



Articles from 2013 and after
are now only accessible on
the Chicago Journals website at
JOURNALS.UCHICAGO.EDU

Futuwwa Traditions in the Ottoman Empire Akhis, Bektashi Dervishes, and Craftsmen

Author(s): G. G. Arnakis

Source: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Oct., 1953), pp. 232-247

Published by: [University of Chicago Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/542945>

Accessed: 23-02-2016 10:19 UTC

REFERENCES

Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article:

http://www.jstor.org/stable/542945?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents

You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



University of Chicago Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

FUTUWWA TRADITIONS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE
AKHIS, BEKTASHI DERVISHES, AND CRAFTSMEN*

G. G. ARNAKIS

WHEN the adventurous traveler of Tangier, Abu Abd Allah Ibn Battuta, arrived at Attalia in the beginning of his Anatolian tour early in 1333 and took up his residence in the Moslem seminary of the town, he was visited by a young Turk of unpretentious appearance who invited him and his company to dinner.¹ The Moroccan traveler's attitude was one of condescending reluctance, for, as he tells us, he was loath to burden the finances of a man who seemed to be anything but wealthy. He was reassured, however, by the sheikh in charge of the school, who hastened to inform him that the hospitable Turk was the leader of the local Akhiyat al-Fityan, or the Brotherhood of Youth, which, as the traveler learned afterward, existed in every important city of Asia Minor. In Attalia it had a membership of about two hundred. They were commonly mentioned as *Akhi*, or Brethren.²

The dinner party in question was Ibn Battuta's first contact with the Akhis, and Ibn Battuta, in turn, became our first source of information concerning the Brotherhood. As he pursued his journey from town to town in the Anatolian Turkish emirates, he had occasion to become acquainted with more than a dozen chapters of the Akhiyat al-Fityan and to

* Abridged to about half its present size, this article was read in the sixty-sixth annual meeting of the American Historical Association (New York, December 28, 1951) under the title: "The Futuwwa Tradition among Akhis, Bektashis, and Craftsmen as a Factor in the Establishment of the Ottoman Empire." It was subsequently developed into its present form during the tenure of an ACLS Fellowship, for which the writer expresses sincere appreciation.

¹ *Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah*, ed. and trans. C. Defrémery and B. Sanguinetti (Paris, 1877), II, 262-63.

learn the organization's aims and practices. When, back in Morocco, many years later, he dictated the recollections of his journeys in the three continents, he did not fail to describe the Akhis of Anatolia. Thus, Ibn Battuta's *Travels* came to shed new light upon one of the darkest corners of early Turkish history at a time when scholarship, headed by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856), seemed to have fully exploited all the known sources, yet without penetrating beyond the legends and traditions which enveloped the heroic personalities of Osman, Orhan, and their contemporaries.³

² Jean Deny, in his brief article, "Futuwwet-name et romans de chevalerie turcs," *Journal asiatique*, XI series, XVI (1920), 182-83, pointed out that originally the word *akhi* was not the Arabic equivalent of "brother" (*akh*), but the Eastern Turkish word *aqi*, which meant, as an adjective, "generous, chivalrous," and, as a noun, "chevalerie," "confrérie religieuse," "corps de métier." It is possible that Ibn Battuta confused the word *aqi*, which, being Turkish, was unknown to him, with his familiar Arabic *akh-i*. The latter prevailed as designation of the members of the society, as the original Turkish name fell into disuse, and the term was generally taken to mean "brother." Franz Taeschner, in his "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Achis in Anatolien," *Islamica*, IV (1929), 15, suggests that there was a semasiological fusion of the two words, as in the instance of *mevlana*, the title of Jelaleddin Rumi and others, which originally meant "our lord" and later signified "wise man" or "scholar." Cf. Enno Littmann, "Anredeformen in erweiterter Bedeutung," *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse* (1916), p. 102.

³ An abridged version of Ibn Battuta's work from manuscripts at the University of Cambridge was translated into English by Stephen Lee, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta* (London, 1829). Then came a very informative article, "The Travels of Ebn Batuta," in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, XLIX, No. 307 (May 1841), 597-615. C. Defrémery published a French translation, *Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah dans l'Asie Mineure* (Paris, 1851). The full Arabic text was edited with a French translation by C. Defrémery and B. Sanguinetti, *Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah*, Vols. I-IV (Paris, 1853-59). There is an English transla-

For a long time, however, Ibn Battuta's testimony remained unnoticed by historians.⁴ It was only as late as the interwar period that scholars began to realize that our knowledge of the Akhi Association could help us understand some of the most intricate aspects of the great upheaval that took place in Asia Minor between the first Mongol invasion and the establishment of the Turks on the Aegean littoral. Such historical facts as the foundation of the Osmanlı state in northwestern Anatolia, cradle of the virile Lascarid Empire until 1261, the growth of other Turkish principalities in lands that were equally Greek at the opening of the Palaeologian era, the large-scale islamization of Asian and European peasants and townspeople alike, and the stability of the advanced Turkish positions, from which they were able to invade Europe without losing their hold on Asia Minor—facts that baffled the historians of earlier times—are less enigmatic today in the light of what Ibn Battuta has reported concerning the dynamics of fourteenth-century Moslem-Turkish society.

What he has to say about the Brotherhood can be classified under three main headings, corresponding to each of the three aspects of its group life: religious, socioeconomic, and political. It must be admitted as a matter of course that these headings do not suggest any clear lines of

demarcation. The three modes of expression of Akhi group-consciousness are closely interrelated, and it is merely as a result of the challenge of environment that at times one of them appears more pronounced than the other. For example, when the Turks were expanding into Christian areas, the religious phase seemed to take precedence to such a degree as to lead one into thinking that the Akhiyat al-Fityan was primarily devoted to the spread of Islam. At times they took up arms in defense of the Moslem faith, though they were by no means a military organization. Similarly, whenever civil government was weak or inadequate, the Akhis came to the fore as a political power. Ibn Battuta reports that in towns where there was no "sultan" or emir, one of the Akhis acted as governor, having the same authority and enjoying the same prestige as the ruler.⁵ Yet, while exercising an undeniable political and religious influence, the Akhis, at least during their ascendancy, kept their socioeconomic setup that impressed the Moroccan traveler so much. Until the time of their decline, in the latter part of the fourteenth century, they remained a cohesive, well-integrated communal organization, adhering to the fundamental principles of the *futuwwa*.

The *futuwwa* (Turk. *fütüvet*) has been defined as the aggregate of all those virtues which distinguish the chivalrous young man, especially nobility of manner and generosity.⁶ A generous, hospitable,

tion by Muhammed Hussein, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta* (Lahore, 1898), and another by H. A. R. Gibb, *Ibn Battuta—Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354* (London and New York, 1929). Both are selections and abridgments. The first two editions of Hammer's monumental *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches* appeared in 1827 and 1836. There was no revision of the early Ottoman period in any of the subsequent editions.

⁴ A critique of old and recent works on early Ottoman history has been attempted by G. G. Arnakis, *Οἱ Πρώτοι Ὀθωμανοὶ* ("The Early Osmanlis") ("Beihefte zu den Byzantinisch-neugriechischen Jahrbüchern," No. 41 [Athens, 1947]), pp. 1–34. Cf. Robert L. Wolff's review in *Speculum*, XXVI (1951), 483–88.

⁵ *Voyages*, II, 289. Cf. Gibb's translation, p. 131.

