

DMITRY SEVRUK

A “BEKTASHI” –  
PRAYER FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION  
OF LIPKA TATAR MANUSCRIPTS



## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

From the time of their first settlements in the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and till today, Belarusian–Polish–Lithuanian Tatars (or Lipka Tatars as this group is usually called in Western researches) remain an interesting ethnic minority in Belarus, Poland, and Lithuania. For a number of reasons, they were for a long time almost isolated from the main Muslim world and this isolation explains a specific form of Islam practiced by them. Although officially they are considered Sunnis and belong to the Hanafi *madhab*, their manuscripts contain texts inherited from old shamanistic practices, borrowed from Sufism<sup>2</sup>, Twelver Shia<sup>3</sup> and even from popular Slavic beliefs.<sup>4</sup> Apparently, the Lipkas were not aware of contradictions between all these elements. In the course of time they forgot their native language (or languages) and wrote their texts in Belarusian or Polish, using for this purpose an extended Arabic alphabet adapted for all phonemes of both Slavic languages. However, Arabic as well as some Turkic languages, and especially Ottoman Turkish, remained a kind of “sacral” languages and were used in prayers, incantation texts, etc.

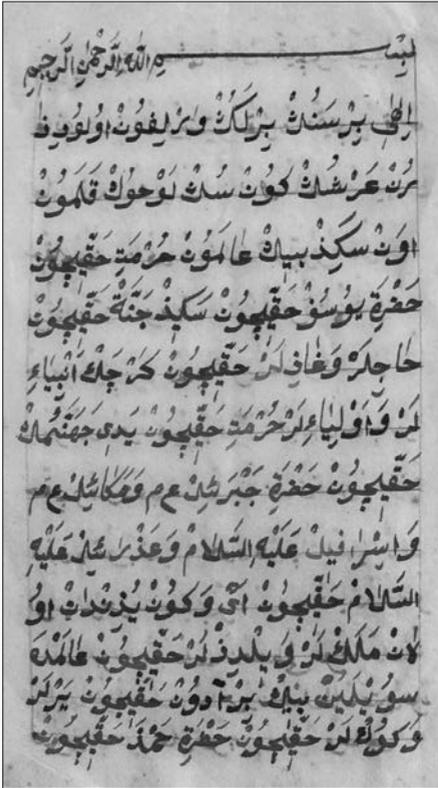
The present paper deals with a manuscript written in Ottoman Turkish and found in one of Belarusian private collections. It consists of six sheets 168 x 110 mm and contains only one text (pp. 2a–4b, sheets 1, 5 and 6 are blank), what makes it in some sense unique among the known Lipka manuscripts. *Basmala* at the beginning (p. 2a, line 1) and the typical final formula (p. 4b, line 13) show that the manuscript contains a complete work and not a part of some text. The manuscript is untitled and not dated.

<sup>1</sup> At the beginning, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Halil Ibrahim Usta from the University of Ankara for his help and consultations which cannot be overestimated.

<sup>2</sup> For example, the text “*Riḡāl al-ḡayb*” ascribed to ‘Abd al-Qādir Gilānī (1077–1166) was known among Lipka Tatars as a kind of protection prayer. For more information, see Тарэлка М., Сынкова І. Тэкст суфійскага паходжаньня з беларуска-татарскага хамаіла // Актуальныя праблемы паланістыкі. Мінск, 2006, с. 29–54.

<sup>3</sup> Тарэлка М., Сынкова І. Шыцкая малітва ў рукапісах беларускіх татарай // Беларускі гістарычны часопіс. Мінск, 2010. № 10, г. 32–37.

<sup>4</sup> E.g.: Тарэлка М., Сынкова І. Знахарскі тэкст з беларуска-татарскага рукапісу // Беларускі гістарычны агляд. Чэрвень 2009. Т. 16, сшытак 1 (30), с. 139–166.



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Paleographic characteristics allow its dating to the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> – first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Names of the author or copyist are not mentioned, and there are no any additional notes.

Interesting is the content and first of all some influences of the Alevi-Bektashi tradition, which emerged in the 13<sup>th</sup> century in Anatolia and later spread also in the Balkans. It is considered part of Twelver Shia Islam but has a number of elements borrowed or inherited from early Islamic heresies, Sufism, Hurifism, Gnosticism and Anatolian folk culture and beliefs, or, to be more exact, it is a mixture of all these elements. The Alevi-Bektashi influences are another thing which makes our text unusual for the Lipka Tatar written heritage<sup>5</sup>, and it seems to be reasonable to publish it here in full. Due to a number of mistakes and language peculiarities, a proper understanding of the

<sup>5</sup> Interesting in this regard is that the “Tatar” prayer, quoted by P. Czyżewski in his anti-Islamic work, contains phrases which are typical of the Alevis / Bektashis: *Czyżewski P. Alfurkan tatarski prawdziwy na czterdzieści części rozdzielony*. Wydanie źródła Artur Konopacki. Białystok, 2013, p. 168, footnote 242.

text was sometimes quite difficult or even impossible, that's why the English translation of certain text parts does not exclude alternative variants.

TRANSCRIPTION

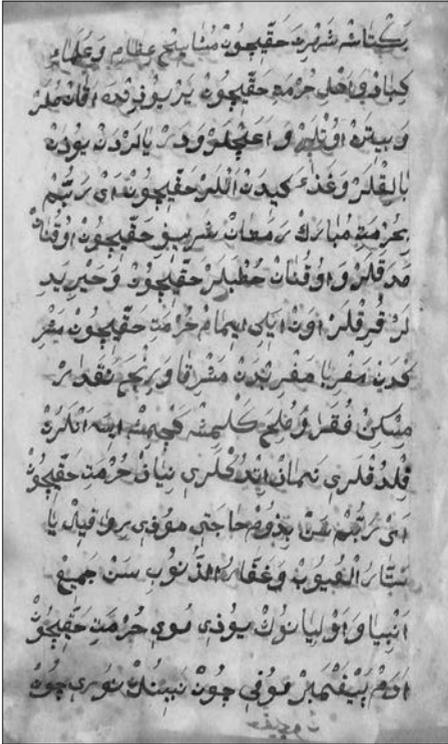
The Turkish text is transcribed according to the transcription system of *İslam Ansiklopedisi* with some extensions to show differences in the orthography of the same words (especially the disorder in writing short and long vocals).

