

DEFINED ON THE EDGE OF POWER
THE ALEVI IDENTITY THROUGH CENTURIES OF
TRANSITION IN TURKEY

A sub-thesis
submitted to the College of Arts and Social Sciences
of the Australian National University
in partial fulfillment for the requirements of
Master of Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies (Research)
İnci Öykü Yener
August, 2013.

Except where it is otherwise acknowledged
in
the text, this thesis represents the original
research of the author.

Signature

İnci Öykü Yener

ABSTRACT

This thesis will argue that one of the main challenges Alevis experience in Turkey is the lack of adequate historical credit afforded to them within Modern Turkish society. Though Alevis have a much older history than the Republic of Turkey, having occupied the region for centuries before the inception the modern Turkish nation-state, they still have a very specific relationship with the development of the secular Kemalist-Turkish identity. In fact, Alevis began to develop a novel and unique political identity, which embraced secularism in spite of deeply rooted religious convictions, during Turkey's National transition from the late Ottoman Empire (early 1900s) to the early multi-party era (late 1950s).

Existing scholarship on Alevi identity often exclusively focuses on how they were perceived as a religious group during the Ottoman Era or on their increasingly marginalized political identity after the 1970s. However, this thesis will argue that these approaches fail to appreciate the 'transition period' of Alevi identity, and how the transformation from being considered a strictly religious/ethnic identity within the Ottoman Empire to becoming viewed as vocal and political advocates of secularism from the early Republic is crucial to understanding contemporary Alevi identity. It will argue that past research has not paid enough attention to this transition, casting Alevi cultural and political identity as fragmented, rigid and impermeable rather than fluid and constantly evolving.

To this end, this thesis will seek to demonstrate that Alevism has in fact evolved politically since the sixteenth century of the Ottoman Era, and validate why most Alevis became secular Kemalists during the early twentieth century Republican era of modern Turkey, with the Alevi identity maintaining a dedicated Kemalist ideology since then society at large.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To present a thesis in one's language is in itself an intimidating task, and to undertake that task in a language foreign to one's own mother tongue presents challenges that cannot be overcome without any external help. The support of my colleagues, friends and family has been vital to completing the present work at hand.

I would like to thank to the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies, particularly Prof Amin Saikal for providing me with the space and necessary tools to conduct my research and writing. I also wish to acknowledge the astute guidance of Dr Hamit Bozarslan, who enabled me to complete an important piece of research at the École Des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, as well as his generosity with his time and knowledge. Writing this thesis would have been a very challenging task without his assistance. In addition I would like to thank to Hande Soğancılar, Özlem Turan, Ertunç Eriçok, Lebana Bourizk, Filiz Atasoy, Ceren Berivan Yener Çolak, Aslı Yener and the Roderburg family, all of whom have helped with their attention and support in so many diverse ways, extending well beyond the scope the purely academic setting of my work. Without them in my corner, helping and encouraging me every day, this work could not have been finished. Also, Ernesto Lopez, Duygu Yiğit and Rishi Raithatha for their time and assistance with reading and editing, their suggestions proved invaluable to helping define the shape and scope of the work at hand. To my partner Florian Roderburg, a special thanks for his care and attentiveness, providing confidence through his listening and patience every day, even while being continents away... And finally, words are not enough to express my deepest gratitude, which I owe most of all to my father Mustafa, specifically his special and personal interest in the Alevi culture and also the interest and support from my mother Hatice. Without them this dream of mine could not have come true.

While writing this thesis, protests broke out (and are still continuing) in Istanbul and across Turkey as well... I dedicate this thesis to the Gezi protesters and the people who died during the protests: Abdullah Cömert, Mehmet Ayvalıtaş, Mustafa Sarı, Ali İsmail Korkmaz and Ethem Sarısülük. No archive or record will ever be able to fully bring voice to the depth of silence that has been forced upon them.

TABLE of CONTENTS

Abstract	3
Acknowledgements	4
Table of Contents	5
Glossary	6
Chapter I: Introduction	8
1.1 Introduction	8
1.2 Alevis and Historiography	21
Chapter II: Definitions and Alevi Identity	28
2.1 Definitions	28
2.1.1 Alevi, Bektashi, Kizilbas	28
2.1.2 Kemalism, Secularism, Laicism	30
2.2 Alevi Identity of Turkey	32
2.2.1 Alevism as a Religion	34
2.2.2 Alevism as an Ethnicity	37
Chapter III: Alevi Politicization and Socialization Processes	39
3.1 Alevis in the Ottoman Era	39
3.2 Alevis during the Early Republican Era	46
3.2.1 Role of Alevis in Nation building	48
3.2.1.1 Kurdish Alevis and Kurdish Sunnis	50
3.2.2 Reforms of the Republican People's Party	55
3.2.2.1 Abolishment of the Caliphate	56
3.2.2.2 Establishment of the Presidency of Religious Affairs – <i>Diyanet</i>	59
Chapter IV: Multi-Party Era	63
4.1 Transition to Multi-Party Era	63
4.1.1 Party Structure and Partisanship	65
4.2 The Democrat Party	68
4.3 Crystallization of the Political Identity of Alevis	72
Chapter V: Conclusion	75
References	79

Glossary

Bektashi Group of people refer to a saint, Hacı Bektas, who migrated from Central Asia to Anatolia starting from the eleventh century onwards.

Cem The most communal Alevi ritual performed by a *dede*.

Cemevi A modern Turkish invention that represents a building that is used by urban Alevi followers where *cem* is celebrated and performed by the masses.

Dede The person, who represents a distinct posturing of the Alevi as being literally descended from the founders of Islam, while also fulfilling a more antiquated Anatolian folk-religious position of community spiritual leader, or shaman. *Dedelik* is an essential institution of the Alevi sect of Islam.

Diyanet The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.

İcazetname Diploma.

Imam Hatip Schools School type that came under the control of the Republican Party in 1949 in order to train prayers and preachers. Graduates of these schools generally found employment in the mosques where they became paid government officials.

Kemalism An ideology referring to the state-led regime of modernization introduced at the beginning of the Turkish Republic by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his supporters. As, such *Kemalism* represents a political ideology, that though aimed at modernization via liberal and secular reforms, still maintained a heavy autocratic regulation of Turkish national identity over the diverse ethnic and religious identities it sought to homogenize under its leadership.

Millet A word of Arabic origin which had come to mean a religious community in Turkish usage. The Nationalists, later became the Committee of Union and Progress members (CUP), used to describe ‘nation’, ‘national’, and ‘nationalism’ were divided from *millet*.

Sabbateans A religious/cultural group of so-called “crypto-Jews”, who are still practicing their ‘open-secret’ identity like their leader Shabbtai Tzvi, who was forced to convert to Islam from Judaism, but continued to practice Judaism privately while professing Islam in public.

Semah Alevi ritual dances.

Shariah The Muslim Legal code, founded on the Qur’an and hadith (traditions of the Prophet) and codified by various systems of interpretation.

Seyyidlik A form of leadership originating from the title of the *seyyid*, symbolizing males accepted as descendants of the Prophet Mohammad through his grandsons.

Tanzimat A new program of reform and reorganization according to Western views that issued as the Noble Rescript of Gülhane in November 1839. *Tanzimat* is essentially important because it gave way to the equality of the non-Muslims that was the initiator for the societal and cultural homogeneity for the nation-state process.

Ulema (sing. *al-Alim*) Literally ‘he who knows,’ but more specifically the scholars who were versed in the religious sciences and therefore authorized to interpret these sciences and especially the Shariah Law in Islam.

Ummah (or *Umma*) Literally means ‘nation’ a universal Islamic Community. Besides, it is the centerpiece concept in Qur’an, the worldwide community of Islam embraces all the Muslims from all over the world. The ‘loyalty to Umma’ is decisively inseparable from ‘loyalty to God’. Furthermore, Ummah puts the Muslim identity on top of any other different identity.

Young Turks A group of constitutionalists, exiled in France who founded a committee called *Ittihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (Committee of Union and Progress – CUP) and began publishing the journal *Mesveret* (Consultation) in 1895. The leading figure of this movement, Ahmad Rıza, was a radical secularist and positivist.

Chapter I. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

On 29 May 2013, an important event took place in Istanbul: President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan named the third bridge on the Bosphorus after “Yavuz Sultan Selim”, in a ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of the bridge (*Today's Zaman*, 30 May 2013; *Hurriyet Daily News*, 29 May 2013; *NTVMSNBC*, 5 June 2013).

However, this news caused discomfort among the Alevis and their supporters. Yavuz Sultan Selim, a prominent figure as an Ottoman Sultan, is believed to have killed thousands of Alevis in Anatolia under his rule, specifically during the Battle of Chaldiran in 1514 against the Shah Ismail-led Safavid Dynasty (Sokefeld 2008, 42; Refik 1932; Ocak 1998, 94-95). The Deputy Leader, Hüseyin Aygün, of the main opposition party the Republican People's Party, who himself is of Kurdish and Alevi origin, stated via his Twitter account “the fact that the name of the executioner of Alevis was given to the bridge is open bullying of Alevis” (*Today's Zaman*, 30 May 2013). The head of the Cem Foundation¹, İzzettin Doğan, also uncomfortable with this controversial political decision, said: “Yavuz Sultan Selim is an important political figure. He has been remembered for his deeds for centuries. But history also recorded his massacre of 70,000 Alevis. It is politically wrong to use the name of a person with this kind of record on a place where he will always be remembered” (*Today's Zaman*, 30 May 2013).

Despite critical questions that have been raised about the extent of massacres of Alevis by the Ottoman Empire happening during the rule of Yavuz Sultan Selim, there are still a number of sources that account for centuries of systematic oppression carried out by the Ottoman Empire from the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards (Bozarslan 2003, 5; Kehl-Bodrogi 2003, 54). These acts of oppression came in the shape of mass arrests, deportation and also massacres. These oppressive episodes were not only limited to the

¹ Cem Foundation is a foundation that established in April 1995 which defines itself as the essence organization of Alevism (Okan 2004, 137). Cem Foundation is one of the foremost important Alevi organizations up to now.

supporters of Shah Ismail and all other Shi'ite groups practicing within the empire, but also extended to other heterodox groups; particularly the Alevis, who as the biggest Anatolian heterodox community, were continuously affected (Sokefeld 2008, 42; Refik 1932; Ocak 1998, 94-95).

This contemporary naming of the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge shows that the Alevi community still faces problems of recognition in present-day Turkey. Based on this premise, it is important to analyze the development of the contemporary political identity of the Alevis, examining its roots specifically from the period of the Ottoman Empire (late sixteenth century through the early twentieth) up to the early-multi party era (of the late 1950s) and explain how this history has influenced a particular modern and political identification for Alevis through their collective and communal response to the development of Kemalism. For this reason, this thesis will focus on the period between the late Ottoman Empire and the early Republican Era of the 1960s.

A significant minority group within Turkey, the Alevis were one of a number of peoples under constant pressure from the respective rulers of Anatolia, i.e., Seljuks, Ottomans and the Republic of Turkey under the rule of the Republican People's party, stretching back the eleventh century and continuing onwards to the present day. Because of this ruling pressure, the Alevis later became important defenders of Kemalist principles, which ideologically presented them with the ability to hope for a public space that afforded them protection from religious persecution under the protection of secularist policies, though in practice this was not always the case. This turn towards Kemalism also led the Alevis to become defenders or sometimes even the founders of various politically "progressive" and leftist groups in Turkey (Köse, 2012, 589). Within Turkey, Alevi support for the Young Turks, has been generally termed as "progressive" because of the will to modernize Turkey through the introduction of liberal social and secular religious reforms. This support for the Young Turks was heavy from both the Alevis and the Bektashis in parallel. The thesis will contrast this earlier support of the Young Turks against the subsequently more institutionalized attitude of the Kemalists towards the Alevis during the early Republican era; which likewise courted support from the Alevi community under the same appeal of furthering liberal social and secular national ideals. However, it should be noted

that this furtherance of liberal and secular reforms has historically been the result of heavy handed authoritarian means on the part of the Kemalist state, counter to the normal understanding of “progressive” political situations in the West.

It should also be stressed, that though the contemporary Alevi community is seen as being historically aligned with Kemalist ideology, it is not a natural feature of Alevism to align with Kemalist politics. Rather, the Kemalist turn in contemporary Alevi political affiliation was born out of a complex merging of internal-existential interests facing the community itself, and external-propaganda and institutional regulations brought on by the Kemalist control of the Turkish Republic after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. This political turn via the institutional political and social challenges that spurred it, occurring between a history of marginalized pressure and political resistance, will be analyzed deeper in the third chapter. In the third chapter, further light will be shed on a number of historical occasions that determined the result of a “progressive” political identification for the Alevis; i.e support for the progressive Young Turks, determined as such because of their will to modernize Turkey by introducing liberal social and secular religious reforms,.

In this context, it will be argued that political incidents in the modern era left no option for Alevis but to support the Kemalist Republican People’s party. Given that Alevis have almost always supported political parties that promoted secularism, starting with the Republican People’s Party, it is significant to question why this has been the case despite the fact that none of these parties, including the Republican People’s Party, have managed to identify the problems affecting the Alevis, both as a religious and ethnic group, up to now.

The Alevis, having centuries long history of development as a distinct ethnic group, represent a significant minority within contemporary Turkey. The formation of Alevism as a sect began in the eleventh century and continued onwards, taking place under the shadow of a long period of oppression against the Alevis, by Seljuks, Ottomans and later the early Republic of Turkey. Even though the actual number of Alevis is not presently known, due to the nonexistence of reliable data on the ethnic and religious backgrounds of Turkish citizens, the Alevi population is predicted to be between 10 to 20 million

(Schuler 2002, 171-172; Kehl-Bodrogi 1988, 93; Vorhoff 1995, 58; Köse 2012, 576-577; Tambar 2012, 653).

In addition to the sizable minority population the Alevis represent, the Alevis also originated from Central Asia, and were considered vital for the new nation-building project of the Kemalists. The Alevis were seen as both given to the modernizing politics and new national character of the Kemalists wished to instill. The Alevis had their own distinct and authentic folklore which stood in contrast and at times even in opposition to the traditions of the Ottoman past. The Kemalists reasoned that this Alevi folklore would help build a new post-Ottoman sense of Turkishness in Anatolia, especially because the majority population had been dominated by Sunni-Islamic elements through centuries-long Ottoman rule. The Kemalist regime sought to displace a perceived Ottoman adherence to Sunni social norms, by delegitimizing its historical hold on the Turkish geography of Anatolia. The Alevis hope in this Kemalist utilization of their folk-culture, belonged to the appealing chance of a more inclusive history of the diverse religious life found in Turkey, especially with Islamic sects that were marginalized by the Sunni emphasis of the Ottoman Empire, would take hold in the new Republic, allowing for a more tolerant secular political culture. Nonetheless, shortly after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the Kemalist secular laicism ideology failed to create the necessary neutral conditions promised for the Alevis; which would have allowed them to represent themselves within the political as well as in the social arena without fear of further oppression. This was due mostly to the fact that Kemalist ideology still held a homogenized vision of Turkishness as its end goal for social integration of the diverse religious and ethnic groups throughout Anatolia. The Alevi were then seen as a symbolic tool to be deployed towards a new mythic “origin” for Turkish identity, and not regarded as deserving recognition as a distinct autonomous identity within the new Republic. The Kemalists in effect wished to use Alevism, amongst other folk and marginalized communities in Anatolia, to reconstruct a history for a future Turkishness; which the Alevi would have to adopt at the expense of their Alevi identity.

This view has been supported in more recent literature on the topic. For example Markus Dressler’s book “Writing Religion: The Making of Turkish Alevi Islam” has highlighted

the commissioned Kemalist historiographical attempts to define Alevism, in ways that assimilate the ethnic/religious group into an explicit homogenous national identity. (Dressler 2013, 153-186) There has also been work by Christopher Houston on how Kemalism interacted with parallel ethnic identities, such as the Kurds (who overlap at times with the Alevi, as will be explained in chapter 3), and the various identity politics that oppressed them in the name of a more unified Turkish national character (Houston 2008, 97-138). This thesis however, is more concerned with exploring the historical and ongoing reception of Kemalist ideology directly by the Alevi community. The history of Kemalist appropriation of marginal ethnic identities within Anatolia; its policies, commissioned historiographies and the deeper underlying intentions of utilizing them towards a “new” Turkish identity are important to note and keep in mind. However, this thesis is more concerned with the Alevi response to Kemalist ideology, the hopes and desires for recognition and security that Kemalist populist propaganda inspired, rather than an historical account of how the ideology operated in the service of a larger focus of identity politics in general under Kemalist rule. A case for revisionism of Kemalist history is certainly in order, as its framing of both the Alevi, other marginal ethnicities, and even their Ottoman predecessors, is clearly in need of contesting. Still, this particular focus would be too much of a divergence and distraction, given the focused attention of this thesis, from giving a sense to how it is that the Alevi, in a popular sense, received, internalized and resisted various Kemalist policies and reforms. In a future work, where more space and a larger scope of research can be brought together, it would be advisable to incorporate the historical Kemalist construction of the Alevi, through Kemalist political dialogue and commissioned academic research, into a larger argument about the limited recognition of the Alevi culture afforded by the Kemalist regime.

However, in the view of the Alevi, the Kemalist principles of laicism, as an effort to put Western style modernist reforms into action, were not fully capable of restricting the role of the Sunni religion in the new republic. This spurned a major shift in how the Alevi responded to the hope of recognition under Kemalist policy. Whilst the Kemalist state tried to rid itself of the main Sunni-Islamic elements that were highly infused into Turkish politics, owing to centuries of strong Ottoman rule via the office of the Caliphate and the Ministry of *Shariah* Affairs, the replacement of the latter with the a similarly influential

institution, the *Diyanet*, showed that Kemalist policies did not go beyond promoting Sunni Islam as the *de facto* official religion of the new state (Sokefeld 2008). Still, this situation did not prevent Alevis from secularly adopting the Kemalist ideology. From the Alevi point of view, a weak secularism was still better than religious rule intolerant to heterodoxy. Moreover, secularist tendencies among contemporary Alevis should also be seen as a symptom of the larger turn of the Alevis away from their more religious identification in the past. During this period of government imposed secularism, the Alevis responded by moving away from their belief system as the main signifier of their identity and embracing their wider Alevi culture. As a result their communal traditions and expectation were reshaped and interiorized by Kemalist laicism, becoming more politically active in the project of modernism under Kemalist ideology (Köse 2012). Therefore, the Alevis in the early Republican Era found themselves in a transition, being less attached to the religious interpretations of Alevism, and instead more attached to a cultural and folk identification under the promised secular freedoms of Kemalism (İçduygu & Keyman 1998-9; Parla & Davidson 2004; Karasipahi 2009).

Furthermore, even though Alevi groups were aware of the weakness of Kemalist ideology from its early periods, they nevertheless remained staunch defenders of Kemalism. Even today, the majority of Alevis are still faithful to this newly crafted Turkishness designed by the Kemalists with the help of the reform of authentic Alevi traditions (Okan 2004, 124). However, this reality could not change the fact that Alevi communities began to rediscover their suppressed identity and articulate a historical narrative which stretches far back into the past and does not necessarily end in a generic Turkish national character. They have developed a political sensibility that is staunchly nationalist in its ethos, while also maintaining that the “national” is heterogeneous in character as well. Essentially, the Alevis have emerged as significant political actors in urban and public places in recent decades; particularly after the sectarian violence that they were exposed to in the late 1970s. This violent period, along with Alevi migration to the big cities, has resulted in their rapid politicization (Tambar 2012, 653).

