

THE LIFE STORY OF AN URBAN SAINT IN THE OTTOMAN  
EMPIRE : PİRİ BABA OF MERZİFON

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Legendary texts have long been of considerable importance for the study of social and religious developments in fourteenth to sixteenth-century Anatolia; yet possibilities offered by these sources are far from exhausted. To the historian, two approaches seem to offer themselves<sup>1</sup>: In the first case, an attempt is made to disentangle the bits and pieces of historical information possibly contained in the legend under study. Usually, the figure of the saint himself is the centre of interest: he may be a real person or else a figment of popular or literary imagination. In the former case, it is necessary to establish the period in which the holy man lived and the people with whom he may have been in contact. If the latter is found to be true, the scholar will try to establish the historical setting for the story. These types of approach recommend themselves when the historical core of the legend is clearly visible and factual statements made in the text are relatively easy to verify.

Where this is not the case, the material can be approached from another angle. Granted that the plot of the story and the person of the saint may be quite imaginary, the legend can still be made to yield information which its author conveyed involuntarily and in which neither he nor his readers were particularly interested. In such a case, there obviously was little reason for falsification.

So far, Anatolian legendary texts have largely been examined with a view toward isolating their historical core. Pioneering efforts in this direction were made by Fuat Köprülü, who sifted the histo-

<sup>1</sup> No attempt has been made to introduce the categories of social anthropology into this study.

rical and legendary evidence available on Abdal Musa, Ahmet Yesevi, Yunus Emre and many others<sup>2</sup>. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı's work on Yunus Emre and his contemporaries is motivated by similar aims<sup>3</sup> and so, among others, are Hans Joachim Kissling's studies of various dervish saints and orders<sup>4</sup>. As a secondary consideration, many students of legendary materials have been interested in the characteristics of folk Islam as opposed to the formal religion of the *ulema*<sup>5</sup>.

But so far a systematic search for information on social and economic conditions has been practiced mainly by scholars working in other fields, particularly on early Byzantine materials. Robert Lopez has described the most frequented sea routes of the seventh century, and has also established the ways in which at that time seamen and shipowners obtained commercial credit<sup>6</sup>. The hagiographic material he employs contains an unexpected amount of data on the lives of craftsmen and merchants. On a much broader basis, Evelyne Patlagean has incorporated legends into her studies of various aspects of poverty in Byzantine society<sup>7</sup>.

Though saints legends from early medieval western Europe survive in smaller numbers than do their Byzantine counterparts,

2 See especially: Fuad Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları (Ankara, 1966).

«Abdal Musa», *Türk Kültürü*, XI, 4, no. 124 (February, 1973), 198-207.

3 Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, *Yunus Emre ve Tasavvuf*, İstanbul, 1961.

4 Among others, see particularly: Hans Joachim Kissling: «Das Menäqybnäme Scheich Bedr ed-Din's, des Sohnes des Richters von Samävnä», *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 100 (N.F. 25, 1950), 112-175, and «Sa'bän Veli und die Sa'bänijje», *Serta Monacensia*, (Leiden, 1952), pp. 86-109.

5 Compare Hikmet Tanyu, *Ankara ve Çevresinde Adak ve Adak Yerleri*, Ankara Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, LXXVIII (Ankara, 1967).

And by the same author, *Türklerde Taşla İlgili İnançlar*, Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, LXXXI (Ankara, 1968).

6 Robert S. Lopez, «Trade in Seventh Century Byzantium», *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 13 (1959), 76, 79-83.

7 Evelyne Patlagean, «A Byzance: Ancienne hagiographie et histoire sociale», *Annales ESC*, 23 (1968), 106-126; «Economie paysanne et féodalité byzantine», *Annales ESC*, 30 (1975), 1371-1396.

Her book *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, IV<sup>e</sup>-VII<sup>e</sup> siècles* was not available while preparing this study.

the data they contain have been exploited in a similar manner. Henri Pirenne has retold the story of how the poor beachcomber Godric became a wealthy merchant, and thereby has illustrated the life of traders in the tenth and eleventh centuries<sup>8</sup>. All these studies are based upon the assumption that the narrators of legends, in so far as they were not simply copying previous literary models, reflected conditions of life which were characteristic of their own age. In the same manner, twelfth and thirteenth century authors in Western Europe depicted Alexander the Great in the guise of a medieval feudal ruler<sup>9</sup>.

When attempting to find out what historical facts a given legendary text is based upon, it is necessary to compare the account given with what is known or surmised from other historical sources. Often, however, the material available for comparison may be very scanty; in some extreme cases, almost all that is known about a given saint is what can be derived from his legend. Unfortunately, certain sources most commonly used for checking, such as Taşköprüzade's biographical dictionary, may themselves contain legendary material, and it is not always easy to distinguish these accounts from bona fide historical statements<sup>10</sup>.

Additional difficulties are caused by the fact that the authors of saints' lives drastically differ from modern historians in their understanding of time and space; certain authors have even postulated a 'mythological time' which either precedes 'historical time' or else coexists with it, albeit on a different plane. This 'mythological time' can not be measured in conventional units, and it is impossible to state how many years a given point in 'mythological time' is removed from another in 'historical time'. Notions of space also differ, as the many examples of miraculously short travels show. Under these circumstances all relationships between saints

8 Henri Pirenne, *Medieval Cities* (Garden City, N.Y., 1956), p. 82-88.

9 For this type of literary treatment compare for instance: George Sampson, R.C., Churchill, *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 34.

10 *El-İa'âiq en-no'maniyye von Taşköprüzade, enthaltend die Biographien der türkischen und im Osmanischen Reiche wirkenden Gelehrten, Derwisch Scheich's und Ärzte von der Regierung Sultan 'Otmân's bis zu der Sülaimân's des Grossen*, tr. O. Rescher (İstanbul, 1927).

and other people of worldly or spiritual renown as described in a legendary text have to be suspect from the historian's point of view. Even if they seem chronologically possible, they need to be confirmed by means of an independent source<sup>11</sup>.

When the main aim is to throw light upon general socio-economic conditions as reflected in a given legend, inquiry must begin with two fairly simple questions. First of all we must find out when a given text was composed. Furthermore we need to establish the literary models used by the author or authors, and if possible the stages of development that a given story went through. Where Anatolian legends are concerned, these questions turn out to be more difficult than expected. For many tales today exist only in very late manuscripts, and even such an immensely popular text as the life story (*menakıb-name*, *vilayet-name*) of Hacı Bektaş survives only in very few copies that are older than the eighteenth century<sup>12</sup>. Linguistic evidence is often not conclusive either, since it was quite common to remodel or embellish a text according to the tastes of the time in which it was copied.

Once these preliminary steps have been completed, it is necessary to find out something about the general world-view that forms the background to the texts under investigation. In this respect, very little work has been done on Anatolian legends. However, without some basic understanding of the categories according to which the *vilayet-name* or *menakıb-name* have been formulated, it remains difficult to understand why the authors of these texts should have recorded fictitious events in certain instances and remained very close to reality in others. Research into these questions might in the future become an area of fruitful cooperation between historians and anthropologists.

Quite often, the roots of a legend go back far into oral literature, although the texts as they have come down to our times were usually composed by writers for readers. As Vansina has pointed

11 Compare Patlagean, «Byzance», particularly 110, 111.

Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition, A Study in Historical Methodology*, tr. H. Wright (Chicago, 1965), p. 102, 157.

12 Compare the introduction by Abdülhakî Gölpınarlı to his publication of the legend of Hacı Bektaş: *Manakıb-ı Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli «Vilâyet-nâme»*, ed. Abdülhakî Gölpınarlı, (Istanbul, 1958), p. XXVI, ff.

out<sup>13</sup>, this situation makes it impossible to apply the criteria valid for traditions which can still be collected from living informants. Yet the student of Anatolian medieval and early modern history has little choice in the matter. As far as saints' legends are concerned, Vansina has provided only a very minor place for them in his schematic overview over the categories of oral literature, although he does mention them several times in the text<sup>14</sup>. This is probably due to the fact that such material is not of great importance in the cultures upon which he concentrated his research.

Equally important for the evaluation of a given legend is the problem of its social function. When analyzing hagiographic material, we attempt to establish the place of a given tale in the system of social interaction that it formed a part of. However, the original narrator's tale may well have been assigned a function quite different from that pertaining to later versions. When Evliya Çelebi, to cite but one example, recounted a legend, it is reasonably certain that entertainment was its primary function. The author attached his stories to individual buildings much as a modern tourist guide would do. When recounting his stay in Merzifon, he included a 'Tale of the Eski Hamam' and also a 'Story of the dervish convent of Piri Baba', both of which deal with the legend of the local saint<sup>15</sup>.

