

ÂDÂB AND THE RITUALIZATION OF MUSICAL PRACTICE: THE CASE OF AYANGİL MESHQ STUDIO¹

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Abstract

“Tasavvuf music”, in the Turkish context, is a controversial concept insofar as the question of “continuity” of the musical tradition of the Ottoman past is concerned. Musicologically speaking, predominant approach seems to be rather holistic, regarding “tasavvuf music” as an integral part of the historically rooted musical culture, generally known as the Turkish *maqam* music. Despite the persistence of the cultural holism approach, however, the representatives of this musical culture in the Republican era, seem to concur on a division, first between the “religious” and “secular” forms, then within the “religious” forms, between the “tekke (lodge)” and “camii (mosque)” music.

Although this formal classification seems to be widely accepted throughout the Republican period, the stress on the unity of the *Turkish maqam music* is obvious, especially in its explanation with reference to its “one and only” learning and transmission method, the *meshq system*. Roughly defined as a method of learning and transference of the technique, structure, forms, rhythmic patterns and repertoire of a musical culture by heart, the *meshq system* is considered as the indispensable building block of the whole musical culture. In this consideration, learning and transmission of the musical tradition do not only pertain to the music itself, but also to the “worldview” of the transmitter/teacher, as well as his specific musical manners (*tavir*).

This study aims to present the cultural particularities of the *meshq* system by arguing that the spatial classifications between the “secular” and “religious” as well as “tekke” and “camii” musics might not be enough in understanding the ritualistic aspects of the “tasavvuf” music. The case of Ruhi Ayangil Meshq Studio might provide a suitable case study for questioning the spatial correlation between the “tekke” music and sufi ritual. Despite its obvious ontological status as a secular place, named after a well-known secular musical master, teacher, composer and qanun player Ruhi Ayangil, the studio hosts the practice and performance of the pieces of the classical “tasavvuf music” yet; at the same time, transforms the space into a ritual one regularly every Friday.

As a participant observant of this *meshq studio*, the researcher claims and proposes that *âdâb*, the code of behavior and courtesy central to the tasavvuf tradition plays a significant role in this transformation. Also proposing to analyze the elements of *âdâb* in the case of this studio, the researcher also asks to examine the role and importance of *âdâb* in the classical *meshq* system, and the ways in which it relates to the embodied tradition. In do-

1- Titled as “The Role of Âdâb in the Transformation of a Secular Space into a Ritual Space: The case of Rûhî Ayangil Meshq Studio”, shorter version of this study was presented at Istanbul Ritual Studies Symposium, organized at Süleyman Şah University on 27 and 28 May 2014. The study is based on the researcher’s participant observation activities and interviews with Mr. Ayangil conducted under her general fieldwork for the Social Anthropology Ph.D. thesis, “The Constructions of ‘Tradition’ within the context of ‘Tasavvuf Music’ in Turkey Today”.

ing this, the study aims to challenge the notion of “sacred space”, which is a predominant theme of the classical ritual studies based on the dichotomous understanding of the spatial relations.

It is Friday again, around 5:30 pm. Professional and amateur musicians, musicologist, ethnomusicologists, philharmonics and guests, be they Turkish or non-Turkish, begin to enter into the studio of Prof. Dr. Mr. Rûhî Ayangil, who is a very well-known figure in the field of Turkish Maqam Music, as a musician, composer, music master, qanun master, researcher and an academician. Greetings vary from the dervish greeting ‘*Hû*’ (a name of Allah) or Islamic greeting ‘*Selam-ün Aleyküm*’ (May Peace be Upon You), to more secular greetings like “Have a good day” or “Have a Blessed day”; from simple hand shakings or warm hugs, to a dervish greeting (*musâfaha*), in which the hands are kissed reciprocally. Participants seem very happy with the fact that they see each other. With this gratitude, some commune happily with each other, some listen carefully the master. In the meantime, Mr. Ayangil welcomes and greets the arriving participants one by one, while some other participants prepare the studio for the upcoming practice: chairs and music stands are composed, missing notes are photocopied, everything is done in pure serenity. In the meantime, new arrivals leave the food, which they have brought with them to the kitchen desk. However, the food is not the priority at the moment. There is a little *sohbet* (conversation) going on around Mr. Ayangil, while participants are arriving one by one.

This place is not a dervish lodge. However, as the long-term participants of this studio name, whom I have met during my eight months fieldwork so far, and some of whom also have affinity with some particular dervish lodges in Istanbul, this musical space works “like a dervish lodge”: “It is rather a lodge-like space”.

Dissecting the above attribution is the main motivation behind the writing of this particular paper, and the reason behind this attribution appears to be that this musical space is not only a regular meeting place for a simple musical practice. Rather, it operates as a place in which *âdâb*, which can be shortly translated as Islamic etiquette, is learned, experienced, internalized and shared by the willing participants. Particularly, *âdâb* is given an utmost importance both at the discursive level and at the level of all kinds of spatial activities; and with this peculiarity, it appears as the *sine qua non* of the organization, regulation and continuation of the space. It is because, most importantly, non-compliance with the rules of *âdâb* simply results in the exclusion from the circle. Besides, compliance to *âdâb* seems to have a priority over a distinctive musical talent in order to be able to be a regular at the circle. This importance can be demonstrated through the speech made just after the leave of a participant, who had to leave because of his non-complying behaviours:

“As known, our door and heart never close down; they are wide open to all friends. We have only one yearning (*niyaz*), which everyone already knows. ...Don’t mind the smallness of the space, there is a space for everyone to sit, and job for everyone to do. These can be enhanced. Nevertheless, the maintenance of the organization (*nizam*) and order (*intizam*) is of vital importance. As if this crowd is at the old Ottoman Palace School (*Enderun*)... A crowd no one’s tail touches to no one’s... Imagine such a crowd, in which participants pass by each other without even touching lightly, like a ghost. As the first three verses of the Surah Hujurat addresses, one should

not raise his/her voice [above the voice of the Prophet], not speak aloud to one another. This is the Word of Allah (*Kelamullah*), Divine Order (*Emr-i İlahi*). One should not speak aloud. It should be almost like a whisper. In fact, there is no need for talking. People of the Spiritual States (*Ehl-i Hal*) understand each other by looking at each other, through their eyes. For this reason, too much speaking is an imperfect (*nâkıs*) behaviour. ...So far, we have adjusted our behaviours by knowing, seeing and understanding what to do; and if Allah wills, (*Inshallah*) Allah grants us to continue in this adjustment. ...*Edeb* (singular of *âdâb*) is above all other orders. By complying with *âdâb*, ...any obstacle is overcome, any problem is solved, hardships can be removed. We are, all guests, since we are all guests in this world, all welcome" (*Translation mine*, Rehearsal, 28 February 2014).

Having accepted its role and importance in the organization and continuation of this musical space, yet, this particular paper is rather concerned with *âdâb*'s role in the transformation of secular musical performances into sacred/ritualistic ones, and hence of a secular space into a sacred/ritual one. Needless to say that the question of space is an indispensable variable, even more an underlying postulation in most of the ritual studies, as a deep-rooted intellectual tendency very much owed to the classical religious studies like of Durkheim and Eliade² (Della Dora 2011). In this postulation, "sacred" and "profane" are assumed to be ontologically two distinct and even opposed spaces. Therefore, most of the ritual studies, pursuing this intellectual lineage, implicitly and explicitly maintain such dichotomous understanding of the sacred. However, Ayangil Meshq Studio, with the overwhelming role of *âdâb*, seems to present a challenge to this dichotomy, bearing both secular and sacred characteristics at the same time.

From above, it might be easily deduced that the main concern of this study is the presentation of the ways in which *âdâb* transforms this secular studio into a sacred, a "lodge-like" space, and hence ritualizes the spatial activities. Yet, a careful eye might notice that this challenge to the notion of sacred space do also challenge the classical understanding in ritual studies based on the dichotomous understanding of spatial relations. Therefrom, the study aims to further analyse the role, position and language of *âdâb* in the working and continuation of this studio to understand the characteristics of the challenge it brings to the ritual studies. In doing this, it aims to dissect the concept by taking into consideration both its discursive nature and its role in the shaping of the interactions of the participants with each other, and also with the space.

As to the pursued methodology, it might be repeated that the findings and discussions in this paper are based on an eight months anthropological fieldwork at the studio, involving participant observation activities, hence regular attendance to and participation in the Friday meetings, as well as personal out-of-studio interviews and get-togethers with the participants and Mr.

2- Durkheim's sociology of religion, for example, depends completely on the practitioners' division and classification of the world as sacred and profane (Durkheim: 1995[1912]:34). While beliefs and rituals together constitute the domain of the sacred, sacred and the profane cannot exist in the same space. Therefore, certain special spaces are assigned for the performance of the sacred, which must be kept distant from the impurity of the profane (Durkheim: 1995[1912]:38;312). Developing this dichotomy, on the other hand, Eliade approaches to "sacred" (both as time and space) as something ontologically constructed, a distinct reality, starting with a "break" from the homogenous profane (Eliade 1959:20-21). Rituals, on the other hand, take place in these sacred times and places, operating both to sacralise the space in order to return to the mythical primordial time, as opposed to the profane time, and to remain there (Eliade 1994[1949]:33-34; Eliade 1959:68).

Ayangil himself. Yet, following a rather self-reflexive approach during the fieldwork, the researcher approaches to the field of observation not as something to be objectified “by virtue of the fact that [s]he is placed outside of the object that [s]he observes it from afar and from above” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:70), but rather as something relationally constructed, “unsettl[ing] the boundary between self and other” (Abu-Lughod 2005:466). In this approach, the researcher, as being part of the observation, is also the subject of the study, by the very nature of being a “halfie”, being both an insider and outsider (Abu-Lughod 2005:467-470)³. Therefore, the paper’s stress on the concept of *âdâb* cannot be thought independent from the researcher’s realization, internalization and reflection of the concept (both as a discourse and a field of practice) throughout the process of being part of the group dynamics. Still, one may notice that during the writing of the fieldwork experience, extreme subjectivity (and first-person writing) is something to be avoided not to fall into the trap of presenting a non-analytical narrative, or a fiction. It is hoped that this trap is overcome by prioritizing the first-order interpretations of *âdâb* (put differently, the discourses and performances of *âdâb* by the long-term participants and by Mr. Ayangil himself), and considering them in relation to “halfie”s personal experience and interpretation of group adaptation and acceptance process. Still, one has to be reminded on the interpretive approach appropriated throughout this ethnographic study, which deals with the meaning of the meanings, and hence accordingly, which is always “inherently incomplete” reflecting any cultural truth only partially (Clifford 1995:6-7).