Under Kemalist rule, the biggest ignorance of the Alevis came with the non-acknowledgment of the Alevi population being a distinct and autonomous identity. By not

recognizing any difference afforded by religion or regional and ethnic customs, in order to create a Turkish nationalist identity, the Kemalist regime failed to end state sponsored religious division and repressive policies that sought to homogenize the Turkish identity. Ultimately, to these ends, the Kemalist regime succumbed to the need of propping up a Sunni religious institution to replace the Ottoman caliphate – which the regime accomplished through the *Diyanet*. Because of this, the early Republican regime remained indifferent to the existence of Alevis in their official accounts –much like their Ottoman ancestors - in order to maintain control of a unified Turkish national identity and character. This situation, along with centuries-long suppression, emphasized that the identities of Alevis were written and designed either by the current hegemonic power according to its socio-political interests, or in line with the Alevis' relation to other identities; such as, citizens of the Republic of Turkey, Kurds etc. (Sokefeld 2008, 21). This suppression, particularly the lack of recognition of an Alevi identity, kept them from forming their own political identity in the early Republic, up until the later identity movements in the Turkish politics of 1970s (Sokefeld 2008, 32). Therefore, specific rituals and cultural practices remained as the key determinants and the key factors in the maintenance of an Alevi identity through this period, despite the fact that these fundamental features were re-contextualized by those in power at the time in service of a project of translating them into a newly defined Turkish identity (Köse 2012, 576).

With the identity movements of the 1970s in Turkey, the Alevis became a big part of the ongoing process of identity transformation; this was due to the modernization and urbanization that they subsequently underwent (Köse 2012, 576). This transformation of Alevis should be seen as a part of the transformation that all migrants from rural areas to big cities underwent, particularly through the urban branches of strong political party structures (Schuler 2002, 288). Even though there were conflicts with Turkish laicism in regards to the Alevi, and a subsequent recognition of politics that was triggered under these circumstances, we still cannot discuss a genuine Alevi identity movement. The Alevi identity movement was markedly different when referenced to other similar movements at the time, both in terms of religious and ethnic actors, such as Islamist and Kurdish movements. From the 1970s to the 1990s, the development of an Alevi identity through rural-urban migration, occurring around other major identity movements, was interrupted

by direct sectarian violence due to the political polarization between left and right political wings (Hiç 2009, 23, 30; Tambar 2012, 653; Massicard 2007, 58). This situation later reflected itself in the form of an increasing socialist ideology, which identified itself as the connecting core of the Alevi's political identities, and also caused the Alevis to abandon the centrality of their previously religiously and/or ethnically defined identity (Çamuroğlu 1998, 79; Köse 2012, 593; Massicard 2007, 60-61).

Nevertheless, this focus of change in the definition of Alevi identity was not launched until after the 1970s. This major transformation of Alevis from having no clear politics of identity to beginning to have one, and how it was initially largely enforced by the laic Kemalists, is important to examine for three main reasons. Firstly, there is a need to rethink existing political, historical, sociological and ethnographic literature on the topic, because much of it focuses too heavily on either the earlier pre-Republican understandings of Alevism as a religious group, or on the later post-Republican developments of Alevism as a distinct political entity (Massicard 2003; Sokefeld 2008; Tambar 2012; Vorhoff 1999). What is then needed is a renewed focus on the history of this transition, and the expanding of that particular period that moved the historical understanding of the Alevis from a marginalized religious group to the embodiment of the Alevis as a figure within the new Turkishness; which Kemalism had sought to inaugurate within Turkey. In order for this to be done, this thesis will necessarily need to focus on material from across a variety of disciplinary sources. Secondly, the limited literature on Alevis also brings about the necessity of a synthesis in the aforementioned areas in two ways. The current literature tends to neglect the political aspect of the Alevi identity in relation to the early Kemalist period; and moreover, the literature either focuses solely on the cultural dynamics of the community or examines the Alevi communities in relation to other identities such as Bektashis (Tambar 2012, 653). Thirdly, literature overlooking the intra-ethnic differences between Kurdish and Turkish Alevis is prevalent due to the long-lasting tension between the majority of the Kurdish citizens and the Turkish government that still stands to this day (Köse 2012; van Bruinessen 2013; Melikoff 1998).

The initial problematic in relation to understanding the Alevi social and political standpoint emerges from the lack of and ineffective use of literature. The political and

historical underpinning of the majority of available literature concerning the Alevis poses a challenge when sourcing information on the Alevis' socio-political behavior. The increase in publications on the Alevis in the last two decades have mostly been in Turkish, English, German and French; and considering the number of publications in Turkish, only a small number of them are reliable. As such, the scarcity of available sources on Alevi political history has led to reliance on a comparatively limited number of key sources throughout this study.

As a background to the Alevi faith, rituals and practices, even though this is the area to which the most attention is paid, three works provide crucial insight into the philosophy, rituals and practices of Alevis. These are: Murat Okan's *Türkiye'de Alevilik: Antropolojik Bir Yaklaşım* (2004), Irene Melikoff's *Bektashi / Kizilbas: Historical Bipartition and Its Consequences* and Talha Köse's, *Ideological or religious? Contending visions on the future of Alevi identity?* (2012). These three authors have made use of primary sources (Ottoman and Republic of Turkey archives on political history) as well as secondary sources to offer an insight into the Alevis' (religious, ethnic and ideological identity tendencies in relation to political incidents. The three sources are written primarily to enlighten the politicization processes that the Alevis went through, focusing particularly on the period from the 1970s onwards. Even though these sources only emphasize the last four decades, they are all well-versed in terms of highlighting the essential background that this thesis will rely on. The work of Okan will aid the thesis arguments to a great extent, as his work looks in detail at early Alevism and how it was conceptually formed - including historically within Anatolia.

Martin van Bruinessen's book *Kürtlük, Türklük, Alevilik: Etnik ve Dinsel Kimlik Mücadeleleri* (2013) is a valuable account, as it covers the heavily overlooked topic of intra-ethnic differences of Turkish and Kurdish Alevis respectively². The study surveys the ethnic identity differentiation as well as formation between Turkish and Kurdish

² Since this thesis is focusing specifically on the identity transformation of Alevis during the transition between Ottoman to Republican rule of Turkey, the term 'Kurdish Alevis' will be used for the population who either speaks Zaza or Kirmanci (dialects the Kurdish Language spoken within Turkey) regardless if they grasp the Kurdish identity or not; which in itself is indicative of another identity politics in the Modern era of Turkey as a nation-state.

Alevis from political, historical and sociological perspectives. This source is also significant in understanding the evolution of Kurdish ethnicity and it chronicles how the ethnic differences have evolved starting from the early Ottoman era in Anatolia to present day. In addition, due to the intensive stress that it puts on the faith, principles and traditions of the Alevis, this book is an essential source for this thesis.

Elise Massicard has written at length on the Alevis, covering their history of identity formation and politicization in her book, *Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması* (2007). Employed in this thesis, this book, though focused on the multi-party era from the Alevi identity movements' development point of view in relation to Kemalism, also offers an extensive account to the emergence of Alevi communities. She offers the reader an insight into the history of the Alevis, from the Ottoman Empire to the present decade, using centuries-long sociological observations. Therefore, this source is very important and unique in the field, as well as for this work.

Harald Schuler's book *Türkiye 'de Sosyal Demokrasi: Particilik, Hemşehrilik, Alevilik* (2002) is a masterpiece in providing insight into this sparsely covered topic, and how social democracy progressed in relation to partisanship, citizenship and Alevis. This source is a valuable account as it essentially depicts the quantitative data and analysis that has been used to bring about an investigation in early Republican era party structures' and party membership's impact on the later periods in the country. This book is also important to this study due to the special attention that it gives to the politicization tendencies of the Alevis and how that has develops over time.

In order to provide an understanding of the Alevi identity from historiographical, ethnographic and sociological points of views, Karin Vorhoff's *Türkiye 'de Alevilik ve Bektaşilikle İlgili Akademik ve Gazetecilik Nitelikli Yayınlar* (1997) and Faruk Bilici's *Alevi-Bektaşî İlahiyatının Günümüz Türkiye 'sindeki İşlevi* (1999) are crucial articles. Even though both sources necessitate further extended studies, they provide broad analysis on the areas that they examined respectively: literature review on the sources of Alevism and Bektashis, and the functionality of Alevi-Bektashi theology in today's Turkey.

This thesis aims then to validate how this sectarian minority known as Alevi evolved politically from the sixteenth century Ottoman Empire forward, and why most Alevis became Kemalists during the early Republican era of modern Turkey, with only a few abandoning Kemalism since then. It will try to explicate the historical, sociological and political dynamics found especially in the late Ottoman Era and Early Republican period, which consolidated Alevism as identical with a Kemalist (and to a lesser extent Leftist) identity. Before the Republican Party, whose roots are found in the Young Turks' ideology, we cannot really talk about a politically identifiable Alevi identity. Put differently, this study is mainly interested in the historical, political and social dynamics at play throughout the Alevis' history in Turkey; especially during the late 19th and 20th century when the Alevis' political identity was mainly shaped. Focusing on how this shaping rendered their cultural identity as an isolated and unique one, as well as figuring them as being at odds with orthodox Islam, highlighting how the cultural-historical roots of the community are inherently constituted along marginal social and political lines. It is important to note as well that this thesis will be primarily be concerned with exploring this expression of a “politicized” Alevi culture from works that are explicitly concerned with giving shape to the Alevi reception of its identification within various political regimes. What is of import to the history that is presented here then is how certain political discourses, policies and formations, regardless of their actual intent or veracity, impacted the Alevi in their own response and organization of a distinct political identity.

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter, in the initial section, serves primarily as an introduction. In the second section, the thesis turns to examine the historiography of Alevis development from the Ottoman Empire to the Republican era. Looking at this historiography is necessary to highlight the difficulties of locating an Alevi identity, primarily because it is precisely in the context of competing histories written by non-Alevi political powers that gave birth to an Alevi designation as a specific ethnicity in the first place.

Chapter Two will be devoted to understanding the specific terms that will be widely used throughout the study: the Alevi, Bektashi, Kizilbas, Kemalism, laicism and secularism. Here, the paper will provide insight for the reader about these key terms in order to

diminish the possibility ambiguities that might occur. In the second part of the chapter the study will highlight Alevi identity as a religion and Alevism as an ethnicity, which will be further touched upon in the following chapters; particularly through the lens of the formation of Alevi identity and how it re-positioned and politicized itself from its religious and ethnic origins.

Chapter Three will examine Alevi politicization and socialization processes from the late Ottoman period to the Turkish multi-party period. To examine the reproduction of Alevi identity and the extent to which Alevism was used and reinvented by the dominant political powers they have existed under. In this chapter, three sections will be presented. First, although focus will be given particularly to the last period of the Ottoman Empire under the Young Turks' rule relying on Alevi historiography, the Safavid Dynasty's religious, sociological and political effect on the Alevis will also be evaluated. Since the very terms of recognition of identity depend on the discourse of identity, Alevism's relation to Shi'ism through the Safavid Dynasty, when the Ottoman archives take them into consideration, should be seen as the start of the invention of the Alevi identity in Anatolia. Up until the sixteenth century, there existed no recognized sectarian religious group known as Alevi in the records of the Empire, and only after the 16th century did they come to be known as the Alevis (Çamuroğlu 1998, 83). Along with the results of the Battle of Chaldiran, instead of putting an end to the suppression of Ottoman over Shi'ite affiliated groups, including Alevis, the defeat of the Safavid Dynasty gave birth to an intolerant environment for such groups. In this regard, this thesis will question the extent to which the Safavids had an impact on the Alevi communities' traditions and rituals, which were subsequently later used by the reformist Young Turks.

In the second section, an examination of the early Republican era of Turkey under the rule of the Republican People's Party will take place within three subcategories. As aforementioned, how Kemalist nation-building reinvented and distributed Alevi identity as part of a new Turkishness within the new Turkey. On this point, the first subcategory, after the detailed outline given about the conditions of the new State, will focus on the role that was attributed to the Alevis for nation building. In this respect, the thesis will present how and why the Alevis were chosen by the Kemalists and it will also present the

reactions of Alevis as the actors of this critical Kemalist aim – especially after the Closure of Religious Convents and Dervish Lodges in November of 1925, which had a remarkably adverse effect on the Alevis. In addition, the intra-ethnic differences that have gained significance since the 1970s among Turkish and Kurdish Alevis as early as the Seyh Said rebellion will be examined. The similarities and dissimilarities between Turkish Alevis and Kurdish Alevis will also be discussed; the Kurdish problem has become a significant issue for the Republic of Turkey even to present day. For this purpose, the Seyh Said rebellion will essentially be used as a case study. In the second subcategory, one of the main Kemalist reforms, the abolishment of the Caliphate will be examined, and in the following subcategory another critical Kemalist reform, the *Diyanet*, will be presented. Along with the analysis of these two subcategories, a discussion will follow about how these reforms, whether indirectly or not, have influenced the Alevi communities. In doing so, it will emphasize the *de facto* state religion status of Sunni Islam through the *Diyanet*, even though the suppression of heretics changed its direction particularly to the radical Sunnis. This was due to strict control over religion via the *Diyanet* and the abolishment of the Caliphate office.

Chapter Four will emphasize the changes in political tendency among Alevis, starting from the period of multi-party politics. In this regard, the chapter will examine the emergence and formation of the party structure and partisanship before it moves on to analyze the Democratic Party's effect, by giving less attention to other political parties founded during that period; this includes the National Development Party and National Party. Special attention will be given to the Democratic Party mainly because it was the first successful political party formed which initiated the period as a multi-party period. While this part will offer a historical background for the aforementioned cases, the struggle between ideological identity and political identity in the Alevi communities will be reviewed particularly in relation to the disagreements that they have developed towards the Republican People's Party. The last part of Chapter Four will examine where the Alevis fit, as well as where they situate themselves, within the structure of the Turkish political system, particularly after the 1957 Election of Turkey.

Chapter Five concludes the arguments of the thesis as discussed in the preceding chapters.

1.2. Alevis and Historiography

Those who tell the stories also rule society. Plato –Republic

Looking at a historiography regarding Alevis is crucial to emphasize the difficulties of locating an Alevi identity. Particularly because it is precisely in the context of competing histories written by non-Alevi powers, which brought about Alevi as an ethnicity in the first place, it is significant to considering Alevi historiography. As such, the various powers that have brought the task forward of “identifying” the Alevi, and placing them in an official historical context, have left accounts that are wanting in objective focus. This following section will look to criticize the “official” view of Alevi identity, from the larger critique of historiography in the service of State homogenization. However, this critique is not the end goal of the section. Rather, it will also introduce an opening into research that seeks to orientate an approach to Alevi identity and history from the view of the Alevi community itself, as opposed to further developing a critical view of official historical accounts brought to bear upon the community.

History has begun to be seen as a hegemonic product, a tool that can shape personal memories and a mechanism that generates official biases in and through archives. In this regard, it is impossible to ignore the effect of the Western world in its historiographic methodological process and the concept of *modernity* for historical understanding, even though modernity's concerns for history gave birth to a highly fertile environment that consciously created ambiguity for the relationship between history and archive.

When the structure of power is considered, it is not hard to see that power acts as if it should have been exercised in and through whichever way it necessitates. Military powers, economic powers, as well as political powers are the ways in which authority shows its accountability to what it dominates. In this regard, *history* is the absolute way to interfere in any source of power, so as to ensure that the *archives* appear as a result of being exactly in the same category with the history for the hegemon. Modernity requires archives and archives are legitimated and interpreted in order to be used to push and pull whenever the powerful hegemon is in need of change and support. Power not only creates archives, but is also fed by them. History is equal to the archives by reason of the understanding of

modernity; power will reproduce itself over and over in time with similar changes within the archives it indexes.

The understanding of modernity has a strong correlation with the history for the new world. The nation-state is one of the most important factors in the process of defining history. To state the matter differently, history is seen as a requirement particularly for the oppressed ones on their way to freedom. However, the oppressed ones' struggle would always remain far from being enough to be fully purified from the hegemon's rule and influence, and the nationality discourse that the hegemon powers created in the name of modernity might not in fact be applicable for the oppressed (Dirks 1990, 25-26). It is also arguable that the tradition of the oppressed is highly affected by the hegemonic world, by gaining a new meaning of the concept of the modernity of hegemons even though modernity itself depends upon tradition. Thus, in any case, history became the hegemon's history and not the history of the oppressed.

The making of history is inseparable then from archives in today's understanding. Thus, while the number of the interpretations of history is variable, who always wins is the archive creator (Stoler 2002, 89). Our perceptions are under attack from so-called modern history producers as well as our own roles in the process of making our own history and memory. History, in its hegemonic and modern iteration, depends on archives that facilitate and develop it as such.

An archive is not an institution, but "the law of what can be said," not a library of events, but "that system that establishes statements as events and things," that "system of their enunciabilities" (Foucault qtd. in Stoler 2002, 94). The Turkish Historical Society was established shortly after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 by the new Kemalist government. With this new institution, even though the new country placed an emphasis on territoriality as a nationality basis, they also aimed to create a new Turkish identity other than what the constitution had drawn up. The creation of archives was thus necessary to house legitimate and official works of history. As a result, archives were produced or reproduced first. The Turkish Historical Society produced a history through the archives in order to offer a new Turkishness that did not correlate to Ottomans, nor

that correlated to the many minority groups who could not be corroborated by reliable sources.

History is a story about power, a story about those who won (Trouillot 1995, 5). In the case of modern Turkey, the early Republican government was the winner; it offered a new history of the Turk. While doing so, this new government did not acknowledge ethnic or religious minorities; it only emphasized the new idea of Turkishness. Derrida's saying, *no political power without control of the archive* supports the previous argument and also underlines the significant role of the archives in the path of being powerful (Derrida qtd. in Stoler 2002, 92). For this purpose, it would be wrong to say that Alevi folklore began to be used as a political apparatus within archives with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey; the Alevis were also used as a tool whose lived tradition was ignored, misunderstood and reproduced according to the archival process of the Kemalist modern nationalism project.

The history of the Alevis is a highly institutionalized one, stretching from the time of the Seljuks and Ottomans to the current day. Due to a long lasting misrecognition of the Alevi community, aside from early pejorative attributes found in Ottoman archives, extended Alevi historical writing only goes back to the late Ottoman Empire and early Turkish Republic (Massicard 2003, 43; Sokefeld 2008, 35; Tambar 2012, 658). The Alevis were accounted for in the archives of the Ottoman Empire mainly from the sixteenth century onwards with different connotations. In Ottoman documents, Kizilbas was the term used to describe the Alevis until the nineteenth century, with words such as heretic, schismatic, Shi'ite and atheist also used; without specifying who the Kizilbas really were (Melikoff 1998, 5-6). Though mentioned from the twentieth century onwards, destructive stereotypes ascribed to the Alevis have not been in use as frequently as before, due to the Young Turk's positive interest in Alevis for their own reform movements. But it is still in effect and some works of Sunni literature still picture the Alevis as an innocent and naïve people who deviated from the right path due to the unpleasant conditions that they were subjected to (Vorhoff 1999, 44-45). As there is no escape from being subjected to the history that the hegemonic powers have written, this situation affects the present and future accordingly. In other words, since the Alevis have failed to have a clear record of

their lived history passed into the archives of the powers that rule them, modernity is then a failure too at its history-making, showing vividly in the case of Kemalist's Alevi historiography in the service of their modernization efforts (Dirks 1990).

Fuat Köprülü, the head and the founder of the Institute of Turkic Studies at the time of the new Republic, gave birth to first academic writings on the Alevis during the last decade of the Ottoman Empire (Vorhoff 1999, 37; Massicard 2003, 43). Furthermore, in *his* Committee of Union and Progress, Baha Sait supported the research that emphasized the Turkish-Alevi communities. Sait claimed that the goal of the Turkish-Alevi communities had always been to protect the 'real' Turkish language, ethnicity and blood (Sait 1994, 22).