For Evliya's Merzifon informants, however, the social function of this legend may well have been quite different, in that it provided a symbol with which all members of the town community could readily identify. Rivalries between neighbouring towns or sanctuaries located at only a short distance from one another form a conspicuous feature of the story. Explanation of certain local features which made Merzifon special when compared to Osmancık and Amasya, or even singled out certain parts of the latter town, should

13 Vansina, p. 3.

14 Vansina, p. 144, 159.

15 On the question of social function, see Vansina, p. 12-13.

The section of the *Seyahat-name* referred to in the present study forms part of volume 2, but has largely been omitted from the printed edition. Compare the manuscript version in the Topkapı Sarayı Library, Bağdat Köşkü 304, p. 346-349. For a brief description see Fehmi Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, Türkçe Yazmalar Kataloğu* 2 vols, (Istanbul, 1961), vol. I, *Din, Tarih, Bilimler*, 456, no. 1381.

also be regarded as part of the 'community-identifying' function. To put it concretely, an inhabitant of the quarter around the Eski Hamam in Merzifon, where Piri Baba supposedly spent a considerable period of his life, may well have used the legend to make the following assertions: 'the public bath in our quarter is unusual because it has been honoured by the residence of a saint. What it is more, it used to drip, but the holy man miraculously repaired it.'<sup>16</sup>

On a less parochial level, story-tellers and their public may also have perceived the wider human implications of a story such as the legend of Piri Baba and affirmed them by repeating the tale. The Merzifon saint was an unlettered man of recent peasant background, whose outward behaviour moreover very much resembled that which characterizes certain mental disturbances. Yet according to the story such a man could acquire both exceptional religious learning and spiritual power, even though the regular path of a religious education was obviously closed to him<sup>17</sup>. In this sense, the story can be said to resemble, on a religious level, that of the 'self-made man' in nineteenth and twentieth-century Europe. For it provided the story-teller and his public with a means of breaking through the social structure at least in the realm of imagination. Thereby in turn a safety valve was provided for the pent-up frustrations of people in the lower reaches of Ottoman society. As the Bektashis in particu-

16 For Byzantine legends tied to a particular locality, see Patlagean «Byzance», 108.

Concerning the identity of the Eski Hamam compare the article «Merzifon» in the *İslam Ansiklopedisi* (IA). Following Evliya Çelebi, the bath is called 'hamam of Çelebi Mehmet'.

Evliya, *Bağdat Köşkü* 304, p. 346 b refers to the hamam of Çelebi Sultan Mehmet, also known as the Eski Hamam.

On the other hand *Türkiye Vakıf Abideleri* (Ankara, 1972) published anonymously by the Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü, p. 318 ff mentions only one hamam in Merzifon older than the seventeenth century and assigns it to the year 1388, that is to the later years of Sultan Murat I. While this publication gives a description of mosque and medrese built by Çelebi Mehmet 1414-1415, the hamam is not included in the külliye, but simply referred to as Çifte Hamam.

17 Aside from the medrese of Çelebi Mehmet mentioned above, Merzifon toward the end of the sixteenth century also possessed a school named Devlet Hatun medresesi (compare Başbakanlık Arşivi, Mühimme Defterleri, vol 41, p. 250, no. 545), about which no further information has been found. The legend of Piri Baba does not mention as association with either one of these schools.

lar, and the more enthusiastic among the dervish orders in general, seem to have addressed themselves largely to just this group of people, it is probably legitimate to interpret the life story of Piri Baba in the same context<sup>18</sup>.

Like many dervish legends, the account of Piri Baba consists of two parts: the biography of the saint followed by a short account describing the foundation of a dervish community bearing his name. In most legends, it was the holy man himself who acted as a founder, although this was not always the case: in the story of Seyyit Ali Sultan, who supposedly gave his name to the famous *tekke* near Dimetoka, it was not the hero himself but rather his companion Rüstem Gazi who founded a community<sup>19</sup>. In the case of Piri Baba, the *tekke* as it existed in later periods was apparently instituted by his followers some considerable time after his death<sup>20</sup>. Thus it seems to have been a prime function of many legends to enhance the status of the *tekkes* with whose foundation they were connected.

Establishing or enhancing the reputation of a *tekke* by means of a legend obviously effected the social position of the people residing in such a place, either as so-called descendants of the founder (*zaviyedar*) or as ordinary dervishes and servants. Considering the

18 After all, the Bektashis' principal adherents were the *acemi oğlan* and *janissaries*, many of whom were *devşirmes* and consequently had been uprooted from their early environment. For the appeal of the more enthusiastic orders to the poor of modern Cairo, compare Michael Gilson, *Saint and Sufi in Modern Egypt, An Essay in the Sociology of Religion*, Oxford Monographs on Social Anthropology (Oxford, 1973).

19 One version of this legend which has been transposed into somewhat literary Ottoman, (manuscript dated 1313/1895-96) formed part of the Library of the dervish community in Hacıbektaş (today in the Cebeçi Semt Kütüphanesi, Ankara).

Compare also:

Irène Beidiceanu-Steinherr, «La vita de Seyyid 'Ali Suljân et la conquête de la Thrace par les Turcs», in: *Proceedings of the Twenty-Seventh International Congress of Orientalists, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 13-19th August 1967* (Wiesbaden, 1971), p. 275-276.

20 *Menakıb-name* of Piri Baba by Şamlıoğlu Hoca İbrahim, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Hazine 1313 (comp. Karatay, *Türkçe Yazmalar*, I, p. 379, no. 1177, from now on abbreviated as *menakıb-name*), p. 16 a/b. I thank the authorities at the Topkapı Sarayı Museum for permitting me to have a microfilm made.

fact that Piri Baba was regarded to have lived and died a celibate, the status of the 'founder's family' had to be established by some special device. In the *Vilâyet-nâme* of Hacı Bektaş a comparable situation was resolved by having the saint adopt Fatma Bacı, and thereby setting up her children as heirs to the *zaviye*<sup>21</sup>. However, a celibate branch of the order existed, and its members often seem to have felt little sympathy for the claims of the 'founder's family.'<sup>22</sup>

Where Piri Baba is concerned, there is no reference to an adoption. But given the importance of blood ties to the founding saint for whoever wished to govern a group of dervishes, it is not surprising that Piri Baba's nephew Ali Dede should have been his follower and later his somewhat unwilling successor<sup>23</sup>. Quite remarkable is also the manner in which Hoca İbrahim, who had piously donated the buildings and appurtenances of the *tekke*, associated himself with the family of the saint. For Piri Baba, when saving Hoca İbrahim and his boat during a storm, demanded not only that a mausoleum be built over his grave, but that a girl be devoted to his service<sup>24</sup>. It is this girl that Ali Dede is then pressured into marrying, ensuring both the establishment of a 'founder's family' and a measure of influence for Hoca İbrahim.

However, the legend provided no legitimation for one particular branch of the family as opposed to another. The history of Piri Baba's *tekke* during the eighteenth century is characterized by long drawn-out struggles between different members of the 'founder's family.' Control of the foundation holdings appeared to be an important prize, so that we find the same feature in many other pious foundations of the time<sup>25</sup>. Yet these struggles were generally not considered worthy of being added to the original foundation account.

Among dervish legends in general it is possible to isolate what might be called a specific Bektashi tradition. However, although

21 *Vilâyet-nâme*, ed. Gölpınarlı, p. 65, 125.

22 This branch of the order was commonly associated with Balım Sultan, compare the article 'Hacı Bektaş' in *IA*.

23 *Menakıb-name*, p. 16a.

24 *Menakıb-name*, p. 15b-16a.

25 For documents relating to these disputes, compare among others Başbakanlık Arşivi, section Cevdet Evkaf, no. 2533, 32169.

the Bektashi order probably began to develop as early as the fourteenth century, it was at that time only one among many more or less heterodox groups active among nomads and frontier warriors. Only gradually did this order absorb many of the less formally organized groups; and when incorporating their *tekkes*, it generally took over their holy patrons as well<sup>26</sup>. Thus quite a few saints who formed part and parcel of the Bektashi tradition in later times seem to have had no connection with the order in their own life-time. This fact is quite often reflected in their legends. If one wishes to define the 'Bektashi tradition' in such a way that only persons originally connected with the order should be included, the group is almost narrowed down to Hacı Bektaş and his disciple Hacı Sultan. If however, as seems reasonable, the tradition is more broadly defined, then it should include saints who were associated with *tekkes* which had affiliated with the Bektashis, say, by the later seventeenth century: and it is in this sense only that Piri Baba of Merzifon can be said to form part of the Bektashi tradition<sup>27</sup>.

When we attempt to establish the social function of a story, we must find out who told it and to whom. Social function must have varied according to whether the story-tellers were men or women, amateurs or professionals. Fuat Köprülü, in his study of the *meddahs*<sup>28</sup> has stressed the fact that quite a few among them were dervishes; unfortunately relatively little is documented about the kinds of stories they told, at least during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nor do we know much about the public their stories were directed at. Since in the Ottoman Empire most legends seem to have pertained to dervish saints, it is imaginable that stories about holy

26 For a detailed description of this process, compare M. Fuat Köprülü, *Türk Halkedebiyatı Ansiklopedisi, Ortaçağ ve Yeniçağ Türklerinin Halk Kültürü Üzerine Coğrafya, Etnoğrafya, Etnoloji, Tarih ve Edebiyat Lâgatı*, sayı 1, Aba-Abdal Musa (İstanbul, 1935), article 'Abdal'.

