Alevism in Politics:
Possibilities and Limits of Alevi Identity Politics

Mehmet Ertan

A dissertation presented to the

Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History
at Boğaziçi University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

June 2016

Abstract

"Alevism in Politics: Possibilities and Limits of Alevi Identity Politics"

Mehmet Ertan, Doctoral Candidate at the Atatürk Institute
for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2016

Prof. Ayşe Buğra, Dissertation Advisor

This dissertation scrutinizes the politicization of Alevism in the 1990s. The politicization of Alevi identity as the basis of a socio-political movement is shaped by culturel turn of politics stemming from debates on postmodernism, multiculturalism and globalization,,but the Alevi movement has never been a classical identity movement. Its ambivalent characteristics, which derive from a heterodox cosmology, ethnic pluralism, and geographical distribution, makes Alevism's availability as a defining component of identity movement difficult. Despite this ambivalence, historical massacres provide Alevi identity with a stable foundation. The ambivalence of Alevi identity and fear of new massacres shape the dynamism of its politicization. In this regard, the Alevi movement, which politicizes without direct reference to Alevi identity, focuses on universal ideologies that provide for equal coexistence of Alevis and non-Alevis. Citizenship and secularism have thus become key concepts of the Alevi movement.

After analysis of the structural framework of Alevi politicization, this dissertation examines its dynamism of Alevism through the main agents of the movement in the 1990s: Alevi associations and the Peace Party. Various definitions and historiographies of Alevism developed by these associations as well as their differentiated positions toward political parties and state structures demonstrate the contested associational domain of Alevi politics. At another level, discussions during the formation of the Peace Party and its subsequent failure demonstrate the difficulty of using Alevism as an ideological source for a party. Thus, this dissertation underscores the multidimensional relation between culture and politics.

100,000 words

Özet

"Aleviliğin Politikleşmesi: Alevi Kimlik Siyasetinin İmkan ve Kısıtlılıkları"

Mehmet Ertan, Doktora Adayı, 2016
Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü

Prof. Dr. Ayşe Buğra, Tez Danışmanı

Bu tez 1990'lı yıllarda Aleviliğin politikleşmesini incelemektedir. Aleviliğin bir kimlik siyasetine kaynaklık edecek şekilde politikleşmesi, postmodernizm, çokkültürcülük ve küreselleşme tartışmalarının siyasetin dilinde yarattığı kültürel dönüşümle yakından ilişkili olsa bile, Alevi hareketi klasik bir kimlik siyaseti yürütmemiştir. Aleviliğin heterodoks kozmolojisi, Alevilerin etnik heterojenliği ve demografik dağılımının yarattığı belirsizlik hali, Aleviliğin bir kimlik siyasetine kaynaklık etmesini zorlaştırmıştır. Bu belirsizlik hali içinde Alevi kimliğine sabitlik kazandıran tarih boyunca maruz kalınan katliamlar olmuştur. Kimliğin belirsizlik hali ve yeni katliamlara maruz kalma korkusu, Alevi politikleşmesinin temel yörüngesini belirleyen unsurlar olmuştur. Alevi hareketi spesifik olarak Alevi kimliğine referansla politikleşen bir kimlik siyaseti olmanın ötesine geçerek, Alevilerin Alevi olmayanlarla eşit düzlemde var olmasını sağlayacak evrensel kavramlar üzerinden politikleşen bir hareket olmuştur. Bu bağlamda, yurttaşlık ve sekülarizm Alevi politikleşmesinin temel köşe taşları olmuştur.

Bu tez Alevi politikleşmesinin yapısal özelliklerini ortaya koyduktan sonra, bu politikleşme mekanizmasını Alevi hareketinin özneleri üzerinden derinleştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu anlamda Alevi hareketinin özneleri Alevi dernekleri ve Barış Partisi olmuştur. Alevi derneklerinin, Aleviliğin tanımı ve tarihi konusundaki ihtilafları ve devletle ve siyasi partilerle ilişkilenme biçimlerindeki farklılıklar Alevi dernekler siyasetinin çatışmalı yapısını ortaya koymaktadır. Barış Partisinin kuruluş sürecindeki tartışmalar ve siyasi başarısızlığı ise Alevilik üzerinden kimliğin politikleşmesi sürecindeki güçlüklere işaret etmektedir. Bu bağlamda, bu tez kültür ve siyaset arasındaki çok boyutlu ilişkinin de altını çizmeye çalışmaktadır.

100.000 kelime

Curriculum Vitæ

MEHMET ERTAN

Born 11. 02. 1983
in Istanbul, Turkey

EDUCATION

Ph.D.	Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History Boğaziçi University 2016	
M.A.	Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History Boğaziçi University 2008	
B.A.	International Relations Istanbul University 2005	

PUBLICATIONS

- "Latent Politicization of the Alevism: The Affiliation between Alevis and Left Politics, 1960-1980." In *Turkey in Turmoil: Social Change and Political Radicalization in the 1960s and 1970s*, edited by Berna Pekesen. Leiden: Brill, (Forthcoming).

- "1990'lar Türkiye'sinde Değişen Siyaset Dilini Aleviler Üzerinden Okumak: Alevi Hareketinin Doğuşu." In *İsyan, Şiddet Yas: 90'lar Türkiye'sine Bakmak*, edited by Ayşen Uysal. Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları, 2016: 259-286.

- "Yoksulluğun ve Sosyal Dışlanmanın Romanlaşması" (with Mehmet Baki Deniz and Başak Ekim Akkan). In *Dezavantajlı Gruplar ve Sosyal Politika*, edited by Betül Altıntaş. Istanbul: NOBEL Akademik Yayıncılık, 2014: 115-137.

- "1970'ler Türkiye'sinde Alevi Siyasetinin Olanakları." In *Modernizmin Yansımaları: 70'li Yıllarda Türkiye*, edited by Funda Barbarosoğlu ve Eric Jan Zürcher, Ankara: Efil Yayınevi, 2014: 311- 342.

- "Türk Sağının Kızılbaş Algısı." In *Türk Sağı: Mitler, Fetişler, Düşman İmgeleri*, edited by İnci Özkan Kerestecioğlu ve Güven Gürkan Öztan, Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012: 203 – 241.

- "Gündelik Hayatın Tarihine Dokunma Çabası: Mikro Tarihçilik ve Carlo Ginzburg." *Kültür ve İletişim*, no: 15/1, Spring 2012: 9-35.

- "Tek Parti Döneminde Dersim / Tunceli'nin Mecliste Temsili." In *I. Uluslararası Tunceli (Dersim) Sempozyumu Bildiri Kitabı*. Tunceli: Tunceli Üniversitesi, 2011: 439-444.

- *The Circuitous Politicization of Alevism: The Case of the Unity Party of Turkey and the Affiliation between the Alevis and the Left Politics (1960-1980)*. Saarbrücken: Lampert Academic Publishing, 2011. ISBN: 978-3-8465-1084-1

- *Sosyal Dışlanmanın Roman Halleri* (with Mehmet Baki Deniz and Başak Ekim Akkan). Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal Politika Forumu 2011. ISBN: 978-605-87360-0-9

- "Meşruiyetin İnşası Katılımın Coşkusu: Cumhuriyet 10 Yaşında," (with U. Ceren Ünlü), *İdea*, no: 2, Fall 2010 : 59-88.

INVITED TALKS

- "The Latent Politicization of the Alevism: The Affiliation between the Alevis and the Left Politics in the 1960s." *Turkey in the 1960s: Social Change and Political Radicalization*, International Conference at Hamburg University, Turkish Studies Department, June 26-28, 2014

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

- "Türkiye Seçim Tarihinde Aleviler, 1961-2015," Türk Sosyal Bilim Derneği, *14. Ulusal Sosyal Bilim Konferansı*, Ankara, METU, 23. 11. 2015.

- "The Role of the Massacres in the Collective Identity: The Alevi Collective Memory on the Basis of the Victimhood," *The Seventh Biennale Convention of the Association the Study of Persianate Societies (ASPS)*, Istanbul, Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi, 11. 09. 2015.

- "Alevi Açılımı Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme", *I. Uluslararası Alevilik Sempozyumu*, Bingöl Üniversitesi, 04. 10. 2013

- "Social Exclusion of Roma in Turkey", European Society for Ecological Economics, *9. International Ecological Economy Conference*, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Istanbul, 17. 06. 2011

- "Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Dersim (Tunceli) Bölgesinin Mecliste Temsili", *I. Uluslararası Tunceli (Dersim) Sempozyumu*, Tunceli Üniversitesi, 17. 06. 2011
- "Öldüren İşkolu: Kot Taşlama", Türk Sosyal Bilim Derneği *11. Ulusal Sosyal Bilim Konferansı*, Ankara, Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi, 09. 12. 2009.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- History of the Turkish Republic I – II, Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Boğazici University, 2013-2016 and 2009-2011
- History of the Turkish Republic II, Yıldız Technical University, 2009
- Social Structures and Historical Transformations, Yıldız Technical University, 2009

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- Research assistant, Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Boğazici University, 2013-2016
- Research assistant at "Aleviliğin Ortak Referanslarının Belirlenmesi," organized by TÜBİTAK, 2014
- Research assistant, Düzce University, 2012-2013
- Research assistant at "Roman Topluluklar için Bütünlüklü Sosyal Politikalar Geliştirme Projesi," organized by Boğazici Üniversitesi Sosyal Politika Forumu, 2010
- Research assistant, Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Boğazici University, 2009-2011

LANGUAGES

- English – Proficiency

To my father who would never be able to read it

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

AABF   *Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Federasyonu*
(European Alevi Unions Federation)

ABF   *Alevi-Bektaşi Federasyonu*
(Alevi Bektashi Federation)

ABKB   *Alevi-Bektaşi Kuruluşları Birliği*
(Union of Alevi Bektashi Institutions)

ABTM   *Alevi Bektaşi Temsilciler Meclisi*
(Alevi-Bektashi Representative Council)

AKP   *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*
(Justice and Development Party)

ANAP   *Anavatan Partisi* (Motherland Party)

AP   *Adalet Partisi* (Justice Party)

AVF   *Alevi Vakıfları Federasyonu*
(Alevi Foundations Federation)

BBP   *Büyük Birlik Partisi* (Grand Unity Party)

BP   *Barış Partisi* (Peace Party)

BP   *Birlik Partisi* (Unity Party)

CHP   *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican People's Party)

DBH   *Demokratik Barış Hareketi* (Democratic Peace Movement)

DEHAP   *Demokratik Halk Partisi* (Democratic People's Party)

DİSK   *Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*
(Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Turkey)

DP   *Demokrat Parti* (Democrat Party)

DPT   *Devlet Planlama Teskilatı* (State Planning Office)

DSP	*Demokratik Sol Parti* (Democratic Left Party)
DRA	Directorate of Religious Affairs
DYP	*Doğru Yol Partisi* (True Path Party)
ECRH	European Court of Human Rights
EU	European Union
FP	*Fazilet Partisi* (Virtue Party)
HADEP	*Halkın Demokrasi Partisi* (People's Democracy Party)
HBAKV	*Hacı Bektaş Veli Anadolu Kültür Vakfı* (Hacı Bektaş Veli Anatolian Culture Foundation)
HBVKD	*Hacıbektaş Veli Kültür ve Tanıtma Dernekleri* (Hacıbektaş Veli Culture and Promotion Association*)*
HDF	*Halkçı Devrimci Federasyonu* (Popular Revolutionary Federation)
HP	*Halkçı Parti* (Populist Party)
İHD	*İnsan Hakları Derneği* (Human Rights Association)
İP	*İşçi Partisi* (Labor Party)
MGK	*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu* (National Security Council)
MHP	*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Nationalist Action Party)
MSP	*Milli Selamet Partisi* (National Salvation Party)
ÖDP	*Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi* (Freedom and Solidarity Party)
PKK	*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan* (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
PSAKD	*Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği* (Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Association)
RP	*Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party)
SHP	*Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti* (Social Democratic People's Party)
SODEP	Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi (Social Democracy Party)
TALEB	*Türk Ameleler Birliği* (Turkish Workers Union)
TBP	*Türkiye Birlik Partisi* (Unity Party of Turkey)
TEP	*Türkiye Emekçi Partisi* (Labor Party of Turkey)
TİP	*Türkiye İşçi Partisi* (Workers Party of Turkey)
TÖB-DER	*Tüm Öğretmenler Birleşme ve Dayanışma Derneği* (Cooperation and Integrity Club of All Educators and Laborers of Science and Culture)

TRT	Turkish Radio and Television Corporation
TTB	*Türk Tabipler Birliği* (Turkish Medical Association)
TÜSİAD	*Türkiye Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği* (Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association)
YDH	*Yeni Demokrasi Hareketi* (New Democratic Movement)

Acknowledgements

I owe special thanks to Prof. Ayşe Buğra, not only for her valuable comments, but also for her ready support. Her magic touch contributed greatly to the discussion of the dissertation. She is more than a thesis advisor. I also want to extend my gratitude to my distinguished jury members: Prof. Duygu Köksal, Asst Prof Berna Yazıcı, Prof. Zafer Toprak and Prof. Murat Borovalı. I am grateful to Assoc. Prof. Mehmet Ö. Alkan from Istanbul University who has always supported and encouraged me academically during my undergraduate and graduate education. I also want to thank Kadriye Tamtekin and Leyla Kılıç who make life easy for all students of Atatürk Institute, and to thank Seyfi Berk and Kamber Yılmaz who make study in the library of Boğaziçi University more comfortable. I also want to thank Jonathan Philips for his meticulous English editing.

I would like to thank all the people who agreed to share their information, memoir and experiences with me. The interviews I made contributed greatly to the dissertation.

I would like to thank my friends who shared their intimate friendship with me. Mehmet Baki Deniz, Osman Savaşkan, Nurçin İleri, Gözde Orhan, Seval Gülen, Barış Zeren, Cem Bico, Barış Çatal, Yunus Emre, Kerem Özkurt, Kerem Morgül, Tezcan Durna, Güven Çakır, Mehmet Nuri Durmaz, Mehmet Can Uğur, Ece Cihan Ertem, Ebru Aykut, Başak Deniz Özdoğan, Fırat Genç, Çiğdem Oğuz and Deniz Pelek. Life becomes more joyful by courtesy of their friendship.

I would like to thank my father-in-law and mother-in-law, Şekip and Mukaddes Ünlü. They are wonderful extension of my family. Last, but not least; the women of my life deserve the most gratitude. This thesis is the result of their patience and love. One is my mother, Şerife Ertan, who has always been by my side and believed me. The other is my wife, Ceren Ünlü. She persistently listened whatever I communicated and read whatever I wrote. Her existence gives meaning to life.

NOTE: The in-house editor of the Atatürk Institute has made recommendations with regard to the format, grammar, spelling, usage, and syntax of this dissertation in compliance with professional, ethical standards for the editing of student, academic work.

1

Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union, the transnationalization of capitalist production, the crisis of the nation-state that accompanied economic globalization, and intellectual debates around postmodernism led to a radical change in the language of politics in the 1990s. Consequently, the focus of politics has shifted from political economy to culture. Parallel to increased attention on culture, the concept of "identity" has come to the fore. The last two decades have witnessed a remarkable upsurge of interest in the concept of "identity," which has paved the way for the politicization of culture. Identity politics addresses injustices rooted in the realm of an exogenously defined culture and presents the vindication of the rights of the oppressed and marginalized groups as a major objective of political action.

The political environment in Turkey in the 1990s, too, was marked by this upsurge of interest in questions of cultural identity. The rise of political Islam and the Kurdish movement, which were two main axes of Turkish politics in this period, can be analyzed within the context of identity politics. The 1990s also witnessed the emergence of Alevi politics based on a particular religious, cultural identity in Turkey.

In this dissertation, the rise of Alevi identity politics is examined by situating it in the context of an intellectual and political environment marked by multiculturalist debates around the recognition of cultural difference. On one level, the society-specific historical context of Alevi politics is examined. The

factors that have led Alevi identity to emerge as the basis of a social and political movement are discussed with reference to the socio-political dynamics in Turkey and the Alevi community's own concerns and demands. The extent to which Alevi culture could form an organizational resource for a politics of identity is questioned in this discussion. On another level, the main agents of Alevi politics in the 1990s - various associations as well as the short-lived Peace Party, which so far has not been a subject of academic inquiry - are examined in relations with to one another and to political parties, social movements, and governmental organizations. Therefore, the dissertation deciphers the codes of the politicization of Alevi identity.

§ 1.1 Analytic Framework

Until the period under investigation in this dissertation, Alevism had not been an openly acknowledged or practiced creed in Turkey. The Alevi revival in the 1990s refers to the publication of hundreds of books and dozens of journals on Alevism, to the establishment of dozens of Alevi associations as well as local and national Alevi radio and television channels, and to the increasing visibility of Alevis who presented their Alevi identity in the public sphere.[1] References to an "Alevi revival" are related to the increasingly open public manifestations of Alevi identity, as well as to accompanying trends toward the organization of Alevism as a politics of identity.

While Alevi identity did not have much public presence until the 1990s, there was an Alevi oriented political party, the Unity Party (of Turkey), between 1966 and 1980. Moreover, there were limited numbers of periodicals in the 1960s addressing Alevi communities, such as *Ehl-i Beyt* and *Cem*. More importantly, the socio-political results of urbanization, which dissolved traditional Alevism, were observable in the 1960s and the 1970s. Nevertheless, Alevism did not take the form of an independent identity movement in this period when the politicization of Alevis was through affiliation with left-wing movements. In this dissertation, Alevi politics of this period is conceptualized as "the latent politicization" of Alevism.

---

1   Aykan Erdemir, "Tradition and Modernity: Alevis' Ambiguous Terms and Turkey's Ambivalent Subjects," *Middle Eastern Studies* 41:6 (2005): 939-940.

Why do we see a revival of Alevism and emergence of an Alevi identity movement in the 1990s? The literature on the Alevi revival often discusses the birth of the Alevi identity movement in relation to the rise of political Islam and the Kurdish movement. On the one hand, ethnically divided Alevis attempt to unite under the umbrella of Alevism in order to withdraw from the struggle between the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan –* PKK) and the state. On the other hand, Alevis start to discover their cultural identity as a defense against the rise of political Islam.[2] Despite the crucial role of political Islam and the Kurdish movement in the birth of the Alevi movement, all three developments can also be seen as the result of the same worldwide trend: the rise of identity politics on the basis of the politicization of culture.

Diverging from the general Alevi movement literature, this dissertation draws attention to the role of the transformed language of politics as a global phenomenon. This transformation refers to the politicization of culture or "the cultural turn" of politics that has led to the emergence of cultural identities as the formative element of political movements. Instead of socio-economic classes, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and sexual identities have appeared as the crucial elements defining the dynamics of political processes. Accordingly, both the increasing willingness and desire to present oneself as Alevi and the birth of an Alevi identity movement are directly related to the advent of a political environment marked by debates on multiculturalism.

This dissertation differs from other academic studies on the Alevi movement, because it contextualizes the Alevi movement through the lens of debates on "identity," which has become an operational keyword for the analysis of Turkish politics in the 1990s. A few studies partially deal with the discourse of "identity as a right" while evaluating the birth of Alevi movement.[3] In contradistinction to these limited studies, this dissertation theoretically contextualizes the Alevi movement with reference to the debates on multiculturalism

---

2   Reha Çamuroğlu, "Alevi Revivalism in Turkey" in *Alevi Identity,* (eds.) Tord Olsson, Elisabeth. Özdalga, Catharina Raudvere (Richmond : Curzon, 1998), 79-80.

3   See. Şehriban Şahin, *The Alevi Movement: Transformation from Secret Oratl to Public Written Culture in National and Transnational Social Spaces*, PhD Dissertation, Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science of New School for Social Research, 2001 and Elise Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, trans. Ali Berktay (Istanbul: İletişim, 2007).

that influenced Turkish politics in the 1990s. On the one hand, political Islam theoretically engaged in a multicultural political environment through the debates on the Charter of Medina, which was presented as an example of a legal pluralism whereby different religions could co-exist in a multicultural environment. At the same time, Islamic publishing houses, radio and television channels, business associations, cafes, and hairdressers appeared, indicating the emergence of an autonomous public sphere formed around Islamic values. On the other hand, the Kurdish movement also adopted a new language of politics, and the goal of an independent nation state was replaced by the objective of democratic autonomy described by theories of radical democracy.

Although the rise of the Alevi identity movement in the 1990s was in harmony with the politicization of culture, its analysis within the framework of identity politics is not easy because of certain characteristics of Alevism. These peculiarities of Alevi identity, which make the mobilization of Alevis around specific demands for cultural recognition difficult, play a vital role in the analysis of the politicization dynamics of Alevism. Thus, while this dissertation argues that debates on identity politics and multiculturalism provide an intellectual background for the rise of Alevi politics, it also asserts that the ambivalence of Alevi identity distinguishes it from Sunni Islamic or Kurdish identities as the formative element of a politics of recognition. Whereas Islamic and Kurdish identity movements demanded that Muslims and Kurds live as Muslims and Kurds, the Alevi movement has abstained from confining Alevis to Alevi identities. Instead, the Alevi movement has tended to participate in the political process by means of a re-conceptualization of the terms of citizenship at large. Thus, an analysis of the politicization of Alevi identity enables us to evaluate Turkish politics through the lens of the Alevi movement, and, as such, it has the potential to contribute to theoretical debates around multiculturalism.

The characteristics that differentiate Alevi identity from Sunni Islamic or Kurdish identities are a heterodox and syncretistic cosmology, ethnic pluralism, and geographical distribution. The detailed analysis of these characteristics, which shape the ambivalence of Alevism, demonstrates why the Alevi identity movement seems to be an "identity movement without identity." This term introduced by Massicard is useful to indicate the handicaps of Alevi identity for nurturing an identity movement, and is used frequently in this

dissertation to contribute to the literatures of both multiculturalism and Alevism by investigating the difficulties of organizing an identity movement in the absence of an identity that can be rigidly defined. As the shared identity of the community is discussed, the massacres of Alevis in the distant and recent past are discussed as important elements that give coherence to Alevism. This discussion is complemented by an analysis of cleavages within the Alevi movement manifested in different interpretations of Alevism itself as well as in the different political positions of the main actors of Alevi politics.

An identity politics requires formulating a singular definition of identity that forms the basis for the revendications of the community. However, the syncretistic and heterodox cosmology of Alevism makes its rigid definition nearly impossible. In this usage, syncretism is the attempt to reconcile and meld diverse practices and various systems of belief. It is associated with attempts to merge and analogize originally discrete traditions in theology and the mythology of religion.[4]

The classics of the academic Alevism literature specifically underscore the syncretistic characteristics of Alevism. Famous French Turcologist Irene Melikoff writes that Alevism is the synthesis of the Islamic values and the religious beliefs of recently Islamized Anatolian communities' before their acceptance of Islam.[5] Accordingly, Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, who is an important historian of the heterodox movement of Anatolia, defines Alevism as a syncretistic belief constituted from Shamanism, Buddhism, Islam Sufism, Khorasan Kalendirism, Zoroastrianism, Mazdakism, Manichaeism Hurifism, and Safavid Shiism.[6]

The term heterodox is a counterpart to orthodox. "Orthodox" indicates adherence to belief in the dominant and common explanations of a religious system. If a religion is systematized and attains the status of a doctrine ac-

---

4 Niyazi Öktem, "Anadolu Aleviliğinin Senkretik Yapısı" in *Tarihi ve Kültürel Boyutlarıyla Türkiye'de Aleviler Bektaşiler Nusayriler* (Istanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1997), 223-225.

5 Irene Melikoff, *Uyur İdik Uyardılar: Alevilik–Bektaşilik Araştırmaları*, trans. Turan Alptekin (Istanbul: Demos Yayınları, 2006), 37.

6 Ahmet Yasar Ocak, *Alevi Bektaşi İnancının İslam Öncesi Temelleri* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000).

cepted by the state, it becomes an orthodox view. On the other hand, "hetero-doxy" refers to the groups of beliefs that do not have a homogenous unity. It refers to a departure from accepted beliefs or standards.[7]

Non-systematization is one of the main characteristics of heterodoxy. The-ologically heterodoxy meets the minimum pillar of faith; however, its open-ness to flexible readings violates the certainty of religious orthodoxy.[8] Corre-spondingly, heterodoxy explains the cosmos on the basis of a unity of pluralisms rather than terms of binary oppositions. Therefore, it assumes a multitude instead of oppositions, negotiation instead of conflict, and the order of nature instead of regulatory interferences.[9] In this usage, the multitude of Alevism refers to the plural comments on its cosmology instead of a singular and uniform approach. This multitude also reveals the difficulty of postulating a singular definition of Alevism. Due to the fact that Alevism was not consti-tuted in a historical moment and frozen, but is in a contingent state of for-mation, Alevism appears as a cultural community that is heterogeneous and multitude.[10]

The assessment of Alevism within the conceptual framework of syncre-tism and heterodoxy clearly indicate that a rigid or singular definition of Ale-vism is nearly impossible. In his classic article on the revival of Alevism, Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi underscores that the absence of a central religio-social authority triggers multiple comments on the definition, doctrine and rituals of Alevism which in turn become the main problem of the Alevi identity movement during its revival.[11]

In addition to their heterodox cosmology, Alevis in Turkey are ethnically divided between Turks, Kurds and Arabs. Consequently, ethnic pluralism be-comes a second element of the structural framework of Alevi politicization. The last component is the geographic distribution of the Alevi population. Al-evis are estimated as the one-sixth of Turkey's overall population. Moreover,

---

7 Reha Çamuroğlu, *Tarih Heterodoksi ve Babailer* (Istanbul: Der, 1990), 135.

8 Süreyya Su, *Hurafeler ve Mitler: Halk İslamında Senkretizm* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2009), 86.

9 Ayhan Yalçınkaya, *Alevilikte Toplumsal Kurumlar ve İktidar* (Ankara: Mülkiyeliler Birliği Vakfı, 1996), 28.

10 Murat Okan, *Türkiye'de Aleviler* (Ankara: İmge, 2004), 18.

11 Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, "Tarih Mitosu ve Kollektif Kimlik," trans. Tanıl Bora, *Birikim* 88 (1996): 53.

unlike Kurds, Alevis do not constitute a dominant majority in a given region of the country. Alevis are the minority, wherever they live with the exception of Tunceli.

Heterodox and syncretistic cosmology, ethnic pluralism, and geographical distribution obstruct the shaping of the cultural boundaries of Alevism. Thus, being ambivalent appears to be the main characteristics of the Alevi identity. Accordingly, the ambivalent and multitude characteristics of Alevism suggest that it is ostensibly unavailable as the defining component of an identity movement. In her study to understand the formation and development of the Alevi movement, Elise Massicard states that Alevi writers and associations could not reach a compromise on the whether or not Alevism is part of Islam and whether Alevis are ethnically Turk or Kurd. In this regard, Massicard carefully points out the ambiguity of Alevism and assesses Alevism as a supra-categorical heterodoxy. Consequently, she defines the Alevi movement as an "identity movement without identity."[12]

Canadian scholars like Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor and, James Tully play vital roles in debates of multiculturalism. Specifically, the Quebec region shapes their interest in the multiculturalism. Quebec is the only Canadian province with a predominantly French-speaking population and the only one to have adopted French as an official language. Quebec has its own flag and national festivals. Politically, Quebec has a parliament and prime minister who independently develop international relations with the United States and France.[13] Due to the multicultural policies of Canada and regional autonomy of Quebec, the Quebec case has become a model case of multiculturalism.

Nevertheless, the demographic, linguistic, ethnic, and cosmological positions of the Alevis are radically different from the Quebec case. Quebec has a territory and language which homologize Quebecois and which differentiates them from the population of other provinces. By contrast, the Alevis have a no rigidly defined identity, no ethnic homogeneity, and no definite territory; therefore, the feasibility of the analyzing the politicization of Alevism on the basis of multiculturalism is questionable.

---

12   Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, 18.

13   Hüseyin Kalaycı, *Ayrılıkçılık: Kanada Quebec Örneği* (Ankara: Liberte, 2010), 337.

Despite the absence of a rigidly defined identity, ethnic homogeneity, and definite territory, Alevis have a history that consists of rebellions and massacres. Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, as an important historian on the Alevism, asserts that the Babai Revolt (1240) systematized non-Sunni religious thinking and laid the foundation for the Alevi-Bektashi paradigm in Anatolia.[14] Then the Sheikh Bedrettin revolt spread this non-Sunni heterodox cosmology to the Balkans; it was transformed into Alevism with Anatolian revolts in the sixteenth century under the influence of the Safavid. The current cosmology of Alevism was formulated in the sixteenth century when the cult of Ali was incorporated into the non-Sunni heterodoxy under the influence of the Safavid.[15] The analysis by Ocak indicates that political revolts such as the Babai, Sheikh Bedrettin and sixteenth century rebellions played vital roles in the formulation of Alevism. Whereas Sunni doctrine developed through religious, intellectual jurisprudence, the Alevi cosmology evolved through political rebellions.

In parallel with rebellions, the history of Alevism has been shaped by massacres. Both the Babai Revolt and the sixteenth century rebellions were brutally suppressed. However, massacres are not an archaic element in the history of the Alevis. The Alevis suffered violent attacks in contemporary history in Dersim (1937-8), Malatya (1978), Sivas (1978), Maraş (1978), Çorum (1980), Madımak (1993), and Gazi (1995). Madımak, in particular, led Alevis to become protective of their Alevi identity and it played a crucial role for the rise of the Alevi movement in the 1990s. Accordingly, the academic literature on the Alevi movement assesses the events at Madımak as a factor that strengthened the Alevi movement.

There strengthening factor notwithstanding, this dissertation analyzes the massacres as a major element in the politicization process of Alevi identity. Massacres have not only led Alevis to protect their Alevi identity, but have paved the way for the formation of an Alevi collective memory consisting of violent attacks. In other words, despite the ambivalent characteristic of Alevi cosmology, the continuity of massacres becomes the permanent object of the politicization of Alevism.

---

14   Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Babailer İsyanı* (Istanbul:Dergah, 1996).

15   Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, "Alevi ve Bektaşiliğin Tarihsel ve Sosyal Tabanı ile Teolojisi Arasındaki İlişki Problemine Dair," in *Türk Sufiliğine Bakışlar* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2012), 236-252.

While analyzing the social conditions of Jews in the Europe within the framework of the ambivalent Jewish identity, Jean Paul Sartre asserts that the main determinant that has given Jews their identity is not their communal identity, but anti-Semitism. Due to the fact that anti-Semitism clears the ambivalences of Jewish identity, Jews choose to assimilate particularistic nations into universal, eternal laws. They claim their rights as citizens rather than Jews.[16]

Analogically, the relation between Jews and anti-Semites is reminiscent of the relation between Alevis and massacres. Due to the fact that massacres stabilize ambivalent characteristics of Alevi identity in history, the Alevi movement mainly prefers to engage in universal political processes instead of focusing on a particularistic Alevi identity. On one level, the heterodox cosmology of Alevism and the absence of territorial and ethnic unity make Alevism unwieldy as the formative element of a politics of identity. On another level, the brutality of the massacres leads Alevis to engage in universal political processes. Thus, citizenship appears as a key concept for Alevi politics.

A booklet written by the Hacı Bektaş Veli Anatolian Culture Foundation (*Hacı Bektaş Veli Anadolu Kültür Vakfı* – HBAKV) symbolically demonstrates how the Alevi movement engages in debates on the Alevi movement. This booklet contends that a constitution on the basis of cultural identity pushes minority identities into their respective cultural ghettoes; therefore Alevis should focus on the equal coexistence of differences instead of the liberation of their specific culture. The booklet ends with the question: "Who are the Alevis?" to which the reply is given: "Nobody." The subsequent question demands the answer to "What do the Alevis want to be?" The answer is not the expected: "To be an Alevi," but to be regarded as "Everybody."[17] The Alevis' desire to be like everybody else without denying their Aleviness demonstrates not only the politicization preferences of the Alevi movement, but also the potential of the Alevi movement to offer new insights into Turkish citizenship.

Can the politicization of Alevism without specific attention to its cultural distinctiveness be perceived as an anomaly? Analyzing the role of identity in

---

16   Jean Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York: Shocken Books, 1965), 110-112.

17   Hacıbektaş Veli Anadolu Kültür Vakfı, *Mor Kitap: Anayasayı Değiştirmek Üzere Değerlendirmeler* (Ankara: 2012).

the politicization of Alevism by evaluating the conceptualization of citizenship in this process can suggest an answer. Whereas multiculturalism naturalizes the politicization of culture in the course of a search for justice and equality, debates on citizenship indicate that respect for cultural difference does not require the politicization of culture and the pursuit of recognition. Instead, a conceptualization of citizenship includes cultural rights, which goes beyond dichotomies of particularism and universalism or equality and difference, appears as suitable for attaining unity in diversity.

The limits of the ambivalent nature of Alevism to nurture an identity movement makes the notion of a form of citizenship responsive to cultural rights particularly relevant for Alevi politicization. Moreover, violent attacks discourage the agents of the Alevi movement for formulating their demands on the basis of their unique cultural identity. In other words, the wish to not suffer new massacres leads Alevis to organize around universal principles such as secularism and citizenship. Therefore, the Alevi movement mainly tends to engage in the political process through inclusive, universal political concepts instead of differentiating themselves on the basis of cultural identity.

In this context, the discussion of the capacity of universal rights to resolve the problems of a cultural group with no definite cultural identity leads to an analysis of the politicization of Alevism as an identity movement where references to equal citizenship and secularism – rather than cultural identity oriented political demands – predominate. In this regard, the examination of the multidimensional politicization dynamics of the Alevi movement contributes not only to debates on identity politics, but also to theories of citizenship.

After the analysis of the structural framework of Alevi politics through debates both on multiculturalism and citizenship, the ambivalent characteristics of Alevism and the crucial role of massacres for politicization, the dissertation examines how the agents of Alevi politics have participated in politics with differing visions of Alevism in the 1990s and early 2000s. In this regard, Alevi associations appear as the main agents of Alevi politics.

Parallel to the existing literature on the subject, this dissertation focuses on the Cem Foundation and the Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Association (*Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği* – PSAKD). Given the differences in their definitions of Alevism and their political stances, these foundations represent the

two opposite poles of the Alevi political spectrum. Their formulations of Alevism and their political positions within Turkish politics shape the boundaries of Alevi politics more broadly. It can be asserted that other popular Alevi nongovernmental organizations of the 1990s remained between these two opposing political poles.

The literature on the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD as the agents of Alevi politics, which is reviewed below, suggests that their political position recall Nancy Fraser's conceptualization of recognition and redistribution. While the Cem Foundation advocates an affirmative politics of recognition, the PSAKD sponsors a democratic, socialist policy reminiscent of the politics of redistribution. Differently from existing literature, this dissertation draws on Fraser's formulation of a distinction between affirmative and transformative remedies to address injustices faced by disadvantaged groups to analyze the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD.

Fraser states that affirmative remedies aim to correct inequitable outcomes of a given social arrangement without disturbing the social establishment that generates them. By contrast, transformative remedies aim to correct inequitable outcomes of a given social arrangement by restructuring the generative framework.[18] This distinction between affirmative and transformative remedies is useful for the analysis of the different approaches of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD to vis-à-vis the relationship between the state and religion and their articulated demands for recognition. The Cem Foundation is an actor that demands affirmative policies involving the formal recognition of the Alevi religious identity while the PSADK adopts a transformative, democratic socialist policy.

The Cem Foundation's demands for the representation of Alevis within the Directorate of Religious Affairs (DRA) and for religious instruction can be assessed as affirmative remedies to restore social arrangements without disturbing the social establishment. The Cem Foundation is not demanding the transformation of state-religion relations, but merely its restoration through representation of the Alevism within the DRA and religious instruction. In

---

18   Nancy Fraser, "From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Postsocialist' Age,"*New Left Review* 212 (July-August 1995): 82.

contrast, the PSAKD demands a change to existing conceptualizations of secularism and democracy. The demand for the abolition of the directorate and compulsory religious courses signify the transformation of the social establishment itself with regard to the relation between state and religion. It demands both a complete change of the existing system and the current conceptualization of secularism in favor of yet more democratic, secular ones.

This dissertation also examines how the multitude characteristic of Alevi cosmology is reflected in the socio-political sphere of Alevi associations. Thus, differences between the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD on the meaning of Alevism and on place of the Alevi movement within Turkish politics are scrutinized, as well.

Despite the existence of academic studies on the Alevi associations, the political agency of the Alevi movement in the 1990s has been surprisingly disregarded. The existing academic literature treats the revival of Alevism as a sociocultural phenomenon, and, consequently, it limits the analysis of the transformation of Alevism to the contexts of urban conditions and the institutionalization of the Alevi movement in non-governmental organizations. Therefore, the experiment of the Peace Party has not attracted the attention of academic studies on Alevism. Neglect of the role of politics during the Alevi revival process is a remarkable deficiency in the existing literature. The absence of an academic study on the Peace Party is but a reflection of this negligence.[19]

One contribution of this dissertation to the Alevism literature is an analysis of the political history of the Peace Party within the framework of two contradictory questions: Why did the Alevis need to establish an Alevi party? And why did the Alevis not support the Peace Party? The examination of the Peace Party experiment not only deepens the analysis of Alevi politics, but also sheds

---

19 Harald Schüller's studies should be mentioned in this context. He dealt with the relation between Alevis and social democrat parties of the 1990s; however, the studies focused on the demographic voter base of the social democrat parties rather than the political positions of Alevis. For more detailed information about them, see Harald Schüller, *Particilik, Hemşerilik, Alevilik*, trans. Yılmaz Tonbul (Istanbul: İletişim, 1999), and Harald Schüller, "Secularism and Ethnicity: Alevis and Social Democrats in Search of an Alliance" in (eds.) Stefanos Yerasimos, Günter Seufert and Karin Varhoff, *Civil Society in the Grip of Nationalism* (Istanbul: Orient Institute, 2000).

light on the contested relations between the civil (Alevi associations) and political (Alevi party) agents of an identity movement. The fact that the Peace Party was a clear political failure while civil associations continue to be active sheds light on the politicization dynamics of Alevism.

This dissertation scrutinizes the politicization of Alevi identity in the 1990s and early 2000s. In this context, it depicts the structural framework of Alevi politics on one hand, and demonstrates the contested domain of Alevi politics through an analysis of its agents on the other. The theoretical ambivalence of Alevism, which obstructs it from being a solid basis for an identity movement, yields an "identity movement without an identity." Despite the theoretical fluidity and ethnic pluralism inherent in Alevism, its history of massacres constitutes a stable foundation for Alevi identity and leads Alevis to struggle for universally defined political projects like egalitarian citizenship rights rather than culturally differentiated rights. While the Cem Foundation attempted a standardized definition of Alevism as a religious creed within Islam, the Alevi community at large has not shared this position. In fact, it might be asserted that universally accepted citizenship rights have become the common stance that unites and defines Alevis since the 1990s. The politicization of Alevism through its struggle to transcend its own cultural peculiarities makes the Alevism a perfect sociopolitical lens through which the relationship between culture and politics can be revisited, reassessed, and redefined. In this regard, this dissertation discusses the politicization dynamics of Alevism as an identity movement, but points to the multidimensional relations between culture and politics by engaging in a dialogue with debates on multiculturalism and citizenship.

§ 1.2   Literature on the Alevi Revival

The aforementioned framework clarifies the contribution of this dissertation to the academic literature on the Alevi movement. In addition to these main arguments, I briefly review the academic literature on Alevism with which this dissertation is in dialogue. As of the end of 2015 there are 317 thesis and dissertations in the database of the Institute of Higher Education that deal with

Alevism in the fields of sociology, anthropology, political science, history, and theology.

Theological studies deal with the position of Alevism within the context of the history Islam and its relation to other Islamic religious sects. Moreover, they compare the rituals of Alevism to other Islamic traditions. On the other hand, historical studies scrutinize specific historical moments in the development of the Alevi-Bektashi tradition, such as the Babai Revolt or the abolition of the Janissary Corps. Furthermore, they examine the religio-political positions of Alevi communities in various historical periods, such as the era of Abdulhamit or the Tanzimat period. The present dissertation mainly engages with the literature of Alevism in sociology, anthropology, and political science which examine three aspects of Alevism: urbanization, citizenship and social movement.

The literature on Alevism that focuses on urbanization approaches the Alevi revival as a response to the dissolution of traditional Alevism in rural communities through adaptation to the urban environment in the course of which existing rituals such as *cem* ceremonies and Muharram fasting are reinterpreted. Traditional Alevism was based on isolated rural life under the management of the communal order. Institutions such as the *dedelik*[20], *musahiplik*,[21] *düşkünlük*[22] and *cem* ceremonies were basic mechanisms that provided for the continuity of the Alevi communal order in rural areas. Urbanization put an end to this isolated life of Alevis; therefore, the traditional institutions and social bases of Alevism, which could only function in the isolated face-to-face societies, became lost in urban situation.

The urbanization literature focuses on the transformation of the traditional Alevi cosmology under the conditions of urban life, as well as the integration of Alevis to heterogeneous, urban social life. Questions pertaining to the ways in which urban Alevis perceive Alevism, reevaluate their religious institutions, and continue their religious practices are the main topics of the

---

20 *Dede*s are the holy men of the Alevi tradition who supervise both the community's social relations and religious prayers.

21 *Musahiplik* is a a kind of spritiual brotherhood between two men within the Alevi community.

22 Excommunication.

urbanization-based Alevism literature.[23] First, the religious institutions of the Alevism such as, *dedelik* and *musahiplik*, are transformed from real to symbolic institutions in urban life.[24] At another level, *cemevi*s as an urban formulation for the religious needs of the Alevi community in a heterogeneous urban life indicate not only the transformation of Alevi rituals from the intimate habitual practices into an anonymous setting, but also the detachment of the religious aspects of *cem* ceremonies from its social practice.[25]

In contrast with traditional Alevism, the social and religious functions of Alevi traditions have become separated in urban settings. In this regard, the urbanization-based literature on the Alevi revival underlines the structural secularization of Alevi identity that gradually prepare Alevism as the basis for an identity movement meanwhile integrating it into the urban condition. It is therefore argued that urbanization weakens Alevism's religious aspect, but it strengthens Alevism as a cultural identity.[26]

Another current in the academic Alevi literature draws on the theory of social movements. This literature analyzes the transition of Alevism from a secret, private identity to a public one, conceptualizing it as a social movement that involves the mobilization of the community for a common aim: the recognition of Alevi identity.[27] Consequently, the term social movement in this literature on Alevism tends to correspond with identity politics.[28]

---

23 Olcay Yıldırım, *Primary Alevi Institutions and Alevi-Sunni Encounters under the Urban Conditions*, M.A Thesis, Ataturk for Modern Turkish History Institute, 2009; Fahriye Dinçer, *Formulations of Semahs in Relation to the Question of Alevi Identity in Turkey*, PhD Dissertation, Ataturk for Modern Turkish History Institute, 2002 and Zeliha Keskin, *Kentsel İlişki Ağları içinde Kimlik İnşası: Alevilik Örneği*, Ankara University, Social Science Institute Sociology Department, 2007.

24 Kamil Fırat, *Urban Alevilik: Self Perception of the Two Neighborhoods in Ankara*, M.A Thesis, The Graduate School of Social Sciences of the Middle East Technical University, 2004.

25 Murat Es, *Alevist Politics of Place and the Construction of Cemevis in Turkey*, M.A.Thesis Boğaziçi University. Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences, 2006.

26 Nail Yılmaz, *Kentin Alevileri* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2005), 254.

27 Martin Sökefeld, *Struggle for Recognition: The Alevi Movement in Germany and in Transnational Space* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 38.

28 Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*.

Analyzing Alevism with reference to social movement theories, the literature evaluates social and political opportunity structures which refer to the socio-political conditions that are favorable or unfavorable for the formation of a social movement. In the case of Alevi politics, factors such as the global discourse on the recognition of identity as a right, the rise of an Alevi bourgeoisie, the privatization of mass media, suddenly imposed grievances such as Sivas and Gazi Massacres, and the state's informal recognition of Alevi identity via Hacıbektaş Festivals are constituents of the social and political opportunity structures.[29] Therefore the social movement-based Alevism literature enables an analysis of Turkish politics through the lens of the Alevi movement.

The social movement literature not only equates the rise of the Alevi movement with identity politics, but expands the territorial space of the analysis of Alevi politics. The literature assesses Alevism as a transnational social movement that transcends national boundaries and unites Alevis around the world. In order to conceptualize the Alevi politics as a transnational social movement, they analyze not only the Alevi movement in Turkey, but also in Germany.

In this respect, the analysis of Alevism as a social movement triggers studies on "diaspora Alevism." A shared Alevi identity links Alevis in Europe to their homeland. Diasporic Alevi consciousness enables an orientation toward integration and a strong homeland perspective which developed interdependently. On the one hand, the Alevis insist on their difference from the Sunni Muslims and closeness to the universalistic values, which facilitate their integration in German society within the context of the multicultural political environment. On the other hand, the Alevi diaspora use their Alevi identity as an opportunity to get involved in Turkish politics.[30] The Declaration of Alevism, the Alevi-Bektashi Representative Council and the Peace Party appear

---

29   Şehriban Şahin, *The Alevi Movement: Transformation from Secret Oratl to Public Written Culture in National and Transnational Social Spaces*, PhD Dissertation, Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science of New School for Social Research, 2001.

30   Martin Sökefeld, "Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition Policy," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 28-29 (Spring-Fall 2003): 135.

as part of a socio-political process that demonstrates the transnational political sphere of the Alevi movement.[31]

The literature that conceptualizes the Alevism as a social movement treats Alevi associations as the agents of this social movement. Some of these studies classify the Alevi associations according to their assessments of Alevism. In this regard, four main groups emerge in Alevi politics, which are (1) leftist Alevis using Alevism as a liberation theology represented by the Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Associations; (2) heterodox, mystical Islamist Alevism surrounding the Hacıbektaş Veli associations; (3) Shii-inclined Alevism; and (4) the Cem Foundation's notion of Alevism as Turkish Islam.[32]

In fact, the literature on Alevi associations concurs on two hegemonic projects by Alevi associations to define Alevism: political Alevism and Islamic Alevism. The boundaries of these two currents of the Alevi movement are clear in the answer to the question: Is Alevism part of Islam or not?[33] Accordingly, two Alevi associations are at the forefront: the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation. Whereas the PSAKD represents political Alevism, the Cem Foundation is the representative of the Islamic Alevism. Beyond their views on the relationship between Alevism and Islam, when the literature compares these two associations according to their political orientation, the PSAKD's Alevism is labeled a liberation theology and, the Cem Foundation's Alevism is classified as republican.[34]

In her master's thesis, Seçil Aslan states that the Cem Foundation defines itself as an Alevi institution that merely tries to spread Alevism and enhance the religious rights of Alevis. On the other hand, the PSAKD presents itself not only as an Alevi institution, but as a democratic platform to compel the

---

31 Mehmet Demiray, *Understanding the Alevi Revival: A Transnational Perspective*. M.A Thesis, Bilkent University, The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences, 2004: 132.

32 Faruk Bilici, "The Function of the Alevi Bektashi Theology in Modern Turkey" in (eds.) Tord Olsson, Elisabeth. Özdalga, Catharina Raudvere, *Alevi Identity* (Richmond : Curzon, 1998).

33 Uğraş Ulaş Tol, *The Sustainability Crisis of the Alevism*, PhD Dissertation, The Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University, 2009, 232-240.

34 Tahire Erman and Emrah Göker, "Alevi Politics in Contemporary Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36:4 (2001): 114.

state to adopt democratic reforms for common good. While the Cem Foundation argues that unless the state resolves the Alevi problem, Turkey cannot be democratic country, the PSAKD claims that the development of secularism and democracy is indispensable for resolving Turkey's Alevi question.[35]

In his anthropological study, Murat Okan also compares the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD. He states that while the Cem Foundation evaluates Alevism as Turkicized Islam, the PSAKD assesses it as laic, democratic way of life. The Cem Foundation addresses the state directly and aims for official recognition of Alevism as a religious identity, while the PSAKD aims to democratize Turkey vis-à-vis the Alevi problem within a political framework influenced by a synthesis of Kemalist-Marxist discourse.[36]

In her master's thesis, Bengü Aydın compares the two tendencies in Alevi politics represented by the Alevi Bektashi Federation (*Alevi-Bektaşi Federasyonu*- ABF) and the Alevi Foundations Federation (*Alevi Vakıfları Federasyonu* – AVF). Because the PSAKD is the one of the main entrance of the ABF and the Cem Foundation is the core constituent of the AVF, Aydın reproduces the classical distinction between two. On the one hand, the Alevi Bektashi Federation demands equality for Alevis within the framework of a newly defined secularism and democracy. They do not claim positive, discriminatory group rights, but want the state to be neutral toward all belief groups. On the other hand, the Alevi Foundation Federation defines Alevism in terms of a belief system within Islam - called "Alevi Islam" - and therefore delineates Alevism on a communitarian basis. It tends to demand group-differentiated rights to acquire equal opportunities within the Directorate of Religious Affairs.[37]

Because the social movement literature handles the Alevi revival as a sociocultural phenomenon, the experiment of the Peace Party does not attract the attention among these academic studies of Alevism. The neglect of the role

---

35 Seçil Aslan, *The Ambivalence of Alevi Politic(s): A Comparative Analysis of Cem Vakfı and Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği.* Unpublished M.A Thesis, Boğaziçi University, Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences, 2008, 218-221.

36 Okan, *Türkiye'de Alevilik*, 124–125; 152–156; 166–167; 193–194.

37 Bengü Aydın, *Alevi Politics of Recognition: Transformation of Alevism and Two Kinds of Recognition Politics,* M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University, Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences, 2009.

of the politics in the Alevi revival process is an important deficit in the social movement literature. The absence of an academic study of the Peace Party experiment is a reflection of this negligence. Thus, this dissertation contributes to the existing literature by examining the Peace Party as an agency of Alevi politics that highlights tensions between demands for cultural recognition and equal citizenship.

As a consequence of the rise of an Alevi movement on the basis of demands for recognition, citizenship appears as a new conceptual tool for the literature on Alevism. Indeed, the rise of the Alevi movement reveals the deficient conceptualization of citizenship in Turkey, which is based on Turkish ethnic and Sunni Muslim religious identities. Because this particular conceptualization of citizenship does not meet the demand for the recognition of Alevis, they call for the formulation of a new approach under the banner of equal citizenship.

Kazım Ateş and Fethi Açıkel claim that the two dominant nationalisms that nurture Turkish citizenship, namely ethno-cultural nationalism and religio-cultural nationalism, exclude Alevis from the conceptualization of citizenship. Although ethno-cultural nationalists idealize Alevis as representatives of an authentic past of pre-Islamic Turks, they also criticize Alevis for adhering to a primordial, heretical creed. On the other hand, religio-cultural nationalists regard Alevis as supporters of a primordial Islam that constitutes a heretic deviance from Orthodox Islamic tradition.[38] In this context, Ateş asserts that the term ambivalence, which captures Alevis' relation to Turkish citizenship, best describes its position between genuine selfness of Turkishness and heretical otherness.[39]

The ambivalence of the status of Alevis in Turkish society situates them in an instrumental position in the search for a new form of democratic citizenship in Turkey. The Alevi movement may provide a new source of energy for a reassessing and revising the way that citizenship is conceptualized in Turkey; their equal citizenship demands have the potential to provide a system of

---

38   Fethi Açıkel and Kazım Ateş, "Ambivalent Citizens," *European Societies* 13:5 (2011): 723-726.

39   Kazım Ateş, *Yurttaşlığın Kıyısında Aleviler* (Ankara: Phoneix, 2011).

rights that assure neutrality among culturally diverse individuals.[40] Compared to the voluminous studies on Alevism situated in the literatures of urbanization and social movements, citizenship is newly emerging and conceptually much less developed in Alevi studies. In this regard, the situation of the Alevism into theoretical debates around multiculturalism contributes not only to the social movement-centered studies of Alevism studies but also to the citizenship perspective in the literature of Alevism.

§ 1.3 Methodology, Sources, and Outline

This dissertation focuses on the politicization of Alevism in the 1990s in the form of an identity movement. Accordingly, databases of newspapers of the 1990s, such as *Cumhuriyet* and *Milliyet* are examined to depict contemporaneous Turkish politics and situate Alevism in the socio-political arena. Alevi associations and the Peace Party are considered as the main agents of Alevi politics. Therefore, the periodicals related to the Alevi movement are investigated. They include *Cem* (the official periodical of the Cem Foundation), *Pir Sultan Abdal* (the official periodical of the PSAKD), *Zülfikar* (pro-Kurdish periodical), *Alevilerin Sesi* (the official periodical of the European Alevi Unions Federation), *Kervan* (a pro-socialist periodical) and *Nefes*. Additionally, I have conducted fifteen in-depth interviews with prominent figures of the Peace Party and influential activists of the Alevi movement.

This dissertation analyzes the politicization dynamics of Alevism; accordingly, both the popular and academic literatures on Alevism are scrutinized. To situate the politicization of Alevism in Turkish politics, the academic studies on Turkey in the 1990s with respect to the relation between Turkey and the European Union, the rise of political Islam, and the Kurdish question are investigated. Moreover, philosophical studies on multiculturalism and citizenship contextualize the politicization of Alevism in the form of an identity movement on theoretical level.

This study consists of eight chapters including this introduction. Chapter 2 discusses how theoretical debates on postmodernism theoretically pave the

---

40 Gürcan Koçan and Ahmet Öncü, "Citizen Alevi in Turkey: Beyond Confirmation and Denial," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 17:4 (December 2004).

way for the politicization of culture and how cultural identities become the formative elements of political process. Then, Chapter 2 scrutinizes the salience of identity politics with reference to the debates on multiculturalism that characterize the intellectual context of the 1990s and theoretically enable Alevism to direct a political movement. In addition to multiculturalism, the chapter scrutinizes how theoretical concept of citizenship instrumental for equality demands by cultural groups.

Chapter 3 examines the dynamics of the politicization of Alevism between 1960 and 1980 under the term of "latent politicization," which indicates the politicization of Alevis as individuals through affiliations with left wing movements instead of the politicization of Alevism as an independent cultural identity. Latent politicization refers Alevis' politicization through their relations to left wing movements like the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi – CHP*) and various socialist movements. Moreover, Alevis' apathy toward an Alevi-oriented party, the Unity Party (of Turkey), contributes to the examination of the latent politicization of Alevism.

The politicization of Alevism with reference to Alevi culture is a unique development of the 1990s. Chapter 4 examines both the causes and results of the Alevi revival process. On one hand, the rise of political Islam, the Kurdish question, and Turkey's membership bid to the European Union are the factors that trigger the politicization of Alevism as an independent identity movement. On the other, the visibility of Alevism in the public sphere through mass media, Alevi festivals, and popular literature on Alevism appear as defining features of the Alevi revival.

Due to the fact that, the Alevi revival has gone hand-in-hand with violent attacks suffered by Alevis in Sivas and Gazi, victimhood becomes an important component of Alevi politics. More importantly, because the ambivalence of Alevism is cleared by the historical continuity of such Alevi massacres, the relation between the violent attacks to which Alevis have been exposed and the politicization dynamics of Alevism requires special attention. Chapter 5 scrutinizes the development of the Madımak massacre and Gazi events in the 1990s and analyzes how these attacks trigger the remembrance of assaults that Alevis suffered in the late 1970s and late 1930s. This chapter theoretically discusses how the massacres shape the Alevi collective memory and the dynamics of Alevi politicization.

Chapter 6 investigates the Alevi associations as the main agents of Alevi politics. The Cem Foundation and the PSAKD are handled as the poles of Alevi politics determining its ideological boundaries. Chapter 6 discusses three contested domains of Alevi associations through differences between the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD: (1) diversified conceptualizations of the Alevism by means of definition, historiography, and geography; (2) the relation with state on the basis of Turkish secularism; and (3) the place of Alevi movement within Turkish politics. Lastly this chapter analyzes how Turkey's membership process to the European Union transforms the contested domains of Alevi politics shaped by the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD.

Chapter 7 analyzes the political history of the Peace Party, the history of which has been neglected by the academic literature on Alevism, as another agent of Alevi politics. The political history of the Peace Party is examined with regard to two contradictory questions: Why did the Alevis need to establish an Alevi party? And why did the Alevis not support the Peace Party? This chapter discusses what led to the formation of the Peace Party with respect both the conditions of Turkish politics in the 1990s and the actual needs of Alevis. An investigation of the political failure of the Peace Party contributes to the sophistication of the analysis of the politicization dynamics within Alevism. Moreover, despite the continuity of Alevi associations, the political failure of the Peace Party sheds light on the contested relations between civil (Alevi associations) and political (Alevi party) agents within an identity movement.

Chapter 8 summarizes the arguments of the dissertation discussed in the previous chapters.

2

Transformed Language of Politics: The Politics in Between Multiculturalism and Citizenship

Chapter 3 conceptualizes the politicization of Alevism in the 1960s and 1970s within the framework of the term "latent politicization." This term refers to the politicization of Alevis through their individual affiliation with left-wing movements rather than the politicization of Alevism as a cultural identity. However, the politicization of Alevism radically changes in the 1990s implying the politicization of Alevi identity as a formative element of a social movement. Chapter 4 discusses the causes and various aspects of the birth of the Alevi identity movement in the 1990s.

What changed from the 1960s to the 1990s? Why did the politicization dynamism of Alevism radically transform from latent to identity politics? How could Alevism become a formative element of a social movement? The answers to these questions are implicit in the intellectual climate of the 1990s. On one hand, the demise of the Soviet Union trivialized the role of socio-economic class for political process; the importance of political antagonism between left and right became insignificant. On the other hand, the process of globalization and debates on postmodernism increased the value of culture as a constructive element in political processes. Consequently, cultural identities became the main basis for political movements, a trend which can be characterized as the politicization of culture or the cultural turn of politics.

The cultural turn of politics made a mark on Turkish politics in the 1990s, as well. The rise of political Islam and the Kurdish movement in this decade can be considered as the politicization of cultural identities. In this context, unlike the period from1960 through the 1980s, the politicization of Alevism as identity politics in the 1990s is the direct result of cultural turn of the politics. Although intellectual debates on identity politics provide a background for the birth of Alevi identity politics, the literature on the Alevi revival has surprisingly neglected the relationship between the multicultural intellectual environment and rise of Alevi politics as an identity movement. To fill the gap in the literature and theoretically contextualize the politicization of Alevism as identity politics, this section reviews the debates on postmodernism, identity politics, multiculturalism, and citizenship that transformed the language of politics and led to the politicization of Alevism in the 1990s.

To this end, this chapter first examines how identity becomes a formative element for the political process through debates on globalization and postmodernism. As a result of the salience of identity politics, the 1990s witnessed a remarkable upsurge of interest in the two topics of multiculturalism and citizenship. On one hand, multiculturalism, which assumes the politicization of group identities, establishes an intellectual environment that paves the way for the politicization of cultural identities. On the other, the politicization of cultural identities sparks interest in conceptualization of that integrates demands for justice and community membership.[1] Therefore, this chapter scrutinizes the basic premises of multiculturalism and egalitarian citizenship through their prominent representatives.

Despite the intellectual influence of the multicultural intellectual environment on Alevi politics, the majority of the agents of the Alevi movement engaged in debates on equal citizenship while formulating their political position. The theoretical analysis of debates on multiculturalism and citizenship enable contextualization of the politicization of Alevism in the form of identity politics in the 1990s. Moreover, the peculiarities of Alevi politics, which refer to the politicization of Alevism as an "identity politics without identity,"

---

1   Will Kymlica and Wayne Norman, "Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory," *Ethics* 104 (January 1994): 352.

demonstrate how Alevi politics can contribute to the literature on multiculturalism and citizenship.

§ 2.1 The Socio-Intellectual Environment of Identity Politics

How has the language of politics been transformed during the 1980s and 1990s? Before analyzing the intellectual environment that led to the rise of identity politics, socio-political factors that increased the importance of culture for political process are briefly analyzed. Globalization, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the transition of the capitalist accumulation from Fordism to flexible production appeared as the socio-political factors that triggered the politicization of the cultural identities.

The globalization process, which dissolves the national boundaries of sovereign nation states, not only unites the world economically and technologically, but triggers a revival of subnational, local cultures, which both resist and paradoxically become integrated into globalization. Because globalization and localization go hand in hand, Roland Robertson evaluates this paradoxical process as the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism.[2] The particularization triggers the formation of ethnic and cultural consciousness that lead to the rise of identity politics.

The "network society" conceptualization of Manuel Castells offers insight into the relation between globalization and identity politics. Economics and politics in the information age are no longer organized in a large, hierarchical, bureaucratic manner, but in loosely structured, horizontal networks. In addition to a technological revolution and the globalization of economy, the expression of cultural identities that challenge cosmopolitanism is also a component of the network society.[3] Thus, religious or ethnic identities provide alternatives for the construction of the meaning of the world for the majority of people who are economically excluded from globalization.[4]

---

2   Roland Robertson, "An Introduction Glocalization" in *Global Modernities*, (eds.) Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

3   Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publications, 2004), 1-2.

4   Ibid., 68.

The relation between identity politics and globalization may be elaborated through the concepts of flexible or post-Fordist production, which assume the fragmentation of the Fordist assembly line into small-batch production, as well as the geographical segmentation of production all over the world. The labor market and industrial organization underwent radical changes under the conditions of post-Fordist production. Flexible labor markets not only mean insecure employment, but also attach immigrants and marginalized groups to the flexible production process under by means of sub-contracting organizations. These sweetshops, which are based on the labor-intensive manufacturing and exploitation of household labor, not only create an "independent proletariat" in the form of small entrepreneurs, but also undermine traditional labor unions and class-based politics.[5]

In this regard, flexible production both transnationalizes production and de-centers national boundaries that contribute to the development of local identity politics in the age of globalism. In addition to post-Fordism and globalization, the collapse of the Soviet Union as a multi-national federation not only contributed to interrogation of class politics, but also triggered ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The socio-economic environment shaped by globalization, post-Fordism, and demise of the Soviet Union lead to the development of postmodern philosophy which enabled the shift of policymaking processes from economics to culture.

Postmodernism can be assessed as an objection to the abstractions of modernist ideology. It not only deconstructs the uniformity and homogeneity of modernity, but also reveals multivocal, heterogeneous, and porous identities and meanings. Liberty, equality, and brotherhood as slogans of modernism are replaced by liberty, diversity, and tolerance in the postmodern age. Diversity, in particular, becomes the keyword of postmodernism.[6]

---

5   David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 152-153.

6   Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernlik ve Müphemlik*, trans. İsmail Türkmen (Istanbul: Ayrıntı, 2003), 131.

Huyysen suggests that due to the natural ambiguity of the concept, chewing on the notion of postmodernism is more instrumental than offering a theory of postmodernism.[7] Accordingly, different writers deal with various reflections of that ambiguous conceptualization. A detailed analysis of the postmodernism is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but this section deals with how postmodern epistemology paves the way for the politicization of cultural identities. In this respect, two tendencies come into prominence while evaluating the concept of postmodernity. One equates postmodernism to a new phase of capitalist production. The other establishes a connection between the disillusionment of social movements and the rise of postmodern epistemology.

Although postmodernism criticizes modernity, it does not problematize capitalist production. David Harvey examines the relation between postmodernism and the capitalist accumulation process, asserting that postmodernism is capitalism under the conditions of post-Fordist economic production.[8] Frederic Jameson also deals with the correlation between the cultural logic of postmodernism and capitalist production. He correlates the emergence of a new type of culture or social life with a new economic order. He assesses postmodernism as the "cultural logic of the late capitalism."[9] Jameson underscores the fragmentation of the postmodern cultural atmosphere through linguistics and states that each group tends to speak a curious, private language of its own.[10] Specifically, the cultural fragmentation of postmodern society gives insight into the rise of identity politics.

In addition to literature on the relation between postmodernism and capitalist production, another literature deals with the relationship between postmodernism and social movements. This literature associates the postmodernism with the despair of a disillusioned generation of ex-revolutionary intellectuals. According to Alex Callinicos, postmodernism is the reflection of

---

7   Andreas Huyssen, "Mapping the Postmodern," *New German Critique* 33 (1984): 39.

8   Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity.*

9   Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991).

10 Frederic Jameson, "Post-Modernism and Consumer Society" in *Postmodern Culture*, (ed.) Hal Foster, (London and Sydney, 1985), 114.

the defeat of the revolutionary generation of '1968 and the incorporation of many members into the new professional and managerial new middle class.[11]

Like Callinicos, Terry Eaglaton searches for the beginnings of postmodernism in the defeat of the political left.[12] Eagleton assesses postmodernism as a style of thought that is suspicious of classical notions of truth, reason, and objectivity. It sees the world as contingent, diverse, unstable, and indeterminate. Following Jameson and Harvey, he states the postmodernism is the new form of capitalism:

> It springs from an historic shift in the West to a new form of capitalism, to the ephemeral, decentralized world of the technology, consumerism and the culture industry in which the service, finance and information industries triumph over traditional manufacture, and classical class politics yield ground to a diffuse range of identity politics.[13]

The literature that assesses postmodernism as capitalism without modernity as well as the studies that evaluate postmodernism in relation to the disillusionment of ex-revolutionary generation agree on a correlation between identity politics and postmodern epistemology. In fact, this correlation can be followed through studies that speak for postmodernism.

Jean-François Lyotard, who introduced the phrase postmodernism to the broader public, defines the term as incredulity towards metanarratives.[14] In Lyotard's sense, postmodernism - as a rejection to the universal, foundational theories - attracts attention to differences among the plurality. In this regard, after the "declaration of the demise of metanarrative," Lyotard turns to issues of cultural politics, believing that the promotion of cultural diversity is the antidote to the universalistic metanarrative, which he labels as cultural imperialism or totalitarianism.[15]

---

11 Alex Callinicos, *Against Postmodernism: a Marxist Critique* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 168

12 Terry Eaglaton, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 1.

13 Ibid., vii.

14 Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiv.

15 Steven Connor, *Postmodern Culture* (New York: B. Blackwell, 1989), 37.

In parallel, Vattimo asserts that the collapse of the idea of a central rationale of history derived from a universal reality paves the way for the liberation of differences. Thus, the postmodern experience of emancipation means to live in a multicultural world that recognizes opportunities to be different.[16] In this regard, postmodernism pays special attention to the particularism of culture in order to deconstruct universalist metanarratives. Jameson states that postmodernism implies the "prodigious expansion of culture throughout the social realm," which is equivalent to the politicization of culture.[17]

In this regard, the opposition of postmodernist discourse to grand narratives leads to the development of micro-politics that is to say the displacement of class-based politics with culture.[18] It also refers to a shift from social class-based economic politics to recognition-oriented cultural politics. In this regard, cultural, ethnic, religious, and sexual identities have become the area of politics instead of class.[19] Postmodern theory articulates the specificity of marginalized groups and valorizes their differences from dominant groups. Thus, political demands are based on the cultural identity of mistreated groups.

The language of politics shifts from socio-economic conditions to culture in order to pluralize the policy making process under the conditions of postmodernity. Postmodern politics could be theorized under the concept of a "politics of difference," a project of building new political groups under categories neglected in modern politics such as, race, gender, sexual preference, and ethnicity. Identity politics mobilizes constituents based on the construction of political and cultural identities through political struggles and commitments.[20]

As a result of the transformed language of politics, the policy making process shifted from economic class to ethnic, religious, cultural, and sexual identities in the 1990s. Thus, ethno-regional independence movements in North

---

16 Gianni Vattimo, *Transparent Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 9.

17 Bary Smart, "Postmodern Social Theory," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, (ed.) Bryan S. Turner (Massachussets: Blackwell, 1996), 419.

18 Terry Eagleton, *Kuramdan Sonra*, trans. Uygar Abacı (Istanbul: Literatür, 2004), 46.

19 Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1992), 197.

20 Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1991), 205.

Ireland, Quebec, the Basque Country and Catalonia; nationalist movements in the Balkans and the Caucasus following the collapse of the Soviet Union; and social movements for racial and gender equality played vital roles in world politics in the 1980s and1990s.[21]

In this context, identity politics refers to the existence of an independent culture that determines a political movement. Because culture provides (1) a context of choice within which individuals exercise their freedom, (2) self-respect that adds meaning to culturally-determined choices, and (3) social security, being culturally recognized becomes a necessary condition for attaining undistorted subjectivity and full participation in socio-political life.[22]

The politicization of culture not only reveals the cultural heterogeneity of modern societies, but also brings forward ethnic, religious, and linguistic minority questions. Thus, the formative role of culture for the policymaking process cast doubt on liberal principles: the difference-blind premises of liberalism are inadequate to handle the problems of newly politicized cultural groups. How can liberalism solve demands for self-government by national minorities or demands for special representation by ethnic and religious groups?[23]

As a consequence of the criticism of political liberalism stemming from increased attention to identity, multiculturalism remedies the insufficiency of liberalism to address the problems of cultural groups. To wit, the next section examines the basic premises of multiculturalism through its prominent proponents.

---

21 Anthony Simon Laden and David Owen, "Introduction" in *Multiculturalism and Political Theory,* (eds.) Anthony Simon Laden and David Owen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 6.

22 Amy Gutman, *Identity in Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 41-42.

23 Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, "Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies: Issues, Contexts, Concepts" in *Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies*, (ed.) Will Kymlicka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3-5.

§ 2.2 Multiculturalism as a Critique of Political Liberalism & the Liberal Counterattack on the Premises of Multiculturalism

The basic principles of multiculturalism can be analyzed along three dimensions. First, all human beings grow up and live in a culturally structured world. They organize their lives and social relations according to their culture. Second, different cultures represent different systems of meaning and different visions. Third, all cultures are in a permanent, interrelational conversation with other cultures.[24] Thus, in a multicultural perspective, people can only define themselves with reference to a culture and develop themselves relation to others on the basis of their cultural identity. Because of the formative role of culture, people only exist when their cultural identity are recognized. Thus, multiculturalism consists of a wider struggle for the recognition of identity-related differences, which assumes the cultural recognition of all persons.

Charles Taylor's comprehensive article on the politics of recognition plays a crucial role for arguments on multiculturalism. Taylor claims that the history of liberal-capitalist societies is the history of the struggle for legal equality; today, however, social groups demand recognition of their culturally defined differences. Taylor establishes a strict link between identity and demands for recognition. He assesses identity as a basic need of human being that determines their characteristics. Due to the dialogical characteristics of identity, which rest on a relation to the other, the formation of identity depends on its recognition.[25] In other words, Taylor believes that individuals' social existence requires their cultural recognition. Therefore, he evaluates cultural recognition as a prerequisite for sociality of an individual. In this regard, Taylor formulates the conceptualization of "equal recognition" or "politics of difference" which assumes that a democratic state should not only promote the cultural pluralism, but also undertake the mission of sustaining cultural diversity by recognizing equal value of the different cultures.[26]

---

24   Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 336-337.

25   Charles Taylor, "Multiculturalism, Examining the Politics of Recognition" in Multiculturalism, (ed.) Amy Gutmann (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 34.

