind and makes people become comfortable.

Storytellers undertake an important role to make people stay in the moment. Since people got used to living with the distractions such as cell phones, the Internet, another kind of technological devices; they are ready to get disconnected to the moment that they live. The habits that social media makes us earn such as sharing, promoting, showing the lives and the attractions of the users put people in a position which is hard to separate from it. Storytellers mostly encourage people to turn off their cell phones

and focus at the moment that they will live, at the beginning of their performance. At the beginning mostly, they warn audiences to shut their cell phones.

Çevik Azazi once in a time, said to the audience who constantly holds her phone up to take a video: “Please give this up and watch with your eyes!” In this interaction, Çevik Azazi emphasizes the understanding of “backing to basics”. Moreover, they mostly warn audience whose cell phone rang. Sometimes they stop their telling and sometimes they give verbal responses to them. It is possible to include that moment into the story sarcastically. “In the time of full silence... There is no sound of birds. No wind, no human, no rattle. In that moment of deep silence... NO! There is no cell phone to ring like this. Maybe it is hard to guess this part for you but yes, no voice of cell phones. You know we do not have time without these devices. Isn’t it scary?” (N. Çevik Azazi, personal communication, March 16, 2017).

Donatan also sarcastically warn a person from the audience whose phone rang by saying: “Is it that important? We could all leave here for you.” They consistently focus the idea that people need to devote some time to themselves and their minds and forget all the technological stuff. Since it is hard to check if people follow these rules or not, at least in their events they strictly forbid to people who are engaged with technology. When Çevik Azazi saw a child next to his mother playing with Ipad, she nearly screamed and said: “Do you play with it? We tell a story to you.”

This purification does not only consist of technology but also the city life and its bringing. They imply that material world is external and unnecessary most of the time. They transfer audience to the spirituality and moving away from the consumption practices. As well as back to the basics, they support back to nature movement. Liberman at once said, “Well, you may not now but in forests, this stuff could occur.” Since people are losing their natural roots according to storytellers, they emphasize how important to remember and even live in nature or get interested in nature and its activities. Spaulding mentioned that people lost in the material world forget realities such as connection between “people and living world” (2011, p. 16) In this process beyond cars and shopping malls, she supports the idea that: “Few of us think of where

food comes from, and being reminded in stories of apple trees and chickens and turnips as part of life rather than as items that require a trip to a supermarket keeps us connected with the joy of life" (*ibid*). She reminds reader to show that we are part of a continuum in the nature.

Storytellers in Istanbul mostly refer to the city life by complaining the chaotic atmosphere of it, crowdedness, dense housing, distant relationships between neighborhood and also people in public life. Akyüz explains the nature in her storytelling as follows: "There were the greenest trees in the world and the smell of soil. There was total silence but on the other side, rumble of the animals and the following stream. Well, it was the picture of tranquility and peace" (B. Akyüz, personal communication, May 12, 2017).

Storytellers try to make people feel the natural world, which they assume that most of the people long for the rural life and peace. Köktaş says, "Back to nature and also to rural from cities are very common nowadays. I want to pursue storytelling in cities to give people who stuck in the cities a relaxation, a relief. If I could manage the audience to dream in that nature which stories pass, that is a success for me" (D. Köktaş, personal communication, January 10, 2017)

Moreover, Liberman says storytelling is an ecological movement for herself when she gave an interview to the ecological association. She says that the tie between the ecology and the storytelling is very powerful and reciprocal. They feed each other according to the Liberman. Nature born to the stories and in story brings the desire to connect with nature. In nature, people have more ideas, more dreams in their minds and have more stories in their hearts since people "open" their dreams and hopes when they get connected with nature (Benim İçin Masal, 2017).

The storytelling camps that are organized by storytellers give the audience a chance that they could follow "back to the nature" or "back to the roots" movements in these isolated spaces. This becomes a trendy activity and at the same time holiday including healing for their souls. Even though nature may lay under the storytelling practice,

matching current storytelling events with the nature do not change the fact that this tradition is constructed in this way.

It is possible to claim this powerful tie, which is always reflected in a tree in the storytelling nights. Trees that are mentioned are important and various in these nights. As it was mentioned Seiba International Storytelling Center took its name from a ceiba tree. The tree might be a symbol of the peace and tranquility since the entire meeting in the stories happens there as a space. Relationally, these trees that are mentioned, in general nature, give audience an understanding of "peace" with these characteristics.

Storytellers serve purification to the audiences, which consist of focusing on the moment, secession from anxieties about daily life or fundamental problems of their lives. Storytelling keeps people in time with its adventures.

In terms of time, audience is tried to live in the moment of the story and the storytelling. Plays that are played interactively during storytelling or before the telling session keep people in the time by making them focus on the mission of the play. Senem Donatan claims that plays are practices of being existed at the time. Since there are no past and future concerns for the children, they are the best in the plays for this reason (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 17, 2016).

4.3.2. Nostalgia

In the storytelling nights, the meditative function of the storytelling is provided with the idea of the nostalgia. Storytellers with their unrational focus on the stories, try to take their burdens and send audience to their childhood. Donatan says that: "Children are always at the moment? Think about it. Who can go the home earlier, a mom or a child? Children discover by living in the moment while the mom could think what to do at home or daily responsibilities" (S. Donatan, personal communication, April 17, 2016). Being children and the childhood are always mentioned in the nostalgic sense. Donatan says that to be able to dream you should wear your childhood shoes.

While it was asked to Çevik Azazi to explain the most striking reaction that she got from the audience, she gave example of her audience in retirement home, who says "My girl, I am 88 years old. Now, you told me a story and I listened. Also, I listened a story when I was 8. You make me return to my 8 years old, thank you." Since storytelling is a practice which mostly attributed to the childhood, people not only feel like they are in their child shoes, additionally, they remember their real memories from the childhood as this example shows.

Gammon tells that it is not interesting anymore that adult miss the past within the imperfections of the present in order to protect the simplicity of the past. The interesting part is today's young generation "yearn for the good old days" (Gammon, 2002, p. 61). Gammon shows media turning its face to past's television programs, music and sport programs as a key factor for this nostalgia.

Young people commemorate the idealized past in their imagination which they have never live. The transitions of cultural and social changes, such as migration, that people live tie themselves to the past. On the other side, as Başgöz mentioned that the role of the storyteller as making people "escape the boredom, problem and monotony of the village life" (Başgöz, 2008, p. 110) is could be supported that people demand the things that they do not have from storytellers. In this case, it is possible to see nostalgia as a way of escaping the reality since the social and political atmosphere of the Turkey may force people to imagine a bright future.

Moreover, it is mentioned that people search for themselves and they also search for their missing parts such as their childhood memories or their childhood itself. As the rising of the storytelling practice, the childhood and its values rise in the storytelling nights. This could be in relation to the unrationality that is emphasized. Since childhood is taken as the term which rational capacity does not work and actions are provided by the emotions, it might be a way that storytellers use to make audience think with emotions by turning them to their childhood.

