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Review Paper

An examination of the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik tradition as an element of intangible cultural heritage (ICH)

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik traditions, which are specific to Regaip Kandili and practiced in Konya, at a conceptual and theoretical level within the framework of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) approach. The study is based on the assumption that these rituals should be evaluated not only as religious practices but also as multidimensional cultural practices in the context of building social belonging, maintaining cultural identity, keeping collective memory alive, and intergenerational cultural transmission processes. The research does not rely on empirical data collection techniques from qualitative research methods; it is a conceptual study designed using a traditional (narrative) literature review approach. The theoretical framework is structured based on UNESCO's ICH classification and Turner's theory of rites of passage and collective memory approaches. The literature review determined that the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik traditions highly correspond to the categories of "social practices, rituals, and festive events" and "oral traditions and expressions" in UNESCO's ICH classification. The findings reveal that these rituals play a decisive role in children's culture and socialization processes, strengthen community solidarity at the neighborhood level, and contribute to the reproduction of local cultural identity. The study emphasizes that evaluating the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik traditions as elements of SOKÜM offers significant potential for the preservation, documentation, and perpetuation of these practices within the framework of sustainable cultural policies.

Keywords

Keywords: Fener Alayı, Şivlilik, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Ritual, Cultural Identity

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Ethics & Conflict of Interest

Conflict of Interest
The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Ethics committee approval is not required because primary data was not collected.

Author Contributions

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Aslı Sultan Eren (Lecturer) ✉ (corresponding)	0000-0002-1173-2560 aseren@fsm.edu.tr	60%	Methodology, Writing - Review & Editing
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1. Introduction

The concept of cultural heritage is a multidimensional phenomenon that is not limited to historical structures, monuments, or archaeological remains; it also encompasses societies' lifestyles, values, beliefs, oral narratives, and social practices (Lenzerini, 2011; Qiu et al., 2022). In particular, UNESCO's 2003 "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage" emphasized the living, dynamic, and participatory nature of culture. In this context, elements such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festivals, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional crafts have also been included in the definition of cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003; Oğuz, 2009).

The religious, cultural, and social practices developed by societies throughout history play an important role in identity construction and strengthening intergenerational bonds (Bortolotto, 2007). Rituals and traditions that are part of these practices and have gained popularity among the people function not only as religious or cultural elements but also as carriers of social memory and a sense of belonging (Lenzerini, 2011; Qiu et al., 2022; Yan and Li, 2023). A similar practice can be seen in the torchlight procession and shivlilik traditions held in Konya. Regaip Kandili (Tekeli, 2007) is one of the sacred nights with special significance in the Islamic world, and the rituals and practices specific to this night manifest in different forms within local folk cultures. In this context, the "Fener Alayı" and "Şivlilik" traditions practiced in Konya are important examples of intangible cultural heritage that stand out as vivid examples of the socio-cultural life specific to Regaip Kandili (Can and Özil, 2024b).

The evaluation of these traditions within the scope of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is important not only for documenting the past but also for preserving these cultural elements and passing them on to future generations. This study aims to evaluate these elements within the framework of ICH criteria by examining the historical background, symbolic meanings, and current practices of the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik traditions. Thus, it aims to reveal the place of these rituals within cultural sustainability. In this context, the research was designed based on the question of whether the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik traditions can be evaluated as an element of SOKÜM.

2. Conceptual Framework

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

Cultural heritage is a multidimensional concept encompassing the entirety of material and immaterial values accumulated by societies throughout their historical development. This heritage is not limited to physical remains or historical structures, but also includes *intangible* elements such as oral traditions, rituals, festivals, social practices, and traditional crafts (Lenzerini, 2011; Qiu et al., 2022; Yan and Li, 2023). In this context, ICH refers to the vital knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and symbols that constitute a society's identity, are passed down from generation to generation, and are continuously reproduced (UNESCO, 2003; Oğuz, 2013). Intangible cultural heritage, conceptualized by UNESCO's 2003 "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage,"

