

Gökhan Percin (Stanford University)

For him who has perception, a mere sign is enough.

For him who does not really heed, a thousand explanations are not enough.

Haji Bektash Veli

Kaygusuz Abdal: A fifteenth-century popular mystic poet, what is known of his life is mixed with legend. He seems to have settled in Egypt and founded a dervish lodge there of which he was the sheyh. He is considered the founder of the Bektashi branch of mystical poetry and excelled particularly in humorous-satirical verse. He was also the author of powerful pamphlets in prose on mysticism.

Petition

Lord, I humbly beg of You, hear my reverend request,

These are words straight from the heart, they are not spoken in jest.

First, a hundred thousand loaves, also fifty thousand pies,

One hundred sixty thousand buns, profusely buttered on both sides.

A thousand piglets should suffice, if added to a thousand sows,

With sixty of their young, some fifty thousand water buffaloes.

Ten thousand cows, a thousand oxen for a mustard stew,

The trotters separately served in vinegar, with garlic too.

A thousand sheep in casserole, an equal sum of goats at most,

But fifty thousand lambs and kids to grill upon the spit, or roast.

Innumerable chickens, ducks, and in the the same proportion, geese,

Some to make succulent kebabs, and others to be fried in grease.

Pray let there be dish after dish of pigeons and of tender quail,

Partridge and pheasant caught in nets, arriving in an endless file.

Fifty thousand pots of rice, and saffron puddings are inferred,

A thousand pots of porridge, the butter with a drum-stick stirred.

*Soups with pleasant flavouring, meatballs gently made, I beg,
Ducklings, and on trays of brass, sweetmeats made of starch and egg.*

*Fifty thousand pasties and the same amount of baklava,
Honey and almond cakes galore, and countless plates of fresh okra.*

*Helva fit for conquerors, served on trays and heaped in bowls,
For eager fingers to scoop up, making quite enormous holes.*

*Forty thousand, fifty thousand pecks of apricot and cherry,
Apple, pear and vintage grape, will be enough to make us merry.*

Pir Sultan Abdal: A sixteenth-century mystic poet from Sivas, about whose early life very little is known. He lived under Süleyman the Magnificent, was involved in an Alevi rising and was hanged. His poems, immensely popular for centuries among the Alevis all over the Ottoman Empire, bear traces of social and political protest and are written in the simple spoken Turkish of his time.

Hasan Dede: A fifteenth-to sixteenth-century poet of Bektashi tradition, he seems to have lived near Ankara and set up a dervish lodge there. What little survived from his is closely connected with the work of Eşrefoğlu.

*Eşrefoğlu, the tidings hear,
We are the garden and the rose,
The worshippers of Shah Meydan,
The seventy-tongues are ours.*

*The waters of ablution cleanse
The fat less than they do the thin;
Of what avail to censure men?
Ours is every human sin.*

*Of small avail to ask for what
Beyond the distant turning lies,
Ours is the mighty fount that flows
From the eight streams of Paradise.*

*The wandering bee sucks here and there,
It hesitates from tree to tree,
The pious shun our company,
We are the honey and the bee.*

*The pilgrim and the sufi join
When to Almighty God we call,
We have the highest Prophet's crown,*

We have the mantle and the shawl.

*We are the fairest dervishes,
Our lodges bloom with many flowers,
We are the servants of Bektash,
The rules, the men, the ways are ours.*

*God's servant is Hasan Dede,
And this is what he has to say,
The rules are in the Holy Book,
The way to God is the true way.*