Consonants:

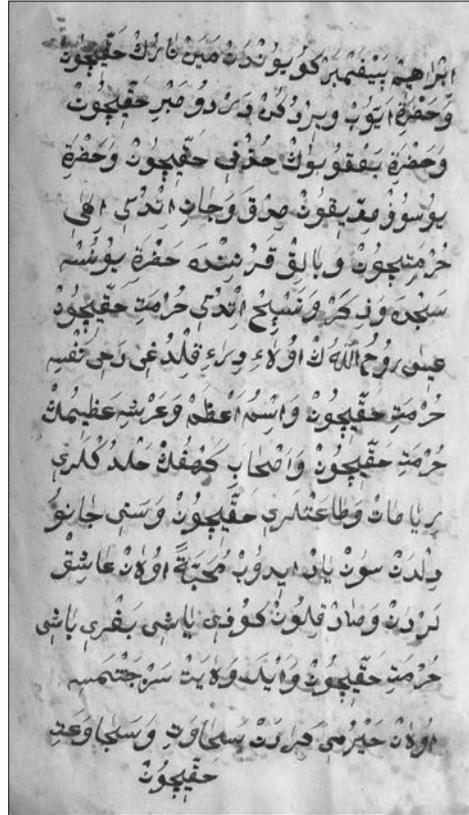
ا	ˆ	ض	z
ب	b	ط	t
پ	p	ظ	z
ت	t	ع	ˆ
ث	ṯ	غ	g
ج	c	ف	f
چ	ç	ق	k
ح	h	ك	k/g/ğ/ñ
خ	ḫ	ك	ñ
د	d	گ	g
ذ	z	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
ژ	j	ه	h
س	s	و	v
ش	ş	ي	y
ص	ṣ		

Vocals:

Letter	Transcription in Arabic and Persian words	Transcription in Turkish words and case endings
◌َ (fatha/üstün)	a / e	a / e
◌ِ (kasra/esre)	ı / i / e	ı / i / e
◌ُ (damma/ötre)	u / ü / o / ö	u / ü / o / ö
اَ اِ اُ اِ اِ اِ	â	â
او و او	û / ô	u / ü / o / ö
اي ي اي	î / ê	ı / i / e



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## TEXT WITH COMMENTS

**Turkish Text**

## P. 2(a)

(1<sup>6</sup>) Bismi-<sup>3</sup> llâhi-<sup>3</sup> r-rahmâni-<sup>3</sup> r-rahîm (2) ilâhî bir senüñ birlüğüñ varlığıñ uludız<sup>7</sup>  
 (3) surun(?)<sup>8</sup> arşuñ künsün<sup>9</sup> levhuñ kalemün (4) on sekiz bin âlemün hürmeti haqqıçün  
 (5) Hâzreti Yûsuf haqqıçün sekiz cennet haqqıçün (6) hâcılar ve gâziler haqqıçün gerçek  
 enbiyâ<sup>7</sup> (7)lar ve evliyâ<sup>7</sup>lar hürmeti haqqıçün yedi cehennemüñ (8) haqqıçün Hâzreti  
 Cebra'îl<sup>7</sup> am ve Mikâ'îl<sup>7</sup> am (9) ve İsrâfîl<sup>7</sup> aleyhi's-selâm ve Azrâ'îl<sup>7</sup> aleyhi(10)<sup>7</sup>s-  
 selâm haqqıçün ay ve gün<sup>10</sup> yüzindan o(11)lan melekler ve yıldızlar haqqıçün 'âlemde

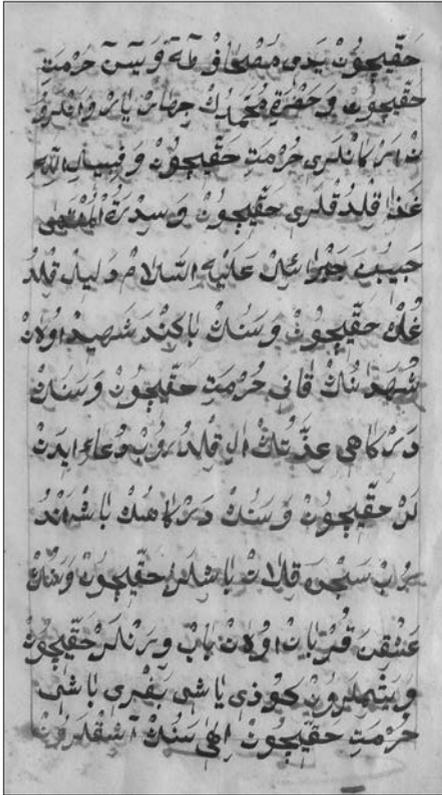
<sup>6</sup> In brackets the number of line in original text.

<sup>7</sup> Probably a mistake instead of *uludur*.

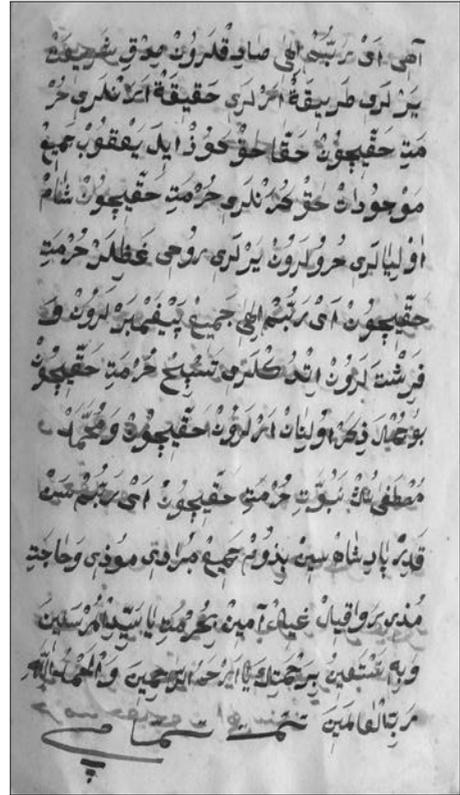
<sup>8</sup> The word is not clear.

