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BEKTASHISM IN EGYPT, IRAQ AND TURKEY

This article provides general information about the founder, Haji Bektash Veli and history of Bektashism, which is one of the oldest branches and tariqas of Sufism (Sufism, also known as Tasawwuf) within the Islamic religion, which was formed in the city of Mecca on the Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century and began to form in the 8th-9th centuries and has adopted the spiritual growth and development of a person as its goal, which originated in the 13th century and whose current centers are Tirana, the capital of Albania and the Hajibektash region of the Nevsehir province in Turkey. The wide geography and ethnic groups are considered, where the tariqa, which appeared on the territory of Anatolia, spread and formed in one or another period. As the main topic of the article, the stages of the formation of the Bektashism in Egypt, Iraq and Turkey (mostly in the Ottoman Empire) were studied, and the path of development of this movement in these countries was also considered. The functions of the bektashism, its relations with the state and the army, the attitude of the heads of state, especially the Ottoman sultans, towards this movement during their rule, connection with the ongoing social and political events, ethnic communities and small nationalities that the tariqa gathered its supporters in different periods, famous personalities who were part of the tariqah, as well as distribution, systematization, certain causes of the tariqa, as well as stages such as disintegration as a result of prohibitions as a whole has been investigated. This article provides general information about Bektashism communities established in the mentioned countries, as well as Bektashi khaniqah that existed in and around the city of Cairo, Egypt, Karbala, Najaf, Baghdad, Samarra, Kadhimiya and other cities of Iraq, in various provinces of Turkey, their main activities, founders (sheikhs) and members (dervishes).

Key words: bektashism, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey, khaniqah, tariqa.

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БЕКТАШИЗМ В ЄГИПТІ, ІРАКУ І ТУРЕЧЧИНІ

У цій статті подано загальну інформацію про засновника Хаджі Бекташа Велі та історію бекташизму, який є одним із найдавніших напрямів і таріків суфізму (суфізм, також відомий як тасаввуф) у межах ісламської релігії, яка сформувалася в місті Мекка Аравійський півострів у 7 столітті і почав формуватися у 8-9 століттях і прийняв духовне зростання та розвиток людини як свою мету, що виникло в 13 столітті та нинішніми центрами якого є Тирана, столиця Албанії та район Хаджибекташ провінції Невшехір в Туреччині. Розглянуто широку географію та етнічні групи, де в той чи інший період поширювався та формувався тарикат, що виник на території Анатолії. В якості основної теми статті досліджено етапи становлення бекташизму в Єгипті, Іраку та Туреччині (переважно в Османській імперії), а також розглянуто шляхи розвитку цього руху в цих країнах. Функції бекташизму, його відносини з державою та армією, ставлення глав держав, особливо османських султанів, до цього руху під час їх правління, зв'язок із суспільно-політичними подіями, що відбуваються, етнічними спільнотами та малими народностями, які тарикат збирав своїх прихильників у різні періоди, відомих особистостей, які входили до тарікату, а також досліджено поширення, систематизацію, певні причини виникнення тарікату, а також такі етапи, як розпад внаслідок заборон в цілому. У цій статті подано загальну інформацію про бекташські громади, створені у згаданих країнах, а також бекташські ханіки, які існували в і навколо міст Каїр, Єгипет, Кербела, Наджаф, Багдад, Самарра, Кадімія та інших містах Іраку, в різних провінціях Іраку. Туреччина, їхня основна діяльність, засновники (шейхи) та учасники (дервіші).

Ключові слова: бекташизм, Єгипет, Ірак, Туреччина, ханіка, тарикат.

Introduction. If we look at the general history of the Bektashism, we will see that this movement arose against the backdrop of social and political events that took place in Anatolia in the 13th century. The name of the tariqa is connected with the name of its founder, Haji Bektash Veli. Haji Bektash Veli lived in the 13th century and founded a great school. The life of Haji Bektash, whose paternal lineage goes back to Hazrat Ali, is made up of semi-legendary tales. Although he is credited with founding Bektashi, the systematic organization of the tariqa took place during the reign of Balim Sultan. He played an exceptional role in spreading and strengthening Bektashi ideas by overseeing the construction and operation of khaniqah.

The Bektashism in Anatolia has gone through stable and turbulent periods throughout its history, sometimes supported by the state during the reign of various Ottoman sultans and was sometimes targeted by the state. When Mahmud II abolished the Janissaries in 1826, the existence of the Bektashism was seriously shaken, and about 100 years later, with the official closure of the khaniqah and zawiyah in the Republic of Turkey, the Bektashism also lost its footing in Anatolia.