- L. M. J. Garnett, *The Dervishes of Turkey* (London: The Octagon Press Ltd., 1990),
I. Shah, *The Sufis* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964),
J. S. Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (London: Oxford at The Clarendon Press, 1971),
F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam Under The Sultans*, vols. 1 & 2 (London: Oxford at The Clarendon Press, 1929),
A. T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in The Islamic Later Middle Period 1200-1550* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994),
J. P. Brown, *The Darvishes or Oriental Spiritualism*, *Islam and The Muslim World*, no. 5 (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1968),
J. K. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, *Luzac's Oriental Religions Series*, vol. 7 (London: Luzac & Co., 1937),
S. Friedlander, *The Whirling Dervishes* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992),
F. Trix, *Spiritual Discourse: Learning with an Islamic Master*, *Conduct and Communication Series* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993),
N. Menemencioglu, *The Penguin Book of Turkish Verse* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1978),
K. Silay, *An Anthology of Turkish Literature*, *Indiana University Turkish Studies and Turkish Ministry of Culture Joint Series 15* (Bloomington, Indiana University Turkish Studies, 1996),
E. G. Browne, "Further Notes on the Literature of the Hurufis and Their Connection with the Bektashi Order of Dervishes," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1907): 533.
E. G. Browne, "Some Notes on the Literature and Doctrines of the Hurufi Sect.," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1898): 61.
G. Jacob, "Die Bektaschijje in ihrem Verhaltnis zu verwandten Erscheinungen," *Abhandlungen Der Philosophisch-Philologischen Klasse Der Koniglich Bayerrischen Akademie Der Wissenschaften* 24.3 (1909): 1.
N. Clayer, *L'Albanie, Pays des Derviches: Les Ordres Mystiques Musulmans en Albanie `a l'epoque Post-Ottomane (1912-1967)*, *Osteuropa-Institut der Freien Universitat Berlin Balkanologische Veroffentlichungen*, band 17 (Berlin: In Kommission bei Otto Harrassowitz-Wiesbaden, 1990),
E. Zengin, *Bektacism in Western Thrace: A Contribution to the History of the Propagation of Islam on Greek Territory* (Thessalonikh: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1988),
T. Zarccone, *Mystiques, Philosophes et Francs-Maccons en Islam*, *Riza Tevfik, Penseur Ottoman (1868-1949)*, *Du Soufisme a la Confrerie*, *Bibliotheque de l'Institut Franccais d'Etudes*

Anatoliennes d'Istanbul 37 (Paris: Librairie d'Amerique et d'Orient, 1993),
B. Noyan, Bektasilik Alevilik Nedir (Ankara: Sanat Kitabevi, 1987),
A. Özkırımlı, Alevilik-Bektasilik ve Edebiyatı (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, Kent Basımevi, 1985),
C.Sener, Alevilik Olayı, Toplumsal Bir Başkaldırının Kısa Bir Tarihçesi (İstanbul: Yön Yayıncılık, 1989),
A. K. Bilgiseven, Prof. Dr. Mehmet Eröze Göre Etnik ve Dini Bölücülük (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırma Vakfı, 1991),
İ. Gündüz, Osmanlılarda Devlet-Tekke Münasebetleri (Ankara: Seha Neşriyat, 1984),
Y. N.Öztürk, Tarih Boyunca Bektaşılık (İstanbul: Yeni Boyut, 1990),
P. K. Hitti, The Near East in History: A 5000 Year Story (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1961),
R. Lifchez, The Dervish Lodge: Architecture, Art, and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies, No. 10 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992),
L. M. Garnett, Mysticism and Magic in Turkey: An Account of the Religious Doctrines, Monastic Organisation and Ecstatic Powers of the Dervish Orders (AMS Press, 1912).
I. Melikoff, Hadji Bektach: UN Mythe Et Ses Avatars: Genese Et Evolution Du Soufisme Populaire En Turquie, Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, no. 5 (New York?: Brill Academic Publishers, 1998),

Janissaries prayer

Allah Allah illallah. We are blameless. We have our hearts afire.

Our devoting to the Sultan is revealed.

the Three, the Seven, the Forty, the Light of the Prophet (gulbang)

Muhammed, the Beneficence (Kerem) of Ali, our Pir the head sultan Haji Bektash Veli,
let's say Hu for all of them, Huuuu.

I have Trusted in God.

Company (Buluk) 45.

We are believers from of old. We have confessed the unity of Reality. We have offered our head on this Way. We have a prophet, Ahmedi Muhtar Cenap. Since the time of the Heroes (Erler=Mystic Saints) we have been the intoxicated ones. We are the moths in the divine fire. We are a company of wandering dervishes (serseri divaneler) in this world. We cannot be counted on the fingers; we cannot be finished by defeat. No one outside of us knows our state. The Twelve Imams, the Twelve Ways, we have affirmed them all, the Three, the Seven, the Forty, the Light of the Prophet, the Beneficence (Kerem) of Ali, our Pir, the head sultan, Haji Bektash Veli. In one thousand two hundred and thirty-eight, in conformity with the benevolent arrangement established by the Law-Giver, the Conqueror, Sultan Suleyman Han whose place is in Paradise and whose abode is Heaven, and by permission of the Auga of the Soup-Makers (Corbaci) and with the knowledge of all the elders this Discharge Certificate (Suffa) has been given to Mahmut who sought and desired it, and whose name is written in the Record-book of the Way. When required let it be shown.

I have trusted in God

Mehmet Commander (Usta) Chief of the Barrack
Huseyin. Oda Bacsi)

LAW 677: Which prohibits and abolishes the profession of tomb-keeping, the assigning of mystical names, and the closing of tekkes (dervish lodges), zaviyes (central dervish lodges), and tombs. 13 December 1925 (1341 H.)

