GETTING TO THE FINAL FORM: REFORMING OF THE ALEVI AND BEKTAŞI BELIEF THROUGH THEIR INTERACTION WITH ONE ANOTHER

Abstract
The Alevis/Kızılbaş and Bektaşis, two of the most prominent religious groups of the Ottoman dynasty, in modern times, have unusually come to be called the Alevi-Bektaşis. This way of use gives the impression that these two religious institutions as though reflect the same group of people despite differences in historical development and growth. With the influence of the popular writings of Fuad Köprülü and later Irène Mélikoff much of the current scholarship held to the belief that these two entities originated from the same root, the Bābā‘ī movement. While acknowledging the historical connection between the two groups, few scholars have taken an interest in clarifying how and when such an association started. This article aims to uncover the historical link of the Alevi-Bektaşi alliance. It further explores the possible benefits that the two entities obtained through their interaction with one another. It will then focus on how the two have affected each other’s religious stance. In doing so the following questions will guide this research: How and why did a Sufi order, recognized and advocated by the Ottoman state, come into contact with a harshly criticized religious group which was identified as an enemy to the Ottoman unity? How did the Kızılbaş-Bektaşi interaction affect

Öz
Osmanlı İmparatorluğu döneminde zuhur eden popüler dini gruplardan olan Alevilik diğer bir adıyla Kızılbaşlık ve Bektaşılık modern dönemde daha ziyade ‘Alevilik-Bektaşılık’ başlığı altında kullanılmaya başlamıştır. Bu kullanım biçimi birbirinden farklı tarihsel süreç ve sahip olan bu iki dinin kökeni aynı inanç biçimini ve zümreyi yansıtır. Araştırmacıların genel tarihsel gelişimleriyle birlikte farklı tarihsel süreçlerin rağmen, Fuad Köprülü ve akabinde Irène Mélikoff’un çalışmalarının etkisi ile her iki grubunun birlikte aynı köken yani ‘Babailikten’ türediği düşünülmesini benimsemişlerdir. Diğer yandan iki grup arasındaki tarihsel bağlantılı kabul edilmişdir, bu bağlantının ne zaman, nasıl ve hangi şartlar altında başladı ve geliştigi yöneltir. Bu makalenin temel amacı Alevilik-Bektaşılık entegrasyonunun tarihsel süreçleri ele almak ve bu bağlantının zaman içinde her iki grubunun birlikte ortaya çıkardığı muhtemel değişikliği irdelemektir. Çalışma öncülük edecek sorular şu şekilde sıralanabilir: Osmanlı Devleti tarihinin

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INTRODUCTION

In this research, I study two inter-related religious groups, the Alevis/Kızılbaş and Bektaşı. From the late fifteenth century onward, both of which played a particular role in the Ottoman Empire’s socio-political domain. The scholars of Alevism and Bektaşı from the early twentieth century have often been tempted to view the Alevis and Bektaşı as though they were genetically related. With the popular saying of Fuad Köprülü, ‘Alevis are the village Bektaşı,’ the two entities began to be viewed as the same thing, according to which they both originated from the same ground — the Bābā’ī movement. This approach has been supported with the works of Irène Mélikoff as she further states that they were of the same origin, but were divided into two groups after the early fifteenth century. Beside, much of the recent scholarship of Alevism and Bektaşı has come to use the phrase of ‘Alevi-Bektaşı’ in the sense of that as though the Alevis and Bektaşi represent the same group of people. Relatedly, in some of the Alevi-Bektaşı literature, the historical development of these two entities was wrongfully

2 From the nineteenth century onward, the Kızılbaş has been called as the Alevi. Across this article, I will particularly use the term Alevi even when referring to the Kızılbaş community lived under the Ottoman rule.

3 Baba’ī movement occurred with the rebellion of Baba Ishaq in 637/1240 against the Seljuk sultanate.

4 Irène Mélikoff, Uyur İdik Uyardılar: Alevilik-Bektaşıilik Araştırmaları, İstanbul: Demos Yayınları, 2006, p. 29; Irène Mélikoff, “Bektashi/Kızılbaş: Historical Bipartition and Its Consequences”, ed. T. Olsson, et al. Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives, Istanbul: 1-7. Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005, pp. 1-7.
interchanged; for example, the historical growth and development of the Alevis has been narrated for the Bektaşıs.⁵

Much of the current scholarship — while upholding the assertion that these two entities grew from the same root — does not clarify; however, how and when such an association started. Neither does it stipulate how long such an association lasted, nor when it ended, nor when it began again. At this juncture, two things seem to be in conflict. Firstly, not only did Bektasism play a crucial role in the social life of the Turkmen tribes of the Ottoman subject, but also the Bektaşıs were closely connected with the Ottoman military system. This connection, which came through the Janissaries, continued until the suppression of the Janissaries in 1826. Further, while the Ottomans were favored by the moral and social support of the Bektasi order, the Bektaşıs were always respected and protected by the Ottoman sultans and had no religio-political arguments with either of them until 1826 when the order was temporarily dissolved. Unlike the Bektaşıs, the Kızılbaş could never find a legitimate space under the rule of the Ottomans because of their support of the Safavids. Secondly, while the Bektaşıs like other dervish groups have not been tolerated by the Republic since 1923 (their religious places were closed and leaders were imprisoned), the Republic of Turkey has perceived the Alevis as allies in their quest to establish a secular and nationalist state.⁶ This shows that these two groups have been differently perceived by both the Ottoman and Turkish states. Even if they were of one origin, they did not get along from their existence until a certain time. Neither were they perceived as the same community. Hence I argue that claiming that these two movements were of the same origin leaves substantial historical loopholes. Therefore, this paper seeks to explore and retheorize the historical and religious development of the possible attachment of the Alevis with the Bektaşıs. Ultimately, it tends to illustrate that at the time of their emergence until the early seventeenth century, with the exception of a few individual link, the two movements appear to be poles apart.

How did the Alevi-Bektaşi alliance affect the social, political, and religious experience of the ‘Kızılbaş’ over the course of its transformation into the Alevi belief system? In what ways did the Alevi-Bektaşi association influence each other’s discourse and

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⁵ For an example, see Baki Öz, Kurtuluş Savaşında Alevi-Bektaşiler, İstanbul: Can Yayınları, 1990, p. 23; Besim Atalay, Bektasılık ve Edebiyatı, İstanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1930.

⁶ Baha Sait Bey, İttihat-Terakki’nin Alevilik-Bektasılık Araştırmaları, ed. Nejat Bürdoğan, İstanbul: Berfin Yayınları, 1994.
standing within the sectarian conjecture of Islam? Though interrogating those questions, this research suggests that both Alevism and Bektaşiism have mutually benefitted from their association with one another. While the Alevis in the eyes of the Sunnis, have gained acceptance in their own right as members of an Islamic pattern, the Bektaşiis have pursued their presence and possessions under two different, but rough circumstances; namely, after the closure of the Bektaşi lodges in 1826 and later in the early times of the Republic of Turkey.

1. Historical, Political and Religious Development of the Bektaşi Order

1.1 From Hacı Bektaş to Balım Sultan

Yet to date, the historical process of the Bektaşi tradition — from the lifetime of Hacı Bektaş, the murşid (someone who gives right guidance) and patron saint of the Bektaşiis, until the official presence in the early sixteenth century of Balım Sultan, the second patron saint — has not been fairly covered. This is primarily because of lack of sources concerning the early history of Hacı Bektaş. Besides that, the information provided by the earliest historiography on Hacı Bektaş and the Bektaşi tradition is heroic and legendary. As with a number of other mystic groups, Bektaşi resources attribute miracles to Hacı Bektaş and define him as a charismatic powerful leader who can perform miracles. Several historical materials, written almost one or two centuries after the death of Hacı Bektaş, address his historical and legendary personality. The work Garibnâme written by Aşık Paşa around the thirteenth century, Menâkıbu’l-Arifin of Aflâkî composed by the fourteenth century, and Menâkıbu’l Kudsiyye by Elvan Çelebi written around the fourteenth century are all of crucial importance in terms of delivering information on the religious personality of Hacı Bektaş. The most detailed information on the life, beliefs and methods of Hacı Bektaş can be found in the Velayetnâme of Hacı Bektaş.

