

## BEHLÜL DANE: CHILD'S PLAY, SAINT'S WAY\*

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In seeking to determine the significance of a single figure in the world of oral narrative, the scholar would tend first to examine standard type indexes<sup>1</sup> to locate tales identified with that individual. Such a tendency would prove fruitless in determining the importance of Behlül Dane.<sup>2</sup>

Behlül Dane is instead the personification of a rich range of folk-narrative motifs<sup>3</sup> too large to be confined to a single type or even to a cluster of types. Furthermore, those motifs found in the corpus of Behlül Dane anecdotes and tales<sup>4</sup> are not by any means peculiar to Turkey or—for that

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<sup>1</sup> The two type indexes most germane to this probe are the following: Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson's *The Types of the Folktale*, Second Revision [cited henceforth as *AT*] (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1964) and Wolfram Eberhard and Pertev Nailli Boratav's *Typen Türkischer Volksmärchen* [cited hereafter as *E.B.*] (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1953).

<sup>2</sup> Behlül Dane appears by name in neither of the type indexes cited above. Slanting references to events or episodes found in the ATON accounts of Behlül Dane but not attributed to him in these indexes are few indeed: *AT* 681, *AT* 910, *AT* 910A, *AT* 910B, *AT* 924B and *AT* 934A, *E-B* 134, *E-B* 204 III, *E-B* 256 III, *E-B* 307 IV, *E-B* 308 V, and *E-B* 312. None of these scant dozen entries is identified as related specifically either to Behlül Dane or to anyone else possessing either his particular combination of traits or his apparent or inferred relationship to Harun Reşit (Haroun al-Raschid), the caliph of Baghdad. In short, Behlül Dane has been woefully neglected by these folk-narrative analysts.

Eberhard explained in a letter to ATON dated January 24, 1977, "You are quite right that we should have included some or rather many of these [anecdotal] stories in our 'Types', but we regarded this as an enormous task... and so we left it, hoping to do the job some other time—but I think now we will never do it[.]..."

<sup>3</sup> Motifs present in one way or another in the ATON items thus far translated [February 1994] may be found in Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*, Revised and Enlarged Edition, 6 volumes (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1955-1957). Although none of these motifs cites a Behlül Dane episode, such episodes were alive and well in Turkish oral tradition for perhaps a thousand years prior to the compilation of the *Motif-Index*. Occasional references to Nasreddin Hoca in the *Motif-Index* indicate that there was *some* awareness of a Turkish anecdotal oral tradition.

<sup>4</sup> Herewith is a sampling of the international folk-literature motifs found most frequently among the ATON Behlül Dane narratives:

A1485. *Calculation of time.*

matter— to Baghdad, the scene of most of the action. They are instead universal.

To a large proportion of today's Turks in Turkey, the time "Behlül Dane" carries only dim associations if indeed it carries any associations at all. But to those twenty-one narrators in nineteen of Turkey's provinces who recorded ninety-two Behlül Dane anecdotes and tales for the Archive of Turkish Oral Narrative [ATON] from 1964 through 1989, that deceptively simple saint and his wisdom are still very much alive.<sup>5</sup>

Who, then, is (or *was*) Behlül<sup>6</sup> Dane? The narrators of the ninety-two ATON Behlül Dane tales had little or no recourse to the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>7</sup> for its erudite identification of this largely legendary figure, this

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D 661.2. *Transformation as punishment for denouncing saint.*

D1312.1.1. *Excrements as advisers.*

D1714. *Magic power of person without sin.*

D1777. *Magic results from power of thought.*

D 1817.05. *Magic detection of sin.*

D1819.1. *Magic knowledge of another's thoughts.*

D1821.3.1. *Magic sight by looking under arm.*

D2121.3. *Magic journey through power of imagination.*

E755.2.4.1. *Hell fires kindled according to sins of sinners.*

H561.10. *Saint as solver of riddles.*

J21. *Counsels proved wise by experience.*

J156. *Wisdom from fools.*

J163.4 *Good counsels bought.*

J822. *Man plays fool to protect himself in dealing with king.*

912.3. *Rich man humbled by realization that he cannot take his wealth with him.*

K1818.3. *Disguise as madman (fool)*

P319.3. *Friend's intercession saves man from execution.*

U81. *Great possessions bring great risks.*

V223. *Saints have miraculous knowledge.*

V223.1. *Saint gives advice.*

V223.3. *Saint can perceive the thoughts of another man and reveal hidden sins.*

These motifs will appear by *numbers only* in appropriate notes to the text.

