

Article History: First Submitted: 27 March 2020, Accepted: 8 May 2020
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33182/ks.v8i1.551>

A Survey of the Roots and History of Kurdish Alevism: What are the Divergences and Convergences between Kurdish Alevi Groups in Turkey?

Suavi Aydın¹

Abstract

This article focuses on the generic form of Alevism, commonly referred to as "Anatolian Alevism", asking how ethnic and tribal divergences occurred, their interrelationships and the basis of the differences and similarities. It assumes that the beliefs and practices known collectively as "Anatolian Alevism" constitute a "wholistic structure" that refers to the joint possession of a common set of ritualistic and mythic attributes and characteristics. In this context, "Anatolian Alevism" presents a distinctive attribute compared to other beliefs thought to be similar or connected to which Alevism is related in some ways although it is also the product of a different history and belief pattern. The central concern is to provide an understanding of the historical establishment and interrelationship of Kırmanjki and Kurmanji speaking Alevi tribes and their similarities and differences compared to Turkish/Turkmen Alevism despite their strong structural associations.

Keywords: Alevism, Kurdish Alevism, Upper Euphrates Alevism, Bektashism, Dersim.

Abstract in Kurmanji

Nêrînek li ser reh û dîroka elewîtiya kurdî: Cudatî û wekheviyên di nav komên elewîyên kurd li Tirkîyeyê

Pirsa serekî di vê gotarê de ew e ka "elewîtiya kurdî" xwedanê cihêkî taybet û dîrokeke xwe ye li nav wê bawerîya ku wek "elewîtiya Anatolê" tê zanîn. Ji bo vê armancê, gotar li rehên dîrokî û geşedana bawerî û cemaeta ku em dibêjinê "elewîtiya kurdî" dinêre, û wekhevî û cudatîyên di navbera komên elewî yên kurmançî-ziman û kirmanckî-ziman dinirxîne. Gotar li ser wan pirsan hûr dibe ku dikevîne nav şiklê berbelav ê elewîtiyê, ku bi rengekî asayî wek "elewîtiya anatolê" tê zanîn, û dikeve dû pirsê ka cudabûnên qewmî û eşîrî çawa pêk hatin, çi têkilî hene di navbera wan de û çi heye di bingehe wan cudatî û wekheviyan de. Gotar hizreke ne-bingehger dide pêş li ser têgihiştina damezrandina dîrokî û têkilîyên navxweyî yên eşîrên elewî yên zaza (kirmanckî-ziman) û kurmançî-ziman, û wekhevî û cudatîyên wan gava mirov ligel elewîtiya tirk/turkman dide ber hev sererayî manendiyên wan ên binyadî yên bihêz.

¹ Suavi Aydın, Professor, Faculty of Communication, Hacettepe University, 06800, Beytepe, Ankara, Turkey.
E-mail: suavi@hacettepe.edu.tr.



Abstract in Sorani

Rumallêkî rîşe û dîrokî kurdanî 'elewî: cyawazîyekan û nzîkbûnewekanî nêwan grupekanî kurdî 'elewî le turkya

Em babete terkîz dexate ser forme giştîyekey 'elewîzm, ke beşêweyekî baw wek "elewîzmî enadollî" amajey pêdedrêt, deprisêt çon cyawazîye etnîkî û hozîyekan û peywendîye nawxoyyekanîyan we payey cyawazî û lêkçunekanîyan rûydawe. Twêjîneweke waydadenêt ke ew bawerr û praktîsaney begsîtî wek "elewîzmî enadollî" nasrawe "sitraktori giştî" (grîmaney serekî pesendikraw lelayen cvakî 'elewî le turkya) pêkdênêt, ewey ke amaje dedat be bûnî komellêk sîfet û taybetmendî nerîtî û efsaneyî hawbeş. Lem çwarçêweyeda, beberawrid legell bawerrekani tir ke wa debînên be corêk le corekan legell 'elewîzimda hawşêwen yan peywendîyan pêkewe heye "elewîzmî enadollî" sîfetî cyakerewey heye herçende berhemî mêjû û şewey bîrkirdnewekeyşî cyawaz bêt. Krokî babeteke destebarkirdnî têgeyîştinêke derbarey bunyad û pêwendîye xobexoyyekanî hoze axêwerekani kirmancekî û kirmanciye 'elewîyekan we cyawazî û leyekçunekanîyan legell 'elewîye turk/turkmanekan sererray sitraktori behêzî komellekanyan.

Abstract in Zazaki

Derheqê ristim û tarîxê elewîyîya kurdan de cigêrayîş: Tirkîya de cîyayî û nêzdîbîyayîşê grûbanê elewîyanê kurdan

Na meqale formê elewîyî yo pêroyî ke sey "elewîyîya Anadolîye" name bena, aye ser giranî dana. Pers beno ke cîyayîyê etnîk û eşîrkî, pagîrêdayîşê înan û bîngeyê cîyayî û yewbînanromendişî senî ameyê ra. Ferz beno ke bawerî û urf û adetê ke bi hewayêko pêroyî sey "elewîyîya Anadolîye" nas benê, ê "awanîyêka pêrogîre" anê pê ke wayîrîya hempare yê komsîfet û taybetmendîyanê adetî û mîstîkan qesd kena (no qeneato umûmî yo ke hetê komelê elewîyanê Tirkîya ra qebul beno). Herçiqas ke goreyê bawerîyanê bînan ê ke texmînan ra gore nêzdî yan zî girêdayeyê elewîyî yê û herçiqas ke elewîyîye qalibanê tarîx û bawerî yê cîya-cîyayan ra yena pêra, la bi tewîrêk ancî ê bawerîyanê bînan de têkildar a, ancîya na çarçewa de "elewîyîya Anadolîye" wayîra sîfetêkê taybetî ya. Eleqeya bîngeyêne a ya ke hem derheqê pagîrêdayîş û awanîya tarîxî yê eşîranê elewîyan ê ke kirmancî û kurmanckî (kirdaskî) qesey kenê de, hem zî, goreyê elewîyîya tirke/tirkmene û duştê heme nêzdîyîya xo ya awankîye de, derheqê cîyayî û yewbînanromendişê înan de îzahat bêro pêkêşkerdene.

Introduction

Martin van Bruinessen's assertion in a prominent article about Alevism makes a striking statement for an introduction:

The existence of Kurdish- and Zaza-speaking Alevi tribes, who almost exclusively use Turkish as their ritual language, and many of which even have Turkish tribal names is a fact that has exercised the explanatory imagination of many authors (Bruinessen, 1997: 1).

Almost all traditional sources in Turkish historiography and its nearby companions acknowledge Alevism as a Turkish/Turkic system of belief;² even though there are Alevi communities in Turkey that speak Kurmanji (Northern Kurdish) or Kirmanjki (Zaza) and that recognise themselves as “Kurd” or “Zaza”.³

In this context, Alevism refers to a specific faith that is different from the Shi’a and is shared by various ethnic groups restricted to communities of Asia Minor who have a common liturgy, norms and cults. Nevertheless, despite their affinity, it is uncertain whether or not each of these various ethnic groups has its own ethno-religious identity. This uncertainty is compounded by the intertwining and assimilation of groups. This is also valid for those Alevi peoples from communities who speak Iranic languages; there are Kirmanjki speaking as well as Kurmanji speaking Alevi people. Besides, there are also Turkish speaking Alevi communities who have lost their original Kirmanjki languages but still maintain their affiliation with the Alevi community due to their former *ocaks*.⁴

Here a noteworthy question arises. How is it possible that a common religious belief with the same liturgy, dogmas and rituals, and the same oral traditions, is adhered to by three different socio-cultural and language groups, namely Kurmanji, Kirmanjki and Turkish? The most common, but one-sided, explanation is that Alevism is originally a Turkic belief, a syncretism brought to Asia Minor from central Asia and Iran by Shamanist Turks and Turkmen who converted to Islam. According to this view, the Kurmanji and Kirmanjki speaking Alevi peoples were originally Turks who became “Kurdified” in eastern Turkey through contact with native Kurds. Another equally one-sided explanation is that they were originally Kurds who became Alevi under the influence of Turkmen. According to a counter argument, Alevism is an original Middle Eastern syncretic belief which the Kurdish and Zaza communities adopted or transferred to other communities. Here, central Asian influences are trivialised and the Turkmen are said to have adopted Alevism after they migrated to the Middle East, where they were influenced by this Middle Eastern faith. Another explanation, which we may characterise as Zaza essentialism, views Alevism as an original Zaza belief (of Kirmanjki speakers) and suggests that

² Many academic studies start from this assumption. Its origin can be found in Köprülü’s writings (1919). Also see Melikoff (1982, 1993); Roemer (1990).

³ See Dressler (2013); Markoff (1986); Beşikçi (2016). For the language of Dersim’s Alevi, see Bruinessen (1997: 6).

⁴ Its fundamental meaning is hearth. It means “the family around that hearth”. According to Andrews and Temel (2010: 287), “in the sense of a large family, it is used for subdivisions, that is communities, among the Alevi...”. Every particular *ocak* recognizes a lineage that is descended from the Prophet Muhammad’s grandson Huseyn (known as *as-sayyids*).

there was a split between the Alevism of Dersim and that of the other regions to which Iranic speaking Alevi groups spread. Here Alevism is presented as a “Dersim phenomenon” which overrides the question of whether groups spoke Kurmanji or Kirmanjki, considering Alevism as the essential culture of the Dersim region which had a widespread power and influence because of the Dersim-based *ocaks* that spread well beyond the boundaries of that region.