26   Ibid., 64.

Charles Taylor's concept of "politics of difference" paves the way for the promotion of cultural difference as a means to attain equality. In addition to the equality, justice appears another conceptual key linking democratic demands with cultural recognition. In this regard, Iris Marion Young is an influential philosopher who supports the politics of difference within the framework of justice. She believes that the conception of justice should begin by addressing different forms of domination and oppression rather than economic distribution.[27] In this regard, Young claims that the persons who are in disadvantageous position at the point of expressing themselves as they wish suffer from the injustice of the structural inequality.[28] Like Taylor, she rejects the difference-blind principle of liberalism and accuses this principle of reinforcing the injustice by universalizing dominant group norms and of reproducing the cultural singularity and structural inequalities in this way. Young claims that politics of difference, which is based on the specific representation for oppressed groups in the policymaking process, promotes justice better than universalistic principles. As she writes "equal participation and inclusion of all groups in institutions and positions is sometimes better served by differential treatment."[29]

The arguments of Taylor and Young clearly demonstrate the tension between liberalism and multiculturalism around the concepts of equality and justice. Because he attempts to formulate a theory that bridges multiculturalism and liberalism, the studies of Will Kymlicka occupy an important place within the literature on multiculturalism. Kymlicka starts with some questions that cannot be answered by traditional human rights conceptualization such as "What are the responsibilities of the minorities to integrate?" or "Should each ethnic or national group have publicly funded education in its mother tongue?" He then underscores the necessity for a new conceptualization of human rights that to meaningfully addresses minority rights.[30]

---

27 Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 7.

28 Iris Marion Young, "Structural Injustice and the Politics of Difference" in *Multiculturalism and Political Theory*, (eds.) Anthony Simon Laden and David Owen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 77.

29 Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 195.

30 Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford University Press, 1995), 4-5.

Kymlicka adapts collective group rights into liberalism on the basis of liberal conceptualizations of freedom and equality. He assumes the onerous responsibility to harmonize liberalism and multiculturalism. For Kymlicka, liberalism means individual freedom, which he equates to freedom of choice among various options. Unlike traditional liberals who focus on the relation between the individual and the state, he draws attention to the relationship between the individual, on one hand, and culture and society, on the other. In this manner, he contends that it is culture that provides people with various alternatives among which they can choose. This connection between individual choice and culture provides a liberal defense of group-differentiated minority rights.[31]

Like Young and Taylor, Kymlicka supports group-differentiated rights in the name of liberal equality. He regards culture as a basic human needs and maintains that minorities are in a disadvantageous position culturally; they live under the pressure, because the dominant cultural representations in society all reflect the culture of the majority. This prevents full participation by minority members in society. Therefore, true equality requires different treatment for different groups, namely group-differentiated rights.[32]

Kymlicka's conceptualization of "multicultural citizenship" is particularly significant, because it links the individuality of liberalism with collective rights, suggesting a liberal grounding for cultural rights. One of the most important difficulties of the reconciliation of liberalism and multiculturalism arises herein: what is to be done if the cultural rights of an illiberal group violate the basic human rights or principles of civic equality? Under this circumstance, Kymlicka argues for limiting the legitimate authority of cultural groups in order to protect the basic rights of individuals. In this context, he distinguishes between internal restrictions and external protections. While internal restrictions limit the liberties of a cultural group's members in the name of group solidarity or cultural purity, external protections refer to limits on eco-

---

31   Ibid., 80-82; 86-87.
32   Ibid., 96-101.

nomic or political power exercised by majority groups over cultural minorities.[33] Kymlicka concludes that liberals should endorse external protections that promote fairness among groups, but should reject internal restrictions, if they limit the right of group members to question traditional authority configurations.[34] Thus, he errs on the side of individual rights in the case of conflicts between culture and individual choice.

Despite Kymlicka's attempts to reconcile liberalism with multiculturalism through the conceptualization of multicultural citizenship, the majority of multiculturalists prioritize group rights when cultural values contradict basic human rights. For instance, Chandran Kukathas claims that any attempt to force minority cultures to reorganize themselves in accordance with liberal norms is intolerant and therefore illiberal. He believes that the claims of the individual and those of minority groups are accommodated by two individual rights: the rights of association and dissociation. With regard to these rights, Kukathas writes that "if members of the cultural community wish to continue to live by their beliefs, the outside community has no right to intervene to prevent those members of acting within their rights."[35]

The multicultural challenge to the premises of liberalism indicates that the multidimensional relation between freedom, equality, and culture requires a more nuanced theoretical position than Kymlicka's. The multiculturalist balance between freedom and equality is based on the free practice of culture, which provides for the equal participation of individuals in the public sphere. Thus, free practice of any culture is the prerequisite for equality among different identities. In this regard, one of the most important assumptions of multiculturalism is the emancipatory role of the culture, which provides epistemological, ontological framework for individuals. This begs some important questions: Can culture be automatically assessed as liberating? Are cultural rights upheld unconditionally even if the culture reproduces or legitimizes structural inequalities?

---

33   Ibid., 163.

34   Ibid., 83-84.

35   Chandran Kukathas, "Are There Any Cultural Rights?" *Political Theory* 20:1 (February 1992): 116.

As mentioned above, Taylor's defense of the politics of recognition stems from the dialogical characteristics of identity. Cultural recognition by others becomes a prerequisite for realizing one's desires as a fully autonomous individual. Reviewing Charles Taylor's article on the politics of recognition, Anthony Appiah rejects such a conceptualization of identity and asserts that cultural identity not only develops in dialog with other people, but is shaped by cultural institutions like religion, schools and the state. In other words, Appiah consents that individuals make their cultural choices, but do not determine the options from which they can choose.[36] This means that culture not only liberalizes the individuals, but also subordinates them to their cultural identities. Appiah elaborates the argument within the framework of distinctions between collective and personal dimension of culture. He states that the politics of recognition requires the political acknowledgment of sexual or ethnical identity, which in turn obstructs the personal dimension of ethnic or sexual identity. Therefore, the personal choices of the member of a culture are subordinated to the necessities of the collective cultural identity.[37]

Appiah underscores the conflicted relation between personal choice and collective cultural identity. According to Anne Philips, the most significant problem of multiculturalism is the tendency to assess individuals - especially those of minority groups - as driven by culture, thereby denying human agency by defining individuals through their culture. Thus, "multiculturalism appears not as a cultural liberator, but as cultural straitjacket forcing those described a members of a minority cultural group into a regime of authenticity."[38] In this usage, the notion of culture is a homogenous unit. Although multiculturalism demonstrates the cultural heterogeneity of society, it paradoxically crates discrete cultural units that impose uniformity and homogeneity on their members.[39]

---

36 K. Anthony Appiah, "Identity, Authencity, Survival: Multicultural Socities and Social Reproduction" in Multiculturalism, (ed.) Amy Gutmann (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 152-153.

37 Ibid., 163.

38 Anne Phillips, *Multiculturalism without Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 14.

39 Brian Barry, *Culture and Equality* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), 129.

It was mentioned that Taylor's "politics of recognition" promotes the recognition of cultural identities to attain equality. Baumann on the other hand, deeply criticizes multiculturalism, suggesting that it generates inequality. He states that multicultural demands are nurtured by nation states' inability to realize social integration and by normative regulation in the age of globalization. Multicultural policies meet the security needs of the individual on the basis of group (community) belonging.[40] This situation, which he defines as "the rebirth of tribalism," recasts socioeconomic inequality as the inevitable outcome of cultural differences and empowers the dominant class.[41]

In spite of Kymlicka's attempts to reconcile the two, multiculturalism is ultimately a critique of the difference-blindness of liberalism, and the most persuasive criticism of multiculturalism comes from the liberal tradition. Brian Barry, for example, strongly objects to multicultural premises. Barry demonstrates the discrepancy between egalitarian liberalism and multiculturalist demands, criticizing multiculturalism on the basis of liberal egalitarianism. According to Barry, multiculturalism derives from "the politicization of group identities, where the basis of the common identity is claimed to be cultural" and is "a political program that aims to institutionalize cultural difference by segmenting society."[42]

In contrast to Kymlicka, Barry asserts that traditional human rights include cultural rights as well. He asserts that multicultural policies of difference and recognition undermine the notion of legal, universal rights and thereby weaken the values of liberty and equality. What Barry proposes to both deal with cultural differences and not impede the cause of equality is equal treatment (equal citizenship).[43] Disadvantages should be defined in universal terms as the lack of resources, opportunities, and power. From there he arrives at the conclusion that injustices suffered by minority groups stem from the lack of these elements rather than from cultural non-recognition. The solution is the

---

40   Zygmunt Bauman, "From Equality to Multiculturalism," in *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*, (Polity Press, 2001), 98-99.

41   Zygmunt Bauman, *Postmodernity and Its Discontent* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 79.

42   Barry, *Culture and Equality*, 5.

43   Ibid., 24.

equal distribution of resources, opportunities, and power rather than recognition of the equal value of different lifestyles and conceptions of the good.[44] In this regard, Barry accuses multicultural politics of undermining the solidarity necessary for a politics of redistribution.[45] Barry's own proposal is a liberal egalitarianism boiled down to redistribution through welfare-state institutions, equal treatment, and universal rights.

Barry's criticism of the multiculturalism demonstrates the dilemma between universal rights and particularistic notions of culture. On that point, Seyla Benhabib seeks a harmony between demands for cultural diversity and principle of universal equality. She underscores that reductionist sociology of culture essentializes the idea of culture as a property of an ethnic group, reifying cultures as separate entities and overemphasizing the internal homogeneity of cultures.[46] She proposes a different kind of dialogical culture formation (different from Charles Taylor) that views "human cultures as constant creations, recreations and negotiations of imaginary boundaries between 'we' and 'other(s).' The 'other' is always both within us and is one of us."[47] Thus, her universalism on the basis of new kind of dialogical culture transcends artificially given distinctions between us and others.[48]

Specifically, Benhabib formulates three normative conditions to compensate for the deficiencies of reductionist sociologies of culture and elaborate her idea of a dialogical culture formation that harmonizes the demands of cultural pluralism and universalist deliberative democracy. These normative conditions are: (1) egalitarian reciprocity, which assumes political, economic, civil and cultural equality between majority and minority groups; (2) voluntary self-ascription, which refers to membership to a cultural, religious, or linguistic group based on choice rather than birth; and (3) freedom of exit and association, which means the freedom of individuals to exit ascriptive groups.[49] She believes these three principles reconcile demands for cultural recognition and social solidarity among various cultures on the basis of universalism.

---

44   Ibid., 266-278.

45   Ibid., 325.

46   Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 4.

47   Ibid., 8.

48   Ibid., 25.

49   Ibid., 19.

Benhabib's useful criticism of multiculturalism and her reconciliation of cultural recognition and universalism highlight the concept of citizenship. In fact, multiculturalism and citizenship have become the prominent topics concerning minority rights. On one hand, multiculturalism, which assumes the politicization of group identities, established an intellectual environment that paved the way for the politicization of cultural identities. On the other hand, the politicization of cultural identities sparked interest in the conceptualization of citizenship, which combines demands for cultural recognition and universal principles.

§ 2.3   Citizenship as a Conceptual Key for Debates on Identity

In her comprehensive study of multiculturalism, Anne Philips criticizes multiculturalism for denying human agency and defining individuals though their respective cultures. She states that a defensible multiculturalism should give human agency a more central role and dispense with strong notions of culture. Therefore she defines her conceptualization as "multiculturalism without culture."[50] Multiculturalism without culture is grounded on the rights of individuals rather than those of cultural groups. Therefore, Philips rejects multiculturalist arguments that insist on the distribution of power and authority among holistic, self-reproductive cultural groups. She writes that multiculturalism without culture…

> … is grounded in the rights and needs of citizens, not of cultures or cultural groups, with culture entering as an attribute of the individual rather than the group. What have sometimes been depicted as cultural rights are better understood as elaborations of standard citizenship rights that ought to be enjoyed by all.[51]

Phillips's criticism of group rights-based multiculturalism shifts the discussion around cultural rights from multiculturalism to the individual rights of citizens through the conceptualization of citizenship. In his classical article on citizenship, T. H. Marshall divides citizenship into three: the civil, political,

---

50   Phillips, *Multiculturalism without Culture*, 9.

51   Ibid., 162-164.

and social. The civil element consists of the rights necessary for individual freedom. The political element is the right to participate in policymaking. And the social element connotes the "whole range from the right to modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share the full in the social heritage and to live a life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society."[52] The inclusion of social rights in the scope of citizenship creates the status of universal citizenship.

For Marshall, citizenship in welfare states ensures every member of society may become a full member and participate in the common life of society. However, in current debates, Marshall's conceptualization of citizenship is criticized for not dealing with cultural rights. Because the equal participation in socio-political life - which is the core of modern citizenship - requires a consideration of cultural diversity, the conceptualization of citizenship must contain cultural rights. Therefore, recent literature on citizenship focuses on the need to revise the definition of citizenship to accommodate the socio-cultural pluralism of modern societies.[53]

In this context, Iris Young claims that the universal conception of citizenship, which has neglected group differences, reproduces the oppression of excluded cultural groups; she subsequently formulates a differentiated citizenship that "provide(s) institutionalized means for recognition and representation rights of oppressed groups." The procedures of differentiated citizenship include public funds, special quotas for representational procedures, and veto rights over specific policies.[54] While formulating the conceptualization of "multicultural citizenship," Kylimcka benefits from Young's model; however, he distinguishes among three groups and three types of group rights, which are (1) special representation rights for disadvantaged

---

52 T. H Marshall, "Citizenship and Social Class" in *Class, Citizenship and Social Development* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1965), 76- 78.

53 Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, "Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies: Issues, Contexts, Concepts," in *Citizenship in Diverse Societies*, (eds.) Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

54 Iris Marion Young, "Polity and Group Difference: A Crituque of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship," *Ethics* 99 (1989): 259-262.

groups, (2) multicultural rights for immigrant and religious groups, and (3) self-government rights for national minorities.[55]

Despite the attempts of Kymlicka and Young to pluralize citizenship within a multicultural framework, the tension between the universality of citizenship and the particularity of group identity remains. As Bryan Turner suggests, modern citizenship as a social status based on universal norms of social membership should be developed into an egalitarian pattern of cultural participation.[56] After the social dimension has been added into the rights of citizenship, Turner begs that turn our attention to the cultural dimension. In other words, the cultural rights should be added as a fourth complement of citizenship rights. Despite this insight, the vital question remains: How can the conceptualization of citizenship be differentiated without disregarding universal rights and norms?

Analyzing the relation between citizenship and identity, Engin Isin and Patricia Wood attempt to reconcile these concepts by reassessing the conceptualization of citizenship. They submit a perspective that interprets "citizenship not only as a legal and political membership in a nation-state but also as an articulating principle for recognition of group rights." To this end, they evaluate citizenship "not only as a set of legal obligations and entitlements which individuals possess by virtue of their membership in a state, but also as the practices through which individuals and groups claims new rights or struggle to expand or maintain existing rights."[57]

To formulate a theory of citizenship as both legal entitlements and rights - including cultural rights - theories of citizenship are faced with two kinds of conflicting relations: between equality and difference, on one hand, and between universalism and particularism, on the other. At this point, this section benefits from feminist citizenship perspectives, which establish a harmony between the biological differences of women and their demand for socio-cultural equality. For this reason, feminist perspectives on citizenship offer insight into

---

55   Kymlicka, *The Multicultural Citizenship*, 26-32.

56   Bryan S. Turner, "Postmodern Culture/Modern Citizens," in *The Condition of Citizenship*, (ed.) Bart van Steenbergen, (London: Sage Publications, 1994), 153.

57   Engin F. Isin and Patricia K. Wood, *Citizenship & Identity* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 4.

theories of citizenship more generally. The suggestion of equality between sexes through difference paves the way for a revaluation of citizenship on the basis of harmony between equality and difference.

Analyzing the complexity of establishing such a harmony, Anne Philips underlines "the difficulty of establishing a full equality of respect between the sexes if they continue to be markedly different in their activities and roles."[58] She then asserts that "when men and women are treated the same, it means women treated as if they were men; when men and women are treated differently, the man remains the norm against which the woman is peculiar, lacking different."[59] The dilemma between neglecting difference or reproducing inequality by means of recognizing difference is valid not only for gender equality, but also for demands for equality demands on cultural grounds. Similar to the problematic relation between the politics of difference and gender equality, cultural recognition for distinctiveness of a specific culture not only overstates the homogeneity of the culture in question but reproduces cultural inequalities. Instead, the conceptualization of egalitarian citizenship, which is open to cultural diversity, can be deliberated. In this respect, the feminist perspective on citizenship, which struggles against gender discrimination, opens new insights into a conceptualization of citizenship responsive to cultural rights.

To formulate a feminist perspective of citizenship, Ruth Lister demonstrates the misinterpretation of the binary opposition between equality and difference. She underscores that equal citizenship has to embrace difference and that difference should not be divorced from equality. After noting that the opposite of equality is not difference, but inequality, Lister proposes a gender-inclusive model of citizenship – in lieu of gender-neutral or gender-differentiated models - in order to escape the binary opposition between equality and difference. As a synthesis of gender-neutral and gender-differentiated models, gender inclusive citizenship refers to a political shift from the gendered division of labor to the conditions where men and women can both combine paid work and caring responsibilities.[60] Gender inclusive citizenship takes biological differences of the sexes into account while maintaining their equality with

---

58   Anne Phillips, *Which Equalities Matter?* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1999), 92.

59   Anne Phillips, *Democracy and Difference* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1993), 45.

60   Ruth Lister, *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives* (New York: Palgrave, 2003), 97- 101.

respect to social responsibilities in a non-essentialist sense. It is important to recognize difference not in terms of different treatment, but in terms of providing the conditions for equal participation in the public sphere. On that point, Lister underscores that gender inclusive citizenship is based on theoretical principle of differentiated universalism, which requires not only an inter-relation between equality and difference, but also a synthesis of universalism and particularism.[61]

Thus, the combination between equality and difference paves the way for reconsider the relation between universalism and particularism. A similar re-assessment of this relation opens the way for a new egalitarian citizenship that is responsive to demands for cultural recognition. In this context, the conceptualization of reflective solidarity by another feminist political scientist, Jodi Dean, paves the way for the reassessment of the mutual relation of universalism and particularism. Dean defines reflexive solidarity as "a mutual expectation of a responsible orientation to relationship." She adds that the universal underpinnings of reflexive solidarity enable rethinking of both the boundaries of communities and the demarcation between us and them. Instead of a binary dichotomy, reflective solidarity suggests a communicative "we" that recognizes the other as belonging to us. Owing to the communicative "we," reflective solidarity refers to the exclusion of exclusion. As Dean writes that reflective solidarity…

> … provides a form consideration of the other where the other is considered a member despite, indeed because of, her difference. Reflective solidarity conceives the ties connecting us as communicative and open. This openness creates a space for accountability, enabling us to grasp the ways this notion of solidarity no longer block us from difference, but instead provides a bridge between identity and universality.[62]

---

61   Ibid., 68-92.

62   Jodi Dean, *Solidarity of Strangers: Feminism after Identity Politics* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 29-30.

Thus reflective solidarity leads Dean to formulate discursive universalism, which enables a move beyond the binary opposition of universal and particular and accounts for the diversity that is always part of universality.[63]

While seeking to equilibrate biological gender differences and feminist struggle of equal rights, feminist citizenship perspectives contribute to overcoming binary opposition between equality and difference or universalism and particularism. Therefore, their theoretical debates pave the way for formulating a conceptualization of citizenship that is responsive to cultural differences. In other words, the dialectic relations between equality and difference or universalism and particularism, which are established in feminist perspectives on citizenship, are equally valid for the relationship between citizenship status and cultural rights.

To address the distinction between "we" and "us," both Benhabib and Dean underscore the communicative characteristics of "we." The term "communicative" naturally invites a reconsideration of Jürgen Habermas' conceptualization of constitutional patriotism. In addition to feminist perspectives, constitutional patriotism is another contribution to citizenship studies that is responds to demands for cultural recognition. Habermas handles the issue of cultural recognition within the context of communicative action inhibited by the boundaries of liberalism and communitarianism.[64]

Habermas argues that multiculturalists handle cultural minorities like an ecological species; in reality, cultures are not preserved by the special measures that multiculturalists suggest within the context of differentiated rights. They create ghettoization, in which participants of the culture isolate themselves from others.[65] Philosophically, Habermas asserts that because cultures are not able to reproduce themselves, they cannot be assessed as independent subjects with rights. Consequently, the demands of cultural groups cannot be met by means of collective rights.[66] His suggestion is inclusion that is responsive to

---

63   Ibid., 143.

64   Jürgen Habermas, *İletişimsel Eylem Kuramı*, trans. Mustafa Tüzel (Istanbul: Kabalcı, 2001).

65   Jürgen Habermas, "Struggles for Recognition in the Democratic Constitutional State" in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition,* (ed.) Amy Gutmann (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994).

66   Jürgen Habermas, "Kültürlere Eşit Muamele ve Postmodern Liberalizmin Sınırları," in *Doğalcılık ve Din Arasında Felsefi Denemeler*, trans. Ali Nalbant (Istanbul: YKY, 2009), 287.

differences. Theoretically, he proposes constitutional patriotism, which enables the co-existence of different cultures and ways of life.

Habermas asserts that the problems of minority groups stem from the fusion of majority culture with the general political culture, the latter of which demands recognition by all citizens regardless of their cultural background. Therefore, dissolving this bond is the only means for interaction among and coexistence of different cultural, ethnic, religious, or linguistic groups on equal terms within the same political community. Due to the fact that the political culture of a country crystallizes around constitutional principles, constitutional patriotism - which is based on various political interpretations of constitutional principles by each national culture rather than a specific nationalism - emerges as the most appropriate way to unify of political culture in the case of a multiplicity of subcultures.[67] In this regard, constitutional patriotism asks citizens to reflect critically on particular traditions and group identities in the name of shared universal principles.[68] Thus, it paves the way for the co-existence of all people with equal rights, granting every citizen the chance to grow up within their cultural heritage without suffering discrimination.

Constitutional patriotism answers the question: "How do want to live together?" within the framework of individuals recognizing each other as free and equal.[69] The constitution of constitutional patriotism does not refer to a concrete document written in a positivist manner. Rather, citizens attach themselves to the norms and values at the heart of a constitution that produces fair and democratic procedures.[70] It seeks to provide the unity of political culture in a multiplicity of subcultures. In this regard, the constitutional patriotism of Habermas not only contributes to the literature on citizenship, but also indicates a strict relation between citizenship and a constitution.

---

[67] Jürgen Habermas, "The European Nation State: On the Past and Future of Sovereignty and Citizenship," in *Inclusion of Other* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), 118.

[68] Jan-Werner Müller, *Constitutional Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 28.

[69] Ibid., 53.

[70] Ibid., 58.

The aforementioned theoretical discussions of multiculturalism and citizenship have a specific meaning for Alevi politics. Ayhan Yalçınkaya, an academician studying on Alevi identity, evaluates identity politics as a reply to the deficiencies of classical conceptualization of citizenship. He adds that identity politics as strategy of governmentality imprisons the individuals in their cultural identities. Therefore, Yalçınkaya advises Alevi associations to demand societies where being Alevi or not is irrelevant instead of liberally living the Alevi identity, which he equates with confinement to Alevi identity.[71] Independent of his recommendations, Yalçınkaya's analysis indicates the validity of debates on multiculturalism and citizenship or equality and difference for the Alevi movement.

Despite the influence of the intellectual discourse of the salience of cultural identities and multiculturalism for the politicization of Alevi identity as a social movement, the introductory chapter notes that the Alevi movement abstains from restraining Alevis to merely Alevi identities. Instead, the Alevi movement tends to participate in the political process by means of a re-conceptualizing the broader terms of citizenship. This form of politicization stems from the ambivalent characteristics of Alevi identity, the ethnic pluralism of Alevis, and their geographical distribution. Chapter 5 also discusses how massacres pave the way for Alevis to engage in universal political concepts including citizenship.

Chapter 6 demonstrates the contested domains of Alevi politics through Alevi associations. Alevi associations have not developed a monolithic attitude toward the dilemmas of multiculturalism and citizenship. Despite the absence of an Alevi association that differentiates the political demands of Alevis in the terms of multiculturalism, the work of the Cem Foundation to systematize Alevism as a monolithic culture and orthodox religious sect coincides with the political premises of multiculturalism. This attempt at systematiza-

---

71   Yalçınkaya, *Kavimkırım İkliminde Aleviler* (Ankara: Dipnot, 2014), 18-29.

tion is analyzed in Chapter 6. However, the great majority of agents of the Alevi movement formulate their political demands on the basis of a conceptualization of equal citizenship.[72]

The question then arises: Is the politicization of Alevism without specific attention to its cultural distinctiveness an anomaly? To answer this question, a different path could be followed in the analysis of the role of identity in the politicization of Alevism by evaluating the conceptualization of citizenship in this process. Whereas the above-mentioned discussions on the multiculturalism naturalizes the politicization of culture for the search for justice and equality; the other above-mentioned discussions on the citizenship demonstrates that respect to the cultural differences does not require the politicization of culture for recognition. Instead, citizenship conceptualization including cultural rights, which goes beyond artificial dichotomies between particularism and universalism or equality and difference, appears as a suitable way for unity in diversity. On one hand, this dissertation examines the capacity of cultural group rights to resolve the problems of a cultural group without a definite cultural identity; on the other, the dissertation scrutinizes the politicization of Alevism as an identity movement with reference to universal political concepts - such as citizenship and secularism - instead of cultural identity-oriented political demands.

An examination of the multidimensional politicization dynamics of the Alevi movement contributes not only to debates on identity politics, but also to theories of citizenship. The inaptness of Alevism as a resource for an independent identity movement may pave the way for the pluralization of Turkish citizenship by means of Alevi identity. Due to the Alevis' position at the threshold -their formal inclusion but de facto exclusion from beneficial citizenship rights- the Alevis' demands for equal citizenship may lead to a reformulation of Turkish citizenship along pluralistic and egalitarian lines. In other words, the ongoing failure of Alevis to organize around the premise of identity politics advances the potential of the Alevi movement for a reevaluation of

---

72   For detailed information on Alevi associations' participation in debates on citizenship, see the Alevi Bektashi Federation's booklet regarding Alevi associations' demands for equal citizenship: Alevi-Bektaşi Federasyonu, *Eşit Yurttaşlık Hakkı için Taleplerimiz ve Çözüm Önerilerimiz*, no: 4.

citizenship in Turkey. Therefore, while ostensibly concerned with an analysis of the politicization dynamics of the Alevism, this dissertation has the potential to contribute to the literature on the reappraisal of Turkish citizenship.

3

Latent Politicization of Alevism before the Age of Identity Politics: Alevis and the Politics of the Left

The politicization of Alevism as an identity movement occurred in the 1990s; however, the story of the politicization of Alevism states back to the 1960s when the first public references to Alevism in Turkish politics are found. The dissolution of traditional Alevism through the process of urbanization played a vital role in the politicization of Alevism between 1960 and 1980. Traditional Alevism, which was shaped around social relations in a closed, isolated rural society and did not require the organizational role of specialized religious authorities, eroded when Alevi villages opened to the outside as a consequence of the urbanization. The Alevi community began to integrate into urban society and come into contact with the centralized, modern government.

Between 1950 and 1980 Turkey's overall population more than doubled from 20,947,000 to 44,737,000, but the urban population grew nearly six-fold, from 3,782,000 to 20,330,000.[1] As a result of Turkey's rapid urbanization, 60 percent of the populations of Istanbul, Izmir, and Ankara were living in squatter settlements by the late 1970s.[2] Migration and urbanization provide keys for

---

1   T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Türkiye Nüfusu, 1923-1994: Demografi Yapısı ve Gelişimi* (Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, 1995), 44.

2   S. Kemal Kartal, *Türkiye'de Kentlileşme* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1983), 40.

understanding not only political mobilization, but also the qualitative transformation of the population between 1960 and 1980.

Immigrant populations lived in *gecekondu*s (squatter settlements) which did not have public utility services such as electricity and sewer systems, and which were spatially segregated from the established residential areas of the city.[3] They worked in informal, marginal sectors, which did not require a high degree of specialization or skill formation, and they were not covered by social security. The absence of job standardization and high turnover were the main characteristics of the marginal, informal sectors that employed unskilled workers in construction, repair work, or petty services.[4] The difficulty of adapting to urban society was therefore related to the physical and social marginality of immigrants.

In this context, political identity formation and action became elements of the strategies that immigrants used to overcome their marginality in cities. In his valuable field study about squatter settlements in Istanbul, Kemal Karpat writes "no other activity is as instrumental as political action in achieving the squatters' urban and national integration."[5] Karpat claims that the drastic change in migrants' living conditions psychologically mobilized them for political action that "played a major role in speeding the squatters' integration in the city by sharpening their consciousness of self, place and role in the society. It also increased their communication with city and national party leaders."[6]

What, then, were the factors that shaped the political preferences of migrants trying to survive in the cities? Certainly sense of their class, economic and occupational position, literacy, and educational backgrounds played vital roles in their political preferences. Regardless of the profound impact of socioeconomic factors on political preferences, migrants' political positions cannot

---

3   Yakut Sencer, *Türkiye'de Kentleşme* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1979), 123-124.

4   Tansı Şenyapılı, "Gecekonduların Ekonomik Profili" in *Kentsel Bütünleşme,* (ed.) Türköz Erder (Ankara: Türkiye Geliştirme Araştırma Vakfı Yayınları, 1982), 107.

5   Kemal Karpat, *The Gecekondu: The Rural Migration and Urbanization* (London: Cambridge, 1976), 196.

6   Kemal Karpat, "The Politics of Transition: Political Attitudes and Party Affiliation in the Turkish Gecekondu" in *Political Participation in Turkey,* (eds.) Engin D. Akarlı and Gabriel-Ben Dor (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Publications, 1975), 117.

be explained solely by class positions since they supported a variety of different political movements in the 1970s, in spite of the similarity of their social backgrounds and life conditions.

The foundation of urban migrants' political preferences follows from their primordial ties of kinship and *hemşehri* (fellow townsman) relations and sectarian identity. Since group solidarity is crucial for the urban newcomer, traditional sectarian identities as a source of social solidarity can be regarded as one of the factors that determine the political positions of urban migrants. As Sami Zubaida writes

> Political forces are constituted from social solidarities, whether of community or of class. These solidarities are social process presented as givens to the political sphere… The constitution of political forces relates to various and shifting bases of social solidarities, but, crucially these varieties and shifts often result from changes in political and economic conjuncture, including state structure and policies.[7]

In the urban environment in Turkey, the role of class-consciousness and community bonding in urban squatter settlements are influenced by religious orthodoxy and heterodoxy. As Dubetsky argues in a study conducted in a *gecekondu* neighborhood in Istanbul in 1970, this differentiation manifests itself in the antagonism between Alevis and Sunnis and influences political preferences, as well. Sunnis in the settlement, whether worker or management, supported the Justice Party; the Alevis tended to vote for the Republican People's Party, the Unity Party or to a lesser extent, the Worker Party of Turkey.[8] In accordance with the survey by Dubetsky, squatter settlements formed by Alevis - such as Gazi, 1 Mayıs, Gülsuyu and Nurtepe - were the liberated areas of leftist politics in the 1970s.

---

7   Sami Zubaida, "Class and Community in Urban Politics" in *Islam, the People and the State* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1993), 87.

8   A. Dubetsky, "Class and Community in Urban Turkey" in *Commoners, Climbers and Notables*, (ed.) C.A.O. Van Nieuwenhuijze (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 362 -369.

When Zubaida evaluates the affiliation between Iraqi Shiites and the Iraq Communist Party, he notes that the political culture of a community may become an important component in the constitution of political forces at particular historical conjunctures.[9] From this perspective, it can be asserted that the socio-political culture of Alevism and the political needs of the leftist movements overlapped in the historical conjectures of the 1960s and 1970s, which were shaped by urbanization and the dismantling of traditional Alevism.

In the introductory chapter, it was mentioned that the Babai Revolt, Sheikh Bedreddin Revolt and Kızılbaş revolts of the sixteenth century played vital roles in the formation of Alevi cosmology. Differently from Orthodox, Sunni theology, the development of Alevi cosmology occurred hand-in-hand with political rebellions; that is to say the politics played a foundational role in the constitution of Alevi cosmology. After the bloody suppression of the Kızılbaş revolts of the sixteenth century, Alevi communities isolated themselves from central authorities for a long period and formed an autonomous social system in their isolated, rural areas. The dearth of a central authority was filled by a communal order under the authority of the Alevi *dedes*.[10]

The separate autonomous social organization of traditional Alevism was a consequence of the political persecutions. Therefore, when political pressure on the Alevi community loosened as a result of the secularist policies of new republic, the semi-closed life of traditional Alevism gradually started to erode. In addition to secular policies, the introduction of compulsory schooling also opened up the Alevi community to the outside world. Concordantly, the influence of the communal order over individuals in the community started to decrease in a process described by Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi as the "structural secularism of the Alevism."[11] This process accelerated with migration from rural to urban areas in the 1960s and 1970s.

Comparing traditional Alevi and Sunni villages, David Shankland asserts that traditional Sunni village-state relations and the traditional social order

---

9   Zubaida, "Class and Community in Urban Politics," 94.

10   For a more detailed information on the social mechanisms of the traditional Alevi order, see Doç. Dr. Bedri Noyan (Dedebaba), *Bektaşilik-Alevilik Nedir*? (Istanbul: Ant; Can, 1995).

11   Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, *Kızılbaş/Aleviler*, trans. Oktay Değirmenci and Bilge Ege Aybudak (Istanbul: Ayrıntı, 2012), 62.

within Sunni villages were compatible with the centralized, modern state. On the other hand, Alevis could not so easily integrate into the modern state; indeed, the very existence of the social order of traditional Alevism kept Alevis from establishing direct relations with the state.[12] The urbanization process, which dissolved the traditional order of Alevism, entailed the integration of Alevism not only to urban areas, but to the centralized state apparatus.

In this context, urbanization not only opened Alevi villages to the outside world and created an integration problem for Alevi migrants to the urban sphere, but also dissolved traditional Alevism that had been based on the isolated rural life. Thus, urbanization triggered an identity crisis among Alevis through their active inclusion into socio-economic life. This chapter asserts that the politics of left compensated for the erosion of traditional Alevism between 1960 and 1980. In this regard, leftist politics, which became influential for policymaking in the period, enabled Alevis to integrate into urban areas and into Turkey's politics during a process of dissolution of traditional Alevism.

The roles aforementioned revolts for Alevi cosmology suggest that political opposition is a formative characteristic of Alevi culture. This historical premise does not suggest that the notion political opposition is inherently embedded within Alevism; it asserts only that socio-political revolts have played a crucial role in its historical development. These oppositional characteristics are only available for the policy making process under particular socio-political conjunctures, which were experienced in the 1970s. These socio-political conjectures were shaped by the correspondence of the dissolution of the traditional Alevism and the rise of a socialist movement between 1960 and 1980.

Support of Alevis for the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi – CHP*) was another dimension of relation between Alevis and the politics of the left. In this respect, the 1970s were the golden years for the affiliation between Alevis and the CHP. Alevis were relatively pleased with the secularist policies of the early Republican period, which provided a secure environment to Alevis through the check on the legal institutionalization and day-to-day influence of Sunni Islam. This became the main dynamic of their close relation

---

12   David Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 5.

to the CHP. However, this historical satisfaction was galvanized by the ideological transformation of the CHP under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit whose populist discourse attracted the attention of Alevis in the 1970s.

In fact, there is a tension between the role of the CHP in forming the state and the anti-establishment socialist movement. However, following the advent of Nationalist Front[13] in the second half of the 1970s approximated the CHP to socialist movement and the socialist movements to the CHP through the lenses of Alevis. Given that the weakening of the CHP's resulted in a power grab by Nationalist Front governments in second half of the 1970s, the tension between the CHP and socialist movements were reigned in.

In this context, the period between 1960 and 1980 witnessed the politicization of Alevism through Alevis' relations to leftist politics. Alevi identity contributed to Alevis' choices to affiliate with leftist politics; however, they did not position themselves in leftist politics as Alevis. In other words, their Aleviness was assimilated into the leftist identity. Therefore, the politicization of Alevism in the 1970s refers not to the politicization of Alevism as an identity, but to the politicization of individual Alevis. Therefore, it can be called the "latent politicization of Alevism" which is radically different from the Alevi identity movement of the 1990s.

This chapter scrutinizes the latent politicization dynamics of Alevism before the age of identity politics within the framework relation between Alevis and the leftist politics. This relation is investigated in two dimensions. On one hand, Alevis' relation to the CHP on the basis of satisfaction with secularist policies of the early Republican governments and the populist discourse of Bülent Ecevit is discussed. On the other, the affiliation between Alevis and

---

13   National Front governments refer to a series governments formed by right wing political parties of the 1970s. The First National Front was formed by the Justice Party, National Salvation Party, Nationalist Action Party, and Republican Reliance Party between 1975 and 1977. The Second National Front was formed by the Justice Party, National Salvation Party, and Nationalist Action Party between 1977 and 1978. Because the Justice Party required the militancy of the National Salvation Party and Nationalist Action Party against left wing movements, these parties wielded disproportionate influence in the governments of the period. Their extreme right political positions and disproportionate administrative influence led to the increase in political violence and polarization in the late 1970s.

socialist movements is examined through the overlap between historical oppression of Alevism by political authorities and the actual needs of socialist movements. Furthermore, the Unity Party of Turkey (*Türkiye Birlik Partisi –* TBP) - which addressed to the Alevi community - and Alevis' indifference to the TBP is examined in the course of analyzing the dynamics of the latent politicization of Alevis before the age of identity politics.

§ 3.1 Alevism in Political Space: The Unity Party of Turkey

Alevis firstly appeared in the public sphere as Alevis in the 1960s. In addition to urbanization, two important political phenomena nurtured Alevis' politicization: the establishment of the multi-party system and the 1961 constitution.[14] Alevism entered the political agenda when the potential of the Alevi community as voters was recognized in the framework of a multi-party political regime. Furthermore, many of Turkey's hitherto neglected political problems were addressed in a politically liberal atmosphere shaped by the 1961 constitution, and the Alevi issue was one.

In 1963, Cemal Gürsel, who was president of the Turkish Republic, invited Alevis to participate in debates about the formation of the Office of Religious Sects *(Mezhepler Bürosu)* under control of the Directorate of Religious Affairs. The issue of Alevism thus became formally acknowledged for the first time. After an attack by rightist media on the proposal to represent Alevism under the auspices of the directorate, sixty Alevi university students made a declaration that they signed: "Alevi Turks." The result of these developments was the appearance of "Alevism" in public debates. In 1963, the Tourism and Publicity Association of Hacıbektaş *(Hacıbektaş Turizm ve Tanıtma Derneği)* performed a public *cem* prayer in Ankara for the first time. Moreover, periodicals like *Cem* and *Ehl-i Beyt*, which were first published in the 1960s, indicated the development of an "Alevi" public opinion.[15]

The public appearance of Alevism and the Ortaca incident triggered debates on the formation of an Alevi party in 1966. The incident was a series of

---

14   Massicard, *Türkiye'den Avrupa'ya Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, 54-56.

15   Necdet Saraç, *Alevilerin Siyasi Tarihi 1300-1971* (Istanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 2011), 346-356.

violent, sectarian clashes triggered by a conflict over land between Alevi Feyziye and Sunni Kızılyurt villages in the province of Muğla. The violence continued between 5 June and 17 June 1966 resulting in one death and seven wounded.[16] In her monograph of the Unity Party of Turkey, Kelime Ata asserts that the response of left-wing parties to the Ortaca incident did not meet with the expectations of the Alevi community. The Workers Party of Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi* – TİP) assessed the incident on the basis of class analysis, pointing out that to divide people according to sect would only benefit the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, İsmet İnönü, who was the leader of the CHP, believed that the conflict between Alevis and Sunnis had been surmounted by the secularist policies of the republic. Which is to say, both of parties avoided assessing the Ortaca incident as a clash between religious sects; so the Alevi community felt abandoned by both the TİP and CHP.[17] The Ortaca incident contributed to the formation of the Unity Party (of Turkey), and highlighted the relationship between the politicization dynamics of Alevism and massacres. As such, this development in the 1960s parallels the formation of another Alevi party in the 1990s, as it is later discussed with respect to the Sivas Massacre of 1993 and the Gazi Events of 1995.

The public appearance of Alevism paved the way for the formation of the Unity Party (of Turkey) the ideological position of which as an Alevi party was consolidated by the Ortaca incident. Although the party was not initially intended to support a social or political order on basis of the Alevi traditions, its discourse clearly addressed Alevis. The party emblem, which consisted of a lion in the middle of twelve stars, revealed its ideological outlook: the twelve stars symbolized twelve imams and the lion as Hadrat Ali in accordance with Alevi tradition. The political history of the Unity Party (of Turkey) deserves to be examined, because its political failure exposes the limits of the latent politicization of Alevism in the 1960 and 1970s.

The political development of the Unity Party (of Turkey) was not monolithic. Two radically different ideological positions are manifest in the political history of the party. Although the Unity Party was formed as centrist party, it

---

16   "Ortaca'da Alevilerin Ekonomik Düzeni Sünnilerden Çok Daha İyi," *Milliyet*, 19. 06. 1966, 3.

17   Kelime Ata, *Alevilerin İlk Siyasal Denemesi: (Türkiye) Birlik Partisi 1966-1980* (Ankara: Kelime Yayınevi, 2007), 52-55.

transformed into a social democrat party under the leadership of Mustafa Timisi. This section therefore scrutinizes the political history of the party along two lines. Firstly, the centrist party position of the Unity Party is analyzed. Then its ideological transformation into a social democrat party is investigated. The ideological transformation of the party coincided with a name change from the Unity Party (*Birlik Partisi* – BP) to the Unity Party of Turkey (*Türkiye Birlik Partisi* – TBP) in the third party convention held in 1971, so the name as the Unity Party of Turkey is used in the second part of the section.

3.1.1   *The Unity Party as a Centrist Party*

The Unity Party was a centrist party from 1966 to 1969 until the leadership of Timisi. In terms of the economy the BP accepted a mixed model with a balance between the private and public sectors under the direction of the State Planning Office (*Devlet Planlama Teskilatı* - DPT). The party's foreign policy was based on national sovereignty and the establishment of peaceful relations with all countries - regardless of their respective ideological outlooks - following Atatürk's principle, "peace in the country, peace in the world" ("*Yurtta sulh, cihanda sulh*").[18]

Due to the fact that the founders of the BP were Alevis and used the symbols associated with Alevism, it was regarded as an Alevi party. Moreover, articles in the party platform on the freedom of conscience triggered its label as Alevi. Article 24 of the party's platform declared that the language for worship and religious education should be Turkish. Article 25 avowed that the Directorate of Religious Affairs should include all of Turkey's religions and sects. Article 27 stated that discrimination in religious education would be brought to an end and religious education would not be executed under the hegemony of any religious sect.[19]

The party's first chairman, Hasan Tahsin Berkman, was a retired general from a right-wing political tradition.[20] His leadership became contentious

---

18   *Birlik Partisi Tüzük ve Programı* (Istanbul: TİPO Neşriyat ve Basımevi, 1969), 61-64.

19   Ibid., 5.

20   Berkman was the Çorum candidate of the Republican Peasant's Nation Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi* – CKMP) in 1961 Senate election.

when he underscored the importance of Turkey's NATO membership vis-à-vis the threat of the Cold War Soviet Union. The left-wing members of the party contested Berkman's anti-Soviet stance, and he was forced to resign. After the resignation, Berkman and Hüseyin Balan ran for the leadership of the party, and Balan won.[21]

Hüseyin Balan was also a right-wing politician of the Nation Party who was elected deputy for Ankara in the 1965 election. When leaders of the Unity Party resolved to consolidate Alevi deputies from other parties in order to have a presence in the assembly, Hüseyin Balan and Yusuf Ulusoy (the Nation Party's deputy from Amasya) transferred to the Unity Party. After his transfer, Balan was elected chairman the same year.[22]

The 1969 general election was the first in which the BP participated under Balan's leadership. The candidate list of the party clearly reflected the party's Alevi makeup. There were four candidates from the Ulusoy family, which is the *postnişin* (religious leader) of the Dedegan Branch of the Bektashi order. Moreover, two members of Doğan family, an influential lineage of *ded*e in the Malatya region, were among BP's candidates.[23]

In the 1969 elections, the Unity Party participated in 29 provinces and gained the 2.8 percent of the total votes, and held eight seats. The deputies and their respective provinces were: Kazım Ulusoy (Amasya), Yusuf Ulusoy (Tokat), Ali Naki Ulusoy (Çorum), Haydar Ozdemir (Istanbul), Sami İlhan (Malatya), Hüseyin Balan (Ankara), Mustafa Timisi (Sivas) and Hüseyin Çınar (Sivas).[24] The election results suggested that the party's relation to traditional Alevi elites directly determined its election performance. Three deputies of the BP came from the Ulusoy family. Moreover, the party's votes in Amasya (23.6%), Tokat (17.7%), Çorum (16.9%), and Malatya (11.7%) - where the BP relied on its relations with traditional Alevi elites - were high above its overall, national performance.

---

21   *Cem* 11 (1 February 1967): 11, 18.

22   *Cem* 14 (15 April 1967): 13-15.

23   The candidates from the Ulusoy family were Kazım Ulusoy (Amasya), Cemalettin Ulusoy (Yozgat) Ali Naki Ulusoy (Çorum) and Yusuf Ulusoy (Tokat). The candidates from the Doğan family were Kazım Doğan (Maraş) and Enver Doğan (Adıyaman). See, Ata, *Alevilerin İlk Siyasal Denemesi: (Türkiye) Birlik Partisi 1966-1980*, 167-171.

24   *12 Ekim 1969 Milletvekili Genel Sonuçları* (Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, 1970), ix-x.

The election results suggested that the BP as a centrist party did not develop a successful ideological or political discourse during the election campaign. It managed only to mobilize traditional relations with Alevi religious leaders instead of pursuing a sociologically based constituency. Despite the eight seats one in the parliament obtained, the results were a great disappointment for party leaders. The party was not able to establish a group presence in parliament. As a consequence, disquiet arose, which was revealed at the party convention held on 23-24 November 1969.[25] There were two candidates for leadership: Mustafa Timisi and Hüseyin Balan. The election of Timisi not only indicated a change in leadership, but also portended an ideological transformation of the Unity Party. Timisi would move the party radically to the left.

3.1.2   *The Unity Party of Turkey as a Social Democrat Party*

The expulsion of the Ulusoy family from the party played a significant role in the BP's move to the left. Because the budget of the Justice Party government was not approved by parliament in 1970, Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel resigned. He was then tasked with again forming a new cabinet; however, he required support of deputies outside of his party to overcome opposition to his leadership within the Justice Party.[26] In this political context, five BP deputies passed a vote of confidence for Demirel's new cabinet despite a decision by the BP's General Executive Council's against it.[27] Deputies who gave a vote of confidence to the government declared that they opposed the BP's move to the left,[28] clearly indicating that these votes were the reactions against the BP's move to the left under the leadership of Timisi. The BP's discipline committee expelled these deputies from the party for having violated party discipline on 28 March 1970.[29]

That decision was an important breaking point in the political life of the party. The expulsion those from of the right wing of the BP accelerated its

---

25   Ata, *Alevilerin İlk Siyasal Denemesi: (Türkiye) Birlik Partisi 1966-1980*, 182.

26   Tanel Demirel, *Adalet Partisi: İdeoloji ve Politika* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 51-62.

27   These deputies were Hüseyin Balan, Hüseyin Çınar, Kazım Ulusoy, Yusuf Ulusoy and Ali Naki Ulusoy.

28   "Beyaz Oy Veren BP Milletvekilleri Haysiyet Divanında," *Milliyet*, 17. 03.1970, 11.

29   "Beş Milletvekili BP'den Çıkarıldı," *Milliyet*, 29.03.1970, 1.

move to the left. More importantly, the expulsion of the Ulusoy family meant that relations between the party and the traditional Alevi elites were severed. Therefore, party politics came to be base on an ideological position rather than the mobilization of traditional relations and religious leaders of the Alevis.

Because the party's ideological transformation coincided with a change in name, the party is henceforth called as the Unity Party of Turkey (TBP). More-over, the centrist platform of the BP and the social democrat stance of the TBP is compared.

The party's move to the left can be followed in the framework of a revised party program and its new "twelve principles." The party's economic policy was again based on a mixed economy under the direction of the State Planning Office; however, the social dimension of economic policies was highlighted. The party emphasized the role of labor unions and assumed the active partic-ipation of workers in economic policymaking through a conceptualization of "economic democracy."[30] Similar to the BP, the foreign policy of the TBP was based on Atatürk's "peace in the country, peace in the world" discourse; how-ever, the TBP interpreted this principle in a radically different way from the BP. The party program stated that the TBP opposed all kinds of imperialism and supported the anti-imperialist struggles of Third World countries.[31] Alt-hough articles of the party program regarding secularism were not revised, the TBP's approach toward the Directorate of Religious Affairs changed. While the BP declared that the directorate should include all religions and sects in Turkey, the new program of the TBP stated that a secular republic should not include religious institutions like the Directorate of Religious Af-fairs, and that it should be abolished.[32]

The twelve principles of the TBP, which were first cited in the 1973 elec-tions, indicated its new ideological premises and democratic left characteris-tics. They were revolutionism, political system for the welfare of the whole of society (*toplumculuk)*, Kemalism, democracy, populism, statism, republican-ism, full independence, political freedom (*özgürlükçülük*), laicism, equality, and patriotism. Due to the fact they were used for the 1977 election and added

---

30 *Türkiye Birlik Partisi Tüzük ve Programı* (Ankara: Gütenberg Matbaası, 1972), 66-67.

31 Ibid., 58.

32 Ibid., 57.

into the party program in 1980, their analysis indicates the ideological transformation of the TBP clearly.

Under the principle of revolutionism, it was asserted that the TBP was different from bourgeois parties - which held to capitalist modes of production - and from social democratic parties - which aimed to moderate capitalism with reform. The TBP's revolutionist stance had, economic and social dimensions. On the economic dimension, the TBP supported a more advanced mode of production to be established through democratic revolution. On the social dimension, it supported a people's democracy based on the power of workers and farmers. The populism principle meant the "fight for people's democracy with the people."[33]

The principle of supporting a political system for the welfare of the whole of society implied a social establishment in which people are not exploited by others. In the party program, Kemalism is regarded as permanent revolution and national independence. The party assumed that the core tenets of democracy are general elections, latitude of thought, and freedom of association. The principle of Turkey's full independence signified independence from imperialism; that is to say, Turkey should favor of non-aligned countries and should resign from international organizations like NATO and CENTO that undermined its independence.[34]

It was clear that the TBP's new ideological leanings, which materialized with the twelve principles, were more leftist than the BP's political outlook. While the BP defined itself as a centrist party, the TBP claimed that it was a democratic left party. Although both advocated mixed economies, the role of the state and its social functions stood out in the platform of the TBP. In foreign policy, establishing peaceful relations with all countries was substituted with a policy based on full, political independence. Furthermore, the TBP supported a more militant secularism, including the abolition of the Directorate of Religious Affairs instead of merely making it serve all religions and sects equally.

---

33   *Türkiye Birlik Partisi Program ve Tüzüğü* (Istanbul: Zafer Matbaacılık, 1980), 76-80.

34   Ibid., 85-91.

The ideological stance of the TBP was based on a perception of antagonistic relations among social class. The differences between bourgeois and socialist notions of democracy and freedom were highlighted, and the party frequently used Marxist methods of analysis to explain prevailing conditions in the country. Although the BP analyzed the problems of Turkey with reference to a lack of foresight by existing political parties, the TBP focused on the social system proper.

The TBP took part in 1973 elections with this ideological stance. Moreover, it formed an alliance with Mehmet Ali Aybar and his friends of the TİP, which had been closed. The parties agreed that Aybar and his eight colleagues would stand as candidates of the TBP in the 1973 election. After the election, the parties to the alliance would independently pursue their political activities in the assembly.[35] The result of the election was a great disappointment. It won 1.1 percent of the votes and only one seat. The only deputy of the party, from Sivas, was Mustafa Timisi himself.[36]

Votes for the TBP decreased in Amasya from 23.6% to 5.1 %, in Çorum from 16.9% to 2.7%, in Erzincan from 13.1% to 2.9%, in Malatya from 11.7% to 1.8%, in Maraş from 6.2% to 1.8%, and in Tokat from 17.7% to 7.0%. The party's loss of votes in provinces where members of the Ulusoy family had been elected in the 1969 election was particularly dramatic. As a result of the resignation of the Ulusoy family and the TBP's move to the left under the leadership of Timisi, the party lost the ability to represent the traditional Alevi community.

The TBP's move to the left broke its relations with traditional Alevi elites. The Alevi dedes were unhappy with the leftist ideological premises of the TBP, since socialist activists charged the *dedelik* institution with exploiting society as an agency of feudal relations. Nevertheless, the TBP's move to the left was paralleled developments within the Alevi community, which would increasingly support left-wing political parties and socialist organizations in the 1970s. However, political conjectures did not allow the TBP to benefit from the leftward move. The Republican People's Party had also moved to the left

---

35 "Aybar: Seçimden Sonra Bağımsız Bir Parti Kuracağız,"*Milliyet*, 21.09.1973, 1.

36 *14 Ekim 1973 Milletvekili Seçim Sonuçları* (Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1974), 6-7.

under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit, and the social democrat (or democratic left) voters came together under the CHP. At the same time, some socialist Alevis regarded the TBP as a reformist, sectarian party and chose to participate in more radical socialist movements. Therefore, the TBP's move to the left was unsuccessful; on the contrary, the party became weaker as it lost the support of traditional Alevi elites.

Despite the loss of votes, the TBP's leftist stance and its twelve principles did not change in the 1970s. Its election campaign for the 1977 elections was based on the twelve principles, as well. The TBP defined itself "as the revolutionary and patriotic organization of the people who seek to come to power through democratic ways" during the campaign;[37] however, the election result was again a disappointment for. It garnered only 0.4 percent of the total votes and no seats in the assembly.[38]

After the 1977 election, the TBP moved even further to the left to distinguish itself from Ecevit's framing of the democratic left. Timisi accused the CHP of having become a political organization of the capitalist system, underscoring that reformist social democracy cannot solve the problems of the people. The only way to overcome economic crisis was to leave the capitalist system behind; only a democratic socialist system would be able to fully solve the problems of Turkey.[39]

This move was followed by another fundamental change of the party platform in 1980. The new program defined the TBP as a revolutionary political organization that opposed imperialism and fascism by utilizing the framework of legal procedures.[40] Moreover, a statue declaring opposition to communism was removed from the platform for the first time. That crucial modification notwithstanding, leaders of the TBP never learned the results of the changes because of a military coup on 12 September 1980 that banned the activities of all political parties including the TBP.

---

37   *Türkiye Birlik Partisi 1977 Seçim Bildirgesi* (Ankara: Ağaç-İş Matbaası, 1977), 25.

38   *5 Haziran 1977 Milletvekili Genel ve Cumhuriyet Senatosu Üyeleri Üçtebir Yenileme Seçimi Sonuçları* (Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1977).

39   Hulusi Konuk, *TBP'nin Kuruluşunun 12. Yılında Mustafa Timisi ile Yaptığı Sorulu-Cevaplı Konuşma: Türkiye Birlik Partisi 1966-1978* (Istanbul: Nurdoğan Matbaası, 1978), 9.

40   *Türkiye Birlik Partisi Program ve Tüzüğü* (Istanbul: Zafer Matbaacılık, 1980), 3.

The political history of the TBP was firmly related to the latent politicization of Alevism. Although the party moved to the left in parallel with the political preferences of Alevis, it was not able to gain the support of Alevis; on the contrary, the TBP's share of votes decreased when it defined itself as a social democrat party. Mustafa Timisi asserted that although Alevis adopted the TBP's political leaning, they voted for the CHP in order not to divide left vis-à-vis actual threat of fascism under the National Front.[41] Timisi's explanations suggests that the political failure of the TBP partly stemmed from the political conditions of the 1970s – especially when Ecevit's CHP was not power and Turkey was governed by Nationalist Front governments between 1973 and 1980. In other words, because Ecevit's CHP was the only viable alternative against the Nationalist Front, the leftist voters, including Alevis, were compelled to support the CHP in the elections. Although Timisi's analysis explains the leftist voters' support for the CHP, the apathy of Alevis to the TBP and their support for the CHP require a more comprehensive explanation specific to the political tendencies of Alevis.

As a clear result of political and economic crisis, Turkey' political sphere polarized in the late 1970s. Alevis mainly supported the left in light of this polarization. The TBP moved to the left politically in parallel with Alevis, but the Alevis' move to the left also corresponded with moves of the CHP and socialist organizations. Thus, the TBP was unable to garner the support of Alevis in the 1970s. Moreover, traditional Alevi elites who had been disparaged by leftist Alevis withdrew their support so that overall political support for the TBP decreased during the 1970s.

The TBP's loss of popular support resulted not only from this dilemma, but also from the latent politicization of Alevism. The language of politics in Turkey in the 1970s did not allow for the rise of identity politics based on cultural identity. Identity politics require the culturalization of politics, which would characterize a later conjuncture marked by the dynamics of globalization, neoliberalism, and the crisis of modernism. In its context, the TBP attempted to position itself as a social democrat party instead of an Alevi party, however CHP made the existence of another social democrat party redundant in the polarized political atmosphere of Turkey.

---

41   Mustafa Timisi, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, 21 October 2007.

Alevism appeared in the political arena in the 1960s; however, the political history of the TBP suggests that this was not the politicization of the Alevism as an independent identity movement. Its political failure reveals that what became politicized was not Alevism, but Alevis. The latent politicization of Alevism - which means the politicization of Alevis within the framework of relations with left-wing movements - requires an examination of these relations with the CHP and with socialist organizations.

§ 3.2 Alevis and the Republican People's Party: A Historical Affiliation

It is generally believed that the historical relationship between Alevis and the CHP is permanent and unaffected by political developments. Nevertheless, their relationship is actually a historical and conjectural affiliation that is not independent of political context and its changes. It needs to be contextualized in a non-essentialist manner for the period before the 1980 military coup. This section analyzes the historical relationship between the CHP and Alevis chronologically.

Some Alevi researchers carry the analysis of the affiliation between Alevis and the CHP back to the years of National Struggle, claiming that all Alevis supported of the struggle. This approach is evidenced with reference to certain historical circumstances: Mustafa Kemal's visit to the Bektashi Order at the end of 1919; the election of Cemalettin Ulusoy - the *postnişin* of the Bektashi Order's Dedegan Branch until his death in 1921- as the vice president of the Turkish National Assembly; and a declaration to the press in 1922 by Veliyettin Ulusoy - brother of Cemalettin Ulusoy and *postnişin* of the Bektashi Order's Dedegan branch from 1921-1940 - affirming Bektashi support for the National Struggle.[42]

Despite the Bektashi Order's active support for the National Struggle, its real influence over the Alevi community at large is debatable. The Bektashi

---

[42] For the most typical examples of this arguement, see Cemal Şener, *Atatürk ve Aleviler* (Istanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1991) and Baki Öz, *Kurtuluş Savaşında Alevi-Bektaşiler* (Istanbul: Can Yayınları, 1995).

Order's influence over the eastern part of Anatolia was especially weak; therefore, some tribes in this region refused to co-operate with the nationalist movement. The Koçgiri tribes in the regions of Sivas and Dersim claimed autonomy from Ankara on the grounds of their Kurdishness and revolted against the newly formed Ankara government in 1920. The revolt was supported by some Turkish-speaking Alevis, but not by Sunni Kurds. Therefore the demographic base of the revolt suggests it was an Alevi revolt as much as Kurdish one.[43] Opposition to the Nationalist Struggle among Alevis was not limited to Kurdish Alevis. Some Alevis from the Yıldızeli and Zile regions participated in the Çapanoğlu uprising (1920) against the nationalist movement as well. Furthermore, some Alevi elites who were also against to the National Struggle such as Rıza Tevfik and Sakallı Rıfkı, established anti-nationalist organizations, like *Tarikat-ı Salahiyye* or became members of them.[44]

According to Mustafa Kemal, the Bektashi Order was only one of the dervish orders of Anatolia that controlled many people and material resources. Consistent with that stance, he did not emphasize Alevis during the National Struggle. The affiliation between Alevis and the nationalist movement was not very different from the relationship between Sunnis and the nationalist movement; there was no special association between Mustafa Kemal and Alevis. However, because the political authorities of the Ottoman dynasty ignored Alevis, Atatürk's interest in the Alevi community was of great importance for them. Therefore, the fact that the nationalist addressed Alevis as a politically at all was evaluated as if Aleviness had been emphasized.[45] In this regard, the historical relation between Alevis and the CHP is grounded on the secularist policies of the early Republican governments, which took aim at the day-to-day projections of Sunni Islam.

While analyzing the early Republican era, Eric Jan Zürcher states that Kemalist secularism had three dimensions. The first was the secularization of the state, education, and law. In this regard, the Caliphate was abolished in 1924, the article that mandated Islam as the state religion was dropped from the constitution in 1928, the principle of secularism was accepted by the CHP in

---

43   Nuri Dersimi, *Kürdistan Tarihinde Dersim* (Istanbul: Doz Yayınları, 1997).

44   Hülya Küçük, *Kurtuluş Savaşında Bektaşiler* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2003), 170-175.

45   Okan, *Türkiye'de Alevilik*, 89.

1931, and it was introduced into the constitution in 1937. The secularization of the state was followed by the secularization of education and law. On 3 March 1924, the Law on the Unification of Education was enacted and the educational system was completely secularized. In 1926, the Swiss civil code and Italian penal code were adopted; thus, family law was taken from control of the *ulema*. The second dimension was the attack on religious symbols and their replacement with symbols of European civilization. Fez was replaced with the hat in 1925. It was followed by the adoption of the Western clock and calendar in 1926, of European digits and the Latin alphabet in 1928, and of Western measures in 1931. The last dimension was the secularization of social life and the attack on the day-to-day influence of popular Islam. To this end, the Grand National Assembly passed Law No. 677 in 1925, closing all religious lodges and *zaviye*s. All ceremonies and meetings of the order were banned; tombs, shrines and other places of pilgrimage destinations were closed. The use of religious titles such as *şeyh, baba, mürit, seyit, dede, çelebi,* and *halife* was forbidden.[46]

Studies by Alevi researchers have generally approached these secular reforms favorably and presented this period as an end to a four century-long "Dark Age" for Alevis. These studies claim that Alevis, who had been suppressed by political authorities since the reign of Selim I, were emancipated by the secular reforms of the early Republican period.[47] However, some Alevi writers have developed a critical attitude toward this assumption. For instance, Reha Çamuroğlu criticizes the existing literature of Alevi writers who, when analyzing the single-party period, imagine a fairytale country under the concept: "Alevi-Paradise-Anatolia." He reminds his audience of the brutal suppression of the Dersim revolt by the single-party government and the formation of a Directorate of Religious Affairs that did not take Alevis into account.[48] Another Alevi writer, Ali Yıldırım, recalls the closing of the

---

46 Eric Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1994), 194-200.

47 See. Burhan Kocadağ, *Alevi Bektaşi Tarihi* (Istanbul: Can, 1996); Cemal Şener, *Atatürk ve Aleviler* (Istanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1991) and Lütfi Kaleli, *Kimliğini Haykıran Alevilik* (Istanbul: Habora, 1990).

48 Reha Çamuroğlu, "Resmi İdeoloji ve Aleviler," *Birikim* 105-106 (January-February 1998): 114.

Hacıbektaş Order by Law No. 677 and the arrest of Alevi *dede*s charged with illegal religious and superstitious activities.[49]

Although the single-party regime ostensibly eliminated the Islamic political apparatus from the state structure, it established a new type of relation with Sunnism in order to keep religion under control. Secularism in the Kemalist sense meant state hegemony over religion rather than full separation of state and religion. To this end, the Directorate of Religious Affairs was formed as the governmental entity in charge of establishing the state's monopoly over religious affairs. Due to the fact that the only Hanafi observance of Sunnism is represented within the directorate, the directorate essentially institutionalizes of this Sunni school of thought. Thus, Sunni Islam became the ipso facto state religion. In practice, the secularism of the Turkish Republic does not recognize different beliefs as equal; on the contrary, it excluded Alevism while indirectly validating Sunnism.[50]

The early Republican regime disregarded Alevism as a religious belief and appealed to Alevis through their Turkishness. Political authorities placed importance on religious prayers of Alevis because the *cem* ceremonies were performed in Turkish and women took part in them. Indeed, this manner of relating to Alevis through their Turkishness and modernity was not peculiar to the early Republican era. Under the leadership of Baha Said, Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*) had conducted comprehensive studies on Alevi groups in the Second Constitutional Era. As a result, Baha Said claimed that Alevis, who had protected their religious beliefs and practices from Arab influence, preserved the Turkish language by means of Turkish prayers in the *Cem* ceremonies.[51] Fuad Köprülü elaborated on this vision and assessed Alevism as a heterodox form of Islam, syncretistically combining the pre-Islamic religious beliefs of Turks with the Shia creed. He added that such heterodox Islam played a crucial role in the Turkification of Anatolia.[52] Instead of a belief system or religion perse, Alevism was clearly considered as a cultural structure associated with

---

49 Ali Yıldırım, "Aleviliğin Adı Yok," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 30 (January 1999): 69-70.

50 Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, 46.

51 Baha Said, *Türkiye'de Alevi-Bektaşi, Ahi ve Nusayri Zümreleri* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 2000).

52 Fuad Köprülü, *Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1959), 95-102.

Turkishness. Therefore, early Republican governments considered the Alevis as authentic representatives of Turkishness and assimilated the religion in Turkish culture.[53]

Given the ambivalent attitude of the single-party government toward Alevis, how is the relation between Alevis and the CHP explained? More interestingly, how did a traditional, anti-statist attitude among Alevis transform into loyalty to the CHP in spite of its exclusionary policies towards Alevis. As Kurdish Alevi writer Cafer Solgun states Alevis' positive feelings toward the CHP recall Stockholm syndrome, which refers to sympathy for one's own abductor.[54] This psychological reading of a sociological phenomenon hardly explains the affiliation between Alevis and the CHP, a fact which deserves a more comprehensive, historically-grounded analysis.

The Kemalist power aimed to reduce religion to a personal, private matter. This necessitated the elimination of the public presence of Islamic symbols in daily life. Although the single-party government re-institutionalized Sunni Islam through the Directorate of Religious Affairs, it successfully suppressed Islamic symbols in the public sphere. Because the Orthodox view of Islam penetrates in social life and public sphere, the target of the secularist policies was Sunni Islam and related religious orders and groups. Thus, the daily practices of Alevis not under the influence of the orthodox Islam were not referenced by the secular reforms as were those of the Sunni community. On the contrary, they were relatively satisfied with the secularization policy precisely because it targeted orthodox Sunnis, whom Alevis considered the "other."[55] In this respect, Alevis were pleased with the secularist actions of the early Republican era and Kemalist repression of Sunni Islam, policies which they interpreted as being indirectly beneficial to the Alevi community.[56]

The relative decline in the influence of Sunni Islam during the early Republican era was considered to have been a factor contributing to the relative

---

53 Murat Küçük, "Mezhepten Millete: Aleviler ve Türk Milliyetçiliği" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (ed.) Tanıl Bora (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), 903.

54 Cafer Solgun, *Alevilerin Kemalizm'le İmtihanı* (Istanbul: Hayykitap, 2008).

55 Okan, *Türkiye'de Alevilik*, 92.

56 Hamit Bozarslan, "Alevism and the Myth of Research: The Need for a New Research Area" in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma: A Comprehensive Overview*, (eds.) Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 9.

improvement of the position of Alevis. Alevis' satisfaction with secularist policies of the single-party era derived from the negation of their negation. Although this explanation is accurate, it needs to be developed more carefully. The Republican government's secularist interventions indirectly eliminated all principal institutional obstacles to the Alevis' equality with the Sunni majority. While Alevis did not actually acquire an equal status with Sunnis "it was after the foundation of the republic, that the Alevis felt a greater sense of security and acquired equal legal rights with Sunnis as individual citizens of Turkey."[57] Thus, when Alevis compared their positions in the Ottoman period vis-à-vis the Republican Era, they favored Republican governments and secularization.

Whether or not the secularist politics of the early Republic would establish the foundation for an egalitarian society, it created a secure environment for Alevis. What provided this environment was not the improvement of the legal status of Alevis as equal citizens, but the attempt to eliminate Islamic political symbols from social life. In this context, the relation between the early Republican governments and the Alevi community are evaluated by Bodrogi:

> They welcomed the republic, considering the basic principles of laicism and nationalism as the best guarantors for putting an end to their religious discrimination. They were willing to accept the fact that they were still denied official recognition as a religious community, as long as the state generally banned religion from the public sphere and therefore also radically curtailed Sunni religious activities and institutions. The Alevis were given to the opportunity to advance on the social, economical and political level on condition that they did not make a public issue of their religious and social identity.[58]

The secularist policies in the early Republican era formed the basis of a good relationship between Alevis and the CHP; however, this relationship was not

---

57 Fahriye Dinçer, *Formulation of Semahs in Relation to the Question of Alevi Identity* in Turkey, Ph.D. Dissertation, Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Boğaziçi University, 2004, 67.

58 Krisztina Kehl–Bodrogi, "Introduction" in (eds.) Kehl-Bodrogi, B. Kellner-Heinkele, A. Otter-Beujean *Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East*, (Leiden: Brill, 1997), vii.

unconditionally sustained in the political process. Alevis selectively remembered the secularist policies of the early Republican era under convenient political conditions, as in the 1970s and1990s. The relation between the Alevis and the Democrat Party (*Demokrat Parti* – DP) suggests how the selective memory of the Alevis was activated in actual political developments.

Alevis supported the DP against the CHP in the 1950 and 1954 elections. The support of the Alevis for the DP may have stemmed from the harsh conditions of the Second World War and the pressures of the war economy, which became associated with İnönü's CHP. Ali Naki Ulusoy, one of the *postnişin* of the Bektashi Order, states that because Ataturk abolished the Sharia government, Alevis' respect for him was greater than for the CHP.[59] Therefore, after his death, the estimation of the CHP decreased for most Alevis, especially given the harsh conditions during the war.

Furthermore, the DP's economic policies and investments - which concentrated on the road network, the building industry, and agricultural industries - were attractive to many demographic groups including Alevis. New road networks in particular the opened up the country, and villages came into contact with the outside world for the first time. Arguably, these developments were even more significant for Alevis who had long lived in isolated areas.