Critically, storytellers share their events and their thought online through Facebook or other social media accounts very frequent. Even they always advise to avoid the

excessive use of the social media, they publish their events, share the photographs from their nights, workshops or courses.

Secondly, even they criticize the material world and the consumption practices; storytelling also becomes a practice of consumption in some cases. It even materializes the nature when they have event or workshop in the natural sites by determining the price of the event. These prices could change between 300 to 800 TL depending on the days of the event.

Thirdly, while storytellers reject or undervalue the rational mind, which standardizes personality and also the written form of the stories; it is not logical to give storytelling courses, which based on strategies rather than feeling and improvising. This is the course that storytellers give hints and strategies about attracting the audience, controlling the voice while telling and memorizing the tale before telling.

Even Nazlı Çevik Azazi supports the idea that she was raised in the Anatolia that hosts lots of the stories, she defines that her theoretical education which she gave in Germany as a "mind" of her art (Çevik Azazi, 2017, p. 16). As Kristin Wardezky who was instructor of storytelling at Universitat der Künste Berlin, said to Çevik Azazi "We learn storytelling by you and now you learn from us." Here "us" and "you" symbolizes the West and East. Azazi says that "telling traditions are developed more in East than West since religion and structure of language feed it. Drawing in Islam was forbidden and when a way of expression was banned other one develops more."

While it was indicated as continuation of the tradition, it does not take its root from but the knowledge that is produced by European instructors. It could be explained with the Said's Orientalism (1978), which West produces knowledge about the East among its practices. In other words, it was supposed that The Orient's traditions and practices should pass the lenses of the Occident to exist "properly" over the storytelling practices.

While storyteller emphasizes the importance of the spirituality, emotions, they give importance for this education based on rational thinking and quick solutions rather

than giving it an effort in time. These courses become like a pill, which makes people storyteller when they swallow it. While Ergün so supports the idea of the spirituality in telling tales, she points out that telling is a talent and transferred through generation (Ergün, 2014, p. 38). Moreover, in storytelling there is proverb, “selling story” symbolizing to be listened, to tell and also symbolic amount of money to teach someone a story (Ergün, 2014, p. 42). This selling story in today was sustained with a change which price is not symbolic anymore. It is possible to see the place of storytelling in the consumption culture by selling storytelling nights, workshops, camps and courses and books.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis has analyzed the debates on the tradition, narrative theories and culture. When the storytelling is considered in the circle of these debates, the change and the continuity in the storytelling practice become prominent to define today's storytelling nights. I conclude that traditions could be evaluated in their categories if they still fit with their context. In current storytelling nights, it is expected to see changes but these changes occur also in the context of the tradition. When the context of the tradition is transmitted into another non-folk context, it is hard to classify as the same tradition, but it could be evaluated properly as well.

My effort to understand current storytelling nights in Istanbul, mainly derives from its roots in the concepts of cultural product, performance, oral narrations. Within these concepts, storytelling is a performative art which uses oral narratives and its specific motifs. Current storytelling nights may use the traditional folktales and fairy tales and with different narratives which could be myths, children stories, proverbs etc. Different than past, in this performative art, it is possible to support that there is a stage show effect in addition to the performance of the telling.

There is a reciprocal relation between the changes in the storytelling and the demand of the society. As it was shown that the demands of the society change the tradition itself whereas changes in the tradition has already responded to the demands of the society. In this case, it is possible to say that, within the context of the tradition it is important to see the demands of the society who rise within its new form. In other words, since demands of the society responded with the changes of the current storytelling nights, it becomes a rising tradition, which responds to the demands of the society.

After the place of the current storytelling nights was discussed, in Chapter 3, Turkish oral traditions and Islamic oral traditions were discussed. Storytelling nights have common features with the traditional oral narrations which were performed in Anatolia. In comparison, storytelling nights were equated with the traditional storytelling practices rather than *meddah*, *ozan* or *aşık*. Current storytellers in Istanbul are women as well as traditional *masal anaları.* While the stories are evaluated as cultural heritage, there is a reason behind the ignorance of the storytelling performance. Since storytellers are mostly women in Anatolia, it could not be researched in depth by men.

One of the significance of analyzing current storytelling practices is its bounded time and place. This boundedness closes the storytelling to its natural process. In traditional storytelling, all audiences were welcomed and they know each other beforehand whereas now audiences could attend these nights by purchasing a ticket and RSVPing beforehand. The market of the storytelling nights was discussed since it brings along the context within itself. When being storyteller becomes a profession, the effects of the market on the performance were discussed. The tradition as a performance art, today is intertwining between the performance and the stage show.

The hybrid form in the storytelling practice, which occurs in today, consists of the structures of the past that embedded in the storytelling practices and also newly, established forms of the storytelling. While there are reasons behind these changes such as urban life styles, it could not be denied that there are changes in the practice.

In the continuation of Chapter 3, the functions that oral narrations give to the society were analyzed under some sub-chapters such as transposition, identity, entertainment, escaping from the reality and functions in the family. While some functions of the storytelling still exist such as transposition of culture or entertainment, their contexts were changed. The cultural transposition in past turned into the emotional transposition and teaching the emotions to the society. Moreover, these teachings of the emotions aimed at the children in past whereas today, adults learn to express their emotions which are underestimated in the rational world.

In the current storytelling nights, audiences create their own group identities. This identity does not depend on the ethnicity or religion but it roots from the lifestyles, i.e. living in urban life but demanding to live in rural life with its natural and relaxed atmosphere. In this group identity of the audiences, they demand basically to relax through the storytelling events which turn the practice into a healing practice. Under the social and political pressure of the present, audience desire to escape from this chaotic world to the safer world which is full of hope. In this world, audiences hope, they dream by hoping and hope for the something to cause change. Audiences relate themselves with the hero and its journey which story is being told. This makes them to see the change that they rarely witness in the real chaotic world which justice mostly do not work. In other words, audiences feel the power to change, see the change, which is less possible to happen in actual world.

The crucial point in these functions that they become motivations for the storytellers and the audience. In another word, these functions of the past that were listed by many scholars are the outcomes of the continuous oral narratives whereas current storytellers use them as a motivation for the audience. In addition to these functions that they still last, there are others that were observed throughout the field. These changes do not only take place in the structures of this oral tradition but also in its functions. The hybrid form in the storytelling also consists of the function of the past that takes place in the present and the new functions that born with the demands of the society. The functions coming from the past become the continuing functions of the today while in past there were not functions but the results of the practice.

This study has aimed to trace the progress of the storytelling and its functions and motivations. Moreover, this research's importance lies on the gap in the academia, which does not give a place to storytelling as an event. In the storytelling literature, the discussions are mostly based on the stories and the functions are evaluated based on the stories. This research shows the storytelling nights as a practice, which serves functions to the society.

