Spiritual Discourse

Learning with an Islamic Master

Frances Trix

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Frontispiece: A "joust" between two Sufi Babas over who has the greater spiritual power. The one riding on the lion proclaims that he can reach the heart of a person though it be like that of a wild animal. He is bested, however, by the Baba riding on the stone, who thereby proclaims that he can reach the heart though it be dead like a stone. The picture was a gift to the Tekke from the family of Ali Orhan, who came to America early in the twentieth century from Voskop in southeastern Albania. Photo by the author.

Cover: Baba Rexheb. Photo by the author.

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For Baba Rexheb
and Other Chanters of Nefes

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Acknowledgments

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Note on Vagaries of Spelling

Choice had to be made in this book from among various spellings of non-English, often Islamic words. These words traveled from Arabic contexts through Persian and Turkish ones before finding their way to the Balkans. Along the way pronunciations varied, particularly in the vowels although not confined to them. Thus Baba's name is "Rajab" in Arabic, "Recep" in Turkish, and "Rexheb" in Albanian. As he is baba of the tekke, I use the form he uses, namely "Rexheb" (pronounced "rejeb"). However, with Baba Bayram, who has since passed away, I use the Turkish spelling because it is more likely to lead readers to correct pronunciation than is the Albanian "Bajram" (pronounced "bayram").

In contrast, for the term for "spiritual guide" I use a transliteration of the Arabic, namely *murshid*. Here the Turkish would be *mürşid,* while the Albanian would be *udhërrëfenjës* or *udhëheqës,* which my secular Albanian dictionary translates as "air-traffic controller." I also standardize reference to the student as *talib*.

In most other cases I have chosen the modern Turkish spelling, as the Bektashis are historically an Anatolian Sufi Order and most literature on them refers to this Turkish context rather than the more recent Albanian one. Thus I refer to the Bektashi center as the *tekke,* although in Albanian it would be *teqe*.

Prologue

in which the frustration of a student after many years of study discreetly erupts

"Baba, how did Selim Baba teach you?" In isolation an innocent enough question.

There I sat on my folding chair in the study room of Baba's *tekke*—a sort of "Muslim monastery."[1] And there across from me sat Baba, the then eighty-four-year-old Muslim "monk" who was the head of the tekke.

The room we were in had probably been the dining room of a Michigan farmhouse that in the 1950s had been bought by a group of Albanian Muslims and converted into a Bektashi tekke. Were the former owners to return, no doubt they would have had difficulty recognizing their farmhouse, due to both additions to the building and changes in interior decor and use.

On one side of Baba's chair, where perhaps a tall cabinet of the farm's finest china had once stood, there was now a bed whose headboard and footboard were covered with prayer rugs. Pillows were propped on the bed against the wall. And people would sit on the bed with their legs folded under them, much as they had sat on carpet-covered floors in the traditional guest rooms back in the Balkans.

On the other side of Baba's chair, and under the window, where the dining-room table had once stood, there was still a table, only it was piled high with books and papers. There was a six-volume set of encyclopedias, published in Constantinople in 1901 and written in the Arabic letters of the Turkish of that time. Scattered among the volumes were copies of *Dielli* ("The Sun"), an Albanian-American newspaper, as well as letters to Baba from Bektashis from all over the world. Toward the back of the table were several Qur'ans, along with the sixteenth-century commentary on the Qur'an by Husein Vaiz, and a nineteenth-century defense of Bektashism,[2] the particular Sufi Order to which Baba belonged. And then of course there were the books of poetry. These were in Turkish and Persian by poets like Nesimi (fourteenth to fifteenth century), Fuzuli (sixteenth century), Pir Sultan Abdal (sixteenth century), and Niyazi Misri (seventeenth century). Besides books of collected works of individual poets, there were several anthologies of Turkish mystic poetry written in the Roman letters that have been used in Turkey since the 1920s. The anthologies had been sent as gifts from Bektashis in Turkey and were easier for me to follow. As for Baba, he reads Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Greek, Albanian, and Italian, and so is at home in several scripts; but he prefers the Turkish poetry in its original Arabic letters.

The walls at least had not changed in the tekke study room. They still had the stucco finish that had been such a popular embellishment of American home architecture in the twenties. But on the walls, where once perhaps a mirror and a placid landscape had hung, there was now a lunar calendar, with a small watercolor of Baba's native Albania obscuring half the calendar. Across from that hung a framed piece of Arabic calligraphy—a scarlet background with gold lettering of the first line of the Qur'an: "In the Name of God the Merciful, the Mercy-giving." Over the bed was a photograph of dry and dusty buildings that I was told were the shrine of Ali in Najaf, Iraq—hardly an inducement to pilgrimage. Behind Baba's chair was a large picture of mountains being scaled by two large rams with antlers, reminiscent of the sheep in Albania. No one was sure who had donated it—the tekke has been furnished with gifts, which accounted for the unusual assemblage—but I suspected some Albanian Bektashis who had gone to Alaska and who regularly sent Baba gifts including blankets depicting the midnight sun.

In stark contrast to all this is Baba's bedroom, where the only picture on the wall is a photograph of Selim Baba, Baba's spiritual teacher.

Also in contrast to the study room is the private ceremonial room of the tekke. This large room was the Bektashis' first addition to the farmhouse. The room is carpeted and without furniture. Its pale blue-washed walls are bare. All attention is thus focused on the *mihrab* or "prayer niche" where Baba sits, and on the steps of candles to his right.

Back in the study room, Baba's high-back chair also has the place of prominence. And as we talked, Baba sat comfortably in his chair with one leg curled under him. His baggy pants seem made for sitting like that, but it is his flexibility that makes such sitting possible. No doubt the Muslim way of prayer, in which one kneels and then bows until the forehead touches the floor, facilitates such flexibility late in life. But it is the flexibility of Baba's talk that I would explore and the subtlety of the way he teaches.

When I asked Baba the question about how Selim Baba had taught him, I had been coming to the tekke for lessons, on a weekly basis, for twelve years. One would think that by then I would have known how my teacher had been taught. But I was not even sure, after all those years, how Baba taught me. There was no syllabus. Baba did not announce topics or even initiate talk. Instead it fell into my lap to begin lessons.

I found that initiating topics myself was uncomfortable, for clearly Baba had the greater authority. Baba is head of the tekke. When people come to the tekke they always go first to greet him. This involves taking his hand, kissing the back of it, and putting it to their foreheads. Or if they are "inner members,"[3] they kiss the inside of Baba's hand and then kiss his heart as well. When people leave a room where he is, they back out, bowing in respect.

Behind these gestures is respect and love for Baba as one who took vows of dervishhood and vows of celibacy[4] at age twenty-one, and who has since dedicated his life to serving God and his community. I am an American student from Michigan. How should I deign to initiate lessons?

And yet we have studied together all these years. But what have I learned? That too is problematic. The best answer I can give is that I have learned to come back. In other words, I have been learning a relationship. I have been learning how to be a *talib* (seeker) as the student of a *murshid* (spiritual guide) is known. This is no small undertaking, for the relationship of talib to murshid is a model of the relationship of human being to God. How is this relationship learned? That is the central question of this study, and my approach is to assume that a description of our lessons will shed some light on this issue.

Most of our lessons have been spent talking with each other and reading Turkish *nefes* together. Nefes are the spiritual poems of the Bektashis. After all these years of study together, I should be able to follow these nefes, or at least Baba's explanations. Or, and perhaps this is the most important, if I do not follow I should be patient and trust that what is confusing will straighten out in time. Alas, this is not always so.

In fact, when I asked Baba how he had been taught by Selim Baba, it was precisely in the context of my own perplexity as a talib. Baba had explained a quatrain, I had been confused, I had asked for repeated explanation, and had been even more confused. After a third unsuccessful try, I had cried out in frustration, "Baba, how did Selim Baba teach you?" (In asking this I had hoped to discover how Baba had learned from his own murshid, and by extension what I was doing wrong.)

Baba answered my intent. That is, instead of answering how he had been taught, he answered how he had learned. Baba responded in the Turkish[5] that was our common language.

Baba: işte duyarken
FT: duyarken?
Baba: yaa\
FT: {laughs}

* * * * *

Baba: thus by listening
FT: by listening?
Baba: yaa\
FT: {laughs}

Baba then went on to respond to my impatience and frustration with myself for not being able to follow the explanation of the nefes.

Baba: senin gibi~
ne kadar~
... e- çok şeyler oğrenmişsin sen benden~
{softly}
FT: evet
Baba: ama nasıl oğrenmişsin
duyarken
FT: eh doğru
Baba: ben sohbet ederim~
konuşolurum~
FT: evet
Baba: sen duyarsin
hatırında kalkar

* * * * *

Baba: like you
so much~
... e- many things you have learned from me~
{softly}
FT: yes

Baba: but how have you learned~
by listening
FT: true
Baba: I talk as a friend~
I speak~
FT: yes
Baba: as for you~ you listen\
it stands out in your memory

Baba's kindness in suggesting I had learned much from him was salve to my dignity. He did not bother to confront me with the foolishness of my insistence on immediate understanding.

But all was not dismal. The very way I had expressed my frustration and called for help did show I had learned how to ask in a Bektashi frame. For, in asking how Baba's murshid had taught him, I had appealed to the basic relationship of the Bektashis.

I. Introduction

Master-Student Relations

in which the topic of master-disciple relations emerges, and an approach to examining this relationship is proposed

In the thirteenth century, with the Mongols pushing at their backs, Haji Bektash along with other Islamicized Turkmen peoples came westward from Khorasan across Iran to Anatolia. In central Anatolia, Haji Bektash drew followers around him, and a Sufi or Islamic mystic order, the Bektashis, was founded in his name. Two centuries later, in the fifteenth century, Sarı Saltık and other babas or Bektashi leaders came westward with Ottoman armies from Anatolia to the Balkans, where they got as far as Albania. There, more tekkes, or Bektashi "monasteries," were established. Five centuries passed. Then, most recently, in the twentieth century, Baba Rexheb had to flee the Communist forces in his native Albania, who saw established religious leaders like himself as enemies of the state. He too came westward, eventually settling in Michigan. In 1954, along with a group of Albanian immigrants, Baba established the First Albanian Bektashi Tekke in America.

I mention this broad sweep of westward movement as a preliminary, a sort of stretching, before settling into a study that is severely limited in geographical space. The physical parameters of this study are in fact two rooms, one above the other, in an old farmhouse on the outskirts of Detroit. The upper room was amply described in the Prologue. It is there that lessons with Baba have taken place, and where I continue to study with him. The other room, beneath, is the basement kitchen, where daily meals are cooked and served and where people drink coffee less formally, talk interminably, and Baba presides most comfortably at the head of the long table.

Behind Baba's place in the basement kitchen is the squat, black twelve-burner stove whose heat warms the classroom above. Toward the end of the morning lessons, the smells of the midday meal waft upward as well. In the same way, the talk around the meal table, the prayers at the table after meals, and the chanting that occurs spontaneously there all help contextualize the private dialogues with Baba and our reading of mystic poetry that take place upstairs.

Returning to the geographical sweep mentioned earlier, from Khorasan to Anatolia, on to Albania, and from there to America, I would like to note that this process took place over seven hundred years. I mention this time period as background, but also in contrast to the time frame of the present work, whose questions arise from fifteen years of study with Baba Rexheb, whose texts come from the last two years of lessons, and whose particular focus is a lesson that lasted seventy minutes. And although seventy minutes is far from seven hundred years, references and patterns of behavior in the lessons can range back to times even before the founding of Bektashi tekkes in the thirteenth century.

Only here, after presenting the spatial and temporal frames of Bektashism and of the immediate study, I pause. Baba Rexheb would not have introduced things in this way. Instead, when asked about Haji Bektash's coming to Anatolia, the Bektashis' entry to Albania, and his own coming to America, Baba responded in a different manner. In the summaries of Baba's accounts that follow, note the overriding importance of the *murshid*, that is, "the master," "the spiritual guide," or roughly, "the teacher."

First, regarding Haji Bektash's coming to Anatolia, Baba recounted that Haji Bektash Veli was born in Nishapur (Iran). His murshid was Lokman Perende, whose murshid was Ahmet Yesevî. In a dream, Ahmet Yesevî saw a sign that Bektash should go to Rum (Anatolia), and so, following the words of his murshid's murshid, he set out first for Mecca and then to the shrine of Ali in Najaf (Iraq), thus receiving the title of *haji*, "one who has made the pilgrimage." After visiting tombs of many saints, Haji Bektash Veli settled in Anatolia where the first Bektashi tekke was opened. In his lifetime he initiated three hundred *halife*s (a high Bektashi clerical position).[1]

Second, in describing the coming of Bektashism to Albania, Baba recounted that Sarı Saltık, a halife of Haji Bektash, was sent to Rumeli (the European part of Ottoman lands), where he founded several tekkes. Before Sarı Saltık's death in Kruje, Albania, people came to him requesting that he be buried by their tekke or on their lands. Sarı Saltık ordered seven wooden coffins be brought to him. After he died each person looked under the cloth of a different coffin and saw him there, and so Sarı Saltık is understood to be buried in seven places in Rumeli, including one in Greece.

Finally, as for Baba's own coming to America, Baba described it in terms of his leave-taking of his murshid, Selim Baba. Baba did not know that he would never see his murshid again alive, or that he would never return to Albania. He therefore did not carry Selim Baba's poems out of Albania with him. The greatest regret of his life is that he did not bring his murshid's poems to have them published here. But he could not have known that he would not see his murshid again alive, and even had he known, as he noted with sadness, he still could not have asked for the poems.[2] This was Baba's account of his departure from Albania.

Regarding the establishment of a Bektashi tekke in America, after Baba and I walked around the recently built white stone *türbe* (mausoleum) on tekke grounds, where Baba will be buried when he dies, we stopped and stood gazing at the tekke that has grown so in the more than thirty years since its founding. I asked Baba whether his murshid wouldn't have been proud of all his work in America. Baba immediately responded in Turkish, and with utter unselfconsciousness:

Ama hepsi onun nimetinden

* * * * *

But it is all from his blessing.

Thus, Baba's accounts of the westward spread of Bektashism contrast with my earlier accounts of the same phenomenon. Whereas my accounts were dotted with temporal and geographical guideposts, the reference points in Baba's accounts tend to be murshids and their words. Haji Bektash's, Sarı Saltık's, and Baba Rexheb's legitimacy and identity are presented in terms of their relationship with their murshids. In the last passage, the one about Baba's reflection on the tekke in America, it is true that the question was framed in terms of Baba's murshid, but the response further underscores the importance of this relationship.

In the Bektashi world of discourse, that is, in parables and narratives, poetry and prayers, in the rituals and in talk at the tekke, the centrality of the relationship with the murshid, as exemplified in Baba's accounts above, is the norm. The very arrangement at the kitchen table, with Baba always at the head, reflects this, for Baba is a murshid. His disciples or students, who are traditionally known as *talib* (a word derived from the Arabic meaning "one who seeks, who strives after"), are seated to either side down the table. But then Baba is also a talib, for each murshid is a talib of his own murshid.

Indeed, there is an unbroken chain of talibs and murshids through which Bektashis connect themselves to their *Pir*, their "patron saint," Haji Bektash Veli. This chain continues from Haji Bektash back to Ali, whose murshid was the Prophet Muhammad, whose murshid was the Angel Gabriel,[3] and thus to God. One way this understanding is expressed is in *devriye*, or "cycle poems." In these poems, the presence of Haji Bektash is described at the initial creation of the world, with the prophets, with the imams,[4] up into the ritual conducted by a living murshid in the private ceremonial room of a Bektashi tekke.

Building on this continuity, Bektashis come into relation with God through devotion and obedience to their personal murshid. This is expressed in their characteristic poetic form, the *nefes*, or "breath of spirit," of which the cycle poems are only one sort. Nefes are most commonly chanted around a meal table after a ritual in the ceremonial room. In nefes the feelings and devotion toward one's particular murshid are endlessly evoked and elaborated. The nefes can thus be seen as a particular Bektashi language of the murshid-talib relationship. As such, they should shed some light on the relationship. However these nefes readily escape those of us new to Bektashism. Their coherence is not narrative in a Western sense, rather it is a much more subtle linking and contrasting of centuries-old Persified Islamic poetic motifs and forms.

For example, the following text is my close translation of a Turkish nefes by Pir Sultan Abdal (sixteenth century) that Baba particularly likes. I include the first quatrain in Turkish (the full Turkish text is in Appendix B).

Derdim çoktur kangisına yanayim hu
  Yine tazelendi yürek yaresi
Ben bu derde kande derman bulayim hu
  Meğer Şah elinden ola çaresi hu

* * * * *

So many are my sufferings, which shall consume me hu
  The wounds of my heart again are raw.
For my sufferings, where shall I find remedy, hu
  If there be cure only from the hand of the Shah. hu

All her garments are finer than the rose.
    Do not scorn the nightingale; it is unfitting of the rose.
Such longing have I endured, my heart is bruised.
    Easily come the fragments of my soul.   hu

My tall and graceful cypress, my plane tree.
    A fire strikes my heart; I blaze.
Toward you I pray, I turn always facing you.
    My prayer niche is between your two brows.   hu

Love is not fulfilled with glances,
    Who flees from love is not a man.
The candle is not put out by the breath of a denier,
    Once afire, the light of passion burns.   hu

I am Pir Sultan, so much you have let yourself fall.
    Without greeting, you come and you pass by.
Why do you flee this loving affection?
    Is this to be the emblem of our way?   hu

If this is the Bektashi language of the murshid-talib relationship, it is an "in-house" language. Much contextualization is needed for it to become meaningful for talibs, not to mention non-Bektashis. In my experience, attaining even some understanding takes years.

For example, the word "hu" at the very end of the nefes and at the end of lines was familiar to me from meal-time in the kitchen. Baba always prayed after meals. When he finished the prayer, he always put his right hand on his heart, bowed his head even lower, and intoned "huu."

For years I assumed that this "hu" was a sort of "amen." And although there were occasional intimations that it meant something slightly different (when I studied Arabic, I recognized "hu" as a way of saying هو, the Arabic third-person singular pronoun "he"); my overriding experience of its usage in closing a prayer kept "hu" akin to "amen" in my mind.

Then after years of study with Baba, I went to Turkey for a summer and returned with some Bektashi books that Baba had requested. As I began to read them to him, I noticed the first page of a book attributed to the thirteenth-century founder, Haji Bektash Veli, began with "hu." "Hu" suddenly showed up all over. That same day I noticed that letters from Bektashis in Turkey sent to Baba also all began with "hu." Baba's nefes that he had written before coming to America began with "hu." These "hu"s had always been there, but I had been blind to them. It was as if my eyes were suddenly opened.

I began to understand that "hu" was not just a sort of "amen"—a request to God that "thus may it be." Rather, "hu" was like the orthodox Muslim *bismillah* (in the Name of God) that begins each chapter of the Qur'an, and that is recited by many Muslims before engaging in all manner of activities.