The positive relationship between Alevis and the DP in the early years of the DP government began to dissolve when politicians promised their electorates greater respect for religious freedom and used religion for political mobilization. When its popular support further declined due to an economic crisis in the second half of its rule, the DP both increased oppression of their political opponents and more actively used religion to mobilize the people around them. From the beginning, the DP had had a more lenient attitude toward public manifestations of the religiosity the Sunni-Muslim population. The prohibition of the call to prayer in Arabic was lifted. The ban on religious radio programs was removed, and the DP government permitted the broadcasting of reading of the Koran on state radio. The education of religion was expanded, and the number of imam-hatip schools multiplied under the reign

---

59 "Cumhuriyetten Bugüne Hacı Bektaş Dergahı", interview with Ali Naki Ulusoy, *Nefes* (October 1994): 25-26.

of the DP. Moreover, the budget of the Directorate of Religious Affairs was expanded.[60] Some of these procedural changes were executed in the early years of DP government; however, presence of popular Islam in daily life increased in the second half of their rule. Binnaz Toprak states that

> … the country witnessed an unprecedented rise in the publication of religious books and pamphlets, in the number of people making the pilgrimage to Mecca, in the number of visits to local shrines and in the number of people publicly wearing religious garbs… Approximately 1500 new mosques a year were built during the ten years of DP's stay in Turkey.[61]

The increasing appearance of Islamic symbols in public life disquieted Alevis. Most were chafed and went back to supporting to the CHP in the 1957 elections.[62] Due to a lack of statistics about the religious and ethnic make up of the regions in Turkey for the period under discussion; an analysis of relation between the Alevis and the DP at the regional level can only be conducted through personal memoirs. Zeki Coşkun's anecdotes from Sivas indicate the shakeup of the relations between Alevis and the DP. Coşkun notes that Alevis supported the DP in the 1950 and 1954 elections because the DP in Sivas included some Alevi candidates. However, the DP's policies, which privileged Sunni interests, were regarded as a retreat from secularism, and the Alevi community in Sivas turned to the CHP in 1957 elections.[63] Similar to Coşkun's account, İzzettin Doğan, the chairman of the Cem Foundation, states that Alevis supported the DP in 1950 and 1954 elections as a reaction to İnönü's repressive policies; however, due to the DP's subsequent move away from secularism, Alevis get back to the CHP.[64]

The relationship between Alevis and the DP indicates that the affiliation between Alevis and the CHP operates in a politically contingent manner. The use of religion (i.e., Sunni Islam) for electoral purposes by rightist parties leads

---

60 Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy* (Boulder: Westview, 1997), 365.

61 Binnaz Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 81-82.

62 Okan, *Türkiye'de Alevilik*, 95.

63 Zeki Coşkun, *Aleviler… Sünniler… Öteki Sivas* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995), 265-272.

64 "Tek Şansımız Diyalog," interview with İzzettin Doğan, *Cem* 71 (October 1997): 29.

Alevis to remember the secular policies of the early Republican era under the CHP government. Therefore, Alevis mainly support the CHP to protect themselves from the threat of political Islam. The CHP becomes a safe harbor for Alevis when the political uses of religion by right-wing political parties trigger existential worries about security.

In this regard, the 1970s were the golden age of Alevi–CHP relations. Massicard claims that although there was no methodical drive to consolidate Alevi votes behind any given political party, the 1970s were unique, because there was monolithic Alevi support for the CHP.[65] The support of Alevis for the CHP partly stemmed from the institutionalization of nationalist and Islamist movements under the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* – MHP) and National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi* – MSP) in the 1970s. These parties came to the power in the second half of the 1970s through the Nationalist Front governments. Indeed, in the period between 1973 and 1980, National Front governments were in power in lieu of the CHP. Alevis' robust support for the CHP in this period derived from their worries about the rising power of the religious and nationalist rights.[66] For Alevis, the CHP seemed the only alternative against the threat of Islamic and nationalist right policies.

In addition to the concerns about the rising power of the MHP and MSP, Alevis' support for the CHP was derived from the concurrence of the dissolution of traditional Alevism and the ideological reconceptualization of the CHP as "left of center" or the "democratic left."

The left of center formulation can be assessed as the CHP's attempt to form close ties with the people, asserting a direct link to the socio-economic transformation of Turkish society on the basis of urbanization and industrialization.[67] The basic elements of the policy were the idea of planning, an equitable tax policy, emphasis on rural development, regional equality in terms of services and investments, civilized and healthy residences for every family, the

---

65   Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, 207.

66   Harald Schüler, *Türkiye'de Sosyal Demokrasi: Particilik, Hemşerilik, Alevilik* (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1999), 169.

67   Derya Kömürcü, *The Emergence of the Center-Left Politics in Turkey, 1960-1980*, M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University Institute of Social Sciences Graduate Program in Political Science and International Relations, 2001, 31.

resolution of the problem of shantytowns, the socialization of health services, land reform, and the participation of workers in the management and decision-making processes in state-run economic enterprises.[68] In this context, the left of center ideology aimed to transform society into a welfare society on the basis of social justice.

The appearance of Alevis in the public sphere was related to urbanization, as well. Urbanization not only dissolved the traditional social organization of Alevis by opening isolated Alevi villages to the outside world, it triggered the formation of the new middle and working classes in which Alevis participated. The CHP's new ideological orientation, which indirectly combined the outcomes of the dissolution of traditional Alevism with the broader transformation of Turkey, therefore attracted Alevis and consolidated their relationship to the CHP.

As the symbol of the CHP's ideological transformation, Bülent Ecevit's leadership in the 1970s strengthened relations between Alevis and the CHP. Ecevit was the only person who did not see left of center as a political tactic, but as a policy that would benefit Turkey both economically and politically.[69] His famous study, *Ortanın Solu,* indicates how he ornamented the left of center conceptualization with populist, humanist rhetoric to make it more attractive to ordinary people.[70]

The populist rhetoric of Ecevit strengthened the affiliation between the CHP and Alevis, as well. Necmi Erdoğan assesses Ecevit's political discourse within the framework of Laclau's conceptualization of populism, which refers to a hegemonising strategy based on binary oppositions between the people and power blocs.[71] Consistent with populist rhetoric, Ecevit first maintained binary oppositions between the people and power blocs, the people and elites, the people and state or the people and intellectuals; he then declared that one

---

68 *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Söz Veriyor - 1965 Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri Seçim Bildirgesi* (Ankara: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Yayınları, 1965).

69 Kömürcü, *The Emergence of the Center-Left Politics in Turkey, 1960-1980,* 53.

70 Bülent Ecevit, *Ortanın Solu* (Istanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1975).

71 Necmi Erdoğan, "Demokratik Soldan Devrimci Yola: 1970'lerde Sol Populizm Üzerine," *Toplum ve Bilim* 78 (Fall 1998): 25.

of the main aim of the CHP under his leadership was to abolish those opposi-
tions and to bring about an amalgamation of the people and state.[72]

Ecevit's promise had a special meaning for migrants: their integration into
the city indirectly meant formal recognition by the state of their homes
(through the issuance of title deeds), their neighborhoods (through public ser-
vices and infrastructure), and their occupations (through the social security
system). For Alevi migrants, Ecevit's populist rhetoric played a special role in
their politicization, because Alevis - whose traditional social order was being
dissolved - faced integration problems not only with respect to the urban
sphere, but also with respect to the daily social life and politically to the state
apparatus. In other words, because the needs of Alevis and the populist dis-
course of Ecevit coincided, Alevis supported Ecevit's CHP in the 1970s.

The CHP's ideological transformation and Ecevit's populism were not
limited to the discursive sphere and operated in policy-making, as well. Con-
sistent with his political populism, Ecevit opened local party organizations to
the common people. The number of voters in Istanbul increased by 58 percent
between 1968 and 1975, but the number of CHP members increased by 318
percent over the same period.[73] Despite the absence of detailed membership
records, this increase clearly stemmed from the popular support of new social
demographics such as migrants, workers, Kurds, and Alevis.

The Alevis' support for the CHP in the 1970s was linked to their positive
sentiments with respect to the secular policies of the early Republican era,
which were recalled in the socio-political conjecture of the 1970s marked by
the threats of the Nationalist Front governments. The ideological transfor-
mation of the CHP through Ecevit's populist discourse also attracted Alevis
to the party, which they supported in elections, the TBP's existence notwith-
standing. The relationship between Alevis and the CHP was one element in
the dynamics of the latent politicization of Alevism, but it was not the only
element. Affiliations between the Alevis and the socialist parties and other
left-wing organizations also shaped the dynamics of Alevism's latent politici-
zation.

---

72 Bülent Ecevit, *Demokratik Solda Temel Kavramlar* (Ankara: Ajans-Türk Matbaacılık Sanayii,
    1976), 9; *Ak Günlere: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi 1973 Seçim Bildirgesi* (Ankara: 1973), 17.

73 Schüler, *Türkiye'de Sosyal Demokrasi: Particilik, Hemşerilik, Alevilik,* 111.

§ 3.3   Alevis and Socialist Organizations

The period between 1960 and 1980 was the golden years of leftist movements in Turkey. The student movement, labor movement, the presence of the TİP in parliament, and popular periodicals such as *Yön* and *Devrim* indicated the increasing popularity of the left both politically and intellectually. Left-wing political movements continuously developed in the unique period between 1960 and 1980.[74] The increasing popularity of the socialist movement raised a question for the first time in Turkey's history: How could socialist movements come to power? This question went hand-in-hand with debates on the question of "going to the people," that is to say, mass mobilization.

When leftist movements turned to the people in the 1960s and 1970s, Alevis welcomed their political activities. Therefore, socialist movements had disproportionate support among Alevis vis-à-vis Sunnis. Most of academics who have studied on Alevism suggested that the division between Sunnism and Alevism mainly resulted from a bisection between the people and political authority in the pre-modern age. Historically, Alevism was the oppositional culture of the subaltern classes.[75] As Bodrogi states, Alevism derives from a socio-political dispute; religious polarization plays a secondary role. When revolts were brutally suppressed, rebels isolated themselves from Ottoman socio-political life, and Alevism as an independent religious system took the place of politics as a means of maintaining group solidarity given the isolation that would last until Turkey's rapid urbanization.[76] Despite the relatively reductionist analysis of such historiography, it sheds light on the oppression of Alevis by political authorities which is a factor in the dynamics of the relation between Alevis and leftist politics. Due to the fact that socialist discourse aims to transform the authority relations in favor of the oppressed, left-wing politics is attractive for religious and ethnic minorities such as Alevis, whose beliefs and daily practices had long been suppressed by political authorities.

---

74   Ergun Aydınoğlu, *Türkiye Solu 1960–1980* (Istanbul: Versus Yayınları, 2007), 46.

75   For a typical example from this historiography, see Nur Vergin, "Din ve Muhalif Olmak: Bir Halk Dini Olarak Alevilik," *Türkiye Günlüğü* 17 (Winter 1991).

76   Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, *Kızılbaş/Aleviler*, 38-39.

While the historical reality of oppression grounded the relation between Alevis and the leftist politics, the relationship was also shaped by the actually existing political conjuncture. The political opposition of Alevism coincided with the political needs of the socialist movement. In other words, Alevis and Alevi culture conforms to the actual needs of the socialist movement in the 1960s and 1970s.

Anti-imperialism had become the main characteristic of leftist movements in the 1960s and 1970s.[77] The anti-imperialist struggle encouraged these political movements to turn to local origins as the places of resistance against the penetration of imperialist culture. The return to local origins was necessary for leftist militants in order to mobilize the people. In this context, Alevis became the group to whom socialist organizations turned: Alevi culture provided socialist movements with a popular, local milieu that had a secular outlook.[78]

The "secularism" of Alevism indicated distance from Sunni Islam, which conduced to the Alevis' charge with the impiety. Analyzing the relation between socialist movements and Alevis, Murat Küçük states that socialist movements have always been accused of impiousness. He asserts that this shared feature, linked leftist movements with Alevis as both are accused of being irreligious.[79] Apart from this accusation, secularism was an axis in Turkish politics that differentiated progressive from conservative, modern from traditional, revolutionist from reactionary, and left from right.[80] Therefore, Alevis, who assessed secularism as a safeguard, stuck with the left-wing politics that detached itself from religion.

Moreover, the Alevi history of rebellions against political authorities provided the left with a sacred narrative: a historical base for their struggles. Indeed, the history of Alevis was rewritten in the 1970s by leftist movements, and influential figures in Alevi history, cosmology, and culture - such as Pir

---

77 Nadire Mater, "Devrimci Gençlik Hareketi Üzerine Ertuğrul Kürkçü ile Görüşme" in *Türkiye Sorunları Dizisi* (Istanbul: Alan Yayınları, 1987), 16.

78 Okan, *Türkiye'de Alevilik*, 100.

79 Murat Küçük, "Türkiye'de Sol Düşünce ve Aleviler" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce vol 8: Sol*, (ed.) Murat Gültekingil (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 2007), 900.

80 Binnaz Toprak, "The Religious Right" in *Turkey in Transition*, (eds.) Irvin C. Schick and Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 218.

Sultan Abdal, Sheikh Bedrettin, Baba İshak and Nesimi - were transformed from Alevi saints into proto-communist, revolutionary leaders who resisted the exploitive feudalism of the Seljuk and Ottoman states.

Alevi music also played a vital role as a figurative binder for building and maintaining an affiliation between Alevis the leftist politics. The transfer of Alevi tradition from one generation to the next has relied on oral culture, materialized in the Alevi *deyiş*s (spiritual folk songs of Alevi traditions). Concordantly, Alevi *ozan*s (folk poets), who plays a vital role in the reproduction of the Alevi tradition, have a privileged rank as carriers of culture and customs. In the 1960s and 1970s, *ozan*s put their privileged positions into the service of radical leftist movements.[81] Historically, the use of Alevi *deyiş*s by leftist parties can be traced back to the campaign of the TİP in the 1965 general election: the TİP employed Pir Sultan Abdal's famous lyric "*Gelin Canlar Bir Olalım*" (Come Comrades and Let Us Be as One) vocalized by Ruhi Su, which later became one of the most popular songs of socialist movements in the 1970s in Turkey.[82]

The use of Alevi music for the socialist struggle progressed in the 1970s. The mission of Alevi *ozan*s was transformed from the transmission of Alevi tradition to the propaganda of the left. In this context, the form of the Alevi *deyiş* was deeply transformed, and many actual debates of the leftist movements took place in the form of Alevi *deyiş*s. Aşık İhsani's elegy of the Kızıldere event, Asık Mahsuni's elegies about the Nurhak event and the death of Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, and an unknown *ozan*'s criticism of Mao's theory of three worlds in the form of a *deyiş* are some examples of the relation between Alevi culture and leftist movements in the context of music.[83] Parallel to the transformation of the Alevi *deyiş*, leftist militants started to listen to political Alevi music and grew moustaches like traditional Alevis.[84]

The affinity between Alevis and leftist movements could be followed in the squatter settlements of Alevi migrants. Although socialist organizations took

---

81   Okan, *Türkiye'de Alevilik*, 67.

82   Küçük, "Türkiye'de Sol Düşünce ve Aleviler," 904.

83   Ibid., 910.

84   Çamuroğlu, "Resmi İdeoloji ve Aleviler," 114.

initiative to form many squatter settlements, including both Alevis and Sunnis, only the Alevi neighborhoods - such as 1 Mayıs, Gazi, Gülsuyu or Okmeydanı - became the liberated areas of leftist organizations.

Şükrü Aslan examines the process by which the 1 Mayıs (Mayday) neighborhood was established as an example of an urban social movement, differentiating the experience from that of other squatter settlements. Socialist organizations – which that developed alternative urbanization projects in the squatter settlements on the basis of the right to housing - established the People's Committee (*Halk Komitesi*) to organize the allocation of urban lands according to housing rights. Unlike many other squatter settlements, the People's Committee played a vital role in the development of the 1 Mayıs neighborhood from its establishment to its formalization as legally-recognized neighborhood unit.[85] Like 1 Mayıs, the Gülsuyu neighborhood was another alternative, leftist urbanization project (or social movement) of the 1970s. Socialist movements not only organized the allocation of urban lands for housing, but also maintained order and safety of the neighborhoods.[86]

What differentiated the 1 Mayıs and Gülsuyu neighborhoods from other squatter settlements was the fact that Alevi residents constituted a majority. A Gülsuyu dweller confirmed this and stated that the efficacy of socialist organizations in the neighborhood derived from the majority Alevi population.[87] Şükrü Aslan draws a parallel between the 1 Mayıs and Gülsuyu neighborhoods with respect to socialist organizations' influence over their establishment. Moreover, he adds that the Gülsuyu neighborhood was blacklisted not only for the prevalence of socialist organizations, but also because the Alevi population was the majority.[88] In addition to the 1 Mayıs and Gülsuyu neighborhoods, Gazi, Okmeydanı, Sarıgazi, and Nurtepe were other neighborhoods formed by Alevi migrants that became areas for the alternative urbanization

---

85 Şükrü Aslan, *1 Mayıs Mahallesi: 1980 Öncesi Toplumsal Mücadeleler ve Kent* (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2004).

86 Erdoğan Yıldız (ed.), *Gülsuyu-Gülensu* (Ankara: Notabene, 2013), 220.

87 Ibid., 251.

88 Ibid., 14.

projects operated by socialist organizations in the 1970s. Their experience indicates the close relations between Alevis and socialist organizations in the framework of urbanization.

The affiliation between the Alevis and leftist movements was not limited to urban squatter settlements. The role of Alevism for socialist movements in the rural context can be followed in the memoirs of socialist activists. Sevim Belli, a prominent figure in the socialist struggle in the 1960s and 1970s, translated many classical texts of Marxist literature into Turkish, such as "The German Ideology," "A Contribution to the Critical of Political Economy," and "The Eighteen Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte." In the late 1970s she was a leading figure in Mihri Belli's Labor Party of Turkey (*Türkiye Emekçi Partisi - TEP)*. In her memoirs, she note that leftist parties sought to organize farmers around the agricultural problems of Tokat. However, leftist militants only made propaganda in the Alevi regions of Tokat, believing that only the Alevis supported them. As a consequence of the affiliation between socialist organizations and the Alevi community, Sunni leftist militants were ashamed. Belli states that although she objected to that practice by activist and sought to propagandize in the Sunni regions of Tokat, they were unable to prevail over the Sunni farmers.[89]

Gün Zileli was leader of an illegal Maoist movement called *Aydınlık*. Consistent with their ideological construction, they sought to organize in rural areas where issues of landless peasants dominated socialist agenda in the 1970s. Zileli joined the movement's rural organization effort in the villages of Pazarcık, a district of Maraş where mainly Alevis were living. Although socialist movements claimed that there were many villages populated by landless farmers, they were usually active only in villages where Alevis were living. *Aydınlık* was not the only socialist movement in Pazarcık; other Maoist illegal movements of the period were active in this area, as well, including *Halkın Birliği* (Union of People), *Halkın Kurtuluşu* (Liberation of People) and TKP–ML (*Communist Party of Turkey - Marxist Leninist*). Socialist organizations' concentration on Pazarcık was indicative of the affiliation between Alevis and such organizations.[90]

---

89   Sevim Belli, *Boşuna mı Çiğnendik?* (Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1994), 579–580.

90   Gün Zileli, *Havariler* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003).

Academic studies and memoirs of socialist activists suggest that the close relation between Alevis and leftist politics materialized in both urban and rural contexts. Furthermore, the examination of the affiliation requires an analysis of the massacres to which Alevis were subjected in the late 1970s. Due to the decline of some traditional Sunni capital owners as a result of capitalization and a coincidental prominence of Alevis as a consequence of the urbanization, Sunni capital owners regarded Alevis as "others" who had upset the traditional order.[91] The equating Alevism with leftism, communism, treason, and atheism in the popular perception of Anatolian conservatism[92] triggered the aforementioned anxiety under the MHP's political leadership. The results were massacres of Alevis in the late 1970s in Malatya (1978), Sivas (1978), Maraş (1978) and Çorum (1980).

These are examined in Chapter 5. These massacres resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Alevis, thus consolidating the Alevis' relations with the left-wing political movements. After being subjected to these massacres, socialist organizations sought to safeguard Alevi districts from the assaults of right-wing militants to prevent additional massacres. As a result of these organizations' safeguards, a turf war between militants on right and left followed the right-wing militants' assault on the Alevi neighborhood in Çorum in 1980. As such incidents in Çorum indicate the consolidation of the relation between Alevis and socialist organizations resulting from the safety problems Alevis faced in the late 1970s.

To sum up, the traditional social organization of Alevis eroded as a result of urbanization, and they became visible in the public sphere in the 1960s. Therefore, urbanization became the main dynamic of the politicization of Alevism, which was also supported by the multi-party system and the 1961 constitution. In this regard, Alevis established close relations with the left as they integrate into Turkish politics. In other words, the politicization of Alevism

---

91   Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can, *Devlet Ocak Dergah – 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Ülkücü Hareket* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 1991), 52-53.

92   Mustafa Çalık's field study on the nationalist movement in Gümüşhane indicated a negative image of Alevis among ülkücü militants. See. Mustafa Çalık, *MHP Hareketi–Kaynakları ve Gelişimi 1965–1980* (Ankara: Cedid Neşriyat, 1995).

between 1960 and 1980 implied their affiliation with left-wing political movements. The Alevis' relation with these leftist movements can be analyzed along two dimensions: their relations with the CHP and with socialist organizations.

Alevis' relative satisfaction with the secularist policies of the early Republican period, which provided a more secure environment for Alevis through the reversal of the legal institutionalization and day-to-day influence of Sunni Islam, became the main dynamic of their relation to the CHP. This historical contentment was reawakened by the socio-political conjuncture of the 1970s. The CHP's weakness implied the power of the Nationalist Front in second half of the 1970s, so Alevis supported the CHP. Furthermore, the ideological transformation of the CHP under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit and a populist discourse that appealed to the needs of Alevis consolidated this relation.

The historical opposition of Alevis to the political and social establishment was awakened in the socio-political culture of the 1970s, shaped by the coincidence of the oppression of Alevis by political authorities and the increasing popularity of socialist movements. When socialist organizations "went to the people," Alevis welcomed their political activities. Thus, Alevi neighborhoods and villages became the settlements in which leftist movements establish their power.

Although being Alevi was one factor to remain attach to left-wing politics, Alevism had no independent meaning and assimilated into the collectivity of being leftist. In other words, regardless of Alevi culture's influence on political preferences, the role of the socio-political struggle predominated in the 1970s. The latent politicization of Alevism does not mean the politicization of Alevism as an identity, but the politicization of individual Alevis in relation to leftist politics.

The political failure of the TBP as an Alevi party was interrelated with the latent politicization of Alevism in the 1970s. Despite the existence of the TBP, Alevis voted for the CHP or supported socialist organizations. The TBP moved to the left in parallel with the Alevi community; however, it did not benefit from this ideological transformation. The relation between the Alevis and leftist politics was met by the CHP, on one hand, and socialist organizations, on the other. Moreover, traditional Alevi elites who supported the BP in the 1969 election renounce support for the TBP. Therefore, the TBP was unable to gain the support of Alevis, whether leftist or traditional.

The 1980s witnessed the emergence of identity politics all over the world. In Turkey, advent of the Alevi identity movement on the basis of a self-determined Alevi identity was the local manifestation of that worldwide trend. This does not mean that the relation between Alevis and the leftist politics disappeared. It indicates that the dynamics of that relationship as experienced in the 1970s, have fundamentally changed. The next chapter discusses socio-political factors that triggered the rise of an Alevi identity movement.

4

The Socio-Political Dynamics of the Alevi Revival and Its Daily Manifestation

The previous chapter argued for the affiliation between Alevis and the leftist politics over the background of urbanization in the 1960s and 1970s. Despite the increasing influence of urbanization on Turkish socio-political life in the 1980s and 1990s, the brutal 12 September military coup and the collapse of the Soviet Union both weakened leftist politics in Turkey. Consequently, the dynamics of the relation between Alevis and leftist politics experienced in the 1960s and 1970s changed. More importantly, a global discourse of identity as a right paved the way for the transformation of the language of politics. Therefore, cultural identities appeared as the source of political movements all over the world.

The rising influence of political Islam and the Kurdish movement in the policymaking process in the 1990s indicated the hegemony of the global discourse of identity as a right over Turkish politics. The emergence of an independent Alevi identity movement, which evaluates Alevism as a source for identity politics or for a social movement, has been a result of that worldwide trend.

Unlike the period between 1960 and 1980, Alevis tended to participate in the public sphere through their Alevi identity in the 1990s. The highly popular term of "Alevi revival" indicates the public appearance of a previously hidden or secret Alevi identity. According to Aykan Erdemir, the components of the

Alevi revival can be listed are (1) hundreds of books and journals on Alevism, (2) tens of radio stations that serve Alevi audiences, (3) increasing Alevi visibility in the Turkish media, (4) dozens of new Alevi associations, (5) increasing participants in the activities of Alevi associations and in Alevi festivals. More precisely, the Alevi revival indicates the desire to present oneself as Alevi.[1]

In fact, aforementioned aspects of the Alevi revival indicate that Alevism became the formative element of a social movement. In the case of Alevi politics, Alevis emerge as members of a religious and cultural community demanding religious and cultural rights from the state. Alevi associations and (somewhat) Alevi intellectuals - including researcher-writers and musicians - appear as the agents of the Alevi movement.

This chapter analyzes the socio-political dynamics that lead to the politicization of Alevism on the basis of their independent Alevi culture without reference to other ideologies. The transformed language of the politics was examined in Chapter 2; the present chapter examines the rise of political Islam, the Kurdish movement, and Turkey's attempts to become a member of the European Union (EU) as political dynamics that pave the way for the politicization of Alevi identity. The organization of Alevis around Alevi identity is naturally broader than Turkey's national boundaries. Alevis abroad and in Turkey are league on the basis of their Alevi identity as parts of a transnational movement. Although this chapter does not analyze the Alevi diaspora in detail, it deals with how the organization of the diaspora triggered the rise of an Alevi movement in Turkey.

After an analysis of the socio-political dynamics of the Alevi revival, the chapter examines the public visibility of Alevi identity as an outcome of the process of Alevi revival. In this regard, article series in the mainstream media on Alevi identity are scrutinized as a result of increasing attention to and public opinion on Alevi culture. Moreover, Alevi festivals are other sites where Alevis emerge through their Alevi identity. More importantly, the Alevi festi-

---

1 Erdemir, "Tradition and Modernity: Alevis' Ambiguous Terms and Turkey's Ambivalent Subjects," 939-940.

vals tie them to their "imagined community," contributing to the reproduction of Alevi identity through its history, saints, and rituals. Therefore, this chapter emphasizes on the role of festivals for the Alevi movement.

The transformation of Alevism from a secret, oral tradition to a public, written culture is one a crucial element of the Alevi revival process. Alevi researcher-writers, who wrote a host of books and published many periodicals on Alevi culture, amassed common knowledge of the history, cosmology, and political position of Alevis. Their studies not only reformulated "traditional Alevism" for modern urban conditions, but instructed ordinary Alevis about the Alevism. In this context, the popular literature on Alevism indicates not only the increasing visibility of Alevi identity, but a reformulation of Alevism as a source for an identity movement. Thus, this chapter finishes with an evaluation of roles of Alevi researchers and writers in the rise of the Alevi movement.

§ 4.1   Socio-Political Dynamics of Alevi Identity Politics

Political Islam and the Kurdish movement were influential actors of policy-making in Turkey in the 1990s. These two movements not only made their mark on Turkish politics, but also impacted the dynamics of the politicization of the Alevi movement.[2] A brief analysis of the rise of both political Islam and the Kurdish movement in the 1990s paves the way for comprehending the politicization dynamism of the Alevi movement. All three movements stem from the same process: the global discourse of identity as a right.

While Islam has long played an important role in Turkish politics, the influence of Islamist parties in Turkish politics radically increased in the mid-1990s. This stemmed from a postmodern wave, which opened new public spaces for identity politics including Islamism, and also the neoliberal economic policies of these years. Haldun Gülalp assesses Islamism as a cultural strategy to accommodate global, socio-economic conditions within a framework of flexible production and a postmodern intellectual climate. Gülalp asserts that political Islam in Turkey stemmed from the decline of traditional

---

2   Çamuroğlu, "Alevi Revivalism in Turkey," 79-80.

working-class politics and the rise of petty entrepreneurship. Small and medium-scale manufacturing industries, which experienced rapid growth in the new production centers of Anatolia and in the suburban areas of large cities, became the grassroots of political Islam.[3] The rise of the Welfare Party *(Refah Partisi - RP)* reflected, in part, the growing ambition of a rising Islamic bourgeoisie to consolidate their positions in society and obtain a greater share of public, economic resources.[4]

The rise of political Islam not only stemmed from the economic power of a new middle class, but also was nurtured by new urban poverty. Real wages in industry decreased by 32 percent from 1978/79 to 1988. Urban wages and salaries as a share of national income declined from 32.7 percent in the late 1970s to 20.8 percent in the late 1980s.[5] Moreover flexible production encouraged informal employment without formal social security and wages lower than the mandate minimum. In this socio-economic situation, the RP represented a post-nationalist and post-socialist sense of justice for the urban poor. The discourse of "Just Order" *(Adil Düzen)* could be assessed as an attempt to formulate a non-socialist, non-capitalist world order within Islamic discourse. The emphasis of the Welfare Party on face-to-face relations with voters and its offer of material benefits to needy potential voters played important roles in its success.[6] Defunct welfare state practices were taken on by local religious organizations and foundations working to help the poor in urban neighborhoods, which contributed to the success of the RP among the urban poor. This was particularly instrumental in its success in local elections.[7] In this manner, Islamist politics addressed both the newly rising Anatolian bourgeoisie and the urban poor, thus enabling it to transcend class divisions with cultural discourse.

---

3 Haldun Gülalp, "Küreselleşme ve Siyasal İslam: Refah Partisinin Toplumsal Tabanı" in *Kimlikler Siyaseti* (Istanbul: Metis, 2003), 46-49.

4 Ziya Öniş, "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective," *Third World Quarterly* 18:4 (September 1997): 760.

5 Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2009* (Ankara: İmge, 2011), 164-165.

6 Banu Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge Universtiy Press, 2010), 136.

7 Gülalp, "Küreselleşme ve Siyasal İslam: Refah Partisinin Toplumsal Tabanı," 55.

In addition to the correlation between neoliberalism and political Islam, the postmodern intellectual environment led to its rise. On the relationship between the postmodernism and Islam, Akbar Ahmed asserts that in Muslim societies, postmodernism meant a shift to ethnic or Islamic identity over the imported Western discourses.[8] Accordingly, the position of Islamic intellectuals in Turkey clearly demonstrates the relation between this perception of postmodernism and Islam. Ali Bulaç, a characteristic postmodernist Islamic intellectual, treats modernism as an illusion of development deriving from belief in reason.[9] Modernism, which promises the establishment of heaven on earth, in fact turns the world to hell. Bulaç believes that liberation from modernism is only possible courtesy of religion, specifically Islam.[10] Because Islamic communities enable the rise of the semi-autonomous individual against universal reason, Islamic identity appears a way of liberation from modernism.[11]

Debates over "The Charter of Medina" ("*Medine Vesikası*") show the effect of the discourse of postmodernist cultural pluralism on Islamic thought. The Charter of Medina constituted a formal agreement between the Muslims, pagans, and Jews of Medina after the migration of Mohammad from Mecca to Medina. It instituted peaceful methods of dispute resolution among diverse groups who live together but did not assimilate under a single religion, language, or culture. In this context, Ali Bulaç assesses the charter as the project of a new society advocates a revival of its principles within the context of religious pluralism. According to Bulaç, the founding principles of the Charter of Medina were (1) a contract among social groups; (2) participation - instead of sovereignty - as a starting point; (3) cultural and juridical autonomy of religious and ethnic groups with regard to religion, education, trade, culture, art, daily life, legislation, and jurisdiction; (4) a multi-judicial law system within a

8   Akbar Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise* (London: Routledge, 1992), 32.

9   Ali Bulaç, *Din ve Modernizm* (Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1992), 27.

10   Ibid., 71.

11   Ali Bulaç, *İslam ve Fundementalizm* (Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1997), 178-184.

pluralist society.[12] Bulaç establishes an analogy between the legal pluralism of a re-invented Charter of Medina and the pluralism of multiculturalism. The effects of postmodernist discourse on Islamic thought are followed through in the multi-juridical society conceptualizations of Abdurrahman Dilipak and Bahri Zengin, as well.[13] These projects clearly indicate how postmodern intellectualism nurtures identity politics intellectually, including political Islam.

The RP, which was founded in 1983, became the main carrier of the political Islam in the 1990s. The turning point for Islamic electoral fortunes was the1994 local and 1995 parliamentary elections. In the 1994 elections, the RP captured the Istanbul and Ankara mayoral seats. In the 1995 parliamentary elections, it won the largest number of the seats in parliament (158 of 550) with 21.4 per cent of the vote.[14]

The RP's electoral successes were important, but the political Islam amounts to more than political parties. Islamist newspapers, magazines, publishing houses, foundations, business associations, and labor unions indicate the wide base of political Islam. By 1994, there were 525 privately owned radio and television stations in Turkey and Islamic groups owned nineteen television stations and forty-five radio stations that played an important role in the construction and expression of Islamic consciousness.[15] Islamic printing houses; periodicals such as *Semerkant, Sızıntı, Tezkire, Dergah, İzlenim, Haksöz, İktibas,* and *Değişim;* and daily newspapers such as *Yeni Şafak*, *Milli Gazete,* and *Zaman* indicated the production of a new type of religious knowledge and also the evolution of a new Islamic intellectual class which was labeled as postmodern by M. Hakan Yavuz. According to Yavuz, these intellectuals were not formally trained in the traditional Islamic sciences and did

12   Ali Bulaç, "Medine Vesikası ve Yeni Bir Toplum Projesi" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce 6: İslamcılık,* (ed.) Yasin Aktay (Istanbul: İletişim, 2004), 508-509.

13   Ömer Çaha, "Ana Temalarıyla 1980 Sonrası İslami Uyanış: Demokrasi, Çoğulculuk ve Sivil Toplum," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce 6: İslamcılık*, (ed.) Yasin Aktay (Istanbul: İletişim, 2004), 485.

14   Ruşen Çakır, "Milli Görüş Hareketi" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce 6: İslamcılık*, (ed.) Yasin Aktay (Istanbul: İletişim, 2001), 551-555.

15   M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 104.

not write about religious issues. They assessed current political issues within the context of Islamic values; therefore, they Islamized the political agenda which fostered an appearance of Islam in public life.[16] Moreover, the growth of an Islamic middle class triggered the formation of new public spaces based on Islamic values and symbolism. Newly-founded Islamic hotels, movies, theaters, and hairdressers opened new spaces for new Islamic visibilities.[17]

Jenny White explains the rise of political Islam using the concept of "vernacular politics" as "an autonomous grassroots political process incorporating a variety of actors and views, in which local networks work in tandem with political parties and civic organizations in a sustained political and social movement."[18] According to White, vernacular politics brings potentially divisive groups together around a political and ideological agenda, which is personalized and popularized through shared rhetoric, norms, and symbols.[19] Thus, the rise of political Islam not only meant the increased efficacy of an Islamic political party, but also the visibility of Islamic images in public spaces that surround all aspects of daily life.

Both the RP's election success and the increasing appearance of Islamic symbols in public life represented a threat of religious fundamentalism for Alevis and contributed to the rise of Alevi identity politics as a defensive instinct. Given the historical "otherness" of Alevis, political Islam - now more visible in daily social and political life - led to a situation where Alevi identity replaced left-wing politics as the factor bringing the community together.

Although the Alevi movement was a reaction to the rise of political Islam, it cannot be reduced to a simple action-reaction mechanism. Analyzing the differences and similarities between political Alevism and Sunnism, Ruşen Çakır underscores that the similarities of these movement are more notable than their differences. Although they have radical, revolutionary constituents, neither directly opposes the political system. Moreover, both political Alevism

---

16   Ibid., 112.

17   Kenan Çayır, "The Emergence of Turkey's Contemporary 'Muslim Democrats'" in *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey*, (ed.) Ümit Cizre (London: Routledge, 2008), 69.

18   Jenny B. White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernecular Politics*. (Seattle: University of Washington, 2002), 261.

19   Ibid., 266.

and political Sunnism are led by the middle class with the support of grass-roots organizations.[20]

The political language of Alevism resembles that of political Islam because both are the result of a similar process: the politicization of culture within the context of the postmodern condition. Islamism is the reformulation of Islam by new intellectuals due to rapid urbanization and a spike in educational facilities in Turkey.[21] The same explanations are appropriate for Alevism, as well. Although a reaction to Islamism is one cause of the rise of Alevi politics, the relation between Alevi and Islamic politics should be evaluated within the framework of their differences and similarities.

In addition to the rise of political Islam, the Kurdish question is another dynamic of the Alevi revival. In fact, the history of the Kurdish question is older than the history of the Turkish Republic; however, the citizenship regime of Turkey has a special role in actual debates on the Kurdish question. Although the Turkish identity that is the core of Turkish citizenship is theoretically asserted to be political - without reference to specific ethnic or religious identities- Turkish citizenship in practice is based on being an ethnic Turk and speaking Turkish. Therefore, Kurds are practically excluded from the Turkish citizenship regime.[22] Because Kurds have a "we-feeling" stemming from their demographic density in specific geographical areas, their common language, and their shared history, they have the capacity to struggle against exclusion.[23] The ethnic consciousness of Kurds was strengthened by the guerilla warfare of the PKK in the 1980s. Therefore, since the 1980s, the Kurdish question always includes reference to the agents of the Kurdish national movement, including both the PKK and legal Kurdish political parties.[24]

In addition to the central position of the Kurdish question in Turkish politics in the context of debates on political violence and democratization in the

---

20 Ruşen Çakır, "Political Alevism Versus Political Sunnism: Convergences and Divergences" in *Alevi Identity*, (eds.) Tord Olsson, Elisabeth. Özdalga, Catharina Raudvere (Richmond: Curzon, 1998), 78.

21 Çayır, "The Emergence of Turkey's Contemporary 'Muslim Democrats,'" 64.

22 Mesut Yeğen, "Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40:6 (2004): 62.

23 Mesut Yeğen, *Son Kürt İsyanı* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2011), 16.

24 Cengiz Güneş, *The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey* (London: Routledge, 2012), 10.

1990s, it triggered attempts of other ethnic groups to revive their ethnic identities.[25] More precisely, the Kurdish question led to a broader questioning of the monist citizenship conceptualization of the Turkish Republic based on being Sunni and ethnically Turk. Due to the challenge of the unitary nation thesis by the Kurdish movement, the Alevism emerged from the rift in Turkish citizenship. Debates on constitutional citizenship with regard to the ethnic references of Turkey's monist citizenship regime enabled the Alevi movement to question the sectarian references of Turkish citizenship under the conceptualization of egalitarian citizenship.

In the early 1990s the guerilla campaign of the PKK and the coercive response of the state created a wave of violence. An estimated 35 thousand people lost their lives, and almost 1.5 million people were displaced according to a survey by Hacattepe University. In the 1990s, the polar atmosphere of Turkish politics vis-à-vis the Kurdish question forced people to take part.[26] Ethnically divided Alevis were on the horns of a dilemma caught between opposing actors in the Kurdish questions. Paul J. White suggests, "both the Kemalist elite as well as the Kurdish national movement are trying to stress what each believes to be any organic relationship between Aleviness and either Turkishness or Kurdishness."[27]

On one hand, prominent Alevi intellectuals like Cemal Şener[28] and Rıza Zelyut[29] defined Alevism as the Turkish interpretation of Islam. On the other, the PKK was spreading ideological propaganda and armed struggle in Alevi regions of Eastern Anatolia. Kurdish-Alevi periodicals like *Zülfikar* were published with the motto of "*Aslını İnkar Eden Haramzadedir.*"[30] The PKK became

---

25 Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth M. Winrow, *Kürt Sorunu: Kökeni ve Gelişimi*, trans. Ahmet Fethi (Istanbul:Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000), 137.

26 Doğu Ergil, *Doğu Sorunu* (Istanbul: Akademi Kültür Sanat, 2008), 104.

27 Paul J. White, "The Debate on the Identity of 'Alevi Kurds,'" in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma,* (eds.) Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 17.

28 Cemal Şener, *Aleviler'in Etnik Kimliği: Aleviler Kürt mü? Türk mü?* (Istanbul: Etik Yayınları, 2002).

29 Rıza Zelyut, *Anadolu Aleviliğinin Kültürel Kökeni: Türk Aleviliği,* (Ankara: Kripto, 2009).

30 Martin Van Bruniessen argues that this Turkish frame can be translated into English as "he who denies his origin is a bastard," but the translation fails to convey the emotive power of the Turkish original. See Martin van Bruinessen, ' "Aslını inkar eden haramzadedir!": The

particularly strong in Alevi regions of Eastern Anatolia from the mid-1990s, areas where it had been previously weak.[31] In this regard, the former domination of Alevi identity over Kurdish identity began to change in the 1990s.[32] On the other hand, Turkish nationalist movements also succeeded in organizing among Alevi populations.[33]

Nevertheless, the revival of Alevism enabled Alevis to hide behind Alevi identity in the context of Turkey's harsh political conditions in the 1990s. Alevis sought neutrality by hiding behind Alevi identity in the face of violent struggles between the PKK and the state. Although some Alevis took part in either the Kurdish movement or in Turkish nationalist movements, the rise of an independent Alevi movement allowed Alevis to participate in Turkish politics without being party to the Kurdish question.

Another factor shaping the dynamics of Alevi politicization is the relation between Turkey and the European Union. Turkey made its application to join European Economic Community in 1959 and the Ankara Agreement was signed between Turkey and the European Economic Community in 1963. Turkey applied for full membership to the European Community in 1987; however, it was not accepted on the grounds that the community would not accept new members during the complementation of economic integration. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the enlargement of the EU started and Turkey was officially recognized as a candidate state at the Helsinki European Council held on 10-11 December 1999. As a consequence of this recognition, the violation of minority rights entered the agenda in the context of the country's relations to the EU.

Debate on the Ethnic Identity of the Kurdish Alevis' in *Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East*, (eds.) Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, Barbara Kellner-Heinkele and Anke Otter-Beaujean (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 22.

31   Martin Van Bruinessen, "Türkiye'de Türkler Kürtler ve Alevi Uyanışı" in *Kürtlük, Türklük, Alevilik*, trans. Hakan Yurdakul (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2009), 128.

32   Ayşe Betül Çelik, "Alevis, Kurds and Hemşehris: The Alevi Kurd Revival in the Nineties" in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma,* (eds.) Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 150.

33   Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can, *Devlet ve Kuzgun: 1990'lardan 2000'lere MHP* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2004).

The management of cultural diversity within the context of the nation state was on the agenda of the European Union, and this principle redounded on Turkey during the full membership process. Turkey's EU accession process transformed the discourse of security with respect to ethnic and religious minorities into a discourse on cultural plurality.[34] Because the EU has endorsed the principle of identity as a right since the mid-1980s, Turkey was compelled to promulgate laws to recognize its ethnic and religious minorities as a condition of full membership in the EU.[35] Various social and cultural groups - including Alevis - were thus able to more actively participate in policymaking.

Erdoğan Aydın's analogy between the proclamation of the Republic and Turkey's process of becoming a member of the EU through the lens of the Alevi movement indicates the importance of the EU. He claims that the Republic emancipated Alevis from religious pressures; however, it did not recognize Alevi identity. The EU process enabled Alevis to organize on the basis of their Alevi identity.[36]

The transformative role of the EU accession process for the development of Alevi politics can be followed in the Regular Progress Reports of the EU on Turkey. The socio-political position of Alevis was addressed in the most of the Regular Reports written since 1998. Alevis are regarded as a minority group in the sociological sense, and the human right violations they face are underscored in the reports. In general, the EU accession process has provided opportunities for the expression of cultural differences in Turkey, and Alevis have benefited. For instance, political pressure by the EU played an important role in lifting the ban on associations and foundations under the title of Alevi and Bektashi, enabling the formation of several such identity based Alevi associations. This was a crucial triumph for the Alevi movement, as Alevi associations would become important actors in the movement.

---

34   Ayhan Kaya, "Avrupa Birliği Bütünleşme Sürecinde Yurttaşlık, Çokkültürcülük ve Azınlık Tartışmaları: Birarada Yaşamanın Siyaseti," in *Türkiye'de Çoğunluk ve Azınlık Politikaları: AB Sürecinde Yurttaşlık Tartışmaları,* (eds.) Ayhan Kaya and Turgut Tarhanlı (Istanbul: TESEV, 2005), 35-57.

35   Şahin, "The Rise of Alevism as Public Religion," 478.

36   Erdoğan Aydın, "Aleviler ve Avrupa Birliği," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 57 (June 2004).

Thus, Turkey's attempts to become a member of the EU opened a space of opportunity for Alevis. Indeed, the EU process contributed to the consolidation - though not the formation - of Alevi identity politics. Furthermore, while Turkey was conducting negotiations with the EU, Alevis in Turkey established closer relations with Alevis in European countries. Therefore, Turkey's accession process also contributed to the emergence of a transnational social movement.

§ 4.2 Birth of Transnational Alevi Identity Politics: The Role of Diaspora Alevis in the Alevi Identity Movement in Turkey

The effect of the policies of the EU on the Alevi movement was not limited to Turkey. Open political structures in European countries provided more freedom of expression for Alevis in Europe, and the establishment of Alevi associations started in Europe earlier than in Turkey. Germany became the center of the European Alevi movement, which in some ways triggered the Alevi revival in the homeland.[37] It is useful to examine the role of the diaspora Alevi movement in Germany for the rise of the Alevi revival in Turkey.

The organization of Alevi migrants in Germany dated back to the late seventies. Popular Revolutionary Federation (*Halkçı Devrimci Federasyonu*, HDF) had been an umbrella organization of the Turkish workers in Germany and was closely tied to the CHP in Turkey and the German Social Democrat Party (SPD). Because of the HDF's silence following the Maraş massacre, Alevi members of the federation resigned and formed the Turkish Workers Peace Union (*Türk İşçileri Barış Birliği)*. In this period, there was another worker's association in Germany, the Turkish Workers Union (*Türk Ameleler Birliği,* TALEB), had close ties to the TBP. In the early 1980s, the TALEB and the *Türk İşçileri Barış Birliği* formed an umbrella organization called the name

---

37 Karin Varhoff, "Academic and Journalist Publications on the Alevi and Bektashi of Turkey" in *Alevi Identity*, (eds.) T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1998), 39.

Yurtseverler Birliği Federasyonu (Federation of Patriots Union) with an initiative of Mustafa Timisi, chairman of the TBP.[38]

In tandem with Alevis in Turkey, Alevi organizations in Germany did not use the title "Alevi" and did not demand to be recognized as a separate cultural community in the 1970s and early 1980s. Therefore, the politicization of Alevis in Germany can also be conceptualized as latent politicization. The use of the title of "Alevi started in the late 1980s indicating a transition from class-based to cultural politics.

Indeed, the rise of Alevi identity politics in Germany was coupled with the multiculturalist policy of the country. In the late 1980s, Germany adopted multiculturalist policies to resolve problems of migrant integration into German society, of citizenship, and of xenophobia. Multicultural policies encouraged organization on the basis of ethnic and religious differentiation among migrants, including Alevis.[39] The Alevi identity movement in Germany flourished within the discursive environment of multiculturalism. Aware of the political support for multiculturalism, Alevis started to strategically employ their distinct identity as an instrument for integrating into German society. Therefore, the Alevi movement found a more favorable political atmosphere in Germany than in Turkey.[40]

Germany was the cradle of the Alevi movement in Europe; however, it was not alone. The European Parliament subsidized migrant associations in order to coordinate migrant mobilization in Europe and migrants formed umbrella organizations to easier integrate with European policies. Due to the hegemony of cultural discourse, these associations were based on cultural identity.[41] Alevi associations in France and Holland were formed in these years, as well.

The Alevi movement in the diaspora was importantly orientated toward integration while maintaining a strong homeland perspective that developed interdependently. Alevis insisted on their difference from Sunni Muslims and

---

38 Sökefeld, *Struggling for Recognition: The Alevi Movement in Germany and Transnational Space*, 51-52.

39 Betigül Ercan Argun, *Turkey in Germany* (London: Routledge, 2003), 69.

40 Ayhan Kaya, "Multicultural Clientelism and Alevi Resurgence in the Turkish Diaspora: Berlin Alevis," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 18 (Spring 1998): 39.

41 Şahin, "The Rise of Alevism as Public Religion," 477.

on their affinity for universalistic values with reference to their Aleviness, which contributed to their integration into German society in the context of a multicultural political environment. On the other hand, the diaspora took the opportunity to become involved in Turkish politics through their Alevi identity.[42] That is why the Alevi movement in the diaspora tended to establish close ties with Turkish Alevis. Especially the shared trauma of the Madımak massacre reinforced transnational ties between the diaspora and Turkish Alevis.

In 1989 the Alevi Communities Federation (*Alevi Cemaatleri Federasyonu*) was founded under the leadership of Alevi *dede*s. After the Madımak massacre, former left-wing activists such as Turgut Öker and Ali Rıza Gülçiçek joined the Federation and its name was changed to Federation of Alevi Unions in Germany (*Almanya Alevi Birlikleri Federasyonu* - AABF). The change of the name from "community" to "union" indicated an ideological transformation from a religious to a more political stance; the Madımak massacre radicalized and politicized the demands of the Alevi movement. Ex-Marxist Alevi activist became more active members in Alevi organizations and applied their organizational skills to the service of cultural identity politics.

Although there are two other similar federations - the *Federasyona Elewiyen Kurdistan* (the Unions of Kurdistan Alevis) and the Cem Foundation - the AABF is the most important. Alevi associations from Austria, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and England joined the AABF in 1994 and the federation changed its name to the European Alevi Unions Federation (*Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Federasyonu* - AABF). This unification process indicates the core role of the AABF for the diaspora movement; importance stems from its pioneering role for Alevi associations in Turkey.

An analysis of the diaspora Alevi movement exceeds the scope of this dissertation but the activities of the diaspora that paved the way for the Alevi movement in Turkey are pertinent. As first public event organized by the Alevis under the name of the "Alevi," the "Alevi Culture Week" in Hamburg in 1989 played a critical role in the rise of Alevi associations in Germany. Conferences on Alevism in both Turkish and German, *Cem* prayers, and concerts were organized as part of Alevi Culture Week. The participants to the festival

---

42   Sökefeld, "Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition Policy," 135.

mostly came from Turkey. Alevi activists assumed the position of speaking in the name of Alevis and demanded formal recognition.[43] In Hamburg, Turkish Alevis found for the first time a cultural environment in which they could express their Alevi identity without restriction.

In Turkey, the "Alevi Declaration," which was published in the *Cumhuriyet* daily on 6 May 1990, was a turning point Alevi identity politics. It was the first, influential public appearance by Alevis putting forward their cultural identity. The original text of the declaration, entitled "Alevi Declaration in Hamburg," had been written in Germany during Alevi Culture Week, and the Turkish version was based on that text.[44] In the midst of the 1990s, the AABF opened an Alevi radio station in Turkey, Radio Mozaik, which was the beginning of the formation of Alevi media. Although Radio Mozaik did not last due to financial problems, it triggered the opening of further channels such as Cem Radio and Radio Barış.

The influence of the culture week on the Alevi Declaration and Radio Mozaik indicate the stimulating role of the diaspora for Turkish Alevis. Because the political opportunity structure of Germany was more favorable than that of Turkey, Alevi activists gained organizational experience in Germany and transferred it to the Turkish political arena.[45] However, when the Alevi movement in Turkey started to develop, a mutual, non-hierarchical relation between diaspora and Turkish Alevis was established. What was emerging was a transnational identity politics nurtured by various localities simultaneously. Thus, a transnational Alevi landscape evolved made up of transnational actors, events, practices, locations, media, and projects.[46]

The movement attempted to establish transnational organizations to coordinate the Alevi movement under formal institutions. The Alevi-Bektashi Representative Council (*Alevi Bektaşi Temsilciler Meclisi,* ABTM) was launched in 1994 and again in 1998 as an umbrella organization the aim of

---

43 Sökefeld, *Struggling for Recognition,* 60-61.

44 Lütfi Kaleli, *Alevi Kimliği ve Alevi Örgütlenmeleri* (Istanbul: Can, 2000), 173-184.

45 Argun, *Turkey in Germany,* 108.

46 Sökefeld, *Struggling for Recognition,* 226.

which was to provide social and juridical acceptance of Alevi identity. Although the council included the major associations of the Alevi movement - such as Hacıbektaş Veli Associations, PSAKD and AABF (all except the Cem Foundation) - it did not last long. Another attempt by diaspora Alevis to establish ties with the movement in Turkey was the Peace Party the political history of which is examined in details in Chapter 7.[47]

When Alevi associations in Turkey and Europe collaborated to establish a radio station - which would become Radio Mozaik - they declared their common demands, which included the abolition of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, the abolition of compulsory religion courses, and a halt to the construction of mosques in Alevi districts.[48] Although the AABF was a constituent of the declaration, the demands all concerned Turkey. The demands of Alevis in Turkey clearly determined the political agenda of transnational Alevi politics in the 1990s.

In the late 1990s, political concerns and activities of Alevis in Germany shifted wholesale from Turkey to Germany. The chairman of the AABF, Ali Kılıç, declared that they would focus on Alevi religion courses and immigration law rather than on Turkish politics.[49] The next chairman, Turgut Öker, further stated that their scope was Europe, and that they would focus on the problems of Alevi migrants that derived from their cultural identity.[50] This shift can be clearly followed in the AABF's assessment of Alevism. Unlike its associational partners, which define Alevism as a culture in Turkey, the AABF tended to evaluate Alevism as an independent religion. As of 2000, the religion is a legally recognized institutionalized category, the rights of which are guaranteed by German Constitution; the Alevi movement in Germany has thus intensified its effort for institutional integration in Germany.[51]

---

47 Demiray, *Understanding the Alevi Revival: A Transnational Perspective*, 114-129.

48 "Türk-Sünni Sentezi Paralelinde Bir Devlet veToplum Yapılanması Sürecine Dur Denilmelidir," *Alevilerin Sesi* 1 (February 1994): 18.

49 "Şimdi Birlik Zamanı," *Alevilerin Sesi* 30 (December 1998): 6.

50 "Kurumsallaşmayı Gerçekleştireceğiz," *Alevilerin Sesi* 31 (February 1999): 6.

51 Sökefeld, *Struggling for Recognition*, 195.

After Turkey's recognition as an official candidate to join the European Union, the EU accession process became a dynamic that affected the transnational political space of Alevism. While diaspora Alevis previously distanced themselves from Turkish politics, Turkey's potential membership in the EU revived relations with Turkish Alevis. On one hand, the AABF raised the issue of Alevism in discussions with members of the German government. Indeed, the political demands of Alevis in Turkey were articulated in the European Parliament.[52] On the other hand, the AABF declared its support for Turkey's joining the EU with the provisos of democratization and freedom of belief. The EU accession process became the new habitat of affiliations between the diaspora and Turkish Alevis.[53]

To sum, if the Alevi movements in Turkey and Germany are compared, a structural dissimilarity reflecting differences between those countries is apparent. In Turkey, the main demand of the Alevi movement was for the state to adopt a neutral position toward different cultural groups on the basis of civic-republican principles of citizenship. In Germany, the Alevi movement demanded affirmation of Alevi differences and cultural, political and religious recognition of Alevi identity.[54] Sökefeld discusses that difference and asserts that the dialectic relation between being equal and being different plays a vital role in the Alevi movement. In Turkey, Alevis are formally treated as if they are Sunnis; therefore, they struggle for to be recognized as equal but different. In Germany the Alevis are clearly marked as different, migrant or foreigner; therefore they aim to be recognized as different but equal.[55] Nevertheless, the Alevi movement in Germany not only contributes to rise of the Alevi movement in Turkey, but also indicates the fact of a transnational Alevi movement transcends the boundaries of nation states.

---

52 Cemil Coşkun, "Aleviler Avrupa Parlamentosunda," *Alevilerin Sesi* 34 (October 1999): 19.

53 Elise Massicard, "Alevist Movement at Home and Abroad: Mobilization Spaces and Disjunction," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 28-29 (Spring-Fall 2003): 181.

54 Demiray, *Understanding the Alevi Revival*, 102-103.

55 Sökefeld, "Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition Policy," 157.

§ 4.3   Alevism in the Public Media

Turkey experienced a media revolution in the 1990s beginning with the establishment of private radio and television channels. In the mid-1990s, there were ten national newspapers, twenty national television channels, 400 local television channels, forty-one national radio stations, and 1234 local radio stations. This media boom reinforced the efficacy of identity politics, as many ethnic and religious groups started to publish their own journals and establish their radio and television stations. More importantly, officially nonexistent phenomena such as ethnic and religious sub-cultures became visible through the new media organs. Local cultures globalized and politicized through media channels. The new media organs reshaped the public sphere, and previously invisible cultural identities took their place in it. Thus, Alevism has gained visibility as an independent culture in the media since the late 1980s.[56]

The debate on Alevism appeared in the media in the late 1980s. *Nokta* magazine became a pioneer with a cover subject on 27 September 1987: "Alevism is vanishing." The report asserted that Alevis were alienated from their culture as a consequence of urbanization. The institution of the *dede* and the *cem* prayer were disappearing. Moreover, Alevis not only support the left wing movements, but also parties on the right, so the oppositional character of Alevism loosened as well.[57] This pessimist outlook on the state of Alevism was contradicted by the Alevi Declaration in 1990.

On 6 May 1990 the Alevi Declaration was printed in *Cumhuriyet* with the signatures of both Alevi and non-Alevi intellectuals.[58] It was a turning point for the movement, because it was the first attempt to make Alevism public and

---

56   Hakan Yavuz, "Alevilerin Türkiye'deki Medya Kimlikleri: 'Ortaya Çıkışın' Serüveni" in *Türkiye'de Aleviler Bektaşiler Nusayriler* (Istanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1997), 58-64.

57   "Cem Ayinleri Mahzun…" *Nokta*, 27. 09. 1987, 26-29.

58   The participants of the Alevi Declaration were Yaşar Kemal, Aziz Nesin, İlhan Selçuk, Tarık Akan, Zülfü Livaneli, Berker Yaman, Kıvanç Ertop, Çetin Yetkin, Ataol Behramoğlu, Atilla Özkırımlı, Emil Galip Sandalcı, Süleyman Yağız, Bekir Yıldız, Muharrem Naci Orhan, Erdal Atabek, Nejat Birdoğan, Vedat Günyol, Cemal Özbey, Mesut Mertcan, Battal Pehlivan, Cengiz Bektaş, Müjdat Gezen, Recep Bilginer, Lütfü Kaleli, Jülide Gülizar, Nevzat Helvacı, Nart Bozkurt, Tanıl Bora, Adnan Sözen, İhsan Atar, Ahmet Bulut, Akın Gürdal, Musa Ateş and Rıza Zelyut.

demand recognition from Turkish state. The declaration underscores the differences between Alevism and Sunni Islam in terms of religious teachings and practices, and it asserted that the existence of Alevism, willfully neglected, though it comprised one third of Turkish population. The declaration demanded the recognition of Alevism in the public sphere and by the state by means of new policies. The demands of the Alevi community included the construction of *cemevi*s instead of mosques in Alevi districts, the introduction of courses on Alevism in school curricula, the representation of Alevis in Directorate of Religious Affairs, and the reformulation of the institution of the *dede*. The declaration established a link demands for recognition to universal human rights such as freedom of belief and speech.

The Alevi Declaration became a turning point for the Alevi movement; Alevis clearly appeared in the public sphere on the basis of their Alevi identity. Moreover, they demanded cultural rights from the state marking the beginning of an identity movement. Three years after its cover story, *Nokta* published another cover story entitled "The Silence is Over: Alevis Demand Freedom of Belief."[59] The shift at *Nokta* indicated shifts in public opinion on Alevis and its story was followed by a series of articles published in the mainstream media. These article series introduced the social and religious aspects of Alevism to the public indicating increasing public interest.

The first was a series in the *Sabah* daily written by Fuat Bozkurt, an Alevi writer and academic, between 22 January and 9 February 1990. This article series was later published as a book entitled *Aleviliğin Toplumsal Boyutları*.[60] Rıza Zelyut prepared a series for *Hürriyet* daily focusing on the figure of Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli. In thesis series of articles, the doctrine of Hacıbektaş - which was based on humanism, democracy, and equality of the sexes - was evaluated as the true reading of Islam.[61] Another series was prepared by Atilla Özkırımlı for *Milliyet* newspaper in August 1990 and was published as a book entitled *Alevilik-Bektaşilik*.[62] Further article series in mainstream media followed by,

---

59   "Aleviler İnanç Özgürlüğü İstiyor," *Nokta*, 13.05.1990, 18-21.

60   Fuat Bozkurt, *Aleviliğin Toplumsal Boyutları* (Istanbul: Tekin, 1993).

61   Rıza Zelyut, *Hacıbektaş Veli* (Istanbul: Hürriyet, 1990).

62   Atilla Özkırımlı, *Toplumsal Bir Başkaldırının İdeolojisi: Alevilik-Bektaşilik* (Istanbul: Cem, 1990).

İlhan Selçuk, Gencay Şaylan, and Şenay Kalkan. They prepared an article series for *Cumhuriyet* between 6 and 21 May 1990.[63] Another series about Alevism in *Cumhuriyet* was prepared by Cemal Şener and ran between 15 and 27 Augustus 1993. It was based on interviews with influential figures of the Alevi movement and introduced some Alevi districts.[64]

In these serial articles, the definition of Alevism, its religious teachings and ritual practices, its historical developments, the differences between Alevism and Bektashism, the relation between Alevis and the Ottoman state, and Alevis' views on the Republic were examined along with the actual political demands of Alevis. Discussions on Alevism in popular newspapers made Alevism visible for Turkish public opinion.

The list of series on Alevism extensive; but, one of them deserves a special attention. The formal media organ of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, *Diyanet,* prepared a special issue on Alevism in January 1992. In this periodical there were interviews with Alevi *dede*s, academics, and Alevis who graduated from İmam-Hatip High Schools. The shared opinions of the interviewers clearly reflected the position of Directorate of the Religious Affairs toward the increasing visibility of Alevism as a non-Sunni identity.

The interviews were based on the denial of a religious distinction between Alevis and Sunnis, because both are Muslim. Their differences stemmed from political preferences concerning the election of caliphate after the death of prophet rather than theological debate.[65] In this regard, Alevis' demand for representation in the Directorate of Religious Affairs was unacceptable, because the directorate represented all Muslims without making a distinction between sects. After the denial of a religious distinction between Alevis and Sunnis, Abdülkadir Sezgin, chief inspector of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, concluded that the Alevi problem stemmed ex-Marxists were anyway not Alevi due to their atheism.[66] Therefore, the problems of Alevis could be

---

63   İlhan Selçuk, Gencay Şaylan, Şenay Kalkan, *Türkiye'de Alevilik Bektaşilik* (Istanbul: Hasat, 1991).

64   Cemal Şener, *Yaşayan Alevilik* (Istanbul: Ant, 1993).

65   "Gündem Alevilik", *Diyanet* 13 (January 1992) 9-18.

66   Ibid., 17.

solved between Alevi and Sunni Muslims if the Marxist, atheists faded from the scene.

The special issue of *Diyanet* consisted of two topics: headscarf and the Alevi problem. Indeed, the periodical implied that the real problem for Muslims was the headscarf; Alevism was an artificial distinction. In this regard, *Diyanet,* as the formal periodical of the Directorate of Religious Affairs disregarded the existence of Alevis and implied that there was not Alevi problem but rather an atheism problem deriving from ignorance of Alevism.

Alevism was not only the agendas of newspapers, but became apparent in visual media. At the end of 1991, İzzettin Doğan participated in popular television show, *Kırmızı Koltuk.* He discussed the religious prayers of Alevis, the relation between Alevis and the Ottoman state, and the actual demands of the Alevi movement.[67] Mehmet Ali Birand then prepared a special program on 21 September 1992 on Alevism.[68] The most extensive broadcast about Alevism was Ali Kırca's *Siyaset Meydanı* in 1994. Participants included Alevi intellectuals and politicians such as Cemal Şener, Rıza Zelyut, Reha Çamuroğlu, Lütfi Kaleli, İzzettin Doğan, Mustafa Timisi, and Aşık Mahzuni Şerif, as well as, Islamic intellectuals like Ali Bulaç, Mehmet Metiner, Bahri Zengin, and Lütfi Doğan. Political clashes among Alevi intellectuals left their marks on *Siyaset Meydanı* rather than differences between Alevi and Sunni intellectuals. The debates focused on the question of whether Alevism was culture or religious belief. As discussed in Chapter 6, this would be one of the most prominent debates for the Alevi movement.[69]

The appearance of Alevism on television not only occurred within the context of talk shows. Old derogatory remarks about Alevis were expressed on television deliberately and unconsciously. The best known was "case of Güner Ümit." Famous talk show host Güner Ümit equated incestuous relations with being Kızılbaş on an entertainment program in 1994. More than ten thousand people gathered around Star TV's headquarters in a short time to protest Ümit. He declared that he did not know the term Kızılbaş referred to Alevis and apologized. As a consequence of the protests, he resigned and his program

---

67   Cemal Şener, "Alevilik Kırmızı Koltukta," *Cem* 8, (January 1992): 32-34.

68   "Alevilik 32.Gün'de," *Cem* 16 (September 1992): 36.

69   "Siyaset Meydanı, Alevilik ve Çirkin Oyunlar," *Cem* 41 (October 1994): 36.

was canceled. The rapid organization against defamation on a television program indicated the correlation between the visibility of Alevi identity and the organization of Alevism.

§ 4.4   Reproduction of Alevi Identity: Alevi Festivals

The Alevi identity gained publicity by means of mass media in the early 1990s. However, media was not the only channel that made Alevism visible. Another phenomenon was the Alevi festivals in which Alevis not only declared their cultural identity, but represented it to the outside world. Cemal Şener claims that one reason for commemoration ceremonies was the desire to openly express their beliefs and perform their rituals in ways to make their identity known to non-Alevis.[70]

The Alevi community comes together to celebrate various festivals dedicated to Alevi saints such as Hacı Bektaş Veli, Abdal Musa, and Pir Hamza Baba. These annual festivals are attended by Alevis and carried out around the tomb of the saint. Rituals of religious Alevism and discourses of the Alevi movement are performed. The meaning of these festivals for the Alevi community is more than to be visible: they come together to perform the rituals of culture, such as the *semah* (the spiritual dances of Alevis) and the *cem* ceremony. Moreover, festivals create collective memory of the saint whose name the festival has adopted. There is a symbiotic relation between memory and identity, because the formation of identity also means a struggle for collective memory - what people remember or forget. Thus, the rise of Alevi identity inevitably coincides with the praxis of collective memory.[71] Alevi festivals, which can be assessed as the praxis of collective memory, play a constitutive role in the re-formation of Alevi identity in the process of the "Alevi revival."

Eric Hobsbawm defines the concept of invented traditions as a set of practices that "seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition,

---

70   Cemal Şener, *Alevi Törenleri* (Istanbul: Ant, 1991), 132.

71   Jonathan Boyarin, "Space, Time and the Politics of Memeory" in *Remapping Memory: The Politics of Time Space*, (ed.) Jonathan Boyarin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 23.

which automatically implies continuity with past."[72] One of the missions of invented traditions is to establish or symbolize social cohesion among the members of a group, whether a real or artificial community. Another purpose is socialization: inculcation of beliefs, value systems, and conventions of behavior. More commonly, invented traditions establish a sense of identification with a particular community.[73] Festivals, public parades, and celebrations appear as invented traditions that create the bounds of a community.

Alevi festivals - as invented traditions - trace the history of Alevism to a distant past through Alevi saints. The Alevi tradition came into existence in the thirteenth century through Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli or Seyyid Hacı Ali Turabi. In this way, the Alevi identity movement claims a historical legacy. Annual festivals also regulate time according to the important days of Alevism and participants are bound to common temporal order and converge around similar memorial experiences. The synchronization of time plays a vital role in the existence and unity of the community.[74]

More importantly, Alevi festivals, like others, create a bond among participants. Individual participants identify themselves with a community through those shared performances. "The main function of the festival is provide occasion and form a positive group interaction which is necessary condition for the continued existence of the group."[75] The Alevi community comes together to celebrate these festivals. They feel that there is a concrete Alevi community whose constituents share the same beliefs and value systems. For instance, in Hacıbektaş festivals, *semah* groups visiting from Tokat, Austria, and Albania not only indicate the geographical expansion and collectivity of Alevi identity, but also the infusive role of the festival for various Alevi groups. Alevi individuals who come from Istanbul, Ankara, Tunceli, Çorum, or Hatay who

---

72 Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions" in *The Invention of Tradition*, (eds.) Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (London: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 1.

73 Ibid., 9.

74 Eviatar Zerubavel, "Calendars and History: A Comparative Study of the Social Organization of National Memory," in *States of Memory: Continiutes, Conflicts and Transformations in National Retrospection,* (ed.) Jeffrey K. Olick (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 317-318.

75 Robert J. Smith, "Festivals and Celebrations" in *Folklor and Folklife*, (ed.) Richard M Dorson (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1972), 167-168.

speak Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic, or Albanian come together under the banner of Alevi identity and experience communal feelings through festival activities.[76] Therefore these festivals create a sense of belonging among Alevis and link Alevi individuals to a larger community. Participants express their Alevi identity with other Alevi participants.

If culture is comprehended as a web of symbols, acquiring a culture and learning to be social means to acquire the symbols that equip individuals to be social.[77] These symbols bind people to other people that they would never have met and to institutions that they would never have encountered.[78] The performance of Alevi culture through the *cem* ceremony or public concerts at festivals provides participants with cultural codes that enable them to become Alevi. In this sense, Alevi individuals say that they take their families to the Hacıbektaş Festival, because they wanted their children to learn and claim their Alevi identity. The festival is the most appropriate place to accomplish this.[79]

Alevi festivals not only provide visibility for Alevis, but also reproduce the cultural values of Alevism and carry over them over to individuals. Festivals play a crucial role in the transmission of traditional knowledge and patterns of behavior to new generations. From a different view of point, Alevi festivals adapt the cultural heritage to the modern context, and becoming an important sphere for the ongoing identity movement.[80] "They both maintain a continuity with accepted understandings of the past and conform with understanding of the present situation."[81] This adaptation through festivals allows tradition to survive.

---

76 "Hacı Bektaş Veli'yi Anarken," *Cem* 4 (September 1991): 16-18.

77 Anthony Paul Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London: Routledge, 1989), 16-21.

78 Hasting Donnan and Thomas M. Wilson, *Sınırlar: Kimlik Ulus ve Devletin Uçları,* trans. Zeki Yaş (Ankara: Ütopya Yayınevi, 2002), 119.

79 Süleyman Cem, "Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli'yi Anma Törenleri ve Düşündürdükleri," *Cem* 29 (October 1993): 36.

80 Mark Soileau, "Festivals and the Formation of Alevi Identity," in *Alevis and Alevism: Transformed Identities*, (ed.) Hege Irene Markussen (Istanbul: ISIS Press, 2005), 92.

81 Ibid., 102-103.

Various Alevi festivals are officially labeled as commemoration ceremonies (*anma törenleri*). Most of these are centered on the tomb of a saint and take the name of this saint.[82] Visiting of the tomb, kissing the sarcophagus lighting candles, and the sacrifice an animal *(kurban)* are traditionally performed. Tomb-related practices are accompanied by musical concerts and performance of the *cem* ceremony. Festivals often include feature academic panels on the culture, history, and current political position of Alevism. In addition to the performance of various aspects of Alevi culture, festivals provide an arena for political display. The cultural program of the festivals is generally preceded by official opening ceremonies where national and local politicians make their presence known through speeches. In this manner festivals not only reproduce Alevi culture, but also link Alevis to current politics.[83]

An examination of all Alevi festivals exceeds the scope of this dissertation. It is useful, however, to analyze the Hacıbektaş Veli Commemoration Ceremonies as a model. Because Hacıbektaş Veli Commemoration Ceremonies are the earliest and most popular among Alevi festivals, they reveal the role of festivals for the Alevi revival. Hacıbektaş Festivals are held in Hacıkbektaş (Nevşehir) from 16 to 18 August. 16 August does not refer to an ancient history; it is the date of the reopening of the *dergah* (tomb) in the form of a museum in 1964.

