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Reading Matter in a Sufi *Tekke*: Book Lists of Bektashi *Tekke*s in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Abstract

The present paper examines library stocks of Bektashi *tekke*s from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The focus is mainly on hitherto unknown book lists of nine *tekke*s from Albania during the late 1920s. The library stock of the *tekke*s gives an insight into the intellectual heritage and circulated book-based knowledge of the Bektashi order. The analysis of different *tekke* libraries provides general assumptions concerning translocal overlaps. Simultaneously, the study reveals local characteristics and differences of particular *tekke*s. By comparing the aforementioned book lists with others of Bektashi institutions from different regions and periods, we can infer continuities and discontinuities in the transmission of written knowledge. Furthermore, the book stocks exemplify the religious negotiation within the officially forbidden order since 1826 between conformity with the predominant Islamic discourse and nonconformism.

Keywords: Bektashi, Albania, libraries, books, Sufism, History of Knowledge, History of Ideas

1. *Tekke* Libraries in the Late Ottoman Empire

Library stocks are a key tool to reconstructing the intellectual heritage of a (religious) culture. They unveil the sources of knowledge which, in turn, hint at influences in literature, ideas, and traditions, as well as transfers of knowledge. On the one hand, it is possible to frame specific cultures and institutions within the intellectual setting of the respective society; on the other, it also enables us to find characteristics outside the 'mainstream'. With regard to a religious group with a comparatively moderate extent of written testimony in particular, as was the case concerning the Bektashiyya, reconstructing library stocks seems to be a promising approach in order to sketch their (religious) knowledge. As the Bektashi order had been prohibited and discursively excluded from the circle of accepted religion, library stocks help us to gain an insight into the struggle between adjustment and demarcation. How did they react to exclusion and discrimination in terms of written knowledge and its transmission? Did they adjust their reading practices to the general religious discourse of the late Ottoman Empire? Or, did they continue their nonconformist tradition and engage in intellectual protectionism?

Even though libraries seem to be a rich and valuable source for the history of ideas and knowledge, little research on this has been done so far in Ottoman Studies. As is shown in the eminent work of İsmail Erünsal, libraries in the Ottoman Empire had

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prospered from small book collections in the fourteenth century to distinct institutions of education around the eighteenth century.[1] One important group of libraries was found in *tekke* collections, mainly structured as foundation libraries, due to the fact that Sufi orders were administratively organised as foundations (*vakıf*). Though foundation libraries struggled to adapt into modern library structures in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they remained important institutions for book-based education and the circulation of knowledge.[2] *Tekke* libraries in the Ottoman Empire were, as Suraiya Faroqhi puts it, the 'entry into the world of books' for many Ottoman subjects.[3] *Tekke* libraries primarily catered for the religious education of the members in the respective *tekke*. However, they also provided the neighbouring people with access to books and literacy, especially in rural regions.

The best-known and probably most wide-ranging *tekke* library was located in the headquarters of the Mevlevī order in Konya, comprising more than 1,000 volumes.[4] The research on other centres of the Mevlevī order, the so-called *Mevlevīḫāne*s, is not as extensive, but has grown in recent years. For instance, we know about book lists from *Mevleviḫāne*s in Yenikapı, Istanbul, and in Chania (Hanya), Crete.[5] Since then, a couple of studies on the library stocks of *tekke*s in Bursa have been conducted, as is the case for the Kastamonu region.[6] Nevertheless, research on the *tekke* library culture is only at an early stage. Comparisons and translocal surveys of different library stocks belonging to the same institution, for instance, have not yet been carried out. However, evaluations of multiple library stocks in particular enable us to sketch the entanglements of translocal knowledge beyond single institutions; and in addition, they provide an overview of local differences between the various *tekke*s within one order.

2. The Turbulences of the Bektashi Order in the Long Nineteenth Century

The Bektashi order was among the most influential Sufi orders in Ottoman history, especially in the core lands of the Empire in Anatolia and Southeast Europe. Despite divergent and nonconformist doctrines that stand in contrast with the predominant Sunni environment, the Bektashis were able to remain an influential and active religious group. One reason for this maintained impact – although not the only one – was their hitherto not entirely understood connection with the elite military corps of

1 Erünsal 2004, 247; Erünsal 2008. Research on private book stocks also provides an insight into the book culture in the Ottoman Empire, mainly based on documents on the heritage of passed bureaucrats, scholars, or officials. See e.g. Sievert 2010. In this paper, the term library is generally used as an umbrella term for book collections, covering both institutionalised and private collections.
2 Erünsal 2008, 83–99.
3 Faroqhi 2003, 210.
4 Faroqhi 2003, 211; Gölpınarlı 1967–1972.
5 İ. Kara 1997.
6 N. Yılmaz 2014; Türk 1995; Kurmuş 2002.

the Janissaries.[7] This alliance was subsequently the reason why the Ottoman Sultan Maḥmūd II (r. 1808–1839) banned the order in 1826, as he abolished the Janissary corps in the context of a military reform and reorganisation. In their official statements and justification, the Ottoman authorities mentioned the religious heresy of the Bektashis, which they presented as the main reason for the prohibition.[8]

While the Janissaries were depicted as the 'enemies of the state', the Bektashis were seen as 'the enemies of the religion'.[9] Whether or not religious arguments were the real reason for the prohibition, this started a discourse in which Ottoman authorities – in coalition with *ʿUlemā'* authors – accused the Bektashis of being a religiously heretical, morally depraved, and socio-politically dangerous group.[10] The discrimination policy was followed by a disciplining approach, as the Ottoman government handed over the Bektashi *tekke*s to decidedly Sunni Sufi groups, in order to tutor the Bektashis in Sunni conformist Islam.[11] The intended goal was to assimilate the 'Bektashiyya within the Ehl-i Sünnet'.[12] For this purpose, the state transformed several Bektashi *tekke*s into those of the Ḳādiriyye, Ḫalvetiyye, and Rifāʿiyye. In most cases, the state promoted the Naḳşibendiyye, which received the majority of the Bektashi *tekke*s.[13] This religious disciplining of the Bektashis was part of a broader process of confessionalisation in the late Ottoman Empire. The state tried to define and frame religious beliefs and promoted a distinct denomination, that is, Sunnism, in order to counteract the signs of decay and to strengthen the central power.[14]

While the sultan was very persuasive in putting the abolition into practice in the capital of Istanbul and neighbouring provinces, the influence of the state was limited in the periphery of the Empire. Thus, life was easier for the Bektashis in these areas, and the result was that some of these former peripheral regions became new centres of Bektashi networks. The most important new Bektashi hub was undoubtedly Albania, especially southern Albania, where the order built dozens of *tekke*s in the nineteenth century.[15]

During the reform era of the Tanzimat, the order remained forbidden. However, the restrictions diminished and as a result, the Bektashis had the opportunity to recover

7 Even though the Janissaries called themselves a 'Bektashi group' (*zümre-i Bektāşiyyān*) and used comparable liturgy to the Bektashis, it would be an exaggeration to state an 'organic connection' between the two institutions, as some historians have suggested. E.g. Varol 2013, 35. Most likely, the connection did not exceed an official and superficial frame but was sufficient to give the Bektashis protection and influence. For further details see Faroqhi 1981, 90–91; Maden 2015, 173–202; Varol 2013, 33–38; C. Kara 2019, 78–81.

8 BOA, HAT 290.17386, 4 August 1826; BOA, HAT 17322, 4 August 1826.

9 Esad Efendi 2005, 172.

10 C. Kara 2019, 101–115.

11 C. Kara 2019, 101–115.

12 BOA, HAT 17322, 4 August 1826.

13 Maden 2013, 177–195.

14 C. Kara 2019, 13–14. For the concept of confessionalisation applied for Ottoman history see Clayer 2011; Krstić 2019; Burak 2013.

