state and governing. Acording to him the four virtues a ruler must possess are *'adl, hilm, sehâ', and hikmet.* Speaking of the importance of *hilm,* he transmits the proverb *"Mürüvvet şeriatı yener"* (generosity overcomes the *sharia*), *(Târîhu Abu 'l-feth,* p. 20).

29. V. Barthold, *Orta Asya Türk Tarihi hakkında dersler* (Istanbul, 1927), p. 75. On the Karakhanids, see O. Pritsak, *IA,* vol. VI, pp. 251-73; unfortunately, we have not seen the same author's unpublished dissertation on the subject.

30. Arat, *Kutadgu Bilig,* vol. I, *Metin,* "Giriş," p. XXII; S. M. Arsal, *ibid.,* p. 94.

31. *Kutadgu Bilig,* vol. I, *Metin,* p. XXVII.

32. On performing justice as a duty to God in ancient Iran, see the *At-tâc fi ahlâki 'l-mulûk,* attributed to al-Câhiz (Beirut, 1955), pp. 268-70.

33. We prefer "just"for *köni* here.

34. The new edition by T. Tekin, *A Grammar of Orkhon Turkic* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968).

35. On this problem, see H. Inalcık, "Osmanlı Hukukuna giriş," *SBF Dergisi* 13/2, pp. 102-107; S. M. Arsal, *ibid.,* pp. 287-91.

36. Âşık Paşazâde, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân* (Istanbul, 1949), pp. 103-104: *"Bu bâb Osman Gâzî' nin kanunu ahkâmin bildürür."*

37. See the publication of H. Darke, p. 162; English translation of Nizâmu 'l-Mulk, *The Book of Government or Rules of Kings,* translated by H. Darke (London, 1960), pp.127-28.

38. On the great *toy* after the conquest of Istanbul in 1453, see Evliya Çelebi, *Seyâhatnâme,* vol.X, pp. 60-62.

39. Fındıklılı Mehmet, *Silâhdar Tarihi,* vol. I, ed. A. Refik (Istanbul, 1928), p. 271. On this tradition as a public institution in the Turkish state, see F. Köprülü, "Islâm âmme hukukundan ayrı bir Türk âmme hukuku yok mudur?" *II. Türk Tarih Kurultayı Zabıtları,* pp. 383-418.

40. This point has been made well known by I. Kafesoğlu: "Selçuklular," *IA,* fasc. 105, p. 390.

41. An English translation of *Kutadgu Bilig* is now available: *Wisdom of Royal Glory,* trans., with an introduction and notes, by Robert Dankoff, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1983.

Dervish and Sultan: An Analysis of the *Otman Baba Vilāyetnāmesi*

Vilāyetnāme-i sultan otman, also referred to in the work as *Vilāyetnāme-i Shāhī* or *Vilāyetnāme-i Sultan Baba,* was completed in August 1483 by one of Baba's dervishes, Küçük Abdal, a nickname given by Otman Baba himself.[1] From a reference in the work we learn that the author was with Otman Baba in the Dobruja in 1462. Written by one of Baba's dervishes who evidently collected material carefully, and from Baba's own words, the *Vilāyetnāme* constitutes an important source for an authentic account of Baba's life, the Sufi doctrine of abdalism, and the history of Rum Abdalları in general. Although presented and interpreted as a *manākibnāme,* Baba's life and extraordinary deeds are told in a way that allows us to penetrate the actual situations and motives. Instead of stereotyped stories common to such hagiographic literature, all of the stories obviously belong to Baba's own experiences. With this characteristic the work can be put in the same category as Manāḳib al-'Ārifīn or Manākib-i Gülşhenī, rather than with the Ṣaltuḳnāme.[2] Here I shall concentrate on the data with regard to Baba's relations with the sultan, leaving a systematic examination of this important historical source to another study.

Küçük Abdal, author of the *Vilāyetnāme,* being well informed about the Sufi doctrine from which Otman Baba's deeds were derived, added an introduction with illuminating comments:

> This is the age of *vilāya (davr-i vilāya) . . . vilāya* is the shepherd of prophethood. Whoever is subject to the appearance of vilāya, he is the promoter of it in the outer and inner worlds, because prophethood is entrusted to vilāya. Anyone who is against vilāya and the holder of vilāya becomes a denier of prophethood, and therefore an infidel.

Below heaven God has his *avliyā;* nobody knows who they are except God himself. Now a *valī* is the man who controls everything in this world but needs nobody.

Vilāya becomes absolutely pure and clean. He is the *khalīfa* of God in the universe. . . . He extinguishes his human limitations in the state of union with God. . . . At this stage a true dervish desires nothing but *al-ḥaḳḳ* (the Truth, the Divinity). He enjoys a total freedom from worldly ties.

Ḳuṭb al-Aḳṭāb, that is, God's emissary *(khalīfa-i khudā),* is that man who makes happen anything he wishes . . . and for it needs no means or help. . . . The *ḳuṭbiyya* is the highest stage *(maḳām)* that man can reach. . . . Extinguishing all his human limitations a *ḳuṭb* is in a constant state of entasis. He sees everything in the universe in his own being. . . . He is on the throne of ḳuṭbiyya in the center of the assembly of souls. A ḳuṭb contemplates al-ḥaḳḳ all the time. The two worlds become a paradise for mankind for his sake.

The *dīvān-i salṭanat* (imperial council), which Otman held by convoking his *abdāls* on special occasions, recalls the "assembly of souls."

The *Vilāyetnāme* reproduces Baba's own words exactly as he pronounced them, revealing an Azeri accent that changed 'k' into 'kh.' According to Küçük Abdal, what made Otman Baba different from other avliyā was that he claimed to embody Divine Truth *(haḳḳ),* as well as the Prophets Muhammed, Jesus, Moses, and Adam. He was the Prophet's secret mystery, *sirr.* Baba said: "I am the iron pole from the earth to the sky," which was obviously a reference to being ḳuṭb or one of the *avtād* (four poles in the doctrine, see below).

Otman Baba made people believe in his divine power by instilling fear in their hearts, by using his club *(kütük),* and by manifesting his *hayba* and *calāl* (awe-inspiring majesty). In Sufi doctrine, *makhāfa* (fear) is one of the paths, the other two being *maḥabba* (love) and *maᶜrifa* (gnosis). Thus, it seems that Otman Baba gave priority to makhāfa in his *ṭarīḳa. Vilāyetnāme* celebrates his overpowering his opponents with these verses:

You, power of God, master of the age,
You take the life of those who deny;

When you give a blow with the hand of divine power
The oppressor realizes his place before you

.....

You make the Sultan of the world realize his right place
You take the souls of all creatures
And in the end you remain as the only one in the universe.

In brief, according to the *Vilāyetnāme* Otman Baba was the *ḳuṭb* or "the pole of the universe" in his time, and so all things including the Sultan had to recognize and consult him in their acts. The idea of *ḳuṭbiyya* is the basic belief in the radical forms of the Islamic Sufi doctrine, in particular, in the *kalandariyye* and *abdalism.*

In his discourse on vilāya and valī, 'Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī[3] distinguishes a particular group of men of *vilāya (aṣḥāb al- vilāya* or *aṣḥāb al-sirr)* who are supposed to be in a constant state of contemplation of God *(mushāhada).* Living in a constant state of entasis *(jazba),* they are oblivious of all worldly things. This is the highest stage in the path of a Sufi. The sign of prophethood is forever manifest with them. They are in control of everything in the universe. Rain falls, sultans remain in power, skies turn in space for the sake of their blessing *(baraka).* They are not known to people nor recognizable in their appearance. Sufi literature elaborates a detailed description of this particular group. It is said that at the bottom there are three hundred *akhyār* with the "power of loosing and binding" *(ḥall wa'lᶜaḳd);* forty of these are called *abdal.*[4] Seven of the abdals occupy the seat of *budalā,* and four of the budalā occupy the seat of *awtād.* Among them there are three *nuḳabā* and one ḳuṭb. They are all known to each other and each acts with the knowledge and agreement of the others. Each of the seven abdals is assigned by God to take care of one of the seven regions of the world, and the four awtād guard the four cardinal points.

The akhyār do not need a guide *(murshid)* to reach *ḳuṭbiyya.* In each age lives one *ḳuṭb* or *ghawth* who is a successor to the Prophet in calling people to the truth *(ḥaḳḳ).* Abdals do not stay in one place. They are free from all worldly concerns, so they do not have family, home, or any kind of property. Their tombs are without a trace. All this explains why abdals do not have, as a rule, an established *ṭarīḳa* or a shrine. They are not known to ordinary people, who usually take them for fools or for ones possessed and mistreat them. In the *Vilāyetnāme* Otman Baba is presented as a *ḳuṭb al-aḳṭāb* in control of two worlds

(taṣarruf-i du jahān). There are twelve ḳuṭbs for each age. Before Otman Baba, Hajji Bekdash and then Sheikh Shudjā were ḳuṭb in the region of Rūm (Anatolia). Ḳuṭb is the center and axis of the world, and all the happenings in this world take place with the knowledge and initiative *(iḳdām)* of the ḳuṭb. Only rarely does the ḳuṭb assume control of both the spiritual and the material worlds. Two imams, ᶜAbd al-Rabb and ᶜAbd al-Malik, take seats on either side of the ḳuṭb (Otman Baba had two abdals: Deli Umur and Kaymal), and the ḳuṭb supervises the angelic kingdom and worldly kingdom through them.

To follow Otman Baba's deeds *(karāmāt)* as told in the *Vilāyetnāme*, we have also to remember the Sufi doctrine of the universal man *(al-insān al-kāmil)*.[5] The outer macrocosm *(al-ẓāhir)* includes all individual beings, and duality is of the nature of this world. But in the sight of the Essence the universe appears like a single one. Unity of beings and things is the essential truth. "Among all the beings of this world man alone has a vision which in virtuality includes all things. . . . All the possibilities which are unfolded in the world are principally contained in man's intellectual essence." In man, the subjective polarization of the spirit reaches its culminating point. The global meaning is actualized only in one who has effectively realized all the universal truths reflected in his terrestrial form, and who is thus identified with the Perfect or Universal Man. Among men, the prophets and the poles (ḳuṭb), having realized union or the Supreme Identity, become the Universal Man. He is the Unique Prototype *(al-anmuzaj al-farīd)*. All of the divine qualities or relationships *(nasāb)* are integrated in him.[6]

For Max Weber, who was interested in dervish religion in Islam,[7] the Otman Baba type of dervish comes under the category of contemplative mystics: The "contemplative mystic is concentrated with perceiving the essential meaning of the world . . . unity beyond all empirical reality. . . . (He) requires of himself the maintenance of his state of grace against every pressure of the mundane order."[8] The contemplative mystic believes he is God's instrument. For him, mystic illumination constitutes "the most notable form of an awareness of having executed the divine will." His activism comes from the belief that he has reached the mystical truths which "come to assume a central position within, and to exert an integrating influence upon, the total view of the world." He becomes what Weber calls a "mystagogue" and a revolutionary.

Our *Vilāyetnāme* provides a description of an abdal. When asked by the *cadi* of Dirnavi *(Trnovo)*, Otman Baba himself defined abdal as follows. "An abdal is the man who gives up all but Allah *(mā sivā allāh)*, and finds himself absorbed within the love of the Divine Truth. At this union *(viṣāl)* there is no room for other things. The abdal finds himself and all things which are written in the Divine Tablet *(khatt-i-ilāhī)* in God's creatures, and sees nothing but the Divine Truth (al-ḥaḳḳ) around himself. He is the one who reaches *(erer)* the stage of absolute and direct knowledge of the Truth *(ᶜilm al-yaḳīn)*." On another occasion, his abdals, answering the cadi of Edirne, describing Otman Baba as "the old man *(koca)* of our age. He is the *ḳuṭb al-aḳṭāb* and the sun in the zodiac of the Divine Truth. And we are his slaves seeking knowledge *(ṭālib banda)*." Küçük Abdal writes: "Here and hereafter, (the holder of) the vilāya becomes God's favor and reveals God's compassion and power for the world. It is (the holder of) the Vilāya who is the master of the world." In fact, Otman Baba's life as described in the *Vilāyetnāme* by one of his disciples is the most authentic and reliable picture of what an abdal is and what his beliefs are.

The *Vilāyetnāme* refers to Otman Baba most of the time as *kān-i vilāyet* (mine of vilāya), also occasionally as *sirr-i ḥaḳḳ* (Mystery of God), *dhāt-i bi-mithāl* (unrivaled essence), *maḳṣud-i insān* (purpose of man), *ḳuṭb-i ālam* (pole of the universe), or *ḳuṭb al-aḳṭāb* (pole of poles). Titles or attributes used by the wordly powers, such as sultan, shah, padishah are also given to him to refer to his absolute sovereign position in the whole universe.

Abdal activism and its sociopolitical nature become clear when the abdals' actions and social connections are examined in light of their belief. In their doctrine the paramount principle is to reach and help the oppressed and helpless *(mażlūm)*, those who have left their home and wander about *(gharīb)*, and the powerless *(miskīn)*. They describe themselves as gharīb and miskīn. They declare they are against "those who oppress people for their love of worldly possessions and vanity." In their doctrine "those who have wordly acquisitions are not God's true slaves."

Throughout the *Vilāyetnāme* we find Otman Baba helping the helpless in the fields or the ghāzis in their fight against the infidels. Helping the helpless at the right moment is also one of the qualities of Hiḍr and Ilyās, so in the *Vilāyetnāme* there is a close association and

cooperation between them and Baba. On the other hand, restoring order and justice on earth gives the group to which the abdals belonged its militant character, and this has a direct bearing on our point in this paper.

Since Mehmet the Conqueror became one of the most powerful and autocratic padishahs following his unprecedented deeds in Islamic history, and since he imposed upon his subjects, particularly on the nomads, heavy obligations for his imperial plans, Otman Baba, the *kuṭb-i ʿālam,* chose him as the one to challenge. The *Vilāyetnāme* revolves around the Sufi doctrine of kuṭbiyya and *al-insān al-kāmil,* and Otman Baba as *kuṭb al-akṭāb* claims control not only of the spiritual but also of the actual socio-political life of his time. Abdal militancy explains Otman Baba's association with segmented groups of Ottoman society, the frontier *ghāzīs* and the Yürüks. Their large-scale rebellion occurred in 1416 under the leadership of Sheikh Badr al-Dīn in the same area where Otman Baba later became active.[9] The Yürüks[10] felt strongly that they were suffering under the centralist-bureaucratic regime of the Ottoman sultans. Since the settled peasants, the *reʿāyā,* could not be employed for such tasks as construction of bridges and fortresses or work in the mines, the central bureaucracy mobilized Yürüks as readily available labor for such works.[11] Yürüks were subjected to various military duties under strict regulations not only in these heavy works but also as light footmen or guards in the fortresses or raiders at the frontier zones. Exemption from extraordinary taxes as compensation was not enough to alleviate the plight of these pastoral nomads, for all the restrictions and state regulations brought unbearable burdens incompatible with their basic economy and way of life. A profound hostility toward the increasingly bureaucratized state of the sultans made the Yürüks open to any radical propaganda, whether in the eastern Balkans or in Anatolia, where they were an important part of the population.[12] Socio-religious movements with radical views that denied the legitimacy of the sultan's rule or anything representing the present order of the world appealed to them. Otman Baba's abdals, mainly shepherds—the most destitute members of the Yürüks society—joined him and created in him the superman power challenging the great sultan and everything he represented."Don't you see," the *Vilāyetnāme* states, "if someone owes his livelihood to a worldly ruler *(dünya begi),* and somehow he disagrees with what he orders, they accuse him of rebellion, they throw him in a dungeon and kill him." The Yürüks, in this tradition,

were not distinguished from the frontier ghāzīs. The *ghāziyān* are cited by ʿĀşık Paşa-zāde side by side with the *abdālān,* as the instruments of God to spread His word.[13]

But now, *ghāzīs* were to be found only on the distant frontiers of the empire. Receiving no salary, as the standing army or the *timar*-holders did, they had to rely exclusively on the booty they could take in the dangerous raids into neighboring Christian countries. Both groups, the ghāzīs and abdals, of the same social background, made a strong partnership. Jihādı frontier fighting in the path of God, and mujāhada of the dervish to conquer the path leading to God, had a common mystic meaning.[14]

To be a dervish exempts one from paying taxes, and the income of a monastery provides food. For a poor peasant, who had to leave his father's home because the *çift* land, either because of its limited size or for any other reason, could not feed an expanding family, the way out was to run away. He could join raiders on the frontier; or he could be a wage laborer *(irgat);* or he could be a *sūhte (softa),* that is, a student at a small town *madrasa;* or he could become a dervish. In all of these endeavors he was freed from taxes and bureaucratic control. On the other hand, to wander about in the countryside was neither easy or safe. Otman Baba in his wanderings was taken as a runaway slave several times by ordinary Muslim and Christian peasants.

Those who joined Otman Baba as his abdals were mostly shepherds from the Yürük population of Dobruja and the eastern Balkan range. This area, densely populated by Yürüks or *Türkmen* (Turcomans), forefathers of the present-day Turks of Bulgaria, prospered by raising sheep and exporting to large cities wool, hides, and cheese, as well as their coarse woollen and felt manufactures. Yanbolu, one of the towns Baba visited, was an important center of felt manufacturing and exported throughout the empire.[15] It is interesting to note that while Otman Baba was in Edirne, a Yürük who brought sheep to the city joined his abdals. Baba outraged the butchers of Edirne by taking lambs which were hanging by their feet and throwing them in the mud in the street. They brought the case to the cadi's court, but he could do nothing against Baba. In short, Otman appears to have recruited his dervishes mostly from among the simple Yürüks of the eastern Balkans, from Vize to the mouth of the Danube.[16] It is to be remembered that the settlement of Yürüks and their forming of small villages was an ongoing process in the area.[17] Yürüks in Dobruja and Deli-Orman served at the same time as ghāzīs or raiders *(akıncıs),* under

famous frontier begs such as Mihal Oglu 'Alī Beg. In the *Vilāyetnāme,* 'Alī Beg is described as a ghāzī beg who recognizes Otman Baba as a saint, and becomes a kind of protector. The frontier begs were traditionally autonomous and centrifugal in the face of the sultan's centralist government. This conflict became especially tense during Mehmed the Conqueror's time, since he had embarked upon a particularly strong centralist empire.

In the past, the same policy appears to have played an important part in the terrible insurrection of abdals under the leadership of Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, in which the frontier population, and their brothers who were left in the Sarukhan-Izmir area, participated.[18] (Interestingly enough, Otman Baba's early activities took place in Sarukhan before he moved—or was deported—to the eastern Balkans.) It was under Bāyezīd I (1389-1402) that the Yürüks of Sarukhan were exiled to Rumeli, and the Yürük migration continued later on as better economic conditions and *ghazā'* booty attracted them.

Historical sources suggest that there was a constant migration of Turcoman tribal groups from the east.[19] They first arrived in western Anatolia, and then crossed the Dardanelles to settle in the eastern Balkans and Macedonia. Baba started his career in Azerbaijan, then moved to western Anatolia, and finally to the eastern Balkans. His center of activities became the area between Misivri, Zagra and Babadag. In this region Tanrıdagı, a center of the Yürüks known as Tanrıdağ Yürükleri, was the favorite wandering area of our dervish, and finally his *ṭarīḳa* and *tekke* were located there. In brief, Otman Baba's association with the Yürüks of the eastern Balkans is a key point in understanding his social and religious background.

There is a common assumption that the oriental ruler has absolute power and that the ruled are totally passive and submissive. But advice-to-king literature of the East makes it quite clear that without popular support a ruler is not secure on his throne.[20] What made dervishes so powerful and defiant was precisely that they were tremendously influential in shaping public opinion in the traditional society in which they lived.

The dervishes, preachers, and men of religion in general assumed a legitimizing authority in the Islamic state. The bureaucrat-historian Muṣṭafā 'Ālī advised the sultan to banish those preachers who compared themselves to Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī or Junayd Baghdādī and misled simple-minded people by their demagoguery. "Those so-called spiritual guides *(murshid)* cause alienation of people from the

Sultan by their unfounded criticisms."[21] An important part of the public treasure goes to thousands of *duᶜā-gūyān,* who had no other function than "saying prayers" for the sultan. But, in fact, these *duᶜā-gūyān,* who included dervishes, were expected to perform a most fundamental function for the sultan by supporting him among the people. Such a function was assumed by dervishes in the countryside. The *Vilāyetnāme,* however, bitterly attacks all those conformist dervishes:

> They are afraid of the lords of this world *(dünyā begleri),*
> They invite people to the path of the Truth,
> But their followers are none but boys and women.
> All they are concerned about are material gains,
> They have no self-respect or honesty.

The group which Otman denounced as hypocrites included *ulema,* sufis, *dānishmends,* and *mashāyikh.* Ulema and danishmends were particularly hostile, even more intensely than government authorities, toward Otman and his abdals, who attacked them because abdals believed they were concerned only with *ẓāhir*—the appearances—and not with the Truth. In the *Vilāyetnāme,* sufis are those devout Muslims who perform only the outward ritual for the sake of favors in the other world. *Mashāyikh* are those sheikhs of religious orders who accept *wakf* grants from people or the state, establish a monastery, and secure for themselves and their offspring an easy life. In fact, many such *zāviyes,* established for the sheikhs of particular orders, controlled quite large sources of income in the form of land and animal stock free of taxation. Administration of the income was in the hands of the sheikh, who transmitted it to his offspring. Some of the sheikhs were very prosperous indeed.[22] In their diplomas from the sultan they were asked to serve the travelers and the poor and to constantly pray for the sultan. For the abdals, such conformist mashāyikh were hypocrites. As the *Vilāyetnāme* puts it, "They sell a false *maᶜrifa,* amass worldly possessions, and pretend to provide spiritual guidance."

Without any *wakf,* Baba performed charitable acts. On the mountain he started building a bridge, inviting others to cooperate in its completion. He and his abdals lived on alms which were given voluntarily. In all the stories in the *Vilāyetnāme,* Otman Baba reacts violently against those who try to give him gifts, even when the sultan

offers them in total humility. Sometimes as a favor *(muruvva)* he accepts a gift in order to distribute it among his abdals and the needy. In the ascetic period of his career he sustained himself by eating leaves and the fruit of wild trees. But when later on he established his own *ṭarīḳa* and had his own abdals, he had to feed them. Apparently he never accepted wakfs from the sultan, and when the sultan offered to build a monastery for him he refused. The *Vilāyetnāme* tells us, however, that he asked peasants or ghāzī begs returning from a booty raid to send sheep as votive offerings *(nadhr)*. Otman Baba and his abdals are described as remaining absolutely faithful to the Sufi principle of poverty *(faḳr)*, in order to distinguish themselves from those "hypocrite" dervishes and mashāyikh. Nevertheless, Otman Baba was against begging. Charities can be accepted, he said, only when they are given absolutely voluntarily by the donor.

Otman Baba neither rejected nor directly challenged the power and the authority of the great ghāzī sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, but he made him believe and admit that Otman Baba himself was responsible for all his ghāzā victories, because he was the axis (ḳuṭb) of the world in the age, the Divine Truth, and the one and only power in the universe which determined things to happen both here and in the hereafter. Sultan Mehmed claimed to be the foremost ghāzī of his age, as expressed in his victory letter to the sultan of Egypt after the conquest of Constantinople. Later, he declared to the world that the sword of ghāzā was in his hand. After the conquest, when Ak Shams al-Dīn, his spiritual mentor, said that the conquest was the work of the *awilyā*, Mehmet replied: "It was my sword that took the city." Now Otman Baba, the spiritual guide of the frontier ghāzīs, came and showed the ghāzī sultan that without his knowledge and support he could achieve nothing.

What makes our *Vilāyetnāme* of special interest is that unlike most of the *manāḳibnāmes* it chronicles the career of the saint in close relation with that of Mehmed the Conqueror, and associates the saint's most spectacular miracles with the sultan. The *Vilāyetnāme* follows, with remarkable accuracy in chronology, the sultan's deeds and the important events of his time.

One day, Otman Baba, sitting at Silivri-Kapı in Istanbul, overheard the sultan express his intention to capture Belgrade from the Hungarians, while walking and discussing the campaign with Mahmud Pasha. The dervish warned the sultan not to undertake this campaign: "They shall squeeze fire in the bells and you will have to flee" *("Çanlarına od tıkarlar, kaçarsın")*. The sultan became angry and pulled out his sword out. Mahmud Pasha rushed up and said, "My lord, this man is not what you think. He is a man of *vilāya*. Despite the warning, Mehmed undertook the campaign, and everything Otman had said came true. Another time, Otman intercepted the sultan on his tour of the city, and asked straightaway: "Tell me who is the sultan, you or I?" The sultan, remembering Baba's words about the Belgrade campaign, dismounted at once and kissed the dervish's hand: "You are the pādishāh and the Divine sirr, my beloved father. I am only your humble servant." Baba said: "You should know that I am pādishāh, not you," and then they exchanged mysterious signs *(marmuzāt)*. Later, when the sultan sent Otman Baba gold pieces with one of his *solak*s, the dervish became angry and shouted at the *solak:* "Do not bring this filth close to me." Thus, after the Belgrade campaign the sultan had complete faith in Otman's *wilāya*.

It was the custom with Ottoman sultans to walk around the city in disguise to hear what was said about them and to surprise wrongdoers. When the sultan was touring the city's monasteries to find out what people were saying about him, Baba recognized him and asked: "Now, tell me at once, who is Otman, you or I?" The sultan, startled by this question, replied: "My beloved father, Otman, is you, I am not." Baba said: "You must believe that I am Otman and you are my son."

The most dramatic story in the *Vilāyetnāme* is the one describing how the dervish imposed himself as a mentor of the sultan. The story begins with the arrival of Otman Baba in Edirne with his three hundred abdals in late 1474. By their appearance and behavior Baba and his abdals stunned the townspeople: "They did not look like any group of people in this world." Crowds rushed to see these strange dervishes "with the awe-inspiring huge man" at their head. With a club in his hand Otman Baba was chasing the crowd, shouting, "You ugly townsmen, shall I have to be afraid of you? No, because I am God's Mystery *(sirr)* without a sign." Their presence in the city caused people to argue and become divided among themselves. It appears that the simple people feared and showed an intense hostility; and the administrators, cadi and *subashi*, tried to get rid of these troublemakers as soon as possible. Otman Baba's public statements made the ulema furious. He declared: "It is I who created this city, I am the sign of Truth *(ḥaḳḳ)*. I am the Prophets Adam, Muhammad, Jesus, and Moses. I have no fear of you. . . . With God's command I hold in my

hands the souls of all of you." The ulema decided that by uttering these words he proved himself an infidel. The cadi, threatening to put all in jail, urged them to leave the city; otherwise, he said, he would report to the sultan.

Otman Baba and his abdals left in the direction of their original homeland in the eastern Balkans, but they had to return from Kırk-Kilise (now Kırklareli) to Edirne. The reason given in the *Vilāyetnāme* is that there Baba, throwing a look *(naẓar)* in the direction of Istanbul, received the inspiration to go to "the City of Hasan and Husayn." The same source makes it clear a bit later that the sultan had ordered that Baba and his abdals be sent to Istanbul in custody.[23] At this point a dream dreamt by one of the abdals shows how they actually felt about this order. In the dream, the *Vilāyetnāme* relates, a man with the appearance of 'Alī descends from the sky wearing red headgear *(kızıl börk)* and holding a sword, and addresses Otman Baba,saying: "You, the sirr of the two worlds, do me a favor and let me massacre these hypocrites." Otman replies that it is not the time, and says to be patient. The man from the sky says: "How can we be patient in the face of such oppression and injustice, already beyond endurance?"

Such a rebellious mood reflects how Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's abdals, and later Shāh-Ḳulu's followers,[24] felt about the Ottoman government. In fact, Baba challenged even the sultan. When the sultan's emissary, a ḳul, arrived to take him to Istanbul in a coach, he said, in "his awe-inspiring majesty" *(hayba va jalāl):* "Who is that man you call Mehmed?" and waved his club in the air. He dissipated his abdals' fears and led them to Istanbul. The *Vilāyetnāme* tells that his journey to Istanbul served to enhance his fame and prestige. At Baba-Eskisi, for example, the people welcomed him, kissing his hands and slaughtering sacrificial sheep for him. Even the ḳul, evidently a Janissary, confessed that his headgear *(börk)* came from Hajji "Bekdash." When the company came in sight of Istanbul at Küçük-Çekmece, Baba told his abdals: "Halt, let us take this fortress and massacre the army of the jealous ones, and cut the breasts of the atheists." The *Vilāyetnāme* interprets these words as follows: Sultan Mehmed and the Muslims living in this city conquered and made it Muslim only in appearance *(ẓāhir);* but now it was the age of *vilāya,* and the city should be the scene of its miracles.

When Otman Baba and his abdals entered the city, crowds came to watch them. While some people found them odd and strange, others were deeply impressed, taking them for holy men. The authorities,

unaware of the sultan's change of mind, had made preparations to impale or strike them on hooks at the At- Meydanı, but thought that they should have the sultan's final order. To their amazement, the sultan ordered instead that Otman Baba and his abdals should be settled in the Kılıç-Manastırı (near Silivri-Kapı). The abdals believed this was a miracle by Otman Baba. On the part of the sultan it was the correct decision, if one considers what the popular reaction would have been throughout his realm to such a mass execution of the abdals. The ulema, however, not bound by such concerns, insisted that their heresy should be eliminated from the earth.

The *Vilāyetnāme* tells us that the monastery was still surrounded by a regiment, and that the threat was still there. In anger, Otman Baba then struck the ground with his club and shouted: "Look, I am the Old Man of the Last Age in this world. I shall show you who I am by demolishing your palace over your head." Then a terrible storm broke out in Istanbul. The sultan was running from one corner to another in his palace. On the next day, he convoked the imperial council and asked about this unusual phenomenon. "They told him," the *Vilāyetnāme* says, "that you choose to fight against a man who had the power of thewhole universe with the twenty-four thousand prophets. Otman Baba sits on the zodiac of both prophethood and sainthood *(nubuvva and vilāya).* If you fell upon him even with an army of a hundred thousand men, he would crush you with one hand and bring your crown and throne to the ground." The ulema, however, urged the sultan to execute at least some of the abdals as an example to "those who might attempt to cause dissension among the Muslims." In reading the *Vilāyetnāme* one senses the extremely tense atmosphere in Istanbul at that time. These events happened just after the execution of Mahmud Pasha, whom public opinion, in opposition to the excessively autocratic rule of the conqueror, had made a martyr. Finally, the sultan sent to the monastery the Grand Vizir Sinan Pasha with the *kādiᶜasker,* then the head of the ulema, with a large company. Surrounded by his abdals Otman Baba challenged them also. Finally, he had to leave the city.

Gentile Bellini was in Mehmed the Conqueror's service in Istanbul during the period 1480 to 1481. The sultan asked him to paint the portrait of a dervish. Gian-Maria Angiolello, then a page at the seraglio, tells us that the sultan was not pleased with the dervish, and prohibited him from praising him by relating his conquests at the Bazaar.[25] When the painting was completed the sultan asked Bellini

what he thought of the dervish. Upon his insistence, the painter expressed his candid opinion and said: "He must be a madman." The sultan replied: "But I do not want to be lauded by a madman." Bellini said, "then why don't you make him your chief dervish?" and the sultan acted accordingly. Angiolello adds that, in fact, "the Conqueror did not believe in any religion, and that was everybody's opinion." From this interesting conversation it may be inferred that the sultan showed the dervish reverence not out of sincere conviction but for practical reasons, although letters discovered in the Topkapı Palace archives indicate that Mehmed II consulted holy men about the outcome of his undertakings. Perhaps he thought this was unavoidable, and even useful, in the environment in which he lived. In his youth his teacher was the noted Molla Khosraw, who was known as a legist of positive thinking. But the dervish referred to in this story cannot be Otman Baba.

According to the *Vilāyetnāme,* Otman Baba died on 8 Rejeb 883/ 5 October 1478. We are able to follow his legacy not in the *Vilāyetnāme,* which stops with his death, but in a popular anonymous chronicle.[26] The assassination attempt against Bayezid II in the summer of 1492 may be related to Otman Baba's abdals. The chronicle says,

> Returning from his campaign in Albania, Bāyezīd came over to Monastir where he stayed a few days. The same day he set out from Monastir. When he was crossing a stream, a cursed man of heresy and unbelief, clad in felt, maybe a Ḥaydarī dervish, with rings on his neck and ears, an uncircumcised infidel, attacked the sultan to kill him. Waiting for the sultan on his way, and thinking it was the right time to attack, he suddenly assaulted him. Shouting "I am the Mahdī" *(menem Mahdī)* and pulling a sword from inside his felt cloak, he rushed against the sultan. Those cowardly *chaushes* who were marching in front of the sultan dispersed when the dervish approached to attack him. At this moment Iskender Pasha, one of the sultan's viziers who happened to be there, rushed and struck the man with his mace so hard that he instantly rolled over his crushed head. Some brave men who were close hastened and tore the attacker into pieces with their swords.[27]

Two years later, when there was great anxiety as a result of preparations for a crusade in Rome with Jem Sultan, pretender to the Ottoman throne, Bāyezīd ordered the cadi of Edirne to round up all

atheist abdals, dervishes, and ışıḳs "in the area east of Filibe and Zagra, and punish, after investigation and hearings, those among them uttering blasphemous words."[28] Accordingly, the cadi made investigations and arrested a few of "the followers of Othman Dede, who was a possessed man *(majzūb),* and executed them by torture. Another group of forty or fifty dervishes were put to torture, and two of them who were found guilty under the *sharʿī* law were hanged. The rest of the dervishes were deported to Anatolia."

The chronicle, written for simple people, then relates a miracle performed by a dervish in Istanbul. This dervish crossed the sea from Davud-Pasha-Kapusu to the other side of the water sitting on his cloak. The chronicle adds: "There is no wonder, there are and there will be among people abdals, *majzūb*s, *eren*s and *valī*s. The order of this universe depends on them. But *eren*s conceal themselves from people and wander about unknown. They do not make their miracles known to the public. They rarely make them apparent."

The abdals of the eastern Balkans survived the 1494 purge, however.[29] The khalīfas and *dāʿīs* of Shāh Ismāʿīl found followers among them in the area in the last anarchical years of Sultan Bāyezīd II, and under Selīm I.[30]

NOTES

1. The author tells us that Otman Baba himself asked some of his abduls to recast his deeds.The work was entrusted to Küçük Abdal The manuscript was originally a wakf of the library of Hacı Bektaş in Kırşehir. It is a unicum copied by Sheikh Ömer (ʿUmar) b. Darvish Ahmed, completed in August 1759. At the present time it belongs to the Ankara Genel Kütüphanesi (no. 643); I have used the photocopy preserved at the Milli Kütüphane, Ankara, microfilm no. A22.

2. Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Aflākî, Manākib al-ʿArifīn, ed, T. Yazıcı (2 vols.; Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu [TTK], 1959); Muhyī-i Gülşenī, Manāḳib-i Ibrahim Gülşenī, ed. T. Yazıcı (Ankara: TTK, 1982); Ebu'l Hayr Rumī, Saltuḳnāme, ed. Fahir Iz, Sources of Oreintal Languages and Literatures, no. 4 (Cambridge: 1974-84).

3. ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. Aḥmad al-Jāmī, *Nafaḥāt al-Uns min Hazarāt al-Ḳuds,* ed. Mahdi Tawhidipur (Tehran: Saʿdi, 1957), pp. 9-15. In his translation (Tercüme-i Nafaḥāt al-Uns Istanbul, 1270/1853), Sheikh Mahmūd Lāmiʿī expanded Jāmī's remarks on ḳalandarīs, q.v. T. Yazıcı, "Ḳalandariyya," *EI*^{2}, 4. 473-74.

4. Jāmī, *Nafaḥāt,* p. 20, summarizes Ibn al-ᶜArabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya,* chapter 31.

5. T. Burckhardt, *An Introduction to Sufi Doctrine,* trans. D. M. Matheson (Lahore: M. Ashraf, 1963), pp. 89-95.

6. Burckhardt, p. 94; also see A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), Index, s.v. "Perfect Man."

7. Max Weber, *Economy and Society,* ed. G. Roth and C. Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), I, pp. 541-49.

8. *Ibid,* p. 548.

9. On Skeikh Badr al-Dīn (Bedreddin) see note 18 below.

10. See H. Inalcık, "The Yürüks: Their Origins, Expansion and Economic Role, " *Oriental Carpet and Textile Studies II: Carpets of the Mediterranean Countries, 1400-1600,* ed. R. Pinner and W. D. Denny (London: *HALI Magazine,* 1986), pp. 39-65.

11. *Ibid.,* pp. 53-54.

12. *Ibid.,* pp. 44-47.

13. See 'Āşık Paşa-zāde in *Osmanlı Tarihleri,* ed. Atsız (Istanbul: Türkiye Pub., 1947), pp. 237-238.

14. On the role of the abdals in early Ottoman history, see M. F. Köprülü, "Abdal," *Türk Halk Edebiyatı Ansiklopedisi,* I (Istanbul, 1935), 23-56; I, Mélikoff, "Les babas Turcomans contemporains de Mevlânâ," Uluslararsı Mevlânâ Semineri (Ankara, 1973), pp. 268-74; Çelebi Elvan, *Manākibu'l-Kudsiyye fi Menāşibu'l-Ünsiyye,* ed. I. E. Erünsal and A.Y. Ocak (Istanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1984); A.Y. Ocak, "Kalenderiler ve Baktaşilik," *Doğumunun 100. Yıldönümünde Atatürk'e Armağan* (Istanbul: Istanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1981); Ḥaṭib-i Fārisī, *Menākib-i Camāl al-Dīn-i Sāvī,* ed. T. Yazıcı (Ankara: TTK, 1972); A.Y. Ocak, "Quelques remarques sur le role des derviches kalenderis dans les mouvements populaires et les activités anarchiques au XVᵉ et XVIᵉ siècles dans l'empire ottoman," *The Journal of Ottoman Studies,* 3 (1982), 69-80; C. Imber, "The Wandering Dervishes," *Mashriq, Proceedings of the Eastern Mediterranean Seminar* (University of Manchester, 1977-78), pp. 36-50.

15. Inalcık, "The Yürüks," pp. 51-56.

16. T.Gökbilgin, *Rumeli'de Yürükler, Tatarlar ve Evlâd-i Fâtihân* (Istanbul: Istanbul Universitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1957); Inalcık, "The Yürüks," p. 64, n. 86; for abdal/Yürük identity, see Köprülü, "Abdal," pp. 38-53.

17. For the process of settlement in this area and its characteristics, the sixteenth-century Ottoman survey registers (*taḥrīr defterleri*) of Nigbolu (Nicopolis), preserved in the Başbakanlık Archives, Istanbul, provide extensive materials, particularly Tapu nos. 775, 625, 439, 416; compared to Bulgarian villages Yürük villages are strikingly small.

18. Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, who declared himself "Malik Mahdī," joined his "Sufi" followers in Agaç-Denizi (Deli-Orman) and made the Zagra Plain his center of activities. The common original source for Ottoman accounts on Badr al-Dīn comes down to us in the least distorted form in the anonymous chronicles: *Tawārīkh-i Āl-iᶜOthmān,* ed. F. Giese (Breslau, 1922), pp. 53-54. In various versions of this tradition Badr al-Dīn's followers were *torlak,* or *ışık,* names used pejoratively for the abdals. In the same sources mention is made also of frontier raiders among his men who were seeking *timar*; on Badr al-Dīn, see A.Gölpınarlı and I. Sungurbey, *Samavna Kadısı oğlu Şeyh Bedreddin* (Istanbul: Eti, 1966); H. J. Kissling, "Badr al-Dīn," *EI²,* I, 869; there is no doubt that Badr al-Dīn espoused *ḳalandarī* doctrine and became one of the most active leaders of abdal activism during the period of intensified struggle between the central power and the frontier, following the restoration of the centralist government under Mehmed I (1413-21); N. Filipović, Princ Musa i Şejh Bedreddin (Sarajevo, 1971) is the most comprehensive work on Badr al-Dīn.