By not being any different than their Young Turk ancestors, Kemalists approached Alevi folklore as a source that could be interpreted as the reflection of the required essentials that the new state's nationalist project demanded. The Kemalists enlisted the assistance of the Turkish Historical Society in order to do this, while the Ottoman Young Turks similarly employed the Institute of Turkic Studies (Tambar 2012, 658).

However, the history that has been created by the powerful does not reflect authenticity; because even through the victory of establishing a novel and free nation-state, the history written from the previous hegemons of the land continued to affect it in and through its use of archives towards political rather than objective academic or scientific ends (Dirks 1990; Stoler 2002). Particularly, the control over collective memory, the teaching of historical memory, and the national project of teaching historical memory are themes that were put into practice by Ottoman rule for centuries and again later by the Kemalists, who likewise also guaranteed the long-lasting misrecognition of the identity of Alevis in the Republic of Turkey (Oglesby 2007, 83).

The attempt to produce more objective academic sources in relation to the Alevis has developed in recent decades. Mainly after the sectarian violence directed against their community in the late 1970s Alevi intellectuals began to publish works on Alevis. In other words, for the first time, the Alevis began to write their own history and have it archived in the public sphere. From then on, Alevi historiography has gained greater legitimacy

and officialdom when compared to the Alevi history that was written by the preceding dominating powers (Tambar 2012, 658-659; Vorhoff 1999, 34). Re-reading archives is a daunting affair in the Alevi case due the fact that Alevi history was written by various hegemon powers for various reasons of political expediency rather than objective knowledge. However, the re-reading of these archives still remains helpful to a certain extent for those in search of Alevi history. The archived data still shows a certain idea about how ‘the others’, the dominants, perceived the Alevis in the case of the studies presented by Köprülü and Sait. Nonetheless, the perception of others in the case of writing the history of a highly neglected as well as suppressed community brings about another outcome that is a further obstacle in front of an accomplished rewritten Alevi-history: the re-victimizing effect that the process of history writing brings about with its production.

In the process of history-making for a community, despite each occasion being unique, *re-victimization* plays a significant role, especially if violence is a crucial part of the historical account (Gur-Ze’ev & Pappé 2003, 93). Unsurprisingly, the Alevis were the ones who were significantly affected by re-victimization in their history writing due to their collective memory of traumatic incidents³ that have impacted on them over the centuries (Massicard 2007, 85). The history of the Alevis is also a distinctive case in terms of revalidating its history as a community not only through long running issues such as unrecognized identities, but also through its daily dose of victimhood brought about by the history of an unrecognized identity itself. The objections raised through opposition to the naming of the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge are an important example in this respect.

In this position, oral history has come into prominence in such a way that it would be the only way for the Alevis to rediscover their past through a more valid means, given how heavily developed Alevi folklore was around oral traditions. However, the suppression of Alevis affected the accountability of the information that could be gained from oral history, because the suppression lasted centuries and disrupted the possibility of clear transmission greatly. In the following part, this thesis will point out why the methodology

³ Sixteenth century Alevi massacre of Yavuz Sultan Selim, 1937-1938 Dersim Massacre, 1978 Maraş Massacre, 1993 Sivas Massacre, 1995 Gazi Incident (Sokefeld 2008, 42; Ocak 2004, 135; Refik 1932; Ocak 1998, 94-95; Massicard 2007, 85).

of oral history particularly in relation to re-victimization cannot help us understand the era that this dissertation aims to research. Although it is important to point out that this victimization was efficient in moving the Alevis to adopt secular power as an ideology, because it appeared as an equally opposed power to Sunni Islam.

Oral history provides history at large with its sources for understanding social meaning, which is not presented in written, formal, political history. However, social history is interested in meaning and formation of memory instead of event based, sequential, linear understanding of history. Hence, the formation of memory as mediation between present and past plays a crucial role in understanding the social meaning of historical events. A single dimension that represents the truth or reality does not contribute to its formation but it is contributed to by a different organization of memory, which provides meaning for past events from the viewpoint of the present. This way, oral sources do not produce static, unchangeable and direct understandings of the events; however, they do present us with a changing, transformational and contingent perspective on the past (Portelli 1991). Since the history of the Alevis has been constructed using traumatic collective memories, historiography containing the recent past can only be fed by oral history as a complementary source; not like the incidents that had taken place hundred years ago. On most occasions, these would only cause re-victimization and self-realization over the victimhood.

Furthermore, oral history forces different historicities to confront themselves and also proposes an alternative formal dimension. The different modes of selections and representations by shifting chronologies and spaces can be realized in oral sources. The mode of selection presents us with different echoes of the event; the personal, collective and political. The different modes of selection make us notice that as varied interests and motivations tell the history, the event itself is converted into a multi-formed historical instrument in memories (Portelli 1991).

“... practice in which pasts that clash with official ways of explaining nation, community, and identity are arrested, in the multiple senses of being held back and, thus, delaying progress but also, in the ironic sense, of drawing attention to these pastsHistorical arrest is not a permanent ban and times

are anticipated –although not guaranteed- in the future when these histories will be opened for discussion ... Arrest is not just for written histories, but also for the many and varied forms that history may take and the ways that histories are unmade as well as made and made sense of”. (McGranahan 2005, 575)

Consequently, the Alevi's arrested historiography from the sixteenth century onwards is currently seen as unfortunate, as rewriting the history of centuries is unlikely to be seen as a valid process. One reason is that oral history makes sense to historical events that occurred in the recent past by reconstructing them in present (Portelli 1991). On the other hand, the Europeans mainly produce literature on the Alevis; thus, even if European-written literature on the Alevis has greater validity than previous literature, the language barrier makes it harder for the Alevis wanting to rediscover their histories as most of the studies are published in non-Turkish languages (Vorhoff 1999, 55).

Because of the volatile nature of oral histories and the inherent lack of objectivity in the narrative voices that take it up, this study will focus primarily on providing a synthesis culled from a number of sources published in English, German and French; particularly those published before the 1980s. Also, in order to avoid the trapping of reproducing a history of the Alevis without giving ear to the Alevis themselves, a survey of Turkish language Alevi sources as well; especially those that began being published in the 1990s, after many Alevi intellectuals turned away from the precedent of oral history and took on the task of developing a history in a more formal academic context.

Chapter II. Definitions and Alevi Identity

2.1. Definitions

2.1.1. Alevi, Bektashi, Kizilbas

Despite the intention to thoroughly examine Alevism in the following section, it is significant to describe the two most Alevism-engaged phenomena that will be recalled throughout the thesis: Bektashi and Kizilbas. Due to having no clear difference between the Alevis, Bektashis and Kizilbas, it is important to evaluate the extent of their relation in relation to one another.

The Bektashis and the Alevis or the former Kizilbas all refer to a well-known saint, Hacı Bektas. These groups migrated from Central Asia to Anatolia during Seljuk during the eleventh century onwards, and were part of a larger group of migrants collectively known as the Turkmen tribes (van Bruinessen 2013, 95; Melikoff 1998, 2). A charismatic and legendary figure, Hacı Bektas, also a Turkish Dervish, was one of the Turkmens who came to Anatolia around 1230s.

Hacı Bektas was not a theologian but a mystic, being a Muslim who did not give up the ancient practices of Central Asia while also interpreting new forms of ritual based on these older traditions (Melikoff 1998, 4; Tambar 2012, 660). For example, he did not pray in mosques. Instead he climbed mountains with his followers, while the dervishes lit fires around which they danced, performing *semah* (Melikoff 1998, 4). After his death, many of the Turkmen tribes continued to follow his religious teachings, organized as ‘Bektashi Sufi orders’. To this day the majority of Alevis and early Turkmens still follow the Sufi orders of Hacı Bektas (Tambar 2012, 653).

The arrival of the Turkmens to Eastern Anatolia caused a rapid and intense transformation that gave birth to the new pastoral nomadism and a new type of tribal structure consisting of many diversified groups. Particularly, due to the influence of Kurdish tribes, Islam rapidly spread among the other Turkmen tribes. The Islamic transformation among the Turkic migrants played out in two different ways (van Bruinessen 2013, 95; Melikoff 1998, 4-5). One group which maintained their nomadic and semi-nomadic lifestyle, which

was later exposed to some troublesome periods, was the Kizilbas. The other group that adopted a sedentary life in urban centers became the Bektashis (Melikoff 1998, 4-5).

An important point that should be stressed is not only the distinct emergence of these two distinct groups, but also how the name given to them, “Alevi”, developed through the centuries. For a long time in Ottoman documents, the Kizilbas were called heretics, schismatic, Shi’ite and also atheists despite having no definite name. The Kizilbas retained their historical name through the centuries, but later they became known as the Alevi. Although Kizilbas literally means “red head” and was attributed to them due to their headdress that comprised a red bonnet with twelve facets, in Ottoman documents Kizilbas was clearly meant to be read as ‘heretic’ and ‘heretic level’ (Melikoff 1998, 5-6). Stigmatized as a heterodox group, as well as ascribed all kinds of destructive stereotypes; these stigmas persisted for centuries, even after the name Alevi took the place of Kizilbas. Any association with the term Alevi/Kizilbas carried negative connotations even well into the modern period of Turkey (Sokefeld 2008, 35). Kizilbas was also deemed a swearword that implied all the negative stereotypes attributed to Alevis, such as having no morals, no honor, and no belief. Such ideas even made their way into official state sponsored dictionaries, which the Alevis later fought to have removed (Sokefeld 2008, 43).

Due to the identicalness in their beliefs, the Alevis became one of the recognized Islamic heterodox groups in Turkey, in spite of the fact that the name ‘Alevi’ means ‘to worship Ali’; Ali being deemed as sacred by these groups in Turkey (Melikoff 1998, 6). Here it is critical to see that the negative attributes attached to the Kizilbas–Alevis and accordingly to the Bektashis was the initial sign of their misrecognition by the state, the religious institutions and by the majority public, i.e. the Sunni Muslim population (Sokefeld 2008, 35). This misrecognition brought about persecution and violence that resulted in a strategy of further misrecognition (Sokefeld 2008, 35). For example, in order not to be recognized by ‘the others’ many Alevis became one of ‘the others’ within the non-Alevi, Sunni Muslim-dominated public (Sokefeld 2008, 35).

Fuat Köprülü (1890-1965), the pioneer of Alevi folkloric studies as well as the head of the Institute of Turkic Studies⁴, called the Alevis ‘country Bektashis’, as he claimed that Alevis were representing themselves as a rough form of Bektashis (Melikoff 1998, 6; Massicard 2003, 43). In time, the nuance in the living style between both groups showed itself with greater clarity. While Alevis remained as a disclosed society within their nomadic lifestyle along with the similar attributes that the Kizilbas had to face, the Bektashis were able to penetrate Ottoman society. The likely outcome of this is that one cannot become an Alevi unless he/she was born as one, while anyone can become a Bektashi. As an organized group, the Bektashis compared to the Kizilbas-Alevis who remained relatively disorganized, created two different images particularly in the eyes of the late Ottoman period and early Republican Era of Turkey that will be evaluated in the third chapter (Melikoff 1998, 6).

Therefore, even though there is no proof showing the process that institutionally bound Alevis to Bektashis as seen from the aforementioned points, there is a certain spiritual identicalness between the two that resulted from a paralleled rise for both in-dissociable communities in many areas, such as in the political arena – albeit with a certain degree of difference (Massicard 2003, 35-36; Melikoff 1998, 7). In the following chapter, I will further examine how and to what extent these sects differ in lifestyle, and how this reflects on their ultimate position with the Turkish Republic/political sphere.

2.1.2. Kemalism, Secularism, Laicism

In this thesis, I will use the term ‘Kemalism’, which refers to the state-led regime of modernization introduced at the beginning of the Turkish Republic by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his supporters. In addition, the term ‘Kemalists’, stemming from the early Republican era of Turkey, refers to Atatürk and his supporters, who later become known as the new Republican elites that strongly believed in the Kemalist ideology of progress; even if implemented through harsh and repressive measures (Tambar 2012, 670; Göle

⁴ The Institute of Turkic Studies, founded as a branch of Darülfünun in 1924 (aka. Istanbul University) (Massicard 2003, 43).

1997, 50). Furthermore I will also use the terms secularism and laicism interchangeably in order to understand what Turkish secularism/laicism, or *laiklik*, is.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was the leader of nationalist military forces that established the Republic of Turkey in 1923; and the principle term, adopted from his name, that has come to describe the essential features of the newfound Republic is *Kemalism* (Kemalist ideology), which was advanced by the nationalist movement particularly during the War of Independence of Turkey (1914 – 1918). Kemalist ideology sought to bring about a secular nation-state led by educational and scientific progress and centered on the principles of rationalism, enlightenment, secularism and positivism (Göle 1997, 48; Webster 1973, 245). Despite the latter two being Western concepts, they have attained different meanings and roles in Turkey's non-Western, Muslim contexts. As Göle points out, “Positivism is a universal model only when it serves to dissociate Western modernity from a particularistic culture or religion and is perceived to be a rational mode of thinking and acting applicable to all societies” (Göle 1997, 48). In the Turkish context, the positivism of Auguste Comte offered the frame of reference for reform which progressive Turkish elites, or *Kemalists*, used to legitimize the Republican elites’ modernization attempts (Göle 1997, 48). From the Young Turks onwards, the secular stance of the Republic of Turkey, shaped by positivism, was achieved by the Kemalists and was done so contrary to the general belief that state secularization could not be achieved in a Muslim country because of secularization’s distinct relationship with religion and nationality. The Kemalists believed that when their ideology is internalized by the masses by any means, there is then no escape from religion (Norris & Inglehart 2004, 65). In addition, in Islam, religion and state are seen as fused together; the state is conceived as the embodiment of religion, and religion is seen as the essence of the state (Berkes 1964, 7). Even the term ‘secularization’ stems from the acceptance of religion, and what religion created lately was endowed it its own sphere. On the other hand Berkes (1964, 5) states:

“The use of the term “secularism” in connection with the determination of relations between spiritual and temporal authorities gives the impression that the condition to which the term refers is found only where such distinctly institutionalised authorities coexisted. In this narrow concept, secularism

appears to be merely a matter of separating the respective areas of jurisdiction of two institutions of authority”.

In light of the aforementioned points, it is crucial to understand what Turkish secularism is and how it was established in Turkey, a Muslim majority country. The answer lies in the concept of the French-inspired *laicite* or laicism, and was due to its highly centralized model of change that turned out to be the template of reform for Turkish modernists. Therefore, laicism should be seen as the part of the process as opposed to a result of the modernization process (Göle 1997, 48).

Although French laicism requires strong anticlericalism, that is the ultimate separation of the church and the state, the Turkish interpretation of laicism is that religious affairs should be regulated by the State which incorporates the clerical personnel into the state bureaucratic apparatus via the Presidency of Religious Affairs, making them state employees with tremendous public and political influence (Parla & Davidson 2008, 69). Therefore, it can be interpreted that Kemalist laicism is not ideologically anti-religious, thoroughly anti-clerical, or entirely anti-religio-political (Parla & Davidson 2004, 113). The main similarity amongst secularism and laicism is that laicism as a modernist ideology rejects the existence of religion in the public sphere and supports ‘positive sciences’ (Göle 1997, 48; Parla & Davidson 2004, 101). Especially between 1923 and 1946, state control over religion in relation to the public sphere was rigid in Turkey⁵. Some of the restrictions of the State included: banning religious orders, compulsory Westernized dress codes for public servants, and the ‘imposition of certain types of audio-visual programming at state radio stations Göle 1997, 49). Later in the 1950s the state’s hold on religion softened significantly.

2.2. Alevi Identity of Turkey

Even though the Alevis are the biggest sectarian minority in Turkey after the Sunni majority, due to the absence of ethnic and *madhhab* (sectarian-based data), the actual population of Alevis in present-day Turkey is not known. Nonetheless various estimates

⁵ In the Chapter Three rigid control will be detailed.

put the number of the Alevi population at a range from 10 to 20 million (15 to 20 per cent of the population of Turkey) (Schuler 2002, 171-172; Kehl-Bodrogi 1988, 93; Vorhoff 1995, 58; Köse 2012, 576-577; Tambar 2012, 653). This situation makes drawing a clear Alevi identity and re-categorizing Alevism that already has an inexplicable identification even harder.

As such, attempts of describing Alevis and Alevism bring about a number of definitions (Tambar 2012, 653). The ones that define Alevism through religion casts it as essentially Islamic, or as an offshoot of Shi'ism, or simply as a Turkish color of Islam or even in some cases as a different religion all together. Some others claim that Alevism initially emerged as a political situation where its characteristics were politicized whereas others emphasize the Shamanist or Zoroastrian sides of Alevism (Vorhoff 1995, 77-181).

Starting from the early 1960s, the Alevi migration from rural areas to cities brought about a drastic change in traditional Alevi identity. Modernized and particularly urbanized Alevis gave rise to later identity movements after the 1970s. Despite the introduction of movements that helped recognize Alevis, these failed to be enough to describe the Alevi identity in one unified definition (Köse 2012, 578; Massicard 2007, 19). The reason for this may stem from the focuses of the movements. The identity movements were chiefly built around Islamist and Kurdish movements that had religious and ethnic-based reference actors. Alevi identity movements in that respect remained weaker due to the absence of a clear reference point that it could employ to motivate and unite the whole community. The dilemmas in regards to defining Alevism show that Alevism emerged as an identity movement without having a clear identity.

In this respect, in this section and with Alevi historiography in mind, this chapter will focus on two notions that are widely believed by scholars to have given birth to a traditional Alevi identity for centuries: religion and ethnicity. In relation to the findings of this section, the following chapter will evaluate Alevism as an ideology with these two concepts in mind. It will also consider how Alevism has situated itself by being exposed to external pressures, particularly by the Young Turks and the Kemalists.

2.2.1. Alevism as a Religion

Although usually associated with Shi'ism (Köse 2012), a number of prominent Alevi intellectuals have demonstrated a certain distinction between Alevism and Shi'ism (Bozkurt 1990; Öz 2001; Şener 1989). According to these scholars, Alevism as a religion is a distinct sectarian entity within Islam. The source of distinction of Alevi religiosity is origination out of Anatolia itself, which over centuries shaped Alevism's characteristic religious customs. This study will follow the point of views of these thinkers, and though it will not view Alevism as an offshoot of Shi'ism, the commonalities shared between the two will not be disregarded as well.

In this regard, it would not be wrong to start evaluating Alevism against its religious foundation. However, in order to understand this link, an understanding of the anthropological perspective of religion is required. Religions and their rituals are the two focal points that anthropological studies of religion primarily focus on. It is necessary to view the rituals practiced by believers in order to comprehend a religion, as religion and rituals are inseparable for the believer (Radcliffe-Brown 1968, 303).

Worship then, as a focus of communal ritual, is a significant element for any form of religion; because worshiping is seen as the embodiment of the entire religious order, which should be fulfilled by the individuals or communities for gods, ancestors and deaths (Örnek 1988, 78). Through worship, a believer can communicate with what or whom she/he believes in. Worship occupies a big part in any religious society's social interactions and events. For worshiping, individuals or communities need four main essentials that are as follows: firstly, a certain place to perform worship such as meeting houses, subtle foundations, and sacred places; secondly, specified tools such as masks, idols and musical instruments; thirdly, specific dates, for example harvesting times, new year's eve, birth and death days of sacred persons, and times for sunsets and sunrises; and lastly, a community leader (Örnek 1988, 70). In this regard, the aforementioned four elements are also highly critical in order to evaluate and understand Alevism as a religion thoroughly.

