BEKTASHISM
BETWEEN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT
AND ESTABLISHED RELIGION

Convenor: Prof. Dr. Albert Doja,
Member of the Albanian Academy of Sciences

Venue: Faculty of Social Sciences
European University of Tirana
23–24 October 2009

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

With special support from
University Institute of Advanced Studies,
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Recent work on Bektashism demonstrates an innovative and well-argued approach, according to which the system of beliefs and practices related to Bektashism seems to have corresponded to a kind of liberation theology, whereas the structure of Bektashi groups corresponded more or less to the type of religious organization conventionally known as charismatic groups. If this is the case, their spiritual tendency could at times connect with and meet social, cultural and national perspectives. It is the overall combination of these factors that seems to cast heterodox mystics and heretics of any kind as non-conformist and often dangerous for the political establishment, as was the case with the Bektashis as much in Ottoman Anatolia and Modern Turkey as in Albania. However, in other circumstances, they may become politically compliant and reliable, depending on political situations. In this case, when members of the previously persecuted religious minority will acquire a degree of religious and political respectability within society at large, the doctrines of heterodoxy and liberation theology fade into the background. In the end, the heirs of the heterodox promoters of spiritual reform and social movement turn into followers and faithful defenders of a legitimate authority. They become the spokespeople for an institutionalized orthodoxy whose support is sought by the political regime.

Programme Timetable

22 October 2009
18.00–20.00 Book presentation and Welcome reception

23 October 2009
09.00—10.00 Registration
10.00—10.30 Opening Session
10.30—12.30 Panel I: ORTHODOXY AND HETERO DOXY
12.30—14.30 Lunch break
14.30—17.00 Panel II: STATE AND POLITICS

24 October 2009
09.00—11.00 Panel III: IDENTITY AND MEMORY
11.00—11.30 Coffee break
11.30—13.30 Panel IV: ARTS AND REPRESENTATIONS
13.30—14.30 Lunch break
14.30—17.00 Panel V: HISTORIES AND LEGACIES
17.00—19.00 Farewell Session

25 October 2009
08.00—18.00 Excursion to Kruja, Berat and Vlora
Detailed Programme

OPENING SESSION

Opening Address: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Enika Abazi, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, European University of Tirana

Welcome Address: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Adrian Civici, Rector of the European University of Tirana

I. ORTHODOXY AND HETERO DOXY

Chair: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Enika Abazi

Prof. Dr. Albert Doja, Member of the Albanian Academy of Sciences
*From Confraternal Religion to Instrumental Theology: ideological reversal between heterodoxy and orthodoxy in the political history of Bektashism.*

Prof. Dr. Enzo Pace, Department of Sociology, University of Padova, Italy, and Ass. Prof. Dr. Fatma Sündal, Department of Sociology, Anadolu University, Eskisehir, Turkey
*Inner-world mysticism and the production of social capital in Bektashism.*

Dr. Mark Soileau, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Albion College, Michigan, U.S.A.
*From Cult to Tarikat: The Formation of Bektashism in the Vilayetname of Haji Bektash.*

Nazli Ozkan, Comparative Study in History and Society, Koc University, Istanbul, Turkey
*Anthropology of Alevism in Turkey: Dealing with the Orthodoxy —Heterodoxy Issue.*

Discussant: Dr. David Shankland

II. STATE AND POLITICS

Chair: Dr. David Shankland

Dr. Nathalie Clayer, CNRS, France
*Institutionalisation and Bektashi Religious Authority in Twentieth-Century Albania.*

Prof. Dr. Bernd Fischer, Full Professor and Chair, Department of History, Indiana University, Fort Wayne, U.S.A.
*Religion and the State in Albania*

Dorian Koçi, UFO University, Tirana, Albania
*The relationship of Bektashism to culturalist and nationalist movements.*
Gizem Kaşoturacak, PhD Candidate, History Department, Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey
The relations between the Ottoman State and heterodox tekkes: A case study on the Tekke of Abdal Musa.

Ass. Prof. Dr. Bülent Bilmez, Department of History, Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey
The closure of the central Bektashi dergah in Turkey (1925) and its consequences

Discussant: Dr. Domna Michail

III. IDENTITY AND MEMORY
Chair: Prof. Dr. Enzo Pace

Dr. David Shankland, Reader of Social Anthropology, University of Bristol, U.K.
Alevi-Bektashi relations: an example village from rural Anatolia.

Dr. Fotini Tsimpiridou, Assistant Professor of Social Anthropology, Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, Macedonia University, Thessaloniki, and Dr. Giorgos Mavrommatis, Lecturer of Educational History, Department of Education Sciences, Democritus University of Thrace, Greece
Bektashi identity politics and fieldwork experiences: challenging ‘heterodoxy’, ‘difference’ and ‘tradition’.