<sup>5</sup> The 92 ATON Behlül Dane anecdotes and tales were derived from field recordings by the ATON staff between 1964 and 1989 in the following provinces of Turkey: Adıyaman, Afyon, Ankara, Aydın, Bolu, Bursa, Çorum, Elazığ, Erzincan, Erzurum, İçel, İstanbul, Kars, Konya, Muğla, Sivas, Uşak, Yozgat, and Zonguldak.

<sup>6</sup> The word *Behlül* comes from the Arabic *buhlül*, "merry" or "jolly." It retains this meaning in Turkish, as evidenced in Sir Jamas Redhouse's *Turkish and English Lexicon* (Constantinople [İstanbul], 1921), 416a. As a noun it can mean "wag", "clown", or "buffoon". The Turkish term *divane*, meaning "mad", is the likeliest source of *dane*. Although normally used as a proper name, *Behlül Dane* could be a generic label, "Mad Wag".

<sup>7</sup> Houtsma, M. Th., *et al.*, eds. *First Encyclopaedia of Islam* (1913-1936); reprinted Leiden: Brill, 1987), II, 772-773. That source furnished the information provided here in greatly ab-

“mad wag.” Nevertheless, they were convinced that he had indeed lived throughout the period of Harun Reşit’s service as caliph of Baghdad and that he was either actually or spiritually the half brother of that powerful ruler. Furthermore, they acknowledged that Behlül Dane on many occasions had behaved in a foolish or childish or at times even socially offensive manner but that the ethical or social or spiritual message he succeeded in communicating as he played the fool was a valid one worth preserving and perpetuating.

The narrators viewed him as at once entertaining and instructive, and so he continues to be. But the humor in the Behlül Dane anecdotes is humor based on incongruity: the hobbyhorse—riding Behlül Dane jolts his caliph “brother” into an awareness of the ruler’s spiritual poverty, the shallowness of his material wealth, and the distinct difference between Allah’s time and mankind’s time. (It is curious that the caliph—the temporal and spiritual head of Islam, the very shadow of Allah on earth—must be drawn from worldly way by one he regards as a fool!)

Humorous aspects of Behlül Dane quite aside, there is no doubt in the tellers’ minds that this supposed madcap was in truth a saint, one beset by concern for the spiritual welfare of his “brother”, whether that “brother” be the caliph of Baghdad or the bemused *hoca* whose mind wandered to his own personal concerns as he was leading the worship service.<sup>8</sup> Yes, the

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breviated form: Behlül Dane was one of the “intelligent madmen”, a contemporary of Haroun al-Raschid (d. 193 A.H.) and the source of many instructive and spiritual anecdotes. “His name, Buhlül, had in his time no association with idiocy... Buhlül’s insanity was intermittent, .... his language was good, and quick-witted stories came down from him... [A]s a traditionalist he was neither accepted nor rejected, and students did not write down anything which he gave...”

*Students* may not have written down anything which Behlül Dane gave, but the oral tradition far more than made up the difference. According to those who told the anecdotes about Behlül Dane, that saintly fool was the supposedly mad half brother of Harun Reşit, the greatest of the Abbasid caliphs, who flourished around 800 A.D. Although there may have been a Behlül Dane, there is very little evidence that he was related to that powerful caliph. Narrators have so richly embroidered their accounts of this enigmatic figure that he has taken on a life that has long outlasted whatever lifetime might have been assigned to him.

<sup>8</sup> Behlül Dane was uniformly viewed by the narrators as deeply concerned by the lapses in true worship displayed both by worship leaders and by those presumably engaged in prayer but actually mulling over their worldly concerns as they “prayed”. More than 10 percent of the 92 ATON Behlül Dane narratives reflect this concern, a concern deep enough to prompt Behlül Dane on several occasions to interrupt the worship service to correct that infraction of genuine worship. Motifs appropriate for these narratives are D1714, D1817.05, D1819.1, V223, and V223.3 (see Note 4 for captions for these numbers).

narrators were thoroughly persuaded that their beloved Behlül had the power to read others' minds and that he used that power to call the attention both of the erring "brother" and of the storytelling audience to clearer views of reality and of spirituality.

According to the narrators, Behlül Dane chose to live in a poor, ill-supplied hut on a minimal diet and attired in tattered clothing rather than to live in the elegant setting of the caliph's palace. From this modest perspective he was able to play the part of a court fool and thus speak his mind openly and with impunity on the caliph's obsession with worldly matters and the high spiritual cost of such an obsession. Behlül Dane's influence was a tonic one, and it still serves his "brothers" in the twentieth century.