⁶ C. van Arendonk, *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, II, 130–31; IV, 1011; Hermann Thorning, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des islamischen Vereinwesens auf Grund von Bast Madad et-Taufiq* ("Türkische Bibliothek," No. 16 [Berlin, 1913]), pp. 184–93. Of primary importance today are the works of Franz Taeschner, *inter alia*, "Futuwwa-Studien, die Futuwwabünde in der Türkei und ihre Literatur," *Islamica*, V (1932), 285–333, and "Die islamischen Futuwwabünde," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, LXXXVII (1934), 6–49.

upright, and heroic Moslem who belonged to an association that had adopted a definite liturgical or ritualistic procedure was a *fata*, or "young man." It is very probable that *futuwwa* associations in one form or another played a part in the establishment of Moslem rule in the Near East in earlier times, especially in the ninth century, when they appear as volunteer warrior guilds. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries with Fatimite support, the *futuwwa* way of life dominated the guilds practically all over Islam. But it was Caliph Nasir (1180–1225), who, under the influence of a mystic (*sufi*), revived and reorganized the *futuwwa* as an order of chivalry.⁷ Franz Taeschner discerns a twofold aim in the caliph's action—first, to strengthen the political position of the Abbasids and, second, to lessen the tension between hostile religious groups, particularly between the Sunnis and the Shi'ites.⁸ It is still debatable to what extent the new *futuwwa* was an outgrowth of Western influences that intruded in the Near East at the time of the Crusades. In a recent article Gerald Salinger⁹ pointed out that the term "order of chivalry" has been misused in connection with the ad-

⁷ Taeschner, "Der Anteil des Sufismus an der Formung des Futuwwaideals," *Der Islam*, XXIV (1937), 63. Taeschner's term for Nasir's organization is *Ordensrittertum* or *höfische Ritterbund*, while the earlier warrior guilds are styled as *niederer Grenz-kämpfertum*. Cf. Louis Massignon, "Guilds - Islamic," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VII (1932), 214–16, and "Le futuwwa ou 'pacte d' honneur artisanal' entre travailleurs musulmans au moyen âge," *La Nouvelle Klio*, IV (1952), 171–98. Massignon says (p. 178) that Nasir used the *futuwwa* to form a "strange order of chivalry," something like the modern system of honorary decorations—a fact that tended to obscure what he calls the "proletarian" nature of the brotherhoods. For outstanding traits of these societies that have survived until the present, see F. S. Vidal, "Religious Brotherhoods in Moroccan Politics," *Middle East Journal*, IV (1950), 427–46, especially pp. 428–31 and 442–43.

⁸ Taeschner, "Islamisches Ordensrittertum zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge," *Die Welt als Geschichte*, IV (1938), 403.

⁹ Was the *Futuwa* an Oriental Form of Chivalry? *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, XCIV (1950), 481–93.

herents of the *futuwwa*, since there is only a superficial resemblance between European knighthood and the *fityan* (pl. of *fata*). In any case, it is all too easy to see that, unlike Western feudal institutions, which had their roots in the system of land tenure and sought to achieve socioeconomic stability, the *futuwwa* was a dynamic movement whose purpose it was to implement a religion and an ideology not only in the *dar ul-Islam* but also, and more conspicuously so, in the *dar ul-harb*. There is no doubt that in times of conflict the *futuwwa* was much more likely to flourish in the frontier zone than in the more settled world of the Faithful.¹⁰

In Asia Minor the Akhiyat al-Fityan appeared as the most vital realization of *futuwwa* ideology from the middle of the thirteenth century to the last quarter of the fourteenth—that is, from the morrow of the defeat of the Rum Seljuks by the Mongols until the time when Anatolian Turkish society assumed a stable character. The Mongol invasion had torn down the spiritual barriers between Sunni Islam, the religion of the upper classes, and the Shi'ah of the masses. At the same time it had brought about a dislocation of political power from the center to the frontier zones.¹¹ During this crisis, when Anatolian Turkish society came so close to disintegration and yet managed to come out with new life, the Akhis were a great power. But when the incorporation of the western emirates was under way, in the reign of Murad I and Bayazid the Thunderbolt, the Akhiyat was in a state of decline. As it might be expected under an autocratic regime, it was the political

¹⁰ Concerning the Moslem's concept of the world see G. E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 9.

¹¹ See Bernard Lewis, "The Islamic Guilds," *Economic History Review*, VIII (1937), 22, 27.

aspects of the organization that were the first to disappear. Remnants of the Fraternity's socioeconomic life lingered on for a few decades, some of them eventually finding their way into various guilds of craftsmen, while the main body of their religious tenets was perpetuated by the dervishes of the Mevlevi, Khalveti, and Bektashi orders.¹²

Of these three groups, the Bektashis are the ones who come nearest to the spirit and the objectives of the Akhis. The similarities between the two movements are such as to lead one to the conclusion that the Bektashiye is the spiritual successor of the Akhiyat al-Fityan. In the following pages we shall trace the rise and the decline of the Akhi Association, its fusion with kindred institutions, and the part that Akhis and related groups played in the formation of Ottoman society in Asia Minor and in the Balkans.

At the time of Ibn Battuta's visit the outstanding political aspect of the Akhiyat al-Fityan was their determination "to crush the tyrants and to kill the satellites of tyranny and the miscreants who join with them."¹³ This may be an echo of earlier struggle under Karmathian influences. Furthermore, we know that not infrequently Moslem states suspected the guilds of revolutionary agitation and religious heresy and sought to control them by means of the urban police (*hisba*), which was composed of loyal Sunnites.¹⁴ On the other hand, the guilds accused the state of oppression and tried to find comfort in sufism. Thus, there was a tendency toward antagonism between the guilds and the governments all over the Moslem

Near East. Nevertheless, Ibn Battuta's statement, made with particular reference to Anatolia, indicates clearly that the Akhis acted as a check on the absolutist trends of local emirs. At the same time the relations of Akhis and emirs appear to be harmonious. Not only do we hear nothing about conflicts between the Fraternity and the Turkish governors, but cases are mentioned when the two cooperate. In addition to the statement cited above that an Akhi would normally replace an absentee ruler, Ibn Battuta recalls instances of collaboration in smaller matters, which are nonetheless indicative of the general trend. At Ladhik (Laodicea), for example, the Akhis, who had a street squabble before they could decide which of the two local chapters would entertain him first, sent word to the sultan about his arrival, and the sultan granted him an audience the following day.¹⁵ At Brusa the meeting held in the Association's headquarters was attended by the high officials of Orhan's realm, the sultan himself being out of town.¹⁶ Even more convincing is the information that Akhi Sherif Hüseyin held sway at Aksaray¹⁷ and Akhi Emir Ali at Kayseri.¹⁸ In the court of Emir Eretna, at Sivas, Akhi Tchelebi was a dominant personality.¹⁹ Another member of the Brotherhood was *kadi* at Konya.²⁰ The office of *kadi* was second in influence to the sultanate and was often the surest way to it. Taeschner believes that the Akhis of Ankara exercised their administrative authority under the guise of the *kadi*.²¹

In that city, which Ibn Battuta by-passed in 1333, leading Akhis appeared as public benefactors and builders of mosques as early as 689 A.H. (A.D.

¹² Taeschner, "Beiträge," *Islamica*, IV, 20, 22-25, 28.

¹³ *Voyages*, II, 261. Gibb's translation, p. 125: "to suppress injustice and to kill [tyrannical] agents of police and the miscreants who join with them."

¹⁴ See Lewis, *Economic History Review*, VIII, 25-27; Louis Massignon, "Le Corps de métiers et la cité islamique," *Revue internationale de sociologie*, XXVIII (1920), 473-89.

¹⁵ *Voyages*, II, 273.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 290-91.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

²¹ "Beiträge," *Islamica*, IV, 11.

