

**ETHNIC IDENTITY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: THE CASE OF
CIRCASSIANS IN UZUNYAYLA**

by

Muhammed Yasin Budak

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of**

Master of Arts

in

International Relations

Koç University

December 2014

Koç University
Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

This is to certify that I have examined this copy of a master's thesis by
Muhammed Yasin Budak

and have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects, and that any and all
revisions required by the final examining committee have been made.

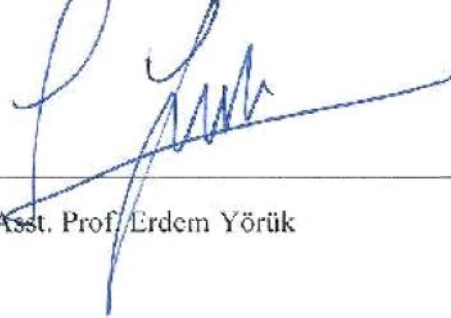
Committee Members:



Asst. Prof. Şener Aktürk



Asst. Prof. Murat Yüksel



Asst. Prof. Erdem Yörük

Date: 15.12.2014

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for any award or any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution. It is affirmed by the candidate that, to the best of his knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due references is made in the text of the thesis.

Muhammed Yasin Budak

List of Tables, Figures, Graphs, and Maps

Tables	Page
1. 7 provinces with highest Circassian population (absolute)	67
2. 7 provinces with highest Circassian population (relative)	68

Figures	
1. The puzzle and the research pathway	4
2. A CUP postcard, 'Long live fatherland, long live nation, long live liberty'	38

Graphs	
1. 2007 and 2011 General Election Results (Uzunyayla and Turkey)	3
2. Comparison of change in MHP votes in Uzunyayla and Turkey	3
3. 1991 and 1995 election results in Circassian villages in Kayseri	69
4. 1991 and 1995 election results in Circassian villages in Sakarya	69
5. 1991 and 1995 election results in Circassian villages in Düzce	70
6. 1999 and 2002 election results in Circassian villages in Kayseri	72
7. 1999 and 2002 election results in Circassian villages in Sakarya	72
8. 1999 and 2002 election results in Circassian villages in Düzce	73
9. 2007 and 2011 election results in Circassian villages in Kayseri	76
10. 2007 and 2011 election results in Circassian villages in Sakarya	76
11. 2007 and 2011 election results in Circassian villages in Düzce	77
12. 2007 and 2011 general election results in Circassian villages located in Sakarya	82
13. 2007 and 2011 general election results in Circassian villages located in Düzce	82

Maps	
1. The geographical location of Circassia	21
2. Main destination ports of Circassians	26
3. Circassian settlements in Anatolia	32

List of Abbreviations

- AP – Justice Party (Adalet Partisi)
- AKP – Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)
- ANAP – Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi)
- BDP – Peace and Democracy Party (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi)
- CHP – Republican People’s Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)
- CUP – Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti)
- ÇDP – Pluralist Democracy Party (Çokulcu Demokrasi Partisi)
- DP – Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti)
- DÇB – International Circassian Association (Dünya Çerkes Birliği)
- DSP – Democratic Left Party (Demokratik Sol Parti)
- DTP – Democratic Society Party (Demokratik Toplum Partisi)
- DYP – True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi)
- EU – European Union
- FP – Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi)
- GP – Young Party (Genç Parti)
- MGK – National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu)
- PKK – Kurdistan Workers’ Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan)
- RP – Welfare Party (Refah Partisi)
- SHP – Social Democratic Populist Party (Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti)
- TRT – Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu)

ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to understand and explain Circassian political participation in primarily Uzunyayla region and in Turkey. The departure point is the 2011 general elections, in which the ultra Turkish nationalist MHP managed to increase its vote share in Uzunyayla more than 100 percent compared to the previous general election. The study includes the analysis of six general elections in terms of Circassian political participation between 1991 and 2011. Since the analysis of Circassian political participation in Turkey remains limited with associational activities of them, such analysis of voting behavior is unique in the literature. Along with the potential impact of the Democratic Opening Process, the effect of the nomination of a Circassian candidate by the MHP, and the economic well-being are evaluated within the context of 2011 election results in Uzunyayla. In addition to historical voting behavior in Uzunyayla, election results in Circassian villages of Düzce and Sakarya are scrutinized as well. The nomination of a co-ethnic candidate is demonstrated to have a significant effect on Circassian voting behavior.

Keywords: Ethnic politics, voting, Circassians, Democratic Opening, the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)

ÖZET

Bu çalı ma, Türkiye’de, özellikle de Uzunyayla bölgesinde ya ayan Çerkeslerin siyasi katılımını anlamayı ve açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. A ırı Türk milliyetçisi MHP’nin oy oranını bir önceki seçime göre bölgede yüzde 100 oranından fazla artırdı ı 2011 genel seçimleri bu çalı manın hareket noktasını olu turmaktadır. Çalı ma, 1991 ile 2011 yılları arasındaki altı genel seçimin Çerkes siyasi katılımı açısından analizini içerir. Türkiye’deki Çerkes siyasi katılımının analizi dernek aktiviteleriyle sınırlı kaldı ından Çerkeslerle ilgili böyle geni çaplı bir oy verme davranı ı analizinin alanda benzeri bulunmamaktadır. Demokratik Açılım Süreci’nin potansiyel etkisinin yanı sıra Çerkes aday gösterilmesi ve ekonomik ko ulların etkisi Uzunyayla’da ortaya çıkan 2011 seçim sonuçları ekseninde tartı ılmaktadır. Uzunyayla’daki tarihsel oy verme davranı ı analizinin yanında Düzce ve Sakarya’nın Çerkes köylerinde ortaya çıkan seçim sonuçları da incelenmektedir. Aynı etnik kimli e sahip bir adayın Çerkeslerin oy verme davranı ı üzerinde belirgin bir etkisinin oldu u ortaya konmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Etnik siyaset, oy verme, Çerkesler, Demokratik Açılım, Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people that I would like to thank since I believe that this thesis would not have been possible without the encouragement I received from each and every one of them. I owe my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor, Asst. Prof. Ener Aktürk. His guidance, insightful comments, and generous support deserve utmost appreciation. I am also grateful to Asst. Prof. Murat Yüksel and Asst. Prof. Erdem Yörük for their constructive comments and suggestions.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Hamit Yüksel. The completion of this research would be much more difficult if I had not met him. I am thankful to Sinemis Temel as well. All interviewees deserve appreciation for the time and effort they spent for a graduate student coming from Istanbul.

I want to thank Aras Köksal, Sibel Karadağ, Yavuz Aslan, Nazlı Üstünes, and Başak Polat. All are great friends, and their support during a very difficult period personally is inestimably important to me. I would like to offer my special thanks to Cansu Soyupak, a true friend, a future literature scholar, only audience of my thesis defense and the ‘thesis-mate’. I am very lucky to have her.

The support of my family was very important for me. I feel fortunate for having such a great family. My heartfelt appreciation goes to them.

I owe a very special thank to Selver Yolsever. This work is for her and every amazing person trying to make the world a better place.

Table of Contents

Statement of Authorship.....	i
List of Tables, Figures, Graphs, and Maps.....	ii
List of Abbreviations.....	iii
Abstract	iv
Özet	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Table of Contents	vii
Introduction	
The Puzzle and the Research Question	1
The Democratic Opening Process	4
Do Circassians feel excluded from the Democratic Opening Process	6
Turkish Nationalism and Circassians	8
Ethnic Voting	9
Economic Factors	14
A Brief Summary and Conclusion.....	15
Chapter 1: Circassians: From the Romanov to the Ottoman Empire	
Who are Circassians: the Romanov Empire and the North Caucasus	
Circassians.....	17
Circassia and the North Caucasus	18
The Resistance and the Tragedy of Deportation	
The Russo-Circassian War (1830-1864)	22
The Circassian Deportation or Genocide.....	25
Circassians in the Ottoman Empire	
The Ottoman reception, perception, and settlement of Circassians.....	27
Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism: The search for identity in late Ottoman Empire.....	32
The Young Turks, the CUP and Turkish nationalism: Where Circassians stood.....	35
Chapter 2: Circassians in the Republic of Turkey (1923-1950): Nationalism, Assimilation and Resistance	
The World War I (1914-1918) and the end of the Ottoman Empire	
Turkist policies of the CUP and the transformation of the Empire (1913-1918)	42
The collapse of the Empire and the Turkish Independence War: Circassians at a crossroad.....	44
The Republic of Turkey	
A new challenge of identity after the Ottomanism-Turkism debate.....	49
Assimilation and the official denial of ethnic differences	54
The Republic of Turkey and Circassians until 1950	55

Chapter 3: Circassian Political Participation in Turkey (1950-2011): Associational Activities and Voting Behavior	
The Institutional Channeling Theory.....	61
Circassian Associations in Turkey	
A brief history: Beginning of Circassian associational activities.....	63
The Institutional Channeling Theory framework and Circassian political participation.....	64
Voting Behavior among Circassians, 1991-2011	
1991 and 1995 elections.....	69
1999 and 2002 elections.....	72
2007 and 2011 elections.....	76
The evaluation of overall Circassian political participation.....	78
Chapter 4: The Rise of the MHP among Circassians of Uzunyayla: A Case of Ethnic Voting?	
The historical dimension: Aziziye, Afshars and assimilation.....	83
The Politics of Xabze: Is it possible?.....	86
Circassian nationalism.....	87
Political participation of Circassians of Uzunyayla	
Ethnic Voting.....	91
The Democratic Opening Process.....	94
Economic Factors.....	96
A Preliminary Assessment.....	97
Conclusion.....	98
Appendix A: Circassian villages in Uzunyayla region.....	104
Appendix A: Circassian villages in Düzce and Sakarya.....	107
Appendix B: Demographic information about interviewees.....	112
Bibliography.....	113

INTRODUCTION

The Puzzle and the Research Question

The 2011 general election results in Uzunyayla, where an ethnically homogenous population of Circassians live to a great extent, provide an interesting puzzle to be investigated. While the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) only received 9.84 percent of votes in the 2007 general election in that region, the vote share of the party rose to 19.99 percent in 2011. Although the national vote share of the MHP declined in 2011, the party succeeded in increasing its votes more than 100 percent in Uzunyayla (see Graphs 1 and 2). As a political party armed with ultra Turkish nationalist discourse, how and why did the MHP see such a tremendous increase in its vote share among Circassians of Uzunyayla? This thesis attempts to understand and hopefully explain the puzzle posed as a question above by putting it into a context of identity, ethnicity, and voting behavior. A political party's doubling of votes in two consecutive general elections within a given region is an important incident to produce element of surprise and a puzzle to be investigated. If the political party in question is Turkish nationalist, and it manages to do that in a region characterized by Circassian ethnic identity, then it becomes one of the most interesting puzzles that deserve scholarly attention.

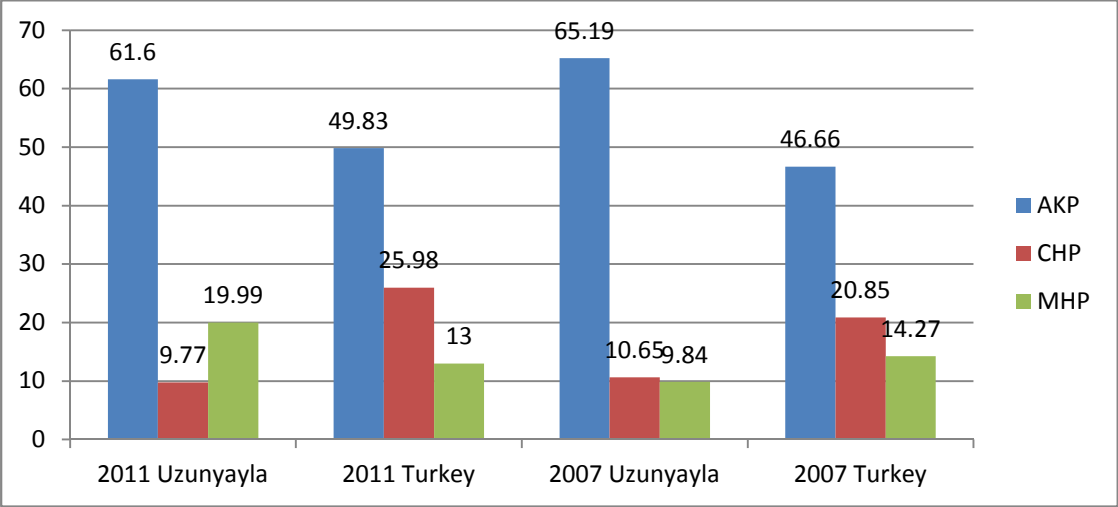
I argue that there are three potential explanations for the significant increase in the MHP vote share among Circassians of Uzunyayla. First, the Democratic Opening Process, which was declared by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government and flourished between two general elections of 2007 and 2011, may have triggered a certain attitude toward the AKP government and a shift to another political party that is the MHP in this case. The reservation of the Democratic Opening Process to one specific ethnic category, Kurds, may have caused Circassians to protest and voice concerns over the process. However, there are two dimensions of this view. First, Circassians, as an ethnic category including significant

elements with earlier discourses of Turkish nationalism, did not approve the move by the AKP government, which in turn points to the support for the status quo on the part of Circassians. Second, Circassians, as an ethnic category with the discourse of official ethnic identity recognition, felt ostracized and disappointed as a result of policies pursued by the AKP government in line with the Democratic Opening Process; therefore, they sought alternative ways to voice their demands. At that juncture, the alternative way could be a candidate with Circassian identity. The MHP nominated Nihat Canpolat, a Circassian and the former governor of Kayseri, as the second candidate from the region. Circassians may have supported the MHP if the first dimension of the potential explanation of the increase in the MHP vote share holds due to their status-quo proponent stance. In the case of second dimension, Circassians may have voted for the candidate, Nihat Canpolat, due to his Circassian identity. They may have sought to have a member of parliament with Circassian origin which could have paved the way for their demands to be heard. Such a motivation, having a co-ethnic parliamentarian, may be unrelated with their overall view of the Democratic Opening Process as well. If this is the case, then there is clearly ethnic voting, of which reasons and motivations require special attention. The last aspect is the economic well-being of people living in Uzunyayla region. The hypothesis is that economic policies of the AKP government damaged the region and caused many people to move to big cities and those who stayed to vote for the MHP.

In order to understand the strategy behind such voting preference, two distinct approaches are essential. First, one should understand what the Democratic Opening Process initiated by the AKP government is about and aiming to change. And second, it is vital to trace overall Circassian attitude towards the official identity building of the Republic of Turkey and their relations with the 'core' as well as their demands, if any, on the basis of ethnic and cultural identity. Taking a historical perspective is likely to be helpful to shed light

on many aspects of Circassian identity building vis-à-vis the imposition of Turkish national identity. The typology of the Regimes of Ethnicity created by Ener Aktürk clarifies both the nature of the Democratic Opening Process and the building of an ethnicity regime in Turkey. This, in turn, makes it possible to understand Circassian identity building mechanisms and their attitude toward the policy of assimilation.

Graph 1: 2007 and 2011 General Election Results (Uzunyayla and Turkey)



Graph 2: Comparison of change in MHP votes in Uzunyayla and Turkey

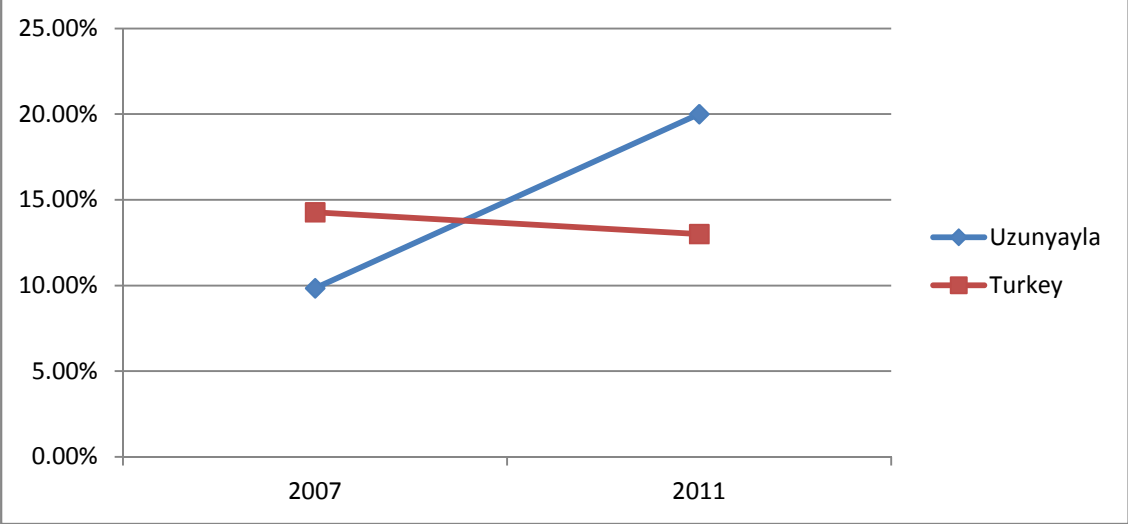
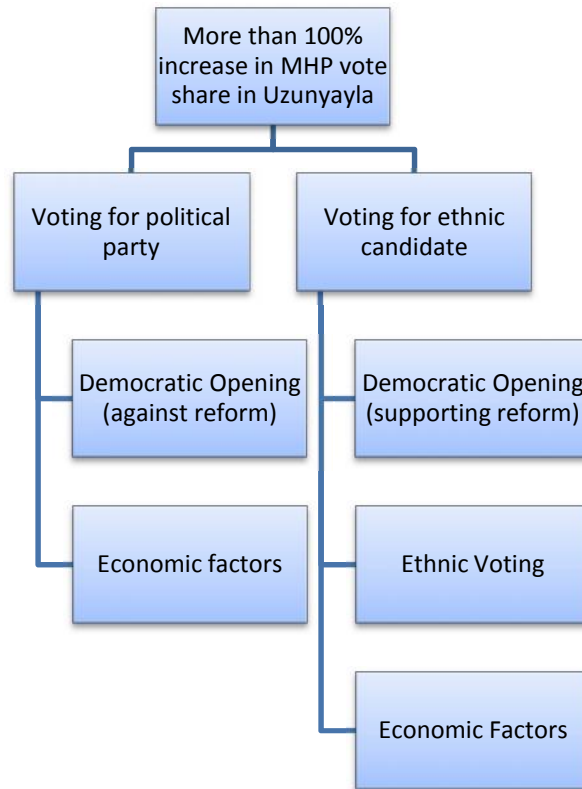


Figure 1: *The puzzle and the research pathway*



THE DEMOCRATIC OPENING PROCESS

The typology that Aktürk (2012, pp. 4-8) develops concerning “state policies regulating the relationship between ethnicity and nationality” is a very useful contribution to the literature. Rather than simply differentiating nationalisms as ethnic and civic, Aktürk builds a typology based on a deductive test. The deductive test has two dimensions. One is membership, which is evaluated on the basis of citizenship. The other is expression, which is assessed based on the explicit statement of ethnic identities through institutionalization. Accordingly, if a state allows only one ethnic group to hold citizenship, it is classified as a “mono-ethnic regime” of which Germany represents the typical example. If more than one ethnic group is allowed to become citizens, then the expression dimension comes in to differentiate between “anti-ethnic” and “multi-ethnic” regimes. If ethnic identities are institutionalized, the result is the “multi-ethnic regime” as in the case of the Soviet Union. If

no ethnic identity is expressed explicitly, the state is identified as having an “anti-ethnic regime”. Aktürk argues that Turkey is an “anti-ethnic regime” since no ethnic identity is institutionalized. Yet, the AKP government attempted to change the “anti-ethnic” character of Turkish ethnicity regime and assimilation policies through the initiation of the Democratic Opening Process toward the end of 2009.

The Democratic Opening Process is the initiative undertaken by the AKP government mainly on the basis of the recognition of different ethnic identities. It had a broad framework which aimed to increase standards of human rights, freedom of expression, and democratic government although the main reference point has been the Kurdish question. It was also a peace process aimed to end divisions between Turks and Kurds by providing rights that would enable Kurds to express their identity comfortably. Generally, the idea was to provide and enhance a democratic environment in which different identities and cultures have the freedom and means of expression. How successful the AKP government has become so far in terms of providing a democratic and free environment, though, is a different issue and beyond the objectives of this study. The Democratic Opening Process challenged the monolithic nature of the “anti-ethnic” regime to a great extent. Unsurprisingly, the Kurdish question, which has been posing the greatest challenge to the “anti-ethnic regime” for decades, constituted the heart of the process. The name Kurdish opening came to be used synonymously with the democratic opening. The main reason for the dominance of the Kurdish question in the agenda of the Democratic Opening Process is the decades-long activities of the PKK, which has been one of the most pressing issues of Turkey. Various solution mechanisms from counter-insurgency to martial law, from economic investments in southeast Anatolia to forced migration of people from villages were introduced and exploited during that long period. However, recognition of Kurdish identity and granting rights they have already earned as citizens were not considered as plausible solutions and not implemented on governmental,

bureaucratic, and legal grounds. Ideally, the Democratic Opening Process represents the multi-dimensional framework that owned the potential to end decades-long conflict.

AKP published a long document with the title of *The Democratic Opening Process with Questions and Answers: the National Unity and Brotherhood Project* on January 2010. PM Erdoğan held meetings and came together with prominent figures of the society, like journalists, academicians, artists, celebrities, and representatives of media. A group of intellectuals constituted by some of those individuals that PM Erdoğan had met personally visited different regions of Turkey in order to tell ordinary people about the process and to eliminate their concerns. Especially, about the Kurdish question, there were widespread concerns, fears, and prejudices among people. Two opposition parties, the Republican People's Party (CHP) and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), opposed the process as well and were accused by the government with feeding concerns and prejudices within the society. The AKP managed to increase its vote share in 2011 even further compared to 2007 elections. Therefore, one may argue that the Democratic Opening Process is supported by a significant part of the society. However, the election results in Uzunyayla region, where an ethnically homogenous population of Circassians resides to great extent, present a different story.

Do Circassians feel excluded from the Democratic Opening Process?

The 2009 local elections in Turkey was an important point for democratization efforts of the AKP government. The significant increase in the vote share of the Democratic Society Party (DTP) and decrease in the AKP votes in Kurdish-populated provinces forced, in a way, the AKP to concentrate on Kurdish question. The AKP's vote share remained around 39 percent while the DTP managed to secure 30 percent of votes in those regions. The democratization efforts were fixed to the Kurdish question and the peace process aiming to

end conflict with PKK. The weak relations with the EU also played an important role in the AKP's adoption of narrower democratization reforms. PM Erdoğan's personal interest to rights of ethnic and religious minority groups like non-Muslims, Alevis, Roma, and Jafari people began to disappear. The Alevi opening remained fruitless, and this caused Alevi people to voice their concerns. It is also interesting to see that the term 'Circassian' appears only two times in the 134-page democratization document prepared by the AKP. In both occasions, Circassians are referred along with other ethnic categories like Kurd, Laz, Georgian, and Bosnian. The Democratic Opening Process promises nothing special to Circassian people. PM Erdoğan's reaction to Circassians' demand for education in mother-tongue is an important indicator of the AKP government's approach to rights of Circassians. The Prime Minister stated with a negative connotation that "now, Circassians began [to demand rights]" in a national broadcast¹. Naturally, Erdoğan's attitude led Circassians to question the nature of the Democratic Opening Process.

Circassians continue to demand the provision of their rights from the government. They exploit possible ways to gain their rights. They organize demonstrations, meetings, and seminars and write petitions to members of parliament. They pool their demands and attempts in Circassian associations and mostly deliver their demands via those associations. Circassians only utilize from the relatively suitable environment that the Democratic Opening Process provided. They comfortably voice their demands, yet they strive and put effort for concrete steps in the direction of recognition of their rights. For the realization of their demands, they take initiative. For instance, Adana Circassian Culture Association concluded an agreement with Adana Governorship and Adana National Education Institute about kindergarten education in Circassian language². The title chosen by the national newspaper for the news ("Circassians began already") carries a clear reference to Erdoğan's discourse on

¹ <http://www.ozgurcerkes.com/?Syf=22&Mkl=235484> (Accessed on 28 April 2014)

² <http://www.taraf.com.tr/haber-cerkesler-basladi-bile-137545/> (Accessed on 28 April 2014)

Circassian demand for education in mother-tongue. It would be unthinkable for Circassians to engage in such an initiative if the Democratic Opening Process had not challenged the “anti-ethnic” regime of Turkey. Nevertheless, the AKP government remains unresponsive to demands of Circassians. Returning to the question in the title of this section, the answer would be positive. Yes, Circassians feel excluded from the overall framework of the Democratic Opening Process and have valid reasons for that. This, in turn, may have encouraged Circassians residing in Uzunyayla region to seek alternative political options for the recognition of their rights. However, the second dimension, which points to the possible pro-status quo stance of Circassians in the case of ethnicity regime of Turkey, should be investigated as well.

Turkish Nationalism and Circassians

Did Circassians vote for the MHP because they were against reform in the area of ethnicity regime? In order to respond to this question properly, Circassian encounter with and their position vis-à-vis Turkish nationalism should be understood. The anecdote that Kaya (2011, pp. 3-5) shares in his book is important from many aspects. When he was accused with conducting research about Chechens without permission, Kaya was invited to the police station. He tried to explain that his research was about Circassians, not Chechens. The police officer with whom Kaya talked was Circassian. Many police officers, then, appeared to have certain links with Circassian identity. Their overall discourse that Kaya presents is critical at this point: “I am Circassian, professor. But, I am not from Circassians you know about. I am Turk. I love my country. I am not at all Circassian nationalist.” This may be due to the fact that they are police officers and part of the state apparatus. Yet, it is known in Turkish society that in general, Circassians hold certain sympathy towards Turkish nationalism. The assimilation strategy in line with “anti-ethnic” regime seems to have worked on Circassians to a great extent. One can come across many accounts of this close link between Circassian and

Turkish nationalism³. However, in order to better understand such linkage, historical encounter of Circassians with Turkish nationalism should be investigated. Their arrival to the Ottoman Empire during mid- and late 19th century, certain settlement policies pursued upon them, their penetration to the state apparatus via bureaucratic positions they occupied in the Abdülhamid II era, their meeting of Turkish nationalism through activities of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) or the Young Turks, and their experiences during the World War I and the Independence War are some primary areas requiring particular attention. Their encounter with the early Republic, the Democrat Party (DP), and their overall political participation strategies should be inquired so that the nature of their link with Turkish nationalism could be figured out. Therefore, taking a historical perspective would be helpful for our discussion.