Roughly speaking, the Upper Euphrates basin⁵ was the core region of Kurdish Alevism. At the same time, this region was the area where the Safavid-Ottoman conflict was at its most violent and the Safavids were at their strongest in Asia Minor. The presence of Kurdish and related groups in this vast area has long been a well-known fact.⁶ It is baseless, therefore, to claim that the Kurds and related communities appeared after the Turkic domination of the east of mountainous Asia Minor, from Erzurum to Mosul, and that the speakers of the Kurmanji and Kirmanjki languages are Kurdified or Zazafied Turks, as some Turkish nationalist historiographers do. At the same time, in Dersim, which is considered to be the core region of Kurdish Alevism, the fact that those who describe themselves as Turks or those whose mother tongue is Turkish are generally Sunni-Hanafi⁷ is another observation that not only weakens the hypothesis of generic Turkishness which is attributed to Alevism, but also emphasises not the generic but the contingent character of religious processes in the region. With this in mind, the thesis that it is the Turks who brought Alevism to the Upper Euphrates basin is groundless. Although it contains some belief elements particular to the Turkmen community,⁸ Alevism should be seen as a belief that exceeds Turkishness and is shared by a variety of groups in Asia Minor, Kurds as well as Turks.

The development of belief sources and their geographical distinction

Alevism relates to a belief system which is separate and dissenting from the traditions of orthodox Islam due to political and religious disputes. This syncretisation pathway for heterodox groups⁹ (different sects and orders) from the eighth century onwards reaches a visible and distinctive form with

⁵ Please see the map at the end of the article which clearly shows the boundaries of the Upper Euphrates basin.

⁶ This is, for example, shown on the famous map of Mahmūd Qashgārī's *Dīwān-ı Lughāt al-Turk* written between 1072 and 1074, where the Kurdish regions are indicated as *Arḍ-ı Ekrād* (lands of Kurds), and situated between today's Iraq and Azerbaijan.

⁷ See Gültekin (2013: 144).

⁸ For the most serious study on the emphasis of pre-Islamic elements, see Ocak (1983); Köprülü (1929); Esin (1985); Karamustafa (1994).

⁹ Heterodoxy and syncretism concepts are criticised in the post-Köprülü paradigm. For debates on concepts and anti-Köprülü positions, see Dressler (2013, Ch. 5).

the combination of different *zāwiyahs*.¹⁰ The development of Alevism has not only been different from that of orthodox Sunni Islam but has also exhibited a unique place among the different forms of heterodoxy and the heterodox positions of some communities that coalesced after they became enemies of the Ottomans.¹¹

From the thirteenth century until the beginning of the sixteenth century, a variety of different orders and communities following the ways of several *murshids* appeared. Although Bektashism was only one of them, it spread faster than the other groups. However, the direction of Bektashī expansion was towards the west (the Balkans) after the Janissaries were included in the order, partly after the emergence of Ottoman state rule. Dervishes such as Otman Baba and Sarı Saltuk were influential in the west, and their followers (Otman Babacılar and Sarı Saltukçular), but also the Jāmīs (Cāmīler) and even the *ocak* of Sayyid Battal Ghāzi, which is considered as the centre of the Rūm Abdals (the Dervishes of Anatolia), would be assimilated later into Bektashism. (Karamustafa, 1994: 77).¹² In the first quarter of the sixteenth century, Bektashīs were not the only “mystical anarchist group” in Ottoman society nor was it the largest (Karamustafa, 1993: 128). In the east, the influence of Ibn Arabī, the community of Barak Baba, the dervish of the Sarı Saltuk, and Jamāladdīn Savī, Savī’s and Cavlakī’s followers (Qalāndārī, Hayderī, Malamati, Hurūfī, Wefāī movements), and the extremist interpretations that emerged in the Shī’a (such as Ismā’īliyya) were more dominant. And like their followers (*tālīb*s), these movements had diverse sources.¹³

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the military expansion of the Safavid state threatened the Ottomans through its “Kizilbash ideology.” The ideology had profound effects on the many scattered and independent mystical groups living in Anatolia. While Bektashism was rising in the Ottoman camp in the west, the “Kizilbash ideology” was institutionalised in the Safavid camp in the east, where it affected and absorbed all heterodox groups, including the Bektashīs. Thus the heterodoxy of the Anatolian Turkmen, and other heterodox groups such as the Qalāndārīye, Hayderīye,

¹⁰ *Zāwiyah* (*tekke*) is a monastery or shrine of dervishes where Sufi/mystic teaching and worship take place.

¹¹ Next to Kizilbashs, also some pantheist groups such as Bedreddinīs and Melāmatis were declared unbelievers and heretics by Ottoman rulers (see Ocak, 1998). Before the sixteenth century, during the reign of Mehmed II and Bayazid II, some Hurūfīs and Qalāndārīs who were declared heretics were executed (Ocak, 1998, *et.al.*; Gölpınarlı, 1987: 149; İnalçık, 1993: 32-33). Some others were executed and deported on the grounds that they were under pro-Safavid influence. See Aşıkpaşazāde, *Menākīb-ı Âl-i Osman*, Bāb 23, 268 (original text and its transliteration: Öztürk, 2013).

¹² However, as mentioned by Karamustafa, despite the absence of sufficient evidence for the stages of these transformation, it is true that there was a “gradual submersion in the growing and stronger network of the officially accepted Bektāšiye” at least since the beginning of the sixteenth century (Karamustafa, 1994: 77-78).

¹³ For detailed descriptions of these sources, see Karamustafa (1994).

Hurūfīyye, Wefai'ye, and Yasaviye, came under Safavid influence. In addition, the Halwatīs and Mavlawīs who had left Tabriz to take refuge in Anatolia, were also influenced by the Safavids (Koç and Tanrıverdi, 2004: 224-226; Konur, 2000: 115-118).

Shah Isma'il's influence and the formation of Alevism in the Upper Euphrates basin

Twelver-Imamism¹⁴ and the practice of *Kerbala* mourning (or mourning of *Muharram*) introduced Alevism to the Upper Euphrates through Shah Isma'il's obvious influence on the regional heterodoxy. Bektashism later also adopted these religious practices (Ocak, 1996: 208-209). Despite Safavism having lost its political influence, there is much evidence supporting the fact that the Kizilbash ideology remained alive and that the Shah's message survived.¹⁵

Shah Isma'il Safavī, under the pen-name of "Hatāyī", created an ideological mysticism in his poems which encompassed Anatolian and Iranian heterodoxy in line with his political goals.¹⁶ As a matter of fact it is the *halifes* (messengers) of Shah Isma'il who put together the *Imam Cafer Buyruğu* (usually referred to as the *Buyruk*, considered to be the manual of Alevism), and who spread it to Asia Minor. Meanwhile the initiatives of some Safavid agents immediately after Shah Isma'il also played a role in the dissemination of the *Buyruk*.¹⁷ Bektashism and the Bektashī *tekkes*, that had spread to Anatolia and the Balkans, did not remain indifferent to these new ideas which had influenced the whole of western Asia in the sixteenth century, and their mysticism became integrated into the "new heterodoxy"

¹⁴ Before the Safavid influence, especially in Balkan heterodoxy, there are strong traces of seven- and eight-Imamist faith instead of Twelver-Imamism. See Karamustafa (1993: 123-124; 1994: 83); Bahadır (2000); Birdoğan (1999: 20); Şahin (2007); Tanman (1994); Kiel (1994: 143); Engin (2004: 46); Mélikoff (1992).

¹⁵ The most important evidence for this is the mystic poems (*deyişs*) of Pir Sultan Abdal who was killed in 1589 or 1590. Despite 70-75 years after the definitive Safavid defeat and 50 years after Shah Isma'il's death, Pir Sultan repeats the "Shah's call" from his poems. In these sayings, the Shah is now the expected mahdi.

¹⁶ For the poems of Shah Isma'il (Hatāyī), see Ergun (1956: 43-44).

¹⁷ There are two sources of the *Buyruk*. The first is *Menākībü'l Esrār* which is composed of Shah Hatāyī's, Kul Himmet's and Kul Mazlūm's lyrics, and the maxims of Safiyyuddin Ardebili, the founder of Safevism. The second *Buyruk* is attributed to Sheikh Sāfī. Gölpınarlı says that the main source of opinion of the *Buyruk*, which was spread by the *halifes* of Shah Isma'il, was the *Menākīb'ü-l Esrār Behcet'ü-l Ahrar*, compiled by Bısatı during the time of Shah Tahmasb. However, according to oral tradition the *Buyruk* derives from the sixth imam Cafer Sādiq. In the Alevi tradition, the *Buyruk* attributed to Cafer Sādiq is called the *Büyük Buyruk* ("Buyruk the Great"). The *Küçük Buyruk*, on the other hand, includes a narrative of the Mahdi, referring to Shah Isma'il. The dates of the *Küçük Buyruk* manuscripts that are attributed to Sheikh Sāfī are placed at the beginning of the seventeenth century at the earliest. The existence of Shah Isma'il's *deyişs* written under the Hatāyī pen name, as well as the *deyişs* of Pir Sultan, Kul Mazlūm and Kul Himmet found in the *Buyruk* indicate that the *Buyruk* was arranged after Shah Isma'il and possibly his successors (see Gölpınarlı 1987: 178-180; also see Kutlu 2006 and 2010).

establishing the ritual and mystical foundations of the beliefs of the Alevi-Bektashī order.¹⁸