Hacı Bektaş is believed to have been born in Nishapur, a city of Khorasan in the thirteenth century. The date of 668/1270 is accepted

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7 Aşık Paşa, Garibname, ed. Kemal Yavuz. vol. 4, Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 2000, According to Köprüülü, as a Sunni scholar, Aşık Paşa wrote Garibnâme to distinguish the Sunni ideology from the non-Sunnis.
8 Ahmed Eflâkî, Ariflerin Menkübeleri, trans. and ed. Tahsin Yazıcı, İstanbul: Kabalcı Yayınevi, 2006.
9 Elvan Çelebi et al. Menakibu’l Kudsiyye fi Menasibi’l Unisyye: Baba İlyas-ı Horasâni ve Sülûlesinin Menkabevî Tarihi, İstanbul: 1984.
10 Hacı Bektaş Veli, Velayetname, ed. Hamiye Duran, Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2007.
as the date of Hacı Bektaş’s death at the age of sixty-three, but this is not definitive. According to the Menâkıb of Aflâkı, Hacı Bektaş was contemporary with Mevlânâ Celâleddin Rumi (603/1207–671/1273). He fled from the Mongol invasion and came to Anatolia with his brother called Menteş and visited several cities including Sivas, Amasya, Kırşehir, Kayseri and settled in Suluca Karahöyük, a village of Kırşehir. In Suluca Karahöyük, he was welcomed in the house of a woman named Kadıncık Ana. It has come to be believed that the house of Kadıncık Ana had become the first tekke (dervish lodge) where Hacı Bektaş preached and raised followers. According to Aşık Paşazâde’s account, Hacı Bektaş was joined to the group of ‘bacıyan-ı rûm’ (women’s union in Anatolia), which was one of the four separate Sufi groups active in Anatolia. He further states that Hacı Bektaş adopted Kadıncık Ana as a daughter, and revealed his secrets and prophecy (kerâmet) to her. He died there and was buried in the city of Hacı Bektaş, the city named after him. Hence, by the fourteenth century, the earliest structure of the Bektaşi teaching was already in place, having begun to be developed right after the death of Hacı Bektaş by a certain Abdal Musa with the help of Kadıncık Ana.

Although the Bektaşi order was named after Hacı Bektaş, he is not regarded to be the founder of the order, but it was rather molded in the early sixteenth century by Balım Sultan (d. 922/1516). With the institutionalization of the Bektaşi doctrine, Hacı Bektaş has become the most celebrated of all dervishes. Due to the fact that his

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11 Eflâkı, Ariflerin Menkıbeleri, pp. 370-372.
12 Aşık Paşazade, Tevârîh-i ál-i Osman, ed. Nihal Atsız, İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1949, p. 195. Tevârîh-i ál-i Osman was first published by Ali Bey in Istanbul in 1332 (1914), then by Friedrich Giese in Leipzig in 1929, and finally edited by Nihal Atsız in Istanbul in 1949.
13 Necdet Öztürk, Aşıkpaşazade Tarihi: Osmanlı Tarihi. 1285-1502, İstanbul: Bilgi Kültür Sanat, 2013, p. 307.
14 Mikail Bayram, Fatma Bacı ve Bacıyan-ı Rûm: Anadolu Bacılar Teşkilâtı, İstanbul: Nüve Kültür Merkezi Yayınları, 2008, pp. 35-36.
15 The other three are: Gazıyan-ı Rûm, Ahıyân-ı Rûm and Abdalân-ı Rûm.
16 ’İmdi Hacı Bektaş bunların içinden Bacıyan-ı Rûm’a ihtiyaç etti. Kim o Hatun anadır. Onu kız edindi, keşf ve kerametini ona gösterdi, ona teslim etti. Kendi Allah’ın rahmetine vardi.’ Aşık Paşazade, Tevârîh-i ál-i Osman, p. 195.
17 Melikoff, “Bektashi/Kızılbaş: Historical Bipartition and Its Consequences”, p. 2; Ahmet Yaşar Oçak, Türkiye’de Tarihin Saptrılması Sürecinde Türk Sufîliğine Bakışlar: Ahmed-i Yeşevi, Mevlânâ Celâleddin-i Rûmî, Yunus Emre, Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli, Ahilik, Alevilik-Bektaşılık: Yaklaştırm, Yöntem ve Yorum Denemeleri, İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 1996, p. 20.
18 Irène Melikoff, Hacı Bektaş: Efsaneden Gerçeğe, İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Kitap Kulübü, 1998, p. 87.
philosophy and teaching has been recognized and appreciated even before his death, the time from the thirteenth century onward can be introduced as the starting point for the development of this particular Sufi order.

Aşık Paşazâde, in his well-known historical account of Tevârîh-i âlâ-i Osman, talks about the presence of a Sufi group in the late fifteenth century with the name of 'Bektaşi'. He uses the term 'Bektaşi' for a particular group that attribute themselves to Hacı Bektaş.\(^{19}\) Relying on the information provided by Aşık Paşazâde, Köprülü came to believe that the Bektaşi order was officially founded with its religious ceremonies and rules by the fifteenth century.\(^{20}\) The Divân of Sadık Abdal also mentions of a Sufi group with the name of 'Bektaşi' by the fifteenth century. According to him, this Sufi group was formed in the dervish lodge of Kızıldeli.\(^{21}\) Balm Sultan was also trained in the Kızıldeli lodge.\(^{22}\) Vâhidi in his Menâkıb (written in 929/1522), beside, provides information on the Bektaşi dervishes of the early sixteenth century. According to his writing, the Bektaşi dervishes like a number of other mystic dervish groups including Qalandars, Haydars, Abdals of Rûm, Jamis, and Shams-i Tabrîzîs were active social dervish groups in the Ottoman lands.\(^{23}\) Unlike the other dervishes, the Bektaşis became even more influential after the sixteenth century.

In 1502, Balm Sultan (d. 922/1516) was asked to institutionalize the Bektaşi order by the sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Bayazid II (885/1481 – 917/1512). According to the tradition, Balm Sultan came into the Kızıldeli lodge in which he systematized the Bektaşi rituals and decrees. That is why he is regarded as the real founder and second patron saint of the order.\(^{24}\) While a number of mystic dervishes mentioned in Vâhidi’s work slowly went out of existence, the Bektaşi dervishes of the fifteenth century retained their entity. They progressed even further to become the primary dervish group existing in the Ottoman realm. The Ottoman support has been listed

\(^{19}\) Aşık Paşazâde, Tevârîh-i âlâ-i Osman, pp. 237-238.
\(^{20}\) Aşık Paşazâde, Tevârîh-i âlâ-i Osman, pp. 204-206.
\(^{21}\) For detailed information on the role of the Kızıldeli lodge in the formation of the Bektaşi Order, see Riza Yıldırım, "Muhabbeten Tarikata: Bektaşı Tarikatı'nın Oluşum Sürecinde Kızıldeli'nin Rolü", Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Araştırma Dergisi 53 (2010): 153-190.
\(^{22}\) John Kingsley Birge, The Bektashi Order of Dervishes, London: Luzac & Co. [1937] 1965, pp. 56-57.
\(^{23}\) Ahmet T. Karamustafa, God’s Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1550, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994, p. 83.
\(^{24}\) Birge, The Bektashi Order of Dervishes, p. 57.
as the leading reason behind the success of the *tarīqah*. The order was granted territories from the newly conquered areas and was advocated to establish their own dervish lodges (*zāwiyas*) in Anatolia and the Balkans.25 Those *zāwiyas* served as a central place for Islamic teaching.

