

SAMPLE BACK COVER

# CONCEPTION OF THE TRADITIONAL ALEVI VALUES AND ALTERATION OF THE TRADITION

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by

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*Dedicated to my dear wife and lovely daughter...*

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## **ABSTRACT**

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**May 2011**

### **CONCEPTION OF THE TRADITIONAL ALEVI VALUES AND ALTERATION OF THE TRADITION**

This thesis aims at manifesting the type of alteration in the conception of social-religious doctrines that form Anatolian Alevism and the basis of traditional Anatolian Alevism within the scale of the scope of adult generation Alevi and explaining the reasons for the ongoing alterations in the tradition.

The thesis is consisted of five parts apart from the Introduction. The theme and the aim of the thesis and the techniques used in the research are explained in the Introduction part. The First Chapter briefly focuses on the definitions of Alevism and Anatolian Alevism along with its emergence. In the Second Chapter, religious beliefs that have impact on the identity of Anatolian Alevism will be emphasized on. The Third Chapter will manifest socio-religious structure of Anatolian Alevism and its peculiar social institutions. The relationship of Anatolian Alevism with the central government will be described in the Fourth Chapter. Results of questionnaires will be interpreted in conclusion.

#### **Key Words**

Alevi, Alevism, Identity, Migration, Social Change, Dedeship, Musahipship (Musahiplik), *Dar* and *Düşkünlük*, Cem

## **KISA ÖZET**

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**Mayıs 2011**

### **GELENEKSEL ALEVİ DEĞERLERİNİN ALGILANIŞ BIÇIMI VE GELENEĞİN DEĞİŞİMİ**

Bu tezin amacı, yetişkin kuşak Aleviler ölçeğinde, Anadolu Aleviliğini oluşturan sosyal-dinsel kurumlarda ve geleneksel Anadolu Aleviliğinin esaslarının algılanışında ne tür bir deęişim olduğunu ortaya koymak ve gelenekte Ageanılan deęişimin nedenlerini açıklamaktır.

Belirtilen amaçla hazırlanan tez giriş bölümü hariç beş bölümden oluşmaktadır. Giriş kısmında tezin konusu, amacı ile araştırmada kullanılan teknikler açıklanmıştır. Birinci bölümde genel olarak Aleviliğinin ve Anadolu Aleviliğinin ne olduğu ile Anadolu Aleviliğinin nasıl ortaya çıktığı üzerinde kısaca durulacaktır. İkinci bölümde Anadolu Alevi kimliğini etkileyen dini inanışlar belirtilecektir. Üçüncü bölümde Anadolu Aleviliğinin toplumsal-inançsal yapısı ile Anadolu Aleviliğine özgü toplumsal kurumlar açıklanacaktır. Dördüncü bölümde ise Anadolu Aleviliğinin Merkezi iktidar ile olan ilişkileri açıklanacak ve son bölümde ise elde edilen anket sonuçları yorumlanacaktır.

#### **Anahtar Kelimeler**

Alevi, Alevilik, Kimlik, Göç, Toplumsal Deęişim, Dedelik, Musahiplik, Dar ve Düşkünlük, Cem

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
CEM VAKFI	Cumhuriyetçi Eğitim ve Kültür Merkezi Vakfı (Foundation of Republican Centre for Education and Culture)
BDP	Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (Peace and Democracy Party)
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
DSP	Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party)
EMEP	Emek Partisi (Labour Party)
İP	İşçi Partisi (Labour Party)
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party)
ÖDP	Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi (Freedom and Solidarity Party)
SP	Saadet Partisi (Felicity Party)
TKP	Türkiye Komünist Partisi (Turkish Communist Party)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The communities are shaped in accordance with the social and political conditions they are in. The religious groups that form the society face alterations when changes take place in the period of time, geographical field, social and political structure of the communities. Hence, it is reasonable to say that religious groups in Turkish geography have faced rapid or slow changes and they are still in a period of change. The two main reasons of these changes are the foundation of Turkish Republic instead of the Ottoman State and the emigrations after 1950s. These two events altered Orthodox Islamic concept (Sunnism) as well as the Heterodox Islamic concept (Alevism).

By the proclamation of the Republic, Alevism that had been in the rural areas of Anatolia throughout the history moved to the centre. Since getting close to the centre meant having closer relationships with the religious, social and bureaucratic institutions of the centre, social and religious institutions of Alevism faced changes as they were based on "living with the least relationships". By the emigrations from villages to metropolitan cities, the Alevi community was introduced to "the other", and they were no more a closed society. Meeting with 'the other' paved the way for the Alevi individuals to revise their ways of life. Religious practices and worships, which require an Alevi community consisted of individuals with certain characteristics, experienced changes as the Alevis separated from each other physically as well as mentally with the migration. This thesis aims at designating changes in the social and religious concepts that form Anatolian Alevism and those experienced in the traditional Anatolian Alevism within the scale of adult generation Alevis. Whether there have been changes in Alevi tradition, if so, what reasons are behind and how they appear in Alevi religious-social institutions and Alevi individuals will be detected in the thesis.

The greatest problem waiting for those who are eager to study Alevism is the problem of defining 'Alevism'. How Alevism vary according to Alevi and Sunni scholars, Alevi foundations and association. On account of the fact that there is no common definition, the first chapter of the Thesis will explore the reasons of the various meanings providing number of definitions of Alevism. The first chapter also discusses the meaning and emergence of Anatolian Alevism briefly.

There are different perceptions regarding Alevism in various geographies of the world. Since our study focuses on Alevism in Anatolia, the second chapter of the thesis will deal with the definition of Anatolian Alevism and its differences from other Alevi understandings.

One of the basic characteristics of Anatolian Alevism is its syncretism. In other words, various religions, sects and cultures had impact on the formation of the identity of Anatolian Alevism. In order to observe the changes in Anatolian Alevism, it is essential to know the factors that formed it. Therefore, the second part of the thesis focuses on the things that affected the identity of Anatolian Alevism i.e. Bektashism, Shi'ism, Batinite, Sufism, Turkish culture and beliefs among the Turks prior to Islamic era.

In an attempt to understand whether there is any change in traditional Anatolian Alevism, it is essential to know its social and religious structure. It is for this reason that the fourth chapter of the thesis will discuss and define various concepts that form religious identity of Anatolian Alevism i.e. belief of God-Muhammad-Ali, four doors-forty positions, three sunnah-seven obligations. The chapter will also emphasize on social concepts that are distinct characteristics of Anatolian Alevism. These are *Dedeship (Dedelik)*, *musahipship (musahiplik)*, *dar* and *düşkünlük*, and *cem* ceremony.

Traditional Anatolian Alevism's relationship with the central government is the most important factor that affected the formation of its social and religious institutions. Thus, the fifth chapter of the thesis discusses



the relationships the Anatolian Alevi have had with the central government throughout the history and their political preferences.

Finally, the sixth chapter of the thesis interprets the survey results, interviews and observations with number of tables.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Before designating a topic for the thesis, in order to pay attention to the originality, the works conducted on the Alevism in Turkey were scanned through National Thesis Centre<sup>1</sup> of Higher Education Council. After scanning the thesis on Alevism, probable topics for thesis were listed and the opinions of academics were consulted. Finally, this work commenced.

This work of thesis began with designating and scanning written literature. In literature review, it was seen that the works on Alevism are divided into three parts. The first of them are the works carried out by the theologians that generally invite the Alevi to "the right way". The second group is the emotion-oriented works aiming at self expression written by the Alevi writers. The third group of works is those written by academicians dealing with Alevism scientifically. The fact that there are various literary works on Alevism raises the question 'which one is right'? In order to answer this question, the question was asked to Alevi in field works. Owing to the fact that the aim of our work is to detect socio-cultural changes occurred in traditional Anatolian Alevism, field research is given prominence. Hence, questionnaire, observation and interview techniques were used to designate the alterations in Alevi society as well as the Alevi individuals. Some parts of the interviews were recorded with a tape recorder and others with note taking method. However, some of the interviews were not recorded as they were developed in a chatting environment.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://tez2.yok.gov.tr/>

In preparing survey questions, previously designed questionnaires were scrutinized carefully. On the one hand required readings were done and on the other hand questionnaire was designed. After preparing the questionnaire, a number of academics were consulted and some of the questions were changed upon their suggestions. During the application of the survey, it was observed that while adult generation was eager to join the survey, old generation was quite reluctant. On account of unwillingness of old generation to participate in survey, the questionnaire was applied to adult generation Alevis. The alteration in traditional Alevism was designated with the answers of adult generation Alevis and interviews with the young and old generation Alevis.

In order to detect the age interval of adult generation, developmental psychology literature was scanned. On account of the factors such as Conditions of various socio-economic classes, nations, cultures, historical events, personality differences, it was seen that developmental theories could not designate stages of adulthood accurately (Onur, 2008:74-86,101). Hence, faculty members of the Psychology Department were consulted. The youth between the ages of 18-30 are considered as young, 31 and above are considered as mid-adult generation. The interpretation of the survey was carried out according to this classification.

At the beginning of the thesis works, Cem Foundation was asked for help. Having arrived at certain level in literature review, an interview of 2,6 hours with Ayhan AYDIN, Director of the Public Relations Department of Cem Foundation, who has conducted many studies on Alevis, was carried out. The interview was recorded with a tape recorder. Upon his recommendations, along with Cem Foundation, I attended International Hacı Bektaş Veli Memorial Ceremony and Culture-Art Activities held on 14 August 2009 in Nevşehir. There were good opportunities to have observations during one day and one night stay in Hacı Bektaş and 17 hours journey. An interview with Şükrü Dede (aged 60 years above), Dede of Istanbul Kırâç Cemhouse,

and Yılmaz Dede (aged between 35-40 years), Kocaeli Derice Cemhouse Dede, took place for 4,45 hours on 15 August 2009. The interview was recorded with a tape recorder. There was also an unrecorded interview with Hüseyin Dede (aged 60 years above), who is not conducting a dedeship in any Cemhouse now. There were interviews with twelve young, adult and old generation man-woman Alevi. These interviews were not recorded for spontaneity. I have also attended and observed cem ceremony that lasted for two hours in the same evening. (I have attended three cem ceremonies during the course of the research). I have also experience of sleeping under the same roof with thirty Alevi 'cans' and I have had very valuable opportunities to have conversations with Alevi dedes and other cans. Hac-i Bektaş tomb was visited on 16 August 2009 and *Deliktaş* (stone with a hole)<sup>2</sup> and the water, believed to be sacred, were seen and the attitudes of the Alevi were observed. In these visits as well as the Cem ceremonies the attitudes of the older generation Alevi and adult generation Alevi were observed. Data recorded with a recording device was analyzed and ill-constructed sentences were made meaningful.

Meanwhile, Serçeşme Association was also visited three times on account of the fact that Cem Foundation might have been inadequate in representing extensive range of Alevi identity and may remain inadequate in designating changes in Anatolian Alevism. During these visits, there were survey applications as well as conversations with 26 Alevi that visited the association. It was observed that the survey participants were affected from the people around them, they could not express their opinions freely and they were guided by old and prominent figures in the group. In order to obtain accurate information, survey texts were transferred to interactive environment.<sup>3</sup> With the help of Facebook social sharing network, administrators of 78 Facebook websites formed by the Alevi in Turkey and

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<sup>2</sup> A cave in Nevşehir, where Hacibektaş-ı Veli used to pray and thus is considered as holy by the Alevi. The Alevi believe that those who pass through Deliktaş are purified from their sins and become sinless.

<sup>3</sup> <https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dEtGaGRRRldxWXQyWjBBOWthamJa0E6MQ>

abroad were communicated and members were requested to participate in the surveys through the link sent to their email addresses. Thus, despite the wideness of the universe, probable financial and temporal problems were solved. As an outcome of a work of the length of two months 525 Alevi from 45 different cities and abroad participated in the questionnaire without being under the influence of anyone.

During our work of thesis, I became member of about 100 facebook websites and followed the discussions there. Furthermore, the website that are launched by the Alevi were scrutinized and their attitudes towards Alevism and the institutions of Alevism as well as their reactions to social daily events were observed. This is how Alevi, who moved to metropolitan cities in different parts of the country from the villages of Anatolia through some emigrations and those abroad staying in a wide range of area, were reached.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **CONCEPTS OF ALEVISM- ANATOLIAN ALEVISM**

For those willing to study Alevism in Anatolia, one of the most significant problems is how to define Alevism on account of the fact that even today there is no widely accepted definition of Alevism. There are people who see Alevism as a philosophy of life as well as those there are also ones that defines Alevism as a distinct culture, a different way of understanding, a sect and an expression of real Turkism. Even those who perceive Alevism as a concept of religion do not come in terms with each other on whether it is in Islam or out of Islam. The fact that there are Kurdish Alevi as well as the Turkish Alevi involve ethnic elements in defining Alevism, makes the definition of Alevism harder (Shankland: 2003:18). The reasons why there is no widely accepted definition of Alevism are: those who identify themselves as Alevi attribute different meanings to Alevism. Existence of ideological-political surroundings that define Alevism in the way they want to see, and the lack of information due to insufficiency of the researches on the Alevism, and the effects formed by the Sunni people, who have no information other than what they hear, misinformation and prediction on Alevism. Therefore, under the complex circumstances, to define Alevism emerges questions of which period, where, between whom, and according to whom (Arabacı, 2000: 26).

Among the reasons why a widely accepted Alevi definition cannot be made are also the fact that Alevism has a syncretic structure, there has always been dominance of oral culture, not being able to form an objective history while there was a transition from oral culture to written one during the proclamation of the Republic and instead producing an Alevi history based on mythological elements, and the way of the life of Alevi i.e. living

unaware of each other and away from the centre. In addition, the fact that Alevism was desired to be used ideologically by the Kemalist elites as well as by those having leftist ideologies during the Republican Era can also be shown among the reasons. "On the other hand dedes, who are in position of being a social leader and guide demonstrate different conceptions and applications depending on the region, which makes the perception of a single Alevism and an application of single Alevism more complicated. "(Yılmaz, 2005:21)

Moreover, Alevism is not limited to the Alevism in Anatolia. There are different perceptions of Alevism in the world owing to the reasons that "the attributions Alevi communities make for Caliph Ali are different from each other, the family lineage of Caliph Ali accepted by the Alevi communities are different from one another, the rituals, worships and ceremonies in the Alevi communities are different from each other, and the differences of the sources that Alevi communities are fed." (Aktaş, 2008). For instance, it is known that there are various forms of Alevi beliefs in countries like Yemen, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan. "Alevism gained different meanings depending on geographical region, ethnic background and cultural structure. What is more, these beliefs and practices, which have nothing in common, except the love of Caliph Ali and Ehl-i Bayt, show differences even in the way they show love and the dedication to Caliph Ali." (Yılmaz, 2005:32). As a result of these differences, the notion of Alevism is known as Ismailia in Pakistan, Jafari in Iran, Zeydi in Egypt and Yemen, Nusaiyri in Syria and Durzi sect in Lebanon (Türkdoğan, 1995:397). As stated by Bruinessen, Alevism as a term is used as super-concept to define heterodox communities that have beliefs and rituals quite distinct from each other. (Bruinessen, 2005:118).

The fact that Alevism gain meaning in different shapes depending on geographical region, ethnic background and cultural structure make the explanation of the term of Alevism and the specification of which Alevism concept we deal in this study obligatory.

## 1.1 What is Alevism?

"The word Alevi, whose lexical meaning is 'belong to Ali' is used in different meanings in various fields. To illustrate more, in Islamic Sufi literature, it is the name of the cults that reaches to Prophet Muhammad in a sequence through Caliph Ali. In Islamic History, it is also the name of some of the dynasties, who are descendants of Caliph Ali, in the region of Morocco-Algeria. On the other hand, in the history of Islamic sects, it is synonymous with 'Shi'a' for those who see Caliph Ali as the greatest companion of the Prophet Muhammad and who became Caliph with the appointment of God and the Prophet." (Fiğlalı, 2000:104)

"Alevism, with most distinct features, is the general name given to deep respect, love and partisan religious and political groups shown to *Ehl-i Beyt* of Prophet Muhammad, and Caliph Ali and his descendents. It is also a super identity that includes *Imamiyye* (including the spirit of *Isna Asheriyye*, *Jaferiya*), who defends to be the Caliph of Caliph Ali and Prophet Muhammad, *Zeydiyye*, *Ismailie* along with *Galiye*, *Muellihe*, *Ali-Ilahis*, *Qizilbash*, and those belief that see Caliph Ali in the position of Divinity such as *'hulul*, *'tenasuht* and *'ibahd*." (Subaşı, 2008:69)

To Melikoff, "in historical context Alevi means a descendent of Ali and this is how it is understood when used in Iran; it is emergence in Turkey aiming at naming (heterodox) Islamic sect that is against tradition and the community, took place only towards the 19th century." (Melikoff, 2006:51). Fuat Bozkurt confirms Melikoff in the definition of the word Alevi. (Bozkurt, 2006:2).

In our study, the concept of Alevism will be used for religious groups that identify themselves with the profound love, respect and partisanship that they demonstrate towards Caliph Ali and his descendents and are formed within the Anatolian territory throughout the history. In other words, when the word Alevism mentioned, it refers to Alevism in Anatolia.

## 1.2 Definition of Anatolian Alevism

As mentioned above, it is highly complex to define Anatolian Alevism on which everyone will be compromised. On account of the fact that there is no commonly accepted definition of Alevism by the entire Anatolian Alevi community, the perceptions and applications of Alevism also show differences. The saying "the way is one but the means to reach the way is a thousand and one" show how wide the range of differences within the scope of Alevi belief.

While Reha Çamuroğlu (2008) defines Anatolian Alevism as a heterodox belief that identifies itself within the symbolic structure of Islam and lived within the cultural generation of Islam (p.43), Fuat Bozkurt (2006) defines it as a religion of a primitive community (p. 174). However, to Mehmet Eröz (1990), Alevism is a conception of the protection of pre-Islamic religious beliefs brought from the Central Asia by the Turkmen communities under Islamic polish with the name 'Alevism' and is based on basic Turkish traditions and also partly Islamic belief. (pp. 88-89). Defining Alevism as a local interpretation of Islam outside the boundary of Orthodox Islam, Hakan Yavuz states that Alevism is not an ethnic group (p.77). Necdet Subaşı (2008) remarks that Alevism has the characteristics of a socio-religious group, but the fact that belonging to Alevism is linked to the birth and is hereditary, and that Alevis have a boundary from the other groups, and that they are recognized as a distinct group from the external world, pave the way for them to be evaluated as an ethnic group as well (p.83).

Melikoff (2006) names Anatolian Alevism as "Qizilbashness" (*Kızılbaşlık*) and states that it is a profound and very old religion designated with its characteristics of syncretism, exceptionalism, and noncompliance with the traditions (marginal and anti-conformist) and rejection of settled order... What is mentioned here is not a sect but a religious system that is



intermingled with each other like a mosaic and that is formed by different elements based on very old history. This religious system is rather than being a distinct religion, it is a religious tradition, which has been affected by various and innumerable factors within the time being and interpreted with esoteric approach. (pp. 110-111).