Chapter 4, discusses the main motivations of the storytellers promise to the audience and audience's expectations from the current storytelling nights. These motivations of

the storytelling nights are created under the effects of the market value of the storytelling. This chapter is based on mainly three points which are storytelling's functions on giving hope, social gathering and imposed spirituality. Even it may be possible to see these functions in past, they become motivations to continue the tradition as well as to "sell" the tradition.

These motivations are shaped by the demands of the society which desire more hopeful world ot live in. Moreover, the isolated and urban way of life make people necessitate the social gatherings which they have chance to attend as an active agent. For this reason, storytelling nights an experiencing a performance become much more prominent than being a viewer or a listener. Moreover, the need of the people is not always for gathering but also healing. Storytellers motivate the audience with the storytelling's effect of healing. Storytellers try to heal audience who are under the pressure of urban life and politics in Istanbul.

Within the importance of this thesis, future researches may focus on the traditions' performance aspect rather than the text itself. Moreover, there will be research on the origins of the performance, which are underestimated in the traditions of the past. The rising in the storytelling nights in Istanbul could be directly explains by the responses that they get for their demands in this established culture.

In the future researches, it would be vital to evaluate the tradition within its change and continuities in relation with its context. It is possible to assume that traditions are changing and continue to change in the future. The problem does not arise from this change but from the separating the core of the tradition and the context of it. Future researches may focus on this aspect in addition to the role of the performance when they achieve the verbal act.

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APPENDIX A.

TURKISH SUMMARY/ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Masal anlatıcılığı pratiği, geçmiş kültürlerden günümüze bağlantıları kök salmış bir gelenektir. Bu anlamda, İstanbul'daki güncel masal anlatıcılığı pratikleri izleyiciye kendisiyle ilişki kurmanın bir yolunu sunuyor. Sözlü geleneklerde görüldüğü gibi masal anlatıcılığı, izleyici için dikkat çekici bazı motivasyonlar önermektedir. Bu tez çalışması boyunca analiz edilen nokta güncel masal anlatıcılığı ve izleyicilerin beklentileri arasında bir bağlantı olabileceğidir. Bu tezde, dinleyicilerin masal anlatıcılığı ile kendilerini ilişkilendirme şekilleri ile masal anlatıcılığının sürdürülme motivasyonlarının iç içe geçmiş olabileceği öne sürülüyor. Bu motivasyonlar masal anlatıcılığı pratiklerinden bağımsız olsalar da masal anlatıcılığı, bunları kendi içindeki kendi işlevi olarak görebilir.

Motivasyonlar ve işlevler, bu tez boyunca ortak anahtar kelimelerdir. Bu açıdan, birbirleriyle nasıl bağlantılı olarak kullanıldıklarını ve farklılaştıklarını göstermek önemlidir. Motivasyon, birisinin hareket etmesine neden olan dürtü sağlama eylemi olarak tanımlanır (Shanks, 2012, sf. 24). Masal anlatıcılığı pratiğinden önce oluşan ve bu pratiğe anlatıcıyı ve dinleyeni teşvik eden nedenleri göstermek için motivasyon kelimesini kullanılacaktır. Motivasyonlar, seyircilerin masal anlatıcılığı pratiklerine katılımının ve masal anlatıcılarının bu geleneği sürdürme arzusunun arkasındaki nedenleri sorguluyor. Fonksiyon, bir diğer yandan, eylemin amacı ve seyirciye toplumsal ve ahlaki açıdan verdiği şeyler olarak kullanılır. Fonksiyonlar, anlatı geleneği gerçekleştirildikten sonra ortaya çıkan masal anlatıcılığının sonuçları olabilir. Dolayısıyla, motivasyonun geleneğin öncesine dayandığını ve pratiğin gerçekleştirilmesinden sonrasında işlevin yürürlüğe girdiğini belirtmek mümkündür.

Barnard (2004) sosyal kurumun, yüklenen yapıda yalnızca bir işlevi yerine getirebileceğini görmenin sorunlu olduğunu iddia ediyor. Masal anlatıcılığını, insanların ortak çıkarlarını paylaştığı bir sosyal kurum olarak sınıflandırırsak masal anlatıcılığı, bireysel ihtiyaçlara bağlı olarak çeşitli motivasyonlara sahip olur. Bu analiz şekli, kendi seçim özgürlüğüne sahip olan bireylerin kendi eylem şekillerine ve ihtiyaçlarına odaklanmaktadır.

Sözlü geleneklerde Türk ve Osmanlı tarihi verimli bir geçmişe sahiptir. Sözlü gelenekler ve sözlü performans tartışmalarına başlamadan önce, bunların neler olduğunu sınıflandırmak gerekir. Sözlü performansların bir kısmı aşıklık ve ozanlık, hikaye anlatıcılığı, masal anlatıcılığı, meddahlar ve benzeri şeklinde örneklendirilebilir. Takip eden bölümlerde, mevcut masal anlatıcılığının ve geleneksel sözlü performansların karşılaştırılmasının olduğunu görmek mümkündür. Bir kavram olarak masal anlatıcılığı, hikâyeler ve masalların söylendiği performans için spesifik olarak kullanılır. Masal anlatıcılığı kurgusal olduğu için diğer sözlü performanslardan farklıdır, oysa hikaye anlatıcıları, meddah ve aşıklar bazı gerçek durumları söyler ve bu durumları detaylandırırlar. Geçmişte masal anlatıcılığı, ya kırsal köylerde tanıdıklar arasında, ya da düzenli masal anlatım pratikleri sayesinde tanışan insanlarla sergilenmiştir. Ancak artık masal anlatıcılığı, izleyici pozisyonuna geçen insanları dekorasyon, müzik ve bedensel ifadeler gibi tiyatro unsurlarıyla sahnelere çağıran sanatsal bir performansa veya sahne şovuna dönüşüyor.

Geleneğin zaman içindeki değişimleri masal anlatıcılığının özü hakkında bazı soruları beraberinde getirdi. Piyasadaki masal anlatıcılığının şimdiki değerini geçmişe kıyasla nasıl değerlendirebileceğimiz sorgulanabilir. Değişiklikler ve devamlılık, kültürel ürünler ve gelenekler için her zaman bu mevzular tartışılmıştır. Bu anlatı geceleri için "masal anlatıcılığı" kavramını kullanabilmek adına geleneksel masal anlatıcılığı pratiklerinin bu anlatı geceleri ile nasıl ilişkilendirildiğine bakmak gerekir.

Masal anlatıcılığı performansıyla ilgili araştırma yaparak, mevcut masal gecelerinin toplumun beklentilerini veya "ihtiyaçlarını" nasıl işaret ettiğini göstererek akademideki bu konudaki boşluğu doldurmak hedeflenmektedir. Yukarıda belirtildiği gibi, masal anlatım gecelerinin popülaritesi her geçen gün artmaktadır. Bu artış, bu

masal gecelerine olan talebin, masal anlatıcılığından farklı şekillerde memnun olduklarından, insanların bu performanslarla daha fazla ilgilendiğini gösterdiğini göstermektedir. Ben-Amos "işlevsel yorumlama" yöntemini kullandığından (1992, sf. 115), ve kültürel üretimlerin "toplumsal ve kültürel bütünleşmeye katkılarının açıklanması isteği" nden dolayı, masallar ve işlevlerinin anlatım esnasında incelenmesinin önemini vurgular.

