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THE TÜRBE OF SARI SALTİK AT BABADAG - DOBRUDJA

Brief historical and architectural notes

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Time and man have dealt harshly with the historical monuments of the many centuries the Dobrudja, the dry steppe country at the western coast of the Black Sea near the estuary of the Danube, since 1878 included in Rumania, was an integral part of the Ottoman Empire. It would be logical to expect that the few buildings dating from Ottoman times have shared the full attention of the world of science and are well known. However, this is not the case, just as it is with most works of Ottoman art in the majority of other Balkan countries. In these few pages we would like to bring to the attention of a larger circle of peoples a small and almost forgotten building from the Ottoman period, a building which was recently saved from total destruction through a complete and competent restoration. We mean the türbe of Sarı Saltık Dede at Babadag in the northern part of the Rumanian Dobrudja as this little building constitutes one of the very last tangible remains of a particularly agitated period of the history of this part of South Eastern Europe, namely the Seljuk colonization in the 13th century and the founding of the cultural and religious centre of the earliest Muslim Turkish colonists of the Balkans! The town of Babadag itself owes its name to this event; the Islamization of large parts of the Balkans, carried out by dervish missionaries of various kind, a process which greatly added to enlarge the base for the spread of Ottoman Turkish Islam and its culture, was to a large extent facilitated by the cult of Sarı Saltık, a popular saint who was identified as the early patron and missionary of the Bektashi Way and functioned as a bridge between Christianity and Islam. This is the real importance of the humble türbe of Sarı Saltık at Babadag. The architectural forms of the building are rather plain.

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The history of the early Turkish colonization of the Dobrudja and the origin of the Turkish speaking Christian population of that area, the Gagauz, and the various problems connected with it have been disentangled by some of the best orientalists, orientalist linguists and historians of our time and need not to be repeated here in detail¹. However, the importance of this period is such that a few words should be said in this context in order to furnish a proper background against which the humble material remains preserved in the Babadag of our time will be better understood.

Ever since the downfall of the Classical civilizations the Dobrudja has been a borderland between the settled empires of the early middle ages and the hosts of nomad peoples pouring in from the East. The Huns were followed by the Avars, the Bulgars, the Peçenegs and the Qypçak (Cumans)². Eventually the land became incorporated within the frontiers of the Turco-Tatar state of Southern Russia³.

¹ See for example: Paul Wittek, *Les Gagauzes = Les gens de Kaykâüs*, «Rocznik Orientalistyczny» vol. XVII, 1952, Warszawa, 1952 (Memorial Tadeusz Kowalski); Paul Wittek, *Yazi jioğhlu 'Ali on the Christian Turks of the Dobrudja*, «Bull. of the School of Oriental and African Studies», XIV/3, London 1952, p. 639-688;

Tadeusz Kowalski, *Les Turcs et la langue Turque de la Bulgarie du Nord-Est*, «Mémoires de la commission orientaliste de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences», no 16, Kraków, 1933; Tadeusz Kowalski, *Les éléments ethniques Turcs de la Dobrudja*, «Rocznik Orientalistyczny» XIV, Warszawa, 1938, p. 66-80;

P. Mutafčiev, *Die angebliche Einwanderung von Seldschuk-Türken in die Dobrudscha im 13. Jahrhundert*, «Spisani na Bălgarskata Akad. na Nauka i Izkoustva» LXVI, Sofia, 1943, p. I - 129; H. W. Duda, *Zeitgenössische Islamische Quellen und das Oguzname des Jaziğioğhlu Ali zur angeblichen Besiedlung der Dobrudscha im 13. Jahr.* in the same «Spisani», Sofia, 1943, p. 113-145. Both this last two studies, which contain very valuable historical information, are discussed in the studies of Wittek mentioned above and their conclusions are, on good grounds, rejected; Aurel Decei, *Le problème de la Colonisation des Turcs Seljoukides dans la Dobrogea au XIIIe siècle*, «Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi», VI, Ankara, 1968, p. 85 - III; Jean Deny, *Sari Saltıq et le nom de la ville de Babadaghi*, in: «Mélanges offerts à Emile Picot, Paris, 1913, p. I - 15.

Other detailed information, especially on ethnological and linguistic matters by D. G. Gadžanov, *Vorläufiger Bericht des Lektors der Türkischen Sprache an der Univ. von Sofia. Reise im Auftrage der Balkan Kommission zur türkischen Dialektstudien in Nord-Ost Bulgarien*, «Anzeiger der Kaiserl. Akad. der Wissensch. Phil-Hist Klasse», XLVI, Jahrg. 1909, No V, Wien, 1909, p. 28-42, and the same *Zweiter Vorläufiger Bericht*, same «Anzeiger» Jahrg. 1912, No III, p. 13-20. Other literature will be mentioned further on in this article.

² A general survey of this period is given by René Grousset, *L'Empire des Steppes*, Paris, 1965 (German edition Kindler, München, 1970, the chapters 4 and II 6: *Die Russische Steppe von 6. bis zum 13. Jahrhundert*, p. 244-263 and *Das Khanat von Qyptschak*, p. 536/557. Also Bertold Spuler, *Die Goldene Horde*, Leipzig, 1945.

³ Grousset, *op. cit.*, p. 549. In detail P. Nikov, *The second Bulgarian Kingdom*, Sofia, 1937 (in Bulgarian).

The interesting excavations of the fortress of Pačuiul lui Soara⁴ on the other hand, most clearly demonstrate the endeavours of the settled empires, the Byzantine and the Bulgarian, to maintain some kind of control over the much threatened but strategically important land. The older Turkic peoples, arriving from the steppes of Southern Russia, must have left an ethnic, or at least a linguistic imprint on the population of the Dobrudja of which the linguistic researches of Kowalski⁵ apparently found the traces. W. Zajaczkowski even regarded the Christian Turks of Dobrudja, which were reinforced by the immigrations from the Seljuks of Asia Minor and together formed «an independent Oghuz state with the capital Karvuna.»⁶ Wittek traced the history of the Seljuk colonization of the Dobrudja as meant by Zajaczkowski by a comprehensive study of the Byzantine and Turkish sources⁷. These Seljuks, who came from the South, from the already (partly) Turkified Anatolia, are not as nebulous as the older groups of Turkish or Turkic emigrants, arriving by way of Southern Russia, as their history can be more or less reconstructed from documentary evidence. The main source of the Seljuk colonisation is Yazıcioğlu Ali, written in 1423. The reliability of this source was demonstrated by Wittek⁸ against charges of Duda⁹ and Mutafčiev¹⁰. According to Yazıcioğlu a considerable group of Turks arrived in the Dobrudja as followers of the deposed Seljuk sultan Izz al-Din II Kaykaus. Among them was the blessed Sarı Saltık as their religious leader. This was after 1263/64. The Byzantine emperor Michael VIII whose guests they were, settled the Turks in an area which was at that time a kind of no-man's-land between the Tatar state of the Golden Horde, the Bulgarian state and the Byzantine Empire¹¹. They founded two or three town and became rather numerous. According to Inalcik the note of the Arab geographer Abu 'l-Fida that the majority of the population of «Sakdji» - Issaccea - was Muslim means that they were

4 On Pačuiul lui Soara see for example: Radu Popa, *La Porte Nord de la Forteresse Byzantine de P.L.S. «Dacia» Nouvelle Série XI*, Bucarest 1967, pp. 270-292, with further literature. Interesting notes on the colonization of the northern Dobrudja by Normans of England in the 11th century, sent there by Byzantine emperor to colonize the practically uninhabited borderland of the empire are given by Krijna Ciggaar: *L'emigration anglaise à Byzance après 1066*, in: *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, 32, 1974, pp. 301-342.