However, the efforts at religious integration and at political domination of all the Bektashī *tekkes* should be seen as separate. Without the merging of Bektashism with Safavid Kizilbashism, it would not have been possible for the Bektashīs to penetrate the post-Kizilbash heterodoxy that dominated the Upper Euphrates basin.¹⁹ The crucial role of Shah Isma‘il himself, and his image, was central to this integration. Shah Isma‘il combined the dual meaning of the title Shah by being both a secular political leader as well as a *murshid* in the religious sense. He added the term *ghāzi* among his attributes through the chivalrous character that he depicted on the battlefield and thus: “The roles of king and holy man converge in Isma‘il, and he was also a hero on the battlefield and crusader (*ghāzi*) for the faith” (Babayan, 2002: xxviii). Likewise, Kathryn Babayan emphasises that Shah Isma‘il’s esoteric and divine identity inspired the Kizilbashs to sacrifice themselves entering battle without arms. He was regarded as immortal, as a spiritual guide (*pīr*, *murshid*, *murshid-i kāmīl*), and as having miraculous powers for whom believers would sacrifice themselves as is mentioned in the Kizilbash battle cry: *Qurbān oldığım pīrüm mūrshidim* (“My spiritual leader and master, for whom I sacrifice myself”). He wanted his adherents to become dedicated *sūfis* (Roemer, 1983: 214) for which he provided enormous inspiration and an attraction that transcended his ethnic (Turkic) identity. Therefore, it cannot be said as claimed by Roemer that the “overwhelming majority of Isma‘il’s militant supporters belonged to Türkmen tribes” (Roemer, 1983: 214). Indeed, as Babayan, who reads the *Diwan* from a different perspective, emphasises, the Iranian mythic components of his poetry shows us that Isma‘il furnished his *Diwan* with Iranian mythology (Babayan, 2002: xxviii-xxx).

Those dervishes directly connected to Shah Isma‘il, regardless of their ethnicity, were intensively active in the Upper Euphrates and Kızılırmak basins and the Central Taurus region. The Upper Euphrates basin was the most sheltered region in Ottoman lands for those who entered into the Kizilbash faith, except those who had been forced to go to Iran under heavy pressure during the reign of Selim I (1512-1520) and Suleiman I (1520-1566). However, in the south of the Upper Euphrates basin, the Sunni Kurdish *mīrs*, who had entered into a kind of vassal relationship with the Ottoman Empire

¹⁸ See Karakaya-Stump (2015: 13).

¹⁹ For Bektashī lodges and their influence in the Upper Euphrates basin and Iraq, see Ayfer Karakaya-Stump (2006: 118; and 2011).

and were thus not under direct Ottoman influence, kept these groups at a distance. Their tribes consisted of ethnic Turkmen, Kurmanji and Zaza.

In addition, we know of the existence of some Turkmen tribes and emirates in the Upper Euphrates basin since the twelfth century. According to the *Sharafnâme*, the Melkişan rulers of Çemişgezek in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were Turkic. Among their subjects were Turkmen tribes as well as Kurds. The *Sharafnâme* indicates that in the sixteenth century a thousand households from the Melkişans were enlisted into the Safavid army, and this group became the guards of Shah İsmâ'il. According to the *Sharafnâme*, their countries of origin were known as "Kurdistan" despite their Turkic origins (Bozarslan, 1990: 189-191).²⁰ Therefore, some of the Kurdified Turkmen and Sunnified Turks of the Upper Euphrates basin should be seen largely as remnants of these Melkişans subordinated to their own emirate.

From the middle of the sixteenth century onwards, after the defeat of Shah İsmâ'il, Kizilbash groups, Sunnis and Christians who lived in the Upper Euphrates basin continued to live together, now administratively belonging to the regions of the *sanjaq* begs of the Ottoman Empire. Within the Empire they were recognised for their power and influence. During this period, although the *sanjaq* begs seemed to be "Sunni", they were also open to cooperation with Shah İsmâ'il at the time when the influence of Shah İsmâ'il was intense; actually they followed a bilateral policy towards the Ottomans and Safavids.

Shah İsmâ'il's politics had lasting consequences and his influence continued also after his defeat. His legacy provided the character and identity of the Dersim region. The majority of sheikh families who were active in the Upper Euphrates basin, and who were loyal to Shah İsmâ'il under their own leadership, are the origin of today's ocaks. The dervishes establishing ocaks, and the Qalândârî and Wefâ'î sheikhs who had *siyadetnâmes*²¹ distributed by Shah İsmâ'il, were recognised as sayyids in Kurdish Alevism (Ocak, 2009: 51). After Shah İsmâ'il's intervention in the region, it is generally accepted that the ocaks were rooted in these sayyids and dedes (Ocak, 2002b: 49; 2011: 67; Yaman, 1998: 27-28) and it can be said that the ocaks were sanctified by Shah İsmâ'il himself. It is known that Nûr (Tûr) Âli Halife, one of his halifes, was leading these activities (Uluğ, 1939: 28; Yolga, 1994: 96). The local ocaks, which started to be institutionalised through the *sayyid* genealogy, were

²⁰ According to *Sharafnâme*, after the Battle of Çaldıran (1514), Pîr Huseyin, son of the Rustem Beg who was affiliated with the Shah, declared his loyalty to Selim I and, in return, the Çemişgezek emirate was assigned to this dynasty again. Pîr Huseyin Beg, who went to his old land upon the order of the Sultan Selim I, evicted the Kizilbash from there (Bozarslan, 1990: 194).

²¹ These are *sayyidism* documents showing the *pîrs* and sheikhs as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad's grandsons Hasan and Husayn.

shaped around the rituals carried out within the framework of Imam Ali, the Twelve-Imams and the Karbala Cult. *Sayyids*, according to the genealogical sequences, were descended from Husayn, grandson of Prophet Muhammad; and the mother tongue of most of them was Turkish, or they used Turkish in their rituals and worship because of their absolute affiliation to the Shah İsmā'il canon. Their *murids* and *talips* were Turkmen, as well as Kurmanji and Kirmanjki speaking Kurds.

In short, it would be an incomplete interpretation to say that only Turkmen, such as the Qalāndāriye, Wefā'iye, Hayderiye, Hurūfiye and Yasaviye, came under the influence of the various sources of Alevism, from the last years of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth. It would also be incomplete to say that it was only groups who were included in the anti-Ottoman and pro-Safavid masses that could be called "Kizilbash". These orders influenced not only the Turkmen, but neighbouring groups as well, who shared similar ways of life with the Turkmen. Similar beliefs were influenced not only by the indigenous peoples but also by some of the Iranian and central Asian communities who had fled or were driven away by the Mongols. It is rumoured that Celāleddin Harezmshah died in Dersim as the last stop on his escape from the Mongols. Also, there was a reverse movement: under the rule of Shah Abbas (1588-1629), some Dersim tribes were dispatched to the east of Iran to resist Sunnī Uzbek and Turkmen attacks and it is assumed that some of these tribes returned to Dersim after the Qajar-Uzbek wars ended.²² Because of this history, some scholars have connected the claim that "Alevs come from Khorasan", which forms the basis of their own cosmogonies, with this concrete event (see Bayrak, 2004: 200). The most important of these tribes was the Çemişgezeklu (known as Zhaferanlu in Iran), which also played a role in the establishment of the Safavid state (Sümer, 1999: 53). Other examples are Turkmen tribes such as the Şahsevens and Avşars, as well as the Qaramanlu, Pulkanlu, Memiyanlu and Sufiyanlu tribes of Dersim origin (Temo, 2018: 198).

Other sources of Upper Euphrates Alevism: the Wafā'iye and Saltukism

As in Anatolia, the mainstream tradition that established heterodoxy before Safavism in the Upper Euphrates basin was the Wafā'i order. Even when Bektashism, a sect that broke away from the Wafā'iye long ago, was fully established with all its institutions further west, the dominant sect in the Upper Euphrates basin was still the Wafā'iye. Sheikh Dilo Belincān, one of the founding *dedes* still blessed in Dersim, was one of the greatest *sūfis* of the eleventh century and a follower (*tālīp*) of Es-Sayyid Abu'l Wafā who

²² For an extensive research on the Dersim originated Kurds in Khorasan, see Temo (2018); see also van Bruinessen (1992: 134).

founded the sect of the Wafā'īye. Sheikh Belincān came to Dersim on Abu'l Wafā's instruction and lived in the village of Pilvenk until his death. His followers established themselves as "*Şih Delil-i Berhicān/Belincān Ocağı*" and carved a large area of influence in Pertek and further south with the help of Kurmanji-speaking followers. From a genealogy belonging to Sheikh Belincān, it appears that he came to Dersim and communicated the path of the Wafā'īye in the pre-Manzikert period (before 1071) at the very beginning of the eleventh century (Yar and Yalçın, 2014: 13). The aforementioned genealogy states that Sheikh Belincān was sent as the deputy of Abu'l Wafā, specifically to guide the Kurdish tribes. In a remarkable passage of the genealogy, Sheikh Imaduddīn Suleimānī, who sent Sheikh Belincān to this region, says: "This is my will for the Kurdish communities" (Yar and Yalçın, 2014: 24, 28, 29). Additionally, a second genealogy lists the names of forty-two Kurdish tribes whom Sheikh Belincān was authorised to guide (Yar and Yalçın, 2014: 29-30). In the same manner, the genealogies of *ocaks* such as Cemal Abdal, Ağuçen, Pirbad, Battal Gazi, Mineyik (Zeynelabidin), Dede Kargın in Malatya, and Üryan Hızır in Pertek also start from Abu'l Wafā. Thus, we can distinguish two sources for the disciples who spread Alevism in the Upper Euphrates basin: Abu'l Wafā's personal dervish pupils, and missionary *dedes* sent to the region by Shah İsmā'il Safavī. It can be argued that these two sources were merged with indigenous sacred beliefs – some of them replaced older beliefs or incorporated indigenous elements, or they were combined with native beliefs by their followers, leading to the emergence of the syncretism unique to Upper Euphrates Alevism.²³

