CHANGING POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN DERSIM/TUNCELI FROM THE EARLY REPUBLICAN ERA TO THE 1970S

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation focuses on the interactions between the residents of Tunceli and the state regarding the political fluctuations of the early 1970s, and the resulting implications for the region. People who participated in socialist left movements emerged as new political figures on the national stage and contributed to shifts and awakenings in local affiliations. The primary aim of this thesis is to investigate how their participation in leftist political organizations during this time shaped their political awareness. It also aims to figure out the degree to which these interactions influenced the fundamental elements of local belonging through the use of three primary sources: in-depth key informant interviews, newspaper clippings, and parliamentary records.

The thesis uncovers the impacts of the implementations and investments of state power on a particular community and explores the effects of these practices on local belonging patterns. Charles Tilly's analysis of "trust networks" provides an insightful but limited framework for understanding the interplay between local dynamics and state-society relations during the 1970s. The state's policies towards Dersim/Tunceli, as well as its initiatives and perceptions towards this region, have been revealed with

parliamentary minutes, and newspaper clippings of the given period. The National Assembly (Millet Meclisi) Republican Period General Meeting minutes from the decade between the 1960s and 1970s are included in the study's content analysis. State Planning Organization's First and Second Five-Year Development Plans provide necessary materials to shed light on the public investments towards the region from mid-1960s to mid-970s. In addition to these materials, daily newspapers archives from that era are included to follow the developments and understanding the state-society relations of the time. In-depth interviewing technique is also applied to this dissertation to benefit from the potential of interpreting the social developments through unwritten stories. A total of twelve key informant interviews were conducted in Dersim, İzmir, İstanbul and Ankara with local individuals who primarily traveled to the center for similar purposes and participated in the political organizations during the period in question. The reports, other printed materials and the interviews covered throughout the dissertation are all intended to answer the following questions: What is the historical background of the state's policies towards Dersim? How did the multi-party-political era in Turkey affect politics in Tunceli? In the political climate of the 1970s, what was the significance of being politically active as an individual from Dersim? How did the political upheaval during the 1970s affect the sense of belonging in Dersim? What changes occurred in the trust networks and collective solidarity ties of the region? Can the early 1970s be considered a pivotal moment for the shifts in trust network of Dersim/Tunceli?

These questions aim to reach the core of the thesis, investigating the peripheral trust network dynamics of the Dersimi population in this particular era. The study explores how local belongings contribute to the formation of a trust network, which has the potential to encounter pivotal breaking points at specific historical periods. The thesis asserts that the early years of the 1970s must be identified as a breaking point for changes in trust network dynamics due to the political awakening of the region and the developing relations with the state mechanisms.

Keywords: Dersim, Trust Networks, Kurdish Alevi, Political Revival

ÖZ

DERSİM/TUNCELİ'DE ERKEN CUMHURİYET DÖNEMİNDEN 1970'LERE SİYASİ BİLİNCİN DEĞİŞİMİ

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Bu tez, Tunceli'nin erken 1970lerde devletle olan etkileşimlerine odaklanmaktadır ve bu sürecin bölgede ortaya çıkardığı sonuçları incelemektedir. Sosyalist sol hareketlere katılan Tuncelililer, bu dönemde ulusal sahnede yeni siyasi figürler olarak ortaya çıktı ve onların politik mecralardaki eylemleri yerel aidiyet bağlarında değişimlere ve uyanışlara yol açtı. Tezin temel amacı, bu dönemde sosyalist sol gruplara katılanların bölgenin siyasi uyanışına katkılarını incelemektir. Ayrıca, siyasi katılımın yerel aidiyetin temel yönlerini ne ölçüde etkilediği sorgulanmaktadır. Bu amaçla, parlamento kayıtları, gazete kupürleri ve anahtar kişilerle yapılan derinlemesine mülakatlar üç ana veri kaynağı olarak ele alınmıştır.

Tez, devlet uygulamalarının ve yatırımlarının belirli bir topluluk üzerindeki etkilerini ortaya çıkarmakta ve bu uygulamaların yerel aidiyet kalıpları üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktadır. Charles Tilly'nin "güven ağları" analizi, 1970'lerde Dersim/Tunceli'yi karakterize eden yerel dinamikler ile devlet-toplum ilişkileri arasındaki etkileşimi anlama konusunda açıklayıcı fakat sınırlı olduğu iddia edilen bir kavram olarak belirlenmiştir. Devletin Dersim/Tunceli'ye yönelik algısı, politikaları ve bu bölgeye yönelik yatırımları, verilen döneme ait parlamento

tutanakları ve gazete kupürleri üzerinden incelenmektedir. Çalışmanın içeriğine 1960'lar ile 1970'ler arasındaki on yılın Millet Meclisi Cumhuriyet Dönemi Genel Kurulu tutanakları dahil edilmiştir. Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı'nın Birinci ve İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planları, 1960'ların ortasından 1970'lerin ortasına kadar olan dönemde bölgeye yönelik kamu yatırımlarını incelemek için gerekli materyalleri sağlar. Bu materyallere ek olarak, dönemin günlük gazete arşivleri yerel gelişmeleri takip etmek ve o dönemin devlet-toplum ilişkilerini anlamak için gerekli malzemeyi sunmaktadır. Bu tezde ayrıca kayda alınmamış dönem anılarının tarihi olayları ve sosyal gelişmeleri yorumlama potansiyelinden yararlanabilmek için derinlemesine mülakat tekniği ile mülakatlar gerçekleştirilmiştir. Dönemin gençlik hareketlerinde yer almış on iki kişiyle anahtar bilgi kaynağı mülakatları, Dersim, İzmir, İstanbul ve Ankara'da gerçekleştirilmiştir. Tez boyunca ele alınan raporlar, diğer basılı materyaller ve mülakatlar, aşağıdaki soruları cevaplamak için tasarlanmıştır: Devletin Dersim'e yönelik politikalarının tarihsel arka planı nedir? Türkiye'deki çok partili siyasi dönem, Tunceli'deki siyaseti nasıl etkiledi? 1970'lerin siyasi ikliminde, Tuncelili bir birey olarak Türkiye siyasetinde rol almanın anlamı nedir? 1970'lerdeki siyasi çalkantılar, Dersim'deki yerel aidiyet dinamiklerini etkilemiş midir? Bölgenin güven ağlarında ve kolektif dayanışma bağlarında hangi değişiklikler meydana gelmiştir? 1970'lerin başı, Dersim/Tunceli'nin güven ağındaki değişiklikler için bir dönüm noktası olarak kabul edilebilir mi?

Tez, bu sorular üzerinden Dersimli Alevilerin 1970'lerin ilk yarısına kadar uzanan periyotta bölgesel güven ağı dinamiklerini araştırır. Yerel aidiyetlerin güven ağı oluşumuna katkı sağladığını ve bu dayanışma ağlarının belirli tarihsel dönemlerde kritik kırılma noktalarıyla değişimlere uğrama potansiyeline sahip olduğunu araştırmaktadır. Ayrıca, tez, bölgenin siyasi uyanışının ve devletle ilişkilerin güven ağlarında yarattığı değişiklikler için erken 1970'lerin bir kopuş noktası olarak tanımlanması gerektiğini iddia eder.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dersim, Güven Ağları, Kürt Alevi, Siyasi Uyanış

To my family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Anatolia has been home to a variety of cultures throughout its recorded history. The region is a dynamic crossroads of political and cultural transition, and the people of Dersim are an important part of this rich cultural domain. Due to their centuries-long residence in Anatolia, Kurdish Alevis in Dersim have deep roots there and have left a substantial cultural and political impact throughout the central and eastern regions of the country. Scholars study on the history of Dersim, examining political developments, cultural interactions, and local power structures to better understand this population's historical continuity and relationships.[1] The first aspect highlighted in these studies about Dersim/Tunceli was the religious belief, which is the primary factor that unites this region. The people of Dersim are part of Anatolian Alevism.

In the religious classification of the Empire, Dersim has always been classified as Muslim even though they adhere to the Kızılbaş/Alevi faith.[2] Although Dersim categorically listed in the broader Muslim family of the Ottoman Empire, its Alevi faith historically caused complexity since it was distinct from the Sunni orthodoxy embraced by the Ottoman Empire. This legacy of religious difference established an enduring pattern of resistance that persisted since the 15th century. Alevism was more than just a belief system, it provided the foundation for Dersim's peculiar social and political structures. Alevi identity, coupled with internal hierarchies shaped by kinship, attempted to impose regional control and limit imperial domination in Dersim. Dersim has a long legacy of resistance fueled by its struggle against both

[1] Many scholars have conducted significant studies on the history of Dersim from various angles, including Taner Akçam, Hüseyin Aygün, Mahmut Akyürekli, Yalçın Çakmak, Ahmet Kerim Gültekin, Martin Van Bruinessen, Şükrü Aslan, Uğur Ümit Üngör, and Hamit Bozarslan.

[2] Mehmet Ali Ünal, *XVI. Yüzyılda Çemişgezek Sancağı*, p.58. in Yalçın Çakmak, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Dersim İnancına Yönelik Algısı ve Tasvirine Genel Bir Bakış", Tunceli Dersim Tarihi'nden Kesitler, ed. Şahin Yedek, (İstanbul: Hiper Yayın, 2019) p.159.

imperial efforts to centralize power and regional power structures rooted in religious and tribal divisions.

This region, possessing a distinct religious identity from the Ottoman Empire, has long been recognized for its rich and peculiar cultural heritage. Residents of Dersim, along with other ethnic and religious groups, have a long history in Eastern Anatolia dating back centuries. Their deep historical presence has shaped the region's character. Dersim has actually evolved into a transitional geography that is home to several cultural and ethnic groupings due to the cultural diversity and pluralism that Anatolia has historically possessed. Since ancient times, different cultural and ethnic groups in Anatolia have been able to maintain a collective ground and had some degree of social ties with one another. Muslim and Christian groups have interacted and lived together in harmony in the locality of Dersim, which has historically been a location of continual transformation and interaction.[3] Due to political waves and movement of several ethnic, religious or tribal groups, Dersim region has been a shelter of a variety of distinct and diverse cultural traditions. In addition to Kurdish Alevi tribes, there has been an Armenian population in the region for centuries. In fact, this area has always been inhabited as a traditional Kurdish and Armenian neighborhood. Since the historical research and its written history is quite limited, there are limited mentions of an Armenian presence in the Dersim region. These studies on Anatolian Armenian history are mostly related to the Armenian presence and population in the surrounding regions. In Aksoy's study, which is one of the rare works about the Armenian presence in Dersim, Gürdal Aksoy noted that there are a considerable number of Armenian place names as showing the cultural heritage in the region.[4] This means that Dersim has historically been an Armenian homeland for centuries. There is no doubt that this penetration of many cultures into the local social structure led to specific complexities and challenges on many different levels in Dersim.[5] Although there are studies which trace Dersim's interactions within broader Anatolian communities, yet the question remains: how did this community's distinct peculiarities and loyalty bonds survive in this turbulent landscape?

[3] Martin Van Bruinessen, *Ağa, Şeyh, Devlet*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2013) p.190.

[4] Aksoy, Gürdal. p.19.

[5] Kalman, M. *Belgeler ve Tanıklarıyla Dersim Direnişleri*. Nujen Yayınları, İstanbul, 1995, p.44.

To define the conceptual boundaries of this research, I shall state what I understand from “Dersim”. In this research, I use the term 'Dersim' recognizing its historical usage, but without focusing on a precise origin or definition. "Dersim" has been used for a very long time in many texts, hence it is primarily regarded as a historical term. The word has a long history and multiple potential meanings, making its exact origins unclear. According to popular etymology, Dersim originated from the two words *deri* (door) and *sim* (silver).[6] One hypothesis suggests that Dersim means “Silver Door” which potentially referring to the Gümüşhane region in the north. Kemal Burkay offers an alternative explanation, proposing that the name "Dersim" comes from a historical silver mine located in the Keban district.[7] Nuri Dersimi offers a different explanation. He suggests the Koçanli tribe understood the Kirmanç words "Dere Sim" ("Door of Silver") as referencing a symbolic "Door of Kurdistan.".[8] Last but not least, local historiography gave space to a tribe called *Desim* which may have been the source of the name Dersim.[9] As a historical notion, the term Dersim appears in land registration records dating back to the Ottoman Empire. The term "Dersim" can be found in the records belonging to the sections of Diyarbakir, and Mamuret’ul Aziz particularly in those areas relating to taxes, correspondences, and resolutions.[10]

Moreover, "Dersim" holds historical significance and refers to a specific geographical region. During the Ottoman Empire, the Dersim governorship covered a geographical area that included the present-day borders of Tunceli province. Additionally, it included parts of the Elazig, Bingol, Erzincan, Malatya, Mus and Sivas provinces of modern Turkey.[11] In *the Encyclopedia of Islam*, Dersim was portrayed as an area in eastern Anatolia, the region was incorporated in the Ottoman

[6] Dersimi, Nuri. *Kürdistan tarihinde Dersim*, Halep: Ani Matbaası, 1952. p.1.

[7] Burkay, Kemal. “Dersim – Tarih, doğa, insan…” in *Herkesin Bildiği Sır: Dersim*. (ed) Şükrü Aslan. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p.18.

[8] Dersimi, *Ibid*, p.1.

[9] Kalman, *Ibid*, p.13.

[10] *Ibid*. p.9.

[11] Şükrü Aslan. *Herkesin Bildiği Sır: Dersim*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011), p.22.

Empire by Mehmed II in 1473.[12] Following the Battle of Çaldıran, the Ottoman Empire integrated the Dersim region into its administrative system, granting it the status of "yurtluk-ocaklık".[13] Historical records from the 16th century indicate that the area corresponding to modern-day Dersim was situated within the borders of the Çemişgezek principality.[14] Dersim was later transformed into a sanjak in the Ottoman state system as part of the centralization policy that was put into force in 1851. It was composed of Hozat, Çemişgezek, Ovacık, Pertek, Sağman, Çarsancak, Kalan, Pülümür, Nazımiye, Mazgirt, Kemaliye, Kemah, Kiğı, and Arapkir districts. In the "Dersim" article of the Encyclopedia of Islam it was mentioned that the region was once a liwa of the eyalet of Diyarbekir in the 19th century, and then it came under the *vilayet* of Mamuret al'aziz as a *sanjak* in 1888.[15]

Dersim, "a place of rebellion and resistance since antiquity"[16], has been perceived by the state as an oppositional power center throughout the history of the Ottoman rule. It was partly due to Dersim's possession of linguistic and religious peculiarities in the culturally distinct part of Kurdistan.[17] The foremost reason that enabled the creation of a regional autonomous authority in Dersim was the isolation of the region from the central government. Dersim was built in an inaccessible region of high mountains and narrow valleys[18] and the relationship with the state mechanisms had always been loose. Military force, exile of dissident tribes, development of schools and places of worship for the government ideology, among other tactics, have been used to maintain the policy of discipline and inclusion towards Dersim.[19] The

[12] V. Cuinet, "TundJeli", in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, (ed) P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Vol X. (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p.628.

[13] Dilek Soileau. "Koçgiri İsyanı'nın Sosyo-Tarihsel Açıdan Analizi", PhD Dissertation, Ankara University, Turkish Revolution History Institute, (2014), p.49.
[14] *Ibid*.

[15] F. Taeschner, "Dersim", in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, (ed) B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht. Vol. I. (E.J. Brill, 1991), p.208.

[16] Kalman, *ibid*, p.9.

[17] Martin Van Bruinessen, "The Suppression of the Dersim Rebellion in Turkey (1937-38)", in George J. Andreopoulos (ed), *Conceptual and Historical Dimensions of Genocide*. (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), pp. 141-170.

[18] *Ibid*.

[19] Aslan(ed), *ibid*. p.13.

primary goal of these measures of reorganization was to consolidate the state authority in the region which was traditionally known as "the region that the state power could not penetrate".[20] This reorganization in the administration of Dersim reveals that the region was decentralized, relatively autonomous, and experienced periods of unrest prior to the implementation of centralization measures of the Empire. The Ottoman Empire's intervention in Dersim were driven by a desire to establish stronger control over this peripheral region and integrate it to the central government.[21] The political authority put measures in place to strengthen the central government's dominance in the area but these policies did not succeed. During the Empire's rapid decline and with the national demands of other populations requiring attention, the Dersim issue could not be effectively addressed in the imperial era. It was passed down to the republican regime, posing a substantial and tangible obstacle in the path of the new republic's development.[22] The centralization policies aimed at the *Vilayat-i Sarkiyye*, including Dersim, persisted during the early Republican period without slowing down. The challenge stemmed from the relatively autonomous status of local forces in remote regions distant from the center, along with the limited recognition of central authority in these areas.[23] Until 1937, the republican authorities faced substantial opposition in Dersim/Tunceli, where the local population resisted the imposition of the national legal framework by the nation-state. In 1935, by Law No. 2885, administrative borders of Dersim were re-drawn; Tunceli province was established by combining the Pulumur district of Erzincan province with the districts of Nazimiye, Hozat, Mazgirt, Ovacık, Pertek, and Çemişkezek from Elazığ province.[24] A year later, the city center was relocated from the Elaziz district to the Kalan district. In a nutshell, the policies produced by

[20] Bülent Bilmez, Gülay Kayacan and Şükrü Aslan. *Belleklerdeki Dersim'38*. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları) p.23.

[21] *Ibid*. p.26.

[22] Zafer Toprak. *Darwin'den Dersim'e Cumhuriyet ve Antropoloji*, (İstanbul: Doğan Egmont Yayıncılık, 2012), p.540.

[23] *Ibid*. p.550.

[24] TBMM, "Yeniden dokuz kaza ve beş vilâyet teşkiline ve bunlarla otuz iki nahiyeye aid kadrolar hakkında kanun" Kanunlar Dergisi, Cilt:16; (25.12.1935). Accessed in: 02.07.2020. https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmmc016/kanuntbmmc016/kanuntbmmc01602885.pdf

the center in this period were implemented primarily via the use of military force to suppress dissenting local tribes. Local dissident groups in the region sought to be suppressed by military force. To achieve this goal, a military administration was established in the Dersim province, that initiated the rehabilitation program for the region.[25] This program was initiated with the implementation of Tunceli Law No. 2884 in 1935 and concluded with amendments introduced in Law No. 5098 on resettlement in 1947.[26] Thus, to enforce loyalty to central administration and integrate the region to the nation-state structure, the region surrounded via legal regulations and strict enforcements.[27]

Geographical renaming is another important issue for the region. The significance of a name change becomes an issue to discuss when it is done by force. This could be defined as demographic pacification tactics used by national governments concurrent with the creation of a contemporary national state. Renaming places could be done on a national scale for ideological reasons in order to create a new national identity. Through the use of coercion or with the support of local authorities, the government introduces geographic renaming to further political objectives in the direction of ideological principles. The Turkish Republic is not alone in its practice of giving new names to geographical regions. Since ancient times, and particularly during the era of nation-states, many states that acquired new territories have employed this strategy to capture these regions on a cultural and ideological basis. State departments may change the names of the cities in order to establish a new political entity and expand their control over new political borders. Renaming practices that represent the Republic's post-nationalist perspective extend back to the establishment of the Turkish Republic.[28] The Black Sea, Southeast, and Eastern Anatolia had seen the

[25] Bilmez, Kayacan, and Aslan, *ibid*. p.29.

[26] TBMM. Kanun No: 5098. "İskân Kanununun bazı maddelerinin kaldırılmasına, değiştirilmesine ve bu kanuna yeniden bazı madde ve fıkralar ilâvesine dair Kanun", (18.6.1947). Accessed in: 02.07.2020. https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmmc029/kanuntbmmc029/kanuntbmmc02905098.pdf

[27] David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), p.208.

[28] Kerem Öktem, "The Nation's Imprint: Demographic Engineering and the Change of Toponymes in Republican Turkey", *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, (2008), p.23.

most renaming procedures. Many non-Muslim or non-Turkish geographical names became subject to change during the Republican period just like Dersim, the city which started to be called "Tunç eli" after 1935. City names that were originally derived from Arabic, Kurdish, Greek, or Armenian have undergone a number of changes. The relationship between territory and local sense of belonging in Dersim/Tunceli, thus, became complex and challenging after this chain of events occurred in the early years of the Republic. Regarding cultural affiliations on regional identity, this turbulent period has served as a significant social marker for Dersim. This is because for a long time the circumstances of the region in all contexts were interrupted. After this violent period, the region withdrew into itself and tried to survive as a closed community both in the area and in the resettled geographies. The events in the early Republican period have created differentiation for the region in terms of historical and geographical continuity. For instance, a forced and massive migration regulation was implemented and a large number of expelled Dersimi groups resettled in various regions in Anatolia. This development had transformative outcomes for the local population. Forced migration disrupted religious affiliation which was a crucial aspect of local identity. Alevism, characterized by its unwritten tradition and emphasis on the confidential dede-talip relationship, was particularly affected by this forced resettlement. The separation of adherents from their religious leaders led to disruptions in the practice of their beliefs and rituals. Thus, Dersim was gradually evolving into a realm of mythology in the memories of the inhabitants. Dersim Alevism, central to the region's identity, lost its strong connection to its historical context. Moreover, the decision to lift the special emergency regime in Tunceli and permit the return of deported families to their homes was made only towards the end of 1946.[29] The 1930s developments had significant impacts on local groups and their sense of belonging. The turmoil in the region had national implications, contributing to a rise in prejudice and negative stereotypes directed towards Tunceli. During the politically turbulent 1960s and 70s, simply being from Tunceli carried a suspicion, making individuals targets of prejudice. For the Republic, as the *ancien régime* in Dersim was the state of lawlessness and ignorance, the Alevi Kurds could represent a serious challenge any

[29] McDowall, *ibid,* p.209.

time.[30] On the other hand, it must be claimed that among the outcomes of the turmoil of the 1930s was a rise in cultural awareness and a sense of communal belonging among the Dersimi people. During this period, a sense of solidarity among the inhabitants of Tunceli, who were subjected to harsh measures, certainly solidified. Increased political awareness and flourishing diverse political movements must be considered as another positive result for the evolution of the regional belonging.

While "Dersim" has deep historical and geographical roots, its meaning extends beyond these definitions. The term holds significance in a contemporary context as well. Dersim represents a complex set of social, political, ethnic, cultural, and religious concepts shaped by a distinctive and contentious history. Scholars use the term "Dersim" in their studies of contemporary issues; this emphasizes a larger political concern than merely a particular geographic location. As Şükrü Aslan states, Dersim, as Tunceli was originally called, has a historical continuation that extends into the present.[31] Due to its geographic location, social and historical structure, belief practices, relationships, and conflicts with the state, the region has been a particularly distinctive social and cultural entity. Therefore, “Dersim” has been a key social marker of the local sense of belonging that contributes to the local aspirations of this region.

It's crucial to note that the renaming of Dersim carries significant military connotations, alongside being a clear example of the Turkification of place names. Local residents generally favor the term "Dersim" over "Tunceli," likely signifying their rejection of the transition imposed after a historical tragedy. In this study, the use of both "Dersim" and "Tunceli" interchangeably is deemed appropriate to accurately reflect these complexities. This dissertation will employ a sensible approach to naming the region. "Dersim" will be used when discussing historical or cultural contexts. For topics addressing the Republican era, particularly the 1970s, the formal term "Tunceli" is necessary. This strategy does not prioritize one term over the other. In analyzing public statements or official documents, "Tunceli" may be used, while otherwise reflecting the local preference for "Dersim."

[30] Bruinessen, *ibid*, (1994), p.152.

[31] Aslan (ed.), *ibid*, p.9.

Having outlined the research question and its significance, this study will now define its scope and theoretical basis. A key focus is understanding the unique historical path of the Alevi Kurdish community in Dersim up until the early 1970s. Examining the influence of state modernization efforts and secular leftist ideologies on local solidarity networks will reveal how these forces shaped both the region and its socio-political landscape. The study will also be based on Charles Tilly's theoretical framework, which examines the means by which this community preserved its distinct identity and provides new perspectives into Dersim's complex relationship with the Turkish state. Within a bounded geographic area and developing a marginalized relationship with power centers there for ages, Dersim can be perceived as a peripheral group in Turkey. In the isolated region of Dersim, residents developed strong trust networks, driven by their shared cultural and religious identity and a need to protect themselves against external threats and ensure their community's survival. Trust network analysis will be a useful tool for analyzing Dersim in the 1970s. Examining local developments of this period through the lens of changing internal dynamics and group behaviors will bring the discussion to an explanatory point.

1.1. Scope of the Study

This thesis is devoted to the scholarly endeavor of area studies. My PhD program, area studies, gave me inspiration to deeply understand and interpret what is happening "in the field". An area expert, as described by Ariel Ahram, specializes in the specific history, culture, or politics of a region. They adopt a multi-disciplinary lens with the aim of producing theoretically grounded and comprehensive research on that region.[32] In order to fully comprehend specific historical, social, or economic processes in a certain geographic area, it is essential for area studies to research the regional context. A region's conditions are determined by the distinctive features and complexities of the area, as well as by interactions with other actors. According to area studies, regional context is crucial.[33] It enables the researchers to grasp the local

[32] Ariel Ahram. "The Theory and Method of Comparative Area Studies". Qualitative Research, Vol 11 (I), (2011), 69-90, p.69.

[33] *Ibid*, p.84.

dynamics from inside and fully understand a region's specific challenges and opportunities from an areal perspective. Moreover, area studies offer necessary tools to test the basic arguments of the disciplinary social sciences on regional knowledge. They provide unique opportunities to illustrate changes, similarities, or distinctions present among many groups or communities at a "regional level".[34] For this aim, it provides the chance to question the theoretical assumptions of social sciences "in the area". In other words, this region-sensitive endeavor of area studies aims to understand and interpret what is happening in the area with the help of using different disciplinary and methodological lenses. Area studies must develop methodologies that integrate historical and social science approaches, enabling the analysis of regional and global histories over *longe duree* from a variety of viewpoints to understand regional issues.[35] This holistic approach of area studies is essential for comprehending and successfully addressing regional concerns and challenges.

This dissertation's core objective is to understand and illuminate a specific issue through the lens of area studies. Employing this methodology, I will conduct an in-depth examination of the state's role in influencing local political consciousness within a particular region. My primary focus is to conceptualize Dersim/Tunceli as an "area," exploring the underlying causes of the complex relationship between the state and this locality. I have a particular interest in how the secular nation-state interacts with the geographically peripheral population of Dersim, specifically within the context of nation-state formation in the Middle East. From the area studies framework, the interplay of ethnicity and religious affiliation creates interesting layers in Dersim. As belonging to the Kurdish/Alevi identity, trust networks primarily tied to two-layered identity markers as of religion and kinship. These two markers overlap in this geography and further strengthen its local identity. My empirical analysis will primarily draw on the experiences of state and local actors during the early 1970s. Since social developments are mutual interactions among

[34] Recep Boztemur, "Ideological-Political Considerations and Theoretical Partiality in Middle East Studies: The Bases for Teachings of History in Area Studies" *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, vol. 12. issue 34. (Spring 2013), p.81-100. p.94.

[35] *Ibid*, p.93-94.

individuals, communities, and institutions, it is essential to evaluate the competing perceptions of the state and local actors in this period.

Thus, in order to gain a better understanding of the relationship between state and Dersim/Tunceli as a distinct social group, my research will consist of document review techniques and oral history. Document review helps to discuss the magazines, newspapers and other published materials of the period written by local administrators from the statist perspective. This study also incorporates local associations' reports, bulletins, and memoirs to gain a comprehensive understanding of regional political developments from a local perspective. Additionally, to uncover regional viewpoints, interviews will be conducted with key individuals who were involved in politics during the 1970s. Within the Area Studies framework and hrough historical and sociological methods, this research will investigate Dersim's relationship with the state and the impact of this relationship on the region's self-perception. The period from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s is of particular interest due to significant developments occurring in socio-political landscape. To elaborate the relationships of this period, "trust network" paradigm make easier to understand the political and social develeopments in this era thoroughly.

This is demonstrated by the fact that Dersim/Tunceli has maintained an exceptional connection and relationship with the state power for centuries. The perceptions and practices suggested by the government aimed at dominating the region as a peripheral actor. The interplay and interdependence of the relations between the state and a peripheral community as being the consistent focus, this study focuses mainly on how the political processes lead to a development - a revival in the sense of local belonging of the indigenous people of Dersim/Tunceli. In the period between late 1960s and early 1970s, this enduring friendship entered a new phase of development; new socio-political repercussions are brought about by local people's interactions with governmental institutions. The early 1970s was a pivotal time for the Dersim/Tunceli Kurdish Alevis to emerge as a visible force in Turkish politics. This study will incorporate field research to collect regional insights, facilitating the testing of scientific hypotheses and informing meaningful conclusions about the area. Key informant interviews conducted as field research reveal a political awakening

occurring within specific segments of the population in Dersim. These interviews highlight a generational shift, with younger generations embracing both traditional values and new perspectives, leading to a transformative dynamic within the region. This study uses area-specific information gathered via fieldwork to explore a particular breaking point in terms of political revival in the Dersim locality. It argues that the region's social activism and political divisions were likely revitalized as a response to 1970s political atmosphere. The central focus is to investigate whether interactions with the state led to greater integration or heightened sense of political activism among the local community at this specific historical moment.

1.2. Literature Review

The studies on Dersim have been carried out thus far has focused on a few key areas in several main axes. Dersim has generally been the subject of political history, ethnographic studies, and cultural history in literature. Two main themes can be found in the literature on Dersim's political history: Tunceli in state discourse and Dersim in local studies. The two opposing debates in the literature examined the political history from the perspective of the "genocide" and "suppression of the rebellion."

According to the first discourse, Dersim/Tunceli was perceived as a central problem in government reports.[36] From the official perspective, the people of Dersim were mentioned in the First Parliament as a people known for banditry for a long time. Council reports and kadi records reveal complaints regarding the nomads in this area. The Dersim operation, which was initiated by the decision of the Council of Ministers on May 4, 1937, was a reformation operation against rebellion and corruption in the eyes of the state authorities.

Local history studies briefly claim that throughout history, the region has struggled with underdevelopment and poverty as an "abandoned" peripheral area. Local ties and peculiarities have been attempted to be erased through state regulations and

[36] Naşit Uluğ. *Derebeyi ve Dersim*, İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2009. Naşit Uluğ, *Tunceli Medeniyete Açılıyor*, İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1997. Hüseyin Aygün. D*ersim 1938 ve Zorunlu İskân: Telgraflar, Dilekçeler, Mektuplar, Fotoğraflar.* Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları, 2009.

investment plans. In this sense, there appeared a two-sided narrative in the literature about the political history of Dersim. For instance, in one side, the official history narrated the "1926 Dersim Rebellion" that the Dersim community launched a full-scale uprising throughout their territory. Conversely, on the other side, documented evidence stated that the state conducted a punitive operation targeted against a certain tribe (Qocan).[37] As quoted by Mete Tunçay, "preventive measures were taken to prevent the possibility of rebellion and to prevent them from revolting."[38]

In this study, background information is given mainly with reference to 1937-38. The developments during this period radically changed the history of the region and that period became a turning point. After the banishment in 1937–1938, Dersim turned into an esoteric place. 'Exile' has changed the local dynamics considerably.

However, in contrast to previous research, this study asserts that it is not possible to state categorically that the Dersim nomadic culture is entirely isolated geographically. This area has served as a transition zone for centuries, and it's important to remember that the local communities are experiencing widespread displacement. Groups that could be referred to as trust networks have emerged and expanded throughout this large region over time.

When studying this region, the first thing to emphasize is that Dersim is home to a multi-layered, sophisticated social network. In this study, I propose that Dersim should be considered as an adaptive concept because it represents a kinship, political, ideological and cultural basin. In Dersim, the dynamics of belonging have developed fictionally rather than solely through kinship and religious ties. In this specific period of the 1970s, the political alliance system in this area establishes the political structure, tribal ties, and trust network connections and facilitates their evolution. Dersim is also a transnational network, extending from Turkey to other countries. Although the global nature of this network is considered, a study of its transnational characteristics was deemed unnecessary for this thesis.

[37] Gündoğan, ibid.

[38] https://t24.com.tr/haber/dersimde-isyan-bastirilmadi-halk-edeplendirildi,62383

CHAPTER 2

SETTING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Theoretical Perspectives to the State and Society Relations

Most of the literature regarding an aspect of modern society starts with the definition and functions of the state. The modern use of sovereign national state which is considered as the starting point of modern society came to scene after the institutionalization of the Westphalian norms in 1648.[39] From this period on, political authority consistently maintains its existence and order inside a specific territorial area.[40] The modern state literally began to refer to a public order distinct from both the ruler and the ruled, with highly centralized institutions using power and exercising authority over inhabitants of a claimed territory.[41] Classical social theorists focused on the state as a key element in understanding the establishment and development of capitalism. They analyzed the social transformations brought about by industrialization and capitalism, developing comparative theories to explore the complex dynamics between the state and society.[42] According to Marxist scholarship, the state is the political organization which is recognized as the representative of a dominant social class that seeks to secure the interests of that privileged social group. The state's elites and the bureaucracy are depicted as trying to capture state authority for their own interests.[43] The state, which supports a certain

[39] G. John Ikenberry (ed). *Power, Order, and Change in World Politics*. (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p.44.

[40] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline to Interpretive Sociology*. Guenther Roth & Claus Wittich (eds). (California: University of California Press, 1978), p.54.

[41] Gerald F. Gaus and Chandran Kukathas (eds), *Handbook of Political Theory*. (Sage Publications, 2004), p.197.

[42] Faruk Yalvaç, "Tarihsel Sosyoloji ve Uluslararası İlişkiler: Jeopolitik, Kapitalizm ve Devletler Sistemi", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 10, No. 38 (Summer 2013), pp.3-28. p.6.

[43] Bob Jessop. *The Capitalist State; Marxist Theories and Methods*, (Oxford: Martin Robertson & Company Ltd., 2013), pp.7-8.

social class, emerges as a result of these social conflicts and crises. In other words, classical Marxist analysis reminds us that states are instruments for dominating the societies they serve. Class conflicts are also among the prevailing categories in explaining the internal and international domain. Additionally, state power takes place in economic relations of production and it is the owner of the means of production in the Marxist literature. Moreover, Marxist study of the state takes into account regional, historical, and national variations in the structures and activities of the state in capitalist social formations.[44] The international system is divided by core, periphery and semi-periphery and there is a dependency relationship between these units.[45] They are the three zones of the world economy and political hegemony is in the hands of developed core countries in the international realm.[46]

In parallel with this context, in the first half of the 20th century, classical realism reminds us that modern nation-states are sovereign territorial entities in an anarchic world. It is defined as the institutional form of the maintenance of social order constantly in the pursuit of power.[47] The state is seen as the main set of institutions of the political system which develops governing structures, secures territorial borders, enforces laws, and provides basic services to their populations. It claims ultimate power and authority within borders to maintain internal order. In this context, enforcing laws, taxation, conscription and other policies give shape to overall internal relations. In the international system of states, states concern themselves with the aim of national survival 'in the condition of international anarchy'.[48] The state considers itself as responsible for maintaining internal order and security as well as confronting international challenges. These realist perceptions

[44] Clyde W. Barrow, *Critical Theories of The State: Marxist, Neo-Marxist, Post-Marxist*. The University of Wisconsin Press, (London:1993), p.155. (op.cit. Jessop, Bob. *The Capitalist State,* p. 221)

[45] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and The Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. (New York: Academic Press, 1974), p.63.

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] Mitchell Dean. *Critical and Effective Histories: Foucault's Methods and Historical Sociology*. (London: Routledge, 1994), p.142.

[48] Robert Gilpin and Jean Gilpin. *The Political Economy of International Relations*, (Princeton University Press, 1987), p.85.

of the modern state dominated the intellectual currents up until the mid-20th century. Since then, expanding on the limitations of classical realist assumptions, alternative interpretations seek to reformulate the concept of the state from different perspectives.

