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# Spin

## Ginan Seidl

2017, color, 80 min., Turkish, German, English. **Producer** Ray Peter Maletzki, Stephan Helmut Beier, Ginan Seidl. **Production companies** Rosenpicture Filmproduktion GbR (Halle/Saale, Germany), Ginan Seidl (Halle/Saale, Germany). **Written and directed by** Ginan Seidl. **Director of photography** Ray Peter Maletzki. **Sound** Ginan Seidl. **Sound design** Ginan Seidl. **Editor** Ginan Seidl. **With** Susanne Sachsse (narrator), Norman Sieroka, Ş. Barihüda Tanrikorur, Cheihka H. Nur Artiran, Zafer Gürel, Veli Aksoy, Helena Eckert, Karen Barad.

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To rotate around one's own axis can be cumbersome and at the same time it can make one light weighted. It is a repetitive movement and does not go forward. It is never linear but still it can make things change or transcend them. Spinning generates energy, creates an outside and an inside. It is stagnant and fast; it takes place on a micro and macrocosmic level. Everything is inconsistent. *Spin* is an experimental film about "spinning" in the field of tension of experimental physics (science) and Sufism (mysticism/Islam). It deals with different concepts of truth and their complexities. It also deals with the conception of body and spirit as instruments to experience and generate wisdom and with the space that emerges between sciences and spirituality. It looks at their borders, the borders of the tangible and perceivable for the human being. Starting in a salt desert, fictional invisible characters meet, searching for a placing of their being. Poems, interviews with physicists, philosophers, a Sufi sheikha, a semazen (dervish), and fictional dialogues are interwoven with an audiovisual exploration of rotation, examining different forms of doubting, differentiating, and thinking.

## Reality

in love, nothing exists between heart and heart.  
speech is born out of longing,  
true description from the real taste.  
the one who tastes, knows;  
the one who explains, lies.  
how can you describe the true form of something  
in whose presence you are blotted out?  
and in whose being you still exist?  
and who lives as a sign for your journey?

*Rābī'a al-'Adawiyya al-Qaysiyya*

## Quantum Physics: Discontinuities in the Nuclear Field

The term quantum was introduced by Max Planck (1858-1947) in a work from 1900 about the distribution of energy in a "black body." In an almost empirical manner Planck here simply introduced a multiplicative constant in order to be able to combine two experimentally known limit cases into one single formal expression. At any rate, this implied – contrary to Planck's original conviction – that the transfer of energy into such a body does not happen continually, but only in multiples of this new constant "h," which today is called "Planck's quantum."

In 1905 Einstein revolutionized physics through his interpretation of the photoelectric effect in terms of Planck's insight, according to which light consists of discrete components (photons) which unbind electrons from the surface of a metal. Between 1911 and 1914 experiments by James Franck and Gustav Hertz showed that electrons are found in atoms at discrete levels of energy. In 1913 Niels Bohr presented his model of the atom, according to which electrons can only move around atoms in a stable manner on certain orbits, and these orbits are defined in terms of multiples of Planck's quantum. Subsequently, Otto Stern and Walther Gerlach, in their experiment from 1922, found that the angular momentum of silver atoms cannot point in any random spatial direction, but is also "quantized" in orientation.

[...] [It was] appreciably more difficult to describe all these findings in a convincing and unified way through the means of classical field theory and mechanics. Even forming analogies not aimed at comprehensive theories, but merely at describing singular phenomena, came to an end.

So, for instance, the assumption of nuclear angular momentum and also Bohr's model of the atom itself were already mental constructs that had emerged from the field of macroscopic physics – in this case from the physics of the spinning top and the contexts of astronomy and wave optics. But even such free building of analogies could not adequately describe all phenomena. Following the Stern-Gerlach experiment, for instance, it was necessary to introduce genuinely non-classical characterization in order to describe this unique quantization of orientation. Atoms and electrons were now attributed a "spin."

If at first it was only the direct macroscopic observability that was problematic, now even the notion of analogy increasingly came under pressure – as had already been the case for electrodynamics – from everyday observations and experiences. The [...] loss of clarity only intensified further.

*Excerpt from: Norman Sieroka: "Philosophie der Physik – Eine Einführung", Munich 2014, pp. 55-57.*

## Sufi Whirling Dance

The whirling dance is one of the oldest of Sufi techniques and also one of the most effective. It is a whirlwind that is nonetheless quite still in the middle. Your inner being is something like the pivot point and your body becomes a spinning wheel. You become the center of the universe, at one with yourself and yet connected to everything. It is the silent dialogue between the inner and the outer universe. Music and dance combine in the rhythm, creating a bridge to the beating of your own heart, and to the presence of others.

The whirling dance is meant to lead out of the sobriety of the everyday by means of an ecstasy (in the sense of the blessedness of unification) into a sobriety of a higher order. Understood in this way, the whirling dance can be seen as a "ladder to heaven," or also a part of *tawhid*, the science of the oneness of all being.

The whirling dance was already being practiced by Sufis in Baghdad as early as the 9th century, and then was institutionalized and perfected in the 13th century by Sultan Walad, the son of Mevlana Jalalluddin Rumi, through the organization of the Mevlevi order. Rumi was still practicing it spontaneously and in part impetuously.

The sama ritual in its complete form represents the spiritual journey of human beings to the divine and their return as servants. Every gesture has symbolic meaning and is performed with great care and concentration. "Neither My Heaven nor My Earth can contain Me, but the heart of My believing servant can contain Me" (Hadith Qudsi). The students must spend three years practicing. Essentially they study the art of "marking time" for three years – 1001 days. They learn to spin in a circle without ourwardly getting anywhere.

The goal is achieved when the practicer can keep exactly to the pivot point while spinning. It begins by dividing the circle into four parts. Each part of this circle is touched with the right foot, then the circle is divided in two and the spinning is commenced with a kick. The foundations of our existence – from the atom to the cosmos – is based on a spinning movement. In spinning the dancers seek out harmony with nature and creator.

*Dr. Fawzia Al-Rawi*

**Ginan Seidl**, born in 1984 in Berlin, lives and works in Halle (Saale) and Berlin. After she finished her studies of plastic arts in Halle (Saale), Berlin, and Mexico City, she participated in the Professional Media Master Class and Master Class Lab of Werkleitz e.V. in 2012 and 2016. She has won several art awards and had residencies in Istanbul and Mexico. Her work has been shown in international film festivals, exhibitions, and art festivals. She is a member of the collective Rosenpictures.

## Films

2011: *Inverse Geometrie* (10 min.). 2012: *Rotation* (8 min., Forum Expanded 2013). 2013: *Ferferak* (5 min.), *Subconscious Areas* (video installation). 2015: *Remote City* (20 min.), *Boy* (30 min.), *Istambul* (20 min.). 2017: *Spin*.