As one of the successors to Abu'l Wafā, Sheikh Hasan, who was one of the sons or brothers of Sheikh Ahmed, was another prominent *pīr*. Sheikh Hasan had gained the allegiance of tribes around Malatya. The tribes from this *ocak* are called "*Şihhasanlı*" or "*Şihhasanan*". In a decision (*hüküm*) addressed to the *qadi* of Malatya, it is written that the village of Şeyhhasanlı in Malatya as well as the hamlets of Çivril, Üçbölük, Erdek and Şelo are affiliated to the waqf of the Sheikh Abu'l Wafā Tekke located in Malatya's "*Meşar*" village; that the waqf was assigned on the basis of a visit by Sheikh Ahmed Tavil, whose grave can be found in the village of Şeyhhasanlı; and according to an edict dated 1656/57, that the *reaya* of these waqf villages would be exempt from paying taxes.²⁴ Sayyid Riza, who was hanged in the Dersim Operation

²³ Especially in Dersim, the ancestor cult and a special hierarchy (*raybers*, *pīrs* and *murshids*) were far advanced. *Ocaks* (and "two sources" – the Wafā'ī and Shah İsmā'il's – that construct them) have a big role in this. Also the emphasis on nature worship in Dersim gives an idea of the transformation and adaptation of old beliefs that were adopted by Alevism (for a detailed work about this symbolism and hierarchy, see Deniz, 2012; Gezik, 2013).

²⁴ İE.EV. 23/2725, 5 Jumādā al-'Ākhirah 1102/6 March 1691.

in 1938,²⁵ was one of the *pîrs* of the Sheikh Ahmed Dede *ocak*. This *ocak* from Malatya had joined the Abbasan tribe, and although they were not part of that tribe, they were known and venerated as “*Aşira Babu*” and “*Ezbeta Babu*”. Nowadays, Abbasans are known as Sayyid Riza’s tribe. In their *cems*, guides are called “*rayber*” and some *raybers* are related to the *pîrs* of Şeyhhasanlı. The Ferhatan tribe in Hozat is also a follower of the Sheikh Ahmedli/Şeyhhasanlı *ocak*. Ferhatans were the tribe of Diyar Agha who was the representative of Dersim in the Assembly that was held in Ankara in the 1920. The *raybers* differentiated themselves from the Şeyhhasanlı *pîrs*; although still loyal to the *ocak*, they lived in villages where they also ruled.

The Ağuçen *ocak* also goes back to Abu’l Wafâ (Birdoğan, 1992: 152; Güler, 2010: 158; Çakmak, 2012). The first centres were located in Sün village within the borders of present-day Elazığ. The Kurdish (Kurmanji) Sinemilli tribe was completely affiliated to the Ağuçen. The sons of Sayyid Temiz, founder of the *ocak*, were scattered in Dersim and Erzincan as well as surrounding areas. Sayyid Mençek maintained the *ocak* in the village of Bargini (Karabakır) of Hozat where his grave is located. As for his other sons, they maintained the *ocak* in the villages of Sivas, Erzincan and Harput.

The Sarı Saltuk *ocak* has a special status. This *ocak* is a form of the Balkan based Qalândârî-Babai *murshids* that managed to maintain its presence and establish itself as a permanent *ocak* in Anatolia. The view that the cult of Sarı Saltuk was a form of Bektashism that came from the Balkans to the Upper Euphrates region in the sixteenth century or later is dubious. The link between Saltukism’s epic of “*seven sarcophagi – seven tombs*” and Seven-Imamism makes it certain that the cult predates Twelver-Imamist Bektashism. In the *Saltuknâme*, the epic of Sarı Saltuk takes place in the Danışmend region (central eastern Anatolia) and tells a different story from that of the figure of Sarı Saltuk in the Bektashî tradition (Ocak, 2002: 38-41). This narrative, which takes place in the Erzincan-Amasya-Sivas triangle, gives us a strong idea about the source of the Sarı Saltuk cult in Dersim. The existence of the Sarı Saltuk *ocak* in Dersim, a fact agreed upon by both those who argue that the true burial place of Sarı Saltuk is at the present-day *ziyaret* in Dersim-Hozat and those who argue that the place of pilgrimage is only “representative/symbolic” (Çakmak, 2012: 94-95), shows us that the Qalândârî-Heydari way appeared before the establishment of Bektashism. The fact that various genealogies of the *ocak* deviate from Twelver-Imamist genealogies, on points of origins between the third and ninth imams, also confirms this situation (Çakmak, 2012: 85-89). The establishment of a

²⁵ This article does not take into account the effects of the Dersim Operation of 1938 which, although a significant milestone, comes after the considerations here.

genealogical relationship that extends to Sarı Saltuk through Battal Ghāzi shows an adherence to the tradition of the *Danişmendnâme* unique to the Upper Euphrates basin. The Sarı Saltuk narrative of the Upper Euphrates differs from that told in the Balkans.

On the other hand, it is also claimed that Sarı Saltuk's descendant Sayyid Nesimî brought the cult of Sarı Saltuk to Dersim. Sayyid Nesimî's grave can be found in the village of Agveren (Akören) as are the graves of his father and brother. It is rumoured that the person buried here is the same person as the Hurûfî bard Seyyid Nesimî, who was executed in Aleppo in 1418. There are also symbols indicating that the cult of Sayyid Nesimî was Twelver-Imamist, unlike the cult of Sarı Saltuk. Furthermore, the cult of Sarı Saltuk in Dersim has been continued and transmitted to this day by the descendants of Sayyid Nesimî (Çakmak, 2012: 97-100). Thus, the Sarı Saltuk *ocak* is the sole order in the Upper Euphrates basin with disputed origins. However, the link between Sarı Saltuk and Bektashism, like many others, appears to be established only later. Although Sarı Saltuk was a figure who joined Dersim Alevism later, in the early fifteenth century at most, if his relationship to Sayyid Nesimî is correct, it is possible that he entered the region not through Bektashism but through Hurûfism.

Ocaks and tribes

Tribalisation can occur through *ocaks* which often have supra-ethnic authorities and networks of *tālîps*. The Ağuışen, Kureyşan and Pilvenk tribes were formed by this process. In the following paragraphs I will explain more about the development of each of these tribes. Thus, different groups became a "tribe" through their relationship to an *ocak*. Conversely, there are cases of different tribes bonded to the same *ocak*. Both Kurmanjki-speaking Koçğiris and Kirmanjki-speaking Abdalans, Şavalans and Balabans are subject to the Baba Mansur *ocak*. There are also smaller *ocaks* as well as bigger ones, such as the Ağuışen (Karadonlu Can Baba), Baba Mansur (Bâmasur), Şihhasan (Şeyh Hasan), Derviş Cemal (Seyyid Cemal), Kureyşan, Sarı Saltuk, Şih Belincan (Delil Berhican), Şih Çoban and Sultan Hızır (Üryan Hızır/Hıdır). There is no competition between these *ocaks* (Gezik, 2013: 8). No matter to which *ocak* they are affiliated, Alevis respect them all and visit their graves. With the exception of Sarı Saltuk, the mentioned *ocaks* are of Upper Euphrates origin. The fact that the *pîr* families of *ocaks* regarded themselves as *sayyids* formed the basis of the Ottoman administration's approach to them. The Ottoman administration adopted and approved these *dedes*, not as leaders of the Alevi faith but in terms of their sayyidism.

The Kureyşan *ocak* has influenced Dersim tribes (especially in Pülümür and Mazgirt) as well as the tribes and villages of Bingöl, Varto, Hınıs, Karlıova and Kiğı. The Kureysan *ocak* was connected to the supreme Baba Mansur

ocak. There is a hierarchy among the tribes, tribal *pîrs* and some *ocaks*. For example, in terms of *pîr-murshid* relation between Baba Mansur and the Kureyşans in Pülümür and Mazgirt, the Kureyşans consider Baba Mansur, based in the Nazımiye Zeve village and concentrated in the Muhundu parish of Mazgirt, as their own *murshid*. The Bahtiyar tribe in Hozat is bonded to the Kureyşan *pîrs* (Çakmak, 2012: 115). Derviş Cemal are *pîrs* of the Şeyhhasanlı tribal confederation. Among the confederation, there are the Karaballı Uşağı, Ferhatuşağı, Abbasuşağı and Koçuşağı tribes. There is an important place of pilgrimage for them in Derviş Cemal (Mezra) village (see Ali Kemali, 1992: 155; Sevgen, 2003: 186; Birdoğan, 1992: 155; Dersimî, 1997: 118; Saltık, 2009: 157; Kaya, 2010: 142, 150-51; Çakmak, 2012: 121).

Kurmanji speaking Ağuicên *dedes* have a large network of influence (Dersimî, 1997: 117; 1997b: 73; Güler, 2010: 157). The Ağuicên presents a good case of multi-ethnic affiliation. The followers of the Diyarbekir branch of the Ağuicên *ocak* are Turkmen (see Akin, 2014), while followers of the Dersim branch are predominantly Zaza speakers. Among those in the Divriği branch there are Kurmanjis as well as Turks. The Ağuicên *pîrs* are the leaders of both the Ağuicên tribes and the Sinemillis (Gezik, 2013: 6, 9). The *dedes* of Ağuicên trace their roots to Imam Zeynelabidin from the Wafā'î path and distance themselves from the Hacı Bektaş tradition. Like many other *ocaks*, the *dedes* of Ağuicên also trace their past from before Hacı Bektaş and have genealogies supporting these claims. The aforementioned *ocak* is based on four *murshids*. Most of the Dersim Ağuicêns subordinate themselves to Sayyid Mençek; *dedes* in Elazığ's Sün village and Hozat's Bargini (Karabakır) village come from the branch of Koca Sayyid. The others are Köse Sayyid and Mir Sayyid who are considered to have settled in the Karpan Mountain. Bektashîs accept the Ağuicên as the second *murshid ocak* after Hacı Bektaş.