<sup>9</sup> Probably a mistake instead of *kürsün*. See Qur'an: 2:255.

<sup>10</sup> Probably a mistake: *gün* instead of *güneş*.



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Page 4b

(12) *söyleyün biñ bir adun haqqıçün yerler* (13) ve *gökler haqqıçün* *Hażreti Hamza haqqıçün*

P. 2(b)

(1) *Ebû Bekkir*<sup>11</sup> ve *‘Ömer ‘Osmân ‘Alî haqqıçün şeytân* (2) *gâzî namâzınuñ* ve *yesserü ’l-Kur’ân*<sup>12</sup> *haqqıçün* *Ķâsım* (3) *‘Alî Efendinuñ* ve *sulţânuñ* ve *sulţân Süleymânuñ* (4) *haqqıçün sana günâh işlemiş kuvvâlarun* her kez (5) *oĸunan âzân oĸunan* ve *namâz oĸunan Ķur’ân* (6) *hürmeti haqqıçün* *Ka’aba şerifun* ve *Ka’aba mübârek* (7) *bayramda iħrâm giyüb kurbân eyleyen hacılar* (8) *haqqıçün* ve *Ka’aba şerifden namâz kılub ‘Arafât* (9) *taĸıma çıĸub ziyâlık*<sup>13</sup> *giden gerçek enbiyâlar* ve (10) *evliyâlar hürmeti haqqıçün* *sulţân Bânnadum(?)*<sup>14</sup> *sû* (11) *İtan Ebûnun(?)*<sup>15</sup> *sulţân*

<sup>11</sup> Is written with “shadda” instead of *Bekir*.

<sup>12</sup> Compare *Qur’an*: 20:26.

<sup>13</sup> Wrong writing: *ziyâlık* instead of *ziyâlık* (contemporary Turkish *aydınlanma*).

<sup>14</sup> The word is not clear and the mentioned person cannot be identified.

<sup>15</sup> Or probably *Ebû Nûn*. The mentioned person is not identified.

*Muṣṭafânun sultân* (12) *Süleymânun sultân Aḥmedun sultân* ‘*Osmânun* (13) *Ḳoyub*<sup>16</sup>  
*Bâbânun* ‘*Alî Ḳoç Bâbânun ve Hâcî*

P. 3(a)

(1) *Bektaş şehrina*<sup>17</sup> *haḳḳıçün ve muşâyîh*<sup>18</sup> ‘*izâm ve ‘ulemâ*’-i (2) *kibâr ve ehl-i*<sup>19</sup>  
*hürmeti haḳḳıçün* yer *yüzinde aḳan şular* (3) ve *biṭen otlar ve ağâçlar ve deryâlardan yūzen*  
(4) *balıklar ve ğazâ*’<sup>20</sup> *giden atlar haḳḳıçün ey rabbüm* (5) *biḥürmet-i mübârek Ramażân*  
*şerîf-i*<sup>21</sup> *haḳḳıçün okunan* (6) *şadaḳalar ve okunan huṭbeler*<sup>22</sup> *haḳḳıçün ve hayriyad*(7)  
*lar*<sup>23</sup> *ḳurıklar*<sup>24</sup> *on iki imâm hürmeti haḳḳıçün meşri*(8) *kden mağribâ mağribdan meşriḳâ*  
*varınca neḳadâr* (9) *miskin fuḳarâ ve şulihâ*<sup>25</sup> *gelmiş geçmiş ise anlarun* (10) *kıldıkları*  
*namâz etdükleri niyâz hürmeti haḳḳıçün* (11) *ey rabbüm sen bizum hâcatı-muzı revâ ḳıl*  
*yâ* (12) *settâru*-’l-’*uyûb ve ğaffâru*-’z-*zunûbi sen camî*’ (13) *enbiyâ ve evliyânun yüzi şuyi*  
*hürmeti haḳḳıçün* (14) *Adem peygamber*<sup>26</sup> *şüfi*<sup>27</sup> *çün nabînun nûri çün*

P. 3(b)

(1) *İbrâhîm peygamber*<sup>28</sup> *köyünden şayan*(?)<sup>29</sup> *nârün haḳḳıçün* (2) ve *Hâzreti Eyyüb*<sup>30</sup>  
*virdüğün derd-ü-şabr-ı haḳḳıçün* (3) ve *Hâzreti Ya’ḳûbun hużni haḳḳıçün* ve *Hâzreti* (4)  
*Yûsûf şiddiḳun şıḳḳ-u-cân etdüği ilâhî* (5) *hürmetiçün ve balıḳ ḳarnında Hâzreti Yûnus*<sup>31</sup>  
(6) *secde ve ziker ve tesbîh etdüği hürmeti haḳḳıçün* (7) ‘*İsâ Rûhu’llahuñ ülâ’i dirâ*’(?)<sup>32</sup>  
*ḳaldığı dahî nefsi* (8) *hürmeti haḳḳıçün ve ismu a’zam ve ‘arşı ‘azîmuñ* (9) *hürmeti*  
*haḳḳıçün ve aşhâb-ı kehfuñ haldukları*<sup>33</sup> (10) *riyâşât*<sup>34</sup> ve *tâ’atları haḳḳıçün ve seni*

<sup>16</sup> Wrong writing: *Ḳoyub* instead of *Ḳoyun*.

<sup>17</sup> Probably a mistake instead of *şehrinün*.

<sup>18</sup> Instead of the correct vocalisation: *meşâyîh*.

<sup>19</sup> Probably a mistake instead of *ehl-i beyt* or *ehl-i islam*. For the latter, see *Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık)* ve onlara yakın inançlar. Köln, 2004, s. 160.

<sup>20</sup> The form of the dative case is built directly from the original Arabic word (*ğazâ*’ + Ditive case ending *a*) instead of the proper Turkish form *ğazâya giden atlar*.

<sup>21</sup> Instead of the proper Persian izafet form *Ramażân-ı şerîf*...

<sup>22</sup> Instead of the proper orthography *huṭbeler*.

<sup>23</sup> The word is not clear. Probably a mistake instead of *hayriyyeler* or *hayırlı yediler*.