1290), as is shown by the inscription on the *mimbar* of Aslanhane Jamissi.²² At Ankara the regime of the Akhis continued until 1361, when Murad I annexed the city.²³ There the Brethren, isolated from the rest of the Fraternity, had had a distinct evolution. Even before the advance of the Mongols, they had avoided entering into the political fabric of the Anatolian Turkish principalities; they had organized a self-sufficient town life; and they had imposed a paternalistic despotism, with themselves as ruling caste. Taeschner speaks of them as a "städtliches Patriziat."²⁴ In assuming so much responsibility, they drifted away from the popular basis of the original Akhiyat al-Fityan. Rivalries and dissensions arose among them. Those who remained loyal to the democratic pattern of earlier days tried to undermine the oligarchy that had sprung up among them, while Murad I played off one faction against another, in an attempt to bring the entire organization under his control.^{24a} Once he became their master, he could hope to extend his authority over large sections of Anatolia. Before long the governing urban patriciate realized that they were too isolated and

too weak to resist Ottoman expansionism. Accused of a conspiracy against the Ottoman government, they were incorporated into the empire, and Murad was recognized as their leader. Murad's autocracy, however, was distasteful to the Akhis, popular discontent increased, and in the reign of his successor, Bayazid the Thunderbolt, it broke into open rebellion. A republic with socialistic tendencies was set up, and it struggled on for almost a decade, while the house of Osman was going through the greatest crisis that it experienced until that time. It was the aftermath of Tamerlane's victory in 1402. The Ankara regime collapsed when Sheikh Bedreddin, the archrebel of Rumeli, was captured and executed at Serres in 1416.²⁵ One of his chief supporters was Mikhaloghlu Mehmed, son of the Greek collaborationist Köse Mikhal, brother-at-arms of the founder of the Osmanlı dynasty.²⁶ A hundred years before, when the Akhis were very influential in the courts of Osman and Orhan, a revolution like that of Bedreddin would have been improbable, because the early Osmanlıs knew how to live harmoniously with potential agitators as well as with their Christian allies of the type of Köse Mikhal. Those were the revolutionary days of the Osmanlıs, and Akhis, religious leaders, and discontented Christians were equally welcome in their ranks.

The downfall of the Akhis of Ankara marks the lowest ebb of the political power of the Brotherhood all over Asia Minor. Henceforth, whenever they appeared to be active as a political force, they provoked the animosity of the Osmanlıs, whose sultan had now grown strong enough to flout the principles of

²² *Ibid.*, p. 43, and Tables I and II. Cf. Halil Edhem, "Ankara Ahilerine ait iki kitabe" ("Two Inscriptions Pertaining to the Akhis of Ankara"), *Tarihi Osmani Enjümeni Mejmuasi*, VII (1332/1917), 312-15; Mubarek Galip, *Ankara*, I (Istanbul, 1341), p. 48; II (Istanbul, 1928), No. 7, p. 8.

²³ Ahmed Tevhid, "Ankarada Ahiler hükümeti" ("The Government of the Akhis at Ankara"), *Tarihi Osmani Enjümeni Mejmuasi*, IV (1329/1913), 1200-1204; VI. Gordlevski, "Iz zhizni tsekhov v Turtsii" ("From the Life of the Guilds of Turkey"), *Zapiski, Kollegii Vostokovedov*, II, 2 (1927), 242. Taeschner, *Islamica*, IV, 11-12.

²⁴ *Islamica*, IV, 13.

^{24a} Massignon, *La Nouvelle Klio*, IV, I, contends on the basis of a paper read by Taeschner in the meeting of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (Bonn, August 1952) that "the affiliation of the Turkish sultan (Murad I) with the *futuwwa* was much deeper than that of Caliph Nasir." Whatever Murad's devotion to the *futuwwa* ideal may have been, his policy towards the government of Ankara was dictated by practical considerations, especially by his desire to acquire more territory.

²⁵ See Franz Babinger, "Scheich Bedr ed-din, der Sohn des Richters von Simaw," *Der Islam*, XI (1921), 64.

²⁶ Babinger, "Mikhaloghlu" (art.), *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, III, 562.

the Fraternity. In the meantime, in Ankara and elsewhere, some Akhis began to own extensive property and the term *ayan* ("owner of large estates") was used to describe them. Subsequently we hear of *ayan ve akhiyan*, and the historian Idris Bitlisi, about a hundred years after Murad's death, knew of the Akhis merely as "great landowners" or "village notables."²⁷

The last we hear of Akhis in politics is in connection with the events of 1423, when two Akhis of Brusa incited Mustafa to revolt against Murad II.²⁸ Thereafter, the Akhiyat al-Fityan passes into political eclipse. But perhaps it had already served its purpose. All available information leads to the conclusion that as long as it was able to avoid open conflict, as indeed it was in the formative years of western Anatolian Turkish society, it was a democratic power behind the throne, keeping the sultans in line and giving a popular foundation to their authority.

The appeal that the Akhis had among the masses came from their way of life and, more specifically, from their socio-economic setup. To quote Ibn Battuta: "Nowhere in the world will you find men so eager to welcome strangers, so prompt to serve food and to satisfy the wants of others."²⁹ Elsewhere the Akhis are described as noble-minded, unselfish, compassionate, affectionate, and hospitable. "A stranger coming to them is made to feel as though he were meeting the dearest of his own folk."³⁰ The rules of the *futuwwa* excluded from membership people of loose morals and questionable prac-

tices such as tax-collectors, actors, dancers, fortune-tellers, sorcerers, gamblers, police informers, and wine-dealers.³¹ The golden rule of the *futuwwa* was "*ithar ala nafsiki*" ("put the other man above thyself").³²

Such a regime of life contrasted very decidedly with the situation in the Byzantine provinces of Anatolia. There, a variety of factors that tended toward social disintegration had been noticeable as early as 1261, working havoc in town and country.³³ The countryside was infested by robbers and terrorists; the church was split up into warring factions; morals had declined, and corruption was rampant. The Palaeologi had adopted a policy that was intended to weaken the rural middle classes, which had lent their support to the Lascarids. Wanting to eliminate potential opposition to his dynasty, Michael VIII had virtually wiped out the *acritae* by means of taxation and conscription, while economic pressure was brought to bear upon the small farmers who had emerged during the Lascarid regime. Large estates appeared again, not as the flourishing economic units of the Comneni period, but as a transient phase in the process of economic decay that was undermining the Empire, especially after the intrusion of Western commercialism.³⁴

In the midst of the confusion of the late 1200's and the early 1300's, the large estates, belonging for the most part to absentee landlords and to monasteries, fell apart, and with their disappearance the last vestiges of Byzantine authority came to an end. Our sources are particu-

²⁷ See Hammer, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, I, 590, n. to p. 160; cf. Arnakis, *op. cit.*, p. 17, n. 50. Gordlevski (*Zapiski Koll. Vostok.*, II, 247) says that the name *ayan* was given to the Akhis because they controlled the *vakf* estates.

²⁸ Taeschner, *Islamica*, IV, 26, 28; Gordlevski, *Zapiski*, II, 242.

²⁹ *Voyages*, II, 261. Gibb's translation, p. 125.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 339. Gibb's translation, p. 140.

³¹ Thorning, *Beiträge*, p. 194; Taeschner, *Islamica*, V, 299; Massignon, *La Nouvelle Klio*, IV, 174.

³² C. van Arendonk, *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, II, 130; Taeschner, *Der Islam*, XXIV, 63-64.

³³ See Arnakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-49.

³⁴ Of particular interest in this connection are the observations of the Greek economist Alexander Diomedes, *Βυζαντινὰ Μελέται*, I ("Byzantine Studies," Vol. I [Athens, 1941]), pp. 59-90.

larly enlightening as to the encroachments of the peasantry upon the monastic estates. The latter, as a rule immune from taxation and enjoying imperial favor, especially under Andronicus II, had grown to immense proportions as a result of bequests by pious people who had despaired of the world. Such people could be counted by the thousands, and their number steadily increased in proportion to the adversities of the Byzantine state.

