

THE REHABILITATION OF THE BEKTASHI ORDER (1826-1876)

by

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Submitted to the Institute of Social Sciences
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Sabancı University
July 2017

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DATE OF APPROVAL: 31.07.2017

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ABSTRACT

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M.A. Thesis, July 2017

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Keywords: Bektashi Order, abolition, rehabilitation, revival, polemics

This thesis aims to analyze the revival process of the Bektashi Order in the course of the fifty years following its abolition in 1826. The focus of this study is the reintegration of Bektashism into Ottoman society, which was actualized concordantly with the gradual moderation of the state's oppression after the reign of Mahmud II. The key findings of this study propose that the state's suppression policy of the Bektashi Order evolved to soft control with time and the revival of the Bektashi Order was a restrained rehabilitation, which was allowed within the state's prescribed limits. By discussing the state's selective oppression policy, as well as its control mechanism of rehabilitation, this thesis aims to detect boundaries of the revival. Relatedly, this study also aims to analyze the reactions of Sunni orthodox scholars toward Bektashism when Bektashis violated boundaries of the rehabilitation, and how Bektashis defended the Order against these reactions.

ÖZET

BEKTAŞI TARİKATININ REHABİLİTASYONU (1826-1876)

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Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Temmuz 2017

Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Yusuf Hakan Erdem

Keywords: Bektaşı Tarikatı, ilga, rehabilitasyon, canlanma, polemik

Bu tez 1826'da ilga edilen Bektaşı Tarikatının sonraki elli yıl içerisinde tekrar canlanma sürecini incelemektedir. Bu çalışmanın odak noktası, Bektaşiliğin II. Mahmud döneminden sonra kademeli olarak azalan devlet baskısına paralel olarak Osmanlı toplumuna tekrar entegre olmasıdır. Bu çalışmanın temel bulguları devletin Bektaşı Tarikatı'nı sindirme politikasının zaman içerisinde düşük kontrole evrildiği ve Bektaşı Tarikatının canlanmasının devletin belirlemiş olduğu sınırlar dahilinde izin verilen kontrollü bir rehabilitasyon olduğudur. Bu tez, Bektaşı rehabilitasyonunun kontrol mekanizmasını, devletin süreç boyunca uyguladığı seçici takibat politikası ile birlikte inceleyerek canlanmanın boyutlarını saptamaya çalışmaktadır. Bağlantılı olarak, bu çalışma, Bektaşilerin rehabilitasyon sınırlarını aştıklarında Sünni Ortodoks ulemanın Bektaşiliğe vermiş olduğu tepkileri ve bu tepkilere karşı Bektaşilerin tarikatı nasıl savunduklarını incelemeyi de amaçlamaktadır.

To my teacher, Sinan Dođan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor Yusuf Hakan Erdem who has patiently read each of my chapters and quickly provided feedback with his invaluable comments which have shaped my understanding of history in fundamental ways. This study would not have been possible without his guidance and encouragement. I am also grateful to members of my thesis defense committee Selçuk Akşin Somel and Yavuz Aykan who kindly accepted to serve on my defense jury and provided their eye-opening comments and criticisms. I also wish to thank Derin Terzioğlu, Hülya Canbakal and Peter Ferenc Csirkes and Halil Berktay. I highly benefitted from their historical knowledge and academic perspectives which intellectually stimulated me throughout my years in Sabancı University.

I wish to thank my colleagues Ali Atabey and Isa Uğurlu for their support as they let me share my findings with them throughout my research. I would also like to specially thank Vanda Bognar for the time she spent proofreading this thesis. Her corrections and suggestions saved me from many inexcusable mistakes. I also thank Sumru Küçüka for her technical help. I am deeply grateful to my teacher and mentor Sinan Doğan who has always supported me. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my family, who never stopped believing in me and never questioned my choices.

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INTRODUCTION

Among numerous religious orders (*tariqa*) in the Ottoman Empire, only a few could exert their influence almost throughout the whole empire. One of such highly influential orders was the Bektashi Order, which spread from Egypt to the Balkans. It was a unique order that had enjoyed a special relationship with the Ottoman state due to its spiritual affiliation with the Janissary Corps. The prestigious Janissary association that had been carried for almost five centuries brought a distinction as well as a drawback. The Bektashi Order paid the penalty for this companionship in 1826, when the Order was abolished together with the Janissary Corps. Bektashism was prohibited, the lodges were closed; many of them were demolished; the properties belonging to the lodges were confiscated; babas and dervishes at the lodges were exiled; some of Bektashi babas at the lodges were sentenced to death. The abolition of 1826 brought about the clandestine years of the Bektashi Order. The Bektashi Order was in an intensive struggle for survival in the clandestine years. Therefore, the post-abolition period of the Bektashi Order deserves more interest scholarly.

Since its abolition in 1826, the Bektashi Order has never been officially recognized again. Yet, it had never disappeared but went underground. The state's harsh prosecution policies toward the Bektashis forced them into performing *taqiyya* (disguise). However, abolition of the Bektashi Order was not complete and the Order recovered itself in the next fifty years. Despite the suppression efforts of the state, the Bektashi Order reappeared as a prominent *tariqa* in the next abolition wave, which took place with the law of prohibition of all religious orders in 1925.¹ In the advent of the 20th century, their power even enabled the Bektashis to cooperate with the newly formed Republican regime and actively participate in the National Struggle of Turkey. Reappearing as an important religious community in a short time lead us to think about why and how did the Bektashi

¹ "Tekke ve zaviyelerle türbelerin seddine ve türbedarlıklar ile bir takım ünvanların men ve ilgasına dair Kanun" *Resmi Gazete*, no. 243, 13 December 1925, article no: 677.

Order resurrect so quickly? In that context, the rehabilitation process of the Bektashism compromising its normalization and oppression, reactivation and reaction against it exists as a significant gap in the Alevi-Bektashi historiography as well as the 19th century Bektashism. This thesis proposes to fill this gap by examining the rehabilitation of the Bektashi Order in the 19th century Ottoman Empire.

Review of Secondary Sources

Bektashi studies, which has been flourishing since the beginning of the 20th century gained a momentum with the Alevi revival after the 1980's in Turkey. As being one of the most powerful religious order in the Ottoman Empire, the history, social bonds and the doctrine of the Bektashi Order has always garnered the attentions of both western and Turkish scholars. The history of the Bektashism was first studied by western missionaries and orientalist in the second half of the 19th and early 20th century.² Among them, John Kinsley Birge and Frederic Hasluck were two prominent orientalist, who determined the direction of today's Bektashi studies through their works. Besides, the great figure of national historiography, Mehmed Fuad Köprülü and his student Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı became pioneers of the field. Despite his erudition, Alevism and Bektashism were represented without a certain differentiation by Köprülü.³ In the last 30 years, the Bektashi historiography progressed with the contributions of Irene Melikoff and contemporary historian Ahmet Yaşar Ocak. Yet, from Köprülü and Birge onwards, the same historiography with the same methodology and periodization has determined the shape of the things in Alevi-Bektashi studies.

Although new approaches and questions are posed in recent studies, Bektashi studies are generally constrained by particular paradigms and questions. Before all, a

² It is assumed that John P. Brown's *the Dervish or Oriental Spiritualism* was the first oriental study mentions Bektashism. It was published in 1868. Although it gives place to Bektashis by covering their customs and religious practices, it remains weak in telling the history of the Order. Yet, Brown let us think the revival question from different eyes, since it was published in the clandestine years of the Order. John P. Brown, *The Dervish or Oriental Spiritualism*, London: Trünber and Co. pp. 140-174.

³ It is certain that there is not a clear definition and segregation between Alevism and Bektashism made by Köprülü. In addition to the dichotomy of high Islam-folk Islam, he also categorizes Kızılbaşes as Bektashis and defines them "*Köy Bektaşileri*". See Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında ilk Mutasavvıflar*, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1976. Köprülü's thesis dominated some later approaches and elicited a problematic Alevi-Bektashi historiography. For detailed criticism of paradigms and problems of Alevi-Bektashi historiography see Ayfer Karakaya Stump, *Vefailik, Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık, Alevi Kaynaklarını, Tarihini, ve Tarihyazımını Yeniden Düşünmek*, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016. Also see Karakaya Stump, "The Vefaiyye, the Bektashiyye and Genealogies of "Heterodox" Islam in Anatolia: Rethinking the Koprulu Paradigm", *Turcica*, 44, pp. 279-300.

general confusion can be seen in some Bektashi studies about the boundaries of Bektashism.⁴ Even if “Alevism”⁵ became a supra-identity⁶ to define the Bektashi and Kızılbash communities of Anatolia today, both Bektashism and Kızılbashism had different historical formations. Therefore, being aware of intersections and distinctions is crucial to understand Bektashism. The most dominant paradigm in Alevi-Bektashi historiography, which is seen quite problematic is based on Fuad Köprülü’s dichotomy of “folk Islam” and “high Islam.” It puts Alevi-Bektashi communities under a hazy category; the “folk Islam” by seeing Alevism as syncretic folk Islam, which took its roots from central Asian Turkic beliefs.⁷ This approach was later continued by another hazy category known as “heterodoxy” by two followers of Köprülü: Irene Melikoff and Ahmet Yaşar Ocak.⁸ Their emphasis of syncretism, heterodoxy and the influence of pre-Islamic beliefs became predominant in following Alevi-Bektashi studies.

Moreover, the internal periodization, which divided Bektashi history into four stages⁹ makes history writing condense on the landmarks of this periodization. It pushes

⁴ Bektashi and Kızılbash communities were called “Alevi” since the 19th century. Alevism as an inclusive umbrella is used to define different Alid groups, however it mainly defines Anatolian Kızılbashes and Bektashis in Anatolia. For boundaries of Bektashism and its differences, see Rıza Yıldırım, “Bektaşî Kime Derler?: ‘Bektaşî’ Kavramının Kapsamı ve Sınırları Üzerine Tarihsel bir Analiz Denemesi”, *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, 55, 2010, pp. 23-58.

⁵ I shall state that word “Alevi” is used to define Alevi-Kızılbash communities in Anatolia rather than Nusayris (Allawis), who live in Adana, Hatay and Syria. throughout this study. Therefore, the 19th-century Nusayrism is out of the scope of this thesis.

⁶ In abolishing process, Bektashis were accused of *Rafîzi* belief, which was attributed to Kızılbashes. It might be that emphasis of belief in 19th century created a new category for these communities. As accusations toward Bektashis are thought, “Alevism” as a socio-religious identity can be seen as an enlarged category, which include all pejorative definitions towards Kızılbashes. Although it is more admissible word, Kızılbash accusations such as *Rafîzi*, *Mülhid*, *Zındık* terms were partially imputed to Alevism.

⁷ Köprülü discusses the Yasawwi-Bektashi link in *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1976 and influence of Shamanism on them in his article “Bektaşîliğin Menş’eleri”.

⁸ Ocak and Melikoff systematized the usage of “heterodoxy” and “syncretism” in Alevi-Bektashi historiography. For their comparison of Alevism and pre-Islamic Turkic beliefs see Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Alevi Bektaşî İnançlarının İslam Öncesi Temelleri; Türk Süfiliğine Bektaşlar and Irene Melikoff, Le probleme; Uyur İdik Uyardılar*.

⁹ One of the most accepted periodization based on Birge’s work. He divides the Bektashi history into three stages. The first stage is accepted between Hacı Bektaş-i Veli (1250) to the appointment of Balım Sultan to central lodge in 1501. From Balım Sultan until the abolition of the Order in 1826 is accepted as the second stage and the third stage is considered after abolition. John Kingsley Birge, *Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, Luzac Oriental: London, 1994. Additionally, contemporary scholars account the law of abolition of tariqas and lodges (*tekke ve zaviyeler kanunu*) in 1925 and aftermath as the fourth stage. Rıza Yıldırım, “Bektaşî Kime Derler”, p. 27. Hülya Küçük, *The Role of the Bektashis in Turkey’s National Struggle*, Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2002.

scholars to define the state-tariqa relations over certain time zones and events such as the appointment of Balım Sultan to the center lodge of Hacı Bektash (1501) or *Vakay-i Hayriyye* (1826).¹⁰ This approach also makes it impracticable to write a qualified social history of Bektashism and ignores the chronological integrity, which results in a disconnected history. It means that focusing on certain events limits to write a more comprehensive Bektashi history including continuations and differentiations from 16th century to 19th century. Moreover, focusing on certain events generated some fixed questions, which depended on each other mutually. Among one of the fixed questions, the most striking one is the Janissary-Bektashi link.

Definitely, Janissary-Bektashi spiritual link shaped the destiny of the Bektashism as well as its relations with the state. However, this link is mostly overstated and regarded as the reason behind the abolition of the Bektashi Order. Unfortunately, most of the 19th century Bektashi studies concentrate on the abolition of the Order by linking it with the abolition of the Janissary Corps and the post-abolition persecution process due to the multiplicity of archival sources. In that respect, some scholars generally argue the suppression of the Order within the context of Ottoman modernization since they see it as the natural follow up to *Vakay-ı Hayriyye* (Auspicious Event)¹¹ as in fact two rings of one chain.¹² Considering Janissaries together with the Bektashi Order might represent Bektashis as a trouble on the way of the modernization process. Nonetheless, there is no source to show or discuss that the Bektashis were against reforms. Besides, *Beşiktaş Cemiyet-i İlmiyesi* (Beşiktaş Community of Science), members of which were accused of Bektashism and exiled was founded in the beginning of 19th century to popularize natural sciences, technology and art in the Ottoman Empire.¹³ Moreover, it is disregarded to

¹⁰ It should be stated that while compared with *Vakay-i Hayriyye*, there is not any comprehensive academic study specifically focuses on the time of Balım Sultan due to lack of sources. Yet, it is accepted as a cornerstone of the Bektashism.

¹¹ Categorizing the abolition of the Bektashi Order under Auspicious Event (*Vakay-ı Hayriyye*) seems problematic. Since its effects on Bektashi Order is considered, it might be seen as a disaster. Therefore, it was also seen “*Vakay-ı Şerriye*” (Inauspicious Event) by some Alevi historians. See, Reha Çamuroğlu, *Yeniçerilerin Bektaşılığı ve Vakay-ı Şerriye*, İstanbul, Kapı Yayınları, 2006.

¹² There is not a study specifically concentrates the role of Bektashis on Ottoman modernization. However, some authoritative books of Ottoman modernization do not make clear separations between 1826 events, which represent Bektashis and Janissaries together on the way of reforms. See, Bernard Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, London: Oxford University Press, 1968 and Stanford Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976-1977.

¹³ Kazım Yetiş, “Beşiktaş Cemiyet-i İlmiyesi”, *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 5, pp. 552.

approach the abolition of the Bektashi Order over Mahmud II's authoritarianism and his redefinition of Sunni orthodoxy as a legitimacy instrument.

Another problematic approach with regard to reasons of the abolition of the Bektashi Order is their faith, which was out of Sunni orthodoxy. Some studies, which have a theological axis miss the historical context of the 19th century Bektashism while condensing on theological dimensions. It is assumed that non-Sunni Bektashi faith, which adopted *Rafizi* beliefs and denied Shari'a practices was the greatest reason behind the abolition of the Order. However, it is rather the fact that the Bektashi Order was the only Sufi order, which had not adopted the Sunni orthodoxy and recognized by the state.¹⁴ Moreover, some scholars ignore this point and reach an assessment that Bektashis had Sunni orthodox practices before the 19th century by looking at the accusations in the Sultan's abolition edict and 19th-century polemical discussions between some Sunni scholars and Bektashis.¹⁵ In that sense, the theological axis studies of the 19th-century Bektashism may create a sense of "corrupted Bektashism" in pre-abolition.

It is a fact that, Bektashis were targeted and prosecuted because of their unorthodox teachings. In that point, some scholars focus on a changing Sunni-Islam and Naqshbandi effects on abolitionary process. In that respect, Butrus Abu Manneh discusses a rebirth of Sunni orthodoxy in the beginning of 19th century by connecting it to the rise of *Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi* branch in the Ottoman domains.¹⁶ Abu Manneh's conclusion that Naqshbandis were loyal supporters of Mahmud's reforms on the way of state's modernization might be categorizing Bektashis as anti-reform communities. Although whether Naqshbandis were behind the decision of abolition or not is debatable, it is certain that they became one of the significant parties to benefit from it. In any case, it should be stated that a kind of orthodox Islam rebirthed or it was redefined as a legitimacy

¹⁴ Ocak, "Bektaşilik", *TDVIA*, vol. 5, p. 373.

¹⁵ See, Hür Mahmud Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf 19. Yüzyıl*, İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2003. The book partially deals with the 19th century Bektashism. Although it explains the abolition process and polemical discussions about Bektashism detailly, it does not make sense of unorthodox Bektashi faith as well as its importance in the context of abolition.

¹⁶ Butrus Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century*, İstanbul: Isis Press, 2001; "1826'da Nakşibendi Müceddidi ve Bektaşî Tarikatları", trans. Ş. T. Buzpınar, *Tarihi ve Kültürel Boyutlarıyla Türkiye'de Aleviler Bektaşiler Nusayriler*, İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1999; "The Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya in the Ottoman Lands in the Early 19th Century" *Die Welt des Islams*, New Series, Bd. 22, Nr. 1/4 (1982), pp. 1-36.

instrument in the time of Mahmud II and Bektashism was targeted at least with this instrument.

Last but not least, stressing Bektashi defenses and polemics of Sunni scholars from a theological perspective ignores these discussions in the context of the rehabilitation of Bektashism within society after 1826. However, it is one of the important piece of the puzzle to understand the entire century of Bektashism between 1826 and 1925. Few studies deal with the social reflections of the 1826 event on society and reaction of the survival of the Bektashism both on Bektashi circles and on Sunni circles. Some of these valuable studies motivated this thesis, and clarify the blurred lines while searching the following fifty years of Bektashism after abolition.

Among secondary sources, which directly or indirectly deal with the revival process and rehabilitation of the Bektashism in the Ottoman society in the 19th century the multiplicity of both master theses and dissertations is striking. Moreover, while it is projected, it can be seen that number of studies done in Turkish is higher than those in English and other languages. One of the most comprehensive studies of Bektashism written in English is the monograph of American missionary John Kingsley Birge, entitled *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*.¹⁷ The book was published in 1937 based on Birge's own research among the Bektashis and primary sources about the Order. It is generally a starting point of students of Bektashis. Birge draws a historical overview of the Order in addition to doctrine, practices of Bektashism. It can be accepted as the first comprehensive work, which periodizes the history of the Order into three periods and analyzes each period particularly. However, Birge's approach and periodization shaped the originality of following studies. Moreover, the third part of it was the shortest one, which is about post-abolition period. Yet, it draws an informative picture of the Bektashi Order after both 1826 and during his time.

Suraiya Faroqhi's *Der Bektaschi-Orden in Anatolien*, which was published in 1981 is another elaborative study. It was translated into Turkish as *Anadolu'da Bektaşilik* and published in 2003.¹⁸ By taking Bektashi lodges (*zaviye*) into the account, Faroqhi

¹⁷ John Kingsley Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, Luzac Oriental: London, 1994. It was also translated into Turkish by Reha Çamuroğlu and published as "Bektaşilik Tarihi" in 1991.

¹⁸ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Anadolu'da Bektaşilik*, translated by Nasuh Barın, İstanbul: Simurg Yayınevi, 2003.

focuses on the geographical distribution and economic activities of lodges between the 15th and the 19th century in her study. Moreover, the targeting of the Bektashi Order by Mahmud II is scrutinized analytically in this book. Faroqhi emphasizes that Janissary-Bektashi relations and *Rafizi* beliefs shouldn't be overstated as the reasons of the abolition. Instead, she draws a causal link between the potential economic power of the lodges and the abolition process by examining the next nine years after the event through archival sources. Though, the book let us think about an alternative socio-economic history of the Bektashi Order, it is nevertheless limited to questions concerning the 18th century.

Two theses written in English shed light onto the landscape of post-abolition period of Bektashism. One of them is a Ph.D. dissertation by Hülya Küçük entitled *The Role of Bektashis in Turkey's National Struggle*,¹⁹ which was submitted to the University of Leiden and published by Brill in 2002. It was also published as *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Bektaşiler*²⁰ in Turkish. After analyzing the role of *tariqas* in the national struggle, Küçük specifically focuses on Bektashis both before and after the struggle and the abolition of all religious orders in 1925. It shows a deepening distinction between two branches of Bektashism: *Babagans* and *Chelebis*, which had varying degrees of participation in this struggle. It assumes a sharp separation between two branches of Bektashism before 1826 and draws a causal link between 1826 and the former connection of *Chelebi*-Safavids, which is uncertain historically.²¹ Yet, it contributes to the question of revival by showing how Bektashis played an important role in the National Struggle and tried to fortify their relations with the newly established Republic.

Another thesis written in English is Sibel Imren Ozturk's unpublished M.A. thesis named *The Effects of Abolition on Bektashi Order*.²² It specifically deals with the division of *Babagan* and *Chelebi* branches as a great effect upon the Order, which can be seen as another dimension of the revival process. Ozturk indicates that the inner struggle between

¹⁹ Küçük, *ibid.*

²⁰ Hülya Küçük, *Kurtuluş Savaşında Bektaşiler*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2003.

²¹ Küçük, *The Role of the Bektashis in Turkey's National Struggle*, p. 256.

²² Sibel Imren Öztürk, *The Effects of Abolition on Bektashi Order*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2012.

two the branches was based on conflict over *waqf* properties and the *postnişin* position of the main lodge of Hacı Bektash. It goes on to provide information about *Babagans*, who became fervent defenders of Bektashism in the polemical discussions made with Harputlu Ishak Efendi. Apart from these two theses, Mehmet Mert Sunar's Ph.D. Dissertation entitled *Cauldron of Dissent: A Study of the Janissary Corps*²³ can also give some information to understand pre-abolition and draw a conclusion about the Janissary-Bektashi link as a reason of abolition.

The rehabilitation of the Bektashi Order in the 19th century has been indirectly glossed over by many theses written in Turkish. Two M.A. thesis in that respect illustrate a general picture of 19th-century Bektashism. Mesut Ayar's *Yeniçeri Ocağının İlgasından Sonra Bektaşî Tarikatı*²⁴ is one of the first M.A. thesis done on this topic. It explains the abolition process by mostly based on archival documents. In addition, Ibrahim Altuntaş's unpublished M.A. thesis *Yeniçeri Ocağının Kaldırılmasından Sonra Bektaşî Tekkeleri ve Osmanlı Yönetimi*²⁵ is another source, which partially touches upon the post-abolition period. However, it is based mostly on a review of secondary sources. Both two theses are descriptive and do not problematize the abolition process and aftermath.

Two extensive Ph.D. Dissertations analyze the forbidden years of Bektashism and offer a general landscape of the 19th century *tariqa* based religious life in the Ottoman Empire. One of them is *Bektaşîliğin İlgası Sonrasında Osmanlı Devleti'nin Tarikat Politikaları (1826-66)*²⁶ written by Muharrem Varol in 2011. Varol discusses the abolition of the Bektashi Order as part of the state's efforts to control Sufi orders during the modernization and centralization process. It emphasis that the state tended to control all Sufi Orders by collecting them under the institution of Evkaf Ministry and manage them by the hand of *Meclis-i Meşayih* (The council of sheikhs). Moreover, Varol also

²³ Mehmet Mert Sunar, *Cauldron of Dissent: A Study of Janissary the Corps, 1807-1826*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Binghamton University, 2006.

²⁴ Ayar's thesis was published in 2009. Mesut Ayar, *Bektaşîlikte Son Nefes: Yeniçeriliğin Kaldırılmasından Sonra Bektaşîlik*, İstanbul: Giza, 2009.

²⁵ Ibrahim Altuntaş, *Yeniçeri Ocağının Kaldırılmasından Sonra Bektaşî Tekkeleri ve Osmanlı Yönetimi*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Osmangazi Üniversitesi. 2005.

²⁶ Muharrem Varol, *Bektaşîliğin İlgası Sonrasında Osmanlı Devleti'nin Tarikat Politikaları (1826-66)*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2011. This dissertation was published in 2013 see Varol, *Islahat, Siyaset, Tarikat*, İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 2013.

discusses the functioning of the state's support and control mechanisms of Sufi orders with regard to the center-periphery. Another and the most comprehensive dissertation was given by Fahri Maden named *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*.²⁷ Maden extensively analyzes the before and after of the abolition of the Bektashi Order with all extents by deeply investigating archival evidences and primary sources. Moreover, the forbidden years of Bektashism, the state's post-abolition policies and reactivation of lodges are also examined in this book. Since it consists of extensive archival evidences, it stands to be the most compendious study. Moreover, by presenting the reactivated lodges and publications of Bektashis, it contributes this thesis to deduce a general assessment about the revival of the Bektashi Order.

In addition to theses, there are various books and articles that directly or partially touch upon the rehabilitation of Bektashism, some of which inspired me and became sources for this thesis. One of the most remarkable study in that respect was done by Ahmet Yılmaz Soyzer entitled *19. Yüzyılda Bektaşîlik*.²⁸ Although it mostly focuses on religious rituals and the structural organization of 19th century Bektashism, it provides some important information about Bektashism in its clandestine years throughout the *Tanzimat* era. Moreover, Yücer touches upon polemics of Bektashism generally in his book *Osmanlı'da Tasavvuf*.²⁹ Salih Çift also illustrates the polemic texts and publication activities of Bektashis in addition to discussing Harputlu İshak Efendi's *Kaşîfü'l Esrar*.³⁰ In addition, Muharrem Varol in his article examines another polemical text about Bektashism by İshak Efendi named "*Izahü'l Esrar*" and it contributes to understand the reactions against the Bektashi revival that will be one part of this thesis.³¹ In addition to these works, many other studies will be mentioning in this thesis while arguing the abolition of the Bektashi Order and aftermath.

²⁷ This dissertation was published with the same title in 2013. See Fahri Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, Ankara: TTK, 2013.

²⁸ Ahmet Yılmaz Soyzer, *19. Yüzyılda Bektaşîlik*, İzmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 2000.

²⁹ Yücer, *Osmanlı'da Tasavvuf 19. Yüzyıl*, see. pp. 522-535.

³⁰ Salih Çift, "1826 Sonrasında Bektaşîlik ve bu Alanla İlgili Yayın Faaliyetleri", *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, vol.12, 1, 2003, pp. 249-268.

³¹ Muharrem Varol, "Kaşîfü'l Esrar'ın İzinde: Harputlu Hoca İshak Efendi'nin İzahü'l Esrar Adlı Bilinmeyen Bir Risalesi" *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*,.78, pp. 35-80.

In addition to secondary sources, multiple primary sources are used in this thesis. First of all, I aim to analyze how the state carried out the abolition process and how the state's oppression and toleration fluctuated in the following fifty years by tracing it from various archival documents such as *Hatt-ı Humayuns*, *Zabtiye Defterleri*, *Sadaret Mektubi Kalemi Defterleri*, *Maliye Nezareti Defterleri*, *Evkafl Defterleri*. Besides, I used different chronicles and accounts that paint a picture of the period of Mahmud II and aftermath, among which there are *Üss-i Zafer*, *Gülzar-ı Fütühat*, *Vak'a-Nüvis Es'ad Efendi Tarihi*, *Tarih-i Cevdet* and *Tarih-i Lütfi*. Although some of these accounts were the propaganda texts of 1826, they draw a detailed picture of the abolition and give us the state's perception of Bektashism. Moreover, since this thesis also focuses on the reflections of the rehabilitation of the Bektashi Order, many polemical texts about Bektashism became my sources in that respect. *Kaşifü'l Esrar ve Dağı'ü'l Eşrar*, which was written by Harputlu Hoca İshak Efendi became the most known reaction of Sunni orthodoxy toward the Bektashi revival.³² Since it raises polemics and accusations with related to Hurufi doctrine and the Bektashism, it serves as the backbone of discussion in this study. As response to *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, Ahmet Rıfat Efendi's *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid*³³, Ahmet Rıfki Efendi's *Bektaşî Sırrı*³⁴ and Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebaba's *Kaşifü'l Esrar Reddiyesi*³⁵ are three known Bektashi defenses that are widely examined in this thesis. Since these three defenses were written by *Babagan* Bektashis and defend Bektashism from an orthodox line, they help us to understand limits of the rehabilitation.