There are different perceptions of Anatolian Alevism for the Alevi and Sunni scholars, and moreover Alevi associations and foundations are seen represent different perceptions. It is possible to reduce the Alevism into four main groups which do not divide from each other with clear cuts:

The first group is what we can call as "materialist", which was formed during the industrialization, urbanization and general modernization of the contemporary Turkey. This section, which defines Alevism as a public movement and an ideology that supports the overwhelmed ones and thus an element of class struggle, can also be seen as a tendency that produces Marxist Alevi theology. The groups that are centered around Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Association see themselves within this ideology. In addition to the differences in their doctrines from each other in terms of political issues and Kurdish nationalism, they believe that it is a wrong analysis to characterize Alevism as Islam. What is more, Alevism is a way of life influenced by not only one but various religions... In addition to having a wide range, the second section sees mainly itself as a movement in a place at the corner of heterodox corner of Islamic Sufism. The basic thesis of this group, which centers mainly around the associations and convents of Hacı Bektaş Veli, is that they see religious dedication to Alevism and inclination to God in "individual" base. The third group, which considers itself completely a part within the scope of the religion of Islam and gets the sympathy of Turkish Alevi associations, gathers around the Cem foundation. They consider Alevism as a sect that follows the doctrines of Imam Jafer-Sadiq; they state that they have some distinctions in some beliefs and worships especially in the interpretation of some religious sources (Holy Qur'an and Hadith). The fourth group is Alevism that we name as "Shia colored". Ehl-I Bey mosque in Çorum, Zeynebiye Mosque in Istanbul are among the institutions of this belief. This group, which remarks that they are the followers of Twelve

Imam and Iranian Shiites, distinguishes Bektashism and Alevism, rejecting the former one rigidly and ties the later one to the Shiaism of the Twelve Imam. According to them, Alevism is the way of Twelve Imam and that all the Alevi are obliged to be parallel to them. (Bilici, 1997:67-74)

### **1.3 Emergence of Anatolian Alevism**

“The structure of religious groups and sects develop within the social and political conditions of the community they are in. when the socio-political structure of the communities change, the religious groups within the community also face alterations. These changes also pave the way for differentiations in the concepts and meanings that identify them.” (Arabacı, 2000:16)

“Throughout the history of Anatolian Turks, in addition to official religions of the city centers; there was a practice of the concept of Islam, which can be better defined as beyond the community (heterodox) but non-conformist and nontraditional public Islam in the moorland, mountains, Anatolian steppes, among the communities that were first migratory but later semi or fully settled ones, which also continued their nomadic habits.” (Melikoff, 2006:99)

“On account of the fact that the Muslim Turkmens, formed by nomadic or semi-nomadic Turkic tribes who are the ancestors of Anatolian Alevi societies today, did not come face to face with the written culture of Islam, continued Islam as a way of public Muslimhood, in which they compromised Islam with their old belief and traditions. With the traces of old Turkish beliefs within the public Islam and the religions in the Central Asia, an understanding of Islam emerged, in which Islamic Sufism represented by Ahmet Yesevi and Horosan reproach were dominant” (Fiğlalı, 2000: 104). Among the factors that paved the way for the formation of Anatolian Alevism are the religions of the Far East, Shamanism, Ancient Anatolian beliefs, Christianity and the Judaism. (Çamuroğlu, 2008:44)

It is very obvious that communities that are converted to a new religion cannot give up all the practices of their old religion and accept all the characteristics of their newly accepted religion. Moreover, it is also clear that the groups that form the community may not perceive and practice the new system in the same way. In Turkish society, which accepted Islam and transferred to a settled life, Orthodox (Sunni) Islamic concept was invigorated whereas heterodox Islamic concept (Anatolian Alevism) was invigorated in nomadic and semi nomadic Turkmen communities. While religion is practiced in Sunni community, which was transferred to a settled life and lived in cities, in accordance with its rules, in semi nomadic Turkmen groups, the new religion was practiced under the influence of religions such as Shamanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism as well as old Turkic beliefs like *Gök Tanrı cult* (Sky God Cult), cults of nature and cults of ancestors. Here, another question that may come to mind is how the Shii elements that are seen in Anatolian Alevism entered the Anatolian Alevism.

Here Melikoff states that Anatolian Alevism is "not a Shii Islam but rather a Turkmen religious understanding that is made Shii and Sufi with Safavi propaganda and that a religious respect towards the martyrs of Ali and Kerbela during the emergence of Anatolian Alevism cannot be considered as the indication of Shiism." (Melikoff, 2006: 54)

Analyzing Anatolian Alevism from a historical perspective and in two periods, Ocak (1998) remarks:

"The First Period extends from the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the period when Islam was spread among the Turkic communities in the Central Asia, to the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This period leaves us face to face with a kind of Heterodox Islamic reality that does not compromise with the written interpretation of Islam and is generally dominated by previous beliefs and traditions and is consisted of a shallow understanding of Islam. However, the Second Period is formed by Safevi propaganda that was effective on Alevism after 15<sup>th</sup> century. Safevi propaganda has shaped the Alevism (but Qizilbashism with its original historical name) to its current condition by injecting some elements in Twelve Imam Shiism into Islam Heterodox, a

theology in the center of which there is Caliph Ali. Hence, heterodox understanding of Islam, which existed in Turkey since 13<sup>th</sup> century, turned into an Islamic sect that looks like neither Sunnism nor Twelve Imam Shiism, in other words non orthodox (that is heterodox) and survived until today..."

"Alevism with its present form or Qizilbashism with its historical name appeared at the stage of history in the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Prior to this period, it is not possible to mention about a phenomenon of Alevism with its present structure and meaning. An Alevism phenomenon with its current structure consisted of Caliph Ali cult at the centre and Twelve Imam cult, Qerbela mourning cult and other cults linked to it emerged in this period. In other words, Alevism today, probably began to be shaped by Sheikh Haydar in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and started by Shah Ismail in the 16<sup>th</sup> century... The period from the 10<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, in other words until the foundation of Safavi State and the beginning of Safevi propaganda, can be called as "the period without Ali", roughly speaking the period since the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century can be called as "the period with Ali"." (Ocak, 2002: 237)

To put in a different way, the period with Ali is the era of transformation of the heterodox Public Islam seen among the nomadic Turkmen tribes until the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the Qizilbashism as of the 16<sup>th</sup> century with the help of Safevi propaganda. This is also the period when heterodox public Islam with the name of Qizilbash turned into social and political discrimination as a result of various Qizilbash revolts in the Ottoman territory such as Sheikh Bedrettin (1416), Shah Kulu (1511), Nur Ali Caliph (1512), Bozoklu Celal (1520), Baba Zunnun (1526) and Shah Kalender (1526).

## CHAPTER II

### CONCEPTS RELATED TO ANATOLIAN ALEVISM

#### 2.1 Bektashism

"Alevism has generally been used with the notion of Bektashism; this is the right usage" (Yılmaz, 2005:38). The reason of it is that there is no difference in Alevism and Bektashism in their essence, but there are some differences in style and method originating from social differences. The similarities and dissimilarities between these two notions will be discussed in this Chapter.

Alevism cannot be separated from Bektashism on account of the fact that both the terms belong the same phenomenon i.e. Turkish Public Islamism (Melikoff, 2006:29). There is a difference in form but not in essence. Both the groups sublimate Hacı Bektaş, who gave name to the sect. During the Ottoman period, Alevis maintained their life depend on public in the rural areas, while Bektashis became a communal and ordered sect maintaining their life within the crowd of the urban areas. This social difference paved the way for a gradually growing distinction between the two groups, which finally led to the birth of the saying, "every Qizilbash is an Alevi but every Alevi is not a Qizilbash" (Melikoff, 2006:130).

Eröz (1990) agrees with the distinction of "Rural Bektashi (Alevi)-Urban Bektashi", which was first mentioned by Fuat Köprülü. To him, Bektashism means being dedicated to Hacı Bektaş Veli and abide by his rules. We can consider those who accept Hacı Bektaş Veli as the leader of their sects and a guide to their ways of life, depending on their life in accordance with obligations Bektashi sect, love of Ehl-i Beyt, and the principle of *tevellâ*<sup>4</sup> (to have fondness towards those who love Prophet

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<sup>4</sup> *Tevellâ* means to love Ehl-i Beyt (Family of the Prophet Muhammed), and love those who love them.

Muhammad) and *teberra*<sup>5</sup> (curse those who are enemy of Ehl-i Beyt and those who killed Imam Husain in Qerbala). However, this Alevism does not go beyond explaining the love of Sunnis towards Ehl-i Beyt<sup>6</sup> (p. 52).

One of the most important differences between Alevism and Bektashism is the way they attend the community. "Every child of Alevi Qizilbash community is Alevi by birth. On the other hand, there are participations in Bektashism such as participating from outside, joining an association. Every person fulfilling certain tasks and "accepting Bektashi way of life"<sup>7</sup> through father can be a Bektashi" (Eröz, 1990:67). In other words, whereas it is impossible for a person to be Alevi if his parents are not, he can be a Bektashi.

Another difference between the Alevis and Bektashis is the religious leaders they accept as their leaders. Both Alevis and Bektashis accept Hacı Bektaşî Veli as the leader<sup>8</sup> and show him great respect. However, while the Alevis are associated with *ocaks* (*organization*) led by "*dedes*", who they think are the descendents of the prophet, Bektashis are associated with *chelebis*, who are believed to be the descendents of Hacı Bektaşî Veli, or "fathers", who represent him spiritually. (Melikoff, 2007:55)

Attitudes of Alevis and Bektashis towards the political party in power also show differences. Bektashis, who live in city centers in an organized way, have been living in peace with the political party in power. "Becoming more prestigious after Balim Sultan, Bektashism was spread in Anatolian and especially in Rumelia. They were protected and paid attention by the government. Guild of janissaries was also affiliated with Bektashism

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<sup>3</sup>Teberrâ is to curse those who have enmity for Ehl-i Beyt, and not to love those who martyred Imam Hussain in Qerbala. ([http://ilahiyat.firat.edu.tr/Makaleler/10-2\\_2005/04BiroIAZAR.pdf](http://ilahiyat.firat.edu.tr/Makaleler/10-2_2005/04BiroIAZAR.pdf))

<sup>5</sup> Tevellâ: To love Ehl-i Beyt (family of the Prophet Muhammad), and have sympathy towards who love.

<sup>6</sup> "Ehl-i Beyt", which means members of the family, is consisted of the house owner and his spouse, children, grandchildren and close relatives. However, the term Ehl-i Beyt has been used to define the family members of the Prophet Muhammad and his family lineage until today.

<http://www.mevlana.selcuk.edu.tr/sumam-web/belge/sumam-bildiri/bildiri-pdf/30-Mehmet%20Temizkan.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> To enter the way of Bektashi,

<sup>8</sup> Religious leader of the way (of Alevism)

spiritually (Eröz, 1990:75)". Despite all these the Alevis, who have lived in rural areas away from the city centers, as a result of intensified propaganda by the Safevis, have opposing attitudes towards the political party in power, as a result of which they always faced proceedings and became face to face with various negative events. "Distinct characteristics of Qizilbash group were mixture in their belief (their religious syncretism), being extra traditional and being ousted. The fact that they did not adopt to have settled life made them a target of the central power. (Melikoff, 2008:235)". Although both Alevism and Bektashism obtained their identity in a formation apart from the Sunni belief, Bektashis were based on autochthonous philosophy rather than an activist identity. This is how they paved the way for the survival of the Qizilbashism known as public Sufism. Being influenced by the Iranian system of thought, Alevism turned into a movement of a community having opposite political attitudes towards the center. (Türkdoğan, 1995:385).

One the differences between the Alevism and the Bektashism is the geographies that they are effective on or those that they affect them. "Bektashis, who are the grandchildren of dervish-veterans who participated in the activities of conquering in the Thrace and the Balkans and settled to the conquered territories, have become sects, of which many turned into a centre of culture and civilizations, by getting further and further from the genealogy they were affiliated with."

In this process, Christian elements were also added to Bektashi belief, which represent a synchronism of religion in which ancestral traditions were united with the Islamic belief. On the other hand, Alevis in Anatolia carried on their dedication to traditions and ancestral customs and remained under the influence of the Eastern Anatolia (Melikoff, 2008:272)." Here, it is important to emphasize on the fact once again that Alevis were affected by the Shii elements owing to Safevi propaganda.

## 2.2 Shi'ism

The word "Shia" stems from the root 'sh-ya' and commonly refers to the words 'supporter, assistant, division'. As a term Shia is the common name for the societies, who believe that Ali<sup>9</sup> and his Ehl-I Bey as the most appropriate caliph (*imamet*)<sup>10</sup> and accepts him as "legal" caliph with *nass* and appointment and that the caliphs succeeding him must also be the descend from him (Fiğlalı, 2000: 97-98)". There are different opinions about the date of the origin of Shiism. To summarize these opinions are; Shiism emerged when Prophet Muhammad was alive. It merged by the request of Ali's becoming a legal Caliph upon the death of Prohet Muhammad. Another opinion is that it emerged by the martyrdom of Caliph Osman<sup>11</sup>, or after the martyrdom of Caliph Ali. However, we cannot talk about Shiism during the time of Prophet Muhammad as well as the period of Caliph Rashed (Hulefâi Râşidîn) including the period of Caliph Ali. At the earliest, after the martyrdom of Husain<sup>12</sup>, there were formations of political consensus about Shism. (Fiğlalı, 2008:265-667).

In terms of the meanings of the words, there is no difference between Shia and Alevi. However, there are significant differences between them in terms of the religious persuasion and perception of worships. "There are distinctions in the content and perception of common points. In fact, Shiism is a sect in terms of belief and practice; on the other hand, Alevism, although it bears some of the elements of a sect, more like an Esoteric-sofi-characterized conception. Hence, Shiism and Alevism are not two different names of the same world; they are two different words with some common points. (Üzüm, 2000:115)."

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<sup>9</sup> The fourth Caliph and the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad.

<sup>10</sup> President, <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/37/779/9963.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> The Third Caliph

<sup>12</sup> Grand son of the Prohet Muhammed and son of Caliph Ali.



“Anatolian Alevi state that they adopt the commands of Imam Jafer-i Sadiq just like Shia of Immamiye. However, these commands faced vast alterations. Whereas Iranian Shiis apply these commands, which are close to Sunni practices, as they are, Anatolian Alevi apply those which are appropriate for their own culture and bodies. They ignore the aspects closer to Sunni practices. (Yilmaz, 2005:42)”

There are also similarities between Shiism and Alevism in terms of the concepts such as respect to the Martyrs of Qerbela, *teberra*, and *tevela*. In Anatolian Alevism, even if these concepts are interpreted completely through Sufi perception, Anatolian Alevism was influenced from Shiism in regard to these terms and thus shares similar opinions. Besides similarities in form in regard to Ehl-i Beyt, the Twelve Imam, *tevela-teberra* concepts, there are very distinct practices between Shiism and Anatolian Alevism in terms of belief and worships (Fiğlalı, 2000:108-109). For instance, “In Shiism, there is no ‘cem’, a type of the way of worship in Alevism; there is no concept of ‘musahipship’ (brotherhood of manner); (generally) there is no Twelve Imam Fasting (Bozkurt, 2005:7).” Moreover, the differences between the Alevism and Sunni theology are also there with the Shii theology. In other words, there are differences regarding practices such as Fasting, Pilgrimage, Salaah, mosques, alcohol, equality of man and woman. There are also differences regarding Imamate; whereas there is “imam”, whose decisions are accepted as accurate and absolute, having the function of a bridge between Allah and the human beings in Shiism, in Alevism rather than such a concept, there is a belief of establishing direct communication with Allah. In both the beliefs, the *Mahdi*, who is the twelfth Imam will come and pay the way for the safety of humanity. This belief is balanced with the belief of Mentor in Alevism. In other words, Alevi are not in mood of waiting for Mahdi. (Çamuroğlu, 2008:62-63). “Although real Shiism and Alevism look similar to each other, they are nurtured from different sources. Shiism is a Persian resistance to Arabian chauvinism. This belief, which originates from old Iranian culture, is

included in a sect similar to Shiism in Islam. On the other hand, Alevism is a resistance of Anatolian culture to Arabian Chauvinism. This culture is mainly originated from Central Asia. However, its formation took place in Anatolia and is originally distinct to Anatolia.(Bozkurt, 2006:210)“

### **2.3 Batinite**

It is a name given to the sects, who assert that every apparent thing has an anagogical dimension (Batini) and that Holy Qur'an and Hadith can only be understood with a gloss, since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. According to Batinites, the universe is immemorial, which means there is no beginning of the substances. Comprehending religious books with their external meanings take place with *tefsir* (interpretation) whereas comprehending them with anagogical meanings occur with gloss. The way of Batinite is gloss. They say that Allah entered into the soul of many selected people since Adam and finally he was seen in the souls (incarnation) Caliph Ali and his children. They believe that the Imams will return to the world and take revenge from those who do bad things to them. Batinites believe that the soul transfers from a body to another and from an object to another (tenasuh). Theory of incarnation claims that Allah exists everywhere and talks in different languages in the forms of human beings. To put in other words, they believe that God personified in Adam and thus entered into human beings. (Eröz, 1990:44-46). As stated above, Batinites believe that Holy Quran has an external as well as an anagogical aspect and they assert that those who know the anagogical aspect of Holy Qur'an, reach the level of such understanding, do not have to abide with the external aspect of it. (Fiğlalı, 1991:300).

“In Alevi belief, the external meaning (outer aspect) includes restrictions, obligations, punishments and rewards. the word for external aspect of Holy Quran is Sheriah. The step of Sheriah, in general terms, is consisted of salaah, fasting, alms and pilgrimage. On the other hand,

anagogical meaning is what Islam targets to effectuate in people. The word for internal aspect is reality. Reality is the expression for a state of a person to be a real believer. It is the Batinites who believe claim that Holy Quran has an anagogical meaning and it is the real meaning of Holy Quran. Therefore, Alevi are batinites. (Zelyut, 2009:68-72).”

## **2.4 Sufism and Alevi Sufism**

One of the most important factors that paved the way for the formation of Anatolian Alevism is the conception of Sufism. Keeping this in mind, the section on Sufism will be discussed elaborately and the effects of Islamic sufi understanding on Alevism will be explained.

There are various definitions and sources of Sufism that shows distinctions from each other owing to historical-social conditions of the society they are in. As required by our topic, without emphasizing on the variety of the definitions, the effects of sufi interpretations that have impact on Anatolian Alevism will be discussed.

If we summarize Sufism briefly, in a widely accepted term, we can define it as mysticism of Islam (Güngör, 1987:17 and Öztürk, 1974:29). To Sunar, Sufism is a way that reaches human beings to absolute freedom and to the Creator. The beginning of this way that includes pre-eternity and perpetuity, heartfelt providence that warns the person; and the end is divine knowledge and love that covers everything (p. VII). According to Kara (2006), Sufism is a system of moral and mediation, which interpretations of principles that point at mystic aspect and spiritual upbringing of a person, deals with the transience of a substance and the world, and takes the heartfelt attitudes as the base (p. 16).

The distinct characteristics of the conception of Sufism are to emphasize on the anagogical meaning rather than the external ones in Quran and Hadith; to accept that there is no distinction between the Creator and the creature in respect to existence, as there is no existence but Allah;

claim that human beings will go to Allah just like the way they came from Him, but it is not essential to wait for the death for this and by keeping the self clean, the Unity at the pre-eternity can be returned to while still alive. (Güngör, 1987:22).

There is a distinction of Orthodox-Heterodox in the sufi conception. Orthodox Sufis assert that the pure Reality cannot be understood by means of intellect and the universal facts cannot be discovered by the people, and thus there is no way of inspiration other than having link to doctrines within 'faithful submission'. To them, moral attitudes and worships unite a person with Allah. Imam-i Ghazali is the most important representative of the Orthodox Sufism. According to him, only through the moral behaviours and prayers by purifying from the sins can a person be united with Allah. In Heterodox Sufism, moral behavior remains at the forefront. Moreover, the ultimate goal of life is moral behavior; the climax of the perfection is to be moral. Moral person is the one, who knows how to get rid of worldly ambitions, and able to reach to the level of ecstasy. The soul melts in the unity of God in competence; fades away. Hence, conscious and soul reaches to the level of God. Having moral behavior at every phase of life is the most supreme prayer. Fasting, salaah and prayer are the means that control and curb the self (ego) and forces will to dominate. The aim is to be competent. For a person, who can perform his competent through his moral behaviors, figural worship is secondary. There is no value of figural worships that do not lead to morality. Muhiddin-i Arabi and Hallac-ı Mansur are the most important thinkers of the heterodox Sufism. According to them, it is possible to unite with God while we are in the world. They see God not only as the Creator of the universe but also see Him as in the Universe. This concept of God is the basic philosophy of the Anatolian Alevi (Öktem, 1995:219-220)."