To assume the appearance of a fool, Behlül Dane frequently rode a hobbyhorse—sometimes a single reed!—as he played among the children in the streets of Baghdad. At other times he occupied himself by building "heavenly palaces" in the dirt of the caliph's palace garden. On one celebrated occasion, he watered his thirsty horse by allowing him to absorb the water of the stream through his feet and legs, as the caliph had just loftily explained to this "fool" during the current drought that reeds had no need for rain: they absorbed the necessary water through their stems. Often during a service in the mosque, Behlül Dane would shout, disrupting the worship, to advise the *hoca* or *imam* or *hafız* as to where that prayer leader could best tie his horse or his donkey. On one oft-described occasion, he childishly shut his eyes while crossing a wooden bridge, thus ignoring the gold coins that had been deliberately scattered there at caliph's order to tempt the unworldly fellow. In a number of instances when urged by the caliph and his court to accept a fine post in society, he asked permission to seek advice on the matter—and went to consult the turds in the latrine! In some accounts, he was so deeply concerned about his own possible responsibility for the afterlife of his "brother" that he ceased to laugh or smile, a pose that at first perplexed and then annoyed his powerful "brother". On one occasion often recounted, Behlül dane set up a business selling skulls dug up from a graveyard. On another occasion, when asked by Harun Reşit to deliver some meat to his home (the palace), Behlül Dane instead hung the meat on a tree in the cemetery; likewise, when pickpockets snatched his purse, Behlül Dane went to the cemetery to await the pickpockets' eventual return of the purse. He even shocked by standers by urinating in the streets of Baghdad, prompting outraged protests to the caliph by the viewers. These and other foolish or childish

or disrespectful acts served to define Behlül Dane as a fool, precisely the role he sought to enable him to speak his mind with impunity to the caliph as well as to reveal his actual identity as a saint worthy of respect and friendship from “The Seven”.<sup>9</sup>

But—as was true with the court fools in Shakespeare’s plays—there was method in Behlül Dane’s madness. Each antic act led Harun Reşit or some other wayward “brother” to a fuller understanding of the relativity of time, or the importance of faith, or the foolishness of the obvious, or the need for genuine worship, or the temporary nature of material wealth, or the corrupting influence of worldly society, or the responsibility for recognizing the limits of mortality. The grave as one’s true home was a point made strongly by Behlül Dane’s supposedly nonsensical actions. And on a number of occasions, Harun Reşit discovered in attempting to put a stop to this foolishness that the “foolishness” provided a door instead to wisdom, and even revealed that this “fool” was no fool at all, but a saint with the power to transport himself and others to a revealing situation outside the realm of man’s time: time—within—time, or “frozen time, *“zaman zaman içinde.”*<sup>10</sup>

Several brief examples from the ATON holdings will suffice to illustrate both Behlül Dane’s antics and the lessons conveyed under their cover, lessons as applicable today as they were at least a millennium ago.

Zübeyde, Behlül’s sister-in-law, asked Behlül one day, “What are you doing?”

“I’m building a palace in paradise”, Behlül answered.

“Will you sell me the palace?”

“Yes, I will”, Behlül answered.

“How much do you want for it?” she asked.

Behlül said, “One *akçe*.”

<sup>9</sup> As reported in a narrative recorded in 1970 from İsmail Sarıbaş, of Gölyazı, Bursa Province.

<sup>10</sup> “Time-within-time” refers to the chronology of events in an interior world (the world of the imagination). The saintly Behlül Dane had the power to project himself and others into *zaman zaman içinde*, wherein a person may dream or fantasize at great length during only a few seconds of ordinary time. One may even seem to spend many years in that other world within: one may take a job, marry, have children, and see them grow to maturity. This phenomenon is also referred to as “frozen time” or “moments of eternity.”

That evening Harun Reşit saw Zübeyde in his dreams. She was the owner of a handsome palace. "From whom did you get the palace?" Harun Reşit asked.

"I bought it from Behlül Dane, who sold it to me for one *akçe*," Zübeyde said.

The next morning Harun Reşit went to see Behlül and said, "Brother, I didn't know you were selling such beautiful palaces. Will you sell me a palace?"

"All right," Behlül answered.

"How much do you want for it?" Harun Reşit asked.

"One thousand gold liras," Behlül said.

Harun Reşit protested, "It's not fair. You've sold a palace to Zübeyde for one *akçe*."