The perception of Hacıbektaş and the organization of the festival are related to the dynamics of Alevi politicization. Alevis were affiliated with the leftist politics until the 1980 military coup. Accordingly, Hacıbektaş was represented as a political figure that opposed the corruption of Persian and Arab ideas in the thirteenth century. In the prevailing political environment of Turkey in the 1970s, he was connected to opposition to western imperialism and

---

82   Abdal Musa Commemoration Ceremonies, Hamza Baba Commemoration Ceremonies, Seyyit Hacı Ali Turab-ı Veli Commemoration Ceremonies, Hıdır Abdal Sultan Culture Events, Hüseyin Gazi Commemoration Ceremonies, and Veli Baba Commemoration Ceremonies are some of them.

83   Ibid., 93-95.

capitalism.[84] During the 1980s, the festivals were detached from this political context and ceremonies were organized by local authorities with continued participation by Alevis, but with little attention from the media and politicians.[85]

The Alevi revival in the late 1980s revitalized Hacıbektaş Festivals, as well. The public visibility of Alevi identity attracted the attention of politicians, the direct result of which was the "etatization" of the Hacıbektaş Festival. In 1989, the Ministry of Culture took over its organization and transformed it into an international festival. This indicated the discursive participation of the state on the formation of Alevi identity through the organization of festival.[86] The number of ministers and deputies that attended the festival radically increased, and the President Süleyman Demirel attended for the first time in 1994. After 1994, participation of the president was traditionalized. By the nineteen nineties, the festival had become a space of negotiation between the state and agents of Alevi politics. The revitalization of the Hacıbektaş Festival not only reflected the increasing interest of the state, but also of the Alevis in the event. The number of the participants increased from 50 thousand in 1993 to 500 thousand in 1998.[87]

The festival program starts with an opening ceremony which consists of speeches by the mayor of Hacıbektaş, the Minister of Culture, the president, and leaders of political parties. After the opening ceremony, panels are held on politics in general and on debates within Alevism.[88] Speakers are the Alevi intellectuals who played a crucial role in the Alevi revival through their books

---

84 Meral Salman, *The Role of the Memorial Ceremonies of Hacıbektaş Veli in Construction the Alevi-Bektaşi Identity*, M.A. Thesis, Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University, 2005, 57.

85 Ibid., 61.

86 Işıl Tombul, "Hırka Altında Siyaset: Hacı Bektaş Veli Anma Törenleri" in *Hacı Bektaş Veli*, (eds.) Pınar Ecevitoğlu, Ali Murat İrat and Ayhan Yalçınkaya (Ankara: Dipnot, 2010), 281.

87 Elise Massicard, "Alevism as a Productive Misunderstanding: The Hacıbektaş Festival" in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma A Comprehensive Overview*, (eds.) P. J White and J. Jongerden (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 127-128.

88 "Democracy Secularism and Alevism," "Alevi Bektashi Tradition and Culture," "Women's Place in Alevi Bektashi Thought," "Alevi-Bektashi Thought of Yesterday and Today," "Hacıbektaş and Tolerance," and "*Dedelik* Institutions in Alevi Bektashi Thought" are some topics of panel discussions at festivals.

and articles, as well as academics and journalists. The panels have an important place in the ceremony, because they instruct participants who come to Hacıbektaş to discover and declare their Alevi identity.

The instruction of the participants is not limited to these panels. The streets of Hacıbektaş districts are set up as a bazaar. Books on Alevism, Alevi periodicals, and pictures of Alevi figures such as Ali, Hussein, the twelve Imams and Hacı Bektaş are available for sale. More importantly, concerts by Alevi musicians and *semah* performances bring together Alevi participants physically and emotionally. All of these activities contribute to the adaptation of Alevism to the modern situation within the context of identity politics.

The agents of the Alevi identity politics and representatives of state meet at the Hacıbektaş Festivals. Thus, the festival establishes a public contact between the state and Alevi associations. On one hand, Alevi associations directly declare their demands to state officials; on the other, government agencies express the official positions of state with respect to Alevism. The Hacıbektaş Festival can thus be comprehended as an arena of negotiation where political Alevism is present.

The representation of the state at the festivals suggests the formal recognition of Alevi identity; however, the relation between the state and Alevi associations remains antagonistic. When the Ministry of Culture undertook the organization of the Hacıbektaş Festival, Alevi associations published a notice declaring that the state should not be manipulating the ceremonies in an effort to assimilate Alevism. They demanded that the municipality of Hacıbektaş and Hacıbektaş associations prepare the festival program.[89] After the reaction by Alevi associations, the Ministry of Culture authorized the municipality of Hacıbektaş to organize festival in keeping with the demands of the associations. The declaration clearly revealed the struggle between the state and agents of Alevism over the shaping of Alevism through the Hacıbektaş Festival program.

Festivals enable Alevi associations to put forward their demands directly and powerfully to state officials. For example, Alevi associations prepared a

---

89   "Hacıbektaş Veliyi Anma Törenleri Onun Felsefesine Uygun Biçimde Yapılmalıdır," *Cem* 4 (September 1991): 15.

list of demands to read at the opening ceremony in the presence of the president and prime minister in 1998. Demands included the abolition of the 1982 constitution, the abolition of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, abandonment of mosque construction in Alevi villages, an end to the broadcasting on television and radio that addresses the beliefs only one sect, the formal recognition of the name "Alevi" and ten years of compulsory primary education.[90] Although these are the general demands of Alevi associations, their presentation to authorities at the Hacıbektaş Festival strengthened their political messages.

The Hacıbektaş Festivals also became domains in which the official discourse of the state on Alevism was voiced. The first speech of Süleyman Demirel in 1994 was summarized the official discourse, which has been repeated in all subsequent festivals. He focused on the religious pluralism and cultural richness of Turkish society saying that freedom of thought and faith in a democratic-secular state is guarantees the unity of Alevis and Sunnis. He also referred to Hacıbektaş-ı Veli and claimed that he advised all citizens on the fraternity of different sects and participation the same nation. Lastly, Demirel advised Alevis not to separate themselves from society even if they are exposed to unequal treatment.[91] Official speeches at the Hacıbektaş Festival have consisted of various promises and rhetorical elements designed to placate participants. The speeches are also aimed to make Alevis believe they are equal to Sunnis and to incorporate them to protect national and social unity.[92] Massicard asserts that "Hacıbektaş is also an occasion for which Alevism is presented as a source of authenticity and Turkishness and a resource against Islamist and Kurdish national movements."[93]

To sum up, festivals appears in the sphere of the politicization of Alevism through negotiation between Alevi associations and state. Moreover, Alevi festivals in the 1990s became one of the main platforms through which Alevi

90   "Adımızı İstiyoruz" *Cem* 43 (September 1998): 43.

91   Ayhan Aydın, "Hacıbektaş Veli'yi Anma Etkinlikleri," *Cem* 40 (September 1994): 33-34.

92   Zeki Uyanık, *The Alevis in Post-1980 Turkey: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Official Texts*, PhD Dissertation, The Graduate School of Social Sciences of the Middle East Technical University Sociology Department, 2009, 273.

93   Massicard, "Alevism as a Productive Misunderstanding: The Hacıbektaş Festival," 138.

identity became visible. The community came together in these festivals, discovered their Alevism, and identified themselves as part of a particular community. The festivals transformed an "imagined" Alevi community into a "real" one. Paul Cannerton questions what is actually remembered in commemorative ceremonies concluding that "community is reminded of its identity as represented and told in a master narrative."[94] In this regard, the commemorative ceremonies of Alevis remind them to be Alevi and reproduce their Alevi identity.

§ 4.5   Alevi Intellectuals

The previous section demonstrates that serial articles in daily newspapers played a crucial role in the public visibility of Alevism. These serial articles were prepared by Alevi intellectuals who had written dozens of books on the history of Alevism and the actual demands of the Alevi community. On a theoretical level, written texts on Alevism indicate one important aspect of the Alevi revival: transformation of an oral tradition into written texts. Accordingly, a host of books, booklets, and journals were published in the 1990s in order to elucidate, describe, and popularize Alevism. A new social category of Alevi researcher-writers played a crucial role in publication boom about Alevism.

Analyzing relation between nationalism and nationalist intellectuals, Anthony Smith underscores that ideological conceptualizations by nationalistic intellectuals produce the political language of nationalist discourse. He then asks "How shall we explain the attraction of nationalism for many intellectuals?" The answer to this question is in the identity crises of the intellectuals themselves stemming from challenges posed to traditional religion and society by the scientific state and western revolutions. The legitimization of religion and tradition has been eroded by scientific techniques and attitudes. In this context, the historicism of nationalism provides a comprehensive expla-

---

94   Paul Cannerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 70.

nation of the universe - as a new set of ideas - while "at the same time integrating the past (tradition), the present (reason) and the future (perfectibility)" in a world where "the old religious-world views [are not] appealing to an external principle of creation."[95]

In other words, the integration of intellectuals in the discourse of nationalism has to do with the erosion of earlier forms of culture. The aforementioned analysis by Smith offers a valid explanation for the change in Alevi intellectuals' relationships with their culture. Alevi researcher-writers re-proposed and re-elaborated the cultural, political, and religious concepts of Alevi identity in the 1990s in order to solve their own identity crisis, as well as the Alevi community's. This identity crisis derives from the postmodern epistemological challenge to the premises of modernism that triggered the politicization of cultural identities, the collapse of the Soviet Union that transformed the political language of a bipolar world system, and urbanization that dissolved the traditional social structure of the Alevi community.

In his criticism of postmodernism, Callinicos asserts that the political odyssey of the 1968 generation plays a crucial role in the spread of postmodernism. Although the 1960s were characterized by important social movements - from youth movement to guerilla warfare all over the world including Europe, Czechoslovakia, the Unites States, Latin America, and the Far East - the movement became disillusioned in the 1970s and the capitalist system was re-stabilized under the leadership of the New Right or military dictatorships. Radicalized activists of the 1968 generation, who were now middle-aged, were incorporated into the professional and managerial middle class in the 1970s. The hope of revolution was gone, but it was not replaced with the virtues of capitalist democracy. In this context, postmodernism emerged as the expression of denouement enabling the integration of disappointed, formerly radical activists into the socio-political system.[96]

Postmodernism thus appears as a response of the intelligentsia to the defeat of 1968 generation. In other words, it indicates the identity crisis of ex-radical, revolutionary intelligentsia under the conditions of neo-liberalism.

---

95   Anthony Smith, "Nationalism and Cultural Identity," in *National Identity* (London, Penguin, 1991), 93-96.

96   Callinicos, *Against Postmodernism*, 166-170.

Postmodernism enabled the shift of the policymaking process from the economy to culture in the context of the intelligentsia rediscovering their cultural identity as an area of struggle. Therefore, the importance of cultural identity for the intelligentsia in the postmodern age can be understood as functional equivalent to the relationship between nationalist ideology and intellectuals in the Smithian sense.

The historical background nurturing Alevi intellectuals affirms the analysis of Callinicos. They grew up in the early years of internal migration and received a modern secular education. They had some higher education, so they have access to knowledge of history, sociology, and politics. Most agents of the Alevi identity movement constituted of the revolutionary leftist movements of the 1970s.[97] After the 1980 military coup, as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of the identity politics, these university-educated intellectuals resigned from "outmoded" leftist politics and entered cultural politics. They discovered their Alevism and realized that their revolutionary values were inherent to their Alevi culture. The historicism, democratic essence, and secularism of Alevi identity combined the past, present, and future for Alevi intellectuals. The Alevi identity not only filled the gaps in the post-Soviet world for these writers, but also enabled them to integrate into the policy making process and public debate. Therefore, a majority of these intellectuals took active roles in Alevi associations, giving speeches at conferences organized by Alevi associations, and writing in various Alevi periodicals in the 1990s.[98]

Alevi intellectuals wrote several books on the rise of Alevism, its historical phases of development, its affiliation with the Republican regime, and the relationship between the Alevi community and actual political institutions. Their books have been reprinted multiple times and unmistakably contributed to the popularization of the discourses of Alevism, which makes them worth examining.

One of the main themes pursued by Alevi writers concerns the content of Alevism. What is the meaning of Alevism? Is it a culture or religious sect? These questions, which would become one of the main areas of contention

---

97 Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, 79.

98 Şahin, "The Rise of Alevism as Public Religion," 471.

between Alevi associations, are widely covered in the texts of Alevi writers. On the one hand, the search for answers to these questions directs writers towards a conceptual discussion about the relationship between Alevism, Bektashism, and Shiism. On the other hand, as researcher-writers have attempted to historically contextualize the definition of these, they are writing the history of Alevism while defining it.

Alevi researcher-writers generally accept the syncretistic character of Alevism which is that it is the synthesis of various beliefs including Central Asiatic and Mesopotamian religious beliefs (Shamanism, Buddhism, Manichaeism and Zoroastrianism), antique Anatolian traditions (antique Greek and Christianity), and Esoteric Islam.[99] Although Reha Çamuroğlu and Esat Korkmaz warn researcher-writers to evaluate Alevism on a theoretical level with reference not only to Islam, but also to all religious beliefs that have affected its syncretic character,[100] most researcher-writers bring focus on the relation of Alevism and Islam.

In this context, geography and ethnicity become tools that bridge Alevism with Islam. On one hand, Alevism is assessed as an adaptation of Islam to the Anatolian context or as a variety of Islam "speaking" the Anatolian language.[101] On the other, Turkishness appears as another concept that relates Alevism to Islam. In this respect, Alevism is evaluated as a Turkish interpretation of Islam vis-à-vis Arabic Sunnism and Persian Shiism.[102]

Alevi researcher-writers contextualize their assessments on Alevism, seeking to establish an Alevi historiography in their studies. This historiography starts with the death of the Prophet Mohammed and debates on the election of the caliphate. Alevism takes Ali's side in these debates. Alevis support Ali, claiming that the caliphate was Ali's due, as he was nominated as the caliphate by Mohammad.[103] Moreover, Rıza Zelyut believes that Ali was also the leader of the oppressed class against the regain of control over the Arab Peninsula by Arab feudal landlords. Consequently, Alevism appears as the ideology of a

---

99   Esat Korkmaz, *Anadolu Aleviliği* (Istanbul: Berfin, 2000), 120.

100   Reha Çamuroğlu, *Günümüz Aleviliğinin Sorunları* (Istanbul: Ant, 1992), 42.

101   Cemal Şener, *Alevilik Olayı* (Istanbul: Ant, 1989).

102   Burhan Kocadağ, *Alevi Bektaşi Tarihi* (Istanbul: Can, 1996), 196.

103   Şener, *Alevilik Olayı*, 16.

specific class, and Sunnism indirectly becomes the belief of the powerful in the power struggle of Islamic history.[104] Therefore, in retrospect, the partisanship of Ali means being socialist in the seventh century Arabian Peninsula.[105]

This historiography continues with an analysis of the Umayyad Dynasty, the Kerbela Massacre (the killing of Hussein, son of Ali), and the Abbasid Dynasty. The development of Shiism is also narrated in this historiography. Although both Alevism and Shiism are based on love of Ali, Shiism focuses on the Sharia rather than on the Truth.[106] Theologically Alevism assesses Islam not only through the angle of the Sharia, but also through the point of view of the Truth. This is the main theological difference between Shiism and Alevism.

Alevi intellectuals clearly establish a historical narrative that reassesses common Islamic history within the preconception of the rightfulness of Ali and his family. The critical point in this historiography is the linking of Alevism with Anatolia, because Alevi writers believe that the pure form of Alevism emerged in Anatolia.[107] In fact, Anatolia appears as the geographical sphere of the amalgamation of Turkishness and Islamism in the form of Alevism. Anatolia is the motherland of the Alevism and Alevism is hence Turkicized and Islamized Anatolia. At which point, Khrosanian dervishes convey Islam according to the Turkmen way of life, contributing to the spread of the Islam across Anatolia. Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli, as a Khrosanian dervish, appears as a central figure for the formation of Alevism and Turkicization of Anatolia.[108]

Asserting the vital role of revolts in the formation of Alevism in Anatolia, studies by Alevi writers deal with Anatolian revolts from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century. Analyzing the peasant revolt in Germany, Engels asserts that the ideas of Müntzer formed an ideology for the oppressed classes. In this manner, he assesses peasant revolts not as a clash of religious sects, but as class

---

104 Rıza Zelyut, *Öz Kaynaklarına Göre Alevilik* (Istanbul: Anadolu Kültürü Yayınları 1990), 20-21.

105 Baki Öz, *Alevilik Nedir?* (Istanbul: Der, 2008), 73.

106 Zelyut, *Öz Kaynaklarına Göre Alevilik*, 48.

107 Şener, *Alevilik Olayı*, 16 and Zelyut, *Öz Kaynaklarına Göre Alevilik*, 25.

108 Nejat Birdoğan, *Anadolu'nun Gizli Kültürü Alevilik* (Istanbul: Kaynak, 2003), 120 and Zelyut, *Öz Kaynaklarına Göre Alevilik*, 25.

war.[109] Alevi writers explicitly adopt analysis of Engels to analyze Alevi revolts in Anatolia in the context of class struggle.

Rıza Zelyut claims that class divisions in Anatolia were embodied in the forms of Alevism and Sunnism in the middle ages. To wit, Alevism is the ideology of oppressed and Alevi revolts are evaluated as the class war of an oppressed people.[110] Alevi writers especially focused on the Babai revolt, corresponding to the fall of the Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate in 1240. Atilla Özkırımlı deals with the Babai Revolt in the framework of power struggles of ruling elites, a collopsed land regime, changes in demographic composition as a result of Mongolian migration, and the formation of a new, prosperous trade class. All these factors nurture social unrests among the peasantry, leading to the Babai Revolt.[111] The influence of Engels is reflected in the historiography of Özkırımlı, an Alevi researcher-writer.

Alevi revolts in the century have attracted the attention of Alevi writers, as well. They claim Alevis played an important role in the formation of the Ottoman state. Bektashism, as the guild of the Janissaries indicates the affiliation between Alevis and the Ottoman state; however, when the Ottoman state was institutionalized and adopted Sunni Islam as the formal state religion, the Ottomans became alienated from the Anatolian people, and class divisions between Ottoman elites and the peasants deepened. Alevi revolts in the sixteenth century were the result of the alienation of the Ottoman state from the Anatolian people.[112] Moreover, the formation of the Turkmen Safavid state in Iran under the influence of Alevi ideology and the leadership of Shah Ismail triggered Alevi revolts in Anatolia. These revolts were suppressed, 40 thousand Alevis were killed, and many chose to relocate to isolated districts to escape the oppression of the Ottoman authorities.[113]

The relation between Alevis and the Republic is another historical topic with which many Alevi intellectuals deal. They agree on the support of Alevis

---

109   Friedrich Engels, *Köylüler Savaşı*, trans. Kenan Somer (Ankara: Sol, 1999).

110   Zelyut, *Öz Kaynaklarına Göre Alevilik*, 40.

111   Atilla Özkırımlı, *Toplumsal Bir Başkaldırının İdeolojisi: Alevilik-Bektaşilik* (Istanbul: Cem, 1990), 67.

112   Şener, *Alevilik Olayı*, 123.

113   Öz, *Alevilik Nedir?*, 201.

for National Struggle. According to Alevi writers, this support stemmed from the subversion of Ottoman feudalism and the emancipation of Alevis from religious pressures.[114] In this respect, the Republic indicates the end of the four-century dark age for Alevis.[115] The visit of Mustafa Kemal to the Hacıbektaş Lodge in 1919 and his conversation with Bektashi religious leaders is the apex of the narratives. Alevi writers claim that in this meeting, they discussed the formation of a Republican regime to follow the National Struggle. The support of Alevis was not one-sided a. At the same time, Atatürk prized the support of Alevis because he did not trust Sunnis in a struggle with the Caliph. The vice president of the Grand National Assembly was Cemalettin Çelebi, a religious authority of the Dedegan branch of the Bektashi Order, and many Alevi deputies took part in the first assembly.[116]

It should be underscored that despite the consistency of this historiography, there is no consensus among Alevi researcher-writers on the definition and history of Alevism. Despite the hegemony of the Turkish-Alevism thesis, there are studies that evaluate Alevism on the basis of Mesopotamian Kurdish beliefs, such as Zoroastrianism.[117] Ethnicity has always been an important, contested sphere among Alevi writers while defining Alevism. Another debatable issue of Alevi historiography is relationship between Alevism and Islam. In spite of the hegemony favoring the Islamist character of Alevism in popular studies on Alevism, Nejat Birdoğan has assessed Alevism as a religion independent from Islam.[118]

Despite different interpretations of the definition and history of Alevism, the aforementioned story is common in the popular historiography of Alevism. It claims that Alevism stems from unfairness towards Ali and the struggle for the caliphate after the death of the Prophet. It evolves together with the religious beliefs that Turks encounter during their migration from Central

---

114   Rıza Zelyut, *Aleviler Ne Yapmalı* (Istanbul: Yön, 1993), 56.

115   Kocadağ, *Alevi Bektaşi Tarihi*, 154.

116   Cemal Şener, *Atatürk ve Aleviler* (Istanbul: Ant, 1991).

117   See. Cemşid Bender, *Kürt Uygarlığında Alevilik* (Istanbul: Kaynak, 1991) and Ethem Xemgin, *Aleviliğin Kökenindeki Mazda İnancı ve Zerdüşt Öğretisi* (Istanbul: Berfin, 1995).

118   Birdoğan, *Anadolu'nun Gizli Kültürü Alevilik*, 33-43 and Nejat Birdoğan, *Anadolu Aleviliğinde Yol Ayrımı* (Istanbul: Mozaik, 1995), 13.

Asia to Anatolia. Thus, Alevism appears as a reassessment of Islam in the context of Turkishness, specifically in Anatolia.

In addition to the debates on the historiography and cosmology of Alevism, Alevi writers deal with the actual political position of Alevis, as well. In this manner, the assessment of the actual politics and political preferences of Alevis have been other important topics of study by Alevi writers. They believe that after the death of Atatürk, Alevis affiliated with leftist politics due to the threat their community. On the other hand, leftist politics was able to organize among the poorest social classes of society by means of Alevis. Therefore, Alevis mostly supported socialists in the 1960s and 1970s.[119]

They claim that the affiliation between the Alevis and the left was contingent. Alevis supported leftist politics because it combined equality and freedom under a socialist discourse. But while socialism was a political ideology, Alevism was a religious thought; in other words, their base criterion was radically different.[120] As the threat of Sharia increased, Alevis became despaired with leftist politics, which lost power as a result of the military coup of 1980 and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Moreover, they rediscovered their Alevi identity.[121]

After Alevi writers formulated the dynamics of the Alevi revival, they listed the actual demands of Alevis: (1) the formal recognition of the *cemevi*s as houses of prayer, (2) changes to the formal statues of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, (3) the representation of Alevism in state radio and television, and (4) courses on Alevism in school curricula.[122]

The Alevi writers broadly agree upon these demands; however, they dissent with respect to actual political preferences. Although most Alevi writers believe that Alevis are threatened by Sharia, they disagree on how to avoid this danger. Analyzing the support of Alevis for the CHP, Cemal Şener asserts that Alevis were aware of the CHP's deficiencies but believed it was the lesser evil

---

119   Zelyut, *Aleviler Ne Yapmalı*, 82.

120   Çamuroğlu, *Günümüz Aleviliğinin Sorunları*, 80-81.

121   Zelyut, *Aleviler Ne Yapmalı*, 40.

122   Birdoğan, *Anadolu'nun Gizli Kültürü Alevilik*, 504 and Şener, *Alevilik Olayı*, 161-162.

and ideologically closest among contemporaneous political parties. Therefore, Alevis have supported either the CHP or other center-left parties.[123]

There is not specific answer how Alevis should vote in elections. Burhan Kocadağ argues that Alevis should not establish an Alevi party and should support the CHP monolithically. The main aim of Alevis should be the get Alevi deputies into parliament.[124] Rıza Zelyut believes that the affiliation between Alevis and leftist politics should come to an end. Moreover, Alevis should question the naturalness of their affiliation with the SHP/CHP tradition. Because the SHP/CHP take Alevis for granted, it does not develop a political agenda for Alevi rights. Moreover, the SHP/CHP prevent Alevis from relating to other political parties. To wit, the main aim of Alevis should be to enact Alevi deputies into parliament from any political party. These deputies should act monolithically according to the demands and interests of the Alevi community. The only criterion of their political activity should be their Alevi identity.[125] In this regard, Zelyut imagines an independent Alevi culture that is independent of all political ideologies.

Some Alevi writers establish only general principles for Alevis and do not deal with real politics and actual political institutions. For instance, Esat Korkmaz claims that the republican regime has not yet reckoned with the feudal middle ages. Alevism, as an Enlightenment movement of Anatolia against thousand years of religious pressure should direct its secularism to the struggle of democracy on the basis of Alevi identity.[126]

The political leadership of Alevi intellectuals for the movement not only stems from their discussion of historical and political problems on the basis of Alevism. Alevi writers also display a knowledge of the religious dimensions of the Alevism. The religious conceptualization of Alevism - such as *musahiblik* and *düşkünlük* - and detailed depictions of *cem* ceremonies are indispensable parts of Alevi studies.

When the works of Alevi intellectuals are examined vis-à-vis those of Alevi *dede*s, categorical differences stand out. Mehmet Yaman, an Alevi *dede*,

---

123 Şener, *Aleviler Ne Yapmalı*, 83.

124 Kocadağ, *Alevi Bektaşi Tarihi*, 207.

125 Zelyut, *Aleviler Ne Yapmalı*, 82-98.

126 Korkmaz, *Anadolu Aleviliği*, 179-183.

wrote a book on Alevism in the 1990s in which the history of Alevism starts with debates on the caliphate after the death of the Prophet. Yaman shows why the caliphate was Ali's due. In this manner, this starting point resembles that of Alevi writers; however, he passes over the political history of Alevism. His study does not contain detailed histories of the Seljuk Sultanate and Ottoman Empire, nor the detailed historiography of Alevi revolts in the sixteenth century. Ali appears as the shah of the saints, not as a "socialist" leader.[127] Shah İsmail is assessed as one of the seven great poets of Alevism; according to Yaman; he is portrayed as a religious figure rather than a political one.[128] Moreover, prayers special to Alevis, fasting, religious duties, and the obligations of Alevism are conveyed.[129] The content of the study clearly indicates that its author is a religious scholar rather than a secular intellectual. The basic aim of Yaman is to hand down religious Alevism to subsequent generations rather than to reform Alevism as a political force.

The differences between Alevi writers and the *dede*s correspond with differences between traditional and resurgent Alevism of the 1990s. The Alevi revival refers to an independent political movement that stems from Alevism. While the prestige of the *dede*s who were the authentic authority in traditional Alevism increase, their monopoly over the reproduction and spread of the knowledge has come to an end. The *dede*s are indirectly forced to share authority with a new social group of Alevi intellectuals, which reproduces and spreads the knowledge of a political Alevism with reference to historical, political, and religious learning.

Why are the studies of Alevi writers important? Because they create mass readership around popular literature that is within everybody's reach. On one hand, popular studies have contributed to the Alevi revival by defining Alevism and writing its history. On the other, increased attention to these studies was a direct result of the revival. These studies were not only the simultaneous contributor and result of the process of Alevi revival, but also the main sources through which the community of Alevis learned the basics of Alevism. The

---

127   Mehmet Yaman, *Alevilik* (Istanbul: Demos, 2011), 324.

128   Ibid., 334-344.

129   Ibid., 212-267.

younger generation of Alevis learned the basics of their revived Alevi identity from the books of Alevi researcher-writers.

Analyzing the relation between Protestantism and print capitalism, Benedict Anderson states that written literature creates new, large, reading publics and simultaneously mobilizes them for politico-religious purposes.[130] He asserts that "the print capitalism gave a new fixity to language which in the long run helped to build that image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of nation… printed books kept a permanent form, capable of virtually infinite reproduction temporally and spatially."[131]

Similarly, books on Alevism and their themes contribute to the standardization of the knowledge of Alevism. The history of Alevis dates back to debates on the caliphate, and upon this fact, Alevism gains a power of resistance vis-à-vis current political arguments. They have created a literature on Alevism that can be consulted anywhere and time. The name of a book by Alevi *dede* Ali Haydar Cilasun declares "Alevism is No Secret." It is ready to participate in the policymaking process.

This chapter situates the Alevi revival of the 1990s in the historical context of a postmodern intellectual environment of identity politics. The centrality of culture to Alevi politicization in this period is examined in contrast with previous forms political participation by Alevi individuals, as well as its relationship to Islamist and Kurdish political movements of the same period. On one hand, the rise of political Islam, the RP's electoral success, and the increasing presence of Islam in daily life direct Alevis to join together under the banner of Alevi identity. On the other, the Kurdish question, which challenges the monist conceptualization of Turkish citizenship on the basis Turk/Sunni identities, leads Alevis to question the sectarian aspects of Turkish citizenship.

The increasing public appearance of Alevi culture became an important aspect of the Alevi revival. Series of articles in the mainstream media, a host of books on Alevism written by Alevi researcher-writers and festivals dedicated to Alevi saints not only popularized Alevism but also reformulated the history and culture of Alevis in line with the needs of Alevi politics.

---

130   Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991), 40.

131   Ibid., 44.

The politicization of Alevism on the basis of Alevi identity cannot be scrutinized without regard to massacres suffered by Alevis in the 1990s. The Madımak Massacre (1993) and Gazi Events (1995) play vital roles for the Alevi movement, leading Alevis to claim their identity even more passionately in reaction. More importantly, both the Madımak massacre and Gazi events contribute to the formation of an Alevi collective identity, the main constituents of which become massacres. Due to the fact that massacres play a crucial role in the politicization dynamic of Alevism, the next chapter examines Alevi massacres as a constituent of the politicization of Alevism.

5

Alevi Massacres as the Component of the Alevi Politicization

The dynamics of the politicization of Alevism were examined in the previous chapters. The next two chapters scrutinize the political agenda of the agents of Alevi movement and their relations among one another. However, this examination requires a discussion of the massacres of Alevi in the 1990s. The tragic incident at the Madımak Hotel in Sİvas and the attacks against Alevis in the Gazi neighborhood of Istanbul played an important role in the organization of Alevi movement, but they also have the potential to contribute to an analysis of Turkish politics through the lens of the Alevi movement. These traumatic events both contributed to the increasing importance attached to Alevi associations and paved the way for the formation of an Alevi party. In other words, they played a vital role for the politicization of Alevi social identity. Therefore, the role of these massacres in the Alevi movement deserves an in-depth analysis.

The massacres at Madımak and Gazi recall similar attacks against the Alevis in the late 1970s. These hostilities together create a collective memory whereby victims of the Karbala massacre of 680 were linked to those who suffered during the 1995 Gazi events. Feelings of victimhood thus play a crucial role not only in the rise of Alevi movement in the 1990s, but also in the formation of the language of the Alevi politicization. Unlike the literature on the Alevi movement, this dissertation attaches particular importance of massacres

for the construction of Alevi collective memory and for the dynamics of politicization in the Alevi movement.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the massacres and the ensuing court cases. The influence of the Madımak and Gazi massacres on the Alevi movement is examined within the framework of the relationship between trauma and identity. These two traumatic incidents resurrected memories of Alevi massacres in Malatya, Sivas, Maraş, and Çorum in the late 1970s, which I also discuss in this chapter to paint a complete picture of the collective formation of memory based on victimhood. The chapter thus scrutinizes how victimhood has become a component of Alevi politics and directs its orientation.

An interesting aspect of the role of the massacres in the politicization of Alevism concerns the place of the Dersim tragedy of 1938 in Alevi collective memory. Although the Kurdish movement's influence over Kurdish Alevis brought Dersim to the political agenda in the 1990s, major Alevi associations preferred not to commemorate that particular episode in Alevi history. Therefore, the collective memory of the Dersim massacre remained limited to Kurdish Alevis in the 1990s.

The way the Dersim massacre was remembered or forgotten demonstrates the multilayered relationship and contested character of collective memory, as well as the heterogeneity of identity. All agents of Alevi politics differently construct their collective memory by selectively commemorating the history of Alevi massacres. The plurality of collective memory on the question of massacres indicates the existence of different interpretations of Alevi identity in line with the ethnic and political differences of those who memorialize them. The contested Alevi collective memory also indicates the problems of uniform cultural approaches that treat cultural groups as homogenous entities. Therefore, while analysis of Alevi massacres contributes to the broader analysis of politicization dynamic of Alevi identity, it also points to the limits of identity politics.

§ 5.1 Alevi Massacres that Opened Pandora's Box: The Madımak Massacre and Gazi Events

The previous chapter showed that Alevis started to bring Alevi identity into public debates in the early 1990s. Massacres that Alevis suffered motivated them to claim their Alevi identity more fervently in the 1990s. The Madımak massacre (1993) and Gazi events (1995) were two traumatic events that played a crucial role in the growth of the Alevi identity movement, and the analysis of the role of massacres for the movement should begin with these.

The Madımak massacre happened on 2 July 1993 during the Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Activities organized by the Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Association (*Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği* – PSAKD). The organization of Pir Sultan festivals dates back to the late 1970s. The festivals had been organized twice (in 1978 and 1979) in Sivas's village of Banaz where Pir Sultan Abdal had lived in the sixteenth century. After the military coup of 1980, the organization of the festivals stopped until 1992, when the PSAKD again organized the Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Activities in Banaz.[1]

The PSAKD decided to celebrate its fourth Pir Sultan Abdal Festival in the first days of July 1993 in both Sivas and Banaz. Murtaza Demir, the chairman of the PSAKD from 1988 to 1998, stated that the association decided to celebrate the festival in Sivas because it did not want to limit Pir Sultan Abdal's image as a poet and political activist to his own village. Due to the universality of Pir Sultan's message, his festival needed to go extend Banaz. Sivas, where Pir Sultan Abdal was executed by hanging, was a fitting place for commemorating Pir Sultan Abdal.[2]

The first two days of the festival (1-2 July) were planned to take place in Sivas and the subsequent two days (3-4 July) would take place in Banaz, as was customary. Famous Alevi musicians and intellectuals were invited to the festival.[3] The writer Aziz Nesin was another guest. Because he had translated

---

1   Murtaza Demir, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 28.02.2014.

2   Murtaza Demir, *Ateş-i Aşk: Sivas Katliamının Gerçek Hikayesi* (Istanbul: Kırmızıkedi, 2013), 16-17.

3   The some participants in festival were Arif Sağ, Muhlis Akarsu, Nesimi Çimen, Musa Eroğlu, Hasret Gültekin, Asım Bezirci, and Metin Altıok. See Murtaza Demir, "Pir Sultan Abdal 4. Kültür Etkinlikleri," *Pir Sultan Abdal 7* (June 1993): 15-16.

some sections of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* in *Aydınlık* and openly declared his atheism, he had become the target of radical Islamists. These groups reacted to his presence in Sivas by spreading the slogan: "the friend of the Satan is among us."

On Thursday, 1 July, the festival program was held as planned. After opening speeches, including ones by the governor of Sivas and by Aziz Nesin, there was a concert, and a conference on the topic "From the Ages of Pir Sultans to Modern Pir Sultans." In the evening, book stands and photographic exhibitions were set up in the Medrese of Buruciye and there was a slide show. The day ended with a public concert.[4]

Despite the fact that the festival proceeded as planned on 1 July, provocative reports in some local newspapers foreshadowed what would be experienced on 2 July. *Hürdoğan* and *Anadolu* reported that the festival started with a moment of silence for Atatürk, Pir Sultan Abdal, and the revolutionary martyrs, who were declared to be immortal. The local media also reported that Aziz Nesin declared his atheism in the opening ceremony of the festival, thus associating the festival's participants with atheist propaganda. In this regard, a columnist of *Anadolu* with the pen name Ahmet Turgut asked, "Why do we commemorate Pir Sultan in light of his atheism and rebelliousness?" An unsigned article in *Hakikat* stated that the Pir Sultan Festival spread atheist propaganda, but the residents of Sivas would not allow the disparagement of Islam. The headlines of *Hakikat* and *Bizim Sivas* established the atmosphere with the idiom "selling snails in a Muslim neighborhood," ("*Müslüman Mahallesinde Salyangoz Satıyorlar*") which signified the contamination of Islamic neighborhoods by non-Islamic elements.[5]

On Friday 2 July, the program was to be held in the Culture Center and Medrese of Buruciye. An autograph session with writers was held and a theatre play was performed. In the afternoon, a concert by Arif Sağ and a conference on the topic of "Media and Imperialism" was to be held in Culture Center. However, the program would not take place, because a crowd of fundamentalists gathered after the Friday prayer in front of the Sivas Culture Center.

---

4   Öner Yağcı, *Sivas'ı Unutmak* (Istanbul: İleri, 2004), 82-83.

5   Soner Doğan, *Sivas: 2 Temmuz 1993* (Istanbul: Ekim, 2007), 90-120.

The assailants first attacked the Sivas Culture Center, but participants to the festival resisted the attack. The assailants moved to the provincial hall and then returned to the Culture Center. Afterwards they moved to the Madımak Hotel where the invited intellectuals and musicians were staying. Security forces did not disperse the crowd and their numbers increased. They shouted aggressive slogans and threw stones at the hotel. Participants of the Pir Sultan Festival who were stuck in the hotel, attempted to contact the governor and chief of police and wrote a letter to the governor.[6] They also attempted to reach the deputies of political parties to inform them of the alarming situation. Arif Sağ, who was a former deputy of the Social Democratic People's Party (*Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti* – SHP), phoned Seyfi Oktay, the Minister of Justice, and Cevdet Selvi, the General Secretary of the SHP. Aziz Nesin phoned Erdal İnönü, the Vice Prime Minister, and Mehmet Moğultay, the Minister of Labor. These politicians reassured them that the situation was under control.[7] These narratives demonstrate that the political authorities from the governorship to the government were kept informed of the course of events.

While the participants to the festival were attempting to contact politicians, the crowd in front of the hotel grew more aggressive. The mayor from the Welfare Party, Temel Karamollaoğlu, came in front of the hotel to calm the crowd; however, his behaviors only escalated the tension. He made a speech asking the crowd to disperse, but his speech ended with: "May God Be With You." Then, a statue commemorating folk poets and Pir Sultan Abdal was torn down and brought in front of the hotel. The Ministry of Culture had erected this statue in front of the Sivas Culture Center before the festival. It was supposed that removal of the statue would calm the assailants, but it did not. On the contrary, the crowd kept growing and became more uncontrollable.[8]

Since the mayor and governor could not reach an agreement on the course of action to be followed, security forces did not intervene. The crowd first set the hotel on fire, then barricaded the way of the fire brigade and prevented people inside the hotel from escaping. The people inside the hotel realized that they would escape only through their own efforts. Some participants tried to

---

6   Murtaza Demir, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 28.02.2014.

7   Demir, *Ateş-i Aşk: Sivas Katliamının Gerçek Hikayesi,* 61.

8   Şenel Sarıhan (ed.), *Sivas Katliamı Davası,* vol.2, (Ankara: Ankara Barosu Yayınları, 2002), 51.

reach the adjacent building via a light well. However, it was the building of the Grand Unity Party (*Büyük Birlik Partisi* – BBP), a nationalist, conservative party that opposed the Pir Sultan Festival. Although party members in the building did not initially allow the participants of the festival passage, the provincial chairman of the BBP and the formal bodyguard of Aziz Nesin, a police commissar, negotiated and nearly forty people passed through the BBP building and escaped the fire. However, half of the participants of the Pir Sultan Festival remained stuck in the Madımak Hotel.[9]

When security forces started to disperse the crowd and the fire brigade reached the hotel, it was too late. Although some participants including Aziz Nesin were saved from the fire, the consequences were horrific: thirty-five people died. Thirty-three of them were Alevi musicians and intellectuals and two were hotel employees. Two people from the mob also died.[10]

Two years after the Madımak massacre, Alevis suffered another violent incident in the Gazi district of Istanbul. On 12 March 1995, unidentified gunmen captured a taxi, killing its driver, and then fired into crowds sitting at coffeehouses in Gazi. An Alevi *dede* was killed and more than ten were wounded. Although there was a police station close to the coffeehouse, police did not take immediate action. As a result of the death of the Alevi *dede* and the inaction of police, hundreds of people took the streets. When they learned that the assailants escaped, they rioted.

Protesters marched to the police station, but were stopped by policemen. They retreated and the Gazi *cemevi* became the protesters' headquarters.[11] Although most protesters left the *cemevi* in the early hours of the next day, two armored vehicles attacked the *cemevi* and plainclothes police opened fire. Another man was killed in this assault and three were wounded. The police's attack on the *cemevi* was a turning point in the Gazi events. Initially, the Gazi people had accused the police of negligence after the attack on coffeehouses; however, the police's direct attack on the *cemevi* made them believe that the assaults were state-sponsored.[12]

---

9   Lütfi Kaleli, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, 11.03.2014.

10   Ali Yıldırım, *Ateşe Semah Duranlar* (Ankara: Yurt, 1993), 124-194.

11   Tamaşa F. Dural, *Aleviler ve Gazi Olayları* (Istanbul: Ant, 1995), 15-39.

12   Remzi Kazmaz, *Gereği Düşünüldü: Gazi Davası* (Istanbul: 2003), 258.

On 13 March, Alevis from various neighborhoods of Istanbul came to the Gazi district to join the protesters and nearly 10 thousand people marched to the police station to claim the bodies of the dead. When crowd overran barriers set up by security forces and approached the police station, police forces opened fire on the protesters. Street fighting escalated as police chased demonstrators through the street. The outcome of 13 March was horrific, fifteen were killed and more than one hundred people were wounded. It was the bloodiest day of the Gazi events.

After the bloody attack by security forces, protesters withdrew and stood behind barricades. Some SHP deputies, intellectuals, as well as representatives from various Alevi associations came to the Gazi neighborhood in an attempt to mediate between protesters and security forces.[13] However, their attempts remained inconclusive.[14] On 14 March, the governor of Istanbul province imposed martial law in the Gazi district and two neighboring quarters; meanwhile Alevis started to riot in Ümraniye and police forces opened fire on the crowds in there, as well. Four people were killed and martial law was extended to Ümraniye.

The commander of the sixth brigade negotiated with protesters, and the attitude of military forces towards protesters was relatively more moderate than that of police forces. The Brigadier General asked protesters to remove the barricades promising to deliver the bodies of the dead. Protesters demanded the release of detainees, medical treatment for the injured, the revocation of martial law, the withdrawal of security forces from the neighborhood, and the release of the bodies of the dead.[15] Finally, the parties reached a compromise. The bodies were delivered to protesters and the barricades were removed. On 16 March, martial law was revoked, but the results had been tragic. Twenty-one people had been killed and more than 400 wounded in the Gazi and Ümraniye neighborhoods.

---

13   The SHP deputies were Mehmet Sevigen and Salman Kaya. Intellectuals included Zülfü Livaneli, Yalçın Doğan, and Umur Talu.

14   Dural, *Aleviler ve Gazi Olayları*, 67-79.

15   Kazmaz, *Gereği Düşünüldü: Gazi Davası*, 260.

5.1.1 *After the Massacres: Trials of the Madımak and Gazi Cases and Public Opinion*

The way Alevi massacres proceeded in the 1990s should be analyzed taking the subsequent trials into consideration. After the Madımak massacre, parliament established a commission to investigate. The report of the commission, which avoided accusing the assailants and focused on the "social sensibility" of Sivas, disappointed Alevis. The report criticized Aziz Nesin's coming to Sivas, his "provocative" speeches, the organization of the festival in Sivas rather than Banaz, and the propaganda of radical leftist organizations with the posters featuring Lenin, Mahir Çayan, and red flags. Moreover, it was underscored that the "Sivas events" (not massacre) was not a clash of sects, but a provocation that got out of control because of the imprudence of local authorities and security forces.[16]

The loneliness of Alevis was not limited to the stances of political parties. The public opinion approached the Madımak massacre using the term "grievous provocation." Mainstream newspapers *Sabah* and *Hürriyet* claimed that the Sivas "events" stemmed from provocation and the imprudence of local authorities and security forces that aggravated the situation. While mainstream media indiscriminately laid the burden on organizers of the festival, local authorities, and assailants within a discourse of "provocation and negligence,"[17] the conservative media (*Zaman, Milli Gazete,* and *Türkiye)* claimed that the events stemmed from provocation by Aziz Nesin. Moreover, they added that "groups aiming to break the peace in Turkey" manipulated the crowd.[18] Right-wing politicians and the media put the responsibility on the shoulders of Alevis. In other words, Alevis were deemed responsible for a process of which they were the victims.

The disappointment of Alevis grew with court decisions. The State Security Court of Ankara handed down judgments for 124 defendants. The court

---

16 Şenel Sarıhan (ed.), *Sivas Katliamı Davası*, vol.1, (Ankara: Ankara Barosu Yayınları, 2002), 130-176.

17 "Interview with Ali Balkız," in *Onlar Işık Oldular,* (ed.) Ahmet Koçak (Istanbul: Alev, 2003), 16.

18 Haydar Gölbaşı, *Aleviler ve Sivas Olayları* (Istanbul: Ant, 1997), 95-125.

sentenced twenty-three defendants to imprisonment for fifteen years, three defendants for ten years, one defendant for five years, fifty-four defendants for three years and six defendants for two years. Thirty-seven of the accused were acquitted.[19] More importantly the court, too, referred to provocation, which was used as an extenuating circumstance. The Prosecutor of the State Security Court, Nusret Demiral, summarized the indictment by stating that "there was no illegal organization, it was a mere provocation."[20]

The Alevi public was indignant toward the decision of the State Security Court. The PSAKD, as organizer of the festival, criticized the decision and stated that the Sivas Massacre cannot be evaluated as the murderous act of a mob under provocation; it was a planned revolt by fundamentalist Islamists against the secular republic. The PSAKD commented that the court decision had not extinguished the Madımak fire; it continued to burn.[21]

This was only the first case, and the decision was later reversed by the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. The State Security Court reopened the case and sentenced the thirty-three defendants to death for their roles in the massacre. When the death penalty was abolished during Turkey's accession process to the European Union, the sentences were commuted. In 2013, the Ministry of Justice declared that there were 27 suspects still serving time for the crimes.[22] Other defendants had been paroled early or released after completing their sentences. In March 2012, the case against the remaining five defendants was dropped owing to the statute of limitations.

The case following the Gazi events went through similar developments. In spite of some nuances, the mainstream media agreed on a discourse of provocation. In this regard, the mainstream media believed that the attacks on the Gazi neighborhood were designed to create a chaotic atmosphere in Turkey on the basis of distinctions between Alevis and Sunnis, Turks and Kurds. After the attack, radical leftist organizations were reported to have provoked the

---

19 Şenel Sarıhan (ed.), *Sivas Katliamı Davası*, vol.2, (Ankara: Ankara Barosu Yayınları, 2002), 227.

20 Ali Balkız, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 02.10.2012.

21 "Karar Madımak Yangınını Söndürmedi, *Pir Sultan* 13 (January 1995): 4-5.

22 http://t24.com.tr/haber/madimak-katliamindan-muebbet-alan-kac-kisi-hapis-yatiyor/224440

Gazi residents to resist against security forces. Due to the manner of the police towards protesters, the Gazi events got out of hand. With the usual references to provocation, Alevis were invited to act sensibly and not be manipulated by internal and external groups trying to destabilize Turkey.[23]

Because of a failure to designate a chief judge, a court case regarding the Gazi events was not conducted between 1995 and 1997. Afterwards, the trials were transferred to Trabzon for security reasons; therefore, defendants were not able to effectively follow the case. The geographic distancing of the trials from the scene of the crime was intended to prevent the "politicization" of the "political trial process" by obstructing the participation of the defendants. Twenty policemen were sued, but only two were pronounced guilty of murder, and their sentences were postponed. Although the Supreme Court revoked the lower court's decision and the case was reopened in Trabzon, families of the victims withdrew from the case. Finally, the court convicted the two suspects handing down a sentence of four years in total. The Supreme Court approved the ultimate decision in 2002.

Madımak and Gazi were deeply traumatic for Alevis. The way public opinion, political parties, and the judiciary responded to the events enhanced the effect of the trauma as Alevis felt helpless and alone both politically and legally.

5.1.2   *Trauma and Identity: Growth of the Alevi Movement*

Trauma implies a breakdown of both meaning and trust, because it refers to a break and a displacement, respectively. Disruptive events break the linear development of history and declare to the victim that the world cannot be accommodated in its previous form.[24] That is why Zerrin Taşpınar, a survivor of the Madımak massacre, concluded her testimony by declaring that "nothing

---

23   Ercan Özyiğit, *Toplumsal İktidar ve Medya: Gazi Mahallesi Olaylarının Basında Sunumu* (Istanbul: Birey, 2008), 59-83.

24   Duncan Bell, "Introduction" in *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship between Past and Present*, (ed.) Duncan Bell (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 8.

will be like before."[25] However, traumatic breakdowns also create new opportunities for innovation and change.[26] In this regard, the fracture of a linear, historical development refers not only to the end of the given sociality, but also to the birth of a new social becoming. Because dealing with trauma contributes to the morphogenesis of culture, it is a stimulating and mobilizing factor for the community. Despite negative, painful short-term consequences, traumas play a functional role as a force of social becoming.[27]

In this context, the Madımak massacre sparked the debate on the social becoming of Alevis. In other words, Alevis started to examine their socio-political position and identity. First of all, Madımak and Gazi revealed how Alevis were alone and defenseless against mass assaults. Furthermore, the trial processes reinforced the loneliness of Alevis. In this regard, the massacres led Alevis to organize on the basis of their identity, because identity appeared as a safe harbor. Arif Sağ, a famous Alevi musician, politician, and survivor of the Madımak massacre, assesses Madımak as a milestone for the Alevi movement because it triggered the embrace of Alevi identity.[28]

The personal story of Fevzi Gümüş indicates the social transformation of Alevi identity after the trauma of the Madımak massacre. Gümüş, who is the former president of both the PSAKD and the Alevi-Bektashi Federation, relates that the Sivas massacre played a crucial role in his participation in the Alevi movement. At the time, Gümüş was a socialist university student. As a consequence of the brutality of the massacre, he began to emphasize his Alevi identity and decided to participate in an Alevi association.[29] His story, which is not unique, shows how the Sivas massacre played a vital role for the discovery of Alevi identity as a political force.

Şehriban Şahin borrows the concept of "suddenly imposed grievances" from Edward Walsh to examine the role of the Sivas and Gazi for the Alevi movement:

---

25   *Sivas Kitabı: Bir Topluöldürümün Öyküsü* (Ankara: Edebiyatçılar Derneği, 1994), 204.

26   Arthur G. Neal, *National Trauma and Colective Memory* (New York: M.E Sharpe, 1998), 18.

27   Piotr Sztompka, "The Trauma of Social Change: A Case of Postcommunist Societies" in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 194.

28   "Interview with Arif Sağ," in *Onlar Işık Oldular,* (ed.) Ahmet Koçak (Istanbul: Alev, 2003), 29.

29   Fevzi Gümüş, interview by the author, tape recording, Bodrum,/Muğla, 24.07.2011.

This concept implies dramatic events that are highly publicized, and often contained unexpected events such as man-made disasters or state sponsored violence that lead to an increased public awareness of and opposition to elements thought to be responsible for the events. In this respect, suddenly imposed grievances can provide favorable conditions for the flourishing of the activities of the social movement.[30]

The Sivas massacre as a "suddenly imposed grievance" paved the way for the increasing importance of Alevi associations. The number of associations and registered members drastically increased. The number of PSAKD branches increased threefold after the Madımak massacre. Other Alevi associations experienced similar growth. There were more than twenty branches of the Hacıbektaş Veli Culture and Promotion Association *(Hacıbektaş Veli Kültür ve Tanıtma Dernekleri – HBVKD)* before the Sivas massacre, but afterwards, the number increased to over fifty. This was a reaction by the Alevi community to the Madımak massacre as they began to embrace their identity.[31]

Increased attention to the Alevi identity was not limited to the number of Alevi associations. After the massacre, interest in Alevi festivals also increased.[32] The Sivas massacre (and also the Gazi events) - as "suddenly imposed grievances"- provided favorable conditions for flourishing activities by the Alevi movement.

Trauma signifies more than the shock induced by facing brutality and death; it is also the betrayal of expectations or faith regarding the social world. Therefore, traumas call the established social world and political alliances into question.[33] The Madımak massacre broke the social routine for Alevis who realized that they could not trust political institutions that kept silent in the face

---

30 Şehriban Şahin, *The Alevi Movement: Transformation from Secret Oral to Public Written Culture in National and Transnational Social Space*, PhD Dissertation, Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science of New School for Social Research, 2001, 161.

31 Hüseyin Yıldırım, interview by the author, tape recording, Bodrum,/Muğla, 25.07.2011.

32 Ali Balkız, "Sivas'ın Üzerinden İki Yıl Geçti Madımak Yangınının Sonuçları Madımak Yangınından Çıkarılacak Dersler" in *Sivas'tan Sydney'e Pir Sultan: Aleviliğin Güncel Sorunları ve Çözüm Önerileri* (Ankara: Prespero Yayınları, 1994), 274.

33 Jenny Eddkins, "Remembering Relationality: Trauma, Time and Politics" in (ed.) Duncan Bell, *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship between Past and Present* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 101.

of the murder of Alevis. They also questioned the legitimacy of the political system.

During the massacre, Prime Minister Tansu Çiller declared that security forces were in control and that "citizens outside" (i.e. the crowd that burned down the hotel) were safe. The leader of the main opposition party, the Motherland Party, Mesut Yılmaz, stated that the Madımak should not be assessed as a social conflict, but as an isolated incident; like thirty people who might have been killed during a football match. He then blamed the governor, saying that if the governor had prevented individuals from infringing the religious sensibilities of the people, the people would have trusted the governor of the state. Therefore, both the political parties in power and the main opposition underscored the "sensibilities of religious people," instead of defending the right to life. After the massacre, President Süleyman Demirel claimed that the events were experienced "under the condition of grievous provocation." The discourse of Demirel represented the formal stand of the state toward the Madımak massacre, which indirectly justified the massacre through the discourse of provocation. However, the marginalization of Alevis was not limited to the stances of right-wing politicians.

When the Sivas massacre occurred, the SHP – for which Alevis mainly voted – was a coalition partner; however, like its partner, it did not take responsibility and remained idle. Intellectuals in the Madımak Hotel got in contact with deputies and ministers of the SHP who reassured them, but their reassurances were ineffective. Moreover, objections of deputies of the SHP to the outcome of the parliamentary investigation committee did not work. The PSAKD accused the SHP of culpability for the massacre in parallel degree for its silence and dormancy.[34] Thus, Alevis lost confidence in all political parties, including the SHP. Because of the parliamentary investigation and criminal trials, their faith in the political system was distressed, and they became alienated from current political conditions. In the second half of the 1990s, this alienation would trigger the formation of an Alevi party, which is analyzed in Chapter 7.

---

34   *Pir Sultan* 8, year: 2 (August 1993): 56.

Although non-Alevis assessed the "Sivas events" within the discourse of provocation, Alevis considered the massacre as a threat to their existence. Alevis witnessed the indolent positions of political parties including the SHP. This feeling of political exclusion was consolidated by the court decisions, and the Alevis felt that the policy making process had always worked against them. For example, Süleyman Cem notes that security forces that remained passive vis-à-vis assailants at the Sivas massacre unhesitatingly opened fire on crowds in the Gazi district. He asks why the actions of security forces and initiatives of policy makers always collude against Alevis.[35] This question clearly summarized Alevis' state of mind after the massacres. Their experience of the massacres urged them to retrospectively interpret the political structure of Turkey as an ongoing entity that has always worked against them.

Murtaza Demir made a speech at the funeral ceremony of those killed in the Madımak Hotel:

> We went to Sivas to sing our folk songs. We did not know that it was a crime. We supposed that there was a state. We supposed that there was a party that we supported. We supposed that we had deputies and ministers; however, we did not have even a stick.[36]

The speech by Murtaza Demir clearly reflects Alevis' feelings of isolation, disappointment, anger, and fear stemming from the Madımak massacre. These feelings of isolation and experienced injustice led Alevis to organize on the basis of Alevi identity because the Aleviness seemed the only safe area for them. Ali Balkız, one of the former presidents of both the PSAKD and the Alevi-Bektashi Federation, wrote that the mindset of state from the time of massacre to the final court decision did not change. "There was no organized revolt, there was provocation" became official policy. Balkız concluded that the only way for Alevis to escape the shame of the Sivas massacre was organization under the banner of Alevi identity.[37]

---

35   Süleyman Cem, "Gazi Mahallesi, Üsküdar, Ümraniye ve Daha Sonrası," *Cem* 47 (April 1995): 15.

36   Sadık Eral, *Alevi Katliamları* (Istanbul: Yalçın, 1993), 241-242.

37   Ali Balkız, "Sivas Dersleri," *Nefes* 21, year:2, (July 1995): 50.

Annie Moore asserts that trauma has two distinct meanings: abandoning and revealing.[38] In this sense, Alevis not only became alienated from established social relations, but also revealed their identity as a social becoming after the Madımak massacre. Alen Megill argues that the value of memory increased when one's identity is threatened. In moments of crisis, when social identities are endangered, memories are reconstructed to defend the unity of the community.[39] After the Sivas and Gazi massacres, the beleaguered Alevi identity was positioned in historical context. Alevis remembered former Alevi massacres and rewrote their political history in light of recent ones.

In this regard, the political effects of Madımak and Gazi are neither limited to the loss of confidence in the political system nor to the rediscovery of Alevi identity. The massacres created a collective memory for Alevis that consisted of victimhood. However, the collective memory of the Sivas and Gazi massacres varies among Alevi political agents. The Madımak massacre differs from the Gazi events because in the former Alevis were clearly targeted because of their Alevi identity. Alevis gathered to commemorate an Alevi poet, Pir Sultan, and assailants who related Alevism to atheism through the image of Aziz Nesin, attacked the festival. In addition to the targeting of Alevism, the brutality of the massacre differentiates Madımak from Gazi. Turkey followed the massacre step-by-step in a live broadcast. Therefore, the brutality of the Madımak massacre is easily identified with Karbala given common metaphors of desert heat, fire, and thirst.[40] Moreover, the Madımak massacre is analyzed by revisiting other Alevi revolts, from the Babai revolt in the thirteenth century to the revolt of the sixteenth century. This leads to the conclusion that the Madımak forms a natural part of a historical legacy composed of massacres.[41]

Another distinguishing feature of the Madımak massacre is the political outlook of the assailants. The assailants were Sunni fundamentalists who attacked participants of the Pir Sultan Festival with the implicit encouragement

---

38 Isabel A. Moore, "Speak You Also: Encircling Trauma," *Journal of Cultural Research* 9 (2005): 87-99.

39 Allan Megill, "History, Memory, Identity," *History of the Human Sciences* 11 (1998): 40-42.

40 Fikret Otyam, "Onlar Ateşte Semaha Durdular," *Nefes* 21, year: 2 (July 1995).

41 Baki Öz, "Tarihin Işığında Sivas Olayı," *Nefes* 21, year:2 (July 1995) 38-43.

of the municipality of the RP. Because Alevis are attacked using fundamentalist discourse, they take refuge in secularism. Alevi associations like Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Associations and Hacıbektaş Veli Culture and Promotion Association especially underscore that the fundamentalists in Sivas not only targeted Alevis, but also the secular republic.

The Gazi events are different from the Madımak tragedy as the assault stemmed not only from the neighborhood's Aleviness, but also its leftism. When the events broke out, Alevis from other neighborhoods as well as socialist organizations supported the inhabitants of Gazi. Due to the combination of Alevism and the leftism, the Gazi events remind Alevis of the Maraş, Çorum, Sivas, and Malatya massacres of the late 1970s.[42]

Alevis suffered massacres in the 1990s while rediscovering their Alevi identity. In this context, memories of victimhood were reconstructed to defend the cohesion of the community. Alevi associations held that Alevis were subjected to the Madımak massacre because they had forgotten previous massacres in Çorum and Maraş. In their point of view, collective memory of massacres would act as a shield for Alevis, protecting them from further attacks.[43] However, Alevis have always selectively remembered massacres according to their political positions.

On one hand, a left-oriented Alevi association, the PSAKD, chose to commemorate massacres that Alevis experienced in the 1970s. Due to the fact these massacres sprang from affiliations with socialist movements, the Gazi events are easily linked with these massacres. On the other, Kurdish Alevis prefer to commemorate the Dersim massacre, which was disregarded by most Alevi associations in the 1990s. Unlike left-oriented Alevi associations and Kurdish Alevis, the Cem Foundation, which aims to reconcile Alevism with state structures through lobbying, prefers to overlook Alevi massacres. Therefore, the collective memory of Alevis demonstrates not only the relation between identity and memory, but also the fragmentation of identity during the reformulation of collective memory. In this regard, this chapter examines how

---

42   "Hain Saldırı," *Nefes* 18, year 2 (April 1995): 5.

43   Ayhan Yalçınkaya, "Hafıza Savaşlarından Sahiplenilmiş Şehitliğe: Madımak Katliamı Örnek Olayı," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 66:3 (2011): 338.

Alevis were subjected to massacres in the 1970s and 1930s and how they evoked these massacres in the 1990s.

§ 5.2   Alevi Massacres in the 1970s

In 1978, Turkey experienced three massacres of Alevi in Malatya, Sivas, and Maraş respectively. These massacres were followed by the Çorum Massacre in 1980. Why were Alevis exposed to sectarian violence in these cities in the late 1970s? What were the common characteristics of these cities? A brief analysis suggests two important phenomena in these cities. One is sectarian heterogeneity; the other is analogical political tendencies.

The populations of Sivas, Maraş, Çorum, and Malatya were composed of both Alevi and Sunni populations in approximately equal number. This sectarian heterogeneity triggered ethnic tensions as Alevis became more visible as a consequence of urbanization. More importantly, the public emergence of Alevis went hand in hand with their upward mobility. The visibility of Alevis in the central and local bureaucracies increased due to the development of educational capacity in the Republic. Moreover, the capitalist development of Anatolia and urbanization triggered the formation of small-medium-scale Alevi middle classes. Analyzing Maraş massacre, Emma Sinclair Webb mentions that the construction of the Kartalkaya Dam in Pazarcık improved the productivity of cotton farms in the region; therefore, the Alevi peasantry developed their economic wealth. Moreover, Alevis began to open businesses in the city center.[44] Thus, the rise of the Alevi middle class and their productivity in Maraş's local industry turned them into targets in the late 1970s.[45] Similar explanations were valid for Malatya, Sivas, and Çorum.

Alevis became more visible through upward mobilization in the 1970s. Due to the fact that the downfall of some of the segments of Sunni traditional

---

44   Emma Sinclair Webb, Secterian Violance, "The Alevi Minority and the Left: Kahramanmaraş 1978" in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma*, (eds.) Paul J White and Joost Jongerden (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 233.

45   Kamil Ateşoğulları, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, 29. 09. 2012.

capital owners and the visibility of Alevis overlapped, Sunni small capital own-
ers indirectly charged Alevis with upsetting the traditional order. Instead of a
detailed analysis of the relation between the socio-economic transformation
of these cities through capitalist development and the rise of Alevis, this sec-
tion focuses on parallels between the political environments of these cities to
explore how political preferences affect sectarian identities.[46] Therefore this
section will focuses on the affiliation of Alevis with left-wing politics to ana-
lyze Alevi massacres. In this context, the political tendencies of the cities shed
light on the political framework that led to massacres of Alevis.

Table 5.1   1973 Election Results in Maraş, Sivas, Malatya, Çorum and Turkey[47]

Parties	Maraş	Sivas	Malatya	Çorum	Turkey
CHP	32 %	32.9 %	44 %	30 %	33.3 %
AP	17 %	16.9 %	13 %	19 %	29.8 %
MSP	26 %	25.7 %	19 %	21 %	11.8 %
MHP	5 %	4.5 %	1 %	2 %	3.4 %

---

46   The analysis of Alevi massacres on the basis of the capitalization of Anatolia derives from
Nicos Pouluntzas' arguments on fascism. Pouluntzas explains fascism within the context of
the middle class' fear of capitalism and becoming proletariat. This analytical framework
proposes that traditional propertied classes of central and eastern Anatolian cities lost their
stability as a consequence of the capitalization process. Some traditional, Sunni small capital
owners lost their position and faced the threat of becoming proletariat. The capitalization
process not only caused a socio-economic decrease among some segments of the traditional,
Sunni petty bourgeoisie of Anatolia, but also allowed the upward mobility of lower class Alevi.
Because the downfall of some traditional, Sunni capital owners and the visibility of Alevis
were concurrent, Sunni small capital owners targeted Alevis as latecomers who upset the
traditional order. In other words, tensions around religious difference coalesced with tensions
around class position combined in central Anatolia, especially within the Çorum-Erzurum-
Gaziantep triangle. For the typical examples of such kind of comments, see. Ömer Laçiner,
"Malatya Olayı–Türkiye'de Faşist Hareketin Yapısı ve Gelişimi," *Birikim* 39 (May 1978);
Maraş'tan Sonra? (Istanbul: Birikim, 1979) and Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can, *Devlet Ocak
Dergah – 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Ülkücü Hareket* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 1991).

47   14 Ekim 1973 Milletvekili Seçim Sonuçları, (Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Yayınları,
1974), 6 -7.

The 1973 elections show that the CHP was the most popular party in these cities, and its total share of votes was similar to the national average except in Malatya, where they were higher. Votes of the Justice Party's (*Adalet Partisi* – AP) were far below the national average; however, votes for the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi* – MSP) were nearly double. The MSP was the second winningest party in these cities in the 1973 elections. Moreover, votes for the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* – MHP) largely reflected its national average. The election results show that in these cities, the extreme right had more support than the center right. The weakness of the AP and the strength of the MSP indicated the discontent of the traditional petty bourgeoisie with economic and political developments. Furthermore, the MHP's relative weakness suggested that this discontent did not take a radical form.[48]

Table 5.2   1977 Election Results in Maraş, Sivas, Malatya, Çorum and Turkey[49]

Parties	Maraş	Sivas	Malatya	Çorum	Turkey
CHP	34 %	42.9 %	52 %	36 %	41.4 %
AP	26 %	23.5 %	17 %	37 %	36.8 %
MSP	15 %	14 %	20 %	8 %	8.5 %
MHP	15 %	13.2 %	9 %	12 %	6.4 %

---

48   While analyzing the class position of rightist parties in central Anatolia in the 1970s, Ömer Laçiner asserts that support of the AP was derived from middle classes content with the capitalization process. He adds that the traditional middle classes – whose socio-economic position deteriorated because of the capitalist development process – mainly supported the MSP and MHP in central Anatolia; however, supporters of the MSP stood a chance of integrating into the capitalization process. Therefore, middle-class supporters of the MHP who were "losing" the capitalization process were politically more aggresive. They were apt to attack upwardly mobile social groups including the Alevis for fear of becoming proletariat. Despite the schematicizm of Laçiner's analysis, it contributes to the comprehension of the socio-political bases of rightist parties in the 1970s. For more detail, see Ömer Laçiner, "Malatya Olayı–Türkiye'de Faşist Hareketin Yapısı ve Gelişimi," *Birikim* 39 (May 1978).

49   *5 Haziran 1977 Milletvekili Genel ve Cumhuriyet Senatosu Üyeleri Üçtebir Yenileme Seçimi Sonuçları* (Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1977).

The 1977 election results reveal that the CHP increased its share of votes in tandem with its national performance. Except for Çorum, it was again the most popular party in these cities. Although votes for the AP were below its national average, it was the most popular right-wing party in these cities. The most drastic result of the 1977 elections was the decline of the MSP and the upsurge of the MHP in these cities. In Turkey overall, the MSP's votes decreased while the total votes for the MHP nearly doubled. In these cities votes for the MHP were high above its national average. The average in these four cities was 13.2% - double the national average. Popular support for the MSP in 1973 was channeled to the MHP in 1977, indicating a trend toward radicalization.

The parallel political tendencies of these cities enable us to contextualize Alevi massacres of the 1970s. Two political factors play a vital role in the Alevi massacres. One is the affiliation between Alevis and the left-wing politics, which was discussed in Chapter 3. Despite a lack of accurate statistics on the number of Alevis in these cities, individual narratives indicate that sectarian differences wholly coincided with political preferences. The second factor was the political power of the extremist right and the rising influence of the MHP. The transfer of votes for the MSP to the MHP in these cities reflected a tension created by sectarian and ethnic differences. In this socio-political context, massacres were related to the increased strength of the MHP in these cities.

Mustafa Çalık's field study of the MHP's socio-cultural base in Gümüşhane indicates how the rising influence of the MHP activated traditional biases against Alevis within a framework of their identification with leftist politics. All the *ülkücü*s[50] that Çalık interviewed had a negative image of leftist teacher from their school life. They described their leftist teacher as being the opposite of an ideal Muslim, both politically and culturally. They mentioned that these teachers did not fast during Ramadan, nor did they perform the *namaz* (prayer); most importantly, they did not take Islamic values seriously. At this point, they identified these teachers with Alevis. The characterization of communists who emphasized their violation of the rules of Islam - such as fasting during Ramadan or performing prayer - led to correlation of

---

50   Ülkücü (idealist) is a term which refers to the rightist militants of the MHP.

communists with Alevis. Moreover, they underscored that these teachers had moustaches like those of the Alevis, whom they did not like.[51]

Being leftist, communist, atheist, outsider, traitor, and Alevi became equal from the point of view of ordinary *ülkücü* militants in the late 1970s. The MHP stirred up these prejudices as a political strategy. The performance of the MHP in elections indicated that the party was successful in rural areas where the population was compromised of both Alevis and Sunnis; however, the MHP's votes in urban areas was far below its national average. In this way, political and ethnic conflicts became the source of power for the MHP, which used political violence against leftist forces to increase political tensions. The MHP's strategy of civil war not only sought to increase its share of the votes through ethnic tensions and political violence, but also to bring the party to power via a right-wing military coup. The mobilization of Sunni Muslims against Alevis and leftists was the main characteristic of a strategy that the MHP was systematically pursued when the CHP was in power in 1978. It succeeded in the Çorum-Gaziantep-Erzurum triangle, where Sunni-Alevi animosity was intense and where political divides between leftists and rightists coincided with sectarian divisions.[52] One outcome of the strategy was the Alevi massacres in Malatya (1978), Sivas (1978), Maraş (1978), and Çorum (1980).