The growing wealth of the monasteries aroused the destitute to rebellious acts; they raided church estates, carrying away grain supplies, olive oil, cheese, and other foodstuffs.³⁵ Not infrequently they would carve off valuable slices of land which the monks were unable to recover even by force of arms.³⁶ The coming of the Turks facilitated the breakup of the large estates, as it is testified by the documents.³⁷ When the curtain rose again to show the Turks in control of the cities of western Anatolia, there was a noticeable degree of peace in the countryside,³⁸ and the new rural class, composed of small farmers, had already identified its well-being with the Turkish domination.³⁹

During the transition and immediately after it the Akhis exerted their greatest

³⁵ *Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi*, ed. F. Miklosich and J. Müller (Vienna, 1860), IV, 62, 247-257. Concerning the economic power of the monasteries in the latter part of the Byzantine era see P. Charanis, "The Monastic Properties and the State in the Byzantine Empire," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, IV (1948), 98-108.

³⁶ *Acta et diplomata*, IV, 231, 280.

³⁷ E.g., the Lembon Monastery "had many more estates before the invasion of the godless Agarenes" (*ibid.*, IV, 62). Cf. Arnakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-100.

³⁸ Ibn Battuta traveled unmolested over Anatolia in 1333: the warm springs of Brusa were frequented by patients from distant provinces, according to the information of Shihabeddin al-Umari (d. 1349), *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi*, XIII (1838), 365; in the early fifteenth century, numerous travelers, going about on peaceful missions, were seen by Bertrand de la Broquière, *Voyage d'outre mer (1422-1433)*, ed. Ch. Schéfer (Paris, 1892), p. 131. These and other items of information indicate a peaceful countryside.

³⁹ Arnakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-101.

influence. Their *zaviye*'s were not merely local headquarters of the Fraternity but also cultural and religious centers and hostels for the travelers. There the Brethren met in the evenings, after the day's work; they deposited the proceeds of their labors in the common treasury; and they resumed their group life, which began with a common meal. From the Association's treasury they paid for meals, entertainment of strangers, and maintenance of the *zaviye*. Each chapter was under a leader who was addressed as "Akhi." He was elected by the group, but Ibn Battuta records nothing about his term of office or the extent of his powers.⁴⁰

The Moroccan traveler says that the Brethren were unmarried and that they all practiced a trade. However, it is not clear from his words if he thought that they were bachelors by conviction or only incidentally and if they all belonged to the same trade or to different trades. Of course, in a place like Ankara, where a political tradition flourished and family ties were strong, general celibacy was out of the question. At any rate, the genealogy of Akhi Sherefeddin of Ankara may be regarded as sufficient indication that married life was not unusual among Akhis.⁴¹ And though the Akhis of Ankara were by no means typical of the Fraternity, it is a well-known fact that celibacy, an outstanding characteristic of Christian monasticism, was never a general prerequisite of Turkish dervishdom. It is therefore very probable that among the Akhis, too, celibacy was optional, and the Brethren could take the vows or could avoid them.

As far as professional lineup is con-

⁴⁰ *Voyages*, II, 260-63.

⁴¹ Taeschner, *Islamica*, IV, 36-37; Gordlevski, *Zapiski*, II, 242; Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, *Les Origines de l'Empire Ottoman* (Études Orientales publiées par l'Institut d'Archéologie de Stamboul, III [Paris, 1935]), p. 109. Köprülü believes that celibacy was very limited.

cerned, in Attalia⁴²—and doubtless in other towns—there was one fraternity composed of men of different crafts, as there could never be enough people of the same trade to form a body of considerable strength. Even when the number of craftsmen increased in the midst of a predominantly agrarian population, it is probable that men of different trades cooperated as a unit. As long as the religious factor retained its importance, there could be little difficulty in keeping alive their *esprit de corps*, despite professional variations.

Their group life, as described by Ibn Battuta, suggests the fervor of a spiritual revival or of a recent conversion. After their common meal, he tells us, the Brethren would sing hymns, recite portions of the Koran, dance, and listen to sermons.⁴³ Some of them would fall into an ecstasy, which to their mystic mind was the consummation of union with God. At Brusa, during the night of the Ashura (the tenth day of Muharrem),⁴⁴ the Moroccan traveler witnessed the death of a man in the throes of religious paroxysm in the course of such a dance.⁴⁵ The Ashura, preceded by ten days of fasting, is in memory of the death of Hüseyin, the son of Ali, and its celebration with such fervor at Brusa indicates Shi'ite loyalties.⁴⁶ On the same occasion Ibn Battuta

⁴² *Voyages*, II, 262. Gibb's translation, p. 126: "about two hundred men belonging to different trades."

⁴³ *Voyages*, II, 262, 270.

⁴⁴ The Arabic word *ashura* means "the tenth." In Turkey, as the writer remembers, *ashure*, a dish consisting of boiled wheat, walnuts, raisins, almonds, rosewater, and other ingredients was offered as a part of the ceremony. The *ashure* day—to use the Turkish form of the word—was scrupulously observed in Bektashi *tekke's* until the abolition of the dervishes by the Turkish Republic in 1925. Until the turn of the century there were also processions in the streets of Constantinople, with shouts of "Ali, Hasan, Hüseyin," and self-inflicted wounds in the midst of emotional outbursts were not infrequent on such occasions.

⁴⁵ *Voyages*, II, 318–20.

recalls Akhis "speaking with tongues." The preacher who helped create such an atmosphere was Mejeddeddin of Konya (al-Kunewi), who was admired for his wisdom and spiritual power. He lived from the work of his hands, owned no property except the clothes he wore, and slept in the graveyard at night.

Mejeddeddin was one of the homeless dervishes who, obedient to their vow, were constantly on the move. It is significant that the fifteen-century Turkish historian Ashikpashazade calls the Akhis *müsaafir* (i.e., "strangers" or "travelers").⁴⁷ This characterization lends further support to the theory that dynamic Moslems like Mejeddeddin kept immigrating from the east and came to have an influence that was tantamount to the spiritual leadership in the Anatolian Turkish principalities.⁴⁸ Though they could hardly outnumber the local Akhis at any one time, they were, nonetheless, the dominant force in the Fraternity, and they left their imprint upon its character. Hence, the appellation *müsaafir* was extended to all the Akhis.⁴⁹

As the wandering dervishes arrived

⁴⁶ See Philip Hitti, *History of the Arabs* (London, 1940), pp. 190–91. Professor Hitti remarks epigrammatically: "Shi'ism was born on the tenth of Muharram."

⁴⁷ *Die altosmanische Chronik des Aşikpaşazade*, ed. Friedrich Giese (Leipzig, 1929), p. 201. According to the historian, there were three other groups (*taifa*) of *müsaafir: gazi* (warriors for the faith), *abdal* (inspired dervishes) and *baji* ("sisters," presumably members of a women's organization, about which our present state of knowledge permits nothing more than conjectures).

⁴⁸ Franz Babinger, "Der Islam in Kleinasien," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, LXXVI (1922), 132–33. Cf. Arnakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 116, 118–21, 123–24, 162–63.