"Hu" is similar to "bismillah," not just in usage but also in reference. It is one of the ways that God is referred to in the Qur'an ("He"), and is therefore a "Name" of God. But with the intersubjectivity of pronouns, that is, with the special ability of pronouns to reference immediate participants or contexts of discourse, "hu" (a special "he"), when intoned by Baba, also invoked his own murshid. For in Bektashism it is through the intercession of one's murshid that one approaches God.

Full contextualization of the nefes by Pir Sultan Abdal is a distant rhetorical goal—beyond this book and this writer at this time. My point in bringing it up here is to give an example of talib-murshid discourse from within the Bektashi world of discourse. Baba, who knows hundreds of these nefes by heart, reads them in four languages (Persian, Turkish, Arabic, and Albanian), and writes them in two (Turkish and Albanian), is a fluent speaker of this language. I am not. This then represents a difference in Baba's and my language repertoires. But the difference is not merely Baba's knowledge of nefes; it is also his knowledge of the context in which they are chanted. A critical change during this study—an attunement at the broadest level—was my growing understanding of the public context of recitation of nefes.

A simpler example of attunement relating to nefes was my dramatic grasping of a wider reference of "hu." When I recognized the broader use and more personal reference of "hu," my language had expanded and come closer to Baba's and that of nefes. This instance of attunement, however, did not drop from the sky. In discussing the motif of sudden illumination of a student by a teacher in Martin Buber's *Hasidic Tales,* Harriet Feinberg (1972) noted:

> The momentary illumination usually depends in fact on a shared reference-system, built up over a period of time. The ability to provide a moment of sudden, deep illumination can indeed at times arise in a brief encounter, but it arises out of participation in a community in which teacher and student

> have a close relationship that extends over a period of time, even if the one illuminated is not a member of that community. The spiritual strength built up through these attachments is what the *zaddik* [similar to the murshid] draws on to provide the moment of insight for the newcomer, the seeker.[5]

In the terms of the above citation, then, I will study the process of learning of a murshid-talib relationship by studying growth of a "shared reference-system." The movement of this growth is toward the discourse of nefes. But the place of departure is more plebeian.

The place of departure is the lessons in the study room of the tekke, with me on my folding chair and Baba in his high-back one. The particular lesson I focus on took place on a November morning in 1985 in the twelfth year of study with Baba.

The Lesson

> in which the history of taping of lessons is recounted, one lesson is selected, and a stab is made at showing what the lesson is not

This book is centered around one lesson that took place early in November of my twelfth year with Baba. More accurately, I draw from the tape-recording of this lesson along with my recollections of it. But as taping of lessons has not always been a common practice at the tekke, I will first sketch the context of taping before describing why the particular November lesson was selected from among more than eighty taped lessons.

For the first eleven years of study I did not tape-record our lessons. Then in the twelfth year I gradually began to tape them. This taping, however, did not occur because of any grand ethnomethodological design. I first brought a tape-recorder to the tekke to record the chanting of laments for particular public ceremonies. One day in April of that year, when we had finished with a lament and the tape-recorder was openly running, I asked what I mistakenly saw as a simple question, "Baba, where does your name come from?"

Now, I was not totally ignorant; in various earlier lessons I had learned that Baba had been prayed for before his birth, and named in a chronogram[6] by his murshid's murshid then. But what I learned from Baba's response to my question on the origin of his name, besides an integration of what I had earlier heard, was that Baba understood his naming as a designation of his duty in the world.[7] I also learned that Baba was willing to continue talking with the recorder on. The very richness of Baba's response and his acceptance of the recorder then led to an increase in taping and a gradual shift in what I taped.

The following week I taped Baba reading several nefes by Nesimi (fifteenth century) and Baki's famous lament on the death of Sultan Suleyman (1566), but I also taped our discussion about meter in these poems. The next week I taped Baba reciting a liturgical poem on the birth of Ali, for it was the week of *Nevruz*, a solar-based holiday[8] that combines a celebration of spring and the Persian New Year with the birth of Ali. But I also taped our discussion of the poem and the holiday.

Thus I shifted from occasionally taping set-off prayers and laments to recording the more overtly interactive discussions of our lessons. This is an important change. Had I stayed with the set-off single-speaker texts, this book might have been a more limited dialect or translation study, more in line with linguistic studies in the first half of this century. Instead, in terms of older linguistic studies, I take what was often the dedication (for how many linguists like Bloomfield and Sapir dedicated their studies to their remarkable informants) and focus on the interactive learning implied in these dedications.

Such scenes of learning, as in the discussions between Baba and me, are much less predictable and less individually controlled interactions than are monologic recitations. I would emphasize the difficulty of individual control of an interaction in which there are multiple parties, especially for readers who are made uneasy by a study in which the interpreter was an overt participant.

Interpreter-participation is common in close analyses of speech interaction.[9] Indeed, understanding of such speech situations requires close interpreter interaction with the participants. However, such interaction does not imply control of the situation. On the contrary, a common reaction of participant-interpreters to hearing the tape of their interaction is reflected in the title of a sociolinguist's paper: "Do I Really Sound Like That?" (Jahr in Trudgill, 1986), and in a sociologist's comment on listening to a tape including himself, "I found myself wondering what he (Grimshaw) would do next" (Grimshaw, 1982).

Taping of Baba's discourse has since ceased.[10] But that leaves a two-year corpus of tapes of lessons from which to choose. After much listening and transcribing of tapes from different times over the two-year period, I selected the early November lesson from the first six months of the taping period.

I was drawn to this particular lesson for its variety of forms of interaction. In terms of Baba's speech, the lesson is rich in narratives, anecdotes, adages, and poetry. And it is from one especially memorable narrative early in the lesson that I draw a name for the whole lesson. Thus, instead of referring to the lesson as "an early November lesson," from now on I refer to it as "the Hizir lesson." (Hizir, a prototypical murshid sometimes associated with Elijah or Elias, figures prominently in Baba's narrative. He also figures in a related narrative in the Qur'an, and is known in the commentaries in the Arabic form of his name as "Khidr.")

Besides variation in Baba's rhetorical forms in the Hizir lesson, there is also much variation in my verbal contributions to the interaction. This contrasts with many other lessons, in which the convention is for Baba to do the lion's share of the talking. As he implied when asked how his murshid taught, it is for me to listen. In particular, in these other lessons I somehow initiate talk at the outset, occasionally read aloud from collections of nefes,[11] listen, show that I am listening, and then help with closure. Baba does the rest of the talking. During such lessons there may be a variety of interaction going on, but because my response is generally silence, oral reading, or forms of "um-hmm," this variety is difficult to investigate with a tape recorder.

In contrast, in the Hizir lesson I make more frequent and varied comments throughout the lesson. One of the results is that instances of misunderstanding and confusion are more apparent. This less "smooth" interaction has the advantage of putting in relief our relationship as seen in our interactive strategies.[12] This is not to say that our relationship is atypical in this lesson; merely that it is more aurally accessible.

A second feature that drew me to the Hizir lesson, besides the variety of verbally expressed interaction, was its overt "meta" dimension. In that lesson Baba and I discussed the relationship of murshid and talib and referred directly to our own relationship. Now all interactions have a "meta" dimension, for, no matter what participants are doing, they are also indirectly commenting on their relationship with each other. But that week, I had just begun to consider writing a dissertation on the relationship of murshid and talib, and my enthusiasm spilled into the lesson in the form of questions on the relationship. Further, my more obvious confusions and vulnerabilities in this lesson led to strategies of mediation on both our parts that put our relationship in yet greater relief.

Finally, besides variety of verbal interplay and explicit references to our relationship, I chose the Hizir lesson for its length. It is seventy minutes long, making it the longest of the uninterrupted taped lessons (here I discount lessons where either Baba or I read aloud extensively from books). This length allows for greater possibility of repetition of patterns of interaction, and therefore, hopefully, my perception of these patterns.

Yet the very length of the interaction that offers such a broad arena for trying out hypotheses of interaction is also a linguist's nightmare. So much can be communicated in a single pause, particularly by those who know each other well. What then of seventy minutes of interaction?

Many linguists and sociologists of language have therefore wisely stuck to analysis of much shorter forms, like a proverb (Becker, 1984); or much shorter periods of interaction: from five seconds (Schegloff, 1968)[13] to five minutes (Pittinger, Hockett and Danehy, 1960) to nine minutes combined (Scollon, 1976) to fifteen minutes (Labov and Fanshel, 1977). The exception is Tannen, who braved over two hours of interaction among six participants (1984).

After transcription, the immediate problem with a seventy-minute interaction is segmentation so that one can reflect on the interaction. Another problem is the rhetorical one of presenting so much interaction for readers. The organization of this book reflects a pendulum-like response to the need for both segmentation and integration in a meaningful frame.

Before leaving discussion of why the Hizir lesson was selected as a basis of study, I return to the point I made earlier of my relatively more varied and more frequent verbal contributions during this particular lesson. A reasonable question is why this greater verbal contribution on my part occurred during the Hizir lesson. A partial explanation was given when I noted that the week of that lesson I had just decided to write on the murshid and talib relationship and so had questions for an outside audience. Along with this, though, there is another circumstance that I see as having influenced the Hizir lesson.

Periodically, people come and interview Baba, for scholarly articles, for radio programs, or just for their own interest in religion. Around the time of the Hizir lesson, a visiting professor had come and stayed at the tekke and interviewed Baba. (As I was wont to do at that time, I taped the interview.) I see the Hizir lesson that took place three days later as a sort of replaying of the professor's interview in which our more usual sort of interaction was temporarily modified. Thus, as a first pass at describing the Hizir lesson, I will now briefly describe the interview that preceded it, both as an event that I feel influenced the Hizir lesson and as a useful sort of foil to my lessons.

Abstractly, the interview had features in common with Baba's and my lessons. Both were interactions wherein one of less knowledge questions one of greater knowledge. In an interview the purpose is presentation to an outside audience. With our lessons this was not usually the purpose, but my idea of writing about the murshid-talib relationship temporarily constituted such an outside purpose. However, there the similarities ended.

In the interview by the visiting professor,[14] the professor's first question concerned the survival of the Bektashi Order. This is a most precipitous beginning, because with no clear successor to Baba, survival even of the Michigan tekke is a pressing question. In contrast, in my lesson with Baba the same week, this question of survival of the Bektashi tekkes also came up, but not so bluntly and not until fifteen minutes into the lesson, and then again at the end of our seventy-minute lesson.

Baba's response to the interviewer's initial question of survival of his Order was defensive, as were his responses to the subsequent two questions on what Bektashism had to offer the world. Baba became less defensive as he started into a discussion of humans as God's *vekil* or "representatives," but he was halted when the interviewer interrupted to ask whether it made a difference how many Bektashis there were.[15]

This sort of shift, from what would have developed into a fuller discussion during a lesson (on the role of humans as *vekil* of God), back to the more distancing question of numbers, occurred frequently in the interview. Here the interviewer's syllabus was showing.

Further, there are instances in the interview where Baba closes a discussion but the interviewer does not acknowledge the closure and merely flies on to another unrelated question. Nor does the interviewer appear to pick up on Baba's signals of irritation. Progressively, Baba's responses get shorter and shorter. In contrast, in the lessons including the Hizir lesson, closure of discussion is negotiated and accomplished together. Comments and references build on immediately preceding discussion, on references earlier in a lesson, and on earlier lessons. This building on preceding talk is described in detail, with examples, in the following chapter.

To give an overall view of the differences between the interview and the Hizir lesson, the interview can be divided into fifteen episodes according to change in topic. These include forty-six questions by the professor over a period of twenty minutes. The Hizir lesson, too, can be segmented into fifteen episodes. These include forty questions by me, but over a period of seventy minutes. In other words, the interview is choppier by number of questions and by shortness of episode. Were the interview like the lesson with regard to frequency of questioning over time, there would be only eleven questions rather than forty-six. Moreover the Hizir lesson itself was an unusual lesson for the variety and frequency of my comments.

The interview finally ended with Baba calling for coffee. This can be read as a sign that verbal repair of social relations was no longer possible; it can be seen as a gesture of mediation over the dissolution of the verbal exchange. But what went wrong?

Several features stand out. First, the interviewer did not recognize Baba's signals: signals of closure of discussions, signals of continuing response, and signals of irritation. Second, the interviewer did not seem able to reframe his questions in more discreet ways. Again and again the matter of survival of Bektashis came up bluntly. This lack of reframing is related to the interviewer's inability to read Baba's signals that some sort of reframing was called for. Finally, the interviewer did not appear to build on Baba's words. At times it almost seemed as if the interview were merely protocol, that the interviewer needed only to get through his questions without being affected by Baba's responses. This may have been a result of nervousness, however, for Baba did not smile or give signals of anticipatory acceptance.

These observations are not meant to denigrate the interviewer. His questions were important ones that showed research and concern. However, reading signals and picking up on interactive rhythms across cultures is difficult. Even reading signals and joining into interactive rhythms within cultures with strangers can be difficult. Given this difficulty, a common strategy is to fall back on outer frames, for example, on questions devised prior to the encounter, and on previously established interactive patterns. I mentioned earlier that one of the puzzling aspects of Baba's teaching was his lack of syllabus. But in listening to the interview, I could understand how a syllabus prepared beforehand by the interviewer and adhered to despite the other's responses ultimately stunted Baba's responses.

One could counter this whole analysis by asserting that the role of an interviewer and the role of a student differ in basic ways. If the purpose of the interview is to get answers to specific questions, then this interviewer-controlled format, as long as it does not utterly alienate the person being interviewed, may be efficient. This theory assumes, however, that the interviewer knows best what he or she wants to know.

With a talib, though, such is clearly not the case. To grow in spiritual understanding, it is precisely the larger frame of what he or she needs to know that the student does not have. Baba's teaching, as I will try to show, nurtures the relationship with the talib, but always with a clear sense of who has this knowledge. And as the murshid models the relationship of the talib with God, any sense of the talib being ultimately in charge is preposterous. Rather than depending on a syllabus, then, the talib relies on the murshid during a lesson. Direction and periodicity are negotiated and affirmed within the interaction. This requires much greater trust and much greater attention than if the talib were to rely on an outside syllabus.

Further, what makes the Hizir lesson so interesting in comparison with other lessons is that there I, too, like the professor, have an outside agenda. My initiating point is that I will write a dissertation on the murshid-talib relationship. Clearly, the requirement of writing a dissertation does not come from Baba. Yet by the end of the lesson I am back in the fold of building on our shared interaction, with Baba steering.

This return to our more common way of interacting is attunement on the scale of the lesson. In the previous section, my growth in understanding the meaning of the word "hu" was also described as attunement. There are, in fact, many scales and figures of attunement that Baba's teaching fosters. Before I present other examples of atttunement and an overview of the study, however, the basic notion of attunement warrants discussion.

Language Attunement

in which "language attunement" is defined, and the relation and debt to neighboring notions and teachers is most gratefully acknowledged

The purpose of this book is to make explicit the implicit perspective and experience of a talib. In linguistic terms, the goal is to describe dialogue in a specific situation of learning; in social terms, it is to describe the murshid-talib relationship.

Bektashi understanding of this relationship is that it is an ongoing one through which the talib is guided along the path to spiritual knowledge. In an attempt to respect the dynamic of the relationship, as well as from the conviction that if a relationship exists anywhere, it is in the interaction of its parties, I look to "language attunement" as a focus of describing this evolving relationship.

The gentle term "attunement" is suggested by Alton Becker (1984), who uses it to refer to the necessary process of self-correction recreated in a philologist's reading of a distant text. His understanding of attunement is that it is never attained but is rather an oscillating approximation toward the world of the distant text. Becker draws his term from John Dewey,[16] but the common parallel is with the tuning of musical instruments for jazz—the self-correction of each musician. "Attunement" thus refers to "a diminishing of difference," or positively, "an increasing coordination."

Attunement is alternatively described by David Blum (1986) in his book on the Guarneri Quartet as "a fifth presence," when all members of the quartet are playing as one: "It is as if the music is playing them." This sort of attunement is one that is attained—attunement as a special state.

The attunement that I describe is a combination of these approximations and arrivals. It is a process—a gradual lingual enrichment of Baba and myself toward a new coherence—but it is also a process with occasional ritual coming together. In an attempt to encompass the breadth of this definition, I define "language attunement" as "increasing coordination through *play-full* recollecting of dialogue with another."

By "play-full recollecting" I intend to suggest several senses of "play." First, the recollecting has varied scope, like a rope with some "play" in it—as short and immediate as a preceding phrasal pattern in a conversation, or as long and distant as a shared story from years in the past. Second, at a far end of the spectrum, participants can get so caught up in the activity, in the "play" of the conversation, that they are transformed. Finally, and this holds across the board, in using the term "play-full recollecting" I refer to the engendering or contagious quality of "attunement" in interaction. This partly reflects the common strategy of matching in conversation, such as when one offers a compliment, and another responds with a compliment. Or in Baba's and my case, an utterance toward the language of another occasions a response toward the language of the previous speaker. But the engendering quality of attunement is more than tit-for-tat; it is observed in interactants' ability and proclivity to use experiences of past attunement as grounds for present attunement. With recurrent interaction, attunement becomes a recursive process, ever expanding in reference and subtlety, leading to the creation of a shared language.

Shared language of this sort is celebrated in a Bektashi context in sessions of *muhabbet* in which participants sing nefes back and forth to each other. In a more mundane way, attunement also can be reached periodically in talk between people who have interacted over a long period of time. My particular aim is to describe strategies that facilitate both the periodic attunement and the more far-reaching attunement, for my understanding of the murshid is that he teaches through such strategies.

This notion of language attunement as "increasing coordination through play-full recollecting of dialogue with another" draws from sociolinguistics, hermeneutics, and cybernetics. Related concepts in each of these fields are "linguistic convergence," "appropriation," and "structural coupling." All of these concepts, it should be noted, are concerned with a way of modeling ongoing change.

"Linguistic convergence," understood as the coming together of two languages or two varieties of a language in the speech variation of individuals, is the ground of sociolinguistics. That such variation can be systematically studied is the premise of the approach. Uriel Weinreich's book *Languages in Contact* (1953) and his later article with his students William Labov and Maurice Herzog (1968) established linguistic convergence as a field of formal study. In the preface to Weinreich's book, Andre Martinet noted that in the past, linguists tended to study linguistic divergence rather than linguistic convergence. Emphasis on divergence kept the "structure of a language" as a thing apart and therefore easier to specify in a structuralist mode. Ongoing change—"interference" as Weinreich still called it, reflecting his historical context—was seen as impossible to study because it muddied up the neat structures. The earlier separatist approach to linguistic study also relied heavily on written records, where variation had presumably spread throughout the system. In contrast, the study of linguistic convergence necessitated study of present structures in speech.

Obviously my study of attunement is a study of speech in which I, too, presume that change can be studied. As for the languages or varieties of languages, there are several. Most prominently, Baba and I speak different dialects of Turkish: he a West Rumelian dialect (Nemeth, 1956, 1961; Friedman, 1982), I a generally more standard Istanbul dialect. Over time, however, Baba's and my dialects are becoming more and more like varieties of the same dialect.