The first massacre the Alevis suffered occurred in Malatya. Alevis, who comprised one-third of Malatya's total population, mainly supported the CHP in the 1970s. Despite the CHP's command over Malatya in the general elections, the mayor of the city was an independent rightist politician, Hamid Fendoğlu.[53] His assassination was the starting point of the Malatya massacre. Fendoğlu, his daughter-in-law, and grandchildren were killed when he opened a parcel bomb on 17 April 1978. The following day, nearly ten thousand people gathered in front of the municipality and started to destroy the houses and

---

51 Mustafa Çalık, *MHP Hareketi–Kaynakları ve Gelişimi 1965–1980* (Ankara: Cedid Neşriyat, 1995), 131-149.

52 Ömer Laçiner, "Malatya Olayı–Türkiye'de Faşist Hareketin Yapısı ve Gelişimi," *Birikim* 39 (May 1978): 15-16.

53 Hamid Fendoğlu was an AP deputy between 1965 and 1969. Due to his aggressive manner in parliament, he was banished from the party and joined the Democratic Party in the early 1970s. Fendoğlu - who stood as an independent candidate for Malatya's mayorship in the 1977 local elections - was elected by means of votes from the AP, MHP, and MSP.

shops of Alevis as well as the offices of the CHP, the Cooperation and Integrity Club of All Educators and Laborers of Science and Culture (*Tüm Öğretmenler Birleşme ve Dayanışma Derneği* – TÖB-DER), and local leftist newspapers. They chanted the slogans: "Down with communism," "Killer Ecevit," "Muslim Turkey," and "We will take Hamido's revenge." At the same time three Alevi high school students were kidnapped in the neighborhood of Çilesiz and tortured to death by unidentified assailants. On 19 April, attacks started against the Alevi districts of Beydağı, Başharık, and Cemal Gürsel. Mutual clashes continued until 20 April when security forces finally brought the events under control. In the end, eight people died, one hundred were wounded. Moreover, 960 workplaces and houses were ruined.[54]

Following these large-scale incidents in Malatya, similar events took place in Sivas on 3-4 September 1978 - the eve and first day of the Ramadan feast. Sunday, 3 September, was also market day in Alibaba, the most populated Alevi neighborhood of Sivas. Outsiders came to Alibaba both as mongers or shoppers in the bazaar. When an old Alevi man tried to stop an Alevi and a Sunni child from quarrelling in the street, about twenty rightist militants attacked him and events escalated. Two women who interfered in the fight were killed. After that, the Alibaba neighborhood was encircled and nearly all shops in the neighborhood were destroyed. At the same time, rumors, such as that communist Alevis bombed the Alibaba Mosque spread throughout the city, and the attacks extended to the city center. Attacks targeted the municipal building (since the mayor was from the CHP), and stores owned by Alevis. In addition to the city center and Alibaba neighborhood, rightist militants attacked other Alevi districts such as Altıntabak, Kılavuz, Çayyurt, Yüceyurt, Yeşilyurt, Aydoğan, and Çiçekli. The people living in these districts resisted the attacks, but at the end of the day, five people had been killed, and fifty were wounded.[55]

The following day, people who gathered at mosques for the funerals of rightist militants killed during the events started to march with the slogan chanting: "Communists and Kızılbaş [Alevis] killed our brothers!" Thousands

---

54 H. Nedim Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Yakın Tarihimizde Kitlesel Katliamlar* (Istanbul: Berfin, 2012), 50-62.

55 Zeki Çoşkun, *Aleviler, Sünniler ve Öteki Sivas* (Istanbul: İletişim, 1995), 294-296.

of people attacked the same targets, shouting "Muslim Turkey," "Death to communists," "Sivas will be the grave of the unbelievers!" Attacks on Alevi neighborhoods started again and mutual clashes continued until the gendarmerie of Yozgat and Kayseri were able to regain control. In the end, nine people were killed and about one hundred were wounded. Moreover, 97 houses and 350 shops were destroyed.[56]

The most tragic massacre occurred in Maraş on 22-25 December 1978. In Malatya and Sivas, Alevis were relatively able to defend themselves, and their defenses limited the scope of the assaults; however, the massiveness and brutality of the assault in Maraş rendered Alevis helpless. Moreover, the overlap of sectarian and ethnic divisions in Maraş triggered by Alevis' identification with Kurdishness and increased the multidimensional anger and brutality of the massacre.

On 19 December 1978, Çiçek Cinema was bombed just as the audience settled in to watch Cüneyt Arkın's anti-communist film *When will the Sun Rise* (*Güneş Ne Zaman Doğacak*). The following day *ülkücü* militants bombed the Akın Coffeehouse in revenge. The bombings increased tensions in the city. On 21 December 1978, two leftist teachers, Hacı Çolak and Mustafa Yüzbaşıoğlu, were killed on their way home from work. On 22 December, the funerals of the teachers were prevented, when nearly 10 thousand people attacked leftists who attended the funeral ceremony. Then, the crowd moved to Cyprus Square (the main square of Maraş) and set ablaze the buildings of political organizations including the CHP, the Turkey Worker and Peasant Party, the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions, the Textile Union, the Union of Turkey Teachers-Association, and the Directorate of Healthcare Duties (*Sağlık İşleri Müdürlüğü*). They also burned and looted shops owned by Alevis and leftists.[57]

On 23 December, the scope of the assault increased as the rightist militants attacked Maraş's Alevi neighborhoods. The assailants encircled the neighborhoods and set houses and shops on fire. Due to the massiveness of the attacks, residents could not resist. Moreover, houses and shops of Alevis in mixed neighborhoods were also destroyed. On 24 and 25 December, events became

---

56   Ibid., 297-298.

57   Webb, "Secterian Violance, The Alevi Minority and the Left: Kahramanmaraş 1978," 222.

even more tragic as the attacks of rightist militants on Alevi districts escalated and spread to rural areas of Maraş. By Tuesday, 26 December, the situation in the province was brought under control with the declaration of martial law, which would last two months in thirteen cities. Maraş was the only city in which massacres ended in the declaration of martial law. According to official documents, the toll of those three days was 111 deaths and over one thousand wounded. Moreover, 552 business and 289 houses were burned down.[58]

Çorum was the location of the last Alevi massacre before the 1980 military coup. The course of the Çorum massacre differed from the others. Unlike the others, it had two stages. The first started with the assassination of a deputy from the MHP, Gün Sazak. The following day, 28 May 1980, *ülkücü* militants gathered in the city center to protest. The rightist militants then headed to the Milönü neighborhood occupied mostly by Alevis. However, leftist militants had constructed a barricade to resist the attacks. Left wing movements had learned from experience of the Maraş massacre; therefore, they had made provisions. The resistance of leftist activists in Çorum was main difference between Çorum and other assaults.[59]

Sadık Eral, who witnessed the Çorum massacre, states that the first stage of the massacre did not concern Alevis. Other right wing activists did not support the *ülkücü* militants; therefore assailants remained limited to the *ülkücü*s. Moreover, due to the resistance of leftist activists, the Çorum events appeared to be a clash between leftists and *ülkücü*s rather than a sectarian conflict. Nevertheless, Eral adds that the Çorum events triggered a change in the city's demographics. Alevis started to move from other neighborhoods to Milönü, and the sectarian division of Çorum became more apparent. Due to the increased sectarian fragmentation of the city, the second phase of the Çorum massacre manifested itself as sectarian rather than a political violence.[60]

---

58   Burak Gürel, *Political Mobilization in Turkey in the 1970s: The Case of the Kahramanmaraş Incidents.* M.A Thesis, Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkey History, 2003, 106-127.

59   Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Yakın Tarihimizde Kitlesel Katliamlar*, 164-178.

60   Sadık Eral, *Çaldıran'dan Çorum'a Anadolu'da Alevi Katliamları* (Istanbul: Yalçın, 1993), 204-205.

The second stage of the Çorum massacre started on 1 July 1980. The internment of leftist activists left Alevi neighborhoods defenseless. The SSK region hospital became the headquarters from which rightist militants opened fire on Alevi neighborhoods. Wednesday, 2 July, was the city market; therefore, stallholders and shoppers hit the town. The *ülkücü* militants blocked entrance to the city and held stallholders and shoppers from Alevi villages captive. Alevis were interrogated, tortured, and a number of them were killed. A two-day curfew declared on 2 July did not stop the attacks, but contributed to a decrease in the violence. However, 4 July became the bloodiest day of the Çorum massacre. When a rumor that Alevis burned the Alaaddin mosque spread throughout the city, a crowd that had performed their Friday prayers attacked the businesses and houses of Alevis. Afterwards, they headed for Alevi neighborhoods. The result of the two-stage Çorum massacre was tragic. Fifty-seven people were killed and nearly two hundred were wounded.[61]

Alevi massacres in the late 1970s were based on the socio-political overlap of Alevis and leftists. Alevis were subjected to assault because they were identified with leftists and stigmatized as unbelievers or traitors. The massacres did not stem from Alevism, per se, but derived from Alevis' identification with leftists. However, this mechanism does not change the fact that the aforementioned assaults were Alevi massacres. Madımak and Gazi triggered the recall of these assaults in the 1990s. Specifically, Gazi reminded Alevis of these massacre of the 1970s because they were assessed as the result of affiliation with leftism (and even with Kurdish identity).

Secondary resources about Alevi massacres referenced in this chapter were largely written in the 1990s symbolically indicating the increased attention to former Alevi massacres under the influence of the Madımak and Gazi massacres. Moreover, the fifty-second issue of the PSAKD's formal periodical devoted to the tenth anniversary of the Madımak massacre and entitled "From Maraş to Gazi: 2 July" demonstrates the reconstruction of the collective memory of massacres based on victimhood. In this issue, articles on Çorum, Maraş, Malatya, Madımak, and Gazi associate these events with one another.[62]

---

61   Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Yakın Tarihimizde Kitlesel Katliamlar*, 186-228.

62   "Maraş'tan Gazi'ye: 2 Temmuz," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 52 (January, February, March 2003).

The collective memory has taken a different course in relation to the Dersim massacre. Although the Alevi movement hardly commemorated Dersim in the 1990s, the Kurdish movement revived it. Because the case of Dersim cannot be discussed without reference to the Kurdish question, the Alevi movement avoided addressing it in the 1990s. Moreover, the Dersim massacre differs from that of other assaults because it was state-led under the direction of the single-party government. Therefore, the recall of Dersim would not only to involved the Alevi movement in the Kurdish question, but compel it to question its own relationship with the CHP and Kemalism.

The silence of the Alevi movement with respect to the Dersim question was a political choice made under the prevailing political circumstances of the 1990s. In terms of theory, this silence indicates how the collective memory of Alevi identity is fragmented due to political preferences and ethnic identities. In this regard, the bifurcation of collective memory of Alevis brings into question the (im)possibilities of a uniform approach of multiculturalism.

§ 5.3   The Dersim Question

The history of the Dersim question dates back to the late Ottoman period. Reports written by state officials substantiate the interest of political authorities in Dersim. In the late Ottoman period, military officials such as Mushir Şakir and Zeki Pashas (1896) and Kazım Karabekir (1918), as well as regional civilian authorities *(mutasarrıf*s) such as Arif Mardini Bey (1903) and Celal Bey (1906) wrote reports on Dersim.[63] These Ottoman reports were followed by reports in the Republican era prepared by Civil Inspector Hamdi Bey (1926); Governor of Diyarbakır, Cemal Bardakçı (1926); the First Inspectorates General (1930); Halis Pasha (1930); Marshall Fevzi Çakmak (1930); the Inspector-General of First Inspectorate, General Ibrahim Tali Bey (1931); the General Commander of the Gendarmerie; the Minister of Interior Şükrü Kaya (1931);

---

63   Alişan Akpınar, Sezen Bilir, Serhat Bozkurt and Namık Kemal Dinç, "II. Abdülhamit Dönemi Raporlarında 'Dersim Sorunu' ve Zihinsel Devamlılık" in *Herkesin Bildiği Sır: Dersim*, (ed.) Şükrü Aslan (Istanbul: İletişim, 2010), 311-320 and Faik Bulut, *Dersim Raporları* (Istanbul: Evrensel Basın Yayın, 2005), 191-218.

the Prime Minister, İsmet İnönü (1935); the Fourth Inspectorate-General (1936); Civil Inspector Abidin Özmen (1937); and Celal Bayar (1937).[64]

Similarities between earlier and later reports indicate that both late Ottoman political authorities and early Republican governments shared a common perception of Dersim. This perception was based on its ungovernableness, which was analyzed within the context of its socio-economic structure, its geography, its ethnic identity, and institution of state structures in the region. According to the reports, Dersim was depicted as an area with severe geographic and environmental conditions. Mountains that circled the region not only obstructed penetration of the district by state structures, but also meant the land was not suitable for agriculture. Lack of sufficient means of subsidence caused the increase in the armament of Dersim tribes: banditry had become the means of existence in the region. Not only geographic conditions, but also ethnic composition had become the source of local tribes' autonomous authority. The reports claimed that Dersim's Kurdish ethnicity and Kızılbaş religion reinforced its autonomy; therefore, cultural homogenization of the region in conformity with "Turkish society" became a recurring theme of the Dersim reports. To sum up, the reports depicted Dersim as an ungovernable region on the basis of an inverse correlation between the lack of centralized state apparatus and the autonomous power of tribes in the region.[65]

What was the solution to the Dersim question? Except for Cemal Bardakçı's report, all proposed military measures to weaken the power of local tribes and to establish order and security. After the state's intervention in the district, military power would have to be reinforced with soft power, which meant opening up schools, building a road network, and providing public health service. Furthermore, the homogenization of the Dersim population and changing in the demographic structure were crucial constituents of the solution of the Dersim question. Consequently, reports suggested the removal of tribal chieftains from the region and resettling Turkish-speaking populations in their place.[66]

---

64 Hüseyin Aygün, *Dersim 1938 ve Zorunlu İskan* (Ankara: Dipnot, 2010), 74-97.

65 Bulut, *Dersim Raporları*, 72-73.

66 Mahmut Akyürekli, *Dersim Kürt Tedibi, 1937-1938* (Istanbul: Kitap, 2011), 132.

The military campaigns in Dersim in 1937 and 1938 put the arguments in these reports into practice. A plausible assessment is that the Dersim massacre was not the suppression of a tribal revolt, but a planned military campaign. In March 1937, the burning of a wooden bridge and an attack against newly built barracks by armed tribes triggered the military operation. Although some local tribes resisted the advance of the military forces, the alliance was weak vis-à-vis military forces. Seyid Rıza, emerged to lead the tribal coalition against military forces, was captured in September. He was executed on 15 November 1937. The military campaign in 1937 was limited to the rebellious local tribes. After breaking their power, a second phase of the military campaign resumed on a larger scale in the summer of 1938. It targeted the entire region, and when the operation ended, military troops had penetrated all the villages of Dersim. After the military campaign, attempts to change the population structure began. The removal of Kurdish, Zaza Alevi populations from Dersim to the western part of the country aimed to change the ethnic composition of the region. According to unpublished, official reports of the Fourth Inspectorate, the results of Dersim operations were 13,160 dead and 11,818 deported.[67]

The literature on the Dersim massacre was weak until the 1990s. It had been discussed with respect to the uprising of Dersim tribes and its suppression by the state. This discourse was adopted by leftist organizations, as well. For example, the illegal Turkey Communist Party reproduced official discourses on Dersim and assessed the case as a feudal uprising against the bourgeois reforms of the Republic. Therefore, it indirectly supported Republican bourgeois reforms and feudal concessions in the late 1930s.[68]

In the 1970s, socialist organizations increased their attention on Dersim because the region became one of their fortified enclaves. The most important development for an analysis of Dersim was the discovery of the national question in the Marxist sense. İbrahim Kaypakkaya, leader of an illegal socialist organization active in Dersim, asserted that Kurdish feudal landlords had led

---

67   Hans Lukacs Kieser, "Dersim Massacre, 1937-1938," *Online Encylopedia of Mass Violence*, p. 5/11, http://www.massviolence.org/IMG/article_PDF/Dersim-Massacre-1937-1938.pdf.

68   Ömer Ağın, *Kürtler, Kemalizm ve TKP* (Istanbul: VS, 2006), 244-247.

the Dersim revolt to maintain their local authority against the central government; however, support of the people of Dersim mainly stemmed from the Turkish Republic's pressure on Kurdish identity. This national pressure directed the attention of the peasantry from social class to national consciousness. The Dersim people thus mobilized under the leadership of feudal landlords against Turkish nationalism.[69]

Despite the ideological transformation, the literature on Dersim remained weak until the 1990s. In this decade Kurdish Alevis recalled not only the massacres of the 1970s, but also of Dersim in the late 1930s. Both the revival of Alevism and the interest of the Kurdish movements in Kurdish Alevis triggered the evocation of the Dersim massacre and the rewriting of Dersim's history.[70]

How did society remember the Dersim massacre in the 1990s? The political influence of the Kurdish movement on Kurdish Alevis increased in the

---

69 İbrahim Kaypakkaya, *Seçme Yazılar* (Istanbul: Umut, 2004), 186.

70 The increased attention on Dersim is reflected in academic studies, as well. The academic literature on the Dersim question mainly assesses the military operations as the intersection of the early Republican regime's attempts to control the region and the Dersim's ethnic composition – i.e. its Kurdish Alevi identity. On the one hand, Dersim was the only region not been brought under the government's effective control by the late 1930s. Because Dersim was apt to neither pay its taxes nor comply with military conscription, the newly established nation state was not able to establish administrative monopoly over its territory. Consequently, the Dersim question appeared as the transformation of an internal frontier into a part of nation state. On the other hand, the military campaign in Dersim was related to the ethnic composition of a population that mainly consisted of Kurdish Alevis. Although the political influence of the Republic in the Dersim region began to increase in the late 1930s by means of new schools, roads, and guardhouses, Dersim's ethnic characteristics overshadowed the state's increased infrastructural capacity in the region, necessitating the military intervention. Therefore, the Dersim question was the modern state's attempts at centralization of its territory coupled with the lack of confidence of the nation state in Dersim arising from the ethno-religious composition of the region. For more detailed information, see. Murat Yüksel, *Forced Migration and the Politics of Internal Displacement in the Making of Modern Turkey: The Case of Dersim (1937-1948),* PhD Dissertation, Schools of Art and Sciences, Columbia University, 2008; Şükrü Aslan and Sibel Yardımcı, "Memleket ve Garb Hikayeleri: 1938 Dersim Sürgünleri ile Bir Sözlü Tarih Çalışması" in *Herkesin Bildiği Sır: Dersim* (ed.) Şükrü Aslan (Istanbul: İletişim, 2010), and Hüseyin Aygün, *o.o. 1938 Resmiyet ve Hakikat* (Ankara: Dipnot, 2011).

early 1990s while the PKK became more active in the Dersim region politically and militarily. To counter the PKK's organization, a military campaign was launched in Dersim in 1994. The region experienced village evacuations and the burning of stretches of forests. Furthermore, holy places of Dersim Alevis were destroyed in aerial bombing attacks. Michiel Leezenberg states that the 1994 campaign was the most destructive episode since 1938 for the villagers of Tunceli.[71] According to the census, the population of the province had drastically decreased from 133,143 in 1990 to 93,584 in 2000. The scale of the military campaign and the change in the demographic structure reminded the people of Tunceli of "Dersim 1937-1938."[72] Thus, in addition to the commemoration of older Alevi massacres under the influence of the Madımak and Gazi, a military campaign in Dersim in 1994 triggered the memory of the Dersim massacre.

The recall of the Dersim massacre was related to the PKK's rising influence in the region, and hence to Kurdish Alevis. The periodical, *Zülfikar*, initiated by the Kurdish movement, was a direct result of rising attention on Alevi issue. The aim of the periodical was to relate the Alevi question to the political struggle of the Kurdish movement. Therefore, as an intersection of Alevi and Kurdish identities, the Dersim question occupied the political agenda of *Zülfikar*. The Dersim revolt was described as an ethnic uprising under the leadership of Seyit Rıza against policies of assimilation of the early Republican regime. Seyid Rıza was assessed as one of the rebellious figures of Alevi history corresponding to Şeyh Bedrettin and Pir Sultan Abdal, who defended his religious beliefs and ethnic identity against the oppression political authorities.[73] This assessment established a framework for Dersim literature based on the region's Kurdish identity.

Owing to the rising influence of the Kurdish movement in the Dersim region and the traumas of Alevi massacres, the literature on the Dersim question

---

71 Michiel Leezenberg, "Kurdish Alevis and the Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s" in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma,* (eds.) Paul J White and Joost Jongerden (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 206-207.

72 Bülent Bilmez, Gülay Kayacan and Şükrü Aslan, *Belleklerdeki Dersim 38* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015), 52.

73 For the most concrete example of this discourse, see. Rıza Fırat, "Seyid Rıza'nın Torunlarıyla Diyap Ağa'nın Torunlarının Kavgası," *Zülfikar* 23 (January-February 1998): 19-21.

expanded rapidly. İsmail Beşikçi's pioneering study assessed the Dersim military campaign as genocide, playing a crucial role in the literature. Beşikçi claims that because the Tunceli Law (1935) focused not only on colonizing the Dersim region, but also on demolishing Kurdish identity, it was a genocide directly targeted at the Kurdish population of Dersim.[74] Although İsmail Beşikçi's genocide thesis is not generally accepted,[75] his book on the Dersim question focused attention on the issue.

The literature on Dersim did not follow one path, but is bifurcated. Although both compromised on the relation of Alevism to the Dersim, they are in conflict with respect to the ethnic identity of the region and the fundamental causes. The literature that emphasizes the Kurdish identity of Dersim assesses the Dersim's resistance to assimilation policies of the early Republican regime. The literature that describes Dersim as an area of the Kurdicized Turks, evaluates the Dersim question as one of civilizing of an autonomous, feudal region. The latter literature uses Alevism to link the region to Turkish ethnic identity, which is to say it uses Dersim's Alevism as "antidote" to its Kurdishness.

Two important studies pioneered these basic directions of the Dersim literature. One is Nuri Dersimi's memoir, *Kürdistan Tarihinde Dersim* (*Dersim in the History of Kurdistan*), published in 1952 in Syria. Dersimi was a Kurdish political activist who was one of the leaders of the Koçgiri revolt during the Turkish national struggle. Moreover, he was involved in the early stages of the Dersim events and lost many relatives in the military campaign. In his memoir, Dersimi claims that the military campaigns in Dersim specifically targeted Kurdish identity. He establishes a continuity with regard to the Kurdish policy

---

74 İsmail Beşikçi, *Tunceli Kanunu (1935) ve Dersim Jenosidi* (Istanbul: Belge, 1990).

75 Martin van Bruinessen states that the military campaign in Dersim was not part of a policy of physically destroying the Kurds, but the aim to destroy rebels and potential rebels was related to the state's official Kurdish policy. He opposes the definition of the Dersim question as genocide and uses the term ethnocide, referring to the destruction of the Kurdish ethnic identity. See Martin van Bruinessen, "Genocide in Kurdistan? The Suppression of the Dersim Rebellion in Turkey (1937-38) and the Chemical War against the Iraqi Kurds (1988)," in *Conceptual and Historical Dimensions of Genocide* (ed.) George J. Andreopoulos (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 141-170.

of the early Republican regime that started with the Şeyh Sait rebellion (1925) and ended with the Dersim massacre.[76]

The literature, which assesses the Dersim question as a Kurdish massacre, takes Dersimi's firsthand testimonies as their primary source. Munzur Çem's studies are typical examples. He believes that the Dersim massacre was the ultra-nationalist single-party regime's attempt to assimilate the culture of Kurdish Alevis and infiltrate the daily life of Dersim.[77]

Another important study is written by Mehmet Şerif Fırat in 1948 is entitled *Doğu İlleri ve Varto Tarihi* (*Eastern Provinces and the History of Varto*). Fırat establishes an Alevi historiography in that conforms with the official discourse of the early Republican period demonstrating the Turkishness of the Eastern Anatolian population. Therefore, Fırat's main focus is to prove the Turkishness of Alevi communities in Eastern Anatolia. He claims that when Selim the Stern waged war against Shah Ismail, he transferred Sunni tribes from Central Anatolia to Eastern Anatolia to tip the demographic structure of Eastern Anatolia in favor of Sunnis. The Sunni Turk tribes transferred to the Eastern Anatolia became Kurds over time.[78] A second historical period of the Kurdification of Eastern Anatolia, was reign of the Abdulhamit II. His Islamist policies and the Hamidian corps accelerated the Kurdification of Eastern Anatolia as well.[79] During the Kurdification and Sunnification of Eastern Anatolia, the Turkish-Alevi population in the region retreated to the Dersim mountains abandoning their language and Turkish identities to save their lives. Therefore, Fırat claims that the Kurdishness of Dersim Alevis was the result of the voluntary assimilation of Turcoman Alevis stemming from official Ottoman policies.[80] Mehmet Şerif Fırat not only endeavors to demonstrate the Turkishness of Alevis in Eastern Anatolia, but also charges the Ottoman dynasty with the Kurdification of these Turkish Alevis. Thus, the Republican regime's attempt to Turkicize Dersim was a reversion to its original state.

---

76 Nuri Dersimi, *Kürdistan Tarihinde Dersim* (Istanbul: Zel, 1994), 171-214.
77 Munzur Çem, *Dersim Merkezli Kürt Aleviliği* (Istanbul: Vate, 2009).
78 Mehmet Şerif Fırat, *Doğu İlleri ve Varto Tarihi* (Istanbul: Şaka Matbaası, 1948), 8-10.
79 Ibid., 93.
80 Ibid., 24-26.

The literature aimed at demonstrating the Turkishness of Dersim through Alevi identity reproduced Mehmet Şerif Fırat's thesis in the framework of actual needs in the 1990s and 2000s. This literature defines Dersim Alevis as Kurdicized Turks and claims that the military campaign, which developed out of the autonomous, exploitive regime of the feudal lords, was intended to civilize the region.[81]

Whereas the first literature emphasizes on the Kurdishness of the region, and assesses the Dersim massacre as a reaction to attempts of the ultranationalist regime to assimilate attempt it; the other literature uses Alevism as proof of the region's Turkishness, and evaluates the Dersim events as the suppression of an uprising by feudal lords. The transformation of personal narratives of the military campaign in Dersim indicates not only the coexistence of contrasting interpretations, but also the dynamism of collective memory.

In the 1990s, Erdal Gezik conducted in-depth interviews with victims of the military campaign. Most blamed rebellious tribes because of their social backwardness, adding that misconducts by tribal leaders pit the state against the ordinary people of Dersim. Interviewees shifted blame to rebellious tribes, only a few accused statesmen such as Celal Bayar, instead of the state structure and ethnic politics.[82] Nevertheless, in-depth interviews conducted by Cemal Taş in the 2000s depict a different collective memory from that apparent in Gezik's interviews. Victims evaluated the military campaign and forced migration as organized state violence against the people of Dersim in the latter interviews. The distinction between tribes and ordinary people became indistinct; more importantly, culpability shifted from the rebelliousness of the tribes to the brutality of state violence. A narrative of one victim summarizes the interviews in a single statement: "The state held a grudge in 1938. We were labeled as 'savages;' yet, they slaughtered us on behalf of civilization."[83]

---

81 See, Baki Öz, *Dersim Olayı* (Istanbul: Can, 2004) and Rıza Zelyut, *Dersim İsyanları ve Dersim Gerçeği* (Istanbul: Kripto, 2010).

82 Erdal Gezik, *Alevi Kürtler* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2012), 148-151.

83 Cemal Taş, *Dağların Kayıp Anahtarı: Dersim 1938 Anlatıları* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2010), 102.

Oral histories of Bülent Bilmez, Şükrü Aslan, and Gülay Kayacan confirm the plurality of collective memory with regard to the Dersim massacre. Although some members of the generation that experienced the massacre accuse both government officers - such as Celal Bayar and Abdullah Alpdoğan - and also some local tribes, nearly all members of generations born in the 1960s and 1970s assess the Dersim events as a planned, state-sponsored massacre. Moreover, they relate the Dersim massacre with politically-motivated evacuations of villages in the 1990s and with plans for hydroelectric power.[84]

The change in the collective memory of Dersim demonstrates that acts of remembrance depend on political developments. Incompatible analyses of Dersim question and diversifying testimonies about the military campaign in time clearly indicate the dynamism and politically-oriented character of collective memory The transformation of collective memory about the military campaign and its assessment as a massacre became a hegemonic discourse among first-hand witnesses in parallel with the rising influence of the Kurdish movement in Tunceli.

§ 5.4 Political Dynamics of Memory: To Remember Not to Remember

The Dersim massacre as intersection between Kurdish and Alevi identities indicates the dynamic relation of identity to memory. In his study on Kurdish Alevis, Erdal Gezik associates the collective memory of Dersim with identity movements. He narrates the story of a family from Dersim who live in Western Europe. The four sons of family have different political tendencies. The oldest sibling believes their ancestors are Khrosan Turcoman who sheltered in the Dersim mountains to escape Selim the Stern in the sixteenth century. Consequently, Ottoman massacres in the sixteenth century play a vital role for this sibling's personal history. Another son defines himself as a socialist. He focuses on rebellious figures such as Şeyh Bedrettin and Pir Sultan, whom he relates with proto-communism free ethnic connotations. The youngest brother, who defines himself as Alevi, carefully underscores the savagery of

---

84 Bilmez, Kayacan and Aslan, *Belleklerde Dersim 38*, 59-63.

Karbala and assesses history on the basis of a clash between Alevi and Sunni communities. The Dersim question occupies the agenda of the fourth, middle sibling, who defines himself as a Kurd. His Kurdish-oriented Dersim historiography rests on the massacre in the late 1930s. The socio-political position of this Dersim family indicates not only the relation of the collective memory of Dersim to Kurdish identity, but also the dynamism of social identity.[85]

Although all brothers are members of the same family, each claims a different social identity. Their relation to their respective identities demonstrates the social dynamism of the identity. Collective memory has been reconstructed in relation to identity, as well. Hitherto, burying recollections of Alevi massacres by various agents of Alevi politics indicate the dynamic relation between identity and memory.

Nedim Şahhüseyinoğlu, who was one of the leading administrators of the PSAKD, wrote an extensive study on Alevi massacres in 1999 entitled *Yakın Tarihimizin Kitlesel Katliamları* (Massacres in the Recent History.) Moreover, the *Pir Sultan Abdal* journal publishes articles on the anniversary of Alevi massacres. Despite the commemoration of massacres experienced in the 1970s, the PSAKD passed over the Dersim massacre. Neither Şahhüseyinoğlu's book nor the *Pir Sultan Abdal* periodical incorporate the Dersim massacre. Accordingly, Kurdish Alevi writers like Munzur Çem accuse the mainstream Alevi movement of attempting to detach Alevis from the Kurdish movement and neglecting Kurdish Alevis. To this end, Çem asks why Alevi associations have constructed a collective memory of Alevi massacres that ignores the Dersim massacre and Koçgiri revolt. Following on the rhetorical question, he concludes that since the Dersim massacre stemmed from Kurdishness, the Alevi movement has stayed silent on the Dersim question.[86]

The silence of the mainstream Alevi movement on the Dersim question is related to the Kurdish question. The Alevi movement, which sought to remain neutral between the state and the Kurdish movement, thus preferred to disregard the Dersim massacre in the 1990s. However, the mainstream Alevi move-

---

85   Erdal Gezik, *Alevi Kürtler* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2012), 106-108.

86   Munzur Çem, Dersim'de Alevilik (Istanbul: Peri, 1999), 45-47.

ment's silence was more complex than mere neutrality on the Kurdish question. It pertained to deeper relations between the Alevi movement and the state.

There were two important dynamics of Turkish politics in the 1990s: the Kurdish question and political Islam. On one hand, the RP's increasing share of votes both local and general elections and its coalition partnerships sparked socio-political unrest, which resulted in the post-modern military intervention of 28 February. On the other, political fallout from the Kurdish question strikingly affected Turkish politics in the 1990s through increase in political violence. Alevis were indirectly involved in discussions about both the Kurdish question and political Islam.

It is estimated that Kurdish Alevis constitute between 20 and 30 percent of the total population of Alevis in Turkey. Martin Van Bruinessen states that Kurdish Alevis, who live surrounded by the Kurdish Sunnis in Bingöl, Tunceli, and Muş are not inclined to ally with them.[87] In other words, the Alevi identity is more dominant than their Kurdish identity. State actors might thus assess the Aleviness of Kurdish Alevis as a tool to tie them to Turkish identity. Concern of state actors regarding Alevi identity was not limited to the Kurdish question. State officials operationally used the perception of Alevism as a modern, secular Islam to oppose "reactionary and Arabized political Islam" in the 1990s. Moreover, Alevis provided state actors with popular backing against political Islamists.[88] State officials including the president, the prime minister, and various ministers participated in Hacıbektaş Festivals and allocated limited funds from the budget to the Alevi associations in the second half of the 1990s.

This attitude of state officials obviously contributed to the political capacity of the Alevi movement though the relationship between the state and Alevi associations was not monolithic. There were differences among Alevi association's relations with the state, and these differences inform the ways attacks

87   Martin Van Bruinessen, "Aslını İnkar Eden Haramzadedir!" The Debate on the Ethnic Identity of the Kurdish Alevis," in *Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East,* (eds.) Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, Barbara Kellner-Heinkele and Anke Otter-Beaujean (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 12.

88   Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, 129.

against Alevis are remembered. At a general level, to remember or not remember given massacres is tied to Alevi associations' political perspectives.

The Cem Foundation did not aim to transform state-religion relations in Turkey, but sought the representation of Alevism in the existing state apparatus - more precisely into the Directorate of Religious Affairs. Due to the fact that the Foundation limited its political scope to high-level negotiations with state officials, it disregarded massacres that had the potential to radicalize Alevi politics. On the other hand, the PSAKD - as a transformative association - aimed to historicize the dynamics of Alevi massacres through commemoration of Malatya, Sivas, Maraş, and Çorum. Therefore, it extended the scope of Alevis politics, implying that to solve the problems of Alevi requires more than legal measures. According to the PSAKD, preventing additional massacres necessitates the institutionalization of equal citizenship. Thus, the PSAKD commemorated massacres while negotiating with state actors in order to transform state-religion relations in Turkey. Nevertheless, it disregarded the Dersim massacre; the evocation of Dersim in the 1990s not only implied a given attitude toward the Kurdish question, but a break in relations with the state. Thus, although the left wing of the Alevi movement commemorated Alevi massacres to extend the scope of politics while negotiating with state actors, it avoided the Dersim question in order to maintain its relation to the state.

Discussions on the collective memory of Alevis demonstrate not only the realities of historiography, but also the impossibility of a holistic Alevi historiography. The plurality of Alevis' collective memory derives from the fragmentation of social identity. The history and identity of Alevis was divided between Kurdish and Turkish axes on the basis of ethnicity or ideological position. In this context, the agents of Alevi politics took various positions with respect to massacres on behalf of Alevi identity. This complicates the answer to the question: how can the uniform approach of multiculturalism examine the plurality of social identity?

§ 5.5 The Role of Victimhood in Alevi Politicization

The governing Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP*) conducted an "Alevi Opening" between 2009 and 2011 consisting of seven workshops with Alevi associations, journalists, academicians, theologians, and politicians. A final report was written in 2011. The analysis of the final report exceeds the scope of this dissertation; however, the report's evaluation of the relation between Alevis and massacres deserves comment.

In the report, Alevis' demands for the acknowledgement of historical massacres and for certain guarantees to prevent the recurrence of such traumatic experiences are criticized as psycho-cultural obstacles to a broader reconciliation between Alevis and Sunnis. The report claims that Alevis construct their identity on the basis of a mythic victimhood discourse, which in turn restrains Alevis in a discursive ghetto preventing their dialogue with non-Alevi communities.[89]

The report detaches the victimhood discourse from actual massacres. It criticizes Alevis for imprisoning themselves in ghettos of their own making. The report claims that the sacred obsession of Alevis for their history makes their discourse of victimhood a permanent characteristic of Alevi identity, which is indirectly assessed as a psychological problem. However, historically speaking, the victimhood of Alevis stems from actual massacres that they have suffered. Therefore, the detachment of the discourse or perception of their identity from actual experiences transforms political debates into supposedly psycho-cultural problems.

Although the report's influence of the relation between Alevi collective memory and massacres sought to detach the discourse from actual events, it touches on the vital role of the discourse of victimhood for Alevi politicization. This discourse can only be analyzed in historical perspective with reference to actual massacres; the role of victimhood for Alevi politicization is not the subject of psychology, but of political science, sociology, and history. The problems of Alevis do not stem from pathological victimhood; on the con-

---

89   *Alevi Çalıştayları Nihai Raporu*, 34.

trary, the actual massacres Alevis suffered created the discourse of victim-hood. Therefore, the focus of an analysis of the collective memory of Alevis should be on actual experiences rather than the resulting discourse.

The revival of Alevism and its emergence as an independent identity movement went hand-in-hand with the massacres of the 1990s; consequently, the commemoration of Alevi massacres from Karbala to Madımak became a characteristic of Alevi political subject during the revival process. The insistence of Alevis regarding their victimhood derives from the urge to avoid similar massacres in the future; however, the role of massacres for Alevi collective memory exceeds the scope of this urge.

While analyzing the relation between Alevi politics and massacres, an analogy between Alevis in Turkey and Jews in Eastern Europe during the interwar period can be established. This analogy is based on two important conditions. One is the role of genocide and pogroms in the collective memory of Jews vis-à-vis that of massacres in the collective memory of Alevis. Due to the fact that both these social groups were exposed to assaults, traumas occupy an important place in their collective memory. The other condition is the equivalence of the socio-political relations of these minority groups with the majority in their countries. Jews in the Eastern Europe during the interwar period and Alevis in Turkey during the Republican period were not able to integrate with the religiously-based social culture of their respective societies. Their differences from the religious structures of their countries hindered full integration into the web of social relations; more importantly, the inability to integrate into the social structure triggered assaults in moments of political or economic crisis. That is why the literature on European Jews, anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust is relevant to our inquiry into the formation of Alevi identity and its role in Alevi politics.

In *Modernity and Holocaust*, Zygmunt Baumann claims that the Holocaust should not be assessed as an isolated incident on the road to modernity; on the contrary, modernity provided the necessary conditions for the Holocaust. Baumann asserts that anti-Semitism differs from other types of xenophobia, because it is not a relation between territorially-defined ethnic groups, but a relation between majority and minority, between a host population and a smaller group. Therefore, although the objects of hate live inside "us" as a "foreigner inside," they maintain their separate identity. Baumann underscores

that the power of anti-Semitic hate derives from the semantically confusing and psychologically unnerving position of the "foreigner inside." The blurred boundary between a Jewish minority and the "host" population increases the intensity of the anti-Semitism.[90] In other words, when the host population has difficulties drawing the boundary lines delimiting a minority group, its hate for the "foreigner inside" increases.

In this context, the "foreigner inside" position of Jews in Europe during the interwar period can be compared to the position of Alevis in Turkey. Although Alevis speak Turkish or Kurdish, they are different from mainstream Turkish or Kurdish communities due to their religious beliefs. However, the religious aspect of the Alevis is based on negativity rather than orthodox doctrine. More precisely, the common answer to "who is Alevi?" is any person who does not fast during Ramadan and does not pray in mosques. The differences between Alevis and non-Alevis are blurred because they are not defined by what they practice, but by what they do not practice. Yet Alevis are also different from classical unbelievers or atheists, because they have a pluralist, heterodox belief system; therefore, their refusal of Sunni doctrine is a conscious preference. More importantly, their co-existence with the Sunni community indicates a permanent challenge to the certainty of Sunni orthodoxy. The heterodoxy and uncertainty of Alevis led these to their being labeled as uncategorized, undefined, nonconformist, and heterodox others. They positioned out of the order of things. Therefore, the existence of Alevis does not symbolize an alternative order of things, but rather chaos and devastation. This interpretation closely follows the analysis Bauman develops in *Modernity and Holocaust*.

While analyzing the socio-political position of Jews in Europe, Baumann carefully underscores the ambivalent characteristics that undermine the categories of host and guest or foreigner and native. As discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, being unidentifiable one of the inherent characteristics of Alevi identity politics. The most complicated question for Alevi associations as agents of an identity movement is: "What is Alevism?" Indeed, Massicard defines the Alevi movement as an "identity movement without identity."[91] The

---

90   Zygmunt Baumann, *Modernity and Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989), 34.
91   Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, 18.

ambivalence of Alevism not only undermines differences between "us" and foreigners, but also turns Alevis into an empty vessel ready to be filled by identification with religious infidelity and political communism. In this respect, anti-Alevi tensions in society mainly derive from Alevis' religious and ethnic ambivalence.

Despite this ambivalence, anti-Alevi tensions played a vital role in establishing the boundaries of Alevi identity. While analyzing anti-Semitism in the European context, Jean Paul Sartre asks what serves the semblance of unity in Jewish community. Due to the fact that the Jewish community has been deprived of both a concrete national and religious history, Sartre defines them as an abstract historical community. However, he asserts that they deserve identification as a community since they have experienced a common social situation. Accordingly, he asserts that the anti-Semitism has given Jews their identity:[92]

> Jews have neither community of interest nor community of beliefs. They do not have same fatherland; they have no history. The sole ties that bind them are the hostility and the disdain of the societies, which surrounds them. Thus the authentic Jew is the one who asserts his claim in the face of the disdain shown toward him.[93]… In a word the inauthentic Jews are men whom other men take for Jews and who have decided to run away from this insupportable situation.[94]

The defining of Jews by anti-Semite has led Jews to destroy Jewish identity within themselves and to acquire a human point of reference for the universe. A Jew hopes to become a human like all other humans. A Jew tries to lose himself in the crowd of Christians, since the Christians represent anonymity, humanity without race. A Jew does not seek assimilation, but his right as an ordinary Frenchman.[95]

---

92 Jean Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York: Shocken Books, 1965), 67-69.
93 Ibid., 91.
94 Ibid., 93.
95 Ibid., 110-112.

Sartre's enlightening analysis touches on two important matters that can be reinterpreted for the formation of the Alevi political subject. One is ambivalence. The ambivalence of Alevism, like that of Jewish culture, has been cleared by non-Alevi conservatism. This type of conservatism which is a reaction against "traitors," "communists," or "unbelievers," has a historical continuity, targeting the Alevis in the sixteenth century, in the late 1970s, and in the 1990s. Therefore, in spite of the unidentifiable and ambivalent character of Alevism, the Alevi political subject has been indirectly defined by massacres to which the Alevis were subjected. Since massacres provide historical continuity and consistency to Alevi identity, they become one of the main elements of Alevi politicization. In other words, the continuity of massacres stands against the liquidity of Alevism. Therefore, they can be assessed as stable elements or the guiding star of an ambivalent Alevi political history.

The second crucial point of Sartre's analysis concerns the political organization of the Jews. Sartre states that Jews chose to assimilate and claim their rights as citizens rather than as Jews.[96] Analyzing European Jews, Hannah Arendt states that due to their territorial dispersion - being international or non-national without a nation state - was one of their main characteristics during the interwar period. In tandem with their fragmented, undefined social situation, Arendt adds that their position had been determined by politics.[97] These two important observations set straight the Jews' relation to political liberalism. The Jews insisted on political enlightenment and liberalism to undermine the social framework of their host countries. There would be no Jews or Germans, Polish, or French, but only people who live in Germany, France, or Poland.

The solution of the Alevi question would thus be the politicization of Alevism without Alevism taking Sartre's and Arendt's analysis into account. Instead of the particularization of their cultural identity within multiculturalism, Alevi associations have preferred to adopt universal political conceptualizations such as citizenship and secularism. Victimhood not only historicized the Alevi political subject, but also directed the political roots of Alevi politicization to the relief of victimhood were brought. The only way to

---

96   Ibid., 110.

97   Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totolitarianism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1962), 18-22.

annihilate victimhood is egalitarian citizenship within the framework of a secular republic. Thus, the political language of debates on Alevi massacres should concern concepts of human rights, citizenship, and secularism instead of diaspora or ghetto.[98]

The role of the massacres for the politicization of Alevism cannot be limited to increasing attention on Alevi identity. More importantly, the historical continuity of Alevi identity has become an inseparable unit of the politicization of Alevism that directs the Alevis to politicize on the basis of universal political concepts without reference to their own cultural peculiarities. Therefore, the historical continuity of massacres counterbalances the ambivalence of Alevi cosmology. Even so, the fragmentation of collective memory - reflected in choices about remembering or ignoring massacres, which are in turn shaped by political divisions within the community - demonstrates the problems of approaching identity formation as a uniform process.

Different interpretations of Alevi identity accepted and promoted by agents of Alevi politics are be examined in the next two chapters. The inquiry begins in Chapter 6 by presenting associations as the main agents of Alevi politics through a discussion of their burying definitions and historiography's of Alevism, their relations with one other, and their affiliations with political parties.

---

98   Ayhan Yalçınkaya, *Pas* (Ankara: Phoneix, 2005), 59.

6

Contested Domain of Alevi Politics: Analysis of Alevi Politics through Contrasting Poles

The 1990s witnessed the emergence of Alevi politics based on a particular religious and cultural identity in Turkey. The agents of the Alevi movement, which formulated the demands of the community, were largely Alevi associations. On one hand, the activities of these associations - like the building *cemevi*s and providing courses on the *semah* and *bağlama* - not only develop social solidarity among Alevis, but also reformulate the tradition within the context of the conditions of urban life.[1] These associations define and historicize Alevism through publications and activities. Alevi practices, traditions, and religious institutions are re-invented or standardized by associations that contribute the creation of an independent Alevi identity. On the other hand, they are contact with political parties and governmental bodies regarding the demands of their members. Associations lead Alevis to more effectively participate in policymaking. Due to the fact that, such associations play a vital role in the public representation of Alevi identity socially and politically, they are the main agents of Alevi politics.

---

1   Burak Gümüş, "Alevi Hareketleri ve Değişen Alevilik Üzerine" in *Alevilik,* (eds.) İsmail Engin and Havva Engin (Istanbul: Kitap, 2004), 521

There were dozens of Alevi associations in the 1990s, but a detailed analysis of all of them exceeds the scope of this dissertation.[2] Two associations, which are of vital importance because they occupy the ideological poles of Alevi politics, are analyzed. They are the Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Associations (*Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Dernekleri – PSAKD*) and the Cem Foundation (*Cem Vakfı*). The theoretical positions of these two associations with respect to Alevism and their political preferences not only reflect their stances, but also indicate the boundaries of Alevi politics. To be more precise, other agents of Alevi politics establish their policies within a political area, the ideological boundaries of which have been established by the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD.

The Cem Foundation evaluates Alevism as an Islamic religious sect; therefore, it approaches the Alevi question in the context of the freedom of religion. On the other hand, the PSAKD assesses Alevism as a culture or way of life that synthesizes Anatolian beliefs and cultures. It ties Alevism to democratic struggles in Turkish politics. While the Cem Foundation is the most successful Alevi association in terms of lobbying and interacting with government bodies, the PSAKD is one of the most popular Alevi organizations. Their differences with respect to the definition of Alevism and relation to the government reflect political preferences, as well. While the Cem Foundation negotiates with any political party to advance its demands, the PSAKD limits its political affiliations to left-wing political parties.

The differences between the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD in terms of their definitions of Alevism and their political stances render these foundations as opposite poles of the Alevi political spectrum. Their theoretical formulations on Alevism and their political positions within Turkish politics shape the boundaries of Alevi politics at large. Other popular non-governmental Alevi organizations of the 1990s - like the Hacı Bektaş Veli Anatolian Culture Foundation, the Hacı Bektaş Veli Culture and Promotion Association, and the Semah Foundation - remained between these poles politically.

---

2   For introductory information on these associations, see. Lütfi Kaleli, *Alevi Kimliği ve Alevi Örgütlenmeleri* (Istanbul: Can, 2000) and Nedim Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Alevi Örgütlerinin Tarihsel Süreci* (Istanbul: İtalik, 2001).

Due to the representational authority of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD, the existing literature on Alevi associations focuses on these associations to evaluate the organizational structure of the Alevi movement.[3] This chapter contributes to this literature by applying Nancy Fraser's notions of "affirmative" and "transformative" remedies to compare the approaches of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD. To analyze remedies designed to cope with problems of recognition and redistribution, Fraser states that affirmative remedies correct the inequitable outcomes of social arrangements without disturbing the social establishment that generates them. Transformative remedies correct inequitable outcomes of social arrangements by restructuring the generative framework.[4] Fraser's argument sheds light on the boundaries of Alevi politics with respect to categorical state-religion relations, represented respectively by the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD.

Chapter 4 demonstrates that the rise of political Islam in the 1990s plays a crucial role for the institutionalization of Alevism as a source for an independent social movement. The increasing salience of Islamic symbols in everyday life and the rise to power of the RP as a coalition partner in municipalities and the national government set the agenda of Alevi politics. Fear generated by political Islam in this socio-political framework determines Alevi associations' relation to the state and political parties in the context of debates on secularism.

The Cem Foundation and the PSAKD represent the boundaries of Alevi political space with respect to state-religion relations and associations' relations to political parties. With reference to Fraser's conceptual framework, the Cem Foundation aims to restore social arrangements without disturbing the social establishment, demanding not a transformation of state-religion rela-

---

3   For academic literature comparing the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD, see Murat Okan, *Türkiye'de Aleviler* (Ankara: İmge, 2004); Seçil Aslan, *The Ambivalence of Alevi Politic(s): A Comparative Analysis of Cem Vakfı and Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği.* Unpublished M.A Thesis, Boğaziçi University, Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences, 2008 and Bengü Aydın, *Alevi Politics of Recognition: Transformation of Alevism and Two Kinds of Recognition Politics,* M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University, Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences, 2009.

4   Fraser, "From redistribution to recognition? Dilemmas of justice in a 'postsocialist' age," 82.

tions, but the representation of Alevism as a religious identity within the governmental structure. In contrast, the PSAKD demands a change to the existing conceptualization of secularism and democracy through the full separation of the state and religion.

In Turkish context the Directorate of Religious Affairs and compulsory religious courses reify secularism debates for Alevi associations. Affirmative remedies proposed by the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD's transformative demands are materialized in policy positions on the statutes of directorate and on compulsory religious courses. The Cem Foundation aims to have Alevism represented as a religious identity in the context of the directorate and in the curriculum of compulsory religious courses. The PSAKD, on the other hand, hopes to transform state-religion relations through the abolition of the directorate and the eradication of compulsory religious instruction.

The assessment of the positions of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD with reference to Fraser's discussion of affirmative and transformative remedies informs this chapter's investigation of the political tendencies of these two associations. In line with the transformative approach, the PSAKD believes that the problems of Alevis stems from the weakness of Turkey's secular democracy; the problems of Alevis cannot be disassociated from the democratization of Turkey. In this respect, the PSAKD suggests secularism and democracy are indispensable for one other. Correspondingly, it accuses right-wing political parties in Turkey of making concessions with respect secularism, and it generally supports leftist politics. On the other hand, the Cem Foundation acts pragmatically vis-à-vis political parties. As a consequence of its affirmative policy outlook, the Cem Foundation conducts negotiations with all parties regardless of their ideology to articulate demands for the representation of Alevis' within state structures and for state funding.

The analysis of these associations as poles of Alevi politics is based on three analytical categories. The multiplicity of the conceptualization of Alevism is the first categorical unit. How the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD have become differentiated while defining Alevism, writing its history, and situating it geographically is scrutinized. The second categorical unit includes the relation between the agents of Alevi politics and the political system. Debates on secularism shed light on this relation. More concretely, varying positions with respect to the existence of the Directorate of Religious Affairs and compulsory

religious course helps to determine differing perspectives on secularism. This in turn identifies the associations' approaches as either affirmative or transformative. The third analytical category is the relation between political parties and Alevi associations. The rise of political Islam shaped the political sensibilities of these associations in the 1990s; however, their diverging conceptualizations of Alevism and secularism have determined their political orientations. While the Cem Foundation supports centrist parties (whether right or left) against the RP, the PSAKD insistently supports left-wing parties to defend secularism against political Islam. Lastly, this chapter extends the agenda of Alevi politics temporally into the 2000s. Unlike the 1990s, Turkey's accession to the European Union (EU) became a main dynamic of Turkish politics in the early 2000s. This process opened up new opportunities for Alevi associations, and they began formulating their demands with the political language of the European Union. The chapter ends with how these associations engaged Turkey's accession process to the EU.

§ 6.1 Contested Boundaries of Alevi Politics: Definition, History, Geography

The formation of the PSAKD dates to the mid-1970s. The association was formed in 1976 in Banaz, under the name Banaz Village Pir Sultan Abdal Tourism and Promotion Association *(Banaz Köyü Pir Sultan Abdal Turizm ve Tanıtma Derneği)*.[5] The association reflected the basic character of politics in the 1970s: it was a *hemşehri*[6] association formed by Alevis rather than an Alevi association focused on protecting the rights of the Alevi community. People who were not from the village of Banaz were not allowed to be affiliated. As a result of the military coup of 1980, the association was closed along with all others. In 1988, it was reestablished under the name Banaz Village Pir Sultan Abdal Tourism and Solidarity Association *(Banaz Köyü Pir Sultan Abdal Turizm ve Dayanışma Derneği)*. It was still a *hemşehri* organization and its transformation from a *hemşehri* association into an Alevi corresponded with the rise of the Alevi identity movement. In the First General Assembly in 1990,

---

5   Banaz is a village of Yıldızeli/Sivas where Pir Sultan Abdal was born.

6   Hemşehri refers to people who originate from same town.

the association was renamed as Pir Sultan Abdal Culture and Solidarity Association *(Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği* – PSAKD). More importantly, the necessary condition for the membership was changed from being born in Banaz to the embrace of Pir Sultan Abdal culture.[7]

The criterion for membership in the association was transformed from place of birth to Alevi culture through the image of Pir Sultan Abdal. Therefore, the assessment of Pir Sultan Abdal by the PSAKD has been crucial to comprehend its mission. The PSAKD underscores the multidimensionality of Pir Sultan Abdal as an Alevi *dede,* poet, and popular leader. Therefore, the embrace of Pir Sultan Abdal requires participation in *cem* ceremonies; reading poems, *deyiş* and *nefes*; and resisting injustices.[8] In parallel with the multidimensional assessment of Pir Sultan Abdal, the PSAKD assesses Alevism as an entity whose cultural, religious, and political elements cannot be separated.[9]

Due to the multidimensional evolution of cultural and political Alevism the PSAKD is more than an Alevi association. On one hand, the association is aimed at keeping all Anatolian cultures alive, including Alevism. On the other, the PSAKD contributes to the struggle for fundamental rights and freedom in Turkey in opposition to fascism, imperialism, and religious fundamentalism.[10] Because the PSAKD asserts that the problems of Alevis stem from Turkey's non-secular and undemocratic political structures, it ties the maintenance of Alevism to the struggle for democracy and secularism in Turkey.[11] Therefore, it emerges as a popular democratic organization on the basis of the Alevi problem.

Before analyzing the Cem Foundation's missions, two points about the foundation should be clarified. One is the relation between the Cem Foundation and the *Cem* periodical. Although the Cem Foundation was formed in 1995, its founders had become influential in Alevi politics in the early 1990s through the publication of *Cem*. The periodical, begun in 1991, established the

---

7   H. Nedim Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Alevi Örgütlerinin Tarihsel Süreci* (Istanbul: İtalik, 2001), 218-219.

8   "V. Dönem Çalışmalarımız," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 36 (February 2000): 54.

9   "Genel Başkan Necati Yılmaz'ın Açılış Konuşması," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 36 (February 2000): 2-10.

10   Nedim Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneğinin Demokrasi Laiklik ve Özgürlük Mücadelesi* (Ankara: PSAKD Yayınları, 1997), 56.

11   "Görüşlerimiz," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 20 (September-October 1996): 13-14.

conceptualization of Alevism even before the Cem Foundation. When the Cem Foundation was established in March 1995, the periodical became its official publication from the fifth-seventh issue onwards. The periodical of *Cem* is therefore treated as a constituent of the foundation, and the analysis dates back to the early 1990s through the periodical, even though the foundation proper had not yet been founded.

In addition to this clarification the position of İzzettin Doğan in the foundation should be underscored. Doğan, who has been chairman of the Cem Foundation since its formation, embodies its policies in his person. He not only comes from an influential *dede* lineage,[12] but also is a professor of international law. As a result of his ancestry and academic position, he symbolizes a synthesis of the traditional values of Alevism and modern, scientific knowledge. As a *hoca* with academic capital and a *dede* with traditional knowledge, İzzettin Doğan gained an upper hand in the Alevi politics during the Alevi revival.[13] He is involved in nearly all activities of the foundation and represents it in relations with political parties and other non-governmental organizations. Given the mark of İzzettin Doğan's personality on the institutionalization of the Cem Foundation, his views and the position of the foundation are inseparably linked and are treated as such in this chapter.

The Cem Foundation's aim is to clarify the uncertainty of Alevi identity and promote a coherent, scientific understanding of Alevism. In this context, the foundation calls Alevi *dede*s, academics, and businessmen to affiliate with the Cem Foundation to strengthen the moral and material structure of Alevism.[14] Unlike the PSAKD, the Cem Foundation explicitly defines itself as an

---

12 İzzettin Doğan is from dede lineage of the Ağuiçen Ocak, one of the most influential Alevi ocaks of Anatolia. Moreover his maternal grandfather is from the dede lineage of the Babamansur Ocak, is another extensive ocak of Eastern Anatolia.

13 Markus Dressler, "The Modern Dede: Changing Parameters for Religious Authority in Contemporary Turkish Alevism," in *Speaking for Islam: Religious Authorities in Muslim Societies,* (eds.) Gudrun Kramer and Sabine Schmidtke, (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 277.

14 "Cem Vakfı Kuruluşu Amaç Hedef ve Çalışmaları," in *Cem Vakfı Çalışmaları ve Vakıf Genel Başkanı Prof. Dr İzzetin Doğan'ın Görüş ve Düşünceleri* (Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), 20-21.

Alevi association and presents a rigorously defined Alevi Islamic system of belief to non-Alevi communities.

The ways in which these two associations have defined their objectives informed conflicts within Alevi politics. Debates about the Alevi Congress demonstrate that these two associations' differing aims triggered conflicts between them. In 1992, the periodical *Cem* attempted to hold an Alevi Congress (*Alevi Kurultayı*) to discuss the problems of Alevis. The periodical assumed responsibility for the congress and listed participants including religious leaders in the Alevism (*Çelebi*s, *Baba*s, *Dede*s), poets, researcher-writers, and active and former Alevi deputies. Moreover, all Alevi associations, *ocaks,* and neighborhoods were invited to attend with three representatives each.[15]

The topics of the congress were the definition of Alevism, its role in the history of Islam, its rituals, the relation between Alevis and the Directorate of Religious Affairs, and the demands of Alevis from political authorities.[16] The topics hinted that the *Cem* was specifying Alevism as an Islamic religious sect in order to negotiate prescribed demands with political authorities on behalf of the Alevi community.

The perspective of the PSAKD was radically different. Because it tended to associate the Alevi problem with Turkey's struggle for democracy, the PSAKD believed that Alevis could only solve their problems through solidarity with democratic movements. It proposed a Democracy Congress under the leadership of Alevis with participation by non-governmental organizations and trade unions including the Human Rights Association *(İnsan Hakları Derneği – İHD)*, the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Turkey *(Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu -DİSK)*, and the Turkish Medical Association *(Türk Tabipler Birliği – TTB)*.[17]

Cem strongly criticized the call for a Democracy Congress. It argued that the Alevi Congress united the newly mobilized Alevi community and that the

---

15   "Alevi Kurultayına Doğru," *Cem* 13 (June 1992): 33.

16   "Alevi Kurultayı," *Cem* 18 (November 1992): 33-35.

17   Murtaza Demir, "Alevi Kurultayına İlişkin Bazı Öneriler," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 3 (October 1992): 3-4.

Democracy Congress would not specifically address Alevis.[18] On the other side, the PSAKD defended the position that the problems of the Alevis did not stem from their Aleviness, but from Turkey's undemocratic political structure. The Democracy Congress, with the participation of the democratic NGOs, could contribute to a resolution of the problems of Alevis, as well.[19]

Debates on the Alevi Congress clearly demonstrate that the two associations define themselves differently: one as an Alevi association and the other as a democratic NGO. This leads to their differing political activities. Indeed, the differing self-definitions mainly stem from the different ways they define Alevism. Dissimilar answers to the question "What is Alevism" lead these associations to define themselves differently.

6.1.1   *Struggle for Meaning: Is Alevism Part of Islam or Not?*

The Alevi revival in the 1990s can be assessed as a struggle over the meaning of Alevism. Framing Alevism means not only defining the community in whose name associations are fighting, but also the determination of political demands. As a consequence of Alevi associations' search for identity, two hegemonic projects emerged, namely political Alevism and the Islamic Alevism.[20] It is clear that the leaders of these two projects are the PSAKD (for the political one) and the Cem Foundation (for the religious one). The struggle over the definition of Alevism between these organizations rests on the relation between Alevism and Islam: Is Alevism inherently Islam or not?

The PSAKD defines Alevism as a self-contained system of thought and belief that synthesized Anatolian beliefs and cultures like Shamanism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Manichaeism, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.[21] In this definition, Alevism is an independent culture - or religion itself - with

---

18   "Bin Yıllık Aleviliğin Onuru ile Yaşayanlar ve İnkara Boğulanlar," *Cem* 20 (January 1993): 3-13.

19   Ali Balkız, "Beş Milyon Yıllık İnsanlığın Onuruyla Yaşıyoruz," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 5 (February 1993): 13-15.

20   Tol, *The Sustainability Crisis of the Alevism*, 232-240.

21   Murtaza Demir, "1992 Yılının Derneğimiz Açısından Kısa Özeti ve Bir Yanıt," *Pir Sultan Abdal*, 5 (February 1993): 3.

traces of all the beliefs that compromise it.[22] The definition of Alevism as a separate culture brings into question its relation to Islam. Kemal Bülbül, a former president of the PSAKD, claims that Alevism's relation to Islam is not categorically different from its relation to Judaism or Christianity. Islam is only one of the constituents of Alevism.[23] The association accepts the historical and cultural relationship between Islam and Alevism; however, it asserts that Alevism is neither inside nor outside Islam, Alevism, as a synthesis of Anatolian beliefs, cannot be limited within a specific narrowly defined religious faith.[24]

On the other hand, the Cem Foundation deeply criticizes the formulation of Alevism as a separate creed independent of Islam. Abidin Özgünay, the chief editor of the periodical of *Cem* and an influential figure in the Cem Foundation, states that the formation of the Cem Foundation was a reaction to the fact that associations, taking the names of Alevi saints, had proven incapable of representing Alevism.[25] The Cem Foundation aims to represent Alevism as an Islamic religious sect.

In this context, İzzettin Doğan formulates the Cem Foundation's vision of Alevism. He claims that Alevism was the interpretation of Islam by semi-nomadic Turkish communities of Central Asia and was nurtured by their pre-Islamic beliefs. However, Alevism gradually developed and came to its own when Turks migrated from Central Asia to Anatolia. Ancient Anatolian beliefs were woven into the composition of Alevism. It then spread to the Balkans.[26]

In this regard, Doğan establishes a relation between Turkishness and Islam through Alevism. On one hand, Alevism is the assessment of Islam by Turkish communities, which spread from Central Asia to the Balkans in parallel with

---

22   Ali Balkız, "Danışma Kurulu Açılış Konuşması," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 39 (August 2000): 5.

23   Kemal Bülbül, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 30.09.2012.

24   Turan Eser, "Yol Ayrımındaki Alevi Örgütlenmeleri ve Gerçekleri Kabul Edelim," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 56 (March 2004): 67.

25   Although Özgünay does not directly mention the names of these associations, it is clear they were the Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Association and the Hacı Bektaş Veli Culture and Promotion Association. See Abidin Özgünay, "Alevilik Kendi Gerçeğiyle Buluştu: Cem Vakfı," *Cem* 48 (May 1995): 2-3 and Abidin Özgünay, "Aleviliğin Öz Örgütü Cem Vakfı," *Cem* 50 (July 1995): 5-7.

26   Ayhan Aydın, "Prof. Dr İzzettin Doğan ile Söyleşi," *Cem* 54 (November 1995): 20-21.

the migration of Turks. Accordingly, Doğan frequently calls Alevism: Turkish Islam. On the other hand, due to the semi-nomadic life of Turkish communities, they could not practice the formal procedures of Islam and gravitated to its essence, instead. Therefore, Alevism emerged as a Sufi version of Islam. Although Doğan accepts the influence of various belief systems on Alevism, he claims that Alevism cannot be considered a cultural synthesis, because the influence of other beliefs has not vitiated its Islamist character.[27] Therefore, the Cem Foundation assesses Alevism as Alevi Islam, Sufi Islam, or Turkish Islam.

Definitions of Alevism by the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation radically differ with regard to its relation to Islam. Whereas the PSAKD assesses Alevism as an independent culture or syncretistic belief system, the Cem Foundation evaluates Alevism as an Islamic religious sect shaped by the Turks' interpretation of Islam. The relation between Islam and Alevism is the most crucial difference between the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation, but the ways Alevism is situated spatially and historically also emerge as a difference.

6.1.2   *Geography of Alevism: "Where is the Homeland?"*

The spatiality of Alevism is another controversial topic for Alevi associations. The importance of debates on the geographical space of Alevism stemmed from the relation between space and ethnicity. In other words, the debates on the spatiality of Alevism go hand-in-hand indirectly with a discussion of the ethnicity of Alevism. Anatolia is at the center of these debates. In his article on the concept of "Anatolian Alevism," Gürdal Aksoy asserts that this imagined term, which does not refer a concrete reality, aims to homogenize and "Turkicize" Alevism through geographical ties. The use of Anatolia as a Turkish homeland standardizes the various manifestations of Alevism into a fixed cultural identity directly related to Turkish identity through national boundaries and Turkish language.[28]

---

27   Ayhan Aydın, "Prof. Dr İzzettin Doğan ile Söyleşi: Kur'an-ı Yunus Emre Gözüyle Yorumlamak," *Cem* 96 (November 1999): 19.

28   Gürdal Aksoy, *Anadolu Aleviliği'nden Dersim'e: Alevi Tarihine Coğrafi Bir Giriş* (Ankara: Dipnot, 2009), 48.

The formative role of Anatolia for Alevism might link Alevism with Turkish identity; however, the concept of Anatolian Alevism - by connecting Alevism with geographical space rather than ethnic identity - might also de-ethnicize Alevism. Correspondingly, the status of Anatolian geography in differing conceptualizations of Alevism of the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation demonstrate that geographical space can be used to ethnicize identity or not.

Anatolia plays a formative role in the PSAKD's conceptualization of Alevism. The association clearly defines Alevism as syncretistic culture of beliefs of Anatolia. It frequently uses the term "Anatolian Alevism" to refer to Alevism. The focus on Anatolia enables the PSAKD to formulate an Alevism shaped by multiple origin stories of Anatolia including Ancient Greek and Islamic Sufi ones. The philosophical bases of Alevism take precedence over Islam via the pre-Islamic history of Anatolia.[29] More importantly, the formative role of Anatolia paves the way for a supra-national Alevism that covered all ethnic groups in Anatolia including Kurds, and Arabs. The PSAKD does not attribute Alevism to an ethnic identity and aims to establish a religious brotherhood (namely *musahiplik*) between Kurdish and Turkish Alevis under the moniker Anatolian Alevism.[30] The emphasis on geography instead of ethnicity contributes to the de-ethnicization of Alevism; however Anatolian Alevism is detached from Mesopotamian or Balkanian heterodox communities. Therefore, the PSAKD's Anatolian Alevism conceptualization is not Turkified Islam, but a "Turkeyfied" belief system.

Unlike the PSAKD, İzzettin Doğan claims that Alevism derives from assessment of Islam by the nomadic Turcoman communities; therefore, the birthplace of Alevism is Central Asia. Alevism then spread from Central Asia to Anatolia parallel with the migration of Turks. During this migration, it was influenced by Iranian beliefs and Christianity coming to its own in Anatolia, where the Turkish interpretation of Islam combined with the Anatolian humanism. Therefore, the Cem Foundation connects the spatiality of Alevism

---

29　"Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği ve Aleviliğe Bakışı," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 36 (February 2000): 15.

30　"PSAKD ve Aleviliğe Bakışı," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 36 (February 2000): 35.

with the existence of Turks. The foundation believes that ethnic origin is the main ground of difference between Sunnism and Alevism. İzzettin Doğan clearly establishes a dual relation between Alevism as the Turkish version of Islam and Sunnism as Arab-oriented Islam.[31] This neither means that Turks cannot be Sunni nor Kurds cannot be Alevi; however, he essentially claims that Alevism is epistemologically derived from a Turkish interpretation of Islam.

On one hand, the spatiality of Alevism is linked with ethnicity; on the other, due to the reconstruction of geographical space through historical developments, spatiality is related to the history of Alevis, as well. The differing historiographies of the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation not only define the spatiality of Alevism, but also indicate the Alevis' relation to political authorities.

6.1.3   *History of the Alevis: Were Alevis Opponents or State Founders?*

History writing plays a vital role in identity politics, because shared history consolidates the sense of belonging within the community and the actual political positions of the agents. Therefore, the analysis of the dissimilar historiographies of these associations, which give rise to distinct centralization of Alevism, enables the comprehension of their different political positions.

Differences in the definition and spatiality of Alevism between the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD are reflected in their historiographies as well; Alevism's religious relation with Islam and geographic relation to Anatolia become the breaking points of these historiographies. However, the relation between Alevism and political authorities affects the differing historiographies of these associations on a large scale.

The historiography of the PSAKD can be seen in a study conducted by Nejat Birdoğan in mid-1990s.[32] In this study, differences between Sunnism and Alevism are discussed within the scope of class struggle and the process of state formation. In the report's words, nomadic Oghuz tribes that migrated

---

31   Ayhan Aydın, "Prof. Dr. İzzettin Doğan ile Söyleşi," *Cem* 54 (November 1995): 20.

32   Nejat Birdoğan was one of the Alevi intellectuals who contributed to the popularization of debates on Alevism in the 1990s. He was also a board member of the PSAKD who led to the formulation of its historical writing.

from Central Asia to Anatolia encountered a feudal state, the exploitation system of which was legitimized by Orthodox Sunni Islam. In contrast with Orthodox Sunnism, the solidarity collective of Oghuz Turks skillfully incorporated egalitarian values of the primordial Christianity, esoteric Sufism, and the essence of Islam around the symbol of Ali under the name of Alevism.[33]

Central to this historiographical analysis is the conceptualization of Alevism as a synthesis of ancient Anatolian cultures. It has not conceptualized Alevism as an interpretation of Islam, but as a syncretistic belief of which but one of the constituents is Islam. According to the study, the relation of Alevism with Islam is not different from its relation to Christianity. The PSAKD's Alevism is thus completed by historical analysis.

Two assessments of Anatolia coexist in the historiographical analysis of the PSAKD. Whereas Sunni Islam symbolizes the dominant classes, state, and sharia; Alevism refers to the communal values of mankind and the political opposition. While the Cem Foundation establishes a distinction between Alevism and Sunnism in the context of Turkishness, the PSAKD asserts that the differences between orthodoxy and heterodoxy – that is to say Sunnism and Alevism - are manifestations of class struggle. As a consequence of this historiography, the association defines its political mission as the defense of freedom from exploitation, of equality against the slavery, and of reason over faith – just as Pir Sultan Abdal did in the sixteenth century.[34]

The historiography of the PSAKD is inspired by the analysis of the Peasant War of 1525 in Germany by Frederick Engels. Engels evaluates religious controversies of the time as a reflection of class wars of the sixteenth century. Müntzer is described as a revolutionary leader of the oppressed classes who tries to establish an egalitarian society using the discourse of Christianity.[35] Similar to Engels, the PSAKD assesses Alevism as the ideology of the oppressed classes of Anatolia in the ideological condition of the middle ages. Because Alevism historically derives from class struggle in Anatolia under the reign of the Seljuk and Ottoman dynasties, the PSAKD identifies Alevism with the political opposition and leftist politics.