Bu araştırmada, masal anlatıcılığı konusunu metinden ayırarak değil, metnin ve masal anlatıcılığı uygulamalarının bağlamını analiz ederek çıkardım. Bu yaklaşım, masal anlatmayı performans yönü yerine metin olarak alan akademik alandaki boşluğu doldurmaya çalışmaktadır.

Bu sözlü gelenekler, iletişimsel davranış ifadeleri içinde gerçekleşti. Bu anlamda sözlü gelenekleri, izleyicilerle sınırlı bir zaman ve mekanda gerçekleştirilen bir estetik iletişim performansı olarak kabul ediyoruz. Bu masal anlatma performanslarını analiz etmeye çalışırken, masal anlatıcılığının amacı insanları toplamak, bilgi aktarmak, insanlara danışmanlık yapmak olabilecek iletişimsel, sosyal ve kültürel yönlerine odaklanmaya çalışıyorum (Bauman, 1992, sf. 41; Ben-Amos, 1992, sf. 111).

Masal derlemelerini toplayan ve bu derlemeler üzerine çalışan birçok araştırma var. Bu sözlü gelenekleri "güvenceye almak" için, insanlar bu masalları toplamaya başlarlar ve daha sonra yazıya dökerler. Bu nedenle masallar üzerinde yazılmış çok sayıda tez bulunabilmektedir. İnsanlar bu masalları geleneğin hale sürdürüldüğü belli başlı şehir veya köylerden toplar ve bu masalları bölgelerine göre kategorize ederler.

Günümüz dünyasında üstüne yoğunlaşılan bir konu olan masal anlatıcılığını incelediğimizde içerdiği bilgelik mevcut varoluşsal ya da toplumsal sorunlarımız için yararlı bulunabilir. Birkaç yüzyıl boyunca sorulan sorulara cevap vermiş ve bu cevaplara sadık olma konusunda ders vermiştir. Dahası, masallar zaman zaman mesajlar veya mücadeleler olarak değişir. Bu yolla, toplumun mevcut mücadelelerini içerdiğinden, günümüzün gelecek kuşaklara aktarılması olarak düşünülebilir.

İnsanlar kendi kültürlerini, yaşadıklarını, sözlü olarak aktarır ve masallar bunların günümüze kadar aktarılmasına yardımcı olur. Goody der ki, "okuryazar olmayan toplumlarda, sözlü gelenekler sözlü kanal aracılığıyla verilen her şeyden oluşur"

(Goody, s.13). Bu doğal sürecin aksine, sözlü gelenekler ötekileştirilip yüzüstü bırakılma riski ile karşı karşıya kalmışlardır. Goody, dinsel uygulamalar ve inançlar okur-yazarlı kültürlerde kutsal metinlere dayandığında sözlü geleneğin bir din ürünü değil, bir tür sihir olarak algılanabildiğini söylemiştir (Goody, 13). Bu, sözlü kültürle karşılaştırıldığında yazılı formlara nasıl saygı gösterildiğini gösterir.

İstanbul'daki güncel masal anlatıcıları, teknolojinin hızla yükseldiğini ve makinelerin hayatımıza hükmettiğini vurguluyor. Çalışma alanlarımızdaki makineleşmenin etkisiyle de robotlaşma eğilimi içinde olabileceğimizi varsayıyorlar. Üstelik, teknoloji ve sanayileşmenin yaygın biçimde kullanılmasının insan duyguları ve hislerinde bir tür yoksunluğa neden olabileceğini iddia ediyorlar. Masal geceleri, hayatın başka bir toplumsal koşulda nasıl olacağını hatırlatarak bir uzaklaşma ve kurtuluş modeli önerir. Teknoloji- masal anlatıcılığı ilişkisi üzerine bir diğer görüş, uyarlanmış bu pratiğin yaygınlaştırılmasının teknolojik ilerlemelerin insan hayatına verdiği yabancılaşmanın doğrudan bir sonucu olduğudur.

Masal geceleri yükselen bir folklor ürünü olarak, toplumun geleneklerini çağın koşulları içinde değiştirerek kendi ihtiyaçlarını nasıl talep ettiklerini veya karşıladıklarını gösteriyor. Masal anlatıcılığındaki güncel değişiklikler, toplumun bu masal gecelerinde görmek ya da deneyimlemek istedikleri olguların değişmiş olabileceğini gösterir. Bu gecelerin popülerliği ve sürekliliği seyirci ihtiyaçlarının tatmine bağlıdır. Masal anlatıcılığındaki değişimler ve izleyicilerin arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Seyirci, masal anlatıcılığında kendi ihtiyaçlarının karşılanmasını talep eder. Bu ihtiyaçların masal anlatımlarına katılma motivasyonlarını değiştirdiği görülmüştür. Önemli bir nokta olarak, masal anlatıcılarının izleyicileri için yerine getirmeyi vaat ettikleri bu ihtiyaçlar, masal anlatıcılığının ana motivasyonu haline gelmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, izleyiciler masal anlatıcılığının işlevlerini etkiler çünkü ihtiyaçlarının karşılamasını isterler ve seyirciyi tatmin edebilirlerse masal anlatıcılığı popülerleşmeye devam eder.

Diğer sanatsal etkinliklerin seyirciye vermediği temel işlev, masal gecelerinde insanların paylaştığı fiziksel alana ek olarak manevi olarak da insanlarla bir araya geliyor olmasıdır. Araştırma, masal anlatıcılığını anlatılan masallardan bağımsız bir

performans olarak ele alır. Masal anlatıcıların sayısının giderek artması; masal anlatma etkinlikleri, kurumsal yaşantıdaki masal anlatıcı eğitimleri ve çocuk-anne eğitimleri gibi farklı alanlara yayılmış olan masal anlatıcılığının yaygınlaştığını varsaymak mümkündür. Bu araştırma, izleyicilerin taleplerine ve masal anlatıcılarının vaatlerine bakarak bu yükselişin nedenini sorgular. Başka bir deyişle, insanların masal gecelerinden neler talep ettikleri, masal anlatıcılarının seyircilere neler vaat ettiği ve bu vaatleri nasıl öne sunduğu gibi soruları cevaplamak, masal anlatıcılığını toplumdaki bir ihtiyaç olarak niteleyen bu grup açısından önemlidir.

Ayrıca, değişen masal anlatma pratiklerinin gerekliliği sorusu, masal anlatıcılığının şu andaki durumuyla tekrar incelenmekte; bunlar, masal anlatıcılığına geleneğin neresinde yer bulduğumuza dayalı soruları içeren serilerden oluşmaktadır.