1. *Oral traditions and expressions,*
2. *Performing arts,*
3. *Social practices, rituals, and festivals,*
4. *Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and*
5. *Traditional craftsmanship. These elements have the potential to strengthen the identity, sense of belonging, and social cohesion of individuals and communities (Lenzerini, 2011,107; Bortolotto, 2007).*

One of the fundamental characteristics of SOKÜM is that it constitutes a "living heritage." Unlike objects displayed in museums, this heritage continues to exist in the daily lives of the people themselves (Oğuz, 2009). Elements such as music, folk dances, religious holiday rituals, children's games, folk tales, and local festivals connect us to the past and nourish today's cultural diversity (Smith & Akagawa, 2009; Lenzerini, 2011; Qiu et al., 2022; Yan and Li, 2023). Therefore, the preservation of intangible heritage is possible not only through documentation and archiving, but also through its perpetuation and support within a social context. Approaches to preserving ICH are shaped by the principles of cultural continuity, community-based participation, and respect for local knowledge systems. These approaches aim to develop resistance to cultural homogenization, promote cultural pluralism, and carry traditional practices into the future. Especially in our era of accelerating globalization and urbanization, the importance of ICH is increasing in the face of the threat of local cultures disappearing (Hafstein, 2018; Yan and Li, 2023). , is not merely a relic of the past; it is also a living part of cultural identity, a foundation for social solidarity, and a guardian of cultural diversity. Shaped through rituals, traditions, and social practices, this heritage represents the connection societies establish with both their past and their future.

Ritual

Rituals are repeated, symbolic patterns of behavior shared by a community that play an important role in organizing social life (Wu et al., 2023). These structures, which usually emerge in a religious or cultural context, reproduce the individual's relationship with both themselves and the society they belong to. Rituals are performed within a specific time, space, and order, which distinguishes them from everyday practices (Turner, 1969). They often serve to reinforce collective identities, strengthen social solidarity, and transmit cultural values from one generation to the next.

In anthropological and sociological literature, rituals are often considered as areas where social structure is reproduced and legitimized. Emphasizing the effect of rituals on collective consciousness, it is known that religious ceremonies ensure the unity and integrity of society (Syaharuddin et al., 2021). Turner (1969), on the other hand, evaluates rituals as a means of transition, transformation, and social restructuring and analyzes the borderline experiences of individuals as they transition from one social status to another with the concept of "liminality."

Social Belonging and Cultural Identity

The concepts of social belonging and cultural identity are considered social structures that operate at both the individual and collective levels, shaped by the individual's sense of belonging to a group, society, or cultural system. While the sense of belonging plays a fundamental role in an individual's understanding of their identity, cultural identity constitutes the aspect of this belonging that is built upon historical, linguistic, religious, and symbolic foundations (Hall, 2011). These two concepts are critical not only in determining individuals' positions within society but also in terms of social harmony, social cohesion, and cultural continuity.

Social belonging is established through individuals' emotional attachments to a group or community and reinforced through social practices. In this context, collective experiences such as shared rituals, traditional practices, holidays, and public celebrations are social mechanisms that make individuals' social belonging visible and reinforce it (Antonsich, 2010). Local cultural events and religious rituals, in particular, enable individuals to connect both with their own communities and with a broader cultural context.

Cultural identity, on the other hand, is the totality of the meaning relationships an individual establishes with the language, beliefs, value system, and traditions of the cultural community to which they belong. Cultural identity is not a fixed structure but a process that is constantly reproduced and shaped by social experience (Eriksen, 2002). Therefore, cultural identity is not only an innate sense of belonging; it is also an identity that is learned, transmitted, and developed through social interaction. UNESCO's emphasis on cultural diversity and the preservation of cultural heritage also aims to support the sustainability and pluralism of cultural identity (UNESCO, 2003).

Today, dynamics such as globalization, migration movements, and media influence expose cultural identities to the risk of homogenization or fragmentation (Castells, 2011). This situation creates an important responsibility, particularly in terms of preserving, reinterpreting, and transmitting local cultures and traditional rituals from generation to generation. At this point, elements of intangible cultural heritage come to the fore as living resources that both reproduce social belonging and keep cultural identity alive (Antonsich, 2010).