The Ottoman-Bektaşi alliance was mutually beneficial for both sides. As stated earlier, with the backing of the Ottoman state, the order expanded its teaching and rituals all around the Ottoman territories. Through the service of the Bektaşi tekkes — a type of Islam indigenized by the Ottoman government — they reached out to the people of different religious tendencies in the newly conquered places. At this point, Mélikoff suggested that the Ottomans blessed the order with the objective of keeping the *rāfiʿi* thoughts within the bubble of the Ottoman central belief.26 Thus and so, those Sufi religious groups of different vibes would have been in the sights of the Ottoman. Likewise Rıza Yıldırım states that it was aimed to control the various social-religious groups and to prevent them from affiliating themselves with the Kızılbaş movement.27 Besides, it has been claimed that the Ottoman co-opted the Bektaşi lodges to Islamize the Christian children of the conquered Byzantine territories.28

As far as it is known, the Bektaşis were one of several dervish groups that actively engaged in the social and religious spheres of the Ottoman dynasty during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Aside from those dervish groups which had not yet turned into a Sufi order, by the late fifteenth century there were, however, the Sunni colored Sufi brotherhood, such as the Mevlevîs. While the Mevlevîs were recognized by the Ottoman administration, they had

25 Irène Mélikoff, *Tarihi ve Kültürel Boyutlaryla Türkiye'de Aleviler, Bektaşiler, Nusayriler*, İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1999, pp. 20-21. It is also suggested that Abdal Musa, claimed to perform and teach the Hacı Bektaş discipline, played a particular role in the conquest of the Balkans and Thrace. In return, he and his followers were rewarded from the conquered territories for their effort and commemorated as *ghāzis* (Muslim fighters against infidels). They were allowed to build their own religious lodges. See, Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bir İskân ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Vakıflar ve Temlikler I: İstilâ Devirlerinin Kolonizatör Türk Dervişleri ve Zaviyeleri”, *Vakıflar Dergisi* 5 (1942): 279–386.

26 Irène Mélikoff, “Le problème Kızılbaş”, *Turcica* 6 (1975): p. 65.

27 Rıza Yıldırım, “Bektaşi kimeder?: Bektaşi Kavramının Kapısal ve Şnırları Üzerine Tarihsel Bir Analiz Denemesi”, *Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Araştırma Dergisi* 55 (2010): 30–33.

28 The view has been initially suggested by Louis Massinon and then adopted by a number of other scholars. Stefan Winter, *The Shiites of Lebanon under Ottoman Rule*, 1516-1788, Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 10-11.
likewise always supported the state’s political and social stance. There appeared no sign of their anti-state stance. At this point, I ask how and why did the Ottoman choose the Bektâşis over the other dervish groups? Instead of turning its full attention to the Mevlevîs, which was an already institutionalized Sufi order why did the Ottoman spend its energy and money to fund a socially esoteric dervish group which had not yet systematized its teaching and rites? At this point, the aforementioned discussion makes sense, according to which the Ottoman state supported the Bektâşis to keep different views of several dervish groups in line with the Ottoman’s central belief. While the Bektâşis interacted with the Turkmen babas, even claiming to be the continuum of the Bābā’î order, the Mevlevîs never thought of the Turkmen babas as an ally, but rather as rivals. At this point, Bektâşis appears to have been a better option than the Mevlevîs to attract the attention of and even control the distinctive dervish groups.

1.2 Janissary-Bektâşi Association

The Bektâşî’s distinctive authority over the Janissary army could be listed as the primary reason of the expeditious progress of the order within the Ottoman regions. According to general view, the Janissary corps, paid soldiers of which constituted the principal branch of the army in the Ottoman state, were educated spiritually by the Bektâşi dedes. They paid allegiance to Hacı Bektâş and recognized him as their patron saint. The era of Murat I has been officially recognized for the establishment of the Janissary army, but when and how Janissaries-Bektâşism interaction began is still a controversial and undefined subject.

29 Mehmed Fuad Köprülü, “Bektâşîliğinin Menşeleri”, Türk Yurdu 7 (1925).
30 Godfrey Goodwin, Yeniçeriler, trans. Derin Türkömer, Istanbul: Doğan Yayıncılık, 2008, p. 157.
31 Fahri Maden, “Yeniçeri-Bektâşilik İlişkileri ve Yeniçeri İşyanlarında Bektâşiler”, Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi 73 (2015): 174.
32 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, Osmanlı Devleti Teskilatından Kapıkulu Ocakları, I. Acemi Ocağı ve Yeniçeri Ocağı, vol. I, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1984, p. 145.
33 What kind of relationship had they had? Was any money transferred to Bektâşi lodges from the incomes of foundations established by Janissaries? If so what was its potential? This discussion is beyond the scope of our study. For a detailed information on this subject, see, Metin Ziya Köş, “Yeniçeri Ocağının Bektâşileşme Süreci ve Yeniçeri-Bektâşi İlişkileri”, Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi 49 (2009): 195-207.
It is claimed that Hacı Bektaş met with Osman I (655/1258 – 726/1326), and he prayed for the Janissaries’ success. He was also claimed to be a close friend and a consular of Sultan Orhan Gazi; however, it is a fact that he died long before the birth of Orhan Gazi (679/1281 – 761/1360). According to the account of Aşık Paşazâde, Hacı Bektaş was never engaged in a conversation with any of the Ottoman sultans. As stated by Aşık Paşazâde, the Hacı Bektaş cult gained recognition through the mediation of Abdal Musa, as he was in interaction with the Janissary army during the conquest of Bursa.

Even though the interaction of the Bektaşi order with the Janissary corps was officially recognized from 1591 onwards, historical records show that even before then there had appeared a constant relationship between the two. The fact that some Janissary ocaks (the Janissary organizations named as ocaq) were called by phrases like ‘ocaq-i Bektaşıyyan,’ ‘taife-i Bektaşıyyan,’ ‘gûruh-u Bektaşıyyan,’ and etc., offers sufficient proof to illustrate a possible connection between the Janissary army and Bektaşi order. The Janissary army was abolished by Mahmut II in 1826. The army was not in favor of the sultan’s reforms and resisted training by saying that it is an infidel invention. The firm attitude of the army was judged as a threat to the central government. Thus the Janissary army was disbanded in 1826 and numerous soldiers were executed. The abolishment of the Janissary army was also declared as ‘vaka-i hayriyye’ (propitious event).

34 Ahmed Lütfi Efendi, Tarih 1. vol. 1 ed. Abdurrahman Şeref, İstanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire: 1290/1874, p. 149.
35 According to the records, when Orhan decided to establish a new army in 1339 he called Hacı Bektaş to Bursa to join the ceremony of the establishment of the new army and Hacı Bektaş did pray for the army. Lucy M. J Garne, The Dervishes of Turkey, London: The Octagon Press, 1990, p. 18.
36 “Ve ılla bu Hacı Bektaş, Âl-i Osman neslinde kimseyle musahabet etmedi; ol sebebden anmadum.” Öztürk, Aşıkpaşazade Tarihi, p. 307. Aşık Paşazâde further refutes the saying of the headgear of the Janissaries was modeled based on that of Hacı Bektaş. The Question: “Ya bu Bektaşiler esdurler kim: Bu yeniçerinin başına taci Bektaşiler dedir derler. The respond: Vallahi yalandır. Öztürk, Aşıkpaşazade Tarihi, p. 308.
37 Öztürk, Aşıkpaşazade Tarihi, 2013, p. 307.
38 Goodwin, Yeniçeriler, p. 157.
39 Uzunçarşılı, Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapıkuşlu Ocakları, p. 150.
40 ‘Talim gavur icadıdır, Müslümanına yakışmaz...’ Ali Resad. Asr-i Hazr Tarihi, İstanbul: 1926, p. 620.
41 Mehmet Şeker, “Bektaşi Tekkeleri hakkında Sultan II Mahmut’un Fermanı”, İslami Araştırmalar Dergisi 12/3-4 (1999): 273.
Shortly after disbanding the Janissary army, Mahmut II issued a *ferman* (decree) that banned the Bektaşi order. This was because of the order's traditional and religious link with the Janissaries. Many Bektaşi lodges were destroyed and the control of the un-ruined ones left to the Nakşibendi *shaykhs*. Moreover, a huge number of Bektaşis were deported and numerous Bektaşi dervishes were executed. A report given in the Muhimme registers, written by a *sadrazam* (grand vizier) to the Divan-ı Humayun (supreme court), states that the trains and possessions of the Bektaşi lodges in Üsküdar/Istanbul with all of its properties including foundational centrals, lands, infield and garden, were given to the state.\(^{42}\) It was not merely the Bektaşi tie with the Janissaries that was reported for the abolishment of the order,\(^{43}\) but rather the distortion of their beliefs that were presented as cause for chastening. In the historical records, the Bektaşis were broadly criticized on account of their disobedience and non-performance of Islamic duties and were even being defined as infidel.\(^{44}\) Depending upon the Ottoman official record's representation of the early nineteenth century Bektaşi belief, I argue that the final form of the doctrine, teaching, and even rites of the Bektaşi order was not shaped entirely by the sixteenth century. Rather, the religious elements of the order evolved from the presence of Hacı Bektaş onwards until the late nineteenth century and displayed different characters due to the sultan’s approach to the order and its discovery of other religious tendencies.