The community leader in Alevism, known as a *dede*, is of major significance. According to Max Weber, charisma, regardless of its source whether it is real, or claim, or ascription, is one's genius. Charismatic authority represents a subject who is obeyed by the majority, who is obeyed in turn because of their extraordinary abilities, which are attributed to him/her by the very same group (Weber 1993, 252). In a circular and reinforcing way, the attributes bestowed upon these charismatic figures also legitimize the leadership status given to them. In this respect, *dedes* should be seen as charismatic religious leaders given that their communities view them as those with superior abilities, along with their holistic characteristics by being the descendants of Ali and Fatima. The *dede* then represents a distinct posturing of the Alevi as being literally descended from the founders of Islam, while also fulfilling a more antiquated Anatolian folk-religious position of community spiritual leader, or *shaman* (Okan 2004, 23; Sokefeld 2008, 265; van Bruinessen 2013, 118).

The emergence of the *dede* is important owing to their position in religion. The shamani way of religious leadership of the Alevi society that stemmed from their earlier Turkmen nomadic backgrounds changed rapidly under the influence of Safavid Dynasty during the sixteenth century. *Icazetname* introduced by the Safavids for example was dedicated to the religious leaders of those Alevi Turkmen communities that laid the foundation of the *dedelik* (Ocak 1996, 253-254). Another possible effect of the Safavids on the Alevis relates to Ali, the cousin and the son-in-law of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad, who is deified by the both communities. The *dede* within Alevi communities is tied back to Ali through familial descent. This characteristic of Alevism is one of the major reasons why Alevis appear to many as an offshoot of Shi'ism (van Bruinessen 2013, 118). However, this merging of both Islam through descendent leaders and the local tradition of the shamanic leader in Anatolian folk-religion, is a way that Alevism distinguishes itself from Shi'ism. Alevism is distinguished in that it adheres to a translation of Shi'a Islamic precepts into the unique history of Anatolian religious customs, whereas strictly Shi'a religious orders do not adopt the Anatolian folk norms into their practice.

As such, the *dede* takes on a much wider role as spiritual and community leader within Alevism. The duty of the *dedes* during worship was to regulate intra-society orders,

establish ethical rules and punish any offenders by denouncing them within the community, instead of simply leading the community members through praying for the sake of God (Okan 2004, 25).

Cem is the most communal Alevi ritual performed by a *dede*, and also has unique aspects that diverge significantly from normal ritual practice in Shi'a Islam. For example, women and men participate jointly in the *cem*, and together worship through the *semah*, with music and dance, which play important roles (Sokefeld 2008, 42, 265). Alevi folk poets are also important elements in Alevi folklore. They were indispensable to *cems* and were very well respected by the community. Today, they are perceived as the descendants of Shamans and the pioneers of Turkish oral literature (Okan 2004, 67; Massicard 2003, 45).

Also, unlike in more traditional sects of Islam, there are no designated holy places of worship amongst the Alevi. Still, though there is no specified holy place among the traditional Alevi, *cemevi* (Cem-Houses) were erected after the rise of rural-urban migration in order to accommodate the needs of community ritual in the new urban settings. *Cemevi* is a modern Turkish invention that represents a building that is used by urban Alevi followers where *cem* is celebrated and performed by the masses. The emergence of the *cemevi* comes with the need for the community to congregate and perform their rituals; as a result *cemevis* have also become significant community centers for Alevis (Sokefeld 2008, 265; van Bruinessen 2013, 118).

The Alevi also have distinct religious holidays that belong specifically to their religious communities and are not shared by other Islamic sects. For example, *Muharram* is the first month of the Islamic lunar calendar. For Alevis, it is believed that the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the son of Caliph Ali and one of the Twelve Holy Imams, at the battle of Karbala, corresponds to the tenth day of Muharram (Netton 1997, 177). This is why the month of *Muharram* is accepted as a holy month amongst the Alevi; the 'Month of Mourning'. During this month, followers of the Alevi creed break their fasts with simple dinners that preclude dairy products or water (Göner 2005, 130).

Consequently, Alevism, like any other religion, consists then of four essentials; a community leader i.e. a *dede*, certain rituals, places of worship and its own holy days in

order to regulate the behavior of its society; all of which has been shaped over hundreds of years. Moreover these essentials have also become the main part of the Alevi cultural identity. In this regard, within Alevism, as worship became a societal practice, it also became a societal phenomenon among other communities that the Alevi have had to share social space with (Okan 2004, 22).

2.2.2. Alevism as an Ethnicity

Apart from the descriptions that attempt to identify Alevism through religious means, irrespective of its correlation with Shi'ism, some scholars have also emphasized the ethnic identity of the Alevi phenomena (Andrews & Beninghaus 1989; Okan 2004). Due to the strong communal group identity, the significance of the continuity of the community in Alevism, and also owing to the unsurprising result of a closed society, endogamy was one of the expected outcomes brought about by the traditional Alevi identity. In addition to this endogamous social order, Alevism could only be passed on patrilineally (Kehl-Bodrogi 1996, 64-67). With these two cases in mind, it is not hard to see the clear connection between the notion of ethnicity and the self-enclosedness of Alevi communities (Okan 2004, 25). On the other hand, according to Andrews, to be able to identify an ethnic group, we should look at how this group identifies itself and perceives the others at present around it (Andrews 1992, 17). Despite there being other explicit criteria in relation to their ethnic roots, a more valid identification is these roots' reflection to today's definitions (Andrews 1992, 57). In this respect, the distinction between ethnicity and race is important to mention. Ethnicity, unlike race, does not consist of people who have the same biological formation; it is rather related to culture and identity (Kupper & Kupper 1985, 268). Considering Alevis in this context, from the sixteenth century onwards they have increasingly been shown to have the features of an ethnic community.

During the sixteenth century, by being under the political as well as the religious influence of the Safavid Dynasty, and as a result being persecuted by the Ottoman government, they became marginalized within Ottoman society (Okan 2004, 28-29). The geographical areas they began to settle in after being marginalized, in addition to the aforementioned endogamous life style of Alevis, drew a certain line between the Alevi communities and

its others (Okan 2004, 29; Kehl-Bodrogi 1996, 52-52). This was also the period when Ottoman historiographers began to view the Kizilbas/Alevi groups as heretics. Still, this exclusion also strengthened a sense of Alevi unity (Okan 2004, 29). In addition to this, the fact that today in their daily relations and speech, Alevis frequently mention non-Alevis as *yabancı*, or stranger, this also leads us to think of the Alevis as a community with an awareness of ethnic differences between themselves and non-Alevis. Thus, in light of these mentioned points it is not possible to comprehend Alevism only within its religious affiliations.

These distinct cultural, religious and ethnic characteristics which Alevism have existed in, points to an important role, both in the formation of their identity and perception of the Alevis by the Sunni majority. While Alevism became predominantly understood as a heterodox branch of Islam, both Alevis' and non-Alevis' perception of this group became even more discriminating and intolerant. This then shaped a political and social tension under rules that were mostly in favor of Sunni Islam, and prepared the grounds for them to embrace a more secular political ideology; one that is in relatively less support of politically strengthening Sunni Islam. In other words, Alevis as a historically, socially, and culturally unified group had been long conditioned to reposition their identities under the Kemalist ideology when it emerged, because it offered a political stance that aligned with the Alevi community's dual needs for both their religious and social identity

Chapter III. Alevi Politicization and Socialization Processes

3.1. Alevis in the Ottoman Era

Religious pluralism is rooted in the Qur'an; "For each of you, religious communities: Jews, Christians, Muslims we have appointed a law and ritual", thus showing the explicit acceptance of religious diversity (amongst the Abrahamic based faiths) that was also adopted by the Muslim majority in the Ottoman Empire (Sonn 2005, 74). However, Ottoman rule over minorities was not the necessarily neutral and became the main and most significant dynamic that determined various minority groups' socialization and politicization under throughout centuries of Ottoman rule. In this respect, the Alevis' relationship with the Ottoman Empire is important to highlight here, not only because they were the biggest sectarian Muslim group, but also because the sixteenth-century Ottoman era was a distinctive period, determining the emergence of the Alevi formation of identity; which continues to carry major characteristics within the Alevi community even to this day (Okan 2004, 81).

In this section, an examination of the Alevis during Ottoman rule after the sixteenth century until the formation of the new Republic of Turkey will occur. Therefore, an intended emphasis will be placed on the influence of the Safavid Dynasty carried by the Alevis under the Ottoman Empire, before and after the Battle of Chaldiran (1514). In this regard, special attention will be given to the transformation in the attitude of Ottoman governance over minorities, again with relation to the Battle of Chaldiran. This section will also highlight the change in perception of the Alevis by the Ottoman government under the Young Turk era, and the further definition that Alevi communities underwent, especially in relation to the influence of the Bektashi community at that time.

Even though the Ottoman Empire was tolerant towards ethnic and religious minorities from its early days, it began to lose its tolerance for heterodox groups particularly after it declared itself the defender of Sunnism against the Shi'ite Safavid Dynasty. The reason behind this declaration was not only to unify all Sunnis against the Safavid Dynasty, but also to identify other potential political threats that appeared supportive of the aims of Shah Ismail (Sokefeld 2008, 42; Ocak 1998, 94-95). The *tariqats* and the sects attached

to Safavids that were living in Ottoman territory, also came under the threat of the Ottoman Empire during this time. Alevi communities were also one of the heterodox groups that appeared attached to the Safavids (Ocak 1998, 94-95). Therefore, the Safavid Dynasty had both a direct and indirect effect over the Alevi communities. In this respect, the influence of the Safavids on the Alevis can be examined in three ways.

The first effect is the political influence of the Safavid Dynasty. Whether it was an intentional effort on the part of Alevis or not, it is not easy to predict the extent of the political effect of the Safavids on the Alevis, yet the Safavid Dynasty legitimized the political aspect of its supporters by creating a stance against the Ottomans. In this regard, this situation can be seen as their first politicization for the Alevi communities, highlighting a theme ever present in Alevi political action; that of being in a position of ‘taking sides’.

Secondly, the religious impact of the Safavid Dynasty was more effective and critical for the future of the cultural, political and religious formation of the Alevi communities. The shamanist and tribal way of religious leadership in Alevi society had changed with the impact of the Safavids through *seyyidlik*. In addition to this, the religious leaders of the Alevi communities were distributed *icazetname*, a diploma that gave birth to the aforementioned *dedelik* institution in the previous chapter, and has become one of the essentials of the structure of Alevism (Ocak 1996, 253-254).

The third and most significant effect of the Safavid Dynasty over Alevis was the ostracizing of the Safavid Dynasty and any affiliated groups within the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman's accused the founder of the Safavid Dynasty, Shah Ismail, and his followers of being atheists. By viewing them as atheists, Ottoman rule legitimized the pressure they imposed upon them. The oppression that Ottoman rule put into action from the beginning of the sixteenth century came in the shape of mass arrests, deportation and massacres, which were not only limited to Shah Ismail's supporters (Sokefeld 2008, 42). All other heterodox groups within the Ottoman Empire, including the Shi'ites who were also seen as heterodox, were also heavily affected by Ottoman oppression. As a result, Alevis, simply by being the biggest Anatolian community related to the Safavids, experienced oppression to a greater extent than the other groups (Refik 1932; Ocak 1998, 94-95).

The repression of non-Sunni groups at the beginning of the Battle of Chaldiran originated from a functional security purpose that tried to suppress the strengthening Safavid Dynasty. However, in time, the policies against non-Sunni groups turned into an essential part of an Ottoman ideology towards non-Sunnis from that time onwards, even until the end of the Ottoman Empire (Refik 1932; Ocak 1998, 94-95). To a great extent, the suppression of Ottoman rule lost its brutality after the big defeat of the Safavids in the Battle of Chaldiran on 23 August 1514, which was fought by the Ottoman Empire under the rule of Yavuz Sultan Selim (1512 –1520). Sunni ideology during the Ottoman Empire became the inexpugnable power that the Sultanate grasped, excluding any other alien identities including the Alevis. Along with the Caliphate title that Yavuz Sultan Selim gained from the Mamluk Sultanate, the Sunni base of the Ottoman Empire strengthened over other religious groups (Gölpınarlı 1969, 87; Massicard 2003, 33).

On the other hand, the damage that the Kizilbas/Alevis suffered after the Battle of Chaldiran prevented them to a great extent from rebelling against the Ottoman Empire (Massicard 2003, 33). The Alevis followed certain strategies in order to protect themselves from further persecutions and deportations. They located themselves mostly in the mountainous areas in Anatolia so as not to be accessed easily by others (Sokefeld 2008, 42). However, the neglect of the Ottoman Empire as well as the exclusion from Sunni societies was the biggest challenge to the Alevi communities. Even after the establishment of the Republic, the Alevis still continued to live under strict isolation. Cases of the violent persecution of Alevis, especially under the Ottoman rule, can be seen as the primary reasons behind this; because these experiences were deeply rooted in the collective memory of the Alevis (Sokefeld 2008, 42). Therefore, for the Alevi communities it was significant to “not be recognized as Alevi in a non-Alevi environment” (Sokefeld 2008, 42).

This situation certainly brought about some permanent features for the community. In order to maintain their societal-religious order and integrity, the Alevi *dedelik* institution necessitated isolation from outsider societies. Keeping rituals exclusively in the community and also marriage solely within the community, and having neither societal nor economical contact with non-Alevis, were some of the major strategies that the rules

stipulated as an outcome of the misrecognition of the Alevis (Kehl-Bodrogi 1988, 6, 69; Sokefeld 2008, 42). By having members who were controlled by a strong, isolated community, and by having members who obeyed the religious authority to which they were subjected, the Alevis were characterized as a secret community and Alevism was widely seen as a secret religion (Kehl-Bodrogi 1988, 6, 69). Thus, this subtle life of Alevis within their isolated village-based establishments from the sixteenth century to the multi-party era became the main ground of their various iteration of identities, both within the community and outside of the community.

Expected and unexpected results of having the subtle lifestyle of the Alevis from the sixteenth century onwards can be examined from two different angles that have remained valid until today. Firstly, the perception of Alevis by the Ottoman government and the Sunni population under Ottoman rule was transformed into a negative misrecognition based on stereotypes. Moreover, the relation between both parties, despite the fact that it was not elusive in practice, had changed acutely. Secondly, the formation of the Alevis was undergoing a number of alterations.

Initially, during the Ottoman Empire, the idle rumors about the amoral lives of Alevi families were one of the most adverse effects upon the isolated lifestyle of the community (Massicard 2003, 38). Another group who faced similar rumors and had adopted a similar attitude to protect themselves from other mainstream groups was the Sabbateans (Okan 2004, 32). Apart from the isolated lifestyle, *cem* also constituted the antithesis of Sunni prayer, and invoked many kinds of imaginations by non-Alevis about what men and women actually do during Alevi rituals. For example, one such rumor stated that ‘candles are extinguished’ and in that darkness men and women indulge in sexual, even incestuous, orgies (Sokefeld 2008, 42). As a result, through the centuries, before replaced by ‘Alevi’ in the nineteenth century, the term ‘Kizilbas’ remained in common use by non-Alevis to refer to heretics because of the predominance of prejudices based on unfounded accusations. However, despite the maligned “official” perception of Alevis sponsored by the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman government also saw the Alevi communities as tribes that were in need of paying their taxes to the State (Gökalp 1980, 27-29). So, the

relationship between the Alevi communities and the Ottoman governance remained at the State level for the subsequent centuries.

While Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876 - 1909) placed great emphasis on the unification of Muslim societies, he took the Sunni interpretation of Islam as the major path to follow for this purpose, as his ancestors had also done (Kieser 2000). Due to the fact that there were a significant number of non-Muslims residing within the empire, during the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire, in order to control non-Muslim communities, institutionalized the *millets*. These institutions consisted of the monotheistic religions of Christianity and Judaism. *Millets* were given certain autonomy in their religious activities but were kept distant from the ruler-ship. Nonetheless, groups that did not belong to Sunni Islam, Christianity and Judaism were seen as heretics and excluded from the legal framework. In this context, their religious differences were neither accepted nor tolerated in an institutionalized context. Despite being the largest minority amongst Muslims within the Ottoman Empire, the Alevis were obliged to be ignored as a heretical group and were not represented by any religious institution within the Empire (Okan 2004, 159; Massicard 2003, 39).

On the other hand the State, in order to integrate the ‘heretics’, or in other words the heterodox religions that were neglected by the official religion of the State, followed different methods. Firstly, even though it was neither a big, nor a successful effort on the part of the State, particularly after the zeal and activity of Protestant missionaries within Alevi communities, the Ottoman government attempted to *Sunnify* the Alevi groups by building mosques in Alevi villages (Kieser 2000).

Secondly, the isolation that Alevis underwent made the *dedes* more powerful. They became the key actors who guided the relations between and within Alevi village communities. Therefore, the Alevi communities became more attached to each other. The unexpected result was an autonomous position of Alevi communities in their own villages; this gave birth to a suitable environment for them to develop their own rituals and practices that were uninfluenced by external societies, where their identity and culture reproduced itself over hundreds of years by being genuinely distinct from the rest of Ottoman society (Kehl-Bodrogi 1993, 42-43).

Institutionalizing non-Muslim communities under *millets* also had an important impact in that outcome. This situation not only created an environment for the Alevis to attach to each other more in their communities (Okan 2004, 68), but it also made them rely on the stronger attachment to other community members. This was necessary as they believed in destiny, which resulted in their acceptance of the isolated and unwanted existence as a community.

The Young Turk era⁶ during the last decade of the Ottoman Empire was powerful enough to change the centuries' long pressure on minority groups to a certain degree. Even though the Young Turks were still under the influence of Sunni Muslim domination in the Empire, religious minority groups were tolerated to a greater extent than they were before under absolute monarchic Ottoman rule.

Under these circumstances, the Alevis saw the chance to showcase themselves in the public arena by drawing greater attention than the other suppressed minority groups. In this regard, particularly in this period, the role that the Bektashis played for the benefit of the Alevis was remarkable. But because there was a significant difference of perception between these two highly similar communities, which stemmed from their lifestyles, the Bektashis gained a greater and unprecedented political influence than the Alevis, especially during *Tanzimat* Period (Melikoff 1998, 6-7). This could be attributed to the fact that the Bektashis were seen as the most appropriate *tariqat* living in the Ottoman territory that would fit in with the progressive *Tanzimat*. Not only did their liberal and progressive thoughts attract a number of significant *Tanzimat* figures that were attached to the Sufis, but many of them also became part of the Young Turks (Melikoff 1998, 7). Due to the similarities in spirituality and freethinking nature of the Alevis with that of the Bektashis, the Alevis also gained recognition by the State. Nonetheless, this recognition was limited compared to that of the Bektashis, as the Alevis preserved a sense of secrecy within their communities (Melikoff 1998, 7).

⁶ Young Turks revealed themselves with the revolution that was started with CUP rebellion in the army during June – July 1908 and Abdülhamid was forced to restore the constitution. Young Turk revolution continued ten more years until the defeat of Ottoman Empire in the First World War in 1918 (Ahmad 2002, 2).

Thanks to influential leaders, the Bektashis accomplished their mission by creating and fostering support for the Young Turk revolution, along with the Alevis in Anatolia. It was known in the Ottoman Empire from the sixteenth century onwards that there was a strong connection between community members and the tribes amongst the Alevis. Thus, unity among the community members was significant. In this regard, the unconditional support of the followers for their leader was taken advantage of by the Young Turks. Nevertheless, immediately after the successful outcome of the Young Turks' revolution, the Alevis were not needed anymore for the Young Turk cause. Powerful Alevi leaders were made use of as political tools in order to build a solid foundation for *Tanzimat* reforms (Massicard 2003, 39-41), not because of the big religious population they represented in the Ottoman Empire, but because of their power over their followers. Therefore, the Alevis were again marginalized and eliminated from the political scene. Their appearance in the public arena, created by the Young Turks, was an insignificant one, and diminished quickly. The Ottoman perspective on the Alevi thus continued with not much change; the Alevis were still simply tribal communities that paid tax to the State (Gökalp 1980, 27-29).

