

**33-Eşik\* as a scale (maqam) of asking for forgiveness in hagiographies\*\*****Onur AYKAÇ<sup>1</sup>****APA:** Aykaç, O. (2022). *Eşik* as a scale (maqam) of asking for forgiveness in hagiographies. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (26), 543-550. DOI: 10.29000/rumelide.1076376.**Abstract**

Eşik seen in many fields from the oldest mythical narratives to modern literary texts and generally defined in dictionaries as “the low step at the bottom of the doorway” carries out a highly important function while interpreting the relation between murshid (spiritual director) and murid (seeker) in tasawwuf culture. According to conventional wisdom, a murid who wants to transfer from zahir (outward) to batin (inward) and to walk confidently on the spiritual path needs to put his head in eşik of his murshid. Thus, murid expresses his devotion and surrender to his murshid. From this perspective, eşik symbolizes humility, devotion, and giving up the ego. Eşik having such a deep meaning is also used in hagiographies while asking for forgiveness for a mistake. Murids who follow their nafs (ego) in a moment’s heedlessness and hurt the feelings of their murshid ask for forgiveness as waiting on eşik of murshid and finally they achieve these goals. One of the best examples of this shows itself in the famous hagiography of eşik between murshid Tapduk Emre and his murid Yûnus Emre. However, this is not the only example in the hagiographies of the use of eşik as a scale of asking for forgiveness. It is seen that a similar situation occurred between murshid Zengî Ata and his murid Seyyid Ahmed Ata, murshid Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli and his murid Molla Sadeddin and murshid Emir Külâl and his murid Behâeddin Buhârî and the murids who commit a fault try to be forgiven by their murshids as putting their heads in eşik of their murids. Firstly, this study deals with the meaning of the term, eşik in tasawwuf culture, then, eşik as an expression of regret is scrutinized in the framework of the sample hagiographies.

**Keywords:** Tasawwuf culture, murshid, murid, eşik, asking for forgiveness**Menkıbelerde bir af dilenme makamı olarak eşik****Öz**

En eski mitik anlatılardan modern edebî metinlere kadar pek çok alanda karşımıza çıkan ve sözlüklerde genellikle “Kapı boşluğunun alt yanında bulunan alçak basamak.” şeklinde tanımlanan eşik, tasavvuf kültüründe mürşit ile mürit arasındaki ilişkiyi anlamlandırırken hayli önemli bir işlevi yerine getirmektedir. Yaygın kanaate göre, zâhirden bâtına geçmek ve hakikat yolunda emin bir şekilde ilerlemek isteyen müridin, mürşidinin kapı eşiğine baş koyması gerekir. Böylece mürit, mürşidine bağlılığını ve teslimiyetini ifade etmiş olur. Bu açıdan bakıldığında eşik; alçak gönüllüğü, adanmışlığı ve benlik davası gütmeğe vazgeçiş simgelemektedir. Böylesine derin manalar ihtiva eden eşik, menkıbelerde bir kabahatin affı dilenirken de kullanılmaktadır. Bir anlık gafletle nefesine uyan ve mürşidinin gönlünü kıran müritler, mürşidinin eşiginde bekleyip af talep etmekte ve sonunda

\* “Eşik” is identified as “threshold” in English. However; during the study the word, “eşik” will be used since the word, threshold does not involve the meaning of eşik in tasawwuf.

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bu amaçlarına ulaşmaktadırlar. Bunun en güzel örneklerinden biri, mürşit Tapduk Emre ile müridi Yûnus Emre arasında geçen meşhur eşik menkıbesinde kendini göstermektedir. Ancak eşğin bir “af dilenme makamı” olarak kullanımına dair menkıbelerde geçen tek örnek bu değildir. Mürşit Zengî Ata ile müridi Seyyid Ahmed Ata, mürşit Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli ile müridi Molla Sadeddin, mürşit Emir Külâl ile müridi Behâeddin Buhârî arasında da benzer bir hadisenin yaşandığı ve bir kabahat işleyen müritlerin kapı eşğine baş koyarak mürşitlerinin affına mazhar olmaya çalıştıkları görülmektedir. Bu makalede ilk olarak eşik teriminin tasavvuf kültüründe taşıdığı anlam ele alınmış, ardından eşğin bir pişmanlık ifadesi olarak nasıl kullanıldığı örnek menkıbeler eşliğinde incelenmiştir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Tasavvuf kültürü, mürşit, mürit, eşik, af dilenme