In conclusion, social belonging and cultural identity are fundamental social structures that enable individuals to establish meaningful connections both with themselves and with the society to which they belong. While shared rituals and traditional cultural practices strengthen these bonds, the preservation of cultural heritage is one of the most important processes supporting these structures.

Preservation and Transmission of Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage is a collection of values, knowledge systems, beliefs, rituals, language, and symbols that have been filtered through a society's historical experiences, passed down from generation to generation, and play a fundamental role in identity construction. This heritage is not limited to physical structures, works, and objects; it also includes intangible values that are sustained in the living practices of communities. Therefore, the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage should be approached not only as a process of protection but also as one of keeping it alive, giving it meaning, and ensuring its continuity (Smith, 2006).

UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage highlights community-based approaches to keeping cultural heritage alive. In this context, preservation is not just archiving or museumification; it is a dynamic process that encourages its reproduction in daily life with the active participation

of local people (UNESCO, 2003). In particular, practices such as traditional rituals, oral narratives, social practices, and local festivals constitute the most visible forms of cultural transmission (Harrison, 2012).

Three key elements stand out in the process of cultural heritage transmission. These are: continuity, community participation, and preservation of cultural context. Continuity requires that heritage be treated not merely as a relic of the past, but as a value that lives today and shapes the future (Lowenthal, 1998). Community participation means that heritage should be defined, preserved, and transmitted not only by experts but also by the communities that own it. Preservation of cultural context points to the importance of preserving a practice not only formally but also in terms of its meaning, function, and local values (Kurin, 2004).

Modernization, urbanization, globalization, and technological transformations pose serious threats to cultural heritage, particularly its local and traditional dimensions. In this context, the preservation of cultural heritage is not only a cultural issue but also a political, economic, and ethical one. The transmission of heritage has become a prerequisite for sustainable cultural development in terms of maintaining cultural diversity, strengthening social identity, and keeping the intergenerational bond alive (Hafstein, 2018). The preservation and transmission of cultural heritage is not only the preservation of the past but also the construction of the future. This process becomes meaningful and sustainable when shaped by respect for local communities' knowledge systems, symbolic worlds, and collective memories.

Shivlilik and Fener Alayı in the Context of Cultural and Collective Memory

Cultural memory is a type of memory that preserves and transmits the values, beliefs, and historical experiences of societies through symbols, rituals, and narratives (Assmann, 2011). However, this memory persists not only at the individual level but also through collective memory, which is nourished by the shared experiences of communities. According to Halbwachs (1992), collective memory is formed by the reconstruction of individuals' memories within a social context. Therefore, social practices, rituals, and traditions are the tools that bring individual memory together with collective memory (Oğuz, 2007).

The tradition of Şivlilik is an important example in terms of collective memory theory. Children going door to door reciting prayers before Regaip Kandili is not only an individual religious practice but also a transfer of memory passed down from generation to generation by the community. By repeating the verbal patterns they learn from their parents and their environment, children keep religious and cultural memory alive (Can and Özil, 2024a). As Halbwachs (1992) emphasizes, individuals can only construct their own memories through shared symbols and practices within the community. In this context, Şivlilik serves as a ritual that merges individual memory with collective memory. Similarly, the Torch Parade is also a powerful example in the context of collective memory. Torch walks held on national holidays or religious days are symbolic practices that carry the collective experiences of the past to today's communities. The lights of the torches should be seen not only as a physical means of illumination but also as "memory markers" that carry the values of the past into the present. This is because the participants' orderly walking together is a reproduction of the experiences of unity and solidarity experienced in the past (Connerton, 1989). Thus, individuals contribute to the continuity of collective memory by symbolically reviving the experiences of past generations.

Assmann's (2015) theory of cultural memory emphasizes that rituals such as Şivlilik and Fener Alayı are not merely religious or folkloric events, but also tools for identity construction. Through these rituals, community members find a collective answer to the question, "Who are we?" In Şivlilik, offering treats to children strengthens solidarity among families, while in Fener Alayı, communities acting together ensures that national and religious identity is kept alive in a shared memory (Oğuz, 2007). This situation demonstrates that collective memory is not only the preservation of the past but also the construction of today's social identity.