The centre of the Şeyh Hasan *ocak*, a large *ocak* whose influence is spread over a wide area and developed around the Euphrates River, is Şeyhhasan village in the Baskil district where the *pîr's* tomb is also located. The "Kizilbash Şeyhhasanlı tribes" (Yılmazçelik, 2012: 15) populating this region until the early eighteenth century appear to have headed towards western Dersim around these dates (Halaçoğlu, 1988: 49-50). According to a complaint sent by inhabitants of the Çarsanjaq district (the present-day Mazgirt region) to Istanbul in 1726, the Şeyhasanlıs roaming in this region for around two decades could not be removed and were pillaging. The documents dated 1732, 1736, 1751 and 1762 also report that Şeyhasanlıs together with the Dersim tribe continued to harass the inhabitants of the Çarsanjaq and Keban districts (Yılmazçelik, 2012: 13-14). The Şeyhasanlıs appear to have settled in western Dersim in the first half of the eighteenth century and became locals in the region. By the middle of the nineteenth

century, the Şeyhhasanlıs had spread as far as Pülümür and Kiğı.²⁶ They occupied some of the Armenian villages in the region and caused Armenian peasants (*reaya*) to emigrate as well as making some of them their sharecroppers.

Speaking about Dersim, it can be concluded from surveying the documents of the period from the beginning of the eighteenth century, that two big tribes (or tribal confederations) dominated the Dersim region. The Şeyhhasanlı tribe dominated western Dersim, while the Dersimli tribe dominated the eastern part (also called Central Dersim). Other tribes were generally confederated under these two umbrella tribes.²⁷ The Şeyhhasanlı tribe was mostly an alliance of Kurmanji speakers, while the Dersimli was an alliance of Kirmanjki speakers. However, over time, groups following the Şeyhhasanlı tribe also penetrated central Dersim.

The relationship between Upper Euphrates Alevism and Bektashism

But how are Alevism and Bektashism related in the Upper Euphrates region? For Dersim, the Anatolian Alevis-Bektashī tradition created a similar narrative as elsewhere, which places Hacı Bektaş as the *ser-çeşme maqam* (*pîr* of *pîrs*) from the beginning. This interpretation of Dersim is an ethnocentric one asserting that Hacı Bektaş was in Dersim together with Sarı Saltuk, and that the original centre of the Bektashī order was Dersim (Çakmak, 2012: 101-102). However, the *ocaks* in Dersim and the upper Euphrates basin were not included in the Bektashī *Vilāyetnâme* tradition, which shows that these *ocaks*, as we mentioned above while explaining their origins, are rooted in a different order than the Bektashīs and that they emerged from local developments. The only exception is the Sarı Saltuk *ocak*. The inclusion of Sarı Saltuk in the *Vilāyetnâme* tradition at a later date and the appropriation of it into Bektashism probably happened after the Sarı Saltuk *ocak* settled in Dersim. In the Dersim narrative, the inclusion of Seyyid Nesimī into the story, and even the placement of him at the beginning of the Dersim story or Sarı Sultan being Sarı Saltuk in the nineteenth century, confirms this chronological difference in both cases.

²⁶ See C.DH. 76/3766, 29 Zū al-hijjah 1255/4 March 1840. At the end of the nineteenth century there is now a "Şeyhhasanlı *Nahiye*" (parish) added to the Pülümür District (see Y.MTV. 171/81, 20 Sha'bān 1315/14 January 1898).

²⁷ In Ottoman documents of the second half of the eighteenth century, members of both confederations are referred to as "bandits" and as people who do not pay taxes. Both tribes are mentioned together in the documents. This means that they shared the region (see AE.SMST.III, 299/23900, 29 Zū'a-l Hijjah 1177/29 June 1764 and C.DH. 304/15158, 29 Rajab 1213/6 January 1799). Also, in Dersim, idioms that compare these two confederations with each other are still used: such as "*Dersim Bese Gawo Şexse Lese Gawo*" ("If Dersim is the forehead of the ox, Şeyhhasan is the ox's body"). For a detailed history and local tradition about the confederations, see Yıldırım (2012).

The violent policy of Mahmud II (1808-1839) to eliminate the Bektashī order temporarily caused pressure on and weakened the traditional local centres of Alevism. Even though the *dergāh* in Hajibektaş town was also affected by Mahmud II's violent policy, the *dergāh*'s power in central Anatolia recovered by the decreasing pressure on Bektashism after Mahmud's reign. The Naqshbandī *postnişins* who took over the lodge, therefore, could not rule there for long. The *babas* of the *dergāh* having been exiled to Amasya were also forgiven by the Ottoman authorities.²⁸ Eventually, at the end of 1849, Ali Dede from the Bektashī community was appointed as the "tomb keeper" (*türbedār*) of Hacı Bektaş. The Hacı Bektaş *ocak*, which was again offered protection under the Ottoman regime, moved towards establishing a Hacı Bektaş *dergāh*-centered Alevism, something which eventually was to bring the Hacı Bektaş *ocak* to the hierarchical top of the all *ocaks* in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Tahtaji *ocak* and the Kurmanji and Kırmanjki (Zaza) speaker's *ocaks* were the last to participate in this development.

While the Hacı Bektaş *dergāh* emerges as an "Ottoman institution", the eastern regions subjected to the "Kizilbash" tradition bypass the Bektashī tradition and date their past to the pre-Ottoman era through the *murshid ocaks* centered on Dersim and Malatya. The Ottoman-Islamic policy of Abdulhamid II, which followed an integration policy within the Ottoman domain, was not a strategy that only used Sunni Islam. Abdulhamid II's administration did not avoid using Bektashism to subject eastern *ocaks* to the imperial centre. Within this scope, the Bektashī *dedes*, too, were mobilised over the eastern *ocaks*. Although spreading Sunni Islam was the main target in the policy of Abdulhamid II, the Bektashization of the Alevi Kurds and the removal of the Alevi communities from the "Kizilbash" tradition were the secondary goals.²⁹ According to British consul Taylor, before Abdulhamid II, the Bektashīs only opened a lodge in Arapgir in 1866 (Taylor, 1868: 312). Fifty years later, another British official counted the shrine in Hacıbektaş town as among the *ziyarets* of the Dersim Alevīs (quoted by Gezik, 2000: 155).

The first *ocak* in the Upper Euphrates basin that the Bektashīs came close to was the Ağuışen, one of the strongest *ocaks* in the region. In the words of Nejat Birdoğan, the Malatya Ağuışen *ocak* was the first to subject itself to Hacı Bektaş. Birdoğan calls them "apostasies" ("*dönmeler*"). Thus, the Ağuışen ensured the recognition of Hacı Bektaş and the introduction of the Turkish Bektashī mantras to the *cems*. Another missionary was Cemaleddin

²⁸ For the forgiveness of Hamdullah Efendi who was exiled to Amasya see İ.HD. 32/1518, 18 Zü al-hijjah 1856/10 February 1841.

²⁹ The most important accusation against the different communities that suffered during the reign of Abdulhamid II was that they were "on the way to Kizilbash" and were preparing to rebel to revive the Kizilbashism (see Çakmak, 2019).

Efendi from the Çelebi branch of the *dergāh*. Cemaleddin had been sent to the region by the İttihad-Terakki administration, which ruled between 1908-1918, on the eve of the First World War to organise the Dersim tribes against the Russian threat. According to Cemaleddin Efendi, the Dersim Alevis no longer followed the commandments of the dervishes sent to them by Hacı Bektaş himself centuries ago and had fallen away from the path (Dersimî, 1997b: 113-114, 115-116). Cemalaeddin Efendi also tried to influence the Dersim Alevis through the Sayyid Aziz of Sivas Ağuichen (Dersimî, 1997b: 108-109, 113).

Through this process, the main structure that became prominent and maintained its hierarchical structure until today outside of Dersim is the lineage known as the “Çelebi *ocak*”. The Çelebi *ocak* today has asserted its hierarchical influence all over Turkey and validated an Alevi framework based upon the personality of Hacı Bektaş Velî.³⁰ However, this influence in the entire country does not go back to before the nineteenth century. That is to say, it is necessary to find other dynamics which come before this “integration” and are the source of all these breaks and divergences and to see the differences and similarities by taking into consideration the historical process. But the claim that the glorification of Hacı Bektaş and his heirs (the Çelebis) is to be found in all Upper Euphrates *ocaks* is a dubious one even today. Some *dedes* see a crucial difference between their pro-Bektashî Alevism and Upper Euphrates Alevism. Hüseyin Solmaz from Çorum, one of the *dedes* of the Imam Rıza *ocak*, summarises this relationship in the following way:

The Alevis in eastern Anatolia do not adopt much Hacı Bektaş Velî, they say our *ocak* is superior, however, Alevis of this region – our central Anatolian provinces, Çorum, Amasya, Tokat, Sivas – are dedicated to Hacı Bektaş Velî. (quoted by Erdem 2013: 263)

Although it is accepted that there were *ocaks* before the Hacı Bektaş *ocak*, it is believed that the *ocaks* in Anatolia were combined together with Hacı Bektaş. In a way, it is accepted that the roots of all the *ocaks* in Asia Minor are related to Hacı Bektaş.³¹ The Bektashîs see most of the *ocaks* as a kind of corruption and associate this plurality with the disintegration after Mahmud II. Again, in Solmaz Dede’s own words:

³⁰ Today, the Çelebis, carrying the Ulusoy surname, protect their holy places in all the *ocaks*. For instance, Hüseyin Solmaz, one of the *dedes* of Imam Rıza *Ocak* in Çorum, calls Ulusoy, with whom he met in Hacıbektaş town, “*efendi*” (master). Solmaz also talks about Çelebi Cemaleddin Efendi as “my *efendi*” (see Erdem, 2013: 260).

³¹ From the interview with Şahin Pertek Dede, one of the *dedes* of the central Anatolian Imam Rıza *ocak* (see Seven, 2010: 360).

Until 1826 permitted *ocaks* from the Hacı Bektaş *dergāh* were limited in number. But later this way got slack. A Naqshbandi sheikh was placed in the *pîr* house. And that Naqshbandi sheikh randomly established a tradition... You know what happened, while being *baba*, the man became *dede*...(cited in Erdem, 2013: 264)

Therefore, the real *pîr* house (the *maqam*) belongs to Hacı Bektaş and others are dubious or self-appointed structures. This dominant narrative has no validity in relation to the Upper Euphrates basin. The Alevis who spread over this area were until recently clearly distinct from other Alevi-Bektashî groups. The two different ways – Alevism under the effect of Bektashism and eastern Alevism – still function in the construction of Alevi social memory and constitute a certain “cultural border”. Nur Yalman, in field research conducted in a Kurdish-Alevi village following the Ağuiçen in Nurhak-Maraş, observed that the village’s *pîr* (Doğan Dede) claimed to be at the same level as Hacı Bektaş and that the village never established marital relationships with the nearby “Bektashi” village (Yalman 1969: 57). Until recently, the Ağuiçen *dedes* in Sün village regarded themselves as separate and more superior to the Bektashîs (Türkdoğan, 1995: 286-288).

The expansion of the Kurdish tribes and Sunnification³²

From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, the main conflict of “eastern Alevism” was not with the Ottoman government itself. Conflict mostly occurred between the tribes and *mîrs* but not on ethnical or religious grounds. This is why the assumed argument about the main difference and conflict between Alevi and Sunni Kurdish peoples does not do justice to the facts. According to this dubious argument, the main reason for the ongoing conflict is the Sunni acceptance of submission to the Ottoman government while the Alevi population always kept their distance from the Ottoman government and periodically had conflictual relationships with it. In fact, the dependence of the Sunni Kurdish population, which was organised in tribes, on the Ottoman government was through local authorities in autonomous structures via the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and the *hükümet* systems. It would not be wrong to suggest that the only real direct contact of the Sunni tribes with the Ottoman government was during the *Hamidification* period.³³ Therefore, it is illogical to try to explain the differences, conflicts, and

³² The information about the tribes and districts mentioned in this article is obtained from my field work between 1999-2019 and based on direct observation and interviews.

³³ *Hamidification* is an operation under the rule of Abdulhamid II that organised the Kurdish tribes in the form of light cavalry regiments and thus directly connected them to the Ottoman administration since 1894 (for details, see Klein, 2016).

problems between Alevi and Sunni Kurdish peoples in terms of their relationships with the central Ottoman government.³⁴

Kurdish *mîrs* and rulers, basing their legitimacy on an extreme Sunni-Shaf'i ideology, developed negotiable and sometimes independent relationships with the Ottoman government and, on the other hand, tried to have control over the tribes within their regions. In general terms, the tribes moving south from the upper part of the Euphrates basin had gone through Sunnification or had split into Sunni and Alevi parts. Most of the Sunni tribes in the south have a "sibling" of the same name in the north and vice versa.³⁵ The stronger and larger tribes (tribal federations) that had gained power on their own succeeded in managing to keep the Alevi and Sunni tribes together in their own structures. The most striking example of this is the Rîşvan federation.³⁶ But the Sunnification of the pastoral-nomadic tribes was always seen as a "false Sunnification" until they were incorporated into organised religion after permanent settlement.³⁷ Therefore, a symbiotic and tribal way of life did not cause a great religious problem among the pastoral nomads.³⁸

The Alevi tribes expanded to include Dersim as their centre, to Erzincan, to western Erzurum, to the northern highlands of the Murat River, and to the south eastern parts of Sivas. It is also a fact that, especially around Dersim, the Ottoman government was trying to create a Sunni zone through its *sanjaq* begs. This indicates a vague cultural border of a "minority" that can be called "Dersim Sunnism". Certain tribes (for example, the Şavaks) were partly Sunnified, and it is known that there were villages of Sunni populations within the domains of the *sanjaq* begs. Moreover, there were fully Sunni tribes such as the Barmaz. This tribe expanded towards the Çemişgezek and Pertek villages, that is, the southwestern parts of Dersim near the Sunni zone.

The area between Malatya and Bingöl was a zone of high mobility. We can observe the tribes' mobility in this area within a three-hundred-year time

³⁴ Sunni Kurds always kept a distance from the Ottoman government and lived within their traditional social and political order, including religious practices. For a comprehensive reading, see van Bruinessen (1992); Özoğlu (1996, 2004); Aydın et.al. (2019).

³⁵ Certain tribes such as İzoli, Dimili, Atmanki and Milli that dispersed to south and became a part of the Sunni Kurdish world preserved their Alevi cultures and traditions in the north. Milli tribe members in Amasya-Tokat are still Alevi today. While the southern part of the İzoli tribe whose villages spread from Malatya to Urfa is Sunni, the İzoli in Dersim have preserved their Alevism and remained bound to the Baba Mansur *ocak*.

³⁶ According to the *Mühimme Defterleri* published by Colin Imber, the Rîşvan tribe was one of the *Kizilbash* tribes that followed the "false İsmâ'il" ("*Düzmece İsmail*") who rebelled under the name of Shah İsmâ'il Safavi in the *sancak* of Malatya in 1578 (see Imber, 1979: 252).

³⁷ H. Christoff argues that the pastoral-nomadic way of life based on livestock breeding poses a great obstacle to the practice of Sunni doctrines (see Christoff, 1935: 50).

³⁸ Even today, the Şavak tribe speaking Kurmanji consists of Sunni and Alevi parts. In times of transhumance, this difference seems to disappear within tribes moving together (see Gültekin, 2013).

span approximately since the seventeenth century. The Alevi tribes of the upper part of the Euphrates basin, for example the Haydaran tribe, expanded to Kiğı and Tercan, the northern parts of Bingöl, and on the east to Varto of Muş, as is the case with the Hormek and Lolan tribes (see Aytaş, 2010). From the end of the nineteenth century onwards, Maraş and the eastern parts of Kayseri were included in this movement zone. The most sheltered area among all the regions is still Dersim. This is why especially those who were oppressed on the western part of the Euphrates moved towards Dersim and the northern parts of Bingöl. Similarly, the dense mobility towards Dersim resulted in the tribes moving towards Erzincan, the eastern parts of Sivas and the southern parts of Erzurum.

One consequence of this expansion was the movement of the Koçgiri tribe, one of the biggest tribes in the western parts of Dersim, the population of which speaks both Kırmanjki and Kurmanji, towards Sivas and Erzincan.³⁹ Apart from rural Erzincan where the tribe began to spread at first, the first area it moved into was the Divriği region due to the weakening of the Kösepaşa dynasty at the beginning of the nineteenth century and the insecurity of the region as a result of the liquidation of the *ayāns* in the middle of the century (Sakaoglu, 1984: 209). The wide zone the tribe expanded to remained within the administrative domain of the Dersim *sanjaq* towards the mid-nineteenth century (Kızıldağ-Soileau, 2017: 157-158, 161).

Another important tribe expanding from the upper part of the Euphrates basin towards the south was the Sinemillis. The expansion period beginning within the first decade of the eighteenth century continued towards Elbistan, crossing through Malatya.⁴⁰ At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Sinemilli expanded to Pazarcık and Gölbaşı, especially after the deportation of the Ottoman Armenians. Similarly, households that belonged to the Pilvenk, Atmanki and Alhas, which were originally from Dersim and Malatya, were observed to settle in the villages in Sarız (Kayseri), Elbistan, Göksun, and Afşin (Maraş). World War I, including the Koçgiri Rebellion and the Turkish War of Independence, caused the tribes of Dersim and Malatya to expand towards the west and the south and to settle especially in the villages, hamlets and pasturelands vacated by the deportation of the Armenians.

Following the repression of the Koçgiri Rebellion in 1921,⁴¹ certain groups of the Koçgiri tribe moved towards Maraş and Kayseri in the west, and

³⁹ The Ginni and Çarek branches of the tribe speak Kırmanjki, while the Canbeg, Kurmeş and Direjan branches speak Kurmanji (see Baran, 2011: 134).

⁴⁰ For a comprehensive historical evaluation of the Sinemilli tribe, see Karakaya-Stump (2006b).

⁴¹ For the Koçgiri Rebellion, see Kızıldağ-Soileau (2017: 157-343).

towards Tokat and Amasya in the northwest. The Koçgiri scattered around Maraş and Kayseri, many settling in the villages and pasturelands vacated because of the deportation of the Armenians. The Canbegs, a part of the Koçgiri confederation, were also seen to move towards the northwest and settle in the villages of Zile in Tokat and Göynücek in Amasya; while those who moved towards the west occupied the land between Ankara and Konya and towards Aksaray. The tribes moving towards the northwest preserved their Alevism, while the ones settling in central Anatolia were Sunnified. The north western Canbeg people are still loyal to the Ağuışen *ocak*.

