THREE CONCEPTS THAT ARE CONFUSED WITH EACH OTHER IN ACADEMIA: ALEVISM, BEKTASHISM, AND SHIISM

Birbiriyle Karıştırılan Üç Kavram: Alevilik, Bektaşilik, Şiilik

Alevitentum, Bektaschitentum und Schiitentum: Drei in der akademischen Welt miteinander verwechselte Begriffe

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ABSTRACT

When Islamic history is analyzed, it is seen that the concept of "Shia" is one of the most striking concepts. However, it is also known that this concept is wrongly used in the same way as Alevism and Bektashism by many people and even many researchers. In this study, all these three concepts will be analyzed in all aspects. And the similarities and differences between them will be tried to be explained in a more understandable way. What are the similarities and differences between Alevism, Bektashism and Shiism in terms of belief, practice, sources and culture? Are these three groups the same with each other or not? If they have differences, what are these differences? The answers to all these questions, which exist the main questions of the study, will be given in a simple graphic at the end of the study. The methodology of this study will be a comparative, thematic and holistic approach to the main sources and studies.

Keywords: Alevism, Bektashism, Shiism.

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ÖZ

İslam tarihi araştırmalarında, "Şii" kavramı en dikkat çekici kavramlardan biridir. Ancak bu kavram, Alevilik ve Bektaşilik kavramları gibi birçok kişi ve hatta birçok araştırmacı tarafından yanlış bir şekilde kullanılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada söz konusu üç kavram tüm yönleriyle incelenecek ve aralarındaki benzerlikler/farklılıklar daha anlaşılır bir şekilde açıklanmaya çalışılacaktır. İnanç, uygulama, kaynak ve kültür bakımından Alevilik, Bektaşilik ve Şiilik arasındaki benzerlikler ve farklılıklar nelerdir? Bu üç topluluk birbiriyle aynı mıdır, değil midir? Farklılıkları varsa, bu farklılıklar nelerdir? Çalışmanın ana meselesini oluşturan tüm bu soruların cevapları, çalışmanın sonunda bir grafik halinde verilecektir. Bu çalışmada ana kaynakların ve araştırmaların karşılaştırmalı, tematik ve bütüncül bir yaklaşımla incelendiği bir metodooji kullanılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Alevilik, Bektaşilik, Şiilik.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Untersucht man die islamische Geschichte, sticht die „Schia" als ein zentraler Begriff hervor. Dieser wird von vielen Personen und sogar von vielen Forschern fälschlicherweise mit dem Alevitentum und dem Bektaschitentum gleichgesetzt. In dieser Studie werden diese drei Konzepte in allen Aspekten analysiert, und es wird der Versuch unternommen, die Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen ihnen verständlicher zu darzustellen. Was sind die Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen Alevitentum, Bektaschitentum und Schiitentum in Bezug auf Glauben, Praxis, Quellen und Kultur? Sind diese drei Gruppen miteinander identisch oder nicht? Worin unterscheiden sie sich? Die Antworten auf all diese Fragen, denen diese Arbeit hauptsächlich nachgeht, werden am Ende des Artikels in einer einfachen Grafik dargestellt. In methodologischer Hinsicht wurden die wichtigsten Quellen und Forschungsarbeiten in dem Gebiet auf Grundlage eines vergleichenden, thematischen und ganzheitlichen Ansatzes untersucht.

Schlüsselwörter: Alevitentum, Bektaschitentum, Schiitentum.

Introduction

The fact that people do not have in-depth knowledge on some subjects does not prevent them from talking and commenting on those subjects. Regrettably, this is the same in academic life as well as in normal life. As such, it is seen that wrong and right are often confused with each other in the academic world. It can easily be said that one of these common areas was carried out under the headline "Alevism".

It is seen that academics working in this field, especially outside of Turkey, confuse Alevism, Bektashism and Shiism with each other. It is understood from the studies of many academics that Alevism and Bektashism are the same. On the other hand, it is another fact that the rate of those who think Alevism or Bektashism is Shi'ite is not low.

In fact, this mistake is unfortunately repeated by many Sunni academic thinkers. Therefore, it will be useful for future studies to examine the meanings of these concepts in detail. In addition, considering the practices of these groups in detail will make it easier to perceive the differences between the groups.

When academic studies are examined, it is seen that very different definitions are made regarding the concept of Alevism. It is understood that these definition differences actually arise from the difference in perception. For this reason, it may be useful to focus on the definitions of Alevism, Bektashism and Shiism in detail.

Therefore, first of all, it is necessary to examine the historical development of the concepts of Alevism, Bektashism and Shiism in detail. What is the historical background of these definitions? How do these groups or those who study these groups describe them? What confusion arises as a result of these definition differences? How can healthy researches or studies be made about Alevism, Bektashism and Shiism within these contradictions?

1. Alevisim[1]

Alevism has been referred with many different names throughout history. Alevis were named with the following names until they took the name "Alevi" in the 21st century:

Table 1. Alevi Terms from Past to Present

Alevi Terms from Past to Present		
Rafida	Vefai	Kizilbash
Haydariyye	Yeseviyye	Shia
Kalendariyye	Bektashi	Alevi

Source: (Topuz, 2021: 50)

Perhaps due to these different approaches, there is a perception of Alevism problem in the society. Keeping these definitions in mind, it is necessary to dwell on the definition of Alevism.