The tariqa also has many followers in Egypt and Iraq. The spread of the Bektashi in Egypt and the beginning of the creation of the Bektashi khaniqah are associated with the name of Kaygusuz Abdal. The existence of the tariqa in Egypt continued until the second half of the 20th century. In Iraq, the Bektashism is more prevalent among Kurdish, Turkmen and Shabaks living in the north of the country. Khaniqahs here are mainly built near the tombs of saints (Ocak, 1992, p. 379).

The scope of a study – In Azerbaijan, no independent study has been conducted on the distribution of the Bektashism in Egypt, Iraq and Turkey. Researchers such as Haslok, Frederick de Jong, Asad Afandi, Fuad Koprulu touched on this topic in their articles superficially and were unable to conduct an in-depth study. In the article, the author studied the religious and ideological concept of other researchers, stages of development, forms of manifestation in Egypt, Iraq and a number of countries. Given all of this, it is critical to consider the aforementioned topics separately.

Purpose and objectives. The main purpose of the study is to give a historical-religious and socio-philosophical analysis of the Bektashi movement,

which is one of the oldest tariqas in the history of Islamic Sufism that arose in the 13th century. On this point, given the uniqueness of the topic, one of the main purpose and objectives is to determine the origin of Bektashism and the various reasons for the emergence of this movement, clarify specific terms related to the topic, and also explore the role of this movement in the history of Islam.

Methods. In the course of the study, the method of comparative analysis between sources related to the topic was used, in general, the analytical method of research. Depending on the tasks set in the study, methods such as generalization, ascent from the abstract to the concrete, historical-comparative and systematic approaches, analysis, synthesis, induction and deduction were used.

Main part.

Bektashism in Egypt

When we turn to historical sources, we do not find accurate facts about when the Bektashi tariqa began to spread in Egypt. As specified by the most correct hypothesis, the tariqa was widespread in this area even before the conquest of Egypt by the Ottoman Empire, and after the conquest became more popular.

The spread of Bektashism in Egypt is associated with the name of Kaygusuz Abdal (d. 1444). Kaygusuz Abdal is believed to have been born in the second half of the 14th century and there is limited information about him. In manaqibs, his real name is given as “Gaybi”. Abdal considered Musa a sheikh and, after serving him for forty years, went to Egypt. He spread the ideas of the Bektashism and conveyed his love for Ahl al-Bayt to the people in the areas where he traveled with forty abdals. Because he showed favor to the Sultan of Egypt, the Sultan built a dargah named after him on the banks of the Nile River called “Qasr al-Ain”. He spent some time in Egypt, made the hajj, and on his return visited the graves of the imams Ahl al-Bayt in the cities of Baghdad, Kufa, Najaf, Karbala, Damascus and Aleppo, spread Bektashi’s thought in the regions he visited. Kaygusuz Abdal is believed the founder of Alawite Bektashi literature based on his allegiance to Ahl al-Bayt (Azamat, 2022, p. 76).

Khaniqas played a peculiar role in spreading Bektashi thought in the Egyptian region. Evliya Chalabi mentions in his work that there are several khaniqas in Egypt, and also in historical sources it is emphasized that there are three baktashi khaniqas

in Cairo. The first is the “Qasr al-Ain” khaniqah, located on the banks of the Nile. In a khaniqah that can accommodate a thousand people, prayers are performed, the Koran is read, and religious texts are read. The tombs of the Bektashi sheikhs were located in the courtyard of khaniqah. Sources say that many objects symbolizing Bektashi are hung on the walls. It existed alone on the site of the building of the Faculty of Pharmacy of Cairo University, which currently exists. This khaniqah, popularly known as “Takiyyat al-Ajam” and “Takiyyat al-Inkishariyya”, was built by Amir Janibak and was intended for use by dervishes. Danish traveler Carsten Niebuhr reported his visit to this region in the second half of the 18th century. Those who came to khaniqah, located by the Nile River, first visited the residence of Sultan Selim, and then entered khaniqah (Çift, 2011, p. 117).

