

**Between the Cannon and the Tradition – Local Versions of Mevlid
among the Suni Turks in North-eastern Bulgaria**

Behrin Shopova

(Summary)

Mevlid is one of the basic ritual complexes in the culture of the Turks in Bulgaria and is practiced by all Muslim communities. It is believed to be religious in nature and is an immanent part of the system of calendar and family rites. Mevlid first appears among Sufi Muslims, but soon becomes an element of the traditional Suni rites. The article follows the appearance and the diffusion of the rite and further compares Mevlid in mosque practice with its performance in the village tradition by revealing the specifics of the ritual as it is performed in the village of Gorna Hubavka, Targovishte region. The use of a text which differs from the conventional one, the appointment of specific months in the religious calendar for the performance of the ritual, the inclusion of authors songs not related to the Prophet, as well as the nature of the ritual stereotypes that are built form the local specifics of the ritual in the village. The analysis of the Mevlid and its particular local characteristics opens the possibility for the study of a very important aspect of the culture of the Suni in Bulgaria. It reveals the mechanisms of functioning of the so-called Balkan Islam which differs substantially from the high Islamic religious culture.

Keywords: Mevlid; Islam culture; Turkish musical folklore; mosque practice; religious music

Behrin Shopova
behrin@abv.bg