15 Clayer 1990, 247–426.

and began to reorganise their religious life. During this process, they negotiated their relationship with the discursively dominating Sunni Islam. Two different ideal typical approaches emerged from this situation. The first approach was employed by a group of the Bektashis, who emphasised the differences from Sunni Islam by publishing nonconformist anthologies and books – particularly works of the Ḥurūfi tradition. The Ḥurūfiyya was a nonconformist mystical movement, known mainly for its (re-)incarnation doctrines as well as its mysticism of letters. The Ḥurūfis had been stigmatised as a heretical group, which led to one of the most extensive religious suppressions in Ottoman history of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[16] From all the vivid influences on the Bektashi religiosity, the Ḥurūfiyya was probably the most nonconformist tradition, imposing the strictest boundaries to mainstream Sunni Islam. Polemics and defamations by *ʿUlemā'* authors against the Bektashis from the nineteenth century, for instance, condemned nothing more than Ḥurūfi elements within Bektashi religiosity.[17] Consequently, emphasising this heritage by publishing mainly Ḥurūfi works was a distinct nonconformist and dissociating approach to Sunnism.[18]

By contrast, the second approach employed by another group of the Bektashis attempted to bridge the gap between Sunni Islam and Bektashism, in order to establish the Bektashiyya among the state-accepted Sufi orders. In doing so, they went as far as to trying to 'Sunnitise' the Bektashiyya by adjusting their religiosity to a Sunni framework. Strategies in this regard included the deliberate omission of nonconformist doctrines as well as practices and even Sufi genealogies (*silsile*) starting with the first caliph Abū Bakr (d. 634), whose caliphate is usually not even accepted by Alid groups.[19] Accordingly, it is possible to interpret the period from the Tanzimat until the 1920s as an attempt to balance out their nonconformist tradition, as a means of establishing themselves within the frame of accepted religiosity.[20]

Another important crossroad for the Bektashi community began with the emergence of nationalism. In the two core lands of the Bektashi network, Albania and Anatolia, nationalist movements collaborated with religious groups, which included the Bektashiyya. Albanian nationalists from the 1890s onwards and Turkish nationalists from the 1910s saw in the Bektashis a vehicle to spread nationalist ideas – both as propagators through the close network of *tekke*s and as a projection surface for genuine nationalist religiosity.[21] This nationalist dualism culminated in the mid-1920s, when the Republic of Turkey abolished all the Sufi orders; and, as a consequence, one of the heads of the Bektashi order emigrated to Tirana five years later in order to

16 For further information on the Ḥurūfiyya see Usluer 2014 and Mir-Kasimov 2015.

17 Mainly by Ḥarpūtlu İsḥaḳ Ḫoca (İsḥaḳ Ḫoca 1874, 4–5, 31–32, 59–61).

18 C. Kara 2019, 115–128.

19 An important publication in this connection is Aḥmed Rifʿat's *Mir'ātü'l-Mekāsıd fi def'il-Mefāsid* from 1876 or the activities of Ḥilmi Dedebaba. The *silsile* starting with Abū Bakr is even more striking, considering the fact that almost every other Ottoman Sufi order, except the Naḳşibendiyye, starts its *silsile* with Imām ʿAlī (C. Kara 2019, 115–128).

20 C. Kara 2019, 115–128.

21 Clayer 2013a, 368–383; Dressler 2015; Küçük 2002; C. Kara 2019, 343–369.

reorganise the Bektashiyya.[22] The Albanian King Ahmet Zogu (d. 1961) granted the Bektashiyya official status, while the Bektashis in Anatolia continued their religious activities unofficially. As a result, the connection between the Bektashiyya in Albania and Anatolia was dissolved and remains so.

As will be described below, the book lists from Albania were made in the late 1920s and therefore during the changing and nationalising period described above. However, the reconstructed book lists reflect this process only in parts. While the stocks mirror the negotiation between conformist religiosity and nonconformism, they do not hint at Albanian nationalist propensities. Quite the contrary: the library stocks are obviously part of the Ottoman heritage, with very little evidence of an Albanian nationalist background.

3. Book Lists of Bektashi *Tekke*s

The book stocks, and subsequently the 'reading practices'[23] of the Bektashis in this period are both a result of and a source for the aforementioned turbulent history. The book lists of Bektashi *tekke*s provide an insight into the intellectual and cultural heritage. Since the religious teachings of the Bektashis were, at least according to the official statements of the Ottoman state, one of the reasons for their prohibition and discrimination, the book lists could shed light on the religious beliefs of the Bektashis. Furthermore, the foundation of the libraries was also the result of the turbulent history, as the discrimination led to conflicts and resulted in the different approaches of the Bektashiyya to their religiosity. In this perspective, the *tekke* libraries are a basis for reconstructing the religious negotiations within the Bektashi community of the nineteenth century.

In the historiography of Bektashism, three book lists have already been reconstructed, covering a period from the 1820s until the 1950s. The oldest book list is from 1827, registering the writings of the historical and important *Abdāl Mūsā Tekke* in Elmalı near Alanya, in the south of Anatolia. Suraiya Faroqhi was the first historian to work on this book list; and the historians of religions Yılmaz Soyyer and Fahri Maden have provided complete transcriptions of the aforementioned library stock.[24] Additionally, Soyyer found another book list of a *tekke* in Istanbul dated from 1845,

22 Doja 2006, 96–100.

23 This research mainly relies on book lists, which do not provide any information about whether the books were actually read or not. A proper history of reading would require further information on access, usage, or other (ego) documents explicitly mentioning reading practices, which we unfortunately cannot draw on. However, the book lists narrow down the potential reading practices in the *tekke*s, as they reveal the available texts and thus the possible reading matter. For a discussion on the interrelation of 'reading and writerly culture' see e.g. Hirschler 2012, 11–31; for a study on reading practices in the late Ottoman Empire see Strauss 2003.

24 Faroqhi 1981, 99–104; Soyyer 2012, 145–177; Maden 2013, 359–361.

though he was unable to name the particular *tekke*.[25] Lastly, Salih Çift has presented a very comprehensive list of the historical Bektashi *tekke* in Cairo, which contains more than 700 entries.[26] The last head of the *tekke*, Ahmed Sırrı Baba (d. 1963), delivered a very detailed book list of the historically rich *tekke* in Cairo, which the Bektashis traditionally consider as one of their four central *tekke*s.[27] However, the lists almost exclusively contain publications starting from the mid-nineteenth century, with virtually no older manuscripts. Accordingly, the library seems to be more of a private collection of the last two presiders, especially of the aforementioned Ahmed Sırrı Baba, than a book-based collected memory of a religious institution.[28]

Most of the book lists consulted in this paper are hitherto unknown registers of library stocks of Bektashi *tekke*s found in the Albanian State Archive in Tirana.[29] Unfortunately, we can only draw on very limited information about the book lists, since they provide neither a date, their purpose, nor any details on the compiler. The lists consist of loosely assorted single sheets which itemise the book titles of nine different *tekke* libraries, mainly from the regions Elbasan and Gjirokastër. Even though the lists are not dated, it is possible to contain an approximate date from printed works registered in the book lists. The newest published work is from 1928, thus the list must have been prepared after this date.[30] Since the lists are in Ottoman Turkish, and particularly as Albanian-speaking works are limited to a handful of items, it is highly probable that the lists are not much older than this date.[31] Therefore, the library lists were made chronologically after the decline of the Ottoman Empire and most likely during the early Albanian Kingdom. However, in terms of the history of ideas and knowledge, the library

25 Soyyer 2012, 160–175. Considering the richness of the *tekke* library with more than 100 books, the list probably belonged to one of the bigger *tekke*s in Istanbul, such as the *Şāḥḳulu Tekke* in Merdivenköy, the *Şehidlik Tekke* in Rumelihisar, the *Çamlıca Tekke* in Üsküdar, or the *Ḳaryağdı Baba Tekke* in Eyüb. The aforementioned book list contains a variety of works from the Ḥurūfi tradition, which the latter *tekke*, *Ḳaryağdı Baba*, had repeatedly been associated with. Moreover, the *tekke* later owned a letterpress in the 1870s, with which the Bektashis printed predominantly Ḥurūfi-oriented works (BOA, MF.MKT 16.177, 15 January 1874; BOA, MF.MKT 17.63, 28 February 1874). Thus, we can assume that the unnamed *tekke* in Istanbul may, with some probability, be the *Ḳaryağdı Tekke* in Eyüb, although there is no definite proof of this.

26 Çift 2011/12.

27 Çift 2011/12, 13. Besides the headquarters in Hacıbektaş, the four following *tekke*s are considered to be central places of the Bektashiyya: *Şāḥḳulu* in Istanbul, *Ḳızıldeli* in Didymoteicho (Dimetoka), *Abdāl Mūsā* in Elmalı, and *Ḳayġusuz* in Cairo.

28 Çift 2011/12, 14–15.

29 AQSH, K 725, DO 199. I initially mentioned the book lists in my thesis but did not dwell on them any further (C. Kara 2019, 67–68, n. 67–68).

30 The newest publication in the book lists is Kemāleddīn Şükrü. 1928. *İslām Tārīḫinde Nifāḳ-ı Kerbela.*

31 Even though it can be assumed that people in Albania used the Arabic alphabet and also the Ottoman language after the Latinisation, the fact that the book lists barely contain Albanian works (despite an increase of Albanian publications starting in the late nineteenth century, Clayer 2013a, 336–348) suggests a rather early date.

stocks reflect late Ottoman history, since the lists contain largely Ottoman Turkish writings, compared to less than a handful of Albanian books.