The other is the khaniqah of the same name, located at the foothill of Mokattam Mountain. This mountain was once one of the places that people believed sacred. The stories associated with Hazrat Musa as well as the Caliph of Fatimid, al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah, are also considered things that make this place famous among the people. Mokattam khaniqah consisted of a prayer room, a sheikh's room and a kitchen. Although there is no accurate facts about when it was founded, the khaniqah was closed by Sultan Mahmud in 1826 along with the janissary centers and resumed its activities only in 1866 at the initiative of Ismail Pasha (Bayhan, 2021, p. 57).

The last khaniqah is the mansion where Ahmed Sirri Baba stayed with his dervishes, which actually belonged to the prince of Egypt, Amr Ibrahim. Although this place did not function as a khaniqah in the literal sense for years, it played a major role in the spread of the Bektashism. The last two sheikhs of khaniqah, Mehmed Lutfi Baba and Ahmed Sirri Baba, who are considered the last representatives of the Egyptian Bektashi, played a major role in spreading Bektashi thought in Cairo and its environs. Mehmed Lutfi Baba was born in 1849 in Gjirokastra, Albania. For the purpose of spread Bektashi's ideas, he took lessons from masters in many khaniqas and finally came to Egypt and worked in Mokattam khaniqah. The last successor of the khaniqah - Ahmed Sirri Baba was born in 1895 in the town of Leskovik, Albania, first entered the dargah at the age of 17, studied the depths of science, from there

he went to Egypt and was considered a student of Mehmed Lutfi Baba, and after his death he became the chief administrator of the khaniqah (Gümüšoğlu, 2–16, p. 200).

The notes of some travelers indicate that there are 1060 khaniqahs in Cairo, of which 200 belong to the followers of Al-Sayyid al-Badawi. One of these khaniqahs was known as Hassan Baba. This khaniqah with small cupola was designed to accommodate 20 dervishes. Although sources mention the existence of another one, “Abdullah Ansari khaniqah” in Cairo, information about him is not very great in amount (Köprülü, 1939, p. 23).

Another information about Bektashi is contained in the words of the Mevlevi sheikh Sahib Dada at the end of the 17th century. The work written by his son tells about the trip of Sahib Dada to Egypt and his meeting with the sheikhs in the khaniqah of the Kaygusuz Baba. In the 19th century, the above-mentioned khaniqah was ruled by the Bosnian Ismayil Baba and his twenty-five followers (Köprülü, 1939, p. 24).

Due to the revolution in Egypt in 1952, Bektashism is not officially allowed in that country. The Dervishes of Mokattam khaniqah, which at that time was considered the only Bektashism center in the country, and the last sheikh of khaniqah Ahmad Sirri Baba left this place and took refuge in the mansion of the Egyptian prince and continued their activities privately (Çift, 2011, p. 128).

Bektashism in Iraq

Considered one of the ancient cultural centers of the world, Iraq is one of the countries where many systems of religious thought are prevalent. Acknowledged that the development of the Bektashism in Iraq began with the resettlement of Turkmens in Iraq by Abdullah ibn Ziyad, the governor of Khorasan. The attack of the Mongol Empire on Iraq and neighboring regions in the 13th century contributed to the spread of Bektashi ideas in these lands. The northern part of Iraq - the cities of Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, Mosul and Kirkuk were areas of compact residence of the Bektashism (Kavak, 2019, p. 267).

Khaniqahs played a particular role in the spread of the Bektashism in Iraq. The sources reflect information about the first khaniqah in the cities of Karbala, Najaf, Samarra, Kazimeyn and Baghdad. Badri Noyan notes that there are four khaniqahs on the territory of Iraq. Acknowledged that the built khaniqah belong to the end

of the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries. Those khaniqahs are as follows: (Karakaya, 2007, p. 693).

Khaniqah in Karbala

One of the major khaniqahs in Iraq is situated in Karbala – near the grave of Imam Huseyn. This khaniqah is known under the names “takkeyi-abdalani-rum”, “Momin dada dargah”, and it is called as “Huseyniyya khaniqah” in some sources. People who come here, after visiting the tomb of Imam Huseyn, enter khaniqah, perform sacrifices according to the rules of the tariqah, and make vows to dervishes. According to Badri Noyan, the well-known Azerbaijani poet Mahammad Fuzuli also served in the mentioned khaniqah for some time.

This khaniqah was ruled by the Bektashi sheikh families. The construction of khaniqah dates back to the period before the conquest of Iraq by the Ottoman Empire. Jahan Dada and Huseyn Dada are considered the most well-known sheikhs among the rulers of khaniqah. Khaniqah continued to operate until 1914.