This thesis deals with the revival period of the Bektashi Order from the reign of Mahmud II to the Hamidian Era. (1826-1976). In this regard, it aims to analyze how and why the Bektashi Order survived damaging regulations of the state during the reign of Mahmud II and regained its prestige and power. Moreover, it concentrates on how the state's suppression of the Bektashism turned to soft control gradually. By discussing the state's selective oppressions as well as indications of the revival, it also traces the

³² Harputlu Hoca İshak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar ve Dağı'ü'l Eşrar*, 1291 (1874). There is not any information about publication place and publisher on the book.

³³ Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşilik: Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid* transcribed by Salih Çift, İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2007.

³⁴ Ahmet Rıfki Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı I-II*, ed. by Hür Mahmut Yücer, İstanbul: Kesit Yayınları, 2013.

³⁵ The *Reddiye* of Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebaba had never published. Yet, it Yüksel studies it in his book. See, Müfid Yüksel, *Bektaşilik ve Mehmed Ali Hilmi Dedebaba*, İstanbul: Bakış Yayınevi, 2002. pp. 126-150.

boundaries of the Bektashi revival. To understand the boundaries of the revival, it tries to explain the reaction of Sunni orthodoxy toward the rehabilitation of Bektashism, what kind of polemics were going on the society and how Bektashism was defended.

The first chapter of this thesis attempts to examine the abolition of the Bektashi Order in 1826 and its aftermath with all extents to understand the survival of the Bektashism. Before all, it deals with why the Bektashi Order was abolished? By questioning the abolition arguments so far, I try to understand the key factors of 1826 and the real motivations of the state in the abolition. Moreover, by problematizing the 1826 so called Auspicious Event (*Vakay-ı Hayriyye*), it discusses the Bektashis in the context of Ottoman modernization process. In addition to analyzing the *Meşveret* discussions and the Bektashi accusations, it tries to understand how the decision of abolition was implemented both in the capital and periphery. Relatedly, it concentrates on how the Bektashis were prosecuted throughout this process with what kind of motivations. Lastly, it illustrates the outcomes of the state's suppression on the Order.

The second chapter addresses the post-abolition period of the Bektashi Order, which covers the reactivation of the Order. I intend to show how the Bektashi Order recovered itself by pointing to telling signs of the revival such as the reopening of lodges, the pardoning of exiles and the increased Bektashi activities in the following fifty years. This chapter explains how and why the state's suppression changed to selective oppression over time. This chapter also argues that whether the revival of the Bektashi Order was completed or limited. Since the state continued to oppress and tolerate the Bektashis at the same time, I intend to trace the boundaries of the Bektashi revival. Ultimately, I aim to understand why the Bektashi Order revived so quickly and what were the determinant factors behind its survival in this chapter.

The reaction of the Sunni orthodoxy toward the rehabilitation of Bektashis composes the last chapter of this thesis. As being one of the most visible indicators of the revival, I review the Bektashi publication activities, which gradually increased since the 1830's and burst in the 1870's. I examine how the Bektashi publications made Bektashism publicly more visible and contributed to its reintegration into society during the reign of the Sultan Abdulaziz. Relatedly, it is also examined how Bektashism was perceived at that time on society and how the boundaries of Bektashi revival were reminded by orthodox scholars by repeating same discourses of 1826 and theological

polemics as well. In that respect, polemical discussion between a Bektashi opponent Harputlu Ishak Efendi and three Bektashi defenders; Ahmet Rifat, Ahmet Rifkî and Mehmet Ali Dedebara are analyzed one by one in this chapter.

CHAPTER I

APOCLYPSE OR INCEPTION? A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF 1826

“It is lawful to punish (all) these contemptibles (Bektashis) according to *Siyasa* and it is not necessary to account their awful deeds and words personally”.³⁶

These words were said by Yasincizade Abdulvehab Efendi to defend and justify the punishment of Bektashis collectively rather than individually in the *Meşveret Majlis*, which was held in the *Babiüssade* mosque of Topkapı Palace on the 8th of July 1826 (2nd of *Zilhicce* 1241). Yasincizade’s words probably became the final decision of the council, which was gathered by Sultan Mahmud II’s call about three weeks following the abolition of the Janissary Corps in order to discuss the future of the Bektashi Order. In this meeting, the Bektashi Order, which had been continuing its activities for nearly five centuries, was held responsible for the conspiracy of Janissaries. As a result, the Order was prohibited with an imperial edict by Sultan Mahmud II.³⁷

Since it was the most fervent time of the Ottoman state and the Bektashi Order (*tariqa*) interaction, the abolition of the Order has received the most attention in Alevi-Bektashi studies. Possible causes and consequences of the event have been widely studied by scholars. Having been identified as *Vakay-ı Hayriyye* (Auspicious Event) by Ottoman scholars³⁸, it was seen as a part of state’s modernization reforms, which might create an inconsistent historiography. In order to read this interaction properly, it is important to adopt an analytical approach that locates what happened in 1826 into the greater context of the nineteenth-century Ottoman history. In other words, instead of treating the abolition of the Janissary Corps and the prohibition of the Bektashi Order respectively as individual events, they should be considered in relation to the general processes that took place in

³⁶ *Bu makulelerin siyaseten icra-yı cezaları caiz olup af’al u akval-i habisleri bi-şahsihi üzerlerine sabit olmak lazım değildir.* Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer (Yeniçeriliğin Kaldırılmasına Dair)*. transcribed by Mehmet Arslan, İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2005, p. 174.

³⁷ BOA, HAT; 290/17351.

³⁸ The term was first used by Esad Efendi, *Vak’a-nüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, pp. 616-619.

the Ottoman center in particular and the whole empire in general. Accordingly, this chapter aims to analyze the prohibition of the Bektashi Order with a holistic perspective.

I.1. Arguments of the Abolition

Why the Ottoman state targeted the Bektashi Order specifically in 1826 is a question that has been widely discussed by scholars. Even though there is a consensus among historians that the Bektashi Order was abrogated because of its spiritual affiliation with the Janissary Corps, both the results of the abolition and the process itself forces us to think that this event was the result of a mixture of multiple objectives, and as such, it cannot be explained with reference to a single phenomenon. For this reason, all possible proposed determinants should be cross-examined with counter-factual questions. Among the main reasons proposed by scholars of the topic so far; the prosperity of Bektashi lodges and *waqf* properties, unorthodox Bektashi faith and efforts of Naqshibandis are the most emphasized ones in addition to the Bektashi-Janissary connection.

I.1.1 Prosperity of the Bektashi Order

Except for a few studies by Suraiya Faroqhi³⁹, there is not another comprehensive study on economic activities of the Bektashi Order showing pre-1826. Despite the growth in the Order's economic activities in the 18th century, whether or not it was targeted due to its prosperity is a controversial argument, as it is uncertain whether the Ottoman state was already aware of the properties of the Order at all. In spite of the fact that Ottomans kept detailed endowment records, not all Bektashi lodges had been listed as *waqfs* (endowment).⁴⁰ Therefore, it is possible that the state realized the total amount of the Bektashis' properties only after 1826 while recording them during the confiscation processes. Yet, the possibility of the wealth of Bektashi lodges as being the motivation behind the abolition is worth considering. Although it might not be accounted for as the primary reason for the state from the beginning, the wealth of the Order might have motivated the state to seize the Order's properties or accelerated the abolition process.

³⁹ Faroqhi makes a point that economic activities of Bektashi lodges might become one reason of abolition of the Order in her studies. See, Suraiya Faroqhi, *Anadolu'da Bektaşilik* and "The Tekke of Hacı Bektas: Social Position and Economic Activities" in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 183-208.

⁴⁰ According to the official edict, Bektashi lodges, which were at least 60 years old were considered old ones. These lodges were not demolished but property was confiscated and lodges were passed on to other Sunni tariqas. The logic behind the 60-year limit might be that aged tekkes probably had *waqfs*. BOA, HAT; 290/17351.

Our knowledge on the properties of Bektashi lodges comes mostly from records kept during the abolition process. Because the state began to seize on lodges and appointed officers to demolishing lodges as well as to report the process and register property and income of lodges from as early as 1826.⁴¹ It seems the process, which had started in Istanbul, was gradually extended to the Balkans and Anatolia. Seized lodges located in the Balkans brought the most income. Among the confiscated properties of lodges in Balkans, there were at least 74.749 *dönüm*⁴² land that included meadows, farms, gardens, 20.845 kg dry food, 7.196 cattle and 81 mills.⁴³ In these records, it is clear that the wealthiest Bektashi lodge in the Balkans was the Kızıldeli lodge (Seyyid Ali Sultan) in Dimetoka. The lodge had 24 villages, 7 mills, nearly 3.000 cattle and hosted 200 dervishes.⁴⁴ The size of agricultural land and mills demonstrate that Bektashis had a considerable economic network in Rumelia that might have created an economic autonomy for them in the region. While coming to Anatolia, the center lodge, Tekke of Hacı Bektash near Kırşehir, is assumed to have been the richest one. However, Tekke of Hacı Bektash was not targeted by the state; as a result, its properties could not be recorded during the abolition process. However, Faroqhi states that it was the richest endowment in Anatolia, even richer than the Mevlevi lodge in Konya.⁴⁵ Since the center lodge was not recorded, the richest lodge according to abolition registers was the tekke of Abdal Musa in Elmalı. The lodge had 8.329 *dönüm* farm lands, 145 buildings, 875 cattle and 16.471 kg dry food.⁴⁶ Both the center Hacı Bektash lodge and Abdal Musa lodge were

⁴¹ Bektashi lodges, which were seized and whose properties were confiscated were recorded in the *Maliyeden Müdevver Defterleri*. For the list of lodges, which were not demolished but properties were confiscated, see Fahri Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 410-413.

⁴² Measure of land, which is about 940 m² or a quarter acre. *New Redhouse*, 8th edition. İstanbul: Redhouse Press, 1986, p. 311.

⁴³ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 115-118.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p.113, also Ahmed Hazerfen, *Tarihi Belgeler Işığında Kızıldeli Sultan Tekkesi*, İstanbul, Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 2006. pp. 93-94. For the detailed list of properties of Kızıldeli lodge see Hazerfen, ibid, pp. 105-110.

⁴⁵ "It is true that the Mevlevi dargah of Konya was even more richly endowed, but within the sancak of Kırşehir, the tekke of Hacı Bektash was by far the most wealthy wakf. Only three other institutions had an income of more than 10.000 akçes: the medrese of Caca Bey (23,673 akçes), the zaviye of Ahi Evran (32,790 akçes) and the zaviye of Aşık Paşa (31,038 akçe), all three of them in Kırşehir. All the *waqfs* in the town of Kırşehir taken together had only as much income as the tekke of Hacı Bektaş, and the sum of all the wakfs in the sancak barely surpassed it" Faroqhi, *The Tekke of Hacı Bektaş: Social Position and Economic Activities*, p.194.

⁴⁶ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 127-128. For the detailed list of confiscated properties of Abdal Musa lodge see pages 410-416.

places with extensive agricultural activities. Compared to the Balkans, Anatolian lodges mostly consisted of shrines, which increased the prestige of lodges in the community. Yet, Bektashi lodges in Anatolia also had reasonable income.

During the process of the Order's abolition, most of the recorded properties were confiscated. The income was transferred to the budget of the new army, *Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediyye*, which was formed after the abolition of the Janissary Corps.⁴⁷ The state considered the confiscation of Bektashi properties as an important source of income to finance the new army. Following confiscation, some *waqfs* of Bektashis were donated to other *waqfs*⁴⁸ while the rest of *waqfs* with their incomes were given to the appointed Sunni *tariqas*. Therefore, although economic activities of Bektashi lodges and *waqf* properties cannot be considered as the actual reason at least in the beginning of the abolition, it might have motivated the state and accelerated the process.

I.1.2. Unorthodox Bektashi Faith

Another debate about the prohibition of the Bektashi Order is whether Bektashis targeted because of their unorthodox faith or not. It might be more reasonable to ask whether there was a kind of revival of Sunni orthodox Islam in 1826. It is a fact that the majority of the charges towards Bektashis were based on religious arguments even though their link with the Janissaries was offered as the prime cause. At the end of the *Meşveret* council, in which thirteen Sunni sheikhs of Istanbul participated, Bektashis were declared as *guruh-u melahide* (non-believer or deviated community)⁴⁹ *guruh-ı mekruh* (abominable community) and *ibahis*⁵⁰ and *guruh-u Alevi ve Ravafiz* (Shi'ite and Alevi community).⁵¹ Butrus Abu Manneh states that these categorical terms were used sixteen

⁴⁷ BOA, MAD.d; 8252. Also see, Zeki Tekin, "Kapatılan Bazı Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Mal Varlıkları Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme" *Türk Kültür ve Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, vol. 1, no. 2, June, 2012, pp. 71-86.

⁴⁸ For instance, in that respect, *waqfs* of Bektashi lodges around Uskudar were decided to join the Waqf of Sultan Bayezid. BOA, HAT; 293/17453.

⁴⁹ Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, p.175. Bektashis were also defined with *ilhad*. "The religious meaning of the term is derived from the basic sense of the root *l-h-d* "to incline, to deviate". Madelung, "Mülhid" *EI. 2*, vol.7. Leiden, New York: Brill, 1993, p.546

⁵⁰ BOA, HAT; 290,17351. *Ibahiyye* or "Ibaha "permission", a term commonly applied to antinomian teachings (or actions), especially as asserted among certain Shi'i and Sufi groups." Madelung, "Ibaha" *ibid*, vol. 3, p. 602.

⁵¹ BOA, C.ADL; 29/1734. *Al-Rafida* literally refers to proto-*Imamiyya*, who do not accept the caliphate of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. Kohlberg, "Al-Rafida" *EI. 2*, vol. 8, pp. 386-89.

times in the official edict of abolition, meaning that it was prepared for the Sunni audience in mind and represented the Sunni orthodox tone of the time to justify the process.⁵²

Relatedly, according to the official edict of abolition, Bektashis, especially those who lived in lodges around Usküdar, Eyüp and Boğaziçi were specifically marked as *rafizis* and *mülhids* who had anti-shari'a behavior and acted against the religion. They were described as people who drank alcohol, gave up praying and did not fast during Ramadan, engaged in organizing *Ayin-i Cems* and cursed sahaba, the companions of Muhammad. They were also claimed to poison people by their beliefs to increase their number. Since they were considered to have engaged in such anti-Shari'a behavior, they were categorized in *murtad* (apostate) status⁵³ and their execution was legitimized.⁵⁴ Categorizing them under the term *murtad* also legitimized confiscation of their properties. In addition to this, another practice of Sunni orthodoxy during the process was that Bektashi Babas and dervishes in lodges were decided to be questioned by Shiekh al-Islam and exiled to places where Sunni orthodox *ulama* was strong in order to ameliorate them according to Sunni orthodoxy.⁵⁵

It seems that religious charges towards Bektashis were derived from the common accusations that had been raised by Ottoman scholars against Alevi-Kızılbaş communities. Giving up praying, not fasting, organizing *Ayin-i Cems* and cursing the first three caliphs Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman were some of the accusations that had always been raised against Alevi-Kızılbaş communities in Ottoman Sheikh al-Islam fatwas to justify their persecutions.⁵⁶ Moreover, Bektashis were named “*guruh-u Revafiz ve*

⁵² Butrus Abu Manneh “1826’da Nakşibendi Müceddidi ve Bektaşî Tarikatları” in *Tarihi ve Kültürel Boyutlarıyla Türkiye’de Aleviler Bektaşiler Nusayriler*, İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1999, p. 125.

⁵³ Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, p. 175.

⁵⁴ BOA, HAT; 290/17351.

⁵⁵ BOA, *ibid.* Sahaflar Şeyhi-zade Seyyid Mehmed Esad Efendi, *Vak’a-nüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, transcribed by Ziya Yılmaz, İstanbul, Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı Yayınları, 2000, pp. 648-649. Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, Dersaadet: Matba’a-i Osmaniye, 1301 (1883-4), p. 182.

⁵⁶ Fatwas, which were issued throughout the Ottoman confessional age (mid-15th-18th centuries) created a sustainable legal pool of definitions and accusation for the Kızılbaş communities. The same accusations seem to be used for Bektashis in 19th century. For the charges and discourse on Kızılbaş fatwas, see İsmail Sefa Üstun, *Heresy and Legitimacy in the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth Century*, (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Manchester), and Colin Imber, “The Persecution of the Ottoman Shi’ites according to the *Mühimme Defterleri*, 1565-1585,” *Islam* 56 (1979): 245-273.

*Alevi*⁵⁷ in a decree dated 1826, which might be the result of associating them directly with the Kızılbaşes. It seems that the same charges ascribed to the word “Kızılbaş” were used with the word “Alevi”. In that sense, it might be the first conscious and pejorative usage of the word Alevi at least for the Bektashi community in an Ottoman document. Related to these charges, Bektashis were claimed to have connections with Shi’ites of Iran. Chronicles of the time tried to legitimize the decision of abolition by giving examples that link them to Iran. For instance, Esad Efendi and Cevdet Pasha insist that Bektashis were always interested in Kızılbaş Iran and they convinced the Janissaries to draw the sword on behalf of Shah.⁵⁸ Furthermore, Esad Efendi also insists that *Kalender Chelebi*, who was the *postnişin* of Hacı Bektash lodge in the 16th century had the sympathy of Kızılbaş Iran and rebelled against Sultan Süleyman.⁵⁹ Moreover, Haydar Baba, who stayed in the 99th *orta* (barrack) of the Janissaries was claimed to have been a spy of Iran and to have provoked Janissaries in the *Alemdar Incident*. However, he was considered as the *pir* (spiritual leader) and executed while he was on the road of exile to Erzurum in the company of a Tatar. Haydar Baba was buried by the Janissaries with an appropriate funeral in Merdivenköy Bektashi lodge.⁶⁰

Besides linking them to Iran, the Bektashi Order was also reflected as a corrupt and deviant community that diverged from its origins, which was claimed to be the teachings of Hacı Bektash based on Sunni orthodoxy.⁶¹ However, as Ahmet Yaşar Ocak states, Bektashi *tariqa* was only non-Sunni *tariqa* that the Ottoman state had officially recognized.⁶² They had never adopted any of the four Sunni Madhabs.⁶³ If Bektashis had

⁵⁷...*Istifta ve istinba(?) olındıkta bu makulelerin iame-i nasdan fitne ve fesadlarını def ü kat için beldeden nef-ü icla olunmaları ve kezalik bu grup-u Alevi ve Revafiz birer takrib arazi-yi miriyeyi zabt...* BOA, C.ADL; 29/1734.

⁵⁸ Esad Efendi, *Vakaniivis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, p.648, Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet* vol. 12, p. 180-181.

⁵⁹ Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, p.169.

⁶⁰ BOA, HAT; 284/17078.

⁶¹ In the opening speech of *Meşveret Majlis*, sheikh-al Islam Kadızade Tahir Efendi made a remark that Bektashis of the time left the right path of Hacı Bektash, whereas he dignified Hacı Bektash and subsequent Bektashi leaders, Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, pp.173-174.

⁶² Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, “Bektaşilik”, *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 5, p. 373.

⁶³ Bektashis believed that they are from Ja’fari Madhab. Teyfik Oytam, *Bektaşiliğin İcyüzü*, vol. 2, İstanbul, Maarif Kitaphanesi, 1960, pp. 30-31. John Birge, *Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p.159.

not followed Sunni orthodox Islam since the beginning, then why did the state attack them specifically in 1826 with religious motivations? Scholars argue that there was a revival of Sunni orthodox Islam in the 19th century especially during the reign of Mahmud II. Moreover, this revivalism is explained with the rise of *Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi* branch in Ottoman domains. One of the main defenders of this argument, Butrus Abu Manneh, emphasizes the rise of a Sunni trend and points to the role of Naqshbandis on the abolition of the Bektashi Order by referring to the consolidation of the *Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi* branch in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁴

Although it is not very clear whether the Naqshbandis played the biggest role in the abolition of Bektashism, it is obvious that they became one influential part of it and the most benefited *tariqa* from the results. Because of their crucial contribution during the abolition process, they were awarded the wealthiest Bektashi lodges and given the task of sunnizing Bektashis. Moreover, the biggest legitimizer of 1826, the chronicler Esad Efendi, was a Naqshbandi. As can be seen in what follows, he depicts Bektashis as enemies of Islam while linking them to the Janissaries in the *Üss-i Zafer*:

From the enormity of rebel Janissaries

Thanks to him, God made Islam safe

We wish who makes Bektashis unfavorable

*One is enemy of the state, one is enemy of the religion*⁶⁵

In addition to Esad Efendi's poem, the list of Balmumcu Mustafa Efendi was another thought-provoking example of Bektashi antagonism of Naqshbandis. One of the two Naqshbandi participants of the *Meşveret* meeting, the sheikh of Idrisköşkü lodge, Balmumcu Mustafa Efendi presented a list of Bektashis to the grand vizier.⁶⁶ Whether

⁶⁴ Abu Manneh thinks that a Sunni orthodox trend spread from India to Istanbul through Naqshbandis. This change was first seen in the Greek revolt with the idea of "Islamic brotherhood". The abolition of the Bektashi Order was another result of this change. Cited in Oztürk, *The Effects of Abolition on the Bektashi Order*, (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Middle East Technical University), p. 54. Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century*, p. 59-67. Abu Manneh, "The Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya in the Ottoman Lands in the Early 19th Century" *Die Welt des Islams*, pp. 29-34. Abu Manneh "1826'da Nakşibendi Müceddidi ve Bektaşî Tarikatları", *Tarihi ve Kültürel Boyutlarıyla Türkiye'de Aleviler Bektaşiler Nusayriler*, p. 127.

⁶⁵ "Yeniçeri taife-i bagiyesi şerrinden
Hamd ola eyledi Hakk devlet-i İslamı emin
Dileriz kim ide Bektaşileri bergeşte
Birisi düşmen-i devlet, birisi düşmen-i din", Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, p. 172.

⁶⁶ Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, p. 652.

Naqshbandis had already prepared a list of the Bektashis or not is controversial. Yet, Balmumcu Mustafa Efendi's action is questionable. As it is seen in the polemics between Naqshbandi sympathizer Harputlu Ishak Efendi and Bektashis, Naqshbandi antagonism of Bektashism focused on the Bektashis' unorthodox faith and it continued through the 19th century. In addition, being opponents of Shi'ites was one of the significant teachings of *Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi* branch.⁶⁷ Moreover, acknowledging both the Bektashi Order and the Naqshbandi Order as two offshoots of Yasawiyya might have caused a power struggle between the two orders.⁶⁸

Contrary to the specific Bektashi antagonism, it has been discussed that Naqshbandis, especially *Mujaddidi* literal meaning "renewers" branch was the biggest supporter of the state's modernization reforms and they inevitably supported the dissolution of the Janissary Corps and the Bektashi Order. In that respect, Abu Manneh points out the *Naqshbandi-Mujaddidis'* endorsement of Ottoman sultans' reforms in the 19th century.⁶⁹ Nonetheless, it might be problematic to draw a picture that they always supported modernism. Although *Naqshbandi-Mujaddidis* were the biggest supporters of Sultan Selim III's military reforms of *Nizam-ı Cedid*⁷⁰, they could influence him to implement strict clothing laws to regulate women's appearance on public sphere.⁷¹ Hence, it cannot be concluded that *Naqshbandi-Mujaddidis* were totally on the side of innovation and modernization. Notwithstanding, they are considered as the loyal partners of Mahmud II who supported and legitimized his reforms on religious grounds. Moreover,

⁶⁷ In that respect, sheikh Ahmed Shrindi wrote a treatise with the title *Redd-i Revafiz* (The Epistle on the Refutation of the Shi'ah). Abu Manneh, "1826'da Nakşibendi Müceddidi ve Bektaşî Tarikatları", pp.119-120. Naqshbandis had always supported Ottoman's anti-Kızılbaş or anti-heterodox campaigns. Dina Le Gall, *A Culture od Sufism, Naqshbandis in the Ottoman World, 1450-1700*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005, pp. 144-145.

⁶⁸ According to Fuad Köprülü, both Bektashiyya and Naqshbandiyya were born from Yasawwiya. Fuad Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*, pp. 108-118. Moreover, in the Sufi tradition, it was believed that Ahmed Yassawi was the mürşid (the guide) of Hacı Bektash and companion of Abdul Khaliq Gajadwani, the founder of Naqhsibandiyya. Therefore, Bektashis were considered as Ahmed Yassawi's disciples of Rum (Anatolia) and Naqhsibansis as disciples of Turkistan. In spite of their religious contradiction, it was thought they shared the same heritage. That might have been the motivation for Naqshbandis to claim Bektashi lodges as inheritors. Irene Melikoff, *Uyur İdik Uyardılar*, pp. 167-179.

⁶⁹ Abu Manneh, "The Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya in the Ottoman Lands in the Early 19th Century" pp. 17-34.

⁷⁰ Aysel Danacı Yıldız, *Vakay-ı Selimiye or Selimiye Incident: A Study of the May 1807 Rebellion*, (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Sabancı University), 2008. 641-653.

⁷¹ Tulay Artan, "Forms and Forums of Expression: Istanbul and Beyond, 1600-1800", *The Ottoman World*, eds. Christine. Woodhead, London: Routledge, December 2011, pp. 400-401.

it is likely that they had a notable influence on the Sultan. The Sultan had numerous Naqshbandi companions including very influential ones like Esad Efendi. Esad Efendi wrote *Üss-i Zafer* to justify the 1826 events and used propaganda to promote Mahmud's reforms.⁷² Esad Efendi excessively aggravated the situation by saying pieces of the Quran were used as stoppers for vine pots by Kıncı Baba.⁷³ Moreover, Esad Efendi provided religious legitimacy to Mahmud II by presenting him as "müceddid", the messiah of the century.⁷⁴

Obviously, there was a revival of Sunni orthodoxy and Shari'a was mostly emphasized during the prohibition of the Bektashi Order. However, beyond the Naqshbandi understanding of Sunnism, it was Mahmud II himself who mobilized the Sunni orthodox Islam and benefited from Naqshshibandis in that way. Actually, mobilization of Islam was one of the most used frequently instruments in his policy. For instance, the Islamic propaganda had already been widely conducted throughout the Greek revolt. Similarly, the Bektashi Order as a non-Sunni *tariqa* could have been erased easier by a policy justified with reference to Sunni principles. This does not mean that Mahmud was a religious person⁷⁵ or Naqshshibandis were the only Sunni *tariqa* that was influential during the abolition process. Qadiri, Rifa'i, Khalwati, Sa'di, and Bayrami sheikhs were also appointed to Bektashi lodges by the state.⁷⁶ Additionally, Mevlevi were chosen by Mahmud II for the Sunna manner and religious education of the new army; *Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediyye*.⁷⁷ Moreover, in order to keep soldiers' Sunni

⁷² Mahmud II rewarded Esad Efendi by making him official chronicle as well as bestowing on 10.000 guruş and 2630 pieces of gold for his work *Üss-i Zafer*, which makes propaganda of 1826 and Mahmud's new centralized order. Baki Öz, *Bektaşilik Nedir*, İstanbul: Derin Yayınları, 1997, p. 177. Cited in İbrahim Altuntaş, *Yeniçeri Ocağı Kaldırıldıktan Sonra Bektaşî Tekkeleri ve Osmanlı Yönetimi*, p. 76.

⁷³ Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, p. 177.

⁷⁴ "...nizam-ı mük-ü millet ve kıvam-ı kanun-i saltanat aksay-i mearib-i müceddidaneleri olan Sultanü'l Müslimin..." Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, p. 488

⁷⁵ Although it is not certain that refers to his piousness, Mahmud II was defined as the "infidel Padişah" Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2013, p. 94. Moreover, according to Rudi Mathee as he cited from Robert Walsh, the British ambassador of Istanbul insists Mahmud was addicted to champagne by saying "a bottle was set beside him every day at dinner." "Alcohol in the Islamic Middle East: Ambivalence and Ambiguity" *Past and Present*, 222, 2014, p. 114.