The Ottoman era for the Alevis, starting from the sixteenth century onward, played a critical role in Alevi identity building. Along with the results of the Battle of Chaldiran, the Safavid Dynasty-effect on Alevis can be taken as the first indicator of a real historical difference between the Alevis' political and religious standpoint from that of the Ottoman Sunni communities. Even though politicization of the Alevis under Ottoman rule was weak, the progressive stance of the Alevis helped them to re-emerge from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, also with the attention that the Young Turks paid them, and they would become important nation-building actors for the modernity⁷ project of the new Republic of Turkey (Massicard 2003, 41-42).

In the following section, the resurrection of the Alevi community under the Republican People's Party will be examined.

⁷ The 'modernization project' of the Kemalists for the new Republic, means here the parallel changes that took place between the free market economy, nation-state development, and more open and tolerant inclusion of previously marginalized communal living formations (Kasaba 1998, 15).

3.2. Alevis during the Early Republican Era

The Turkish nation-state was forged from the multinational, multilingual and multi-religious Ottoman Empire. With the deportation of Armenians in 1915⁸, and the population exchange in 1923 between the Republic of Turkey and Greece⁹ stipulated by the 1923 –1925 Treaty of Lausanne, the new Republic became more homogenous to a certain extent in terms of hosting proportionately more Muslims than non-Muslims, compared to the country's previous demographics (Zürcher 2004, 175; Treaty of Lausanne 1923, Sect.I - Art.2). However, after the Armenian deportation and population exchange between Turkey and Greece, the denominational and ethnic diversity among Muslims in Turkey had still remained significant. This situation coincided with the aims of Mustafa Kemal and his followers, which was aimed at purifying real “Turkishness”; particularly from the influence of the Islamic cultures that pervaded during the Ottoman Era. This was to be done using an autocratic Kemalist ideology (Georgean 1986, 137; Okan 2004, 86-87). In 1925, Mustafa Kemal drew attention to the “establishment of a nationalist republic” in place of the Ottoman Empire (Parla & Davidson 2004, 98).

In this regard, the Young Turks' era which was followed by the Republicans, or at the time the Kemalists, particularly after 1908, should be seen as critical not only because of the formation and birth of a Turkish national consciousness during this period, but also because it was the period in which the Young Turk revolution became the major initiator of this newfound Turkish identity formation (Ahmad 2002, 78).

Some decades after the foundation of the Republic, it has been observed that the one-party period of Republican People's Party (1923 – 1950) drew the required citizenship image for a homogenous nation, by successfully undertaking a number of different strategies: creating the new Turkish identity that was reinvented from Anatolian traditions, while limiting the power of religion by abolishing the Caliphate office and controlling religion

⁸ Armenian deportation lasted until the late 1916 that had also included western Anatolia (Zürcher 2004, 175).

⁹ Like all other non-Muslim minorities –Armenians, Jewish and the remaining Greek Orthodox communities after the population exchange- Sabbatean people preferred to live in the big cities of Turkey. Later, even in the first years of the Republic of Turkey religious minorities were established as communities outside of Istanbul, as with the Sabbateans. They tended to settle into the cosmopolitan and wealthy districts of Istanbul (Neyzi 2002, 145).

through the *Diyanet*, the Presidency of Religious Affairs. The new identity attributed to Turkish citizenship was modern, laic and nationalist, as well as Sunni-Turkified Muslim (İcduygu & Keyman 1998-9, 150-151). Kemalist elites intentionally gave a role to religion in the form of a ‘Turkified Islam’. This was conceptualized according to laicist principles, which would facilitate and make national harmony in ‘modern Turkey’ stronger instead of putting religion at the centre of the state (Karasipahi 2009, 17). As such, Alevism figured prominently as cultural heritage which embodied many of the characteristics that the new regime wished to model their vision of a national identity upon.

Although the extent of the connection between the State and Islam was less than it had been under Ottoman rule, the relationship was not cut completely off (Parla & Davidson 2004, 113). Kemalist laicism while expelling Islam from certain areas of ‘governance and social life’, religious life was still maintained but with a reformed character as a regulated state institution which was progressively modeled to be beneficial for the larger Kemalist social reforms (Parla & Davidson 2004, 91). In other words, within the boundaries of ‘the ideological transformationist and nationalist’ goals of the Kemalist modernization project, Turkified Islam was also modified (Parla & Davidson 2004, 113; Göle 1997, 48).

Nonetheless it would not be right to give all the credit of the re-emergence of religion within the new State to the modernization project. Kemalist laicism was still required to meet the religious needs of the new nation inherited from its Islamic Ottoman predecessor, which was the main feature that differentiated Turkish anticlericalism from the French version of laicite (Parla & Davidson 2004, 113; Parla & Davidson 2008, 69). Thus, this situation underlined the clericalist nature of the Kemalist laicism. State regulated religious theory, in accordance especially with governance practices aimed at the new national character, resulted in the closure of the active institutions of folk Islam and put a limit to the activities of the believers in such institutions.

“To understand the traditionalist, antilaicist view of Kemalism as an attack on Islam, one needs to see Islam not only as a “religion” (to be separated from and superseded in affairs of politics and education), but, according to

Serif Mardin, as a “rich store of symbols and ways of thinking about society”.
(Mardin 1989, 156)

“Kemalism clearly rejects this holistic outlook. Its discourse is permeated with the idea that those who opposed laicist changes were “backward”, “reactionary” and “obscurantist””. (Parla & Davidson 2004, 114)

For being conveniently compatible and related to the requisite identity model of the Republicans, the Alevis in that era again became an appealing community to the ruling body –much like they were for the Young Turks under the Ottoman rule. This time, their allure came as a result not only because of the strong support they lent to the reformist Young Turks, due to their openness to liberal and progressive views, but also because they were seen as a substantial contributor to the pure form of Turkishness that was needed to build the new nation-sense by the Republicans. For this purpose, Turkishness leaned on “the history and traditions of Anatolia” which like Alevi traditions “had to be rediscovered or even manufactured”, according to the necessities of the new Turkish identity (Ahmad 2002, 78). Though, because of the desire to still regulate religious life in the new republic through the *Diyanet*, the Alevi were only regarded as an exemplary ground for Turkish identity construction. The government maintaining its authority over what would constitute religious orthodoxy in the new state.

In the following section, how and to what extent the new Republic had paid attention to the Alevi communities in the period of creating a new Turkish identity will be evaluated and in this respect, special attention will also be paid to the Kurdish Alevis along with the Turkish Alevis respectively.

3.2.1. Role of Alevis in Nation building

Folklore played an important role in nation-building process of the Republic of Turkey. Turkmen culture, and Alevi folklore in particular, was seen as the purest form of what contained the targeted folkloric essentials, and could be used as the initiator for re-building a new country according to ‘the state-sanctioned nationalist ideologies’ of the Kemalists (Tambar 2012, 653). Therefore both, Turkish and Kurdish Alevis were of great

importance for Atatürk's modernization project (Melikoff 1998, 7; van Bruinessen 2013, 120). It should be noted however, that Alevism was figured as a tool for use towards a new national religious identity, not the goal in itself of the religious model that the Kemalist regime wished to institute.

Because of the Ottoman Empire's long history of rule, the major groups of the society – except some heterodox and nomadic groups – identified themselves with Islam (Georgean 1995, 4). In his famous speech, that was later published as a book entitled: *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal also stressed the necessity of the purification of Islam and stated that “It should be purified and raised from the political situation in which it has been put for centuries” (Parla & Davidson 2004, 108). To be able to break the ties between the Sunni Muslims and Islam, the Alevis were seen as complementary essentials to Turkmen folklore because of the Turkmen background of the Alevis (Melikoff 1998, 1, 2). Thus, with its traditions the Alevi creed was institutionalized to be the best available alternative for the refinement of Turkishness from strictly foreign Islamic attributes, and accordingly Alevism was seen to provide a convenient alternative to Sunni Islam; which was perceived as a ‘primitive’ Arab religion at the time (Salcı 1940, 150; Tambar 2012, 658). For the new republic, which was established with the aim of becoming a developed country, being categorized with the underdeveloped Arab nations of the time was unacceptable for the new Turkish government. Therefore, studies focusing on the Alevis, in order to evaluate the ‘Turkish nation's authentic past’, identified Alevi rituals and reinvented them according to the ideological interest of Kemalist nationalists (Tambar 2012, 658).

In addition to the Alevi communities' stand-points, from which reformist Kemalists were appropriating for their modernization goals, Alevi folk poets who were active in *cems* were also encouraged to spread the official Kemalist ideology of the Turkish Republic all over Anatolia (Massicard 2003, 45). This example is another important indicator that Alevi culture, with its rituals, was utilized by Kemalists in numerous ways to establish a strong Turkish nation-state.

The distinction between the Turkish and Kurdish Alevi groups and their relation to the new nation-building process of the Republic of Turkey has not been drawn in this study until now; as such differentiation was not taken into careful consideration by the

Kemalists. The reason for missing this differentiation was due to the fact that regardless of their ethnic background, Alevi communities under the rule of the Ottoman Empire acted and behaved similarly and were thus treated as similar by the Ottoman governance. Furthermore, it was not the goal of the Kemalist to reinforce the ethnic diversities that constitute Alevism, but rather to model a homogenous “Turkish” ethnicity that symbolically utilized Anatolian folk origins as part of its state-sponsored mythical heritage. Nonetheless, Kurdish Alevis became a distinct entity after the rise in power of the new State. The following section deals with the reason as to why and to what extent Kurdish Alevis acted similarly and where and how they differed vis-a-vis Turkish Alevis.

3.2.1.1. Kurdish Alevis and Kurdish Sunnis

The deportation of Armenians in 1915 and the population exchange in 1923 between the Republic of Turkey and Greece led to an unexpected result, aside from simply creating an ethnically and religiously more homogenous environment in Turkey. Essentially after Armenians were deported, the Eastern Anatolian cities were left to populations dominated by Kurdish people during the War of Independence (1914 – 1918). With the collapse of a common enemy shared between the Turkish and Kurdish peoples, *the Russian Front* left those two communities alone in the region. In a short time, these ethnically different communities became arch-rivals in the region. Due to this situation, tension began to brew between both parties, and led to the formation of the first Kurdish cultural and political organizations; such as Society for the Rise of Kurdistan, founded in Istanbul in 1918 (van Bruinessen 2013, 31-32; Zürcher 2004, 253). Soon after the creation of the first branch, this organization extended its influence through other branches mostly in Kurdistan, for Kirmanci and Zaza speaking Kurdish peoples, Sunni Kurdish and Alevi Kurdish peoples, even though the members of these organizations predominantly consisted of Sunnis (van Bruinessen 2013, 72; Zürcher 2004, 253).

Even though the friction amongst the Turkish and Kurdish communities in the Eastern Anatolia region was palpable, the Kurdish communities did not take advantage of positions given to them by external separatist powers (Romano 2006, 28; Zürcher 2004, 253). In other words, contrary to general belief, there was no solid distinction between Turkish and Kurdish Muslims from the late Ottoman to early Republican era (van

Bruinessen 2013, 72). Firstly, the efforts of British spies' during the War of Independence and secondly, the autonomy given to the Kurdish communities through the Serves Treaty did not change the side that Kurdish communities had hitherto taken (Romano 2006, 28; Zürcher 2004, 253).

After winning the war of Independence and with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the new borders separated Kurdish tribal communities mainly into two countries: Turkey and Iraq. However during the independence struggle, the Kurdish population was promised autonomy by the Kemalists. Moreover, Kurdish people believed that it was better to be under a new Ottoman Empire, *Turkey*, than to be under a British-ruled Iraq (van Bruinessen, 2013, 73). Nonetheless, not only were such promises forgotten –the new border regulations being a crucial example– but were also not mentioned in the Treaty of Lausanne¹⁰, unlike other minorities whose rights were guaranteed by Article 41 (Ahmad 2002, 80; Zürcher 2004, 253). These outcomes created a deep sense of frustration among Kurdish nationalists, some of whom were members of the Young Turks movement which founded the Union and Progress Party (van Bruinessen, 2013, 73). As a result, some Kurdish individuals founded an organization for *Azadi* (liberty) that is significant even today for the Kurdish nationalist movement. The major importance of this organization comes from Seyh Said, who was a part of this organization and enjoyed great power amongst the Kurdish by virtue his Naksibendi background.

Under these circumstances it is important to underline that Kurdish ethnicity is older than Kurdish nationalism, in order to understand why separatist nationalist movements emerged. *Serefname* is a document in which the emeer of Bitlis, Seref Han, wrote about the Kurdish dynasties' history in 1597 (van Bruinessen 2013, 28, 59). In his book, Seref Han differentiates Kurdish people from Ottomans, Persians, Arabs and Armenians. His 'Kurdish' description includes not only 'real' Kurdish speakers but also Zazas; not only Sunnis but also Alevis and Yezidis (van Bruinessen 2013, 28).

¹⁰ Treaty of Lausanne (June 1923). is a crucial treaty apart from protecting minority rights of Turkey defined its borders and set the rules of the population exchange in between Turkey and Greece (Ahmad 2002, 3; Zürcher 2004, 243,253).

On the other hand, *Mem u Zin*, written in Kurdish by the poet and scholar Ahmed Hani (1650 -1706), can be seen as an extension of Kurdish literature, as it comprises modern nationalist ideas. This book was put forward as the Kurdish-written-book to show that the Kurdish people have their own culture and to counter the general opinion that the Kurdish people do not possess one example of their own literature (van Bruinessen 2013, 28-29).

Later in the twentieth century, Hani's work became a Kurdish cultural source of honour. One of the leading Kurdish families, the *Bedirhan* family, accepted *Mem u Zin* as the Kurdish national epic (van Bruinessen 2013, 29). Thus, it can be said that from the sixteenth century, Kurdish ethnicity consciously existed among the Kurdish emeers and elites. Even though Sunnis were the core of this consciousness, at that stage, language and religion were not the key determinants of the ethnic stance. Denominational differences were not particularly important either. Depending on the alliances that were established amongst the Kurdish people, either with the Ottomans or with the Safavids, they often converted from Sunnism to Shi'ism¹¹ or vice versa (van Bruinessen 1981 cited in van Bruinessen 2013, 30). This awareness of unity was derived from locality, tribal culture and ethos, historical commonality, similar emeers' role on integration and the language, as well as other cultural differences between the neighboring Arab and Turkish tribes (van Bruinessen 2013, 30).

Despite there being strong awareness of their unity amongst Kurdish people, that was never enough to establish political integration among the Kurdish groups. Aside from the point made on the unparalleled growth of ethnic and nationalist awareness, the conflicts among the tribes that continued is another significant reason for their failure to integrate politically. From the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, along with the elimination of the emeers and other community leaders, Kurdish ethnicity was further ruptured (van Bruinessen 2013, 30; Ahmad 2002, 58; Zürcher 2004, 253-254).

This situation should be seen as the foundation of the different stances that Turkish and Kurdish Alevi took particularly for the Seyh Said Rebellion. Because of the abolishment

¹¹ Shi'ism and Alevism should not be seen as overlapping in this case. Alevism is as distant to Shi'ism as it is to Sunnism. Alevi have their own religious rituals which distinguish them from these two dominant sects of Islam (van Bruinessen 2013, 63).

of the Caliphate in 1924, religion, the strongest link between the new Turkey and the Kurdish population, gradually evaporated. On the other hand, the Turkish government built a strong nation-state with a pure 'Turkish identity', which consequently led to the oppression of other minority identities. The Alevis were elevated, while the Kurdish people became one of the oppressed minorities. Speaking and teaching or generally utilizing Kurdish language and culture of any kind was prohibited, and thousands of influential Kurdish families were deported from their homelands in order to settle in the Western parts of Turkey (van Bruinessen 2013, 44; Ahmad 2002, 79; Zürcher 2004, 254; Olson 1989, 125).

These circumstances gave rise to the Kurdish Seyh Said Rebellion in February 1925, which aimed to found an independent Kurdistan. That rebellion mainly consisted of Zaza tribes. However, as a result of the rise of one major tribe among the Kurdish communities, big conflicts among the Kurdish communities arose inevitably after the Kurdish Alevi groups stood against the Sunni rebels. In order to understand the strength of the ethnicity's significance regarding the political stance of Alevis, it is important to point out why Alevis disapproved of the Seyh Said Rebellion. In this respect, two possibilities can be put forward.

Firstly, Kurdish leaders had demanded their own autonomous *Shariah*-ruled country with the Caliphate office. Yet heterodox communities, mainly Turkish Alevis, opposed to the Sunni-traditionalist Ottoman approach, supported Kemalist Laicism since this offered a more neutral environment for Alevis; therefore, this conservative approach either belonged to Turkish Sunnis or Kurdish Sunnis (Ahmad 2002, 58; Zürcher 2004, 253-254; van Bruinessen 2013, 119). Secondly, the Kurdish Alevi people were only a minority amongst the greater Kurdish population and saw themselves as closer to their Turkish speaking coreligionists than to Sunni Kurdish groups, even to this very day (van Bruinessen 2013, 63, 103, 119). This situation also stems from the unique ethnic characteristics of the Alevis regardless of the language they speak (van Bruinessen 2013, 70).

With the aforementioned points in mind, it is now known that Kurdish Alevis supported Kemalist Laicism instead of *Shariah* rule (van Bruinessen 2013, 119). On the other hand, the Dersim riot, a Turkish-Alevi revolt inspired by the Kurdish riots, was not supported

by any Kurdish Alevi. This is another important indicator that language was not much of a determinant as religion or ethnicity was in defining borders in the Alevi case (van Bruinessen 2013, 33, 70, 103).

Since the sixteenth century, it was known that Turkish and Kurdish Sunnis felt prejudices towards the Alevi (Ahmad 2002, 58; Zürcher 2004, 253-254). Some fanatic Sunnis went as far as to reject the Alevi as being legitimate members of the Islamic world (Okan 2004, 159). Therefore, it was natural for the Alevi to support laicism. This was not only because of the role that Kemalist initial attempts at laicism attributed to them during the nation-building process, but also because the Alevi gained their recognition over the suppression of the Sunni population mainly due to the damage that the Kemalist project of the “purification of Turkishness” had done to Sunnis, irrespective of whether they were Kurdish or not. In order to suppress the rebels, *Takrir-i Sukun*¹², the Law for the Maintenance and Order, was passed. This environment continued until the head of the Rebellions, Seyh Said, was arrested in late April 1925 (Zürcher 2004, 254-255). Therefore, Kurdish rebels were pushed to the mountains where small groups continued to carry out guerrilla warfare. However, these incidents resulted in another Kurdish riot that started in 1926 and continued for four more years thereafter. The Law for the Maintenance of Order enabled the Independence Tribunals¹³ to change the “legal face of Turkey” (van Bruinessen 2013, 44). Because particularly after the riots of 1920s and 1930s and regardless of the denominational background or the difference in political standpoints among the Kurdish Alevi and Kurdish Sunnis, a number of riot leaders were executed, while thousands of Kurdish people were deported from their homelands and forced to settle in Western parts of Turkey under the jurisdiction of the *Takrir-i Sukun* Law (van Bruinessen 2013, 44; Ahmad 2002, 79; Zürcher 2004, 254; Olson 1989, 125).

When Kemalism’s point of view towards the Kurdish Alevi identity is taken into account, due to their identity, the Alevi were considered as members of the real Turkish version

¹² *Takrir-i Sukun* – the Law for the Maintenance and Order; on March 1925, “which gave the government virtually absolute powers for the next two years, powers which were renewed until they were no longer necessary and were finally allowed to expire on 4 March 1929” (Ahmad 2002, 58, 79).