## 1. Introduction

The term, eşik<sup>2</sup>, used in several fields such as architecture, music, astronomy, sociology, psychology, geography, literature has been mostly mentioned together with the words *house* and *door* in historical Turkish dialects. When *eşik* is mentioned among Turkish communities, “house, outside of the house, the entrance of the house, door, front of the door, doorstep, the low step at the bottom of the doorway, street door, tent entrance” comes to mind. Beyond these meanings, there are also its equivalents such as “the bridge that supports the strings on a stringed musical instrument, the psychological and physiological point that is effective in the initiation of a reaction, the mound separating the two adjacent depressions, and the visible electromagnetic wave”. (Atmaca and Adzhumerova, 2010: 32-38) Eşik<sup>3</sup> having such a wide universe of meaning finds a place for itself in the discourses of tasawwuf.

Eşik, in tasawwuf tradition, is especially discussed with its location at the closest point to the ground. That is to say, it is approached as if it were trampled. When viewed from this perspective, eşik is the symbol of being humble, giving up the ego, becoming not arrogant, becoming not self-rightness. In tasawwuf culture, describing the modest people as “under the feet like eşik” (Cebecioğlu, 2009: 197) is an expression of this perception related to the tradition about eşik.

As known, eşik is a place that is crossed when entering or leaving a house/room. Considering that the place in question is a dervish lodge, a murid entering the dervish lodge crossing eşik accepts that eşik conduces to approach to his murshid and he also attributes to divinity to eşik because of the divinity of the goal that it reaches (Cebecioğlu, 2009: 197). Hence, Sufi people have made a practice of avoiding sitting on the threshold or stepping on it with their feet. Even, there is a belief among the people that anyone who steps on eşik or sits on eşik will be slandered<sup>4</sup> (Gölpınarlı, 2004: 116).

The understanding of eşik as a tool in reaching the murshid has been also decisive in interpreting the inward and outward of eşik in tasawwuf. While *zahir* (outward) of eşik is accepted as metaphor, *batin* (inward) of eşik is accepted as truth; in this sense, the thought that *eşik* is a place providing “the transition from *zahir* to *batin*, from the metaphor to the truth” has been brought forward (Uludağ, 2005: 128). Hence, the houses of sublime people and *eşiks* of these houses have been attributed to the sanctity, even it has often been observed that eşik of the door is kissed before entering. This attitude expresses the unconditional surrender and devotion to the murshid. In other words, it expresses “willingness to

<sup>2</sup> The words, *atebe* (threshold), *âsitân(e)* (central residential facility of a Turkish order), *dergâh* (dervish lodge), *ahceste* (threshold) are sometimes used instead of *eşik* in tasawwuf tradition.

<sup>3</sup> For the study on eşik discussed sociologically and comprehensively evaluated in the context of “phenomenon” and “image”, see: Gökçen, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> For the definitions of eşik in Turkish culture in details, see: Kaya, 2010.

be a sacrifice” (Özçelik, 2015: 30). Moreover, entering a dervish lodge, the room where murshid stays or a tomb by kissing eşik is called *eşiğe baş koymak* (put the head on threshold) (Gölpınarlı, 2004: 116).

In the discourse of tasawwuf, eşik has also gained meaning through *the death* and *the grave* at times. While in the saying “Beşikten eşiğe kadar (from cradle to eşik).” cradle portrays the birth, coming to the earthly realm, eşik represents the death, going to the realm of meaning (Cebecioğlu, 2009: 198). Also, the foot of a grave of murshid is referred to eşik and his murids desire to be buried next to the foot of a grave, namely eşik of their sheikh. Here, the primary aim of murid is that his own grave will be trampled by the people who want to visit their murshid’s grave. As a result of this manner, “ethical values such as knowing and identifying the position or rather the limit of people, respecting for elders take place in cultural memory” (Duymaz, 2019: 16).