⁷⁶ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 192-95.

⁷⁷ Instead of Bektashi baba's "miralay" title, Mahmud appointed a Mevlevi sheikh with "mareşal" title. The Mevlevi sheikhs' title signified a higher position in the army than that of the Bektashi Babas. In that way, the aim might have been to give a religious message.

faith alive, reading of *Risale-i Birgivi* was made compulsory.⁷⁸ In short, among all *tariqas*, it seems Naqshbandiyya was the best option for Mahmud II's policy of Sunnism and anti-Bektashism.

I.1.3. Bektashi-Janissary Connection

It is certain that the Bektashis paid the price of their Janissary comradeship.⁷⁹ Dissolution of the Janissary Corps brought the end of their Bektashi brothers as well. As Birge states, due to their affiliation with the Bektashi Order, Janissaries were identified as *Taife-i Bektaşiyân*, *Guruh-ı Bektaşiyân*, *Dudman-ı Bektaşiyye*, *Hacı Bektaş Köçekleri*, and *Ocağ-ı Bektaşiyye*.⁸⁰ In spite of the lack of information about the historical roots of this companionship, it is certain that Bektashi-Janissary mutual relationship became systematized through centuries and the Bektashi Order became a predominant *tariqa* in the Ottoman lands with the support of Janissaries. Melikoff explains the beginning phase of this connection by saying that the prominence of Hacı Bektash was related to being regarded as the *pir* (spiritual leader) of the Janissaries in the 14th century by the Ottoman sultans.⁸¹ Although chroniclers Esad Efendi and Cevdet Pasha attribute the historical roots of this link to Hacı Bektash Veli's blessing of Orhan Gazi's new soldiers,⁸² it is highly probable that Hacı Bektash never met Orhan Ghazi. Rather, the Bektashi connection seems to have developed through Abdal Musa, who had participated in Orhan's campaigns. Even though the exchange of Bektashi *elif-i tac* is problematic, it is accepted that *elif-i tac* was used at the time of subsequent Bektashi dervish Abdal Musa as the Janissary head cap.⁸³ In addition to *elif-i tac* and the adaptation of Hacı Bektaş as the *pir*, it was believed that Janissaries had the holy cauldron of Hacı Bektash, which

⁷⁸ Gülay Tulasoğlu, "Türk Sunni Kimlik İnşasının II. Mahmud dönemindeki Kökleri Üzerine" *Kızılbaşlık Alevilik, Bektaşilik*. Ankara: İletişim Yayınları, 2015. p.177.

⁷⁹ Muharrem Varol, *Bektaşiliğin İlgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları (1826-1866)*, p.10.

⁸⁰ Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 74.

⁸¹ Melikoff, *Hacı Bektaş, Efsaneden Gerçeğe*, p. 224.

⁸² According to Cevdet Pasha as he cited from Esad Efendi, some soldiers of the new army, which formed during Orhan Gazi, went to Hacı Bektash to receive his blessing. In return, Hacı Bektashi gave them a piece of his *aba* (coarse woolen cloth), which they later began to use as their head gear. Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 180.

⁸³ Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, pp. 46-47.

would become a symbol in many revolts. Another enhancing practice of Bektashi-Janissary link was Janissaries' declaration of their subordination to Hacı Bektash via their oath called *gülbeng*.⁸⁴ Last but not least, a Bektashi baba stayed in the 99th orta of Janissaries with his eight dervishes by using the *miralay* title,⁸⁵ which facilitated the existence of this brotherhood until the 19th century.

In spite of the link between Janissaries and Bektashis, whether Bektashis were partners of the Janissaries in their contra-state actions is debatable. Yet, Bektashis were represented as actors in a conspiracy behind the Janissary rebellion in propaganda texts. For instance, in the *Üss-i Zafer*, Esad Efendi charges Bektashis with provoking Janissaries against the state. One Bektashi entered among soldiers during the campaign of (1)102⁸⁶ and discourage them by saying “You fools! Why are you losing your life for nothing? There is no virtue in *Ghaza* or martyrdom, as the Ottoman sultan lives in pleasure in his palace and so does the *Efrenc* (Frank) king in his own realm”.⁸⁷ In order to show an example of propaganda against Bektashis, Esad Efendi seems to cite this passage from *Koca Sekbanbaşı Risalesi*, which is another propaganda text against the Janissaries. However, Esad Efendi does not give any reference to Koca Sekbanbaşı. He distorts the passage of Koca Sekbanbaşı by showing it more provocative and attributing it to Bektashis as well.⁸⁸ According to another propaganda text, *Gülzar-ı Fütühat*, Şirvanlı Fatih Efendi represents the Bektashi Order as the conspiracy branch of the Janissary

⁸⁴ *Allah Allah, illallah. Baş üryan, sine püryan, kılıç al kan. Bu meydana nice Başlar kesilir, hiç olmaz soran. Eyvallah, eyvallah...Kahrımız, kılıcımız düşmana ziyan. Üçler, Beşler, Yediler, Kırklar, mur-u Nebi, pirimiz, hünkarımız, Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli demine devranına hü...Erol Özbilgen, Bütün Yönleriyle Osmanlı, İstanbul, İz Yayıncılık, 2003, p. 260.*

⁸⁵ Cevdet Paşa gives the number of the orta as 94th. See, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol.12, p. 180. Also see Maden, “Yeniçerilik Bektaşilik İlişkileri ve Yeniçeri İsyanlarında Bektaşililer” *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, 73, 2015, p. 177.

⁸⁶ There is contradiction in Esad Efendi's example. He gives the date of campaign as 1102. However, he also gives the name of Koca Yusuf Pasha as commander of the campaign (serdar-ı ekrem), who became grand vizier twice, from 1786-89 and in 1791-92 almost a century later than Esad Efendi's date. The wrong date was given by Esad Efendi and he most probably refers to the Russo-Turkish war of 1787-1892. In fact, the Koca Sekbanbaşı, whom Esad probably cited the passage from proves it. See *Koca Sekbanbaşı Risalesi*, İstanbul, Tercüman Yüz Temel Eser, 1974, pp. 57-61.

⁸⁷ *Behey ahmaklar, abes yere canınızı niçün telef edersiniz, yut size, şahadet ü gaza faziletü diye işittiğiniz kelamın haşa aslı yoktur, Osmanlı padişahı kendi sarayında sefasında ve Efrenc kralı kendi memleketinde cümbüşünde iken sizler taglar başlarında can vermek nedir bilmem.* Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer* p. 170.

⁸⁸ The original passage in the treatise of Koca Sekbanbaşı is “*Be hey yoldaşım, devletin bize verdiği yedi akçe ulufedir. Bize şehadetle cennet gösterirler ve göz göre göre cümlemizi gavura kırdırır. Bizim iki canımız yok ya! Gavur bizim nemizi aldı? Boşuboşuna niçin kırılalım?*” “*Büyükler yağlı pilav yesin, bizler kuru kuruya Moskof keferesiyle kırılmak neden olsun*” *Koca Sekbanbaşı Risalesi*, p. 58.

Corps and claims that Bektashis offered Rums to “destroy these Yazids (Ottomans) by making alliance together” during the rebellion in Mora.⁸⁹

Another common example given by historians is Haydar Baba, who was associated with the *Alemdar incident*. Haydar Baba was staying in the 99th Janissary barracks and accused of being the spy of Iran and that he motivated Janissaries to start rebellions.⁹⁰ The state found the solution by exiling him to Erzurum. However, he died on the way. His death must have seemed suspicious to the Janissaries so much so that they forced the Aga of Janissary by the threat of burning Istanbul and massacring non-Muslims similarly to the events of 1821.⁹¹ Unlike being a spy, it seems Haydar Baba was a respectable Bektashi *pir* of Janissaries so they even buried his body with a funeral in Merdivenköy. By getting rid of a spiritual leader of the Janissaries, the state might have aimed to weaken Janissary solidarity and test their reaction.⁹² In addition to the case of Haydar Baba, Bektashis were claimed to participate in the Auspicious Event with Janissaries. Cevdet Pasha implies that Bektashis motivated the Janissaries with the notion of “revival of Hacı Bektash Ocağ.”⁹³ Bektashi Babas were claimed to play *taber* in *Et Meydanı* and try to mobilize Janissaries in and all around Istanbul to spread the rebellion on that day.⁹⁴

Both archival documents and chronicles define Bektashis as *fesad* (conspiracy) behind Janissary rebellions and associate the two events of 1826 with each other. Furthermore, assuming that the Janissaries were the actual cause of the prohibition of the Order might push historians to combine the abolition of the Janissary Corps and the abolition of the Bektashi Order as a part of Mahmud’s reforms. Therefore, it has been the general tendency among 19th-century Ottomanists that they could not make a clear

⁸⁹ *Sizinle bi'l ittifak haşa bu yezidleri katl-i amm edelim*. Şirvanlı Fatih Efendi, *Gülzar-ı Fütühat (Bir Görgü Tanığının Kalemiyle Yeniçeri Ocağı'nın Kaldırılışı)*, İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2001, p. 19.

⁹⁰ BOA HAT; 284/17078.

⁹¹ BOA, *ibid*, also Maden, “Yeniçerilik Bektaşilik İlişkileri ve Yeniçeri İsyanlarında Bektaşililer” *Türk Kültürü ve HBV Araştırma Dergisi*, 73, 2015, pp. 188-89.

⁹² Mert Sunar, *Cauldron of Dissent. A Study of Janissary Corps*, (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Birmingham University), p. 190.

⁹³ Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 154.

⁹⁴ Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, p. 171.

differentiation between abolition of the Bektashi Order and abolition of the Janissary Corps, which shaped today's historical approach considerably. For instance, Bernard Lewis discusses the prohibition of the Bektashi Order and Janissaries together as a part of the state's military reforms without any distinction.⁹⁵ Another prominent historian, Stanford Shaw also links Bektashis to Janissaries and explains the two events under the Auspicious Event while discussing military reforms of the Mahmud II.⁹⁶

Attaching these two abolition events of 1826 to each other by sorting them under the *Vakay-i Hayriyye* (Auspicious Event) and pairing them up together as a part of the state's modernization efforts might result in reaching inconsistent historical assumptions. In that respect, one might think that the Bektashi Order was an obstacle on the way of reforms and they did not want any progress. However, it cannot be inferred that Bektashis were necessarily against modernization. Instead, *Beşiktaş Cemiyet-i İlmîyesi* (Beşiktaş Science Community)⁹⁷, whose members were accused of Bektashism, was founded to disseminate science and technology in the Ottoman lands. Among its members, Ismail Ferruh Efendi was giving lectures in literature while Şanizade Ataullah Efendi was giving lectures in science to the community.⁹⁸ Although Cevdet Pasha states that members of the community were not related to Bektashism and ties these indictments to personal animosity⁹⁹, chronicler Lütü Efendi insists that these people were known as *mezhebsiz* (those, who are not from Sunni madhab).¹⁰⁰ As a consequence of the charge of Bektashism, three members of the community were exiled.¹⁰¹ It means no matter they

⁹⁵ Bernard Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, pp. 80-83.

⁹⁶ Stanford Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, pp. 20-21.

⁹⁷ It was not a systematized community. It was formulated through regular meetings of Ismail Ferruh Efendi, the former ambassador of London, Şanizade Ataullah Efendi, the historian and doctor, Melekpaşazade Abdülkadir Bey ve Kethüdazade Arif Efendi in Beşiktaş and Fatih. In these meetings, they were discussing western culture, science, technology, medicine, philosophy and religion nearby open courses. For more information, see Kazım Yetiş, "Beşiktaş Cemiyet-i İlmîyesi", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 5, pp. 552-553.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p.553. Ahmed Rıfki, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 2, p. 183.

⁹⁹ Cevdet Pasha mentions Şanizade and Ferruh Bey as respectable and knowledgeable men. *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol.12, p183.

¹⁰⁰ Ahmet Lütü Efendi, *Vakanüvis Lütü Efendi Tarihi*, İstanbul: Matba'a-i Amire, 1290 (1873-4), vol. 1, p.169. Cited in Yetiş, "Beşiktaş Cemiyet-i İlmîyesi", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 5, p. 553.

¹⁰¹ Ferruh Efendi was sent to Kadıköy while Melekpaşazade Abdülkadir Bey was exiled to Manisa and Şanizade was exiled to Menemen.

were modernists in case they were Bektashis. Consequently, seeing all Bektashis as a trouble against state's modernization efforts might be a problematic approach.

It seems that the Sultan saw these abolitions as a way to strengthen his authority. The destruction of the Janissary Corps was an important achievement for the state. The last rebellion of Janissaries was suppressed by way of bombarding, which lasted about half an hour¹⁰² and resulted in the massacre of hundreds of Janissaries.¹⁰³ This short operation must have surprised the Sultan, therefore he wanted to consummate the process. Scholars dwell on the state's fear of a contra-rebellion, which might be started by ex-Janissaries or their sympathizers. Therefore, the Sultan targeted Bektashis because of their cooperation with the Janissaries and provoking protests against the state after the abolition of the Janissary Corps.¹⁰⁴ As it is understood from interrogations during the abolition, Bektashi Lüleci Ahmed, Bektashi sheikh Mehmed, and the other Mehmet who was the Thursday sheikh of Laleli lodge were arrested with the claim of spreading the idea of the resurrection of Janissary *ocak*.¹⁰⁵ Even if Bektashis tended to protect ex-Janissaries, it could not be a reason to abrogate the Bektashi Order completely. Nonetheless, the destruction of a powerful group, the Janissaries, increased the Sultan's power. Now, as a powerful ruler, Mahmud might have tried to erase whatever remained from the Janissaries to secure his absolutism. As an absolute ruler, he aimed to destroy Bektashis as the Janissaries' brothers and the members of the Beşiktaş Science community as Bektashi sympathizers. Additionally, he could also target any other Sunni order for his authoritarianism including the Naqshbandis themselves.¹⁰⁶ It seems that the Bektashi Order was abolished because the power struggle between Mahmud II and the

¹⁰² Şirvanlı Fatih Efendi, the observer of the day, says this event was completed in 21 minutes. *Gülzar-ı Fütühat*, p. 13.

¹⁰³ Although Cevdet Pasha claimed that at least 6000 Janissaries were killed in the *Vakay-i Hayriyye*, a few hundred seem to be a more realistic number. Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 179.

¹⁰⁴ Lewis, *ibid*, 80-83.

¹⁰⁵ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapıkulu Ocakları*, vol. 1, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, p. 583-95.

¹⁰⁶ Because of tending to be a contra-state entity, Mahmud II exiled a group of Naqshibandi-Halidi dervishes in 1828. As a result of Mahmud's authoritarianism policy and usage of orthodox Islam, no matter they were from a branch of a Sunni order Naqshbandiyya, they were sentenced using the same words as Bektashis, which are "conspiracy and acting against Islam" Varol, *Bektaşiliğin İlgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları (1826-1866)*, pp. 72-75.

Janissary Corps but with a religious motivation, and Bektashis had to struggle with these religious charges throughout the century.

I.2. *Meşveret* Council and the Abolition Edict

The meeting was held with the participation of Grand vizier Selim Pasha, Sheikh al-Islam Kadızade Tahir Efendi, the previous Sheikh al-Islam Yasincizade Abdulvehab Efendi, Kazasker Rahmi, Melekpaşazade Abdulkadir Efendi, and Arapzade Hamdullah Efendi.¹⁰⁷ The meeting took place in a mosque in the Sultan's presence who was listening to it from a cage and was unique in the sense that the council was composed mostly of sheikhs. In addition to politicians and scholars, thirteen sheikhs of different *tariqas* in Istanbul attended to the meeting.¹⁰⁸ The sheikh council consisted of three Mevlevi sheikhs; Mehmet Kudretullah Dede from Galata Mevlevihane, Ali Efendi from Kasımpaşa lodge and Abdulkadir Efendi, who was the sheikh of Beşiktaş Mevlevihane. There were three representatives from the Khalwati Order; Şikarizade Ahmet Efendi, who was the sheikh of Kocamustafa Paşa lodge, Seyyid Ahmed Efendi from the tekke of Merkez Efendi and Şemdeddin Efendi, the sheikh of Uskudar Nasuhi lodge. Apart from them, Balmumcu Mustafa Efendi from the tekke of Eyüp Idrisköşkü and Hafız Ahmed Efendi the keeper of Beşiktaş Yahya Efendi shrine represented the Naqshbandi Order. Two Jelveti sheikhs; Şihab Efendizade Seyyid Efendi Efendi from the Hüdai lodge and Mehmed Galip Efendi from the Haşim Efendi lodge also attended to the *Meşveret* council. Moreover, the Sadi Order was represented by the sheikh of Kovacı lodge; Emin Efendi.¹⁰⁹ The Qadiri and the Shadhili *tariqas* were also represented by one sheikh each, whose names do not appear in the sources and chronicles.¹¹⁰

This meeting became the first step towards the abolition of the Bektashi Order, as it formed a tripartite coalition between the state, orthodox scholars and Sunni *tariqas*.¹¹¹ By the invitation of *tariqas* to the *Meşveret*, it was aimed to justify the prohibition of

¹⁰⁷ Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, pp. 650-651. Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12 p. 183.

¹⁰⁸ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 64.

¹⁰⁹ Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p.181., Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, pp. 648-49.

¹¹⁰ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 63-66.

¹¹¹ Fatma Sel Turhan, *The Abolition of the Janissary Army and Its Reflections*, (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University), p. 142.

another religious order, which had strong connections with the society. Moreover, it became an ecclesiastic council in the sense that the discussions intensified mostly on religious issues, especially unorthodox Bektashi teachings. The meeting started with an opening speech of the Sheikh al-Islam by making a distinction between contemporary Bektashis and spiritual leaders of the *tariqa*. After insisting on the piousness of Hacı Bektash and former leaders of the Bektashi Order respectfully, Sheikh al-Islam defined contemporary Bektashis as ignorant, who don't obey their religious duties and even underestimate worship. After the opening speech, he asked the members of the commission for their opinions. Each member expressed their opinions about the Bektashis' unorthodox teachings and whether they should be accused of *ilhad* (atheism) or not. Contrary to the sheikhs, the scholars defined Bektashis as "non-believers" hesitatingly.¹¹² Thus, there was no consensus among the members of the council. While some stayed neutral by saying "we have no acquaintance with them"¹¹³ some expressed their opinions against Bektashis. Among opposite ideas, the most incriminatory words were used by Melekpashazade Abdulkadir Efendi, the judge of Medina: Cevdet Pasha says that while miracles of Bektashi saint Karaca Ahmed was told, Melekpashazade Abdulkadir Efendi denied Karaca Ahmed saintliness and said "if he is a saint, then he should distort me now"¹¹⁴

It is interesting that although the Bektashis were accused of being responsible for the Janissaries' actions, Bektashi-Janissary affiliation seems not to have been discussed in the *Meşveret*. Discussions intensified on the unorthodox Bektashi faith instead, which most probably came from the dominance of *ulama-sheikhs* in the meeting. Furthermore, their argument about the Bektashi faith focused on specific names and places. Kıncı Baba, İstanbul Ağasızade Ahmed and Salih Efendi were the main names discussed because they were accused of eating during Ramadan, not praying and cursing caliph Abu Bakr and

¹¹² Although Soyzer and Haksever insist that Sheikh al-Islam Tahir Efendi was not a supporter of the decision made about Bektashis, it seems his opening speech that made a distinction between contemporary Bektashis and Hacı Bektash and former Bektashis shaped the discussion. Haksever, "Osmanlı Son Döneminde Islahatlar ve Tarikatlar: Bektaşilik ve Nakşibendilik Örneği", *Ekev Akademi Dergisi*, vol. 38, p. 41. also, Soyzer, "Osmanlı Devletinin Son Yüzyılında Bektaşilik, Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılışı ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları" *Araştırmalar*, vol. 2, p. 46.

¹¹³ Esad Efendi *Üss-i Zafer*, pp. 173-74.

¹¹⁴ Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 183. Melekpashazade Abdulkadir was a member of Beşiktaş Science Community and he was later accused of Bektashism and exiled with two other members of the community. By using stern words through the discussion, he might have wanted to show himself as opposed to the Bektashi Order and aimed at gaining the Sultan's favor.

Umar.¹¹⁵ At the end of the meeting, the main question that had to be answered was whether Bektashis should be punished individually or collectively. Previous Sheikh al-Islam Yasincizade finalized the discussion by articulating that it is lawful politically to punish Bektashis collectively. In this way, Yasincizade might have tried to win the Sultan's favor, who was listening to the discussions behind the cage.¹¹⁶ It was concluded that Kıncı Baba, Istanbul Ağasızade Ahmed and Salih should be executed and the others should be exiled.¹¹⁷ Moreover, apart from the lodges older than 60 years, all Bektashi lodges were decided to be demolished. It was also decided that in order to rehabilitate the Bektashi confession, an investigation needed to be carried about babas and dervishes in these lodges and they should be banished to Hadim, Birgi and Tire where orthodox ulama was strong.¹¹⁸ Results and decisions of *Meşveret Majlis* were presented to the Sultan by the grand vizier right after the meeting.¹¹⁹

The first imperial edict of the prohibition of the Bektashi Order was issued on July 10, 1826.¹²⁰ The Sultan's decree, which was also justified by Sheikh al-Islam's fatwas¹²¹, defines Bektashis as *guruh-ı melahide*. In addition to the decisions *Meşveret*, the Sultan emphasized the importance of the dissolution of the Janissary Corps and Janissaries' affiliation with the Bektashi Order. Because of their increasing numbers day by day,

¹¹⁵ Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 6, p. 2968.

¹¹⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapıkulu Ocakları*, vol. 1 p. 569.

¹¹⁷ BOA, HAT; 290/17351, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12 p. 182. *Üss-i Zafer*, p. 174.

¹¹⁸ Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, p. 649. Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 182.

¹¹⁹ BOA, HAT; 290/17351. According to grand vizier's writing; The situation is described as some *mülhid*, *ibahi* and *rafizis*, who left the religious duties gathers in Bektashi lodges around Uskudar, Eyüp and Boğazici. They gather in mourning nights (10th of Muharrem) to perform *ayin-i Cem*, where they scorn *sahaba* (companions of Muhammad). Moreover, they poisoned minds of many ignorant people and left the right path. For the peace of subject, they should be punished and their faith must be corrected. In that respect, six of them were imprisoned now. Apart from, Kıncı Baba, Salih Efendi and Istanbul Ağasızade Ahmed, Kapan veznedarı (cashier) Aziz, Haremeyn Veznedarı Arif and Balcıyokuşluzade were imprisoned. Except Balcıyokuşluzade, other two names were exiled.

¹²⁰ BOA, *ibid*, the abolition edict was written with the Grand vizier's conclusion of the meeting. By attaching the conclusion of meeting, it seems Mahmud aimed to justify all decision processes and show the opinions of sheikhs to the public.

¹²¹ In that respect, two fatwas by Sheikh al-Islam Tahir Efendi and one by former Sheikh al-Islam Ataullah Efendi were issued. The fatwa of Tahir Efendi justifies the confiscation of Bektashi properties. "*Selatin-i maziyyeden Zeyd bazı kara ve mezairi-i temellükk ve vakf ve gallelerini bir zaviyede şeyh olanlar ile bu zaviyede hucuratında sakin olanlara şart u tayin buyurup bir müddet mezburlar galle-i vakf-i merkumeye mutasarrıflar iken fevt olup ol zaviyede şeyh ve hucuratında sakin olanlar ehl-i bid'at, medhen-i hamr ve fıskdan olmasalar hala Padişah-ı İslam hazretleri galle-i merkumeyi cihet-i uhraya sarfa kadir olur mu? El-cevab: Olur.*" Cited in Ahmet Rıfıkı Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol.1. p. 194.

Bektashis could not be tolerated anymore and it was time to get rid of them. It also states that the investigation should start with the Istanbul lodges.¹²² On the other hand, it was stated that all their dervishes and babas should be questioned and the grand vizier needs to run the process with ultimate care. The abolition first started in the capital and then extended to the Balkans and Anatolia and resulted in the demolition of lodges, confiscation of properties and the prosecution of Bektashis.

Sultan Mahmud II tended to secure social and religious legitimization for the decision of abolition by frequent references to the *Meşveret* discussions. In that respect, he highlighted sentences like “according to the decision made in yesterday's *Meşveret*”¹²³ or “as it was discussed in the commission”¹²⁴ On the other hand, he tried to accelerate the process by forcing the grand vizier to finalize the abolition.¹²⁵ Moreover, it seems the edict served as a mobilization and motivation instrument for Sultan Mahmud.¹²⁶ He made use of orthodox Islam to mobilize society and motivate the officers who were tasked with the demolishing of Bektashi lodges. Unsurprisingly, this use of religious legitimization through the accusation of the Bektashi of practicing unorthodox Bektashi faith appears in almost all archival documents.

I.3. Implementation of the Abolition

In the first phase of the process, the decision of abolition was implemented quickly in Istanbul before extending it into Balkans and Anatolia. In spite of the lack of information in archival sources, it seems that the operation took the form of sudden assaults against which the Bektashis could not show any resistance in Istanbul.¹²⁷ As soon

¹²² BOA, HAT; 290/17351.

¹²³ “*Düinkü gün akd olunan meclis-i suranın kararına mutazammin*” BOA, HAT; 290/17351.

¹²⁴ “*mecliste müzakere olunduğu üzere*” BOA, Mühimme Asakir, no. 26, p. 61. Cited in Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 77.

¹²⁵ “*bundan böyle gevşetilmeyip Şeyhülislam ile haberleşerek Bektaşîlerin temizlenmesine ve ele geçenlerin kıyafetlerini layıkıyla tetkik ederek haklarında ne şekilde tedbir alınması bildirilirse, bunu hemen icra edesin.*” BOA, HAT; 293 314/19475. “*bu makule mülhid ve zenadika itikadında çok kişi vardır ve henüz layıkıyla temizlenemedi, bu sebeble bundan böyle yine ihtimamla araştırılmalarına gayret olunsun.*” BOA, HAT; 293/17438. Cited from Maden, *ibid*, p. 79.

¹²⁶ He also called himself “Emir al-Muminin” and “Padişah-i Islam” in this edict. Abu Manneh, “1826’da Nakşibendi Müceddidi ve Bektaşî Tarikatları” p. 127.

¹²⁷ Contrary to Istanbul, where the process was under control and done quickly, some Bektashis resisted in provinces. For instance, Esad Baba protested the demolishing a tekke in Rumelia. He was arrested in Manastır as he was thought

as the decree was issued, three Bektashis, Kıncı Baba, İstanbul Ağasızade Ahmed Efendi and Salih Efendi, who had been sentenced to death, were beheaded on the 10th of July.¹²⁸ Apart from them, the sheikh of Yedikule, Hüseyin Baba and sheikh of Camlıca, Mehmed Baba were also executed.¹²⁹ The state used executions as an intimidation policy starting from the beginning.¹³⁰ The real method of the state in dealing with the Bektashis was rather exile compared to how they dealt with the Janissaries.

Apart from the few executed Bektashis, the rest of Bektashi babas were decided to be exiled.¹³¹ In this respect, Mahmud Baba, who was the sheikh of the Şehitlik Tekke was exiled to Kayseri with his six companions.¹³² Ahmed Baba, who was the sheikh of the tekke of Oküzlimanı and Hüseyin Baba from the tekke of Mehmed Baba in Yedikule were exiled to Hadim. Ibrahim Baba, who was assumed to be the representative of Hacı Bektash and lived in the Karaağaç lodge with his eight dervishes, Mustafa Baba from the tekke of Bademli in Südlüce, Mustafa Baba, who was the baba of Karyağdı lodge in Eyüp with three dervishes, were banished to Birgi. Moreover, Yusuf Baba, who was the guest in Karaağaç lodge was exiled to Amasya while Ayintabi Mustafa Baba, another guest of Karaağaç lodge was exiled to Güzelhisar. Apart from them, Mehmed Baba, the brother of Kıncı Baba, the other Mehmet Baba, who resided in the Tahir Baba lodge, another Mehmed baba from Merdivenköy with his four Bektashi dervishes, and Mustafa baba, the sheikh of the tekke of Mürüvvet Baba, were banished to Tire.¹³³

With the first exiles, the process of demolishing Bektashi lodges started in Uskudar before extending to the whole city. The lodges less than sixty years old were

to start a rebellion against the state. For detailed information see, Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 86-87.