⁴⁹ Paul Wittek, on the other hand, has expressed the opinion that the term *müsaafir* has an allegorical meaning, designating the expanding, fighting power of Islam. See his article, "Deux chapitres de l'histoire des Turcs de Roum," *Byzantion*, XI (1936), 285–319. Concerning Professor Wittek's theory of the *gazi* origin of the Ottoman Empire, see his lectures, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire* ("Royal Asiatic Society Monographs," No. XXIII [London, 1938]), *passim*.

year after year, they found that the *zaviye*'s were convenient places where they were sure to have a free meal and a congenial audience. Being for the most part mystics (*sufi*), these men brought about a further accentuation of esoteric life, as they came in contact with the groups assembled in the *zaviye*'s all over Anatolia.⁵⁰ Parallely, the Fraternity became increasingly aware that their active interest in politics involved too many embarrassments. About thirty years after Ibn Battuta's visit, Yahya Ibn Halil, author of a *Futuwwetname*, which purported to serve as a handbook for the Akhiyat, admonished all good Akhis not to go to the courts of the rulers, to associate with the poor only, to be humble, and to keep their membership secret.⁵¹ He sought to purge the Fraternity of all secular tendencies and to bring it closer to *sufi* ideals. To him the goal of the Akhiyat al-Fityan was the attainment of holiness. Those initiated had to know and apply 124 rules of ethics (*adab*) corresponding to the 124,000 prophets. Taeschner, who made the most comprehensive study of the *Futuwwetname*, noticed that these rules are an abridgment of the 740 precepts that should guide the life of a good sheikh.⁵²

The *Futuwwetname* of Yahya also describes the initiation ceremony, which is referred to as "receiving the candle" (*tchirak almak*), "putting on the belt" (*kushak kushanmak*), and "getting permission" (*destur almak*). A symbolical tonsure of the new member reminded one of Christian monasticism. In addition to these acts, the candidate had to drink a

glass of water with salt and to "receive the scissors" (*makash almak*). In fact, a pair of scissors formed a part of his equipment. Candles were also important in the initiation as well as in all other ceremonies. Ibn Battuta remembered that many candles stood on three-legged candlesticks.⁵³

The Akhi's outfit consisted of a long, white robe, boots, a belt with a sword, and a tall peaked headdress made of white woolen cloth and terminating in a strip one cubit long and two inches wide.⁵⁴ This cap was called *kalansuwa*, and later generations knew it as the distinctive mark of the Janissaries.

Yahya mentions three ranks of Akhis—*yughit* ("heroes" or "knights"), *akhi*,

⁵⁰ *Voyages*, II, 264. The three-legged candlesticks, the tonsure, and the ritualistic importance of lights suggest pre-Islamic survivals. Yet, to what extent they can be attributed to the influence of Christianity as such is still a matter of conjecture. It is hard, of course, to underestimate Christianity, which had a thousand-year tradition in the cities of Asia Minor before the coming of the Turks, but our sources of information are, at best, fragmentary and sporadic. A puzzling inscription was copied and published by Cyril VI, patriarch of Constantinople from 1813 to 1818 and former archbishop of Iconium (Konya), in his *Ἱστορικὴ περιγραφή τοῦ ἐν Βιέννῃ προεκδόθεντος χωρογραφικοῦ πλάνου τῆς μεγάλης ἀρχιεπισκοπίας τοῦ Ἰκονίου* ("Historical Description of the Map, Already Published in Vienna, of the Great Archsatepry of Iconium") (At the Patriarchal Press, 1815), p. 47. The inscription in question existed in the Monastery of St. Chariton (Ak Manastir) near Sille in Lycaonia. It mentioned a certain "Akhi Pangalos." Was he a Greek who had joined the Akhis? Or was he a Turk with Christian sympathies? Was "Pangalos" a man's name or was it simply an adjective describing some Akhi who (or whose son) was buried there? Or could it be that Cyril had made a mistake in copying? The text is fragmentary and is published uncritically. However, it acquires significance from the fact that St. Chariton's was held sacred by Greeks and Turks alike. It is very probable that the inscription of "Akhi Pangalos" dates from the year 1290. For the text and a brief discussion of this interesting document see F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans* (Oxford, 1929), II, 383 (V). Cf. *idem*, pp. 273-77, 377. Also, Taeschner, *Islamica*, IV, 46. N. A. Bees, *Die Inschriftenaufzeichnung des Kodex Sinaiticus Graecus 508 (976) und die Maria-Spiläotissa Klosterkirche bei Sille (Lykaonien)* ("Beihefte zu den Byzantinisch-neugriechischen Jahrbüchern," No. 1 [Berlin, 1922]), is a very good study of St. Chariton's monastery and its inscriptions but contains no reference to "Akhi Pangalos."

⁵⁴ *Voyages*, II, 262.

⁵⁰ See Gordlevski, *Zapiski*, II, 245; Babinger, *Scheich Bedr ed-din*, p. 100.

⁵¹ Taeschner, *Islamica*, IV, 9. Also, the same author, "Das Futuwwetname des Jahja b. Halil," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*, XXXI (1928), 1065-68.

⁵² *Islamica*, IV, 9, n. 2. Concerning the sheikh's position in Moslem corporations see Thorning, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-14.

sheikh—the last one being merely honorific. He hastens to add, however, that members of all ranks are equal. Two other categories are mentioned, presumably subdivisions of the first rank, the *kavli* ("preachers") and the *seyfi* ("soldiers"), which are styled as "the two ways."⁵⁵ No attempt is made to define their positions.

Clearly, the *Futuwwetname* reflects a condition of political decline in the Akhiyat at a time when secular tendencies came into conflict with religious ideals. As a result, the Akhis fell into two categories. On one hand, there was the essentially practical man who regarded the Fraternity as something between a trade-union, a guild, or a workmen's cooperative. On the other hand, there was the spiritual Akhi who was more sympathetic to a monastic way of life. Gordlevski⁵⁶ very aptly observes that, after the expansion of the Osmanlis in the neighboring principalities, the *zaviye*'s lost their political significance and operated as religious and professional centers. Henceforth the downfall of the organization was inevitable. Before the split both types of Akhi found a channel of self-expression in the political life of Anatolia and a clearly defined social ideology kept them united. The spiritual Akhi reconciled heaven and earth and set the common goal as he thought it most pleasing in the eyes of Allah; the simple Akhi, the realist and the man of action, plied his useful trade or joined the fighting forces of Islam in the frontier zone. For both, participation in political life was a necessary outlet. Moreover, it provided a common ground for the two types of man. When that common ground was no longer there, the "two ways" diverged at a wide angle. The educated, spiritual, and esoteric Akhis be-

came monks or hermits, and the practical, untutored, worldly individuals chose the life of a craftsman. Before long, the first category was absorbed by the new orders of dervishes—the Mevlevi, the Khalveti, and the Bektashi—and the guilds of Moslem craftsmen, whose origins go back to the ninth century, claimed many of the rest. The Akhiyat al-Fityan thus passed out of existence. Scanty recollections of the once powerful Fraternity remained in the traditions of the guilds and in the mystic life of the Bektashi.

Let us first turn to the Akhis who identified themselves with the dervishes. Already in 1355 theologian Akhis formed the *élite* in what was then the cradle of the Ottoman Empire. As "wise and erudite men," they were asked by Sultan Orhan to have a public debate with the outstanding theologian of Eastern Christendom, Gregory Palamas, then a captive of the Osmanlis.⁵⁷ Orhan's capital, Brusa, the leading city in the westernmost regions of Anatolian Islam, had become the rallying point of theologians, scholars, mystics, and God-inspired adventurers. It was rapidly becoming the *dar al-ulema*, "the city of theologians." Back in the countries of their origin—that is, in North Iran and in Turkestan—the theologians had been exposed to a religious syncretism that had been going on for centuries. Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Manichaeic, Gnostic, Christian, and Moslem elements and an atmosphere laden with religious spirituality were the heritage of the typical Moslem who came out to the west.⁵⁸ There is no doubt that most of them belonged to the Shi'ah. Once in Anatolia, they became associated with the

⁵⁷ See G. G. Arnakis, "Gregory Palamas among the Turks and Documents of His Captivity as Historical Sources," *Speculum*, XXVI (1951), 107–8, 113–14.

⁵⁸ Babinger, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, LXXVI, 132–33, 147. Taeschner (*Islamica*, IV, 14) speaks of Transoxania as "Nährboden für eine ekstatische Religiosität und korporativ-religiöses Leben."

⁵⁵ Taeschner, *Islamica*, IV, 7.