Ali Yaman takes the subject from a slightly different perspective and adopts the origin of the word Alevi as sublimity and supremacy. Here the aim is to get rid of ignorance and reach the truth. According to this approach, the perfect human being is Ali. Alevism is trying to be like Ali in bravery, generosity, valiantness, and honesty. Alevism is an immense sea of love. The drops that make up this sea are the paternal brothers/sisters of each other. There is unity among them. Unity is the coalescence of God and the people so that there is no duality between them. Alevism, on the other hand, teaches that God-Muhammad-Ali, is attached to Sufism, which is the essence of Islam. Alevism in another respect means to be bound to Ahl Al-Bayt; the unique possession of the Prophet Muhammad, to be distant from those who betrayed this holy entity, and to find God in Adam, then prostrate him. It is, in essence, to believe that the heart of the believer is the house of God. It means loving

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1 For studies and discussions in which "Alevi" terminology was used in detail, please see: Gülten, 2016, "*Osmanlı Devleti'nde Alevî Sözcüğünün Kullanımına Dair Bazı Değerlendirmeler*" [Some Evaluations of the Use of the Alevi Word in the Ottoman State]; Akın, 2020 "*Kızılbaş Oğuzlar ve Şah İsmail'in Anayurdu Diyarbakır*" [Kizilbash Oghuz and Shah Ismail's Homeland Diyarbakir], p. 33-49; Akın, 2021 "*Melamet Hırkası Giyenler: 17. Yüzyıl Öncesinde Heterodoks Türk Derviş Topluluklarının Adlandırılması ve Alevilik İle İlişkileri*" [Those Who Wear Melamet Cardigans: Naming Heterodox Turkish Dervish Communities Before the 17th Century and Their Relationship with Alevism].

Seventy-two nations as servants of God, brotherhood, equality, and democracy. Alevism is eventually an original temperament of Islam (Yaman, 2007: 19).

According to Ali Kaya*[2], "The understanding of Alevism is based on Islam and the Koran. It reinterprets Islam with its universal dimensions in accordance with the commandments of the Prophet Muhammad, opens new gates to humanity. It is embodied in the integrity of people, is alive with the philosophy of Sufism, and is a great movement of thought. It finds its essence in the love of humanity, and is a philosophical culture that believes that God is manifested in man (Kaya, 2008: 11). The Alevi Islamic conception was inspired by the views of Hoca Ahmed Yesevi, Ebul Vefa, Haci Bektash Veli, Yunus Emre, Pir Sultan Abdal, the Anatolian Saints and the philosopher wise men who best interpreted the Koran. It is an interpretation of Islam that has Islamized Anatolia" (Kaya, 2008: 11).

There are people, like Erdoğan Çınar, who ground the concept of Alevi on Luwians and Hittites who were living in Anatolia around two thousand years before Christ (Birgün Newspaper, 2005).

Yörükan says that Alevism begins with promising, surrendering, and having a companion. The companionship also constitutes the basis for the adoption of some of the ideas about allowing and participating. In Alevism, there are some wills and provisions, but these three principles and two results give the essential to Alevism (Yörükan, 1998: 33)

Güven's perception of Alevism is completely different and he perceives Alevism as a different religion. According to him, Alevism, religiously and philosophically, is a pantheistic religion that goes back to the ancient age. Religiously and philosophically, it has common characteristics with Indian pantheism and Greek philosophy. It has neither a unique founder nor a prophet and holy scripture. In the historical period, it has guides, patriarchs, and minstrels who led the society religiously and philosophically. Alevism is pantheist in terms of its understanding of God. Its blessed person is Xızır´e Qal-Bozatlı Hızır. Its fasting is three days and is named the fasting of Xızır. In Alevism, service to people is the greatest worship. It's based on

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2   Ali Kaya is an Alevi thinker and writer.

familiarity. The religious ceremony "*djem*" is carried out altogether. Sacred places and tombs are visited. There are no strict rules, forms and time in worship. Everyone is responsible for himself. Nobody interferes with anyone's belief or unbelief. The important thing is to be respectful of nature and living things (Güven, 2014: 73).

Another researcher who agrees with Güven is Birdoğan. He also regards Alevism-Bektashism as a detached religion. After examining the Alevism ceremonies in his studies, he examined Alevism-Shamanism relations, then the relations between Alevism and Ahi and finally the similarities of Alevism and Christianity. As a result, he stated that Alevism was a genuine belief and lifestyle on its own (Birdoğan, 1992: 543).

According to Mehdi Halıcı; who wrote under the pseudonym Cemşid Bender, the word Alevi was derived from the Kurdish word "Alaw". The attachment of the ite suffix to the word Alaw corresponds to the addition of "with" and "supporter" words in Turkish. In Alevis, fire, Ocak, and ash are sacred, and the root of this is based on Zoroastrianism. The word Alevi means the one who loves and respects the light and luminous. In Turkish, it means flame, flaming, a supporter of flame. In some respects, the fact that some of the Alevis are called Qizilbash also affirms this assertion; because red is the color of fire and flame. According to him, the terms Alevi and Qizilbash are synonymous (Bender, 1995: 93). In other words, according to Bender, Alevism is an extension of Zoroastrianism. In conjunction with the fact that there are authors who accept that there is a relationship between Alevism and Zoroastrianism, Bender is the author who strongly claims that Alevism has arisen from Zoroastrianism, and that it is a follow-up of Zoroastrianism. Bender also claimed that Alevism came from Zoroastrianism, and was a product of Kurdish civilization. Moreover, in another study, he stated that Alevism was far from the twelve Imams creed of Shia (Bender, 1995: 93).

According to Balkız, Alevism is a way of life. In one of his articles, he says:

> "Alevism is a way of life rather than a belief system. It is a way of understanding and interpreting the nature, the individual, the society, and the world. It is the aggregate of the rules that regulate the individual's relationship with the individual and with society. Alevism

is not a system based on the other world, but the world, not the society, but the individual. It is a system that puts the human at the center of thought and action, organizes production, and sharing, and so it construes not before and after an eternity, but today." (Balkız, 1992: 69).

According to him, Alevism is not settled and dogmatic, but it is up-to-date and contemporary. It is not Ottoman or Arabic at all. At most, it is Turkish and partly Kurdish and is the way of life of the people of Central Anatolia and Anatolia. It has been influenced by Islam and has preserved its shamanist characteristics as well. There is also some Buddhism and Christianity in it. It is very little related to Shia other than an abstract love for Ali. It has a characteristic of Batiniyya belief. When it comes to whether it is contemporary or not, in fact, neither of the sects and tariqas can be contemporary. Alevism is a lifestyle and a culture. Nevertheless, it is outdated to the extent that it is influenced by Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, and Shamanism, and to the same degree, it is contemporary to the extent that it carries social solidarity in the institution of companionship. In it, everyone brings things from home to the djemevi in order to share, judges, and punishes the ones who stray, and attaches importance to self-criticism (Balkız, 1992: 70).

Subaşı approaches the issue from the current point of view and says that the concept of Alevism, which is used to describe the beliefs and rituals of different communities, is mainly used to describe Anatolian Alevism (Subaşı, 2008: 69). Gülçiçek also has a similar view, and according to him, it is just the Anatolian interpretation of Islam (Gülçiçek, 2004: 394).

About Alevism, Subaşı surmises that:

"In this framework, Alevism, which is a distinct form of Islam or a different style of Islam, does not have characteristics of religion in itself, nor is it a sect that emerges after some theological debates. Therefore, Alevism should be considered as a folk Islam which has a characteristic of the socio-religious group and sustains its existence in the form of a sect" (Subaşı, 2008: 84).

Abdulkadir Sezgin, an esteemed religious scholar, by stressing the principles of Iranian Shia that differentiate it from Ahl Al-Sunnah, he has pointed out that Alevism and Bektashism in Turkey are within the framework of Ahl Al-Sunnah, and they are in the Hanafi sect as the majority of the society. According to his scientific conviction, Sezgin has clearly determined that: "Who is the Ahl Al-Sunnah? That person is Alevi. And who is Alevi? That person is truly Ahl Al-Sunnah" (Özdağ 2002: 88)

Öktem also has the same ideas as Gülçiçek. According to his approach, what is clear and certain is that Anatolian Alevism is an interpretation of Islam. Every religion and every interpretation of religion demonstrates cultural characteristics undoubtedly. For this reason, saying that Alevism is a culture, not a religion is an extremely wrong approach. Each religion has cultural characteristics. Above all, Anatolian Alevism is an interpretation of Islam, because the decisive element is the belief aspect. Alevism expresses its belief in the trinity of God-Muhammad-Ali. The Alevi community in Anatolia predicates their relationship and communication with the spiritual aspect of this trinity. The Trinity is the phenomena, concepts and sacred ones within Islam. It is an erroneous approach to consider Anatolian Alevism out of Islam. The fact that the trinity also exists in other religions and that the cults similar to the cult of Ali had previously existed in Anatolia should not constitute a justification to consider the Alevi interpretation out of Islam. Of course, a synthetization and syncretization with such previous interpretations will be on the agenda. Anatolian Alevism is committed to Allah and Muhammad, which are the essence of Islam, and this is the determining factor (Öktem 2011: 124).

Enver Behnan Şapolya puts Alevism through a classification. According to him, Alevism is made up of three groups: "Shiites, Qizilbashes, and Bektashis. Shiites are Iranian Alevis. Qizilbashes are certain groups of Turkomen. Bektashis are urban Alevis" (Şapolyo 1964: 254). The separation of Alevism from Qizilbashism in Turkey is caused by the renunciation of Najafian Shia doctrine by Shah Ismail, which has been considered as the natural line of Qizilbashism according to the jurisprudence of Shia. At this point, the Ottomans followed a policy that eliminated the Turkish presence in Southeastern Anatolia since they were Qizilbashes. It has now been revealed that Alevism, which is much debated today, has nothing to do with Shia,

and the jurisprudence of it, and that Iranian Shia have moved away from Alevism, the religion of Anatolian Turks, after the XVII. century. In other words, the Alevi rituals in Anatolia have been representative of the Turkish religion as the developed form of the Shaman rituals in Middle Asia-Khorasan (Üşümezsoy, 2011: 12-14).

In fact, the interaction of different beliefs and cultures in history is an accepted fact by everyone. There is no religion and belief that is not affected by any other faith, religion, and culture. With this understanding, it is also stated that Alevism is influenced by various beliefs and cultures (İlhan-Sofuoğlu, 1997: 137). On the other hand, it can be understood from the examples that some thinkers tend to consider Alevism as a different religion. According to them, the effects and similarities of other religions, cultures, and understandings in Alevism are the proofs of its being a religion independently. According to them, Alevism, which contains overtones of Shamanism, Christianity, Buddhism, Manichaeism, and Batiniyya, must be seen as an independent religion. These researchers claim that Alevism is not connected with Islam. When they compare worship in Alevism and worship in Islam, they argue that Alevism is non-Islamic. For instance, while there is Ramadan fasting in Islam, there is Muharram fasting in Alevism. Instead of the five times prayer in a day by turning towards the Qiblah in Islam, there is a ring prayer without turning towards the Qiblah in Alevism. Alcoholic drinks are strictly prohibited in the Koran, while in Alevism it is a part of the rituals. According to them, these differences are proof that Alevism has a non-Islamic character (İlhan-Sofuoğlu, 1997: 136-137).

However, there is no significant difference between the Alevis and Sunnis in terms of the principles of belief. The Prophet Muhammad (as) was adopted as the prophet and the last prophet by the Alevis as well. The Koran is the word of Allah that is inspired to the Prophet Muhammad. Again, Alevis believe in the angels and in the next world where everything in this world will be accounted for. Their beliefs about the bridge of Al-Sırat are not different as well (İlhan-Sofuoğlu, 1997: 105). Regardless of how differently interpreted or introduced, it is not possible to isolate Alevism from the belief in Allah, the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad's prophethood, and afterlife. All the principles, especially the humanity of Alevism, originated from the teachings of the Koran and the elders of the religion (İlhan-Sofuoğlu, 1997: 148).

Together with the findings above, the general acceptance of Alevism in Turkey today is summarized as follows:

1. Alevism is the Anatolian Interpretation of Islam, it is a tariqa.
2. Alevism is a sect.
3. Alevism is a way of life,
4. Alevism is a social revolt,
5. Alevism is a doctrine with communist concepts.
6. Alevism is a separate religion (İlhan-Sofuoğlu, 1997: 140-142).

The socio-religious structure defined as Alevism as of today has been named as Qizilbashism since the XVI. century. The name Alevi has become widespread in the last century. Especially after the studies initiated by the Committee of Union and Progress, this name has been designed to include all the "Ali" centered communities (Taşğın, 2006: 26).

As a result, it can be said that Alevism has historically experienced three different periods. The first period of it; which can also be defined as the formation process of it, is generally defined as Qizilbashism (Melikoff, 1998: 213-214). This process is a period that highlights both the emergence and historicalization of Alevism. The second period is Alevism. It is the process during which a group of people with heterodox and syncretic characteristics tries to isolate themselves from the general society after the tensions encountered in the Qizilbashism process. The last period is the position of historical Alevism in the modernization process. This period reflects the new positions generated by Alevis in the face of modernity (Subaşı, 2008: 71).

When looking at other studies in this field, it is seen that the Alevism phenomenon is handled differently by almost every researcher working on this subject. Therefore, it is noteworthy that Alevism is perceived by society in many different ways. There is an Alevism, which is described differently according to Türkdoğan, (Türkdoğan, 1995: 42), Ocak (Ocak, 1991: 24) and Eyuboğlu (Eyüboğlu, 1989: 142-143) who worked on this subject for many years. As can be understood from the approaches here, Alevism, according to some, consist of different perception, interpretation, and application of the same Islamic religion by changing with the different factors starting from the process of Turks becoming Muslims and even to the present day.

Table 2. Academic descriptions of Alevisim during the years.[3]

How has Alevism been defined academically till today?
1) Tariqa
2) Sect
3) Lifestyle
4) An original disposition in Islam
5) Philosophical culture
6) Belongs to B.C. 2000s
7) A different religion
8) Zoroastrianism
9) Interpretation of Islam - Synchritic
10) Hanefi
11) Shaman
12) Manihazim
13) It has nothing to do with Islam
14) A communist movement
15) Beliefs consist of traditions and customs

Source: (Topuz, 2021: 50)

2. Bektashism

Bektashism is a tariqa that began to be formed within the Qalandar'iyyah in XIII. century and emerged around the traditions of Haci Bektash Veli in the late XV. Century (Ocak, 1991: 373) Bektashi means a person or a community committed to this tariqa. Like other existing tariqas, Bektashism is also a tariqa. However, it is seen that a number of attributes, such as "following a pathway" that is present in others, do not exist in this tariqa. On the other hand, the characteristics of the "inabe" and "promising" that exists in other tariqas is also present in Bektashism. The equivalent of "revolving" and "dhikr" concepts of other tariqas is the ritual of djem in Bektashism (Sezgin, 1990: 33).

A ritual is organized for the person who wants to enter the Bektashi tariqa. His promise means, he has entered into Bektashism. In other tariqas, it is called "el almak" or "... inabe" (Sezgin, 1990: 71). All candidates who are accepted to the tariqa should be believers in God and have a good morality, and the latter characteristic

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3   For more information and the current studies on Alevism, nomenclature, hierarchical structure, terms related to belief system, and the concept of "Ocak", please see: Ersal, 2016 Alevilik: Kavramlar ve Ocak Sistemi [*Alevism: Concepts and Ocak System*]

must be guaranteed by a credible guarantor (Hasluck, 2000: 45). Here, after that, the "secret" begins in all tariqas. This secret remains between the guide and the aspirant or the dervish. It is a secret what tasks are given to which dervishes by the guide, how each dervish has been educated by the guide. How this education in the tariqa will be conducted remains a "secret" in all tariqas. This part is in the "hearts", not in the "rows of texts" (Sezgin, 1990: 73).

According to the foreign researcher, Hasluck, who conducted researches on Bektashis, Bektashism has been designed with religious orders that are suitable for all minds and moods. The path of the Bektashis, as in others, involves passing through a gradual process that will enable its follower to attain mystique. It is seen that the theology of Bektashism goes from unity and generosity to being abstracted from its own existence. According to the author, the creeds and rituals of Bektashism have many common points with Shiite Islam and Christianity which are considered to have a kinship with Bektashism by the author. There is no compulsion in the Bektashi understanding, and the members of this tariqa are insistently encouraged to avoid violence and to show mercy and compassion to all people. A good member of Bektashism does not discriminate between Muslims and non-Muslims. Non-Muslims can also be admitted to the tariqa. The most concrete evidence for these practices is that, in the mid-nineteenth century, a Greek named Antonaki Varsamis was the head of a lodge in Bursa (Hasluck 2000: 45).