¹²⁸ BOA, HAT; 290/17351. Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, p. 649.

¹²⁹ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 85-86.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 89.

¹³¹ In the records, reasons why Bektashis were sent to exile given as *rıfz* and *ilhad* (being Shi'ite and non-believer), not fasting during Ramadan, not praying, drinking alcohol, making unlawful things to lawful, acting against religion, having behaviors that deviated them from Islam and made them infidels. *Ibid*, p. 93.

¹³² Differently, Günay Kut and Edhem Eldem state that Mahmud Baba was exiled to Kütahya. Kut and Eldem, *Rumelihisarı Şehitlik Dergahı Mezar Taşları*, İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayinevi, 2010, pp. 48-49.

¹³³ *Ağalar eyledi cehime sefer, Çaldı Bektaşilerde göç borusun*. Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, pp. 176-77.

demolished.¹³⁴ While most Bektashi buildings were demolished, unmovable *waqf* properties were seized by the state. In the process, some of them were transferred to other *waqfs* while some others were left to heirs. Alternatively, some other Bektashi properties were rented and their income was transferred to the treasury.¹³⁵ The decision to expropriation Bektashi properties was extended to the provinces in the second council that was held on the 1st of August.¹³⁶ For carrying out the abolition, Hacı Ali Bey, who was the minister of Tophane-i Amire, was assigned to Rumelia with Pirlepeli Ahmed Efendi in his company. Moreover, Cebecibaşı Ali Bey and Çerkeşli Mehmed Efendi as assistants were appointed to fulfill this mission in Anatolia.¹³⁷ These officers were responsible for the demolition of lodges, confiscation or renting of properties, recording and transferring incomes to the state treasury.

The same abolition process in Istanbul was applied in the Balkans and Anatolia.¹³⁸ Lodges were closed down by razing or converting their buildings to mosques and madrasas. Bektashi babas and dervishes in those lodges were exiled; *waqfs* were seized; and movable properties were confiscated in order to contribute the budget of the new army. Since Bektashi lodges were more widespread in the Balkans, the implementation of the decree started there. The wealthiest tekke of Rumelia, Kızıldeli (Seyyid Ali Sultan) lodge, became the first abolished one, whose *Meydan odası* (the main room) was razed while other buildings were converted to a mosque and a school. Its dervishes were banished and properties were confiscated. The income was ordered to be transferred to the treasury of the new army.¹³⁹ Ninety three Bektashi lodges, including Kızıldeli, were closed down in the Balkans.¹⁴⁰ While some of them were razed to the ground, the rich

¹³⁴ According to Birge, the following tekkes were razed to the ground: Rumeli Hisar, Öküz Limanı, Kara Ağaç, Yedikule, Sütlüce, Eyüp, Üsküdar, Merdivenköy and Çamlıca. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 77.

¹³⁵ BOA, HAT, 293/17453. For detailed information about demolished Bektashi lodges in Istanbul, see Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 109-112.

¹³⁶ Turhan, *The Abolition of the Janissary Army and Its Reflections*, p. 147.

¹³⁷ These officers could not carry out the abolition process from beginning to end. New officers were appointed. Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, p. 177-178. Ayar, *Bektaşîlikte Son Nefes*, pp. 54-55.

¹³⁸ There were Bektashi lodges in Crete and Bagdad that were also closed down according to the edict.

¹³⁹ Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, p.183.

¹⁴⁰ For the names of lodges closed down in Balkans see Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 375-77.

properties of others were expropriated.¹⁴¹ On the other hand, sixty two Bektashi lodges were recorded in Anatolia as closed down.¹⁴² The same procedure of abolition in Rumelia was implemented those in Anatolia. Again, in addition to demolishing lodges, the confiscated properties of the wealthiest lodges like the tekke of Abdal Musa channeled its income to the army of *Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediyye*.¹⁴³ Among the Bektashi lodges in Anatolia, the tekke of Hacı Bektash was exempted from the common abolition procedure even though it was the wealthiest and the most important lodge. It is understood that the state did not aim to erase Bektashism with its legacy and heritage completely. Moreover, the abolition of the tekke of Hacı Bektash might have triggered more problems like riots. Instead, it was less risky and a more efficient and smooth solution to take the tekke from Bektashis and give it to Naqshibandis.

The prohibition of the Bektashi Order was not a total eradication of the Bektashi population and heritage. Instead, given the results of the abolition, the main motivation of the state seems to have been suppressing the Order through sunnization. All it defended since the beginning was that the contemporary Bektashism was a type of corrupted Bektashism, which had moved away from the original teaching of Hacı Bektash. Therefore, their faith should have been corrected. Besides, the term “corruption” seems to have been used for Bektashis and the Janissaries in a similar way.¹⁴⁴ In other words, it seems that it became a tool of abolition that let the state categorize the Janissaries and the Bektashis together. Therefore, the Bektashi lodges that were less than sixty years old were demolished completely. The limit of sixty years was probably the limit of contemporary Bektashism, to which the state always referred. Contrary to the sixty year-old lodges, the venerable lodges that were larger complexes were decided to be converted to mosques or madrasas to amalgamate them easily with Sunni orthodoxy. For instance,

¹⁴¹ Their total recorded land was 74.749 dönüm. Ibid. p. 115.

¹⁴² Ibid, p. 377-78.

¹⁴³ According to Faroqhi, the state’s total income from confiscations in the tekke of Abdal Musa was 64.747 guruş. Faroqhi, *Anadoluda Bektaşilik*, p. 109.

¹⁴⁴ “Kızıl Elma kapısının fetederken nacağı,
Ne revadır bozula Hacı Bektaş ocağı” Soyger, “Osmanlı Devletinin Son Yüzyılında Bektaşilik, Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılışı ve Bektaşiliğin Yasaklı Yılları”, p. 38.

the tekke of Kandiye¹⁴⁵ in Crete and the Kızıldeli lodge in Dimetoka were converted to mosques whereas the tekke of Seyyid Gazi in Eskişehir was transformed into a madrasa.¹⁴⁶ However, state policy regarding Bektashi lodges was not only restricted to the conversion of buildings; it also aimed to take sustainable control and facilitate the permanent sunnitization by appointing sheikhs from different Sunni *tariqas*. Among these *tariqas*, there were Naqshbandi, Qadiri, Rufai, Sa'di, Mevlevi, Khalwati, Bayrami and Gülşeni orders. However, the state mostly appointed Naqshbandi sheikhs to the majority of Bektashi lodges. Even the two important lodges of Anatolia, the tekke of Hacı Bektash and the tekke of Abdal Musa, were given to Naqshbandis. In 1835, the Naqshbandi sheikh Kayserili Mehmed Said Efendi was assigned as the sheikh of the tekke of Hacı Bektash to practice Naqshbandi rituals in the tekke.¹⁴⁷ Appointing Naqshbandi sheikh nine years after the abolition shows that the process that started in the center reached the periphery only gradually. On the other hand, it seems that the Naqshbandis had been appointed to wealthiest and important lodges for a long time after the abolition since they were given the task of sunnitiing Bektashis and became a successful partner of the state.

I.4. Prosecution of Bektashis

In fact, the larger part of the abolition was exile rather than execution. Many Bektashi sheikhs and dervishes as well as the people who were thought to be Bektashi sympathizers were relocated in that respect. After being arrested and imprisoned in Darphane, the Bektashis of Istanbul were questioned by Sheikh al-Islam according to Sunni *akaid*s (doctrine). Some of them were believed to have Sunni faith and released. However, it was decided that Bektashis generally practiced *taqiyya* (religious disguising) and all were decided to be banished to the places where Sunni scholars were influential. Starting from Istanbul, Bektashi babas and dervishes in Anatolia and Rumelia were relocated.¹⁴⁸ The sheikh of tekke of Hacı Bektash, Hamdullah Chelebi was sent to

¹⁴⁵ BOA, HAT; 293/17474B. According to the decree, because of not having any mosques in Crete, people could not learn Sunni-Hanafi doctrine. Therefore, the tekke of Kandiye was decided to be converted to a mosque for the purpose of spreading Sunni orthodoxy.

¹⁴⁶ Ayar, *Bektaşilikte Son Nefes*, p. 74.

¹⁴⁷ Hür Mahmut Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. yüzyıl)*, p. 479.

¹⁴⁸ For detailed information about exiles in provinces see Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 92-105.

Amasya in 1827.¹⁴⁹ Although his position was filled by Chelebi Veliyyüddin Efendi, the Chelebi was also banished to Sivas after the state's abrogation of Chelebi's position in 1834 and the tekke of Hacı Bektash was left to the Naqshbandi sheikh Mehmed Said Efendi.¹⁵⁰

According to an edict, the prosecution of Bektashis and Janissaries was done together. Upon the reporting of the infiltration of the Janissary-supporting Bektashi officers in the new army, 800 of them were deported to Chios, Lesbos, and Bozcaada.¹⁵¹ Consequently, the aim of interrogations was not only to understand the faith of Bektashis, but also rule out the possibility of contra-movements by Janissaries. The interrogation stage seems to have been carried out strictly as the Sultan wanted to suppress the idea of the revival of the Janissary Corps inside the army of *Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediyye*. According to Uzunçarşılı, it was denounced that a rebellion was being planned by Bektashi Lüleci Ahmed and some of his companions for the resurrection of the Janissary Corps and the Bektashi Order. As a result, these Bektashis were subjected to interrogation. Since the plan of the revolt was understood, the examination was extended.¹⁵² The idea of a revival seems to have caused a serious fear in the upper echelons of the state. Thus, the grand vizier and Sheikh al-Islam were tasked by the Sultan to carry out the process carefully. Even the Sultan himself urged the grand vizier plenty of times to carry out the process with ultimate care.¹⁵³

Of course, the special meaning assigned to the incidents of 1826 by the state and the following practices such as exile orders resulted in a considerable increase of denunciations which almost took the form of witch-hunting. As Cevdet Pasha insists that accusing someone of Bektashism became a common tool of exploit for their rivals.¹⁵⁴ Three members of the Beşiktaş Science Community were charged with Bektashism and

¹⁴⁹ BOA, HAT; 501/24588-D. Hamdullah Chelebi spent the rest of his life in Amaya and died in there in 1842.

¹⁵⁰ As cited in Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 92.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, p. 96.

¹⁵² Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatından Kapıkulu Ocakları*, vol. 1, p. 594.

¹⁵³ BOA, HAT; 293/17438.

¹⁵⁴ Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 183. Turhan, *The Abolition of Janissary Army and Its Reflection*, p.144.

exiled even though one of them was the most ardent opponent of Bektashis in the *Meşveret* council. Apart from them, Murat Mollazade Arif was also accused in this way and exiled to Aydın Güzelhisar.¹⁵⁵ As Ahmed Rıfkı said, Bektashi persecution became an opportunity for some people to harm and get rid of their rivals.¹⁵⁶ This condemnation mechanism was used even in *tariqas*. For instance, seven sheikhs from different *tariqas* in Usküdar were charged with Bektashism and exiled.¹⁵⁷ The reaction of the Bektashis against the harsh prosecutions was mostly to disappear from the scene by disguising. Cevdet Pasha says that Bektashis changed their clothes and there were no Bektashi remaining.¹⁵⁸ However, the Bektashi prosecutions never finished and continued even after the reign of Mahmud II.

¹⁵⁵ Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12. p.183.

¹⁵⁶ Ahmed Rıfkı, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 2 p. 190.

¹⁵⁷ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp.104-105. Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. yüzyıl)*, p. 518.

¹⁵⁸ Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 183.

CHAPTER II

REVIVAL OF THE BEKTASHI ORDER AFTER 1826

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the state suppressed the Bektashi Order harshly in 1826 as demolishing lodges or transferring them to other Sunni orders; exiling Bektashi babas and dervishes and prosecuting them. As the outcome, they were forced to disguise themselves. However, the Bektashism had never vanished and recovered itself after a few decades. It is a general tendency to restrict the aftermath of 1826 to the state's affairs. Most related studies generalize the abolition to all of the 19th century which rarifies the understanding of today's Bektashism and Alevism totally. Even though they accept the Bektashi revival in the second half of the 19th century, they neglect to ask what kind of a revivalism it was and what boundaries it had. In that sense, the resurrection process of Bektashism is presenting us a gap in the existing literature. This chapter aims to examine the survival of Bektashism in the post-abolition period and to problematize the revival of the Order in the following fifty years after the abolition.

II.1. Questioning the Revival

Although some scholars consider that the revival of Bektashism started in the last years of Mahmud II,¹⁵⁹ scholars generally agree that the Bektashis reappeared only after the death of Mahmud II. According to Thierry Zarcone, the semi-renaissance of Bektashism had started and the Order became active again during the reign of Sultan Abdulmecid in 1839.¹⁶⁰ Birge insists that it is not clear when exactly Bektashis stopped disguising, reconstructed their lodges and gathered new dervishes. Yet, they captured significant strength by 1849 that was just twenty-three years after the abolition.¹⁶¹ The

¹⁵⁹ Ayar, *Bektaşilikte Son Nefes*, p. 66, Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 207.

¹⁶⁰ Thierry Zarcone, "Bektaşîliğin Rönesansı: Batı Karşısında Bir Mistik İdeoloji", *Nefes*, no: 34, p. 27. Cited in Soyzer, *19.yy'da Bektaşilik*, p. 75.

¹⁶¹ Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 79.

reason why Birge specifically emphasizes 1849 is based on a book which illustrates doctrines and practices of Bektashism confirmed by Mahmud Baba of Şehitlik Tekke in Rumeli Hisar. Moreover, as Birge refers, MacFarlane, who traveled in Ottoman lands between 1847-48, and published his account in 1850 says that his Bektashi companions insisted that the Bektashism were rapidly on the increase.¹⁶² Besides, he insists that the Bektashis were numerous around the Bursa plain.¹⁶³ Another prominent source of Bektashi studies, F.W. Hasluck states that the Bektashi Order had largely recovered by the fifties of the 19th century, and approximately one fifth of the population of Istanbul was supposed to be Bektashi at that time.¹⁶⁴

Köprülü argues that the Bektashi Order reactivated during the reign of the Sultan Abdulaziz.¹⁶⁵ On the other hand, Ahmet Yılmaz Soyyer marks 1848 as the starting date of the revival of the Order.¹⁶⁶ Although he indicates that the pressure over the Bektashi gradually decreased, it was in 1848 that the Bektashi recaptured the center lodge; the tekke of Hacı Bektash from Naqshbandi sheikhs.¹⁶⁷ Contrary to Soyyer, Maden points out that Bektashis reached their real freedom during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz. Yet, from 1832 onwards, Bektashis were more often pardoned, thereupon the reactivation of lodges started from this time.¹⁶⁸ While Küçük emphasizes that Bektashism resurrected in

¹⁶² Charles MacFarlan, *Turkey and Its Destiny*, vol. 1, London: John Murray, 1850, p. 497.

¹⁶³ Ibid, p. 501.

¹⁶⁴ Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam Under the Sultan*, vol. 1, İstanbul: İsis, 2000, pp. 160-161. Hasluck takes this information from Skarlatos Byzantios. He also gives the contemporary number of Bektashis in Albania as eight thousand.

¹⁶⁵ Fuat Köprülü, and Vasily Bartold, *İslam Medeniyeti Tarihi*, Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1984. p. 239. Moreover, Fuad Köprülü in his case study of "Mısır'da Bektaşilik" insists that the state's policy of destroying Bektashis was over between 1951 and 1965 and it became active again with the efforts of Hidiv Ismail Pasha in Egypt. See Köprülü, "Mısır'da Bektaşilik", *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 6, p. 28.

¹⁶⁶ Soyyer makes a periodization of the post-abolition period of Bektashi Order, which consists of three parts. He thinks the first period between 1826 to 1848, when Bektashis were under state pressure and continued to hide their identity. From 1848 to 1908 is called second period by him. In this period, the Order began to regain its power and the internal struggle for the leadership of the Order emerged between two branches of the Order. After the 1908, the Bektashi Order had faced the freest atmosphere since the 1826 and had close relations with members of the Union and Progress part. It even appeared as a substantial figure of the Albanian revolt. Soyyer, *19. Yüzyıl'da Bektaşilik*, pp. 53-108.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, pp. 78-79. Soyyer, insists that by 1848, Naqshbandi sheikhs had not stayed at the tekke of Hacı Bektash anymore. After the last Naqshbandi sheikh Mehmed Nuri Efendi, Çorumlu Hüsnü Baba became the *postnişin* of the tekke of Hacı Bektash.

¹⁶⁸ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşiliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 207-209.

the time of Bezm-i Alem Valide Sultan (d. 1853)¹⁶⁹ Varol implies that the revival of the Order had started in the 1840's. Yet, the activities of the Bektashi Order were mostly tolerated by the state during Sultan Abdulaziz's time even though it had not been officially recognized.¹⁷⁰ In that respect, despite the lack of consistency among Bektashi studies, they generally accept the reign of the Sultan Abdulaziz as the crucial period of the revival of the Bektashi Order.

The revival of the Bektashi Order seems to be less questioned among historians. More importantly, the boundaries of the revival vary according to historians' approach. While some historians see the revival as moderation of the state's prosecution efforts, some explain it by the regaining of lodges and stopping *taqiyya* performance. Based on perception, one can assume that the Bektashi Order started its recovering just in the reign of Mahmud II since some Bektashi sheikhs were pardoned by the sultan. However, designating an initial point for revival might be problematic, as it was not officially recognized again. Furthermore, it seems hard to make a clear cut separation between Bektashi oppression and Bektashi resurrection throughout the 19th century, which means they intertwined with each other. While the state could tolerate some Bektashi babas and lodges, it could continue to prosecute some others with the same motivation as in 1826. Therefore, "toleration" should not be fully explicated as "revival" or "recognition". Even though there was not any clear starting point of the revival of the Bektashi Order, it can be said that the Bektashis had gradually become visible since the 1840's and reached considerable prestige and continued to be linked with the state unofficially in the second half of the 19th century. Yet, their reintegration into society mostly increased during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz, especially in the 1860's and 1870's.

II.2. Boundaries of the Revival

II.2.1 Toleration

How did Bektashism survive in its clandestine years? This question drives us to account 1826 as an unsuccessful attempt. Moreover, it brings another question: why could not the state achieve the destruction of Bektashism? As the previous chapter discusses, since it was attached to the Janissaries, the abolition of the Bektashi Order was regulated

¹⁶⁹ Küçük, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Bektaşiler*, p. 38.

¹⁷⁰ Varol, *Bektaşiliğin Ilgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları*, pp. 61-62.

according to potential Janissary danger. Yet, this does not mean that state did not carry a specific Bektashi policy throughout the abolition process. Its suppression policy turned to selective oppression in time. Controlling Bektashis by way of sunnitization became one exertion of the state. What is more, dictating Sunni orthodoxy continued throughout the 19th century, which means the state pushed them to keep their teachings alive by performing *taqiyya*. They disguised by removing their Bektashi clothes and joining other *tariqas*. However, it might be problematic to conclude that all Bektashis hid their identities. It seems that the abolition could not be implemented in all parts of Anatolia and the Balkans as the same proportion. As it is thought it reached the periphery gradually, it might not have been easy to relocate Bektashis in some regions. This means that Bektashis felt the effects of abolition in different proportions. Thus, some might not need *taqiyya*. It seems that *taqiyya* was performed by Bektashis, who felt the pressure of the state directly in some provinces, particularly in Istanbul.

In addition, Bektashis lived under different Sunni orders by showing themselves as members of these orders, Although Maden insists that they mostly existed inside the Mevlevi Order¹⁷¹, Varol counters him by saying that they mostly survived in the Naqshbandi Order.¹⁷² When it is thought that majority of lodges were passed to the Naqshbandi Order, it might be more sensible to think that Bektashis stayed among Naqshbandis. However, hostility between Bektashis and Naqshbandis might push Bektashis to take the shelter of the Mevlevi Order. If the Bektashis' excessive efforts to survive are imagined, it can be thought that the Bektashi Order had more activities in its clandestine years than previous centuries.¹⁷³ According to Işın, Bektashism in Istanbul reemerged in three different walks of life in its clandestine years. One of these was in coffeehouses and firefighter corps (*tulumbacı*), which were continuations of the Janissary culture and revived after the *Tanzimat*. Another was the urban middle or upper class Bektashis, who tried to regain their lodges and bound them under the umbrella of the *tariqa*. The last social base of Bektashis in 19th-century Istanbul was civil and military

¹⁷¹ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 200.

¹⁷² Varol, *Bektaşîliğin İlgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁷³ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 301.

bureaucracy.¹⁷⁴ It is debatable at what extent did Bektashis exist in these grounds and what specific efforts did these social bases spend in the revival process.

In that context, the revival of the Bektashi Order could stay within state-prescribed proportions, which means it was a restricted revival. It seems that offensive state policy toward Bektashism started to soften by the pardoning of exiled. While some Bektashis were forgiven during Mahmud II, some had to wait until his death.¹⁷⁵ It was an interesting landscape, in which the state on the one hand continued to enlarge the abolition, on the other hand, could forgive Bektashis. It seems that pardoning started just a few months after the implementation of the abolition. For instance, Bektashi Ismail, who had a coffeehouse in Usküdar and Canbaz Nazif were accused of contemporary Bektashism (*zamane Bektaşılığı*) and sent to exile in Güzelhisar. Yet one year later, pardon was requested for them since Canbaz Nazif was dead and Ismail corrected his faith. It is understood that Ismail was forgiven with the petition of Mufti of Güzelhisar.¹⁷⁶ Apart from that, Mahmud Baba, the sheikh of Şehitlik lodge in Rumeli Hisar was forgiven in 1832.¹⁷⁷ Mahmud Baba could return to his tekke since it was decided that his faith was corrected. Moreover, two Bektashis; Sarachane Dellalı Ahmed and his companion Çedikçi Hafız Hüseyin from Yenikapı, who had been exiled to Bayındır were absolved by the decision of a council that consisted of Sunni scholars of Bayındır in 1833.¹⁷⁸ Again, correction of the faith and following the Sunni orthopraxy became the prerequisite of their return.

¹⁷⁴ Ekrem Işın, “Bektaşılık”, *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 2, pp. 136-37.

¹⁷⁵ I shall state that common people who were accused of Bektashism could be forgiven after a brief time. Especially, members of the Beşiktaş Science Community returned to their position in a short time. For instance, Melekpaşazade Abdulkadir Efendi returned to Istanbul in 1827, Ferruh Efendi stayed in exile just for four months and his exile place was changed to Kadıköy. Şanizade Ataullah was also forgiven after two mounts of his exile. Yetiş, “Beşiktaş Cemiyet-i İlmîyesi”, *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, p. 533.

¹⁷⁶ ...merkum her vechle ıslah-ı nefis ve tashih-i itikad etmiş ve müddet-i ikameti bir seneyi tecavüz ettiklerinden ...merkum İsmail bendelerinin afv ve ıtlak hususuna mücade-i seniye-i hüsvane erzan ve inayet buyrulmak niyazıyla... BOA, C.ZB; 17/843.

¹⁷⁷ Mahmud Baba was evaluated by Naqshbandi sheikhs in terms of his faith and loyalty to the state. Moreover, he got an *icazetname* (permission) from the Naqshbandi Order and stayed in Şehitlik tekke until his death. Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 205.

¹⁷⁸ ...Ehl-i Sünnet üzere amil ve zümre-i mergube-i ashab-ı salaha hahil olarak itikad-ı sabıkalarından feragat etmek ve ale'l-husus müddet-i nefî ve iclaları yedi seneye karib olub ol-vechle şayan-ı merhamet olmuş oldukları beyanıyla afv u ıtlakları hususunu... BOA, HAT; 512/25094D.

Moreover, Mehmed Hamdullah Chelebi as the *postnişin* of the tekke of Hacı Bektash was exiled to Amasya. He sent petitions to the sultan and asked for forgiveness and permission to return to Kırşehir.¹⁷⁹ The state approved his petition in 1840.¹⁸⁰ Likewise, it was underlined that Hamdullah Chelebi corrected himself (*ıslah-ı nefis*) and he was allowed to return in case he did not claiming a sheikh's position.¹⁸¹ What is common in the cases of all forgiven Bektashis is the emphasis on the correction of faith (*tashih-i itikad*), (*ıslah-ı nefis*) and loyalty to the state. As it was the original purpose of sending someone to exile, Bektashis were aimed to be sunnitized. Therefore, only those Bektashis, who were believed to have Sunni faith and follow Shari'a practices could be released. Moreover, their banishment could be ended by obtaining an approval from the orthodox scholars of the region. After being forgiven, Bektashis continued to stay inside Sunni *tariqas* and even took *icazetnames* from them.¹⁸² It seems that keeping Bektashis on the circle of Sunni orthodoxy became the way of rehabilitation of Bektashism in society. In that respect, pardoning Bektashis seemed to normalize gradually with the vanishing of the Janissary danger and the state controlled the reintegration of the Bektashi Order by the mechanisms *tashih-i itikad*.

However, the state continued to pardon Bektashis by using the same mechanism after the *Tanzimat* era. For instance, Dervish Hacı Hasan, who had stayed in Karaağaç lodge was asked by his wife to be forgiven after spending many years in Amasya since he corrected his faith.¹⁸³ In addition, Ibrahim Baba, the sheikh of Karaağaç lodge was reported as "he was on Sunni faith" by the scholars of Birgi and later he was forgiven. Similar cases were seen in the beginning the reign of the Sultan Abdulaziz. In 1866, Bektashi Hasan Efendi was claimed to have ameliorated his faith by continuing to pray

¹⁷⁹ Hamdullah Chelebi underlined his miserable life and spending of 13 years in Amasya when he asked for forgiveness. Moreover his pardon was also supported by some officers. For instance, Esad Pasha, the governor of Halep asked the Sultan for his forgiveness. Soyyer, *19. Yüzyılda Bektaşılık*, p. 76. Moreover, Reşid Pasha, the governor of Sivas also supported his pardon. Varol, *Bektaşiliğin İlgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları*, p. 63.

¹⁸⁰ BOA, I. DH; 32/1518. Melikoff and Varol give the pardoning date of Hamdullah Chelebi as 1833. Melikoff, *Uyur İdik Uyardılar*, p.236. Also, Varol, *Bektaşiliğin İlgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları*, p. 63.

¹⁸¹ Soyyer, *19. Yüzyılda Bektaşılık*, p. 76.

¹⁸² Küçük, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Bektaşiler*, p. 37.

¹⁸³ ...*hal-i pür melalimize merhameten sadaka-i eser-i hümayun cenab-i padişahi olmak üzere zevcim merkurum kullarının dahi kayd-i nefyden afv u itlakı hususuna mücade-i seniyeleleri şayan buyrulmak babında...* BOA, C. ZB; 34/1680. Ayar, *Bektaşilikte Son Nefes*, p. 67.

five time and gaining public consent.¹⁸⁴ Therefore, Bektashis could return from exile in case they stayed in the orthodox Sunni circle. Pushing them to stay inside orthodox circle was how the state arrange their visibility on public sphere. Therefore, Bektashis probably never appeared wearing their own clothes until the second half of the 19th century.