Altogether, the aforementioned twelve books lists are as follows (see Table 1):[32]

Table 1: Table of the book lists of Bektashi tekke*s*

No.	*Tekke*	Location	Date of Foundation	Date of the Book List	Number of Books
1.	*Abdāl Mūsā Tekke*	Elmalı near Antalya	Approx. fifteenth century	1827	146
2.	Unknown *Tekke* Istanbul	Istanbul	–	1845	107
3.	*Ḳayġusuz Abdāl Tekke*	Cairo	Approx. fifteenth century	1950s	over 700
4.	*Selmān Baba*[33]	Elbasan	1927	Late 1920s	36
5.	Unknown *Tekke* I	–	–	Late 1920s	44
6.	*ʿĀṣım Baba Tekke*[34]	Gjirokastër (Ergiri)	1780	Late 1920s	111
7.	Unknown *Tekke* II	–	–	Late 1920s	31
8.	*Zeynel Baba Tekke*[35]	Gjirokastër	1878	Late 1920s	6
9.	*Ṣṭūf Tekke* [i.e. *Ḥayderiyye Tekke*][36]	Gjirokastër	Before 1800	Late 1920s	13
10.	*Muḥarrem Baba*[37]	Elbasan	–	Late 1920s	22
11.	*Cefā'i Tekke*[38]	Elbasan	Before 1800	Late 1920s	17
12.	Unknown *Tekke* III	–	–	Late 1920s	42

32 The identification of a particular book list with a Bektashi *tekke* is not always possible, because the compiler did not always mention the names of the *tekke*s. Thus, some *tekke* names remain unknown. Another problem that makes distinguishing the lists more challenging is the fact that the start and end points of a particular list are also not always clearly recognisable. However, occasional paginations, changes of paper, and ink sometimes provide an indication.

33 For further information on the *tekke* see Clayer 1990, 267–268. The date of foundation is not clearly identifiable, though Nathalie Clayer narrows it down to between 1927 and 1930.

34 Clayer 1990, 280–290.

35 Clayer 1990, 295.

36 Clayer 1990, 291–294. I would like to thank Huseyin Abiva for helping me to identify the record 'Ṣṭūf' with the *Ḥayderiyye Tekke*.

37 A *tekke* named *Muḥarrem Baba* in Elbasan could not be identified. This could be a contemporary and locally used name for one of the known *tekke*s in Elbasan; or it could allude to a *tekke* in Kičevo (Kırçova), known as *Muḥarrem Baba* in North Makedonia. However, this would be a little surprising, as the other *tekke*s were located solely in today's Albania.

38 Clayer 1990, 270–273.

While in both of the older lists from Elmalı and Istanbul the majority of the books are manuscripts, the books in the Albanian *tekke*s from the early twentieth century are largely prints. This is not surprising, since the majority of the Albanian *tekke*s were built in the nineteenth century.[39] Naturally, this development corresponds with the establishment and spread of the letterpress in the Ottoman Empire.[40] However, there were also manuscripts in the Albanian *tekke*s from the early twentieth century. The compiler marked them clearly as 'elyazısı' (manuscript), which applies only to 5% of the records.[41] Interestingly, almost all the manuscripts can certainly be attributed to Bektashi agents.[42] This suggests that these manuscripts were probably older and had been transmitted prior to the publication explosion, or that the effort to write manually was limited to works considered to be part of their 'own' tradition. However, we only can speculate about this, as the compiler failed to give dates from the manuscripts or any other further information.

The amount of books per *tekke* differs significantly, varying from less than a dozen to three-digit stocks. The different book holdings correlate largely with the historicity of the *tekke*s. While the *tekke* in Elmalı is one of the oldest in the history of the Bektashiyya, with a century-long history dating back to the fourteenth century, the *tekke*s in Albania are mainly from the nineteenth century, with a shorter time for collecting books.[43] Similarly, within the *tekke*s in Albania we can also see a considerable difference in the numbers of books. This also depends on the historicity: *ʿĀṣım Baba*, for instance, is one of the oldest *tekke*s in Albania, dating back to the late eighteenth century, and had the biggest library.[44] However, historicity and socio-religious significance did not always lead to comprehensive libraries: the *Ḥayderiyye Tekke* was a fairly important *tekke*, also built prior to 1800, but apparently comprised only 13 writings.[45] There could be many reasons for this, including confiscations after the prohibition, fire incidents, or a lack of interest in literature. The average number of books in the Bektashi *tekke* corresponds with that of other *tekke* libraries from rural regions. Known rural *tekke* libraries from different Sufi orders in the region of Bursa, for instance, comprise similar numbers of books, even though the Bektashi *tekke* libraries are slightly smaller.[46]

Language-wise, the majority of the works are in (Ottoman-)Turkish, while Persian and Arabic writings occur regularly in the lists. Arabic and Persian writings account for

39 Clayer 1990, 247–426.
40 Neumann 2002, 241.
41 The compiler marked 17 of the total amount of 322 books as manuscripts (AQSH, K 725, DO 199).
42 Such as the *Dīvān-ı Türābi* (the anthology of a leader of the Bektashi order, in *ʿĀṣım Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 6a) or the hagiography of Ḥācı Bektāş Velī, *Vilāyetnāme* (AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 6a).
43 Maden 2013, 362–389; Clayer 1990, 247–426.
44 Clayer 1990, 279–290.
45 Clayer 1990, 290–294.
46 Türk 1995, 51–62. Particularly compared to the *tekke* library lists from the nineteenth century (Türk 1995, 51–52, 60–61).

approximately 15–20% of the whole stock of the Albanian *tekke*s.[47] *ʿĀṣım Baba* is the only *tekke* in Albania that includes Albanian texts, comprising just three writings.[48] The Cairo *tekke* is, language-wise, the most stunning, with writings in nine different languages. Besides Arabic, Albanian, Persian, and Turkish, the list includes works in Italian, English, German, French, and Kurdish.[49]

4. Translocal Knowledge

The Albanian *tekke*s cover a region from Elbasan in today's central Albania to Gjirokastër in the south. The collection of these texts provides us with a general understanding of the characteristics of the librarianship of 'Albanian' Bektashism of the early twentieth century. Thus, the analysis of intersections and overlaps in the stocks gives us an insight into a broader intellectual heritage and the translocal book-based knowledge within the Bektashi order.

The research provided by Maden and Çift categorised the books into different disciplines and branches, such as literature or history.[50] For the purpose of this paper, the categories differ from their systematisation and follow a more content-based and denominal differentiation, since one of the aims of the study is to reconstruct the intellectual heritage and religio-cultural sphere of influence. The categories should be seen as ideal types according to Max Weber, as the boundaries between the themes are fluent and the categories are thus heuristic.[51] Accordingly, the categories are as follows:

1. General Knowledge
2. Sufi Literature
3. Bektashi Literature
4. Sunni Literature
5. Non-Islamic Literature

47 The estimation includes only records clearly marked as 'ʿArabī' or 'Fārisī' (25 respectively 23, excluding dictionaries). The language of Rūmī's *Meṣnevī* or the Quran is not always mentioned, so we cannot conclusively ascertain the actual number.

48 AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 5a.

49 Çift 2011/12, 19.

50 Maden 2013, 359–369; Çift 2011/12, 17–23.

51 It has to be added that it is not always possible to identify the mentioned works in the list. Records such as 'Kitāb-ı Müftizāde' could apply to dozens of different texts (*Selmān Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 2a). Occasionally, it is possible to assume the content from the title, even though the work is not absolutely identifiable: 'Ṭarīḳatnāme' for instance, is most likely a work on Sufism, even though we cannot trace back the actual text (*ʿĀṣım Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 7a).