¹³ Independence Tribunals were established in early 1920’s and remained in effect until 1927 in order to punish mainly the rioters who were against supporting the Turkish cause during the Independence War by any means (Zürcher 2008, 228).

of Islam. They were accepted as natural partners of the Kemalist laicism project (van Bruinessen 2013, 104). However at the same time before the 1937 Dersim incidents, a study carried out by the gendarme forces of the State, denoted the Kurdish Alevis as the Kizilbas, an expression that equates them with heretics. Furthermore, the same work points out that the Kizilbas committed atrocities towards the Sunnis (Gendarme General Command qtd. in van Bruinessen 2013, 105). The contradiction in the State's view towards Alevis, along with its view on Kurds, which regarded them as unreliable strangers, demonstrates that Kurdish Alevis were not perceived favorably (van Bruinessen 2013, 104).

In view of the previous statements, along with the *Takrir-i Sukun* Law, it can be observed that, until the introduction of this law, the Kurdish identity was ignored, suppressed and rejected as a separate identity. In this respect, Kurdish identity, despite being rooted and definable, can be perceived in parallel to the Alevi identity in terms of the recognition-problematic caused by the governing authority over them. Thus, the Kurdish Alevi people were victimized twice; once by their ethnic background, and again because of the minority denomination that they belong to.

3.2.2. Reforms of the Republican People's Party

From the beginning of the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, the State adopted the use of Kemalist ideology in every sphere in the life of the new Republic's citizens. In order to draw them close to the government's position and to instill a tendency towards modernity at every possible opportunity, Kemalist reforms were put into action and carried a weight of importance. Religion was certainly one of the foremost spheres that should also have been addressed by the Kemalist principles. The most effective strategy, in this regard, was to place religion under control in every possible way. Thus, the Turkish model of secularism represented particularly radical institutional changes. The enforcement of a Westernized dress code for public servants was one of the most visible implementations of this ideology. At the executive and legislative levels, the abolishment of the Caliphate office and the Sultanate; and the replacement of the Ministry of *Shariah* Affairs with the newly established the Presidency of Religious Affairs, represented major steps taken

towards secularization. Both developments greatly impacted the course of events in relation to the Alevis sociopolitical stand point.

3.2.2.1. Abolishment of the Caliphate

For the Kemalists, the abolishment of the Caliphate on 3 March 1924, right after the establishment of the new state - the Republic of Turkey, was one of the most important ways of avoiding the effect of Ottoman traditions, along with the role of the *Ulema*, over the new Republic (Ernst 2004, 121,132-133; Karasipahi 2009, 14). The Kemalists viewed the *Ulema* as ignorant charlatans rather than sources of ancient wisdom, namely because the *Ulema* rejected any benefits brought about by the development of Western science and technology. In contrast, the Kemalists were strongly opposed to the dogmatism of religion and consequently came into direct confrontation with the institutionalized effects of the Ottoman interpretation of religion. Furthermore, the Kemalists also regarded the *Ulema* as an obstacle to progress (Karasipahi 2009, 14; Piscatori 1986, 8, 17-18). On the decision to abolish the caliphate, Mustafa Kemal (SD 3: 1924b, 74 qtd. in Parla & Davidson 2004, 115) stated:

“The decisions made by the Assembly in the past [few] days are matters that have already been wished for by the nation in a natural and true way. There is no reason for considering these as being extraordinary. The nation desired there with its manner of attitude and in a natural way. And no other inclination could have been expected from a nation that has decided for true salvation and liberation”.

Mustafa Kemal had also pointed out the opponents of his regime, whom he targeted as the proponents of *Shariah* law. Moreover, he underlined the necessity of regime change and made it clear for his opponents that their efforts to revert the new order to the old Ottoman one would never be successful:

“There was a groundless fear, there was anxiety; the scene seen by all upon the proclamation of the Republic and [upon] the abolition of the institutions

made redundant by the requirements of the former have caused a relief in the hearts of those fearful and anxious persons.

From now on only one thing can come to mind. And that is that some base politicians and egoistical self-seekers may reawaken that fear and fancy for satisfying their ambitions and interests. I assure you and assure you with all my being that such [people] shall not be able to escape from being a target for the Turkish nation's merciless annihilation the moment they insinuate their presence in any form, manner and occasion". (SD 3: 1924a, 75-56 qtd. in Parla & Davidson 2004, 115)

In addition, Mustafa Kemal also claimed that religion could find a space for itself in the new state by enjoying its full autonomy "From now on Turkey is far above being a stage for games of religion and *Shariah*. If there are such players, let them search for a stage elsewhere" (SD 3: 1924a, 75-56 qtd. in Parla & Davidson 2004, 115).

Although Islam was adopted as the state religion in the new Constitution of 1924, it is also important to emphasize the attitude of Mustafa Kemal on the religious authorities that were part of the anti-laicist and anti-Kemalists groupings. The stance of Mustafa Kemal and his supporters was strong in terms of yielding no space for the politicization of Islam, in order to rescue it from the position of becoming a political instrument (Ahmad 2002, 54). Nevertheless, in his Izmir speech in 1923, Mustafa Kemal mentioned the unification of the educational system in accordance with Kemalist laicism; he could not object to those opposition groups. Thus, laicist reforms were brought about with "religiously conceived meanings" (Ernst 2004, 131; Parla & Davidson 2004, 111-112). The following speech given by Mustafa Kemal demonstrated his commitment to a strategy of including his opponents in the adoption of Kemalist policies:

"The Turkish nation should be more religious; that is, it should be more religious in its whole plainness. I believe in this in the same way that I believe in my religion, truth itself. [Our religion] contains nothing that impedes progress". (SD 3: 1923b, 70 qtd. in Parla & Davidson 2004, 114)

The Kemalists' attitude towards the relationship between politics and religion, where religion as a concept should remain clear from the games of politics, lasted only until 1928. In that year, the Republican People's Party found enough strength, given the successful and rigid nation-state building strategies of the previous five years, to withdraw the statement of 'Islam to be the religion of state' from the constitution of 1924 (Parla & Davidson 2004, 106). Furthermore, removing Islam from its status as the official state religion from the constitution in 1928 should also be read as an attempt of the Turkification of Islam, rather than the separation of the Turkish state from Islam.

Nevertheless, there is one striking point that should be emphasized here. The relationship between the office of the Caliphate to the Westphalia¹⁴ concept of the state came with the abolishment of the Caliphate office in Turkey. With the establishment of a new state under the laic Kemalist principles, the Republic of Turkey not only discounted the significance of the Caliphate office, but also established a Westphalian form of state that left no space for the inclusion of Islamic doctrine (Abbas 2011, 93). Having the title of Caliphate, the Ottoman Sultans, with the power that they gained from the Ottoman Empire, were in charge of the protection of all Muslims, the ultimate owner of the *Ummah* mission and had the support of all its followers. Thus, these points inherently emphasized the secular Turkish identity over any other affiliation, particularly religious, whether that could add any value to the new Republic or not. Therefore, along with Kemalist ideology, it is observed that the abolishment of the Caliphate was a necessity to fulfill the requirements that Kemalist laicism stipulated.

However, abolishment of the Caliphate office should not be seen as an attempt to completely cut off religious ties. In contrast, this occasion should be interpreted as a vital Kemalist ideological principle, not only to eject significant Ottoman political and cultural

¹⁴ The Treaty of Westphalia (1648) is known as the agreement that ended the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) between the major European powers. But more importantly it "gave a formal expression to the definitive replacement of medieval Christendom by independent and secular nation-states ..." (Piscatori 1986, 50). The concept of 'nation-state' that the Treaty of Westphalia gave birth to, is a concept still utilized today and defines the state system that we live in. In addition to geographical certainty, the Westphalian form of state brought about a sovereign state understanding. This modern state-system also requires, as well as stems from, the equal recognition of the sovereignty of other states. Nation-state sovereignty is the foremost feature of states subscribing to the Westphalian state concept (Lansford 2000, 8).

heritage, but more importantly to have full control over religion as well as the ability to shape it according to the needs of the new Republic. Moreover with the transformation from a Muslim empire to adopting Western nation-statehood, the Republic of Turkey differs from other Muslim-majority countries; due to the fact that after the abolishment of the Caliphate office, the subsequent declaration of ten different Caliphs by Middle Eastern countries signified that Islam was being used as a tool manipulated for instrumental political purposes (Ernst 2004, 121, 132-133; Parla & Davidson 2004, 91).

Thus, in this case, it is important to realize that although there may seem to be no direct relation between the abolishment of the Caliphate office and the Alevis, if the case of Kemalist laicism which elevated the Alevi traditions is taken into consideration, we can see that through the abolishment of Caliphate office, the Alevis were more or less guaranteed a more neutral environment because the biggest source of brutality of the Caliphate towards the Alevis, having lasted for centuries, suddenly lost its power. Also, the Sunni Muslims no longer had any authority upon which to legally oppress the Alevis as heretics. Furthermore, within this new, less oppressed environment, the Alevis were given the chance to participate in political and social arenas, instead of keeping themselves isolated in their own communities as they had been since the sixteenth century.

3.2.2.2. Establishment of the Presidency of Religious Affairs – *Diyanet*

Although there may be a degree of difference among the periods in the Republic between the Kemalist understanding of controlling religion and the preceding Ottoman position, there is a structural continuity among these periods: religion was taught, administered, and promoted by the State (Parla & Davidson 2008, 66). Thus, demolishing the Ministry of *Shariah* Affairs in 1924 in order to avoid affiliation to the Ottoman Empire in the new Republic era created a sizable void in the lives of Sunni followers of the new Republic. As Göle states, “institutions come with their significance”, so, on 3 March 1924 the Ministry of *Shariah* Affairs of the Ottoman Empire was replaced with a new Kemalist invention, the Presidency of Religious Affairs, *Diyanet* (Göle 2002, 176; Tuğal 2006, 250; Parla & Davidson 2004, 111-112).

Kemalist policies, which had started to permeate through public life from the early 1920s, eventually enabled the control of mainstream religion, Sunni Islam. Kemalist discourse stated that institutions were not to be regarded as external to social imaginaries and social practices (Göle 2002). As one of the most efficient and well-functioning governmental institutions of Turkey at that time, the *Diyanet* was an important as well as the most practical strategy for the Kemalists in the nation-building process. The *Diyanet* not only derived its religious strength from the previous Ministry of *Shariah* Affairs of the Ottoman Empire, but it also used this power to take advantage of its position in order to build a nation by making use of it for the new laic Turkey. In other words, the *Diyanet* was founded in order to control religious activities and solve problems related to religion in the domestic realm, and to transfer the population's ties from Islam to the Turkish nationalist cause (Çıtak 2009, 5; Tuğal 2006, 250; Parla & Davidson 2004, 107).

In addition, the head of *Diyanet* was to be appointed by the President of Turkey, “on the recommendation of the Prime Minister” (Law on the Abolition of the Ministry of *Shariah* and Foundations and the Ministry of General Staff, Article 4 qtd. in Parla & Davidson 2004, 111-112). Therefore, it would be a natural outcome for large Kemalist support to be given to the *Diyanet* from its establishment.

The population of Turkey, after taking into consideration the deportation of Armenians and the population exchange between Turkey and Greece, consisted largely of a Muslim majority (Zürcher 2004, 175). However, despite this, there were significant dissimilarities in the religious practices amongst the Muslim groups, mainly between the Sunni and Alevi groups. The Kemalist position also happened to be another, distinct religious standpoint amongst all the different groups. The Kemalists made true Sunni-Islam second-in-command, after nationalism, within the Kemalist identity (Çıtak 2009, 5; Parla & Davidson 2008, 71).

In *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal brought about the Kemalist standpoint in Islam by stating the necessity for a purification of Islam: “It should be purified and raised from the political situation in which it has been put for centuries” (Parla 2008, 108). So, the Kemalist interpretation of Islam, that is Turkified Islam, required finding a common tie to all the Turkish people in order to lift the Turkish national identity (Parla & Davidson 2004, 107).

Furthermore, the Kemalists also believed that state-controlled religion should be purified through suppressing its strong local forms, and then use this purified form of religion together with Alevi traditions in order to promote a uniformed Turkish identity as the new common bond (Massicard 2003, 46; Akan 2003, 70-71). So, the establishment of the *Diyanet* was set not only to purify Islam and control it, particularly from intervening in the new Turkish political arena, but also to be used as a tool for nation building which was a highly politicized aim in itself.

Culture refers to the character of a historical community; nationality is seen as a heritage much like religion is, despite the fact that it is unconsciously constructed (Akan 2003, 61; Peter Jones qtd. in Akan 2003, 65). Thus, Atatürk's statement, "religion is 'culture'", stresses that too; even though the state gave religion its own sphere through a strong governmental institution, the *Diyanet*, getting rid of religion altogether was never the absolute aim. Instead, the objective was to back the nation-building reforms through the combined use of Turkified Islam and Alevi traditions.

The Alevis were not put forward with their religious background in nation-building reforms; their religious affiliation was in fact ignored in the reforms. Thus, this can be seen as a trap that most Alevis intentionally fell into in the new Republican era. Being embraced by the new Republicans did not mean that Alevis and Alevi identity were completely accepted; certain features were used only for Kemalist modernity and progression plans. In this respect, the secularist tendency among the Alevis for the sake of building a strong nation, which was imposed by the government, should also be seen as the point where the Alevis consciously accepted the passivity of their belief system as opposed to their culture. Culture is open to fluctuation and can be reshaped over time. This should be seen as natural because culture can be consciously mobilized and politicized, as it was in the case of Alevi culture in the new Republican Era (Akan 2003, 65).

In addition to the *Diyanet*, the declaration of the laic state with the 1937 Constitution ensured that the state guaranteed the absolute control of the religious institutions (Massicard 2003, 46). The 1937 Constitution declared its secularity through Article 2: 'The Turkish State is a Republican, Nationalist, Populist, Statist, Secularist, and

Revolutionary-Reformist' (Ahmad 2002, 63; Göle 1997, 49). It is important to highlight that Kemalism ignored religious plurality. However, despite the fact that the *Diyanet* was brought about to control the religious affairs by placing emphasis only on Sunni Islam, it principally elevated Sunni Islam to the status of a default religion of the State (Göle 1997, 49; Parla & Davidson 2008, 71). In other words, Kemalism created the sphere for religion, embodied it with the *Diyanet*, and by nesting it under the most respectable institution of the Republic, the Presidency resulted in having an implicit state religion. Thus, Turkish laicism did not treat all existing religions within the Turkish borders equally. Alevism, in that respect, was marginalized together with other minority sects of Islam and religions in Turkey. Remaining as the state religion, 'Sunni Islam' is a concept still being challenged today by the Alevis (Göle 1997, 49).

Moreover a famous and widespread saying in Turkey, which states that "laicism does not mean having no religion", firmly supports the view that the Kemalist interpretation of laicism grasps religion (Parla & Davidson 2008, 71). Kemalism constructed itself around religion not against it; due to the needs of the state and its population's relationship to religion, laicism does not reject religion even if it solely holds Kemalists' stand-point. The "Kemalists did not coexist with [a] politically and morally privileged religion", and was also "the proponents, defenders, functionaries, and ideologues of a certain form of religious belief", which was Sunni Islam (Parla & Davidson 2008, 71).

Thus, according to their modernization project, even though the major aim of the Kemalists was to control religion by institutionalizing it through the *Diyanet*. However, in time it turned into an institution that only represented and served the interests of Sunni Islam. The existence of the *Diyanet* assured the position of Sunni Islam as the state religion, which stands in contradiction with the initial reasons of having a laic state. Most of the Alevis felt betrayed by the Republican People's Party because the Party was seen to be acting hand in hand with the Alevi community during the early new nation-building period, only to dismiss and ignore them after establishing clear authority in the new state. This situation caused unrest among the Alevis in the early days of *Diyanet* because for them, the laicism principle of Kemalism failed to provide the neutral environment it promised.

Chapter IV. Multi-Party Era

4.1. Transition to Multi-Party Era

Detailed analyses of this period are necessary to fully understand to what extent the multi-party transition was successful and representative of the majority of the country, particularly when the Alevi sectarian minority is considered. For this purpose, in this section the aim will be to place emphasis on the development of the political party structures and the reliability of newly emerged partisanship in Turkey. Furthermore, in order to clarify the strong connections between the newly emerged parties of the multi-party era and the Republican People's Party, special attention will be given to the Democrat Party among other parties. Accordingly, Alevi responses and reactions to the new parties, specifically to the Democrat Party, will be evaluated simultaneously.

Transition to the multi-party system from the long reign of the Republican People's Party is one of the cornerstones of the political history of Turkey. This transition period was significant, because having a multi-party system is seen as a key requirement for a successful democratic Turkey, especially due to it having inherited an empire with a religiously and ethnically non-homogenous society. It is important to recognize that the transition from a one party system to a multi-party system with the introduction of the Democrat Party was exceptional, since this transition did not cause a rupture in Turkish politics despite the fact that it brought an end to over twenty year of one party rule (Özbudun 2003, 19-20). Yet, given the attempts of the opponents of the Republican People Party in trying to form an opposition party before the emergence of the Democrat Party, their oppositional voices were not welcomed by the Republican People's Party. Socialist parties, such as the Turkish Socialist Workers and Peasants Party, Turkish Socialist Party and some other Islamist parties were not allowed by the Republicans to participate exist in the new so-called democratic political arena. So in effect, the transition to a multi-party system was still a heavily regulated process, and not as radical as it could have been. The Republican People's Party then maintained a tight grip on how the incorporation of a "multi-party" system was to develop within Turkey.

After some failed party building attempts, multi-partisanism recommenced in 1945 with the introduction of the National Development Party led by Nuri Demirağ. However, the National Development Party was not particularly influential. Still, this transition, created a suitable environment for building an opposition party; and this was the brainchild of the then-President and leader of the Republican People's Party, İsmet İnönü (Hiç 2009, 15-17; Özbudun 2003, 19-20). Thus in 1946, with the full support of the Republican People's Party, Celal Bayar, a former Republican, established the Democrat Party. With the support of the Republican People's Party for the creation of an opposition party, the Democrat Party, can also be traced back to the initial ideological commonality of both parties. The slight difference between the parties related chiefly to the parties' politics; the Republican People's Party comprised an elite group of politicians that tended to follow more the national-based interests of both the military and the state, while on the other hand, the Democrat Party consisted of a political elite that focused on focused local and regional demands (Hiç 2009, 16-17; Özbudun 2003, 35). Furthermore, the lack of a demand by the Democrat Party for a change in the constitution is another sign that the party was established under the full control of the Republicans (Hiç 2009, 16; Özbudun 2003, 23), and was symptomatic of the Republican interest in maintaining control over the democratic processes within Turkey¹⁵.

There were also three conditions, stipulated by President İnönü that the new parties had to obey: the secular character of the country would not be changed, foreign affairs would be advanced, and primary school education would be encouraged (Özbudun 2003, 21). Yet the main emphasis was put on the protection of the new democratic feature of the country (Hiç 2009, 16-17; Özbudun 2003, 22).