In Anatolian Sufism, there is a huge influence of the philosophy of Unity of Existence. "According to Alevi concept, God is the only reality. All other things, the universe, that seem to exist are just appearances. Allah is

the absolute reality, and the real existence. This is why Alevis-Bektashis say 'I am God' (*enelhak*) like Hallac." Led by the 34<sup>th</sup> verse of the Bakara Surah, i.e. "All the angels prostrate themselves to Adem upon the command of Allah; only the Satan did not", they see the reflection of divinity from the facial beauty of human beings and they prostrate face to face (to each other) in cems. (Eröz: 1990:205)"

In Alevi Sufism, human is at a central point. Human beings are believed to be divine, and thus they are given a special value. The divinity of human originates from the belief that humans are created by God by being blown from His soul. The spiritual existence of the human is believed to be the same as that of God. Human is the symbol of God in Alevism. The heart of human is the house of God. Hence, human is the real kiblah. Human being is divine owing to the fact that he is equipped with Godly knowledge. Being left the steps of sins behind owing to his divinity, he is innocent. He is considered as independent from the rules and links, for the fact that he guides himself towards the spiritual inner step, where the eternal realities prevail, from the external spiritual world consisted of rules and obligations. Salaah, fasting, alms, and pilgrimage remain back for him. In Alevi philosophy, holiness is not unique to the Alevis. The position of pious and irreligious is the same before God. (Zelyut, 2009:89-94). Alevism look at dedication to God and tendency towards Him individually. According to Alevism, the universe was existed on account of the fact that God, who is a mysterious treasure, likes to be known. In other words, love is the essence and reason of the existence. Thus, only through the means of love can a person go to God. In Alevism, a person can be valued with the love he carries and becomes a believer ever so. In this respect, a Christian, Buddhist, Taoist or atheist can also be a believer. (Çamuroğlu: 2008:37-38).

In Alevi Sufism, there are deep impacts of Hallac-i Mansur. Religion and God conception of God reflects exactly those of the Anatolian Alevis. Sufi originated this concept accepts Allah as the essence and quintessence. Hallac

also affected the perception of Anatolian Alevi on worships. Hallac accepted 5 obligations of Islam, however he sought anagogical (inner) meaning in all. According to Hallac, the figure of worship remained secondary for those who have anagogical conscience. (Öktem, 1995:256-258). To Hallac, rituals in religion is the way that paves the way for the reality. The main aim of the religion is to discover reality and morals, which are true and fair. A person, who commits hypocrisy, immorality and dishonesty, is always sinful, no matter how much he abides by the rituals. On the other hand, a moral person, a believer that behaves in a modest and honest manner is considered as persona grata even if he does not follow rituals. Intention is more important than the deeds; following rituals spiritually is more important than performing prayers figuratively. Prayer and Salaah are not optional but compulsory. However, the important thing is to reach Allah and make the spirit free. (Massignon, 1994:94).

It is known that the opinions of Hallac spread in Khorasan most. The men of religion, who were known to be saints of Khorasan and were affective in the spread of Islam to Anatolia, used to sustain the traditions of Hallac. Ahmet Yesevi is the first Turk bard influenced from Hallac. All the opinions of Hallac were accepted as Yesevian along with the conception of Enel Hak (I am God) (Massignon, 1994:68-69).

Ahmet Yesevi occupies an important place in the history of Turkish Sufism. During the centuries, when Islam began to spread among the Turks, He founded the first Turk sect by establishing a profession of Sufism among them. . (Köprülü, 1976:114). Yesevi narrated taught his sufi interpretation of Islam, which was becoming to be established then, to the nomad Turks with plain and simple language and these teachings of Yesevi were accepted among the Turkmens (Kırkılıç, 1994:5).

It is worth mentioning that Ahmed-i Yesevi was not a Sunni in classical sense (of course in traditional sense too), he was a heterodox sufi. His historical mission was to strain Islam from Iranian Sufism, and simplify and

popular so simple to have nomad and semi-nomad Turks with Buddhist, Shamanist and Manichaeian mystic culture background. Islamic perspective of Ahmed-i Yesevi is not just a piety Sufism based on fearing the torment and rage of Allah rather it is based on divine love and ecstasy, and thus puts emphasizes on tolerance and love for human and censures all types of feelings of ego. Such a sufi perspective of him was widely accepted by the nomad and semi-nomad Turks, who were far away from the conceptions of the details and subtlety of Islam then, and owing to them Islam entered in Anatolian territory. (Ocak, 2002:31-46).

Although historically there is a fifty years of time span between the death of Ahmet Yesevi and the birth of Hacı Bektaşî Veli, the anecdotes show him as contemporary, and presented Hacı Bektaşî Veli as the successor of Hodja Ahmet Yesevi (Develi, 1997:42). The most important influence of Hodja Ahmet Yesevin Anatolia carried out through Hacı Bektaşî Veli. The mystic thoughts spread among Yesevi and nomad Turks and the settled public transferred to from Khorasan to Anatolia and then to Rumelia from there. While the Sufi thoughts of Hacı Bektaşî Veli are added to those of Hodja Ahmet Yesevi, the beliefs of Alevism and Bektashism were emerged (Eröz, 1990:202-203).

By the emigration of the Turks to Anatolia, they brought Sufi thoughts of Ahmed Yesevi with the same simplicity and plainness as an oral tradition to Anatolia with Yesevi dede, father and ancestors and the dervishes that are affiliated to them. On account of these oral traditions, it is possible to designate the origin of the cults, which remain their freshness in the religious history of Anatolia and among the Alevi Turkmens such as entering into the pants of bird, moving stones and rocks and making them walk, terminating dragons, victim of cattle, animating the pagans, and many cults that are attributed to Ahmet Yesevi but originally Shamanistic cults (Fiğlalı, 1991:107). Ahmet Yesevi's perception of prayer can also be shown as an example to his impact on Anatolian Alevism. In Cem ceremonies, men and

women have prayers together for the fact that Alevi also adopted his idea of men and women having prayer and allusion together in the same assembly for the fact that God is powerful enough to eradicate all grudge and enmity in their heart. (Arslanoğlu, 153-184).

We can conclude the topic of Sufism that has enormous effect on the belief of Anatolian Alevism with the following statement of Arabacı (2003): "On the base of Turk-Islam civilization, Sufism has a significant share in the formation of the field of the meaning of the established universe. Having such an area of impact, Sufi thought and information system also immensely affected the way people understand and interpret religion, and the application of religious principles to the life. The Sufi conception that has kept of protecting its influence in the first periods as well as the process that has continued until today. Besides the fact that the roots originated from Yesevi and Hacı Bektaşî Veli continue Sunni elements to a great extent, in folkloric terms, they formed the historical and social basis for some Sufi thoughts blended with different philosophical, Gnostic, esoteric thoughts, and with the impacts of Iranian Shah" (p. 103) .

## **2.5 Turkish Culture and Religious Beliefs among the Turks in Pre-Islamic Period**

The Turks believed in many religions throughout the history and thus were influenced by many religions. As it can be seen in other societies that convert to other religions, the Turks, before accepting Islam, completely carried out their old beliefs that did not conflict with their new religion, and adopted the conflicting ones by nurturing with the motives that they took from the new religion. The same condition continued after the acceptance of Islam. (Ocak, 2009:53) It may be said that in addition to Islam, there were also effects of the religious beliefs among the Turks in the pre-Islamic era in the formation of Anatolian Alevism. Moreover, to Eröz (1992), the main source of the Anatolian Alevism is the Turkish culture and old Turk religion



and system of belief (p.7). In this section, the impacts of the religious beliefs that were seen among the Turks in the pre-Islamic era on Anatolian Alevism will be analyzed.

Okan (2004) states that Turkic societies adopted the Islamic applications that they faced with their encounters with sufi dervishes on account of the fact the religious belief system of the Turkic societies in the pre-Islamic era was formed by belief systems such as Buddhism, Shamanism and Manichaeism and the general characteristics of these belief systems is that they demonstrate mystic features (p.47). In his article published in 1926 on *Türk Yurdu*, Inan (1998), mentions about Shamanism as a national religion. He states that with the acceptance of Islam, many traditions and principles of Shamanism remained among the Turks despite their acceptance of Islam as the nomadic Turks were loyal to old Turkic traditions and rules (p.389). Eröz (1990) also states that the Turks belonged to Shaman religion since ancient times. After the acceptance of Islam in mass numbers, while all the rules of the new religion were practiced in the city centers, the nomads accepted Islam figuratively. After the acceptance of Islam, men and women of nomad Turks, like they were in their previous religion, stayed together and performed their rituals with great ecstasy and excitement with music and dance (carried out with firmament). Furthermore, Eröz states that there are number of similarities between the *dede* and *kam* (belief), cem and shaman religious rituals, slaughtering ceremonies and rituals, beliefs of land-water-sky cult, belief of human in the guise of an animal, and beliefs of animals considered lucky and unlucky. (pp. 251-417). Melikoff (2006) adds the followings to the similarities: beliefs of birds (relating the divine ones to pigeon, falcon and crane), beliefs of tree and stone; holiness of the water sources; cutting beard and having slouchy moustache; similarities between the Cem ritual and Shaman ceremonies, ceremonial songs and dances, alcohol consumption in the ceremony, free movements of women in the ceremonies, tradition of waiting by the woman after child birth for three days

and three nights without sleeping, burial ceremony of the dead ones, festival of Khidr, existence of the belief of muhasip (brotherhood of Hereafter) (pp. 119-120).

To Kafesoğlu (2005), Shamanism, which demonstrates a magical characteristics rather than a religion, is not the religion of ancient Turks, but it affected their beliefs externally (p. 297). Ocak (2009) agrees with the opinion of Kafesoğlu and states that the religious beliefs of the most ancient Turks of the Central Asia consisted of trio religious conception of Cult of Ancestors, Cult of Nature and Cult of Sky God Cult. He emphasize that Shamanism was accepted by the Turks in later periods, while this system of magic was spreading and settling, there had already been sets of beliefs like Cult of Ancestors, Cults of Nature and belief of Sky God Cult and they had already adopted many ceremonies and beliefs of religions such as Buddhism, Manichaeism and thus it turned into a shape of what is explained as Shamanism today. (pp. 59-73).

One of the most commonly seen religions among the Turks in the pre-Islamic era is Buddhism. Especially the perception of incarnation in Buddhism reflected as anecdotes of Ahmet Yesevi and other scholars after the acceptance of Islam. The similarity between the three seal principle of 'sealing mouth, hand and waist' in Manichaeism, one of the religions that the Turks accepted, and teaching of 'holding hand, tongue and waist', one of the basic principles of Anatolian Alevism, attract our attention. (Ocak, 2009:74-97). In Manichaeism the important thing is to understand the anagogical. On the literate ones (gurus), pure ones (abdals (wandering dervishes)) and selected ones can understand the anagogical dimension. Pure reality is wisdom. Wisdom can be coalesced with 'purity'. Belief motifs of Anatolian Alevism can be seen in these statements. (Öktem, 1995:22).

As seen, perhaps the most important characteristic of Anatolian Alevism is its syncretism that can includes various religious beliefs and cultures. "Nourished by various religion, sect and cults, Anatolian Alevism

has gained a synchronic structure. However, this religion, sects or cults were reinterpreted within the shades of Islam and reached to the contemporary Alevism. (Yılmaz:2005:48).”

## **CHAPTER III**

### **SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE OF ANATOLIAN ALEVISM**

#### **3.1 Alevi Theology**

##### **3.1.1 Belief of Hak-Muhammad-Ali**

Owing to the fact that concepts related to the belief in Allah in the Anatolian Alevism are discussed in the section of the concepts, I will only focus on Hak (Allah)-Prophet Muhammad-Caliph Ali trio in this section.

Hak-Muhammad-Ali trio is at the top of the belief concepts of Anatolian Alevism. In the daily prayers, this condition is expressed with the prayer of "for the sake of Hak-Muhammad-Go". "Alevi see Prophet Muhammad as the Prophet of the religion of Islam. When they express their beliefs, 'Hak-Muhammad-Ali' accept it as a compass definition (Şener, 2008:13)." Although this trilogy, as in the Jaferism, is sometimes interpreted as Allah, his Prophet Muhammad and his successor Caliph Ali, it is mainly stated that Hak, Muhammad and Ali are the three figures of God. Despite the emphasize put on this trilogy, Caliph Ali has been considered as superior to Prophet Muhammad in Alevi sayings. Even more, miraj (prophet Muhammad's night ascension) is told to be Prophet's accession to Caliph Ali's secret. (Subaşı, 2008:95).

"In Alevi belief, Ali and Muhammad are from the same divine light. One is white light (Caliph Ali) and the other one is green light (Muhammad). Besides the chronological history, this light entered into worldly time with the last Prophet. In Alevi philosophy, Muhammad and Ali are identified with each other. As a result, Muhammad-Ali concept was emerged. Here there is a

single existence that seems to be two existences. The outer side of the existence is Muhammad whereas the internal part is Ali. The outer part symbolizes Prophethood (Sharia) while the inner part stands for authority (reality) (Zelyut, 2009:49).

### **3.1.2 Four Doors and Forty Positions**

In order for a person to reach a certain phase of maturity and existence in Sufism, he must pass through some steps. Notwithstanding the fact that it is difficult to characterize Alevi teaching as traditional sufi tendency, the counterpart of these phases of Sufism is the teaching of four doors, forty positions in Alevism. (Yalçinkaya, 1996:99). The four doors in Alevism are the doors of sharia, sect, attainment and essence. "The first door sharia is the basic obligations of Islam such as salaah, abolution, pilgrimage and fasting. The second is sect; these are the teachings that are transferred to only the members. The third phase is the knowledge of attainment and mystic God. The fourth door is essence and consists of personal experiences of Godlikeness. As of origin, the Alevis classify themselves within the second phase as the competent of sect. For Alevis, sect is also a phase where belief is experienced apagogically and thus there can be a renunciation from the outer proof. (Subaşı, 2008:95). In Anatolian Alevism, since a person leans to anagogical steps, where eternal realities prevail, from the external spiritual world formed by rules and sanctions, he is considered as independent from the rules and links. For him, salaah, fasting, alms, and pilgrimage are left behind. Therefore, Alevis say, "our salaah is performed and fasting is kept" (Zelyut: 2009:93). Furthermore, the conception of Sharia in Alevi philosophy is different from that of the Sunni. "When they mention about Sharia, Alevis defend that the world must be organized in accordance with its maturity and historical conditions and that people must act accordingly. In other words, being limited to external meaning of the religion and the holy book, they do not assert that the provisions of religion and Holy Book must be adopted and

enforced in the world and that the world must be made in harmony with them (Yalçinkaya, 1996:102).”

There are total of forty positions, ten for each of these four doors. They can be listed as below:

i. positions of sharia: 1. Having faith, 2. Acquiring knowledge, 3. Praying. 4. Staying away from the sin, 5. Being beneficial to family, 6. Not to harm the environment, 7. Abide by the commands of the Prophet, 8. Being compassionate, 9. Paying attention to cleanliness, 10. Staying away from unfavorable attitudes.

ii. Positions of sect: 1. To repent, 2. To obey the rules and demands of the guru, 3. To wear clean clothes, 4. To fight in the name of goodness, 5. To love to serve, 6. To be afraid of injustice, 7. Not to feel despair, 8. To draw a lesson, 9. Generosity, 10. To see oneself as poor.

iii. Positions of attainment: 1. Manner (holding one’s hand-tongue-waist), 2. Being away from all (selfishness, grudge, and enmity) except God, 3. Abstemiousness, 4. Patience and thankfulness, 5. Shame, 6. Generosity, 7. Knowledge, 8. Tolerance, 9. Knowing oneself, 10. Intellectuality.

iv. Positions of essence: 1. Humbleness, 2. Not to see any wrong of anyone, 3. Not to withhold any goodness that can be done, 4. To love everything created by Allah, 5. To see everyone equal, 6. Lean towards and make people lean the unity, 7. Not to hide reality, 8. To know meaning. 9. To learn the secret, 10. To reach the existence of Allah (Yaman, 1993:233-234).

### **3.1.3 Three Sunnah and Seven Obligation**

In the command of Imam Jafer-I Sadiq, one of the most significant sources of Anatolian Alevism, there is a discussion on three sunnah and seven obligations that must absolutely be obeyed. Those who do not obey will be needy and the punishments to be issued are explained. The three sunnah and seven obligations stated in the command are as follows:

The first Sunnah: the word of Allah must not always be transferred through tongue, it must go through the heart of Kalimah at-Tawhid. The grudge from the heart must not be arrogance. The Second Sunnah, the heart must be refined from the hostility. The third Sunnah: we must yield to the way, which we aspire; the aspirant must sit like one if he is like a thousand; he must immediately say the one. The seven obligations can be listed as: the first obligation is to keep secret. The second obligation is to abandon life but not to return from God. Be muhasip. The third obligation is wherever you are, always apologize for and be entreated for, and do not tend to the world even at the amount of a particle. The fourth obligation is be obedient to the governor, and get repentance from the caliph. The fifth obligation is to lose musahip right from the caliph to the cem. The sixth obligation is to hold the hand of caliph and take repentance; wear sweater from the caliph. The seventh obligation is to be crowned by the caliph.

### **3.2 Institutions Peculiar to Alevism**

#### **3.2.1 Dedeship**

All the religious groups have belief leaders that they name differently. These religious leaders are very important for the religion in both presenting the teachings and being a model with their perspective and knowledge of the religions they belong to. These leaders are the most significant actors that lead and direct the group (Yılmaz, 2005: 97).” The religious leaders of the Anatolian Alevism are “dedes” who are believed to be seyyids<sup>13</sup> and are at the top of the religious hierarchy. In Alevi tradition, they perform the task of a mentor and guide. They play the main role in all the tasks based on applications of Alevi theology. In addition, all theological conducts from birth to circumcision, marriage to divorce, and death to visits of graves etc are

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<sup>13</sup> Seyid: a person descendant of the family lineage of the Prophet Muhammed

naturally oriented around dedes that are religious leaders. In short, Dedes form the bases of inseparable tissue of Alevi culture for they carry out religious-social tasks in Alevi community (Altıntaş, 2005:03).

Before the solution of the general structure, the main functions of an Alevi Dede can be listed as such: 1. Being a leader for the community in social and religious aspects and be a model with his attitudes and practices, 2. to enlighten and inform the community, 3. To maintain unity and cooperation in the community, 4. To preside social and religious ceremonies (cem, funeral, weddings etc.), 5. To maintain justice and announce criminals as *düşkün*, 6. To provide chances to practice and transmit belief and traditions, 7. Being the authority to be applied for people who are ill and those who have financial-spiritual problems owing to his spiritual power (Yaman, 2006:69).

“In traditional Alevism, Dede is accepted as a mentor<sup>14</sup>. A person does not have faith in mentor is like an infidel who has no faith. The aspirant to enter the way of Alevism submits his existence to the mentor; and takes hand from him<sup>15</sup>. Throughout the history, Dedes visit the villages (where they have their apirants) that are affiliated to them, revivify religious life, make the way cheerful, solve the disagreements, and increase the cooperation wonderfully (Eröz, 1990:106-107). Dede is the authority to forgive significant crimes, and remove the *düşkünlük* of those who committed adultery, killed a person, got married to a Sunni person, in short, all the states of being *düşkün*, and thus excluded and banned from the community. Forgiveness of such crimes can only be possible with the entreatment of the dede and the decision of of the person (Türkdoğan, 1995:62).” It must also be added to these characteristics that the Dede is also the keeper and preserver of the rich folk poem and oral folk tradition that are transmitted to each other verbally like old Shaman (Melikoff: 2006:119). In other words,

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<sup>14</sup> A guide that shows the right way.



Dede is the culture and identity transmitter of Anatolian Alevism that is not based on written culture rather based on rural structure and verbal tradition. It can be said that it is the Dedes who has carried Alevism upto now. Such a condition makes Dedes more important.

Dedes are believed to be descendants of Fatima<sup>16</sup> and Caliph Ali<sup>17</sup>, in other words, the family lineage of the Dedes goes as far as to Prophet Muhammad; hence, dedes are considered to be innocent by birth (Çamuroğlu, 1999:101). Dedeship is hand down from father to son. It is not welcomed for a person from the family lineage of dede to get married to someone who is not; this is how the dede family lineage is being protected.

The origin of Dedeship is traced to kam-bards of the Shaman period by the majority of the researchers. On the other hand, Ocak (2001), in addition to admitting that the historical background of dedeship goes as far as to kam-bards, says that these religious leaders were named as Dede with the propaganda of Shah Ismail and thus made seyyids (pp. 242-246).

İzzettin Doğan<sup>18</sup> states that the family lineage of Caliph Ali tried to be removed because of political reasons, many of the relatives were killed, and that those who are descendants of the Prophet Muhammad got chances to live in ma wara'un-nahrn and the event we call dedes emerged from here. In other words, son of Imam Zeynel Abidin's<sup>19</sup> son and the only survival of Qerbela event Ali Kasgar is believed to be taken to and brouth up in ma wara'un nahr by the Turkmens from the Turkmenistan, and therefore the family lineage of Porphet Muhammad is believed to have continued there... To Doğan, not all the dedes today are of descendants of the Prophet. The number of dedes is little wehereas the number of those performing dedeships is a lot. He thinks that the reasons of it are to bring up and sent

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<sup>15</sup> To enter a sect, to teach himself spiritual knowledge and accept the religious leader as a teacher to himself.