### 1.3 The Bektaşi Struggle to Survive from 1826 Onwards

As highlighted earlier, the Bektaşi belief has never died out or passed away from the stage of history neither after the ban in 1826 nor with the shutting down of the dervish lodges in 1925. The Bektaşi *tarıqah* managed to survive in hiding and in defiance of the stance of the central authority of the Ottoman dynasty and Republic of Turkey. I argue here that this period of secret existence must be counted as an important era that enabled the order to establish its final form.

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\(^{42}\) Cemal Şener, *Osmanlı Belgeleri’nde Aleviler-Bektaşiler*, İstanbul: Karacaahmet Sultan Derneği Yayınları, 2002, p. 155.

\(^{43}\) Esad Efendi in his famous work *Üss-i Zafer* mentions of the Bektaşi link to the Janissaries and its importance on the restrain of the Bektaşi Order. ‘Bektaşi guruhu Yeniçeri taifesine istinad ile o misilü teklyeler ve zevyanın isimlerini tahrif ve kendilerine nisbet ile zabit ve haslatlı vakfi nefislerine hasr ve fisk-u fucur ile ekli-u bel ve bazı mahallerde dahi halkı idali için muceddden teklyeler ihdas ve birer fasid vakfiye tertibiyile ihtira’ai evkaf iderek sirran ve alenen evna-i senate cesaret etmekte oldukları...” Mehmed Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, İstanbul: Matbaa-i Suleyman Efendi, 1876, p. 215.

\(^{44}\) Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, 1830, pp. 214-215.
The era of Mahmut II has to be distinguished from the era of the following sultans: Abdülmecid I (1254/1839 – 1277/1861), Abdülaziz (1277/1861 – 1292/1876) and Abdülhamid II (1292/1876 – 1326/1909). That is mainly because each of these sultans illustrated a different approach to the Bektaşi; however, the ban over the order had not been constitutionally removed under their rule. Hence the Bektaşi kept their presence either with the help of some high state officials or with the tolerance of the reigning sultan.

In contrast to the era of Murat II, the era of Abdülmecid is known as tolerant to different types of the dervish lodges and religious tendencies. Within this time period, like a number of other Sufi groups and religious sects, such as the Druze and Yazidis, the Bektaşi did not re-establish their closed lodges, but to some extent gained strength. By the time of Abdulaziz, tolerance to the Bektaşi has become transparently visible. During this time, the Bektaşi order was sufficiently tolerated to operate their public service. The tolerant attitude has been tied to the sultan who claimed to be sympathetic to the order.

And finally, by the early twentieth century, under the rule of the Ittihat and Terakki (1909 – 1918), the Turkish government became interested in researching the Anatolian Sufi orders, particularly the Bektaşi and Alevis. This was the beginning of the process of new political and administrative attempts. Talat Paşa, the leader of the party, said in the parliament; ‘however, we rule the government, we lack in our knowledge of Anatolians. We must know the people.’ That is why the different beliefs, tariqahs and tribes must be investigated. And Baha Said Bey was assigned to research the Alevi and Bektaşi groups.

2. The Religious Resemblance: the Alevis and Bektaşi

The Alevi community resembles the Bektaşi community with its non-traditional practice of Islam. Neither of these groups pay any attention to the external forms of religion nor do they strive to be recognized as a branch of either Sunni or Shi’ite. Most of recent

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45 İlber Ortaylı, “Tarikatlar ve Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Yönetimi”, Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi (1990): 285.

46 Çift, “1826 Sonrasında Bektaşılık ve Bu Alanla İlgili Yayın Faaliyetleri”, Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi 12/1 (2003): 251.

47 Baha Sait Bey, Ittihat-Terakki’nin Alevilik-Bektaşılık Araştırması: Bursalı Mehmet Tahir and Hasan Fehmi Hoca were in charge to research ahis, and Esat Uras Bey was assigned to seek the beliefs of Armenian.
scholarship attempted to associate them with Shi’ite Islam due to the alleged Shi’ite elements like the veneration of ‘Ali and Twelve Imams. On the contrary, some scholars perceived the Bektaşi order as a Sufi group of mainstream Sunni Islam. Besides, to some scholars, Alevism and Bektaşism symbolize a Turkish form of Islam that is close to Sunnism, but is definitely not Shi’ite.48

With the writings of Köprülü, Alevism and Bektaşism are believed to have been originated from the Bābā’ī movement.49 With the exception of a few scholars who criticize this view, this approach dominated the current Alevi-Bektaşi literature. The identical character of their religious rites could be one of the primary reasons, if not the only one, that enable this view to be recognized by the majority of the following scholarship. In modern times, instead of the term ‘Alevis’ and ‘Bektaşis’ as they represent separate two groups, the phrase of ‘Alevi-Bektaşi’ has become quite popular as though it represents a single group of people. Although today there appears a group of people who identify themselves as Alevi-Bektaşi, it does not mean that each Alevi is also Bektaşi and vice versa. And more importantly, despite popular usage of the notion Alevi-Bektaşi, the historical evolvement of both groups differs from one another. However, some scholars neglect to distinguish the historical and theological development of the two.50 It is of interest to this article to note the fact that the Alevi and Bektaşi history has developed through the influence of different political, social and religious paradigms. Nevertheless, both groups exhibit similar religious doings with some exceptional differences. While acknowledging the community that define itself as ‘Alevi-Bektaşi’, in the general sense, this study intends to separate the Alevi community from the Bektaşi by recognizing the presence of separate Bektaşi groups, such as the Babagan Bektaşi, Çelebi Alevi-Bektaşis,51 and Nakşi Bektaşi.52

48 For detailed discussion on the subject, see Reyhan Erdoğdu Başaran, “Comparing Scholarship: The Assessment of the Contemporary Works that Links Alevis with either Shi’ism or Sunnism”, Kilis 7 Aralık Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi 5/9 (Aralık 2018): 315-338.
49 Mehmed Fuad Köprülü, Early Mystics in Turkish Literature, trans. and ed. Gary Leiser and Robert Dankoff, London: Routledge 2006, p. 7.
50 Öz, Kurtuluş Savaşında Alevi-Bektaşiler, pp. 25-26; Hüseyin Bal, “Cumhuriyet, Mustafa Kemal ve Alevi-Bektaşiler”, Alevi-Bektaşilik Araştırmaları Dergisi 3: 55-83.
51 It has been suggested that the Kızılbaş community begun to interact with the Bektaşi through the mediation of the Çelebi Bektaşi. Hülya Küçük, Kurtuluş Savaşında Bektaşiler, Istanbul: Kitap Yayınları 2003, p. 152.
52 Refik Engin, “Nakşi Bektaşiler”, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları 20 (2005): 364.
2.1 The Shared Religious Characters

Attribution to Hacı Bektaş as a spiritual guide is one of the most proposed indicators of commonalities between the Alevis and Bektaşis. The earliest Bektaşi resources refer to Hacı Bektaş; however, the name does not appear in the early writings of the Alevi literature. There neither appears the name of Hacı Bektaş in the earliest written texts of Shaykh Safi Buyruks, dated 1608 and 1612, nor there is a sign of Bektaşi influence. The name of Hacı Bektaş, however, does appear in a few places in the later made Imam Jafar Buyruk, dated 1292/1875. In a particular passage, Hacı Bektaş appears along with Jesus, Salmān al-Fārsī, and Uwais al-Qarani. In a different part, Hacı Bektaş was listed right after the Alevi trinity concept (Allāh, Muhammed, and ‘Ali), ‘Allāh, Muhammed, ‘Ali, Hacı Bektaş say hû (hû is used to refer to God in Sufism) to the truth! The name of Hacı Bektaş does not appear in the iżazetnâmes and hilafetnâmes of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, and also in the well-respected books of the Alevi community like the Divān of Hatāi.

Particularly with the Alevi-Bektaşi association, Hacı Bektaş, the patron saint of the Bektaşi order, became a leading charismatic figure for the Alevi community. Hacı Bektaş has been acknowledged as important as ‘Ali. Recognition of him helped the Alevi community to establish their independence from the Safavid influence. Due to the integration of Alevism with Bektaşism, Alevism came to be perceived as a Sufi order, which according to Sunni-inclined Turkish scholars is closer to Sunni than the Shi‘ite faith.