Within the study of linguistic convergence, is a subset, labeled "linguistic accommodation" (Giles et al., 1973), that specifically studies change in mutually intelligible varieties of the same dialect. Instead of defining itself in the historic framework of language change, as linguistic convergence generally has, linguistic accommodation is often contextualized in the broader framework of "interactional synchrony." This broader interactional synchrony includes coordination of body movement, eye contact, speech rhythms, and so forth. Although I do not investigate these aspects, except perhaps for speech rhythm, I also see language attunement as part of the more general phenomenon of interactional synchrony.

Despite these broad perspectives, however, the scope of actual studies of linguistic convergence, including linguistic accommodation, has tended to be restricted to phonological and syntactic features of language. The exceptions are several studies of linguistic convergence in a regional or areal framework (for example, Friedman, 1982) or in an areal and ethnographic one (Scollon and Scollon, 1979).

Unlike most studies of linguistic convergence, both the areal and the ethnographic studies referred to above also include rhetorical or "stylistic" features beyond their descriptions of the usual phonologic, morphologic, lexic, and syntactic features. Moreover, in the ethnographic study cited above, the Scollons extend beyond stylistic features to "world view." Specifically, the Scollons studied language at Fort Chipewyan, Alberta. They sought to show how in that setting Chipewyan and English have come to match more closely in form and meaning. They related their findings and the process of linguistic convergence at Fort Chipewyan to what they term a "world view" of the people.

There is an interesting parallel here with Weinreich's work. Just as he and his students Labov and Herzog targeted the problematic notion of the study of language as a study of discrete structures, so the Scollons targeted the notion of speech community. Instead of coherence of the speech community being one of shared "language" in a political sense, the Scollons posit community coherence in terms of a world view that facilitates language convergence of the multiple languages spoken in that town. As with language attunement, the shared world view is both a dynamic and an interpretation of the situation.

In addition to linguistic convergence, a second concept related to language attunement is the hermeneutic notion of Paul Ricoeur known as "appropriation." Ricoeur brings a distinctive breadth of vision to hermeneutics, the study of interpretation. He sees the aim of all hermeneutics as "a struggle against cultural distance and historical alienation." This description is clearly part of the dynamic of Baba's and my relationship. And while we struggle to understand each other and not be caught in our differences of dialect, generation, religion, nationality, gender, occupation, and other contrasting networks too numerous to mention, in terms of the study, these differences are a boon. They make our adjustments and interactions more visible.

Ricoeur's understanding of the power of a text is particularly stimulating. He sees this power as the potential to disclose a world. Therefore, "To understand is not to project oneself into the text; it is to receive an enlarged self from the apprehension of proposed worlds which are the genuine object of interpretation."[17] The Bektashis would see the power of a nefes as an actualization of the relationship with a murshid, for the inspiration to compose a nefes comes from one's own murshid. Thus the nefes testifies to the relationship. The reciting of a nefes is among other things a recreating of the event of inspiration of a talib by his or her murshid. The murshid is the link to earlier saints, to the founder of the Order, to the imams, and back to Husein, Ali, the Prophet Muhammad, the Angel Gabriel, and God. In Ricoeur's terms the "enlarged self" would then include the spiritual realm.

Instead of speaking of "enlarged self," however, Bektashis and other Sufis speak of "loss of self," of "death before dying." These expressions reflect partly the precariousness of trusting into the Unknown, as well as the reframing that can ensue. But these contradictory metaphors should not blind us to the agreement between Ricoeur and the Bektashis that the event of interpretation or spiritual growth is fundamentally one in which one receives but does not control or direct. Ricoeur calls this event of interpretation "appropriation," or "the making one's own what was initially alien." However, the term "appropriation" has the grave disadvantage of implying that the interpreter is in control. Ricoeur acknowledges the problem, and tries to overcome it by describing the actual process of interpretation as a sort of "play" toward the world proposed by the text.

Ricoeur further acknowledges that many of these formulations derive from Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer's basic notion of "understanding" is that it is "an event in which the interpreting subject does not preside." It is a "fusion of horizons"—the historical horizon of the text with the horizon of the interpreter. In this fusion, the horizon of the interpreter is transformed. Gadamer sees the engagement of the reader in this process of understanding a text as "play." As such it is not a reproductive process of author intent, but a productive process that "lives in presentation."

> What is essential to the phenomenon of play is not so much the particular goal it involves but the dynamic back-and-forth movement in which the players are caught up—the movement that itself specifies how the goal will be reached.
>
> Thus the game has its own place or space, and its movement and aims are cut off from direct involvement in the world stretching beyond it. The fascination and risk that the player experiences in the game indicate that in the end "all playing is a being played."[18]

My definition of attunement as a process of "play-full recollecting of dialogue with another" is clearly in debt to Gadamer's and Ricoeur's references to the event of interpretation as a sort of "play." Further, the emphasis of both Gadamer and Ricoeur that in understanding one does not project oneself into the text, but rather one receives a projection from the world of the text, ties in with my understanding of the creation of a new coherence or language between Baba and myself. This "nonmerging" also ties in with cybernetic understandings of the preservation of the individual unity of systems despite structural change within them as a result of recurrent interaction.

The third related notion after linguistic convergence and appropriation is "structural coupling," the framework of which is cybernetics. Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela (1987) define structural coupling as what ensues "whenever there is a history of recurrent interactions leading to the structural congruence between two or more systems."[19] Cybernetics can be described as a science of patterns and systems as opposed to forces and material. One of its strengths is in modeling feedback in the working of a system. This is important in the concept of language attunement, because the recursive aspect of attunement is one of its central features.

Structural coupling is developed by Maturana and Varela in a cosmology of cognition, *The Tree of Knowledge* (1987), wherein they derive human knowledge by beginning with the interaction of cells in the simplest of living beings. Underlying the whole development from cells to social organization is the distinctive quality of living beings, namely that "their organization is such that their only product is themselves." Another way to phrase this idea is that as unities, they produce their own boundaries, and they can relate to other unities only in terms of their own structures. This construct supports the basic sociolinguistic tenet that there is order in language variation. Maturana and Varela would say that as unities we can change only in terms of what structure we bring to an interaction. In terms of interpretation, we can only perceive from the structures of our current perspective.

Change comes when such unities are in recurrent interaction, causing their structures gradually to accommodate to each other. This might be seen as "adaptation," but Maturana and Varela reject the term because it connotes that the environment is the determinant, when in fact it is the structures of the unities that determine responses. Further, over time there occurs what Maturana and Varela call "structural drift." The conventional term here would be "evolution," but again the problem with this term is that it implies a world of the environment instead of worlds constituted by the structural responses of interacting unities. Like structural coupling, language attunement is a recurrent process. And the structural drift of Baba's and my interaction is toward constituting a world of shared experience of nefes.

Thus language attunement as "increasing coordination through play-full recollecting of dialogue with another" is similar to and draws from linguistic convergence, appropriation, and structural coupling. But in this discussion and in the definition, the vague element is what constitutes "dialogue with another." Why not just say "dialogue" and leave it at that? The reason I add "with another" to "dialogue" is that I want to emphasize the *personal* quality of these rememberings. They are not rememberings of dialogues unconnected to the recollector. Rather, the recollector was most often a party in the dialogues he or she recalls, or at the very least, closely linked to one of the parties.

In the case of the Hizir lesson, "dialogue with another" includes most often earlier dialogues with the "immediate other," that is with Baba and myself. But the rememberings of Baba can also include dialogues with Baba's murshid (Selim Baba) who is long dead. Indeed, a point of this book is that the way Baba teaches facilitates both our attunement with our earlier dialogues with each other, as well as Baba's remembering and sharing of his earlier dialogues with his murshid.

And these earlier dialogues include not just the words spoken, but also the context of the words in the interactive situation of speaking. For example, Baba's memories of nefes are entwined with the ritual context at the tekke where he heard them and participated in their chanting. So just as "language" in this book is not to be understood as a set of rules, similarly "memories of dialogues" are not movable impersonal scripts. Instead "language" should be understood here as "a repertoire of games," to use Ludwig Wittgenstein's term, with the remembered dialogues as a specific set of personally shared games, where the sharing and the context also have theological significance.

A difference in Baba's and my repertoires was his richer experience with remembered dialogues of nefes in ritual tekke settings. This is an important point, for my major confusion in understanding the lesson was an undervaluing of the personal linking of nefes, and an overly restrictive categorization of the discourse situation of nefes.

Progression to a fuller understanding of the discourse situation of nefes is the plot and substance of the fifth chapter of this book. Baba's and my interaction described there is an example of attunement, or increasing coordination, on a broad scale. But the earlier chapters also catalogue attunements between Baba and myself. It is to an overview of all these chapters and their particular processes or "figures" of attunement that I now turn.

Maps of the Study

in which the chapters of this study are most fleetingly characterized, "figures" of attunement are sketched, and Haji Bektash comes in riding on a stone

A map or overview of this study should help readers follow the variety of focal lengths with which I examine the Hizir lesson, and the variety of perspectives from which I view the relationship with Baba.

Briefly, in the chapter following this Introduction, I study the lesson and its interactive structures in terms of episodes. The episode is a basic focal length and segmentation. I look at openings and closings of episodes, at patterns within the narrative episodes, and at what I consider the pivot of the lesson. Within this discussion I present one episode in its entirety.

In the following chapter on the nature of interacting with Baba, I take a different approach, and rather than continue with segmentations and progressions, I describe the lesson from the perspective of "keyings" (systematic signaling of how an interaction is to be interpreted) of the participants. This leads to a negative definition of the lesson. In other words, just as earlier in the Introduction I described the lesson as "not an interview," so in the third chapter I draw from Albanian society and describe the lesson as "not a joust." By "joust" I refer to the practice of verbal duel, of challenge and riposte, that is such a source of pleasure in Islamic societies.

Then in the fourth chapter I return to looking at progressions across the lesson. Here I focus less on structural units like the episode and more on cohesive textures and their emergence. And whereas I came up with a plot and coherence to the lesson as a whole in the second chapter, in this chapter I develop appreciation of the cohesion of Baba's teaching and my learning.

In chapter five I am again concerned with keyings or interpretive frames. But whereas earlier I was interested in frames of the participants, here I look for a frame from Islamic society for the whole lesson. I describe my growing interest with *muhabbet*, the ritual setting of the chanting of nefes, and how Baba finally contextualized muhabbet for me in most memorable fashion in the basement kitchen of the tekke.

Finally, in the last chapter I review the figures of attunement described in the study. I also coax out assumptions, the "walls of my mind," that restricted understanding of the Bektashi context of lessons with Baba. The epilogue is a brief Sufi characterization of the relationship of murshid and talib. I know of no better.

Another sort of map of this book is an overview of the various "figures" or particular progressions of attunement. For example, one figure already referred to is the gross change of format across the lesson, from an unusual quasi-interview format to a smoother, more deferential format that is the common sort interaction between Baba and myself.

Figure of Attunement: **Gross Change of Format**

(episodes 1 to 7)
interviewlike
multiple shifts of direction of discussion
reference to project outside lesson (dissertation)

⟶

(episodes 8 to 11)
usual interaction of Baba and me
continuous direction of discussion of narrative
total demise of reference to outside project

Another example (second figure) of a figure of attunement is found at the level of episode structure. Here I see the direction of drift toward an interchange of personalized nefes. The vertical axis represents time through the lesson, and the horizontal axis drift toward nefes.

Figure of Attunement: **Drift to Nefes**

reference
  ⟶ response
    reference based on interaction
    ⟶ response toward Bektashi form
      nefes
        ⟶ nefes

The second figure thus leads to interactional attunement wherein a nefes calls up in response another nefes. Baba and I did not reach this attunement in the lesson, but that was the direction of our interaction. More humbly, in the episode described in detail in chapter two, we did arrive at a shared concern for the future of the tekke.

Supporting the second figure is the figure of the gradual surfacing of nefes in the Hizir lesson (third figure).

Figure of Attunement: **Gradual Surfacing of Nefes Across the Hizir Lesson**

1st episode:
  at close, my aphoristic statement and Baba's

  4th episode:
    at close, my aphoristic statement, nefes by Baba

    6th episode:
      nefes behind whole episode

      7th episode:
        early in episode nefes by Baba

These figures of attunement and others will be developed in the context of the different chapters. However what is missing in these summary figures, as in summary as a genre, is a shared sense of pleasure. Since I defined language attunement as coming about through "play-full recollecting of dialogue with another," this omission is significant. In an attempt to rectify neglect of the emotional texture of attunement, and with the understanding that a "taste" is also a sort of "map," I offer the following example of attunement in the Hizir lesson. It is necessarily at a much finer level of analysis than episode structure or rhetorical form.

The relevant passage took place fourteen minutes into the seventy-minute Hizir lesson, near the end of the first episode. Baba had just made a distinction between *murshids* (spiritual teachers) and *ustaz* (teachers). I had then asked Baba how one knew if someone was really a murshid, or just a teacher. Baba had explained that in the past, murshids would bring word to their talib through what were "like miracles." Baba continued that thus the talib would know the murshid was a true murshid, "that he saw not just from the front, but from the back as well." I had not heard that expression for what must refer to "special vision," but the picture in my mind of "eyes in the back of the head" made me laugh. Baba laughed too. Then, to check that I understood what "like miracles" referred to, I asked:

FT: hazreti Bektaş- hazreti Bektaş Velinın
bu taşe~
Baba: **binmesi**
FT: **binmesi**~
boyle gibi **mirakl**?
Baba: **mirakl** yaa\
.. **boyle**dır\

* * * * *

FT: his majesty Bektash- his majesty Bektash Veli's
on a stone~
Baba: **his riding**
FT: **his riding**
that sort of **miracle?**
Baba: **miracle** yaa\
.. **that sort** it is\

I have highlighted the obvious attunement of "tracking," that is, the immediate repetition of words of the other: my tracking of Baba's "his riding," and Baba's tracking of my "miracle" and "that sort." But were I to single out all instances of attunement, the entire passage would be boldfaced. It is this density of attunement that I later use to develop the notion of an "attunement slide."

Beginning at the top of the passage, my reference to (Haji) Bektash Veli's being "on a stone" harkens back to a story Baba has told me on several occasions in previous lessons. Briefly, in that story another spiritual teacher wanted to prove that he was superior to Haji Bektash. So he rode in on a wild animal, showing that he could tame the heart of humans, though it be wild like that of an animal. In response, Haji Bektash proceeded to ride in on a large stone, besting the other by showing that he could restore to life the heart of humans, though it be dead like a stone.

In the room next to the study, there is a picture depicting this story (see frontispiece). Baba had first told me the story in the context of explaining the allegorical picture of two bearded men in ritual headgear, one riding on a strangely docile lion, the other riding proudly on a large flat

stone. Baba's telling of the story had been a sort of translation of the picture for me. Later tellings had come up in other contexts, and because it was a memorable picture and story, by the second telling it was already part of my repertoire as well. Thus, in referring to this multiply shared story, I was recalling our earlier dialogues on the story that themselves were occasions of attunement.

Baba's response to my minimal evoking of this story (in only five words) was to show that he had picked up my reference. He did this by fitting in closely with my immediately preceding language. In particular, he played into and completed a genitive construction that I had begun. In Turkish, the genitive is marked on both components of the construction.

veli**nin** binme**si**

* * * * *

veli'**s** riding (**his**)

Baba's providing the second word of my genitive construction shows very close semantic and syntactic coordination with my language. It demonstrates his close attention and attunement with my talk.

I follow this coordination by "latching" onto his utterance "his riding." That is, my next utterance, which happens here to be a repetition but need not be, comes without discernible pause after Baba's utterance. This close coordination of speech rhythms is a form of attunement as is the tracking we both engage in in our immediate repetitions of each other's words.

My next word, *boyle*, or "this sort," I pronounce with a back vowel (*o*), as in Baba's West Rumelian dialect, instead of with a rounded front vowel (*ö*) as it would be in more Standard Turkish. Ninety percent of the time I use this common word in the Hizir lesson, however, I pronounce it the Standard way. My movement here to Baba's dialect of Turkish then is a tuning to him.

In Baba's next turn, he too uses "boyle" in "boyledir" as a response to my question and an echo of my words. However, Baba's use of "boyle" here is more than a response and an echo, for, as we will see in the next chapter, the most common way Baba signals closure of an episode is with the phrase "işte boyle" (thus it is so). The enclitic suffix "-dir," reinforced by the preceding minute-long pause ("mirakl yaa\ .. boyledir\"), combine to suggest a shift in meaning of "boyle" from "that sort" as I had used it (that sort of miracle) to "it is so." Thereby Baba signals closure while at the same time playing on my words.

What do all these attunements signify? First, there is pleasure. To refer to a shared story with only five words and a nod of the head toward the next room is to play collusively. That Baba is part of this is clearly seen in his close play into my words. And his completing of my genitive construction is an artistic response to my question of whether that sort of story was indeed the kind of miracle he had been referring to in his distinction of murshid and teacher. My use of his dialect in "boyle" can be understood as a continuing of our play, a refusing to step back. My dialect of Turkish is generally considered of higher status than Baba's regional one, but to ask a question in a higher-status dialect would send a possible message of superiority that I want no part of. Baba's following reference to a second meaning of "boyle" is a sort of punning.

A second significance of such multiple attunement is that it marks a coming together of Baba and myself near the close of an episode. Episode structure will be discussed in the next chapter, but the point here is that twenty seconds after this passage we had closed the first episode of the Hizir lesson.

A third significance of this passage is that Baba and I have yet another instance of attunement under our belts on the basis of the old Bektashi story. Hearing such stories again and again reinforces patterns in the story. One pattern of this story of the baba on the lion and the baba on the stone is the progression from animal to unliving thing. This is a sort of negative definition of human being. Going the other way, from unliving thing to animal to human, leads to God.

Overall, the attunement slide just described was for Baba and myself a reassurance of a shared past, and a testament to current attention. It is in this soil of trust and attention that the relationship of murshid and talib grows from attunement to attunement.

II. The Interactive Structure of Episodes in a Lesson

The focus of this chapter is internal bracketing of the Hizir lesson. Such bracketing provides grounds for the division of the lesson into parts that can then be analyzed and defined as units. Internal comparison of such units is the basis of a structuralist description, but the establishing of brackets and the defining of units are not just creatures of analysis. In a seventy-minute conversation between people of long-standing companionship, conventions of interaction and a periodicity in the flow of conversation are to be expected. Further, these conventions of interaction are an important form of attunement, for they most certainly if unconsciously reflect recollection of earlier dialogues between Baba and myself.

What then are the episodes of the lesson? How are they bracketed? And what messages do variations in their bracketing carry?