ETHNIC VOTING

In the 2011 general election, the MHP vote share in Uzunyayla increased more than 100 percent compared to the previous general election. Therefore, Circassians either voted significantly for the political party or they “crossed party lines to vote for a candidate belonging to a particular ethnic group” (Wolfinger, 1965, p. 896). Considering the fact that the MHP candidate in the 2011 general election, Nihat Canpolat, is a Circassian, the probability of the latter being the case is notable. As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, such voting behavior may be linked to overall Circassian view of the Democratic Opening Process. However, building a certain perspective regarding the process and voting for a co-ethnic candidate may be two separate developments as well.

³ <http://www.teorivepolitika.net/index.php/okunabilir-yazilar/item/324-diasporik-cerkes-kimligi-uzerindeki-turkcu-hegemonya> (Accessed on 28 April 2014)
<http://www.jinepsgazetesi.com/cerkeslerin-turk-milliyetciligi-hayranligi-12833.html> (Accessed on 28 April 2014)
<http://www.xabze.net/blog/bizim-cerkesler-ve-oteki-cerkesler/> (Accessed on 28 April 2014)

Before moving into ethnic voting literature, I believe that providing a definition of ethnicity, an issue debated in academia for a long time and still being debated, should be useful for the ensuing discussion. Scholars from various disciplines, like sociology, political science, anthropology, have engaged in this discussion. Two key approaches for defining ethnicity can be named as primordialist and constructivist perspectives, and a tendency to define ethnicity increasingly based on constructivist understanding is visible. Historically, ethnicity has been defined like something always produces conflict, and this has been attributed to its unchangeable character, which has been assumed to bring irreconcilable differences. Given characteristics of ethnic identity are emphasized by primordialist scholars. Geertz (1973, pp. 259-260), for instance, wrote

... the new states are abnormally susceptible to serious disaffection based on primordial attachments. By a primordial attachment is meant one that stems from 'givens' –or more precisely, as a culture is inevitably involved in such matters, the assumed 'givens' of social existence: immediate contiguity and kin connection mainly, but beyond them the given-ness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language... and following particular practices. These congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering coerciveness in and of themselves. One is bound to one's kinsman, one's neighbor, one's fellow believer, ipso facto; as the result not merely of personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but at least in great part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself.

As opposed to primordialist view that focuses on unchangeable or 'given' nature of ethnicity, constructivist approach basically argues that historical and social dynamics should be taken into account as well since ethnicity or ethnic identities are built and reproduced to a

great extent through social interactions and historical developments. Accordingly, ethnicity is a socially constructed concept in the course history. Therefore, one should get beyond the limits of primordial features while defining ethnicity. Those who moved beyond those limits either listed a set of features that would help define an ethnic group or only provided a definition consisting of one short sentence. The definition of Hutchinson and Smith (1996, p. 6) is “a named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more elements of common culture a link with a homeland and a sense of solidarity among at least some of his members.” Fearon (2003, p. 201) provides an even longer definition. Accordingly, defining characteristics of an ethnic group are descent-based membership, group consciousness, special and valued cultural elements, a homeland, common history at least partly based on factual events, and it is different than “a caste or caste-like group.” Weber (1996), on the other hand, provides a short but very useful definition: “human groups that entertain a subjective belief in common descent.” Rather than a long definition containing complex terms like culture and consciousness, a short, simple, but effective definition should do the job. Weber’s definition may be criticized since it leaves out many aspects of ethnicity, yet in such a short definition, Weber brings key features of ethnicity together: subjective and descent-related character of ethnicity. Learning the language, customs, and cultural practices of a community does not make one ethnically belong to that community. Although common descent may be problematic as one goes back to the remotest past possible (Chandra, 2006), it is clear that characteristics of ethnicity are either impossible or very difficult to change (Posner, 2005). The existence of a real blood-kinship does not matter; the “subjective belief” is sufficient and very difficult to change.

The literature on ethnic voting has a long history. Robert A. Dahl and Raymond Wolfinger could be named as pioneers of research in that area, and one can see references to two scholars in almost all studies on ethnic voting. Their theories of ethnic voting depart from

similar assumptions and data but reach different conclusions. Both agree that ethnic voting is closely linked with socioeconomic status of the ethnic group. According to Dahl, ethnic groups pass through a three-stage assimilation process (Miller, 1971, pp. 484-485). In the first stage, members of an ethnic group share low socioeconomic statuses along with almost no social and political impact. Dahl argues that ethnic voting is predominantly a case of this stage. Since members of an ethnic group have same socioeconomic positions and close links with each other, they are expected to behave in a similar fashion politically. In Dahl's theory, homogeneous class characteristics play a key role in the emergence of ethnic voting. As the ethnic group moves to the second and finally the third stage, socioeconomic characteristics change due to class mobility, and this socioeconomically heterogeneous population is expected to cease mobilizing on the basis of ethnic identity, which translates into a clear decline in ethnic voting. In the third stage, immigration is also an important factor. A significant number of people leave the ethnic community for economic opportunities, and close links among members of ethnic group begin dissipating, which in turn reduces the possibility of collective political action. In summary, as people move to new socioeconomic positions, they become concerned with protecting their new position and issues that may affect them rather than ethnic mobilization. Therefore, in the third stage, socioeconomic diversity among members of ethnic group is high, assimilation is (almost) completed, and ethnic voting diminished, Dahl basically argues.

Wolfinger (1965) challenges Dahl's argument and conclusions in his theory of ethnic voting. He also establishes a link between the overall socioeconomic position of an ethnic group and its tendency to mobilize on the basis of ethnic identity, like ethnic voting. Yet, his conclusion runs contrary to Dahl's. Accordingly, upward class mobility is indispensable for ethnic voting to emerge. Therefore, one can expect ethnic voting as socioeconomic diversity increases within an ethnic group. Wolfinger (1965, p. 903) labels his theory as "a mobilization

theory.” Wolfinger dismisses wholesale assimilation of ethnic groups and particularly underlines the role of obtaining middle-class status. By this way, an ethnic group can have a certain degree of sociopolitical impact, have their own political organizations, and run co-ethnic candidates. Owning required resources, socially and economically, for political action constitutes the central theme of Wolfinger’s study and theory. Wolfinger (1965, p. 905) summarizes his theory

The strength of ethnic voting depends on both the intensity of ethnic identification and the level of ethnic relevance in the election. The most powerful and visible sign of ethnic political relevance is a fellow-ethnic’s name at the head of the ticket, evident to everyone who enters the voting booth. Middle-class status is a virtual prerequisite for candidacy for major office; an ethnic group’s development of sufficient political skill and influence to secure such a nomination also requires the development of a middle class. Therefore ethnic voting will be greatest when the ethnic group has produced a middle class, i.e., in the second and third generations, not in the first.

Those theories and many others in this research area are based on studies conducted in the United States. Due to contextual differences, assumptions and conclusions of those scholars may not hold for ethnic groups and cases of ethnic voting in other countries. Both theories have come under severe criticisms. Gabriel (1972, pp. 410-417), for instance, argues that there is no empirical evidence for the conclusion that socioeconomic status affects ethnic voting. According to Gabriel (1972, pp. 419-420), what matters is ethnic consciousness, and the author maintains that “people from both low and high social status can vote for ethnic candidate since they have different types of ethnic consciousness.” Other criticisms focus on the difference between assimilation and acculturation (Parenti, 1967), candidate quality apart from ethnic identity (Manzano & Sanchez, 2010), and the role of intervening factors like

cross pressure (Miller, 1971). In the light of those discussions, this study will attempt to understand why ethnic voters move their support to political parties that they have no former links yet nominated co-ethnic candidates (Birbir, 2007), if Circassians had voted for Nihat Canpolat, an ethnic Circassian and the candidate of the MHP in the 2011 general election.

ECONOMIC FACTORS

Uzunyayla is a region with high altitude. Neither soil nor climate is suitable for agriculture. Therefore, people living there engaged in animal husbandry, especially cattle. Historically, horse breeding occupied a remarkable place in lives of Circassians. Horse riding and breeding constitute an important element of Circassian culture. Caucasian horses are known worldwide with adaptation and endurance to unfavorable conditions⁴. Circassians continued their horse breeding activities after their deportation from the North Caucasus to Anatolia. Until 1950s, they provided horse need of the military, yet the military ended using horses later. From then on, horse breeding, a culturally significant economic activity, began to diminish. People relied on sheep and cattle husbandry for living. Recently, trout farms emerged in the region as well⁵. Water quality is very suitable for raising trout or basically salmon. It is a developing economic activity area.

Those limited opportunities for economic activity make people look for other options. Many Circassians have been leaving Uzunyayla and moving to big cities for purposes of education and work. Outmigration is an undeniable reality of the region. Since most of Circassian villages in that region are located in Pınarbaşı district of Kayseri, looking at countryside population information may yield some idea about the level of outmigration. While the population living in countryside was 45,099⁶ in 1965, it decreased to 36,458⁷ in

⁴ <http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/horses/kabarda/index.htm> (Accessed on 5 December 2014)

⁵ http://www.zaman.com.tr/abdullah-aymaz/uzunyayla-nereden-nereye_634214.html (Accessed on 5 December 2014)

⁶ <http://www.webcitation.org/6BspqmEzS> (Accessed on 5 December 2014)

1990, 23,313⁸ in 2000, and 16,085⁹ in 2012. Is there a relation between adverse consequences of economic policies carried out by the AKP government and moving to big cities or voting for the MHP in the case of those stayed in Uzunyayla? This is another aspect considered in this study as well.

A Brief Summary and Conclusion

Although the AKP increased its votes in Turkey in the 2011 general election, their vote share in Uzunyayla declined as the MHP doubled their votes. As pointed out in the research puzzle section, such a development may be explained by looking at Circassian perspective of the Democratic Opening Process, co-ethnic candidate, and economic factors. First, the predominance of Kurdish question in the agenda of the Democratic Opening Process may have caused Circassians to further encourage their already existing Turkish nationalist stance in line with keeping the status quo and demonstrating their anti-Democratic Opening Process understanding. Therefore, they may have supported the MHP as the most ardent opponent of the process. Second, they may have become ostracized and disappointed with the process mainly due to the fact that their demands for ethnic recognition similar with the demands of Kurdish people were ignored to a great extent. Therefore, their pro-Democratic Opening Process or reformist stance may find expression in the support for an ethnic candidate, in this case the MHP candidate Nihat Canpolat, who is an individual with Circassian origin. Third, Circassians of Uzunyayla may have voted for a co-ethnic candidate independent of both his political party and the Democratic Opening Process, which points to a classical example of ethnic voting. And last, economic factors may have affected Circassian voting behavior. Given this framework, this research attempts to understand the dynamics of Circassian identity building and voting preferences by comparing last two general election

⁷ <http://www.webcitation.org/6BtyQ6TL8> (Accessed on 5 December 2014)

⁸ <http://www.webcitation.org/6Bu0YlwZJ> (Accessed on 5 December 2014)

⁹ <http://www.webcitation.org/6EZxluYTz> (Accessed on 5 December 2014)

results. Inferences that will be obtained as a result of this research process are likely to provide important and helpful insights for the content and characteristics of the Democratic Opening Process, possible persistence of ethnic politics, and the democratization of Turkey in general.

Chapter 1

CIRCASSIANS: FROM THE ROMANOV TO THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

This thesis takes experiences of Circassians referred as “one of the first stateless peoples in modern history” (Richmond, 2013) as a departure point and pursues to develop a scholarly discussion that would provide important insights for ethnicity, nationalism, and political participation. It aims to bring historical perspective and modern political phenomena together. It should also be noted that memory and common suffering serve as essential elements of identity building in ethnic categories referred as diaspora, like Circassians. Therefore, taking a historical perspective should be helpful to understand modern dynamics of the Circassian society.

1.1 Who are Circassians: the Romanov Empire and the North Caucasus

1.1.1 Circassians

The culture and identity of any given social group is bound to experience a certain degree of transformation evidently as a result of incidents or different groups that they come across. In the case of ethnic groups, different forms as well as different names may emerge in the course of history. While some ethnic groups disappear completely, some new ethnic groups come into existence as a result of merging of other ethnic identities, for instance. Circassians constitute an example of the latter. Circassian denotes the name of one ethnic group bringing many other ethnic identities together: Adyghe, Abkhaz, Abzekh, Kabardian, Shapsugh, Ubykh, etc. The name serves as an umbrella term for most if not all North Caucasian people historically living in clans and tribes. Sometimes it refers to three of the societies listed above: Adyghe, Abkhaz, and Ubykh people. And sometimes it is taken as only people speaking Adyghe language.

As pointed out before, Circassians historically lived in clans and tribes and developed a unique and highly stratified social structure. This unique social structure displays highly hierarchical characteristics since individuals in the society are ranked in six different groups or classes from ‘prince’ or the head of the society to the slaves without any rights (Karata , 2013, pp. 406-408). Henze (1996, p. 69) emphasizes that the number of classes in the society is four instead of six. What makes this structure unique is the complete ignorance of those ranks in social relations. In that sense, the relations between individuals were not governed by the classes to which they belonged (Spencer, 1855, p. 348). Some Circassian groups managed to preserve this understanding of the hierarchical social structure even after the expulsion from the North Caucasus while some groups already gave it up before 1864.

The history of Circassians as an ethnic group may be traced back to ancient times. However, providing thousands years of history of Circassians is not relevant for the purposes of this work. It is rather purely a historical quest, and such studies abound in the literature (Betrozov, 2009; Jaimoukha, 2001; King, 2010; Namitok, 2003; Natho, 2009; Özbek, 1991; Traho, 1991). While some of those studies provide an extensive history of Circassians as a part of their general agenda of research, others’ sole focus is the history of Circassians. The part of history of Circassians that we are interested in is relatively recent considering the centuries-old history of them. The North Caucasus in the 18th century is a good point to begin.

1.1.2 Circassia and the North Caucasus

Circassia, the historical homeland of Circassians, was situated in the North Caucasus though a state with the name of Circassia did not exist in reality (see Map 1). It is rather an imagined homeland in the form of a unitary state living in the minds of Circassian diaspora today since “a single Circassian state uniting all Circassians has never existed in known history” indeed (Smeets, 1995, p. 107). The North Caucasus region is characterized by its

mountainous geography, and Circassians have been referred as ‘mountaineers’ from time to time. Circassia has been one of the hot spots of the region due to its geographical proximity to the Romanov or Russian Empire. The region has also attracted the attention of the Ottoman Empire as well as other Great Powers, especially the Great Britain, during the heyday of the balance of power games. The Romanov Empire’s interest to the region emerged in the 16th century and intensified in the mid-18th century with the expansionist policies of Catherine the Great. The offensive policies of the Tsarina brought Russians and Circassians against each other in 1765 for the first time. After 14 years of fighting, Russians came out victorious, and Kabardians were driven away from their lands (Gammer, 1994, p. 2). The 19th century has seen an unending fighting and rivalry between the Romanov Empire and the Ottoman Empire which exhibited itself in the struggle for the North Caucasus as well. Therefore, the role of Ottomans in the 19th century episode of the North Caucasus should be emphasized along with Russian activities.

Until the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, the Ottoman Empire did not pay attention to the North Caucasus since for the empire the southern Caucasus constituted strategic importance due to ongoing rivalry and wars with Iran (Köremezli, 2004, p. 8). Although the region was not considered strategically important until late 18th century, there are accounts stating that the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Circassians began in early 18th century. As Natho (2009, p. 124) points out, the Ottoman Empire established relations with mountaineers on the basis of spreading Islam. Circassians embraced Islam and had trade relations with the Ottoman Empire. It will become clear in the next section of this chapter that Islam played an important role in both bringing Circassians together around the common idea of fighting the infidel enemy and having close relations with Muslim Ottomans. Although the Ottoman Empire tried to build relations with all Circassians, those people of the North Caucasus were extremely divided; and therefore, Circassians of some regions chose to

cooperate with Russians as a result of Russian strategies to collaborate with indigenous elites. In the meantime, the Romanov Empire's advancement was becoming extremely threatening for the Ottoman Empire. Later, the Crimean War and the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman war, which brought Russian forces very close to Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, would reveal the extremely severe threat from Russia leading the Ottomans to seek alternative military options including defense systems and alliance formation. Consequently, the Ottoman Empire built additional fortresses that proved to be extremely useful later and established contacts with Circassians in the North Caucasus who were known to be having severe clashes with Russians. This alliance played an important role in delaying the plans of Russia over the North Caucasus for more than 100 years (Jaimoukha, 2001, p. 52). Nonetheless, this alliance may have influenced the way Circassians have been treated by the Romanov Empire. Russians may have thought that Circassians were troubling their empire by being puppets of the Ottomans; therefore, it was better for the Ottomans to have them when the war was over.

The Romanov Empire started an aggressive and expansionist military policy in the early 19th century. Within less than three decades, consecutive victories against the Ottoman Empire and Iran as well as dominance over Georgia gave Russians the upper hand for devising policies concerning the North Caucasus. The 19th century did not bring fortunate developments for the Ottoman Empire. Growing and spreading nationalist rebellions in the Balkans, unrest in the Middle East, consecutive losses in wars against the Great Powers, and the eventual treaties signed as the losing side made the Ottoman Empire, one of the greatest empires of the history, truly a 'sick man'. Contrary to the situation with the Ottoman Empire, the success of Russian armies in the Napoleonic wars boosted the confidence of the Romanov Empire. The indigenous people were targeted by the Romanov Empire after 1830. Until that time, Russians "pursued a policy of carrot-and-stick with the Circassians: encouraging

disaffection and tribal rivalries, tempting the common people to become dependent on overland trade, threatening attack, offering rewards to princes and nobles for collaboration” (Henze, 1996, p. 76). Those people would be convinced to accept the Russian rule and supremacy by the means of either word or sword. However, mountaineers were not so willing to easily give up on their land. The elimination of other powers in the struggle against Russians led Circassians to take matters into their own hands. They fought the way they know for their lives and freedom at least for about 30 years while some scholars present the duration of the war as about hundred years. The Russo-Circassian War, no matter how long it took, thirty or hundred years, produced the story of a legendary resistance and a tragic deportation in the eyes of Circassians, which would play a crucial role in shaping the modern Circassian identity.

Map 1: The geographical location of Circassia



Source: Benvenuto and Lim, 2013

1.2 The Resistance and the Tragedy of Deportation

1.2.1 The Russo-Circassian War (1830-1864)

The Treaty of Edirne, signed between the Ottoman and Romanov empires in 1829, has been a significant development for Circassians of the North Caucasus. Although territories where Circassians were living have never been a part of the Ottoman Empire, the Romanov Empire assumed that the territories that they got from the treaty subsumed Circassia. However, the basic idea was that since the Ottomans have never had Circassia under their political control, for instance, having Circassians as tax-paying subjects, it is not expected for Russians to assume those territories to be their own as a result of clash and following agreement with the Ottoman Empire. However, that was the opportunity that the Romanov Empire has been waiting for decades. As an empire that had eliminated two major opponents within the region, Russians initiated a final attack on the North Caucasus in order to capture and control the territory. Yet, they certainly did not consider that the success would take more than thirty years to come.

Charles King (2010, p. 73) depicts wars between Russians and Circassians as “partly guerilla campaigns –what would today be called seasonal counterinsurgency operations”. The Romanov Empire utilized three main strategies in that exceptional war. First, they launched heavy military strikes as possible as the geography of the region allowed. They even changed the geography by destroying forests and villages. Second, they cooperated with Circassian adherents. And third, they tried to cut supplies to Circassia sent by the Ottoman Empire. Incapacitated by the Romanov Empire, the Ottoman Empire could not provide any military support to fighting Circassians. The best the Empire could do was to send vital supplies, but those supplies were usually captured by Russians before they were received by Circassians. Moreover, as the war between Russians and Circassians extended, the Romanov Empire used all means to cut relations of the North Caucasus people with outside world. Circassian

delegations seeking support from the Ottoman and British empires managed to build relations with authorities of both empires at the beginning of the war. As pointed out before, the North Caucasus attracted the attention of the Great Powers, especially the Great Britain due to its fierce rivalry with the Romanov Empire. Although numerous visitors came to Circassia from the British Empire, the actual support provided by the British remained extremely limited (Çiçek, 2009, pp. 63-64). The Great Britain was not so eager to oppose and challenge Russians openly since they did not want trouble for their colonies and territorial holdings. The archival documents demonstrate that the number of requests for help from Circassians increased considerably and remained unanswered to a great extent as the war came to a close due to the widespread belief that Circassians would not be able to resist any longer (Köremezli, 2004, p. 29). Indeed, the general opinion about the possibility and duration of Circassian resistance remained same since the beginning of the clashes around 1830s. No one could foresee such a long and somehow stubborn resistance.

Under those circumstances, however, the victory of the Romanov Empire was inevitable. Circassian people resisted as much as they could despite all misfortunes and disadvantages they had. Although some disadvantages emerged due to divisions and betrayals within Circassian people, they managed to come together as the Russian threat grew significantly. Islam, as the common religion, served as an important base for their joint war efforts (King, 2010, p. 69). The visitors like Captain Spencer, David Urquhart, and John Stanislaus Bell who came in different periods from the British Empire also played an important role in glorifying Circassians' cause at the expense of a potential Russian-British conflict. Those people stayed in Circassia and produced written accounts on Circassian people and their struggle against Russians. The fact that two main contacts of Circassians, namely the Ottoman and British empires, produced unifying elements for them led Russia to keep Circassians totally isolated after a certain period of time. King (2010, p. 39) states that the "Russian state policy involved

the establishment of forts and defensive outposts, first as pinpoints of imperial power and later as fortified lines” while Köremezli (2004, p. 41) counts eleven fortresses built within 8 years for the isolation of Circassians. In short, Russians left Circassians in dire need of vital supplies, and surviving was incredibly difficult for mountaineers let alone fighting.

Circassians, as a community who had nothing to lose, attacked Russian fortresses and managed to capture four of them in 1840. They established relations with outside world again and decided to act in unity putting aside tribal conflicts. Those were the times when Sheikh Shamil was emerging as a leader of the North Caucasian people. Then, he became the greatest legend of the war; his legacy has not been forgotten today, and numerous publications were produced on his personality, leadership, successes of war, and courage. Shamil’s leadership helped Circassians control their territory for more than a decade.

The outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853, however, brought significant changes. The involvement of the Great Powers like Britain and France in the war provided the opportunity for Circassians to have communication with the Ottoman Empire and the Great Powers. Contrary to expectations of Circassians, meetings with authorities from those empires did not produce any concrete benefits for their struggle with Russians. The documents from the Ottoman archives show Circassian demands for Ottoman support. The kind of support demanded was generally related to either supplies or Ottoman initiatives for peace talks with Russians. As the Crimean War approached, the negative responses from the Ottoman Empire increased (Özsaray, 2011, pp. 123-128). The direct communication between Sheikh Shamil and the Ottoman sultan is noteworthy. Shamil’s conclusion in 1854 that seeking collaboration with the Ottoman Empire was useless is one of the most important factors that would shape the future of Russian-Circassian conflict (King, 2010, p. 89). The Treaty of Paris signed in 1856 did not include any arrangement concerning the North Caucasus. The Ottoman Empire was the most willing party to provide support to Circassians through all means, yet the war

destroyed the empire considerably. Consecutive losses of battles against Russians and serious damage to the navy left Ottomans with limited options. The only benefit for Circassians for this period has been the limitation on the Black Sea activities of the Romanov Empire and the destruction of Russian fortresses which let Circassians live without a major Russian intervention for three more years. Ottoman efforts to bring Circassians to the battleground against the Romanov Empire were ineffective. They remained uninvolved in the Crimean War and had a relatively peaceful period. Yet, this was only the calm before the storm.

After the Crimean War and the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris, the Romanov Empire directed all their attention to the North Caucasus. In 1858, Russian armies started a destructive strike against mountaineers. They attacked from three different points with large armies, and the resistance in the North Caucasus was broken. Finally, Shamil surrendered, and Russians took control of the North Caucasus in 1859. There were minor resistance attempts by remaining tribes after 1859, but the Romanov Empire curbed the resistance and established their own rule in the North Caucasus by 1865. They did this by removing almost all the population living in the North Caucasus. During five or six years between those two dates, Circassians demanded negotiations from the Tsar. Their request was acknowledged by the Tsar, and they delivered their propositions. Accordingly, Circassians “expressed readiness to recognize Russian suzerainty provided that Russian troops were removed from Circassian lands” (Shenfield, 1999, p. 151). However, the Tsar rejected their demands. Circassians were sent away from their territory, and a tragic story of deportation emerged in 1864.

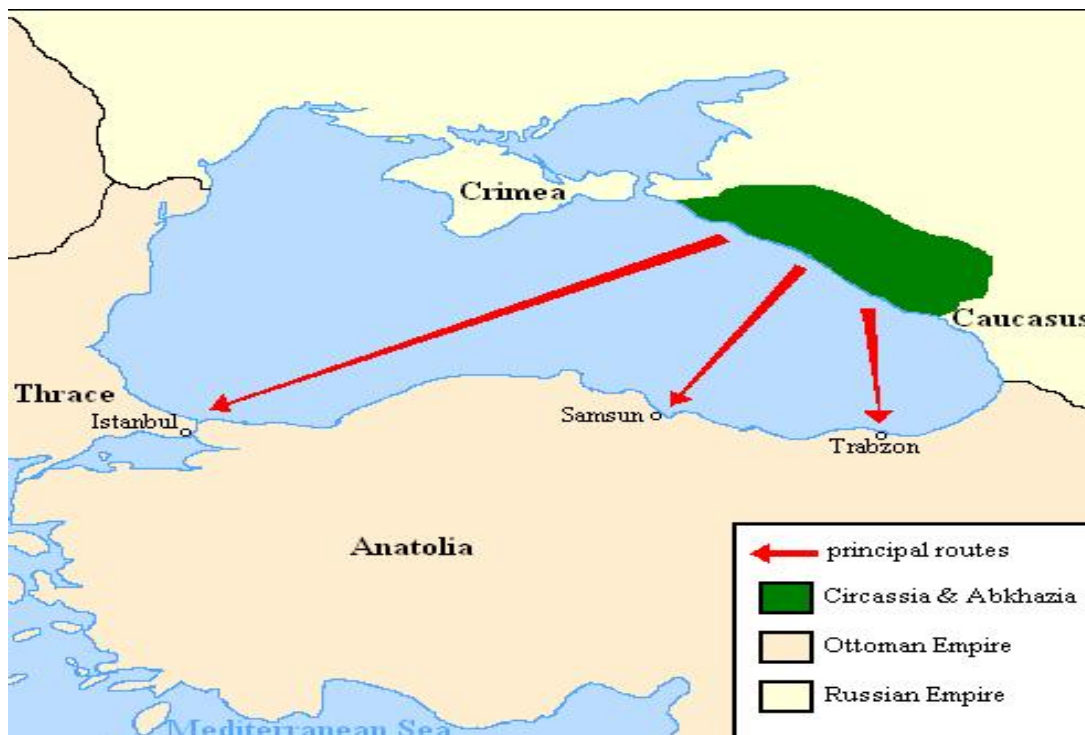
1.2.2 The Circassian Deportation or Genocide

After the conclusive victory, the Romanov Empire decided that people living in the North Caucasus region would be removed. They offered two options to Circassians. They would move either to northern areas within the Romanov Empire or to shores to be deported

to Anatolia. Relatively a small number of Circassians agreed to move to the north while most of Circassians preferred living in a Muslim country rather than remaining under the Russian yoke. Therefore, hundreds of thousands of Circassians were brought to Black Sea shores so that they could sail for Anatolian Black Sea ports. Yet, the conditions were extremely terrible. Based on a Russian historian, Berzhe's observations, Shenfield (1999, p. 153) presents the horrible situation with Circassians waiting to be deported:

I shall never forget the overwhelming impression made on me by the mountaineers in Novorossiisk Bay, where about seventeen thousand of them were gathered on the shore. The late, inclement, and cold time of year, the almost complete absence of means of subsistence and the epidemic of typhus and smallpox raging among them made their situation desperate... And I saw not a few such scenes.