"Yes, it is fair", Behlül answered. "She bought the palace without seeing it first, but you want to buy it after you have seen it."<sup>11</sup>

One day Harun Reşit said to his brother, "Take this meat and carry it to my home."

Behlül Dane took the meat to the cemetery and hung it up there. When Harun Reşit arrived home in the evening, he said, "I sent home some meat today. Did it arrive?"

Harun taken asked Behlül Dane what had happened to the meat that he had sent with him. "Well" said Behül, "you told me to take it to your home, and that is what I did. This world, after all, is just a visiting place. I took it to your real home."<sup>12</sup>

Once when Baghdad was in a state of political confusion, people told Behlül Dane that they wished to make him caliph so that he could restore

<sup>11</sup> Narrated in 1972 by Reşat Özbaş at Söke, Aydın Province. This is among the anecdotes and tales that suggest Behlül Dane's mysticism and his ability to transport himself and others into another world, a spiritual world beyond time. Other anecdotes presenting the same situation and conclusion (each with individual touches added by the narrator) were told by Mehmet Ali Şen (1974; İnegöl, Bursa), Mustafa Akdağ (1985; Haymana, Ankara), Ali Çiftçi (1976; Sarıkaya, Yozgat), and Mehmet İlhan (1974; Yerköy, Yozgat). See Note 4 for these relevant motifs: D 1777, D2121.3, J156, J822, and V223.

<sup>12</sup> Told by Ali Efendi, a gravedigger (1964; Akşehir, Konya). Other anecdotes making the same point were recorded from İdris Okan (1974; Akdağmadeni, Yozgat), and Mehmet İlhan (1974; Yerköy, Yozgat). See Note 4 for these relevant motifs: J156, J822, J912.3, and V223.3.

order and put everything to rights. He refused to accept the office, but the people persisted in their demands that he accept it.

“Well, let me first consult with someone. Then I shall give you my answer,” said Behlül.

“All right,” they said. “While the people wait here, go and consult with whom you will and then return with your decision. We know that you do not really have to consult with anyone, for you follow your own judgement.”

Behlül Dane arose and went to the toilet. After a while he came out to where the group of people was waiting. They said to him, “You did not go very far. With whom did you consult?”

“Do you know that they told me in the toilet? One [adviser] said this: ‘I was once very good wheat. I was turned into flour and then baked into a snow-white loaf of bread. Then I was eaten by the son of man. Passing into him and out of him, I became something stinking.’ The dung advised me, ‘Do not go into society, or this will happen to you.’ All of them there agreed to that, and I shall follow their advice and not accept any position in society.”<sup>13</sup>

Well over half of the Behlül Dane anecdotes and tales thus far translated in ATON deal in one way or another with Behlül Dane’s efforts to win his “brother” away from excessive worldliness to a proper concern for spiritual health. To achieve this goal, Behlül Dane used several different methods: outright statements, learning situations arranged in ordinary time, and situations arising in “frozen time,” or “time-within-time.”<sup>14</sup>

His outright statements annoyed the powerful caliph, who considered himself an intellectual and his “brother” an outright fool. The anecdote identifying the grave as Harun Reşit’s true home and a more common variant of the “turds in the latrine”<sup>15</sup> in which Behlül Dane responds directly to Harun Reşit in rejecting a social post that he has offered provide ins-

<sup>13</sup> Narrated by Mehmet Şengül (1970; Pazar Köy, Mengen). Many variants of this anecdote were recorded, among them ones by Ahmet Kalaycı (1970; Kızılcahamam, Ankara), Süheyl Ünver (1971; İstanbul), Şerif Mehmet Ceylan (1970; Bursa, Bursa), and Mehmet Ece (1970; Erzurum, Erzurum). Motif D1312.1.1 most certainly applies here (see Note 4).

<sup>14</sup> See Note 10. One of the distinctive marks of Behlül Dane’s saintly powers was his ability to use this device to make a spiritual point to his “brother” with impunity.