Based upon this introduction, the subject matter is to be elaborated under four sections. In the first one, a brief introduction on Prof. Dr. Mr. Ayangil and on the physical organization of the studio will be provided in order to present the secular characteristics of the studio. In the second and third ones, the spatial activities and relations will be presented in relation to *âdâb*, taking into consideration both the musical performances, and non-musical practices. Then, in the last part, it is hoped that further elaboration of the concept *âdâb* will provide the necessary ground in understanding the concept’s challenge to the ritual studies.

Prof. Dr. Mr. Rûhî Ayangil and Ayangil Meshq Studio

Prof. Dr. Rûhî Ayangil is currently a lecturer at Fatih University Conservatory. Before this, until his retirement, he works at Yıldız Technical University Faculty of Arts and Design, Department of Music and Stage Arts for years both as a Dean and Head of the Department. Therefore, he is an academician, researcher and a teacher, and also a director on a large scale. Born and raised in Istanbul, he can be considered as a genuine Istanbulian, both with respect to its language and etiquette.

He narrates that his musical journey starts around the age of six with Qur’an recitations, mandolin, and then, with the traditional stringed instrument qanun (Bilgin, Özer and Altun 2010). After a while, he attends to various Turkish Maqam Music institutions like Association of the Conservatory of Advanced Turkish Music, and Istanbul Municipality Conservatory; yet, his most distinctive features in this cultural field becomes visible, when he starts conducting the first

3- The term “halfie” is developed by Abu-Lughod against the classical anthropologists’ claim to study “distinctively other” ethnic and powerless communities. Mostly based on her fieldwork experience as a half American, half Palestinian female researcher in a Bedouin village, she develops this term by questioning her split personality, meaning her changing and sometimes conflicting position-takings and personalities at the village where she was both a guest and the daughter (of a Palestinian father who indeed introduces her to the village by using his influence). For more, see Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1986.

private choir at Boğaziçi University. Historically linked to Robert College, the first American college founded outside the United States, Boğaziçi is a pro-American oriented university; therefore, conducting a Turkish Maqam Music choir there in the 1970s might be considered an avant-garde initiative at that time, as it aims to make visible this culture in an environment where it is disregarded (Ayangil, *personal interview*, 15 August 2013). With his choirs, he is then invited to the International Istanbul Festival, as well as many other international music festivals, where he plays both old repertory of Turkish Maqam music, and specially ordered new compositions. What is more striking in his musical endeavors is that his choirs are polyphonic in which the musical instruments are classified as to their sound types (Ayangil 2014), which is contradictory to, and hence leads to many controversies within the “traditional” circle. Therefore, with these characteristics, he can be classified under the reformist line of the Turkish Maqam Music tradition. Having conducted many concerts in Turkey and abroad, he is also a composer and a researcher with his own particular archiving works (Ayangil 2014; Bilgin, Özer and Altun 2010).

Mr. Ayangil's studio in Kabataş (Istanbul) is a personal 30-40 meter square studio of an intellectual, academician and a professional musician, designed to serve his professional needs. At this studio, he hosts his guest, be they academicians, musicians, researchers and alike, from Turkey and abroad, makes his private and personal rehearsals, gives qanun lessons, and executes his private studies.

The physical organization of the space reflects such professional needs. The entrance of the studio, opens up to a single space hall, surrounding walls of which are furnished with a huge library, containing historical and actual books and other texts and documents on music, Turkish Maqam Music, Turkish and world literature, cultural studies, theology, Islam, Sufism, and social sciences. This open space can easily be transferrable into a rehearsal space, for approximately 25 people. Music stands are in their case, carefully placed. The opposite right end of this open space meets with an open kitchen, which faces towards a sitting area, as well as a long meeting table. Behind the sitting area, there are two restrooms.

According to my personal interview with Mr. Ayangil, there are not only Friday rehearsals at the studio. On Mondays, there are maqam based *fasıl* rehearsals (a style a music from the Ottoman times, mostly like a suite), and on Thursdays, there are the musical practices of Ayangil Acapella Choir. In addition to the rehearsals, Mr. Ayangil gives some of his qanun classes there. Therefore, the studio can be considered as a secular musical space to practice various forms and genres of music.

The Friday rehearsals at this studio, at which pieces from the Religious Music repertory are performed, are named as Rûhî Ayangil Religious Music Meshq Studio⁴. The repertory is composed of Mevlevi Ceremonial compositions, religious hymns (*ilahî*), *Miraciye* (special long compositions on the ascent of Prophet Mohammed into heavens), and likewise. With âdâb as the predominant element of the Friday meetings, the meshq studio does also present a noticeable example with respect to the significant role of âdâb in the transmission of a musical tradition, or the *meshq* system.

4- From now on, it will be referred as Ayangil Meshq Studio.

Âdâb in the Musical Performances

Flow of a regular Friday rehearsal at the studio is as follows:

A regular rehearsal starts with Islamic exclamations by Rûhî Ayangil like “*Ya Allah* (Oh Allah)”, “*Ya Allah, Destur Bismillah* (Oh Allah, Make Way and Permit, in the name of Allah)” or “*Ya Allah, Bismillahirrahmanirrahim* (In the name of Allah, Beneficent and Merciful)”.