The first real elections in the history of Republic of Turkey took place in 1946. The Democrat Party won 66 seats, the Republican People's Party won 396 seats and

¹⁵ Even though more recent literature on this topic has criticized the "official" version of history presented by the Kemalist regime during this period (Dressler 2013; Houston 2008), the view presented here, that the Democrat Party and the Republican People's Party were in effect a concerted effort, two sides of the same coin as it were, is not at odds with this critical approach to the history of the period. What is important to the thesis is how the Alevi, as the targets of this apparently dualistic approach to policy, were motivated to move in their allegiance from one Kemalist ideological position to another. Özbudun and Hiç's presentation of the history, in this respect, serves to highlight the popular reception of this "split" in Kemalism during the period.

independents won 7 seats (Hiç 2009, 17-18; Özbudun 2003, 21). The second multiparty elections took place in 1950. This election concluded with the great success of the Democrat party; the Democrat Party won 470 seats, while the Republican People's Party could only amass 69 seats. This achievement of the Democrat Party was the sign that guaranteed the Democrat Party's place in Turkish politics, even though the result surprised not only the Republicans but also the Democrat Party and its supporters. In the following elections of 1954 and 1957, the Democrat Party won more seats again and also won the majority of the seats in parliament, although the Democrat Party did lose some of its support in latter elections. Nonetheless on May 27, 1960 the first democratic experience of Turkey (1946 – 1960) was brought to an abrupt end by a Coup d'état (*Belge* 2013; Hiç 2009, 17-18; Özbudun 2003, 35).

In the following section, the development of the political party structures and reliability of the newly emerged partisanship in Turkey will be examined.

4.1.1. Party Structure and Partisanship

According to Frederick Frey, Turkish politics of the 1950s should be considered as the politics of the new political parties. The political parties of the era were highly institutionalized even though they were new. They were strong and broad, and remained having unofficial but direct attachments to the larger Turkish society up until the 1970s (Frey 1965, 78-81). After the 1970s, the party system fragmentized. The number of the political parties' increased, ideological polarization became crucial and society became reluctant in identifying itself through any of the given parties (Hiç 2009, 22; Özbudun 2003, 69-71). All in all, compared to 1950s, the 1970s showed an institutional collapse of political parties.

Starting from one-party rule until the 1970s, party membership was considered to be the most important indicator of the political parties' strength. In 1930, the Republican People's Party had 800,000 members, consisting of 5 per cent of the general population of Turkey. This number increased to 1,059,000 members in 1933, comprising 7 per cent of the population and in 1941, 1,512,719 members were registered as the Republican People's Party members. In 1948, two years after the Democrat Party was established,

almost 1.9 million people, i.e. 9.5 per cent of the population, were members of the Republican People's Party (Öz 1992, 182). In addition, Turkish youth below voting age were incorporated by Kemalists as natural members of the Republican People's Party (Schuler 2002, 43). Within a year following its establishment, the Democrat Party also followed the trend and the number of Democrat Party members reached 1 million (Schuler 2002, 52).

The degree of organization in the Republican Party in 1948, was akin to that of the Nazi Party, having surprisingly resulted in 6.5 million registered party members in 1943 (Öz 1992, 182). Under these circumstances, there are two possible reasons that have emerged to explain the overstated member of the Republican People's Party. The first possible reason can be the use of disorganized and miscalculated party lists. The second and more likely possibility is that the overstated number of party members can only be propaganda-oriented, which can be seen as a reflection of the strong Kemalist foundation at the public level (Schuler 2002, 42).

Contrary to the growth of membership, while the Republican People's Party administration of the 1930s was completely supportive of rapid growth, they were also unwilling to include the whole nation in their organization. The administrative body had a precise idea who should become a member and who shouldn't because they believed the threat against Kemalist reforms were likely to develop from receiving uncontrolled membership from all parts of society (Schuler 2002, 47). With regard to this, while Alevis were supported to become members, *mürteci*, or reactionists were certainly not welcomed even though it was known that many *mürtecis* had already been admitted into the party. In addition to the *mürtecis*, Kemalist member enlargement was directed through a Turkish nationalism that indirectly and clearly reflected the period between 1936 and 1941. There was a conscious deferment of the Kemalist administration in their politics of membership enlargement in South Eastern Turkey, where the Kurdish population density is higher than other parts of the country (Schuler 2002, 48-50). The Kurdish rebellions (1924 – 1938) could be seen as the major reason for the party politics of enlarging partisanship in that region, since the rejection of being a member was popular in the region and did not seem feasible, particularly to the Kurdish Alevis, as the Kemalists' displayed heavy disapproval

of the rebellions (Zürcher 2004, 254-255; van Bruinessen 2013, 33, 70, 103; Schuler 2002, 50-51).

Considering the Democrat Party's viewpoint in relation to expanding their party members, we can observe a similar reluctance of the Republican People's Party's administration to regard the Kurdish people (Schuler 2002, 52-53). The main reason for the aforementioned similarity is because the Democrat Party was born from the womb of Republican People's Party, and in its first years it especially followed an ideology parallel to that of the Republican People's Party with regards to party-strengthening strategies (Schuler 2002, 53). Nevertheless, in a short period of time the Democrat Party emerged as the broad populist party that aimed to be critical of the Republican state's grasp of a solid homogenized social identity (Hiç 2009, 17; Özbudun 2003, 78).

Factionalism in the country had always blighted Anatolia. This formation of the country thus favoured the Democrat Party, so when the coast was seen as supporting the Republican People's Party, it fell on Anatolia, in view of propaganda strategies by the Democrat leadership, to support the Democrat Party. It is important to note that the Democrat Party not only had the opportunity to get ready votes due to factionalism, but also factionalism in the country underlined the existence of a social heterogeneous opposition to the Republican People's Party (Hiç 2009, 16-17; Özbudun 2003, 78). The high numbers of registered party members of both parties also highlighted the polarized political standpoint of society (Schuler 2002, 53).

During 1950s, the politics of Turkey were shaped in the midst of partisanship-strengthening policies of the political parties, which in time with the existing fragmented society turned into polarizing policies. The Republican People's Party supported Alevi partisanship, while the Party remained distant to enlarging its party membership to the Kurdish, particularly Sunni, populace. With the number of the party members of the Republican People's Party in mind as the reflection of the strong Kemalist basis at the public level, the special interest of the Kemalists in the Alevis is what ultimately underlined the Alevi support of Kemalism. Furthermore, in the wake of the emergent party politics of the era, the Alevi community increasingly became modeled and interpreted as a distinct and homogenous political community, not only from the official view of the

political parties that sought their support but also from within the community that sought representation by aligning with political parties, and represented a support.

4.2. The Democrat Party

After the incentive of 1945, on 7 January 1946, the Democrat Party was officially established under the leadership of Celal Bayar (Özbudun 2003, 21). As aforementioned, being able to gain a good number of Parliamentary seats through the first election in 1950 was an important indicator for the future successes of the Party. The conditions for the success of the young Democrat Party can be grouped together under three interlinked reasons.

The first reason is that the long reign of the Republican People's Party did not represent the majority of the society. In addition, people under strict Kemalist rule, particularly in relation to its restrictive policies towards religion, gave rise to obvious separations of certain groups; e.g. laics and anti-laics. Thus, the twenty-year rule of the Kemalists expectedly resulted in a big vacuum that needed to be filled. State laicization through the abolishment of the Caliphate office (1924), the control over religion especially in the education system via the *Diyanet* (1924), the introduction of the Swiss Civil Code, the Italian Penal Code, and the German code (1926) to replace *Shariah* were not welcomed by most of the Sunni majority (Ahmad 2002, 80; Schuler 2002, 162).

Secondly, particularly-ignored rural Anatolian peasantry, whose emphasis was on religion, were the biggest supporters of the Democrat Party (Hiç 2009, 23, 30). This rural group never took full advantage of the state regulated secular culture created by the Kemalist state. As time passed, the gap between the peasantry and elite classes widened. For example, inadequate education opportunities that were offered to Anatolia, compared to the western urban cities, are an important contributing factor which brought about this situation. Moreover, the rise in modern industry which was also controlled by a few large-scale companies, severely placed pressure on small business owners across Anatolia (Hiç 2009, 16, 23).

The laic implementations of the Kemalists not only excluded a big part of society that had developed significant Islamic traditions over centuries, but also excluded the Alevis living in Anatolia; who also experienced the effects of social and economic deficits through this exclusion. These rural based Anatolian Alevis still lived in their self-enclosed communities, even though with the introduction of the laicization policies they had high expectations for neutral treatment, and tolerant acceptance, under Republican rule (Schuler 2002, 162). Hence, the need for a new political party that would serve as an opposition to the Republican People's Party became a driving force behind the introduction of the Democrat Party to the region. The Democrat Party was seen as independent from the Republican political ideology, and was considered vital by the Alevis and many of the other groups who wished to maintain their distinct religious and ethnic identities in a secular government that would be equitable towards those ends.

The third reason for the success of the Democrat Party stemmed from the gap that Kemalist rule had created over twenty years. The aforementioned efforts of people with a socialist or Islamist background to form a new political party were overwhelmingly denied by the Republicans. As a result the supporters of various different ideologies and parties saw this new party, the Democrat Party, as a break from the Republican People's Party's centrist, bureaucratic and authoritative policies (Keyder 1990, 101). The support of the illegal Communist Party's members for the Democrat Party during the 1950 election is a good example in understanding the reason of unification of different voices that stemmed from the significance of needing an opposition to the long standing Kemalist rule (Okan 2004, 94). Apart from the neglected position of the Alevi communities, when the Democratic Party's policies that were set to result in the advancement of the agricultural sector were considered, Alevi interest in this party increased greatly because the majority of Alevi people lived as farmers (Schuler 2002, 162). Therefore, during the 1950s, the Alevis switched their allegiance from the Republican People's Party to the Democrat Party (Coşkun 1995, 266). So, it can be safely said in regards to the three aforementioned intermingled reasons that failure of the strategies of inclusion and other alienating efforts of the Republican People's Party reflected through the ballot boxes, and as a result contributed to the overwhelming success of the Democrat Party.

The Democrat Party that became a strong governing power due to the big support that it gained fundamentally from the large peasantry at the time, and its rise could be characterized as a mass action taking place in a very short amount of time, but it too failed in preserving its inclusive attitude towards ethnic and religious diversity in the long run (Eroğul 1990, 87). Accordingly, the change in the political direction of the Alevis, which was a significant reason for the success of the Democrat Party during early 1950s, did not last long (Schuler 2002, 162). The ideological line that the Democrat Party took attracted more and more Sunni Muslims, who, due to long-standing historical tension between the two religious groups, were not welcomed by the Alevis. This is because the Alevi identity was fundamentally rejected by the Sunni hegemon ruling bodies from the sixteenth century onwards (Okan 2004, 95). Still, even though that reason cannot be seen as the sole reason (the other possible reasons can be found in the following paragraphs), many Alevi communities eventually returned back to supporting the Republican People's Party (Schuler 2002, 162). In the end the Republican vision of a state regulated laicism, was seen as more favorable to the Alevi community than the threat of a Sunni dominated laicism under the Democrats. With this parallel line over religion that was drawn by the Republican People's Party, from 1957 elections onwards, state regulated 'laicism' quickly became the main category that determined the Alevis' political tendency (Kars 1990, 5; Okan 2004, 95).

Unsurprisingly, chiefly with the withdrawal of Alevi support, along with other socialist groups' support in the 1957 election, the Democrat Party's vote rate began to decrease. Along with this circumstance, the Democrat Party's suppression over opposition party members and supporters extended to a critical level. Changing the status of a city - Kırşehir- to a district, using the state radio broadcasts solely for the interests of the Democrat Party and reforming parliamentary legislation in order to stop the resistance of opposition; were only some of the ways through which the Democrat Party implemented oppressive political tactics (Hiç 2009, 30; Özbudun 2003, 35). Finally, with the support of ever-increasing opposition groups from various groups, the army seized power over the Democrat Party on the 27th of May 1960 (Hiç 2009, 30; Özbudun 2003, 36).

At this point, apart from the aforementioned oppression strategies, it is central to evaluate what specifically caused Alevi communities to stop supporting the Democrat Party policies in order to have a better understanding of the change of Alevis' political tendency in the 1950s back towards the Republican People's Party, as well as their strengthened attachment to the Republican People's Party, which have made them predominately staunch defenders of laicism up until today. The failures of the Democrat Party in the eyes of the Alevi communities can be gathered in two interconnected phases.

The main and the most visible initial reason, as previously mentioned, was the coinciding objectives of the Democrat Party and the Sunni Islamic ideology, which was seen as a form of Islamic resurgence (Ahmad 2002, 219; Schuler 2002, 162). Mosque-building programs, as well as establishing Imam Hatip schools in order to gain the support of Sunni *tariqats*, caused a loss of support from the Alevi communities (Schuler 2002, 162-163). The Democrat Party's sympathy for the Nur Movement, an Islamic movement that started in the early twentieth century, was especially seen as one of the major reasons that a number of Alevis withdrew their support from the Democrat Party given also that the Sunni Islamization of the ruling body was the biggest worry for the Alevis (Schuler 2002, 163). The suppression they experienced for centuries under the Ottoman Empire and being used and also neglected as a sectarian community by the Young Turks and then later again by the Republican People's Party, made them more cautious towards this issue. This resulted in a lack of belief for a promising future while the Democrat Party, that dismissed the laic values of Turkey, remained in power.

Secondly, by putting its Sunni Islamic policies into action, the Democrat Party did not only signal the introduction of a more conservative environment and oppression towards any kind of opposition, but also by being against the progressive and laic fundamentals of the Kemalist Republic of Turkey, created a more polarized environment. Because of this, the Alevis and other minority groups, either ideological or religious or ethnic, stopped supporting the Democrat Party. Certain distinctions, which are still in use in present-day Turkey, such as the division in the society in between laic as opposed to religious, or

republican and leftist ideologues¹⁶ opposed to pro-*Shariah* reactionaries, emerged as a result of the exclusivist character that the Democrat Party gained during its short rule (Okan 2004, 97-98). This clear separation between the parties was attributed to the laic and republican leftist features that most appealed to the Alevi identity. In addition, Alevism, with its new political identity once more gave the unexpected result of locating the community on one of side, neglecting its religious as well as ethnic affiliations, in favor of a government that would better suit its existential concerns as a community.

Consequently, in light of the points made, even though the Democrat Party achieved a significant amount of support from different parts of society, and appeared as a strong opposition against the long reign of the Republican People's party after its first two elections (1950 and 1954), it failed to maintain the support of the Alevis and other socialist groups from the 1957 election onwards. The religious standpoint of the Democratic Party, privileging the Sunni Islamic *tariqats* in particular, caused frustration as well as unrest among Alevi communities, who were in search of a laic environment in which they could have their voice heard. All in all, starting from late 1950s, the Alevis, adopting a politicized identity, also increasingly committed themselves to becoming the defenders of the laic Republic of Turkey turning out to become their main identity definition.

4.3. Crystallization of the Political Identity of Alevis

The Sunni Islamic resurgence that began with the Democrat Party's last period after the 1954 elections has not stopped gaining momentum ever since (Ahmad 2002, 219). "In the 1960s the conservatives, alarmed by the growing influence of socialist and democratic forces, began to use religion as an ideological counter-force" (Ahmad 2002, 219; Hiç 2009, 23, 30). This situation made it clear not only to the political expediency the Alevis embodied, which was decidedly to the left, but also the leftist ideology in general that the

¹⁶ The Republican People's Party in its early years cannot be categorized as a left wing party because populism arrow of the party meant that the existence of the class differences within the society was accepted. Nonetheless, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, abolishment of the Caliphate office with the introduction of secular republic resulted in characterizing the party a left-wing one (Okan 2004, 97-98). In this regard Alevis support for the Republican People's Party can be interpreted as supporting a laic concept which was an indication of left in Turkish context. Like the majority of the socialist movements, the majority of the Alevis' political stance did not present itself leftist rather statism (*Ibid.*).

adoption of these politics did not have not much to do either with their religious or ethnic background (Çamuroğlu 1998, 79; Köse 2012, 593; Massicard 2007, 60-61).

In the 1950s, because of industrialization, there was increase in migration from rural to urban cities¹⁷. Migration also carried the party mechanisms that were formed in the rural areas to the big cities (Hiç 2009, 30; Özbudun 2003, 78). The effectiveness of the system carried on with the Justice Party after the Democrat Party was abolished by the Coup of 1960. This situation can also be seen as the explanation for the failure to build loyal horizontal networks between political parties and their supporters (Özbudun 2003, 78). During the 1970s and 1980s, the ideological polarization in society did not change the fundamental vertical structure of the parties, but it did however destroy the then party system which did not have a strong bourgeoisie, and was highly autonomous from social groups (Heper 1985, 100-101).

“...Alevi expressions of communal tradition have had to contend with accusations of disloyalty to the nation that have been backed with threats and acts of violence. This fact goes some way to explaining what might otherwise seem to be a contradiction that, in an era of increased public reflexivity on communal differences and religious pluralism, many Alevis continue to insist upon their commitment to the indivisibility of the nation, brandishing Turkish flags and photographs of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk at events organized for the sake of communal expression”. (Tambar 2012, 659)

The rise in political Islam among Sunni Muslims gained more strength in the 1970s and brought about attacks on the laic order of the Republic, with the accusation of it being restrictive on religion. These circumstances underlined the polarized nature of the country to a high level. The Alevis could not create their own identity movements akin to the Kurds and Islamists, who depended on a reference actor for their religious and ethnic political stance. The absence of a reference actor for the Alevis was likely to have

¹⁷ The high migration rate after 1950's in Turkey did not affect the population growth rate of rural regions as well as the big cities. With the end of World War II high birth rate was witnessed all around Turkey. Solely after 1980's the rural depopulation caused a remarkable decrease in the population in the rural zones of Turkey (Schuler 2002, 85).

stemmed from the absence in recognition of the Alevi as a distinct identity. As a result, their ideological tendency coming from the early Republican era located them to the leftist side during the movements; with the advent of modernization and urbanization, the Alevis went through another identity formation to a great extent (Sokefeld 2008, 32; Köse 2012, 576; Tambar 2012, 653; Massicard 2007, 58). Thus, despite the discriminatory reforms experienced from the early days of the Republic of Turkey by the Kemalists, the Alevis to a large extent continued to provide loyal support to the Kemalist Republic (Vorhoff 1999, 35-36; Okan 2002, 97).

Another point to make clear is that the Alevis' socialist path that started during the early Republican era later reflects their political stance of supporting leftist parties. Despite the 1923-1946 single party era of the Republican People's Party being contextually and structurally different than the 1980s Social Democratic People's Party, the majority of the latter mentioned party members saw this party as the continuation of their parents' party; the Republican People's Party (Schuler 2002, 41, 157). In direct proportion to the strong support of the Alevis during a significant part of the grass-roots era of the Republican People's Party, in parallel to the general view, the Social Democratic People's Party also benefited highly from the crucial support of the Alevi communities (Schuler 2002, 41; Ayata 1993, 44; Erdoğan 1995, 76).

Chapter V. Conclusion

The notion of Alevi identity is inherently always in contention. Whether being told orally by Alevis themselves, academically or by an oppressive power Alevi identity is always in controversy because Alevi identity is never fixed in one location of place and time; instead it is constantly in flux and appearing in the course of transition. Over the recent years it has accrued certain qualities such as secular or leftist. However, it is only through centuries of movement that these qualities have come into view.

It appears that the emergence of the Alevi political identity contrary to general tendency was not shaped after the 1970s. Under current conditions, the question of when the political identity of the Alevis was born and how it evolved in time is the key issue. Particularly the analysis of the period in between the late Ottoman Empire and early Republican Era offers a viable answer to this issue. By tying the Young Turks' interest to Alevis then to the Kemalists, Alevi political identity can surely be seen as having transformed from maintaining no clear active public politics of identity to beginning to have one. As it has been argued, the absence of existing political, historical, sociological and ethnographic literature on the topic is a clear sign of the continued neglect of the political aspect of Alevi identity; which Alevi communities challenge even today, as in the case of naming the third bridge on the Bosphorus after Yavuz Sultan Selim of the Ottoman Empire.