27 Evliya, Bağdat Köşkü 304, p. 347b associates Piri Baba with Hacı Bektaş and claims that the two saints travelled together from Horasan to Anatolia by permission of Hoca Ahmet Yesevi.

28 Fuat Köprülü, 'Türklerde Halk Hikâyeciliğine Ait Maddeler, Meddahlar,' in: *Edebiyat Araştırmaları, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınlarından VII Seri*, Sayı 47, Makaleler Külliyesi I (Ankara, 1966), p. 391 ff. For an example, compare: Orhan Köprülü, 'Velâyet-nâme-i Sultan Şücaeddin,' *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, XVII (1972), 177-184.

men also formed part of the repertoire of certain *meddahs*. Moreover, as the libraries of dervish *tekkes* often contained considerable collections of legendary texts, it is likely that these institutions formed radiation centres from which many such narratives were spread into the community.

As far as the story of Piri Baba of Merzifon is concerned, three versions have so far been discovered. One was very briefly summarized by Şükrü Akkaya, who encountered it in the course of his travels during the nineteen-thirties<sup>29</sup>. According to this tradition, the saint was apprentice to a shoemaker. While the latter was at prayer in the Hicaz, Piri Baba brought his master a tray of warm *helva*. From the flower design on the tray, the master recognized his property and upon his return treated his apprentice with special consideration. A second, much fuller legend of the same saint has survived in Evliya Çelebi's travel book<sup>30</sup>. It contains elements which are not found in any of the other extant versions, particularly references to the conquest of İzmir. Finally, the Topkapı Sarayı library in Istanbul possesses a small undated manuscript of eighteen pages, which gives the only full biography of the saint that has become known so far. In slightly different versions, the stories related by Akkaya and Evliya Çelebi recur here<sup>31</sup>. The Istanbul manuscript was supposedly written by one Hoca İbrahim, son of the Syrian or Damascene (Şamlıoğlu), but who was most likely a resident of Merzifon.

As far as the life-time of the historical Piri Baba is concerned (if indeed there was one such person and the legendary figure is not an amalgam), some information can be gained by recourse to the taxregisters, or *tahrir*. An undated manuscript which according to the archive catalogue was compiled during the reign of Selim I, contains a reference to the *tekke* of Piri Baba. At the time the dervish community was being headed by a certain Şahkulu Dede<sup>32</sup>. Since

29 M. Şükrü [Akkaya], *Orta Anadolu'da bir Dolaşma* (Ankara, 1934), p. 47.

30 Compare notes 15 and 16.

31 Compare note 20.

32 Başbakanlık Arşivi, section Tapu Tahrir (TT), no. 90, p. 153 only states that Şahkulu Dede b. Bayezit was *şeyh* of the *zaviye*. Since neither Şahkulu nor Bayezit occur in the *menakib-name*, it is possible to assume that the immediate

there is no reference to the saint himself, it is most likely that he had died before that time. Moreover, both Evliya Çelebi and Hoca İbrahim claim that Piri Baba lived in the *külhan* or heating room of the Eski Hamam which had probably been built during the first quarter of the fifteenth century. If this latter assertion should be true, there is some reason for assuming that the 'historical Piri Baba' most probably lived during the second half of the fifteenth century.

It is rather difficult to decide when the legendary biography of Piri Baba was composed, and in what kind of a relationship it stood to the story as recounted by Evliya. From the latter we learn that many tales concerning the life of the saint were being told in Merzifon at that time. Indeed he is allotted so much space in Evliya's account that he must have struck the author as something of a local celebrity. An analysis of the two versions may clarify some of the issues :

followers of Piri Baba were no longer alive by the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Slightly more information can be found in a later register, located in the Tapu Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü, section Kuyudu Kadime, Ankara (abbreviated TK). This register forms part of the series describing the *vilayet* of Rum in the years 982-983/1574-76. As *şeyh*, the same Şahkulu b. Bayezit is again recorded (TK 34, p. 12a). However, this information must long have been out of date, since it is unlikely that the same person should have remained *şeyh* for over fifty years. The seven other dervishes mentioned, who were formally granted exemption from peasant taxes, *avarız-ı divaniye* and *tekâlif-i örfsiye*, may have lived in the fifteen-seventies. Two of them were sons of Şahkulu, and one was the son of a certain Ali. But given the popularity of the latter name, it would be too risky to conclude that this was a descendant of Piri Baba's nephew Ali Dede.

As foundation lands, the *zaviye* possessed some agricultural land (*zemin*) of modest dimensions, such as might have been donated through the intercession of wealthy citizens. Nothing in this description indicates that the *tekke* had great potential for expansion, yet Evliya claims that in his time it possessed a large number of buildings, more impressive than those of the wealthy foundation of Koyun Baba in Osmançık (Bağdat Köğkü 304, p. 347 b). How much of this is pure rhetoric is of course impossible to tell, and we have no way of checking Evliya's claim that about two hundred dervishes were in residence. But it is still obvious that during the first half of the seventeenth century the *tekke* must have shown appreciable growth.

Version I (Hoca Ibrahim)

Section A : The Miracle-working Apprentice

1. Introduction : Piri Baba's family background and arrival in Merzifon one briefly described.
2. Piri Baba is late fetching water. His master does not understand the proffered explanation and gets angry at him.
3. Variation of 2 : Piri Baba brings Zemzem water for his master to drink. Not believing his explanation, the master tries to punish him.
4. The master embarks on a pilgrimage to Mekka. While at the Kaba, Piri Baba brings him *helva* prepared by his wife at home and returns in a miraculously short time. His master's wife believes in him.
5. Variation of 2 and 3 : Piri Baba brings water from Kerbela. When his master again disbelieves his explanation, one of his eyes turns blind.
6. People begin to believe in Piri's supernatural powers. The master's wife convinces her husband by recounting him the miracles previously performed.
7. Variation of 6 : People who have seen Piri Baba in Kerbela confirm his miraculous travels.
8. Variation of 6 and 7 : Piri Baba's mother accepts him as a saint.

Section B : The Saint of the Eski Hamam

9. Piri Baba drives a nail into the stone with his bare hands.
10. Piri Baba joins a picnic and miraculously cooks the meat.
11. Variation of 10. : Piri Baba has grapes ripen out of season. Two of the bunches are eaten, while one is set aside to prove the occurrence of the miracles.
12. Piri Baba repairs the Eski Hamam by means of his supernatural powers.
13. The saint solves a problem posed by a wise man from Gilan.
14. His residence in the *hamam* having given rise to complaints, Piri Baba is visited by the Sultan. He approaches the ruler in a rather unconventional manner and pronounces words which

are taken to predict the conquest of Istanbul. The Sultan declares himself satisfied.

15. Piri Baba refuses the Sultan's offer of gifts.
16. Koyun Baba of Osmaniç asks the Sultan for donations and acknowledges the greatness of his rival.
17. The conquest of İstanbul is announced to the Sultan.
18. Piri Baba frequents the spot where his *tekke* is to be built and dies there.

Section C : Foundation of the Sanctuary.

19. In a dispute between Narince and Merzifon concerning the remains of the saint, the townsmen retain the upper hand.
20. Kara Baba is sent to İstanbul to ask for official help in establishing a *vakıf*; he dies without having achieved his purpose.
21. Local pressure to establish a pious foundation is brought to bear upon Ali Dede, a relative and follower of the saint, The latter attempts to avoid the issue.
22. Piri Baba's intervention saves Şamlioğlu Hoca İbrahim from drowning in a storm. Hoca İbrahim promises to build a sanctuary over the saint's grave and dedicate a girl to his service.
23. Construction of the *tekke*, establishment of the 'founder's family', and composition of the legend are briefly recounted and round off the story.

Version II, (Evliya Çelebi) (corresponding mainly to Version I, No. 14)

- a) Complaints are brought before the Sultan concerning Piri Baba's service to the women in the *hamam*.
- b) Sultan Murat threatens to kill the saint, who half disappears into the wall (compare I, 9).
- c) Piri Baba exhorts the Sultan to conquer İzmir.
- d) He kneads two leaves of bread out of stone and, giving them to the Sultan and Crown Prince Mehmet, predicts the conquest of İstanbul.
- e) The prophecies are fulfilled, whereupon the Sultan establishes a rich foundation.