Regardless of the form and type of the musical piece to be rehearsed, the practice starts with *Aşr-ı Şerif*, which is the recitation of the ten verses from the Holy Qur’an in a melodic form in the presence of other people.

Participants of the rehearsals may vary in weeks, despite its regulars. Some weeks, professional imams or muezzins may be the guests of the circle. In such weeks, those guests recite the *Aşr-Şerif*; in other weeks, the participant, who is eligible to recite the Holy Qur’an performs this task.

Peace and serenity are essential in all the practices, but especially during the recitation of the Holy Qur’an. During the recitation phase, participants listen the reciter carefully, mostly collecting themselves, correcting their sitting position in the way to submit themselves to Allah, with their eyes looking down or closed, arms closed or hands opened for praying.

Following *Aşr-ı Şerif*, Rûhî Ayangil initiates *Salawat* (a form of prayer to salute and honour the Prophet Mohammed) calling participants to pray Surah *Al-Fatiha*. Just before the *Salawat*, Rûhî Ayangil may address some particular names for the prayers to be dedicated to, like the sick family members of the participants prayed for ailment, or the victims and deceased of a disaster experienced in the country.

Salawat is followed by a *taqsim* (semi-structured improvisations in the Turkish Maqam Music) in the maqam to be practiced during the rehearsal. Who performs the *taqsim* is a rather professional Nay player in the meshq circle; yet, in the absence of that musician, it might also be performed by another instrument like tambour or qanun. There may be times, in which Mr. Ayangil addresses one of the rather amateur participants to perform the required *taqsim*, for them to get used to perform in public and learn to make *taqsim*. Regardless, the person, who is going to make the *taqsim*, is known at that particular moment, by the special address of Mr. Ayangil.

In the moments of mastered maqam transitions or melodic performances during the *taqsim*s, Mr. Ayangil may show his appreciation through the Sufi exclamation and greeting “*Hû*”.

Rehearsal piece starts just after the *taqsim* with the direction of the master. The piece is selected depending on the requirements of the day; it could be rehearsal for a concert to be held at a concert hall, or for a Ceremony to be held at a particular Mevlevi House or a dervish lodge, for a specific gathering like *kandil* (Islamic Holy night). At this point, it should be noted that these concerts and ceremonies are always made free-of-charge, on the basis of the principles of volunteerism and service to Allah and People.

Salawat is what comes next just after the practice, which is followed by the Mevlevi *Gul-bang*. *Gul-bang* is a Persian term, literally meaning the rose sound, or rose prayer. It is a general term for special poetic prayers composed for various aspects of the lodge life, including not only Mevleviyya, but also others (Gölpınarlı 1963:19). The *Gul-bang*, recited after the rehearsed piece is always the Mevlevi *Gul-bang* recited at the end of the Mevlevi Ceremonies, and it is as follows:

“May this moment be blessed. May goodness be attained and may evil be dispelled. May our humble plea be accepted in the Court of Honor; May the Most Glorious God purify and fill our he-

arts with the Light of His Greatest Name. May the hearts of the lovers be opened. By the breath of our master Mevlana, by the secret of Shams and Weled, by the holy light of Muhammad, by the generosity of Imam Ali, and the intercession of Muhammad, the unlettered prophet, mercy to all the worlds. May we say Hu” (*translated by Helminski 2000:65*).

Occasionally, the sheikh of the Qadiri Dervish Lodge is invited to the practices. At the time of his courtesy visits, the *Salawats* and *Gul-bang* are recited by him, and in other cases, by Mr. Ayangil himself. Yet, it should be underlined that the ritualistic characteristics of the practice do not depend on the visits of the sheikh, as âdâb demonstrates a highly central role in all the spatial practices, regardless of his presence.

During the rehearsals, non-musical/technical interventions of Mr. Ayangil places as much place as his musical/technical interventions. Such interventions can be outlined as follows:

1- Musical Practice with Full Submission to Allah:

Submission and the practice of the musical pieces for Allah only are among the themes frequently underlined during the rehearsals. Accordingly, any musical performance should reflect the subtleties of Mohammedan morals and Islamic behavioural patterns addressed by the Holy Qur’an. Although the space is a secular studio, it is vital that the participants should act like they perform at a dervish lodge, since the practiced pieces are the examples of religious repertory. This theme is explicitly and implicitly underlined. For this, one has to work very hard and be meticulous, but at the same time comply with the rules of âdâb. The value of the work can only be sustained with this faith and submission.

“This is a great service; I mean you should see it like that. Don’t you ever consider this as a compulsory work. ...When these pieces are practiced and recited with submission... When you practice *Miraciye* with the feeling of *mirac* (ascendance into heavens)...When you recite all these *Sallualeyhs* (Pray for Prophet Mohammed) ...you should emphasize it accordingly. Otherwise, it is an ordinary performance...

The language of the piece should be strong, heavy, sound, and well-settled. Your faith should overflow from your use of the language. ...I mean your faith should start to talk at the moment. When this happens, listeners so also step out and experience the *mirac* one more time. ...These masters give voices to the melodies from the heaven, from *Hak* (Allah). ...For this reason, it is the Holy Trust (*Emanet-i Kudsıyye*), it is the Trust of Allah (*Emanetullah*). It should be approached like this. Your performances should be worthy of *Emanetullah*. You should be âdâb-full, competent” (*Translation mine, Rehearsal, 2 May 2014*).