Much as it is seen that eşik is respected in almost every sect and eşik is mentioned in the hagiographies of the sect masters, eşik has a special place and importance, especially in Bektashism. Moving from the hadith of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) “I am the house of wisdom, and Ali is its door.”<sup>5</sup> (Tirmizî, *Sünen’üt-Tirmizî*, Menakıb 17, 3723), eşik in Bektashism represents the entrance to the path of Ali. Here, a Bektashi never disrespects the eşik because Ali who is the door of wisdom will be morally reached right after eşik. Even he wants to emphasize its divinity/holiness as kneeling and touching eşik with his hands before crossing it. As a continuation of the same understanding, in Bektashism, four sides of the door are symbolized by Ali’s loved ones. The right and left sides of the door Hasan and Hussein, the upper part of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh), and the lower side symbolize Fatima. Therefore, in Bektashism, it is not welcomed that a person turns his back and wears his shoes across eşik. (Gökbel, 2019: 281) In Bektashi tradition, it is known that the notion eşik is also kept alive in terms such as “eşik ıssı (the owner of eşik), eşik tercümanı (the translator of eşik), eşik yoklama (controlling eşik), eşikçi (the person of eşik)”.

## 2. The usage of eşik as a scale of asking for forgiveness in hagiographies

Although eşik is seen as *a symbol of humility* in tasawwuf culture, it can also transform into a scale of asking for forgiveness for those who get arrogant and break someone’s heart. A murid who rebels against his murshid and breaks the heart of the murshid in a moment’s heedlessness puts his head on eşik and waits for forgiveness to regain his trust. Here, the issue is not putting the head on eşik morally but putting the person’s head on eşik in real terms and waiting. Four hagiographies about the usage of eşik as a scale of asking for forgiveness were detected. These comprise the events that occurred between murshid Zengî Ata and his murid Seyyid Ahmed Ata, murshid Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli and his murid Molla Sadeddin, murshid Tapduk Emre and his murid Yûnus Emre and murshid Emir Külâl and his murid Behâeddin Buhârî, relatively.

According to the first hagiography, Zengî Ata<sup>6</sup> (d. 656/1258) who is one of the famous mutasawwifs of Tashkent, is heartbroken against his murshid Seyyid Ahmed Ata (d. 702/1303) who follows his nafs and despises him. Seyyid Ahmed Ata, who sees that no progress has been made on the path of tasawwuf despite the passing of years, realizes that all this has happened to him because he has offended his murshid. Yet, he does not know how to ask for forgiveness from him. Finally, listening to the advice of

<sup>5</sup> This hadith is generally cited in other sources as “I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its door”. In the history of the caliphs written in verses, it is as follows: “Dahî hakkında didi Peygamber/ Ben ilmün şehriyem Haydar ana der” [Muhammad told about him as/ I am the city of knowledge and Haydar (Ali) is its door] (Gıynaş, Ataseven and Öztürk, 2018: 65).

<sup>6</sup> For the history and life of Zengî Ata, see: Koçak, 2003.

Anber Ana, the wife of his murshid, one night, he puts his head on eşik of his murshid and waits and wins his heart back in this way:

Zengî Ata is a murshid who works as a shepherd on the mountains of Tashkent. Thus, he provides for his family. One day, four young men come to him when he grazes the animals on the mountain. These young men tell him that they learned the exoteric science in Bukhara madrasas, now they seek a blessed man who will teach esoteric science to them. Zengî Ata listening to them without laying back his identity tells them that he is the only person who will help them near here. Seyyid Ahmed Ata, one of these four young men, becomes arrogant and thinks that “I am both the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) and attended to a school and madrasah. Why should I be the student of such a miserable shepherd?”. However, he still accepts to stay with Zengî Ata in order not to leave his friends. Despite the passage of time, Seyyid Ahmed Ata can not make any progress on the path of tasawwuf due to her excessive pride and arrogance and his troubles are in vain. Seyyid Ahmed Ata, who thinks that it has happened to him because he has broken the heart of his murshid, Zengî Ata, and who wants to ask for forgiveness from him, seeks help from Anber Ana, the wife of his murshid. Anber Ana tells him that “Wrap yourself in black felt and lie on Zengî Ata’s path<sup>7</sup> tonight. When he goes out to pray at dawn, he sees you like that and feels pity for you.” Seyyid Ahmed Ata, wrapped in a black felt, lies on eşik of door of Zengî Ata. When Zengî Ata goes out for the morning prayer, he notices that something black is lying on eşik and touches it with his foot to understand what it is. Meanwhile, Seyyid Ahmed Ata rubs his face on his murshid’s feet and asks for forgiveness. Zengî Ata accepts his apology and picks Seyyid Ahmed Ata up. (Komisyon, 1993: 325-328)

Second hagiography occurs between Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli (d. 669/1271) and his murid Molla Sadeddin (d. The beginning of XIV. century). According to this hagiography, Molla Sadeddin, who suddenly succumbs to his heedlessness and intends to kill his murshid, regrets greatly and wants to ask for forgiveness from him. While he broods on how to do this, Sarı İsmail who is one of the successors of Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli comes to his rescue. Listening to the advice of Sarı İsmail, he puts his head on eşik of çילהane (chilla khana)<sup>8</sup> where Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli stays, and finally receives the forgiveness of his murshid:

Molla Sadeddin who is a famous müderris (professor) in Aksaray leaves everything behind and becomes murid of Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli whose miracles go the rounds. He has served under Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli for eighteen years. Although he sometimes misses his former days, he does not leave the dervish lodge. On a heavy rainy day, Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli wants him to repair the earthen roof of the masjid with a stone roller. While Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli is sitting in front of the masjid, Molla Sadeddin climbs the roof of the masjid and begins to roll the stone roller. Meanwhile, the devil misgives Molla Sadeddin. Molla Sadeddin regrets that he was the well-known müderris beforehand but now he is a servant of a murshid thinks if Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli is eliminated, he can go back his work. Thereupon, he throws the roller stone in his hand towards the head of Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli, who is sitting in front of the masjid. Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli who shouts, “O Allah!” raises his hand in the air and holds the roller stone with one hand and lays it on the ground. Then, he gets angry with Molla Sadeddin who wanted to kill him sends back him to Aksaray. Molla Sadeddin who is very sorry for what he did joins a caravan and decides to go back to Sulucakarahöyük to ask for forgiveness from Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli. He ties his beard to the bridle of a donkey in the caravan so that his remorse can be seen by everyone, and then he enters Sulucakarahöyük as such. Sarı İsmail who sees him in this situation unties the beard of Molla Sadeddin from the donkey’s bridle, asks him to explain what happened. Molla Sadeddin spells out the incident. Thereupon, Sarı İsmail gives him an idea. He advises him to lie down in front of/on eşik of chilla khana (Kızılca Halvet) used by Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli and to wait until morning in this state. Molla Sadeddin does what has been advised. When Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli leaves from his chilla khana at night, steps on Molla Sadeddin’s face in the dark and asks “Who is this I stepped on?”. Sarı İsmail answers: “My sultan, he is Sadeddin, your servant”. In response to it, Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli asks “Is this our Sadeddin?” and forgives and accepts him in his dervish lodge. (Gölpınarlı, 2019: 60-61; Kardaş, 2018: 449-453)

Third hagiography occurs between Tapduk Emre (d. The end of the XIII. century) and his murid Yünus Emre (d. 720/1320-21). According to this hagiography whose last part is very reminiscent of the

<sup>7</sup> In the part where the hagiography is described in verse, the expression “eşik of door” is used instead of “road” (Komisyon, 1993: 327).