---

33 "Pir Sultan Abdal'ı Anlamak," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 17 (January-February 1996): 5.

34 Ibid.*,* 7.

35   Friedrich Engels, *Köylüler Savaşı*, trans. Kenan Somer (Ankara: Sol, 1999).

The historiographical understanding of the Cem Foundation is formulated by İzzettin Doğan, who strongly argues against the notion that Alevis is inherently oppositional. He believes that the moral codes of Alevis played a vital role in the formation of the Ottoman state. Doğan claims that the marriage between Osman Ghazi and the daughter of Seyh Edibali, an Alevi-Ahi religious leader, the ideological leadership of the Bektashi Order for the Janissary guild, and the roles of Alevi *dede*s for the Islamization of the Balkans indicate a formative role of Alevis in the Ottoman state.[36]

When did the harmonious relation between Alevis and the Ottoman state break down? İzzettin Doğan claims that the disturbance of the relations dates back to the reign of Sultan Selim the Stern. When Sultan Selim came to power, he declared war against Shah İsmail, who held a special place in Alevi culture. He then defeated the Memluks and became caliph. As a consequence, more than two thousand Arab ulema were transferred from Egypt to Istanbul and assigned to madrasahs and mosques. Doğan believes this process was a milestone in Anatolia for the domination of Arabic over Turkish Islam, sharia over Sufi Islam, or Sunnism over Alevism. In addition to undertaking ideological transformation, Sultan Selim violently repressed opposition by the Alevi majority of Anatolia which resisted the Sunnification policies of Ottoman state. Thus, İzzettin Doğan claims that when the Ottoman dynasty inherited the responsibility of the caliphate, the dominant ideology was transformed from Islamic Sufism to Arabic Islam. The Ottoman state accordingly turned against the Alevis who were the carriers of the authentic, Islamic soul.[37] This indicated a rupture in the relations between the state and Alevis.

In the historical writings of İzzettin Doğan, the proclamation of the Turkish Republic constitutes another turning point as it means the end of legal discrimination against Alevis. He believes that the Republic means the rebirth of authentic Islam in Anatolia; Republican secularism as a cultural revolution purified Islam from Arabic influence. Therefore, Alevis who supported both the National Struggle and early Republican policies appeared as actors in the

---

36   "Alevilik Kırmızı Koltuk'ta," *Cem* 8 (January 1992): 34.

37   Ayhan Aydın, "Prof. Dr İzzettin Doğan ile Söyleşi: Osmanlı'da Alevilik," *Cem* 97 (December 1999): 22-23.

formation of the Republican state, as well. However, the relationship between Alevis and the Republic broke down after the transition to multi-party politics because politicians began to use religion for political gain.[38]

The PSAKD also has a favorable view of the early Republican period; however, its attitude is more circumspect and nuanced. The association believes that secular reforms and the rupture of Ottoman society drew Alevis close to the Republic.[39] On the other hand, the establishment of the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the outlawing of the Bektashi Order (as part of the ban on dervish lodges) deinstitutionalized Alevism in the early Republican period. The PSAKD therefore believes that the Republic had not recognized Alevism, but merely transformed the official position from annihilation to negligence. Similar to the Cem Foundation, the PSAKD claims that the transition to a multi-party system paved the way for the exploitation of religion for political gain, and the official attitude toward Alevism changed from negligence to assimilation.[40]

The methodological comparison of the historiographies of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD demonstrates that the structural historiography of the PSAKD in the context of class analysis and power relations contrasts the Cem Foundation's focus on individual interests. It emphasizes the state formative role of Alevis in both the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, and explains Alevis' alienation from the state structures with reference to the irresponsibility of politicians. This methodological difference relates to the differences between their transformative and affirmative political demands as it directs them to adopt differing political positions.

So far the definition, spatiality, and historical development of Alevism have been discussed in relation to epistemological boundaries of Alevi politics. On one hand, the PSAKD defines the Alevism as the cultural synthesis of Anatolian beliefs. In fact, Alevism as a syncretistic culture is more than a belief, because it becomes the ideology of oppressed classes against the exploitive regimes of the Seljuk and Ottoman dynasties. On the other hand, the Cem

---

38   Ayhan Aydın, "Prof. Dr. İzzettin Doğan ile Söyleşi: Aleviler ve Atatürk," *Cem* 98 (January 2000): 20-23.

39   Necati Yılmaz, "Adı Konulmadık 75 Yıl," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 30 (January 1999): 23.

40   Ali Yıldırım, "Aleviliğin Adı Yok," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 30 (January 1999): 69 -73.

Foundation believes that Alevism is the reassessment of Islam by nomadic Turks. Due to the influence of the nomadic way of life, newly Muslim Turks did not follow formal procedures of Islam and gravitated instead to its essence. When nomadic Turks migrated to Anatolia, their pre-Islamic beliefs and the ancient cultures of the Anatolia influenced their conceptualization of Islam. Therefore, Alevi Islam, Turk Islam or Sufi Islam took its final shape in Anatolia and was then disseminated to the Balkans.[41]

İzzettin Doğan's conceptualization of Alevism as Turkish Islam has certain parallels with the doctrine of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, which insists on the inseparability of the identities of Turkishness and Islam. This doctrine became the de facto official ideology against socialism after the 1980 military coup.[42] Similar to the function of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, İzzettin Doğan's conceptualization of Alevism, too, assumes the function of disassociating Alevism from socialist discourse and the Kurdish movement. In this regard, the conceptualization of Alevism of the Cem Foundation is in line with "Turkish" secularism and Turkish nationalism, aspiring to integrate Alevism into the state structure. On the other hand, in the PSAKD's conceptualization Alevism is dissociated from Islam religiously and from Turkishness ethnically. Thus it emerges as an oppositional culture.

Political authority plays a critical role in identity movements, because the relation between cultural groups and the state shapes the politicization of cultural identity. The relation with the state not only affects the public emergence of an identity, but also determines the position of the agents of the identity movement vis-à-vis social establishment. In the case of the Alevi movement in the 1990s, different Alevi associations' relations to the state are of crucial significance for an analysis of cleavages within the movement. The next section analyses the diversity within Alevi politics by examining these relations.

---

41 Ayhan Aydın, *İzzettin Doğan ile Söyleşi: İzzettin Doğan'ın Alevi İslam İnancı, Kültürü ile İlgili Düşünceleri* (Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 2000), 111.

42 Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey*, 102.

§ 6.2 Political Demands and Relations with the Political System within a Framework of Debates on Secularism

Their definitions of Alevism and views on the historical relations between political authorities and the Alevi community indicate how the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD have differently positioned themselves in relation to the political system. The different political demands of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD have drawn the political boundaries of the relation between the Alevi movement and state. The discussion of the political system was directly linked to debates on secularism.

6.2.1 *Different Positions Toward Turkish Secularism in Demands Put Forward by the Cem Foundation and PSAKD*

While discussing the secularism of early Republican period, Nuray Mert underscores the character of Turkish secularism as a non-Western society. She asserts that because debates on secularism in Turkey have always related to Westernization, the basic principles of Turkish secularism were founded automatically. Consequently, Turkish secularism never involved a struggle against religious thought or theological ethics, but reconciled secularism with religion.[43]

The basic principles of Kemalist secularism can be summarized as the secularization of law, the elimination of religious institutions such as caliphate and religious orders, and the control over religion exercises by administrative institutions like the Directorate of Religious Affairs (DRA), Imam Hatip schools, and courses on the Koran.[44] Andrew Davison and Taha Parla argue that early Republican secularism meant both the separation of religion and politics and the control of religion by the state. On one hand, reforms in law and education corresponded to separation; on the other, establishment of the DRA and Imam Hatip Schools indicated control. According to these writers, neither control nor separation could secularize society: reforms should have continued in the direction of the disestablishment, meaning the "removal of

---

43   Nuray Mert, *Laiklik Tartışmasına Kavramsal Bir Bakış* (Istanbul: Bağlam, 1994), 65.

44   Andrew Davison, *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

the control that religion has within a state, the severing and elimination of relations and connections between religious institutions, personnel, ideas, on the one hand and politics and the structure of the power on the other." In other words, full secularization refers to "the removal of the religion from not only politics but also from general human inquiry and understanding, from beliefs in the nature of reality, from social morality, from culture and from individual morality."[45]

The secularization of society is thus said to require both the transformation of religion-centered public morality and the privatization of religion. Şerif Mardin argues that Kemalism offered cognitive directions to society, but did not offer a social ethos. Moreover, it could not understand the identity-building role of Islam in society.[46] Islam served as a rich store of symbols and ways of coping with rapid social change, and in this regard it was clearly more powerful in comparison to the ethically limited cultural and political programs of the Kemalists.[47]

While discussing the relation between religion and politics in Turkey, Ayşe Buğra and Osman Savaşkan use the term "incomplete secularization" to conceptualize attempts by the Republic to control religion without eliminating the influence of religion on society and politics. Consequently, religion maintained in its potential to be used politically, socially, and ethically by governments and politicians during Turkey's shift to multi-party politics.[48]

As a result of the inadequacy of Kemalist secularism and the ethical power of Islamic value system, institutions, that initially established official control over religion, contributed to the conservation of its influence over society and politics. More concretely, the increasing number of Imam Hatip schools, the

---

45 Taha Parla and Andrew Davison, "Secularism and Laicism in Turkey," in *Secularisms,* (eds.) Janet R Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008), 61-63.

46 Şerif Mardin, "Religion and Secularism in Turkey," in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State,* (eds.) Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (London: C. Hurst § Company, 1981), 218.

47 Şerif Mardin, "Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey," in *Islam in the Political Process,* (ed.) James P. Piscatori, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 156.

48 Ayşe Buğra and Osman Savaşkan, *New Capitalism in Turkey: The Relationship Between Politic, Religion and Business* (Cheltenham: Edgar Elward, 2014), 41.

existence of religious courses in the curriculum, their being made compulsory, and the increasing power of the DRA marked the development of religious conservatism.[49]

In this respect, the relation between the state and Alevi associations in the 1990s was fashioned by Turkey's "incomplete secularism." Accordingly, two institutions became the focal points of the relation between Alevis and the state: the Directorate of Religious Affairs and compulsory religious courses. These were problematized differently by the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD.

After the abolition of the caliphate and the office of the *Şeyh-ül İslam,* the DRA was established on 3 March 1924. Both the 1961 and 1982 constitutions guarantee its legal stature. Article 136 of the1982 Constitution defined the DRA as a constitutional institution within the general administration charged with exercising its duties in accordance with principles of secularism. In addition to constitutional guarantees, Act 633 on Organization and Duties of the Directorate of Religious Affairs came into effect in 1965. According to this regulation, the duties of the DRA were "to carry out affairs related to the beliefs, prayers and moral foundations of Islam, to enlighten society about religion and to manage places of prayer." Although the DRA's mandate to meet the general needs of practicing Muslims were reasonable, assigning the DRA the function of managing the affairs related to moral foundations was legally ambiguous. This act indicated that the state preferred to use the Directorate as an ideological tool in a manner different from its original intent.[50]

The other contested issue has been compulsory religious courses. After the transition to a multi-party political system, the CHP's secularism policies softened in order to compete with the Democrat Party. At its Seventh Congress, the CHP made changes to its policies concerning religious matters. In 1948, the Ministry of Education began offering İmam Hatip courses in to train religious personnel, and in 1949 a Faculty of Theology was established at Ankara

---

49 Şerif Mardin, Kitle Toplumunda İslam: Uyumla Kutuplaşma Karşı Karşıya in *Türkiye, İslam ve Sekülarizm*, trans. Murat Bozluolcay and Elçin Gen (Istanbul: İletişim, 2013), 166.

50 İştar Gözüaydın, *Diyanet: Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Dinin Tanzimi* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2009), 246-247.

University.[51] Elective religious courses were introduced to the curricula of primary and secondary schools between 1950 and 1981. After the 1980 military coup, religious courses were made compulsory. Article 24 of the1982 constitution, which guarantees freedom of religion and conscience, assumed that instruction in religious culture and moral education had become compulsory in the curricula of primary and secondary schools.[52] Compulsory religious courses based on the Sunni, Hanefi interpretation of Islam, indicated the gradual affiliation of citizenship and Sunni Islam.[53]

The DRA and compulsory religious courses reflect the incomplete secularism of Turkey and are at the center of the relationship between Alevis and the state. The Cem Foundation, which aims to reconcile Alevis with the state, attempts to expand the boundaries of Turkish secularism to include Alevism. It argues for the representation of Alevism within the DRA and the inclusion of Alevi Islam in the compulsory religious curriculum.[54] On the other hand, the PSAKD, which aims to transform Turkish secularism by means of Alevi question, stands for keeping the state out religious affairs. It demands the abolition of both the DRA and compulsory religious courses.[55]

The existence of the DRA and compulsory religious courses is basic parameters that shape the boundaries of the relation between Alevi politics and state. Therefore, an analysis of the approach of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD toward these issues indicates how the two contrasting poles of Alevi politics differ with respect to relations with the state.

The PSAKD demanded the abolition of the DRA based on the principle of the neutrality of seculars state in religious affairs. According to the association, a secular state should not undertake the performance of religious services

---

51 Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey*, 77 – 78.

52 Bülent Tanör and Necmi Yüzbaşıoğlu, *1982 Anayasasına Göre Türk Anayasa Hukuku* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002), 97-99.

53 Buket Türkmen, "Kemalist İslam'ın Dönüşümü mü yoksa Yeni Bir Sünni Yurttaş Ahlakı mı?: 'Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi' Ders Kitapları Üzerine Bir İnceleme," *Toplum ve Bilim*120 (2011): 55.

54 Aydın, *İzzettin Doğan'ın Alevi İslam İnancı, Kültürü ile İlgili Düşünceleri*, 184-186.

55 Murtaza Demir, "Demokratik Alevi Kurumlarında Yöneticilik Yapan Arkadaşlarıma Notlar," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 25 (January-February 1998): 3.

through government bodies. Any public institution within the state structure that promotes a specific religious sect violates the secular character of the Turkish Republic.[56] Thus, the basic problem of Turkey's secularization was the DRA, because it protects Sunni Islam as an official religion. Correspondingly, the abolition of the DRA was deemed a prerequisite for the secularization of Turkey.[57]

The PSAKD petitioned to the parliament and issued press statements calling for the abolition of the DRA. These petitions indicated the legal basis of their objections to the directorate. The PSAKD stated that the existence of the DRA violated (1) Articles 1 and 2 of the Turkish Constitution of 1982, which defined the form of the state as a Republic and the character of the Republic as democratic, social, and secular; (2) Article 10 which mandates the equality of all citizens before the law, and (3) Article 174 which decreed the preservation of Reform Laws. In addition to the constitution, objections to the very existence of the DRA were based on the international covenants on freedom of thought and faith, especially Article 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights. In this framework, the PSAKD demanded the abolition of Law 633 that specified the duties of the DRA and Article 136 of the 1982 constitution.[58]

As far as compulsory religious courses were concerned, the PSAKD opposed them for being incompatible with freedom of religion. The association asserted that compulsory religious courses impose Sunni, Hanefi beliefs on students who are not adults, hence not yet in a position to make informed choices on matters of religion. Moreover, because the courses were based on Sunni beliefs, they trigger sectarian clashes. Therefore, the PSAKD opposed them within the framework of the violation of the principles of secularism, freedom of religion, and children's rights.[59]

---

56   "Görüşlerimiz," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 20 (September-October 1996): 13.

57   Turan Eser, "Devlet, Laiklik, Din İlişkileri ve Sorunları" *Pir Sultan Abdal* 58 (July 2004): 27–28.

58   Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneğinin Demokrasi Laiklik ve Özgürlük Mücadelesi*, 77-87.

59   "Görüşlerimiz," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 20 (September-October 1996):14.

The PSAKD's struggle for the abolition of compulsory religious courses paralleled its demands to abolish the DRA. The association submitted a petition with 100 thousand signatures to the Parliament in 1994 for the abolition of Paragraph 4 of Article 24 of the 1982 Constitution's and Article 12 of the Basic Law of National Education. In this petition, opposition to the compulsory religious courses was based on Articles of 1, 2, 10, and 174 of the 1982 Constitution as with the objection to the DRA. The petition included examples of discriminatory phrases in religious textbooks and anecdotes of the discriminatory attitudes of instructors.[60] The PSAKD's objection to compulsory religious courses was also a constituent of its own education program, which underscored the importance of extending compulsory education to eight years.[61]

The PSAKD criticism of the existence of the DRA and compulsory religious courses required not only constitutional amendments, but also changes in state-religion relations in Turkey. On the other hand, the Cem Foundation did not opposed the existence of the DRA and compulsory religious courses, but aimed to integrate Alevism into these institutions. The objection of the Cem Foundation to the existing statutes of the DRA and the teaching of religious courses stemmed from Articles of 10 and 24 of the 1982 Constitution. Article 10 mandates the equality of all citizens before the law regardless of language, religion, sect, race, sex, or political opinion. Article 24 guarantees the freedom of religion and conscience. The foundation did not oppose the conducting of religious services by state; however, it claimed that the Alevi community should equally benefit from religious services as a requirement of the principle of egalitarianism.[62] In this regard, the Cem Foundation did not want the abolition of the DRA and compulsory religious courses, but argued for the

---

60   Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneğinin Demokrasi Laiklik ve Özgürlük Mücadelesi*, 90-98.

61   Until 1997, primary education in Turkey lasted five years. On 16 August 1997, compulsory primary education in Turkey was increased from five to eight years. Law No. 4306, which increased period of the primary education, generated discussion because the secondary school parts of the Imam Hatip High Schools were closed down as a result of the eight year basic education.

62   "Cem'imizden," *Cem* 96 (December 1999): 6-7.

representation of Alevism within them given the constitutional principle of egalitarianism.

Because İzzettin Doğan believed that the representation of Alevism within the directorate would directly mean the recognition of the Alevi reality, he claimed that Alevi associations should focus on the structural transformation of the DRA on the basis of equal representation for all religious groups.[63] Consequently, the foundation attempted to establish formal contact with the directorate. It organized a conference entitled "Religion-State Relations and the Reorganization of Religious Services in Turkey" with the participation of the president of the DRA. In the symposium, İzzettin Doğan underscored the need to restructure religious services advocating the DRA's reformation such that all-religious beliefs including Alevism would be represented within the directorate according to the size of their community of believers.[64] Moreover, obtaining a share of the budget of the directorate was the vital constituent for the push for Alevi representation within the DRA.

The representation of Alevism within the scope of government religious services required revision to the curriculum of religious courses, as well. Although the Cem Foundation had defended making religious courses (including ones on Alevism) elective, it did not stand behind this stance adopting a pragmatic approach and attempting to integrate Alevism into the syllabus of religious courses. İzzettin Doğan believed in the necessity of teaching Alevism within the curriculum to break down prejudices against Alevis. The Cem Foundation thus demanded scientific, critical instruction of all religious beliefs within the context of Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge courses.[65]

Inquiries into the instruction of Alevi religious rituals and teachings began in the 1990s independent of the Cem Foundation,[66] and the foundation par-

---

63   İzzettin Doğan, "Yeni Bir Türkiye mi?" *Cem* 6 (November 1991): 6.

64   İzzettin Doğan, *Din Devlet İlişkileri ve Türkiye'de Din Hzimetlerinin Yeniden Yapılanması* (Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 1996), 211.

65   *Cem* 81 (August 1998): 10.

66   Representatives of various Alevi associations and a group of Alevi dedes started to write a textbook in 1996 called "The Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge from the point of Alevism" under the direction of Ardıç Publishing House. Besides this textbook, independent

ticipated in debates around integrating Alevism into the curriculum of compulsory religious courses in the mid-2000s. In this regard, the Directorate of Religious Affairs for Alevi Islam within the Cem Foundation drafted an educational program for the instruction of Alevi Islam and prepared a 350-page textbook. According to the program, basic information on Alevi Islam would be taught from the fourth to the twelfth grade. İzzettin Doğan stated that Alevi Islam could be taught as either an independent course or as part of the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge courses.[67]

Unlike the PSAKD's transformative approach to state-religion relations in Turkey, the Cem Foundation's approach can be characterized as affirmative since it attempts to integrate Alevism into existing state structure. However, the Alevism' integration into the existing state apparatus requires a transformation of the heterodox cosmology of Alevism into a more standardized, religious system of belief. While, the foundation does not aim to transform state-religion relations in Turkey, the integration of Alevism into state structures lead the foundation to transform Alevism itself.

6.2.2 *The Cem Foundation's Attempts to Systematize Alevism as an Orthodox Belief*

Heterodoxy and syncretism are frequently assessed as two main characteristics of Alevism. The main consequences of these are multiplicity and non-systematization. Nonetheless, elimination of dissimilarities among different interpretations and practices of Alevism is an obligatory to establish internal unity within the Alevi community. More specifically, representation of Alevism as an Islamic sect within the structure of the Directorate of Religious Affairs would require the reformulation of Alevism as a public religion, which

---

researcher-writers like Esat Korkmaz wrote textbooks and brochures for the religious education of Alevism; however, none were given due regard, because of a legal statute that did not allow instructing Alevism. The debate on the instruction of Alevism in the context of the curriculum of religious courses was again triggered by the instruction of Alevism as a religious course independently of Sunni Islam in Germany in the early 2000s. It was mentioned above that the Alevi movement in Germany conceptualized the Alevism as a religious belief in order to gain legal status. As a consequence of this conceptualization, religious courses on Alevism were taught in German schools independent of Islamic courses.

67   http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/24965934/

implies the homogenization of various Alevi rituals, standardization of Alevi houses of prayer, and stabilization of the roles of Alevi *dede*s. In other words, representation of Alevism within the directorate calls for the creation of an orthodox Alevi belief corresponding to Sunnism. Therefore, the Cem Foundation took the organizational structure of Sunni Islam as a model in its attempts to standardize the cosmology and rituals of Alevism.

Due to the fact that the standardization of Alevism as an orthodox belief requires a formal authority to manage religious prayers, a redefinition of the mission of *dede*s is the cornerstone of the Cem Foundation's work to this end. In traditional Alevism, the authority of *dede*s was based on the *ocak* lineage. Inheritance was the social marker of the Alevi *dede*s, who were revered descendants of the Prophet Mohammad. It was believed that the charisma of the family of Prophet (*Ehl-i Beyt*) was passed from generation to generation through *dede* lineages, which were called *ocak*s. The non-ocak majority of the Alevi community called *talib* recognized an *ocak* members as *dede*s and connected through the network of his *ocak* lineage. Therefore, the traditional religious and communal authority of the *dede*s had meaning for a specific *talib* community that accepted his *ocak* lineage.[68] The role of the *dede*s for the community was not limited to religious functions. Alevi *dede*s had both governmental and ritualistic roles in traditional Alevism. They not only led Alevi rituals and *cem* ceremonies, but also acted as mediators and judges.

Urbanization dispersed traditional Alevism and radically challenged the privileged social position of Alevi *dede*s, but the revival of Alevism as a religion paved the way for their re-institutionalization as religious authorities. This re-institutionalization did not imply a full return to the *dede*s' traditional position, but signified an increase in their role as religious authorities.[69]

The Cem Foundation organized two meetings to re-institutionalize the socio-religious position of Alevi *dede*s entitled "Leaders of Faith in Anatolia" and held on 16-19 October 1998 and 12-15 May 2000. Due to their vitality for the Alevi tradition, the meeting aimed to map Alevi *ocak*s, form a council of

---

68   Ali Yaman, "Geçmişten Günümüze Dedelerin Misyonu ve Değişim," *Dem* 6 (2009) : 30-32.

69   Dressler, *The Modern Dede: Changing Parameters for Religious Authority in Contemporary Turkish Alevism,* 270.

qualified Alevi *dede*s, and legalize this council in order to conduct formal negotiations with the state.[70]

The vision of the Cem Foundation concerning Alevi *dede*s institutionalizes them in the form of an organization structurally similar to the DRA. On one hand, this organization of Alevi *dede*s would standardize the production of religious knowledge on Alevism: fixing the dates of Muharram fasting, standardizing the procedures of the *cem* ceremonies, and determining which Alevi *deyiş*, *duaz-ı İmam*,[71] Koran verses, and *Semah*s would be performed in the ceremonies.[72] On the other hand, this organization would negotiate with governmental organizations regarding the religious demands of the Alevi community - for instance, the establishment of a school for Alevi *dede*s from which graduates would be appointed to *cemevi*s as religious officials.[73]

The "Leaders of Faith in Anatolia" meetings paved the way for the establishment of a Council of *Dede*s and *Baba*s. Where would *cemevi*s be built? Which Alevi *dede*s would be assigned to *cemevi*s? How would the *dede*s be educated? How would Alevi Islam be represented in religious courses? This council, which would deal with all the religious needs of Alevi-Bektashi believers, was to be the Directorate of Religious Affairs of the Alevi community. Moreover, the institutionalization of this council on the basis of an undersecretary under the Directorate of Religious Affairs or another ministry would contribute to the integration of the Alevi community to the state apparatus.[74] As a "DRA of the Alevis," the council was formulate a universal standard for Alevism, assuming standardized prayers and systematized time sequences on

---

70 Ayhan Aydın, "Prof. Dr. İzzetin Doğan ile Söyleşi: Alevilikte Ocaklar Dedeler" in *Anadolu İnanç Önderleri I. Toplantısı* (Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 2000), 319-322.

71 Religious songs of the Alevi cem ceremonies that contain the names of twelve Imams of the Alevi tradition.

72 *Anadolu Inanç Önderleri II. Toplantısı* (Ankara: Cem Vakfı, 2003), 289-290.

73 *Anadolu İnanç Önderleri I. Toplantısı* (Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 2000), 29.

74 Prof. Dr. İzzettin Doğan, "Dedeler Babalar Meclisi Alevilik için Son Derece Önemli Bir Adım Olacak," in *Anadolu Inanç Önderleri II. Toplantısı* (Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 2003), 762-765.

one hand; and the Alevism's inclusion as a religion in the state apparatus, on the other.[75]

The Cem Foundation's attempt at the systematization of Alevism into an orthodox Islamic sect also involved homogenization of the physical appearance of places of worship. The history Alevi places of worship is short. Although there are 700 year-old underground *cemevi*s in Anatolia, they are exceptional.[76] *Cemevi* constructions in urban areas started in the early 1990s. There were only three *cemevi*s in Istanbul in 1993; by mid-1994 the number increased to around twenty.[77] In the early 2000s, the number of *cemevi*s in Turkey was estimated at more than one hundred. The construction of the *cemevi*s was the direct result of the revival of Alevism. The *cemevi*s became sites where Alevism gained publicity. Therefore, one of the crucial demands of the Alevi movement has always been the recognition of *cemevi*s as places of worship with equal rights and privileges as mosques, synagogues, and churches.

Unlike other Alevi organizations, the Cem Foundation struggles both for the recognition of *cemevi*s as places of worship, and for the homogenization of their physical appearance. It held a competition for the architectural development of *cemevi*s aimed at giving them a specific architectural structure.[78] 86 projects were entered into the competition and the jury of architects, administrators of the Cem Foundation, and *dede*s selected twelve of them. The foundation bought the copyrights of those projects and declared that *cemevi*s constructed by the foundation would be designed in line with the principles of the

---

75   The name of the Council of Dedes and Babas was changed to the "Directorate of the Alevi Islam Religious Service," which symbolically demonstrated that the Cem Foundation was established in parallel to the DRA until the representation of Alevism was allowed within the DRA. Nowadays, the Alevi Directorate has 101 members elected by representatives of the Alevi *ocak*s. Its chairman is Ali Yüce.

76   İsmail Onarlı's series of articles on the historical cemevis of Anotolia was published in the Cem periodical between August and October 1998.

77   G. Saufert, "Between Religion and Ethnicity: a Kurdish-Alevi Tribe in Globalizing Istanbul" in Ayşe Öncü and P. Weyland (eds.), *Space, Culture and Power: New Identities in Globalizing Citie*s (London; Atlantic Highlands; N.J.: Zed Books, 1997).

78   "Cem Vakfından Haberler," *Cem* 53 (October 1995), 32.

winning projects.[79] The project clearly aimed to establish standards for the physical appearance of *cemevi*s vis-à-vis mosques.

The standardization of the role of the *dede* should be paired with the homogenization of *cemevi*s. The Cem Foundation attempts to assign standardized *dede*s to homogenized *cemevi*s. In this manner, geographical mobilization of *dede*s on the basis of the aforementioned *dede-talib* relationship becomes fixed through employment in newly established *cemevi*s. Therefore, the *dede*s are defined on the basis of the *cemevi*s to which they are assigned instead of their *ocak* lineage. The assignment of *dede*s to *cemevi*s is conducted by the Directorate of Alevi Islam Religious Service for the *cemevi*s under the control of the Cem Foundation. Consequently, *dede*s are changed into official, religious clerks, and the *cemevi*s become the places of established religion. This system clearly replicates the relation between the Turkish state and Sunni Islam. The role of the DRA, mosques, and *imam*s are substituted by the Directorate of Alevi Islam Religious Service, *cemevi*s, and *dede*s.

Limiting the authority of Alevi *dede*s to religious functions within the boundaries of homogenized *cemevi*s bears the stamp of the Turkish style of secularism that the Cem Foundation aimed to imitate.[80] Along with the transformation of *cemevi*s from anonymous houses to fixed places of worship, it was part of a process whereby Alevism was defined as a religion and its rituals separated from daily life.[81]

Furthermore, the Cem Foundation's attempts to systematize Alevism as an orthodox religious belief were linked to debates on multiculturalism. As discussed in the introductory chapter, the heterodox character of Alevism had undermined its ability to generate an identity movement. Accordingly, the elimination of the cosmological multiplicity of Alevi religiosity was doubtlessly related to the increase in the capacity of Alevism to organize an identity movement within the framework of debates on multiculturalism. Therefore, the Cem Foundation's attempts to standardize Alevism as an orthodox sect was a reply to demands for equal citizenship by the PSAKD.

---

79 *Cem* 57 (August1996):12-14.

80 Ayhan Yalçınkaya, "Eşitlikçi Dışlama: Dedelik, Soy ve Siyaset," *Kırkbudak* 9 (Winter 2007): 80.

81 Murat Es, *Alevist Politics of Place and the Construction of Cemevis in Turkey*, 156.

Like their definitions and historiographies of Alevism and their political demands concerning state-religion relations, the relations of the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation to political parties differed. The next section scrutinizes the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation's positions within Turkish party politics.

§ 6.3   Alevi Associations and Turkish Party Politics in the 1990s

Due to the fact that Alevis were a numerically important group, the rise of Alevi identity politics attracted the attention of political parties, which regarded Alevis as a power base for elections. In this context, Alevi associations emerged as one of the political representatives of the Alevi community to which political parties sought to appeal. It has been asserted that the positions of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD regarding the definition of the Alevism and the demands of the community delimited the boundaries of Alevi politics. Concordantly, their relations with political parties established the extremities of the relational space between Alevi associations and political parties. Again, this section does not examine the political preferences of the whole of the Alevi community, limiting its scope to the political preferences of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD and their relations with political parties.

In this context, the rise of political Islam in the 1990s marked not only Turkish politics generally, but also the political preferences of Alevi associations. The RP won the municipalities of Istanbul and Ankara in the 1994 local elections and became the victorious party in the 1995 general elections, and Alevi associations determined their political positions according to the rise of political Islam.

Before the local elections of 1994, vice chairman of the RP, Şevket Kazan stated that their party wished to address all social groups including Alevis. The RP promised that the Alevis would benefit from the budget of the Directorate of Religious Affairs and new *cemevi*s would be opened. The RP's campaign promises clearly paralleled the demands of the Cem Foundation, which included securing a share of the budget of the directorate and the construction of state-sponsored *cemevi*s.[82] İzzettin Doğan semi-voluntarily welcomed the RP's "Alevi opening." He claimed two circumstances destabilized Turkey:

---

82   "RP'den Alevi Çengeli," *Milliyet,* 27.01.1994, 17.

conflicts between Turks and Kurds and between Sunnis and Alevis. Following this analysis, Doğan defended negotiations with the RP that softened tensions between Alevis and Sunnis. However, he made a distinction between negotiation with the RP and political support of the RP: the former did not imply the latter.[83]

Alevi public opinion on this negotiation demonstrated the political boundaries of the Alevi movement in the 1990s. Popular Alevi researcher-writer Cemal Şener summarized the Alevi public's reaction: after reminding that the RP was the political representative of fundamentalists who had set Alevis on fire in Sivas within the previous year, he criticized Doğan's arguments on the grounds that he was establishing an alliance between the Alevi community and its murderers by evoking the threat of a military coup.[84] As a consequence, the allegation of an electoral alliance between Alevis and the RP was refuted in an article in *Cem* entitled "Alevis would not go hand in hand with the RP, not even to heaven."[85]

Thus, the retreat by *Cem* demonstrated how the threat of religious fundamentalism determined the red lines of Alevi politics in the 1990s. After discussions on relations between the RP and İzzettin Doğan, both the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation decided not to support the fundamentalist political parties - namely the RP and its successor - for the elections on principle. Although it became a red line for Alevi movement, reactions to the threat of religious fundamentalism took different forms, which are represented by the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD.

Abidin Özgünay of the Cem Foundation claimed that center right parties, which left nationalist and religious fundamentalist ideological positions to the MHP and RP, had became more democratic in the 1990s. Moreover, he claimed that ideological differences between the left and right politics would disappear as a consequence of Turkey's accession process to the European Union and widespread secularist concern regarding the threat of political Islam.

---

83 "Aleviler Ağırlık Kazanmak İstiyorlarsa Bir Partiye Bağlanmasınlar," in *Cem Vakfı Çalışmaları ve Vakıf Genel Başkanı Prof. Dr İzzetin Doğan'ın Görüş ve Düşünceleri* (Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), 250.

84 Cemal Şener, "Seçimler Refah Partisi ve Alevi Seçeneği," *Nefes* 5 (March 1994): 7.

85 Abidin Özgünay, "Aleviler RP ile Cennete Bile Girmez," *Cem* 33 (February 1994): 3-6.

Therefore, Alevis should not insist on supporting only leftist parties and should vote for rightist parties if necessary to strengthen the Alevis' struggle for recognition.[86]

The fear of political Islam led the Cem Foundation to vote for right wing political parties on the basis of secularism. Moreover, the Cem Foundation's definition of Alevism as a supra-ideological, apolitical religious sect enabled the foundation to establish contacts with any party. In this context, the concept of "social party" deserves analysis to comprehend the political position of the Cem Foundation in the 1990s.

The idea of a social party was introduced to increase the political influence of the Alevi community by channeling Alevi votes to a specific party. Hence, Alevis were advised to act as a social party, which meant neither supporting nor opposing any party categorically. Alevis should vote for political parties within the context of their own demands, principles, and identities regardless of the parties' political ideologies.[87] The social party conceptualization was based on the foundation's assessment that Alevism transcended differences of social class, ethnic identity, and political preference. Therefore, Alevi identity should guide the electoral choices of Alevis regardless of their class or ethnic identity.

On the other hand, the PSAKD asserted that the problems of Alevis stemmed from concessions made vis-à-vis secularism, which were derived from populist policies of rightist political parties - ranging from the center to the fundamentalist and nationalist right. Because the PSAKD believed that Turkish right could not internalize secularist principles, it consistently supported left-wing political parties.[88]

In this context, both the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation determined their political position on the basis of secularism being the antidote to political Islam. However, a common focus on secularism moved these associations to differing political positions. Whereas the Cem Foundation supported centrist parties -whether right or left- the PSAKD was insistent on supporting left-

---

86 Yaşar Uçar, "Aymazlar Meydanı," *Cem* 55 (December 1995): 17

87 Sadık Göksu, "12'ye 10 Kala Tüm Sorumlu ve Sorumsuzlara Mesaj: Alevi Sosyal (Toplumsal) Partisi Seçim Sınavında," *Cem* 31 (December 1993): 32-35.

88 Ali Balkız interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 02.10.2012.

wing parties. These similar political sensitivities but differing political positions of these associations were evident in the general elections of 1995 and 1999.

Before the 1995 general elections, the Cem Foundation called on Alevis to vote for the party which was responsive to the demands of Alevis. These demands included obtaining a share of the budget of the directorate and recognition of the status of *cemevi*s as places of worship. After the declaration, Yıldırım Aktuna, the Minister of State from the True Path Party *(Doğru Yol Partisi* – DYP*)*, attended to opening of the Cem Foundation's Küçükçekmece branch and declared that Prime Minister Tansu Çiller had promised to allocate 3 Trillion Turkish lira of 1996 budget for Alevis. Moreover, she promised representation of Alevism in the DRA, the removal of derogatory expressions regarding Alevi belief from schoolbooks, and representation of Alevism within the curriculum of compulsory religious courses. These promises conformed with the demands of the Cem Foundation and they were favorably received. The foundation believed that the DYP's election campaign promises entail the recognition of Alevi identity, which constituted the most important reform in Turkish history.[89]

While the Cem Foundation negotiated with the DYP before the 1995 elections, the PSAKD participated in debates on the formation of an Alevi party. Because the SHP was the coalition partner in the government at the time of the Madımak and Gazi events, the PSAKD accused the party of remaining inactive while Alevis were subjected to massacre. Therefore, the association distanced itself from the traditional line of the SHP/CHP in the 1990s.[90] This was an important factor in the revival of attempts to form a new party in the mid-1990s. In 1994, important Alevi associations such as the PSAKD, the HBVKD, and the AABF formed the Alevi Bektashi Representative Assembly *(Alevi Bektaşi Temsilciler Meclisi – ABTM)* - an umbrella association to become more influential in policymaking in Turkey. Before the 1995 elections,

---

89 "Asırlardır Görmezden Gelinen Alevliğe Çiller'den Meşruiyet Atağı," *Cem* 54 (November 1995): 33-34.

90 In addition to the SHP, the CHP was re-established in 1993 after legislation allowing the re-establishment of political parties closed by the military coup. These two parties independently participated in the 1994 local elections. In 1995, the SHP and CHP agreed to merge under the name of the CHP, so the CHP became the center left party taking part in elections.

debates on forming a new party divided the assembly. Whereas the HBVKD and the AABF supported the formation of an Alevi party or participation in elections through independent Alevi candidates, the PSAKD opposed an Alevi party and argued for the formation of a new leftist party to fill gaps in Turkish politics. The PSAKD believed the new party should not be explicitly Alevi, but should be a leftist party struggling for a secular and democratic Turkey.[91] In the end, the position of the HBVKD and the AABF's prevailed, and the debate ended with the formation of the Democratic Peace Movement (*Demokratik Barış Hareketi* – DBH), an Alevi-oriented political party the story of which is examined in the next chapter. This section is limited to the PSAKD's unsuccessful attempts to form a new leftist party.

Given the Cem Foundation's support for the DYP, the PSAKD could not develop an alternative to the CHP. Although the DBH decided to participate in the 1995 elections with independent Alevi candidates, it later withdrew when the danger that the CHP may fail to pass 10 percent election threshold became clear. In the end, neither the Alevi party nor a new leftist party could be founded before the 1995 elections. In this context, the PSAKD was confined and endorsed neither the independent Alevi candidates nor political parties that denied Alevi reality.[92] Despite its indirect boycott, members of the association mainly supported the CHP given the party's proximity to the 10 percent threshold.[93]

Although, the DYP became the junior partner of two coalition governments in the 1995 and 1999 legislative sessions, it did not keep its election promises. Moreover, it refused proposals by the DSP and the CHP concerning a share of the budget to be given to Alevis, which led İzzettin Doğan to accuse Tansu Çiller of breaking her election campaign promises.[94] The Cem Foundation thus started to develop a critical attitude toward the DYP and attempted to establish relations with Bülent Ecevit's DSP before the 1999 elections. Indeed, there was a parallel between Ecevit's view of Alevism and the Cem

---

91   Murtaza Demir, "Gücümüzün Siyasal İfadesine Doğru," Pir Sultan *Abdal* 13 (January 1995): 7.

92   Murtaza Demir and Emel Sungur, "Seçime Doğru Kamuoyuna," *Nefes* 26 (December 1995): 40.

93   Ali Balkız, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 02.10.2012.

94   "Refahyol da Fasa Fiso," *Cem* 62 (January 1997): 23-29.

Foundation's perspective. Ecevit used the symbol of the reconciliation of Selim the Stern and Shah Ismail to establish a social peace between Sunnis and Alevis. The representation of Alevism in the directorate, in the curriculum of compulsory religious courses, and in public television broadcasts were the elements of these social peace projects, and they were in harmony with the Cem Foundation's demands.[95] Therefore, İzzettin Doğan declared he would vote for the DSP in the 1999 general elections,[96] He added decidedly that the Cem Foundation would not support the CHP for disappointing Alevis, except in the Istanbul municipal elections. The CHP's mayoral candidate for Istanbul was an Alevi businessman, Adnan Polat, who was member of the Cem Foundation.[97]

The PSAKD criticized both Ecevit's views on Alevism and the close relation between the Cem Foundation and Ecevit. Turan Eser, a former president of the ABF, asserted that the reconciliation of Selim the Stern and Shah İsmail implied disregard for historical Alevi slaughters without a critical reckoning. Furthermore, he added that representation of Alevism within state structures through the DRA and compulsory religious courses would reinforce Turkish-Islamic synthesis with support of a Bektashi-Alevi-Islam synthesis.[98]

While the Cem Foundation declared support for the DSP, the PSAKD sought to create alternative channels for Alevi politics in cooperation with other Alevi associations like the HBVKD, and the AABF. These associations sought to establish a common sense during the 1999 elections in opposition to Doğan's support for the DSP. Nevertheless, attempts to form an electoral alliance between the Peace Party (*Barış Partisi* – BP) and the CHP remained inconclusive. As a result of its abortive attempt to form a left-wing coalition for the elections, the PSAKD recommended not voting for a specific party, but simply to support pro-labor, secular and democratic political parties.[99]

---

95 Aynur Gürsoy, "Bülent Ecevit ile Söyleşi: Alevilerin Bölünmesi Önemli Bir Problem," *Cem* 58 (Mart 1996): 48-50

96 *Cem* 90, (May 1999): 36.

97 *Cem* 88, (March 1999):10-13.

98 Turan Eser, "Hacı Bektaşı Veli ve Anadolu Aleviliği," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 27 (July 1998), 33-35.

99 H. Nedim Şahhüseyinoğlu, "Alevi Örgütlerine Bakış ve Siyaset," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 35 (December 1999): 46.

In the 1990s, the rise of political Islam not only determined Alevi associations' relations with political parties, but also provided new political opportunities. After the 1995 elections, the RP became largest party in parliament, followed by the Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi* – ANAP), the DYP, the DSP, and the CHP.[100] After the failure of a short-term coalition government that included the ANAP and the DYP, a coalition government led by the RP and the DYP under the prime ministry of Necmettin Erbakan was formed. Symbolic acts of the RP government - Necmettin Erbakan's *iftar* meal for *tarikat* leaders at the Prime Minister's official residence, discussions on ending *türban* (headscrarf) ban for female university students and civil servant, the proposal of a grand mosque in Taksim Square, the indirect suggestion of transforming the Hagia Sophia into a mosque, and anti-secular speeches by RP deputies such as Şevki Yılmaz and Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan[101] - reinforced not only the RP's "anti-secular image," but made the Alevi public suspicious of them.[102]

The National Security Council *(Milli Güvenlik Kurulu – MGK)* defined political Islam as foremost threat to the existence of Turkish Republic on 28 February 1997. The Council then presented a plan that included the extension of compulsory primary education from five to eight years, closure of illegal Quran courses, monitoring the flow of Islamist capital, and restrictions on the

---

100 Despite the fact that the voting rate of the ANAP (19.65 %) was higher than the DYP (19.18%), the number of DYP deputies (135) was higher than the ANAP's (132).

101 Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey,* 217-218.

102 Şevket Kazan's speech in which he linked political opposition to the RP to historical insults about Alevis, symbolically indicated the Alevis' discontent with the RP. In November 1996, a car accident in Susurluk revealed illegal links and processes within state structure. Following the accident and discussions on the deep state, an effective protest campaign started under the name *"Sürekli Aydınlık için Bir Dakika Karanlık"* (One Minute of Darkness for Perpetual Light). People switched their electricity off for a minute every night at 9 o'clock. In view of the efficient protests, the Minister of Justice from the RP, Şevket Kazan said that people protesting illegal links within the state by switching of their electricity were playing *"mum söndü"* (candle extenguished). Kazan's slanderous was that the Alevis engage in free sexual intercourse within the family through the practice of blowing out the candle. Therefore, Şevket Kazan's criticism of the political opposition through reproducing a historical insult about Alevis naturally got a reaction from both the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation.

Islamist media.[103] Due to the fact that Prime Minister Erbakan was obliged to sign the plan and subsequently he resigned in June 1997, the decision issued by the MGK is referred to as postmodern coup or the 28 February memorandum. As a consequence, the RP was closed by the Constitutional Court of Turkey in 1998 for violating the constitutional principle of secularism.

After the 28 February memorandum, political elites' interest in Alevis increased as it became politically attractive to consider Alevis as the true, ancient inhabitants of Anatolia undertaking "modern" and "Turkicized" Islam compatible with secular life. Kemalists attempted to secure popular backing against political Islam through Alevis. Therefore, the credibility of Alevi associations as concrete representatives of the Alevi community increased in the political conditions after the 28 February.[104]

The Alevi movement experienced two important developments in post-28 February period: extension of the basic education from five to eight years and Alevi associations' benefiting from the state budget. As mentioned above, the extension of basic education was one of the demands of the PSAKD. On 16 August 1997, compulsory primary education in Turkey was extended. It was also the date of the opening ceremony of the Hacıbektaş Festival. Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz attended the festival on 17 August and declared that the law was good news for the Alevi community.[105]

The second development was the allocation of a small fund from the state budget to Alevi associations: 425 billion Turkish lira for 1998 and 90 billion for 1999. After the 1999 elections, a new coalition government was formed by the DSP, the MHP, and the ANAP. Despite decreases, the new coalition continued to allocate funds to Alevi associations, as well. In 2000, funds were decreased to 25 billion. Fund allocated for 2001 and 2002 budgets were 113 billion and 140 billion, respectively.

Due to the fact that the Scipio of funds indicated the state's official policy on the Alevi associations, the question of which associations benefit became criteria of the legitimacy of the associations. The first two funds were given to

---

103 Eligür, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey,* 221-229.

104 Massicard, *Alevi Hareketini Siyasallaşması*, 129.

105 Murat Küçük, "Hükümetten Eşitlik Sözü," *Cem* 70 (September 1997), 6.

the Hacıbektaş Veli Anatolian Culture Foundation, which was close to the HBVKD. It was used to build a cultural center in Dikmen, Ankara. Other funds organized by the coalition government of the DSP, the MHP, and the ANAP were allocated to the Cem Foundation, the PSAKD, and the Hacıbektaş Veli Anatolian Culture Foundation.[106]

The rise of political Islam determined Alevi associations' relation with the political parties in the 1990s extending to the early 2000s via the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP). After the Constitutional Court of Turkey banned the RP from politics, the Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi – FP*) was formed as a de facto successor. But, the Constitutional Court also banned it for violating the secularism principle in 2001. After the closure of the FP, the party's deputies split and two parties were formed: the reformist AKP and the traditionalist Felicity Party.

On one hand, AKP founders claimed that their party had gone through an ideological transformation and was different from the RP. The AKP defined itself as conservative democrat party rather than as an Islamist party. Its ideological position coincided with international discussions on moderate Islam in the context of a post-9/11 political atmosphere. On the other hand, after the 2001 economic crisis, all political parties in the parliament lost the trust of voters. In this atmosphere of political and economic crisis, the newly formed AKP appeared a new breath of fresh air in Turkish politics.[107]

The AKP's establishment under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan revived Alevis' concerns with respect to religious fundamentalism. Due to the fact that Erdoğan came from the National Outlook *(Milli Görüş)* movement - the primary political Islam tradition in Turkey under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan –; as mayor of Istanbul ordered the demolishing of the Karacaahmet Dervish Lodge on the pretext that it was an unauthorized building; and referred to the religious places of Alevis as *cümbüşevi* ("jazz places") instead of *cemevi*, the Alevi community did not have confidence in his political

---

106   Massicard, *Alevi Hareketini Siyasallaşması*, 239.

107   For a more detailed analysis on the AKP, see İlhan Uzgel and Bülent Duru (eds.), *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu* (Ankara: Phoneix, 2009); Cihan Tuğal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to the Capitalism* (Standford University Press, 2009) and Neşecan Balkan (ed.), *Neoliberalizm, İslamcı Sermayenin Yükselişi ve AKP* (Istanbul: Yordam, 2013).

party. Therefore, the rise of the AKP as the favorite in the 2002 elections became the main dynamics that influence the political positions of Alevi associations.

Before the 2002 elections, Ali Balkız listed the demands of the PSAKD as the abolition of the DRA, the end to the compulsory religious courses, the fair punishment of the perpetrators of the Sivas massacre and Gazi events and the handover of administration of the Hacıbektaş Dervish Lodge to the municipality of Hacıbektaş. He wrote that the election promises of the pro-Kurdish Democratic People's Party (*Demokratik Halk Partisi* –DEHAP), the socialist ÖDP, and the social democratic CHP and DSP were partially in line with the demands of the PSAKD.[108] Specifically, he stated that the main aspiration of the PSAKD was to contribute to an alliance on the left, which had not yet been achieved. Therefore, the great majority of members of the PSAKD went on to vote for the CHP in the 2002 elections.[109]

Unlike the demands of the PSAKD, the Cem Foundation targeted to integration of Alevi associations in state structures. In this regard, the foundation listed its demands as: the reorganization of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, the allocation of the one third of the budget of the directorate to Alevis, representation of Alevi Islam in the curriculum of compulsory religious courses, public aid for construction of *cemevi*s, and the introduction of all religious beliefs in the programs of Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT).[110] Moreover, İzzetin Doğan, declared that the political stance of the DSP was consistent with the demands of the Cem Foundation and announced that he would personally vote for the DSP in the 2002 general elections to counter the artificial polarization of the AKP and the CHP.[111]

Political support of Alevi associations was directed to center-left parties in the 2002 elections. The result of the elections was that only two parties, the AKP and the CHP, crossed the 10 percent threshold. Although the AKP gained

---

108   Ali Balkız, "Aleviler Kime Oy Verecek," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 50 (July-August-September 2002): 69-80.

109   "Aleviler İstismar Edilmekten Bıktı," *Milliyet*, 16.08.2002.

110   "Alevi Talepleri," *Milliyet*, 02.09.2002.

111   "Aleviler Kırgın," Milliyet, 26.10.2002.

only 34 percent of the total votes, it was awarded over two-thirds of parliamentary seats. The CHP earned 19 percent of the total votes and was the only other party in parliament.

Although the Islamic background of AKP leaders revived fears of fundamentalism among Alevi associations, Turkey's accession to the European Union during the rule of the first AKP government was a new element in Turkish politics and also on the agenda of Alevi associations. Therefore, until the late 2000s, Alevi associations largely sought to engage in Turkey's accession to the European Union instead of engaging with domestic politics.

This chapter does not scrutinize the relationship between political parties and the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation during the AKP period. On one hand, Turkey's party politics narrowed to a rivalry between the AKP and the CHP. The MHP and pro-Kurdish political parties were relegated to being secondary political parties. Therefore, Alevi associations including both the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation supported the CHP over the AKP. On the other hand, Turkey's accession to the European Union partly detached Alevi associations from domestic politics in the early 2000s. Alevi associations attempted to adapt their demands using the political language of the European Union. This preempted party politics for Alevi associations until the accession process slowed.

§ 6.4 New Dynamics of Alevi Politics: Turkey's Membership Process to the European Union

According to Articles of 5 and 6 of the Law on Associations, the formation of an association in the name of a specific culture apart from Turkish culture is not allowed, and consequently, the formation of an association with the word Alevi was forbidden until 2002. The removal of the ban in question in 2002 demonstrated that how the accession process to the European Union provided new political opportunities for the Alevi movement.

The unification attempts of some Alevi associations including the PSAKD, HBVKD, and the AABF resulted in the revamping of the ABTM in the late 1990s as the Union of Alevi-Bektashi Institutions (*Alevi-Bektaşi Kuruluşları*

Birliği–ABKB) in 2000. The main change in the transformation of the ABTM into the ABKB was the struggle for legal recognition.

Despite the aforementioned articles of the Law on Associations, the ABKB submitted its charter to the Governorship of Ankara to register its legal personality. The governorship demanded the ABKB change its name and remove some statements from its charter that violated Articles 5 and 10 of the Law of Associations.[112] The ABKB neither changed its name nor removed the specified statements from the charter, so the Ankara Civil Courts of General Jurisdiction dissolved the ABKB on the basis of Articles 5 and 6 of the Law of Associations.[113]

The court decision categorically banned the establishment of associations the name of which includes the word Alevi. As a result, the Court of Appeal reviewed the decision of the district court and ruled that the charter of the ABKB did not propose to violate the Law on Associations and overturned the ruling of the Ankara Civil Courts of General Jurisdiction.[114]

Although the decision of the Court of Appeal invalidated the ban, the Law on Associations was not changed. The decision of the Court of Appeal had to be supported by political developments, in order to be enforced. In this respect, the membership process of the European Union played a vital role in moderating restrictions on right to association. The progress reports of the EU dealt with the problems of Alevis with reference to human rights, specifically mentioning the ban on the founding of associations with the word Alevi in the name.[115] Moreover, the AABF brought problems of Alevis with respect to the right to organize before the European Parliament.[116] Consequently, the ban was removed on account of the EU accession process. As a result of the de

---

112   "ABKB Faaliyet Raporu," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 45 (July-August 2001): 8-9.

113   Alevi Sözcüğü Yasak, *Pir Sultan Abdal* 48 (January- February 2002): 4.

114   "Alevi Derneğine Yargıtay Vizesi," *Radikal,* 06.11.2002.

115   http://www.abgs.gov.tr/files/AB_Iliskileri/Tur_En_Realitons/Progress/
Turkey_Progress_Report_2002.pdf

116   "Alevilerin Umudu AB'de," *Radikal,* 05.03.2002.

facto removal of the ban, the Alevi-Bektashi Federation (*Alevi Bektaşi Feder-asyonu – ABF*) was founded in 2002. The majority of Alevi associations in Turkey and abroad had gathered under a federation called Alevi-Bektashi.[117]

This was one of the most important successes of the Alevi movement in Turkey and was a turning point. The importance of the role of the European Union for Alevi associations became particularly clear in the struggle for the establishment of a federation under the Alevi name. Turkey's accession to the EU shaped the political agenda of Alevi associations from the time of formal recognition of Turkey's candidacy in 1999. Concordantly, the Alevi associations based their demands on the European Convention of Human Rights.

Chapter 3 evaluated Turkey's accession to the EU as a political opportunity that contributed to an increase in the political capacity of the Alevi movement. This section elaborates this point in a discussion of how relations between Turkey and the EU shaped the agendas of the agents of the Alevi movement in the first half of the 2000s with specific reference to the positions of the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation.

Both the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation were aware of the EU's importance for the Alevi movement. Both associations claimed that the Copenhagen criteria, which guaranteed the freedom of conscience, would contribute to the struggle for the recognition of Alevi identity and the democratization of Turkey.[118] Moreover, they pointed out that the requirements of the Copenhagen criteria and demands of the Alevi community overlapped with respect to principles of equality and freedom of religion. Therefore, Turkey could not become a full member of the European Union unless it met the democratic demands of Alevi associations.[119] Interestingly the differing ideological positions of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD converged on the issue of Turkey's accession to the EU.

The Cem Foundation and the PSAKD emerged as the main Alevi actors in Turkey's membership process. A meeting on 22 June 2000 between Karen

---

117 After the de facto removal of the ban, the Hacıbektaş Veli Culture and Promotion Association - as constituent of the Alevi-Bektashi Federation - was renamed Alevi Culture Associations (*Alevi Kültür Dernekleri – AKD*).

118 Yüksel Işık, "Alevilik ve Avrupa Birliği," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 45 (July-August 2001): 18-30

119 İsmail Engin, "Avrupa Birliği ve Türkiye," *Cem* 111 (July 2001): 9–12.

Fogg, the EU's ambassador to Turkey, and representatives of these associations to inform her about the demands of Alevis symbolically demonstrated the representative role of these associations for the Alevi community in relation to the EU. Moreover, such meetings indicated Alevi associations' approach to integrating with the political opportunity structures provided by the EU.

In this regard both associations formulated their classical demands within the framework of the basic principles of the European Union project. Ali Balkız, who represented the PSAKD, listed the main problems of Alevis as compulsory religious courses, the existence of the DRA, the construction of mosques in Alevi villages, the TRT's biased broadcasts, and the indication of religious affiliation on the national identity cards.[120] Doğan Bermek, who represented the Cem Foundation, listed their main demands as the reformation of the curriculum of compulsory religious courses and the organizational structure of the DRA, the representation of Alevism in TRT broadcasts, the recognition of cemevis as religious centers and the removal of the religious affiliation from identification cards.[121]

As the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD engaged in Turkey's accession process to the EU, demands of Alevis were carried beyond domestic affairs. The transnationalization of the Alevi issue can be followed in the EU's Regular Progress Reports and in the European Convention on Human Rights. On one hand, the progress reports kept problems of Alevis on the agenda; on the other, the European Court of Human Rights was a new legal and political referee for the problems of Alevis.

The European Union monitors reform in candidate countries with respect to the Copenhagen Criteria through Regular Progress Reports. The European Commission has published regular reports on Turkey since 1998 and the Alevi question held a place in nearly all of them. In these reports, Alevis were referred to directly as Alevis or indirectly as non-Sunni Muslim groups.[122] The

---

120   "Alevilerden AB'ye Şikayet," *Milliyet*, 23.06.2000.

121   "İnanç Hürriyeti Türkiye'nin İç İşi Değil," *Cem* 103 (July 2000):14-15.

122   Differently from the others, the 2004 Progress Report defined Alevis as a non-Sunni Muslim minority, which drew a reaction from both Alevi and non-Alevi publics. Alevi associations declared that Alevis are not a minority group in Turkey, but one of the main elements of Turkish Republic.

problems of Alevis were generally evaluated under the subtitle "Human Rights and Protection of Minorities" of the article "Civil and Political Rights."[123]

In these reports, the list of the problems of Alevis included: (1) DRA neglect for Alevi concerns and the fact that Alevis are not represented in the directorate; (2) the obligation of Alevi children to take compulsory religious instruction in public schools that disregarded Alevi identity; (3) the fact that financial support was only available for Sunni-Muslim mosques and religious foundations such that Alevis experienced financial difficulties opening places of worship; and (4) more importantly, the fact that cemevis had no legal status as places of worship. Except from these repeatedly reported problems, specific developments concerning Alevis were in the reports. The dissolution of the ABKB with reference to the Law on Association (in the 2002 report), the granting of its legal status (in the 2003 report), a lawsuit brought against compulsory religious instructions by an Alevi family (in the 2007 report), the transformation of the Madımak Hotel into a culture center (in the 2009 report), and new textbooks containing information on the Alevi faith (in the 2011 report) were some of these developments.[124]

The Regular Progress Reports demonstrated that the European Union regarded Alevis as a religious group whose main problem was there official non-recognition. As mentioned in previous chapters, European countries tended to recognize Alevism as a religious identity, validating the experiences of diaspora Alevis. This reflected in the reports of the European Commission, as well. The European Union assessed the problems of Alevis within the framework of violations of the freedom of conscience. Thus, reports suggested the reformation of the structural organization of the DRA in deference to the existence of Alevis, the representation of Alevism in the religious curriculum, and the recognition of *cemevi*s as houses of prayer.

---

123   All the Regular Reports prepared by the European Commision can be found on the internet sites of the Ministry for EU Affairs and the European Commision. See. http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=123&l=2   and http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/ detailed-country-information/turkey/index_en.htm

124   Zeki Uyanık, "Avrupa Komisyonu İlerleme Raporlarında (1998-2012) Aleviler: Tanımlar, Sorunlar, Tartışmalar," *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi* 56 (February-April 2013),113-136.

This position was clearly closer to the Cem Foundation's position rather than that of the PSAKD. The PSAKD therefore developed a relatively critical attitude toward the European Union in the course of time. Ali Balkız of the PSAKD asserted that the reports endorsed the recognition of Alevism as an Islamic religious sect and accused the EU for being influenced by the Cem Foundation's conceptualization of Alevi Islam.[125] Despite the critical attitude toward the European Union, the PSAKD did not abandon its engagement with the EU process; it also evaluated the process as an opportunity to secure Alevi's rights from the state.

In addition to input on the Regular Progress Reports, Alevi associations engaged in Turkey's EU accession process through the European Court of Human Rights (ECRH) on the basis of the European Convention of Human Rights. In other words, they formulated demands within the framework of the European Union human rights discourse and compel Turkish state to accept their demands. Recurrent complaints about compulsory religious courses and the indication of religious affiliation on the identification cards were taken to the European Court.

In 2006, Hasan Zengin made a complaint about the curriculum of compulsory courses based solely on Sunni Islam. He appealed to the European Court and argued that courses were a clear violation Article 2 of Protocol 1 (the right to education) and Article 9 (the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion) of the European Convention of Human Right's. In 2007, the Court ruled for revisions to the syllabus of religious courses under the principle of religious pluralism.[126] Although the ABF - including the PSAKD - claimed that the European Court's ruling required the abolishment of compulsory religious courses,[127] their curriculum was revised. Various beliefs including Alevi were added to the syllabi of religious courses.

The Alevi families who complained about compulsory religious courses appealed to the European Court of Human Rights again in 2011. The ECHR examined the case in light of the curriculum of compulsory religion and ethics

---

125 Ali Balkız, "AB'nin Türkiye'ye İlişkin 2003 Raporu Yayınlandı," http://www.psakd.org/yazarlar/ab_aleviler.html

126 Rıza Türmen, "Zorunlu Din Dersi ve AİHM," *Milliyet*, 15. 10. 2010.

127 http://www.psakd.org/aihm_din_dersi_karar.html

classes, as well as the aforementioned changes. In its ruling, the court observed that in the field of religious instruction in particular, Turkey's education system was inadequately equipped to ensure respect for parents' convictions. The latest verdict of the European Court indicated that the revision of the curriculum was not sufficient and directly criticized the compulsory status of religious courses, which violates both the right to education and right to freedom of conscience guaranteed by the European Convention of Human Rights. The latest verdict of the ECRH is closer to the stance of the PSAKD with regard to compulsory religious courses.

Another issue taken to the European Court was the indication of religious affiliation on the national identification cards. Alevi citizen Sinan Işık demanded to indicate his religious affiliation as Alevi on his identification card in 2004; the Izmir Regional Administrative Court and then Supreme Court of Appeal dismissed his demand on the ground that Alevism was not a religion, but a religious sect. After the verdict of the Supreme Court of Appeal, Işık took his demand to the European Court in 2005. He argued that Turkey was violating Article 9 (the freedom of conscience), Article 6 (the right to a fair trial) and Article 14 (the rule of non-discrimination) of the European Convention of Human Right. The court ruled that the indication of religious affiliation on the identification cards violated the freedom of conscience; therefore, an impartial state should remove this from national identification cards altogether.[128]

Although Alevi associations did not appeal to the European Court directly, the ABF actively followed both cases. Moreover, the Cem Foundation demanded the legal recognition of *cemevi*s as houses of prayer and the allocation of funds and staff from the directorate. The foundation presented a petition to the Prime Ministry concerning these demands; however, they were not accepted. The foundation then opens proceedings against the Prime Ministry; nevertheless, the Sixth Administrative Tribunal of Ankara ruled that the demands of the foundation were contrary to legislation. İzzettin Doğan argued that the demands of Alevis should be assessed according to international instead of national legislations. He added that Turkey had violated the freedom

---

128 " Din Hanesi Kalkıyor mu?" *Cumhuriyet*, 10.11.2013

of conscience guaranteed by the European Court by rejecting the demands of the Cem Foundation.[129] These arguments and legal bases demonstrated that the reference points for the Alevi movement had shifted from a national to an international context during Turkey's accession process to the European Union.

On one hand, the process led the Alevi movement to express its demands more effectively. Alevi associations forced the Turkish government to partially meet its demands courtesy of verdicts by the ECHM. On the other hand, the accession process induced new tensions for Alevi associations. The reports of the European Commission tended to equate the sociological minority position of Alevis with legal minority status. Reactions to the definition of Alevis as a non-Sunni minority in the 2004 Regular Report showed that Alevi associations, including both the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD, were against defining Alevis as a legal minority. İzzettin Doğan posited that there were 25 million Alevis in Turkey; one-third of Turkey's population could not be evaluated as minority. On the contrary, Alevis were a fundamental component (*asl-i unsur*) of the Turkish Republic. Kazım Genç, the chairman of the PSAKD at the time, used the term *asl-i unsur* as well. He stated that Alevis - who were among the basic contributors to Anatolian culture and who participated in the National Struggle for independence, wished to benefit from fundamental rights and freedoms as equal citizens. Elizabeth Özdalga asserted that the discrepancy between positions as a sociological minority position and legal minority status stemmed from the difficulties of balancing two authorities and sets of values: the national and the supranational. In this regard, the Alevi movement was caught between reference points provided by the European Union and national values and loyalties.[130]

When Alevi individuals appealed to the ECHM, they argued in the context of freedom of conscience with reference to basic human rights and principles of equality instead of minority rights. Due to the fact that the Turkish legal system recognized the juridical priority of international covenants on human

---

129　"Cemevi Davasına Yargıtay'dan Ret Kararı," *Milliyet*, 13.01.2008

130　Elisabeth Özdalga, "The Alevis—a "New" Religious Minority? Identity Politics in Turkey and Its Relation to the EU Integration Process" in *Religion, Politics, and Turkey's EU Accession,* (eds.) Dietrich Jung and Catharina Raudvere (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 194.

rights, the demands of Alevi associations did not violate national juridical standards. However, Elise Massicard points out another tension derived from the "Europeanization" of the demands by Alevis. The EU tended to recognize Alevism as a religious identity in its reports; moreover, the Alevi movement in European countries was acquiring rights within the context of the freedom of religion. Therefore, the accession process to the EU meant that the best chance of obtaining recognition was within the religious domain.[131]

To benefit from the European system of rights required the "religionization" of the movement. This was in harmony with the Cem Foundation's stance, but contradicted the traditional positions of the PSAKD. However, the latter association shifted and redefined Alevism as an independent system of belief rather than as a culture, but it did not specify how it related to Islam. In other words, the PSAKD took a position in the religious domain without reference to Islam. This religious turn did not end the conflict between the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation; the demands of the PSAKD continued not to explicitly refer to Islam. Although the domain of the Alevi movement expanded in conformity with the European ethos, controversies within the movement remained. Both the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD carried their own historiographies, definitions, and demands into the European context in the 2000s.

Turkey's accession process to the EU slowed in the late 2000s. Due to the fact that Alevi associations had based their demands on this process, the spaces of their political opportunities narrowed, as well. More importantly, the ruling AKP's "Alevi Opening" as a hegemonic project over the Alevi community radically transformed the political sphere of the Alevi movement. In the 1990s, the Alevi movement developed under a tension between the aspiration for a liberal Alevi identity and the aspiration to be equal citizens of the Republic. The AKP's "Alevi Opening" process meant the re-construction of the Alevi question and was a crucial rupture from traditional Alevi politics. On one hand, it aimed to redefine Alevism monolithically within the boundaries of

---

131   Massicard, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*, 353-354

orthodox Islam. On the other hand, it aimed to eliminate the Alevi associations that secularly politicized the Alevi question.[132] Thus, the representational character of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD as poles of Alevi politics was challenged in the framework of new political conditions created by the "Alevi Opening" project. Further analysis of this political context is not presented in this chapter which investigated the associational environment of Alevi politics and cleavages within this environment.

This chapter analyzed the contested domain of Alevi politics through the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD. These associations' definitions of Alevism, historiographies, visions for secularism, political demands from the state, and political positions with respect to political parties portrayed the boundaries of Alevi politics within Nancy Fraser's conceptual framework of debate between affirmative and transformative remedies. Whereas the affirmative politics of the Cem Foundation aimed to expand state-religion relations in Turkey through representation of Alevis in political structures; the PSAKD's transformative politics targeted to transform Turkish secularism through the Alevi issue. In this regard the dilemma between the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation shaped the boundaries of Alevi politics in the 1990s.

On one hand, the Cem Foundation assessed Alevism as an Islamic religious sect or as Turk-Islam; therefore, it demanded official recognition by state of Alevism as a religious identity. On the other, the PSAKD evaluated Alevism as a culture or democratic way of life rather than as a religious sect.[133] Differences in their definitions led the associations to take different positions with respect to the relation of problems of the Alevi community and democratization in Turkey. The Cem Foundation believed that Turkey could not be a democratic state unless the Alevi problem was solved. Meanwhile, the PSAKD embedded the problems of Alevis within the democratization process of Turkey and claimed that the problems of Alevis cannot be solved unless Turkey first becomes a democratic and secular republic.[134]

---

132 Ayhan Yalçınkaya, "Dar Alanda Kısa Paslaşmalar: Ver-Kaç!" in *Kavimkırım İkliminde Aleviler* (Ankara: Dipnot, 2014), 37-168.

133 Murat Okan, *Türkiye'de Alevilik*, 124–125; 152–156; 166–167; 193–194

134 Aslan, *The Ambivalence of Alevi Politic(s): A Comparative Analysis of Cem Vakfı and Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği*, 8.

With these contrasting positions, the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD developed different stances vis-à-vis the political establishment with regard to secularism. The Cem Foundation, which aspired to integrate Alevism witin the state structures, demanded the representation of Alevism in the DRA and in compulsory religious courses. These demands targeted the formal recognition of Alevism as a religious identity, but also the expansion of Turkish secularism through the integration of Alevism into state structures. On the other hand, the PSAKD focused on the transformation of the state-religion relations in Turkey that generated the problems of Alevis. Correspondingly, it defended the abolition of the DRA and the end to compulsory religious courses as means to the secularization and democratization of Turkey.

The different positions of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD toward the political establishment were reflected in their relations with political parties, as well. Although both kept their distance from religious and ultra-nationalist rightist parties, their political preferences varied. The Cem Foundation did not support a specific political party and changed its political endorsements according to actual developments in Turkish politics. The foundation supported both center rightist and leftist parties in the elections in the 1990s and 2000s in opposition to political Islamist parties. On the other hand, the PSAKD believed that the problems of Alevis derived from the non-secular and undemocratic political system in Turkey and that only leftist politics would contribute to the secularization and democratization of Turkey. While the PSAKD did not declare support for a specific party, its members mainly voted for social democrat parties.