2. 1. The Differences between Alevism (Qizilbash) and Bektashism

To point out the difference between Qizilbashism and Bektashism; although the basic beliefs and behaviors of both groups are similar, it is known that their social structures are different. Qizilbashes/Alevis are groups living in rural areas and mostly from tribal circles for centuries. On the other hand, Bektashis is a structure composed of educated people mostly that live in city centers (Melikoff, 1998: 29). Another difference is about Haci Bektash Veli. Although both groups love and respect Haci Bektash Veli, Alevis do not affiliate to the lodge of Haci Bektash but they are affiliated to Ocaks which they believe to be descendants of the Prophet. Another important difference is that Alevism depends on lineage. However, Bektashism is discretionary. In other words, to be an Alevi it is necessary to be born from Alevi parents. However, to be a Bektashi, there is no such requirement. Anyone who wants can become a Bektashi after the reception ceremony to the tariqa (Eröz, 1977: 52-53). On the other hand, due to these differences, it is seen that Alevism and Bektashism

have partially different characteristics. The social base of Bektashism is formed by Turkmen Babas, all of whom are folk Sufis. On the other hand, Alevism is a kind of sect that has a social base consisting of Turkomen addressed by the Turkmen Babas, and which develops in closedness, not ethnic, but a kind of nation (Ocak, 2003: 20).

İnancık gives even more interesting information about this issue. According to him;

> "The Bektashis emerged starting from the XIV. century on the Rumelian end zones of the Ottoman Empire and Bektashism was adopted by the Janissaries in the XV. century. Some have attempted to explain that the Janissaries were, in fact, Christian children or prisoners of war. No matter what their origins are, these devshirmeh children sent to the Anatolian Turkish villages to learn the Turkish language and the religion of Islam are undoubtedly more prone to folk beliefs than Sunni Islam. Haci Bektash was officially accepted as the Patriarch of the Janissaries since the end of the XVI. century, and at that time a Bektashi Baba was permanently staying in the Guild of Janissaries. The Bektashi tariqa and the Guild of Janissaries had become so inseparable that when a Dede was elected head of the tariqa, he came to the barracks of Janissaries in Istanbul and his crown was dressed by the Chief of Janissaries" (İnalcık, 2013: 51-52).

According to the data in the book "Vilayetname", during the period when Haci Bektash was alive, there were 36,000 caliphs affiliated to him in Anatolia and 360 of them were in the service of Haci Bektash (Gölpınarlı, 1958: 81 et. seq.). Melikoff described the Bektashi dervishes as colonizer dervishes (Melikoff, 2013: 49-50).

According to Saraç, these groups could not use the concept of "Alevi" as a common concept "naturally". This determination was not valid for the concept of "Bektashism". Bektashism was known more in the Balkans, mainly in Istanbul, since Bektashism established its "central coordination" due to the settled and institutionalized Bektashi lodges in the cities and the "Bektashi" word was used as a common concept. The concept of Alevi, which was introduced more frequently after 1826, was used as Alevism-Bektashism at first, and then "Alevism" was used solely by the closure of the Bektashi joints and lodge in the 1920s. However, due to the increased communication in the 1990's in Turkey, the expansion of the

Alevi organization, the use of Alevi concepts by the European Alevi organizations insistently, and in conjunction with the fact that the concept of the "Alevi" became visible and known in comparison with the past, the concept of "Alevi" became wholly transformed into a common identity expression (Saraç, 2013: 133-134).

On the other hand, it is seen that the approaches of Bektashis related to the life of Haci Bektash have caused the formation of two different schools within the group. Some of the Bektashis believe that Haci Bektash Veli had never married, and this group is mostly Albanian. This approach is called "Mücerretlik"[4]. Babas and Dedes who adopt this understanding prefer not to marry. These Babas and Dedes are called abstract Baba or abstract Dede. Those who believe that the Patriarch had married, say that he married and had children, and these are called "Çelebi". Today, there are people among the Bektashis who are called "Çelebi". There were also various edicts of sultans which indicated that they were "Çelebi" as they claimed. Another name for "Çelebi" is "beloğlu". This means that the person is from the lineage and the person who continued the lineage (Sezgin, 1990:18).

3. Shiism[5]

The linguistic meaning of Shia is the side, the community, the friend and the subordinated (Haldun: 196). In the history of the sects, Shia is a general name given to those who see Ali as superior to companions of the Prophet Muhammad, and those who believe that the caliphate right belongs to Ali and his lineage via assignment and provision (Ekici, 2010: 2008). "Shiite", which is derived from the word "Shia", the plural form of "shea", stands for someone who is a proponent, walking in the footsteps of someone, committed to someone, and helping. It is considered the fifth "sect" by some of the Islamic thinkers today. This structure which is accepted as outside of the four Sunni sects, Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki, and Shafi'i, claimed to be a separate way of belief, adopted as a great belief institution in Iran today, mostly mentioned as "Shia" in Turkey, is said to be separated from the Sunni sects with definite lines (Eyüpoğlu, 1989: 53).

According to the approach of Hakyemez, Shia is the common name of the Islamic groups who claim that the imams, descendants of Ali and the daughter of

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4   Abstraction

5   For more information please see: Soyyer, A. Yılmaz. 2005. 19. Yüzyılda Bektaşilik [Bektashism in the 19th Century]. İzmir: Akademi Kitabevi

Prophet Muhammad, Fatıma, were appointed pursuant to assignment and provision and believe that those Imams are innocent. At the end of the Umayyad power some groups who wanted the descendants of Ali to come to power, posed several claims about the descendants of Ali; such as assignment, provision, second coming, Mahdi,[6] absence, and various claims have been adopted by the masses over time that has led to the formation of Shiism (Hakyemez, 2014: 16).

If the claim of Shia's existence in the time of Prophet Muhammad is not taken into consideration, the idea of this sect was laid by those who wanted the caliphate of Ali after the death of the Prophet. This idea was processed during the later period of Osman and the period of Ali. As a political movement, it is accepted that it separated itself from the main body after the martyrdom of Huseyn during the Umayyad period, and emerged as a separate group with the name of Shia in order to defend the political rights of Ali and his descendants. Thus, in terms of both concept and sect, Shia appears to emerge before the Ahl Al-Sunnah movement (Şentürk, 2010: 22).