<sup>8</sup> Place in which 40-day retreat is conducted (Renard, 2009: 263).

abovementioned one, Yûnus Emre, after serving for years in the dervish lodge of Tapduk Emre thinks that he can not progress in esoteric sciences, and one day he leaves the dervish lodge unannounced. He understands his fault after many years and wants to turn back and asks for forgiveness from his murshid Tapduk Emre. Yet, Yûnus Emre who is not sure how to do this puts his head on the eşik of Tapduk Emre and waits with the guidance of Ana Bacı, the wife of his murshid. As a result of this action, he is addressed as “ours” -just like Molla Sadeddin- and realizes that he wins his murshid’s heart back:

Although Yûnus Emre has served for thirty years in the dervish lodge of Tapduk Emre, he thinks that esoteric sciences are not clear for him, and one day he leaves the dervish lodge abruptly. His path leads him to the mountains, countryside; he travels from one region to another. After a long time, one day, he meets seven *eren*s in a cave and becomes friends with them. One of them prays every night, and with the blessings of that *eren*’s prayer, a table appears in front of them. Finally, Yûnus Emre’s turn comes. Yûnus opens his hands and says “My God, do not let me down. For whose sake they pray, do not embarrass me”. That night, two tables appear in front of them. *Erens* are surprised and ask “For whose sake did you pray for?”. Yûnus says that “First you will explain”. *Erens* express that “We pray for the sake of Yûnus Emre who has served for thirty years in the lodge of Tapduk Emre”. When Yûnus hears this, he feels sorry, and immediately, he turns back to the lodge of Tapduk Emre and asks help from Ana Bacı, the wife of his murshid to receive forgiveness of his murshid. Ana Bacı says, “Tapduk goes out to perform ablution for fajr<sup>9</sup>. Lie on eşik of the door. He asks ‘Who is this?’ when he steps on you in the dark. I will tell him ‘He is Yûnus!’. If he says ‘Which Yûnus?’, understand that you are not remembered anymore. However, if he says ‘Is he our Yûnus?’, Ana Bacı advises him to throw himself at his murshid’s feet and to beg for forgiveness.” Yûnus Emre does what Ana Bacı suggests. Tapduk Emre, who can not already see well, asks what is the thing touching his feet in the dark. Ana Bacı says with a loud voice “Yûnus!”. When Tapduk Emre says, “Our Yûnus?”, Yûnus Emre throws himself at the feet of his sheikh and atones for his crime. (Timurtaş, 1972: 23-24)<sup>11</sup>

The last hagiography occurs between Emir Külâl (d. 772/1370) and his murid Behâeddin Buhârî (d. 791/1389). According to the hagiography, one day when Behâeddin Buhârî passes out with the love of Allah, he wants to enter the presence of his murshid, Emir Külâl, in a distraught state. But, Emir Külâl does not want him to join the conversation<sup>12</sup> in this situation and he dismisses Behâeddin Buhârî from his presence. Behâeddin Buhârî who feels degraded gets very angry with his murshid. Even he thinks to run riot. However, he calms down in a short time and asks for forgiveness from his murshid since he enters the presence of his murshid improperly and he considers making something bad by following his nafs. Behâeddin Buhârî, who knows very well that he can do this by putting his head on eşik of his murshid’s door and waiting, immediately does what he thinks and is forgiven by his murshid:

One winter day, Behâeddin Buhârî passes out with the love of Allah and wanders barefoot in the countryside and mountains. He gets pricked in his feet by thorns and he has severe wounds on the soles of his feet. He wants to enter the presence of his murshid and joins his conversation in this situation. When Emir Külâl, who is in a deep conversation with his students at that time, sees that Behâeddin Buhârî tries to be included in the conversation in a miserable state, he calls out to his students and orders them to take Behâeddin Buhârî out. Behâeddin Buhârî resents this situation. At first, he desires to create the problem by following his nafs. When his nafs is about to overcome his will, he calms himself down and is ashamed that he enters the presence of his sheikh in an unpleasant state. Behâeddin Buhârî, who wants to ask for forgiveness from his sheikh, puts his head on eşik of his sheikh’s door and does not move from there until the morning. He does not care if it snows on him and if his body disappears under the snow.<sup>13</sup> When Emir Külâl takes a step on eşik of the door

<sup>9</sup> Man of God, individual totally given to spiritual quest (Renard, 2009: 264).