Bektashi pardons gradually facilitated the process of the reactivation of lodges. Mahmud Baba, after he returned to Istanbul, rebuilt the Şehitlik lodge.¹⁸⁵ Bektashi lodges started to reopen during the reign of Sultan Abdulmecid. The Şahkulu Sultan lodge in Merdivenköy was brought back to life by Halil Revnaki Baba and Ahmed Baba in 1840.¹⁸⁶ It was claimed that the reopening of Şahkulu lodge was done with the help of Bezm-i Alem Sultan, the mother of Sultan Abdulmecid.¹⁸⁷ She became a great patron of the lodge. However, the Şahkulu Sultan lodge reached its prestigious days again with Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara in 1863.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, Bektashis started to reappear in society by gathering as communities. For instance, Harputlu Ishak Efendi reports that they gather on mansions by the participation of Ahmed Baba of Merdivenköy to read and discuss Bektashism.¹⁸⁹ The number of reopened Bektashi lodges increased, even new lodges were founded in Istanbul after 1826.¹⁹⁰ The emancipation process of Bektashi lodges continued and it reached its height after 1850 especially during Sultan Abdulaziz.

Sunni sheikhs, who were appointed to Bektashi lodges after 1826 mostly became unsuccessful when they tried to control Bektashi lodges and dervishes. Furthermore, some of these Sunni sheikhs even converted to Bektashism. For instance, Halil Revnaki

¹⁸⁴ Varol, *Bektaşiliğin İlgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları*, pp. 64-65.

¹⁸⁵ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşiliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 207.

¹⁸⁶ İbid, p. 207. While Şevki Koca insists that the Şahkulu lodge was reopened by Santuri Hacı Ahmed Nur Baba and with the patronage of Bezm-i Alem Valide Sultan in 1840, Gülay Yılmaz says that it was reopened by Ali Baba in 1839. Şevki Koca, *Bektaşilik ve Bektaşî Dergahları*, İstanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 2005, p. 20. Also, Gülay Yılmaz, "Bektaşilik ve İstanbul'daki Bektaşî Tekkeri Üzerine Bir İnceleme", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları / The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 45, p. 118.

¹⁸⁷ According to the story, she attributed her prestige to standing on a wish stone (dilek taşı) in the Merdivenköy lodge. Therefore, she respected to the lodge. Lucy Garnet, *Mysticism and Magic in Turkey*, London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd. 1912. p. 73-74.

¹⁸⁸ Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. yüzyıl)*, p. 496.

¹⁸⁹ Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşîfî'l Esrar ve Dağî'ü'l Esrar*, p. 10-12.

¹⁹⁰ For instance, Emin Baba reconstructed a tekke in Edirne Kapı with the support of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan. Zarcone, "Notes Liminaire, Sur Les Couvents Bektachis D'Istanbul" *Bektachîyya*, pp. 206-207.

Baba was originally from the Khalwati Order and he converted to Bektashism and reactivated the Merdivenköy lodge.¹⁹¹ Hasan Nazif Dede, the sheikh of Beşiktaş Bahariye Mevlevihanesi was another example of conversion.¹⁹² Another Bektashi sheikh Yaşar Baba was the former *zakir* of the Rufai Order.¹⁹³ Moreover, Taki Dede of Kerbela lodge was a Naqshbandi sheikh previously.¹⁹⁴ Besides, although, Sunni sheikhs had continued to be official sheikhs of Bektashi lodges, the moderate atmosphere allowed Bektashis to become de-facto owners of the lodges and claimers of their prestige. In that respect, Soyzer claims that the tekke of Hacı Bektash passed to Bektashis in 1848, while a Naqshbandi sheikh continued to stay there as a puppet. Ali Turabi Baba had stayed as *postinişin* of the lodge until his death in 1868. After his death, the tekke of Hacı Bektash faced the internal clash that occurred between the *Chelebi* and the *Babagan* branches.

The conflict between the *Chelebi* and the *Babagan* branches became another dimension of the revival of the Bektashi Order. Although the separation between these two branches commenced earlier than the abolition¹⁹⁵, it became definite since both *Babagans* and *Chelebis* claimed the leadership of the Order and the management of *waqfs* of the tekke of Hacı Bektash after the abolition.¹⁹⁶ For this reason, each party tried to gain the support of political authorities to increase their power and legitimacy in the late 19th and early 20th century. Yıldırım states that while the *Babagan* branch stayed close to ruling elites and the Young Turk movement, the *Chelebi* branch grew close ties to its Kızılbash base and established a link with leaders of the National Struggle.¹⁹⁷ Moreover, the clash became more apparent when a polemical discussion started over their writings. While Ahmed Rıfkı defended Bektashism and legitimized the *Babagan* branch by his

¹⁹¹ For more information about converted Sunni sheikhs see Soyzer, *19. Yüzyılda Bektaşılık*, pp. 63-64.

¹⁹² Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 201.

¹⁹³ Birge *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 248.

¹⁹⁴ Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. yüzyıl)*, p. 524.

¹⁹⁵ While *Chelebis* see themselves as “yol evladı” starting from Hacı Bektash, *Babagans* see themselves as “bel evladı” which was instituted by Balım Sultan. For detailed information about the clash of these two branches see Öztürk, *The Effects of the Abolition on the Bektashi Order*.

¹⁹⁶ Bedri Noyan, *Bütün Yönleriyle Bektaşılık*, vol. 1, pp. 318-319.

¹⁹⁷ Yıldırım, “Bektaşî Kime Derler?: ‘Bektaşî’ Kavramının Kapsamı ve Sınırları Üzerine Tarihsel bir Analiz Denemesi”, pp. 46-47.

book *Bektaşî Sırrı*, Cemaleddin Chelebi countered Ahmed Rıfki in his book *Bektaşî Sırrı Nam Risaleye Müdafâ'a*. Therefore, the internal struggle between Bektashism made Bektashis more conspicuous in society.

Bektashi lodges were handed over not only in Istanbul but also in Anatolia and Rumelia. Bektashis regained their lodges together with all their properties. For instance, sheikh Mustafa from Köstendil sent his petition to the sultan and demanded that the Hızır Baba lodge, which was in the hands of Kadı Mustafa Efendi and his son Said Efendi unfairly should be given to him because he had been there since age nine.¹⁹⁸ His claim proved successful and he regained the lodge. It seems, the biggest lodge of the Balkans, the Kızıldeli lodge began its activities again in the second half of the 19th century. By the turn of the century, it reached such considerable power that the tekke could affect thousands of people around it by way of its activities.¹⁹⁹ Similarly, it seems that Bektashis increased their influence in the Abdal Musa lodge after the 1870's. The lodge was reopened in 1874.²⁰⁰

The Bektashis' economic income was cut during the abolition. Nonetheless, the Bektashis seem to have sustained their financial bonds with the state. For instance, a Bektashi dervish named Seyyid Yusuf, who was employed in the Erzurum Customs Office could reach his total income of a year from the public revenue (*mukataa*) in 1828.²⁰¹ The state itself could also get Bektashi lodges repaired and support them financially in the clandestine years. A fair was to be organized in *Ruz-ı Hızır* to support poor people and Bektashi *postnişins* in addition to transferring some amount of *zebhiye*²⁰² tax to the lodges in 1843.²⁰³ Furthermore, the state assigned the governor of Edirne to implement the repair of the Mürsel Baba lodge in Dimetoka in 1854. All these examples indicate that the state's attitude toward Bektashis showed gradual moderation eventually.

¹⁹⁸ BOA, C. EV; 441/22348.

¹⁹⁹ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 233.

²⁰⁰ Gizem Kaşoturacak, *Dergah-ı Abdal Musa: A Heterodox Dervish Tekke Between the State and the People*, (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University), p. 56.

²⁰¹ ...*Derviş es-seyyid Yusuf Ali tarik-i Bektaşî[ye] varub uslub-ı sabık üzre tayin olunan yevmi sekiz akçe vazife-i sabık Erzurum tekye mukata'ası malından emin olanlar yedinden alub mutasarrıf ola...* BOA, C. EV; 151,7527.

²⁰² *Zebhiye* was a butchery tax that was taken according to each slaughtered animal.

²⁰³ A.)BOA, MKT; 6/34.

The state seems to have acted as the patron of lodges rather than making them autonomous.

Bektashi publications in the 19th century became another aspect of Bektashi revival.²⁰⁴ Although, it started simultaneously with the pardoning of Bektashis in 1830's, a real explosion of publications was seen during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz. Especially, the number of Bektashi publications sharply increased in 1870's. Many Bektashi classics were reprinted at that time. Among them, there was *Aşkname* or *Işkname* (1871), which was also known as *Cavidaname-i Sagir*. These publications were the most visible signs of the revival because they received a reaction from Sunni orthodoxy. Harputlu Hoca Ishak Efendi started a polemical discussion with his work *Kaşifü'l Esrar ve Dafi'ü'l Eşrar*, which blamed Bektashism with infidelity and Hurufism by using the same orthodox discourse of 1826. Bektashis defended themselves against his accusations, which will be examined in the third chapter.

Apart from publications, the Bektashi revival can be traced in Bektashi jokes. Some of Bektashi jokes directly refer to the clandestine years of the Bektashi Order and how Bektashis lived. Jokes support that Bektashis had close relations with high-level statesmen. For instance, according to a Bektashi joke, Damat Gürcü Halil Rıfat Pasha, the minister of commerce of Sultan Abdulmecid arranges a marriage for Malatyalı Lütfi Baba.²⁰⁵ Another joke indicates that Ahmed Baba²⁰⁶ participates in a meeting that was organized by the grand vizier Serasker Hüsrev Pasha in his mansion.²⁰⁷ Reopening of lodges and interaction with the state can also be seen in Bektashi jokes. While Gani Baba opened a Bektashi lodge in Divriği and his reputation spread in the region, he was

²⁰⁴ The number of Bektashi publications continued to increase after 1850's generally. Even though publication decreased during the Abdulhamid, it accelerated in the first quarter of 20th century particularly after 1909. For instance, Hacıbeyzade Ahmet Muhtar started to publish the *Muhibban* magazine in 1909, which had Bektashi propaganda. See, Kara, "Muhibban", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 31, pp. 34-35.

²⁰⁵ The jokes continue as, the mother in law died ten days after the marriage. In the funeral, Halil Rıfat Pasha asks Lütfi Baba "she must have done you a great favor, if you are crying so much" and Lütfi Baba answers "I will never forget her goodness, she never gave me hard times during her lifetime." Dursun Yıldırım, *Türk Edebiyatında Bektashi Fıkraları*, Ankara: Akçağ Yayınları, p. 164.

²⁰⁶ This Ahmed Baba is most probably that one Ishak Efendi refers to. See footnote 189.

²⁰⁷ Hüsrev Pasha puts a question to sheikhs about the existence of God. One of the Sunni sheikhs turns to Ahmed Baba and says, "If you can say where the God exists, I will give you a donkey, if you can't, I will tie you next to donkey." Upon this, Ahmed Baba answers "Thank you! But, you first say where the God does not exist, if you can't, I will make your headgear rope and tie you with this rope among the mules of the pasha." Ibid, pp. 231-232.

reported to the state. Gani Baba meets with the Sultan Abdulhamid without removing his Bektashi cap.²⁰⁸ Although it is hard to determine the historical consistency of jokes, it is certain that they carry some reality and show the Bektashi revival and its reintegration to society in the second half of the 19th century.

II.2.2. Selective Oppression

Bektashis were mostly reintegrated to society during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz. Although Bektashis sometimes applied to *Meclis-i Meşayih* to be recognized officially, their demand was refused by insisting that this decision was implemented since Mahmud II and the law cannot be contravened.²⁰⁹ Bektashis' demands of official recognition show that their *taqiyya* policy, which had been carried on since 1826 softened in the second half of the 19th century. Yet, it never ended. Because, the state continued its authoritarian policy upon the Bektashi Order by restricting their actions and not recognizing, most importantly continuing to oppress them by using Sunni orthodoxy. Therefore, the boundaries of the revival of Bektashism at least on the eyes of central authority was determined by how much they tolerated. It can be said that the state's Bektashi policy at this time was a soft control. The state restricted Bektashis by way of prosecution carried out with the same discourse as in 1826 if they display their Bektashism openly. While the state pardoned some Bektashis in 1840²¹⁰, it decided to exile Ibrahim Dede, who was the sheikh of the tekke of Ilbasan Hacılar Ceşmesi in the same year. Ibrahim Dede was accused of *rifz-u ilhad* by stating that he abuses the Quran, curses the prophet and his companion and acts against the Shari'a.²¹¹ Ibrahim Dede seems to be targeted since he revealed his Bektashism. Moreover, the abolition efforts continued

²⁰⁸ As the story goes, Gani Baba gains the sultan's favor because he makes him laugh. In return, the sultan grants him a piece of land in Divriği. Ibid, pp. 111-114.

²⁰⁹ Mustafa Kara, *Din, Hayat, Sanat Açısından Tekkeler ve Zaviyeler*, İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, pp.351-352. Despite this, there were sheikhs and lodges that were apparently Bektashis could be admitted by *Meclis-i Meşayih*. For instance, Abdullah Baba lodge, which was rebuilt on the place of Takyeci Baba lodge in Topkapı in 1908 was one of them. However, there seems no Bektashi lodge was officially recognized between during 19th century. Küçük, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Bektaşiler*, p. 38.

²¹⁰ BOA, C. ZB; 34/1680. Dervish Hacı Hasan, who was staying in Karaağaç lodge and exiled to Amasya was forgiven in 1840.

²¹¹ ...Bektaşî guruhundan zahiren tekve deyü halen içinde ikamet eden rafîzi ilhad guruhundan İbrahim dede ma'a-dervişleri dürlü dürlü habais ve itale-i lisan ve sebt-i kitab ve ashab ve Resulullah sallalahü aleyhi ve sellem hazretlerine sebt ve itale edüb şeriyat-ı Muhammediye'ye mugayir ve muhalif işleri aşikar olduğundan... BOA, C. ZB; 35/1717.

to be carried out like in 1826. For instance, the tekke of Sersem Ali Baba in Tekfurdağı was taken from Mehmed Reşid Baba and given to Naqshbandi sheikhs Hacı Hafız Mehmed Esad and Hafız Mustafa in 1839.²¹²

It seems that Bektashis were prosecuted in 1840 with the same discourse of 1826. The accusations, which Ibrahim Dede was charged with were basically derived from the official edict of abolition. In addition, a decree dated in 1840 shows the how abolition of the Bektashi Order was alive and how the state aimed to control it. It insists on the prosecution of Bektashis, who were gathering during *Aşura* night. It is understood that the Bektashis cooked *Aşure*, the holy soup and practiced *Ayin-i Cem*, where they were believed to act against Shari'a in the tenth of Muharrem. It stated that they should be dealt with and their *fisk-ı fucur* practices, which had existed since the past should be forbidden.²¹³ It seems that in about 1840, the state continued to restrict Bektashi activities by keeping them under pressure. Interestingly, like Bektashi toleration, Bektashi oppression increased in 1840, when Abdulmecid ascended the throne. The reason why the aggressive policy targeted the Bektashi Order might be that new sultan wanted to show his authority and emphasize his side on Sunni orthodoxy. Moreover, visibility of Bektashism increased with the death of Mahmud II. Yet, the state limited this visibility. Therefore, although prosecution of Bektashis was smoother than in Mahmud's time, the state's attitude toward the Bektashi Order mostly remained the same in Abdulmecid's time.

Obviously, it can be said that the state's pressure over the Bektashi Order was moderated and Bektashis reappeared in society in the second half of the 19th century. Yet, it must be known that their prosecution continued even when their revival was at its summit. The state had never allowed Bektashis to fully present themselves with their identity. For instance, a report of *Zaptiye Nezareti*, from 1852 demands to deal with the Bektashis who started to wear Bektashi clothes and whose number increased recently as they gathered people and corrupted them (*idlal*).²¹⁴ Moreover, prosecution of these

²¹² BOA, C. EV; 651/32819.

²¹³ ...*Merahim-i aliyelilerine mercudurki kadimde olageldiği vechle kaide-i atik ve sürüm-i ayin-i tarik üzre tekye ve zaviyelerde postnişin ve zaviyedar olanlar icabında kimesneyi idhal itmedigin ve fisk-u fesada müeddi halatdan ictinab iderken kendi tarik-i fukaralarımız ile olagelen ibadetlerine müdavim olmaları için tenbih ve teekidi havi ferman-ı aliyeye istar buyulmak babında emr-ü ferman...* BOA, C. EV; 312/15889.

²¹⁴ ...*Meclis-i Vala'ya lede'l-i ita zikr olunan kisanın öyle elbise-i Bektaşiyeye ile gezmeleri memnu idüğinden merkumların celbiyle bade'z-zinöyle elbise-i memnua ile gezmeleri ve herhalde kendü halleriyle meşgul olarak hilaf-ı*

Bektashis was assigned to four Sunni sheikhs of different *tariqas*, which means that the state wanted to sustain the stability and solve problems by using *tariqa* circles.²¹⁵ In 1863, the same demand for prosecution was made during Sultan Abdulaziz, the time that scholars believe as the freest period of Bektashism. The state emphasized that the Bektashi Order was still a banned order and those Bektashis, who apparently showed themselves with their special clothes, caps and accessories should be warned and arrested as the occasion requires.²¹⁶ The state's prescribed limit for Bektashism forced them to care while reappearing on public sphere. For instance, Nafi Baba tried to hide Bektashi symbols and wore a Bektashi cap that was covered with *ulama* headgear.²¹⁷ Furthermore, a Bektashi sheikh named Hüseyin Yaşar Baba was claimed to spread Bektashism in Akçahisar. Upon complaints, people demanded investigation against him. Consequently, Hüseyin Yaşar Baba was banished with the decision of the governor of Işkodra.²¹⁸ As archival sources indicate, the state continued to restrain Bektashis to show their Bektashism on public sphere in the second half of the 19th century.

In addition to exiles and prosecutions, the appointment of Sunni sheikhs to Bektashi lodges continued in the second half of 19th century. When the former Sa'adi sheikh died, the state designated another Sa'adi sheikh Ali bin Mustafa to Inci Baba lodge in Kaley-i Sultani in 1850.²¹⁹ Moreover, Şişko Mehmed Efendi lodge in Tırhala was given to Rufai sheikh Gazi Ali Baba with the consent of Sheikh al-Islam during Sultan Abdulaziz.²²⁰ Abdal Musa lodge, which was retaken by Bektashis in 1874 was given back

rıza bir güne uygunsuzluğa ihtiyar edememeleri için kendilerine itham-ı ekide icrası ve bu makulelerin öyle idlal-ı nassa cüret edememeleri hitamında... A.)BOA, MKT.NZD; 86/57.

²¹⁵ These four sheikhs were Ruşen Efendi who was the sheikh of Hudai Order, Yunus Efendi from tekke of Keşfi Cafer, Necati Efendi, who was the sheikh of tekke of Şah Sultan and Kudretullah Efendi, who was the sheikh of Galata Mevlevihanesi. Varol, *Bektaşiliğin İlgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları*, p. 66.

²¹⁶ *Malum-ı alileri buyrulduğu üzrebundan mukaddem Bektaşi tariki lağv kılınmış olduğu halde bu aralık bazı başı taçlı ve beli teslim taşlı ve eli nefirli Bektaşiler görülmekte olduğundan ve bunun ise merzâtı müselmandan bulunmadığından bade'z-zin o misillü kendüsüne Bektaşilik namını vererek heyet-i acibe ile gezmekte olan eşhasın görüldüğü anda tedbil-i kıyafet etmek için kendilerine hıyaban tebligat-ı müessire icrası ve...etmedüklerin suretde bade'l-icrabına bakılmak üzere kendülerinin ahz ve tevkifiyle keyfiyetin bab-ı aliye itham hususuna himmet buyrulmaları babında... A.)BOA, MKT.MHM; 265/4.*

²¹⁷ Kut and Eldem, *Rumelihasarı Şehitlik Dergahı Mezar Taşları*, pp. 55-56.

²¹⁸ BOA, MVL; 1017/43.

²¹⁹ Maden, *Bektaşi Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşiliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 194.

²²⁰ BOA, A.MKT.UM; 265/16. BOA, HR.MKT; 64/47.

to Naqshbandi sheikh in 1876.²²¹ Apart from that, the state aimed to restrict Bektashi publications, which became the most conspicuous sign of revival. Many Bektashi books were published in the 1870's. Especially, *Aşkname*, which was translated from *Cavidanname-i Sagir* by Firişteoğlu Abdülmecid and published in 1871²²² became a part of a polemics of Harputlu İshak Efendi. İshak Efendi's extensive propaganda must have been responded by the state. *Cavidanname* took the attention of the state that the state wanted to stop publications of *Cavidan* and *Hüsniye*, confiscated published ones, which even reached Crete and penalize the publishers.²²³ Therefore, Bektashis took the reaction of both state and Sunni orthodoxy as the outcome of the revival.

II.3. Why did the Bektashi Order revive?

The rehabilitation of the Order was done through the tolerations and ongoing oppression. Despite a constant pressure, the Order experienced a gradual revival starting from the last years of Mahmud II. To understand why the Order regained its power and prestige so quickly, it should be understood in what conditions the Bektashi Order survived and what factors played role in its rebirth.

Some scholars tie up the recovery of the Bektashi Order to its centralized *waqfs* and economic power.²²⁴ However, it is certain that Bektashis' properties became a triggering factor throughout the abolition, which means the state seized all *waqfs* and confiscated their properties. Thereby, Bektashis did not have enough economic autonomy to recover the Order. Instead, it is obvious that the revival of the Bektashi Order is directly related to the abolition itself. If it is thought that the Order recovered itself in a short span

²²¹ Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. yüzyıl)*, p. 491. The recapturing of the Musa lodge by Naqshbandis in 1876 started a struggle between Bektashis and Naqshbandi. The case gained a judiciary dimension and continued in the first decade of the 20th century.

²²² Çift, "1826 Sonrasında Bektaşilik ve bu Alanla İlgili Yayın Faaliyetleri", p. 255.

²²³ *İş bu tezkire-i samiye-i cenab-ı vekaletpenahileri melfuf tezkire ve risalelerle beraber meclis-i ma'arife lede'l-husus Hüsniye ile yine ol kabilden Validehanı'nda bir iki risale tab olunduğu günde tahkik ve istihbar olunması üzerine bunların neşrine meydan verilmemesi 2 numarolu Reb'ül Evvel [12]94 tarihli tezkire ile Dahiliye Nezareti celilesine yazıldığından bunların ve Cavidan'ın heman neşreden meni ve tabi'ileri hakkında muamele-i kanuniyenin icrası zimmında Zabtiye Nezareti celilesine işar-ı keyfiyet buyrulması lazımunun cevaben arz-ı meclis-i ...ifade olunmuş ve zikr olunan risaleler tevkif olarak tezkire-i mezkureye leffen iade kılınmış olmasıyla ol-babda... BOA, MF.MKT; 47/22. Another document says that ...Gerek bu Hüsniye ve gerek Cavidan ve emsali kütüb ve resailin men-i intişarı vacibeden olub bunun Girid'e kadar münteşir olması calib-i dikkat bulunmasıyla zabita ma'arifetiyle her dürlü taharriyata bi'l icra ele geçürülecek nüshalarının nezaret-i acizaneme irsaliyle beraber... BOA, MF.MKT; 50/139.*

²²⁴ Ocak, "Bektaşilik", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, p. 377.

of time, it can be easily concluded that the abolition of the Bektashi Order was not a serious attempt consequently. The primary aim of the state was the annihilation of the Janissaries. Since the prohibition of Bektashism remained in the shadow of the Janissary Corps, the applicability of the abolition depended on the existence of Janissary danger. In other words, the state's pressure gradually decreased and Bektashis found a more moderate environment for themselves. One can say that the state did not make enough effort to erase Bektashism completely. Keeping lodges, older than sixty years might have allowed Bektashis to survive in them easily. Yet, it should not be forgotten that the state strictly transferred their lodges to Sunni sheikhs and dissolved them in Sunni orthodox circles. Therefore, the aim was basically to suppress them rather than destroy them. Since the Janissary danger disappeared, the state's policy turned to soft control, which means Bektashis could survive unless they did not attract the attention of the state.

With related to vanishing of the Janissary danger, the prohibition of the Bektashism was not implemented everywhere in the same proportion. While the abolition was strictly implemented in Istanbul and certain areas of Anatolia and Rumelia, it seems it could not reach provinces effectively. For instance, the prohibition was not practiced in the Balkans totally and that made Bektashism consolidate in Balkans.²²⁵ Moreover, the implementation of the prohibition in small lodges in Anatolia and Balkans seem blurred and need to be studied extensively. If it is considered that the revival attempts were generally seen in places where abolition was implemented, it might never have reached small villages.

Beyond the extent of abolition, Bektashis, whose lodges were taken from and who were suppressed kept their Bektashism alive. After 1826, Bektashis hid their practices by presenting themselves as loyal followers of Sunni orthodoxy. Ahmed Safi insists on how *taqiyya* became a way that kept Bektashis alive by referring to them with these words “*we are clothes in the gap of Shari‘a to appear to the Yazids*”, which he attributed to them.²²⁶ Indeed, Bektashis kept practicing their beliefs inside Sunni *tariqas*. For them, *taqiyya*

²²⁵ The abolition was not implemented in Albania effectively. Bektashis in Albania remained undisturbed, which let them increase their number there. Albert Doja, “A Political History of Bektashism in Albania”, *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*. vol. 7, p. 87. Moreover, Fıđlalı states that the Bektashis chose Albania as a center for themselves after the 1826 attempt. Ethem Ruhi Fıđlalı, *Türkiye’de Alevilik Bektaşılık*, İstanbul: Selçuk Yayınları, 1991, p. 208.

²²⁶ “*Şeriatı büründük, Yezidilere göründük*” Ahmed Safi Bey, *Sefinetü’s-Safî*, vol.4, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Mikrofilm Arşivi, nr.2096, p. 361. cited in Maden, *ibid*, p. 196.

became a living mechanism. Even though some of them showed themselves among Sunni sheikhs and obtained Naqshbandi *icazetnames*, they used their position to reopen their lodges or perform Bektashism under the name of Sunni *tariqas*. Another *taqiyya* of Bektashism in the revival period was adopting a new name. In this time, the Bektashi Order started to be called “*Tarik-i Nazenin*”, which means beautiful path.²²⁷ Defining the Bektashi Order with *Tarik-i Nazenin* became one way for Bektashis to reintegrate in society. Since the term Bektashi was forbidden, it might have been easy to escape from the reaction of orthodox scholars by calling Bektashism something else.

The crucial question at this point is why their *taqiyya* performance was so successful, by which they never lost their identities. This might be related to their close connection with each order and organizing privately. As a part of their disguise, they designated special ways and signs that were only known by them to recognize each other in the society. These special ways were dressing, way of handshaking, wearing earrings and a special way of eating. All these *taqiyya* practices and ways of recognizing each other brought a notion of Bektashi secret (*Bektaşî Sırrı*) in society.²²⁸ However, the sense of “secret” seems to be exaggerated and became a defamatory usage against Bektashis. At least, the dissatisfaction of Bektashis toward the usage of *sır* shows that it might be another blemish.²²⁹

As for the *taqiyya* practice, scholars also argue that Bektashis tended towards Freemasonry in the clandestine years. According to Melikoff, Bektashis, who tended to disguise found a support from freemasons, with whom they shared the same ideals as liberalism, non-conformism and anti-clericalism. Moreover, with the influence of Freemasonry, Bektashis played an intellectual role in society. Melikoff in that respect considers some Young Turks as freemason-Bektashis.²³⁰ Even if, there was a sympathy of Bektashism among Young Turks, it might be a speculative assessment to say that they helped Bektashism to regain its power. Because their Bektashi adaptation seems more

²²⁷ Zarcone, “Bektaşiyye” *EI*, vol. 3, p. 24.

²²⁸ Birge states that the Bektashi secret had political ritual, moral, social teachings that only Bektashis knew and carried. For more information, see Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, pp. 159-161.

²²⁹ For instance, Ahmet Rıfki named his book *Bektashi Sırrı* to explain what Bektashism is and tries to refute what accusations were attributed to Bektashism over secrets. See Ahmed Rıfki, *Bektashi Sırrı*.

²³⁰ Melikoff, *Uyur İdik Uyardılar*, p. 26.

philosophical rather than practical. Yet, it is certain that Bektashis tried to stay close to Ottoman elites and bureaucrats in the revival process.