As it is known, the most important fraction among Muslims throughout history has been the sectarian formation that took place under the name of Shi'ism or Shia. The fact that an issue that could only be considered as a conflict between tribes, in the beginning, turned into a faith-based difference with time has led to the formation of a large and different Islamic sect (Hakyemez, 2014: 7). It is seen that these differentiations have emerged over time over the leaders of Shia, the chosen form of struggle, and the basic concepts. The Kaysanite movement, which arose after the assassination of Ali and took its name from Kaysan, the freed slave of Ali, the movement of those who argue that Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya, who was said to be the son of Ali, should be the Imam (Çağatay, 1976: 57). They are known as the

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6   The concept of Mahdi and Mahdism has been one of the main factors shaping the Islamic world in terms of holding power and directing the society since the first period. Therefore, throughout Islamic history, many people who wanted to benefit from the power of the concept of savior declared themselves as "Mahdi". In addition, many political formations, religious-sufic groups and sects have accepted the leader of the community they belong to as the Mahdi. This has been the case since the early days of Islam and such cases have always had similar characteristics. For more information on this concept, which is also very popular within Alevism, see: Artan, M. (2022), "An Assessment of The Mahdi Discourse in the Shahkulu Rebellion and Hijri 1000", Journal of Alevism-Bektashism Studies, V. 25, pp: 103-136.

supporters of the Abbasids. The fqih of the Kaysanite was not written and in time it was integrated with Zaidiyyah and Imamiyyah (Bal, 1999: 69-70).

Çağatay and Çubukçu state that the concept of Shia was encountered after the martyrdom of Caliph Osman and that those who supported Caliph Osman and his Umayyad dynasty were called "Shia-i Osman", and those who supported Ali were called "Shia-i Ali". Later on, this name was used only in the meaning of the advocacy of Ali (Çağatay, 1976: 52). While this is the case, the struggle of the two families over time has led to the Shiite-Sunni or Alevi-Sunni differentiation (Bal, 1999: 69).

Shi'ism, which derived from the opposition to the Umayyad State, was founded on the power of Ali's sons and continued after the collapse of the Umayyads. The Shiites had become opponents again shortly after the establishment of the Abbasid State. Throughout their life, they were in a constant struggle with the sons of their uncle, Abbas, together with whom they founded the new Abbasid State. After a while, with the weakening of the Abbasid State and the seizing of power by the Shiite Buyid dynasty, their luck returned. The dynasty of Buyid (945-1055) had provided great advantages to the Shiites. In this period, they found the opportunity to write works that provide a source for the formation of Shi'a thought in a comfortable environment, and they had the opportunity to perform some ceremonies and rituals that they considered sacred. Therefore, the power of the Buyid Dynasty is of great importance for the spread of Shiism in Iran (Akoğlu, 2008: 137-156).

3. 1. Differences between Alevism and Shiism

The fact that Alevism and Shiism are different is not known much. For example, djem is not present in Shi'ism. In addition, the three-time classical prayers and Ramadan are important in Shi'ism, although Alevism is known not to be very responsive to these worships. On the other hand, the Muharram fasting of Alevism does not exist in Shi'ism. According to the Alevis, the Shiites are as formalist as the Sunnis. There is no similarity between the clergymen of Alevism and the clergymen of Shi'ism. There are no concepts and structures such as Dede, Ocak, patriarch, guide, and aspirant in Shi'ism. However, these concepts and structures are the cornerstones of Alevism. In Alevism, monogamy is essential, but this is not the case in Shi'ism. All of these are the factors that make the lifestyles of Alevis and Shiites completely different (Aksüt, 2009: 23).

On the other hand, there are very few common points between Alevism and Shi'ism. The first and foremost common point is surely the commitment to Ali and Ahl Al-Bayt and the second one is Muharram. Apart from that, there is no common point. For example, there is no djem in Shi'ism; also it does not have the principle of companionship which is the fundamental solidarity organization of Alevism. Besides, "Twelve Imam Fasting" does not usually exist in Alevism. Alevism is mistakenly defined as an extension of Shi'ism in Anatolia in the form of the tariqa (Bozkurt, 2005: 7).

Furthermore, according to Shia, the question of the accuracy and value of the Koran is intertwined with the congregation of the Koran and the events that happened during the congregation of the Koran and the allegations of falsification. Therefore; they should be considered together. If allegations of some of the extremist groups that the Koran was falsified during the process of gathering and recording after the death of the Prophet and the accusations against the Shia for this reason are left aside; according to the vast majority of Shia, there is no doubt about its resources and its accuracy of the official Mus'haf of Osman. Because the rumors that the Koran was gathered after the death of the Prophet is single and they do not have the value of knowledge. According to many Shi'a scholars who rely on the related rumors, the Koran was gathered during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Yılmaz, 1993: 163-169). As Şaban Karataş states, the great majority of Shi'ite scholars have not denied that there have been allegations of falsification in their own sources. However, they do not accept the possibility of falsification in the Koran (Şentürk, 2010: 41).

The belief system of Shia is accepted to be extended to the Prophet Muhammad and Ali, but it is accepted that it was systematized by the sixth Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq. For this reason, Ja'farism is accepted as a sect. The Ahl al-Sunnah considers Ja'farism as the fifth sect, however, it is seen that this sect is omitted from the group of the "true sects" (Bal, 1999: 66).

According to Aksüt, the ethnic element that comes to mind when it comes to the proponents of Ali, namely the Shia, are not Persians, but Arabs. Most of the Persians became the followers of Ali after the sixteenth century. In the past and today, the first region that comes to mind when the home of the supporters of Ali is mentioned in Iraq, not Iran (Aksüt, 2009: 19).