Further, the adoption of Hacı Bektaş as a spiritual guide along with ‘Ali fostered a nationalist

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53 Bisâti, Şeyh Sâfi Buyruğû, Menâkıbu’l-Esrâr Behcetü’l-Ahrâr, ed. Ahmet Taşğın, Ankara: Çizgi Kitabevi, 2013.
54 Mehmet Yaman, Erdebilli Şeyh Safi Buyruğu, Istanbul: Ufuk Matbaası, 1994;
55 Fuat Bozkurt, Buyruk: Imam Cafer-i Sadık Buyruğu, İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2004; Sefer Aytekin, Buyruk, Emek Basım Yayınevi, 1958.
56 Bozkurt, Buyruk, p. 68; Aytekin, Buyruk, pp. 113-114.
57 Bozkurt, Buyruk, p. 85; Aytekin, Buyruk, pp. 199-200.
58 In the later-made copies of the Divan, the name of Hacı Bektaş appears; however, in the earliest transcript, it lacks. Tourkhan Gandjei, Il Canzoniere Di Sâh Ismâ’îl Hatâ’î, Napoli: Estituto Universitarro Orientale, 1959; Mirza Resul İsmailzade, Hatâ’î Şâh İsmâ’îl Safevi Hetai Külliyyatı: Divân, Nasihatnâme, Dehnâme, Koşmalar, Farsça Şiirler, Tehran: 2001.
59 Even some schoolbooks in Turkey have viewed Alevism as a denomination of Sunnism in their teaching of Alevi-Bektaşi doctrines. Halise Kader Zengin, "Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi Öğretim Programlarında Devletin Alevilik Algısı (Karşılaştırmalı Bir Analiz)", Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi 12/47 (2013): 63-87.
approach. However ‘Alī is an Islamic figure, he is, for the Turkish nationalist, still an Arab. But on the other side, Hacı Bektaş had been represented as a Turkish figure.60

Pro-Alid sayings and Shi‘ite patterns like the concept of the Alevi triad of (Allāh, Muhammad, and ‘Alī), the glorification of ‘Alī, ahl al-bayt, the doctrine of Imamate, and matter of the fourteen infallibles are all indicative of the doctrinal affinities that exist between the Bektaşis and Alevis. However, while the Alevi community has acknowledged those Shi‘ite currents from the beginning of their origin, they are not observable within the Bektaşi collections until the late seventeenth century. The Bektaşis due to their reverence for ‘Alī, ahl al-bayt, and the lament for the martyrs of the Karbalā cult, Bektaşis are claimed to be secretly Shi‘ite. 61 Reverence for ‘Alī, however, was also quite common in most of the religious groups that define themselves as Sunni. It further needs to be pointed out that in what circumstance did the Ottoman state support and favour the Bektaşi order when it claimed to be Shi‘ite.

The use of the Turkish language, rather than Arabic and Persian in practicing their rituals and in the composed texture of their traditions can be listed as one of the fundamental resemblance. There is also a resemblance in the practice of using symbolic liquor (wine), the sema (spiritual dance), fast in Muharram, and similar service at Nawruz (old Turkish-Persian New Year celebration).62 The well-know cem ritual is also performed by both the Alevis and Bektaşis.63 Additionally, the doctrine of ‘dört kapı’ (four gates) — shari‘ah, tariqah, ma‘rifah and haqīqa — and ‘kırk makam’ (forty positions)64 are expressed in the Makalat attributed to Hacı Bektaş, and are almost identical with the ones explained in the Buyruks of the Alevi literature.65 It is also essential to know that the tradition of cem, belief

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60 Baha Sait Bey, İtihat-Terakki'nin Aleviilik-Bektaşilik Araştırması, p. 22.
61 Due to seemingly Shi‘ite elements appear in the Bektaşi order, Birge suggests that it is a Shi‘ite inclined Sufi order. For detailed information, see Birge, The Bektashi Order of Dervishes.
62 Birge, The Bektashi Order of Dervishes, pp. 166-170.
63 It is run by a mursit, or baba or a dede. There are twelve duties. Hacı Bektaş, Makalat, ed. Esad Coşan, Ankara: Seha Neşriyat, 1983, p. 263.
64 For the names of the kirk makam and their qualifications see, Hacı Bektaş, Makalat, pp. 11-21.
65 İlyäs Üzüm, "Hacı Bektaş Velinin Kızılbaş Kültürüne Etkileri", İslam Araştırmalar Merkezi, I. Uluslararası Hacı Bektaş Veli Sempozyumu, I, (Çorum: 2010): 241-251.
of ‘dört kapı’ and ‘kırk makam’ are also the shared future of a number of Sunni-colored Sufi orders.66

2.2 The Elements that Distance the Alevi from the Bektaşis

One of the fundamental differences between the Alevis and Bektaşis is that while for the Alevis, only those whose’ genealogy can be traced back to the Prophet Muhammad can lead the community as a dede. The head of the ‘dedelik institution’ can merely be the son of a dede. When a dede dies, naturally his son becomes dede. The Bektaşis instead the term dede prefer to use the word baba to refer to their spiritual guide of the dervish lodge. Baba was not required to be a sayyid to lead the community. Any qualified shaykh can be the baba. Each position and rank within the order is being done through election.67

Secondly while the bloodline is essential to be recognized as an Alevi according to which only a person being born from an Alevi family can be Alevi, the Bektaşis have no such norm. Unlike the Alevi structure of belief, anyone who wills to be Bektaşi and embraces the Bektaşi belief can become a Bektaşi. Accordingly, anyone can become a Bektaşi but not an Alevi. The doctrine of ‘musahib’ [that Muhammad and ‘Alī are companions] can be listed as another rite that separates the Alevi community from the Bektaşis. It appears to be an important ritual in the Alevi belief as a particular section entitled 'musahib' narrated in detail in the primary Alevi texts.68

Contrary to this, there is no sign of the ‘musahib’ dogma in the Bektaşi tradition. Additionally, although the cem ceremony was the shared rite of both groups, there appear some differences in its performance. For example, only married couples can participate in the Alevi cem ceremonies. On the other hand, the Bektaşi have a tradition of 'mücerred' (single/unmarried dervish)69 in which only the single dervishes can participate in the ritual. Last but not least, for the practice of religious rites, the Alevis use the phrase ‘meydan evi’ for their gathering place, while the Bektaşi use the term ‘dergah’.70

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66 Hasan Onat, “Kızılbaşlık Farklaşması Üzerine”, İslâmiyât 6/3 (2003): 10.
67 Bedri Noyan, “Doçent Dr. Bedri Noyan (Dedebaba) ile Söyleşi”, röp. Ayhan Aydın. Çem 4/48 (Mayıs 1995): 16.
68 Yaman, Erdebili Şeyh Safi Buyruğu, p. 78; Bozkurt, Buyruk, pp. 70-91; Aytekin, Buyruk, p. 11.
69 Mélikoff, Hacı Bektaş, p. 255.
70 Birol Azar, “Benzerlikler ve Farklıklar Ekseninde Alevi-Bektaşi İnançları Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme”, İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi 10/2 (2005): 83.
3. When and How did the Alevi-Bektaşi Association Begin?

Relying on the historical records of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, it is unlikely to be certain whether the Alevis and Bektaşis rooted from the same religious origin. The historical material rather suggests that the two groups exist as separate movements and developed for a certain time in their own circle, despite the fact that the religious tenets of both factions are stunningly alike. Therefore, the scholars of Alevism and Bektaşısm are hesitant to estimate the exact date of how and when the two groups initially encountered one another. The available popular sources of the sixteenth century on the Bektaşi and Alevi belief do not relate them. On one side, the Alevi/Kızılbaş was officially recognized as a religious and militant group by the Ottoman state during its fight with the Safavid dynasty. Due to their support of the Safavid dynasty, they were subjected to persecution. The central government not only accused them of being a threat to the integrity of the state, but also defamed them as an enemy to Islam. The official records of the Muhimme Registers and religious documents provided similar information to justify the persecution of the Kızılbaş.\(^71\) On the other side, the official administrative records of the sixteenth century have no accusation on the political, social or religious stance of the Bektaşis, but the fermans of the nineteenth century mention of the Bektaşi belief as marred.\(^72\) Rather, it has come to be believed by the historians that the support of the Ottoman government enabled Balım Sultan to institutionalize the Bektaşi order and that their religious doctrine, teaching, philosophy and method were not systematized until then.