Where the Lesson Breathes

> in which it is shown that topics alone are insufficient for setting off episodes, that bracketing of episodes is better defined through negotiated boundaries, and that it is through these boundaries the lesson under scrutiny breathes

In most studies of conversation, topics are the basis of episoding. Centering on topics, however, may reflect the particular sort of interactions that have been chosen for study. For example, the most common sort of conversational study to date is the interview.[1] The next most common sort appears to be teacher-student interaction in the classroom.[2] In both the interview and the classroom situation, transfer of information or checking up on information is seen as important. This lends itself to topical episoding of the interaction. But even in other sorts of studies, like Deborah Tannen's on conversation around a holiday meal (1984) and Labov and Fanshel's on a psychotherapeutic session (1977), episodes were defined by shift in topic (although Tannen added that sometimes the episodes were also centered around an activity, and Labov noted that the topical segmentation, which he nevertheless used, was at a superficial level of organization).

Related to the choice of interactions, but in a broader frame, is the tendency in western society to think and organize in terms of topics, of nouns, of titles. An illustration of this inclination is the way we index poems. In the West, most poems have titles. These titles, the poet's last name, or the first line of the poem are how we organize for retrieval of poems in our indexes, anthologies, and libraries.

In contrast, the Sufi poems that Baba knows have no titles. They are indexed by the poet's pen name that is worked into the first line of the last or second to the last couplet of the poem. For example, in the nefes by Pir Sultan Abdal translated in the Introduction, the second-to-last couplet begins:

Pir Sultanım kani yüksek uçarsın

In collections of poetry by a single poet, individual poems are indexed alphabetically by the first letter of the rhyming segment that is picked up across the nefes. Again, with reference to the nefes by Pir Sultan Abdal, this letter would be an "a" from the rhyming segment "-aresi":

Yine tazelendi yürek y**aresi**

Poems are presumed to be remembered by couplets, but not necessarily the first one, a method that strikes me as distant from a topical organization. And certainly the way people have been trained to recollect would affect how they teach.

This leads to the point that I do not see topics as the basis of segmentation of the lesson with Baba. Rather, sequences of interaction seem more related to the righting and affirming of our relationship with each other and to progressions of associations. Throughout the chapter I will illustrate how the meaning of an episode is esssentially an affirming of Baba's and my relationship. This should be clearest in the section on vulnerabilities of openings. But here I would prefer to illustrate with two examples what I mean by progressions of associations.

One sort of progression of associations is played out in the first quarter of the Hizir lesson. I began the lesson by initiating talk on the murshid-talib relationship. Baba's first response to this was to recite the adage in Arabic:

> the murshid is to his talib
> as the Prophet to his community

(The "Prophet" here is, of course, the Prophet Muhammad, and the "community" is the community of Muslims. Muhammad's concern for the Islamic community is a theme throughout the Qur'an.)

Sometime later, after two more reframings on my part, Baba made the point that Sunni or "orthodox" Islam saw the relationship of human being to God as a direct one without intermediary. He then repeated the above adage, only this time in Turkish, after which he made the point that Bektashism, in contrast to Sunni Islam, adheres strongly to the belief in intermediaries between humans and God, the murshid being such an intermediary.

With the point of the murshid being an intermediary as frame, Baba then moved into a long narrative on Hizir and Musa. In this narrative, though, the talib (Musa) questioned the actions of the murshid (Hizir) in open disobedience of the murshid. After the narrative, Baba countered the negative actions of the talib in the narrative with the following adage in Arabic:

> the talib should be to the murshid
> as a corpse in the hands of the body-washer

In other words, unlike Musa in the narrative, the talib should be totally submissive and trusting.

Is the topic here murshids and talibs? That is true of the whole encounter. Are there several topics, one of the murshid being like Muhammad, one of the murshid being an intermediary, and one of talibs as totally submissive? Or is this interaction more about how to think and talk about the relationship of murshid and talib in terms of the narrative and the adages that move from a more "Sunni" or "orthodox nonmystic Islamic" referenced adage of the Prophet in response to my first questions, to the decidedly Sufi adage of submission of the talib given after the narrative? I find more coherence in the progression of linkages from the outer inward (Beeman, 1986), that is, from the Sunni to the Sufi in Baba's explanation, than in a topic or topics.

Historically it has been safer to begin with Sunni images as a grounds of legitimacy, because political power in the Ottoman world was overwhelmingly in the hands of the orthodox Muslims. Theologically, though, this is also the starting point of argument, for all legitimacy is grounded in the Qur'an. Sufism or Islamic mysticism then progresses from the outer Sunni form to an inner Sufi meaning, for example, by affirming the importance of the Sunni injunction to pilgrimage but then understanding true pilgrimage not as a physical journey to Mecca but rather as a spiritual journey to the heart. Again, this parallels Baba's progression from the orthodox Sunni simile of the murshid being like the Prophet to the Sufi metaphor of the murshid as body-washer, as intermediary.

During the Hizir lesson, after Baba's adage on submission of the talib, I continued with my assertion that:

> without a murshid, one sees nothing

Baba's response to this was to offer similar aphorisms prefaced by "we say," leading into a contrast between spiritual teacher and teacher (murshid and ustaz). As mentioned, this response seems less about a topic and more about a progression toward a Bektashi phrasing and framework.

Yet another sort of sequence that does not fit well with topical organization is a sort of zigzag Baba and I engage in forty minutes into the lesson. There Baba suggests I read more about the line of murshids preceding Haji Bektash, but I say that I prefer learning from him because it sticks better and I like the stories. And furthermore, how did his murshid teach him? (This was not the instance referred to in the Prologue.) Baba responds that his murshid taught with stories, parables, and supernatural tales of the saints, after which he explains the source of such supernatural powers in the "chain of the Order," which I relate to the laying on of hands in the Christian church. Somehow a topic is not interactional enough to categorize such movement.

Thus a topic does not appear to serve as the focus of episodes. This is not to say that a change in topic, like the change in motifs in the nefes, cannot be related to the bracketing of an episode. The constraint is that a change in topic alone is not sufficient as a bracket.

In fact there do appear to be interactive patterns around some places where I bring up a topic not related to immediately preceding propositions, but the patterning starts before I introduce the new topic. For example, about twenty minutes into the lesson the following dialogue transpires in Turkish:

1. Baba: . and whatever you should write you know well\
{soft voice}
2. FT: yes\
3. Baba: there is materialism as much as one wants\
{soft voice}
4. FT: yes
5. Baba: **thus it is** this way\
6. FT: hnnn
. **thus** it is good Baba\
7. Baba: yaa
8. FT: .. do you know~
.. hey let's have a look\
{checks the tape-recorder}
as for me what I like are stories\
one thing I like
-is stories\
9. Baba: yaa
10. FT: for example that one on Hizir and Musa~
(it shows) ex-
11. Baba: yes
12. FT: -actly a mur-
13. Baba: ex-
14. FT: -shid
what he is\
are there others Baba~

The second half of this passage (after line 7) with its hedging,[3] pausing, faltering syntax, distraction toward the tape-recorder, and finally my question (in bold) with its direct reference to Baba all constitute what

I consider the beginning of an episode. But the immediately preceding passage (before line 8) is also patterned in Baba's "işte boyle" (thus it is this way) and my repetition of "işte" in "thus it is good Baba" and softer voice.

In fact, in going through the lesson, I found the discourse marker "işte" to be an important signal of closure. Semantically "thus" has potential for closure. But more important, in our other lessons across the years, Baba has used it to mark the closing of a discussion. For example, one of the earliest lessons taped (July 1985) was on the life of Baba's murshid's murshid (Ali Baba, 1826–1903). After telling of Ali Baba's life, Baba finished his narrative by reciting the couplet in Persian that Ali Baba had composed in his last hours. Then Baba said the following:

> . **işte**~ bu beytten sonra~
> eh- bir kaç sahat yaşadi~
> sonra geçti dunyadan\\
> .... **işte**~
> onun tercume-i hali budur\\
>
> * * * * *
>
> . **thus** after this couplet~
> well- he lived a few hours~
> then he passed from the world\\
> .... **thus**~
> this is his life-story\\ {archaic phrase}

At that point I asked Baba about the meaning of the couplet he had recited in Persian. After a few more comments, Baba again said: "işte \\," and I added, "it's complete Baba\\." The taping and lesson ended.

A working hypothesis then is that episodes in the lesson may be bracketed by a cluster of utterances and interactive moves, including most prominently "işte" but also pausing, my introduction of a relatively new topic, hedging, and a direct reference to Baba.

In perusing the lesson, other interactive strategies group with "işte." One of these is Baba's reciting a poetic couplet or line from the Qur'an, glossing it, and then following immediately with an "işte" phrase. Another common co-occurring strategy is laughter from both Baba and me around the "işte" phrase. A summary of these co-occurring bracket markers is shown in the figure.

Figure of Attunement: **Bracket Markers of Episodes**

END of episode
    (quotation)
    (shared laughter) + işte

BEGINNING of episode
    + pause + (hedging) + my introduction of a topic (new or continued) + direct address to Baba

Seeking sequences of these sorts, I find ten such brackets delimiting eleven episodes in the lesson. In contrast, with more subjective topical segmentation I identify at least thirty-two major shifts. Certainly eleven units are easier to deal with than thirty-two. But more important, the bracketing with "işte" has the advantage of being constituted by both Baba and myself; these are negotiated boundaries.

The next figure is an overview of the Hizir lesson, segmented by the negotiated boundaries just described. On the left, the first topic of the episode is listed, while on the right are chains of associating or interacting found within the episode.

An Episode Map of the Hizir Lesson

(episode) (no. of minutes)

(first topic)	*(chain of associating/interacting)*
1. (16 min.) relationship of murshid and talib	 Sunni ⟶ Sufi my words ⟶ Bektashi form
2. (4 min.) no murshids in America	 my words ⟶ Sufi terms concern for Bektashism ⟶ future of tekke
3. (3 min.) good topic?	 confusion ⟶ self-correct
4. (8 min.) more stories like Hizir and Musa	 inappropriate question ⟶ remedy ⟶ mediation of remedy

5. (15 min.)	Bektashism full of murshids	Bektashism ⟶ other faith zigzag to chain of the Order
6. (7 min.)	suggest lessons on great murshid	inspiration as mediation my aphorism ⟶ nefes
7. (7 min.)	is music like poetry?	confusion ⟶ distress ⟶ mediation
———— 4 "işte"s ————		
8. (3 min.)	Baba Bayram's life story	word ⟶ vindication
9. (3 min.)	how long Baba Bayram at tekke	history ⟶ purpose of visit
10. (3 min.)	how met Baba Bayram	Egypt ⟶ America
11. (1 min.)	when Baba Bayram became a baba	circumstances ⟶ purpose ⟶ concern for future of tekke

{telephone rings}
{called to lunch}

What stands out in this map of the Hizir lesson is the change after episode 7. All the episodes after this internal bracket have a unifying reference to Baba Bayram. But the bracket after the seventh episode stood out in my mind before I looked at later episodes. That bracket has the unusual distinction of including four "işte"s. This gave it special prominence among the other brackets which at most include two "işte"s.

Further, not only do the episodes after the bracket of four "işte"s have a unifying reference, but also they can be characterized as a sort of connected narrative in which my contributions can be seen as transitions within the narrative. In contrast, the first group of episodes (1 to 7) has a much greater variety of references, and Baba's and my verbal contributions are less smooth. This first grouping of episodes before the line of four "işte"s is also much longer (sixty minutes) than those after the line of four "işte"s (ten minutes).

The immediate problem is to characterize the interaction of the first group of episodes. If, as it appears, these are more varied, then starting with them should not distort perception of the apparently more uniform pattern of interaction in the second group of episodes.

But before moving on to describing specific episodes, I return to the character of the boundaries that delimit these episodes. As mentioned, the boundaries are negotiated ones. Yet it is Baba who initiates them—either with the finality of his quotation, or with his statement of an "işte" phrase—and I who recognize this closure. That these boundaries include both our contributions shows the extent to which we have become attuned to each other's signals in ordering our talk. Or, seen more differentially, I may initiate a topic, but by earlier initiating closure, it is Baba who has given me the floor.

The Withholding of Affirmation

> in which an entire four-minute episode is presented wherein the negotiation of its closure reveals the expected structure of closure as well as how a most delicate subject was broached

In the last section I put forward preliminary bracket markers of episodes in the Hizir lesson, and thereby segmented the lesson into eleven episodes. Bracket markers of episodes are not just creatures of analysis; they, too, are features of attunement. That is, they testify to Baba's and my many previous dialogues with each other. And, as conventionalized features of attunement, variation in their usage carries messages.

To provide a context for discussion of bracket markers, and at the same time give readers a less interrupted view of Baba's and my interaction, I present a complete text of one of the eleven episodes of the Hizir Lesson. The episode I have selected for such an investment of time and analysis is the second episode of the lesson, beginning seventeen minutes into the seventy-minute whole. The main reason I selected this episode is that the friction in the last half places Baba's and my expectations in clear relief. I also chose this episode because it is relatively short—four minutes or fifty-two turns.

The immediate context of the second episode is the first episode. Indeed, I draw my opening of the second episode from a point Baba had made in the first episode. There I had noted that I did not see a relationship like that of murshid and talib in America. Baba's comment had been that there were no murshids in America. That is, instead of speaking in terms of a relationship, Baba spoke in terms of the murshid. My picking up on Baba's comment thirteen minutes later is an example of attunement across the lesson.

The only other reference that warrants explanation before presentation of the text is the darkened lines. I have marked in bold Baba's "işte" (turn 26), my withholding of affirmation (turns 29 and 31), and at the end, my "işte" (turn 51). These are important in the ensuing analysis.

Otherwise the episode should be clear enough in itself. When reading through it, though, I recommend consciously slowing down. In particular, notice the placement of turns across the page. When the utterance of a turn begins directly below the end of the other speaker's utterance, this indicates that there was no discernible pause—less than a half-second—between turns. (See Appendix A for a guide to conventions of transcription.)

It is also important to remember that the Turkish text, with English translation on the facing page, is a transcription of a tape of spoken interaction. The format was specifically designed to emphasize the flow and coordination of talk: here, across and down the page; there, at the tekke, through the morning.

Episode 2: Turkish[4] Transcription

1. FT: .... nasıl baba~
.. ki~ . ben göriyorum bu eksikliktir\
\Amerikada\
. ki murşid yok\
2. Baba: yok\ burda\
oylesin\ ruh-değil Amerikada~
butun yerlerde şimdi artık\
3. FT: hmmm
4. Baba: yani~ o~
manevi yoluni tutanlar~
5. FT: evet\
6. Baba: yalnız~
ah- ruhani adamlardır~
. ta <ehl-i TARIK>\
ehl-i tarik~ ne burda var
ne her yerde var şimdi bo-
Amerikada da bozuldi~
şey~ eh~-
Turkiyada da bozulmişler~
ve~ Arnavutlukte bozulmiş~
her yerde boyle\
7. FT: ...... değiştir- değişecek MI baba\
ne düşünüyorsun?

English Translation

1. FT: .... so Baba~
.. that~ . I see that they are lacking\
\in America\
. that there are no murshids\
2. Baba: there are none here\
such ones\ spirit- not in America~
in all places now there are no longer\
3. FT: hmmm
4. Baba: that is~ those~
who hold to spiritual {vs. material} ways~
5. FT: yes\
6. Baba: only~
ah- they are spiritual {vs. corporeal} persons~
. or < people of the WAY>\
people of the way~ they are neither here
not anywhere now des-
in America it is destroyed~
whatever yes~
in Turkey too they have been destroyed~
and in Albania destroyed~
in every place it is this way\
7. FT: ...... will it change- will it change Baba?
what do you think?

8. Baba: ahh ooo
o belli değil\
. po~ bir şey var\
\Bektaşilikte~
her şey gayip- < hiç bir şey gayip olmaz>\
9. FT: .. hmmmmm
10. Baba: .. her var ise gelecek bir gun~
.. gene var\
\olur o\
11. FT: . hmmm
12. Baba: ama ne kadar . zaman ister o~
belli değil\
13. FT: . ama [hi-
14. Baba: [be- benz- belkim yuzlerce~ sene~
kim bilir\
15. FT: . am- hi- yani . muhim bir şey gayip etmez
[de-
16. Baba: [gayip etmez ya\
.. her şey- uhh bir fi- filozofi da var\
17. FT: evet\
18. Baba: eh ki diyor ki~
< her şey gayip etmez>
bilmem kim- hangi filozof
19. FT: [evet
20. Baba: [ki soylemiş buni\
ki her şey gayip olmaz\
21. FT: . hmmm
22. Baba: .. bile~
. uh naimi-n soylediği
. yok mi~
kyi~
\ .. yok değil Naimi-n
var ni- niyazi Misrini-n\
.. kyi~
.... uh~ diyor kyi~
. uh
< ..... oğlunun . içinde~
. babasi saklanmiş\>

8. Baba: ahhh it
it is not clear\
. but there is something\
\in Bektashism~
everything is hid- <nothing is ever lost>\
9. FT: .. hmmmm
10. Baba: .. whatever there is in a coming day~
.. again it is\
\it will be\
11. FT: . hmmm
12. Baba: but how much . time it needs~
it is not clear\
13. FT: . but [ne-
14. Baba: [li- like- maybe hundreds of years~
who knows\
15. FT: . but- no- that is . important things are not lost
[it me-
16. Baba: [not lost\
.. everything ah and there is a philosopher\
17. FT: yes\
18. Baba: eh who says that~
< nothing will be lost>
I don't know who- which philosopher
19. FT: [yes
20. Baba: [who said this\
that nothing is ever lost\
21. FT: . hmmm
22. Baba: .. and even~
. ah Naim has said
. isn't it~
that~
\ .. no not he Naim
it was of Niyazi Misri\
.. that~
.... ah~ he said that~
. ah
< ..... inside . the son~
. the father is hidden\>

uh- pan- pantheisme bakımından~
pantheisme bakımından~
uh bir . uh şey- YOL\
bir . yoldi-r kye diyorse~
<hiç bir şey gayip olmaz\> ne imiş~
uh .. valit~ {Arabic}
\. yani peder~ {Persian}
uh mevlude {Arabic}
.. girır\
ama nasıl girır?
yani mevludi olurse~
tabii ki~ bir validın vari-
-vari- var- olmali bunun\
23. FT: haaa
24. Baba: ... oğlunun içinde~
.. haaa {below in Albanian}
< .. tek i biri jetë i gjati
kiron sot në këtë jetë\
është fshehur i ati
kjo është fjalë e vërtetë\>
işte bu~
25. FT: olmali ya\ {soft voice}
26. Baba: **işte** ondan cihe- şey eder\
27. FT: \ama manevi [bakımından
28. Baba: [manevi bakımından\
29. FT: . hmm .. **ama daha zor bu günler**~
çünkü bu şey
inşallah gayip etmez [fakat
30. Baba: [çok-
31. FT: **belli değil**\
32. Baba: BAKSANA~
uh şimdi materialism ilerliyor\
33. FT: . hmmmm
34. Baba: . ne kadar iler -lerse materialism~
. mavevi~ . uh duşur\
am- gayip olur duşur ama~
uh duşur\
gorunmez ama~
gayip olmaz\

ah- pan- from the view of pantheism~
from the view of pantheism~
ah one . a whatever- WAY\
it is a way of which is said~
< nothing will ever be lost\> which is~
ah .. the father~ {Arabic}
\ . that is the father {Persian}
ah to his child {Arabic}
.. he enters\
but how does he enter?
that is if there is a child~
of course~ there is a father-
there is- there- must be one\
23. FT: haaa
24. Baba: ... inside the son~
.. haaa {below in Albanian}
< .. in his long-lived son
who lives today in this life\
is hidden his father
these are the words of truth\>
thus is this~
25. FT: there must be yes\ {soft voice}
26. Baba: **thus** from that poin- it does\
27. FT: \but from a spiritual [point of view
28. Baba: [spiritual point of view\~
29. FT: . hmm .. but **these days it is harder**~
because as for this
God willing it will not be lost [however
30. Baba: [much-
31. FT: **it is not clear**\
32. Baba: LOOK HERE~
ah- how materialism progresses\
33. FT: . hmmmm
34. Baba: . as much as materialism progresses~
. the spiritual declines\
bu- it is hidden it declines but~
ah it declines\
it is not seen but~
it is not lost

35. FT: ummm
36. Baba: gene var\
ama kim bilir ne vakıt gelir zamani ki
- aç- açabilir gene\
. anladın mi?
37. FT: .. ama Bektasşism Baba~
sakladi- buuu-
.. bu babalar sakladı\
bu murşitler sakladı\
ki— .. [bizim
38. Baba: [bu-
39. FT: mirathımız da~
şey protection verdiler
40. Baba: ya
41. FT: ki~
ellerden\
ellere~
ellerden\
42. Baba: ellere~
gayip olmadi\
43. FT: olmadı\
44. Baba: şimdiye kadar\
45. FT: şimdiye kadar\
46. Baba: yaa\
47. FT: ama bugünler Baba?
48. Baba: bugunler~
. bakalım\ {all in softer voice}
ne olur\
< .... la yalim ul-gayipe illa-allah> {in Arabic}
yani~ gayip olani~
. Allahtan başka bilmezdır birisi\
49. FT: {warm chuckle}
oldu [Baba
50. Baba: [{joins in chuckle}
51. FT: **işte** bizim ellerimizde değil\
52. Baba: evet\

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35. FT: ummm
36. Baba: it is still there\
but who knows when the time will come
-for it to grow again\
. have you understood?
37. FT: .. but Bektashism Baba~
it preserved it-
.. these babas preserved it\
these murshids preserved it\
so that— .. [our
38. Baba: [this-
39. FT: heritage as well~
that they gave "protection"
40. Baba: ya
41. FT: so that~
from hands\
to hands~
from hands\
42. Baba: to hands~
it was not lost\
43. FT: not lost\
44. Baba: up to now\
45. FT: up to now\
46. Baba: yaa\
47. FT: but in these days Baba?
48. Baba: in these days~
let us see\ {all in softer voice}
what will be\
< .... la yalim ul-gayipe illa-allah> {in Arabic}
that is~ . of what has disappeared~
. no one but God knows\
49. FT: {warm chuckle}
so it is [Baba
50. Baba: [{joins in chuckle}
51. FT: **thus** it is not in our hands\
52. Baba: no\

THE INTERACTIVE STRUCTURE OF AN EPISODE

What then is the interactive structure of this episode? A cursory description of the interaction could be that it is made up of a series of four question-and-answer passages in which I ask and Baba answers (first figure).

Second Episode as a Series of Question-Answer Passages

turns 1–6	
(I see there are no murshids in America)	(. . . people of the way have been destroyed everywhere)
turns 7–28	
(will it change, what do you think)	(. . . nothing is ever lost . . . inside the son the father is hidden, the Albanian couplet, pantheism)
turns 29–36	
(but these days it is harder . . . God Willing it will not be lost, however, it is not clear)	(LOOK here how materialism progresses . . . the spiritual declines but it is not lost)
turns 37–52	
(but Bektashism preserved it . . . but in these days Baba, these days Baba)	(. . . let us see, Arabic "of what has disappeared no one but God knows")

Yet closer reading shows that only the second of my above comments is a question. The others are better described as references (Goffman, 1981) or comments (Ochs, 1983) to which a response is expected. And as the character of the response is open to Baba, "answer" would be too specific a term. But even to describe these more accurately as a series of "reference-response passages" still misses the dynamic of the episode.

The interaction of the episode is better summarized by the moves in the next figure.

Interactional Moves of Second Episode

turns 1–6	
my initiating reference	Baba's response
turns 7–28	
my transitional reference	Baba's response, Baba's initiation of closure
turns 29–36	
my withholding of affirmation of closure	Baba's reframing Baba's direct request for affirmation of closure
turns 37–52	
my second withholding of affirmation and drawn-out reframing my affirmations of closure	Baba's joining in new frame Baba's third initiation of closure Baba's confirmation of my affirmations

Thus the first two passages (turns 1–6, 7–28) reflect the conventional order of interaction between Baba and myself, while the last two passages (turns 29–36, 37–52) include reframings by both Baba and myself before yielding to closure. To build context for my withholding of affirmation in turns 29 and 31, I will first describe the more conventional preceding passages. As mentioned, my initiating reference was drawn from a response of Baba's in the preceding episode.

1. FT: .... so Baba~
.. that~ . I see that they are lacking\
\in America\
. that there are no murshids\

Baba responded with:

2. Baba: there are none here\
such ones\ spirit- not in America~
in all places now there are no longer\
3. FT: hmmm
4. Baba: that is~ those~
who hold to spiritual ways~
5. FT: yes\
6. Baba: only~
ah- they are spiritual persons~
. or <people of the WAY>\
people of the way~ they are neither here
not anywhere now des-
in America it is destroyed~
whatever yes~

in Turkey too they have been destroyed~
and in Albania destroyed~
in every place it is this way\

In this response, Baba expands on my reference in two ways. First, he expands on my geographic reference of there being no murshids in America to this being the case "everywhere." Second, he rephrases my point, except that whereas I said there were no "murshids," Baba uses three other terms:

"manevi yolunu tutanlar"
(those who hold to spiritual ways)

"ruhani adamlar"
(spiritual persons)

"ehl-i tarik"
(people of the way)

There is a progression in these terms from the first, which has a Turkish verbal base (*tutanlar*), to the third, which, is a Persian genitive construction. In the Turkish context, the progression moves toward a more syntactically marked phrase. Further, of the three main Islamic language groups of the Near East—the Arabs, the Persians, and the Turks—it is the Persians who are most associated with Sufism and from whom many of its terms come. Thus this progression also moves toward a more particularly Sufi terminology.

These rephrasings can also be understood as substitutions for my term "murshid." Substitution is a most important phenomenon in language learning: it sets up a contextual frame for contrast, as here, but it is also part of the process of creating sets of semantic domains. Elinor Ochs (1983) claims that for children the creation of lexical sets through substitution is instrumental in developing discourse that is not bound by the here and now. Instead of being tied to the immediate context of what the child sees and hears, with the advent of substitution, the child can draw on background knowledge as well.

Baba, in his response, moves into more Sufi terms. For me this expansion of the semantic domain, parallels and points to what is hoped to be an expansion of experience toward the Sufi world.

Baba's response ends with another progression in which he reiterates his point that there are no "people of the way" anywhere today. He expands upon "not anywhere" as "not in America," but also not in Turkey nor in Albania. Baba and I hail respectively from Albania and America, but why mention Turkey? The answer is, I believe, related to Baba's additional comment that not only do these "people of the way" not exist, but they have been destroyed.

In 1826 the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II ordered the destruction of the Bektashi Order. At that time, tekkes were burned and babas killed or exiled. Some fled to Albania. Then the Order built up again in Turkey, only to be made illegal once more in Turkey, this time by Atatürk in 1925. The headquarters was subsequently moved to Albania. But after World War II, the Communists took over in Albania and the Bektashis were again killed or suppressed.

Thus Baba's description of the destruction of "people of the way" from Turkey to Albania reflects twice the historical direction of destruction of the Order. His geographic elaboration is therefore a particularly Bektashi understanding of "everywhere."

It is interesting that this elaboration came after his series of terms leading into "ehl-i tarik" (people of the way). It is as if the first progression to more Sufi terminology triggered the second progression to a more Bektashi understanding of "everywhere."

After Baba's above response, the second passage (turns 7 to 28) transpired, beginning with my question:

7. FT: ..... will it change- will it change Baba
what do you think?

Early in Baba's response to this he put forward an adage that was expressly framed as coming from Bektashism:

8. Baba: ahhh it
it is not clear\
. but there is something\
\in Bektashism~
everything is hid- < nothing is ever lost>\

Baba then searched for specific others who voiced forms of this adage. The ones he brought up: a philosopher (whose name he remembered two lessons later), Naim Frashëri (a nineteenth-century Albanian poet), and Niyazi Mısri (a sixteenth-century Sufi poet) show a certain progression, from philosopher to poet. This also parallels the progression from outer to inward, from knowledge of the mind to knowledge of the heart.

Baba's initial framing of the adage and his subsequent attributions and quotations potentially set off his involvement in the discussion. In terms of Goffman's "production format" (Goffman, 1981), in which the notion of speaker is spun out into one or combinations of three statuses (of "animator," as merely a reciter of someone else's words; of "principal," as one who is committed to what the words say; or of "author," as one who has chosen both the sentiments and the words), Baba thus set up the possibility that in the discussion he was perhaps only an animator, or that at least his personal involvement was somehow restricted.

This framing and quoting, however, which in our rhetorical tradition can appear either as a restriction on commitment on the part of the speaker, or as a display of erudition, can have other significance in other rhetorical traditions. For, as Baba later told me, "How can we know of the spiritual world except by those who have seen it?" Such quotations, instead of merely lending support to a proposition, can be a form of proof. Furthermore, Baba later interpreted another instance of his quoting from others not to imply that he reserved his own opinion, but rather that it was not only he who held the expressed opinion.

Baba then elucidated the pantheism of the Albanian couplet, leading into an "işte" phrase. As mentioned earlier, "işte" phrases in Baba's lessons with me, especially when they follow quotations and explanations, frequently signal closure of the episode. In most episodes, here I would have shown acceptance of closure and the episode would have ended.

However, this is where this episode stands out. After Baba's "işte" phrase, instead of going along with closure, I made another response-eliciting reference:

29. FT: . hmm .. but in **these days** it is harder~
because as for this
God willing it will not be lost [however
30. Baba: [much-
31. FT: it is not clear\

Baba responded to this with a swift frame change away from talk of philosophers and pantheism to talk of materialism.

32. Baba: LOOK HERE~
ah- how materialism progresses\
33. FT: . hmmmm
34. Baba: . as much as materialism progresses~
the spiritual declines\
bu- it is hidden it declines but~
ah it declines\
it is not seen but~
it is not lost\
35. FT: ummm
36. Baba: it is still there\
but who knows when the time will come
-for it to grow again\
. have you understood?

This reframing on Baba's part represents a departure from elaborating within the Bektashi tradition. But it still maintains the same point of the earlier response, namely, that spiritual life will not be lost. In this later response, however, a cause or at the very least a co-existing phenomenon with the decline of the spiritual is presented in materialism. And, more in line with persuasive talk in my rhetorical background, Baba insists directly that the decline of the spiritual is not final.

Notice also the unusual emphasis with which Baba began this reframing, "LOOK HERE," and the explicit close to his talk on materialism, "Have you understood?" But instead of acknowledging whether I had understood, again I questioned. This insistence in questioning was unusual in the lessons. Baba's strong responses to my remarks highlight not only my insistence but also the expected structure of the episode. The brackets of the lesson are negotiated ones, and when Baba initiates closure he expects acknowledgment of this.

This particular sort of acknowledgment I have referred to as an "affirmation." Affirmations have much in common with the "hmmm"s or "yes"s[5] that are found throughout the lesson and many interactions. These serve as evidence that the addressee is listening and is following, and may encourage the speaker to continue. But an affirmation as I define it here also has the special property of signaling acceptance of initiation of closure of the episode. Thus the structure of the episode is one of reference and response, whose final sets include initiation of closure plus affirmation.

Structure of an Episode

my initiating reference
⟶ Baba's response

Baba's initiation of closure
⟶ my affirmation

In the second episode, however, I withhold affirmation not once but twice. The second time is after Baba explicitly asked if I had understood. Instead of responding to this directly, I, too, reframed:

37. FT: .. but Bektashism Baba~
it preserved it-
.. these babas preserved it\
these murshids preserved it\
so that- .. [our
38. Baba: [this-
39. FT: heritage as well~
that they gave "protection"
40. Baba: ya
41. FT: so that~
from hands\
to hands~
from hands\
42. Baba: to hands~
it was not lost\
43. FT: not lost\
44. Baba: up to now\
45. FT: up to now\
46. Baba: yaa\
47. FT: but in these days Baba?

I not only reframed my question relating to the survival of spiritual understanding in our times, I also drew it out over seventeen lines.

Such spreading out of a proposition over a sequence of utterances has been described as a defining feature of distressed communication in general and of caretaker speech in particular, the problem of the caretaker being to secure the child's attention.[6] I see here the initial spreading out of the proposition to draw attention, but soon Baba picks up on my concern, which he signals by building on my series of "hand to hand" and adding the crucial "it was not lost." As we both continue, echoing and latching onto each other's utterances, the effect is quite the opposite of distress. The actual effect is to mirror our alignment over an unspoken but utterly significant matter. This matter is the continuity of the tekke and how to face not knowing how it will continue after Baba's death. There is not yet a successor to take over when Baba dies. Four or five people of different degrees of religious maturity and community perspicacity have appeared over the years, but they have either died or proven themselves not suited.

With an understanding of the seriousness of the topic we have broached, the episode takes on different hues. I see the earlier response-eliciting references as being general ones. At some point, the more personal concern must have come up and I needed to pull Baba to a more personal frame. I signaled this by not acknowledging Baba's "işte" phrase and by voicing a third reference. Baba assumed it was the form of his response that I could not follow and therefore reframed in a more modern way. But it was not a different rhetorical form that I sought; rather it was the personal focus. When I was able to put this in the context of Bektashism and the personal (note my use of pronoun "our" of "our heritage" in turns 37 and 39), Baba quickly saw my concern. He responded by playing into my syntax, words, and rhythmic patterns so closely that although we are two people, the result is one move.

After our dance of phrases, Baba's response, all in a softer voice, is humble and personal to the ground of his being.

48. Baba: in these days~
{all in softer voice}
let us see\
what will be\
< .... la yalim ul-gayipe illa-allah> {in Arabic}
that is~ . of what has disappeared~
. no one but God knows\

The Arabic of this response refers of course to the Qur'an. In addition, the message refers to the submission of human beings to God, which is the essential understanding of "Islam" and what it means to be a "Muslim," that is, "submitted to God."

In terms of the episode, this response shares characteristics of earlier responses. Like Baba's first response, in which he expanded on my reference of there being no murshids in America, here Baba builds on my words "but in these days?" Like the second response, in which Baba quoted the adage and Naim's words, here Baba also recites a distant text (the Qur'an). What distinguishes the response here, though, is Baba's involvement, seen in the integration of our expression of the question, in his movement into a softer, more collusive voice, and also in his use of the pronoun—"let us see." With its quotation in Arabic and brief elucidation, I also see this response as yet a third initiation of closure.

In earlier discussion of internal brackets of episodes, I mentioned that quotations of distant texts by Baba are often found around closure. Among quotations, those from the Qur'an are particularly powerful. Not only is the Arabic distinctive in a sea of Turkish, but the Qur'an is the ground of all legitimacy in Islam. After Baba recites from the Qur'an, not much can be added. This then is a particularly effective initiation of closure.

Missing from this initiation of closure is Baba's use of an "işte" phrase. That an "işte" is implied, however, can be inferred from my affirmations that immediately follow Baba's elucidation of the Arabic line:

49. FT: {warm chuckle}
so it is [Baba
50. Baba: [{joins in chuckle}
51. FT: **thus** it is not in our hands\
52. Baba: no\

Certainly my comment (turn 49) "so it is Baba" is broadly affirming. As if to mirror my understanding that Baba has initiated closure, in my next line I affirm closure with an "işte" myself: "thus it is not in our hands" (turn 51). This last utterance refers to both my questions on the future of "people of the way" as well as the more personal situation after Baba's death.

Yet what does the chuckling signify in this context? I think my chuckling was a sign of relief that Baba had understood my concern of what was to happen after his death. This is a concern that is difficult to talk about directly, and yet Baba showed me that he understood it by joining in my last question. And further, with the Arabic line, he shared with me how he faces this. But I also see my chuckling as a sign of pleasure in our play and verbal coming together. Baba's joining in the chuckling further showed our shared pleasure. My following comment, "thus it is not in our hands"—

> işte **bizim** eller**imiz**de değil\
> (thus **our** hands—**our**—in is not)

—then recaptured Baba's point, while its optionally multiple references to "our" in the Turkish emphasize the shared nature of our concern.

Overall, the process of reframings on both our parts as we negotiated a more personal focus on our earlier topic showed our responsiveness to each other. This responsiveness is both a sign and a feature of our attunement. By way of contrast, recall the approach of the professor in his interview with Baba the same week as the Hizir lesson. He initiated talk head-on by asking about the survival of the tekke, and although he brought up the topic several times during the interview, it was with the grace and flexibility of a bulldozer.[7] But then he did not have twelve years of previous dialogues to build on.

Finally, though, notice Baba's last utterance of the episode. It is a "no" of agreement which serves as an affirmation of my affirmation. Such a move I term a "confirmation." It is as if my affirmations are also references that require from Baba a response.

Openings and Closings of Early Episodes

in which the description of episode structure is refined with examples of uncomfortably vulnerable openings and strangely aphoristic closings

In the previous section I looked closely at one of the early episodes in the Hizir lesson. There I described how Baba responded to my initiating references, either with progressions that led to Sufi terms or with juxtapositions of distant texts in the form of adages or sayings that he then anchored by attribution and explanation. Through interaction described as a "withholding of affirmation," I developed an expected structure of interaction of the episode that can be summarized in the figure.

Structure of an Episode

Opening sequence
my reference
⟶ Baba's response
⟶ my reference
(transition)

Body
Baba's responses

Closing sequence
Baba's initiation of closure
(commonly with discourse marker "işte")
⟶ my affirmation
⟶ Baba's confirmation

In this manner of defining the episode the boundaries are stated in more abstract terms. But is this so much *safsata* (sophistry) as Baba would put it? Does this model fit other episodes and does it lead to greater understanding of our interaction?

VULNERABILITIES OF OPENINGS

Openings of episodes, which are generally characterized by hedging, pausing, faltering syntax, and often protracted development of reference, are among my most vulnerable and unsure times. Of the seven episodes in the first hour of the lesson, there were three whose openings were particularly uncomfortable. I examine these, not from orneriness, but from the understanding that situations of interactional difficulty can be most revealing of relations between people.

As might be expected, the initial episode is among the most uncomfortable. Certainly if openings of episodes are times when I am most aware of my ignorance and of the imposition that questioning implies, then the opening of the entire lesson is even more so. And later in the lesson, openings do not necessarily become smoother. For example, the opening of the fifth episode brought another sort of difficulty, while the opening of the fourth episode was so problematic that Baba and I spent most of the episode in remedy and mediation of my unfortunate outset.

In the initial episode, I broached the topic of the relationship of murshid and talib in a general way. Baba responded with the saying in Arabic that "the murshid is to the talib as the Prophet to the community." But then I was unable to provide a transitional reference that Baba would build on. Talk subsided.

So I tried again to introduce discussion of the relationship of murshid and talib, this time reframed in terms of my society. Baba immediately modified my statement, in which I had spoken of the murshid-talib relationship, to speak only in terms of the murshid. Then again things petered out as Baba closed discussion.

Yet a third time I brought up the murshid and talib, this time in the frame of Christianity. Here Baba joined in my transition and finally the discussion was launched.

During the earlier uncomfortable times of reframing, Baba had not been overly solicitous, but neither had he been discouraging. Through this I had gained practice in reframing—a skill in which Baba excells. This reframing is a sort of attunement on my part, as I knew that Baba would not discourse until he achieved what was to him the right entree.

In the following episode, that is, the second episode which was discussed in the last section, I mediated the awkwardness of the opening by drawing my initiating reference from a response of Baba's in the previous episode. Baba expanded on my reference. Building on this, I was able to make a transition that Baba carried into discussion.

The fifth episode was similar to the second in that I began with a reference that Baba immediately expanded. There I started:

FT: ..... hey so BaBA~
it means that
.. in Bektashi history~
Baba: . hhm
FT: ... it is full of murshids

Baba responded by stretching my reference beyond Bektashism and reminding me of the murshids in other religions including those of ancient India, of the Kabala in Judaism, and of ancient Greece. The difference between this expansion and Baba's earlier expansion in the second episode was length. In the second episode, Baba had expanded on my opening for fifteen seconds. In the fifth episode, he went on for four minutes. By the time we finished with the expansion, I had forgotten what I had been leading up to.

The opening of the fourth episode, however, was the most problematic. Here it was not an issue of reframing to Baba's satisfaction, or even of keeping a train of thought. The problem here was that I began by requesting what I had no right to request. This request (in bold) was housed in a typical opening sequence:

1. FT: .. do you know~
.. hey let's have a look\
{checks tape}
as for me **what I like are stories**
\one thing
I like are stories\
2. Baba: yaa
3. FT: for example that one on Musa and Hizir~
com-
4. Baba: yes
5. FT: -pletely (tells) of the mur-
6. Baba: -shid
7. FT: what he is\
are there others Baba~

To this innocently straightforward question, Baba responded:

8. Baba: ohh- you know if you
speak well on this story~
it will finish half your thesis\

With this response Baba side-stepped my immediate question about other stories, for, as I now understand, stories cannot be ordered up like scrambled eggs in a restaurant. Baba only tells stories in the process of making a point. In this sense they are more like parables.[8]

To request a parable does damage to the parable's way of meaning, for the meaning of a parable is in its recasting of the situation of its addressee. So too with Baba's stories. They cannot be called up by direct request of listeners. Rather it is Baba's perception of the resonance of a listener's situation with a story that leads him to recount it, and of course reshape it. For example, in earlier lessons, Baba had told me the story of Hizir and Musa in the context of my own impatience. Then in this lesson he told the story of Hizir and Musa to show how the murshid is an intermediary. And later, at the end of this episode, Baba told the story of the ant going on pilgrimage[9]—in the context of explaining the "perfection" of a murshid.

All of which is to say I had made an error in asking for stories. Baba of course did not tell me this outright. Instead, by not answering my question in the way I had expected, Baba initiated a gradual process of self-correction. This behavior is consistent with formulations of "repair," or correction of misunderstanding or error, in studies of conversation in which "other-initiations overwhelmingly yield self-corrections."[10] But research into repair in conversation has understandably focused on repair that takes place within at most two conversational turns of what was repaired. This research concludes that the tendency is for self-correction over other-correction (imagine the tyranny or dissolution of relationships that would result were other-correction the rule), and also that this self-correction most often occurs within the same turn as that which it corrects.

In contrast, although Baba initiated repair in the turn following my unfortunate opening in episode 4, it was not until four turns later that I followed up with a sort of self-correction. And while understanding is a matter separable from self-correction, for one can attempt correction knowing only that something was not right, it is interesting to note that I did not understand what was wrong with requesting stories until whole lessons later.

This study differs from conversational studies of repair in that it has a long-term view of interaction of the participants. It also differs in that, unlike most sociologically based studies, the ongoing relationship of the participants is of focal interest. Finally, it differs in that Baba, unlike the man-on-the-street voices of most sociological studies, is an artist of repair. For example, a misattribution I made in the first minute of the lesson was subtly corrected by Baba forty turns later. It is as if Baba has been trained in strategies of subtle repair. Theologically the task of the murshid could be construed as one of repair—repair of blindness to the coherence of life.

Baba's deflective response in this episode signaled to me that I had not chosen the right way to proceed. Here was that minimal conversational attunement in which one is sensitive to the need to reframe one's remarks without necessarily understanding why this should be done.

My response was therefore a general remedy in which I acknowledged my need for Baba's help. Mirroring this dependence on Baba, I went into Baba's dialect in this remedy by using a locative postposition (*tape'de koymak*) the way he does, instead of the more standard Turkish dative postposition (*tape'e koymak*) I would ordinarily use.

11. FT: .. so Baba\
I . whatever .
I put it on tape this\
. I will go home\
12. Baba: ya
13. FT: I will write\
again I will bring it back~
we will speak about it is that possible?
14. Baba: -possible
sure\
15. FT: because I want to really find the meaning\

Baba's response, which was not said with irony, was a mediation of my remedy:

16. Baba: everything is possible
for Frances~

Baba's use of my name is extremely rare and therefore most effective in drawing my attention and signaling closeness. This called for a mediation, here a humbling response on my part, as did Baba's speaking of the future. In Islamic societies, talk of the future is frequently mediated by the phrase "inşallah" ("if God pleases," that is, "God willing").

17. FT: God willing
18. Baba: everything is possible
19. FT: -God willing Baba\

But after a few "ya"s Baba followed with:

22. Baba: I want that
it be high high you- that you be so\

23. FT: {appreciative laugh}
ahhhh Baba\
24. Baba: {also laughing along}

Baba's wish for me that I rise high again called forth a mediation from me in which I acknowledged my debt to Baba for all my understanding. I did this in the form of a long narrative on how I first came to the tekke[11] and how I became the student of Baba.[12]

In summary, the pattern of redress in the exchanges in the episode so far has been as in the figure.

Summary of Redress Thus Far

1. my error
(ask for other stories)
Baba's deflective response
2. my attempt at remedy through
acknowledgment of my need of Baba
Baba's mediation of that remedy
(all is possible for Frances)
3. my mediation of Baba's mediation
(inşallah—God willing)
Baba's continuing hope for me
(to rise high)
4. acknowledgment of that hope
(appreciative laughter)
Baba's laughter
5. my mediation of that hope
(through the telling of narrative)

The dynamic of this interchange is that as Baba helped me right myself in my own face (for I know I have erred), he demonstrated his support to such a degree that I felt impelled to mediate or compensate for a new imbalance created by that help.

With my narrative, Baba early recognized it for the mediation it was and said simply, "thank you." Once the narrative was begun though, I kept going until I got to the point when Baba Bayram, a baba who was a close friend of Baba and who also lived at the tekke, suggested that I study with Baba. This is a key passage because the point of my story was how fortunate I was to study with Baba. To initiate closure in the story I repeated the point two times.

47. FT: Baba Bayram said
why don't you come
and take lessons with Baba
do you remember this?
48. Baba: ya
49. FT: Baba Bayram said that
you should take lessons
with Baba Rejeb

The tables were turned with my telling the story instead of Baba. Here it was I who asked for affirmation. Baba responded:

50. Baba: that means~
so it's to be understood that it was Baba Bayram
who assigned to me this "misfortune"
51. FT and Baba: {shared laughter}

This was a remarkable affirmation because it both referred to the point of my narrative and offered a mediation of that point. As such, it facilitated Baba's and my coming together in laughter.

Earlier I mentioned that shared laughter was common in closing sections of episodes. This laughter effectively closes my narrative. Following Baba's affirmation were more mediations of mediations until as I was saying how I hoped my writing on the Bektashis would be positive for the tekke, for my society, and that even those at the university might learn something, Baba interjected that perhaps they would be interested. I added "so much," to which Baba slyly inserted "sophistry." My point is that Baba again used humor to break the chain of mediations. I followed with a joke of my own, after which there was more shared laughter. With its association with closings, and its releasing and binding nature, this laughter certainly seemed like a winding down of a most unusual episode.

In what I see as an affirmation of this movement toward closure, my next comment was the aphoristic phrase

> the teacher who truly teaches
> must be a murshid

This is hardly an earthshattering observation, but it surely served to second Baba's attempt to stop the mediations we had gotten into. The distinctive form and tone of the aphorism replicated nothing that had come before in this episode. This aphoristic form, which is for me a distinctly Bektashi one, is a sort of attunement to Baba's adages and quotations that he often cites in closing an episode. The assurance such a form implies also showed that I had finally accepted as sufficient the mediation of my opening error.

"Reach" in Closings

In the previous section I described episode openings that were "at risk" or vulnerable in various ways. I ended that discussion by contrasting the aphoristic affirmation in the closing section of the fourth episode with the preceding remedies, mediations, and opening of that episode.

The contrast between my opening and my affirmation in that episode, in terms of form and assurance, turns out to be a common contrast across the first seven episodes of the lesson. Openings are places of uncertainty, places of possible affront, places where misunderstandings can easily occur. The hedging and pausing in openings reflect this. Affirmations, however, coming as they do after Baba's initiations of closure, are places of integration where I acknowledge closure in compact and fluent forms: single words, laughter, simple phrases, or integrated clauses including aphorism.

In particular, the affirmations that are of the distinctive aphoristic form—the terse, syntactically marked, assuratively stated affirmations—are maximally different from the openings of episodes. They are also a puzzle. Why should I shift into this aphoristic form, this "second cousin to a cliché," which I would avoid in English? To investigate this I look at these affirmations in the context of their episode, with special emphasis on Baba's following confirmations.

In confirmations, Baba acknowledges my affirmations and sometimes modifies and extends them. Such modifications and extensions provide perspective on the affirmations. Together, the affirmation and confirmation pairs serve as special loci of attunement.

The distinctive character of the affirmation-confirmation sequence in general relates to the "reach" of the preceding utterance. As defined, the preceding utterance of an affirmation is Baba's initiation of closure of the episode. These initiations of closure often have the reach of the whole episode, or in the case of adages and quotations from the Qur'an, they have the reach of an eternal truth. Such reach is contagious, or at least stretching for following utterances.

"Reach" is a critical concept in accounting for the flexibility of talk. It embodies the understanding that a speaker in a situation can respond to all manner of features of that situation. For example, when two people meet and greet: "How are you?" "Hi," the "Hi" is not a nonsequitur. Rather the reach of the "Hi" is a response to the presence of the other, not to his or her words per se (Goffman, 1981). Or, within the bounds of talk, a speaker can choose to respond to an entire set of exchanges rather than just the immediately preceding one.

In his essay on the organization of talk, Goffman (1981) states:

> Standard sequences are involved, but these are not sequences of statement and reply, but rather sequences at a higher level, ones regarding choice with respect to reach and to the construing of what is reached for.[13]

A familiar example of such a "sequence at a higher level" is the stretch and variability of reach in the closing section of the second episode. There Baba initiated closure with the Qur'anic "of the hidden no one but God knows." The reach of this is to the entire episode framed in an eternal truth. My following affirmation in that episode had three parts. First I chuckled. Clearly this response did not parallel the reach of the Qur'anic line; I read it rather as an expression of relief and pleasure that Baba had understood what I was asking about. Then I said, "so it is Baba," in which my reach is to Baba's implied way of facing the unknown and to the closing of the episode. Finally, I added, "thus it is not in our hands" as a more personal statement, but with reach similar to that of the Qur'anic line.

Baba's confirmation of this was a simple "yes." In the three closings of episodes that I affirm in aphoristic fashion (episode 1, episode 4, and episode 6), Baba's confirmations are more extensive.

The first episode is the longest one (sixteen minutes) of the whole lesson, as well as being rich in narrative and adage. Baba initiated closure in this episode with the adage on the talib being like a corpse in the hands

of the murshid. He then asked if I understood and noted that there were many people who had no knowledge of such things. I responded with the affirmation that what Baba had just told me was quite different (from the Sunni way without an intermediary), and that, as was clear in Baba's talk,

150. FT: <to each talib there should be a murshid>\
151. Baba: is a murshid\
152. FT: that is
<without a murshid one sees nothing>\

The reach of my affirmation here is similar to Baba's preceding point that there are many people who do not know of these things. Notice, too, how I restate the aphorism from a positive phrasing—"to each talib there should be a murshid"—to a negative phrasing—"without a murshid one sees nothing." Baba responded:

153. Baba: without a murshid~
.. ah- we say~
< he who goes on the way without a murshid~
ah—is like a ship without a captain>
. it is like that\
154. FT: heyy that's true\ {with chuckle}
155. Baba: himself~
.. a ship or a car without a man cannot go-
can it go
no\
156. FT: no\
157. Baba: therefore~
ahh-
< on the spiritual way~
without a murshid
a person does not progress>\

Baba's response to my aphorism was prefaced by "we say." He then proceeded to give: a restatement ("he who goes on the way without a murshid is like a ship without a captain"), an explanation (which brought in the parallel with a car and driver), and then a second restatement ("without a murshid a person does not progress on the spiritual way").

The first restatement builds directly on my aphorism by using the previous phrase, "without a murshid," as the first phrase of the restatement. The explanation also builds on my "motor city" society and its cars (recall the tekke lies outside Detroit), while the second restatement significantly adds *ruhani yolunda* or "on the spiritual way." This mention of "the way" was missing from my formulation. It is important because the point of the murshid is to lead a talib on this way.

Baba also reinforced the negative phrasing that I had moved into myself (turn 152) in that his restatements and explanation refer to what does not happen if one has no murshid. Thus Baba's response to my aphorisic affirmation works to bring my words more in line with Bektashi expression.

A second instance of an aphoristic affirmation was in the fourth episode. This was the episode that began with my misguided request for more stories. Most of the episode (five minutes of a seven-minute total episode time) was then taken up with remedy and mediation and mediation of mediation. Baba twice made jokes which temporarily stopped the back-and-forth of mediation. To the second of these, I responded with a joke that served as an outset of the affirmation. I then followed with an aphorisim:

FT: .. as I see it Baba~
<it must be that the teacher
who truly teaches is a murshid>
Baba: ya that's true\
certainly a murshid\
a murshid- of course a murshid
but in saying a murshid~
I mean a "perfected murshid" {murşid-i kamil}
such that
<to each murshid do not give your heart
he teaches only false ways
FT: yes
Baba: as for the perfected murshid
his way is most truly smooth>

There is special attunement in Baba's response to my affirmation. First Baba made sure that by "murshid" I had in mind a true murshid—in the Persian phrase that Baba then used—a *murşid-i kamil,* or a "perfected murshid." He captured this caveat by reciting a modified couplet from a nefes by Niyazi Mısri (sixteenth century):

Her murşide dil verme gıl
yalnız safta öğretir

Murşid-i kâmil olanın
gayet yolu asan imiş

* * * * *

To each murshid do not give your heart
He teaches only false ways

As for the perfected murshid
His way is most truly smooth

When Baba recited the lines from the nefes, though, he modified them. In particular, the usual version of the second line is *yolunu sarpa uğradır* ("his way will lead to difficulty [steepness]"), which is more coherent with the final line. What Baba's modification (*yalnız safta öğretir,* or "he teaches only false ways") did, however, was resonate with our immediately preceding interaction. He picked up the word he had just used in his humorous initiation of closing, *safsata* (shortened to *safta*) or "sophistry," and coupled it with the verb I had just used in my affirmation—*öğretmek,* "to teach."

This modifying of the nefes drew my attention so much that I did not realize Baba was reciting from a nefes. My "yes" between the lines of the nefes, as well as my initial transcription of this section, showed that I had not perceived the lines as from another text. Perhaps sensing my distraction, Baba then amplified the phrase "perfected murshid" from the last line of the nefes with a short narrative:

Baba: oh don't think that we are perfect
\we are not so perfect~
however nevertheless~
we work at becoming perfect\
FT: yes
Baba: how is it the ant~
tries~
to whatever- that it go on the pilgrimage\
and so\
as much strength as it has~

this much it expends of that strength\
that God {Sufi term} give it more strength~
and it will go that much forward\
that's how it is\

Thus to my aphoristic affirmation, Baba presented a confirmation in the form of a modified nefes. He further commented on the nefes with an abbreviated narrative.

The last episode with an aphoristic affirmation is episode 6. Briefly, in this episode I opened with a sequence that led to asking why it is that we know of great murshids from their talibs. Baba answered, "because of inspiration" (*üfürüş*). As a way of explaining "inspiration," Baba then immediately told a short narrative, again from a negative perspective, about a baba who did not write poetry.

Baba: . they said to one\
\to a baba or whatever\
.. how is it he said
... you . you haven't written anything
not a nefes-
or anything\
. oh they haven't given me anything
that I write he said
what do you mean given\
. because WHATEVER comes
\that a
perfect one says~
. THAT is received\
\received that is
in-come\

In his explanation of this story, Baba allowed as how this "in-come" is from God or one's teacher—in other words, "through an intermediary." This connects directly to the whole Hizir and Musa story from the first episode, whose point was that the murshid was an intermediary.

After this explanation, Baba initiated closure with an "işte" phrase. I responded with an aphoristic affirmation that Baba immediately modified:

Baba: thus it is they\
FT: that means that
< great poets~
Baba: .. but-
FT: are disciples>\ {muritler, like talib}
Baba: ah ah-
that is great po-
SPIRITUAL poets
FT: of course
Baba: [that means-
FT: [I mean to say that Baba
Baba: ya
FT: <great~ spiritual po-
Baba: poets~
FT: -s~
are disciples>\
Baba: yes\
.... **certainly there are those who have said this**
{in lower pitch, even pace}
<what appears to our eyes~
that we write\
what is given~
that we say\
what we feel in our hearts~
that we disclose\>

Again, an aphoristically stated affirmation had led to a confirmation in the form of a nefes. The nefes that Baba was referring to here is one by Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dede Baba (nineteeth century), the complete text of which is in Appendix B.

Baba's prefacing comment to his nefes, however, was not what I had expected. It had been with pride in my understanding that I had asserted that "the great spiritual poets are disciples." But instead of patting me on the back for my growing understanding, Baba had responded that "certainly there are those who have said this." It took the wind out of my sails.

Yet in a later lesson, when I had asked Baba about the purpose of quoting others' words, Baba had said that it was to show that not only he thought this way, but others did as well. In responding to my aphorism with the comment that others had said as much, Baba was confirming that my affirmation fit with Bektashi tradition. It was as if he were stepping aside to link my words with this tradition.