3. Method

Konya is already a very important tourist center due to its values. However, the contributions of these events to the destination are also not negligible. The study was written following a conceptual framework. This study aims to evaluate the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik traditions celebrated in Konya on Regaip Kandili as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). In this regard, the research was designed within the framework of the traditional literature review method, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Traditional literature review is a study designed to examine published works on a subject. This technique consists of compiling information obtained through different methods and from different sources without following a specific method (Burns and Grove, 2009; Gerrish and Lacey, 2010; Moule and Goodman, 2009; Karaçam, 2013). Therefore, rather than following a specific method, this study compiles the literature on the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik as elements of

intangible cultural heritage. The aim here is to understand the subject in its historical, social, and cultural context and to determine whether it qualifies as an element of intangible cultural heritage.

The theoretical basis of the research is shaped around ritual theory and the concept of intangible cultural heritage. Turner's (1969) ritual theory is used as a basis for understanding rites of passage and social integration processes. Turner's theory of passage is an approach aimed at understanding the significant changes and transition processes individuals encounter in their lives. Transition is defined as meaningful changes in an individual's life in terms of roles, relationships, routines, or environmental conditions (Schlossberg, 1981). Turner approaches transitions not only as events but also as the meaning individuals give to these events and the process of adaptation. Turner's theory also states that transitions have not only an individual but also a social dimension. According to Turner (1969), transition rituals are symbolic practices that enable individuals to reproduce their bonds with society. In this context, the torchlight procession and the Şivlilik tradition have been evaluated as collective memory practices that reinforce community identity and facilitate intergenerational cultural transmission.

4. Findings

Lantern Parade and Şivlilik Tradition

The lantern parade tradition is an event that takes place on the first Wednesday night of the month of Recep according to the Hijri calendar, after evening prayers (Can and Özil, 2024b). It is a tradition where the residents of the neighborhood take to the streets, and children walk around with colorful lanterns and various instruments, making sounds like drumbeats. Similar to the Nowruz festival, which celebrates the arrival of spring, large fires are lit and fire jumping rituals are performed. Everyone, young and old, who jumps over the fire recites *"lantern parade"* rhymes (Arslan and Meydan, 2023). Children usually carry their lanterns in their hands, and lanterns hung in the streets can also be seen. The lantern parade is usually a noisy and fun night where apple candies and many toys are sold (Görgülü, 2018; Can and Özil, 2024b).

On the morning after the torchlight procession, children wake up to the call to prayer and begin collecting Şivlilik by reciting rhymes while carrying bags in their hands (Can and Özil, 2024b). Şivlilik is an event organized to celebrate the arrival of the month of Recep, the first of the three months known as *"üç aylar"* in the Islamic faith, and Regaip Kandil, which is celebrated on the first Thursday night of the month (Aydın, 1985; Arslan and Meydan, 2023; Yaşaroğlu, 2012). There are various accounts about its name. Işık (2024) states that the word Şivlilik comes from the Phrygian language. He argues that instead of rejecting their customs, the Turks adapted them to Islam and continued to observe them. There is no root word in Persian corresponding to the word şib/şiv, but in Arabic, it is thought to be related to the verb " شَبْعٌ(şibaa)" meaning "to be satisfied." The Konya poet Desteli (2014) recounts the history of the name of this tradition: "*Before 1071, our ancestors, the families who came to Konya as migrants ( ), lived in tents without settling in one place, establishing a more settled order on this first day of prayer. One of the wise mothers in the tent asked her husband to make a fatty dough dish. Nomadic families constantly make flatbread so that it is easy to carry while migrating. When the man asked his wife to make a greasy bread to enrich the inside of the flatbread, the object we call "bişi" today came to the woman's mind. Early in the morning, the matriarch of the tent lit a fire in the courtyard and melted plenty of clarified butter in her frying pan, then dropped in small round pieces of dough. They made sweet sounds as they sizzled in the butter. The irresistible aroma of the clarified butter, reminiscent of the sweet scent surrounding them, woke up everyone in the camp, young and old. They ran towards the tent where the smell was coming from. Seeing the crowd approaching, the tent's new bride forgot about the food cooking in the pan and started looking around.* "*Mother! It's cooked, mother, it's cooked*!" she said. *Because of the sizzling and bubbling sounds made by the food as it cooked*, *it was named "şivlilik*" (sizzling), *and to this day it is known as "şivlilik*." Another version is expressed by Çakır in his article titled "Konya's Traditional Entertainment Culture" (2005). "In Konya, children called the sound made by a predatory, migratory bird known locally as 'Cüllülük' 'şivlilik'." Çakır argues that this word originated from the sound of the bird.