The work of Suraiya Faroqhi in which she studied the geographical distribution of the Kızılbaş groups — particularly the ones mentioned in the Muhimme registers and existing Bektaşis of the sixteenth century — illustrates that the geographical expansion of the both sides are not interrelated.\(^73\) Due to that, however, it seems difficult to claim an institutionalized link between the two groups by the fifteenth and sixteenth century, with the discovery of newly Alevi

\(^71\) M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi Fetvalan Işığında 16 Asır Türk Hayatı, Istanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1983, For detailed information, see Reyhan Erdoğdu Başaran, “Does being Rafidi mean Shi’ite?: The Representation of the Kızılbaş Belief in the Sixteenth Century Ottoman Records”, Trabzon İlahiyat Dergisi 6/1 (Haziran 2019): 12-35.

\(^72\) Şener, Osmanlı Belgeleri’nde Aleviler-Bektaşiler, pp. 155-157-163.

\(^73\) Suraiya Faroqhi, Anadoluda Bektaşılık, trans. Nasuz Barin, Istanbul: Simurg, 2003, p. 79.
documents, some scholars have come to declare a possible individual interaction between the two groups by the sixteenth century.\footnote{Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, "Documents and Buyruk Manuscripts in the Private Archives of Alevi Dede Families: An Overview", \textit{British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies} 37/3 (December 2010): 277-278; Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, "The Forgotten Dervishes: The Bektashi Convents in Iraq and their Kizilbash Clients", \textit{Journal of Turkish Studies}. Vol. 16, no. 1/2, (2010): p. 20. At this point, the study of Karakaya-Stump becomes more of an issue as she claims an established institutionalized relationship between the Kızılbaş of Anatolia and the Bektaşi of Iraq by the sixteenth century.}

### 3.1 The Undocumented Sixteenth Century Alleged Link of the Bektaşi to the Alevi

Ayfer Karakaya-Stump mentions of an institutionalized relationship between the Anatolian Kızılbaş of the sixteenth century and Bektaşi lodges located in Iraq.\footnote{Karakaya-Stump, "The Forgotten Dervishes", p. 20.} She states that “from the second half of the sixteenth century onward, the Alevi/Kızılbaş communities of Anatolia maintained a close and by all appearance rather institutionalized relationship with a distinct network of Bektaşi convents in Iraq centered around the convent in Karbalā.”\footnote{Karakaya-Stump, "Documents and Buyruk Manuscripts in the Private Archives of Alevi Dede Families," pp. 277-278.} This view has been supported with similar expression in a different article, “Alevi documents originating from Iraq expose the presence of fairly institutionalized relationships between the Alevi dedes and a group of Bektaşi convents in Iraq.”\footnote{The transliterated version of the original form of the \textit{işazetnâme} was given in the work titled \textit{Kargın Ocaklı Boyu ile İlgili Yeni Belgeler}. Alemdar Yağcı– Hacı Yılmaz, "Kargın Ocaklı Boyu ile İlgili Yeni Belgeler", \textit{Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi} C.8 (2002): 71. The article in total, mentions of 30 original documents composed for the Dede Kargin Ocak, the oldest one was composed in 1496 and the latest was formed in 1914.} She mentions of recently discovered Alevi documents like \textit{ziyaretnâmes}, \textit{hilafetnâmes} and the ones indicating their pedigree that connect them with the Prophet Muhammad originated in the sixteenth century showing an institutionalized relationship between the two communities. Nevertheless, she only cites a single document — an \textit{işazetnâme}, dated 996/1588, formed in Karbalā convent, claimed to be the leading Bektaşi convent in Iraq — on behalf of a certain Dede Yusuf from the Dede Kargın ocak.\footnote{The article in total, mentions of 30 original documents composed for the Dede Kargin Ocak, the oldest one was composed in 1496 and the latest was formed in 1914.}

The \textit{işazetnâme} states that a person named Dede Yusuf living in a village of Malatya (Bimare köyü) visited a number of sacred cites and
Reyhan Erdoğdu Başaran
tombs of Imam ‘Ali, Imam Husayn, Imam Kazım, Sahib-i Zaman and a number of other saints in Iraq. He was trained in the lodge of Imam Husayn. With reference to this particular *ijazetnāme* formed in 996/1588, Karakaya-Stump argues that the association of the Dede Kargın Ocak (naturally the Kızılbaş community) and the Bektaşi of Iraq commenced by that time. The *ijazetnāme*, was formed in the name of Dede Kargın Ocak in the Karbalā convent, which to Karakaya-Stump is the Bektaşi lodge of Karbalā. However, as far as I am concerned that there appears no sign of a Bektaşi link with regard to the scope of the *ijazetnāme*. Neither does it refer to Hacı Bektāş nor to any particular Bektaşi dervishes. It also does not make any mention of the Karbalā lodge’s link to the Bektaşi. The name of Hacı Bektāş, however, rigorously shows up in a *ferman* composed in 1227/1813 and in an *ijazetnāme* written in 1232/1817. This would lead us to believe in an institutionalized relationship between the Dede Kargin Ocak and Bektaşi community by the first half of the nineteenth century. And yet it would be difficult to talk about an institutionalized link between the two groups by the sixteenth century relying merely on this particular *ijazetnāme* composed in 996/1588.

In a different research, she provides another document written by the early seventeenth century in the form of a letter composed by a certain Seyit Baki, who is said to have come from the lineage of Hacı Bektāş. The letter was to be sent to Seyyid Yusuf, who was introduced as ‘the son of Hakk Dede Kargın’ (Hakk Dede Kargın oğlu). In the letter, Sayyid Baki informs Sayyid Yusuf about the conquest of Baghdad by Shah Abbas in 1033/1624. Karakaya-Stump indicates that the letter was written in a Bektaşi lodge located in Baghdad. The most striking part of the letter is that here Seyit Baki appears to be a firm supporter of the Shah of Iran as he praises the Shah on his

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79 Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, “Kızılbaş, Bektaşi, Safevi İlişkilerine Dair 17. Yüzyıldan Yeni Bir Belge”, *Journal of Turkish Studies*. Vol. 30/II (2006): 12.
80 Yağmurlu Yılmaz, “Kargin Ocaklı Boyu ile ilgili yeni belgeler,” pp. 42-43, (record: 25).
81 Yağmurlu Yılmaz, “Kargin Ocaklı Boyu ile ilgili yeni belgeler,” pp. 45-49-58.
82 Karakaya-Stump, “Kızılbaş, Bektaşi, Safevi ilişkilerine dair 17. Yüzyıldan yeni bir belge,” pp. 117- 130.
83 This letter was preserved by Galip Dedekargınoğlu, a member of Dede Kargin Ocak. Today Dede Kargin Ocak is regarded to be one of the Alevi ocaks. The earliest information on behalf of Dede Kargın was presented in the *Menākib* of Elvan Çelebi. According to this, Dede Kargın was likely fled from the Mongol attack and settled in Anatolia. Across time, he had become quite popular and the number of his disciples had dramatically increased. Çelebi et al. *Menakib-i Kudsiyye fi Menasibi’l Unsiyye*. 
conquest of Baghdad. He also states his wish for the Shah to move to Anatolia, according to which, the letter illustrates a certain loyalty to the Safavid Shah. The letter leaves a huge loophole in terms of the political and religious stance of the Bektaşıs operating in Iraq. Even though, in this letter, Seyit Baki relates himself to the genealogy of Hacı Bektaş, it is not yet definitive if the dervish lodge, possibly located in Baghdad where the letter was written, had acquired a Bektaşı identity by the early seventeenth century. As far as we know, the Bektaşı lodges in Iraq only began to be identified as Bektaşı after the annihilation of the Safavids, which did not happen before the eighteenth century. Unlike the previous ijażetnāme, the reference to Hacı Bektaş shows that by the seventeenth century there had appeared an individual link between some certain people of Dede Kargın Ocak with the Bektaşı order.