Thus Baba's words, "certainly there are those who have said this," are only disparaging to those who, like myself, link art and intelligence with originality. We share, to use Harold Bloom's phrase, an "anxiety of influence." However, in Baba's way, as made clear by his understanding of inspiration as "in-come" from his murshid, there is rather an anxiety of noninfluence. It is in this tradition that the great Sufi poet Rumi (thirteenth century) wrote a collection of poetry and entitled it the "Collected Works of Shemseddin Tabrizi," Tabrizi being Rumi's teacher.

Returning to the question of the occurrence of the aphoristic form in affirmations of closings, it is noteworthy that in the three cases described above, Baba confirmed by moving toward and then into actual nefes. (Apart from these confirmations, Baba moved into a nefes only one other place in the lesson.) It is as if these terse, syntactically marked, and assuratively phrased clauses suggest to Baba a reach to Bektashi forms. He responds with similar reach, and because he is a Bektashi baba and reciter of hundreds of nefes, he can call up appropriate nefes that move my aphorisms closer to this specialized form of interaction.

But why did I voice these affirmations in aphoristic form in the first place? Here I look not at the following confirmations but at the preceding bodies of the episodes. In other words, what do episodes 1, 4, and 6 have in common that might trigger formally similar affirmations?

I suggest that episodes 1 and 6 have in common a specifically Bektashi resonance of inter-lesson and intra-lesson attunement. In episode 1 there is Bektashi attunement across the two adages and narrative, as well as attunement of the Hizir and Musa narrative with other tellings of this narrative in earlier lessons. In episode 6, there is intra-lesson attunement in the elucidation of "inspiration" with the elucidation of the murshid as "intermediary" from earlier episodes. And in episode 4, where Baba humorously noted that Baba Bayram had assigned him the misfortune that was me, I am defined in the ritual Bektashi way of entry through sponsorship by another baba.

Thus the forms of attunement in these episodes were both memorable and specifically Bektashi, and my affirmations in aphoristic form reflect my attempt at an appropriate "Bektashi reach."

Pattern and Pivot of Later Episodes

> in which heretofore ignored narrative episodes are studied for their patterns, and for how they reassert the more customary interaction of Baba and student after the tumult of the earlier episodes

In the earliest discussion of internal bracketing of the Hizir lesson, I noted a major discontinuity between the seventh and eighth episodes. This discontinuity was signaled by a prominent closing in which four "işte"s figured. The episodes before this line, which account for sixty minutes of the seventy-minute whole, have been the focus of attention thus far. The episode that I fully transcribed, translated, and looked at in detail was from this group, as were the openings and closings recently discussed. The episodes after the seventh episode and its line of four "işte"s differ from earlier episodes in that they have a unity of narrative reference. It is to these episodes that I now turn.

Patterns Across the Narrative Episodes

The most obvious difference between the last set of episodes and the earlier ones is the common reference of the last episodes to Baba Bayram. Baba Bayram, as you may recall from my narrative on how I came to study at the tekke and Baba's affirmation of that narrative (episode 4), was the one who first suggested that I study with Baba.

Baba Bayram was the cook at the Michigan tekke until his death in 1973. His name, which translates as "Father Holiday," suited him. He was short, and had a long white beard. I remember him best with a white apron wrapped around his generous middle, cooking some Middle Eastern specialty like imam bayıldı (a sort of eggplant lasagna whose name, "the imam fainted," refers to the imam fainting either because the dish was so delicious or because the eggplant in the dish soaked up a year's worth of olive oil). He and Baba were both Albanian Bektashis who had ended up at the Bektashi tekke in Egypt in the middle of this century. There they became fast friends, and after the tekke was established in America, Baba invited Baba Bayram to leave Egypt and come to Michigan. Once here, it was Baba Bayram who, although he was not educated in the Ottoman scholarly way Baba Rexheb was, encouraged Baba to write his major book on Bektashism and Islamic mysticism (1970).

In the Hizir Lesson, the last episodes not only refer to Baba Bayram, they also refer chronologically to his life. Illustrating this are my eliciting references in the opening of each of the last episodes:

episode 8
oh who was Baba Bayram's murshid Baba?

episode 9
and how long did he {Baba Bayram} stay
at the tekke {in Albania} Baba?

episode 10
AND in Egypt~
you must have found yourself with Baba Bayram~

episode 11
ehh\
. WHEN did he {Baba Bayram} become a baba~

This unity of reference and chronological sequence suggest the possibility that this sequence be treated as one episode. However, like the earlier episodes, these interactions also include closing sequences of "işte" phrases, and affirmations and confirmations. On this basis, and on the pull of the earlier pattern, I maintain that these are separate episodes. But as episodes they differ from the earlier ones in several ways.

First, the narrative episodes lack the hedging that was so apparent at the outset of most of the earlier episodes. This leads to a smoother transition between episodes. Second, although in the earlier episodes there was reference to a multitude of topics, including most prominently the murshid and my dissertation, in the latter set of episodes the reference is to Baba Bayram or an aspect of his life. Third, whereas there were several reference-response sequences within the earlier episodes, in the later ones, Baba recounts without uninterruption. I tell no stories and make no aphoristic statements. Except for "yes"s and "um-hmm"s, my talk occurs at the edges. And yet there are interesting patterns across the episodes and within them.

Looking first at episode structure across the narrative episodes, as in the earlier episodes, it is Baba who initiates closure. But what do the episodes enclose?

In terms of Baba Bayram's life, the first of the narrative episodes includes his becoming a *muhib*, that is, a "spiritual member" (the first in a series of vows and ceremonies of the Bektashis), and his repeated acknowledgment of these vows after his military service. The second narrative episode includes his becoming a dervish (the second of the vows and ceremonies of the Bektashis). The third episode relates to Baba's relationship with Baba Bayram in Egypt and in America. And the last episode refers to Baba Bayram's taking his last vows as baba and halife (again, special ceremonies of the Bektashi).

The sequence of muhib-dervish-baba-halife, the ceremonial hierarchy of Bektashi clerics, is thus recounted. That segments in a Bektashi baba's life should break at these divisions is not remarkable. But what is notable is that it is I who ask the last question about Baba Bayram's becoming a baba. Baba had closed the immediately preceding episode by saying that Baba Bayram had stayed in America twelve years. This was said as a cap to his life here, implying his death. And yet the last stage of becoming a baba and halife had not been discussed. Thus my last opening shows attunement to completing the pattern of the Bektashi hierarchy.

Besides the hierarchical pattern, there is also a basic narrative pattern that can be seen within the episodes. It is especially clear in the eighth episode, which is the first narrative episode. This episode began:

FT: eyyy
hey this Baba Bayram~
do you remember\ his~
we should [know his life story {archaic phrase}
too
Baba: [know-
FT: oh who was Baba Bayram's murshid Baba?

This last question is akin to asking, "Who brought Baba Bayram into the family of Bektashis?" In Albanian and much Middle Eastern society, the family name has often been derived from the name of the village or town that the family came from. This is true of many babas. But the next identity frame among Bektashis is the name of one's murshid. Thus, in the above question, I show attunement to the Bektashi identity frame.

Baba responded to my question on Baba Bayram's murshid by telling me about this murshid. He then moved from details of the murshid's contemporaries in nineteenth-century Albania to describing the poverty of their tekke, and then on to an account of Baba Bayram being called up for Ottoman military service. It seems that Baba Bayram's murshid told him not to go into the military, that the tekke would pay the money required for exemption. But Baba Bayram insisted on going. His murshid then remarked:

> ahhh\
> it seems that perhaps ah~
> you regret moving toward being a dervish\
> through this opportunity you want to "unbind" yourself\
> {from the vows}

To this Baba Bayram responded:

> as for that~
> time will show

And sure enough, after serving in the military, Baba Bayram returned and immediately went to the tekke, where he renewed his vows and remained there.

In initiating closure of the episode, Baba then noted:

Baba: it means~
.. what he wanted (to say) that
now you understand that I~
I had given my word to become a dervish~
not that ah- an excuse~
that I find an excuse to get out
of the situation\

I then affirmed the closing and my understanding, both of which Baba confirmed:

FT: .... thus~
ah this showed Baba Bayram's
... ess- it showed his essence\
Baba: yaa\

The pattern that I want to highlight here is Baba Bayram's giving his word ("time will show") and then vindicating it. In examining narrative lessons from the two-year period of taping, I found this to be a basic pattern—that there is a "word," and the narrative is the spinning out of the vindication of that "word." This recurrent theme reflects the important Albanian notion of *bese*, standing by one's word, that underlies the Albanian sense of honor. This pattern became clear to me when I compared different narrative lessons with the same referent. Additional anecdotes always had two parts: someone's "word" and a vindication.

In the above episode, the anecdote on Baba Bayram's military service showed his character and his will to stand by his word. My affirmation,

> .... thus~
> ah this showed Baba Bayram's
> ... ess- it showed his essence\

shows my clear attunement with this pattern.

But there is another sort of word-and-vindication pattern that in Sufi lore is even more basic than the foregoing example. This is where the vindication is not of the word-giver's honor, but rather of his or her supernatural connections. This pattern is exemplified in the story of Hizir and Musa.

At the beginning of the story, Musa went to Hizir to be his talib. But Hizir, the prototypical murshid, immediately announced that it would not work, that Musa would not be able to trust him. Musa insisted, and finally Hizir relented on the condition that Musa never question his actions.

The story involves the playing out of three incidents in which each time Musa cannot contain himself and questions Hizir's actions. This clearly shows that, as Hizir had earlier announced, Musa was unable to trust and be patient with Hizir. Thus the murshid's word is vindicated, only here it is not a question of Hizir's character, as it was with Baba Bayram. Rather here the vindication is of Hizir's special sight. Those who have cleansed themselves of the world are able, in Bektashi terms, "to see from behind." They can see the future the way ordinary people can only view the past. Hizir is of this sort, and so vindication of his word vindicates his status as one with this sight—with supernatural connections.

A common "word and vindication" of this sort occurs when a Bektashi baba prays for the birth of a child and then a child is born. Baba's murshid's murshid was not only prayed for before his birth, he was also promised to the Bektashis. Thus, both his very birth and his later becoming a muhib, a dervish, a baba, and a halife vindicated the "word" of the Baba spoken before his birth.

Baba Rexheb was also prayed for before he was born. His murshid's murshid prayed that a boy be born, named him, and also gave him what would be his pen name. He, too, was promised to the Bektashis. Thus Baba's birth, his writing of poetry, and his becoming a muhib, a dervish, a baba and a halife are all vindications of the word of his murshid's murshid. His life is understood in this basic narrative pattern as well as in the Bektashi clerical pattern.

Finally, nefes can be related to this narrative pattern of "word plus vindication." Instead of being separate, however, in a nefes the word is the vindication. As Baba explained in the sixth episode when talking about inspiration, a spiritual poet only writes what he or she receives. The baba who did not write poetry said it was not his fault: he had received nothing through his murshid (dead or living). So when one writes nefes, that is evidence that one is receiving from one's murshid.

An understanding of a unity of word and vindication has also been used in the Islamic community as an argument for the divine nature of the Qur'an. The language of the Qur'an is surpassingly beautiful. Because God is the Creator of the world and its beauty, "words" that are most beautiful can only come from God.

Pivot of the Lesson

In the previous section I noted two important Bektashi rhetorical patterns that were realized in the narrative episodes of the Hizir lesson. These were the chain of hierarchical progression from muhib to dervish to baba to halife, and the narrative pattern of the word and its vindication. I also described how the narrative episodes (8–11) were different from the earlier episodes (1–7) in the lesson. But what of the transition from the earlier episodes to the narrative episodes? Why the shift of the later episodes to narrative style and reference to Baba Bayram? Or more fundamentally, how do the narrative episodes fit in with the overall interaction of the lesson?

The only way to understand the transition to narrative episodes is to look backward, for if the extended talk on Baba Bayram is a response to something, then this something occurred before it in the lesson. In Goffman's deconstruction of the adjacency pair approach to looking at conversation (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974), he too recommends "a backward look to the structuring of talk" (Goffman, 1981).

What preceded the narrative episodes in the Hizir Lesson was the closing of the seventh episode. This included Baba initiating closure with an "işte" phrase, my affirmation, Baba's confirmation, and our laughter.

End of Episode 7 and Opening of Episode 8

Baba: as for you you listen\ **{initiation of closure}**
it stays in your memory~
then what~
{lower pitch voice}
if there are books too~
you look in the book how~ (it goes)
thus it is\

FT: ehhh {accord} **{affirmation}**
... thus it is good Baba\
.. ehh
. eyyyy
.. ey what a good lesson you have given
today [Baba

Baba: **[eh well what can I do so** **{confirmation}**
.. as for you~ you are left over from Baba Bayram

FT: laughter
Baba: laughter
FT: ey Baba\
Baba and FT: {continued laughter}

FT: eyyy **{opening of episode 8}**
hey this Baba Bayram~
do you remember\ his~
we should [know his life story {archaic phrase}
too
Baba: [know-
FT: oh who was Baba Bayram's murshid Baba?

It is Baba's confirmation (all in boldface) that I will concentrate on, for I see it as a pivotal utterance of the lesson and as a remarkable example of Baba's way of teaching. The confirmation was in response to my affirmation that ended with my thanking Baba for the good lesson he had given that day. The confirmation can thus be understood as a sort of mediation of this thanking:

Baba: eh well what can I do so
.. as for you~ you are left over from Baba Bayram\

Baba's reference to Baba Bayram here is especially significant. The only other time we had spoken of Baba Bayram in the lesson was twenty minutes earlier in the fourth episode when I had been telling my narrative of how I came to study with Baba. Baba Bayram had been the one to suggest I study with him. Baba's affirmation there helped bring shape and closure to my narrative as well as humor:

Baba: anlaşılan Baba Bayram havale etti "bela" bana

* * * * *

Baba: so it's to be understood that Baba Bayram
assigned to me this "misfortune"

Thus Baba's referral to Baba Bayram in his confirmation at the close of the seventh episode had resonance to his earlier affirmation in the fourth episode and our pleasure there. This intra-lesson attunement brought a certain cohesion to the lesson. At the same time, Baba's confirmation with its reference to my "Bektashi entry" to study with him has ritual parallels that go beyond the lesson.

In the ceremony of initiation a talib needs a *rehber* to set one on the spiritual way, and a murshid to guide one on that way. When Baba Bayram was in Egypt, he had hoped Baba Rexheb would remain there with him so that together they could be the rehber and murshid for the Egyptian tekke. Thus Baba's reference to Baba Bayram having assigned me to him has ritual as well as humorous resonance.

In initiating the eighth episode, I picked up on Baba's reference to Baba Bayram. I read this new focus on the agent of my study with Baba as a way of reinforcing Baba's and my relationship within a Bektashi frame. But why then, after such a long lesson, did our relationship need to be reinforced in this Bektashi frame? Again, because my reference to Baba Bayram is a response, we need to look backward to what came before. The four "işte"s are a clue that something unusual transpired in the episode of which they are the terminal bracket. It is here I find what for me was the low point of the whole lesson.

The episode that contains the low point is the seventh episode. The episode before that was the one in which we had been talking about inspiration in poetry. I had felt that I was following and understanding well. Then at the outset of the seventh episode, I had asked if inspiration in music were similar to inspiration in poetry. Baba had responded with a couplet from a poem by Nesimi (fifteenth century).

.. bu muzikiden ey sami~
sana gel nesne keşve oldu~

makamatın beyan eyle~
usulun göster *edvarın*

* * * * *

.. O listener from this music
come let's see what it reveals in you

it makes clear your *tune*
your *rhythm* and shows your *mode*

In the last two lines, all the italicized words have multiple meanings, both musical and mystic. *Makamat* signifies not only "tune," but also "place" and "spiritual stage." The word I translated as "rhythm" has a more general meaning of "style" or "manner"; and the last word, which I translated as "mode," more generally refers to "cycles," or "duties," which also implies "duties commanded by God."

After reciting the couplet, Baba added that he had learned this nefes from his murshid, Selim Baba. Then he went on to explain the couplet, and at the end of his explanation he initiated closure with the first "işte." But I was unable to follow part of Baba's explanation of the couplet, so instead of affirming his initiation of closure, I asked for a fuller explanation of what I thought was confusing me. In particular, I asked about the last word of the couplet, *edvar*, which is the plural of *devir* and usually signifies "cycle." Baba explained again. Still I did not understand. Then Baba said:

po görmeden anlayamazsın tabii\

* * * * *

well without seeing of course you can't understand\

This was a blow to me, for I interpreted "to see" in the mystic sense of experiencing things. Baba then told me to open the dictionary to the word *devir*. I refused, telling him I knew that it meant "cycle" or "duty," but perhaps I did not know what it meant in musical terms.

In a later lesson, I learned that my confusion with Baba's explanation was a classic problem of frame. Ottoman poetry was visual as well as auditory. Just as calligraphy was an esteemed art form in Islamic society, similarly the way a poem looked on the paper was also art, even to the point of there being "visual rhyme," in which the Arabic consonants and long vowels looked similar but their pronunciation in particular words did not rhyme (Andrews, 1976).

In the case of Baba's experience with the couplet by Nesimi, the reference to cycles or modes had been picked up and played out in the actual writing of the poem such that the whole poem was written in circles. (This is also done with prayers, in which the first word is in the center, and then the prayer circles round and round, just as pilgrims circle the Ka'aba in Mecca.) When Baba had been describing these circles on the page, I had been trying to relate them to the more restricted sense of cycles in the poem. And when he had said that I could not understand without seeing, he had literally meant seeing the page. But assuming that it was the multiple meanings and perhaps musical understanding that eluded me, I persevered, and Baba dutifully explained the musical explanations of the words. I suggested I understood, but Baba knew better and repeated his explanation, which he then capped with the second closure and "işte" phrase.

Yet again, I withheld affirmation, and with a shift of focus asked Baba the words that were presented in the Prologue:

. haaa bu severim baba~
a- anlamak~
nasıl öğretti Selim Baba sana\ {with frustration}

* * * * *

. haaa this I would like Baba~
t- to understand~
how did Selim Baba teach you\ {with frustration}

Notice the hedging, and although it is not as apparent in the English, the Turkish syntax is loose and highly dialectal (subject and indirect object follow the verb).

As noted earlier in the Prologue, my question on how Selim Baba had taught Baba was not an innocent question. In one sense this question was an attempt to short-circuit the couplet by Nesimi and Baba's explanation that I could not follow. In referring back to Selim Baba I was referring back to the person who had taught Baba the couplet, as if I could thereby ignore the couplet. But I was also crying out, for why after so many years couldn't I understand these poems! Baba responded to this cry with a remedy, which I then repeatedly acknowledged with laughter, "yes"s, and an affirmation.