It is likely that Evliya did not use the book by Hoca İbrahim or a text closely related to it, even if one allows for the fact that he often permitted himself all kinds of liberties with his sources<sup>33</sup>. However, some close parallels between the legend of Piri Baba and the *Vilâyet-nâme* of Hacı Bektaş are readily apparent: Piri Baba's miraculous pilgrimage to the Kaba (I, 4) is modelled closely upon a similar exploit by Hacı Bektaş<sup>34</sup>. There it is Lokman-ı Perende who, while at prayer on Arafât, wishes for some fritters which are just now being prepared in his home. Hacı Bektaş takes it upon himself to bring them to him. Different however from Piri Baba's rather less saintly master, Lokman is quick to grasp the significance of the event. He himself carries home the tray as a proof of his student's miracle, and upon his return informs the other members of the community. It is probable that the story heard by Akkaya, where the tray also has such an important role to play, was even more strongly influenced by the Lokman-ı Perende tradition than was the case with Hoca İbrahim's version.

Another parallel is apparent in the story of Piri Baba's grapes. (I, 11) According to the *Vilâyet-nâme* of Hacı Bektaş, the saint, accompanied by Hızır, visits the garden of a certain Bahaeddin in springtime<sup>35</sup>. The visitors ask for melons, which the host is unable to provide at such an early season. Hacı Bektaş then causes three melons to ripen and is given two by the astonished gardener, who retains the third to take home at night. Again Bahaeddin is rather quicker to grasp the spiritual meaning of this event than Piri Baba's fellow townsmen; he becomes a devoted follower of the saint.

Piri Baba's supernatural ability to soften stone, attested both in the Hoca İbrahim and Evliya Çelebi versions, (I, 9; II, b, d) also has its parallels in the legend of Hacı Bektaş. The latter saint opens a window in his place of retreat, or *çilehane*, by the simple expedient of hitting the wall with his fist<sup>36</sup>. Further parallels can be found in local Anatolian legends, from the imprints of Hacı Bektaş's teeth

33 Concerning the use Evliya made of his sources, compare Meşkure Eren, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi Birinci Cildinin Kaynakları Üzerinde Bir Araştırma*, (Istanbul, 1960), p. 32 ff.

34 *Menakıb-name*, p. 3a ff, *Vilâyet-nâme*, ed. Gölpınarlı, p. 6-7.

35 *Menakıb-name*, p. 8a, *Vilâyet-nâme*, ed. Gölpınarlı, p. 22-23.

36 *Menakıb-name*, p. 6b, *Vilâyet-nâme*, ed. Gölpınarlı, p. 38.

over the getaway to the *tekke* of Seyyit Gazi to the considerable number of places where the footsteps of Ali, Muhammed's son-in-law, or some other saint are still being shown<sup>37</sup>. In another section of the *Vilâyet-nâme*, we find Hacı Bektaş cutting the rock as if it were a cucumber<sup>38</sup>.

But the most significant parallel undoubtedly concerns the miraculous rescue from a storm (I, 22) which supposedly prompted Hoca İbrahim to have the *tekke* erected<sup>39</sup>. Within the *Vilâyet-nâme*, this story even occurs three times, although it is not there connected with the foundation of the *zaviye*. Rather, one of the seafarers saved in this fashion, a merchant, shows his gratitude by presenting the saint with a considerable sum of money as a pious donation (*nezir*). The other, a sea captain by the name of Kara Reis, even joins the circle of Hacı Bektaş's dervishes. Different from Piri Baba, however, Hacı Bektaş does not in these miracles assume the shape of an animal: once he appears without any disguise, while in the second episode he takes on the form of a completely naked dervish<sup>40</sup>. If on the other hand, Piri Baba is seen by Hoca İbrahim as a dove, this tradition may well have resulted from contamination of the 'rescue-from-the-storm' story with the episode in which Hacı Bektaş meets the dervishes of Rum. For it is by appearing as a dove that Hacı Bektaş overcomes the resistance of the established holy men and manages to settle in their territory<sup>41</sup>.

These parallels do not strictly prove that the people who related Piri Baba's miracles were in fact acquainted with the *Vilâyet-nâme* directly. It is conceivable that the compilers of the two legends simply utilized traditions current in the same milieu. But a knowledge of the story of Hacı Bektaş is still rather likely. If so, the period in which this legend was compiled would provide a terminus ante quem for the composition of Piri Baba's *menakıb-name*<sup>42</sup>.

37 Tanyu, *Inançlar*, p. 76, 106 and elsewhere.

38 *Vilâyet-nâme*, ed. Gölpınarlı, p. 34.

39 *Menakıb-name*, p. 15a/b, *Vilâyet-nâme*, ed. Gölpınarlı, p. 69-71, 77.

40 *Vilâyet-nâme*, ed. Gölpınarlı, p. 71. In the third episode, Hacı Bektaş sends Hızır to save a boat in danger of sinking.

41 *Vilâyet-nâme*, ed. Gölpınarlı, p. 18.

42 Gölpınarlı in his introduction to the *Vilâyet-nâme*, p. XXV assumes that in its present form it was composed during the second half of the fifteenth



Much less significant are the parallels between the story of Piri Baba and other famous legendary texts belonging to the Bektashi tradition, such as those relating to Abdal Musa, Kızıl Deli, Hacı Sultan or Şücaeddin Baba. The miraculous softening of stone also occurs in the legend of Seyyit Ali Sultan or Kızıl Deli, while Hacı shares Hacı Bektaş's power to change into a dove at will, and Şücaeddin refuses the gifts offered him by one of his wealthy adherents<sup>43</sup>. However, the two first-named tales may just as well have come from the *Vilâyet-nâme* of Hacı Bektaş directly, and the third is well-nigh universal in the biographies of ascetic saints<sup>44</sup>. Comparison with these legends thereby does not add to our knowledge in a way which would help us date the story of the Merzifon saint.

If the claims of Hoca İbrahim are to be taken at all seriously, the *menakıb-name* of Piri Baba should have been composed not too long after the death of its hero. For the author closely associates his account with the construction of the *tekke*, which supposedly took place while Piri Baba's nephew was still alive, even though by that time he was a very old man. Since the *tekke* was functioning by about 1520, the original version of the legend should have been written during those years at the latest<sup>45</sup>. However this conclusion

century. Another indicator, pointing in the same direction, is connected with the foundation date of the *tekke* of Koyun Baba in Osmaniçik. According to an inscription published by Neşet Köseoğlu «Osmaniçik'ta Üç Kitabe», *Çorumlu*, I, 5 (1938), 154-157, Koyun Baba died in 1468-69 and his mausoleum was built the following year. While the relationship between Piri Baba and Koyun Baba may well be purely fictitious, the fact that the latter is mentioned at all means that the episode could not have been written down much before the second half of the fifteenth century.

43 For Abdal Musa see note 2, also Fuat Köprülü, «Mısır'da Bektaşilik», *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, VI (1939), 13-40.

On Kızıl Deli: Copy in Cebeci Semt Kütüphanesi, p. 29.

On Hacı Sultan: Rudolf Tschudi, ed., *Das Vilâyet-nâme des Hâdâschim Sultan. Eine türkische Heiligenlegende* (Berlin, 1914), p. 22.

On Şücaeddin: Köprülü, «Velâyet-nâme», 180.

44 The visit of a saint to the women's bath also occurs in Byzantine hagiography: Evelyne Patlagean, «Limitation de la fécondité à Byzance», *Annales ESC*, 24 (1969), 1353-1369, compare 1363 for reference.

45 According to Hoca İbrahim's claim, he had an expression conveying the *tarih* and the image of a dove put up over the entrance to the mausoleum of Piri Baba. However, at a recent visit, the author of the present study has

remains doubtful in various respects. The language of the text points to the seventeenth rather than to the first half of the sixteenth century<sup>46</sup>. While this state of affairs may of course be due to later adaptation, it does not exactly increase confidence in an early date of composition. Moreover, if Şamhoğlu Hoca İbrahim did in fact finance repairs to the *tekke*, say in the seventeenth century, he might have had an interest in rewriting the *menakıb-name* to suit his own ends. Under these circumstances, it is fortunate that Evliya's account gives us a well-developed version of the legend which must have been current about 1650. Due to its existence, the question as to when Hoca İbrahim really wrote becomes less pressing.

been unable to find either one or the other. In the *tekke* complex, only modern buildings can be seen apart from the *türbe*. This is not surprising in view of the fact that the buildings of Bektashi-*tekkes*, with the exception of the *türbes*, were regularly destroyed when Sultan Mahmut II closed down the Bektashi order in 1826. (compare, as one example among many, Bağvekâlet Arşivi, section Cevdet Evkaf, no. 13680).

It has not been possible to locate literature on the *türbe* of Piri Baba, which appears to have undergone heavy restoration in the early twentieth century. Most of the graves near the sanctuary show no inscriptions; one of them, however, belongs to a certain el-hacc Yusuf Baba and is dated 1208/1793-94. Another stone is crowned by a Bektashi *taç* and bears a very worn inscription dated 1233/1817-18.