Dr. Domna Michail and Antonis Koutsoumbas, Lecturer of Social Anthropology, University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece
Bektashi Islamic tradition in Western Thrace – Greece: an ethnographic observation of the Bektashi practices among the Pomaks of Xanthi.

Vladislava Spasova Ilieva, PhD student, Institut des Langues et Cultures de la Méditerranée et du Proche-Orient, CCHS, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), Madrid, Spain
Demir Baba dans la reconstruction de la mémoire chez la population du nord -est de la Bulgarie.

Discussant: Dr. Mark Soileau

IV. ARTS AND REPRESENTATIONS
Chair: Prof. Dr. Gianclaudio Macchiarella

Prof. Dr. Gianclaudio Macchiarella, Full Professor of Medieval Art History and Director, Centre for Balkan Studies, Ca’Foscarì University of Venice, Italy
The cultural heritage of Delvina (Southern Albania): a Bektashi architectural enclave.

Prof. Maurizio Boriani and Mariacristina Giambruno, Department of Architectural Design, Polytechnic University of Milan, Italy
The architectural Islamic complexes in the area of Delvina: A problem of conservation, protection and valorization of Albanian cultural heritage.

Massimiliano Fusari, PhD researcher, Ca'Foscari University of Venice, Italy
*Forms of representations of the Albanian Bektashi: A visual anthropological research.*

Inis Shkreli and Armand Zaçeliçi, Centre for Albanian Studies, Tirana
*Music as an aspect of inter-religious harmony: The role of Bektashi and Orthodox communities in the urban music of Elbasan (XIX and the early XX century).*

Dr. Ali Akbar Ziaee, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
*The Mysticism and Bektashism of the Albanian national poet Naim Frasheri.*

Discussant: Dr. Fotini Tsimpiridou

**V. HISTORIES AND LEGACIES**

Chair: Prof. Dr. Bernd Fischer

Sibel Imren, Graduate student, History Department, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
*Bektashism in the early Turkish Republic: An Overview.*

Stephen Schwartz, Independent Scholar, Washington, U.S.A.
*The Harabati Teqe in Tetova Under Sunni Fundamentalist Attack.*

Ass. Prof. Dr. Fatih Usluer, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara, Turkey
*Hurufism among Albanian Bektashis.*

Abdülkadir Yeler, PhD Student, Department of Sociology of Religion, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey
*Alawism and Jafarism in Turkey: Similarities and Differences.*

*Traces of Bektashism in Tunisia and Algeria.*

Discussant: Dr. Nathalie Clayer

**FAREWELL SESSION**

Chair: M. Besnik Mustafaj, National Coordinator, Albanian Forum for the Alliance of Civilizations
*Farewell Address and Presentation of the National Strategy for the Alliance of Civilizations.*

Distribution of Certificates and Farewell Cocktail
International Symposium

BEKTASHISM BETWEEN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT AND ESTABLISHED RELIGION

Faculty of Social Sciences, European University, Tirana, 23–24 October 2009

Abstracts

Ass. Prof. Dr. Bülent Bilmez, Department of History, Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey

*The closure of the central Bektashi dergah in Turkey (1925) and its consequences.*

This paper will start with the description of the place and meaning of the main/central tekke in Bektashism and proceed with the history of the last years of the central Bektasi tekke in Haci Bektas in Turkey by focusing on the fact that the majority of the dervishes in recent years in the main tekke were Albanian. I will then try to explore the legal process of the closure of this tekke and its immediate social, religious and political consequences for Bektashis in general. The main point of discussion will be the longer term consequences of this closure: First, I will discuss the rather paradoxically positive attitude of the Bektashis of Turkey towards Kemalism in spite of this act of closure. Secondly I will examine the consequences of this act for the Bektashis in Albania, who have directly been effected by this closure as the last leader of the Bektashis before the closure ended up in Tirana afterwards to launch a new centre there. The consequences of this shift, on the other hand, still continue to affect the world Bektashism today.

Prof. Maurizio Boriani and Mariacristina Giambruno, Department of Architectural Design, Polytechnic University of Milan, Italy

*The architectural Islamic complexes in the area of Delvina: A problem of conservation, protection and valorization of Albanian cultural heritage.*

Delvina’s region is rich in Islamic cultural and monumental heritage (Gjin Aleksi’s mosque and mausolea at Rusan, mosque, tekke and hammam at Xhemal, Baba Haziz’ tekke and mausolea). All together they represent a coherent case of survival of religious monuments from the communist era of remarkable architectural, environmental and cultural interest, some of them still in use, other abandoned or close to ruin. The interest of these sites resides also in their topographical proximity within a very limited portion of territory along an old trail leading from Gjirokaster to the coastal region, corresponding to the Kalasa river valley. The study and conservation of these sites represent not only an important opportunity for keeping alive a significant and original cultural identity but also for its valorization in view of the development of cultural tourism in an area still under the negative influence of a longstanding economic and social crisis. Our paper will provide a description of the sites, emphasizing their particular architectural interest as a system and will finally outline a possible methodology for their eco-museological valorization.

