

139. For the document, see my '16. Yüzyıldan Bir Ziyaretname (Yazı Çevirimli Metin-Günümüz Türkçesine Çeviri-Tıpkıbasım)', in In Memoriam Şinasi Tekin', ed. George Dedes and Selim S. Kuru, special issue, *Journal of Turkish Studies/Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları* 31, no. 2 (2007): 67-79.
140. Cf. *FD/Ij-Wafa'i-DK-1* and *FD/Ij-AGU-Ma*.
141. For the Sinemillis and their family documents, see my 'Sinemilliler: Bir Alevi Ocağı ve Aşireti,' *Kırkbudak* 2, no. 6 (Spring 2006): 19-59.
142. FD of Erhan Dede, the *ocak* of Derviş Çimli. It is curious that both of these documents are found in the family archives of a lesser-known *ocak* of Derviş Çimli. On the other hand, the two *ocaks*, it would seem, branched out from the same family line, given their shared home in the province of Elbistan-Maraş and some Sinemilli oral traditions to that effect, even though this claim is rejected by members of the *ocak* of Derviş Çimli. Personal correspondence with Erhan Dede, spring 2018.
143. Michael Ebstein, 'Spiritual Descendants of the Prophet: Al-Ḥakim al-Tirmidhī, Ibn al-°Arabī and Ikhwān al-Şafā° on *Ahl al-Bayt*', in *L'Esotérisme Shi'ite L'Esotérisme Shi'ite, ses racines et ses prolongements*, ed. M. A. Amir-Moezzi et al. (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2016), 546.
144. While a modern observer may become easily sceptical of the reliability of a process of proof based solely on witness testimonies and communal recognition, it was in fact in keeping with the rules of the shari°a courts that prioritised oral testimonies of Muslim witnesses given under oath over any other type of evidence; see Rüya Kılıç, 'The Reflection of Islamic Tradition on Ottoman Social Structure: The Sayyids and the Sharifs', in *Sayyids and Sharifs in Muslim Societies: The Living Links to the Prophet*, ed. Morimoto Kazuo (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 131. These testimonies could also be supplied in written form without the witness being personally present. This is suggested by a *shajara* that was issued by the *naḳībū'l-eşraf* in Najaf based on two letters, one of which was signed by the local kadi. *Shajara* dated 30 Zi'l-ka°de 953/1547, FD of Hüseyin and Hayri Doğan, the Adıyaman branch of the *ocak* of Ağuıçen. This document was published, but its date was read incorrectly as 553/1158 in Fevzi Rençber, 'Anadolu Aleviliğinde Şecere Geleneđi: Bir Ağuıçen Şeceresi Örneđi', *Alevilik Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6 (Winter 2013): 175-180.

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Hacı Bektaş and his Contested Legacy: The Abdals of Rum, the Bektashi Order and the (Proto-) Kizilbash Communities

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*Ninety-six thousand elders of Horasan
Fifty-seven thousand saints of Rum
The eminent leader of all of them
Isn't it my master, Hacı Bektaş*

– Abdal Musa (fourteenth century)¹

Of the many Sufi masters who began arriving in Anatolia in the thirteenth century or earlier, few were destined to play such a pivotal role in the socio-religious history of the region as Hacı Bektaş (d. c.1270). Hacı Bektaş is not only the eponym of the Bektashiyye, one of the most influential Sufi orders in the Ottoman Empire; he was also a cornerstone of the broader religious matrix from which Kizilbashism/Alevism emerged. In accordance with his historical significance, Hacı Bektaş and his spiritual legacy have received sustained scholarly and popular interest. Despite that, large gaps and many uncertainties exist in our knowledge of Bektashi history. One particularly baffling aspect of this history that concerns us here is the origins and nature of the relationship between the Bektashiyye and the Kizilbash/Alevi communities. The latter share with the Bektashis a common reverence for Hacı Bektaş. The two groups are likewise united in their veneration of °Ali and the Twelve Imams, and they are near-identical in the sphere of doctrine and rites. On the other hand, Hacı Bektaş was also the patron saint of the Janissaries, the elite infantry corps of the Ottomans, and the Bektashiyye was an officially recognised Sufi order in the Ottoman Empire. And so, the Bektashis, unlike the Kizilbash/Alevi communities, have lived for the most part a life free of persecution under Ottoman rule, at least until the order's abolition in 1826 (along with the destruction of the Janissaries), when they entered a period of underground existence.