The conflict between the PSAKD and the Cem Foundation can also be evaluated within a framework of antagonism between multiculturalism and egalitarian citizenship. Although the Cem Foundation did not specifically demand the recognition of Alevi identity in a multicultural sense, its attempts to systematize Alevism as an orthodox religious belief - suppressing the diversity of interpretations - coincide with the political premises of multiculturalism. The elimination of the dissimilarities among different implementations of Alevism seems as an obligation for establishing the internal unity within the community necessary for an identity movement. On the other hand, the PSAKD formulated Turkey's Alevi question as an issue of democracy and secularism. Consequently, the solution of the Alevi question was for Alevis to

equally benefit from their rights as citizen without reference to their cultural peculiarities.

Nevertheless, the manifestation of the Alevi movement in the realm of politics was not limited to Alevi associations' relations with political parties. Alevi identity appeared in political space in the 1990s independent of Alevi associations as seen in developments around the formation of the Peace Party. The next chapter discusses of these developments to examine the (im)possibilities of Alevi identity politics.

7

The Peace Party

Turkey witnessed the emergence of Alevi politics defined by a particular religious, cultural identity in the 1990s. The previous chapter examined the main Alevi associations as agents of Alevi politics. Alevi associations not only developed solidarity among Alevis, but reformulated tradition through their publications and activities. Moreover, they were in contact with political parties and government bodies to put forward the demands of their members. As such, these associations took charge of the public representation of Alevism both socially and politically.

As the main agents of Alevi politics, associations have become the subject of various studies; the Peace Party (*Barış Partisi – BP*) as another political agents of the Alevi movement in the 1990s has been disregarded. However, the relation of the ABTM - the umbrella organization of Alevi associations - and the Democratic Peace Movement (*Demokratik Barış Hareketi* – DBH) in the 1990s suggests that the Alevi movement cannot be comprehended without regarding the political history of the Peace Party. This chapter continues to scrutinize the agents of the Alevi movement through an examination of the Peace Party.

The BP was the result not only of the rising Alevi movement, but of the political crisis of Turkish politics. On one hand, Alevis felt that Turkey's political and juridical systems did not sufficiently react following the massacres they suffered in the 1990s, so they lost confidence in all political parties. The alienation of Alevis from the political system due to these massacres led Alevi

associations to organize politically around Alevi identity. On the other hand, left-wing movements in Turkish politics became disoriented following the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. The formation of the political ideologies on the basis of cultural identities (instead of socio-economic classes) - which can be labeled as cultural turn of the politics - became one of the main characteristics of post-Cold War politics in Turkey. The increasing saliency of political divisions between cultural identities also enabled Alevis to politicize on the basis of their cultural identity. Thus, the formation of the Peace Party as an openly Alevi party stemmed both from feelings of being unprotected from attacks and from the general transformation of politics to accommodate with cultural identity-based demands.

Analyzing the formation process of the Peace Party, this chapter examines the tumults of Turkish politics deriving from the rise of political Islam, the Kurdish question and the disorientation of the left at the end of the Cold War, on one hand, and the political reactions of Alevi associations disappointed with how Turkish political parties responded to the Madımak massacre and Gazi events, on the other. The formation of the Democratic Peace Movement and its transformation into the Peace Party are contextualized at the intersection of pursuit by Alevi associations and the general restructuring of Turkish politics.

The political program of the DBH/BP, which was based on multiculturalism and liberalism, can be assessed as a liberal reply to the crisis of Turkish and Alevi politics under the ideological influence of popular "Third Way" and radical democracy debates of the 1990s. However, the party could not play an effective role in Turkish politics during the course of its political life. More importantly, Alevis never supported the BP; consequently, its political history ended following poor performance in the 1999 elections.

Why did Alevis not vote for the BP, the existence of an influential Alevi identity movement notwithstanding? This question is examined within the framework of intra-party conflicts and the politicization dynamics of Alevism. Intra-party conflicts concerned the BP's relation to Ali Haydar Veziroğlu, whose financial contributions were important for the party. Veziroğlu's influence and wealth dominated the BP's political activities and ideological positions; therefore, the party could not escape the image of being Veziroğlu's party. Conflicts also stemmed from the dilemma of being recognized as an

openly Alevi party. Whenever the BP attempted to transcend its images as on Alevi party character to entice non-Alevi voters, it steered away from Alevi issues; as such, it was never able to overcome its Alevi image in the eyes of the non-Alevi voters.

Nevertheless, the political failure of the BP cannot be analyzed solely with reference to political orientation. Its failure as an "Alevi party" is related to the politicization dynamics of Alevis as a cultural, religious community, as well. The plurality of the heterodox cosmology of Alevism and the traumas of the massacres constituted this dynamic. On one hand, its cosmologically pluralist and heterodox character made it difficult to define Alevism in a rigid way. The difficulty of devising a shared, unambiguous definition of Alevism made the politicization of Alevi identity within the context of a political party problematic. On the other hand, Alevi massacres have played a vital role historically for politicization of Alevism as examined in Chapter 5. Although massacres triggered the formation of Alevi parties, in the long run, the fear of suffering further massacres made Alevis reluctant to organize politically on the basis of Alevi culture. Both the ambivalence of Alevism and fear of massacres led Alevis not to vote for a political party based on Alevism. The Peace Party experience must be discussed against this historical background.

§ 7.1   Alevi Politics in the Early 1990s: Influence of the Massacres on Political Preferences

The role of massacres in the politicization of Alevism was discussed in Chapter 5. When assailants attacked the Madımak hotel, security forces did not intervene in the assault. Afterward, the president, the majority partner of the coalition government, the main opposition party, and the mainstream media evaluated the massacre within the framework of a discourse of "grievous provocation," rationalizing the motives of the assailants. Moreover, the judicial process, which also adopted the provocation discourse, was another disappointment for Alevis. The experience of the Gazi events was similar. Therefore, the faith of Alevis about the political system became distressed, leading to their alienation from contemporaneous political conditions.

Feelings of loneliness, disappointment and injustice led Alevis to lose trust in the political parties and to organize around their Alevi identity as a safe alternative. The short-term effect of the massacres for Alevi associations was open debate on the formation of an Alevi party. However, these cannot be comprehended without regard for the special role of the SHP/CHP[1] among the Alevis in the early 1990s.

In fact, the early 1990s were golden years for the representation of Alevis in both local and central governments through their influence over the SHP/CHP. In a study on the relation of ethno-regional ties and political activities in the context of urban spaces, Harald Schüler asserts that ethno-religious identities play a special role in that they constitute both the membership and voter base of the SHP/CHP. Districts in Istanbul where the SHP/CHP won the most votes were ones where the Alevi immigrants from Sivas, Erzincan, and Tunceli constituted the majority of the population. Thus, when the SHP won the mayorship of Istanbul, Ankara, and İzmir in the 1989 local elections and became the junior partner of the coalition government after the 1991 parliamentary elections, Alevi supporters were considered for civil service appointments and in the assignment of urban resources.[2]

On one hand, twenty-seven of eighty-eight SHP/CHP deputies in the 1991-1995 legislative term were Alevi. Moreover, the coalition government led by

---

1   After the military coup of 1980, forming a party under the name Republican People's Party was banned by the military regime. Therefore, supporters of the CHP formed new parties: the Populist Party (Halkçı Parti – HP), the Social Democracy Party (Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi – SODEP), and the Democratic Left Party (Demokratik Sol Parti – DSP). The HP and SODEP united in 1985 as the Social Democratic Populist Party (Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti – SHP) forming as a successor of the CHP. After legislation allowing for reestablishment of older parties, the CHP was reestablished in 1992 and Deniz Baykal became its new chairman. Due to the poor election results in the 1994 local elections, the SHP and CHP united under the umbrella of the CHP. When the Sivas massacre happened in 1993, the SHP was the junior partner of the coalition government; when the Gazi events occurred, the coalition partner was the CHP. In analyzing the relation of Alevis to this party within the framework of these massacres, the name of the party is abbreviated as SHP/CHP in this section.

2   Harald Schüler, "Secularism and Ethnicity: Alevis and Social Democrats in Search of Alliance" in *Civil Society in the Grip of Nationalism,* (eds.) Stefanos Yerasimos, Günter Seufert and Karin Varhoff, (Istanbul: Ergon, 2000), 228-230.

the DYP and the SHP included four Alevi ministers. On the other hand, Alevis had significant influence over metropolitan municipalities governed by the SHP.[3] However, the massacres turned the tables on Alevis. At the time of the Madımak massacre and Gazi events, a coalition government led by the DYP and the SHP/CHP was in power. Though it was the junior partner of the coalition, the SHP/CHP did not take responsibility during the massacres and remained inactive. Furthermore, its participation in the subsequent parliamentary investigation committees on the Madımak massacre and Gazi events was underwhelming. Alevis thus lost faith in the SHP/CHP.

The Madımak massacre violated not only Alevis' trust in the SHP/CHP, but also their representation within the party. After the massacre, the number of Alevi ministers in the coalition government decreased from four to one.[4] Moreover, Alevis lost influence over local organization of the SHP/CHP. For instance, when Ahmet Güryüz Ketenci was elected chairman of the CHP's Istanbul organization in 1995, party leader Deniz Baykal referred the fact that he was neither Alevi nor Kurdish as a positive indication that the CHP was overcoming its reputation as an ethno-religious political party.[5]

In this context, heated debates on the necessity of an Alevi party began. Moreover, belief in the necessity of an Alevi party went hand-in-hand with discussions about the under-representation of Alevis in political parties.[6] However, debates on Alevi party cannot be analyzed without noting the transformation of Turkish politics experienced in the 1990s. The cultural turn of politics enabled ethnic and religious identities to form the basis of political movements. The rise of political Islam and the existence of the Kurdish movement indicated how the cultural turn in policymaking provided political opportunity structures for cultural identities. The politicization of Alevis via a political party stemmed not only from massacres, but also from the broader transformation of Turkish politics in the 1990s.

---

3   Cemal Canpolat, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul. 25. 01. 2013.

4   "Aleviler Sol Partilere Kızgın," *Cumhuriyet*, 07.04.1995, 12.

5   Celal Kazdağlı, "Baykal Erken Havaya Girdi," *Aksiyon*, no: 39, 02.09.1995.

6   Lütfi Kaleli, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, 11.03.2014.

§ 7.2 Turkey's Political Catastrophe in the 1990s: Renewal of Political Structure and Appeal for New Political Parties

Turkish politics experienced both tumult and renewal in the 1990s. The political atmosphere, shaped by the 1980 military coup, started to dissipate in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Articles of 141, 142, and 163, which banned politics on the basis of class and religion, were removed from the Penal Code in 1991. Consequently, the ban on the socialist trade union, DISK, was rescinded. Moreover, the ban on using the Kurdish language in private life was removed. In the 1990s, the political party system, which had been redesigned after the military coup, gradually changed as politicians such as Süleyman Demirel, Bülent Ecevit, Alparslan Türkeş, and Necmettin Erbakan - who had been prohibited from participating in political life - returned to shape Turkish politics with re-minted, renamed parties.[7] The DYP under the leadership of Demirel and the ANAP were center right parties. The DSP under the leadership of Ecevit and the SHP (then the CHP) were the parties of the center left.[8]

Nevertheless, centrist policies whether right or left were unable to stabilize the Turkish political system in the 1990s, as the political movements outside the scope of center space made their mark on Turkish politics. The RP, representing political Islam, secured the mayorship of Istanbul and Ankara in the 1994 local elections, becoming the largest victor in the 1995 national elections. Although these elections demonstrated the weakness of government without the RP,[9] its coalition partnership triggered debates on secularism. Therefore,

---

7   Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 299-305.

8   Aylin Özman and Simten Coşar, "Reconceptualizing Center Politics in Post 1980 Turkey: Transformation or Continuity?" in *Remaking Turkey*, (ed.) E. Fuat Keyman (New York: Lexington Books, 2007).

9   The RP won the elections of 1995 with 21.3% of the votes and 158 deputies. It was followed by the ANAP (19.65% of votes and 132 deputies), the DYP (19.18 % of votes and 135 deputies), the DSP (14.64 % of votes and 76 deputies), and the CHP (10.71 % of votes and 49 deputies). The composition of parliament indicated that a government without the RP would need to be constituted of at least three parties.

the second half of the 1990s was characterized by a military memorandum and volatile coalition governments.[10]

On the other hand, escalating political violence in the guerilla war of the Kurdish movement in Eastern Anatolia also undermined party politics in the 1990s. The guerrilla campaign and coercive response of the state affected both the Kurdish population and Turkey as a whole. An estimated 40 thousand people lost their lives, while military and security forces spent more than $100 billion. Almost 1.5 million people were displaced. The State of Emergency regime in Eastern Anatolia restricted basic rights such as freedom of expression, residence, and travel.[11] Political violence, unsolved murders, and debates on the deep state vis-à-vis the Kurdish question betrayed the trust of ordinary citizens with regard to political structures.

Despite the restructuring of the mainstream Turkish political party system in the 1990s, political Islam and the guerilla warfare of the Kurdish movement destabilized the system. This crisis cannot not be comprehended apart from global tendencies. The collapse of the Soviet Union and globalization radically transformed the language of politics, the focus of which shifted from the economy to culture and from class to identity. In this respect, the crisis of Turkish politics, which was partly derived from due to the politicization of Islamic and Kurdish identities, was also related to a transformation of the policymaking process in the post-Cold War socio-political environment.

The traditional structure of Turkish politics could not cope with the multitude of politicized identity positions and their struggles for inclusion in public sphere. The formation of new political parties in this decade attempted to fill the gaps in the political premises of Turkish politics. One such party was the New Democratic Movement (*Yeni Demokrasi Hareketi* – YDH). The leader of the YDH, Cem Boyner, was the former chair of Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (*Türkiye Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği* –

---

10   Suavi Aydın and Yüksel Taşkın, *1960'tan Günümüze Türkiye Tarihi* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2014), 431-447.

11   Hamit Bozarslan, "Kurds and Turkish State" in *Cambridge History of Modern Turkey 4: Turkey in the Modern World*, (ed.) Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 352-353.

TÜSİAD). His career hinted at the YDH's political orientation, characterized by a liberal, democratic platform both economically and politically.

The YDH was an indirect response to the popular debates on the "Second Republic" in the 1990s. Due to the fact that the multi-party political system of Turkey had been developed under the conditions of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and debates about a "New World Order" foreshadowed changes in Turkish politics and new conceptual tools - such as pluralism and civil society - gained currency. Moreover, Kemalist principles such as nationalism, secularism, and etatism came under question within the framework of the Kurdish question and the rise of political Islam. Some liberal intellectuals claimed that the democratic standards of the Kemalist Republic, founded by a civil and military bureaucracy, were unable to meet Turkey's needs in the 1990s. A "Second Republic" under the leadership of the bourgeoisie should be founded on the basis of pluralism instead of nationalism, democracy instead of Kemalist republicanism, libertarian instead of militant secularism, civil society instead of military bureaucracy, and free market society instead of etatism.[12]

The theoretical premises of the "Second Republic" thesis largely came into existence in the YDH's political program. The YDH aspired for the structural transformation of Turkey's political regime. Boyner claimed that the YDH was not an alternative to current political parties, but to the system itself.[13] Its political program aimed to restructure Turkey on the basis of freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, and freedom of enterprise. To this end, the party program principally defended decentralization, cultural pluralism, and economic privatization.[14] The YDH supported free market liberalism, full religious freedom, and recognition that the Kurdish question was an identity problem rather than terrorism. Although it attracted the attention of liberal intellectuals as a modern political force, it was unable to garner grassroots political support. The party participated in the 1995 general elections and gained only 0.48 percent of the vote. This election result was the beginning of the end

---

12   Mehmet Altan, *II. Cumhuriyet Demokrasi ve Özgürlükler* (Istanbul: Birey, 2004), 146-157.

13   Osman İridağ, "Bir Bitişin Öyküsü," *Aksiyon* 73 (27.04.1996).

14   Yeni Demokrasi Hareketi, *Tüzük*, (Istanbul: 1994), 51-57.

for the YDH. Boyner quit the party in 1996 and the YDH merged with the BP in 1997.

The YDH's merge with the BP demonstrated the ideological affiliation between the parties. However, the political atmosphere that paved the way for the formation of the Peace Party cannot be analyzed without considering new socialist parties in the 1990s. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the relative liberation of the political system shaped by military intervention led to the formation of new socialist parties in the mid-1990s. One was the Freedom and Solidarity Party (*Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi* – ÖDP) founded in 1996. The ÖDP was an alliance of various socialist factions and claimed to be a pluralist combination of these factions and new social movements, such as ecology, feminism, and anti-militarism.[15] The ÖDP aimed to differentiate itself from traditional, centralist socialist parties, adopting the slogan: "The party that is not a party" (*parti olmayan parti*).[16]

The "party not party" discourse indicated the influence of popular new left discourses that emphasized the re-definition of socialism on the basis of pluralism and freedom through anti-systematic new social movements. This influence is clear in the ÖDP's platform, which underscored the importance of new social movements such as the ecological and feminist movements, but did not contain orthodox, Marxist conceptualizations such as the right to self-determination and proletarian dictatorship. In this context, the ÖDP could be assessed as a liberal, socialist rejoinder to the restoration of neo-liberal capitalism under the post-Soviet political conditions.[17]

Both the YDH and ÖDP experiments showed that the post-Cold War cultural turn of politics paved the way for the formation of new political parties around new conceptual frameworks, such as the "Second Republic" or the New Left. In this regard, the formation the DBH / BP in the mid-1990s was the result of the aforementioned political atmosphere. In other words, Tur-

---

15   Atilla Aytemur, "Militan Bilinci Üzerinden Siyaset Kurulamaz," in *ÖDP Kendini Anlatıyor,* (ed.) Belgin Demirer (Istanbul: Güncel, 1996), 37.

16   Bülent Forta, "Şimdi Yeni Bir ÖDP Tasarlamak Zorundayız," in *ÖDP Kendini Anlatıyor,* (ed.) Belgin Demirer (Istanbul: Güncel, 1996), 76.

17   Mustafa Bayram Mısır and Mehmet Haruş, *Tarihsel Seyri İçinde ÖDP* (Ankara: Ütopya, 1999), 79-81.

key's socio-political conjuncture in the 1990s, which was conducive of the formation of the YDH and the ÖDP, led to the founding of the BP, as well. Ideologically, the BP occupied a space between the liberal democracy of the YDH and the new left vision of the ÖDP. In this respect, the BP defined itself as a liberal-left party.

In the following sections, the BP's ideological tendencies are analyzed with respect to party platform, brochures, and personal narratives. The BP's differences from the YDH and the ÖDP stemmed not only from ideological leanings, but also from its social base. Unlike the YDH and the ÖDP, the BP specifically targeted a cultural group, namely Alevis. It was not only a response to the crisis of Turkish politics, but also to the search by Alevi associations for political alternatives following the Madımak massacre and Gazi events.

§ 7.3 From De Facto Federation to Political Movement: Quest for Alternatives within Alevi Politics

The debate on the necessity of an Alevi-oriented party resulted from isolation of Alevis deriving from massacres and the crisis in Turkish politics that led to new political parties on the basis of new political leanings. In this context, the quest to develop alternatives within Alevi politics had two-stages. After the Madımak massacre, Alevi associations first discussed ways to increase the power and influence of the movement. They attempted to develop their associational capacity by constituting an umbrella organization acting as a federation. The Gazi events, which again brought effectiveness of Alevi associations into questionable, triggered debates on the formation of an Alevi party. The newly formed federation of Alevi associations was crucial in the formation process of the BP.

7.3.1 *The Alevi-Bektashi Representative Assembly as an Umbrella Organization of Alevi Associations*

After the Madımak massacre, taking shelter in Alevi identity seemed the only option for many members of the community. Ali Balkız, for example, stated that the only way to escape the shame of the Sivas massacre was to organize

around Alevi identity.[18] The number of the associations and their registered members drastically increased thereafter. Alevi associations sought to channel their increasing popularity into an umbrella organization to strengthen the influence of the movement whole.[19] The result was the Alevi-Bektashi Representatives Assembly (ABTM).

The constituents of the ABTM were the AABF, the PSAKD, the HBVKD, the Şahkulu Sultan Dervish Lodge, the Karacaahmet Dervish Lodge, the Semah Culture Foundation, and the periodicals *Cem, Nefes,* and *Kervan.* Nearly all-significant agents of the Alevi movement were represented in the ABTM,[20] which was functionally a federation of independent Alevi associations. However, it was not a legal entity. Because the Law of Associations did not allow associations with the word Alevi in the name, the ABTM could not be formed legally and carried on its activities unofficially. As Selahattin Özel, the former chairman of the HBVKD, stated, the ABTM was an "illegal" organization despite its legitimacy within Alevi politics.[21]

The missions and functions of the ABTM demonstrated its claim to represent the Alevi community. The assembly declared it would deal with all problems of community that derived from their Aleviness. On one hand, the ABTM asserted that the problems of Alevis could not be disassociated from democracy and human rights; therefore, it aimed to contribute to the struggle for democracy in Turkey. On the other, the ABTM was a central organization of Alevi associations and soft to protect Alevi culture from assimilation.[22] With reference to the discussions mentioned in the previous chapters, the political position of the PSAKD faction predominated in the policies of the ABTM

Nevertheless the ABTM sought to represent all social agents of the Alevi movement, including associations, religious institutions, researcher-writers, and *dede*s. Representatives determined by Alevi associations and periodicals,

---

18   Ali Balkız, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 02.10.2012.

19   "Alevi Birlikleri Federasyonu Genel Yönetim Kurulu: Şeriatçı Şiddete Karşı Direnmek ve Laik-Demokratik Blok Hareketi Yaratmak Zorundayız," *Alevilerin Sesi* 2 (April 1994): 8-12.

20   "Basın Bildirisi," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 13 (January 1995): 41.

21   Selahattin Özel, interview by the author, tape recording, İzmir, 06.09.2011.

22   "Alevi Bektaşi Temsilciler Meclisi Basın Bildirisi," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 13 (January 1995): 41.

*dede*s, researcher-writers, and academics studying on Alevism took part in the Executive Council of the Assembly. The Alevi associations were represented in proportion to their membership and Alevi periodicals were represented in proportion to their circulation.[23]

Despite the ABTM's claim to represent all agents of Alevi politics, rifts at the assembly appeared during the preparation of the charter and determination of the aforementioned political platform. The *Nefes* periodical objected to the leadership of three Alevi associations (the AABF, the PSAKD, and the HBVKD) as well as to the underrepresentation of traditional Alevi dervish lodges and authoritarian figures of Alevism such as *çelebi*s and *dede*s.[24] The *Cem* periodical separated from the ABTM due to disagreements regarding the Directorate of Religious Affairs.[25] Although the majority of the ABTM's members defended abolition of the DRA, *Cem* sought representation of Alevism within the DRA. As a result of this emblematic conflict between *Cem* and other Alevi NGOs, the periodical resigned from the ABTM.[26] Although these discrepancies harmed the representational authority of the ABTM over the movement, the positions of the AABF, the PSAKD, and the HBVKD strengthened within the assembly. However, debates on the formation of an Alevi party stirred up conflicts among these associations and resulted in the ABTM's dissolution.

7.3.2 *Affiliation between the Alevi-Bektashi Representative Council and the Democratic Peace Movement: Debates on the Participation of Independent Candidates in the 1995 Elections*

Debates around the necessity of a political party to increase the representational capacity of the Alevi community occupied the Alevi movement's political agenda before the 1995 general elections. There was strong opposition to the formation of an Alevi party within the Alevi public outside the ABTM. This opposition was based on the claim that although Alevism had been a

---

23 "Alevi Bektaşi Temsilciler Meclisi Tüzüğü," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 39 (August 2000): 13-15.

24 "Alevilerin Birliği ve Ankara Toplantısı," *Nefes* 8 (June 1994): 23-24.

25 "ABKB'nin Kuruluş Süreci," *Pir Sultan Abdal* 39 (October 2000): 19.

26 Atilla Fırat, "Haklı ve Doğru Temsile Dayalı Olmayan Yetkisiz Aleviler Temsilciler Meclisi Girişimi ve Yansıması," *Cem* 44 (January 1995): 21.

source of political resistance in the religious context of the middle ages, the religion-based political movements were unable to solve problems of the modern societies. Although modern politics was based on sociological class, Alevism - as a cultural, religious identity cut across social classes. Alevis should participate in the democratic struggle in Turkey, because Alevi culture, which consisted of political opposition, could contribute to the secular-democratic struggle of the Turkish left. The politicization of Alevism in the form of an Alevi party would not only violate the principle of secularism, but isolate the Alevi community from democratic power blocs.[27]

Needless to say, debates on the Alevi party were reflected in the ABTM, as well. Constituents were of one mind about the inability of current political parties to address the Alevi question; however, disagreement arose about the necessity of an overtly Alevi party. On one hand, the PSAKD opposed founding any party based on religion. It asserted that the exploitation of religion for political gain was one of the problems of Turkish politics; an Alevi party would only contribute to the politicization of religion.[28] Because the PSAKD principally believed that the problems of Alevis did not stem from their Aleviness, but from the undemocratic and non-secular political structure of Turkey, it advised Alevis to cooperate with other democratic powers and form a new leftist party instead of an Alevi party.[29]

On the other hand, the AABF believed that political organization in the form of associations had no influence and limited effect on policymaking. Therefore, the federation argued that the agents of the Alevi movement should revise their organizational structure to more efficiently contribute to the struggle for democratic transformation in Turkey. In this context, the organizational renewal of the Alevi movement implied the constitution of an Alevi

---

27 Reha Çamuroğlu, "Alevi Partisi Tartışmalarına Zorunlu Bir Değini," *Nefes* 1 (November 1993): 40-41; Esat Korkmaz, "Alevilerin Siyasal Örgütlenmesi," *Nefes* 18 (April 1995): 42; Esat Korkmaz, "Alevi Siyasetinin Çıkmazları," *Nefes* 30 (April 1996): 30-32; and İsmail Yıldırım, "Siz Kimin Siyasetini Yapıyorsunuz," *Kervan* 51 (August 1995): 6-8.

28 Murtaza Demir, "Sivas," *Nefes* 21 (July 1995): 37.

29 Ali Balkız, "Alevi Partisi mi Sınıf Partisi mi?" *Nefes* 18 (April 1995): 51.

party.[30] The multicultural political environment in Germany played a crucial role for the formation of the political language of diaspora Alevis. For this reason, the AABF tended towards the politicization of Alevism in the form of a political party that could instrumentally transfer the symbolic capital of multicultural diaspora Alevis to Turkey, as well.[31] When the HBVKD took the side of the AABF, the factions that believed in the necessity of the political representation of Alevis on the basis their identity became dominant within the ABTM.

Despite objections to the formation of an Alevi party in Alevi public opinion, all the constituents of the ABTM except for the PSAKD stood in favor of entering party politics. Therefore, the ABTM declared that the historical responsibility of the Alevi community required their intervention in the political space to contribute to the struggle for secularism and democracy.[32] Due to the impossibility of formatting a new party two months before the elections, the ABTM decided to participate in the early elections of 1995 with twenty-one independent Alevi candidates. Alevi poet Mahsuni Şerif, Lütfi Kaleli from the Semah Foundation, Gülizar Cengiz from the AABF, Yaşar Yılmaz and Necdet Yıldırım from the HBVKD, and independent figures of Alevi politics such as Sadık Eral and Şahin Atılgan were nominated candidates.[33] Despite the opposition of the PSAKD,[34] the ABTM, which sought to increase the influence of Alevi associations in the political process, was transformed into a political actor participating in the election with independent candidates.

Concurrently, independently of the Alevi associations, Ali Haydar Veziroğlu had formed the Democratic Peace Movement on 1 September 1995. Ve-

---

30   Necdet Saraç, "Sürekli Sığınacak Liman Aramak Zorunda mıyız?" *Alevilerin Sesi* 8 (May 1995): 13.

31   Demiray, *Understanding the Alevi Revival: A Transnational Perspective*, 123.

32   "Alevi-Bektaşi Temsilciler Meclisi Başkanlık Divanı Basın Açıklaması," *Nefes* 26 (December 1995): 39.

33   "Aleviler Meydanlara İniyor," *Cumhuriyet*, 09.11.1995, 9.

34   The PSAKD reacted to ABTM's decision to participate in the elections with the independent Alevi candidates and declared it would not support the Alevi candidates. See Murtaza Demir and Elif Sungur, "Kamuoyuna," *Nefes* 26 (December 1995): 40.

ziroğlu, who was born in Ürgüp in 1946, was an Alevi businessman and poli-
tician originally from Dersim. When Veziroğlu served as a deputy of the CHP
between 1977 and 1980, he was respected as the only deputy who resigned in
reaction to the Maraş massacre in 1978.[35] His successful economic activities
brought Veziroğlu prominence in the 1980s. He became an influential busi-
nessman, known for being the owner of a large construction company,
VİNSAN.[36] On account of his economic power, Veziroğlu intended to reenter
politics through leadership and sponsorship of the DBH in the mold of Cem
Boyner.

The political histories of these two independent initiatives overlapped
when the ABTM and DBH contacted one another before the election. They
joined in an alliance for the elections, such that independent Alevi candidates
would participate in the elections in the name of the DBH. Thus, the organi-
zational structure of the Alevi movement and financial power of Veziroğlu
came together under the name of the Democratic Peace Movement. After the
election, the movement would transform into a political party, which signified
the second time the politicization of Alevism would take the form of a political
party.[37]

After the decision that Alevi candidates would participate in the elections
as part of the DBH, its first national meeting was held in the Ankara Atatürk
Sports Hall on 25 November 1995 to officially announce the independent can-
didates. The advertisement of the meeting with full-paged newspaper spreads
and transportation of Alevi associations to the meeting via 500 buses and
twenty airplanes from Europe and Turkey[38] indicated the financial power of
Veziroğlu.[39]

The aim was to seat at least twenty deputies and to create a powerful block
within the parliament. Therefore, the movement undertook the decision to
put up thirty candidates in twenty-six provinces a fact also publicized with

---

35   Reha Çamuroğlu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 25.02.2015.
36   Mustafa Balbay, "Ali Haydar Veziroğlu," *Cumhuriyet*, 20.12.1995, 1.
37   "Demokratik Barış Hareketi," *Cumhuriyet*, 16.11.1995, 20.
38   "Biz de Varız," *Milliyet*, 26.11.1995, 29.
39   "Ecevit: Paranın Kaynağı Kuşkulu," *Cumhuriyet*, 25.11.1995, 4.

full-page newspaper advertisements.[40] After the declaration, the DBH organized a number of rallies for its electoral campaign; however, these meetings did not attract the expected attention. Moreover, the withdrawal of some of associational support from the DBH (namely the support of the AABF's) led to a reappraisal of the decision to put independent candidates up for election.[41]

After this reappraisal, the DBH decided not to participate in the 1995 elections. The decisions both to participate and to withdraw from the elections were made quickly and the final decision to withdraw generated speculation. Veziroğlu presumably thought that the independent candidate project would fail and this would put an end to the formation of party before it even began. Consequently, he withdrew his support so as not to face a possible election fiasco. Moreover, the CHP was in danger of remaining below the election threshold, an outcome to which the existence of independent Alevi candidates might contribute. Therefore, Veziroğlu avoided responsibility for possibility that the CHP may fail to pass the election threshold.[42]

As a result of rumors concerning the DBH's withdrawal from the elections, Ali Haydar Veziroğlu explained the decision via full-page newspaper advertisements. He stated that the DBH withdrew so as not to legitimize an unfair election process. However, the political activities of the DBH were not at the end; on the contrary, the DBH would continue its political activities within the framework of transforming from a movement into a party. To this end, the "Peace Party of Turkey" would have the objective to the develop of secular democracy in Turkey and to eliminate discrimination.[43] Thus, the withdrawal from the election did not mean the end of the DBH's political story, but the beginning of a new political phase.

---

40   *Milliyet,* 08.12.1995, p.13; *Cumhuriyet,* 07.12.1995, 15.

41   Şahhüseyinoğlu, *Alevi Örgütlerinin Tarihsel Süreci,* 88.

42   Reha Çamuroğlu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 25.02.2015.

43   "Demokratik Barış Hareketi Neden Niçin Nasıl?" *Cumhuriyet,* 19.12.1995, 7; "Demokratik Barış Hareketi Neden Niçin Nasıl?" *Milliyet,* 20.12.1995, 27.

§ 7.4 From Movement to Party: Democratic Peace Movement and the Peace Party

The DBH's withdrawal from the elections, and its subsequent decision to transformation into a party revitalized debates on the formation of an Alevi party for the associations. The PSAKD classically opposed the formation of an Alevi party. As a consequence of the DBH's withdrawal from the 1995 elections, the HBVKD pulled its support for the party formation process, as well.[44] In this regard, the AABF representing diaspora Alevis was the only association that supported formation of the party. Despite Alevi associations' reluctance regarding the DBH, some prominent figures in the Alevi movement, such as Selahattin Özel, Arif Sağ, Reha Çamuroğlu, Cafer Özer Koç, and Hıdır Temel supported the process. In other words, the affiliation between the DBH and the Alevi movement proceeded through personal figures rather than institutions.

Despite institutionalization in the form of a political party, the new party preferred to keep the name Democratic Peace Movement. When a case was filed to close the Democratic Peace Movement, a new party was formed with the name Peace Party in case of ruling to dissolve the movement. The change in the name was procedural - safeguarding against closure proceeding- and the ideological position of the party remained. In this chapter, I use both names with regard to the appropriate period of its history, but both names actually refer to the same party.

The party formation process was naturally based on the constitution of a party platform. This was written by a cadre consisting of Ali Haydar Veziroğlu, Taner Akçam, Reha Çamuroğlu, Cafer Özer Koç and Selami Şengül.[45] Reha Çamuroğlu and Cafer Özer Koç came from the Alevi movement. Çamuroğlu, who had been the editor of *Cem* and *Nefes* periodicals, had written several books about the history of Alevism. Cafer Özer Koç was member of the Semah Foundation. Both would participate in the political activities of the Democratic Peace Movement later on. Taner Akçam and Selami Şengül contributed to the constitution of party program professionally. Şengül was a writer on

---

44 Hüseyin Yıldırım, interview by the author, tape recording, Bodrum. 25.07.2011.

45 Reha Çamuroğlu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 25.02.2015.

economy for *Radikal* newspaper; Akçam was a leading figure of the Revolutionary Path (*Devrimci Yol*), a popular illegal leftist organization from before the 1980 military coup. He received a nine-year prison sentence in 1977, but escaped in 1978. He received political asylum in Germany and conducted academic research there. When he participated in the constitution of a party program, he had just received his doctorate with a dissertation entitled "Turkish Nationalism and Armenian Genocide."

This cadre wrote two important documents in July and August 1996 during the formation of the party. They entitled "Peace Project: Aims and Principles" (*Barış Projesi: Hedef ve İlkeler*) and "We are Turkey" (*Biz Türkiye'yiz*). These documents established the ideological framework of the party, corresponding to the party platform and a detailed analysis demonstrates the basic tendencies of the Democratic Peace Movement.

The party platform was based on three conceptual notions: political peace, economic peace and social peace. Political peace meant pluralist democracy on the basis of secularism, human rights, and rule of law. A new constitution became the core of political peace. Social peace referred to an increase in social and individual quality of life within the frameworks of gender equality, and the improvement of educational capacity and health care. Lastly, economic peace indicated the separation of economy and politics in the liberal sense. Equality of opportunity in the production process, distributive justice, efficient taxation and privatization were the key concepts of economic peace.[46]

It was clear that the concept of peace was not only the name of the political party, but shaped its political orientation. The party introduced itself as the peace project of Turkey in the context of a turbulent, post-Cold War period. The DBH promised to solve Turkey's problems deriving from tensions concerning the rise of political Islam and political violence related to Kurdish question. In this context, the DBH's guiding mottos became pluralism in politics, multiculturalism in social life and liberalism in economy.[47] The emphasis on pluralism and multiculturalism led the party to assess diversity as cultural richness. Thus, the DBH's main slogan was "our names are different, but our

---

46   Demokratik Barış Hareketi, *Biz Türkiyeyiz* (Ankara: 1996), 9-18.

47   Demokratik Barış Hareketi, *Barış Projesi: Hedef ve İlkeler* (Ankara: 1996), 8-12.

surname is Turkey." This slogan indicated that the DBH recognized sub-cultural identities under a political supra-identity, namely *Türkiyelilik,* to establish a peaceful Turkey beyond ethnic differences.[48]

The DBH's self-definition demonstrated that the party sprang out of Turkey's political crisis in the 1990s analyzed above. In this sense, five main tenets in the party platform came to the forefront: (1) decentralization of governance, (2) demilitarization in politics, (3) liberalism both politically and economically, (4) engaging with new social movements, and (5) the importance of the cultural rights.

The decentralization of governmental structure meant increasing local power by transferring of the authority concerning education and health care from central office to local governments. Thus, local governments would be empowered with regard to the administration of public hospital and universities. Furthermore, decentralization required increasing the efficiency of non-governmental organizations as buffers between local and state authorities.[49] Theoretically, reforms concerning decentralization were intended to encourage more active participation by citizens in to the policymaking.

Demilitarization was related to the DBH's legal reform promises. In this regard, the DBH promised to establish a new constitution based on full separation of powers and demilitarization. On one hand, the separation of powers required strengthening the legislature, limiting executive power, and providing for implied judicial independence. On the other hand, demilitarization implied the abolition of the State Security Court, Military Government Courts and the Anti-Terror Law; restricting the authority of the National Security Council; and placing the General Staff under the civilian authority of the Minister of National Defense.[50]

The most detailed part of the DBH's platform was its economic policies, which covered everything from the taxation of urban rents to market transactions. The DBH's economy policies was liberal and based on the full separation of the economy from politics, equality of opportunity in the distribution

---

48 *Biz Türkiyeyiz,* 7.

49 *Barış Projesi: Hedef ve İlkeler,* 32-35; 65-69.

50 *Ibid.,* 38-39.

as well as production, deregulation of the economy and privatization of state enterprises.[51] In this respect, the DBH's vision for the economy was in harmony with the Washington Consensus that shaped neoliberal globalization in the 1990s under the guidance of the World Bank and International Money Fund.

Thus far, the DBH's principles demonstrate its liberal character politically and economically. However, the emphasis on new social movements and cultural rights differentiated the DBH from other center-left political parties. The influence of new social movements on the party program can be seen in the context of topics such as ecology, gender, disability rights and immigrant rights. The DBH underscored the importance of an ecological policy on the basis of harmony between humans, nature, and society. Its gender policy was naturally based on equality of women and men, but promised positive discrimination in politics and employment. The rights of the disabled were discussed in terms of economic motivations and the party assumed positive preventive health services and education to provide integration of the disabled into the community. International migration became an important issue given the conditions of globalization. The DBH was the first political party to develop an independent policy regarding immigrant rights. Lobbying for dual citizenship for Turkish-origin emigrants was the cornerstone of the DBH's migrant policy. The migrant rights discourse of the DBH was shaped under the influence of diaspora Alevis who supported the formation of the DBH.[52]

The most distinctive part of the platform concerned cultural rights. The popular political discourse on cultural rights deeply influenced the DBH's political orientation. The program asserted that ethnic issues in Turkey mainly derived from a problematic concept of citizenship based on Sunni religion and Turkish ethnicity. The platform specifically dealt with three cultural groups: Alevis, Kurds, and non-Muslims. The Kurdish problem was assessed as a problem of economic development and identity to be solved by redefining of the relation between the state and the individual on the basis of human rights, by lifting the state of emergency, by legally allowing Kurdish- language education

---

51   Ibid., 43-58.

52   Ibid., 84- 99.

and television broadcasting, and by updating the Southeastern Anatolia Project.[53] The problems of non-Muslims concerned minority rights laid out by the Turkish legal system. Last but not least, the DBH stated that the Republic had provided Alevis with security of life, but not with religious freedom. Thus, the DBH suggested abolishing the Directorate of Religious Affairs and compulsory religious courses as the solution to the Alevi question. In conclusion, the DBH believed that the ethnic problems of Turkey could only be resolved in the context of constitutional citizenship that recognized the cultural rights of all ethnic groups.[54] In this context, the DBH's slogan "Our names are different, but our surname is Turkey" indicates its multicultural conceptualization of constitutional citizenship.

It has been mentioned that the crisis of Turkish politics in the 1990s generated new alternatives such as the YDH and the ÖDP. In this regard, the DBH emerged as a liberal-left response to the crisis. In fact, there were many similarities between the DBH's platform and the political vision of popular Third Way discourses. The Third Way was a political position that advocated a review of social democratic principles under the conditions of neoliberalism and the demise of real socialism. Anthony Giddens, who was known as its theorist, defined the Third Way as "making left of center values count in a world undergoing profound change."[55] In this regard, the politics of the Third Way suggested reconnecting the state, market, and civil society within the conditions of neoliberalism, globalization, and information society.[56]

An analysis of Third Way debates exceeds the limits of this dissertation; however, its key concepts impacted the political principles of the DBH. "Democratization of democracy" on the basis of decentralization, an administrative role of for NGOs for an efficient governance, the right to information, and

---

53   The Southeastern Anatolian Project was a multi-sector, regional development program aimed at improving the economic conditions of the impoverished Southeastern region of Turkey. The scope of the project included agriculture, irrigation, hydroelectric power production, urban and rural infrastructure, forestry, education, and health.

54   *Ibid.,*112-125.

55   Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way and Its Critics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 163.

56   Anthony Giddens, "Introduction" in (ed.) Anthony Giddens, *The Global Third Way Debate* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), 6-8.

the reformation of the public sector on the basis of a social investment state instead of a social welfare state were basic principles of the Third Way that were incorporated into the platform of the DBH.[57]

Unlike Third Way policies, the DBH advocated relatively more liberal economic policies and stressed the importance of cultural rights. The latter indicated the influence of another popular discourse on the DBH: radical democracy. Radical democracy assumed that the left should deepen and expand liberal democracy in the direction of a radical, plural democracy. Thus, leftist politics should emphasize ontological differences in society to expand political possibilities.[58] In this respect, radical democracy proposed replacing class-based economic policies and state-centric political analyses with an emphasis on cultural identities in order to diversify the political sphere and expand political possibilities. Radical democratic discourse, which precluded universalist notions such as class and citizenship, paved the way for resting new social movements on the basis of identity polices. The DBH's emphasis on cultural rights to expand the realm of politics paralleled fundamental premises of radical democracy. So, under the influence of popular Third Way and radical democracy conceptualizations, the DBH defined itself ideologically as liberal left, which meant being liberal economically and leftist politically.[59]

After the preparation of the ideological platform, the DBH began conducting public relation campaigns to appeal to ordinary citizens. The term Americanization conceptually described the DBH's public relation campaigns. Heavy use of mass media for propaganda, carnivalization of meetings, and emphasis on presenting the image of the leader rather than on organizational networks were some elements of the Americanization of political campaigns.[60] The announcement of the foundation of the party under the headline of

---

57   For more detailed information about the Third Way debates, see. Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).

58   Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985).

59   *Türkiye Toplumsal Barış Projesi Yeniden Yapılandırma Programı* (Ankara: 1998), 163-164.

60   For more detailed information about the Americanization of political campaigns, see. David L. Swanson and Paolo Mancini (eds.) *Politics Media and Modern Democracy* (London: Greenwood, 1996).

"Peace Manifesto" in a full-page media advertisement,[61] the organization of a carnival attended by 40.000 to celebrate the transition from movement into a party in the 19 Mayıs Stadium in Ankara with the image of Ali Haydar Veziroğlu, and emphasis on his financial power instead of the movement's organizational capacity[62] indicated that the DBH had adopted American-style political campaigning.

The full-paged newspaper advertisements and stadium and sports arena meetings calculatingly overstated the political capacity of the party and motivated its supporters. Owing to the American-style campaign, the DBH succeeded in holding Turkey's attention during its formation process. Many news reports concerning the DBH ran in July and August 1996 in daily newspapers. However, this success, which mainly stemmed from the financial power of Ali Haydar Veziroğlu rather than the movement's political organization, did not enable the party to maintain such political dynamism in the years to follow.

After the stadium rally in Ankara, the first convention of the DBH took place in Abdi İpekçi Sports Hall. In this congress, Ali Haydar Veziroğlu, who promised not to be a candidate for leadership and wished to be succeeded by someone younger than forty years old, delegated party leadership to Dr. Mehmet Eti, a medical professor at Ege University.[63] Because Eti had not played any role in the formation process of the party and was unexpectedly appointed from above, his leadership created unrest within the party.[64] Veziroğlu considered Eti owing both to his academic scholarship and to the fact that he was not Alevi. Veziroğlu thereby hoped to send a political message that the DBH was not an Alevi party. The reluctance of appearing to be an Alevi party became the basic dilemma of the DBH.

In addition to unrest stemming from Eti's leadership, the DBH contended with another crisis that subordinated the question of leadership. A case filed by the prosecutor's office to the Supreme Appeals Court argued to close the

---

61   "Barış Bildirisi," *Milliyet*, 10.07.1996, 16-17.

62   "Demokratik Barış Hareketi Start Veriyor," *Milliyet*, 28.08.1996, 16.

63   "Demokratik Barış Hareketi Istanbul'dan Yola Çıktı," *Cumhuriyet*, 30.09.1996, 7.

64   Reha Çamuroğlu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 25.02.2015.

DBH on grounds that the party platform contradicts the Law on Political Parties.[65] The ruling of the Constitutional Court came after the DBH was accused of incorporating articles in its party platform that proposed to abolish the Directorate of Religious Affairs. The court regarded the article as contradictory to Turkey's Law on Political Parties, which stipulated that political parties couldn't challenge the position of the directorate.[66] Although the DBH carefully avoided appearance of being an Alevi party, the closure suit was filed on grounds that the party aimed to abolish the DRA, ironically. It was the most characteristically Alevi-oriented political demand of the DBH.

Defense of the DBH was based on the principle of the separation of state and religion. The party believed that the state's intervention in religious affairs via the directorate violated its secular mandate. Therefore, opposition to the status of the DRA derived from the party's adherence to the principle of secularism.[67] This defense may not have helped the DBH win the case, and Veziroğlu decided to organize a new party under the name Peace Party.[68] The founding members of the DBH, including Ali Haydar Veziroğlu, resigned from that party and joined the newly formed Peace Party, instead. Despite the formation of the BP, the DBH maintained its legal status under the leadership of Turgut İnal; however, its de facto political activity was terminated.[69]

Although the cadre was transferred from the DBH to the BP, the most important change was the leadership of Ali Haydar Veziroğlu; problems concerning the leadership of Mehmet Eti were overcome by means of Veziroğlu's charisma. After the formation of the BP, *Hedef ve İlkeler* was updated under the headline: "Peace Party: Main Perspectives" (*Barış Partisi: Temel Yaklaşımlar*) *as a de facto* platform of the new party.[70] The most significant revision was the replacement of the DRA's abolition with its reformation.

---

65   "DBH için Kapatma Davası Açıldı," *Milliyet*, 26.10.1996, 16.

66   "DBH'ye Kapatma Davası," *Cumhuriyet*, 13.11.1996, 5.

67   "DBH'den kapatma davasına itiraz," *Milliyet*, 27.10.1996, 16.

68   "DBH Adını Değiştiriyor," *Cumhuriyet,* 24.11.1996, 5.

69   "DBH'den BP'ye," *Milliyet,* 11.12.1996, 18.

70   *Barış Partisi: Temel Yaklaşımlar* (Ankara: 1996).

After the party overcame legal obstacles, it continued its political activities.[71] The BP held public demonstrations and conducted political campaigns; however, its political effect was limited. Its political activities were influential in only two areas: cultural policies and clean politics campaign after the Susurluk incident.

The most distinctive political discourse of the BP was the multicultural aiming integration of minorities and different ethnic groups into mainstream politics. The emphasis on the cultural rights of ethnic groups, namely Kurds and Alevis, differentiated the BP from its contemporaries. The BP's policy on the Kurdish question was based on constitutional representation of subcultures in the context of non-ethnic citizenship (on the basis of *Türkiyelilik)*, recognition of cultural rights such a mother tongue s education and Kurdish television broadcasting, and socio-economic development in Eastern Anatolia.[72] It solutions to the Kurdish question were more liberal than those of other center-left parties.

In addition to the party platform, the BP held public demonstrations to underscore the importance of a democratic solution to the Kurdish question. When the BP attempted to organize a political rally in Diyarbakır in 1996, the State of Emergency Regional Governorate denied permission.[73] The meeting was organized in Şanlıurfa instead with the attendance of 20 thousand people and the motto of "*Analar Ağlamasın*" ("Do not let the mothers cry").[74] When asked, Selahattin Özel, an influential figure of Alevi politics and 1999 BP candidate from Amasya, assessed the Urfa meeting as one of the most prominent political activities by the BP.[75] Interest in the BP in Kurdish provinces was not limited to its early period; the party started its election campaign for the 1999 elections in Diyarbakır, symbolically indicating the importance of Kurdish votes for the BP.[76]

---

71 The Constitutional Court dismissed the closure case filed against the DBH. It then institutionally partook in the BP.

72 "Türkiyelilik Bilinci Yaratmalıyız," *Cumhuriyet*, 13.12.1998, 6.

73 "Mitinge Engelleme," *Cumhuriyet*, 14.11.1996, 5.

74 "BP'nin Urfa Mitingi," *Milliyet*, 23.12.1996, 13.

75 Selahattin Özel, interview by the author, tape recording, Izmir, 06.09.2011.

76 "Türkiyelilik Bilinci Yaratmalıyız," *Cumhuriyet*, 13.12.1998, 6.

The BP's political discourse on Alevis was more subtle than its views on the Kurdish question. Due to the fact that the BP had been labeled as Alevi party, it was cautious about the Alevi question. Needless to say, the basic demands of Alevi associations - such as the abolition of compulsory religious courses and reformation of the DRA - were included in the party platform. Moreover, the BP contributed to the political activities of Alevi associations, keeping its relation with Alevis alive. The Hacıbektaş Veli Peace, Comradeship, and Love March (*Hacıbektaş Veli Barış, Dostluk ve Sevgi Yürüyüşü*) in 1998 was one such activity. The march started on 10 August in Trabzon, where the eleventh trial concerning the Gazi events was pending, and passed through Ordu, Samsun, Çorum, Ankara, and Kırşehir, ending in Hacıbektaş on 16 August. The end of the march was tethered to commemoration ceremonies in Hacıbektaş, which were held between 16 and 18 August. The BP supported this march along with a number of other political parties like the ÖDP and the Labor Party, as well as non-governmental organizations such as KESK and DİSK.[77]

In addition to cultural politics, the campaign for clean politics was another significant project of the BP. Demands for clean politics became important after an incident revealing illegal links and processes within state structures. On 3 November 1996, the victims of a car accident in Susurluk, included Hüseyin Kocadağ, the deputy chief of Istanbul Police department; Sedat Bucak, a deputy of the DYP, and a leader of an influential Kurdish clan; and Abdullah Çatlı, a former, ultra-nationalist, rightist militant and highly sought fugitive. Following the accident and discussions of the "deep state," influential protest campaigns for clean politics were initiated. The most effective was "One Minute of Darkness for Perpetual Light" (*Sürekli Aydınlık için Bir Dakika Karanlık*), in which people switched off their electricity for a minute every evening at 9 pm.

Due to the fact that coalition government was led by the DYP and the RP, the clean politics campaigns targeted these political parties. Owing to the RP's strong reaction,[78] the clean politics discourse amalgamated with secularism

---

77 "Alevilerin Tarihi Yürüyüşü," *Alevilerin Sesi* 28 (August 1998): 15-35.

78 After the *"Sürekli Aydınlık için Bir Dakika Karanlık"* campaign and public demonstrations, Necmettin Erbakan accused protesters of being parasites and conspirators. Furthermore,

demands. The BP, which prioritized the "deep state" and political fundamentalism as Turkey's basic problems,[79] actively participated in the clean politics campaigns. To this end, the BP supported both a march for secularism to Anıtkabir organized by the *Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği*[80] and a meeting organized by the ÖDP entitled "Gangs or Democracy."[81] The most spectacular campaign of the BP in the context of the clean politics campaign was the organization of a countrywide tour of a truckload of counterfeit money, symbolizing the quantity involved in crimes of state corruption.[82]

Despite the BP's attempt to direct Turkish politics by engaging debates on sociological minorities and active participation in the clean politics campaign, its political influence remained limited. The BP neither set board an influential political agenda nor generated newsworthy political activities during its political life. However, the 1999 early elections gave the BP an opportunity to more actively participate in Turkish political life; the 10 percent election threshold enabled the BP to increase political influence through electoral alliances.

§ 7.5   The Peace Party in the 1999 Elections: Beginning of the End

In Turkey, the high election threshold, which disallows small parties from being represented in parliament, determines party politics before the election process. Since the Turkish military blamed the instability of the 1970s on the inability of parties in parliament to form majority governments, an Electoral Law (Law 2839, Section 33) enacted after the 1980 military coup stipulated that a party must obtain at least 10 percent of the votes cast at the national level in order to participate in the distribution of parliamentary seats. The justification for the high threshold was to prevent unstable, multi-party coalitions like

---

Şevket Kazan said that the people, who were protesting the illegal links within the state by switching of their electricity, were playing "*mum söndü*" (candle blown out). In this speech, Şevket Kazan implication on the slander of candle blown out indicated that the Alevis engage in free sexual intercourse within the family through the practice of blowing out of candle.

79   *Milliyet*, 04.03.1997, 17.

80   "Anıtkabir Cumhuriyet Sevgisiyle Kucaklandı," *Cumhuriyet*, 25.10.1998, 1.

81   *Milliyet*, 14.04.1997, 27.

82   Hıdır Temel, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, 28.08.2011.

those of the 1970s.[83] The election threshold ideologically targeted socialist, Islamist, and pro-Kurdish political parties, ostensibly stabilizing the parliamentary system by keeping out so-called marginal parties. Although the RP succeeded in passing the 10 percent election threshold in the 1990s, socialist and pro-Kurdish parties could not. Moreover, the level, which is the highest among European countries, disallowed newly formed and small parties from being represented in the assembly. It compelled small parties to establish electoral alliances with other small, ideologically similar parties to present themselves as more viable, powerful political alternatives.

To this end, before the election process in 1997, the YDH annulled itself and joined the BP. When Cem Boyner abdicated the YDH leadership due its poor election results in 1995, the YDH lost all political significance.[84] Its merger with the BP reflected not only the influence of the election threshold on small parties, but also the ideological parallels between these parties on the basis of economic and political liberalism. Specifically, liberal economic policies and demilitarization became the cornerstone of their alliance.

Due to the high election threshold, the BP attempted to affiliate with left-wing political parties in the 1999 elections. In fact, the clean politics campaigns led the BP to establish closer relations with other left wing political parties and paved the way for electoral alliances. The BP specifically attempted to establish alliances the ÖDP and the CHP.

Although the ÖDP and the BP reached consensus on the necessity of an electoral alliance, they disagreed as to which party would participate in elections and which would withdraw and campaign in the name of the other party. Due to the fact that both insisted on participating in the elections under their own names, the attempts to establish an alliance failed.[85]

After this failure, the BP negotiated with the CHP. Due to the fact that the CHP was in danger of remaining below the threshold in 1999, it was open to negotiations with the BP. In the end, the parties reached a consensus on the

---

83 Sinan Aikin, "Underrepresentative Democracy: Why Turkey Should Abandon Europe's Highest Electoral Threshold," *Washington University Global Studies Law Review* 10:2 (2011): 351.

84 *Milliyet*, 03.11.1997, 16.

85 Reha Çamuroğlu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 25.02.2015.

format of the alliance in principle: the BP would not participate in the 1999 elections and a number of its candidates would be added to the lists nominees from the CHP. However, the parties disagreed about the number of BP candidates. The CHP allocated eight chairs for the BP, but the BP demanded twenty chairs in order to establish a parliamentary block. As a consequence, attempts to establish an electoral alliance between the CHP and the BP failed,[86] and the BP participated in the 1999 elections without forming any electoral alliance.

After the decision to participate in the elections independently, the party started its electoral campaign. Two important documents reflected the political position of the BP during the campaign: "The Restructuring Program of Turkey's Social Peace Project" (*Türkiye Toplumsal Barış Projesi Yeniden Yapılanma Programı*) and the Election Bulletin. In fact, these two documents were updated versions of "*Barış Projesi: Hedef ve İlkeler*" analyzed in detail above. These documents enabled the BP to re-elaborate conceptualizations of political, social, and economic peace on the basis of pluralism, multiculturalism, and liberalism.

Political peace required the reformation of Turkey's election system, a re-assessment of citizenship, decentralization, and demilitarization. The BP promised proportional representation without a threshold and the abolition of legislative immunity.[87] Decentralization entailed the empowerment of local governments economically and politically. Thus, local governments would take over responsibility for the educational services and healthcare, and they would have the power to tax to gain financial autonomy independent of the central government.[88]

The reformation of the conceptualization of citizenship on the basis of non-ethnic Turkeyification (*Türkiyelilik*) instead of current ethnically Turk, and religiously Sunni form of citizenship was another component of the political peace.[89] On one hand, the BP defended the restoration of the DRA on the condition that all religious groups have representation. Moreover, a change

---

86   *Milliyet*, 21.02.1999, 17.

87   *Türkiye Toplumsal Barış Projesi Yeniden Yapılanma Programı* (Ankara: 1998), 34.

88   *Barış Partisi Seçim Bildirgesi* (Ankara: 1999), 12.

89   *Ibid,*, 11.

of the status of religious courses from compulsory to elective and the representation of Alevism in the curriculum of elective religious courses were among the promises of the BP that largely paralleled the demands of Alevi associations.[90] On the other hand, the BP's Kurdish policy consisted of the abolition of the State of Emergency regime and the system of village guardship,[91] the return of victims of forced migration to their villages, legalization of Kurdish broadcasting, and economic development projects in the Southeastern Anatolia.[92]

The last component of political peace was demilitarization that is a decrease in the power of military forces in policymaking. In this respect, the BP suggested the abolition of military administrative courts and State Security Court, rendering of the Chief of General Staff's report to the Defense Ministry, turning the National Security Council into a consultative institution, and the transition to a professional military.[93] It should be underscored that a military memorandum on 28 February 1997 increased the role of the military in Turkish politics. Given the political conditions, the BP's reform suggestions on demilitarization were relatively progressive.

The BP's economic peace project was based on liberalism. The separation of the economy from politics and deregulation in the neoliberal sense were crucial to the BP's conceptualization of economic peace. The privatization of state enterprises, formation of a free trade area with neighboring countries, adoption of export-led international trade, autonomy of the central bank to stabilize financial policies, and a decrease in the rate of urbanization by means

---

90   *Ibid.,* 17.

91   The system of village guardship was set up under the direction of Turgut Özal in 1985. It was to act as a local militia in the villages against attacks of the PKK. In fact, the village guardship system was intended to help the Turkish army as an additional force that knew the region and the Kurdish language and could assist military operations against the PKK. The number of the village guards increased to 90 thousand in the 1990s. Moreover, they were charged with being involved in extrajuridical executions, extortion, destructions of houses and drug smuggling. See Evren Balta Paker and İsmet Akça, "Askerler, Köylüler ve Paramiliter Güçler: Türkiye'de Köy Koruculuğu Sistemi," *Toplum ve Bilim* 126 (2013): 7-34.

92   *Türkiye Toplumsal Barış Projesi Yeniden Yapılanma Programı*, 45.

93   *Barış Partisi Seçim Bildirgesi*, 14-15; *Türkiye Toplumsal Barış Projesi Yeniden Yapılanma Programı*, 27-28.

of urban-village projects were the elements of the economic peace project.[94] Lastly, an *ad hoc* solidarity tax for social peace, which targeted national debt, was included in the Election Bulletin. The progressive solidarity tax would be imposed on personal income.[95]

The BP's social peace project rested on the reformation of the social security system. In this context, the establishment of Social Security Insurance, Health Insurance, Education Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, and Social Solidarity Insurance rounded out the social security spending as part of social peace project of the Peace Party. Moreover, the unification of the Social Insurance Institution, Pension Fund for Civil Servants, and Social Security Institution for the Self-Employed was another important constituent of the BP's social peace project.[96] In addition to the social security system, educational reform was another constituent of social peace. In this respect, the BP promised to increase Turkey's eight years of compulsory education to eleven years and dispense with the Council of Higher Education in order to establish the financial and administrative autonomy of universities.[97]

The election process was based on the concretization of the conceptualizations of social, economic and political peace within the framework of pluralism, multiculturalism, neoliberalism, demilitarization, and decentralization. Despite its challenging Election Bulletin, the BP was unable to attract the attention of the public. Rising nationalism regarding the Kurdish question and the debates on political Islam after the 28 February military memorandum dominated the electoral campaign. More concretely, the ban of the RP from politics, the foundation of the Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi* – FP), the capture of Abdullah Öcalan, two months before the election, and the risk that the CHP would not exceed the election threshold were the major topics. Therefore, the BP's election campaign did not enjoy wide media coverage.

Former candidates of the BP, who were interviewed, stated that they were aware the BP would likely fail to pass the election threshold; therefore, the party did not conduct a strong campaign before the elections. Nevertheless,

---

94   *Türkiye Toplumsal Barış Projesi Yeniden Yapılanma Programı,* 93-143.

95   *Barış Partisi Seçim Bildirgesi,* 27.

96   Ibid., 21-25.

97   *Türkiye Toplumsal Barış Projesi Yeniden Yapılanma Programı,* 67-70.

the election results were a disappointment. Elections held on 18 April 1999 combined local and parliamentary elections for the first time in Turkish history. The BP, which participated in fifty-seven provinces, and only 78.922 votes - corresponding to 0.25 percent of the total votes. Local election results were worse than that of the general election. The total number BP voters in the provincial council election was 67,448 (0.21 percent of the total vote). Moreover, the BP's mayoral candidates one only 53.614 in total. The party succeeded in winning the mayorship in six small towns from of Adıyaman, Tokat, Iğdır, Hatay, Maraş, and Kırıkkale.

Table 7.1   BP's Votes for 1999 General Election

PROVINCE	VOTES	%	PROVINCE	VOTES	%
Adana	2286	0.3	Kırklareli	448	0.2
Adıyaman	1810	0.8	Kırşehir	438	0.4
Amasya	1082	0.5	Kocaeli	1465	0.2
Ankara	3886	0.2	Malatya	1344	0.4
Antalya	2217	0.3	Manisa	1796	0.3
Artvin	371	0.3	Maraş	1453	0.3
Aydın	1196	0.2	Mardin	512	0.2
Balıkesir	1576	0.2	Muğla	847	0.2
Bilecik	238	0.2	Muş	444	0.4
Bingöl	327	0.4	Nevşehir	465	0.3
Bolu	975	0.3	Niğde	648	0.4
Burdur	427	0.3	Ordu	1749	0.5
Bursa	1764	0.2	Sakarya	866	0.2
Çanakkale	629	0.2	Samsun	1957	0.3
Çankırı	323	0.3	Siirt	258	0.3
Çorum	1870	0.6	Sinop	772	0.7
Diyarbakır	2136	0.5	Tokat	4134	1.2
Edirne	1145	0.5	Tunceli	715	1.8
Elazığ	1000	0.4	Urfa	1241	0.3
Erzincan	858	0.8	Van	1482	0.6
Eskişehir	647	0.2	Kırıkkale	784	0.5

Gaziantep	1348	0.3	Batman	516	0.4
Hakkari	420	0.7	Bartın	454	0.4
Hatay	3067	0.5	Ardahan	653	1.1
Mersin	2071	0.3	Iğdır	351	0.6
Istanbul	11927	0.2	Yalova	187	0.2
İzmir	4980	0.3	Kilis	133	0.3
Kars	770	0.6	Osmaniye	552	0.3
Kayseri	915	0.2	Abroad	117	0.2

SOURCE: Türkiye İstatistik Enstitüsü Milletvekili Genel Seçimi İl ve İlçe Sonuçları, 2011, 2007, 2002, 1999, 1995, 1991 (Ankara: June 2012)

The performance of the BP in the election was too poor to allow a meaningful social analysis of the regional distribution of the limited number of votes it obtained. Percentages of the BP's total votes were approximately equal in all electoral districts. The party's votes in the regions where Alevis were living - such as Çorum, Amasya, Adıyaman and Hatay - were above its national average; however, the difference was negligible. The BP could only passed 1 percent in three cities: Tunceli, Tokat and Ardahan. The party's relative success in Tunceli and Tokat might have been because of the size of the Alevi population. On one hand, Tunceli was the only city whose population consisted mainly of (Kurdish) Alevis; the BP's liberal discourse on ethnic groups might have had limited influence on Tunceli's Kurdish Alevi population. On the other hand, Tokat had a considerable Alevi population, as well. The BP's Tokat candidate, Hıdır Temel, was from an influential *dede* lineage there. His candidacy might have contributed to the BP's votes.

The election result was a disappointment and the failure was analyzed by the party delegation, which concluded that Turkish public did not trust the Peace Party. In this context, Ali Haydar Veziroğlu declared that the BP would dissolve itself and its assets would be given to the Ministry of Education.[98] It spelled the end of the BP's political history; however, its political failure deserves analysis to comprehend the dynamics of Alevi politicization.

---

98   "BP Kendi Kendini Kapattı," *Cumhuriyet,* 11.05.1999, 5.

§ 7.6 Failure of the Peace Party

The failure of the BP can be discussed along three dimensions. The first dimension concerned the Turkish electoral system independent of the BP's policies – that is to say, the 10 percent election threshold. Because of this high threshold, voters tend to opt for popular parties that may be their second choice ideologically in order not to waste their votes. BP candidates interviewed in the context of this dissertation underscored that during their election campaigns in Amasya and Tokat, voters told them that the political discourse of the BP appealed to them, but they would not vote for the party because of the threshold.[99] In addition to the BP, the threshold impaired other small, left-wing parties such as the ÖDP, the People's Democracy Party (*Halkın Demokrasi Partisi* – HADEP), and the Labor Party (*İşçi Partisi* – İP). However, the BP's political failure cannot be solely explained by the election threshold. The low level of support for the BP (just 0.25 %) indicates that its failure mainly stemmed from additional factors having to do with the BP's political positions and the nature of the processes of Alevi politicization.

The second analytical unit for explaining the BP's failure concerns the BP's political orientation. The aforementioned political history indicates that the BP was grounded on the demographic strength of Alevis and the financial power of Ali Haydar Veziroğlu. Paradoxically, these became the Achilles' heel for the BP. An examination of the multidimensional relation of Alevis, Veziroğlu, and the Peace Party helps explain the political failure of the BP.[100]

It should be recalled that Ali Haydar Veziroğlu did not remain the leader of the BP, but was succeeded by Mehmet Eti and Abidin Özgünay.[101] The BP's

---

99 Hıdır Temel, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, 28.08.2011; Selahattin Özel, interview by the author, tape recording, İzmir, 06.09.2011.

100 On that point, thanks or due to Reha Çamuroğlu, whose personal observations led me to a more sophisticated argument on the failure of the BP.

101 Abidin Özgünay was a veteran activist in the Alevi movement since the 1960s. Moreover, he was a prominent figure of the Cem Foundation and chief editor of the *Cem* periodical in the 1990s. His leadership might have encouraged the party to establish a close relation with the Alevi movement; however, he was not able to continue in a leadership role due to health problems.

problem did not stem from Veziroğlu's leadership, but from his sponsorship. Due to the fact that Veziroğlu financed the party from the beginning to the end, he was more than a political leader. Just before the elections, he declared that he had spent 15 trillion Turkish liras on behalf of the Peace Party, including the inauguration of the BP's provincial headquarters; their decoration; the preparation, publishing, and announcement of party documents; and organization of stadium festivals and meetings.[102] Veziroğlu legitimized his sponsorship, arguing that he spent money earned in Turkey for Turkey, with a sense of social responsibility for his country's future as a political responsibility tax.[103]

Due to the financial contributions of Veziroğlu, his name and wealth subordinated the BP's political activities and ideological positions. The organizational structure of the party rested on Veziroğlu's financial power instead of on initiatives of its political supporters; therefore, the party had provincial organizations in cities where it had no voter base. On the other hand, Veziroğlu's expenses attracted pragmatic politicians who aimed to benefit from his wealth. Some politicians, who were unable to succeed in other center-left parties, participated in the political activities of the BP. In this regard, the relation between the BP and its supporters, which was established on the basis of pragmatism was artificial. Despite the strong, liberal-left ideological stance, the BP could not establish an ideological affiliation with its supporters.

The BP indirectly turned into another of Veziroğlu's holdings, regardless of his intentions for it. The party appeared to exemplify a model of political party based on a firm. This type of party is usually founded under conditions of political crisis where the power of traditional political parties has declined, as was the case in Turkey in the 1990s. The weakening of party bureaucracy, the effective role of technical experts working under contract for the benefit of party politics, and the vital role of a charismatic leader are among the main characteristics of this party model. When role of professional experts (namely Taner Akçam and Serdar Şengül) in the process of making party ideology and policy and Veziroğlu's position are considered, the BP can be easily likened to

---

102   *Milliyet*, 14.02.1999, 18.

103   "Interview with Ali Haydar Veziroğlu: Taban Bize Kayıyor," *Milliyet,* 12.08.1996, 15.

a business entity.[104] Due to the fact that political parties based on business firm model focus on electoral victories similar to profit-oriented companies, bad election results finish their political history, as the BP exemplifies. In this respect, the BP categorically recalls the YDH with respect to leadership structures and the end of their political histories following bad election results.

Nevertheless, labeling the Peace Party as a business firm disallows a categorical explanation of the BP. The party's relation to the Alevi community differentiates the BP from classical business firm parties. For instance, the composition of the cadre that prepared the party program indicates the hybrid character of the Peace Party. In addition to professionals who contributed to writing the platform – which is in line with its classification as business firm party – independent figures from the Alevi movement such as Reha Çamuroğlu and Cafer Özer Koç were participants in the formation of the party platform. The cadre symbolically demonstrates that the party was a synthesis of ethnic and business firm models.

In fact, an analysis of party program disallows the labeling of the BP as an Alevi party. The BP employed a multicultural discourse for integrating various cultural groups into mainstream society, including Alevis. Although the party program included basic demands of Alevi associations – such as the reformation of the DRA and the abolition of compulsory religious courses – it also incorporated basic demands of the Kurdish movement – such as mother-tongue education and television broadcasting. In this regard, the BP was programmatically a liberal catch-all party that emphasized cultural rights instead of an Alevi-oriented, ethnic party.

Nevertheless, the public never backed away from labeling the BP as an Alevi party. The DBH was institutionally based on the ABTM before the 1995 elections. The decision to participate in the 1995 elections with independent candidates was justifiably assessed as Alevi involvement in Turkish politics in the framework of Alevi identity. The closure proceedings against the DBH filed on the grounds that the party aimed to dismantle the DRA was one a main demand of Alevi associations. In this context, the public associated the BP with Alevism and labeled the party as such.

---

104   Jonathan Hopkin and Catherina Paolucci, "The Business Firm Model of Party Organisation: Cases from Spain and Italy," *European Journal of Political Research* 35 (1999): 331-332.