Clause 1. All the tekkes (dervish lodges) and zaviyes (central dervish lodges) in the Turkish Republic, either in the form of wakf (religious foundations) or under the personal property right of its sheikh or established in any other way, are closed. The right of property and possession of their owners continue. Those used as mosques and mescits (small mosques) may be retained as such.

All of the orders using descriptions as sheikh, dervish, disciple, dedelik (elder of Alevis), chelebilik (title of the leader of one branch of Alevis), seyyitlik (a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad), babalik (elder of Bektashi order, a kind of sheikh), emirlik (descendant of the Prophet Muhammad), nakiplik (warden of religious order), halifelik (deputy sheikh), faldjilik (fortune teller), buyudjuluk (witchcraft), ufurukchuluk (a person who claims to cure by means of the breath), divining, and giving written charms in order to make someone reach their desire: service to these titles, and the wearing of dervish costume, are prohibited. The tombs of the sultans, the tombs of the dervish orders are closed, and the profession of tomb-keeping is abolished. Those who open the closed tekkes (dervish lodges) or zaviyes (central dervish lodges), or the tombs, and those who re-establish them or those who give temporary places to the orders or people who are called by any of the mystical names mentioned above or those who serve them, will be sentenced to at least three months in prison and will be fined at least fifty Turkish liras.

Clause 2. This law is effective immediately.

Clause 3. The cabinet is charged with its implementation.

By Hacı Bektashi Veli

Before the world came into being in the hidden secret of nonexistence,
I was alone with Reality in his oneness.
He created the world; because then
I formed the picture of Him, I was the designer.

I became folded in garments made of the elements;
I made my appearance out of fire, air, earth and water.
I came into the world with the best of men [Adam];
I was of the same age even as Adam.

The blessed rod I gave to Moses.
I became the Holy Spirit and came to Mary.

I was guide to all the saints;
To Gabriel the Faithful I was the right hand companion.

To this world of ``being annihilated in God" I have often come and gone.
I have rained with the rain and I have grown as grass.
I have guided aright the country of Rum;
I was Bektash, who came from Khurasan.

Sehitlik tekke at Rumeli Hisar
Okuz Limani
Kara Agac
Yedi Kule
Bademli tekke in Sutluce
Karyagdi tekke in Eyup
Muruvet Baba tekke in Uskudar
Shahkulu Dergah at Merdebanli Koy (Merdiven Koy)
Tahir Baba tekke in Camlica

Bektashi Tekkes in Istanbul (Constantinople)

European side:

Yedi Kule Kazli Cecsme, Sheikh Abdullah.
Top Kapi, Sheikh Abdullah.
Karyaugdi above Eyup, Sheikh Husain Baba.
Kara Augac near Kaugithane, Sheikh Munir Baba.
Rumeli Hisari Sehitler

Asiatic side:

Camlica.

Merdiven Köy. This important tekke is said by the Bektashi to contain the grave of a very ancient warrior-saint, Shahkulu, who `fought against Constantine' and was here buried. The tekke is also said to contain the grave of Azbi Cavucs, who conducted Misri Efendi to exile and was converted by him on the way. Besmi Sultan, a legal wife of Sultan Abdil Mecit (1839-1861), attributed her elevation to that high and unusual position to the fact that she had once stood on a ``wishing stone" in the grounds of the famous Bektashi Tekke (Shahkulu Dergah) at Merdivenköy near Istanbul. This stone standing near the grave of Azbi Cavucs, a famous saint in Bektashi lore, possessed the power, dervishes asserted, to grant the wish of anyone standing on it.

The Principles of the Order of the Bektashis

Six ahkam, or `Commands':

begin

1. Liberality &
2. Knowledge &
3. Truth
4. Holy Law &
5. Submission &
6. Contemplation

Six erkan, or `Columns':

1. Science &
2. Meekness &
3. Contentment
4. Thankfulness &
5. Calling on God &
6. Retirement

Six bina, or `Constructions':

1. Repentance &
2. Submission &
3. Fidelity
4. Increase of Spirituality &
5. Contentment &
6. Seclusion

Six hukum, or `Wisdoms':

1. Knowledge &
2. Leberality &
3. Approach to Divine Science
4. Fidelity &
5. Reflection &
6. Faith in God

Six asbat, or `Evidences of the Order':

1. Benevolence &
2. God's Praise &
3. Abandonment of Sin
4. Abandonment of Passions &
5. Fear of God &
6. Cheerfulness of Spirit