For understanding and analyzing historical processes which led to transformation of traditional social organization to modern industrial society and its "territorialization as the political obligation"[49], fundamental analyses and argumentations have flourished till the middle of the 20th century. Several political and social developments led to a departure from the classical understanding of the state. Some of the developments of that era included global developments such as the end of the Cold War and the Soviet Union's collapse, as well as social movements of the era, including the labor movement, feminist movement, student movement, civil rights movement, and the rise of globalization.[50]

Starting in the mid-20th century, social science theories underwent significant expansion and diversification, particularly regarding alternative approaches to analyzing the state. Schools of thought like Structural Functionalism, Neo-Marxism, Neoliberalism, Constructivism, Feminism, and Historical Sociology offered new perspectives on state functions and state-society relations, challenging classical theories. These fresh approaches introduced new ways of understanding the nature and functions of states.

According to the scholarship of this period, the state is not understood as a monolithic entity but rather as a dynamic network composed of actions undertaken by individuals and groups with different interests.[51] This perspective posits that the state's power is constrained by non-state actors, social forces, and the global power structure.[52] Power struggles occur among these actors and the state and this results in

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] Stephen Hobden, *International Relations, and Historical Sociology: Breaking Down Boundaries*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p.1.

[51] Lars Kaspersen. 2003, p.24.

[52] Fred Halliday. *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics, and Ideology*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p.72.

a distribution of power. It sees states, societies, and governments as separate entities, but underlines their interconnected nature and relationships.[53] Since it is stated that the state is influenced by the society that surrounds it, state power should be considered in relation to social forces. In addition, non-state actors started to take ito consideration in this era. States are considered as influenced by factors such as ethnic identities, economic motives, religious beliefs, or cultural differences. Non-state actors began to be acknowledged and influential in forming the socio-political sphere. It is also important to acknowledge that relationships between states and social classes differ across countries and in different historical periods. Ignoring these unique conditions and understanding society only through the lens of class conflicts neglects the crucial factors influencing the relations between states and societies.

Although theories varied in terms of methodology, subject matter, and level of analysis, the emergence of conceptually and theoretically critical, cultural, historical, and sociological studies during this time led to a greater diversity in social sciences. Many of these studies focus on state functions in different domains such as political, military, economic, cultural, or ideological aspects. They focus on the function of states and societal phenomena on the premise that historical events allow social formations to emerge, evolve, and undergo various forms of transitions. The political authority and other actors appear to be in a state of flux which means they are shifting or changing their positions continually. Relations between states, individuals, social groups, and international institutions are diversified, multifaceted, and interdependent. In addition, Boztemur critiques the limitations of existing state theories when analyzing the "state" concept, specifically regarding its origins, processes, and power dynamics. He contends that a comprehensive understanding of the nation-state's establishment necessitates considering a complex interplay of national, international, political, economic, and social factors – a viewpoint lacking in other theoretical frameworks.[54]

[53] Hobden, *ibid*, p.5.

[54] Boztemur, *ibid*, p.2.

Given its emphasis on historical and cultural context, Historical Sociology was selected as the most appropriate methodological framework for this study. Its ability to illuminate historical context and cultural patterns, particularly regarding peripheral groups within nation-states, makes it exceptionally valuable. This thesis adopts a Historical Sociology perspective, specifically drawing influence from Charles Tilly's work, to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the chosen subject area, Dersim/Tunceli, during a specific period of the republican era.

2.2. A Critial Perspective: Historical Sociology

In a form of "historical and cultural turn" in social analyses, Historical Sociology is articulated as a "middle ground" between the grand theories and historicism.[55] They put a strong emphasis on historical processes, cultural and historical specificities to the exploration of both national and international sources of change.[56] However, Historical Sociology is both within and beyond conducting sociological or historical research. Among the pioneers, Charles Tilly argues that history and sociology were brought together under the same umbrella to respond to the limitations of both historicist and sociological modes of inquiry.[57] From the late 1960s, Historical Sociology has aimed to "bring back" aspects of social life often deemed irrational. This includes a renewed focus on the roles of religion, emotions, violence, and social relations within societal analysis.[58] In addition, modes of production, bureaucracy, social class, nation-states, revolution, social welfare, civil society, citizenship, and cultural studies are among the core features of inquiry in a historically and sociologically sensitive approach.[59] These power sources can be understood in relation to one another.

[55] William R. Wood, *ibid*, p.120.

[56] Yalvac, *ibid*. p.6.

[57] Tom Lunborg. "The limits of historical sociology: Temporal borders and the reproduction of the 'modern' political present" *European Journal of International Relations*, 1-23, (2015), p.3.

[58] Julia Adams, Elisabeth Clemens, and Ann Shola Orloff. "Social Theory, Modernity, and the Three Waves of Historical Sociology", Russell *SAGE Foundation Working Paper 206*, (2003), p.66.

[59] Wood, *ibid*, p.123.

There have been versions of historical sociology; different scholars approaching state and the social phenomena by focusing on different questions. In *Bringing the State Back In* Theda Skocpol mentions that historical sociology views the state as an actor that is influenced by the society that surrounds it.[60] It means modern national states should be considered in relation to social structures. In other words, state and society should be analyzed as mutually exclusive categories signifying the importance of social forces in the emergence of state mechanisms. Recent historical sociology analyses pay more attention to patterns of state-society relations for this reason. States develop in relation to societies and the interactions lead to specific relationships in each and every particular context. They recognize that historical processes, social relations, and cultural patterns are all shaped by the unique historical contexts within which they develop.[61]

In line with this argument, historical sociologists share an appreciation that understanding contemporary social relations can only be fully realized by knowledge about the long-term and short-term reasons that generated them.[62] According to this argument, previous circumstances both limit and encourage human behavior which affects current processes. There are historical state building pathways (*path dependency*) that identify historically "successful" practices and institutions. These historically successful paths can get reproduced and help to the creation of recent political authorities.[63] Consequently, according to all of the previously mentioned interpretations, historical sociology is seen as the most appropriate theoretical paradigm because it provides the necessary toolkit for elaborating a specific region's political developments in a certain time period.[64] Charles Tilly's approach, which emphasizes the significance of long-term dynamics and historical context, offers excellent justifications for analyzing how the relationship between the state and

[60] Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Theda Skocpol (eds), *ibid*, p.VII.
[61] Alejandro Colas and George Lawson, *ibid*, p.14.

[62] George Lawson. "The Promise of Historical Sociology in International Relations", *International Studies Review*, 8, (2006), 397–423. P.403.

[63] Raymond Hinnebusch, "*A historical sociology approach to authoritarian resilience in post-Arab Uprising MENA*". The Arab Thermidor: The Resurgence of the Security State Workshop, London School of Economics and Political Science Middle East Centre, (October 10, 2014), p.2.

[64] Hobden, 1998, p.37.

society evolves over time. This directly addresses the main questions of this dissertation.

2.3. A Pioneer in the Discipline: Charles Tilly

Charles Tilly is recognized as one of the pioneers of historical sociology due to his significant contributions to understanding the historical dynamics of state formation, social movements, and social change. He analyzes the effects of capitalism, class struggle, revolutions, collectivities and collective actions upon the political systems. In his studies, primacy has been given to the institutional dimension, or "infrastructural power", of the state by defining it as a coercion-wielding organization.[65] According to Tilly, the process of state building is driven by competition both from within and beyond its borders. The state needs to keep internal order and govern its society effectively by coercion. It also aims to protect itself from external threats. To maintain legitimacy inside and outside its borders, states need to get resources like taxes, military service, and loyalty from its population. Instead of relying on warfare, states improve their capacity by building bureaucracies, schools, and making investments. Moreover, he states that states are historical entities, and they are continually shaped via negotiation between individuals, interest groups and the states. Drawing on Tilly's analysis, power relationships – including acts of resistance, revolutions, and social movements – significantly shape the actions and functions of the state. When people mobilize for political purposes, it has a profound impact on the state's role and limitations.

Charles Tilly is also concerned with different state forms in world history. According to his conception, the state has been the most powerful coercion-wielding organization which is distinct from households and kinship groups and exercises clear priority over all other human organizations for more than five thousand years.[66] He analyzes that concentrated capital (presence of cities), concentrated coercion (presence of states), preparation for war, and position within the international system

[65] Hobden and Hobson. *Ibid*, p.94.

[66] Charles Tilly. *Coercion, Capital, and European States: AD 990-1990*, (Blackwell Publishing, 1992), p.1.

made significant effects on the emergence of the modern European states system.[67] In his *Coercion Capital, and European States*, he discusses alternative forms of state formations in Europe. He argues that European states, despite diverse historical paths, ultimately evolved towards a shared model: the national state.[68] States exist out of the competition for control of territory and population with other states and that led to the creation of different state forms. In his *Formation of National States in Europe*, Tilly claims that war and threat of war plays a critical role in the modern state formation. The dynamics of war-making provides legitimacy for state-making and protecting the population inside and outside of the delimited territories. For Tilly, state has three essential minimum activities as state-making within defined boundaries, war-making with rivals outside, and protection.[69] Among the explanations regarding the European state-formation, the international system is understood as a dual force, imposing norms and rules on nation-states while also fueling wars.[70] Tilly's works, including *The Vendée* and *Trust and Rule*, illuminate the dynamics of state power and the counter-revolutionary forces that oppose it. He claims how pre-existing societal networks grounded in factors like kinship and religion shape regional resistance, influencing and sometimes reshaping state policies. In *The Vendée*, Tilly sheds light specifically on how religious and kinship networks fueled resistance to the French state, providing insights into the complexities of state-society relationships.

For this dissertation, one of the most focal explanations about the state and social processes is Charles Tilly's seminal work, *Identities, Boundaries and Social Ties*. In this work, Tilly investigates challenges within social organization and how individuals relate to the broader socio-political context. He emphasizes the importance of identities in understanding social behavior, arguing that identities emerge from social interactions. Tilly stresses that our focus should be on the connections, or transactions, between social positions rather than solely on the

[67] *Ibid*, p.14.

[68] *Ibid*, p.14.

[69] *Ibid*, p.96.

[70] Hobden and Hobson (eds), *ibid*, p.115.

relationships themselves. Relations between the social sites were the result of a series of transactions.[71] Tilly uses the term "social ties" due to their enduring nature. These ties encompass various forms, including kinship, friendships, and professional networks. Social ties facilitate cooperation and are inherently dynamic. They can transform over time, influencing behavior at both individual and collective levels. Conversely, "relations" refer to the evolving interactions between social positions, potentially leading to shared memories, perceptions, and patterns.[72] Tilly views social identities as powerful social constructs, shaped by shared narratives that people create within specific social contexts.[73] Identity is shaped by relationships that exist both within defined groups and across the boundaries that separate them.[74] Identities are shaped by diverse factors, including social class, ethnicity, and religion. Tilly's significant contribution highlights the role of interpersonal connections in state-society dynamics. He emphasizes how these relationships give rise to new social processes, boundaries, and connections, such as citizenship, inequality, social movements, and collective violence. Building upon Tilly's analytical framework, this research explores state-society relations in contemporary Turkey during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Specifically, I will utilize his concept of "trust networks" as a framework for analysis.

2.3.1. Trust Networks Analysis

Charles Tilly has made an important contribution to the literature with “trust networks” analysis. In his studies, he uses the concepts "trust" and "trust networks" to picture a network of inner interactions in a defined society by considering their relations with the state. Tilly claims that people come together for a common social, political, economic, or cultural goal to form social movements. These movements depend on a number of resources, like as labor, money, information, religious ties, and a common commitment.[75] They place their trust in others, believing those

[71] Charles Tilly. *Identities, Boundaries and Social Ties*. (Routledge, 2005), p.7.

[72] *Ibid.*

[73] Tilly, 2005, p.209.

[74] *Ibid*, p.8.

[75] Charles Tilly. *Trust and Rule*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.23.

individuals will act in ways that reduce risks or uncertainties that are beyond their direct control.[76] ocial movements in Western societies typically exhibit three defining characteristics: organized collective action to advance shared demands, the use of various political tactics (including public gatherings and protests), and displays of legitimacy, unity, strength, and commitment among participants.[77] Social movements can arise in response to specific societal changes, organized oppression, or to challenge those in power. They emerge as a reaction against repressive systems and serve as a call to action to resist various forms of injustice.[78] To build larger social movements, diverse members of a community may unite their existing solidarity networks.

In his 2005 book *Trust and Rule*, Tilly refers to a specific type of social movement. This special form of social organization is defined as "trust network". According to this definition, trust can be an attitude or a relationship. People establish networks when they are connected by common bonds. In this context, it's helpful to consider Charles Tilly's definition of the dynamics within a trust network:

> "How will we recognize a trust network when we encounter or enter one? First, we will notice a number of people who are connected, directly or indirectly, by similar ties; they form a network. Second, we will see that the sheer existence of such a tie gives one member significant claims on the attention or aid of another; the network consists of strong ties. Third, we will discover that members of the network are collectively carrying on major long-term enterprises such as procreation, long-distance trade, workers' mutual aid or practice of an underground religion. Finally, we will learn that the configuration of ties within the network sets the collective enterprise at risk to the malfeasance, mistakes, and failures of individual members."[79]

This paragraph describes in detail what one should understand from the concept of trust network. In this sense, a trust relationship occurs in closed social structures due to various political, social, or economic reasons. People rely on such networks for practical and long-term activities as childbirth, engaging in long-distance trade,

[76] Tilly, 2004, p.134.

[77] Tilly, *ibid*, pp.3-4.

[78] Charles Tilly. *Social Movements, 1768-2004*. (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2004), p.3.

[79] Tilly, 2005, p.4.

migration to long distances, practicing a hidden religious belief, or agricultural production.[80] According to Tilly, trust and solidarity relationships can occur among members of kinship groups, secret religious sects, mutual aid societies, trade networks, migration groups, pirate bands, a group of tax resisters, violence-wielding groups, or commercial diasporas.[81] In other words, solidarity networks can take various types according to particular circumstances such as small commercial networks or popular religious communities. Via these collaborations they create strong social bonds with the trusted others. Members of these groups share deep bonds of solidarity and trust. Trust means accepting the risk that another person might make mistakes or cause harm.[82]

Tilly was also interested in how these networks contain marginalized populations that are located far from the central power.[83] Certain social groups form alliances based on shared goals and mutual trust, operating independently of formal ties to those in power. As Tilly notes, throughout history, participants in such solidarity groups have found ways to function outside the reach of government control.[84] They have traditionally distanced themselves from power centers for several reasons. They fear pressure from the government because they worry their businesses could be taken or disrupted, causing problems. A political regime could weaken their local power and endanger their possessions. Due to the fear of dispossession or exploitation[85] the members of a trust network have significant shared interests and participate in collective activities that involve risks, due to their strong mutual trust. When individuals successfully protect their trust networks, they resist government interference and weaken government control on their delimited territories, comply

[80] *Ibid*, pp. 4, 6, 13, 14.

[81] Charles Tilly. *Identities, Boundaries and Social Ties*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), p.40.

[82] Charles Tilly. *Trust and Rule*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.xii.

[83], Michael Hanagan and Chris Tilly. "Cities, states, trust, and rule: new departures from the work of Charles Tilly", *Theory and Society*, (2010), p.255.

[84] Charles Tilly. *Social Movements, 1768-2004*, Paradigm Publishers, 2004, p.134.

[85] Charles Tilly. "Trust and Rule", *Theory and Society*, Vol.33, No.1, (2004), p. 1.

minimally with government demands, and contribute less to public resources controlled by the government.[86]

The relationship of trust network groups with public politics is another issue. According to Tilly, we can rarely observe integration of trust networks into public politics. In certain circumstances, members of trust networks may attempt to negotiate with the ruling regime or seek to establish alliances with it. Through these actions, trust networks may choose to partially integrate into mainstream political structures. From indirect (politically active associations based on trust networks) to direct (supporting careers of trust network members in governmental services), there are many different ways that people interact with the political system.[87] Moreover, according to Tilly, social relations among the participants of trust networks and the relation with the political regime creates a kind of intersection. Different forms of integration with the political system emerge because of various forms of trust networks. These relations result in inhibiting or promoting the processes towards democratization. In Tilly's words, there appeared three means of connection between the rulers and the ruled: coercion, capital, and commitment.[88] Coercion refers to different ways of causing harm or damage to individuals or their belongings forcefully. It involves the use of weapons, armed forces, prisons, damaging information, and established methods of imposing sanctions.[89] Capital, in relation to a ruler's control over natural resources, entails the ruler's direct power, often enforced through coercion, and the ability to assert legal ownership over those resources.[90] Commitment refers to the relationships between different social groups that encourage them to acknowledge and support each other.[91] For example, a shared language can strongly connect a trust group without a need to rely on coercion or capital. Different human communities have been able to follow some historical paths

[86] Charles Tilly. *Identities, Boundaries and Social Ties*, p.55.

[87] Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, p.10.

[88] *Ibid,* p.30.

[89] *Ibid.*

[90] *Ibid.*

[91] *Ibid.*

to engage into public politics, from segregation to integration as Tilly mentions.[92] These historical paths include power struggles such as opposition to the system, adaptation to it, or violent extraction throughout the ages.[93]

Trust networks can assume duties typically carried out by governments, occasionally helping and strengthening governmental institutions.[94] If the state offers support and back the trust networks up via public services, this partially creates an integration towards democratic consolidation. This process results in incorporation and expansion of existing trust networks into the polity.[95] These initiatives further support the democratization processes. Democratization requires at least a minimal level of integration of trust networks into public politics because when trust networks and democratic institutions support each other under favorable conditions, it promotes the process of democratization in the political system.[96]

Furthermore, Charles Tilly adopts the terms of "predator", "prey", and "predation" to describe the relationships in social organizations. In Tilly's words, trust groups mostly fall in the category of prey, but rarely they can be predators.[97] Predators hold positions of power while preys are groups subject to their dominance. Predators are mostly cities or states. They can be also individuals or groups, such as pirates or gangs, who establish close relations with one another to escape oppression or external interference.[98] They use coercion to pursue their own interests in politics, economics, or society. Trust networks mostly defend themselves from predation. Preys represent rural collectivities which are bounded to each other via kinship, religion, or common culture. To take resources from others, predators use coercive

[92] Charles Tilly. *Contention & Democracy in Europe, 1650-2000*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.17.

[93] *Ibid*.

[94] Hanagan and Tilly, *ibid*, p.251.

[95] Tilly, *Identities, Boundaries, and Social Ties*, p.39.

[96] Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, p.124.

[97] *Ibid*, p.84.

[98] *Ibid*, pp.81-82.

measures directed at other groups. They use violent measures by targeting individuals or groups outside their own group.[99] Charles Tilly, consequently, contends that distinct solidarity networks have given rise to various sorts of regimes across time by addressing a wide range of hypotheses regarding the dynamics of solidarity in various places and periods.

2.3.2. Understanding Dersim as a *Trust Network*

As extensively debated in the literature, Dersim and its related challenges have consistently been perceived as a security issue and central problem by governments since the imperial times. After the republic was established, the government aimed to create a unified national identity by promoting a single ethnicity, religion, and culture. Isolated regions like Dersim/Tunceli became a focus of these nation-building efforts. The government's attempts to exert control over Dersim/Tunceli were part of this process, resulting in the region being continually marginalized and excluded from central power structures. Regarding Tilly's arguments on state-society relations and local solidarity networks, one can explain Dersim/Tunceli as a kind of trust network in its own public realm. Based on this information, residents of Dersim can be considered as a genuine trust network. The people of the locality have a special relationship of solidarity within themselves in the sense that there are strong ties and coordination between the participants, and we can see the relations among the residents of Dersim such that:

> a. involvement in that relation gives all participants some minimum of shared rights and responsibilities
>
> b. members have established means of communicating and signifying their shared membership within the group
>
> c. clear boundaries exist that distinguish members from outsiders.[100]

The strong ties and coordination within Dersim/Tunceli clearly demonstrate the presence of internal trust networks in this region. The local community has

[99] *Ibid,* p.84.

[100] Tilly, *Trust and Rule,* p.44.

traditionally maintained a closed social structure based on strong bonds like kinship, tribal affiliations, and religious connections. These ties *that bind and bound* create a cohesive group with a shared religious and ethnic identity, distinguishing them from outsiders. Moreover, participation in solidarity networks of this region imposes responsibilities and rights on all group members; Dersim Alevi affiliation grants a unique religious entitlement to those who carry it. In contrast to other religious doctrines, Alevism asserts that individuals are inherently born Alevi and cannot undergo conversion. This principle establishes a distinct boundary between Alevi individuals of Dersim and those outside the community. This distinctive belief system fosters a shared sense of dignity, forming a fundamental basis for their social network. Furthermore, the people of Dersim communicate through shared ties, including religious rituals, relationships with spiritual guides, and the language. The affiliation with Alevism is the primary determinant that shapes the horizon of being from Dersim. Families of spiritual lineages (*ocaks*), spiritual guides (*pirs*), and those who seek their religious guidance (*talips*) make up these ties.

Trust networks in Dersim developed largely as a response to external threats, both from regional powers and the central government. Their distinct identity as Kurdish Alevis, differing from both the Sunni Kurdish majority and Bektashi Alevis, has historically created tensions with other groups. A sense of internal unity and the emergence of strong in-group trust networks appeared in this atmosphere. Furthermore, the state's treatment of the region based on their Kurdishness, Alevi identity, and underdevelopment has further shaped these local networks. Importantly, the complex relationship between the state and Dersim's trust networks has led to a degree of autonomy within the region. The state's actions directly influence how these networks of solidarity form and evolve over time.

The primary factors influencing Dersim's sense of belonging is physical coercion directed by the ruling power and conflicts with the regional powers. The region's history is driven by economic survival, the protection of its religious identity, local political power, and the need to defend against external threats.[101] Local residents

[101] Charles Tilly. *Coercion, Capital, and European States AD 990-1990*. (Basil Blackwell, 1990), p.96.

sought collective action and internal organizational activities in their territories against the pressures coming from outside. Prior to the 20th century, Kurdish Alevi community in Dersim possessed religious and tribal networks that allowed them to maintain autonomy from the central government. These structures, built on trust and longstanding local relationships, were able to evolve independently from the state, which encouraged a sense of autonomy in the region. The community was able to provide its own needs and maintain a level of self-governance without being dependent on central authorities because they possessed trust networks based on shared religious, linguistic, and ethnic affiliations. The people of the locality have tried to protect themselves from external influences by determining collective strategies among major regional power centers. They had disagreements with the government, especially in tax collection and military service, which were one of the steps of centralization during the Ottoman modernization era. Tensions developed especially in these two lines for many years and the sanctions were imposed by the imperial center. Political authority, thus, has attempted to dominate this locality for many ages and maintain its hegemony unilaterally. As in the Waldesians/Barbes example described by Tilly, the people of Dersim; "did not preach publicly, for justified fear of persecution. Instead, their proselytizing passed from household to household, from person to person, in protected secrecy."[102]

Moreover, in its own context, the people of Dersim can be called a "prey" group with reference to Tilly's statement. Dersim, as a marginalized solidarity network, carries within its identity a combination of closed religious beliefs and ethnic affiliations. The region's distinct beliefs, kinship ties, and underdeveloped rural conditions set it apart from the surrounding centers of power, making it incompatible with them. Within this marginalized group of Dersim, the establishment of trust networks can be seen as crucial, as they become vulnerable to predation from both the imperial center and the regional Kurdish center. The internal dynamics of solidarity, characterized by distinct religious belief and affiliation with an ethnic group other than the dominant ethnicity of the establishment, make the region vulnerable to oppression by predators. In the context of Dersim, the predators opposed to this local solidarity

[102] Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, p.3.

group have been sometimes other regional powers and at other times government authorities representing state governance. From the middle of the 1970s, when an integration began to occur into the public politics, we find the people of Dersim creating long-term activities to public politics; they started to take role in publicly recognized political fractions, not pursuing a kinship or shared belief within these organizations. This means some segments of the local society in Dersim withdrew their trusted network from public politics to some extent after 1970s. Their political embrace of leftist ideology, in addition to existing religious differences, created new challenges for the state's attempts to integrate Dersim into the broader Turkish society.[103]

To further prove whether Dersim can be considered as a trust group, it seems possible to compare some of the trust network dynamics claimed to exist in Dersim with some other trust network examples. Despite differences in time, geography, and specific context, the dynamics of trust networks in Dersim share parallels with those of the Waldensian community described by Charles Tilly. Waldensians, a religious community living in France in the 14th century, were considered as a heretic primitive Christians by the establishment of the era. Living in the high parts of the Alps, the Waldensians were a Christian group engaged in herding and agriculture. They had a clergy who did not marry due to their religious beliefs and were only busy with their religious teachings. They resisted papal authority in their lands, refused to take oaths, and opposed the death penalty.[104] Since the state considered the Waldensian population as heretics, they refrained from preaching in public because the state prohibited them from public teachings. Rather, their preaching took place in safe secrecy from person to person and from household to household.[105] Both communities, feeling an existential threat and fear of persecution due to their beliefs, prioritized secrecy, and clandestine practices. To survive, these communities formed internal bonds of trust against state coercion. To protect themselves, both communities developed techniques of secrecy to survive and maintain their identity.

[103] Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi. *Kızılbaşlar/Aleviler*, (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2012), p.186.

[104] Tilly, "Trust and Rule", p.1.

[105] *Ibid*. p.2.

The inhabitants of Dersim, like the Waldensians, are a semi-nomadic agricultural community that exists on the periphery of political authority. They rely largely on strong family-based, religious, and ethnic relationships since they have a common history of facing external forces. As mentioned above, resistance capacity in Dersim depends on this inner trust bonds, and geography aiding them to resist. The state's limited control in the region prior to 1938 signifies a significant obstacle within Turkey's state-building process. State policies focused on undermining Dersim's internal established networks led to a turning point, allowing the state to maintain domination.

In terms of the changing structure of these dynamics according to time and conditions in Dersim, Dersim during the period of 1923-1938 can be categorized as a typical strong trust network as defined by Tilly. During this period, there appeared resistance against the newly emerging state institutions and national unity. The region's population, lived away from the state's influence for centuries, opposed the centralization policies of the 19th century. Both regional leaders and the local population rejected the state and its authority in this era. This situation dramatically changed when the republic established full authority in the region in 1938 through harsh measures and forced migration, leading to a semi-dissolution of the trust network. With ties severed for about a decade, the local population transformed into what Tilly refers to as an "underground trust network."[106] After this major tragedy, the population of Dersim literally closed their doors to the outside world. During this period, the spiritual guides (*pirs*) lost their connections with their followers (*talips*), and as religious beliefs and practices were orally transmitted and sustained; it wouldn't be incorrect to say that there was an interruption in religious affiliation.

After 1948, as the local population began returning to their lands, this period indicated another phase of advancement for the networks of solidarity in Dersim. In the 1950s, the local community started accepting government investments, healthcare, education services, and other public services. This led to a semi-dissolution period for the local ties, driven by the state's investments and the introduction of socialist ideas and politization of the inhabitants. The involvement of

[106] Tilly, *ibid.* p.3.

the youth in public politics brought integration and democratization, further eroding the trust network in the 1960s and 1970s. Consequently, the trust network dynamics within the Dersim locality underwent continuous transformation during this period. Two key forces shaped these changes: first, government investments and integration policies encouraged reliance on external resources, weakening internal bonds. Secondly, the politicization of a segment of the local population, namely the Dersimli youth, led to the expansion of their trust networks, facilitating engagement with broader political movements and integrating Dersim into wider solidarity networks.

The intensity of trust network dynamics in Dersim has fluctuated throughout history. Initially, it closely mirrored Tilly's definition of a trust network. Subsequently, it has experienced phases of erosion, resurgence, and renewed weakening. This cyclical pattern reflects the evolving relationship between Dersim society and the state, shaped by the prevailing sociopolitical conditions of each era. Importantly, while sometimes categorized as a prey group, the trust networks of Dersim do not necessarily imply a homogeneous or entirely cohesive organization. In this context, interviews revealed that conflicts can arise even between neighboring villages sharing historical ties and kinship due to competing interests. Within the Dersim locality, known for its history of conflict, it's possible to identify trust networks that can act as "prey" in their relationship with the state, yet simultaneously function as "predators" within local dynamics. As Tilly notes, trust networks can form even among groups engaging in violent predatory activities, such as pirates or gangs. One could argue that historically semi-nomadic and warlike groups can also establish trust networks based on shared interests.

For these reasons, Dersim locality can certainly be examined as a trust network. "Coercion", which Tilly associates with being a trust network, has been the fundamental dynamic of state relations with this region since its known history. Similar to the Waldensians, the Alevi identity of the Dersim community fostered a practice of “concealment”.[107] That legacy stems from being Alevi, has enabled them to be closed to the outside world in all areas of social life and to form an internal

[107] Tilly, *ibid*, p.83.

security network against external threats. For fear of persecution, they could not speak openly; instead, religious propaganda was "transmitted secretly from house to house, from person to person" in Dersim.[108]

Thus, Dersim is considered as an example of an autonomous community that has remained distant from centers of power for centuries. They have adopted a survivalist perspective centered on preserving their unique way of life in reaction to state attempts to impose authority. Geographic isolation and challenging circumstances have historically led them to engage in war-like practices such as banditry, highway robbery, or brigandage. The people of Dersim are seen as primarily motivated by their own survival and autonomy, even if it means acting outside the law. This implies that the people of Dersim are viewed as using coercion and violence to achieve their goals and preying on those around them. In the context of Tilly's work on social movements, Dersim's actions could be understood as a form of contentious politics, where they employ solid, sometimes violent, methods to maintain their position and resources within the larger regional power balance.[109] Thus, local ties can be classified as predatory in the sense that functioning as local gangs to avoid state control while maintaining its own survival via illegal activities in neighboring areas. As a predatory group, they also rely on strong internal network to effectively coerce their targets and resist external threats.

These factors reveal that trust networks were present in Dersim and were characterized by constant internal fluctuation during the period under study. These networks were not monolithic entities but rather exhibited dynamic characteristics shaped by the complex interplay of various factors.

Consequently, one must emphasize the fact that trust networks in Dersim/Tunceli do not appear in the typical form that was discussed by Charles Tilly. It should be carefully addressed to understand the social structure of the Dersim/Tunceli region using the conception of trust networks. The trust networks paradigm explains Dersim

[108] Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, p.3.

[109] Tilly, *Contentious Politics*, p.19.

with some boundaries. The social networks here are much more complex than the trust dynamics Tilly mentions. For this reason, one should try to imagine Dersim as a trust network "with reserves". In this context, Prof. Özden's contribution is worth considering about this conceptualization. In the thesis committee meeting with Prof. Özden, he wisely stated that the Ottoman Empire was more involved with the Çukurova Turkmen tribes in settling the nomads and recruiting them into the military than Dersim tribes. According to Özden, one should take into consideration that the Ottoman Empire used comparable strategies to address the centralization issues that emerged in various regions of the empire.[110] The efforts being made in Dersim were not different from those aimed at rehabilitating the Çukurova Turkmens through the Fırka-i İslâhiye unions, who refuse to obey state authority and cause disturbances.[111]

This contribution makes clear that careful consideration must be given to attempts to establish Dersim as a unique socio-political and cultural entity. Dersim should not be seen as the only case that exposed to the strict centralization measures of the Empire. Like other nomadic tribes, Dersim had its share of centralization policies. What makes it unique is that it was included and subject to the republican regime after a major military operation in 37-38. However, to interpret the situation in relation to local developments during this period, it is necessary to look at the nomadic-settled relationship observed in Anatolia. At that time, the rural norm in some tribes was such that one of the working principles of the tribe was to steal, and the operational principle of the tribe was the protection of their own members' interests and resources.

[110] This reference is made to the argument expressed by Professor Mehmet Özden in the thesis committee meeting held on March 8, 2024.

[111] Yusuf Halaçoğlu. XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İskân Siyaseti ve Aşiretlerin Yerleştirilmesi, TTK Yayınları, Ankara 1997. Abdurrahman Kütük, "Çukurova Türkmenlerinin Son İsyanı", Akademik Tarih ve Düşünce Dergisi, Cilt:9, Sayı:4, pp. 1418-1443, Aralık 2022

CHAPTER 3

SETTING THE HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK: DERSIM/TUNCELI IN MODERN TURKEY

3.1. Imagining Dersim/Tunceli as a Stock of Knowledge

Tunceli/Dersim is located in the Upper Mesopotamia of the Turkish mainland. Throughout the centuries this region has been called with three names: Mameki, Kalan, and Tunceli.[112] The region shares borders with the provinces of Erzincan in the West and North, Bingöl and Elazig in the East, and Elazig in the South and Southwest. It is geographically isolated between the Harçik-Munzur rivers and Munzur-Mercan mountains. According to the report written by İzzeddin Çalışlar, the name Dersim was given to a mountainous area formed by valleys between Munzur and Harcik rivers passing through Kalan and Kutu streams, devoid of agricultural land, and home to several tribes referred to as Dersimanli.[113] Historically, it is a multiethnic and multireligious area where different communities have lived together for centuries. Discussions about Dersim/Tunceli within Trukish politics often focus on matters of religious differences, ethnic identity, and its hosting of radical political movements. Apart from imagining Dersim merely an historical, political, or geographical affiliation, the phenomenon of “Dersim/Tunceli" should be considered as a stock of knowledge. The stock of knowledge means the collectivity of experiences, relations, local customs, and everyday practices accumulated over time. This common knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation and which is available to the individual in everyday life.[114] Given that it is challenging to

[112] Kemal Burkay. *Dersim*, (Ankara: Kalan Yayınları, 2001), p.1.

[113] İzzeddin Çalışlar. *Dersim Raporu*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), p.15.

[114] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construcrtion of Reality: A Treatise in hte Sociology of Knowledge.* (USA: Penguin Books; 1991), p.56.

encapsulate Dersim in a single category, this concept can be used for defining Dersim/Tunceli. Dersim is first and foremost a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious identity that is deeply intertwined to each of these components.[115] It might be possible to miss this multifaceted structure if one only considers one of these scenarios while imagining Dersim. As a result, we may identify Tunceli/Dersim based on its political outlook, ethnic affiliations, and social as well as cultural heterogeneity in its particular content.

There are elements in Tunceli's stock of knowledge which distinguish it from other surrounding Anatolian populations. These characteristics include peripherality, ethnic and religious boundaries and forms of traditional social organization. These are significant interconnected factors which shape and define the region and the community while mutually influencing one another. The amalgamation of these aspects is crucial, as these three elements collectively shape the region's sources of belonging. The influence of these components in shaping the region's dynamics, along with the local connections they create, has shaped daily life, relationships, and local affairs in the region.

In literature, Dersim/Tunceli is portrayed as a particular "area" which locates on the Anatolian Kurdish mainland. Dersim is considered as primarily an ethnic area because it is home to Kurdish, Armenian, and Turcoman ethnic communities. In other words, the initial aspect of local identity in the area is its diverse ethnic composition. This multiethnicity signifies that the Dersim region has historically accommodated various groups, including Kurds, Turks, Zazas, Armenians, and Greeks. During the period covered by the thesis, these ethnic identities were still present in Tunceli, but in small numbers, as can be seen from the "Languages of the Tunceli Population in 1965" table in Ali Kaya's book. According to this illustration, a range of languages including Zaza, Turkish, Armenian, Greek, Jewish, Arabic, Circassian, and Albanian were spoken by a relatively small number of individuals in Tunceli in 1965.[116] This spectrum of communities highlights distinct identities,

[115] Leyla Neyzi. *Ben Kimim? Türkiye'de Sözlü Tarih, Kimlik, Öznellik*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), p.150.

[116] Ali Kaya. *Başlangıcından Günümüze Dersim Tarihi.* (İstanbul: Demos Yayınları, 2010), pp.689, 708.

contributing to the region's multicultural heritage that extends back to the 20th century.