<sup>24</sup> Wrong vocalisation of *ḳırklar* the Forty.

<sup>25</sup> Probably *şalih*.

<sup>26</sup> Should be *Adem peygamberün*.

<sup>27</sup> For unknown reason, the author (or the copyist) apparently transformed here the title of Adam in Islamic tradition *Şafî Allah* (“The chosen of Allah”) into *Şüf* (“wool”).

<sup>28</sup> Probably *İbrâhîm peygamberün*.

<sup>29</sup> Or *mayan*. The word is not clear.

<sup>30</sup> Should be with the dative ending: *Hâzreti Eyyübe*.

<sup>31</sup> Should be with the genitive ending: *Hâzreti Yûnusuñ*.

<sup>32</sup> The meaning is not clear.

<sup>33</sup> Probably a mistake instead of *kıldukları*.

<sup>34</sup> Probably a mistake instead of *riyâzat*.

*cân-u(11)dilden seven yâd idüb muhâbbetten olan<sup>35</sup> âşik(12)lardan ve şâdkılun<sup>36</sup> gözi yaşı bağı başı (13) hürmeti hakkiçün ve eyle velâyet ser-çeşmesi (14) olan hayrumı(şı) (?)<sup>37</sup> kirâdan(?)<sup>38</sup> sehâveti<sup>39</sup> ve sacava<sup>c</sup> ati(?)<sup>40</sup>.*

P. 4(a)

*(1) hakkiçün yedi muşâf TaHa ve YaSin hürmeti (2) hakkiçün ve Hazreti Muhammadun Cihâr<sup>41</sup> Yâr ve anlaru(3)n erkânları hürmeti hakkiçün ve fi-sebil Allahi (4) gazâ kıldukları hakkiçün ve sidretü'l-müntehâ (5) habibun Cebrâ'il aleyhi-s-selâm delil kıldu(6)ğün hakkiçün ve seniün yañında şehid olan (7) şühedânuñ kanı hürmeti hakkiçün ve seniün (8) dergâhi izzetün eli kıldurub du'â eden(9)ler hakkiçün ve seniün dergâhuñ baş indu(10)rub(?) secde kılan başlar hakkiçün ve seniün (11) aşkına kurbân olan bâb virenler hakkiçün (12) ve peygamberün gözi yaşı bağı başı (13) hürmeti hakkiçün ilâhî seniün aşıklarun<sup>42</sup>*

P. 4(b)

*(1) âhi ey rabbüm ilâhî şâdiklarun şıdkı şeri<sup>c</sup> at (2) yerleri tarikat erleri hakikat erenleri hür(3)meti hakkiçün hakka hak göz ile<sup>43</sup> Ya küb cemî<sup>c</sup> (4) mevcûdât hak görenleri hürmeti hakkiçün Şâm (5) evliyaları hurûlarun(?) yerleri rûhî gâzilar(?<sup>44</sup>) hürmeti (6) hakkiçün ey rabbüm ilâhî cemî<sup>c</sup> peygamberlerün ve (7) ferişte-lerun etdükleri tesbîh hürmeti hakkiçün (8) bu cümle ziker olınan erlerün hakkiçün ve Muhammad (9) Muştafânuñ nebüvvet hürmeti hakkiçün ey rabbüm sen (10)kâdir pâdişâh-sın bizüm cemî<sup>c</sup> murâd-muzı ve hâcatı(11)muzı revâ kılgıl<sup>45</sup> âmin bihürmeti yâ seyyidi'l-mürselin (12) ve bihi neste<sup>c</sup> inü birahmetika yâ arhamu-r-rahimîn ve el-hamdu li-Llâhi (13) rabbu-l-âlemîn. Tammat tammâmî.*

<sup>35</sup> Wrong writing: *olan* instead of *ölen*.

<sup>36</sup> Wrong writing of *şadıklarun*.

<sup>37</sup> The word is not clear.

<sup>38</sup> The word is not clear.

<sup>39</sup> Wrong orthography: *sehâvet* instead of *sehâvet*.

<sup>40</sup> Or *secaveti*. The meaning is not clear.

<sup>41</sup> Correct *Çihâr*.

<sup>42</sup> Wrong orthography: *aşıklarun* instead of *aşıklarun*.

<sup>43</sup> Or... *hakka hak gözüyle*...

<sup>44</sup> Probably a mistake instead of *gâziler*.

<sup>45</sup> Old form of imperative. *Тенишев Э. Сравнительно-историческая грамматика тюркских языков. Морфология. Москва, 1988, с. 341.*

**English Translation**

P. 2(a)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate; my God, only the Unity of Your Existence is great; for the sake of Your [...?], Your Throne (‘arş),<sup>46</sup> Your Throne (kürsi),<sup>47</sup> Your [Preserved] Tablet (levh),<sup>48</sup> Your Pen (kalem),<sup>49</sup> for the sake of eighteen thousand worlds,<sup>50</sup> for the sake of the Holy Yusuf,<sup>51</sup> for the sake of eight paradises,<sup>52</sup> for the sake of pilgrims and [religious] warriors, for the sake of the True Prophets and the Men of God, for the sake of seven hells,<sup>53</sup> for the sake of the Holy Jibrail peace upon him, and Mikhail peace upon him, and Israfil peace upon him, and Azrail peace upon him,<sup>54</sup> for the sake of angels and stars existing for (?) the Mond and the Day,<sup>55</sup> for the sake of thousand and one name<sup>56</sup> being pronounced in the world, for the sake of earthes and heavens, for the sake of the Holy Hamza<sup>57</sup>

<sup>46</sup> The Throne of Allah in the Qur’an: 7:54; 9:129; 10:3; 13:2; 17:42; 20:5; 21:22; 23:116; 25:59; 27:23; 27:26; 32:4; 39:75; 40:7; 40:15; 43:82; 57:4; 69:17; 81:20; 85:15.

<sup>47</sup> Qur’an: 2:255.

<sup>48</sup> Qur’an: 75:22.