4.1 General Knowledge

A large number of the books can be categorised as pertaining to general knowledge according to the contemporaneous discourse, which means they could also be found in every other library. This includes dictionaries and other language-based books, historical works predominantly on the history of Islam, and the so-called *Dīvān* literature of famous Ottoman poets broadly cherished within the Empire. However, the most important subcategory is that of Qurans and Quranic interpretations, so-called *tefsīr*.[52]

Dictionaries appear in almost every library list: Arabic dictionaries, most commonly the well-known *Aḫter-i Kebīr*, are recorded in six of nine book lists.[53] This implies that reading Arabic literature, mainly the Quran, was a cornerstone of religious education in most of the *tekke*s. The presence of Qurans and/or Quran commentaries in every single *tekke* supports this assumption. Every *tekke* owned at least one Quran, Quran translation or Quran commentary and in most of the *tekke*s there was more than one Quran-related work. Therefore, the presence of the Quran intersects in every *tekke* and suggests that this was an integral part of Bektashi religiosity in the late Ottoman period. Turkish Quran translations had also found their way into at least four *tekke*s.[54]

With regard to the commentaries, it is difficult to highlight a certain tradition of *tefsīr* or school of thought. On the one hand, information on the book lists is sometimes limited to general records such as *Tefsīr-i Ḳurʾān*.[55] On the other hand, the commentaries differ from *tekke* to *tekke*. Nevertheless, the tradition of Ḳādī Beyżāvī (d. 1286) seems to stand out in the Bektashi *tekke*s. In four *tekke*s, we find the famous *Envārıʾt-tenzīl ve Esrārıʾt-teʾvil*.[56] Considering that Beyżāvī's work is of strong Sunni-Shāfiᶜ and Ashᶜarī provenance, the presence of his commentaries in four Bektashi *tekke*s is quite striking.[57] However, Beyżāvī was one of the most influential and popular Quran commentators in Ottoman lands and his work shows indications of Sufi

52 Quran-related literature is listed in the category of general knowledge, because it is undoubtedly the most common genre in the Islamic world and therefore a shared genre by various Islamic denominations, starting from strict Sharia compliant groups through to antinomian traditions. However, there is, of course, a huge variety in the hermeneutical approach to the Quran.

53 *Selmān Baba*, *Tekke* I, *ᶜĀṣım Baba*, *Tekke* II, *Ṣṭūf*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 2a–12b.

54 *Selmān Baba*, *Tekke* I, *ᶜĀṣım Baba*, and *Ṣṭūf*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 2a, 4a, 6a, 9a. In some cases, we cannot confirm the language, since the record is limited to 'Ḳurʾān' or 'Ḳurʾān-ı Kerīm' (AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 10a, 12b).

55 E.g. *ᶜĀṣım Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 5a.

56 *Zeynel Baba*, *Ṣṭūf*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 9a, 12a. Mostly quoted under the title *Tefsīr-i Ḳādi*. As Erünsal points out, famous books are only rarely referred to by their actual title but rather by abrogation such as *Tefsīr-i Ḳādī* (Erünsal 1987, 348).

57 Yavuz 1992, 100–103.

interpretations.[58] Another noteworthy Quran commentary is the so-called *Tercüme-i Tibyān* by ʿAyıntābī Meḥmed Efendi (d. 1699), which appears in two *tekke* lists.[59] ʿAyıntābī's *tefsīr* and translation was the first Quran-related work printed in the Turkish language in Ottoman history.[60] ʿAyıntābī was influenced by Beyżāvī and also used for his *tefsīr* Sufi literature, including Ibn ʿArabī's *Fütūḥātü'l-Mekkiyye*.[61] Thus, his *tefsīr* shows a Sufi inclination, too.

In addition to Arabic dictionaries, four *tekke*s held Persian and five *tekke*s Ottoman Turkish dictionaries.[62] These were mainly necessary for reading the *Dīvān* poetry and classical Sufi literature mentioned below. As far as the *Dīvān* literature is concerned, it is not possible to find any translocal overlaps or characteristics. In the case of the historical works, there are barely distinguishable specificities. Most of the historical works in the *tekke*s deal with the history of Islam; some are classics, such as the Turkish translation of Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1406) or the *Tārīḫ-i Ṭaberī*.[63] Moreover, there are many biographies of the prophet(s), *Tārīḫ-i* or *Ḳıṣaṣ-ı Enbiyā*, which are more hagiographies than 'sober' history works.[64] In this connection, the most frequently mentioned history work is *Ravżatü'l-Aḥbāb*, with four records.[65] This is one of the most read *sīra* (prophetic biography) writings in Ottoman history. Even though cherished among Sunnis, it has an Alid notion, as it deals not only with the biography of the Prophet and the time of the first four caliphs, but also with the life of the Twelve Imams.[66] The latter is probably the reason why it is the most prevalent history writing in the Bektashi *tekke*s. The majority of the remaining historical works are contemporaneous publications from the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, such as *Tārīḫ-i Cevdet*, *Tārīḫ-i Afriḳā Delīli*, or *Tārīḫ-i İslām* by Şehbenderzāde.[67] Works of philosophy (e.g. *Aḫlāḳ-ı Celālī* by Celāleddin ed-Devvānī or Ibn Sīnā's *Kitābü'l Şifā'*) and astronomy (*ʿİlm-i Heyʾet*) complete the category of general knowledge.[68]

These works could be found in almost every other *tekke* or even *medrese* – and are part of the general knowledge of this time. If we compare them with the inventory of other known *tekke* catalogues, they overlap strikingly and embed the Bektashi *tekke*s in

58 Erünsal 1987, 348; Türk 1995, 51, 55, 57–58, 60; İ. Kara 1997, 136; İstek et al. 2017, 523; N. Yılmaz 2014, 325; Selvi 2018.
59 *ʿĀṣım Baba* and *Ṣṭūf*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 6a, 9a.
60 Arpa 2012, 127–128.
61 Arpa 2012, 127–128.
62 Persian: *Tekke* I, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Tekke* II, *Muḥarrem Baba*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a–8a, 10a, 12a. Ottoman: *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Muḥarrem Baba*, *Ceſā'ī*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 5a–7a, 11a, 12b.
63 *ʿĀṣım Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 6a.
64 *Selmān Baba*, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 3a, 5a, 12b.
65 *Selmān Baba*, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Muḥarrem Baba*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 3a, 5a, 11a–12a.
66 Aykaç 1993.
67 *Muḥarrem Baba*, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, and *Ṣṭūf*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 7a, 9a, 10a.
68 *ʿĀṣım Baba* and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 1997a, 12a.

their contemporaneous intellectual and educational environment.[69] However, it is still possible to highlight a Sufi and Alid notion in the Bektashi *tekke* libraries, since the most common historical work had a distinct Alid tendency and the Quran commentaries were of Sufi provenance. Thus, within the contemporaneous 'canon' literature, the Bektashis seemed to pick works that, for the most part, were closely related to their religious affiliation.

4.2 Sufi Literature

Sufi literature can be divided into Sufi classics and Ottoman Sufi literature. With regard to the first group, two main influences emerge: Persian Sufi classics and Ibn ʿArabī (d. 1240). The latter was a main source for many Sufi groups in the Ottoman Empire, whose Sufism was brought to Anatolia by his stepson Ṣadreddīn Ḳonevī (d. 1274).[70] Ibn ʿArabī gained much attention, particularly among intellectual Sufis in the late Ottoman Empire.[71] While he is prevalent in four *tekke*s, in two of these he is the most prevalent author with multiple writings.[72] Similarly, dervish notebooks of the Bektashis, as well as publications by intellectual Bektashi authors such as Aḥmed Rıfḳı (d. 1935) from the early twentieth century, illustrate the significance of Ibn ʿArabī, whom they describe as the 'Greatest Sheikh' (*şeyḫü'l-ekber*).[73] Indeed, Ibn ʿArabī's ontology – generally known as the 'Unity of Being' (*vaḥdet-i vücūd*) – and his spiritual anthropology with the goal of the so-called 'Perfect Man' (*insān-i kāmil*) are ubiquitous in Bektashi literature of the late Ottoman period.[74]

Moreover, Rūmī's (d. 1273) *Meṣnevī* and *Dīvān* and Ḥāfiẓ' (d. 1390) *Dīvān* – respectively commentaries of these works, so-called *şerḥ*, by Ottoman Sufis – are the most common Persian Sufi classics in the *tekke*s. While Rūmī's works were present in five *tekke*s, Ḥāfiẓ was represented in four.[75] The works of the Persian Sufi poet Jāmī (d. 1492) also appear in four *tekke* library lists.[76] Other Persian Sufi classical authors are Saʿdī (d. 1291/2) and Farīduddīn ʿAṭṭār (d. 1220/1) – each found in two *tekke*s. Saʿdī features in the library lists with his famous *Gülistān*, ʿAṭṭār, with his hagiographical

69 İ. Kara 2006, 136–140; Türk 1995, 51–61; İstek et al. 2017, 523–536; N. Yılmaz 2014, 325–328.

70 For a comprehensive study on Ḳonevī see Todd 2014.

71 See e.g. C. Yıldırım 2019, 54–58.

72 *Tekke* I (with four writings) and *Tekke* III (five); AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a, 12a–12b.