<sup>10</sup> Dawn prayer.

<sup>11</sup> There are different rumors about Yûnus Emre’s leave from Tapduk Emre’s lodge for a while. According to one of them, Yûnus Emre leaves the dervish lodge at the request of his sheikh so that he spiritually matures and becomes cooked on the path of the erens, and he wanders from the sahra to the sahra for forty years. Although the reason why Yûnus leaves the lodge in this rumor is different, the conversation between Yûnus Emre and Ana Bacı on the day he returned to the lodge and the happenings after this conversation are the same as above. (Köprülü, 1966: 229-230; Tatçı, 1990: 9-10; Uysal, 2014: 25).

<sup>12</sup> It is a religious conversation.

<sup>13</sup> Seyyid Fehîm Arvâsî (d. 1314/1896) is one of the mutasawwifs who is covered with snow while lying on eşik of his murshid. Seyyid Fehîm Arvâsî, who lies on eşik of door of his murshid one night to show his devotion to his murshid Seyyid Tâhâ

at the time of fajr, he steps on Behâeddin Buhârî's head, which is under the snow. When Emir Külâl sees his murid in that situation, he favors Behâeddin Buhârî and consoles by inviting him inside. He even cleans the thorns on Behâeddin Buhârî's feet with his blessed hands and applies ointment on his wounds. (Komisyon, 1992a: 408)

When compared these four hagiographies, the first thing that draws attention is that some scenes are similar or common. Seyyid Ahmed Ata and Yûnus Emre learn from his murshid's wife how they could be forgiven by their murshids; When Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli forgives his murid, Molla Sadeddin and Tapduk Emre forgives his murid, Yûnus Emre, they call their murids "ours". Moreover, in these four hagiographies, murshids come across their murids on eşik when they go out to perform ablution for fajr. Hence, the action of asking for forgiveness takes always place in a semi-dark setting. The fact that some scenes and dialogues in the hagiographies are almost the same brings the following questions to the mind: "Which hagiography is older than the other? Which hagiography is fed from the other? Is it possible to talk about a stereotyped structure of asking for forgiveness in tasawwuf?" Firstly, it is necessary to know under which conditions these hagiographies recorded to be able to answer these questions correctly. According to Ahmet Yaşar Ocak studying on hagiographies much, it is very important that the person who penned a hagiography and the saint who is the subject of that hagiography must live in the same era, even in the same neighborhood. If the author of the hagiography lived in the period(s) after the murshid in question, then he would be devoid of his personal observations. Compulsorily, he will use one of three sources "oral tradition, written sources, historical remains". As a result, this will weaken the credibility of the hagiography he tells. According to Ocak, especially the hagiographies fed from the oral tradition and the hagiographies that were the written version of the oral tradition are open to information pollution. It is very weak that they reflect the experience of the aforementioned saint in a realistic way. (Ocak, 2010: 37-38) Considering that the case studies which have many similarities are not immediately transferred into a written form, but are compiled from the oral tradition and transmitted to the written medium after a long time, it can be accepted as normal that they consist of great similarities within them. It is also common for them that the scene or sentence in one of them is exactly reflected in the other. However, it is not possible to reveal which hagiography is older or which one is fed from the other, in the light of current information and documents.