As mentioned above, there is no clear explanation of where Şivlilik comes from. However, this tradition, which has continued unchanged for years, is like a candy-collecting race for children (Şahin, 2022). Children collect candy from houses while chanting rhymes *such as "Şivli şivli şişirmiş / Erken kalkan pişirmiş / İki çörek bir börek / Bize namazlık gerek / Şivlilik..."* The treats given during Şivlilik have changed over time. In the early days, it was pişi, then nuts and chickpeas, later wafers, and today packaged foods (Can and Özil, 2024b). In recent years, the Konya Metropolitan Municipality has also taken important steps to ensure that this tradition is not forgotten, starting to turn the torchlight procession and Şivlilik into a city festival.

In this context, the Torch Parade and Şivlilik Tradition have been categorized under 4 subheadings as SOKÜM elements. These subheadings are detailed in Figure 1.

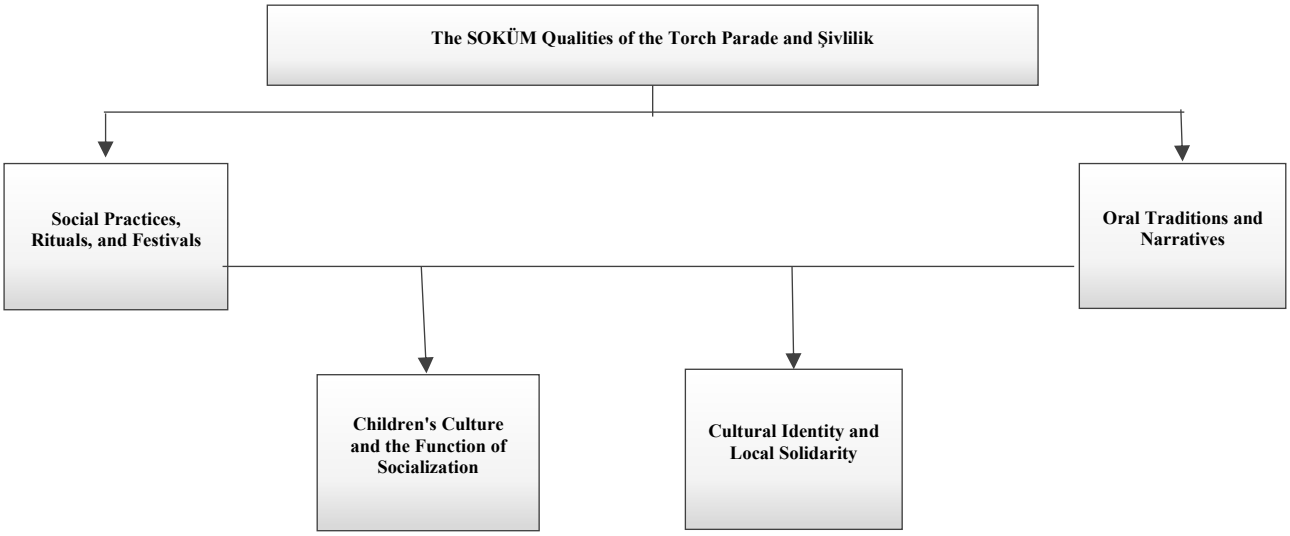


Figure1 : Categorization of the Lantern Parade and Şivlilik within the Scope of SOKÜM

Social Practices, Rituals, and Festivals

The Lantern Parade and Shivlilik are two important folk traditions celebrated at the beginning of Ramadan, especially among children. Both practices are noteworthy for their religious and sociocultural functions. These events are associated with a specific holy night, Regaip Kandili, and are ritualistic practices passed down from generation to generation by local communities. These traditions are practices that build a collective social memory and sense of unity through the active participation of the neighborhood community and children. The participants' wearing of specific clothing, carrying of lanterns, singing of songs, or going door to door collecting candy clearly reveal the ritual nature of the tradition and its festive atmosphere (Bortolotto, 2007; Grimes, 2006).

