

A

Abdullah Kaşgari (‘Abdallāh Kāshgarī)

Şeyh **Abdullah** Nidaiyi **Kaşgari** (Shaykh ‘Abdallāh Nidā’ī-yī Kashghārī, 1100–7 Safer 1174/1688/9?-18 November 1760) was affiliated with the Central Asian Kāshānī branch of the Naqshbandiyya, a widespread Sufi (Şūfī) order founded in Bukhara by Bahā’ al-Dīn (d. 786/1384). After travelling extensively and visiting the Sufi tombs in Turkestan, Khurāsān, Iran, Iraq and Syria, he remained in Mecca for three years and performed the *hajj* three times according to his untitled Persian treatise (Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS Aşir Efendi, 411).

When Abdullah arrived in Istanbul, he abandoned the itinerant life and was appointed the first *shaykh* of the Kalenderhane (Qalandar-khāna) in Eyüp. This establishment was founded or restored in 1156/1743–4 by the *kadasker* (*qādī-‘asker*, chief military judge) of Anatolia Lalizade Abdülbaki (La’līzāde ‘Abd al-Bāqī) Efendi (d. 1159 or 1161/1746–8). Lalizade supported the Mujaddidī branch of the Naqshbandiyya (initiated by the Indian

shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1034/1624), who was known posthumously as the Mujaddid-i Alf-i Thānī, i.e., the Renovator of Islam who appeared at the beginning of the second millennium of the Islamic era) which already had important establishments in eleventh-/seventeenth-century Istanbul. Like other Özbekler convents, this *tekke*, served as a hospice for pilgrims from Central Asia. The office of the *shaykh* was restricted to unmarried persons, “and because Abdullah wished to marry, he gave up the office of *shaykh*.” (Ayvansarayı 260).

Subsequently, Yekçeşm el-Hac Mürteza (Yekçeşm al-Ḥājj Murtaḍā, d. 16 Ramazan 1160/22 September 1747), who had received a vision in which he had been instructed to establish a *tekke*, offered a solution for Abdullah by erecting a new building in the hills overlooking Eyüp. As *ruznâme-i evvel* (*rūznāmçe-i evvel*), Mürteza Efendi belonged to the elite of the financial bureaucracy, *hacegan-ı divan-ı hümayun* (*khwācegān-ı dīvān-ı hümayūn*, senior scribes of the imperial chancery). He had been initiated in the Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī brotherhood during his pilgrimage to

Mecca by Şeyh Ahmed Yekdest Cüryani (Ahmad Yekdast Jüryānī, d. 1119/1707).

“The significance of the contacts between Nidāī and Yekdast lies precisely in (...) mutual acceptance and the intertwining of different branches of the Naqshbandiyya that it reflects” (Algar p. 11). Abdullah’s succession remained largely within his family. This uninterrupted continuity until the closure of the *tekkes* (1925) demonstrates the successful implantation of the Naqshbandiyya in this epoch and its close affiliation with high ranking bureaucrats. In the early thirteenth/nineteenth century, the Kaşgari *tekke* accommodated some thirty permanent dervishes, or *hücrenişin* (*hujra-nishīn*), but in 1885 there were only eight male and four female residents. The central building (a mosque with a *tevhid-hane* (*tawhīd-khāna*)), which is adjoined by a private suite, is still extant and has been restored substantially.

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KLAUS KREISER

Aktham b. Şayfī

Aktham b. Şayfī is a semi-legendary figure of pre-Islamic Arabia. The sources portray him as a judge, sage, and poet, from the Usayyid branch of the Tamīm tribe, but otherwise very few details of his life are known with certainty. He is counted among the *mu‘ammarūn*—people famous for their alleged longevity—and his lifespan is given variously as 130, 190, 200, or 330 years. The earlier sources do not provide his date of death, while later sources assume that he died around 8/630, probably by extrapolation from the traditions linking Aktham with the prophet Muḥammad (see below).

Together with similar figures, such as Luqmān and Quṣṣ b. Sā‘ida, Aktham b. Şayfī is regarded as an archetypal pre-Islamic Arabian sage, and numerous maxims, legal rulings, and proverbs are attributed to him. Their authenticity cannot, however, be ascertained, as several of these sayings are also attributed to other authorities, or are known from the Bible or other sources; a famous sermon by him can be shown to be a later forgery, probably in support of Arabian culture (cf. Chraībi). Some of his alleged sayings or rulings seem to have served as a model for later Islamic legal positions.

Several traditions try to link Aktham to the prophet Muḥammad. Thus Aktham is said to have inquired about the teachings of Muḥammad and to have approved of Islam when a verse of the Qur‘ān calling for justice and kindness was recited to him. Other traditions report a written correspondence between Aktham and Muḥammad. Yet other traditions claim that Aktham died on his way to Muḥammad, along with a hundred members of his tribe, intending to submit to