There exists no consensus among the people of the region regarding the Zaza identity, which is frequently mentioned in the ethnic identity debates of Dersim. For some members of the local population, Zaza identity is seen as distinct from the Kurdish identity because Zaza identity is often associated with Sunni belief. Particularly among Sunni Zazas residing in the Bingöl region, prefer not to be identified as Zaza. Conversely, for some others, Zaza identity is considered a branch within the Kurdish identity family.[117] Additionally, the languages spoken in the area encompass Zaza language, Kurdish, and Turkish. Zaza language exhibits resemblances to Kurdish and Armenian in terms of both structure and content. When examining sources related to the region, it becomes evident that the tribes of Dersim primarily speak Zazaki, though there are also tribal members who speak Kurdish, Turkish, and Armenian.[118]

Dersim/Tunceli is widely present both inside and outside the Kurdish region in terms of its cultural and religious tendencies. In terms of its Alevi faith, Dersim is distinct from the rest of the Sunni Kurdish majority. Due to religious reasons, Dersim isolates itself from the Sunni Kurdish majority, which constitutes the majority of the population in Kurdistan. Beyond religious distinctions, Kurdish Alevis of Dersim are distinct from Sunni Kurds in terms of their social organization, local affiliations, and relationships with the political establishment, which are largely affected by their religious beliefs. Moreover, Dersim/Tunceli held a multi-religious structure hosting Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Protestants, and Jews for centuries.[119] This fact reveals the multifaceted demographic diversity of the region, which historically encompassed Sunni Kurds, Armenians, and Jewish communities coexisting within the same territories.[120] However, this religious diversity underwent significant

[117] Gürdal Aksoy, *Dersim Alevi Kürt Mitolojisi, Rai Haq'da Dinsel Figürler*. (İstanbul: Komal Basım-Yayım-Dağıtım, 2006), p.33.

[118] Kaya, *ibid*, pp.110-128.

[119] Kemal Karpat. *Osmanlı Nüfusu (1830-1914)*. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2003), p.220.

[120] Aksoy, *ibid.* p.28.

changes, particularly due to the establishment of the Turkish nation-state. Non-Muslim populations deported from their land and Sunni Turks and Kurds. The deportation operations held by after 1937-38 operations also led to alterations in the region regarding the Dersimi local belongings. By the 1970s, alongside the predominant Kurdish Alevi population, Sunni Turkish and Sunni Kurdish groups, also a small community of Christian Armenians coexisted.[121]

The importance of religion in the context of regional belonging is highlighted by the fact that Tunceli is the only province in Anatolia where the Alevis make up the majority. Consequently, the most influential group among Alevi groups in Anatolia is the Dersim/Tunceli Alevis. Dersim Alevis are widely employed in state institutions and constitute one of the influential groups within the state. While broadly categorized as Alevi, Dersim Kızılbaş Alevism holds distinct practices and beliefs compared to Bektashi Alevism, which has closer ties to Turkish national identity.[122] While their rituals may be theologically congruent, Bektaşilik more closely resembles a Sufi order, whereas Dersim Kızılbaş Alevism comprises various distinct lodges, some affiliated with Hacı Bektaş Veli and others independent. Dersim Kizilbas Alevism adheres to the twelve imams doctrine. The Seyyid families, who constitute the socio-cultural fabric of the region and trace their family to the prophetic lineage, are central mythological elements intertwined with the belief system.[123] According to regional beliefs, 12 hearths are descended from 12 imams, and these hearth families are connected to the Seyyids. These Seyyid families established a network that complemented the tribal structure of the region, effectively linking the various tribes together.[124] The Seyyid families undertake the religious duties of the region. Moreover, Kizilbas Alevism incorporates mythical elements such as Duzgun Baba and Hizir belief. Within Dersim Alevism, one finds a blend of Armenian, Zoroastrian, Islamic, and Persian elements.[125] Consequently, it

[121] Kaya, *ibid*.

[122] Aksoy, *ibid*. p.32.

[123] *Ibid*.

[124] Erdal Gezik. *Dinsel, Etnik ve Politik Sorunlar Bağlamında Alevi Kürtler*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), p.63.

[125] Aksoy, *ibid*, p.28.

can be inferred that Dersim Alevism constitutes a complex and multi-layered set of spiritual teachings.

Having established this background, I will now examine the specific local factors that shape the complex sense of belonging in Dersim. I will categorize these factors into three main areas: ethnicity, religion, and politics. Considering Dersim's diverse ethnic and religious composition, this study explores how inhabitants defined their self-perception across ethnic, political, and religious boundaries during the 1960s and 1970s. The interview section will elaborate how this process impacted shifts in local belonging and trust networks and its potential role in catalyzing a new era of democratization within the region.

3.1.1. Peripherality

In literature, the terms periphery and peripherality are used to claim a geographical location or a conceptual interpretation. In the *Sage Dictionary of Sociology*, for instance, the phrases "center" and "periphery" are used conceptually to highlight the inequalities in economic development and modernization within the context of the global capitalist system.[126] Peripherality refers to a people's or region's position in relation to a central geographic area. Being on the borders of a political system is referred to as peripherality.

When examining Dersim/Tunceli, peripherality refers both geographical peripherality and an intellectual distance from the dominant core. Despite all possible interpretations, the first and maybe the most important characteristic of the Tunceli/Dersim region is its peripheral location. Regarding the political power and the economic processes, Dersim is situated on the periphery. It remains peripheral because Dersim has always been separated from the political center both geographically and socially due to some reasons. In the political context, peripherality refers to Tunceli region's distance from the central state and its power structures as well as the local Kurdish center. The peripheral positioning of

[126] Steve Bruce and Steven Yearley. *The SAGE Dictionary of Sociology*, (London: SAGE Publications, 2006), p.30.

Dersim/Tunceli in terms of its power relations, has a direct impact on its political existence. As known the region has remained on the edge of the Ottoman sphere of influence for ages. The central authority has never had a direct impact on this region because of its geographic and cultural distance from the centers of power. Peripheral Dersim has always been having limited access to decision-making processes as well. Since the area was in the frontiers of the Ottoman and Persian Empires, and later the Republican Turkey, the region faced a lot of challenges and the phenomena of peripherality shaped the political environment of the region profoundly.

Regarding the economic context, the idea of peripherality offers another significant explanation to the economic underdevelopment of the region. Dersim has actually been a peripheral region because of its economic peculiarities such as its inadequate economic infrastructure, limited access to economic resources, and lack of investment compared to the economic center. The region's economic underdevelopment stems from its distance from economic developments and its limited interaction with the economic center. The distance of the locality to the economic activities developing in the center results in inadequate economic capabilities and lack of industrial production processes. Being on the edge of centralized authority and power structures is thus a clear consequence of being on the economic periphery. As a rural locality, there is a lack of access to economic resources and markets to the political center particularly in the 1960s and 70s. The region clearly missed out the economic developments and lagged behind the latest advances of the age.[127]

In the cultural context, Dersim is an apparent peripheral area. The state of being situated in a geographical periphery brings social and cultural isolation for the region. Due to this reality, traditional social mechanisms and solidarity networks have until recently maintained their functionality and activity. In this sense, the cultural influence of the core remains weak. Furthermore, Dersim might be viewed as peripheral to the Sunni Turkish dominant culture. As a result of its Kurdish and

[127] The following chapter will critically examine state policies implemented in the region. Particular attention will be given to the economic sphere, assessing the degree to which state investments have been insufficient and their role in creating a disparity in economic development opportunities compared to the rest of Turkey during the period under study.

Alevi heritage, the territory is on the periphery in terms of both ethnicity and religion. So it is appropriate to name the area as the "periphery of the periphery" or an “inner periphery”. In the analysis of local center-periphery relations in the context of Iran, the concept of "internal periphery" was used by Houchang E. Chehabi, one of the scholars of Middle East politics and cultural history. The classification of Dersim/Tunceli as an inner peripheral area is also possible with the Zaza-Alevi core being surrounded by both imperial control and the regional Kurdish power. Due to its predominately Alevi population, in contrast to the Sunni Kurdish majority in other regions, Dersim can be seen as the "internal" peripheral area within the Anatolian Kurdish region. It exists in a *triangular relationship*, positioned between the central state mechanisms and the peripheral areas of Sunni Kurdish and Kurdish-Alevi communities.[128] Thus, due to geographical, political, economic, and cultural traits and the historical realities, the area occupies a double periphery position in the Turkish political history. As previously mentioned, the Kurdish-Alevi "area" of Dersim, which is situated in the Upper Mesopotamian region, symbolizes a geographical and cultural province with rural living conditions. In terms of history and culture, Dersim possesses peripheral, marginal, rural, heterodox, and even mythical labels.[129] Consequently, analyzing specific issues or developments related to this area becomes more comprehensible by considering characteristics such as peripherality, religion, and ethnicity. To comprehensively understand this cultural area and address its challenges, it is necessary to conduct a study that centers around religion and ethnicity, as these aspects play crucial roles in shaping Dersim's identity and dynamics. These factors significantly shape the identity dynamics of the region, making them crucial focal points for comprehensive analysis.

3.1.2.Ethnic Boundaries

The people of Dersim, who consider themselves within Kurdish kinship, together with the Alevi tribes of the Erzincan, Sivas, Malatya and Maraş regions constitute the

[128] H.E. Chehabi, “Ardabil becomes a province: center periphery relations in Iran”, *IJMES*, Vol.29, (1997), pp.235-253. p.236.

[129] It is important to note that the heterodox characteristics of Dersim/Tunceli have often been oversimplified or exaggerated. Arguments focusing exclusively on the region's uniqueness and authenticity can inadvertently exclude the region from its broader regional, national, and international contexts. This results in a limited and potentially misleading understanding of Dersim.

Kurdish Alevi population in eastern Anatolia. Kurdish Alevis live roughly around Tunceli, Elazig, Varto and Muş provinces. Dersim has an ancient legacy of linguistic and cultural variety, with Kurdish, Zaza, Turcoman, and Armenian populations. For centuries, the region has been the shelter of these ethnic groups and they make up the multi-component social fabric of Dersim/Tunceli. The founding social dynamics of this territorial district were formed due to this ethnic diversity and coexistence. The intersection of religious, ethnic, and political affiliations has created a complex, multi-faceted identity for the people of Dersim, shaped by a constantly shifting political landscape.

The Kurdish presence within the Alevi community in Anatolia is relatively limited in terms of population size.[130] The Kurds historically belong to the Sunni and Shia branches of orthodox Islam. It constitutes the demographically most densely Kurdish-Alevi part of the larger Kurdish-Alevi habitat appears as the cultural and political epicenter of this ethno-religious area.[131] Dersim/Tunceli is often recognized as the political hub of Kurdish Alevism since it is not only the area where Kurdish Alevis are most numerous demographically but also because of the active and contentious role Kurdish Alevism plays in Turkish political life. Opposition and dissidence have played a significant role in the region's history, and this paved the way for Dersim to actively participate politics.

Dersim has consistently been perceived as a predominantly Kurdish region by the governments. Since the events of 1937-38 considered within the category of "Kurdish Rebellions" is a crucial indication that the state views Dersim through the lens of the Kurdish issue rather than solely focusing on its Alevism. In the Ottoman archives, the tribes residing in this region are mentioned as Kurds. The historical documents discovered in the Ottoman archives of Prime Ministry (BOA) show that Dersim was a location that was repeatedly targeted to domination. As a result, throughout the Ottoman Empire, the inhabitants of the area were repeatedly referred to as "Kurdish tribes around Dersim," "Kurdish rebels in the Dersim Sanjak," or

[130] Kehl-Bodrogi, *Ibid*, p.81.

[131] Ahmet Kerim Gültekin. "Kurdish Alevism: Creating New Ways of Practicing the Religion", *Working Paper Series of the HCAS*, Leipzig University, (2019), p.2.

simply "Dersim Kurds."[132] Within this framework, the Jön Türk movement and the Kemalist ideologues presented studies asserting that the people of Dersim were ethnically Turks. For the writers of the early Republican era, people residing in Dersim were not Kurds but Zazas. They claimed that the Zazas were Turkish who spoke “mountain Turkish” and assumed that the origin of the Dersimi people was therefore Turkish.[133] A military commander named Ragip Gumuspala wrote a report claiming that the residents of Tunceli are descended from Turks. The research revealed that the inhabitants of Tunceli were Khorasan Turks who had fled the Genghis invasion. It is claimed that these individuals began speaking a mountain Turkish that is a hybrid of Central Asian Turkish while migrating from Khorasan to Anatolia and encountered Persians and Zaza Turks.[134]

However, the uprisings in 1937–38 were not solely motivated by Kurdish nationalism; rather, they also intended to preserve the regional tribal exemptions (such as military exemption and tax exemption). Moreover, the rebels were motivated by their religious sentiments to oppose the abolition of the caliphate.[135] An interview conducted by Gündem Newspaper with a soldier who took part in the Dersim operation in 1937 is featured in the introduction section of *Dersim Reports* by Faik Bulut. According to this interview, desertion was the reason for the military operation in Dersim. “I have no idea why we killed them. It was said that the residents of Dersim did not enlist. I'm not sure if they were Muslims or non-Muslims. We were squabbling. We were killing them, and they were killing us…”[136] The state responded with a violent and harsh response as a result of the 1937–1938 uprisings, which posed a significant challenge to the Turkish Republic in its formation years.

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[132] BOA, Amedi Kalemi Evraki, H-29-12-1265. & BOA, İrade Mesail-i Mühimme Defteri, H-23-04-1264, op.cit. Savaş Sertel, dissertation thesis.

[133] Ercan Cağlayan, *Zazalar: Tarih, Kültür ve Kimlik*. (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016), p.18.

[134] Ersoy Zengin, “Binbaşı Ragıp Gümüşpala’nın Tunceli Raporu (1936-1937)”, *Belgi Dergisi*, p.20, Pamukkale Üniversitesi Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılâp Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Yayını, (Yaz 2020/II), pp. 2553-2578.

[135] Bruinessen, *Ibid*, 2003, p.441.

[136] Dersimi, *ibid*, p.28.

According to widely acknowledged opinion presented by the governments, the ancestors of the residents of Dersim originated from Kurdish tribes of Anatolia. State officials counted the turmoil appeared in the region as part of the Kurdish revolts. Although people of Dersim speak natively Zazaki**,** a dialect of the Kurdish language, they are culturally different from Sunni Kurdish majority. People of the region see themselves as different from Sunni Kurds. This is because Dersim is not just Kurdish; it is both Kurdish/Zaza and Alevi. In terms of ethnic identity, Alevi Kurds align themselves relatively with the broader Kurdish society. However, from a religious standpoint, they differ from Sunni Kurds due to their distinct religious beliefs.

For the local authors religious diversities result in cultural heterogeneity.[137] They perceive themselves as distinct from both Sunni Kurdish and Alevi Turkish communities culturally. The historical and spiritual formations of the Kızılbaş Alevi tradition in Dersim region are quite different from the mainstream Anatolian Alevi-Bektashi tradition. Moreover, Kurdish Alevis of Dersim have remained isolated from Sunni Kurdish core in terms of the hierarchical social organization that reigned throughout Kurdish geography is not present in Dersim/Tunceli. Unlike the general social organization type observed in Kurdish geography, Tunceli does not possess feudal landlordship and tribal networks in the region. There is no hierarchical structure except the religious *ocaklık*[138] system in Dersim. In Dersim, religious authorities replaced the kinship based *aghalik* and tribal order that could be seen throughout the greater Kurdish region. Small groups of suitors are gathered horizontally around their Alevi *dedes*, demonstrating the horizontal social relationships in the community.[139] Another distinguishing factor for Tunceli is its language, which sets it apart from the broader Kurdish region. The dominant language in the area is Kirmancki, serving as the *lingua franca*.[140] The people of

[137] Kalman, *ibid*, p.35.

[138]In Alevi faith system, the term "ocak" is used to refer to the lineage of the spiritual leaders or the family to which the *dede* belongs. It is an important term which is used to express a sense of belonging and lineage ties within the community.

[139] Kalman, *ibid*, p.35.

[140] Cağlayan, *ibid*, p.41.

Dersim/Tunceli belong to the Northern Zaza branch of the Kurdish language family, specifically the Dersim dialect.[141] Linguists classify Zazaki as part of the Iranian group within the Indo-European language family. Consequently, the region is linguistically distinct from the larger Kurdish area, further contributing to its uniqueness in terms of communication.

Thus, Alevism has been a factor that has affected the cultural context and ethnic affiliations in Dersim. The ethnic and religious affiliations in Dersim have had both positive and negative implications for the region. The unique culture and belief system have fostered a diverse tradition that distinguishes Dersim from its neighboring communities. The discussions revolving around its Kurdish ethnic identity have placed Dersim in a distinct position, contributing to its singular character. The question is which of these different identities mentioned above is stronger in this region, and why so? Either of these ethnic or religious affiliations comes first and has the primary importance, depending on the person's viewpoint. As an instance, during the in-depth interviews, participants were asked about whether their identity is primarily shaped by their Kurdishness or Alevism. It was observed that Alevism is the most significant element determining the identity of Dersim, Dersim Alevis sometimes reveal their religious affiliation in front of their ethnicity and they explain it in the form of "we are neither Kurdish nor Turkish".[142] In this context, after a careful consideration of the term's implications, I have decided to refer to the region's inhabitants as “Dersim Alevis”. This choice acknowledges that the Dersim affiliation holds significance beyond Kurdish ethnic identification. The concept of "Dersim Alevis" provides a more accurate representation of the region's distinct identity. Since this multi-layered belief structure is the dominant element that defines Dersim, and the discussions of ethnic belonging and Kurdishness remain secondary, I prefer to call the people of this region as Dersim Alevis.

Moreover, the state viewed the Kurdish uprisings - especially Dersim's crucial participation in these attempts - as a national security issue even in the 1970s. The

[141] *Ibid*, p.27.

[142] Cağlayan, *ibid*, p.35.

publications from this time period demonstrate that the state still has a strong ideological stance on the Kurdish uprisings and still views them as a top priority. In the 06.06.1969 edition of Milliyet Newspaper, Talat Halman published a column called "On Kurdishness". The author said,

> "The majority of Turks have not forgotten or forgiven the uprisings of the Kurds. Our anger persists. That's why, when we call the Kurds "tails", neither our hearts crumple, nor our faces turn red. We have always underestimated, blamed the Kurds."[143]

There is no doubt that the "tailed Kurds" mentioned here are Alevi Kurds from Dersim since Sunni Kurds share a common space with the Sunni Turks in terms of religion. The same concept is more applicable for Dersim Kurds since they are not Sunni Muslims. Just as the other Kurdish communities, as their one of the founding social dynamics, establishing a network within their closed community to protect and open a space through this network bring the people of Dersim closer to their Kurdish relatives. In this context, Dersimi belonging will be analyzed precisely through this trust networks paradigm in the next chapter.

3.1.3. Religious Dynamics

Religious dynamics are another source of legitimacy in Dersim, besides peripheral conditions and ethnic affiliations. The locality of Dersim has actually been a major center for Alevism for centuries. The Kurdish-Alevi family, who primarily resides in the provinces of Malatya, Erzincan, Sivas, Erzurum, Kars, Kahramanmaraş, Bingöl, and Muş provinces, is considered to have its spiritual center in Dersim. This can be attributed to the fact that the majority of Tunceli's population consists of Alevis. The region has been predominantly Alevi; the only Alevi majority province in Turkey is Tunceli.[144]

Dersim Alevis have achieved a successful composition in religious patterns by successfully combining pre-Islamic and non-Islamic elements. Alevism, in this

[143] *Milliyet Newspaper Archives*, 06.06.1969.

[144] Ahmet Kerim Gültekin, "Kurdish Alevis: A Peculiar Cultural Identity at the Crossroads of Multiple Ethno-Politics" *The Ethno-Cultural Others of Turkey: Contemporary Reflections*, (2021), 39–69. p.43.

sense, combines the elements from Zoroastrianism, Sufism, Iranian Shiism, Shamanism, Paganism and some other older Anatolian beliefs.[145] Moreover, Alevism and Christianity have coexisted in this region for a very long time. Residents of Dersim have demonstrated a devotion to religious and cultural coexistence with a particular respect to their Armenian neighbors as well.[146] Together with the Armenian, Assyrian, and Orthodox Christian populations, they have lived in this remote mountainous area for centuries. Dersim's multi-layered religious structure and cultural patterns make it a distinctive region unlike its neighboring areas have. In this context, it has been described by the regional writers as the center of Alevism and even as the heart of Kızılbaş Alevi belief.[147] According to author Munzur Çem, unlike other regions, Dersim had the chance to pursue the original form of Kurdish Alevism, as it was in the middle of the regions where Kurdish Alevis lived and could protect itself from external threats and influences more than other places.[148]

Furthermore, Kurdish Alevis of Dersim do not follow the historical path of their Kurdish counterparts in neighboring areas because of their distinct religious belief and practices. They do not believe in the Sunni version of Islam. In the religious context, residents of Dersim have been considered as a minority who have different traditions and religious practices that deviate from Sunni Islam. Peculiarities of this religious creed have been a matter of contention by the political authority for ages. Dersim Alevis have represented a heterodox and mystical branch of Islam in Anatolian lands, Kurdish version of Alevi faith.[149] Like the traditional Alevism expresses, an autonomous social structure is carried out in Dersim under the social and religious authority of Alevi *dedes*, who have a sacred lineage, within the pattern of closed rural life.[150]

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[145] Martin Van Bruinessen. "Religion in Kurdistan." *Kurdish Times*, New York, vol. 4, (1991), pp. 5-27. p.10.

[146] Kalman, *ibid*.

[147] Gultekin, *Ibid*.

[148] Munzur Çem. *Dersim'de Alevilik*, (Peri Yayınları, 1999), p.107.

[149] Gezik, *ibid*, p.63.

[150] Mehmet Ertan. "Aleviliğin Politikleşmesi ve Sosyalist Sol", *Birikim*, 309-310, p.43.

Kurdish Alevi beliefs also differ from the larger Alevi family. The Alevi-Bektaşi lodges, or tekkes, which are linked to Hacı Bektaş and constitute the major branch of the Alevi order in Anatolia, do not largely span the Dersim region. Dersim belongs to the Kızılbaş sect of Anatolian Alevism. Kızılbaş Alevism is considered as village Alevism that is claimed as isolated and rural compared to the urban Alevism Bektaşilik. It has originated from Anatolian Alevi tradition but it also has some considerable differences from that, such as having loose links with one of the most founding elements of Anatolian Alevism, Bektashi order. Moreover, Kurdish village Alevism differs sociologically and historically from Bektashism in terms of its religious teachings; one of the most important of these differences is the understanding of *ocak* and *pirlik*. Other central issues in the belief system of Dersim are the *cem* ritual, the culture of *ziyaret* (visiting), the understanding of *path*, and the belief of *Hızır*. Moreover, Kurdish Alevism and its religious precepts are not based on written rules, religious teachings has reigned by the help of holy families. According to Kehl-Bodrogi, it is impossible to draw a complete picture of the Kurdish Alevi belief system because the transfer of religious knowledge is based on oral tradition.[151]

The society in Dersim is mostly organized around the *ocaks* (hearths) built by the powerful families in terms of their religious ancestry. Scholars have made significant efforts to understand the complex cultural and social structure of Ottoman society.[152] The local belief was established through the hearth system. According to the Encyclopedia of Islam, Ocak, which is the fundamental unit of the religion in Alevism and is used to express the lineage to which the dedes belong in Alevism. Accordingly, the Ocaklık land system, which is frequently mentioned in classical Ottoman history, should not be confused with the faith based Ocak structure. In Ottoman society, hearths appear as institutions run by dedes and subject to lineage. In the Alevi tradition, it is believed that every dede has a hearth and that the hearths are based on sacred foundations. Each of the families that make up these hearths can all trace their ancestry to the prophet Muhammad and to figures like Sarı Saltuk,

[151] Kehl-Bodrogi, *ibid*, p.10.

[152] Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, Ali Yaman, Nejat Birdoğan ve niceleri Osmanlı toplumunda Alevi ocakları üzerine çalışmalar yapmışlardır.

Abdal Musa, Karaca Ahmed, Otman Baba, Şücâüddin Baba, and Seyyid Ali Sultan.[153]

Ocaks emphasize kinship and religious ties and Kurdish Alevis are among the groups that manage their own independent *ocaks* within the larger Alevi family. Regional hierarchy is mostly based on religious capacity of these sacred religious institutions as the ruling or guiding bodies. Together with their suitors (*talips*), hearth families founded the *pir-talip* organization, which is known as the 12 hearth teachings. *Ocaks* maintain their existence and continuity through sacred religious leaders called *seyids*. The members of the sacred lineages hold religious authority within the community and *talips* are subordinate to the sacred lineages.[154] Suitors are directly connected to each other by these hearth ties.

Moreover, in these spiritual networks, it was able to gain spiritual consolidation by citing instances of miracles, such as Baba Mansur walking the wall, Quraysh joining the fire and producing fresh fruit in the lake in winter, and Dewrese Gewr being tested in a 1000 celcius-degree oven, which played a crucial role in the construction of these hearths.[155] *Ocak* composition in Dersim is shared by prominent families in Dersim like Baba Mansur, Sarı Saltık, Kureyş, Derviş Cemal and Ağuçan. There are 7 Sayyid lineages whose *ocak* centers are located in Dersim. These lineages are thought to be based on Hazreti Ali. The well-known families in the area are Ağuçen, Baba Mansur, Berhucan, Derviş Cemal, Kureyşan, Sarı Saltık, and Seyh Çoban.

The Alevi belief also differs from that of other Alevi regions. The prominent lodges in that area, are independent lodges that are not affiliated with Hacı Bektaş in terms of organization. Independent quarries that were not connected to Hacı Bektaş quarries provided the experience. In addition, in Dersim belief, the concept of Ocaklık has a validity beyond this locality. The adherents of the hearths join these

[153] Haşim Şahin, "OCAK", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Cilt 3, İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, p.316. https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ocak (10.03.2024).

[154] Ahmet Kerim Gultekin, "Kurdish Alevism: Creating New Ways of Practicing the Religion", *Working Paper Series of the HCAS Leipzig University*, (2019), p.3.

[155] Hüseyin Aygün. "Alevi Ocakları", *BirGün*, published on 27.08.2015.

religious lodges later from outside regios. The followers of the quarries originating from this area reside elsewhere. For example, according to Ocak's statement, there is a Sari Saltık shrine on a hill close to the Sari Saltık village near Hozat in Tunceli. The Sarı Saltık cult could be seen in a widespread area; with Tokat, Sivas, Divriği and Tunceli having a significant influence.[156]

In short, it is certain that the region has religion-based founding sentiments and the problem of belief lies at the hearth of the multi-layered problems of Dersim/Tunceli. Throughout the historical transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic, Dersim has consistently been an area that has experienced tense conflicts because of sectarian issues. As a result of the suppressed rebellions at the beginning of the 17th century, Alevis from Dersim aimed to isolate themselves from the outside world and to exist as a closed group. According to Çem, this region remained a shelter for Alevis for centuries.[157] At some tipping points, religious content has evolved into political content. The political opposition that derived from the historical legacies had been a founding symbol for Dersim. Located geographically between the Ottoman and Safavid power centers, the geography of Dersim/Tunceli was also exposed to the opportunities and limitations for the region, and the main factor determining its relations with the state stems from its religious possessions. Dersim Alevism, which developed in this setting and has a political reference at its core, coincides with the Kurdish revolts, especially after the foundation of the Republic. As a result, this intersection of religion and politics creates a kind of distinct local identity in the locality of Dersim over time.

3.1.4. Social Organization and Tribal Relations

Tribal groups are lineage-based formations reflected as the form of political, economic, and social organization of the societies. Tribal system is based on kinship, creating a strong sense of community, shared decision-making, and a common territory.[158] Tribal groups can be seen as the political organization of a segmentary

[156] Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, p.108.

[157] Çem, *ibid*, p.86.

[158] Erdoğan Yıldırım. "Would The 'Tribal Principle' Survive When Tribes Have Long Disappeared?", *The 15th Annual Middle East History and Theory Conference*, April 28-29, University of Chicago, (2000), p.6.

lineage systems encountered mostly among the pastoral nomadic societies.[159] Pastoral nomadic societies have historically relied upon strong tribal bonds.

As mentioned before, the majority of the population in Dersim are nomads who do not maintain a settled life and animal husbandry serves as the primary source of income for them. Since it was a pastoral nomadic group, the social and political organization of Dersim Alevis has been shaped by the tribal structure. The primordial social structure stems from religious lineages and kinship community of the region. Apart from religious *ocak* system and Kurdish lieages, social conditions of the region is determined by pre-modern tribal affiliations. Among the Dersim population, the tribal leaders are called *seyyids* coming from powerful religious families. It is stated that there are around 100 tribes in Dersim, where Alevi Zazas reside, forming a tribal structure intertwined with the prevalent religious practices in the region.[160] Members of the tribes (*talips*) belong to the hearths (*ocaks*) located around the borders of their tribes, and all members of a tribe belong to the same hearth.[161] Some of the biggest tribes in Dersim are the Koçgiri, Dersim, Hemzini, Ferhat Usagi, Dervis Cemalan, Sari Saltikan, Agucanan, and Demenan tribes.[162]

Historical tensions persist between Dersim's tribal structures and the centralized state, stemming from various reasons. Since the Ottomans' aimed to centralize state and limit tribal autonomy in the peripheral regions, they strategically maintained alliances with certain tribes to bolster their own dynastic power.[163] For this reason, several tribal structures persisted under the Ottoman territories. In remote areas with nomadic populations, the Ottomans found it strategically advantageous to work with existing tribal structures. This enabled the Ottoman rule to reach peripheral areas inhabited by rebellious local groups. Important military and administrative positions were granted to tribal leaders for cooptation. Additionally, the Ottoman military

[159] Yıldırım, *Ibid*, p.10.

[160] Dilsa Deniz. *Yol/Re: Dersim İnanç Sembolizmi*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2018), p.46.

[161] Kehl-Bodrogi, *ibid*, p.147.

[162] Kalman, *Ibid*, pp.175-179.

[163] Yıldırım, *ibid*. p.11.

forces depended extensively on tribal groups. The military manpower was greatly enhanced by these dissident tribal populations.

The social structure in Dersim was established by the tribes, as in neighboring geographies, which are composed of both kinship and religious dynamics. Unlike the Sunni Kurdish tribes, Kurdish Alevi tribes have some distinct peculiarities. The tribal order, which is dominated by strong social solidarity relations, prevails in a different format in the region. The people of Dersim, who inhabit in a mountainous tough geography, fall far behind other regions in terms of economic development when compared to other regions due to the effect of climate and transportation conditions. There are some distinctions in Dersim's tribal dynamics, clans, and family structures. Kinship dynamics have been crucial to the development of the community in Dersim's geography, which contributes to the complex dynamics of the area have possessed.

The tribal organization in Dersim is incompatible with the tribal system recognized in greater Anatolia. In contrast to neighboring rural regions, there has been an absence of notables or feudal landlords in Dersim. This is explained by the outcome of insufficient arable land for farming and generating income.[164] Tribes have a very fragmented structure in the Dersim region. When the tribal structure in the region is examined, it is seen that there are many centers of power as tribes, and that these tribes are at conflict with one another. Political disputes have frequently erupted between villagers from various tribes and clans, even between neighboring villages. Therefore, Dersim tribes are not equivalent to the definition of a tribe as it is commonly used in literature. Moreover, Dersim's political history has always been embedded in a tribal framework. Participation in politics and political inclinations established on a tribal basis in Dersim. The Dersim tribes agreed to send six deputies to the First Assembly of the Republic of Turkiye: Abdulhak Tevfik Bey, Diyab Ağa, Hasan Hayri Bey, Mustafa Ağa, Mustafa Zeki Bey, Ramiz Bey.[165]

[164] Tunceli Valiliği, 1967 İl Yıllığı, p.49.

[165] Kazım Gündoğan, "İdamının 80'inci yılında Seyit Rıza'nın ardından: Dersim Katliamı neden yapıldı?" *Gazete Duvar*, 16 Kasım 2017. Accessed in 20.03.2022.

In other words, the social composition of Dersim does not resemble a hierarchical, class-based society like the neighboring Sunni-Kurdish communities. In this context, it can be claimed that the social structure of Dersim/Tunceli evolved as a "differential" model. It is mainly because local property relations differ in many ways compared to neighboring societies. In Dersim, indigenous groups were maintaining their life by engaging in agriculture and stockbreeding in the agrarian living conditions. They were also engaged in beekeeping and fishing.[166] Resources were concentrated in the hands of the whole community in the pre-modern age in the region. Small communities cooperatively owned and managed the land and resources; individual ownership was not recognized.[167] Under a communal property system, the community held the land and other resources in common and granted members of the community the right to use and access them. In Dersim, unlike the other Eastern Anatolian populations, there were no powerful families or tribes which hold substantial amounts of land. Large landlords did not exist and small land peasants ruled in these territories. Furthermore, the network of feudal relations that existed in the broader Kurdish territory was not present in the Dersim region when the property relations in the area are taken into account.

The tribal identities and connections in Dersim are complicated and flexible, and they have changed throughout time in reaction to political, economic, and social changes. In fact, the tribal structure is a local social organization in Dersim and should be regarded as a kind of solidarity network. Tribes, products of the pre-modern period, were also carried to the modern period in Dersim/Tunceli and became one of the main factors keeping the social structure alive in the modern period.[168] In the 1960s-70s, which are the period of this study, tribal structures were still valid and effective power centers in the society. In this context, we see that inter-tribal conflicts in Dersim/Tunceli in the 1970s were a local reality that was the subject of the country's printing press. A newspaper clipping in *Milliyet*, one of the

[166] Cağlayan, *ibid*, p.47.

[167] B. Ali Eşiyok, "Türkiye'de Başarısız Kalmış Bir Reform Girişimi: 1945 Tarihli Çiftçiyi Topraklandırma Kanunu ve Günümüze Uzanan Süreç." *Memleket Siyaset Yönetim*, Sayı:19-20, (2013) pp.176-232. p.178.

[168] Kehl-Bodrogi, *ibid*, p.147.

national printed media of the period, reported a conflict between two tribes resulting in the death of two individuals. The headline read 'Two tribes fought, two people died.'[169] This news serves as evidence that the tribal structure remained a significant social dynamic with an active role in society in the 1970's.

As a result, one of the issues that should not be forgotten while deciphering about Dersim is to accept the fact that tribal units are political units on their own.[170] The tribal structure in Dersim demonstrates the existence of pre-modern affiliations in different periods across time. Regional realities undoubtedly have a founding role in the formation of local identity. Conflicting nature, on the other hand, stems from the existence of a constantly conflicting dynamic in its relations with other groups, both at the local and regional levels.[171] Hence, the complex nature of the hearth and tribal systems give rise to the uncertainty about belonging in this area. Since tribes are communities thought to be formed by blood ties, they are partially related with the ocaks which represent religious leadership in Dersim. However, tribes occupy a distinct position from ocaks, as religious affiliations take precedence in the local dynamics of belonging. Hearth and tribal structures sometimes overlap and sometimes differ from each other in Dersim. Accordingly, the Ocak structure, which is under the control of faith leader families, also includes the tribal structures living in this region. Ocak has been the main force mobilizing the society in this region. The tribe, on the other hand, remained more limited. Therefore, the Ocak system, which forms the basis of Dersim's social structure, appears as a kind of tribal network for this locality.

3.1.4.1. A Modern Tribe

As industrialization progresses, traditional forms of social organization such as tribes tend to disappear. Although tribes have disappeared long time ago, under favorable conditions, there may be resurgence of lower levels of social organization, leading to

[169] *Milliyet Gazetesi Arşivi*, 02.08.1970. s.3.

[170] Ayhan Yalçınkaya,. *Kavimkırım İkliminde Aleviler*, (Dipnot), p.445.