5 Tadeusz Kowalski, *Les Turcs et la Langue Turc...*, cited on note 1.

6 Włodzimierz Zajaczkowski, in *Encycl. of Islam*, N. E. Leyden 1965, art. Gagauz on p. 971-972, With rich literature on ethnical and linguistic questions.

7 Paul Wittek, *Yazıcioghlu cAli on th Christian Turks of the Dobrudja*, cited on note 1.

8 Idem, also Wittek: *Les Gagaouzes*, on note 1.

9 H. W. Duda, *Zeitgenössische Is. Quellen*, cited on note 1.

10 P. Mutafčiev, *Die angebliche Einwanderung*, cited on note 1.

11 Halil Inalcik, *Encycl. of Islam (E. I.) New Edition*, art. Dobrudja, p. 610.

the Seljuk colonists from Anatolia rather than the Tatars settlers of Noghay¹². The story of Yazıcioğlu continues with stating that the Byzantine emperor feared a too great power of his Turkish subjects in the Dobrudja «because they were 10 or 20.000» and killed and imprisoned a number of their leaders. Izz al-Din was freed by the Tatars together with two of his sons but his mother, a relative of the emperor, and two younger sons were deported to Verria in Macedonia where they received land in feudal possession. One of the Seljuk princes remained in Verria and died as a Muslim. His children were converted to Christianity and with them their retinue. When the Ottoman sultan Yıldırım Bayezid¹³ conquered Verria (1385) he found the Seljuk descendants still living there. They followed Yıldırım in his campaigns and received the land around Zichne (Eastern Macedonia) from him as their fief. Yazıcioğlu added that they came «recently» to renew their documents. This must have occurred in 1421 after the ascension of Murad II to the Ottoman throne (in any way before 1424 when the author finished his manuscript). The historian worked at that time at the Ottoman chancery and must have spoken personally to these Seljuk descendants¹⁴. Our only source concerning the fate of the followers of Izz al-Din so far was Yazıcioğlu. After Wittek had demonstrated the validity of this source the Greek scholar Zahariadou published five documents¹⁵ of the Athonite monastery of Vatopedi which confirmed the story of Yazıcioğlu on the Seljuks of Verria. In fact they had become Christians much earlier than the Turkish source has it but they indeed were big land owners in the Verria region after the year 1265, active as protectors of the Holy Mountain, about which the five documents speak. They confirm the reliability of Yazıcioğlu's story in the most conclusive way. The Seljuks of Verria, after their deportation to Zichne by Yıldırım Bayezid, continued to live in and around the last mentioned place as Turkish speaking Christians and were still there at the beginning of our century¹⁶.

12 *idem*, p. 610.

13 Actually Verria was taken under Murad I in 1385, four years before Bayezid came to power. Most probably the great meeting of Verria under Bayezid I in 1392 is referred to in the story of Yazıcioghlu; for this see Aşikpaşa-zâde, German translation of R. F. Kreutel, Graz-Wien-Köln, 1959, p. 101.

14 Wittek, *Les Gagaouzes*, p. 18-22.

15 E. A. Zahariadou, *Oi Hristianoï apogonoi tou Izzedin Kaikaous sti Verroia*, (The Christian descendants of Izzeddin Kaykaus in Verria), «*Makedoniki*», VI, Thessaloniki, 1964-1965, p. 62-74.

16 For these Turkish speaking «Greeks» in Macedonia see: Paul Wittek, *La descendance chrétienne de la dynastie Seljouk en Macédoine*, «*Echos d'Orient*» XXX, 1934, p. 409-412. They are also mentioned by Schultze-Jene, *Makedonien, Landschafts und Kulturbilder*, Jena, 1927, p. 180. The process of Hellenising this people, fostered by Greek schools and church, was in an advanced state in the time Schultze-Jena travelled.

The emigration of Izz al-Din to the Dobrudja, his imprisonment and subsequent liberation by the Tatars of Noghay is known from other sources as well. According to Grousset¹⁷ the liberation took place in 1265/66 or in 1269/70 after a defeat of the troops of emperor Michael VIII by the Tatar army of Noghay. Izz ed-Din moved to the Crimea where he married a daughter of Khan Berke and received the town of Sudak as apanage. The Muslim Turkish colonists, who under the guidance of Sarı Saltık remained to live in the Dobrudja, appear to have been protected by the powerful Qypçak-Turkish (Mongol) leader Noghay who himself was recently converted to Islam. This conversion is brought in connection with the activities of Sarı Saltık. It must have taken place about the time of Khan Berke's death (1267)¹⁸. The position of the Seljuk Turks in Dobrudja must have been well secured during the entire last quarter of the 13th century. Between 1280 and 1292 their chief menace, the Bulgarians, were completely neutralised as the machinations of Noghay (and Byzantium) succeeded to rise the Cuman (Qypçak) nobleman Georgi Terter to the Bulgarian throne at Tirnovo during whose reign Bulgaria became a Tatar protectorate¹⁹. Noghay was killed in 1299 and his son Čeke (Tschaka) in the year after, in Tirnovo²⁰. The ruler in the area adjacent to Dobrudja became Tuka Bugha, son of Khan Tokhtu (Toqtai), both papans²¹. Yazıcıoğlu remarks that the Muslim Turks decided to emigrate because the Bulgarian princes had risen to power and occupied large parts of the land²². They emigrated in several waves to North Western Anatolia. At this time Sarı Saltık Dede must have died, according to Wittek shortly after 1300²³. Being without powerful protectors, harassed by the Christians and without their old leader they must have preferred to leave. This occurred about 1309. Those who remained were converted to Christianity and became the Gagauz, «Les gens de Kaykaus» as Wittek demonstrated. In the Ottoman registers of the late 16th century some of their descendants still bore Turkish names, (Arslan, Balık, Karagöz etc)²⁴. The 14th century saw the rise of an independent state in the Dobrudja under Dobrotič, who gave his name to the entire dis-

17 Grousset, *L'Empire des Steppes*, German edition, p. 546. Unfortunately Grousset does not mention his sources. The contemporary Ibn Bibi, critical edition by H. Duda, København 1959, p. 282-285, describes the flight in detail. Ibn Bibi was the main source of Yazıcıoğlu, he also notes the liberation of the sultan by the Tatars of Berke.

18 H. Inalcık, in E. I. New Edition, art. Dobrudja, p. 610.

19 Grousset, p. 549.

20 Inalcık, in E. I. p. 610; Grousset, p. 550.

21 Inalcık in E. I. p. 610

22 Wittek, Yazıcıoğlu 'Ali on the Christian Turks, etc. p. 615.

23 idem, p. 658.

24 Inalcık in E. I. p. 610.

trict²⁵. The capital of Dobrotiič's state, Kaliakra, has been unearthed by recent Bulgarian excavations²⁶. Those Turks who had emigrated to Anatolia settled in the recently founded Turkmen principality of Karasi. Yazıcioğlu²⁷ noted a tradition, still alive in his time, that they arrived in several waves. He also knew that the remaining Turks lost their ancient faith. It is interesting to note that the Emirate of Karasi was involved in continuous warfare with the Christians across the Dardanelles. When this state was incorporated in the young Ottoman empire (by 1334/35-H. 735) the latter inherited a group of experienced military leaders and the old conflict with Byzantium. Although only hypothetical it appears very probable that among the Ottoman vanguard of wars of conquest of Thrace were a considerable number of Seljuk descendants of the old colonists of Dobrudja. In fact only little more than one generation lies between their arrival in Karasi and the first Ottoman expeditions on European soil.