<sup>15</sup> Of the 92 ATON Behlül Dane anecdotes, five versions present the disdain of this saintly fool for wealth and social position. Those versions were recorded from narrators in the provinces of Ankara, Bolu, Bursa, Erzurum, and İstanbul, Motif D1312.1.1 (see Note 4) certainly is present in this anecdote.

tances of such outright statements. On another occasion, when Harun Reşit proposes to divide all his property with Behlül Dane, the “fool” heats a *saç* red hot and invites Harun Reşit to stand on the *saç* and name all of his belongings; when the caliph refuses, Behlül Dane point out that “the fire of hell is more fearsome than this one. How will you be able to enumerate your property there?”<sup>16</sup> There is no answer. In an additional episode, Behlül Dane, in answer to a question as to where he had been for several days, reports that he had gone to hell to see if he could warm himself a bit. When Harun Reşit laughs and asks if he had found it warm enough there, Behlül Dane responds, “I could not find any fire.... Everyone else there had taken his own fire [within himself].”<sup>17</sup> In such direct answers, Behlül Dane truly needed his “fool” disguise.

On a number of occasions, Behlül Dane was able to offer guidance to his “brother” through experiences in ordinary time. One such instance involved the caliph’s offer of a fine reward for anyone who could report his suddenly somber half brother’s laughing or even *similing*. Upon a courtier’s stating that on that day he had seen the saintly Behlül Dane actually laughing, Behlül Dane acknowledged that he had indeed laughed. Pressed for a reason, he responded, “I laughed because I saw there [in a butcher shop] that every sheep was hung by its own leg. I gussed then that you will be held responsible for your sins and for what you have done to people, not I.”<sup>18</sup> In another instance, Harun Reşit asked his “brother,” a renowned teacher, to train the caliph’s son in the ways of the court, and Behlül agreed to do so. The pampered son was made to walk for four hours, until his tender feet were sore and swollen; then Behlül Dane gave him a beating on the soles of his feet and sent him home. When questioned about this unusual teaching method, Behlül Dane said, “I trained your son in the ways of the court. When he becomes caliph, a man will come to him and say, ‘I walked for ten hours to claim my rights.’ I made your son walk for four hours so that he will understand how tiresome it must

<sup>16</sup> This passage concludes an anecdote told by İdris Okan (1974; Akdağmadeni, Yozgat), Motifs J156, Ö1912.3, and U81 (see Note 4) are relevant to this account.

<sup>17</sup> This wise and witty observation brought the message directly to Harun Reşit in an anecdote told by Behçet Mahir (1974; Erzurum, Erzurum). Motif E755.2.4.1 (see Note 4) provides support for the concluding comment by Behlül Dane.

<sup>18</sup> Behlül Dane’s concern for his “brother’s” spiritual welfare, burdensome indeed, is reflected in a number of versions of this anecdote; provinces from which ATON variants have been recorded include Afyon, Aydın, Bolu, and Muğla. There is apparently no applicable motif for this anecdote; however, the expression “Every sheep is hung by its own leg” has become a proverb in Turkey.



be to walk for ten hours and won't be unjust to such a man. When he gets angry at a man, he may order him to be whipped for 500 times.... I therefore gave your son a whipping myself so that he will know how it feels to be whipped and won't be cruel to others. I've taught him what a ruler ought to know."<sup>19</sup>

Unquestionably, the most telling lessons Behlül Dane delivered to the caliph were those occurring in "time-within-time," the strongest possible evidence that this "brother" who seemed such a fool as instead a saint. A short tale given in its entirety will convey one narrator's method of moving with Behlül Dane from man's time to Allah's time.

As we all know, Behlül was the brother of Harun Reşit, one of the great leaders of Islam. Although many people of that time thought that Behlül was crazy, he was in fact a very intelligent man with great wisdom. Often, however, nobody could understand him very well. He used to say, "An hour in the presence of Allah is like a thousand ordinary hours," but no one, even Harun Reşit, took his words seriously.

In those old days the Friday noon service was considered to be so important that it was often led by the caliph Harun Reşit himself. One Friday morning Harun Reşit was preparing for that service by taking his ritual ablutions, but his ablutions were different from those of most people because he took them not before a fountain of flowing water but in his private pool. While Harun Reşit was doing this, Behlül came along riding on a stick as if it were a horse, in the way that children do. Behlül said, "O Harun, an hour in the presence of Allah is like a thousand ordinary hours."

"Hah! Our crazy man has started talking again", answered Harun Reşit. He did not believe anything that Behlül said.

But when Behlül touched his brother with his stick and shouted, "Ya, Allah!" Harun Reşit discovered himself to be a naked woman on the bank of a river. Frightened and confused, he said to himself, "*Aman!* I am not really a woman! I am Harun Reşit! But what am I going to do now?"

A short while later, a shepherd came to the river to water his flock. When the shepherd saw a naked woman on the bank, he covered her nakedness with a coat and took her home with him.

The shepherd's mother asked, "Son, where did you find this woman? Who is she?"