[171] *Ibid*, p.424.

the reemergence of tribal formations. Small lineage groups and families may reestablish themselves, driven by the protecting dynamics among members under suitable circumstances. The tribal principle replicates itself in the relatively new relations of locality as a protective and covering umbrella for the members.[172] It also shows itself in the changing dynamics of local relationships, providing participants a structure that is both protective and unifying. Individuals continue to organize themselves within tribal formations, which appear to be the centers of society's underground communities.[173] What separates modern tribes from historical tribes is how flexible and adaptive the tribe-like ties are in responding to changing conditions.

In this regard, Yıldırım's study on modern tribes provides an insightful perspective on the tribal system that existed in Dersim. According to this powerful analysis similar tribal structures in modern Turkish politics, particularly in the locality of Dersim. In Dersim, where pastoral nomadism is a way of life, it can be argued that local relations in this region are also based on tribe-like ties in the modern nation-state era, when it is thought that the rule of tribes will decrease. These ties provide a sense of community and regulate communal life in Dersim. According to this article, tribal formations are pragmatic and adaptive in nature. In this structure, kinship is more dominant than land ownership. While there is an internal hierarchy within the tribe, there is a sense of protection among members due to kinship ties when facing external threats. Thus, kinship largely determines the boundaries of the tribe. Being together based on kinship gives rise to an incredibly militant behavior when facing external threats.

The concept of modern tribal formations, borrowed from Yıldırım's article, can also be partially compatible with Tilly's conceptualization of trust networks. Tribal principles, which are comparable to a protecting and covering umbrella, could therefore naturally serve as a foundation upon which a group establishes its trust dynamics. The modern tribal ties and functions, which have not disappeared and have been replicated in the new local relationships, provide a great deal of flexibility

[172] Yıldırım, *ibid*, p.16.

[173] *Ibid*.

while preventing the complete development of the formal structures of modern society.[174] Particularly in the second and third moments constituting the political resurgence of Dersim, we perceive the tribal formations proposed by Yıldırım as binding principles that foster solidarity among group members. As he argues that these tribal ties, while promoting unity within the group, make it more difficult for Dersim to fully integrate with the larger Turkish society. These bonds pose obstacles to the integration of Dersim into modern Turkish society.

As mentioned in previous sections, Dersim can be studied from many different angles, using a variety of unit and level of analysis. The common point of these different perspectives is that this region is considered as a rural, ancient, and even mythical geography. The distinct characteristics of the locality of Dersim allow us to assert that it maintained a modern tribal structure even until the 1970s. The population of Dersim, historically known as a warrior community, largely preserved its tribal social structure during these years. Indeed, traces of this can be observed in newspaper clippings from the period. The following sections of this thesis will provide parts from newspaper clippings that demonstrate the continued vitality of the tribal structure in the 1970s. Thus, the changes and continuities in power dynamics and state-society relations over the course of the Dersim's political history should be examined via discussing the important turning points that enabled Dersim to move from being an isolated other to becoming a recognized national figure in Turkish history.

3.2. Pivotal Moments in the History of Dersim

3.2.1. The Imperial Era

When the 19th century arrived, it was clear that the Ottoman state and society lagged behind in all spheres of life. A significant portion of 19th century history was marked by both internal and external upheavals for the Empire. These upheavals had a significant impact on Ottoman legitimacy both at home and abroad. The imperial

[174] Yıldırım, *ibid*, p.15.

institutions need to be modernized in order for the state to reclaim its legitimacy and possession of the territory. A set of new reform policies have been undertaken by the ruling elites to modernize the old state institutions, to transform rural and agrarian conditions and increase Ottoman dominance over its region. The Ottoman state of mind can be inferred from this popular slogan of those times, *Cet etat subsistera. Dieu le veut.* (*This state will survive. God commands it.*).[175] The late Ottoman statesmen, whose primary duty was *the saving of the state*[176], began to reflect on the inefficient institutions and agencies of government.

To achieve their objective inside the territories, the Ottomans aimed at complete transformation in all institutional frameworks. In order to ensure security within the borders, Ottoman rulers made an effort to modernize the military. The reforms aimed at controlling the dissident tribes in the Eastern provinces, weakening their autonomous power, accomplishing to collect taxes and integrating the peripheral tribes into the conscription system with the support of the military. In the agricultural sector, the reforms were implemented in light of the Land Law of 1858. The Land Law of 1858 aimed at restoring official ownership over the imperial possessions, which had bypassed the imperial authority over the previous centuries.[177] In fact, state officials enforced this law in the Eastern provinces in which they remained autonomous from the Empire for centuries. During the turbulent 19th and 20th centuries, the Ottoman Empire encountered numerous obstacles on its long journey toward centralization. In this turbulent atmosphere, as a part of the Eastern region of the empire, Dersim has faced a number of challenges. The shifting political landscape posed challenges for Dersim, formerly a semi-autonomous emirate until the mid-19th century.[178]

To comprehend the historical context that form the regional dynamics in Tunceli, one should take a deeper look at the specific moments in the evolution of the trust

[175] Deringil, *ibid*, p.27.

[176] *Ibid*, p.20.

[177] Stanford J Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw. *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey Volume II*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p.114.

[178] Bruinessen, *ibid*, 2013, p.280.

relations of Dersim. The first important moment to be considered in the history of Dersim is the imperial era. In the Ottoman times, particularly until the Tanzimat period, the population residing in Dersim continually resisted against change, as they were outside of the reach of the state.[179] The people of Dersim with other Kurdish groups have staged a series of rebellions in order to voice their regional demands. After the Tanzimat reforms, a series of reforms were undertaken in order to centralize the Kurdish regions, and it was seen that many tribes in the region were armed and mobilized during the implementation of these reforms.[180] Some of these tribes were from Dersim. For this reason, the state made serious plans to break the influence of the tribes for the development of the eastern regions and Dersim. With the help of the modernization attempts, educational institutions of the region faced changes; tribal relations started to weaken, tearing apart religious relationships between sacred lineages and their followers.[181]

The Dersim region experienced significant administrative changes throughout its history. Prior to the 19th century, it was intermittently linked to the Diyarbakır and Erzurum provinces. During the centralization and modernization era, a Dersim *sanjak* (district) was established within its own borders, under its own name. However, it was soon integrated into a *liwa* (sancak) and became part of Elaziz. The late Ottoman period saw frequent administrative reorganizations in Dersim, resulting in a series of transformations as the region was restructured under new administrative units.

Although institutional changes occurred, the fundamental power dynamic between the state and its subjects remained unaltered. Resistance emerged as new policies were implemented in the wake of the state's centralization efforts, marking a period

[179] Recep Boztemur, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Devlet-Toplum İlişkileri: Araştırma Yöntemlerinde ve Kurumsal Yaklaşımlarda Tek Yanlılık". *OTAM Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, Vol.9, (1998), pp.79-110. p.82

[180] Uğur Ümit Üngör. "Rethinking the Violence of Pacification: State Formation and Bandits in Turkey, 1914–1937." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 54, no. 4, (2012), pp. 746–69.

[181] Ahmet Kerim Gültekin, "Kurdish Alevism: Creating New Ways of Practicing the Religion." *Working Paper Series of the HCAS "Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond* Modernities" 18. Leipzig University, (2019), p.3.

of tension between the Ottoman power center and peripheral groups. New policies encountered resistance within public life, leading to protests against modernization initiatives. As a consequence of these radical reforms, various actors within the Empire, including Alevis, Kurds, Armenians, and Islamists, began to exhibit differing degrees of rebellion. For these reasons, Ottoman centralization efforts can be seen as the initial turning point in Dersim's history regarding changes in socio-political dynamics. This era represents a crucial juncture in the evolution of Dersim's internal trust networks, primarily because the region's autonomous political structure underwent transformation during this period, and Dersim was compelled to come under the authority of the Empire.

3.2.2. Early Republican Era

As mentioned before, Tilly's book *Trust and Rule* defines trust networks as social ties fostering collective action. Religious sects, kinship groups, trade diasporas, patron-client chains, credit networks, societies of mutual aid, age grades, and some kinds of local communities can be considered as trust networks.[182] Trust networks have a long history of secrecy in Dersim deriving from its religious foundation. The locality's secretive stance can be attributed in part to its Alevi roots, as the Kızılbaş branch of Alevism is based on the idea of living in secrecy and keeping oneself hidden for centuries. Moreover, the emergence of strong internal networks in Dersim was facilitated by generations of mistrust toward the state. Generations of mistrust against the state meant that strong internal networks evolved faster on the periphery. The desire to be independent of governmental control as well as economic hardship served as their driving forces. Dersim's capacity for resistance has made it a persistent concern within regional power dynamics for centuries. Resistance in Dersim region signifies both open rebellions, and opposition to tax evasion, military conscription, and other centralization attempts. It is a well-known fact that Dersim has historically posed a serious challenge to centralized authority.

The establishment of the republic and Dersim's new position within this new-born structure is the second significant moment. The emergence of the republic marks an

[182] Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, p.6.

important turning point in the history of Dersim because of the tremendous changes have occurred in the Republic's interactions with its population in that era. The new regime fundamentally reshaped the social landscape, prioritizing the creation of a unified, Turkish national identity. This transformation was evident in the Republic's ideological and institutional foundations, reflecting the modernizing vision of the new elite. The rise of the nation-state introduced a worldview to Turkish society. According to Niyazi Berkes, the victory of the nation-state ideal against the religious state opened the door to a series of reforms on the way to modernization.[183] The Republic of Turkey embarked on this modernization road in 1925, 1928, 1931, 1932, and 1934, undertaking several changes in many areas with the intention of making a comprehensive change to all the structures of government.[184] New reform initiatives have drastically changed the social forces and relationships based on the feudal land tenure system, which has had a negative impact on the Ottoman government. Since there have been significant changes in the relationship with its population, the establishment of the Republic on the remains of the Ottoman Empire marks a crucial moment in history. In place of the authoritarian Ottoman power structure, a modern, secular, and centralized system emerged. This shift had profound effects on Dersim: existing social structures and alliances dissolved, new ones formed, and established groups with opposing interests underwent radical change.[185]

The official state perception about the region did not seem to change in the early years; Dersim was still regarded as the center of disorder due to ongoing rebellions in their territories. The uprisings emerged in the locality of Dersim intensified and gained prominence in that period. Government services and regional administration were used to influence local dynamics via manipulating the region through the co-optation of local elites, who were granted positions within the political apparatus. In this regard, government memos and oral histories offer valuable insights to picture this second significant moment of Dersim history. Local individuals describe how

[183] Niyazi Berkes, *Turkiye'de Cagdaslasma*. (Istanbul: Dogu-Bati Yayinlari, 1978), p.511.

[184] *Ibid*, p.539.

[185] Reşat Kasaba. *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: 19th century*, (State University of New York Press, 1988), p.5.

specific events disrupted family ties, leading to enduring shifts within networks of trust.

In addition, during this transition from the Empire to the republic, the existing trust and solidarity dynamics among the people experienced a significant shift, the state's strategy shifted to educational and cultural aspects. It means the republic sought to civilize the masses and aimed to make them as equal citizens in front of the modern constitution. Thus, the dynamics leading to the transformation of the trust networks in Dersim are variable, and changes in these dynamics have occurred through specific moments. Pre-existing trust networks in Dersim are shaped by some major historical moments. The establishment of the Republic was a major moment in Dersim's history. The early Republican period following the establishment of the Republic marked a period of dispersion in the trust network dynamics of Dersim/Tunceli.

3.2.3. 1937-38 Military Operations

The military operations of 1937-38 are undoubtedly considered the most important moment in the history of the region. Since the Ottoman period, the Ottoman state had tried to keep the Kurdish region under its control, and for this reason, the borders of the provinces were changed many times for the effective administration of the region.[186] Since the Tanzimat period, the state has implemented a series of operations of varying sizes to maintain control over the eastern provinces. The largest of these was the Koçgiri Rebellion centered in Dersim in 1921.[187] After the Republic, the Eastern Reform Plan was implemented to establish state authority and improve the living conditions in this region. Despite the establishment of the Republic, Dersim remained a national security concern. In 1937, a military operation was launched in response to road-blocking incidents. While the government claimed that the operation was necessary to stop the rebellion and restore order, some studies argue that it was actually part of a broader and long-term state project.[188]

[186] Güney Çeğin and Ümit Kurt (eds). *Kıyam ve Kıtal- Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Devletin İnşası ve Kolektif Şiddet*, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015), p.307.

[187] Soileau, *ibid*.

[188] Çeğin, and Kurt (eds), *ibid*, p.374.

Once the military phase of the *Tertele*[189] in 1937-38 concluded, territorial unity was established in Dersim, and Dersim was oriented into the nation-state system under the name Tunceli. After political authority was firmly established, the objective for the region was not to erase the subject aimed at by the authority, as put forth by Ayhan Yalcinkaya, but rather to reshape in into an acceptable form.[190] The modernization and centralization policies applied in Dersim brought the region face to face with the state's citizenship-oriented nation-building process, emphasizing a unified and equal citizenship structure. The transition to a modern and secular nation-state in Turkey was a complex process that involved the gathering of various ethnic and religious groups into one single national identity. In the case of the Dersim Alevis, their religious differences from the Sunni Kurdish tribes led them to side with the Republicans during the Republican era.[191] This was a significant change because it marked the transformation of the Dersim Alevis from a peripheral group into equal citizens. However, this equality came at a price, as the state demanded that the Dersim Alevis quit their distinctive ties and local demands in exchange for legal recognition.[192] As Oran states, the people of Dersim did not rebel, but with the ideals of the nation-state to establish a unitary structure, total control and "restriction" operations were carried out against Dersim.[193]

For this reason, it is essential to center the events of 1937-38 in any historical study related to Dersim because this period has created a distinct break up in the region. The impact of this period has not faded over several generations; the experiences of this time are still subject to debate. Following this significant upheaval, the people of the region display varying degrees of both resilience and integration. Another major breaking point in terms of solidarity networks alterations was the 1937-38 incidents.

[189] The term "Tertele" originates from Kurdish language. It carries the precise connotation of massacre or genocide.

[190] Yalçınkaya, *ibid,* p.389.

[191] Bodhogi, *ibid,* p.82 (op.cit.) Bumke, 1979, p.542.

[192] Baskın Oran and Karabekir Akkoyunlu. *Kemalism and the Republican People's Party (CHP)* in: E. Özyürek et al. (eds.), Authoritarianism and Resistance in Turkey, (Springer International Publishing, 2019), p.15.

[193] Baskın Oran, "1937/38'de Ne Oldu", I. *Uluslararası Tunceli Dersim Sempozyumu, 4-6 Ekim 2010, Bildiriler Kitabı*, Tunceli: Tunceli Üniversitesi Yayınları, Aralık 2011, s. XVI.

In this phase of trust network evolution, Dersim exhibits the transition described by Tilly as moving from segregation to integration. Following 1938, the legacy of forced displacement encouraged the community to develop external consistency while maintaining a prudent attitude within the community. During the early Republican period, there were shifts in the local community sentiment among Dersim's inhabitants, including the enforcement of state authority and obedience to the laws of the nation-state. Tensions were rooted in the region's distinct cultural identity, its complex relationship with the imperial centralization efforts and later republican ideals. Dersim's distinct evolution was shaped by a combination of local responses and regional governmental measures, in addition to the religious and economic realities that shaped the region in that era.

The networks of belonging are not static, they are fluid as in other cases. The period denoted that they could evolve. Networks and loyalties shifted they did not collapse at all. The first period of network loosening came in 1937-38. All the cultural infrastructure has collapsed even among closed groups. In that period trust network within the area facilitated collective action and they resisted via protests and rebellions. that period, via state control, they disorganized. this is the second period of trust network shift. The state tried to co-opt them in terms of equal citizenship.

As in Tilly’s words, power capacity is a key ingredient in imagining Dersim as a trust network. Before this major breaking point, there appeared several uprisings in the area. But this one was bigger; that moment transformed the whole cultural infrastructure in the region. After the force-based 1937-38 events, the state started to develop a moderate relationship with the area. The state sought to maintain loyalty and obedience to republican ideals within the region. The period after 1938 saw a shift towards an integration of the existing trust network in Dersim. This is consistent with the circumstances Tilly noted, in which community members received opportunities for schooling, military service, and compliance to state requirements such as paying taxes. While the original trust network was eroded, the presence of Dersim individuals in the state apparatus suggests the formation of a stronger network, potentially operating with greater secrecy in their new environments. This dynamic illustrates Tilly's theory, as traditional trust networks weaken, there's a

tendency towards democratization, yet the reforming of these networks can lead to a period of de-democratization, as observed in the Turkish context.

3.2.4. 1960s and 1970s

Trust networks in Dersim, forced into greater secrecy after the events of 1937-38, began to gradually open from the late 1960s onwards. This led to increased engagement in collective political action. The 1970s were a pivotal moment, with wider access to education fueling change. In this period, party politics emerges as a contradiction that causes deviation in the trust network. Party organization among the residents in Dersim and beyond Dersim creates an interesting dynamism. A high level of political solidarity emerged in the 1970s. And it eroded the trust dynamics among the local people during this period. The leftist political wave that emerged in the 1960s posed a threat to the trust network dynamics in the Dersim/Tunceli region. The idea of revolution in this period and the rejection of the old habits and traditions threatened the established political structure.

It is argued that the political structure, political alliances, and relationships that developed in this area in the 1970s demonstrate how networks function within them and contribute to the region's complexities. The military operations of 1937-38 serve the narrative of trust networks; trust networks established during the modernization period collapsed in 1937-38. After this complete disintegration, there is still a sense of belonging between people. The locality turned out to be a mythic homeland. However, their sense of loyalty was shaken and as Tilly put it, because of conjunctural developments they evolved into an underground trust network. Tribal level politics and underground trust bonds started to reintegrate into mainstream politics in the 1950s.

Some individuals moved away from traditional ties, adopting leftist and secular ideologies as a means of mobilization and social change. During this time, democratization seemed to be facilitated by the partial integration of pre-existing "trust networks" into public politics. Young activists in this period paved the way for Alevi Kurds to participate more openly in Turkish politics in the 1990s, embracing

their identities. This period will reveal a partial merging of interpersonal trust networks into public politics. Today, individuals from Dersim are among the most prominent in the broader Alevi community, with strong representation within the state, highlighting the enduring power of networks forged during this critical period.

When exiles returned to Dersim in the 1950s, surviving social structures resurfaced, taking on new forms in the 1960s. While historical distrust remained, the changing national landscape of the 1970s led to new ways of organizing within Dersim. The region began to open up to the outside world, both literally via investment projects and metaphorically via political awakening. This was partly influenced by state efforts to strengthen its legitimacy and implement nationwide measures. These included modernization and education programs that reached Dersim, as well as the mandatory use of Turkish since the establishment of the republic.[194] The state invested heavily in education and schooling in the region as part of a larger strategy to maintain the cohesion of the empire and prevent unrest among its population.[195]

Due to these various efforts to incorporate the region, local solidarities rooted in religious sentiments and ethnic ties, which had regulated much of everyday life prior to the republic, were fundamentally changed.[196] The pre-existing sense of belonging, self-identities, and community matters also experienced a profound shift, as the process of modernization entailed crafting the archetype of a citizen and instilling the loyalty codes necessary for the governing authority.[197] The people of the region have also created new ways for themselves as a result of forced or voluntary changes. Promises made it possible for the people of the region to embrace the secular republic, as well as being equal citizens before the law and the state's withdrawal from religious matters. They took advantage of the education plans offered by the state, and managed to adapt to a considerable level in literacy in a short time and despite the historical devastation of the region.

[194] Kurt and Çeğin, *ibid*, pp.307-318.

[195] Oran and Akkoyunlu, *ibid*, pp.11-12.

[196] Ceren Belge, "State Building and The Limits of Legibility: Kinship Networks and Kurdish Resistance in Turkey". *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 43, no. 1, (2011), pp. 95–114.

[197] Kurt and Çeğin, *ibid*, p.329.

This moment marked a partial awakening within Dersim, though not a complete social or political transformation. While there was a desire to resist the established order and some level of public support for it within, but the capacity for organized mobilization was still developing. Therefore, this period could be described as an early stage of awakening. Thanks to the pioneering efforts made during this time, it became possible to discuss collective political mobilization and participation by the 1990s. In other words, Tunceli returned to national, although radical, politics in the 1970s. It is also necessary to draw attention to political and social similarities in different parts of the republic. During the same period, similar political developments were taking place in regions such as Fatsa, Artvin and Nurhak. As the identity politics that emerged around the world in the 1970s began to see everyone and everywhere as unique, 1937-38 became a "tertele" for the people of Dersim, and the Dersimli identity went to a particularistic place in the 1980s and 1990s.

A significant factor behind the societal changes in the region brought about by modernization is the state's investments, acting as the driving force propelling these transformations.[198] The state attempted to build loyalty via state investments once they disrupted in 1937-38. The state's targeted investments in various sectors within the region have unsettled the distinctiveness of local solidarities and affiliations, subsequently leading to change. The state's involvement through its investments has enabled it to exert control, guidance, and even manipulation over the region. Importantly, it's worth noting that Dersim/Tunceli isn't an exception in the Republican era in terms of underdevelopment, as the efforts for modernization and centralization are not unique to this region. The criteria of citizenship and societal needs set forth by the Republic apply to all citizens universally. Nonetheless, the cultural connections attributed to societies and communities aren't inherited, fixed, or constant. The sources of local belonging are in a continuous interplay and relationship with their surroundings and the circumstances of the time.

[198] Yalçınkaya, *ibid*, p.377.

CHAPTER 4

RELATIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE REPUBLIC: PUBLIC INVESTMENTS TOWARDS TUNCELI FROM THE MID-1960S TO THE MID-1970S

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze government's investment plans in Tunceli from 1960 to 1970 through documented evidence. The investments made by the government in various areas such as education, agriculture, farming, and industrialization can be traced through records from the Governorship Investment Reports, the First and Second Five-Year Development Plans of the State Planning Organization, and Milliyet newspaper archives. Additionally, the chapter will explore the perceived distance and conflict between the government and the region on the political front, shedding light on these matters using available documents. By examining these evidences, it becomes apparent that the region's social services, public works and economic circumstances has undergone visible transformations during the 1960s and 1970s.

Despite Tunceli lagging behind in pursuing the national and international developments so far, it is evident that the state made gradual efforts to modernize the region through its investments in that era. To reach this conclusion, it is necessary to examine the policy papers and investments towards the region during this period. It is also crucial for this research to analyze the evolution of the state's policies and investments in this area as it provides valuable insights into the reciprocal interactions between the state and society and their impact on one another. By examining the state's approach towards this region and its efforts to integrate Tunceli within the nation-state standards, we can gain a better understanding of the overall relationship between the state and the region. Therefore, it is highly necessary to observe the state's development moves and investments in this area.

4.1. Investments in the Field of Education

Education is a powerful instrument for society to achieve a desired standard of living and promote its growth. It plays a vital role in shaping social values and norms, making it essential to prioritize education in achieving development goals. Considering the prevailing regional conditions, the government took measures to include Tunceli and other underprivileged areas into the republican system through development plans. The development plans, which began in 1963, depict a comprehensive strategy intended to promote inclusion and regional development under the direction of the government of the time. These development projects aimed to elevate the overall standard of living for the nation by implementing new regulations and making investments in sectors such as education, agriculture, mining, manufacturing industry, construction, energy, transportation, and social services. The ultimate goal was to boost the national income, educate the citizens, create more job opportunities for the citizens, and implement various measures to achieve social justice.[199]

The First Five-Year Development Plan of the State Development Organization emphasizes the importance of elevating the educational level of the society to reach development objectives. When the plan is examined, it is seen that it consists of a set of solid principles. It highlights that education is the primary step for social development in all aspects, and the impact of investment in education becomes observable in long term. Hence, planning for a minimum of fifteen years is recommended.[200] The 7th National Education Council which was held in 5-15 February 1962 introduced essential initiatives for the region. Based on the decisions made at the council, the aim was to establish girls' and boys' artisanship institutes, girls' and boys' art high schools, evening girls' artisanship schools, primary teachers'

[199] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1968-1972, p.3. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ikinci_Bes_Kalkinma_Plani-1968-1972.pdf

[200] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1963-1967, p.1. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Kalkinma_Plani_Birinci_Bes_Yillik_1963-1967.pdf

schools, and technical teachers' schools as vocational institutions in Tunceli.[201] Consequently, significant investments were made in the field of education in Tunceli province.

In terms of education, according to the reports of the Ministry of Education, Tunceli is an 'area of deprivation' along with other 18 provinces.[202] In line with the strategies created for the purpose of educational enlightenment, an education campaign started in Tunceli after 1961. Before this period, the first educational institution opened in Tunceli was the Central Primary School, which began its educational activities in 1940. The growth of primary schools and the extension of education to rural areas in Tunceli were especially noticeable between 1950 and 1970. The number of primary schools was 247 in 1962, it increased to 390 in 1971.[203] There was a meaningful rise in the number of students studying in primary education in rural areas and district centers during these years. In 1963 Tunceli had 415 villages, 241 schools, with 174 of them being nonexistent, as reported.[204] According to this newspaper report, there is still much work to be done in the field of education in this region, as certain educational institutions referred to as "nonexistent" need to be put into operation. For instance, Tunceli (Kalan) High School which was established in 1964, was the only high school in the province. In a few years, a total of 8 secondary schools started to educate the public, one each in 8 districts. This increase in numbers can be attributed to the effective education and teacher training programs carried out in the region.

In the 1967 reports, it is seen that the number of schools increased exponentially. In this period, there are 15 primary schools in the center of Tunceli and 292 primary schools in the villages.[205] Considering the total number of villages and hamlets in Tunceli at that time, which were 419 and 975 respectively[206] it is evident how high

[201]VII. MIilli Eğitim Şurası, https://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2021_12/08162906_7_sura.pdf

[202] *Milliyet Gazetesi Arşivi*, 24.07.1969. p.11.

[203] Yüksel Kastan. "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Tunceli'de Eğitimin Tarihi Gelişimi". *Atlas Journal*, Vol.7, Issue:45, (2021), p.2301.

[204] *Milliyet Gazetesi Arşivi*, 17.09.1963, p.5.

[205] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı* 1967, p.92.

[206] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı* 1967. p.19.

the schooling rate was and how much the state developed the educational potential of Tunceli. During that era, the Prime Ministry's Republican Archives featured a report on education investments, which included information about the construction of the Tunceli Kalan High School dormitory. The report stated that the dormitory's construction would be finished and ready for use in the academic year 1967-68.[207]

According to the *Tunceli Provincial Yearbook of 1967*, Tunceli High School, Tunceli Secondary School, Tunceli Primary Teachers' School, Craftsmanship Institute, and Girls Institute were established to provide education on the region. Between 1963 and 1967, there was a significant focus on technical and vocational education as part of development efforts. Tunceli Teacher's School, Craftsmanship Institute, and Girls' Institute were introduced as vocational education institutions during this period, aiming to train skilled personnel for the job market in Tunceli and across the country. Another important educational move during this period was the establishment of Regional Boarding Schools. These schools were built to meet the educational needs of villages with no schools due to their low population. To address this issue, a Regional Boarding School was established in Tunceli during the Second Five-Year Development Plan period. A newspaper reported the opening of the school as follows: "Prime Minister Demirel officially opened a new library building in Tunceli and initiated the construction of a regional boarding school in Pülümür."[208] Ensuring equality of educational opportunity was another key concern during this period. According to the education reports from the era, scholarships would be provided to children from underprivileged families to support their education. Additionally, there was an Artisanship Institute established in 1969 in Tunceli which provided three years of secondary school education.[209]

As part of the 1967 Development Plan of the Governorship of Tunceli, a total of 8.782.956 Liras[210] ($ 967.285) were allocated for the educational services of the

[207] BCA, 02.03.1966. 114.723.4 "Tunceli İlinin İhtiyaçları"

[208] *Milliyet Gazetesi Arşivi*, 18.09.1968, p.1.

[209] *Milliyet Gazetesi Arşivi*, 17.07.1966, p.4

[210] To facilitate a comparative analysis of the Turkish Lira, it is necessary to examine its value relative to the US Dollar. The 1967 exchange rate was 9.08 Turkish Liras per US Dollar. Additionally, the

province by the Ministry of Education. Out of this amount, it has been specified that 2.600.000 Liras ($ 286.343) would be utilized for the construction, repair, and equipment of central and village schools.[211] The commitment was to complete the repairs and renovations by the end of the year. The remaining portion of the allocated funds were planned to be utilized for the construction of several facilities, including Tunceli Secondary School teachers' lodgings, Mazgirt and Hozat Evening Girls' Artisanship Schools, Teachers' School gym, teacher lodgings, laboratory, public education center, Central Girls' Artisanship Secondary School, and Pülümür Evening Girls Artisanship School.[212] In the Additionally, it was mentioned that 350.000 liras ($ 38.546) aid was provided to these associations for the construction of Pertek and Cemisgezek Evening Girls' Artisanship Schools, which were being built by these associations.[213] The period reports reveal a substantial investment in the field of education in the province of Tunceli during the 1961-73 period. In the First Five-Year Development Program, education received a share of 52.1% among the public investments in Tunceli. However, in the Second Five Year Development Plan, the share allocated to education decreased to 33.3%, and this downward trend continued in the following years.[214] During the period between 1945 and 1960, the literacy rate in the province was 20.7%, but this rate significantly improved to 55.2% in 1975.[215]

Moreover, to enable a comparison of investments made in the field of education, the relevant periods should also be examined through the discussions in the National Assembly annual budget sessions. A review of these budget sessions reveals that the allocated amounts for education were distributed according to the populations and regional needs of the areas. For instance, in the year 1967, the country's general

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Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Turkey in 1967 stood at $537. (CBRT Electronic Archives, Exchange Rates: US Dollar (Cross)." https://evds2.tcmb.gov.tr/index.php?/evds/archiveMarket/ Accessed in 30.08.2023.

[211] Tunceli Valiliği İl Yıllığı Hazırlama Komitesi, *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, (Tunceli: Tunceli Valiliği, 1968), p.97.

[212] *Ibid*.

[213] *Ibid*, p.101.

[214] Türkmen: 2012, p. 303. in Kaştan, *ibid*. p.2307.

[215] Kaştan, *ibid*.

budget was twenty two billion Turkish liras. From this budget, the Ministry of National Education was allocated a total budget of three point one billion liras..[216] Fourteen percent of the total allocation was designated for national education expenses in 1967.. During this period, the National Assembly noted that education allocations were adjusted based on the population. In the budget discussion sessions, it was mentioned that Tunceli was given a support of seventeen million Turkis liras.[217] As an example, in the same year, decisions were made to allocate nine million eighty-seven thousand liras to the provinces of Burdur, Uşak, and Isparta, and twenty two million liras to the provinces of Erzincan and Adıyaman. In this context, during these budget discussion sessions, the Minister of National Education, İlhami Ertem, emphasized that it would be unfair to say that nothing was done for the Eastern region.[218] Furthermore, during the budget discussions, it was stated that 60 vocational and technical schools were established in the year 1967. Tunceli was one of the cities where these schools were opened.

Despite not having access to formal education or substantial wealth during the time, the residents of Dersim/Tunceli displayed a keen interest in education and they actively supported educational moves. They organized campaigns to raise funds for school construction and to address deficiencies in school, often providing help personally as well. An article published in Milliyet provides an important example of the public's dedication to education: "An officer named Ali Kahraman, who selflessly donated his house to be used as a school, stated 'whoever provides better service to people should win the elections".[219] This newspaper article could serve as evidence that the general public values education more highly than politics or any other aspect. From another newspaper article, we get the information of a secondary school (Tunceli Teacher School) was built in Kirmizikopru, Pülümür, and the villagers were requesting a teacher from Ankara.[220]

[216] Millet Meclisi, 2. Dönem, 25. Cilt, 46. Birleşim, p 550.

[217] Millet Meclisi, 2. Dönem, 25. Cilt, 47. Birleşim, p. 552.

[218] Millet Meclisi, 2. Dönem, 25. Cilt, 47. Birleşim, p.552.

[219] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi,* 22.09.1961.

[220] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi,* 15.11.1970, p.7

On the other hand, these educational progressions were designed as a state strategy. The republican era wanted to bring significant enlightenment and cultural transformation to the rebellious locality to adopt them to the standards and requirements of a modern secular society at the national level. In line with this argument, Milliyet Newspaper reports an issue entitled, '*The importance of education was emphasized during the ongoing 'Tunceli problem*'. According to this report, Sidika Avar, the head of Elazig Girls' Institute, was described as a 'revolutionary missionary' to improve education in the region, mirroring the advancements in education throughout Turkey.[221]

In this article, it is stated that the conversation of a little girl with the head of the school was 'in a language other than Turkish'. Kurdish girls and boys were gathered from villages and taught Turkish language, modern sciences, and most of all Turkish lifestyle in these educational organizations. This report also reveals the economic conditions of the region that a girl receives her first pair of shoes and proper clothing upon entering the school. The poverty of the region was apparent and these developments lead to significant changes in the predominantly illiterate Alevi-Kizilbas community over time. As a result of this project of enlightenment in education, Tunceli achieved a higher level of education in comparison to the neighboring provinces by the 1970s.

Besides, the use of education as a state strategy to align the masses with the official ideology is a much-debated issue. In this context, Ayhan Yalçınkaya emphasizes that the modern state, particularly through its educational policies, aimed to assimilate the local population of this region and invested in education for that purpose. He proposes that this integration into modern educational standards has gradually eroded Dersim's sense of local identity and belonging at the end. That is probably because the increase in the educational level of the people means that the people are ecoming more politically aware and more consciously politicized in the next stage.[222] Yalçınkaya's analysis, on the other hand, suggests that the people of Dersim have

[221] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*: 03.01.1961.

[222] Kerem Öktem. "Alevilerin Siyasal Katılımının Dönüşümü: 1950-1973", *Birikim*, vol.309-310, (2015), p.63.

developed a strategy of resistance by using the same educational system, not resisting against education itself but using it as a means of resistance in the following years.[223]

As a result, the state's investments in the field of education in Tunceli such as opening schools all over the province, increasing school enrollment and implementation of compulsory education, lead to major changes. Educational investments put an end to the cultural isolation of Tunceli and integrated it into the unitary state system. Thus, period of intense interactions for the Tunceli/Dersim region has started, especially due to state investments in this field of education.

According to my point of view, educational reforms and development initiatives have made the education sector the most prominent target in Tunceli compared to other fields. Among all development plans, one of the most heavily invested areas is education. While there might be issues in the implementation of investment plans in other sectors, with plans often not fully realized, the state has ensured that Tunceli is not significantly left behind compared to other cities in terms of investments in education. Particularly from a republican perspective emphasizing enlightenment objectives, the fact that Tunceli was one of the last regions to embrace nation-state ideals meant that special attention was given to the region in terms of education. Given that Tunceli was one of the last regions to adopt the nation-state ideals, the particular emphasis on education for the region indicates the state's commitment to providing equitable educational opportunities in Tunceli.

4.2. Investments on Social Services: Public Health and Public Works

> 'The stepchild, who receives the most from every burden and the least of every blessing, is a typical example of the east, Tunceli. Despite severe poverty, experiencing shortages of electricity and water, the people in this region demonstrate admirable qualities. They are compassionate, watchful, devoted, resilient, courageous, generous, and staunchly opposed to bigotry and reactionary ideologies. Their unwavering patriotism is evident…'.[224]

Tunceli was a region characterized by poverty and deprivation as journalist Hasan Pulur described in the 1960s. Pulur's use of the metaphor of Tunceli as a stepchild is

[223] Yalçınkaya, *ibid*, p.378.

[224] Hasan Pulur. *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 31.07.1969, p.7.

undoubtedly due to the region's strained relations with the state and its undeveloped condition. However, in the 1950s, as Tunceli's security improved, public facilities began to be established, and the unfortunate feeling of being treated like a stepchild started to change. Later in the 1960s, a systematic period of development began in Tunceli and throughout the country, with comprehensive plans and projects the provinces received state funding. During this period, Tunceli became a priority area for state development plans along with other Eastern provinces, resulting in significant investments in various sectors to promote progress. Analysis of the period reports reveals the implementation of development plans in areas such as public health and public works in Tunceli.