Dr. Nathalie Clayer, CNRS, France

*Institutionalisation and Bektashi Religious Authority in Twentieth-Century Albania.*
Generally observed from the center, the issue of religious authority within the Bektashi brotherhood is seen through the lens of a centralized authority, either in the Ottoman period, around the tekke of Haji Bektaş, or in post-Ottoman Albania, with the creation of national Bektashi institutions. New Bektashi authorities are indeed set up during the 1920s in this country. However I would like to show that these central authorities have had great difficulties to be recognized during the inter-war years, because of political considerations, but also because, within the brotherhood itself, supra-local authorities were only rarely effective at the local level, the local authority remaining crucial for disciples around their spiritual leaders. For that I analyse the conflict which broke out for the direction of the tekke/teqe of Melcan which lasted more than twenty years, and opposed Baba Qazim to Baba Zylfo who was one of the actors of the institutionalization of the brotherhood.

Prof. Dr. Albert Doja, Member of the Academy of Sciences, Albania

From Confraternal Religion to Instrumental Theology: ideological reversal between heterodoxy and orthodoxy in the political history of Bektashism.

In my paper I will argue that the system of beliefs and practices related to Bektashism seems to have corresponded to a kind of liberation theology, whereas the structure of Bektashi groups corresponded more or less to the type of religious organization conventionally known as charismatic groups. If this is the case, their spiritual tendency could at times connect with and meet social, cultural and national perspectives. It is the overall combination of these factors that seems to cast heterodox mystics and heretics of any kind as non-conformist and often dangerous for the political establishment, as was the case with the Bektashis as much in Ottoman Anatolia and Modern Turkey as in Albania. However, in other circumstances, they may become politically compliant and reliable, depending on political situations. In this case, when members of the previously persecuted religious minority will acquire a degree of religious and political respectability within society at large, the doctrines of heterodoxy and liberation theology fade into the background. In the end, the heirs of the heterodox promoters of spiritual reform and social movement turn into followers and faithful defenders of a legitimate authority. They become the spokespersons for an institutionalized orthodoxy whose support is sought by the political regime.

Cecilie Endresen, PhD Candidate, Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages, University of Oslo, Norway

Thus God separated religion and state: conceptions of politics and secularism among Albanian Bektashi leaders.

The suspicion that religion is being “politicised” is widespread among Albanians, and this concern permeats the rhetoric of the Bektashi leaders. Given their experience of dictatorship, conflict and misrule, the word “politics” does not ring well in Albanian ears. This paper is a study of how concepts of “politics” and “politicisation” figure in contemporary Bektashi discourse and in a wider intra-Islamic theological debate. After communism, religion has assumed a new role in the public discourse. A combination of the strongly secularist Albanian nationalism, Rilindja ideals, Marxist propaganda and a turbulent political history has made many Bektashi leaders sceptical to what they understand as a “politicisation” of religion, particularly that the other religious communities are mixing religion and politics. Conversely, Bektashi leaders see their own religious tradition as completely apolitical and as a defence of secularist, national, and inter-religious values. The threat of politicisation shapes the leaders’ interpretation of current affairs, Albanian history, and the global development of Islam. One example is how the Battle of Kerbala is used as an argument to separate religion and state.
Prof. Dr. Bernd Fischer, Full Professor and Chair, Department of History, Indiana University, Fort Wayne, U.S.A.

Religion and the State in Albania.
This paper discusses some aspects of the relationship between religious elites and the state in Albania from the era of King Zog to the present. Because of Albania’s multi-confessional status, Albanian religious elites did not become the basis of conservative nationalism as they did elsewhere in the Balkans, where they possess considerable political influence but perhaps less moral authority. Because religion did not become an arm of the state, Albania’s political leaders found it necessary to balance and control Albania’s church elites to prevent them from playing a divisive role and being unduly influenced by foreign interests, with the Bektashi traditionally seeming to be less of a challenge in this regard. To achieve this goal Albania’s rulers employed various means, ranging from coercion and bribery, to brutality and terror. The paper concludes with some thoughts on the results of this often troubled relationship and what it might mean for contemporary church-state relations in Albania.

Massimiliano Fusari, PhD researcher, Ca'Foscari University of Venice, Italy

Forms of representations of the Albanian Bektashi: A visual anthropological research.
Relying on a fieldwork visual research carried out in August 2008, this paper addresses the issue of how editing procedures, formatting and structuring photographic essays may influence (to the point of shaping) the general perception of a subject. The case-study relates to my personal exploration of the Bektashi communities in Tirana (Albania) and Tetovo (Macedonia). Photographic essay at:
http://www.massimedia.com/photo/sub_storie/bektashi/index.html

Nurullah Gündüz, Fatih University, Istanbul, Turkey

Alevi Revivalism In Turkey: Processes of Disenchantment Since 1990s.
This thesis explores revival period in Alevism which gained more importance in certain time periods, Alevis, the changes that they have been exposed to, and the disenchantment process of Alevism. Especially since the 1990s, Alevis and Alevism of which leftist ideology hopefully embraced became important than ever and added a different dimension to Alevism. Also it was emphasized that Alevism was superior to Sunni Muslims, as Sunni since seen were as a violent, bigot tool, radical sect while Alevism was seen as a humanist, equitable, modern belief. Alevis have been influenced negatively by this situation. Although they were taken into much consideration in certain time periods, these periods lasted in a short time and they are left all alone as they became politicized. We will explore a period of disenchantment in Alevism and analyze the ideological, political and social aspects of this enchantment. Different hypotheses will be used to determine whether this enchantment is valid or not. Hypotheses will be proved via the interviews with intellectuals and Alevi writers.

Vladislava Spasova Ilieva, PhD student, Institut des Langues et Cultures de la Méditerranée et du Proche-Orient, CCHS, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), Madrid, Spain

Demir Baba dans la reconstruction de la mémoire chez la population du nord-est de la Bulgarie.
In my paper, I will use all the written information about Demir Baba, the kizilbash saint, and his tekke, which nowadays has become a place of encounter for different religious beliefs
(and sometimes not necessarily religious) to such an extent that is also referred to as “the Bulgarian Jerusalem”. During the 80s, the story of Demir Baba and his tekke was not as popular and a frequent topic as it is today. At that time, the people of that region used to talk of a legend about a man with iron shoes that usually could be seen in his türbe. The children wore those shoes to acquire power and strength. The legend tells that Demir “baba” or the “iron father” (translation) was building his monastery alone. When he got thirsty, he put his hand inside the earth and five fountains streamed out together in what is known today as besh parmak. Finally, some Christians asserted that who really lived there was Saint Demetrius. After a long time of ostracism, through newspapers and local magazines, “Demir baba tekke” is getting back into the public sphere and has attracted the interest of archaeologists, ethnologists and other researchers, which have been focusing on the history of Demir Baba and have tried to reconstruct the past. Nowadays, the name of this bektachi saint has entered even into the Bulgarian political affairs. In this paper, I am going to address this holy place where the memory is reconstructed in some different ways through the legends of Demir Baba. I will focus on the different spheres of the written word as a field where the memory is reconstructed over the interaction between official historical narrative and the popular knowledge of the past. This field is mediated by the concerns of political, social, ethnic and religious actors. Different historical representations split up and compete between them; the past is transformed in a way that reflects present necessities. I will analyze the role that the holy topos has in the construction of the regional identity and the way it is influenced by different interpretations that are developing.

Sibel Imren, Graduate student, History Department, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

_Bektashism in the early Turkish Republic: An Overview._

The Bektashis were highly influenced by the new socio-political structures of the Republic in Turkey. One of the main questions is how the Bektashi dervishes maintained their existence in the new organized state. How did they locate themselves in the newly established Republic of Turkey? What is the attitude of the Bektashis towards the Republic during the early years of Turkey? Is this a nationalist movement or culturalist movement? These are significant questions to evaluate or understand the main characteristics of the Bektashi support. Also, there was a controversy about whether the Bektashi dedebabas or çelebis totally gave support or not. In the present study the emphasis is on the dedebaba and çelebi branches of the Bektashi order.

Gizem Kaşoturacak, PhD student, History Department, Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey

_The relations between the Ottoman State and heterodox tekkes: A case study on the the Tekke of Abdal Musa._

Through the end of the fifteenth century, when the Ottoman state was about to complete its centralization process; the heterodox Babas started to disobey the State and refuse its higher authority. This problem was combined with the appearance of a new threat in the East; The Safavid State. Thus, the State tried to find a solution to end the migration movements towards Safavids and popular movements within its boundaries both were provoked by the safviş propaganda. One of the solutions was creating a centralistic heterodox sect which can easily be controlled by the state. This was a way to reach the followers of the heterodox beliefs and show them that the highest religious authority for them was in Anatolia, namely in Kirşehir’s Hadji Bektash tekke and not in Iran. This would hopefully, also prove the superiority of the Ottoman political power against Safavids. The date of bringing Balm Sultan from the zaviye in Dimetoka to the Dergâh-ı Hadji Bektash by the Sultanic order
accepted as the foundation date of the Bektashhiya. As the head sheikh of the Tekke, he held serial reforms within Bektashhiya. Some new rituals and ceremonies were created to separate and alienate the Bektashis from other heterodox groups. This would also emphasize its superiority. It can be hypothetically proposed that, Ottoman ruling system tried to reach out to its nomadic-heterodox subjects through a tekke-tariqa system which was controlled from a central tekke that was directly connected to Istanbul.

Dorian Koçi, UFO University, Tirana

The relationship of Bektashism to culturalist and nationalist movements.

Although the diversity of the religions was not giving any hope for a unified factor towards national awaking, the national Albanian movement did not exclude totally the idea of one religion for the Albanian nation. Two alternatives were discussed in the political and philosophical circles of Albanian Renaissance: Protestantism and Bektashism. While the first was an imported religion from the European countries and did not exist in Albania, the second was well rooted in Albanian reality. Considered to be sometimes as the “heretic” branch of Islam, Bektashism suffered a lot of persecution not only concerning their mysticism which was not acceptable from the official “Sunni” dogma of the Ottoman Empire, but also as a supporter of nationalistic movements, especially in Albania. Their “revolutionary” device, concerning the universality of the monotheistic religions “Pa Atdhe nuk ka Fe”- with no fatherland there is no religion, served very much to the nationalistic dogma of Albanians called “Shqiptarisma”. Many prominent figures of Albanian nationalism as the brothers Frashéri, Ismail Qemali etc., were followers of this sect. Another prominent contribution of Bektashism towards the Albanian national movement was the use of the Albanian language in the predications and their tolerance towards other religions. In this paper will be disclosed the contribution of Bektashism to the national and cultural movement of the XIX-XX century in Albania and will give answer to several questions concerning the relationship between the universalism of Bektashism as part of a monotheistic religion and the support toward the national movements not in Albania only but also in Egypt, through the Albanian dynasty of Mohamed Ali Pasha and his successors.

Dr. Robert Langer, Collaborative Research Centre on Ritual Dynamics (619), University of Heidelberg, Germany, and Dr. Ahmet Taşgın, Sociology of Religion, Dicle University, Diyarbakr, Turkey

The Journey of Hacı Bektaş from Horasan to Anatolia: Encounters with the ‘Saints of Rum’.

In this paper, we describe the journey of Hacı Bektaş and his settling down in ‘Rum’ (Anatolia). His journey started in Horasan and ended in Rum where he finally settled down. We describe his travels based on the available copies of the Velâyetnâme. One focus lies on his Menzilnâme with a notice to the cities and communities he dropped in during his journey. Moreover, we will explain the encounter of Hacı Bektaş with the ‘Saints of Rum’ (Rum Erenleri), whom he met when entering Anatolia. We believe that former studies repeatedly putting the popular figure of Hacı Bektaş to the foreground resulted in the disappearance of the real effect of his activities carried out in a vast region. However, there are traces of communities related to him in Horasan, Iraq, and from Anatolia to the Balkans. Until now, researchers have either not seen or not appreciated enough his historical activities and their lasting results. We want to draw the attention to this point, which has not been studied sufficiently until now.
The paper will introduce the studies carried out in the area of Delvina, from 2003 to 2009, by the Italian team of the Centre for Balkan Studies of the University of Venice and the Polytechnic University of Milan, composed by experts in various disciplines. The region is particularly rich in Islamic monumental heritage spanning from the 16th to the 19th c., under the Ottoman rule and cultural influence and well rooted into its typical Albanian traditions of independence and enduring persistence of local, older traditions. Architectural typologies of the monuments, their inscriptions, decorations and few historical records, as well as their place within the history of the Balkan religious Islamic architecture will be examined.

Dr. Simeon Magliveras, University of Durham, U.K.
Registered Participant

Katerina Markou, Lecturer of Social Anthropology, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Crete, Greece
The case of a small Bektashi group in Greek Thrace.
In Greek Thrace the Muslim minority which is officially recognised and protected by the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923, constitute a mixed group composed by different ethnic groups (Turks, Pomaks, Tsiganes) and also by majority of Sunni Muslims and a small number of heterodox Bektashi Pomaks (about 2,500 slav speaking persons) and Turks (about 500 turkish speaking persons). The main feature of the literature on this Bektashi group concern folklore and in the most of the cases is depicted as the cultural other to the Sunnis. As a result, the folklorist material suggests similarities between the Bektashi group and the Christians. On the other hand, we observe a gradual “Sunnization” of this Bektashi community which loose its traditional form. My attention – far from any ethnocentric aim – is to study the presence of this group within the wider context of the Muslim minority and to examine its relation with Turkish Alevism, privileging methodologically such “a view from above and inside” as “from below and inside”.

Dr. Domna Michail and Antonis Koutsoumbas, Lecturer of Social Anthropology, University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece
Bektashi Islamic tradition in Western Thrace–Greece: an ethnographic observation of the Bektashi practices among the Pomaks of Xanthi.
The Bektashi (Bektaşî) Islamic tradition has been evident in the Balkan area (Bulgaria, Rumania, Bosnia Hercegovina, Kosovo, FYROM, Albania) as well as in Western Thrace – Greece and is known as the ‘the Balkan Islam’. During the period that Western Thrace was under Ottoman rule, as almost everywhere else in the Balkan area, the Bektashi dervishes were establishing their tekkes and were working on making people accept Islam. When Western Thrace was annexed to the Greek state the Greek governments did not close the tekkes and did not interfere at all with their operation. Nevertheless, even after 1840 the Sunni Muslims in Western Thrace opposed to their operation since they wanted to impose the Sunni doctrine everywhere in W. Thrace. The paper examines the reasons why although the Bektashi tradition was maintained in Western Thrace until quite recently it has started weakening and giving way to other forms of Islam during the last decades. It examines the reasons why the Bektashi celebrations today do not remind us of the religious character they used to have in the past. It also sees to the most known Bektashi celebrations in Western
Thrace as well as the locations they are taking place and the more civil character they have taken in the present, as ‘meaning’ seems to be losing ground while ‘form’ persists.

Beryl Nicholson, Independent scholar, Newcastle, U.K.
Registered Participant

Nazli Ozkan, Graduate student, Comparative Study in History and Society, Koc University, Istanbul, Turkey

*Anthropology of Alevism in Turkey: Dealing with the Orthodoxy—Heterodoxy Issue.*

Contrary to what Asad proposed for making Anthropology of Islam, when making Anthropology of Alevism in Turkey it is really important to begin analysis from the ways Alevis define Alevism since there are multiple ways for Alevis to claim their Alevi identity in Turkey. Setting criteria for what Alevism is without asking Alevis the question of “What is Alevism?” as Asad does for what is Islamic, does not work for the study of Alevism in Turkish context because it creates a certain “orthodoxy” for being Alevi among the multiplicity of the ways of being Alevi. However, basing the study of Alevism on what people say Alevism is may seem as abating the possibility of using the concept of heterodoxy when doing Anthropology of Alevism since “everyone is Orthodox to himself” Therefore, main aim of this paper is to analyze the usage of the concepts of orthodoxy and heterodoxy when making Anthropology of Alevism in Turkey. Since orthodoxy – heterodoxy nexus cannot be understood without referring to power relations in a society, it is important to follow their traces when making Anthropology of Alevism in order to reveal the certain dynamics of power which shapes the perception of people. In this context, by defending the idea that the concepts of orthodoxy and heterodoxy are useful tools for the Anthropology of Alevism in Turkey, this paper suggests that Bourdieu’s concept of doxa may be a useful tool while dealing with the problems related with the situation of “everyone is Orthodox to himself” from an anthropological perspective.

Prof. Dr. Enzo Pace, Department of Sociology, University of Padova, Italy, and Ass. Prof. Dr. Fatma Sündal, Department of Sociology, Anadolu University, Eskisehir, Turkey

*Inner-world Mysticism and the production of social capital in Bektashism.*

The combination of the mystical dimension and engagement in the world characterising Bektashism suggests the adoption of an ideal type which Max Weber called inner-world mysticism. In his typology, inner-world mysticism is a peculiar form of rationalization of the world: it’s not a fuga mundi, but moreover a social enterprise to put into practice the principle of sincerity and solidarity. The former implies a social capital building, the latter, in some cases, an improvement of the economic activities both at the local and at transnational levels. The world is rejected without any withdrawal; it is the sphere in which contemplative virtues are practised and the search for a mystical union with God takes place, suitably with the aim of being a ‘vessel’ of the divine but not a tool of it. Thus, in everyday life and practical work, the inner-world mystic lives in the world, respecting the internal autonomy of the various spheres of life, without allowing this recognition to turn itself into an internal conflict between “faith and work”. The paper deals with the specific case study of the Bektashiyya turuq in Turkish society from the antagonism with the power during the Ottoman regime to the relative harmony with the Republic nowadays, and present both theoretical and empirical outcomes drawing from a working in progress on the social effects of the mystical path in the Muslim world.
Stephen Suleyman Schwartz, Independent Scholar, Washington, U.S.A.
The Harabati Teqe in Tetova Under Sunni Fundamentalist Attack.
This paper will discuss the conflict in Macedonia, currently underway, between Sunnis and
the Bektashis at the famous Harabati teqe. Since the breakup of former Yugoslavia, a
concerted effort has been made by radical Sunnis to occupy the teqe and expel the Bektashis
from it. The author of the paper has visited the teqe repeatedly, observing and reporting in
international media on the crisis there, which has now reached very alarming proportions.
The Sunnis flood the teqe with their followers at every prayer time, having occupied most of
the buildings and allegedly established a mosque, installed a muezzin, occupied a separate,
enclosed space for women’s prayer, and even opened a café on the grounds. In addition, old
trees on the property have been cut down by the Sunnis and a raid was made on the sole
remaining building under Bektashi control. The paper will describe the history of the teqe
as well as of the conflict, analyze the development of the confrontation, and propose
solutions for it.