<sup>16</sup> Daughter of Prophet Muhammad

<sup>17</sup> Prophet Muhammad's uncle's son and husband of Fatima, the fourth Caliph.

<sup>18</sup> Prof. Dr. Head of Cem Foundation

<sup>19</sup> Son of Caliph Ali and son of Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad.

people to spread Islam as far as to the doors of Vienna. The people, who told about Islam with their own interpretations paved the way for the emergence of a new dede lineage that have been transmitted from family to family for centuries. Many of the Dedes, seventy to eighty percent of them, today are such perfect people who perform such functions. The number of real dedes is just about ten to fifteen percent of what is seen. (Aydın, 2000:128-130).

When the historical background of Anatolian Alevism is scrutinized, it is observed that the Alevi communities are introvert societies that sustain their existence in villages away from the center. Hence, all the social institutions have been established in accordance with this structure. By the emigration to big cities in the 1950s, and the effects of political developments in the 1980s, there have been alterations in the dedeship institution of the Anatolian Alevism just like the alterations in all the institutions. Its religious and social role and significance in Anatolian Alevi society was shattered.

“Dedeship lost its functionality in 1970-70s. It is seen as an outcome of the adaoptation of leftist ideology by the Alevis youth and exploitation of the institution of dedeship. On the other hand, dedeship cannot renew and equip itself with the requirements of the contemporary age. The dedes cannot meet with the needs of the new generation that began with the urbanization. The old myth and narrations do not appeal to the Alevi youth. They are accepted as vain belief and made up stories... While the old dedes die one by one, new ones do not replace them. The youth coming from the dede organization do not have any interest in dedeship. They prefer long-established professions. Many dedes who selected different professions also opposed and criticized the institution of dedeship. As a result, by the 80s, the dedes who know traditional Alevism are completely wiped out. Dedes have become bound to preside cem ceremonies by the help of a piece of paper on which they write the rules (Bozkurt, 2003:86).”

Owing to the reasons such as emigrations that took place from the villages to the urban areas, increase in the number of educated Alevis, and technological advancements, the number of people equipped with knowledge swelled up and turned towards other directions. Authority on knowledge shifted from traditional man of religion to an enlightened person with university education. Moreover, transmission and production of information based more on "narratives" has been replaced with more abstract theory and system of thought. Development of abstract thought and demonstration of contemporaneity paved the way for people with higher education to be 'authority'. Dedeship is no more sufficient; it is necessary to have higher education in addition (Yavuz, 2000:83).

Dede has played the role of a mediator/judge in addition to being a man of religion, and had significant share in maintaining social balance and peace. The state excluded Alevi communities to stay out of the judicial organs, and their relationships with the state is tried to be kept in minimum level. The Alevis, who were united with the public institution owing to the Republic, carried their problems to the Republican courts and thus one of the basic function of the dedes was terminated (Yavuz:92).

The alterations exposed by the institution of dedesip are dealt with in detail at the final part of the thesis with the survey and interview results.

### **3.2.2 Musahipship**

One of the most significant religious and social institutions of the Alevism is musahipship. Musahipship, whose lexical meaning is transferred to Turkish as 'brotherhood of Hereafter, brotherhood of the way, brotherhood of the lot, and brotherhood of life', is most commonly used as the brotherhood of the way or the lot (Yalçinkaya, 1996:67). It can be defined as two people (and their wives) with no blood tie are blessed by a dede and made as spiritual brothers. The custom of Musahip is one of the seven obligations for an Alevi. A person with no Musahip cannot attend the Cem. A person who cannot attend the Cem cannot enter the way (Melikoff, 2008:285-286).

Although to be an Alevi, it is sufficient to be born to Alevi father and mother, the individuals can be Musahips with other married couple and attend the gathering. Hence, they ascend from a natural membership to official membership of the community... Every Alevi couple must keep a musahip. These two families of four members form the core for Alevi society and are considered as siblings to each other. This brotherhood is the brotherhood of both for the world and for the Hereafter. If a woman from one of the sides and man from the other side among the Musahips die, the two surviving man and woman cannot get married to. The Musahip men are called 'brothers' while women are called 'sisters'. Except their honor and possessions, almost all their belongings are shared. If they are bankrupt, their animals die, their products are damaged, their Musahips immediately come to help. The Musahip, who comes for help, gives some possessions, help financially and provides food to the one in need depending on his power. The children of Musahip can not get married to each other. Such a situation demonstrates how long established is Musahip brotherhood (Eröz, 1990: 110-111).

Conditions to be Musahip and whom to get as Musahip are arranged with rules. The rules in the commandment are specified as such: a) everyone

can be musahip with his or her peer, equal and suitable one. In other words, those who want to be Musahips must be within the same social status. For instance, an educated can not be a musahip with an illiterate, likewise a mentor cannot be with an aspirant and a single one cannot be musahip with a married one. Musahips are bound to be in the same village or city. Musahips must be at the age of 20 minimum (Bozkurt, 2009:71,72).

The most important element of the Alevi cult is musahipship. This cult is the most significant cultural factor that ties Alevi society to each other and sustains cooperation (Türkdoğan, 1995:60). As an indication of the activity that sustains the continuity of the society, Musahipship, with its requirement of certain stereotyped attitudes, aims at facilitating the individuals in their daily life and serves the function of a guide, even a mean of "reterritorialization". Different from blood relationships that come from the family lineage, musahipship is what the individual selects or is selected with his or her independent will. In this aspect, musahipship is an indication of the social attitudes and tightly organized social systems of Alevism (Okan, 2004:80). However, despite all these things musahipship today loses its historical effectivity. "Although, the musahipship is carried out in rural areas lankly upto a certain degree, it vanishes in the urban life. Most of the musahips in the places of settlement prior to the emigration, forget their musahips in big cities, and did not take the law of musahipship into consideration. The new generation brought up in the cities maintain their lives without having the contract of musahipship (Üzüm, 2000:114)." One of the important reasons of it is its peculiarity to be social institution belonging to nomad, semi-nomad or the communities that are newly settled to the land keeping similar applications in other geographies into consideration (Melikoff, 2006:96). Due to political reasons in the historical process (the Alevis revolt and support of the Safavids in the Ottoman-Safavid dispute, and the rigid precautions that the Ottomans took against these rebellions), the Anatolian Alevism living in villages away from the city centers moved to big cities with

the emigrations occurred in 1950s. Such a situation changed the social institutions of the Anatolian Alevism. The change of the structures in villages in Alevism led to the difficulties in the applications of the musahpship. "there are two options for the Alevism in urban life: either to give up this institution completely or sustain it symbolically (Bozkurt, 2006:183)." The preset state of musahpship will be discussed with the shade of survey information and interviews at the final part of the thesis.

### **3.2.3 Dar ve Düşkünlük<sup>20</sup>**

"The institution of Düşkünlük is the legal system of the Alevi communities. It is because this institution designates the required impositions in order to preserve the system of values and the norms (Yılmaz, 2005:100)." System of Dar and düşkünlük is a system of law emerged as an outcome of the worry of maintaining relationships with the state at minimum level; and is also accepted by the present State in respect to the crime and punishment relationship as well as the applications peculiar to Anatolian Alevi. The reason why the Alevi desire to form a distinct legal system can be perceived when the historical process is analyzed. "Alevi teaching is characterized as a "perverse belief" and the Alevi were defined as 'infidel' and 'pagan' by the Ottoman State (Yıldırım, 2010:11). The Alevi society, which during the Ottoman-Safavid conflicts was in favor of the Safavid, have been approached cautiously, which consequently cause exclusion from the society. As against such exclusion the Alevi society also approached towards the central government cautiously and thus they established their own legal norms to minimize their relationships with the government; therefore they have carried out their own legal cases and issued punishments in the courts they named as '*dar*'. Since it is essential for a society under systematic threat and pressure to be in peace, brotherhood and cooperation; the aim of the

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<sup>20</sup> "Exclusion from the society"

rules in Alevism is to maintain healthy existence of the unity of Alevi society and keep it away from the dangers and degradations (Yıldırım, 2010:12).

In lexical meaning, *düşkün* is a person guilty of crime against his good manners (Zelyut, 2009:477). "Here, guilt means, in addition to daily attributions, submission to the present time and historical conditions. *Düşkün* is a person who absolutized the truth, forgot the reality, ignored the transformation and formation, and absolutized his or her ego by saying 'I' (Yalçınkaya, 1996:85-86)." As a matter of fact, 'egotism' is seen as an unfavorable attitude to be cursed for it removes social cooperation. If a person says 'I' by mistake, he corrects himself saying "let the egotism be cursed". It is thought that egotism and self destroy social cooperation (Yıldırım, 2010:12).

*Düşkünlük* is of two kinds as temporary and permanent. The permanent one is called "Yoldan Düşme (exclusion from the way of Alevism)" such a person cannot live in the society any more. On the other hand, the temporary *Düşkünlük* is although very hard to face is something endurable as it is a temporary punishment (Eröz, 1990:144). In temporary *Düşkünlük*, a person can join back the Cem after having confession.

"*Düşkün* person is expelled from the community; no one exchanges greetings with him; no one speaks to him; his needs are not met; his house is not visited; he can not visit house of anyone; his cattles and sheep cannot join those of the neighbor's; his wedding is not attendant to and he is not invited to weddings; he is not greeted in festivals; and if he is sick, no one asks about his state of health. There is exception, if there is a death in his house, his funeral is attendant and he is visited then; however, still his offer of meal as well as water and coffee is not accepted; he is just spoken to normally just to console himself. After a period of forty days, the old situation continues... On the other hand, *Yoldan düşme* is the most severe punishment. A person receiving this punishment can never enter Alevi organization and can no more live in Alevi community until his death.

Punishment of Yoldan düşme is issued in these conditions: 1- Getting married to those who are forbidden in Holy Qu'ran, 2- Change one's mind about confession, 3- committing adultery. Such a state of mind is completely forbidden. Those who are exposed to such a state of mind are considered as merdut<sup>21</sup> people who fall away from the way (of Alevism). when they die, their body is not washed and their prayer of death is not performed; they are just buried in how they are (Orhan, 1966:9)."

The judicial processes in Alevism take place in dar ring, which also known as 'Dar-ı Mansur'. The Dar ring is a place where an Alevi individual completely submits himself to the society. By having confession, the Alevi individual becomes an official member of the community. Those Alevis who want to enter the way (of Alevism) by having confession give account of their deeds throughout the year in the Cem ceremony in front of the entire community and have to stand at the dar. Moreover, any Alevi about whom there is a complaint also faces dar in regard to the matter (Yıldırım, 2010:21).

The fact that the geographical fields show differences and they face lack of communication prevented the formation of a legal system that issues the same punishment for the same crime among the Alevis. Bedri Noyan Dede-Baba (1995) refers to other sources very often in his article on düşkünlük. While in many of these sources, he mentions them as old texts and booklets, he only names these sources: Kitab-ı İmam Hasan ve Hüseyin, İmam Cafer-i Sadık Commendment, Menakıb-ı Şeyh Safi, Ahitname (these are decisions taken by the mentors of Alevi communities of Eskişehir, Seyitgazi, Ulubey affiliated to Battalgazi convent). Even the Ahitname shows that düşkünlük punishment is carried out differently depending on the region and the mentor in accordance with the level of the loyalty to the traditions (pp. 366-397). However, almost in all Alevi geography, the crime is an

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<sup>21</sup> A person away from the blessings of Allah.



outcome of disobedience to the principle of "hold your hand, tongue and waist" (Yıldırım, 2010:28).

Düşkünlük also show changes or is wanted to show changes like other Alevi institutions. To begin with, some of the topics such as alteration of the restriction of the marriage between an Alevi and a Sunni the state courts are seen as dar place, are demanded to be changed by the Alevis who moved to cities. There can be concrete examples for alterations: according to the statement of Bedri Noyan Dede-Baba, there has nnot been many issues of düşkünlük punishment in the last forty years (Noyan, 1995:366-397). There can also be changes in the aforementioned Ahitname. For instance, while it is crime to go to the state courts according to the Ahitname dated 10.01.1969, it is no more a crime according to the Ahitname dated 1994 and the courts are shown as the places for Alevis to solve problems that emerge within themselves. The article that issues five years of düşkünlük punishment to those who give their daughters to zahir according to 1969 Ahitname, in the arrangement of the Ahitname of 1994 such an article was abrogated. Furthermore, in 1994 Ahitname, it is preferred to arrange/legitimate the crimes and punishments in accordance with reference to the Surahs of Holy Qur'an (Yıldırım, 2010:166-168).

In an environment where there are modern judicial organs and the relationships with the State are inevitable, it can no more perform its task as an organ of integrating the community. The rules of urban life are also not coherent with those of the rural life. As a matter of fact, the judicial system punishes the person who shatters the system of the community. Moreover, some of the crimes which are considered as düşkünlük in traditional Alevism are no more crimes in contemporary society. Sanctions such as düşkünlük, temporary düşkünlük and permanant düşkünlük cannot be enforced in cities. As a result, it has lost its functionality of "social exclusion" in the city life (Bozkurt, 1999:108). In the final part of the thesis, this topic is discussed in detail.

### **3.2.4 Cem Ceremony**

Cem is the name of a holy ceremony perceived as worship which Alevis-Bektashis perform with the community. In lexical meaning in Arabic, cem means "Accumulation to total" or "community, crowd"; however, by the time being, it became a term that defines a prayer that Alevis-Bektashis conduct with the community (Korkmaz, 2008:205-209).

There are various opinions on the sources of Cem ceremony. It is possible to divide these opinions into two groups as legendary and historical. Cem ceremony is based on "Cem of Forties" as legendary (Yaman, 1993:147). According to this legend, Prophet Muhammad goes to the assembly of Forties during the ascendance (Miraj) and asks where he is. He is responded as "we are forties and all forty of us are the one". When the prophet wanted a proof, Caliph Ali cuts his fingernails and hands of bloodsheds from the hands of all forties. Right at the time, Selman-I Farsi come with a grape in his hand. From this single grape, the Prophet makes sorbet sufficient to allocate for all forty. The forties who drank the sorbet felt overwhelmed and began to spin. When the Prophet wanted to join them, his turban was untied and fell to the ground and splits into forty pieces. Every one among the Forties takes one piece and tie around his waist and began to spin again (Melikoff, 2008:281). There is no consensus as to whether this event occurred during the Miraj or after it. Moreover, Mehmet YAMAN (1993) states that the Prophet Muhammad did not have Miraj but joined the assembly of the Forties (p.147). One of the points that attracts attention in this legend is the distribution of genders. According to this legend, 22 of the forties are men while seventeen are women (Zelyut, 2009:455). This incidence is especially important in showing the performance of a prayer consisted of both men and women as well as it shows the fact that women can also ascend to the class of saint.

The historical source of the Cem ceremony, on the other hand, is based on the religious ritual and ceremonies which are performed by the Shamanist Turks consisted of both men and women (Korkmaz, 2008:208). After the acceptance of Islam, by changing formats, these religious rituals and ceremonies carried out in Turkmen sects such as Yesevism and Vefaism and transmitted to the Alivism through Babai movement which includes the aforementioned sects in its body (Ocak, 2009:176-178). The dominant Caliph Ali cult and the Tvelwe Imam Cult affiliated with it were added to the Cem ceremonies with the Sfauid propaganda in the early XVI<sup>th</sup> century (Ocak, 2002:245).

There are varieties of Cem ceremonies attendant by women and men together. They are: Cem of *İkrar verme* (to promise) (*Nasip alma* (to take portion)), Cem of manners, Abdal Musa Cem, Qerbala (Muharrem) square, Koldan Kopan Officials, and officials to forgive Dar. The most important of them are the cem of giving promise and cem of manners. It is conducted to have a couple with his or her musahip, which makes four people consisted of two couples, to enter the council. In other words, it paves the way for Alevi by birth to be officially Alevi as well. Only the two couples to enter the council for the first time, those whose ceremony was conducted before i.e. musahips, those who have promised and taken proportion and those seen ones can attend the cem. The cem of manners is the most important ceremony for all the Anatolian Alevis. It is generally conducted in winter months. In this ceremony, everyone in the village is seen and exposed to manners. The cans seen in the ritual refresh their confession. Those who are offended to each other or are in bad terms with each other are reconciled. The ones facing manners repent not to commit the crimes they committed before. Abdal Musa Cem is conducted in some regions every Thursday night. Generally the ceremony is held to carry out the desires of the neighbors or their wish to slaughter an animal, and when a Dede or a guest comes to the village, or to solve an offence or a problem and an animal is slaughtered.

Qerbala (Muharrem square), lamenting ceremony takes laces between the days of 1-12 of the month of Muharrem for the memory of the martyrdom of Husain in Qerbala. From the first day to the tenth of this month, people keep fasting. There are also differences of the application of this custom from a region to another. There are people continuing fasting until the twelfth day, there are also people keeping fasting of water. In other words, they do not drink water for ten days but they can eat liquid food. They do not shave their beard. They do not have sexual intercourse. Koldan Kopan council is carried out to familiarize the young to the Cem and get them educated in respect to rules and principles; and have them learn good manners; and be accustomed to the ideology of religious sect. In this meeting, the young learn the way of whirling and learn to say 'nefes'. The council of reducing Dar is conducted for the commemoration of the soul of a dead Alevi. The council of reducing Dar is carried out for the salvation of the soul of the *Can* after the death; it is conducted with the dears and near ones and those with whom he or she traded with as if he or she died before getting the blessings of all (Fiğlalı, 2006:267-270)."

This religious ceremony serving at many aims does not show a perfect unity in Alevi villages and organizations. There are various applications in different regions on condition that the essence is the same. (Bozkurt, 2005:9). Since it is difficult to put twelve service into effect in cities like Istanbul and owing to the daily business of the city life, the participation to the Cems is little, which paves the way for not to conduct Koldan Kopan Erkân.

In addition to being a religious ceremony, as I also stayed at the section where *düşkünlük* concept is described, Cem is the place where there is communal trial. The Alevis who want to enter the way by giving promise and those Alevis who are to account for their deeds throughout the year are bound to face dar (Yıldırım, 2010:21). The basic principle of the Cem ceremony is the phenomenon of consent. It is essential to get the consent of

the community for both to enter and to get out of the cem. Only if the others are consent with a person, can he remain in the Cem ceremony. Dede is no exception to this. Before sitting on the woollfell, the dede has to get the consent of the community (Yalçinkaya, 1996:78). The person who is announced as Düşkün, and hence punished in the community can attend other Cems but cannot be allowed in the cems of confession and manners. In other words, it can be said that one of the most important functions of this ceremony is to maintain inspection within the group. Another important function is its role in transmitting teachings of Alevism in which verbal culture is dominant to new generations and maintaining the durability of the teaching. "In Alevism Cem is the social phenomenon where the teachings of Alevism are put into effect and the belief that becomes inspiration for the teachings is made worldly and is the place for the production of such a social phenomenon (Korkmaz, 2008:214)." The ascendance to the forties, in a way, symbolizes the process for the creation of "model personality". Hence, the Alevi activity around common and dominant norms succeeds in uniting all the members through this ceremony... This situation also causes the formation of social model or type by maintaining order among the ceremony participants. The closed and heterodox identity, in a way, gains structural attribution with the designation of such types of norms. Even though it is just conducted once a year, it forms the focus point of the Alevi culture. A person attains his or her structure of personality in this panteon (Türkdoğan, 1995:107).

By the shift of Alevism to the urban life, the cem ceremony also faced changes. The cems that used to be held in long winter evenings in villages are replaced by the weekend cems. It is impossible to conduct the cems, which are held in the winter evenings until the late nights for about a month, in the cities. The worries about the neighboring Sunnis and inappropriate working conditions are the main reasons of it. The cems get gradually shorter and turns into Abdal Musa ceremonies which are held a few times a year. Thus, performances cannot be practiced completely in those

ceremonies (Bozkurt, 2006:174). In metropolitan cities, foundations and associations like the Cem foundation organize a cem ceremony once a week like the Friday prayer of the Sunnis. However, not all the tasks can be performed in the ceremonies; the rules of good manners are aimed at being transmitted to the young generations.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RELATIONSHIP OF THE ALEVIS WITH THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY AND THEIR POLITICAL PREFERENCES**

#### **4.1 Pre-Republican Era Case**

“The Seljuks accepted Persian language in administration, and handed the civilian authority of the State in to Iranians. Hence, nomadic Oğuzlar (the Turkmens) who played significant role in the foundation of the the Seljuk Empire were ostracized. Moreover, prisoner Turks as soldiers (Gulam) were preferred to these nomadic Oğuzs. (Türkdoğan, 1995:567).”