An indicator of progress towards achieving a satisfactory standard of living in society is the delivery of healthcare investments and medical services by the state to the public in an equal and fair ground. Considering this, after the 1961 Constitution, state development plans were formulated to enhance the overall welfare of the country, and attention was given to identifying and addressing the shortcomings in the healthcare sector. The health-related section of the First Five-Year Development Plan emphasized the main principle of elevating the healthcare conditions of the population, with a particular focus on the advancement of preventive medicine services. Furthermore, in the First Five-Year Development Plan, a commitment was made to establish a comprehensive social security system that would cover health insurance for all, aiming to strengthen social development.[225] Another main objective of the development plans was to establish a strong healthcare system that extends to the rural villages. The First and Second Five-Year Development Plans highlight the insufficiency of healthcare services, with a particular observation that 40% of the total number of medical doctors in Turkey were concentrated in the Istanbul region.[226] This indicates that the majority of the population residing outside the Istanbul region faced challenges in accessing medical personnel and services.

[225] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1963-1967*, p.110. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Kalkinma_Plani_Birinci_Bes_Yillik_1963-1967.pdf

[226] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1968-1972*, p.147. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ikinci_Bes_Kalkinma_Plani-1968-1972.pdf

It is evident that healthcare services in Tunceli as elsewhere in most of the regions of Anatolia were experiencing disruptions, and urgent action is required to address the situation. As an example, in a newspaper clipping emphasizing the inadequate healthcare services, Huseyin Atac, the independent mayor of Tunceli, urgently seeks support from the parliament for the construction of a tuberculosis hospital in the region, stating that around 80% of Tunceli's population is affected by tuberculosis.[227] However, contrary to this news report, it was stated in the 1967 Provincial Yearbook of the Tunceli Governorship that epidemics were not common in the Tunceli region as a healthcare problem for the same period. According to the report, digestive system diseases and malnutrition are most common in this region due to lack of food. It is reported that measles and pertussis diseases tend to be prevalent during winter months.[228] Thus, while the information released by the mayor of Tunceli during the same period highlights significant healthcare challenges, the official state report seems to have taken a more optimistic view, ignoring these healthcare challenges of the region.

Before this period, in 1955, Tunceli State Hospital with 75 bed capacity began operations, providing conventional healthcare services in Tunceli. As part of the development plans, three 10-bed medical centers were established in Nazimiye, Hozat, and Cemisgezek districts. By 1967, medical centers started to operate in Pulumur, Kirmizi Kopru, Dereova, Mazgirt Muhundu, Carsancak, Pertek, Pinarlar, Cicek, Ovacik, Geyiksuyu, and Akcapinar, along with a tuberculosis dispensary, a trachoma dispensary, and a malaria treatment department in Tunceli. In addition, a state hospital with 50 bed capacity is being built in Ovacik in the same period.[229] In the 1967 Tunceli Yearbook, it was mentioned that a specific budget was given to the healthcare sector during that period. According to the report, an amount of 464.757 liras ($ 51.184) was assigned for healthcare facilities in that year. This budget was used to start the construction of medical lodgings with four flats in the center, as well as a medical center and a lodging in the Balpayam sub-district of Pülümür.[230] In

[227] *Milliyet Elektronik Arşivi*, 25.05.1964, p.7.

[228] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, *ibid*, p.80.

[229] *Ibid.*

[230] *Ibid*, p.97.

addition to these, Ovacik State Hospital, 14 medical centers, and 18 medical center lodgings were constructed with 2.062.890 liras ($ 227.190) given from the budget for the healthcare expenditures of Tunceli during the First Five-Year Development Plan.[231] And again, with the support of local people and associations, medical centers have been built in Pertek and Mazgirt districts. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has donated 110.000 liras ($12.114) to these constructions.[232]

When the gross investment table for the years 1963-1967 is examined; in terms of the percentage of total gross investment by sectors, agriculture is 17.7%, housing 20.3%, manufacturing industry 16.9%, transportation 13.7%, energy 8.6%, education 7.1%, mining 5.4%, while the percentage of healthcare investments remains only 2.3% on a nation-wide basis.[233] According to this report, investments in the healthcare sector accounted for 2.3% of the total investments, which represents a significant increase compared to previous periods.[234]. The reason behind this shift was attributed to the preparation of healthcare programs focused on maximizing service efficiency. Moreover, this investment preference was influenced by the priority given to strategic sectors that could bring added value, taking into account the necessities of the time. The rise in budget allocation can be attributed to the extraordinary efforts by Turkish governments in the field of healthcare, especially starting from 1961. The reason behind these efforts was to carry out a healthcare revolution in the country. Diseases like measles, tuberculosis, malaria, trachoma, and oriental sore were eradicated from Turkey during this period. However, this was a nationwide initiative that encompassed all of Turkey. To understand the implications of this period in Tunceli, we need to assess the planned investments and implementations for this province.

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[231] *Ibid*, p.100.

[232] *İbid*.

[233] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1963-1967*, p.136.
https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Kalkinma_Plani_Birinci_Bes_Yillik_1963-1967.pdf

[234] *1967 İl Yıllığı*, p.80.

As of 1973, the healthcare workforce in Tunceli consisted of 9 doctors, 1 dentist, 3 pharmacists, 28 medical officers, 8 nurses, 16 nurse assistants, and 72 midwives.[235] Despite these figures appearing to be limited, it is essential to consider that a decade before, the region had only one hospital. In this decade, efforts have been made to direct healthcare professionals to this area within the available resources, enabling the provision of continuous healthcare services to the public. When analyzing the per capita healthcare investments, it is evident that between 1961-1965, Tunceli's per capita healthcare investment was 60.36 liras, while the average per capita healthcare investment in the eastern provinces was 64.77 liras. However, during the years 1966-1970, the per capita healthcare investment experienced a considerable rise, reaching 182,43 liras ($ 20) for Tunceli and 133.00 ($ 14,64) liras for the eastern provinces.[236] During this time, the funds designated for the healthcare sector in Tunceli saw a remarkable increase. Furthermore, it is evident that the investments made by the government in Tunceli did not fall behind the eastern provinces, particularly in healthcare.

Comparing the healthcare investments in Tunceli with the annual budget of the Ministry of Health would provide a better understanding of the subject in a comparative context. During this period, the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance received an allocation of 983 million 97 thousand Turkish lira from the general budget.[237] Despite the tremendous efforts in battling epidemic diseases, which were largely driven by the dedicated work of healthcare personnel, discussions in the assembly highlighted that the allocated amount for the Ministry of Health was considered insufficient.

On the contrary, in terms of public infrastructure, the Ministry of Village Affairs allocated significant budget amounts from the 1967 general budget. For road construction under the Directorate of Roads-Water-Electricity, 142 million Turkish liras was allocated, while the Directorate of Settlement received 350 million Turkish

[235] Savaş Sertel. "Tunceli'de Kişi Başına Düşen Kamu Harcamaları", *Akademik Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, No: 79, (2018), pp.39-61, p.54.

[236] *Ibid*, p.56.

[237] Millet Meclisi, 2. Dönem, 26. Cilt, 48. Birleşim, pp.100-103.

liras for drinking water projects. Additionally, a budget of 50 million liras was allocated for forestry purposes.[238] Analyzing the investments made in Tunceli based on these figures, we can observe that relatively insufficient budget allocations were directed towards the development of the region.

Investments in public works demonstrate the government's intention to integrate Tunceli into the national economic order. Before this period, the insufficient transportation infrastructure in Tunceli resulted in limited access to production processes, trade relations, markets, and other governmental facilities. For this reason, a large amount of resources has been given for the construction of new roads in Tunceli, as transportation investments. As part of the 1967 Program of the Governorship, a budget of 3.058.400 liras ($ 336.828) was given to Tunceli for Road-Water-Electricity services, which allowed for the construction, repair, and maintenance of roads, including the rebuilding of 26 km of roads during that time.[239] Following the earthquake in Pulumur, it was reported that the roads in the affected villages were quickly opened, causing a delay in the planned road works.[240]

Additionally, in 1967, the continuing projects under the scope of highway services were continued, and a budget of 8.970.000 liras ($ 987.885) was allocated for this purpose.[241] With this budget, the Tunceli-Pulumur highway was repaired, and inner-city transit roads in Cemisgezek, Pulumur, and Mazgirt were built. The Tunceli-Ovacik, Mazgirt-Muhundu, Nazimiye-Iresi, and Hozat-Dere highways were also opened, and the construction of Dereova bridge, along with bridges in Yesilyazi, Mercan, Rabat, Harcik, Beylikcayi, Yoguncay, and Yaylagun, was accomplished.[242] In a news report from the Milliyet newspaper it was written as "the touristic road which stretches along the Munzur river and heading towards Ovacik, has reached 25 kilometers. However, the road's construction through steep cliffs remains a

[238] Millet Meclisi, 2. Dönem, 25. Cilt, 47. Birleşim, pp.590-594.

[239] Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967, *Ibid*, p.97.

[240] *Ibid*.

[241] *Ibid*, p.97.

[242] *Ibid*, p.101.

significant challenge".[243] In another news clipping we see an interesting piece about the transportation question of the region reporting that a local resident who had been working in Germany came back to his hometown and brought a minibus with him. A new minibus imported from Germany and horse carriage have recently been added to the taxi service in Tunceli.[244]

Another major problem of Tunceli is the scarcity of drinking water in the province. Many rural areas across the country face a similar issue, where providing drinking water facilities becomes a top priority. To address this issue, the State Hydraulic Works (DSİ) divided the country into regions, and Tunceli was included in the 9th Region, along with Adiyaman, Bingol, Elazig, and Malatya. According to the data from the State Hydraulic Works, the 9th Region comprises 5076 villages and neighborhoods, out of which 2647 suffer from inadequate or no access to water.[245] The lack of sufficient water is a widespread issue in Eastern Anatolia, and Tunceli is no exception. To address this problem, the ministry also allocated 1.816.000 liras ($ 200.000) specifically for providing drinking water to the villages in Tunceli. Utilizing this funding, a tender was organized, resulting in the construction of 42 wells to deliver water to these villages. [246] In 1967, regional directorate of Road, Water and Electricity initiated the supply of drinking water to ten villages using a budget of 653.000 liras ($ 71.916).[247]

In addition, Tunceli did not have a fire department, as many other public services were lacking in the early 1960s. This issue was mentioned two days apart in Milliyet newspaper and it was reported that Tunceli, a city without a fire department, experienced a devastating fire that completely destroyed the roof.[248] Prominent

[243] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 02.07.1964, p.5.

[244] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 25.08.1967, p.3.

[245] [1] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1963-1967,* p.415.
https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Kalkinma_Plani_Birinci_Bes_Yillik_1963-1967.pdf

[246] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, *Ibid*, p.97.

[247] *Ibid.*

[248] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 01.05.1961, s.5.

journalist Cetin Altan wrote in his column on May 1, 1961, that "imagine a country that has a province without firefighters. Well, in the second half of the 20th century!".[249] During that period, the absence of a fire department was a significant concern. However, an equally important issue was the fact that people were still residing in the countryside, living in cave-houses or adobe house during those years. In 1965, out of Tunceli's population of 154.175, 15% (23.240) resided in the city, while 85% (130.935) lived in rural areas.

These budget allocations show the government's dedication to improving Tunceli's basic services, infrastructure, and environmental management. This is part of a larger initiative to advance development, enhance standard of living, and provide opportunities for residents.

4.3. Investments in Economy

Regional economic development plans and subsequent investments of the period between 1960 and 1970s very much affected by the long-standing regional realities that have persisted in Dersim/Tunceli for years. Underdevelopment of the region stems from its geographic location, limited transportation facilities within the province and across other regions, lack of access to the production processes and the markets hindered the development and expansion of trade in the region. There has not been any capital accumulation throughout history because there has not been enough economic activity in this area. This peripheral region remained a rural farming and livestock breeding society until the middle of the 20th century. Consequently, it experienced significant setbacks in terms of economic development and failed to keep up with the advancements of the time. The absence of any industrial output and commercial enterprises in this province has historically been the main factor in designating its people as undeveloped, in addition to the underlying economic infrastructural limitations. The economic backwardness of the region in the 1960s can be traced from news reports. According to the front-page news of Milliyet newspaper dated October 15, 1967, it is reported that: "Today, the fifth of the East

[249] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 02.05.1961, p.2

Rally, focusing on the development of the East and Southeast is taking place in Tunceli. The main topic of discussion is the ongoing issue of neglect towards the Eastern provinces".[250] The underdevelopment of the Eastern provinces is a long-standing topic that has been discussed for many years. Particularly during the Second World War, the region's economic problems worsened, severely weakening its already fragile economic situation. Among the provinces with the lowest annual income per capita in the country, Tunceli has the lowest share with 923 liras ($ 326) , after Hakkari with 893 liras ($ 315) in the late 1950s.[251] However, in the same period, the annual income per capita was 1767 liras ($ 624).[252]

Tunceli's economy consists of agriculture of industrial plants and cereals, livestock breeding, and the cultivation of animal feed. Since the domestic production of most of these products cannot even meet the consumption, this deficiency is eliminated from the surrounding provinces.[253] Dersim, dealing with the difficulties of infertile soil and harsh climate, experiences obstacles in agricultural production. Nevertheless, the local population has predominantly adhered to traditional production methods throughout history, with minimal engagement in industrial or conventional economic activities. The tribal structure, serving as the fundamental model of social organization, has posed limitations on the production relations within this society. Living in a rural community, the region has experienced long-standing economic underdevelopment due to the absence of individual assets and capital accumulation within the hierarchical tribal order. As the community sustains primordial production patterns, they mainly belong to a landless peasant class, relying heavily on sheep and goat farming as their primary source of livelihood.

The primary focus of the economic development plans is to achieve economic progress and the subsequent social development it would foster. In the First and

[250] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 15.10.1967, p.1.

[251] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 14.08.1964, p.5.

[252] Mukerrem Hiç, "50 Yıl Boyunca, Muhtelif Dönemlerde Uygulanan Ekonomik Gelişme Stratejileri ve Milli Gelir Artışları" *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. 30, (1970), pp.47-72. https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/8586

[253] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, p.52.

Second Five-Year Development Plans, Turkey's economic development is linked to the country's industrialization, and accordingly, industrialization is given a special place in the distribution of investments. In this context, the first step to be taken is to establish factories, industrial enterprises and production facilities throughout the country, according to the potentials of the regions. However, it is assumed that industrialization alone would not create enough job opportunities to solve the employment problem in short term, and it is envisaged to support employment with special measures.[254]

In line with this target, the First and Second Five-Year Development Plans aim to create employment opportunities according to the needs of the sectors for the rapid development of the Turkish economy. In the context of the Second Five-Year Development Plan in 1968-1973, one of the main objectives is to address the requirements for skilled labor in various sectors. The report emphasizes that meeting the demand for a qualified workforce is crucial for promoting economic development during this period. For this reason, it is planned to train qualified personnel in the fields by determining the needs for engineers, skilled personnel for agriculture and forestry, medical doctors and high-quality medical personnel, and technical personnel in other fields.[255] The Second Five-Year Development Plan not only aimed to design and allocate economic investments and providing skilled labor but also made efforts to incorporate the investments of private enterprises into the overall economic system. The plan was developed within the framework of the mixed capitalist economic system, which had been gradually adopted after 1950s. It was a deliberate decision to promote and incentivize the private sector for profit businesses in the Turkish economy.

According to Milliyet newspaper reports, private investments targeted at increasing economic development have reached Tunceli, along with 22 other underdeveloped

[254] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *IV. Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu*, Yayın No: DPT: 1575 - ÖİK: 262, (Mayıs 1977), p.2. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/04_CalismaSorunlari.pdf

[255] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1968-1972*, p.3, 156. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ikinci_Bes_Kalkinma_Plani-1968-1972.pdf

provinces, as part of the efforts to encourage regional investments.[256] The private sector is encouraged to invest in these regions through various incentives, such as investment discounts and interest rate reductions on loans. Additionally, five distinct funds have been established, including industry and development, mining development, agricultural development, and export development. As part of this initiative, a total of 600.000.000 liras ($ 66.079.295) from the general budget was allocated to the private sector in 1969 for development and incentive purposes.[257] Three years later, in another news report, the focus remains on encouraging private investments to invest in disadvantaged regions, including Tunceli. The objective is to continue promoting economic development in these areas. It is reported that "investment opportunities have been made more accessible for private enterprises in twenty three underdeveloped provinces. Significant decisions have been made and will be implemented soon".[258] Moreover, In the Yearbook of 1967, Tunceli province seems an undeveloped area in terms of commercial opportunities. This report stated that the sales and manufacturing stores to be opened for clothing, groceries and daily household needs will bring profit to the investor.[259]

In this period, the state officials thought that the industrialization of Tunceli was possible with the exploitation of the underground resources, which was abundant and not yet extracted from the underground. In 1967, licenses were requested to operate several mines in different districts of Tunceli. These included two chrome and one asbestos mines in Mazgirt district; 13 chrome, 4 manganese, 1 coal, 1 iron, and one copper mine in Pülümür district; 15 chrome, 5 lead, 2 coal, and 1 copper mine in Ovacik district; 2 lead and 2 copper mines in Hozat district; 2 lead, 1 iron, and 1 copper mine in Pertek district; 1 lead mine in Nazımiye district; and one copper mine in the center of Tunceli. These licenses were seen as an opportunity to utilize the abundant underground resources and potentially contribute to the industrialization of the region.[260]

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[256] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi, p.1.*

[257] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 04.01.1968, p.7.

[258] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 12.01.1971, p.7.

[259] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, p.53.

[260] *Ibid*, p.54.

With the implementation of the mixed economy system model, education and healthcare sectors were prioritized. Starting from the 1950s, an economic development strategy based on promoting private enterprise, foreign aid, and foreign capital was introduced. However, this strategy led to a rapid increase in inflation by the end of this ten-year period. Additionally, in 1960 and 1961, the gradual increase of the dollar caused significant shifts in the country's economic balances. In 1959, the exchange rate was 2.83 Turkish lira for one dollar. However, in 1960, it rose to 5.15 lira, and from 1961 onwards, it surged to 9.05 lira. This dynamic shift in exchange rates during this period had a significant impact on the country's economic landscape.[261]

Despite being included in the list of priority provinces for development in 1968, Tunceli's economy did not experience the anticipated effects in this atmosphere. Limited economic investments prevented significant progress in the region's economic foundation during this time. In terms of manufacturing, only public-owned food and dairy factories were notable during the 1970s.[262] Private business and investments were largely absent in Tunceli. The difference between being a priority and the actual economic growth highlights Tunceli's challenge in that period.

Tunceli's absence of economic investments has still drawn considerable attention from various official reports and publications of the time. The region's continuous struggle with the lack of local or private capital and corresponding investments remains a prominent topic of discussion in the newspapers of the period. Despite being a disadvantaged region in terms of economic development, the necessary investments have not been sufficiently made by the state and private enterprise. For instance, During the 1970s, it becomes evident that Tunceli falls significantly behind the targeted economic progress and investment commitments. Although determined in the development plans of the State Planning Organization, Tunceli region did not have a factory, industrial output, or private industry until the middle of the 1970s. According to news reports in the press, the projects aimed at fostering economic

[261] *Gösterge Niteliğindeki Merkez Bankası Kurları*, accessed in 07.08.2023 https://evds2.tcmb.gov.tr/index.php?/evds/serieMarket/#collapse_2

[262] Kaya, *Ibid*, p.717.

development in Tunceli have not been implemented, and the investments are still pending in the 1970s. An article published in 1972 in Milliyet Newspaper describes the current economic situation of the province as follows: "According to the State Planning Organization, Tunceli is one of the fifteen provinces that have the lowest development rate compared to the national average in Turkey."[263] The state tried to attract investments to this region in the 1970s; promises several incentive measures, such as investment discounts, customs installment plans, and tax exemptions, will be implemented in accordance with Law No. 202.[264] Moreover, by the 1970s, Tunceli was also mentioned, along with other underdeveloped regions, for the urgent establishment of new factories for production. According to Prime Minister Ferit Melen's announcement, it is planned to construct at least one factory among the thirty-three provinces, including Tunceli.[265] In the same years, the plan to establish a dairy products facility in Tunceli was reflected in the press. According to the report, the Turkish Dairy Industry Authority is directing its attention to underdeveloped regions and has intentions to set up dairy facilities in eleven different areas. One of these regions is Tunceli, where plans are in place to establish a butter and cheese factory.[266] As can be observed, compared to other parts of the country, the investments planned for the region are quite insufficient. The eastern provinces, including Tunceli, have lagged behind in becoming appealing destinations for manufacturing opportunities. This can be attributed to various factors, such as security concerns in the region, limited transportation options, the distance from vital ports and roads, the rugged mountainous landscape, and most notably, the region's inability to attract significant investments.[267] Moreover, the absence of any significant product or raw material suitable for large-scale fabrication might also be a contributing factor in Tunceli not being chosen for economic investments.

[263] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 08.08.1973, Milliyet, p.7.

[264] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 13.12.1972, Milliyet, p.7.

[265] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 26.07.1972, Milliyet, p.3.

[266] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 10.04.1973, p.7.

[267] Savaş Sertel. Cumhuriyet Döneminde Tunceli (1940-1970), Dissertation Thesis, Fırat Üniversitesi, (2012), p.204.

Due to the reasons mentioned above, the development plans designed for Tunceli in the economic sector couldn't be realized during this period. The region held significant potential, particularly in terms of underground resources, and substantial planning was undertaken in this regard. However, the desired outcomes couldn't be achieved. Until the 1990s, the region's economic development lagged considerably behind neighboring provinces. This could have been influenced, to a certain extent, by the collective opposition shown by Dersim to capitalist production processes. Even in recent history, Tunceli stands out as a differential example compared to regional standards. As an instance, when I first visited Tunceli in 2011, I witnessed the opening of a chain supermarket for the first time in the city center. It shows that in the 21st century, the province stayed in a differential position in terms of economic activities. Certainly, due to ideological opposition to capitalist production, the local population refrained from pursuing commercial endeavors and instead aimed to maintain a distinctive standard until the 2010s. For thes reasons, Tunceli has remained one of Turkey's economically disadvantaged provinces. Tunceli is part of the TRB1 region, which has a per capita income around 60% of the national average, making it the fifth poorest region out of 26 in Turkey. Tunceli, along with Bingöl, is one of the two poorest provinces within this region.[268] This fact explains how limited the region's potential was for creating economic value or development not during the 1970s but extends to present. In the period examined in this thesis, the underdevelopment of the region was pronounced, which can be observed through various sectors, as highlighted earlier.

4.4. Investments in the Field of Agriculture

Tunceli has predominantly been characterized as a rural agricultural society, with the majority of its population residing in rural areas, while a smaller proportion lives in the center of the province. Based on data from 1975, 21% of Tunceli's population lived in urban areas while the remaining 79% lived in rural regions.[269] The local

[268] Ümit İzmen. "Bölgesel Kalkınmada Yerel Dinamikler: Tunceli Modeli ve 2023 Senaryoları", TURKONFED, 2014, p.19. https://www.kalkinmakutuphanesi.gov.tr/assets/upload/dosyalar/bolgesel-kalkinmada-yerel-dinamikler-tunceli-modeli-ve-2023-senaryolari.pdf

[269] *Ibid.*

economy relied predominantly on agriculture and livestock breeding, with traditional techniques being utilized for farming. Due to the lack of flatland, only 5% of the area was suitable for cultivation, making conventional and intensive agriculture impractical. Since the crops grown locally were insufficient to meet the residents' needs, Tunceli heavily relied on agricultural imports from neighboring provinces.[270] According to the 1967 Yearbook of Tunceli, agricultural land accounts for 13% of the region, and the crops grown include wheat, barley, corn, *mahlut*[271], as well as industrial crops such as tobacco, potatoes, sugar cane, linen, cotton, sesame seeds, and sunflower.[272] Among these products, sugar cane and tobacco had greater economic significance in the region. Analyzing the state of agriculture in Tunceli during the 1960s-70s, it becomes apparent that limited fertile land and challenging climate conditions in the region, sufficient yields could not be obtained in agricultural production. In this period, traditional methods were still in use in the region meaning that agricultural production has not been mechanized, and agricultural technology has not reached this region As an example reflecting the agricultural conditions of the Eastern region and its part Tunceli, we can consider a speech by Ahmet Şener, the RPP Trabzon deputy, where he discussed landless villagers in the Pülümür district of Tunceli. In his speech, he mentioned that all eleven villages within the borders of Pülümür district were comprised entirely of landless villagers. The land was fully owned by landowners, and the villagers were poor tenants on the land. The agricultural issues in this region were brought to the attention of the parliament, questioning why agricultural reforms were not implemented in this area..[273]

With the aim of promoting rural development, the First and Second Five-Year Development Plans emphasized the objective of modernizing agricultural production and enhancing productivity and efficiency. The promise was made to modernize agricultural activities, which were previously conducted using traditional methods,

[270] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, p.49.

[271] *Mahlut* is a type of grain mixture created by either cultivating wheat and rye together or combining oats with rye.

[272] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, p.51.

[273] Millet Meclisi, 2. Dönem 26. Cilt 49. Birleşim, p.211.

by improving access to raw materials and enhancing production opportunities. The industrialization of agriculture was significantly important because the development plans aimed for total industrialization, development, and urbanization of the country.[274] To ensure successful industrialization, having a surplus of crops in agriculture is crucial so support for agricultural production was emphasized. Accordingly, agricultural investments, which were previously neglected, were significantly increased in the First Five-Year Development Plan. During the period of 1963-1967, the agriculture sector received the highest investment compared to other sectors. As part of this initiative, investments were made in Tunceli worth 10.548.400 liras ($ 1.161.718), which accounted for 17.7% of the total gross investment.[275] In the First Five-Year Development Plan, under the title of Community Development, which is synonymous with village development, the objective was to establish organizations such as associations and cooperatives, and foster collaboration between the government and the local communities in terms of agricultural sector/production. In 1962, newspaper clippings indicate that an aid campaign was launched to boost grain production in the Eastern provinces. The campaign was advertised as follows: "The Eastern aid campaign saw an increase" as grain allocations were made to famine-stricken regions including Kars, Erzurum, Agri, Sivas, Tunceli, Bingol, and Erzincan. A sum of 15.000.000 liras ($ 5.300.353)[276] was allocated through the Turkish Grain Board, but irregularities in distribution were noted".[277]

In the Second Five-Year Development Plan of 1968-1972, which aimed at increasing the living standards of the whole society, a section titled "Village and Peasant Problem" was mentioned.[278] In this plan, it was aimed to raise the living standards of

[274] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1968-1972*, p.263. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ikinci_Bes_Kalkinma_Plani-1968-1972.pdf

[275] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1963-1967*, p.136.

[276] As of today's exchange, 1 US dollar was equivalent to 2.83 Turkish liras.

[277] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 07.01.1962.

[278] TC Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, *İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1968-1972*, p.235. https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ikinci_Bes_Kalkinma_Plani-1968-1972.pdf

the Turkish villagers, to overcome poverty and to be more productive, educated, well-fed, happy, and healthy. It has been stated that these ideals can be achieved by the cooperation of state with the communities living in the villages. Under the scope of the Second Five-Year Development Plan, an agricultural reform was planned in Tunceli, a region with landless peasants, aiming to enable farmers to cultivate their own land of a certain size. This reform involved transforming farmers into small landowners and organizing institutions for agricultural lands. Additionally, farmers would have access to agricultural services through agricultural credit cooperatives.[279] Farmers would have the advantage of receiving technical assistance and financial loans from agricultural cooperatives, enabling them to engage in intensive agriculture and generate added value in the agricultural sector. The planning report emphasized the importance of utilizing modern agricultural technologies and supporting purchases of agricultural products to guarantee the farmers' income. Additionally, the investment tables of the period include the production of agricultural tools and machinery as part of the overall agricultural development.

During the development plans period, the investments in Tunceli's agricultural sector mainly focused on two projects. Firstly, efforts were made to establish the water supply infrastructure in the region to facilitate agricultural production. Secondly, a Technical Agriculture School was planned to be established to provide training for farmers. As part of the First Five-Year Development Program in 1963, funds were allocated for the establishment of this Technical Agriculture School in the city center of Tunceli.[280] The same report also indicates that the presidents of the RPP and NTP of that period requested on behalf of the people of Pertek to address the irrigation problem crucial for agriculture in the region and to establish a fruit tree planting area. Furthermore, during this time, the implementation of chemical pesticides in agriculture and farmer training programs were introduced to enhance crop yields.

The aim of the agricultural program was to bring agricultural practices closer to the requirements of intensive farming through education of the farmers. According to the

[279] İzmen, *ibid*, p.14.

[280] Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi- "Tunceli İlinin İhtiyaçları". 05.02.1963, no: 118 - 750 – 6

1967 provincial report by Tunceli Governorship, a budget of 1.242.750 liras ($ 136.866) was provided from the ministry to Tunceli for agriculture, veterinary, and forestry services. Out of this amount, 236.250 liras ($ 26.018) were allocated for animal feed, establishment of vineyards, and fruit tree planting to improve agricultural services. Additionally, 176.000 liras ($ 19.383) were allocated for veterinary services in Tunceli. This fund was utilized to construct a veterinary facility and a residence in Pertek and Ovacik districts, as well as a bull tying/corral facility in Ovacik. Animal health protection and control efforts were also conducted using these funds. [281]

Besides agricultural investments, Tunceli has also received some investments in the field of animal husbandry. Historically, animal husbandry has been prominent in the Dersim region due to its limited agricultural lands. The following news from the Milliyet newspaper sheds light on the livestock conditions during that period:

> "Animal husbandry holds a significant place in Tunceli, as emphasized in the Minister of Public Works, Ethem Erdinc's program for Eastern Development. Special attention will be given to veterinary medicine to prevent animal mortality. Additionally, plans are in place to establish wool, fleece, and leather industries in Tunceli. Comprehensive measures will be taken to promote the development of forestry in the region".[282]

In his context, state officials aim to construct a national park in Munzur region and trout breeding ponds in the Munzur valley in 1974. A national park project covering an 82 km-area was included in the development plan though. The lakes located in Munzur Mountains were also considered for regional development. Furthermore, the Forestry Directorate planned to establish forestry production stations. An amount of 50.000 liras ($ 3496) were allocated to the Elazig Forestry directorate for this purpose, which was humorously mentioned in the newspaper.[283]

According to the Comparative Tunceli-Turkey Population Information by years, the total population of Tunceli has always increased numerically in the measurements

[281] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, pp.97, 100.

[282] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 17.11.1965, s.7.

[283] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 19.09.1973, p.5.

made every 5 years between 1960-1975. [284] The population, which was 140,034 in 1960, increased to 153,130 in 1965, 157,293 in 1970 and 164,591 in 1975.[285] Based on this data, it is evident that the population of Tunceli was increasing in a fluctuating trend, and feeding the increasing population was crucial during this period. Being a peripheral and disadvantaged area, Tunceli needed investments in various sectors like water, electricity, healthcare, education, agriculture, and trade. Ensuring agricultural production, enhancing production efficiency, and establishing a market were vital not only for its economic welfare but also for the overall development of the region in all these aspects.

Based on period reports, statistical data, and newspaper clippings, it is evident that Tunceli has received government investments in multiple sectors. As a part of the Eastern Anatolia region, Tunceli was prioritized in development plans. However, Tunceli has not achieved significant success in the fields of agriculture and industry in this decade. As examined above, while some of these plans achieved success, others faced complete failure in reaching their goals. There is no evidence to suggest that it was left behind compared to other Eastern provinces, nor was it subjected to different strategies or treatment. The challenges in achieving investment targets are not specific to Tunceli alone but are part of the broader difficulty in executing nationwide development plans, taking into account regional differences. Tunceli received equal treatment from the government compared to other cities, and there was no discrimination in investment initiatives. Investment preferences were justified by the fact that the supported sector and region are strategically appropriate for investment. As a consequence, with the state investments in education, health, economy, and agriculture sectors, reform startegies had extended to regions that were previously beyond state control. This inclusion led Tunceli region to become part of the capitalist world-system, thanks to the progress made in transportation and communication networks and the enforcement of compulsory education.

Furthermore, while investments planned in various sectors can be traced through documents, the question of whether these plans were actually realized poses a

[284] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı*, p.73. https://www.kulturportali.gov.tr/medya/dokuman/dokumandetay/3860

[285] *Ibid.*

separate challenge. Despite the planned goals and objectives for development, they did not provide a solution for Eastern Anatolia, which was a prioritized region for development during this period. Insufficient economic conditions prevailing in the Eastern Anatolia and in Tunceli, which remained unchanged during this period, can be observed through newspaper clippings and periodical parliamentary records from the 1970s. Additionally, criticisms of the failure to achieve harmonious development among regions in terms of economic activities are evident in these records. These economic reforms, whether realized or remaining as plans, fell considerably short in terms of employment, economic development, and industrialization in Tunceli. However, they relatively succeeded in the fields of education and healthcare. The impact of these reforms was generally felt socially by the local population. As educational enrollment increased, educational levels gradually improved, literacy rates rose, and the region started opening up intellectually to the outside world.

For instance, in the 1965-1966 academic year, 20,000 students enrolled in primary education in Tunceli province. Within a year, this number increased by 10% to reach 22,000 students.[286] During these years, Tunceli also witnessed a significant leap in literacy rates. Between 1945 and 1960, the literacy rate in the province was 20.7%, but by 1975, it had risen to 55.2%. Although the percentages were still below the national average of 61.9%, Tunceli's literacy rate exceeded the average of the neighboring provinces. [287]

However, when it comes to female education, the number of girls attending school in Tunceli remained low. The numerical disparity between male and female students in secondary schools was quite significant. In 1967, while 1,692 male students were registered in secondary-level schools, only 164 girls were enrolled in such schools during the same period.[288] The allocation of education investments to the region, which accounted for 52.1% of the total investments directed to Tunceli in the first five-year development plan and 33.3% in the second five-year development plan,

[286] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı,1967*, p.85.

[287] Kaştan, *ibid*, p.2307.

[288] *Tunceli İl Yıllığı 1967*, p.87.

would gradually elevate the region's education level.[289] However, it would take some more time for women's participation in education and social life to increase. The non-enrollment of girls in school during the 1960s was not a specific situation to Tunceli; it was a widespread practice across the country and particularly in the region.

With these developments in education, the region established a connection with the nation-state after years of conflict, gradually integrating into the system. During this integration process, the society also underwent various changes. The internal solidarity relations and trust networks, which were the fundamental support systems of the society, started to change as external forces entered into commitments with these networks, leading to their revival.

Investments influenced traditional belonging attitudes and patterns in the region, leading to changes in the class structure. The local sources of authority, such as Dersim's tribal ties and religious sensitivities, weakened as tribal influence waned during this period. The steps towards centralization, economic development plans, education, and reforms in the agricultural and industrial sectors, coupled with the weakening connection of migrated individuals with the region and its traditions, contributed to the secularization trend becoming evident during this period. As a result, unique aspects of Dersim's identity were questioned, overlooked, and in short, their influence on the community diminished during this time.

[289] Kaştan, *Ibid*.

CHAPTER 5

DERSIM/TUNCELI IN MODERN TURKISH POLITICAL HISTORY

5.1. Left-wing politics in Turkey during the 1960s and 1970s

The coup d'état of 1960 was a pivotal moment in modern Turkish history that profoundly led to changes in the political climate of the country. The constitution made after the coup addressed the issues that caused the regime crises in the 1950s and a series of structural steps were taken towards the democratization of the regime. The 1961 Constitution has redefined basic rights and freedoms in more detailed terms, while also embracing the principles of pluralistic democracy and welfare state. The inclusion of rights such as judicial independence, the right to form unions, establish associations, and hold demonstrations has marked a pivotal moment in Turkey's democratization process. With the implementation of the renewed electoral system, the rise of two new dynamic forces, students and workers, became influential actors capable of posing difficulties for the governments.[290] Thus, following the coup, Turkey experienced a significant turning point in its modern history known as the era of active politics, during which all social groups as bureaucratic officials, workers, agricultural entrepreneurial groups, student and women groups, and ordinary citizens, actively participated in politics and underwent a social awakening.[291] A new, democratic, and pluralistic political climate started to occur after 1961, allowing previously suppressed ideological and political movements to freely participate in politics.[292]

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[290] *Ibid*, p.259.