On the historical personal of Sarı Saltık Dede very little is known in fact. He certainly was a strong and persuasive personality. He is said to be a native of the Central Asian city of Buchara. Almost all we know of him is found in the Vilayet-name of Haji Bektâş²⁸. The historicity of this work was doubted by Georg Jakob²⁹ but accepted by Birge, still the greatest authority on Bektashism. Birge regarded the Vilayet-name as a historical source from the period prior to 1400 with only a few later interpolations³⁰. Both Claude Cahen³¹ and Georgé Arnakis³² used it as such. Cahen also mentions a Saltuk-name which is not contemporary to Sarı Sal-

25 This is the generally accepted idea. Recently doubts were raised against it by Hans Eideneier on the XIVe Intern. des Etudes Byzantines at Bucarest (1971). See: *Résumés-Communications, Supplément, Quatrième Thème, Ein früher Beleg für «Dobruddja»?* which brings the name D. as far back as the 12th century.

26 Georgi Djingov, Kaliakra and the feudal Bulgarian principality in Dobruddja, in: XIVe Congrès Intern. Bucarest, 1971, *Résumés-Communications*, p. 13-15.

27 Wittek, *Les Gagaouzes*, p. 22.

28 It has been translated into German by E. Gross, *Das Vilajet-name des Haggi Bektasch*, «*Türkische Bibliothek*» No 25, Leipzig, 1927. For the original text see: Abdülbâki Gölpınarlı, *Vilâyet-nâme, Manâkib-i Hüncâr Hacı Bektâş-ı Velî*, Istanbul 1958.

29 Georg Jakob, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Derwischordens der Bektaschis*, «*Türkische Bibliothek*», No 9, Berlin, 1908, and by the same: *Die Bektaschijje in ihrem Verhältnis zur verwandten Erscheinungen*, «*Abhandlungen der Phil. Hist. Klasse der Königl. Bayerische Akad. der Wiss.*» XXIV, III, München, 1909.

30 J. K. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, London, 1937, p. 46-51 and 74.

31 Claude Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey, a general survey of the material and spiritual culture and history c. 1071-1330*, London 1968, p. 354.

32 G. G. Arnakis, *Futuwwa traditions in the Ottoman Empire, Akhis, Bektashi Dervishes and Craftsmen*, «*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*», XII, 4, 1953, p. 243-244.

tuk but still a very early work^{32a}. The oldest known note on Sarı Saltuk is that from Ibn Battutah of Tangier³³ who on his way from the court of the Khan of the Golden Horde Özbek in Southern Russia to the Byzantine capital visited «a town known by the name of Baba Saltık, who, they say, was an ecstatic mystic». The town is described as being at the frontier of the Turkish (Tatar/ dominions and the Roman territory. Ibn Battutah passed along the place in 1332/33³⁴. Although it is not possible to identify Baba Saltık with Babadag this appears the most likely. According to the above mentioned Vilayet-name Sarı Saltık was one of the most intimate companions of Haji Bektash³⁵. The same source continues stating that Sarı Saltık founded a Tekke in Kilgre-Kaliakra in the Dobrudja and came by way of Georgia. However, a very reliable source as Yazıcıoğlu relates that he came with the followers of Izz ed-Din across the Bosphorus during the reign of Michael VIII.

In their ancient homes in Central Asia men like Haji Bektash (died prior to 1295/³⁶ and Sarı Saltık had been exposed to centuries old religious syncretism between Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Manichaean, Christian, Gnostic and Islamic elements and an atmosphere laden with religious spirituality³⁷. Taeschner even calls Transoxiana «the matrix of a ecstatic religiosity and corporative religious life»³⁸. Once in Anatolia they were the driving forces in the formation of other religious organisations known for their syncretism, especially the Bektashiye³⁹. Sarı Saltık was included in the pantheon of Bektashi saints and his cult spread far and wide over the Turkish dominions, first of all over the Balkans. According to a legend noted by Evliya Çelebi in the mid 17th century⁴⁰ the God man himself ordered his followers to bury his body in seven different places in order to have an equal number of reasons for pilgrimage of Muslims, which would ultimately lead to the incorporation of those districts to the state of Islam. Again according to Evliya coffins were placed in Babaeski (Turkish Thrace/, in Kaliakra, in Babadag, in Buzau in Wala-

32a Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, p. 354.

33 Arabic text and French translation of C. Defrémey and B. Sanguinetti, *Voyages d'Ibn Battoutah*, four vols. Paris, 1853-1859; *Baba Saltuk*: II, p. 416.

34 Inalcık, E. I. p. 610.

35 *Vilâyet-nâme*, German translation, p. 73.

36 Birge, *The Bektashi Order*, p. 40-47, proved that the saint died before H. 695 (= 1295-1296).

37 Arnakis, *Futuwwa traditions*, p. 241.

38 Franz Taeschner, in his *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Achis in Anatolien*, «*Islamica*», IV, 1929, p. 14.

39 The basic work on these processes still remains that of Köprülü-zâde Mehmed Fuat, *Türk edebiyatında ilk mutasavvıflar*, Istanbul 1918; see also his *Les Origines du Bektashiisme* in: *Actes du Congrès Intern. d'Histoire des Religions*, II, Paris, 1925, p. 391-411.

40 Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyâhat-nâme*, III, 133 vv.

chia, and even in Dantzig⁴¹. With the expansion of Bektashism in Europe a number of other 'graves' of Sarı Saltık were 'discovered'. So in the Albanian Krüja, where he came to supplant an ancient place of veneration of some mountain- or nature god, in Korfu where he was identified with the popular Saint Spiridon, in Sveti Naum on the Lake of Ohrid where he impersonated the Apostle of the Slaves, Naum, in the Albania city of Skutari or at Blagaj at the sources of the Buna in Hercegovina⁴². A tomb of Sarı Saltuk Dede is also shown in the ancient Ottoman capital of Iznik (Nicaea) a building of the late 14th century⁴³. The chief centre of the cult of Sarı Saltık, however, remained at Babadağ⁴⁴ «the Mountain of the Father». The latter is of course Sarı Saltık himself.

Already in 1934 Babinger pointed to the necessity of a thorough investigation of the «half historical-half legendary figure of Sarı Saltık». Viewed against the background of the enormous political and cultural influence of the Bektashi Order, which contributed so much to a better understanding among the nations and religions or produced such a voluminous and fervently mystical and lyrical poetry⁴⁶ and caused a magnificent monastic architecture into being⁴⁷ this necessity seems even greater:

When after 1393 the Ottomans brought the Dobrudja directly under their cont-

41 Idem, p. 133 vv. The complete story of the miraculous life of Sarı Saltık, based on Eviya, is to be found in Jean Deny, *Sarı Saltık et le nom*, etc.

42 For the later forms of the cult of Sarı Saltık and the various places where graves of him were venerated see especially F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*. Oxford, 1929; also Hasan Kalessi, *Albanische Legende um Sarı Saltık*, «Actes du Premier Congrès Intern. des Etudes Balkaniques et Sud-Est Européennes», VII, Sofia 1971, p. 815-828.

43 See: Katharina Otto-Dorn, *Das Islamische Iznik*, Berlin, 1941, p. 79-80, and Tafel 33, I. More türbes of Sarı Saltık are known in Anatolia, so for example that in Diyarbakır behind the Urfa Gate, presumably built in the 16th century. See: Metin Sözen, *Diyarbakır'da Türk Mimarisi*, Istanbul, 1971, p. 169-170 and photos 43 and 43 a.