Güncel masal anlatım pratikleri, ahlaki değer temelli sözlü anlatımlardan ziyade "pazarlanabilir" performansları destekleyen bir yönde durmaktadır. İnsanların karşılanması gereken talepleri olan ve belli motivasyonları başarmayı arzulayan bu alanda masal anlatıcılığı geceleri, rağbet gören veya çok talep edilen konuları kullanarak parasal kâr elde etmek üzerinden bir çeşit manipülasyona dönüşebilme riskiyle karşı karşıyadır. Başka bir deyişle, masal anlatıcılığı, bazı ahlaki düşünceleri izleyicilere iletmeye çalışmaktadır. Masal anlatıcıları, masalları bu ahlaki düşünceleri daha fazla para kazanmak için ayarlamaya başlasalar masalın özünü aşabilirler. Bu öz, masal anlatıcılığının verdiği ve pratikte önemli yer kaplayan ahlaki değerler olabilir. Ahlaki düşüncelerin yanı sıra, değiştirilen masal anlatıcılığının işlevi de önemlidir. Eğer masal anlatıcılığı belli bir ideolojiyi dinleyicilerin talepleri doğrultusunda aktaran geçici bir eğlence veya araç olarak kullanılırsa geleneklerde bir sorun olabilir. Masal anlatmanın işlevleri masal anlatıcılığının daha fazla kâr elde etme taleplerine bağlı olarak değişirse, gelecekte bu taleplerin var olmadığı dönemlerde bu gelenek önemini kaybetme riskiyle karşı karşıya kalacaktır.

Güncel masal anlatıcılığını bu popülerleşen performanstaki konuları tartışabilmek adına çağdaş bir performans formu olarak veya bir geleneğin canlandırılması olarak tanımlamak önemlidir. Bunun geleneğin canlandırılması olduğunu ve onun işlevlerinin geleneksel versiyonla uyuşmadığını söylersek özünün çok değiştirildiğini

gözlemlemek mümkün olacaktır. Öte yandan, masal geceleri, bölgenin tanıdık olmadığı yeni oluşturulmuş bir performans formu değil. Dolayısıyla, anlatı yapısını güvence altına alarak ve işlevleri değiştirilişini göz önüne aldığımızda masal gecelerini bu iki özelliği birleştiren bir hibrit form olduğunu söylemek yanlış değildir.

Masal anlatıcılığının sözlü bir gelenek olarak değerlendirilmesinden sonra, sözlü anlatıların nasıl yapılandırıldığına odaklanılması önemlidir. Bu tezde, masal anlatıcılığı sözlü bir gelenek olduğundan, bu anlatının kökenleri ve masal anlatıcılığı süreçleri İstanbul Masal Geceleri başlığı altında analiz edilecektir. Masal anlatıcılarının uyguladığı atmosfer, performans özellikleri, anlatı zamanının yapılandırılması, seyirci ile masal anlatıcısı arasındaki etkileşim, İstanbul'da masal anlatıcılığı geceleri hakkında tartıştığım konu ve kavramlardan bazılarıdır. Ayrıca, masal anlatıcılığı uygulamasında kadın egemenliğinin nedenleri ve etkileri ayrı bir bölümünde incelenmektedir.

İkinci bölüm, geçmişten gelen ve bugünün masal anlatıcılığı pratiklerinde etkilileri süren işlevleri ele almaktadır. Geçmişten adapte edilerek devam ettirilen masal anlatıcılığının işlevleri mevcut işlevleri doğrudan etkilemez, ancak bu işlevlerdeki kaymaları gösterir. Masalların kültürün, toplumun tabularının ve kimliğin yaratılması ve bunların etkilerinin aktarılması üzerine dayalı işlevleri vardır. Bugün, bu işlevler günün sosyal ve politik koşullarının bulunduğu başka yollarla değişmektedir. Anlatıcılar, masal anlatıcısının haberci ve eğlendirici rolünü güncel masal anlatıcılığının işlevleri olarak desteklemektedir. Güncel masal anlatıcılığı ile ikinci bölümün konusu olan bu roller arasında bağlantılar olabilir. Çoğunlukla üçüncü bölüm, güncel masal anlatım gecelerinin temel işlevlerini ve bunların seyirci üzerindeki etkileri ve izleyici ile olan ilişkilerini gösterir.

Bu tez, mevcut masal anlatıcılığının motivasyonlarını ve işlevlerini açıklarken üç ana hipotez üzerine kurulmuştur. Bu hipotezler, masalların umut, bir araya getirme ve maneviyat rolü üzerine kurulmuştur. Masal anlatıcılarının, tutum ve söylemlerine bakarak seyirciye vaat ettikleri umut veren, şehir hayatında insanları bir araya getirmeye yönelik motivasyonları, günlük hayatta karşılaşılan baskılarla başa çıkma yolları ve kendilerine şifa sunmak biçimleri analiz edilecektir.

Birinci bölümde, masal anlatıcılığının diğer sözlü geleneklerle ilişkili olarak vurgulamayı amaçlamaktadır, çünkü masal anlatma, Türkiye'de meddah, ozan ve geleneksel masal anlatıcılığı biçimleri gibi sözlü geleneklerle benzerlik ve farklılık gösteren eski bir gelenektir. Bu analiz masal anlatıcılığının gelenek, kültürel üretim, sözlü anlatım ve performans kavramları altında nasıl kategorize edildiğini görmemizi sağlıyor. Bu açıdan Cashman, Mold ve Pravina, toplumu etkileyen geleneğin sanat, zanaat, iletişim, performans ya da folklor gibi bir ürüne dönüştüğünü iddia ediyor (2011, s. 3). Masalın bu kavramlar altındaki sınıflandırılması da bize vazgeçilmez bir özellik kazandırmaktadır. Masal anlatıcılığının ait olduğu bu gelenek, kültürel üretim, sözlü anlatım ve performans, süreç hakkındaki bazı bilgileri gösteren bu yapılara dayanan masal anlatıcılığı pratiklerini şekillendiren bazı yapılara sahiptir.

Bu tezde masal anlatıcılığı örneği üzerinden, değişime ve sürekliliğe dayanan gelenek kavramı üzerine tartışmalar ışığında değişim ve süreklilik arasındaki denge desteklenmektedir. Geleneğin değişimi ve sürekliliği masal anlatıcılığı uygulamasının motivasyonları, işlevleri ve harici unsurları temel alınarak tartışılır.

Masal anlatıcılığı da dönemin koşullarıyla yeni bir şeye dönüşmektedir. Gelenek bir terim olarak, izole edilebilir bir kültürel ögenin zamanla iletilmesi sürecine ve bu süreç boyunca iletilen öğelerin kendileri için kullanılır (Bauman, 1992, sf. 31). Bu durumda, Bauman geleneği "geçmişe dayanan ama doğal bir nesne biçiminde günümüze kadar süren geçici süreklilik" olarak almaktadır (Bauman, 1992, sf. 32). Buna ek olarak, geleneği günümüzün görünümü ile geçmişin yorumlanması arasındaki bağlantının sembolik bir yaratımı olarak önermektedir (aynı şekilde).