[291] Kemal Karpat. "Socialism and The Labor Party of Turkey". *Middle East Journal*, Vol.21, No:2 (Spring, 1967), pp.157-172. p.157.

[292] Igor Lipovsky. "The Legal Socialist Parties of Turkey, 1960-1980", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.27, No.1, (1991), pp.94-111. p.95.

The social awakening has caused great upheavals for the left-wing politics as well. Starting from the 1960s, there was a notable flourishing and popularization of left-wing ideas within Turkish politics. This was an important milestone in Turkey's modern history as workers, laborers, and regular citizens made massive efforts to engage in active politics. This was the first time that these groups had experienced such a significant political revival.[293] All the political groups demand for more freedoms and rights to express their opinions, to increase human rights protections, to bring social justice, labor rights, and economic development.[294]

The modern secular left-wing movement in Turkey, aimed at establishing a new social and political system, depended on the elimination of the traditional concepts of authority and social organization.[295] The socialist left aimed to abandon the traditional social organization patterns and relationships, and instead, establish a new organizational model based on labor to maintain a fair and free public order. For instance, the socialist deputies who managed to secure seats in the parliament had formulated proposals regarding issues such as land distribution to landless peasants, unemployment insurance, nationalization of the oil industry, removing laws that encouraged foreign investment, lowering tax burdens on workers, removing bans on strikes, establishing schools in rural areas, and providing free educational materials for primary school students.[296] These goals show that Turkish left particularly aimed to harmonize the relations between individual and society in a new social order, and to generate a sense of social solidarity and responsibility in a nation-wide scale.[297] Creating a sense of social responsibility refers to establishing a sense of unity within society by taking responsibility for societal issues and challenges through raising awareness and engaging in social projects. Achieving these goals could contribute to the creation of a more responsible and democratic social environment in Turkey.

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[293] Ergun Aydinoğlu, *Turkiye Solu 1960-1980*, (İstanbul: Versus), p.1.

[294] Kemal Karpat, "The Turkish Left", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.1., No.2, (1966), p.157, 172.

[295] *Ibid*, p.169.

[296] Hikmet Özdemir, *ibid*, pp.256-257.

[297] Karrpat, *ibid*, p.186.

As a result of the 1961 Constitution's guarantee of individual rights and freedom of expression, new political organizations emerged and became actors in Turkish politics. Tanil Bora referred to the decades between the 1960s and the 1970s as the "golden age" of the leftist ideology because of the substantial political diversity that existed in these ages.[298] Within the left-wing spectrum, various factions such as social democrats, national democratic revolutionaries, communists, pro-Soviets, Marxists, Leninists, and other groups came to prominence.[299] During the 1960s, three prominent political groups had significant presence in Turkish politics: Workers' Party of Turkey (WPT), the Yön-Devrim Movement, and the National Democratic Revolutionaries (MDD). Along with these founding members, other significant political organizations from this era include the Turkish Revolutionary Youth Federation (Revolutionary Youth) and the Federation of Idea Clubs (FIK). These groups originated from WPT members and supporters and made the decision to organize among the young people, young workers, and farmers.[300] Besides these new political formations, the Republican People's Party (RPP), which had been representing a Kemalist ideology since the beginning of the Republic, engaged in discussions concerning the revision of its party policy to democratic leftism. During the 18th Congress of the RPP held on October 18, 1966, the party officially adopted a "left of the center" approach as its political direction.[301] Moreover, only the RPP and the WPT were able to officially represent the left-wing votes in the parliament during this decade. A number of minor political formations known as extreme left-wing flourished after the closure of the WPT and division of its cadres into different factions. According to Aydinoglu, the leftist politics succeeded in creating an intellectual dynamism in the 1960s.[302] Many political groups, intellectual cadres, and public movements have appeared on the political scene and preached their own perspectives in 1960s. Following the 1969 elections, Turkey witnessed a political

[298] Tanıl Bora, *Cereyanlar- Türkiye'de Siyasi İdeolojiler*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017), p.573.

[299] Aydinoğlu, *ibid*, p.26.

[300] Hüseyin Aykol. *Turkiyede Sol Örgütlertler - Bölüne Bölüne Büyümek*. (İstanbul: Phoneix Yayınevi), p.36.

[301] Aykol, *ibid*, p.101.

[302] Aydinoğlu, *ibid*, p.14.

polarization along the right and left spectrum. With the closure of the WPT, the RPP emerged as the center of the parliamentary left, leading to a rise in its votes in subsequent elections throughout the 1970s. The period of 1968-71 has been defined as the "decomposition of the left" as a political movement with the rise of mass movements.[303] This perspective indicates a transition from the left being solely an intellectual worldview and discourse to transforming into a widespread mass movement in the 1970s.

Furthermore, it is important to address the historical context of the environment created by the 1961 Constitution and the government's inclination towards favoring Sunni Islam within the setting of leftist movements. As a historical development, it must be acknowledged that the backdrop formed by the 1961 Constitution and its liberal environment posed a potential threat to the state due to the emergence of these leftist political actors challenging the government's potential control over the country. During this era, international labor and student movements were spreading across countries, accompanied by escalating violence. In response to the potential threat of communism, the state decided to employ the Sunni Islam card. Successive governments followed a similar political strategy in the aftermath of the multi-party period. Particularly noteworthy is the Sunni Islam favor adopted by right-wing governments, especially after 1965. This policy is significant in light of the communism threat within the country, as it was used as a weapon to the perceived danger.

In the 1970s, the lively environment and intellectual accumulation inside the left-wing circles led to the emergence of new political groups, primarily consisting of young individuals. They were fragmentary, armed, or radical left-wing groups. These extreme leftist factions completely reject the entire political system and distanced themselves from any interaction with public authorities.[304] Far-left groups like People's Liberation Party-Font of Turkey (THKP-C or abbreviated as PLPFT in English), People's Liberation Army of Turkey (THKO or abbreviated as PLAT in

[303] *Ibid.*

[304] Senol Durgun. "Left-Wing Politics in Turkey; Its development and Problems", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vo.37, No:1, (Winter 2015), pp.9-32. p.24.

English), and Communist Party of Turkey/Marist-Leninist (TKP-ML or abbreviated as CPT/ML)were largely composed of students who had previously been involved in the Revolutionary Youth Federation of Turkey (DEV-GENC or *Revolutionary Youth* in English) cadres.[305] During the 1970s, these groups gained prominence with their sensational actions. The Turkish People's Liberation Party-Front was established in 1970 and led by Mahir Cayan. The Turkish People's Liberation Army was formed in 1971 by youth and peasant leaders Deniz Gezmis, Huseyin Inan, Yusuf Aslan, and Sinan Cemgil. The Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist was founded in 1972 by Ibrahim Kaypakkaya and his followers, with the Liberation Army of the Workers and Peasants of Turkey (TIKKO or abbreviated as LAWPT in English) serving as its armed wing. These groups made their names known during this period through armed actions resulted in violence. Especially, the years 1971-72 was a period of intense armed struggles called Guerrilla Movements. The years 1971-72 was a period of intense armed struggles called Guerrilla Movements. PLPFT and PLAT conducted urban guerrilla operations by carefully planning and carrying out violent actions in urban cities.[306] These armed actions, including bank robberies, kidnappings of individuals, kidnappings of American soldiers, and the capturing and murder of the Israeli consulate, attracted great attention and were widely reported in the media. Between 1974 and 1980, large-scale organizations, strikes, clashes, resistances, demonstrations, and armed conflicts emerged because of the excessive fragmentation of political groups and increasing tension between conservatives and leftist political groups in the country. Ultimately, these developments paved the way for the collapse of the government on September 12, 1980.

5.2. The Impact of Pre-1960s Political Atmosphere on Dersim/Tunceli

As mentioned before, the enduring trajectory of politics in Dersim/Tunceli has been marked by a lengthy and turbulent history. Dersim, which had been geographically distant from the central authority and culturally isolated from its neighborhood, became a double peripheral territory as a result of the centralization and

[305] Aydinoğlu, *ibid*, p.259.

[306] *Ibid*, p.253.

modernization measures enacted in Tanzimat era. Since then, bureaucratic elites have had several historical, cultural, and political claims about this area, influenced by the conditions of the period. Although these perceptions and practices have evolved, their essence remains unchanged. From the centralization period of the Ottoman Empire to the 1960s Turkey, there has been a consistent pattern of interactions between the state and community in Dersim/Tunceli. The state-centered view reflected upon the community was the set of assessments that derived from the Ottoman predecessors as distrust of the masses, a strong emphasis on modern education, and a belief in activism and progress for orienting the region.[307] As a peripheral community, engaging in politics was particularly challenging as the country they lived in has a center that was inherently skeptical of the intentions and goals of the periphery.[308] Because of this suspicious perception, Dersim as a marginalized community, experienced a sense of exclusion from the political system and struggled to advocate for their needs and concerns marginally for ages.

During the Ottoman period, the primary source of conflict arose from the fact that Dersim was not aligned with the political order and became a persistent hub for rebellion, uprisings, and looting. In the Republican era, the newly formed nation-state aimed to unify all ethnic and religious identities under a singular Turkish framework. Substantial measures were taken in pursuit of this goal. In this atmosphere, it became necessary for the provincial populations to keep up with the new era in terms of its social, political, and economic requirements. The Dersimi Alevis affected from the official measures and these efforts encountered resistance in the local population. The isolation in terms of social, political, and economic contexts made Dersim especially susceptible to frequent military interventions. The military actions were primarily motivated by Dersim's uprisings against reforms, rejection of the government, public unrest to pay taxes, and refusal to conscription until 1930s. These rebellions should be seen as typical examples of resistance against Ottoman centralization, which started in the Kurdish regions since the 19th century. Another reason for regional rebellions were the efforts of tribal and religious leaders

[307] Touraj Atabaki, (ed). *The State and the Subaltern: Modernization, Society and the State in Turkey*, (I.B. Tauris, 2007), p.109.

[308] Metin Heper. *Türkiye'de Devlet Geleneği*. (Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2006), p.249.

seeking to maintain their power and protect their privileges against these changes.[309] Therefore, various military operations were conducted, and military units were sent to the region even during the World War I due to ongoing local unrest and banditry. Punitive measures called "banishment operations" were carried out in 1926, 1930, 1937, and 1938 to serve as examples to other dissident groups.[310] After the military operations, the surviving residents faced additional regulatory measures such as administrative reorganization, deportation and forced resettlement.[311] This social dynamism has brought about a new wave of social and political shifts for the region. The phrase "Commanders were like God descended from the sky"[312] quoted by Munzur Çem, one of the regional writers, demonstrates the perspective of the community towards the central state at that period. Testimonies demonstrate that the Republican measures in Dersim were marked by severity, considering the context of the time and circumstances. In the opening speech of the 1937 Turkish Grand National Assembly's Opening Ceremony, Tunceli was highlighted in the first article of Atatürk's speech, emphasizing that security and peace had eventually been established in the region. One year later, in the 1938 Grand National Assembly Opening Ceremony, Celal Bayar declared that the unrest in Tunceli had been completely suppressed, and the region would enjoy the same access to state services as other citizens of the country. He expressed the intention to treat the people of Tunceli with the benefits and prosperity of the republic on an equally with other citizens.[313]

During the multi-party period, although the state became secular in character, the governments began to align with Sunni Islam to confront the communist threat, and this alignment marginalized Tunceli and other Alevi groups regarding state mechanisms. For this reason, the closed social structure remained strong in the region in this period. External interference further solidified the societal structure,

[309] Soileau, *ibid*, p.1.

[310] *Ibid*, p.104.

[311] David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, (I.B. Tauris, 2004), p.208.

[312] Çem, *ibid*, p.236.

[313] T.B.M.M. Zabit Ceridesi, Cild: 27, 1.11.1938, p.3-4., https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tarihce/ataturk_konusma/01_11_1938.pdf

causing the people of Dersim to preserve their traditional cultural experiences and customs to a significant degree until the 1970s. Nevertheless, the people of Dersim who lived in metropolitan centers have appeared as the influential actors in Turkish politics. Educated young people from Dersim have become visible in political life in the urban cities. That younger generation of Dersim/Tunceli have participated in socialist organizations starting from the 1950s. They have also established and taken active part in political-ideological groups since the middle of the 20th century. Early representatives from Dersim who achieved prominence in left-wing politics were Kemal Burkay and Dogan Kilic. They made several contributions to the left-wing politics, including active involvement in political groups, editorial positions in periodicals and newspapers, and administrative responsibilities.[314]

By examining the voting patterns and party distribution in Tunceli, we can gain insight into the political preferences of the residents, which are influenced by the prevailing developments of the time. Tunceli is represented in all general elections held since 1920, except between 1927-1939. In the 1950 elections, the Democrat Party (DP) was mostly elected in Tunceli. However, in the 1954 and 1957 elections, the Republican People's Party became the leading party in the region. In the general elections held between 1960 and 1970, both the center-right and left-wing parties received support in the region. This is because votes were historically distributed basing on tribal affiliations rather than party affiliations. For instance, according to a newspaper article titled "Parties in Tunceli are Based on Tribes" it was observed that the party aligned with a particular tribe would likely win. Another daily news clipping, titled as "Majority of Parties in the Southeast Seek Support from Sheikhs" mentioned that three parties, namely Republican People's Party (RPP), Justice Party (JP), and New Turkey Party (NTP), would run in the upcoming elections in Tunceli. All three parties have a substantial number of candidates contesting for seats in the region.[315] In another clipping, the provincial president of the RPP confidently stated that, "despite conflicts between deputies, we will still win the election here no matter what."[316]

[314] Şükrü Aslan. *ibid,* p.10.

[315] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 21.08.1965, p.5.

[316] Milliyet, 22.09.1961, p.3.

Thus, these materials demonstrate that the voting processes in Tunceli were solely directed by the regional notables. The tribal chiefs and religious leaders of the community established close connections with politics, as they held significant influence to mobilize large masses of people.[317] Political parties agreed with the notables of the region and nominated the people they would support as candidates from their own parties. Similar to other provinces in the East, tribal collectivities rather than individual preferences played a role in Tunceli's electoral preferences. In this manner, RPP consistently emerged as one of the leading parties in elections held in Tunceli. Center-right parties also gained support, not primarily due to aligning with the region's ideological stance, but rather because of local dynamics like the influence of local religious leaders and tribal affiliations. As seen, contrary to popular belief, left-wing parties did not predominate in Tunceli before 1970s.

5.3. The Visibility of 'Tunceli' in Politics from the Mid-1960s to the Mid-1970s

Besides the tremendous developments that have taken place in politics and society in the early 1960s, it is necessary to question the adaptation of this peripheral region to the new political environment in the 1960s and 1970s period. An important point of reference for Dersim in the 1960s and 1970s was the consideration of the region as being the basis for the extreme left-wing movements. Tunceli's historical legacy and its backwardness in many respects compared to its neighboring regions, gave an opportunity to the extreme political groups to build their novel narrative.[318] During this period, the left-wing movements traced their genuine origins in the history of Alevism; the history of Alevi rebellions became a source of inspiration for them and promised a glorious history as its potential to struggle against oppression.[319] According to Mehmet Ertan, left wing politics helped Alevis to deal with their historical traumas, with the ideological engagements they formed and the solidarity

http://gazetearsivi.milliyet.com.tr/Ara.aspx?araKelime=tunceli&isAdv=false

[317] Cağlayan, *ibid*, p.144.

[318] Gezik, *ibid*, p.109.

[319] Mehmet Ertan, "Aleviliğin Politikleşmesi ve Sosyalist Sol", *Birikim*, 309-310, p.46.

networks they created.[320] In line with this, Tunceli established itself as an important center and made substantial contributions to the regional ultra-leftist groups. The region helped the left-wing cadres to make use of Dersim's own glorious and dissident past with the leftist fellows. The flourishing left-wing cadres in the 1970s, made significant efforts to establish Tunceli as a pivotal origin for their movement, of course, contributed to the subsequent alteration of political and cultural belonging in Tunceli. Participating in the socialist movements since the 1960s had a significant impact on raising individual awareness within the Dersimli community.

However, it seems that this political activism has had a reverse effect on local cultural elements and traditions, leading to a decline in these ties prominence. Traditional social mechanisms have changed as a result of increased interactions with other groups and participation to national politics. Through interviews, it becomes evident that individuals' feelings of belonging and local sentiments were subject to fluctuations starting from this era. Nevertheless, the shift in societal attitudes and belonging patterns took longer to occur and spread out, as the influence of urban centers' changes required more time to reach the periphery. Considering the complexity of societal changes and the time needed for their effects to be seen throughout the community of the region, political mushrooming has led significant alterations in socio-cultural and political patterns.

During the 1960s up until the mid-1970s there were some political formations which had impact in Tunceli's political space and gained support inside the area. When considering which political group dominated this historic Alevi enclave starting from late 1960s, it is evident that revolutionary ideologies were accepted and took root in these lands, aligning with the region's history. In addition to the significant presence of the RPP in the region, which was evident from election results above, CPT/ML founded by Ibrahim Kaypakkaya in 1972 attracted great popularity in the area. Dersim has provided human resource and support to this movement for years. CPT/ML and LAWPT which was affiliated with the Federation of Idea Clubs and the Reviolutionary Youth before, had a program aimed originally at villager

[320] Mehmet Ertan, "Örtük Politikleşmeden Kimlik Siyasetine: Aleviliğin Politikleşmesi ve Sosyalist Sol", *Birikim*, (Ocak-Subat 2015), p.45.

organization, conducting activities in the countryside of Dersim. They created a party program inspired by the communist Chinese leader Mao Tse Tung. This leftist movement believed that independence would be attained through armed conflict and attempted to adapt the Marxist philosophy and policies of the Chinese communist party to the circumstances in Turkey.[321]

In 1971, Ibrahim Kaypakkaya organized activities while touring the villages in the rural Corum, Malatya, Antep, and Dersim regions. LAWPT, the armed wing of the party, had made a name for itself with illegal actions in the Dersim countryside and it has been known as *Partisan* in Turkish politics since 1978.[322] Following a series of illegal activities, Kaypakkaya was captured in the locality of Dersim in 1973, and after being brought to a prison in Diyarbakir, he supposedly committed suicide there.[323] According to Tanıl Bora, one crucial factor contributing to the popularity of this movement in Tunceli was the organization's referencing the events of 1937-1938. Muzaffer Oruçoğlu, a chief executive of LAWPT during that period, brightly described the era, their efforts in the countryside, and the local people's perceptions towards the political developments. He proudly described the Dersimi youth as "they have desire to break the silence they were silenced in and to flourish and grow in their isolation."[324] As mentioned here, the Dersimi community and the radical left coexisted in the same historical context, sharing the similar political considerations.

The interaction and connections between these two groups opened an important page in the history of the region. The relationship of these two groups likely had a significant impact on the local dynamics. Coexistence helped shape the political potential of the region and made the region a home for radical left-wing politics for the first time. Tunceli started to gain recognition in association with the radical left. Furthermore, researchers argue that Tunceli's left-wing political experiences followed a distinct path due to its distinct ethno-religious identity.[325] While the

[321] Aydınoğlu, *ibid*, p.237.

[322] Aykol, *ibid*, p.43.

[323] *Ibid*.

[324] Bora, *ibid*, p.668.

[325] *Ibid*, p.863.

mainstream Kurdish national movement sought to amalgamate Tunceli into the Kurdish identity by the second half of the 1960s, the relationship did not unfold as expected due to the region's ethno-religious differences.[326] These power struggles are attributed to the specificities of the region, where the majority of the Tunceli Alevi-Kizilbash population follows a Sunni-Shafi Kurdish base, claims Bora.[327] As a result, conflicts arose between different factions of the left-wing currents and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Tunceli in the later periods. Kurdish Alevis in Tunceli were accused of promoting separatism within the Kurdish national movement.

In addition, to examine the voting behaviors and parliamentary election results, it is possible to comprehend the formal political participation of Tunceli during this time. The province was granted the right to have two representatives in the Turkish Grand National Assembly since 1946. In the 1961 general elections, the RPP secured one seat with 35.2% of the votes, while the NTP obtained the other seat with 35.4% of the votes. In the 1965 general elections, the RPP remained the leading party with 33.5% of the votes and won one parliamentary seat. The second seat was claimed by the JP, which received 26.8% of the votes. In 1969, the two parliamentary seats allocated to Tunceli were won by the JP with 23.3% and the RPP with 18.9% of the votes. Other parties and independent candidates who were unable to secure seats in the 1969 elections included the WPT with 16.8%, the NTP with 14.9%, and independent candidates with 17.6% of the total votes. By 1973, the RPP gained both two allocated seats in Tunceli, obtaining 70% of the votes.[328]

As seen from the election results, the political orientation of Dersimi Alevis has considerably changed since the multi-party period. Despite the sympathy among the youth for left-wing politics, Tunceli's general political inclinations were not solely on supporting the socialist left-wing before the 1970. For instance, in the 1965 general elections, Tunceli backed the RPP even though the WPT was also an alternative. Starting from the early 1970s, Tunceli has exhibited a relatively consistent political

[326] *Ibid.*

[327] *Ibid.*

[328] https://www.ysk.gov.tr/doc/dosyalar/docs/Milletvekili/1950-1977/Tunceli.pdf

orientation, characterized by a clear alignment with left-wing politics in its voting patterns. Since then, general political stance has remained stable. The Workers Party of Turkey, nominated candidates in Tunceli in the 1965 and 1969 elections; however, they were unable to win any seats, obtaining 5.8% and 16.8% of the votes, respectively. Interestingly, WPT received support from the Sunni community in Tunceli during these elections, but not from the Alevis.[329] Considering the voting preferences after the March 12, 1971 coup d'état, the RPP remained the dominant force in the region's politics. After 1970, Tunceli saw significant attention from various socialist left factions. Despite the emergence of socialist and extreme left movements, the people of Tunceli continued to support the RPP, led by Bülent Ecevit until the 1980 coup. In the latter half of the 1970s, as political polarization turned into street conflicts, Tunceli experienced increasing politicization and a growing inclination towards radical left groups. Thus, the region's political dynamics after the 1970s presented a reasonable picture in line with the left-right polarization in politics.

5.3.1. "The Center of Political Disorder"

By the mid-1960s, Tunceli was once again cited for unrest and disorder on the national stage. Newspapers and reports frequently highlighted the incidents where armed groups conducted roadblocks, kidnapped individuals to remote mountainous areas, and engaged in unlawful activities like robbery. A report in the Milliyet newspaper portrayed the visibility of the province at that time. The question of "What kind of a place is Tunceli?' is answered as "bent lip," which refers to ignorance or reluctance to discuss the topic.[330] The metaphor of the "bent lip" serves as evidence that the republican project aimed at integrating the region have not achieved the desired success. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Tunceli continued to pose challenges to the state in terms of maintaining public order, persistent poverty, and underdevelopment. It has been portrayed as the center of political disorder with the rise of extreme left-wing activities in the region particularly after 1970s.

[329] Kerem Öktem, "Alevilerin Siyasal Katılımının Dönüşümü: 1950-1973", *Birikim*, vol.309-310, (2015), p.61.

[330] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 20.12.1964, s.4.

The governments made consistent efforts to address the issue of unrest in Tunceli. Its presence in the parliamentary records and in the national press has increased over time. Discussions about Tunceli in the parliamentary records focused on topics such as regional development plans, investment shortcomings, public works, and minor local issues until the middle of the 1960s. However, by the second half of the 1960s, Tunceli gained attention once more due to the incidents of anarchy, terrorism, and disorder. The perception of the region shifted from development-related matters to security-related issues. For instance, the archives of the Milliyet newspaper documented two instances in May 1964 where Tunceli was prominently featured in news articles concerning public order challenges. The newspaper clipping published on May 7th reported that "four masked terrorists carrying automatic weapons stopped a minibus and a truck in Tunceli's Kuzudere area. After taking the passengers' money and valuables worth 15000 liras, they escaped."[331] However, a few days later the newspaper published a disclaim for this news. Possibly, the governing authority did not wish to disclose any weaknesses of the state authority in the region. As a result, a disclaimer was issued regarding the newspaper article to avoid any accusations that would indicate the state's inability to maintain control in Tunceli. In the second clipping released on May 22nd, Tunceli governor Ethem Boysan made a statement contradicting the previous news reports about Tunceli. He emphasized that Tunceli is a city free from any security issues or problems. In the news report it was claimed that "there have been no reports of robberies by criminals in Tunceli targeting trucks and minibuses. Tunceli is known for having excellent public order, and its residents are highly responsive to such incidents."[332] The periodic news in newspapers indicates that Tunceli was emerging as a significant local political actor.

Moreover, during this period, apart from the development policies formulated by political authority, it was apparent that some of the political parties have developed an inclusive discourse for the people of this region. Their objective was to gain the support and trust of the citizens and promote the region's further incorporation into the nation-state structure. Bülent Ecevit, one of the most prominent social democratic

[331] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 07.05.1964, p.7.

[332] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 22.05.1964, p.1.

political figures, made the following statement in his speech in Diyarbakır in 1973, when he himself became the head of the RPP and the RPP received the overwhelming majority of the votes in the general elections in Tunceli:

> The people of the Eastern region should not be viewed with suspicion, as they would willingly learn Turkish if provided with the opportunity by previous governments. The challenges faced in this region are primarily rooted in land injustice, unemployment, poverty, limited access to education, and social oppression. The existence of 'sheikhs' and 'agas' is a consequence of the government's failure to provide adequate support and leaving the people to fend for themselves. However, if the government stands by its citizens and offers proper support, the influence of such hierarchical figures would diminish.[333]

The newspaper clipping denotes that during that period, social democrats expressed their sympathy and support for the region's specific conditions. The newspaper clipping thus serves as evidence that the RPP of the period sought to establish deeper connection with the region because of the political support that the region has provided in 1971 elections. They made these statements also because they witnessed that the radical left cadres appeared here as a threat and started to take root in Tunceli. On the other hand, the NTP, a center-right party established after the dissolution of the Democrat Party following the 1960 coup, had critical opinions of the growing influence of the socialist left in Tunceli. The NTP, which secured a parliamentary seat in Tunceli with 35% of the vote during the 1961 elections, declared by 1965 that, Tunceli was moving towards the revolutionary left. In Milliyet newspaper, a report entitled “Red propaganda should be avoided in Tunceli”, Ekrem Alican, the leader of the NTP, issued a warning regarding the proliferation of red ideology (revolutionary socialism) in Tunceli. Alican warned that anyone promoting revolutionary socialism and using social justice principles as a cover to label the Turkish political regime as a class dictatorship would face opposition from the entire Turkish nation.[334]

In 1969, we see an unrest erupted in the region when the provincial authorities banned the performance of Pir Sultan Abdal's play. Members of the WPT actively

[333] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 10.10.1973, p.6.

[334] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 11.07.1965, p.3.

intervened in the incident accusing the governors of discrimination. After a meeting held at the ministry, strict security measures were implemented in the city, resulting in the closure of entertainment venues and a restriction on alcohol sales. The events resulted in the destruction of the central police station, police lodgings, and several houses. According to Milliyet, following the incidents, one person died, eight people were injured, and eight people were arrested.[335] After these turbulent developments occurred in August 1969, the province of Tunceli once again became a subject of discussion in the media via the key concepts like anarchy and terror. Newspapers in the years 1972 and 1973 reported the spreading anarchist activities taking place in Tunceli. In a news clipping entitled "In Tunceli, two armed anarchists were arrested"[336] reported that these individuals confessed to planning and executing the People's Liberation Operation in Tunceli and its neighboring regions and they have been handed over to the Diyarbakir Martial Law Command for further action. In 1973, the unrest in the region escalated further. According to a news report from Milliyet newspaper dated 31.01.1973, one anarchist in Tunceli lost their life, and another was wounded during a clash with the gendarmerie. Ibrahim Kaypakkaya was also injured and was detained.[337]

Turkish Grand National Assembly's records reveals that until the 1970s, the discussions about Tunceli primarily focused on development plans, issues related to regional demands, needs, and challenges in this regard. However, as demonstrated by these records, there was a shift in the regional agenda of Tunceli in the 1970s. The Turkish Grand National Assembly records started to associate the province's name with terms like terror and anarchy. Statements made about Tunceli in the archives shifted from development problems and regional projects to anarchy and disorder. For example, the 3rd Term of the National Assembly Tunceli deputy Huseyin Yenipinar's question to the parliament contains remarkable details about this period. This question addresses the quantity and characteristics of political and anarchic incidents that happened in the region during that period. It awaits a detailed written

[335] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 25.08.1969, p.11.

[336] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 25.11.1972, p.9.

[337] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 31.01.1973, p.1.

response from the ministry of interior. Tunceli deputy Mr Yenipinar also asked a question to the police chief of the period. The deputy inquired about allegations if the police chief sent certain high school teachers to the Diyarbakir crime-control command. Furthermore, it was reported that the police chief threatened a high school teacher, stating, "Submit your petition immediately and leave this province, or I will send you to the command of the siege control." The teacher was also allegedly asked, "Are you Kurdish or Alevi? Why did you get engaged with an Alevi?"[338] In the archive records, there is a written response from the Ministry of Interior officially denying all these questions. In a different official record, the Minister of the Interior, Ferit Kubat, proudly stated that there had been some tendencies towards anarchic events and actions in Tunceli recently, but all such incidents were successfully suppressed and brought under control. Based on this report, Tunceli witnessed a series of twelve anarchic events starting from November 1971. Slogans like "*Long live Revolutionary Youth*," "*Revolutionaries may die but revolutions endure*," and "*Become a member of the Turkish People's Liberation Army*" were found graffitied on the walls of the Craftsmanship and Girls' Artisanship Schools of Tunceli and the authorities successfully caught the responsible for these incidents.[339]

According to another parliamentary report, Tunceli deputy Suleyman Yildirim directed a question to the Ministry of the Interior about the actions of the Mazgirt Gendarmerie commander. The deputy reported that the gendarmerie commander had beaten two teachers of the Darikent district, and he had openly pulled weapons at these teachers. Furthermore, due to the arbitrary behavior of the lieutenant in this district, a ban was imposed after 7 pm, leading to restrictions on the freedom of citizens to walk on the streets. The Gendarmerie General Command responded to these allegations by claiming that they are merely rumors and that they are actively investigating the subject.[340] Indeed, Tunceli deputy Nihat Saltik's speech in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey serves as a historical document that sheds light on the perceptions of Tunceli during the 1970s. His speech offers crucial insights

[338] Millet Meclisi, 3. Dönem, 29. Cilt, 11. Birleşim, p.319, 320.

[339] Millet Meclisi, 3. Dönem, 26. Cilt, 121. Birleşim, (1.11.1974), pp.351-352.

[340] Millet Meclisi, 4. Dönem, 7. Cilt, 1. Birleşim, pp..41-42.

into how the region was perceived and understood by the public of that period. Nihat Saltik in his speech:

> "Esteemed colleagues, is it considered improper to come from Tunceli in Turkey? I am wondering whether being from Tunceli is regarded as a dishonorable or stigmatized identity in our country. My dear colleagues, certain incidents occur in Gaziantep, and Tunceli residents are searched on buses; similar events happen in Kizildere and Tunceli people are again subjected to searches on buses; and similarly, when events break out in Zonguldak, Tunceli residents are called out on buses. I would like to pose a question to the government: why is this happening? When I mention "government," my esteemed colleagues, Mr. Süleyman Demirel comes to mind. I would like to ask Mr. Demirel: if you claim that the people of Tunceli did not vote for you, I can provide historical examples from previous assemblies to indicate otherwise: In the face of the approaching enemy towards Erzincan, an urgent situation arises. Atatürk, the great leader, sends a telegram to Diyab Aga, the deputy of Dersim, urging him to act. Atatürk warns that the enemy is almost at Ilic province and asks why no action has been taken yet. In response to Atatürk's call, Diyab Aga gathered the Dersim locals and organized militia forces. From early morning till night, they were entirely committed to carrying out Atatürk's orders, stating that Atatürk and the Turkish nation's commands were of utmost importance to them... Then I address the government: Oh, government, why are you beating our young people? Why are you attacking them and conducting searches everywhere? You are the ones who resort to violence, use offensive language, and cause unrest on the streets. Because you have the militants who triggered the turmoil in the provinces, you put them there. Take your hand off the collar of Tunceli, take the collar of the students and the poor young people. Is the reason for this torture in Tunceli since Tunceli elected two deputies from the RPP in previous parliaments?"[341]

As stated by deputy Nihat Saltik, Tunceli has become one of the significant centers of left-right political polarization in Turkey. The increasing tension in the region was associated with its rebellious past. The impact of past experiences on the state is undeniably significant, shaping the present situation in the region. Furthermore, residents in Tunceli have begun to affiliate themselves with the emerging and popular radical left movements. In terms of political orientations of Dersimi Alevis, we see a revival of interest to politics, a shift to secular left and engagement to popular politics in Tunceli region. That period brought about notable changes in the living conditions and political orientations of the people in Dersim.

Right-left confrontations and student collectives that participated in these tensions as political players started to appear in the media by the year 1974. Tunceli was one of

[341] Millet Meclisi, 4. Dönem, 20. cilt, 111. Birleşim, pp.215-216. (15.6.1976)

the places where the political conflicts took place for the first time with Erzurum, Ankara, Kars and spreading across the country. In one of the news clippings, it was reported that "clashes between students resulted in nineteen injuries across two provinces, in Tunceli Teacher's School and in Erzurum Ataturk High School."[342] According to All Teachers Unification and Solidarity Association (TÖB-DER or abbreviated as ATUSA in English) general chairman Ali Bozkurt, the events that extreme right-wing and so-called commando student groups emerged in universities, schools, meetings and on the streets were rising. "They are attacking Ataturkist revolutionary students, and the RPP youth are also attacking fascist groups."[343] RPP Sivas Senator Huseyin Ozturk also announced the reoccurrence of student unrest and emphasized that "regardless of where these events occur, whether in Tunceli, Erzurum, or elsewhere, the government should address the matter with determination and take measures to eliminate the presence of commandos."[344]

Moreover, another newspaper article was about the secretive political group of Turkey, LAWPT. In 1975, it was reported that LAWPT made protests by featuring slogans such as "*boycott the elections, boycott Ecevit*" and "*end the occupation in Cyprus*". The group also wrote slogans on the walls which were discovered on the roads between Tunceli and Bingol, reported Milliyet newspaper.[345] LAWPT members protested and sabotaged Bulent Ecevit's eastward trip in September 1975. Upon these protests in the region, Prime minister Ecevit stated that the young people had been provoked towards violence. He expressed his deep sadness saying, 'I faced opposition from the right-wing in Elazig and more painfully from the left-wing in Tunceli, preventing me from speaking'.[346]

The political upheaval of the 1970s inspired new viewpoints and questions among Dersimi Alevis. They began to question traditional forms of local belonging in their

[342] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 19.03.1974, p.1.

[343] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 21.03.1974, p.11.

[344] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 22.03.1974, p.6.

[345] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 06.09.1975, p.1.

[346] *Milliyet Gazetesi Elektronik Arşivi*, 07.09.1975, p.6.

new secular political environments. In urban centers, the 1970s marked a period when Dersimi youth opened to external influences and gained visibility in political movements. Because of this increased visibility, their local belonging became more open to embracing new ideas, philosophies, and cultural aspects. The residents of the region began to question their sense of belonging and local elements long after the youth cadres have embraced in metropolitan cities. However, it is essential to note that these inquiries and reflections did not necessarily result in a complete transformation in the patterns of local belonging. Dersimi Alevis maintained their trust networks and closed community structure until the 1970s, with fully disclosing themselves to other fellows in mass movements. They did not pay attention to their belonging patterns and traditions because their mere motivation was politics in that era. The youth entirely committed with loyalty to the secular socialist left. This assertion, which is also the claim of originality of this dissertation, will be further explored and examined in the following sub-title.