3.2 From the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century: From an Individual Link to an Institutionalized One

How and why did a Sufi order, recognized and advocated by the Ottoman state, come into contact with a harshly criticized religious group which was identified as an enemy to Ottoman unity? How did such a relationship affect their political position up against the Ottomans? In what sense did both sides benefit or not benefit from such a link? Overall, historians studying the Bektaşıs and Alevis are in agreement with the view proposed by Mélikoff that the Ottoman state supported the systematization of the Bektaşı order; it did so with a particular intention of assimilating the rāfiḍi thought and preventing the existing unruly dervish groups being a threat to the Ottoman unity. Namely it is likely to say that the central motive of the Ottoman dynasty to support the Bektaşı philosophy is to co-opt the different mystic groups including the Alevis/Kızılbaş. According to this, establishing of personal or formal relationships with the other mystic groups was entirely consistent with the nature of the Bektaşı order.

What was the motive of the Kızılbaş in interacting with the Bektaşıs? One possible reason would be that they were tired of

84 Bektaşı order, according to Hamid Algar, was also influential on some marginal sects and groups in Iran. The group of Aḥl-i Ḥaq views Hacı Bektaş as incarnated version of Sultan Sahak. Some rituals like the cem service parallels in two groups. The notions of shari‘ah, tariqah, maʿrifah and haqiqa in the Aḥl-i Ḥaq are as essential as they are for the Bektaşı order. Hamid Algar, “Bektaşı ve İran: Temaslar ve Bağlantılar”, Tarhi ve Kültürel boylattılyla Türkiye’de Aleviler, Bektaşiler, Nusayriler, İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 1999, pp. 136-139; Evliya Çelebi et al. Günümüz Türkiye’yle Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi, vol. 4, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2010.

85 Mélikoff, “Le probleme Kızılbaş,” p. 65.
exclusion and persecution. And thus being close to a Sufi order that was the ally of the Ottoman would free them from the enmity of the Ottoman dynasty. Secondly, and more importantly, it would be because of the Safavid's unstable stance to the Kızılbaş after the recognition of Twelver Shi'ism as the official religion of Iran. The Safavid 'ulamā tended to control the religious philosophy of the Kızılbaş after the recognition of Twelver Shi'ism. The attempt of the Safavid 'ulamā on religious understanding of the Kızılbaş, said Kathryn Babayan, weakened both the political and religious bond that existed between the two. Hence the Kızılbaş would have been in search of a different harborage where they could find more freedom for their own belief system. Due to the common religious elements shared between the Kızılbaş and Bektaşis, the Bektaşis would have met the expectation of the Kızılbaş. It needs to be clarified that that the Bektaşi link to the Kızılbaş, however, has begun as early as the seventeenth century and it does not seems to be institutionalized earlier than the late eighteenth century. The evanescence of the Safavid dynasty seems to fasten the relationship between the two factions.

Since then, the Kızılbaş community has turned its face from the Safavid Shahs to Hacı Bektaş. The majority of the Alevi ijazetnāmes written after that included a genealogy connecting the Alevi dedes to Hacı Bektaş. Hence from the eighteenth century onwards, the Kızılbaş began to appeal to the Hacı Bektaş convent in Kırşehir to ratify their sayyid-hood and thus to acquire an accreditation for their dede status. The Hacı Bektaş convent in Kırşehir has become the focal point for the Bektaşi and Alevis, and the rest of the Bektaşi lodges originating in the Ottoman reigns, were subjected to this one. When a new shaykh was about to be assigned to a tekke or a zāwiya, he would only be assigned with the permission of the shaykh of the Hacı Bektaş convent and Ottoman sultans. The eighteenth century Alevi documents indicate that Alevi dedes applied to the Hacı Bektaş convent for an accreditation to confirm their ocak status and their sayyid-hood genealogy. The Alevi association with the Bektaşi seems to be beneficial for the Kızılbaş community. The advantage of the link for the Bektaşi side showed up especially in 1826 with the

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86 Kathryn Babayan, “The Safavid Synthesis: from Qizilbash Islam to Imamite Shi'ism”, *Iranian Studies* 27 (1994): pp. 140-143.
87 Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, “Alevi Dede Ailelerine Ait Buyruk Mecmuaları”, ed. Hatice Aynur et al. *Eski Türk Edebiyatı Çalışmaları VII: Mecmua: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*: 361-379, İstanbul: Turkuaz Yayınları, 2012, p. 379.
88 Suraiya Faroqhi, “Nüfuz Mücadeleleri, Yapı Sorunları, ve Yeniçerilerin Sorunlu Rolleri: Bektaşilerin 1826 Öncesi Tarihi Bir Katkı”, *Toplumsal Tarih Dergisi* 97 (Ocak 2002): 18.
abolishment of the Bektaşi convents. While the majority of the Bektaşi lodges were closed down, the Nakşi shaykhs, who were known for their loyalty to the Ottoman state, were assigned to the available ones. With that the government aimed to control the functioning of the ongoing Bektaşi lodges. By that time it is likely to claim that the Bektaşi link to the Kızılbaş enabled them to keep their presence in secret.

The distinguishing feature of the Alevi documents composed in the Hacı Bektaş convent when compared with the ones formed in the Sufi convents in Iraq is that the genealogy of the Alevi dedes have begun to be traced back to Hacı Bektaş. The oldest available ījazetnāme in which the chain of initiation was taken back to Hacı Bektaş was dated 1763. There is also a number of other ījazetnāmes from the nineteenth century that frankly express a Bektaşi identity. Similar expression with regard to connecting the genealogy to Hacı Bektaş also becomes quite definitive in the documents of the Dede Kargın Ocak. For example, an ījazetnāme composed in 1817 begins with similar expression with the rest of the ījazetnāmes as they all praise Muhammad, ‘Ali, Fātima, and the Twelve Imams, but then it distinctly gives a special place to Hacı Bektaş. In this particular ījazetnāme, Hacı Bektaş was respected and glorified. Hacı Bektaş was presented as the most almighty person of his era and the sultan of tarīqah’s almighties. This ījazetnāme explicitly illustrates the presence of notably institutionalized relationship between the Dede Kargın Ocak and Bektaşi order.

By the eighteenth century, the Bektaşis were known by two separate branches: the Çelebis, which mainly expanded in Anatolia, and the Babagans, which were popularized in the Balkans. The political and religious stance of these two branches had begun to break up slowly by the time when the Kızılbaş belief has become to blend in with the Çelebi Bektaşi. By early twentieth century, there appeared a fairly obvious power struggle between the Çelebi and Babagan branches of the Bektaşi order. In 1327/1911, Feyzullah Baba, who represented the Babagan branch, wrote a letter to the sultan in which he offered his loyalty to the Ottoman sovereignty while he accused Çelebi Cemaleddin Efendi, the leading figure of the Çelebis, accused of the Babagans for favoring the Albanians.

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89 Yıldırım refers to the ījazetnāmes dated 1763-1803, 1816, 1819, 1855, and 1870, but he neither includes the facsimile nor the transliterated version of the documents. Yıldırım. “Bektaşî kime derler?,” 39.
90 Yağmuran and Yılmaz, “Kargın Ocaklı Boýu ile ilgili yeni belgeler,” pp. 45-49.
91 A. Yılmaz Soyuer, “Arşiv Belgeleri Işığında II Meşrutiyet Döneminde Bektaşilik”, 
Besides that, the Ottoman government of the late nineteenth century was involved in a fight for power between the Ittihat and Terakki party — the party that ruled the government (1909 – 1918) — and the sultan. The Babagans and Çelebi Bektaşıs even favoured different sides. The Çelebi Bektaşıs by the early twentieth century established a good relationship with the sultan. Thereafter the Babagans were in good terms with the Ittihat and Terakki party.92

This power struggle united the Kızılbaş with the Çelebis; the Babagans, however, kept their distance from the Kızılbaş community. The Çelebi Bektaşi beliefs were combined into a mixture of Kızılbaş and Bektaşi tenets. The Alevi-Bektaşi literature composed under the authority of the Ittihat and Terakki party at this time, demonstrates that there was a sense in which the Alevis and Bektaşıs were regarded as the same group of people.93 The phrase ‘Alevi-Bektaşi’ also began to be used to define the Alevi and Bektaşi groups. The history of Alevis has been given in a number of books as though it was that of the Bektaşi. This is still a common mistake in numerous recently written books. Further, numerous Bektaşi convents like the main lodge in Hacı Bektaş, the lodges of Şahkulu located in Üsküdar/Istanbul, and Abdal Musa lodge in Elmali/Antalya were all begun to be run by Alevi dedes.94

CONCLUSION

In modern times, the usage of the Alevi-Bektaşi has become popular to refer to the community in which people identify themselves as both an Alevi and Bektaşi. In such circumstance, we

92 Hülya Küçük, “Cumhuriyet Döneminde Bektaşılık”, Uluslararası Bektashilik ve Alevilik Sempozyumu I, SDÜ İlahiyat Fakültesi Isparta (2005): 79.