<sup>49</sup> Qur’an: 68. In Sufi tradition, “Levh-i kalem” means also a Tablet (Levh) with destinies of all people wrtitten on it with a Pen (Kalem) <http://tasavvufsozluk.com/tasavvufi-terimler-sozlugu/S%C3%B6zl%C3%BCk-1/L/levhi-Kalem-1332/> [last connection on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014]

<sup>50</sup> 18 000 worlds: according to some Qur’an commentaries, the number of worlds being understood by saying “Allah, Lord of the Worlds”.

<sup>51</sup> Qur’an: 12.

<sup>52</sup> The idea of eight paradises traces back to the number of hadiths. The Turkish encyclopedist of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Erzurumlu Ibrahim Hakki classifies the eight paradises as follows: 1. *Dar-ül celâl* from white pearls; 2. *Dar-üs selâm* from red rubins; 3. *Cennet-ül mevâ* from green peridots; 4. *Cennet-ül huld* from yellow corals; 5. *Cennet-ül naim* from white silver; 6. *Cennet-ül firdevs* from red gold; 7. *Cennet-ül karâr* from yellow musk; 8. *Cennet-ül and* from pearls never been touched: Hâkî İbrâhîm. Ma’rifet-nâme. Istanbul, 1330 (1914), s. 9. Also available online: <http://www.sevde.de/marifetname/bolum02.htm> [last connection on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014]

<sup>53</sup> The idea of seven hells (jahannam) traces back to the Qur’an: 15:43–44. Ibrahim Hakki describes the seven levels of hell as follows: 1. *Cehennem*: for sinful Muslims; 2. *Sa’îr*: for Christians; 3. *Sekar*: for Jews; 4. *Cahîm*: for Demons and renegades; 5. *Hutame*: for kafirs and Gog and Magog; 6. *Lezî*: for magicians; 7. *Hâviye*: for those who denied Allah and for hypocrites. Hâkî İbrâhîm. Ma’rifet-nâme. Istanbul, 1330 (1914), p. 17. Also available online: <http://www.sevde.de/marifetname/bolum04.htm> [last connection on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014]

<sup>54</sup> Four high-ranked angels in Islam. Jibrail: Qur’an: 2:97–98; 66:4. Mika’îl: Qur’an: 2:98. İsrâfîl: Qur’an: 39:68 (not mentioned by name). ‘Azrâ’îl: Qur’an: 32:11 (not mentioned by name).

<sup>55</sup> Or [of] the Sun.

<sup>56</sup> Thousand and one names of Allah are mentioned in the prayer known as “Cevşen-ül kebir” (Arab.-Pers.: big armor), which is popular especially among Shiites, and allusions to it can be found in Bektashi poetry: “*Bin bir adı vardır bir adı Hızır/Her nerde çağırсан orada hazır/Alîm Padişahır Muhammet vezir/O fermanı yazan Ali değil mi*” (Pir Sultan Abdal).

<sup>57</sup> Hamza ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib (c. 567–625) was a companion and paternal uncle of the prophet Muhammad.

## P. 2(b)

For the sake of Abu Bakr and Omar and Osman and Ali,<sup>58</sup> for the sake of the prayer against the Devil (?) and [for the sake of the phrase] “make easy” the Qur’an (?)<sup>59</sup> for the sake of Qasim Ali Efendi<sup>60</sup> and Sultan and Sultan Suleiman,<sup>61</sup> for the sake of azan read every time [against?/for?] forces(?) sinned against You and [for the sake of] the prayer being read [and?] the Qur’an, for the sake of pilgrims dressed in ihram,<sup>62</sup> who make sacrifice during the feast [of/near?] the Noble Ka‘aba and the Blessed Ka‘aba, and for the sake of the True Prophets and the Men of God, praying in front of the Noble Ka‘aba, climbing the Mount Arafat and achieving enlightenment, for the sake of Sultan Bannadum(?),<sup>63</sup> Sultan Ebu(?),<sup>64</sup> Sultan Mustafa,<sup>65</sup> Sultan Suleiman, Sultan Ahmed<sup>66</sup>, Sultan Osman<sup>67</sup>, Koyun Baba<sup>68</sup>, Ali Koç Baba<sup>69</sup> and the city(?)<sup>70</sup> of Haji

<sup>58</sup> The Four Right Guided Caliphs.

<sup>59</sup> Probably a paraphrase from the Qur’an: 20:26.

<sup>60</sup> Probably the son of the tenth Imam Ali an-Naqi (or Ali al-Hadi). According to the Alevi-Bektashi beliefs, Qasim Ali was killed in Damascus at the age of three years and is revered as one of the Fourteen Infallibles (*on dört masum-u paklar*): *Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık) ve onlara yakın inançlar*. Köln, 2004, s. 327.

<sup>61</sup> Here and further is not clear which Sultan exactly is mentioned in each case. Two Sultans with the name Suleiman ruled the Ottoman Empire: Suleiman I “the Magnificent” (1494–1566), reign period from 1520 till 1566; Suleiman II (1642–1691), reign period 1687 till 1691.

<sup>62</sup> A sacred state to be entered by a Muslim for performing the Hajj-pilgrimage, also ritual clothing worn during the Hajj-pilgrimage.

<sup>63</sup> The person is not identified.

<sup>64</sup> Or probably *Ebû Nûn*. The mentioned person is not identified.

<sup>65</sup> There were four Sultans with the name Mustafa: Mustafa I (1591–1639), reign period from 1617 till 1618 and from 1622 till 1623; Mustafa II (1664–1703), reign period from 1695 till 1703; Mustafa III (1717–1774), reign period from 1757 till 1774; Mustafa IV (1779–1808), reign period from 1807 till 1808.

<sup>66</sup> There were three Sultans with the name Ahmed: Ahmed I (1590–1617), reign period from 1603 till 1617; Ahmed II (1642/43–1695), reign period from 1691 till 1695; Ahmed III (1673–1736), reign period from 1703 till 1730.

<sup>67</sup> There were three Ottoman Sultans with the name Osman: Osman I Gazi (1258–1326), founder of the Ottoman Empire; Osman II (1604–1622), reign period from 1618 till 1622; Osman III (1699–1757), reign period from 1754 till 1757.

<sup>68</sup> Koyun Baba – one of the Holy Men of Khorasan (Iran) revered in the Alevi-Bektashi tradition. Died according to some chronicles in 1467 (Muharram 23, 873). He is very popular first of all on the Balkans. See: *Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık) ve onlara yakın inançlar*. Köln, 2004, s. 530–531, 575.