When we look at the Ottoman Empire built on the heritage of the Seljuks, we can understand that there is a parallel situation to the aforementioned. “While Bektashism was approved in the Ottoman administration, and even their fathers were honored and entertained, the Qizilbashism was known as Rafizism and faced a tight prosecution. (Refik, 1932:3).”

At the beginning there used to be no difference between the Ottoman and Qizilbash-Turkmen. What lies at the root of the problem is the conflict between the dönme/devşirme (proselyte/devshirmeh) and Turk/Turkmen. The founder of the Ottoman administration was Turk-Turmen. Throughout the foundation, they dominated the State. the option of the Ottoman State changed with the formation of the Devshirmeh system (Bozkurt, 2006:61).

Since the very beginning, the relationships between the Ruler and the Turkmen allies were always full of the tensions that weakened the initiatives of the Sultan to establish a powerful State. By the conquest of the Balkans, the Sultan noticed that he could reduce his dependence on the Turkmens by forming an opposite power among the Christians that were living in the

newly conquered territories. Hence, Devshirme system was commenced during the reign of 1. Murat. The Christian children who were collected with Devshirme system were being the servants of the Sultan or with a more appropriate term "slaves" of the Sultan; they were showing absolute loyalty to him; and they were able to get promotion to the highest administrative positions including military and grand viziership. Although the Turkmens tried to prevent the development of this system, they could not succeed. Turkoman-Devshirmah struggle showed itself in the most violent way during the process of the conquest of Istanbul; and finally Mehmet expelled Turkmen royal origin Çandıralı Halil Pasha and appointed Zağanos Pasha instead. This is how the tradition of appointing devshirmes to the most important positions of the central administration began. (Ahmad, 1995:32-33).

They used to raise devshirmes to significant bureaucratic-military positions through the Enderun, conscript boys system and guild of janissary that were established and the Turkmens (nomad Oğuzs) who contributed to the formation of the State were kept away from the centre. "Not to be at the centre, and to be ostracized by the centre created psychological reactions among the Turkmens living at the vicinity. This paved the way for the complexities of being despised and pushed away. This situation designated the process of alienation of the people around against the centre. Since every attempt to be alienate forms an identity against the others, within the line of historical development, heterodox identity was born against the Orthodox identity. (Türkdoğan, 1995:568)." Political struggles between the Safevis and the Ottomans strengthened the distinction between the Orthodox and the heterodox identity. Shah Ismail from the Erdebil guild, which had a great esteem among the Anatolian Turkmens, founded Safevi dynasty in Iran in 1501 with a great contribution of this estimation and became the first Ruler (Sultan). Some Turkmens began to emigrate from the Ottoman territory towards the Safevi lands. The saying of "let's go to Shah (Şaha



gidelim)“ became a direct slogan of political preference at that time. There were insurgencies in domino effect in Anatolia. Political alternative in religious guise forced the Ottoman State to have fundamental religious changes... In Rafizi terms, the struggle against the rival is Jihad, and the rival is defined as “worse than infidel”. (Çamuroğlu, 2008:13-18). The strong tension between the Ottoman and the Safevi States and the hostility that resulted in war also led to the punishments and banishments of Alevi which was started during the reign of the II.Beyazid and turned into a massacre in the reign of the Yavuz Selim (Akpınar, 2001:241). Heterodox public Sheiks compared the Turks’ exposition to tyrannys then to the cruelties that Ehl-I Beyt (the lineage of the Prophet) faced once. A majority of the Turkmens then, being deceived from such comparison, made a different literature, a distinct philosophy and separate temple for themselves (Gökalp, 1970:38).

#### **4.2 Past-Republican Era Case**

“When the Ottoman Empire was replaced with Turkish Republic, Alevi embraced the goals of Ataturk with great joy and supported his efforts to establish a secular State. Furthermore, they even compared Ataturk with Caliph Ali. (Melikoff, 1999:11).” “Even more, to some Alevi, Ataturk is also Mahdi. He came to settle divine justice on Earth and he fulfilled his tasks. (Bozkurt, 2006:22).” (It can be said that one of the main reasons why Alevi are in favor of CHP is the respect they have for Ataturk and that CHP is seen as Ataturk’s party.)

Perhaps the most significant reason for Alevi contribution to the War of Independence is that the Ottoman governance was seen as an administration which could not be proponen for the Alevi (Öz, 2001:35). Kurdish Alevi as much as the Turkish Alevi also supported the secular and populist opinions of Kemalism; many Kurdish Alevi willingly accepted to be

assimilated within the Turkish culture and they began to identify themselves as the Turks rather than the Kurds. (Bruinessen, 2005:38).

For the first time in the history of Anatolia, the Alevis met with the cities and the benefits of urban life with the rule of Republican administration. For the first time their existence as a ruled society was accepted legal with the Republican administration; and they saw themselves considered as citizens. In a way, the Alevis found the long desired type of administration in secular Republic and multicultural state; however, it cannot be said that all the expectations of the Alevis were met by the Republican administration. For instance, when it was first established, the Directorate of the Religious Affairs was an institution to serve to Sunni sect. The Islamic monasteries were closed alleging religious fundamentalism; meanwhile, including Hacı Bektaşî Veli convent, the Alevi convents were also closed. Sunnism became just like an official religion or sect of the State; from religious point of view Alevism was not accepted officially by the Republican administration (Şener, 2001:65). In fact it was not something new for Alevism for not being recognized in religious terms. Starting from the supporters of Union and Progress Party, the attempts to modernize religion in Turkey cated from the point of having a single religion in Turkey and did not accept that the public beliefs were meaningful unity within itself. The religious reforms during the period of the foundation of the Republic aimed at giving a new and civilized form to the Orthodox type of Sunni Islam (Mardin, 2010:145-146).” Hence Alevism was ignored.

Despite all, the Alevis, who would always continue to be heartfully dedicated and thankful to Atatürk, also became loyal to CHP as it was the party that meticulously enforced the laws which removed Sunni Islam from the state and public affairs after his death and always supported him. Almost all the Alevis have always supported this party until now. Although there were some to sympathize with DP and AP in the post 1950s, it is due to different reasons from the Sunnis. Even though, DP’s coming to the power with the elections of 1950 gave hope to the Alevis for democratization, the attitude of this party to support Sunni Islam explicitly disappointed the Alevis. They see

this decade as a period of betrayal to Ataturk and a kind of interregnum in the history of the Republic. Hence, the coup of 1960 was welcomed by the Alevi with a great rejoice and was seen as a new period of liberation. (Ocak, 2002:318-319).

As of 1960s, with the effect of the period of Village Institutes, Alevi turned towards the leftist politics. The leftist politics on Alevism and the Alevism on the leftist politics had permanent impacts. From the national anthem to the daily rituals, and to the popular leftist moustache, many characteristics were taken from the Alevism. In this process of interaction, with their idea of enlightenment, thought of progressing, and more importantly, they get introduced to Statism. For the majority of Alevi, from then on, the new motto has been "let my existence be a present to the left!" (Çamuroğlu, 2008:VIII)..

Political environment that was brought by the coup of 1960 and was open to the leftist tendency, paved the way for the development of the militant leftist ideology as well as a moderate leftist ideology; it also led to difficulties for them to find social base for themselves. Especially the Marxist ideology did not take much trouble to gain the Kurdish and Turkish Alevi at the universities by discovering ethnic and sect differences. The leftist saying of CHP then and "socialist" propaganda of the TIP used to attract great sympathies from the Alevi people. Meanwhile, CHP continued to be the party of the Alevi of the rural area. In order to gather Alevi within its body, Party of Union (BP) was founded in 1966 (Ocak, 2002, 320). In the evolution of Alevi identity, Union Party occupies an important place. The party, with its reasons of foundation, undertook interesting functions in making people get used to the politics. In terms of the regulations of foundation, it does not bring huge changes. It was in a range between the Turkish Worker Party, which was in a socialist line then, and social democratic Republican People's Party. They could not bring immediate and permanent solutions to the problems of Turkey. Rather they lashed out by bringing the already existing

problems on agenda (Bozkurt, 2006:95).” Established on 17 October 1966, the Union Party received 2,8 % votes in 1969 elections and thus attained 8 members for the Parliament (Yavuz, 2001:82). They could not succeed at achieving the goals at the foundation process and thus was closed in a few years.

“During the 1970s, it was observed that Alevi belief system was solved and the Alevi identity was moving towards political field. At a time when Sunni Muslims once again rediscovered to use religion for political aims and attacked the existing secular system for it limits the liberty of religion; although they still faced discriminations occasionally and some Kemalist policies played havoc with Alevi belief system, a great majority of the Alevi saw the Kemalist Republic as a security for their existence. (Karin, 1999:36).

The fact that 1980 military coup had official reactions against Islam paved the way for Alevi to have the greatest disengagement from the Kemalist tradition, which Alevi believed in and thus had used to lead them approach towards the state. The military coup supported Sunni Islam against the socialism, and the elective course of religion at the schools was made a compulsory. The Directorate of Religious Affairs was strengthened; many new mosques were built in places including Alevi villages, and educated leaders (Imams) were appointed to these mosques. These changes in the 1980s led Alevi to stay detached from the Kemalism and form a new interest in Alevism as a distinct religion within itself. As a matter of fact, majority of the young Alevi in 1970s used to reject religion thinking that religion was just an ideology and be proud of Alevism as it was a democratic social movement. (Bruinessen, 2005:49).

As of the late 1980s, Alevism became an element of the process of rediscovery in a dazzling way. The most fundamental reason of rediscovering Alevi community in sociological terms were the emigrations from the rural areas to the urban places on account of economic and political reasons that reached at climax in the 1970s. Emigration to cities imposed Alevism, which used to sustain its existence in remote rural areas, inevitable innovative and urban way of expression. Rapid urbanization caused radical changes in the

social structure of the society. However, political factors can be reduced to three points. The first of these factors is the collapse of socialist block in the Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. As an outcome of this development, socialism, which had undisputable authority on young and middle age generation Alevis as an ideological alternative for twenty years, lost its magnitude. By the end of 1980s, many of those who gained political experience in leftist groups and parties along the years of 1970s began to redefine themselves as "Alevi". This situation paved the way for contemporary terms and methods to enter Alevism... The second and perhaps the most significant factor is the defensive instinct against the rise of Political Islam in Turkey. Owing to this instinct, many rapidly spreading Alevi associations were established and a political unity was tried to be formed by them. The third important factor that led to the awakening of Alevism is Kurdish issue. Since most of the Alevis were Kurdish, they noticed the fact that nationalist tensions affected their community directly. Noticing the situation caused different ways of explanations for the Alevi ethnicity according to the dominant discourses in the country. Hence, Alevis showed tendencies to incline towards secularism as a political preference against the Islamism and express their identities with political terms. As for against the Kurdish nationalism, they emphasize on identity and belongings as Alevi giving priority to the principle of unity. (Çamuroğlu,1999:97-98).

The political preferences of Alevi community today will be dealt in "the political party attitudes of the Survey Participants" section.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FINDINGS AND EVALUATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

In order to conduct the survey studies, Cem Foundation and Serçeşme Association were sought help. It was observed that while filling the survey questions up the Participants could not express their opinions explicitly and being influenced from the other Participants, they gave different answers from what they originally thought. To provide chance for the Participants to express their opinion without any influence and obtain accurate data, the questions were transmitted to an interactive platform<sup>22</sup>. By the help of Facebook social sharing network, 78 facebook site administrators from Turkey and abroad were communicated and they were requested to send the link to the members and thus participate in the survey questionnaire. After a period of a month, 525 Alevis participated the survey through internet or by means of filling the forms up with their handwriting.

#### 5.1 General Qualifications of the Survey Participants

**Table 1- Distribution of Survey Participants According to Their Age**

	Number	%
15-17 Age	13	2,48%
18-30 Age	328	62,48%
31-64 Age	184	35,04%
Total	525	100,00%

When the ages of the survey Participants are analyzed, 328 people from the young adults between the age of 18-30 form 62 %, with 184 people the adult group form between the ages 31-64 form 35,04 % and with

13 people 15-17 age group form 2,48 % of the Participants. The reason why the young adults form the majority of the survey Participant is that those who had participated the survey in Cem Foundation and the Serçeşme Asoociation were at this age group. Owing to the fact that the rate of illiteracy is low among the old generation Alevis, the questions were long, and rhe survey study was given different meanings, the participation of the old generation Alevis to the survey remained low. The fact that social networks sites like Facebook are used more by the young adult generation Alevis, majority of the Participants are consisted of the young adult Alevis between the age group of 18-30.

**Table 2- Distribution of Survey Participants According to Their Gender**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Women	136	41,46%	48	26,09%	184	35,94%
Men	192	58,54%	136	73,91%	328	64,06%
Total	328	100,00%	184	100,00%	512	100,00%

When we look at the distrubition of survey Participants according to their gende, we find out that the women Participants form 41,46 % of the young adults with 136 people, and form 26,09 % of the adults with 48 people. The ratio of the women in general total is 35,94 % with 184 people. However, the distrubition of men is 58,54 % of the young adults with 192 people and 73,91 % of the adults with 136 people. The Distribution of men in general total accounts for 64,06 % with 328 people.

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<sup>22</sup> The survey is available at the following link:  
<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dEtGaGRRRIdxWXQyWjBBOWthamtJa0E6MQ>

**Table 3- Distribution of the Survey Participants According to Their Educational Background**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Not a graduate of Primary School	4	1,22%	1	0,54%	5	0,98%
Primary School Graduate	19	5,79%	18	9,78%	37	7,23%
Secondary School Graduate	15	4,57%	24	13,04%	39	7,62%
High School Graduate	130	39,63%	67	36,41%	197	38,48%
University Graduate	144	43,90%	65	35,33%	209	40,82%
Masters/Ph.D. Graduate	16	4,88%	9	4,89%	25	4,88%
Total	328	100,00%	184	100,00%	512	100,00%

If the educational background of the Survey participants is scrutinized, it is seen that the level of education is high. The ratio of the university graduates in general total is 45 %. The percentage of university graduates in the age group of young adult is more than that of the adults. Gradually developing educational opportunities, increasing number of universities and economical improvement can account for the situation. It can also be concluded that the educational level in Alevi community is increasing gradually.

**Table 4- Distribution of the Survey Participants According to Their Residence**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Adana	5	1,52%	2	1,09%	7	1,37%
Adiyaman	1	0,30%		0,00%	1	0,20%
Ağrı	1	0,30%		0,00%	1	0,20%
Amasya	1	0,30%	2	1,09%	3	0,59%
Ankara	26	7,93%	24	13,04%	50	9,77%
Antalya	6	1,83%	4	2,17%	10	1,95%
Aydın	2	0,61%		0,00%	2	0,39%
Balıkesir	1	0,30%	2	1,09%	3	0,59%
Bilecik		0,00%	1	0,54%	1	0,20%



Bingöl	1	0,30%		0,00%	1	0,20%
Bursa	6	1,83%	1	0,54%	7	1,37%
Çorum	6	1,83%	4	2,17%	10	1,95%
Denizli	1	0,30%		0,00%	1	0,20%
Diyarbakır	1	0,30%		0,00%	1	0,20%
Elazığ	3	0,91%		0,00%	3	0,59%
Erzincan	1	0,30%	1	0,54%	2	0,39%
Erzurum	2	0,61%		0,00%	2	0,39%
Eskişehir	2	0,61%	2	1,09%	4	0,78%
Gaziantep	7	2,13%	3	1,63%	10	1,95%
Giresun	2	0,61%		0,00%	2	0,39%
Hatay	2	0,61%	3	1,63%	5	0,98%
Isparta	3	0,91%	1	0,54%	4	0,78%
İstanbul	153	46,65%	53	28,80%	206	40,23%
İzmir	30	9,15%	22	11,96%	52	10,16%
Kahramanmaraş	2	0,61%	1	0,54%	3	0,59%
Karabük	2	0,61%		0,00%	2	0,39%
Kars		0,00%	1	0,54%	1	0,20%
Kayseri	3	0,91%	2	1,09%	5	0,98%
Kocaeli	7	2,13%	3	1,63%	10	1,95%
Kütahya	2	0,61%		0,00%	2	0,39%
Malatya	1	0,30%	4	2,17%	5	0,98%
Mersin	2	0,61%	2	1,09%	4	0,78%
Muğla	15	4,57%	4	2,17%	19	3,71%
Osmaniye	1	0,30%		0,00%	1	0,20%
Ordu		0,00%	3	1,63%	3	0,59%
Rize		0,00%	2	1,09%	2	0,39%
Sakarya	2	0,61%		0,00%	2	0,39%
Samsun	1	0,30%	1	0,54%	2	0,39%
Sivas	4	1,22%	1	0,54%	5	0,98%
Şanlıurfa		0,00%	1	0,54%	1	0,20%
Tekirdağ	1	0,30%		0,00%	1	0,20%
Tokat	2	0,61%	2	1,09%	4	0,78%
Tunceli	2	0,61%		0,00%	2	0,39%
Yalova	1	0,30%		0,00%	1	0,20%

Zonguldak	1	0,30%	1	0,54%	2	0,39%
Yurtdışı	16	4,88%	31	16,85%	47	9,18%
Total	328	100,00%	184	100,00%	512	100,00%

When the state of stay for the survey participant is studied, it is seen that the participants mainly live in big cities such as Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara and abroad. This condition shows us the emigration phenomenon that we often emphasize on in the thesis.

**Table 5- Distribution of Survey Participants According to Their Marital Status**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Married	53	16,46%	144	78,69%	197	39,01%
Single	262	81,37%	20	10,93%	282	55,84%
Widow	1	0,31%	3	1,64%	4	0,79%
Divorced	6	1,86%	16	8,74%	22	4,36%
Total	322	100,00%	183	100,00%	505	100,00%

When the distribution of the survey participants according to their marital status is examined, the ratio of the married ones is 16,46 % of the young adults with 53 people, and 78,69 % of the young ones with 144 people. The ratio of the married Alevis in general total is 39,01 % by 197 people. The ratio of the single ones is 81,20 % in young adults by 262 people and 10,93 % in adults. The general total of the single accounts for 55,84 % with 282 people. However, ratio of the divorced is 1,86 % with only 6 people in young adult and 8,74 % in adult with 16 people. The ratio of the divorced ones in general total is 4,36 % with 22 people.

The leading reasons for the lower ratio of the married ones than the single ones in adult generation are economical reasons and that the participants do not feel themselves ready for the marriage. Thus the age of marriage increases.

In Alevism, with the sanctions that aim to protect the family institution, the people who get divorced are announced as crank (*düşkün*) and are thus ostracized from the community (Yaman,2001:70). Although divorce is forbidden in Alevi families, we can not talk of an absolute restriction. Whereas adultery committed by one of the spouses is a reason for divorce, even if there is no such thing, it is also a reason to get divorce if the woman insistently demands to get divorced (Yalçinkaya, 1996:65). If the conception level of 0,05<sup>23</sup> in scientific researches taken into consideration, although divorce in Alevism is not welcomed, the rate of divorce for the adults is 8,74 %.

**Table 6- Distribution of the Survey Participants According to Their Profession**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Student	129	44,48%	6	3,64%	135	29,67%
Laborer	67	23,10%	42	25,45%	109	23,96%
Civil Servant	22	7,59%	40	24,24%	62	13,63%
Businessman	16	5,52%	12	7,27%	28	6,15%
Self employed	28	9,66%	32	19,39%	60	13,19%
House wife	13	4,48%	10	6,06%	23	5,05%
Retired		0,00%	18	10,91%	18	3,96%
Unemployed	5	1,72%	1	0,61%	6	1,32%
Others	10	3,45%	4	2,42%	14	3,08%
Total	290	100,00%	165	100,00%	455	100,00%

When Table 6 that illustrates the distribution of the Survey Participants according to the profession is studied, the largest group of profession is laborers with 23,96%. Then follows civil servants with 13,63 %, self employed with 13,19 %, businessmen with 6,15 %, housewife with 5,05 %, and 3,96 % retired people. When we look at the table, we notice that the Alevis are generally in paid employee class rather than being employers.