In the same way, Mr. Ayangil, during my personal interviews, mentions that the musical âdâb of the performances is indeed the Mohammedan morals and Sufi âdâb. He underlines that the compliance with Mohammedan morals, Sufi âdâb and *erkân* (rules of conduct) is maintained through the auto-control system. Although the space does not bear the division of labour encountered at dervish lodges -like *ashci dede* (senior cook), *meydancı* (master of ceremonies), *post-nishin* (leader of semazens) and *zakirbash* (head of the dhiqr and hymns), it works like a dervish lodge through this auto-control system. In the sustenance and internalization of the auto-control system, examples given from and references made to the Holy Qur’an, Sunnah, Islamic and Sufi literature, Rumi’s Masnawi and alike play especially a particular role.

2- Musical practice to honour the composers:

To bless the spiritual existence of the composers is among the *sine qua nons* of the Friday rehearsals. During the practices, their names are frequently praised with prayers. Musical performance is also considered as a service to the ancestors, who already sublimated the names of Allah and the Prophet Mohammed. In fact, ancestors play a great part at the prayers on the ground that they have blessed the names of Allah in the most sophisticated form. This sophistication, on the other hand, is considered as a result of supreme âdâb, rather than the technical/musical sophistication, which is deemed the main reason behind the survival of the compositions for centuries.

This commentary might exemplify the approach on supreme âdâb as the prerequisite of technical/musical sophistication: In one rehearsal, Mr. Ayangil cuts the practice to give a speech on the reflection of supreme âdâb in the practiced composition. The speech is about the relationship of the *Nutk-ı Şerif*⁵ (lyrics) with the melody in the composition of Itri's Salat-i Ummye. Accordingly, the piece is composed in a way to put the lyrics denoting the greatness (*Ekberiyet*) of Allah forward through higher pitches⁶. This musical expression is considered not only a reflection of a musical genius, but also of a supreme âdâb. Therefore, it is not coincidental, but intentional. It is the result of a "subtle contemplation on the reverent expression of the Greatness of Allah". Therefore, "all these compositions are beyond our comprehension in terms the supreme âdâb they bear".

Complementing this process, Mr. Ayangil motivates the participants in the cases of performance difficulties through encouragements like that the performances indeed honour the composers' spirituality, and with these practices, they must be feeling blessed at the place they rest. In the same way, it is essential that the rehearsals end with prayers in the name of the composers, like the rehearsal of a Mevlevi Ceremony composed by Künhi Abdurrahim Dede:

"Allah is the Greatest (*Allah-u Ekber*); may he rest in lights (*nûr*), may he be covered all over with lights. In fact, he is probably in full bliss now, probably in raptures. ...Oh Lord (*Ya Rab*), may you beatify your servant (*kul*) Künhi Abdurrahim Dede in both worlds. Amin" (*Translation mine*, Rehearsal, 8 November 2013).

3- Importance of Peace and Serenity during Practices:

Small or big, any talks among the participants during the rehearsals are not appreciated at all. In such cases, talkers are warned in front of other participants, and in heavier cases, they are excluded from the meshq circle. In such cases, the stress of the warnings might be on the musical discipline, as well as on the principles of Islamic morals.

Serenity is associated with spiritual refinement and courtesy. Serenity during the practices is underlined frequently not only with respect to the organization of the relations among participants, but also to the performance style of the instruments. Accordingly, during the collective

5- In the Turkish Maqam Music repertory, the lyrics of the religious repertory, because they involve the names of Allah and Prophet Mohammed, and they are taken from the sacred texts like Rumi's Masnawi or the poems and sayings of saintly figures, is called Nutk-ı Şerif, literally meaning Honored or Sacred Words. In the case under consideration, appropriate usage of the term is given a higher importance on the basis of the principle of respect.

6- The Nutk-ı Şerif under consideration is Allah-u Ekber (Allah is the Greatest), and La İlahe İllallah (There is no God but Allah).

performances, the sound of an instrument should not beat down or suppress any other instrument among the group, unless stated otherwise. Such cases result with serious warnings. Nay players can be especially subjected to such warnings because of the higher pitches of the instrument:

“Now, I remind this especially to Nay players. Nay is not an instrument to be played right after you sat down. You should warm your instrument beforehand. You should know this. Then, listening is a must. ...You should not blow it like the Israfel’s Trumpet. It must be soft, by listening around. This is a rhythmic music; this is the music of the intervals. If you don’t pay attention to this, I mean all the instruments ...we cannot carry out the practices. This job is like weighting a gold dust at a goldsmith machine. ...It should be in serenity. ...[i]n serenity, moderation (*i’tidâl*), humility (*huzu’*) and reverence (*huşu’*). Not by stressing the community, but in serenity. Our job is serenity, peace, humility, and reverence. This is what matters. No intemperance (*huşunet*); only reverence (*huşu’*). All right (*Eyvallah*), now we will play this part one more time” (*Translation mine*, Rehearsal, 28 March 2014).

This performance style can be thought together with the Sufi principle ‘diversity in unity, unity in diversity’. Accordingly, any musical piece should be performed to result in wholeness. For the achievement of this wholeness, on the other hand, the ego should be controlled in relation to the performance of the instruments as well. Wholeness in practice is achieved through the equal share in sounds, listening other instruments and always being in tune with the other instruments. Mr. Ayangil comments on this as follows: “in music, if we are ten people, the share of each person is one tenth. It is neither zero tenth nor two tenth. It is one tenth including the *faqir’s*”.