Another piece of information which at first sight appears to be useful for dating purposes has also turned out to be a blind alley. When Molla Ali is unable to answer the questions of the scholar from Gilan, he goes to pray for inspiration in the *cami* or *mescit* of a certain Hamit. However, the description of Merzifon in *Türkiye Vakıf Abideleri* mentions no mosque by this name, nor do we find a *mahalle* called after it in the *tahrir* registers (TT 90, p. 137 ff, TT 387, p. 386). This is all the more unfortunate as there should have been no reason to refer to a non-existent place of worship, so that the date of its construction would have provided an excellent terminus post quem.

Evliya, ingenious as always, solves all these vexed questions by claiming that Piri Baba lived an extraordinarily long life, from the reign of Sultan Orhan to that of Mehmet II. The Sultan that Piri Baba confronts in the Eski Hamam is called Mehmet by Hoca İbrahim, while Evliya identifies him as Murat, father of Mehmet the Conqueror. Thus it is obvious that local tradition considered Piri Baba to be a contemporary of Mehmet I, Murat II or Mehmet II, so that he should have lived in the fifteenth century. However, it is hard to say how seriously this tradition should be taken.

46 For this information I am indebted to Prof. Dr. Mustafa Canpolat, Dil ve Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi, Ankara.

As the conquest of Istanbul is mentioned in the *menakib-name*, the earliest and latest among the likely dates of composition lie approximately two centuries apart.

Features of social structure as reflected in the legend of Piri Baba can conveniently be grouped under the following headings: family relationships, urban social structure outside the family, and popular religion. When discussing these topics, however, we must keep in mind that we are dealing with a fictional account, and that certain remarks may reflect images current in the mind of the storyteller rather than the realities surrounding him. Remarks concerning family life are all the more significant as this is a topic on which we so far have very limited information<sup>47</sup>.

Piri Baba's story begins with the observation that his mother brought him to Merzifon and apprenticed him. This makes it likely that she was a widow, for otherwise her husband would probably have taken the initiative in this matter. Moreover, the legend makes no reference at all to Piri Baba's father, although inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire were normally identified as 'X son (daughter) of Y.' Piri Baba's mother occurs once again in the course of the story: After the saint's miraculous powers have already won a measure of recognition in the community, she formally acknowledges his special gifts and commits herself to his protection<sup>48</sup>.

Another aspect of family life is touched upon when describing Piri Baba's apprenticeship. Apparently the boy no longer stayed with his mother, but lived in the house of his master. There he was expected to obey not only the orders of the master himself, but also those of the master's wife. Carrying food from the house or water from the fountain was probably a common chore and as such these features are duly emphasized in the story. Within the family, the opinion of the master's wife appears to have counted for something. Not only was she the first to recognize Piri Baba's miraculous powers, she also convinced her husband that he was dealing not with a lazy and overimaginative apprentice, but with a young saint<sup>49</sup>. It

47 Compare Ronald C. Jennings, «Women in Early 17th Century Ottoman Judicial Records - The Sharia Court of Anatolian Kayseri», *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, XVIII, 1, (1975), 54-114.

48 *Menakib-name*, p. 6a/b.

49 *Menakib-name*, p. 5b.

is possible that the role of Hatice, Muhammed's first wife and one of his earliest disciples, made it easier for the author of the legend to conceive a woman in this role.

Evliya's story introduces a number of other features concerning women and the family. While in Hoca İbrahim's version the saint simply appeared to be living in the Eski Hamam, Evliya made him act as a servant in the public bath<sup>50</sup>. There he rubbed down the women customers with soap and haircloth. Moreover, he predicted the sex of unborn children and advised expecting mothers concerning the names their offspring should be given. All these appear to have gone on for quite some time before the notables of the town began to object. At least in Hoca İbrahim's version, the prominent citizens complaining about this matter before the Sultan claimed to be convinced of Piri Baba's saintliness, and supposedly only protested because of the general principles involved. Piri Baba's justification for his behaviour is also of some interest. Pregnant women, he is made to say, should be considered as brood-mares of the faith, for they might well give birth to many exalted *ulema*. He himself should be considered a stableboy, who rubbed down the mares and kept them in good condition. It was probably by remarks of this type that Piri Baba had earned his reputation as a holy fool<sup>51</sup>.

Passing from the family into the wider community, we find certain observations concerning the relationship between master and apprentice. The right of the master to beat an apprentice obviously constitutes the background for several of the episodes between Piri Baba and the Merzifon shoemaker he was serving. However the power of the latter is not depicted as unlimited, for even at a time when no one was as yet aware of the boy's miraculous powers, Piri was once spared a beating because 'others' intervened. Nothing is said about the identity of these people, but presumably they were neighbours, and if the shoemakers of Merzifon were more or less concentrated in one place, they may well have been the master's fellow guildsmen<sup>52</sup>. In such a context it is remarkable that this

50 Evliya, Bağdat Köşkü no. 304, p. 346 b.

51 Evliya, Bağdat Köşkü, no. 304, p. 346 b.

52 We get another brief glimpse of the relationship between master and apprentice when Piri Baba's master makes his preparations for the pilgrimage.

account of life among artisans contains no reference to a formal guild structure nor to the traditions current therein.

Aside from the craftsmen, the text also refers several times to the *ulema*. Unlike many stories belonging to the Bektashi tradition in the narrower sense of the word, the established religious leaders of the community are treated with a reasonable degree of respect<sup>53</sup>. When Piri Baba refuses the gifts offered him by the Sultan, he suggests that they be given to the local *ulema* instead, so that they might pray for the salvation of his soul<sup>54</sup>. At the same time, Piri Baba is made to surpass the *ulema* in knowledge. This is demonstrated in the story of the scholar from Gilan, who had posed a difficult religious question to the *ulema* of Amasya<sup>55</sup>. As he did not receive an answer, he went on to Merzifon, where the local learned men were equally perplexed. However, Piri Baba went out of his way to save the pride of the *ulema*. In fact he did not even enter into any direct contact with the scholar from Gilan. It was one of the local religious leaders who passed the question on to the saint, and when the latter was requested to keep silent about the incident he showed no hesitation about doing so.

According to the legend as related by Hoca İbrahim, Piri Baba

The apprentice is to remain in his master's house, but in the daytime he is expected to work for a fellow shoemaker. After his return the old master plans to claim the boy. Though not explicitly stated, this arrangement was probably also intended to provide for the child in case his master died in the course of his travels. We do not hear whether Piri's mother was asked for her consent.

In the case of travelling merchants, apprentices were sometimes taken along. It is apparent from an entry into the Ankara kadı sicilleri, (Etnografya Müzesi, Ankara) vol. V, p. 31-32, no. 140 that in such cases the consent of the parents was needed. In this particular case, it is worth noting that both parents, not just the father, appeared as plaintiffs before the *kadı* when the boy had been sold into slavery.

53 Compare the stories collected in Dursun Yıldırım, *Türk Edebiyatında Bektaşî Tipine Bağlı Fıkralar (İnceleme-Metin)*, Kültür Bakanlığı, Milli Folklor Dairesi Yayınları : 18 Halk Edebiyatı Dizisi : 2 (Ankara, 1976).

54 *Menakıb-name*, p. 12a.

55 Possibly the arrival of the wise man from Gilan should be understood as an allusion to the foundation of the *tekke* of Abdülkadir Gilani, which existed in Merzifon at the time of Evliya's visit : Bağdat Köşkü no. 304, p. 346 b.

was not apparently affiliated with any particular order<sup>56</sup>. Even though the legend of Hacı Bektaş probably influenced the biography of Piri Baba, the story does not associate these two saints in any way. Among the holy men of Anatolia known from other sources, Piri Baba is considered only to have been in some contact with Koyun Baba, patron of the sanctuary located in the nearby town of Osmancık. Rivalry is depicted as the dominant feature of this relationship, and Koyun Baba is definitely made out to be spiritually inferior to the hero of the legend<sup>57</sup>. While Piri Baba rejects the gifts offered to him by the Sultan and is quite displeased when some of his disciples show fewer scruples, Koyun Baba is depicted as asking the ruler for gold, foundation lands and woollen fabrics for his dervishes. Much of this rivalry should probably be ascribed to the fact that the two sanctuaries were located very close to one another.

But since Koyun Baba was considered a follower of Otman Baba, one of the major colonizing dervishes of the Balkans, it is also possible that the story was meant to highlight differences in general world-view between the two dervish leaders, the details of which escape us today. If this assumption is at all realistic, it is also likely that the author of Piri Baba's legend intended to describe him as rather a 'moderate' figure, in spite of the outward eccentricity of his behaviour.

Respect for the *ulema* did not however preclude veneration for Ali and his family, an attitude shared by many Sunnis<sup>58</sup>. An obvious parallel is established between Piri Baba's first miraculous pilgrimage to Mekka, and his second trip to the sanctuary of Imam Hüseyin in Kerbela. Moreover, it was the second pilgrimage which first became known to outsiders and established the modest shoemaker's apprentice as a local celebrity.