Map 2: Main destination ports of Circassians



Source: Lewis, 2012

The travel and the situation in Anatolian ports were not favorable as well. The preparations made by the Ottoman Empire for the reception and settlement of Circassians remained meager, which is discussed under another section. Small ships were overloaded with people, and many of them sank failing to resist strong waves of the Black Sea. Thousands of Circassians died before getting to Anatolia. Major reasons were diseases, drowning due to capsizing of boats, and lack of minimum means of subsistence. Obviously, the deportation of Circassian people was not thought thoroughly and planned appropriately by the Romanov Empire.

When the similar act of deportation took place in Anatolia concerning Armenians after about fifty years, it attracted considerable attention. However, the same amount of attention was not paid to the terrible experiences of Circassians for some reason. Circassians commemorate the genocide every 21 May and have produced a lot of written and visual materials about it, but their messages are still not heard sufficiently by the international community. Circassians fiercely protested the 2014 Winter Olympics organization to be held in Sochi where the Romanov Empire won their final victory against Circassians. For them, this was a huge disrespect to their ancestors, who were targets of the genocidal activities of Russians. They organized protests, created websites, i.e. nosochi2014.com, and tried to attract public attention for the recognition of the Circassian genocide. Although they successfully exploited this opportunity for their cause to be heard, the understanding and empathy shown to them is yet to be seen.

1.3 Circassians in the Ottoman Empire

1.3.1 The Ottoman Reception, Perception and Settlement of Circassians

Until the mid-19th century, the Ottoman Empire did not have a concrete policy on immigration and settlement of immigrants. However, three important developments led the

Empire take action and have an immigration policy: territorial retreat, consequent decline of population, and beginning of immigration to the Empire in masses. People, without making any discrimination on the basis of religion or ethnicity, were encouraged to immigrate to the Ottoman Empire by 1857. The Decree on Immigration and Settlement provided favorable conditions for potential immigrants. One can clearly see the impact of Tanzimat period on the propositions included in the decree. Immigrants were ensured that their religious freedom and cultural characteristics would be protected. They would be provided with land, limited but significant period of exemption from taxation and conscription (Akgündüz, 1998, p. 101; Karpat, 2003, p. 104). Though it is relevant to say that the Ottoman Empire received immigrants from various religious and ethnic backgrounds, beginning with the 19th century, the profile of immigrants coming to the Empire turned out to be predominantly Muslim. Main sources of immigration flow were the Balkans and the Caucasus. The nationalist uprisings and following independence declarations in the Balkans caused Muslim population to move away due to widespread fear of being targeted for being Muslim. The role of Islam and the developments in early period of Islam, like the Hijra in 622, on the welcoming posture of the Ottoman Empire existed without a doubt due to the Caliph title of the Ottoman sultan. Accordingly, the Caliph was the protector of all Muslims around the world; therefore, whenever they sought refuge, the Ottoman sultan as the Caliph provided help in line with the teachings of Islam. It was even a matter of prestige since it was thought that if Muslim immigrants were not welcomed and settled appropriately, that would damage the reputation of the Ottoman sultan as the Caliph (Berber, 2011, p. 30). Muslims, as well, preferred living under the rule of the Caliph rather than remaining under pressure in non-Muslim lands after successes of nationalist rebellions. Similarly, Circassians chose moving to the Ottoman Empire considering the options given by the Romanov Empire. In order to establish solid rule over the Caucasus, the Romanovs moved Muslim population and settled Slavic people. Rather

than forcibly converting to Christianity and moving to another place within the Tsarist Russia, Circassians preferred to be a part of the Caliph's state. Crimean Tatars had similar experiences under the Russian rule and about 300,000 had to move to the Ottoman Empire as well (Jersild, 2002, p. 23).

Before the great exodus of 1864, Circassians were already immigrating to the Ottoman Empire. Especially in 1858, after the decree, the number of Circassians coming to Anatolia began to increase. Recognizing the need for official arrangements for the settlement of immigrants, the Ottoman Empire established the Commission for Immigrants (Muhacirin Komisyonu) in 1860. Moreover, additional commissions were formed later due to inadequacy of the Commission for Immigrants (Berber, 2011, p. 21). The commission was responsible for tasks that Gün (2013, pp. 44-48) examines under three main headings: "shelter and support, agriculture and production, and recruitment of skilled individuals." While the first task was related to more immediate needs of immigrants, the second and third tasks mainly aimed making immigrants productive as well as providing the Empire with necessary goods and staff. All those preparations for the reception of Circassians remained inefficient due to huge numbers of people coming from the Caucasus. Thousands of Circassians who managed to make their way to Anatolian Black Sea ports waited for a long time to be settled in an appropriate region. Gün (2013, p. 52) argues that "in some cases the settlement of the Circassian tribes was delayed for months or even years." Those Circassians were welcomed as guests by local population; however, as the permanent settlement was not fulfilled, tension among the local people and Circassians began to increase. Later, some Circassians tried to survive on their own simply by banditry which brought the local population and Circassians against each other. There were armed clashes due to disagreements over lands. Afshars and Circassians fought repeatedly in Uzunyayla region around central Anatolia. There are various documents in the Ottoman archives showing the weak coordination and confusion among

local and central governors about the settlement of people. In one document, the Trabzon governor was ordered not to send Circassians to Istanbul anymore; however, he responded that he could not keep people under unfavorable conditions, and they should be taken away to be settled (Pinson, 2001, p. 55). Thousands of Circassians lost their lives mostly due to spreading diseases, mainly the typhus. Today, many Circassians are still furious with the Ottoman Empire due to the failure of providing the necessary arrangements of settlement and means of subsistence. However, the Ottoman Empire did whatever they could do under highly unfavorable conditions. The Romanov Empire did not provide the right number of people to be deported and rejected the Ottoman proposal for delaying the deportation for a while (Akgündüz, 1998, p. 99; Pinson, 2001, p. 58). The Ottoman state used all the means at hand and made considerable expenditures in order to settle hundreds of thousands of Circassians (Gün, 2013, p. 59).

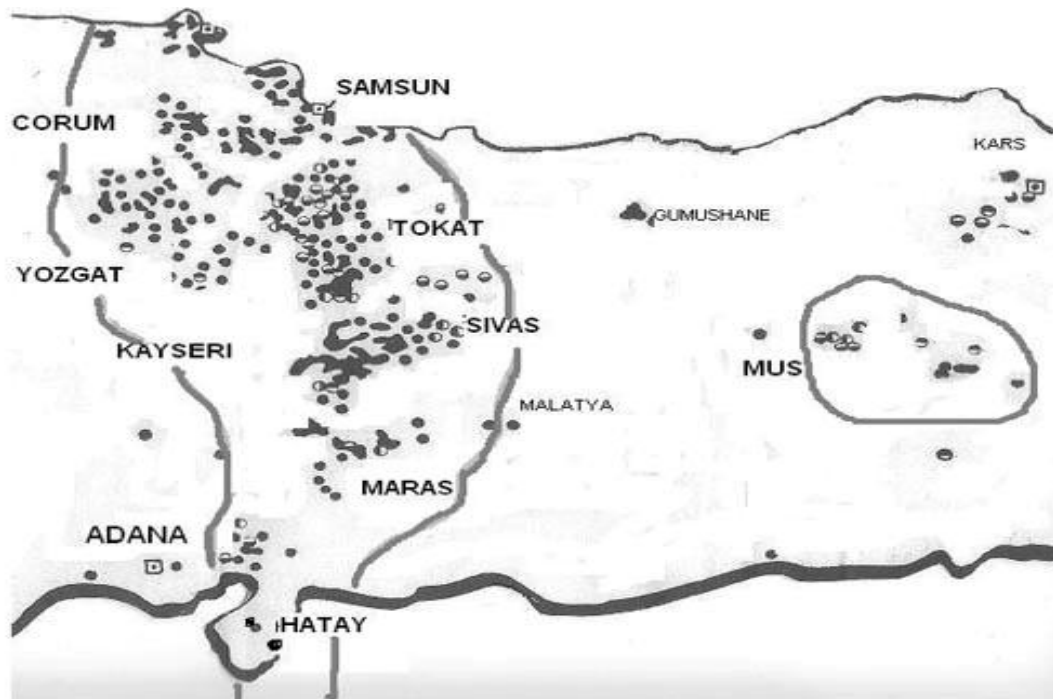
Circassians may be considered as a potential defense line for Ottomans against the Romanov Empire. This is evident in the settlement patterns of Circassians. While they were settled in the Rumelia compactly for border security and constituting dense Muslim populations, those in Anatolia were kept distinct from each other so that they could form a vertical line of settlement ranging from Sinop in far north and Hatay in far south (see Map 3). Cuthel (2003, p. 161) refers to this systematic settlement as “the creation of an Anatolian buffer zone, designed to protect and strengthen the Turkish Anatolian heartland.” The dispersed settlement of Circassians in Anatolia was related to the internal security as well (Berber, 2011, p. 24). It was referred as preventing potential solidarity among Circassians that may have been damaging for the center’s absolute authority (Avagyan, 2004, p. 62). Main places of settlement were the Rumelia, Istanbul and environs, central Anatolia, Syria, and Jordan. The settlement policies of the Ottoman Empire carried certain ideological and strategic concerns as well (Avagyan, 2004). The central motives behind the way Circassians

were settled were to increase Muslim population especially in Christian-populated areas, to suppress potential uprisings, and to maintain effective dominance and control in regions where it was thought that the population remained outside the state's sphere of influence (Avagyan, 2004, p. 61). As a result of Ottoman settlement policy, Circassian diaspora came into existence predominantly in Turkey, Syria, and Jordan. Gün (2013, p. 61) emphasizes the role of the Commission for Immigrants in shaping the population dynamics as the following:

As an agent of transformation the Commission was further the main actor of the *population engineering* of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. As a result of the Ottoman migration policy the demography of the Ottoman Empire changed significantly which should construct the foundation for the Turkish nation state during and after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

The Circassian immigration continued after the great exodus of 1864 as well as the immigration of Muslims. Especially, following the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, thousands of Muslims immigrated to the Ottoman Empire. "Between 1861 and 1875 the influx of refugees was so massive that by 1878 as much as 20% of the Muslim population in the lands that constitute modern Turkey were recent immigrants" (Cuthel, 2003, p. 139). The role of migration in building certain demographic characteristics in terms of ethnicity or religion is apparent. As will be explored in the next chapter of this study, Turkish state policies of keeping those culturally diverse populations together had significant social and political effects still echoing today. Before moving into the practices of early Turkish Republic, many diverse policies of identity building in the late Ottoman period are evaluated along with their implications for ethnic categories like Circassians.

Map 3: Circassian settlements in Anatolia



Source: Jane, 2006

1.3.2 Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism: The search for identity in late Ottoman Empire

The 19th century witnessed significant transformation of the Ottoman Empire in numerous aspects. The economy, administration, and population changed considerably as well as borders as a result of successive wars. The changing character of Ottoman population, the rise of nationalism, and the intervention of the Great Powers to domestic matters in line with the balance of power understanding and the Eastern Question as its inevitable part were the most pressing issues that should be dealt with. During late 19th century, the search for an identity in the Ottoman Empire intensified in order to respond to those developments appropriately. Different types of identities, Ottoman, Muslim, and Turk, were used as bases for advancing a new understanding of the Empire. While the Tanzimat era (1839-76) signified the beginning of the search for a new perception of identity, efforts to come up with a suitable basis of identity appeared with the emergence of the Young Ottomans, “a group of Turkish

intellectuals who attained prominence in the years 1867-78” (Mardin, 2000, p. 3), and accelerated during the reign of Abdülhamid II, who stayed in power for 33 years from 1876 to 1909.

The potential disintegration of the Ottoman Empire due to pressure from the Great Powers and nationalist uprisings was the key reason for the search of alternative ideas and practices. The main source of reform in the Empire was the developments in the Western world. The demand for freedom and equality materialized in the idea of creating new institutions, like parliament and modern justice system. The Young Ottomans, heavily influenced from scientific and political developments in the West, attempted to modernize the Empire by combining those ideas with the Islamic understanding and to come up with the idea of being ‘Ottoman’ regardless of ethnic background¹⁰. However, it was the Young Turks, who brought the crucial change, not the Young Ottomans. The year 1876 signified an important moment. For the first time in history, the Ottoman Empire had a constitution and a parliament. Abdülhamid II came to the throne, and the idea of Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism, weakly developed by the Young Ottomans earlier, became the most influential identity-building mechanisms of the Empire during his reign. His period of rule brought important developments for Circassians as well. When they came to the Ottoman Empire, many Circassians served as slaves. There are numerous accounts on the Circassian slaves and slave trade of the Empire with the Caucasus during 19th and 20th centuries (Çen, 1994; Toledano, 1998; Zilfi, 2012). Abdülhamid II brought many Circassians to high levels of military and bureaucracy which accelerated the center-periphery interaction to a large extent. That was directly related to the suppression of uprisings according to Avagyan (2004, pp. 95-99). The author provides numerous prominent Circassian people who attained key positions in the

¹⁰ For a detailed discussion of Ottomanism idea and Young Ottomans, see Şerif Mardin (1996), *Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesinin Doğuşu*, İletişim Yayınları: İstanbul and Joseph G. Rahme, Namık Kemal’s Constitutional Ottomanism and Non-Muslims, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 10, no. 1 (1999): 23-39.

Ottoman state, especially in military, police department, and gendarmerie. The fact that the Ministry of Defense post was always occupied by Circassians disregarding a few exceptions is interesting in terms of demonstrating the way the Ottoman state tried to utilize Circassians. Gingeras (2009, p. 27) also points out that those people began to occupy key positions in the state. Thanks to those people, Circassians had exceptional relations with the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), which developed into a significant organization in the military, as will be explored later. Circassians were relatively comfortable during the prevalence of Ottomanism and Islamism. The introduction of Turkish nationalism or Turkism caused Circassians to have certain concerns over their own existence and identity.

During his long reign, Abdülhamid II followed a strict policy of centralization domestically and a policy of balancing the Great Powers in foreign relations by exploiting their disagreements over Ottoman territories. His reforms in education and networks of transportation and communication are noteworthy for emphasizing his centralization efforts. The establishment of espionage networks was a key development in terms of controlling the population, and it became one of the defining features of the Abdülhamid II era. In order to keep Ottoman population, which was composed of Muslims predominantly at that time constituting three fourth of the whole Ottoman subjects (Shaw & Shaw, 1977, pp. 238-241), together and under control, he popularized the idea of Ottomanism along with Islamic understanding which would be interpreted as Pan-Islamism later. While his rule intended to offend none of the millets in the Empire, he emphasized his Caliph title frequently so that he could appeal to Muslims and cool down Arab nationalism in the Middle East. This policy of him was also a protective shield against the pressure of the Great Powers (Deringil, 1991, p. 350). This type of careful policy creation and implementation made it possible for Abdülhamid II to remain in the throne more than three decades. The way the last two sultans of the Empire were deposed also played an important role in the way Abdülhamid II ruled

(Shaw & Shaw, 1977, pp. 211-212). However, his ruling style, frequently referred as ‘despotic’, disturbed many people, most importantly elites with Western ideas and ideals. He was also accused with failure to uphold interests of the Empire vis-à-vis the Great Powers¹¹. Finally, he was deposed by a group of those elites, the CUP or the Young Turks, in 1908. Thus, the Ottoman Empire entered the final phase of its more than 600 years of existence. Yet, this final phase of 14 years witnessed developments that had important implications for the Republic of Turkey, one of the successor states of the Ottoman Empire where the vast majority of Circassians live today.

1.3.3 The Young Turks, the CUP, and Turkish Nationalism: Where Circassians stood

The origins of the Young Turks movement can be found in the establishment of the Ottoman Union Committee in 1889 by a group of students from the medical school. One of the four founders of the Ottoman Union Committee was Mehmed Re id, a Circassian by descent. They were unified around the idea of saving the Empire and the feeling of dissatisfaction with Abdülhamid II’s rule. Mardin (1992) emphasizes the failure of formulating a concrete ideology for a remarkable period of time on the part of the Young Turks. According to him, Turkism as an ideology emerged among them as a result of this long ideological uncertainty (Mardin, 1992, p. 23). Hanio lu (2008, p. 146), on the other hand, argues that it was rather a strategic and purposeful choice of ideology since they realized that without having the discourse of Turkism and policy of centralization, success was impossible. First signs of Turkism emerged in the newspapers they published around early 1890s. In the beginning, their Turkist ideas were based on an instinct of defending Turkish people against the Western attack on the basis of racial prejudices. Mardin (1992) underlines the importance

¹¹ For a detailed discussion of the foreign policy of Abdülhamid II, see Mim Kemal Öke, “Şark Meselesi” ve II. Abdülhamid’in Garb Politikaları (1876-1909), *Osmanlı Araştırmaları III* (1982): 247-276.

of differentiating between this type of defensive Turkism of the CUP and chauvinist Turkism of later periods. The role of Turanism, idea of uniting all Turks in the world, was very much influential in the development of hardcore Turkism, which was predominantly based on racial understanding. Although there were attempts to internalize Turkism in terms of culture rather than race, discriminative practices dominated the development of Turkist ideas later on. In 1923, the very same year the Republic of Turkey was founded, Ziya Gökalp's *The Principles of Turkism* (Türkçülü ün Esasları) would raise this cultural perspective and emphasize the irrelevancy of race in terms of determining the quality of character. Karpat (1995, pp. 36-37) views Gökalp's nationalism still an ethnic one, for his reference to culture is based on ethnic and political concerns missing historical depth. Actually, Gökalp's idea of Turkish nationalism, inspired from Emile Durkheim, attempted to bring three different levels of identities together. The ideal expression of his idea was 'I am a member of Turkish nation, ummah of Islam, and Western civilization' (Tunaya, 1984, pp. 10-11). Nevertheless, Turkism or Turkish nationalism initially followed a different path. Yusuf Akçura's impact is crucial and worth of mentioning in terms of giving a direction to the Turkist ideology.

Yusuf Akçura was a Tatar intellectual dedicated to Turanism. His well-known work, *Three Styles of Politics* (Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset) triggered a great debate, but eventually provided a sense of ideological solidarity among the Young Turks. Three styles that Akçura was discussing in his essays were Ottomanism, Pan-Islamism, and Turkism. According to him, Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism proved to be inefficient though used extensively by Ottoman sultans. Therefore, Turkism should be the main ideology which was defined in two ways. First, it entails the establishment of a new nation-state composed of Turks on the Ottoman territory. And second, it implies the idea of uniting all Turks in the world. As theories of race gaining momentum and movements like Pan-Slavic and Pan-German were on the rise, the outcome of Russo-Japanese War of 1905-06 provided a racial justification for the Turkist

ideology. Russians were defeated by Japanese. That was the victory of a lower race against a higher race from the hierarchical perspective of races as laid out during 1850s by a French ideologue of racism, Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau in *An Essay on the Inequality of Human Races*. Turks were also considered as a lower race, but the Young Turks were determined to demonstrate that Europeans were wrong, and Turks belonged to a noble race. In addition, Turks as well could modernize and develop without giving up on their culture and identity like Japanese (Ak in, 1987, p. 52). Primarily, they had to get control of the government so that they could pursue their own policies. Therefore, they took a top-down approach and organized a coup against Abdülhamid II. The sultan was dethroned, and the parliament was reopened in 1908. While the Abdülhamid II reign that lasted for 33 years ended, last 14 years of the Empire dominated mostly by the CUP began.

Ak in (1987, p. 80) describes the CUP as a group of bourgeoisie who maintained Ottoman and Islamist discourses, but Turkist practices. Their early policies deserve attention since those served as principal mechanisms of popularizing Turkism. For instance, the election propaganda of the CUP after the re-establishment of the constitutional monarchy included education policies which could be referred as earliest assimilation practices. Ak in (1987, p. 103) briefly discusses those policies and asserts that education was crucial for shaping how next generations would be raised; therefore, it was an important tool for the CUP to Turkify subjects who were not Turks then. The language teaching policies were also an essential element for identity creation and imposition. The CUP's election propaganda made Turkish language a mandatory course. In addition, the CUP's organization of education system required people to learn Turkish if they wanted to become bureaucrats or state officials. The CUP was also trying to form its empire-wide cadres solely from Turks or Turkish-speaking people. The CUP usually considered itself both the promoter and protector of Turkishness. Accordingly, if they had lost the control of government, Turkishness would

also disappear. Their discourse, as Ak in (1987) points out, was implicit since they were still attaching importance to Ottomanism idea and refraining themselves from laying out explicit nationalist discourses that may have triggered further nationalist demands in the Empire.

Figure 2: A CUP postcard, ‘Long live fatherland, long live nation, long live liberty’



Source: Buxton, 1909

The 5-year period of 1913-18 was the time of dominant CUP rule in the Empire. Nonetheless, their consolidation of power coincided with a period of successive wars. The CUP’s rule ended after four consecutive wars that enormously destroyed the Ottoman Empire. First, the Tripolitania War (or the Italo-Turkish War), followed by two Balkan Wars, and lastly the World War I, brought an end to both the CUP and the Empire. During their rule in the Empire, the CUP sowed the idea of Turkish nationalism to be reaped in the early Turkish Republic to a large extent. They tried to exploit nationalist and Western propositions in their policies regarding society and culture. They established many ‘national’ institutions in various areas from library to music. The establishment of organizations with the name ‘Turk’, like Türk Oca 1 or Türk Gücü, also signifies their pursuit of imposing Turkish identity to the society in general (Tunaya, 1984, pp. 34-35). Among them, Türk Oca 1 comes into prominence with its propaganda of Turkish nationalism and uninterrupted existence until

1931 when it was closed down, and People's Houses (Halkevleri) opened by the authorities of early Republic¹². Besides, the role of the Secret Organization (Te kilât-ı Mahsusa), which was founded in 1913, has been extremely controversial in the Armenian Deportation of 1915 as well as keeping the population under control. The relative relaxation and freedom they brought to the press and civil society compared to the Abdülhamid II era dissipated with the CUP's attempts to capture full power of government especially after 1913. This short period of relaxation benefited Circassians along with many other ethnic categories. They established their own organizations that remained legal until their prohibition with the Law of Associations on 21 August 1909. One of the earliest Circassian organizations was the Society for Circassian Unity and Mutual Aid (Çerkes tihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti) established in 1908. Many different ethnic groups within the Muslim millet opened their own organizations as well. Nationalism was spreading to the every corner of the Empire. The CUP's Turkist policies were further stirring it up as Turkism was neither the only nor the first "proto-nationalist movement" that developed among Muslim groups within the Ottoman Empire (Hanio lu, 2008, p. 142). Kurds, Albanians, Arabs as well as Circassians began to demonstrate a sense of nationalist understanding in varying degrees. Dünder (2008, p. 21) asserts that the Turkist predispositions of the CUP caused different ethnic groups to establish their own associations. Kurds' resistance to CUP's Turkist policies until the end of the Empire through associations they created is noteworthy. Their schools were closed down by the CUP, and they resisted assimilation without pursuing any separatist goals within this period (Tunaya, 1984, p. 408). While some nationalist movements were more powerful in terms of ideology and mobilization, others were relatively less developed and relied on Muslim identity, like Circassians, since they preferred living under Muslim rule rather than being subjects of the Great Powers that may annex the Ottoman territories any time. Circassians

¹² For an excellent analysis of Türk Ocağı and periodicals promoting the idea of Turkish nationalism or Turkism in the CUP era, see Masami Arai (1992), *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*, E. J. Brill: Leiden.

“insisted on their duty to defend the integrity of the empire, despite Ottoman mistreatment, while vowing to persevere in their struggle for cultural autonomy” (Hanio lu, 2008, p. 144). As the Turkist policies of the CUP flourished, those ethnic groups remained between two unfavorable choices: living under non-Muslim Great Power dominance or government/state with policies of Turkification. They sought for a way out which was developing their own nationalism towards the end of the Ottoman Empire. In summary, the CUP era provided some space for the revival of cultural identification of ethnic categories, including Circassians. Their existence and influence within the state apparatus increased. They managed to form solidarity organizations through which they created Circassian alphabets, published Circassian newspapers and books, built libraries, and opened schools providing education in mother-tongue (Avagyan, 2004, pp. 129-133).

Presumably, this is an appropriate occasion for the end of the first chapter of this study. The second chapter begins with a discussion of the World War I and the Independence War years with special focus on relations of Circassians with officials of the Istanbul and Ankara governments. Some deductions are made in terms of Circassian identity building as their relation with the remnants of the CUP is emphasized. Then, the chapter presents the developments and national policies of the early Turkish Republic. The construction of the ethnicity regime in Turkey is discussed in detail.

Chapter 2

CIRCASSIANS IN THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY (1923-1950): NATIONALISM, ASSIMILATION AND RESISTANCE

Introduction

In 1923, the Republic of Turkey was founded as the Ottoman Empire collapsed after the World War I. With the defeat of the Empire, all Ottoman territories were occupied by British, French, Italian, and Greek forces in line with the Armistice of Mudros and the Treaty of Sèvres later on. Under heavy sanctions imposed by the Entente forces, the Empire remained ineffective and paralyzed in terms of keeping its soil free from foreign invasion. The establishment of defense societies or associations and the beginning of a movement among common people with the name of the National Forces (Kuva-yi Milliye) against the invading powers triggered a sense of resistance, solidarity, and hope for getting rid of the enemy. The emergence of the National Forces and the organization of those irregular forces by an army official and a member of the CUP, Mustafa Kemal, for the ultimate aim of freedom marked the beginning of the three years of struggle (1919-1922), which is known as the Turkish Independence War or Liberation War. Primarily, this chapter focuses on the developments during the World War I and the Independence War. Especially, Circassian encounter with the CUP and cadres of the Independence War is emphasized, and their identity building mechanisms are investigated. Later, the Republic of Turkey constitutes the center of attention. The official state ideology concerning matters like citizenship and ethnic identity is analyzed along with examples of policies and practices of the time. This chapter serves to present early political setting of the nation-state established on territories where Circassians have been living for about 150 years.