<sup>23</sup> Zekai Arslantürk, Sosyal Bilimler İçin Araştırma Metod ve Teknikleri, M.Ü İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Publications, İstanbul, 1995. p. 121

**Table 7- Distrubution of Survey Participants According to Financial Status**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
500-1000 TL	95	28,96%	29	15,76%	124	24,22%
1000-1500 TL	93	28,35%	54	29,35%	147	28,71%
1500-2000 TL	83	25,30%	44	23,91%	127	24,80%
Above 2500 TL	57	17,38%	57	30,98%	114	22,27%
Total	328	100,00%	184	100,00%	512	100,00%

According to Table 7 that illustrates the distrubution of the Survey Participants in respect to to their financial condition, the income level of the participant is seen to be close to each other. 28,71 % of the participants have income between 1000-1500 TL, 24,80 % have 1500-2000 TL, 24,22 % have 500-1000 TL and 22,27 % have above 2500 TL.

## **5.2 Perception of Religion and religious Attitudes of the Survey Participants**

**Table 8- Survey Participants' State of *İkrar Verip Görgüden Geçme***

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes	67	22,04%	54	30,51%	121	25,16%
No	237	77,96%	123	69,49%	360	74,84%
Total	304	100,00%	177	100,00%	481	100,00%

With its lexical meaning, avowal (ikrar) means to promise, to make agreement and to have obedience (Arslanoğlu). It is the promise that an Alevi student makes about accepting all the advice and teachings of the mentor (mürşid) and abides by the rules of the path (i.e. Alevism) (Eröz, 1990:139). Although having Alevi father and mother is naturally a reason enough to be an Alevi, it is essential to ikrar verip görgüden geçmek in order to be Alevi and participate in cem rituals. (Keskin, 2004:106).

Even though 25,16 % of the survey participants did *ikrar verip görgüden geçmek*, 74,85 % of them did not. Under the conditions, it can be said that this tradition has lost its significance in Alevism.

**Table 9- Distribution of the Survey Participants' Ways of Self Description According to Religion**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Muslim and Alevi	205	51,00%	95	42,99%	300	48,15%
Muslim and Bektashi	25	6,22%	15	6,79%	40	6,42%
Muslim and Sunni	15	3,73%	4	1,81%	19	3,05%
Muslim and Jaferi	13	3,23%	10	4,52%	23	3,69%
Only Alevi	122	30,35%	85	38,46%	207	33,23%
Only Bektashi	22	5,47%	12	5,43%	34	5,46%
Other	0	0,00%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
Total	402	100,00%	221	100,00%	623	100,00%

When the Table 9 that illustrates the Distribution of the Survey Participants' Ways of Self Description According to Religion is analyzed, 48,15 % of the Survey participants describe themselves as Muslim and Alevi, 33,23 % of them as only Alevi, 6,42 % as Muslim and Bektashi, 5,46 % as only Bektashis, 3,69 % as Muslim and Jaferi, and 3,05 % as Muslim and Sunni.

**Table 10- Survey Participants' Way of Describing Themselves**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Only Turkish	186	34,70%	109	32,63%	295	33,91%
Only Kurdish	51	9,51%	36	10,78%	87	10,00%
Only Muslim	85	15,86%	46	13,77%	131	15,06%
Only Alevi	214	39,93%	143	42,81%	357	41,03%
Total	536	100,00%	334	100,00%	870	100,00%

According to the Table 10 that shows Survey Participants' Way of Describing Themselves, 41,03 % of the participants described themselves as Only Alevi, 33,91 % as only Turkish, 15,06 % as only Muslim and 10 % described themselves as only Kurdish.

**Table 11- Survey Participants's Way of Describing Alevism**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Sect	195	43,62%	91	36,25%	286	40,97%
Religion	63	14,09%	42	16,73%	105	15,04%
Way of Life	144	32,21%	96	38,25%	240	34,38%
Cult	34	7,61%	16	6,37%	50	7,16%
Same as Shi'ism	11	2,46%	6	2,39%	17	2,44%
Total	447	100,00%	251	100,00%	698	100,00%

When we look at Table 11 that illustrates the Survey Participants' Way of Describing Alevism, we see that 40,97 % of the survey participants describe Alevism as a sect, 34,38 % describe as a way of life, 15,04 % as a religion, 7,16 % as a cult and 2,44 % same as Shi'ism.

**Table 12- Survey Participants' Place of Learning Alevism**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Family	246	38,62%	132	38,82%	378	38,69%
Alevi Leaders (Dede-Baba)	157	24,65%	76	22,35%	233	23,85%
Books	164	25,75%	91	26,76%	255	26,10%
Others	70	10,99%	41	12,06%	111	11,36%
Total	637	100,00%	340	100,00%	977	100,00%

When we look at Table 12 that illustrates Where the Survey Participants Learnt about Alevism from, 38,69 % of the survey participants

learnt from the family, 26,10 % from the books, 23,85 % from the Alevi leaders, 11,36 % from the other sources. It is seen that the family has the greatest share in learning Alevi values. In addition, it is observed that the old generation Alevis believe that the young generation Alevis are reluctant to learn Alevi values and that the families are not sufficient to transmit the young Alevis the values of Alevism well. Moreover, from the Table we can draw a conclusion that the function of dedes to transmit oral culture to new generations has become decreased.

**Table 13- Opinions of the Survey Participants on Whether They Know Alevism Adequately**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes, I know adequately	96	29,91%	75	41,67%	171	34,13%
No, I do not know adequately	225	70,09%	105	58,33%	330	65,87%
Total	321	100,00%	180	100,00%	501	100,00%

When we look at the Table 13 that illustrates the opinions of survey participants on whether they know Alevism sufficiently or not, 65,87 % of the participants think that they do not know Alevism adequately whereas 34,13 % think that they know Alevism adequately. The fact that Alevism is transmitted to new generations through verbal sources rather than written ones can account for the reason why Alevism is not known sufficiently. Because the cultural transmission is carried out through verbal sources, religious and social practices may show variations according to the regions. This situation paves the way for the concept of "the way is one but the method is a thousand and one" and prevents the integrity of the Alevi theology. Not to have a single theory on which all compromise also hardens the teaching. Moreover, the fact that the institution of dedism loses its previous significance and function also prevents the transmission of Alevi

teachings to the new generations. Furthermore, there is no consensus among the Alevi associations, authors and scholars as to what Alevism is as well as the practices of it. This also prevents the teachings of Alevism to be transferred to new generations.

**Table 14- Sufficiency of Alevi Myth, Naration and Teachings in meeting the needs of the survey participants**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes, Sufficient	102	33,01%	56	31,28%	158	32,38%
Partly sufficient	148	47,90%	89	49,72%	237	48,57%
Not sufficient	59	19,09%	34	18,99%	93	19,06%
Total	309	100,00%	179	100,00%	488	100,00%

When we analyze Table 14, which illustrates Sufficiency of Alevi Myth, Naration and Teachings in meeting the needs of the survey participants, 48,57 % of the participants say that they meet their religious needs partly, 32,38 % completely and 19,06 not at all.

**Table 15- Survey Participants' State of Reading the Command of Jafer-i Sadiq**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
I have read	70	22,08%	70	38,89%	140	28,17%
I haven't read yet	247	77,92%	110	61,11%	357	71,83%
Total	317	100,00%	180	100,00%	497	100,00%

The command is the most important of the Alevi written sources. It is a general name for the teachings of the rules of good manners and basic rules based on the teachings of Imam Jafer-I Sadiq (Yıldız).

When we see Table 15, which illustrates Survey Participants' State of Reading the Command of Jafer-i Sadiq, 71,83 % of the survey participants say that they have not read the comma of Jafer-I Sadiq whereas 28,17 % say they have.



**Table 16- Opinions of Survey Participants on Alevism without Ali**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Only those who are affiliated with Ali are Alevis	183	59,22%	102	57,63%	285	58,64%
Those who are not affiliated with Ali can also be Alevis	69	22,33%	60	33,90%	129	26,54%
Indetermined	57	18,45%	15	8,47%	72	14,81%
Total	309	100,00%	177	100,00%	486	100,00%

Caliph Ali occupies a significant place in traditional Alevi concept. Allah-Muhammad-Ali trilogy is at the top of the Anatolian Alevi belief. Evenmore, according to a prevalent opinion among the Alevis, Allah appeared in the form of Prophet Muhammad and Caliph Ali.<sup>24</sup> The fact that the secret behind ascension (miraj) of Muhammad is considered to be His attainment of Caliph Ali's secret, show us the place of Caliph Ali in the teaching of Alevism. In Alevi teaching, Caliph Ali is the person appointed by the Prophet with the permission of Allah. The Prophet said "I am the building of knowledge while Ali is the door of it". When the Prophet fell into the trench and got injured in the War of Trench, Angel Gabriel came and warned the Prophet to call Caliph Ali. In other words, in the Alevi teaching, Caliph Ali is the one that the Prophet Muhammad appointed by the command of Allah. Ali is the Prophet's dear assistant and guide.

When Table 16 is analyzed, 58,64 % of the survey participants said that only those who are affiliated with Caliph Ali are the Alevis while 26,54 % said that those who are not affiliated with Ali can also be Alevis. 14,81 % of the survey participants stated that they are indetrmined. Such a condition shows that in traditional Alevism the response to the question of *who real Alevi is* may vary.

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<sup>24</sup> Büyük Larouuse, C.11, p.6753

**Table 17- According to Survey Participants whether the Principle of "*Eline, Diline, Beline Sahip Ol*" is followed as much as it used to be**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes, followed	48	15,09%	30	16,85%	78	15,73%
Not followed	242	76,10%	133	74,72%	375	75,60%
No idea	28	8,81%	15	8,43%	43	8,67%
Total	318	100,00%	178	100,00%	496	100,00%

*Eline, diline, beline sahip ol* (Hold your hand, tongue and waist) is the most important principle of Alevis. It is commonly interpreted as do not steal, do not tell a lie, and do not covet the honor of others. Allah-Muhammad-Ali trilogy is identified with the trilogy of *eline-diline-beline sahip ol*. An Alevi who does not have hold of his hand-tongue-waist feels like having disrespected Allah-Muhammad-Ali (Yardımcı).

According to the Table 17, 75,69 % of the survey participants answered the question whether the principle of "*Eline, Diline, Beline Sahip Ol*" is followed as much as it used to be, as 'not followed' while 15,73 % said 'yes followed'. 8,67 % of the survey participants stated that they are indetermined. This situation shows that one of the most important principles of Alevism faced alteration with the emigration.

**Table 18- Whether the Survey Participants Know All the Names of Ehli Beyt**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
I know all	138	43,67%	98	55,06%	236	47,77%
Not all	154	48,73%	68	38,20%	222	44,94%
I know none	24	7,59%	12	6,74%	36	7,29%
Total	316	100,00%	178	100,00%	494	100,00%

“The most fundamental identifiable attitude of Alevism is based on having love towards Caliph Ali and those descended from his lineage(Korkmaz, 1994:356).” “Tevella” and “Teberra” concepts occupy a great place in Alevi teaching. “Tevella” is to love those who love Ehl-I Beyt, and “teberra” is to dislike and stay away from those who dislike Ehl-I Beyt (Menemencioğlu).

When we look at Table 18 that illustrates whether the Survey Participants Know All the Names of Ehli Beyt, 47,77 % of the survey participants stated that they know all the names while 44,94 % said that they do not know the names completely. However, 7,29 % of them mentioned that they do not know any name of the Ehl-i Beyt.

**Table 19- Whether the survey participants know the name of Twelve Imam**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
I know all in order	167	52,19%	100	55,87%	267	53,51%
Not all	141	44,06%	72	40,22%	213	42,69%
I know none	12	3,75%	7	3,91%	19	3,81%
Total	320	100,00%	179	100,00%	499	100,00%

One of the basic foundations of Alevi belief is the Twelve Imam belief. The Twelve Imams are spiritual mentors who were tortured by Umayyads and Abbasids (Sarıkaya). The Twelve Imam belief in Alevism is related to the concept of “divine light”. It is believed that the divine light, which splitted after the death of Prophet Muhammad and Caliph Ali, reunited in Fatima and transferred to the Twelve Imams in succession. (Öztürk, 1972:39).

According to Table 19, which illustrates whether the survey participants know the name of Twelve Imam or not, 53,51 % of the participants stated that they know the names of the Twelve Imams in order,

42,69 % stated that they do not know completely, 3,81 % said that they know none of the names.

**Table 20- Whether the Survey Participants can Recite Three Sunnah and Seven Obligations**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes I can name all	77	24,76%	41	23,56%	118	24,33%
I can name partly	132	42,44%	77	44,25%	209	43,09%
I cannot name at all	102	32,80%	56	32,18%	158	32,58%
Total	311	100,00%	174	100,00%	485	100,00%

One of the central concepts in Alevism is “three sunnah (üç sünnet) and seven obligations (yedi farz)” owing to the fact that this concept describes basic principles and religious organizations of the way (Alevism). This concept is also significant because of the fact that it covers other important concepts such as “Mentorship”, “tutoring”, and “musahipship”. (Üzüm, 2001:159-160).

According to Table-20 that illustrates whether the Survey Participants can recite Three Sunnah and Seven Obligations, 43,09 % of the participants can recite Three Sunnah and Seven Obligations, 32,58 % cannot recite at all and 24,33 % can recite all.

**Table 21- Whether the Survey Participants agree with the Opinion that Allah-Muhammad-Ali are a Whole and Divine Light**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
I agree	249	83,56%	121	71,60%	370	79,23%
I do not agree	49	16,44%	48	28,40%	97	20,77%
Total	298	100,00%	169	100,00%	467	100,00%

Allah-Muhammad-Ali trilogy forms the basis of Alevi beliefs. The first statement in the trilogy is the perception of God, and the second statement

is equivocally about prophethood, and the third one is quite complicatory; in some places and some people it stands for godhead, and sometimes reincarnation, and for some places and people it means authority (Üzüm, 2006:65).

According to Table 21, which shows the state of Whether the Survey Participants agree with the opinion that Allah-Muhammad-Ali are a Whole and Divine Light, 79,23 % of the survey participants agree with this opinion while 20,77 % do not agree.

### 5.3 The attitudes of the survey participants towards Religious-Social Institutions that are unique to Alevism

#### 5.3.1 Dedeship

**Table 22- Survey Participants' Opinion on the Necessity for every Alevi to be Affiliated with a Dede**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Every Alevi must be affiliated with a Dede	132	41,77%	82	46,07%	214	43,32%
Every Alevi does not have to be affiliated with a Dede	127	40,19%	76	42,70%	203	41,09%
Indetermined	57	18,04%	20	11,24%	77	15,59%
Total	316	100,00%	178	100,00%	494	100,00%

In traditional Alevism, every individual is affiliated with a Dede. The Alevi villages are affiliated with a Dede, whom they call 'Pir (Master)', and this dede is affiliated to another dede in another society (*ocak*). This is how Dede of Alevi guilds are interrelated to each other with a sequence. The final affiliated society is the Hacı Bektaşî Veli Society (Arslanoğlu). The society, which can be seen as a set of culture, designates the lineage, role and place of religious leaders in Alevi tradition. Due to the concept of society,

it is clarified whether someone belongs to the lineage of Ehl-i Beyt or Hacı Bektaş (Aksoy ve Talas).

According to the Table 22, which illustrates the Survey Participants' Opinion on the Necessity for every Alevi to be affiliated with a Dede, 43,22 % state that every Alevi must be affiliated to a Dede, 41,09 % state that it is not necessary that every Alevi be affiliated to a Dede, and 15,59 % say that they are indetermined.

**Table 23- Opinions of Survey Participants on being a descendant of a Dede to be a Dede**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Dede must be a descendant of a Dede	121	37,93%	66	36,67%	187	37,47%
Dede does not have to be a descendent of Dede, but he must deserve to be a Dede with his proficient knowledge in Alevism	172	53,92%	106	58,89%	278	55,71%
No idea	26	8,15%	8	4,44%	34	6,81%
Total	319	100,00%	180	100,00%	499	100,00%

In traditional Alevism, the Dedeship follows family lineage, when Dede dies, his son succeeds him (Aydın, 2009:449). Dedes are believed to be descendant of Ehli Beyt lineage. The most important source of legitimacy is that that is from the family line age of the Prophet.

According to Table 23 that describes Opinions of Survey Participants on being a descendant of a Dede to be a Dede, 55,71 % of the suvey participants stated that Dede does not have to be a descendent of Dede, but he must deserve to be a Dede with his proficient knowledge in Alevism whereas 37,47 % said that Dede must be a descendant of a Dede.

As a result of the interviews carried out for the thesis, we came to a conclusion that today Dedes are expected to fulfil the tasks of Dedeship in

order to accepted by the society and that being a descendant of Dede lineage is not sufficient. Moreover, Alevi scholars, who are not descendant of Dedeship but deals with the problems of the Alevis and conduct work on Alevism, are also labelled as "Dede".

The main reasons why the Dedeship institution have a symbolic meaning and instead there are influences of well-educated Alevis are the low level of education of the Dedes, their inability to read classical sources such as *Menakıbnâme (Book of Anecdote)* and Command, their insufficiency in knowledge and equipment to reform Alevism, and tendency of cultured Alevis in the urban societies towards written sources rather than verbal information (Alperen, 2009:81).

**Table 24- Whether Survey Participants find the Dedes Sufficient**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes, sufficient	45	14,61%	17	9,60%	62	12,78%
No, not sufficient	157	50,97%	98	55,37%	255	52,58%
Partly sufficient	106	34,42%	62	35,03%	168	34,64%
Total	308	100,00%	177	100,00%	485	100,00%

According to Table 24 which shows whether the survey participants find the Dedes sufficient, 52,58 % of the participants find them insufficient whereas 34,64 % find partly sufficient. However, 12,78 % find the sufficient.

Notwithstanding with the fact that in traditional Alevism Dedes are the producers, protectors and transmitters of the Alevis values, the Alevis do not find adult generation dedes sufficient. The followings can be mentioned as the reasons: Dedes difficulty in fulfilling their tasks because of the migration, increase in the educational level of the adult generation, Dedes insufficiency in bringing themselves up in respect to religious terms and their inadequacy to answer the questions originating from various philosophical

books. Today, the Alevis pay more attention to university graduate Dedes, take them more seriously and that they do not find the old generation Dedes adequate.

**Table 25- Whether the Narrations of Dedes Satisfy the Religious Needs of the Survey Participants**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes they satisfy	91	29,55%	30	16,76%	121	24,85%
No they do not	66	21,43%	67	37,43%	133	27,31%
Partly satisfy	151	49,03%	82	45,81%	233	47,84%
Total	308	100,00%	179	100,00%	487	100,00%

When we look at the Table 25 that illustrates Whether the Narrations of Dedes Satisfy the Religious Needs of the Survey Participants, 47,84 % stated that they satisfy partly while 27,31 % say that they do not satisfy. However, 24,85 % of them say that the narrations of Dedes do not meet their religious needs. Under the circumstances, it can be said that the narrations of Dedes remain inadequate to mee the religious needs of the adult generation Alevis.

**Table 26- How the Survey Participants Solve Significant Problems among Themselves**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
I Litigate	55	90,16%	39	97,50%	94	93,07%
Solve it by consulting Dede	1	1,64%		0,00%	1	0,99%
Solve it among ourselves	5	8,20%	1	2,50%	6	5,94%
Total	61	100,00%	40	100,00%	101	100,00%

Dede is not just a religious leader in traditional Alevism. Playing a role of a judge, Dede is also a mediator for the problems among Alevi individuals.



Hence, the Alevi society reduces their relationship with the state to the minimum.

According to Table 26, which shows How the Survey Participants Solve Significant Problems among Themselves, 93,07 % say that they solve significant problems that occur among themselves by litigating. 5,94 % say that they try to solve the problems among themselves while 0,99 % state that they solve the problems with the consultancy of Dede. Such a condition shows that with the emigration from the villages to the urban areas, Dede has lost their traditional roles as mediator and judge.