<sup>69</sup> Ali Koç Baba – a dervish who lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. His tomb (türbe) near Nikopol (Bulgaria) is revered by both Muslims and Christians. For more information: *Alexisyyev B. Ali Koç Baba iki izlenim // Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*. 2004, s. 31. Available online at: <http://www.hbvdergisi.gazi.edu.tr/index.php/TKHBVD/article/view/722/712> [last connection on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014]

<sup>70</sup> Probably a mistake in the text.

P. 3(a):

Bektaş,<sup>71</sup> and for the sake of great sheikhs and great scholars and the People [of the House<sup>72</sup> / of the Islam?], for the sake of waters streaming on the earth, and grasses growing [on the earth], and fishes swimming through the seas, and horses going to the [holy] war. Oh, my Lord, with blessed respect and for the sake of the noble Ramadan, for the sake of the almses being read<sup>73</sup> and sermons being read, and for the sake of the good [people],<sup>74</sup> the Forty,<sup>75</sup> the Twelve Imams,<sup>76</sup> for the sake of appeals and prayers of miserable poor [people] and [...?] in all times and from the East to the West and from the West to the East. Oh, my Lord, fulfill our wants, You are Covering the faults and Forgiving the sins, for the sake of (the tears/water from face of)<sup>77</sup> all Prophets and Men of God, for the sake of the wool<sup>78</sup> of the Prophet Adam, for the sake of the Light of the Prophet [Muhammad]

P. 3(b)

For the sake of the ...fire (?)<sup>79</sup> from(?) the village of the Prophet Ibrahim, and for the sake of pain and patience given to the Holy Ayyub,<sup>80</sup> and for the sake of sadness of the Holy Yaqub<sup>81</sup>, and for the sake of the God<sup>82</sup> whom the Holy Yusuf the Truthful<sup>83</sup> gave his truth and soul, and for the sake of kneeling down and *zīkr*-recitation<sup>84</sup> and praises [to God] performed by the Holy Yunus<sup>85</sup> in the belly of the fish, and for the sake of [...]

<sup>71</sup> Haji Bektaş (Bektaş) – a legendary mystic from Khorasan (Iran), who lived and taught in Anatolia approximately from 1209 to 1271. Eponym of the Bektashiyya order. One of the most revered personalities in the Alevi-Bektashi tradition.

<sup>72</sup> People of the House (of the Prophet) or Ahl al-Bayt. The term refers to the family of Muhammad and is of importance, especially for Shia Muslims.

<sup>73</sup> Apparently a mistake in the manuscript. Correct probably *being given*.

<sup>74</sup> Or of the good Yediler (Seven): seven persons revered by the Alevi/Bektashis: Muhammad, Hadija, Fatima, Ali, Hasan, Husayn, Salman al-Farisi. *Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık) ve onlara yakın inançlar*. Köln, 2004, s. 325.

<sup>75</sup> In the Turkish text *kırıklar*. Most probably a wrong vokalisation instead of *kırklar*: the Forty (companions of Ali b. Abi Talib) revered in the Alevi-Bektashi tradition. More information: *Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık) ve onlara yakın inançlar*. Köln, 2004, s. 331–332.

<sup>76</sup> The Twelve Imams revered by Twelver Shiites as well as by the Alevi / Bektashis.

<sup>77</sup> Meaning of “(birinin veya bir şeyin) yüzü suyu hürmetine” is “for the sake of somebody / because of respect to somebody”.

<sup>78</sup> See footnote 27. Apparently it shall be “for the sake of the Prophet Adam chosen by God”.

<sup>79</sup> Probably an allusion to the Qur’anic legend which says that the people from Ibrahim’s village intended to burn him for destroying the idols, but he was saved from the fire. Qur’an: 21:51–70.

<sup>80</sup> Qur’an: 21:83.

<sup>81</sup> Qur’an: 2:132–133; 21:72–73; 38:45–47.

<sup>82</sup> Apparently there is a mistake in the manuscript. The correct version probably is “... for the sake of the truth and the soul given to my God by the Holy Yusuf the Truthful...”

<sup>83</sup> Qur’an: 12.

<sup>84</sup> *Zīkr* is a continual recitation of Allah’s names and epithets used by Sufis for entering the trance state.

<sup>85</sup> Qur’an: 37:139–144.

of Isa the Spirit of God, and for the sake of the Great Name and the Great Throne, and for the sake of asceticism(?) and devotion shown by the People of the Cave,<sup>86</sup> and for the sake of tears and bleeding hearts of the truthful [peoples] and Your lovers loving You with all their heart and dying from love when remembering You, for the sake of [ve eyle velâyet<sup>87</sup> ser-çeşmesi<sup>88</sup> olan hayrumı(şl) kirâdan<sup>89</sup> seḥâveti<sup>90</sup> ve sacava'ati<sup>91</sup>] [ the fragment is not clear].<sup>92</sup>

P. 4(a)

For the sake of the Seven Scrolls<sup>93</sup> [and of the suras] TaHa and YaSin<sup>94</sup>, and for the sake of the Four Companions<sup>95</sup> of the Holy Muhammad and the great people [around] them, and for the sake of those who are fighting in the way of God, and for the sake of the Lote Tree<sup>96</sup> [and] of the evidence<sup>97</sup> given by the beloved Jibrail peace upon him, and for the sake of the blood of martyrs who were killed [while fighting] on Your side, and for the sake of those who are praying by raising their hands to the glory of Your court and [for the sake of] the heads inclined in adoration [in front] of Your court (?), and for the sake of those victims for You, who are [...?] the gate, and for the sake of the tears and bleeding heart of the Prophet, my God, the exclamation of Your lovers:

P. 4(b):

Oh, my Lord, my God, for the sake of the truth of the truthfals, [for the sake of] the places of Sharia, [for the sake of] the Men of the [Sufi] Orders, [for the sake of] the Holy

<sup>86</sup> Or the Seven Sleepers. Qur'an: 18. For more information e.g.: Koch J. Die Siebenschläferlegende, ihr rprung und ihre Verbreitung. Leipzig, 1883.