Before moving into the discussion of the events during the World War I, it is important to note that a certain type of link or relation exists between actors and policies of the late Ottoman Empire and of the early Republic of Turkey. For instance, Mustafa Kemal, the founding father of the Republic, was a CUP member. The CUP initially influenced from the Young Ottomans; therefore, Mustafa Kemal's link goes back to Namık Kemal, who popularized the concept of fatherland (vatan). Mardin (1996), for instance, emphasizes this ideological inheritance. However, according to Mardin (1996, p. 450), the best way to follow while trying to understand the link between those actors is analyzing the Islamic content of their discourses. Hence, this Islamic content declines and disappears almost completely as we move from the Young Ottomans to the Young Turks and finally to Mustafa Kemal and the Republic of Turkey. As Karpas (1995, pp. 32-33) points out, apart from those direct or indirect links, earlier movements fostered the emergence and dispersion of later movements. Those cautions by prominent historians are kept in mind as this chapter is laid out.

2.1 The World War I (1914-1918) and the end of the Ottoman Empire

2.1.1 Turkist Policies of the CUP and the Transformation of the Empire (1913-1918)

The backbone of reforms and modernization attempts that the Republic of Turkey carried out was formed by the CUP during the World War I. During its unassailable ruling period, the CUP engaged in important reforms in various areas from education to economy. The ongoing war did not prevent the CUP from carrying out those improvement attempts. Actually, it is not surprising that wars serve as a justification for certain actions undertaken by the ruling class. For instance, as Zürcher (2001, p. 130) points out, the CUP was pursuing Turkism in economy by expelling non-Muslim people, especially merchants and shop owners, and giving their property to Muslim or Turkish people, who were definitely lacking the necessary knowledge and experience in trade. After Turkifying the politics of the Empire to a great

extent, the CUP attempted to undertake national economic policies and to build Muslim and Turkish bourgeoisie. Ak in (1987, pp. 276-282) argues that the war period was used by the CUP cadres as an opportunity to flourish “economic Turkism” by developing a Turkish capitalist class, establishing companies and banks, and enacting laws favoring Turkish entrepreneurs. He also underlines the significant decline in the Roman Orthodox and Armenian populations as those policies were implemented. Lewis (1962, p. 224) considers those changes as “the first steps in the economic nationalism” and precursor of Westernization attempts that were undertaken during the early Republic by providing examples of reforms in dressing and time. Other areas of reform were education, provincial structures, judiciary, and women rights (B. Lewis, 1962, pp. 222-225; Zürcher, 2001, pp. 125-127). The last attempt on the part of the CUP to win Arabs by making decentralization arrangements proved ineffective. The women rights were slightly improved though it is impossible to talk about gender equality. The further secularization of both education and judicial systems was one of the most important developments of the period. As Lewis (1962, p. 223) rightly puts it, “though [the CUP’s] work was often ill-conceived, incomplete, and frustrated by events, they did nevertheless help to prepare the way, in many important respects, for the new Turkey that was to emerge after their disappearance.” The legacy of the CUP has been visible in the Republic of Turkey for a long period of time. Simply, the constant intervention of military into politics began with the CUP and continued to shape Turkish politics until 27 April 2007 when the military declared an ‘e-memorandum’ about the presidential elections¹³. The association of important figures with the CUP also made their legacy to be felt in Turkey for a long time. For instance, the leader of a religious movement known as Nurculuk, Said Nursi, was a member of the CUP branch and also made CUP propaganda through the Special Organization (Zürcher, 2001, pp. 135-136). The size of the community belonging to this religious

¹³ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6602661.stm> (Accessed on 28 April 2014)

movement and their impact on the political matters is very significant today; they are accused by the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with aiming to form a ‘parallel state’. Surely, this is a recent political incident of which details should be discussed in different domains, but it is important to show us the magnitude of the CUP impact in Turkish political and socioeconomic life.

2.1.2 The Collapse of the Empire and the Turkish Independence War:

Circassians at a crossroad

The World War I ended with the defeat of the Central powers, including the Ottoman Empire, Germany, and the Habsburg Empire. The signing of the Mudros Armistice on 30 October 1918 between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied powers ended the war and started the foreign occupation of Ottoman territories. The Treaty of Sèvres, signed on 10 August 1920, became the Versailles of the Ottoman Empire. The signing of those two post-war arrangements was referred as “the peace to end all peace” (Fromkin, 2009). The Empire literally was in ruins after four years of fighting. The population declined, the economy was destroyed, and the social order completely collapsed (Macfie, 1998, pp. 149-150). Many prominent CUP members were either arrested or escaped (Macfie, 1998, p. 185). The army was incapacitated, the communication and transportation were taken under control by occupying forces. The Empire was in a desperate condition. A new organization for liberation seemed very difficult to create. However, Anatolian people could not take the insult of foreign powers anymore and began to organize societies for the defense of the ‘fatherland’. They formed paramilitary groups, known as the National Forces and fought against the invaders. An Ottoman army official and former CUP member, Mustafa Kemal, played a crucial role with a couple of his fellows in unifying those diverse groups’ resistance and giving the movement a clear direction. The Independence War, which continued approximately three years and ended with the decisive victory of Turkish forces in 1922, paved the way for the

foundation of the Republic of Turkey on 29 October 1923. The Independence War was an important period for the mixed perception of Circassians in Turkey. The figures like Çerkes Ethem, Ahmet Anzavur, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Rauf Orbay, and Bekir Sami played important roles in the Independence War and were remembered by most Turkish people with mixed thoughts. Their role in the war and the relations they established with authorities of the Ankara government and the remnants of the CUP became influential in the way Circassians developed their identity in Turkey and the way they are perceived in Turkish society.

Circassians held very diverse social statuses in the Ottoman Empire. While most of them were slaves, rebels, and peasants, some Circassians managed to acquire important positions within the bureaucracy. Therefore, Gingeras (2009, p. 29) emphasizes that rather than ethnic identity or mother tongue, it was class that separated Circassians in the Ottoman Empire. As the World War I ended, and the Independence War broke out, Circassians began to develop mixed relations with prominent actors like the CUP and cadres of the National Resistance, especially due to the existence of high-ranking authorities like Çerkes Re id, one of the five founders of the CUP, who served in Ottoman secret service and had close relations with prominent figures. Occasionally, they supported and complied with policies imposed in a top-down fashion, yet it is also true that they resisted many reforms undertaken by the CUP as well. Still, one of the defining characteristics of Circassians of the time was the paramilitary status of them in the eyes of the state. According to Gingeras (2009, p. 27), the formation of associations, like the North Caucasian Political Committee (İsmali Kafkas Cemiyet-i Siyasiyesi) and the Circassian Women's Mutual Aid Committee (Çerkes Kadınları Teavün Cemiyeti), in the early periods of the Second Constitutional Monarchy became the main forces of the distinctive relationship between the state and Circassian society, for "these organizations became closely tied to the state's administrative apparatus, and in certain respects became quasi-arms of the state itself." Avagyan (2004) points to the same type of

relationship between Circassians and Ottoman and Turkish states. According to the author, Circassians were used in line with the ideological goals of two states. By utilizing Circassians mainly through exploiting their warlike characteristic and earlier penetration into the state apparatus, both Ottoman and Turkish state managed to suppress nationalist uprisings and to maintain the predominant Muslim character of population within their territories. Circassians acquired legitimate positions by entering into the army or forming state-sponsored associations. Gingeras (2009, pp. 60-61) provides a table demonstrating excessive number of Circassians in the Special Organization and seems astonished by this fact. Figures like Rauf Orbay and Bekir Sami, who are known by their role in the National Resistance and were members of the North Caucasian Association (İmali Kafkas Cemiyeti) that aimed to recapture Circassia, became highly influential in the establishment of that unusual pattern of relations between Circassians and the state. Gingeras' (2009, p. 65) distinction and emphasis on the "ties to the state, and not to the party and its ideology, that condemned many Circassians in the aftermath of the War of Independence" is critical. The role of Circassian notables like Bekir Sami and Rauf Orbay was crucial for getting the support of Circassians in the struggle against occupying powers. This was a deliberate policy of the National Resistance cadres, argues Gingeras (2009, p. 80), considering the ethnic overlap between the society and representatives sent. However, considerable number of Circassians did not become a part of the National Resistance and joined the 'Loyalist' camp which Gingeras (2009, pp. 82-83) defines as a group of individuals "victimized by the CUP" for years and formed against the CUP ideology. The author rejects the idea that the Loyalists were simply running a reactionary movement in ideological terms. Apparently, remarkable number of Circassians shared the fate of 'being victimized' and turned their backs on the CUP. The section below taken from Gingeras (2009, p. 91) is a great summary of what some Circassians experienced and why and how they abstained from supporting the National Resistance:

Many North Caucasians had served faithfully as the CUP's covert operatives during the Great War. Upon their return home from the front, they soon discovered that the state had compensated them and their families with starvation and dead relatives. Now the Kuva-yı Milliye (still the CUP with a new set of uniforms) was demanding more sacrifices and another term of service.

The recent policies of the CUP also frightened and worried Circassians. The deportation of Armenians in 1915 made them think that they would be deported too by the CUP. In addition, the memory of deportation from the Caucasus was still fresh in their minds; therefore, it was natural for them to have such a huge concern. That also affected the Circassian attitude towards the Kuva-yı Milliye. Ahmet Anzavur, for instance, revolted against the CUP and the Kuva-yı Milliye by bringing significant number of Circassians together; however, he was defeated by another Circassian, Ethem (Çerkes).

The key development in this period that brought significant changes in terms of Circassian perception was the loss of trust to Circassian people on the part of Ottoman authorities due to rising tensions among Circassians and other communities as well as intensified paramilitary activities. Circassians exploited every opportunity from collaboration with Greeks in South Marmara region to separatist activities for national independence in order to break with the CUP hegemony. A document with the title of *The General Statement of the Circassian Nation to the Great Powers and the Civilized World* prepared by the Association for Strengthening of Near Eastern Circassian Rights in late 1921 included interesting and noteworthy evaluations and demands¹⁴. The language used in the document also deserves attention since it was written directly to the international community. The document includes the term 'Circassian nation' in the title, and there are constant references

¹⁴ For the full text of the document in English, see Gingeras (2009), pp. 124-127. For Turkish, see Tarık Zafer Tunaya (1986), *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler Cilt II: Mütareke Dönemi 1918-1922*, Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları: İstanbul, pp. 610-614.

to the self-determination principle in line with the Fourteen Points laid out by the president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, after the World War I ended. The participation of Çerkes Re id and his brother Ethem in the drafting and publication of the document was another point of wonder since both were committed supporters of the National Resistance a couple of months before that meeting. Circassians of Kuva-yı Milliye protested the document and the association produced it. Within one year after the document was published, Kuva-yı Milliye defeated Greek forces and controlled Anatolia entirely. The war was over, and the environment was getting more and more favorable for the foundation of a new nation-state on Anatolian soil.

The main point that should be kept in mind is that Circassians did not form a monolithic structure. As pointed out, there were numerous notable Circassians like Ethem, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Bekir Sami Günsav, Rauf Orbay, and Bekir Sami Kunduk in the Ottoman bureaucracy and organizations like the CUP, many of whom joined the National Resistance and became actors that transformed the Empire and established the Turkish nation-state. Some Circassians became defenders of the sultanate and caliphate, like Ahmet Anzavur. Other Circassians pursued a non-aligned policy and aimed for autonomy or independence, like the Association for Strengthening of Near Eastern Circassian Rights. Those divisions were not surprising, and we see that significant number of Circassians became a part of the new nation-state acknowledging the Turkish nationalist discourse and the identity of 'Turk'. The link between the Circassian notables within the Republican cadres and the Circassian society is crucial to understand dynamics of identity among Circassians since that link served as an important tool for the propaganda and diffusion of Turkish nationalist discourses and policies.

2.2 The Republic of Turkey

2.2.1 A New Challenge of Identity after the Ottomanism-Turkism Debate

The Republic was founded with the name of Turkey on 29 October 1923. The name had been used extensively by Europeans in their reference to the Ottoman Empire earlier. Turks had also represented the Ottomans in the eyes of them though Ottomans did not consider themselves as Turks and did not emphasize Turkish identity until late 19th century. The roots of the founders of the Ottoman state, which is traced back to Central Asian Turks, were never found in the official discourse of the Empire for hundreds of years. Certainly, the absence of ethnic identity understanding and the prevalence of religious and class identities played pivotal role in the absence of such discourse. With the collapse of the Empire and the founding of the new nation-state, numerous challenges were awaiting the Republic. One of the major challenges that the Republic had to deal with was the question of identity. As a nation-state established on the ruins of an empire, Turkey envisaged a new understanding of identity for their citizens and its existence, which was based on Turkish nationalism, being Turk and Muslim, and Western. Since the remnants of the CUP, to a great extent, constituted the National Resistance cadres and the group that established the Republic, they became influential in the design of the new state. Ak in (1987, p. 308) emphasizes the “ideological, sociological, and cadre-related links” between the CUP and the Republican People’s Party (CHP), established by Mustafa Kemal and ruled the country for 27 years as a single-party government. Turkish nationalist ideas emerged and flourished well before the Republic; they were popularized by the CUP as laid out in the previous chapter, and those ideas became one of the defining features of young republic. Being Turk was explicitly stated both in the statements of prominent figures of the Republic and the first constitution enacted in 1924. However, being Muslim was mainly visible in the practices of the Republic, for the secular feature of the state should have been emphasized strongly. Western ideas and ideals had been

in the agenda of the Ottoman Empire since the late 18th century that exhibited itself in reform attempts in various policy areas; however, compared to the Ottoman Empire, the perception and the implementation of Westernization in Turkey was very different. Turkey followed a path that aimed catching up with the modern developments in every aspect. Mustafa Kemal termed it reaching ‘the level of modern civilizations’. Three main perspectives that shaped the new republic are investigated in this section.

The quote by Mustafa Kemal, ‘how happy is the one who says I am a Turk’, is helpful for laying the basis of citizenship and identity understanding. Although the 1921 Constitution, which was drafted after the establishment of the Grand National Assembly on 23 April 1920, did not include any reference to being Turk¹⁵, the first constitution of the Republic denoted all citizens of the republic as Turks¹⁶. The identity of being Turk was defined along the axis of citizenship and did not make any discrimination on the basis of race and/or religion. The religion dimension begs two questions that need to be addressed. First, why did the same constitution include the statement that “Islam is the religion of the state”? And second, why was the population of Anatolia homogenized by eliminating non-Muslims through deportations, population exchange, and unequal treatment? Considering the abolishment of the Caliphate on 3 March 1924, republican cadres may have thought that the inclusion of the statement regarding the religion of the state in the constitution would relax the dissatisfaction of religious elements. The statement was removed in 1928 in order to emphasize the secular character of the Republic. The second question, however, requires us to go back to the Ottoman Empire and explore the link between the Ottoman population and the population that constituted the Republic of Turkey. The term ‘millet’ and the transformation it underwent are essential to understand the dynamics of the nation-building in Turkey.

¹⁵ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa21.htm> (Accessed on 4 April 2014)

¹⁶ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa24.htm>, see Article 88 (Accessed on 4 April 2014)

Millet signified religious communities in the Ottoman Empire. There were four main millets that were officially recognized by the sultan and had their own governing mechanisms and rights. Those four millets were the privileged Muslim millet, Roman-Orthodox, Armenian (Gregorian), and the Jews. As a result of nationalist uprisings and the consequent loss of territories in the Balkans, significant amount of the Roman-Orthodox millet vanished from the Empire. The remaining members of that millet were removed as a result of the population exchange with Greece within first two years of the Republic and the pogroms carried out against them. Most of the Armenian millet was eliminated with the deportation in 1915. The number of Jews was negligible; therefore, they were not seen as an important threat to the homogeneity of the population. The search for a homogenous society in terms of religion was evident in practices although almost never expressed clearly¹⁷. The idea behind such a policy and parallel practices may be the relative convenience of instilment of Turkish identity and nationalism. Compared to trying to impose a new national identity on a population with various religious and ethnic backgrounds, aiming to achieve this considering a religiously homogeneous society seemed relatively viable. Poulton (1997, pp. 89-90) underlines the role of war as a catalyst for the diffusion of Turkish nationalism. The war served to sow the idea of enemies of Turks and positioning of people vis-à-vis the enemy in terms of identity. Other factors that popularized the Turkish identity were listed as high rates of mortality as a result of wars, huge migration that transformed the population, and the grievances felt under the sultanate (Poulton, 1997, pp. 90-92). Those factors were seen as elements that raised and accelerated the demand for change.

As pointed out on the basis of the Regimes of Ethnicity framework, Turkey adopted “anti-ethnic regime” in its “policies regulating the relationship between ethnicity and nationality” (Aktürk, 2012, pp. 4-5). Occasionally, clear deviations from the non-ethnic

¹⁷ See Şener Aktürk (2009), Persistence of the Islamic Millet as an Ottoman Legacy: Mono-Religious and Anti-Ethnic Definition of Turkish Nationhood, *Middle Eastern Studies* 45 (6): 893-909.

design of identity appeared and became visible in some discourses and policies that the Republican cadres produced. Being Turk was sometimes defined like it carries some implications for ethnicity and/or race for the sake of glorifying the Turkish identity. This is a widespread policy seen in the early phases of any nationalism. Attributing extraordinary features and exaggerated historical role are common among different nationalist discourses trying to popularize the official ideology. In the case of Turkey, two examples of such practices are the Turkish History Thesis and the Sun-Language Theory. Those two discourses maintained in a sense that Turks were one of the people that laid the foundation of civilizations and formed the origins of all communities, cultures, and languages in the world. However, both discourses appeared during 1930s that saw the escalation of ethnic nationalism in the aftermath of the Great Depression. The bitter consequences of the treaties signed after the World War I was also influential in the establishment of fascist and racist regimes in Europe during this period. The effect of international dynamics on the adoption of such discourses, therefore, should not be underestimated. The idea of popularizing Turkish identity was combined with some kind of a racial justification aiming to attribute ‘high’ characteristics to Turks in line with hierarchical understanding of races, and it was not an unexpected development considering the circumstances of the time period.

The caution that Anthony D. Smith puts forth is worth mentioning before getting into any discussion of official nationalism in Turkey. According to Smith (1993, p. 13), “every nationalism contains civic and ethnic elements in varying degrees and different forms.” No matter how the Republican cadres sought positioning Turkish identity apart from any ethnic implications (this is why Aktürk terms it “anti-ethnic”), ethnic elements found expression in the development and discourse of Turkish nationalism as policies and practices of the early republic demonstrate. Besides, many scholars use various labels for Turkish nationalism as they analyze different aspects of it. Sugar (1994, p. 46), for instance, identifies four main

types of nationalism in his analysis of Eastern European nationalisms. Namely, those are bourgeois, aristocratic, popular, and bureaucratic nationalism. Sugar classifies Turkey as a country with bureaucratic nationalism. The top-down fashion assumed by governing elements during the imposition of Turkish nationalism led Sugar to adopt such a term in the case of Turkey. Akman (2004, p. 24), on the other hand, uses the term “modernist nationalism” for Turkish nationalism by focusing on the modernizing reforms carried out by the Republican cadres. However, Akman points out two crucial elements of such understanding in order to differentiate it from a simple modernization perspective. First, “modernist nationalism” directly aims for an extensive cultural transformation of the society. Second and related to its aim, it seeks to “restrict political and even cultural expression of non-conforming, traditional, religious or local identities” (Akman, 2004, p. 26). The idea is to complete the transformation of the society and then to provide a democratic environment if circumstances permit. Like Sugar, Akman emphasizes the top-down and authoritarian characteristics of Turkish nationalism instilment. The most striking example of such policies was to make every day prayers in Turkish rather than Arabic. The Republican cadres sought ways to bring Muslim identity down so that they could popularize Turkish identity instead. The prohibition on the expression of different ethnic and cultural characteristics through policies like ban on speaking languages other than Turkish constituted a well-known example in line with “modernist nationalism” understanding and its assimilative and top-down character as an integral part. Ye en (2004), for instance, investigates the ethnic component in the citizenship definition in Turkey based on constitutional texts. He argues that implications of ethnicity are apparent not only in policies or practices but also in legal documents and constitutions of the Republic of Turkey. Canefe (2002) focuses on ethno-symbolism in the early republic. According to the author, “the German construct of a nation –a homogenous people bound by linguistic affinity, ethno-religious sentiment, and collective solidarity” could be found in

Turkish nationalist discourse (Canefe, 2002, p. 135). A consensus seems to exist among scholars on the ‘mono-religious’ character of Turkish nationalism. However, while some regard Turkish nationalism as having ethnic components and discriminative on the basis of ethnic identity, others maintain that it was devised as an all encompassing ideology not making any discrimination or excluding any group. The denial of different ethnic identities or cultures and the existence of assimilative policies as the primary driving force of Turkish identity promotion, however, are clearly essential characteristics of Turkish nationalism.

2.2.2 Assimilation and the Official Denial of Ethnic Differences

One of the six principles of Kemalism, nationalism, became the source of assimilation policies. Atatürk nationalism, as it is usually framed, was defined as a unifying, non-ethnic, and territory-based ideology. In order to bring all elements of the society together, one national identity was popularized. Identities other than being Turk were not allowed to be expressed or institutionalized. The most effective tools for the indoctrination of Turkish nationalism were education, language, and media. In those areas, numerous reforms were carried out as well as in many other aspects of public life. The modernization of Turkey and assimilation of the society became simultaneous projects.

Two main driving forces of reform-making were centralization and standardization. The Republic was trying to raise nationalist individuals loyal to the state. The secular nature of the Republic was always emphasized by the Republican cadres as they continued their struggle for the creation of such generations. Education was designed according to secular nationalist policies. The promulgation of the Law on the Unification of Education in 1924 signified the beginning of the national education understanding. Along with the homogenization of educational content and teaching style, there were important reforms and campaigns in language. Turkish was the only official language, and learning it was

compulsory since the only language taught in schools was Turkish. People were not allowed to speak languages other than Turkish, and with the ‘Citizen, Speak Turkish’ campaign, Turkish was imposed on individuals as their language. Languages like Kurdish and Adyghe were prohibited. Poulton (1997, p. 122) presents the difficulty experienced by a Circassian citizen. Although he spoke his mother-tongue at home, he could not do that in the public. Furthermore, removing Arabic script and the introduction of Latin alphabet instead served to break with the Ottoman past and to weaken Muslim identity. A wholesale transformation of identity began with the foundation of the Republic, and policies pursuing the completion of that process were assertively implemented. Under such repressive and assimilative environment, different ethnic categories did not find the opportunity to express their identities until a certain point in time, which is discussed in length under another section. This chapter concludes with the developments in the period of single-party government, paying special attention to Circassian ethnic category. Next chapter focuses on identity preservation and expression methods, voting behavior, and political participation strategies of Circassians between the years 1950 and 2011.

2.2.3 The Republic of Turkey and Circassians until 1950

The 1920s was the time of intense modernization and reform activities in the Republic of Turkey. Following the Great Depression in 1929, 1930s saw the escalation of ethnic nationalisms around the world, which in turn influenced Turkish politics as well. Therefore, we may say that the promotion of one identity, that is being Turk, and the assimilation policies were devised and implemented in during 1930s in an accelerated fashion. Circassians, along with other ethnic categories, were prevented from adopting a lifestyle that would reflect their ethnic and cultural characteristics. The prohibition of speaking Adyghe and other Circassian languages, changing names of Circassian villages, prohibition of taking non-Turkish surnames with the Surname Law in 1934, and ban on the establishment of Circassian

cultural associations were key policies that inhibited the development of Circassian identity in Turkey at that period.

Circassians were invisible to a great extent during the single-party period in Turkey. The role of developments during the Independence War and the policies pursued by the republic in the aftermath of the war are essential to understand the invisibility of Circassians in this period. Do an (2009, pp. 48-51), for instance, underlines the Çerkes Ethem factor. Accordingly, the labeling of Ethem as a traitor by the republican cadres and his association with Circassian identity brought unfavorable implications for Circassian society in Turkey. The traditional alliance between the state and Circassians since the era of Abdülhamid II began to dissipate due to huge suspicions held towards them. In 1923, the year the Republic of Turkey was founded; all Circassian associations were closed down mainly due to the suspicions coming from the experience of Çerkes Ethem incident. The Circassian residents of some villages in the South Marmara region were forcefully displaced and sent to eastern parts of Anatolia. The cultural activities of Circassians were prevented with the Law on the Maintenance of Order in 1925. They were dismissed from publishing materials. Furthermore, in 1934, Circassian publications coming from Europe were banned from circulation in Turkey. Circassians were forced to conceal their identities since they were afraid to be identified as traitors. They were even afraid to give the name Ethem to their children and moving themselves away from those who named their children Ethem (Do an, 2009, p. 49). They had valid grounds for developing such an attitude considering the fact that the image of traitor was promoted by the republic. The history books referred Çerkes Ethem as a traitor until 1960s. Ça aptay (2009, p. 178) argues that the Republic was explaining the treason of Ethem in relation to his ethnic background.

The association of Circassians with treason was the key development of this period, and this, in turn, undermined the development and expression of Circassian identity. Such

association of Circassians led the publication of a book entitled *“Traitor” Circassians in History*, in which prominent Circassian figures in Turkey from Ethem to Türkan Özyay are listed. Serbes and Yaşar (2010) use a humorous language in their book while telling about all prominent Circassians in Turkey. The phrase ‘unfortunately, he/she is also a potential traitor’ is an excellent satire of the state perception of and policies towards Circassian society.

Another factor that forced Circassians to hide their identity was the constant monitoring of them by the central authorities of the republic. Çapaçay (2009, pp. 179-181) cites various incidents of such surveillance during mid-1930s. Circassian people were watched closely since they were perceived as a potential threat to the Turkish state. This is also related to İzmir and Ankara trial processes that Avagyan (2004) refers to. The republican authorities sought punishing perceived enemies of state through those trial processes. The trials became processes of eliminating CUP members as well as Circassians. According to Avagyan (2004, p. 282), İzmir and Ankara trial processes made the role of Circassians within Kemalist movement one of the most unattractive issues that Turkish history writing would deal with. Circassians were usually referred as Caucasian or North Caucasian Turks during the single-party period. As Çapaçay (2009, p. 34) points out, in a textbook published in 1931 and used in elementary education, Circassians were referred as people settled in the North Caucasus long time ago and actually coming from Turkish descent. Circassians were also linked to other communities perceived as usual suspects and potential enemies of the Turkish state (Çapaçay, 2009, p. 64). Circassians were among ethnic categories that faced state repression since they were not speaking Turkish. Arabs, Kurds, and Cretan Muslims were other groups that became main targets of the state. Circassians were also referred as one of the Muslim groups that the Turkish state became unsuccessful in integrating into the Turkish nation along with Albanians and Abkhazians. Still, the Minister of Interior, Refik Saydam stated in a report that Circassians were Turkish citizens, and they belong to the Turkish race on December 1938

in line with the assimilative understanding and the belief that Muslim groups from different ethnic backgrounds could be incorporated into the official design of nationhood (Ça aptay, 2009, p. 251).