44 Babinger in *Enzykl. des Islams*, IV, Leiden, 1934, p. 185.

45 These tendencies are the most conspicuous and convincing in «Fletore e Bektashiniet, (Bektashi Sheets), of the Albanian Bektashi Naim Frasheri, Bucarest, 1896 and Salonique, 1910, which was very popular in his time and was generally accepted in Bektashi circles. For an English translation see: Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam*, p. 554-562.

46 A survey of Bektashi and Alevi poetry is given by Sadeddin Nüzhet Ergun, *Bektaşî-Kızılbaş Alevî Şairleri ve Nefesleri* three vols. Istanbul, Maarif, In the general work on Ottoman literature of Bursalı Mehmed Tahir Efendi, *Osmanlı Müellifleri-1299-1915*, gives a survey of no less than 288 mystical or religious writers and poets who were dervish. Bektashi poets like Yunus Emre or Kaighusuz Abdal, whose works breathe of deep sincerity, purity and real lyricism, rank among the greatest masters of Ottoman poetry. For the subject in general see E. J. W. Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, 6 vols., London, 1900-1909, or the compact survey of Köprülü-zade Mehmed Fuat in *Enzykl. der Islam*, IV, art. *Türken*, *Die Osmanisch-Türkische Literatur*, p. 1011-1033.

rol a number of sectarians and heterodox Turks moved into the area⁴⁸. The religious climate, which emerged after the fusion of the heterodox newcomers from Anatolia and the existing groups since the time of Sarı Saltık, was an excellent base for the revolutionary activities of the well-known reformer-free thinker Sheikh Bedreddin of Simav⁴⁹ in the years around 1416, which shook the empire at its very foundations. The conversion (or reconversion) of parts of the Dobrudja population to Islam is brought in connection with the actions of this man who actually taught the equality of all religions. The support of the Rumanian prince Mircea the Old, who was the temporary master of Dobrudja, to the revolt of Bedreddin is known. When after 1419⁵⁰ the area was definitely incorporated in the Turkish state, after Mircea's death, the new lords embarked on a large scale resettling and colonising of the devastated land. Barkan and Inalcık⁵¹ published data on the extent of this colonization which made Dobrudja a real Turkish land. In the 16th century Babadag

47 The architecture of the Bektashi Order has not yet been studied in a comprehensive manner. Due to the destruction of the Order under Mahmud II in 1826 most of the great monasteries were demolished. What remains in places like Seyyid Gazi near Eskişehir in Western Anatolia, or at Akyazılı near Balçık in the Bulgarian Dobrudja or at Kideimli Baba near Nova Zagora is sufficient to give an idea of the former might and perfection of this monastic architecture. Detailed descriptions of the former appearance of the above mentioned dervish centres are given by Evliya Çelebi. See for example: Semavi Eyice, Varna ile Balçık arasında Akyazılı Sultan Tekkesi, «Belleten T. T. K.» No 124, Ekim, 1967, p. 551-600; M. Kjel, Bulgaristan'da Eski Osmanlı Mimarîsinin bir yapıtı, «Belleten» XXXV, No Ocak 1971, p. 45-60; Karl Wulzinger, Drei Bektaschi Klöster Phrygiens, Berlin, 1913, (especially on Seyyid Gazi) On the latter see also Godfrey Goodwin, A History of Ottoman Architecture, London, 1971, p. 180-184. The statement on p. 182 that a part of this large tekke was originally a Christian convent, of which the church and the cells still remain, is not correct; Metin Sözen proved that the «church» in reality is a Seljuk türbe of a special type of which he gives many examples. Sözen also corrects the views of Wulzinger as to the older parts of the tekke (See Metin Sözen, Anadolu'da Eyvan Tipi Türbeler), «Anadolu Sanatı Araştırmaları» I, İstanbul, 1968, p. 167-210.

48 Inalcık, E. I. Dobrudja, p. 610.

49 On Bedreddin see: F. Babinger, Scheich Berd ed-Din, der Sohn des Richters von Simav. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Sektin wesens im Altosmanischen Reich «Der Islam», XI, 1921; Abdülbâki Gölpınarlı, Simavna Kadısı oğlu Şeyh Bedreddin, İstanbul 1966; H. J. Kissling, Der Menaqybnâme Scheich Bedred-Dins, Sohne des Richters von Samavna, «Zeitschrift Deutschen Morgenl. Gesellschaft», 100, 1950.

50 Inalcık in E. I. p. 611.

51 Masses of documentary evidence on the Ottoman colonization of Dobrudja and the Balkans in general is found in: Ö. L. Barkan, İstila devirlerinin kolonizatör Türk dervişler ve zâviyeler, «Vakıflar Dergisi», II, 1942, p. 279-386; or: Ö. L. Barkan, Les déportations comme méthode de peuplement et de colonisation dans l'empire Ottoman, «Revue de la Faculté des Sciences Economiques de l'Université d'Istanbul», IIe année, No I/4; 1953.

is mentioned among the minor local centres⁵². In a report of 1597 it is described as having 16 Muslim districts but only 2 districts inhabited by Christians⁵³. The name of the town is given as Baba or Baba Kasabası. Several Ottoman rulers showed personal interest to the relics of pre-Ottoman Islam in Babadag. Bayezid II visited it in 1484 during his campaign against Kilia and Cetatea Alba⁵⁴. According to Evliya Çelebi⁵⁵ he ordered the construction of a large mosque, to be built there together with a medrese (college) and a bath. Evliya relates the story of the reconstruction of the ancient Islamic centre in a legendary manner which, however, must contain many elements of truth. According to him when Bayezid arrived in Babadag a number of trustworthy people told him of the old turbe of Sarı Saltık which was desecrated by the unbelievers and in ruins. During the night Sarı Saltık appeared to sultan in a dream, predicted his victory over the Unbelievers of Bogdan (Moldavia) and asked him to free his body from the dust with which it was covered. During excavations on the indicated spot the next day they found a marble sarcophagus with an inscription in «Tatar characters» telling: «Here is the tomb of Saltık Bay Seyyid Mehmed Ghazi». Although the details given by Evliya may give reason to doubts, the identification of the town of Babadag with the place where Sarı Saltık lived, the Baba Saltuk of Ibn Battutah, must in our opinion be accepted as the right one. In fact only 150 years lie between Ibn Battutah and Bayezid II. It is very important to note that Evliya mentions some of the sources⁵⁶ he used for his story, works which, according to Babinger, are lost now but which once bridged the gap of a century and a half. These are two. A 'Menâqib' or 'Remarkable actions', written by the well known author of the Mohammadiye, Yazıcıoğlu Mehmed of Gallipoli, who died in 1451⁵⁷ (his tomb in Gallipoli - Gelibolu - still remains a place of veneration today)⁵⁸. The second source was a «Saltuk nâme» which was a compilation of older works and was made by Koca Kenan Pasha, married with the Otto-

52 M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, Kanunî Sultan Süleyman devri başlarında Rumeli eyaleti, livaları, şehir ve kasabaları, in: «Belleten T. T. K.», XX, 1956, p. 254/55, 266/67. A Serbo-Croat translation of this valuable study appeared in «Prilozi» za Orientalnu Filologiju, XVI-XVII, Sarajevo, 1970, p. 307/342.

53 Inalcık in E. I. p. 612.

54 On this campaign see in detail: Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr et Nicoara Beldiceanu, Etudes Ottomano-Roumaines, La conquête des cités marchandes de Kikia et de Cetatea Alba par Bayezid II, «Südost-Forschungen» Band XXIII, München, 1964, p. 36-90.