Bektashis continued to interact not only with Ottoman high-level statesmen but also with the Sultan himself and his family. For instance, Bezm-i Alem Valide Sultan played a crucial role in the reactivation of the Şahkulu lodge in Merdivenköy. Moreover, Sultan Abdulmecid visited Şehitlik lodge twice and had a good relationship with Nafi Baba.²³¹ Sultan Abdulaziz also visited the Gül Baba lodge in Hungary while returning from his voyage Europe. His mother Pertevniyal Valide Sultan constructed a tekke for Emin Baba in Edirnekapı.²³² Moreover, Ahmet Rıfat's *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid* was published with the support of the Valide Sultan, who is assumed to be a Bektashi.²³³ The publication of *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid*, which was the response of Ishak Efendi's, *Kaşifü'l-Esrar ve Daft'ü'l-Eşrar* contributed to the rehabilitation of the Bektashi Order. Therefore, having a close relationship with Ottoman bureaucrats and the Sultan's family increased their prestige and assisted them to regain power.

Another discussion among historians is whether *Tanzimat* reforms played any role in the revival of Bektashism or not. The *Tanzimat* reforms increased the integration of different communities. Moreover, a sense of patriotism was attempted to be created by keeping all Ottoman subjects together regardless of religion with the reform of 1856.²³⁴ Did the equality among subjects and freedom regardless of religion become a privilege for Bektashi community? Although the equality regardless of religion was obviously taken for granted for non-Muslims, it seems that *Tanzimat* had a special outcome for its Muslim subjects. For instance, the death penalty, which was the compulsory law of Shari'a for those who abandoned Islam was abrogated in 1844.²³⁵ While it is thought that Alevi-Bektashi communities were always categorized in apostasy (*murtad*) status, which was punished with death penalty, the law seems to decrease the Shari'a pressure over Alevi-Bektashi communities theoretically. Although the state reaffirmed the decision of

²³¹ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması (1826) ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, pp. 224-225.

²³² Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. yüzyıl)*, p. 505.

²³³ Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 80-81.

²³⁴ Carter Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism and Modernity*, London: Yale University Press, 2010, p. 99-102.

²³⁵ Eric Jan Zürcher, *Turkey A Modern History*, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004, p. 61.

abolition during the *Tanzimat*, the pressure over the Bektashi Order gradually decreased. Varol ties the reduction of the pressure to both changes in state's pace and obedience of Bektashis to the state.²³⁶ On the contrary, Ortaylı insists that *Tanzimat* showed a tolerance to all religious minorities and sects especially to the Order. Contrary to Mahmud II's reign, *Tanzimat* bureaucrats abandoned the hash struggle with Bektashism.²³⁷ Therefore, pressure over the Bektashi Order diminished with the *Tanzimat*, which enhanced the reemergence of Bektashism.

To conclude, although it started few years after the abolition, the Bektashi Order revived in the second half of the 19th century on a large scale. Yet, it had never returned to its previous position before 1826. While Bektashis were prosecuted harshly in 1826, they found ways of surviving in places where the abolition could not reach too much and by disguising among other Sunni orders and by using the name *Tarik-i Nazenin*. Moreover, starting with *Tanzimat*, the reintegration of Bektashis into society accelerated by their close relationship with high-level statesmen and the sultan's mother. It seems that Bektashism was mostly reintegrated into society during Sultan Abdulaziz. Especially, the 1870's became glorious years for the Order. The reintegration of the Bektashi Order was done according to the borders the state drew for it. Since it was abolished due to their Janissary link, the rehabilitation of the Bektashi Order was regulated according to Janissary policy. While the state's prosecution policy toward Bektashis continued to be carried in the 1830's and the 1840's, it was softened when there was not any potential of Janissary revival. Therefore, the Bektashi suppression was continued as a restrained control. It means, the state closed its eyes to existence of Bektashis unless they do not move out of boundaries. The boundaries of the revival in that sense were Bektashis' conformity of Sunni orthodoxy and not presenting Bektashism publicly. Moreover, the state continued to punish Bektashis selectively for controlling the revival. Bektashis could reintegrate into society on the condition of "*tashih-i itikad*". Moreover, the control of Sunni orthodoxy toward them showed fluctuations in time. Eventually, Bektashis restarted their activities, published books and propagandized Bektashism overtly. The revival of the Bektashi Order was a physical and intellectual revival, but mostly intellectual. However, when Bektashism reappeared, it received a reaction from Sunni

²³⁶ Varol, *Bektaşiliğin İlgasından Sonra Osmanlı Devletinin Tarikat Politikaları*, p. 62.

²³⁷ İlber Ortaylı, "Tarikatlar ve Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Yönetimi", *OTAM*, 6, pp. 285-288.

orthodoxy on a social basis, which became one of the important parts of their rehabilitation.

CHAPTER III

REACTIONS OF SUNNI ORTHODOXY TO THE BEKTASHI REVIVAL: BEKTASHI POLEMICS

III.1. A Sign of the Bektashi Revival: Publications

Bektashi publication activities became one of the most significant indications of the Bektashi revival. Literature was the efficient way that made Bektashis more active and allowed them to express themselves in society as well as making the propaganda of Bektashism. Therefore, Bektashi publications received the most reactions from the orthodox circles. Correlated with the revival, this reaction increased in the second half of the 19th century and it reached its zenith in 1871 when Harputlu Hoca Ishak Efendi published *Kaşifü'l Esrar ve Dafî'ü'l Eşrar*. However, Bektashi publication activities started earlier, few years after the abolition of the Order. The first Bektashi book after 1826 was *Virani Risalesi* dated 1833.²³⁸ *Haşim Baba Divanı* was published in 1836 in Istanbul.²³⁹ Apart from these books, *Nesimi Divanı* was published twice in 1844.²⁴⁰ Besides, *Hüsniye*, which criticizes views of Sunni scholars of Abbasids was translated into Turkish by Muhammad Rana Bağdadi and printed in 1853.²⁴¹ Moreover, *Tahmis* of Azbi Baba, which consists of *Divan-ı Niyaz-ı Mısri* was published in 1867.²⁴²

Despite these publications, Birge states that from 1867 onward, Bektashis had considerable series of books.²⁴³ Especially, 1870's can be considered a little renaissance

²³⁸ Maden, *Bektaşî Tekkelerinin Kapatılması ve Bektaşîliğin Yasaklı Yılları*, p. 214.

²³⁹ Hasan Kamil Yılmaz, "Haşim Baba" *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 16, p. 406.

²⁴⁰ Ahmet Rıfkı Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, p. 26. *Nesimi Divanı* was published four times. In addition to being printed twice in 1844, it was printed again in 1869 and in 1981.

²⁴¹ Harputlu Ishak Efendi wrote his book *Tezkiye-i Ehl-i Beyt* in 1878 as refutation of *Hüsniyye*. Çift, "1826 Sonrasında Bektaşîlik ve bu Alanla İlgili Yayın Faaliyetleri", p. 254.

²⁴² Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, *Alevi-Bektaşî Nefesleri*, Remzi Kitapevi: İstanbul, 1963, p. 9.

²⁴³ Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 80.

of Bektashism in that respect. In 1870, Karakaşzade Omer composed *Nuru'l Hüda*, which illustrated the appearance of antinomian dervishes.²⁴⁴ The Hagiography of Tevfik Baba was also issued in 1870. Moreover, *Makalat-ı Cafer Sadık* and *Makalat-ı Hacı Bektaş Veli* under the name of *Vilayetname* were printed in 1871.²⁴⁵ In the same year, *Haşim Baba Divanı*, *Budalaname*²⁴⁶ and *Aşkname* were also printed. *Aşkname* or *Işkname* was the translated version of *Cavidanname-i Sagir*, which belonged to Firişteoğlu Abdulmecid²⁴⁷ and published by Müneccim Necib Baba, the *postnişin* of the tekke of Karyağdı.²⁴⁸ *Aşkname* was the second Bektashi publication related to Hurufism after *Divan-i Nesimi*.²⁴⁹ Upon these publications, Harputlu Ishak Efendi published *Kaşifü'l Esrar ve Dañi'ü'l Eşrar* in the same year to accuse Bektashism of Hurufi orientations. The book was republished in 1873 when another Hurufi book, *Nazm-ü Nesr* of Virani Baba, was printed in 1873.²⁵⁰ To answer *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, Ahmet Rıfat Efendi published *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid* in 1876. As the outcome of the burst of printed books, the period between 1870 and 1876 was the time that Bektashism was the most open to the public.

The number of Bektashi publications decreased during the reign of Abdulhamid II. Yet, it never ended.²⁵¹ The Bektashis continued to print books, some of which contained Bektashi propaganda and advocated Bektashism in the discussion that Harputlu Ishak Efendi started. Bektashi publications, which almost came to a halt in the period of

²⁴⁴ *Nuru'l Hüda* was originally Vahidi's *Menakıb-ı Hacı-i Cihan ve Netice-i Can*. Karakaşzade recomposed this book by using Arabic and Persian phrases. Ahmet Karamustafa, "Menakıb-ı Hoca-i Cihan" *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 29, p. 110.

²⁴⁵ Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 80.

²⁴⁶ This book is also known as *Risale-i Kaygusuz Abdal*.

²⁴⁷ According to Aksu as he cited from Mecdi, there were two Firişteoğlu Abdulmecids. One was the real Hurufi Abdulmecid, the composer of the book *Aşkname*, who lived in the 15th century. Another was the translator of the one published in 1871. Hüsamettin Aksu, "Firişteoğlu Abdulmecid" *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 13, p. 135.

²⁴⁸ Ahmed Safi Bey says that *Aşkname* was sold at a price of ten guruş to dervishes and it started to be sold with a nominal fee to the public around Beyazıt and Fatih mosques. Cited in *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, p. 26.

²⁴⁹ Hüsamettin Aksu, "Firişteoğlu Abdulmecid" *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 13, p. 134.

²⁵⁰ Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 80.

²⁵¹ For instance, *Turabi Baba Divanı* was printed in 1878.

Abdulhamid II gained momentum after 1909. Apart from Ahmet Rifat's *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid*, Ahmed Rıfki's *Bektaşî Sırrı* (1909) and Mehmed Ali Hilmi Dedeababa's *Kaşifü'l Esrar Reddiyesi* (n.d) were two important pieces to defend Bektashism in this time. These defensive pieces were not rapid answers as *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid*. The reason why Bektashis could not compose any response against *Kaşifü'l Esrar* in 1880's and 1890's was most probably the restriction of the Bektashi publication activities during Abdulhamid II's reign. However, Bektashis found a freer atmosphere after 1909 and published ample books and magazines.²⁵²

III.2. Polemical Texts

III.2.1. Texts of Sunni Orthodoxy

Although the discussion about the unorthodox Bektashi teachings started with the abolition of the Order and put in words occasionally, it came to light in its entirety in 1871 with Harputlu Ishak Efendi's *Kaşifü'l Esrar ve Dağı'u'l Eşrar*. Although Ishak Efendi attacked Bektashism by criticizing the Hurufî content of the book *Aşkname*, he displayed his opposition to the growth of Bektashi publications as well as the reappearance of Bektashism on public sphere. Bektashis printed seven books consisting of *Aşkname* between 1870-71²⁵³ This number was the highest number in a short period that Bektashis had ever reached in fifty years after the abolition. Therefore, Harputlu Ishak Efendi must have got annoyed of these publications. Although he states that *Kaşifü'l Eşrar* was written against Firişteoğlu's *Aşkname*, it seems that his reaction was against reappearance of Bektashis. Indeed, he indicates his intention in the *Kaşifü'l Eşrar* by saying "although it is understood from their deeds and words that they are not from Islam, they showed themselves utterly in 1288(1871)."²⁵⁴ Sunguroğlu states that Harputlu Ishak Efendi composed a refutation (*reddiye*) upon Sultan Abdulaziz's demand of his opinion about Bektashism.²⁵⁵ The Sultan's interest of Bektashism might have been

²⁵² For the list of Bektashi publications between 1909 and 1925 see Çift, "1826 Sonrasında Bektaşilik ve bu Alanla İlgili Yayın Faaliyetleri" pp. 257-58.

²⁵³ These books were, *Nuru'l Hüda, Hagiography of Tevfik Baba* (1870) and *Makalat-ı Cafer Sadık, Makalat-ı Hacı Bektaş Veli, Haşim Baba Divanı, Budalaname, Aşkname* (1871).

²⁵⁴ *Malum ola ki, ehl-i İslam'ı idlal ile meşgul olan taifenin en başlıcası taife-i Bektaşiyân olup, halbuki bunların akval ü ef'allerinden ehl-i İslam'dan olmadıkları malum ise de bin iki yüz seksen sekiz tarihinde bütün bütün izhar eylediler*, Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Eşrar*, p. 2.

²⁵⁵ Ishak Sunguroğlu, *Harput Yollarında*, vol. 2, p. 125. Yücer by citing from Sunguroğlu states that Ishak Efendi's aim was not writing a refutation (*reddiye*) and he also gives the name of Sultan Abdulmecid instead of Abdulaziz in

another factor that prompted Ishak Efendi to attack Bektashism.²⁵⁶ In spite of attacking Bektashism through *Aşkname* and Hurufism, he clearly indicated the main cause of writing as “announcing Bektashi *küfr* (blasphemy) to the public”.²⁵⁷ Ahmet Rıfki emphasizes Ishak Efendi’s real aim by stating that he wanted a second 1826.²⁵⁸

The explosion of Bektashi publications caused Ishak Efendi to compose his book straight away in 1871, which made his arguments of Bektashism far away from strong evidences theologically. What Ishak Efendi did so quickly was to argue Bektashi thoughts and practices by linking them mostly to the Hurufi doctrine and to recall accusations, which Bektashis were charged with throughout the abolition. Ishak Efendi also derived charges that were used against Alevi-Kızılbaş communities by Ottoman scholars in the 16th and the 17th centuries. Charges against the Bektashis were basically about not following Shari’a orders, not praying, not fasting, drinking wine, cursing the first three caliphs, organizing *Ayin-i Cems* etc. These charges were not used at the first time with *Kaşifü’l Esrar*. Starting from Esad Efendi’s propaganda chronicle of 1826, Bektashis were exposed to accusations of Sunni orthodox scholars due to their unorthodox faith. For instance, by having the same view of Bektashism with Esad Efendi, Kuşadalı İbrahim Halveti considered Bektashis out of the Shari’a and stated that the most frightening thing for Islam is *ibahiye* (making prohibited things lawful), lewdness, carelessness and being *Rafizi* (Shi’ite) and these all exist in Bektashism.²⁵⁹ Not only scholars but also the state used orthodox discourse toward Bektashis. State’s control mechanism of the rehabilitation of Bektashism was the correction of faith. Therefore, Harputlu Ishak Efendi’s argumentative work was the follow-up of the accusations of 1826.

Scholars agree that Ishak Efendi continued to blame Bektashis in another treatise with the title *Izahü’l Esrar*. As being the follow-up to *Kaşifü’l Esrar*, the treatise

his book. *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. Yüzyıl)* p. 529. However, Sunguroğlu clearly says that it was the refutation of Bektashism and it was presented to Sultan Abdulaziz.

²⁵⁶ Ishak Efendi’s attempt also seems to find support in the time of grand vizier Mehmed Rüşdi Pasha (1873-74). Ahmed Safi *Sefinetü’s-Safî*, vol. 4, pp.321-322. Cited in Yüksel, *Bektaşilik ve Mehmet Ali Dedeaba*, p. 138.

²⁵⁷ *Bu eseri yazmaktan kastımız gizli olan küfürlerini açığa çıkarmaktır*, Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü’l Esrar*, p. 97.

²⁵⁸ Ahmet Rıfki Efendi, *Bektaşi Sırrı*, vol. 1, pp. 126-127.

²⁵⁹ Yaşar Nuri Oztürk, *İslam Düşüncesinde Bir Dönüm Noktası Kuşadalı İbrahim Halveti*, Yeni Boyut Yayınları: İstanbul, 1997, p. 18.

discussed the influence of Hurufism on Bektashism and additional Bektashi-Melami relations.²⁶⁰ In order to humiliate Bektashism, the author of *Izahü'l Esrar* posed twenty seven questions about unorthodox Bektashi teachings and its connection with Hurufism and Malamatiyya.²⁶¹ Since some of these questions were addressed to the *Babagan* branch by comparing their *mücerred* custom with Christian monks, Ishak Efendi seems to have composed this treatise as a counter response of Bektashi defence.²⁶² Moreover, Ishak Efendi specifically underlines that it was salvation itself to abandon Bektashism and adopt Naqshbandism.²⁶³ Why did he specifically defend the Naqshbandi Order against the Bektashi Order? It is not certain whether he was a Naqshbandi or not.²⁶⁴ However, it is certain that he had strong Bektashi antagonism and sympathy of Naqshbandism. Most probably, his antagonism was related to the reappearance of Bektashism, because, while coming to the second half of the 19th century, the Naqshbandi dominance of the Bektashi Order ended and Bektashis started to recapture their lodges from the hands of Naqshbandis. More importantly, it seems the Bektashi Order increased the number of followers so much so that it made itself a competitor for the Naqshbandi Order. Apart from these two books, Birge says that Ishak Efendi's last Bektashi criticism was *Tezkire-i Ehl-i Beyt* as a reply of *Hüsniye*.²⁶⁵

The discussion over Bektashi teachings did not remain limited to Harputlu Ishak Efendi. Many other Sunni scholars followed him to defame Bektashism. Another criticism of *Hüsniye* was *Rafi'eş-Şikak* came from Hüseyin Azmi Dede (1893), the sheikh of the Mevlevihane of Galata. *Mühimmetü'l Beyan* was another treatise of Hüseyin Azmi Dede that focused the condemnation of Bektashism and Freemasonry.²⁶⁶ In addition,

²⁶⁰ Although there are no dates and no name of writer on the treatise, scholars consider that *Izahü'l Esrar* was the work of Harputlu Ishak Efendi, written most probably at the end of the 19th century or at the beginning of the 20th century. Moreover, it was not printed and remained as manuscript. Muharrem Varol, "Kaşifü'l Esrar'ın İzinde: Harputlu Hoca Ishak Efendi'nin *Izahü'l Esrar* Adlı Bilinmeyen Bir Risalesi" *Türk Kültürü ve HBV Araştırma Dergisi*, issue.78, p. 38.

²⁶¹ For the questions that were posed toward Bektashism, see Varol, *ibid*, pp. 58-64.

²⁶² Varol, *ibid*, p. 60.

²⁶³ Cahit Telci, "XIX. Yüzyıl Bektaşiliği Hakkında Bir Eser: *Izahü'l Esrar*" *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, 16, p.195.

²⁶⁴ Ishak Efendi's grandfather Perçençli sheikh Ali Efendi from Shadilli Order. Sunguroğlu, *ibid*, vol. 2, p. 223. However, Ishak Efendi's praise of the Naqshbandi Order can be clearly seen in both *Kaşifü'l Esrar* and *Izahü'l Esrar*.

²⁶⁵ Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 81.

²⁶⁶ Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. Yüzyıl)*, p. 530.

Ahmed Safi Bey²⁶⁷ criticized Bektashis by inserting a chapter called “*Bektaşiler Hakkında Mülâhaza*” in the fourth volume of his book *Sefinetü’s-Safi*. Ahmed Safi emphasized that there is no place for praying, fasting and ablution in the Bektashi Order. Thereby, it is an atheist and heretic order.²⁶⁸ Ahmed Safi’s argument was an answer to Ahmet Rıfki’s *Bektaşî Sırrı*. Another Sunni scholar Ziyaeddin Hüsnü Efendi also answered *Bektaşî Sırrı* by his series in *Peyam-ı Sabah*.²⁶⁹ The polemics of Bektashism never ended and even continued in the 20th century.²⁷⁰

What made Ishak Efendi important? In spite of the fact that Bektashism was criticized occasionally throughout the 19th century, it had never been attacked as harsh as by *Kaşifü’l Esrar*. Why Harputlu Ishak Efendi charged Bektashism sharply? What made *Kaşifü’l Esrar* different? Although scholars state that Ishak Efendi composed *Kaşifü’l Esrar* upon the sultan’s favor of his opinion of Bektashism, it is doubtful whether he was tasked by the Sultan to criticize Bektashism or not. Even if he was asked for his opinion, he was probably not tasked with Bektashi defamation since the state tolerated Bektashis mostly at that time. In other words, as the most tolerant ruler, Abdulaziz does not seem to have any attempt of restriction toward Bektashis by way of such an abusive text. Besides, if the state aimed to restrict Bektashi activities by propaganda texts, it would prefer books with valid evidences and strong arguments that would be written by mainstream orthodox scholars. However, Ishak Efendi, as coming from periphery drew a different image beyond mainstream orthodoxy. Ishak Efendi was not only periphery origin polemicist, who criticized unorthodox beliefs from outside of mainstream orthodoxy in that period.²⁷¹ However, Ishak Efendi’s profane language, aggressive

²⁶⁷ Ahmed Safi worked as a chief clerk and officer in many places. He composed his famous work *Sefinetü’s-Safi* after 1913. Necdet Tosun, “Kültür Tarihimize Işık Tutan Mühim Bir Kaynak: Sefinetü’s-Safi” *İlam Araştırma Dergisi*, vol. 1, pp. 177-190.

²⁶⁸ *bir tarik-i ilhad ve zındıka...* Ahmed Safi, *Sefinetü’s-Safi*, vol. 4, pp. 360-361. Cited in Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. Yüzyıl.)*, p. 532.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 532.

²⁷⁰ Yücer states that this discussion emerged again in 1940 between Besim Atalay and Mehmet Ali Ayni Bey as reciprocal questions. In addition, another Bektashi defamation in the 20th century was a series of articles of *Büyük Gazete* entitled “*Bir Bektaşî Babasının Hatıratı: Bektaşî Tekkelerinde Senelerce Neler Gördüm*” The writer used the nickname “H.A.” and twenty issues were published in 1926. *Ibid*, pp. 533-535.

²⁷¹ For instance, Adanalı Süleyman Efendi (d. 1863), who abandoned Nusayrism and converted to Christianity published a book named *el-Bakuretü’s-Süleymaniyye* in 1862 to criticize unorthodox Nusayri beliefs. The book was published in 1859 in Aleppo and in 1862 in Beirut. Mustafa Öz, “el-Bakuretü’s-Süleymaniyye”, *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 4, pp. 548-550.

manner and emphasis of the abolition made him different that he had a more radical approach than the state and mainstream orthodoxy toward Bektashism. In that sense, it can be assumed that he voiced a criticism toward the state's Bektashi policy. It was this uniqueness pushed Bektashis to reply it by three defence.

III.2.2. Bektashi Defence

Bektashi defence focused on mostly arguments of *Kaşifü'l Estrar* since it carried the harshest accusations that addressed the Bektashi Order in that time. Charges of Ishak Efendi were answered by three defence of Bektashism. These are *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid*, *Bektaşî Sırrı* and *Kaşifü'l Estrar Reddiyesi*. The key point about Bektashi defence was that all were composed by *Babagan* Bektashis not *Chelebi* Bektashis. It is a fact that *Babagan* Bektashis were literate and had more interaction with high level-statesmen and the Ottoman elite. Moreover, while comparing with *Chelebis*, *Babagans* seems more visible in the capital so they were more likely to be influenced by discussions in scholarly circles of Istanbul. That might have pushed *Babagans* to become fervent advocates of Bektashism. They did not only defend Bektashism against Sunni scholars but also, they made the propaganda of the *Babagan* branch against the *Chelebi* branch. *Babagan* defenders represented themselves as true Bektashis who follow the Shari'a and Sunna to refute Ishak Efendi's incriminations.

The first Bektashi defense against *Kaşifü'l Estrar* was *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid* that was published by Ahmed Rıfat Efendi in 1876. He worked as an accountant in the ministry of finance. According to Birge, *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid* was printed at Sultan Abdulaziz's mother's expense²⁷² and it was presented to Sultan Murad V.²⁷³ Although there is no direct reference to *Kaşifü'l Estrar* and Harputlu Ishak Efendi, it is obvious that Ahmet Rıfat Efendi launched his book as an answer to *Kaşifü'l Estrar*. Because Ahmet Rıfat Efendi allowed to acquit the Bektashi Order and disprove Ishak Efendi's main arguments without providing his name in his book. Besides, he insisted his motivation to compose the book as "declaring that those vanities and deviated people, who have Hurufi and Noktavi teachings are not Bektashis."²⁷⁴ Because of refuting the Hurufi-Bektashi

²⁷² Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 81.

²⁷³ Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşilik (Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid)*, p. 439.

²⁷⁴ *İşte bu risaleyi tertib eylemekten murad-ı fakiranem tarikat-ı aliyeye-i Bektaşiyeye pir-i dest-gir Hüncar Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli kuddise sırrıhu'l-celi hazretlerine müntesib bir tarikat-ı nazenin iken her nasılsa nefis-i mel'una zebun olmuş bir*

connection, *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid* was the first defense of Bektashis against Hurufi charges. Besides, it was the first authentic example in Bektashi history that represents Bektashism with its history, teachings, practices, and customs. In that respect, it brought out the Bektashi thoughts apparently in 1876.²⁷⁵ Moreover, its ornate and complicated language shows that the audience was probably high-level statesmen and the elite. By presenting Bektashism as being rather close to Sunnism, no doubt, *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid* might have had a mission to present Bektashism to those were interested in.²⁷⁶

Contrary to Ahmet Rifat's *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid*, Ahmet Rıfki's *Bektaşî Sırrı* answered Ishak Efendi's charges directly. His writing was published in 1909 in two volumes. In its first volume, Ahmet Rıfki refuted Ishak Efendi's condemnation of Hurufism. He insists that the Bektashi-Hurufi link is shown as a secret (*sır*) to confuse minds. Yet, there is no link of Bektashi teachings and morals to Hurufism.²⁷⁷ This remark was the reason why Rıfki Baba attempted to write.²⁷⁸ Since the author got annoyed of the statement of secret (*sır*) of Bektashism, he named his work *Bektaşî Sırrı*. As *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid* did, *Bektaşî Sırrı* also introduced Bektashism to the public. Unlike Ahmet Rifat, debates of Rıfki Baba with Ishak Efendi were clearer. He directly answered *Kaşifü'l-Esrar* by a mordacious tone. Like *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid*, *Bektaşî Sırrı* also defended Bektashism by representing it as a Sunni tariqa. Still defending Bektashism according to Sunni orthodoxy shows that state control of Bektashism continued and legitimization of Bektashism on a social basis still depended on confirmation of the state's criteria. Yet, while comparing with the publication time of *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid*, it seems that Bektashis defended themselves more explicitly in the 20th century. Moreover, polemics of Babagan Bektashis with orthodox scholars started to shift to *Chelebis*. Beginning at the end of the

alay berrani ve serserilerin karışmalarından naşi bu misillü berranilerin nefis-i melunlarının muktezasına muvaffık oan mahalde şeri'at ile ve muhalif olacak te'vil-i batıl u atıl ile amel eyledikleri der-kar ve bunlar ise Bektaşî olmayıp bu missillü Noktaviyyun ve Hurufiyyun ve sair guruh-ı melahideden oldukları aşikar olup haşa Hazret-i Pir'e müntesib olmadıklarını edille-i bahire ve zahire ile beyanla... Ahmet Rifat Efendi, Gerçek Bektaşilik (Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid), pp. 274-275.

²⁷⁵ Yücer, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf (19. Yüzyıl)*, p. 529.

²⁷⁶ Ahmet Rifat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşilik (Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid)*, p. 45.

²⁷⁷ Ahmet Rıfki Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, p. 42.

²⁷⁸ Şu mukaddimeden maksadımız okuyucuların Bektaşilikle Hurufileri tefrik etmeleri luzumunu ihtar için olup bundan sonra pîr-i tarikin tercüme-i haliyle "Sır" namıyla umumun aklını işgal eden meselelere vasaire-i adab u erkan-ı tarikata dair malumat-ı mücmeleyi beyan etmek isteriz. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 45.