Due to all those pressures put upon them by the republican authorities, Circassians largely remained invisible until the emergence of the Democrat Party (DP). Do an (2009, p. 51) states that for 27 years, Circassians did not have even single cultural association though people found ways to gather and to keep their cultures alive. The author also presents relative relaxation felt by Circassians with the DP era based on the statement of one of her interviewees. Since the prohibitions remained even the governing party changed, they could not use the word Circassian in the name of their organizations. Caucasian was the word used largely in the establishment of associations. First, the Caucasian Cultural Association, then the North Caucasian Cultural Association was established. However, as Do an (2009, p. 52) points out, “until the 1960s, Circassian organizations and magazines were quite ephemeral and volatile; they appeared under the guise of North Caucasian “Turks”; and timidity and anti-communism gave the organizations and the publications their characteristics.” Kaya (2011, p. 101) also states that due to the suppression of Circassian identity and the promotion of terms like Caucasian or North Caucasian instead, Crimean, Dagestan, Karachay, and Balkar Turks, Circassians, Abkhazians, and Chechens came together under Caucasian or North Caucasian associations.

In the next chapter, political participation and identity preservation and expression strategies of Circassians through the establishment of associations constitute the key focus of the study. The passage taken from Do an is directly related to the discussion in the third chapter. The voting behavior of Circassians is analyzed, and a key contribution to the literature is pursued through the analysis of Circassian voting in Uzunyayla as well as

Circassian villages in Sakarya and Düzce between 1991 and 2011. Following the analysis, the central puzzle of this study is investigated in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3

CIRCASSIAN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN TURKEY (1950-2011):

ASSOCIATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND VOTING BEHAVIOR

This chapter focuses on different ways that Circassians living in Turkey participate in political processes. As the most conventional way of political participation, voting behavior constitutes the central issue in this chapter. I attempt to present historical voting behavior of Circassians as much as the data allow. Apart from voting, associational activities of Circassians are evaluated. This second dimension of Circassian political participation is covered based on Kaya's implementation of the institutional channeling theory developed by Patrick R. Ireland to Circassian political participation in Turkey. Some inferences are drawn as a result of the analysis of Circassian political participation. This guides us to the last chapter of this work, and the key puzzle is investigated thoroughly.

In order to make keeping track of the chapter easier, I should provide a rough outline. First, I present the institutional channeling theory that Ireland develops based on the political participation of immigrants in Europe. Then, I engage in the analysis of associational activities of Circassians building my argument mainly on Kaya's study, which also takes institutional channeling theory as a departure point. The theory is useful to observe changing motivations of Circassians in their participation to political processes in relation to changes in institutional and political setting in Turkey. The main contribution that I would like to make is the presentation and analysis of Circassian voting in Uzunyayla region as well as Sakarya and Düzce between 1991 and 2011 (see Appendices A and B). I break down the analysis of Circassian political participation in Turkey into two parts, 1950-1991 and 1991-2011. In the first part, Circassian political participation is scrutinized based on associational activities they engaged in. In the second, it is based on the voting behavior of Circassians of Uzunyayla

region, Sakarya, and Düzce along with associational activities. The reason for such approach is that no reliable tools exist in order to analyze Circassian voting behavior between the years 1950 and 1991. The available data on both Circassian population and election results do not provide room for a healthy and useful analysis. Both provincial and district-level election results are not helpful to figure out voting behavior of Circassians. In addition, some basic inferences could be made about Circassian voting behavior concerning the period between 1950 and 1991 based on the analysis of elections in 1991, 1995, 1999, 2002, 2007, and 2011. Therefore, focusing on associational activities between the years 1950 and 1991 is more productive. The key contribution that I pursue is actually more micro level since I analyze election results of Circassian villages from both Uzunyayla region that this thesis takes as the main research region and Sakarya and Düzce from 1991 to 2011. This allows us to see whether the analysis of this thesis may be generalized to overall Circassians in Turkey. I prepared all charts on election results by utilizing the data provided by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜ K).¹⁸

3.1 The Institutional Channeling Theory

Ireland (1994) investigates the motivation behind immigrants' political participation in the host country. The author attempts to theorize on the ways immigrants join political processes, especially in European countries. He presents three theories that try to explain the ways and nature of the immigrant political participation. Those are the class, the ethnicity and race, and the institutional channeling theory. The argument of the class theory is simply that "ultimately, the immigrants' common class identity determines the nature of their participation" (Ireland, 1994, p. 6). The class theory sees racist and discriminative practices against immigrant population in host countries as tools that state and employers utilize to damage class consciousness. The ethnicity and race theory assumes that the ethnic

¹⁸ <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/secimdagitimapp/secim.zul> (Accessed on 6 July 2014)

background of immigrants is essential to understand their political participation strategies. Therefore, “each ethnic group’s own distinctive mode of political participation has developed from group socialization processes and in response to discrimination” (Ireland, 1994, p. 7). Scholars arguing in line with the ethnicity and race theory expect “roughly similar forms of participation” between immigrants from same ethnic category no matter in which host country they reside (Ireland, 1994, p. 8). While those two theories mainly concentrate on immigrants, the institutional channeling theory focuses on the institutional structure of host countries. Ireland (1994, p. 10) provides the elements of this structure as “the immigrants’ legal situation; their social and political rights; and host-society citizenship laws, naturalization procedures, and policies (and non-policies) in such areas as education, housing, the labor market, and social assistance that shape conditions and immigrants’ responses.” Ireland underlines the significance of ethnic identity in terms of immigrant political participation, but he considers it as an effect rather than a cause. The author argues that institutionalized actors like political parties, trade unions, and associations have great importance in terms of providing immigrants the means of participation in political processes. Therefore, their role takes the central stage in the institutional channeling theory. In summary, the institutional channeling theory maintains that immigrants’ political participation is linked to the institutional factors in host countries that are listed above. The institutional elements either facilitate or inhibit immigrants’ political participation. In most host country cases, we encounter the hindrance of their participation in political processes. Therefore, it is only natural for them to adopt a political participation strategy strongly linked to their ethnic identity. To cite Ireland (1994, p. 10), “host-society institutions have nurtured ethnicity through their policies and practices.” The research questions that Ireland (1994, p. 24) attempts to answer are the following: “what forms has the immigrants’ political participation taken and why? Why has immigrant politics evolved in certain directions and not in others?”

The author takes cases of France and Switzerland and tries to explain the immigrants' political participation linking it to the institutional setting in those host countries.

The institutional channeling theory that Ireland develops through the inspiration he gets from the work of Welch and Studlar (1985) can also be used for the analysis of political participation of ethnic categories, not necessarily immigrants, living in a given country. The key arrangement for the utilization of the theory should be made on the elements that constitute the institutional setting of a country. It should be defined outside the scope of migration and immigrants' status. The institutional setting of a country should be presented in a way that would make sense in terms of explaining political participation of different ethnic categories. Realizing such potential of the theory for the explanation of political participation of a given ethnic category, Kaya (2004) implements the theory to Circassian associational activities in Turkey though the author approaches Circassians as a diaspora community. This chapter continues with historical and current associational activities of Circassians in Turkey. Kaya's work on those activities is presented in the following sections. Later, the analysis of the voting behavior of Circassians as the main topic of this chapter is laid out.

3.2 Circassian Associations in Turkey

3.2.1 A Brief History: Beginning of Circassian Associational Activities

The attempts of Circassians for the revival and continuation of cultural and ethnic characteristics through the establishment of associations are briefly touched upon in the previous chapter. In 1946, the Friends Hand Mutual Aid Association (Dost Eli Yardımla ma Derne i) was established, yet it emerged thanks to the cooperation between Azeri Turks and Circassians. The first association was established in 1952 following the first democratic general elections held in 1950. The name of the association was the Caucasus Association, and it was founded in Istanbul. Due to limitations posed by the early Republic, names of

associations established at that period only included geographical terms like Caucasus and Balkan rather than ethnic terms like Circassian. Later, the North Caucasus Cultural Association was established in 1964 in Ankara. According to Toumarkine (2001, p. 425), the key force behind the development of such associational activity and effective revival is immigration to urban areas. The solidarity understanding among people living in rural areas was carried to cities and materialized in the emergence of associations. Until 1970s, when political polarization and tension in domestic politics rose significantly, those associations were only used as platforms for coming together, organizing cultural activities like dancing, and socializing. The political aspect of those associations was almost non-existent in terms of voicing ethnic and cultural rights. They were channels that bring Circassians together for the aim of making Circassian culture live. Those associations also became highly connected to the republic; they adopted anti-communist, anti-Soviet, and Turkish nationalist discourses from time to time. Such discourse adoption was related to already existing Circassians' anti-Russian sentiments as well as Turkey's position in the Cold War politics. They denounced communism as the slavery of nations (Toumarkine, 2001, p. 426). However, towards 1970s, Circassians distanced themselves from this official state discourse and came up with new thinking that enabled them to voice their demands. Unsurprisingly, there were multiple and sometimes conflicting discourses that found expression via Circassian associations. Kaya investigates those discourses based on the institutional channeling theory.

3.2.2 The Institutional Channeling Theory Framework and Circassian Political Participation

Kaya begins with the division between 'revolutionaries' and 'returnists'. During 1970s, revolutionaries advocated that replacing capitalist system with socialism in Turkey would lead to favorable developments for Circassians. Returnists, on the other hand, were arguing that revolutionaries had unrealistic goals, and it would be better for Circassians to go

back to the North Caucasus, their historical homeland (Kaya, 2004, p. 231). Both of those groups belonged to left side of the political spectrum and never addressed ordinary Circassian people, who held significant religious and conservative values.

With the military coup in 1980, Circassian political and associational activities experienced considerable damage. Kaya (2004, pp. 231-232) argues that again, there were two main Circassian groups against each other, Circassians adopting Turkish nationalism and Circassians adopting Circassian nationalism. The discourse that the military brought with the coup was very effective in the emergence of such division. Nevertheless, those groups also could not manage to trigger mass Circassian support. 1990s were the years Circassian associations utilized 'minority politics' (Kaya, 2004, p. 232). They began to voice their demands as an ethnic category, just like Kurds and Alevis did. Toumarkine (2001, pp. 427-428) underlines the role of PM Turgut Özal in domestic political environment and the rise of ethnic nationalism with the collapse of the Soviet Union in international political environment for the revival of those demands. Circassians asked for the official recognition of their distinct ethnic and cultural identity. However, the state's response was not pleasing for them. This ethnic minority discourse was replaced by diaspora politics, according to Kaya. And this was the latest change that Circassian associations experienced in line with the institutional setting in Turkey. "Rediscovery of the homeland and of their kin groups in remote diasporas such as in Syria, Jordan, and Israel has led them to bypass to some extent the binary opposition between themselves and the Turkish nation-state" (Kaya, 2004, p. 236). Kaya's main point regarding the latest political participation strategy of Circassians is that since transportation and communication channels are improved thanks to technological and political developments, Circassians in Turkey began to establish closer relations and links with Circassians in the Caucasus as well as other areas. Consequently, that provided them with the adoption of a diaspora discourse and political understanding in line with that understanding.

At the time of writing, Kaya points out that there are approximately 80 Circassian associations in Turkey. His main point is that since the institutional setting and elites of the republic did not provide Circassians with necessary means to pursue conventional ways of political participation, they tried to make their cause heard through associations as an alternative way. Their discourses, demands, and tools they use to achieve their goals have been different in different time periods. We see the change in discourses and demands in Kaya's work. Their involvement in lobbying activities for influencing Turkish foreign policy during the Russian-Chechen War is a good example for the change in tools they use (Çelikpala, 2006). However, along with efforts of associations, voting, as the most conventional way of participating in politics, should be analyzed and elaborated as well in order to demonstrate reasons and motivations of Circassian political participation in Turkey. The analysis of Circassian voting behavior is the main issue that this chapter focuses on. A useful contribution to the literature is intended through such analysis.

3.3 Voting Behavior among Circassians, 1991-2011

In this section, voting behavior among Circassians between the years 1991 and 2011 is analyzed. My original intention was to demonstrate Circassian voting behavior throughout history. In other words, the analysis of Circassian voting behavior beginning with the first democratic election in 1950 was intended. Nevertheless, the data on both Circassian population and election results are far from providing necessary means to produce meaningful analysis and results. I relied on censuses carried out in 1927, 1950 and 1965 in order to figure out Circassian population in Turkey. The Republic of Turkey collected information about its citizens' mother tongue and second language in censuses between the years 1927 and 1965. The data based on the indication of Circassian languages as mother tongue and/or second language is obtained, yet the percentage of Circassians living in specific provinces is extremely low. Therefore, carrying out an analysis based on those weak data is avoided.

Furthermore, election results between 1950 and 1991 are only available in provincial and district level. That posed a severe constraint in terms of analyzing Circassian voting behavior as well since an analysis in village level is improbable regarding those elections. Besides, the settlement of Circassians does not provide any clues about their undisputed majority in a given district. However, the census results are useful to observe the effects of assimilation policy. Even in the first census carried out in 1927, the number of people indicated their mother tongue as Circassian does not exceed 100,000. Yet, we know that the number of Circassians arrived to Anatolia in mid- and late 1800s was close to one million. In addition, the number of those people gradually declines as we move to the 1965 census results, which was the last census that the Republic of Turkey officially declared the ethnic composition of the country. The state continued to collect that information afterwards, yet they did not make the results publicly available. The provinces with highest Circassian population are listed below. The list is not comprehensive, yet one would easily recognize extremely low percentage of Circassian population in those provinces though they host most Circassians. Therefore, the inclusion of a few additional provinces is found unnecessary.

Table 1: 7 provinces with highest Circassian population (absolute)

Province	Circassian and total population in 1927	Circassian and total population in 1950	Circassian and total population in 1965
Kayseri	13616/251334	13583/403861	17110/536206
Bolu	12082/218246	6522/303111	1603/383939
Kocaeli	8959/286600	7964/474644	1467/335518
Tokat	7131/263063	4569/388923	5934/495352
Çanakkale	3680/181735	3089/289429	1608/350317
Samsun	5616/274065	4472/475660	3401/733946
Maraş	3010/186855	3024/288843	4185/438423
TURKEY	95901/13629488	75837/20947188	58339/31391421

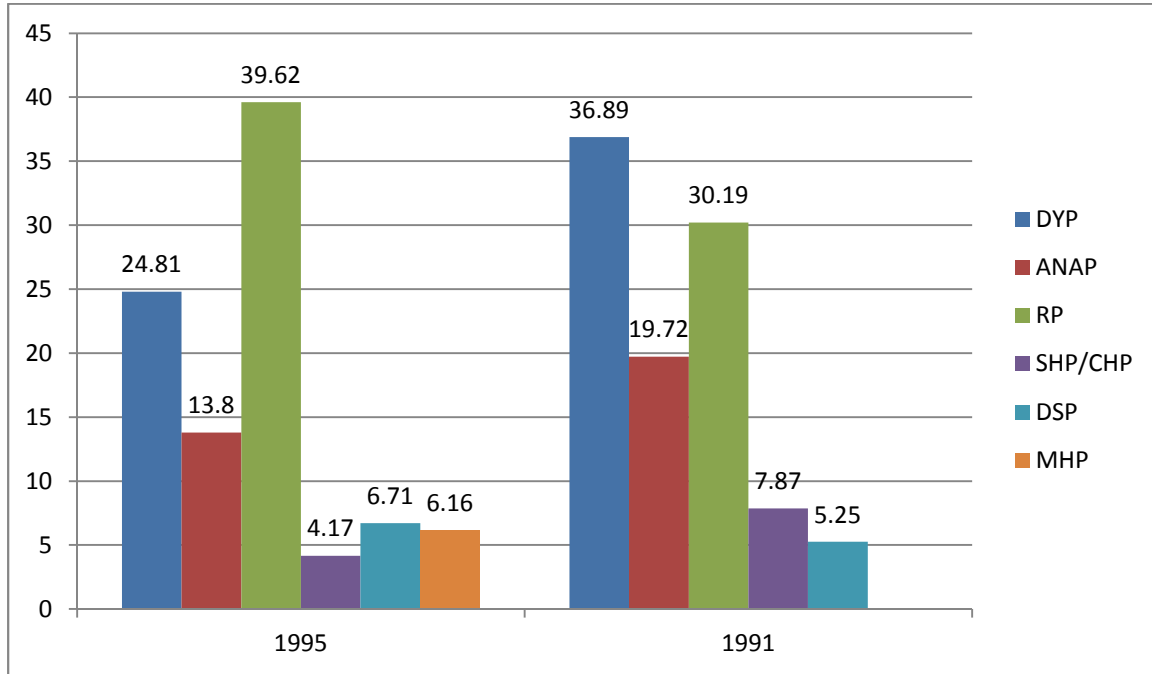
Table 2: 7 provinces with highest Circassian population (relative)

Province	Percentage of Circassian population in 1927	Percentage of Circassian population in 1950	Percentage of Circassian population in 1965
Kayseri	5.4	3.4	3.2
Bolu	5.5	2.2	0.4
Kocaeli	3.1	1.7	0.4
Tokat	2.7	1.2	1.2
Çanakkale	2	1.1	0.5
Samsun	2	1	0.5
Maraş	1.6	1	1
TURKEY	0.7	0.4	0.2

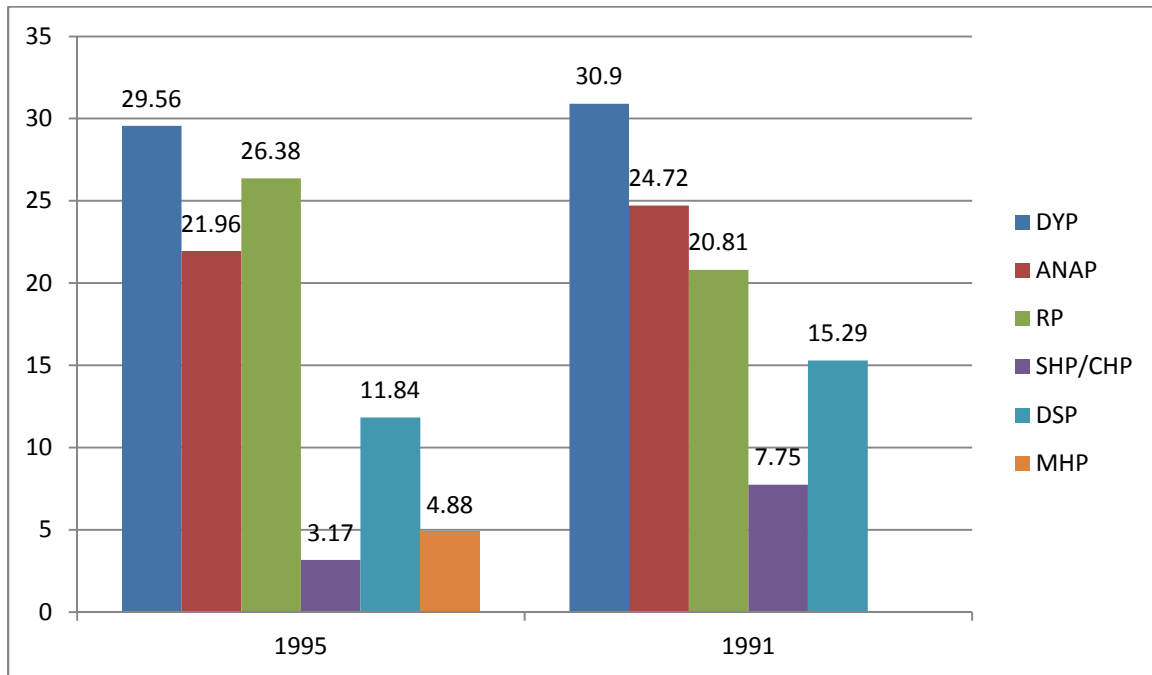
The data is retrieved from Dündar's (1999) study on minorities in censuses in Turkey. As the table demonstrates, carrying out an analysis of Circassian voting behavior in provincial level between 1950 and 1991 would produce no meaningful results. Therefore, the political participation of Circassians during this period is scrutinized from the aspect of associational activities. The period between 1991 and 2011 is analyzed based on election results. I provide those results in Circassian villages in three different regions, Kayseri (Uzunyayla), Sakarya, and Düzce. It is important to note that Sakarya was a district of Kocaeli, and Düzce was a district of Bolu at the time the censuses were conducted.

3.3.1 1991 and 1995 Elections

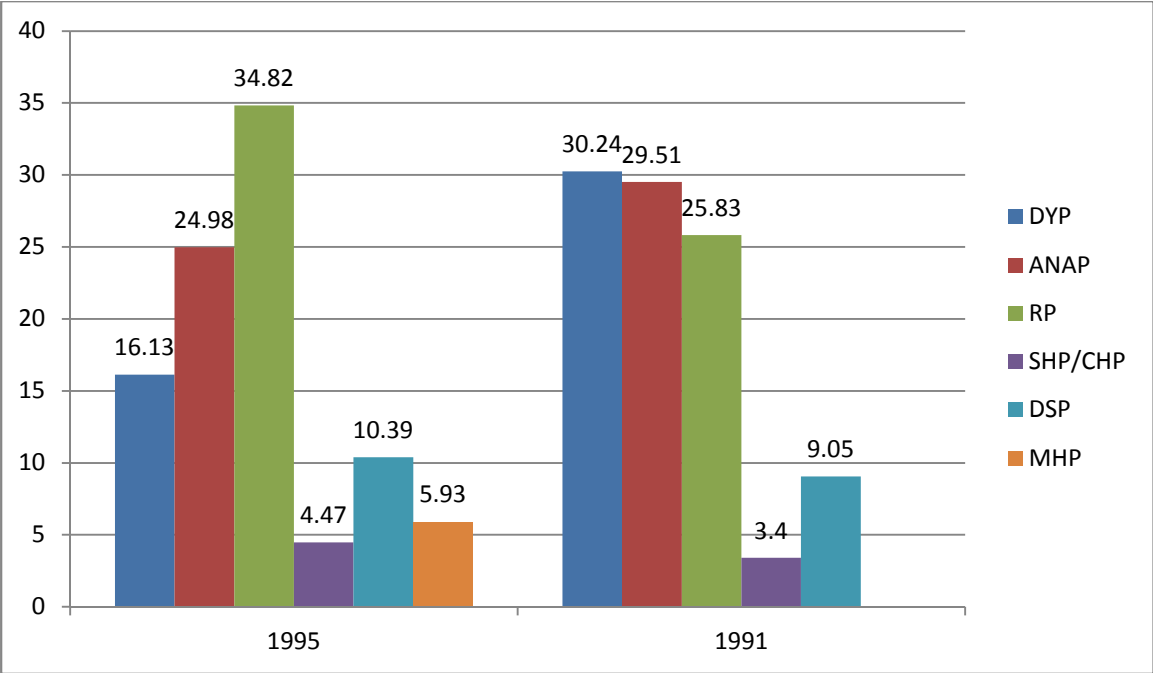
Graph 3: Election results in Circassian villages in Kayseri



Graph 4: Election results in Circassian villages in Sakarya



Graph 5: Election results in Circassian villages in Düzce



After two consecutive election victories in 1983 and 1987 in the leadership of Turgut Özal, the Motherland Party (ANAP) went into elections in the absence of Özal since he was elected the 8th president of the Republic of Turkey. The ANAP lost its leading position as a result of elections. The True Path Party (DYP) came out victorious by receiving 27 percent of votes. 24 percent of voters voted for the ANAP. The Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) followed with approximately 21 percent. The Islamist Welfare Party (RP) received 17 percent of votes. The Democratic Left Party (DSP) managed to receive 11 percent of votes in the leadership Ecevit. The DYP and the SHP came together and formed a coalition government as a result of elections. The most important aspect of the 1991 election is that many important political figures emerged again after they had been banned from politics for years with the military coup in 1980. The RP leader Necmettin Erbakan, Turkish nationalist Alparslan Türke , and the DSP leader Bülent Ecevit were among those prominent figures.

One of the key results of the analysis is that political parties belonging to left side of political spectrum did not find support among Circassians. Although the SHP received 21

percent of votes in Turkey, the vote share of the party did not exceed 8 percent in Circassian villages in all three provinces. The strong position of center-right, conservative, and Islamist political parties is evident. Especially, the RP managed to receive 30 percent in villages in Kayseri and 25 percent in Düzce villages though they only got 17 percent of votes nationwide.

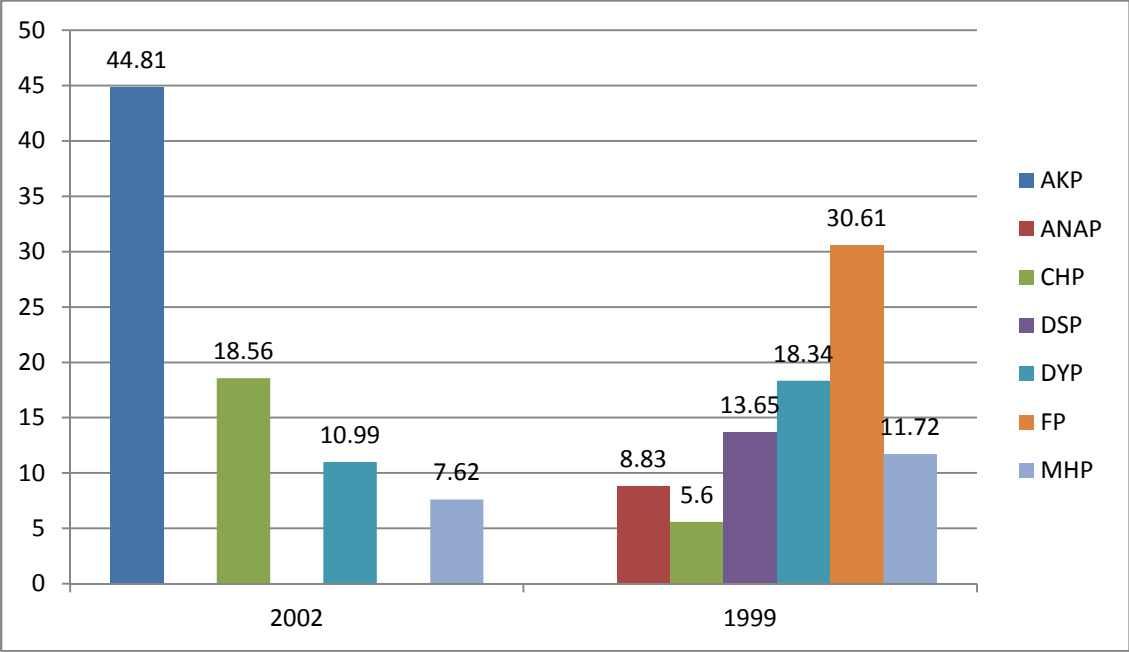
The period between two general elections, 1991 and 1995, witnessed political crises. The SHP was dismissed, and the CHP took the role of government partner in the leadership of Deniz Baykal. However, sharp disagreements emerged between the CHP and the DYP. Under those circumstances, the 1995 election was held. The CHP lost important amount of votes; the party got only 11 percent of votes. The rise of the RP was significant. They received 21 percent of votes. The DYP and the ANAP closely followed with 19 percent for both. The DSP managed to increase its vote share as well with 15 percent. The MHP strongly joined the race by receiving 8 percent of votes. After the election, crises occurred during the formation of government. The attempts of RP-ANAP and DYP-ANAP coalition governments resulted in failure. Finally, the RP and the DYP agreed to form the government known as Welfare-Path (Refah-Yol). However, on 28 February 1997, upon the National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu – MGK) decisions, the government was forced to resign. A new government was formed in the absence of the RP later. The 28 February signified another episode of military intervention to politics in Turkey.