Âdâb in the Non-musical Practices

One of the differences between the studio and a dervish lodge is experienced at the entrance to the studio. Whereas the participants enter into the studio with their shoes in galoshes, the shoes are taken off at dervish lodges. Yet, one or two long-term participants still take their shoes off, and enter into the studio with their *pashmaks* (a general term used for dervish slippers made of leather).

No need to mention that cleanness and order of the space is given a higher importance. Personal belongings are not left around; used glasses and plates are not taken out of the kitchen; and everything is collected and cleaned after the rehearsals.

Following rehearsals, it is required to clean and tidy up the rehearsal space immediately. Following *Gul-bang*, participants put the chairs back in their initial order, fold back the music stands, put their notes into their bags. All is done in silence and mostly reserved. In the case this silent negotiation is not followed, the non-complying participant is warned in front of others. At the end of the rehearsals (also at the rehearsal brakes), Mr. Ayangil, then calls the participants to the kitchen table, with Sufi exclamations: ‘*Somata Salâ Ya Hû* (Pray to the Table, Oh Allah)’, or ‘*Lokmaya Ya Hû* (To food, Ya Allah)’⁸.

7- Literally meaning poor, *faqir* (or *fakıyr* in Turkish), in the Sufi lodge culture, is a word to be used instead of ‘I’. This usage has a value in terms of representing the inadequacy, nothingness and imperfection of a dervish in the presence of the Greatness, Completeness and Perfection of Allah.

8- *Somat* is a specific word in Mevlevi terminology denoting Mevlevi dining table, while *lokma* is a general term in Sufi culture to refer food, literally meaning bite.

1- Âdâb at the kitchen

Participants come along with a food to share. These foods are placed at the open kitchen desk following the greetings upon arrival. In the meantime, the tea is prepared. The time of food sharing is the rehearsal brakes and ends.

Kitchen time has a special importance during the rehearsals. The aim of *lokma* sharing is not to get full, but rather to share the food, and to serve and honour each other during the sharing time. Therefore, the kitchen can be considered as a sharing, serving, and helping space. Participants pour tea to each other's glasses, help them for the food, clean the utensils together, motivate or compliment each other on the taste of food, and serve each other. First comers generally hesitate to take part at the kitchen; in such cases, they are especially encouraged to join in the group.

Hosting the guests can be thought in relation to the kitchen âdâb. In fact, right after the practice, participants first mind to service the guests, and prepare a plate and tea for them, before minding themselves and each other. In opposite situation, long-term participants are warned heavily.

Sharing of food does not take too much time; close to the end, kitchen is cleared rapidly with the collaboration of participants; leftovers are collected to put in the refrigerator or cupboards. Crumbs of the foods are never thrown into the garbage. All crumbs are collected in a bag to be thrown to the soil to feed the ants or pigeons.

In accordance with the âdâb of the dervish lodges, halvah is cooked and sherbet is made in special days like *kandil*. Halvah cooking is done with prayers and repeated recitation (*dhiqr*) of the Beautiful Names of Allah (*Esma-ül Hüsna*). With the guidance of Mr. Ayangil, all the participants cook the halvah in turns and pray. While cooking, participants stir the halvah and make double *vav's* (ص), the Arabic letter doubling of which denotes 66, the numerical value of Allah. It is stressed that none of the pieces should be spilled on the oven. Ayangil especially warns the participants by saying, "you will pray Surah *Al-Fatihah* for every piece of semolina spilled on the oven". Halvah cooking starts before the rehearsal, and is completed during the rehearsal by one or a few participants assigned for this task. When the task is complete, participants re-join the rehearsal by taking their seat silently. Between the rehearsals, the cooked halvah is eaten together from a single bowl with prayers. At the end, the bowl of halvah is not washed like the other dishes. First, the empty bowl is filled in with water, and then the water is thrown into the soil, not to waste a single drop. If needed, the soil is dug, the water is spilled into the dug soil, and then the soil is covered again. All is done with prayers.

2- Use of Language

Use of a respectful and polite language by the participants in their out-of-rehearsal conversations with each other, with the hosts and with Mr. Ayangil is a must. When it is not the case, related participant is warned by other participants, or by Mr. Ayangil himself. Just like at the rehearsals, participants speak with their low voices, and never raise their voice during the conversations. Friendliness is also a distinctive feature in the conversations.

Islamic concepts are used very often during the conversations, in addition to honouring the names Allah and Prophet Mohammed. Additionally, Sufi terminology is preferred in the appropriate situations. For example, the word *faqir* is mostly preferred to the word 'I'. The rehearsal space is called *meydan* (square), the sacred place at Sufi lodges for devotional rituals and other

collective lessons like whirling, hymn chanting and poetry recitation (Gölpınarlı 1963). When the rehearsals are over, *meydan* is not cleared and collected, but rather made secret or hidden (*sırlanır*). *Sırlamak* is a special term in the lodge culture used instead of saying turning something off, because of its improper connotation. Therefore, it is used to denote turning off the light, oven or electricity by saying, for example, 'making the light secret'. The term is also used to denote burying the deceased (Gölpınarlı 1963:41). Similarly, when something is turned on, it is rather awakened (*uyandırmak*).