It is also very important how the usage of eşik as a maqam (scale) of asking for forgiveness was explored in these four hagiographies. Murids in the first three hagiographies are not aware of this function of eşik and they discover to use eşik thanks to someone's advice. While Anber Ana, the wife of his murshid Zengî Ata recommends Seyyid Ahmed Ata use eşik, Sarı İsmail, the caliphate of his mursid Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli, advises Molla Sadeddin to use eşik and Ana Bacı, the wife of his murshid Tapduk Emre advises Yûnus Emre to use eşik. Considering that the people in these three hagiographies lived in the period from the 13. century to the first quarter of the 14. century, it can be told that using eşik as a scale of asking for forgiveness in these years was not known by everybody. Only people close to the murshid have this knowledge, and under his guidance, the murids can become aware of this function of eşik. The situation in the fourth hagiography is very different. Because, Behâeddin Buhârî does not consult anyone when he puts his head on eşik of his murshid, Emir Külâl, for the forgiveness of his fault; on the contrary, he is aware that eşik is a position of asking for forgiveness. Keeping in mind that the abovementioned people died at the end of the 14. century, it can be said that the knowledge that eşik is a place of asking for forgiveness is now becoming widespread. When analyzed the encyclopedia, *Evliyalar Ansiklopedisi*

(d. 1269/1853), never moves and falls asleep, even though his body is covered by snow in a short time due to heavy snowfall. Seyyid Tâhâ, who goes out for the tahajjud prayer, accidentally stepped on Seyyid Fehîm Arvâsî and wakes him up since he can not notice Arvâsî due to the snow. Then they go to the mosque together to pray. (Komisyon, 1992b: 155)

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(Encyclopedia of Saints) consisting of 12 volumes, the data to justify this claim are acquired. In this encyclopedia, it is detected that the number of *hagiographies including eřik* increases. It draws attention that the murids, especially those who want to express their devotion, often lie on eřik of their murshids. This shows the value of eřik has been understood by several people since the end of the 14. century whatever the murid's aim is.

In these four case studies, the way the murids use eřik while asking for forgiveness is also remarkable. Rather than standing or kneeling in front of eřik, the murids prefer to put their heads on eřik as if they were a sacrifice. Even, each of them stays put from until the foot of his murshid touches him. The murid, who is aware of his guilt/fault, declares that he will no longer make headstrong actions by behaving like this and shows that he has trampled his personality underfoot.

### 3. Conclusion

Eřik impresses itself as a *symbol of humility* in tasawwuf culture due to its location at the closest point to the ground. A murshid expects his murid to trample his nafs underfoot like an eřik and to be purified from arrogance. However, some murids follow their nafs in a moment of anger and break their murshid's heart. When he gets calm, the murid who understands his fault and asks for forgiveness from his murshid lies his head on eřik as if he were a sacrifice and waits. In this way, he lays bare what he regrets, and eventually, he is forgiven by his murshid. Here, eřik rises to the status of a *scale of asking for forgiveness*, not an ordinary place to be crossed.

It is detected that there are four hagiographies in which eřik is used as a scale of asking for forgiveness. They occur between Zengî Ata and his murid Seyyid Ahmed Ata, Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli and his murid Molla Sadeddin, Tapduk Emre and his murid Yûnus Emre and Emir Külâl and his murid Behâeddin Buhârî. When the aforementioned hagiographies are analyzed comparatively, three issues come to the fore. First of all, it draws the attention that there are significant similarities/influences among the hagiographies since they are written down after being told in the oral tradition for a long time. Secondly, while Seyyid Ahmed Ata, Molla Sadeddin and Yûnus Emre do not know how to use eřik, it is seen that Behâeddin Buhârî who belonged to one generation after them is informed about the usage of eřik as a scale of asking for forgiveness. This situation leads to the conclusion that the functions of the eřik are learned by large masses as time progresses. Thirdly, instead of kneeling or standing in front of eřik while asking for forgiveness, the murids lower themselves to the ground level and put their heads on eřik as if they were a sacrifice; thus, they declare to their murshids that they surrender unconditionally.

It is mentioned in previous studies that eřik represents the values such as “being humble, giving up the ego”. Especially, the famous eřik hagiography between Tapduk Emre and his murid Yûnus Emre is focused on. Yet, the relation of eřik with the act of asking for forgiveness is not questioned much. This study discusses the hagiographies of Seyyid Ahmed Ata, Molla Sadeddin and Behâeddin Buhârî about eřik apart from Yûnus Emre and the study also reveals that eřik is used as a scale of asking for forgiveness by the abovementioned murids.

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