**Table 27- According to Survey Participants, Whether the Institution of Dedeship Fulfil its Duties**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes it fulfills	83	26,27%	35	19,55%	118	23,84%
No it does not	169	53,48%	120	67,04%	289	58,38%
No idea	64	20,25%	24	13,41%	88	17,78%
Total	316	100,00%	179	100,00%	495	100,00%

Table 27, which illustrates According to Survey Participants, Whether the Institution of Dedeship Fulfil its Duties, shows that 58,38 % of the Survey participants say that the institution of Dedeships does not perform its tasks while 23,84 % say that it does. However, 17,78 stated that they have no idea.

The Dedeship institution, which plays the most essential role of social and religious formation of Anatolian Alevism, weakened following the foundation of the Turkish Republic on account of the emigrations that took place from the villages to the cities. Today it has almost no function and remains as a place where Dede and aspirants have just symbolic names. Owing to socio-economic changes faced by the Republic of Turkey, the

functions of the Dedes have become gradually absorbed by the social institutions (Yaman).

### 5.3.2 Musahipship

**Table 28 a- Whether the Survey Participants have Musahips**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes	60	19,93%	70	39,77%	130	27,25%
No	241	80,07%	106	60,23%	347	72,75%
Total	301	100,00%	176	100,00%	477	100,00%

According to Table 29-a, which illustrates Whether the Survey Participants have Musahips, 72,75 %said that they have no Musahip while 27,25 % said that they have.

**Table 28 b- Whether Married Alevi Survey Participants have Musahips**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes	13	26,53%	56	40,58%	69	36,90%
No	36	73,47%	82	59,42%	118	63,10%
Total	49	100,00%	138	100,00%	187	100,00%

According to Table 28-b, which shows Whether Married Alevi Survey Participants have Musahips, 63,10 % stated that they have no Musahip while 36,90 % stated that they do.

The survey result reveals that the number of those who have Musahips is more than the number of those who do not. The main reason of it is the migration from the villages to the cities and the changes brought by the migration to the life of people. The communication between the Alevis weakened due to the migration. Most of the Alevis who had earned their life from agriculture became workers and civil servants after the migration. Most of those who migrated have income of less than 1500TL. Since such a

condition prevents Musahipship to be experienced in real senses, the Alevi individuals are not being able to musahip.

**Table 29: Survey Participants' Frequency of Meeting Their Musahips**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
We meet often	49	75,38%	49	73,13%	98	74,24%
We do not meet frequently	16	24,62%	18	26,87%	34	25,76%
Total	65	100,00%	67	100,00%	132	100,00%

When we look at Table 29, which illustrates Table 29: Survey Participants' Frequency of Meeting Their Musahips, 74,24 % of them meet their musahips often and have close relationship whereas 25,76 % do not meet frequently and do have poor relationships.

**Table 30- Whether the Musahips can Solve Daily Problems of Each Other**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Evet	30	51,72%	31	46,97%	61	49,19%
Hayır	6	10,34%	10	15,15%	16	12,90%
Bazen	22	37,93%	25	37,88%	47	37,90%
Total	58	100,00%	66	100,00%	124	100,00%

According to Table 30 that shows Whether the Musahips can Solve Daily Problems of Each Other, 49,19 % of the musahip Alevis say that they can solve their daily problems with each other, while 37,90 % say that they can occasionally solve their problems. However, 12,90 % is state that they can not find solutions for their musahips.

**Table 31- Who do the Survey Participants with Musahips Seek Help from When They Feel Difficulty?**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
From Musahip	33	28,70%	43	32,09%	76	30,52%
Family members	45	39,13%	58	43,28%	103	41,37%
Close friends	25	21,74%	27	20,15%	52	20,88%
None	4	3,48%	2	1,49%	6	2,41%
Other	8	6,96%	4	2,99%	12	4,82%
Total	115	100,00%	134	100,00%	249	100,00%

According to Table 31 that illustrates Who the Survey Participants with Musahips Seek Help from When They Feel Difficulty, 41,37 % of the Alevis with musahips seek help from their family members, 30,52 % from their musahips, 20,88 % from their close friends, and 2,41 % do not seek help from anyone. Under the circumstances, it can be concluded that although the musahips maintain good communication with each other, they consult family members rather than their muhasips when they have problems.

**Table 32: According to Survey Participants Whether the Authority of Musahipship Fulfil its Old Duties?**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes	15	25,42%	12	17,65%	27	21,26%
No	19	32,20%	35	51,47%	54	42,52%
Partially	25	42,37%	21	30,88%	46	36,22%
Total	59	100,00%	68	100,00%	127	100,00%

According to the Table 32, which shows the opinions of Survey Participants on Whether the Authority of Musahipship Fulfil its Old Duties, 42,52 % of the participants state that the musahipship position does not

fulfill its tasks whereas 36,22 % say that they fulfill partially. However, 21,26 % of the Alevis state that it fulfils the duty.

I is also a common idea of the old generation Dedes we interviewed that musahipship des not perform its function in Anatolia. Among the reasons, hardship of the musahipship, the fact that musahips live in different cities and even abroad owing to emigrations and that musahipship is an institution that can be practiced villages rather than big cities can be stated. Hence, due to the hardships of the musahipships, the Alevis in the urban cities cannot abide by the rules; thus there are demands to alter the conditions of the musahipships.

### 5.3.3 Düşkünlük

**Table 33: According to Survey Participants, Whether "*Düşkünlük*" Fulfil its Duties in Anatolia?**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes	46	17,49%	17	10,37%	63	14,75%
No	99	37,64%	93	56,71%	192	44,96%
Partially	118	44,87%	54	32,93%	172	40,28%
Total	263	100,00%	164	100,00%	427	100,00%

When we look at Table 33, which illustrates Survey Participants' opinion on Whether "*Düşkünlük*" institution Fulfil its Duties in Anatolia or not, 44,96 % of the survey participants stated that "*Düşkünlük*" institution cannot perform its duties in Anatolia while 40,28 % say that it performs partially. However, 14,75 % mentioned that the "*Düşkünlük*" institution fulfils its tasks in Anatolia.

In the interviews with the Dedes, itt is observed that the Dedes compromise on "*Düşkünlük*" institution's inability to perform its tasks in Anatolia. In additioned, it is observed that the adult generation Alevis have a consensus on having some of the principles of Alevism reinterpreted. "*Düşkünlük*" institution is one of the institutions that must be reinterpreted. Especially the rule that an Alevi, who is going to get married to a Sunni person, has to Düşkün must be reinterpreted.

**Table 34: Opinions of the Survey Participants on getting married to a Sunni person**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Only girl can be married to	29	9,24%	29	16,29%	58	11,79%
Intermarriage can be possible between the Alevi and the Sunnis	141	44,90%	84	47,19%	225	45,73%
Absolutely disagree	107	34,08%	47	26,40%	154	31,30%
No idea	37	11,78%	18	10,11%	55	11,18%
Total	314	100,00%	178	100,00%	492	100,00%

In traditional Alevism both letting a daughter to a Sunni (Üzüm, 2007:171), and getting married to a Sunni also are reasons of *düşkünlük*. The most distinct characteristic of Alevi marriages is "endogamy" marriages. In endogamy, the couples have to be affiliated to the same group (Tolan, 1975:216). In Alevi marriages, there is a condition that both the couples must be Alevi. Hence, Sunni or others will not be welcomed into the society. Moreover, one of the other reasons is that two different communities have two different ways of life. This distinction paves the way for them to keep a distance for prospective marriages to the Sunnis in order to protect their children. (Yalçinkaya, 1996:64).

When we look at Table 34, which illustrates Opinions of the Survey Participants on getting married to a Sunni person, 45,73 % of the survey participants account for not having any problem with getting married to a Sunni person. 11,79 % of the Survey participants think that they can get married to a Sunni girl, while 31,30 % state that they are against marriages with the Sunnis.

By the Alevi's emigration from Anatolian villages to big cities, the perspective of "Will you get married to a Yezid?" common among the old generation Alevi has become altered on account of the increasing relationships between the Sunnis and the Alevi, getting to know each other

better and the increase of educational level of both the groups. Besides the increase in the number of Alevi-Sunni marriages, especially the old generation Alevis approach to the prevalent condition reactively on account of the events that took between the Alevis and Sunnis as well as the aforementioned reasons.

**Table 35: Opinions of the Survey Participants on Getting Married to a Non-Muslim**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Only girl can be married to	27	8,41%	15	8,38%	42	8,40%
Intermarriage can be possible between the Alevis and the Sunnis	139	43,30%	102	56,98%	241	48,20%
Absolutely disagree	83	25,86%	30	16,76%	113	22,60%
No idea	72	22,43%	32	17,88%	104	20,80%
Total	321	100,00%	179	100,00%	500	100,00%

According to Table 35 that accounts for the Opinions of the Survey Participants on Marrying a Non-Muslim, 49,20 % of the survey participants state that they do not see any problem getting married to a Non-Muslim person. However, only 8,40 % of the survey participants say that there is no problem with getting married to a Non-Muslim girl, whereas 22,60 % say that they disagree with getting married to a Non-Muslim.

Despite the fact that 49,20 % of the survey participants find no problem with getting married to a non-Muslim, the same ratio for getting married to a Sunni person decreases to 45,73 %. On the other hand, 22,60 % of the survey participants are against marriages to non-Muslims but it increases to 31,30 % when it comes to marriages with the Sunnis. The reasons can be listed as: the impact of unfavorable events, which have occurred in the recent history, in the memory of the Alevis and the belief that non-Muslims might be more democratic and tolerant in comparisons to the Sunnis.

**Table 36: Distribution of the Survey Participants according to the belief of their spouses**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Alevi	51	80,95%	128	83,12%	179	82,49%
Sunni	12	19,05%	23	14,94%	35	16,13%
Other	0	0,00%	3	1,95%	3	1,38%
Total	63	100,00%	154	100,00%	217	100,00%

According to Table-36, which illustrates Distribution of the Survey Participants according to the belief of their spouses, 82,49 % of the adults have their spouses Alevi, while 16,13 % are Sunni. However, 1,38 % of the participants are seen to have faith in other religions. The fact that the ratio of marriages with the Sunnis is 16,13 % show that the tendency to get married to Sunnis increase.

**Table 37: In raising their children up, which set of belief the Survey Participants, who are married to a non-Alevi, follow?**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
According to Alevi belief	1	20,00%	4	19,05%	5	19,23%
According to Sunni belief	3	60,00%	5	23,81%	8	30,77%
No such distinction	1	20,00%	12	57,14%	13	50,00%
Total	5	100,00%	21	100,00%	26	100,00%

All personality traits of an individual is formed within the structure of a family (Aydın, 2001:12). Moreover, family is the most important means of cultural transmission (Ergin). This feature of family is important in regard to transmitting social values to the individual and the continuity of them.

According to Table 37, which illustrates the way survey participant-Alevi with non-Muslim spouses follow in raising their children, 19 % of the participant raise their children according to Alevi belief, 30,77 % according to



Sunni belief and 50 % state they they do not have such a distinction. Under the circumstances, it has been observed that in transmission to Alevi values to the children, the situation is in disadvantage of Alevis when one of the spouses is not an Alevi.

In the interviews with the young Alevis as well as with the dedes, it was observed that Alevi values are not being able to be transferred to the young generations. For my question on the reluctance of the young to the cem ceremonies, one of the dedes I met at Hacı Bektaşî Veli festivals responded that the parents do not generally put any impositions on their children to go to cems, and owing to democracy and tolerance within the family, they do not intervene with the acts of their children. He also mentioned regrettably that his daughter and son studying at universities also do not have much information about Cem and manners. Yılmaz Dede, whom we met at the Hacı Bektaşî Veli festivals, stated that the rate of the participation of the young for the festival is sufficient but they do not know why the come to the festivals.

The young Alevis at the Hacı Bektaşî Veli festival expressed that they do not know Alevi rules and conventions and that they do not generally take part in Cems or attend them rarely. The young who do not know the methods of Alevism see Alevism as a way of life or a world view.

### 5.3.4 Cem

**Table 38: The Survey Participants' Frequency of the Visit of Cems**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
I attend all	58	18,77%	27	15,00%	85	17,38%
I attend occasionally	188	60,84%	109	60,56%	297	60,74%
I do not attend	63	20,39%	44	24,44%	107	21,88%
Total	309	100,00%	180	100,00%	489	100,00%

In traditional Alevism, Cem ceremony is not just a way of conduction religious aims, prayers and worships, but also as a symbolized norm, it

clarifies the formation of individual relationships, emotions, thoughts, attitudes and conducts, and maintains the formation of the unity of stereotyped behavior (Çakır, 2005:393). In addition, cem ceremonies perform the task of transferring verbal tradition to the new generations.

According to the Table 38, which illustrates the Survey Participants' Frequency of the Visit of Cems, 60,74 % account for occasional visit, 21, 88 % for none and 17,38 % stated that they always attend the cem ceremonies.

In the interviews with adult Alevis, it has been observed that the young generations Alevis are reluctant to take part in Cem ceremonies owing to the hardships of life and working conditions in cities.

Families of the young generation female Alevis are not willing to send their children to the Cem ceremonies as they start at 19:00 in the evening and lasts until late midnights.

The fact that the dedes, who conduct Cems, read the prayers, *gulbenks* from a piece of paper and that the cems repeat each other, pave the way for young generation Alevis to be reluctant in attending the Cems.

Another factor that leads to a decrease in the participopation to Cem is the disconnection between the dedes and the aspirants because of emigration.

One of the Dedes working in an iron factory stated that he could not go to ceremonies because of the busy workd schedule. When I asked him about the reasons of the young not attending the cems, he stated that because of democracy within the family, families do not put pressure on their children to go to Cems. He regretfully expressed that his two children do not attend the cems and thus do not know the rules and conventions. This situation confirms that urban life and busy work schedule pave the way for the decrease in attending cem ceremonies.

**Table 39: According to Survey Participants, whether the Cems fulfil their duties in Anatolia**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
Yes	79	28,01%	40	24,39%	119	26,68%
No	65	23,05%	57	34,76%	122	27,35%
Partially	138	48,94%	67	40,85%	205	45,96%
Total	282	100,00%	164	100,00%	446	100,00%

Cem of manners is the most important religious ceremony of the traditional Alevism. As an outcome of rural life, it is carried out every year in winter months when the field works are not very hectic rather than summer months when people are very busy with the field works. "Every Alevi must go through an interregotation once a year. Without a justifiable reason, if any Alevi does not face it, he is considered as *düşkün* (exclusion from societ). Can (the name for Alevi individuals), who is to face interregotation, asks the blessings of all the neighbors. If the blessing is not given by the neighbors, such a disagreement is carried to the cem, the matter is discussed here and the person who is not right is punished or the problem is solved (Keçeli, 2005:326)."<sup>25</sup> Since "rightful due" occupies an important place in the foundation of Alevi teaching, rather than being just a religious ceremony, the cem of manners also serves the function of being a place of trial where rightful due is sought, and social unity is intensified. An important feture of cem of manners in traditional Alevism is that every Alevis has to be seen by his or her own organization dede (Aydın, 2005:433). Accordingly an Alevi can not attend to any cem of manners conducted by any dede.

When we look at Table 39 that shows Survey Participants' opinion on whether the Cems fulfil their duties in Anatolia or not, 45,96 % of the

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<sup>25</sup> Şakir KEÇELİ, Bektaşılık-Alevilik Arasındaki Farklar-Meydan Evi, 1. International Symposium on Bektashism and Alevism, SDU Faculty of Theology Publications. No:20, Bilimsel Toplantılar Series:7, Isparta, 2005, p. 326

participants account for partially fulfil their duties whereas 27,35 % is for not fulfilling their duty. However, 26,68 % of the participant Alevis are of the opinion that the Cems perform their tasks in Anatolia.

One of the reasons why the cems of manners cannot fulfill their tasks in Anatolia is related to the requirements of the cems of manners. As mentioned above, every Alevi must see his or her own organizational dede in traditional Alevism. In other words, an Alevi can not attend to any cem of manners conducted by any dede. On account of emigration, the aspirants in the villages moved to cities or that dedes and aspirants live in different cities-countries, which make it difficult for both dede and aspirant to come together and conduct a cem of manners. Hence, not all the Alevis are being able to attend cem of manners regularly.

Cem of manners is a type of prayer in which social aspects of individual characteristic is emphasized on. One of the aims of these cems is to have individuals purified from rightful due and have the society be consent with him; thus it is important for an individual to be known by the Alevi society. The significance of an individual's position of being in front of the Alevi society in villages changed with the emigrations. As an outcome of emigrations from the villages to the cities and abroad, the Alevis have become detached from each other mentally and physically. Since such a condition prevents an individual being known to the society, it emerged a problem of being consent with an unknown person. Hence, the cems of manners cannot fulfill their tasks.

## 5.4 Survey participants' preferences about political parties

**Table 40- Which Party did the Survey Participants Voted for in 2007 Elections?**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
AKP	11	4,20%	6	4,14%	17	4,18%
BDP	7	2,67%	6	4,14%	13	3,19%
CHP	223	85,11%	120	82,76%	343	84,28%
DSP	1	0,38%	2	1,38%	3	0,74%
EMEP	1	0,38%	2	1,38%	3	0,74%
İP	1	0,38%	1	0,69%	2	0,49%
MHP	4	1,53%	1	0,69%	5	1,23%
ÖDP	4	1,53%	2	1,38%	6	1,47%
SP	1	0,38%	1	0,69%	2	0,49%
TKP	9	3,44%	4	2,76%	13	3,19%
Total	262	100,00%	145	100,00%	407	100,00%

It is observed that according to Table 40 that illustrates Which Party the Survey Participants voted for in 2007 elections, 84,28 % of the participants voted for CHP, 4,18 % for AKP, 3,19 % for BDP, 3,19 % for TKP, 1,47 % for ÖDP, 1,23 % for MHP, 0,74 % for DSP, 0,74 % for EMEP, 0,49 % for İP, and 0,49 % SP.

As it is dealt in the section that describes Alevis relationships with the Central Government and their political preferences under the title Post Republican Period, except one period of election, CHP is the only party supported by the significant majority of the Alevis. According to the Table 40, it can be concluded that the election of 2007 is not an exception.

**Table 41- Which Party will the Survey Participants Vote for in 2011 Elections?**

	18-30 Age	%	31 and above	%	Total	%
AKP	7	2,85%	4	2,74%	11	2,81%
BDP	12	4,88%	6	4,11%	18	4,59%
CHP	211	85,77%	126	86,30%	337	85,97%
DSP	1	0,41%	1	0,68%	2	0,51%
EMEP		0,00%	2	1,37%	2	0,51%
İP	1	0,41%	1	0,68%	2	0,51%
MHP	1	0,41%		0,00%	1	0,26%
ÖDP	4	1,63%	1	0,68%	5	1,28%
SP	1	0,41%		0,00%	1	0,26%
TKP	8	3,25%	5	3,42%	13	3,32%
Total	246	100,00%	146	100,00%	392	100,00%

When we analyze Table 41, which illustrates Parties that the survey participants Alevis will vote for in 2011 elections, 85,97 % of the survey participants will vote for CHP, 4,59 % for BDP, 2,81 % for AKP, 3,32 % for TKP, 1,28 % for ÖDP, 0,26 % for MHP, 0,51 % for DSP, 0,51 % for EMEP, 0,51 % for İP, and 0,26 % for SP. Under the circumstances, it is seen that there has been no change in the political party preferences of the Alevis. While comparing to the previous election the ratio of the survey participant Alevis was reduced by 1,37 %, the number of those who plan to vote for CHP increased by 1,60 %. This situation shows that AKP's "Alevi expansion" has not been welcome by the Alevi societies.

The opinions of Şükrü Dede, one of the dedes I had an interview with, is significant in showing CHP's place in the mind of Alevis:

"We are very fond of Republic and Atatürk. I get angry; I say that I will not for (CHP), but when I look at a piece of paper, I see no other alternative ahead. I think of voting for it again, believe I do not vote for the person... See, when CHP was in power, there was a pogrom of Maraş; CHP came to power, and Sivas events took place; whenever CHP came to

power, there was always pogroms against Alevis. However, we still did not give it up. I do not know why. It is the affiliation to Atatürkism; the Republic links us; we are the guard of the Republic.”

A young Alevi, to whom a journalist directed a microphone towards during a period of election, stated that he wanted to vote for the socialists but his hand tended to go for CHP and thus blamed his right hand. In other words, his own conscious, and belief directed him towards CHP (Erdemir).