In response to this presupposition, Ali Haydar Veziroğlu attempted to prove that the party was a peace project for all of Turkey and paid particular attention to making Sunnis within the party administration visible in order to change the party's image. This explains the choice of Mehmet Eti, a Sunni medical doctor, as the first chairman of the party. Moreover, the BP sought to remain institutionally disconnected with the Alevi associations and to reduce the use of symbols related to Alevism. Veziroğlu's attempts to disassociate the party from Alevism made the BP similar to other center-left parties in the Alevi community. Therefore, Alevis preferred to vote either for the DSP or the CHP; both of these represented the center-left more strongly than the BP.[105]

The basic dilemma of the BP was whether to be an Alevi party or not. As long as the BP attempted not to appear Alevi, it steered away from Alevis; nonetheless, it was unable to overcome that image in the eyes of non-Alevis. As a result of this dilemma, the BP accomplished neither; it was not an Alevi party, nor was it a successful peace for Turkey. Reha Çamuroğlu, the BP's Manisa candidate, and Selahattin Özel, the Amasya candidate, claimed that had the BP owned its Alevi identity, it might have played a more important role in Turkish politics by means of its demographic base.[106]

The domination of Ali Haydar Veziroğlu's financial power over the BP's ideological position and the party's attempts to disassociate itself from Alevis led to its failure. The 10 percent election threshold was another dynamic determining the party's failure. However, these two analytical units are incapable of incorporating and scrutinizing the politicization Alevism, which is the third factor waiting the BP's failure.

Turkish politics witnessed the politicization of ethnic and religious identities in the 1990s. On one hand, the RP – as an agent of political Islam – became the most popular party in Turkey; on the other, votes for pro-Kurdish political parties have gradually increased in each election. The formation of the BP as an Alevi party was part of the shifts from political ideology to identity experience in Turkish politics in this decade. Nevertheless, the BP – as a

---

105   Selahattin Özel, interview by the author, tape recording, İzmir, 06.09.2011; Reha Çamuroğlu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 25.02.2015.

106   Selahattin Özel, interview by the author, tape recording, İzmir, 06.09.2011; Reha Çamuroğlu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 25.02.2015.

contemporary Alevi party – was unable to secure political power in proportion to the size of the Alevi population.

In this sense, the BP's failure resulted not only from the election threshold and intraparty tensions, but from the politicization dynamics of Alevism. Unlike Islamist or pro-Kurdish political parties, Alevi-oriented political parties could not succeed in securing the support of Alevi voters. While Alevi associations achieved their mission of bringing the Alevi question to the public sphere and public debates in the 1990s, the BP was not able to attract the attention of Alevi voters. Given the survival of Alevi associations as the civil agents of the Alevi politics, why did the Peace Party fail as a political agent of the Alevi movement?

Previous chapters have underscored the pluralist, heterodox character of Alevism, which made it impossible to present it as a rigidly defined entity. In the absence of a shared, unambiguous definition of Alevism, its politicization within the context of a political party was difficult. The difficulty of presenting Alevism as a definite religious or ethnic culture hindered the political mobilization of masses around a common cultural identity. As "an identity movement without identity," Alevism is at a disadvantage in the realm of party politics vis-à-vis Sunni and ethnic Kurdish movements.

While the heterodox character of Alevism created an obstacle to mobilization for political projects, the experience of being a minority under attack nevertheless triggered the formation of short-lived Alevi parties. The debates around the formation of an Alevi party just after the Sivas massacre indicated the relation between Alevi massacres and an Alevi party. The traumas of the Sivas massacre and the Gazi events clearly paved the way for the formation of the Peace Party. Nevertheless, the fear of suffering future massacres kept Alevis from organizing politically on the basis of Alevi culture in the long run. Arguments discussed in the fifth chapter are helpful to comprehend the politicization dynamics of Alevism and to analyze the BP's failure.

Due to the ambivalence of Alevism, the boundaries between Alevism and Sunnism remain blurred. Although Alevis are outside orthodox Sunni Islam, they are not classical unbelievers due to their heterodox belief system. In this respect, the co-existence of heterodox Alevis and orthodox Sunnis led to the former's being labeled as uncategorizable, undefined, nonconformist, and heterodox others positioned outside of the order of classical Islam. Therefore, the

boundaries of Alevism were drawn by non-Alevis who labeled them as unbelievers, traitors, or communists. Historical massacres in the sixteenth century, in the 1930s, in the 1970s, and in the 1990s provided a historical continuity for Alevi identity. Despite the liquidity of the definition of Alevism, massacres became the stable elements of Alevi history. Therefore, the fear of suffering potential massacres is one of the main dynamics of Alevi politicization in a conjuncture marked by the Madımak massacre.

In this context, the politicization dynamism of Alevism stems both from the heterodox cosmology of Alevism – theoretically – and from massacres – historically. Moreover, the geographical distribution of Alevi populations is the third component of the Alevi politicization structure. On one hand, Alevis are demographically a minority group the population of which is estimated as one-sixth of Turkey's overall population. Unlike Kurds, Alevis do not constitute the majority in any given region of the country. In other words, except for Tunceli, Alevis are the minority wherever they live together with Sunnis. Thus, an Alevi-oriented party has neither had a chance to come to power locally nor nationally. In this context, Alevis concluded that their appearance in the form of a politicized Alevi identity made them targets for violent assault, such as those experienced in the late 1970s or in Sivas (1993). Although Alevi massacres triggered the formation process of short-term Alevi parties as a reaction, Alevis keep their distance from Alevi parties in order to avoid possible massacres.

In this context, the ambivalence of Alevism, the fear of prospective massacres, and their geographical distribution led Alevis to organize around universal political ideologies rather than around an independent Alevi culture. Instead of the particularization of their cultural identity in a multicultural sense, Alevi associations preferred to adhere to universal principles such as citizenship or secularism. An egalitarian conceptualization of citizenship within the framework of a secular republic has been regarded as the only way to overcome the historical experience of victimhood. Thus, Alevi politics has dissolved Alevism as a cultural identity into a universal conceptualization of citizenship.

The survival of Alevi associations and the failure of the Peace Party provide us the elements to decipher the codes of Alevi politicization, which was based on politicization without specific reference to Alevi culture. However, it

should be noted that this political position cannot be said to characterize all agents of Alevi politics. Despite the hegemony of the egalitarian citizenship discourse among Alevi associations, conflicts between the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD demonstrate that there have been continuing tensions within the movement due to the existence of incompatible trends of focusing on Alevi religious identity and organizing politically around egalitarian citizenship.

This tension, which points to the complex relationship of culture to politics, is clearly revealed in the analysis of the politicization of Alevism presented in this dissertation. The failure of the BP completes the analysis by highlighting the limits of identity-based political mobilization, which in the case of Alevism, manifested itself in the fairly successful organizational activities of associations but was unable to generate popular support for a political party.

8

Conclusion

This dissertation scrutinized the dynamics of the politicization of Alevism in the 1990s. On one hand, the dissertation contextualized the politicization of Alevism with reference to global transformations of politics in this period. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the widespread questioning of the basic premises of modernity radically transformed the realm of politics all over the world, and political movements began to be organized around cultural identities. On the other hand, the dissertation discussed the rise of the Alevi movement with reference to Turkish politics in the 1990s. The political-legal system created by the military coup of 1980 was weakened in the 1990s. More importantly, the demise of the Soviet Union and a transformed language of politics were reflected within Turkish politics in the forms of a rise of political Islam and the Kurdish movement. In this respect, the Alevi identity movement, which was part of the same process, attempted to integrate into Turkish politics through its agents, of which Alevi associations and the Peace Party were examined.

The politicization of Alevism went hand-in-hand with urbanization. Urbanization dissolved traditional Alevism, based on isolated rural life in a communal order. The traditional institutions and social bases of Alevism, which can only function in isolated, face-to-face societies, were lost given urban conditions. Alevism began to be politicized in the context of urbanization; therefore, the history of the politicization of Alevism can be dated back to the 1960s. However, despite the existence of an Alevi-oriented political party – the Unity

Party (of Turkey) – which existed from 1966 to 1980, Alevism was not politicized in a way that engendered an independent identity movement in the 1960s and 1970s.

After the first two chapters introduce the frame of analysis and the theoretical literature with which the study engages, Chapter 3 examines the politicization of Alevism before the age of identity using the term, "latent politicization," which indicates not the politicization of Alevism as an identity, but the politicization of Alevis as individuals. In the 1960s and 1970s, Alevism was "latently" politicized through its relationship with leftist politics. At one level, this chapter analyzed the Alevis' relationship with the CHP as one largely defined by their favorable view of the secularist policies of the early Republican governments and by the populist discourse of Bülent Ecevit. At another level, the affiliation between Alevis and socialist movements is examined with reference to overlap between the historical oppression of Alevism by political authorities and the way Alevis were positioned to contribute to the objectives of socialist movements. The chapter also discussed the Unity Party (of Turkey) as an Alevi party to which the community nevertheless remained largely indifferent, showing that the politicization of Alevism in this period proceeded without direct reference to Alevi cultural identity.

The latent politicization of Alevism is discussed to argue that the language of the politics in Turkey in the 1970s did not allow identity politics based on an independent cultural identity. Identity politics require the politicization of culture, which is related to debates on multiculturalism. The appearance of an Alevi movement on the basis of an independent cultural, religious identity would be experienced in the 1990s.

The demise of the Soviet Union reduced the importance of economy-based class politics. Furthermore, postmodern criticism of the metanarratives of modernity paved the way for the promotion of cultural diversity vis-à-vis universalistic metanarratives. As the focus of struggles for equality and justice shifted from economic inequality to cultural forms of domination and oppression, ethnic, religious, cultural, and sexual identity-based politics became dominant in the 1990s.

In this context, identity became a keyword in politics. Identity politics referred to the politicization of group identities where the basis of the common

identity is claimed to be cultural. In parallel with identity politics, multicultural approaches insist that being culturally recognized is the necessary condition for attaining an undistorted subjectivity and full participation in sociopolitical life. Culture was said to provide the basis of self-respect and social security as well as the context of individuals' choices concerning meaningful ways of life. In this respect, multiculturalism referred to the recognition of identity or identity-related differences as the centerpiece of political struggles.

Instead of affiliation with leftist politics, the politicization of Alevism with reference to an independent culture was a direct result of the cultural turn of politics in the 1990s. Chapter 4 examines the causes and result of the politicization of Alevism as an identity movement. While analyzing the birth of Alevi politics, the multidimensional relation among political Islam, the Kurdish question, and the Alevi movement demonstrates how debates on identity politics and multiculturalism are reflected in Turkish politics.

The rise of Alevi politics went hand-in-hand with the public visibility of Alevism and defined what was called an Alevi revival. Serial articles in daily newspapers and festivals organized to commemorate Alevi saints indicated not only the increasing visibility of Alevism in daily life, but attempts to the reproduce the knowledge of Alevism that organization around an independent cultural, religious identity requires. Specifically, Alevi researcher-writers as organic intellectuals of the Alevi community played a crucial role in the reproduction and circulation of knowledge of Alevism.

Despite the politicization of Alevism as identity politics in parallel with the politicization of culture in debates on multiculturalism, the movement could never be organized as a classical identity movement, unlike Sunni Islamic and Kurdish identities. Whereas Islamic and Kurdish identity movements demand that Muslims and Kurds live as Muslims and Kurds, the Alevi movement has refrained from confining Alevis to their Alevi identity. Instead, the movement opted to appeal to universalist principles. In this context, what makes the Alevi movement intriguing in the context of debates on multiculturalism has been the organization of Alevism as an "identity movement without identity."

Although identity politics generally require a singular definition of the identity conforming to the needs of the community, the heterodoxy of Ale-

vism does not allow such a singular definition of Alevism. Unlike the orthodoxy of Sunni Islam, heterodoxy is based on multifarious explanations and a flexible cosmology. Therefore, the rigid definition of Alevism necessitated by identity politics has been impossible in practice. Moreover, Alevi populations do not have a territory like Kurdish populations do. As a result of their geographical dispersion, Alevis are minorities in all the cities and districts where they live except for the unique case of Tunceli. The geographical distribution of Alevis is also conducive of their ethnic plurality and divides Alevis among Kurds, Turks, and Arabs. The heterodox cosmology, ethnic pluralism, and geographical dispersion hinder a determination of the cultural boundaries of Alevism. Thus, ambivalence becomes a main feature of Alevi identity. Given its ambivalent and multifarious character, Alevism can hardly form the basis of a classical identity movement. In this regard, this dissertation discusses the limits and possibilities of Alevism as the source for identity politics in order to contribute to the literature on Alevism, as well as debates on the multiculturalism and citizenship.

The Alevi movement has never been a classical identity movement derived from a rigidly defined cultural identity. Nevertheless, there is an undeniable Alevi identity that holds individuals together as members of cultural community and marks them as Alevis. Despite Alevism's cosmologically ambivalent character, geographical distribution, and ethnic pluralism, what provides its continuity is a history of massacres. As the stable element in Alevi history, massacres played a vital role in the politicization of Alevism in the 1990s.

The Alevi revival went hand-in-hand with violent attacks that Alevis suffered. The Madımak massacre and Gazi events took place in the 1990s as the Alevi revival was taking shape. Madımak and Gazi not only led Alevis to protect their Alevi identity more ardently, but paved the way for the formation of an Alevi collective memory consisting of attacks against the community.

Massacres from Karbala (681) to Madımak (1993) have become permanent elements of the politicization of Alevism. On one hand, Karbala was linked to Alevi massacres in the sixteenth century to provide a historical background for the victimhood of Alevis. On the other hand, Madımak and Gazi reminded Alevis of less distant assaults suffered in Malatya, Sivas, Maraş, and Çorum in the late 1970s.

Chapter 5 scrutinizes how the history of Alevi massacres shaped the politicization of Alevism. Although Alevis speak Turkish or Kurdish, they are different from mainstream Turkish or Kurdish communities because of their religious beliefs. Nevertheless, the heterodox cosmology of Alevism makes it difficult to define rigidly. Due to their heterodox belief system, Alevis are not classical unbelievers, but "foreigners inside." Their co-existence with the Sunni community presents a permanent challenge to the certainty of Sunni orthodoxy. The ambivalence of Alevism not only blurs the differences between "us" and foreigners, but turns Alevis into an empty vessel. They are identified with religious infidelity and political communism. This means that anti-Alevi tensions played a vital role in establishing the boundaries of Alevi identity. Consequently, non-Alevi conservatism has played a role in overcoming the ambivalence of Alevism. The historical continuity of conservatism targeting Alevis in the sixteenth century, in the late 1970s, and in the 1990s made it possible to define the Alevi political subject through the massacres that Alevis suffered. In other words, a recurrent history of massacres stands against the ambivalence of Alevism.

Victimhood not only historicized the Alevi political subject, but directed Alevi politicization on a quest to escape victimhood. Since massacres are central to the way Alevism was shaped, the movement chooses to appeal to universal principles instead of particularistic cultural traits; it attempts to claim the rights of the people it represents as citizens rather than as Alevis. The political position of Alevis has thus been defined by concepts such as citizenship and secularism. Agents of the movement have sought to translate the language of culture into a political one in the form of egalitarian citizenship. Therefore, unlike political Islam and the Kurdish movement, the demands of the Alevi movement were formulated not as the right to live as Alevis, but as equal citizens in a secular Turkey.

In this context, this dissertation establishes the structural framework of the Alevi movement on the basis of (1) a universally transformed language of policymaking through debates on postmodernism and multiculturalism; (2) the socio-cultural ambivalence of Alevism deriving from its heterodox cosmology, geographical distribution, and ethnic plurality; and (3) the historical continuity of massacres that Alevis suffered. After establishing the structural

framework of the politicization dynamics of Alevism, the dissertation examines how agents of the movement participated in Turkish politics in the 1990s and the early 2000s. Alevi associations and the Peace Party are examined as the main agents of the movement.

Alevi associations have always been the main agents of the Alevi movement. Despite the existence of dozens of associations, two came into prominence in the 1990s: the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD. Their contrasting definitions and historiographies of Alevism, their different visions of secularism, and their diverse political demands from the state shaped the boundaries of the Alevi political sphere. Other associations in the 1990s conducted their activities within a political spectrum the boundaries of which were drawn by the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD.

Chapter 6 analyzes the contested domain of Alevi politics through a discussion of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD. The Cem Foundation evaluates Alevism as an Islamic religious sect or as the Turkish interpretation of Islam; it approaches the Alevi question within the context of freedom of religion. The PSAKD, on the other hand, presents Alevism as a culture or way of life constituted by a synthesis of Anatolian beliefs and cultures; consequently, it positions Alevism within struggles for the democratization of Turkey. While the Cem Foundation believes that Turkey cannot be a democratic state unless the Alevi problem is solved; the PSAKD situates the Alevi question within the democratization process of Turkey and claims that the problems of Alevis would not be solved unless Turkey first becomes a democratic and secular republic.

Parallel to their contrasting positions concerning the relationship of problems of Alevis and the democratization of Turkey, the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD developed different stances towards the political establishment on the basis of secularism. With reference to Nancy Fraser's conceptual framework, this dissertation argues that the Cem Foundation's affirmative policies aim to restore social arrangements without disturbing the social establishment, demanding the representation of Alevism as a religious identity by governmental structures rather than the transformation of state-religion relations. On the other hand, the PSAKD's transformative politics seek the full separation of state and religion for a truly secular and democratic Turkey. Whereas the Cem Foundation demands integration of Alevism as a religious

creed into the state structure through the representation of Alevism within the DRA and compulsory religious courses, the PSAKD wants the abolition of both the DRA and compulsory religious courses in order to transform state-religion relations in Turkey.

The differing positions of the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD toward the political establishment can also be traced in their relations with political parties. The Cem Foundation did not call its constituency to vote for specific political parties and changed its endorsements according to actual developments in Turkish politics. The foundation supported both the center-right and leftist parties in elections in the 1990s and 2000s to oppose political Islam. On the other hand, because the PSAKD believed that the problems of Alevis resulted from the non-secular and undemocratic political system in Turkey, it supported left-wing political parties for the secularization and democratization of Turkey.

Turkey's accession process to the European Union transformed the official security discourse regarding ethnic and religious minorities into a discourse of cultural plurality. The European principle of identity as a right created a political opportunity structure for the politicization of Alevism in the late 1990s. Both the Cem Foundation and the PSAKD formulated their demands with the new political language of the EU. However, endemic tensions among Alevi associations continued with the Europeanization of their demands. Due to the fact that European Union member states tended to recognize Alevism as a religious identity and thus evaluated the demands of Alevis with reference to freedom of religion, the movement – specifically the PSAKD – was caught between two premises: Alevism as a religious creed or as a culture.

In addition to the Alevi associations, the Peace Party appeared as another agent of the movement in the 1990s. Chapter 7 examines the political history of the Peace Party (BP), which sets the case for the (im)possibilities of Alevi identity politics. The BP was the result of both the emerging Alevi identity movement and a crisis in Turkish politics in the 1990s. On one hand, the passive attitude of the Turkish judicial and political system with respect to the Madımak massacre and Gazi events led Alevis to organize in the form of an openly Alevi party. On the other, the collapse of the Soviet Union – which discredited class-based politics – enabled cultural identities to politicize under

the banner of new ideological premises such as the Third Way, the second republic, radical democracy, and libertarian socialism. In this respect, the formation of the BP was not only a reaction to the inability or unwillingness of existing political parties to take a firm position vis-à-vis Alevi massacres, but also a response to the catastrophic state of Turkish politics in a world where the Cold War had ended and the language of politics was transformed.

The BP's party program – which was based on demilitarization, decentralization, economic and political liberalism, and cultural rights – demonstrated that it was a liberal-left reply to the ideological crisis of Turkish politics. More importantly, the constitutive role of some Alevi associations and popular Alevi figures showed the BP's close relationship to the movement. Nevertheless, most Alevis did not vote for the BP in the 1999 elections. The analysis of the BP's political failure enabled an examination of the dialectic relation between agents of the Alevi movement and the nature of the politicization of Alevism.

On one hand, the threshold in the Turkish electoral system discouraged voters from voting for small or newly established parties, including the BP. On the other hand, intra-party dilemmas stemming from the BP's problematic relations with the person of Ali Haydar Veziroğlu and with the Alevi community caused its political failure. Because of the financial sponsorship of Veziroğlu, his name dominated the BP's political activities and ideological position; the party was seen as his personal party. Furthermore, the party had a dilemma concerning whether it was as an Alevi party or not. Consequently, the BP's attempt to overcome its Alevi image to secure non-Alevi voters drove a wedge between the party and Alevis. Even so, it was not able to overcome that image in the eyes of non-Alevi voters and did not reach a wider electorate.

Nevertheless, the political failure of the BP cannot be analyzed solely with regard to its political activities. If the party had acted in compliance with its Alevi character, could it have survived in Turkish politics? Its failure as an "Alevi party" is related to the structural framework of the politicization Alevism as a cultural, religious identity. The plurality of the heterodox cosmology of Alevism and the traumas of massacres constitute the politicization dynamics of Alevism. On one hand, the cosmologically manifold, heterodox character of Alevism disallows its rigid definition. The ambivalence of Alevism makes its politicization in the form of a political party difficult. On the other hand, although massacres triggered the formation of short-term Alevi parties, fear

of suffering future massacres has kept Alevis from organizing politically on the basis of Alevism in the long run. Therefore, Alevis mainly vote for social democratic or socialist parties to advance universal concepts instead of underlining their cultural particularities. The ambivalence of Alevism and fear of massacres lead Alevis not to vote for a political party based on Alevi identity.

The BP's failure and the Alevi associations' survival together constitute a basis for examining the multidimensional relation between the structural framework of the Alevi movement and its agents. Alevis have opted for organizing within the context of Alevi associations in order to protect their culture and formulate their demands; however, they have not supported a political party that addressed the Alevi community, preferring to engage in politics with universal demands for secularism and equal citizenship. This dissertation argues that this politicization is related to the ambivalence of Alevi identity deriving from its heterodox cosmology, geographical distribution, and ethnic plurality, as well as the traumas of historical massacres.

Despite the influence of the multicultural intellectual environment on the birth of the Alevi movement, the politicization of Alevism is marked by references to universal political concepts such as egalitarian citizenship rather than to a unique cultural identity in the multiculturalist sense. The past of the politicization of Alevism, while revealing the limits of its capacity to form an identity movement, also demonstrates the manner in which theories of citizenship may be useful for assessing demands to recognize the cultural identity of a minority group. Analyzing the politicization of Alevism through its structural framework and agents, this dissertation contributes to the literature and theory of multiculturalism and citizenship.

Bibliography

NEWPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Alevilerin Sesi, 1994-2000.

Cem, 1991-2001.

Cumhuriyet, 1966-1967, 1969-1971, 1973, 1977, 1995-1999.

Kervan, 1992-1998.

Milliyet, 1966, 1993, 1995-2002.

Nefes, 1993-1996.

Pir Sultan Abdal, 1992-2003.

Zülfikar, 1994-1999.

INTERVIEWS

Aksu, Recai. Interview by the author, tape recording, Bodrum/Muğla, 24.07.2011.

Ateşoğlu, Kamil. Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, 29. 09. 2012.

Balkız, Ali. Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 02.10.2012.

Barış, Necati. Interview by the author, tape recording, Bodrum/Muğla, 25.07.2011.

Bülbül, Kemal. Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, 29. 09. 2012.

Canbolat, Cemal. Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul. 25. 01. 2013.

Çamuroğlu, Reha. Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 25.02.2015.

Demir, Murtaza. Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, 28.02.2014.

Gümüş, Fevzi. Interview by the author, tape recording, Bodrum/Muğla, 24.07.2011.

Kaleli, Lütfi. Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, 11.03.2014.

Özel, Selahattin. Interview by the author, tape recording, Izmir, 06.09.2011.

Saraç, Necdet. Interview by the author, tape recording, Bodrum/Muğla, 24.07.2011.

Timisi, Mustafa. Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, 21 October 2007.

Temel, Hıdır. Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, 28.08.2011.

Yıldırım, Hüseyin. Interview by the author, tape recording, Bodrum/Muğla, 25.07.2011.

BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Ağın, Ömer. *Kürtler, Kemalizm ve TKP*. Istanbul: VS, 2006.

Ahmad, Feroz. *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy*. Boulder: Westview, 1997.

Ahmed, Akbar. *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise*. London: Routledge, 1992.

Aikin, Sinan. "Underrepresentative Democracy: Why Turkey Should Abandon Europe's Highest Electoral Threshold." *Washington University Global Studies Law Review* 10:2 (2011): 347-369.

Ak Günlere: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi 1973 Seçim Bildirgesi. Ankara: 1973.

Akpınar, Alişan, Sezen Bilir, Serhat Bozkurt, and Namık Kemal Dinç, "II. Abdülhamit Dönemi Raporlarında 'Dersim Sorunu ve Zihinsel Devamlılık." In *Herkesin Bildiği Sır: Dersim*, edited by Şükrü Aslan, 311-334. Istanbul: İletişim, 2010.

Akyürekli, Mahmut. *Dersim Kürt Tedibi, 1937-1938*. Istanbul: Kitap, 2011.

Alevi Bektaşi Federasyonu, *Eşit Yurttaşlık Hakkı İçin Taleplerimiz ve Çözüm Önerilerimiz*, Yayın No: 4.

Altan, Mehmet. *II. Cumhuriyet Demokrasi ve Özgürlükler*. Istanbul: Birey, 2004.

Anadolu İnanç Önderleri I. Toplantısı. Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 2000.

Anadolu Inanç Önderleri II. Toplantısı. Ankara: Cem Vakfı, 2003.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 1991.

Appiah, K. Anthony. "Identity, Authenticity, Survival: Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction." In *Multiculturalism*, edited by Amy Gutmann, 149-163. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Aksoy, Gürdal. *Anadolu Aleviliği'nden Dersim'e: Alevi Tarihine Coğrafi Bir Giriş*. Ankara: Dipnot, 2009.

Alevi Çalıştayları Nihai Raporu. Ankara: T.C. Devlet Bakanlığı, 2011.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1962.

Argun, Betigül Ercan. *Turkey in Germany*. London: Routledge, 2003.

Aslan, Seçil. *The Ambivalence of Alevi Politic(s): A Comparative Analysis of Cem Vakfı and Pir Sultan Abdal Kültür Derneği*. Unpublished M.A Thesis, Boğaziçi University, Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences, 2008.

Aslan, Şükrü. *1 Mayıs Mahallesi: 1980 Öncesi Toplumsal Mücadeleler ve Kent*. Istanbul: İletişim, 2004.

Aslan, Şükrü and Yardımcı, Sibel. "Memleket ve Garb Hikayeleri: 1938 Dersim Sürgünleri ile Bir Sözlü Tarih Çalışması." In *Herkesin Bildiği Sır: Dersim*, edited by Şükrü Aslan, 413-440. Istanbul: İletişim, 2010.

Ata, Kelime. *Alevilerin İlk Siyasal Denemesi: (Türkiye) Birlik Partisi 1966-1980* Ankara: Kelime Yayınevi, 2007.

Ateş, Kazım and Açıkel, Fethi. "Ambivalent Citizens." *European Societies*, 13:5 (2011): 713-733.

Ateş, Kazım. "Türk Milli Kimliğinin İnşası ve Ulusal Cemaat İçinde Alevi Yurttaşın Müphem Konumu." *İnsan Hakları Yıllığı* 25 (2007): 55-78.

——. *Yurttaşlığın Kıyısında Aleviler*. Ankara: Phoenix, 2011.

Aydın, Bengü. *Alevi Politics of Recognition: Transformation of Alevism and Two Kinds of Recognition Politics,* M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University, Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences, 2009.

Aydın, Suavi and Taşkın, Yüksel. *1960'tan Günümüze Türkiye Tarihi*. Istanbul: İletişim, 2014.

Aygün, Hüseyin. *Dersim 1938 ve Zorunlu İskan*. Ankara: Dipnot, 2010.

——. *o.o. 1938 Resmiyet ve Hakikat*. Ankara: Dipnot, 2011.

Baha Said, *Türkiye'de Alevi-Bektaşi, Ahi ve Nusayri Zümreleri*. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 2000.

Balkan, Neşecan, *Neoliberalizm, İslamcı Sermayenin Yükselişi ve AKP.* Istanbul: Yordam, 2013.

Balkız, Ali. *Sivas'tan Sydney'e Pir Sultan: Aleviliğin Güncel Sorunları ve Çözüm Önerileri*. Ankara: Prespero Yayınları, 1994.

Barış Partisi: Temel Yaklaşımlar. Ankara: 1996.

Barış Partisi Seçim Bildirgesi. Ankara: 1999.

Barry, Brian. *Culture and Equality*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Intimations of Postmodernity*. London: Routledge, 1992.

——. *Modernlik ve Müphemlik*. Trans. İsmail Türkmen, Istanbul: Ayrıntı, 2003.

——. *Modernity and Holocaust*, Cambridge: Polity, 1989.

——. "From Equality to Multiculturalism" In *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*, 74 – 109. Polity Press, 2001.

Bell, Duncan. "Introduction." In *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship between Past and Present*, edited by Duncan Bell, 1-29. New York: Palgrave, 2006.

Belli, Sevim. *Boşuna mı Çiğnendik?* Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1994.

Bender, Cemşid. *Kürt Uygarlığında Alevilik*. Istanbul: Kaynak, 1991.

Benhabib, Seyla. *The Claims of Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

————. "Another Universalism: On the Unity and Diversity of Human Rights." In *Dignity in Adversity Human Rights in Turbulent Times,* 57-76. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011.

————. "Twilight of Sovereignty or the Emergence of Cosmopolitan Norms? Rethinking Citizenship in Volatile Times." In *Citizenship between Past and Future*, edited by Engin F Isin, Peter Nyers and Bryan S. Turner, 18-35. London: Routledge, 2009.

Berkes, Niyazi. *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. London: Hurst & Company, 1998.

Best, Steven and Kellner, Douglas. *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*. New York: The Guilford Press, 1991.

Beşikçi, İsmail. *Tunceli Kanunu (1935) ve Dersim Jenosidi*. Istanbul: Belge, 1990.

Bilici, Faruk. "The Function of the Alevi Bektashi Theology in Modern Turkey." In *Alevi Identity*, edited by Tord Olsson, Elisabeth Özdalga and Catharina Raudvere, 51-62. Richmond: Curzon, 1998.

Bilmez, Bülent, Gülay Kayacan, and Şükrü Aslan. *Belleklerdeki Dersim 38*. Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015.

Birdoğan, Nejat. *Anadolu'nun Gizli Kültürü Alevilik*, Istanbul: Kaynak, 2003.

————. *Anadolu Aleviliğinde Yol Ayrımı*. Istanbul: Mozaik, 1995.

Birlik Partisi Tüzük ve Programı. Istanbul: TIPO Neşriyat ve Basımevi, 1969.

Bodrogi, Krisztina Kehl. *Kızılbaş/Aleviler*. Translated by Oktay Değirmenci and Bilge Ege Aybudak. Istanbul: Ayrıntı, 2012.

————. "Introduction." In *Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East*, edited by Kehl-Bodrogi, B. Kellner-Heinkele, A. Otter-Beujean. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

————. "Tarih Mitosu ve Kollektif Kimlik." Translated by Tanıl Bora, *Birikim* 88 (August 1996): 52-63.

Bora, Tanıl and Can, Kemal. *Devlet Ocak Dergah – 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Ülkücü Hareket*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınevi, 1991.

Boratav, Korkut. *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2009*. Ankara: İmge, 2011.

Boyarin, Jonathan. "Space, Time and the Politics of Memory." In *Remapping Memory: The Politics of Time Space*, edited by Jonathan Boyarin, 1-38, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.

Bozarslan, Hamit. "Alevism and the Myth of Research: The Need for a New Research Area." In *Turkey's Alevi Enigma: A Comprehensive Overview*, edited by Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden, 3-16. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003.

————. "Kurds and Turkish State." In *Cambridge History of Modern Turkey 4: Turkey in the Modern World*, edited by Reşat Kasaba, 334-356. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Bozkurt, Fuat. *Aleviliğin Toplumsal Boyutları*. Istanbul: Tekin, 1993.

————. *Çağdaşlaşma Sürecinde Alevilik*. Istanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2006.

Bruniessen, Martin Van. "Aslını İnkar Eden Haramzadedir!" The Debate on the Ethnic Identity of the Kurdish Alevis." In *Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East,* edited by Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, Barbara Kellner-Heinkele and Anke Otter-Beaujean, 1-24. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

————. "Türkiye'de Türkler Kürtler ve Alevi Uyanışı." In *Kürtlük, Türklük, Alevilik: Etnik ve Dinsel Kimlik Mücadeleleri*. Translated by Hakan Yurdakul, 115-130. Istanbul: İletişim, 2009.

————. "Genocide in Kurdistan? The Suppression of the Dersim Rebellion in Turkey (1937-38) and the Chemical War against the Iraqi Kurds (1988)." In *Conceptual and Historical Dimensions of Genocide*, edited by George J. Andreopoulos, 141-170. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.

Buğra, Ayşe and Savaşkan, Osman. *New Capitalism in Turkey: The Relationship between Politic, Religion and Business*. Cheltenham: Edgar Elward, 2014.

Bulaç, Ali. *Din ve Modernizm*. Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1992.

————. *İslam ve Fundementalizm*. Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1997.

————. "Medine Vesikası ve Yeni Bir Toplum Projesi." In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce 6: İslamcılık,* edited by Yasin Aktay, 503-511. Istanbul: İletişim, 2004.

Bulut, Faik. *Dersim Raporları*. Istanbul: Evrensel Basın Yayın, 2005.

Callinicos, Alex. *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.

Cannerton, Paul. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Castells, Manuel. *The Power of Identity*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publications, 2004.

Cem Vakfı Çalışmaları ve Vakıf Genel Başkanı Prof. Dr İzzetin Doğan'ın Görüş ve Düşünceleri. Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 1998.

Cohen, Anthony Paul. *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. London: Routledge, 1989.

Connor, Steven. *Postmodern Culture*. New York: B. Blackwell, 1989.

Coşkun, Zeki. *Aleviler... Sünniler... Öteki Sivas*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995.

Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Söz Veriyor - 1965 Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri Seçim Bildirgesi. Ankara: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Yayınları, 1965.

Çaha, Ömer. "Ana Temalarıyla 1980 Sonrası İslami Uyanış: Demokrasi, Çoğulculuk ve Sivil Toplum." in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce 6: İslamcılık*, edited by Yasin Aktay. 476-492. Istanbul: İletişim, 2004.

—————. "The Role of the Media in the Revival of Alevi Identity in Turkey." *Social Identities* 10:3 (2004): 325-340.

Çakır, Ruşen. "Milli Görüş Hareketi." in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce 6: İslamcılık* edited by Yasin Aktay, 544-575. Istanbul: İletişim, 2004.

—————. "Political Alevism versus Political Sunnism: Convergences and Divergences." In *Alevi Identity*, edited by Tord Olsson, Elisabeth Özdalga and Catharina Raudvere, 63-68. Richmond: Curzon, 1998.

Çalık, Mustafa. *MHP Hareketi–Kaynakları ve Gelişimi 1965–1980*. Ankara: Cedid Neşriyat, 1995.

Çamuroğlu, Reha. "Alevi Revivalism in Turkey" in In *Alevi Identity*, edited by Tord Olsson, Elisabeth Özdalga and Catharina Raudvere, 79-86. Richmond : Curzon, 1998.

—————. "Resmi İdeoloji ve Aleviler," *Birikim* 105-106 (January-February 1998): 112-116.

—————. "Some Notes on Contemporary Process of Restructuring Alevilik in Turkey." In Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East, edited by Kehl-Bodrogi, B. Kellner-Heinkele and A. Otter-Beujean, 25 – 33. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

—————. *Günümüz Aleviliğinin Sorunları*. Istanbul: Ant, 1992.

—————. *Tarih Heterodoksi ve Babailer*. Istanbul: Der, 1990.

Çarkoğlu, Ali and Bilgili, Nazlı Çağın. "A Precarious Relationship: The Alevi Minority, the Turkish State and the EU." *South European Society and Politics* 16:2 (2011): 351-364.

Çayır, Kenan. "The Emergence of Turkey's Contemporary 'Muslim Democrats.'" In *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey*, edited by Ümit Cizre, 62-79. London: Routledge, 2008.

Çelik, Ayşe Betül. "Alevis, Kurds and Hemşehris: The Alevi Kurd Revival in the Nineties." In *Turkey's Alevi Enigma,* edited by Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden, 141- 158. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003.

Çem, Munzur. *Dersim Merkezli Kürt Aleviliği*. Istanbul: Vate, 2009.

Davison, Andrew. *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

Davison, Andrew and Parla, Taha. "Secularism and Laicism in Turkey," In *Secularisms,* edited by Janet R. Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini, 58-75. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008.

Dean, Jodi. *Solidarity of Strangers: Feminism after Identity Politics*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996.

Demir, Murtaza. *Ateş-i Aşk: Sivas Katliamının Gerçek Hikayesi*. Istanbul: Kırmızıkedi, 2013.

Demiray, Mehmet. *Understanding the Alevi Revival: A Transnational Perspective*. M.A Thesis, Bilkent University, The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences, 2004.

Demirel, Tanel. *Adalet Partisi: İdeoloji ve Politika*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004.

Demirer, Belgin. *ÖDP Kendini Anlatıyor*. Istanbul: Güncel, 1996.

Demokratik Barış Hareketi. *Biz Türkiyeyiz*. Ankara: 1996.

———. *Barış Projesi: Hedef ve İlkeler*. Ankara: 1996.

Dersimi, Nuri. *Kürdistan Tarihinde Dersim*. Istanbul: Doz Yayınları, 1997.

Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü. *12 Ekim 1969 Milletvekili Genel Sonuçları*. Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, 1970.

———. *14 Ekim 1973 Milletvekili Seçim Sonuçları*. Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1974.

————. *5 Haziran 1977 Milletvekili Genel ve Cumhuriyet Senatosu Üyeleri Üçtebir Yenileme Seçimi Sonuçları*. Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1977.

Din Devlet İlişkileri ve Türkiye'de Din Hzimetlerinin Yeniden Yapılanması. Istanbul: Cem Vakfı Yayınları, 1996.

Dinçer, Fahriye. *Formulations of Semahs in Relation to the Question of Alevi Identity in Turkey*, PhD Dissertation, Ataturk for Modern Turkish History Institute, 2002.

Doğan, Soner. *Sivas: 2 Temmuz 1993*. Istanbul: Ekim, 2007.

Donnan, Hasting and Wilson, Thomas M. *Sınırlar: Kimlik Ulus ve Devletin Uçları*. Translated by Zeki Yaş. Ankara: Ütopya Yayınevi, 2002.

Dressler, Markus. "The Modern Dede: Changing Parameters for Religious Authority in Contemporary Turkish Alevism." In *Speaking for Islam: Religious Authorities in Muslim Societies,* edited by Gudrun Kramer and Sabine Schmidtke, 269-294. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Dubetsky, A. "Class and Community in Urban Turkey." In *Commoners, Climbers and Notables*, edited by C.A.O. Van Nieuwenhuijze, 360-371. Leiden: Brill, 1977.

Dural, Tamaşa F. *Aleviler ve Gazi Olayları*. Istanbul: Ant, 1995.

Eaglaton, Terry. *The Illusions of Postmodernism*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996.

————. *Kuramdan Sonra*. Translated by Uygar Abacı. Istanbul: Literatür, 2004.

Ecevit, Bülent. *Demokratik Solda Temel Kavramlar*. Ankara: Ajans-Türk Matbaacılık Sanayii, 1976.

————. *Ortanın Solu*. Istanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1975.

Eddkins, Jenny. "Remembering Relationality: Trauma, Time and Politics." In *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship between Past and Present*, edited by Duncan Bell, New York: Palgrave, 2006.

Eligür, Banu. *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Engels, Friedrich. *Köylüler Savaşı*. Translated by Kenan Somer. Ankara: Sol, 1999.

Eral, Sadık. *Çaldıran'dan Çorum'a Alevi Katliamları*. Istanbul: Yalçın, 1993.

Erdemir, Aykan. "Tradition and Modernity: Alevis' Ambiguous Terms and Turkey's Ambivalent Subjects." *Middle Eastern Studies* 41:6 (2005): 937-951.

Erdoğan, Necmi. "Demokratik Soldan Devrimci Yola: 1970'lerde Sol Populizm Üzerine." *Toplum ve Bilim* 78 (Fall 1998): 22-37.

Ergil, Doğu. *Doğu Sorunu*. Istanbul: Akademi Kültür Sanat, 2008.

Erman, Tahire and Göker, Emrah. "Alevi Politics in Contemporary Turkey." *Middle Eastern Studies* 36:4 (October 2000): 99- 118.

Erol, Ayhan. "Re-Imagining Identity: The Transformation of the Alevi Semah," *Middle Eastern Studies* 46:3 (2010): 375-387.

Es, Murat. *Alevist Politics of Place and the Construction of Cemevis in Turkey*, M.A. Thesis Boğaziçi University. Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences, 2006.

Fırat, Mehmet Şerif. *Doğu İlleri ve Varto Tarihi*. Istanbul: Şaka Matbaası, 1948.

Fırat, Kamil. *Urban Alevilik: Self Perception of the Two Neighborhoods in Ankara*, M.A Thesis, The Graduate School of Social Sciences of the Middle East Technical University, 2004.

Fraser, Nancy. "From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Postsocialist' Age," *New Left Review* 212 (July-August 1995): 68-93.

―――. "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics." In *Redistribution or Recognition?* edited by Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth. Translated by. Joel Golb, James Ingram and Christiane Wilke. 7- 108. London: Verso, 2003.

Gellner, Ernest. *Muslim Society*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Gezik, Erdal. *Alevi Kürtler*. Istanbul: İletişim, 2012.

Giddens, Anthony. *The Third Way and Its Critics*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.

——. *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999.

——. "Introduction" In *The Global Third Way Debate*, edited by Anthony Giddens. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002.

Göker, Emrah. *Reconstructing the Political: A Study on Contemporary Alevi Politics from A Generative Structuralist Perspective*, M.A. Thesis, The Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Bilkent University, 1999.

Gölbaşı, Haydar. *Aleviler ve Sivas Olayları*. Istanbul: Ant, 1997.

Göner, Özlem. "The Transformation of the Alevi Collective Identity." *Cultural Dynamics* 17:107 (2005): 108-135.

Gözüaydın, İştar. *Diyanet: Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Dinin Tanzimi*. Istanbul: İletişim, 2009.

Gutman, Amy. *Identity in Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

Gülalp, Haldun. "Küreselleşme ve Siyasal İslam: Refah Partisinin Toplumsal Tabanı." In *Kimlikler Siyaseti*, 41 – 60. Istanbul: Metis, 2003.

——. "Refah Partisinin Yükselişi." In *Kimlikler Siyaseti*, 61 – 75. Istanbul: Metis, 2003.

——. "Refah Partisinin İktidar Dönemi ve Sonrası." In *Kimlikler Siyaseti*, 75 – 91. Istanbul: Metis, 2003.

Güler, Sabır. *Aleviliğin Siyasal Örgütlenmesi: Modernleşme, Çözülme ve Türkiye Birlik Partisi*. Ankara: Dipnot Yayınevi, 2008.

Gümüş, Burak. "Alevi Hareketleri ve Değişen Alevilik Üzerine." In *Alevilik,* edited by İsmail Engin and Havva Engin, 507-529. Istanbul: Kitap, 2004.

Güneş, Cengiz. *The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey*. London: Routledge, 2012.

Gürel, Burak. *Political Mobilization in Turkey in the 1970s: The Case of the Kahramanmaraş Incidents*. M.A Thesis, Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkey History, 2003.

Habermas, Jürgen. *İletişimsel Eylem Kuramı*. Translated by Mustafa Tüzel. Istanbul: Kabalcı, 2001.

—————. *Kamusallığın Yapısal Dönüşümü*. Translated by Tanıl Bora and Mithat Sancar. Istanbul: İletişim, 1997.

—————. "Struggles for Recognition in the Democratic Constitutional State." In *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition,* edited by Amy Gutmann, 107- 148. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994.

—————. "The European Nation State: On the Past and Future of Sovereignty and Citizenship." In *Inclusion of Other,* 105- 128. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998.

—————. "Kültürlere Eşit Muamele ve Postmodern Liberalizmin Sınırları," in *Doğalcılık ve Din Arasında Felsefi Denemeler*, translated by Ali Nalbant, 257- 296. Istanbul: YKY, 2009.

Hacıbektaş Veli Anadolu Kültür Vakfı. *Mor Kitap: Anayasayı Değiştirmek Üzere Değerlendirmeler*. Ankara: 2012.

Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

Hobsbawm, Eric. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 1- 15. London: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Hopkin, Jonathan and Paolucci, Catherina. "The Business Firm Model of Party Organisation: Cases from Spain and Italy." *European Journal of Political Research* 35 (1999): 307-339.

Huyssen, Andreas. "Mapping the Postmodern." *New German Critique* 33 (1984): 5-52.

Isin Engin F. and Wood, Patricia K. *Citizenship & Identity*. London: Sage Publications, 1999.

İrat, Ali Murat. *Devletin Bektaşi Hırkası*. Ankara: Chiviyazısı Yayınları, 2006.

⸻. *Aleviliğin ABC'si*. Istanbul: Profil, 2012.

⸻. *Modernizmin Erittikleri: Sünniler, Şiiler, Aleviler.* Istanbul: Kirmizi Kedi, 2009.

İridağ, Osman. "Bir Bitişin Öyküsü," *Aksiyon* 73 (27.04.1996).

Jameson, Frederic. *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalism* Durham: Duke University Press, 1991.

⸻. "Post-Modernism and Consumer Society." In *Postmodern Culture*, edited by Hal Foster, 111- 125. London and Sydney, 1985.

Kalaycı, Hüseyin. *Ayrılıkçılık: Kanada Quebec Örneği*. Ankara: Liberte, 2010.

Kaleli, Lütfi. *Alevi Kimliği ve Alevi Örgütlenmeleri*. Istanbul: Can, 2000.

⸻. *Kimliğini Haykıran Alevilik*. Istanbul: Habora, 1990.

Karpat, Kemal. *The Gecekondu: The Rural Migration and Urbanization*. London: Cambridge, 1976.

⸻. "The Politics of Transition: Political Attitudes and Party Affiliation in the Turkish Gecekondu." In *Political Participation in Turkey,* edited by Engin D. Akarlı and Gabriel-Ben Dor, 89-120 Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Publications, 1975.

Kartal, S. Kemal. *Türkiye'de Kentlileşme*. Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1983.

Kaya, Ayhan. "Avrupa Birliği Bütünleşme Sürecinde Yurttaşlık, Çokkültürcülük ve Azınlık Tartışmaları: Birarada Yaşamanın Siyaseti," in *Türkiye'de Çoğunluk ve Azınlık Politikaları: AB Sürecinde Yurttaşlık Tartışmaları,* edited by Ayhan Kaya and Turgut Tarhanlı, 35-57. Istanbul: TESEV, 2005.

————. "Multicultural Clientelism and Alevi Resurgence in the Turkish Diaspora: Berlin Alevis," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 18 (Spring 1998): 23-49.

————. "Türk Diyasporasında Etnik Stratejiler ve Çok-KÜLT-ürlülük İdeolojisi." Toplum ve Bilim 82 (Fall 1999): 23-57.

Kaypakkaya, İbrahim. *Seçme Yazılar*. Istanbul: Umut, 2004.

Kazdağlı, Celal. "Baykal Erken Havaya Girdi," *Aksiyon* 39 (02.09.1995).

Kazmaz, Remzi. *Gereği Düşünüldü: Gazi Davası*. Istanbul: 2003.

Keskin, Zeliha. *Kentsel İlişki Ağları içinde Kimlik İnşası: Alevilik Örneği*, Ankara University, Social Science Institute Sociology Department, 2007.

Kieser, Hans Lukacs. "Dersim Massacre, 1937-1938," *Online Encylopedia of Mass Violence*, p. 5/11, http://www.massviolence.org/IMG/article_PDF/Dersim-Massacre-1937-1938.pdf.

————. "Alevis, Armenians and Kurds in Unionist-Kemalist Turkey (1908-1938)." In *Turkey's Alevi Enigma*, edited by Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden, 177- 196. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Kirişçi, Kemal and Winrow, Gareth M. *Kürt Sorunu: Kökeni ve Gelişimi*. Translated by Ahmet Fethi. Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000.

Kocadağ, Burhan. *Alevi Bektaşi Tarihi*. Istanbul: Can, 1996.

Koçak, Ahmet. *Onlar Işık Oldular*. Istanbul: Alev, 2003.

Koçan, Gürcan and Öncü, Ahmet. "Citizen Alevi in Turkey: Beyond Confirmation and Denial," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 17:4 (December 2004): 464-489.

Konuk, Hulusi. *TBP'nin Kuruluşunun 12. Yılında Mustafa Timisi ile Yaptığı Sorulu-Cevaplı Konuşma: Türkiye Birlik Partisi 1966-1978*. Istanbul: Nurdoğan Matbaası, 1978.

Korkmaz, Esat. *Anadolu Aleviliği*. Istanbul: Berfin, 2000.

————. *Alevilik-Bektaşilik Terimleri Sözlüğü*. Istanbul: Kaynak, 2003

Kömürcü, Derya. *The Emergence of the Center-Left Politics in Turkey, 1960-1980*, M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University Institute of Social Sciences Graduate Program in Political Science and International Relations, 2001.

Köprülü, Fuad. *Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1959.

Kukathas, Chandran. "Are There Any Cultural Rights?" *Political Theory* 20:1 (February 1992): 105-139.

Küçük, Hülya. *Kurtuluş Savaşında Bektaşiler*. Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2003.

Küçük, Murat. "Mezhepten Millete: Aleviler ve Türk Milliyetçiliği." In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, edited by Tanıl Bora. 901-910. Istanbul: İletişim, 2003.

—————. "Türkiye'de Sol Düşünce ve Aleviler." In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce vol 8: Sol*, edited by Murat Gültekingil, 896-934. Istanbul: İletişim, 2007.

—————. "Cemaat, Yurttaş ve Sivil Toplum Meseleleri Işığında Aleviler ve Cem Vakfı." In Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik, 184 – 199. Istanbul: İletişim, 2001.

Kymlicka, Will and Norman, Wayne. "Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies: Issues, Contexts, Concepts." In *Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies*, edited by Will Kymlicka, 1-41. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Kymlicka, Will. *Multicultural Citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Laclau, Ernesto and Mouffe, Chantal. *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics.* London: Verso, 1985.

Laçiner, Ömer. "Malatya Olayı–Türkiye'de Faşist Hareketin Yapısı ve Gelişimi," *Birikim* 39 (May 1978): 12-25.

Laden, Anthony Simon and Owen, David. "Introduction." In *Multiculturalism and Political Theory,* edited by Anthony Simon Laden and David Owen, 1-20. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Leezenberg, Michiel. "Kurdish Alevis and the Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s." In *Turkey's Alevi Enigma,* edited by Paul J White and Joost Jongerden, 197-212. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Lister, Ruth. *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*. New York: Palgrave, 2003.

Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Maraş'tan Sonra? Istanbul: Birikim, 1979.

Mardin, Şerif. "Kitle Toplumunda İslam: Uyumla Kutuplaşma Karşı Karşıya." In *Türkiye, İslam ve Sekülarizm*, translated by Murat Bozluolcay and Elçin Gen, 159-166. Istanbul: İletişim, 2013.

———. "Religion and Secularism in Turkey." In *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State,* edited by Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun, London: C. Hurst § Company, 1981.

———. "Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey." In *Islam in the Political Process,* edited by James P. Piscatori, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

———. *Türkiye'de Din ve Siyaset*. Istanbul: İletişim, 1992.

Marshall, T. H. "Citizenship and Social Class." In *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*, 71- 134. Garden City: Anchor Books, 1965.

Massicard, Elise. *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması*. Translated by Ali Berktay. Istanbul: İletişim, 2007.

———. "Alevism as a Productive Misunderstanding: The Hacıbektaş Festival." In *Turkey's Alevi Enigma A Comprehensive Overview,* edited by P. J White and J. Jongerden, 125-140. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003.

⸺. "Alevist Movements at Home and Abroad: Mobilization Spaces and Disjunction." *New Perspectives on Turkey* 28-29 (Spring-Fall 2003): 163-187.

Mater, Nadire. "Devrimci Gençlik Hareketi Üzerine Ertugrul Kürkcü ile Görüşme." In *Türkiye Sorunları Dizisi,* 10- 42. Istanbul: Alan Yayınları, 1987.

Megill, Allan. "History, Memory, Identity." *History of the Human Sciences* 11:3, (August 1998): 37-62.

Melikoff, Irene. *Uyur İdik Uyardılar: Alevilik–Bektaşilik Araştırmaları.* Translated by Turan Alptekin. Istanbul: Demos Yayınları, 2006.

⸺. *Hacı Bektaş: Efsaneden Gerçeğe.* Translated by Turan Alptekin. Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Kitapları, 1999.

⸺. "Alevi-Bektaşiliğin Tarihsel Kökneleri, Bektaşi- Kızılbaş (Alevi) Bölünmesi ve Neticeleri." in *Türkiye'de Alevi, Bektaşi, Nusayriler*, 17-34. Istanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1999.

Mert, Nuray. *Laiklik Tartışmasına Kavramsal Bir Bakış.* Istanbul: Bağlam, 1994.

Mısır, Mustafa Bayram and Haruş, Mehmet. *Tarihsel Seyri İçinde ÖDP.* Ankara: Ütopya, 1999.

Moore, Isabel A. "Speak You Also: Encircling Trauma." *Journal of Cultural Research* 9 (2005): 87-99.

Müller, Jan-Werner. *Constitutional Patriotism.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

Neal, Arthur G. *National Trauma and Collective Memory.* New York: M.E Sharpe, 1998.

Noyan, Bedri. *Bektaşilik-Alevilik Nedir*? Istanbul: Ant; Can, 1995.

Ocak, Ahmet Yasar. *Alevi Bektaşi İnancının İslam Öncesi Temelleri.* Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000.

———. "Alevi ve Bektaşiliğin Tarihsel ve Sosyal Tabanı ile Teolojisi Arasındaki İlişki Problemine Dair." In *Türk Sufiliğine Bakışlar*, 236-251. Istanbul: İletişim, 2012.

———. "Babailer İsyanından Kızılbaşlığa: Anadolu'da İslam Heterodoksisinin Doğuş ve Gelişim Tarihine Kısa Bir Bakış." In *Türk Sufiliğine Bakışlar*, 252- 289. Istanbul: İletişim, 2012.

———. *Babailer İsyanı*. Istanbul: Dergah, 1996.

———. *Türkler, Türkiye ve İslam*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004.

Okan, Murat. *Türkiye'de Aleviler*. Ankara: İmge, 2004.

Otyam, Fikret. *Hu Dost*. Ankara: Gazeteciler Derneği Yayınları, 1964.

Öktem, Niyazi. "Anadolu Aleviliğinin Senkretik Yapısı." In *Tarihi ve Kültürel Boyutlarıyla Türkiye'de Aleviler Bektaşiler Nusayriler*, 221- 250. Istanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1997.

Öniş, Ziya. "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective," *Third World Quarterly* 18:4 (September 1997): 743-766.

Öz, Baki. *Alevilik Nedir?* Istanbul: Der, 2008.

———. *Osmanlı'da Alevi Ayaklanmaları*. Istanbul: Ant, 1992

———. *Dersim Olayı*. Istanbul: Can, 2004.

———. *Kurtuluş Savaşında Alevi-Bektaşiler*. Istanbul: Can, 1995.

Özdalga, Elisabeth. "The Alevis—a "New" Religious Minority? Identity Politics in Turkey and Its Relation to the EU Integration Process." In *Religion, Politics, and Turkey's EU Accession,* edited by Dietrich Jung and Catharina Raudvere, 177- 198. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008

Özkırımlı, Atilla. *Toplumsal Bir Başkaldırının İdeolojisi: Alevilik-Bektaşilik*. Istanbul: Cem, 1990.

Özman, Aylin and Coşar, Simten. "Reconceptualizing Center Politics in Post 1980 Turkey: Transformation or Continuity?" In *Remaking Turkey,* edited by E. Fuat Keyman, 201- 226. New York: Lexington Books, 2007

Özyiğit, Ercan. *Toplumsal İktidar ve Medya: Gazi Mahallesi Olaylarının Basında Sunumu*. Istanbul: Birey, 2008.

Özyürek, Esra. "The Light of the Alevi Fire Was Lit in Germany and then Spread to Turkey: A Transnational Debate on the Boundaries of Islam," *Turkish Studies* 10:2 (2009): 233-253.

Paker, Evren Balta and Akça, İsmet. "Askerler, Köylüler ve Paramiliter Güçler: Türkiye'de Köy Koruculuğu Sistemi." *Toplum ve Bilim* 126 (2013): 7-34.

Parekh, Bhikhu. *Rethinking Multiculturalism*. New York: Palgrave, 2000.

Phillips, Anne. *Democracy and Difference*. Oxford: Polity Press, 1993.

———. *Multiculturalism without Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

———. *Which Equalities Matter?* Oxford: Polity Press, 1999.

Poulantzas, Nicos. *Fascism and Dictatorship*. Translated by Judith White. London: Verso, 1979.

Poyraz, Bedriye. "The Turkish State and Alevis: Changing Parameters of an Uneasy Relationship," *Middle Eastern Studies* 41:4 (July 2005): 503-516.

Robertson, Roland. "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity- Heterogeneity." In *Global Modernities,* edited by Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson, 25-44. London: Sage Publications, 1995.

Salman, Meral. *The Role of the Memorial Ceremonies of Hacıbektaş Veli in Construction the Alevi-Bektaşi Identity*, M.A. Thesis, Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University, 2005.

Saraç, Necdet. *Alevilerin Siyasi Tarihi 1300-1971*. Istanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 2011.

Sarıhan Şenel. *Sivas Katliamı Davası*, vol.1. Ankara: Ankara Barosu Yayınları, 2002.

————. *Sivas Katliamı Davası*, vol.2. Ankara: Ankara Barosu Yayınları, 2002.

Sartre, Jean Paul. *Anti-Semite and Jew*. New York: Shocken Books, 1965.

Saufert, G. "Between Religion and Ethnicity: a Kurdish-Alevi Tribe in Globalizing Istanbul." In *Space, Culture and Power: New Identities in Globalizing Citie*s, edited by Ayşe Öncü and P. Weyland. London; Atlantic Highlands; N.J.: Zed Books, 1997.

Savaşçı, Özgür. "Alevi Bektaşi İnancının Temel Kavramları." in *Alevilik*, edited by İsmail Engin and Havva Engin, 23-43. Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2004.

Shankland, David. *The Alevis in Turkey*. London: Routledge Curzon, 2003.

————. "Günümüz Türkiye'si Aleviliğinde 'Dede' ve 'Talip' Arasında Değişen Bağ." in *Türkiye'de Alevi, Bektaşi, Nusayriler,* 319 – 334. Istanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1999.

————. "Social Change and Culture: Responses to the Modernization in an Alevi Village in Anatolia." In *Turkey's Alevi Enigma*, edited by Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden, 33 – 50. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003.

Schüller, Harald. *Particilik, Hemşerilik, Alevilik*. Translated by Yılmaz Tonbul Istanbul: İletişim, 1999.

————. "Secularism and Ethnicity: Alevis and Social Democrats in Search of an Alliance" in *Civil Society in the Grip of Nationalism*, edited by Stefanos Yerasimos, Günter Seufert and Karin Varhoff, 197-249. Istanbul: Orient Institute, 2000.

Selçuk, İlhan, Gencay Şaylan, and Şenay Kalkan. *Türkiye'de Alevilik Bektaşilik*. Istanbul: Hasat, 1991.

Selmanpakoğlu, Ceren. *The Formation of Alevi Syncretism*, M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University, The Institute of Fine Arts, 2006.

Sencer, Yakut. *Türkiye'de Kentleşme*. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1979.

Sivas Kitabı: Bir Topluöldürümün Öyküsü, Ankara: Edebiyatçılar Derneği, 1994.

Smart, Bary. "Postmodern Social Theory." In *The Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, edited by Bryan S. Turner, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1996.

Smith, Anthony. "Nationalism and Cultural Identity." In *National Identity*, 71-98. London: Penguin, 1991.

Smith, Robert J. "Festivals and Celebrations." In *Folklor and Folklife*, edited by Richard M. Dorson, 159-172. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1972.

Solgun, Cafer. *Alevilerin Kemalizm'le İmtihanı*. Istanbul: Hayykitap, 2008.

Soileau, Mark. "Festivals and the Formation of Alevi Identity." In *Alevis and Alevism: Transformed Identities*, edited by Hege Irene Markussen, Istanbul: ISIS Press, 2005.

Sökefeld, Martin. *Struggle for Recognition: The Alevi Movement in Germany and in Transnational Space*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2008

—————. "Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition Policy." *New Perspectives on Turkey* 28-29 (Spring-Fall 2003): 133-161.

Swanson, David L. and Mancini, Paolo. *Politics Media and Modern Democracy*. London: Greenwood, 1996.

Su, Süreyya. *Hurafeler ve Mitler: Halk İslamında Senkretizm*. Istanbul: İletişim, 2009.

Sztompka, Piotr. "The Trauma of Social Change: A Case of Postcommunist Societies" in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, 155- 195. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

Şahhüseyinoğlu, H. Nedim. *Alevi Örgütlerinin Tarihsel Süreci*. Istanbul: İtalik, 2001.

—————. *Yakın Tarihimizde Kitlesel Katliamlar*. Istanbul: Berfin, 2012.

Şahin, Şehriban. *The Alevi Movement: Transformation from Secret Oral to Public Written Culture in National and Transnational Social Spaces*, PhD Dissertation, Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science of New School for Social Research, 2001.

—————. "The Rise of Alevism as Public Religion," *Current Sociology* 53 (May 2005): 465-485.

Şener, Cemal. *Alevi Törenleri*. Istanbul: Ant, 1991.

—————. *Aleviler'in Etnik Kimliği: Aleviler Kürt mü? Türk mü?* Istanbul: Etik Yayınları, 2002.

—————. *Atatürk ve Aleviler*. Istanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1991.

—————. *Yaşayan Alevilik*. Istanbul: Ant, 1993.

Şener, Cemal and İlknur, Miyase. *Şeriat ve Alevilik*. Istanbul: Ant, 1995.

Şenyapılı, Tansı. "Gecekonduların Ekonomik Profili." In *Kentsel Bütünleşme,* edited by Türköz Erder, 103 – 121. Ankara: Türkiye Geliştirme Araştırma Vakfı Yayınları, 1982.

Şimşek, Sefa. "New Social Movements in Turkey since 1980," *Turkish Studies* 5:2 (Summer 2004): 111–139.

Tanör, Bülent and Yüzbaşıoğlu, Necmi. *1982 Anayasasına Göre Türk Anayasa Hukuku*. Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002.

Taş, Cemal. *Dağların Kayıp Anahtarı: Dersim 1938 Anlatıları.* Istanbul: İletişim, 2010.

Taylor, Charles. "Multiculturalism, Examining the Politics of Recognition." In *Multiculturalism*, edited by Amy Gutmann, 25- 73. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994.

T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Türkiye Nüfusu, 1923-1994: Demografi Yapısı ve Gelişimi.* Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, 1995.

Tekeli, İlhan, Yiğit Gülöksüz, and Tarık Okyay. *Gecekondulu, Dolmuşlu, İşportalı Şehir*. Istanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1976.

Tekeli, İlhan and Gökçeli, Raşit. *1973 ve 1975 Seçimleri: Seçim Coğrafyası Üzerine Bir Deneme*. Istanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1977.

Tol, Uğraş Ulaş. *The Sustainability Crisis of the Alevism*, PhD Dissertation, The Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University, 2009.

Tombul, Işıl. "Hırka Altında Siyaset: Hacı Bektaş Veli Anma Törenleri." In *Hacı Bektaş Veli*, edited by Pınar Ecevitoğlu, Ali Murat İrat and Ayhan Yalçınkaya, Ankara: Dipnot, 2010.

Toprak, Binnaz. *Islam and Political Development in Turkey*. Leiden: Brill, 1981.

—————. "The Religious Right" in *Turkey in Transition*, (eds.) İrvin C. Schick and Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak, 218-235. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Tuğal, Cihan. *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to the Capitalism*. Stanford University Press, 2009.

Turner, Bryan S. "Postmodern Culture/Modern Citizens." In *The Condition of Citizenship*, edited by Bart van Steenbergen, 153-167. London: Sage Publications, 1994.

Türkiye Birlik Partisi 1977 Seçim Bildirgesi. Ankara: Ağaç-İş Matbaası, 1977.

Türkiye Birlik Partisi Tüzük ve Programı. Ankara: Gütenberg Matbaası, 1972.

Türkiye Birlik Partisi Program ve Tüzüğü. Istanbul: Zafer Matbaacılık, 1980.

Türkiye İstatistik Enstitüsü Milletvekili Genel Seçimi İl ve İlçe Sonuçları, 2011, 2007, 2002, 1999, 1995, 1991. Ankara: June 2012.

Türkiye Toplumsal Barış Projesi Yeniden Yapılandırma Programı. Ankara: 1998.

Türkmen, Buket. "Kemalist İslam'ın Dönüşümü mü yoksa Yeni Bir Sünni Yurttaş Ahlakı mı?: 'Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi' Ders Kitapları Üzerine Bir İnceleme," *Toplum ve Bilim* 120 (2011): 48-78.

Uyanık, Zeki. *The Alevis in Post-1980 Turkey: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Official Texts*, PhD Dissertation, The Graduate School of Social Sciences of the Middle East Technical University Sociology Department, 2009.

—————. "Avrupa Komisyonu İlerleme Raporlarında (1998-2012) Aleviler: Tanımlar, Sorunlar, Tartışmalar," *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi* 56 (February-April 2013): 113-136.

Uzgel, İlhan and Duru, Bülent. *AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu.* Ankara: Phoenix, 2009.

Üzüm, İlyas. "Günümüz Alevi Örgütlenmeleri ve Geleneksel Alevilikle İlişkisi." in *Türkiye'de Alevi, Bektaşi, Nusayriler*, 335- 375. Istanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1999.

Varhoff, Karin. "Academic and Journalist Publications on the Alevi and Bektashi of Turkey" in *Alevi Identity*, edited by T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere, 23-50. Richmond: Curzon Press, 1998.

—————. The Past in the Future: Discourses on the Alevis in Contemporary Turkey." in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma*, edited by Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden, 93- 110. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003.

Vattimo, Gianni. *Transparent Society.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.

Vergin, Nur. "Din ve Muhalif Olmak: Bir Halk Dini Olarak Alevilik." *Türkiye Günlüğü* 17 (Winter 1991): 11-21.

Webb, Emma Sinclair. "Sectarian Violence: The Alevi Minority and the Left: Kahramanmaraş 1978." In *Turkey's Alevi Enigma*, edited by Paul J White and Joost Jongerden, 215-235. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

White, Jenny B. *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics*. Seattle: University of Washington, 2002

White, Paul J. "The Debate on the Identity of 'Alevi Kurds.'" In *Turkey's Alevi Enigma*, edited by Paul J White and Joost Jongerden, 17-29. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Xemgin, Ethem. *Aleviliğin Kökenindeki Mazda İnancı ve Zerdüşt Öğretisi.* Istanbul: Berfin, 1995.

Yağcı, Öner. *Sivas'ı Unutmak.* Istanbul: İleri, 2004.

Yalçınkaya, Ayhan. *Alevilikte Toplumsal Kurumlar ve İktidar*. Ankara: Mülki-
yeliler Birliği Vakfı, 1996.

_____. *Pas*. Ankara: Phoenix, 2005.

_____. *Kavimkırım İkliminde Aleviler*. Ankara: Dipnot, 2014

_____. "Eşitlikçi Dışlama: Dedelik, Soy ve Siyaset," *Kırkbudak* 9 (Winter
2007): 77-93.

_____. "Hafıza Savaşlarından Sahiplenilmiş Şehitliğe: Madımak Katliamı
Örnek Olayı," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 66:3 (2011): 333-394.

Yaman, Ali. "Geçmişten Günümüze Dedelerin Misyonu ve Değişim," *Dem* 6:
20-29.

Yaman, Mehmet. *Alevilik*. Istanbul: Demos, 2011.

Yavuz, M. Hakan. "Alevilerin Türkiye'deki Medya Kimlikleri: "Ortaya
Çıkışın" Serüveni." In *Türkiye'de Aleviler Bektaşiler Nusayriler*. Istanbul:
Ensar Neşriyat, 1997.

_____. *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*. Oxford: Oxford University Press,
2003.

Yeğen, Mesut. "Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies*
40:6 (November 2004): 51-66.

_____. *Son Kürt İsyanı*. Istanbul: İletişim, 2011.

Yeni Demokrasi Hareketi, *Tüzük*. Istanbul: 1994.

Yıldırım, Ali. *Ateşe Semah Duranlar*. Ankara: Yurt, 1993.

Yıldırım, Olcay. *Primary Alevi Institutions and Alevi-Sunni Encounters under
the Urban Conditions*, M.A Thesis, Ataturk for Modern Turkish History
Institute, 2009.

Yıldız, Erdoğan. *Gülsuyu-Gülensu*. Ankara: Notabene, 2013.

Yılmaz, Hulusi. *Kentleşme Sürecinde Alevilik-Bektaşilik.* M.A Thesis, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Sosyoloji Anabilim Dalı, Isparta, Türkiye, 1998.

Yılmaz, Nail. *Kentin Alevileri.* Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2005.

Young, Iris Marion. *Justice and the Politics of Difference.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

_____. "Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship," *Ethics* 99 (1989): 250-274.

_____. "Structural Injustice and the Politics of Difference." In *Multiculturalism and Political Theory,* edited by Anthony Simon Laden and David Owen, 60- 88. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Yücekök, Ahmet N. *Türkiye'de Örgütlenmiş Dinin Sosyo-Ekonomik Tabanı (1946 -1968).* Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1971.

Yüksel, Murat. *Forced Migration and the Politics of Internal Displacement in the Making of Modern Turkey: The Case of Dersim (1937-1948),* PhD Dissertation, Schools of Art and Sciences, Columbia University, 2008.

Zelyut, Rıza. *Aleviler Ne Yapmalı.* Istanbul: Yön, 1993.

_____. *Anadolu Aleviliğinin Kültürel Kökeni: Türk Aleviliği.* Ankara: Kripto, 2009.

_____. *Dersim İsyanları ve Dersim Gerçeği.* Istanbul: Kripto, 2010.

_____. *Hacıbektaş Veli.* Istanbul: Hürriyet, 1990.

_____. *Öz Kaynaklarına Göre Alevilik.* Istanbul: Anadolu Kültürü Yayınları, 1990.

Zerubavel, Eviatar. "Calendars and History: A Comparative Study of the Social Organization of National Memory." In *States of Memory: Continuities, Conflicts and Transformations in National Retrospection,* edited by Jeffrey K. Olick, 315-338. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

Zileli, Gün. *Havariler.* Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003.

Zubaida, Sami. "Class and Community in Urban Politics." In *Islam, the People and the State*, 83 – 98. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1993.

Zürcher, Eric Jan. *Turkey: A Modern History.* New York: I.B. Tauris, 1994.