5.4. Dersimi Youth as a Paradigm Shifter? – Getting in the "Area" via Interviews

As was already noted, area studies serve as a useful tool for identifying the unique qualities and commonalities of regional characteristics. This academic endeavor is also greatly aided by interviews and oral history research. To bring forward a different perspective of the past[347], oral evidence is a suitable tool for elaborating the local history for this research. In this context, since there is limited written documentation for the 1970s political developments about Tunceli, oral sources seem to be necessary for obtaining regional insights and acquire knowledge of this era. For this reason, in the early stages of my dissertation, I decided to adopt one of the qualitative research techniques for my study, key informant interview, as a method for conducting the regional analysis. I believe that applying the interview technique helps to establish a connection between the historical and theoretical assumptions and the geographical knowledge. Additionally, these interviews support the claim of originality of this dissertation that strongly promotes the consideration of the insider contributions for the in-depth exploration of regional issues. Therefore, one should

[347] Robert G. Burgess, (ed) *Field Research: A Sourcebook and Field Manual*, (Taylor&Francis, 2005), p.203.

emphasize the revealing role of the interviews while considering the peculiar development paths of Tunceli in the history of Turkey. To comprehensively analyze this period in terms of the dynamics of local belonging and the network of relations, gaining an insider's perspective was essential. This required engaging with individuals from the area to access firsthand knowledge about the history of the region. For this reason, understanding the roles and activities of the younger generation in national politics such as participation to radical left factions or workers' movements can provide valuable insights into examining the repercussions of these developments. It is also reasonable to find out from interviews whether the state's strategies and investments for regional development in Tunceli had the potential to reshape the dynamics within Tunceli. Another key objective of the interviews was to learn whether and how the changes pushed by the youth in the left-wing politics have influenced the local dynamics and trust networks.

Due to these reasons, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. Following the documentary and archival research, it became essential to provide a platform for the voices of the youth who were perceived as the driving force behind the regional changes. The interviews with the young individuals of the period aimed to facilitate a comprehensive exploration of the research period from another point. Consequently, a series of key informant interviews were undertaken involving six young individuals from the region. First, the interviews were designed with open-ended questions that allowed the respondents to share their perspectives and experiences as they wished. The semi-structured format with open-ended questions offers both the participants and the interviewer the flexibility to manage the conversation in the direction they find relevant and appealing in interpreting the past. This can lead the conversation to evolve in a flexible and productive direction. Even though I identify myself to the respondents as having research and thoughts on the decade of the 1970s, I could not refrain from presenting myself as an outsider to the cultural setting of "Dersim".

For establishing a rapport with the respondents or convincing them that "I am interested in what they are talking about"[348], I wholeheartedly reveal my general

[348] *Ibid*, p.665.

perspective and my research about the historical evolution of the Turkish political history. I see myself as a curious outsider in front of the local population, and I genuinely reflect my curiosity towards their insider perspective. They serve as both the inheritors and witnesses of that era, possessing a unique insight into the events and experiences of that time. As such, the stages of warming up and establishing rapport at the beginning of the interview facilitated the progression of the interview which promoted a healthy and sincere connection. Through the interviews, I strongly believe I am effectively "getting my foot in the door", as Kenneth Goldstein describes it, and I can succeed in establishing a connection with the informants and gain proper insight into the historical period.[349] As I stated to my key informants at the beginning of the interviews, their perspectives provided original viewpoints that enrich my study, while also enabling me to test my hypotheses through their responses.[350]

Then, it is also important to underline the reason of selection to key informant interview technique in this study. Since area studies account for both continuities and changes over time within societies and particular areas[351], I decided to conduct key informant interview. Key informant interviews locate the individual to a social context to gain insights on which local values and associations are formed during a particular period.[352] Among a group of people, key informants are selected for their consideration as a source of detailed qualitative information on a certain topic.[353] Key informants are not chosen randomly from the general population; specific circumstances have guided their selection for their engagement to a certain topic. They must have a particular knowledge or expertise on a specific setting, such as

[349] Kenneth Goldstein. "Getting in the Door: Sampling and Completing Elite Interviews", *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 35, No. 4, (2002), pp. 669-672.

[350] Beth L. Leech, "Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews", *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 35, No. 4, 2002, pp. 665-668, P.665.

[351] Boztemur, 2013, *ibid*, p.94.

[352] Donatellla Della Porta and Michael Keating (eds). *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences; A Pluralist Perspective*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p.99.

[353] Emilia Dungel and Anne-Séverine Fabre. "Key Informant Interviews." *MISSING OR UNSEEN? Exploring Women's Roles in Arms Trafficking*, Small Arms Survey, 2022. http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep41863.10., p.30.

ethnic belonging, religious affiliation, generational belonging, financial and political movements of a particular group or area.[354] Key informant individuals participate in in-depth interviews with the aim of providing a relatively comprehensive representation of the social, cultural, or political dynamics within their group affiliation. This particular method involves interviewing a limited number of qualified informants in order to capture a comprehensive understanding and securing the total patterning of a specific culture.[355] Besides, key informants are the focus group for the study of specific aspects of a cultural setting rather than the cultural whole usually detailed in ethnographies.[356] The group provides exclusive data in the sense that they are expected to have specialized information on a particular topic.[357]

In line with these arguments, I adapted the key informants to my study via in-depth interviews. I aimed at interviewing a minimum number of ten people. Preliminary selection of the key informants in this study derived from their age, sex, and their sensitivity and knowledge to local issues. These interviews are crucial because they enable a comprehensive examination of regional developments from the perspectives of younger people who lived during this pivotal period in Turkish history and who were a part of a political formations of that time. Through the interviews, the younger generation of the region remembered, recalled, and articulated the possibility for Dersimi people to participate in national socialist movements without disclosing their own identities, the effects of regional developments on local dynamics, and the networks of trust and solidarity within Dersim. The investigation of the regional circumstances, previously described as a network of trust and solidarity in earlier chapters, was made possible by this qualitative method. The key informant group was crucial for emphasizing and further proving the trust network dynamics via their narratives of the time.

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[354] Robert G. Burgess, *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research*, (Taylor&Francis, 2006), p.60.

[355] Burgess, (ed), *ibid*, p.151.

[356] *Ibid*, p.152.

[357] *Ibid*.

Certainly, it was possible to increase the number of the interview respondents. However, I encountered challenges in gaining access and persuading eligible individuals to participate this study. Several factors posed obstacles for eligible individuals to become part of the study. Some of these individuals expressed reluctance to revisit their challenges, referencing their over-engagement in political activities that had resulted in a troubled past. A few of the individuals I offered to interview declined my invitation as well; some did so because they had poor online meeting skills, others indicated that they were abroad, and there were those who expressed their preference to avoid both in-person meetings during and after the 2019 pandemic, primarily due to currently being elderly individuals.

Another contributing factor to this obstacle could be my outsider status from a different culture. Encouraging the individuals to reconsider their past and share their life stories from their youth was indeed a challenging endeavor. For this reason, when in gaining access and conducting interview, I used an overt behavior when approaching the participants during the interviews. Likely due to my overt approach, participants seemed to respond positively after getting together, feeling at ease as I was not an outsider conducting research on the region's history with certain motives. For this reason, I gave the necessary information to the participants before each interview carefully, I stated the general scope of the questions and the aims and objectives of this study. While the participants were sharing their thoughts, I got commentaries about the person and their personal insights and reactions. So, the autobiographical material revealed through the interviews offered their self-descriptions of personal narratives and shed light on how they perceive and interpret their past experiences as an insider.[358] Furthermore, the limitations faced by potential interview participants did not present an obstacle to the primary focus of the dissertation. A suitable group of individuals possessing expertise in the subject's level was carefully selected as the key informants, and their in-depth opinions were collected as the empirical evidence via the interview questions. This approaching resulted in a coherent and definitive conclusion in the end.

[358] Burgess, 2006, p.103.

Following the tradition in social science research where interviews have been perceived as 'conversations with a purpose'[359], I carefully organized the interview questions under four subtitles. The first subtitle focuses on the overall identity perceptions of young individuals during that era. It includes concerns about how they "remember" their shared language, religion, and cultural traits in that era. The second subtitle involves questions about their self-perceptions, their experiences in the urban cities, and their perceived place in Turkey's changing political landscape. The questions in part three are centered on the presence of Dersimi Alevis in the socialist left throughout the 1970s. This section explores the implications of engaging with state mechanisms through the lens of socialist discourse and the experience of being affiliated with the socialist left among individuals from Dersim. In the concluding part of the interview questions set, the focus was on the changes perceived by the younger generation concerning their ideological affiliations and local belonging. Additionally, the consequences of the increasing visibility of Alevi people of Dersim in politics have been questioned. The newly rising youth who began to appear in national politics came out from the masses, not from the prominent families of the region. The interview questions were directed to figure out the advancements caused by the youth on the local solidarity networks since they were considered as the driving force for opening the region to the outside world. Thus, I ordered the list of questions before the interview as such to conduct the interviews in a semi-structured format.

Before diving into the content of the interviews, it's important to evaluate the profile of the primary informants. The first case, Case Number 1, was affiliated with a group of spiritual leaders in Dersim. He is a descendant of the Sari Saltiks, a lineage associated with the Alevi population of Hozat village. Case Number 1 indicated his political affiliation with the CPT/ML group and expressed a continued affinity towards the LAWPT tradition. He continued to identify himself as a political dissident aligned with a similar viewpoint in his youth. According to his own narrative, he has been actively engaged in struggle for four decades. He recalled experiences of being imprisoned and subjected to torture during his youth,

[359] *Ibid*, p.84.

emphasizing that he was captured in Izmir and imprisoned in this province. Because of his turbulent teenage years and active involvement in politics, Case Number 1 did not pursue a professional career but focused solely on writing. He maintains in close contact with the Alevi diaspora, dedicating his life to delivering conferences and giving talks.

Case Number 2, on the other hand, initially defined himself as a missing family child of Dersim. He stated that the state had separated him from his family and compelled his family to migrate to Istanbul. At the age of 5, he was separated from his parents which they were unable to take care of and was sent to a dormitory. He was adopted by a high-ranking civil servant, and after many years he independently uncovered his identity. His roots are linked to the Baba Mansur lineage. Case Number 2 stated that he is politically anti-hierarchical, anti-authoritarian, and egalitarian, yet he does not consider himself a communist. He claimed that he politically aligned Mahir Çayan group in his youth. As a member of the *Acilciler* faction of the PLPFT, he engaged in active politics, including illegal activities, and faced imprisonment. Due to his record, he has been involved in temporary jobs for short terms as cafe management and working as taxi driver.

Case Number 3 was the daughter of a teacher father who graduated from a village institute. Her family's origin was connected to the Kureysan lineage of the region. She pursued studies in the program of architectural drawing. She stated that her university education ended after the September 12 military coup. Case Number 3 was a member of LAWPT guerrilla group. In her youth, she actively engaged in the struggle alongside İbrahim Kaypakkaya. She highlighted her involvement in highly active politics during that era, which resulted in considerable persecution and her subsequent arrest. Her husband also had an active role in the organization, he was arrested and spent many years in prison. In 1976, she came to the Aegean region to participate in the guerrilla struggle. Since then, she has continued to take part in the Partizan political movement in the province. She strongly recalled her early experiences, demonstrating her persistent commitment and strong faith in her ideological affiliation.

Case Number 4 was a person from Dersim who has a youthful appearance despite his age. He has a bright gaze and has spent most of his life among the suitors and his religious community. He was a descendant of Baba Mansur lineage and was a well-known person in the province where he resided in. Although he was part of revolutionary groups during his youth, he eventually shifted his focus due to various factors and gave up on political claims. His occupation was masonry and plaster master. Since his youth, he has worked in construction projects with his friends from his hometown in the Western provinces of Turkey. When introducing himself, Case Number 4 stated that he no longer identifies himself with revolutionary movements from a political standpoint. He recollected his childhood, a time when he hadn't yet migrated to the West but resided in a mountain village within the boundaries of Dersim. During this period, he led a life largely disconnected from the outside world and characterized by a sense of isolation. It was when he moved to a central location that he sensed alignment with fellow sympathizers and fellows. Arriving in the metropolitan center, he found motivation in the prevailing socialist left worker groups that connected him with other fellows. Throughout the years, up until the early 1970s, he held sympathies for workers' and labor movements and engaged to a certain extent in these movements. He expressed his desire to see fair individuals in positions of administration and resources distributed equally to the citizens. He stated that he participated in a few labor actions in the Aegean region before gradually distancing himself from these movements. Today, he perceives himself as a member of the Dersim Seyit quarry and as an adherent of the path teaching of Alevism. He chose not to offer his perspectives on political matters.

Case Number 5 was a female individual residing in Germany. She belonged to the Kureysan lineage with her family. She graduated from the teacher’s preliminary school and worked as a teacher in the province of Erzurum. While teaching in Erzurum, she actively supported the educational demands of young individuals studying at Erzurum University during protests. As a result of political pressures linked to these events, she went through challenging times and left her home country in 1978 to reside abroad with her relatives due to the judicial proceedings against her. Reflecting on her youth, she remembers herself as a dedicated revolutionary during that period. She recalled performing her teaching duties with passion for the

development of the region in all spheres through revolutionary and democratic sentiments. She articulated that their objective was to achieve social progress through modern and scientific methods, with the overarching intention of transitioning the society towards a more just and equitable phase. To achieve this goal, she stressed the importance of reaching the masses and fostering the enlightenment of the younger generation. She supported legal politics in the fight for social justice, labor rights, and educational reforms while appreciating all the non-armed revolutionary parties at the time. Moreover, Case number 5 chose to identify herself as a former member of the WPT movement.

Case Number 6 featured a retired female medical officer residing in the region. She was born in the mountain village of Kalan, situated in the central district. She indicated that her family lineage traced back to the Koc family of Ovacik. During the early 1970s, she lived in the region as a high school student, recollecting her first voting experience during the 1973 elections. She views herself as an advocate of an egalitarian and secular way of life. Emphasizing her commitment to legal politics, she engaged in activities aligned with this consideration. She expressed a strong affinity for the socialist left movement during those years, associating her political involvement with sympathy for the WPT in that era. Her commitment to class struggle and labor rights was significant, and she reads much on these subjects at the time. Since there were civil servants in her family, she was always advised by his elders to behave carefully in the field of politics. She discussed her involvement in labor union activism and workers' rights, highlighting the influence of the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Unions' (DISK) actions at that time. Later, as she was a civil servant, her children also became civil servants. She defines herself as a socialist until the 1980s, and states that after the 1980s she realized the importance of ethnic and religious debates in shaping a society and she started to take into consideration to regional ethnic politics in a manner. She currently defines her political affiliation through the Labor Party (EMEP) group.

The 7th participant, with whom I conducted an interview, is a woman currently residing in Dersim. She is originally from Mazgirt Kabun village and belongs to the Kureyşan tribe. This lady pursued her university education in Izmir and worked as an

art teacher within the Ministry of National Education in Bursa. She expressed her affinity towards the Partizan group during the 1970s, actively participating in their events.

The 8th key respondent is a man born in Mazgirt and belongs to the Kureyşan tribe. He studied civil engineering in his undergraduate studies. He spent his university years in Ankara. This gentleman, who is the brother of the 7th participant, is also a member of Partizan and took an active part in the group's activities. After his university years, he engaged in the private sector, becoming a businessman today. His dedication to Partizan remains evident through his lively and enthusiastic recounting of the events he experienced during that time.

Case number 9 is a male respondant from Kalaycı village in Mazgirt and belongs to the Kureyşan tribe. Having completed his higher education in Ankara, he continued to live in the city. Through international business connections, he attained high positions in private sector institutions. He spoke about embracing the principles of DEV-YOL during his youth as part of the 1970s youth groups. The 10th participant, a gentleman from Kalaycı village affiliated with the Kureyşan tribe, began his higher education in Istanbul. Due to an accident during his studies, he had to cut short his education and return to his hometown. The interviewer mentioned that he participated in politics within the THKO organization during his university years. A fall from a high place during a student event left him with a leg injury, leading him to discontinue his university education. Upon returning to his hometown, he entered government service using his personal resources and later retired.

The 11th participant is a male studied economics in Ankara. Notably, he began the interview by expressing how much he suffered from politics. He indicated that his political ideology was shaped by the THKPC school of thought. He mentioned being a relative of the renowned political activist Hüseyin Cevahir, stating that Cevahir served as an inspiration for many young people, including himself, to carry the torch of revolution. Despite not being able to be with Cevahir during the same period due to their age difference, he vividly recalled his political activities that led him to

Greece, then France, and finally Australia. Unlike most other participants, he nostalgically reflects on his politically active years.

The last key respondent currently resides in the Netherlands and is a member of the Kureyşan tribe. During the interview, he mentioned working as a Turkish teacher while in Turkey and leaving the country due to political turmoil while he was a civil servant. After migration, he found an opportunity to continue his teaching profession in the new country. He shared that his political thoughts were influenced by THKPC and DEV-YOL during his student years, but despite not directly being affected by student incidents, he faced obstacles in his civil service due to his political affiliation. Despite not participating in illegal activities, he explained that he was pressured to leave his job due to the tense political atmosphere in the country, ultimately forcing him to go abroad.

While engaging in discussions with the informants introduced above, I employed a semi-structured technique to ask questions. It allowed to create a more open and conversational atmosphere during the interviews and the participants were given the opportunity to share their perspectives in a manner comfortable to them. In the semi-structured interviews, I was provided the space for participants to express both feelings of pride and regret in their narratives. When analyzing the interviews, it reveals that there are some preliminary key words that shape the basic conduct of the interview flows. Listing the primary themes and metaphors that emerged during the interviews helps depict the context of the researched period and the developments taking place at this time. The collection of keywords, thus, illuminates the period dynamics from the youth's viewpoint. Among the key concepts raised in the interviews are Kurdishness, Alevism, *tertele*, migration, revolution, revolutionary ideas, fellows, solidarity, hope, struggle, inequality, and regret. These concepts frequently claimed by the key informants during the interviews.

5.4.1. Faith: Alevism

In the very beginning of the interviews, my question was designated to discuss the self-perception and self-identification of the youth of that time. I aimed to focus on,

regardless of their ancestral origins or inheritance, how each respondent personally defined himself/herself during this period and where they felt their sense of identification and belonging on most strongly. During this discussion, the question also focused on the claims participants initially stated in the context of their origins. Respondents generally gave similar answers. Everyone felt the need to elaborate on their personal viewpoints because it has been a subject of discussion among the residents of the region for years. The younger generation expressed religious elements as the basis of their affiliation and counted Dersim's being a hub of political opposition as another component of their belonging.

When it comes to religion, nearly all participants, except for one, mentioned that during that period, the religious motivations and traditions which inherited from their ancestors lost their previous significance. In the 1970s, their political groups did not approve of displaying religious identities or making any references to religion within the movement. During this era, the primary driving force for young individuals was merely political motives. They struggled to create a fresh political alternative for a more equal and democratic Turkey. There was a sense of detachment from the region, and local matters no longer held the same importance for them. In this context, the youth of Dersim, who started to engage in politics in the national context, began to question the special characteristics of their local belonging, as religious references and founding myths. Case Number 2 portrayed the 1960s and 1970s as the period when religious figures were beaten in the region, and he stated that in fact, Case Number 1, who came from a *Seyit* family, beat religious figures in the region during this period. Thus, if we evaluate the mentioned events, it must be said that the youth broke away from tradition. One exception to this outcome is Case Number 4 who currently lives a religious life. He was who broke away from politics due to the movements that ignored and discredited religion. He mentioned that the youth were going in a different direction.

In this context, the first result that emerges from the interview analyses is that the youth considered the prominent feature of Dersimi trust networks as their faith. There are varying opinions about how to define the faith of Alevism. To illustrate, Case Number 1 portrayed the Alevism in the area, which he identifies himself with,

as a belief separate from Abrahamic religions, more like a worldview or a cosmology. In contrast, Case Number 2 interpreted Alevism in the context of Islamic history and perceived it as part of Islam. According to him, Dersim Alevism goes back to the years when *Haci Bektas* hid in the Munzur mountains and lived there with the *Horasan Saints*. He stated that the youth of the period had a sincere commitment to Alevism even though they did not display it. On the other hand, Case Number 1 stated that fasting was not historical in Dersim Alevism, and it was not an era-appropriate practice today. At the time, the young people from Dersim were not fasting, and even if they did, they did not display it outwardly because they think that faith is inside rather than outside. In the words of Case Number 2, "the path teaching to the knowledge of God was our common point. Due to the solidarity ties inside, we have adopted a volunteer hierarchy within the community. Religious hierarchy is voluntary in our community, so you could change your religious figure, *dede*, if there exists a necessity." However, in this period, the youth were separated from the religious notables, the communication between them was broken and thus the traditions were forgotten. Case Number 3 highlighted that during the political struggle, people's religious affiliations were unimportant. Religious distinctions were irrelevant as the primary focus was participating in class struggles. Public discussions in the community about these matters were discouraged during this period.

As claimed by the informant, the youth of Dersim diverted their existing solidarity sentiments into leftist organizations. Confidentiality played a significant role in community interactions. Like the secrecy observed in *cem* ceremonies, they concealed their true identities in public, using placeholders like "I am from Elazig" or "I am from Malatya." This was a way of not revealing their actual origins as Dersimi Alevis even within the leftist groups. They attributed this behavior to a sense of loyalty. They only revealed themselves to those they genuinely trusted. Therefore, there were no religious links inside the political groups of the youth. On the other hand, Case Number 3 referred Alevism with a sign of dissatisfaction that while Alevi belief has a progressive side, it is still a dogma, and it is ultimately a religion. Despite knowing the elements of this culture of faith, she claimed that she did not belong to Alevism. She stated that she would rather quit Alevism and move to the left-wing

politics, she defined herself as a socialist though. "If you have a combative past, this was the thing to do! Creating a socialist network within the community was necessary, so we did it." she explained.

According to Case Number 5, during that time, discussions related to religion or nationality seemed absent, and faith-based conversations weren't prevalent within their communities. Later on, when they engaged in politics that were rooted in the region, they began to tolerate religious references for gaining local support. However, during the years of conflict, religion did not serve as a point of reference for them. Another distinct perspective on religion during this period comes from Case Number 4. Unlike other young people of the time, Number 4, who did not have a formal education, entered the political struggle through the workers' movements. He eventually disengaged from these movements when he noticed that the dynamics within the socialist left rejected religious elements. Over time, he transitioned into a more religious identity. He expressed the view that Dersim was often associated with leftist politics due to the rejection of religious values. On the other hand, he mentioned that the Maoist Kaypakkaya movement aimed to eliminate religion from society. In short, according to the statements of the participants about religious references, religion was not the main motivation of the period, and the youth did not prioritize religious issues. Participants claimed that they had hidden their Alevism from their fellows during these years. Despite this, the conversation about religion in the interviews was the sub-topic that each participant talked about the most. In the mentioned period, since the first parameter of the trust network was religious belonging, it must be claimed that one determinant of the trust network was shaken due to the political motives replaced religion in the daily lives of the young locals. Trust networks started to be questioned in this period, as religion lost its significance and a binding principle within the younger generation.

5.4.2. Ethnicity: Kurdishness

Moreover, individuals who have questioned Dersim's identity over the years have wondered whether Dersim was part of the Kurdish nation. Dersim's societal structure, characterized by tribal relations and feudal affinities can indicate that

Dersim shares some similarities with other Kurdish regions. The Alevis of Dersim, however, differ significantly from the rest of the Sunni Kurdish region. It must even be acknowledged that these two spatial frameworks are different rather than being similar to each other. Religious differences, the form of social organization, land regime, the status of women in community and many other traditions differ in Dersim according to the mainstream Kurdish habitat. In terms of ethnic affiliations, which forms another aspect of self-perception, key informant interviews provided similar insights.

The interviews suggested that the youth maintained a certain distance from ethnic claims, particularly regarding Kurdish identity in that period. For instance, Case Number 1 highlighted the multicultural and multilingual heritage of Dersim, noting that various dialects, including Zazaki, Turkish, and Kurdish, were used during *dede* hearth ceremonies to get in contact with different suitors. In other words, this lingual diversity derived from the origin of *twelve ocaks* and the necessity of spreading religion to all cultures. While emphasizing this heritage, he pointed out that the lineage that he referred to was rooted in religious beliefs, rather than ethnicity. According to him, Alevism serves as the primary reference point for their cultural belonging. He rejected the idea of being classified as either a Turkish or Kurdish, as their lineage isn't founded on ethnicity.

Moreover, none of the participants referred to "Kurdishness" while discussing their sense of belonging during this period. When asked about the aspects of Kurdish identity, which was considered another foundational element of the region, they mostly indicated that they did not identify themselves as Kurds. For instance, Case Number 4 noted that the name *Zaza* had only recently emerged and that he did not feel like a Kurd at the time. By stating uncertainty about being Zaza or not, he once again highlighted that religion was the fundamental point of reference for Dersimi belonging and networks. Regarding the Kurdish-left, for instance, Case Number 1 shared his views as follows: "Dersim can never be Diyarbakir, you can never impose the color of the southern geography (Sunni Kurdish provinces) onto Dersim." Similarly, Case Number 2 stated that he was not in favor of a region-centric Kurdish history for Dersim. For him, Dersim's diverse composition does not stem from

Kurdishness. He perceived the concept of being Kurdish as distinct, as it involves a cult of leadership, worship-like behaviors towards esteemed figures as if prophets, which are not observed in Dersim. Therefore, this participant asserted that Dersim was not Kurdish in nature.

Likewise, other key informants noted that in the early 1970s, they were not part of a "national" struggle. They expressed a different stand from the emerging Kurdish movement during this period. They emphasized their distance from all forms of nationalism, including Turkish or Kurdish, as these kinds of nationalisms are integral to the established order. However, Case Number 3 emphasized that despite their anti-nationalist stance, they did not seek to erase the local identities of the people. For this reason, she stated that LAWPT was successful in Dersim and gained the support of the public. In contrast to other informant profiles, Case Number 3 discussed national claims with excitement as:

> The community we were part of was not a lifestyle club; we were not a team with cultural objectives. We formed a common ground for our people under the banner of socialist left. It did not matter which lineage revolutionaries came from; our overarching identity was revolutionary, and that bound us together. In a period where there was a struggle between the oppressors and the oppressed, it was a struggle for rights, and if necessary, violence was considered legitimate for this reason.

In short, as the other informants emphasized, socialist-left emotions were dominant among the youth, religious beliefs or Kurdish feelings were not prominent. The key informant memories mentioned here showed that although the awareness of Kurdishness was partially present among a few of the young people who became politicized in this period, it was not a prominent content of local belonging.

5.4.3. Being from Dersim and Defining the State Power

In the following subtitle of the interview questions, participants were asked about their opinions on local dynamics and their relationship with the state. Their views regarding the region's interactions with the governments during that period, especially the implications of sectoral development plans on the area, were questioned. The interviews revealed an inconsistency between how government

investments and policies in Tunceli were portrayed inside the region and how they were portrayed in the media or in official documents at the time. In essence, the official narrative contradicted with the insights emerging from the local community. The informants criticized the government's initiative to support the region with development policies and investments, claiming that these initiatives were implemented for a hierarchical goal and to assimilate the territory. The oral accounts that discussed the unequal nature of relationships with state mechanisms contradicted the national perspective held towards the region. One of the causes of the disagreement between the arguments is the fact that local opinions are the expressions of people who grew up in the territories that faced major upheavals happened not so long ago such as *tertele* in 1937-38. These events radically changed the region's perception of the state and its relations with it.

The participants did not express a uniform view on how the economic development plans and practices were perceived in the region. Although it is known that development projects were planned simultaneously in the rest of the country, the backwardness of Tunceli was considerably more severe compared to many other cities. Unfortunately, these plans failed to generate adequate development for the region in this period. In terms of backwardness, informants said that after they migrated to the central provinces, they realized that Tunceli in the 1970s was living outside of history. They stated that there was still no electricity and water in many parts of the region during this period. Although the development projects which were frequently covered in the media as if they were realized, the testimonies showed that even the most fundamental human needs could not be addressed in this period. Development plans mostly remained as plans, many of which could not be realized. Hence, the majority of young people expressed a critical stance towards government investments in their region. Local inhabitants perceived state investments and development initiatives as an assimilationist strategy implemented by the state. The region's history of resistance to centralization and modernization efforts, dating back to the Tanzimat period, continues to fuel the antagonistic nature of their relationship with the state.

The discomfort with the state was also definitely connected to the regions' perceived history of cultural assimilation. Case Number 1 and Case Number 2 elaborated on

the perceptions of the state extensively. According to Case Number 1, the state entered the region from 1947 onward through schools, curriculum, and investments, aiming for comprehensive assimilation through these initiatives. Case Number 2 highlighted the difficulties in relations with the state, considering that Dersim residents, unlike other citizens, could only establish their registry when drafted to the military. Only Case Number 5 mentioned Republican Turkey provided her education, allowing her the opportunity to become a teacher and enabling her to read and think outside of the surroundings. This perspective demonstrated a middle ground in interacting with the state compared to other participants.

5.4.4. Political Affiliation: The Socialist Left

The next, and perhaps the most crucial aspect for trust network analysis, is the participants' political affiliations in the mentioned period. Within this subheading, the informants were asked about their sympathy and involvement in political formations during that period. Additionally, the internal dynamics of the leftist formations and the extent to which Dersim residents could integrate to these political networks were also explored. Certainly, the historical legacy of resistance was one of the most important characteristics of the locality of Dersim. As a cultural area that includes Kurdish Alevi populations in at least eight provinces[360], Dersim has witnessed a history marked by complicated interactions with the state mechanisms. It has always been a subject of politics, but the region became ever more politicized between the 1960s and 1970s. The younger generation played a pivotal role in driving the process of extensive politization in the region. As inferred from the interviews, the political tendencies, and affiliations of all the informants fell within the spectrum of the left-wing politics. Replying to the question of the political participation and support, respondents listed several left-wing political groups from legal organizations to armed political groups. The informants mentioned the following groups as WPT, Revolutionary Youth, PLPFT *Acilciler*, and CPT/ML. However, some of the key informants indicate they still define themselves based on their political affiliations from their youth. Among the informants, only Case Number 3 mentioned that she

[360] Ahmet Kerim Gültekin and Uğur Yeşiltepe. "Dersimli Alevilerin Makus Talihi mi? Dersim (Alevileri) için Yeni Fırsatlar mı?" *Birikim*, 309-310, (Ocak-Şubat 2015), p.110.

actively maintains connections with her political group and is currently engaged in a political struggle with her revolutionary fellows.

Furthermore, the youth of Dersim were exposed to intense political discourse during the period when they encountered different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups in urban centers and conduct the political struggle under the same umbrella. This fostered a sense of political consciousness among the youth. In this context, Case Number 2 recalled that he considered himself an integral part of the movement, and his Alevi background from Dersim did not create any sense of isolation from others. On the other hand, according to Case Number 4, it gradually became challenging to participate in socialist left groups due to their exclusionary stance toward religion. As he struggled to find an environment where he could authentically express himself within the group, he began to feel excluded. He eventually distanced himself from labor activities and shifted his focus to addressing everyday livelihood issues within his trusted network. Reflecting on his past, he acknowledged that Dersimi youth experienced a disconnection from their language during that period. He noted that among the socialist groups, they forgot their indigenous language because they had to struggle with the Turkish language in urban centers. On the other hand, the outcome of the left-wing political actions they carried out in this period brought the socialists and the Alevis of Dersim closer together against the *raison d'état*. There emerged a harmonious relationship based on the history of Alevism.

Another interesting comment was made by the Case Number 2. In his narrative he asserted that hierarchical structures within left-wing politics exploited the youth during the 1970s. In this era, while Stalinist youth entirely rejected the religious beliefs, existing within the political movements as someone with openly express local beliefs proved to be a challenge. Besides, the Dersimi youth did not actively attempt to establish a cultural unity within their own groups during this time. This could be attributed to the fact that aligning with the socialist left was considered as comfortable because it created a protective cover for them in the urban centers. In addition, key informants Number 5 and Number 6 had similar political affiliations as they served as civil servants in the public institutions. Even though both were actively involved in politics, they preferred to stay on the legal side of movements.

Consequently, while the youth completely dedicated themselves to left-wing politics, their focus did not extend to maintaining local affiliations they could trust. In light of these circumstances, Case Number 2 expressed significant criticism that they stayed away from their trust relations and lost their trust networks in that era. While the younger generation gradually detached themselves from their regional ties, they did not prioritize establishing trust networks or solidarity groups in urban areas. Their primary focus was on socialist political objectives. In this context, he criticized the abandonment of thousand years of local belonging for the sake of a decade of ideals. He acknowledged that, it was a historical mistake and a form of self-denial for the youth to assume they could sever ties with traditions. He criticized that era using the metaphor "we dried our seas as young people."

From this criticism it was apparent that the youth distanced themselves from their inherited traditions and trust networks, relying primarily on political motivations for revolutionary ideals. There were also young individuals such as Case Number 4, who preferred to stay in his own safe area and maintain the trust network because he did not have any expectations from the state mechanisms. Individuals who prioritized religious references such as Case Number 4 maintained their trusted networks by continuing their own daily life in the urban centers without making any demands from the state or establishing a relationship with it.

At this point, it is necessary to examine the political developments in the region with the help of interviews, if the political consciousness in the area has shifted to a new level in this period. In terms of regional political awakening, collective political experiences in the region were traced through the formation of the CPT/ML political organization in 1972. During the interviews, Case Number 3 provided a comprehensive description of the armed branch of CPT/ML, LAWPT's revolutionary identity and the charismatic leadership of its founding fathers. She emerged as the informant who most effectively described the region's political landscape in the interviews. According to this account, the participant highlighted that LAWPT revitalized Dersim's glorious history and carried the revolutionary potential of the region. Although the origins of left-wing political engagement in the region can be traced back to WPT in the 1960s, the influence of LAWPT played a unique role for

the region. WPT became a party that engaged in legal politics in the country with its socialist left agenda, even gaining representation in the parliament. But its influence in Tunceli's general elections was not as significant as desired, as elaborated in the earlier chapter, and it failed to gain a deputy from Tunceli. However, LAWPT's declaration of Tunceli as the intellectual and physical homeland for its ideology, combined with its radical leftist stance, contributed to re-radicalizing the region's perception on a national level. According to the information obtained from the interviews, the inhabitants of Dersim who resided in the region only participated in politics in the election periods in favor of the preferences of the notables of the region. These inhabitants were affected by the regional political developments in the 1970s and shifted from the central left to the socialist left parties in the 1980s. CPT/ML and its armed wing LAWPT combined the political perceptions in the region with local values and became the first step towards political revival. For this reason, it would be appropriate to claim that 1972 was a turning point in the process of re-politicization of Dersim after *tertele*, gaining a place for itself in the socialist left, and reshape its political landscape. After this period of intermingling local political roles, individual preferences begin to emerge in socio-political level.

While speaking about the leading LAWPT Dersim cadres, Case Number 3 highlighted that Kaypakkaya's anti-Kemalist position significantly increased support for him in the region. "In Dersim, there existed an eye-watering solidarity. LAWPT's primary objective was the revolution for democratic rights revolution for the region. Nevertheless, we pursued armed actions to capture public attention" she added. The findings indicate that the political struggle in Dersim conducted with the support of the local population. Each of the informants romanticized the revolution while also admitting that they could not change the destiny of their society in the long run. They attributed this result to rising political violence and the gradual disintegration of the ties between the broad masses and the political activists who advocated pro-radical politics. Moreover, another claim of originality in the interviews is that this period brought Dersim to a new reference point and a new destination in terms of political revival. It becomes apparent that in the past, the region leaned towards center-right and center-left parties, a time when trust networks were stronger and tribal affiliations were more decisive upon the community. Subsequently, as political

diversity expanded in nation-wide basis, Dersim acknowledged towards engagement to politics through socialist left parties, and ultimately, the radical left.