55 Evliyâ Çelebi, Seyâhat-nâme, III, p. 366-370.

56 Evliyâ Çelebi, III, 366.

57 Details on the life and works of this long famous mystic writer and poet see: E. J. W. Gibb, History of Ottoman Poetry, I pp. 391-410, London 1900, s.

58 It was seen as such during the visits of the author of this pages to Gelibolu in 1970 and 1972.

man princess Atike Sultane, the daughter of Ahmed I.⁵⁹ Kenan Pasha was governor of the Vilayet of Özü (Oczakov) and Silistra in the years 1635 - 1636. The Vilayet in which Babadag was situated. Among the older works Kenan Pasha used for his compilation Evliya mentions a «Futouhat (Futuwwa) -i-Tokhtamish». Tokhtamish the Khan of the Golden Horde the man who destroyed Moscow (August 1382/ruled between 1380 and 1397/99⁶⁰. We do not know his contacts with Northern Dobrudja in which Babadag lies but the area was in any way very close to his sphere of interest and easy to reach when passing by the Danube fords at Isaccea. From 1241 onward the area immediately east of Dobrudja, the Budjak (the name derives from the earlier Cuman settlers and means «corner») had been a part of the territories of the Golden Horde. This with two short intervals, around 1345 when it was occupied by the Rumanian principality of Walachia and around 1400 when it was occupied by the Voyvode of Moldavia^{60a}. According to Grousset⁶¹ the empire of Tokhtamish stretched from the Dnjestr to the Syr-darja in Central Asia. If between the above mentioned dates Budjak was included within the frontiers of state of the Golden Horde, the period corresponds precisely with the reign of Tokhtamish, I do not know. It seems safe to conclude that Tokhtamish was the closest possible neighbour of Babadag. As Sarı Saltık is regarded as the man who brought Islam to the Tatars Southern Russia^{61a} (in the time of Noghay) an interest in the life of the saint shown by Tokhtamish is highly probable. The Khan of Golden Horde must have been born in 1330-1340 and could easily have spoken with men who had known Sarı Saltık personally. In our opinion the now hidden works mentioned by Evliya Çelebi, dating from about 1380-90 and 1430-50 constituted the link between Ibn Battutah and Bayezid II and make it certain that Babadag is the real place where Sarı Saltık lived and worked. On no other of the alleged six places where he was buried we have such an information as available about Babadag^{61b}.

Evliya continues his story telling that Bayezid immediately ordered to reconstruct the türbe and to built a large mosque at the place. After his return from Kilia and Cetatea Alba he restored the town of Babadag by enriching it by a number

59 See: Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i 'Osmânî*, modern Turkish edition Gültekin Oransay, Ankara 1969 pp. 71, 142 and 200. Original Ottoman edition, vol 4, p. 83.

60 Grousset *L'empire des Steppes*, German edition 1970, pp. 556/7 and 605/6.

60a Halil İnalcık in *Encycl. of Islam*, new edition vol II article Budjak, p. 1286.

61 *L'empire des Steppes*, German edition p. 556.

61a İnalcık in E.I. article Dobrudja p. 610, with further references.

61b On some later (16th century) documents on Sarı Saltuk see: T. Okıç, Sarı Saltuk'a ait bir fetva, in: Ankara Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi I, 1952, pp. 48-58 also Y.Z. Yörükân, Bir fetva münasebetiyle fetva müessesesi, Ebu Suud Efendi ve Sarı Saltuk, same periodical no I, pp. 137-160.

of pious foundations among which a medrese and a hamam and endowed the tax revenue of the town and the surrounding villages as vakf (pious foundation) to Sarı Saltık. «Even today the town of Babadag is the Khass (fief) for Baba Sultan⁶²». This last remarks of Evliya are confirmed by a Vakıf Defter on this foundations preserved in the Ankara Archives⁶³ and by two later documents on the same object from the years 1078/1667 and 1111/1699 in the Topkapı Saray Archives in Istanbul⁶⁴.

During his campaign against the Voyvode of Moldavia, Petru Rareș, in 1538, sultan Süleyman showed the same interest to Babadag and Sarı Saltık. He remained four days in the town visiting the tomb and doing his devotion⁶⁵. The tomb is also mentioned by the Polish traveller Otwinowski in 1557⁶⁶ and by Evliya Çelebi in 1652⁶⁷. Evliya and shortly after him Philip Stanislavoff (1659)⁶⁸ describe Babadag as a large and prosperous place. Evliya called it a flourishing commercial centre with 3.000 houses and 380 shops. He gives the names of three large mosques, the Ulu Cami of Bayezid II near the tomb of Sarı Saltık, the Ali Pasha Camii on the Marked Place and the Defterdar Dervish Pasha Camii. The town had three hamams, three medreses, 8 khan-caravanseray-, 20 primary schools (mekteb), 11 Dervish tekke's. and a number of small mosques (mescid).

The later history of Babadag is that of continuous decay and depopulation caused by the raids of the Cossacks and the Russian invasions during the numerous wars of the 18th and 19th century. Especially ruinous was the Russian invasion of 1828/29 which caused a mass emigration of the Turkish-Tatar population⁶⁹. Babadag was destroyed by enemy fire on various occasions and rebuilt in poor style, reflecting the sad state of affairs in the province.

The depopulated land became colonized by Rumanian cattle breeders, mainly from Transylvania⁷⁰. By 1850 these newcomers formed the second largest ethnic

62 Evliya Çelebi III, p. 367.

63 Tapu ve Kadastro Umumi Müdürlüğü, Ankara, No. 397, cited by Inalcik E.I. p. 612.

64 Arşiv Kılavuz, İstanbul 1938, i, 52, cited by B. Lewis in E.I. II, 1965, p. 842.

65 Histoire de la campagne de Mohacz par Kemal Pachazadéh, published and translated by M. Pavet de Courteille, Paris 1859, p. 80 vv. or J. von Hammer, Gesch. Osm. Reichs III, p. 202.

66 Cited by Hammer, G.O.R. I, p. 686, II p. 804 and III p. 708.

67 Evliya Çelebi III pp. 262-270. For the date see B. Lewis in E.I. II, p. 843.

68 Cited by Ion Negoiescu, Monografia oraşului Babadag, Braila 1904.

69 Inalcik, E.I. p. 613.

70 Constantin C. Giurescu, Transsylvania in the History of the Rumanian People, Bucurest, 1968, p. 68.

group in the district, immediately after the Turks⁷¹. The emigration of Turks continued after 1878 when Dobrudja had become a part of the Rumanian state. In these years a host of Islamic monuments disappeared⁷², a process which was only stopped after the Rumanian people's Republic was founded and took the works under its care.

Today the town of Babadag has recovered from its ruins and disorganization of previous periods. The centre has been rebuilt in a modern way and some of the most important monuments of Islamic architecture have carefully be restored. These are the fountain (Çeşme/ of the 17th century, the mosque of Gazi Ali Pasha, built in 1620, and the türbe of the same man (see photographs). Stanescu, in his study of the Turkish monuments of the Dobrudja., also mentions a medrese and a hamam among the works of Ali Pasha⁷³. The last vestiges of these last mentioned buildings disappeared in the beginning of our century. Stânescu also mentions the famous works of Bayezid II, the foundations of which were still visible at the end of the last century⁷⁴. All that today remains preserved of the once imposing tekke of Sarı Saltık is the humble türbe of the saint.