⁵⁶ "Dervishi Akhi Evrana i tsekhi v Turtsii" ("The Dervishes of Akhi Evran and the Craftsmen's Guilds in Turkey"), *Izvestiya Akademii Nauk SSSR*, VI (1927), Nos. 15–17, p. 1182; *Zapiski*, II, 242.

Mevlevi order, or they helped in building up two other noteworthy religious organizations that reveal strong evidences of syncretism—the Khalvetiye and the Bektashiye.⁵⁹

The Mevleviye, with its Persian intellectual background, appealed mainly to the educated upper classes in the cities, and the Khalvetiye was likewise a limited movement because of its exclusive mystical discipline. Neither the one nor the other was able to influence the development of the Ottoman Empire to any serious degree. But the Bektashiye outnumbered all Turkish sects combined and came to play an increasingly important role from the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the order was reorganized as a militant body, perhaps by Balım Sultan of Dimotika, to the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when Western influences invaded Turkey.

Concerning the historical background of Bektashism, it is the opinion of the present writer that J. K. Birge's thesis⁶⁰ that Haji Bektash is the founder of the movement is more plausible than the theory endorsed by F. W. Hasluck, Ismail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, and others that Bektash did not found the order that bears his name and is in no way related to it.⁶¹ Like Birge, they place Haji Bektash in the thirteenth century on the basis of written evidence of a convincing nature, but they speak of an "adoption" of his name by the *babai* movement in the fifteenth century. Accepting Haji Bektash as a real and not as a fictitious per-

sonage, we see at once a man who made a lasting impression on his fellow-Turks; it is, therefore, hard to deny that he had a considerable following upon his death. For his disciples, his teachings provided the nucleus of a new trend in the Shi'ah. His theology, spread by word of mouth in a notably religious era, became the basis of an uninterrupted spiritual tradition from his death to the historical emergence of the Bektashi order. The movement grew inconspicuously at first; it became the subject of legends with the lapse of the years; but its continuity is attested by Bektashi oral tradition and by the *Vilayetname* of Haji Bektash.⁶²

Its success was mainly due to two facts: first, it brought religion to the common

⁵⁹ The *Vilayetname* has been translated into German by Erich Gross, *Das Vilayet-name des Hağgi Bektasch* ("Türkische Bibliothek," No. 25 [Leipzig, 1927]). Concerning the traditions and Bektash's historical life, see Birge, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–42. Birge's book is still the best work on the subject. It has superseded the old classic by J. P. Brown, *The Dervishes* (1st ed.; Constantinople, 1868; 2d rev. ed. by H. A. Rose; Oxford, 1927). Prior to Birge, the leading authority was Georg Jacob, with his *Beiträge*, already cited, and *Die Bektaschijje in ihrem Verhältnis zu verwandten Erscheinungen* ("Abhandlungen der Philosophisch-philologischen Klasse der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften," XXIV [1909], Part III [Munich, 1909]). Jacob doubted the historicity of the *Vilayetname*; regarded the affiliation of the Janissaries and Bektashis as a sixteenth-century phenomenon; and concluded that Haji Bektash did not found the order that bears his name. He attributed the founding of Bektashism to Fazlullah, leader of the Hurufi sect, a century after Bektash's death. Birge (pp. 46–51, 74) accepts the *Vilayetname* as a historical document of a period prior to 1400, with only a few later interpolations; and he sees an early relationship between the Janissaries, organized in the fourteenth century, and "some leader or leaders of the already widespread Bektashi dervishes." For background material, affording a basis for Birge's conclusions, of particular importance are the works of Mehmet Fuat Köprülü [zade], *Türk edebiyatında ilk mütesavvifler* ("First Mystics in Turkish Literature") (Istanbul, 1918); "Bemerkungen zur Religionsgeschichte Kleinasien," *Mitteilungen zur Osmanischen Geschichte*, I (1921–22), 203–22; "Les Origines du Bektachisme," *Actes du Congrès International d'Histoire des Religions*, II (Paris, 1925), 391–411. VI. Mirmiroghlu, *Oi Δερβίσαα* ("The Dervishes") (Athens, 1940), which devotes a good deal of space to the Bektashis (pp. 78–247), contains a wealth of information from Turkish records and traditions but is unsystematic and uncritical.

⁵⁹ Georg Jacob, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Derwisch-Ordens der Bektaschis* ("Türkische Bibliothek," No. 9 [Berlin, 1908]), p. 80; Gordlevski, *Zapiski*, II, 245.

⁶⁰ *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* (London, 1937), pp. 40–45.

⁶¹ Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, II, 488–93. Ismail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları* (Ankara, 1943), I, 148. See W. L. Langer and R. P. Blake, "The Rise of the Ottoman Turks and Its Historical Background," *American Historical Review*, XXXVII (1932), 498.

man by displaying a remarkable flexibility⁶³ and, second, it held the spiritual leadership of the Janissary corps.

Perhaps more than any other Anatolian sect, the Bektashis interpreted Scripture allegorically and effaced all sharp contrasts and vicissitudes, preaching, as they did, their favorite theme of the unity of existence and the identity of the external and the internal world.⁶⁴ To the agonized man who had known decades of war, slavery, abduction, and all kinds of violence, the mystic offered hope and comfort, an escape from harsh reality. Thus, the Mevlana Jelaleddin Rumi was regarded as a saintly figure by both Moslems and Christians,⁶⁵ and his contemporary, Haji Bektash Veli,⁶⁶ the eponymous saint of the Bektashi order, could likewise attract worshipers from both religions. Tolerance in all directions, common places of worship for Christians and Moslems, stories of miracles for the followers of Christ and Mohammed indiscriminately, saints venerated by both peoples, and a persistent, if vague, identification of Ali with Christ and Haji Bektash with St. Charalampos—these are some of the factors to which the Bektashis owe their success.⁶⁷ Their expansion continued down to the suppression of the Janissaries in 1826, when the Bektashis were also persecuted as their spiritual mentors.⁶⁸ Until then, the Asiatic provinces from Iraq to the Aegean coast, Constantinople, and large sections of the Balkans were fertile grounds of Bektashi propaganda.

Perhaps the earliest infiltration of

Bektashism in the Balkan Peninsula is associated with a semilegendary figure, Sarı Saltık, who according to the *Vilayet-name*⁶⁹ was one of the outstanding associates of Haji Bektash. The same source, which doubtless contains historical facts under a veil of romantic accretions, informs us that, on orders from the Veli, Sarı Saltık established a *tekke* at Kilgra (= Kaliakra) in the Dobruja. On his way to Constantinople from the court of Mohammed Uzbeg, khan of the Golden Horde, Ibn Battuta recalls visiting "a town known by the name of Baba Saltuk, who, they say, was an ecstatic mystic, though stories are told of actions by him which are condemned by the law."⁷⁰ The town is described as being on the frontier between the Turkish (i.e., Tatar) dominions and "the Roman (Greek) territory" (the latter presumably including Bulgaria). Though Ibn Battuta does not give any clue to establish the identity of

⁶³ Birge (*op. cit.*, pp. 40–47) has proved in a conclusive way that the death of the saint occurred prior to A.H. 695 (A.D. 1295).

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 211–12, 215–18; Jacob, *Die Bektaschijje*, pp. 33–39. Concerning village groups under the Bektashis, see M. F. Grenard, "Une secte religieuse de l'Asie Mineure—Les Kzylybâchs," *Journal asiatique*, X series, III (1904), 511–22; and S. V. R. Trowbridge, "The Alevis—Deifiers of Ali," *Harvard Theological Review*, II (1909), 340–53. About the "utraquistische Heilige," whose worship was widespread among the masses of Anatolia, see Babinger, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, LXXVI, 149. St. George and St. Demetrius captured the fancy of the Moslems more than any other saints, the former being naturalized as Khidr and the latter as Kasim. But there are scores of others. Local patron saints like St. Amphilocheus of Iconium and St. Chariton of near-by Silile likewise found a place in Turkish popular hagiography (see Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, I, 319–22; II, 273–77). Gordlevski, in his "Osmanskiya skazaniya i legheidi" ("Ottoman Traditions and Legends"), published in *Etnograficheskoye Obozrieniye*, a work which I have not been able to consult, studies 167 saints of this nature, according to a citation by Babinger, *loc. cit.*, p. 149, n. 1.