19th century, the *Babagan-Chelebi* conflict gained a certainty. In that respect, as a member of *Babagan* branch, Rıfki Baba allocated his second volume of the *Bektaşî Sırrı* to defend *Babagans* and disfavor *Chelebis*. Consequently, he was responded by Cemalettin Chelebi by *Bektaşî Sırrı Nam Risaleye Müdafaa*.²⁷⁹

The last Bektashi defense against Harputlu Ishak Efendi came from the *postnişin* of Şahkulu lodge Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebaba. He joined the discussion with his refutation named *Kaşîfü'l Esrar Reddiyesi*.²⁸⁰ According to Ahmet Rıfki, Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebaba's refutation of *Kaşîfü'l Esrar* never printed and remained as a manuscript.²⁸¹ Although there was no date on the manuscript, Yüksel insisted that it was written in 1290 (1873-74) or 1291(1874-75). However, according to the content of its polemics, it seems to be written at least after *Izahü'l Esrar*. In any case, it was before the *Bektaşî Sırrı*. Mehmed Ali Hilmi Dedebaba tried to disprove Ishak Efendi's charges one by one. Like other two defenses, *Reddiye* stated the difference between Hurufism and Bektashism. It underlined the common roots of the Bektashi Order and the Naqshbandi Order. Differently, it was the defense that Bektashism was the most presented as a Sunni orthodox order.

III.3. Polemics

III.3.1. Charges of Harputlu Ishak Efendi; *Kaşîfü'l Esrar ve Dafî'ü'l Eşrar*

There are contradictory opinions about the publication date of *Kaşîfü'l Esrar*.²⁸² Although it is his most known polemical text against the Bektashi Order, Ishak Efendi has other polemical texts. Since being a disputer and having a scholarly background,²⁸³

²⁷⁹ Cemalettin Çelebi, *Bektaşî Sırrı Nam Risaleye Müdafaa*, İstanbul: Manzume-i Efkar Matba'ası, 1328 (1910-1).

²⁸⁰ According to Müfid Yüksel, the manuscript is at Suleymaniye Library, in the collection of İzmirli İsmail Hakkı and number 1228. Müfid Yüksel, *Bektaşîlik ve Mehmet Ali Dedebaba*, p. 138.

²⁸¹ Ahmet Rıfki Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol 1, p. 105.

²⁸² Although most of scholars give the publication date as 1873, Maden indicates it as 1871. Maden, *Ibid*, p. 215. The copy that I used was printed in 1874. In addition, if it was considered that *Kaşîfü'l Esrar* contains of abusive words, it might be thought that Ishak Efendi extended the copy, which he presented to the sultan before publishing. Hence, Sunguroğlu confirms that he enlarged the copy that he presented to the sultan. Sunguroğlu, *Harput Yollarında*, vol. 2, p. 125. Besides, *Kaşîfü'l Esrar* does not seem to be republished after 1874.

²⁸³ Ishak Efendi was born in Perçenç village of Harput (Elazığ) in 1803. After his education, he became *müderriş* and taught in Darülmaarif Rüşdiye Mektebi and Madrasa of Fatih. He was also appointed as molla of Makkah, İstanbul payesi (rank of the kadı of İstanbul) and inspector of the ministry of Finance. He died in 1892. See, Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicil-i Osmani*, vol 3. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996, p. 805. and Sunguroğlu, *Harput Yollarında*, vol. 2, pp. 124-127.

Ishak Efendi used to participate the *Huzur Dersleri*, in which scholars were discussing in the presence of the sultan. He seems to be a fervent advocator of orthodox Islam in these sessions. In addition to criticism of Bektashism, he composed theological texts to debate with Christian missionaries.²⁸⁴ Differently from other polemical texts, *Kaşifü'l Estrar* has weak sources while examining the Bektashi-Hurufi link. According to Köprülü, Ishak Efendi's information of Hurufism was based on *Nuru'l Huda*, the book of Karakaşzade Omer.²⁸⁵ Ishak Efendi's accusations and assertions are generally based on his own experience and what he heard from around. The words "what I heard" and "what a friend reported" are frequently used at the beginning of claims. Another Sunni scholar Ahmet Safi also criticized Harputlu Ishak Efendi. He states that Ishak Efendi did not read the *Cavidan* carefully.²⁸⁶ Not only the lack of resources but also the pejorative language of the text shows that *Kaşifü'l Estrar* was not a normal reaction orthodoxy and it came out as a quick response to the Bektashi revival.

Kaşifü'l Estrar was first examined by German orientalist Georg Jacob.²⁸⁷ He translated the first part of the book into German and accepted its inferences about Bektashism as true.²⁸⁸ However, both Köprülü and Barthold emphasized that Jacob misinterpreted the text, which caused the misunderstanding of the Hurufi-Bektashi interaction.²⁸⁹ *Kaşifü'l Estrar* was divided into three parts by the author according to the content. In the first part, Ishak Efendi gave the information about Fazlallah Astarabadi and Bektashism. In the second part, he examined Firişteoğlu's *Aşkname*. In the last part, he criticized different *Cavidan* books. Hurufism and the critics of *Aşkname* are the main arguments of *Kaşifü'l Estrar*. However, Ishak Efendi posed polemics generally with

²⁸⁴ Especially, his two books, *Şemsü'l Hakika* and *Ziyâü'l Kulub* were written against Christian missionaries by debating the dual nature of Jesus and the originality of Bible. See, Kara, "Harputlu Ishak Efendi", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 22, pp. 531-532.

²⁸⁵ "Fuad Köprülü, Anadolu'da İslamiyet" *Darü'l Funun Edebiyat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, vol. 2, pp. 464-465.

²⁸⁶ Ahmet Safi, *Sefinetü's-Safi*, pp. 321-322. Cited in Yüksel, *Bektaşilik ve Mehmet Ali Dedebaba*, p. 138.

²⁸⁷ See especially pages between 40-95. Georg Jacob, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Bektaschis Ordens*, Berlin. 1908.

²⁸⁸ Varol, "Kaşifü'l Estrar'ın İzinde: Harputlu Hoca Ishak Efendi'nin İzahü'l Estrar Adlı Bilinmeyen Bir Risalesi" p. 42.

²⁸⁹ W. Bartold and Fuad Köprülü, *İslam Medeniyeti Tarihi*, Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1984, p. 244.

related to Hurufism and unorthodox Bektashi teachings and repeated same arguments throughout the book.

The main debate of Harputlu Ishak Efendi was the Bektashi adaptation of Hurufi doctrine. Before all, he objected to the publication of Firişteoğlu's *Aşkname* in 1871. He says that Firişteoğlu was a disciple of a Hurufi named Bayezid, who attached himself to Şemseddin, one of the successors of Fazlallah.²⁹⁰ Related to the symbolism of "thirty two letters", *Aşkname* was made up of thirty two parts and Ishak Efendi goes over each part and tries to refute each one of them in the second part of the *Kaşifü'l Esrar*.²⁹¹ He also claims that Bektashis revealed their *küfrs* with Firişteoğlu Abdulmecid's *Aşkname*.²⁹² For the historical roots of Bektashi-Hurufi association, he insists that the Bektashi Order was corrupted after Hacı Bektash Veli by the influence of the Hurufis on the Order. According to him, after Fazallah's execution by Miran Shah, Fazlallah's successor named Ali al-Ala, came to the Tekke of Hacı Bektash and taught the *Cavidan* in there. He convinced ignorant dervishes to believe that Hurufism was the *tarik* (path) of Hacı Bektash and these teachings were their secrets.²⁹³ As it is discussed in the first chapter, the thesis of corrupted Bektashism after the Hacı Bektash was one of the claim of Esad Efendi in *Üss-i Zafer*. Ishak followed the same pattern while attaching Bektashism to Hurufism.

Ishak Efendi saw the Hurufism and Bektashism as the same doctrine and he generalized the Hurufi teachings to the Bektashi Order, which was mostly rejected by Bektashi defenders. According to Ishak Efendi, the biggest blasphemy (*küfr*) of Hurufis was the divinity of Fazlallah Astarabadi. According to him, they believe that Fazlallah existed from all eternity. He came to the world as Adam, Moses and Jesus and he reappeared in the year 800.²⁹⁴ Ishak Efendi also claims that they believed that God's spectrum was on the Fazlallah's face with its hair, beard, mustache and eyelashes which

²⁹⁰ Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, p. 157.

²⁹¹ Çift, "1826 Sonrasında Bektaşilik ve bu Alanla İlgili Yayın Faaliyetleri", p. 261. For the transcription of *Aşkname* see, İsmail Arıkoğlu, *Firişteoğlu'nun Cavidan-nameTercümesi: İşkname*, (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi), pp. 71-253.

²⁹² Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, p. 2.

²⁹³ Ibid, p. 4-5. According to Birge, there is no historical support of this claim. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, p. 60.

²⁹⁴ Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar Kaşifü'l Esrar*, p. 33.

was another *kijfr*.²⁹⁵ In addition, he states that the Hurufis claimed that Ali was Fazlallah in order to gain the support of *Shu'ubis*.²⁹⁶ He underlined the worshiping of the body of Fazlallah in Hurufi doctrine and associated it with the Bektashi's prostrating to their babas in prayer.²⁹⁷ Actually, Ishak Efendi's theological polemic about Fazlallah's divinity seems to be concerned with panthist doctrine of the unity of existence. Yet, he tries to disprove the divinity of Fazlallah by referring to his death. While doing this, he picked abusive words.²⁹⁸ In addition, he continued the same discussion about Fazlallah's divinity in *Izahü'l Esrar*.²⁹⁹

Apart from Fazlallah's divinity, Ishak Efendi also criticized symbolism of letters in the *Aşkname* in the second part of *Kaşifü'l Esrar*. He examined the enigma of thirty-two letters.³⁰⁰ He insists that the Hurufis changed the meaning of Quranic verses and drew the human face using letters.³⁰¹ They also claimed that *Cavidan* carries the meaning of four holy books. Ishak Efendi explains the symbolism of letters in *Cavidan* as the secret that was carried and taught among Bektashis.³⁰² Ishak Efendi's intention seems insulting Bektashis while explaining the secret. He states that if someone adopted Bektashism for the first time, they make him naked and teach him these secrets by putting a knife to his throat. If he successfully repeated, they tell him "you grasp the secret" and bring him to

²⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 49.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p.8. Ishak Efendi referred to Iranians by the word *Shu'ubis*. *Shu'ubiyya* was the movement among non-Arab Muslims that emerged against the superiority of Arabs during the Umayyads and Abbasids. It mostly spread in Iran. Sussane Enderwitz, "Shu'ubiyya" *EI2*, vol. 9, pp. 513-516.

²⁹⁷ Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar Kaşifü'l Esrar*, p. 69.

²⁹⁸ *Zira uluhiyyet dava'sı eden şimdiye kadar iki yüz şahıs vukuu bulmuştur. Lakin, böyle acemin baldırı çıplak, aç köpeğini Timur'un oğlu geberdüb laşe-i murdarını çarşı Pazar sürüklediği herife itiba' edenlere fevkü'lgaye ta'acüb olunur.* Ibid, p.62.

²⁹⁹ Especially, second, third, fourth and twenty second questions of *Izahü'l Esrar* accuse Bektashis of believing Fazlallah's divinity. Varol, "Kaşifü'l Esrar'ın İzinde: Harputlu Hoca Ishak Efendi'nin *Izahü'l Esrar* Adlı Bilinmeyen Bir Risalesi", pp. 62-69.

³⁰⁰ Algar explains the Hurufi understanding of letter as the science based on sophisticated numerological theories, which attempted to explain new revelation by interpretation of Quranic verses. Thirty-two is the number of Perso-Arabic alphabet, which was the "manifestation of divine essence." Hamid Algar, "The Hurufi Influence of Bektashism", *Bektachiyya Études Lordre Mystique Bektachis*, eds. by Alexandre Popovic and Gilles Veinstein, pp.39-40. Moreover, for detailed information about Hurufi logic of letters in different texts see Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, *Hurufi Metinler Kataloğu*, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1973.

³⁰¹ Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, pp. 34-36.

³⁰² Ibid, p. 5.

the baba for prostration. Otherwise, they behead him.³⁰³ Even though Ishak Efendi accused Bektashis mostly by *Aşkname*, he made the same arguments by referring different verses of *Cavidans* in the third part of his book.³⁰⁴

Apart from the review of *Aşkname*, Ishak Efendi posed debates that linked Bektashism to Hurufism. In that regard, reincarnation (*tenasüh*) is one of these polemics in the *Kaşifü'l Esrar*. According to him, Bektashis believe the change of form instead of death. He insists that they think that Ali was the reincarnation of Fazlallah. Ishak Efendi attempted to humiliate Bektashis by giving an anecdote of his friend about Bektashi understanding of reincarnation. According to him, a Bektashi baba thought his father as the dog of his farm. He took the dog inside the house and respected it as it was his father. After giving these examples,³⁰⁵ he states that there is no doubt that reincarnation was taught by Fazlallah to Bektashis.

Another most remarkable discussion of *Kaşifü'l Esrar* was the originality of Bektashism. Ishak Efendi problematizes Bektashi lineages. He started the divarication of tariqas from Junayd of Bagdad and Naqshbandi sheikh Muhammad Bahauddin.³⁰⁶ He accepted Hacı Bektash among saints (*piran*) of tariqas who followed the Shari'a. Yet, his claim was that his teachings vanished. According to Ishak Efendi, although Hacı Bektash gave his authorization to some of his subsequent followers, his legacy was forgotten with time.³⁰⁷ Even though Ishak Efendi accounted Hacı Bektash Veli among Sunni saints respectfully, he presented a contradiction with his previous statements about Hacı Bektash Veli. He says that "Is the affirmation of Hacı Bektash among religious duties?" Besides, he questioned the faith of Hacı Bektash by insisting that although "all religious leaders of Sufi orders were on Sunni faith and left books to us, there is not any book

³⁰³ Ibid, p. 69.

³⁰⁴ Although he indicates the number of different *Cavidans* as six, he refers to sixteen books in total. These are: *Cavidan*, *Aşkname*, *Hakikatname*, *Mahşername*, *Ustüvaname*, *Hidayetname*, *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakayık*, *Viran Abdal Risalesi*, *Ahiretname*, *Risale-i Fazlullah*, *Tuhfetü'l-Uşşak*, *Risale-i Bedreddin*, *Risale-i Nokta*, *Risale-i Huruf*, *Türabname*, *Vilayetname-i Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli*. Enver Demirpolat, "Harputlu Ishak Hoca'nın Hayatı ve Eserleri" *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 9, 2003, p. 405.

³⁰⁵ Another Bektashi baba thought himself to have been an ox in his previous life. Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, pp. 60-61.

³⁰⁶ Ibid, pp. 22-23.

³⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 24.

remaining from Hacı Bektash.”³⁰⁸ Ishak Efendi lastly states, “if his opinion of Hacı Bektash was asked, he would answer as that if Hacı Bektash was capable of Shari’a practices like all other saints, we would call him blessed one. Yet, if he was from *ibaha*, we would call him expelled one.”³⁰⁹

Unorthodox Bektashi teachings were among another polemics of the *Kaşifü’l Esrar*. Ishak Efendi’s most striking discussion was whether Bektashis are praying (*namaz*) or not? He states that they do not pray. Moreover, he disparaged their ways of worship by mentioning his discussion with Halil Baba as an example. Against Halil Baba’s view of invalid (*batıl*) praying, he said that “the prophet was praying like us. Not any of scholars and sheikhs abandoned praying and accepted *batıl* like you”.³¹⁰ In addition, he attempted to support his argument by saying “Ali was a pious man, who died while praying in the mosque.”³¹¹ In addition to praying, Ishak Efendi countered the Bektashi way of worship by ridiculing their way of prostrating. He claims that the Bektashis were genuflecting to their babas. By overstating his speech, he humiliated them by saying “they are kissing and prostrating to genital organs of their babas”³¹² He also says that since they believe to prostrating to face and legs as Fazlallah ordered them, some Bektashi babas are praying to their genital organs.³¹³ In addition to the prostration to the human body in the *Kaşifü’l Esrar*, the discussion was enlarged in the *Izahü’l Esrar* as “they prostrate two lights in certain nights. By considering it as pray to fire, he compared Bektashism with Zoroastrians.³¹⁴ Besides, he compared Bektashism with Christianity and claimed that they had Christian practices. His argument was that Bektashis confess in the

³⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 158.

³⁰⁹ *Lakin insafane hareket olunursa, Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli’yi nasıl bilirsin? Din-i zata cevap olmalı ki; eğer sair piran-ı tarikat gibi cem-i akval ve ahval-i şerr-i şerife muvaffak ise kudsullah-ı sarih deriz ve eğer bu ademlerin dedikleri gibi ibahiyeden olub bu tarik-i delaleti anlar ibra etdi ise matrud bir herif deriz.* Ibid, p. 159.

³¹⁰ *Cümle ulema-i ilm ve meşayih-i kiram ve cümle ehl-i iman eli bu manada kıldıkları namaz yine bu erkani malume üzere olub, hiç birisi bu erkani terk edüb batınca namaz diyerek başka bir yol tutmamış.* Ibid, pp. 12-13.

³¹¹ Moreover, Ishak Efendi says that “Ali was shut by an arrow while fighting and he ordered remove the arrow while I am praying” Ibid, p. 18.

³¹² He adds that while Fazl-ı Hurufi told them pray to face and leg, they overshoot it. Ibid, pp. 70-71.

³¹³ Ibid, p. 88.

³¹⁴ “Her kandil yandıkça gülbank çekmek, iki kandile ve yukarıda bahsi geçen yuvarlak taşa secde etmek tarikatın usulünden oluyor. Mecusiden başka ateşe secde ve tazim eden başka bir topluluk var mı?” Varol, “Kaşifü’l Esrar’ın Izinde: Harputlu Hoca Ishak Efendi’nin Izahü’l Esrar Adlı Bilinmeyen Bir Risalesi”, p. 61.

presence of babas same as Christians' confession.³¹⁵ Moreover, Ishak Efendi as he cited from one of his friends, who stayed nine years in the Bektashi Order claims that the Bektashis perform Eucharist in the Bektashi lodges.³¹⁶ However, he later says that Bektashis are polytheist not *ehl-i kitap* (people of the book) like Christians and Jews. Therefore, slaughtered animals by them must not be eaten.³¹⁷ The same polemic can also be seen in the fatwa of Ebusuud Efendi.³¹⁸ Like Ebusuud Efendi's another fatwa³¹⁹, Ishak Efendi seems to categorize Bektashis as *Fırkay-ı Dalle* (deviated community) with this polemic. In this regard, he derived what Alevi-Kızılbaş communities were accused of in the sixteenth century and applied it to the Bektashis.

Misguiding society (*idlal*) by Bektashi babas became another debate of Ishak Efendi. According to him, contemporary Bektashism was corrupted Bektashism. He presented Bektashi babas as ignorant people, whom he had discussions with and whom he beat by his knowledge.³²⁰ Moreover, based on what he heard, he asserts that a Bektashi baba told to his disciple of five years that "praying, fasting and ablution are compulsory just one time, then you reach the secret, which is that Muhammad was Ali and Ali was God himself."³²¹ About the notion of corrupted Bektashism, Ishak Efendi assumed Bektashis from *ibaha*, who made unlawful deeds lawful as a part of their secret. In that respect, drinking vine is one of these sins that Bektashis made legalized. He saw Bektashi

³¹⁵ Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, p. 29.

³¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 27-28.

³¹⁷ *Bu taife Yahudi ve Nasari gibi ehl-i kitab olmayub adeta zebihası yenmez bir müşrikten imiş.* Ibid, p. 166.

³¹⁸ *Mesele: Sufi adına olan Zeyd zikr ederken devran edip, ettiği devranı ibadet addeylese, nikahı sahih zebihası helal olur mu? Elcevap: Devranı ibadet addeyleyicek murtaddır, asla müslimeden zimmiyeden avret nikahlamak mümkün değil, zebihası meyyitedir.* Ebusuud Efendi, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı*, ed. Etüğürl Düzdâğ, İstanbul: Şule Yayınları, 1998, p. 134.

³¹⁹ *"Mesele: Taife-i mezbure Şi'a'dan olmak da'va ederler "la ilahe illallah" derler iken, bu mertebeyi icab eden halleri nedir, mufassal ve meşruh beyan buyurula? Elcevap: Şi'a'dan, değil, "yetmiş üç fırka ki, içinde Ehl-i Sünnet fırkasından gayri nardadır" deyu hazret-I Resul (sallallahu aleyhi ve sellem) tasrih buyurmuşlardır, bu taife ol yetmiş üç fırkanın halis birinden değildir."* Ibid, pp. 174-175.

³²⁰ For instance, he explains how he won the discussion with Ahmed Baba of Merdivenköy by ridiculing his saint stories. Halil Baba also could not answer Ishak Efendi's questions. Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, p. 12.

³²¹ Ibid, pp. 20-21.

lodges of his time as “barrooms and pleasure houses”.³²² To support his criticism, he indicates that while Ali forbade every kind of intoxicants, Bektashis continued to drink alcohol.³²³ Like the previous one, his arguments of corrupted Bektashism were basically the same as what Bektashis were charged with in the edict of abolition.

Ishak Efendi’s another charge was the Bektashis’ viewpoint of women. He insists that there is no covering of women’s private parts (*setr-i avret*) in the Bektashi Order and they admit their women into their meetings and made them dance.³²⁴ Exaggeratedly, Ishak Efendi claims that they have sexual intercourse during the *Ayin-i Cems* if two men liked each other’s wives.³²⁵ He also accused Bektashi babas of sexual assault of their women disciples.³²⁶ While explaining it, he used the most offensive terms. Moreover, the same charges were continued in the *Izahü’l Esrar*. In the *Izahü’l Esrar*, it is asserted that although adultery is forbidden in all religions, it is permissible in Bektashism.³²⁷ This polemic was not unique to Ishak Efendi. The abuse of women, which Ottoman scholars called “*mum söndü*” was constantly the most used defamation toward Alevi-Kızılbaş communities before the 19th century.³²⁸ Although his debate of the abuse of women seems to be of a similar nature, Ishak Efendi charged Bektashis with harsher calumny which shows his hostility to Bektashism.

In addition to their anti-Shari’a practices, Ishak Efendi refuted what Bektashis defended themselves with. He attacked them by arguing their love of *Ahl al-Bayt* (*muhıbb-i hanedan*) and their cursing of Yazid (*Yezid’e lanet*). He insists that although Bektashis always represent themselves as *muhıbb-i hanedan*, they consider *Fazlallah* as God, whom Ali appealed to for help.³²⁹ In addition, he claims that Bektashis do not fight

³²² Ibid, p. 80.

³²³ Ibid, p. 18.

³²⁴ Ibid, p. 28.

³²⁵ Ibid, p. 29.

³²⁶ Ibid, pp. 30-31.

³²⁷ Varol, “Kaşıfı’l Esrar’ın Izinde: Harputlu Hoca Ishak Efendi’nin Izahü’l Esrar Adlı Bilinmeyen Bir Risalesi”, p. 61.

³²⁸ See Evliya Chelebi, *Seyahatname*, vol, 4, ed. Yücel Dağlı and Seyit Ali Kahraman, İstanbul: YKY, 2000, p. 188.

³²⁹ Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşıfı’l Esrar*, p. 105.

on the path of God, which became another argument of Ishak Efendi in the *Kaşifü'l Esrar*. As he did previously, he tried to legitimize his charges by giving examples of Ali. He says that “while Ali was busy fighting for Islam, have Bektashis ever sacrificed their lives for the *Ghaza*? They are on Yazid’s path which is not attending fights for Islam (*gaza*) and spending their time in barrooms.”³³⁰ His emphasis of Yazid seems remarkable as his polemic about Yazid consisted of both defense and offense. Against the Bektashis’ implication of “respect for Yazid”, he defended Sunni orthodoxy by saying that “a hadith orders not to curse around so we do not make cursing a habit. Yet, we never abstain from cursing Yazid a thousand times.”³³¹ Therefore, while he refuted the Bektashi thesis of *muhibb-i hanedan*, he defended his party on the polemic of cursing Yazid as well as attaching Bektashis to Yazid. As his other theological discussions, polemics of cursing Yazid was also a popular discussion topic of the 16th and the 17th centuries.³³²

By referring to the Bektashis’ *taqiyya* performance, Ishak Efendi, emphasizes that Bektashis, who wore Naqshbandi clothes for years show their blasphemy openly now.³³³ It seems that Ishak Efendi worried about the emancipation of the Bektashi Order and its recollecting disciples, who disguised themselves under Sunni tariqas. According to him, it does not befit a Muslim’s dignity to stay calm against the increased number of followers of Bektashism.³³⁴ Moreover, he emphasized the importance Sultan Mahmud’s efforts in the abolition. He states that Sultan Mahmud killed their babas and demolished their lodges. His officer Arif Hikmet Bey also demolished all lodges in the Balkans and explained the necessity of exile of Bektashi babas.³³⁵ Ishak Efendi concluded his book again stressing that he revealed the Bektashis’ *küifr*. Moreover, he states that the sultan is

³³⁰ Ibid, p. 19.

³³¹ Ibid, pp. 14-15.

³³² The same argument about the cursing Yazid was made by Katib Çelebi in the 17th century. He insists that cursing Yazid is a Shi’i practice and Sunnis do not curse. Katib Çelebi, *Mizanü'l-Hakk fi İhtiyari'l-Ehakk*, ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay and Süleyman Uludağ, İstanbul: Kabcacı Yayinevi, 2007, pp. 189-191.

³³³ Harputlu Ishak Efendi, *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, p. 6.

³³⁴ *Bir çok mümin biraderlerimizin ekserisinin abay-ı ecdadı ahibbamızdan olduğu halde, abay-ı ecdadının dinini terk eyleyüb müebbeden cehennemde kalacak bir tarik-i delaletle salık oldukarını gördüğümüz vakitte nasıl sabr-u sükut olunabiliyor, bu sükut müslümanlığın şanına düşer mi?* Ibid, p. 172.

³³⁵ Ibid, pp. 21-22.

the protector of Islam and it is compulsory for him to defeat them.³³⁶ Therefore, he clearly indicated his intention of reinstating the abolition.

III.3.2. Responses of Bektashis

Polemics of Harputlu Ishak Efendi in the *Kaşifü'l Esrar ve Dafi'ü'l Eşrar* were answered by three Bektashi defenders. Contrary to Ahmet Rıfat's *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid*, Ahmet Rıfkı's *Bektaşî Sırrı* and Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara's *Kaşifü'l Esrar Reddiyesi* were more argumentative texts and directly targeted Harputlu Ishak Efendi. Yet, all three defenses answered Ishak Efendi's polemics the same way, which was defending Bektashism by representing it on the side of Sunni orthodoxy. Besides, except certain polemics, they did not respond to all of Ishak Efendi's claims.

Since it was the main debate of *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, refuting the influence of Hurufi doctrine on Bektashism was the widest discussion of Bektashi defense. Ahmet Rıfat Efendi insists that Bektashis are certainly not Hurufis. Moreover, he criticized Firişteoğlu's *Aşkname* and Hurufism like Ishak Efendi. After defining Hurufis as *zendeka*, he attached Fazlallah to Qarmatians and states that "those who believed *Cavidans* and followed their doctrine diverged from God's mercy definitely."³³⁷ Ahmet Rıfat also claims that *Cavidan* was not written by Fazlallah. It was written by one of the Fazlallah's successors named Mahmud. Mahmud protested his sheikh's teachings and formed *Noktavism*, which was the symbolism of diacritical marks. Therefore, Hurufis after being defeated by Noktavis in Iran came to Anatolia.³³⁸ In addition to stating that Hurufis influenced many other orders like Mevlevi, Khalwati and Jelveti orders, he gives the example of *Nuru'l Huda*, the book of Karakaşzade Omer, who Ahmet Rıfat asserted to be Jelveti.³³⁹ Ahmet Rıfat did not refuse the existence of the logic of letters. He believed that the knowledge of letters can only be known by qualified people.³⁴⁰ Although Ahmet Rıfat criticized Hurufism, he accepted the Hurufi knowledge and its effects on

³³⁶ Ibid, p. 173.