<sup>87</sup> Velâyet – here “holiness” or “friendship of God” (Turkish: velilik, ermişlik, Tanrı dostluğu). Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşılık, Kızılbaşlık) ve onlara yakın inançlar. Köln, 2004, s. 1294.

<sup>88</sup> Serçeşme literally “head of a spring-well”. Epithet used for a Sheikh (Pir) of an Order or for Haji Bektash: Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşılık, Kızılbaşlık) ve onlara yakın inançlar. Köln, 2004, s. 1278.

<sup>89</sup> Not clear.

<sup>90</sup> Wrong orthography seḥâvet instead of seḥâvet – “generosity”.

<sup>91</sup> Secaveti (?). The meaning is not clear.

<sup>92</sup> Compare the vocabulary of the original text “şâdkılun (şâdikların) gözi yâşl bağırlı başl hürmeti hakkiçün ve eyle velâyet ser-çeşmesi olan hayrumı(şl)(?) kirâdan(?)seḥâveti ve sacava'ati(?)” with a poem of Yunus Emre in Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşılık, Kızılbaşlık) ve onlara yakın inançlar. Köln, 2004, s. 935–936.

<sup>93</sup> Seven scrolls the Qur'an.

<sup>94</sup> According to some commentaries, Taha and Yasin are two secret names of Muhammad: Nöldeke T. Geschichte des Qorâns, Die Sammlung des Qorans. Leipzig, 1919. T. II, S. 71.

<sup>95</sup> The Four Right Guided Caliphs. E.g.: Seyyid Eyyûb bin Siddik. Menâkib-ı Çihâr Yâr-i Güzîn (Dört Halifenin Üstünlükleri). İstanbul, 2009. Nevertheless, it cannot be completely excluded that the epithet “The Four Companions [of Muhammad]” has another interpretation among the Alevites.

<sup>96</sup> Qur'an: 53:14.

<sup>97</sup> The Qur'an.

Men of the Truth<sup>98</sup>, for the sake of those who see all creatures and the Truth with the eye of the Truth [like?] Yaqub [did?](?)<sup>99</sup> for the sake of the places of [...] of the Holy Men of Damascus<sup>100</sup> and [for the sake of] the spiritual warriors (warriors of spirit) (?)<sup>101</sup> [...?]. Oh, My Lord, My God, for the sake of the praises [to God] performed by all Prophets and Angels, for the sake of all men mentioned here, for the sake of the Prophecy of Muhammad Mustafa. Oh, My Lord, You are the powerful ruler, fulfill all our wishes and wants. Amin. With adoration, oh, Chief of the Prophets, and we ask him for help with Your mercy, the most Merciful, and praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds. End.

## TEXT ANALYSIS

### *Language peculiarities*

The manuscript is written in the Ottoman Turkish language and vocalized. At the same time, a number of peculiarities in its orthography, grammar and style suggest that the literacy level of the copyist (and maybe even of the author) wasn't too high, and Ottoman Turkish probably wasn't his mother-tongue at all.

In general, these peculiarities can be presented as follows:

1) disorder in using short and long vowels in the same words. For example:

- *sekiz* (eight): p. 2a, line 4: سکز (sekiz), line 5: سکیز (sekiz);
- Yusuf: p. 2a, line 5: يوسف (Yûsuf) and p. 3 b, line 4: یوسف (Yûsûf);
- in the ablative case endings (-dan/-den): p. 2a, line 10: أي وكون یزندان (ay ve gün yüzindan), p. 2b, line 8: کعب شریفدن (ka`ba şerifden), p. 3a, line 3–4: دریالردن یوزن بالفلر (deryâlardan yûzen balıklar);
- in the genitive case ending (-uñ): p. 2b, line 3: سلطان سلیمانئ (sultan selimânî), lines 11–12: سلطان سلیمانئ. Moreover, the “nun” (ن) is sometimes used instead of the correct “nef” (ئ). For example, p. 2b, line 12: سلطان احمدئ سلطان عثمانون;

2) the priority of phonemic writing and not of the original orthography can also be seen in some borrowed Arabic words. The word *maşriq* (East) (p. 3a, lines 7–8) is written in two variants: مشرق and مشرك. The same grapheme is used in the text both in words with the dental [z] and in Arabic borrowings with the interdental [d̪] (see, e.g., p. 3a, lines 11–12);

<sup>98</sup> *Haqîkat erenleri*. Compare with a poem of Yunis Emre in *Gülçicek A. D. Alevilik (Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık) ve onlara yakın inançlar*. Köln, 2004, s. 933.

<sup>99</sup> The construction of the original sentence is not clear.

<sup>100</sup> Or Levant.

<sup>101</sup> The fragment in the original text is full of mistakes, and its meaning is not clear.

3) Numerous grammatical mistakes, for example:

- in using the genitive case: p. 3b, lines 5–6: “*ve balık karında Hâzreti Yûnus secde ve ziker ve tesbîh etdüği hürmeti hakkıçün*” instead of “*ve balık karında Hâzreti Yûnusûñ secde ve ziker ve tesbîh etdüği hürmeti hakkıçün*”;
- in using the Persian izafet: p. 3a, line 5: *Ramažân şerîf* instead of *Ramažân-ı şerîf*;

4) interesting is the use of different imperative forms of the verb *kılmak* in the same context. A usual imperative is used on the page 3a, line 11: *sen bizüm hâcatı-muzı revâ kııl*. On the last page (p. 4b, line 11), the same verb is put into the ancient imperative form (-ğıl): *bizüm cemîc murâdı-muzı ve hâcatı-muzı revâ kııl-ğıl*;

5) the writing of some words and even phrases does not allow their recognizing and proper understanding. It suggests that the copyist probably just copied a written text without (at least sometimes) knowing its meaning. Significant here is a strange writing of the word “Your Throne”: *künsüñ* instead of *kürsüñ* or the transformation of Prophet Adam’s title *Şaфі Allah* (“The chosen of Allah”) into the word *Şûf* (“wool”).