At the end of the kitchen time, some participants leave the place with the same greeting manners as they enter into the studio, while some mostly gather around Mr. Ayangil and the guest(s) of the day for a deep conversation (*sohbet*). As in the case of music rehearsal, *sohbets* mostly revolve around the narrations with reference to Qur'an, *Sunnah* (sayings and doings of Prophet Mohammed), Sufic and Islamic literature, Rumi's *Masnawi* and alike, but in a deeper sense. Those are accompanied to the narratives on the virtues of Islam and the life stories of the ancestors. Yet, *âdâb* seems to be the main focus during those narrations, as if they are narrated to demonstrate the most refined examples of *âdâb*, and achieve a cultural transmission in this way.

What Does Ayangil Meshq Studio Tells us on Âdâb and Ritualization of Musical Practice

Above detailed description can be considered as an attempt to present the ways in which *âdâb* works in a meshq studio, both at the discursive level and at the level of musical and non-musical practices, predominating the organization and maintenance of whole spatial activities and interpersonal relationships. This case study does also allow one to comment further on the peculiarities of the concept.

It would be meaningful to start with the complexities and the multi-dimensionality of the concept, bearing many aspects of "right ways of behaving". Yet, first things first, it is clear that *âdâb* refers to the Islamic etiquette, Islamic correct ways of behaving including ethical and practical set of rules that give an order to the life of a good Muslim. As Lapidus summarizes, it is "what a person should know, be, and do to perfect the art of living" with reference to Islam (Lapidus 1984:39). Therefore, despite its roots in the Pre-Islamic period, it is primarily based on Qur'an, *Sunnah*, what Prophet Muhammad lived and said, and the narrations of saintly examples in the Islamic world (Lapidus 1984). It is obvious at the studio too that the correct ways of behaving during the musical and non-musical practices are supported through the references made to Qur'an, *Sunnah* and the narrations mainly from the Sufic literature⁹. These references might be made during the musical practices, in order motivate the participants in the desired way of performing, or during the non-musical activities to reinforce the meaning of acting according to the desired rules of conduct.

Further, as the Meshq Studio exemplifies, *âdâb* does not only bear the internalized respect to above references, but also to the musical ancestors. Lapidus, in outlining the historical development of the concept, dates the concept's usage back to the pre-Islamic period during which it is used to refer the inheritance from the ancestors and right way of behaving accordingly (Lapidus 1984). At the studio, in the same way, the musical ancestors, composers of the practiced pieces are respected and praised with respect to their being the perfect examples of supreme *âdâb*, ref-

9- The fact that the practiced compositions are the religious repertory of Turkish Maqam Music has of course a certain role in these references yet, it seems inadequate to explicate the predominance of the concept.

lecting this through their sophisticated compositions. For this reason, the musical practices should be handled in pure devotion, in absolute peace, serenity and respect, and most importantly as a service to the composers' sophisticated spirit, as well as to Allah.

The extreme emphasis on the concept might easily be thought as part of âdâb's general role as a tool for spiritual and intellectual learning. Likewise, Lapidus emphasizes the concept's pedagogical aspect in the Islamic world in the teaching of the etiquette, ethical rules, good behavior and manners especially in, but not limited to the urban and aristocratic life, ranging from royal and scribe classes to children (Lapidus 1984:38). In the same way, in this *meshq* studio, one should not underestimate the role of âdâb in the unique teacher-student or master-apprentice relationships that the *meshq* culture requires¹⁰. It might also be considered as a case to present that the *meshq* system is not only about the transmission/learning of the music and its technical aspects, but also of the transmission of an ethical worldview, the apprentices of which "ethically become" through imitating and being subjected to it (Senay 2014). As the *meshq* studio demonstrates, this "ethical becoming" involves spiritual and behavioral refinement, which is to be reflected to the musical performances as well as spatial relationships. It is as Brian Silver elaborates âdâb in the Hindu oral music tradition, it is reflected on each moment of the performance, including the arrangement of space, students' behaviours and use of the language, expression of respect, and so on. Yet, for Silver, pedagogical role of âdâb is "not [only] a duty but a strategy" "...[t]o achieve certain effect and to attain certain goals" (1993: 318)". The goal is to reach at the "highest level of sophistication and understanding represented in the audience" (1993:323).

The *meshq* studio does also present a valid case in terms of the deep relation of âdâb and the Sufi culture, so that it is regarded as a "lodge-like space" by its participants. Sufi literature can be deemed enormously rich in terms manuals and treaties defining the correct code of behaviour with respect to the every aspect of inner and outer attitude (Geoffroy 2010; Schimmel 1975). Likewise, discursive and practical references to Sufi âdâb at the studio seem to not only limited to a symbolic kind, as they are expected to be shared, and hence to some extent appropriated by the participants especially during the non-musical communal practices. This might be thought in relation to âdâb's role in the organization and maintenance of spatial and interpersonal relations. While the participants of the studio may come from culturally or politically diverse, and even sometimes conflicting backgrounds, and of course are not only composed of devoted Muslims, it may be argued that the extreme stress on âdâb also helps to the re-conciliation of differences through the language of morals, and to the creation of a continuing shared civil space. As Logan Sparks explains in his study on the role of âdâb in shared Muslim-Christian rituals (2015), the concept seems to have a distinctive place in the Islamic principle of co-existence, as it is closely related with the concept of hospitality and respect. As the kitchen âdâb at the studio demonstrates, where the guests are served first before everyone and everything else, hospitality and respect work like an unwritten but "spontaneous system of values", almost like an "intuitive negotiation" (Sparks 2015:8), rather than normative rules.