19. Inalcık, "The Yürüks," pp. 44-45; *idem,* "Arab Camel Drivers in Western Anatolia in the Fifteenth Century," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine,* nos. 31-32 (Tunis, 1983), 270.

20. See H. Inalcık,"Adâletnâmeler," *Belgeler,*2 (Ankara, 1967), 49-63.

21. A. Tietze, *Muṣṭafā ᶜĀlī's Counsel for Sultans of 1581,* I (Vienna: Akademia, 1979), text 149, trans. 56.

22. S. Faroqhi, "XVI-XVIII. yüzyıllarda Orta Anadolu'da Şeyh Aileleri," *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi Semineri, Metinler, Tartışmalar,* ed. O. Okyar and Ü. Nalbandoğlu (Ankara, 1975), 225; *idem, Der Bektaschi-Orden in Anatolien* (Vienna: WZKM. 1981), pp. 49-75.

23. In 1444, during Mehmed II's first sultanate, Orkhan, an Ottoman pretender, had found support among the frontier raiders and heretics of Deli-Orman: see H. Inalcık, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar* (Ankara: TTK, 1954), pp. 37-38; H. Inalcık and M. Oğuz, *Gazavât-i Sultan Murâd b. Meḥmmed Han* (Ankara: TTK, 1978), pp. 37-39; Deli-Orman and Dobruja became classic terrains of heresy and

rebellion in the Ottoman Empire; the last violent uprising occurred in 1555, when an adventurer pretending to be the executed Prince Mustafa was able to organize an army of rebels, made up mostly of discontented raiders and sipahis and heretics, see Ş. Turan, *Kanunî' nin Oğlu Şehzade Bayezid Vak' ası* (Ankara: TTK, 1961), pp. 37-44.

24. See Ç. Uluçay, "Yavuz Selim Nasıl Padişah Oldu?" *Tarih Dergisi* VI (1954), 61-74; VII (1955), 117-31.

25. Donado da Lezze, *Historia Turchesca (1300-1514)* ed. I. Ursu (Bucharest: Academiei Romane, 1910), pp.120-121.

26. *Tavārīkh-i Āl-i ʿOthmān*, ed. F. Giese, p. 126; a detailed version of this chronicle, housed at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (MS Suppl. no. 1047, folios 103-104), gives the following chronology: The sultan celebrated the *ulu-bayram* at Depe-Delen (July 26-28), then moved to Monastir where he stayed a few days (*birkaç gün*); he then left the town to return to Edirne. The same day that the sultan left Monastir the attack occurred while he was crossing a creek near Monastir. He was in Edirne on 11 Dhu'l-ḳaʿda 987/4 September 1492; H. J. Kissling, *Sultan Bâjezid's II Beziehungen zu Markgraf Francesco II von Gonzaga* (Munich: Max Hueber, 1965), p.12, says Bāyezīd stayed at "Tepedelen" during the month of Ramaḍān, which started on January 28, 1495.

27. For the identity of haydarī and abdal, see Köprülü, "Abdal," pp. 28-31.

28. Deportation occurred in the year 900 of the Hegira, which started October 2, 1494; cf. Kissling p. 39, note 87. The event is put in the *Tavārīkh* before the miracle of the dervish that took place in the month of Jumāda I, which started on January 28, 1495. Jem Sultan died on 29 Jumāda I, 900/25 February, 1495.

29. Followers of Otman Baba called Bedreddinī were found in Kırklarili still in 1894; see V. L. Salcı, "Trakya'da Türk Kabileleri, I: Amuca Kabilesi," *Türk Amacı*, I/7 (January 1943), 311-15 (reproduced in A. Gölpınarlı and I. Sungurbey, *Samavna Kadısı*, pp. XXVI-XXX); in 1894 some of their leaders were exiled to Libya. Salcı reports that they believed Otman Baba to be "the Divinity of Rain" and flying as a cloud. He took over functions attributed to Hiḍr.

30. See Ç. Uluçay, "Yavuz Selim Nasıl Padişah Oldu?" mentioned in note 24 above.

The Ottoman Succession and Its Relation to the Turkish Concept of Sovereignty

A GLANCE at the tree of the Ottoman Sultans will show that until the death of Ahmed I (1603-1617) the throne always passed from father to son; it is only after that date that we see the accession of brothers. Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall attempted to explain this phenomenon in the following manner: the Ottomans followed the seniority principle, inherited from the time of Chinggis Khan, whereby the throne devolved first upon the eldest son or, if there were no son, upon the oldest living relative of the deceased ruler.[1] Because of the practice of fratricide, however, the need to invoke the latter proviso did not arise until 1617 when, for the first time upon the death of a Sultan, a brother was found to be still living. Rejecting this explanation, Friedrich Giese put forth the view that there was no law or principle governing Sultanic succession among the Ottomans.[2] Similarly, Wilhelm Radloff had earlier given examples showing that no established rules for succession prevailed among any of the Turkish peoples.[3] Finally, László Ferenc viewed the problem from a wider perspective, stating conclusively that among the Turks, "every member of the ruling dynasty has a claim on the right to rule, there exists neither a *primogenitura* nor a *senioratus* principle of succession."[4]

More recently, proponents of both the *senioratus* principle, whereby the eldest member of the ruling family assumes the throne, and of the *primogenitura* principle, whereby only the eldest son has the right to succeed, have come forward. Zeki Velidi Togan, for instance, stated that "because the title of great khan passed to the eldest brother, the area of his residence would become the center of the state. This practice was prevalent also among the Karakhanids, successors to the Kök Türks."[5] Togan elsewhere stated, rather ambiguously, "Among the Karakhanids the right to Kaghanship, according to old Turkish traditions, belonged to the eldest prince of that segment of the family which was predominant."[6] Osman Turan stated