Dr. David Shankland, Reader of Social Anthropology, University of Bristol, U.K.
Alevi-Bektashi relations: an example village from rural Anatolia.
The relationship between the Alevis and the Bektashis is one of the most frequent questions
that I have been faced with as a specialist in the Alevis of Anatolia. Though this question
may be answered in a number of different ways, in this paper I shall attempt to present in
some detail the ways that the Bektashis have interacted with a particular Alevi village
community. Amongst the different aspects that I shall attempt to examine is the role of the
Bektashis as leading religious figures, the place of Bektashi prayer and doctrine, Hacibekta
as a possible pilgrimage location, and so on. I shall conclude with some tentative remarks on
the political emergence of the Alevis, and their relationship with the Republic, as mediated
by the Bektashi leadership.

Inis Shkreli and Armand Zaçeliçi, Centre for Albanian Studies, Tirana
Music as an aspect of inter-religious harmony: The role of Bektashi and Orthodox
communities in the urban music of Elbasan (XIX and the early XX century).
The paper is based in recent field works among the Bektashiyya and Orthodox in Elbasan
and particularly in the relationship between the two communities during the nineteenth and
the early twentieth century. The research is a small scholarly expertise in the field of the
history and religion of Elbasan focusing the active life of urban music which had an
important place in the spiritual life of the city, predominantly in the Bektashiyya and
Orthodox. The study will argue from a socio-historical and sonic vantage point: the features
of religious music that were absorbed in the urban music and new songs where introduced
by, comparative analyses of Bektashiyya religious tolerance/harmony toward other religions
(Orthodox) in terms of urban music and its role inside the two communities, the influence of
the Bektashiyya and Orthodox in the urban music of XIX and the early XX century through
Elbasan territory.

Marc Saurina, Researcher, CCHS, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones
Científicas (CSIC), Madrid, Spain.
Registered Participant

Dr. Mark Soileau, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Albion College,
Michigan, U.S.A.
From Cult to Tarikat: The Formation of Bektashism in the Vilayetname of Haji Bektash.

The life of Haji Bektash Veli is recounted in a text known as the Vilayetname, probably collected and set down in writing in the late fifteenth century. The obscure process of its composition coincides historically with the equally obscure formation of a distinct Bektashi order. Besides providing legendary information about the life of the saint, then, the text can help elucidate the complex processes of social, cultural and religious formation undergone by the community that bore his name. This paper will analyze elements of the Vilayetname that reflect the concerns of this community in its process of formation. The emergent Bektashi Order faced a competition for disciples at a time when other Sufi orders were also being formed, so the Vilayetname includes episodes in which Haji Bektash is shown to be superior to other founding saints and charismatic leaders. As the Ottoman state was in the process of becoming religiously more orthodox, many heterodox movements were being absorbed into the Bektashi community, and the Vilayetname shows Haji Bektash counteracting the reprovals of representatives of orthodoxy. It also legitimates Bektashi ritual practices by showing their origins in the deeds of Haji Bektash himself. And in order to give the Bektashi Order a firm spatial foundation, it recounts many legends that firmly imprint the legacy of Haji Bektash in the landscape around his tomb complex. The Vilayetname, then, reflects the self-imagination of the Bektashi order as part of the process of its coming to be.

Dr. Fotini Tsimpiridou, Assistant Professor of Social Anthropology, Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, Macedonia University, Thessaloniki, and Dr. Giorgos Mavrommatis, Lecturer of Educational History, Department of Education Sciences, Democritus University of Thrace, Greece

Bektashi identity politics and fieldwork experiences: challenging ‘heterodoxy’, ‘difference’ and ‘tradition’.

This paper describes the relation of Bektasism in the Greek Thrace to the local and the state culturalist and political practices, as well as to the competing Turkish and Greek nationalisms in the region. By examining the ways “orthodoxy” and “heterodoxy” practices are interwoven with local political life and nationalism discourses in the frame of Kizilbash festivities, we will try to understand the significance Bektashism, as religious and social movement, can acquire in particular sociohistorical contexts. More specifically, we will try to problematize analytical categories of orthodoxy and heterodoxy by connecting, from the one hand, the religious practices with social and political relationships; we will try, from the other hand, to understand how all those practices are connected to the religious feelings and Bektashi principals. In this frame agricultural kizilbash culture, Alevilik and alevism are all seeing through the prisma of political and religious experiences as well as through the morality Bektashi principles and practices mean for and inspire to different social subjects. In the previous analysis, two different researcher’s experiences are taking into account reconsidering the ways participant observation, empathy and comparatism can lead to more critical understanding, surpassing blocking dichotomies between observed/observer, we/other, orthodoxy/heterodoxy, past/present, local and global, to the study of Bektashism in the Balkans and Anatolia.


Traces of Bektashism in Tunisia and Algeria.