Masallar, Bauman ve Braid'in savunduğu gibi düşüncelerin iletilmesi için hayati önem taşırken, performansın önemi inkar edilmiştir. Bascom, kültürün bir ürünü olan folkloru toplumu eğitmekten ziyade toplum hakkında öğrenilmesi olarak tanımlamaktadır (Bascom, 1954). Masal anlatıcılığının performans yönü, toplum hakkında bilgi edinmek için kullanılabilir. Bascom'un folklor anlayışından yola çıkarak, masalların neyi dönüştürdüğünü ve değiştirdiğini analiz etmenin yanı sıra masal anlatıcılığının da günümüz meselelerini aydınlatacak bir araç olarak görülmesi gerekmektedir. Bir başka deyişle, masal anlatıcılığının masalların kullanıldığı bir

pratik olduğu gerçeği, masal anlatıcılığını yalnızca masalların öneminin olması demek değildir. Masal anlatıcılığı da masallardan bağımsız olarak performatif açıdan incelenecek öneme sahiptir. Örneğin, sözlü anlatımların ve sözlü kültürel ürünlerin çoğu, Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı'na göre kültürel miras olarak kabul edilirken, bu metinlerin performansları bunlara dahil değildir. Bu bağlamda, bir sosyal olay olan masal anlatıcılığı, metni ve performansı birleştiren birçok boyuta sahiptir. Bauman ve Braid, sözlü geleneklerin yalnızca toplu biçimde şekillendirilmiş metin öğeleri olarak algılandığını, geniş alana dağılabilen, zamanla varlığını sürdürecek, koleksiyonları ve arşivleri dolduracak ya da kültürü yansıtacak geleneksel metinleri analiz ettiğini öne sürmektedir (Bauman & Braid, 1998, sayfa 106). Çoğunlukla göz ardı edilen şey, zaman içinde var olan ve kültürü yansıtan sözlü geleneklerin performans tarafıdır. Benzer şekilde, pek çok halk bilimci tarafından sözlü anlatıların sadece metin değil sosyal olayların içinde bulunduğu fikrini vurguladığı için, Bauman ve Braid de, performansın, sözel geleneklerde anahtar bir faktör olduğunu vurgular; çünkü varlıkları insanların eylemini açıklar ve kökleri sosyal ve kültürel hayata dayanmaktadır (Bauman & Braid, 1998, sayfa 107).

Türk kültüründe sözlü anlatılar ve sözlü performanslar belirgin bir yere sahiptir. Sözlü anlatımlara dayanan sözlü gelenekler, Orta Asya'nın sözlü kültüründen türemiştir. Orta Asya, sözlü kültürü göçebe oldukları için benimsediği gibi, Türklerin dokuzuncu yüzyılda Küçük Asya(Anadolu)'ya göçü de sözlü geleneği ve bu kültürün birçok masalını benimser (Halman, 2013, sf. 55) Bu göçte Türkler, Anadolu miraslarını, kültürlerini, kültlerini ve epik hayal gücünü ve İslami anlatı geleneğini edinmişlerdir. Bu anlatıların evlerde ve onaltıncı yüzyılın ortalarından sonra yapılan toplantılarda ortaya konduğu belirtilmiştir (Halman, 2013, s. 56).

Sözlü anlatı geleneklerinde, erkeklerin anlatıcı olarak bu alana hakim oldukları birçok kişi tarafından kabul edilmiştir. Aksine, geleneksel masal anlatıcılığında anlatıcılar çoğunlukla kadınlardır. Bu durumda, kadınların ve erkeklerin masal anlatıcılığı pratiklerini ayırt etmek daha sağlıklı olacaktır (Ben-Amos, 1992, s.111). Ancak geleneksel masal anlatıcılığı dendiğinde kastedilen, köylerde masal anlatan kadın masalcılardır. "Masal anaları", edebiyatta ve folklorda bu kadın masalcılar için yaygın olarak kullanılan bir ifadedir (Ergün, 2014).

İddia edilen kadınların tüm sözlü geleneklere egemen olmaları değil, ancak kadınların hikâyeleri anlatmada önemli rolleri olduğunu görmenin çok önemli olduğudur. Günümüzde, bu gelenek, geçmişte olduğu gibi baskı altındaki kadınların sesini yansıtmamakla birlikte, masal anlatıcılığı pratikleri kadınların İstanbul'daki egemenliği ile birlikte halen yapılmaktadır.

Geçmişten günümüze, Türkiye'deki masal anlatıcılığında gözlemlenebilecek farklı işlev ve motivasyonlar bulunmaktadır. Benzersiz tarzlarda, mekanlarda ve zamanlarda masal anlatıcılığı, topluma hizmet etmek için ortak işlevlere de sahiptir. Masal anlatıcıları, bilinçli veya bilinçsizce kendi performansları üzerinden bu işlevlere odaklanabilirler.

Masallar, zalim bir dünyada yaşamak ve hayatta kalmak için bir strateji oluştururlar (Halman, 2013, s. 60). Ayrıca, ezilen ve bastırılan açtık ve diğer yoksunluklarla başa çıkmaya çalışan halklar için bir eğlence fonksiyonu da sağlarlar. Bu amaçla, masal anlatıcıları, gerçek dünyadan daha kötü bazı durumları anlatırken, bazen gerçek dünyadan daha daha iyi durumlar anlatarak seyircilerin umut dolmasını arzu edebilirler. Bu durumda, masallar rüyaların ve dileklerin gerçekleşmesine ve hatta imkânsızlığa ulaşırken "tiranlığa, eşitsizliğe veya herhangi bir kötülüğe karşı bir direniş" olur (Halman, 2013, s. 60).

Masalların işlevleri, kültürün aktarım rollerine göre önemlidir. Pertev Boratav kitabında, gelecek nesillere aktarılacak yararlı bilgileri içeren masalların bir toplumda nasıl var olduğunu inceledi (Boratav, 1969). Örneğin, Boratav'ın analiz ettiği masallarda, koyunların nasıl önemli bir hayvan olduğu veya bir borunun nasıl kullanılabileceği gibi yararlı bilgiler bulunmaktadır.

Bir kültürü aktarmakla benzer olarak, dezavantajlı gruplar hikâye anlatıcılığı pratikleriyle kendi kimliklerini yaratır ve korurlar (Tewari Jassal, 2012 & Lila Ebu-Lughod, 1993). Bu anlayış, azınlık halklarına seslerini duyurma hakkı vermiştir ve insanlara kültürel farkındalık yaratmalarında yardımcı olur.

Öte yandan Başgöz, aşıklık ve masal geleneğinin köydeki insanların bir sanatsal etkinliğe katılmanın tek yolu olduğunu gözlemlemiştir (Başgöz, 2008, s. 144). Teknolojinin bulunmadığı kırsalın izole ortamlarında, masallar ve aşıklar köy

toplulukları tatmin edici eğlencelik formlardır. Bu şekilde masal anlatmanın hala sanatsal bir performans olduğunu söylemek mümkündür.