93 The Ittihat and Terakki party assigned some scholars to investigate the Anatolian Sufi orders particularly the Bektaşis and Alevis. This was the beginning of the process of new political and administrative attempts. Talat Paşa, the leader of the party, said in the parliament, ‘however, we rule the government, we lack in our knowledge of Anatolians. We must know the people.’ That is why the different beliefs, tariqahs and tribes must be investigated. And Baha Sait Bey was assigned to research the Kızılbaş and Bektaşi groups. (Baha Sait Bey researched from 1914 to 1915, however, his researches were published in 1926-7 in Turk Yurdu. Bursaı Mehmet Tahir and Hasan Fehmi Hoca were in charge to research ahis, and Esat Uras Bey was assigned to seek the beliefs of Armenian.) Baha Sait Bey, Ittihat-Terakki’nin Alevilik-Bektaşıilik Araştırması; Ahmet Cahit Haksøver, “Osmanlı’nın Son Döneminde İslahat ve Tarikatlar: Bektaşılık ve Nakşibendilik Örneği”, Ekev Akademi Dergisi 13/38 (2009): 49.

94 Küçük. “Cumhuriyet Döneminde Bektaşılık,” 79.
cannot talk about two separate religious identities but a united religious group of people. And yet it does not mean that each Alevi is also Bektaşi since there appear to have been those who identify themselves as Bektaşi but not an Alevi and vice versa. When using the phrase of the Alevi-Bektaşi, it is essential to differentiate two groups in terms of their historical, theological and political development. Despite the differences in the historical and theological development of both groups, some scholars engaged in studying Alevism and Bektaşism struggle to separate the two entities from one another. At this point, the view of Köprülû appears to be influential as he traces the origins of both back to the Bábâî movement. Similarly Mélikoff highlights link between the two from their origin, mentioning; however, certain distinctions emerging only by the early fifteenth century. This view dominates the current Alevi-Bektaşi literature. Instead of focusing on whether the two entities originated from the same root or not, since there does not exist enough evidence to prove it, I find it important to discuss how and when the Alevis came into contact with the Bektaşi.

Until recently, it was believed that by the seventeenth century Alevism and Bektaşism have become intertwined with one another. However, Karakaya-Stump mentions an institutionalized link between the Alevis and Bektaşi by the sixteenth century. Yet the document discussed in her work does not seem to be enough to suggest an institutionalized link, but rather shows the presence of an individual connection between the two. The ğazetnâmes and hilafetnâmes of the seventeenth century, however, show a precise link between the two group and the records of the eighteenth century likely display an institutionalized link between the two.

The historical records show that the Alevi link to the Bektaşi order has been consolidated during rough times. Both groups in terms of their religious and political stance seem to have been influenced from such link. Relatedly, the central motive of this article is to demonstrate that with the influence of the Bektaşi order, the Alevi belief has freed itself from the Imami hegemony of Iran and found a latitudinarian space for its own self-directed belief structure. Given this fact, this article purports that the Alevi belief found its final form after the penetration of the Bektaşi philosophy — not before that, as claimed.
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SUMMARY

This research focuses on the link of the two essential religious groups of the Ottoman realm—the Alevi/Kızılbaş and Bektaşi. From the late fifteenth century onward, both of which played a particular role in the Ottoman Empire’s socio-political domain. However, the order is attributed to Hacı Bektaş (d. 668/1270), it was rather institutionalized in the early sixteenth century by Balım Sultan (d. 922/1516). As a Sufi order, the Bektaşi movement attracted the attention of the rural Oghuz population. From the early sixteenth until the late nineteenth century they played a crucial role in the social and political life of the Turkmen tribes in the Ottoman regions of Anatolia and Rumelia. To the much of historians, the support of the Ottoman dynasty played crucial role in the institutionalization and expansion of the order all around the Ottoman realm. On the other hand, the Alevism appeared as a religious and political group by the late fifteenth century under the influence of Shaykh Junaid (d. 864/1460), the leading figure of the Safavid order by that time. Due to the Alevi-Safavid alliance, there had been a certain struggle between the Alevi and Ottoman Empire. Unlike the Bektaşi, there had never appeared a peaceful link between the Alevi and Ottoman dynasty. The Alevi were never recognized nor respected as a legitimate religious group. They were rather subjected to the harsh critics as they were called to be rāfiḍ (rejectionists), mulhid (apostate), khawārij (seceders), zinḍiq (heretic), kāfir (unbeliever), non-Sunnis, bandit, burglar, etc.

From their birth to a certain time, the political stance of the both groups is completely different from one another. While the Bektaşi were in a close link with the Ottoman Empire, the Alevi were

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95 It has come to be known with the name of Kızılbaş until the nineteenth century.
supporting the Safavid order in their struggle with the Ottoman. This, however, shows that they were initially un-related religious groups, with the influence of writings of Fuad Köprülül and later Irène Mélikoff, a number of works on Alevism held to the belief that these two entities originated from the same root, the Bābā’ī movement. Both Köprülül and Mélikoff have come to believe that these two entities were originally related. Mélikoff even states that both originated from the same ground and divided into two separated groups through time. However, neither the records of the late fifteenth nor the sixteenth century provide enough evidences to prove such assertion. And yet scholars who claim that Alevism and Bektasım were grew from the same root, does not clarify, however, how and when such an integration ended.

Alevism and Bektasım in the modern times have come to be called the ‘Alevi-Bektasıs’. Some scholars have even used the phrase of ‘Alevi-Bektasıs’ as though the two always reflect the same group of people. Due to that despite differences in their historical, political and theological development, some scholars have struggled to distinguish the two groups’ historical growth from one another. To give an example, in a few works, the historical growth and development of the Alevis was given when talking about the Bektası historical process. The important matter that this research aims to pay attention is the fact that however, the phrase of ‘Alevi-Bektasıs’ represents a certain group of people, it does not mean that each Bektası is an Alevi and vice versa. Across time Bektasım has been divided into several groups and only the Çelebi Bektasıs have integrated with the Alevis. Neither the Babagan Bektasıs nor the Nakşi Bektasıs related themselves with the Alevis.

It is of interest to this article to note the fact that the Alevi and Bektası history has developed through the influence of different political, social and religious paradigms. But in the course of its doctrinal and theological development, Alevism has in modern times become closely associated with Bektası order. To date, however, there are only a few recently published Alevi documents that make mention of the historical interaction of a number of Alevi dedes with some certain Bektası dervishes. At this point, the following questions will guide this research: How and why had a Sufi order, recognized and advocated by the Ottoman state, have come into contact with a harshly criticized religious group which was identified as an enemy to the Ottoman unity? How did the Kızılbaş-Bektası interaction affect the social, political and religious experience of the Kızılbaş over the course of its transformation to the Alevi belief structure?

Recently Ayfer Karakaya-Stump talks about an institutionalized relationship between the Anatolian Kızılbaş dedes of the sixteenth
century with the Bektaşi lodges located in Iraq. However, the available sources of the sixteenth century on the Alevi and Bektaşi belief do not relate them. Besides, the work of Suraiya Faroqhi in which she studied the geographical distribution of the Kızılbaş groups—particularly the ones mentioned in the Muhimme registers and existing Bektaşi of the sixteenth century—illuminates that the geographical expansion of the both communities are not interrelated. Unlike the sixteenth century record, the seventeenth century documents on Alevism and Bektaşism present strong link between the two. That is why to this research, it is unlikely to claim for an institutionalized relationship between the Alevi communities and Bektaşi lodges, those documents presented by Karakaya-Stump only show an individual link between some certain Alevi dedes with the order.

To this research, Alevi belief system underwent a type of religious transformation over the course of its interaction with Bektaşi order. It can also be said that the evanescence of the Safavid dynasty fastens the relationship between the two factions. Since then, the Kızılbaş community has turned its face from the Safavid Shahs to Hacı Bektaş. The majority of the Alevi iğazetnāmes written after that included a genealogy connecting the Alevi dedes to Hacı Bektaş.