If Piri Baba kept his distance from the mighty ones of this world, it is also possible that he was not very highly thought of at

56 Compare in this context Vahidi, «Hâce-i Cihan ve Netice-i Can», Süleymaniye, Halet Efendi, no. 242, and Abdülhakîm Gölpınarlı, «Menâkıb-i Hâce-i Cihân», *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, III (1926-1935), 129-132.

57 For what is known about Koyun Baba, see the pertinent article in *IA*.

58 Compare Marshall Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam, Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols. (Chicago, London, 1974), vol. 2 *The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods*, 452.

the Sultan's court. While the story emphasizes the fact that Piri Baba did not wish to demand either presents or favours from the ruler, this may have been no more than a face-saving device<sup>59</sup>. When his disciple Kara Baba after the death of the saint went to İstanbul to petition Sultan Mehmet for help in establishing a foundation, he was kept waiting and died without receiving the expected gifts. It was due to the efforts of the local citizenry, and particularly of Hoca İbrahim, that a *tekke* and a mausoleum were finally erected.

As far as the legend is concerned, no explanation is offered for the respectful aloofness shown by the Sultan. However, a passage reported only by Evliya may help us penetrate somewhat further. When denouncing Piri Baba for serving the women bathers in the Eski Hamam, the local notables used epitheta which were normally reserved for heterodox dervishes, particularly the term *ıstık*<sup>60</sup>. Now the area of Çorum, Amasya, and Merzifon was the centre of a Kızılbaş area, and popular heterodoxy was not limited to villagers and nomads, but had its adherents among urban craftsmen as well<sup>61</sup>. Under these circumstances it is quite possible that Piri Baba, in spite of his alleged moderation, was viewed with some misgivings by the *ulema* of the capital.

Among the wondrous feats of Piri Baba, no tales relating to missionary activity are recounted. This is all the more remarkable, as converting the heathen or else doing battle against them formed part of the heroic deeds performed by many great dervish saints of Anatolia and the Balkans<sup>62</sup>. Moreover, Merzifon in the early sixteenth century possessed a significant Christian community<sup>63</sup>. Given these circumstances, Piri Baba's lack of activity in this matter may be taken to indicate that the period of missionary zeal had passed

59 *Menakıb-name*, p. 14 b.

60 Evliya, Bağdat Köşkü no. 304, p. 346 b.

61 Bağbakanlık Arşivi, Mühimme Defterleri, 29, p. 96 no. 231 (984/1576-77).

62 Particularly to Celaleddin Rumi, Hacı Bektaş, and Kızıl Deli. Compare in this context Speros Vryonis, Jr., *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1971), passim.

63 According to TT387, p. 386, compiled during the early years of Kanuni Süleyman, the community consisted of 239 families.

and a certain equilibrium had been reached. Unfortunately we do not really know where to locate this point in time.

Compared to the Byzantine legends studied by Evelyne Patlagean, urban society as it is depicted in the story of Piri Baba appears comparatively stable and secure. This is true also if we compare it to the open countryside as described in the legends of Hacı Bektaş and Hacı Sultan. Demonic entities, so common in Byzantine hagiography, are totally absent from the story of Piri Baba and comparatively rare in the other two legends, which however have their fair share of robbers, quarrelsome holy men, tyrannical lords and fear-inspiring rulers. At the same time, the life story of the Merzifon saint does not seem to be much concerned with the moral edification of its public. In this feature, the legend differs from its probable model, as the *Vilâyet-nâme* of Hacı Bektaş is quite rich in scenes which confront the reader or listener with instances of exemplary behaviour<sup>64</sup>. In the legend of Piri Baba, the only episode of this type is the one in which he refuses the Sultan's gifts. It is probable that the craftsmen of Merzifon did not expect their local holy men to exhort them by preaching or obvious example.

In the eyes of the local population, apparently the most important function of a saint was to be a miracle worker. Some of his marvellous feats involved securing the basic necessities for survival, as when the saint kneaded bread out of stone, took care of pregnant women and concerned himself with the name and sex of unborn children. But the saint could also provide certain amenities of life, such as roast meat, grapes, and helva<sup>65</sup>. Moreover, we find him undertaking the pilgrimage to Mekka and to Kerbela, which many modest townsmen may have wished to perform without being able to afford the expense. This concern with what lies beyond the minimum demands for survival is also illustrated by the gratuitous feat of strength that Piri Baba performs by driving a nail into the wall with his bare hands<sup>66</sup>.

64 Compare the devotion of Kadıncık Ana, *Vilâyet-nâme*, p. 64; the perspicacity of the 'Müslüman keşiş', p. 56; the condemnation of spying and tale-bearing, p. 55.

65 For the significance of *helva* compare Irène Mélikoff, «Le rituel du helva», *Der Islam*, 39 (1964), 180-192.

66 *Menakıb-name*, p. 6b.

Any respectable miracle worker must be able to see into the future, and Piri Baba proves his mettle by predicting the conquest of Istanbul. Furthermore he acts as a kind of tutelary spirit to the Eski Hamam, which at least according to Evliya Çelebi was supposed to have healing properties<sup>67</sup>. Probably because of these protective qualities, the inhabitants of the village where he was born came to Merzifon shortly after his death to claim his body, and it was only after heated discussion that the townsmen managed to keep it<sup>68</sup>. These features all point to the saint as a symbol standing for the unity of the urban community and the enhancement of its reputation against outsiders, be they villagers, inhabitants of nearby towns, or even the Sultan himself.

67 Evliya, Bağdat Köşkü, no. 304, p. 347 a. On Piri Baba's village, Narince, compare *Türkiye Vakıf Abideleri*, p. 312 ff.

68 *Menakıb-name*, p. 13b-14a.

### MERZİFON'LU PİRİ BABA

Rivayet kabilinden yazılmış metinler, XIV. ilâ XVI. asırlar arasında Anadolu'daki sosyal ve dinî gelişmeler üzerine yapılan çalışmalar için büyük önem taşımaktadır. Merzifon'lu Piri Baba hikâyesi de bu tür metinlerden biridir.

Ömrünün büyük bir kısmını Merzifon'da Eski Hamam civarındaki bir mahâlde geçirmiş olan Piri Baba, rivâyete göre önceleri suyu damla damla akan bu hamamı mucizevi kuvvetiyle tâmir etmiştir. Kendisinin okuma-yazması yoktur, ancak istisnai dinî bilgisi ve mânevî güce sahiptir.

Merzifon'lu Piri Baba ile ilgili üç adet versiyon mevcuttur. Bunlardan birincisi Şükrü Akkaya'ya âit çok kısa bir özet, ikincisi Evliya Çelebi'nin *Seyahatnâmesi*'nde yer alan rivâyet, sonuncusu ise muhtemelen Şamhoğlu Hoca İbrahim'e âit olan ve İstanbul'da Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi'nde bulunan 18 sayfalık, üzerinde tarih bulunmayan bir elyazmasıdır.

Evliya Çelebi ve Hoca İbrahim'e göre, Piri Baba, muhtemelen XV. asrın ilk çeyreğinde inşâ edilmiş olan Eski Hamam'ın külhanında ikâmet etmekte idi. Şâyet bu iddia doğru ise, kendisinin XV. asrın ikinci yarısında yaşamış olduğu kuvvetle muhtemeldir. Bunların yanında Evliya Çelebi, kendisinin umumî hamamda kadın müşterileri yıkamakla görevli olduğunu, doğacak çocukların cinsini önceden haber verdiğini ve bu çocuklara ad verme hususunda annelere akıl verdiğini de belirtmektedir.

Piri Baba hikâyesinde sosyal yapı özellikleri şu başlıklar altında gruplandırılarak yansıtılmıştır: Aile ilişkileri; Şehrin sosyal yapısı ve din.

Yerli halkın gözünde bir evliyanın en önemli görevi mucize yaratabilmektir. Piri Baba bu hususta birkaç kez hünerini göstermiş

ayrıca İstanbul'un fethini önceden haber vermekle de geleceği görebilme kabiliyetini ispatlamıştır. Şifa verici özelliklere sahip olan Eski Hamam'ın koruyucu ruhu olmuş, ölümünden hemen sonra doğduğu köyün halkı Merzifon'a gelip kendisine sahip çıkmış ve bu hamamın da idaresini üzerlerine almışlardı. Piri Baba'nın bu özellikleri şehir toplumunun birliği için daimi bir sembol olarak kalmıştır.