10- As one of the most detailed accounts of the classical *meshq* system in the teaching, learning and transmission of Turkish Maqam Music, Cem Behar's book, *Aşk Olmayınca Meşk Olmaz* (No Love, No Meshq) defines this pedagogical concept, as a term derived from the Ottoman Calligraphy (*Hat*) tradition, requiring the "imitation" and "repetition" of the work of the master. Similarly, in music, *meshq* is master-apprentice relationship in a paradigm where there is no notation system, in which apprentice imitate and repeat the musical pieces and musical repertory performed by the master. See Behar, Cem. 1998.

Last but not least, the embodied characteristic of âdâb at the studio, meaning that its being internalized and practiced by the individual participants themselves, and reflected to interpersonal and spatial relationships, is what challenges most the spatially bounded understanding of the sacred. As the case study displays, the participants of the studio, by their own will, become part of the discourses and performances of âdâb, as they choose to regularly attend to the Friday meetings, than any other musical practice. With the intentionality of participation, they engage in the sacralisation of their discourses and practices at this particular space, and also as “decentred subjects”, they may re-construct and re-experience the sacred, in other contexts, relationally through other “decentred subjects”. As Nigel Thrift (1997) outlines in his non-representation theory of space, embodiment of the sacred appears to be as a “decentered subjectivity”, not an indivisible one, which is indeed an affective subjectivity requiring dialogical practices to experience the sacred spatially and temporally (Thrift 1997:127-128). In the same way, out-of-studio get-togethers of the group, except one-to-one private meetings, can be said to reflect the same sacralization of their civil interactions, as âdâb is contextually and dialogically defined and re-produced.

As elaborated above, these characteristics of âdâb, especially through its embodied, dialogical and contextual nature, challenge the Durkheimian and Eliadean conception of sacred space, as a territorially defined and ontologically given category on the basis of the dichotomy with the profane. In the same way, with this peculiarity, it also brings a challenge to the classical ritual studies, in which this dichotomy is inherently embedded and ritual acts are given meaning as something different from the ordinary and profane activities of the culture bearers. As this particular study claims, therefore, the concept of âdâb allows us to re-think the classical understanding of ritual mostly conceptualized as opposed to the ordinary profane activities of the daily life.

The inherent acceptance of the sacred-profane dichotomy might be traced in the symbolic approach to rituals, which, as Talal Asad criticizes, is the predominant approach in the Western understanding of ritual and conceives it as a “symbolic behaviour –a type of activity to be classified separately from practical, i.e. technically effective, behaviour (Asad 1993:75)¹¹. Yet as the Ayangil Meshq Studio shows, the way âdâb ritualizes the spatial activities and relations does not work as the symbolic opposite of the daily life, as it appears to possibly transcend the spatial boundaries of this studio and extend to the non-spatial interactions of participants both with each other and with Mr. Ayangil, and also with the possible outer world. Therefore, with the concept of âdâb, one can hardly talk about the ritual codes to be de-coded in order to understand the ways in which it ritualizes the activities and relations, just like Asad criticizes that the symbolic approach may not be valid for all cultures (1993:78).

Based on this criticism, what Asad proposes to approach to rituals might be considered for the concept of âdâb, as he, beyond this dichotomous understanding, approaches to ritual as “proper ways of doing certain things” (1993:79). Exemplifying his proposition with reference to the life of monks in early Christianity, he claims that the main goal of ritual and ritualistic act is simply

11- This inherent dichotomy might even be observed in the works of Victor Turner, the forerunner of the symbolic approach to rituals, even if he does not approach to ritual as something confined to religion, but as a symbolic activity dealing with and manipulating the meaning structures of a given society. Although this approach has a quite general understanding of ritual even including social dramas, its understanding of ritual symbols still works through binary oppositions. Especially developed regarding the rite-of-passage rituals, the term liminality, referring the ritual phase, refers to a phase of ambiguity, the anti-structure, in which the meaning structures become upside down. For more, see Turner, Victor. 1982; 1995.

to establish a “predefined model of excellence” or of a “virtuous self” (1993:80;82). This, before all, necessitates conducting certain virtues like humility (being the supreme virtue) by imitation first in order “to behave in accordance with the saintly examples” (1993:80).

As outlined in the characteristics of âdâb, the concept may be said to relate to the pre-defined excellence of Prophet Mohammed, ancestors, Sufi Saints and alike as well as to proper behaving based on Qur’an, Hadith and Sunnah. Yet, by challenging the territorial division between sacred and the profane, it helps the sacralisation of the civil interactions of the decentred subjects, which in the end makes it relational, leading to the creation of a common/shared civil sphere, carrying it to also the domain of “profane” interactions. Just like Asad claims, therefore, the concept might be exemplary of the socially and culturally constructed characteristic of these two domains, “sacred” and “profane”, as “the distinction between ‘ordinary’ communicational behaviour and ‘ritual’ behaviour may be less momentous than we suppose” (Asad 1993:86).

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