

Djounieh, the 25th May 1934.
Lebanon.

TDVISAM
Kütüphanesi Arşivi
No RTB-10-1

My dear Friend Mr Birge,
I felt very much ashamed, when after having ^{spent} been in Cyprus, and then having travelled in Palestine and Transjordan during five months altogether, I ^{met in} was told by our good friend Mr Levonian, ^{to who told me} that you were still waiting for an answer to the questions put in your first letter dated Aug. 17, 1933.

That was really a shame for me, because it might be misinterpreted as a neglect not to be forgiven easily. In reality, I am always ready to tell - ^{an earnest} a good scholar and a ^{good} friend like you - whatever I know about these Religio-philosophical tenets and creeds. This is my profession above all, and then, I must render you such a little service most willingly, for the good souvenir of the very interesting afternoons we had spent together in the peaceful Djounieh, at least! ^{the fact is} I had been quite wrongly supposing that I had already answered you, because I had found on my desk some notes relating to the same questions. That is the fact. The real cause of my absentmindedness is that the later half of the year 1933, has proved to be very unobtrusive for me. I had continuous trouble

and narrow-minded. We know also how great and how deep was the fascinating influence of such stupidities on the mind of man, at that time, and now as well!

Just a century before Jesus Christ the Jews who were concentrated in the prosperous city of Alexandria, and deeply influenced by the decadent Greek culture, have assimilated these ideas, worked them out as to give them a more or less doctrinal form. That is the famous (Kabala), of which the universal and essential principle, is the theory of the numbers of Pitagorism. The Turkish mysticism had its Kabala: that is the (Houroufee sect حروفی). I had composed my first philosophical book: (Textes Houroufis, Luzac and Co London) on the request of my old regretted friend Prof. E. G. Brown of Cambridge, and Prof. Barbier de Meynard, ~~and~~ revealed all the so called secrets of that sect. I recommend you to get a copy of that book, I have none myself. It is useful, because the Houroufies, have been in intimate contact with the Bektashies for nearly two centuries and they have got this Jewish Kabalism more or less modified by adaptation although a lot of Bektashies never accepted this view and followed the orthodox line. You know perhaps that Freemasonry has also accepted this Kabalism for it is of Jewish origin surely. I am a mason of the highest degree myself.

As to the importance of some peculiar numbers

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which have disturbed me always very unpleasantly. all our children - as you know - are scattered on the four corners of the world getting on very difficultly. I had to write a lot of long letters to every one of them; so I have lost - for a moment perhaps - my memory in such a turmoil. I beg you pardon.

Now, let us come to the question. I will begin with the most unimportant one, put in your last letter: the word (Baba) ~~is used as~~ ^{is used} father in the ordinary sense of the word, and then as the qualificative of every respectable old man. It is used also as a title given to the spiritual leader of a sect. In that case, the age of the Baba, is not considered as a condition absolutely required. Such a Sheikh (which means in arabic old man!) may be a young, even a very young one.

You know perhaps, that we had an (oglan - Sheikh - a boy Sheikh), the very famous spiritual leader of the (Melânee ^{سنة}) order, who was at last beheaded and his body thrown in the Bosphorus, just before the Robert's College by order of the Sultan Solëimân the magnificent, who punished him for his heresies.

at Aksarai there is still a big building which is called (oglanlar Tekkesi = ^{اوغلان تکیه سی}) where the unfortunate young Sheikh was teaching. ^{So it is} You understand ^{was} as well that (Baba) ^{is not exclusively used} as a title ^{is not} adopted by the Bektashees ^{only}, for ^{spiritual} this young leader was a (Melânee). ~~and~~ the famous (Ali Baba) mentioned in the story of (forty thieves) was not the leader of any sect but an

old man simply. Many good old men are called, Ali Baba, Hassan Baba, or Ali (Dayee ^{دایه}) Hasan dayee (uncle!) etc. in Turkey now also. TDVISAM RTB-10-3

(2) As to the origin, importance and signification of the numbers (particularly of the N^o: 1, 3, 4, 7, 40, 19) it is well known what they mean and what they stand for. ^{in mystic Kabala writing and ritual.} ^{the writings of our confis.} For their origin and their infiltration I have (after long and careful studies on mystic writings) ^{I had been employed} come to build up ~~as~~ a hypothesis ^{to contain} ~~on~~ some presumptive evidences. ^{more or less acceptable, relying on}