Masal anlatıcıları, performanslarında bugünün dünyasında insanların yüz yüze kaldıkları kötülüklerden bahsederler. Türkiye'nin içinde bulunduğu siyasi atmosfer ve toplumsal kutuplaşma nedeniyle insanların yaşadıkları haksızlıklar, bireyselleşme, toplum hakkında bazı değerlerin (mesela hoşgörü, misafirperverlik, yardımseverlik) azalması gibi sonuçlar ortaya çıkmış olabilir. Masal anlatıcıları bazen farkındalık yaratarak bu tür düşüncelerden söz ederler. Bu farkındalığı "Farkında mısınız ...?" veya "Duydunuz mu?" gibi çeşitli konular gündeme getirerek ya da konuyla ilgili şakalar yaparak masal gecelerine getirirler. Bu konuşmalar çoğunlukla anlatılan masallar, bunların umut verici etkileri ve geleceği umutla yaratma kapasiteleri ile devam etmektedir. Masal anlatıcıları, bu seyircilerin gözünde çizdikleri sosyal ve siyasi olarak kaotik dünyada, masal anlatmanın bu sorunları çözmenin bir yolu olduğunu iddia ederler.

Masal anlatıcılığı, bir hayal kurdurma sanatı olarak insana hayallerinin gerçekleşme imkânı için umut verir. Hayal kurma, insanların gerçek dünyadan kaçmak için masal anlatımlarına ihtiyaç duyduklarını düşündükleri için çok tercih edilen bir yol haline geliyor. Masal anlatım kurslarından birinde seyirciler arasında yer alan bir kişi, "izleyiciler bulundukları durumdan kaçmayı hayal ediyorlar ve alternatif bir dünya hayal ederek sosyal ve politik baskılardan kaçıyorlar. Düşündükleri dünyayı yaşadıklarını hissediyorlar ve bu his insanları hayat hakkında umutlu kılıyor "dedi. Ayrıca, kongrelerden birinde seyirci kitlesinden bir kadın kendini kahramanla özdeşleştirdiğini belirtti ve hatta bu yolda kahramanlaştığını ifade etti. Kötülüğün üstesinden gelinmesi ve toplum için iyilik yapma fikri ile dolup taştığını da açıklamalarına ekledi.

İnsanlar masal gecelerinde "yabancılarla" karşılaşma şansına sahip oluyor ki bu da insanların şehirleşen günlük hayatlarında yapılması pek mümkün olmayan bir şey haline geliyor. Bu atmosferin seyircilere sosyalleşmek, dinlemek ve en önemlisi bir şekilde kendi duygularının dinlendiği bir alan verdiğini varsaymak mümkündür. Diğer seyircilerle birlikte, bir dünyayı hayal ederler. Bu "önceki yabancılar" masal

gecelerinde zihinsel, sözlü veya fiziki katkılarla tanışmakta ve birlikte olmaktadırlar. Bir boşlukta toplanma biçimi, çoğunlukla geçici fakat bazen kalıcı olan bir topluluk oluşturur.

Bu tez, gelenek, anlatı teorileri ve kültür üzerine yapılan tartışmalarla birlikte masal anlatıcılığını analiz etmektedir. Masal anlatıcılığı bu tartışmalara dahil edildiğinde, masal anlatıcılığındaki değişim ve süreklilik günümüzün masal anlatıcılığı gecelerini tanımlamak için belirgin tartışmalar hale gelmektedir. Ben, geleneklerin kendi bağlamlarına uymaya devam ederse, kendi kategorilerinde değerlendirilebileceği sonucuna vardım. Güncel masal gecelerinde, değişiklikleri görmesi beklense de bu değişiklikler gelenek bağlamında gerçekleşmektedir. Geleneğin bağlamı başka bir bağlama taşındığında, aynı gelenek olarak sınıflandırılması zordur ve bu yeni bağlamda değerlendirilmesi gerekmektedir.

İstanbul'daki masal gecelerini anlamak için gösterdiğim çaba, esas olarak kültürel ürün, performans, sözlü anlatım konularındaki masal anlatıcılığı köklerine dayanmaktadır. Bu kavramlar çerçevesinde masal anlatıcılığı, sözlü anlatımları ve bunların getirdiği motifleri kullanan performatif bir sanat olarak değerlendirilebilir. Günümüzdeki masal geceleri, geleneksel hikâye ve masalları, efsaneler, çocuköyküleri, meseller gibi farklı türlerdeki anlatıları kullanabilir. Geçmişten farklı olarak, bu performatif sanatta, performansın yanı sıra bir sahne gösterisi efekti olduğunu da desteklemek mümkündür.

Masal anlatıcılığındaki değişiklikler ile toplumun talebi arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki vardır. Toplumun taleplerinin geleneğin kendisini değiştirdiği, gelenekteki değişiklikler ise toplumun taleplerine zaten cevap verir hale gelmiştir. Bu durumda, geleneğin bağlamında, toplumda masal anlatıcılığının yeni biçimiyle bu artan talepleri görmek önemlidir diyebiliriz. Başka bir deyişle, toplumun talepleri mevcut masal gecelerinin değişiklikleriyle örtüştüğünden toplumun taleplerine cevap veren yükselen bir gelenek haline gelmektedir.

Güncel masal gecelerinin yerini tartıştıktan sonra, Bölüm 2'de, Türk sözlü gelenekleri ve İslami sözlü gelenekler tartışıldı. Masal anlatıcılığı geceleri, Anadolu'da yapılan geleneksel sözlü anlatımlarla ortak özelliklere sahiptir. Güncel masal geceleri

meddah, ozan veya aşık yerine geleneksel masal anlatıcılığı uygulamalarıyla eşleştirildi. İstanbul'daki masal anlatıcıları geleneksel masal analarında gözlemlediğimiz gibi yine kadınlar olmuştur. Masallar kültürel miras olarak değerlendirilirken masal anlatıcılığı performansının öneminin gözden kaçırılmasının arkasında bir sebep bulunmaktadır. Masal anlatanların çoğunluğu ağırlıklı olarak Anadolu'daki kadınlar olduğu için erkekler tarafından derinlemesine araştırılması mümkün olmamıştır.

Mevcut masal geceleri araştırmasının önemlerinden biri de, sınırlı zaman ve mekanın pratik üstündeki etkileridir. Bu sınırlılık masal anlatıcılığının doğal sürecini kapatır. Geleneksel masal anlatıcılığında, tüm izleyiciler memnuniyetle karşılanmışlardı ve önceden birbirlerini tanıyor durumundaydılar, oysa izleyiciler bir bilet satın alarak ve önceden rezervasyon yaparak bu gecelere katılabilir hale geldiler. Masal gecelerinin market ve pazarlama değerleri, kendi içinde bir bağlam getirdiğinden tartışılmıştır. Masal anlatıcılığı bir meslek haline geldiğinde, piyasanın performans üzerindeki etkileri tartışıldı. Performans sanatı olarak gelenek, günümüzde performans ve sahne şovu arasında bir yer tutmaktadır.