The extraordinary support to the RP among Circassians is apparent in the 1995 election as well. 40 percent of votes in villages in Kayseri and 35 percent of votes in Düzce villages were received by the RP. Left political parties could not get the support of Circassians. The CHP was punished by Circassian people mainly due to political crises occurred before the election. They only received around 4 percent. The DSP could not match its nationwide vote share in Circassian villages. The amount of the MHP votes remained

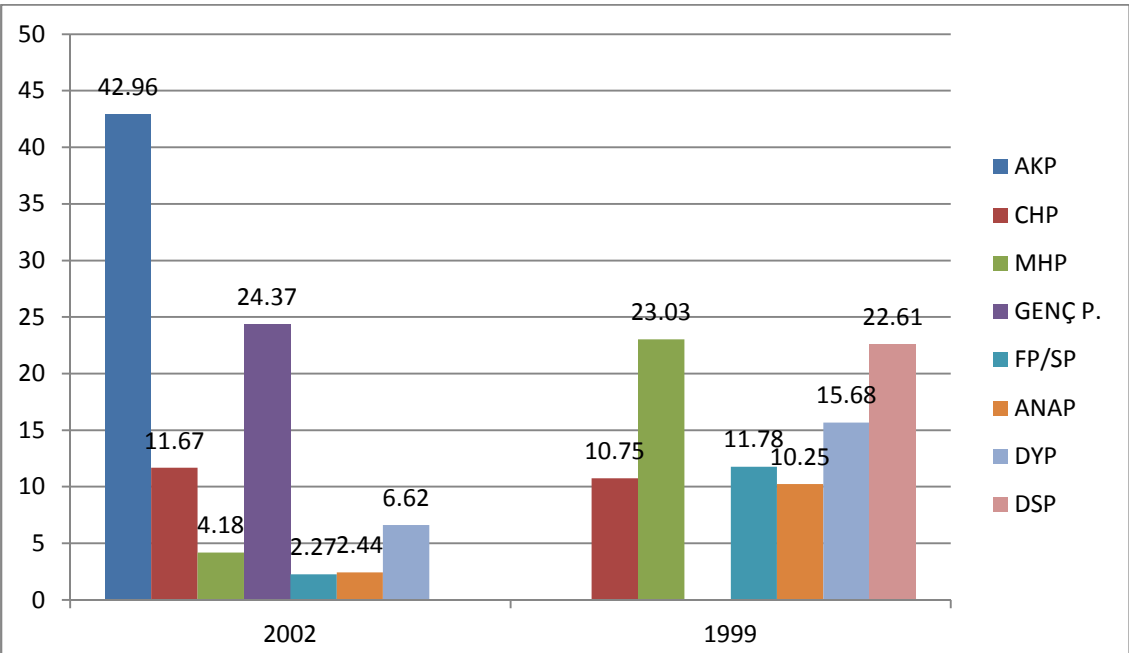
below 6 percent. The dominance of Islamist and center-right parties in voting preferences of Circassians is incontrovertible again.

3.3.2 1999 and 2002 Elections

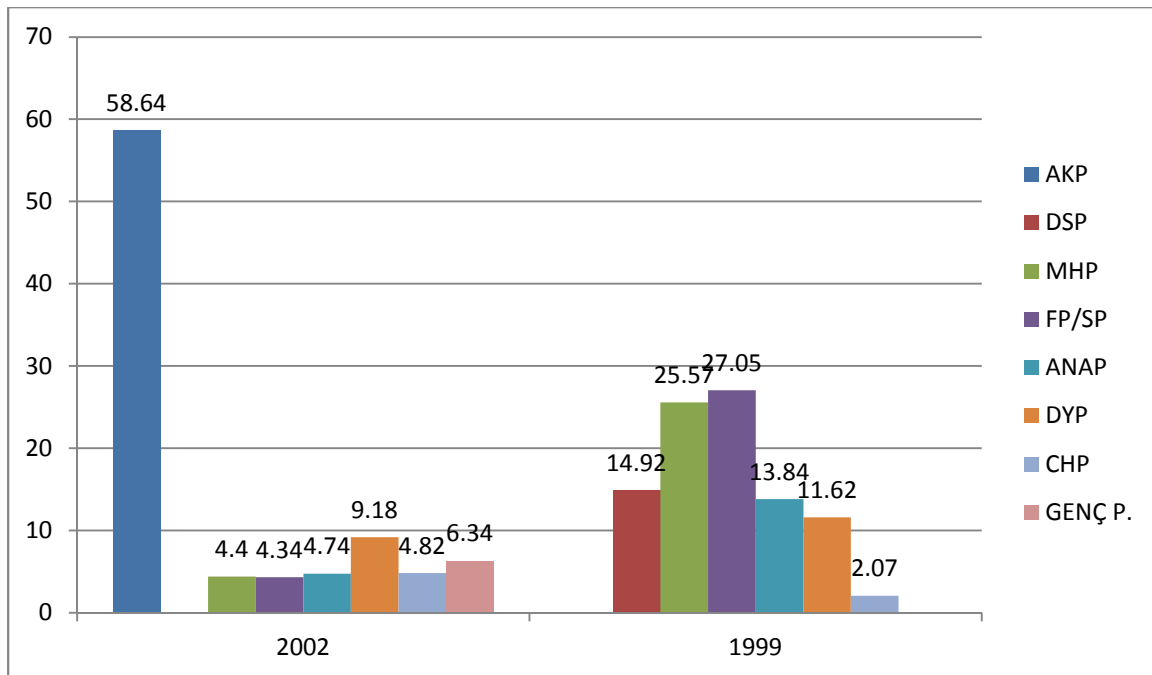
Graph 6: Election results in Circassian villages in Kayseri



Graph 7: Election results in Circassian villages in Sakarya



Graph 8: Election results in Circassian villages in Düzce



The 1990s in Turkey signified the period of coalition governments and political crises. The 1999 election constitutes the last episode of coalition governments. The DSP, the ANAP and the MHP came together and formed the coalition government. The leap of the DSP and the MHP is noteworthy. The MHP, for the first time in history, became a major coalition partner. The rise of PKK terror was one of the most important reasons of such enormous support given to Turkish nationalist the MHP. Although the Virtue Party (FP), the continuation of the RP and Islamist discourse, received more votes than the ANAP, they were not included in the coalition government. Along with terror, the republic was concerned with the so-called Sharia threat. The 28 February incident two years before the elections demonstrated the materialization of harsh state reaction to that so-called threat.

First, election results in Circassian villages in Sakarya differ from results in villages in Kayseri and Düzce. That is the case in the 1991 and 1995 elections as well. Left political parties receive relatively more support from Circassians living in Sakarya as opposed to those in Kayseri and Düzce. The support given to the DSP in Circassian villages in Sakarya in the

1991 and 1995 elections demonstrates the difference. In 1999, both the DSP and the CHP received remarkable amount of votes in Sakarya villages compared to Kayseri and Düzce. Second, the strength of Islamist and conservative discourse among Circassians is visible again. While the FP's vote share remained around 15 percent nationwide, the party succeeded receiving 31 percent in Kayseri villages and 26 percent in Düzce villages. Third and in relation with the main regional and political concern of this study, the MHP received only about 12 percent of votes in Uzunyayla villages. The nationwide vote share of the MHP is 18 percent. Therefore, it is interesting to observe that even though the MHP received unprecedented amount of votes nationwide and became a major coalition partner, the vote share of the party remained considerably lower in Uzunyayla region. The puzzle of this study, that is 20 percent vote share of the MHP with 100 percent increase compared to previous election, appears to be a significant issue of research.

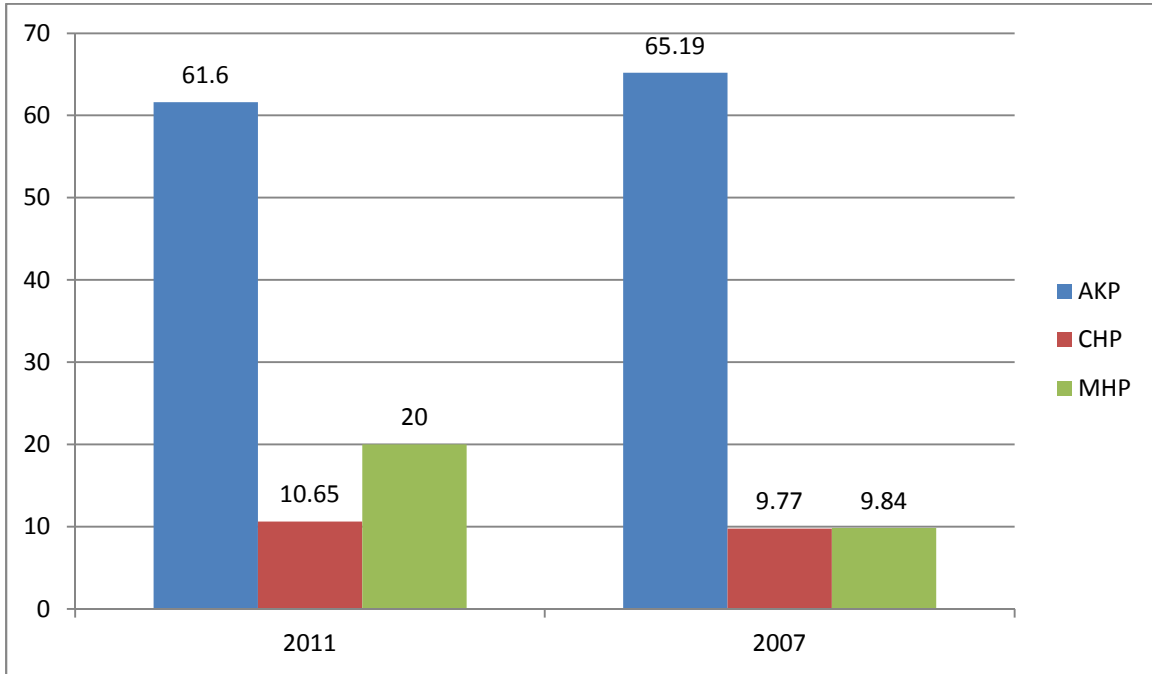
The 2002 election signaled the beginning of a dominant party system with smaller “effective number of parties” (Lijphart, 1999, pp. 65-69). The beginning of the AKP emergence as the dominant party is the 2002 election. By receiving 34 percent of votes, the AKP won elections and formed the government without need for another political party. Finally, the era of coalition governments ended in Turkey. The CHP, with 19 percent of votes, became the main opposition. Actually, until 2007, only those two political parties were in the parliament. The MHP failed to exceed the 10 percent national threshold. The emergence of the Young Party (GP) and the success of the party are noteworthy. The GP managed to receive 7 percent of votes in their first election.

The electoral support given to the AKP by Circassians is remarkable. In all three provinces, the AKP managed to receive above 40 percent of votes. The vote share of the AKP in Circassian villages in Düzce reached 59 percent. The MHP could not match their nationwide vote share in Circassian villages of all three provinces. The amount of votes that

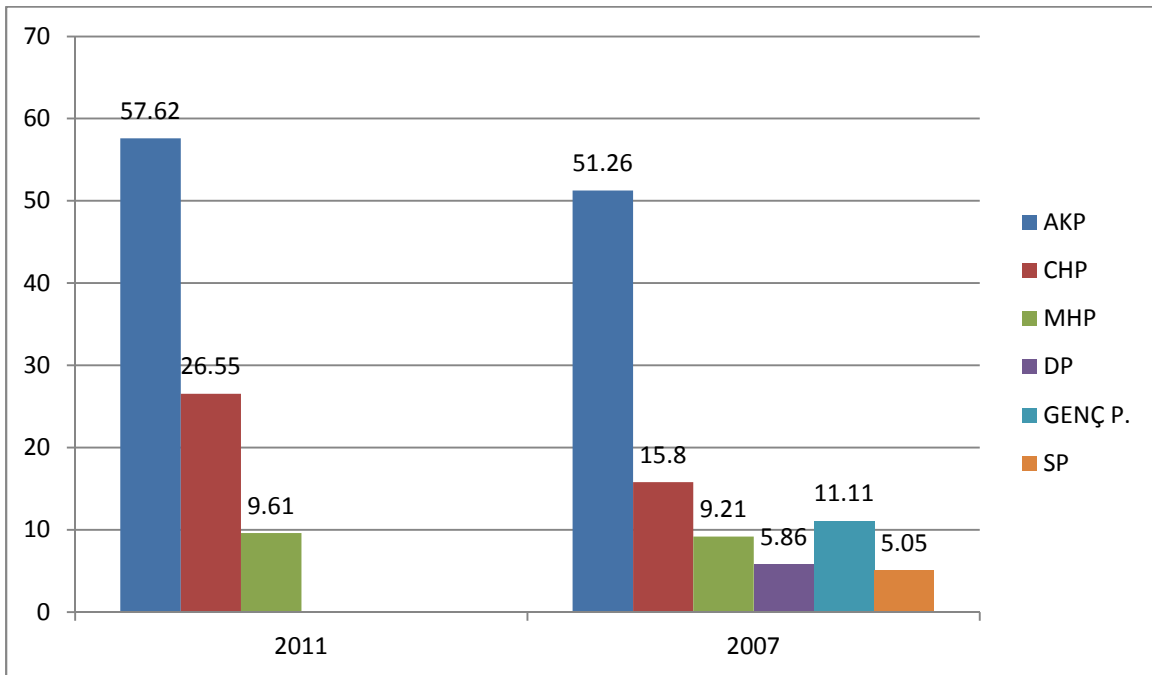
the GP received in Circassian villages in Sakarya is notable. The GP managed to receive approximately 25 percent of votes, which is three times more than their nationwide vote share. The key finding of the analysis of 2002 election results in those provinces is that the CHP managed to receive approximately 19 percent of votes in Uzunyayla region. A possible and solid reason of the emergence of such surprising incident is the nomination of a candidate with Circassian identity, Seyfettin Diner. The implication of this finding for the puzzle investigated in this study is invaluable. The fact that the support given to the CHP in Kayseri is unique provides a solid ground for the corroboration of the hypothesis that the ethnic identity of the candidate matters for voting behavior of Circassians. In 1991, 1995, 1999, 2007, and 2011 elections, the vote shares of the CHP in Uzunyayla region are respectively 8 percent, 4 percent, 6 percent, 10 percent, and 11 percent roughly. The main case of this study, the vote share that the MHP candidate Nihat Canpolat received in Uzunyayla in 2011 elections, seems to be supported by this case, the vote share that CHP candidate Seyfettin Diner received in the same region in 2002 elections, as well. Ethnic voting significantly exists among Circassians.

3.3.3 2007 and 2011 Elections

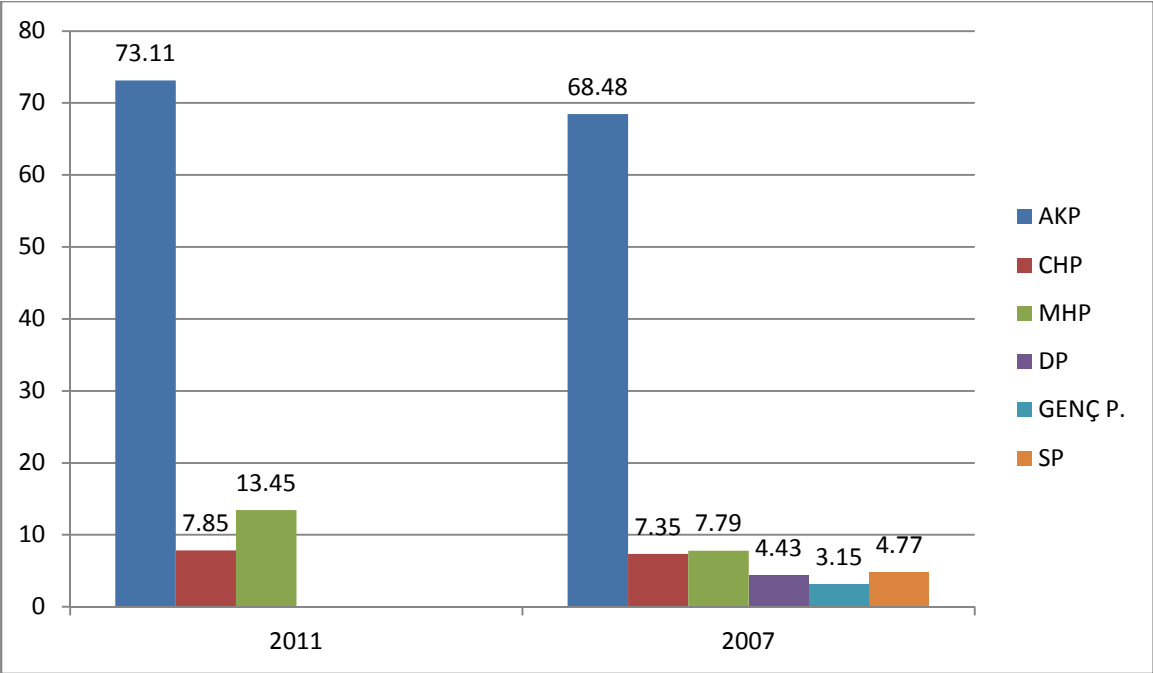
Graph 9: Election results in Circassian villages in Kayseri



Graph 10: Election results in Circassian villages in Sakarya



Graph 11: Election results in Circassian villages in Düzce



The 2007 and 2011 election results constitute the basis of this study. Those two latest elections provided the AKP with strengthening their hold to the government. The AKP became the longest ruling political party of the republic by substantially increasing their vote share in each election. The CHP continued to be the main opposition, and the MHP reserved their place in the parliament. Kurdish opposition, the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), emerged as a prominent actor as well thanks to the strategic candidate nomination to beat the 10 percent threshold.

The election results reveal increasing and extraordinary support for the AKP among Circassians. 73 percent of votes in Circassian villages in Düzce are received by the AKP, which demonstrates that tremendous support and a success story that is very difficult to achieve. The 2007 and 2011 election results are analyzed in the last chapter of this study more thoroughly.

3.4 The Evaluation of Overall Circassian Political Participation

Building his argument on the activities of associations since 1950s, Kaya (2004) posits that Circassian political participation has been experiencing a certain degree of transformation throughout history. Constrained with institutional obstacles, Circassians tried to build a 'channel' through the institutional setting that would allow them to pursue their own political understanding. According to Kaya (2004), historically, they advocated socialist revolution, return to the Caucasus, Turkish nationalism, and Circassian nationalism. In 1990s and early 2000s, they adopted the minority discourse and began to voice demand for rights. The final element that shapes their political participation is the diaspora identity. Along with pre-established institutions and rules, political environment, both domestic and international, and dominant ideologies of the time have been effective on the way Circassians participated in political processes, according to Kaya (2004). The demonstration of historical transformation is invaluable. Nevertheless, certain possible continuities should be figured out as well considering the fact that those earlier strategies that Kaya mentions did not receive popular support of Circassians, and they opted for an alternative understanding of political participation. The analysis of voting behavior of Circassians offers the potential of revealing other major strategies of political participation. Therefore, election results in Circassian villages in Kayseri (Uzunyayla), Sakarya, and Düzce are retrieved for elections held between the years 1991 and 2011.

Basically, the analysis of results uncovers three principles:

1. Circassians give tremendous support to center-right and conservative political parties as well as those with Islamist discourses.
2. The political parties of the left side of political spectrum cannot attract Circassian voters. The vote shares of those parties remain considerably lower compared to the

vote shares they receive nationwide as well as the vote shares of right-wing political parties in those regions.

3. Most importantly, Circassians are likely to give significant support to candidates with Circassian identity.

First two results are interrelated and could be evaluated as the reflections of the CHP's single party rule between the years 1927 and 1950. The legacy of the CHP, ethnic nationalism, discrimination, assertive secularism, and authoritarianism, that permeated and remained in every corner of the state led to the renewal and reproduction of anti-CHP sentiments and reservations regarding left politics. The relief brought by the DP has been effective as well. The political parties that can be referred as the continuation of the DP managed to receive enormous amount of support from Circassians.

The third principle is the key finding that guides us to the last chapter of this study. It is closely related to the key puzzle investigated and has the potential to lead us to certain directions. The candidate profile may prove to be a crucial factor that shapes Circassian voting behavior. Ethnic voting is an important element of their political participation strategy.

Chapter 4

THE RISE OF MHP AMONG CIRCASSIANS OF UZUNYAYLA: A CASE OF ETHNIC VOTING?

On June 12, 2011, the 16th general election in the Republic of Turkey was held. The incumbent AKP managed to increase its vote share even further and won a decisive victory beyond opposition parties, the CHP, the MHP, and the BDP. That was a great success for the AKP since they received approximately half of all valid votes. The dominant party system that Çarko lu (2011) talks of was becoming an undeniable reality in Turkish politics. The AKP became the longest ruling political party in Turkish history by even increasing its vote share in subsequent general elections. Although the 2011 election signified such a success case for the AKP, election results in Uzunyayla region presented an important puzzle. The vote share of the AKP declined from 65.19 percent to 61.60 percent compared to the 2007 election whereas the MHP managed to increase its vote share from 9.84 percent to 19.99 percent. There are some interesting aspects of this incident.

As 2011 elections came closer, a scandalous event was surrounding the MHP. The sex tapes of some members of the party released, and ordinary people accessed those footages via the internet. The PM Erdoğan brought this issue to the forefront during his election rally in order to take advantage of it. Erdoğan went even further to state that “this is not a private issue, this is public” (see Erdoğan’s speech in Kastamonu on May 5, 2011)¹⁹. After failing to surpass the national threshold in 2002 elections, the MHP once again faced the same threat due to the eruption of those scandalous incidents. Although those developments led to a slight decline in the vote share of the MHP, the party managed to exceed the threshold and got into the parliament. Despite such unfavorable election environment and consequent decline in

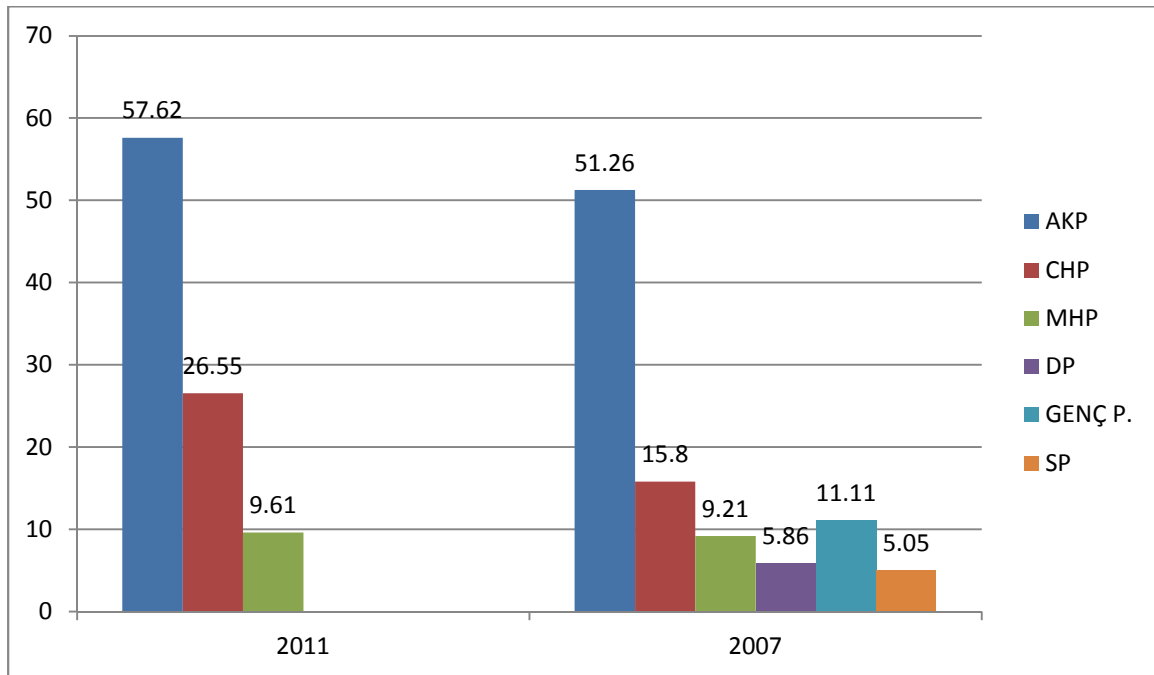
¹⁹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RCDiTffsAE> (Accessed on 14 September 2014)

overall votes, the MHP succeeded in increasing its vote share in Uzunyayla region from 9.84 percent to 19.99 percent. This means more than doubling the vote share. Achieving this kind of success under highly adverse conditions and in a region characterized by Circassian ethnic identity is an interesting puzzle to be investigated. When the MHP, as a Turkish nationalist party, manages it, it becomes even more interesting. Potential reasons of the rise of the MHP among Circassians of Uzunyayla are scrutinized in this final chapter. I attempt to provide an explanation to the emergence of such puzzle based on the semi-structured interviews I conducted with academicians and politicians, who know the region very well and have great knowledge on Circassian community in Turkey. The targeted snowball sampling method is utilized in the interviews. I sought the reasons behind Circassian support for the MHP within the framework of the Democratic Opening Process, the nomination of a co-ethnic candidate, and the economic well-being of Circassian people in Uzunyayla.