Conclusion

Alevism developed along a different path away from the Bektashī influence in the eastern parts of the Euphrates. The Alevism here is to a great extent Kurmanji-Zaza (Kırmanjki) Alevism – “Kurdish Alevism” in other words. It was organised through *ocaks* and was a result of the Twelver-Imamist formation following the Safavids in the east of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, Twelver-Imamism is the link between pre-Safavid heterodoxies and later Safavid ones. The Twelvers in the western Ottoman lands appear at the beginning of the sixteenth century when Balım Sultan reorganised the Bektashī order. It was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that the Kurdish Alevi tribes moved to the western parts of the Euphrates and expanded towards the west once again. Under the influence of the Safavids in the sixteenth century, Turkish developed into a liturgical language in Kurmanji and Zaza Alevism, whereas Bektashism became influential in Kurdish Alevism in the nineteenth century. Kurmanji and Zaza Alevism preserved their networks of *murshids* in the upper part of the Euphrates basin, whereas in the west, after the second half of the sixteenth century, the Hacı Bektaş *dergāhı* began to adopt other *dergāhs* into its hierarchy. When Kurdish Alevism expanded from the upper part of the Euphrates basin, these networks of *murshids* also spread. This seemed to decrease to a certain extent when the Bektashī effect increased towards the east in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although there was a dichotomy between the eastern networks of *murshids* and the Alevism based on Hacı Bektaş, at least until the beginning of the twentieth century, on the basis of the common liturgical language, rules, dogmas, rituals and conventions connecting the two centres lies the uniting effect of the Twelver-Imamism of Shah İsmā‘il Safavī at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

References

- Akın, B. (2014). Alevi ocakları ile ilgili tespit edilebilen en eski tarihli belge: Ağuışen Ocağı şeceresi (The oldest document about Alevi *Ocaks*: Genealogy of Ağuışen Ocağı). *Türk Kùltürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, 70, 15-38.

- Andrews, P. and Temel, H. (2010). Hubyar. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 37(3): 287-334.
- Aydın, S. et.al. (2019). *Mardin: Aşiret-Cemaat-Devlet (Mardin: Tribe-Community-State)* (2nd edition). Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları.
- Aytaş, G. (ed.). (2010). *Bingöl, Muş/Varto Yörelerinde Ocaklar, Oymaklar ve Boylarla İlgili Araştırma Sonuçları (Research Results about Ocaks and Tribes in Bingöl, Muş/Varto)*. Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları.
- Babayan, K. (2002). *Mystics, Monarchs, and Messiahs: Cultural Landscapes of Early Modern Iran*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bahadır, İ. (2000). Alevilikte Erkân Farklılıkları (Erkân Differences in Alevism). *Uluslararası Anadolu İnançları Kongresi Bildirileri – Proceedings of Congress on International Anatolian Beliefs (23-28 October 2000, Ürgüp-Nevşehir)*. Ankara: Ervak Yayınları, 89-112.
- Baran, M. (2011). *Koçgiri: Kuzey-batı Dersim (The Koçgiri: Northwest Dersim)*. Ankara: Saresur-Kızılbaş Yayınevi.
- Bayrak, M. (2004). *Ortaçağ'dan Modern Çağ'a Alevilik (The Alevism from the Middle Ages to the Modern Era)*. Ankara: Öz-ge Yayınları.
- Beşikçi, İ. (2016). Yaresan (Ehl-i Hak) Rêya Heqîyê, Ezdan, www.nerinaazad.org, 23/06/2016 (Last accessed on 15 April, 2020).
- Birdoğan, N. (1992). *Anadolu ve Balkanlarda Alevi Yerleşmesi (Ocaklar-Dedeler-Soyağaçları) (Alevi Settlements in Anatolia and Balkans: Ocaks, Dedes, Lineages)*. Istanbul: Alev Yayınları.
- Birdoğan, N. (1999). *Alevi Kaynakları, II (Alevi Sources, II)*. Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları.
- Bozarslan, M. (ed.). (1990). *Şerefnâme (Kürt Tarihi) (Sherefnâme of Sheref Khan: Kurdish History)*. Istanbul: Hasat Yayınları.
- Çakmak, Y. (2012). *Tunceli-Hozat Bölgesinde Sarı Saltık Ocağı ve Bektaşilik (Tarih-İnanç ve Doktrin-Ritüel) (Sarı Saltık Ocak and Bektashism in Tunceli-Hozat Region: History-Belief-Doctrin-Ritual)*. Unpublished MA Thesis, Ankara: Hacettepe University.
- Çakmak, Y. (2019). *Sultanın Kızılbaşları: II. Abdülhamid Dönemi Alevi Algısı ve Siyaseti (Kizilbashs of the Sultan: Alevi Perception and Policy during the Abdulhamid II Era)*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Christoff, H. (1935). *Kurden und Armenier: Eine Untersuchung über die Abhängigkeit ihrer Lebensformen und Charakterentwicklung von der Landschaft*. Dissertation, Hamburg: Hamburg Universität.
- Deniz, D. (2012). *Yol/Rê: Dersim İnanç Sembolizmi. Antropolojik Bir Yaklaşım (Yol/Rê: Dersim Belief Symbolism. An Anthropological Perspective)*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Dersimi, M. (1997). *Hatıratım (My Memoirs)*. Istanbul: Doz Yayınları.
- Dersimi, M. (1997b). *Kürdistan Tarihinde Dersim (Dersim in the History of Kurdistan)*. Istanbul: Doz Yayınları.
- Dressler, M. (2013). *Writing Religion: The Making of Turkish Alevi Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Engin, R. (2004). Bir madalyon, bir tarih, Ali Koç Baba ve yaşayan erkânı (A medallion, a history, Ali Koch Baba and his living liturgy). *Gazi Üniversitesi Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, 10(31): 33-67.
- Erdem, C. (2013). Sözlü tarih ve kültür açısından İmam Rıza Ocağı (İmam Rıza Ocak through oral history and culture). *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, 66, 257-278.

38 A Survey of Roots and History of Kurdish Alevism

- Ergun, S. (ed.). (1956). *Hatâyî Divanı. Şah İsmail Safevî: Edebi Hayatı ve Nefesleri (Diwan of Hatâyî. Shah İsmâ'il Safavî: His Literary Life and His Poems)*. İstanbul: İstanbul Maarif Kitaphanesi.
- Esin, E. (1985). Les dervîs hétérodoxes turcs d'Asie centrale et le peintre surnommé 'Siyâh Kalam'. *Turcica*, 17, 7-41.
- Gezik, E. (2013). Rayberler, Pirlar ve Murşidler (Alevi ocak örgütlenmesine dair saptamalar ve sorular) (*Raybers, Pirs and Murshids: Determinations and questions on ocak organizations of Alevism*). E. Gezik and M. Özcan (eds.), *Alevi Ocakları ve Örgütlenmeleri (Alevi Ocaks and their Organizations)*, (2-44). Ankara: Kalan Yayınları.
- Gölpınarlı, A. (1987). *Tarih Boyunca İslâm Mezhepleri ve Şûlik (Islamic Sects and Shi'a throughout the History)*. İstanbul: Der Yayınları.
- Güler, S. (2010). Dersim Alevi geleneğinde bir tarihsel ocak: Ağuçanlar (A historical ocak in Dersim Alevi tradition: Ağuichen). In Ş. Aslan (ed.), *Herkesin Bildiği Sır Dersim (The Secret that Everybody Knows)*, (155-174). İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Gültekin, A. (2013). Kültürel kimliğin çeşitliliği bağlamında özgün bir örnek: 'Şavak Aşireti' (The shavak tribe as an original case for diversity of cultural identity). *Antropoloji*, 26, 129-154.
- Gündüz, T. (2015). *Kızılbaşlar, Osmanlılar, Safevîler (Kizilbashs, Ottomans, Safavids)*. İstanbul: Yeditepe.
- Halaçoğlu, Y. (1988). XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İskân Siyaseti ve Aşiretlerin Yerleştirilmesi. Ankara: TTK Yayınları.
- Imber, C. (1979). The persecution of the Ottoman Shī'ites according to the Mühimme Defterleri, 1565-1585. *Der Islam*, 56(2): 245-273.
- İnalçık, H. (1993). Dervish and Sultan: An Analysis of the Otman Baba Vilayetnamesi. *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire. Essays on Economy and Society*. Bloomington: Indiana University Turkish Studies and Turkish Ministry of Culture, 19-36.
- Karakaya-Stump, A. (2006a). Kızılbaş, Bektaşî, Safevî ilişkilerine dair 17. yüzyıldan yeni bir belge: Yazı çevrimli metin-günümüz türkçesi'ne çeviri-tıpkıbasım, (A new document from the Seventeenth Century on the Kizilbash, Bektashi and Safavi relationships: Transcribed, translated text and its facsimile). *Journal of Turkish Studies, Festschrift in Honor of Orhan Okay II*, 30(2): 117-130.
- Karakaya-Stump, A. (2006b). Sinemilliler: Bir Alevi ocağı ve aşireti (The Sinemillis: An Alevi saintly lineage and tribe). *Kırkbudak*, 2(6): 19-59.
- Karakaya-Stump, A. (2011). The forgotten dervishes: The Bektashi convents in Iraq and their Kizilbash clients. *Turkish Studies*, 16(1-2): 1-24.
- Karakaya-Stump, A. (2015). *Vefailik, Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık: Alevi Kaynaklarını, Tarihini ve Tarih yazımını Yeniden Düşünmek (Wefa'ıye, Bektashism, Qızılbashism: Rethinking Alevi Sources, History and History Writing)*. İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Karamustafa, A. (1993). Kalenders, Abdâls, Hayderîs: The Formation of the Bektâşîye in the Sixteenth Century. In H. İnalçık and C. Kafadar (eds.), *Süleymân the Second and His Time*, (121-129). İstanbul: Isis, Press.
- Karamustafa, A. (1994). *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1500*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.
- Kaya, A. (2010). *Başlangıcından Günümüze Dersim Tarihi (Dersim's History from the Beginning to Present)*. İstanbul: Demos Yayınları.
- Kemali, A. (1992/1932). *Erzincan (Tarihi, Coğrafi, Toplumsal, Etnografi, İhsai İnceleme Araştırma Tecrübesi) (Erzincan: A Research Experience on its History, Geography, Society, Ethnography, and Statistics)*. İstanbul (2nd print): Kaynak Yayınları.