Algeria and Tunisia were added to the Ottoman Empire during the 16th century by two brothers Barbaros Hayreddin and Oruc Reis. Short herafter semi-independent states (Barbary States of Algiers, Tunis and Trablus) were established who were nominally
subordinated to the Ottoman Sultan but were de facto independent in their foreign and internal affairs. The soldiers and ruling elite of the two states were descended from Anatolia and the Balkans. The Yenicheri soldiers were adherents of bektashism and with them Bektaşi order was established in Algeria and Tunisia. In Algeria there is the tomb of Bektaşi Veli dede who is still adhered by the local population today because of its miracles and in Tunisia the Yenicheri Diwan was enlarged by a Tomb of the Hajji Bektaşi. When the Janissaries were abolished, the lodges of the dervishes also disappeared. The Janissaries, who were abolished by central Ottoman provinces, continued their presence in the North African provinces, particularly in Tunisia and Algeria. However in 1838, the Janissary barracks in Algeria were destroyed by the occupying French forces in the name of modernizing the city, hence all the traces of Janissaries and Bektaşi were wiped out. In Tunisia there are still 3 yenicheri barracks were the names of the soldiers are inscribed on the portes of their sleeping rooms. The names on the rooms in these Janissary barracks are quite interesting. Here, one frequently encounters the names of young Turkish men from Balkans, Aegean and Central Anatolia with bektashi adjectives. In this presentation, we will try to evaluate the remaining traces of Bektaşi in Tunisia and Algeria.

Ass. Prof. Dr. Fatih Usluer, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara, Turkey

_Hurufism among Albanian Bektashis._

Hurufism, the mystical and philosophical movement was found by Fadlallah Astarabadi (d. 796/1394) in Iran. Fadlallah and his disciples like Sheikh Abu'l Hasan (n. 1352), Sayyid Sharif, Sayyid Ishaq (n. 1369), Amir Ghiyasaddin (d. after 1448) lived in Iran and wrote in Persian. One of the disciples of Fadlallah, Nasîmî (d. 1418) and his disciple Rafî’î (d. after 1418) are the first hurufis who wrote in Turkish and because of political and/or ideological reasons, migrated to Anatolia. While Nasîmî condemned to death in Aleppo, Rafî’î is died in Preveza. Except Abdulmajid b. Firishte and Darwish Mortada (Bektashi) which are translators, the footsteps of Hurufism can be followed by XV. century and thereafter only in Balkans and especially in Albania. It is interesting to note that Hurufi philosophy are developed and perpetuated by the Bektashis of Albania. In this paper firstly we will talk about the Bektashi scholars and poets of Albania which obtained and perpetuated hurufi philosophy. Secondly we will analyze the hurufi manuscripts which are copied by the Albanian Bektashis. As it can be seen among the hurufi manuscripts in Turkish or Persian, most of them are copied in Albanian Bektashis. Finally we aim to display the role of Hurufism among Albanian Bektashis and vice-versa.

_Abdülkadir Yeler, PhD Student, Department of Sociology of Religion, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey_

_Alawism and Jafarism in Turkey: Similarities and Differences._

Alawism (Bektashism) and Jafarism (Shiaism) are regarded as local religious groups in Turkey in addition to Sunnism and usually as a combined form because of some common figures as Hadrat Ali and Twelve Imams although they have many differences in their belief systems and ways of life in terms of their social and cultural structures. This paper focuses on similarities and differences between Alawism and Jafarism. According to a general description Alawism is a belief system whose Prophet is Muhammad and holy Book is the Qur’an in addition it’s general assumption that Alawism is evolved among Turkish Clans and then mixed with Turkish culture. Jafarism in general, asserts that the succession to the Prophet Muhammad properly belonged to his son-in-law, Hadrat Ali and then the progeny of Ali after him in a line of twelve divinely Guided Imams. Both Alawites and Jafaris accept Prophet Muhammed, Ali and his family as the reference point in their beliefs. However,
they have many differences in their life style, cults, temples, and also their ideological structures. Also, it is sometimes claimed that Jafaris have a plan to make Alawis turn to Jafariyya. There is no official data on their population but it is speculated that Alawi population is about 5 million and Jafari population is about 2 million in Turkey.

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The Mysticism and Bektashism of the Albanian national poet Naim Frasheri. Naim Frasheri (1846-1900) is the most famous poet of the Albanian renaissance of the nineteenth century. He is also famous for being a Bektashi. He is nowadays widely considered to be the national poet of Albania. The significance of Naim Frasheri as a national poet rest upon mystical and religious messages it transmitted to the Muslims in general and to the Bektashi believers in especial. His role as a socio-political thinker in the liberation of Albania from the Ottoman conquest is of special significance. He influenced Albanian writers at the beginning of the twentieth century enormously. Many of his poems were set to music during his lifetime and were sung as folk songs in national celebrations or Bektashi songs in the religious ceremonies such as Sultan Novruz on March 21. My presentation will focus on the role of Naim Frasheri in the formation of Islamic Mystical literature in Albania.