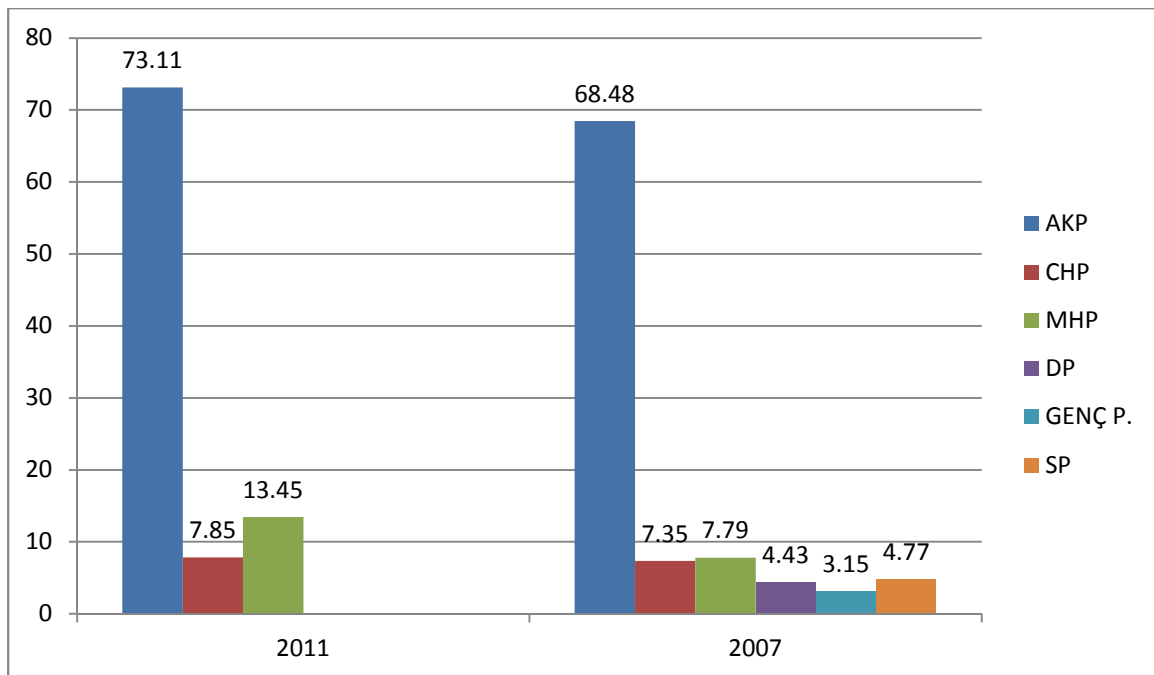
Before moving into the main discussion of this chapter, providing a comparison should be helpful in terms of determining the range of inferences or conclusion that will be drawn from this study. Düzce and Sakarya, as two of the provinces in which Circassians form a significant amount of population, are taken for the comparison in question. The results of 2007 and 2011 general elections in 20 Circassian villages located in Düzce and Sakarya (a total of 40 villages) are provided. The election results of those villages for 1991, 1995, 1999, and 2002 are already presented in the previous chapter. It is examined that whether a tremendous increase in the vote share of any political party in 2011 elections occurred as it happened in Uzunyayla. The election results of Circassian villages in both provinces have the potential to produce remarkable puzzles. In Circassian villages of Düzce, the MHP managed to increase its vote share from 7.79 percent to 13.45 percent, which means an increase of approximately 73 percent. The CHP also increased its vote share from 15.80 percent to 26.55

percent in Circassian villages of Sakarya. This is equal to 68 percent increase compared to 2007 elections.

Graph 12: 2007 and 2011 General Election Results in Circassian Villages located in Sakarya



Graph 13: 2007 and 2011 General Election Results in Circassian Villages located in Düzce



I do not attempt to explain those changes in vote shares of the MHP in Düzce and of the CHP in Sakarya. The nomination of Engin Özkoç, an Abkhaz by descent, as the CHP candidate in Sakarya have presumably been influential on such an increase in the CHP vote share in the province. Since I do not conduct a thorough analysis of the Circassian voters in the region, my conclusion does not go beyond an informed guess. The emergence of such an interesting incident still implies noteworthy aspects for this study. The region that this thesis focuses on is Uzunyayla. In order to seek answers to my key questions, I travelled to Kayseri. I conducted nine interviews with prominent Circassian people, including businessmen, academicians, politicians, and representatives of associations. I also had an interview with Nihat Canpolat, the MHP candidate with Circassian origin, in Ankara. Including two Circassian people from Istanbul, I had interview with a total of twelve people. I should admit that those interviews brought very interesting cases and events as well as new perspectives. I also had the opportunity to know about Circassian culture and people more. Overall, that became a great experience for me both personally and academically.

4.1 Historical Dimension: Aziziye, Afshars, and Assimilation

The semi-structured interview included 12 questions about various dimensions of political life of Circassians. It asked respondents about their linkage with Circassian community, a potential political alignment of Circassians throughout history, the role of associations, Uzunyayla's special location, the Democratic Opening Process and Circassians, the MHP and Circassians, Nihat Canpolat, and the general attitude towards elections. Most of the respondents began their accounts by referring to historical settlement of Circassians. They provided details of the conditions that Circassians faced after being expelled from the Caucasus and the arrival to the Ottoman Empire.

Kayseri's Pınarbaşı district is the most important part of Uzunyayla region. Most of Circassian villages are located in that district. The history of their settlement in Pınarbaşı is an issue that no Circassian leaves out in their responses. The original name of Pınarbaşı is Aziziye. The name was given due to the fact that Sultan Abdülaziz ordered the setting of such district as a part of Sivas. Circassians coming from the Caucasus were settled there. However, nomadic Afshars did not welcome Circassians since they thought that Circassians stole their land. The tension between Circassians and Afshars still continues today with changing levels of intensity. It is visible in social, economic, and political life. I have an interesting account on the latest general elections held in 2011, and I deliver it under a different section.

Many respondents from different political perspectives and age groups presented stories of their encounter with official assimilation policies and practices. Elders, as witnesses of the 'Citizen, Speak Turkish' campaign, shared their experiences. As a Circassian child in one of the elementary schools in Kayseri, one of the interviewees (INT. 6)²⁰ told me that

The teacher gave me the duty of keeping the names of children who speak Circassian languages. I was keeping those names and giving them to the teacher. The teacher was occasionally beating them. I was thinking that I was doing well by listening to the teacher. However, as I grew older, I recognized the actual aim of such policy.

Another account was about the period after the military coup in 1980. It was told by one of the interviewees that had an important place in Canpolat's election campaign in terms of public communication (INT. 2)²¹.

A couple of friends and I attempted to establish the Caucasus Association in Kayseri in 1984. However, conditions were harsh in terms of preparing an

²⁰ Kayseri, Erciyes University, 21 August 2014, interview by the author

²¹ Kayseri, Talas, 20 August 2014, interview by the author

association code in line with the new constitution that is very strict regarding civil society organizations. We worked day and night so that we could produce a politically and legally appropriate association code. We were not allowed to use 'Circassian' or 'Adyghe' in the name or code of the association.

The association was eventually founded and continues to serve as a platform for the protection and inter-generational transfer of Circassian culture and language.

The assimilation policy of the republic was felt deeply by most of Circassians as the interviews reveal. They are aware of the fact that the republic attempted to make them forget their ethnic origins and to embrace Turkish identity by putting their cultural differences aside. Apparently, Circassians felt remarkable relief with the beginning of the AKP period. They found a suitable environment in terms of voicing their grievances stemming from assimilation policies and developing new mechanisms of ethnic and cultural identity protection. When I asked his opinion about the AKP's success in election results in Uzunyayla, one of the interviewees (INT. 3)²², who was a former active CHP member and an ardent opponent of the AKP, admitted that

People vote for parties that they believe to be representative of them. The AKP represents Circassians of Uzunyayla, and that is why they succeed. Although the CHP provided an incomplete list of candidates for the municipal council in the local elections, they did not consider putting a Circassian candidate in one of those available spots. A couple of my friends within the party and I pushed for the nomination of at least one Circassian candidate, but it didn't work. On the other hand, the AKP nominated two Circassian people for the membership to the municipal council.

²² Kayseri, Kocasinan, 20 August 2014, interview by the author

4.2 The Politics of Xabze: Is it possible?

One of the most striking things that I saw during my visit to Kayseri is Circassians' commitment to their culture. Xabze is the key component of their culture since it works as the code of appropriate conduct. Basically, Xabze regulates a Circassian individual's relations with other people and her responsibilities towards elders (Thamade) and guests. It provides appropriate manners and characteristics that a Circassian person must have. Circassians have to live according to the rules of Xabze since the idea is that a good person has to know and practice Xabze.

Circassians implement Xabze in every part of their lives, including politics. All interviewees point out that Xabze is a concept superior to politics. And, to some extent, politics requires greed, ability of lying, inconsistency, and cheating. According to most interviewees, success in politics is very much related to this kind of maneuvers. Their experiences in political arena support their statements. However, Xabze does not allow them to have such qualities. A better expression would be that they are raised according to Xabze; therefore, they do not consider such moves worthy for being successful. They maintain that this is against their personality as well as culture. Most people, who embrace their Circassian identity, are not allowed to go as further as they can due to problems they faced in political environment. Circassians voice their demand for a political environment based on honesty, merit, and solid character. Is this kind of politics of Xabze possible? As a matter of fact, it does not seem likely to happen. Recognizing this reality, Circassians began the process of establishing a political party a couple of years ago. The Pluralist Democracy Movement (Ço ulcu Demokrasi Hareketi) was eventually transformed into the Pluralist Democracy Party (Ço ulcu Demokrasi Partisi – ÇDP)²³. The foundation of ÇDP is a good indication that

²³ http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/siyaset/106447/Cerkesler_de_parti_kurdu.html (Accessed on 28 August 2014)

Circassians sought and found a place for themselves within Turkish politics, where they thought that they could not match their cultural characteristics and the way politics is done. They hope that Xabze continues to influence their ideas and policies as it has been shaping lives of Circassians for centuries.

4.3 Circassian Nationalism

...ethnic identity is the product of a dialogical and dialectical process involving internal and external opinions and processes, as well as the individual's self-identification and outsiders' ethnic designations –i.e. what you think your ethnicity is, versus what they think your ethnicity is. Ethnic boundaries, and thus identities, are explicitly socially constructed in relation to the 'Other'

In line with Kaya's (2005, p. 138) argument regarding the construction of ethnic identity and his emphasis on interaction with others, Bora (1999, pp. 21-22) points out that Circassians borrowed some essential characteristics of Turkish nationalism, to which they have been exposed for a long time. According to Bora, this is an expected process for nationalisms that had to fight or compete with other nationalisms for the expression of identity. Bora provides some examples of such adoption of discourses. Circassians talk about the Caucasian origin of people, who founded first states in Anatolia, with pride. This is directly linked to the debate on who first came to this territory. Bora also sees imprints of the Sun-Language Theory or the Turkish History Thesis in Circassian thinking on their ethnicity. In addition, the constant feeling of extinction danger among Circassians is a similar feature considering Turkish nationalism. Those ideas are widespread among Circassian intellectuals, Bora argues. When I first read Bora's piece, I thought that it was a bit an exaggeration. However, the interviews that I conducted made me think that Bora's inferences are correct. Turkish nationalism made other nationalisms similar to it as it denied their existence and

oppressed them. One of the interviewees (INT. 2) admitted that even without asking. He is a public communication expert and was one of the most important figures of Canpolat's campaign in Kayseri. He stated that

Each ethnic group considers it superior to other ethnic groups; this is true for Circassians as well. As you conduct interviews with other Circassian people, you will definitely come across such glorification of Circassian identity.

And he proved right as I met many other Circassian people from different socio-economic and political backgrounds. Kaya's (2005) anthropological study in various Circassian settlements in Turkey also reveals the belief that being Circassian is superior compared to belonging to other ethnic groups.

4.4 Political Participation of Circassians of Uzunyayla

Based on the institutional channeling theory that Ireland develops, Kaya (2010, pp. 247-248) argues that Circassians in Turkey embrace their ethnic identity as they participate in politics since they have been feeling that they were discriminated and excluded from political processes due to the ethnic identity they have. Unlike class and race/ethnicity theories, the institutional channeling theory explains political participation strategies of immigrants based on institutional characteristics of host countries rather than immigrant groups. Accordingly, the ethnic identity is the ultimate tool that immigrants utilize as a result of exclusionary institutional elements of host countries. This is a point raised by numerous scholars as well (Bird, 2004; Bochsler, 2010; Chandra, 2005; Martin, 2012). The only difference is that they focus on ethnic minorities rather than immigrants exclusively. The institutional setting matters and it allows understanding and explaining why ethnicity plays the key role in political participation of immigrants or ethnic categories. Yet, in order to understand and explain how ethnic categories utilize ethnic identity in a given institutional setting and why they choose

doing that way, I believe that characteristics of ethnic groups should be taken into account as well so that their diverse political participation strategies could be better understood. The ability of collective mobilization, the extent members of ethnic category participate in mainstream politics, and various strategies to overcome institutional obstacles emerge as essential elements. In the case of Circassians in Turkey, it is very important to capture key characteristics of the ethnic category, like the role Xabze, the extent of assimilation, and the role of associations in relation to the International Circassian Association (Dünya Çerkes Birli ği – DÇB), as well as of political dynamics, like the Democratic Opening Process. Instead of the one-dimensional character of three theories trying to explain political participation of immigrants or ethnic categories, a balanced perspective on characteristics of both institutions and ethnic categories would provide a clearer understanding.

I came across numerous stories of being excluded from political parties or being discriminated. Therefore, Kaya's argument regarding the exclusionary character of institutional setting of Turkish politics is supported. There are stories about the loss of advantageous position in the candidate list for general elections due to Circassian identity of the candidate. Even, Nihat Canpolat (INT. 7)²⁴ lost his first position, nominated second, and could not be elected as a MHP parliamentarian.

When the MHP first offered me candidacy, I was reluctant to accept it. They told me that they consider nominating me as the first candidate from Kayseri. Since I consider myself a Turkish nationalist with Circassian identity and see the support of both Circassian people and people of Kayseri, I accepted the offer. However, it appeared later that I was nominated second. That was a surprise, but I didn't object to this decision.

²⁴ Ankara, 22 August 2014, interview by the author

Some Circassian people were excluded from the local political party administration although they had the support of sufficient number of delegates. Ironically, the political party in question is the AKP. The interviewee (INT. 5) told that

I was the vice president of the district-level organization of the AKP in Kayseri. I decided to run for presidency of the organization, and as a result of a long and challenging campaign period, I managed to get the support of a significant number of delegates that would allow me to be elected as the president. However, on the day of election, the rival group threatened many delegates that are supposed to vote for me. In addition, the election was definitely rigged. I was aware of the meaningless concern that Circassians are trying to take the control of the party organization. That was a clear scheme run against me and all Circassians in the party.

An individual in the top management of a political party known with his Circassian identity is reluctant to nominate Circassian people as candidates since he is afraid of being blamed for granting privilege. The interviewee (INT. 6) told that

Many Circassians may not be in key positions in political party organizations, local or national, due to problems they face. Yet, that doesn't mean that we don't have prominent figures in politics. In CHP, for instance, Önder Sav is known with his Circassian identity. However, occupying key positions within political parties, somehow, isn't influential on the nomination and election of further Circassian representatives. Önder Sav avoids proposing Circassian candidates to the party management since he thinks that he would be labeled as privileging co-ethnics.

He also argued that Circassians are underrepresented in the parliament as well. His expression was interesting as he referred to previous terms of office.

Following the 2002 general election, the number of Circassian parliamentarians was so significant that they could decide to come together in the parliament by putting political party differences aside and perform traditional Circassian dances. However, I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of Circassians in the parliament today.

ETHNIC VOTING

The key puzzle of this study, tremendous increase in the MHP vote share among Circassians of Uzunyayla region, has important implications for political participation strategies of Circassians. First, the nomination of a co-ethnic candidate plays a key role in such increase in the MHP votes. The MHP received an important portion of valid votes in both Kayseri and Uzunyayla, and this is closely related to ethnic identity of candidates, Yusuf Halaço lu and Nihat Canpolat. Canpolat, both as the former governor of Kayseri and a Circassian by descent, was welcomed by the society as an appropriate candidate. His Circassian identity was influential in the amount of votes the MHP received in Uzunyayla. Canpolat admits this and adds that

I am grateful to support given to me by Circassians of Uzunyayla. Many people living in Uzunyayla voted for the MHP for the first time in their lives.

This short statement represents a good example of the argument put by Birnir (2007) that ethnic voters move their support to political parties that they have no former links yet nominated co-ethnic candidates.

Furthermore, this is not the first time Circassians support a Circassian candidate in general elections. One of the interviewees (INT. 8)²⁵ told me about his efforts during general elections in 2002.

I compiled the list of all candidates of political parties, identified all Circassian candidates and tried to motivate Circassian people all around Turkey to vote for the Circassian candidate with the most chance of being elected in the province without discriminating any political party candidate with Circassian identity.

Although the interviewee was an ardent supporter of the CHP, he worked for the success of Circassian candidates putting political party differences aside. As seen in third chapter, the vote share that the CHP managed to receive in Kayseri in that general election is unprecedented. The efforts of my interviewee may have produced an impact since Seyfettin Diner, a Circassian, was nominated from the region. However, Diner states that the support given to him neither negligible nor sufficient.

Circassians supported Canpolat in the last general election as they had supported me in 2002. Both political parties reached vote shares that they had never seen before. However, the support given to both Canpolat and me was not enough. Circassians should have demonstrated more determination for collective political action.

One interviewee underlined this need for collectivity.

In order to become influential actors in Turkish politics, Circassians should utilize their population strength. However, I'm aware that expecting approximately three million Circassians to act in unity in their political preferences is not realistic. This is the ideal situation that I'm talking about, a

²⁵ Ankara, 22 August 2014, interview by the author

will to shape and lead politics in Turkey, yet it means unfortunately nothing to most Circassians.

One essential inference from this study could be that the ethnic identity of the candidate and the ethnic make-up of the region matter for electoral success. The MHP candidates, Yusuf Halaço lu and Nihat Canpolat, represent two major ethnic categories of the region, respectively Afshars and Circassians. Canpolat managed to receive an unprecedented level of electoral support for the MHP in Uzunyayla region, mainly due to the ethnic identity he has. Halaço lu, as a person with Afshar ethnic identity, received important amount of support and was elected as the MHP parliamentarian. While nominating candidates, political parties should take certain dynamics into consideration, like the ethnic identity of the candidate and a potential ethnic rivalry around the region. However, taking those dynamics into account requires good balancing. As underlined in the first section of this chapter, there is a historical tension between Circassians and Afshars. The violent encounters during the Ottoman period were replaced by a battle on democratic ground. In each election, Afshars and Circassians compete so that they could have the maximum number of parliamentarians in the Grand National Assembly. Most of the interviewees shared accounts of this rivalry. Canpolat told that

In the latest general election, for instance, Afshars had candidates from all three major political parties. Since Afshars believed that the candidate from the AKP (Sadık Yakut) and the candidate from the MHP (Yusuf Halaço lu, 1st to be elected in MHP list of candidates) would be elected easily, they tried to consolidate their votes in the CHP. Due to this strategic voting, I could not be elected as a MHP parliamentarian from Kayseri. Although Halaço lu was an Afshar, and his hometown was Sarız, one of Kayseri's districts; Afshar people, constituting an important population in Sarız, voted predominantly for the CHP

instead of the MHP. The MHP ranked third in the district after a very long period of time with 26.4 percent of votes, following the AKP with 41.9 percent and the CHP with 27.5 percent. That was a huge disappointment.

THE DEMOCRATIC OPENING PROCESS

The interviewees believe that there is a family legacy on which political party is supported by Circassians. Many interviewees underline the tendency of carrying anti-CHP sentiments among Circassians due to grievances experienced under the single-party rule. Assimilated through policies of the republic and interacted with many diverse groups around Anatolia, Circassians naturally developed a certain type of political participation, and it is not monolithic. For an important amount of people living in Uzunyayla region, religion is an essential part of their lives. Islamic or conservative discourses of political parties find support there. The AKP managed to bring this dimension with the relief they brought to different ethnic categories. A sociologist that I conducted interview with underlined that

The Islamic understanding among Circassians, especially in Uzunyayla, is very different compared to mainstream religious perspective in Turkey. As a social scientist researched extensively on Circassian religious leaders, I should underline the integral role of Circassian culture in religious understanding. The religious sentiments are strong among Circassians, yet the culture comes before everything else.

One interviewee (INT. 3), who is a former CHP member, acknowledges the AKP's well-received move as well. He stated that Circassians feel comfortable in terms of both expressing their ethnic and religious orientation during the AKP period. Yet, the president of the AKP Kayseri Administration (INT. 4)²⁶ refuses the idea that the AKP provides space for

²⁶ Kayseri, Kocasinan, 20 August 2014, interview by the author

different ethnic categories to express themselves. According to the president, the AKP only tries to bring people living in Turkey around the idea of being the citizen of the Republic of Turkey. Though I insisted on the principles of the Democratic Opening Process, the president ignored the ethnic or cultural dimension of the process. He argued that not even one citizen should avoid expressing that she is a citizen of the Republic of Turkey. As he talked about the AKP project by focusing on the presidential elections, he used the phrase ‘Turkish nation’. While rejecting the term Turkish citizen, he did comfortably use ‘Turkish nation’ for a couple of times.

Although the dimension that calls attention to the ethnic identity of the candidate appeared to be accurate in the quest for discovering the rationale behind the rise of the MHP in Uzunyayla, the assumed key role of the Democratic Opening Process seems to be actually weak. Circassians living in Uzunyayla did not vote based on the Democratic Opening Process as the semi-structured interviews reveal. The Democratic Opening Process is welcomed to the extent that it allowed those people expressing their identity, speaking or learning their mother tongue, and the solution to conflict with PKK. Those who think that they are excluded from the Democratic Opening Process as Circassians remain a small minority and seek for alternative ways of doing politics. One of the interviewees (INT. 1)²⁷ told that

The amount of Circassian people building their political participation strategy solely on hardcore Circassian nationalism and anti-Russian sentiments do not exceed 1 percent. This political attitude is more pervasive in younger generations, but it is not above 10 percent of all individuals belonging to those generations.

²⁷ Kayseri, Talas, 20 August 2014, interview by the author

One certain result is that most Circassians are supportive to the Democratic Opening Process and reform in the ethnicity regime. There is no concrete evidence for their pro-status quo stance in the case of ethnicity regime change.

ECONOMIC FACTORS

The economic dimension of the puzzle is also investigated through semi-structured interviews. There are some accounts from a couple of interviewees about negative economic conditions in Uzunyayla region, yet it does not seem that the economic dimension has been an essential factor in voting preferences. An interviewee (INT. 9)²⁸ argued that

People living in villages of Uzunyayla have no jobs. Unemployment is an important problem. The government policies concerning animal husbandry became destructive to those people. Outmigration mainly stemmed from adverse economic conditions appeared during the AKP period. People emptied the villages to find jobs elsewhere.

However, we lack concrete evidence to support this claim. It needs further analysis by laying out motivations of immigration, and this requires interaction with individuals moved from Uzunyayla. Only account to be evaluated as a negative development in economic terms during the AKP government is Canpolat's statement.

During my governorship period, we wanted to bring horse breeding activities back in Uzunyayla. This is both culturally and economically important for Circassians. We aimed to build horse farms and provide jobs for people. Yet, this initiative was prevented by some higher political authority.

²⁸ Kayseri, Kocasinan, 21 August 2014, interview by the author

Kaya (2010, p. 239) talks about this initiative as well. Nonetheless, the link between economic conditions in Uzunyayla region and voting for the MHP remains weak.

4.5 A Preliminary Assessment

Taking tremendous increase in vote share of the Turkish nationalist MHP in Circassian-populated Uzunyayla region in 2011 general elections as a departure point, the study attempts to understand how Circassians participate in political processes and why they prefer doing so. The nomination of ethnic candidates is demonstrated to have significant impact on the political participation of important number of Circassians. This seems a popular strategy that Circassians utilize due to the fact that the nomination of a Circassian candidate by a Turkish nationalist political party did not discourage a significant number of Circassians from voting for the MHP. The existence of similar examples from both earlier elections and different regions, Seyfettin Diner from Kayseri in 2002 and Engin Özkoç from Sakarya in 2011, should be underlined as well.

The conclusion part of this study sums up the aim, method, key points, and results of the thesis. The rationale behind the study, concrete contributions to the literature, and implications for academic studies and policies carried out in political domain are elaborated as well.

CONCLUSION

This thesis study focuses on Uzunyayla region located in central Anatolia, where Circassians constitute an ethnically homogenous population. Circassians historically lived in the North Caucasus and had to move to the Ottoman Empire as a result of decades-long attacks by the Romanov Empire. In 1864, they experienced a traumatic exile resulted in the death of hundreds of thousands of people. Circassians believe that it was an act of genocide inflicted upon them and commemorate the genocide every year on May 21st. Their settlement in the Ottoman Empire carries important implications for the way they were perceived by the ruling elites of the empire. In a period of heightened conflict between the Ottoman and Romanov empires, they were settled in a vertical line of residence from Sinop in the north to Hatay in the south based on the idea that Circassians would serve as a protective shield against a possible Russian attack from the Caucasus. The empire aimed to exploit their war-like characteristics and anti-Russian sentiments. Circassians lived mostly as slaves and peasants after being deported to the Ottoman Empire, yet they penetrated into the state apparatus during the long reign of Abdülhamid II. The loyalty and war capabilities of Circassians were utilized by the sultan. They continued to play key roles during the CUP era. One of the founders of the CUP, Mehmed Re id, was a Circassian. However, things began to change dramatically for them with the rise of Turkish nationalism. The seeds of the nationalist ideology were sowed during the CUP period, and it became the official state ideology of the Republic of Turkey founded in 1923. The Independence War years signified an important turning point for Circassians. Although there were some groups aiming to protect the sultanate or to declare autonomy or independence, most Circassians became part of the National Forces (Kuva-yi Milliye) and struggled against foreign invasion. Figures like Ethem, Ahmet Anzavur, Rauf Orbay, and Bekir Sami are known with their Circassian identity and they constitute some of the key characters of the national struggle. With the foundation of the

republic and the predominance of Turkish identity, Circassians became invisible in the public. The assimilation policy and practices of the republic aimed to create a nation solely based on Turkish identity. The denial of existence of various ethnic groups became the official state discourse. Circassians were not allowed to speak their languages and to establish associations. Ethem's disagreement with the new elites of the state was reflected as treason by a Circassian. Due to all those unfavorable conditions, Circassians either embraced Turkish identity by giving up on their Circassian identity or chose to remain invisible and concealed their identity. The republic damaged Circassians to a great extent during the single-party rule. The assimilation policies and practices had consequences still echoing today. Many Circassian languages are listed in the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger²⁹. Among 18 languages under threat in Turkey, four languages are spoken by Circassians, namely Abkhaz, Adyghe, Kabard-Cherkes, and Ubykh. According to the UNESCO Atlas, three of those languages are in a vulnerable position while the Ubykh language is extinct.