The Fener Alayı and Şivlilik tradition also has pedagogical value in terms of teaching children sharing, cooperation, and the importance of religious days. At the same time, this practice, which was once part of neighborhood culture, is now celebrated on a more organized scale in Konya with the support of local governments and civil society organizations.

Oral Traditions and Narratives

Collective memory, consisting of oral traditions and narratives, is critical in transmitting historical experience from one generation to the next. This category includes epics, legends, fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, lullabies, prayers, and oral rituals performed during traditional festivals ( ) (UNESCO, 2003). Because oral culture is transmitted through non-written means, it is constantly reproduced and shaped according to the current values and needs of society (Finnegan, 2007). In this context, the oral narratives in Şivlilik and Fener Alayı are not merely folkloric elements belonging to the past, but also living cultural forms that play an active role in the construction of community identity. The Fener Alayı and Şivlilik rituals can be evaluated not only as religious or cultural events, but also as oral narrative practices that carry and produce oral culture. For example, the Fener Alayı is not just a visual parade or a commemoration of a holy day; it is also an important cultural tool that serves as a vehicle for the revival of oral narratives accompanied by hymns, rhymes, and religious discourses. On Shivlilik night, children go door to door, reciting rhymes, prayers, and begging songs, thereby participating in an oral tradition that carries religious meaning and strengthens social solidarity. These narratives consist of standardized phrases that vary from region to region, engraved in memory from the children's mouths and recited in unison: "Şivli şivli şişirmiş / Erken kalkan pişirmiş / İki çörek bir börek / Bize namazlık gerek / Şivlilik..." (Çakır, 2005; Desteli, 2014). These narratives are not only verbal but also serve to encode moral, religious, and social values. Therefore, it is clear that these rituals are examples of dynamic oral traditions maintained through collective memory in the absence of written records (Bauman, 1986). Preserving cultural diversity and ensuring cultural continuity are among the main functions of oral traditions. Preserving and transmitting oral traditions is crucial in order to both protect cultural diversity and ensure continuity. Therefore, Fener Alayı and Şivlilik, in line with UNESCO's definition, fall

under the category of oral traditions, contributing to the preservation of cultural diversity and the assurance of cultural continuity.

Children's Culture and the Function of Socialization

Children's culture encompasses both the social world that children construct among themselves and the traditions, values, and symbols transmitted to them by adults (Corsaro, 2015). This culture is shaped in various ways, including games, verbal expressions, rituals, and symbolic behaviors. The process of cultural socialization is defined as the acquisition of these elements, the development of belonging, the internalization of social rules, and the construction of identity (Şahin, 2022). In this context, both Şivlilik and Fener Alayı are considered integral components of children's cultures that directly contribute to their socialization processes.

In the Şivlilik tradition, children go from house to house accompanied by traditional songs and rhymes, asking for "şivlilik" and participating in a ritualized procession. This practice takes place before the sacred celebration night of . This approach is designed to teach children both the oral culture of their ancestors and the established rules of social interaction. Furthermore, the act of wandering in groups allows them to observe social behaviors such as sharing, waiting in line, and cooperating with others (Görgülü, 2018). The participation of adults in symbolic roles during this process serves to facilitate children's early exposure to traditional religious rituals. Similarly, the Torch Parade is an event in which children actively participate and thus become aware of religious and national symbols. As they walk forward with torches in their hands and recite prayers and hymns, they become familiar with religious oral traditions at an early age. Being present in the field with adults facilitates the observation and imitation of social roles. When evaluated within the framework of Bandura's (1977) observational learning theory, this situation can be seen as a typical example of acquiring social behaviors through modeling.