For Fuad Köprülü, as for many others writing in his wake, the difference between the two groups is reduceable to one of separate social

likelihood, of such a connection. Simultaneously, however, Karamustafa called into question Köprülü's broader assumption of a Yesevi omnipresence in medieval Anatolia by drawing attention to the lack of compelling evidence in that direction, save for Hacı Bektaş himself. It is true that Evliya Çelebi, on whose seventeenth-century *Seyahatname* Köprülü relied heavily, attributes Yesevi identity to several other, near-contemporary Anatolian Sufi figures of the medieval era, such as the aforementioned Geyikli Baba. This, however, ought to be viewed as symptomatic of the pertinent Bektashi tradition that was already well-established at the time. The fragile evidential basis of the supposition of a widespread Yesevi presence in pre-Ottoman Anatolia, in turn, strengthens, rather than undermines, the probability of an actual connection between Hacı Bektaş and Ahmed Yesevi by eliminating the *raison d'être* (i.e., the popularity of the Yesevi tradition in medieval Anatolia) for feigning such a link within the later Bektashi tradition.

Where would Hacı Bektaş's Yesevi background, assuming its historicity, leave us with regard to sources earlier than the *Velāyetnâme* that say nothing of this affiliation, and instead associate the saint with Baba İlyas and the Wafa'i/Baba'i circles in medieval Anatolia? The explanation of this seeming discrepancy may be as simple as the non-exclusive nature of Sufi affiliations, which must have been particularly the case during the thirteenth century when the different Sufi traditions were still in a state of flux and not fully institutionalised into distinct orders. It is, in other words, entirely possible that Hacı Bektaş came to Anatolia with some kind of Yesevi affiliation under his belt but received a second initiation from Baba İlyas, or at least intermingled with the Wafa'i/Baba'i circles in his new home.

Indeed, a close examination of the *Velāyetnâme* supports the idea of Hacı Bektaş's changing Sufi environments. It is telling in this regard that Hacı Bektaş is associated in his hagiography with the 'Sufi saints of Khorasan' (*Horasan Erenleri*), while his shaykh, Ahmed Yesevi, is described as the master of the 'Sufi saints of Turkistan' (*Türkistan Erenleri*) who, in turn, mandates Hacı Bektaş to take charge of the 'Sufi saints of Rum' (*Rum Erenleri*). These three distinct groups of saintly dervishes, and in particular the Sufi saints of Khorasan and Rum, are frequently conflated in Alevi lore. They are also lumped together in the secondary literature, presumably as part of the same ill-defined proto-Alevi tradition (read as 'Turkish folk Islam' within the context of the Köprülü paradigm).³⁵ Yet, beyond their implied spiritual communion as saints transcending time and space, it is not clear what temporal links existed among these three distinct groups of dervishes who are consistently identified in the *Velāyetnâme* by

their geographical origins only. Nor is it obvious in what capacity Ahmed Yesevi allegedly bestowed Hacı Bektaş with authority over the far-off 'Sufi saints of Rum'. While the *Velāyetnâme* raises more questions than answers on this issue, pertinent episodes in it leave little doubt that Hacı Bektaş was viewed as a rival outsider by the 'Sufi saints of Turkistan' and the 'Sufi saints of Rum' alike, and was initially received poorly by both groups. It is, therefore, reasonable to read these stories as reflective of Hacı Bektaş's changing Sufi environments in tandem with his voluntary emigration or forced displacement from his original home in Khorasan, first to Turkistan and then to Anatolia. The *Velāyetnâme* focuses specifically on Hacı Bektaş's encounter with the Abdals of Rum, presenting it as a watershed moment of sorts in his saintly career. The prominence that the narrative gives to this encounter indicates the greater formative impact of the thirteenth-century western Anatolian frontier context than Hacı Bektaş's probable Central Asian and Yesevi origins in shaping the content of his real or imagined spiritual legacy. Further exploration of the intertwined histories of the Abdals of Rum and the Bektashi order will throw this point into greater relief.

Hacı Bektaş and the Abdals of Rum

Hacı Bektaş, if we are to believe the *Velāyetnâme*, would have been a mature adult and a relatively established Sufi when Ahmed Yesevi dispatched him to Anatolia. Even so, the driving elements behind the incipient development of the Bektashiyye appear to have come less from his life prior to his arrival in Anatolia and more from an encounter and cross-fertilisation between the saint's cult and a core early community of the Abdals of Rum.

This is how the *Velāyetnâme* recounts this initial encounter and the events immediately following it, which together constitute a discernable peak in the hyperbolic narrative of the hagiography: when Hacı Bektaş arrives at the border of the land of Rum, he spiritually salutes the Abdals from afar, but only a saintly woman named Fatima Bacı, who was preparing food for an ongoing gathering of the Abdals, stands up in respect and returns his greetings. Being thus informed of the coming of Hacı Bektaş, and alarmed by it, the 57,000 Abdals try to prevent him from entering their territory by blocking the road with their 'wings of sainthood' (*velāyet kanadları*), but to no avail. Hacı Bektaş immediately transforms himself into a dove and flies over the barrier, landing on a rock in Sulucakaraöyük. Still unwilling to let him in, one of the Abdals by the name of Hacı Tuğrul (Hacı Togrul) transforms himself into a hawk and flies to Sulucakaraöyük

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