The türbe of Sarı Saltık as we see it today is situated on the edge of the town, not far from the mosque of Ali Pasha. A few Turkish families live in this part of the town and still remember the place but not its historical background. The türbe is built against a low hill and sits with its rear end more than two meters deep in the ground. It consists of a domed tomb chamber which measures internally 4.85 - 4.85, and a portico of 4.86 m. wide and 2.96 m. deep. This portico is open on the frontside. The portico has a primitive wooden roof supported by three wooden posts. On the outside the dome of the tomb chamber is completely masqued by its tiled roof which forms one sole part together with the roof of the portico. The walls of the türbe vary in thickness between 0.96 m., 0.92m., and 0.86 m. They are built of very rough hewn blocks of stone which are only a little more fashioned at the corners. The dome rests on four coarse pendentives of a kind we come across with in various

71 Inalcık in E.I. Dobrudja, p. 613 has this general remark. Detailed information on the population of the Dobrudja in the last years of the Ottoman period see the Sâlnâme-i Vilâyet-i Tuna No. 6, Rusçuk 1290 (1873/74), pp 264 - 282 and 309 which gives for the kazas of the sancak of Tulça, (Tulça Sünne=Sulina, Babadag, Maçin, Köstence, Hırşova, Mecidiye) and the nahiyes Mahmudiye and Kili and the kaza of Mangalya, being almost identical in size with the present Rumanian Dobrudja 24.044 Muslim households and but 12.726 Christian households. The numbers are given village by village.

72 For this process before 1944 and the changes after that date see: H. Stanescu, Monuments d'art Turc en Dobrudja, in: Studia et Acta Orientalia, III, Bucarest 1961, pp. 177-179.

73 Stanescu, Monuments p. 180.

74 Stanescu, Monuments p. 179.

provincial Ottoman buildings of the 18th century. This feature, as well as the character of the masonry supplies us with some points to establish the date of construction of the türbe. Stănescu supposed a date somewhere in the 14th or 15th century⁷⁵. This is difficult to prove. The türbe is either of very ancient date, built immediately after the death of Sarı Saltık, i.e. 1300, or it is a reconstruction from after the time of the Russian invasions, when the lack of economic resources prevented the construction of a building of greater quality. In fact we have no other Islamic building from the 13th - 14th century in South - Eastern to use for comparison. If we assume that the türbe was built by the Seljuk - Turkish colonists themselves, after the death of their leader, it should, be a work reflecting the humble material resources and rudimentary technical knowledge of a society of nomadic colonists resembling in spirit the earliest works of the European colonists in the North American «Wild West». In fact our building has all characteristics of such a cultural environment. To find a work of similar kind of society, nomadic or semi - nomadic warriors, we must turn our attention to the oldest territories of the Ottoman principality, the area around Bursa in North - Western Anatolia. There, in the village of Genbemüz Köy between Mudurnu and the Lake of Iznik a mosque is preserved which dates from the very first years of the principality, under its founder Osman I, then still a minor leader of a group of Warriors of Faith who defended the extreme frontiers of the Islamic world. This is the mosque of Samsa Çauş⁷⁶, a person mentioned in the Ottoman chroniclers⁷⁷ between the years 699 (1299/1300) and 704 (1304/05) which makes his building almost contemporary with the death of Sarı Saltık. The mosque of Genbemüz Köy is a small size building of the most primitive character, built of rough broken stone with little mortar. Beams are used to give the walls more strength, just as at Babadag. Construction and general concept of both buildings is almost identical. These facts may confirm the views of Stănescu, as to the very ancient date of the türbe. However, there must remain a considerable amount of

75 Stănescu p. 179. He writes «Sa ressemblance aux points de vue style, proportions, matériaux de construction, avec les tur bés de Brousse (Bursa) des XIVe et XVe siècles est évident». (on p. 189 of the same study, however, he writes «debut du XVIe siècle») We disagree with Stănescu on this point as the works preserved in Bursa show a much more evolved and gracious style whereas the workmanship is of much greater quality. For the plans and photographs of the minor monuments of Bursa see first of all the rich work of Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mimarîsinin İlk Devri, 1230-1402*, Istanbul 1966, pp. 49-119 and 384-482. See also E.H. Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mimarîsinde Çelebi ve II Sultan Murad Devri, 1403-1451*, Istanbul 1972, pp. 36-135 and 275-372.

76 Published by E.H. Ayverdi in *Osmanlı Mimarîsinin İlk Devri*, pp. 10-13. *Aşıkpaşa-zâde*, German translation of R. Kreutel, Graz-Wien-Köln 1959, pp. 33 and 51.

uncertainty as in fact the same workmanship and little understanding for architecture reappeared in the time of decline of the Ottoman empire, in the 18th century. In domestic architecture the same humble techniques had always remained in use but for religious and utilitarian buildings better work was used as soon as the state evolved to a higher level of culture. The earliest works in the new Ottoman capital Bursa (after 1326) demonstrate this rise most clearly. An element which points to the 18th century rather than to an early period is the use of pendentives. However, 14th century pendentives can be explained as an influence of the local Byzantino-Slav environment. It could also be argued that during the reconstruction of the türbe by Bayezid II in 1484 such a humble building would not have spared but to removed take place for a fine work of architecture, more in accordance with the refined tastes and technical ability of that time. The description of what happened during the building activities of Bayezid II as given by Evliya Çelebi appear to confirm this last hypothesis. However, the arguments for a total newbuilding are not convincing as the türbe could have been spared as an act of piety, a practice of which more examples are known⁷⁸. Personally I am more inclined towards a later date, somewhere in the 18th century but I am not certain. In fact the exact date of the türbe is not as important as the fact that the little monument marks the very historical spot with which so many great personalities are associated. No serious doubts about this can be raised.

In the portico of the türbe a fine cylindrical gravestone remains preserved. It most probably comes from the graveyard that once surrounded the tomb of the Holy Man. It has a very elegantly written inscription in Turkish which bears witness to the prosperity and high level of culture in Babadag of the 17th century which is in accordance with the reports of Evliya and Stanislavoff. The stone is dated H. 1050=1640/41. As far as I can see this inscription has not been published⁷⁹. It is given below integrally.

1. al merhûm al mağfûr al sacîd al şehîd al muktâc ila rakmet Allah
2. İbrâhîm Çelebi ibn al-ğacc Meħmed 'Alî

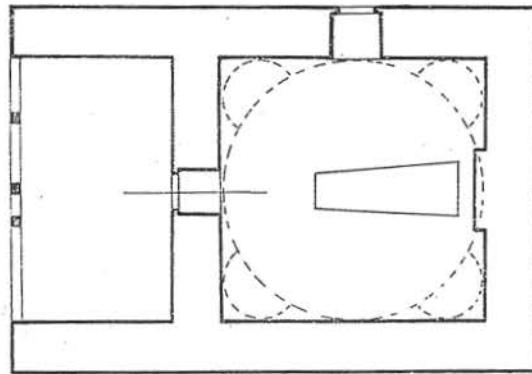
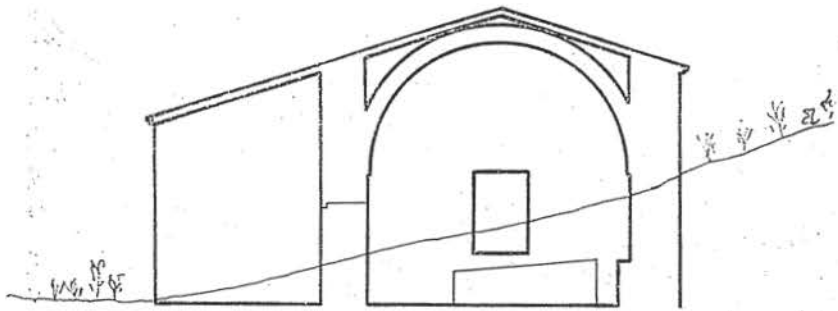
78 A definite case is that of the tekke of Sayyid Battal Ghazi near Eskişehir in North-Western Anatolia where a türbe from 1207 was spared and incorporated in the reconstructed Tekke of 1511/12. For details on this building see: Karl Wulzinger, *Drei Bektaschi Klöster* etc and Metin Sözen, *Anadolu'da Eyvan tipi Türbeler*, (op. cit. on note 47).