#### *Content, themes and personalities*

The text can be described as a simple citation of different themes and personalities important for the Islamic tradition and can be classified as a kind of prayer, an appeal to Allah, in the name of different themes and persons revered among Muslims. Each mentioning is followed by *حقیچون (...haqqıçün)* or *حرمت حقیچون (...hürmeti haqqıçün)* – “in the name of...”, “for the sake of...”

Nevertheless, the themes and personalities mentioned in the text are very interesting, especially with regard to the region where the manuscript was found and probably even composed. The themes and personalities can be roughly divided into the following categories:

1) religious symbols and terms mostly mentioned in the Quran or Hadith-literature, for example: The Preserved Tablet (p. 2a, line 3), 18000 worlds (2a: 4), eight paradises (2a: 5), seven hells (2a: 7), seven scrolls (of the Qur’an) and some suras (4a: 7), the Lote Tree (4a: 4), 1001 names (of Allah) (2a: 11–12.), the Quran itself and the prayer (2b: 2), some holy places (Ka’aba, the mount Arafat – 2b: 8–9), etc.;

2) mythological characters: angels and prophets mentioned in the Qur’an. Sometimes there are allusions to the legends about them. Angels: Jabrail, Mikhail, Israfil, Azrail (p. 2a: 8–9). Prophets: Adam (3a: 14), Ibrahim (3b: 1), Ayyub (3b: 2), Yaqub (3b: 3), Yusuf (3b: 4 и 2a: 5), Yunus (3b: 5–6), Isa (3b: 7), People of the Cave (or the Seven Sleepers) (3b: 9);

3) historical personalities: Muhammad, the four rightly guided Caliphs (Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman and Ali, mentioned by name 2b: 1 and as “four companions of the prophet Muhammad” (3a: 2), Ottoman sultans: Sultan Suleiman, Sultan Mustafa,

Sultan Ahmed, Sultan Osman (e.g., 2b: 11–12). The names of some Sultans cannot be read properly and are not identified yet, for example, 2b: 10–11: Sultan Bannadûm (?);

4) a special and interesting group are personalities mentioned in the text and revered among the Alevi / Bektashis: Koyun Baba, Ali Koç Baba, Haji Bektash (2b: 13–3a:1); probably the Seven (3a: 6–7); the Forty (companions of Ali) (3a: 7); the Twelve Imams (3a: 7); holy people (*erenler*) (4b: 2), the Sufis (*tarikât erleri*) (4b: 2) and the Holy People of Damascus (or Levant) (4b: 4–5).

5) God is also invoked in the name of those who perform Hajj and make sacrifices (2b: 6–7), of those who are fallen in battle (for faith) (4a: 6–7), etc.

## PROBLEMS, QUESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

*Origin of the text: compilation or original work?*

First of all, unusual seems to be the fact that the four right-guided Caliphs and personalities revered in the Alevi-Bektashi tradition are mentioned together. Similar cases are known in history: for example, Jahan Shah (1397–1467), the leader of Qara Qoyunlu Turkmen tribal federation, who converted to Shia Islam, let strike coins with the names of the Twelve Imams together with the names of the four right-guided Caliphs.<sup>102</sup> And the epithet “the four companions of Muhammad”, which is usually applied to the first four Caliphs, can be found in the poetry of the Bektashi poet Ashiq Sidki Baba (1865–1928).<sup>103</sup> Nevertheless, it should be said that the mentioning of Abu Bakr, Omar and Osman is not typical of the Alevi / Bektashis (anyway, not in a positive context). Such a kind of mixture can be an evidence of a compilation made from different independent fragments. Some examples of similar compilations are already known in the Lipka Tatar handwritten heritage.<sup>104</sup>

One more evidence of compilation can be the fact that the same personalities are mentioned several times, for example, the prophet Yusuf: (2a:5) and (3b:4, together with other prophets). His name is written in different ways. Two times, p. 2b (lines 3 and 11–12) and in two different groups, Sultan Suleiman is also mentioned. Several times God is invoked in the name of the same angels, prophets, and Holy Men. Different grammatical forms of imperative used for the same verb and in the same context but on different pages can also mean that these fragments are of different origin.

<sup>102</sup> Noth A., Paul J. Der islamische Orient: Grundzüge seiner Geschichte. Würzburg, 1998, S. 295.

<sup>103</sup> Aydoğan Tuğba Bektaş Şairi Âşık Sıdkı Baba'nın Nasihatnamesi. Available online: [http://turkoloji.cu.edu.tr/ESKI%20TURK%20%20EDEBIYATI/ta\\_bektasi\\_nasihatname/ta\\_bektasi\\_nasihatname.htm](http://turkoloji.cu.edu.tr/ESKI%20TURK%20%20EDEBIYATI/ta_bektasi_nasihatname/ta_bektasi_nasihatname.htm) [Last connection on July 09<sup>th</sup>, 2014]

<sup>104</sup> Тарэлка М., Сынькова І. Шыцкая малітва ў рукапісах беларускіх татарэў // Беларускі гістарычны часопіс. 2010. № 10, с. 32–37.

Taking into consideration the reign periods of the Sultans mentioned in the text, we can suppose that the text was compiled not earlier than in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. A more precise chronological classification of certain fragments needs an additional detailed research.

*Place of origin: Anatolia, Balkans, territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania?*

Peculiarities of the language and the content of the text show that the person who made the last redaction (or maybe even compiled the text) did not have skills of orthographic writing in Ottoman Turkish, probably wasn't a native speaker and likely had no deep knowledge of some religious aspects. This may mean that he was born and lived on the territory where Turkish was not a spoken and written language and the Islam was not a dominating religion. In favor of the second suggestion is the fact that Koyun Baba, and especially Ali Koç Baba, are revered primarily on the Balkans. Even their tombs are either near the Bulgarian border (Koyun Baba) or in Bulgaria near Nikopol (Ali Koç Baba).

On the other side, some fragments of the text do not completely correspond to the Alevi-Bektashi tradition, but on the Balkans this tradition was well known and quite strong. This (together with some other factors mentioned about) allows to suppose that the text was compiled in another region. This region should have a bigger geographical and cultural distance from the centers of Islamic tradition than the Balkans, although the Balkan origin of the protographs of some text parts seems to be beyond doubt. That's why it cannot be completely excluded that the text was compiled on the territories of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania where it has been recently found.