³³⁷ Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşilik (Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid)*, pp. 252-256.

³³⁸ Ibid, pp. 272-273.

³³⁹ Ibid, p. 274.

³⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 264.

Bektashism. He legitimized it by making a Noktavi-Hurufi separation and insisting on Hurufi influence on other Sufi orders. In that sense, *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid* differed from other defenses.

Like Ahmet Rıfat, Ahmet Rıfkı also gave the same story of the Hurufi-Noktavi separation.³⁴¹ Yet, contrary to Ahmet Rıfat, he had a stricter manner about Hurufi-Bektashi relations. He called Hurufism “*tarik-i delalet*” and *Cavidan* as “*delaletname*”. He says that “as it is understood from the fate of Fazlallah, their deeds and way of worship according to the *Cavidan*, it is a way of heresy that has no dealing with mind, piety and Shari’a.”³⁴² Ahmet Rıfkı states that there can be wicked people in a *tariqa*, yet it does not mean this *tariqa* is weak.³⁴³ He also indicates that *Aşkname* was not printed by Bektashis if the name on the printed copy was checked.³⁴⁴ Therefore, he criticized Ishak Efendi by giving his first mistake as the confusion of Hurufism and Bektashism.³⁴⁵ Another advocate of Bektashism, Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara also refuted Ishak Efendi’s accusations in the same way. He insists that Ishak Efendi slandered Bektashism by confusing it with Hurufism. Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara also states that Bektashis always follow Shari’a deeds. He asks Ishak Efendi that if there is someone, who claims the divinity of Fazlallah as Ishak Efendi said, they will fight with him with them.³⁴⁶

Except Ahmet Rıfat’s brief explanation, Bektashi defenses generally stayed silent about the content of *Aşkname* and they tried to keep Bektashism away from discussion of the logic of letters, Fazlallah’s personality and Firişteoğlu Abdulmecid. Yet, they refused what Ishak Efendi charged them with related to Hurufism. Among these charges, Fazlallah’s divinity and reincarnation were the most striking polemics. By contrast with Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, Ahmet Rıfkı and Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara challenged the Ishak

³⁴¹ Ahmet Rıfkı Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, p. 117.

³⁴² *Ibid*, p. 77.

³⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 73.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 121.

³⁴⁵ *Hata-yı evvel; Bektaşîlik ve Hurufîlik birbirine karıştırılmış, gerek tarihan, gerek mekanen, gerek itikaden tamamıyla birbirinin zıddı olan bu iki mesleğin birbirine karıştırılması efkar-ı umumiyeği tağlid etmiştir.* *Ibid*, p. 112.

³⁴⁶ “Ey Müellif (Harputi), eğer senin dediğin gibi Fadl-ı Hurufiyi ilah ittihaz edip, tamamıyla Kuran-ı Kerim’in ahkam-ı münifini inkar eden var ise bizde seninle beraber olup o misilli kimseleri tekfir edip her birlerini haşre dek nefrin ederiz.” Yüksel, *Bektaşîlik ve Mehmet Ali Dedebara*, p.142.

Efendi's reincarnation (*tenasüh*) thesis precisely. After underlining reincarnation as *batıl*, Ahmet Rıfki states that there is not any Hurufi understanding of reincarnation in the Bektashi Order. Moreover, he states that great Sunni scholars had some ideas related to *devriye*. To support his statement, he quoted sentences about *devriye* from Niyaz-i Mısri, Ibrahim Aksarayi, and Erzurumlu Ibrahim Hakkı.³⁴⁷ Likewise, Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara emphasizes Ishak Efendi's defamation of the Bektashi Order and states that "they do not know Fazl-ı Hurufi and have no interest of reincarnation. Their book was not Cavidan, it is the Quran."³⁴⁸

In the *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, Ishak Efendi debated the lineage of the Bektashi Order and tried to represent Hacı Bektash as an unimportant dervish. The counter argument of the Bektashis was the emphasizing on same roots of the Bektashi Order and the Naqshbandi Order. Ahmet Rifat tended to show the Bektashi Order inside Sunni tariqas. In order to legitimize it, he gave the Naqshbandi and the Bektashi lineages, both reach Abu Bakr. Moreover, he states that all tariqas reach Ali through Junayd al-Bagdad and Jafar al-Sadiq.³⁴⁹ Moreover, in order to strengthen the Naqshbandi-Bektashi bond, he says that "Bektashis wear "edhemi" cap, which belongs to Naqshbandiyya."³⁵⁰ Same as Ahmet Rifat, Ahmet Rıfki connected the Bektashi lineage to Abu Bakr and insisted that both the Naqshbandi Order and the Bektashi Order were two branches of Yasawiyya.³⁵¹ Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara specifies that the Bektashi Order like other Sufi orders depends on *Ahl al-Sunna*. After giving Hacı Bektash's lineage to prove his *sayyidness*, he attaches Naqshbandism and Bektashism to each other via Yusuf Hamedani.³⁵² All Bektashi defenses underline the Hacı Bektash's piety and greatness. Against Ishak Efendi's claim that there was no book remaining from Hacı Bektash, Rıfki Baba states that there is no doubt that *Vilayetname* was written by Hacı Bektash.³⁵³

³⁴⁷ Ahmet Rıfki Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, pp. 89-93.

³⁴⁸ Yüksel, *Bektaşîlik ve Mehmet Ali Dedebara*, p. 141.

³⁴⁹ Ahmet Rifat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşîlik (Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid)*, pp. 155-159.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 339.

³⁵¹ Ahmet Rıfki Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, p. 40, 48.

³⁵² Yüksel, *Bektaşîlik ve Mehmet Ali Dedebara*, pp. 143-147.

³⁵³ Ahmet Rıfki Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol.1, p. 86.

Rıfıkı Baba continued to defend Bektashism by emphasizing piousness and miracles of subsequent Bektashi babas. His defense was against Ishak Efendi's discussion of corrupted Bektashism after Hacı Bektash. He indicates that Ishak Efendi's claim had a lack of sources. He also states that teachings of Hacı Bektash Veli had never lost and *hilafetnames* show that the Bektashism was carried from hand to hand and it passed to Balım Sultan, then it passed from Balım Sultan to Sersem Ali Baba so the *Babagan* branch.³⁵⁴ Ahmet Rıfat also refers to Hacı Bektash's *sayyidness* and he gives the lineage of *Babagan* branch to demonstrate the continuation of the Bektashi Order in addition to the life stories of *mücerred* Bektashi babas.³⁵⁵ On the other hand, Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara's answer of Ishak Efendi's claim about subsequent Bektashis was underlying their dependence of Shari'a.³⁵⁶ Since all three Bektashi defenders were from the *Babagan* branch, they answered Ishak Efendi's claim by ignoring *Chelebis* and highlighting the importance of the *Babagan* branch.

Since one of the harshest charges of Ishak Efendi was prostrating to babas, it was one of the widest discussions in the Bektashi defenses. According to Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, the Bektashis accept their *pir* as the truth (*hak*) and they make *niyaz* (entreaty) to them as respect. Kissing the hand of *pirs* does not mean to prostrate him like putting your face and hands to the ground.³⁵⁷ On the other side, Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara emphasizes that God never let anyone to prostrate but himself. He adds that there is not any case of prostrating to a baba in any Bektashi lodge.³⁵⁸ Contrarily, Ahmet Rıfıkı displayed sharper opposition. After quoting Ahmet Rıfat's comments, he states that *niyaz* was the custom of *tariqas*, and it is not unique to the Bektashi Order. Moreover, he countered Ishak Efendi by saying "if Bektashis prostrate someone, that would be Hacı Bektash, not Fazlallah." He

³⁵⁴ Ibid, pp. 78-79, 86.

³⁵⁵ Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşılık (Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid)*, pp. 304-318.

³⁵⁶ Yüksel, *Bektaşılık ve Mehmet Ali Dedebara*, p. 148.

³⁵⁷ *Ve lakin bu adab ba'de's-selam yalnız bir inhina ile şeyhinin el ü diz ü damenin öpmek ve tutmakla yoksa secde eder gibice elin ve yüzün taş ve topraklara sürmek değildir.* Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşılık (Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid)*, p. 348.

³⁵⁸ Yüksel, *Bektaşılık ve Mehmet Ali Dedebara*, p. 142.

considered that since Ishak Efendi attacked Bektashism vulgarly, his aim was the total defamation of Bektashism.³⁵⁹

The Bektashis also countered Ishak Efendi's accusation of being outside of Islam. All defenses strictly insisted their dependence on Shari'a. While Ahmet Rifat emphasizes the importance of Shari'a deeds for the tariqa,³⁶⁰ Ahmet Rıfıkı says that the "faith of Bektashis is not different from Islam, and it will be contemptibility to discuss this matter with Ishak Efendi."³⁶¹ More importantly, he tries to dispose of Ishak Efendi's accusations by differentiating between Kızılbashes and Bektashis. He stated the dependence of Bektashism to Sunni orthodoxy and blamed Shah Ismail for depravity in Anatolia.³⁶² In that way, he imputed accusations to Alevi-Kızılbashes. Differently, Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dede-baba indicates that Bektashis are on *Maturidi* school of Sunna and they depend on Hanafi school in law (*fiqh*).³⁶³ Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dede-baba also says that "we are not infidels (*müşrik*), we are Muhammadis"³⁶⁴ to refute Ishak Efendi's consideration of Bektashis as infidels, whose slaughtered animals must not be eaten.

Alongside the emphasis of its loyalty to Sunni orthodoxy, Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dede-baba continued to defend Bektashism against Ishak Efendi's claim of "unorthodox practices". He objected to the discourse of underestimation of society (*idlal*) by Bektashis. He indicates that Bektashis pray in the mosque located in the tekke every day.³⁶⁵ Moreover, he also states that drinking alcohol by a few young Bektashis cannot be generalized to all Bektashis and Hacı Bektash. Moreover, Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dede-baba strictly refused Ishak Efendi's defamation of unlawful sexual intercourse.³⁶⁶ Contrary to

³⁵⁹ Ahmet Rıfıkı Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol.1, pp. 102-104.

³⁶⁰ Ahmet Rifat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşılık (Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid)*, pp. 290-298.

³⁶¹ Ahmet Rıfıkı Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, p. 87.

³⁶² Rıfıkı Baba also states that Bektashis are part of Islam, which has three hundred sixty million members. Ibid, pp. 95, 225.

³⁶³ Yüksel, *Bektaşılık ve Mehmet Ali Dede-baba*, pp. 142-143.

³⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 149.

³⁶⁵ "Hankah-ı feyz-i iktinah-ı Hazret-i Pir-i Veli'de mine'l-kadim sabahları bi'l cümle babalar ve dervişan ile bulunan züvvar hankah-ı mezkure dahilinde olan cami'i şerifte cemaatle salat-ı subhun edasından sonra Dede Efendi tarafından Padişah-ı din-i İslam ve asakir-i şahane-i zafer encam ve cümle ibadullahın selameti için bir gülbang-ı ali çekilip yani dua olunup kaffei cemaat amin diyerek hatmolunur." Ibid, p. 141.

³⁶⁶ Ibid, pp. 140-143.

Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dede Baba, Ahmet Rıfat and Ahmet Rıfkı stayed silent about the participation of women in the Order, even though Ishak Efendi used the harshest incriminations in this matter. Moreover, although Ahmet Rıfkı does not remark any defense about drinking alcohol, Ahmet Rıfat Efendi specifies that there is no respect for alcohol in Bektashism and those who drink are influenced by *rafz* and *ilhad*.³⁶⁷

Ahmet Rıfkı spent all his efforts to refute the claim of “secret” as Ishak Efendi considered unorthodox Bektashi practices their secret (*sır*) by linking them to Hurufism. Rıfkı Baba says that “if Ishak Efendi discovered the secret that has been kept for five centuries, his contribution is greater than the discovery of America.”³⁶⁸ Moreover, Ahmet Rıfkı challenged the claim of Ishak Efendi about Bektashis and *Gaza*. He underlines that Ishak Efendi was ignorant about Janissaries and determines that Janissaries, who were blessed by Hacı Bektash had fought for Islam since the time of Orhan Ghazi.³⁶⁹ In that way, Ahmet Rıfkı defended the Janissaries with Bektashism incontrovertibly. While referring to 1826, he justified both the Order and the Janissaries by insisting on the role of factious people. In addition, Bektashism was also defended against Ishak Efendi’s charge of “not following Ali.” Against Ishak Efendi, Bektashis claimed that they are *muhıbb-i hanedan*. While Ahmet Rıfkı refers to the confusion of Ishak Efendi about Bektashism and Hurufism in that sense,³⁷⁰ Ahmet Rıfat differently explains the *Tawalla* and *Tabarra* (loving of *Ahl al-Bayt*, to express aloofness to enemies of *Ahl al-Bayt*). However, he represented *Tawalla* and *Tabarra* understanding of Bektashis differently from the classical understanding of Shi’a.³⁷¹ In that regard, he defended Bektashism again as a Sunni *tariqa* in the face of Ishak Efendi’s polemic of cursing Yazid.

In general, Harputlu Ishak Efendi posed more than fifteen polemics related to each other toward Bektashis. Yet, while Bektashi defenses harshly refused some of these

³⁶⁷ Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşılık (Mir’atü’l-Mekasid fî def’i’l-Mefasid)*, p. 229.

³⁶⁸ “Beş yüz seneden beri mektum tutulan Sır’dan bahs olunuyor. Beş yüz sendir Sır böyle perde-i ihfa altında iken eğer Hoca İshak Efendi bunu keşfedip ortaya koyduysa...! Amerikanın keşfinden daha büyük hizmet etmiş demektir.” Ahmet Rıfkı Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, p. 106.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 108-110.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 84-85.

³⁷¹ Ahmet Rıfat Efendi, *Gerçek Bektaşılık (Mir’atü’l-Mekasid fî def’i’l-Mefasid)*, p. 318

polemics, they neglected some of them. Especially, polemics related to the content of *Aşkname* and unorthodox faith were reacted by Bektashis superficially. Since they refused *Hurufism* in the beginning, they never attempted to discuss *Cavidan*. Since all Bektashi defenses drew a picture of the Bektashi Order over Sunni orthodoxy, one might assume that the Bektashi Order was a Sunni *tariqa*, whose members followed *Shari'a* path. Although *Babagan* defenders in Istanbul seem to perform *Shari'a* deeds, it is obvious that Bektashi defence carried a kind of *taqiyya* since some of their defenses remained weak due to esoteric Bektashi teachings. More importantly, they contradicted with their defence. Although Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dedebara defended Bektashism from Ishak Efendi's perspective, he showed opposition by writing poems (*nefes*) containing the Hurufi description of face as well as the idea of the divinity of Ali.³⁷² Therefore, the content of Bektashi defence was a kind of *taqiyya* and a part of the rehabilitation policy, which they confirmed that they were within Sunni orthodoxy.

Kaşifü'l Esrar was the most reacted polemical text by Bektashis since Ishak Efendi defames Bektashism by using invective words. His extreme offense differentiated him from mainstream orthodoxy since he even derived discourses of 16th century. The reason why he attacked Bektashis with a gross insult was Bektashi reintegration of society. As Ahmet Rıfki implies, Ishak Efendi's aim was emblazing the Bektashi antagonism in society.³⁷³ Since the explosion of Bektashi publication in 1870's became the symbol of the Bektashi revival, *Kaşifü'l Esrar* was written against the publication of

³⁷² Ayine tuttum yüzüme, Ali göründü gözüme,
Nazar eyedim özüme, Ali göründü gözüme

Adem Baba Havva ile, Hem allem-el-esma ile
Çarh-ı felek sema ile, Ali göründü gözüme

Hazret-i Nuh Neciyyullah, Hem İbrahim Halilullah
Sina'da Kelimullah, Ali göründü gözüme

İsa-yı Ruhullah oldur, İki alemde Şah oldur
Müminlere penah oldur, Ali göründü gözüme

Ali evvel, Ali ahir, Ali batın, Ali zahir
Ali tayyib, Ali tahir, Ali göründü gözüme

Ali candır Ali canan, Ali dindir Ali iman
Ali Rahim, Ali Rahman, Ali göründü gözüme

Hilmi gedayi bir kemter, Görür gözüm dilim söyler
Her nereye kılsam nazar, Ali göründü gözüme. Noyan, *Bütün Yönleriyle Bektaşilik ve Alevilik*, vol. 4, pp. 264-265.

³⁷³ Ahmet Rıfki Efendi, *Bektaşî Sırrı*, vol. 1, p. 112.

Aşkname ostensibly. However, it brought the polemics, some of which had existed in the society since the sixteenth to light and recalled the same demands of 1826. In other words, Ishak Efendi aimed to draw attention of the state to that Bektashis became visible by violating the line of orthodoxy that were drawn for them, which needed to be controlled by oppression. Ishak Efendi's call must have been answered by the state that the publication of *Cavidan* was aimed to be confiscated and booksellers were ordered to be punished by the state in 1873.³⁷⁴ However, his propaganda could not be preferred by the state even in Abdulhamid II's reign.

³⁷⁴ *Şer'an intişarı memnu olan Cavidan nam kitab bu kere neşr ve fûruht olunduğundan serian men-i neşriyle beraber tabına mütecasir olanın mazhar-ı mücazat olunması hususunun Zabtiye müşiriyet-i celilesine emr ü işarı zımında keyfiyetin huzur-ı sami-i cenab-ı vekaletpenahileri arz ve beyanı Meclis-i Ma'arif'den ifade edlimiş ve iktizasının icrası mütevakıf bulunmagın ol-babda emr-ü ferman.* BOA, MF.MKT; 9/78. Moreover, *Cavidan* and *Hüsniye* were also confiscated by the state again during the reign of Abdulhamid II. See footnote 223.

CONCLUSION

Today, Alevi-Bektashi communities are the biggest religious minority that can officially exist by using its their own name as an identity. Although the Bektashi Order experienced two instances of abolition almost in a hundred years (1826 and 1925), it did not dissolve. Instead, its members managed to rebuild it in each time. The abolition of the Bektashi Order in 1826 is the significant cornerstone of the history of Bektashism that had undeniable impacts on the Bektashi Order. Scholars constantly approach the abolition of the Bektashi Order by perpetuating all its consequences to the following clandestine years or oversimplify the revival of the Order by drawing certain lines but without examining its dimensions and particularizations. Notwithstanding, contrary to common belief, the revival of the Bektashi Order was a complex historical process that was regulated by the state's changing Bektashi policy.

In the present thesis, I have tried to demonstrate the gradual rehabilitation process of the Bektashi Order between 1826 and 1876. To this end, starting with 1826, the breaking points and continuities in the Bektashi struggle for survival, the transformation of the state's perception of Bektashism throughout the above mentioned period, the limits and indications of the rebirth of Bektashism and reflections toward it have been examined. The focus of this study has been the reintegration of Bektashism into Ottoman society, which was actualized concordantly with gradual moderation of the state's oppression after Mahmud II. Since Janissaries were the primary target in 1826, the abolition of the Bektashi Order was suppression rather than eradication and remained as a precaution to counter resurrection attempt of the Janissaries. In other words, Bektashism started to reappear when the state felt certain about the removal of Janissaries. Moreover, while the Bektashi-Janissary association lost its significance, the accusations based on unorthodox Bektashi faith became a sustainable control mechanism of the Bektashi rehabilitation. Bektashi polemics over orthodox discourse, which emerged as the reaction to the increasing visibility of Bektashism on public sphere was also taken into consideration in this study to describe the perception of Bektashism existing in society.

The first chapter has scrutinized the incidents of 1826 in all respects to check the consistency and causality between the state policy of Bektashism throughout the suppression and the revival process of the Order in the following fifty years. The abolition of the Bektashi Order was a process that was conducted by several ways of justification. The Bektashi Order was prohibited just three weeks after the suppression of the Janissary Corps by the decision of a *Meşveret* council, which was formed as a tripartite coalition between officials, scholars and Sunni sheikhs. Since the unorthodox faith of the Bektashis became one justification of the abolition, it was claimed that contemporary Bektashism was corrupted and the Bektashis were accused of heresy and of not following Shari'a deeds such as not praying, not fasting, drinking alcohol and cursing caliphs and companions of Muhammad. As a part of Sultan Mahmud's policy, rising Sunni orthodoxy was used to carry out the abolition process and Naqshibandis were preferred as the best option for conducting the propaganda. In addition, the prosperity of the Bektashi waqfs also became an accelerative factor of the process. Beyond all, the actual reason was the Bektashis' spiritual affiliations with the Janissaries. As an authoritarian ruler, Mahmud II aimed to extinguish any Janissary association and the Bektashis were the closest associates of the Janissaries. However, attaching the abolition of the Bektashi Order to the suppression of Janissaries by considering it under the Auspicious Event (*Vakay-i Hayriyye*) prompts historians to deduce a problematic assumption, which is seeing Bektashis as a trouble on the path of Ottoman modernization. However, it would not be fair to say that Bektashis were against modernization. On the contrary, *Beşiktaş Cemiyet-i İlmiyesi*, whose members were accused of Bektashism had the mission of disseminating science and technology in Istanbul. In addition to the examination of the incident of 1826, this chapter has established a causality between the abolition and the resurrection by investigating the state's Bektashi policy through primary sources. Sources show that few Bektashis were executed at the beginning of the abolition for reasons of intimidation. Yet, many Bektashi babas and dervishes mainly from certain Bektashi lodges of Istanbul were banished to places, where Sunni orthodox *ulama* were strong. Bektashi lodges, which were less than sixty years old were demolished, properties were seized and income was transferred to the budget of the new army. The rest of the Bektashi lodges were granted to other Sunni orders but mostly to the Naqshbandi Order. The sources consulted in this study also indicate that it was not a completed abolition, which was implemented in the same way all around the empire. Rather, it was a type suppression that aimed to elude ex-Janissary activities in Istanbul and turn Bektashis into obedient subjects.

Chapter two has focused on the reactivation process of Bektashism after 1826. By examining ongoing state prosecution and toleration together, it has argued the nature, the content and the extents of the Bektashi revival. Since the attempt of 1826 was not finalized by the state, it allowed Bektashism to uphold itself on certain levels and in certain regions by getting through the state's prosecution by practicing *taqiyya* and adopting a new name *Tarik-i Nazenin*. The harsh policy of the state started to mollify with the pardoning of some Bektashi babas few years after the abolition. Although Bektashi pardons increased after Mahmud II, the Order was mostly tolerated in the second half of the 19th century and reappeared on public sphere during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz. Despite all, it was neither a finalized nor a formalized revival. Although some Bektashis were forgiven and allowed to return to their lodges, some others continued to be persecuted at the same time. The state altered its collective suppression policy against Bektashis and continued it by oppressing them selectively and individually. Archival sources show that the Bektashis were pardoned upon the condition of their correction of faith (*tashih-i itikad*), which was the way of their reintegration into society. Relatedly, disobeying Shari'a rules brought oppression together. The Bektashi Order was gradually rehabilitated with the reactivation of lodges as a consequence of pardons. The Bektashis' requisition of official recognition had never been answered. Yet, the existence of the Bektashi Order was practically ignored by the state. Starting with the *Tanzimat* era, The Bektashis' interaction with public and high-level statesmen increased and they sometimes even received the patronage of high-level statesmen. The rehabilitation of Bektashism was mainly sustained during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz. It was the time that they printed many books, recruited new dervishes and found support from even the Sultan's mother. Moreover, her patronage enabled them to create the propaganda of Bektashism and defend it against orthodox scholars.

The final chapter has analyzed Bektashi polemics, which were made between Harputlu Ishak Efendi and *Babagan* Bektashis in the late the 19th century. As being the most visible sign of the Bektashi rebirth, publication activities of Bektashis reached the top in the 1870's. The increase of the appearance of Bektashism on public sphere via printed books drew a rebuff of Sunni orthodoxy. To this end, this chapter traced Bektashi polemics by the cross-examination of Harputlu Ishak Efendi's Bektashi aggression; *Kaşifü'l Esrar ve Dafî'ü'l Eşrar* and three Bektashi defence; Ahmet Rıfat Efendi's *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid*, Ahmet Rıfki's *Bektashi Sırrı* and Mehmet Ali Hilmi

Dedebaba's *Kaşifü'l Esrar Reddiyesi*. *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, which was penned against *Aşkname* of Firişteoğlu Abdulmecid posed more than fifteen discussions on Hurufism and Bektashi teachings. Since the predominant claim in *Kaşifü'l Esrar* was that Bektashism was corrupted after Hacı Bektash due to the influence of Hurufism, the theological debates of Ishak Efendi focused on Hurufi criticism and existing accusations toward Bektashism. The content of polemics showed that Ishak Efendi derived charges, which were utilized in 1826 and expressed defamations that were used toward Alevi-Kızılbaş communities since the 16th century. The findings of this thesis showed that *Kaşifü'l Esrar* was a unique response, which had a lack of sources, underdeveloped polemics, and profane language that aimed to defame Bektashism publicly and warn the authorities about the Bektashi revival. Since Ishak Efendi has more radical approach, he displayed a different stance than mainstream orthodoxy about Bektashi revival. Against the claims of *Kaşifü'l Esrar*, Bektashism was defended by three *Babagan* advocates, who probably remained close to intellectual circles of Istanbul and were exposed to polemics. Contrary to *Mir'atü'l-Mekasid fi def'i'l-Mefasid*, later two replies; *Bektaşî Sırrı* and *Kaşifü'l Esrar Reddiyesi* made a more powerful defence of Bektashism, which shows that although it was interrupted during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid, the Bektashi rehabilitation gained explicitness at the turn of the 20th century. Yet, Bektashis continued to indicate the presence of Bektashism in prescribed lines of orthodoxy. As a part of *taqiyya*, Bektashi defence against *Kaşifü'l Esrar* was drawing a Bektashi image that was introducing the Bektashi Order as a Sunni orthodox order, which shared strong historical roots with Naqshbandism. Moreover, it can be concluded that the Bektashi defence not only vindicated Bektashism from the polemics of *Kaşifü'l Esrar* but also tried to justify Bektashism by explaining its doctrine, teachings and its history to the public. Findings of this chapter suggest that Ishak Efendi cautioned the state that Bektashis violated the border of abolition and became visible, which needed to be controlled by oppression as it did earlier.

The concluding remark of this thesis is that it is certain that the rehabilitation of the Bektashi Order was a restrained revival, which took place under state control as a consequence of the moderation of state pressure. Although the Bektashi Order has never returned to its position before 1826, it revived to a considerable extent both physically and intellectually in the second half of the 19th century. While the state's concerns of 1826 started to change after Mahmud II, suppression was lessened correspondingly and it

turned to soft control. Since it was the legitimacy of abolition, the discourse of the corrupted contemporary Bektashism had been kept alive throughout 19th century. The findings of this thesis support that Bektashis reactivated their lodges and resumed performing Bektashi practices even if they admitted living under the umbrella of orthodoxy. More interestingly, the state's pressure of Bektashism was in its softest level during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz, which made Bektashism more apparent in society. In other words, the state turned a blind eye to Bektashi activities. However, what the state ignored about Bektashis was recalled by Sunni orthodox scholars by proposing the suppression for the agenda.

Overall, this study has aimed to contribute to the Alevi-Bektashi studies by dealing with the particularizations and dimensions of the Bektashi revival in the following fifty years of the abolition of the Order. Since the state's perception of Bektashism showed fluctuations in the century following the abolition, further research regarding the survival of Bektashism in the reign of Abdulhamid should bring more reliable conclusions about 19th-century Bektashism. Moreover, how Sunni orthodoxy as a legitimacy instrument transformed together with the state's Bektashi policy in 19th century is needed to be addressed for a comprehensible 19th-century Ottoman history. Further analysis about the socio-religious transformation of post-abolition Bektashism is needed to answer how and why Bektashism was merged with Kızılbaşism and how it was reborn under the new supra identity Alevism. Last but not least, the pre-abolition period of Bektashism is blurred and further researches about the formation and transformation of Bektashism in early modern period are needed to understand a more qualified history of Bektashi Order.

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