⁶⁵ See Birge, *op. cit.*, pp. 77.

⁶⁶ German translation by Gross, p. 73.

⁶⁷ *Voyages*, II, 416. Gibb's translation, p. 153. Ibn Battuta stopped at the same place on his return to the Volga region, *Voyages*, II, 446; Gibb's translation, p. 165.

⁶³ As a Shi'ite, a Bektashi could practice "disimulation" (*takiyah*)—"not to be as one seems, not to seem as one is" (Birge, *op. cit.*, p. 270).

⁶⁴ For an analysis of Bektashi theology see *ibid.*, pp. 109–61.

⁶⁵ See Hasluck, *op. cit.*, I, 56; II, 374; see also "Christianity and Islam under the Sultans of Konia," *Annual of the British School at Athens*, XIX (1912–13), 193.

Kilgra (=Kaliakra) with Baba Saltuk village, it is clear from the text that "an ecstatic mystic" named Saltuk (or Saltik) was well known in a European locality on the way from the Ukraine to Constantinople.⁷¹ It is certain that the orthodoxy of the *baba* was not beyond reproach, and this testimony, coming from a Sunni source, lends further support to the idea that he was associated with Bektash. Whether or not he was one of the Veli's lieutenants is an open question, but it is a fact of particular importance that there was a local tradition concerning the life of a Shi'ite leader on Balkan soil about forty years after Bektash's death and more than two decades before the Osmanlis crossed over to Europe. According to the *Vilayetname*, Sarı Saltik came to Kilgra by way of Georgia, but Yazıjoghlu Ali, a Turkish historian of the early fifteenth century, says that Sarı Saltik came to the Dobruja with the followers of Izzeddin Kaikaus II, across the Bosphorus, in the reign of Emperor Michael Palaeologus.^{71a}

The *tekke* of Baba Saltik, perhaps the oldest outpost of Islam in the Balkans, continued to be a center of Shi'ite tradition, and in the sixteenth century it provoked the censure of the *ulema*.⁷² By that time it must have played its part in the spread of Islam in the new lands of the empire. The role of Saltik and his *tekke* in the Dobruja seems to be strikingly analogous to that of his contemporary, Mejdeddin, and the *zaviye* of the Akhis at Brusa. Both leaders were *sufi*'s, dynamic Moslems, and pioneers in the lands of the

infidels. Judging from the results, both must have been extremely successful. In Bithynia the slopes of Mount Olympus were dotted with *tekke*'s of anchorites,⁷³ many of them occupying the very cells of their Christian predecessors, and in the Balkans, where the Ottoman Turks advanced rapidly under Murad I, there were dozens of Bektashi *tekke*'s scattered in Bulgaria, Macedonia, the South Slav countries, Albania, Thessaly, and, more recently, Crete. In Albania, particularly, Bektashi dervishes prepared the way for the conversion of whole villages or tribes as late as the eighteenth century. Today it is estimated that some 200,000 Albanians (one-fifth of the entire population of the country) profess Bektashi affiliations.⁷⁴ It is also estimated that prior to the persecution of the order by Mahmud the Reformer, in 1826, there were 7,370,000 Bektashis, of whom about 7,000,000 were in the Asiatic provinces of the empire, 120,000 in Constantinople, 100,000 in Albania, and the rest scattered all over the peninsula.⁷⁵ After the closing of the *tekke*'s in Turkey, Albania contains the greatest organized force of Bektashism.

In the days when the Turks were new on European soil, the Bektashis were unofficial propaganda agents who succeeded in making the gap between the ruling nation and the subject races less wide. Appearing more as pioneers of the Osmanlis than as followers of Mohammed, they helped in recruiting soldiers and administrators for the sultans and in replenishing the manpower that threatened the West. At the same time, by wielding a decided influence over the Janissaries, they were a factor in the domestic affairs of the empire. Beyond the narrow but important circle of the Janissaries, the

⁷¹ It took Ibn Battuta eighteen days to reach Constantinople from Baba Saltuk, but progress was slow because of the severe winter. Normally the distance from Kallakra to the capital could be covered in about ten days.

^{71a} P. Wittek, "Yazıjoghlu Ali on the Christian Turks of the Dobruja," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XIV (1952), 648. According to Wittek (*ibid.*, p. 658) Sarı Saltik died shortly after 1300.

⁷² Birge, *op. cit.*, p. 51, n. 4.

⁷³ Arnakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-63.

⁷⁴ Birge, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-73, 85-86.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Bektashis approached the masses of the Turks more effectively than any other religious group—a fact that can be attributed to their broad human sympathy and to their simple Turkish speech, which contrasted very favorably to the erudite, incomprehensible Arabic of Sunni theologians.

With such a power among the masses, it was not hard for them to overthrow the Sunni emperor, especially in times of crisis such as that of 1501, when Shi'ite Persia waged war against Bayazid II.⁷⁶ If they did not do so, in the formative years of the empire, it was because of a vague awareness of a common Osmanlı background and the munificence of the sultans toward the Janissaries. Undoubtedly, much depended upon the personality of the sultan. The mild and tractable Bayazid II managed to hold the loyalty of his Shi'ite subjects, but Selim I, surnamed Yavuz, or "the Grim," an epithet which he fully deserved, had to face the growing hostility of his heretical soldiery. In his brief reign large numbers of Kızılbashes and other dissenters were massacred, and the Janissaries became troublesome. After Selim, Süleyman the Magnificent had to strain his energies to crush a Bektashi rebellion in Anatolia in 1526.⁷⁷ In the period of decline that began immediately after Süleyman's death Osmanlı loyalties became more vague and inconsequential, and the demands of the Janissaries grew in reverse proportion to their usefulness. In fact, it was the Janissaries, more than any other group in the empire, that made the reign of many sultans difficult. They even went so far as to depose two sultans—Osman II (1622) and Selim III (1807). Their suppression by Mahmud the Reformer was an act of political necessity, for they had degenerated into a rabble.

⁷⁶ See Sydney N. Fisher, *The Foreign Relations of Turkey, 1481-1512* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1948), pp. 92, 95, 98.

This, at least, is the orthodox interpretation of the measures taken in 1826.

The relation that the Bektashi dervishes had with the uprisings of the Janissaries during the period of decline has not yet been thoroughly investigated. It is now an essential task of the historian of the Ottoman Empire to study these upheavals in connection with the social rebellions like those of Sheikh Bedreddin and his associate, Bürklige Mustafa, in fifteenth-century Anatolia, which were directed against Ottoman despotism. The contemporary Greek historian Ducas⁷⁸ says of Mustafa that "he taught that all things, except women, should be held in common, even food, and clothes, and shoes, and land." The movement attracted many Christians, as it preached freedom and equality and showed closer affinity to Christianity than to Islam (*προστίθεσθαι πλέον Χριστιανοῖς ἢ Τούρκοις*). After desperate resistance these rebellions were drowned in blood. Religious slogans of a broad, syncretistic nature, as well as economic motives, were the driving power in the rebellions of the sheikhs and of the Janissaries alike. Furthermore, it is clear that there was much of the spirit of the Akhiyat in the rebels of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Bektashi dervishes, in particular, carried on the main traditions of the Akhis after the Osmanlis were established in Europe. Religious dances (*sema*),⁷⁹ a fervent mystic disposi-

⁷⁷ Birge, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70. Concerning the persecutions of the heretics, see H. R. Roemer, "Die Safawiden," *Saeculum*, IV (1953), 34-36.