- Kiel, M. (1994). Deliorman: Kuzeydoğu Bulgaristan'da bir Bölge (Deliorman: A Region in North-Eastern Bulgaria). *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi (Encyclopedia of Islam TDV version)*, 9, 141-144.
- Kızıldağ-Soileau, D. (2017). *Koçgiri İsyanı: Sosyo-Tarihsel Bir Analiz (Koçgiri Rebellion: A Socio-Historical Analysis)*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Klein, J. (2016). *The Margins of Empire. Kurdish militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone*. Redwood City, CL: Stanford University Press.
- Koç, M. and Tanrıverdi, E. (eds.). (2004), *Muhyî-i Gülşenî, Menakıb-ı İbrahim-i Gülşenî*. İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları.
- Konur, H. (2000). *İbrahim Gülşenî: Hayatı, Eserleri, Tarikatı (İbrahim Gülşenî: His Life, Works and His Order)*. İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları.
- Köprülü, F. (1919). *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar (The First Sufis in the Turkish Literature)*. İstanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire.
- Köprülü, F. (1929). *Influence du Chamanisme Turco-Mongol sur les Ordres Mystiques Musulmans*. İstanbul: İstanbul Darülfünûnu Türkiyat Enstitüsü.
- Kutlu, S. (2006). *Alevîlik Bektaşîlik Yazıları, Alevîliğin Yazılı Kaynakları: Buyruk, Tezkire-i Şeyh Safî (Articles on Alevism-Bektashism, The Written Resources of Alevism and Bektashism: Buyruk, Tezkire-i Sheikh Sâfî)*. Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları.
- Kutlu, S. (2010). *Alevî ve Bektaşî Yazılı (Arap Harfli) Kaynaklarının Neşri ve Ortaya Çıkar Sorunlar (Publishing Alevî and Bektaşî Written (Arabic Letters) Resources and Emerging Problems)*. In G. Aytaş and D. Sümer (eds.), *Alevî ve Bektaşî Yayınlarının Temel Sorunları, Çözüm Önerileri Konulu 13. Bilim Danışma Kurulu Toplantısı*, (42-73). Ilgaz, Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Velî Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları.
- Markoff, I. (1986). The role of expressive culture in the demystification of a secret sect of Islam: The case of the Alevi in Turkey. *The World of Music*, 28(3): 42-56.
- Mélikoff, I. (1980). Un ordre des dervishes colonisateurs, les Bektashis: Leur rôle social et leurs rapports avec le premiers sultans ottomans. *Mémorial Ömer Lütfi Barkan*, Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Maissonneuve, 149-157.
- Mélikoff, I. (1982). L'İslam hétérodoxe en Anatolie. *Turcica*, 14, 142-154.
- Mélikoff, I. (1992). La communauté Kızılbaş du Deli Orman en Bulgarie. *Sur les Traces du Sofisme Turc: Recherches sur L'islam Populaire en Anatolie*. İstanbul: Isis Press.
- Mélikoff, I. (1993). *Uyur İdik Uyardılar: Alevîlik-Bektaşîlik Araştırmaları ('Uyur İdik Uyardılar': Researches on Alevism-Bektashism)* (trans. T. Alptekin). İstanbul: Cem Yayınları.
- Ocak, A. (1983). *Bektaşî Menâkıbnâmelerinde İslam Öncesi İnanç Motifleri (Pre-Islamic Belief Motifs in the Bektashî Menakıbnâmes)*. İstanbul: Enderun.
- Ocak, A. (1996). *Türk Sufiliğine Bakışlar (Views on Turkish Sufism)*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Ocak, A. (1998). *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler: 15.-17. Yüzyıllar (The Heretics in Ottoman Society: 15th-17th Centuries)*. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları.
- Ocak, A. (2002). *Sarı Saltık: Popüler İslâm'ın Balkanlar'daki Destanı Öncüsü (Sarı Saltık: The Legendary Pioneer of Popular Islam in Balkans)*. Ankara: TTK Yayınları.
- Ocak, A. (2002b). *Türkler, Türkiye ve İslam (The Turks, Turkey and Islam)* (5th print). İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Ocak, A. (2009). *Babailer isyanından Kızılbaşlığa: Anadolu'da İslam heterodoksisinin doğuşuna kısa bir bakış (From Babai revolt to Kizilbashism: A review on the rise of Islamic heterodoxy in Anatolia)*. In A. Ocak (ed.), *Gechmişten Günümüze Alevî-Bektaşî*

40 A Survey of Roots and History of Kurdish Alevism

- Kültürü (Alevi-Bektashi Culture from the Past to the Future, (38-57). Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları.*
- Ocak, A. (2011). *Dede Garkın ve Emirci Sultan (13. Yüzyıl) (Dede Garkın and Emirci Sultan, 13th Century)*. Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Özoğlu, H. (1996). State-tribe relations: Kurdish tribalism in the 16th and 17th century Ottoman Empire. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 23(1): 5-26.
- Özoğlu, H. (2004). *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State*. New York: New York University Press.
- Öztürk, N. (ed.). (2013). *Âşıkpaşazâde Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi, 1285-1502] (Cronicle of Âşıkpaşazâde [Ottoman History, 1285-1502])*. Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat.
- Roemer, H. (1983). The Safavid Period. *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 189-350.
- Roemer, H. (1990). The Qizilbash Turcomans: Founders and victims of the Safevid theocracy. In M. Mazzaoui and V. Moreen (eds.), *Intellectual Studies in Islam: Essays Written in honor of Martin B. Dickson*, (27-39). Utah: University of Utah Press.
- Şahin, H. (2007). Otman Baba. *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi (Encyclopedia of Islam TDV version)*, 34, 6-8.
- Sakaoglu, N. (1984). *Anadolu Derebeyi Ocaklarından Kösepaşa Hanedanı (The Kösepaşa Dynasty: One of the Anatolian Landlord Ocaks)*. Ankara: Yurt Yayınları.
- Saltık, V. (2009). Tunceli’de Alevi Ocakları (Alevi Ocaks in Tunceli). *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, 52, 145-176.
- Seven, Y. (2010). İmam Rıza Ocağı’nda inanç uygulamaları, (Belief practises in İmam Rıza Ocak. *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi*, 56, 357-370.
- Sevgen, N. (2003). *Zazalar ve Kızılbaşlar (Coğrafya-Tarih-Hukuk-Folklor-Teogoni) (Zazas and Kizilbashes: Geography, History, Law, Folklore, Religion) (2nd print)*. Ankara: Kalan Yayıncılık.
- Sümer, F. (1999). *Safevi Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Gelişmesinde Anadolu Türklerinin Rolü (The Role of Anatolian Turks in Establishment and Development of Safavid State)*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları.
- Tanman, B. (1994). Demir Baba Tekkesi. *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi (Encyclopedia of Islam TDV version)*, 9, 150-151.
- Taylor, J. (1868). Journal of a tour in Armenia, Kurdistan, and Upper Mesopotamia, with notes of researches in the Deyrsim Dag, in 1866. *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, 38, 281-361.
- Temo, S. (2018). *Horasan Kürtleri (Khorasan Kurds)*. Istanbul: Alfa Yayınları.
- Türkdoğan, O. (1995). *Alevi-Bektaşî Kimliği: Sosyo-Antropolojik Araştırmalar*. Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları.
- Uluğ, N. (1939). *Tunceli Medeniyete Açılıyor (Tunceli Opens to Civilization)*. Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Matbaası.
- van Bruinessen, M. (1992). *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books.
- van Bruinessen, M. (1997). “Aslını inkâr eden haramzâdedir”: The debate on the ethnic identity of the Kurdish Alevi. In K. Kehl-Bodrogi, B. Kellner-Heinkele and A. Otter-Beaujean (eds.), *Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East*, (1-23). Leiden: Brill.
- Yalman, N. (1969). Islamic reform and mystic tradition in Eastern Turkey. *European Journal of Sociology (Archives Européennes de Sociologie)*, 10(1): 41-60.
- Yaman, A. (1998). *Kızılbaş Alevi Dedeleri (Kizilbash Alevi Dedes)*. Istanbul: Şahkulu Sultan Dergâhı Vakfı Yayını.

- Yar, E. and Yalgın, E. (2014). Şeyh Dilo Belincân'ın şeceresinin kısa bir analizi (A short analysis on the genealogy of Şeyh Dilo Belincân). *Tunceli Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 2(4): 7-32.
- Yıldırım, M. (2012). Desimlu Aşireti'nden Dersim Sancağı'na (From De[r]simlu Tribe to Dersim Sanjak). *Tunceli Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 1(1): 23-37.
- Yılmazçelik, İ. (2012). Osmanlı döneminde Dersim'de sosyal yapı ve Dersim Aleviliği (Social structure and Alevism in Ottoman Dersim). *Alevilik Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 3, 1-38.
- Yolga, M. (1994). *Dersim (Tunceli) Tarihi (History of Dersim –Tunceli)*. Ankara: Türk Halk Kültürünü Araştırma Vakfı Yayınları.

Appendix