Khaniqah in Najaf

The khaniqah built near the tomb of Hazrat Ali was also known as the khaniqah “Najaful-ashraf” or “Imam Ali”. According to the information mentioned in the sources, Badri Noyan recorded the name of the khaniqah as “Virani Baba”, because the Hurufi-Bektashi poet Virani Baba served here in the 16-17 centuries. The khaniqah building was taken from Bektashi by the governor of Baghdad, Namig Pasha, in the 19th century.

Khaniqah in Kazimeyn

There are rumors that the khaniqah built near the tomb of Imam Museyi Kazim was built by Nasraddin Shah’s uncle Mirza Farhad. Khaniqah has long been ruled by Salman Jamali Baba, a Bektashi dervish of Albanian origin.

Khaniqah in Samarra

Khaniqah, known as “Imam Hasan Asgari doorstep”, was built next to the tomb of the Imam. Although there is no accurate facts about the time of the foundation of the khaniqah and its activities, it is acknowledge that it was created in the 16th century and ceased to operate in the 19th century.

Although the cities of Karbala and Najaf are considered to be the first cities where the Bektashi khaniqahs were established, the khaniqahs are believed to be more numerous in Baghdad. The most famous khaniqah located here is named after Gurgur Baba. In khaniqah, students were

taught the sciences of shariat, aqidah, logic, wisdom and eloquence. Gurgur Baba, who is called blessed, became famous for telling about the location of oil wells in Kirkuk. He died in the khaniqah where he taught and was buried there. His grave became a pilgrimage (Taşgın, 2022, p. 320).

Another famous khaniqah in Baghdad is the Khizir Ilyas khaniqah in the Karkh district of the city. Information about this khaniqah can be found in the memoirs of Khalwati Sheikh Siddig, who came from Istanbul and stayed here for about a year. Sheikh Siddique met Darwish Khizir and learned from him what he thought of Bektashism (Taşgın, 2020, p. 272).

Munshi Baghdadi also mentioned a khaniqah belonging to the Bektashis in 1822. He stated that the original building of this khaniqah was built by Alp Arslan Sultan of the Seljuk and was located in the western part of Baghdad. Khaniqah was likened to the Kaaba in appearance and the tomb located nearby belonged to Mikayil Seljuqi was narrated (Taşgın, 2020, p. 273).

Khaniqah in the city of Kirkuk played a remarkable role in preserving the Bektashi tradition among the Turkmen. If we turn to historical sources, we will see that, in this city there are khaniqahs known by the names “Dada Jafar”, “Mardan Ali”, “Darvish Abbas”, “Hunkar”, “Dada Gaib”, “Baba Gulam”, “Seyid Ali”, Seyid Galandar”, “Seyid Heydar” (Kavak, 2019, p. 267).

One of the groups that maintain the Bektashi tradition in Northern Iraq are the Shabaks. People belonging to this group live east of Mosul. The Shabaks, who speak a language that is a mixture of Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish, are considered a society that adopted Bektashi thought. There is controversy over when they entered Iraqi territory. By all accounts, they came from Iran and supported Shah Ismayil, the founder of the Safavid state. The Shabaks accepted Haji Bektash Vali as a pir and considered him the caliph of God on earth. At present, shabaks continue to exist, but at different times they were assimilated under the influence of Sunnis and Shias (Taşgın, 2009, p. 124).

Khaniqah in Turkey

The history of the Bektashism in Turkey coincides with the period when Islam began to spread in Anatolia in the 13th century. When Turkey was proclaimed a republic, khaniqahs and zawiyas were officially closed.

The deep history of the Bektashism in Turkey is divided into several major stages. The tariqah went through the stage of formation from the 13th to the 15th century, and was officially formed in the 16th century at the initiative of Balim Sultan. The abolition of the Janissaries by the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II in 1826 dealt a big blow to the Bektashism, and the tariqah lasted almost 100 years.

As a result of the state policy of Bayezid II, as well as other tariqahs, the state provided serious support to the Bektashism, thus, the Bektashism were able to strengthen their existence and activities (Yılmaz, 2015, p. 98).

During the reign of Yavuz Sultan Selim, the attitude of the state towards Bektashism completely changed, the tariqahs were closed due to uprisings in Anatolia, but the Bektashi tariqah was revived under the rule of Kanuni Suleiman (Ocak, 1992, p. 379).