⁷⁸ Bonn ed., pp. 111-115. A. S. Stepanov, "The Work of Ducas as a Source for the History of the Revolt of Bürklige Mustafa in the Beginning of the Fifteenth Century," (in Russian), *Vizantiski Vremennik*, new series, V (1952), 99-104. Stepanov, who describes the revolt as a peasants' uprising directed against the Turkish feudal lords, attributes it to oppressive taxation. He makes no attempt to study the underlying causes, nor the deeper spiritual aspects of the movement, especially the solidarity of Christians and Moslems and their willingness to face martyrdom.

⁷⁹ Birge, *op. cit.*, pp. 199, 211.

tion, special importance attached to the Ashura feast,⁸⁰ common social ideals with emphasis on the spirit of brotherhood, and allegiance to the *futuwwa* code of ethics⁸¹—these are outstanding Bektashi traits reminiscent of the Akhiyat al-Fityan as described by Ibn Battuta. In this light it is easy to understand how, in a land where clothes indicated social distinctions, the headdress of the Akhis came to be worn by the Janissaries, the spiritual protégés of the Bektashis.

The "lower" order of the Akhis, who identified themselves with the various craftsmen's guilds, likewise preserved important elements of the old institution. A strong *futuwwa* tradition, which existed in Moslem guilds from the ninth to the nineteenth centuries, served as a connecting link among the Akhiyat al-Fityan, the Bektashiye, and the organized craftsmen. Bektashi sheikhs kept the books containing the old regulations of the *futuwwa*,⁸² and the guilds accepted the spiritual leadership of the dervishes as a matter of course. The origins of the relationship of dervishes and craftsmen go back to the Akhiyat al-Fityan, which brought the two groups together, in an organization that had a religious, political, and professional scope. The *futuwwa* books (many of them actually bearing the title of *Kitab el-futuwwa*), which have come down to our times, point to a triangle-like relationship of Akhis, Bektashis, and guilds, with the Akhis placed at the apex of the triangle as the historical link uniting the other two.

The allegiance of the guilds to the

futuwwa idea is attested by the generic term *ahl el-futuwwa*, which was used with reference to the craftsmen, in the same way as *ahl el-hak* ("people of the right") and *ahl el-tarik* ("people of the way").⁸³ As *futuwwa* associates, the workmen had an initiation ceremony that had much in common with that of the Akhis of the *Futuwwetname* of Yahya Ibn Halil.⁸⁴ The connection of the guilds with the Bektashis appears clearly in the initiation ceremony of such bodies as the blacksmiths' *esnaf* (guild) of Burdur in Anatolia. Gordlevski mentions that the new member was solemnly appraised that he was about to join "the society of *shariat, hakikat, tarikat, and marifat*."⁸⁵ These are "the four gateways" of Bektashism,⁸⁶ interpreted by Birge as "religious law," "immediate experience of the essence of reality," "teachings and practice of the secret religious order," and "mystic knowledge of God." Various external aspects of the ceremony—posture, movements, gestures—were also part of the Bektashi way.

In the same guild a very important place in the ritual was reserved for an official called *Akhi baba*.⁸⁷ He addressed the new masters with the final admonitions—respect, love, compassion, truthfulness, and abstention from forbidden food. In other guilds the *Akhi baba* supervised promotions.⁸⁸ An Akhi, Akhi Evran, was the patron saint (*pir*) of the tanners'

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 75–76, 114, 116, 184.

⁸⁴ For a description of initiation ceremonies see Thorning, pp. 71–73, 123–64. Massignon in his article on Islamic guilds, *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VII, 214–16, describes the ceremony as "semi-masonic." Lewis, describing Moslem guilds in general, prefers the expression "quasi-masonic" (*Economic History Review*, VIII, 22).

⁸⁵ *Zapiski*, II, 240.

⁸⁶ Birge, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–7.

⁸⁷ Gordlevski, *Zapiski*, II, 239, 241.

⁸⁸ Taeschner, "Das bosnische Zunftwesen zur Türkenzeit" (review art.), *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XLIV (1951), 554.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

⁸¹ Thorning, *op. cit.*, pp. 81–82.

⁸² Thorning, in connection with his work on the *Bast Madad et-Taufiq* (his translation of this title is "Darlegung der Hilfe des göttlichen Beistandes," *op. cit.*, p. 175), has made a comparative study of a score of *futuwwa* books intended for the use of the various guilds in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

guild of the entire Ottoman Empire. He lies buried at Kirshehir, some ninety miles southeast of Ankara, and an inscription over his tomb, dated 854 A.H. (A.D. 1450), reads: "*pir* of *pirs*, saint of saints, fountain, sultan sheikh Nasireddin Mahmud Akhi Evran. May his mystery be blessed by God (*kuddisa Allah-u sirruh-u*). . . ."⁸⁹ "May his mystery be blessed" is a common Bektashi formula.⁹⁰ Another inscription says that the cemetery near by was a burial place of Akhis.⁹¹ The legendary Akhi of Kirshehir was also the *pir* of the clothiers' guild, and all the guilds of Turkey claimed him for their own.⁹² Kirshehir was an important center of dervishes, whose leader was styled *Akhi baba*.⁹³ As late as 1887 the tanners' guild of remote Bosnia received a traveling sheikh, also called *Akhi baba*, who came from Kirshehir as representative of the dervishes of Akhi Evran.⁹⁴

From facts such as these the fundamental relationship between Turkish guilds and Bektashi dervishes, and also between guilds and Bektashis, on the one hand,

and the old Akhiyat al-Fityan, on the other, appears very clearly. The function of these three bodies in the development of the Ottoman Empire was essentially the same. In degrees that varied according to the prevailing circumstances, Akhis, dervishes, and craftsmen contributed in their significant way to the consolidation of Turkish power in the Near East—the Akhis in Anatolia before and during the rise of the Osmanlıs, the Bektashis primarily in the Balkans and to a smaller extent in Asiatic Turkey, and the organized craftsmen all over the Empire. The Akhis, who were not merely craftsmen or religious men alone but a brotherhood with a multiplicity of interests and functions, wielded extensive political power, limiting the absolutist tendencies of Anatolian Turkish emirs and of the first two Osmanlı sultans, and they exerted a leveling influence until authority and wealth corrupted them and Murad I brought them under his control. Their tradition, which was tied up with the old *futuwwa*, was carried on by the Bektashis, but the latter's influence was more cultural than political. It appeared in the Islamization of the Christian peasants in the Balkans and in Anatolia. The craftsmen's guilds, though not in any way fanatical, played a similar role among the townspeople, and through their social mechanism they implemented the missionary activities of the dervishes. All three—Akhis, Bektashis, and guild craftsmen—served as vital supports of the growing Ottoman Empire.

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
LAWRENCE, KANSAS

⁸⁹ Gordlevski, *Izvestiya Akademii Nauk SSSR*, VI, Nos. 15–17, 1173.

⁹⁰ See Birge, *op. cit.*, pp. 41, 160–61.

⁹¹ Gordlevski, *Izvestiya*, VI, 1173.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 1178, 1180.

⁹³ Concerning the significance of Kirshehir, in addition to Gordlevski's article cited above, see Taeschner, "Legendenbildung um Akhi Evran, den Heiligen von Kirsehir," *Die Welt des Islams, Sonderband Festschrift Friedrich Giese* (1941), pp. 61–71; W. Ruben, "Kirsehirde dikkatimizi çeken san'at âbideleri, Ahi Evran türbesi" ("Eigenartige Denkmäler aus Kirsehir"), *Belleten*, XI (1947), 629–38.

⁹⁴ Hamdija Kreševljaković, *Esnaf i obrti u Bosni i Hercegovini, 1463–1878* ("Guilds and Trades in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1463–1878"), in Taeschner's review article, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XLIV, 556.