بند مشقه او زنده هجده و ستادى لمبره طلع  
 ابدى نماه گون اولده نماز بن گنن طول بگوزينه  
 دکاين او توب منبت مشغول ابدى گوزينه  
 بابه حصرت بن او ستادى سونه صلدى ببرى  
 بابه دخی صوره ن گنج کوب او ستادى ابدى ببرى  
 او علان بچون اکلده که دوى پير بابه او ستادى  
 ایلدی که حى او سته بو اراهه شاد صول بچوق  
 ستر ابدى دوى او ستادى ابحو ب ابدى  
 بر بسان او تولى سن بى هج برسته قومان  
 سبن کجا بوبه لطيف ابدى سبن بونه اصیل  
 سوز در شاد صول ب او ابدى بچوق منبر ابدى

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 ببرى بابه جعفر ببرى و دستر الله بصره البر بركه ببرى  
 بيان بابه نوم بوبه نكته و وجهه طعمه ابدى  
 و نه مرتبه و بى الله اولوب وجوده کوب بواب بچوق  
 يا زيله و عین ابدى بابه جعفر ببرى فریة يا زيله  
 بى بوبه ابدى سکر بکته و اردوقه و ابدى  
 مهربان بوى بوى بابه بابه شاکر بکده و بوى  
 ببرى بابه ستادى بابه مشغول بکده و بوى  
 طهنگ تاين بجا بابه مشغول ابدى او ستادى نك

منقول

ايموبه او کرمک سعى ايمر سبن دوى ببرى  
 بابه ابدى او سته بو ايمد کله صول بکده  
 زمد صول ببرى او ستادى بابه ببرى  
 او علان سبن بى مزلو رسبن دوى ببرى  
 بابه بوى کده کنگ تدا رک ابدى کور ارايه  
 او ملر دوى بوب ابدى ابدى ابدى مکره  
 بربحه ابا م او ستادى کله صغه مشغول  
 اولدى ابدى ببرى بابه نك او ستادى بجه  
 نيت ابدى بجه مشغول او مزلو بکده بکده  
 او توب بکجه فلان کده بوى و هدا ابدى ببرى  
 بابه بى او ستادى کور ب بابه او سته

در بربن برب بابه و اوسته او توب بکده ابدى ببرى  
 کرايه ابر شاد کور اولد و ببرى بابه ببرى  
 کرايه کله بکده ابدى او توب شاد ابدى  
 کرايه ابدى بجه ابدى او توب بوى ابدى  
 سکن بکده بوى او ستادى ابدى  
 بابه بابه ابدى ببرى ابدى او توب بوى ببرى  
 بکده او توب بجه بوى بکده بوى ببرى  
 او ستادى مزلو صول ببرى ببرى  
 ببرى بابه بوى او توب بجه بکده بکده  
 او ستادى ابدى ببرى ببرى ببرى ببرى  
 ببرى بکده بوى ببرى ببرى ببرى ببرى

منقول

فکر از آمد و کی اوستا دینک زوی گوید بولید  
 شتر خلق پیری با بیک بوکر استن کور لب  
 اشیدن کز زیا رسته کله دی ز حکمت خدا  
 اوستا دی ملامتله اوینه کله دی کور  
 خاتون بولید نه احوالدره دیوب جلوان کور  
 سوزا ایلدی خاتون ولما الله اولدی عین پیش  
 ایدی حاجیه بر ز فضل بدوب باشدی پیر  
 با بیه عظیم الثبات ایوب کله دی بر طوره  
 کلوب میان اولندی اندن کور پیری با بیه  
 استادی یانیه او فربوب شفا عین دیوب  
 دحسین بجاوسنا دایلدی راولر شوبله

دیوبن

خدمته لاین نگه ز پیره بو کرمیت کاروان  
 یق اولدی دیوب پیرینک کور ز لیه او یوب کور  
 رجالتدی پیری دخی کور همان دوشوب مجتهد  
 دیوان مشرب کندی او لوب کله دی پیر  
 ظهور دایلدی پیر با بیه کله دی کور هاندن  
 دی بر کور کور همان یار کور کور کور پیر  
 الله ترا کور ایوب کور همان ایوب کور  
 اکثری کور همان او با عینه بر ماشه قور بومر  
 غله قانده یق کور کور یق قار ش ماشه پای  
 کور است غار اولدی راولر شوبله روایت ایلدی  
 ر کور شهر دن ز بیجه کشید باغ باغی صحیحی

دیوب

روایت ایلدی حضرت امام حسین دن ز فرج کور  
 پیری با بیه کور زیا رسته کله دی کور زیا رسته  
 چشمه سیندن کلوب اندن بر مشرب ز داق الله  
 آشور کور شنه کلوب صوالان اولغان بود دیوب  
 شفا دسا ایوب بیج او ارب پیری با بیه کور  
 دیک لری کور دایا عینه دوشوب بر سبغان  
 ولما الله دیوب پیر ز یو اولغان اما حسین  
 چشمه سیندن صوالان کور بر مشرب کور  
 کور ز یو اولغان دایا عینه اوستا دیوب کور  
 خیر ایوب پیری با بیه کور استن خیر و یو  
 والدی سی الله کله دیوب بو شنه کور پیر

اینگه کلمه مراد ایلدی رجوان ایوب  
 بر باغنه کتاب تیک اندن صکر باغنه اوتور  
 ای او زیا رسته کلوب کور ایوب کور  
 کور کور پیری برایشه دعای او لوب کله دی  
 حیوب او حاجه ایلدی و کور ایوب کور  
 ای کور پیر کور با بیه کور کور  
 یار کور سلام و بر دیوب کور کور  
 ایامه قلعه قور کور کور کور کور  
 پیری کور کور کور کور کور کور  
 اندر کور کور کور کور کور کور  
 ایوب کور کور کور کور کور کور

یانیه امانت و بر و س آندی سن بو اولدی  
 ال کسین اما اخشام اولد قیجه سیم حاتم  
 اولسون انشا الله کله دی میتیر اولور سه  
 سیه او علان شاکر دند ز دیوب فر ایلدی  
 ز ایلدن اوستا دجه روانه اولوب کندی  
 پیر با بیه اتر اوسته یانیه اشته مشغول  
 اخشام اولدی کلوب استادی حاتم  
 لاکمه اولور ایدی اما اوستا دیوب شرفیه  
 ایکن کور کور عرس سی اولدی او خاتون کور  
 بر فغان جلوان دایلدن اور تا پیر  
 حلوان ایوب بو کور اوستا دیک بو اولدی

ایوب

قوروب کور دن نمان اولدی با بیه پیری خاتون  
 یانیه کلوب و طور دی خاتون ایلدی پیری  
 قنی لکر ایله حلوان کور دیک دیری پیری  
 ایلدی اوستا دیمه التوب و بر دم دیدی خاتون  
 ایلدی کلوبه جواسید رسین دیوب خاطر  
 شرف کور ده اولوب پیری با بیه بر فغان سوز  
 سولدی پیری با بیه همان بحضور اولوب ایوب  
 بر لکر کور خاتون ایلدی اوستا دیمه و بر و یق  
 کلوب دیدی خاتون ایلدی کور اولغان ولید  
 راولر شوبله روایت ایلدی کور اوقش پیری  
 با بیه خاتون ایوب جیت شرفیه التوب ای

ایوب

کورد ایدی ددی پیری با بیه ایلدی کور کور  
 ایجه حلوان خاتون اوستا دیمه ایلدی  
 خاتون ایلدی با اولغان اوستا دیک کور  
 کور سن و حلوان ایلد سین دیک با بیه کور  
 ایلدی بو حلوان و برین ایلدی دیوب طور دی  
 خاتون ایلدی بر لکر ایوب ایجه بر فغان  
 قوروب پیری با بیه ایلدی و بر دی پیر با بیه  
 اولوب طوره ایلدی و ارب اوستا دیوب  
 شرفیه التوب اولدی اوستا دیمه  
 قوروب کور ایلدی توب ایلدی دیک سینه  
 نیاز ایلدی ایکن پیر با بیه حلوان اوستا دی یانیه

دخی دشا دایلدی و بو طوره اولن ایلدی  
 ایله صغته مشغول ایکن کور اوستا دی  
 با بیه و ایلدی کور دیوب ایلدی بر مشرب  
 بر داق ایوب دکاندن عطره اولوب کندی  
 صولدی کلوب کور کور کور اوستا دی پیر  
 با بیه اولور اولغان سوز ز با بیه سولدی  
 پیری با بیه ایلدی چون بو یله سولر سین بو  
 ایجد و کور صولور ایلدی ایلدی بو یق  
 ایق بولدر دیدی اوستا دی بو یق سوزیه  
 قایوب همان دیکه دایر کور ایوب دوهان  
 پیری با بیه شهادت بر باغی ایلدی ایلدی



انرا زاده معاينه جگردي كيلان - ابتدای پيخ  
 اندی کاستنوز و بز که حامد پاشای مسجد  
 یکی رکعت نماز قیلوم اندن کلوب سلفیه  
 جواب و بره پدی نکلان منلا علیه سستو  
 و بردی منلا علی مسجد ایکی رکعت نماز قیلو  
 کتاب مشغول بودن منلا علی و شدی قلعون  
 اشک خیم کوله نانه کوز کزین با جحد کلدی  
 منلا علی سستو و بره پدی منلا علی کیلان  
 و بلا سندن رکعت کشت بر منلا علی انرا  
 پنج رکعت کشت یا منلا علی اولعنه شورده بو  
 جواب و بردی همان منلا علی الله قلم لوبه

