KURDISH ISLAMISM: ENGAGING WITH KURDISH NATIONALIST AND ISLAMIST DISCOURSE AND MOVEMENTS IN TURKEY

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As the author of this work, I here declare that all information in this thesis has been obtained and written in accordance with the academic rules and ethics. I also declare that I have completely cited and referenced all materials that are not original to this thesis as a requirement of ethical conduct and academic rules.

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ABSTRACT

Yusuf ÇEVİK   **January, 2015**

KURDISH ISLAMISM: ENGAGING WITH THE KURDISH NATIONALIST AND ISLAMIST DISCOURSE AND MOVEMENTS IN TURKEY

Political Islam in Turkey is an exceptional phenomenon that has been different from other Islamist movements in other countries with Muslim majority. Turkish Islamism has gained this exceptional character throughout the reformation period of Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and of Turkish Republic between 1920s and 1950s. The idiosyncratic role of Nakşibendi order has seriously been effective on this exceptional character of Turkish Islamism both in politics and in societal issues. The term, Turkish Islam refers to the exceptional character of Political Islam in Turkey, which does not have any radical views and uses political institutions as different from the other Islamist movements around the world. Beside, because of being Muslim with majority, Islam has become a significant and unifying social fact for the Kurds living in Turkey. Likewise in the case of Turkish Islamism, the Nakşibendis have become more of an issue in Kurdish regions. Based on these facts, this study will argue that there has been a Kurdish Islamist movement in Turkey initiated with Kurdish nationalist movements and with the effect of Nakşibendi sheikhs on the Kurdish revolts. Even though Kurdish Islamist movement shares the same Islamic background with Turkish Islamist movements, it disintegrates with Turkish Islamism at some points. Kurdish Islamism has been a phenomenon through the history of Turkish Republic and has also become voice of the Kurdish groups emerged after 1980s.

Keywords

Nationalism, Islamism, Kurdish Islamism, Kurdish Nationalism, Nakşibendi Order, Said Nursi and Med-Zehra Group, Hezbollah

KISA ÖZET

Yusuf ÇEVİK   **Ocak 2015**

Kürt İslamcılığı: Türkiye'de Kürt Milliyetçi ve İslamcı Söylem ve Hareketlerin Etkileşimi

Türkiye'de Siyasal İslam, Müslüman nüfusun yoğunlukta olduğu diğer ülkelerdeki İslamcı hareketlerden farklı olan, istisnai bir olgudur. Türk İslamı bu istisnai karakterini 19. yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti'nde başlayan ve Cumhuriyet dönemi boyunca devam eden reform sürecinde elde etmiştir. Nakşibendi tarikatının kendine has rolü bu istisnai karakterin kazanılmasında hem siyaset hem de toplum düzeyinde ciddi derecede etkili olmuştur. Türk İslamı veya İslamcılığı kavramsal olarak, İslam dünyasındaki diğer İslamcı akımlara kıyasla, Türk İslamcı hareketin radikal görüşler taşımayan ve farklı siyasi mekanizmaları kullanan bu istisnai karakterine gönderme yapar. Ayrıca, çoğunlukla Müslüman olmaları nedeniyle, Türkiye'de yaşayan Kürtler için de İslam önemli birleştirici bir sosyal gerçekliktir. Türk İslamı'nda olduğu gibi, Nakşibendi hareketi Kürt bölgesi için de önem arz eder. Bu gerçekliklere dayanarak, bu çalışma, Türkiye'de Kürt milliyetçi hareketiyle ve Nakşibendi tarikatının Kürt isyanları üzerindeki etkisiyle başlayan bir Kürt İslamcı hareketinin varlığını tartışacaktır. Kürt İslamcılığı Türk İslamcılığı ile aynı tarihsel arka planı paylaşmasına rağmen bazı temel noktalarda ayrışır. Kürt İslamcı hareketi cumhuriyet tarihi boyunca bir olgu haline gelmiş ve 1980'lerden sonar ortaya çıkan Kürt gruplar arasında da etkili olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Milliyetçilik, İslamcılık, Kürt İslamcılığı, Kürt milliyetçiliği, Nakşibendi Tarikatı, Said Nursi ve Med-Zehra Grubu, Hizbullah

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INTRODUCTION

The Kurds and their politics in the Ottoman Empire and in the Turkish Republic have always been a source of debate and many works have been done on them so far. Because of today's problematic situation of the Kurds and the historical background of the Kurdish problem, there is a broad academic literature on this issue. However, based on my literature survey, I see that most of the academic works regard the Kurdish issue from the nationalist point of view.[1] The effect of nationalism on the Kurds mostly after 1880s and the nationalist and separatist discourse of the Kurdish movements are central in those works. Therefore, the studies that have been done in regard to this perspective are valuable. Nevertheless, I think that the handling of the Kurds -and the Kurdish question specifically-exclusively from a nationalist point of view undermines the other political components of the Kurdish politics such as the effect of political Islam. Accordingly, this thesis aims to unveil the effect of political Islam on the Kurds by analyzing the important Kurdish movements and revolts in the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th century and the Turkish Republic later on. Because of the insufficient sources on the issue of Kurdish Islamism, I have to follow a historical comparative method by examining the views of the Kurdish elites, sheiks and intellectuals in a chronological order starting from the late 19th century. In addition, I need to look at some primary sources especially about Islamism, but in this study, I am going to resort to the secondary sources as well, which provided a great deal of contributions to this study.

The political movements that emerged in and spread from Europe in the 18th and 19th century affected almost all countries and states as well as the Ottoman Empire.The Ottomans' situation in the 19th century was getting worse day by day and the Ottoman Empire was called the "ill man", which was about to die, by the Europeans. Under these circumstances, the Ottomans launched a reformation movement in the reign of the Sultan Mahmud II. The first reforms were done in the military and educational fields by Mahmud II, and towards the end of the 19th century

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[1] See Olson 1992, Jwadieh 1961, Van Bruinessen 1992, Şimşir 2007 and Romano 2006.

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they were followed by land reform, administrative centralization, the establishment of constitutional monarchyand the right of citizenship to the minorities. In addition to the reforms, Ottoman elites and intellectuals were trying to cure "the ill man" by discussing ideologies that emerged at that time. Accordingly, Islamism and nationalism, which are going to be the base of this study, were the two dominant political ideologies in the late 19th century in the Ottoman Empire. While the former was an internal ideology in order to save the Ottomans from the corruption, the latter was an external ideology caused by fractions in the Ottomans.

Before starting to discuss Islamism, I think that a clear distinction should be made between Islam and Islamism in order to clarify the concepts that are going to be used in this study. First of all, Islam is a religion which accepts the existence of a supernatural power as all other religions do. It is a religion that tries to make believer's life meaningful. In Islam, people believe in afterlife and they shape their life according to this belief. What really matters for Muslim is this belief of eternal life (Türköne 1991, 20). In contrast to this, political Islam or Islamism appears as a political ideology that uses Islamic discourse in politicsand actually secularizes Muslims in one way or another. Islamism or political Islam is a controversial term in terms of its definition (Yılmaz 2011, 247). Yet it can basically be defined as the actualization of the political goals by referring to the Islamic understanding and the use of Islamic discourse in the political sphere. Political Islam that emerged in the mid-19th centurywas firstly a pursuit of solutions to the weaknesses of Muslim communities and thenturned to be a reaction to the imperialist activities of the western powers (Esposito 1984, 33). The first aim of Islamism was to find a solution to the weakness of Muslim communities. After that, it tried to cope with the western powers and modernize the Empire as the Young Ottomans tried to do in the Ottoman Empire. This was started with modernization of Islam.

When we look at Islamist movements today, it is clear that Islamism is seen -with an orientalist view- as a radical, intolerant and bloodthirsty movement. Some terrorist organizations, such as Al-qaida and ISIS, which claim to be Islamist, have been effective on the emergence of this perception because of their armed struggle in

order to realize an Islamic order all around the world. Nevertheless, it is not correct to consider all the Islamist movements in this frame. There are other Islamist groups, movements and organizations, which have tried to actualize their goals without armed struggle by just using the method of *tebliğ* (religious notification) and participating in the political sphere. The Islamist movements in Turkey, called Turkish Islam by Şerif Mardin (2005) and İhsan Yılmaz (2011) et al., is one of the best examples to these groups. Turkish Islamism in the late Ottoman Empire and in the Turkish Republic has gained an exceptional character with the contributions of the Young Ottomans, which has been different from the other Islamist movements all around the world. In this exceptional character, Islamism in Turkey used the states' tools and followed a legitimate process in order to achieve their goals by participating in the political arena. The use of institutional ways and not following an armed or violent strategy made them different from the other Islamist movements (Mardin 2005, 14).

The political ideas of Sufi movements, mainly the Nakşibendi tariqa which is a broad religious network in Turkey, are effective in this exceptional character of Turkish Islam. Mostly starting from the Kurdish Nakşibendi Sheikh Mevlana Halidi Bağdad-I (1777-1826), Nakşibendis played a crucial role both in the political sphere and societal level in Turkish history (Algar 2007; Tosun 2002). The reformist and modernist views of the Nakşibendi order in the late Ottoman Empire and after the foundation of republic contributed a lot to the emergence of Turkish Islamism (Mardin 2005, 8). Yet the appellation of Islamism in Turkey as Turkish Islamism referring to an ethnic group raises some questions, which are going to be analyzed in this study. Can Islamism be referred to an ethnicity? Is there just one type of Islamism in Turkey? What are the reactions of the Kurds, the major ethnic Muslim group after the Turks, to Islamism and specifically Turkish Islamist views? Is there a Kurdish Islamism in Turkey alongside of Turkish Islamism? Moving from these questions, the hypothesis of this study is that there has been Kurdish Islamist movements in Turkey starting with the Kurdish revolts at the end of the 19th century

and that these movements were mostly affected by the Kurdish Nakşibendi Sheiks and thus shared the same Islamic background with Turkish Islamists[2].

The term Kurdish Islam or Kurdish Islamism has been used recently to refer the Islamist background of the Kurdish movements without any clear definition because there are no comprehensive works on this topic. What I aim to do in this study is also to clarify the term Kurdish Islamism with a broad perspective. Who are the Kurdish Islamists? What are their aims? How are their relations with the Turkish-Kemalist state? What are their views now? What is the Kurdish Islamists' comprehension of the secular state? In the light of my research, those questions will be answered in this study. Kurdish Islamism as a term is used mostly in reference to Hezbollah and its fractions in Turkey by some writers (Aytaç and Uslu 2006; Kırmızı and Bölme 2007). In addition, it also refers to the Med-Zehra group, which is a fraction of the Nur movement. The Med-Zehra group that will be analyzed in this study dwells mostly on the Kurdish identity and culture by referring to Said Nursi, one of the most influential Kurdish religious scholars of the 20th century and also one of the successors of Nakşibendi Sheikh Halid-i Bağdadi (Atacan 2001). In this study, I define Kurdish Islamism in Turkey as the use of Islamic discourse and Islamic understanding in order to found an Islamic state and make Islam dominant in every units of society by expressing the identity, culture and problems of the Kurds. At this point, it is important to state that in spite of sharing the same Islamic background with Turkish Islamism and being affected by the Nakşibendi network like Turkish Islamism, Kurdish Islamism is different in terms of its relation to the Turkish state. While Turkish Islamists do not see the state or caliph as something to revolt against because of the traditional Sunni idea of 'obeying to the caliph' and 'The worst state is better than chaos' (Black 2010, 128), Kurdish Islamists do not show the same reaction as Turkish Islamists do in what concerns political authority. For example, Sheikh Said puts forward the idea that if the imam, the ruler, does not obey the

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[2] In this thesis, the term, Turkish Islamism, is used to refer to the mainstream Turkish Islamist movements such as the National Outlook movement and the Nur movement. Sometimes I use statements like "Islamism in Turkey" which do not refer to only Turkish Islamism, but also Kurdish Islamism.

Sharia law, it is obligatory to revolt against him (Kurbanoğlu 2012, 246). By dwelling on differences between Islamist movements in Turkey, I aim to underline the particularity of Kurdish Islamism throughout the history of Turkey. Yet my thesis will not completely make a comparison of these Islamist movements. In spite of the sharing the same Islamic background and being in the same network, why does Kurdish Islamism differ from the Turkish Islamism? Are there any other components that affect this difference and what is the effect of the problems that the Kurds have had during the history of Turkey? In the light of the information given above, I hope to answer these questions during my thesis.

In addition to Islamism, nationalism was an important trend that affected the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. Although it caused separations of the ethnic minorities from the Ottoman Empire, in order to save the Empire it became a political recipe for the Young Ottomans and for the CUP (the Committee of Union and Progress) in the late Ottoman period which led to a Turkification process with the government of the CUP after 1908. What I am also going to focus on in this study is the nationalist effect on the Kurds and the background of Kurdish nationalism because based on my research I think that there was a link between Kurdish Nationalism and Kurdish Islamism in the late Ottoman period and at the time of the foundation of the Turkish Republic. The effect of nationalism has continued throughout the history of Kurdish Islamist in Turkey as well. So, classical nationalist theories -primordialist, modernist and ethno-symbolist approaches- will be analyzed in this thesis (Özkırımlı 2000).

I am going to compose my thesis in four interconnected chapters. In these chapters, I am trying to analyze the most important and effective Kurdish Islamist movements in a chronological order starting with the late Ottoman period. In the first chapter, I will discuss the theoretical background and historical processes related to the development of nationalism and Islamism in order to build my thesis' theoretical structure and contextualize my research. After mentioning the history of nationalist ideology, I will put forward the effect of nationalism on the Ottoman Empire generally and on the Kurds specifically. Because it is central to this thesis, Islamism

will be another ideology to be worked on in this chapter as well. The emergence of Islamism in the Ottoman Empire and its historical process will also be analyzed in this section. In addition, the context of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and the reformation process will be discussed to situate the grounds on which these currents emerged, with a particular focus on the effects of these reforms on the Kurds and on Kurdish nationalism. Moreover, the Nakşibendi network and the background of Turkish Islamists will be studied in this chapter by looking at the most comprehensive sources written on the Nakşibendi in Turkey since the the Nakşibendi's comparative effect on Turkish Islamism and Kurdish Islamism constitutes the core of this thesis.

In chapter 2, I will work on the relation between Kurdish Nakşibendi sheikhs and the state starting from the 1880s. Since the Kurdish Nakşibendi Sheiks have played an important role in the awakening of the Kurdish sentiments, this chapter will try to explore their roles in the formation of Kurdish Islamist and nationalist movements. The last period of the Ottoman Empire witnessed many ethnic revolts including Kurdish ones, and the initiators of these Kurdish revolts were mostly Sheiks and Mullahs, as it can be seen the names of these revolts such as Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri revolt (1880), Sheikh Abdusselam Barzani revolt (1913), Sheikh Selim revolt (1914) Sheikh Said (1925) and Sheikh Mahmud Barzinji revolt in northern Kurdistan (1919,1921 and 1931).It is thus an important data for us that most of the Kurdish revolts were led by Nakşibendi Sheiks. Two of these revolts created a great impact on Kurdish Islamists and nationalists, the Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri revolt and Sheikh Said revolt. Because of their importance for both Kurdish Islamists and Nationalists, these two revolts will be analyzed in depth in this chapter.

The third chapter will focus on Said Nursi, one of the most influential Kurdish religious scholars in the 20th century in Turkey, and his movement called Nur (Followers of Light). After Nursi, this movement was fragmented and there appeared different Nur movements. The Med-Zehra group, with its Kurdish Islamist and also nationalist structure, is one of those splits to be studied in this chapter. The reason to analyze this movement is that it is founded as a reaction to the mainstream

Nur movements that are ethnically Turkish; this will allow to highlight the Kurdish background of Said Nursi and to contribute to understanding the development of Kurdish Islamism. The books written by the founder and the leader of Med-Zehra group, Sıddık Dursun (Şeyhenzade), will be important for this study so as to understand the movement in depth.

Chapter 4 will mostly deal with the extinction of the Islamic discourse among the Kurdish nationalists starting from the 1930s and the new radical Islamist movement Hezbollah.After the Sheik Said rebellion, there was a rupture in Islamist movements in Turkey. The reason behind this was the policies of the Kemalist state that was built exclusively on Turkish ethnic nationalism and the assertion of laicism which led to the exclusion of religion from the public sphere (Kuru 2007). The Kurds were one of the most affected communities from these policies and following an ideology based on religion was very difficult in such a political setting. In this context, there was no place both for Kurdish nationalists and for Kurdish Islamists. Based on my research, I call this period the cessation in Kurdish Islamism and Kurdish Nationalism.

After the 1960s, Kurdish Nationalists appeared with a new ideological link to Marxism and distanced themselves from Islamic discourse. Therefore, in this chapter, I am going to try to analyze Kurdish Nationalists ideas after 1960s and their approach toward Islam. My intention to give place to the Kurdish nationalists after 1960s is that the Kurdish nationalists have an ever-changing discourse towards Islam and Islamist policies. I hope to put forward the reintroduction of Kurdish Islamism into the political and societal arena of Turkey with an armed and radical structure. Kurdish Hezbollah, which was founded after 1980s, will constitute the core of this chapter. The struggle of Kurdish Hezbollah both with Marxist PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) and with the secular state lasted nearly 20 years in Turkey. Founding an Islamic state and making Diyarbakır, a Kurdish province in the southeast, the capital of that state was at the core of Hezbollah policy. In this respect, Hezbollah has had an important role in the Kurds' political life and has become an alternative to PKK in the Kurdish region of Turkey for the practicing Kurds as it aims to solve the

Kurdish issue by founding an Islamic state. Furthermore, the armed struggle of the Kurdish Hezbollah puts forward a radical and violent side of Kurdish Islamism. This said, the situation changed in the years 2000s when Hezbollah distanced itself from armed struggle and formed a political party in order to reach their aims and to engage in political and social life. Accordingly, Hür Dava Partisi (Free Cause Party) was officially founded on the 30th of December 2012 by one of the fractions of Hezbollah, called Mustazaflar.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: THE RISE OF ISLAMIST AND NATIONALIST IDEAS AND THE OTTOMAN STATE IN 19TH CENTURY

1.1. Islamism and Nationalism

1.1.1. The Rise of Political Islam

Likewise other religions, Islam has also affected the political sphere profoundly since it emerged in the stage of history. Accordingly, the study of Islamism, which is a political ideology that emerged in the 19th century, encapsulates a broad area as it is in the case of nationalism that has been discussed before. The term, Islamism, itself, is controversial because of different conceptualizations and definitions (Yılmaz 2011, 247). Besides, the alteration and transformation of the Islamist movements in the historical process have let an ambiguity of the meaning. One of the reasons of this ambiguity is the emergence of different Islamist groups and movements in different Islamic states or in the countries with Muslim majority. As a result, the terms such as fundamentalism, radical Islamism, reformist Islamism or moderate[3] Islamism are encountered. The source of those entire conceptions stems from the relation of a religion, namely Islam, with politics. Among other Muslim countries, Turkey's experience of Islamism stands in a different position because of its historical background and being a democratic Muslim country as well. By dwelling on this different experience, in this part the term political Islam and the conditions by which political Islam came into existence in Turkish history are going to be analyzed.

Before discussing the term, Islamism, it is necessary to make a clear separation between Islam and Islamism. As being the second largest religion of the

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[3] The term, "moderate", is used to refer to Islamist movements that do not question the authority and obey it or use institutional politics in order to reach their aims. In these kinds of Islamist movements, the discourse of democracy, secularism and liberty can be seen more when compared to the radical movements.

world[4], Islam is a religious doctrine that tries to make its believers' lives meaningful. The Noble Quran as the source of Islam mentions about the function of Islam as a religion and states, "Indeed the only religion in the sight of Allah is Islam…" (The Noble Quran 3:19). Another verse of the Quran emphasizes, "So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to [contain] Islam; and whoever He wants to misguide - He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky. Thus does Allah place defilement upon those who do not believe" (The Noble Quran 6:25) Likewise other religions, Islam accepts the existence of a supernatural power (Türköne 1991, 19). In Islam, people believe in the afterlife and shape their lives according to this belief in order to avoid punishment. Believing afterlife and shaping their life according to this belief will let believers have an eternal life. What really matters for a Muslim is this belief of eternal life. As Türköne argues, "The basic essence of Islam as a religion is to give meaning to Muslims' lives; to find satisfying responses against fears about which Muslims do not know and cannot comprehend" (Türköne 1991, 20). Islam, therefore, makes believers think that everything comes from Allah whether it is bad or good and it puts forward a life style for Muslims.

From this aspect, it is accepted that Islam is a religion before anything else. There is, however, another point of view especially accepted by Islamists that Islam is not only a set of metaphysical values but also it is a guide of social, political, economic and cultural life for Muslims. In that sense, it is a religion that explains this world and beyond, becomes a guide for Muslims and functions as a source of solace among them (Fuller 2003, 17). Even though it is controversial, in the mind of a Muslim, Islam is a social religion that propounds all aspects of life. "Theoretically, Islam involves politics; namely gives a scheme of governor of the society, his imperium and the rights of ruled ones against the ruling one" (Türköne 1991, 23).

As it is tried to be explained above, in this thesis Islam and Islamism (or political Islam) are differentiated because Islam is a religion but Islamism is a

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[4]In a recent research, Islam has been thought to be the first largest religion of the world, see more detail on http://www.religiouspopulation.com/World/.

political ideology, which has been using Islamic discourse in order to achieve its political aims. Before discussing the conditions that caused the emergence of Islamism, it is necessary to answer the question: "What is Islamism?" Although it is a controversial term, it is possible to present a definition in a general frame. Islamism, which has mostly been thought to appear in the 19th century, was a reaction to the Western imperialism and also became a search for the weakness of Muslim societies. As Esposito states, "Islamic modernism represented an Islamically rooted response to unite and strengthen a demorilized community. Its method was reinterpretation of Islam that not only drew on Islamic tradition but also attempted to assimilate the best of modern science, thought, and institutions" (Esposito 1984, 34). Moving from this point, it can be argued that Islamism firstly aimed to find a solution for the corruption of Muslim communities, but after that it tried to cope with the western powers and modernize the Empire. Islamism can be defined as the actualization of political aims by referring to Islam and the use of Islamic discourse in the political sphere (Esposito 1984, 33). Similarly, Ayoob argues that political Islam "is the instrumentlization of Islam by individuals, groups and organizations that pursue political objectives" (Ayoob 2005, 952). It is also a political, socio-cultural movement which supports turning back to the Islamic references because it is the only way to escape from difficult conditions in which Muslims are (Şentürk 2011, 18).

Being one of the most influential scholars in the study of Islamism in Turkey, Kara makes one of the most comprehensive definitions of Islamism. According to Kara, Islamism can be defined as "an intellectual, scientific and political movement which is done for the sake of modernizing, uniting and reconstructing Muslims. Besides, Islamism as a movement includes all of the studies, researches, suggestions and solutions that were put forward so as to make Islam, as a whole, re-dominant in life; to save Muslim world from the West's exploitation, from tyrant and despotic rulers, from thralldom, imitations and superstitions. The activist, modernist and eclectical sides of this movement have been dominant as well" (Kara 2011, 17). The terms 'restoration and re-domination' come to the front in Kara's definition. When

we look at this definition, it can be concluded that Islamism is an ideology, a way of thinking that considers all aspects of Muslims' lives.

Moving from these terms, Islamism wants to turn back to the Quran, the life of Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) and takes the credible hadiths of Prophet as a guide for their aims (Kara 2011, 18). Virtually, one of the most important points for Islamists is their longings for the turning back to the Asr-ı Saadat (the era of bliss), to the lives of Prophet Mohammed and his companions. By referring to Hobsbawn's term, Ayoob calls this longing as "an 'invented tradition' in terms of a romanticized notion of a largely mythical golden age" (Ayoob 2005, 952). Ayoob argues that the use of the myth of Asr-ı Saadat is by no means instrumentalisation of Islam. What makes this idea available is the mechanism of "ijtihad[5]" in traditional Islam, which is the use of the Quran and Sunna as the basic sources for the interpretation of Islamic law or analogical reasoning in order to find a solution to a current social, political or economic problem (Türköne 1991, 23). What it deals with is to see and interpret what the Quran says in a particular situation and how the Prophet behaved in that particular situation. For that reason the use of ijtihad have been a crucial way-out for Islamists in order to realize their aims (Kara 2011, 55). Another concept that explains this situation is called 'tecdid' which means 'inwardly innovation or renewal'; to live Islam peacefully and to transfer it to new generations without breaking it and changing its perpetual principles (Kara 2011, 18; Karaman 2014). The idea of 'tecdid' mostly based on a hadith that says, "Allah will no doubt send such a person for Muslims who will restore and rejuvenate the religion at the beginning or at the end of each century" (Algar 2007, 404). "The renewer of Islam is sent at the beginning of each century to restore true Islamic practice and thus regenerate a community which tends, over time, to wander from the straight path" (Esposito 1984: 35). Two concepts that are put forward are the methods of the traditional Islam in order to deal with the current issues. However, they also became instruments of Islamism to reconstitute a system by applying to original sources (Türköne 1991,

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[5]The System of Ijtihad.2014. Assessed on March 1.http://www.al-islam.org/introduction-islamic-shariah-sayyid-muhammad-rizvi/system-ijtihad

31). In spite of the fact that Islamists gave so much importance both to the idea of turning back to the basic sources and to Asr-ı Saadat, it can be said that Islamists had failed while using these instruments because it was more rational to put prospective principles and to find urgent solutions for current problems. In addition to this, the idea of progression contributed to the separation of the traditional Islam and Islamism (Kara 2011, 18). As different from the classical Islam, this let Islamists to see the religion as a rational ideology that is similar to those of western ideologies. In other words, it is the secularization of Islam that "put an anthropocentric understanding instead of a theocentric view". Accordingly, "as being a product of acculturation coming from the West" (Türköne 1991, 31-32), Islamism comes into the front as a rational and activist ideology that aims to save the Muslims from the corruption, to demand the redomination and re-construction for Muslims and to construct a base for progression of the Muslim regions. While putting forward these goals, modernism played a crucial role for Islamists since it was the only instrument in hand in order to reach goals (Nafi 2012, 36).

1.1.2. Nationalism

The 19th century of the world history had faced with many political ideologies, movements and fluctuations that affected so many states and regions. Industrial Revolution and French Revolution had contributed a lot to these fluctuations especially in Europe. Alongside of technological and industrial development, transition from agricultural society to industrial society let individuals pursuit different identities. Traditional relations and ties among individuals such as family, tribe, kinship and religion were leaving their places to a new identity which was "nation" (Özten 2009, 24). Whether nation is "new" or not has been a point of discussion among academics. Nationalism, too, was one of those political ideologies that became the ideology of 19th and 20th century and found its way among those societies in Europe. As Heywood states, "It was nationalism that contributed to the explosion of wars and revolutions, caused the birth of new states, breaking down of the empires and redraft of the borders. It was used for the reformation of existing

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states as well as for the consolidation of them" (Heywood 2006, 149). It has become one of the most important driving forces of the 19th and 20th century.

With this wide effect on the politics, there has been a good deal of literature on nationalism but the concept does not have a crystal-clear definition. Intermingling of the terms, while defining the concept of nationalism, creates this difficulty for its definition (Özkırımlı 2006, 22). The use of the term "state" instead of "nation" and vice versa and also the ambiguous relation of the term with other terms such as ethnicity, kinship and tribe are another side of this difficulty for definition (Özkırımlı 2006, 70; Özoğlu 2005, 10). Furthermore, the place and time conditions in which nations and nationalisms have been analyzed have let many different definitions to have been put forward. Accordingly, differences generating from definition of nation and of nationalism caused different approaches among academics. Therefore, it will be tried to put forward the idea of nationalism in a frame that dwells on these different approaches, which are basically primordialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism. Before dwelling on these approaches in detail, it is necessary to give a short place to the historical evolution of nationalism.

Even though it is controversial, most of the academics who have argued nationalism take the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th as the starting point of nationalism. Nationalism is thought to be as natural as human beings themselves by nationalists. It is an inherited result of human behavior. This inheritance of nationalism is actually derived from the naturalness of nation itself. "As a man has a nose and two eyes, he must also have a nationality" (Gellner 2006, 77). Through the changing structure of the socio-political and economic life, it also appeared to be a need. In addition to this, the nation is accepted by those nationalists who believe in the naturalness of the nation as "the only source of the legitimacy, sovereignty and political power" (Özkırımlı 2000, 51). Although German Romantics have been seen the first supporters and carriers of the idea of nationalism, some thinkers take it back to the Enlightenment philosophers such as Kant and Rousseau. "In fact, according to Kedourie, who explains nationalism in terms of seismic changes in European philosophy, it all started with Kant" (Özkırımlı 2006, 33).

Kant's effect on German philosophy had brought 'the idea of obedience to the law of morality', a new understanding of 'free will and self-determination' which put the individual in the center of the universe (Özkırımlı 2006, 34).

The influence of the idea of nationalism mostly showed itself on German romantics like Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) and Johann G. Fichte (1762-1814). These two important figures have been thought to be the first supporters of the romantic nationalism. Having been influenced by Enlightenment philosophers, Fichte is known with its *Addresses to the German Nation* in which he defends the unity of Germany as a separate whole from other nations or states (Özoğlu 2005, 11). For Fichte, only Germans have "the real and rational love for their nations." They were "*Urgeist*, the original people, entrusted with a mission towards the rest of humankind- to create a perfect state" (qtd. in Özkırımlı 2000, 14). As Kohn puts forward, Fichte's nationalism was a call for the spiritual rebirth for the "nation". Being a real nation necessitates the belief of freedom for all nations (Özkırımlı 2006, 36). Alongside of this, Fichte has been known with his keenness on freedom of individuals. Nevertheless, the freedom of individuals could be realized by merging to a community, which was nation, namely German nation that would lead the humanity.

Johann Gottfried von Herder is thought to be another important romantic nationalist figure who believes in the spirit and essence of German nation. His thoughts are accepted as the first examples of the primordialist approach as well (Özoğlu 2005, 11). Herder's nationalism mostly shows itself in his comprehension of "language" as the core point of the nation. For Herder, "What makes one a human is language. It is meaningless to mention about human beings before talking about language because language is also thought. People who are speaking a common language constitute the first stage of nation. As for nation, it can be thought the natural continuation of family" (qtd. in Özkırımlı 2006, 37). Herder also stood up to the conquest of nations by other nations because he believes in the authenticity of nations which looks at what is real and natural among a community. Additionally, what Herder points out here is that nature had created the nations so that they cannot

be alloyed since it would be at odds with nature itself. At this point, the importance of language, again, occurs in Herder's nationalism because language is something to be protected from external effects. Fitche also agrees with Herder in the protection of language of a community and thinks, "Language reflects the national spirit and clearing the loanwords from language means the protection of national spirit from external influences" (Özkırımlı 2006, 38). Those German romantic nationalists, who had given the first examples of nationalist ideas, put forward the idea that nations are *sui generis* communities that distinguish themselves from others by having a common lineage, a shared culture, religion and language (Özkırımlı 2006, 38; Özoğlu 2005, 11).

a) Primordialist Approach

As it is mentioned above, the idea of nationalism has widely been argued by different approaches such as primordialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism. The reason that this thesis is going to analyze these three approaches is that they are the most of influential among nationalism's studies. Those different perspectives have naturally expanded the meaning of nation and nationalism as well. Each one of these approaches has their different, sometimes relevant, view of nation and nationalism. In addition, those approaches could present differences among themselves. There are points and perspectives that both separate and unite them. As Özkırımlı states, "the common feature that is thought to unite modernists is to see nationalism as a gift of modern process and recent history. For ethno-symbolists it is the importance of ethnic origins of nations and for primordialist, it is to see nations as natural structures" (Özkırımlı 2006, 79).

Anthony Smith, Clifford Geertz and Walker Connor are known the most influential figures of this approach. The main point of the primordialist approach is that it accepts nation as a given and natural social structure that has existed since the ancient times long before nationalism existed. According to this approach, nation is something given, unchangeable and fixed (Gökalp 2007, 281). It stems from the territory that it was born in, from the relations such as religion, language and

tradition, and it is a kind of social solidarity that exists among its members. Besides, it will go on existing in the future with all its dimensions that let it survive (Sönmez 2011, 3856). In addition, primordialist approach does not put forward a monolithic point of view. Even though their common approach is "the naturalness and antiquity of nation", in primordial approach, there are different perspectives like nationalists, perennialists, culturalists and sociobiological approaches.

The nationalists are known to be the strictest supporters of the primordialism (Özkırımlı 2000, 50). According to this view, ethnic identities are as natural as our body parts and one's ethnic identity is determined by nature itself. Due to this determined character, it is natural that human beings have been divided into different groups and tended to exclude others (Sönmez 2011, 3858; Özkırımlı 2006, 83). Accordingly, nations "have a specific origin and territory in nature as well as a special character, mission and faith as they have natural borders. In this case, they have right to self-determination and independency" (Şimşek 2009, 81).

In addition to nationalists, there is perennialist approach that dwells on the continuity of nations in contrast to the view that accepts nations as organic and natural structures. Mostly put forward by Anthony Smith and Adrian Hastings, as Özkırımlı states, the most important point in this view is that "the perennialists do not treat nation as a 'fact of nature', but they see it as a constant and fundamental feature of human life throughout recorded history" (Özkırımlı 2000, 58). According to perennialists, nations gained a political form with the modern age and nationalism as an ideology has correspondingly occurred. For a perennialist, nation is not something given or natural phenomenon but it is rather a social phenomenon. As for nationalism, it is an ideology that is available for this social phenomenon. As it is stated above, the historical continuity of nation constitutes the core of perennialist approach (Şimşek 2009, 84).

Another view in primordialism is the culturalist approach, mostly put forward by Clifford Geertz, which is the belief of the existence of cultural ties before anything else, such as religion, language and common past, which are thought to be

fundamental separators of one nation from another, rather than the naturalness of ethnic identities (Şimşek 2009, 83). Accordingly, nations are constant and existed historically but they are not natural. What they stress primarily is that cultural ties are the primordial ties that have lived in all nations (Sönmez 2011, 3858). The most important figure of sociobiological approach is Van den Berghe according to whom there are three important instincts in human relations which are kin selection, reciprocity and coercion (Özkırımlı 2006, 88). What is meant with kin selection is the human tendency of becoming partners with someone that they have the same consanguinity. Reciprocity is the collaboration of individuals for mutual benefit and coercion is using of power for ex parte benefit (Şimşek 2009, 83). It is important to note that because they see ethnic groups as extended families or super families, these three instincts are valid for ethnic groups which are thought to be derived from the expanded line of descent (Özkırımlı 2006, 88).

As it has been mentioned above, the most important point that brings primordialists together, with the exception of culturalist approach, is their acceptance of nation as a given phenomenon, which has improved out of societal relations. However there have been so many studies recently that criticize this view by standing against the idea that nation is a given, unchangeable and fixed structure. The outstanding of these critiques comes from the modernist/constructivist approach.

b) Modernist Approach

The most affective and important contribution to the study of nationalism comes from the modernist approach whose prominent names are Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawn and Benedict Anderson. The ideas of modernists have been widely discussed and become more dominant than primordialist approach in the field. As it has been argued above, primordialist approach points out that nation, constructed by primordial ties, is natural, given and unchangeable phenomenon of human feature, which has existed historically and will exist forever. Nevertheless,modernists come about with reaction to this belief of naturalness of nationalism. What modernists put forward is that nation and nationalism are not something given or fixed; it is rather a

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modern phenomenon that existed in the age of modernity with 200 years of history. As Özkırımlı states, for modernist approach both nation and nationalism "appeared in the last two centuries and they are the products of specifically modern processes like capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, secularism, and the emergence of the modernbureaucratic state" (Özkırımlı 2000, 72). Nations and nationalism appeared in the 18th and 19th century as a modern ideology and as a sociological need while most communities were transforming from agricultural societies to industrialization society.

Hobsbawn argues that nations and nationalism should be examined by regarding the 18th and 19th century, which is thought to be as the age of nationalism. In the age of revolutions, the most common definition of nation was its political definition (Hobsbawn, 2010: 34). Hobsbawn does not see nation as given or unchangeable, and nation, thus, belongs to a recent history. It is not possible to talk about nations and nationalisms before the emergence of "modern states dependent on a territory". Additionally, "nations are societal units as far as they are identified with nation-states" (Hobsbawn 2010, 24). Nation and state cannot be thought separately (Gökalp 2007, 283). Alongside of identification of nations with nation-states, social engineering, invented tradition and artificiality constitute Hobsbawn's approach to nation and nationalism. For him, nations do not create nationalisms, but on the contrary, nationalisms create nations. "What deserves particular attention in this process is the case of 'invented traditions' by which he means 'a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past' (qtd. in Özkırımlı 2000, 94). Invented tradition, for Hobsbawn, is used by ruling class as a way of putting together the ruled class in order to cope with mass democratic threats coming from them (Özkırımlı 2000, 94). Besides, nationalism was the product of industrialization in order to perform capitalist program, which was put forward by state (Özoğlu 2005, 13). In this way, nations happen to be invented communities by expressing a common past with its social norms and values. What invents nations is therefore

nationalism. Even though there had been ethnic groups, tribes or super families before the age of nationalism, those were not nations as it is thought to be today. That is why nationalism comes before nations; nations do not create nationalism, on the contrary, nationalisms create nations (Hobsbawn 2010, 24).

By sharing most of the ideas of Hobsbawn, Gellner, too, believes the invention of nations by nationalism. Neither are nations natural phenomenons nor they are unchangeable constituents. Nation is the invention of nationalism on the way of transformation from agricultural society to industrial society (Gellner 2006, 118). Before anything else nationalism was a political principle in modern times, which with the rise of industrialization became a sociological need in modern world. In pre-modern times, there was not a need for nation or nationalism since individuals mostly cared about whether their rulers were just or not (Özkirimli 2000, 100; Şimşek 2009, 85). In order to explain the concept of nation, he asserts two definitions; firstly, if two people share the same culture, they are from the same nation and secondly if two people accept each other as being the members of the same nation, then they belong to the same nation. "To put it in another way, nations are created by human beings. Nations are the product of belief, faith and solidarity of human beings" (Gellner 2006, 78). In addition to this, nationalism is the process of conversion of preexisting cultural societies into nations by referring to a common past, restoring its language and inventing its tradition. For Gellner, nationalism is the imposition of a high culture to a community, which includes many low cultures in its scope. Moving from that point, it creates its own nation. As he states, "nationalism is not the product of nation, on the contrary it is nationalism that engenders nation" (Gellner 2006, 138).

One of the most influential figures of the modernist approach is no doubt Benedict Anderson who contributed to the study of nationalism by putting forward the concept of 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1983). Likewise his counterparts, Anderson claims that nation and nationalism are modern paradigms which appeared towards the end of the 18th century and they are cultural artifacts of a particular kind (Özkirimli 2000, 106). Anderson describes nation and nationalism as an imagined

political community and expresses the importance of cultural references in formation of nations in the political process. Nation is "*imagined* because the member of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 2006, 6).

While putting forward the term *imagined*, he also underlines that it should not be confused with falsity by which he criticizes Hobsbawn and Gellner's assertion of the term *invented* as 'fabrication' or 'falsity' (Anderson 2006, 6). For Anderson, accepting nations as invented or imagined does not make them false or fabricated. The comprehension of people that constitute the nation and their thoughts about the nation to which they belong is more important (Gökalp 2007, 284). Three important historical developments, as Anderson points out, had caused the emergence of modern nation: firstly a change for comprehension of time, secondly the decline of religious societies and thirdly of dynastic realms. In addition to all of these, language, especially vernacular, and lineage were taking place of those sacred scripts (Anderson 2006, 42). The most important point that Anderson puts forward is the idea that the commercial book publishing, which he calls print-capitalism, contributed a lot to the grow of nationalism; it let people think consciously and caused the rise of national awareness gradually (Özkırımlı 2000, 110).

c) Ethno-symbolism

Ethno-symbolist approach appeared as a reaction to the modernist approach by dwelling on ethnic origin and cultural affiliations together, and creating a synthesis between modernist and primordialist approach. Its prominent figures are John Amstrong and Anthony Smith both of whom reject the primordialist arguments and also find the modernist arguments insufficient. By accepting nationalism as a product of modernity, they separate themselves from primordialists; and by asserting the insufficient explanation of nationalism with capitalism and industrialization, they put a border between modernists and themselves (Özkırımlı 2006, 203-204).

In the definition of ethnicity, common past, myth, symbols, a shared territory and a few of cultural elements play important role since these become a basis for the rise of national awareness. As Smith states, "Ethnicity can be defined as a human population having a common race myth, a shared historical memory, one or more cultural element and a link with historical territory or at least a measure of solidarity among elites" (qtd. in Şimşek 2009, 90). For ethnic ties are permanent, modern nations, thus, cannot be analyzed without regarding their past. Even though ethnicity is accepted to be permanent, that does not mean they never change throughout history. On the contrary, there are historical and social events such as war, invasion, and migration and so and so on, that change the structure of ethnic cultures. According to ethno-symbolists, it is not possible to explain modern nations without considering their ethnic origin. Nor it is sufficient to explain them just by looking at their ethnic origin or thinking them as something given, existed historically (Şimşek 2009, 90). Modern nations are continuation of ethnic groups of the pre-modern times. They are of a kind, not separate from each other, and also they could only be separated in terms of their development.

As it is stated above, the aim of including nationalism in this thesis is to have an idea about the Kurds and their comprehension of nationalism. As a movement, nationalism took place among the Kurds at the beginning of the twentieth century. Most of the Kurdish nationalists predicate their ethnic background to the ancient times and dwell mostly on Kurdishness and its roots as a nation. In this sense, ethnic background or ethnicity in general plays an important role in the existence of the Kurdish nationalism. Accordingly it can be concluded that the Kurdish nationalism carries the traces of ethno symbolist approach which is the theory that ethnicity is the core element of nation and nationalism. On the other hand, when it is looked at the emergence of the Kurdish nationalism, it can be concluded that it is a product of modernism since until the modern times, it is not possible to talk about the Kurdish nationalism in Turkey. Mostly being affected by the separatist-nationalist ideas coming from Europe, the Kurds raised their nationalist ideas toward the end of 19th century and at the beginning of 20th century. Stressing on a common territory and

coming from a common ethnic background are important basis for raising nationalist ideas. Depending on these, Kurdistan and Kurd are highlighted by the Kurdish nationalists. Despite the fact that it is difficult to make a crystal clear definition of nationalism as well as the Kurdish nationalism, it can be stated in a way that the Kurdish nationalism is a political movement which emerged in the twentieth century and is constituted by the ones who think that they belong to a separate ethnicity and territory. Depending on this, the Kurdish nationalism struggles for the self-determination on a specific territory.

1.2. Reforms and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century

After discussing the term, this section will mention about the rise of the Islamism in the Ottoman Empire and the conditions in which it emerged. The 18th and 19th centuries occupied a crucial place in the Ottoman Empire because of the harsh conditions that caused lots of social, economic and political fluctuations coming from Europe. The sequential war defeats, the loss of lands and the atmosphere led by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution affected the Ottoman Empire as well. In order to cope with this situation, the Empire which was damaged seriously and defined as the "ill man" by the Europeans, tried to get back its power by attempting to reform the state both in the area of economy, administration and military. The Reformation period of the Ottomans had started in 1794 in the military, by putting forward a reformation package called Nizam-ı Cedit (New Order) with the reign of Selim III (Zürcher 1995, 44). In addition to his efforts on modernizing the Empire, Selim's most important progress was to create an atmosphere by which the western ideas and movements had easily flowed towards the Ottoman Empire. In particular, the opening of the permanent embassies in Europe played a significant role in this progress (Zürcher 1995, 46).

The effort of Selim III was the initial step of the reformation process, which was prolonged by Mahmut II who succeeded the throne after him. The reforms done by these two Sultans in military and administration so as to strengthen the Empire and centralize the government had found its supporters as much as oppositions. The

military officers and ulama were upset for these reforms so that Sultan Selim had paid the penalty for his efforts with his life (Zürcher 1995, 47). Nevertheless, Mahmut II and Abdülmecid I continued to modernize the Empire by making concessions to notables and by signing some agreements. The rescript of Gülhane declared in 1839 and the Reform Edict of 1859 by Abdülmecid I were two significant reforms that aimed to centralize the government, make improvements in military, administration, politics of economy and education as those of the Europeans (Türköne 1991, 57). Because of including so many different ethnicities and different religious groups in its structure, the Ottomans faced with the western intervention to its internal affairs. In order to prevent external interventions and internal disorder, the Empire carried out those mentioned reform acts. Both reforms mostly aimed to improve non-Muslims rights by regulating the concepts such as citizenship, the duty of non-Muslims in the government and bringing paid military system for them. Sultan Mahmut II had brought the system of compulsory military service for all Ottomans subjects, but this system was removed because of the idea that it would create a disorder in the army since the non-Muslims would also be soldiers in the military. Instead of this, non-Muslims were held exempted from the military service by giving the tax of paid military service (Zürcher 1995, 93). In addition to these reforms, there were some other policies that the Ottomans bureaucratic elites and intellectuals tried to apply. Those were Ottomanism, Pan-Islamism (Ittihad-ı Islam) and Turkism towards the end of the Ottoman Empire. Especially Ottomanism became the policy of the Tanzimat elites which aimed to save the Empire by bringing about an equalitarian view to the concept of citizenship (Bajalan 2010, 36). Nevertheless, those top-down reforms were out of the public support. Besides, it created a thought of the loss of privilege for Muslims because the 1856 Reform Edict was empowering non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. Accordingly, the oppositions to the reforms appeared soon among the intellectuals and bureaucracy itself. Moreover, the reforms could not find any response among non-Muslims and could not prevent the propagation of the separatist nationalist movements (Zürcher 1995, 107). The most important one of those oppositions were the Young Ottomans who

were known the intellectuals who got their education in Europe or at least had a western-style education and also knew French.

Although there appeared oppositions to those reforms both in the Ottoman bureaucratic elites and in community, it is clear that those reforms affected the Ottoman Empire in a broad way. The reforms that started with the Tanzimat contributed to the modernization of traditional institutions and community. Especially the broad use of the printing press, the western-style educational establishments and the proliferation of translation created great impact in the Empire. From this aspect, the printing press provided the reproduction of the old ideas with the new ideas coming from the west. It was in a sense both the reproduction of the traditional ideas and also the modernization process of the Empire. The western ideas were new in the Ottomans and could not find any broad societal response but the thought of Islam was massified and had its strong response among society. Therefore, it can be said that the reformation period of the Empire helped the rise of Islamist ideas (Türköne 1991, 60).

1.3. Dating Islamism

As it is mentioned above, there are many discussions about the definition of Islamism as well as the date that Islamism had emerged. In addition, the discussions about the time that Islamism emerged had also brought the discussions about the founders of Islamist movement. Accordingly, there have been two common stances about the emergence of Islamism. The first one mostly shares the idea that Islamist thought had emerged in the mid-19[th]century. This view takes Islamism to 1860s-70s by accepting the Young Ottomans as the initiators of Islamism (Şentürk 2011, 27). According to this view, the fundamentals of Islamist movement had started with the Young Ottomans who were the activists, thinkers and journalists that tried to modernize the Empire. The Young Ottomans was an opponent, intellectual and reformist group who had created a great influence in the Ottoman Empire and mostly financed by the crown prince of Egypt, Mustafa Fazıl, in 1867 (Black 2001, 406). As Yılmaz states, "Young Ottomans were also social engineers like the Tanzimat elite

and the 20th century Islamists" (Yılmaz 2011, 252). In addition to Yılmaz statements, Esposito argues, "the Young Ottomans can be thought as modernists who advocated a reinterpretation and reformulation of their Islamic heritage to respond to the political, cultural, and scientific challenge to the West and modern life" (Esposito 1984, 48). They came into the front as intellectuals that stood up to the dictatorship of the sublime porte and tried to find new ways to carry out their aims via Islamism since they were lack of public support. They were also known by their keenness of liberty (Türköne 1991, 92). Among its founders, there were intellectuals such as Ali Suavi and Namık Kemal whose ideas had affected the Islamist movements in a broad way (Şentürk 2011, 30). Especially Namık Kemal has been known as the poet of the liberty and motherland since he immensely dwelled on liberty and motherland in his writings. The first Constitution of the Ottoman Empire that declared in 1876 let the Young Ottomans have a chance to apply their ideas into practice. In this constitution, "for the first time in the history of Islam, all subjects were declared to be Ottomans regardless of their religion. All subjects were equal and all were to enjoy their liberty" (Yılmaz 2008, 50).

Opposing the arguments that accept Cemaleddin Afghani as the leading figure of Islamism, this view puts forward the Young Ottomans as the leading figures of the Islamism in 1860s and later on (Türköne 1991, 40). For this view, the Young Ottomans used Islamist discourse for their political aims because Islam was the dominant religion and it was the best way to prompt the Ottoman society whose majority was Muslim. In order to modernize and rejuvenate the corrupting state it was necessary to apply for the Islamic sources and terms that correspond to the modern concepts. That is why they heavily used the Islamic terms, which corresponded to the modern political concepts. As Black states, "For the Young Ottomans 'umma' meant nation; 'icma' was social contract; 'biat' was the sovereignty of people and 'meşveret' was democracy" (Black 2001, 407). Many of the members of the Young Ottomans were the bureaucratic elites who had been influenced from the liberal and nationalist ideas. They were the first group who had created a public opinion about democratic rules such as the rule of law, freedom,

sovereignty of people, separation of power (Zürcher 1995, 110-111). The most important device that helped the Young Ottomans to promulgate their views was the newspaper *Hürriyet* that they started publishing in 1868 (Şentürk 2011, 49).

On the other hand, there is another view that accepts Islamism emerged as an ideological movement with the announcement of the second Constitutionalist period (II. Meşrutiyet) in 1908 (Kara, 2011; Nafi 2012). According to this view, despite the fact that the background of Islamist ideology base on the ideas such as Pan Islamism and the Unity of Islam (Ittihad-ı Islam) in the 19th century, it politically concluded itself after the second Constitutionalism. Pan-Islamist movement and the Unity of Islam become the most common ideas of the 19th century. These two terms have also been used interchangeably. However, in one way or another, both terms represent the same view. Especially, the idea of the Unity of Islam is accepted as the landmark for the rise of the Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, which becomes a state policy under the name of Pan Islamism with Abdulhamid II. As Kara argues, "Although Islamism had become a dominant political idea in the Ottoman Empire under the name of the Unity of Islam since 1870, the emergence of Islamism as an ideological movement started forty years later with the entrance of Sırat-ı Mustakim to the broadcast life in 1908" (Kara 2011, 14). For this view, the rise of Islamism starts with the Afghani origin thinker and activist Cemaleddin Afghani, and he is thought to be the pioneer of Islamism. Cemaleddin Afghani, who had been in Istanbul in 1869-1870, was a reformist that was calling for the unity of Islam and internal recovery of the Muslim world (Nafi 2012, 26; Kara 2011, 38). Alongside of Afghani, Muhammad Adbuh in Egypt, Seyyid Ahmed in India, Said Halim Paşa, Mehmet Akif, Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi, Muhammed Hamdi Yazır in the Ottomans and the magazines such as Sırat-ı Mustakim, Sebilürreşad and Volkan have also been thought to have improved the Islamist movement (Şentürk 2011, 18). Indeed all these thinkers had followed the footprints of Cemaleddin Afghani.

In addition to all these arguments, the Nakşibendi Sufi order had played an important role in the development and promulgation of Islamism in the Ottoman Empire and then in Turkish Republic. Particularly, the effectiveness of the

Nakşibendi tariqa in the political area let Turkish Islamism become an exceptional phenomenon because of following a legitimate way in order to reach its policies (Mardin 2005). At first, the Sufi orders and tariqas were not welcomed by the Islamists of the time because of the idea that Sufi orders and tariqas isolate themselves from the earth since they did not focus on the situations from which Muslims were suffering and they were the ones that brought up lazy Muslims (Kara 2011, 54). Nevertheless, with the centralization policy of the Ottoman Empire in 19th century, especially in the Kurdish region of the Ottoman Empire, sheiks and mullahs, most of whom were the Nakşibendis, became much more important political figures. Accordingly, the political gap that was created by the tribal leaders of Kurds filled with those Nakşibendi sheiks and mullahs. That is why this thesis accepts the latter argument, which argues that Islamism had emerged in the mid 19th century and became more active as a political movement at the beginning of the 20th century. Besides, as it will be argued in the third Chapter, the Kurdish Islamist movements were accepted to have appeared at the beginning of the 20thcentury. At the beginning, it is not easy to separate Kurdish Islamists from Turkish Islamism, which is the mainstream movement. Nonetheless, the government of the Committee of Union and Progress (the CUP from now on) after 1908 started a Turkification policy, which was unaccepted by the Kurds, and as a reaction, most of the Kurdish intellectuals and elites started to discuss new policies against this Turkification process. Furthermore, it can be said that this policy made the Kurdish Islamist and nationalist movement more clear both of which were substantive from 1880s but not explicit. Before the government of the CUP, the Kurdish Islamists and nationalists intertwined with the Turkish ones since the main goal for both ethnicities was the salvation of the Empire so that it was not easy to mention about a different political movement from the mainstream Turkish movement. Moreover, some of the Kurdish intellectuals such as Abdullah Cevdet and İshak Sükuti were the members of the CUP whichwas against the reign of Abdulhamid II (Bajalan 2010, 87). At this point, it is important to state that Kurdish intellectuals, the Nakşibendi sheiks and mullahs had played a crucial role in the emergence of the Kurdish Islamism. That is why this thesis will analyze

the importance of the Nakşibendi tariqa and its role both for Kurdish Islamism and Turkish Islamism in the next part.

1.4. The Nakşibendi Order and Islamism

In Islamic lands, religious Sufi orders have historically played a crucial role both in social and political sphere. "Sufism is a discipline that aims to teach one how to live without confining oneself to the materialistic dimension of life. It argues that there is one true experience in existence and it is the encounter with the sacred, the numinous, that is beyond human reasoning and is grounded in an instinctual understanding that immediately calls a believer's attention to his or her finiteness in the face of God" (Yavuz 2003, 134). The history of Sufism and Tariqas/orders goes back to the first centuries of Islam (Algar 2007, 15). Most of these Sufi orders and tariqas lean their roots on the Prophet Muhammed or his companions such as Abu Bekr and Ali. The Nakşibendi order is one of those Sufi orders that emerged as the tariqa of Hacegan in the 7ᵗʰ century and turned to be the Nakşibendi order via Sheikh Bahaeddin Nakşibend by giving his name to the order (Tosun 2002, 17). Many other tariqas and Sufis emerged as a passive reaction to the disorder and corruption in Muslim communities. Nevertheless, the Nakşibendi order was totally different from other tariqas or Sufi movements both in practice and theory. As it is stated above, the role of the Nakşibendi tariqa in the promulgation of Islamism cannot be undermined because of its activism. When it is compared to many other religious orders or groups, it can be said that the Nakşibendi order has been the most effective order in the political arena. Additionally, it has differentiated Islamist movements in Turkey from other movements in terms of the method it has been using and its profane discourse (Yavuz 2003, 133). That is why it is important to look at the Nakşibendi order deeply in order to understand Turkish Islamism and Kurdish Islamism.

The Nakşibendis create a lineage starting from the Prophet (s.a.v) and then Abu Bekr Sıddıq who was one of the crucial names for them. At the beginning of the tariqa, it was known as the tariqa of Hacegan, yet later it became the Nakşibendi order with Bahaeddin Nakşibend who was born in Buhara in 1318. After him, the

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order was called as the Nakşibendi meant muralist, which was his nickname because his father was a muralist (Algar 2007, 26). The most important thing that he brought to the Nakşibendi order was his commitment to Sharia (Islamic law) and Sunnah (Tosun 2002, 113; Algar 2007, 17). In addition to this, there was a difference among tariqas in terms of *dhikr* (invocation) which was a feature that distinguishes the tariqas from each other. Those were *cehri* (loud) and *hafi* (silent) invocations. Before Bahaeddin Nakşibend, some of the Hacegan sheiks were doing *cehri* (loud) invocation but he strictly accepted the accuracy of *hafi* (silent) invocation. Those were the contributions of Bahaeddin Nakşibend to the order. Even though he was less active in politics compared to his successors, he formed the base of the Nakşibendi order (Algar 2007).

After Bahaeddin Nakşibend, the order had spread towards to the west Asia via the successors of him. As it is stated above, even though he was less active in politics and governmental issues, his successors tried to make Sharia dominant in a broad region, which was mostly carried out by Tashkent born sheik Ubeydullah Ahrar (1404-1490) in 15th century. Moving from his predecessor's view, he was strongly loyal to Sharia and its domination. That is why he engaged in the politics in order to enable Muslims to reach their aims and that was a turn point for the Nakşibendi order since the idea put forward by Bahaeddin Nakşibend was carried to the political arena by Ubeydullah Ahrar (Algar 2007, 68). He was such a rich man that affected politics and social structure of Muslim society. Both by using his richness and his influence, he thought that the way to let Muslims to have a comfortable life is possible with getting on well with the Sultans or administrators. "By putting into practice the axiom of seclusion in the midst of society (khalvat dar anjuman), one of the eight Nakşibendi principles, Ahrar became both a sheik and a politician" (Yavuz 2003, 135). That is why he engaged in politics much more than his predecessors (Tosun 2012, 162). Additionally, Nakşibendi order had entered the Ottoman Empire in the era of Ubeydullah Ahrar via his caliph, Mulla İlahi of Simav (Algar 2007, 72).

At the course of time, Nakşibendi order has been spread all over Asia and the Middle East with the caliphs appointed by each sheik of the order. Ahmed al Sirhindi (known also as Imam Rabbani) was one of the crucial characters for the Nakşibendis and his time was also a turn point for Nakşibendi movement because of his intellectual and spiritual contributions (Algar 2007, 74). Borned in India in 1563, he founded the mujaddidiyya branch of the Nakşibendi order and he was named as mujaddid (the Renewer) by putting forward the idea of both giving importance to the social issues and also internally to be with God. That is to saythat he did not eliminate social and political issues, and he encouraged activeness in the community life. Therefore, Sirhindi created strong ties with Mogul administrators and dignitaries, and became against the rule of Akbar of India by blaming him not to apply the rule of Sharia (Algar 2007, 74). Moreover, this Renewal movement of Nakşibendi order successfully used their internal religiosity for "social activism and resistance against 'alien' rule" (Yavuz 2003, 136). After Sirhindi's death, his mobilizing power had spread among Muslims and had also been brought into Anatolia, firstly to the Kurdish region mostly by Mevlana Halid Bağdadi who had been a great mobilizer of the Nakşibendi order (Mardin 2005, 152). Likewise Sirhindi, Mevlana Halid sustained the mujaddidiya (müceddidiye) movement of the Nakşibendis and he left great impact on the episode of the Nakşibendis in the Ottoman lands as well as the Caucasus, the Southeast Asia, the Balkans, the Central Asia and the Middle East (Abu Manneh 1982; Yavuz, 2003, 137). The importance of the Renewal movement comes into the front with the Islamists movements because it became a base for the Islamist movements of the 19th century and 20th century (Yavuz 2003, 137).

Mevlana Halid Bağdadi (1777-1826), was a Kurd from Shahrizur, a city in the North Iraq, which was under the rule of Baban tribe at that time (Mardin 1989, 97). He became a Nakşibendi sheik after he had met sheik Abdullah al Dihlevi (known also as Gulam Ali). He took ratification from al Dihlevi with "full and absolute successorship" which had rarely been given any other sheiks (Abu Manneh 1982, 3). This helps us to understand why Mevlana Halid was such an effective

figure in the Kurdistan region and in the Ottoman Empire as well. Moreover, this "full and absolute successorship" caused the rise of a new branch among Nakşibendis, which was called Halidiyye; and Mevlana Halid became the Renewer (Müceddid) of the age. Mevlana Halid formed a more activist movement than those of his predecessors with which Nakşibendis found a new way to cope with the western imperialism and the destructive movements of westernization and modernization process of the Ottomans in the 19th century (Mardin 1989, 97). He "reinterpreted the doctrinal content of the order to respond to external challenges" (Yavuz 2003, 137). Mevlana Halid appointed nearly 120 caliphs most of whom were Kurds. Likewise Sirhindi, he taught his caliphs to influence the rulers and had them to apply Sharia rules since he thought that the reason of the decadence of the Muslims were because of leaving of Sunna and Sharia in social life (Yavuz 2003, 137). That is why he went to revitalize the Muslims via strengthening the rule of Sharia and Sunna. Additionally, one of his main goals was to strengthen the loyalty of the Ottomans to Sharia and by this way, it would become a Muslim land that defends all rights of Muslims and Sharia (Algar 2007, 150). The rule of Sharia was prerequisite of his receipt.

This activist policy of Mevlana Halid widened in the Ottomans, especially in Istanbul among the administrators. One of the reason that let the Nakşibendis to widen easily and to penetrate the state was because they were orthodox Muslims to which most of the *ulama* belonged. In addition to this, the activist policy of the Nakşibendi-Halidiyya order let them to penetrate the state (Yavuz 2003, 137). Besides, they faced with some difficulties as well. For instance, Sultan Mahmud II was a suspicious ruler against those groups and influential movements. As a result of this, he expelled most of the leading Nakşibendis from Istanbul until 1833 (Algar 2007, 350). Nevertheless, under the reigns of Abdülaziz, Abdülmecid and Adbülhamid II, the order strengthened its influence, and "became one of the most important forces of mediation between rulers and ruled" (Yavuz 2003, 138).

As it has been stated before, the activist policies of Nakşibendi movement did not resemble other religious networks that were criticized by Islamists of the 19th

century. Other tariqas and networks were not welcomed by Islamists because they were thought to be not active in politics and social issues. Moreover, most of them had isolated themselves from the society and focused on only the issues of the hereafter. In contrast to those religious orders, Nakşibendi-Halidiyye branch of Nakşibendis had concerned a lot about the social and political issues especially after 1850s, because they penetrated the state and affected the administrators much more than other religious orders. Both for the realization of the Islamic ideals and for coping with "Christian and Shia expansionism", for Nakşibendi-Halidis, the state under the rule of Caliph was a necessary organization (Yavuz 2003, 138). Additionally, according to sheik Halid, Muslims went to wrong way. "Thus, to restore it to the right path, the period of the Prophet and his Companions should be brought to the forefront as an ideal that should be recaptured by Sunni Muslims. Indeed, returning to the early period of Islam was a basic principle of Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi thought" (Abu Manneh1982, 13). When it is looked at these words of Abu Manneh, it is clearly seen that the Islamists of the 19th century were Nakşibendis or those who had ties with them. The activist doctrine of Mevlana Halid let this understanding appear and widen among Nakşibendis. When it is looked at the Islamist doctrines of the time, it can be seen that both Islamists ideals and Nakşibendi-Halidiyye doctrines overlapped in the same goal. It is no doubt that most of the sheiks and ulama alongside of the bureaucrats of the Ottomans had been nourished in the same sources. Moreover, the Kuleli incident (1859) which was accepted as the beginning of the Islamism in the Ottomans was carried on by Nakşibendi sheiks that were against the modernization policies of the Tanzimat era and "demanded full restoration of Islamic law" (Yavuz 2003, 139).

The full engagement in politics and social life that were put forward by Sheikh Mevlana Halid mostly implemented by his successor, Ziyaeddin Gümüşhanevi, who became a prominent figure for Turkish Islamism (Algar 2007, 350). He involved in the war of 1878 against Russia, which later became an example for the Nakşibendi sheiks. This is also a clear evidence of the resistant character of the Nakşibendi order against the external powers. Nevertheless, this resistant

character was not shown against the Turkish state by those Nakşibendis, because the state needed to be rejuvenated. Gümüşhanevi's effect on Nakşibendi-Halidi branch was mostly carried on by his successor, M.Zahid Kotku who "created a new version of the "operational code" of Nakşibendi order, synchronized with the political code promoted by the Republic, that of constitutional legitimacy" (Mardin 2005, 158). Likewise his predecessors, Kotku approached the state as a necessary organization. The state was not an enemy for him and this approach differentiated his line from other radical Islamists movements (Çakır 1990, 24). After the foundation of the multiparty system, most of the political parties tried to involve the sons and grandsons of the Sheikhs in their parties in order to get the votes. Some of those became the deputy in the parliament (Şenocak 2006, 128). Therefore, he encouraged his followers to engage into the state's organizations and politics. Accordingly, one of his successors Professor Necmettin Erbakan, who had been an influential politician in the second half of 20th century in Turkey, took Kotku's ideas in practice by founding Islamist parties called Milli Nizam Partisi (National Order Party) in 1971 and Milli Selamet Partisi (National Salvation Party) in 1972. In addition to this, there were a president, two prime ministers and ministers brought up in the Kotku's lodge (Şenocak 2006, 128). Depending on this fact, the National Order movement (Milli Görüş) occurred with a nationalistic cover of Islamism. As Mardin argues, Islamists' use of a legitimate way for reaching their goal let Islamism an exceptional character that is different from other Islamism and mostly carried out by the Nakşibendis (Mardin 2005). In addition to this, the exceptional character has been prolonged by the JDP (Justice and Development Party) and Gülen movement via their moderate understanding of the state, democracy and laicism, which is called as civil Islam by Yılmaz (2011).

The Kurdish region, at the time of Mevlana Halid, depended on the tribal ties, but the religious organizations, especially the Nakşibendi order, was playing a powerful role in terms of politics and socio-cultural aspects together with other networks (Van Bruinessen 1999). Alongside of his role in Nakşibendi order, Mevlana Halid also became a prominent figure among the Kurds since he played a

unifying role as well. As it is stated above, Sheikh Halid appointed around 120 caliphs most of whom were the Kurds. Those caliphs of him spread his ideas in a broad region including the southeast Anatolia where the Nakşibendi order has been very effective and widespread even today. The reformation process of the Ottomans in 19th century had changed the situation in the Kurdish region as well. Especially, the centralization policy caused some large and small revolts among the Kurds. Accordingly, the tribal leaders started to lose their powers and sheikhs in the Kurdish region came into the front. The region had faced with the handover of political power from tribal leaders to religious leaders that have become the reference of the Kurdish nationalism and Islamism. Besides, the authority of the Nakşibendi sheikhs widened in the region towards the end of 19th century and contributed to the rise of the Kurdish Islamism as well as Kurdish nationalism. It can also be said that as in the case of Turkish Islamism, Kurdish Islamism was affected by nationalist ideas towards the end of 19th century as well as in the government of the CUP in the beginning of 20th century. That is why the effect of Nakşibendi order was underlined in this part.

CHAPTER 2

THE KURDISH NAKŞIBENDIS AND THE FIRST STEPS OF KURDISH ISLAMIST AND NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS

2.1. The Kurdish Nakşibendi Sheiks and the Ottoman State in 19th century

As it is mentioned above, the reformation era of the Ottomans had brought up a series of changes in 19th century. Most of the reformation processes were carried out in the administration and military areas. The Kurds of the Ottomans were one of the most affected ethnic groups from these reformation processes since with the centralization of the government started by Mahmud II, they lost their autonomous position in the region. In the end of 18th century and in the beginning of 19th century, most of the Kurdish region had *de facto* autonomous principalities, which were controlled and inspected by the Ottoman Empire (Özoğlu 2005, 79). In respect to this fact, the Kurdish notables in the region were keeping this power at their hands and they were still loyal to the Ottomans. Even before conquered by the Ottomans, Kurdistan had already been governed by the Kurdish principalities or tribal leaders. This situation had continued during the Ottoman era as well (Van Bruinessen 1992a, 93). Because of its complex structure, the Kurdish regions were left to the government of the local leaders. They were responsible to the central government, to Istanbul, with tax collection and providing military force when it was needed. Nevertheless, the policy of the Ottomans caused an unease situation among the Kurds who were holding power in the region.

The policy started with Mahmud II and continued in the reign of Abdülmecid I. The Land Act of 1858 clearly surfaced the unease between the state and the Kurdish notables. The income that the Ottomans had gained from wars and other areas decreased roughly in the 18th and 19th century so that the state found the solution to change manorial system, and with the Land Act, declared that the only owner of the land was the state (Van Bruinnessen 1992, 280). The aim was to increase the state income, collect taxes directly and put an end to the misuse of the

manorial system. Before this act was issued, the centralization policy had already caused some uprisings at the Kurdish region. First and the most important one was the uprising of Bedirhan who was controlling the Botan Principality located in Cizre in 1840s which was one of the strongest principalities in Kurdistan at that time. With the new system, the Botan Principality became an administrative district of Diyarbakır and Cizre, which was the residence of Bedirhan, was attached to the province of Musul. At the end of this act, Bedirhan revolted against the Ottomans in 1847 and the revolt was repressed by the Ottoman forces. Bedirhan was sent to Istanbul in the same year (Özoğlu 2005, 80). The importance of the Bedirhan revolt showed itself later on, because it became an example for other Kurdish revolts and also it is thought to be the first Kurdish nationalist revolt. Yet this revolt was not directly tied to the nationalist sentiments since the reason of the revolt was totally the Ottoman administration policy. The revolt was also a clear sign of the results of the Ottomans policy in the region. In addition to these, the policy that the Ottomans had successfully put forward in the region since the conquest of Kurdistan created loyal Kurdish leaders to the state. Nevertheless, the policies of the 19th century generated a new kind of leadership in the Kurdish region that can be called as nonconformist (Özoğlu 2005, 85; Jwadieh 1961, 115).

The principalities in the Kurdish region were a kind of surpassing structure on the Kurdish tribes that were keeping them together. "They were creating a balance between tribes. Besides, their authorities were accepted as mediators or judges by tribes in order to solve conflicts such as sharing the lands, theft and kidnappings" (Van Bruinessen 1992a, 111). Yet the Ottomans policy aimed to remove these principalities and appointed new rulers from the center. Nevertheless, the solution that they put forward did not operate in the Kurdish regions because they were stranger to the region. In addition to these, as Bruinessen argues, "The appointed officials did not know much about the province, and they were not welcomed and respected by the tribal leaders. The Kurdish society also needed to the leaders who knew the society, were respected and well-known, and whose authority transcended the tribal authorities" (Van Bruinessen 1992a, 111). As a result, the Kurdish sheiks,

Nakşibendis of course, came into the front as political figures because their authorities "transcended the tribal authorities" and they were seen and accepted as the mediators in the society as well. They were also much more engaged in politics than any other tariqas. As it is stated above, the most important result of the Ottoman policies in the 19th century in the Kurdish region was the formation of a new kind of leadership that was the emergence of the Kurdish Nakşibendi sheiks as political figures. As the Kurdish principalities, "the sheiks transcended tribal affiliations and were in fact traditionally relied upon to resolve and mediate conflicts between tribes" (Romano 2006, 34). The emergence of the Nakşibendi sheikhs as political leaders among the Kurds encounters with the emergence of Islamist movement in the Ottomans. After the 1870s, the sheiks gained political power alongside of their religious power and became local authorities in the Kurdish region. Those years were the years of the handover of the power from the Kurdish principalities and tribal leaders to the Kurdish sheiks. The effect of activist ideas of Mevlana Halid affected this situation in the Kurdish region.

Because of powerful figures of the sheiks that emerged in the Kurdish regions, Jwaideh (1961) criticizes the Kurds for being ignorant people because of accepting and believing the sheiks' absolute authorities. Moreover, because of their religious affiliations and their full respect to the sheiks, the Kurds were defined as ignorant and believers of superstitions. Jwadieh goes further and states, "The escape of Mevlana Halid from Suleymaniye is the decline of the charismatic authority of the sheiks"(Jwaideh 1961, 111). In contrast to this argument, it is not even the point in question that the authority of the sheiks among the Kurds widened after Mevlana Halid because of his autonomous caliphs spread all over the Muslim lands. Those caliphs were autonomous and most of them formed their own networks by remaining loyal to the basic rules of Nakşibendi network. Even some of them have not followed an activist way and have not been interested in the politics as well. Mevlana Halid was against the local principalities and was the defender of the Ottomans against them (Algar 2007, 349-350). Because of these conflicts between the principle of

Suleymaniye and Mevlana Halid, he left Suleymaniye and first went to Baghdad and then to Damascus (Algar 2007, 84).

The authority of the Nakşibendi sheiks was getting widened among the Kurds towards the end of the 19th century. The rising power of central authority brought itself the rising of the revolts let by the Kurdish Nakşibendi sheiks. Besides, the nationalist sentiments towards the end of 19th century started to affect the authority of the sheiks as much as religious sentiments. The conformist approach of the Kurdish Nakşibendi sheiks to the state had changed towards the end of the 19th century, which was actually started by the centralization policy and reached the top with the Turkification policy of the CUP government at the beginning of the 20th century. Correspondingly, a series of small and large revolts occurred in the Kurdish region most of which let by the Kurdish sheiks. At this point, the Kurdish Islamists, which were mostly Nakşibendi sheiks, differentiated themselves from Turkish Islamists by starting to follow a nonconformist way of reaching their goals. That is why this thesis takes the Kurdish revolts at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century as the beginning of the Kurdish Islamist and nationalist movements. In addition to these, the Kurds and the Turks follows different Islamic sects. Most of the Kurds follows the Shafii School of law of Sunni Islam (orthodox Islam) while the Turks follows Hanafiyyah School of law. The importance of the difference is that Shafiis are mostly indifferent to the state. In contrast, Hanefiyyah School sees the state as a necessary organization (Mardin 1989, 102). The indifference to the state can be thought to be a reason of the revolts of the Kurdish Islamists as well. It is important to state that most of the revolts against the Turkish state were let by the Kurdish Nakşibendi sheiks such as Sheik Ubeydullah revolt in 1880. Ubeydullah was a Nakşibendi sheik and his father, Seyyid Taha, was a disciple of Mevlana Halid. Sheik Said revolt in 1925 was another example to this revolts and he was also a successor of Nakşibendi order; and Sheik Selim revolt in 1913 was also a Nakşibendi sheik led revolt (Kutlay 2002, 442; Van Bruinessen 1999).

2.2. The New Cult of Leadership in Kurdistan: Sheik Ubeydullah Nehri Revolt

Although the centralization policy of the Ottomans in 19th century reduced the authorities of the Kurdish notables and local principalities, the Kurdish Nakşibendi sheiks came into the front as political authorities towards the end of the century because of the political gap in the region (Kutlay 2012, 102). The implementation of the policies in the region caused ruptures between the Kurds and the State. Additionally the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878 let some disasters in the Ottoman Empire and it created an unease situation among the Kurds (Jwadieh 1961, 160). In that war, Sheik Ubeydullah Nehri was appointed as the commander of the Kurdish forces which was the creation of the opportunity of an official authority for him. Sheik Ubeydullah was revered by the Kurds because of his religious authority as well. He was the son of Seyyid Taha who was the caliph of Mevlana Halid and he became the leader of the Nakşibendi order in the region. He was seen as a savior among the Kurds who suffered a lot from the disastrous results of the wars and poverty in the region. Additionally, the defeat of the Ottomans in the war of 1878 against Russia and the Treaty of Berlin signed after the war were the reasons that strengthened Sheik Ubeydullah hands in order to start a revolt (Olson 1992, 23). The stress on Armenians and their security in Berlin Treaty let the Kurds worry about their situation in Kurdistan. The rise of Armenians in the region was another reason that caused the rise of the authorities of the sheiks among the Kurds as unifying powers (Kutlay 2012, 100; Jwadieh 1961, 170). In one of his speech, Sheik Ubeydullah states his worries about the threat of Armenians and Nestorians, and says, "I heard that Armenians would found a state in Van and Nestorians would declare themselves as British subjects and raise the British flag. Even if I have to arm women, I will never let this to happen" (Jwadieh 1961, 170; Olson 1992, 24; Kutlay 2012, 101).

Sheik Ubeydullah was not only a powerful spiritual leader but also he was a popular tribal leader. These two features contributed a lot to him in order to widen his authority among the Kurds. In addition to this, he was a rich religious authority

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who had a large property in the region. As Özoğlu states, "it is reasonable to say that the source of his richness mostly depends on the donations coming from his followers when it is thought that he was the member of one of the most important Nakşibendi families" (Özoğlu 2005, 96). That is why he did not have difficulty in finding supporters; therefore, most of the Kurds accepted his authority (Jwadieh 1961, 161). At the end of all these situations, Sheikh Ubeydullah leaded one of the biggest Kurdish revolts against the Ottomans and Iran in 1880. The first and the most important aim of the revolt was to found a Kurdish state in the Ottomans, Iranian and Iraqi territories (Özer 2009, 270). Even though at first the revolt got some success, but later on it was repressed by the Ottomans and Sheik Ubeydullah was taken to Istanbul and then to Damascus where he died in 1883 (Kutlay 2012, 101). This revolt has been thought to be the first Kurdish nationalist revolt by most of the experts on the issue (Olson 1992; Jwadieh, 1961; Kutlay 2012). Özoğlu considers the revolt as the Kurdish proto-nationalism and gives place to a letter that was written by Sheikh Ubeydullah to an American missionary Mr. Cochran, which is important because Sheikh stresses on the unity of Kurdistan. "The Kurds are a separate nation that is consisted of 500.000 families. Their religions, laws and customs are different than others…We want to handle our own issues so that we could be independent and powerful to judge our own criminals and we could have privileges as the other nations have" (qtd. in Özoğlu 2005, 99). Even if it is not certain what the Sheikh aimed while defining the Kurds as a separate nation, it is a strong reference for most of the Kurdish nationalist that the Sheikh aimed to found an independent Kurdistan. Additionally, Jwadieh puts forward serious evidences in order to display Sheikh's aim of founding an independent Kurdistan. The British assistant consul of the time, Clayton, states, "I believe that he has plans to found an independent state by uniting all the Kurds under his own leadership" (qtd. in Jwadieh 1961, 165).

Alongside of the nationalist effect of Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri revolt, it is important to state that the revolt has its own Islamist sides. First of all, the leader of the revolt was a Nakşibendi sheikh who accepted and followed the Halidi branch of Nakşibendi order. The activist policy of Nakşibendi-Halidi order seems to have

affected Sheikh Ubeydullah since he directly involved in the politics and became a porte-parole of a nation. Secondly, the power and support that he gained were mostly provided by his pious followers who thought him the savior of the Kurds and the religion. Thirdly, the Armenian and Christian's threat because of the missionaries in the region let the Kurds come together around a religious figure who was thought to be the savior of both the nation and the Sharia. Besides, he paved the way for the ensuing sheikhs with regard to being a religious leader that leads a revolt against the state. In that sense, Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri revolt can be thought as a revolt that includes in it nationalist and religious elements.

2.3. A Kurdish Islamist Revolt: The Revolt of Sheikh Said of Palu in 1925

2.3.1. The Community of Union and Progress, and the Kurds at turn of 20th century

While coming to the end of the 19th century, the fluctuations in the Ottoman Empire had been going on in many ways. Sultan Abdulhamid II (from 1876 to 1908) put forward different policies in order to cope with the ongoing situations that were taking the State to disintegration. As seeing the salvation of the Ottomans in Pan-Islamist policies, he also implemented some policies in order to keep the Kurds loyal to the State. The most important one of the policies that he implemented in the Kurdish region was to found the Hamidian Cavalry (1891) which was mostly consisted of and commanded by the Kurds. The aim of the foundation of the Hamidian Cavalry was not only to raise the loyalty of the Kurds, but also it aimed to strengthen the central government by controlling the Kurds in the region, to use them against the Armenians and the Russian threats in the eastern Anatolia (Olson 1992, 28). The foundation of the Hamidian Cavalry also helped the Pan-Islamist policies of Abdulhamid II, because he was using his caliphate position to prompt the Kurds in the region. Additionally, the Kurds were appointed to high ranks in the army and most of the children of Kurdish families were brought to Istanbul in order to be educated. Even a school was opened for the children of the Kurdish tribal leaders in Istanbul (Kutlay 2012, 131). The soldiers who had taken place in the Hamidian

Cavalry had joined the wars in different places and this let them to interact with new ideas and political movements. In respect to this, the Hamidian Cavalry both raised the loyalties of the Kurds to the State and also allowed them to get new ideas such as nationalism and Islamism. In contrast to these, the increasing power of the Hamidian Cavalry harassed some of the governors and the Kurds in the region, because the commanders were moving waywardly and disturbing the local merchants (Bajalan 2010, 102). As a result, the status of the Hamidian Cavalry was changed with the government of the CUP and it was proscribed in 1910. The Hamidian Cavalry created a rupture among the Kurds as well. Most of the Kurds were supporting them and joining to the Cavalry while some of the Kurds were criticizing them because of their illegal activities. Known with its loyalty to the Ottomans, the journal of *Kurdistan*(issued in 1898-1902) was criticizing the policies of the Sultan Abdulhamid because of the Hamidian commanders' illegal activities (Bajalan 2010, 102). In contrast to these, as it is mentioned above, the most important contribution of the Hamidian Cavalry to the Kurds was their interaction of the new policies such as nationalism and Islamism in the beginning of 20th century, because the Hamidian commanders were brought to Istanbul and their children were educated in modern schools.

The reason of the separateness among the Kurds was not only because of the Hamidian Cavalry or because of the policies of the Sultan, but also their approach to the state and the caliphate. Most of them were loyal to the Caliph and Sharia although they were criticizing the government policies. Especially, those Kurdish notables and tribal leaders living in Istanbul were against Sultan Abdulhamid and supported the CUP revolution of 1908. Founded in 1895 as a secret organization, the CUP included in its body most of the Kurdish notables as well. Abdullah Cevdet and İshak Sukuti were the Kurds who involved in the foundation of the CUP. Alongside of these, Seyyid Abdulkadir, who was the son of Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri, was the member of the CUP who was exiled to Mecca after the CUP's plan to topple down the government had been unveiled. İsmail Hakkı Baban and Abdurrahman Bedirhan were the other Kurdish notables who joined the CUP (Jwadieh 1961, 208-209).

Seyyid Abdulkadir was an important figure in the Kurds history because of his active policy in advancement of the Kurdish society and his efforts to improve a Kurdish political and cultural identity. In 1908, right before the CUP revolution, the first Kurdish political union, the Society for the Mutual Aid and Progress of Kurdistan was founded by the initiation of Seyyid Abdulkadir Nehri (Özoğlu 2005, 102). Although the Kurdish notables living in Istanbul joined the CUP, the Kurds in periphery did not approach them in the same way. The CUP was an elitist and pragmatist organization against Sultan Abdulhamid's policies and thought him to be a despot. With respect to this, they aimed to renouncement of the Constitionalism (Bajalan 2010, 87). They reached their aims on 24 July 1908 by the declaration of the Second Constitutional Era.

With the announcement of the Second Constitutionalism, the CUP became a de jure government of the Ottomans and aimed to save the State from corruption and separation. Indeed this was the moving point of the founders of the CUP. While enclosing different political wings in the foundation and created a liberal atmosphere, the CUP government started a serious Turkification process after it came to the power. In 1909, the CUP government encountered a counter-revolution, which is known as March 31 movement, and consequently started suppression of opposition (Ülker 2005). The suppression policy mostly affected the Kurds and their organizations. The Society for the Mutual Aid and Progress of Kurdistan and the school that opened in Istanbul for the Kurdish children was closed as a result of this policy. The organization was a cultural organization to advance the Kurds and their regions, which did not carry nationalist or separatist ideas yet it mostly supported an autonomous status for Kurdistan (Özoğlu 2005, 101-102). The organization also published a newspaper with the same name. The important figures such as Said Nursi and İsmail Hakkı Babanzade were claimed to be the members of the organizations by depending on their writings in the newspaper (Kutlay 2012, 142). Especially, Said Nursi was contributing to the newspaper by his writings dwelling on the Kurdish identity and advancement (Bajalan 2010, 113). As it is stated above, the president of the organization was Seyyid Abdulkadir and there were important names in the

foundation of the organization such as Emin Ali Bedirhan and Şerif Paşa (Olson 1992, 37). Emin Ali Bedirhan and Şerif Paşa were sentenced to death penalty by default and they had to escape from the country, because the CUP government accused them as being nationalists (Jwadieh 1961, 212). There were opened the branches of the Society for the Mutual Aid and Progress of Kurdistan in Kurdistan towns, which defined themselves as Kurdish Clubs. Most of these clubs were against the CUP and its policies, and even in 1909, they sent a letter to the CUP officers which was stating the Islamist susceptibilities and threatening them in order to apply Shari rules (Bajalan 2010, 103). The periphery branches of the organization and some of the founders such as Seyyid Abdulkadir were using Islamist discourse against Turkification process of the CUP. Even Islamist sensitivities and commitment to the Sharia and the Caliphate were underlined in the declaration of the organization (Bajalan 2010, 107). In this sense, the organization can be thought as a Kurdish Islamist organization, which started ball rolling to the ensuing Kurdish nationalist and Islamist movements.

The Kurdish political and cultural organizations continued to be opened after 1910s even though there were the CUP suppressions on them. The nationalist policy of the CUP government between 1910 and 1918 created a reactionist movement among the Kurds. Besides, the Kurdish sheiks were playing important roles among the Kurds because of the CUP policies. On one hand, the sheikhs who were supporting the Islamist policies of Sultan Abdulhamid started to criticize the CUP government because of implementing policies that were against benefits of Muslims and the Sharia. The sheiks had the idea that the CUP aimed to found a modern secular state and in contrast to this, they supported an Islamist state (Jwadieh 1961, 214). On the other hand, the rising express on the nationalist and secular state let nationalism to become widespread in dervish lodges. "This was an important development in the Kurdish nationalist history. The dervish lodges played a very crucial role in propagation of the nationalist ideas, because the ideas that were spread from these lodges were broadly and quickly accepted… The sheikhs' being religious leader and their influences were protecting them from the government intervention

and suppression" (Jwadieh 1961, 214). It is important to state here that the madrasas also played a very crucial role in the education of the Kurdish people and in the propagation of nationalism among the Kurds since they were the place where the Quran was interpreted in Kurdish and the language of education was also Kurdish until they were banned (Çiçek 2008).

In addition to these, the sheikhs started to put forward their wills by blending nationalist and Islamist discourse together. The stress on the Sharia and the loyalty to the Caliphate come into the front in the sheikhs' demands and policies. While they were demanding the implementation of the Sharia in legal affairs and in the taxation policies on one hand, they were also demanding the Kurdish as the language of education and administration on the other hand (Olson 1992, 39). It is also important to note that while the city-dweller Kurdish notables were trying to put forward policies both for the salvation of the state and of the Kurds, the Kurdish sheikhs in the periphery developed a more nationalist stance different than those of the Kurdish notables. This issue comes into the front as a dilemma since the sheikhs were also loyal to the Caliphate.

This era encountered with the propagation of nationalism, the rise of political demands and the emergence of the demands of independency among the Kurds. In addition to this, the World War I caused diseases in the Kurdish regions and the Kurds started to find new solutions in order to advance the region (Kutlay 2012, 155). In that sense, another important organization, the Kurdish Student Hope Society (Kürt Talebe Hevi Cemiyeti), was founded by some of the Kurdish students in Istanbul in 1912. It is important to note that this society was mostly dwelling on Kurdish identity and national advancement, not as the subject of the Ottomans but as a nation who had the right to live separately. Additionally they defined the Kurds as a different ethnicity (Bajalan 2010, 130). By putting forward this, they tried to follow the paths of an independent status for Kurdistan. The organization published newspapers such as *Rojawi Kurd* and *Hatewi Kurd* both of which included an excessive propaganda of the national will. In addition, they included the articles of

important figures such as Abdullah Cevdet and Lütfi Fikri who were suggesting ways for the advancement of the Kurdish society (Bajalan 2010, 131).

After the closing the Society for the Mutual Aid and Progress of Kurdistan, almost the same cadre consisted of Kurdish notables living in Istanbul founded the Society for the Advancement of Kurdistan (Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti) on 17 December 1918, soon after the Armistice of Mudros (Özoğlu 2005, 107). The leader of the organization was again Seyyid Abdulkadir. Nevertheless, there appeared a rivalry between Şemdinan and Bedirhan families as well. While Semdinan family, whose leader was Seyyid Abdulkadir, was supporting an autonomous state, Bedirhan family was much more pro independency. In this sense, the organization came into the front as a much more nationalist than the former Kurdish organizations. The newspaper, *Jin*, was published by this organization and it included articles propagating nationalism and demands for the Kurdish rights (Özoğlu 2005, 108). The newspapers such as *Kurdistan* and *KTTC* were dwelling on the Ottomanism and Pan Islamism, but *Jin* was clearly far more different since it put forward the Kurdish identity (Bajalan, 2010, 129). The fundamental aim of the organization was the advancement of the Kurds and the Kurdish regions both economically and socially. Moving from this aim, they demanded an autonomous or independent state for the Kurds in Kurdistan region. Besides, the 12. Article of Wilson's Fourteen Principles paved the way for rising of the voice for these demands among the Kurds. Özoğlu states, "By taking courage from Wilson Principles, KTC was clearly demanding an autonomous or independent state" (Özoğlu 2005, 110). It is interesting to note that those demands were mostly coming from the Kurdish notables living in Istanbul and close to the sublime porte and bureaucracy.

The Kurds joined the World War I for the salvation of the Ottomans and for the sake of the Caliphate to which most of the Kurds felt themselves tied profoundly. At the time of the Armistice, they also developed ties with the Armenians in Paris Conference. Şerif Paşa attended Paris Conference as the Kurdish delegation and demanded an independent state for the Kurds (Kutlay 2012, 161). With the same impetus, the Kurds joined the War of Independency in 1919 and sided with Mustafa

Kemal since they had the belief of saving the caliphate and the Ottoman state. The Kurds had almost had the strongest loyalty to the Caliphate among the Ottomans subjects. That is why they were easily included in the Salvation War. In addition to this, it has been claimed that Mustafa Kemal promised an autonomous state to the Kurds in exchange for joining the Salvation War. This is a controversial claim because there is not a crystal clear document that states this promise. It can be said that it mostly depends on Mustafa Kemal's discourses. This situation created a dilemma among the Kurds since they sided with the Ottomans and the Allied Powers did not help those who wanted to found an independent state (Kutlay 2012, 155; Jan Zürcher 1993, 252). The separation among the Kurds was already clear because of the future status of Kurdistan. While the leading figures such as Seyyid Abdulkadir, Abdullah Cevdet and Said Nursi was pro for an autonomous state in Kurdistan, Bedirhanis and Cemilpaşazade families were the supporters of an independent state. Those who had an Islamist background preferred an autonomous state while the other group like Bedirhanis and Cemilpaşazade demanded an independent state. This situation went on until the revolt of Sheikh Said in 1925, which was a turn point in the Kurdish history.

2.3.2. Sheikh Said Revolt and the Kurdish Islamists in Turkish Republic

After the Salvation War, the sultanate was removed and with the declaration of Republic on 29 October 1923, Turkish history and politics took a new turn. The removal of the sultanate created a dilemma in the government of the state while the caliphate was institutionally standing in its place. That is why the caliphate was removed on 1 March 1924 by the command of Mustafa Kemal. This was another important remarkable development in the newly founded republic. The caliphate had been accepted as an authority whose effect went beyond the borders of the Ottomans and reached to the other Muslims all over the world. The removal of the caliphate and the exile of the Ottoman family created an unease situation among the Muslims living in Turkey. After the Treaty of Lausanne, the borders of Turkish state were drawn again and twenty percent of the population of the new state was the Kurds (Zürcher 1993, 252). Accordingly, the Kurds were against the removal of the

caliphate since the most of the Kurds were pious people and also the Kurdish sheikhs had tied to the caliph strongly. Besides, the promise of an autonomous state that was given to the Kurds by Mustafa Kemal was forgotten and this let the Kurdish notables have suspicions about the new state. At this point the policies of the CUP were carried out by the new state which caused another important rupture between the Turkish state and its Kurdish citizens. The removal of the caliphate caused such a disastrous situation among the Kurds because it was providing a strong religious tie between the Kurds and the Turks. On the other hand, the new state was carrying out nationalist policies, such as banning of Kurdish, with the aim of creation of a new nation from which most of the Kurds were disturbed. That was a strong assimilation policy reflected to the bureaucracy of the new state as well (Van Bruinessen 1992a, 133).

As it is stated above, the removal of the caliphate destroyed all of ties and relations of the Kurdish separatists in Turkey. As Bruinessen states, "With the removal of the caliphate in 1924, one of the strongest ties between the Kurds and the Turks brotherhood sheared off" (Van Bruinessen 1992, 413). At this point, the Kurdish movements gained a different point of view. The movements and organizations that fought for the sake of the caliphate and supported the Islamist policies of Sultan Abdulhamid started to give voice to the separatist actions. It can also be considered that the removal of the caliphate caused the propagation of the Kurdish separatist movements (Bruinessen 1992, 413).

The most important and the most discussed one of those separatist movements against Turkish Republic come from a Kurdish Islamist figure, Sheikh Said, in 1925. Known also Said of Palu, he was a Nakşibendi sheikh who had a respected authority in the Kurdish region (Zürcher 1993, 253). The importance of this revolt comes into front because of the Islamist ideas of Sheikh Said who blamed the rulers of new Turkish state as being pagan. However the Kurdish Islamists were not only disturbed because of the removal of the caliphate; the suppressions on the Kurds, the assimilation policy, feelings of being cheated by the Turks were other reasons caused the revolt. Yet it is necessary to note that the removal of the caliphate

was the most important reason. As the Sheikh himself stated in his own explanation, "There was only religion that was binding us to the Turks, but Turkish government has removed it. There is nothing remained to bind us them anymore" (Siverekli 2008, 52). There was a strong will for an independent Islamist state in the words of the Sheikh. It is important to state that the Sheikh used his religious authority and mostly Islamist discourse to get support for his revolt. The will for the caliphate and the sultanate can be thought to be the reason of the support in terms of the Kurds as well. Islam was the strongest side of the Kurds. The assimilation policy of the Kemalist regime targeted both the religion and the ethnicities. As the minister of law,Mahmut Esat Bozkurt's statements clearly display the Kemalist assimilation policy. "There was only one of right of those who are not Turks living in this country. That is to be slave of the Turks" (Özbey 2009, 97).

The first steps of the Sheik Said revolt were taken by Azadi (Liberty) movement, which was founded in 1923 by the Kurdish militia (Zürcher 1993, 253). The members of this movement were the Kurdish notables who were annoyed because of the policies of the new state. The founders and members of the organizations, such as KTC and KKTC, founded before the 1920s were also members of Azadi movement. Likewise the members of those organizations, the members of Azadi movement split into two as those who preferred an autonomous state and those who favored an independent state for the future of the Kurds (Kurbanoğlu 2012, 71). Sheikh Said was also the member of Azadi movement who attended the first congress of the movement in 1924 (Zürcher 1993, 253). The leader of the movement was Cibranlı Halit who was known with his Islamist ideas (Kurbanoğlu 2012, 66). He was also known with his activist side for the advancement of Kurdistan and the Kurds. In addition to this, the contribution of Azadi movement and Cibranlı Halit to the Sheikh Said revolt should be underlined. Accordingly, the Sheikh Said revolt was organized by Azadi movement and carried out by Sheikh Said until his defeat (Romano 2006, 32).

The works on Sheikh Said are mostly written in the biased perspectives. While some of the studies see the revolt as a nationalist one (Olson 1992; Van

Bruinessen 1992a), some considers it as Islamists (Kurbanoğlu 2012). The source on the Sheikh Said revolt depends on the Turkish archive that is why it is difficult to make an objective and clear justification since the revolt was declared as both a radical Islamist and nationalist one by the government itself. While the Kemalist government was reflecting the revolt as an Islamist one to the western states, it was reflected as a Kurdish nationalist revolt in Turkey. This was a tactical move by the state in order to apply its policies and to mold public opinion. In addition to these, as an ongoing and unproven discussion, it is claimed that the revolt was supported by the English government (Tan 2009, 231). Nevertheless, when it is looked at the words of the Sheikh, Sheikh Said's aim was clearly showed itself from his defense in the Independent Court. He underlines his aim as to serve Islam and Muslims but he underlines that he failed to reach his goal (Menek 2011, 106). When the court board asked him how he thought of the revolt and if there were any provoker or if he got any inspiration, he answered that "No, any inspiration did not occur. We have seen in the books that If the imam, the ruler, does not perform the judgements of the Sharia, then it will be obligatory to revolt against him. We wanted to explain the matter of the Sharia to the government. At least we would demand the execution of a part of the Sharia" (Kurbanoğlu 2012, 246). In addition to this, Toynbee states that it is not easy to decide whether it is a nationalist or an Islamist revolt but there are evidences that the Islamists and radical features are more effective in the Kurdish revolt" (qtd. in Jwadieh 1961). M.V. Guinet also states similar comments and says, "The revolt of Sheikh Said was the reaction of the Kurdish feudal lords against the Republic. To put in another way, it was the result of the clash between the secular, modern Turkey and the old Turkey which tied to Islamist tradition" (qtd. in Genel Kurmay Belgelerinde Kürt İsyanları 1992, 142). Despite all of these arguments, it is necessary to note that in his defence in the court, Sheikh Said clearly stated that he was affected by the writings of *Volkan*which was an Islamist journal and propagating Islamist ideals by criticizing the new government (Kurbanoğlu 2012, 246-7). This instance is also another significant case to display the Islamist side of Sheikh Said revolt.

The revolt was suppressed two months after it started on 26 April and 48 people including Sheikh Said and Seyyid Abdulkadir Nehri were executed. In addition, most of the Kurdish notables, tribal leaders and more than twenty thousands of the Kurds were exiled on the grounds of joining or supporting the revolt (Zürcher, 1993:254-255). Sheik Said revolt was the outcome of the policies of the Kemalist regime which had its background in the CUP government. Especially the assimilation and westernization policies of the new regime and the suppressions on the Kurds did not leave any other solution for the Kurds except for the revolt (Rabasa and Larrabee, 2008: 34). The new state tried to lay the foundation of a nation state in which there were not left any other place for other ethnicities and where the Turks became ruling people (millet-i hakime). In addition, the cultural rights of the other ethnic groups of the Turkish state were also denied by the bureaucratic elites of the new state (Yeğen, 2007:127). At the end of the day, the Kurdish Islamists followed a different path comparing to the Turks. Since the ruling elites were the Turks and the state was the Turkish state, the Turkish Islamists preferred a conformist way. As for those who were not conformist, they preferred to be silent or at least they did not revolt against the state. With no doubt, the Islamist and bureaucratic background of the new Turkish state had an effect on this situation. All in all the rulers of the new state had come out of the Ottomans' bureaucracy. However, the Kurdish Islamist differently followed a nonconformist and violent way by revolting the state in order to achieve their goals. The Sheikh Said revolt was the most important one of those nonconformist actions and also it can be considered to be as a radical Islamists movement since the Sheikh applied an armed struggle.

CHAPTER 3

SAID NURSI AND THE KURDISH ISLAMISM OF MED-ZEHRA MOVEMENT

3.1. Said Nursi and the Nur Movement

The most developed and the most common religious movement in Turkey is without doubt, Nur movement. With its powerful structure and effective pervasion, the Nur movement became a remarkable religious movement that has left its footprints to the second half of twentieth century of Turkey. Said Nursi (or Said-i Kurdi as the Kurds calls him since he was a Kurd) was the initiator of this movement, who was one of the most influential religious scholars of the twentieth century. Nursi was a Kurdish scholar born in 1873 in Nurs, a village in Bitlis located in the southeast of Turkey (Bruinessen 1992, 383). In his youth, he showed his talents as a scholar and surprised most of the well-known sheiks with his great knowledge. It is known that he even hanged an announcement on his hotel door while he was in Istanbul as "In here, all questions are answered but no question will be asked" (Seyhanzade 2003, 44). Even though his ties are not clearly known and he sometimes refers to Abdulkadir Gilani, the leader of Kadiri tariqa, Nursi himself was a successor of Mevlana Halid. He was educated by Nakşibendi sheikhs such as Muhammed Küfrevi, Molla Fethullah and Sheikh Abdurrahman Tagi (Şeyhanzade 2003, 44).

Said Nursi is called as Bediüzzaman which means the scholar of the age. He got his education from the madrassas in Kurdistan most of which followed the Halidiyye branch of Nakşibendi movement. His sheikh was Abdulkadir Tagi who had been in Nurs and had a great importance for Nursi (Algar 2007, 388). As it is stated above, the madrassas were really important places both for the education of the Kurdish mullahs, sheikhs and religious scholars alongside of Islamist and nationalist ideas. Şerif Mardin sees Said Nursi as a remarkable figure and says, "He was the star of the Nakşibendi order" (Mardin 2011, 84). Nursi's effect in Turkey's history comes along with his books called Risale-i Nur (The Pamphlets of Light)

from which his movement got its name, the Followers of Light. The collection that he wrote was more than six thousands pages and it was the interpretation of the Quran by which he got his fame. He gave much more importance to the Risale-i Nurs rather than his own name since the Risale-i Nurs had their lights from the Quran (Algar 2007, 389). It is necessary to state that accepting the Quran as the source of the Risale-i Nurs and the only guide for Muslims was Nursi's denial of the sheikhs' positions. He was not a classical sheikh of a tariqa but he was much more a religious scholar. Taking the Quran to the center constituted his aim of an Islamic state by underlining the importance of a united ummah (Seyhanzade 2003, 27). Another evident for this is that classical sheikhs appoint a caliph or caliphs that would succeed them after their deaths but Said Nursi did not appoint any caliphs who would succeed him. Because of this situation, there appeared fractions in Nur movement after Nursi's death.

3.1.1. The Old Said and the Kurds

Nursi's movement was a different one than those of traditional tariqas which are thought to be lead in wrong directions and criticized by Nursi because of being tools of misguiding. Additionally Nursi denies being a sheikh or a leader of tariqa. That is why his movement cannot evoke a sense of traditional Islamic tariqa (Algar 2007, 388). Nursi was always stood close to the Nakşibendi families and mostly got his authority from his religious stance. He is also accepted as a Kurdish leader and guide who struggled for the advancement of the Kurds as well (Özoğlu 2005, 145). In this sense, Nursi also became a political figure. Nursi's life is divided into two periods as Old Said and New Said both of which reflects his different approaches to the social, political and religious issues (Mardin 1989, 152). The period until 1920 can be seen as the period of Old Said. In this period, he was more interested in social and political issues as much as religious ones. Foremost among them was his aim to advance the Kurds and Kurdistan for which he engaged in politics and political movements. Moreover, he comes into front as Constitutionalist and republican but not separatist as those of the Kurds of his age. Nursi joined various Kurdish movements in the first years of 20[th]century. As an example to this, he wrote in

KTTC's newspaper before 1908.The interaction with Kurdish nationalists and Islamists in Istanbul was also effective on Said Nursi's stance. At the age of 32, he came to Istanbul right before the declaration of the second Constitutionalism in order to serve for the advance of the Kurds. In addition to his writings in KTTC's newspaper, he also wrote in *Kurdistan* and *Şark* dailies. The writings in these dailies mostly went around the Kurds and their development. Nursi mostly dwelled on the educational development of the Kurds. Therefore, he involved in the foundation of a school for the Kurds living in Istanbul. Nevertheless, his dream was to found a university in Kurdistan called Medresetül Zehra, which is similar to Al-Azhar of Egypt, and in 1907, he came to Istanbul in order to share his opinions with the Sultan and to get financial aid from the government for the university (Van Bruinessen 1992, 383). Nevertheless, he was thought to be insane and taken to mental hospital because of his appearance and sharp language (Mardin 1989, 134).

Nursi's arrival to Istanbul let him to meet the Kurdish nationalists of the era as well as the CUP members. Özoğlu even claims that he was the member of the CUP and took place in the Ottoman Secret service, Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa so as to suppress Arab revolts (Özoğlu 2005, 146). The same claim was put forward by Mardin as well which was related to Molla Selim revolt in Bitlis in 1913 (Mardin 1989, 144). Additionally, he was keen on liberty and became a supporter of the CUP because of the belief that the CUP was constituted of the pros of Constitutionalism. His keenness on liberty is widely known with his saying: "I can live without bread but I cannot live without liberty." As it is mentioned above, the CUP government created a positive atmosphere for Nursi that he involved in the Kurdish nationalist movements by his writings (Van Bruinessen 1992, 383). With the declaration of the Second Constitutional era, he even made a speech in Salonika called Adressing to Liberty in which he criticized the reign of Abdulhamid II, drew a picture of importance of liberty and appreciated the new government (Seyhanzade 2003, 60). Nevertheless, Said Nursi became against the CUP government and involved in the counter movement of Ittihad-ı Muhammedi, which was against the CUP constitution (Van Bruinessen 1992, 383). The fundamental aim of the Ittihad-ı Muhammedi

movement was to make the Sharia as the source of the parliamentary regime (Mardin 1989, 141). The members of the CUP government were aware of the impellent power of Pan Islamism among the Ottoman society but they did not realize that the Islamist groups had their particular authentic structures that let them engage to the politics (Mardin 1989, 137). The CUP members also accepted the Islamist groups as the militant groups that just tried to take over the government by using Islamic discourse. That is why they held those groups as threat for their government and tried to suppress them. The reactionist movement of the Ittihad-i Muhammedi was the product of this assumption of the CUP government (Mardin 1992, 138). Said Nursi was the eighth member of the Ittihad-ı Muhammed-i movement and he was judged in *Divan-ı Harbi Örf-i* in 1909, which was a kind of martial law court. He accepted that he was the member of the movement and gave an answer to the question if he demanded Sharia law: "I am ready to sacrifice myself for a truth of the Sharia…But not as those of revolutionists" (Seyhanzade 2003, 97). Most of the members of Ittihad-ı Muhammed-i were executed by the court but Said Nursi was acquitted with his 115 friends because of his amazing defence.

Nursi went back to Van after the accusation of being against the government even though he rejected it. In 1911, he made a short trip to Damascus where he was hosted by one of the well-known Nakşibendi sheikhs. In the Umeyye Mosque of Damascus, he made a speech in which he dwelled on the unity and revival of Islam and the ummah, using technology that is taken from the west and being aware of the power of Islam as the cement for the unity (Mardin 1989, 144). In order to realize his dream of founding a university in Van, he came back to Istanbul. At that time, Sultan Mehmed Reşat was at the throne and he was known with his affinity to Mevlevi tariqa. Nursi made the same offer of founding a university to the Sultan Mehmed and he got financial aid. However, this project did not come true because of the Balkan Wars in 1913 (Mardin 1989, 145). He joined to the Balkan Wars and World War I with his militia and he was captured by Russians. He escaped from the Russian captivity, came back to Istanbul in 1918, and became a member of the Society of Advancement of Kurdistan (Kürt Teali Cemiyeti) which mostly dwelled on the

Kurdish identity and culture (Özoğlu 2004). Nursi contributed to this society by writing in the dailies that were published by the society and he was freely putting forward his ethnic background which does not carry nationalist elements and ideas.

The Turkification process of the CUP era let the Kurdish nationalists dwell on their ethnicity much more than they had ever done before because of the fear of assimilation. After the CUP came to the power, Turkification process had started and it went on the same line in the new founded republic. Furthermore, in the republican era, the ethnic policies were much more irksome and it turned into an assimilation process (Ülker 2005). Even though Nursi was a pro of the movement of Mustafa Kemal in the War of Independence, after the war he disappointed because the new regime was not an Islamic one. Additionally the new regime put forward different policies in order to suppress different ethnic groups and oppositions. This era let Nursi remain silent and start to write The Pamphlets of Light by which the era of New Said, as he called, began (Mardin 1989, 152). Nursi was also accused of being involved in the Sheikh Said revolt, which is a controversial issue because the involvement of Nursi to the revolt is not clear. Van Bruinessen states that even though Said Nursi did not join the revolt, he was exiled to the west of Anatolia (Van Bruinessen 1992, 383). In contrast to this, Seyhanzede claims that Nursi and Sheikh Said met in different times in order to consult about the essence of the revolt (Seyhanzade 2003, 179). On the other hand, Abdulillah Fırat, who is the grandson of Sheikh Said, states that he met with Said Nursi before his death, and Nursi said that Sheikh Said sent him a letter to invite him to the revolt. Accordingly, Nursi wanted to join the revolt, but he did not get the chance because Sheikh Said and his militia were arrested (Kurbanoğlu 2012, 47). This is an unproven claim that depends on memoirs of the sons and groundsons of Sheik Said.

3.1.2. The New Said and the Nur Community (Cemaat)

The revolt of Sheikh Said was also a milestone for Said Nursi. Before the revolt, he went to Van to live in seclusion because of the policies of the new regime which was not an Islamic one (Seyhanzade 2003, 169). He supported the War of

Independence but he saw that the Kemalist regime was not doing anything in order to unite Muslims and to put forward a strong Islamic lifestyle. Depending on those critics, he even published a notice, which was criticizing the new regime because of its assertive laicist policies (Kuru 2007), to the members of Grand National Assembly in 1923 (Mardin 1989, 156). The revolt of Sheikh Said was the beginning of another era for Nursi, which he calls as the era of New Said. In this era of New Said, Said Nursi followed an indifferent position to the politics of the government and the state. Actually, his political activism decreased because of the harsh policies of the Kemalist regime. Even though it is not clear whether he joined the revolt of Sheikh Said or not, he was sent to exile and started to write the Pamphlets, which have gained a nationwide fame. While he was in the exile, he did not involve in any political action and just focused on the interpretation of Quran. In his Pamphlets, he dwelled on modernization of Islam via rationality. Nursi mostly tried to make scientific clarifications to the Quran by using ration. He explained the verses of Quran with a scientific logic and showed that science is not out of Islam. By mostly dwelling on the importance of the family and the community (cemaat), he followed a way of Islamic reformation. According to Nursi, the Tanzimat and the statist policies destroyed this ideal (Mardin 2011, 85). In addition to this, as Ugur argues, Nursi had a significant role between ulama Islam and popular Islam, "by responding to modern questions regarding the authenticity and rationality of aspects of Islamic faith." (Ugur, 2004: 333).

During the Kemalist regime, Said Nursi was subjected to too many difficulties. He was prisoned in many times mostly with the commitments that he aimed to found an Islamic state, which was the violation of the laic principle of the constitution. Additionally he was sent to exile in different times again with the same commitment. Most of those trials ended up with the exculpation of Said Nursi (Mardin 1989, 158). As an example to these, in 1935, by depending on the Pamphlets he again accused of being a leader of a tariqa, which aimed to found an Islamic state. In his defence in the court, he stated that the Pamphlets did not have such an aim, on the contrary they were the tools supporting the law and the order (Mardin 1989, 158).

In addition to these, the Kemalist press was constantly publishing writings that were blaming Nursi as a reactionist who was threatening the order (Van Bruinessen 1992, 385). Until the government of Democrat Party, he became target of those commitments and faced with exiles and prisons. Besides, the Nur movement found a free atmosphere in the period between 1950 and 1960 in order to promulgate. The movement developed constantly and Nursi died in 1963 in Urfa. Nevertheless, even his corpse was seen as a threat by the government and it was buried to an unknown place (Van Bruinessen 1992, 385).

The passive stance of New Said mostly dwelled on the revival of Islam and its modernization and on the scientific explanation of the verses of Quran. The life of community (cemaat) came into front with New Said and he tried to maintain his influence with his Pamphlets and his pupils. As in the era of the Old Said, before 1920, he did not put forward his Kurdish ethnic background. It can be said that the harsh policy of the Kemalist regime against different ethnic groups became effective in the decrease of the expression on the ethnicity. The death of Said Nursi created a negative result for the followers of him since the movement fractioned into different groups. As it is stated above, Nursi did not appoint any caliphs as traditional sheikhs and he did not also point out anyone to lead the movement, which was the main reason that let the Nur movement divide into different groups. Yazıcılar, Yeni Nesilciler, Yeni Asyacılar (known also as Okuyucular), Gülen Movement, Med-Zehra Movement can be constitutively counted among those splits. Each one of those Nur movements has their own way in order to promulgate and develop their movement depending on the Pamphlets of Light. The separation among those groups mostly depends on the publishing of the Pamphlets of Light and the relation of the movement with the politics (Şentürk 2011, 248-276). With government of Democrat Party in 1950, the Nur movement, with the advice of Said Nursi, started to involve in the politics again. Nursi had given a break to the politics after 1920s yet in 1957, he stated that he remained passive because of the writing of the Pamphlets, which was much more important for Muslims and the country (Mardin 1989, 163). After the advice of Said Nursi, Tahsin Tola who was the author of Said Nursi's biography

became a candidate for Democrat Party and Nursi wanted his followers to support him. Among the splits of the Nur movements, Yeni Asyacılar came into front as the most concerned with the politics. It is known that they supported Justice Party of Süleyman Demirel against the Islamist National Salvation Party of Necmettin Erbakan in 1977 (Şentürk 2011, 256). Being in relation with politics caused another discussion and fraction among the Nur groups, mostly in Yeni Asyacılar. In addition, their negative stance against the National Salvation Party created reactions from other Islamic networks against this group (Şentürk2011, 255). After the death of Zübeyir Gündüzalp, Bekir Berk, a lawyer and a previous leader of the Community of the Struggle with Communism, became the voice of the mainstream Nur movement as well. Bekir Berk had a nationalist background and discourse. His nationalistic discourse continued after he became an effective person in the movement. This nationalistic discourse paved the way for the separation of the Kurds in the Nur movement. Med-Zehra group, which was consisted of the Kurdish Nur students, came into front as a result of those nationalistic discourses.

3.2. The Med-Zehra Group and Its Islamist Stance

As it is stated above, after Nursi's death his movement divided into different groups by the students of Nursi. Two of the most developed and common of those splits are Yeni Asyacılar led by Mehmet Kutlular and Gülen movement led by Fethullah Gülen. It can be said that these two groups constitute the mainstream Nur movement. Even though Yeni Asyacılar openly involved in politics, Gülen movement has stood aloof from politics (Şentürk 2011). Nevertheless, Gülen movement did not escape to state their democratic stance and their support for the development of human rights and for the full membership of Turkey to European Union. Especially with the government of JDP in 2002, Gülen movement actively supported those processes. (Yılmaz 2011) In addition to these, Med-Zehra group comes into front as a Kurdish Nur movement, which differentiates itself from the mainstream Nur movements. This movement is also called radical Nur movement or Kurdist Nurcular (Büyükkara 2006, 153). Dwelling on the ethnic background of Said Nursi and mostly giving place to his writings before 1925s related to the Kurds,

Med-Zehra group became a voice among the Kurdish Nur students. The movement mostly consists of the Kurds and their leader Sıddık Dursun (known also as Seyhanzade) is also a Kurd from Bingöl. The movement was not known before the 1980, but after 1980s, it started to take place in the press (Şentürk 2011, 271). Med-Zehra group takes its name from the university project of Said Nursi called Medresetü'l Zehra that was aimed to be founded by Said Nursi in Van in order to educate and improve the Kurds living in Kurdistan. Separated from the mainstream Nur movement, Med-Zehra group founded Tenvir publishing house in 1980 as a reaction to Sözler publishing house. The reason to found Tenvir publication was the idea of repudiations in the Risale-i Nurs of Said Nursi (Çakır 1990, 130). Med-Zehra group blames the mainstream Nur movements on their repudiation of Nursi's ethnic background (Atacan 2011, 112). The critics of Med-Zehra group continue by claiming that especially certain words or sentences that indicated Nursi's Kurdish identity were removed intentionally from the Pamphlets. They were thought to be removed with nationalistic and Turkist inducement of the mainstream Nur movement (Şentürk 2011, 271). Besides the claim that Med-Zehra group put forward was corrected officially by the revolution council of 12 September. It was stated in a report prepared by the revolution council of 12 September that in the recent edition of the Pamphlets of Light, the statements against the regime and the law have been taken out and the Pamphlets turned to be moral books (Büyükkara 2006, 153). Özoğlu gives place a corroborative opinion and states, "Even though his Turkish followers have tried to leave aside his Kurdishness, he was really keen on his Kurdishness" (Özoğlu 2004, 146). In addition to this, Med-Zehra group claims that the mainstream Nur movements lost their stances because of political ambitions and of coming together with nationalistic approach (Atacan 2011, 118). According to them, the mainstream Nur movements tried to take the control of the Pamphlets and published it with the repudiations by mostly deleting Said Nursi's ethnic background (Şentürk 2011, 271; Çakır 1990, 131). This situation prevented the promulgation of the Pamphlets and acceptance of Said Nursi by all the people.

Med-Zehra group started to publish a journal called *Dava* in 1989 whose editorial writer was Seyhanzade Sıddık Dursun, the leader of the group. The journal, *Dava* contained much more nationalistic contents in which they also accepted Sheikh Said as "the second great predecessors beside Said Nursi" (Van Bruinessen, 1999). In the first issue of the journal, Seyhanzade states that they were not after any political interests but they were Hizbul Kuran which means "the party of Quran" (Çakır 1990, 130). Another striking incident that clearly shows the distinctness of Med-Zehra group from the other Nur movements was that after the death of Ayetullah Humeyni the group published a big condolence notice in the journal, *Dava,* which is a kind of the expression of the unity of all Muslims (Büyükkara 2006, 154). This incident is significant in terms of showing the political stance of the group. In addition to these, Seyhanzade also criticizes the mainstream Nur movements because of their involvement in the politics, which, for Seyhanzade, was banned by Said Nursi. Nevertheless, as it is stated above, Nursi, himself, encouraged his students to take place in politics and Tahsin Tola, a student of Nursi, became a candidate from Democrat Pary (Şentürk 2011). According to Seyhanzade, the politics, which was rejected by Nursi, was not Islamic politics but the politics that were derived from the west. Moreover, doing politics or involving in politics that depends on Islamic law is legitimate (Seyhanzade 2003, 302). Sıddık Dursun also published three books based on the Pamphlets of Light and his own memories, and in these three books he mostly tried to explain how the Pamphlets were repudiated by the mainstream Nur movements. He mostly dwells on the nationalistic repudiations that removed Said Nursi's Kurdish background. Seyhanzade describes those who made repudiations as "the people who do not tolerate the words such as the Kurds and Kurdistan" (Seyhanzade 2003, 332). This was also reflection of official ideology on the mainstream Nur movements since the state also did not tolerate such words. It can also be said that the mainstream Nur movements made those repudiations in order not to draw a rebuff from the state. As an example to these repudiations, he gives place to Nursi's defence in Divan-I Harbi Örfi in which Nursi puts forward his ideas on racism and wrongness of giving privilege to a nation over the other ethnicities and he states, "I am an irritable Kurdish student who newly joined the

civilization" (Nursi 1990, 40). Nevertheless, as Seyhanzade claims the words, "an irritable Kurdish student", were removed in other publications because they do not want to indicate Nursi's ethnic background (Seyhanzade 2003, 333). In another part, he states that the word "Kurdistan" was replaced with "Şark", which means "east" (Seyhanzade 2003, 30). Seyhanzade's book, Nurculuğun Tarihçesi, is full of those examples and makes critics of the mainstream Nur movements. The target of those critics is mainly Sözler publication, which is the publishing house of Yeni Asya group. Seyhanzade also states that the reason of founding Tenvir publishing house was to publish the Pamphlets in its original version and to prevent those repudiations (Seyhanzade 2003, 11). Nevertheless, while doing this, Seyhanzade avoids stating the differences between Said Nursi's life periods. Seyhanzade even avoids calling Said Nursi but he prefers to call him as Said Kurdi, which notably shows Nursi's ethnic background. It is important to state that Said Nursi did not avoid giving place to his ethnic background during the years that he was in Istanbul and he started to involve in the politics. He aimed to advance the Kurdish society that is why it was not possible for him to stand against the politics and politicians. In spite of this fact, he also gave harsh criticism to the government of the time.

According to Med-Zehra group, the mainstream Nur movement is misdirecting their students and giving false information about Nursi's ideas. As an example to this, they give place to Said Nursi's approach to democracy. Seyhanzade claims that Nursi never mentioned the word democracy in his Pamphlets of Light but his followers favored democracy as sine quo non (Seyhanzade 2003, 277). "According to Seyhanzade, anyone who accepts democracy as a governing system should be considered as a non-believer. This is because democracy was created as a reaction to Quran, Islamic law and vahy" (Atacan, 2011: 120). Moreover, Med-Zehra group favors an Islamic federation, which can also be considered an autonomous state as Nursi favored in his Old Said era. For this group each ethnic group must have the right of founding its own state yet they all must generate an Islamic federation. Then it would end up with a "United Islamic State" (Şentürk 2011, 271). "This approach would ultimately lead to some changes in the existing borders of Turkey by

establishing a Kurdish Islamic Republic" (Atacan, 2011, 125). Moving from this point, Seyhanzade points out that "Kurdistan will exist…No one can reject the realities of life. The existence of Kurdistan in the future is a reality" (Seyhanzade 2008, 62). In order to realize this ideal, for Med-Zehra group, Muslims should not remain just praying five times in the day but they have to run after their ideals of revival of Islam. In here, the group prefers much more activist way to reach their goal of founding an Islamic state. Furthermore, the group puts forward the idea of Islamic state that is covered with Islamism and Kurdish ethnicity. The emphasis on the Kurdish ethnicity has always come into front in Med-Zehra's ideas. At this sense, it appears as a Kurdish Islamist movement.

Making reference to Nursi's project of Medrestü'l Zehra, Med-Zehra group has the idea that Nursi supported an Islamic unity, which is İttihad-ı Islam, in which all the ethnicities or nations must have the right to use their own language and live peacefully with their own cultural constituents. Because of being a determinant character of a nation, language cannot be undermined or banned. Each nation maintain its existence with its own language and that is why Said Nursi wanted to found Medresetü'l Zehra university where Arabic was supposed to be used as obligatory (vacip), Kurdish as permissible (caiz) and Turkish as necessary (lazım) (Atacan 2011, 127). Nursi also states his aim about the university project. "We want to found a university called Medrestü'l Zehra, a sister to Al-Azhar in Bitlis, which is thought to be the center of the Kurdistan, with its two companion in Van and Diyarbekir…In this madrasa, science and religion will be taught together and Arabic will be obligatory, Kurdish permissible and Turkish necessary" (Seyhanzade 2003, 122). It can be said that Nursi's aim to found this university was to give place both reason and revelation together and he would carry out his dream much earlier. As it is stated before, Nursi interpreted the Quran in his Pamphlets with scientific explanations by giving much more examples from biological phenomenons. What Nursi had done was to prove that Islam does not conflict with science since there are so many scientific explanations in the Quran.

The use of the Kurdish in a university was an important demand and it is almost demanded by all the Kurdish Islamists. The emphasis on the Kurds and their language by Med-Zehra was because of the historical situation of the Kurds in Turkish Republic. The Kurds living in Turkey faced with many harsh policies including assimilation and prohibition of their language. As it is stated before, this has been a policy of the Kemalist regime and it created a problem lasted eighty years. Therefore it should not be considered strange that Med-Zehra group, a Kurdish Islamist movement, comes into front with such ideas. In this sense, Med-Zehra's ideas have nationalistic characters in one way another although they criticize Turkish nationalists or the mainstream Nur movement as being nationalist. Nevertheless, they again put forward a reasonable explanation to their nationalistic stance (although they reject this stance) by giving references to Said Nursi (Seyhanzade 2008, 59). Med-Zehra states that Nursi was pro of positive nationalism which is the acceptance of all ethnic groups as created equal and the acceptance of them with their cultural constituents. In contrast, Nursi was against negative nationalism which is the denying of other ethnicities and nations and acceptance of superiority of a nation on the others (Seyhanzade 2003, 321). Additionally the group has the idea that Nursi, himself, made critics of Turkish nationalists for being racist and harming Islamic unity (Atacan 2011, 127). Besides, Seyhanzade gives place to a letter of Nursi written in one of his Pamphlets called Emirdağ Lahikasi in which Nursi is complaining about some Turkish nationalists and says "…I am saying this to those who make Turkism as a curtain for themselves; they are viciously and remorselessly attacking me and saying that "Said is a Kurd. Running after him does not suit to zeal of our nation."…But it is clear to all that I served to the children of this nation in their own language…" (Seyhanzade 2008, 290).

In addition to all of those arguments, it is necessary to note that the strong emphasis on Kurdish identity rather than grasping all other ethnicities caused the critique of Med-Zehra by other religious groups and the Nur students. Together with this argument, Med-Zehra group is also seen as a reactionist group to the mainstream movements since their understanding of Islam and the state are totally different from

the Turkish Islamists and the other Nur movements. Referring to Said Nursi, their interpretation of the Pamphlets of Light takes a different shape and appears to have more radical views. "Med-Zehra group, which can be described as the most radical interpretation of Said Nursi and the Nur movement, intensifies its relation with other radical Islamist groups rather than the Nur environment" (Çakır 1990, 132).

Said Nursi's ethnic and political background is the most important point for the Med-Zehra and its leader, Seyhanzade Sıddık Dursun. In addition, the conditions of the Kurds and the Kurdish problem lets the group make more emphasis on the Kurdish ethnicity and their past. Blaming the Turkish nationalists as racists and the reason for the Kurdish problem is another point that they underline. Moreover they have a stance that opposes democracy and secular state order which is also a radical interpretation of Islamism. The opposition to the state and its policies differentiate them from the mainstream Nur movements since the other Nur movements mostly engaged with the state and they have escaped to have problem with the state. While the mainstream Nur movement tried to use the state apparatus, Med-Zehra group preferred remaining out of it since it became a tool of assimilation of the Kurds. They favored the application of Sharia law in all parts of the society and they believe that purely and simply an Islamic state can serve Muslims who are united under an Islamic federation. Besides, under the flag of this Islamic federation, it is possible to achieve Islamic unity which means that all nations will have right to the cultural and administrative autonomy. As it is stated above, Med-Zehra group does not see democracy as a proper system for Muslims, even curses it because of being western ideology, while the mainstream Nur movements, such as Gülen movement and Yeni Asya group, accept and encourage democratic ways as legitimate. In this sense, it can be said that Med-Zehra group occurred as a Kurdish Islamist Nur movement that predicates its ideas to the Kurdish problem and nationalism.

The fractions in Nur movement have notably continued after the death of Said Nursi and those fractions have also occurred in each group because of the difference of opinions. As an example to this, Zehra Education and Culture Foundation appears as a fragmented group from Med-Zehra group. The more nationalist interpretation of

Said Nursi's life and his Pamphlets comes from this group with the leadership of İzzettin Yıldırım who had founded Med-Zehra group with Seyhanzade Sıddık Dursun. There appeared a difference of opinion between Seyhanzade and İzzettin Yıldırım in terms of the stance of the group that Yıldırım criticized to be more Islamist (Yavuz 2006, 85). In 1992, Yıldırım left the Med-Zehra group, founded Zehra Foundation and started to publish a new journal called *Nubihar* in Kurdish. Beside *Yeni Zemin* was another journal published by this foundation in which there were writers from different perspectives (Tan 2010, 459). Zehra foundation tried to display Nursi as a Kurdish nationalist by referring his struggle with the Kemalist state. Furthermore, the journal indicated that Nursi was a Kurdish activist struggling for the Kurds and their rights; therefore, it is not possible to evaluate Nursi only with his contribution to Islam (Yavuz 2006, 85). In addition to this, Nubihar journal arranged a Kurdish conference in 1993 in which the Kurdish question was discussed by intellectuals from different political groups and this one was one of the most comprehensive and broadest conferences. Moving from those inclinations of the Zehra Foundation,it can be said that they took a more nationalist position than Med-Zehra group by dwelling on Islamist discourse and Said Nursi's life. The leader of Zehra Foundation, İzzettin Yıldırım, was kidnapped by Hezbollah members in 2000 and found death a few months later (Tan 2010, 459).

CHAPTER 4

A RADICAL ISLAMIST MOVEMENT: THE KURDISH HEZBOLLAH

4.1. The Kurdish Movements after 1960s

During the first party government, there appeared many undemocratic policies in Turkey. Especially in 1930s, emphasize on nationalism with Turkification process and on laicism with westernization process was dominant policies of the Kemalist government so that the Turks really had been made millet-i hakime (the ruling nation) and the imprisonment of religion to conscience of people was obtrusively tried to be realized as the social engineers of the Kemalist state thought of and planned (Yeğen 2007). What this situation created was the silencing of the Islamist and nationalist movements as well as the suppression of other ethnic groups until the period of multi-party system. It can be said that during those years of the one party rule, the Kurdish nationalists and Islamists went underground because of the oppressions of the government. Nevertheless some of the nationalist continued to promulgate their ideas from different countries such as Syria, Egypt, Iraq and Iran. The journal, *Hawar*, was one of them published by Kurdish nationalists in Syria between 1923 and 1943 (Van Bruinessen 1992, 18). In contrast to this, it is not possible to say the same statements for Islamist discourse. Most of the Islamists, especially those who were against the secular state policies preferred to remain silent during this period. Yet some of them were integrated to the state policies or were on duty in the name of the government in Directorate of Religious Affairs (Özoğlu 2005, 147).

With transition to the multi-party system, Turkish democratic history took another turn and Democrat Party broke the dominance of Republican People's Party by winning election in 1950. Nevertheless the existence of DP's government did not last much more than ten years and the government of DP was toppled down by a military coup in 1960. The coup brought immediately a committee called the Committee of National Unity under the presidency of Cemal Gürsel, which was to govern the country. In 1961 the third constitution of Turkish republic was accepted

with 61 percent of aye votes (Zürcher 1992, 357). Compared to the constitution of 1924 and the Kemalist regime, it can be said that the constitution of 1961 had created slightly more liberal and democratic atmosphere in Turkish political history. In parallel with this liberal atmosphere, the Kurdish nationalists and Islamists alongside of the Kurdish movements and organizations began to surface in the political arena. This period was important in terms of the rise of the communist movements as well. As a leftist party, TİP (Turkey Workers' Party) was one of the outcomes of this era and it became a base for the Turkish Communist Party. The importance of TİP also comes into front because of including Kurdish nationalist members such as Kemal Burkay and Mehdi Zana (Özer 2009, 568; Şimşir 2009, 549). At this point, it can be said that the Kurdish nationalist movement was reborn among the Turkish leftists. Especially, the years between 1975 and 1979 were the years when the Kurdish nationalist movement started to put forward and dwell on the Kurdish problem in the southeast. Additionally, they raised questions against the state and the feudal system of the Kurdish region (Van Bruinessen 1992, 59). Furthermore, the Islamist discourse among the Kurds was rarely seen in this in this period because the mainstream Turkish Islamist movements were undermining the Kurds' problems and using the discourse of Turkish-Islamic synthesis. This situation let the most of the Kurdish nationalist to be included in leftist organizations and movements (Çiçek 2008). In addition to this, the Kurdish nationalist movement became more radical and interestingly made references to the autochthonic Kurdish history and Zoroastrianism, which was pre-Islamic religion of the Kurds. Islam was seen the reason of the backwardness of the Kurdish society. It can be pointed out that the Kurdish nationalism fell into line with Turkish ethnic nationalism which accepted Shamanism as the proper religion of the Turks and saw Islam as the reason of backwardness. In order to show this similarity, some important figures can be given as examples. Nihal Atsız, a Turkist poet and ideologue, dignifies Turkishness and the history of the Turks before Islam. Islam, for him, was the reason of the corruption and backwardness of the Turks (Uzer 2002). On the other hand, Mehdi Zana, a Kurdish nationalist and the husband of the current Kurdish deputy Leyla Zana, shares the same idea for the Kurds by declaring Islam as the reason of the backwardness and

by accepting Zoroastrianism as the proper and original religion of the Kurds. According to him, the Kurds were obliged to accept Islam via the sword (Yıldız 2011). Cigerxwin was another example of these Kurdish ethnic nationalist who strictly rejected the Islamic background of the Kurds (Yıldız 2011). The journal of *Hawar* was also following the same ethnic nationalist line, but because of having negative reactions, the journal had to change its publication policy and started to give place to verses from the Quran and hadith of the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) in the beginning of each volume (Van Bruinessen 1992, 18).

The nationalist discourse of the Kurds covered with Marxism reaches its top with the foundation of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) in 1978. The organization had brought up from the grassroots of the TİP and Abdullah Öcalan was the leader of DDKO (Revolutionist Cultural Lodges of the East) in 1971 before founding the PKK (Şimşir 2009, 549). The strong emphasis on Marxism, the secularist views and anti-religious stance of the PKK did not found the support among the Kurds and became an obstacle for the organization since being Marxist and secularist was the same as being atheist or heretic for the Kurds most of whom were pious people (Van Bruinessen 1999). Abdullah Öcalan, himself, accepts that the Marxist stance and discourse of the PKK let the most of the Kurds to stand aloof the PKK (Çiçek 2008). At first Öcalan aimed to move together with the Marxist Turks in order to realize revolution but because of the Kurdish problem, he put forward his aim as to found an independent Kurdish state based on Marxist principles (Özer 2009, 625). So as to reach this aim, the armed struggle was legitimate and the PKK started armed struggle in 1984 around six years after its foundation. It is necessary to state that the oppressions and tortures done by the military coup of 1980 helped the participations to the PKK and the improvement of the PKK's armed struggle (Cemal 2010).

The Islam and Islamist discourse have always been a changing parameter in the Kurdish nationalist policy. This can also be observed in the PKK's discourse. The PKK's stance toward Islam and religion in general was negative at first but it changed toward the end of the 1980s depending on the conjectures and the comprehension of the pious Kurds. The Kurds in Kurdistan have always been pious

people and the PKK seems to neglect this side of the Kurds. As Öcalan underlined, the PKK and its leader cadre did not comprehend the religiosity and piousness of the Kurds and the power of Nakşibendi order in the region while constructing the ideology of the PKK. (Çiçek 2008). Besides, Öcalan criticized the leftists and Marxists politicians for being strange to the realities of the Kurdish society since he thinks that the leftists and Marxists in Turkey ignored the comprehension of the religion among the Kurdish people (Kırmızı and Bölme 2007). Depending on this, Öcalan commanded to found a religious organization called the Union of Kurdistan Pious People in 1990 which would carry out Öcalan's commitments dwelling on Kurdish identity (Siverekli 2008, 130; Van Bruinessen 1999). This was, in a sense, an action to expand and direct the PKK's grassroots by using Islamist discourse and Islam. In addition to this, the PKK declared its supports for the PİK (Kurdistan Islamic Party) which was founded in 1980 in Syria and was not active until 1990s. "The first aim of the PİK was to struggle with despotic regimes in Kurdistan. Secondly it aimed to Islamize the society starting with Kurdistan by using the method of *tebliğ*(religious notification)" (Bulut 2010, 356). Accordingly, the ultimate aim of the PİK was underlined as to found a Kurdish state under the federation of an Islamic state where the Kurdish would be official language alongside of Arabic because Arabic is the language of the worship (Van Bruinessen 1992a, 45; Siverekli 2008, 137-138). The PİK published a journal called *Judi* which included much more nationalist constituents rather than Islamic issues."It was a Kurdish nationalist movement as much as an Islamic movement. The journal of the movement, *Judi*(Cudi) gave place to much more nationalistic constituents rather than Islamic entries" (Van Bruinessen, 1992: 45) The example of the PİK is important in order to display the use of nationalist discourse among the Kurdish Islamists. It is also a significant example of the Kurdish Islamic-Synthesis which was tried to be constituted at the end of 1980s when the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, which is idealized and put forward by Intelligentsia Lodge, was in fashion (Çetinsaya 1999, 371). The Kurdish movements and organizations that are mentioned above can also be discussed as reactions to the Turkish-Islamic synthesis that aimed to put Islam and Turkishness together. However, at the end, Turkish-Islamic synthesis became"a

nationalist discourse and a periodical means for the Nationalist People Party (MHP)" (Bora and Can 1991, 163). The same statement can be put forward for the Kurdish-Islamic synthesis as well because it also appears to be a nationalist periodical means.

These efforts have also been carried out by the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) in order to show that the Kurdish nationalists are in peace with Islam and Islamic values even though the party includes in Marxist and secularist members and deputies. As the co-president of the DTK (Congress of Democratic Society), the deputy Aysel Tuğluk underlined that the PKK was the assurance of secularism and has been an obstacle for the rise of the radical Islamist groups in the southeast (Özcan 2013). This discourse is important in order to show the dilemma in the Kurdish nationalist party, the BDP. It can be said that the effect of the victory of Islamist parties such as the WP and the JDP, in the Kurdish region have let them use the Islamist discourse. Nevertheless there were some deputies who had some questions about this discourse because of their Marxist background. Furthermore, the pro- PKK nationalists were ready to make cooperation with the state against the rising power of Islamist parties. The political success of the Islamist parties in the region cannot be overestimated and seems to affect the policy of the Kurdish nationalists which later has turned to be more moderate to Islam and Islamic discourse. Accordingly, the BDP and the DTK (Congress of Democratic Society) organized civil Friday prayers and preaching in Kurdish in the region before the election of 2011 in order to get support and take attention of the Kurds (Sarıkaya 2011). The party also nominated, Altan Tan, an old member of Islamist Welfare Party, a conservative and pious candidate from Diyarbakır for the election of 2011. Furthermore, the imams appointed by the Directorate of Religious Affairs were claimed to be the means of assimilation by the BDP and the DTK. Selahattin Demirtaş even criticized the imams as the agents of the states and encouraged the Kurds not to pray behind those imams (Söylemez 2011). The PKK and its party organization, the BDP, are still being thought as the offspring of heretic and un-Islamic movements and this situation let the most of the Kurds approach them doubtfully (Kırmızı and Bölme 2007).

4.2. The Rise of Radical Islamism among the Kurds: The case of Hezbollah

The circumstances that were created by the constitution of the 1961 were not restricted to the nationalist or communist movements. The relative liberal atmosphere had also allowed to the rise of publishing depending on translations of classics of western orientalists alongside of the Islamist ideologues from Pakistan and Egypt (Çakır 2001, 43). The translations of the books such as *Signposts on the Road*and *Towards an Islamic Society*of Seyyid Kutub and the books of Mevdudi, the founder of the Cemat-i Islami, had played an important role in the development of radical Islamism in Turkey. "The translation of those sources let the youth think that Islam is not only a religion but it is also an order of life" (Çakır 2001, 42). Additionally those translations let the new Islamist youth accept that the regime that is not ruling the state with the rule of God is satanic and that state is Darul-harb[6] (House of War) in which Friday praying cannot be performed. Turkey, for those Islamists, was Darul-harb as well because of its secular structure (Çakır 2001, 43).

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 was the turn point for the Islamist ideology all around the world as well as Turkey. The Islamic revolution of Iran was both pragmatically and theoretically depended on the Islamist ideology which is to regulate Darul-Islam (House of Islam) and to Islamize Darul-harb by the way of jihad. Having been accepted as an Islamic revolution, the pioneers of the revolution aimed to promulgate the revolution to other Islamic states and started to do religious propaganda. The most important point of the Iranian revolution was that the revolution was not restricted to the Iranian territories yet as a foreign policy, they applied the policy of the exportation of the Islamic revolution. As one of the leaders of the revolution, Ali Muntazari underlines, "The feature of Iranian revolution is of the reality that it cannot be restricted to any geographical border. In reality, our revolution is not an Iranian revolution but it is the revolution of Islam" (Dağı 1998,

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[6]Darulharb is a term used in Fiqh, Islamic jurisprudence, means that the states or places where the rulers are despotic or heretic. In contrast, Darul-Islam means the state or the place where the rule of Islam is dominant. http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dar%C3%BClharp.

61). The ultimate goal of the Islamic Republic of Iran was to export the revolution and to propagate Islamist ideology all over the world. It is possible to note that this policy of Iran has been effective on some groups including Hezbollah movement in Turkey. The atmosphere that the Iranian Revolution created had been seen more clearly in the south east of Turkey because the revolution enhanced the visits of the people to Iran. Because of the Iran-Turkey's border it had been easier to go and visit Iran for the Islamists from the south east of Turkey. For this reason, the Iranian Revolution had been more effective in the south east of Turkey, especially on Hezbollah, compared to other regions (Büyükkara 2006, 147).

As a radical Islamist movement, Kurdish Hezbollah was founded in the southeast of Turkey in early 1980s by some of the radical Kurds such as Hüseyin Velioğlu, Fidan Güngör, Ubeydullah Dalar, Molla Mansur Güzelsoy and so on. At first Hezbollah declared itself as a religious community (cemaat) as it can be understood from its name, Hezbollah, which means The Party of God. In its manifestation, Hezbollah declares that there is no rule beyond the God's authority so that Islam is the only source for the ruling process of Muslim communities. That is why Hezbollah would use the method of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) as the moving point for realizing Islamic ideals. In addition to these, there are not any humane ideologies, which could respond human beings' social, economic and societal needs except for Islam. That is why the ultimate goal of the movement is to provide the sovereignty of Islam in all parts of life. (Hizbullah Cemaatinin Manifestosu 2013)

The Iranian revolution was one of the strongest inspiration points for those people in order to found an Islamist organization. In addition to these, the radical and reactionary Islamist such as Seyyid Qutup and Hasan El Benna had been effective on the Kurdish Hezbollah (Yavuz 2009, 216; Demirel 2003, 34). Even though the Iranian Revolution affected the understanding of these people, especially Velioğlu was keeping him apart from this understanding because of the denominational difference. Velioğlu had been brought up in the MTTB cadres and he was a Sunni Muslim following the steps of Muslim Brothers in Egypt (Çakır 2001, 70; Demirel 2005, 59). Nevertheless, Fidan Güngör and the others were closer to Iran even

though they were Sunni Muslim as well. In spite of this, the approach of Hüseyin Velioğlu to Iran would change incoming years and some of the members of the İlim group would visit to Iran and get the core elements of the Iranian Revolution (Çakır 2001, 73). Those mentioned names were gathering around a publishing house in Diyarbakır and Batman called İlim-Menzil (Bulut 2010, 358). After that, the order of the organization spread to Şırnak, Hakkari, Bitlis and Şanlıurfa. The gatherings in those publishing houses were the first steps of the foundation of Kurdish Hezbollah. However, those gatherings were done latently until 1987. The discussions in those publishing houses were about to found an Islamic state in Kurdistan derived from Iranian revolution (Siverekli 2008, 143). There were put three steps that were to be followed for the realization of this aim. The first step was *tebliğ* (religious notification); the second one was to construct a community (cemaat) and the third one was *jihad*. "In order to reach the first aim, the group emphasizes on the face to face verbal contact, gives importance to discussion rather than reading and makes emphasize on politicizing the religious consciousness of the Kurds" (Yavuz 2009, 216). Those were to be performed step by step. According to these ideals, there appears a group that leans its fundamentals on the religious awareness of the Kurds. At this point, the target of the Hezbollah movement is the Kurds who have historically been known as the most pious people living in Turkey. Accordingly, Hezbollah and the PKK emerged and strengthened on the same grassroots, but the PKK took the Marxist ideology and Hezbollah used Islamist ideology. Both of the organization saw gun violence as the means of political struggle (Çakır 2012). When it is looked at the Hezbollah movement's pervasion among the Kurds, it can be clearly seen how it is felicitous to choose the Kurds as the main target. The use of ethnicity and nationalist discourse by Hezbollah movement is not as strong as the one that the PKK used. Nevertheless, Hezbollah used the nationalist discourse as a motivating force in order to get support for its ultimate aim. In this sense, the words such as the Kurd and Kurdistan were highly used in the organization's journal and songs (Çakır 2001, 216; Demirel 2003, 60).

Even though Hezbollah stated that the method of *tebliğ* and invitation (davet) would be used in order to spread all over Turkey in its manifestation (Hizbullah Cemaatinin Manifestosu 2013), Hüseyin Velioğlu, who moved to Diyarbakır in 1980 and gathered important meetings there for nearly seven years, had the idea that the *tebliğ* method is not sufficient to reach the ideal of Islamic Kurdistan. Moving from that point Velioğlu suggested that the armed struggle for the foundation of the Kurdish Islamic state had to be started. "Kalashnikov and Quran were two important weapons to open the way for the foundation of a Kurdish Islamic State" (Çiçek 2008). In order to reach this aim, Velioğlu states, "Either every groups and organizations will join us or they will get out of our way. Otherwise we took oath to destroy all of them" (Çakır 2001, 65). At this point, there appeared fragmentations in Hezbollah movement and Velioğlu founded İlim group in 1987. The reason of this fragmentation in Hezbollah was mainly that the important names in the movement such as Fidan Güngör, Ubeydullah Dalar and Mansur Güzelsoy did not accept the armed struggle because they were of the idea that the circumstances for the armed struggle were not adequate and the only way to reach the goal of founding an Islamist state was to use *tebliğ* method until the circumstances for the armed struggle would occur. Depending on this fact, those names caused the first fragmentation in Kurdish Hezbollah by founding Hezbollah Menzil[7] group (Siverekli 2008, 145). Actually Menzil group were founded before this event in 1981 yet there was not any fragmentation or difference of views between the two mentioned groups. In contrast to this, Hüseyin Velioğlu tried to take all the oppositions out of the way in order to become the only opposition to the state in the Kurdish region (Çakır 2001, 65).

In addition to the armed operations to its own splits, the Kurdish Hezbollah found another target in the east and southeast of Turkey in order to reach its aim. Alongside of Menzil wing, the PKK became another target of the Hezbollah. It can be said that there appeared a war of power between the PKK and Hezbollah in the southeast of Turkey. Hezbollah launched the PKK as a Marxist and anti-religion

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[7]It is necessary to state that Hezbollah Menzil wing should not be confused with Adıyaman Menzil Cemaati which is totally different from Hezbollah movement.

organization (Menek 2011, 215). It can be noted that this was a useful propaganda against the PKK since Hezbollah tried to get support by using Islamist discourse which they thought to be effective among the pious Kurds. The clash between the PKK and Hezbollah started in 1991 when the PKK killed the parents of a member of Hezbollah, Şerif Karaaslan (Çakır 2001, 67). From an another point of view, the murder of Karaaslan was not the beginning of the clash between the PKK and Hezbollah, but with this murder the clash that had already been started, just surfaced and became publicly known (Demirel 2005, 40). Having oppressed most of the Kurdish organization, the PKK tried to take Hezbollah under the control and give message to them that the only dominant group in Kurdistan was the PKK itself. In contrast to this, Hezbollah was upset because of the PKK's attributions and messages to the pious people by founding and organizing some religious conferences and movements (Kırmızı and Bölme 2007). The reason of the clash was so evident that it was because of the power control in the region. Another important reason for this clash was that the PKK named Hezbollah as "Hizb-ül Kontra" and declared that Hezbollah was the state agent founded against the Kurds. In contrast to this, Hezbollah nicknamed the PKK as 'Partiya Kafirun Kurdistan' means that the Party of Heretics of Kurdistan. By this way, both of the organizations were trying to humiliate each other in the eyes of the Kurds in order to give message to their grassroots and legitimize themselves. The claim that the Hezbollah was supported and brought up by the state against the PKK has remained unclear so far (Bulut 2010, 359). Even if this is still a point of discussion, it can be said that Hezbollah was tolerated by the state because of its struggle with the PKK, which was a more dangerous organization than Hezbollah(Kırmızı and Bölme 2007). Nevertheless, the attacks of the PKK against the Hezbollah did not remain unreciprocated and Hezbollah responded this attack by killing an important PKK member in İdil in the same year, in 1991. The killings did not remain with those numbers and until the end of the year, 13 people from the both side were killed. In 1993, the clash reached its highest level and lasted until 1995 (Çakır 2001, 69-70). Although the total number of deaths from the clash is not known, as Çakır states 500 Hezbollah militias and 200 PKK members were killed between 1991 and 1995 (Çakır 2001, 70). It can be

understood from the operations of the state against Hezbollah in the later years that the state was not aware of the rising power of Hezbollah in the region.

Even though the clash between the two groups lasted until 1995, there appeared some attempts to declare ceasefire. In order to reach a conclusion in this clash, the PKK started to make some announcements that underlined the importance of the peace among the Kurdish armed groups. Depending on this on 30th March 1993, the PKK distributed leaflets that issued a call for peace. As a result, it was claimed that with the mediatory positions of Sheikh Osman of the Kurdistan Islamic Movement and Ethem Barzani of Hezbollah in North Irak, the conflict between the PKK and Hezbollah reached to a conclusion (Demirel 2005, 71). However, the conflict between the PKK and Hezbollah has lasted until these days even though it was not as high as in the 1990s.

Nevertheless, the drastic actions of Hezbollah did not end in the region after establishing peace. Having reached a conclusion with the PKK for the time being, Hezbollah started to target other Islamist groups in the Kurdish region, which did not obey Hezbollah. Velioğlu had the idea of the being ultimate power in the region by eliminating other Islamist groups.In order to be alone in his struggle against the state and heretic structures, Velioğlu firstly rectified Fidan Güngör, Ubeydullah Dalar and Mansur Güzelsoy. Therefore, Ubeydullah Dalar was kidnapped and killed by Hezbollah İlim wing in 1992 and Güngör faced with the same situation in 1994 (Demirel 2003, 64). Accordingly, he targeted Fidan Güngör, one of the founders of İlim-Menzil group and Velioğlu's old friend. As it is mentioned before, Fidan Güngör left the İlim group because of Velioğlu's thought that he wanted to start armed struggle in order to achieve his own aim. The conflict between the PKK and Hezbollah depended on this understanding as well. First Hezbollah would get rid of the PKK and would be the sole power in the region. Choosing the other Islamists groups as target was servicing the same aim (Büyükkara 2006, 147). Moving from that point, Fidan Güngör and Menzil group criticized Hezbollah because of its actions against the PKK since it was not servicing the aims of the Kurds (Çakır 2001, 75). Güngör also blamed Velioğlu as not being a religious scholar and leader. After

these critics, Velioğlu declared that Fidan Güngör was servicing the PKK. The accusations between the two groups went on within this direction (Demirel 2003, 65). Another difference that caused the conflict between İlim and Menzil was that Fidan Güngör and his group, Menzil had always been a pro-Iran group while Velioğlu was a pro of Muslim Brothers, and especially, Said Havva in Syria had become effective on Velioğlu's ideological background (Büyükkara 2006, 147). Within this direction, Menzil group dwells more on the principle of progressivity, which means that the process and progress of realizing Islamic ideals had to be followed whereas Velioğlu and İlim group did not care about this principle. In other words, Velioğlu started armed struggle directly, took the first step as jihad while Fidan Güngör rejected it and left the group (Çakır 2001, 75). Moreover, Velioğlu and Güngör were invited to Iran in order to find a solution to the conflict between Menzil and İlim groups, but Velioğlu did not accept it and the clash started with the murder of Ubeydullah Dalar in 1992 (Demirel 2003, 66). The conflict between İlim and Menzil went on in 24 December 1993 by İlim's targeting to Güngör's shop. Even though the first attempt to kill Fidan Güngör failed, later Güngör was invited to one of the İlim's cell houses in order to issue a call for peace between İlim and Hezbollah, but it was clearly a trick and Fidan Güngör was murdered in 1994 (Çakır 2001, 76). The other important name of Menzil group, Molla Mansur Güzelsoy escaped to Iran and died there, which let the Menzil group to disperse. At the end of the clash between Menzil and İlim group, 200 people of Menzil wing were killed by Hezbollah (Çakır 2001, 76). As a result, Hüseyin Velioğlu succeeded to get rid of another group that he saw as an obstacle for his organization.

The targets of Hezbollah did not remain limited to its own splits. As it is mentioned before, Hezbollah targeted too many Islamist and Kurdish movements, which the organization saw as a threat to its own ideal. İzzettin Yıldırım, one of the Kurdish followers of Said Nursi and the founder of Zehra Vakfı (foundation), became a target of Hezbollah as well. Zehra Vakfı was a split of Kurdish Nur movement, Med-Zehra that is mentioned above. Yıldırım was also a religious scholar who was giving voice to Kurdish problem and servicing to the Kurdish youngsters,

which appeared to upset Hezbollah. Because of these activities, İzzettin Yıldırım was kidnapped by Hezbollah militants on 29 December 1999 and he was found death with one of his friends in Kartal, Istanbul on 28 January 2000 (Çakır 2001, 83). This murder was a turning point for Hezbollah movement because reactions against Hezbollah from the Islamist circle reached its top with this murder. The action against the PKK could be seen understandable in a way because the PKK was declared as a Marxist heretic organization by Hezbollah and both of the organization tried to rectify each other, but these actions against Islamist groups were seen as meaningless and felonious by the Islamist groups and by the pious Kurds. It also caused eyebrows to rise against Hezbollah as well.

The operations by the state against Hezbollah movement increased in 1999 and 2000 because of the rising terrorist actions and power of the organization, which also becomes a threat for the state. Accordingly, Hüseyin Velioğlu was killed in an operation, known as Beykoz operation, on 17 January 2000 in Istanbul. Actually, this operation was the result of a series of operation applied to Hezbollah militants. After these operations, nearly six thousands of Hezbollah members were arrested with a huge amount of ammunition (Çakır 2001, 89-90). In addition to this, Hezbollah's secret archive was seized by the police officers. It was important in terms of holding information showing the organizations' agenda, the frame of the organization and the murders that the organization did. Hezbollah was really a latent structure. That is why just a little informartion was known about the organization, but the operations that were done against Hezbollah unveiled so many unknown things about the structure (Demirel 2003; Çakır 2001). Even though these operations inflicted a heavy blow on Hezbollah and weakened it, the actions of Hezbollah did not end. It can be said that the most vital and drastic action of Hezbollah was the assassination of Gaffar Okkan, the chief constable of Diyarbakır at the time. This was the biggest and one of the first of Hezbollah actions that targeted the state officials. Okkan was a strategic and important target because he led the most of the operations against Hezbollah. In order to give a message to the state and to its own grassroots, Hezbollah members planned to murder him on 17 January 2001, on the death

anniversary of Hüseyin Velioğlu, but this plan did not work and Okkan murdered on 24 January (Demirel 2003, 172). After this assassination, the state much more increased its operations against Hezbollah and captured the leader cadre of the organization, which in a way brought the end of the armed struggle of the organization.

As it is stated before, Hezbollah was the most radical of the Islamist movement emerged in the south east of Turkey. It can be said that the Islamist ideals that were led by the Iranian Revolution in 1979 found its reflection with Hezbollah in Turkey. Additionally, violence and terror were the most effective tools of Hezbollah alongside with the use of Islamist discourse for the battered Kurds. Even if there was not an ethnic nationalist policy of Hezbollah, most of the leaders and grassroots of the movement were the Kurds. In this sense, it can be stated that Hezbollah was a Kurdish Islamist movement emerged in the Kurdish region with the aim of founding an Islamist state ruled by Sharia law. In order to reach this aim, the movement first tried to get the control of the power in the region by rectifying other Islamist movements and by struggling with the PKK, which was launched as a Marxist-heretic organization by Hezbollah. After reaching the first aim in the Kurdish region, Hezbollah secondly would target the secular state and would Islamize the state by spreading the actions to all over the country. Accordingly, it would be a remedy for the battered Kurds and for all other ethnic groups living in Turkey. Hezbollah proposed an Islamist solution to the Kurdish problem as they thought to be oppressed and battered because of the humane ideologies. Moreover, Hezbollah goes further and states that in order to guarantee the human rights and Islamic rights of the Kurds, constitutional solution, autonomy, federation and even independency must be discussed in Turkey (Hizbullah Cemaatinin Manifestosu 2013). As columnist Lale Kemal states clearly, "Hezbollah is of the opinion that all the options, including autonomy, a federation and independence for the Kurdish people, that might safeguard the Islamic values and human rights of the Kurds, should be discussed" (Kemal 2012).

Nevertheless, the plan that was put forward by Hezbollah did not work. Even though the participation to the organization was high, the drastic and violent actions of the organization let the most of the Kurdish and Turkish Islamists to stand aloof to Hezbollah. At the beginning of the 21st century, the movement faced with serious operations and oppositions as well. As a result, Hezbollah dispersed and reemerged with a new political and religious organization form in 2003. From the dispersion of the organization, some other religious networks and civil societal organizations emerged in the south east of Turkey. This was a sign that shows Hezbollah did not completely disappear from the society, but it went on its way with different structures. Accordingly, the movements like Mustazaf-Der, Umut-Der and Toplum-Der were founded by the splits of Hezbollah. The most important one of those splits was Mustazaf-Der, which had a broad participation in the region and became a political party in 2013.

4.2.1. Mustazaf-Der and the New Islamist Stance of Hezbollah

After 2000s, Hezbollah changed its policy and reemerged as a civil societal organization. The leader cadre of the organization was arrested in the operations held in 2000 and 2001, but the remaining members of the organization left the armed struggle and made a new start for the future of Hezbollah. Accordingly, the organization founded some unions and foundations. The most important and the most known of these associations was Mustazaf-Der whose leader was the lawyer of Hezbollah's cases, Hüseyin Yılmaz. Mustazaf-Der was founded in 2003, and it took its name from the Iranian revolution. The term 'mustazaf' means 'battered', which was corresponded to battered Kurds and Islamists by the movement. In the charter of the Mustazaf-Der, it is stated that Mustazaf-Der will struggle for the rights of oppressed ones in the society in terms of restriction of human rightsincluding education and religion (Siverekli 2008, 159). For religion and education, Mustazaf-Der had the idea of having separated schools for the children as male and female, and demanded freedom for the headscarves at the schools. Mustazaf-Der believes that all human beings have natural and given rights which cannot be taken from them under any circumstances. Therefore, the movement will be siding with all oppressed

societies living in or beyond Turkey(Mustazaf-Der Tüzüğü 2013). The most important one of those oppressed ethnicities is the Kurds as the movement underlines. Depending on this, the spokesperson and the leader of Mustazaf-Der, Hüseyin Yılmaz states in an interview in Timetürk news portal on 14 November 2012, "A person has the right to express himself in any language that he wants. That is why Kurdish must be the second official language and the language of education." The armed struggle of Hezbollah movement caused some uneasiness in the Kurdish region and Mustazaf-Der tried to break it with its new structure as a civil societal organization giving much more importance to the Kurdish issue. At the same time, Mustazaf-Der did not leave aside its Islamic identity.

This new moderate impressions of Mustazaf-Der found its response among the Kurds and the movement strengthened in all over the south east of Turkey, reached to the even the smallest villages. Because of its previous members' ties, the organization was getting such a rising fame among the Kurds. In addition to these, Mustazaf-Der was using different ways of mass medium effectively, organizing big wedding ceremonies for its members and having meetings in all over the region for the purpose of thepropaganda (Aytac and Uslu, 2006). It can be said that the movement was so successful in organizing demonstrations in order to display the power of the organization. Depending on this, the Kurdish Hezbollah has been much more active among the Kurds with its organizations, charities and conferences and it has started to present Kurdish identity, which was thought to be a challenge to the PKK and its policies in the region (Uslu 2012). In 2006,one of the biggest of those demonstrations was held in Diyarbakır by the efforts of Mustazaf-der in order to protest and condemn a Danish caricaturist because of Prophet Muhammed's (pbuh) cartoons. It was stated that there were nearly 130.000 participants in the demonstration, which took the attractions of the mediaand people all over the country (Aytaç and Uslu 2006).In addition to this, Mustazaf-Der also organized meetings in the birth week of the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) as well as for the support of Palestine. In one of those demonstrations in 2010, there were 120.000 people in the Diyarbakır square. In contrast to this, Mustazaf-Der had faced with

some difficulties because of being active in accordance with the purpose of Hezbollah. Therefore, Mustazaf-Der was closed in 2010 by the local court of Diyarbakır and its closure was approved by the appellate court in 2012. After the decision of the court, the leading figures of Mustazaf-Der stated that the movement would continue its mission by being a political organization called as Mustazaflar Cemiyeti (The Community of Battereds). Depending on this, Hüseyin Yılmaz states, "We faced a big societal support in region [north Kurdistan]. Court verdict that closed our foundation accelerated us to go towards a political entity. We will take pulse of society in days ahead. We will make meeting with society to get comments and suggestions. We will decide and disclose name and identity of a political entity after those meetings which will be done soon" (Akgönül 2012). This could be considered as a step for the foundation of the political party and the movement would be an opposition to the JDP and the BDP in ensuing elections. Moreover, on May 2012, the movement had a meeting in one of the famous places of Istanbul in Kazlıçeşme where the ruling party, the JDP, and the BDP holds their meetings because of its large space. After Diyarbakır and Batman, Mustazaf-Der preferred Istanbul for the meeting in order to show its power. In those days, it was being claimed that Hezbollah was going to found a party, which was realized in ensuing months. By sharing their impressions from the meeting, Oğur and Yazıcı stated, "We are faced with a movement that demilitarizes itself and tries to reappear in the political arena with a new discourse" (Oğur and Yazıcı 2012). That is why Kazlıçeşme was chosen on purpose because it is seen to be a place of challenge by the politicians since the participation to the meetings there, in one way or another, gives the clues about the next elections (Fırat 2012).

On 30 December 2012, the leader of Mustazaflar Cemiyeti, Hüseyin Yılmaz applied to the Ministry of Interior and gave the foundation petition of the party. By this way, the party process of Hezbollah was completed and it got its position in the next local elections. The full name of the party was Hür Dava Partisi, namely the Free Cause Party. The abbreviated name of the Party, Hüda Par, was chosen on purpose because it reminds the name of Hezbollah because "Hüda" means God in

Kurdish, and then the name of the party means the Party of God as it was the case in Hezbollah (Coşkun 2012; Raufoglu 2013).

As it is stated in the chart of the Mustazaflar Cemiyeti, the new founded party is dwelling on the same political demands and targets. By emphasizing on Islamic values and the Kurdish identity, the party tries to get support both from the pious Kurds and from the secular-nationalist Kurds who vote for the BDP. Nevertheless, the activities of Hezbollah in previous years let the secular Kurds keep aloof to the new founded party. Accordingly, it can be said that the party's first aim is to get the votes of religious people in the region. In this sense, it was thought that the JDP would be most affected party from the foundation of the HüdaPar since the most of the religious electorates in the regions vote for the JDP and there is a rising anger against the JDP because of its statist policies (Akgönül 2012; Raufoglu 2013). In their own words, the party members indicated that HüdaPar was founded as an alternative to the Kemalism and Apoism. Moving from this point, it can be said that HüdaPar would be against the system that was created by the Kemalism. Besides, it would not let the pious Kurds be obliged to the PKK and the JDP (Raufoglu 2013).

As it is stated in the party program, the first aim of the party is "to rejuvenate Islamic and humanistic values, which have been degenerated consciously or unconsciously, and make those values livable among the society" (Hür Dava Partisi Programı 2013). Additionally, the party dwells on the Kurdish identity and gives much more importance to the Kurdish question. As related to the Kurdish problems, the constitutional recognition of the Kurds and the Kurdish language, education in mother tongue and the decentralization of the state power have taken place in the party program (Raufoglu 2013). As for liberty of religion, the party indicates that the state must lift the restrictions on religion and worship, the adultery must be penalized and religious marriages must be recognized. The party has also given place to the other issues in its program as well. In foreign policy, it puts forward the idea of lifting artificial boundaries between the Muslim Kurds and purpose to provide cultural, economic political and social cooperation with those states (Hür Dava Partisi Programı 2013).

When it is looked at the party program, it seems that the party has put forward the political ideas of its previous organization as a continuation. As it is mentioned before, the solution to the societal problems with an Islamist stance was taken place in the Mustazaflar community and Hezbollah as well. One of the founding members of the party, Said Şahin, confirms this by saying that the party's references are Prophet Muhammad and the Quran (Raufoglu 2013). At this point, there is an interesting difference in the discourse of the founders of the party related to their background. As the founding leader of the HüdaPar, Hüseyin Yılmaz dismisses their links to Hezbollah. He stated on the NTV news on 7 December 2012 that Hezbollah was an illegal organization, but now, the HüdaPar comes forward as a legal political movement and party. "The statements that our party has a link to Hezbollah are put forward on purpose. They want to restrict our party to a confined space. It also was the projected and fabricated reason for the closure of Mustazaf-Der. However, the main reason is the panic that Mustazaf-Der has created by getting support from the people and by expanding in the region." However, these statements do not mean that the party leaders denied their backgrounds. In a way, it seems that the party members want to take precautions for the closure of the party because those claims that the party has a link to Hezbollah, which is accepted as a terrorist organization by the state, might lead opening of a new case for the closure of the party. In addition to Yılmaz statements, Said Şahin also denied the claims about the link between Hezbollah and the HüdaPar and stated that the party leaders and founders have certain background, but this is nothing to do with the party's political struggle for serving people living in Turkey without looking at their religious affiliations (Raufoglu 2013).

With these political perspectives, HüdaPar entered the local elections of 30 March 2014. Only 14 months after its foundation, the party had taken place in the election and the result of the election for the party was not successful compared to the general rate of Turkey. The rate of votes in general for HüdaPar was 0.2 percent, which nearly corresponded to 90.000 electorates, but the party's votes in the southeast of Turkey varied between 4-8 percent, which is a high and indicative rate.

In spite of this fact, the election result in the southeast is an indicator that the party has the electorate potential in the region (Çifçi 2014). In addition to this, the party ranked among the top three in provinces like Diyarbakır and Batman and became the fourth in Muş and Bingöl, which is an issue that needs to be underlined. This is a significant point both for HüdaPar and for the region as well, because HüdaPar might be the third voice rising among some of the Kurds who do not see the PKK as their representatives. By dwelling on this point, the spokespersons make the same statements, as they do not want to see "the PKK to play for patronage of all the Kurds" (Bila 2013). Accordingly, in the process of the peace talks between the PKK and the government, HüdaPar complains about the situation, which sees the PKK and the BDP as the only representatives and defenders of the rights of Kurds. The founding leader of the party, Hüseyin Yılmaz states, "We also want violence to end. But the government is wrong in conditioning the rights of all Kurds on the PKK laying down arms. I am a Kurd, but I have nothing to do with the PKK. Why do my rights depend on the PKK?" (Bila 2013).

The ideas that were put forward by HüdaPar did not find any response in the minds of electorates in all over Turkey except for the southeast. Nevertheless, in the local election of 2014, the party showed that it has a potential among the Kurds in the southeast, who have been obliged to vote for the BDP and the JDP because of not having any other alternatives. However, it can be understood from the discourse of the party that it aims to get the votes of the pious Kurds who advocates the recognition of the Kurdish identity and their rights as much as the BDP (now the HDP (People's Democratic Party)). Accordingly, HüdaPar puts forward an Islamist solution to the Kurdish problem in Turkey. In this sense, the party acts from the point of indivisible unity of Islam and Kurdishness and advocates this unity in all platforms. While doing this, the party criticizes the JDP and the mainstream Islamists because of ignoring the Kurdishness of the people in the southeast and also it makes critique of the BDP because of not giving importance to the religion of the Kurds, namely to Islam. By highlighting the Kurds' rights and the Kurdish identity, the party puts forward a nationalist discourse even if it is not as strong as the BDP-PKK line.

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In contrast to this, it can be said that the Islamist discourse of the party is much stronger than the JDP's discourse. These acts and discourses of the party make it clear that HüdaPar came into the front as a Kurdish Islamist party, which stemmed from the roots of Hezbollah. It can also be said that by being an NGO and then a party, Hezbollah gave up arms and applied to legitimate ways of political struggle, which has not been done by the PKK for years. It is, with no doubt, an important alteration and development for the Kurds in the region who had suffered both from Hezbollah drastic activities and from its clashes with other groups. It can also be seen as a significant step that will help the region to obtain a pluralist democratic structure in contrast to monopolistic structure of the BDP-PKK line.

CONCLUSION

From the beginning of the 19th century until now, Islamism has been one of the dominant political ideologies in Turkish political history. Islamist movements and networks have been effective both in the political and societal levels of the country. Additionally Islamism in Turkey has taken an exceptional character which is different from those of radical Islamist movements in other parts of the world. The most important point of this exceptional character is the moderate view of Turkish Islamists toward the state and order (Mardin 2005). It can be said that those mainstream Islamists in Turkey have developed a way that allows them to engage with the state with a moderate position. At first, while it was on the rise, the fundamental aim of Islamism was the revival of Islam and the reawakening of Muslims who had regressed with the dominance of western countries. In this sense, political Islam appears as a reactionary ideology which tries to cope with western ideologies and Muslims backwardness together. In order to succeed, it was necessary to turn back the era of Asr-ı Saadet, the life of Prophet Mohammed and his friends, and to make reforms by applying the Sharia to all parts of life (Kara 2011, Türköne 1992).

It can be said that the fundamentals of Islamism were set in the mid-19th century with the contributions of important intellectuals (Young Ottomans and Young Turks afterwards) such as Ali Suavi and Namık Kemal by using the Islamist discourse in the political area. Most of those Young Ottoman members were intellectuals and journalists who had been abroad. They were the initiators of the social engineering in the Ottoman Empire since they aimed to change society in terms of politics, economics and education (Yılmaz 2011). While doing this, they used Islamic discourses and tried to reawake Muslims living within the ottoman borders. In addition, these thinkers tried to reconcile modern terms such as equality, liberty and democracy with Islam. (Türköne 1992) That is why Young Ottomans used 'icma' as social contract, 'biat' as sovereignty of the people, 'meşveret' as democracy and 'musavat' as democracy (Black 2001, 407). Additionally, the effect of Cemaleddin Afghani cannot be undermined in the rise of political Islam. As a

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reformist and activist thinker,Afghani is accepted as a pioneer of Islamist movements because he called for the unity of Islam and the reformation of Islamic states. Moving from this point,it can be stated that Islamism, as a political ideology, crystalised in the beginning of the 20th century with the contribution of journals such as Sırat-ı Mustakim, Sebilürreşad and Volkan most of which followed the footprints of Cemalleddin Afghani (Şentürk 2008, 18; Kara 2011).

It is necessary to state that the ideas mentioned above were the product of the ideas of mainstream Islamists who were mostly Turks. Being the dominant nation in Turkey, Turkish Islamists developed in a moderate way and the activist policy of the Nakşibendi order played a crucial role: since Sheikh Mevlana Halid, the Nakşibendis were mostly involved in political and social life. Mevlana Halid, followed by Ziyaedddin Gümüşhanevi, known as the prompter of the National View of Necmettin Erbakan, focused on the use of instituttional politics and the use of the state apparatus in order to reach the Islamist ideals. The reformist and modernist views of the Nakşibendis in the late Ottoman Empire and after the foundation of the Republic contributed a lot to the emergence of Turkish Islamism (Mardin2005).

In parallel, the Nakşibendi order also became a tool for mobilization among the Kurds since their ideas were mostly developed and promulgated from Kurdistan. Mevlana Halid, himself, was a Kurd and he appointed nearly 120 caliphs most of whom were Kurds. Most of those caliphs were Kurdish sheikhs' successors who became effective in the rise of Islamist ideas among the Kurds. It can also be said that those Nakşibendi sheikhs had a strong effect on the Kurds because of the social and political structure of the Kurdish region. With the reformation process of the Ottoman Empire that started in the 19th century, the strength of the Kurdish tribal leaders decreased and the Kurdish sheiks took the place of those leaders (Özoğlu 2005). Sheikh Said, Said Nursi and Sheikh Ubeydullah and his son Seyyid Abdulkadir, all became significant references for the Kurdish Islamists, and they were influenced by the same source of the Nakşibendi order.

As it is stated and concluded in this thesis, Islamism spread among the Kurds with some differences. In other words, Kurdish Islamists differ from the mainstream Turkish Islamists as they have their own understanding of Islamism which, as it is explored in this thesis, and they use extra political instutitions differentfrom that of mainstream Islamists in Turkey. As an example, most of the Kurdish revolts in the beginning of the 20th century were led by the Kurdish Sheikhs, which is an important reference for Kurdish Islamists. Most of those revolts occurred with the aim of founding an Islamic state or a Kurdish Islamic state by destroying the secular state with armed struggle. For the Kurds, the removal of the caliphate became one of the most important reasons which prompted them to revolt against the new Turkish regime. Also, the Turkification process of the Kemalist regime and the Turkish Islamists' and nationalists'dominance had a strong effect on the Kurds and their approach to the state. When compared to the Turks, the Kurdish Islamists have developed a negative approach to the state and to order because the secular and democratic order was also a way to assimilate the Kurds. Blaming the Turks for trying to assimilate the Kurds and denying their identity, and the mainstream Turkish Islamists for being silent about the suppression of the Kurds, the Kurdish Islamists have chosen to follow their own interpretations of Islamism, which is the use of extra institutions regarding to their aims. In respect to this, the traumas that the Kurds faced in the beginning of the 20th century seriously affected their ideas.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Islamism and nationalism were the dominant ideologies derived from 19th century. Nevertheless, nationalism became more dominant in Turkey in the 1910s with the government of the CUP. This resulted in two of the most important revolts in the history of the Kurds, the revolts of Sheikh Ubeydullah and Sheikh Said. Sheikh Ubeydullah revolt was important because it was mostly covered with ethnic elements. This revolt showed that the Kurdish Nakşibendi Sheikhs were in the center of political power in the Kurdish region. The Turkification policies of the CUP government and the difficult living conditions of the Kurds led to the foundation of large and small Kurdish

communities which struggled mostly for the advancement of the Kurdsafter the 1900s.

Nationalistic and Islamists ideas were represented in these communities, and they constituted a base for Kurdish nationalism which started to rise at the end of 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. These Kurdish communities published their own dailies and also began to propagate nationalism together with Islamism. It can be stated that those communities had also been proto-nationalist movements for the Kurds (Özoğlu 2005). Two important examples of these communities that made intellectual, social and political contributions were The Society for the Mutual aid and Progress of Kurdistan (Kürt Teavün ve Terakki Cemiyeti) and The Society of Advancement of the Kurds (Kürt Teali Cemiyeti). Among the founders of these communities and dailies, there were Islamists and nationalists , such as Seyyid Abdulkadir, Halil Cibran, Babanzades, Bedirhans and Said Nursi who first aimed at advancement of the Kurds and the Kurdish region.

Before the foundation of the Republic, in the 1910s, the Kurdish intelligentsia living in Istanbul was divided into two groups: those who favored separatism and those who wanted an autonomous state for the Kurds. Some Kurdish intellectuals such as Seyyid Abdulkadir, Said Nursi and Halil Cibran come into the front as pro-autonomous. In contrast, others like Bedirhans, Kemal Fevzi and Colonel Kasım were pro-independent state. The most important reason of this fragmentation was that these intellectuals belonged to different family structures and they were educated in different education systems. The pro-autonomous intellectuals mostly got religious education in madrasas while the intellectuals that favored an independent state were educated in secular schools and some of them had lived abroad. The political positions of the Islamists were important because they notably favored to save the country and the caliphate from corruption at first and were involved in the War of Independence with this motivation. They did not focus on separation but they aimed to found an autonomous state for the Kurds. It is important to underline that the Kurdish Islamists before 1920s mostly favored the creation of an autonomous state rather than a separate nation state. In contrast, the Kurdish nationalists developed a

sense of separation and they tried to found a nation state because of the policies of the CUP government. With the foundation of the Republic and the removal of the caliphate, the Kurdish Islamist movement became more radical, which is clearly seen in the revolt of Sheikh Said. Whether the Sheikh Said revolt was a nationalist revolt or an Islamist one is a matter of debate. Yet, as it is seen in the defense of Sheik Said, this revolt was mostly an Islamist revolt which aimed to the establishment of the Sharia law. This does not mean that there were no nationalist impulses in the revolt of Sheikh Said. In spite of the fact that Sheikh stated his Islamist aims, there were also some nationalists figures involved in the revolt. Nevertheless, the leader of the revolt was ultimately a Nakşibendi sheikh who had Islamist ideals.

As it is in the case of Turkish Islamism, Kurdish Islamism was also affected by nationalist ideas (Duman and Yorgancılar 2008). It can even be said that some of the Kurdish Islamists have shown a strong tendency toward nationalism. The situation that the Kurds have faced in Turkey, with no doubt, was the main reason for this tendency. The harsh policies of the Kemalist regime led the Kurds to use nationalist discourse which is clearly seen in the Kurdish Islamists discourse as well. This appears clearly in the discourse of the Med-Zehra group that combined their Islamist understanding with the Kurdish ethnicity as a reaction to the mainstream Turkish Islamist movements by referring to the Kurds' problems. According to this group, Turkish Islamist movements denied the identity of the Kurds as the Kemalist regime had historically. The main argument of the Med-Zehra group is that the mainstream Nur movements did not even recognize the Kurdishness of Said Nursi and for this reason they repudiated Nursi's Pamphlets of Light. The group claims that words such as Kurd, Kurdistan and Kurdish were removed from Nursi's books for political reasons. The Med-Zehra group as appears as one of the most radical interpretations of the Nur movement. The leader of the group, Seyhanzade Sıddık Dursun, is a vigorous advocate of Islamic unity and a united Islamic state in which Kurdistan would be founded with the Kurdish language, banned in public by the Kemalist regime, would be the official language (Seyhanzade 2003-2008). In addition, the group curses democracy because it is a western ideology. Med-Zehra is

also critical of mainstream Nur movements such as the Yeni Asya and the Gülen movement since they claims that Nursi was in favor of democracy. Seyhanzade's opposition to democracy can be seen clearly in claims that those who believe democracy are simply sinning. The strong opposition to democracy, the emphasis on the Kurdish ethnicity and the Kurdish problem and the nationalistic discourse of the Med-Zehra group reflect Kurdish Islamist ideas in a much broader sense.

The political position of the Kurdish movements has fluctuated throughout Turkish history. In this, the changing political atmospheres of the world and especially of Europe have been quite effective. The sixties and the seventies of the 20th century saw the rise of communist and socialist movements in Europe and in Turkey as well. It can be said that after the constitution of 1960, there appeared a slightly more liberal political atmosphere. Most of the Kurdish activists who were banned from politics and who did not get what they expected from parties such as DP and CHP, started to join communist movements and parties. The Turkey Worker's Party of the time became a safe harbor for Kurdish nationalists and socialists. While Kurdish nationalists and activists had found a place to give voice to their policies, the Kurdish Islamists did not have that chance since Islamism had not been politically organized as much as other political movements. Nevertheless, the freedom of press allowed some publishing houses to publish translations of books of Islamist thinkers such as Seyyid Kutub, Muhammed Abduh and Hasan El Benna (Çakır 1991). This free atmosphere of publication would contribute to the rise of Islamist movement in ensuing years.

Even though some Kurdish politicians participated in politics via the Turkey Worker's Party, the cultural rights of the Kurds were still being undermined by the state and the governments. Even 'Kurd' as a word was banned and state officials claimed that there was no nation called Kurd, they argued that as the people who live in the south east of Turkey were stepping in snow and made noise that sounded like "kard, kurd", so those people were called Kurds because of that noise and they argued that they were actually just one of the clans of the Turks living in the

mountains of the south east (Hür 2008). This was actually the situation throughout Turkish political history.

In addition, for most of the Kurdish nationalists and socialists who had joined the Turkey Worker's Party, Islam was an obstacle in front of the Kurds and it kept them undeveloped. Alongside of these politicians, there were also nationalist poets and authors such as Cigerxwin and Mehdi Zana, who thought that Islam was the reason of the backwardness of the Kurds and it was a tool of exploitation for the Turks (Yıldız 2011).

Towards the end of the 1970s, Kurdish activists and politicians started to give voice to the Kurdish problems and demands (Bruinessen 1990) and the traces of Islamism and Islamist discourse nearly disappeared during those years. As a reaction to the mainstream Islamist movements, to the Turks actually, Kurdish Islamists also tried to be included in those new Kurdish movements. The PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) was founded in such an atmosphere with the rise of Kurdish political demands. At the beginning, the PKK was founded as a Marxist-Leninist organization, but later on it included Kurdish nationalist group as well. The PKK's founder, Abdullah Öcalan, aimed to include all Marxist-Leninist groups in the PKK by putting forward the aim of founding a communist state during the foundation of the organization. With this aim, some Turkish leftist and communists joined to the PKK as well as the Kurds. This said, the main issue that undermined the PKK and its founders was the relation to religion, especially Islam. Being a Marxist in the Kurdish region was the same as being an atheist and this idea let most of the Kurds keep aloof to the PKK. This was one of the main issues that Öcalan, himself realized and criticized in the later years. Despite this, the military coup of 1980 and the tortures in Diyarbakır prison led many Kurds to join the PKK (Cemal 2010). Additionally, in order to get more support from the Kurds, Öcalan and the PKK started to make references to Islam and to use Islamist discourse. Öcalan even supported some Islamist organizations and led the foundation of the Union of Kurdistan's Pious People in 1990 and the Association of Imams of Kurdistan (Akgönül 2012).

Alongside its nationalist and Marxist discourse, the PKK started to use Islamist discourse and paid more attention to religion. As it was for previous nationalists, the PKK had to use Islamist discourse in order to get more support from the Kurds as other Islamist groups became effective. Especially, the ascending power of Hezbollah and the success of the Welfare Party in the Kurdish region led the PKK to change its policy and to use a more lenient discourse towards religion, specifically Islam. The changing discourse concerning Islam was an effort to put forward a Kurdish-Islamic synthesis as a response to Turkish-Islamic synthesis. The efforts of the PKK to show itself as not the enemy of religion continued with its party organizations, the DTP and later the BDP. Being linked with the PKK, the DTP and the BDP included mostly secularist, Marxist and leftist members. In particular, most of the deputies come from a communist-socialist background. In addition, some deputies such as Aysel Tuğluk, in an interview, stated that the BDP was the guarantee of secularism in the Kurdish region. Moreover, the party thought that they could cooperate with the state in order to ensure secularism in the Kurdish region.

In fact, it was a dilemma for the BDP and the PKK, because while they were trying to show that the PKK and its party organization did not have any negative position against religion, on the other hand its deputies were giving messages to the state for cooperation to struggle against the Islamist groups in the region (Sarıkaya 2011). This was the reality of the BDP, because the BDP mostly had Marxist-nationalist and secularist members who have been in clash with religious groups and organizations. In spite of this fact, in the parliamentary elections of 2011, the BDP nominated some conservative candidates such as Altan Tan and Şerafettin Elçi. Additionally, right before the election, the party led its grassroots to have "civil prayers" outside of the mosques. Because they are appointed by the state, the BDP declared that imams of mosques were used by the state for the assimilation of the Kurds in the Kurdish region. The BDP's strategy in discourse,on the one hand, was trying to keep stable their Marxist and nationalists' votes by dwelling on secularism and by declaring themselves as the insurance of secularism in the Kurdish region. On the other hand, by nominating a pious Kurd, Altan Tan as the deputy candidate, it

was giving messages to the pious Kurds in Kurdistan that the party did not have any problems with Islam. Actually, this message was targeting the grassroots of Hezbollah and the JDP. As it is claimed in this thesis, Kurdish nationalist use a fluctuating discourse towards religion. The changing and undecisive discourse of the PKK and the BDP can be considered in this context.

The use of the Islamist discourse and attacks on Hezbollah caused a strategic clash of power in the Kurdish region. Hezbollah is an Islamist organization founded in the 1980s and has been increasingly powerful in Kurdistan. Most of the pious Kurds who had faced oppression by the state as well as by the PKK started to sympathize with Hezbollah, which made the PKK upset because of sharing its power with this Islamist and 'barbaric' organization as they called it. In order to break down the participation to Hezbollah, the PKK started blaming Hezbollah of being an organization founded by state agents to oppress the Kurds. At this point, the PKK changed its discourse towards Islam, which was a usual maneuver of Kurdish nationalists. Moving from here, the PKK called Hezbollah as 'Hizbul-Kontra', which means a counter guerilla organization. Nevertheless, the claim that Hezbollah was a counter guerilla organization, which was backed up by the state, was not confirmed or proven. As the state remained silent and turned a blind eye to the actions and the attacks of Hezbollah, and took the step late, it can be said that even if the state did not back up Hezbollah, it gave way to the clash between Hezbollah and the PKK (Çakır 2001). In this clash, it is important to say that many people were killed from both sides, and since the members of both organizations were the Kurds, it is the Kurds that suffered the most.

Hezbollah targeted not only the PKK, but also other groups that were obstacles and rivals to Hezbollah's aim in the Kurdish region. Other Islamist groups or communities such as Menzil and Zehra communities were attacked by Hezbollah. In order to realize its aim, which was to found an Islamic state, the organization took brutal steps against these groups and many people were killed by Hezbollah until 2000.

After 2002, there appeared a visible change in the policy of Hezbollah and its members with using a much more moderate discourse. Velioglu's death had become a turning point for Hezbollah members, because this event paved way for the demilitarization of the organization and it pushed them to move on by using legitimate ways. The operation against Hezbollah by the state forces was alsoeffective. In addition, because of its drastic actions against the PKK, the organization had already gained the hatred of Kurdish nationalists. In addition, by attacking Islamist movements and communities, it also lost its appeal among the Kurdish Islamists. Aware of this situation, the members of the organization founded Mustazaf-Der in 2003, which can be seen as the first step taken by the organization to move its activities in legitimate ways.

This is important in terms of showing the transformation of the radical Kurdish Islamism into a more moderate stance. To put it another way, it was the opening the ways of legitimate politics for Hezbollah. Most of the members of Mustazaf-Der were the old members of Hezbollah and its leading figures, most of whom were the suspects of the Hezbollah case. Mustazaf-Der created a widespread effect by organizing demonstrations, charities and conferences related both to the Kurds and to their rights and by dwelling on Islamist ideology. It is necessary to say that the sensivity of Hezbollah about the Kurds and their rights became much more visible in this stage of the organization. Mustazaf-Der was putting forward itself as the voice of opppressed, most of whom were the Kurds. Nevertheless, the background of Mustazaf-Der's members did not stop following them in the new term of the movement. In 2010, the court instance of Diyarbakır adjudged the closure of Mustazaf-Der for being in line with Hezbollah aims and the decision was approved by the high appeal court in 2012. This decision, in a way, accelerated the process of political organization for the Kurdish Islamist movement. At the end of the day, HüdaPar, as a Kurdish Islamist party, was founded on the 30th December 2012.

HüdaPar, as a political party, continues to state the ideals of Mustazaf-Der and Hezbollah, which is to take Islamism to the center of politics. The party accepts only Quran and Sunnah as references and puts forward its political view according to

them. In addition to this, expressing the ethnic and Islamic identity together found its place in the politics and discourse of the party. On societal issues like the Kurdish problem, HüdaPar proposes Islamist ideas as the only solution. The constitutional recognition of the Kurds and their rights and the acceptance of Kurdish as the second official language constitute the fundamental demands of the party as it is stated in the party program. Even if the party does not mentiont democracy, it also gives place to some democratic solutions such as lifting the 10 percent election threshold and decentralization of state power. Additionally, the party puts forward the idea that the state must apologize from the Kurds that have suffered from its brutal actions in the region. Most of those political demands that were put forward by the HüdaPar have also been shared by the most of the Kurdish politicians from all political views. Nevertheless, as an Islamist party, HüdaPar is the first who gives place to Islamist ideals in its program in the region in order to solve the problems of the Kurds. It seems that this excessive discourse on the Kurdish identity and Islamism can stand as a problem in front of HüdaPar. Moreover, it is possible to restrict the party to the southeast of Turkey and make it a regional party rather than being a national party that could compete with other parties in all parts of Turkey. Because of their political stance and their Kurdish Islamist approach, Hezbollah and HüdaPar constituted a crucial point for this study.

While concluding, it is necessary to state that this thesis is restricted to the Kurds who have been living in Turkey and who became a part of its history. As a nation, most of the Kurds live in Mezopatamya, between the Tigris and the Euphrate, which is thought to be their homeland by the Kurds. Especially, after the WWI, the Kurds were divided with artificial borders and there are still many Kurds living in Iraq, Syria and Iran as well as Turkey. Nevertheless, a great majority of the Kurds live in Turkey. That is why the Kurds living in Turkey constitutes the core of analysis in this thesis. As it is put forward in this study, the Kurds and their political struggle in Turkish history have different dimensions. Mostly affected by nationalist and Islamist ideologies in the late of 19th century and early 20th century, they have developed different discourses in the political arena. Nevertheless, because of their

old relation with Islam and Islamic networks and tariqas, Islamist ideals and movements have easliy found a base at a societal level. Especially, the Nakşibendi order and its acitivist policies had an impact on the polical views of the Kurds. According to the data set by this thesis, Nakşibendi sheikhs became political figures in the Kurdish region after 1870s because of the handover of the power from the tribal leader, and they were so powerful that they could easily penetrate the Kurds and their policies. Accordingly, the political power of the sheikhs and the effect of religious networks paved the way for Islamism to have a place in the Kurdish political life. As this thesis proposed, the Kurdish Islamist movements have covered their discourses with nationalist elements because of the Kurdish problem in Turkey after the 20th century. Accordingly, the main factor that differentiates the Kurdish Islamism from other Islamist movements is that Kurdish Islamism is covered with Kurdish ethnic identity and it offers a solution to the problems of the Kurds with Islamist policies. As it is in the case of Med-Zehra group and Hezbollah, their reactions to the mainstream Islamist come into the front because these ignore the Kurds and their rights.

In addition to this, as different from the Kurdish Islamists, the Kurdish nationalists and secularists put forward a fluctuating and everchanging discourse about Islam and Islamism depending on conjuncture. As this thesis puts forward, the nationalists and secularists Kurds had been neglecting the Islamic sensitivities of the Kurds at the beginning. Nevertheless, they tried to give much more importance to the religiosity of the Kurds when they realized that the Kurds were welcoming Islamist parties and organization. The success of the Welfare Party and the Justice and Development Party needs to be taken into consideration at this point. To sum up, it can be said that the Kurdish nationalists-secularists had an ever-changing discourse toward Islam starting from the foundation of Turkish republic.

As a conclusion, we come up with the answers to questions that are asked in the first part of this study. Who are the Kurdish Islamists? What are their aims? How are their relations with the Turkish-Kemalist state? What are their views now? What is the Kurdish Islamists' comprehension of the secular state? Based on my research, I

conclude that the Kurdish Islamists are the Kurds who shares the same Islamist background with Turkish Islamists, but they differ from Turkish Islamists in terms of recognizing the authority and using different institutions in order to reach their aims. Considering the Kurds' situation during Turkish history, Kurdish Islamist movements also have a nationalist discourse that refers to the Kurdish ethnic identity. A strong resistence to secular and Kemalist order, which was built exclusively on Turkish ethnic nationalism, appears in discourse of Kurdish Islamism. In addition, Kurdish Islamism aims to make Islam dominant in all parts of life and struggles for the establishment of Sharia law. While doing this, it does not avoid using extra institutions for politics such as revolts, armed struggle and denying the authority.

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