Although there is no direct heading for "children's culture" in the UNESCO classification, practices such as the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik serve a socializing function in terms of children learning social rules, developing cultural belonging, and participating safely in public spaces. Şivlilik and Fener Alayı are multi-layered socialization spaces where children encounter cultural codes, learn the values of society through rituals, and form emotional and social bonds. Preserving these traditions is important not only for supporting children's acquisition of cultural identity but also for cultural continuity. This situation demonstrates that children play an active role as cultural carriers in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage (Eriksen, 2002; Can and Özil, 2024a).

Cultural Identity and Local Solidarity

Cultural identity is defined as the relationship of belonging that individuals establish with the historical, religious, linguistic, and social codes of a particular society (Hall, 1996). This identity is shaped at both the individual and societal levels and is constructed through various cultural practices, traditions, and rituals. In contrast, the concept of local solidarity encourages the emergence of shared behaviors and cooperative actions, strengthening social bonds through a sense of commitment to a common cultural identity (Smith, 2006). In this context, Şivlilik and Fener Alayı are not only religious rituals but also social practices that serve to reinforce cultural identity and foster a sense of community among the local population. The Şivlilik tradition in Konya involves neighborhood residents distributing sweets to children. This action has been proven to be effective in educating children about the principles of social generosity and also serves to strengthen existing bonds among local community residents ( ). At the same time, this tradition also serves to reinforce the sense of belonging to a community, which is considered a fundamental element of cultural identity (Hall, 2011). Traditional verbal expressions, rhymes, and forms of prayer are important in reinforcing the cultural identity of the population in question. This reinforcement occurs at both the verbal and symbolic levels.

The Torch Parade is a symbolic procession formed by people who come together to celebrate a religious or national holiday. The torches carried in these parades serve to demonstrate that the community is united around a common memory and symbol system. The use of these symbols fosters a sense of social belonging among individuals, even in the absence of personal acquaintance, as explained in Benedict Anderson's (1983) concept of the "imagined community." Shivlilik and Fener Alayı have the potential to be used as tools to encourage local solidarity, which plays an important role in preserving neighborhood culture, strengthening social support, and ensuring the continuity of intergenerational cultural transmission. Continuing these traditions is of great importance not only for the preservation of cultural diversity but also for the development of social integration and cohesion (UNESCO, 2003). The Fener Alayı and şivlilik serve to strengthen solidarity, belonging, and collective participation among individuals living in the city. This tradition instills in children a sense of sharing and solidarity while also offering

them the opportunity to experience the spiritual atmosphere of religious holidays. At the same time, it ensures the consolidation of neighborhood culture, intergenerational interaction, and the preservation of local values.

Examples of Lantern Parade and Şivlilik Organizations:



F.1. Şivlilik in Konya,
Access date: 13.01.2025
https://www.takvim.com.tr/yasam/2024/01/10/sivlilik-ne-demek-onemi-nedir-10-ocak-konya-sivlilik-gelenegi-kutlama-etkinlikleri-neler-2024-fener-alayi-ne-zaman/2



F.2. Şivlilik in Konya,
Access date: 13.01.2025
https://www.merhabahaber.com/konyada-cocuklar-uc-aylari-sivlilik-gelenegiyle-karsiladi-1881655h.htm



F.3. Fener Alayı at Konya Culture Park,
Access date: 08/10/2025
https://www.konya.bel.tr/haber/basin/konyada-sivlilik-ve-fener-alayi-coskusu?filtre=gorsel



F.4. Torchlight Procession at Konya Culture Park,
Access date: 10.08.2025
https://www.konya.bel.tr/haber/basin/konyada-sivlilik-ve-fener-alayi-coskusu?filtre=gorsel



F.5. Torch Parade, Konya Metropolitan Municipality Organization,
Access date: 13.01.2025
https://www.yenikonya.com.tr/konya/konya_da_fener_alayi_coskusu-1920476



F.6. Fener Alayı, Konya Metropolitan Municipality Organization,
Access date: 13.01.2025
https://www.konya.bel.tr/haber/basin/konyada-sivlilik-ve-fener-alayi-coskusu?filtre=gorsel



F.7. Fener Alayı, Konya Metropolitan Municipality Organization,
Access date: 08/10/2025
https://www.konyaaktuel.com/2017/03/fener-alayi-nedir-lastikler-hazir-mi.html