Masal anlatıcılığı uygulamasında günümüzde ortaya çıkan ve bu tezde ortaya konan hibrid form, masal anlatıcılığı uygulamalarında yer alan geçmişin yapılarından ve masal anlatıcılığının yeni kurulmuş biçimlerinden oluşur. Kentsel yaşam tarzları gibi bu değişikliklerin ardındaki nedenler olsa da, pratiğin kendisinde değişiklikler olduğu inkar edilemez.

2. bölümün devamı olarak, sözlü anlatımların topluma kazandırdıkları işlevler, aktarım, kimlik yaratımı, eğlence, gerçek dünyadan kaçış ve ailedeki işlevleri gibi bazı alt bölümler halinde analiz edildi. Masal anlatıcılığının bazı işlevleri, kültür aktarımı veya eğlence gibi, hala mevcut olsa da bağlamlarının değiştirildiğini söylemek mümkündür. Geçmişteki kültürel aktarım, duygusal aktarıma dönüşüp duyguları topluma öğretmeyi aşılayan bir motivasyon haline gelmiştir. Üstelik, bu duygular geçmişte olduğu gibi sadece çocukların ifade etmesine yönelik değil yetişkinler için rasyonel dünyada göz ardı edilen duygularını ifade etmeye yöneliktir.

Güncel masal anlatıcılığı gecelerinde, izleyiciler kendi grup kimliklerini oluştururlardı. Bu kimlik etnik kökene veya dine bağlı olmak zorunda değildir, ancak kendi yaşam biçimlerindeki ortaklıklardan kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu ortaklıklar genellikle kentsel hayatta yaşamaları ve kırsal yaşamın doğal ve rahat atmosferinde yaşama arzusundan kaynaklanmaktadır. İzleyicilerin bu grup kimliğinde, telkin edici bir uygulamaya dönüşen masal anlatıcılığı ile temelde rahatlamayı talep etmeleri de etkilidir. Günümüzün toplumsal ve politik baskısı altında, izleyiciler bu kaotik dünyadan umut dolu daha güvenli bir dünyaya kaçmayı arzuluyorlar. Bu dünyada, izleyiciler umut ediyor ve umut ederek hayal ediyor ve bir şeylerin değişmesini hayal ediyorlar. İzleyiciler, kahraman ve kahramanın masalda anlatılan yolculuğu ile kendilerini bağdaştırırlar. Bu da, adaletin çoğunlukla işe yaramadığı gerçek dünyada izleyicilere nadiren tanık oldukları değişikliği görmelerini sağlar. Başka bir deyişle, izleyiciler, değişimin gücünü hissediyorlar ve gerçek dünyada gerçekleşmesi daha az imkanlı olan değişimi görüyorlar.

Bu işlevlerdeki en önemli nokta, masal anlatıcıları ve izleyicileri için bu işlevlerin motivasyon haline gelmeleridir. Bir başka deyişle, birçok akademisyen tarafından listelenmiş olan geçmiş anlatıların bu işlevleri, geçmişteki sözlü anlatımların sonuçlarıdır; oysa güncel masal anlatanlar onları seyirci için bir motivasyon olarak kullanmaktadır. Hâlâ sürdürdükleri bu işlevlere ek olarak, saha boyunca gözlemlenen başka işlevler de vardır. Masal anlatıcılığındaki değişiklikler yalnızca bu sözlü geleneğin yapılarında değil, işlevlerinde de gerçekleşir. Masal anlatıcılığındaki bu hibrid form, geçmiş anlatıların getirdiği yararlar ve toplumun talepleri doğrultusunda doğan yeni işlevlerin birleşiminden oluşur.

Bu çalışma, masal anlatıcılığının ilerlemesini, işlevlerini ve motivasyonlarını izlemeyi amaçlamıştır. Dahası, bu araştırmanın önemi, bir performans olarak masal anlatıcılığına yer vermeyen akademik alandaki boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlar. Masal anlatıcılığı edebiyatta daha çok masallara dayanır ve masalların yararları değerlendirilir. Bu araştırma, masal gecelerini, topluma çeşitli sunan bir pratik olarak göstermektedir.

Bölüm 3, masal anlatıcılarının izleyicilere ve izleyicilerin beklentilerine dair temel motivasyonlarını tartışmaktadır. Masal gecelerinin bu motivasyonları masal anlatıcılığının piyasa değerinin etkileri altında yaratılmıştır. Bu bölüm, masal anlatıcılığının umut verme, sosyal olarak bir araya gelme ve dayatılmış maneviyata ilişkin üç temel noktaya dayanıyor. Bu işlevleri geçmişte görmek mümkün olsa bile, geleneği sürdürmek ve geleneği piyasada "satabilmek" adına motivasyon olarak kullanılmalarına yer verilmiştir.

Bu motivasyonlar, toplumun içinde yaşamak istediği daha umutlu bir dünya talepleri doğrultusunda şekilleniyor. Dahası, izole ve kentsel yaşam biçimi, kişilerin aktif bir temsilci olarak katılma şansı olan topluluk toplantılarını zorunlu kılmaktadır. Bu nedenle, masal geceleri bir performans izlemek, izleyici ya da dinleyici olmaktan çok daha belirgin olarak insanlara vaatlerde bulunur. Dahası, halkın ihtiyacı daima toplanma ve bir araya gelmek için değil bu varsayıma ek olarak aynı zamanda şifalanmak içindir. Masal anlatıcıları, hikâyenin sağaltıcı etkisiyle kitleyi motive eder. Masal anlatıcıları, kentsel yaşam ve politik baskılar altındaki izleyicileri İstanbul'da sağaltmaya çalışıyorlar.

Bu tezin önemi, gelecek araştırmalar için metinlerin kendisinden ziyade geleneklerin performans yönüne de odaklanmanın gerekliliğini vurgulamasıdır. Dahası, geçmişin geleneklerinde göz ardı edilen performansın kökeni üzerine bir araştırma yapılabilir. İstanbul'daki masal anlatıcılığı gecelerindeki yükseliş, bu değişen kültür ürününün toplumun taleplerini karşılamaları ile doğrudan açıklanabilir.

Gelecekteki araştırmalarda, geleneğin değişimi ve sürekliliği içinde ve de bağlamıyla ilişkili olarak değerlendirilmesi hayati önem taşımaktadır. Geleneklerin değiştiğini ve değişmeye devam edeceğini varsaymak mümkündür. Sorunun, bu değişimden değil, geleneğin özünü ve onun bağlamından ayırmaktan kaynaklandığını söyleyebiliyor olmak gerekmektedir. Gelecekteki araştırmalar, sözlü eylemi gerçekleştirirken performansın rolüne ek olarak bu yöne de odaklanabilirler.

APPENDIX B.

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ■

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : İnam
Adı : Dilara
Bölümü : Sosyal Antropoloji

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : The Functions of Storytelling Practices: Current Storytelling Nights in Istanbul

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ■ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ■
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: 05 / 01 / 2018