We know that Pythagoras, the mathematician philosopher of Samos, who believed firmly in the doctrine of Metempsychosis, was also the founder of the (theory of numbers) according to which he tried to explain all the phenomena of the objective and subjective world. ^{well} We know also, that he was in Magna Graecia (Italy!) the founder and the leader of a politico-mystic confraternity whose tenets and teachings were carefully kept secret from the Mob. We may see even to day, in the East and especially in modern Persia such aristocratic mystic confraternities aiming at political power. ~~the fact is that Pythagoras was the founder and the spiritual leader of such a confraternity and his philosophical teachings were based on the theory of numbers, some numbers (like those above mentioned) were believed to have some mystic virtues, and symbolizing God, the seven stars, the zodiac, and the five senses of man, etc.~~ ^{He} ^{high numbers had} ^{some others} ^{the No 1} ^{there is historical evidence to acknowledge the fact} We know also how these semi-mystic ideas have been widespread in the antiquity and the medieval periods of humanity, so deeply ignorant

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3) any means possible. ~~But~~ the old greek masters had quite rightly considered philosophy as a practical science, the science of (happiness = eudemoia); and consequently, all the discussions concerning the essential problems of ~~the~~ speculative philosophy were preliminary inquiries to clear up the way and to find out the practical principle of conduct which may lead a man to happiness. When we come to the firm ground of practical life, there is one reality which is immediately accessible for us: it is life itself! and as it is the most evident fact, we are not absolutely in need of knowing its metaphysical nature, or signification. It is much more important ^{to know} for us the main conditions which are required to make it ~~to~~ more or less happy under some given circumstances. Practical philosophy may be easily and reasonably confined within the narrow limits of ~~these~~ this considerations? the best and the surest way of getting useful knowledge for the good administration of life, is to acquire it through personal experiences and not from the philosophical books, which speak to the understanding only, and to know something by (the understanding) is to know it only by definition and description. You may easily such a knowledge) about my neuralgia - for instance - by simple description. But in order to know it really

you must suffer from the same disease; you must have such a painful experience. that is the reason why mere advices are annoying verbiage.

~~I~~ ^{you} ~~we~~ have here a good opportunity to make a remark. I am very ^{there is this} glad that you have come to the right way of thinking. ^{your success is that} You have reversed an important formula of creed when you say: (all philosophy all art is for the purpose of living better or successfully). that is the true thinking, so I have no reason to accuse you of being ungrateful to my good advices. But what a hard experience was needed for been able to turn over such a heavy block of stone as a moral principle! You could not have displayed such a power if you had n't been subjected to a long and painful experience in life.

~~The greatest~~
I am very much pleased to acknowledge the fact that

Otherwise (that loose way of talking about living
- as you say - is certainly silly). Sorrow or happy sorrow
coupled with nightingales, moons, soft winds etc, are
only good for writing objective and descriptive poems
in the conventional romantic style. Your opinion
about the deepest emotions which are surely the
unexhaustible sources of art and poetry in their truest
and noblest acception, besides that such an opinion
denote a very keen ^{psychic} analysis. ~~of psychic~~

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like (3, 4, 7, 40), in the classic writings of orthodox mysticism, it is an evidence of the indian influence on oriental (mohammedan) mysticism.

An indian Brahman, had come to see me when (in 1928) I was in Jerusalem; and we had a long conversation about the Vedanta philosophy and then about ^{the} oriental mysticism. When I came to the theory of (the perfect man انسان کامل) who is considered by our mystics as the (pole = Koutoub = قطب) of Humanity, its helper and Saviour, then I ^{gave him} ^{an idea of} the hierarchy of (Saints = evliyâ = اولیاء) viz: the four (pillars = evtâd = اوتاد) supporting the Koutoub, and then (the seven سبع ستون) other pillars, strengthening the four ones; and the forty (abdâls = ابرار) who are prepared - by a very rigid ascetic education - to take the place of the missing one (in case of death!) ^{among} of the members of the immediately higher circle; The indian Brahman exclaimed that all this was totally indian. ~~and~~ I believe, it is quite true, ~~because~~ our mystic current has surely more than one source. If you study keenly these questions on their historical ground you will easily find these sources.

Let us come now to the properly so called Bektaşhee terms.

Letter on Brahman to Mr. Prige

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[Faint, mirrored bleed-through text from the reverse side of the page, including words like 'Brahman', 'theory', 'saints', and 'education']