Essential habits in terms of Shi'ism such as praising the descendants of Ali, telling of their miracles and heroism, and insulting the Companions of the Prophet using poems, known as Legend-tellership, started first in the Buyid dynasty. Continuously chanting of this kind of poetry in the state of trance in the bazaars and markets by legend-tellers has helped Shi'ism to remain alive and spread. The Sunnis, on the other hand, formed the institution of fezailhanlık, in which the glories of the companions of the Prophet such as Abu Bakr and Omar were highlighted (el-Kazvini, 1331: 65).

4. Qizilbash

The interesting thing is that Sunnis almost describe both Alevis, Bektashis, and Shiites as "Qizilbash" as a derogatory term. However, the history of the concept of Qizilbash is also one of the fields that remain unknown. Therefore, it will be useful to have information about the history of this concept.

The majority of the community called Qizilbash is Turkomen. Although there is no clear reason for the fact that they are called Qizilbash, there are two very common convictions: One is related to the battle of Uhud, and another is the type of dresses of the Shah Ismail's soldiers. He dressed his army in a red hood, and after this incident, Alevis were called "Qizilbashes" (Eyüpoğlu, 1989: 67-68).

Similarly, according to another rumor, Sheikh Haydar, in order to be able to distinguish his supporters from others, asked his followers to wear the twelve-slice red crown, or in other words "Crown of Haydar". In the era of Shah Ismail, the term Qizilbash became a common name for the Turks who supported Shah Ismaili and the Safavid state. In the book named "Tezkire" which was written by Shah Tahmasb who was the ruler of the Safavid state after Shah Ismail and remained in power until 1576, the expression of "Qizilbash" meant the "Safavid sympathizers and Safavid soldiers" without any negative meaning.

4. 1. Qizilbash in Ottoman Empire

On the other hand, the Ottomans called all the communities that supported and openly advocated the Safavids "Qizilbash". In addition, they used names such as Rafida or Mulhid for these groups (Onat-Kutlu, 2013: 561).

According to Hinz, as Onat mentioned, the expression of Qizilbash was used especially for the followers of the Ardabil Joints in Anatolia (Hinz, 1945: 65-66). In fact, the Crown of Haydar was not used for the first time in that period. It is known that this crown was used by some Turkomen tribes in the early days (Eröz, 1977: 80). Due to the fact that Sheikh Haydar dressed his soldiers and supporters in a red hood, the red hood and his name have gained a new meaning. The twelve-sliced hood symbolizes the twelve imams, and the red color symbolizes martyrdom. Thus, the Erdebil Ocak had determined and settled its principles (Bozkurt, 2005: 50-51).

In the past, there were no original written sources about the "Incident of Qizilbashism". The oldest and only written source known today is the book of Niğdeli Kadı Ahmed named "El Veledüş-Şefik". The aforementioned book says that "In the Niğde region, there emerged groups named "Gökböriler" and "Tapdukiler" and they present their daughters and wives to their guests". At that time, it was known that there was a very bad relationship between Kadıs and Alevis, and Alevis were in constant conflict with the Kadıs. It is believed that the Alevis did not bring their cases to the Kadis due to their problems with the state, and that such a definition was caused by this infighting (Erdoğan, 1993: 11-12).

According to Eyyüboğlu, although the source of the name Qizilbash is unknown, it is known that the Ottomans called the Iranian Alevis (Shiites) as Qizilbash, and explained it with the Persian idiom "sürh-ser". In fact, the idiom "sürh-ser" in Persian means "Qizilbash" in Turkish, and that idiom has been used in the Divan poetry as of the XVI. century. In a poem of Suleiman the Magnificent that deals with the need to fight against the Shiites, "Pay-mal eyleyelüm kişverini sürh-serin / Gözine sürme diyudud-i siyahi çekelüm", in the phrase "sürh-ser" means "Qizilbash". The meaning of the strings is: "Let's invade the homeland of Qizilbash, let's tinge it with black smoke instead of kohl" (Eyüboğlu, 1989: 68).

In the Ottoman sources of that period, the term "Qizilbash" refers to a wider meaning. At the time, it was observed that the use of this term for anyone supporting Iran politically did not refrain (Ekici, 2010: 15-16). That is because almost all of the people who founded the Safavid State are the Turkomen tribes and Kurdish tribes living in Anatolia. In a sense, today's Iran owes its existence and borders to that state founded by the Safavids (Ekici, 2010: 19). Against this accusation, Alevis, who are called Qizilbash, state that;

"The Yazid boy called us Qizilbash,

The rose, which blossoms in the garden, is also red,

My heart does not hurt no matter what they say,

The tongue which incorporates a book is also red."

...It is seen that using the lines above, they expressed their reproach to their brothers who are members of the same religion (Erdoğan, 1993: 11).

It can be seen that the problem of Qizilbas, who had an important place in Ottoman society, with the Ottoman State was a little earlier than the establishment of the Safavid State. (Revolt of Sheikh Bedreddin who was the son of the Judge of Simavna). This revolt was parallel to the religious and political aims of the Safavids at that time (Babinger, 1996: 21). For this reason, the Ottoman Sultan, Sultan Bayezid II brought Balim Sultan to the head of Haci Bektash Zawiyah in order to prevent them from entering the activities against the state. Then he enriched the Bektashi foundations and ensured people joined these places. As a result, his politics worked out during a period when the Safavid propaganda became intense in Anatolia. Thanks to this, the relations between the Bektashis and the Ottoman Empire were generally good, except for the period of Selim I in which the joint was closed (Ocak, 1980: 378). Likewise, by means of this policy, the Anatolian Qizilbashes becoming Shiites was also blocked significantly. The Anatolian Qizilbash supporters of the Safavids were under the influence of Imamiyya Shias through Turkish poetry and therefore, although they were characterized by names such as Rafida, Kharijite, Profane and Mulhid by the Ottoman ulema, this community could never become Shiites entirely (Teber, 2008: 139).

It is observed that the most severe sanctions against the Qizilbashes in the Ottoman Empire were in the period of Selim I, who was fighting against Shah Ismail. The request of Selim I for fatwas from ulema that vilified Shia was considered as a measure intended to stop the population's migration towards the Safavid State and to establish the basis of legitimacy in the war against them (Teber, 2008: 130-131). It is also known that the fatwas that he desired were consequently given to him by the Mufti Hamza Sarı Görez (918/1512) and Kemal Paşazade (Hakyemez, 2014: 57).

In his fatwa about Safavids, Kemal Paşazade included the Qizilbashes into the category of apostates. Therefore, he stated that when they were seized, their women, children, and property would be taken as loot, and that if they did not become a Muslim they should be killed, and that the main duty of the Sultan of the Muslims was the war against them (Hakyemez, 2014: 57).

In fact, similar fatwas were not limited to the period of Selim I's period, such as Kemal Paşazade, but such fatwas were repeated from time to time. Due to the fact that Shia Safavids incited groups into participating in certain incidents, and due to some political concerns, the religious officials continued to give such fatwas about the Iranians. For example, Ebussuud Effendi, one of the most famous Shaykh al-Islams of the Ottoman Empire, gave a fatwa that the fight against the Qizilbashes is a holy war and martyrdom, and claimed that those who died while fighting against those rebellious infidels would become a martyr. According to Ebussuud, all the groups out of Ahl Al-Sunnah, including the Qizilbashes and Shiites, were deserving of hell (Düzdağ, 1972: 173-174).
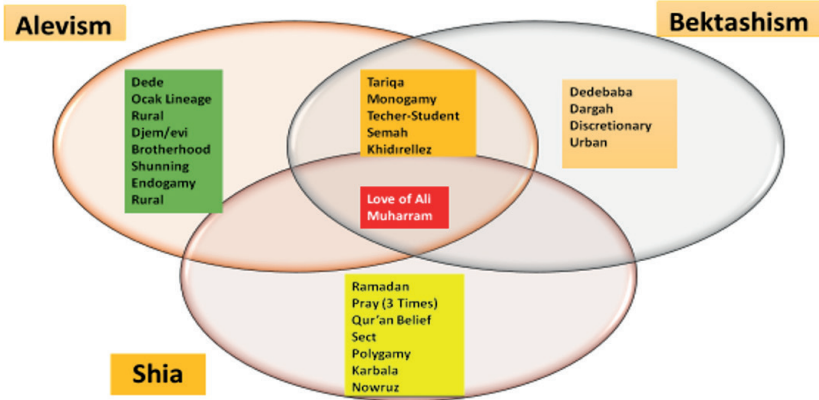
Melikoff, one of the foreign researchers who has conducted detailed studies about Qizilbashism, gives the following information:

> "Qizilbashes are also divided into groups. Each group is affiliated to an Ocak at the command of a Dede. The chair of Dede is hereditary: The chain (family tree) must come from Ali; Dede should be a Sayyid. Thus, it enters into a concern for legitimacy in the Shiite line. (...) In Iran, Alevi is the people who are Sayyids and descendants of Ali, and those who deify Ali are called Ali'llahis. The beliefs of the Qizilbashes (Alevis) are basically the same as those of the Bektashis: Both of these groups are committed to Haci Bektash. However, although Bektashism has been transformed into an institutionalized tariqa with educated circles and enlightened elite, the Qizilbashes, who dispersed around villages and tribes, form, more or less, undisciplined anarchic groups. However, both of them have the same faith-base" (Melikoff, 2009: 227).

As it can be understood from here, Qizilbashes are generally perceived as a name given to Alevis.

Conclusion

Difference among Alevi-Bektashi-Shia

Alevism

Dede
Ocak Lineage
Rural
Djem/evi
Brotherhood
Shunning
Endogamy
Rural

Tariqa
Monogamy
Techer-Student
Semah
Khidırellez

Bektashism

Dedebaba
Dargah
Discretionary
Urban

Love of Ali
Muharram

Ramadan
Pray (3 Times)
Qur'an Belief
Sect
Polygamy
Karbala
Nowruz

Shia

In general, when looking at the table, it will be seen that the religious leaders of Alevis, Bektashis, and Shiites are different. This is a fundamental difference that first catches our attention.

Secondly, it is seen that the concepts of Djem and Djemevi that come to mind first when Alevism is mentioned do not exist in both Bektashism and Shiism. However, it is seen that Alevis continue their existence mostly in rural areas, while Bektashis live in city centres. In fact, it is seen that the Bektashis acted together with the dynasty, while the Alevis were subjected to state persecution, especially in the Ottoman period, as "Qizilbash".

On the other hand, it is understood that the concepts of "Musahiplik"[7] and "Düşkünlük",[8] which are the basic institutions of Alevism, do not exist in both Bektashism and Shiism. Therefore, it is understood that none of the concepts of Dedelik, Djem, Djemevi, "Musahiplik", and "Düşkünlük", which are the basic institutions of Alevism, are in other groups.

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7   Brotherhood

8   Shunning

In particular, the concept of "Ocak", which constitutes the student Alevi group, is considered important only by Alevis in terms of the management and administration of the group. In fact, "Ocak Lineage" is the most basic institution that creates Alevism.

When the family institution is examined, it is seen that the Alevis mostly do in-group marriage (endogamy) and behave very sensitively in this regard. On the other hand, it is seen that Alevis and Bektashis favor monogamy, while Shiites often have polygamy.

While Bektashis and Alevis see themselves as tariqa, it is seen that Shiites act as a sect. It is also known that Alevis and Bektashis have different perceptions and practices of Ramadan, prayer and the Qur'an.

In general, it is understood that these three groups are together only on the issues of the love of Khalipha Ali and the month of Muharram. Apart from that, it is quite clear for those who know all three groups that there is almost no similarity among them.

<div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl">REFERENCES</div>

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