<sup>19</sup> This singular anecdote was furnished by Süheyl Ünver (1971; İstanbul).

“I found her by the river, Mother. She told me that she is a river girl.”

Harun Reşit, who had been transformed into a woman, was soon married to the shepherd. Harun Reşit lived with this shepherd for several years and bore him three children. But one day when he went to the edge of the river to do the family laundry, he heard the voice of Behlül Dane again saying, “Ya, Allah!” and he suddenly found himself back in his pool taking his ablutions.

Harun Reşit said, “oh, Behlül, I now believe your words. It is true that an hour in the presence of Allah is like a thousand ordinary hours!”<sup>20</sup>

One sample of the many additional tales involving *zaman zaman içinde* suggests the complex structure that the longer Behlül Dane tales display. Because of its length, it must of course be summarized except for an occasional sentence or so needed to clarify the message. A summary of one much longer tale follows.

Harun Reşit, dissatisfied with the behavior and the criticism of his “fool” of a “brother”, Behlül Dane, sought the advice of his viziers on a method of disposing of this troublesome fellow. Following their suggestion that if Behlül were to apologize for the “poor food” he would be able to serve the caliph and his viziers after a series of sumptuous meals at their respective homes, he could be accused of ingratitude to Allah for his lot and could thus be executed, Harun Reşid and his viziers were chagrined to discover that Behlül Dane made no apology whatsoever for the barley bread and water that he served, calling it “the most precious food that I have.” While they were still bemused, Behlül Dane asked that Harun Reşit stand on his (Behlül’s) shoulders in order to climb into a palm tree and pick some dates for all of them. But “when it was time for him to come down from the tree, it seemed to him that he was in a place quite unfamiliar to him.”

In that unfamiliar land, Harun Reşit mislaid his money belt and recovered it—“No money is ever stolen in this village”—was prompted to choose and marry a virgin, married the girl, was set up in business by his father-in-law under instructions to sell the merchandise for no more

<sup>20</sup> Narrated by Ramazan Avcı (1989; Kâhta, Adıyaman). This short tale, as well as the summarized tale to follow, falls among the few Behlül Dane narratives that to some degree approach an Aarne-Thompson and/or Eberhard-Boratav type *A-T* 681 and *E-B* 134), *King in the Bath; Years of Experience in a Moment* and *Zaman Zaman İçinde*, respectively. All concern the relatively. All concern the relativity of time. Applicable motifs include A1485, D661.2, D1777, D2121.3, and P319.3. (see Note 4).

than he paid for it, and to pay his father-in-law a specified amount each month from his profit! Above all, he was never to interfere with the work of Allah. On a single occasion, he charged 40 para over the price he had paid, and was therefore sentenced to be executed, “for you have created dishonesty in our village.”

Harun Reşit, allowed to take his ablutions before execution, was rescued by a beautiful bird and carried to the roof of a palace. Subsequently, he was hired as a tutor to the prince, whom he accidentally killed while slicing a melon. Though the prince’s death in this fashion had been predicted, the mother refused to forgive him; he was condemned to execution. Allowed to take ablutions and to pray before execution, he had just finished the second *rekat* when he was again rescued by the bird. “The next thing that he was aware of was the fact that he was again in the branches of the date-palm tree outside the house of Behlül Dane.

“Behlül Dane called up to his brother, ‘Come down, Harun! You have picked enough dates for all of us.’

“Harun Reşit climbed down from the date-palm tree. He then hugged Behlül Dane and decided not to try to harm him in any way.”<sup>21</sup>

Further examples from the twenty-five-year ATON corpus of Behlül Dane narratives would provide only further confirmation of the observation made at the outset of this paper: the largely overlooked saintly fool Behlül Dane deserves a well-documented place in scholarly guides to Turkish oral tradition.

<sup>21</sup> This lengthy tale (it ran nineteen minutes in recording time in Turkish) was told by İshak Kemali in 1970 in the city of Erzurum. The device of *zaman zaman içinde* is highly functional: the implication is that Harun Reşit has recognized Behlül Dane’s spiritual power in placing him in an unworldly framework of time. In some variants of this narrative, the teller states explicitly that his (Harun’s) brother was a holy man, a saint.

The motifs present in this tale (especially V223.3) include A1485, D1714, D1777, D1819.1, P319.3, and V223.3 (see Note 4). The ability of Behlül Dane to perceive the thoughts of his “brother” and the viziers and their deadly intention is crucial to the resolution here.