79 Stanescu mentioned the stone in his study *Monuments* but only gave the name of the person to which it belonged. Instead of İbrahim Çelebi, son of Hadji Mehmed 'Alî, he gives «İbrahim Çelebi son of Hadji Ahmad» which is incorrect. The transcription and translation of this inscription I was controlled by Dr. F. Th. Dijkema, whose help and valuable suggestion I would like to acknowledge.

3. intakala ila civâr Allahi ta'ala fi şahr şafar al-mużaffar
4. li-sana hamsîn wa-alf rûhicün fâtiha.
1. He who is admitted to God's mercy, whom God forgives his sins, the felicious one, who died for the sake of Faith, who needs God's mercy,
2. Ibrahim Çelebi son of Hadji Mehmed Ali
3. may he be forgiven - is transferred to the presence of God
- he be exalted - in the month of Safar the Victorious
4. of the year thousand fifty. Recite a Fatiha for his soul.
(The month Safar of 1050 runs between 23 May and 20 June 1640)

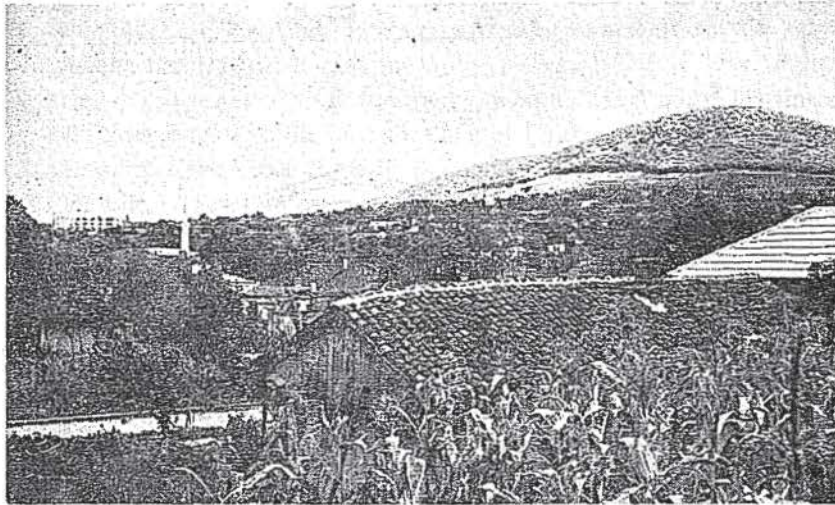
Until recently the türbe of Sarı Saltık at Babadag was in a terrible state of disrepair. As cult centre it has been abandoned and forgotten long ago. Stânescu warned sixteen years ago that the walls would soon collapse. During our visit to the place in October 1967 we found the situation even worse. The wooden sarcophagus the famous man was broken to pieces and a large part of the lateral wall of the türbe was ruined to an utmost dangerous extend. Because of the extreme moisture of the walls we thought the building would collapse the next winter. However, during our second visit to Babadag, in September 1971, it was still standing but with even larger cracks in the walls. In the past 25 years the Rumanians have developed a considerable interest in the preservation of the Islamic monuments which becomes visible in the careful restorations of buildings like the Hünkxar Mosque at Constanta (Küstence), the Ali Pasha Mosque and türbe at Babadag, the Esmâ Sultan Mosque at Mangalia and others. When we, at the occasion of the XIVth International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Bucarest (Sept. 1971), brought the sad state of the forgotten monument of Babadag to the notice of the authorities in charge they reacted with the thorough restoration of the building in 1973. We may hope and expect that this interest is going to be continued and will lead to excavations beneath the now saved monuments as well as to the excavation of the foundations of the nearby buildings of Bayezid II. As the last mentioned buildings were the largest and most imposing Ottoman monuments ever erected on Rumanian soil such excavations will yield interesting details in the field of oriental art. Excavations under the türbe of Sarı Saltık will offer specialists the opportunity to study the skeleton of the saint and enable them to discern between fact and fiction in the life of this remarkable man and may yield details about the presence of earlier constructions beneath this small but historically so important monument, revealing the course of its development.