By decree signed by Sultan Mahmud II in 1826, the Janissaries were closed. During the incident, in addition to the Janissaries, who were pursued and neutralized, a massacre was perpetrated among the Bektashism, and the khaniqahs were burned or destroyed (Maden, 2015, p. 193).

In the Republic of Turkey in 1925, in connection with the law on the closure of khaniqahs and zawiyas, the Bektashi tariqah was completely abolished, as a result of which many sheikhs and dervishes left the country, some have gone underground (Hakyemez, 2014, p. 165).

Information about the first Bektashi khaniqahs founded in Turkey dates back to the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th century. On this matter, the article written by Omar Lutfi Barka is of special significance. In addition, the work of Katib Chalabi called "Jahannuma" is considered as one of the primary sources (Değerli, 2018, p. 108).

Among the khaniqahs discussed, we can point out many khaniqahs known under the names of "Abdal Ata", "Achigbash Ibrahim Dada", "Aghbiyig Sultan", "Bayazid Baba", "Chomag Baba", "Ganj Abdal", "Sheikh Nusrat" (Değerli, 2018, p. 108).

Abdal Ata khaniqah

The first information about this khaniqah in the province of Chorum, dates back to the 15th century. The sources mention that the khaniqah was exempt from taxes, provided with food by the state and was one of the khaniqahs that reopened

and operated after the abolition of the Bektashi khaniqah in 1826.

Achigbash Ibrahim Dada khaniqah

Khaniqah, built during the arrival of Haji Bektash Veli in Anatolia, is located in the province of Tokat. In accordance with sources, at the beginning of the 19th century, the brothers Seyid Mahmud and Seyid Ali ruled the khaniqah. After the abolition of the Bektashism in 1826, the fate of this khaniqah remained unknown.

Aghbiyig Sultan khaniqah

The sources mention that the founder of the khaniqah, Aghbiyig Sultan, lived during the time of Mahmud II (XV century). It is said that Aghbiyig Sultan was a rich and generous man, he distributed donations to passers-by and the poor in the khaniqah he built in Bursa and died in 1456. Evliya Chelebi reported this khaniqah to Bektashi in his "Seyahatname" (XVII century).

Bayazid baba khaniqah

The sources mention that there are many Bektashi khaniqah with this name in different cities of the Ottoman state, and the khaniqah in Izmir stands out especially. The oldest source mentions that it belongs to the 17th century. Sources report that the khaniqah continued to function after 1826, where students were taught and food was distributed to the poor. At the end of the 19th century, the khaniqah was completely abolished, and its building was used as a school.

Chomag baba khaniqah

It is said that the oldest information about the khaniqah, located in the city of Marash, dates back to the 16th century. The sources mention that khaniqah at different times was ruled by Sheikh Mustafa, Khojazada Sheikh Abu Bakr. Khaniqah continued to operate after 1826.

Ganj Abdal khaniqah

The khaniqah that existed in the province of Alanya, according to the oldest information, was founded in the 18th century and was ruled by a man named Vali. The sources mention the names of Mahmud ibn Nasukh, Ahmad, Shaban, Ibrahim and others among other administrators of the tax-free khaniqah. Information about khaniqah was not recorded after 1819.

Sheikh Nusrat khaniqah

It is believed that Sheikh Nusrat lived in the same period as Haji Bektash Veli. Sources from the 14th century report a province he created in the province of Tokat. There was a mulberry tree

growing in khaniqah's yard, which was believed to heal the sick, and Evliya Chelebi also gave information about this tree in his work (Değerli, 2018, p.108).

Conclusion

The Bektashism, which took its name from Haji Bektash Veli, was systematically formed in Anatolia at the initiative of Balim Sultan, and spread to the surrounding territories in different historical periods, supported by the state throughout its existence, mainly in Anatolia, at certain periods it became part of state policy, but in Egypt and Iraq, where it gathered supporters, it could only be lived among minorities. Khaniqahs, founded in

Anatolia, look like places exempt from taxation by the Ottoman state and performing a kind of charitable function. Although different sources give different data on the number of Bektashi khaniqahs in Egypt, these ones existed mainly in the city of Cairo. In Iraq, as already mentioned, this tariqah managed to maintain its existence among minorities - Kurds, Turkmens, Shabaks.

Since the 20th century, the Bektashism has seriously fallen and lost its positions as a result of political events in all areas of their distribution. Currently, the Bektashi groups live and operate mainly in the Balkans, in parts of Anatolia and northern Iraq.

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