طی

و انرا برون کیلانیه و شویج کیلان منلا علی  
 مریخا ابرو منلا علی کیلانیه و شویج کیلان  
 و بردی کیلان همان منلا علی الله انصیه  
 دشو لیا ابتدای پنج سس زجاس یا خود بر  
 و البته ارشمنش سن کرم ابدی کسبه دینیه  
 بی پنج بر یا به همدسک جواب و بره پدی  
 کیلان کلوب بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر  
 بوسری صفیه سین انرا الله لعلوم بود و ایله  
 لغت کنگ یا لنگ قلوب پدی عربی سلا سون  
 قلوب کنگه و لوس و او و او و او و او و او و او  
 بر یا بنگه عارفی اشک خیم کاه اولیه دکن رکعت

معه شدی ردی ابرو کلدی خود به بخور و بیک  
 ایچ شش سندن پنج شش الله ابرو کلدی  
 خدمت ابرو بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر  
 کوز رکعت کباب لوزیه بیه لوم پدی اولکسه  
 زیننه بعشوب یا بر لوزیه و سلطان شدی لوزم  
 زمانه کز بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر  
 انرا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر  
 و حق و کلدی بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر  
 اوج کوز لوزیه پدی اوج ادم کوز و سستو  
 کوز بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر  
 اولاز حین کلدی پدی لوز کلدی بر یا بر یا بر

طی

اوزم ایکی سین کسه لوم برین ابرو کلدی  
 کوز شش کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
 دخی ایسا نر شدی اوزم اولان نر بر دخی ایسا  
 بره نر اوزم ایسا کسک کسک نکلان کوز کلدی  
 کوز لوزم اولان ایکی کوز کسبه لوز برین ابرو کلدی  
 کلوب لوز ابرو کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
 شهر خلق کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
 واروب ایسا بر کوز کوز بر یا بر یا بر یا بر  
 و پدی لوز اولان ادم ایسا کسک سن لوز سستو  
 نماز و قلدی بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر یا بر  
 اوزم بو لوز ادمه بن فلان شیخ و بره سکا کلدی

ابتدی همان بود نمک مده دیو نقش اپندی  
 حالیا شدی اشک تمام مکر کوز بر کوز  
 کیلان و بلا سندن بر عالم صا اولدی قلدی  
 اهل عالم وار بو لوزم بر سستو وار دانی سوال  
 ادم سن بلور لوزی دیو نونه شهریه کلدی  
 ادم اولان نماز جمع ابدی کیلان مشکی کوز  
 ایکی نماز اولوب جواب و بره کوز قلدی  
 کوز کلدی کلوب هر م سوز عیون دیوب کوز  
 علمای جمیع ابر اول سستو بو نر دخی سوال  
 ابرو کلدی جمیع لوز انا منلا علی نامنه بر اهل  
 حیرت و ابرو پدی کاستنوز و بره حامد پاشا

بو لوز انا سستو کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
 پدی سوز و بره هر بلور نکلان کلوب یا کلدی  
 بره بلور سستو ما هذا اول اوزم بر یا سستو  
 کوز ای اولش ادم کسک بر یا کلدی کلدی کلدی  
 مکان لوزیه بر یا کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
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 اولدی لوزیه بر یا کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
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 اول وقت اشک خیم کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی

طی

ایله کلور ایله دن کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
 اولان کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
 بود انا عقاب لوز کوز ادم اولدی کلدی  
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 ادم کلدی و بره لوز من نماز اوله پدی  
 ابتدای با دیشا هر و بلا سندن بر یا کلدی  
 کوز کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی کلدی  
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طی

اولان سوز لعلیه کرم ابدی سوز لعلیه سوز  
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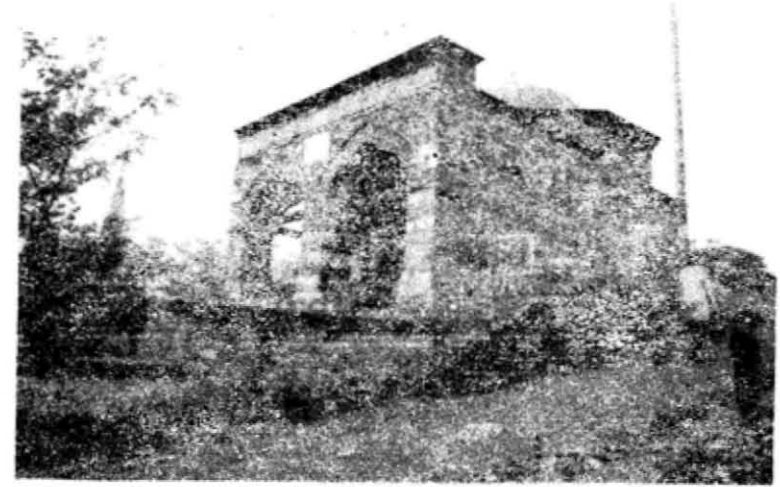
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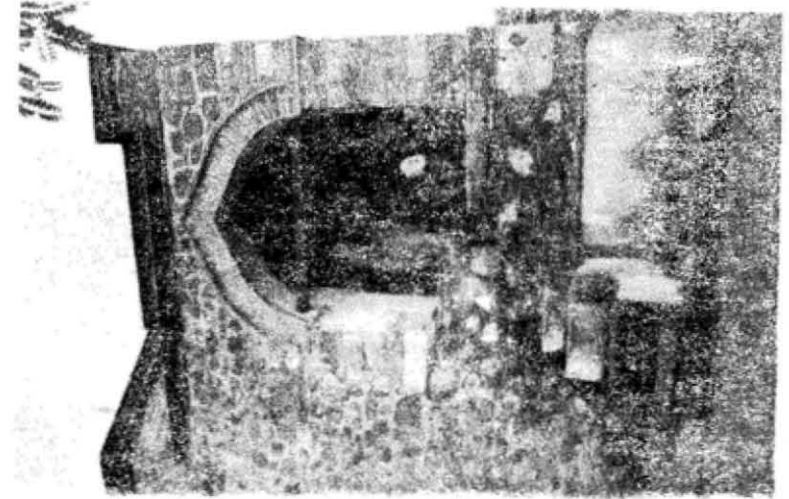
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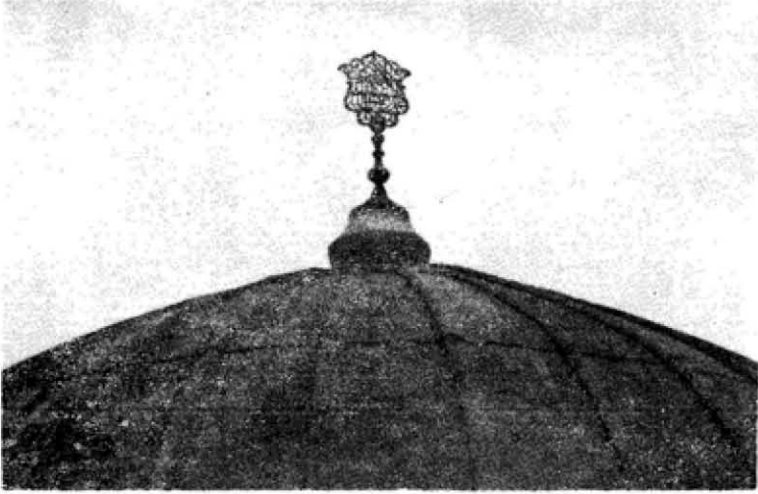
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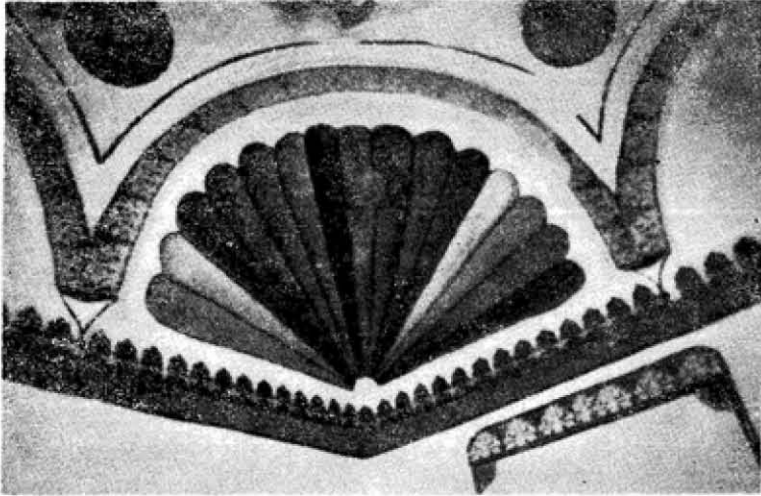
Piri Baba Türbesi genel görünüşü.



Piri Baba Türbesi ve musluklar



Piri Baba Türbesi, kubbesi



Piri Baba Türbesi iç süslemeleri.