FT: . haaa this I would like Baba~
t- to understand~
how did Selim Baba teach you\
Baba: . thus by listening~
FT: by listening~
Baba: yaa\
FT: {laughs}
Baba: -like you~
how~
so much~
. . . so many things you have learned from me~
FT: yes
{softly}
Baba: but how have you learned~
by listening\
FT: it's true
Baba: I make friendly talk~
I speak~
FT: yes
Baba: as for you you listen\
it stays in your memory~
then what~

if there are books too~ (lower pitch)
you look in the book how~ (it goes)
thus it is\
FT: ehh {accord}
... thus it is good Baba\
.. ehh
. eyyy
.. ey what a good lesson you have given
today [Baba
Baba: [eh well what can I do so
.. as for you~ you are left over from Baba Bayram\

Baba's first response to my question about how Selim Baba taught him reflected his understanding of the reach of my question. Instead of describing how his teacher taught him, Baba referred instead to how he learned. At a deeper level this is what I was asking, for I wanted to know if there was something I was doing wrong that caused me not to follow the nefes. Baba responded further to this worry of mine by stating that I had learned much from him. His response is a remedy, because it responds to my sense of myself that has taken a beating from not being able to understand his explanation. This remedy reassured me that I was not a dolt in Baba's eyes. Baba then moved for a third time toward closure, with a third "işte" phrase.

The fourth "işte" is mine, when in the affirmation I mirror Baba's *işte boyle* (thus it is this way) with my *işte güzel* (thus it is good). This affirmation, after three tries on Baba's part, shows the sufficiency of his remedy. Baba's ensuing confirmation, of my being left over from Baba Bayram, reinforces his remedy. In referring to my Bektashi entry, Baba also asserts my legitimacy in a Bektashi way in the enterprise that is our interaction.

That I then picked up on Baba's reference to Baba Bayram can be seen as a sort of echo of Baba's reinforcement of his remedy. Notice though that all reference to the project of the dissertation has long since evaporated, as has the quasi-interview format in which I earlier asked so many questions. Instead, in the last narrative episodes, we have returned to a less risky, more familiar balance of interaction in which Baba does most of the talking, and as he suggested, I listen. Thus we have adjusted back, and in this process of attunement, reasserted at the same time our relationship and our usual way of interacting.

III. Keying Interaction with Baba

In the last chapter I explored internal bracketing of the Hizir lesson. This led to a definition of episoding across the lesson, a description of episode structure, and an interpretation of the major shift in the last part of the lesson. Attunement of my language and Baba's was brought out in the sequences of remedy and mediation within episodes, in the affirmations and confirmations that closed episodes, and in the shift near the end of the lesson.

In this chapter I adopt a different perspective. Instead of comparing structures across the lesson I look at an overall message that can be gleaned from "keyings" of the interaction of talib and murshid throughout the lesson. By "keying" I refer to "systematic signaling of how an activity is to be interpreted in terms of another known frame." Gregory Bateson's example of monkeys "keying" that they were playing, to indicate "this is not fight," is a basic illustration of keying (Bateson, 1972; Goffman, 1974). An advantage of looking at keyings is that they relate particular patterns of interaction (the signals of the transformation of the frame) to socially recognizable activities.

The particular keying of the interaction that I evolve is "this is not a joust." Like many keyings as well as many Sufi anecdotes, this is a negative definition. Attunement here is brought out not as a changing progression toward a shared form, but rather as an uncovering of recurrent messages of interaction.

Preliminary to Keying: "Knowing of His Not Knowing"

in which the student or talib is revealed as one of patent insecurity, who by fostered default learns dependence on the murshid

There is a poetic series of linked adages that Baba has on occasion recited in Arabic.[1] Regretfully I do not recall the contexts of recitation.

Knowing not,
And knowing naught of his not knowing,
He scatters.
Hasten from him.

Knowing not,
Yet knowing of his not knowing,
He seeks.
Teach him.

Knowing,
Yet knowing naught of his knowing,
He sleeps.
Wake him.

Knowing,
And knowing of his knowing,
He centers.
Draw near him.

In the second stanza, the line I translated as "he seeks" is in Arabic the nominal "talib."

This extended adage asserts that a talib is one who "knows that he or she does not know." That which he or she does not know, refers of course to more than facts, for when Baba and the Sufis in general speak of knowledge, they mean spiritual knowledge—experience in coming closer to God. More generally, though, "knowing of one's not knowing" refers to an acknowledgment that one is unable to predict sequences and find meaning within a new situation. It is the limbo and anomie of foreigners who finally realize their frames of expectation do not fit. They drift and stumble. This is a common experience in cross-cultural study, except for those who carry their empire within—thinking either that all the world should emulate them, or, more insidiously, that at base all the world is already like them. In other words, "knowing of one's not knowing" is a sort of suspension of frame.

In my case of studying with Baba, the suspension of frame was especially intense. As a university student part of my identity was wrapped up in what it meant to be a student and to study. There was strong pressure to apply my frame of how one studies and learns to studying with Baba. When this frame was contradicted, I was at a loss.

The major contradiction was my notion of how the teacher should behave compared with how Baba did behave. My expectations were that the teacher would overtly direct the flow of information and evaluation of the student's learning. That is, there should be topics, and Baba as the teacher should set them. He should be overtly in charge. He should speak first; but he did not. Thus when I had to begin the sessions, when it was I who had to open talk after episode breaks, I felt in a cross-cultural double bind. Baba would not begin, so clearly I had to. Yet to do so set me up in my mind as in charge, though I knew I was not.

Part of my problem was a foggy sense of knowledge as information and as separable from the student, and of knowing as a passive state. This leads to a view of learning as "a banking enterprise," to use Paulo Freire's term. Maturana and Varela (1987) claim that this view of knowledge and of knowing is a common fallacy. Rather, according to them, every act of knowing brings forth a world; all knowing is effective action. This view squares well with the Sufi vision of spiritual knowing as the action of drawing closer to God. For the lowly talib however, what is lacking is a frame for understanding what is going on. For me this was manifested in the feeling that there was no syllabus.

In my interaction with Baba, this lack of frame, this "not knowing," was reflected in features often characterized as features of "negative politeness" (Brown and Levinson, 1987), namely, hedging, pausing, faltering syntax, distractions to the tape-recorder, and prolonged development. For example, the fourth episode began:

FT: .. you know~
.. hey let's have a look\
{checks tape-recorder}
as for me what I like are stories\
. one thing I like
-is stories\
Baba: yaa
FT: for example Hizir and Musa~
ex-
Baba: ya
FT: -actly a mur-
Baba: ex-

FT: -shid~
what he is\
are there others **Baba**?

Two other common features in such passages are my ubiquitous calling out to Baba, as in bold above, and instances of my moving into his dialect. (These include unrounding of front vowels, fossilizing of suffixes usually governed by vowel harmony, and substitution of locative for dative postpositions.) Both my calling out to Baba and my use of his dialect can be classified as features of "positive politeness."

The deferential strategies of both "negative politeness" and "positive politeness" by the same person in an exchange are sometimes interpreted as an attempt both to maintain social distance and to reduce social distance. Here, though, this analysis falls short of explaining my behavior. Rather I interpret this mixture of moves as reflecting not just questions of deference toward Baba but also questions of my own demeanor,[2] of how I relate to myself in a situation where I am profoundly unsure.

My uncertainly stems from several areas: what to talk about, how to put it, my place in initiating talk, and where the lessons are going. These would be concerns of any talib. Compounding this unsureness is isolation. Certainly one way in which we anchor our sense of frames of meaning of the world is through multiple messages that reinforce our contentions (Goffman, 1974). But the situation of the talib seeking to learn from the murshid is that only through the murshid is there light. In the case where there is only one line of validation of a frame, we are on a slender line indeed. As Baba chants in the nefes from Pir Sultan Abdal (sixteenth century):

Derdim çoktur kangisine yanayim hu
  Yine tazelendi yürek yaresi
Ben bu derde kande derman bulayim hu
  Meğer Şah elinden ola çaresi hu

* * * * *

So many are my sufferings, which shall consume me hu
  The wounds of my heart again are raw.
For my sufferings, where shall I find remedy, hu
  If there be cure only from the hand of the Shah. hu

Quatrains from nefes like this one have much accumulated resonance, but here notice the last line. As Baba once explained, "Shah" can stand for the murshid. There is a strong understanding that any assistance can come only from the murshid. Also, the "hu" at the end of the lines, as explained in the first chapter, comes from the Arabic for "he" and can refer to God or to one's murshid through whom God is invoked. Thus "hu" is like my saying "Baba," a calling out to the murshid.

If the Bektashi tradition expects and promotes the suspension of frame of the talib, the sense of "knowing of one's not knowing," what is the point of this experience? Another name for suspension of frame is "negative experience." Goffman has noted that there are uses of negative experience (1974). Short suspensions, like some laughter, allow closer reintegration to the previous frame, but longer negative experiences allow reintegration into some other frame.

Death is a major frame break for most of us. Among the Bektashis, as with many other mystics, there is an understanding expressed by the Arabic phrase *mauta qabla en ta mouta*, or "death before dying." It involves a dying to this world and its values, a cleansing so that only God lives inside one. That is the goal. But the way is understood through the murshid, who both promotes the negative experience and serves as the only way to a reintegration. Thus the "knowing of one's not knowing" cuts one loose and focuses trust on the murshid. My calling out to Baba and my use of his dialect also reflect this movement toward dependence on him.

The Keying: "This Is Not a Joust"

in which Baba's consumate skill in verbal jousting is portrayed, his utter restraint from jousting behavior with the talib is described, and the ever-present binding of murshid and talib is revealed

The suspension of frame of the talib and the resulting insecurity and dependence on the murshid set up a keying of the talib-murshid relationship that I refer to as "this is not a joust." In this situation the talib knows he or she could be easily shamed or bested by the murshid, and yet the murshid does not do this. The talib's sense of the murshid's restraint further strengthens the bond of talib and murshid. But why should the thought of being verbally bested occur to a talib?

spacing of start of next turn
below the end of the previous one
signifies that there was no perceptible pause between turns

[placed one above the other show [initial place
[of overlap of talk

bold within a transcript of dialogue
highlights point to be addressed
in surrounding discussion

RELATING TO TURKISH AND ALBANIAN

The Turkish alphabet has six symbols not found in the English alphabet:

ç	(“ch”)
ş	(“sh”)
ü	(front high rounded vowel)
ö	(front central rounded vowel)
ğ	(lengthens previous vowel)
ı	(signifies an undotted “i” high, central, unrounded vowel)

The Albanian alphabet has nine symbols and letter combinations not found in English:

ç	(“ch”)
dh	(“th” as in “they”)
ë	(“uh,” central unrounded vowel)
gj	(“g + y”)
ll	(back “l”)
nj	(“n + y”)
rr	(strong flap)
xh	(“j” as in “job”)
zh	(as in French “je”)

Appendix B: Turkish Texts of Nefes

Where Baba’s version differs from the printed version in Sadeddin Nuzhet Ergün’s *Bektashi Şairleri ve Nefesleri* (1960), Baba’s words are added in parentheses.

In recitation, Baba often repeats each line of the third quatrain, chanting “hu” after each repetition. He also adds “hu” at the end of most stanzas and invariably at the end of the whole nefes.

by Pir Sultan Abdal (sixteenth century)

Derdim çoktur kangisına yanayim
Yine tazelendi yürek yaresi
Ben bu derde kande derman bulayim
Meğer Şah elinden ola çaresi

Türlü donlar giyer gülden naziktir
Bülbül cevr eyleme güle yazıktır
Çok hasretlik çektim bağrım eziktir
Güle güle gelir canlar paresi

Benim uzun boylu servi cinarım
Yüreğime bir od düştü yanarım
Kiblem sensin yüzüm sana dönerim
Mihrabımdır kaşlarının (iki kaşın) arası

Didar ile mahabbete (mahabbet’le) doyulmaz
Mahabbetten kaçan insan sayılmaz
Münkir üflemekle çirag söyünmez
Tutuşunca yanar aşkın çirası

Pir Sultan’ım kati (kani) yüksek uçarsın
Selamsız sabahsız gelir geçersin

Dilber (Güzel) mahabbetten niçin kaçarsın
Böyle midir yolumuzun turası

by Mehmet Ali Hilmi Dede Baba (nineteenth century)

Ayine tuttum yüzüme
Ali göründü gözüme
Nazar eyledim özüme
Ali göründü gözüme

Adem Baba Havva ile
Hem Alem el'esma ile
Çerhi felek sema ile
Ali göründü gözüme

Hazreti Nuh Neciyyullah
Hem Ibrahim Halilullah
Sinadaki Kelimullah
Ali göründü gözüme

Isayı Ruhullah oldur
Iki alemde Şah oldur
Mu'minlere penah oldur
Ali göründü gözüme

Ali evvel Ali ahir
Ali batın Ali zahir
Ali tayyib Ali tahir
Ali göründü gözüme

Ali candır Ali canan
Ali dindir Ali iman
Ali rahim Ali rahman
Ali göründü gözüme

Hilmi gedayi bir kemter
Görür gözüm dilim söyler
Her nereye kılsam nazar
Ali göründü gözüme

by Niyazi Mısri

Derman arardım derdime
derdim bana derman imiş
Burhan aradım aslıma
aslım bana burhan imiş

Sağ u solum gözler idim
dost yüzünü görsem deyu
Ben tasrada arar idim
ol can içinde can imiş

Öyle sanırdım ayriyem
dost gayridir ben gayriyem
Benden görüp işiteni
bildim ki ol canan imiş

Savm-i salat u hac ile
sanma biter zahid işin
Insani-i kâmil olmağa
lazim olan irfan imiş

Kande gelir yolun senin
ya kande varır menzilin
Nerden gelüp gittiğini
anlamayan hayvan imiş

Murşid gerektir bildire
Hakk'i sana Hakk el-yakın
Murşidi olmayanların
bildikleri guman imiş

Her murşide dil verme kim
yolunu sarpa uğradır
Murşidi kâmil olanın
gayet yolu asan imiş

Anla hemen bir sözdürür
yokuş değildir düzdürür

Alem kamu bir yüzdürür
    gören ani hayran imiş

Işit Niyazi'nın sözün
    bir nesne örtmez Hak yüzün
Haktan ayan bir nesne yok
    gözsüzlere pinhan imiş

Appendix C: Features of West Rumelian Turkish, Baba's Dialect

"Rumelian Turkish" refers to the Turkish spoken in the Balkans. (The name "Rumeli" comes from the term the Ottoman Empire used to refer to its European provinces there.) As cited in *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta* (1959), the Turkish of the Balkans is further classified into East Rumelian Turkish and West Rumelian Turkish. Geographically, East Rumelian Turkish is spoken in most of Bulgaria, while West Rumelian Turkish is or was spoken in the far west of Bulgaria, in Yugoslavia, and in Albania.

This classification is largely based on the work of J. Nemeth, the eminent Hungarian Turcologist, in his monograph *Zur Einteiling der Türkischen Mundarten Bulgariens,* "On the Classification or Division of Turkish Dialects in Bulgaria," (Sofia, 1956). The monograph is much broader than its title would indicate. Nemeth includes data from regions beyond the borders of Bulgaria and relates differences in dialect to different times and places of origin of Turkish settlers in the Balkans.

In particular, Nemeth proposes eight distinctive isoglosses of West Rumelian Turkish. The first five of these isoglosses relate to a "breakdown" of vowel harmony—that progressive assimilation for which Standard Turkish is so famous—in which the first vowel in a word can be see as keying the following vowels of that word in terms of frontness (*öldü*) and unroundedness (*baktı*).

West Rumelian Turkish: Nemeth's Eight Isoglosses

with contrasting examples of Standard form and dialect form

1. ı, u, ü → i in word final position.
    (öldü—oldi)
2. the perfect suffix -miş is invariant.
    (kalkmış—kalkmiş)

3. i → ı in noninitial and closed final syllables.
   (benim—benım)
4. ö → o', o; and ü → u' in many words.
   (dört—dort; üç—uç)
5. in suffixes with low vowel harmony (e ~ a), one of the two forms is generalized.
   (kanlar—kanler)
6. ö → ü in about forty words.
   (ördek—ürdek)
7. Osmanli ğ is preserved as g.
   (ağaç—agaç)
8. the progressive participle form in -yor is replaced by one in -y.
   (seviyorum—seveyi-m)

In a later article by Nemeth, "Traces of the Turkish Language in Albania" (1961), an article that was most generously brought to my attention by Professor Victor Friedman, Nemeth proposes two additional isoglosses for the Turkish of Albania:

9. fronting of k and g to palatal affricates or stops.
   (gyun or djun for gün, kyi for ki)
10. variations in word-initial h.

The first of these additional isoglosses (9) is not a feature of Baba's Turkish in voiced form (gü → gyu) but is present in unvoiced form (ki →kyı). In my recent travels in Yugoslavia (1987 to 1988) I noted both of these as most prominent in the Turkish spoken in Kossovo and western Macedonia, and in the Albanian of those regions.

Nemeth does not systematically discuss morphology and syntax of West Rumelian Turkish in his articles. These are discussed, however, in a study by Victor Friedman, "Balkanology and Turcology: West Rumelian Turkish in Yugoslavia as Reflected in Prescriptive Grammar" (1982: 13–25, 30–31).

Selected Features of Morphology and Syntax from Friedman's Study on West Rumelian Turkish

The following features are represented in Baba's Turkish.

Morphology

1. invariant -miş
2. participle + auxiliary (separation of idi, e.g. var idi)
3. datives (generalization of -a or -e no matter the frontness or backness of vowel)
4. verbal derivations, especially with -len- or -lan-

Syntax

1. placement of verb in nonfinal position (exceedingly common)
2. use of optative-subjunctive in place of other finite and nonfinite verbal forms as calques in Albanian subordinite clauses in të

Besides these published dialect features, the following four are additional features of Baba's Turkish that I find interesting and that are probably dialectal. (Indeed, Baba's Turkish deserves a study of its own.)

Additional Selected Features of Baba's Dialect

1. nominal use of bu referring to a person
   (Bu geldi, i.e., Bu adam geldi, similar to Albanian usage of ky and kjo)
2. reduction or inversion in the genitive construction
   (onun arkadaşı ismi Mustafa)
3. use of locative suffix instead of dative
   (giderlerdi tekkede)
4. peculiarities of postpredicate elements

In reference to number 3 above, the only place I find published reference to this phenomenon is in Tadeusz Kowalski's *Les Turcs et la langue Turque de la Bulgarie du Nord-Est* (1933)—a study on what would now be considered an East Rumelian Turkish. And in reference to the last feature listed above, number 4, I find interesting differences between the findings of Dan Slobin and Karl Zimmer's study (1986) on postpredicate elements in spoken Turkish and Baba's speech (recall that their study was with Standard speakers of Turkish).

Baba has a higher percentage of postpredicate elements that are objects (80 percent) than was found in Slobin and Zimmer's study, but only half the percentage of subjects in that position that the researchers found. Further, in Baba's narratives, the percentage of postpredicate elements increases from a low of 25 percent to a high of 66 percent when going from narratives of little action to passages of dramatic action. There is clearly a discourse constraint on this feature.

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