In order to show the importance of the era that reshaped Alevi identity, by putting less emphasis on either a religious and ethnic affiliation, and examining both of these qualities as not absolute or polarized in their historical context, this study validated how this sectarian minority of Alevism evolved politically from the sixteenth century Ottoman Empire forward. Also laying the groundwork as to understanding why most Alevis became Kemalists during the early Republican era of modern Turkey, with only a few leaving Kemalism since then.

Before the Republican People's Party, whose roots are found in the Young Turks' ideology, it is not possible to mention a politically identifiable Alevi identity. This work, in this respect, was essentially interested in the material historical, political and social

dynamics at play throughout the Alevi history in Turkey, focusing on the late Ottoman Empire and early Republican Era when the archival productions of an Alevis' political identity was mainly shaped. Concentrating on how this shaping reduced their cultural identity as an isolated and unique one, this study also shows how Alevism has perceived itself as an orthodox religion in Islam, even under dominate Sunni Islam interpretations that are antagonistic to this claim of orthodoxy.

In this regard this thesis reintroduced emphasis on the history of this transition, and the expanding of that particular period of moving the historical understanding of the Alevis from a marginalized religious group to the embodiment of the Alevis as a figure for the new Turkishness; which Kemalism had required to create within Turkey. Furthermore, explicit attention has been paid to continuing the academic account of how the Alevi uptake of its “identification” within the discourse of these competing powers, Ottoman and Kemalist, has unfolded. From the view of the Alevis, the way their community and political interests have mobilized, has been from a paradoxical resistance to and embodiment of the logic of Empire and Nation, as expressed under these separate historical regimes.

This thesis also attempted to focus on Kurdish and Turkish Alevis as overlooked intra-ethnic communities. Since the political behavior between the two starting from the Seyh Said rebellion was observed parallel and there were certain disagreements between the Kurdish Sunni and Kurdish Alevis regarding the position they took in relation to the Kemalist laicism. This examination showed that being Alevi for Kurdish people was more dominant in choosing their political side than being Kurdish.

For this purpose this study examined the reproduction of Alevi identity starting from the direct and indirect religious, sociological and political effects of the Ottoman Empire and Safavid Dynasty and their relations to the Alevi community. Relations that were informed by many policies and institutionalized practices and interpretations, such as the change in the *dedelik* understanding and institution of Alevi community, as well as gaining recognition as a religious group for the first time in the sixteenth century. Though the early accounts of Alevi groups were predominately prejudiced and negative, the Alevi

community continued to practice and re-form their own religious and communal practice in spite of their non-recognition as legitimate.

In order to show the importance of the late Ottoman period, the Young Turks influence on the identity building of Alevis evaluated. The Young Turks' support for Alevis particularly during the *Tanzimat* period resulted in gaining a political influence for the Alevis, with the Bektashis particularly highlighted. Especially because this situation caused a resurrection of the Alevi community under the Kemalist Republican People's Party rule, during the Early Republican era, casting them as a key nation building actor.

The analysis of the Early Republican era showed that even though Kemalists' Turkishness leaned on laicism. It still made use of the history and traditions of Alevis in ways that were rediscovered and re-manufactured by the Kemalists, and was not welcomed by the majority of Alevis. This is chiefly because this effort by the Kemalists ultimately lacked the ability, from the point of view of the Alevi themselves, to create a neutral environment for the Alevis to represent themselves. In order to show the main reasons of Alevi frustration, the two main reforms of the Kemalist ideology have been examined; the abolishment of the Caliphate office and establishment of the Presidency of Religious Affairs. This examination showed that even though first reform resulted in a great extent of control of the Sunni Islamic dominancy within Turkey, the second reform, despite it being put into action to restrict the role of religion in public sphere, brought about the Sunni religion as the *defacto* official state religion. In doing this also showed that Kemalist laicism ultimately rejected religious pluralism.

The significance of the multi-party era for the Alevi communities appears precisely at this point. Because of the non-acknowledgment of the identification of being Alevi under the Republican People's Party for more than twenty years, Alevis supported the first successful political party that emerged in this period, the Democrat Party. Yet, the newly forged Democrat Party failed to maintain its support from the Alevis after the 1957 election, because the religious stance of the party privileged Sunni Islam in particular. This situation caused unrest among Alevi communities, who were in search of a laic political environment, in which they would be treated as equal with the Sunni majority.

To sum up, starting from late 1950s, the shift in the political tendency of Alevis made its solidified and ultimate move towards the laic and socialist Republican People's Party. This shift also underlined the Alevis adoption of a politicized identity, in which they committed themselves to becoming the defenders of a laic Republic of Turkey; which has subsequently turned out to become their main identity definition.

With the help of the course of a number of theoretical paths that have crossed; such as the problem of history-making and voice within the official production of an archive against a long standing oral history, the clash of the private and public when marginalized heterodox religious/ethnic communities confront hegemonic political/religious powers, and the development of a strong partisanship structure in politics which does not provide full articulation to a people's political needs and will. This thesis shows how contemporary Alevi identity is historically tied to the effect of the ebb and flow between these various institutional and internal effects of a marginalized community's existence.

This research offers then a call to open up further discussion of the period between the two distinct positions that have been taken in existing literature. While one position heavily focused on the pre-Republic Alevi identity, and the other has stressed the political nature of Alevism after the 1970s'; the main focus in this regard is on the 'transition' of the Alevi identity from a religious/ethnic community to secularist political demographic and community.

Further research based on the framework of this thesis could help to develop a literature that recognizes the transition period of political, social and cultural identity of Alevis that started in the fourteenth century and leads into the Early Republican Era of Modern Turkey. This literature would facilitate solving the existing identity problematic that the Alevis face in Turkey to this day, as well as better contextualize why issues like the third bridge of the Bosphorus the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge are problematic within contemporary Turkey's sanctioned national discourse.

References

Abdelhadi, M 2003, '*Sheikh sanctions headscarf ban*', BBC News, Viewed 4/18/2013, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/3358363.stm>.

Ahmad, F 1988, *Islamic Reassertion in Turkey*, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 750-769.

Ahmad, F 2002, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, Routledge, New York.

Akan, M 2003, *Contextualizing Multiculturalism*, Studies in Comparative International Development, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 57-75.

Akan, M 2009, *Laïcité and Multiculturalism: Stasi Report in Context*, British Journal of Sociology, Vol 60, No. 2, pp. 237-256.

Andersen, R, Seibert, R & Wagner, J 2004, *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*, Pearson Education Inc., New Jersey.

Andrews, P & Benninghaus, R 2002, *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey*, US: Eds. Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert Verlag, pp. 117-123.

Andrews, P 1992, *Türkiye'de Etnik Gruplar*, Trans. Mustafa Kupuşoğlu, İstanbul: Ant ve Tüm Zamanlar Yayıncılık.

Asad, T 1993, *Introduction to Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Islam and Christianity*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

Asad, T 2006, *Trying to Understand French Secularism*, In Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World. Eds. H. Vries and L. E. Sullivan, Fordham University Press, New York.

Ayata, A 1993, *Ideology, Social Bases and, Organizational Structure of the post-1980 Political Parties*, in The Political and Socioeconomic Transformation of Turkey (eds), Eralp, A, Tunay, M & Yeşilada, Praeger, Westport.

- Baha, S 1926, *Türkiye 'de Alevi Zümreleri*, Türk Yurdu, Eylül, Vol. 21 No. 204, pp. 207.
- Balibar, E 2004, "Dissonances within *Laïcité*", *Constellations*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 253-267.
- Belge Net 2007, *Seçim Sonuçları*, Available: <http://www.belgenet.net>, Viewed: 4/19/2013.
- Berkes, N 1964, *Two concepts of secularism*, The development of secularism in Turkey, McGill University Press, Montreal.
- Bilici, F 1999, *Alevi-Bektaşî İlahiyatının Günümüz Türkiye 'indeki İşlevi*, Ed. T. Olsson, E. Özdalga ve C. Raudvere, in *Alevi Kimliği*. Tarih Vakfı, İstanbul.
- Binnaz, T 1981, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey*, E. J. Brill, Leiden.
- Birdoğan N, 1994, *İttihat-Terakki 'nin Alevilik-Bektaşîlik Araştırması*, Berfin, İstanbul.
- Bozkurt, F 1990, *Aleviliğin toplumsal boyutları*, Yön Yayıncılık, İstanbul.
- Brah, A 1996, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*, Routledge, London.
- Coşkun, Z 1995, *Aleviler, Sünniler ve Öteki Sivas*. İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul.
- Çamuroğlu, R 1998, *Alevi Revivalism in Turkey*, in *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*, (eds) Olsson, T, Özdalga, E & Raudvere, C, Curzon Press, Richmond.
- Çarkoğlu, A & Toprak, B 2006, *Değişen Türkiye 'de Din, Toplum ve Siyaset*, Tesev Yayınları, İstanbul.
- Çıtak, Z 2009, *Between 'Turkish Islam' and 'French Islam': The Role of the Diyanet in the Conseil Français du Culte Musulman*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.
- Dirks, N 1990, *History as a Sign of the Modern*, *Public Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp 25-32.

Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı 2008, Alevilik, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı,
<http://www.diyanet.gov.tr/turkish/dy/Diyanet-Isleri-Baskanligi-Duyuru-128.aspx>,
Viewed 2/19/2013.

Dressler, M 2013, *Writing Religion: The Making of Turkish Alevi Islam*, Oxford University Press; New York.

Eroğul, C 1990, *Demokrat Parti: Tarihi ve İdeolojisi*, İmge Yayınevi, Ankara. Foucault, M 1979, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, Vintage, New York.

Foucault, M 1982, *The Subject and Power*, in *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, (eds) Dreyfus, H & Rabinow, P, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Georgean, F 1995, *Des Ottomans aux Turcs: naissance d'une nation*, İsis, İstanbul.

Georgean, F 1986, *A la recherche d'une identite: le nationalisme turc*, Altan Gökcalp (yay. yön.), *La Turquie en transition. Disparites, identites, pouvoirs*, Maisonneuve et Larose, Paris.

Gezik, E 2000, *Alevi Kürtler, Dini, Etnik ve Politik Sorunlar Bağlamında*, Kalan, Ankara.

Gökcalp, A 1980, *Tetes Rouges et Bouches Noires*, Une conferie tribale de l'ouest anatolien, Societe d'ethnographie, pp. 25-27, Paris.

Gökcalp, A 2002, *Islam in Public: New Visibilities and New Imaginaries*, Public Culture, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 173-190.

Göle, N 1997, *Secularism and Islamism in Turkey: The Making of Elites and Counter-Elites*, Middle East Journal, Vol. 51, No. 1, pp. 46-58.

Gölpınarlı, A 1969, *Türkiye'de Mezhepler ve Tarikatlar*, Gerçek Yayınevi, İstanbul.

Göner, Ö 2005, *The Transformation of the Alevi Collective Identity*, Cultural Dynamics, Vol. 17, pp. 107-134.

- Gur-Ze'ev, I & Pappé, I 2003, *Beyond the Destruction of the Other's Collective Memory: Blueprints for a Palestinian/Israeli Dialogue, Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol. 20, pp. 93-108.
- Heper, M 1985, *The State Tradition in Turkey*, The University of Michigan, Eothen Press.
- Hiç, M 2009, *Turkish Economy and Politics: From 1923, the Foundation of the Republic until 2002*, Beykent University Press, Istanbul.
- Houston, C 2008, *Kurdistan: Crafting of National Selves*, Berg Publishers; Cambridge.
- Hürriyet Daily News 2013, *Third Bosphorus bridge to be called 'Yavuz Sultan Selim'*, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/third-bosphorus-bridge-to-be-called-yavuz-sultan-selim.aspx?pageID=238&nID=47801&NewsCatID=345>, Viewed: 30/05/2013.
- İçduygu, A & Keyman, F 1998-9, *Globalleşme, Anayasallık ve Türkiye'de Vatandaşlık Tartışması*, Doğu-Batı, Vol. 5, pp 143-145.
- Karasipahi, S 2009, *Muslims in Modern Turkey: Kemalism, Modernism and the Revolt of the Islamic Intellectuals*, I. B. TAURIS, London; New York.
- Kars, S 1990, *Aleviler Siyasetle Ic Ice*, Günümüzde Alevilik, 5, Cumhuriyet.
- Kasaba, R 1998, Eski ile Yeni Arasında Kemalizm ve Modernizm, in *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, Eds. Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul.
- Kehl-Bodrogi, K 1988, *Die Kızılbaş/Aleviten*, Untersuchungen über eine esoterische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Anatolien, Schwarz, Berlin.
- Kehl-Bodrogi, K 1993, *Die "Wiederfindung" des Alevitentums in der Türkei: Geschichtsymthos und kollektive Identität*. Orient, Vol. 34, pp. 267-282.
- Kehl-Bodrogi, K 1996. *Tarih Mitosu ve Kollektif*, Birikim, Vol. 88, pp. 52-63.

- Kehl-Bodrogi, K 1993, *Türkiye’de Alevilik: Dini Bir Cemaatin Oluşumu ve Şimdiki Konumuna Dair*, Nefes Dergisi, Vol. 2, pp. 42-44.
- Keyder, Ç 1990, *Türkiye’de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul.
- Kieser, H 2000, *Der verpasste Friede, Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei, 1839-1938*, Chronos, Zurich.
- Köse, T 2012, *Ideological or religious? Contending visions on the future of Alevi identity*, Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power, Vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 576-596.
- Kupper, A & Kupper, J 1985, *Ethnic Groups, The Social Science Encyclopedia*, Routledge, London.
- Massicard E, 2007, *Türkiye’den Avrupa’ya Alevi Hareketinin Siyasallaşması – L’autre Turquie*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul.
- McDowall, D 1992, *The Kurds: a Nation Denied*, Minority Rights Publications, London.
- McGranahan, C 2005, *Truth, Fear, and Lies: Exile Politics and Arrested Histories of the Tibetan Resistance*, Cultural Anthropology, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 570-600.
- Melikoff, I 1998, *Bektashi / Kizilbas: Historical Bipartation and Its Consequences*, in *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*, (eds) Olsson, T, Özdalga, E & Raudvere, C, Curzon Press, Richmond.
- Nasr, S 2000, *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, ABC International Group Inc., Chicago.
- Netton, I. R 1997, *A Popular Dictionary of Islam*, NTC Pub, Lincolnwood.
- Neyzi, L 2002, *Remembering to Forget: Sabbateanism, National Identity, and Subjectivity in Turkey*, Society for Comperative Study of Society and History, Vol. 44, No. 1, 137-158.
- Ntvmsnbc 2013, ‘Yavuz Sultan Selim’aProtestosuna Biber Gazi, <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25447162/>, Viewed: 5/06/2013.

Ocak, A 1998, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mulhidler (15. ve 17. Yüzyıllar)*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul.

Ocak, A 1996, *Türk Sufiliğine Bakışlar*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul.

Oglesby, E 2007, *Educating Citizens in Postwar Guatemala: Historical Memory, Genocide, and the Culture of Peace*. Radical History Review, Vol. 97, pp. 77-98.

Okan, M 2004, *Türkiye 'de Alevilik: Antropolojik Bir Yaklaşım*, İmge Kitapevi, İstanbul.

Örnek, S 1988, *İlkelerde Din, Büyü, Sanat, Efsane*, Gerçek Yayınevi, İstanbul.

Öz, B 2001, *Alevilik nedir?* Der Yayınları, İstanbul.

Öz, E 1992, *Tek Parti Yönetimi ve Siyasal Katılım (1923-1945)*, Gündoğan, Ankara.

Özbudun, E 2008, *Çağdaş Türk Politikası Demokratik Pekişmenin Önündeki Engeller*, Doğan Kitap, İstanbul.

Parla, T, & Davidson, A 2008, *Secularism and Laicism in Turkey*, in *World Secularisms at the Millennium*, Eds. J. R. P. Jakobsen, Ann, Duke University Press, Durham.

Parla, T, & Davidson, A 2004, *Corporatist ideology in Kemalist Turkey: Progress or Order?*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse.

Piscatori, J 1986, *Islam in a World of Nation-States*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Portelli, A 1991, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning In Oral History*. SUNY Press, Albany.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R 1968, *Din ve Toplum*, Çev. Ünsal Oskay, Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 301-329.

Refik, A 1932, *Onaltıncı Asırda Rafızlık ve Bektaşiliğe dair Hazine-i Evrak Vesikalarını Havidir (1558-1591)*, İstanbul Edebiyat Fakültesi Mecmuası, Vol. 9, No. 2.

- Romano, D 2006, *Cambridge Middle East Studies*, Missouri State University. Missouri.
- Rubin, M 2005, *Green Money, Islamist Politics in Turkey*, Middle East Quarterly, Vol.12, No. 1, pp. 13-23.
- Sayarı, S 1975, *Some Notes on the Beginnings of Mass Political Participation in Turkey*, in *Political Participation in Turkey: Historical Background and Present Problems*, (eds) Akarlı, ED & Ben-Dor, G, Boğaiçi University Publications, Istanbul.
- Schuler, H 2002, *Türkiye’de Sosyal Demokrasi: Particilik, Hemşehricilik, Alevilik*, (trans) Tonbul, Y, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul.
- Scott, J. W 2005, *Symptomatic Politics: The Banning of Islamic Head Scarves in French Public Schools*, French, Politics, Culture & Society, Vol. 23, pp. 106-127.
- Sokefeld, M 2008, *Struggling for Recognition: The Alevi Movement in Germany and in Transnational Space*, Berghahn Books, Oxford.
- Sonn, T 2005, *Islam and Modernity: Are They Compatible?* in *Modernisation, Democracy, and Islam*, (eds) Hunter, ST & Malik, H, Praeger, Westport.
- Stiring, P 1965, *Turkish Village*, Wiley, New York.
- Stoler, A 2002, *Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance*, Archival Science, Vol. 2, No.1-2, pp. 87-109.
- Şalcı V. L 1940. *Halk Bilgisi Haberleri*, Vol. 102, pp. 150.
- Şener, C 1989, *Alevilik Olayı: Toplumsal Bir Başkaldırının Kısa Tarihçesi*, Yön Yayıncılık, İstanbul.
- Tambar, Kabir 2012, *Islamic eflexivity and the uncritical subject*, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 18, pp. 652-672.

Today's Zaman 2013, *Name of the third bridge causes outrage among Alevis*, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-316969-name-of-third-bridge-causes-outrage-among-alevis.html>. Viewed: 30/05/2013.

Touraine, A 1981, *The voice and the eye: An analysis of social movements*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Trouillot, M 1995, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Beacon Press, Boston.

Tuğal, C 2006, *The Appeal of Islamic Politics: Ritual and Dialogue in a Poor District of Turkey*, Sociological Quarterly, Vol. 47, No. 2, pp. 245-273.

Van Bruinesses, M 2013, *Kürtlük, Türklük, Alevilik: Etnik ve Dinsel Kimlik Mücadeleleri*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul.

Vorhoff, K 1999, *Türkiye 'de Alevilik ve Bektaşilikle İlgili Akademik ve Gazetecilik Nitelikli Yayınlar*, in Alevi Kimliği, Eds., T. Ollson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere, Tarih Vakfı, İstanbul.

Vorhoff, K 1995, *Zwischen Glaube, Nation und neuer Gemeinschaft: Alevitische Identität in der Türkei der Gegenwart*, Klaus Schwarz, Berlin.

Weber, M 1993. *Sosyoloji Yazıları*, (trans) Parla, T, Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul.

Webster, D 1973, *The Turkey of Atatürk*, Social Process in the Turkish Reformation. AMS Press, New York.

Yıldırım, E 1995, *Türkiye 'de Siyasal Süreci ve Profesyonel Siyasette Benliğin Kurulması, SHP Örneği*, Ark, Ankara.

Zürcher, E 1993, *Turkey: A Modern History*, I. B. Tauris, London; New York.