F.8. Venue Decoration for the Sivlilik Organization,
Access date: 10.08.2025
https://x.com/simurg_42/status/1103562458806083586



F.9. Şivlilik Organization,
Access date: 08/10/2025
https://x.com/tarihikonya/status/1233115557370658821



F.10. Shivlilik Preparation, Gödene Neighborhood,
Access date: 08/10/2025
https://x.com/GSB_GodeneGM/status/1874820863343923284/photo/1



F.11. Torchlight Procession, Culture Park,
Access date: 08.10.2025
https://www.diyanethaber.com.tr/konyada-sivlilik-gelenegi-kapsaminda-fener-alayi-coskusu-yasandi



F.12. Torch Parade, Culture Park,
Access date: 08/10/2025
https://www.konhaber.com/sahifeler/2012/05/24/galeri/1400fgb.jpg



F.13. Lantern Parade, Culture Park,
Access date: 10.08.2025
https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/yasam/konyada-sivlilik-gelenegi-kapsaminda-fener-alayi-duzenlendi/2797424



F.14. Şivlilik Organization, Selçuklu Congress Center, 2024,
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Conclusions

This study aims to examine the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik traditions, which are specific to Regaip Kandili and are carried out in Anatolia, particularly in Konya, within the scope of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). It seeks to compile the social functions of these rituals, their effects on cultural identity, and the processes of intergenerational transmission. These traditions are not merely folk entertainment or religious practices; they are multifaceted cultural symbolic activities that keep collective memory alive, strengthen local cultural identity, reinforce community solidarity, promote social integration, strengthen social memory, and encourage intergenerational interaction.

The main finding of the research is that rituals such as the Torch Parade and Şivlilik are fully consistent with the "social practices, rituals, and festive events" category in UNESCO's ICH classification (UNESCO, 2003). These traditions contribute to the socialization of children, strengthen neighborhood culture, and ensure that a religious night is designed as a vehicle for social unity. Furthermore, they present a holistic pattern of cultural practices that includes many ICH elements such as oral culture, children's games, local narratives, and traditional clothing (Can and Özil, 2024a). The findings are also consistent with Turner's (1969) theory of ritual. In particular, children stepping outside their everyday roles to embark on a symbolic journey through the neighborhood can be seen as a rite of passage where social boundaries are temporarily relaxed. In this sense, Şivlilik offers an experience that supports cultural identity construction at both the social and individual levels. These characteristics are also consistent with the theory of collective memory (Assmann, 2011). This shows that such rituals should be regarded not only as a folkloric tradition but also as social practices that strengthen social solidarity, keep cultural memory alive, and contribute to identity construction. Therefore, the preservation of rituals such as Şivlilik and Fener Alayı is important not only in terms of keeping local culture alive but also in terms of strengthening the collective memory of societies. At the same time, the ownership and perpetuation of these rituals by the local people presents a positive picture in terms of community-based cultural sustainability (Harrison, 2012; Smith, 2006). However, despite this positive outlook, various challenges have been identified in the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage. In particular, the processes of urbanization, digitalization, and individualization weaken the meaning of traditional rituals, reduce participation rates, and cause the bond with younger generations to loosen (Hafstein, 2018; Lowenthal, 1998). Furthermore, the commercialization of rituals, their detachment from cultural meaning, or their reduction to mere tourist attractions are among the factors threatening the authenticity of the heritage. In this context, several recommendations have been developed. First, the Konya Metropolitan Municipality should add the Fener Alayı and Şivlilik events to the UNESCO National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage. This will give these two important events official status and ensure their sustainability. Ensuring the sustainability of deep-rooted traditions such as Şivlilik and Fener Alayı is directly related to educational policies, local government activities, and cultural heritage awareness. Furthermore, archiving, digitizing, and including these practices in official inventories for promotion at the national and international levels is also an important step towards preserving cultural heritage. Keeping such traditions alive is not only a cultural responsibility but

also a strategic necessity in terms of preserving social unity, solidarity, and shared memory. In addition to all this, the current status of SOKÜM elements should be studied through academic collaborations, and social research should be conducted on these topics.

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