Machiel Kiel
Castricum HOLLAND

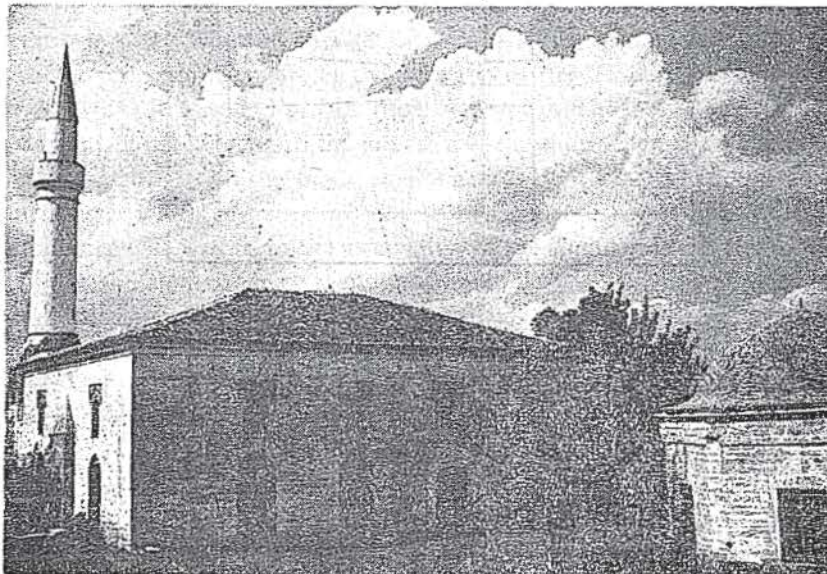


Türbe of Sari Saltık Dede at
Babadag.
Plan and section. 1926

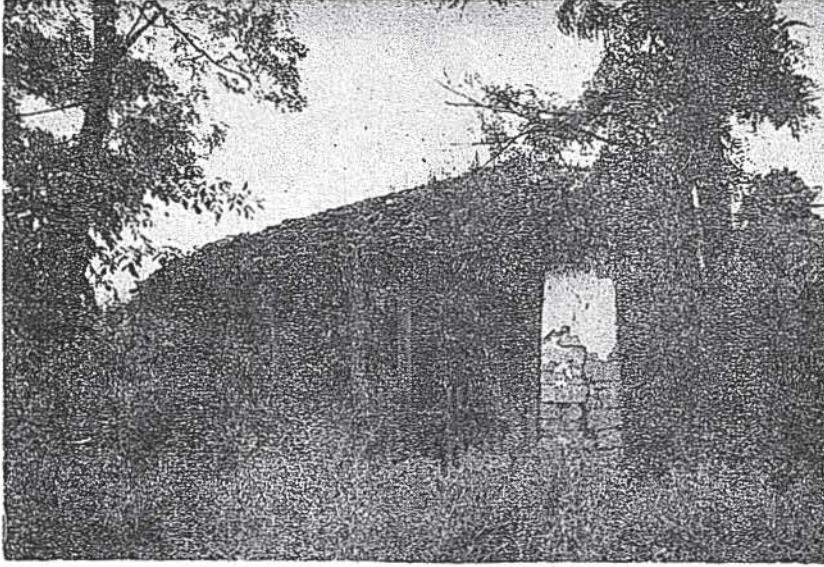




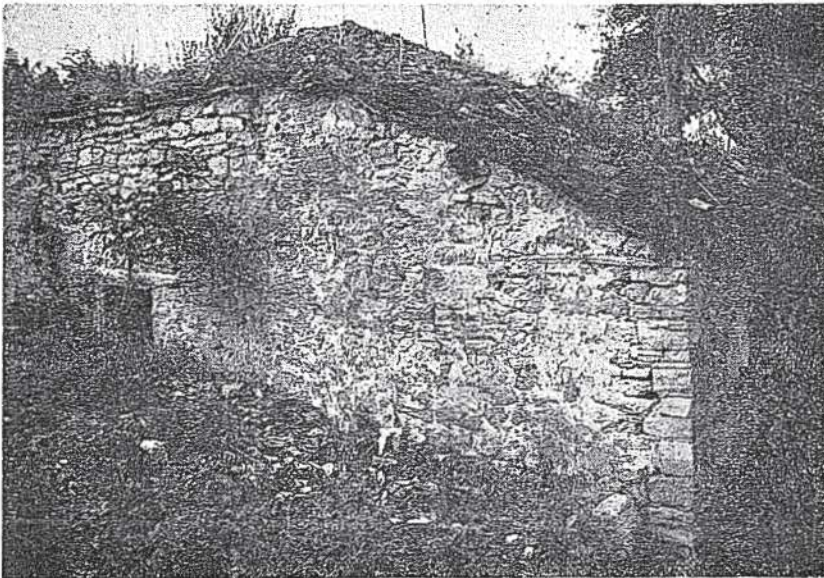
1. View over Babadag and the «Mountain of the Father» taken from the entrance of the türbe.



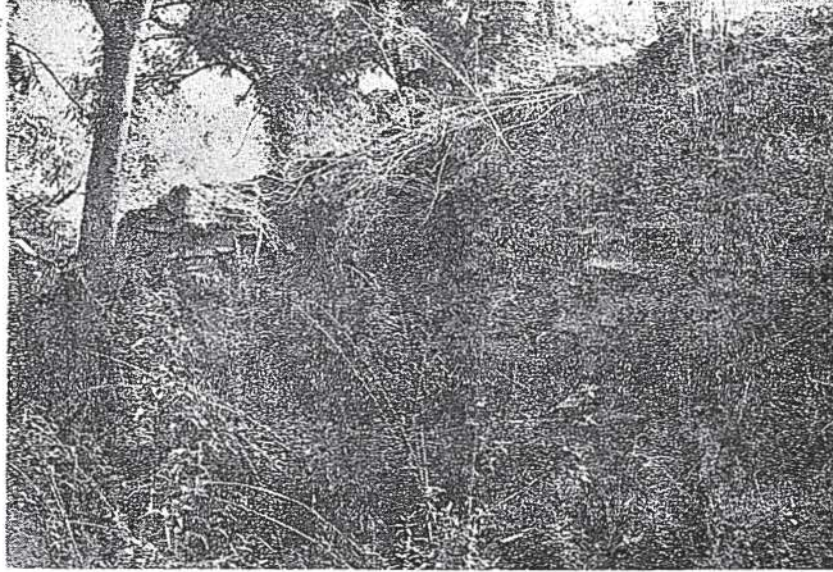
2. Mosque and türbe of Ghazi Ali Pasha at Babadag (1620).



3. Babadag, Türbe of Sarı Saltık Dede, façade (before restoration).



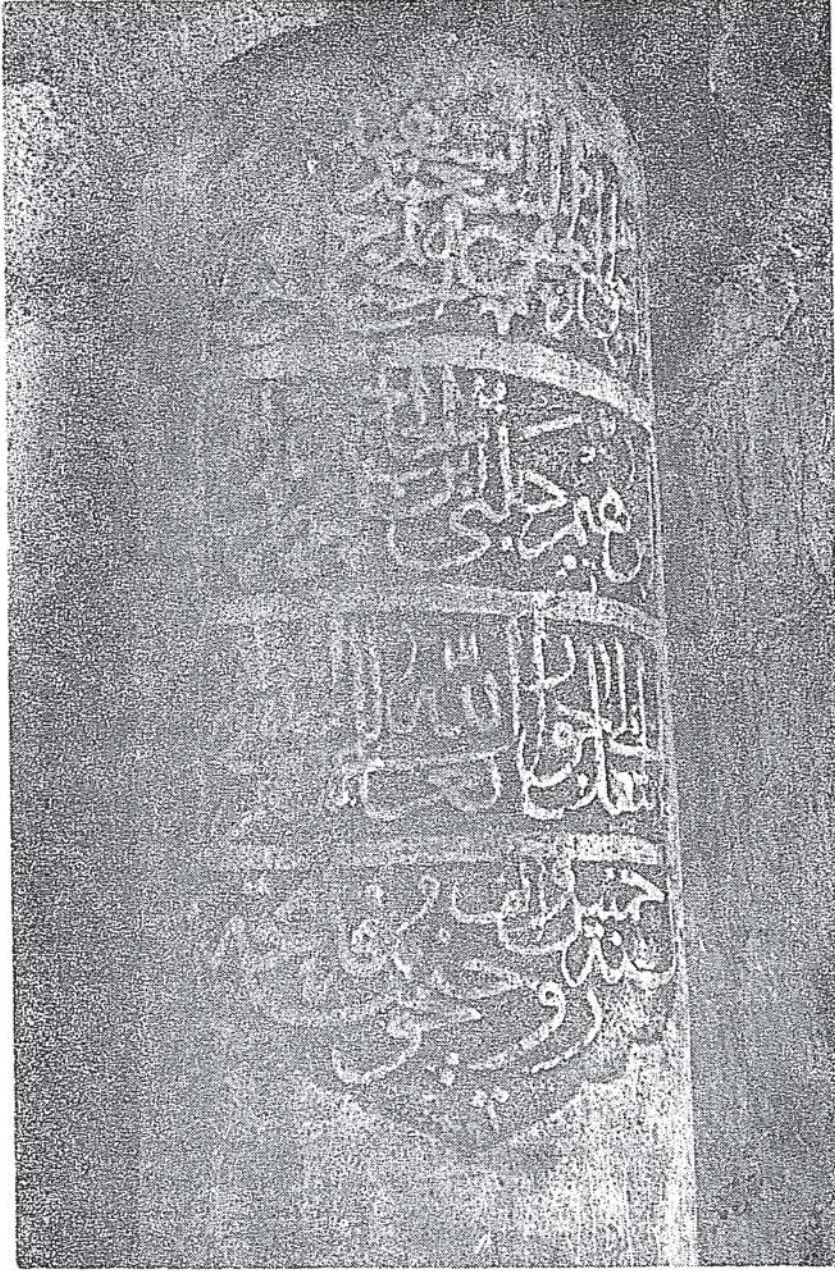
4. Babadag, Türbe of Sarı Saltık Dede, left Lateral wall before restoration.



5. Babadag, Türbe of Sarı Saltık Dede, right lateral wall before restoration.



6. Babadag, Türbe of Sarı Saltık Dede, interior view.



7. Babadag, Türbe of Sarı Saltık Dede, gravesone of İbrahim Çelebi from 1050 (1640). Only epigraphical monument of the Ottoman period preserved in Babadag.