Besides the emotional link, there are also other reasons why the Alevis vote for CHP: the events of Dersim (21 March 1937), Malatya (17-18 May 1978), Sivas (3-4 September 1978), Maraş (23 December 1978), Çorum (1 July 1980), Madımak (2 July 1993) and Gazi Incidents (12 March 1995) caused unforgettable wounds in the social Alevi memories and are transferred to new generations. Sunni political formations are seen as the causes of these events. Since AKP is perceived as the politization of Sunnism by the Alevis, the prospective strengthening of Alevis forms worries for the Alevis for the reoccurrences of these incidences. Hence, while CHP, which supports idea of taking Sunni Islam out of state and public affairs, is supported, the interest of Alevis on AKP gets decreased.

## **CONCLUSION**

Either slow or fast, the societies are always in the process of a alterations. The more the societies change the more the perception of the religion and religious values and their practices are exposed to alterations. From this point of view, it can be said that the traditional structure of Anatolian Alevism faced alterations.

As opposed to Bektashis, Alevism found areas to live in rural regions of Anatolia owing to the relationships with the central government. The social and religious organizational structure of the traditional Alevism has also been shaped in accordance with this living space. The foundation of Turkish Republic and the emigration from the rural areas to the urban areas in the post 1950 period altered the social structure that Alevism was developed on. As a result the way that traditional Alevism is perceived also altered.

Throughout the history, Anadolu Alevism was lived in the rural areas far from the city centres and thus always remained in the vicinity. The collapse of the Ottomans and the foundation of the Turkish Republic was welcomed by the Alevis with a great joy and excitement, and the steps of the newly established state regarding separating Sunni Islam from the social life were supported by the Alevis. Consequently, Alevism, which sustained with the reflex of living intermingled life with the central government, unprecedentedly interacted with and approached to the central government by the foundation of the Turkish Republic. The change occurring from the rural to the urban led to changes in some of the traditional institutions of Alevism. For instance, the Alevis, who had their own proceedings in the narrow square, they began to hear each other in the courts of the State. Moreover, they get introduced to the judge of the State, and thus the function of the dedes, who had a function of a judge in the Alevi society, became weaker.



The most important reason that led to the alterations in the way of the conception of Alevi values is the emigration phenomenon which should be evaluated with the newly established State. As of the 1950s, there were movements of emigrations from the rural to the urban areas in entire Turkey. Hence, the Alevis, who had always been living in the rural areas away from the urban centres throughout the history, began to emigrate to the metropolitan cities even they emigrated abroad especially to Germany. As a result, the social structure of the Alevis changed. The change of social structure on which Alevism was formed led to the changes in the religious institutions, whose social aspects overweighed individual aspects, and religious perceptions.

Alevis had the characteristics of a close society in the rural areas. Their relationships with the Sunni villages, where "the others" lived, were limited. Their economic life was based on agriculture. The financial status, life standards and social status of people used to be close to each other. There used to be a tight cooperation within the society formed by large families consisted of endogamy marriages. Furthermore, an Alevi individual used to be known by the society as the attraction of the society was drawn to him. The religious organization of traditional Alevism was also formed in accordance with these conditions.

"Dede", who solemnizes, becomes referee in marriages, performs the burial ceremony of the dead, reconciles the offenders, solves the problems occurring within the society, provides chances for the cultural transfer, punishes the criminals, conducts cem ceremony, in other words who was a leader, referee and judge for the society, was an inherently natural leader owing to his descendance of the lineage of the Prophet. The social structure, in which social cooperation was increased because of the endogamy marriages, formed artificial relationships by musahipshi institution and thus made more strongful. The Alevi society judges the members in accordance with the traditional Alevi norms by the leadership of dede in the narrow (dar)

square and used to give punishments, of which the hardest one was the ostracism from the society.

The religious worships were also shaped in accordance with the rural life. To illustrate, cems of good manners, to which every Alevi was supposed to attend once a year, used to take place in winter months when there were no field works and the night time was longer than the day time rather than the summer months when the field works were intense and the night time is shorter than the day time. Religious ceremonies and prayers were used to be performed mainly in the winter months.

With the emigrations from the rural areas to the metropolitan cities and abroad, their characteristics of being a closed society diminished. Their physical and mental distance to each other increased. Despite the fact that they live in the same locality in big cities, they got far away from each other not physically but mentally owing to the structure of city life. On account of the structure of the city life which is different from the rural life, the musahipship institution could not preserve its traditional function for the fact that the communication between the musahips diminished.

There was also an alteration in the perception of the institution of "*dar ve düşkünlük*", which occupies an important place in traditional Alevism. the relationships with the Sunnis increased after getting introduced to "the other" with the emigrations. The definition of "Yezid", which old generation Alevis use for the Sunnis, also settled in the mind of the adult generation Alevis. On condition that they do not sympathize with certain religious groups, adult generation Alevis lean towards having good relationships with the Sunnis. The fact that the relationships between the Alevis and Sunnis increased paved the way for the rise of the number of intermarriages between them. This situation led to the demand on the changes in the *düşkünlük* institution of Alevism, which did not use to allow Alevi Sunni marriages.

In traditional Alevism, every Alevi must pass through manners. In other words, in the cem of manners, he has to account for what he has been doing for a year, and must be absolved by taking the consent of the society. For that, he has to attend the cem that is presided by his *dede*. Two problems emerged with the emigration: 1. To be known, 2. Dede and aspirant's getting away from each other. In the rural areas, the individual used to be in front of the society; since his every deed was known by the society, when opinions on a person was asked in cem of manners, people could easily say "good" or "bad". However, physical and mental distance increased by the emigration to the cities, which led to the decrease in being known to other Alevis. As the Alevis do not know other Alevis in the cem of manners, when dede ask about whether the person is good or bad, they cannot answer it easily. The fact that dede and aspirant<sup>26</sup> get away from each other, led to the decrease of the practice of attending cem of manners in which every aspirant has to see his dede. Consequently, Alevis face problem in arranging cem of manners for which there has to be a certain number of Alevis. Or, there is a bend of the obligation in the cities on every aspirant's visit of his own dedes.

The participation of especially the young generation Alevis to the cem ceremonies in the metropolitan cities gradually decrease on account of generally getting employed as workers and that the way of life in cities is different from that of the rural areas. In addition, families do not let their daughters and wives attend the cems that begin in early evening and last until late night. In order to have cems to last for shorter periods, this situation led to the flexibility in the cem ceremonies by quitting some of the rituals.

Throughout the history, the problems of the Alevi individuals were discussed and decided within the community. If necessary, the punishment of "düşkünlük", the most sever punishment, would be given to the criminal,

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<sup>26</sup> An Alevi individual affiliated to a certain Dede

and being ostracized the criminal would be forced to leave the place. During the rule of Ottoman State, to go to Muslim judge was a reason for *düşkünlük*. By the foundation of the Turkish Republic and increase of emigration, state courts replaced these courts of people. Moreover, the greatest sanction *düşkünlük* also lost its older sanction, for a person already lost his land by facing emigration and thus *düşkünlük* can no more be a sanction for him.

Since the establishment of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, there have also been appointments of Imams to Alevi villages as well. The Imams, who had certain level of education, and the dedes, who became dede inherently with low level of literacy, were begun to be compared. The things that Imams used to tell in the villages led to the questioning of what dedes had told.

The institution of dedeship was injured most as a result of emigration. By the emigration, Alevism was introduced to leftist movement and had close interactions with it, and the literacy level of Alevis also increased, all these things led to questioning what dedes, who are accepted as absolute right, had told in the villages. Especially the university graduate Alevis questioned not only the dedes but also the Alevi traditions. By the increase of educational level, verbal knowledge has not been adequate to satisfy Alevis any more. Hence, there have been demands for scientific knowledge rather than verbal one. Especially the young generation Alevis take the university graduate dedes as role models for themselves, and they do not find the old generation dedes good enough for them. In particular in big cities like Istanbul, "dedes" lose their significance and instead heads of associations, foundations and authors and "scholars" has received acceptance from Alevis. The fact that the dedes are being questioned weakened their role as a dearie culture transmitter. Today Alevis learn Alevism first from their families and then from the books. As there are different definitions of Alevism made by various Alevi associations, foundations and even number of authors, Alevis

are perplexed, which causes an unfavorable circumstance for the formation of identity.

One of the most important factors of the cultural transmission is the families. Traditional large family type was replaced by the nuclear family type in the cities, in which both mother and father work. Such a situation prevents the transmission of traditional family values to new generation Alevi, as a result interest to Alevi values decreases among the young. The number of Alevi in the cem and Hacı Bektaşî Veli ceremonies observed to be very few.

In short, by the foundation of the Turkish Republic and the emigration that occurred immensely in the post 1950s, the perception of traditional Alevi values changed. According to adult generation Alevi, the institution of dedeship does not carry out its historical mission. Owing to the heavy conditions of the institution of musahipship, it is believed that it is must be reinterpreted. Although Cem ceremonies are the occasions when the Alevi teachings are experienced most vigorously, the participation of adult generation Alevi is comparatively low, which paves the way for the alteration of the rituals of cem ceremonies. In general, although there aren't many changes in the traditional Alevi theology, the social aspect of the Alevism weakens; and the Alevism has become the way of life sustained individually rather than socially.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: The Survey Questions<sup>27</sup>

Aşağıdaki sorular, bir yüksek lisans tezi için tamamiyle bilimsel amaçlar için çıkartılmıştır. Anketin herhangi bir siyasi ve bilim dışı bir amacı yoktur. Cevaplarınızın doğru olup olmadığına bakılmayacağından, sadece kendi görüşünüze en uygun seçeneği işaretlemeniz önem taşımaktadır. Araştırmanın amacına ulaşması sizin vereceğiniz samimi, gerçekçi ve eksiksiz cevaplara bağlıdır. Yardımlarınızı esirgemediğiniz için teşekkür ederiz.

1. Cinsiyetiniz?
  - a. Kadın
  - b. Erkek
2. Yaşınız :
3. Öğrenim durumunuz?
  - a. Okul mezunu değil
  - b. İlkokul mezunu
  - c. Ortaokul mezunu
  - d. Lise mezunu
  - e. Üniversite mezunu
  - f. Yüksek Lisans/Doktora Mezunu
4. Şu anda yaşadığınız yer neresidir?
  - a. İlin Adı:
5. Mesleğiniz?
  - a. Öğrenci
  - b. İşçi
  - c. Memur
  - d. Esnaf
  - e. Serbest Meslek
  - f. Ev Hanımı
  - g. Diğer: (.....)
6. Ailenizin aylık geliri ne kadardır?
  - a. 500-1000 TL
  - b. 1000-1500 TL
  - c. 1500 -2000
  - d- 2500 TL'den Fazla
7. Medeni durumunuz?
  - a. Evli
  - b. Bekar
  - c. Dul
  - d. Boşanmış
  - e. Diğer:

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<sup>27</sup> Since survey questions are given within the text, this section has not been translated to English.

8. Kaç evlilik yaptınız?  
a. Bir b. Birden Çok
9. Eşinizin inanç durumu hangisidir?  
a. Alevi b. Sünni c)Diğer.....
- 10.Eşiniz Alevi değilse çocuklarınız hangi inanca göre yetiştiriliyor?  
a. Sünni İnanca Göre, b. Alevi İnançına Göre, c. Her ikisine göre,  
d. Böyle bir ayırım yapılmıyor
- 11.Sünni biriyle evlenmek hakkındaki düşünceniz nedir?  
a. Sadece Kız Alınabilir  
b. Hem Kız Alınabilir Hem de Kız Verilebilir  
c. Kesinlikle Karşıyım  
d. Fikrim Yok
- 12.Gayri müslim biriyle evlenmek hakkındaki düşünceniz nedir?  
a. Sadece Kız Alınabilir  
b. Hem Kız Alınabilir Hem de Kız Verilebilir  
c. Kesinlikle Karşıyım  
d. Fikrim Yok
- 13.Sünni biriyle evlenmek düşkünlük sebebi olmalı mıdır?  
a. Evet b.Hayır c.Fikrim Yok
- 14.Evliliklerde hangi nikah biçimi uygulanmalıdır?  
a. Sadece Resmi Nikah b. Sadece İmam Nikahı c. Sadece Dede Nikahı  
d. Hem Resmi Hem İmam Nikahı e. Hem Resmi Hem Dede Nikahı  
f. Hiçbiri
- 15.Boşanma hakkındaki düşünceniz nedir?  
a. Kesinlikle Boşanılmamalıdır  
b. Zina Yapılması Durumunda Boşanılmalıdır  
c. Sadece Kadının Boşanma İsteğinde Israrcı Olması Durumunda Boşanılmalıdır  
d. Erkeğin Boşanma İsteğinde Israrcı Olması Durumunda Boşanılmalıdır  
e. Aile İçi Huzurun Kalmadığı Durumlarda Boşanılmalıdır  
f. Fikrim Yok

16. Dini bakımdan kendinizi nasıl tanımlıyorsunuz?
- Müslüman ve Alevi
  - Müslüman ve Bektaşî
  - Müslüman ve Sünnî
  - Müslüman ve Caferî
  - Sadece Alevi
  - Sadece Bektaşî
  - Diğer (.....)
17. Kendinizi nasıl tanımlarsınız?
- Önce Türk'üm
  - Önce Kürt'üm
  - Önce Müslüman'ım
  - Önce Aleviyim
18. Aleviliği nasıl tanımlarsınız?
- Mezhep
  - Din
  - Hayat Tarzı
  - Tarikat
  - Şiilikle Aynıdır
19. Aleviliği nasıl öğrendiniz?
- Ailemden
  - Alevi Önderlerden (Dede-Baba)
  - Kitaplardan
  - Diğer .....
20. Alevi usül ve erkânını yeterince bildiğinizi düşünüyor musunuz?
- Evet Yeterince Bildiğimi Düşünüyorum
  - Hayır Yeterince Bildiğimi Düşünmüyorum
21. Alevi söylence, öykü ve öğretileri dini ihtiyaçlarınızı karşılayabiliyor mu?
- Evet Karşılayabiliyor
  - Kısmen Karşılıyor
  - Hayır Karşılayamıyor
22. Evinizde bulunan dini kitaplar hangileridir?
- Kur'an-ı Kerim
  - Hadis Kitapları
  - İlmihal
  - Dua Kitapları
  - Hacı Bektaş Veli'nin Kitapları
  - Nechü'l Beleğâ
  - Cafer-i Sadık Buyruğu
  - Hepsi
  - Diğer.....
23. Cafer-i Sadık Buyruğu'nu okudunuz mu?
- Okudum
  - Henüz okumadım



24. Musahibiniz var mı?  
a. Var b. Yok
25. Dede, pir veya rehberiniz var mı?  
a. Evet b. Hayır
26. Alevi olabilmek için mutlaka Hz. Ali'ye gönülden bağlı olmak mı gerekir?  
a. Evet, Sadece Hz. Ali'ye Bağlı Olanlar Alevidir  
b. Hayır, Hz. Ali'ye Bağlı Olmayanlar da Alevi Olabilir  
c. Kararsızım
27. Her alevi, bir dedeye bağlanmalı mıdır?  
a. Evet b. Hayır Gerekli Değildir c. Kararsızım
28. "Eline, diline, beline sahip ol" temel düsturuna eskisi kadar uyuluyor mu?  
a. Evet Uyuluyor b. Hayır Uyulmuyor c. Fikrim Yok
29. Dedelik kurumu işlevini yerine getirebiliyor mu?  
a. Evet Getiriyor.  
b. Hayır Getiremiyor  
c. Fikrim Yok
30. Dedeleri yeterli buluyor musunuz?  
a. Evet Yeterli Buluyorum  
b. Hayır Yeterli Bulmuyorum  
c. Kısmen Yeterli Buluyorum
31. Dedelerin anlattıkları dini ihtiyaçlarınıza cevap verebiliyor mu?  
a. Evet Cevap Verebiliyor  
b. Hayır Cevap Veremiyor  
c. Kısmen Cevap Veriyor
32. Dede olmak için dede soyundan gelmek hakkındaki düşünceniz nedir?  
a. Dede Olacak Kişinin Dede Soyundan Olması Gerekir  
b. Dede Olacak Kişinin Soyuna Değil, Liyakatına, Alevilik Konusunda Gerekli Yeterliliğe Sahip Olup Olmadığına da Bakılmalıdır

c. Fikrim Yok

33. Dedeler diyanetten maaş almalı mıdır?

- a. Evet
- b. Hayır
- c. Fikrim Yok

34. Alevi birisi ile aranızdaki önemli sorunları nasıl çözersiniz?

- a. Mahkemeye Başvururum
- b. Sorunu Dedeye Danışarak Çözmeye Çalışırım
- c. Aramızda Çözmeye Çalışırım

35. İkrar verip görgüden geçtiniz mi?

- a. Evet
- b. Hayır

36. Ehli Beyt'in tamamının isimlerini biliyor musunuz?

- a. Hepsini Biliyorum
- b. Tam değil
- c. Hiç bilmiyorum

37. Oniki İmam'ın isimlerini biliyor musunuz?

- a. Hepsini Sırasıyla Biliyorum
- b. Eksiklerim var
- c. Hiç bilmiyorum

38. Üç sünnet ve yedi farzı sayabilir misiniz?

- a. Hepsini sayabilirim,
- b. Eksik Sayabilirim
- c. Hiç Sayamam

39. Musahibiniz varsa ne sıklıkla görüşürsünüz?

- a. Sık Sık Görüşürüz, İlişkimiz Sıkıdır
- b. Pek Görüşemeyiz, İlişkimiz Zayıftır

40. Musahibinizle, günlük hayattaki problemlerinize çözüm olabiliyor musunuz?

- a. Evet
- b. Hayır
- c. Bazen

41. Günümüzde musahiplik makamı eski işlevini yerine getirebiliyor mu?

- a. Evet
- b. Hayır
- c. Kısmen

42. Zor duruma düşerseniz öncelikle kimden yardım istersiniz?  
a. Musahibimden  
b. Aile fertlerinden  
c. Yakın Arkadaşlarımdan  
d. Kimseden Yardım İstemem  
e. Diğer
43. Cemlere ne sıklıkla gidersiniz?  
a. Tümüne giderim  
b. Arada Sırada Giderim  
c. Gitmem
44. Görgü cemleri Anadolu'daki işlevini yerine getirebiliyor mu?  
a. Evet                      b. Hayır                      c. Kısmen
45. Düşkünlük, Anadolu'daki işlevini yerine getirebiliyor mu?  
a. Evet                      b. Hayır                      c. Kısmen
46. Cinayet işleyip de cezasını hapis yatarak çeken bir Alevinin, dedenin niyazi olmadan düşkünlüğü kalkabilir mi?  
a. Bence, Cezasını Çektiğinden Düşkünlüğü Kalkar  
b. Bence, Hapis Yatmasına Rağmen Dedenin Niyazı Olmadan Düşkünlüğü Kalkmaz  
c. Fikrim Yok
47. Allah-Muhammed-Ali'nin bir bütün ve nur oldukları şeklindeki inanca katılıyor musunuz?  
a. Katılıyorum                      b. Katılmıyorum
48. Muharrem orucunu tutar mısınız?  
a. Sürekli Tutarım                      b. Bazen Tutarım                      c. Hiç Tutmam
49. Hacı Bektaş'a ziyarete gittiniz mi?  
a. Bir Kez Gittim                      b. Birden Çok Kez Gittim                      c. Hiç Gitmedim

50. İslam inancının temel unsurlarına inanıyor musunuz?

	EVET	HAYIR	ŞÜPHELERİM VAR
a. Allah'a	( )	( )	( )
b. Meleklerle	( )	( )	( )
c. Kutsal Kitaplara	( )	( )	( )
d. Peygamberlere	( )	( )	( )
e. Ahiret Gününe	( )	( )	( )
f. Kadere	( )	( )	( )

51. Aşağıda belirtilen İslam'ın şartlarından yerine getirdiklerinizi işaretleyiniz.

	EVET	HAYIR	BAZEN
a. Namaz	( )	( )	( )
b. Zekat	( )	( )	( )
c. Oruç	( )	( )	( )
d. Zekat	( )	( )	( )
e. Hac	( )	( )	( )

52. Sizce Kur'an tahrif edilmiş midir?

- a. Evet  
Yok
- b. Hayır
- c. Kararsızım
- d. Fikrim

53. Son seçimlerde hangi partiye oy verdiniz? .....

54. Bir sonraki seçimlerde hangi partiye oy verirsiniz? .....

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