73 C. Kara 2019, 67–68.

74 C. Kara 2019, 67–68.

75 *Tekke* I, ʿĀṣım Baba, *Tekke* II, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 5a–8a, 12a–12b.

76 In *ʿĀṣım Baba* and *Tekke* II the record is limited to 'Mollā Cāmī' (Jāmī's famous name in the Ottoman Empire) without a concrete book name (AQSH, K 725, DO 1997a–8a); in *Tekke* I and *Cefā'ī*, in turn, the Ottoman Turkish translation of *Şevāhidü'n-Nübüvve* is included (AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a, 11a). *Tekke* I, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Tekke* II, and *Cefā'ī*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a–7a, 9a.

description of Sufi saints, *Teẕkīrātü'l-Evliyā*.[77] The latter should be seen as a main source for the collective memory of the aforementioned saints. The Bektashi remembrance of Imām Jaʿfar Ṣādiq (d. 765) and especially of the Sufi martyr Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. 922) may have been significantly shaped by the accounts of ʿAṭṭār.[78] This selection is not at all surprising, since the aforementioned authors and their works belong to the 'canon' of literature in the Ottoman Empire and were cherished broadly even outside Sufi circles.[79] However, unlike the other known Ottoman Sufi libraries, the absence of other Sufi classics, in particular that of al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), is noticeable. Compared to the *tekke* libraries of other Sufi orders, in which al-Ghazālī is a regular author, he is not once mentioned in Bektashi *tekke* libraries.[80] Considering that among the classical Sufi authors, al-Ghazālī is widely seen as one of the most Sharia-compliant and anti-Shiite scholars, this absence seems quite coherent.[81]

With regard to Ottoman Sufi texts, the most important author was İsmāʿīl Ḥaḳḳı Bursevī (d. 1725) from the Ḫalvetī-Celvetiyye tradition. İsmāʿīl Ḥaḳḳı Bursevī was one of the most active Sufi authors in Ottoman history and left a great opus capturing different fields such as *tefsīr*, *fiḳh*, Hadith, and most importantly, Sufism. His Sufi views reveal an eminent reception of Rūmī and Ibn ʿArabī and his opus contains largely commentaries on their works.[82] Being present in five of nine *tekke*s – and mostly represented by multiple works – İsmāʿīl Ḥaḳḳı Bursevī must be considered as a main source of the Bektashi religiosity during that time.[83] The same can be said of Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī (d. 1694), also a Sufi of the Ḫalvetī order, and one of the best known Sufi authors in Ottoman history. As a main apologist of the doctrine of *vaḥdet-i vücūd*, Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī continued the tradition of Ibn ʿArabī.[84] The presence of Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī's works in four *tekke*s again highlights the enormous impact of the Ibn ʿArabī school.[85] The fact that Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī's Sufism has a strong Alid inclination made his works probably even more appealing to the Bektashis.[86]

77 Saʿdī: *Tekke* I and *ʿĀṣım Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a–6a; ʿAṭṭār: *ʿĀṣım Baba* and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 5a, 12a.

78 Karamustafa 2007, 25–26.

79 Faroqhi 2003, 211; Çift 2011/12, 18.

80 E.g. in comparison to nine different *tekke*s in Bursa in which al-Ghazālī was represented in almost every *tekke* (Türk 1995, 51, 53–55, 57–60).

81 For an introduction into al-Ghazālī's religious ideas see Griffel 2009. However, the book lists also contain writings, that are decidedly hostile against Bektashism. In Elmalı and Istanbul were, for instance, books from the forerunners or representatives of the anti-Sufi movement *Ḳādızādeli*, i.e. Imām Birgivī (d. 1573) or Üstüvānī Meḥmed Efendi (d. 1661) (Faroqhi 1981, 100; Maden 2013, 361).

82 Kut 2012.

83 *Selmān Baba*, *Tekke* I, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Ṣṭūf*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 2a, 4a–7a, 9a, 12b.

84 Demirli 2007, 169; M. Kara 2010.

85 *Tekke* I, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Cefā'ī*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a, 7a, 9a, 12b.

86 For Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī's Alid leanings see M. Kara 2010, 36–37.

Proceeding from the occurrence of these two Ḫalvetī Sufis, one could conclude a significant Ḫalvetī influence on the Bektashis of Albania in the early twentieth century. However, both authors are important agents of Ottoman Sufism beyond order boundaries; thus, pointing out the order affiliation could be misleading, as it would be the case regarding Rūmī and an alleged Mevlevī influence. However, other works listed in the library catalogues suggest a certain influence, that is, works affiliated with the Naḳşibendiyye. As already mentioned, the Naḳşibendiyye took over many Bektashi *tekke*s. Even though Albanian Bektashi *tekke*s in the imperial periphery remained generally unaffected by these transmissions, and were still run by the Bektashis, the Naḳşibendiyye influence was also present in Albania. In relation to this, we can find works affiliated to the Sufi order of the Naḳşibendiyye in four *tekke*s.[87] This suggests that the Bektashis adapted some of the Naḳşibendiyye works and that the exchange between these two quite different Sufi orders went beyond the official transmission of the *tekke*s.[88]

4.3 Bektashi Literature

Naturally, works of the Bektashi tradition are also embedded in the Sufi culture. Therefore, this category emphasises writings that the Bektashis have considered as 'their' religious sources. The question of when a certain text is considered a 'Bektashi work' has not been entirely analysed and is worth its own research. For this purpose, contemporary literature by the Bektashis can be used as reference for genuine Bektashi literature.[89] The main problem is that some of the works and respective authors attributed to Bektashi literature can hardly or only restrictedly be linked to the Bektashi order and its history – for instance Fużūlī (d. 1556), who was a major author in Bektashi *tekke* libraries. Regardless of whether or not Fużūlī was indeed a Bektashi, for the purpose of the present study the perception of the group regarding the historical figure is the deciding factor rather than the normative institutional attribution.[90] Accordingly, the Bektashis have considered Fużūlī a Bektashi poet.[91] The same applies to Ḥurūfī-related writings, even though the connection of Ḥurūfism and Bektashism was an issue of dispute and conflict even among contemporaneous Bektashis.[92]

87 *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Muḥarrem*, *Cefā'ī*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 6a, 10a–12b.
88 See also: C. Kara 2019, 128–139.
89 See e.g. quoted works by representatives of the Bektashi order such as Bedri Noyan Dedebaba or Rexheb Ferdi Baba (Noyan 2000–2001; Ferdi 2016).
90 Even though there is speculation about Fużūli's affiliation with the Bektashi *tekke* in Karbala, this claim remains a research desideratum (Karakaya 2015, 47; Yorulmaz 2000; Gölpınarlı 1961, VII–VIII, LXI–IXII).
91 Noyan 2003, 160–164.
92 One could argue that Bektashis who possessed Ḥurūfī-related works were also more candid towards Ḥurūfism and perceived their works as part of the own religious tradition.

According to this definition, Fużūlī's *Ḥadīḳatü's-Süʿedāʾ* was the most prevalent 'Bektashi work', with copies in six of nine *tekke*s.[93] Fużūlī's *Ḥadīḳat* deals mainly with the events of Karbala and addresses the question of why prophets or saints suffer pain and how they handle afflictions. It is a genuine answer to the problem of theodicy by adducing the most important incident in the collective memory of Alid groups.[94] Thus, we can assume that the remembrance of the martyrdom in Karbala was significantly based on Fużūlī's *Ḥadīḳat*, which makes it a main source for the collective memory of Bektashism. Another source in this connection is the writing *Gülizār-i Ḥasaneyn*, which covers the mythical biographies of Imām Ḥasan (d. 670) and Imām Ḥusayn (d. 680). It is recorded in two library lists, which also makes it a relevant source in terms of confessional historiography.[95] An additional Alid source is recorded in two library lists: *Yenābiʿü'l Mevedde* by a certain Süleymān el-Kundūzī.[96] Written in Arabic and printed in 1885 in Istanbul, *Yenābiʿü'l Mevedde* covers sayings of and narratives about the family of the Prophet (*Ehl-i Beyt*). Further Alid literature is found only occasionally in the form of an Alid Hadith collection, or historical works related to Karbala.[97] Writings from the distinct Jaʿfarī-Shiite provenance are not recorded in any library list, which suggests that no intellectual networks were formed.