With the introduction of multi-party politics through the establishment of the DP in 1946 and coming to power in 1950, Circassians felt significant degree of relief. They began to establish associations though they had to be contented with naming those associations with geographical instead of ethnic names and utilizing them in terms of reviving and protecting culture. Their visibility in both public and political areas began to increase substantially. They set up associations and became part of mainstream politics via those associations to a great extent. Since it is very difficult to assess Circassian political participation in terms of voting between the years 1950 and 1991 due to data inadequacy, I attempt to sketch Circassian political participation during that period based on associational activities. Despite the fact that I only analyze voting behavior of Circassians from 1991 to 2011, it seems that they voted predominantly for center-right and conservative political parties since the beginning of multi-

²⁹ www.unesco.org/culture/languages-atlas/ (Accessed on 20 September 2014)

party elections in 1950. There are at least three reasons to assume such voting pattern. First, Circassians experienced remarkable grievances during the CHP rule that lasted for 27 years and relief with the DP coming to power. Second, the interviews I conducted with many Circassian intellectuals and politicians underline anti-CHP sentiments and the tendency to vote for successor political parties of the DP, like the AP, the ANAP, and the AKP. And third, as Kaya (2004) presents periods of Circassian political participation in relation with the role of associations, he states that neither socialists nor nationalists managed to address Circassian population.

First and second chapters of this study focused on the historical account of Circassians and their identity building mechanisms vis-à-vis repressing state ideology, both in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. Concerning the third chapter that focused on political participation of Circassians between the years 1950 and 2011, I should underline the lack of appropriate data on both Circassian population and election results. It is not possible to carry out an analysis other than provincial level with the data at hand. Therefore, rather than getting into such fruitless attempt, I break down the analysis into two parts, 1950-1991 and 1991-2011. While the associational activities constitute the major issue in the first part, voting behavior is the key concern of the second part. Two major points arise as a result of analysis carried out. First, while left-oriented political parties have considerable difficulty in terms of receiving votes of Circassians, political parties with Islamist, center-right, and conservative characteristics get tremendous support in regions populated by Circassians. Second, Circassians seem to give significant support to candidates with Circassian identity regardless of the political party. The CHP vote share in Uzunyayla region in 2002 and in Sakarya villages in 2011 demonstrate this trend. The vote share of the MHP in Uzunyayla in 2011 elections, as the key puzzle of this study, is also a reflection of this trend.

As indicated in the beginning of this section, Uzunyayla region constituted the central concern of this study. The comparison of two latest election results revealed that Circassians living in the region voted for the MHP significantly. The MHP managed to receive the vote share twice as much the vote share they received nationwide and their vote share in the region in the previous general election. Three key reasons of the significance of such puzzle are as the following:

1. The MHP is a political party armed with ultra Turkish nationalist discourse.
2. Uzunyayla is characterized by its Circassian population almost homogenously.
3. The vote share of the MHP declined nationwide in 2011 due to scandalous events that the party had to confront.

The reasons of such a tremendous increase in the MHP vote share are sought in the Democratic Opening Process, the nomination of a co-ethnic candidate, and economic factors. It is thought that Circassians feeling excluded from the process due to the lack of realization of their demands may vote for the MHP. A basic content analysis of the Democratic Opening Process document prepared by the AKP and PM Erdoğan's statement regarding Circassian demands demonstrate that Circassians have valid grounds for feeling excluded from the process. Yet, it was important to figure out if Circassians are against the Democratic Opening Process or they support it but experience disappointment with limited benefits offered by the process. As the interviews reveal, Circassians are apparently not against the Democratic Opening Process. Borrowing Aktürk's (2012) terms, the move from 'anti-ethnic' to 'multi-ethnic' regime is welcomed by Circassians. However, another dimension, the nomination of a co-ethnic candidate, is an important element to effect voting preferences of Circassians. The MHP nominated Nihat Canpolat, a Circassian by descent, as the second candidate from the region. Corroborated by the results of the interviews conducted, Circassians supported Canpolat to a great extent. Many people voted for the MHP for the first time in their lives.

One of the defining features of the political life in Uzunyayla region is the historical tension between Afshars and Circassians. Supporting ethnic candidates is a widespread strategy in the region. Based on the accounts provided by the interviewees, it may be concluded that the economic well-being of Circassians in the region has a negligible impact on voting preferences.

The voting behavior of Circassians has not been scrutinized thoroughly in the literature. By providing Circassian voting from 1991 to 2011, a meaningful contribution to the literature is intended. Furthermore, the role of culture, especially Xabze, in terms of political behavior of Circassians is laid out. The predominance of the AKP, voting for ethnic candidates, and the foundation of the ÇDP are analyzed based on two questions aiming to cover different aspects of political participation.

1. How do Circassians join mainstream Turkish politics?
2. Why do they utilize those particular strategies rather than other potential methods?

The key findings and implications of this study may be summarized as follows:

- The politics of ethnicity and ethnic voting persist.
- For Circassians, the Democratic Opening Process is an unprecedented initiative, yet they believe that the framework should be developed.
- The traditional Circassian culture is an undeniable element of every aspect of lives of Circassians and an important factor that affects the political participation mechanisms of those people.
- The grievances felt during the single-party rule and the relief with the end of that period caused Circassians to have anti-CHP sentiments and sympathy towards center-right, conservative, and Islamist political parties.

Last but not least, Circassian community in Turkey constitutes an ethnic category, to which social scientists have not been paying sufficient attention. Many aspects of Circassian ethnic category, history, culture, political behavior, and associational activities, contain invaluable elements that deserve special attention. Circassians voice their protest for insufficient number of analyses conducted and call for further studies in fields of anthropology, sociology, and political science. Hopefully, this study modestly serves to increase the level of attention paid to Circassian people in Turkey as well as in other countries. I would be content with attracting scholarly attention to a topic understudied but deserving better treatment as Circassians I met pointed out.

Appendix A: Circassian villages in Uzunyayla region

Village	Province	District
Akören	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Alamescit	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
A a ibeyçayır	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
A a ıborandere	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
A a ıhüyük	Sivas	Kangal
A a ıkaragöz	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
A a ıkızılçevlik	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Aygörmez	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Beserek	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Büyükgümü gün	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Büyükkabaktepe	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Cinliören	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Çukuryurt	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Demirciören	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Devederesi	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Dikilita (Dikili)	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Erdo an	Sivas	Gürün
Eskiyassıpınar	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
E meba 1	Sivas	Yıldızeli
Gebelek	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Hayriye	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Hilmiye	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Ilıca	Sivas	Yıldızeli
ınlıören	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Kaftangiyen	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Karabo az	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Karahalka	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Karakuyu	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Kavakköy	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Kaynar	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Kılıçmehmet	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Kırkgeçit	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Kırkpınar	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Kiremitli	Sivas	Yıldızeli
Kurba alık	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Ku çular	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Malakköy	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Methiye	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Olučkaya	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Ören ehir	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Panlı	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Pazarsu	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Saçaya 1	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Sö ütlü	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
erefiye	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Tahtaköprü	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Ta lıgeçit	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Ta oluk	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Tersakan	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Uzunpınar	Kayseri	Pınarba 1

Üçpınar	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Ya lıpınar	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Yahyabey	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Yeniassıpınar	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Yolkaya	Sivas	Yıldızeli
Yukarıbeyçayır	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Yukarıkaragöz	Kayseri	Pınarba 1
Yukarıkızılçevlik	Kayseri	Pınarba 1

A detailed report on election statistics of those villages are provided below:

1991 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 10,769

Number of valid votes: 8,439

Turnout: 78.37%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 3,113

ANAP: 1,664

RP: 2,548

SHP: 664

DSP: 443

1995 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 8,602

Number of valid votes: 6,734

Turnout: 78.28%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 1,671

ANAP: 929

RP: 2,668

CHP: 281

DSP: 452

MHP: 415

1999 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,942

Number of valid votes: 6,909

Turnout: 86.99%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 1,267

ANAP: 610

FP: 2,115

CHP: 387

DSP: 943

MHP: 810

2002 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 8,070

Number of valid votes: 5,996

Turnout: 74.30%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 659

AKP: 2,687

GP: 118

CHP: 1,113

MHP: 457

2007 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,846

Number of valid votes: 6,128

Turnout: 78.11%

Number of votes that political parties received:

AKP: 3,995

CHP: 599

MHP: 603

2011 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,011

Number of valid votes: 5,013

Turnout: 71.51%

Number of votes that political parties received:

AKP: 3,088

CHP: 534

MHP: 1,002

- Circassian villages are obtained from those four major sources:

http://www.uzunyaylakafkas.com/md_6/ct_UZUNYAYLA-KYLERi-VE-ERKESCE-iSiMLERi_18/

Website, Uzunyayla Kafkas Association, accessed on 21 October 2014

<http://www.circassiancenter.com/cc-turkiye/arastirma/0500-cerkeskoyleri.htm>

Website, Circassian center, accessed on 21 October 2014

<http://www.cerkes.net/serbest-alan/turkiye-diasporasindaki-cerkes-koyleri-t18633.html>

Forum, cerkes.net, accessed on 21 October 2014

http://www.nartajans.net/site/haberler_5573_turkiye_deki_cerkes_koyleri.html

Website, Nart Agency, accessed on 21 October 2014

Appendix B: Circassian villages in Sakarya and Düzce

Village	Province	District
Adliye	Sakarya	Merkez
Alancuma	Sakarya	Merkez
Bedilkadirbey	Sakarya	Akyazı
Bediltahirbey	Sakarya	Akyazı
Beylice	Sakarya	Hendek
Bıçkıdere	Sakarya	Akyazı
Çakallık	Sakarya	Hendek
Çayba 1	Sakarya	Merkez
Hüseyin eyh hsaniye	Sakarya	Hendek Karasu
Karadere	Sakarya	Hendek
Kayalarmemduhiye	Sakarya	Merkez
Kayalarre itbey	Sakarya	Merkez
Kemaliye	Sakarya	Merkez
Kurudil	Sakarya	Sö ütlü
Ma ara	Sakarya	Sö ütlü
Maksudiye	Sakarya	Geyve
So uksu	Sakarya	Hendek
Yanık	Sakarya	Sapanca
Yeniormanköy	Sakarya	Akyazı
Bostanyeri	Düzce	Merkez
Çalılık	Düzce	Çilimli
Çamlı	Düzce	Merkez
Çınarlı	Düzce	Merkez
Do anlı	Düzce	Merkez
Elmacık	Düzce	Gümü ova
Esenli	Düzce	Çilimli
Gölormanı	Düzce	Merkez
Karaçalı	Düzce	Merkez
Kızılcık	Düzce	Merkez
Kirazlı	Düzce	Merkez
Konaklı	Düzce	Merkez
Küçükmehtmet	Düzce	Merkez
Ku açması	Düzce	Merkez
Kutlu	Düzce	Merkez
Pa aormanı	Düzce	Merkez
Pınarlar	Düzce	Merkez
Sarayyeri	Düzce	Merkez
ıralık	Düzce	Merkez
Ta köprü	Düzce	Merkez

A detailed report on election statistics of those villages are provided below:

SAKARYA

1991 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,114

Number of valid votes: 5,984

Turnout: 84.12%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 1,849

ANAP: 1,479

RP: 1,245

SHP: 464

DSP: 915

1995 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 6,925

Number of valid votes: 5,903

Turnout: 85.24%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 1,745

ANAP: 1,296

RP: 1,557

CHP: 187

DSP: 699

MHP: 288

1999 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,036

Number of valid votes: 6,148

Turnout: 87.38%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 964

ANAP: 630

FP: 724

CHP: 661

DSP: 1,390

MHP: 1,416

2002 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,830

Number of valid votes: 6,480

Turnout: 82.76%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 429
ANAP: 158
AKP: 2,784
CHP: 756
GP: 1,579
MHP: 271
SP: 147

2007 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,919
Number of valid votes: 6,678
Turnout: 84.33%

Number of votes that political parties received:

AKP: 3,423
CHP: 1055
MHP: 615
DP: 391
GP: 742
SP: 337

2011 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 8,173
Number of valid votes: 7,180
Turnout: 87.85%

Number of votes that political parties received:

AKP: 4,137
CHP: 1,906
MHP: 690

DÜZCE

1991 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 6,604
Number of valid votes: 6,141
Turnout: 92.99%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 1,857
ANAP: 1,812
RP: 1,586
SHP: 209
DSP: 556

1995 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,764

Number of valid votes: 6,764

Turnout: 87.12%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 1,091

ANAP: 1,690

RP: 2,355

CHP: 187

DSP: 302

MHP: 401

1999 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 7,821

Number of valid votes: 6,902

Turnout: 88.25%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 802

ANAP: 955

FP: 1,867

CHP: 143

DSP: 1,030

MHP: 1,765

2002 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 8,405

Number of valid votes: 7,220

Turnout: 85.90%

Number of votes that political parties received:

DYP: 663

ANAP: 342

AKP: 4,234

CHP: 348

GP: 458

MHP: 318

SP: 313

2007 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 10,271

Number of valid votes: 9,227

Turnout: 89.83%

Number of votes that political parties received:

AKP: 6,319

CHP: 678

MHP: 719

DP: 409

GP: 291

SP: 440

2011 Elections

Number of eligible voters: 11,579

Number of valid votes: 10,489

Turnout: 90.59%

Number of votes that political parties received:

AKP: 7,669

CHP: 823

MHP: 1,411

- Circassian villages are obtained from those three major sources:

<http://www.circassiancenter.com/cc-turkiye/arastirma/0500-cerkeskoyleri.htm>

Website, Circassian center, accessed on 21 October 2014

<http://www.cerkes.net/serbest-alan/turkiye-diasporasindaki-cerkes-koyleri-t18633.html>

Forum, cerkes.net, accessed on 21 October 2014

http://www.nartajans.net/site/haberler_5573_turkiye_deki_cerkes_koyleri.html

Website, Nart Agency, accessed on 21 October 2014

Appendix C: Demographic information about interviewees

Number	Gender	Occupation	Date of interview	Place of interview
1	Male	Sociologist, PhD student at Erciyes University	20 August 2014	Talas, Kayseri
2	Male	PR expert	20 August 2014	Talas, Kayseri
3	Male	Former CHP member, owner of a store selling agricultural pesticides	20 August 2014	Kocasinan, Kayseri
4	Male	President of AKP Kayseri provincial organization	20 August 2014	Kocasinan, Kayseri
5	Male	Former vice president of AKP district-level organization in Kocasinan, Kayseri	21 August 2014	Talas, Kayseri
6	Male	CHP candidate in 2002 general elections	21 August 2014	Erciyes University, Kayseri
7	Male	MHP candidate in 2011 general elections	22 August 2014	Ankara
8	Male	Former CHP member and head of a Circassian organization in Ankara	22 August 2014	Ankara
9	Male	SP member with close links with prominent figures of Turkish government	21 August 2014	Kocasinan, Kayseri
10	Male	Vice president of MHP Kayseri provincial organization	21 August 2014	Kocasinan, Kayseri
11	Male	Editor of an online Circassian magazine	25 August 2014	istanbul
12	Male	Columnist on a website built by Circassian intellectuals	26 August 2014	istanbul

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akgündüz, A. (1998). Migration to and from Turkey, 1783-1960: types, numbers and ethno-religious dimensions. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 24(1), 97-120.
- Akman, A. (2004). Modernist Nationalism: Statism and National Identity in Turkey. *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 32(1), 23-51.
- Ak in, S. (1987). *Jön Türkler ve tihat ve Terakki*. stanbul: Remzi Kitabevi.
- Aktürk, . (2009). Persistence of the Islamic Millet as an Ottoman Legacy: Mono-Religious and Anti-Ethnic Definition of Turkish Nationhood. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 45(6), 893-909.
- Aktürk, . (2012). *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia and Turkey*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Avagyan, A. (2004). *Osmanlı mparatorlu u ve Kemalist Türkiye'nin Devlet- ktidar Sisteminde Çerkesler*. stanbul: Belge Yayınları.
- Benvenuto, J., & Lim, J. (2013). The Mid-Nineteenth Century Genocidal "Pacification" of the Circassians in the Russian Caucasus. Retrieved 3 March, 2014, from <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/center-study-genocide-conflict-resolution-and-human-rights/mid-nineteenth-century-genocidal-pacifica>
- Berber, F. (2011). 19. Yüzyılda Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Yapılan Göçler. *Karadeniz Ara tırmaları*, 31, 17-49.
- Betrozov, R. (2009). *Çerkeslerin Etnik Tarihi*. Ankara: Kafdav Yayınları.
- Bird, K. (2004). *The Political Representation of Women and Ethnic Minorities in Established Democracies: A Framework for Comparative Research*. AMID Working Paper Series.
- Birnir, J. K. (2007). *Ethnicity and Electoral Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bochsler, D. (2010). Electoral Rules and the Representation of Ethnic Minorities in Post-Communist Democracies. *European Yearbook of Minority Issues*, 7, 153-180.

- Bora, T. (1999). Türk Milliyetçiliği, Kültürel Kimlik ve Azınlıklar *Türkiye Çerkeslerinde Sosyo-kültürel Değişim* (pp. 17-23). Ankara: KAF DER Yayınları.
- Buxton, C. R. (1909). *Turkey in Revolution*. London: T. Fisher Unwin.
- Canefe, N. (2002). Turkish Nationalism and Ethno-symbolic Analysis: the Rules of Exception. *Nations and Nationalism*, 8(2), 133-155.
- Chandra, K. (2005). Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability. *Perspectives on Politics*, 3(2), 235-252.
- Chandra, K. (2006). What is Ethnic Identity and Does It Matter. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9, 397-424.
- Cuthel, D. (2003). The Circassian Sürgün. *Ab Imperio*, 2, 139-168.
- Çağaptay, S. (2009). *Türkiye’de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir?* İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Çarkoğlu, A. (2011). Turkey’s 2011 General Elections: Towards a Dominant Party System? *Insight Turkey*, 13(3), 43-62.
- Çelikpala, M. (2006). From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 42(3), 423-446.
- Çiçek, N. (2009). "Talihsiz Çerkeslere İngiliz Peksimeti": İngiliz Arşiv Belgelerinde Büyük Çerkes Göçü (Eylül 1864-Mayıs 1865). *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, 64(1), 57-88.
- Deringil, S. (1991). Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State: The Reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909). *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 23(3), 345-359.
- Doğan, S. N. (2009). *Formations of Diaspora Nationalism: the Case of Circassians in Turkey*. (Unpublished PhD Thesis), Sabancı University, İstanbul.
- Dündar, F. (1999). *Türkiye Nüfus Sayımlarında Azınlıklar*. İstanbul: Doz Yayıncılık.

- Dünder, F. (2008). *ttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları skân Politikası (1913-1918)*. stanbul: leti im Yayınları.
- Fearon, J. D. (2003). Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country. *Journal of Economic Growth*, 8(2), 195-222.
- Fromkin, D. (2009). *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Gabriel, R. A. (1972). A New Theory of Ethnic Voting. *Polity*, 4(4), 405-428.
- Gammer, M. (1994). *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar: Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Daghestan*. London: Frank Cass.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gingeras, R. (2009). *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gökalp, Z. (1976). *Türkçülü üin Esasları*. stanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı 1.
- Gün, G. (2013). *Flight and Refuge in 19th Century Europe: The Muhacirin Commission of the Ottoman Empire*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- Hanio lu, M. . (2008). *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Henze, P. B. (1996). Circassian Resistance to Russia. In M. B. Broxup (Ed.), *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance towards the Muslim World* (pp. 62-112). London: Hurst & Company.
- Hutchinson, J., & Smith, A. D. (Eds.). (1996). *Ethnicity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ireland, P. R. (1994). *The Policy Challenge of Ethnic Diversity: Immigrant Politics in France and Switzerland*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Jaimoukha, A. (2001). *The Circassians: A Handbook*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Jane, . (2006). Osmanlılarda skân Politikası ve Çerkesler. *Nart Dergisi*, 52.
- Jersild, A. (2002). *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845-1917*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Karata , Ö. (2013). 19. Yüzyılın ikinci Yarısında Osmanlı Devleti'ne skân Olunan Çerkes Toplumunda Sosyal Sınıfla ma ve Kölelik. *CBÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 11(1), 404-426.
- Karpat, K. H. (1995). Kimlik Sorununun Türkiye'de Tarihi, Sosyal ve deolojik Geli mesi. In S. en (Ed.), *Türk Aydın ve Kimlik Sorunu*. stanbul: Ba lam Yayınları.
- Karpat, K. H. (2003). *Osmanlı Nüfusu (1830-1914) Demografik ve Sosyal Özellikleri*. stanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları.
- Kaya, A. (2004). Political Participation Strategies of the Circassian Diaspora in Turkey. *Mediterranean Politics*, 9(2), 221-239.
- Kaya, A. (2005). Cultural Reification in Circassian Diaspora: Stereotypes, Prejudices, and Ethnic Relations. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31(1), 129-149.
- Kaya, A. (2010). Anadolu'da Çerkes Diasporası: Etnokültürel ve Siyasal Yapı. In B. Pusch & T. Wilkoszewski (Eds.), *Türkiye'ye Uluslararası Göç* (pp. 225-249). stanbul: Kitap Yayınevi.
- Kaya, A. (2011). *Türkiye'de Çerkesler: Diasporada Gelene in Yeniden adı*. stanbul: stanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- King, C. (2010). *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Köremezli, . (2004). *The Place of the Ottoman Empire in the Russo-Circassian War (1830-1864)*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Lewis, B. (1962). *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. London: Oxford University Press.

- Lewis, M. W. (2012). The Politics of Genocide Claims and the Circassian Diaspora. Retrieved 4 March, 2014, from <http://www.geocurrents.info/historical-geography/the-politics-of-genocide-claims-and-the-circassian-diaspora>
- Lijphart, A. (1999). *Patterns of Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Macfie, A. L. (1998). *The End of the Ottoman Empire 1908-1923*. New York: Longman.
- Manzano, S., & Sanchez, G. R. (2010). Take One for the Team? Limits of Shared Ethnicity and Candidate Preferences. *Political Research Quarterly*, 63(3), 568-580.
- Mardin, . (1992). *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908*. stanbul: leti im Yayınları.
- Mardin, . (1996). *Yeni Osmanlı Dü üncesinin Do u u*. stanbul: leti im Yayınları.
- Mardin, . (2000). *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas*. Princeton, NJ: Syracuse University Press.
- Martin, N. (2012). *Do ethnic minority candidates mobilise ethnic minority voters? Evidence from the 2010 General Election*. Paper presented at the the EPOP (Elections, Public Opinion and Parties) Conference, University of Oxford.
- Miller, A. H. (1971). Ethnicity and Political Behavior: A Review of Theories and an Attempt at Reformulation. *The Western Political Quarterly*, 24(3), 483-500.
- Namıtok, A. (2003). *Çerkeslerin Kökeni*. Ankara: Kafdav Yayınları.
- Natho, K. I. (2009). *Circassian History*. New Jersey: Xlibris Corporation.
- Öke, M. K. (1982). “ ark Meselesi” ve II. Abdülhamid’in Garb Politikaları (1876-1909). *Osmanlı Ara tırmaları*, III, 247-276.
- Özbek, B. (1991). *Çerkes Tarihi Kronolojisi*. Ankara: Kafda ı Yayınları.
- Özsaray, M. (2011). *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkasya - I*. stanbul: Kafkas Vakfı Yayınları.
- Parenti, M. (1967). Ethnic Politics and the Persistence of Ethnic Identification. *The American Political Science Review*, 61(3), 717-726.

- Pinson, M. (2001). Kırım Sava ından Sonra Osmanlılar Tarafından erkeslerin Rumeli'ne skâni. In K. Derne i (Ed.), *erkeslerin Sürgünü 21 Mayıs 1864 (Tebli ler, Belgeler, Makaleler)* (pp. 52-77). Ankara: Kafkas Derne i Yayınları.
- Posner, D. N. (2005). *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Poulton, H. (1997). *Top Hat, Grey Wolf and Crescent: Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic*. London: Hurst & Company.
- Rahme, J. G. (1999). Namık Kemal's Constitutional Ottomanism and Non-Muslims. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 10(1), 23-39.
- Richmond, W. (2013). *The Circassian Genocide*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Serbes, N., & Ya an, A. (2010). *Tarihteki "Hain" erkesler*. Ankara: Phoenix Yayınevi.
- Shaw, S. J., & Shaw, E. K. (1977). *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Shenfield, S. D. (1999). The Circassians: A Forgotten Genocide? In M. Levene & P. Roberts (Eds.), *The Massacre in History* (pp. 149-162). New York: Berghahn Books.
- Smeets, R. (1995). Circassia. *Central Asian Survey*, 14(1), 107-125.
- Smith, A. D. (1993). *National Identity*. Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press.
- Spencer, C. (1855). *Turkey, Russia, the Black Sea, and Circassia*. London: George Rutledge & Company.
- Sugar, P. F. (1994). Introduction. In P. F. Sugar & J. Lederer (Eds.), *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*. Seattle: Washington University Press.
- en, Ö. (1994). 19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti'ndeki Köle Ticaretinde Kafkasya Göçmenlerinin Rolü. *Toplum ve Ekonomi*, 6, 171-192.

- Toledano, E. R. (1998). *Slavery and Abolition in the Ottoman Middle East*. Washington: University of Washington Press.
- Toumarkine, A. (2001). Kafkas ve Balkan Göçmen Dernekleri: Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik *Türkiye’de Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik* (pp. 425-450). stanbul: leti im Yayınları.
- Traho, R. (1991). Circassians. *Central Asian Survey*, 10(1/2), 1-63.
- Tunaya, T. Z. (1984). *Türkiye’de Siyasal Partiler Cilt I: kinci Me rutiyet Dönemi 1908-1918*. stanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları.
- Tunaya, T. Z. (1986). *Türkiye’de Siyasal Partiler Cilt II: Mütareke Dönemi 1918-1922*. stanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları.
- Weber, M. (1996). The Origins of Ethnic Group. In J. Hutchinson & A. D. Smith (Eds.), *Ethnicity* (pp. 35-40). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Welch, S., & Studlar, D. T. (1985). The Impact of Race on Political Behaviour in Britain. *British Journal of Political Science*, 15(4), 528-539.
- Wolfinger, R. E. (1965). The Development and Persistence of Ethnic Voting. *The American Political Science Review*, 59(4), 896-908.
- Ye en, M. (2004). Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 40(6), 51-66.
- Zilfi, M. (2012). *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Zürcher, E. J. (2001). *Turkey: A Modern History*. New York: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd.