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ALEVI AND SUNNI IN RURAL TURKEY; DIVERSE PATHS OF CHANGE

DAVID SHANKLAND

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by David Shankland

Alevi and Sunni in rural Turkey: diverse paths of change

This dissertation has two aims. The first is to contribute toward our knowledge of changes in contemporary Anatolia in a coherent way, the second to provide the first systematic ethnographic account of the Alevi, a Shi'ite minority living in rural Turkey.

From March 1988 until November 1989, I conducted fieldwork in a sub-province in the north-eastern part of central Anatolia, and returned for a brief visit in August 1990. The population of the sub-province is approximately 70,000; about 12,000 live in the only town, the remainder dispersed among 96 villages. I lived in one village but made frequent visits to others, and to the town. The people are Muslim, divided into two sects, *Alevi* and *Sunni*. 74 villages are Sunni and 20 Alevi, 2 villages contain both Alevi and Sunni. The town I estimate to be 90 per cent Sunni.

The finding which I discuss in my dissertation is that the Sunni villages are more successful than the Alevi villages at moving into the modern world. More specifically, though most Sunni villages are declining in size, some are growing larger, and even turning into small towns. In striking and direct contrast to this, *all* the Alevi villages are losing population, so much so that the total Alevi population of the sub-province has diminished by more than half over the years 1980-1990. Similarly, whilst most Sunni men continue to affirm their faith, many Alevi men are becoming sceptical, some even doubting the existence of God.

The model which I use to account for these findings suggests that the social order within the Sunni villages is compatible with being absorbed gradually into the national, centralised administrative system. In contrast to this, traditional Alevi culture is based on the idea that they have offered submission to an authority which is not that of the central government, but another which lies outside the jurisdiction of the central state. As the Alevi internalise their membership of modern Turkey, the right to solve disputes becomes transferred from indigenous mediators, whose position is supported by the traditional myths, to figures whose authority is sanctioned by central government. In addition, the Alevi settlements are much smaller than the Sunni; a number of them together are declared a village by the state, causing conflicts of loyalty, ownership and identity within their communities. In short, the dispersed nature of Alevi traditional settlement patterns and their uneasy relationship with central authority means that their communities cannot become part of modern Turkey without undergoing fatal disruption.

In spite of the great upheavals in their communities, the Alevi do not become violent. Rather, their religion, which might be described as 'Shi'ite mystical Islam', loses it force as an instrument of social control, and, fused with Kemalism, becomes a secular humanitarian ethic by which they can lead their lives in the cities.

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Throughout the thesis, after much thought, I have decided not to name the area in which I worked. It pains me to do this because I am unable to name the villagers whose hospitality I enjoyed for countless meals, and whose patience and generosity were unlimited. I thank them here.

The final acknowledgement must be to my parents, who have been kind far beyond the call of duty. I dedicate this thesis to them.

Declaration

This work is based on research conducted between 1986 and 1990 in the North Eastern part of Central Turkey. In the field, I worked on my own and without assistance. This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. It does not exceed the permitted word limit as laid down in the regulations governing the submission of thesis.

A note on Turkish

Turkish is written in Roman script, and words are pronounced approximately as they would be in English (though each syllable should be clearly enunciated) but for the following letters;

ı said as is the 'o' in women
ç said as is the 'ch' in church
c said as is the 'j' in jam
ö said as is the 'eu' in the French *veut*
ş said as is the 'sh' in wish
ğ said as is the 'y' in yellow, lengthens the preceding vowel
ü said as is the 'u' in the French *rue*.

Following the suggestion of Stirling (1951) unnumbered prelim, no Turkish noun is given an English plural ending. Throughout the dissertation all Turkish words in italics (eg. *Muhammed*) are written according to Turkish spellings, but all those in plain text (eg. Bektashi) are written as would be normal in English.

There is one word, *tarikat*, (Islamic brotherhood) which appears many times in this dissertation. In the end, I have decided to use 'tarikat' when referring to Islamic brotherhoods which are not Turkish, *tarikat* for Turkish brotherhoods in general, and *Tarikat* when referring to the Alevi.

Alevi and Sunni

As this dissertation is concerned greatly with the difference between two sects, a preliminary description of their respective religious practices I found them in the sub-province is offered below.

Most of the Sunni population regard themselves as believing Muslim; the men pray in a mosque and affirm the importance the five conditions of Islam, *Islamın Beş Şartları,* (believe in the one God, pray five times a day, give alms, keep the fast in the Ramazan, make the pilgrimage to Mecca), though not all practice them assiduously. Pious men may say that the *Kuran* encapsulates all the knowledge in the world and all the books that have ever or shall be written. Such men tend to dislike music or dance, regarding it as sinful. Some men, perhaps half a dozen in most villages (though on occasion a village may have none or substantially more) are members of an Islamic brotherhood, *tarikat;* usually either the *Süylemancı* or the *Nurcu*. These men regard the *tarikat* as a complement to orthodox Islam: a way of better understanding and implementing the revealed, infallible word of the *Kuran* and immutable word of *Muhammed*, and not as an alternative path to truth.

Alevi religious doctrines are based on those of the *Bektaşi* tarikat and very strongly influenced by a form of twelver Shi'ism which they attribute to *Imam Cafer*. According to both the *Bektaşi* and *Caferi* doctrines, the first and necessary step toward personal development is mastering the *Şeriat* (Islamic law) but in practice most Alevi do not regard the *Kuran* as literally true and they only very occasionally go to mosques. The great majority of Alevi do not regard praying by genuflecting, going to Mecca, fasting in *Ramazan* or paying alms a requirement for religious fulfilment; that is, they do not practice, nor give importance to, the five pillars of Islam.

Introduction

During the summer of 1988 I travelled in Turkey looking for a suitable area in which to conduct fieldwork. I moved by coach, and was therefore guided by the existing transport network; services usually begin at sub-province or province towns and run to large towns. Thus, I journeyed from Ankara to the Black Sea, along the coast to Trabzon, across the Pontus mountains and returned toward Ankara across the northern part of central Anatolia.

I was interested in music and also wanted to work in a village, so when the coach stopped at a sub-province town which looked quiet I alighted and put up in a small hotel. Over the coming days, I worked at learning Turkish[1] and at the same time arranged to visit near-by villages. At the first village I visited, I asked about weddings and how they were conducted. The man I spoke with replied that though they liked music at festivals, no one in the village played. Another added that when they needed musicians they hired them from a village 'on the other side of the hill'. So, I went to that village. The head man brought coffee, and explained that there were musicians, but that, along with the village youths, they had all gone to Istanbul for a wedding.

Back in the town, I made conversation with people as best as I was able. During the next weeks, I learnt that the people in the sub-province were all Muslim but split into two sects; Alevi and Sunni. Further, that no Sunni village had musicians. The Alevi, on the other hand, specialised in music. Thus, in my first days in the sub-province I had first visited a Sunni village, and they had sent me to an Alevi village to meet musicians.

After a delay, I found a house to rent in one of the Alevi villages. I learnt that they are different in many respects from the Sunni villages, not just in their taste for

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[1] Whilst in the sub-province, I spoke only Turkish.

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making music. In the Sunni villages, all male believers are declared equal to each other, but in the Alevi, men are divided between those descended from a holy lineage and those who are not. Rather than go to the mosque, as do the Sunni, the Alevi worship in their homes, in collective ceremonies at which both men and women are present, led by these holy men, whom they refer to as *dede*, literally 'grandfather'. The *dede* are not just holy leaders, they also have the right to mediate in quarrels. The Sunni possess no such mechanism to solve disputes.

I could have attempted to write an ethnography on this alone, but I very soon became dogged by various difficulties. The Alevi villagers were reluctant to talk about their religion. This was partly because there was a prescription against disclosing their lives to outsiders but also because traditional life was becoming disrupted; the authority of the holy lineages lessening, the number of collective rituals held becoming less, and a number of the villagers becoming sceptical about the existence of God.

At the same time, on each occasion that I went to the town at the centre of the sub-province, or to a Sunni village, I was struck by the self-confident belief of many men. Whilst the Alevi had to be coaxed, teased and persuaded to talk about almost any aspect of their lives, but especially religion, many Sunni would talk for hours about the tiniest detail of Sunni Islam, and would frequently try to convert me. This forced me to ask myself, what is it about these people's lives which leads to such opposing directions of belief? Why should one group be strong in religious conviction and anxious to expand their body of believers, whilst the other be introverted and insecure?

The position was made further interesting by the similarities between the two sides. The Alevi are in the minority, by a ratio of about 1 to 5,[2] but the villages of both sides consist of farmers tilling land owned by themselves, and there is no discernible

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[2] This figure is probably about right for Turkey as a whole, though it is difficult to be sure as the government does not distinguish officially between Alevi and Sunni. For estimates see Andrews (1989 Page 57).

difference in their traditional economies. People of both sides wish ardently to modernise, *modernleşme*, and develop, *gelişme*. Both appeared to migrate from the sub-province in large numbers; in almost every village they claim that a substantial number of households have gone, in some as many as a third or a half.

On closer examination a difference in the rate of migration between the two sects became apparent. The Alevi claimed that their villages suffered more in population loss than the Sunni. I myself had the impression that some Sunni villages were becoming flourishing small towns, though others were depleted. Both these suppositions were supported when I analysed successive national census reports (Chapter 1, tables 1.1-1.5). They show that between 1980 and 1990 about half the Alevi population of the sub-province has left, but that the total population of the Sunni villages has remained approximately the same. They show also that the Sunni population appears constant only because of a big expansion in a few of their villages. Most of them have declined in size.

The religion of the Alevi fascinated me, and still does. Their ceremonies appear never to have been written about by a foreign anthropologist who has actually seen them.[3] The way religion is practiced in their villages is almost unrecorded.[4] The text on which they base much of their doctrine is little known.[5] I was tempted to write a specialised account of their religion to attempt to fill this gap. But to do so would be to give a mistaken idea of the present situation. The Alevi are going through a period of

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3 To my knowledge, the only accounts are in Gökalp (1980) and Birge (1937). Birge's is extracted mainly from texts, Gökalp's from informants' descriptions.

4 Yalman (1969) has not written up his admirable short article into a longer work. Gökalp's monograph (1980) has a fascinating section on the cosmology and ritual of the villagers, but does not describe its social organisation. Bumke (in Andrews 1989) describes only very briefly Alevi Kurdish social organisation with regard to holy lineages. Melikoff (1975, 1988) gives interesting descriptions of repeated visits to Alevi villages supplemented by literary research and written up from an historical point of view. Naess (1988) has worked mainly in Norway and followed Alevi migrants back to their village in the east of Turkey. None of them give a detailed picture of the way Islam is lived in an Alevi village.

5 The text is the *Buyruk* supposedly by *Imam Cafer*. Melikoff (1975) and Moosa (1988) testify as to the importance of the *Buyruk* to the villagers. Moosa does not appear to have seen a copy of the *Buyruk* as it is used by the Alevi villagers where I worked, but he does discuss several other, similar texts which also go by the name *Buyruk*. See Chapters 3 and 4 below.

extra-ordinary trauma and change. Traditional religion is releasing its hold, and the people are developing new attitudes toward the world as it does so.[6]

Taking all these factors into account I decided to make a general statement about the sub-province within which a description of the Alevi ritual might be placed. The general statement is *both the Sunni and the Alevi villagers want to modernise but the traditional social organisation and religion of a Sunni village is sufficiently adaptable to survive as they do so, whereas that of the Alevi is not.*

Clarification and explanation

Modernisation itself is a phenomenon of such great complexity that it is extra-ordinarily difficult to provide a sustainable framework which covers all the changes which appear to be taking place. Accordingly, I decided to chose one particular aspect of social change, one which is common to both the Alevi and the Sunni, and return to it consistently throughout the thesis. It is this, to take their place in the modern world, a people, or community, must become an integral part of a nation-state. This movement is fuelled from both above and below; to rule successfully, a state wishes to keep order, to obtain people's loyalty and educate them so that they may take their place in the nation. The people themselves gradually obtain an increasing part of their identity from their place as citizens, and transfer, or affirm, their allegiance to the nation, from which in turn they expect material and moral support. Thus there is a patrimonial-relation between state and citizen; the state educates, guides, rules, enriches and protects in return for fidelity; in all but exceptional cases a person can be a member of only one nation, and that nation has first claim on their loyalties.[7]

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6 When he visited the Alevi village from which the people with whom he worked in Norway came from, Naess found also that religion was weakening; the *dede* had been rejected and the last ceremony held before he arrived. Bumke mentions a similar development. Gökalp in Andrews (1989) stresses also the difficulties the Alevi communities are facing.

7 Hann (1990) refers to this process in the title of his recent monograph as *The Domestication of the Turkish State.*

I argue that this patrimonial relation between citizen and state is compatible with traditional Sunni village/state relations and that the traditional social order within the Sunni villages is compatible with their being absorbed gradually into the national, centralised administrative system (described in Chapter 1). In contrast to this, the Alevi cannot integrate into the modern Turkish State without relinquishing literal belief in their myths, rituals and ideals because these undermine the legitimacy of the central government. Their mechanisms of social control must change far more radically than those of the Sunni villages because the right to solve disputes becomes transferred from indigenous mediators, the *dede*, whose position is supported by the traditional myths, to figures whose authority is sanctioned by central government. Further, the Alevi settlements are much smaller than the Sunni; a number of them together are declared a village by the state, causing conflicts of loyalty, ownership and identity within their communities.

It is important that I make it quite clear that I am comparing the *traditional* Alevi way of life with the *traditional* Sunni way of life, and claiming that the Alevi must change more than the Sunni in order to become part of the Turkish nation. Otherwise, it might be said that the Alevi are more 'modern' than the Sunni precisely because they find it easier than the Sunni to cease believing in their religion.[8] Indeed, they frequently refer to themselves as 'modern people', *biz modern insanız*, where what they intend by 'modern' is that they have embraced the secular tenets of Atatürk. However, this is similar to what I am arguing from another point of view. I assert that, as the Alevi take their place in the nation, they turn *from* their traditional religious setting, with its insistence on literal belief in the myths which justify its existence, to accepting the secular tenets of the Republican State. This necessitates a fundamental change in cosmology. The Sunni, on the hand, are often able to reconcile their beliefs with being

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[8] Lerner's work (1958), entitled *The Passing of Traditional Society* (which contains an account of the modernisation of a village near Ankara) is often criticized for conflating the idea that 'modern' must necessarily also mean 'secular'.

citizens of the secular Turkish nation,[9] and the world-view of those who have done so undergoes less radical a change then that of the Alevi.[10]

Underlying my explanation is an assumption that different *types* of traditional social organisation and ways of thinking are compatible with the modern world to varying degrees and react to it in different ways. It is not, of course, original to make this a basic assumption of a sociological enquiry. Within the social sciences, Weber himself made the difference in worldly success between Catholic and the Protestant central to his *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904-5), and related this differing success to their different world-views. Within anthropology, Gregory Bateson (whose work I was studying during the fieldwork) was interested in ways that social organisations might be compared in his early work *Naven* (1936). Much later, in *Mind and Nature* (1981), he relates this to evolutionary theory as a whole, emphasising that the investigation of living phenomena (and evaluating their success or failure), is absolutely reliant upon comparing and establishing the differences between relevant groups.

How was I to differentiate between the Alevi and the Sunni in my analysis? Any difference I found between the two communities had to be one which was sufficiently important to bear the brunt of the very large theoretical weight I was placing on it. For example; men of both Alevi and Sunni villages grow moustaches, but Alevi men trim their moustaches in a way quite distinct from the Sunni. The Sunni men cut a slight nick so that the centre of the upper lip is exposed. The Alevi, on the other hand allow the moustache to grow. This is not a trivial difference (a man may in certain circumstances be anxious to conceal his sect but his moustache give him away), but neither is it important enough to be used as an explanation of the diverse way the Alevi

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[9] Of course, Sunni men differ enormously in the way they achieve this accommodation. This was described for the first time, I believe, by Rustow (1957). I explore this point in Chapter 2. See also Richard and Nancy Tapper (1987b).

[10] Mardin's recent (1989) work (on followers of Said Nursi) brings out the point very well. See Chapter 2, part 2.

and the Sunni are changing. Equally, that the Alevi are a minority (though of great importance and I return to consider this point again below), is not in itself enough to explain the different way that the two groups are changing, because we have to know something of the mechanisms within each group which are contributing to this change.

I finally decided that the fact that the two sides *order* themselves in the traditional setting in greatly different ways was a possible way to make sense of the ethnography. That order is of the greatest importance to human groups, and often difficult to achieve, is indisputable. This is true for Turkey as a whole, which has suffered three *coups* in the last thirty two-years, and for the immediate setting of the villages, where quarrels and disputes have to be continually resolved. In addition, it appeared to me that to take order as a beginning point for an investigation has the added advantage that the problem is very unlikely to be no more than the artifact of the investigator; that to investigate the problem of how order is achieved might be one way of protecting the results of the project against the possible charge of being no more than a reflection of the initial approach.

The social organisation of Alevi and Sunni villages

I found that both Alevi and Sunni villages consist of a number of households whose members till land which the household itself owns (Chapter 1). Its residents usually consist of a nuclear or extended patrilineal, patrilocal family. The household head in both the Alevi and Sunni villages is usually the oldest fit male. He expects his wife, children and grand children to be subordinate to him (Chapter 2). In many other ways, the two sects differ enormously. In the Sunni villages, there are no elaborate techniques for dispute settling. If a person is distressed or angry with another, they may become *küs*, on not-speaking terms, with the other but they have no other redress (other than violent retribution) but to go to the state courts (Chapter 2). In the Alevi villages, just as in the Sunni villages, people may become *küs* with one another, but, unlike the Sunni villages, they can be brought to peace by the intercession of Holy

Men, *dede*. Such a reconciliation may take place at any time that a *dede* is invited to intervene in a dispute (Chapter 4.1 and 4.2). Also, reconciliation takes place before collective religious rituals (Chapter 4.4). Indeed, according to the Alevi creed, it is forbidden to worship unless all in the room are at peace with one another.

At this point in my enquiry, I was led into an area which has become unfashionable. The great part which religion plays in the social order of the Alevi villages made me reconsider afresh the connection between structure and culture, something which concerned the social anthropologists who founded the discipline. The premise of their argument is, simply put, that the ideology of a community is vital in ensuring the perpetuation of its social structure.[11] Indeed, the more I studied the two groups, the more I was convinced that the key to any explanation of the way the groups are changing must take into account both their ways of thinking and their social organisation, and then attempt to indicate the way these are effected by the ever-growing integration of the villagers into the state.

With regard to the Sunni villages, the question is tackled in Chapter 2 by breaking it down into four smaller questions; i) how is is that some Sunni villages can survive and even grow larger as they become ever more integrated with the state apparatus? (this last is described in Chapter 1)[12] ii) how is it that many men are able to retain their belief? iii) Why do they wish the state to support their belief? and iv) how is it that the state can support this belief?

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[11] The point could be put in another way by saying that the British social anthropology of this tradition is interested in studying a social order and the way its culture (defined as 'the sum of learned knowledge and skills - including religion and language - that distinguishes one community from another') relates to that order. (Lewis 1976, pages 13-21.) The definition of culture is taken from Page 17 of that work.

[12] To my knowledge, this question has not been considered in detail by another researcher, though Dr Brian Beeley (personal communication) has been considering it. However, Starr's most recent work *Law as Metaphor*, (1992), which I only received after the thesis was written, offers strong support for one of my contentions: that the traditional social order in Sunni villages can often integrate with the state courts (Chapter 2).

The overall model hinges around the following point: that both culture *and* the social order are inculcated by the authority to which a person or people have given their subservience. This idea is already implicit within the original anthropological model, which assumes that those favoured by the social hierarchy teach (often successfully) their own validation. I suggest also that there is an element of reciprocity: given that an authority is accepted, those who are subordinate attempt to manipulate those in authority to teach them in accordance with what they wish to learn. Thus, I suggest that, as villages gradually take their part in the nation-state as a whole, *given* a Sunni man is able to retain his belief, he insists on the state teaching Islam because, having accepted the authority of the state, he feels it should also teach the principal values by which he orientates his life (pages 73-76). *Why* it might be that Sunni men still believe I investigate on pages 69-73, and what enables the state to support their belief on pages 76-78. (This last question is of great interest in itself because of the secular basis of the Turkish Republic). Overall, these four questions provide a joint consideration of the way an established social order (the village) and a religion (Sunni Islam) is able to become accommodated within the secular nation-state of Republican Turkey.

My approach to the Alevi villages is ethnographically more detailed (I lived mainly in Alevi villages) but revolves around the same main themes: the encroaching state, the relationship between order and ideology, and the different authorities which claim to rule peoples' lives. I begin in Chapter 3, where I show that, unlike the Sunni villages, the Alevi villages are dispersed into small village quarters. Each has a separate agricultural cycle which does not fit easily into the overall, village status which a number of village quarters have been given together. This disjunction between the state-given categories of village life and the traditional ones is further accentuated by there being two distinct chains of authority. The village holy men, *dede*, trace their allegiance through Haci Bektash back to Imam Jafer, Ali and the Prophet Muhammed, whilst the position of the village head man, *muhtar*, is supported and legitimated by the state. In

Susesi, the village in which I lived, the head-man has struggled against the *dede* for many years.

In Chapter 4, the longest in the thesis, I explore the relation between order, social control, and religion within the Alevi village in more detail. I discuss first the way *dede* mediate in quarrels, and show that they are validated both by the overall Alevi cosmology and by myths which the *dede* themselves teach. I then illustrate the way the Alevi creed takes one aspect of Islamic mysticism (that it is the aim of the believer to reach the God that is within us all), and relates this explicitly to the social order: they say that God can only be reached if all are at peace within the community, that God is reached by doing another a kindness with no expectation of return, for then we enter into our hearts, the true Mecca, where God lies. They summarise this approach by saying that they have a commandment *edep*, ('*eline, diline, beline sahıp ol*!', be master of thy hand, tongue and loins!') which is the Alevi equivalent of the Sunni 'five pillars'. A frequent gloss on *edep* is 'do not take what you yourself have not set down, do not talk of what you yourself have not seen, and do not have sex outside marriage.'[13]

In Chapter 5, I return to the point at which Chapter 3 ended; with a description of the difficulties and the conflicts within the Alevi communities. First, I discuss the weakness of the *dede* and the difficulties entailed in holding collective religious ceremonies as the community becomes increasingly disparate. I then describe the way many men are ceasing to believe literally in the accounts given by the *dede* to justify their special position. Secondly, I explain that though *literal* belief in the Alevi religion becomes weakened, the idea that it is good to behave well toward other members of the community does not disappear. Rather, it finds a new *niche*. It no longer becomes validated by its place within a religious system, but now, the Alevi say that it should be

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[13] In fact, *edep* is known and cited throughout Turkey as one of the sayings of mystical Islam. The Alevi are interesting in that they have brought this idea to the fore and made it the very definition of their sort of Islam.

respected because it is appropriate behaviour in society (*toplum*). Thus, in a way reminiscent of Durkheim's claims in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912), initially the ideas governing conduct within the group are subsumed under religious justification, then, as they lose their sacred validation, they are approved directly as prescriptions governing social behaviour. Equally, the authority which sanctions their acceptance of their culture has changed, whereas before it was based in their allegiance to the *dede* , now the Alevi accept the authority of the secular state. Accordingly, (and as would be predicted by my model which suggests that people wish the political unit to which they have given subservance also to teach their values) some Alevi now wish the state to support *Alevilik* and to acknowledge their distinct way of life. The difficult and sensitive question of a state teaching a culture which has formerly been inculcated by Holy Men who justified their authority by denying the right to govern of that central state is discussed in the final part of the chapter.

The secular state

One of the most interesting aspects of Turkey is the paradox of a secular state which nevertheless supports the practice of Sunni Islam. The steps by which this has come about are extremely complicated.[14] I would sum them up by saying that the drastic reforms instigated by Atatürk have been slowly eroded in certain ways, but in certain ways only. The law of the Turkish Republic has remained secular. Decrees which forbid criticism of Atatürk have remained in place, and have even been strengthened. Atatürk's achievements have never been subject to the 'revisionism' which was so common in Soviet Russia; that is, they, and Atatürk himself, have been consistently venerated since the foundation of the Republic and no government has attempted to deny the reforms' significance or to belittle Atatürk's memory. Individuals

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[14] I describe briefly in Chapter 1 the political events of Modern Turkey which have contributed toward this development.

and groups have spoken against him, of course, but by and large his reforms have been astonishingly stable.

Against this, religion has not remained separate from public affairs in the way Atatürk envisaged. Particularly since 1950, when the first freely-elected party came to power, successive governments have gradually permitted the ruling apparatus of government to play a greater role in the administration and teaching of Sunni Islam.[15] In Chapter 2, I explain this curious double emphasis on Islam and Kemalism by suggesting that, for the Sunni population, they cater for different aspects of an individuals' experience: that Kemalism has been successful as a number of symbols and tenets with which to unify the country and express national sentiment. Islam, on the other hand, is used primarily as a collection of ideas about the moral basis of peoples' lives.[16]

With regard to the Alevi, the situation is rather different. At various times in the Ottoman Empire they were subject to persecution.[17] Their myths, which stress the primacy of Shi'ite Islam, are in direct contradiction to the Sunni foundation of the Sunni state and, taken literally, deny its validity. The Sunni are aware of the different theological basis of the Alevi, and often regard them as not being true Muslim. The Alevi themselves frequently told me that the Republican rebellion appeared to them a release from persecution from the Sunni and that they supported the Republican movement even when it was in its infancy. For example, they claim that Atatürk was smuggled secretly from Alevi village to Alevi village as he travelled through Anatolia looking for support after the end of the First World War. For the Alevi, therefore, the government's gradual acceptance of state's responsibility to teach Islam is a betrayal of

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[15] I give detailed statistics in Chapter 2, footnote 59.

[16] Nancy and Richard Tapper (1987b) put forward a similar argument. There is a slight difference in our arguments however. I am arguing that people often want the government to support both Islam *and* Nationalism, the Tappers regard Islam as being almost purely relegated to the private sphere.

[17] Birge (1965, Chapter 2) discusses the history of the Alevi. I discuss the Alevi social organisation in relation to the pressure they feel they are under from the Sunni in Chapter 3.

the Republican cause, one which they remark on frequently and bitterly. Today, they are still supporters of Atatürk's ideals, and favour the political party (the *S.H.P.*) which reflects these ideals most closely.

I describe in Chapter 1 the way Alevi and Sunni have consistently supported different sides of the Turkish politics. The diverse conception of the role of the government in Islam held by Alevi and Sunni has yet to play itself out, and may lead to tragedy.[18] However, the sub-province has been peaceful since 1980. That is, the neither the Sunni nor the Alevi have had recourse to parties which obviously appeal to sectarian differences. Both the Alevi *and* the Sunni feel that their conceptions of the state and modern Turkey can be met within the Republican, democratic framework. On the other hand, their twin conceptions of the state are hardly compatible. Alevi and Sunni are separate populations each attempting to impose their distinct idea and will onto a political unit whose legitimacy they have both accepted.[19]

In the Conclusions, I draw together the implications of one aspect of the thesis, though one which needs further investigation. The Alevi communities appear to be consistently enjoying a lower level of worldly success than the Sunni villages. There are several different reasons for thinking that this may be the case. The Alevi, supporters of the *C.H.P.*, have not benefitted by experiencing their party in a majority government since 1950. Thus, their contact with those in power are less developed than the Sunni villagers. Also, the Alevi villagers do not appear to have developed a specialist trade, and then used that trade to create a network of opportunities for their own family and neighbours, in the way that appears frequent in Sunni villages. I show in Chapter 1, by analysing the population statistics over recent years, that not one Alevi

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[18] In Turkey today, the role of the government in religion is still changing. Some Alevi think that they should be allowed to use government money to support Alevi culture (*kültür*), others that the state should support neither Aleviism (*Alevilik*) or Sunniism (*Sunnilik*). These recent developments are mentioned in the final part of Chapter 5.

[19] I hope to publish a paper *Stability and Plurality in Contemporary Turkey*, which I presented at the School of Oriental and African Studies on February 13th 1993, on this topic.

village has expanded in size, nor has one gained 'municipality' status (described on page 20) from the government. The Alevi who migrate to the city nearly all go to Istanbul, to a single district, where there are many other people from the sub-province. There, though they are working very hard to ameliorate the situation, living conditions are harsh: schools are over-crowded, the roads are not yet built, there is no running water.

Exactly *why* they have migrated from the sub-province in such great numbers is extremely difficult to ascertain, and is no doubt a combination of several factors to do with the perceived opportunities in the village versus those in Istanbul, discontent with being a villager, *köylü* , and, for those who are still in the village, the very large number of friends and relatives who are now living in Istanbul. But in either Istanbul or the sub-province, *vis a vis* their Sunni counterparts, there appear to be few Alevi doing well, and many doing very badly indeed.

Specific assertions

Though interested in an overall model which could be claimed to have some adequate philosophical grounding, I was also concerned to establish the validity of my initial impressions, and then with being able to state them in such a way that they are sufficiently concrete for another researcher to go to Turkey and to explore whether these assertions are right or wrong.[20] This was partly as insurance. *Models* are continually in need of refinement, alteration and tinkering to justify their existence but straightforward assertions are easier to debate and easier to refute.[21] I summarise here, therefore, the main assertions I would make in addition to the overriding claim of the thesis. For the sake of clarity, I indicate here also the extent to which I believe these claims are valid with regard to Turkey as a whole.

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[20] This is, of course, the Popperian endeavour. See Popper (1959).

[21] Popper (1959, Chapter 1) discusses the relationship between individual propositions which are easy to conceive as falsifiable and the way models are built up from them.

i) *Alevi and Sunni communities are radically different in the way that they order their social life*. The Alevi posses hereditary Holy Men who are empowered to solve disputes but, according to the dominant religious philosophy, women are equal to men. In the Sunni communities, however, no man is regarded by birth as being superior to any other (nor are there men empowered by birth to judge in disputes) and women are explicitly regarded as inferior to men within their religious cosmology.

I hold (on the basis of both general reading and travelling in Turkey) that this distinction between Alevi and Sunni is true for all central Anatolian Turkish villages, possible also those on the Black Sea Coast, and for sedentary groups in the East. I do not believe that the distinction is so stark among Nomads, nor among the Kurds.

ii) *Traditional Sunni settlements are larger than traditional Alevi settlements*. On the basis of enquiry over the last three years, I think that this is true over central Anatolia, probably for the East as well.

iii) *Most of the Sunni are able to retain literal belief in their religion, most of the Alevi are not*. This assertion is explained in more detail in Chapter 2 with regard to the Sunni, in Chapter 5 with regard to the Alevi. I hold that this is broadly the case among all over Turkey with regard to the Alevi communities, though not necessarily among those who are living abroad, where among a part of the population, their religion appears to strengthen, not weaken. With regard to the Sunni, it is possible that the rural west of Turkey is less confident in their religious belief than the central Anatolian villages.

Obviously, and as I make clear in Chapters 1 and 2, there is a wide discrepancy in belief within any village, province or area and even within individuals over time or at different parts of the year. Nevertheless, it appears that a great number of Sunni people retain literal belief in their religion and a great number of Alevi men do not. Therefore, in spite of the great complexity of religious practice and belief, it is valid to make this assertion.

iv) *As a proportion of their total respective rural populations, more Alevi than Sunni are migrating to the towns*. Again, on the basis of my enquiries I believe that this is the case for Turkey as a whole, though the exceptional conditions in the east may render it not true for some areas.

v) *The Alevi vote for the left-wing of Turkish politics far more than they do for the right*. Again, this I believe is true for Turkey as a whole. I have looked now for six years for an Alevi community which votes for the right-wing consistently and been unable to find one. Very occasionally, I have come across an Alevi village which supported *ANAP* (the party in power from 1983-1991) in return for an immediate reward, but I have not found any community where this right-wing bias is true over time (Chapter 1, part 2).

vi) *The Alevi are faring less well than the Sunni in the race to become affluent; that is, they are in danger of becoming an underclass*. I believe that this also is true of Turkey as a whole, and I touch on this point again in the *Conclusions*.

To avoid any misunderstanding, I should perhaps affirm that in making these specific asseverations concerning social change I do not imply any assumption of absolute certainty. Indeed, quite the opposite, I am acutely aware that it is extremely difficult to be certain of anything at all. The reason that I express these ideas so firmly here is through a conviction that the only way we can make steps forward is to phrase our questions in such a way that another researcher can take them up, and confirm, revise or reject them.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge that the way I treat the ethnography has been influenced in particular by the works of three contemporary researchers. Gellner's (1981) analysis of the different forms of social organisation which he finds representative of Islamic societies and his view of the social change which accompanies the contemporary, industrialised world (eg. Gellner 1964 or, more recently, 1990), Stirling's work over many years in Sunni Turkish villages, and Sirman's more recent

PhD. thesis (1988) and her articles (eg.1990a) on the relationship between villager and state. I am equally indebted for the generosity with which they have given their time in discussion, though I remain, of course, responsible for any assertions which are made in this work.

Chapter 1

THE SUB-PROVINCE

Part 1.1 The Background

There is little flat land in the sub-province, the hills begin close to the river and rise, sometimes steep, sometimes less inclined, but always climb until the boundaries are reached. The maximum elevation is perhaps 1,500 metres on the north side and 2,000 on the south. On the lower slopes there is brushwood, coarse grass and stunted pine. Higher, over about 750 metres, there are small oak trees growing among the fields. Higher still, the brushwood gives way to flatter areas of sweet grass and there are patches of deciduous pine forest.

The climate falls between that of the Anatolian plateau and the milder, more humid weather of the Black Sea coast. The summer is long and dry, the autumn and early part of the winter a time of heavy rain. Snow lies from December or January until a short, rainy spring leads again to summer. The snow melts earlier in the lower part of the valley than the upper. Where I lived, about 750 metres above sea level, in 1989 the thaw came in March and I would estimate the maximum temperature to have been 35 or 36° C, the minimum about -15° C.[1]

A main road runs through the valley, carrying local traffic and serving as a route for long-distance lorries, many on their way from Iran to Istanbul. The exact date it was made is not clear but the villagers say it was widened and surfaced in about 1975. As I first visited the area, in March 1988, it was being tarmacked. By 1989 it took between twelve and fourteen hours by coach to reach Istanbul and between seven and nine hours to reach Ankara.

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1 On the geography of Turkey see Dewdney (1971) or Naval Intelligence Division, Geographical Handbook Series B.R. 507 *Turkey* (1942).

The sub-province has a single town, designated the sub-province centre, *ilçe merkezi*, whose population is recorded in the 1990 census as being 12,321. The town is the home of most of the civil servants stationed within the sub-province and the place of a weekly market. There are only two private concerns which employ more than ten people: a gravel-processing firm with about fifty workers, and the larger of two coach companies running services to Ankara and Istanbul. There are a plethora of small businesses: tradesmen selling household utensils and electrical goods, grocers, butchers, pharmacists, barbers, restaurants and tea-houses. Artisans: tinsmiths, mechanics, blacksmiths, cobblers, goldsmiths and tailors cluster together in their own distinct areas. Doctors and lawyers share a street below the town hospital. There are almost no tourists; two hotels cater mainly for travellers and junior civil servants visiting on government business.

The town is surrounded by 96 villages with, according to the census in 1990 (see below), a total population of 48,912. Most villages are reached by tracks which climb off the main road. The tracks are usually no more than beaten earth; one is tarmacked, some are metalled, but they are free of major obstructions or potholes, and if the weather is fine the most isolated villagers are no more than an hour in a minibus or van from the sub-province centre. During the autumn rains and the spring thaw, those tracks without gravel turn to mud, and at their most sodden are impassable for vehicular traffic. The winters are rarely severe enough to cut off a village from the centre for more than a few days. If villages are not on the same road, to travel from one to another is difficult. It is necessary either to go down to the main road and up again, or walk across the hills along paths. Some of these paths are just passable in summer for a tractor and trailer, but not without risk of a spill.

A village consists of one or more groups of households set in the midst of fields. The fields are divided according to household and tilled mainly by its members. There are no large landowners and the fields around any one settlement are nearly always owned almost entirely by the households which inhabit it. Principal crops are wheat,

barley and maize. Cows, bullocks, water buffalo and sheep are important both for the meat and dairy products they provide and, when sold, for they income they bring. The villagers plough their fields either using draft oxen or tractors. In wealthier villages, all but the poorest families have given up using draft oxen in favour of tractors. They are correspondingly fewer tractors and greater use of oxen in poorer villages. The village in which I stayed had approximately one hundred households, nine tractors and fifty six working pairs of oxen (Chapter 3).

Exceptionally the villagers irrigate their fields, but most are left at the mercy of the elements. If a household has no access to a tractor, its members plough using a wooden plough, scatter seed by hand and reap the harvest using a scythe or sickle. They carry the harvest to the threshing ground using a fixed-axle cart or, if the ground is too steep, a sled, both drawn by oxen. Threshing is achieved either by tossing the sheaves into a machine called *patos*, which chops the stalk and separates the grain, or by hand using a board studded with flints dragged by any combination of horse, ox and donkey. If necessary the wheat is separated from the chaff by winnowing.

All over the sub-province the soil consists chiefly of clay and is often stony. Even when ploughed by tractors and encouraged by fertilizers the yields are poor, usually varying between one to one and a half in a bad year, to one to fifteen at best. The yield is constrained in part by the climate. The autumn rains are held up in the clay and it is difficult for the villagers to sow their fields in conditions dry enough so that the seed does not rot, whereas if they wait too long winter sets in, making planting impossible. Conversely, the dry spring and summer means crops are often short of water.

Villagers may sell part of a surplus crop of wheat, maize or barley in the market in the sub-province centre, but no crops are grown specifically to sell. To create cash through agriculture they turn to animal husbandry. A household may keep a few oxen throughout the winter, rear them carefully and sell them the next season at a profit, keep a small flock of sheep to exploit the lambs and wool, or construct a larger manger and

rear sixty or seventy beasts for the beef market. There are very few sources of regular wages. A family may obtain a little money through one of its members taking on casual labour; for example if a man has a particular task, perhaps building a new stable, he may pay his neighbours or other acquaintances by the day for the duration of the work. In most villages, a few men actively pursue a trade such as making agricultural equipment or carpentering and live off it successfully, others may turn a hand less commitedly when an opportunity offers (see tables in Chapter 3, and Conclusions). Occasionally there is a worker or civil servant in receipt of a pension who has returned to his village to retire, having worked in the town. Among some of the villages, but not all, carpet weaving by women has become a valuable source of income.

Except for state funds, by far the most cash comes into the sub-province through remittances sent back by relatives who have left the sub-province and found work, sometimes in other Turkish cities, sometimes abroad. We may summarise the relative importance of money obtained by agriculture against that through remittances by saying that families who have a generous relative abroad who sends money regularly over a period of years are comfortable: 100 DM a month, together with self-sufficiency in food production, being adequate to get by. Those households without money coming in from outside can raise an equivalent or greater income only with difficulty, the task involving extremely hard work, land and adequate labour.

Government in the sub-province

The sub-province is governed on behalf of the state from offices in the sub-province centre. The governor and senior official is the *kaymakam*. His duties include maintaining order, overseeing the work of the government offices, cooperating with the locally-elected officials of the town municipality and villages, and implementing the policy defined by the province governor, *vali*. The *vali* is in turn responsible to the Ministry of the Interior in Ankara.

The *kaymakamlık*, building of the sub-province governor, lies on one side of the market square. His office is on the first floor, along with that of his assistants, *yardımcı*. On the ground floor of the *kaymakamlık* are the courts and offices of the public prosecutor. Cases are brought to the court by the *polis*, who are responsible for order in the towns, and *jandarma* equally responsible for the villages. The *polis* are not intrusive, though their presence was growing throughout the fieldwork period, and by its end they had moved into a new building. The *jandarma* are more prominent. In the sub-province there appeared to be stationed perhaps fifty officers and men. Their headquarters are about two hundred metres down the street from the *kaymakam*. Within, there is an officer's mess and a training area for conscripts; opposite is the town prison, a small lock-up which the conscripts guard. The head of the *jandarma* wields considerable influence in the affairs of the sub-province. Not only has he armed troops at his disposal, he is also the second in authority to the *kaymakam*, and may stand in for him when he is absent.

Below the *kaymakamlık* is the office of village affairs (*Özel İdare Bürosü*, lit. 'special administration office'). Its manager agrees a village budget with the head man of each village, *muhtar*, pays out a small monthly stipend to help with his expenses, and endeavours to ensure the *muhtar* carry out tasks ordered by the government with respect to village administration. He also investigates any formal complaints which have been made concerning a *muhtar* 's conduct, preparing a dossier which he makes available to the *kaymakam*.

Near by are the offices of the *müftü*. The *müftü* are the official administrators of religion in the sub-province; they distribute the salary of two full-time *Kuran* -course teachers and approximately 100 mosque *imam*, pass on a weekly sermon sent by the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Ankara to be read out in each mosque and check that mosques being built are facing accurately toward Mecca. They also are empowered to collect charitable donations made in response to official appeals announced in the Friday sermon.

An office of the education ministry administers the schools and teachers. A boarding hostel, *yurt*, is run by the government for village school children who wish go to school in sub-province centre. There are primary schools in all villages, and in large villages a middle school. In the town there are in addition a technical high school, high school and a school for religious functionaries, *İmam-Hatip Okulu*. An office of the Ministry of Health administers midwifes and doctors stationed in the villages and town, and a hospital in the town itself. An office of population records expects to receive notification from the villages of any marriage, birth or death, and provides the population with their identity cards. Field ownership and village boundaries are registered at the office of land registry and title deeds, *Tapu ve Kadastro Müdürlüğü*.

The central office of a state-run agricultural bank, *Türkiye Tarım Kredi Kooporatif,* is responsible for the lending practices of smaller branches situated in the villages. A distribution point of the government monopoly, *Tekel,* sells tobacco and spirits made under government jurisdiction. An office of village affairs, *Köy İşleri Müdürlüğü*, is responsible for the preliminary development of village infrastructure, such as preparing roads until they are ready to be tarmacked, drainage and electricity. A central post office lies next to the market square. It accepts letters and parcels and sorts incoming mail (a person from each village comes and collects anything for their village from the post office), possesses national and international telephone lines, and administers sub-agencies in each village.[2]

Alevi and Sunni

The town I estimate as being at least 95 per cent Sunni. With the possible exception of any civil servants who may be stationed there, 74 of the villages are

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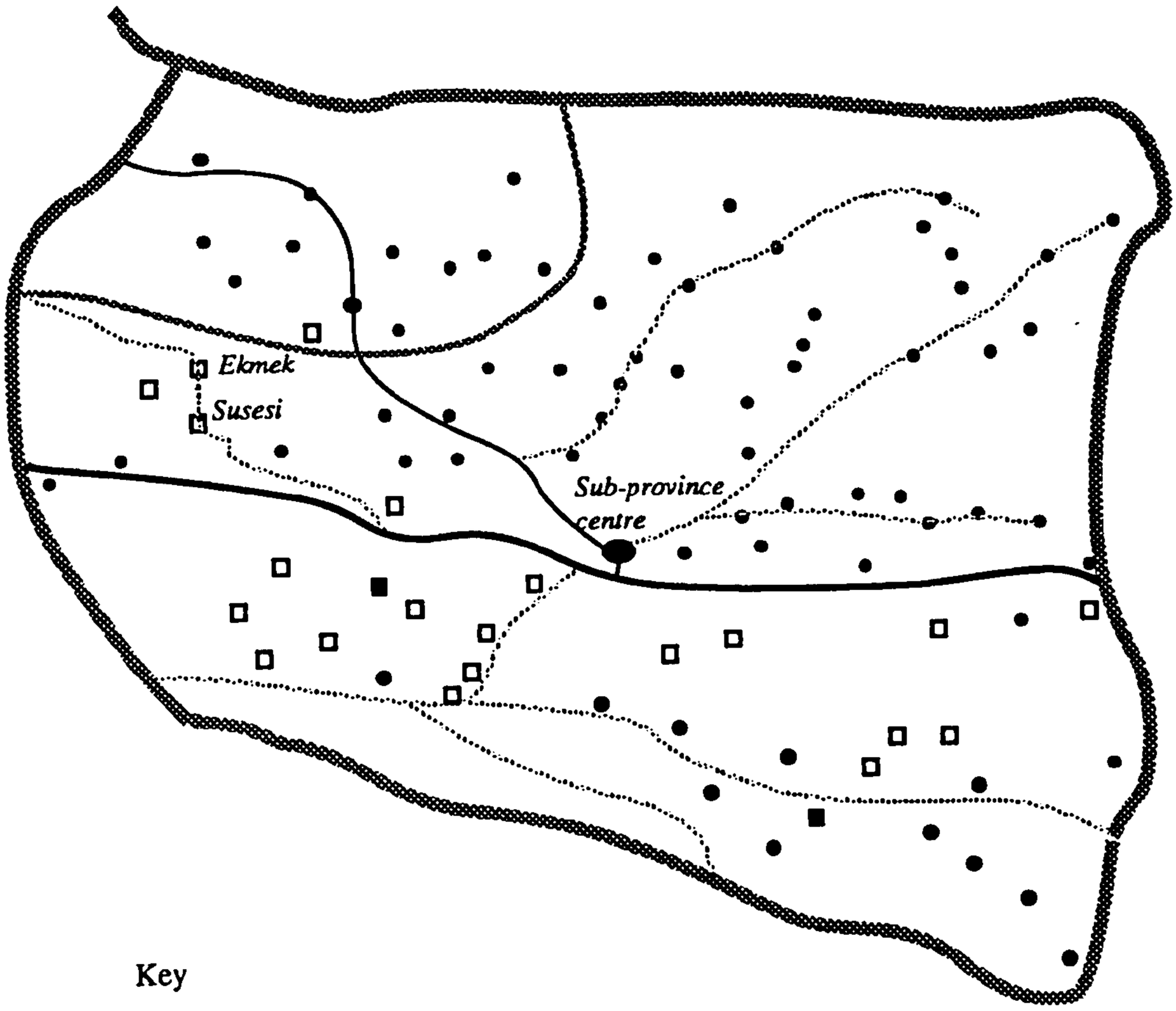
2 The above description is slightly simplified. More information on which government departments are found in any province or sub-province can be found by looking the appropriate *PTT* telephone directory, where they are listed in full. The standard work on local administration by government is *Yerel Yönetimler* by Keleş and Yavuz (1989). See also the description of *Söke* in Sirman (1988, Chapter 2).

Map 1.1

Sub-province, showing villages by sect



Key

= sub-province boundary

= district boundary

= main road

= tarmacked-single track road

= single-track road (not all are shown)

● = Sunni village

□ = Alevi village

■ = Mixed Alevi/Sunni village

Total Sunni villages = 74

Total Alevi villages = 20

Total mixed Alevi/Sunni villages = 2

entirely Sunni, and 20 Alevi (see Map 1.1 opposite). Two have a mixed population of both Alevi and Sunni. In these, the sects occupy different and separate settlements. Thus throughout the villages of the area, Alevi and Sunni live apart from one another.

All but three villages regard themselves as indigenously Türk. The exceptions are a Circassian (*Çerkez*) village, one of Yugoslavs (referred to locally as *göcmen*, immigrants) and one of Kurds. All three are Sunni. The Sunni part of one of the mixed Alevi/Sunni villages is also Kurdish. The Kurds are said to have been transported from the east by the government after a period of unrest in the early years of the Republic, the Circassians to have arrived in the nineteenth century, and the Yugoslavs at the beginning of the twentieth. In this work, 'Alevi' refers to conditions prevailing to the best of my knowledge among all the Alevi in the sub-province. 'Sunni' applies to the indigenous Sunni; the extent to which the analysis is applicable to the three incoming groups is not yet clear.[3]

Both Alevi and Sunni villagers say that long ago the population of the area was predominantly Alevi, but then gradually converted to Sunni. Conversions from Alevi to Sunni appear to have stopped at the beginning of the Republic, but several villages are remembered as having become Sunni at the turn of the century and referred to, pejoratively, as *dönek*, 'turned'. The following is a précis of a story I have heard from both Alevi and Sunni when discussing the *dönek* villages:

Account 1.1

> When a wrestling match was held between the villages of the sub-province, the master of ceremonies called for the Sunni men to go to one side of the field and the Alevi to the other. When they had gone to their respective ends, the villagers of ...(then recently turned Sunni) remained in the middle quite unable to decide whose side to fight on.

The comment after the story is told is usually that the *dönek* villagers became *tarafsız*, literally 'without side', and by implication, had no group of trusted allies to

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[3] On ethnic groups in Turkey, including description of the *Çerkez* and the Yugoslav immigrants, see Andrews (1989).

whom they could show, and from whom they could receive, allegiance. Some men add that it is impossible to turn from Alevi to Sunni because other men do not forget one's past so easily. Certainly, though now there are many different and rapid changes occurring within their communities, the Sunni show absolutely no sign of converting to Alevi, and only part of one Alevi village any indication that it might become Sunni.

The Alevi and Sunni villages are not only physically set apart from one another but there is also little social contact between them. The only occasion when the Alevi recall violent conflict against the Sunni was during the unrest which preceded the *coup* in 1980.[4] Then, they said, each Alevi village guarded itself with watchmen drawn from their number for fear of being attacked by the Sunni.

Non-violent interaction between sects is likewise limited; there are many Sunni men who have not visited an Alevi village, and likewise Alevi who have not been to a Sunni village. This is partly due to lack of affinal ties. Marriage bonds are very stable, and regarded as an opportunity to further economic and social intercourse between the respective families for the indefinite future but Alevi and Sunni only rarely intermarry.

The separation is exacerbated by mutual distrust, often expressed in religious terms. When I travelled in the Sunni villages I was repeatedly told that the Alevi are not Muslims because they do not pray in a mosque nor keep the *Ramazan* fast, and that their women are promiscuous. The Alevi are aware of the insults and on their part tend to regard all Sunni as fanatics, *yobaz* . I sometimes heard them degrade Sunni worship, saying that to pray in line in a mosque was not really prayer at all.[5]

The distrust between the sects does not preclude casual contact or the occasional cross marriage. The head man of one of the Alevi villages, *Ekmek,* was said to be

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[4] For an analysis of the events leading to the *coup* in 1980, see Dodd (1990). For a mention of there being violent conflict between Alevi and Sunni at that time see Hale (1986).

[5] Yalman (1969) finds similar insults were exchanged where he worked.

descended from a Sunni prayer leader, *imam,* who arrived in the village around the turn of the century. The preacher did not convert the village to Sunni Islam, but himself became an Alevi. In time, he became both the *imam* to the village mosque and the head man, *muhtar*. His descendant, head man in turn, remains an active mosque goer and encourages his village to be likewise. Though he has given two of his daughters to Alevi families, one has gone to a family in a neighbouring Sunni village. He has many Sunni friends, and indeed is admired by them for the regularity with which he prays.

There are casual contacts also. One man in *Susesi,* the village in which I lived, sold a pair of oxen to a man from a Sunni village whom he had met forty years before whilst on his military service. Occasionally, if his business is pressing, a man from an Alevi village goes to a small weekly market held in one of the large Sunni villages.

There is often more overlap between Alevi and Sunni villages during times of ritual. Almost every Alevi village has a family whose members are professional or semi-professional musicians, *mehter*. The instruments they play are usually the *saz*, an eight stringed instrument similar to a mandolin, the *zurna*, a pipe with a double-reed and *davul,* drum. The *saz* is used in religious ceremonies, though it may also be played at weddings and when drinking with friends. The drummer and piper play together as a team at weddings and at other, larger celebrations such as circumcisions or festivities in the mountain pastures. There are no players of the pipe and drum in any of the Sunni villages of the sub-province but some of them nevertheless desire to celebrate their weddings with musicians. Therefore they commission one or two teams of musicians from the Alevi side to come and stay in their villages for the duration of the festivities. They refer to this as *mehter düğünü* , 'wedding celebration with musicians'. As the name implies, the musicians have an important place; they welcome guests, accompany them as they approach the wedding house, play a variety of dances, *halay*, which the youths perform with the groom, chant a special air as *kına,* henna, is applied to the groom's hands and another as the bride is being taken from her natal home to that of her groom.

The Alevi musicians are used in other ways within the sub-province. They are regularly commissioned by the town council to play in the street and wake people up just before dawn during the month of *Ramazan*. They may also be asked to play at open wrestling competitions to heighten the sense of occasion. During my stay, they were invited to play at the circumcision of the *jandarma* commander's son; the party took place within the *jandarma* compound, a location which they would normally avoid.

There is occasionally opposition to the musicians from the Sunni villages. I would estimate perhaps a fifth of the Sunni men to be actively concerned with maintaining the five pillars of Islam, and self-consciously, even assertively Muslim. The others may go to the mosque on Friday, probably fast during the *Ramazan* but are less conscious of conforming to Islam in their everyday lives. Some of the Sunni villages are dominated by these intense believers, who argue that all music is sinful, *günah*, evokes sexual excitement, *şeyvet*, and against the word of the *Kuran*. From these villages, Alevi musicians are banned. These villagers hold instead a different type of wedding, named *mevlud düğünü*, at which there are no musicians but a man chants hymns, *ilahi*.[6]

All over the sub-province, the ability to play an instrument is identified as being characteristic of the Alevi and a further element marking the differences between the two sides. One Sunni man said to me '*Zurna çalana kız vermez* !' '(They) do not give girls to those who play the *zurna* ' when explaining to whom the Sunni villagers give their daughters in marriage. A Sunni youth who wanted to learn the *saz* told me the following story.

Account 1.2

> This summer a friend came. We gathered together with our comrades at the village threshing ground to play the *saz* and sing quietly. We made very little noise but the gathering lasted most of the night. An elder saw us, however, and in the coffee house the next morning spoke

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6 Though these weddings are named '*mevlud* ', there appears to be no reading of the poem of that name. (Cf. Tapper, Richard and Nancy 1987a).

with the 'greats', *büyükler*, of the village. My father became very angry, came into our house, took the *saz* and broke it in two, saying it was *hor* (forbidden, or despicable).

'Are you Alevi?', he said, 'that you play music thus? Are we approaching their traditions that you behave as they do?'

Relations between Alevi and Sunni at the centre

Most villagers, when possible, leave active dealings with the central authorities to the village head, or other respected figure, but all except the poorest men go regularly to market. While visiting the town, Alevi and Sunni keep out of each other's way. Most of the few Alevi families in the town run shops, restaurants and tea-houses; Alevi from the villages usually patronise these, and not those owned by Sunni. There is a garage owned by an Alevi man which maintains and repairs Alevi vehicles, and several owned by Sunni men to which Sunni men go. There is rarely open hostility. The market place is strictly neutral. The only open fight I saw or heard of on a market day took place between two rival lineages from one of the Kurdish villages. The last time open confrontation ensued between sects was said to be in 1980, just before the military *coup*. The Alevi say that then their shops were smashed by fanatics and many of the Alevi families living in the town were forced to migrate.

The two sects come into closer contact with each other during the *Ramazan*, which is an exciting time; the streets are fuller than usual and men spend the entire day sitting with their friends looking out at the streets of the town. Those restaurants with Sunni proprietors close during the day, opening before the evening break of fast when they fill with men shouting at waiters for their food. Bakeries stay open throughout the night, preparing *pidda* bread, then, just as the skies grow pale, the thump of the Alevi drum and wail of the pipe wake the faithful for the pre-dawn breakfast.

The restaurants run by the Alevi stay open during the day, their windows covered in newspaper, and do much better than usual. During the opening days of the *Ramazan* this is in part due to Alevi coming from the villages, curious to watch the Sunni fasting. Mostly though, it is because those Sunni men who do not wish to keep the fast

come to the restaurant, and, protected by the newspaper against the glances of their acquaintances, are able to eat without fear of recrimination.

Despite the apparent peace, Alevi often feel uneasy. They do not discuss customs, beliefs or events in any way relating to their religion where they may be overheard by Sunni. The town, because it is predominantly Sunni, is an environment in which they do not express themselves freely. This feeling of isolation is reinforced by five mosques whose call to prayer resounds throughout the town, and by a large, Ottoman-style mosque being built through subscription in the town's central street.

Alevi, Sunni and the state

Alevi and Sunni villagers have a great deal in common and also deep differences in their attitude toward the state. Both sides are content that they are part of the Turkish Nation. Both sides try to gain jobs as civil servants, *memur*, and when they do so they are able to work alongside one-another. Neither Sunni nor Alevi wish to separate and create a country of their own. They are both intensely proud of the achievements of Atatürk in creating modern Turkey. They both share the idea that the state is infinitely rich, the provider of all if it so wishes, and a vehicle for sensible people to exploit. *Devletin malı deniz, onu yemeyen domuz.* 'The property of the state is an ocean, he who does not eat it is a pig (stupid)' is a saying I heard from both Alevi and Sunni. This concept is reinforced in the sub-province where the state is so clearly the only institution with the power or money to initiate large-scale projects.

Alevi and Sunni disagree as to the task of the state with regard to religion. The Sunni, though they are content that Atatürk founded modern Turkey, do not approve of the drastic secular reforms which he initiated. Though most Sunni men would hesitate before speaking out openly against anything which Atatürk decreed, it is difficult for a believer not to feel a deep ambivalence toward him. Not all men are believers, but for those who are, the feeling goes deeper than a simple dislike of the anti-religious aspects of the early Republican government. The Sunni regard it as the duty of the state to

actively support Islam, as part of its reason for existing (Chapter 2). In contrast, the Alevi view the Republic as a bastion against Sunni Islam, and Atatürk as the creator of the ideal way to live within a modern country (Chapter 5).

The Alevi complain that it is clear the state is no longer the opposer of Sunni religion; they point to the vocational schools for Muslim preachers, attended entirely by pupils from Sunni villages, the growth of the brotherhoods, television programmes favouring religion on television, the *müftü* offices in the sub-province centre, the religious lessons taught in schools, the new large mosques which are being built in many villages. In particular they stress the increasing confidence of active Sunni believers. For example, that it is increasingly difficult for those who wish to eat or smoke during *Ramazan* to do so, and that teachers in schools are finding pupils forbidden by their parents to perform calculations of interest rates in mathematics lessons.

The last development is deplored not only by Alevi but also by Sunni who are less interested in religion. The following story illustrates this. It was told by a local Circassian man, who was a manager in one of the government offices of the sub-province, to an Alevi school teacher whilst I was present.

Account 1.3

> 'On the national holiday of *kurban bayramı* (the feast of sacrifice) together with two doctors and their wives, we went to a quiet spot just above the town to celebrate the holiday. The doctors had it in mind to drink, so we placed two bottles of *rakı* (a popular strong drink similar to *pastice*) in a stream to cool. We went a little further on and sat down. In front of us came a number of youths, led by two teachers from a faculty of higher religious studies, home on leave. The group prayed and intoned hymns. *Ho çıktılar* (recited the name of the one God in a fashion characteristic of an Islamic brotherhood).
>
> After watching them we returned to the *rakı* and found that the bottles had been broken. The doctors turned to the youths who had been worshipping and remonstrated. The youths responded by denying the doctors' right to fault them and insulted their wives. I knew the youths, and tried to say something but they insulted me too.
>
> The next day I was walking in the town and many of my friends, whatever their political views were upset. Among the crowd I saw some

of the youths involved. I said to them, 'You have broken the rules. The state has founded *Tekel* (the state monopoly), and sells *rakı* to those it sees fit. These doctors had given four and five year's service to the state. I couldn't believe the way you behaved. They did not listen.'

Part 1.2 Migration, modernisation and politics

Nearly all the villagers possess a deep and frequently expressed desire to modernise, *modernleşme*, or develop, *gelişmek*. Exactly what is meant by 'develop' varies from person to person but with regard to material things it usually implies possessing consumer goods; particularly televisions, refrigerators, cassette players and videos, moving to a concrete or brick house, gaining a living other than by farming and living in a settlement with a modern infrastructure, asphalt road, schools, doctor, telephones, water and electricity.

In every village there are active men campaigning for services to be brought to them, but many more feel that their aspirations can only be fulfilled by leaving the sub-province. Daily conversation is full of references to *göç*, migration, and its ramifications; the merits of different countries, the possibilities and difficulties of obtaining visas and the amount it costs to build a house. Almost everyone appears to have a close relative who has migrated. In almost every village they told me that a substantial number of households had gone, sometimes as many as a third or a half.

In a recent essay, Stirling summarises migration over the past forty years in two villages near *Kayseri*, in Western Central Anatolia.[7] He notes that initially men depart from the village in search of seasonal work, leaving their families behind, and returning to them when possible. Later, as men from the village become established in the towns, their wives and families join them. Later still, the path to the town eased by the presence of relatives within it, those in the village depart more rapidly. Ultimately,

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[7] Stirling (1988). See also Güneş-Ayata (1987).

whole households leave. The sequence involves a gradual change in attitude from accepting the village as the natural place of domicile to preferring the town; a man who looks for seasonal work is doing so in order to subsidise life in the village, whilst a household which migrates together to the town has little intention of returning.

The sequence described by Stirling fits the sub-province well, for both Alevi and Sunni. Until the 1950's, only a few men from each village seem to have migrated to look for work in the towns. One man from the village in which I lived became a fireman in Ankara, another walked to Istanbul and found work, eventually bringing up his children there. Seasonal migration was prevalent, either to pick fruit on the Black Sea coast or casual work in the sub-province centre. Migration is said to have increased in the 1960's, and then accelerated enormously in the 1970's as people began to realise that to work in Germany or another European country could be a lucrative and secure occupation (this is born out by the sudden drop in village population recorded in 1975 - see tables below). Initially those who went to Germany planned to retire to their native villages, but now those who return tend to move to Istanbul, or perhaps build a house in the next sub-province, which is closer to Istanbul, and more prosperous.[8] In the late 1970's and 1980's, permission to work in European countries became more difficult to obtain, and it is no longer possible to gain visas to travel freely abroad in Western Europe. Some men find work in the Middle East but migration to destinations within Turkey has continued, and even accelerated.

Though a migrant leaves the village, it is unusual for him or her to sever ties, either social or economic with those who remain. A man who is abroad and earning money usually remits money back to kin who are in the village. To whom he sends money depends in part on the warmth of the relationship, and in part on the degree of kinship. Where the possibility exists, and in descending order of priority, a man sends

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8 On the 'returnee' phenomenon see an essay by Abadan-Unat in Stirling (Forthcoming).

money to his wife and children, his parents, brothers, brother's children, sisters and sister's children. More distant relatives are less likely to receive money regularly but may in exceptional circumstances.

The worker abroad may help in other ways. Those in the village exert all the pressure they can on their friends and relatives abroad, telling them to find them a visa so that they may come and join them. There are several ways that this may be possible. Those abroad may prepare the ground for a marriage of convenience (said in 1989 to cost 5,000 DM in Germany) or simply obtain a tourist visa for the relative in the village and shelter them on the visa's expiry.[9] They may arrange also a genuine marriage with a Turkish national possessing foreign residence rights, usually a relative born there. In return those who have left the village to work in Western Europe know that by keeping on friendly terms with the village they can return if they fail to accumulate sufficient funds to retire safely elsewhere. They may benefit also from the village being a reservoir of people with similar values to their own, and arrange a visa for a relative from the village so that they can obtain a dependable spouse or business partner.

With regard to migration within Turkey; if a man is fortunate, relatives and neighbours in the town have established themselves in a particular trade and built up a network of professional ties.[10] He may then find an immediate niche through their help. The most successful example of this was a Sunni village whose members worked as goldsmiths, both in the sub-province centre and the covered market in Istanbul. No Alevi village had so apparently lucrative a profession, though one did supply the bath attendants to a famous Turkish bath in Istanbul. Far more villagers are leaving, though, then can be absorbed in this way; the possible openings in the city are less than the numbers of people who want them. Rather than a man arranging an occupation before

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[9] For an overview of Turkish migration abroad see Abadan-Unat (1989, 1986).
[10] For an overview of immigration within Turkey see Beeley (1983, Chapter 2).

going, he often moves to Istanbul and there relies on the welcome of neighbours and kin who have already moved whilst looking for a way to make money.

When I visited the area outside Istanbul to which many of the villagers migrate I found that conditions were difficult.[11] There was no running water or sewage pipes, little industry nearby to provide work and no obvious means by which families were making enough money to survive. In this precarious position, with no solid home or job the support of the village is often very important. A man's relatives may send food via the coach services from the sub-province, whose final stop is in the area of Istanbul where most of those from the sub-province have settled. If all else has failed he may return to the village and eke out a living farming until an opportunity to migrate offers itself again. Some men leave their small children in the village in care of their parents. Not only is the air more healthy and the food better than in Istanbul, but also the children have a better chance of gaining an adequate primary schooling. The schools in the poor areas of Istanbul are overcrowded and understaffed and it is often difficult to have one's child admitted to them. The village primary schools are rarely as crowded. If the village has a middle school, he may even leave his children in the village until the age of fifteen, in which case they may make a significant contribution to subsistence farming in the village.

Thus, each village becomes divided as people's aspirations become more ambitious. Formerly, the village was a sedentary community in which a person expected to live and die. Now, few people under middle age anticipate spending their complete existence there. The villages themselves are changing function; they are a retirement place for the old, a base for migrants to return to or work from, and a school for the young so that they may be successful in life in Turkey as a whole. It is important to note though, that there is no mechanism or organisation which pools resources donated by migrants. The links they retain with the sub-province are almost

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[11] For a work on the *gecekondu*, towns 'formed in a night' outside the cities, see Karpat (1976).

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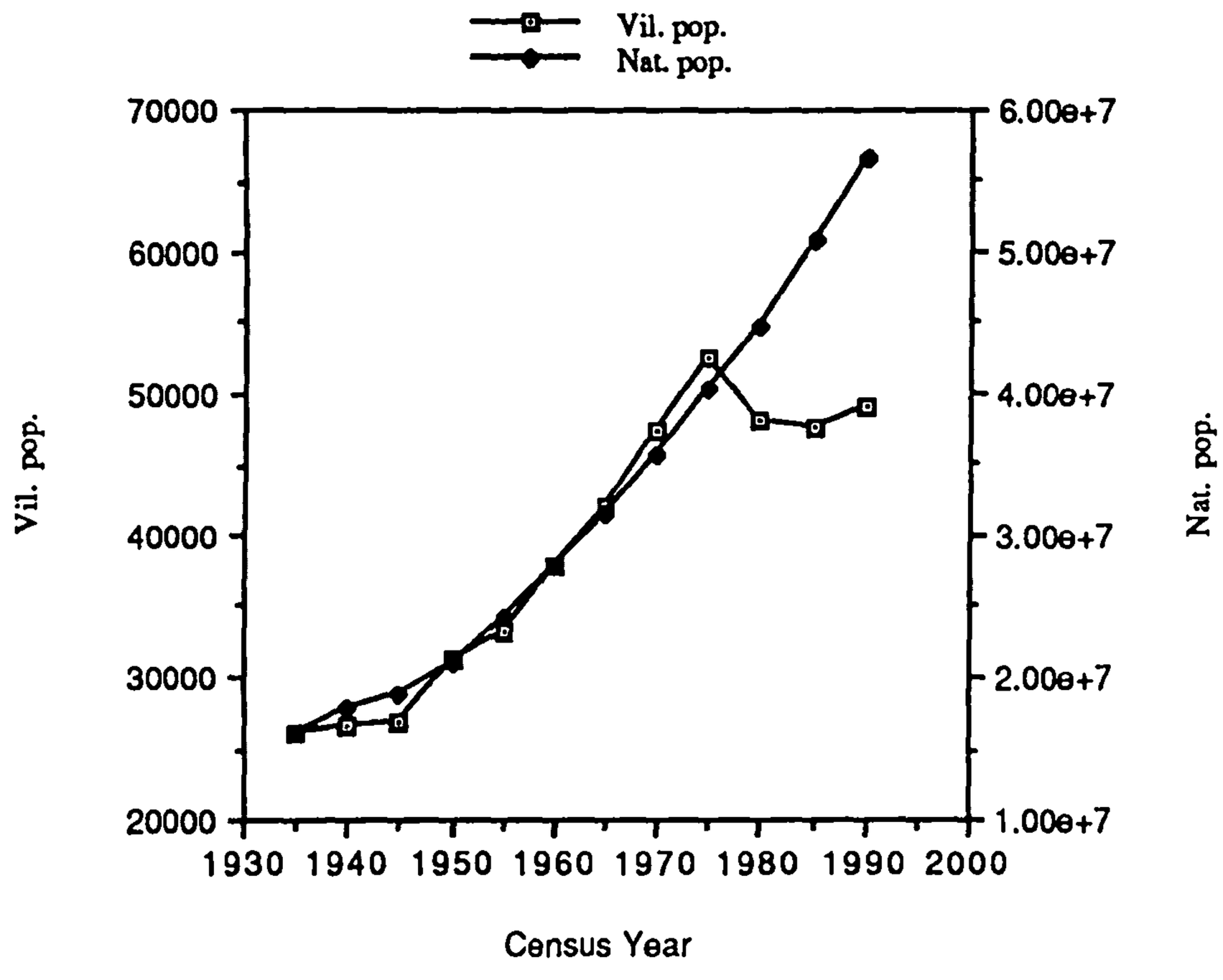
TABLE AND GRAPH 1.1

VILLAGE POPULATION OF SUB-PROVINCE BY CENSUS YEAR, COMPARED WITH NATIONAL TOTAL

Census year	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Village population	26207	26611	26836	31314	33096	37810	42049	47319	52492	47967	47638	48912
National population	16158018	17820950	18790174	20947188	24064763	27754820	31391421	35605176	40347719	44736957	50664458	56473000



exclusively governed by kin and neighbour, each person sending money to their own community. Villages become more bound into the world outside the sub-province than before but they do not become more closely linked with each other. The traditional life of the Alevi and the Sunni villages in the sub-province is largely separate; even as they open toward the world it remains so.

Some figures

That large numbers of people have migrated is confirmed by examining the results of population census since 1935. They are in the public domain, freely available from the Prime Ministry Institute of Statistics in Ankara. Table and graph 1.1 illustrate data from 1935 until the present day for the village population of the sub-province. They show that from 1935 until 1975, the population of the sub-province matches the rate of growth for Turkey as a whole. There is a sharp fall in 1975, after which the population begins to grow again, though more slowly. By extrapolation it is possible to see that if the population of the villages has continued to grow unchecked it would have been approximately 68,000 in 1990, as opposed to the 48,912 actually recorded.

Table and graph 2.2 present the total village population separated into Alevi and Sunni. The Sunni village population follows the trend already established in graph 1.1; a steep rise until 1975, followed by a fall and a subsequent rise until, according to the figures, the Sunni population is now as great as it has ever been. On the other hand, the Alevi population begins to fall as early as 1970. The fall then steepens so much that almost half the remaining Alevi have migrated from the sub-province between 1980 and 1990.

Whether the population loss is spread evenly throughout each village, or some have been more successful than others can be seen by looking at the figures village by village. We find that in most Sunni villages the population rises to a peak in the late seventies, then falls. But ten of them have reversed this trend and grown bigger. Table 1.3 shows the way that these ten villages have gradually taken over a greater proportion

TABLE AND GRAPH 1.2

VILLAGE POPULATION OF SUB-PROVINCE BY YEAR, DIVIDED ACCORDING TO ALEVI AND SUNNI (OMITTING TWO MIXED VILLAGES)

Census year	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Sunni	21298	21901	22799	25542	27126	28656	32074	36679	42344	37888	39084	43399
Alevi	4732	4579	3867	5553	5675	8072	8807	9368	8733	8742	7473	4693
Totals	26030	26480	26666	31095	32801	36728	40881	46047	51077	46630	46557	48092

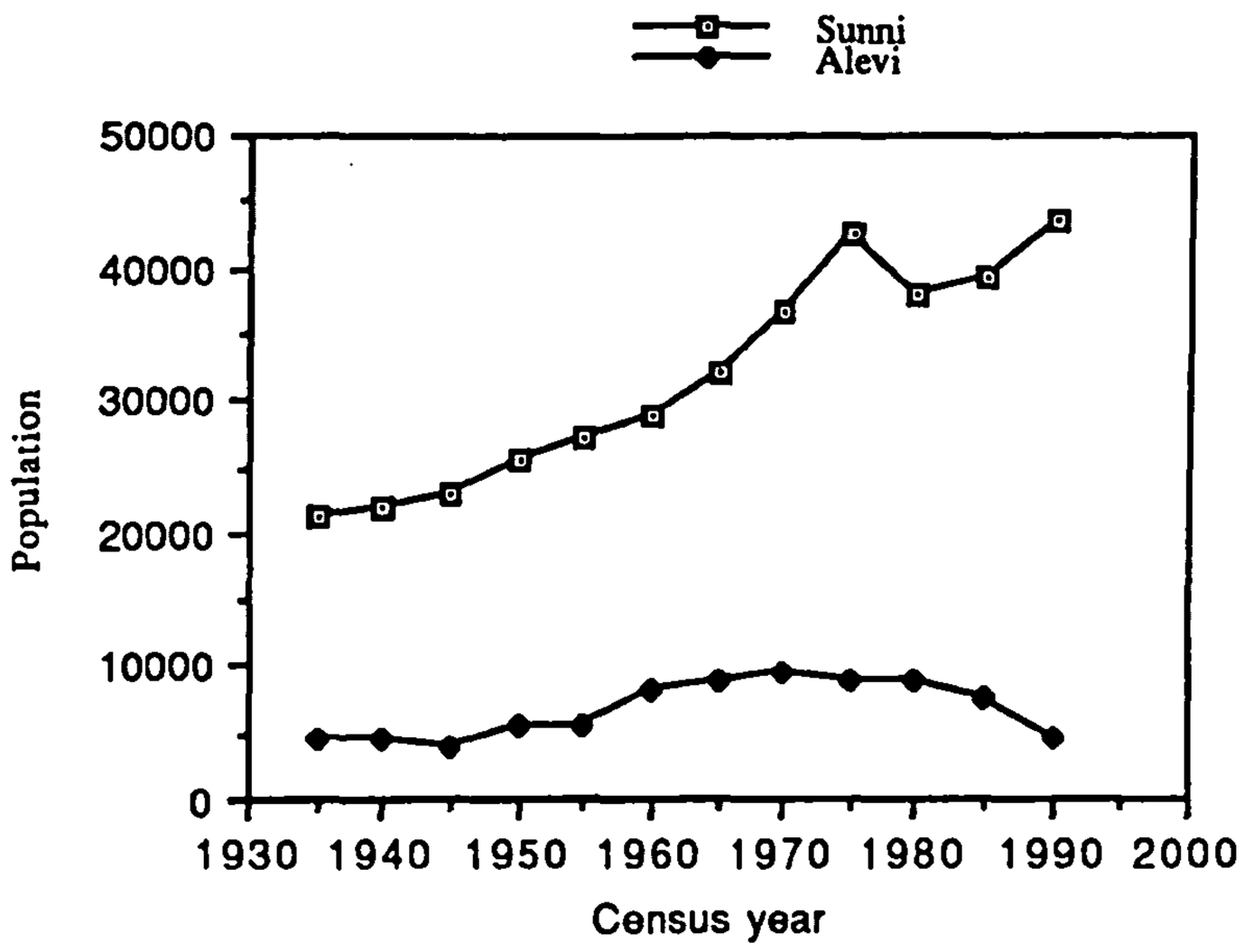


TABLE 1.3

DIVIDING SUNNI VILLAGES ACCORDING TO WHETHER THEY ARE GROWING OR FALLING IN POPULATION OVER THE LAST THREE CENSUS RESULTS

Census Year	No.	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Sunni villages with declining population	64	14857	14877	15858	17811	18752	19514	21739	22744	23920	23277	21146	18025
Sunni villages with growing population	10	6441	7024	7214	7731	8374	9142	10335	13935	18424	14611	17938	25734
TOTALS	74	21298	21901	23072	25542	27126	28656	32074	36679	42344	37888	39084	43759
Percentage of Sunni village population accounted for by 10 successful villages		30.0	32.1	31.6	30.3	30.1	31.9	32.2	38.0	43.5	38.6	45.9	58.5

TABLE 1.4

LISTING THE ALEVI VILLAGES OF THE SUB-PROVINCE INDIVIDUALLY FROM 1965 UNTIL 1990

Census year	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Susesi	881	896	737	887	821	429
Ekmek	1402	1440	1402	1464	1363	946
Göz	600	686	607	591	554	282
	191	180	175	142	119	63
	448	509	473	383	309	174
	192	191	140	328	105	49
	286	291	324	328	300	176
	373	346	311	260	209	115
	194	192	205	156	103	65
	215	219	205	167	133	42
	377	400	427	454	498	367
	697	662	605	604	423	158
	278	497	348	390	343	304
	426	504	462	439	399	259
	302	342	352	309	294	259
	398	376	391	289	235	141
	751	806	787	735	525	363
	281	296	252	247	188	103
	275	293	261	308	283	175
	240	242	269	261	269	223
TOTALS	8807	9368	8733	8742	7473	4693

TABLE 1.5

COMPARING SUNNI VILLAGES WITH DECLINING POPULATION AGAINST ALEVI VILLAGES

Census Year	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Declining Sunni villages	21739	22744	23920	23277	21146	18025
% Change	11.4	4.6	5.2	-3.7	-9.1	-14.6
Alevi villages	8807	9368	8733	8742	7473	4693
% Change	9.1	6.4	-6.7	0.1	-14.5	-37.2

of the total Sunni village population until, in 1990, they accounted for just over 56 per cent. The Alevi villages give quite a different picture. They have all declined in size (table 1.4). Furthermore, table 1.5 shows that even those Sunni villages in decline are losing population more slowly than the Alevi villages.[12]

The role of the state in modernising

Those who stay in the sub-province find remittances useful in meeting their ever greater demand for cash, and they may on occasion combine resources to try to fund a specific project such as a village bulldozer or pumping station, but they look to the state to provide the bulk of the infrastructure with which their villages are to be modernised. The state does so according to two principles. A particular service may be obtained piecemeal on gaining permission from the relevant department, perhaps the villagers offering to pay part of the cost. In addition every settlement has a place in the state classificatory scale, which carries automatic entitlement to certain resources.

The lowest level in the state's scale is the village, *köy*. If a settlement is too small to be a village in its own right then it is attached to a neighbouring settlement or settlements and together they are defined a single village. In 1989, all the villages in the sub-province had access to a somewhat erratic domestic electricity supply, which provided sufficient current to power fridges, televisions and light. All had post office sub-agencies and a telephone line. Villages with an abundant flow of water from the hills often had piped water, obtained from depots which the state has constructed on the hillsides to catch and channel their spring water. All had primary schools and at least a rudimentary road leading to the village.

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12 Though internal migration in Turkey has been studied by Beeley and other researchers (Beeley 1983), that Alevi and Sunni might have different rates of migration to my knowledge has not been considered. The figures presented here represent, therefore, the first attempt to quantify migration according to sect.

A village may gain promotion and become a district centre, *ilçe merkezi*. In this case it becomes the administrative centre for several of the villages which surround it, In the sub-province where I worked there is one such centre, the village I visited on first arriving (see Introduction). At it, there are a well-staffed middle-school, a small weekly market, health centre (*sağlık ocağı*), doctor and cooperative bank which are used both by the central village and the eleven others under its jurisdiction. A village may also gain special 'municipality', *belediye* status, which entitles it to a town council organisation. Though this does not necessarily carry responsibility for the surrounding villages, the village then gains state funds from which a mayor's salary and any one else directly employed by the municipality may be drawn. A municipality is entitled to a much greater level of government services than a normal village; perhaps a doctor, middle school, telephone, post-office, tarmacked road, cooperative agricultural bank; in part depending on the village's population.

Patronage and politics

In the sub-province (and frequently in Turkey as a whole), a man conducts business, official and otherwise, with those he knows best. Knowing this, active men from every village try to create links with the officials in the centre. Not all villagers are comfortable with the higher status of the officials, but those who are may visit a dozen or more acquaintances in their offices and shops in succession, drinking a glass of tea in each, in part simply renewing their acquaintance, but also exchanging news on how to achieve a certain task and ascertaining whether the other has a friend who might be able to help a particular project along. Such links are important in daily life, not just for special favours. Contact with the state bureaucracy is inevitable, interaction with it lightened enormously by knowing people and being familiar to officials; a teacher one knows well can be persuaded to pass an inadequate child in a school exam, a doctor to give preferential treatment, the head of the *jandarma* not to press charges, the forest watchman to ignore a conspicuous new fence cut from forbidden pine and the cooperative bank manager not to press for repayment.

The number and level of contacts a village achieves is in part due to the personalities involved in negotiating for them, but any encounter is shaped by the protagonist's mutual assessment of one another; a man calculates the other's relation to himself with regard to wealth, rank, kin, contacts, sect, mutual friends and political party. The most pervasive of these factors is political party. That politics should be so important is partly due to the mechanics of the election system. When the time arrives for deciding representatives in the Grand National Assembly in Ankara, a party puts forward a number of candidates in each province who go forward to the assembly on the basis of the number of votes they win from that province. To secure representatives, parties attempt to build a network of supporters throughout a large number of provinces. To create and maintain this network, they reward their loyal, local supporters with better access to state services when their party wins, and place them in the most attractive posts. To secure control over the administration the ruling party ensures that as many civil servants as possible are sympathetic to their cause. Thus the party in power has a direct and immediate influence on the actions of those who staff the government administration and on who receives the services they distribute.

Dodd notes this as occurring on a national level, referring to the 'process of politicising the bureaucracy by moving into important positions persons who were sympathetic, if not dedicated to, the politics of the government in office, or its particular minister'.[13] It is also very evident in the province where I worked. Many postings within the civil service are influenced by the ex-head of the local branch of the Motherland Party (*ANAP*), the governing party since 1983.[14] The man runs a small carpet shop in the covered market in the province town, at which he receives visitors. Civil servants approach him with various requests, some wish to move house to a

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13 Dodd (1983, page 40). For other discussions of patronage see (for example) Sayar (1966), Özbüdün (1981), Yalçın (1990) or Güneş-Ayata (1990).
14 See also Finkel and Hale (1990).

Table 1.6 General election results for the sub-province 1965 - 1987. Parties (including independents) are arranged from left to right in accordance with number of votes won.

Election year	Valid Votes Cast	Votes and % of total vote won according to Political Party (including independents)													
1965	16918	A.P.		C.H.P.		Y.T.P.		T.I.P.		C.K.M.P		M.P.		Independ.	
		7834	46%	6035	36%	1313	8%	939	6%	797	5%	—	–	–	–
1969	21661	Independ.		B.P.		A.P.		C.H.P.		G.P.		M.H.P.		M.P.		T.I.P.	
		19500	90%	1485	8%	387	2%	152	1%	51	–	40	–	25	–	21	–
1973	15822	A.P.		C.H.P.		T.B.P.		M.S.P.		D.P.		M.H.P.		Independ.		C.G.P.	
		7862	50%	2392	15%	2321	15%	1440	9%	589	4%	496	3%	417	3%	305	2%
1977	20548	C.H.P.		A.P.		M.H.P.		M.S.P.		Independ.		C.G.P.		D.P.		T.B.P.	
		8232	40%	6843	33%	2036	10%	1646	8%	800	4%	516	3%	311	2%	164	1%
1983	19221	A.N.A.P.		H.P.		M.D.P.		Independ									
		7993	42%	5883	31%	4849	25%	496	3%								
1987	21297	A.N.A.P.		D.Y.P.		S.H.P.		D.S.P.		R.P.		M.C.P.		I.D.P.			
		9034	42%	4059	19%	3639	17%	1503	7%	1443	7%	1150	5%	469	2%		

larger city, others to transfer from one appointment to another within the province, achieve promotion or simply to stay in the same place in the face of opposition from political rivals.

Local politics may also be a source of wealth. Every municipality elects a mayor and council. Not every village is a municipality but this status is given automatically to all higher levels in the administrative classification; that is to district, sub-province and province centres. Municipal councils, though funded by the state, have considerable discretion as to how they dispose of their income.[15] The municipality of the sub-province centre employs men to work in its administrative offices, dig the roads, man the fire-brigade, maintain a small-Turkish bath (*hamam*) inside the town, run cubicles surmounting hot springs just outside, and run the town park.

Politics and the sub-province

The Prime Ministry Institute of Statistics in Ankara provides detailed general election figures for the sub-province since 1961. These show that almost every political party standing nationally has also provided candidates for the province, to whose votes the sub-province votes are counted (Table 1.6) and usually the vote is split among them. Only once has the voting in the province been almost unanimous, in 1969. Then a man from one of the sub-province villages stood for parliament as an independent candidate. The votes he won were enough to secure him a place in the assembly.

It would seem that the voters in the sub-province combined together on this one occasion because there was a clear chance that if they did so their man was going to win. In the absence of such a dominating figure the villagers rely on networks built up with a party over a number of years. National political parties retain offices in the sub-province, making speeches and campaigning on behalf of their policies. Those who support them work with each other to apply pressure to the administration and to make

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15 Finkel (1990) discusses the place of municipalities in relation to the state.

friends within it, hoping that their loyalty toward each other will one day be rewarded by their party's control of central government, by-passing their rivals in the sub-province and giving direct access at last to the wealth and power distributed from Ankara.

Alevi/Sunni and politics

It would be reasonable to hypothesise that the deep social division between Alevi and Sunni is reflected in the way the population of the sub-province divides itself politically.[16] If a group fights for office with others with whom they already have other kinds of close relations they can be fairly sure that their mutual trust will lead to adequate repayment. If they make links with people with whom they have no existing social or economic contact then they can be far less sure of a reward, because they lack the knowledge, sanctions and intertwined social obligations that friendship and patronage links imply.

If we analyse the national election results from 1965 until 1987 according to Alevi and Sunni villages, we find indeed that the most significant divide in politics nationally, that between parties associated with the left, *sol*, and the right, *sağ*, is reflected in the way the sects cast their votes. The results of the analysis are presented in tables 1.7-12 and discussed below.

The tables of voting statistics

I give the political statistics in detail, because, though it is widely assumed (both in academic[17] and daily-life circles) that the Alevi vote for the left-wing, this is to my knowledge the first statistical evidence that this is in fact the case. In order to place this data in context, I offer a brief description of the place the more important political

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16 See also Finkel and Hale (1990, page 125) 'As a general point one could say that where the SDPP (the *SHP*) or indeed other political parties have a strong regional bias, this is a prompt to look for ethnic (Kurdish, Black Sea, *mucahir* (Yugoslav), Alevi) factors'.

17 Eg. Heper (1982, page 354) or Özbüdün (1976, page 110).

parties hold in the political spectrum.[18] Turkish Politics is extremely complicated, and my aim in the sketch below is only to give an indication of the most important events. The most frequent acronyms mentioned in the discussion below are the *C.H.P.* (People's Republican Party), *D. P.* (Democrat Party), *A.P.* (Justice Party), *D.Y.P.* (True Path Party), *ANAP* (Motherland Party), *S.H.P.* (Social-Democrat People's Party).[19]

Modern Turkish History

Atatürk founded the Republican People's Party (*C.H.P.*) in 1923. Turkey remained remained a one-party state until 1946, when the first multi-party elections were held. Opposition parties were set up during Atatürk's lifetime, often with his permission, but on each occasion they were closed down before they could take part in any election. The *C.H.P.* in effect, then, was at once the sole ruling party and a stable political channel through which Atatürk implemented his reforms. It continued to play a similar role after Inönü, one of Atatürk's generals in the War of Independence, took over its leadership after Atatürk's death in 1938.

In 1946, Inönü allowed an opposition party, the Democrat Party, (*D.P.*) to contest the *C.H.P.*'s rule in a general election. The *C.H.P.* won a majority. It is generally agreed, however, that this election was not fairly conducted. In 1950, elections were held again. The *D.P.* again contested *C.H.P.* rule and they won a

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[18] The description below is influenced partly by reading and partly by talking with friends during the years that I have spent in Turkey. In particular I would thank Cemil Bezmen for the many enjoyable and intense hours we have debated Turkish politics together. Ahmad (1977), Hale (ed. 1977), Dodd (1983) or Heper and Landau (ed. 1991) are among many of the works available which describe modern Turkish politics.

[19] A complete set of the parties' initials in Turkish, and English translations, are given here in alphabetical order; *ANAP*. (Motherland Party), *A.P.* (Justice Party), *B.P.* (Unity Party), *C.G.P.* (Republican Reliance Party), *C.H.P.* (Republican People's Party), *C.K.M.P.* (Republican Peasant's National Party), *D.P.* (Democratic Party), *D.S.P.* (Democratic Left Party), *D.Y.P.* (True Path Party), *G.P.* (Reliance Party), *H.P.* (People's Party), *I.D.P.* (Reformist Democracy Party) *M.Ç.P.* (Nationalist Work Party), *M.D.P.* (National Democracy Party), *M.H.P.* (National Action Party), *M.P.* (Nation Party), *M.S.P.* (National Salvation Party), *R.P.* (Welfare Party), *S.H.P.* (Social-Democratic People's Party), *T.I.P.* (Turkish Worker's Party), *Y.T.P.* (New Turkey Party). English usages after Dodd (1990, pages 223-224).

resounding victory. Between 1950 and 1960 the Democrats won two more elections, thus they remained in power throughout the decade.[20]

This period marks a distinct change in the policies regarded as esssential to Turkey's future by the ruling party. Wheras the *C.H.P.* had been responsible for the implementation of secular reforms and pursued a highly centralised policy in almost all aspects of government, the *D.P.* were markedly more active in implementing a market economy and much more lenient toward Islam.[21] But it was not a peaceful decade. Unrest, high inflation and uncertainty led to a military take-over in 1960 by the army. Menderes, the prime minister during the 50's and the leader of the *D.P.*, was incarcerated by the generals and later hanged.

The generals called for fresh elections in 1961. Though they had banned the *D.P.* from taking part, another party, the Justice Party (*A.P.*), headed by Demirel, took over the mantel of the *D.P.* and competed in the elections. The *C.H.P.*, though supported by the army, only won slightly more seats than the *A.P*, but the army forced the two parties into a coalition headed by Inönü. This coalition was unstable, and the *C.H.P.* formed governments with several other, smaller parties before losing power outright to the *A.P.* in the 1965 elections. The detailed tables of election results presented in this thesis begin at this point (Table 1.7).

The *A.P.* pursued policies broadly similar to the *D.P.* and in the 1969 general elections they increased their majority. But in 1971, amid increasing economic difficulties and worry over violent civil unrest, the army stepped in again. It was not a full-blown *coup* , but they dissolved the government headed by Demirel, and threatened to intervene more severely if necessary. The next prime-minister, Nihat Erim, was

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[20] For an account of Turkish history between 1918 and 1950 see Lewis (1957, Chapters 6-16).

[21] For example, see the analysis by Metin Heper (1982) where he describes the relationship between Islam and politics and notes that Sunni Islam gradually played a greater role in the Democrat decade 1950-1960. See also Ahmad (1977). Chapter 2, footnote 59 provides statistics of government involvement in Islam during the 1980's.

sympathetic toward the left, but he was unable to form a stable government and finally was replaced by Ferit Melen. Ferit Melen, who leant more toward the right, formed a government for a year, until the general elections in 1973. At those elections, though the *C.H.P.* won more seats than the *A.P.*, they did not command a majority.

Though general elections were held only once again, in 1977, during the remainder of decade, this period marks a greater instability and a greater polarisation of the parties competing for power than before.[22] Ever increasing violence between even the supporters of the main two parties meant that even those people who were before distant from extremist debates were drawn into an increasing escalation and confrontation between left (*sol*) and right (*sağ*). Ultimately, this led to the most severe of the three *coups*. In 1980, the army suspended all political activity. The leaders of the parties then in power were banned from taking any further part in politics. Their supporters were questioned, and in some cases jailed and beaten. Many university academics and civil servants suspected of extremist tendencies were deprived of their jobs, with the axe falling particularly serverely on the left.[23]

The army allowed elections again in 1983. They vetted the parties who were allowed to stand for election, and hindered those whom they did not approve from registering for the elections. In the end, the three parties who stood were made up of the Motherland Party (*ANAP*) headed by Özal, who had been the director of the State Planning Organisation under Demirel in the 70's, the Nationalist Democracy Party (*M.D.P.*), whom the military favoured and the Populist Party (*H.P.*), who were markedly left-wing. In the event, *ANAP* won a majority and Özal formed a government. Özal's economic policies were liberal, indeed his name is often linked with Mrs Thatcher's in his pursuit of the private sector. He also continued a new policy begun by the generals of the 1980 *coup*; the 'Türk-Islam synthesis'. This consisted of

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[22] Dodd (1990, page 17) notes that there were five different governments between 1973 and 1980.
[23] The conditions which led to this last *coup* are discussed in the next chapter. The fullest discussion of the 1980 *coup* and its aftermath is Dodd (1990).

Table 1.7 1965 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

TABLE 1. Votes cast according to sect and party

	Political Party															
	Valid Votes		A.P.		C.H.P.		C.K.M.P		M.P.		T.I.P.		Y.T.P.		Independ.	
	%	Cast	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	votes	%	votes
Sub-province centre	3%	507	3%	257	3%	196	2%	15		—	2%	17	2%	22	—	—
Alevi Villages	21%	3606	10%	791	38%	2287	16%	127		—	19%	181	17%	220		—
Sunni Villages	76%	12805	87%	6786	59%	3552	82%	655		—	79%	741	82%	1071		—
Total		16918		7834		6035		797		—		939		1313		—

TABLE 2. Votes caste according to percentage of total vote of each sect.

	Political Party						
	A.P.	C.H.P.	C.K.M.P	M.P.	T.I.P.	Y.T.P.	Independ.
Sunni	53%	28%	5%	--	6%	8%	---
Alevi	22%	63%	4%	--	5%	6%	---

Table 1.8 1969 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

TABLE 1. Votes cast according to sect and party

	Political Party																			
	Valid Votes		A.P.		B.P.		C.H.P.		G.P.		M.P.		M.H.P.		T.I.P.		Y.T.P.		Independ.	
	%	Cast	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	votes	%	votes	%	Votes	%	Votes
Sub-province centre	4%	864	1%	4	1%	19	11%	17	6%	3	4%	1	3%	1	5%	1		----	4%	818
Alevi Villages	19%	4199	8%	30	92%	1367	25%	38	25%	13	32%	8	53%	21	43%	9		----	14%	2713
Sunni Villages	77%	16598	91%	353	7%	99	64%	97	69%	35	64%	16	45%	18	52%	11		----	82%	15969
Total		21661		387		1485		152		51		25		40		21		----		19500

TABLE 2. Votes caste according to percentage of total vote of each sect.

	Political Party								
	A.P.	B.P.	C.H.P.	G.P.	M.P.	M.H.P.	T.I.P.	Y.T.P.	Independ.
Sunni	2%	1%	1%	--	--	--	----	--	96%
Alevi	1%	33%	1%	---	---	1%	---	---	65%

Table 1.9 1973 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

TABLE 1. Votes cast according to sect and party

	Political Party																			
	Valid Votes		A.P.		C.H.P.		C.G.P.		D.P.		M.P.		M.H.P.		M.S.P.		T.B.P.		Independ.	
	%	Cast	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	votes	%	votes	%	Votes	%	Votes
Sub-province centre	6%	893	6%	467	7%	158	9%	28	7%	43		—	6%	28	2%	31	6%	130	2%	8
Alevi Villages	23%	3676	4%	332	39%	931	33%	101	9%	52		—	14%	70	2%	25	71%	1837	79%	328
Sunni Villages	71%	11253	90%	7063	54%	1303	58%	176	84%	494		—	80%	398	96%	1384	15%	354	15%	81
Total		15822		7862		2392		305		589		---		496		1440		2321		417

TABLE 2. Votes caste according to percentage of total vote of each sect.

	Political Party								
	A.P.	C.H.P.	C.G.P.	D.P.	M.P.	M.H.P.	M.S.P.	T.B.P.	Independ.
Sunni	63%	12%	2%	4%	---	4%	12%	3%	1%
Alevi	9%	25%	3%	1%	--	2%	1%	50%	9%

Table 1.10 1977 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

TABLE 1. Votes cast according to sect and party

	Valid Votes		Political Party																	
			A.P.		C.H.P.		C.G.P.		D.P.		M.S.P.		M.H.P.		T.B.P.		T.I.P.		Independ.	
	%	Cast	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	votes	%	votes	%	Votes	%	Votes
Sub-province centre	7%	1498	8%	560	8%	622	3%	17	5%	17	5%	77	6%	131	4%	6		—	9%	68
Alevi Villages	25%	5074	1%	57	60%	4931	1%	5	2%	7	1%	9	—	8	20%	33		—	3%	24
Sunni Villages	68%	13976	91%	6226	33%	2679	96%	494	92%	287	95%	1560	93%	1897	76%	125			89%	708
Total		20 548		6843		8232		516		311		1646		2036		164		—		800

TABLE 2. Votes cast according to percentage of total vote of each sect.

	Political Party								
	A.P.	C.H.P.	C.G.P.	D.P.	M.S.P.	M.H.P.	T.B.P	T.I.P.	Independ.
Sunni	45%	19%	4%	2%	11%	14%	1%	---	5%
Alevi	1%	97%	--	---	----	---	1%	---	---

Table 1.11 1983 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

TABLE 1. Votes caste according to sect and party

	Political Party									
	Valid Votes		A.N.A.P.		H.P.		M.D.P.		Independ.	
	%	Cast	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes
Sub-province centre	10%	1862	11%	887	9%	544	8%	397	7%	34
Alevi Villages	19%	3641	5%	387	49%	2879	6%	308	14%	67
Sunni Villages	71%	13718	84%	6719	42%	2460	85%	4144	80%	395
Total		19221		7993		5883		4849		496

TABLE 2. Votes caste according to percentage of total vote of each sect.

	Political Party			
	A.N.A.P	H.P.	M.D.P.	Independ.
Sunni	49%	18%	30%	3%
Alevi	11%	80%	8%	1%

Table 1.12 1987 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

TABLE 1. Votes cast according to sect and party

	Political Party																	
	Valid Votes		A.N.A.P.		S.H.P.		D.Y.P.		D.S.P.		I.D.P.		M.C.P.		R.P.		Independ.	
	%	Cast	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	votes	%	votes	%	Votes
Sub-province centre	14%	2990	13%	1130	12%	453	23%	942	8%	116	11%	42	14%	159	10%	148		—
Alevi Villages	17%	3572	8%	765	63%	2277	3%	130	17%	254	8%	39	3%	36	5%	71		—
Sunni Villages	69%	14735	71%	7139	25%	909	74%	2987	75%	1143	83%	388	83%	955		1224		
Total		21297		9034		3639		4059		1503		469		1150		1443		—

TABLE 2. Votes caste according to percentage of total vote of each sect.

	Political Party							
	A.N.A.P	S.H.P.	D.Y.P.	D.S.P.	I.D.P.	M.C.P.	R.P.	Independ
Sunni	48%	6%	20%	8%	3%	6%	8%	
Alevi	21%	64%	7%	1%	1%	1%	2%	

explicit ideological support (through schools, government publishing houses and the media) for the Islamic and Turkish foundations of the nation.[24] Özal won the general elections in 1987, thus staying in power, just as my fieldwork began.

In sum, Modern Turkish politics can be considered as consisting of three phases. One party rule from 1923 to 1950. Free elections from 1950 to 1977, punctuated by three *coups* and an increasingly politicised and radical struggle between left and right. During this period the *C.H.P.* did not once gain a majority, though they managed coalition governments under Inönü after 1961 and Ecevit during the 70's. Finally, comparative peace after 1983, after which the left appeared to be greatly weakened, and the right appeared to support the ideological policies with which had been introduced by the leaders of that final *coup*.[25]

Turning to the sub-province. The key figures in the tables 1.7-1.12 for this discussion are always those in the left-hand corner of the second part of each table, because it is there that the percentage of Alevi or Sunni villagers who voted for a particular party becomes clear. The first table (1.7) shows that that there is a marked difference in the way the Alevi and the Sunni cast their votes; 22 per cent of the Alevi, but 53 per cent of Sunni vote for the *A.P.*, whilst 63 per cent of the Alevi and only 28 per cent of the Sunni vote for the *C.H.P.* Table 1.8 has already been considered above; it is the one occasion that the sub-province voted together, for the independent candidate. I am satisfied from the villagers' recollections of this occasion, that their voting in unison was due to their desire to place a man in the Grand National Assembly who could support their cause. 1973 (table 1.9) shows an increasing divergence

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[24] That the basis of the Turkish Nation lies in its ethnic roots is one of the planks of Atatürk's ideology, but it was the first time that a government recognised so explicitly the part which Islam holds. It is as if the support that successive governments gave to Islam before 1980 was reluctant; made with an eye to political support. After 1980, this changed and it became an accepted and useful tool for governing the country, not just to help win elections (Chapter 2).

[25] It is interesting to note that the role of the army in politics changes over time; first they supported the *C.H.P.* and were the architects of its only return to power, then as it moved toward the left, they regarded it as a threat to law and order.

between the Alevi and the Sunni vote (63 per cent of the Sunni, but only 8 per cent of the Alevi, voted for the *A.P.*). In 1977, this divergence is almost complete; 97 per cent of the Alevi voted for the *C.H.P.* and only 1 per cent for the *A.P.* In 1983 and 1987 the split between Alevi and Sunni is still present, though slightly less marked.

Overall, the left, the side chosen by the Alevi has not done well. Consequently, from the point of view of patronage, the Sunni villages enjoy a far more comfortable relationship with the authorities in the centre than the Alevi. This is shown most simply by the fact that five Sunni villages have received municipality status, whilst not one Alevi village has done so. These five villages are now among the largest in the sub-province, and all are among the ten villages whose population is recorded as having grown in the last census. The Alevi villagers with whom I lived were able to obtain extensive irrigation channels and a middle school when Bulent Ecevit was in power in the late seventies. since he has fallen they have been unable to achieve similar political influence. Now, the village has few friends in power to run to in order to fill vacancies in their schools when teachers leave, or to help them gain a doctor, automatic telephone or gravel for their roads. They have good contacts with the main opposition party, having built up contacts over many years with people who are affiliated with the *S.H.P.* and they hope that some day they will win, but during my time with them they regretted continually their lack of political influence and the difficulties they find in creating *torpil*, 'pull' with government officials.[26]

Nor do the Alevi fare better in local politics. In 1989, elections took place to decide the municipal council in the sub-province centre. The *S.H.P* branch, which was controlled by the Alevi, made an agreement that they would not compete strongly against the *D.Y.P* if they were rewarded when the *D.Y.P* won, which they did. In the same elections, a man from the village in which I lived won the mayorship of a large

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26 I do not yet know whether their hopes have been fulfilled now that the *S.H.P.* are part of a coalition.

borough in Istanbul for the *S.H.P.* When the newly-made mayor returned in triumph to the sub-province, the *D.Y.P* cooperated by making available the resources of the municipality to the mayor, and by giving him a special party. A few months later, the arrangement broke off acrimoniously. The Alevi of the sub-province complained that the municipality had held examinations to take on workers but no Alevi had been recruited, and that the municipality had not fulfilled its promise to help them gain asphalt to tarmac their roads. The *D.Y.P* mayor in reply said he had not been treated with sufficient respect when he visited the *S.H.P* mayor in Istanbul.

Commentators on modern Turkey often stress the the importance of patronage. Patronage is assuredly important within the sub-province, as I have tried to show, but the ideological similarities and differences between the respective parties and the Alevi and Sunni should not be overlooked. The *C.H.P* and the *S.H.P* have never formed a majority, so that there is no way of being sure how they would have acted, but, to the Sunni, they are inextricably linked with Atatürk's reforms against religion. The Alevi feel a deep sympathy for the aims of the *C.H.P.* and its successors. The Alevi and Sunni in the sub-province, therefore, do not just split and support different parties around which they then compete for services, they chose those parties which reflect most closely the way they believe the state and the country should be run.[27] I look at this point in more detail in Chapters 2 and 5.

That the country nationally, and the sub-province locally, have been run by parties sympathetic to the practice of Islam is frequently used as an argument by the Alevi to illustrate that the state is merely the continuation of the force which opposed them in pre-Republican days. This in turn helps to perpetuate the perception they have of themselves as a minority. For example, in 1990 I visited with an Alevi friend the *ANAP* man who was influencing the transfers of the civil servants within the sub-

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[27] Dodd (1990, page 141) writes 'The Alevi have traditionally supported the People's Party, which they rightly saw as less religiously inclined than the Justice Party and less inclined on that account to favour the Sunni majority.'

province. We were forced to wait as the man made small talk. At one point the *ANAP* man said, 'Of course there are no divisions in Modern Turkey, no class, no recognition of Kurd or otherwise, all are *Türk*, isn't that right?' To which we agreed. Then he added, 'But some people are Alevi. This is the real division in life. Alevi women sleep with everyone, are untrustworthy, isn't that the case?' My friend perforce acquiesced to this calumny, which was repeated several times, so as not to jeopardise his chances of a transfer, but he was not at all surprised that the *ANAP* man should say such a thing.[28]

The smaller parties

One of the conclusions we can draw from these findings is that the local division between Alevi and Sunni expresses itself through their adherence to large national political parties which do not have an explicitly sectarian policy; that is, Alevi and Sunni usually subordinate their religious identity within the greater left/right division of Turkish politics as a whole when it comes to voting practices within the sub-province. It is interesting to note two exceptions. First, about 10 per cent of the Sunni vote within the sub-province consistently goes to a small, ostensibly orthodox religious party (and therefore anti-Alevi) such as the *M.S.P* (National Salvation Party) or the *RP* (Welfare Party). Secondly, the Unity Party (*B.P.*), which split the Alevi vote in 1969 and 1973, was lead by *efendi,* Alevi religious leaders from *Haci Bektaş* town (Chapters 4 and 5). It was therefore a concerted effort by the Alevi population to gain political power on the basis of their sect. It was short-lived. Unable to collect enough votes nationally to gain more than a few seats, it collapsed and lost its support when its representatives formed part of a coalition which included right-wing religious parties in the late seventies.[29]

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28 This is an example of *taqiye*, or forced dissimulation, for which Shi'ite societies are famed, though the Alevi do not appear familiar with the word. This point is returned to in Chapter 3.

29 Heper (1982, page 354). Today (1993) the *efendi* are again active within mainstream left; this time in the Social-Democrat People's Party where to my knowledge, at least one of the *efendi* lineage responsible for the sub-province (Chapter 3) is a member of parliament, and active in debates surrounding the role of the Directorate of Religious Affairs. There is another point, which I hope to pursue in a more extended analysis in the future; the Sunni vote is more diverse than the Alevi. Among

Conclusions

The two sects of the sub-province, Alevi and Sunni, lead largely separate lives in sedentary villages but, in recent years, there has been no violence between them. The Alevi villagers, as the population statistics have illustrated, are leaving the sub-province in even greater numbers than the Sunni. Many Sunni villages are also emptying, but ten are growing larger. Many of the men within the Sunni villages are retaining faith in their religion, though some are markedly more pious than others. Both Alevi and Sunni wish to modernise, but most of the Sunni villagers desire to do so within their form of Islam, most of the Alevi villagers are more sceptical (the form their scepticism takes is made clear in chapters 3 and 5). These differences in outlook are reflected in the national political parties which the respective sects support. However, the Alevi support the left-wing, which has consistently failed to win a majority. Handicapped by their lack of political success, the Alevi villagers fare consistently worse than the Sunni villagers in the search for patronage.

The next chapter explores the Sunni villages in detail, in order to bring out the way both their belief and their traditional village organisation can be sustained as their villages modernise.

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the right-wing parties it is regularly split between the main party of that election and the smaller parties, such as the *MHP* (National Work Party) or the *MSP* (National Salvation Party). In addition, some votes go to the Republican Party as many as 28 per cent in 1965.

Chapter 2

The Sunni Villages

In Chapter 1 I presented figures showing that the Sunni population in the area is maintaining itself overall, but that some of their villages are growing larger, others smaller. I did not examine how it is that they have the potential to grow. The initial problem in this chapter is therefore, 'how is it that some Sunni villages are able to survive and even expand as they come in increasing contact with the state and the outside world?'

Sirman has also studied this question. After examining a Sunni cotton producing village in *Söke*, in the west of Turkey, she concludes;

> Extension of roads, education and electrification especially in the West of Turkey has helped the integration of these communities into the social, economic and cultural life of the nation as a whole. Contrary to the experience of other similar communities in Turkey where change has produced massive upheavals...transition to commodity production in the *Söke* region has been rather smooth and has not destroyed the fabric of social relations within the community.[1]

The argument by which Sirman reaches this conclusion is detailed and convincing; she explains that the household is able to take up cotton production without the relations of authority within it breaking down, that a complicated network of social and economic interaction between households maintains cohesion in the community and that the plenty resulting from their success ensures the village retains its population.

Just as is Sirman, we are also interested in investigating how it is that village communities are able to survive and expand but our emphasis is different. Whereas Sirman conceives life in the village communities greatly in terms of how it reacts to changing economic conditions, we are interested also in why many Sunni men should continue to believe, why they should want the state to support the practice of their

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1 Sirman (1988, page 384).

religion, and what enables the state to accommodate their desire. It is only by explaining these connections that we can understand why the Alevi continue to feel themselves a minority discriminated against by those who rule.

The chapter has a second purpose, this time on a more abstract level. In chapters 3 and 5 I shall describe the ways in which the Alevi villages are changing. Underlying the explanation I shall put forward is the proposal that lack of political success is not enough to explain the difficulties faced by their communities, but that the Alevi social organisation, their very way of life, is incompatible with the changing conditions of the sub-province. For this to be a falsifiable theory we need to be able to conceive of a way of life which *is* compatible with modernisation. The Sunni villages provide this alternative model.

Part 2.1 The Sunni villages and the state

In its interaction with the sub-province the state has two priorities; to keep order and to teach its inhabitants to be responsible citizens of the nation.[2] To fulfil this task it has various means at its disposal; it is the sole body permitted to supply education qualifications or to teach Islam. It is the sole permissible legal authority. It monopolises violence. It conscripts all males for eighteen months in the armed forces. It controls the radio and television. It labels people; every citizen must carry an identity card, and every settlement has a place in the government administrative scale.

A state must be authoritarian, otherwise it cannot claim the right to judge others, but states vary in the care, and the severity, with which they interact with their citizens. The attitude of the Turkish state is one of benevolent, often rather unthinking, paternalism. Rural communities, for example, may largely run their own affairs, so

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2 For Turkey as a whole, of course, the state's requirements are rather more complicated, for example in that it must produce also highly educated people, and stay solvent. See Stirling (1984, page 573). Neither of these are priorities of the state in the sub-province; higher education and high finance take place outside the sub-province.

long as they do not break any rules in blatant fashion and so long as disputes do not lead to bloodshed.

This approach is reflected in a pamphlet published by the state planning office in which Tuğ, its author, claims that the state desires that a settlement be absorbed into the administrative scale in a manner as far as possible congruent with the indigenous organisation of the community;

> 'Village administration thus is at the base of the local administration....The individuals come together almost with natural ties....these societies are not created by the government, but a social fact is given a legal status, ie. they are administrative establishments getting their force from law.[3]

All the land and all the settlements within the sub-province are defined by the state as being part of one village or another and the boundaries between one village and the next noted and approved.[4] The state declares pasture, woods and scrub within the boundary a collective good. The villagers are not permitted to sell such land, fell trees growing on it, nor open fields within it, but only they may use it and all villagers are given equal rights to do so. Services; cooperative bank, health centre or school, which the state awards to the village it expects to be constructed on land donated by the villagers. This land the state also defines collective property, as does it the land on which the mosque and cemetery are built.

All the Sunni villages I visited, heard of or saw at a distance, unless prevented by the lay of the land, consist of a single group of patrilineal, patrilocal households clustered together in the centre of the village territory in the midst of which is a mosque.[5] I would estimate an average-sized village as having between 70 and 120

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3 Tuğ (1975, page 3-4).

4 Stirling (1965, pages 135 and 271) notes that village boundaries became fixed by the state with the introduction of the Village Law in 1924.

5 Stirling (1965, page 26) finds a similar pattern. Referring to Kayseri he writes, 'All the villages in the area... are self-contained clusters of buildings separated from one another by stretches of unfenced

households, each usually containing two or three generations. Nearly all households own some fields on one side of the village and some on the other. All the villages I visited or enquired of have a single rotation cycle; the villagers sow wheat or barley collectively on one side of the territory owned by households from the village, and then, on the next year, the other side. There are no sharp internal divisions within the village; villagers may regard themselves from coming from different village quarters, but to come from a particular quarter gives no rights over any of the land or other resources.

We can see several ways in which Tuğ's claim that a 'social fact is given a legal status' is vindicated.The villagers themselves make a distinction between land which is owned by a household and land which is not. Ploughed land is regarded as being the property of individual households, land which is not yet ploughed up as being available for exploitation by any man.[6] The state declares only unopened land collective property. Thus though it imposes a distinction between collective and individual property rights, it does not disrupt the existing pattern of ownership,[7] but merely prevents any further extension of individual holdings.

In differentiating between individual land and collective land which must be used by all, the state mirrors existing agricultural practice. Households usually tend fields and gardens owned by themselves. They usually use their own labour and, if aided by

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land'. See also Sirman (1988, page 36) 'Rural Turkey is a mixture of nucleated villages and small towns which act as administrative and economic centres'. I would regard this as a characteristic of central Anatolian Sunni villages - though not necessarily of other areas of the country, see Hann (1988).

6 Stirling (1965. Pages 134-140). See also Chapter 5 below.

7 There have been periodic attempts at land redistribution by the state. These only reinforced the village ideal that all households should own some fields because the redistribution was aimed at handing creating smallholdings out of land taken from large landowners. Sirman notes; 'This law (the land reform bill of 1945) was supposed to provide 'land to the tiller' by distributing land to the peasants... this land was supposed to provide for the subsistence of a family..it was on the basis of the *households* (orig. emphasis) that the distribution took place (Sirman 1988, pages 248-249).

a neighbour, they reciprocate by working for that neighbour on his or her land.[8] Sheep, goats and bullocks are grazed by the whole settlement as one flock on unopened land within the village boundary, supervised by a shepherd paid for by donations in cash or kind from every household in the village. Indeed, by protecting this collective pasture against further incursion the state enables the traditional mixed pastoral/agricultural economy of the village to survive when otherwise it would have been taken over by a few individuals with the power to plough over all the land.[9] In turn, this contributes to the cohesion of life in the village as a whole; we shall find the oscillation between households concentrating on their individual holdings but on occasion working collectively reflected in many aspects of the social organisation and ritual of the village.

Further, the category 'village' is imposed on a single settlement with no internal divisions; the village boundary is at once the social, economic and territorial boundary of the community and the legal boundary given to it by the state.[10] The *muhtar* , head man, whom every village is compelled to elect, and whose main function is to act as a link between the authorities and the villagers, represents only one community and the services which the state gives the villagers may be shared out by all without claims of priority by one part of the community or another.

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8 Sirman (1988) explores this in depth. See also Stirling (1965, chapter 5) and Schiffauer (1987, Chapters 3 and 4).

9 The state of course also thereby acts as a restrictive force against change. Sirman (1990a, pages 26-27), for example, describes how the villagers she worked with complain that they have almost entirely given up animal husbandry and wish to enlarge their individual cotton-producing holdings at the expense of land held by the state to be collective pasture, but they are not permitted to do so.
A frequent account of development in rural areas in Turkey is that the 'peasant mentality' is conservative, and restrictive of change Delaney, for example, repeats this argument in Stirling (Forthcoming). Though this has some truth, it is entirely unrecognised that the very capability of the peasant farmers to be conservative, that is continue with their existing methods is because the state ensures the existence of pasture which would otherwise long since be taken over.

10 Sirman (1988 Page 87). 'Thus the village constitutes a unit within which a number of goods and services are produced and exchanged outside the sphere of commodity production. Village boundaries mark the outer limits within which these activities take place.' See also Stirling (1965, page 29) 'People belong to their village in a way they belong to no other community. On any definition of community, the village is a community - a social group with many functions, not all of them explicit, and to which many people are committed by birth or marriage and bound by many ties.'

Of course the interaction between the state and villages extends beyond one of boundary designation and property rights, and to explore this I describe the internal life of the villages in more detail below. Before doing so; two general points. The Sunni settlements have adopted a religion which has been associated with the urban government of the country for centuries. Being also sedentary, they have deprived themselves of the traditional means of opposing the central authority in Islamic lands. They are neither tribal nor do they differ in sect from those that govern them. Their very life-style implies obeisance to the central authority of the state, even if they do not always agree with its actions.

Also, the state is at once intrusive and creative in the way it interacts with the villages. It is intrusive in the property and land rights it imposes on the communities but it is creative in that by naming a settlement as village, municipality or administrative centre, it gives people a location and a territorial base legitimated by the universal authority of the state. Thus, Tuncdelik, another official of the state planing office, writes of the state-approved collective land as 'real estate (which) constitutes the very *existence* of a village' (my emphasis).[11] In a Sunni village, where the community boundary is the same as the legal boundary and the state-approved collective land, shared freely by all, provided a focal point by the village mosque, the institutions of the society are already inextricably bound-up with the authority of the state. Just as the villagers have no pretensions to a tribal life, with its associations of rebellion and independent existence, and as they have accepted Sunni Islam with its connotations of urban authority, so have they based the very existence of their settlements on criteria given to them by the state and rely on them for the community's continuing viability. The process described in Chapter 1 by which the villagers compete to make the state's institutions play an ever greater part in people's lives as they modernise is accordingly not an innovation but an intensification of already-existing relations of subordination

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11 Tuncdelik (1974, pages 66-67).

and affiliation between state and Sunni villager. This line of thought is returned to in part 2 of the chapter.

Ranking and authority in the Sunni villages

The most important principle of interaction between people in Sunni villages may be stated as follows; no man has the right to dominate any other by virtue of his birth, but all women are subordinate to all men. In addition, though the exact relation between any individuals is effected by factors such as personality, wealth and worldly experience, their behaviour towards each other is greatly constrained according to the closeness of the kinship relation between them and their respective sex and age.[12]

When a man is young he comes under the immediate control of his parents. As he grows older he pays less heed to his mother, but remains under the authority of his father and other senior male relatives. After his father is dead he has no immediate master, and may compete much more freely with other men of the village, though in appearances at least he is expected to defer to those men who are older than himself.

A girl is also controlled firstly by her parents. When she marries she becomes the responsibility of her husband. She remains under his control until she becomes a widow, when she may enjoy a greater degree of freedom. At any time, though, she remains constrained by male relatives and the other men of the settlement, all of whom feel they have the right to control her behaviour.[13]

This pattern of authority is reflected in the way the public spaces are used. If a man meets a woman on the path, then she stands back and lets him pass, likewise if they find themselves going through a door together. If two men pass each other, they

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12 Delaney in Stirling (Forthcoming) gives an extended discussion of this point, around the concept of *izin*, permission to do something awarded by a senior person to a junior.
13 See Belma Akşıt in Stirling (Forthcoming) for a description of women's life cycle, also Stirling (1965. Chapter 6).

exchange a greeting *aleykum selam*. but only exceptionally is a woman offered a 'selam' by men; usually they are ignored. Women avoid the central areas of the village such as the coffee-house or the main square. Only if they are accompanied by a man is their presence in the open accepted as legitimate. The man need not be her husband, but should be one who can claim the right to control her in that context, such as her elder brother.[14]

A similar combination of rights and spheres of control operates in the household. Where practical, the household's head is the oldest male. He expects his wife, children, and their children to obey him. Though the course taken by any one household may be subject to various degrees of negotiation between its members, ultimately he has the authority to sell the household fields and to decide the way the money of the household shall be channelled.

The same authority pattern appears in the division of labour; women occupy themselves with the tasks involving the internal running of the household, men those to do with the external; men work in the household's fields and go to market, women tend its garden, milk the sheep and cattle, fashion cakes of dung for fuel, look after children, and prepare and serve the food.[15] Thus, the household may be conceived as a unit of production and consumption maintaining itself through mutual cooperation but under man's sway. Men themselves gain much of their status and weight in the community through possessing a wife and fields.[16] As we shall see below, many are prepared to defend their rights to such control with violence.[17]

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14 See also Sirman (1988, page 91) 'Agnates should take care of, and protect (and control) each others' wives and daughters'.

15 For a detailed analysis of the division of labour in an Anatolian village see Aydin (1986 Chapter 7).

16 Sirman, (1988, pages 109-110) especially; 'It is on the basis of their being authoritative people, that is men, that individuals are able to enter into the 'public' sphere. A similar argument appears in Jamous (1981), where he evaluates men's honour in terms of the extent of their '*zones de control*", where a 'zone of control' is fields, wife and family.

17 The peasant household in the Sunni village conforms very closely to the generally accepted vision of peasant households in the literature. For example, see the detailed summary in MacFarlane (1978, Chapter 1).

Disputes in the village and daily interaction

In daily interaction, where possible, a person avoids contradicting another directly. To do so may taken as a declaration of hostility, or of defiance. Disagreement is expressed rather through the degree of enthusiasm with which one accepts the other's proposal, or simply by behaving as one wishes but ensuring that on the surface at least the relations of authority and subordination outlined above are respected.[18]

The concern with not openly confronting people also appears in the way disputes are conducted. If a person is determined to show their displeasure with another the usual way to do this is to become *küs*, 'not-speaking terms'. *Küs* has various degrees of intensity. If a person is extremely angry he or she may avoid the other as much as possible. The situation may then become very tense and a chance meeting lead to confrontation, exchange of insults and violence. If less angry, *küs* may mean no more than going about one's daily life, making clear one's disapproval by not addressing the other person directly.[19]

A state of *küs* between two individuals may spread, usually following the social divisions of the community.[20] Thus, if two people who have argued come from different households, then the households may collectively become *küs*, if very serious the patrilineage as a whole (see below) may become drawn in to the dispute so that a

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18 Mardin write in similar vein; 'hints, admonishments, mild remonstrances, repeated entreaties are part of the Turkish way of doing things before we reach the drop that makes the glass spill over' (1969, page 383-384).

19 Stirling (1965, pages 248-249), Delaney (1991, page 189). Dr Werner Schiffauer informed me in conversation that the same is true for the village in which he worked, illustrating his point with the following anecdote; at the annual feast of sacrifice it is customary throughout villages in Turkey for men to go to the mosque and, after the ceremony, line up outside the mosque; each man shaking hands with every other in turn, passing down the line as they go. This is seen as an opportunity to make up quarrels and reconcile enemies. Knowing that two men were quite irreconcileably opposed, he asked them what they had done; one of them told him that rather than shake hands, or alternatively make a public display of their emnity, they had as discretely as possible avoided greeting each other, simply passing on to the next man in the line. See also Schiffauer (1987, pages 56-63).

20 On quarrels spreading according to the social structure see Evans-Pritchard (1940).

number of households become on not-speaking terms with each other. If a village has argued with another, then all its members may become *küs* with the other.

Solving disputes

There is no indigenous, codified law nor are there tribunals within the village through which disputes may be brought to a close, or blame apportioned. Occasionally, an older person or friend of disputants may intervene and persuade them they should be at peace. The possibility of a reconciliation varies according to the seriousness of the quarrel. If an argument has led to blood being shed, it is unlikely that the intercession of friends, neighbours or relatives works is effective. In that case, the dispute may become a blood feud, and simmer for years, the quarrel occasionally flaring up into violence, as is described in the account of the onrunning feud below.[21]

Lineages

There is a debate among those who have worked in Anatolian villages (though, curiously, I do not think that it has reached print), on how significant lineages are in Sunni communities. In the sub-province, they appear to operate as described in Stirling's early (1951, 1965) work. There are a number of lineages in each village, but no village regards itself as coming from a single ancestor. There is no segmentary lineage organisation in which each lineage has a clear place with relation to each other on a mutual scale of descent, and therefore a fight between two lineages draw in others, obliged to fight by their conception of common ancestry. However, men do exchange favours such as labour or goods more closely with their patrilineal relatives than with other people of the village and may turn to them for help at elections or support in times of conflict.

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21 See also Stirling (1965, page 149); 'Those who feel they have been let down have no sanctions to apply except to withdraw from social relations with the offenders - unless the matter is serious enough to call for violence.'

A dispute is most likely to become violent if it is over women or land; such disputes often also involve the lineage.[22] For example, when visiting a neighbouring village I was told that the community divided in 1984 before the local elections around two lineages, one claiming to support *DYP*, the other *ANAP*. The incumbent lost his post. Still aggrieved some years later, he made insulting remarks concerning the winning man's daughter. The brother of the winning man met the previous head man on a path, and after an argument shot and killed him. The respective lineages were still *kus*.

The following account is from the village I visited on first arriving in the sub-province. I collected it perhaps ten months after the last murder had taken place and talked for several days to the villagers concerned in the feud.

Account 2.1

Idris went to serve his period of conscription in the army. On his return he found his wife had had a boy by another man.Wanting to avoid trouble and being humiliated, he went to Istanbul and found work in a construction site. He died almost immediately in an accident. His brother was therefore expected to marry his widow, who had given birth to several of *Idris'* children before he had gone into the army.To clean his honour he shot and killed the man who was the lover of his dead brother's wife and then married her. He went to jail for twelve years.

On coming back he was tending his flocks one day and was shot dead by the brother of the man he had killed. This man, *Cemalet*, in turn went to jail.

On returning *Cemalet* was very nervous and began to drink. One day he was in the coffee house and drew his pistol whilst arguing. He did this to scare his enemies, not to use it, but his daughter stepped in between her father and his opponent and by accident she was shot in the hand. Some time later, he was in the habit of going to stay in a solitary house near the summer pastures, where his friends would come and see him and drink. On his return during the winter he passed a flooded stream on the outskirts of the village. A woman was in danger in her house so he waded into the water to help her. As he did so he forgot to be on his guard. The son of the man he had killed had been following him for a week and, seeing he was not paying attention, shot him in the back of the neck. The murderer ran and hid in another village. When learning by telephone the man was really dead he came back and gave himself up to the gendarmes.

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22 Ünsal (1985) gives a detailed breakdown of his research into the blood feud, commenting on its preponderance even in recent times (pages 222-223). See also Yalman (1979).

The men whose families are fighting come from different lineages. *Cemalet'* s is the smaller of the two. The two lineages have long avoided taking paths where they might meet each other, and avoid visiting houses where they might find members of the other present. The smaller lineage is finding life very difficult in the village, and most of its households have moved to Istanbul.

In the next example, I was visiting the village concerned at the time of the dispute, and watched the arrival of the *jandarma*. I collected the details of the story over the next few days.

Account 2.2

There was a widow and a man whose wife had lately died. He wanted to marry the woman, and pressed her to do so, but she refused. He persisted, and finally grabbed and tried to take away a woman who was sitting by the side of the widow, thinking that it was her.

On this, the men of the woman he had grabbed beat him up and he went to hospital. His son came from Istanbul. Two days later the assaulted woman's brother-in-law (*kayınçı*) ran into the son of the refused man, a scuffle ensued. The brother-in-law was hit on the head with an axe and taken to hospital in the province centre. After this a general fight took place between the two lineages concerned, in the centre of the village. The gendarmes arrived from the next village, where they were stationed, stopped the fight and took people away.

Social control

Stirling labels the mechanisms within a society by which order is kept, and power distributed, 'social control'.[23] Henceforth I shall use the term accordingly.

Mardin in an article entitled 'Opposition and Control in Turkey' writes;

> 'Villagers are brought to heel by the community, not by the enforcement of explicit norms known and applied by the village council,[24] but by the subterranean workings of the 'grapevine'. [25]

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23 Stirling (1984, page 572).

24 Not a village institution, but imposed by the state according to the village law of 1924.

25 Mardin (1969, page 383).

In this he is extremely perceptive. No researcher has found organised dispute settling mechanisms indigenous to Sunni sedentary communities, and Mardin's conclusion that, in their absence, the influence of neighbours' checking and watching is important in constraining peoples' actions has been reiterated by Delaney and Stirling.[26]

Though useful, this explanation needs further exploration. The sanction of peers in controlling behaviour interacts with many others, including those concrete, such as economic compulsion, and others less tangible, such as respect, love, loyalty and belief which operate partly as ideals of conduct instilled in infancy and are continually reaffirmed, recreated or changed in everyday life. A full explanation of how order is achieved would try to take into account the respective weight that should be accorded to genetic and environmental factors and include micro-models of human development and interaction.[27]

It is here the advantage of making a comparison between the Alevi and Sunni communities becomes clear. We shall find that though spheres of authority within households, and the means of production, are similar in both Alevi and Sunni villages, they are discernibly different in the means by which they retain order in their communities. Thus, though we cannot be sure that we have found more than a tiny part of the mechanisms which ensure social control in a community, we can point out where the Sunni differs from the Alevi. Ultimately I shall argue that the fact that they do differ so turns out to be of the utmost significance, because their respective ways of achieving order are associated with a different philosophy of life, and it is because of these

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26 Delaney (1991 Chapter 3), Stirling (1984, page 572). See also Mansur (1972) writing on Bodrum.
27 To my knowledge, there is no body of theory which allows us to link the models worked out by anthropologists to account for interaction in small scale societies with that of psychologists working on individual learning (eg Bower 1982), though Bateson's work (1972, 1981) may provide a starting point with which to do so. We return to this point in part 2 below, and in Chapter 4, part 1.

differences that the two communities react differently when faced with the modern world.

Religion

In her thesis, Sirman does not mention the part played by religion at all. It is one of the cornerstones of anthropology that a coherent ideology subsumed under the rubric 'religion' supports the existing power relations within the community, so its omission is puzzling. It is possible, though, that the economic plenty of the religion has rendered the power of religion as a controlling cohesive force less evident.[28]

In the sub-province, I found that most Sunni men affirm that they are believers, and are proud of being Muslim, *Müslüman*.[29] Though men vary greatly in the details of their belief they possess a common cosmology. They assume *Allah* to be omnipotent and omniscient. *Allah* judges a person after their death, and according to His wish he sends them to heaven (*cennet*) or hell (*cehennem*). *Allah* makes His decision by evaluating whether they have behaved appropriately in this life, the guidelines for which He has laid down in the *Kuran*, dictated to His last prophet, *Muhammed*. Though the *Kuran* (and the sayings (*hadis*) of *Muhammed*) hold the key to correct conduct, God's desire of men may be summarised in the form of five conditions; the famous 'pillars' of Islam; i) Believe in the one God ii) Fast during the *Ramazan* iii) Make the pilgrimage to Mecca iv) Pray five times a day v) Pay alms. Men's adherence to these rules varies, but all accept that these are the ideal rules of life for a believing Muslim.

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28 I must confess scepticism, given that the villagers described by Delaney seem to be both firm in their belief and very well off. Until Sirman has published her findings on religion in the village this must remain a vital moot point. If voting patterns in elections are a reliable indicator of belief, there is some indication that the West of Turkey (where Sirman worked) is less committed to Islam than the central Anatolian region; the *RP* are stronger in the central areas, the *DYP* or *ANAP* in the west (I am indebted to Dr Hale for this information).

29 Cf. Nancy and Richard Tapper (1987b, page 60), referring to the town in which they conducted fieldwork; 'By and large, *Eğirdir* people are religious...'

All the believers I spoke to maintained that there are strictures on conduct which is permissible in God's eyes and that which is not. To behave according to the precepts of Islam is *sevap*, favourable, to eat food which is acceptable according to Holy Law is *helal,* an action carried out according to the teachings of Islam is *hayırlı,* auspicious. Breaking religious prescriptions is subject to various degrees of fault. *Haram* are those things expressly forbidden by Islamic law. *Günah*, translatable exactly as our 'sin', are those things or actions disapproved of by God. Men vary according to what they regard as being *günah*. It is characteristic, though, that a man justifies his conclusions by claiming that the position he extols is written in the *Kuran.*

In the Sunni villages, Islam plays a definite role in perpetuating men's domination of women. The men I spoke to regarded it *günah* for a woman not to wear a headscarf and *günah* for her to disobey her husband and her body as *haram* to other men.[30] Islam functions in a different way with regard to relations between men. Whilst women are told they are inferior,[31] and their subordination is endorsed by religion, any man can be as holy as any other by fulfilling the ritual demands made on them by God. Thus the equal distribution of temporal power among men in the village, where none is permitted to judge another but all may judge women is paralleled in its religious philosophy.

The same two principles also operate at the village level. Mosque-going is not held to be absolutely necessary unless on one of the two religious festivals[32] of the year, but most men attend the Friday noon service and *iftar*, the prayers held daily after the break of fast during *Ramazan.* Women, however, are not permitted in the mosque

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30 This has been explored in detail by Delaney, and indeed forms the subject of her 1991 monograph, See also Stirling (1951, Chapter 14).

31 Stirling describes a similar experience 'As I have said, several times, in discussing women or questioning men about their home life, I was told that women are *hayvan gibi* - like animals....men do not altogether act on the proposition, but that they should affirm it so often and, on occasion in front of the women and girls, is significant of the relative prestige of the sexes.' (Stirling, 1951, page 58].

32 *Seker bayramı*, 'sugar festival', celebrating the last day of Ramazan, and the feast of sacrifice, *kurban bayramı.*

except at *Ramazan*, and only then curtained off, out of sight of the men. The mosque ceremony, almost exclusively male, ensures those who hold authority and power in the community also dominate access to the ideal place of worship, whilst the exhilaration of worshipping together strengthens ties and minimises the inequalities between them.[33]

Other constraints in the hierarchy of power

Though Islam is the most important control on people's actions, it is not the only one.[34] A man justifies his right to control women also by invoking honour, *namus*. *Namus* supports an ideal of masculinity which demands an aggressive attitude towards the world, according to which an insult is responded to with an insult and a blow with a blow. *Namus* is lost if a man's wife is unfaithful, or if he fails to stand up for himself as befits a man.We see *namus* operating in the above account of the feud (2.1), where the man who was reluctant to murder his wife's lover left the village, whilst his brother, before he was prepared to marry the woman, now widowed, felt obliged to murder her lover.

Another conceptual constraint is respect, *saygı*. Within the sexes a person must show *saygı* to one older than him or herself, and a wife must show *saygı* to her husband. A women demonstrates *saygı* by not interrupting her husband when he is speaking, not contradicting his assertions, not leaving his presence without permission and by obeying his wishes. *Saygı* does not rest explicitly on a religious sanction, but rather is an acknowledgement of the authority to which the husband and head of the

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33 Sirman (1990b) notes that women play a separate role, though equally important, supporting ties between the household of the community through frequent visits to each other, out of sight, and independently of the men.

34 It is necessary to spell out the points below partly because of the recent monograph (1991) by Delaney. Its theme is that all aspects of village life can be reduced under the single rubric 'man monopolises the right to create life, women are the bearer of his children'. She appears to forget occasionally that this is very much her abstraction of life in the village (though an extremely convincing and fascinating one). From the actor's point of view life is different, constrained by multi-stranded, evasive, often conflicting ideas. The listing of some of these ways in which this is done is an attempt to demonstrate this. This point will become relevant again when we arrive at the Alevi ethnography.

household is due. A third is *ayıp*, shameful. For a woman to run is *ayıp*, for a woman to walk across the open spaces of the village in front of the tea-house is *ayıp*, to disobey one's husband is *ayıp*. To say '*ayıp* ' to another is to imply that they have seriously transgressed a social norm but it too has no explicit religious justification.

Thus women are emeshed in a sea of concepts, which when combined with the physical circumstances of their position, place them in a predicament from which it is extremely difficult to escape. If a woman denies the right of religion (with the accusations of *günah* that this may give rise to) to control her, she still has to overcome the social norm, breaking which is *ayıp*, to obey her husband, and deny his right (which he regards as vital to his *namus*) to sole access over her. If she overcomes this, she has to overcome the respect (*saygı*) owing to her husband instilled over years of upbringing. Even if she denies all this she has to acknowledge the obedience due to his superior physical strength or face a beating. If she decides to flee, she has no experience of the towns and no where to go if she flies there.[35]

The relationship between older and younger men is much less clear cut, and full of tension. For a man, absolute submission to the will of another, such as a man should give to his father, is a stage of their life that they must go through on the road to full adulthood. It does not have the absolute quality of women's inferiority to men. A father's control over his sons must always remain a delicate balance between encouraging them to make an exception for their father, and teaching them to behave as a man should, that is, be answerable to no other man. Thus, fathers claim that they should be shown respect, that it is shameful that a son should disobey his father, and they may also threaten disinheritance or refuse to support a son's marriage plans, but their authority is increasingly brought into question as the youths mature.[36]

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35 This point is made very strongly by Delaney (1991).
36 Tezcan (1985) analyses inter-generational conflict in the Turkish context.

Diverse beliefs among men

In Chapter 1, I estimated, very roughly, that perhaps up to twenty per cent of men [37] may be regarded as actively Muslim. Of the remainder, I would suggest that 10 per cent are indifferent or hostile to religion, and the rest fall into the middle category of believers, extreme in neither way.[38] In the following paragraphs I shall examine the way village life accommodates men of different beliefs, but I offer first a brief description of village ritual life.

Ritual cycle in a Sunni Anatolian village

Ritual in a Sunni village can be seen partly in Durkheimian, partly in Van Gennepian terms. The path on which a man embarks by adhering to the tenets of religion is the auspicious, *hayırlı*, side of a cosmology which also includes its sinful, *günah* or forbidden, *haram* side. Accepting this path leads the believer into rituals marking the passing of each day by virtue of the five prayers, each week through the Friday sermon at the mosque, each year through the *Ramazan* fast, religious holidays and feast of sacrifice, and the passage of life itself by virtue of circumcision in youth, marriage, pilgrimage to Mecca in old age and funeral in death.[39] In short, the natural order of the world is paralleled by the community holding collective rituals both to mark its revolving and the passage of individuals through it, these rituals are subsumed under the rubric 'religion'.

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37 The discussion below sadly omits any discussion of diverse beliefs among women. This is not due to choice but compulsion, for I spoke very little with women of either sect in the sub-province. I have discovered no work which discusses the implications that different levels of belief among women have for order in Turkish villages, though Dr Emine Inciroğlu has confirmed (personal communication) that, as one would expect, they range greatly in levels of piety. Nor, curiously do I know of one in the literature on women in Islamic societies. Fernea and Fernea (1978), for example, discuss variations in practices of women in Islam according to the society from which they come but not the way individual women may differ amongst themselves.

38 Rustow (1957) reaches similar conclusions with regard to Turkey as a whole.

39 For an extended description of the role of Islam in life cycles in Turkey see Rustow (1957).

The rituals vary in the extent to which their conduct is defined. There is only one permissible way to perform a mosque ceremony, that taught by the state, and no villager suggests that there may be an alternative to it. Likewise the rules of *Ramazan* are clear and inviolate. Marriage, circumcision, engagements and the two annual religious festivals are not so well defined. There is no a priori assumption of the festivities which may accompany them, they are a part of the overall life of the community which is open to argument and debate. The significance of this point becomes clear below.[40]

Those who believe less

No extravagant displays of faith are demanded of men. If a man does not explicitly question the existence of God, attends the mosque on Fridays (if he is seen in its vicinity at the time of prayer), and pays lip service to the rituals of religion, then his disbelief need little discommode him. For example, if a man wishes to ignore the fast he may go to a restaurant and eat; it is important only that he is not seen doing so.[41] This explains why, during the *Ramazan*, the Alevi restaurants in the sub-province centre are filled by Sunni men (Chapter 1), where they are likely to be seen only by men who, like themselves, are breaking the fast. Likewise, all but one of the Sunni restaurants have back rooms, at which alcohol may be consumed out of the public eye. Factors similar to those which we have seen operating already in the sections describing disputes in the village; the reluctance to confront others directly or a desire to avoid the condemnation of his fellows, impede a man from openly damning religion, but he is able to avoid its more stringent requirements quite easily.

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40 I owe this point partly to a conversation with Nancy Tapper in 1986, for whose stimulating ideas on the role of wedding rituals vis a vis the state I am grateful. See also her paper 'Changing Wedding Rituals in a Turkish Town' (1985).

41 Cf. Nancy and Richard Tapper (1987b. Pages 60-61), describing their fieldwork; 'One dentist, who closes his office during Ramazan because dental treatment is held to break the fast, estimated that 50 per cent of all men in town, and probably many more women, scrupulously keep the fast, but that another 30-35 per cent of all men make a show of doing so.'

Those who believe strongly

Those who are active believers differ most conspicuously from men who are sceptical in that they believe they have the right to impose their philosophy of life on others. No man has quite the same attitude toward the world, but those who believe strongly share many of the following characteristics: they emphasise the importance of the five conditions of Islam. Whereas most men revere the *Kuran*, those who are aggressively religious proclaim that it is the source of all knowledge that the world possesses or ever shall possess, and that all books in existence stem directly from it. They invoke the name of God as frequently as possible, for example saying, *Elhamdülillah* or *Allah çok şükür* (Praise be to God). They insist more strongly than other men on the seclusion of women. They frequently appear to be afraid of women's evil qualities or they stress that they are untrustworthy. I occasionally heard such men say *kadın şeytandır*, women are devils, and that women should be buried more deeply in the ground than men.

In the village, few men drink wine, but most are prepared to drink *rakı* claiming that it is only wine that the Prophet forbad. Men who believe strongly eschew all alcohol, claiming that it is *günah*. Equally, such men protest that dance is *günah*, some adding that it is so because it gives rise to *şeyvet*, sexual excitement. Such men do not laugh, do not speak loudly, shout or move hastily but are careful to be as considered as possible in all their movements. Often, they take great care over their appearance and wear a suit and a collarless shirt, buttoned up at the neck. Many are bearded and carry *tesbih*, rosaries.[42]

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42 I was struck throughout my fieldwork by the appropriateness of Weber's description of the Calvinists in his *Protestant Ethic* to these men; 'there was not only no magical means of attaining the grace of God for those to whom God had decided to deny it, but no means whatever. Combined with the harsh doctrines of the absolute transcendality of God and the corruption of everything pertaining to the flesh, this inner isolation of the individual contains...the reason for the entirely negative attitude of Puritanism to all the sensuous and emotional elements in culture and religion because they are of no use toward salvation and promote sentimental illusions and idolatrous superstitions.

We may note immediately that from the point of view of the village organisation, there is an important symmetry. Strong believers, in their insistence that women should be separate from and inferior to men, are supporting the existing social order. Men who do not believe strongly (successful imposition of whose views might threaten the social order) are not so intrusive, and hesitate to express their views.[43]

That is not to say that there is no quarrel between those with different degrees of belief. Those who believe strongly do argue with those who are less committed. But when they do, it is over the rituals I mention above as being open to debate. For example, marriage. I describe in Chapter 1 how men who believe strongly attempt to ban Alevi musicians from their villages, substituting a different type of wedding ceremony in their stead.They use the *müezzin* (caller to prayer) of the local mosque in place of music, asking him to intone *ilahi,* sombre religious hymns. Whichever ceremony ultimately is performed, the debate is not over the presence of the mosque and the subordination of women, but whether religion should spread out of the acknowledged religious sphere to dominate all ritual life. Men who are not strong believers are prepared to divide their lives into compartments,[44] sometimes sacred, sometimes less so, men who are strong believers desire that Islam should underpin all men's existence all of the time, few men reject the sacred entirely; because the shared conception of the sacred is congruent with the social order, the social order itself is not threatened.

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43 Cf Sirman (1990a, page 29) which indicates how strongly denial of God is reacted to; 'a number of young students had walked into the coffee-house declaring that God was dead...These were the kind of activities that have been designated by the media as 'terrorist' acts, perpetrated by the enemies of the Turkish nation'.

44 A similar division is noted by Stokes when he describes his fieldwork on a village in the Black Sea coast, in particular he describes how the *sacred/profane* division fits in with the overall annual cycle. For most of the year the villagers are in their main settlement, but they go to the mountain pastures during the summer. They regard the mountain pasture period as one in which they can play music, drink and dance with far greater freedom than when within the village. Indeed he suggests that it is the social importance of moving to the *yayla* that has encouraged them to keep up this custom even though its economic significance has lessened (Stokes. Forthcoming).

The mosque and the tarikat

In the villages, Islam is officially represented by the mosque *imam* who is a civil servant. He calls the village to prayer five times a day, and leads services in the mosque. He performs *nikah* to solemnise marriages, presides over burial services and often runs a *Kuran* course from the mosque for children of primary school age. He is not a free agent of religion, rather an official administrator of religion's practice[45] and extremely limited as to the doctrines he may pursue. For example, he has no authority to preach extempore. Each week a sermon which has been sent by the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Ankara via the *müftü* offices in the sub-province centre arrives in the village, which he must read out to the congregation. I only heard two sermons,[46] but these emphasised importance of belief to the individual, the importance of respecting the secular basis of the law of the land and the role of the mosque in fostering a collective spirit in the community.

Those men who believe strongly that Islam should be practiced, often say that the state is not religious enough. The expression they employ is 'the government is without religion' *hükumet dinsiz*. It is difficult to be precisely sure what they mean, because they hesitate before criticising the state in more explicit terms. Certainly, they are unable to express open opposition to the state's secular basis or advocate a return to *şeriat* law for fear of being arrested.[47] These men are often members of *tarikat*, Islamic brotherhoods. Though the *tarikat* are officially still illegal, having been banned at the beginning of the Republic, they appear active to varying degrees in most Sunni villages

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45 He may be transfered at any time to another branch of the civil service.
46 I was not welcome in the Sunni mosques, and was able to go only twice to those on the Alevi side, once when visiting *Ekmek*, and once in *Susesi* for the Feast of Sacrifice (Chapter 3).
47 Delaney notes that the *imam* in her area was arrested for making too fiery an appeal against Atatürk's reforms (1991, page 227).

in the sub-province, the most prominent being the *Süleymancılar*. Some men claimed to be *Nurcu*, followers of *Said Nursi*.[48]

I was puzzled for a long time why the *tarikat* should be prevalent. Neither the *Süleymancı* nor the *Nurcu* seem to play a mediating role.[49] I think the answer, in part, is that at their base lie extensive networks of patron-client relations similar to those which I discussed in Chapter 1 as being part of political parties. The *Süleymancı tarikat* in the sub-province is based in a hostel, *yurt*, which provides food and lodging to poor boys who would otherwise be forced to give up formal education.[50] The boys are encouraged to study at the state schools and pass the examinations which lead to the civil service. When a graduate is established he is expected to help the work of the *tarikat*. A second hostel in the sub-province is nearly finished, the coordinator of efforts to find the funds to build it is a successful professional who was himself brought up in a *Süleymancı* hostel. When I visited the hostel being built, the workers employed were proud to explain that they were giving their services for nothing, and took me to each different part of the building, explaining the different places that the materials had been sent from, as gifts, some from as far away as Ankara and Samsun, and boasted of the extent of their contacts all over Turkey.

If this interpretation is correct, the *tarikat* are similar to political parties in two ways. Just as do political parties, they act as organisations with the aim of being able to

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48 The same connection between the strong religious believers and the *tarikat* is found by the Tappers; "The religious fanatics, such as those of two clandestine religious Islamic sects, the *Nurcu* and the *Süleymancı*...." (1987b. Page 61). There is uncertainty whether to refer to the *Nurcu* and the *Süleymancı* as '*tarikat*', or as 'loose federations of believers' or a similar term (Norton 1990). I call them *tarikat* here because I am fairly certain that the refusal of the members of these groups to call themselves '*tarikat*' is cosmetic; ie. they do not wish place themselves in danger of being arrested if their activities fall into political disfavour, but they conform pretty well to the analytic definition of a tarikat group; a number of people joined together through collective worship, common belief in the sanctity of their founding figure and who are committed to proselytising his wisdom.

49 This is corroborated by Mardin who traces the failure of *Said Nursi* as a mediator (1990 pages 34-35). The use of tarikat to mediate disputes is returned to in Chapter 4.

50 Margulies and Yıldızoğlu (1988, page 16) mention also that the *Süleymancılar* posses rural hostels to encourage poor youths to study.

assert their members' philosophy of life to the central authorities. Thus, the *tarikat* are not politically neutral, but support a party as a block; invariably one of the right-wing such as the *DYP*, *RP* or *ANAP*.[51] Given the privacy of balloting, it is difficult to obtain exact evidence but the connection became explicit before the local elections in March 1992. In the sub-province, the village in which the *Süleymancı* are most powerful is also the village which supplied *ANAP*'s candidate in the local elections. When an *ANAP* member of the Grand National Assembly came to the sub-province centre and made a speech from a coffee house in support of their candidate, the pupils from the *tarikat* hostel were driven into the town and hidden in the middle of the crowd, and told by their masters to applaud, or hiss as the moment required.

The *Süleymancı* make their presence felt in other ways too. When I returned to the sub-province in August 1990 for a brief visit, I found that they had registered a charity, the *milli genç vakfı*, 'national youth foundation' in all the sub-province towns in the area, the head office of which is in Ankara.[52] In the sub-province next to the one in which I worked, I was handed the first broadsheet of the foundation, entitled '*Neşter*', '(The) Lancet'. The front page has two columns; the first entitled 'for a beginning' promises to take youths away from the addiction of gambling and pop-music. The second announces that in 1989 they had provided circumcision free of charge to 102 poor and orphaned children, and that they would do so again, for as many that they were requested to do so, this year. An article within explains the meaning of *Cihad* (Holy War), saying that it is to devote oneself entirely to the service of *Allah* and religion. An advertisement offers to provide all the loudspeakers and cassettes of religious hymns necessary to provide religious weddings, *Islami düğünü*

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51 There are repeated but passing mentions of the connection between *tarikat* and right-wing political extremism in the literature eg. Toprak (1987). The national library in Ankara, however, furnished me with a pamphlet which states this orientation explicitly; *SOLCULARIN Süleymancılık Uydurmasına CEVAP* 'An ANSWER to the calumnies cast at *Süleymancılık* by the LEFT-WINGERS' (1970).

52 Pickering (1989, pages 109-110) notes that the *Nurcu* have a similar network of *vakıf*, most of which appear to be named the *ilim ve kültür vakfı*, 'knowledge and culture foundation'.

(an alternative label for the *Mevlud düğünü* described above). A section at the back describes the sub-province's branch of the foundation as 'in spite of its opening recently holding weekly talks and video shows, and continuing to give help to fellow townsmen'

The relation between the government and Islam is further explored below; we can note here, though, that the authorities do not appear to impede the workings of the *tarikat* so long their attention is not officially drawn to their existence.[53] The *tarikat* function as *eminences grises*, manipulating and negotiating for their members, extolling a philosophy which is outside that officially condoned and existing just under the surface of everyday life.

The state's priorities

The way the state achieves order in the Sunni villages has already partially become clear. The very existence of the village is reinforced by the authority of the state, and its traditional agriculture reliant on the separation between individual land and collective pasture on which the state insists. By administering Islam and controlling the doctrines which are taught the state impedes the villages from dividing around those who believe intensely (who, if the mosque were under their control, would be able to dominate its teachings and spread their doctrines further) and those less. On the other hand, through supporting the mosque, the *imam* and the Sunni tenets of Islam the state endows them with its authority, making it difficult for a man who is sceptical of religion to express his opposition.

More directly, the state's involvement extends into the relations between the people of the village. When a village is made a municipality, a squad of *jandarma* is billeted within it. Each improvement in the roads leading to the villages means that the

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53 Pickering (1989, chapter 1).

village can be policed more easily.[54] Villagers themselves now have recourse to the courts where they might previously have attempted to solve a dispute amongst themselves. Some quarrels, for example when a man wishes to obtain a divorce officially so that he can declare himself free to marry a spouse abroad, can only be satisfactorily dealt with by the central courts. The authority of the state even in Ottoman times (through the *şeriat* courts) was the only formal way that the villagers could resolve disputes; increasingly it is becoming the only accepted means. However, we may note that the lack of a privileged body of men within the village who might act as mediators means that the gradual shift of responsibility for dispute solving to the state does not disturb an internal hierarchy of men.[55]

I have not yet discussed Kemalist doctrine, but a brief mention is necessary in order to examine further the role of the state in the villages. As I interpret early Republican history, one of the aims (though of course not the only aim) of Atatürk's reforms was to create a set of rituals, myths and symbols which would provide a complete parallel to those of Islam so that from then on a person in Modern Turkey, if they so wished, would be able to lead their lives without any need to have recourse to religion.[56] He pursued this aim with regard to the political and social unit in which people live, the rituals with which they mark the passing of their lives and the means by which the government retains law and order.

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54 Stirling makes this point very strongly in his 1984 article with regard to development in rural Anatolia. Such a conception is of course behind Weber's definition of the state as the body imbued with the monopoly of legitimate violence. See also Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* (1983, 'definitions').

55 The state does disrupt the freedom with which lineage quarrels may be pursued (a doctor friend in one of the Sunni villages told me that he had to write an official medical report to the *jandarma* on any occasion that blood was spilt in anger in the village) but no particular rights are imbued in the lineage. Indeed, both Stirling and Sirman (personal communication) inform me that lineages in the villages they study are of increasingly little importance.

56 The reforms have been described in many publications. Lewis B. (1961) remains the perhaps the most lucid summary. Mardin (1971) offers a view close to the one I postulate here.

As is well known, Atatürk's first act was to create a Grand National Assembly to replace the sultan as the highest body in the land, in which was vested the sovereignty of the people. Under his guidance, the Grand National Assembly passed decrees replacing Arabic script by the Latin, Islamic law with a combination of the Swiss Civil Law, Italian criminal and German economic codes. Islamic education institutes were closed down and replaced by purely secular schools and universities. Nationhood was buttressed by a systematic emphasis on the pre-Islamic history of Turkey and corresponding lack of interest in the Ottoman and earlier Islamic periods. Anatolian folkdances became regarded as useful symbols of Turkish national identity, taught in schools and performed in processions. Economic and social programmes were less well articulated[57] with the notable exception of an explicit ideology that henceforth women were to be regarded as equal to men.[58]

It is often remarked that Kemalism has failed. I do not regard this a useful judgement. If it was Atatürk's hope that by creating a Turkey in which a person could live free of religion, religion itself would whither away, then clearly he has not succeeded. The decades since the earlier militant secularism of the Republican Party have seen a gradual increase in the amount of money spent by the government on religious education, on providing *imam* for village mosques, on administering the pilgrimage to Mecca and on publishing works examining the place of Islam in the modern world.[59] But he has been successful in that the nationalist ethic which he

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57 On the economic policies of the early Republic see Hale (1981).

58 For a general overview see Shaw and Shaw (1977). On the policy of the Republic toward women see Kandiyoti (1991).

59 See Lewis B. (1950), Thomas (1952), Lewis G (1957 Chapter 20) and Stirling (1958) for comments on the early changes. Heper (1982) offers a later overview. In the preface of his recent French edition of *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Lewis writes, *'A l'interior, l'islam est incontestablement beaucoup plus puissant dans la vie publique Turque qu'a aucun moment depius la chute de l'empire ottoman. L'instruction religieuse fait maintenant parties du systeme educatif; on trouve les ouvrages religieux partout; et les diplomes des ecoles confessionelles, de plus en plus nombreux, occupent d'importantes fonctions publiques.* (1988, page vii). Susannah Pickering has kindly sent me fifteen official charts published by the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Spring 1992, listing the level of government activity and its involvement in religion in various ways. They detail

created remains similar today to that formulated in the earliest days of the Republic, and that the reforms he instigated have substantially remained in place. Thus, though most people in Turkey are still deeply Islamic in the sense that they believe that their conduct may be judged against certain moral norms which are revealed to them by God, there have been remarkably few attempts to bring back Islamic law or to threaten the secular basis for the government of the country. Kemalism the philosophy has been at best a partial success, Kemalism the source and unifying symbol of national identity has been a triumph.

This selective success means that any government of Turkey is in a predicament. They cannot scrap the Kemalist base of the Republic because it is so intertwined with the national consciousness, but Kemalism is not in itself a credible philosophy to most Sunni people. Consequently, the moral teachings of the state have broadened and diversified. The state continues to teach that the Republic is based on the secular principles of Atatürk. It continues to respect and display in all public buildings the sayings for which Atatürk is best known but it also acknowledges that the religion of the country is Islam. It teaches through schools and mosques that the moral basis of one's life, *ahlak*, is satisfactorily catered for by Islam, and attempts to show that this in conformity with Atatürk's life and thought.

We have already discussed the presence of the mosque *imam* who is the most significant provider of government-inspired Islamic sentiment. The main channel

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(among other things) that the number of officially registered mosques went up from 54,667 to 62,947 between 1984 and 1987, that the number of children in *Kuran* courses has gone up from 68,486 in 1979 to 155,403, in 1989, that the number of *Kuran* courses being taught has gone up from 2,610 in 1979 to 4,715 in 1988-89, that the number of people going on the *hac* has risen from 10,805 to 92,006 over the same period. See also a pamphlet *Din Öğretimi Genel Müdürlüğü Brifingi* (1990) published by the Ministry of Education.

through which the Kemalist heritage is inculcated is the schools.[60] On entering a school one is faced by a bust of Atatürk. The bust stands on a pedestal, which in turn is placed on a square of red carpet marked off by a rope. Above the bust is suspended a saying of Atatürk such as *Ne mutlu Türküm diyene!* How happy is he or she who says 'I am a Turk!' or '*Ey Türk gençler, öğün, güven, çalış!* Ey Turkish youth, struggle, trust, work! Suspended next to the bust is a copy of the speech made by Atatürk to celebrate the tenth year of the foundation of the Republic. At the end of each week the pupils assemble outside the school and the Republican flag is raised, to the accompaniment of its pupils singing the national anthem. The school curriculum includes lessons on Republican history, and each text book has a preliminary leaf showing Atatürk's portrait and the first verses of the national anthem.

Among national public holidays are several marking the foundation of the Republic and also several marking Islamic festivals. The onus on organising celebrations on those days which mark the Republic falls on the teachers of the village, who arrange for the children to sing commemorative songs and poetry and to form a procession which then marches in front of the assembled village. I went also to the mosque on the day of *kurban bayramı*. A celebratory sermon in the form of a cassette had been sent by the Muftu based in the province centre, on which he urged that the religious festivals are particularly appropriate occasions for all villagers to go to the mosque.[61]

The same parallel doctrines appear in the school's lessons on morals, *ahlak*. For example, a text book for children in the third year of Middle School, at which time most

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60 Makal's *Bizim Köy* (1950), excerpts from which appeared in English as *A Village in Anatolia*, is a renowned account of the difficulties faced by a school teacher, newly trained in the tenets of Kemalism, as he tried to persuade the villagers of its worth.

61 The same duality appears in the television, which is owned by the state. On the days marking the Republic it shows state processions from Ankara, on those marking religion it broadcasts passages from the Kuran.

children would be perhaps fourteen years of age.[62] After a full-page picture of the Republican flag over which is printed the national anthem, 'Atatürk's speech to youth' is quoted in full. It begins 'Ey Turkish youth! Your first duty is to the perpetuity, the preservation and the defence of Turkish independence and the Turkish Republic' and continues similarly. The book itself is divided into ten units; the first describes the *Kuran*, the prophets which lead up to *Muhammed*, and gives an account of the Prophet's life. The second describes the circumstances in which ritual cleansing, prayer, fast and pilgrimage may take place. Successive sections discuss the relation between Islam and secularism (*laiklik*) and describe Muslim ceremonies and special religious days. Later sections emphasise the duty that each person possesses to their fatherland (*vatan*), and outline polite behaviour. A final section illustrates the beauties of Islamic art and architecture.

The author explains secularism as follows; in Islam there need be no mediator between a person and God, all people have access to Him and are able to win His approval. They win His approval by conforming to His teachings, comprising the five pillars, performing the life rituals (circumcision, marriage and funerals) which He has laid down, and ensuring that the inner self is appropriate to worship by being peaceful, tolerant of other religions and honest. It goes on to explain that in Christianity, where people are divided between priests and layity, *laiklik* meant in 1789 disposing of the priests so that they ceased to come between a person and God. In the same way, Atatürk, in making Turkey *laik,* made stronger the bond between God and His people.[63] The author adds that the consequence of *laiklik* is that the business of the

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62 Dr Ethem Ruhi Fiğlalı (1988).

63 This approach is not quite as surprising as might first appear. Islam has no priests but it could be argued that the official endorsement of religion by the state in Ottoman times rendered more difficult the establishment of a personal relation between a man and God (On this being one of the aims of the Muslim believer see Nicholson (1924)). Jung (1958, page 49) in analogous fashion argues that the gradual demise of the Protestant Church frees its members for a greater personal fulfilment.

state and that of one's personal life becomes separate, so that religion caters purely for the latter. He summarises his overall argument in the form of five points;

> 'A secular country
>
> > separates the affairs of religion and state
> > in it there is freedom of belief, worship and freedom of conscience
> > fanaticism is never tolerated; fanatical movements are avoided
> > no person makes any other person embrace a religion or sect by force
> > those who wish to use religion for their personal gain are not permitted.[64]

In the Turkish context, the division suggested by the author of the text book in his first line, 'a secular country separates the affairs of religion and state' is misleading. In Turkey, Islam is not relegated to the private sphere, the state to the public, and the two thus separated. The analysis above shows clearly that the state ensures the integrity of the nucleated settlement clustered around a mosque which has for centuries contributed toward the generation of Islamic belief and continues to do so. The argument of the textbook is misleading in another way; the state *also* wishes to control how both Kemalism and Islam are used and developed (the book in itself is an example of this) so that the way people think remains within the limits of good citizenship. In anthropologists' traditional terms; the state wants control both the structures and cultures of daily life.

The very existence of the parallel doctrines of Kemalism and Islam, both embodied in the state, each claiming to be able to cater for large parts of a person's philosophical needs, means that there is great flexibility in the position which any individual may take up and still regard themselves as lying within the parameters of the legitimate membership of Republican Turkey. We shall find this of the utmost importance when analysing the political position taken up by the Alevi villages. With

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64 Figlali (1988, page 56).

regard to the Sunni villages one should conceive of a spectrum. All villagers wish to modernise. Those believers who are less intense accept that a nation may be modern and secular as Atatürk prescribed, but retain their belief. The position that these men take up has been explored in detail by Richard and Nancy Tapper in a recent article,[65] and indeed is similar to the ideals described in the *ahlak* text book above in that they are able to conceive of a distinction between secular and a sacred part of their lives. Those who are explicitly sceptical are few, as I have stressed, but these are likely to regard Kemalism as a successful moral and political philosophy as well as a principle on which a state may be governed and be former members of the *CHP* or current members of the *SHP*. [66] Strong believers, on the contrary, minimise the secular moral philosophy extolled by Atatürk, lay great stress on Islam, and admire Atatürk almost purely for the victories he achieved, a *gazi*, [67] conqueror for the faith. These people find it most difficult to accept the legitimate authority of the secular government to rule and are likely to be members of *tarikat*.

I have already stated that the state appears to ignore the *tarikat* as long as they do not openly assert their opposition to secular law. The government in power, however, cannot ignore them because it is in part dependent on their votes. The response of those in government to this group appears to be to accommodate their philosophy to some extent. The *ahlak* book described above is typical of the text books used in lessons. However, among other publications which emerge from the Department of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education and which are sent to schools for their libraries, there are books which assert that far from being contrary or opposed to the modern world, Islam in fact has anticipated its inventions, that the discoveries of science merely

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65 Richard and Nancy Tapper (1987b).

66 The problem of disbelief in Islam *and* disbelief in Kemalism therefore I met very little in the villages. I lived not only in the villages, but also in Ankara (see Acknowledgements). There, in the universities, it is obvious that many younger people have faith in neither ideals, but their study lies outside this work.

67 On *gazi* in Turkish thought see Mardin (1989, pages 3-5).

confirm the revealed and infallible nature of the *Kuran* and wisdom of its tenets. For example, a work on health and Islam[68] is divided into chapters, each showing the way in which the researches of the West have confirmed that to perform the ritual ablution is healthy, that pigs are unhealthy to eat, praying is good exercise and the fast is good for the body. One on education[69] begins by quoting parts of the Koran and sayings of the Prophet in favour of science (*ilim*), then illustrates the size of the libraries of Islam in former times. It goes on to consider the strength of Islamic thinkers in Astronomy, Mathematics, Geometry, Physics, Chemistry, and Medicine.[70] It is quite different from the sentiment expressed in the *ahlak* textbooks in its confidence in Islam's absolute success, its emphasis on the exoteric aspects of Islam and the universality of its message. The attitude of those who run the state, therefore, appears to be that just as though officially the *tarikat* are illegal, their presence is better tolerated than banned, so among the diversity of the state publications it is better to cater for those who believe intensely in Islam than ignore them all together. Alternatively, and perhaps as well, it may mean simply that those who have won power aided by the *tarikat* groups are now paying back their obligations by letting the organs of the state produce literature which is appropriate to the *tarikat* world view.[71]

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68 Dr Haluk Nurbakı. *Islam Dininin Insan Sağlığına Verdiği Önem, Diyanet Başkanlığı Yayınları 256* (The Importance which the Islamic Religion gives to People's Health, Directorate of Religious Affairs publication no. 256).

69 Osman Keşkioğlu. *Islamda eğitim ve öğretim* (Education and Teaching in Islam, Directorate of Religious Affairs publication no. 249).

70 See also Rahmi Balaban 1986 *Ilim - Ahlak - Iman* (Science - Morality - Faith, Directorate of Religious Affairs publication no. 128, Ankara.), Prof. Dr. Asaf Ataseven 1985 *Domuz eti* (Pig Meat), Doc. Dr. Mehmet Bayrakdar 1989 *Islam'da Bilim ve Teknoloji Tarihi* (The History of Science and Technology in Islam), Turkish Religious Foundation Publication (*Türkiye Diyanet Vakfi Yayınları*) nos 25 and 30.

71 We return again to the thesis that all people want to become modern. Members of the *tarikat* almost without fail, appear to be working out a position which enables them to believe in the universal validity of Islam and also enjoy the benefits of a consumer society (Cf. the detailed treatment of the *Nurcu* by Mardin (1989), the essays on the *tarikat* in Tapper (ed.) 1991, and the brief treatment of several *tarikat* by Norton (1990)) and this is the reason that they come so sharply into conflict with the authorities.
That the *Nurcu* may have influenced the production of school text books is confirmed by Pickering (1989. Pages 114-115). See also Saylan's recent *Islam ve Siyaset* which gives contemporary voice to these fears, and whom Pickering also mentions.

The village order and Kemalism

The key to the village social order is the egalitarian ideal between men and the subordination of women. Whether a man leans more toward Kemalism or Islam makes little difference to his attitude here; both philosophies are egalitarian and have no truck with those that claim they are privileged by birth. The subordination of women is more complicated in that Kemalism prescribes equal treatment of women. Pupils in state schools are not segregated, the same uniform is worn by both sexes, and girls do not wear headscarfs. Republican inheritance laws demand equal inheritance for women, and they, as well as men, possess the right to vote.[72] In spite of this women's place within the village remains markedly inferior. Of course some women do struggle against the authority of men but the multi-tied nature of the conceptual and physical bind in which women find themselves means that their position has improved only very slowly.[73] I have seen men manipulate women's votes by simply waiting next to them in the polling booth and checking what they have put inside their voting envelopes. Fathers may use their existing authority over women to try to avoid sending them to school, certainly to prevent them going on to higher education. Inheritance rights are more complicated, and an area where Republican law is in direct contradiction to traditional village life. I have the gravest doubts of the efficacy of the state inheritance law in the sub-province,[74] and hope to conduct a study on this during the next long field trip, but even if women's shares are respected according to Republican Law, Sirman's thesis shows that men may retain the land and property, and pay women their share in movable goods. Their husbands (or whomever the women is bound to) can then exploit these goods.

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72 Kandiyoti (1991).

73 This question has been considered by Starr in several publications from the point of view of women and the state courts. For example Starr (1978, 1984). See also an article by Kandiyoti (1988) with the suggestive theme 'bargaining with patriarchy'.

74 Stirling (1965, pages 120-131) notes that inheritance is complicated by the different ways men may use to support their claim, appealing to tradition, the Republican Law, or the village interpretation of *şeriat*.

The same pattern emerges when one looks at the problem from the wider perspective of the relations between the state and village. In a recent article, Sirman writes that as the state encroaches on the village, men are privileged in their interaction with it because they dominate the public spaces of the settlement. Also, that women have little access to the town outside the village, and, unlike men, they are not conscripted. Thus the fund of knowledge about the external world in the village is increasing all the time, and possession of this knowledge becomes more and more important in order to operate in it successfully, but its acquisition is skewed in favour of men.[75] I stress that I do not wish to deny that women attempt to gain such rights that they perceive that they are able, but, in many different ways, the odds are stacked against them succeeding. This point is taken up again in the second part of this chapter.

The third bond noted in the sketch of village social structure above was that between young men and their fathers. It is among the most frequently made generalisations on modernisation that younger men are increasingly reluctant to stay under their father's roofs, and the ideal traditional household of three generations is giving way to one of two, a father, his wife and their children.[76] However, it is unlikely that more than a small proportion of any village ever actually had the ideal, three generation household,[77] and in any case the household unit depends on the dominance of its head and the capability to divide by sex and provide labour, not on the number of generations within it. The earlier splitting of sons from their fathers does not therefore impede the order within the village but simply means that a greater percentage of men in the village become household heads.[78]

Part 2.2 The opening questions reconsidered

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75 Sirman (1990a).

76 Kandiyoti (1985) sets the debate in its Turkish context. Though men all over the sub-province complained frequently that the old three-generation household is now found much less than before, thus confirming this generalisation, it may not apply to *Susesi*. See page 80 below.

77 Stirling (1965, page 40).

78 Stirling (1988, page 8), and Belma Akşit in Stirling (Forthcoming).

The question at the beginning of the chapter was, 'How is that the Sunni settlements are able to survive their integration with the state and even grow larger?' Much of the above analysis has been devoted to showing various compatibilities between the villages and the state. Among these are the subordination to the state inherent in the villages' combination of sedentary life and Sunni Islam (we will return to this below), the lack of internal mediators, the way each single settlement is incorporated into the national scale as a village, the state's respect for indigenous land rights, the willingness of the state to control, to support but not to allow become fanatical the Islam taught in the village mosque and the blind eye that it shows toward the *tarikat*. We may sum the argument up more generally that to a great extent the Sunni community can allow the state to take responsibility for running the community without undermining either the prevalent social order or that part of the indigenous body of beliefs which supports that order, and that the state is willing to take on this responsibility in a way which is sympathetic to its indigenous organisation.

In Chapter 1 I attempted to place the villages of the sub-province in the context of their ever increasing interaction with the world outside the village, not just by virtue of greater contact with the state but also through kin and friends who have migrated. Certain aspects of Sunni village life are appropriate to this greater interchange. Religion's practice in the village is not disrupted if people migrate; no single man or woman plays a vital part in its practice but for the *imam* who is supplied by the state. Households may migrate in their entirety but the independence of each household unit means that the viability of the village economic unit is not effected. Incoming households, if their livelihood is secure and they are not rejected by the existing villagers, can fit easily into the community; there are no initiation rituals, as long as they are prepared to acquiesce to the Sunni religion they can fit in easily into the mosque-

based religion of the village,[79] nor (given that the lineages are losing their importance) is men's ability to defend themselves bound up with a group of kin or other association.

Men and their belief

I ask also, 'why is it that men still believe? It is extremely difficult to answer such a question but there must be *something* which makes Alevi and Sunni different in their ability to believe, and as it is extremely unlikely to be genetic it is surely legitimate to look for an answer in the way they react to the pressures which mold their lives. I shall approach my suggestion by taking snippets alternately from Gellner and Mardin, both of whom have considered the role of Islam in the modern world.

Mardin, in his recent monograph on the *Nurcu*, suggests that men continue to believe because they are able to conceive of the world around them in Islamic terms; 'What I suggest is that the reproduction of Islamic societies is linked to a common use of an Islamic idiom by the members of such societies..'[80] This has undoubted force when thinking about the villages. I describe above how those men who believe intensely, who regard Islam as the universal base for all their lives, have succeeded in combining their culture with the ever expanding cognitive horizon offered by the modern world by the simple expedient of declaring that everything that is ever invented or ever will be invented is commensurate with and anticipated in the *Kuran*. Given the omniscience of God and the revealed status of the text enshrined in the traditional religion this is a straightforward step for such men to take, and ensures that the doctrine is insulated against any surprises that the world might bring; to this extent it provides

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79 Thus an Alevi civil servant stationed in a Sunni village is as a matter of course invited to attend the mosque, and as long as he does so few remarks are likely to be made as to his background - assuming that he has admitted that he is Alevi at all. The reverse is not possible; even an extremely well integrated Sunni civil servant in an Alevi village (at least in the villages of the sub-province - and I believe that this is the case for the rest of Turkey as well) is not permitted into their religious ceremonies and therefore remains outsider to the community.

80 Mardin (1989, page 3).

men with a stable, common world-view with which they can interact and communicate in modern conditions. We see an obvious example of this in operation in the *tarikat* organisations, where people of like mind join together to exert pressure on the authorities both to improve their material conditions and to impose their way of thinking on the administration, the idiom which they use to communicate being Islam.

Another, more general example, can be seen in the changing mosque architecture of the village. Almost all villagers want to live in a town. Their ideal of urban life is not Ankara, the capital of the Republic but Istanbul, the Ottoman capital with its great Imperial Mosques. In almost every household can be seen a wall-hanging depicting the Istanbul mosque sky-line. In all the Sunni villages I visited, the villagers have destroyed the traditional structures of wood and daub and replaced them with concrete edifices in the Ottoman Imperial Mosque style with *minaret* and dome. This conforms to Mardin's suggestion of 'root paradigms', key concepts which are continually pressed into service; their longevity explained by the crucial place they still are able to play in the way individuals orientate their lives; the imperial-style mosques are appropriate expressions of both their beliefs, and the desire the people have to model their behaviour on urban life.

In direct contrast to other commentators, for example Gilsenan (1982), Mardin explicitly denies that religion is used as a camouflage for power relations within a society, or (in the terms used in this chapter) as a means of reinforcing a social hierarchy. For example, contrasting his approach with Foucault's he writes; 'Foucault's discourse is held together by relations of power; my own use of the term refers to cognitive problems'.[81] Mardin's is a wonderful book; meticulous, rich and stimulating but I find it astonishing that he can refer to Islam as a purely *cognitive* problem. Anyone who has seen a man (as I have) raise his fist to emphasise his actions

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81 Mardin (1989, page 8).

and shout "A wife not wear her headscarf? First I tell her it is a sin to be bareheaded, if she still refuses I beat her, then if she still won't cooperate then I divorce her" would have little doubt that in addition to its ability to give men an identity and purpose in life, it has also a more earthy function.

Gellner (1983) begins from a very broad perspective, exploring ideologies which are likely to be most successful in an industrialised (or industrialising) nation. He concludes that characteristically they are egalitarian, universal and have a minimum of what one might call 'difficult-to-believe' components. In brief, the explanation he gives for this is that a successful ideology in a modern country must be in accord with the necessity for a homogeneous population, homogeneity is dictated by the social mobility and change which an industrial economy depends on. Beliefs which contradict this requirement, or which are greatly and obviously at odds with the body of knowledge which is generating industrial society must loose their attraction. With regard to Islam, he notes that it has components within it which are compatible with these requirements; 'Islam always has an in-built proclivity or potential for this kind of 'reformed' version of the faith...Under modern conditions, its capacity to be a more abstract faith presiding over an anonymous community of equal believers, could reassert itself.'[82]

This approach is illuminating with regard to the sub-province where, as we have seen, the villagers use either Kemalism or Islam, or a combination of both doctrines to orientate their lives. Both are egalitarian and both allow direct access to the social unit of which men believe themselves a part and thus conform to Gellner's 'abstract faith presiding over a community of anonymous believers'. One of the most frequently reiterated Republican sayings is 'How happy is he or she who says 'I am a Turk'. Similarly, a person's affirmation of belief in Islam (the first of the five pillars) is enough to enable them to become Muslim. Both approaches to life are watched over by

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82 Gellner (1983, page 41).

the state, and a man may regard himself affiliated to either or both simply by virtue of being a Sunni born within the boundaries of modern Turkey.

There is a problem. Gellner's account does not allow us to decide why most men should prefer Islam to Kemalism. On this Mardin suggests;

> Kemalist ideology was long on views concerning the virtue of Turks, the benefit of secular republicanism for personality expansion and the contribution of universal education to progress. It was short on methods that would enable individuals to tackle issues arising in the family circle. It did not answer queries relating to the authority of the father...Neither did Kemalists have a view of rituals that would give meaning to life-stations such as birth, adolescence, marriage and death.[83]

I think Mardin is correct, but that there is also a much more basic difference between the two doctrines; the one advocates absolute equality for women, and the other explicitly regards them as inferior. Sunni Islam is that rare phenomenon in the modern world (but terribly useful for those who hold power) a *tenable* universal philosophy supported by the government in power which explicitly sanctions the inferior status of those who are already subordinate. There is therefore an in-built incentive for men to remain believers in the village situation, where the social order in the community is so dependent on the separation and pressing out of sight of women and the man's individual status and honour so absolutely intertwined with sole access over his wife.[84]

This explanation has added weight when we look at it from Gellner's point of view, to which we can now offer a refinement. Modern industrial society is absolutely dependent on the mobility and education of the *men* within in it, but can function perfectly well if women remain outside the stream. Japan is perhaps the most glaring

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83 Mardin (1989, page 170).

84 My explanation assumes that there is something within the Islamic faith which assumes the axiomatic inferiority, or at least separation, of women from men (and therefore the power to run society). One can put it into falsifiable terms as follows; 'no intense group of believers anywhere in Islam sanctions the intermingling of men and women'. These, curiously would appear to be an example of a successful universal generalisation in the social sciences. Certainly I have not yet seen it falsified.

example of this, but there is no industrialised country in which women have anything approaching actual equality in the power, wealth and knowledge which ensure its viability. Islam, in its postulation that men and women should be married and that the man is the dominant partner is therefore a *much* more accurate reflection of the social organisation of present day industrialised countries than the theoretical equality between the sexes which characterises modern thought. The significance of this point is touched on again with regard to the role of belief in the Alevi villages.

Men, the state and Islam

The desire that most men have to make the state support Islam in Turkey is unquestionable. Pragmatically, one may see why this might be the case. The tenets of Sunni Islam are far easier fulfilled in a state which supports, rather than is opposed to Sunni Islam. The pilgrimage to Mecca, for example, is coordinated by the Turkish government. The total number of pilgrims who will leave from Turkey are agreed in consultation with the Saudi's. The government charters buses and arranges for the *Kızıl Ay* , the 'Red Crescent', an organisation similar to the Red Cross, to be in attendance to supply medical facilities. The Department of Religious Affairs sends information as to the cost and necessary formalities to mosque *imam* via the *müftü*. The *imam* read these to the congregation. These, of course, are a few examples among many; the government is the very fount of religious knowledge and administration in Turkey, providing a huge body of explanatory material to which the most remote village has access, and training sufficient mosque imams so that every village may have at least one stationed within it.[85]

Further, and obviously, the villagers also hanker after the authority of the state to support their religion because of the legitimacy it gives to their beliefs. The mosque

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85 Inverse evidence as to the importance of this is provided by Stirling (1958) who comments on the villagers' difficulties when a lack of trained *imam* became apparent.

becomes difficult to question when it is protected by the state, as does the *imam* who by virtue of his position in the civil service is an approved part of the state mechanism, as I explained in the part above on order in the village.

These explanations are part of the overall picture but I think one can approach the psychological base of the problem more deeply. I stressed at the beginning of the chapter that women are guided and dominated by their husbands and fathers, who themselves have no immediate masters within the village as they reach adulthood, though they should respect the wishes men older than themselves. In the above sections I explain that men regard themselves as being part of a state to which they owe their subservience, though they may couch their affiliation in partly Islamic and partly Turkish terms. These points have also been considered by Sirman, who points out that men, through their greater access to the organs of the state, are more part of the nation than women. Further, Delaney puts the elements together to make an all-embracing three-part hierarchy which she refers to as the 'traditional authority structure', suggesting that women are under the authority of men, who are in turn under the authority of, and closer to the state than women.[86]

This does not yet explain the extraordinary desire which many men have that the state support Islam, but it may give a clue. On the basis of my experience, and of the researches of Sirman and Delaney, it appears to me that the inculcation of moral values in Turkey is inextricably bound up with subjugation to a superior authority, that is, though all people are learning from their surroundings all of the time, individuals permit themselves to be taught, particularly when they are in a position of submission to a greater authority.[87] If this is the case, then the chain of authority which we have outlined for the social organisation within the village is both a means of ensuring a

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86 Delaney in Stirling (Forthcoming).

87 This explanation is deeply influenced by a view of human development represented by Bower (1982), and the theories put forward by Bateson in *Mind and Nature* (1981) and his earlier collected short essays (1972).

social hierarchy and a conduit by which the values taken on board by individuals. Men are not just dominated by the state, they also expect to learn from it and their characters to be constructed by it, likewise women are not only dominated by men, they also learn their orientation toward the world from them more than from other sources. In addition, this relation is reflexive, a person by the very act of subordination expects that they will be guided by the figure of authority to whom they have submitted.

The desire men have that the state support Islam now becomes explicable. Submission to the authority of the state carries with it also the expectation by men that the state will take on the responsibility to teach the values with which they orientate their lives. *Given* that men believe in Islam, then it is absolutely vital to them that the state should support their beliefs. Failure to do so induces such profound distress because by their subjugation to it they have opened themselves up to what it will teach them, what they wish for is Islam. If it does not do so, at best it betrays the principal mechanism of acculturation in Turkish Society and at worst (in its presumption of equality for both men and women) contradicts horribly the premises by which they lead their lives.

Politics, the state and Islam

The fourth question asked in the introduction to the chapter is 'what enables the state to accommodate the desire the people have that they support Islam?' Only a brief explanation is needed here, because I think the most significant part of the explanation is in accordance with conventional theory.

In Turkey, the winning political party, if it wishes to stay in power, must reconcile the villager's desire to modernise with their desire to practice Islam. The state (protected by the army) has rather different priorities; to keep order and protect the integrity of the nation. This uneasy relation has been in existence only since 1950, when the first genuinely free elections were held. It has broken down in 1960, 1971 and 1980 when the army had to intervene to ensure social order.

In an article written just after the third *coup* , Stirling suggests that the unrest which led to so much violence is due to a gap between the undermining of the traditional means of keeping order in the villages as they modernise (which he dates as having its greatest effect only after 1950) and the time needed by the villagers to adjust to a different form of social control, one in which a man allows the state to assume the responsibility for most of the means in which order is retained in a community.[88]

I have summarised briefly his rather more elaborate argument but it enables me to ask, why, since 1980 has there been no more need for *coups* ? I think the answer is the generals who were governing Turkey between 1980-1983, aware of the problem which Stirling describes, made a quite conscious effort to supplement the means of social control which they have over the villages by encouraging the apparatus of the state to support the practice of Islam and that this is the aim of the famous *Türk-Islam sentezi* which emerged during the general's rule.[89] In effect, they were exploiting the congruence, so dear to anthropologists, between religion and social order twice over; first, the compatibility between the traditional religion of the village communities and the social order within them, secondly, that the social hierarchy within the Sunni communities depends on, and welcomes the authority of the state particularly when it is expressed through religion.

After 1980, therefore, there is a greater convergence between the aims of the state and that of any government then before (indeed the politics that Özal pursued with regard to Islam changed little after the generals had resigned from power).[90] Both the government and the state are supporting Islam, one motivated by popularity, the other by social order; the successful combination of these two ensure that Islam remains the

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88 Stirling (1984).

89 'The 'Turkish-Islamic Synthesis' as a slogan stood at the core of the new ideology which, on its pragmatic side, represented an attempt to integrate the Islamists and the nationalists'. (Toprak 1990, page 10).

90 On the role of Islam in politics, particularly after 1980 see *Saylan* (1987).

establishment ideology in Turkey. It is this particular combination which explains the continuing importance of Islam in the sub-province, not just among the villagers, but also in the realms of the state and politics.

Conclusions

This chapter contains a number of arguments, which may be summarised as follows. For a settlement to maintain population as the sub-province modernises it must be able to produce citizens of modern Turkey.[91] By definition it can do this only by integrating with the state. The more it integrates, the more responsibility for running the community is transferred to bodies who are sanctioned by the state. With regard to both the economic and social institutions of the community and with the way men form their identity, Sunni villages are amenable to this integration, and the low level of specificity of the social organisation means that their settlements are open to large and rapid changes in population. We turn now to the Alevi villages.

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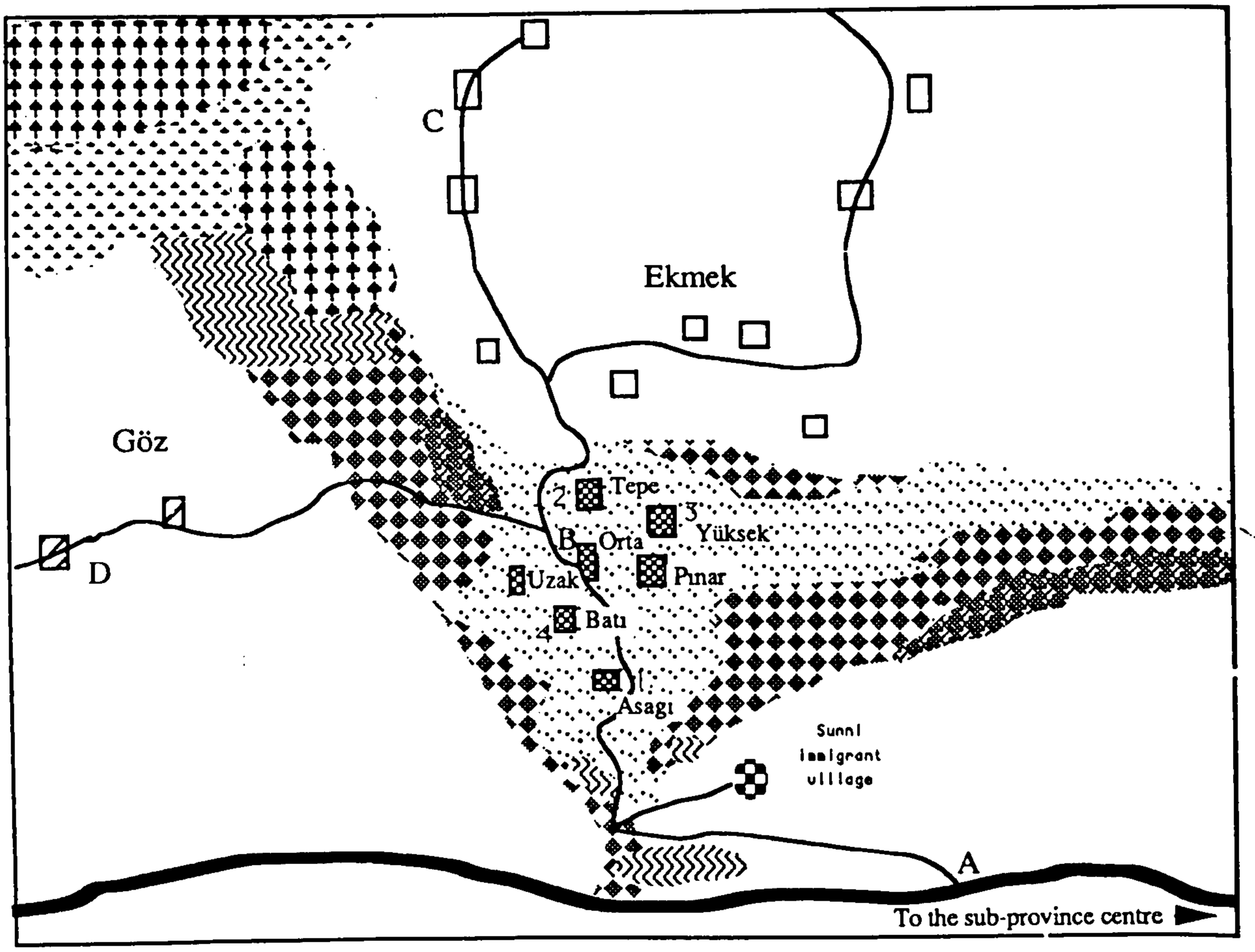
91 It is possible that this conclusion may lead to misunderstandings; my general point that people leave an area when they are not content must *ipso facto*, in the absence of forced migration, be true. I am arguing that the ability to feel part of Modern Turkey is a vital process in this decision whether to go or stay, and that people can only feel this sense of belonging when they have submitted to the state's authority and they that feel they are being made part of the nation. I do not deny that there are other, contributing factors, as to whether people migrate or not. See also the *Introduction* .

Map 3.1 Susesi, indicating road and neighbouring villages



KEY

— = dirt road

▬ = tarmacked road

= tilled land owned by households irrespective of village quarter

= forest (mainly used by village quarter closest by)

= land divided according to village quarter

= untilled scrub

= mountain pasture

= village quarter

= rock

= field boundary between village quarter

Land types are slightly simplified. Thus, areas which are marked fields may nevertheless have a proportion of shrub, some areas marked shrub nevertheless have stunted trees and so on

SCALE; FROM B TO A IS ABOUT 50 MINUTES WALK, FROM B TO C ABOUT 40 MINUTES, FROM B TO D 50 MINUTES

Chapter 3

Susesi

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first describes the layout of *Susesi,* the village in which I lived, the second summarises its economy, the third outlines the Alevi form of Islam as I found it in the village. A fourth part illustrates the village's internal divisions by describing the rise of the *muhtar*, head man.

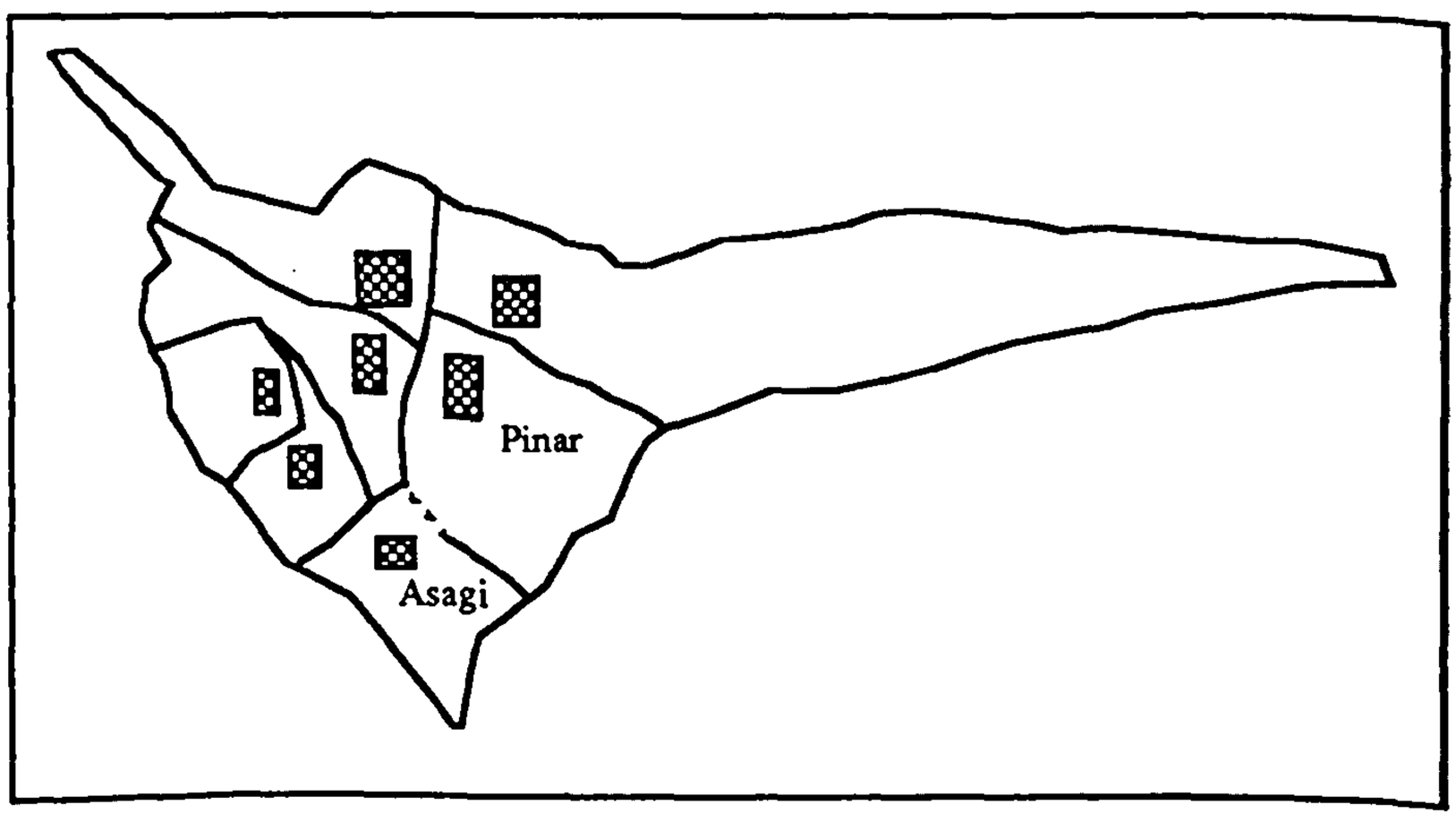
Part 3.1 The layout of the Alevi villages

The Alevi, just as do the Sunni, live in nuclear settlements. Each predominantly consists of patrilineal, patrilocal households whose members till fields which they themselves own. Each settlement pursues its own rotation cycle and households of one settlement only rarely own fields in the territory of another. However, the number of households in each settlement is less than in the Sunni villages. I would estimate the average Alevi settlement to have between fifteen and twenty households, the largest I came across about fifty, the smallest, four.

An Alevi village, as defined by the state, comprises of a number of these settlements, which the villagers refer to as *mahalle,* village quarter. I am not yet sure of the criteria by which they have been grouped together and declared a village by the state. It may simply be solely according to their smaller size, or it may be that their situation has been exacerbated at crucial points in the past through the lack of patronage discussed in Chapter 1, but no Alevi village in the sub-province has less than two distinct and separate *mahalle* ; the village in which I lived had seven, the closest village, ten. The most I found in a single village was twenty-two.

Map 3.1 shows *Susesi*, the village in which I lived, and the two immediate neighbouring villages, both Alevi also. The scale is approximate, I made the map by walking and travelling over the ground. The track running up from the road passes

Inset 3.1
showing field boundaries between village quarters in an Alevi village



through scrub for about two kilometres, then turns and rises steeply through fields up to the village, passes through, and still rising steeply splits, one fork going to *Göz* the other to *Ekmek,* the two immediately neighbouring villages, both Alevi. From *Susesi* to the main road, 'B' to 'A' on the map, measures three and a half kilometres on a speedometer. The three Alevi villages have little contact with the immigrant Sunni village indicated by the checked oval on the map though the track passes it within a few hundred metres on the way to *Susesi.*

Susesi' s seven *mahalle* are marked as checkered squares. Though the villagers have names for each, those used here are fictional. The other Alevi villagers in the sub-province regard them as being rather closer together than is normal for Alevi villages, nevertheless it takes at least forty minutes to walk from points 1 to 2 and thirty minutes to walk from 3 to 4 and even *Pınar* and *Yüksek,* which at first glance appear almost to merge into each other, are divided by gardens which fall between the houses themselves. The two *mahalle* of the neighbouring village marked 'D' are about twenty minute's walk apart and, as can be seen from the map, the ten of the village above are spread even further apart.

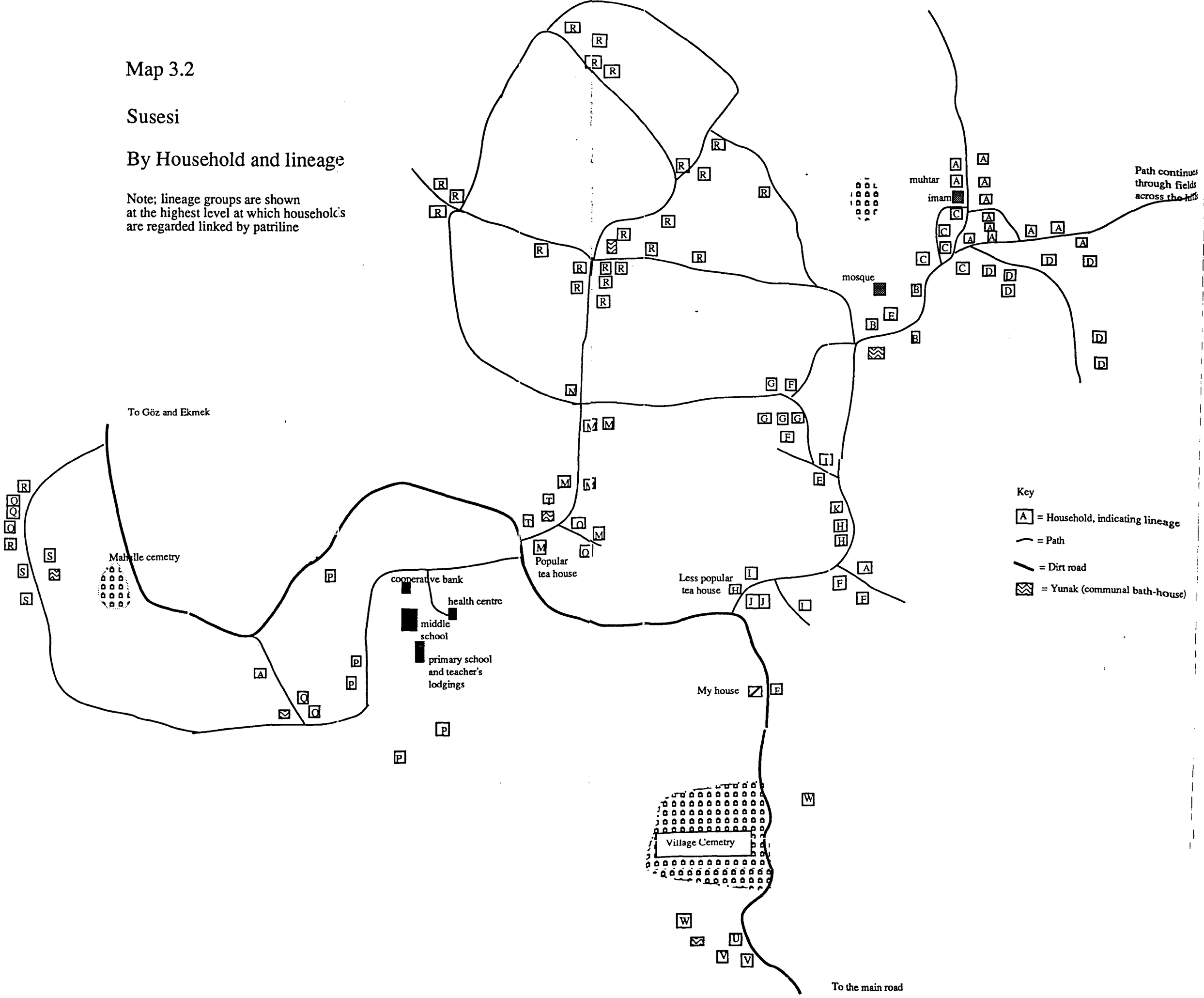
In *Susesi,* the only time of the year when the *mahalle* divisions dissolve is during the annual sojourn in the mountain pasture, *yayla.* For the rest of the year each *mahalle* largely looks after its own affairs with regard to subsistence farming, though the exact degree of independence varies. The dotted area in Map 3.1 shows fields which are divided according to *mahalle,* and the inset how the boundaries fall within this area. Within these boundaries, each *mahalle* pursues its own rotation cycle. The one exception to this clear demarcation is a large swathe of land which falls away beneath *Pınar* and *Aşağı* where households from both own fields. *Mahalle* are independent units, or nearly so, in other ways too; all have a communal bath house, *yunak,* but for *Yüksek* and *Pınar,* who share one which lies on the boundary between them, and all but *Aşağı* have trees within their territory from which they obtain firewood. *Aşağı*

Map 3.2

Susesi

By Household and lineage

Note; lineage groups are shown
at the highest level at which households
are regarded linked by patriline



obtain their wood by cutting branches and scrub from the territory of the next village who, as long as this is done unobtrusively, do not appear to object.

Within each *mahalle* are a number of shallow patrilineages, indicated in Map 3.2. Lineages rarely cross *mahalle* boundaries, thus the largest territorial group which can be united by descent is the *mahalle*. Lineages function similarly to those in the Sunni villages; a possible means by which men may cooperate if they wish, capable of playing a significant part in disputes, exchanging labour and regulating behaviour but a man is not absolutely obliged to commit himself to them. Indeed, in *Susesi,* as is clear from the map, some lineages are so depleted that they consist of only one or two households. Lineages have one additional function, not found in Sunni villages, in that they order relations between Holy Men, *dede*, and their followers, *talip*. This is explained below.

Services in *Susesi* which have been provided by the state, or with the state's assistance, are as follows: a primary school, with a *lojman*, staff quarters; a middle school; a telephone line, with a telephone exchange; piped water (which comes directly from a natural source in the mountain pasture); extensive irrigation channels; a concrete bridge spanning a stream which crosses the track as one comes to the village; electricity sufficient for domestic purposes; a health centre, *sağlık ocağı,* and a branch of the cooperative agricultural bank. To maintain these services, stationed in the village there were, during different periods of my stay, between two and six middle school teachers, a janitor to look after the middle school building, between one and three primary school teachers, a bank manager, and a midwife (who administers the health centre). One of the middle-school teachers and his wife, the midwife in charge of the health centre, were from *Susesi*. The school's janitor was an Alevi from a local village, as was the head master , whose wife was also a teacher at the primary school. The rest of the civil servants, that is, the bank manager and most of the secondary school teachers, were Sunni.

The services supplied by the state effect all the inhabitants of the seven *mahalle* equally as a village. The middle and primary schools, health centre and cooperative bank are all built in the centre of the village territory. All the buildings are government property, out of bounds for all those without proper business there, and though the villagers are extremely proud of them, they remain very obviously an intrusion from outside the traditional life of the community.

In sum, each Alevi village consists of two distinct jural spheres. The *mahalle* is the basic residence unit, the place where each person enjoys their closest social and kinship ties. These overlapping ties are strengthened by the *mahalle* being the centre of property and economic rights from the point of view of subsistence farming. The village unit, sanctioned by the state, and not by traditional lore or usage, is the principal channel by which the inhabitants are socialised into the nation and, because it embraces a number of *mahalle*, at once, introduces a category with its own rules and laws which is incongruous with the *mahalle* divisions. The villagers nevertheless feel a part of this unit, and much of the coming ethnography reveals a tension between the traditional way of life, which is based in the respective *mahalle*, and the alternative orientation provided by the state.

Part 3.2 The village economy, migration and the household

The day I arrived in the village, I was met by a lorry piled high with bedding, sacks of grain, furniture and kitchen equipment groaning its way along the track down to the road. This movement continued throughout my stay so that from about 110 inhabited households, the number dropped to about 90 over the course of the eighteen months during which I rented a house in the village. Sometimes whole households leave, then they lock the door to their house and tack boards over their windows so that children do not break in. Sometimes an old man or woman, not wishing to go to the city, remains behind, perhaps living off stores of grain, tending a single cow and maintaining a solitary donkey or mule. If a couple has aged together, then sometimes

Table 3.3 Fragmentary households

Widow with children	2	*2*	9	*2*
Widower living alone	4	*4*	4	*1*
Widow living alone	3	*3*	3	*1*
Widow living alone, son in village				
Unmarried woman, living alone	1	*1*	1	-
Sub-total	10	*10*	17	*4*

Totals	100	*100*	464	*100*

SUSESI VILLAGE HOUSEHOLDS

(After Stirling (1965))

Table 3.1 Simple households

	No. of Hds	%	No. of Psns	%
Married couples	14	*14*	28	*6*
Married couples, children	36	*36*	160	*34*
Married couples, husbands mother				
Married couples, husbands mother, children	8	*8*	51	*11*
Father with children, no wife alive				
Married couple, children and other kin	4	*4*	21	*5*
Married couple, husband's younger siblings				
Married couple, children's children, (with sometimes other kin as well)	6	*6*	29	*6*
Married couple, husband's younger siblings, mother				
Married couple, children, husband's mother, mother's sister, mother's father.	1	*1*	8	*2*
Sub-totals	69	*69*	297	*64*

Table 3.2 Joint households

Fraternal joint	1	*1*	10	*2*
Paternal joint, one child married, without grand children	2	*2*	13	*3*
Paternal joint, one child married, with grandchildren	11	*11*	74	*16*
Paternal joint, more than one child married, without grandchildren				
Paternal joint, more than one child married, with grandchildren	3	*3*	29	*6*
Special paternal joint no 'grandchildren'				
Paternal joint, with grandchildren (but no children)	1	*1*	6	*1*
Special paternal joint with 'grandchildren'				
Patrilineal married couple, daughter staying put, groom moving in, (*iç güvey*) children	2	*2*	10	*2*
Patrilineal joint, children, grand-children, great grandchildren	1	*1*	8	*2*
Sub-totals	21	*21*	150	*32*

they send their sons to the city, hoping that they will make a success of life there and be able to support them in their old age. They often send their children produce from the village; eggs, butter, cheese, flour, even meat, saying that it encourages them not to forget their parents. Sometimes, even though middle-aged, they also try to leave the village and move to Istanbul where so many of the rest of the village have gone.

These are the most unfortunate. Others have relatives who have done passably well in Istanbul, at least well enough to send a few *lira* occasionally to their relatives in the village. Slightly better off still are those whose relatives have found a steady job as *memur*, civil servants, and can often send a little more back, more regularly, to their relatives in the village. The most fortunate have relatives in Germany who have found steady work. These can live off the cash which is regularly remitted from Germany. But these are only about a fifth of the village households (see tables 3.3-6 below). The overall note is one of sadness, of empty houses and broken ties, of relatives and friends in far off places, of a community which is becoming increasingly aware of its comparative poverty and lack of material things.

In view of this rapid migration, the tables opposite should be treated with caution. For ease of comparison, I have used the layout begun by Stirling (1965) and followed up by Sirman (1988) but it is in no sense a picture of a stable community. I returned to visit friends in May this year, 1992, and it is clear that the out-flow has continued, both by individuals and whole households. In part by retrospective questioning I have aimed to locate the data in June 1989, the middle part of my fieldwork.

Tables 3.1-3 Household data

In June 1989, *Susesi* consisted of 100 households. In each household there were between one to four generations of men and women, all close kin. Residence

is almost entirely patrilocal, and every person living within the village was an accepted member of a particular household.[1]

The household data for *Susesi* is remarkably consistent with that collected by Stirling in 1950. Stirling divides households into those with one married couple (simple) those with more than one married couple (joint) and those with no married couple (fragmentary). Tables 3.1-3 do the same for *Susesi*. They show that about one fifth of the households are 'joint' and about seventh-tenths are 'simple' and that a third of the population live in joint households. Stirling found that about a quarter of the houses were joint and also found that a third of the village lived in joint households. A slightly higher number than Stirling found are 'fragmentary', but this is the only obvious demographic difference.[2]

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1 The importance of this became clear soon after arriving in the village. When walking along the road by the lowest *mahalle* with a friend, an old man emerged, bowed, very thin and with a long beard, asking for a cigarette. After we had passed him, my friend explained that he used to be a householder in the *mahalle*, but one day, after the death of his wife, had declared himself tired of poverty and work in the fields. In spite of the entreaties of his sons (who had gone to Istanbul), he sold his land and went to the town, spending his money in gambling and drink. Later, on its running out, he took casual labouring work. In becoming too old for this, he had taken to begging and sleeping under hedges. He stayed alive by virtue of some distant relatives putting out bread for him. On the onset of winter he died, found in a field. His funeral, at which there were very few people, was the first I attended in the village (Cf Stirling 1965, page 35. 'Only through membership of a household does an individual take part in the economic life of the village. Otherwise survival is only possible by begging').

2 Why there should be such a demographic similarity between Stirling's village of fifty years' ago and that of *Susesi* today needs consideration, particularly as it implies that the contention made in the previous chapter, that 'joint' households are widely giving way to simple, nuclear households, needs re-examining. One explanation would run as follows; nowadays a family has many sons, most of whom survive. It is extremely unlikely that there is sufficient wealth for them all to remain married in the parental home, and equally unlikely that they should all want to. However, to form a three-generation household only one son need remain, and it is still frequent that of all the sons, one can be persuaded to remain. In *Susesi*, the sons who have left home are unlikely to be able to make a living by remaining in the village, therefore they leave to the towns, and the three-generation household, almost by default, continues to be a significant proportion of total village households.

The demographic significance of this would then be that though patrilineal, three-generation households remain frequent, it is increasingly rare that they have more than one married son. In *Susesi* there is provisional support for this; there are 13 three-generation households with one married son, and only 3 three-generation households with more than one married son (Table 3.2). Whether this is less or more than *Sakaltutan* is not clear (the tables in *Turkish Village* do not distinguish between three-generation households according to number of married sons).

Table 3.6 The Village Economy (Fragmentary households)

Fragmentary Hsds	No. of Hds	No. of Psns	Money from Eur.	Turkey	State Pensn	Ploughs fields?	Tractor (Total num.)	Oxen (Total num.)	Sheep (Total num.)	Donkey /mule (Total num.)	Cow (Total num.)	Approx dönüm <10	10-30	30-60	60-90	Other profession of source or income
Widow with children	2	9	1	1		2		2	10(1)	2	3		2			
Widow living alone	4	4	1	1		3				3	3		2			
Widower living alone	3	3	1			2				2	1	1	1	1		*Dedelik* (1)
Unmarried woman, living alone	1	1				1				1		1				
Sub-total	**11**	**18**	**3**	**2**		**8**		**2**	**10 (1)**	**8**	**7**	**2**	**5**	**1**		
Total overall	**91**	**421**	**26**	**16**	**8**	**82**	**9**	**112**	**522 (42)**	**91**	**119**	**11**	**50**	**23**	**4**	

Table 3.5 The Village Economy (Joint households)

	No. of Hds	No. of Psns	Money from Eur.	Ist.	State Pensn	Ploughs fields?	Tractor (Total num.)	Oxen (Total num.)	Sheep (listed by house-holds)	Donkey /mule (Total num.)	Milch Cow/ Buffalo (Total num.)	Approx dönüm <10	10-30	30-60	60-90	Other profession of source or income
Fraternal joint	1	10				1		4	70 (1)	2	2			1		
Paternal joint, one child married, without grand children	1	6				1				1	2		1			*Mehterlik*(1)
Paternal joint, one child married, with grandchildren	9	64	2		2	8	1	12	15,25, 20,10 (4)	8	12	2	4	3		Diesel flour mill+ Grocery shop (1) *Dedelik* (1) Teacher (1) Raising and selling bullocks specifically for the beef market in Istanbul (1) *Mehterlik* (1) Clerk in village cooperatif bank +bullocks (1) Bank clerk in sub-province centre(1) Tea-house keeper (1)
Paternal joint, more than one child married, with grandchildren	3	29		1		3	3	6	110,60, 40 (3)	6	10				3	*Dedelik* (2)
Paternal joint, with grandchildren (but no children in village)	2	12	2			2	1		5 (1)	2	2		2			
Patrilineal married couple, daughter staying put, groom moving in, (*iç güvey*) children	1	5		1		1		2	25 (1)	1				1		
Patrilineal joint, children, grand-children, great grandchildren	1	8	1			1		2	45 (1)	1	1		1			
Sub-total	**18**	**134**	**5**	**2**	**2**	**17**	**5**	**26**	**425 (11)**	**21**	**29**	**2**	**8**	**5**	**3**	

Table 3.4 The Village Economy (Simple households)

	No. of Hds	No. of Psns	Money from Eur. Turkey	Money from Within Turkey	Money from State Pensn	Ploughs fields? (Num. of hsds.)	Tractor (Total num.)	Working Oxen (Total num.)	Sheep Total number (No. of hsds)	Donkey/ mule (Total num.)	Milch Cow/ buffalo (Total num.)	Approx dönüm <10	Approx dönüm 10-30	Approx dönüm 30-60	Approx dönüm 60-90	Other profession or source of income
Married couples	14	28	2	4	2	11		16	5,10, 10,45 (4)	14	14	4	8	2		Walling (1) Roofing (1) *Dedelik* (1) Husband migrant worker + wife tends chickens and sells eggs (1) Sells eggs (1)
Married couples, children	31	141	9	3	3	29	2	46	25,10, 10,20, 30,10, 25,25, 8,10, 25,15, 6,10 (14)	31	43	2	21	8		Plumbing (1) Roofing (3) House painter (1) Minibus driver (1) Village watchman(2) Chicken rearing (2) Fattening young oxen (4) Carpenter (1) *Mehterlik* (drum / pipe player) (2) *Dedelik* (1) *Hocalık* (1)
Married couples, husbands mother, children	7	45	5			7	2	8	20,20, 30,20, 10 (5)	7	14		2	4	1	*Kahveci* (tea-house keeper) (1) *Muhtar* Fattening young oxen (1) Minibus driver (1)
Married couple, children and other kin	4	21	1			4		6	20,20(2	4	5	1	1	2		Walling (1)
Married couple, children's children, (with sometimes other kin as well)	5	26	1	3	1	5		6	6,8,8,6 (4)	5	5		5			Village watchman (1) Chicken selling (1)
Married couple, children, husband's mother,mother's sister, mother's father.	1	8				1		2	15 (1)	1	2			1		*Aşık* (minstrel) + Bee-keeping (1)
Sub-total	62	269	18	10	6	57	4	84 (42prs)	487 (30)	62 (1 per hsd)	83 (1-2 per hsd	7	37	17	1	

Tables 3.4-6 The village economy by household

In her thesis, Sirman put forward a simple and plausible model of economic change in *Tuz*, where she worked. She shows that the villagers have successfully turned to growing cotton in place of their traditional crops, and use the cash raised from selling the cotton to buy the raw foodstuffs from the market in the near-by sub-province. A similar model is implicit in a recent work by Hann (1990), where he describes how villages in *Rize* have gradually left their indigenous crops to grow tea, which they then sell to the state. In *Susesi*, this is reversed. Those who can, leave. Those who stay earn what money they can by casual labour, remittances or other occupation and use this money to finance their growing cash-needs. They have not abandoned subsistence farming, and most of the villages' nutritional needs are obtained directly through their own labours.

Tables 3.4-6 offer a breakdown of 91 households, and show very clearly this continuation with basic farming methods by the greater part of the community. The households are indicated according to their household type. The column 'Money from' indicates by number of households whether they have any income from outside on a regular basis. No household has more than one entry in this column, thus two of the 'married couples' have a regular source of remittances from Germany, four from within Turkey, two are in receipt of a state pension, eight of the fourteen have no significant help from outside at all. Eleven of the 'married couples' still plough their fields, or pay for them to be ploughed by another. Eight of them still possess a team of oxen. Four of them keep sheep, the size of their flocks being 5, 10, 10 and 45 animals. Every 'married couple' has a donkey or a mule, and every one a milch cow. Four have less than 10 *dönüm* (the amount of land that one man working one pair of oxen can plough in a day) 8 between 10 and 30, 2 between 30 and 60, none between 60 and 90. One of the households supplements its income by the man practicing stone-walling, another by

roofing, another sells eggs, a fourth is a migrant worker.[3] One is a *dede* and raises a small amount of cash by leading religious services or mediating in quarrels (Chapter 4). A similar exercise can be carried out for each household type by following each through the tables. The total breakdown for all the 91 households is given at the end of Table 3.6. They show that 82 out of the 91 households in the village still use their land to obtain wheat, nearly all still own a donkey and a milch cow, and 42 still keep sheep.

This continuation with traditional farming methods means that there is a profound contradiction between the life villagers lead in fact and that which they desire. The ideal life for almost all men is to become a worker in Germany. After that, at least for those who are still young enough, it is to become a civil servant, *memur*, often a school teacher. Failing this it is to move to Istanbul and enjoy the sensation of living in a town, even though they are not very likely to lead a comfortable life there. Whilst still living in the village, though turned firmly toward the towns in spirit, in practice most villagers are subsistence farmers reluctantly living off their land, obtaining cash where they can, but remaining bound in to the traditional farming methods and the host of reciprocal duties, interactions and ties associated with this way of life.

Part 3.3 The Alevi and Islam

Among the Sunni, *Islam* is the most coherent and embracing of the various ideologies and concepts which serve to perpetuate the existing social order. This is also the case among the Alevi, but theirs is a different *type* of Islam, one which differs so much from the Sunni that it is not always clear, even to the Alevi themselves, that it is right to regard it as Muslim.

The Sunni define *Müslümanlık* mainly by literal belief in the Koran, praying in the mosque, and the 'five pillars'. The Alevi minimise the importance of these criteria,

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3 The only migrant worker in the village. The villagers say that migrant work used to be normal, particularly for fruit picking on the Black Sea coast. Now, however, men move to Istanbul to look for work and only return to the village if they have failed to make a living there.

saying that they possess 'Alevi conditions' of Islam, *Alevinin Şartları*. These are *Eline, diline, beline sahip ol !* 'Be master of your hands, tongue and loins!' These conditions are not exclusively Alevi; they are present throughout Turkish culture as a whole, in the mystical or Sufi side of Islam, where they are known as *edep*. But the Alevi have raised them to a jural level, so that they are the defining characteristic of their form of Islam, at the *expense* of, rather than as an accompaniment to the 'five pillars'.

That the Alevi place the *edep* ideal at the heart of their form of Islam gives a clue as to the way that they build up a separate identity from the Sunni. Though, of course, individual Alevi are articulate to varying degrees, many refer to their style of life (*Alevilik*) as *Tarikat,* and the Sunni style (*Sunnilik*) as *Şeriat.* By *Tarikat* the Alevi mean praying collectively in a 'reunion', *cem*, respecting their 'three conditions' and paying heed to a great body of mystical lore which contains an assumption of allegiance to certain men (*dede* and *efendi*) who have been designated by God to keep order within the Alevi community and who are its guide to correct conduct. By *Şeriat,* which they contrast with *Tarikat* , and say is a quite different way of life to theirs, the Alevi do not mean to imply the codified law of Islam, rather, praying in the mosque, interpreting the Koran literally, and following the 'five pillars'; that is, the daily round of religious life in a Sunni village. They also equate *Şeriat* with the power and exercise of authority by the central government.[4]

The Alevi hierarchy

I estimate that 10 per cent of the population are accepted as being of a *dede* lineage. The every-day burden of perpetuating *Tarikat* tradition and mediating disputes within the framework of the religious authority falls on the *dede*, and no one who is not a *dede* may pronounce *Tarikat* prayers or lead *Tarikat* ceremonies.

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4 This division into social life ruled by the state, and social life independent of the state is known elsewhere in the Muslim world, for example in North Africa, where the mountain tribesmen lived in a state of rebellion, *siba*, and the plainsmen and townsmen accepted the rule of the state, *makhzen*. (Gellner 1969).

Though each *dede* lineage regard themselves as descended from different founders, for example one *dede* lineage traces its descent to *Ibn Arabi*, nearly all acknowledge their subordination to *Haci Bektaş*, and men named *efendi*, whom they regard as descended from *Haci Bektaş* himself. The *efendi* live at the town of *Haci Bektaş*,[5] in the province of *Kırşehir*, about five-hours' drive from the sub-province, and come perhaps once or twice a year to the village in which I lived, to collect dues and to reaffirm their contact with the villagers. They do not play a large part in the life of the village, though the villagers do say that the *efendi* are a type of higher court to whom they can appeal for judgement on points of ceremony or for mediation.

All men, whether *dede* or not, are pupil, *talip*, to a particular *dede* lineage. A *cem*, the most important of the *Tarikat* rituals, can only be held if a *talip* lineage offers a sacrifice to their *dede*, and *dede* may only mediate in a quarrel if they are invited to do so by a *talip* lineage. Also, once a year, before the winter sowing, the *dede* is supposed to visit all his *talip* lineages, ascertain from them any disputes which they have had during the year, reconcile them and leave them 'clean', *temiz*, for the coming planting season (Chapter 4).

The Alevi and mystical Shi'ism

The Alevi interweave the *Tarikat* ideals with *Shi'ism* ; they maintain the 'twelver' tradition; that *Hüseyin* and *Hasan* were murdered at the *Kerbala*, that the rightly-guided caliphs succeeded them until the twelfth, *mehti*, disappeared and will ultimately return. The *cem*, the most important of the *Tarikat* ceremonies, celebrates the martyrdom of *Hüseyin* and *Hasan* in song and ritual. They say that they were taught how to perform the *cem* by *Ali*, and a slow stepping dance in the *cem*, the 'sema of the forty', *kırklar semahı*,[6] commemorates the first men and women who gathered around

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5 Norton (1983).

6 *Sema* conventionally means a dervish dance, for example that of the whirling dervishes of Konya. The Alevi in *Susesi* have two distinct *sema*, the '*sema* of the forty' mentioned here, and 'the *sema* of the hearts', *gönüller semahı* . These are both discussed in more detail below.

Ali and learnt from him. *Ali*, they say, learnt his knowledge from *Muhammed*, who was commanded by *Allah* to impart his esoteric knowledge of religion to *Ali* and ultimately to the villagers. Some of the *dede* maintain that the Alevi are the *ehli-beyt*, the rightful descendants of the Prophet's household, and that therefore the Alevi as a people are privileged in the sight of God.

This unusual combination of *tarikat* organisation and Shi'ism is elucidated in a work named *Buyruk*, 'Decree'. The villagers claim that this work, which they read in a modern Turkish edition, is the collected sayings of *Imam Cafer Sadık*, the sixth of the twelve *imam*. Most *dede* possess a copy and consult it frequently. This book contains no codified law, but rather is a series of descriptions of different facets of the correct workings of the *Tarikat*, religious anecdotes and ritual prescriptions. The relation between the *Buyruk* and the practice of religion in the village is discussed in the next chapter. Here, in order to illustrate the way Shi'ism in bound in to *Tarikat* ideals I give a translation of its first two sections. The first of the two describes how *Muhammed* was introduced to the original forty followers of *Ali*, who were learning how to conduct *Tarikat* rituals from him. The second recounts that *Ali* was chosen by God to become *Muhammed* 's representative, that *Muhammed* concurred with this, and that the two men became one.[7]

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[7] Moosa (1987) writes that the *Buyruk* is known to the Bektashi, and also to the Ahli-Haq, and to the Shabak (both heterodox Shi'ite groups). The Ahli-Haq are found in Iran, the Shabak in Iraq. Unfortunately, I only learnt of the existence of Moosa's highly relevant and interesting comparative study after the thesis was written. The *Buyruk* he describes as being used by the Shabak appears to be quite dis-similar to that used by the Alevi. Some of the tales he quotes as being told by the Alevi-Haq, however, bear a great resemblance to those in the *Buyruk* I found amongst the Alevi. Notably, Minorsky appears to have been told an account of the 'Cem of the Forty' very similar to that I give here (Page 118). Moosa also notes that several different versions of the *Buyruk* are known to exist (Pages 153-158).

THE BUYRUK SECTION 1

'THE CEM OF THE FORTY'

Muhammed was walking early one morning to *Mirac*. Suddenly a lion appeared on the road. The lion roared at him. *Muhammed* did not know what to do. At once he heard a voice:

'Ey, *Muhammed*, 'Put your ring in the lion's mouth.'

Muhammed did as he was told. He put his ring into the lion's mouth. The lion, on receiving his ring quietened. *Muhammed* continued on his way. He reached the highest part of the skies. There he was reunited with his companion (*dost*).[8] He spoke ninety thousand words with him. Of these, thirty thousand were on the *Şeriat*, they descended to humans. The remaining sixty thousand became a secret to *Ali*....

When returning from *Mirac, Muhammed* saw a dome in the city. This dome arose his interest. He walked to its door. Inside people were talking. *Muhammed* knocked on the door in order to enter. One from inside asked; 'Who are you, why have you come?'

Holy *Muhammed* ; 'I am a prophet. Open! I would enter. I would see the beautiful faces of the developed ones!'

From within; 'Prophets do not come amongst us. Go and be a prophet to your community', they said. On this *Muhammed* drew back from the door. Just as he is going a voice comes from God:

'Ey, *Muhammed* , go to that door!' it commanded.

On this command from God *Muhammed* went again to the door and knocked. From within; 'Who's that?' they asked.

Muhammed: 'I am a prophet. Open! I would enter. I would see your blessed faces', he said.

From within;'Prophets do not come amongst us. In addition, prophets are not necessary to us', they said.

On these words, the emissary of God again turned away. He was leaving when again God commanded;

'Ey *Muhammed*, turn back! Where are you going? Go and open that door!'

The emissary of God went again to the door. He rang on the door-knocker. On 'Who are you?' coming from within *Muhammed* replied;

'I am a poor son, come into existence from nothing. I came here to see you. Is there permission for me to come inside?' At that moment the door opened. Those within; 'Hello!' Welcome, you have brought luck, let your coming be auspicious,' they responded.

The assembly sat, talking with each other, in places for forty. *Muhammed* stepped inside with his right foot saying; 'The sacred, the holy door has opened. In the name of God, the merciful and the compassionate'.

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8 *Dost* in colloquial Turkish means close friend. In the mystical sense (in which it is used here) it means one for whom one longs, for whom one has a profound but non-sexual love. Here, the implication is that *Muhammed* was united with God. 'Love' and its place in the Alevi cosmology is returned to in the next chapter.

Inside sat thirty-nine people. On looking, *Muhammed* saw that twenty-two were male, and seventeen female. On *Muhammed* entering the believers rose to their feet. All indicated a place for him to sit. *Ali* was also in the assembly. *Muhammed* sat by his side but he did not realise he was *Ali*. There were a host of questions in *Muhammed* 's mind. 'Who are these people? All sitting in the same way, who are their great ones, who are lesser?' he thought. He saw that it was superfluous to ask questions but he was unable to control himself.

'Who are you? How do they address you?' he asked.

Those within:

'We are the forty' they responded. *Muhammed*:

'Well, who are your leaders, who are your lesser ones? I do not understand.'

Our leaders are leaders, our lesser ones are leaders. Our forty are one, our one is forty.'

'But one of you is missing, what happened to this one of you?'

'This one is *Selman*, he has gone out. He has gone to *parsa*. [9] But why did you ask? *Selman* is here, he is among our number.'

Muhammed asked the forty to show this. Thereupon *Ali* extended his blessed arm. One from the forty, saying rise (*destur*)! smote *Ali* 's arm with the knife. Blood began to flow from *Ali* 's arm. Blood began to flow from all their arms. At this moment a drop of blood came through the window and dripped in the centre. This blood was the blood of the *Selman* who was outside. Then one of the forty bound *Ali* 's arm. The blood of the others stopped also.

Selman came back from gathering. He had brought with him a single grape. The forty took this grape and placed it in front of *Muhammed*;

'Ey, duty-holder (*hizmetkarı*) of the poor ones, do a duty (*hizmet*) and share this single grape', they said.

Muhammed looked at his position. 'They are forty, there is but one grape. How am I to divide this single grape?' he wondered. At that moment God said to Gabriel;

'Beloved *Muhammed* is in difficulties, quick!, take a dish of light from heaven, and go there. Crush the dish inside the plate. Let him make sherbet, give it to the forty and them drink it.'

Gabriel took a dish of light and came in front of the emissary of God. He gave God's greetings and placed the dish in front of *Muhammed*:'Make sherbet, *Muhammed* !', he commanded.

As they watched, the forty were asking themselves what *Muhammed* was going to make with the grape. Suddenly they saw a dish form out of the light in front of *Muhammed*. The dish gave off a light like the sun. *Muhammed* put a drop of juice in the dish. The forty drank the sherbet. They all became drunk as in the beginning of creation. They rose from where they were sitting. This time saying 'O God!' raised their hands in worship. They began a *sema*. *Muhammed* together with them danced the *sema*. The forty's *sema* was lit by a holy light.

Whilst dancing *Muhammed* 's blessed bead fell from his head into forty pieces. Each one of the forty took one piece and made a skirt, tying the piece to it. Then *Muhammed* asked who were their holy leaders and guides. The forty said; 'Our holy leader is *Ali*, without a doubt and without dispute. And our guide is Gabriel, peace be upon him.'

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9 To go out to fetch those things necessary to the dervishes (footnote in the original).

Upon this, *Muhammed* understood that *Ali* was there. *Ali* walked straight to *Muhammed* 's side. When *Muhammed* saw *Ali* he gave him room, with a salute. The forty, *Muhammed* joining in, bowed, made way and gave him room. Then *Muhammed* saw in *Ali* 's finger the face of the lion to whom he had given his ring.

SECTION 2

THAT MUHAMMED AND ALI ARE COMPANIONS

After joining in the forty's *sema Muhammed* rose and returned to his house. All his disciples came to visit him. The disciples said to *Muhammed*; 'Ey emissary of God.... Explain what God said to you, we also would know'. On this *Muhammed* commanded;

'Ey believers, the God's secret is reality (*Hakikat*) ....Come! be followers to the *Hakikat*. The disciples;'What is *Hakikat* ? Oh emissary of God', they asked. *Muhammed* commanded

'*Hakikat* is to confess with the tongue, affirm with the heart, believe and have faith. To love yourself, and society (*toplu*). To submit yourself to a *pir* and obey his commands.'[10] Then Gabriel came. Gabriel said; 'Ey, *Muhammed*. God has decreed your giving this position to Ali'. But *Muhammed* wanted to avoid doing this. Gabriel came again. 'Ey, *Muhammed* why do you not fulfill God's decree?*Muhammed* replied; 'There is no pulpit.(*minber*)' Gabriel said; 'God commanded you to build a pulpit on a giant scale, climb it and fulfill your duty. On this *Muhammed* gave a sign. The believers built a pulpit on a giant scale. *Muhammed* climbed to the top of the pulpit. First he read a fine sermon then;

'Ey, believers Shah *Ali* has come to the *Hakikat*. Come, strive after *Ali* ', he commanded, and he took *Ali* 's right hand. He brought him to the pulpit. He opened his sash with sacred hands. He pressed *Ali* to his breast. The two entered into one gown. The two showed their heads from one collar. Two heads, but one gown appeared. And *Muhammed* said; 'Your blood is my blood, your flesh is my flesh, your body is my body, your soul is my soul (*ruh*), your spirit is my spirit (*can*)'.

Muhammed 's disciples who were watching this event, were surprised. One from them requested jealously; 'Ey, emissary of God, take off your gown, we would see also.'

On this, *Muhammed* took the gown off from his body. All that were there saw that *Muhammed* and *Ali* had become one body.'We have believed, ey emissary of God', they said. The prophet donned his sacred gown.

'Ali and I are one fruit of the same tree' he said. Then he took *Ali*'s hand. He placed one thumb on another. He said that *Ali* should be his deputy. He read the following verse;

"Ey, *Muhammed*, without a doubt those who bow their heads to you, count as if they have bowed their heads to God."

Then he read the following prayer for *Ali*; 'My God. Help those who support him, and be an enemy to his enemies. Help those who give him help, make those who annoy him weak....' Then he asked for his

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10 *Pir* , a person descended from *Muhammed* (See Chapter 4).

prayer rug. They brought his prayer rug. *Muhammed* climbed down from the pulpit. With *Muhammed* 's permission, *Ali* spread it so as to face *Mecca*. He placed *Muhammed* 's sacred sash on the prayer rug. Then he walked three paces from it, the first in the name of God, the second in the name of Gabriel, the third in his own name. Bewildered, the believers watched. *Muhammed* began to speak; 'This is the sash with which Gabriel bound my waist on the night of *Mirac*. I also gird your waist', he said. He bound the sash on *Ali* 's waist. He tied the first knot in the name of God, the second in the name of Gabriel, the third in his own name. Of this tight knot of three, he placed one on the left side and one on the right. '*La ilahe illalah*, Muhammed is God's prophet, Ali is His Saint' he said and returned to his seat. The disciples sat also. The Prophet turned to the believers and said;

'Ey believers, each of two you accept that you are brothers!', he commanded.

Thereupon every believer found himself a brother. Each two people accepted that they were brothers to each other. Thus all believers became companions. In this chosing *Ali* remained alone. He, the greatest of the believers, rose;

'Ey, emissary of God, with whom would I become brother? I have remained alone', he said. *Muhammed*; 'Ey *Ali*, you are my brother. Exactly like Moses and Aaron. After this go and bind the waists of those who follow and believe in you', he commanded.

Thereupon *Ali*, in *Muhammed's* presence, first bound the sash of *Selman-i Farsi*, then *Kamber*, then thirdly *Sühey*.

The believers wanted to celebrate this event. A believer fetched biscuit, oil and dates. *Ali*, in front of *Muhammed*, made morsels from the biscuit, oil and dates and offered them to all the believers. All of the believers ate the morsels and were full. One morsel was left over. At this time *Hasan*, *Hüseyin* and *Fatümatüz - Zehra* were in *Medine*. Those who were at the assembly placed the spare morsel in a vessel. They gave the vessel to the duty holder of illustrious descent, *Selman-i Farsi*. *Selman-i Farsi* without letting the vessel touch the ground conveyed it to *Medine*. There he left it in front of a disciple. Among devotees, sending morsels to express delight originates from this event. In our times, in memory of this event the people of the *Tarikat* give morsels to each other....

The power of the state

I have stressed that the Alevi regard each sect as possessing a distinct sphere of authority within which a certain way of life prevails, the one *Şeriat* the other *Tarikat*. To the Alevi, however, *Şeriat* is not an equal authority but through its being concatenated with the force of the central government, one which dominates them, and from which they must protect themselves. Not by violence. The Alevi are sedentary and live in stable, small clustered communities; they have no tribal, segmentary lineage organisation through which to unify to oppose the force of central government nor means to attack and flee in the fashion of Nomads. Rather they react to the perceived

pressure of central government by closing their community to non-Alevi. In Chapter 1, I explained that they avoid any discussion of their religious practices in front of those who are not Alevi. As well as this, *Tarikat* ceremonies are held after dark, with a minimum of fuss, so that even after living in an Alevi village for years a Sunni man (for example one stationed there as a school master) may be entirely ignorant of all but the simplest aspects of their religion and not even know in what months of the year the Alevi worship. This reticence spreads even to seemingly more mundane aspects of their lives, so that it is difficult to ask any direct question and receive a straightforward reply.[11]

Passive accommodation rather than resistance to external authorities is a well-known feature of Shi'ite communities,[12] who frequently sanction *taqiya*., or dissimulation.[13] The Alevi do not appear familiar with the term, nor with the idea (in spite of their dislike of direct questioning) of systematically lying to protect themselves. Whilst in the field this lack puzzled me, as did another feature of their religion. It is by no means clear whether the Alevi can be labelled *Shi'ite* or not. The Alevi rarely categorise themselves as anything but 'Alevi' and have no desire at all to call themselves *Shi'i* , saying that the '*Shi'i* ' are 'those fanatics from Iran'.[14]

The answer to both these this quandaries is that the Alevi build in to their religion such flexibility that it is quite acceptable for them to practice Sunni Islam when they find it expedient to do so. Because of this, they do not need to possess *taqiya*, nor do

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11 I suspect most *Türk Alevi* communities in central Anatolia are also sedentary and non-tribal. Alevi religion can also work within a tribal organisation. This is clear from Bumke's brief article (1989) on the Alevi Kurds. Sadly, this research has not yet appeared in more detail, so that the most one can conclude is that Alevi tenets can flourish either in a rebellious, tribal setting or in closed, settled communities who react to the power of the central state by closing in on themselves. This dual possibility is borne out by Gökalp's research (1980) in the West of Turkey, among the villages of a settled but landless Alevi tribe. Khuri (1989 Page 125) regards the potential to be passive and evasive of central authority, or rebellious and actively against it as enshrined in the doctrine of all Shi'ite groups.

12 Khuri (Ibid. Page 19, passim).

13 Or, interpreted from the political point of view, resigning temporal power to the central government, (Khuri Ibid. Pages 124-125).

14 See also Gökalp (Ibid. pages 9-10).

they appear unambiguously *Shi'ii*. The flexibility stems from their particular use of the 'four doors', *dörtkapı*, to God, which are well known in Sufi practice. These are; *Şeriat* , *Tarikat, Marifet* and *Hakikat*. The first, *Şeriat* , they say is to remain on the surface of existence, the second *Tarikat*, to look below everyday reality to the depths which lie below, *Marifet*, to have knowledge of God, *Hakikat*. to become one with God.[15]

Within the Alevi creed, these doors are both sociologically descriptive and refer to an individual's progression toward God. Thus *Şeriat* as well as having the connotation described above of being typical of religious life within the Sunni communities, is also regarded a legitimate preparation for the second stage toward God,*Tarikat,* the level, they say, which most Alevi have reached. The holy, *dede*, lineages are supposed to have reached, either today or at some time in their past in the form of a founder who was blessed by God, the fourth *Hakikat* stage.[16] They also say that the prophets leading up to *Muhammed*, and *Muhammed* himself are on this fourth stage. The third, *Marifet* seems to be redundant in that it had no observable corresponding rank within their community other than the knowledge that there is, hypothetically, such a stage.

Using the 'four doors' as the base of their view of Islam rather than simply their Shi'ite, *Tarikat* tradition has enormous consequences for the way the Alevi communities can adapt and live within the Sunni world by which they are surrounded. An Alevi man can go to the mosque, read the *Kuran* and respect the 'five pillars' and say that he is doing no more than taking the first step toward religious fulfilment which his own creed encourages him to do. Thus, the Alevi community does not condemn a man who is influenced by Sunni practices. In addition, the Sunni villagers, though they can suspect that the Alevi are not *Müslüman* at all, do not find it easy to condemn them in outright fashion because of the ease to which Alevi can adjust to Sunni practices

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15 Birge (1965, pages 102-109).

16 See page 88 above, the first line in the fourth paragraph of the second section of the *Buyruk*, where *Muhammed* declares that *Ali* has reached the *Hakikat* rank.

when they need to. For example, I met an Alevi acquaintance of mine whilst I was visiting one of the most active of the Sunni villages in the sub-province. He was stationed there as a health officer, and went to the mosque and outwardly respected the *Ramazan* fast along with the other men of the village. He appeared to be very well accepted by them. His family, who lived in the next Alevi village to *Susesi* , simply took it for granted that he would do this, and indeed saw no reason to remark on it at all.[17]

Dedelik and *Hocalık* or *Şeriat* and *Tarikat* within the village

Tarikat, as explained above, consists of the body of myths, prayers, ritual, songs and poetry which serve to perpetuate the particular blend of *Shi'ism* and mysticism which is central to *Alevilik.* Only a *dede* may pronounce *Tarikat* prayers or lead *Tarikat* ceremonies, and the practice of being a *dede* is known as *dedelik.* Any man, however, may interest himself in *Şeriat* rituals and prayers. Such men (unless they are *dede* in which case they are still called *dede* however much they are interested in *Şeriat*) are known within the village community as *hoca* and its practice *hocalık.*

In part, *hoca* have a secondary, replacement role for *dede.* If there is no *dede* present and a prayer, for example a grace before a meal, is required then a *Şeriat* prayer is often deemed to suffice and someone who is known to be fond of such prayers asked to pronounce one. The villages distinguish between the two types of prayer quite easily and differ in their responses to each: *Şeriat* prayers are in Arabic and consist of verses from the Koran or pious hymns, *ilahi,* also in Arabic. *Tarikat* prayers are in Turkish, and contain references to *Ali, Hüseyin* or *Hasan.* During

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17 From a broader perspective, this point has great implications for Alevi/Sunni interaction in Modern Turkey. The Sunni if asked maintain that the Alevi are not Muslim, but they do not deny the Alevi membership of modern Turkey (which to many of them is associated with being Muslim) they fight alongside them in the army, work alongside them in the civil service (as the example above illustrates) and call upon them to contribute to mosques (see the anecdote below). Thus as long as the Alevi practices are not drawn into the open, or brought into question, Sunni count them Muslim by default. It would be unheard of for the Alevi to be accused called *gavur,* 'infidel' which is still a frequent appellation for Christians.

Tarikat prayers, the villagers place their hands in front of them on the dining table, with just the tips of their fingers touching its surface, and call out '*Alahalaaa* !'. After it finishes, they raise their right hand to their lips and kiss the backs of the second and third finger. After a *Şeriat* prayer, they call out '*Amin* !' and pass their hands over their faces as if washing. These responses are specific, and never intentionally confused with each other.

Hoca are not always merely substitute religious figures for the *dede*. They are used specifically to recite an *ilahi* to mark the end of the *cem* . They are also used to wash cadavers, lead the burial service, *cenaze,* (which the villagers say quite definitely, even proudly, are 'just like those in Sunni villages') and to recite a *Sura* over a copy of the Koran just before the consummation of a marriage. This specific use of the *hoca* and *Şeriat* at the two most significant *rites de passages* in a person's life I interpret as to do with the overall orientation of the Alevi within Islam. Although their *Tarikat* practice takes them very far from Sunni Islam, this acknowledgement of *Şeriat* allows them to feel part of the surrounding Muslim community, just as it is encapsulated in a more abstract way in the 'four doors'.

Şeriat , Tarikat and the village unit

Dedelik is firmly based in the domestic life of the *mahalle*. *Tarikat* ceremonies have no special building, but are held in the same large room, *ev,* of any house, where the inhabitants live and sleep. *Dede* , and minstrels, *aşık*, are trained by their peers and older relatives within the village. In addition, the textual base of *Alevilik* lies not in the government publishing houses, but in books describing *Bektaşilik* and the *Buyruk* which are brought to the villagers by the *efendi* from *Haci Bektaş* town.

In contrast, *hocalık* is practiced by the Alevi at the village level as well as at funerals or as substitute *dede*, though here the indigenous *hoca* are largely replaced by trained government *imam*. As explained in the previous chapter, the government supplies a trained *imam* to every village in the sub-province, and sends him sermons

and strict instructions as to the way religion should be conducted. This position, like other services provided by the government, is awarded to any village only if they make a formal request, *dilekçi*. All the Alevi villages but one in the sub-province have made this request and been awarded with an *imam*, invariably Sunni.[18] In *Susesi* , the villagers are friendly to their *imam*., sending him bread, allowing him to cut wood from the village copse and even giving him a field to plough for nothing. The village women told me that they persuaded his wife to drink tea with them, even though she was afraid of them at first.

The villagers use the state *imam* as a replacement *hoca* if the family concerned are prepared to pay his fee to wash a body, or to attend the wedding (in 1989, 10.000 *lira*, about £3). His principal role, however, is to tend to the mosque. Nearly all Alevi villages, however dispersed the individual *mahalle*, have only one mosque. They are usually without the minaret and concrete dome which are typical of the Sunni mosques, made from traditional building materials and not obviously distinguishable from a normal house.

Though present, the mosque does not usually have a prominent role. In *Susesi*, attendance is poor, few men attend daily prayers and even the Friday service is frequently cancelled by the *imam* because the statutory minimum of three worshippers have not arrived. The men of the village say that they go to the mosque on the two religious festivals of the year sanctioned by the state; the holiday to mark the end of *Ramazan*, and the Feast of Sacrifice. I attended the Feast of Sacrifice service in *Susesi* in March 1989 , and calculated that about fifty, that is approximately one third, of the males who were in the village at that time, came to the mosque. After the service, as is normal all over Turkey on the day of a *bayram*, those who had attended the service

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18 State-employed Alevi *imam* are almost unknown, according to the *Susesi* villagers because they are unacceptable to the Sunni congregations.

lined up and each shook hands with the next in turn, in order of age, so that every man shook the hand of every other.

That few men go regularly to the mosque, and only a third of the village attended on at the feast of sacrifice illustrates well the ambivalence men feel for the mosque ceremonies and the *imam*. On the one hand they are a way to celebrate the village with a collective ritual sanctioned by their overall cosmology, on the other the mosque is representative of a way of life which the Alevi dislike, and often fear. Whenever there is a demonstration which appears to have a religious spur, for example, when there were violent disturbances in Istanbul against the law that women must remove headscarves to enter university premises, the Alevi blame fanaticism stirred up by mosque *imam* during the Friday services for their spark.

This ambivalence is often expressed through jokes about Sunni Islam, often at the *imam*'s expense. For example, I describe below how the *imam* in *Susesi* attempted to obtain a transfer. Thinking that he was successful, he arranged to move. Among his possessions was a huge sack of onions. On failing to secure his new position, he returned to the village, still with the sack of onions. Even normally sombre villagers found this extraordinarily amusing and chortled for days that even if he had not obtained a transfer he had not lost his year's supply of onions. Again, whilst visiting a neighbouring town I was introduced to a teacher who was said to be one of the most popular teachers their had ever been in the village. When I asked why, my friends said that one night, whilst very drunk, he had opened the window of the teacher's quarters, and called a wonderfully loud and clear *izan* (call to prayer). Thinking that it must be dawn, one old man called to his wife for his clothes, and made his way to the mosque in the middle of the night, to the great amusement of the other villagers, who had guessed that it was the teacher who had made the call. [19]

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19 Another example, the villagers asked me to summarise Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* for them Accordingly, I bought a copy and did so. After an extremely detailed questioning about the book, some men were mildly scandalised, others were delighted at what Rushdie had written. Nobody condemned it

The uncertainty also spreads to the villagers when they consider their own position. Some Alevi men accept that they are hardly, conventionally speaking, Muslim; saying that they are half-Muslim, half Christian *Yarı Krystiyan, yarı Müslüman*. Others say that *Şeriat* has nothing to do with *Alevilik* at all, even when its rituals occur within their own community. Others wonder whether they should both respect their own 'three conditions' *and* the Sunni 'five pillars'. The following anecdote illustrates this uncertainty, amusement and ambivalence well.

Account 3.1

One afternoon, late in the summer of 1989, three Sunni men came in a jeep to the tea-house in *Susesi*, outside which I was sitting at the time. One man was a retired Kuran-course teacher, the other a *haci* (a man who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca), the third, their driver. They explained that they were collecting poplar trees (*kavak*) to use when constructing the new town mosque in the sub-province centre, which they expected to be given as *hayır*, charitable gift. No man in the tea-house offered any trees, though one said that if they would build a church then he would be happy to donate trees from his land. Great laughter followed, and the men drove off in irritated fashion to the village above ours. They had more success there, though it is also Alevi. However, the *haci*, who was old and frail, was knocked down and killed by one of the poplar trees that were being felled for the mosque. Some of the men of *Susesi* expressed no regret at all on hearing this, saying that he was a *yobaz*, fanatic. Others were shocked at the idea of a man being killed whilst working for a pious cause.

Part 3.4 The village, the outside world and the rise of the muhtar

Thus far, I have sketched a society dispersed into small communities still occupied with subsistence farming with a distinct tradition and a sophisticated cosmology with which to relate this tradition to the dominant, Sunni community by which they are surrounded. In the Introduction to the thesis, I stated that this way of life cannot survive. Here, in order to introduce the chief conflicts within the village, I

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outright. I should add that this amusement is extremely context specific. The *dede* and the *Tarikat* tradition are never a subject for amusement.

shall explain only one part of the way their lives are changing; the rise in power of the *muhtar*, the state-supported head man of the village, over the *dede*, the traditional leaders of the community, and other opponents.

I have argued above that *Susesi* can be conceived as having two spheres, the outer, village shell of the community and the inner *Tarikat* core of the *mahalle*. The *muhtar* falls into this outer, protective role. He entertains dignitaries with gusto when they come to the village, indeed his hospitality is famous throughout the sub-province. He spends many of his days in the sub-province centre drinking with figures of all political persuasions. He takes members of the village to the government offices in the centre when they need to appear in front of the judge or governor. He speaks for the village with vigour if they are visited by the *jandarma*. He claims personal credit for organising the services which the village possesses, is proud of the ways in which he helps the individual villagers, and used this claim to great effect in the elections of March 1989, when he again won a five-year spell as *muhtar*. The following account is typical of the stories of his prowers. I should point out perhaps, that, but for the civil servants stationed there, no other person in the village has anything like the ability described in this account to make contact with the officials in the sub-province centre. Indeed, the *muhtar* 's friendship with the surgeon and the other doctors could be matched by only a few other village *muhtar* in the sub-province.

Account 3.2

Whilst waiting for the mini-bus to go to the sub-province centre from the village, I began talking with one of the men and he told me the following story.

My wife was very sick, and I took her to have some x-rays. I was not happy with the outcome and so took them to the hospital in the sub-province centre accompanied by the *muhtar*. The guard at the hospital tried to stop us entering, saying that entrance was forbidden. The *muhtar* simply pushed him aside and entered. The doctors were all at lunch so the *muhtar* went to the doctors' dining room. The surgeon, on seeing the *muhtar*, whom he knows well, invited them to eat. The *muhtar* took out the x-ray pictures and the surgeon passed them to his fellow doctors to look at. They wrote out a long prescription. I said that I couldn't pay for a list as long as that, so the *muhtar* took the pictures, gave them to the surgeon himself and said, 'Write us just one medicine'. Taking the

> prescription to the chemist I found it was 18,500 *lira* (about £5). I couldn't pay this even so went back to the *muhtar* and said 'Just now I've no money.' The *muhtar* took the money from his pocket and gave it to me. I bought the medicine and gave it to my wife.

The *muhtar* himself, in a conversation with me, attributed his ability to be so successful to two years in jail when he was a youth, followed by two years' military service in the eastern part of Turkey, so that when he returned to the village he was afraid neither of the outside world nor of other men. Whatever the root of his great confidence, his position in the village was not gained without making enemies, nor without his first defeating the different factions who have opposed him.

The muhtar and the hoca

Until the early eighties the mosque was controlled by a particular lineage which was known as *hocagıl*, 'the lineage of the *hoca*.' The *hoca* who looked after the mosque as the *muhtar* was beginning his rise to power was from this lineage, and so respected that the villagers would plough and reap his fields before theirs without anticipating any reward. When he died the new *muhtar* seized the opportunity to rid himself of the indigenous *hoca* by requesting that the village receive a state *imam*. When he arrived, the *muhtar* gave him the house next to his own in which to stay, so that he could watch him better. This plan has worked. The present incumbent is young, not very bright and outwardly respectful of the *muhtar*. That the *muhtar* is still conscious of the problems which might stem from a more active *imam* is shown by an event during my stay.

Account 3.3

The *imam* was dissatisfied with his position in the village, mostly, he said, because he was fed up with no one coming to the mosque for its services. His brother, who was the assistant head of the *imam-hatip* school (the school for religious vocational training) in the sub-province centre was appointed temporarily head of the *müftü* whilst the official head was away. He immediately called his brother to work for him in the sub-province centre. The *imam* took up everything and went. The *muhtar*, on hearing this, went to the *müftü* offices and said that unless the *imam* came back, he would make a *dilekçi* (petition) and close the

position of *imam* in the village.[20] He was prompted to do this because the *imam* of a close-by Sunni village, far stronger in character than the present quite ineffectual *imam*, was rumoured to be coming to the village. On that day, however, the true head of the *müftü* offices came back, and said that he didn't want the brother of the assistant head in his offices. Not finding an alternative position, the former *imam* returned to the village.

The muhtar and the dede

More complex is the struggle which the *muhtar* has with the *dede*, and we shall return to this theme in Chapter 5. Though they are not strong now, all the villagers say that until the seventies the *dede* had a powerful hold over the actions and activities of the villages. In addition, they say that until that time the *muhtar* was often also a *dede*. This combination still exists in other Alevi villages. That it has not continued in *Susesi* is greatly due to the present *muhtar*, who was first voted into office in 1972. He talked of his opposition to the *dede* to me, and though I hope to piece together a more coherent account on a further visit, he told me that his opposition was based on a philosophy of absolute and utter scepticism that there can be anything whatsoever in the accounts they give of the past and in the special powers which they claim. He told me, for example, that he overturned a grave which was supposed to be of a venerated saint and found nothing there but a horse's skeleton. On another occasion, he told me the following;

Account 3.4

There was a tree held to be sacred, *yatır*, in one of my fields. I was not permitted to plough in its shadow, so that as a consequence a big part of my field went unploughed. I got rid of it by chopping it down and burning it. They said that lightning would strike me from the sky, but it didn't.

By the time of my fieldwork, there was little opposition to the *muhtar* from the *dede*. That which emerged revolved around my presence. At the beginning, the *dede*,

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20 This threat is a powerful one, because of the irreligiousness implied in a village which has no *imam*. Certainly no *müftü* official would relish being embroiled in such a controversy.

though not pleased to have me in the village, did no more oppose me than not respond to my overtures and not invite me to their houses.

More overt opposition emerged when I made my desire to attend the *Tarikat* ceremonies known. The *dede* of the village, were absolutely against this, though the *muhtar* supported my request. He waited until a *dede* from a neighbouring village was visiting one of his *talip*, followers, in *Susesi*. Together with several of his lineage, and myself, he visited the *dede* at the follower's house. The *muhtar*, explained to the *dede* in a long speech that I was not a tourist, that I had been in the village for a considerable time, and that he would like to sponsor me to enter the ceremony that evening. The *dede* after considering briefly, replied *'muhtar, kendi köyünde sultandır'*, 'a muhtar is sultan in his own village' and acquiesced to my attending. At the ceremony itself, the *dede* who lived within the village stayed away in protest, but no one openly objected to my being there, and I was able to witness it in its entirety.

The muhtar's other opponents

Periodically a man emerges who is prepared to challenge the *muhtar* directly. This happens rarely, however, because the *muhtar* attempts to make the position in the village of all who oppose him untenable. The son of the last indigenous mosque *hoca* to emerge from *hocagıl* , was forced to leave by the *muhtar* before migration was so prevalent, and he had a hard struggle to set up a shop in Istanbul. Though I met this man in the sub-province occasionally, he never comes to the village and is extremely bitter. Another man attempted to stand as a candidate for *muhtar* before the recent elections. The present *muhtar* simply provoked a quarrel, punched him on the jaw and told to him leave the village.

The one group of people whom the *muhtar* seems unable to cow are returnees from Germany (*Almancilar*, 'Germans'). The villagers estimate that about seventy households are living in Europe, most of them in Germany. The villagers say that the first of the villagers left to work in Germany in the late sixties and early seventies.

Those that left first of all invested their new-found wealth in the village, buying fields and building large concrete houses which showed their new position. One man spent a large sum on a dry stone wall to enclose his fields. On their return trips to the village, they quickly found that life in the village was no longer congenial to them and built in Istanbul or in the local towns, so that now most of their brightly-painted houses are empty. Two returnees remain in the village, however and their position is awkward because the villagers regard them as having wasted their opportunity to make money, proof of their failure shown by their remaining in the village.

Both men resent not being regarded with more authority by their fellow villages, and regard themselves as greatly superior to them because of their experience abroad. One of them has opened a *kahve*, tea-house.[21] This is the second *kahve* in the village, The first, in *Orta mahalle* , is the oldest in the village and acts as an unofficial focal point for villagers. Minibuses to the town leave from there, and the *muhtar* calls meetings there when he wants to organise collective work, *angora*, on behalf of the village community (for example, a water channel). This second *kahve*, run by the returned German worker, acts a focal point for those villagers who are enemies of the *muhtar*, and from it, in March 1989, he ran a campaign to try to become *muhtar* of the village. Though it was difficult to find men who would publicly indicate their support he campaigned hard. His wife who was an active, intelligent woman, tried to gain votes from the other village women by persuading them to vote for her husband. His campaign failed by a very large margin. His *kahve* remains a centre of support for those who are the *muhtar*'s opponents, though one which has not yet born fruit.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have provided a sketch of *Susesi* from several different approaches; the most important points are the discontinuity between the *mahalle* and the

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21 Literally 'coffee-house' (*kahve* also means 'coffee'), but tea is the staple drink provided in them.

'village' category by which they are linked, the dissatisfaction of the villagers with their lives, though they still continue to farm their land, the existence of a clearly articulated tradition which defines the Alevi as being different from the Sunni (though in a subtle way, so that they can regard themselves as similar to the Sunni when they need to) and which assumes that the Sunni way of life is synonymous with the rule of the central state, the assumption that there are holy men, *dede*, who are privileged to teach the Alevi way of life, and, finally, the difficulties which the *dede* have faced against the *muhtar*. In the next chapter, we turn to examine in more detail the relationship between social order and religion in the village.

Chapter 4

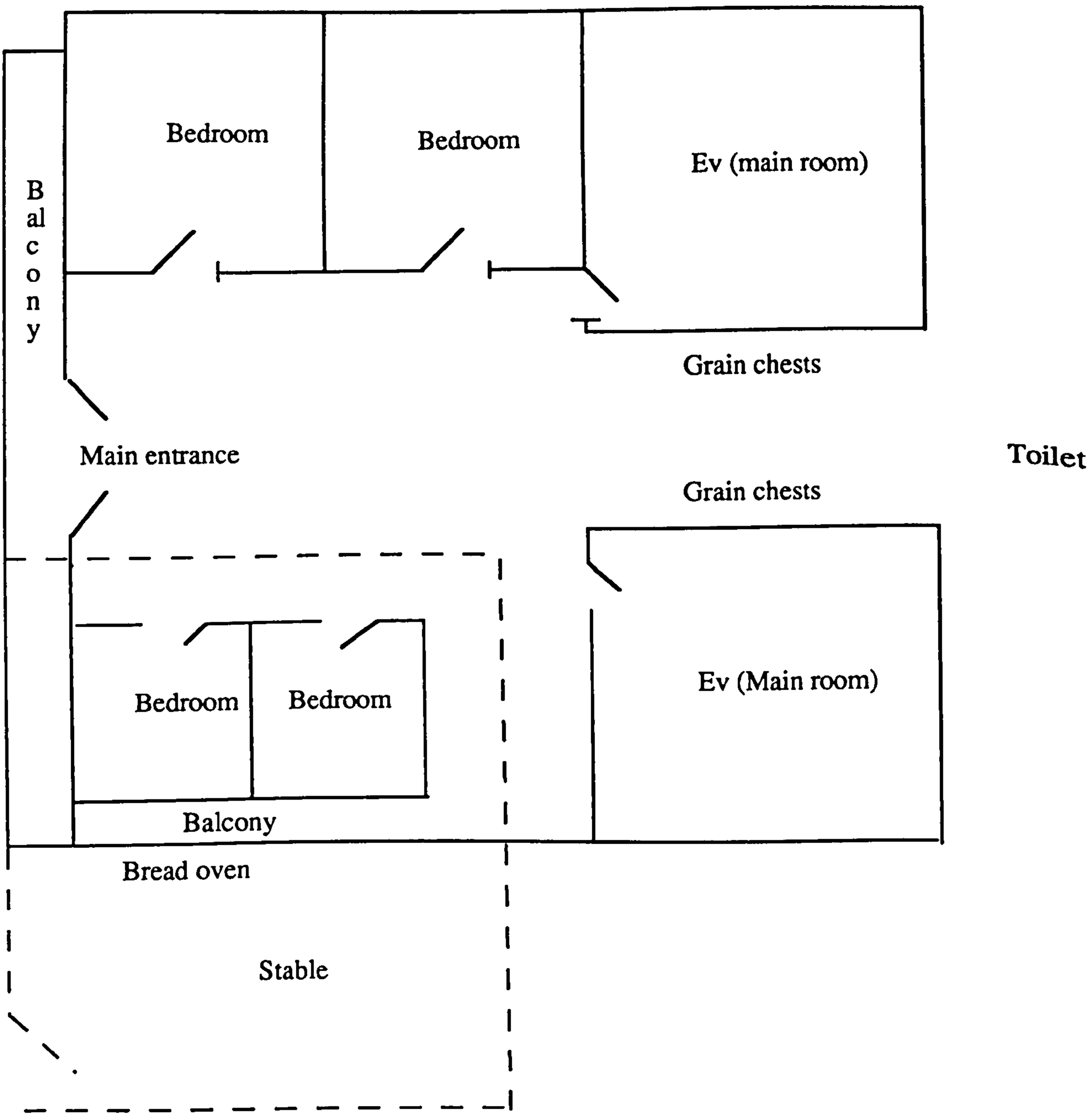
Religion and social control in Susesi

The public spaces of the Sunni villages are dominated by men, who worship together, without women, in the village mosque. This dominance and segregation is found also within their respective households, where men and women lead largely separate lives but the men possess overall authority. One conception of the relationship of men to other men, and of men to women, serves to regulate both domestic and public relations.

By contrast, in the Alevi villages, relations between the sexes and between men differ sharply depending on whether they fall in the public or the private sphere. In the private sphere of the *mahalle* and the household, *dede* are treated differently from other men. But there is no segregation of men and women, and both sexes worship together in *Tarikat* rituals. In the public sphere, to be from a *dede* lineage carries no special rights or privileges, women are secluded and men worship alone.

In the Sunni villages, peace-keeping authority has been awarded to the state. There are no internal mediators and there is no elaborate mechanism to solve disputes. Those who believe strongly reinforce the subordination and segregation of women and the ideal of equality between all men, but religion has no explicit peace-keeping function. *Tarikat,* in contrast to this, is court and religion rolled into one; a regulatory, mediating and reconciliatory function is present in almost every part of its doctrine and practice. Thus there is a correlation between the participation of women in the *Tarikat* religious ceremonies, and the great significance which these ceremonies possess to the social order in the Alevi villages. This does not mean that women are equal to men. It means no more than there is a doctrine of social control enshrined in *Tarikat* which requires all people, whether men or women, be answerable to it. In fact, women are dominated by men, perhaps more so even than in the Sunni villages.

Plan 4.1 House in Susesi



Scale 1m to 1cm

Note; the stable, within which is the bread oven, lies below the main part of the house.

There are fourteen people living in the house. Though the bedrooms are used at night, the lower *ev*, main room, is the only large room inhabited during the day.

The aim of this chapter is to expand on these points. The first part describes the Alevi household, the position of women within the community and the occasions when they are segregated.

Part 4.1 Men, women and social control

In a Sunni village women possess their own space independently of men, both in that they have elaborate rituals which men do not attend and a distinct domestic sphere.[1] Women's relationship to authority is also absolutely clear. From the women's point of view, men have to be manipulated, persuaded and even coerced in order to behaving as they would wish but men hold ultimate responsibility and there is absolutely no doubt that they do so.

Women in *Susesi* are not presented with such a clear view of authority, nor such a distinct domestic space. Women still do the tasks normally associated with women in a Turkish village; they clean, cook, prepare food, milk, tend the gardens and look after children, but they do not do so in a separate environment from the men. Within the household, there is no segregation. Eating, preparing food, sleeping, gossiping and entertaining visitors (provided they are also Alevi) takes place in one large room, *ev*, with both men and women present. Whilst women are doing tasks outside the home, for example gardening or baking bread, men feel not at all constrained against joining in or sitting with the women and talking. This difference between Alevi and Sunni is reflected in their domestic architecture. The Alevi houses are square, and have one or more very large rooms and smaller auxiliary bedrooms (see the illustration opposite). The Sunni households are rectangular in shape, and built as a series of smaller rooms.[2]

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1 Cf. Roper (1973), Glazer (1978) or Dobkin (1967).
2 Cf. Delaney's plan of a Sunni house (1991, page 234).

Alevi women, unlike the Sunni, appear to have no specialised rituals which are theirs alone.[3] There are no *mevlud*, (readings of a poem of that name which describes the birth of *Muhammed*, attended separately by men and women, but more frequently held by women) such as those discussed by Nancy and Richard Tapper.[4] Alevi women do go to shrines in search of fertility or health [5] but they go together with their husbands, and together they sacrifice a sheep which has been blessed (*tekbirleme*) by a *dede*. There is also a fertility ritual which *dede* may hold for a barren couple, but again they do so with both husband and wife present. Women do dance alone in the bride's house before she is collected to go to her groom, but they join up with the men later to dance together. When they do so, they dance the same step as when alone, this time dove-tailing with the men (Chapter 5).

Though the separation between men and women is less, the Alevi household social structure is similar to the Sunni. That is, the household head is, where possible, the senior male. Women, though they should be shown respect according to their age, are subordinate to men's wishes, and expect to be treated accordingly. There are rare cases of uxorilocal marriage, *iç güvey* , but women usually move to their husband's home, give up their maiden name, and gradually transfer their allegiance to their new household from their old, and the figure immediately in control of their lives changes from their father to their husband.

Also, the lack of separation between men and women dissolves as the domestic sphere moves into the public. When men wish to talk they tell the women to leave them alone. They also tell the women to leave if there are strangers present. Outside the home, just as in the Sunni villages, women should not cross any open space unless

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3 I insert the note of caution because it is not possible to be sure on this point until a female researcher has provided a fuller picture of the life lead by Alevi women.

4 Richard and Nancy Tapper (1987a).

5 (Nicolas 1972) or Nancy Tapper (1990).

they are accompanied by a man. They must never cut across a man's path, they must never enter a door before he does. Women never go to the tea-house.

Women are also segregated in those*Şeriat* rituals which take place at the village level (see chapter 3, part 3 above) indeed, to the Alevi, one of the characteristics of the*Şeriat* way of life is that women are separated from men. When the women leave the men, they occasionally remark, semi-ironically,'*haremlık/ selamlık*.' (In a house where residential segregation based on religion is practiced *haremlık* is the term for the women's quarters, *selamlık*, the men's).[6] In *Susesi*, and, so far as I am aware, in all the Alevi villages of the sub-province, women never go to the mosque. In *Susesi*, during the funeral, *cenaze* (the ceremony which they regard as being similar to the Sunni), women stand apart, away from the men, as the *imam* speaks the service over the corpse. Women are not permitted to accompany the pall-bearing procession to the cemetery, nor be present at the interment, and they are forbidden to go to the grave for forty days after the burial.

I stressed in Chapter 2 that Islam in the Sunni villages is only a part of a complicated network of concepts which serve to keep women controlled by men; by far the most organised, developed and embracing of the different ideologies in use but only one of them. The Alevi men do not use Islam to control women in the same overt way; thus where a Sunni man might accuse a women of *günah*, sinful conduct, if she does not obey her husband or fails to wear her headscarf, the Alevi use *ayıp*, a general word with a powerful connotation of 'not done', of transgressing a specific rule but with no religious overtones. The Alevi have other ways of expressing the control of women by men too; that a women must not go out into the open spaces of the village simply because she is a woman, that women are equal to men but just a little bit weaker, that she must not cross a man's path because it causes bad luck to the man if she does so,

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6 Redhouse dictionary (1987, Page 541).

that it destroys the household's honour, *namus*, if she is unfaithful, but none of these are explicitly rooted in their religious practice.

Indeed, *Tarikat* doctrine requires that women take part in its rituals. The *cem* and all other *Tarikat* rituals take place with both men and women present, face to face with one another. The culminating dance of the *cem*, the 'dance of the forty', which celebrates the first men and women to learn the *Tarikat* doctrine from *Ali*, is conducted by two married couples. Throughout *Tarikat* ceremonies men behave toward women, and to each other, with marked courtesy, more than in everyday life, addressing women as 'sisters', *bacı*, and men 'brothers', *kardeş*.

This nominal equality comes out particularly clearly in the criteria of who may be defined as more holy than another. Just as *dede* lineages consist of men distinguished from other not so blessed lineages, so the wife or daughter of a *dede* is counted more holy than other women. Such women are called *anne* (lit. 'mother'). *Anne* have no active role in *cem* ceremonies other than that they sit apart from other women, but it is regarded as part of their duty to resolve quarrels among women, to teach women the *Tarikat* path, and to be a support to the *dede* . Even the segregation involved in *Şeriat* rituals at the village level is not tied to that assertion of the malevolent nature of women which helps to sanctify the Sunni conception of male superiority. The sexes separate because that is the way *Şeriat* rituals are supposed to be conducted rather than any more explicit reason. Alevi men laugh at the idea, prevalent in the Sunni villages among firm believers, that to see a woman during a *namaz* ruins the ritual ablution, *aptest* , or that to touch a woman is in some way defiling.[7]

In spite of the higher position which religion give to Alevi women, it does not appear that their overall situation is better than that of women in the Sunni villages. Before marriage, women are let out of the house as little as possible. The Alevi men I

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7 Yalman (1969) found a similar disdain for the supposedly defiling nature of women.

have lived with were careful to make sure that I was never able to carry on a sustained conversation with a woman, whatever her age. Women never shop alone in the market in the sub-province centre. This puts widows in an extremely difficult position, for though not tied any more to their husband, they are fearful of being cheated through their inexperience and I have seen them implore men to buy things on their behalf. Materially, women are worse off than their Sunni counterparts. The Alevi inheritance rules prescribe equal shares among sons and nothing at all for women. The men are absolutely emphatic that this is an invariable rule, '*Kadın hakkı yok* !'(married) Women have no rights!' Those cases of inheritance I knew conformed to this rule. Some men qualify this by saying that before marriage a woman is supposed to inherit as would a son, but after marriage she looses her rights. There is just one unmarried woman in the village, aged about sixty, whom they say was emphatic that she didn't want a husband. Her nephew, who was involved in the partition of his grandfather's (her father's) estate, told me that he gave her a small outlying field in order to respect the spirit of their inheritance law but he certainly was not going to give her an equal share when she should have married and found security that way.

There is a further, though more abstract reason that I would suggest why Alevi women are worse off, at least in the traditional setting, than their Sunni counterparts. There is no hard and fast rule when the women should be left alone and when they should be with the men. When men wish they tell them to go, otherwise women may stay. Even when they do stay, women are never quite sure when they are allowed to join in with the conversation with the men and when not. As a result, it seems to me that Alevi women are more timid and insecure, and less articulate, than the Sunni women because they are never sure of what reaction they are going to receive from the figures of authority who control their lives.[8]

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8 This would lead us to an application of Bateson's double-bind theory (1956). I am grateful to Professor Alan MacFarlane for pointing this out to me.

In sum, from the point of view of the concept of the person embodied in their dominant religious ideology, Alevi women are favoured as equal to men. On the other hand, they are rarely left alone, they have little ritual space, no property rights and an uncertain relation with authority. For these reasons, it is doubtful that they are significantly better off than the Sunni women. My experience in this matter suggests that they are not.[9]

Part 4.2 The village, the dede and the Buyruk

When I began to read and translate the *Buyruk*, I was struck as to the way it mirrors the villagers' description of their religious tenets. Nevertheless, it is difficult to be sure of the relation between it and the actual practice and perpetuation of religion in the village. The *Buyruk* is possessed only by *dede*. They read it in a modern Turkish edition, printed in Istanbul. Many refer to it repeatedly, and keep it wrapped in a soft piece of cloth to protect it. But I only once heard it mentioned in a prayer (the collective prayer quoted from below), and not at all as a text whose words must be respected to the letter. It is never taken into religious ceremonies. Rather, *dede* absorb those aspects they find interesting in their own time and recount them in the course of commentaries, *yorum*, on songs and poetry first sung by minstrels. The *Buyruk* would appear to be a rich source of ideas, one that shapes the villagers thoughts within the overall, mostly oral, traditions on which they found their society but not in itself constitutive of a body of dogma.

To give a detailed example. The *Buyruk* consists of forty sections each explaining a different tale, moral or command of God; some recount parables involving the Prophet and His followers (such as the two given in the previous chapter) others outline *Tarikat* ceremonies (such as the *görgü* described below), others specify

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[9] Lloyd and Mageret Fallers (1976) argue in analogous fashion that Sunni women enjoy more freedom than is commonly realised by virtue of their separation from men.

particularly desirable characteristics for people to adopt in their behaviour (for example, *Cömertlik*, generosity).

Sections 3-5 and 7-9 describe six ranks of men; successively *Pir, Mürşid, Rehber, Sofu, Talip* and *Mürid*. The first three of these are teachers, the second three followers. The *pir* is described as being the descendant of *Muhammed-Ali*, and the rightful leader of the community thus;

> *Pirlik* and worship such as *Şeriat, Tarikat, Marifet* and *Hakikat* come from *Muhammed - Ali*. This is why someone who is not from the lineage of the prophet is not permitted to give guidance as a *pir*. And that a devotee should recognise as a *pir* anyone who is not from the lineage of *Muhammed - Ali* is not a subject open to discussion. The food eaten by a person acting wrongly, and that which he drinks, is unholy (*haram*). His *Tarikat* is apostate, his *Hakikat* is apostate. His guidance, his repentance is not valid. Because *Muhammed - Ali* 's lineage has forbidden it. Someone who does not accept *Muhammed - Ali* 's lineage is without foundation. He has no base. He is no initiate at the monastery of the twelve *imam*.. (Page 17)

The *mürşid* is depicted more abstractly, as a gardener who makes sure that the eaters of fruit in the garden do not consume poisonous fruit. The next section, on the *rehber* , is more concrete. He is depicted as a guide who may be appointed by the *pir* when he is not himself present.

> The *rehber* is one who shows the *talip* the road to light, to enlightenment. He is assistant to the *pir*, his representative at times and in areas where there is no *pir*. (Page 25)

The three sections *Sofu, Talip* and *Mürid* resemble each other closely, and stress the importance of following a *pir* and the other teachers.

> According to *Imam Cafer Sadık, Şeriat* is to know the truth, *Tarikat* is to behave truly, *Marifet* is to choose the true road, *Hakikat* is to attain the Truth. The *talip* must be well conducted in all four. The *talip* is one who answers to his educator, and bows to his companion. The *talip* is one who follows a *pir* descended from the lineage of *Muhammed Ali*. The *talip* is one who cooks at the cauldron of the *pir*, and learns the correct path. And he follows without fail the decrees of the *pir*. One who does not go against the sayings of the *pir*. The *talip* is one who approves with his tongue and believes in his heart. One who knows the struggle of *Muhammed-Ali*. One on this road is one pursuing the correct path. One who is acquiescent (*rıza*) in all things, and turns not from acquiescence. (Page 38)

In *Susesi* , as explained in Chapter 3, there are but three religious ranks, *efendi*, *dede* and *talip*. The villagers say that the *efendi* are descended from *Haci Bektaş*, and

Haci Bektaş himself from *Ali* . The *efendi* live at the town of *Haci Bektaş*, and come to the village three or four times a year. There are two local ranks, *dede* on whom the daily burden of leading *Tarikat* rituals falls, and followers, *talip*.

The conduct entailed in fulfilling these three ranks according to the villagers matches closely the duties outlined in the *Buyruk*. *Haci Bektaş* is referred to by the villagers as *Pir* , and the *efendi* , his descendants, as being their leaders. The *dede* are often referred to as *rehber*. Some claim to have official permission to practice from the *efendi* lineage, just as the *Buyruk* describes a *rehber* may. The *vaziyetname*, 'diploma', or 'authorisation' given below, for example, was given to a local *dede* by one of the *efendi*.

Vaziyetname

> *Aşık* ..., descended from the sons of ..., of the lineage ....., illustrious son of ..., now resident in ...village, in every respect a worthy model and guide. This *vaziyetname* assures that on the *talip* to this hearth transfering their allegiance and respect to said licensed seventh son of... sure and peaceful love (*muhabbet*) comes to the community.
>
> *Sealed and dated August 19xx*

Despite these correspondences, neither *dede* nor *talip* justify their behaviour by direct reference to the *Buyruk* nor, indeed, is there ever any mention that there are categories outlined by the *Buyruk* but not found in the village. Each practicing *dede* lineage has an oral account which explains its past, within which is often a mention of their ancestors attending the monastery of *Haci Bektaş* and also of their own ability to perform miracles. They express this by saying that they are 'people/possessors of *keramet*', *keramet sahibi*. *Keramet* is sometimes rendered in English as 'charisma', but is best translated in this context as 'the ability, given by God, to perform miracles'.[10] Independently of any other consideration, *keramet* is a mark of God's favour and

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10 See Gilsenan (1961) for a sustained discussion, also Redhouse (1987. Page 369).

places a lineage in the *Hakikat* rank, the fourth level, where one is at contact with God, at liberty to control the material world and superior to others.

One *dede* lineage tells the following story, which illustrates *keramet*, about the *derviş* who was their founder

Account 4.1

One day whilst the *Padişah* from Istanbul was passing he stopped in the valley with his soldiers. They spent a long time looking for food, but in vain. However, they came across a *derviş*, and took him to the *Padişah*. The *Padişah* said, 'My men are hungry, but we can find nothing to eat'. The *derviş* hit the ground with his staff and a deer rose out from the earth. The *derviş* said, 'Slaughter and eat it, but you must return all the bones to me.'

They ate the deer, collected the bones in its fleece and gave them to the *derviş*. One of the soldiers, however, had put a bone in his pack. When they had eaten the *derviş* said a prayer. The deer became alive again and ran, stumbling owing to its missing bone, into the forest.

The *Padişah* said 'We have had meat to eat, thank-you, but our hands are greasy, may we have hot water?' The *derviş* banged his staff again and hot springs came out of the ground...

This account is returned to in the next chapter. The following was recited to me by one of the most active and articulate *dede*. He did not live in the village, though he is regarded as being from the same lineage of the most important *dede* lineage within it, and most of the households in one *mahalle* are his *talip* (Part 4.3 below).

The account is interesting in several different ways. I have translated it from a tape which the *dede* filled at my request, keeping as closely as possible to the form the original explanation took. As the *dede* was telling the story to an audience (there were several other people in the room), and not with an eye to making a coherent written account, the events described are perhaps not immediately clear.

The man mentioned as the founder of the lineage at the outset of the story is *Muhitin Arabi*. *Muhitin Arabi* is one of the most famous of all Muslim mystics, [11] and

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[11] See Nicholson (1921, chapter 2).

that a lineage should claim descent from him is not surprising, given the esteem in which he is held. The *dede* describes *Muhitin Arabi* 's early travels, and explains that finally he is martyred in *Şam* (Damascus) by fanatics. A Sultan comes to *Şam* and solves a riddle which *Muhitin Arabi* had had inscribed on the mosque before he died. This leads the Sultan to discover a cauldron of gold, from which those who are praying in a mosque believe they are going to benefit. They abandon their prayer to receive their share. This barbed insult at those who worship in a mosque is typical of the Alevi disdain for mosques and the type of genuflecting prayer which takes place in them.

The action then shifts suddenly to *Hasan*, a descendant of *Muhitin Arabi*, who has become a farmer. He is approached by *Haci Bektaş*, who shows him that he has *keramet* because he can make melons ripen only just after they are planted. Later, at his house, where *Haci Bektaş* has become a guest, *Hasan* is invited to attend the monastery of *Haci Bektaş*. He agrees, and there is trained until one day he performs another miracle by boiling a cauldron with only a handful of grass as fuel. Realising that he is now ready to set out on his own, *Haci Bektaş* sends him to the sub-province to be a *dede*, the *dede* from whom the *dede* telling the story claims his immediate descent at the conclusion of the story. Thus, the narrator is implying to the audience that his lineage has performed many miracles, has received professional training and authorisation from *Haci Bektaş*, and is descended further back, in its own right, from a great mystic. He does so with wit, and in a manner calculated to please.

Account 4.2

Hasret Muhitin Arabi came to *Konya* in the year twelve hundred and two, married there, came to *Kayseri* in Anatolia, there had a child, *Hasan*, and came to .. From ... he went to *Malatya* and from *Malatya* to *Şam*.[12] There, when he said, 'What you worship is under my feet', he was martyred by fanatics. (But) he had had written on the mosque, 'When *sin* comes to *şin* '[13] my being will become apparent, so says *Muhitin Arabi* '.

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12 *Konya*, *Kayseri*, and *Malatya* are provincial towns in today's Turkey. *Şam* is the Arabic term for Damascus.

13 *Sin* is the fifteenth letter, *Şin* the sixteenth letter of the Ottoman alphabet.

Two hundred years pass, and a Sultan of Turkey, *Yavus Selim* comes to *Şam*.. He sees the writing and solves it; *sin* means 'yours', *şin* means 'troops'[14] (and he asks) 'Where is this man's grave?' (They reply) 'When *Muhitin Arabi* said, 'What you worship is under my feet', they martyred him.' 'Where?' 'Over there by the mosque'. 'Dig!' (says the Sultan) They dig and there appears a cauldron of gold.

'Aghh', they say, 'The Sultan will give out all the gold to those who are praying'. They empty out of the mosque, half-way through the prayers. 'Haa! This seems to have been a great man' (says the Sultan) 'what you really worship is money. Your God is money. You've killed this fellow and made him a martyr. Show me his grave!' They hadn't put him in a grave. They buried him in a ditch in a cemetary on the mountain top. *Yavuz Selim* found his grave and there had made a memorial, a monastery.

One summer day when *Hasan* from that lineage was sowing water melons *Haci Bektaş* came to his farm and there directed; 'Farmer, go and get us a water melon and we'll eat it'. The farmer replied, 'How can I get a water melon, I've just planted them?' At *Haci Bektaş's* side was a *derviş*. The *derviş* said, 'A kindness has life, go to the first row you sowed and look'. *Hasan* went to the far part of the field. The plant had grown, developed fruit, and three melons were ready. He took the three melons and placed them in front them. The *derviş* took two, and left one for the farmer. The people there, on seeing *hızır*, begin to day-dream (of riches), they are not able to know that these are developed ones (*ermiş kişi*)[15] They rise and leave. A little later *Hasan* says, 'Ah!, I was sowing melons and they ripened. These people were people with grace (*keramet*), developed people'. He goes after them, but can't find them. Returning to his house he sees that they have become his guests.

The *derviş* said, 'This is *Haci Bektaş Veli*, descended from the twelve *imam*.' They embraced.[16] *Haci Bektaş Veli Sultan* said, 'Do you want children and success or saintly influence and a country ?'(*Evlat mı isten? devlet mi isten, himmet, ülke mi isten?* '[17]) On the farmer saying, 'I have no children, nor success..', his wife dug him in the ribs (she spoke true Turkish)[18] and said 'My sovereign, with my man, as partners, we'll sort it out and then say what we want.' On going outside she said to her husband, 'What a stupid man you are! You'd ask for success and children, success and children are wordly goods, they come and go. Let's ask for saintly influence (*himmet*) and country (*ülke*)'. They said, 'Let's ask for country', and went inside.

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14 Ie. He construes the riddle as meaning 'When your troops come, my being will become clear '.

15 The *dede* is making a contrast between two types miraculous influence. The first is *hızır*, the spirit or embodiment of nature. *Hızır* is widely supposed to take the appearance of an old man. He is renowned for performing miracles for those who have been polite to him such as saving the life of a person in a difficult situation, or warning them of an impending danger. The miraculous influence with which the *dede* contrasts this is that of a person with *keramet*, one who has reached the fourth *Hakikat* level and is at contact with God. In the story, the onlookers understandably mistake the miracle which they have seen performed as being one by *hızır*, and do not realise the true 'developed' character of *Haci Bektaş*. *Hasan* begins to realise his mistake, and when he returns home, *Haci Bektaş* finally reveals himself and presents *Hasan* with the opportunity to study with him. On *hızır* see Ocak (1990). For a discussion of the opposition between nature and religion see Suziki (1954).

16 That is, they performed a *niyaz*, a ritual embrace, 'salutation of a dervish to his superior' (Redhouse, page 889). *Niyaz* is very significant in *Tarikat* rituals in the village, and is returned to below.

17 *Ülke* is the normal Turkish word for country, it may have a nuance of which I am not aware.

18 *Öz Türkçe*, literally 'Original Turkish'. The term used by the language reformers to denote Turkish before it borrowed extensively from Arabic. See Chapter 5, Section 3.

'*Haci Bektaş Veli*, give us saintly influence and country.' The *Haci* said, 'To give saintly influence and country does not resemble giving children or success. If you want to take duty (*hizmet*) in my monastery, and receive saintly influence, then you are welcome'.

And they went to the monastery of *Haci Bektaş*. Whilst they were there, performing their duties, a son was born. *Haci Bektaş Veli Sultan* said, 'I would give him his name, let it be *Muhitin*.' He gave him *Muhitin Arabi* 's name, his grandfather's.

In *Haci Bektaş* 's convent there is a black cauldron, which takes twelve oxen. He who can make the cauldron boil with a hand-full of dried grass, he takes the rank of *halife*.[19] After seven years service (*Hasan* did this) and *Haci Bektaş Veli Sultan* said, 'Let your name be from now on *Hasan Bostan Kollu* (Melon-Arm Hasan).' He wrote out his licence in the name of *Bostan Kollu Hasan*, and said, 'Go! teach in the villages of...in the area of ... In the *Tarikat* of *Bektaşi Nazi* if there are those who are not speaking to one another make them at peace, make two hearts one, do all that it necessary for people to live humanely'.

When there he died, according to his last wish he was buried in the field in *Kayseri*, in the village of ..., where the melon ripened. His tomb is there. Some of his sons stayed in ... village, others in *Susesi* village. One who was called ... came to .. in the village now named ... I, .., am from this family.

In sum, the *Buyruk* provides the villagers with a blue-print of the roles which different people should fulfill, traditions by which they can justify their position and reminders as to various rituals they can conduct. On the other hand it does not replace the rich oral accounts which justify the position of the *dede* such as the one just described, makes little attempt to tie itself down as to the specifics of daily life in any one place, is not used as a precise ritual handbook, nor does it impose a legislative code (as we shall see in the last part of this chapter).

In the following sections, I concentrate on religion as a source of social control. Because the *Buyruk* is not used as a book of law, but only molds the practice of religion via the influence of the *dede*, to establish the immediate connection between any one piece of ritual and the *Buyruk* is not vital. Nevertheless, the villagers stress its importance, and I found many passages illuminated so well the exegesis the villagers themselves offered that I have inserted quotations from it.

Bektaşi texts and the Alevi

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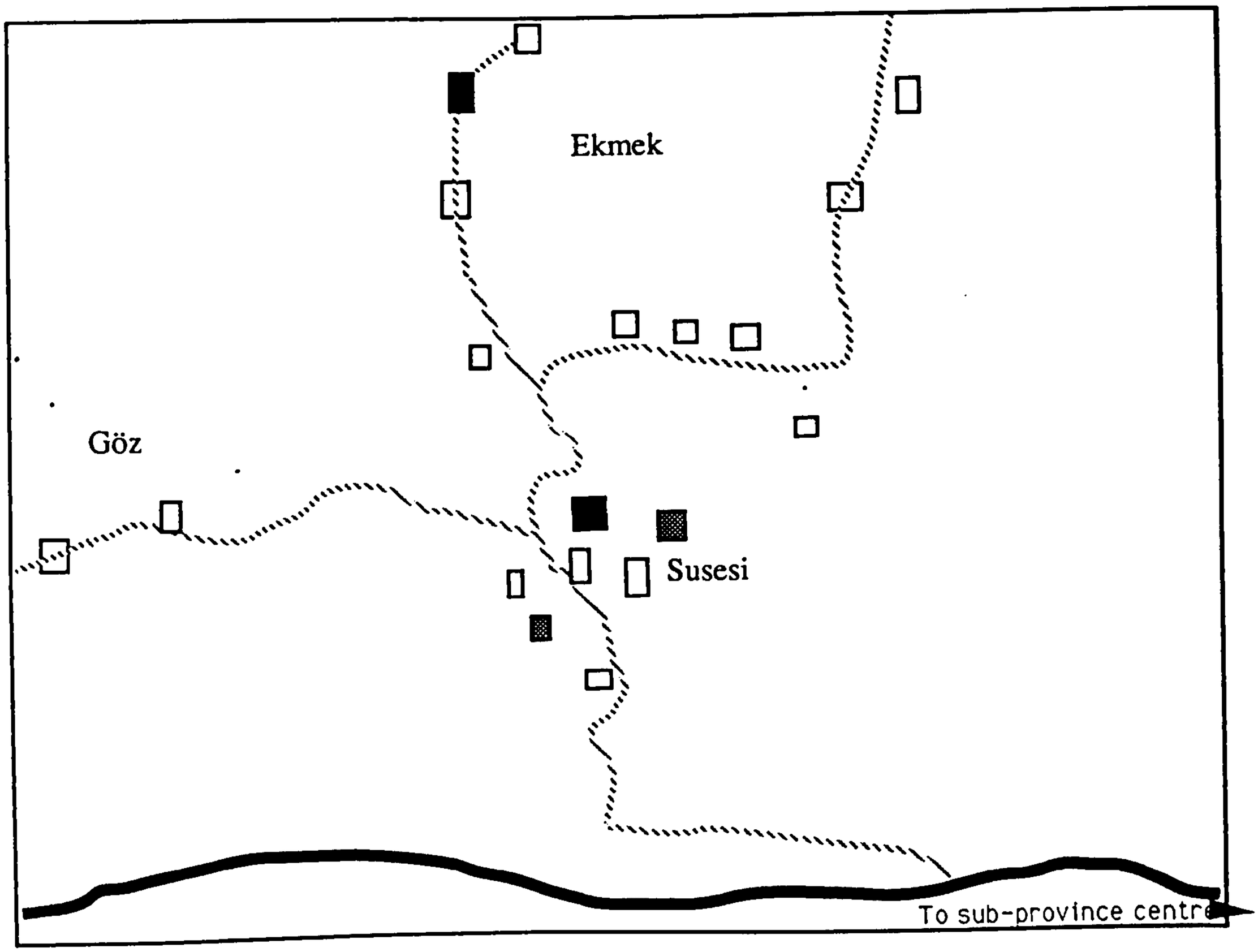
19 In the Alevi context *halife* is used to mean the right to practice *dedelik*.

Map 4.1 Indicating the location of dede lineages in Susesi, Ekmek and Göz



Key

= Dirt track

= Main road

= Mahalle (village quarter) with no dede

= Mahalle partly consisting of dede

= Mahalle entirely consisting of dede

The *Buyruk* is brought to the village by the *efendi*. They also periodically bring *Bektaşi* texts and histories, some written recently by themselves, but none of these appears to have been referred to by *dede* currently practicing. This is more attributable to the lack of literary inclination of the *dede* in the village than any reluctance to use *Bektaşi* doctrine. Many of the prayers and rituals I heard and recorded bear extremely close resemblance to those described by Birge in his *History of the Bektashi Dervishes*, (first published in 1937). Birge himself appears not to have heard of the *Buyruk*. He does makes an occasional reference to *Imam Cafer*, whom the Alevi regard as its author, affirming that he is revered by the *Bektaşi*.

Part 4.3 Dede and their role

Map 4.1 opposite shows the three Alevi villages which I know best; *Susesi*, *Ekmek* and *Göz*. Those *mahalle* in which there are *dede* are shaded; *Göz* has no *dede*, one *mahalle* in *Ekmek* consists entirely of *dede*, otherwise it has none. One *mahalle* in *Susesi* likewise is all *dede*, and two *mahalle* have *dede* lineages among them but are not entirely *dede*.

Dede lineages often have much longer genealogies then lineages with no claim to holy status. Sometimes these accounts include descriptions of moves from place to place which are reflected in an assumption of local agnatic links. The *dede* lineage in *Tepe mahalle* in *Susesi* is one of these. They trace their immediate descent to *dede* who live about a day's journey away across the valley, and say that men left *Susesi* to move on to two other villages, the one about seven hour's walk away, the other twice that distance. The long description above (4.2) was given to me by one of the *dede* from that further village. Not all *dede* lineages give such detailed accounts. The *dede* lineage in *Ekmek* say they come from a holy founder who lived on the Black Sea coast, where his tomb now lies. The two other *dede* lineages in *Susesi* simply assert, much more vaguely, that they came from a wandering, Nomadic past. This lack of specifity appears to coincide with a lack of active *dede* among these lineages.

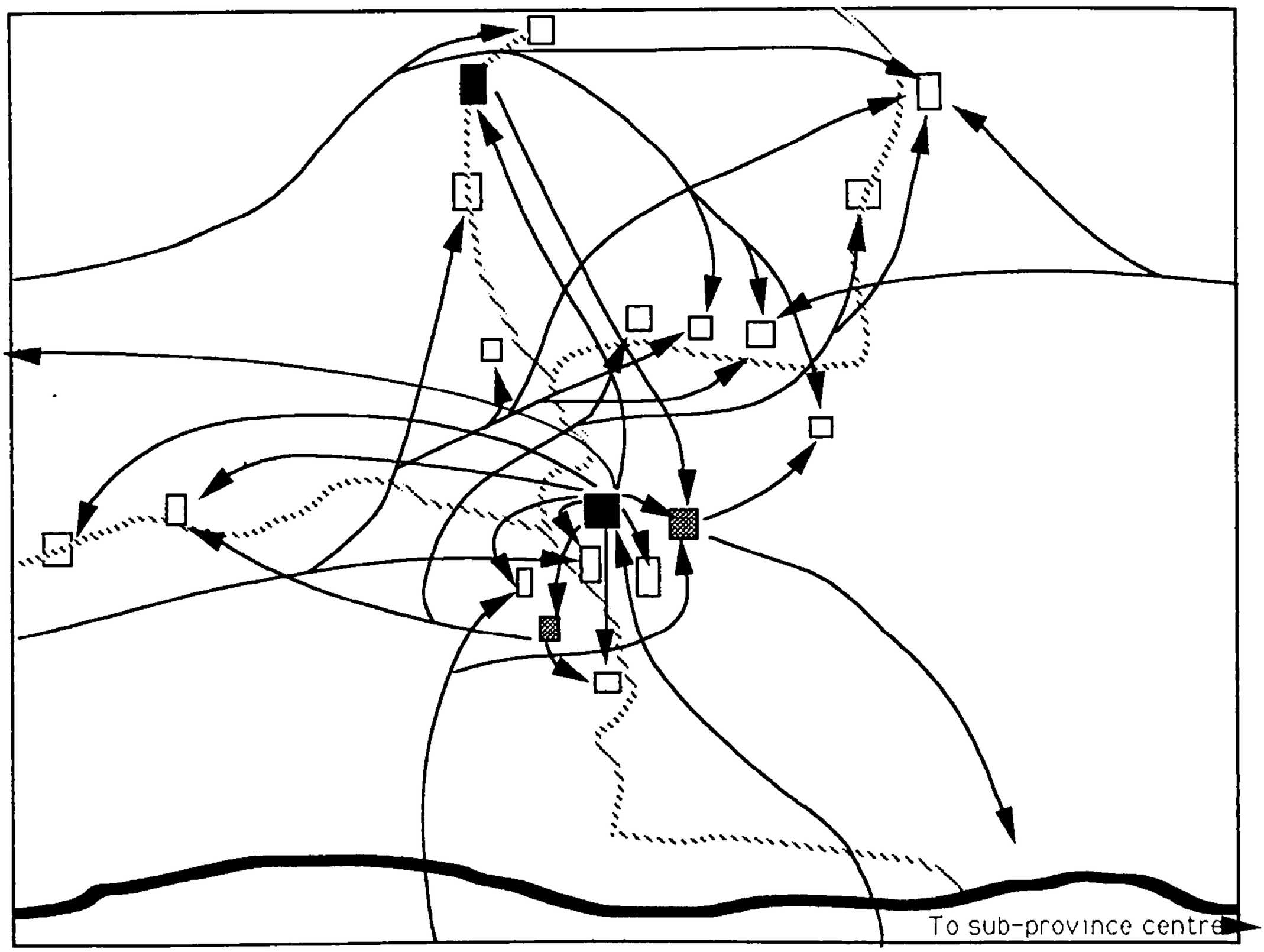
As explored in Part 1 above, the immediate reason for a lineage being accepted as *dede* is that they are sanctioned by Haci Bektash as being so. These claims are supported by myths which trace *keramet* within the lineage, and, from a wider perspective, are embodied within a cosmology, the four doors, which assumes that some men are closer to God than others. The actual requirements and function of a *dede* at a day to day level are more specific. To be accepted as a wise *dede* and shown respect accordingly, a *dede* must be;

> Temperate in character, careful with his words and refrain from swearing.
>
> Hospitable.
>
> Honest in his dealings with others.
>
> In full possession of all his faculties, and able to mediate between factions, and people, with skill.
>
> Fluent in the services and ritual which comprise *Tarikat* lore, and able to comment intelligently on its interpretation within the community.

In return, besides the respect of the community, *dede* are entitled to dues for any service rendered. In 1989 this was usually 10,000 lira, about £3, and is referred to as *hak kulak*. *Dede* are also entitled to the pelt (*post*) and breast (*göğüş*) of any sacrifice which is offered to them and a small annual due.

Not all the *dede* in one *dede* lineage are active. Rather, one man gradually becomes the most sought after as the most competent and accepted by the rest of the lineage as the most fit to lead *Tarikat* ceremonies. Seniority given by age is an important factor. No son can practice *dedelik* whilst his father is still alive, and it is emphatically not done (*ayıp*) for a son to express any ambition to take over his father's position. Age helps also in becoming the centre of attention. It is bad manners to interrupt a man older than oneself, thus in the daily struggle to show that one has a better knowledge of Islam, and a wiser interpretation than the other *dede*, the oldest man in the gathering can talk as long as he desires. Ultimately, though, whether a man is successful or not is demonstrated by the willingness of his followers *talip* to respect

Map 4.2. Indicating dede and dede/talip links



Key

= Dirt track

= Dede/talip link (the arrow points toward the talip)

= Main road

= Mahalle (village quarter) with no dede

= Mahalle partly consisting of dede

= Mahalle entirely consisting of dede

his judgement, the number of sacrifices he is offered by them, the number of followers who come to his house and the frequency with which he is asked for advice.

Dede/talip links

Among the three villages as a whole, about one in ten households are accepted as being *dede*. This ratio appears to be constant in the other Alevi villages of the sub-province and in the surrounding area. Every lineage whether *dede* or not, is *talip* to a *dede* lineage. The *dede/talip* links for *Ekmek, Göz* and *Susesi* are given in the map opposite.

The *dede* lineages attached to any *mahalle* can be traced by the arrows which terminate at it. The tail of the arrow leads back to the location of the *dede* lineage. Where a tail merges with another it signifies that the *talip* have that dede *lineage* in common. As no *talip* lineage has more than one *dede*, the number of *talip/dede* configurations in any one *mahalle* is the same as the number of arrows going toward it. For example, some of the households in the lowest *mahalle* in *Susesi, Aşağı*, are attached to *dede* who come from *Batı*, the rest to *dede* who come from *Tepe* (both *mahalle* in *Susesi*). Other *mahalle* possess *dede* who come from outside the immediate area, this is shown when the tail of an arrow goes off the map.

The *dede* lineages in *Ekmek, Susesi* and *Göz* possess *talip* within these villages and among other villages in the area, as can be seen by the arrows leaving their *mahalle* on the map. The *dede* in *Tepe* are by far the most significant. I would estimate they have fifty *talip* lineages, comprising about five or six hundred households in all spread out in about fifteen villages.

The *talip/dede* links are said by the villagers to be set by Haci Bektash himself. The *talip* has no right to break this link unless the *dede* are inadequate to perform their duties or they behave in a dishonest way. *Dede*, however, are entitled to re-allocate *talip* as they wish. This may happen because a *dede* lineage becomes

temporarily bereft of good *dede* (see account 4.3 below). It may also happen when a *dede* lineage splits on the death of a prominent *dede* and cannot come to any compromise about how to share out the remaining *talip* lineages. A near-by lineage, for example, told me that they divided into two sub-lineages over such a discussion, one half agreed to accept the bulk of the lineage's fields in return for giving up *dedelik*, whilst the other half took over all the *talip*. If a lineage does not split, and has many *talip*, then it is the agreed custom to rotate responsibility for a number of *talip* lineages between different competent *dede* within the lineage. In practice, one *dede* appears to gradually become dominant over the others and when the time comes round for the less powerful *dede* to run ceremonies, they defer to the most highly regarded *dede* of the lineage.

The link between *dede* and *talip* can vary greatly. At its strongest, a *talip* lineage is proud of their *dede*, venerates their interpretations and enlists their services for help in many matters to do with their daily lives; not just to mediate quarrels but to help on their behalf in marriage negotiations (*dünürlük*), with fertility and health in special rituals, and, through frequent visits and talks, continuous advice on how to organise their lives. At a less close level, a *talip* lineage may offer a sacrifice when the *dede* visits, and invite him in the event of a very serious quarrel. At a more distant level still, a *talip* may do no more than attend an annual service, the *görgü*, (discussed below), pay a very small annual due and be polite to his *dede* on meeting. At worst, a *talip* may reject their *dede* entirely (I return to this last possiblity in the next chapter).

The power relationship between *dede* and *talip* is thus very subtle. If the *talip* wish it so, the *dede* can play an enormous part in their lives and influence many of their actions. If they do not, then simply by not inviting the *dede* they need have almost nothing to do with him. Outside the *cem* and the *görgü*, that is, outside the two most important collective *Tarikat* ceremonies, the *dede* is not supposed to mediate in disputes unless asked to do so, and the religious ceremonies themselves take place only if the *talip* offer a sacrifice to their *dede*. On the other hand, the *dede* lineages hold a

monopoly of *Tarikat* practice, and through the rule that a *dede* can change their *talip* at will, but the *talip* cannot change their *dede* , have great flexibility in the way that they can retain their position over the *talip* through times when their influence might otherwise be lost. The following account illustrates these points.

Account 4.3

The *dede* in *Batı mahalle* in *Susesi* have *talip* in both *Ekmek* and *Göz* as well as in *Aşağı mahalle*. Among these *talip* lineages, the present *Batı dede* are remembered principally for their late grandfather, who was said to be a fine minstrel, *aşık* , as well as being a wise *dede*. His eldest son moved to Germany. There he married the wife of his *musahıp* (a religious partnership struck between men, said to be the same strength and bound by the same rules, as kin, discussed in more detail below). A scandal resulted, both because he already had a wife in the village whom it appeared he was neglecting, and because, by marrying the wife of his *musahıp* , it was said that it was as if he had married his sister.[20] The adverse reaction was so severe that he was unable to return to the village to practice *dedelik* and was forced to pay a large sum of money to the family he had left in the village, enough for them to buy a tractor. His son, though still in the village, and interested in being a *dede* has so far been unable to assume sufficient authority. A nephew, who enjoys great respect because of his honesty and the efficiency with which he works does not wish to become a *dede*. This leaves only one other nephew of suitable age, who is not respected enough to be consulted over daily matters or brought in to solve disputes. Thus there are no adequate *dede* in the lineage to administer the *talip*.

In practice, if the *Batı dede* visit their *talip* they are treated with respect. Their one very admired figure refers all *talip* who come to him for advice to the *Tepe dede*. For ceremonies, the *Batı dede* still sit in that part of the room reserved for *dede* (see below) but they invite the *Tepe dede* to conduct their ritual duties. In the meantime, the son of the disgraced man, is studying *dedelik* with his father-in-law, a retired school-master. This man comes from across the valley, about a day's walk away, and is one of the most self-confident and successful *dede* in the area.

From the sociological point of view, the wisdom in making one *dede* responsible for the whole of a patrilineage is clear. Patrilineal groups are at once the residential and social core of the community, and occasionally a whole *mahalle* is regarded as coming from the same descendant. Disputes within this group can be brought under an authority to which all are equally subservient, and in the event of disputes breaking out between lineages, the *dede* is equally well placed to represent the whole of his *talip* lineage vis a vis another. He therefore becomes a break on the

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20 There is no word for incest in Turkish.

escalation of conflict, a powerful force which operates across the natural points of fission within the community.

This position as opposed to the patrilineal authority on which much of the social order is based is reflected in the normal village word for *dede*, *dayı*, 'mother's brother'. *Dayı* is used throughout the Alevi villages as a word of respect for an elderly, revered figure and is a compliment. This is the reverse of the Sunni villages, where *amca*, father's brother, is the equivalent way to address such an old man for whom one has respect. *Amca* is only used in the Alevi villages as an over-familiar term of endearment, to a man whom one does not wish to address as *dayı* .

The following two examples show *dede* at work. The first is by one of the *dede* in the village, recalling his first triumph. This I have compiled from notes made during our conversation. The second is from *Susesi* and involves the *muhtar*. It illustrates the way the *dede* may attempt to smooth over quarrels which have developed from individuals to a state of collective *küs* ('on not-speaking terms' (described with regard to the Sunni villages in Chapter 2). I collected account from one of the participants, and over the next days, talked with other members of the village in order to confirm the details.

Account 4.4

> My father told me it was time to go to the *medrese*. I went, learnt how to make *muska*, and wandered through the villages making money by selling these charms.
>
> I was resting with a friend one day and several brothers walked past, they passed without a *selam*. 'These people are not Muslim,' I said, 'to pass without saying anything.' My friend explained that for ten years they had not spoken because of an argument about water that was going through the courts. I said, 'I'll sort it out', so one day they, myself and my friend met together. I explained what *Müslümanlık* is, that to fight is wrong. After a long discussion they said, 'We'll make peace but what about the courts?' They decided simply not to go any more to the courts and for this I took from each a *teneke* (measure) of wheat. Thus I made money.
>
> Eventually a note came to them from the courts to say that they should attend their hearing. 'We have made peace', they said. On asked why they replied, 'A *dede* came who also knew *hocalık*. We listened to him and made peace.' On hearing this the judge was so curious he asked to meet me, The next time I was in that village we did so, and we had a meal together.

Account 4.5

Kol mahalle (the closest *mahalle* to Susesi belonging to *Ekmek*) left their goats to graze freely on some fields below their territory. They were eating some of the crops of the *muhtar*. He sent warning to *Hasan* of *Kol* that they must not do this again.

The next day, however, the goats were again left free to roam. (Thereupon) the *muhtar* collected thirty five of the men of the *mahalle* together and saying 'Let's go and get those goats', took up the village rifle.[21] The rest of the men gathered up their rifles, which they had secretly hidden. They took the goats to a pasture belonging to *Yüksek mahalle*. The goatherd, son of *Hasan*, ran away when he heard them coming and gave the news to *Kol* that they were being taken.

Hasan came running after his goats to save them. *Hasan* 's five brothers came running after him as they heard the news and after the brothers came running the rest of the *mahalle*, who are anyway all related. On arriving at the pasture *Hasan* began swearing at the collected *Yüksek mahalle*. As he shouted the *muhtar* let off the rifle, once to the ground, and once to the sky. On hearing the sound *Hasan* shouted,'They'll kill us!' but still advanced to about 100 metres before stopping. On seeing how close he had come, some of the *muhtar* 's friends said, 'Let's get that man'. Immediately some of *Yüksek mahalle* ran, grabbed *Hasan* and dragged him in front of the *muhtar*, who hit him twice.

Just then the brothers of *Hasan* arrived and began to swear. At last, though, they said that would they give whatever they were asked. *Yüksek mahalle* refused this offer and began to drive the goats toward the village. The elder brother of *Hasan* said, 'Don't, whatever you do, do that!' At which the *muhtar* said, 'I have one friend in *Kol*, *Mehmet*. If you fetch *Mehmet* I will discuss things.' They fetched *Mehmet* accordingly and after discussion, on pain of not repeating the offence, *Yüksek mahalle* released *Hasan* and the goats.

A year later a problem emerged between the same people. *Hasan* collected his lineage and, crossing a boundary common to both parties one night, levelled trees, cleared the ground and planted wheat. The *muhtar* waited his opportunity for five or six months. The two *mahalle* were already *küs*, so they did not speak to one another. As the crop was maturing the *muhtar* gathered some men, this time from the village as a whole and reaping it, threw it on to one of his lineage's fields nearby. *Kol* found out in the morning but were unable to do anything about it. Relations were now so bad that they were unable to pass through our village and had to go by the hill road.

Two months later two of the *muhtar* 's cows, who were grazing freely on the *mahalle* pasture, did not come back. There was no herdsman, they were grazing freely. *Yüksek mahalle* collected together and, with the village watchman, searched for two days. *Dursun dede*,[22] and a few others, met in the *muhtar*'s house and decided that they had looked everywhere, they had not been eaten by a wolf because there are no remains. Accordingly, *Hasan* and his brothers must have taken them. We sent news telling them to give back our cows but they denied taking them. Then we heard that someone had seen them being grazed in *Kol mahalle*. The *muhtar*, saying 'I'm going to kill that man' took the rifle and ran to find him. At last he came back, being unable to do so. Four of us from the

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21 Each village is permitted to possess one rifle, for which the *muhtar* is responsible.
22 The most influential and important dede in the village.

muhtar's lineage, *Ismail hoca* and *Dursun dede* went to the *muhtar* of *Ekmek*, *Hakkı*. *Hakkı* said he had no reason to interfere but would call the *Hasan* brothers. Four of them came. The village council of *Ekmek* came also. *Hakkı* said, ' If you have the cows give them back'. They refused all knowledge, however, and after half an hour got up and left. *Hakkı* was powerless to do anything about this. We couldn't go to the courts because this would mean that we were powerless to sort out our own affairs. There were threats made daily.

Ten days later the senior of the *Hasan* brothers came to the *muhtar* 's house, where we were sitting. He went with the *muhtar* to another room and said we *Kol* want the promise that if we are able to find your cows, then we can have absolute peace. The next day the *muhtar*, *Ismail Hoca* and three of us from the *muhtar* 's lineage went to *Kol*. They slaughtered a sheep, gave *rakı* and we made peace. They gave back one cow. In the place of the other, which they had eaten, they put money.

The reconciliation was achieved by *Dursun dede*. He waited until the market day in the sub-province centre,[23] when he was able to meet the *Kol* brothers, and told them that if they went to the *muhtar's* house and asked for peace then they would have a favourable reply. *Dursun dede* then told the *muhtar* that if the *Kol* brothers came to his house to make peace he should give them a hospitable welcome. When eventually they came to offer terms he persuaded the *muhtar* to accept them.

Part 4.4 Social control and the Tarikat

So far, much of the social organisation I have described is familiar to social anthropology. *The Nuer* showed the way holy men who are also mediators may be used in a patrilineal segmentary society,[24] and Evans-Pritchard himself illustrated that these ideas can be applied to Muslim societies in *The Bedouin of Cyrenacia*.[25] Following this last work have come a number of others; for example Lewis' *Pastoral Nomads* or Gellner's *Saints of the Atlas*.[26] Both demonstrate the way tarikat leaders may be used as neutral figures to solve disputes. Most recently, Van Bruinessen's *Agha, Shaikh and the State* provides a wealth of data showing that the Kurdish tribes in the east of Turkey used *şeyh* to order relations between warring tribes as the ability of central government to administer them grew less.[27]

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23 The market-place is neutral ground, in which one should not pursue individual quarrels. See Chapter 1.
24 Evans-Pritchard (1940).
25 Evans-Pritchard (1949).
26 Lewis (1961), and also Lewis (1984), Gellner (1969).
27 Van Bruinessan (1991).

There are striking differences, however, in the Alevi version of social control and that of the tribal conflict-leading-to-reconciliation model. Tribal groups such as the Nuer, the Berbers, the Sunni Kurds and the Somali Bedouins all possess a highly unstable, aggressive ethos within which men compete to defend their honour. If a dispute does not remain contained within interchanges between two men, their agnates join in. This triggers the segmentary lineage organisation, which owing to the flexibility with which different levels can combine or split, allows many different alliances to form, so many that almost every situation can be first provoked, then contained within opposing segments of roughly equal weight.[28]

The Alevi differ in that, though they do possess shallow lineages, they lack a developed segmentary structure with which to order disputes at different levels. In place of such a segmentary system, they supplement the mediating function of the *dede* by holding collective rituals at which all must be at peace whatever the patrilineal relations between the participants (examples are given below). In addition, the Alevi living philosophy is pervaded by an idea that individual salvation lies in avoiding confrontation. This way of life is made coherent within the Islamic tradition by having recourse to the great body of esoteric lore present in Islamic mystical ideas. It conflicts sharply with the Muslim groups discussed by Evans-Pritchard, Lewis and Van Bruinessan in that, although the tribesman use members of tarikat groups to mediate in their quarrels they do not avail themselves of the mystical philosophy extolled by them. *Some* tribesman join the tarikat and learn its teachings, but the great majority do not.

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28 The actual groupings on the ground do not necessarily accurately reflect real kinship divisions, as Kuper (1982) stresses in his criticism of segmentary theory. (See also Holy (1979)) Indeed it is obvious that they could not (and Kuper misses this point entirely) because the most important function of the segmentary lineage is to balance conflict. Real lineages are never equal in strength, but temporary alliances with an agnatic core can easily form and change in size until both sides are opposing each other with equal force, and then a reasonable settlement reached. With unequal forces or strict adherence to lineal links this would not be possible. This was brought home to me by a Berber tribesman during my M.A. fieldwork in the Atlas Mountains; when I asked him why more, related villages did not join in a fight between his and the next valley, he replied, 'But why should they join in when the forces between the two sides are already equal?'
The interplay of the segmentary organisation and the aggressive ethos with regard to Evans-Pritchard's research is explored in Douglas (1980 Chapter 6). See also Jamous (1981), who stresses the way men's defence of their honour leads to conflict.

All the Alevi, on the other hand, join in with their *Tarikat* as a matter of course, and its teachings are absolutely intertwined in the everyday life and outlook of every member of Alevi society.[29]

For example, ideally, every man must marry. Having married, according to the *Tarikat* rules, he should form a partnership with another man who is also married, so that their two households are indissolubly linked. This bond is known as *musahip*. The partnership is formed by both men sacrificing a sheep, and holding a *cem* together. When it is completed, the two men are said to be related just as if they are brothers, and their two households are supposed to act toward each other accordingly; to go in and out of each others' houses freely, to borrow money or goods in times of need, and to rely on each others' support and attendance in times of need such as marriage or death.[30]

In the *Buyruk*, the custom is said to derive from the way *Ali* and *Muhammed* became one (cf. *Buyruk* section 2, given in the previous chapter). The villagers did not mention such a derivation to me, but they do say that only those couples who are *musahip* to each other should dance the '*sema* of the forty' which takes place in the *cem*, only they can perform the 'twelve duties' and that only they can receive the sacrificial morsels (*lokma*) from the *dede* (see part 4 below).

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29 It is a question of emphasis, of which of the ideas within a society are bound up with the conception of correct behaviour. Alevi men are jealous and defend their honour, of course, but when they do, it is regarded as laudatory from the point of view of personal salvation not to reciprocate, and to allow themselves to be brought to peace. Among tribesman, revenge, either in the form of an indemnity or reciprocal violence, is accepted as an appropriate response to a tort, and the idea of peace is much less articulated. Tribal Alevi, for example, the Alevi Kurds, presumably possesses equally a highly articulated idea of revenge and also one of the appropriateness of behaving in a peaceful fashion. Alevi Kurdish ethnography is scanty, but there is a hint of the difficulties such a volatile society faces in Bumke's article on the Kurdish Alevi, in which he describes the way *pir* are loosing their influence, and tribal fights flourish accordingly. (Bumke, in Andrews (1989).

30 See also Gökalp (1980, 215-219), where he suggests that from the functional point of view, *musahip* links people together in a way which cuts across patrilineal groups, thus aiding cohesion in the society.

In *Susesi*, whilst I was in the village, no new *musahıp* partnerships were formed, and they said that none had been since the late seventies. Several households in *Tepe mahalle* (that with the active *dede*) were linked in this way, however, and the villagers often affirmed the importance of *musahıp* in principle. Their explanations accorded very closely to the *musahıp* is explained in the *Buyruk* , and I give some relevant extracts in Part 4.2.2.

The sections below explore *Tarikat* and social order as follows. The first illustrates the villagers' conception of God as an omniscient authority with the power to send people to heaven or to hell. The second illustrates the *dede* 's ceremonial role, showing that they are understood to be the representative of God on earth to the *talip*. The third looks at a second, more esoteric conception of God; one that maintains that God is within all people, and that He can be reached by behaving according to the *edep* ideal, or through love, *aşk* , or being at peace with another. The fourth, and last part, discusses *Tarikat* collective rituals and illustrates the way the Alevi twin conception of God, that He is both imminant and transcendant, can be used in conjunction with the collective rituals to bring peace to the community.

Part 4.4.1 God as omniscient authority

In its fundamental assumption of the relationship between God and His people, the Alevi cosmology is similar to that of other Islamic societies. God, (for whom they have many names, but most usually *Allah* or *Tanrı*) is the supreme judge and the perceiver of all things. He is omnipotent, omniscient but merciful. After a person's death, according to their conduct on this earth He sends them to heaven or to hell, but He may be influenced by intercession (*sefaat*) on the dead person's behalf.

Whilst in great part a person is judged, whether man or woman, principally by the way that they have behaved during their lifetimes, the Alevi say that *Allah* can also be placated by a service held by those on earth in memory of the dead person, and by a

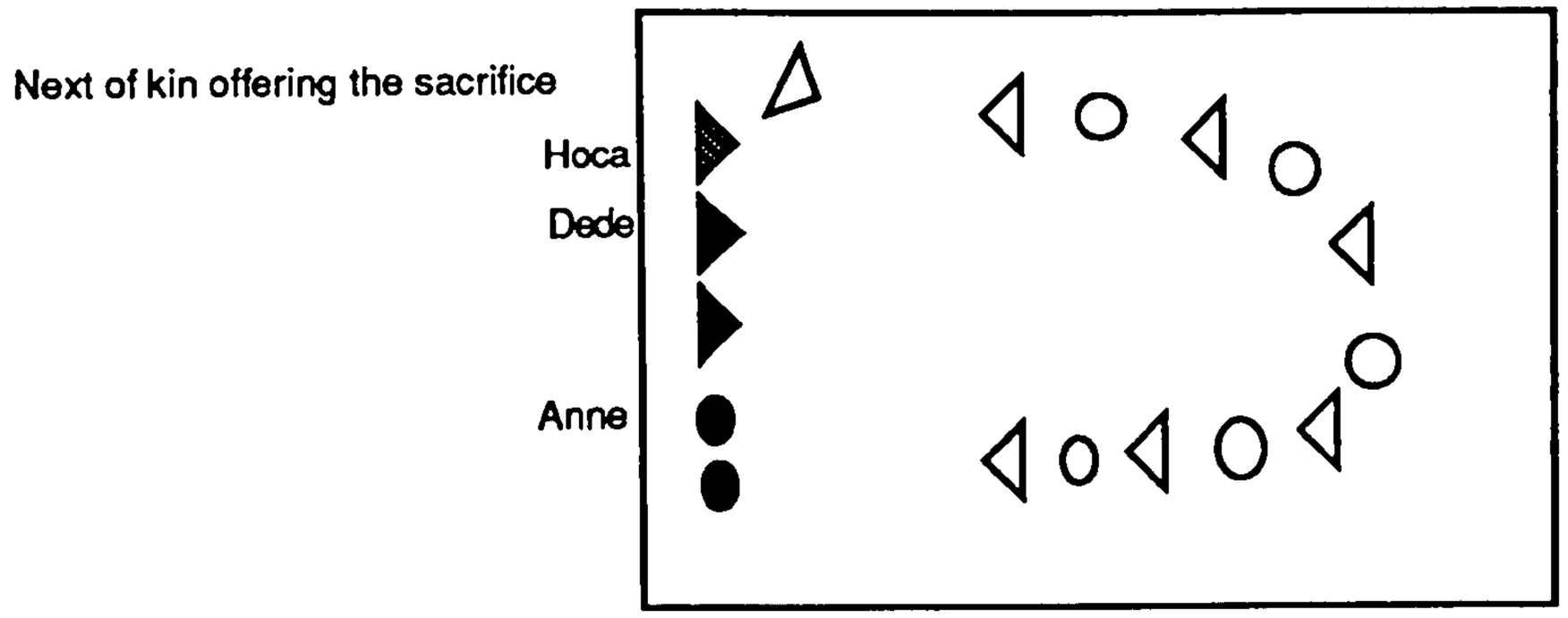
sacrifice offered to the community and eaten in His name. The service is known as *Dar çekme*, and the sacrifice as *Can ekmeği*.

Dar çekme

Çekme has several meanings, 'to draw out', 'to attract', 'to undergo'. The villagers seem to use it here in its last sense, thus the phrase becomes 'to undergo *dar* . '*Dar*' means several things; 'a situation of great difficulty', 'the gallows', 'the place where a person is judged'. All three meanings are pertinent to the overall connotation of *dar çekme*, which the villagers say is a direct attempt to influence God, or even to offer Him a bribe, *rüşvet*, as the deceased is standing before Him, and He is deciding his or her fate. We shall see below that *dar* is also used to describe the position of the *talip* as he or she sits in front of the *dede*.

The *dar* ceremony is held three days after a person's death. Some people say this is an appropriate interval because for the first three days the deceased is a guest in God's house, and only after this time has elapsed will He judge them. It is short, and I was never permitted to attend. I did, however, gain a detailed description from a friend. He furnished me with the diagram and the description below.

DAR CEREMONY



The ceremony takes place in the *ev*, main room, of the deceased person's house. The *dede* lineage of the dead person is invited to attend, as is a *hoca* (it must be an indigenous *hoca*, not a state-trained man, this being one of the ceremonies which are closed to non-Alevi). The *dede*, of whom there may be up to half a dozen, sit along one side of the room, the *anne* to their right, the *hoca* to their left, and the person offering the sacrifice to the left of them in turn. In front of the *dede* are, ranged alternately, male and female, twelve people of the village in a horse-shoe formation. The *dede* pronounces a brief prayer, and then the *hoca* reads a longer prayer. This long prayer is the central part of the ceremony. The *dede* then say a prayer to close the proceedings. The company then move to another room, where the sacrifice, *can ekmeği* (see below), usually a sheep, is eaten, having been blessed by a *dede* and boiled with *bulgur* wheat earlier during the day. Eating the sacrifice, unlike the ceremony itself, is open to all and I often joined in this.

Later, the village *hoca* let me take a copy of the long prayer. It assures God of His power and asks for His mercy. The requests to God are made in the name of many different figures in their *Tarikat* tradition, so that the prayer as a whole is a detailed account of their sacred allegiances. There are references to the Twelve *imam*, to the prophets, to the *ehli-beyt* , to famous *dervi*ş, to vocabulary used by many tarikat

orders such as *dergah,* 'monastery', and to *Horasan,* from whence the Alevi say their original teachers came. The provenance of the prayer is not clear - the *dede* of the village say that it was given to them by their forefathers to pass on to the *hoca* of their choice. It has no parallel in the *Buyruk*, which does not mention such a ceremony.

The passage below is representative of its tone, and consists of repeated requests revolving around the phrase *hakkı için*. I have rendered this 'in the name of' to try to capture some of its flow (Literally, *hak* means 'right', 'due' or 'truth' and *için* 'for' but the implication of the phrase taken together is ' for the respect due to the truth embodied in the name of..') *Hak* also is a common word for God, and occasionally there is a play on this double sense. I return to the reference to *Horasan* (in the last line) in the next chapter.

> O God! Our faces are black, our sins are many. ...do not refuse our prayer. In the name of your Godliness, in the name of the great, beautiful Light, in the name of *Muhammed Ali Nebi*, in the name of the cloaks of the Saints, in the name of *Mekke* and *Medine*, in the name of all the Prophets, in the name of the martyred soul of *İmam Hasan*, in the name of the blood of *Hüseyin*, and in the name of the great Twelve Imam, in the name of the tongues which are saying 'God is Great', in the name of the blood spilt by martyrs, in the name of the offerings made by the developed ones, in the name of the three, the seven and the forty...in the name of the Saints of *Horasan*...accept our prayer...

Can ekmeği

'*Can*' is a difficult word to translate. It usually means 'life force', ie. that which distinguishes animate from inanimate objects. ' That part of the disembodied spirit which, after death, is particular to the individual' is perhaps best in this context so that '*can ekmeği*' implies 'food (or bread) for the spirit of the dead person'. *Can ekmeği* may be held at any time that the relatives of a dead person wish to remember him or her, and not just after a *Dar çekme*. For it, a sacrifice is prepared and served with favourite foods (perhaps stuffed vine leaves, yoghurt with pasta, beans cooked with meat). A representative from all the households of the village should attend the meal, which in the summer is laid out in long trestled tables outside the house, and then leave

immediately after they have eaten. There is little ceremony other than the act of eating itself, except that the *dede* is invited to say a prayer. For example;

El hamdülilah
Lokmalar kabul ola
Ocaklar aydın ola
Yiyene helal ola
Yidilen delil ola
Geçmişlerin canına değir
On iki imama dergahına kayıt ola
Gerçeğe hu!

In the name of God,
Let (the) morsels be accepted,
Let hearths be lit
Let (only) permitted (foods come) to those eating
Let guides come to those being drawn
Let there be value to the souls of those past
Let (them) be registered in the monastery of the twelve *imam*
Attention to the truth![31]

Nearly all the lines of the prayer have more than one meaning, and refer to different aspects of *Tarikat* practice, but its supplicatory tone is clear. In the second line *lokmalar*, morsels, implies both the food which has just been eaten, and the entrails of a sacrificial sheep handed out by *dede* in a *cem* (see part 4.4.4 below). Hearth, *ocak*, refers both to the literal hearth in the house, to the lineage which owns the house and also to the *dede* attached to the house; a man may refer to his *dede*, for example, as 'our hearth', *ocağımız* . The final phrase, 'Attention to the truth!' is the normal way to close a *Tarikat* prayer.

Part 4.4.2 God's temporal authority

The *dede* represent God's authority on earth. Indeed, it is the presumption that *dede* are in some way qualitatively different from other men by their virtue of their closer contact with God which allows them to mediate in disputes.

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31 This prayer is very similar to one described by Birge (1937, page 167).

That the *dede* occupy an intermediary position between God and His followers, that they are His spokesmen and have the capability to help others contact Him is important not simply in giving the *dede* the authority to mediate in quarrels in everyday life but is also a key element in ritual. We have noted already that only *dede* may teach *Tarikat* doctrine or conduct *Tarikat* ceremonies. In *Tarikat* rituals, the focus of ceremonial activity is in the centre of the room, in a space called the *meydan*. *Meydan* literally means 'place', or 'square', but in the *Tarikat* it is a prayer rug spread out in front of the collected *dede*. At various occasions during the ceremony *talip* step onto the *meydan*, if men, having first taken off their socks and jacket. There, standing before their *dede*, the *talip* bow their heads, place their right foot over their left, and their right hand over their hearts. They refer to this as *dara durmak*, 'to be paused in a situation of *dar* ' (cf. the *dar çekme* ceremony above) and say that the position of the *talip* in front of the *dede* is parallel to that of a person who is standing before God (Cf. Part 5 below). Whilst in the *dar* position the *dede* may question a *talip* as to their conduct, approve their holding a duty, *hizmet*, (see below), declare a punishment for a misdemeanour or simply instruct them in the correct way to behave.

The following extracts from the *Buyruk* use the occasion when two couples become *musahip* to illustrate the ceremonial role of the *dede* as they speak to the *talip*. As I explain above, the *dede* in *Susesi* do not follow the *Buyruk* for exact guidance in how to conduct a ceremony, so it is unlikely that precisely the words below would be used. The themes, however, are pervasive, as can be seen by comparing the account below with the recording of a *dede* 's speech given in the next chapter. Indeed, we shall find that he quotes indirectly from the *pir* 's first long speech to the *musahip* .

Account 4. 6. Extracts from Buyruk section 11

MUSAHIP

At the place of reckoning (*dar meydanı*), in front of the *pir*, those who are about to become *musahip* cover their feet.

Rehber; 'Let there be love (*aşk*)!'

On this the five kiss the *meydan* and stand upright again.

Rehber; 'Hû, developed ones of *Tarikat* !'

Pir; 'Hû, *Şeriat* traveller. Where do you come from, where are you going?'

Rehber, 'We are coming from *Şeriat* and going to *Tarikat*.'

After the *rehber* has said this the five together leave the place of reckoning, go to the threshold, and come back. The *rehber* again begins speaking; 'Hû, developed ones of *Tarikat*!'

Pir; 'Hû, *Tarikat* traveller! Where do you come from, where are you going?'

Rehber, 'We are coming from *Tarikat* and going to *Marifet*.'

Again they turn back, they go to the threshold and again they stand upright.

Rehber, 'Hû, developed ones of *Marifet* !'

Pir, 'Hû, *Marifet* traveller! Where do you come from, where are you going?'

Rehber, 'We are coming from *Marifet* and going to the *Hakikat*, the secret.

Pir, 'You cannot go! There is snow, there are impassable mountains, there are unfordable rivers. You cannot cross these passes, you cannot pass these floods. There are great obstacles, there are very difficult surroundings. Peas made from iron are not eaten! Shirts made from grass are not worn. Those would come, come! If you would come, do not turn! The goods depart of those who come, the soul departs of those who turn! Die but offer yourself. Die! Do not turn from offering. This is the case! These affairs I have said to you, and I would have you hear, my children.'

Rehber, 'My *pir*, believing in God we have come to the being of the assembly, to the way of *Muhammed-Ali*, the presence *Hunkar Haci Bektaş Veli* and to the community of *Muhammed*, slaves to God, *talip* to *Hüseyin* believing, trusting in these, the names we remember. Our death is possible, our turning is not. Our heads are bare in front of you, our feet stripped. Our beings in the presence of reckoning, our faces to the ground. Whatever comes from the *pir* we have said *'Allah, Allah*, by *Allah'*, and stood at the place of reckoning. Our necks thinner than a hair's breadth, our road sharper than a sword. We have believed, we have brought forth faith. Together we have come to your presence.'

...The *pir* gives advice to the *musahip*;

'My children, you have become *musahip*. First, a *musahip* does not separate his house from another *musahip'* s. He does separate his goods. He will take without permission things from the other's house. If, may God prevent it, an argument emerges between you and if you stay at odds until the heat of July, then your pain will find no remedy.

If *musahip* does not speak plainly to *musahip*,
His way is crooked in the next,
Muhammed-Ali does not intercede for him,
Spoke *Muhammed*, listened *Ali*.

The *musahip* who parts ways with *musahip*

God will smite and overturn his foundations
Command him to the fire of seven hells
Spoke *Muhammed*, listened *Ali*.

For you to be *talip* I want four things of you. First, it is necessary to know the *Şeriat*. Secondly, it is necessary to know the *Tarikat*. Thirdly it is necessary to be a possessor of knowledge of *Marifet*. Fourthly it is necessary to be a person of the secret Truth. To be worthy of these things it is necessary not to tell lies, not to eat forbidden things, not to have sexual relations outside marriage, not to gossip, not to take up those things you have not set down with your hands, not to say "I have seen" of those things you have not seen with your eyes. It is necessary not to trouble anybody else. You will do all those things I have said. You will show respect to those greater, you will love those lesser. That is, to follow those things Great God has decreed, those things he has forbidden you will know are forbidden, those things he has made necessary you will know are necessary. You will not stray from God's path. Have you heard, my children!'

The *musahip* say in reply, 'By God! (Yes)...

Part 4.4.3 The immanent God and aşk

Omniscient authority is one, vital conception of God among the Alevi, but they have a second and complementary image. They say also that there is a part of God within all people, *ruh* 'soul'. Their story of the creation, for example goes as follows;

Account 4.7

God created the earth and the creatures who dwell upon it. He gave them each life, *can*, But He found that he had nothing with which to reflect Himself in them, so He gave them all a piece of Himself, *ruh*..

The *ruh* does not die on the death of the mortal body, but returns to God. During our earthly existence our *ruh* can be reached by entering into our hearts. One's heart can be reached by behaving with a certain orientation toward the world; by being patient, by not retaliating when injured, by doing deeds with no expectation of return, by hurting nobody, by being courteous, peaceable and honest in one's daily dealings and by respecting the rights due to others. *Kimsenin hakkını yemem*. 'I eat (abuse) no others' rights!' is a way they have of expressing this. An old minstrel once said to me *namazımız tahammül, aptesimiz sabırdır,* 'Our prayer is our forbearance, our (ritual) cleansing is patience'. Another, when a host had run out of cutlery, said 'one spoon is enough among seven dervish'. Another, that if struck on the cheek, one should turn the other side. Equally, in everyday conversation, the villages say that to give

something to another without expectation of reward is the equivalent of going on the *hac*, because one enters into the heart where *Mekke* truly lies.

The 'three conditions' of *Alevilik, 'Eline, diline, beline sahip ol!'* thus are a succinct statement of this overall orientation. A frequent interpretation, *yorum*, by *dede* of the 'Be master of thy hand, tongue and loins' is 'do not take what you have not yourself set down, do not make love outside marriage, do not say you have seen what you have not'. In addition, I have heard a *dede* take a part of this phrase, for example the *'tongue'* and expand it into a general account of the evils involved in gossiping, saying that a false tongue can be the most bitter of all enemies.

The transcendent and immanent sides of God, when taken together provide an immediate and future reason for people to behave well. A person must behave according to the *edep* philosophy in order to go to heaven. We have seen this in the final speech of the *Pir* above, in the way he exhorts people to behave honestly. In addition, by striving continually to behave in a way which hurts no other, a person may make contact with God whilst still on this earth. This possibility of earthly fulfilment combined with future promise is described in the *Buyruk* as follows;

Account 4.8

From Buyruk section 7, SOFU

> Those (*sofu*) who embrace each other on their thresholds become *haci, gazi* a thousand times, they escape from great and minor sins, become purified, without sin. Then the *sofu* among the people resembles the angels in the sky, the *huri* in the heavens, the moon and sun among the stars, and brings to mind God's messengers...
>
> ...If a *sofu* goes to another *sofu*'s house he is saved from the sins he has committed with his feet. If he kisses his hand he is saved from the sins he has committed with his hands. If he looks from his heart to the other's face he is saved from the sins he has committed with his eyes. If he loves a *sofu* he is saved from the sins he has committed with his heart and his will. And if he gives to eat food of this world to a *sofu* then in heaven God will offer him the food of heaven. If a *sofu* goes to a *sofu*'s village, province or country then he wins a hundred thousand mercies, a hundred thousand abundances and a hundred thousand good deeds. And if the *sofu* who is the householder smiles at that *sofu* then a hundred thousand misfortunes, a hundred thousand accidents go far from his village.(Page 33).

Aşk and longing

The idea that God can be reached through continual struggle to behave in the correct way permeates the village; indeed in the *edep*, it is the defining characteristic of *Alevilik*. [32] But it receives its most poetic representation in songs played by a minstrel, and in a mystical conception of love. The villagers say that God can be reached through love, *aşk*, because by loving we enter into our hearts. The word for minstrel, *aşık*, means 'lover', and if a person wishes to pay a compliment to another they may say *aşıksın*, 'you're a lover'.[33]

Minstrels are usually, but not always from a *dede* lineage. The necessary techniques are passed from established *aşık* to promising children. The instrument used is always a *saz*, an eight-stringed instrument similar to a mandolin, though with a larger body. Their songs, *deyiş* , use images familiar in Sufi poetry to express longing for God, particularly the nightingale who is seeking the rose and may be performed on any occasion when requested.

These two ideas, that love is one way of manifesting God, and that all people should be at peace with one another, are brought together in the Alevi conception of collective worship. At *Tarikat* rituals, all present must be at peace. All people must see into each other's faces as they pray, by praying face to face they see into each other's hearts and thus come close to God. This peaceful, collective worship is known as *muhabbet*. The authorisation to practice being a *dede* quoted in the first part of this chapter shows clearly that this is one of the aims of worshipping together. It ends: 'on

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32 Though the history of the Islamic mystical ideas in the village is obviously difficult to trace, the idea of behaving in a perfect way, to copy an ideal way of behaviour which reaches its apothesosis in men who have achieved union with God is very prominant in the philosphy of Ibn Arabi, and I wonder whether it is significant that the *Susesi dede* trace their descent back to him. On the philosophy of Ibn Arabi see, for example, Burckhardt (1976) or for an extract from Ibn Arabi himself which is very close to the explanations the villagers' themselves give see Ibn Arabi (1976). For a more general account see Schimmel (1976. Chapters 6 and 7).

33 For the place of love in Sufi thought see, for example, Nicholson (1914, Chapter 4) or Schimmel (1976, Chapter 3).

talip from this hearth transferring their allegiance to said licensed son of ..., peaceful and sure *muhabbet* comes to the community.' It is present also in the collective prayer, *halkçılık namazı*, from which I quote below, of which the villagers are very proud. Then, they say, every person in the room can see into each others' face, and therefore their hearts, as they pray. They contrast this form of prayer with that of the Sunni in a mosque, where they say all the worshippers are ranged in line and cannot see each other's faces.

The following verses from two *deyiş*, which are the favourite of the senior *dede* in *Susesi*, and sung at the village sacrifice described in the next chapter, express these ideas clearly;

Hoşgeldiniz canım dostlar
Silinsin kalplardan paslar
Bu meydanda, bu meydanda
Silinsin kalplardan paslar
Bu meydanda, bu meydanda

Welcome, friends, dear ones,
Wipe impurities from your hearts,
In this place, in this place,
Wipe impurities from your hearts
In this place, in this place.

Uzağı eyledik yakın
Toplandık buraya, bakın
Incitme kimseyi sakın
Bu meydanda, bu meydanda (x2)

We have made far, near,
We are gathered together, look,
Take care, bother no one,
In this place, in this place. (x2)

The second;

Yedi yıldır hasretlik çekerdim çekerdim
şükür sevdiğime düşgeldi yolum (x2)

For seven years I have longed
Praise be, my way has come across my love (x2)

Yıllar vardı tatlı bülbül aramaz uğramazdı

şükür sevdiğime düşgeldi yolum
şükür dostlarıma düşgeldi yolum

For many years the sweet nightingales came not,
Praise be, my way has come across my love
Praise be, my way has come across my companions

Can cana hasretlik çekince böyle
Onu kavuşturur Cenabım ona
Kusurum varsa müvret affeyle
Şükür sevdiğime düşgeldi yolum (x3)

Longing together, thus, face to face
The Lord, my God, brings us into contact
If there are those who are angry (with me) reply? with forgiveness
Thank God my way has come across my love.

Part 4.4.4 Collective Tarikat rituals

In *Susesi,* the most important collective *Tarikat* rituals are the *cem* and the *görgü*. The *görgü* takes place annually, just before the winter ploughing season begins. There is no restriction on the number of *cem* ceremonies, but none can be held before the *görgü* has taken place, and none after Spring has begun.[34]

The cem

The *cem* has no fixed length, and can often last up to four or five hours. Its principle aim is to worship, to come closer to God (*Tanri yakalaşmak*) through collective, peaceful prayer, but it also commemorates the Alevi allegiance to *Haci Bektaş* and the twelve *imam* through a series of rituals which they refer to as the 'twelve duties 'on *iki hizmet*, and has other sub-parts. It is extremely important that all in the community are at peace to hold such a ritual, and a *dede* may be able to pressure a community to come together through this requirement, as is shown in the account below;

Account 4.9

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34 I must confess as to not being sure when cem are no longer permitted in the Spring. It might be that there is no exact date, but rather an increasing feeling that they should no longer be held.

'Now, if there are small sorts of encroachments on another's boundary, problems of escaping with a girl, we solve them, make them at peace....The *dede*... do not send every subject to the courts. Whether in village or town, except for serious assaults, we make peace among people. We make two hearts one (*iki gönül bir ederiz*). They (the villagers) live in a human way. This is the defining characteristic of the *Alevi-Bektaşi Nazi Tarikat*. Those who go to the *Tarikat* of *Haci Bektaş Nazi* never permit a division in their midst....The village assembled, the *dede* create a dialogue when the village cannot live together...

...I would give you an example. I went to a village a little tne other side of ... This village had split into two over the question of the *muhtar*. The two sides had complained about each other.[35] I don't know what they hadn't done...there was going to be a murder. For some years they had been unable to collect in the same place and hold a sacrifice. Haa! There were some *talip* of mine on the present *muhtar* 's side. I met with them. After that I met with the side of the opposition. 'You", I said, 'If you don't make peace amongst yourselves, these are your children, you have children, (to the other side) you have children, if there is a murder, if you do not prevent this murder (then you will be responsible). I would bring you to peace. *Muhammed* 's way is the way of the heart (*gönül*). The way of God'. I worked for four days, on the fifth I brought them to peace. I was presented a peace sacrifice. They embraced, kissed, we ate their sacrifice and the sacrificial morsels.[36] 'Let Allah be content with you', they said, and I departed.'

The way one of the oldest *dede* in *Susesi* described the *cem* to me is given in the account below. He speaks in the present tense throughout, whicl. is a frequent way of narrating an event, and I leave this unaltered to try to catch his style. The first paragraph describes the preparations as the people arrive, settle down, and the sacrifice prepared. Here the relevant points are the way that the *talip* pause in front of the *dede* , acknowledging his authority, before they sit down, and then they embrace with the people nearest them to show that they are on good terms. The second paragraph describes how the man who has offered the sacrifice is questioned, and the *lokma*, entrails of the sacrifice, distributed. The third outlines the different steps which are necessary to go through the 'twelve duties' and close the ceremony.[37]

Account 4.10

Evening has arrived, everyone has gathered (together), and those arriving paused at prayer, the *dede* has said prayers (over them), all have made a *niyaz* (embrace) with all others, kissed hands, they have sat on their knees, the *dede* has

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35 The implication is that each side had made formal complaints about the other to the central authorities.

36 In the *tarikat* the *dede* hands out morsels of the sacrificed beast's liver to those whom he especially favours.

37 For the *cem*, see also Birge (1937, Chapter 4, part 5) or Gökalp (1980, pages 207-214).

said to them '*Ho* !', the whole company has said '*Ho* !' also. He (the *dede*) has said 'Sit at ease!' and they have sat at ease. People have washed their hands, the *meydan* has been brushed clean, the *hoca* has read the *Kuran*, the *dede* has said another prayer. A *duaz imam* is sung. The *dede* has said '*Allahhalla* !' and again he says a prayer. The *dede* has said 'go and fetch (the sacrifice)!', and they have fetched it. The *dede* blesses it (*tekbirleme*). The sacrifice is slaughtered, cut up and is cooking. The *aşık* takes up his *saz* and sings *deyiş*. After this we (*dede*) offer interpretations on the songs sung by the *aşık*, and in this way we keep occupied

The sacrifice is cooking, is it ready? It is. The man who is tending the sacrifice takes it from the hearth. We (*dede*) take the entrails. Now these entrails; if there is a person at odds with another he does not eat them. If the person giving the sacrifice is at odds with another, his sacrifice is not eaten. If he does have an argument, then he is brought to peace.

Now we come to the twelve duties (*on iki hizmet*). For each, a man comes to the *meydan* , one who has a *musahıp*. He puts his right foot over his left (and kneels bowed in front of the *dede*). The first duty holder passes round the news of the *cem* taking place. The second is the *iznikçi*, he watches the door and makes sure that the shoes are tidy. The third is the one who takes the water around for people to wash their hands. The fourth is the *aşık*. The fifth is the one who distributes the food. The sixth is the *çırakman,* he lights a match. The seventh is the *saki*....this is to remember the water which they did not give to *Hüseyin,* who died a martyr without water, the eight..the ninth is the sacrifice. The tenth is the one who watches that all behave whilst in the *cem*, the one who holds a staff in his hand. The twelfth is the *sema*, the *sema* of the forty. They rise to dance the *sema*. Two women and two men. *Muhammed* himself danced the *sema* with the (original) forty...then, after a prayer it is finished. They eat the sacrifice, the *dede* gives permission for the people to leave and they return to their homes.

> ...But I have only given you a simplified version, there is much needed to fill in the gaps...(and he continues to tell the story of the 12 *imam* and the martyrdom of *Hüseyin*).

I attended one *cem* ceremony and one village sacrifice (which is almost identical) during my stay in the village, and the above description is an accurate reflection of what I saw, though it needs a little elucidation. A *cem* is always held in the largest room (*ev*) of a house, and has no special building. All tables and chairs are taken out of the room, and replaced with cushions and rugs, *cecim* on which the congregation sit. As it becomes dark, the *dede* arrive, rather before the rest of the congregation (*cemaat*). They take up their place alongside the hearth, the man who will lead the ceremony at their head. From now until the end of the evening they do not leave their places, and they say that one of the most difficult parts of a *dede* 's job is this having to stay perhaps five or six hours in the same spot. As each villager arrives they line up, making no differentiation between man and woman, quickly and respectfully in front of the

dede, and bow their heads, their right hand over their hearts, and their right foot over their left. The *dede* say a short prayer, given below, and the women go to their part of the room, the men theirs (see the diagram below).

> *Darın duarı kabul ola,*
> *Hayır hizmetin kabul ola,*
> *Hayırlı muradın hasil ola,*
> *Istediğini dileğini Allah Muhammed Ali vere.*
> *Gerçeğe Hu!*
>
> Let the prayers of suffering be accepted,
> Let the sacred duties be accepted,
> Let sacred wishes be granted,
> Let *Allah Muhammed Ali* give what is needed, what is desired,
> Attention to the truth!

After they have sat down, each person embraces the person on either side of them. This is the *niyaz*, the ritual embrace referred to in the accounts of *dedelik* above. It is at once an acknowledgment of the relations of equality, inferiority and superiority which exist between any two people, and a public declaration of amity; a younger person kisses the hand of an elder, an elder kisses the eyes of a younger, equals shake hands and kiss each other's cheeks. To those sitting further away, those who have just arrived place their right hands over their hearts and, bowing slightly, say *Hu!* They say that this is the equivalent of *merhaba!* (The everyday greeting 'hello!'), but said only in *Tarikat* rituals. No one speaks loudly, and all are careful to move quietly and be courteous to each other.

There is no restriction on the number of *cem* which may be held in the village at the same time, but no more than one should be held in any *mahalle* , and all the households in the *mahalle* should send representatives to the *cem*. Ideally, this should be the household head and his wife, but it may also be a different couple, man and daughter, brother and sister, mother and son, and so on. If a couple do not come, then at the very least one person should attend. When all have arrived, a senior man says to the assembled *dede*, *Hu! Dedeyimiz, hoş geldiniz* ! 'Welcome, our *dede* '. To which

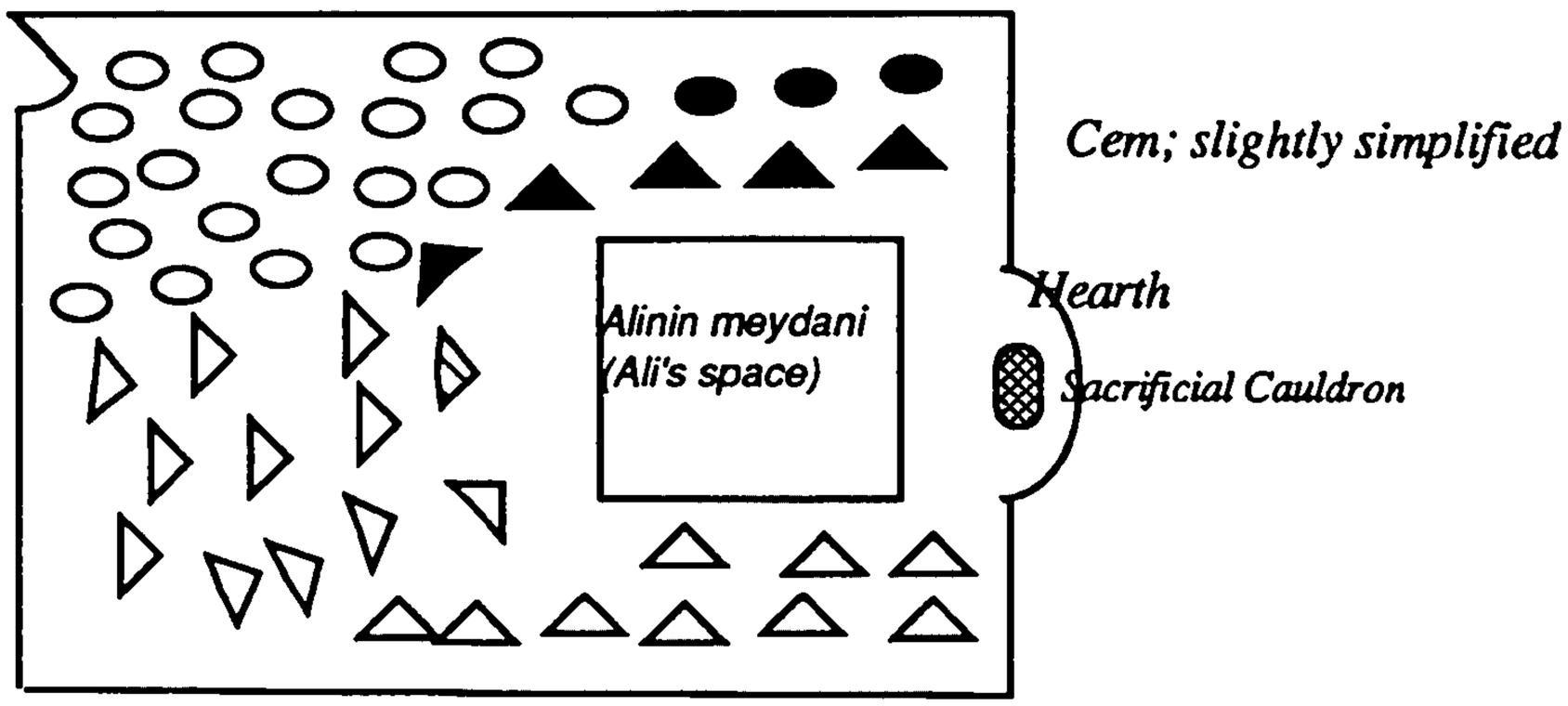
the *dede* reply *Hu! Hoş bulduk* ! 'Well-found!' and the rituals begin with a *halkçılık namazı,* collective prayer.

As explained above, the villagers lay great stress on this prayer and say that whilst they are praying all people are looking into each others' faces, and so into their hearts. During it, they do not genuflect, but stand, and as the *dede* recites rapidly, call *Allahhalla* ! The following is taken from the *halkçılık namazı.*

Account 4.11 *Halkçılık namazı*

O Lord (*Ya Rabbi*) you are great, you are gracious, O Lord. You are capable of all things. You have the power of warding off misfortune, hidden and evident, and calamities from your slaves, O Lord. *Allah*, you will do so, *Inşallah*, Forgive our faults. Accept our repentance. O Lord, You will scatter every mishap, every misfortune, O Lord. Let skewers and hatchets not depart from those who find themselves in the wrongful deeds of jealousy, envy and hypocrisy. Let doubt not come to the hearts of believing slaves. We have found this information in the *Buyruk* of *Imam Cafer*. ..For the slave who weeps a single tear for *Imam Hüseyin* at the *Kerbala*, O Lord, award us grace. The rightful God is *Allah*, *Muhammed* is his companion, the companions are the poles of the earth; the twelve *imam*. To the unity of the twelve *imam*, to the power of belief, let us say *Allah, Allah. Allah,* your slaves calling *Allah*, guard, hide them from misfortune, pain. Let the helper in remedying your pain be *Ali*, O Lord, award our lot with grace. *Nuri Veli*, the munificent, *Ali,* poles of the earth, approach! The twelve *imam*, our *pir*, our master, *Haci Bektaş Veli,* grant favour. Attention to the truth!

At this point the space in front of the *dede* is bare. Now they begin to turn it into the ritual space, *meydan* , described above, on which much of the ceremonial activity will take place. The wife of the household head in which the *cem* is being held comes before the *dede* with a brush. He blesses it, and she sweeps the floor in the centre of the room. She returns with an embroidered rug, and on it being blessed, spreads it out. The *meydan* is now open. The *aşık*, who sits at the side of the *meydan* facing the hearth (see diagram below), sings a *duaz imam*, a song commemorating the twelve *imam*.



▲ = Dede △ = Other men ⬭ = Other women
◺ = Asık ● = *Anna*, wives of dede

Account 4.12 The opening verses of a Duaz Imam

Gelin hey erenler umudu kesmen
Bulbul işini zar eder Allah
Nasibım az deyin Mevleya küsmen
Anide nasıplarını var eder Allah

Come, developed ones do not give up hope,
God makes the work of the nightingale piteous,
Saying, 'my lot is little', do not become angry with God,
God in an instant makes good fortune.

Muhammed Alinin sırı yayılmaz
Hasan Hüseyini seven ayrılmaz
Nice bin ayıplar yüze vurulmaz
Rahmet sahibidir sır eder Allah

The secret of *Muhammed Ali* is not revealed,
Those who love *Hasan, Hüseyin* do not break away,
How many thousand shameful (things) do not come
to the surface (?).
God is the dispenser of mercy, he makes the secret.

Zeynelin rengine boyanmıyanlar
Ol imam Bakıra dayanmıyanlar
Ol Ali evlat nesline inanmıyanların
Mahşarda gözünü kör eder Allah

Those who are not of *Zeynel* 's colour,
Those who are not trusting in *Imam Bakır*,
Those who do not believe in the lineage of Ali's children,
God blinds them at the last judgement.

Now the sacrifice is brought to the *meydan*. The sacrifice, usually a sheep, though it may also be a goat, is made ready by combing its hair and cleaning it of thorns and twigs. They place apples on its horns, calling these 'heaven's apples'. As it waits in the *meydan* the *aşık* sings a *kurban deyişi,* sacrificial song. If the sheep reacts violently, then they take it away and find another, if it stays calm, when the song is finished it is taken away, slaughtered, chopped, and its carcass placed in the cauldron to begin cooking. The sacrificial song is as follows;

Erenler, evliyalar, kırklar, yediler
Onikimamların kurbanı budur
Cümle evliyarlar cümle nebiler
Onikimam kurbanı budur

Developed ones, saints, the forty, the seven,
This is the sacrifice of the twelve *imam,*
The community of saints, the community of the holy messengers,
This is the sacrifice of the twelve *imam.*

Anam kısır koyun atam Cebrayel
Nefesimden halık oldum hükmüne gayır
Bilendi bıçağın gelendi soyum
Onikimamların kurbanı budur

My mother is a barren sheep, my father Gabriel,[38]
Through my breath I have become God, outside all laws,
The knife is sharpened and come to my skin,
This is the sacrifice of the twelve *imam.*

Yem cığarım yedi kere karktılar
Etcügezim pare pare dittiler
Ibrahim sürüsüne kattılar
Onikimamların kurbanı budur

They have seven times sliced my entrails into forty (?),
They have cut my flesh into pieces,
They have made me join the flock of *Ibrahim,*
This is the sacrifice of the twelve *imam.*

He erenler bize bulmam bahane
Yarın varıncığuz ulu dıvana
Rıza lokmasığız geldik meydana
Onikimamların kurbanı budur

He! Developed ones, I do not find an excuse for us,
Tomorrow we will be at the *dıvan* of the great God,
We have come to the *meydan* (with) our morsels of acquiescence,

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38 The minstrel is pretending to be the voice of the sacrifice.

This is the sacrifice of the twelve *imam*.

Derviş alim kanım negaha dökmem
Hak için ölmeği hiç alem çekmem
Pirim gelmeyince postumdan çıkmam
Oniki imamların kurbanıyam ben

Weeping dervish, I do not spill my blood for nothing
To die for God bothers me not at all
I do not leave my place until my *pir* has come
I am the sacrifice of the twelve *imam*

After the song, the *dede* asks whether any person in the room has a quarrel. If they do so, then they should come forward to the *meydan* and their dispute settled. Even if no person in the room has admitted to a quarrel, the man who has offered the sacrifice to the *dede* must come forward to the *meydan*, and affirm, in response to the *dede*'s questions that he has no quarrel with any other person in the room. The *dede* then asks the congregation whether they are content with this man. If they are, then the twelve duties may take place, and the man's sacrifice is accepted. To undergo this questioning is known as 'to die before dying', and is treated in more detail below.

The twelve duties are said to be prescribed by *Haci Bektaş*, and necessary to go through to hold a successful *cem*. They consist partly of ritual requirements, and partly of allotted tasks in the management of the assembly. As described by the *dede* above, the person who is to hold, or has been holding a duty comes to the *meydan* and a short prayer is said over them. Thus the doorkeeper, the person who has alerted the village to their being a *cem*, the minstrel, the person who is watching the sacrifice all are blessed whilst kneeling in the *meydan*. Later duties include lighting a match whilst on the *meydan* and blessing a bowel of water held by a man on the *meydan* in order to commemorate *Imam Hüseyin*. In the above account, the *dede* stumbles in allocating exactly one duty to each number until twelve. This is normal. The *dede* do not refer to a specific book in which the duties are laid out (though there is a section on the twelve duties in the *Buyruk*) and in local practice the order in which the duties are called to the *meydan* varies, or may even be the subject of discussion and argument. All are agreed,

however, that the culmination of the twelve duties lies in the *kırklar semahı*, the *sema* of the forty.[39]

To dance the *sema*, two men and two women, who must be *musahıp* to each other, move on to the *meydan*, and accompanied by the *aşık* dance in a slow, intricate short stepping dance which is sombre and reverent. During it, their heads are bowed and their hands crossed over their chests. After it has finished, the minstrel changes the song, and a different *sema* begins; the *gönüller semahı*, dance of the hearts. This is different. Though there are still two men and two women, the rhythm is much more rigourous, and the men turn first one way and then the other, throwing out their arms, and the women raise their arms outstretched and whirl in a complete circle. The requirement that all dancing should be *musahıp* is relaxed, and men and women queue up to dance as long as the *aşık* is content to play. The villagers say that the idea of the second *sema* is that everyone should go home cheerful in the unity of the *cem*, and not made sombre by the worship. After the *sema* indeed, when the sacrifice is brought out, the mood is relaxed and people talk quietly as they eat.

The görgü

In the Autumn, before the season of the *cem* may begin, a series of rituals called *görgü* are held.[40] The villagers say that these mark their new year and that until they have been conducted no one should sow their fields. In *Susesi* there are seven *mahalle*. On the first night the ceremony is held for *Batı, Aşağı* and *Uzak* , on the second night for the *Yüksek* and *Pınar*, and on the third for *Tepe* and *Orta*. The *Tepe dede* are asked to officiate.

During the course of the three days, a couple from *every* household in the village go forward to *Ali* 's space to answer whether or not they have a quarrel with any one in

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39 For a description of the place the *sema* may hold in Sufi worship see Rice (1964, pages 97-103).
40 Gökalp (1980, page 205) found a similar ritual, though called by a different name; *sorgu ayini* (interrogation rite). See also Birge (1937, page 170-171).

the room. To undergo this questioning is called 'to die before dying'. They explain the expression 'to die before dying' by saying that the interrogation they undergo from the *dede* is parallel to that which they shall receive from *Allah* after they have died.

The twentieth section of the *Buyruk* spells this out;

Section 20 To die before dying

God decreed, "O, my slaves, die before dying! See your reckoning before the day of judgement!"

Well, how is this possible?

It happens by making a person's emotions and selfishness disappear, and by following a *pir*. Those who have made a *musahip*, gone with them on the true path, shared goods and beasts heart to heart, and given themselves up to one another, go once a year go to the *pir* 's (the representative of *Allah*, *Cabriel* (Gabriel) and *Muhammed-Ali*) side . In the presence of the *pir* and in front of the people they take the penalty for the sins they have committed in the year.

...That day is like the day of judgement. The *pir* is regarded as the deputy of God. He asks the graveside's question; "if you have taken something give it! If you have given something take it! If there is someone you have made weep make them smile. If there is something you have spilt, make it full. If there is something you have knocked down, take it up".

...The follower must think to himself " Let questions be asked me in this court, that they not be asked in the next. Whatever it decrees in the *Kuran*, I would behave accordingly. At the court of the *pir*, and that of God, let my face be unblemished, I would behave, and lead my life according to the four doors and the forty commands." If not, whether with or without witnesses, if he hides what he has done and does not tell, he would be a liar in the Great Tarikat....on the day of judgement, at the assembly of the resurrected he will remain in vain{and not go to heaven}. No one will stand up for him.

If necessary the follower's head is taken, if necessary his life.. If necessary the follower is driven from his house, pitchers, millstones are hung around his neck. Needles are driven into his feet. Skewers are held to his brow. The laws of our road are thus. (Pages 89-90).

In the village, after the congregation has collected together in an appropriate house, the *görgü* begins with a *halkçılık namazı*. Then, rather than a sacrifice being brought forth (as it would in a *cem*), couples begin to go forward to the *meydan*. If a lineage has too many people present to go to the *meydan* together, then it splits according the closeness of the patrilineal ties between them. The following extract is from a tape of the ceremony which I witnessed in 1989.

After an initial formula, the *dede* asks;

Dede. 'Evveli baştan sizi sizden sorıyorlar, evinizinen, ocağınızınan, çoluğunuzunan, çocuğunuzunan, feylinizinan, amelinizinen, gövdedinizan, nice belirsiniz? Dört camdinizden kendinize yari garmi?'

Dede. 'Beginning from the first they ask of you, of your homes, of your hearths, of your wives, of your children, of your husbands, of your actions, of your bodies, what do you say? Are you happy within yourself?'

Meydandakilar. 'Eyvallah, dede'. Those in the centre. 'By God, *dede* '. (yes)

Dede. 'Allah hepinizden razi olsun. Ellerinizinen koymadığınızı alman, gözünüzünen görmediğinizi söylemen, ... komşu hakkında, yol darmında, verecekte, alacakta, bilenler bu kişilerden razımısınız?

Dede. 'Let Allah be content with you all. Do not take what you have not yourself set down, do not say what you have not yourself seen....on neighbour's rights, in the narrow part of the road, on that to be given, on that to be taken, those who know, are you content with these people?'

Note; First the dede is addressing those in the centre, then he is asking the congregation what they know of those in the centre's actions throughout the year.

When the existence and circumstances of a dispute have become clear, the *dede* suggests a reconciliation based whether the disputants have shown the correct degree of respect to each other (a young man must respect an older, a wife her husband), or abused one another's rights (*hakı yemek*). The congregation then must agree with his decision, or else it is not valid. The *dede's* suggestions are supplemented by a '*görgü* committee', *görgü heyeti,* of which he is the head. The other members of the committee are not necessarily *dede* but must be respected men of the village.

If the problem cannot be resolved, the person disagreeing with the majority must leave, and is said to be fallen, *düşkün*. In this case at best he or she will be forbidden entrance to religious ceremonies and at worst will not be spoken to or allowed to work with others on daily tasks, or even forced to leave the village. If one of a *dede* lineage fails to pass through the centre, then the whole of lineage is forbidden to practice until he or she has done so (see example *v* below).

The examples below are from the *görgü* at which I was present in 1989. In spite of the aggressive tone of the extract from the *Buyruk*, the Alevi way of ensuring

social order, at least in *Susesi,* places great emphasis on restoring harmonious relations between people. In the disagreements below, the ideal solution to any problem is seen as the public re-affirmation of good relations between the two relevant people by going through the *niyaz*, the embrace. The *niyaz* in turn entails acknowledging the subordinate relationship between younger and older peopel, so that one of the most important principles of the village social structure is reaffirmed each time a quarrel is resolved.

Examples from the görgü

i) A man aggrieved with his neighbour because he had sold a field without giving him an opportunity to buy it.

Solution; the younger told to kiss the hand of the older, the older to kiss the younger's eyes, and the two not to argue in future.

ii) A man failing to visit his sick brother.

Solution; it was wrong not to wish a sick person well. The brother still being sick, the offending brother shook hands with his wife, and was made to promise to visit the next day.

iii) A woman losing her temper with her neighbour because she believed he had taken a piece of firewood from her door.

Solution; it was wrong for women to swear, and anyway he hadn't taken it. They shook hands.

iv) A young man, whose father had died, throwing stones at a neighbour's sheep.

Solution; his mother said that she could not control him. It was decided to ask the *muhtar* to speak to him, and all who saw him causing trouble to beat him.

v) An enemy of the *muhtar*, one of the returning men from Germany, had reported to the sub-province governor that the *muhtar* was spending time in Istanbul and not in the village. The man who made the complaint came to the *meydan* and said that there was no connection between events particular to the village and those to do with the state, that *Tarikat* could be separated from *Seriat*. On this there was an outcry of protest, one man made a speech saying, 'when *Şeriat* is separated from *Tarikat*, then Alevi life in this village is finished..'[41] The offending man withdrew. There was great consternation at this because the man was one of the *dede* from *Batı mahalle* and as he had not been through the ceremony, the whole *dede* lineage would be unable to conduct the ceremony for their *talip* in the neighbouring village. He was persuaded to come back again.

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41 I take this to mean, 'when *Tarikat* no longer has temporal authority over the events in the village...then *Alevilik* is finished'

Solution; his brother's son spoke up, a man who commands great respect, and a member of the *görgü* committee. He explained that he had talked with the *muhtar* (who was not present through illness) and been appointed his representative. He promised he would reconcile the two men's differences soon. On hearing this promise the assembly allowed the man through without taking the matter further. When I went back to the village the next summer I found that, indeed, the two had resolved their quarrel.

Conclusions and summary

In the opening part of this chapter, I asserted that *Tarikat* is an ideology to which all people, whether men or women, must acquiesce and by which they must allow themselves to be brought to peace. To this end I showed firstly that women are not separated from men in domestic life or in *Tarikat* ceremonies, and then examined the way *dede* justify their position as being superior to other men. In the next section I described the place of the *dede* from the ethnographic point of view; indicating the links between them and their followers and the way they may mediate in disputes.

In the second part of the chapter, I looked more closely at *Tarikat* practice. I wished to show particularly that the Alevi respect an authoritarian, transcendant God and that the *dede* are held to represent this God in *Tarikat* rituals. In the next part, I showed that this conception of God is intertwined with another, that God is made imminent through love, through interacting peacefully with one's neighbour, and through worshipping in such a way that all people are able to see eachothers' faces as they pray. In the final part, I showed that disputes are resolved by combining these two ideas of an imminent and transcendent God. The *dede* are the representative of an authoritarian God who must be respected, but every person may come into contact with Him if all in the gathering are at peace with each other. To conclude I gave several examples from a *görgü* ceremony which I witnessed.

In the next chapter, I turn back to the point at which the third chapter ended; with the *muhtar* triumphant over the *dede*, and explore the way religion and the *Tarikat* rituals in the village are changing.

Chapter 5

Changes in the Alevi villages

In this chapter I argue that the efficacy of the Alevi religion as an instrument of social control is growing less but that Alevi religion as a *culture*, as a collection of interlocking ideals and symbols which people may use to assert their identity, survives. The survival, 'Aleviness', becomes celebrated less in *Tarikat* rituals than in collective rituals which are not explicitly religious, and can be combined with Kemalism to form the basis of a secular ethic within which to live as a member of modern Turkey.

The chapter is split into three parts, each of which looks at different aspects of this contention in more detail. The first sketches the difficulties facing the *Tarikat* rituals. It then discusses men's varying response to the weakness of religion in its traditional form. The second outlines collective rituals which remain popular, at which Alevi songs and poetry are performed. The third part discusses the way the Alevi are interacting with the state and the outside world, employing as a framework the same four questions which I used when discussing the Sunni villages in Chapter 2.

Part 5.1 The decline of the authority of *Tarikat*

Tarikat is an integral part of a religion which also claims legal authority. The different elements on which this power is based have been described in the previous chapter. They consist (in the *edep* philosophy) of a definition of how all people should behave all of the time, fear of the hereafter, acceptance of the inherent superiority of the *dede*, and the ratification of the *dede*'s decisions at collective rituals. They are supported by a text, but more immediately by a rich corpus of music, poetry and song.

The idea that *edep* is an adequate basis for a person's life not losing force. (I return to this below). All the other elements are weakening. The *dede* in the village are losing respect. This is partly due to a lack of competent *dede*. Only those born into a

dede lineage may become *dede*, so that *dede* lineages depleted by migration or death cannot make up their number from non-*dede* within the village. The remaining *dede* are either old and are not in contact with changing conditions, or if younger are not fluent in the necessary religious knowledge.[1] Some villagers become openly derisive, others continue to show the *dede* respect but avoid asking them to officiate in a *cem*. In the complete year I spent in the village only two were held.

As we have seen (Chapter 3), the villagers are acutely aware of the dichotomy between the chain of authority which leads through the dede to *Haci Bektaş* and *Ali* on the one hand, and the power of the state on the other. Now that the villagers want to become urban and to develop, the state, vastly more powerful than any means at the villagers' command at achieving this goal, is becoming increasingly acceptable. The *muhtar* is seen as representative of this authority. It is he who solves most of the petty quarrels which occur from day to day. Even if a very intelligent and charismatic *dede* emerged, able to justify his position only by using tales which are ever more difficult to believe, and his authority continually undermined by the encroaching central authorities, he would but delay the decline.

As more of the village gains an income from the outside and more people migrate, life in the village becomes less based around the mutually intertwined interests and controls of a tight-knit community. The problems besetting those living in the village often involve negotiations with kin and friends living outside, sometimes as far afield as Germany, and are not likely to be solved simply by those remaining resolving their differences with each other. Sensing this, many doubt the relevance of a community-based sanction. Also, the most serious punishment in *Susesi* is banishment. More than half the households have left, and most of those remaining spend much of their time trying to raise the money to move. Those still in the village are distressed that their neighbours have gone and not inclined to make more people leave.

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1 *Dursun dede*, the man who resolved the conflict between *Yüksek* and *Kol* died in 1980.

The rise of the *muhtar* is matched by a decline in the integrity of each *mahalle*, where the *cem* ceremonies (but for the annual village sacrifice described below) are held. The *mahalle* is important primarily for subsistence farming and as a base in which people enjoy their closest social ties. In both respects it is being eroded; the villagers rely increasingly on remittances from outside for their livelihood, and as such large numbers of people have migrated, those people remaining in the *mahalle* are, though neighbours, often not as closely related to each other as they are to the migrant workers outside the village.

This decline is matched by an equivalent shift in identity; the village unit is taking over as the most important residence unit by which people define themselves. This can be seen not just in the village, but also outside. When the villagers leave the sub-province and settle in Istanbul, they do not build or rent houses according to *mahalle* divisions, but according to village. There, men collect in a tea-house as *Susesi* migrants, and during weddings and *muhabbet* (see discussion below) sing songs celebrating the fine water, women and landscape of *Susesi*, making no specific heed of the *mahalle* from which they come.

These points all emerge in the following transcription of a village sacrifice which I witnessed in 1989 in *Susesi*.

The village sacrifice, köy kurbanı

A village sacrifice is held annually, the evening after all the households in the village have been through the 'die before dying' ceremony discussed in the last chapter. It is similar to a *cem*, but there are slight differences in emphasis. Instead of one *talip* offering the sacrifice to his *dede* (thereby meeting its cost), a small financial contribution is made by every household in the village. Instead of the sacrificial meat being eaten on the spot after the ceremony has finished, each household takes back an equal portion to their home and eats it in their own time. Also, instead of just the households of the *mahalle* in which the ceremony is being held having to attend,

representatives of all the households in the village must be present. This necessitates a large room, of course, but several of the houses of the village have such extremely large rooms, and if there are too many people, it is regarded as acceptable to sit just outside.

At the time of occasion described below, at which I was present, the *muhtar* was seriously ill in hospital and had decided to offer a personal sacrifice alongside the village sacrifice, the meat of the two animals to be cooked together. (I return later to the paradox of the *muhtar* supporting religion in spite of being one of the most persistent rivals to the *dede*).

The evening began badly. The *muhtar* 's sacrifice was safely tethered, already blessed during the day, but the village sacrifice was to be brought to the *meydan* and the sacrificial song sung over it by a minstrel as usual. After the people had gathered and taken their places, it turned out that the village sacrifice had disappeared. Several people went out to look for it but without success.

Then, a man of the village burst in late, past the restraining hand of the watchman at the door, who was both young and not very bright. The incoming man was very drunk, so much so that he was unable to stand still as he bowed in front of the *dede* to receive the greeting before sitting down. Though it is usual to drink in the village (see the descriptions below of drinking sessions), to be drunk in a *Tarikat* service is *ayıp*, shameful and it was the task of the watchman to ensure that such occurences did not take place. The *muhtar* 's mother, who was anxious that the service go without a hitch so that it would have the most benefit for her son began to grumble audibly.

The drunken man was taken out, amidst increasing disturbance, and several men saw that he was placed in a stable to cool down. Then the man who had lost the sacrifice was found and brought to the *meydan* to be questioned as to what happened to it. Whilst he was trying to explain, it was located. The congregation began to settle down again, but then the drunken man returned, walking straight to his former place.

Again, grumbles began to be heard. The minstrel, a boy aged fourteen, who was playing in his first sacrifice (the usual village minstrel having migrated to Istanbul) played the two songs from which quotations have been given (in part 4.4.3 above) in order to quieten the noise.

The extract from the tape recording given below begins at this point. There are two protagonists. *Hüseyin dayı* is old and hard of hearing. He is regarded as being the best of the *Susesi dede* by the villagers because in spite of his increasing age, he is said to be generous, as never having been anything other than peaceful and pious in his actions. They say also that he knows the religious formula better than any other man. For this reason he is asked to officiate in all ceremonies involving the *Tepe dede*. The other man who speaks is *Hasan.dede* from *Ekmek*, who has *talip* in *Yüksek mahalle*. (*Ekmek* is the village above *Susesi* - see Maps 3.1 and 4.2) As will become clear, the elderly *dede* is unable to keep control of the proceedings. It looks as if the gathering will break up in disarray. At this point, the younger *dede* from *Ekmek*, bursts into an impassioned speech and succeeds in holding the gathering together.

His long speech is interesting in that it provides an example of the way the *dede* may use the religious ideas discussed in the previous chapter to control an extremely serious threat to the social cohesion of the village. At the same time, that he needed to make the speech at all is indicative of the difficulties that were facing the success of the evening, indeed his tone throughout is imploring rather than confident. The extract begins with the older *dede* making a favourable comment on the young minstrel's playing, saying that it is the Turkish version of the *Kuran*. (see part 3 below).

Account 5.1 Extracts from a tape of the village sacrifice of 1989 in Susesi

Hüseyin dayı; 'The words sung by this friend (the minstrel) are Turkish, the *Kuran* 's Turkish. We shall lend our ears and behave according to it.'

In spite of the calming influence of the songs, the drunken man is unable to stay still. The whispering from the people around him becomes louder and *Huseyin dayı* finally says,

'My offspring, my son, you are of our children, you came here, you are in a place of worship. It would have been better had you not found yourself here but we are tolerant'.

Man (Visibly distressed at this public admonishment),

'I'm leaving'

and stumbles away.

The sacrifice is brought in, and the minstrel sings the sacrificial song over it (given in the previous chapter). But then the murmuring in the gathering rises as they begin to discuss the way the man was asked to leave. Shouts come from outside make it clear that he has not yet gone away. *Hasan dede* from *Ekmek* asks for permission to speak, but his request is misunderstood and he is interrupted by *Hüseyin dayı*, who is disturbed at what has happened and begins to think out loud. He is incoherent, and does not appear to notice that the disturbance is still not resolved.

Hüseyin dayı; 'My uncle, the regretted *Nebil*, said that God said to our Prophet, 'My emissary, I created you for me, I created your house for you. If I had not created your house I would have created nothing in this world.'[2]...The sun warms, the moon lights.. all for us. The God of divine truth from his own perfection created the skies....Given this creation's backward, four footed creatures how were people created with two feet? What are people, then? Where are you to know what are people? You are unable to know...In the days of the regretted uncle, I was brought up in the times of the mobilisation,[3] - he said 'My

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2 *Ehli-beyt yaratmasaydım, hic bir şey yaratmazdım*. The *dede* is referring to the idea, mentioned in chapter 3, that the Alevi are the chosen people of God because they are the followers of *Ali* and his descendants.

3 The mobilisation during and after the First World War, which culminated in the victories over the Greeks.

son!'..then came the call-up, there was *Ismail*, the son of a sergeant, my uncle's child. He was a watchman they say..he shouted..'*Mehmet* uncle, *Mevlut*, *Ramazan*, *Hasan*, *Hüseyin* and *Minstrel Veli*' all have call-up papers'. Mobilisation was declared, eighty people went from this village. They went, from those eighty, eight even did not return. Then came the terrible earthquake. What else can I say. Know this! Know thyself and behave accordingly! If not, what can I do? My responsibility is to say this, let him not hang on to my collar...this is the duty of the *rehber*...

The sounds of an argument from outside grow louder, some men stand up and go outside to see if they can help to control the drunken man. The talking inside the room also grows louder, and it looks as if the gathering will break up. Then *Hasan dede* begins to speak, without asking for permission this time;

Hasan dede ; 'A Sunni person uses the five conditions. Is this not so? We say that we are the people of the *Tarikat* but we are unable to be people of the *Tarikat*. The *dede* said a little earlier, 'a person must know their humanity', you should say not 'What has become of me' but 'What will become of me? It is necessary to know this', he said. Assembly (*cema'at*), like this one cannot be people of the *Tarikat*..'

The *muhtar* 's mother mutters

'...a sacrifice cannot be done like this.'

and rises to leave. But she is prevented by *Hasan dede* speaking even more forcefully;

'There is a saying of *Holy Hüseyin*, 'If you would come, come; if you would turn, turn. The goods of those who come, the life of those who turn.' This is the forward of the *Kuran*.[4] We are are sitting in the *Tarikat* of Holy *Hüseyin*. I beseech you, do not be ignorant of God's divine love...A *görgü* means to bring people together, to listen to their hearts. Here a person of the *Tarikat* comes not to destroy people's hearts but to make them. Let God accept your hearts, let God let no one be inadequate for their path. I am recounting the words of *Holy Hüseyin*. 'From those who come, goods, from those who turn, life!' From those who profane here, life departs! Pay attention to this!

People are the *Kuran*. A person must know themselves...Other men worship with five conditions, we are the people of the *niyaz* (embrace). We, with the *niyaz* will go to the happy judgement day. What are you becoming? I request, I beseech you. Here in three, five villages remain people of the *Tarikat*. What are you becoming? Your end will be confusion! If we bathe, if we wash it will not go

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4 In fact, it appears in the *Buyruk* , though in slightly different words, in the speech of the *pir* given in part 4.4.3 above. I interpret the phrase to mean 'you may not win wordly goods if you come to the *tarikat*, but you will not lose your chance of everlasting life'. The long account of the *dede* descended from *Muhitin Arabi* in Chapter 4 contains a similar idea when *Haci Bektaş* invites *Hasan* to chose between *himmet* (saintly influence) and *devlet* (wordly influence/success).

from our backs. Know this for certain! 'Agh, I am dying', said my regretted father. He cried and spoke at the same time. He gave his soul to the longed-for God. He said, 'My son, the road is ended'. What does does this mean? It means that he was a person of faith.[5]

Apart from these words..we will become beasts! No *Şeriat*, no *Tarikat*, no *Marifet*, no *Hakikat*, no honest work, no worship, what will happen? A person's death is between their eye and brow.[6] It comes to youths and old. The soul has gone, finished. It is necessary to strive a little for the next world, more than for this. This assembly must not disperse for the words of one ignorant man. Let God give assent to your intentions!

.. The body is one, the spirit is one, the blood is one, the skin is one. Once you have entered here, siblings are one, wives are one, husband are one, children are one. There can be a lone voice from no-one. From the words of the minstrel, the words of the *dede* a person listens to the words of the scriptures..we are the people of the *niyaz*, the people of the *Tarikat*, are we going to be thus people of the *Tarikat* ?

Silence followed his speech. Then

Hüseyin dayı; 'What was the last problem, *Mehmet* ? Why did they leave? What happened?

'Nothing. Do not interfere, *dede*. Nothing, *dede*, continue with the worship.'

Hasan dede 'A misdemeanour took place, *dede* '.

(end of extract)

Counter-currents

Men react in different ways to the difficulties facing the collective *Tarikat* rituals, and the weakness of the *dede*. A few strive, perhaps 15 per cent, to keep up the appearances of the *dede* 's authority. Perhaps half of these men are themselves from *dede* lineages.They say that the tales told of miracles are true and the *dede* should be respected accordingly. Perhaps 10 per cent of the villagers as a whole, are indifferent, or hostile to the *dede* and are sceptical about all aspects of religion. These people may call themselves atheists, *ateist*. The remainder of the men are more difficult to encapsulate. They would like to continue to believe in the appropriateness of the *cem* ceremonies, but they cannot bring themselves to offer a sacrifice to a *dede* for whom

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5 That is, as he died he successfully came into contact with God.
6 Death may come at any time.

they have little respect, nor do they enjoy sitting in a crowded room in an uncomfortable position for five or six hours far into the night. The predominant reaction among these men is to maintain that the Alevi religion does not strictly call for the involvement of *dede*, nor for the *cem*, and that it is sufficient to obey the *edep* commandment. They attend *can ekmeği* services described in Chapter 4 for the soul of a dead person, they may themselves sacrifice a sheep if a person falls ill or if they wish for the success of an important project. If a service is arranged with a famous *dede* they may attend and they go through the *görgü* once a year, but they do not actively try to interact with the *dede*, nor themselves try to hold *cem*.

Those who do still wish to maintain the ceremonial aspects of religion in the village may turn to the *muhtar* for help. During my stay the *muhtar* himself appeared to change his approach to religion. In his earliest period as *muhtar* he had been actively against the *dede* (See Chapter 3 above). Now his temporal authority is not threatened by them, but the village itself is emptying so rapidly that the basis of his power is vanishing. He is also aware that most of the villagers do not actively desire the rituals to cease altogether, and he is anxious to retain their support. Thus, the *muhtar* is now willing to condone the practice of religion in the village, but under his auspices, in part to ensure that he continues to gain people's votes and in part to aid the cohesion of the village community.

For example, *efendi* visit the village once or twice a year, to collect dues and reaffirm their contact with the villagers. When they come, they do so with a favoured local *dede* at their side, and together with this *dede* visit one of the village households where they are confident of a warm welcome. The villagers then come to this house to pay their respects. Men and women usually come together, the woman carrying a tribute to the *efendi*.. This offering is brought in the form of produce, often wheat. The *dede* accompanying the *efendi* take the produce, and sell it back to the villagers for cash, the idea being that the *efendi* cannot conveniently take the wheat away with them.

When, during the latter part of my fieldwork, an *efendi* visited the village, he went directly to *Tepe mahalle*, where the remaining active *Susesi* dede live. There he waited, but few villagers came to see him. Very worried, one of the villagers came down from *Tepe mahalle* to the tea-house in *Orta mahalle*, where I was sitting with the *muhtar* , and explained that insufficient people were going to visit the *efendi*. The *muhtar* immediately rose and told the man to fetch some people from the other *mahalle* of the village and join him in the house where the *efendi* was visiting. Later I also was sent for and witnessed the latter part of the *efendi* 's visit, which the *muhtar* presided over, and did his best to make successful.

Part 5.2 *Muhabbet* and other collective rituals

The strains in the community are not leading to violence, indeed the village is probably less violent a place than it used to be. Between fifteen and twenty years ago, when the village population was at its peak, the villagers say that there was a severe shortage of water and of fields. They say there were continual disputes, that the allocation of water channels often led to arguments, that a man could never be sure that his flock would return in the evening without one or more of the beasts missing, and the smallest things; axes, hammers, pieces of firewood would disappear, presumably stolen. They say also that there was great difficulty in finding enough land to plough, and that this could only be solved by moving to fields further away from the *mahalle* and into the distant village territory near the mountain pastures (see Map 3.1). Now there is more than ample bread and fresh vegetables, no shortage of land and sufficient water for irrigation. It is difficult for a family to make make a lot of money but life is more comfortable than before.

On a deeper level, though the increased contact with the outside world through migration has decreased the homogeneity and interdependence of the people in the community, the villagers' economic world has shifted from competing with each other for agricultural resources to cooperating with each other to gain services, and to pooling

knowledge about how to succeed in the outside world. For example, one of the ways in which a man used to show his status was to increase his holdings in fields. The early migrants to Germany, before they lost the inclination to compete in the village setting, used their savings to buy land in the village. One of the fields in the centre of the village territory is renowned for the very high price for which it changed hands in a gambling session between two workers whilst they were in Germany. Now, only a handful of men think it worthwhile to spend money in buying up fields, and much land lies fallow. This lack of competition, combined with a sufficiency of food, means that it is genuinely easier to remain at peace with one's neighbour than before.

Though *cem* ceremonies are growing less, wedding ceremonies are celebrated with great vigour and with very little friction. They are much more frequent than *cem* ceremonies. On my second weekend in the village, I arrived late in the evening from Ankara, and was taken immediately to a household in *Tepe mahalle*, where the son of a *dede* was celebrating his wedding. In one of the rooms of a large house, there was a long table around which men were seated. Meat steamed in small dishes along the table's centre, alternating with bottles of *rakı*. Sliced cucumbers, pickles, bread, tomatoes, roasted chickpeas and great jugs of water completed the repast. Two young men were acting as waiters, and continually replenishing the meat to ensure it was hot. When I arrived, men were drinking in unison, downing one small glass of *rakı* at a time. The married women of the household one by one came into the room and drank a glass of *rakı* with the men. As the evening went on, the drinking increased until the noise was great. The drinkers called a minstrel in and asked him to play. Men stood up, called for silence, and made speeches. Finally, just before I left to go to bed, one man stood up, shouted 'I'm a *dede* ', and, losing his balance, fell out of the window.

Though the villagers' do not draw an explicit parallel between the two types of ceremony by calling one of the 'sacred' and the other 'profane', this does appear to be a useful analytic distinction in that both types of ceremony offer the villagers the chance

to celebrate their songs, dances and outlook on life in a structured setting, though the aim of the *cem* is religious, and the immediate aim of the wedding celebrations is not.

To examine this point more closely; marriage celebrations last three days, and are divided between the house of the groom and the house of the bride. On the first day, neighbours, friends and relatives come to the house of the groom and celebrate. The second day is similar, except that acquaintances from further away villages attend. On this second day, if the marriage takes place in *Susesi* or in a near-by village, celebrations at the bride's house begin. On the third day, the two sides come together as the groom goes to the bride's house and takes her away.

Throughout the three days, lively dancing takes place. It moves through a distinct sequence. It begins with the *mehter* playing a *halay* (folk-dance) of the sort which is found all over Turkey, and indeed on both the Sunni and Alevi sides of the sub-province. The dancers take three or four steps to the right and one back in a repeated sequence. At this point, the Alevi dance is different from the Sunni only in that the women dance alongside the men in the Alevi villages, and separately, out of sight of each other, in the Sunni. From this point on, the two sects differ. After a *halay,* the Sunni men dance with their hands in the air, mimicking the way the Sunni women dance when they are on their own. Among the Alevi the dancers, form a circle, and move through a sequence of preparation (*hazırlama*), a faster stepping, clapping dance called *elli* (with hands), and finally to a *gönüller semahı*, the same 'dance of the hearts' which rounds off the *cem* ceremony. There is no limit to the number of dancers who may join in, so at one moment there may be several dozen people dancing in unison, the women whirling with their arms outstretched, and the men throwing their arms vigorously first one side then the other, and stamping their feet, the whole dance in a circle, moving in an anti-clockwise direction. During the dance, the men shout *Haydar* !7

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7 'A surname of the caliph Ali' (Redhouse.1987, page 466.)

Men may form around a table and drink at any time during the three days of the wedding. This is known as *muhabbet* (the same word which is used for love brought forth by worshipping together in the *Tarikat* , cf. Part 4.4.3 above). The drinking, at least at the beginning of the evening, is highly ritualised.One of the company, who must be a man able to control the gathering, is appointed *saki*, distributor of drinks.[8] No man may begin before the *saki* has given a formal toast to open the proceedings, and thereafter all men at the table must obey *saki* 's command to drink. In addition, no man may leave the table without the express permission of the *saki*. If he does so, he is open to punishment, *sitem*, from the *saki*. The standard punishment they term a *cabriel*, an 'Angel Gabriel', and consists of a cockerel and a bottle of *rakı*, donated to the people drinking.

I have been present at many gatherings at which the minstrel began by singing a drinking song, then moved on to laments mourning Ali or in praise of the twelve *imam*. For example;

Dönen dönsün, ben dönmezim yolumdan (i)
Ali, Ali, Ali, Ali'ya doğru (ii)

Bir gün mahşer olur, dıvan kurulur (x2)
Haklı, haksız orda hemen beli olur

(ii), Süçlü olmayanlar orda beli olur
(i), (ii), (i), (ii).

Let those who turn, turn, I do not turn from my road
Ali, *Ali*, *Ali*, true to *Ali*.

One day comes the day of judgement, (the) court is assembled, (x2)
There, right or wrong becomes clear immediately.

Ali, *Ali*, *Ali*, true to *Ali*.
There, the not-guilty become clear immediately.

Let those who turn, turn, I do not turn from my road,
Ali, *Ali*, *Ali*, true to *Ali*.

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[8] *Saki* (lit. 'water-distributor) is a figure who appears frequently in Persian poetry, also in settings which are ambivalent in tha they are in part merry gathering, in part worship. See, for example, Heron-Allen (1899) on the sources of Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat*. I return to the Persian connection below.

Let those who turn, turn, I do not turn from my road,
Ali, *Ali*, *Ali*, true to *Ali*.

The minstrel then usually plays a sequence of songs culminating in a *sema*. At the sound of the *sema* it is usual for a man to call for his children, both boys and girls and encourage them to dance to the accompaniment of cheers from the drinkers. Often women are present, either sitting with or waiting on the men. They usually dance in the *sema* with the men.

When the men are very drunk, often one or more of them stands and shouts 'Silence! I want to say something.' On being allowed to talk, they say, 'We're all friends (*dost*) here, are we not? There is oneness (*birlik*)'. They then take a drink of *raki*, and the *saki* hands them a *lokma*, a piece of meat from the entrails of the sheep which is being eaten, to swallow immediately afterwards. If there is no meat available, they still perform this gesture, for example, with a piece of cucumber or a piece of potato.

Thus the power of the dede is waning, and the religious ceremonies over which they preside ever less popular. A few villagers still believe without question the teachings of the dede as the true form of Islam, more are sceptical as to the worth of religion. All I spoke with or witnessed remain attached to their dance and song, but practice them mainly in a secular setting. Here, the dance and song are seen not as religion but as a part of 'Aleviness', even though the sentiments expressed, and structure of the gatherings, are very similar to those in the religious rituals.

I witnessed, therefore, a community in which for many individuals the symbols and ideas of religion are coming to be seen as culture. This shift is quite explicit, the *Susesi* villagers refer to a neighbouring *mahalle* in *Ekmek* , who supply the musicians for much of the area, as 'very cultural', *çok kültürlü*, citing their ability at music, dance and poetry. Even those Alevi who are avowedly left-wing, who reject all religion in principle, who avoid going to a *cem* unless they absolutely have to and never kiss the

hand of a *dede* , attend the *muhabbet* drinking sessions, where they sing and dance *sema* enthusiastically. Indeed, these politically active men are those who hold *muhabbet* the most often.

Part 5.3 The four questions reconsidered

In Chapter 2, I asked four questions with regard to the Sunni villages. Why are their villages able to grow larger? Why are most men able to retain their faith? Why do they wish the government to support their religion? What enables the government to cooperate with this wish? If we ask the equivalent questions with the Alevi villages in mind they become: first, why is every Alevi village losing population rapidly? The second, why are most men losing their faith? The third and fourth questions are a little more complicated to phrase.

Most Alevi men look to the government to support them as they modernise, to protect them against the Sunni, and to uphold Atatürk's reforms. As we have seen (Chapter 1), they vote consistently for parties associated with Kemalism. Some also think that the Directorate of Religious Affairs should train *dede* so that the intelligent members of *dede* lineages do not leave to become school teachers (their favoured profession). However, when the government did make a move to acknowledge Alevi religion, by taking over an annual festival in *Haci Bektaş* town in 1990, the same men who before wished that the government would support them, when they heard of this event, were profoundly suspicious of the government's involvement.

The third question then becomes, why are the Alevi Kemalist, and why are they so ambivalent toward the government's taking an interest in their religion? and fourth, why did the government feel able to become associated with the Alevi in 1990?

Why the Alevi villages are declining in population

When trying to explain why the Sunni villages are able to flourish, and even to expand in population, my answer in part, was that the state choses one settlement and

designates it a village, that there is no rank of men whose position becomes overturned by the state gradually taking over responsibility for dispute settling, that there is a very low level of specifity in their social organisation, and that their sedentary way of life, combined with their being Sunni, already implies a subservience to central authority. As a result, the Sunni villages are able to hand over more and more of the communities' administration to the state without profound disruption, and they are amenable to large changes in population without an essential social institution being damaged.

Alevi are similar to the Sunni in their methods of traditional agricultural production, but otherwise, all of these things are reversed. A number of settlements are designated 'village'. Some men are more holy than others. The Alevi traditional social organisation is highly specific in that every lineage is in theory attached in perpetuity to a holy lineage. Men's first allegiance, according to their religion, is to these holy men, and the authority they represent

The difficulties which this creates when the Alevi settlements are trying to integrate into the nation have already in great part become clear. Their mechanisms of social control must change far more radically than those of the Sunni villages because the right to solve disputes becomes transferred from the *dede* to figures sanctioned by central government, represented in the village by the *muhtar*. As men internalise membership of the Turkish nation, with the loyalty and subservience that this implies, they must give up literal belief in the myths and traditions by which the *dede* are supported. Men do not wish to accept the living conditions which life in the separated *mahalle* imposes on them, yet they cannot entirely abandon them and the network of reciprocal obligations and ties which this entails because they have failed to develop any other means of staying alive in the rural setting. In addition, they have no core to the village community such is found in the Sunni villages by virtue of the correspondence between the villagers' presumption and the state's allocation of what is collective pasture. In the Alevi villages, the state-designated collective pasture conflicts with that owned by each *mahalle*, and in *Susesi* (Chapter 3, part 1) each *mahalle* retains use of

its own pasture when it is able. Even when the separate *mahalle* do cooperate as a village to exploit the services available from the state and individuals embrace their identity as villagers there is no obvious discourse in which shared rituals can be celebrated. *Muhabbet*, shared drinking sessions, are not sufficient in themselves to provide a collective identity for a whole village community. *Tarikat* religious ceremonies gain much of their *frisson* by conveying a sense of a persecuted minority and it is difficult for the Alevi to use them as focal points for a village community (which is only seen as such in the first because its inhabitants feel able to accept the state's designation of them as a village) and the villagers are not sufficiently attracted to the Sunni, mosque-based Islam led by the Directorate of Religious Affairs for it to be a sustainable alternative.[9]

My suggestion, therefore, as to why the Alevi villages are emptying so much more quickly than the Sunni is that they cannot integrate into Modern Turkey without the difficulties, contradictions and disorganisation that such a change in orientation requires appearing more painful to them than simply moving to a city and starting life again. In the town, the contradictions which beset village life largely disappear. The rival system of authority between the state and the *dede* is no longer a dilemma; the state is their only feasible temporal authority in an urban setting. Individuals may show respect to the *dede*, and ask them to hold religious ceremonies, but they need pay no heed to what they say because the means of enforcement of the *dede*'s most drastic punishment (banishment from the homogeneous, closed village community) is no longer a viable possibility. In addition, the conflicting levels, *mahalle* or village, as a

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[9] Naess' very interesting article (1988) on an Alevi village in the east of Turkey confirms many of these points. The village he visited appears to be on a path similar to *Susesi* but perhaps further along it. He explains that the last *Tarikat* ritual was held before he arrived in the village, and that they had rejected the last *dede* completely, that the villagers claimed that the *mahalle* divisions in the village were once more important than they were at the time of his visit, but that by then, they had lost their integrity as independent units through the fields in them being sold and ownership dispersed throughout the whole village. He notes also that the villagers turned to mosque-based worship but that it was not a success.

category by which a person may identify simply disappear; in the city the village *mahalle* from which a person comes is no longer considered important.[10]

Why the Alevi are giving up their religion

The reasons that the Alevi are less and less concerned with actively participating in.religion have already partly become clear. Traditional religion is cumbersome. The doctrines obscure and difficult to learn. The opposition between *Tarikat* , the private life of the community in which the religious rituals are celebrated in secrecy, and *Şeriat*, the sphere of life controlled by the central state, looses much of its significance when the community itself is trying to attract services.

There is also a fundamental change in the outlook of individual men.[11] I explain in part 1 above that *dede* lose their authority and men lose their taste for long collective rituals but that the *edep* philosophy retains its force as an appropriate way to lead one's life. Even men who are explicitly anti-religious stress that this is the key to Alevi-ness, that the community rests on people not stealing, on not committing adultery, and not telling lies, and many men seem to try scrupulously to lead their lives according to this prescription. However, the *edep* philosophy is not usually regarded as a religious stricture but as one which should be retained because of its overall benefit to the community. That is, the basis for men's moral behaviour is moving out of the religious

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10 The Alevi's lack of patronage is important, and is returned to in the conclusions. But it is not in itself an answer as to why so many of the Alevi should have left. There is no violent persecution in the sub-province, and there is no reason for the Alevi to suppose that in the city they will have significantly better access to resources. They leave because they are unable to to conceive of the village successfully turning into a town, which brings us back to the question of their traditional social organisation and its inappropriateness in a modern setting.
I should add that, of course, my explanation of why migration occurs is only a preliminary one, which will have to be made more elaborate as I continue to learn more of the villagers' lives. An obvious way to test what I suggest here would be to find an Alevi community which is financially comfortably off. A researcher could then explore what steps they have taken to modernise their communities, and investigate the incidence of migration without the suspicion that the Alevi are leaving purely for financial reasons.

11 Men is used deliberately. The question of women and belief is one one which, owing to the little contact I had with Alevi women, I do not feel able to discuss in depth. I have the impression that, attracted by the higher status it offers them, they remain attached to religion longer than do the men. The two *cem* ceremonies which I attended had twice as many women as men, and the women were disappointed when they drew to an end.

sphere, where they act in a certain way ostensibly or actually because they are commanded so by God, into a sphere which requires such an action of men because this is an appropriate way to behave in society. Put in another way, the Alevi have gone (or are going) though a double process of secularisation. They have separated government from religion in that they accept the law of the Republican state when they get to the town (and increasingly do so in the villages), *and* they have taken the available wisdom from their traditional religion and stripped it of its sacred justification. In contrast, the Sunni have only gone through the first stage; they may, as Richard and Nancy Tapper have stressed,[12] be able to conceive a separation between their private lives and that of the state but their private lives are still governed by precepts which they hold to be based in religion.

The question is now, why is it that the Alevi are able to make this second shift when the Sunni villagers are not? In terms of the explanation which I used in the chapter on the Sunni villages above, I would suggest also the following argument. Both Alevi and Sunni wish to be part of the Turkish nation. The two most important social relations in a nation-state are respectively those between men and the nation with which they identify, and men and the women whom they dominate. Sunni Islam is admirably suited to strengthening both these relations; it extols subservience to a central governing authority which can then administer its people, and it extols dominance of men over women. Alevi religion can be used for neither of these tasks by the *Susesi* villagers. On the contrary, by virtue of its insistence on the rightful leadership of the Twelve *imam*, taken literally, it regards governing by central Sunni rule as entirely without legitimation. And, though in fact women are subordinate to men, there is nothing in the *Tarikat* creed which says that they should be treated in any way different from men. On the contrary it supports their equal participation in social life. In short, because there is little in the Alevi religion which can be used by men to

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12 Nancy and Richard Tapper (1987b).

perpetuate the social structure of which they increasingly become a part, or to reinforce their position within it, there is no reason for them to continue to embody religion's moral message within the confines which it has set itself in the traditional setting. Alevi men do not reject the humanitarian element within their religion, on the contrary they stress this aspect, saying it is their culture, but its sacred underpinnings are no longer relevant to their lives.

Why the Alevi wish the government to support Kemalism

At one level, that the Alevi should be supporters of Kemalism is obvious. It offered them relief from persecution, whether real or supposed, and a Republic within which they were promised full rights irrespective of their sect. However, the Alevi veneration for Atatürk goes further than appreciation for the reforms he instigated when he created the Turkish nation. They regard Atatürk as a creator of an ideal way of life, and often regret the elections in 1950 which led to the demise of the *CHP* . Some *dede* even say that they love him as much as they love *mehti*, the twelfth, vanished *imam*, who is supposed to return one day to rule.[13] Birge noticed this very early, saying 'Many Bektashis.... claim that they are content with the situation as it is, feeling that (Republican) government action has now ensured for all the social life which formerly was to be found only in the secret ritual of the Bektashi order.'[14]

There are many parallels between Republican ideology and the Alevi way of looking at the world which help to explain this veneration. I would summarise them by saying that Alevi culture (traditional religion shorn of the Shi'ite myths and subservience to *dede*), with its emphasis on correct conduct, responsibility to the community, and its collective music, poetry, dance and song, fuses well with the philosophy extolled by Atatürk as being appropriate for a person's life in modern

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[13] On *mehti* see Donaldson (1933, Chapter 21).
[14] Birge (1937, page 85).

Turkey and provides them with an urban ethic with which to lead their lives. To give an example, Meeker writes on the early Republican period;

> One of the earliest formations of Turkish nationality considerably elaborated its patrilineal basis. It was asserted that not only was a man Turkish by virtue of his paternity, but that Turks as a group were all descendants of the Turkish tribes of central Asia which had emigrated to the Near East. There is even a myth which traces this descent back to particular individuals and events in central Asia. The advantage of such a viewpoint for a diverse population with contrasting customs is clear. Unity in blood or descent is used to offset diversity in culture. As a result one finds today that many Turks believe that Kurds are Turks who speak a peculiar dialect which is not a separate language, that Greek speaking villages on the Black Sea coast are Turks who acquired their language when they settled among the Christian population, and that Circassians represent one branch of the Central Asian Turkish tribes. They are all Turks because they all share share common descent, their cultural differences are therefore mere aberrations.[15]

The Alevi also trace their descent to Turkish roots, comparing themselves to the Sunni, whom, they say, have been converted to Arabic culture by virtue of being Sunni. Though Alevi vary in the way they are able to describe their history, some of those who are most articulate use the following explanation. They say that there was a teacher, *Ahmed Yesevi* , who ran a Sufi school at *Horasan* in Iran and that *Haci Bektaş* was one of a number of *Ahmet Yesevi* 's pupils sent forth to spread the *Tarikat* doctrine. They say that the task of these pupils (now become teachers) was to support the victories gained by *Arp Arslan* , the Selcuk general, by ruling the conquered territories in Anatolia and bringing their inhabitants to peace.[16] *Dede* lineages sometimes use this part of the Alevi heritage to link their descent directly to one of *Ahmet Yesevi* 's pupils, thereby missing out *Haci Bektaş* in their explanation of their past. The dervish (described in account 5.1) who struck the ground and made a deer appear for the Padishah's troops is the founder of one these lineages. The *dede* who

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15 Meeker (1970 page 143).

16 *Arp Arslan* was the conqueror of the Byzantines at Malazgirt (A.D.1071) In fact, *Ahmet Yesevi* lived a century after *Arp Arslan*, see Birge (1937, Chapter 2, part A). Otherwise, the main Alevi/Bektashi idea, that there were highly trained Sufi leaders who came from the east during the time of the *Türk* invasion of Anatolia, and that *Ahmet Yesevi* was prominent among them is regarded as being historically true by Birge and by Melikoff (1988). The subject of the invasion of Anatolia is, of course, an enormous debate, which I do not feel qualified to enter here.

regard themselves as descended from him say that the dervish came with *Arp Arslan* in the original campaign against the Byzantines, and only reluctantly agree that they have offered subservience to the *Haci Bektaş efendi* lineages.[17]

To the bulk of the Alevi, however, *Haci Bektaş* appears as at once the religious fountain-head of their movement, one which is now carried through the generations of *efendi* to the present day, and also a great Turkish leader, one who has few Arabic (and by implication Sunni Islamic) influences. More extreme Alevi say that he is representative of a pre-Islamic, shamanistic cult which constitutes the true Turkish religion. These Alevi may even say that the monotheistic, authoritarian God *Allah* is a needless creation of the Sunni, pointing to their polytheistic, shamanistic past, and embrace Atatürk's explorations into a pre-Islamic Anatolian past with enthusiasm.[18]

The Alevi preoccupation with being Turkish rather than Arabic shows itself in also in their use of language. We have already seen (Chapter 3, part 3) that in the village they make a distinction between *Tarikat* prayers, which are in Turkish, and that they contrast these with *Şeriat* prayers, which are in Arabic. Further, they prefer to refer to God as *Tanrı*, the old Turkish word for God, rather than the Arabic *Allah*. They read the *Buyruk* in a version which has almost no Arabic words accept those absolutely necessary to retain the Islamic setting and the Sufi vocabulary. For example, the formula, 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful', used by the Sunni in its original Arabic form (*bismillahirrahmanirrahim*) they write in rather awkward Turkish as *Esirgeyen ve Bağışlayan Tanrının Adı İle* , which smacks of the very early Republican attempts to make Arabic Islamic formula Turkish. The more politically

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[17] I have deliberately avoided an investigation into the connection between *Shah Ismail* and the Alevi in this work. It would appear to fit in very well with the investigations of Birge and Melikoff to surmise that the Alevi were converted (or at least supported) in their religion via the instigation of *Shah Ismail* when he was trying to defeat the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century (Birge 1937, pages 62-69). Indeed Melikoff suggests such a connection (1975). I have found nothing in the sub-province to contradict such a supposition. But on the other hand I have found nothing to support it either, in that the villagers have no sense of an historical attachment to Iran, other than through its earlier Sufi movement of *Ahmet Yesevi*. See also Savory (1975).

[18] These are described well in B.Lewis (1961).

conscious among the villagers indeed are deeply sympathetic to the change from Arab to latin script, and to the language reforms instigated by the *Türk Dil Kurumu* (Turkish Language Council) which was set up by Atatürk to reform Turkish of Arabic borrowings,[19] and regret its closure after the 1980 *coup*.[20]

Why the Alevi are ambivalent toward the state

That the Alevi should be ambivalent toward the state can be explained in the following way. The shift in allegiance from the *dede* to the state involves a change in the authority they are prepared to accept to run their lives, but it entails only a *partial* rejection of the culture which used to be embodied in their respect for their *dede*. Until the shift in authority is complete, they will be remain hesitant at accepting the power of the state over their lives. But at the same time, because they increasingly draw their identity from their membership of a modern nation, they want the state to reflect the values which orientate their lives. These values are still very close to those endorsed in their traditional religion. Thus on the one hand the Alevi wish the state to acknowledge them as its citizens and support their way of life, and on the other they are fearful of its interference. They remain suspicious of the state for a further, more pragmatic reason. As explored in Chapter 1, the *CHP* have never won a majority. Because (in their eyes) the parties who have won are all pro-Sunni religion, the Alevi are suspicious of any move which the government makes, and particularly one which involves them, for fear that there may be a religious motivation behind the government's actions.

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[19] On the language reform, see G. Lewis (1957, Chapter 14).

[20] There are further similarities between the Alevi and Kemalism, which I hope to explore more fully at a later date. For example, according to the Republican ideology, the folk dances found all over Turkey are ways through which people can celebrate the Turkish roots of their nation. There is still now a government department employed in collecting folktales. Every child is taught folkdances whilst at school. Folkdance and folktales are still the subject of government conferences and publications. (For example*Türk Halk Kültürü Araştırmaları* (Turkish Folk Culture Researches) (1991). In the villages, school teachers are encouraged to make the pupils perform folkdances as a way of celebrating national holidays which are important in Republican History. In a Sunni village, these dances conflict with the actively religious believers, as described in Chapter 2. In an Alevi village, however, the dances are *already* the principal way in which Alevi-ness is celebrated. On occasions when the teachers in the schools have been Alevi, I have seen their Alevi pupils dance the *gönüller semahı*, the 'sema of the hearts' for them with a will outside the schools to celebrate national holidays.

These conflicting feelings were put in sharp relief by the Haci Bektash festival, *şenliği*, in 1990. In August each year, Haci Bektash town becomes a focus for Alevi from all over Turkey. The meeting does not have an explicitly religious purpose. Rather, as its title, 'festival' suggests , it is a celebration of Alevi dance, music and poetry. Different teams of *sema* performers show their way of dancing (which vary greatly from one part of Turkey to another). Famous *aşık*, minstrels, play to large crowds. Less famous ones, but nevertheless highly skilled, enter competitions for medals.

In 1990,[21] for the first time, the government decided to take notice officially of the festival. They arranged an official programme, which included a debate between representatives of the Alevi community and a Sunni teacher at a Theological Faculty, held in the presence of the Minister for Culture in the *ANAP* government at that time. They arranged for the *sema* dances to be programmed properly and the dancing to stop promptly at eleven o'clock at night, and for there to be an official opening with speeches.

The Minister himself, the leader of the *SHP*, and a spokesman for the *DYP* all spoke at the opening (at which I was present). The speeches were elaborate and complementary, as is normal in such settings, but the most controversial was that given by the Minister of Culture, *Namık Kemal Zeybek*. It can be contrasted with that made by *Erdal Inönü* (the son of *Izmet Inönü*, the first president of the Republic after *Atatürk*) who is the head of the *SHP*. *Erdal Inönü* gave a conventional speech (from the Alevi point of view), describing the way that the Alevi, in their immediate acceptance of Atatürk's efforts to set up the Republic, showed their important place in a *laik* Republic.[22] He also stressed the worth of their humanism (*Humanizma*) to the

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[21] I would like to thank the William Wyse fund of Trinity College for a most generous award to pay for the expenses incurred in attending the festival.

[22] The Alevi often claim that they were instrumental in the success of Atatürk's early journeys across Anatolia when he was trying to raise support for the nationalists' cause. For example Şener (1991).

democracy which is modern Turkey. He received tumultuous applause. In quite a different vein, the Minister for Culture explained firstly that the Alevi had been instrumental in creating the glorious success of the Ottoman Empire through the Janissery (*yeni-çeri*).[23] He then went on to say that the government intended to set up a permanent *sema* group at Haci Bektash to play for tourists, and to build a large town mosque (which Haci Bektash town lacks).

Later, at the debate held in the presence of the minister, a representative of the ministry handed out works published by the government to the audience explaining the history and philosophy of Haci Bektash.[24] During the debate itself (the purpose of which was to discuss different aspects of Alevi culture), the Alevi representatives told the minister quite bluntly that if the government wanted to help the Alevi they could leave Haci Bektash town alone to look after its own affairs. I learnt later, also, that a large unofficial concert had been held at a sacred area just outside the town by a popular, nationally known minstrel, which had an even higher attendance than the official events in the town itself. The Alevi I spoke with in the town itself were very angry at both the idea of having a new mosque (new mosques are built in the Ottoman classical pattern, with large minarets and dome, a style which the Alevi particularly dislike) and at the idea of their dances, which many of them take very seriously indeed, being used as tourist attraction.[25]

Why the government decided to take notice of the Alevi for the first time

That a government should decided to acknowledge a folk festival may not seem very surprising, but in the Turkish context it is an innovation. Republican tenets hold, as Meeker writes in the quotation above, that there is no difference in Turkish citizens.

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[23] The janissery regiments were organised around Bektashi leaders. See Weissman (1964).
[24] Coşan (1990) and Sezgin (1990).
[25] Men who still believe find it wrong that a religious dance should be so exposed to the careless eye of the tourist, and those who regard the dances as representing Alevi culture find it wrong that so serious a subject should treated merely as a tourist attraction.

All are *Türk* and all are *Müslüman,* the sect being of no consequence. Why the *ANAP* government should suddenly decide to intervene, breaking fifty years of completely ignoring the Alevi officially, is therefore worthy of thought. In the terms of the arguments put forward in Chapter 2, that the state wants control over both the cultures (the means people have to think) and the structures (the authority) of everyday life, an answer is possible in that one would assume that *ANAP* officials thought that it would be an appropriate way to control any possible resistance to the government which was coalescing around the annual festival at Haci Bektash.

Whilst this is no doubt part of the answer, it does not explain why the government should intervene at that point. To my knowledge, though the festivals were attractive to left-wing groups,[26] they were not actively planning against the state or the government. This problem will have to wait further research.

As a speculation, however, I would suggest that the government taking notice of the Alevi is bound in with a wider shift in Turkey as a whole. It appears that the Republican idea that all citizens are Turk, that officially there are no minorities in Turkey is becoming more difficult to sustain, and that this opening up of ideas is part of a great increase in pluralism since 1980 . Not pluralism in the strict political sense of the word, but from the point of view of the ideas that are available to think with. Pre-1980, the Alevi assured me repeatedly, there was no middle of the road, liberal tradition which a person could take up. One was either for the left, or the right. The ideas which one had inevitably bore the colour of one's political persuasion. Now it appears increasingly that ideas can be treated independently from politics. If this is the case, then the Alevi way of life can be acknowledged as a part of Modern Turkey without remaining concealed in left-wing movements and ignored by authority. There is some

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[26] A volume entitled *Haci Bektaş Veli*, published as the first volume in a series by the 'Haci Bektash Tourism Association' in 1977 is the result of a meeting held at Haci Bektash town. In it there are both historical researches, and essays discussing the revolutionary (*devrimci*) and 'societal' (*toplumcu*) aspects of Haci Bektash's ideas. This gives it an unmistakable 'lefty' connotation. The word '*devrim*' was later banned by the generals.

evidence for this in a rapid increase of publications concentrating or describing the Alevi during the late eighties, and which shows now (1992) no sign of ceasing.[27] The investigation of this issue, however, takes us out of the village setting and will be considered in a further piece of research.

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[27] See for example, Eyuboğlu (1991) or Selçuk, Şaylan and Kalkan (1991).

Conclusions

In this thesis I have sketched how the increasing interchange between central government and village leads to quite different ethics of modern life. The Sunni's village organisation survives, the villagers retain their faith and they favour the parties, all of whom are lenient toward Islam, who customarily win a majority in the National Assembly. The Alevi in contrast are unable to adapt, village life is disrupted and their beliefs eroded.

When trying to explain the way the Alevi villages are emptying I did not invoke their lack of patronage to explain why they are leaving. I did not do so because I do not believe lack of patronage on its own can explain the great difference in the rate the two populations are migrating from the sub-province. However, patronage, whether in political parties or through possessing friends and contacts on a more informal basis in the towns, is vital in the race the two sides are pursuing in trying to better themselves in modern Turkey as a whole. In other words, because the Alevi have so few friends, either in the towns, cities or in the sub-province, who are doing well as Turkey develops, they may find themselves falling behind as a sect in a fully industrialised Turkey and have a greater percentage of unskilled workers among them than could be expected merely on a random basis. At the moment there is no structural economic difference between the two sects, but one may emerge in the future.

There is evidence for this already. I explained in the first chapter, for example, that the Alevi have very little foothold in the sub-province centre, from which they might be able to build an urban base. In addition, in the absence of an obvious cash-crop, the method with which a rural community appears to integrate best into Turkey as a whole is to specialise in a particular trade, so that the villagers who are successful can then pass on vacancies and opportunities which occur in the profession. This is

described in detail by Stirling for *Sakaltutan*, where the villagers have first become plasterers, and now moved on to become contractors.[1]

In the sub-province, the members of one Sunni village boast that they specialise in helping each other to become medical doctors. Another, one of the most successful, are goldsmiths and have shops both in the sub-province centre and in the covered market in Istanbul. One Alevi village has managed to specialise in becoming *hamam* (Turkish bath) attendants. I have no information as to how lucrative this is, though I suspect it would be difficult for a single village to find many posts in popular baths because of their dispersed nature. *Susesi* has failed to develop any specific trade at all. Indeed, the tables (3.4-3.6), which list the different ways with which men earn money in *Susesi,* are surprising in their diversity. Nor have the *Susesi* villagers been successful in gaining academic qualifications. Only one man from *Susesi* has a full university degree, which he took part time whilst working as a civil servant. This man is now a successful lawyer in Ankara. Usually the villagers' highest aspiration is to become a school teacher, and for the women, to become midwives or nurses.

The research conducted here is only based on one sub-province but if it is generalisable its significance is this: the Alevi have hitherto been a rural population and the cities and towns predominantly Sunni. As the Alevi move into the towns it will be increasingly in urban Turkey that a mix of sects will be found, and rural Turkey will become predominantly Sunni. If the indications found in the sub-province that the Sunni cope better than the Alevi at developing the ties necessary to do well in modern Turkey are also generalisable, then it is to the poorer parts of the cities that we will go for further research on the Alevi, perforce to study the emergence of a new underclass.[2]

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[1] Stirling (1988).

[2] Cf. an essay by Bahitin Akşit, at the end of which he appeals for sociologists to take into account Alevi and Sunni as one of their variables when researching into urban life (1985, page 200). These contentions sound perhaps overbold, but see the *Introduction* for the explanation of why I phrase them like this.

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