The second most prevalent Bektashi source is the *Vilāyetnāme* of Ḥācı Bektāş Velī (d. 1270) registered in four library stocks.[98] The *Vilāyetnāme* of Ḥācı Bektāş Velī is his hagiography aiming to prove Ḥācı Bektāş' *vilāyet*, that is, sainthood. Depicting multilayered miracles performed by the protagonist, the *Vilāyetnāme* is a constitutional writing of Bektashi religiosity.[99] It is therefore surprising that it is recorded 'only' in four *tekke*s. Even more striking is the fact that the doctrinal work attributed to Ḥācı Bektāş Velī, the so-called *Maḳālāt*, is mentioned only once.[100] Currently, it is considered a constitutional source, which makes it intriguing that it was not read more in Bektashi *tekke*s of early twentieth-century Albania.

Furthermore, the libraries contained many anthologies of poets Bektashis considered directly or indirectly a part of their religious tradition. In addition to the afore-

93 *Selmān Baba*, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Zeynel Baba*, *Ṣṭūf*, *Muḥarrem Baba*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 2a, 5a, 9a, 10b, 12b.

94 Güngör 1987.

95 *Selmān Baba* and *Muḥarrem Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 2a, 10a.

96 *ʿĀṣım Baba* and *Cefāʾī*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 6a, 11a.

97 For instance the records 'Aḥadīs-i Şerīf Mecmūʾası. Ḥasan Ḥaḳḳı. Ehl-i Beyt. Lisān-ı ʿArabī' and the above-mentioned 'İslām Tārīḫinde Nifāk-ı Kerbela'. Both in *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 12a–12b.

98 *Selmān Baba*, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Ṣṭūf*, and *Cefāʾī*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 3a, 7a, 9a, 11a.

99 Soileau 2011.

100 *ʿĀṣım Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 7a. *Maḳālāt* was published in the nineteenth century under the name *Vilāyetnāme* (*Vilāyetnāme* 1853; *Vilāyetnāme* 1871). This makes it in one case impossible to distinguish between both works, as in the library list of the *Ṣṭūf Tekke* we can only find the record of 'Vilāyetnāme', with no further specification (AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 9a). Nevertheless, the presence of two copies at best is still conspicuous.

mentioned *Ḥadīḳat*, Fużūlī's *Dīvān* was present in two *tekke*s.[101] Furthermore, the *Dīvān*s of Nesīmī (d. 1417) and Vīrānī (sixteenth–seventeenth centuries) were found in two *tekke* libraries, as was Yemīnī's (sixteenth century) *Faẓiletnāme*.[102] Nesīmī is the best-known lyrical representative of the Ḥurūfiyya and one of the most influential Turkish-speaking mystical poets in premodern history.[103] Nesīmī's influence can also be found in the works of Vīrānī, who in turn became a broadly received poet himself.[104] Yemīnī's *Faẓiletnāme* depicts the mythological biography, virtues, wisdom, and teachings of Imām ʿAlī (d. 661) and is an important source for Bektashi religiosity and collective memory.[105]

The lists contain contemporaneous works, such as the *Dīvān* of Türābī Dedebaba (d. 1868) and Meḥmed ʿAlī Ḥilmī Dedebaba (d. 1907), two heads of the Bektashis in the second half of the nineteenth century, whose *Dīvān*s were published in 1877 and 1909.[106] Also, the apologetic work *Mir'ātü'l-Mekāsıd fi def'il-Mefāsid* by Aḥmed Rifʿat Efendi (d. 1875/6) was found in three *tekke* libraries. *Mir'ātü'l-Mekāsıd* was an answer to İsḥaḳ Ḫoca's (d. 1892) defamatory polemic against the Bektashis and an attempt to establish the Bektashiyya among the Sunni Islam.[107] Accordingly, it is a fairly Sunni- and Sharia-compliant work, describing the Bektashiyya as congruent with Sunni theology and even jurisprudence.[108]

The nonconformist countermovement, shaped mainly by a Ḥurūfi inclination, was also represented. Besides Nesīmī's *Dīvān*, there are works associated with the Ḥurūfi tradition in five of nine *tekke*s, particularly the main work *Cavīdān(nāme)*, or its Turkish translation *ʿAşḳnāme*.[109] As previously mentioned, the Ḥurūfiyya was, of all the still vivid influences on the Bektashiyya, the most nonconformist and the one with the highest religious boundaries towards Sunnism. The pejorative polemics against the Bektashis in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries almost exclusively made the Ḥurūfi influence on the Bektashiyya responsible for the alleged decay. Thus, from the 1870s onwards, the Bektashis resolutely distanced themselves from any Ḥurūfi

101 *ʿĀṣım Baba* and *Muḥarrem Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 7a, 10a. For the discussions and different positions on the authorship of *Maḳālāt* (whether or not Ḥācı Bektāş wrote it) see e.g. Mélikoff 2010, 106–113; A. Yılmaz 2013, 19–22.

102 Nesīmī: *ʿĀṣım Baba* and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 5a, 7a, 12b. Vīrānī: *Tekke I* and *Muḥarrem Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a, 10a. Yemīnī: *Cefā'i* and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 11a, 12b.

103 Heß 2009.

104 Usluer 2012.

105 Yemînî 2002; R. Yıldırım 2011.

106 Dīvān-ı Türābī 1877; Ahmed Mehdi (ed.) 1909/10. Both recorded in *Tekke* I and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a, 12b.

107 Aḥmed Rifʿat 1876. Recorded in *Selmān Baba*, *Muḥarrem Baba*, and *Cefā'i*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 2a, 10a–11a.

108 C. Kara 2019, 118–119.

109 General Ḥurūfi-related works: *Tekke* I, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Tekke* II, *Muḥarrem Baba*, *Cefā'i*, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a–12b. Explicit *Cavīdān* respectively *ʿAşḳnāme*: *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Tekke* II, and *Cefā'i*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 5a, 8a, 11a.

indication in their performative activities.[110] The presence of Ḥurūfī works, however, suggests that informally, many Bektashis and Bektashi institutions were still bound to the Ḥurūfī tradition.

Finally, the absence (or relatively small representation) of writings generally associated with the Bektashiyya is at least as interesting as the actual stocks. The great poet Yūnus Emre (d. 1321), for instance, whom the Bektashis have considered as a Bektashi dervish since the textualisation of the *Vilāyetnāme*,[111] is represented only once;[112] and Ḳayġusuz Abdāl (d. 1444), also a very important Bektashi poet with a comparatively comprehensive oeuvre, is not found at all.[113] Regarding the poets Yūnus and Ḳayġusuz, the oral transmission should also be taken into account, since many of their poems have been passed on in musicalised versions up to the present day. The first music anthology on Bektashi hymns from the early 1930s, for instance, contains multiple scores of Yūnus Emre and Ḳayġusuz Abdāl's poems.[114] Moreover, both poets are repeatedly quoted in notebooks (*cönk*) used by Bektashi dervishes in Albania.[115] These notebooks were mainly for personal use in daily life and/or for ritual practices, so that the presence of the mentioned poets in many of these notebooks hints at their impact within the oral tradition.[116] Another reason for the absence of certain writings can be explained with the publication restrictions faced by the Bektashis in the late Ottoman Empire. Considering the relatively small number of manuscripts, the *tekke*s were mainly dependent on what was published and what was not. The comparatively low presence of Bektashi works in the Albanian *tekke*s was also due to the fact that Ottoman authorities repeatedly prohibited Bektashi publications.[117]

However, neither the printing restrictions nor the oral culture explains the modest representation of the theoretical writing *Maḳālāt*, as it was printed twice in the nineteenth century.[118] Since the lists cover only nine *tekke*s, their representative character is naturally limited. However, the known stocks and the absence (or the limited repre-

110 C. Kara 2019, 101–128.
111 *Vilâyet-Nâme* 1995, S. 47–48.
112 *ʿĀṣım Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 7a.
113 For further information on Ḳayġusuz Abdāl see Oktay 2017; Pinguet 2003; Karamustafa 2014.
114 ʿAli Rifʿat 1931, 167, 173, 206–207, 238–239.
115 *Cönk*: AQSH, K 725, DO 81, 5–16; *Erkânnâme-i Bektâşi*: AQSH, DO 156, 103–104; *Erkânnâme-i Bektâşi:* AQSH, K 725, DO 157, 111–114. See also the publications by intellectual Bektashis such as Aḥmed Rıfḳı and Rıżā Tevfiḳ (Uçman 1982, 36–46, 166, 211; Aḥmed Rıfḳı 1921, 20).
116 *Cönk* notebooks can be understood as so-called *hypomnema*, which are according to Gregor Schoeler 'private written records intended as a mnemonic aid for a lecture or discussion, and draft notes and notebooks' (Schoeler 2009, 21). Thus, they transcend to some extent the binary of oral and written culture (Hirschler 2012, 12).
117 C. Kara 2019, 87–90.
118 *Vilâyetnâme* 1853; *Vilâyetnâme* 1871.

sentation) of so-called Bektashi 'classics' raise the question of local and chronological differences in the 'canon', which, in turn, requires further research.[119]

4.4 Sunni Literature

Six of the nine *tekke*s hold writings that can be clearly identified as being part of Sunni tradition, for instance works of the Sunni jurisprudence tradition, *fiḳh,* or the canonical Sunni Hadith collections of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (d. 870). The latter Hadith collection is the most common Hadith-related work in the Bektashi libraries and is found more frequently than Alid or Shiite collections.[120] The *fiḳh* works are mostly of the Ḥanefi tradition, but there are occasionally Mālikī or Shāfiʿ writings.[121] It would be a premature judgement to ascribe this presence of explicit Sunni-Ḥanefi writings to the conformist tendencies among Bektashis in the nineteenth century, since they can, in a way, be considered as general knowledge, especially the Hadith collection of al-Bukhārī. However, comparing the amount of Sunni works to the stock of the Elmalı *tekke* in 1827 (just 5 out of 150),[122] we can see a noticeable rise of Sunni literature that culminated in the Cairo *tekke* during the time of Ahmed Sırrı Baba, with dozens of writings of Sunni propensity.[123]

4.5 Non-Islamic Literature

The *tekke*s also held works that did not deal with Islam-related topics or were of a non-Islamic provenance. The most important and most commonly found are, with three records, Turkish translations of the Bible.[124] The Bible is undoubtedly an important resource for Quranic interpretations and thus a source for a genuine Islam-related field of knowledge. Nevertheless, it is also the holy scripture of two non-Islamic world religions.

Moreover, there are occasional translations of Western European writings, such as the *Tercüme-i Telemāk* by the French author François Fénelon (d. 1715), translated by Yūsuf Kāmil Pasha (d. 1876) or the *Kitāb-ı ʿAḳl-ı Selīm*, a work on atheism and materialism by Jean Meslier (d. 1729) and translated by ʿAbdullāh Cevdet (d. 1932).[125] The latter work, in particular, is quite intriguing, as it is explicitly antireligious, an excep-

119 On the concept of canonisation of religious texts in general see Assmann and Assmann 1987. On first reflections on canonisation processes in the history of Alevism e.g. see Weineck and Zimmermann 2018; R. Yıldırım 2018.

120 *ʿĀṣım Baba*, *Tekke* II, and *Tekke* III; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 6a, 8a, 12b.

121 For instance, the important *el-Fetāvā el-Hindiyye fī Meẕhebi'l-İmāmi'l-Aʿẓam Ebi Ḥanīfe* or *İbrāʾyül Rabiʿ Mine'l Fetāvā el-Mālikiyye* (AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 8).

122 Soyyer 2012, 146–159.

123 Çift 2011/12, 20.

124 *Tekke* I, *ʿĀṣım Baba*, and *Muḥarrem Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a–7a, 10a.

125 *Tercüme-i Telemāk* in *ʿĀṣım Baba*; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 7a; *Kitāb-ı ʿAḳl-ı Selīm* in *Tekke* II; AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 8a.

tional case in the *tekke*s. The lack of other comparable 'Western' works suggests that this tendency in the core of the Empire did not reach the Albanian periphery comprehensively.

Conclusively, a look at the smallest libraries – *Ştūf*, *Baba Zeynel*, and *Cefā'ī* – gives us an insight into the basis and fundamental literature read in Bektashi *tekke*s: there were 6, 13, and 17 texts listed in the *tekke*s. Overlaps are found in the case of *tefsīr*, as well as Quran, *Ḥadīḳat*, and *Vilāyetnāme*.[126] These are also the works most often found in the lists, which makes them the core of the book culture of the Bektashiyya during that time.

6. Local Differences and (Dis-)Continuities

While there are several translocal overlaps and patterns in the library stocks, differences and local or *tekke*-wise specialities also occur – both, in comparison to the *tekke*s outside Albania, that is, in Elmalı, Istanbul, and Cairo, and within the Albanian *tekke*s themselves. Nathalie Clayer has shown the interplay between local and supralocal religious authorities in the Bektashi order for interwar Albania. Accordingly, the understanding of Bektashism varied to some extent from region to region and was shaped significantly by the local authority of the particular Baba.[127] The analysed library stocks also allow us to identify certain local characteristics.

There are, for instance, variable tendencies in the specific Sufi literature. In *Tekke* I and *Tekke* III, Ibn ʿArabī was the most prevalent author with four and five writings, respectively.[128] In the *ʿĀṣım Baba Tekke*, Rūmī and commentaries on his work were the main source.[129] Moreover, differences can be observed with respect to the suggested categories. In the *tekke*s *Selmān Baba* and *Tekke* I, the majority of the works can be attributed to general knowledge; in *Tekke* III, in turn, almost half of the library stock is related to Sufism – to name but a few local emphases in particular *tekke*s.[130]

Moreover, we can observe a local peculiarity regarding sainthood and the respective book stock. For instance, Ḳayġusuz Abdāl's writings are recorded in the library lists of Elmalı and Cairo, while he is not registered once in the stocks in Albania or Istanbul.[131] Ḳayġusuz Abdāl was linked to both *tekke*s: in Elmalı he became a disciple of the name giver of the *tekke*, Abdāl Mūsā; the foundation of the Cairene *tekke* is even attributed to him.[132] Consequently, local sainthood and local characteristics in the veneration of saints are also reflected in the library stocks. It would be interesting to also explore whether this tendency can be found in other regions and *tekke*s. In the Bektashi culture, hagiographies (*vilāyetnāme* or *menāḳıbnāme*) are probably the most

126 AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 9a, 11a.
127 Clayer 2013b.
128 AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 4a, 12a–12b.
129 AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 5a–7a.
130 AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 2a, 4a, 12a–12b.
131 Soyyer 2012, 158; Çift 2011/12, 34.
132 Pinguet 2003, 13.

important type of religious source, with a variety of hagiographies of different saints.[133] In the known *tekke* libraries, however, the only hagiography that occurs is the *Vilāyetnāme* of Ḥācı Bektāş Velī. It can be assumed that, according to region and local saint veneration, other hagiographies also feature in the libraries, for instance, the hagiography of Seyyid ʿAlī Sulṭān in Didymoteicho (Dimetoka) or of Demir Baba in Ludogorie (Deli Orman). Since no research has yet been conducted on these *tekke* libraries, we can only speculate about such tendencies.[134]

The most crucial local peculiarity concerns the Sunni conformity of a *tekke*. While six of nine *tekke*s contained works of Sunni provenance, in most cases their presence was limited to single writings. In *Tekke* II and *ʿĀṣım Baba*, however, there are multiple Sunni-based works. *ʿĀṣım Baba* had the most comprehensive *tekke* library, so that the range of Sunni works is not surprising, since there was a vast variety of different writings in general. *Tekke* II, however, had a smaller library and of 31 books, eight were explicitly Sunni works – mostly Sunni *fiḳh* or other definitely Sunni-related writings.[135] This suggests that the tendency of conformity and the approaches to Sunnism were more advanced in some *tekke*s than in others.

As mentioned above, the two ideal typical tendencies – Sunni-conformism and nonconformism – culminated in the different approaches to Ḥurūfism. While Sunni- and Sharia-compliant Bektashis denied any connection of Bektashism to Ḥurūfism, nonconformist Bektashis emphasised Ḥurūfi ideas. Thus, an analogous Ḥurūfi prioritisation in some *tekke*s seems to be quite possible. However, unlike the *tekke* library in Istanbul from 1845, which had a huge stock of Ḥurūfi-related works,[136] none of the known Albanian *tekke*s possessed multiple Ḥurūfi writings. The *tekke* in Istanbul seemed to emphasise the Ḥurūfi and nonconformist tradition, distinguishing themselves from the Sunni environment as well as the Sharia-compliant approach within the Bektashi order. There is no similar or clearly identifiable propensity for nonconformism and Ḥurūfism observable within the Albanian Bektashi *tekke*s. Most of the *tekke*s seemed to deal with both traditions, seeking a balance between nonconformist and conformist sources.

In terms of continuity and discontinuity of the book stocks, it is difficult to come to a definitive conclusion, since we have to rely solely on older or newer library stocks from different regions. Thus, we can only compare the *tekke* libraries in Albania from the 1920s with libraries in Elmalı from 1827 and Istanbul from 1845, and with a library from the 1950s in Cairo. However, it is possible to pick out some continuities and overlaps in the stock.

Regarding the general corpus of specific Bektashi literature, Fużūlī's *Ḥadīḳat* and his *Dīvān* are present in all three *tekke*s – multiple times in the Cairene *tekke*.[137] Thus,

133 Ocak 2002, 25–52.

134 While Erünsal mentions the stock of the *Demir Baba Tekke*, he does not go into any detail (Erünsal 1988, 133). For the present paper, the mentioned stock could not be consulted.

135 AQSH, K 725, DO 199, 8a.

136 Soyyer 2012, 160–175.

137 Soyyer 2012, 147,158, 167; Çift 2011/12, 27–28.

Fużūlī was translocally and transtemporally the most prolific author according to the known library stocks. The same can be said of works attributed to Vīrānī – both his *Dīvān* and *Risāle* – which can also be found in the three *tekke*s.[138] Additionally, the *Dīvān*s of Nesīmī and Yemīnī's *Fażiletnāme* are found in two of the other *tekke*s.[139] These authors were established in different *tekke* libraries of different regions and in different periods, which makes them the core of the Bektashi lyrical heritage in the written culture.

All four poets, Fużūlī, Nesīmī, Vīrānī, and Yemīnī, are considered to be a part of the compilation of the so-called 'Seven Great Poets' of the Alevi-Bektashi tradition, the *Yedi Ulu Ozan*.[140] Even though we still do not know the origin of this assembly, and it seems more common among Alevis than Bektashis, the library stocks suggest that this selection also reflects the lyrical tendencies of the Bektashis. While the reception of these four poets can be traced back to actual books or published anthologies, the remaining three poets of this compilation – Shah İsmāʿīl (d. 1524), Pīr Sulṭān Abdāl (sixteenth century), and Ḳul Himmet (sixteenth–seventeenth centuries) – seemed to be prevalent in the oral tradition. Even though anthologies of the latter three go back to the mid-twentieth century,[141] their poems have been transmitted orally in musicalised form, as suggested by the first musical anthology of Bektashi hymns compiled in the early 1930s.[142]

Moreover, the Sufi literature intersects to a considerable extent: Ibn ʿArabī and Persian Sufi classics such as Rūmī, Saʿdī, Ḥāfiẓ, and Jāmī on the one hand, İsmāʿīl Ḥaḳḳı Bursevī and Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī on the other, while ignoring al-Ghazālī and other strong Sharia-compliant Sufis.[143] Considering, that Bursevī and Mıṣrī largely adopted the writings of the aforementioned Sufi classics, we can conclude that Bektashi teachings were very much influenced by the Persian poets and Ibn ʿArabī. Thus, we can also observe with certainty a transregional and epoch-spanning text core in terms of Sufism. The general Sufi landscape in the Ottoman Empire was significantly shaped by these two influences, which embed the Bektashiyya as a religious tradition within the Ottoman Sufi culture.

138 Soyyer 2012, 163, 157; Çift 2011/12, 31. In Cairo, only the *Dīvān*.

139 *Dīvān-ı Nesīmī* in Istanbul 1845 (Soyyer 2012, 164) and Cairo 1950 (Çift 2011/12, 29); Yemīnī's *Fażiletnāme* in Elmalı 1827 and Istanbul 1845 (Soyyer 2012, 154, 164).

140 Ulusoy n.d.; Gölpınarlı/Boratav 2010, 9.

141 Nüzhet 1929; Nüzhet 1946; Gölpınarlı 1953; Aslanoğlu 1976.

142 All three poets occur multiple times in ʿAlī Rifʿat's (d. 1935) musical anthology; İsmāʿīl (Ḫaṭāyī) and Pīr Sulṭān Abdāl are even the most prevalent poets (ʿAlī Rifʿat 1931, 155, 158–163, 177–178, 187, 206–207, 214–215, 219, 221, 225). Moreover, poems by the aforementioned poets can be found in contemporaneous lyrical anthologies. My colleague Ercan Akyol has worked on an unprinted Bektashi anthology of the mid-nineteenth century in which they also occur (cf. Ercan Akyol and Aysu Akcan. 'A History of a Cönk'. Presented at the Turkologentag in Hamburg on 14–17 September 2016). I want to thank him for sharing his results with me. See furthermore: Aḥmed Rıfḳı 1921, 4–5, 21, 28–29, 33–34.

143 Soyyer 2012, 146–177; Çift 2011/12, 23–38.

Discontinuities are even more difficult to distinguish, since the absence of particular works is in no way representative. However, it is conspicuous that *Maḳālāt*, which is widely considered a constitutive writing in Bektashism, does not occur in the stock in Istanbul from 1845 and occurs only once in all the *tekke*s in Albania from the 1920s. This raises the still unanswered question of its status in the written culture of the Bektashi order of different regions and periods as well as the general processes of 'canonisation'. Therefore, the analysis of the book lists does not support current attempts to define a generally applicable 'canon' for the Bektashi history, as claimed by series such as the *Alevi-Bektaşi Klasikleri*, published by the Directorate of Religious Affairs, *Diyanet*, in Ankara. This is all the more surprising, given that several of the works in the aforementioned series do not occur even once in any book list.[144] A historisation of the written culture in Bektashism thus requires further research, also taking into account local and temporal alterations.

7. Conclusion

The *tekke* libraries in Albania embed the Bektashiyya in the book-wise intellectual setting of the Ottoman Empire. The majority of the works could be found in any other educational institution and overlap particularly with *tekke* libraries of other Sufi orders. Thus, to a great extent, the Bektashi order shared a book-based knowledge with other religious cultures in the Ottoman Empire. Within the shared stock, however, characteristic tendencies also occur in the Bektashi book collections, be it with regard to Sufi literature and the comprehensive adaptation of the Ibn ʿArabī school, as well as Persian classics, or Alid historiographies and Sufi Quran commentaries.

Moreover, the book stocks mirror the negotiations within the order between nonconformism and conformity to the predominant Sunni-Islamic discourse. The latter tendency should be seen in the context of confessionalisation processes in the late Ottoman Empire, which had led to the discriminatory state policy and discursive exclusion of the Bektashis. By adapting to the state-favoured religious understanding, the Bektashi order tried to re-establish its status in state and society. However, the rapprochement to Sunni Islam should not be reduced to a performative and tactical practice, as some Bektashi groups seem to have internalised a Sunni- and Sharia-compliant understanding of their religion. Some *tekke*s had a certain tendency in this regard, mainly identifiable by multiple Sunni *fiḳh* writings. However, the majority of the *tekke*s seem to have dealt with both spheres of influence. Since most of the *tekke* libraries hold both Sunni- and Ḥurūfī-related writings, we can observe an oscillation and simultaneous reception of these clear contradictory religious schools of thought.

Moreover, the library stocks suggest that neither works in the Albanian language nor on 'Albanian topics' seemed to reach the Albanian *tekke*s in the periphery. Even though the nationalisation of the Bektashiyya in predominant Albanian regions had

144 E.g. *Besmele Tefsiri*, which is even directly attributed to Ḥācı Bektāş Velī (Duran 2007).

already begun, the book stocks of the Bektashis in their *tekke*s were apparently not influenced by these movements.

The emergence and dissemination of the letterpress in Ottoman lands, and the increase in publication activities during the Tanzimat, and especially during the Second Constitutional Era, eventually had an effect on the library stocks. Since the books in the *tekke*s were mainly prints, the range of available literature comprised publications that had passed censorship. As mentioned above, Ottoman authorities repeatedly prohibited Bektashi publications, which is most likely a reason for the comparatively low presence of texts written by Bektashi agents.[145] Fużūli's widespread presence should be seen also as a result of the fact that his works were more easily accessible, as he was broadly cherished, which led to multiple publications.

Furthermore, the absence of certain authors and traditions does not necessarily negate their impact on the Bektashi religiosity of that region and time. Poems in particular (especially in musicalised versions) were transmitted orally, and the genesis of printed anthologies did not start before the 1920s.[146] That almost all Alevi-Bektashi-related published anthologies found their way to the Cairene *tekke* in the middle of the twentieth century emphasises their unequivocal status in Bektashi cultures.

However, the marginal representation of as widely constitutive-perceived writings as *Maḳālāt* remains intriguing. Unlike the poetic tradition, *Maḳālāt*'s potential role as being part of the oral tradition is at least questionable. This reveals the necessity not only for further research on particular writings of the Bektashi tradition, but also on the Bektashi written culture in general and its transformations.

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145 C. Kara 2019, 87–90.
146 Starting with: Aḥmed Rıfḳı 1921.

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