To conclude, this period must be characterized as a political revival, especially by efforts of the young people in the center and in the region. The engagement of youth in radical leftist political factions and the efforts of these radical formations to incorporate Dersim as a symbol of resistance into politics have led to the region's political revival and awakening. This, in turn, served as a fresh starts for the region's reengagement in oppositional politics. The people of Dersim responded these extreme left political groups with sympathy and, for the first time in years, began to establish a commitment with the state through politics. In short, radical left-wing organizations mobilized the public to bring about socio-political developments during the 1970s. In this era of political revival, the changes also reshaped the traditional Dersimli identity. Interviews reveal that engagement in the socialist left movement led to more secular attitudes among the population, resulting in a considerable impact on the local identity.

5.5. Shifts in Trust Networks

As mentioned in the theoretical section, Charles Tilly's analyses provide valuable insights into the interactions among states, societies, and the resulting social processes. His exploration of "trust networks" allows for an in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics that exist within and between various types of states and different societal groups. Tilly’s analysis sheds light on how solidarity networks affect power dynamics, the nature of relations with the state, and the overall functioning of societies and states in the international system. In the analysis, Tilly underlines different forms of connections between trust networks and public politics. According to this analysis, trust networks emerge at a point where democracy is disrupted, and these networks gain prominence as they distance themselves from the democratic framework.

Considering Tilly's model of democratization and trust networks, it is evident that Turkey does not fully align with the democratic system he referred to. In terms of the

consolidation of democracy, Turkey has struggled to overcome the persistent challenges of a weak state.[361] Turkey's journey towards democratization has evolved along a distinctive path, differing from Western examples. Various authors have described the democratic model of Turkey using terms like "transitional democracy" or "hybrid democracy."[362] These definitions are tailored for the countries, mixing traditional and modern features in their autohirty formations and have obstacles that need to be improved in their democratic, social and economic systems.[363] This formulations stem from the factors such as the expanding role of armed forces on politics, power distribution among specific groups, and the influence of bureaucratic institutions within politics, which collectively pose significant obstacles to the realization of a functioning democratic system.

In democracies, the incorporation of trust networks into public politics is often achieved through coercion or capital, as highlighted by Tilly. He classified three different forms of trust networks, *three-way splits*, as privileged, illicit, and underground trust networks.[364] Dersim's solidarity networks were shaped as "underground" due to the practices of dissimulation or concealment against the implementations of the administrative system.[365] An underground trust network was shaped in the region for historical reasons and continued its existence until the 1970s due to the hybrid nature of democracy in the country. Considering the pre-republican and post-republican periods, we must apply two distinct models to describe the relationship between Dersim and the state. In the pre-republican era under the Ottoman Empire, there existed a "brokered autonomy"[366] arrangement between Dersim and the government. In this system, local leaders within trust networks

[361] Metin Heper and E. Fuat Keyman. "Double-Faced State: Political Patronage and the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey." *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 4 (1998), p. 271.

[362] Feroz Ahmad, "The Transition to Democracy in Turkey" *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 7, No. 2, (1985), pp. 211–26. pp..211-212.

[363] Raymond Hinnebusch, "Toward a Historical Sociology of State Formation in the Middle East", *Middle East Critique*, Vol. 19, No. 3, (Fall 2010), pp. 201–216, p. 209.

[364] Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, p.35.

[365] Tilly, *ibid*. p.35.

[366] *Ibid*.

provided resources and compliance to rulers in exchange for autonomy within their own domains. Following the formation of the Republic, the trust networks in Dersim underwent changes within the framework of the "democracy". A partial integration of trust networks into public politics has occurred in democratic systems. Partial integration means reliance on government guarantees, subventions, and services for sustenance of valued long-term resources and enterprises.[367] It means getting in contact with the state mechanisms for fostering commitment either obtaining privileges or benefiting from the services of the state.[368] In essence, what Tilly suggests is that the consolidation of democracy correlates with the degree to which trust networks align themselves with the state. The more trust networks and similar divisions exist within society, the further the society tends to move away from democracy.

In this study, just as it has explored from a historical perspective, the people of Dersim have remained a closed community engaged with their own local issues and struggle for livelihood throughout the ages. They historically distinguished themselves from others for different reasons. Charles Tilly's explanations about the formation of trust networks fully fit to the geography of Dersim. Until the 19th century, the community preferred to live within its own trusted networks because they did not have a need for the state, public services, or state's protection in its region. As Tilly mentions, there has been a perennial boundary between insiders of the region and the outsiders.[369] From the establishment of the Republic until the 1937-38 incidents, Dersim continued to maintain its basic social foundations and remained as a classical trust network group. Solidarity and trust relations, which remained intact until this date, were partially disturbed by the forced migration that took place after 1937-38; individuals were detached from their indigenous locations and tried to survive through their *binding ties*, religion and language in the places they migrated.[370] In this case, the early stage when trust networks are partially

[367] *Ibid.*

[368] *Ibid*.

[369] *Ibid*, p.57.

[370] In his book "Identities, Boundaries, and Social Ties," Charles Tilly discusses the concept of social ties, which signify enduring connections between social sites within societies. These ties possess characteristics that both gather people together (binding) or create distinctions from others (bounding).

subject to change must be attributed to post-1937-38, when they first established direct contact with the center. Following the 1950s, the returning population of Dersim strengthened trust networks as a safety and loyalty measure again. One must argue that the partial integration of the trust networks into the democratic system started in the late 1960s since the local community's engagement to politics became prevalent and the educational services was the main motive that the government had an effect in the area. During this period, the state's presence increased through the regional development plans, and the younger generation intellectually exposed to politics and brought forth the political revival in the region. These two factors significantly contributed to transformation of the trust networks dynamics of Tunceli.

In this context, the active involvement of young individuals in left-wing politics during the 1970s and their initiation of developing an interaction with the state for negotiations and national goals indicates a significant shift for the region. During this period, the residents of the region, including the youth, started engaging in formal relations with the state such as welcoming government investments, doing military service, pursuing education, and paying taxes. The insights gathered from the interviews have served as valuable material of reference for this thesis; interviews gave people an opportunity to provide interpretations of their own lives.[371] The participants, having attended schools under the Republican regime and fulfilled military service, undoubtedly opened themselves of the opportunities provided by the nation-state as citizens. The satisfaction with the investments should also be perceived via observing the enrollment rates to schools in the region during this period.

Recognizing these forms of state interactions during this period, one must argue that trust networks in Dersim started to gradually loosen while also becoming integrated into the democratic system of the Republic. As evident, the matter of bargaining with the state has not entirely ended on a societal level. During this time, neither the region's distinctive trust network dynamics nor the local population entirely adapted to the central government. The early 1970s signifies a period where observable shifts

[371] Burgess (ed), 2005, p.203.

in the unique trust network became apparent.[372] However, as evident from the interviews above, even though underground trust networks have experienced some partial changes, the people still placed a high importance on their continued existence. Their essential existence remained significant. Due to the motivation to revive the tradition with those who survived despite the disruptions, the presence of trust networks continues to reflect the message that "we will persist in existence with our social content." Therefore, it cannot be said that the networks have completely dissolved.

Moreover, the government demonstrated its intention to control and orient Tunceli on a national level through its developmental initiatives in this period. The investments planned for Tunceli should be viewed as the state's democratic goals for this region. The state aimed to democratize, modernize, and develop the area. However, the region's actual circumstances differed from the state's official plans for it. Economic development plans were also a factor in the region's path to progress. However, as we know, planning does not necessarily result in success[373], which is evident in the case of Turkey. Development plans, with the exception of those in the area of education, were mostly remained ineffective. Newspaper archives and parliamentary records indicate that there were deficiencies in basic infrastructure like roads, electricity, and water in Tunceli on the second half of the 20th century. Similar situations were seen in most Eastern provinces. However, as previously stated, Tunceli is a periphery within a periphery. If the East is underdeveloped, Tunceli can be considered twice as underdeveloped.

The state's formal plans for the region and the actual conditions on the ground vary. On one hand, there is an effort towards democratization and adaptation, while on the other hand, there seems to be a second agenda centered on security and surveillance of the region. So, the notion of democracy in Turkey must be subjected to debate. Considering the region's requirements for assistance in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and the economy, it becomes essential to assess how this adaptation process might contribute to democratization.

[372] Tilly, “Trust and Rule”, p.14.

[373] Nuri Eren. “Turkey: Prospects for Democratic Development”, *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1965): 170–80. p.175.

During the early 1970s, the trust network had a presence in Tunceli; however, the young individuals were in a distinct intellectual position to their ties. In one hand, since the young individuals in the urban centers did not draw a boundary between other political fellows and themselves in the political movements, trust networks began to dissolve in a way. As mentioned above, the youth did not distinguish themselves from outsiders in the political groups.[374] They have created a way of life and integrated into the nation-state system by utilizing the tools of the nation-state and becoming assimilated within it. On the other hand, shared language is emphasized as a significant factor in creating commitment among a defined group. Language acts as a bridge between social entities and facilitating connections within networks.[375] It was mentioned earlier in the statements of Case Number 1 that the local networks was eroded due to the indigenous language not being used in urban centers, political organizations, or public services. Shared religion, and to a certain extent, ethnic affiliations were the other primary indicators which formed the foundation of binding ties within the closed trusted network. In addition, it was also mentioned in the narratives of all the informants that the sense of belonging to Alevism became weaker for individuals in this period.

Consequently, it is essential to understand the shifts in Dersim's underground trust networks that have influenced the local sense of belonging in relation to the process of democratization. Two variables are responsible for the shift in the trust networks and its effects on the local ties in Dersim/Tunceli:

1- The state's influence led to changes in the trust network: Modernization and the state-driven development plans began to weaken the collective sense of belonging in Tunceli. These policies, perceived as moves towards democratization, intended to integrate the region into the national framework over time. Furthermore, the state's particular objective was the ideological integration of the region into the national system in the long term. For this reason, informants, who were the leading figures of the

[374] Tilly, *Ibid*, p.56.

[375] *Ibid*, p.31.

youth, have all opposed the state's education policies towards Dersim/Tunceli. Nevertheless, the local population welcomed these investments and embraced the initiatives, often by enrolling in schools and continuing their education within these institutions.

2- Regional political preferences have also led to the transformation of the trust networks: The region's inhabitants embracing newly emerging political movements and supporting national claims indicate their separation from the trust network. Their sense of belonging has been profoundly influenced by their own political actions, both armed and unarmed. As the residents of the region extended their connections both physically and intellectually beyond the locality, the religious and cultural norms that constitued the network also began to undergo changes. During this period, religious and cultural values started to overlap with national political ideals. Consequently, the accounts of all interviewees consistently revealed a weakening sense of belonging to Alevism or Kurdishness in this period. Due to the interaction between the state and the local youth, there is a particular transformation in the region's trust networks. Dersim/Tunceli, which was assumed to be an underground trust network society, began to take on a new form during this period of political revival in the region.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Historically, people in Dersim have always felt connected and obey their inner bonding values and rules secretly. Distancing themselves from their surroundings and political authorities over the course of centuries has facilitated collective action against external entities. This situation has empowered them to defend each other's interests within a trusted group dynamic, which in turn has enabled them the capability to periodically launch offensive measures against the political authority, regional rival factions, and, at times, even neighboring villages. From the Ottoman administrative policies to reforms in the Republican era and beyond, this area has faced direct attempts by the state to exert control and dominance. In reaction to these historical shifts, the local population has responded to those attempts by either direct attacks or defensive actions. Trust networks in the region have been a local force, undermining state authority for generations. They served as a catalyst for rebellions that were planned responses shaped by the region's specific realities and longstanding grievances such as economic neglect, centralization efforts, and cultural controversies.

Despite Tunceli was fully subject to the jurisdiction of the nation-state laws after 1938, the trust networks within its borders remained active until the 1970s. The indigenous community had overlapping trust dynamics include religious values, shared language, ethnic claims, tribal bonds, agrarian organizational structure, equalitarian gender roles, and close ties with non-Muslim communities. These specific features and conditions that have characterized the region for generations began to shift as the people of Dersim engaged with the state authority directly in the 1960s.

The profound changes witnessed in Tunceli from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s were of great importance. During this period, the dynamics that underpinned the

formation of an underground trust network in the region began to shift, making this transformation the core focus of the thesis. This transition implied the trust networks, which protect the group against other groups or powers, began undergoing transformations. As a province that was forcibly integrated into the nation-state system after the events of 1937-38, the period starting in the 1960s witnessed an increased engagement in national politics, marking the initiation of a gradual process of social adaptation and political radicalization. The main driving force behind this amalgamation was the region's younger generation, who took a prominent role in the active politicization of the region. By the 1960s, a noticeable shift towards aligning with state power and its programs was observed in the region. This must be attributed to a desire to overcome centuries of isolation and become integrated into the political and cultural framework of the secular republic as equal citizens.

This thesis centers on the solidarity networks and relationships within Dersim/Tunceli, examining the evolving and changing patterns within these networks during the mid-1960s to mid-1970s period. A crucial element in exploring the shifts in religious, ethnic, and linguistic networks within Dersim/Tunceli's social structure is Tilly's trust network analysis. Trust networks analysis can explain Tunceli's political and social history "with some constraints". The thesis began with the assertion that the period from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s marked a significant turning point in Tunceli's socio-political history. Starting in the 1960s, the state embarked on infrastructural investments across the country, including the province of Tunceli. While the project achieved some success with its both coercive and co-optation-based strategies, it was limited in scope. State capacity in areas such as agriculture and industrialization remained limited. The region's economic underdevelopment remained unaddressed due to the absence of any substantial development projects in that era.

However, the schools at different educational levels were constructed in the region, leading to a significant educational campaign in the 1960s. This initiative allowed Tunceli to encounter Republican ideals once again in the field of education and this time led to its relative integration to the nation-state system. The educational institutions became arenas where republican ideals and local values encountered. The

expansion of schools across various educational levels in Tunceli signaled the state's renewed focus on the region. Although the extent of its integration of the region remained limited, this educational campaign carried out the potential to reshape local attitudes towards Republican ideals at that time. The introduction of new schools in Tunceli had the potential to disturb or transform pre-existing trust networks and local approval was obtained primarily through educational and cultural integration initiatives. There was less opposition to the establishment of schools among the local population, indicating a weakening in deeper trust bonds. This shift in education encouraged acceptance of the Republican project while also maintained long-standing trust feelings and local belonging patterns. Key informant interviews shed light on the opinions of those who witnessed that period of Dersim history.

Tilly's concept of trust networks sheds light relatively on the complex dynamics that led to a sociopolitical awakening within Dersim during the 1970s. This study demonstrates how, after a period of suppression following the 1938 events, the region began to see shifts in established networks, catalyzed by state-led modernization, increased political participation, and a renewed encounter with central authority. Analyzing this through the lens of trust networks provides a nuanced understanding of the community's evolving response to both 1938 trauma and new opportunities.

This network among individuals and within the community has undergone changes for two main reasons after the leftist turn in the late 1960s. Firstly, the inclusive policies of the government and secondly, the increasing engagement in politics of the individuals have contributed to an alteration in social norms and trust networks. Durng the 1970s, the distinguishing characteristics of the trusted ties started to be questioned, and the principle of “being distinct from outsiders” lost its validity particularly among the youth. This change was due to the emergence of new sentiments as belonging to socialist groupings seeking rights and justice for the entire society. If a group stay hidden from the state, trust networks are preserved. However, since the state has taken the role of political opponent in political dialogue within the political sphere, the trust networks that existed in Dersim have undergone alterations. On the contrary, this new encounter evidenced the local peoples’ adaptation to the

national system. At that time, young Dersimis made important choices that shaped who they would become. Consciously or unconsciously, their adaptation to urban groups and political organizations led to the erosion of trust networks. The turning point in the alterations in trust network dynamics must be traced back to 1972, when CPT/ML established its organizational presence in Tunceli. It represents a significant turning point in the alterations of Dersimi trust networks. The region's involvement in national politics, adoption and support to a radical political group mark a crucial turning point in the dismantling of Tunceli's closed trust network. The Dersimli Alevi and Kurdish Alevi identities were changing from being "Dersimli Alevi" or "Kurdish Alevi" to labels like "socialist" or "communist" as a result of the appearance of a political group from the area in 1972. The narratives acquired through interview analysis revealed this shift.

While Dersim experienced a kind of political awakening and instant radicalization starting from this period, it was more limited in scope rather than a widespread social or political movement. While there was always potential for localized resistance within Dersim, the overall level of education of the individuals and the organizational capacity of the population remained low. For this reason, this period should be seen as an early stage of awakening, laying the groundwork for more widespread collective political mobilization and radicalization that would emerge by the 1990s.

The archival materials were presented to provide a comprehensive examination of this period from various angles and to challenge existing literature. The interviews were carried out to question and enhance the existing information by providing insights from within the region. Examining the official documents allowed us to gain an understanding of how the governing authority perceived, comprehended, and administered Tunceli and its inhabitants. In contrast, the interviews offered insight into how the public perceived the state and recognized the relations with the government at that period. The in-depth investigation of the local dynamics of trust and solidarity networks prevalent in Dersim was made possible by the critical analysis gained from these materials. Furthermore, it seems that the dynamics of trust networks and the layers of these dynamics, were not seriously considered by the

inhabitants of the region until the 1980s. The shifts occurred as the trust network dynamics encountered external influences. In this period individuals merely displayed strong political motivations. They were in the process of recognizing their own belonging within the broader national political arena, rather than focusing on bounding and binding features of their belonging. After this period of massive involvement in politics, voting preferences were channeled entirely to left-wing politics. Local sympathy now extended primarily to all options within the leftist spectrum, with particular emphasis on the mainstream left-wing groups in the parliamentary elections. While the youth were devoted to the radical left, the local people were sympathetic to all colors of the left. In short, broadening political participation shifted local trust networks to a new level. The connection to nationwide politics led to the gradual decline of religious references and traditional symbols that were central to the sense of belonging for the people until the 1960s and the 1970s.

In contrast to prevailing views of Dersim as a static entity, this study employs Tilly's concept of trust networks to illuminate a starting period of sociopolitical awakening during the 1970s. Tilly has been underused for cases like Dersim in terms of examining modern Turkish society and politics. Furthermore, the contribution of this thesis to the literature lies in its application of the "trust networks" conceptualization, which allows us to comprehend different periods of Tunceli or any other locality. This thesis offers us the ability to understand changes within an ethnic, political, religious or interest group as a coercion figure in a country during specific historical periods and political conditions. Through various trust network categories that can be classified based on time, space, particularities, and relations with political authorities, we can analyze state-society relations and their impacts on the political system at an analytical level. Another contribution to the literature is the necessity to recognize the importance of understanding the era spanning from the mid-1960s to mid-1970s as pivotal for comprehending Tunceli's turbulent history and present. Without conducting this study, it's impossible to comprehend the current state of state-society relations and integration in Tunceli.

The trust networks paradigm proves to be a useful but ‘limited’ framework for examining the unique regional characteristics that protected the community from

external influences or threat. By focusing on the events that triggered alterations in these trust and solidarity networks over a decade, this approach needs a careful approach to the peculiar dynamics of Tunceli. Tilly's analysis offers adaptive and flexible assumptions but the local belonging in Tunceli/Dersim has more everlapping and complex dynamics. The historical baggage and distinctive characteristics of the region can still be illuminated through the lens of the trust network paradigm. Subsequent studies can deepen the understanding of Dersim's trust network dynamics by investigating different historical epochs of the region's past with additional dimensions. Such research efforts have the potential to contribute to the realms of Area Studies and Middle East Studies, enriching these fields with fresh perspectives and valuable insights.

Lastly, it's important to note that just as the transformation of these "trust networks" is inevitable, the recurrence and shifts in these local solidarities should also be perceived as a natural phenomenon. For instance, starting from the late 1980s, concepts such as identity, language, minority, and community rights began to influence politics and society. In Tunceli, too, there was a resurgence in these networks. Trust networks that set them apart from others, *the ties which bind and bound*, gained strength. Although the effects of modernity might not have been visibly apparent in Tunceli, in the whole country, especially in the last 20-40 years with the increasing prevalence of religious politics, these networks are indeed being continually reestablished in different regions, among various groups, and in diverse contexts throughout the country. While examining the decline and changes in the functions of these networks, it's important to consider that trust networks can adapt to the era, conditions, relationships with the state, and other societal structures. This thesis also contemplates the possibility that these networks can regain their resurgence. Just like in the 1980s and 1990s, these networks could become active once again, potentially expanding from regional to national and even global levels (as seen in Alevi organizations in Germany). In this sense, this thesis contributes to Tilly's approach for its confirmation to the applicability of the term "trust networks" to a case regarding the Turkish politics in the 21st century.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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07 NİSAN 2023

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof. Dr. Recep Boztemur

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Sekine Özten Mert'in **"A Critical Analysis of Kurdish Alevi Political Consciousness of Dersim/Tunceli in the 1970s Turkey"** başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek **0206-ODTUİAEK-2023** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN
Başkan

Prof.Dr. İ.Semih AKÇOMAK
Üye

Doç. Dr. Ali Emre Turgut
Üye

Doç.Dr. Şerife SEVİNÇ
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PART I: On General Identity Perception – *How did you remember your origins?*

Where do you consider yourself from?
As it is known, there is a wide range of identities prevalent in Dersim; "Dersimlilik" is also considered as an ethno-religious affiliation. (Kurdishness, Turkishness, Zazaness, Alevism, Armenianness – or mobility along these axes) How do you feel about your identity, which one do you embrace?
Did you mention your identity within the organizations you were affiliated with during that period, in your daily life, and among yourselves?
Can you explain what you understand by the term "belonging"; what is the most important element in your definition of belonging?
To what extent did elements inherited from ancestors (ethnic, religious, sectarian, or daily bonds) and those acquired later determine Dersiminess (transition to democratic citizenship and democratic society in the age of nation-states)?
According to you, what did it mean to be "Tuncelili/Dersimli"? In your observations, in what context was "Dersimlilik" used?
What is your mother tongue, and what language was spoken within your family and in your daily life? (Worship language: Turkish, daily language: Zazaki. How widespread was the national language?)
What did it mean to be a young individual from Dersim in the late 60s and 70s? Can you talk about it?
How significant was religion for the Alevi youth from Dersim during this period? Was the role and significance of religion in your life less than that given to your place of birth, ethnic background, or family ties? Can you elaborate on how the importance and meaning of religion changed during this period? (The extent to which ethnic and religious identities were intertwined)
How much was ethnic affiliation felt and discussed among the youth during this period?

How did the Dersimi youth relate to dominant identity structures such as Turkishness, Sunni Islam, and Turkish citizenship?
What advantages/disadvantages did you face in your location from the periphery to the center, whether for education or career-related reasons?
What was the overall situation of young people during this period, in your opinion; to what extent had family ties, adherence to traditions, religious sensitivities, and lifestyles changed?

PART II: The Political Identity Quest and Representation of "*Dersimlilik*" in the 1970s - *who were you and where did you belong in this environment?*

What was your perception of the state?
What did it mean for you to be a citizen of the Turkish Republic?
As you know, no matter what topic we discuss regarding Dersim, it ultimately revolves around the events of 37-38. I would like to briefly learn your views on the Dersim issue, which has long been a chronic problem on the state's agenda. In your opinion, did these uprisings arise due to nationalist demands (with a Kurdish nationalist motivation) or did they stem from the historical conditions of the Kurdish Alevi identity?
Where did you feel yourself as an Alevi-Kurd in the established order and as the youth of the 1970s; excluded? Partially integrated?
In the 1970s Turkey, what were the environmental, societal, or legal obstacles you encountered in expressing and living your identity? Can we talk about a rupture that distinguishes this period from others? Did you feel your identity was under pressure?
In the 70s, which political groups did you work with within the leftist/socialist/radical movements? Turkish radical left or Kurdish nationalist?
What was the central goal you articulated during this period? What direction were you aiming to lead the masses?
When examining the history of Anatolia, migrations appear as one of the most important phenomena. To what extent did population mobility resulting from migrations affect the political realities of the region in the 60s-70s? Did internal and external migrations influence the social structure during that period?

In the 1960s-1970s, a time when traditional values gave way to social change and the necessity of pluralism in politics was recognized, did some values begin to dissolve? What were the factors that differentiated you from your ancestors during these times or integrated you with them? Did changes in values alter the region's sociology?
How do you remember the state's perspective on you as non-Turkish and non-Sunni? Did the policies produced at that time aim to reduce categorical inequalities and open the way for the political inclusion of "other" communities in society?
Did your loyalty to local belonging diminish or did it increase after this period?
What contribution do you think the younger generation, which turned towards the center and encountered new intellectual currents, made to the formation of a marker in political revival of the region? How did their approach to the central authority contribute to the transformation of local identity patterns? (Did this polarization secularize the concept of Dersimlilik and lead to a new definition that transcends local identities? Was there a break between families and traditions?)
To what extent has the youth distanced themselves from or become alienated from the social and ethno-religious values they were born into? To what extent were they integrated into or carriers of these values? To what extent were they able to reflect the spirit of the age to the region? To what extent can we reveal your social fabric, tendencies, perspectives, values, and judgments by using the political-ideological tendencies of these young people as a reflection?
To what extent were the elements of the desired new culture and the old culture distant, incompatible, or different from each other?

PART III: Socialist Left in Turkish Politics in the 1970s and The Existence of Kurdish Alevis in the Political Factions

You remember the voting behavior and patterns in the region during the 1960s and 1970s. How did you evaluate it? What were the voting tendencies and preferences of the educated segment, including you? Can we talk about a change in the region's political preferences with education?
Did the socialist left of that period receive support from the local people? What was the place and role of Dersimli people in the leftist movement during this period?
Did you have a projection of Dersim that included socialist politics?

Which line were you closer to within the socialist/leftist/patriotic movement: revolutionary, leftist, or socialist?

What was the basis for your presence in these organizations (Kurdishness, Alevism, Kurdish Alevism)? In this context, did your value priority evolve towards a socialist politics above religion or ethnicity?

What was the place of Kurdish Alevism within the Kurdish left at that time? What did it mean to be a part of the socialist left as an Alevi-Kurd? Although the Alevi belief rejects ethnic nationalism.

To what extent did you embrace the ideas of the groups advocating Kurdish nationalism in 1970s Turkey?

Did you contemplate the Kurdish issue during that period? Did you have any agenda related to Kurdish-Alevism during this period within the framework of socialist and leftist arguments?

What elements of the current political agenda can be mentioned in this period? Was there a turning point in the context of new ideology and value networks?

How did you react to the national politics of that period? What kind of social order were you pursuing? What solutions did you offer? Was the aim integration, insistence on exclusion? Motivations? Desired cultural and political change?

How was the change in the region progressing for you who were receiving education in the center, different from the local routine and cultural changes? To what extent did the differentiation in the individual potential of the youth alienate them intellectually from the region?

The burden of the past was still very fresh during this period; the trauma of the local population was still present in the center. How aware were you of regional politics during this time when local trauma was still echoing? Did you contribute to a local protest, and did your protests and efforts have any impact on the center?

How were the changes in the Kurdish issue felt among Alevi Kurds and in their geography from the 1960s to the 1980s?

How did Dersimi Kurdish Alevi youth influence politics; can we really talk about the influence of youth?

PART IV: How Did Ideological Movements Affect Local Belonging - Visibility of Kurdish Alevi Identity in Politics and Its Consequences

When did you date the political awakening of that period in the context of Dersim? Is there a symbolic event to pinpoint it?

If you remember, the real political environment in the early stages of the Republic shook the regional dynamics significantly and irreversibly. What can we say about the political atmosphere in the region by the 1970s? Can we talk about a change?

Is there a cultural rupture during this period in your opinion; can we speak of a change in terms of Dersimi belonging? Was a more widespread change imagined; what was hoped for and what was found?

C. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	METU Middle East Studies	2009
BS	Fatih University International Relations	2006
High School	Manisa Fatih Anatolian High School	2002

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2014-2018	Manisa Celal Bayar University, Department of International Relations	Research Assistant
01.2015 - 11.2015	METU, Institute of Social Sciences	Research Assistant
2010-2014	Izmir University, Department of International Relations	Research Assistant
2008 - 2009	TC Ziraat Bank	Operations and Credits Service Officer

LANGUAGES

Advanced English

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Turkish Ministry of Education Graduate Studies Scholarship (YLSY 2007)

TUBITAK Graduate Studies Scholarship (2006)

EU Socrates/Erasmus Student Exchange Program Scholarship (2005)

Fatih University Full Scholarship (2002-2006)

Ministry of Education, State Achievement Scholarship (1995-2002)

D. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

DERSİM/TUNCELİ'DE ERKEN CUMHURİYET DÖNEMİNDEN 1970'LERE SİYASİ BİLİNCİN DEĞİŞİMİ

Mevcut literatür Dersim'de uzun yıllardır yaşanan siyasi gelişmeleri, kültürel etkileşimleri ve yerel güç yapılarını çeşitli perspektiflerden incelemiştir. Dersim/Tunceli ile ilgili yapılan bu çalışmalarda öne çıkan ilk husus, bu bölgeyi birleştiren temel unsurun dini inanç olduğunun vurgulanmış olmasıdır. Bu çalışmalara göre imparatorluğun dini sınıflandırılmasında Dersim, Kızılbaş/Alevi inancına bağlı olmasına rağmen her zaman Müslüman olarak kayıt altına alınmıştır. Dersim, kategorik olarak Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Müslümanlık ailesinde yer almasına rağmen, Alevi inancına mensup halklardan olmuştu. Akrabalığın şekillendirdiği iç hiyerarşilerle birleşen Alevi kimliği, Dersim'de bölgesel kontrol dayatmaya ve emperyalist hakimiyeti sınırlamaya çalışmıştı. Dersim hem emperyalistlerin gücü merkezileştirme çabalarına hem de dini ve aşiretsel bölünmelerden kaynaklanan bölgesel güç yapılarına karşı verdiği mücadelenin körüklediği uzun bir direniş mirasına sahiptir. İmparatorluğun kurucu dini görüşünden farklılık, Alevi coğrafyalarından olan Dersim'de 15. yüzyıldan beri devam eden kalıcı bir direniş modeli oluşturmuştu. Dersim'de Alevilik bir inanç sistemi olmanın ötesinde Dersim'in kendine özgü toplumsal ve siyasal yapısının temelini oluşturmuştu.

Bu tez, Tunceli'nin erken 1970'li yıllarına odaklanmaktadır ve bu dönemde yaşanan siyasi gelişmelerin bölgede ortaya çıkardığı sonuçları incelemektedir. Tez, bu dönemde sosyalist sol gruplara katılanların bölgenin siyasi uyanışına katkılarını incelemektir. Ayrıca, siyasi katılımın yerel aidiyetin temel yönlerini ne ölçüde etkilediği sorgulanmıştır. Sosyalist sol hareketlere katılan Tuncelililer, bu dönemde ulusal sahnede yeni siyasi figürler olarak ortaya çıktı ve onların politik mecralardaki

eylemleri yerel aidiyet bağlarında değişimlere yol açtı. Bu amaçla, parlamento kayıtları, gazete kupürleri ve anahtar kişilerle yapılan derinlemesine mülakatlar üç ana veri kaynağı olarak ele alınmıştır.

Tez, devlet uygulamalarının ve yatırımlarının Dersim/Tunceli yöresi ve yerel aidiyet kalıpları üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktadır. Charles Tilly'nin "güven ağları" analizi, 1970'lerde Dersim/Tunceli'yi karakterize eden yerel dinamikler ile devlet-toplum ilişkileri arasındaki etkileşimi anlama konusunda açıklayıcı bir kavram olarak belirlenmiştir. Devletin Dersim/Tunceli'ye yönelik algısı, politikaları ve bu bölgeye yönelik yatırımları, verilen döneme ait parlamento tutanakları ve gazete kupürleri üzerinden incelenmektedir. Çalışmanın içeriğine 1960'lar ile 1970'ler arasındaki on yılın Millet Meclisi Cumhuriyet Dönemi Genel Kurulu tutanakları dahil edilmiştir. Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı'nın Birinci ve İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planları, 1960'ların ortasından 1970'lerin ortasına kadar olan dönemde bölgeye yönelik kamu yatırımlarını incelemek için gerekli materyalleri sağlamıştır. Bu materyallere ek olarak, dönemin günlük gazete arşivleri yerel gelişmeleri takip etmek ve o dönemin devlet-toplum ilişkilerini anlamak için gerekli malzemeyi sunmuştur. Bu tezde ayrıca kayda alınmamış dönem anılarının tarihi olayları ve sosyal gelişmeleri yorumlama potansiyelinden yararlanabilmek için derinlemesine mülakat tekniği ile mülakatlar gerçekleştirilmiştir. Dönemin gençlik hareketlerinde yer almış on iki kişiyle anahtar bilgi kaynağı mülakatları, Tunceli, İzmir, İstanbul ve Ankara'da gerçekleştirilmiştir. Tez boyunca ele alınan raporlar, diğer basılı materyaller ve mülakatlarda devletin Dersim'e yönelik politikalarının tarihsel arka planı, Türkiye'deki çok partili siyasi dönemde Tunceli'nin durumu, özellikle de 1970'lerin siyasi ikliminde, Tuncelili bir birey olarak Türkiye siyasetini gözlemlemenin imkanları ele alınmıştır. 1970'lerdeki siyasi gelişmeler çerçevesinden bakıldığında, Dersim/Tunceli'deki yerel aidiyet dinamiklerinin bölgenin güven ağlarında ve kolektif dayanışma bağlarında ne gibi değişiklikler meydana gelmesine yol açtığı tezin temel süreğini oluşturur.

Tez, bu sorular üzerinden Dersimli Alevilerin 1970'lerin ilk yarısına kadar uzanan periyotta bölgesel güven ağı dinamiklerini araştırmıştır. Yerel aidiyetlerin güven ağı oluşumuna katkı sağladığını ve bu dayanışma ağlarının belirli tarihsel dönemlerde kritik kırılma noktalarıyla değişimlere uğradığı ele alınmıştır. Bu araştırmalar

sonucunda, 1970'lerin ilk yarısının, Dersim/Tunceli'nin güven ağındaki değişiklikler için bir dönüm noktası olarak kabul edilebileceği iddia edilmiştir. Ayrıca, tez, bölgenin siyasi uyanışının ve devletle ilişkilerin güven ağlarında yarattığı değişiklikler için erken 1970'lerin bir kopuş noktası olarak tanımlanması gerektiğini iddia eder. Bununla birlikte Dersim'i bir değişken olarak güven ağı kavramı üzerinden tanımlamak, bu yöre çok daha kompleks bir trans network olduğundan, karmaşık bir yapıda olduğundan bu bölgeyi birtakım sınırlarla tanımlamayı olanaklı kılmaktadır. Bu satırların yazarı tüm bu boyutların farkındadır ve hepsini ilgili kısımlarda açıklamıştır.

Bölümlerin Özeti

Bu tez toplam 5 kısımdan oluşmaktadır. Giriş kısmında bu çalışmanın kapsamı, mevcut literatür taraması ve bu çalışmanın literatüre ne şekilde katkı sağlayabileceğinden bahsedilmiştir. Buna göre, mevcut literatürde Dersim/Tunceli ile ilgili araştırmaların iki ana eksende yürütülmüş olduğu görülmüştür. Buna göre iki temel aks, resmi tarih merkezli ve yerel tarih ve anlatılar merkezli söylemdir. Resmi tarih söylemini merkeze alarak yapılan çalışmalarda Dersim'in 1937 yılındaki "isyan"ın bastırılmasına kadar olan süreçte bu yörenin bir menba-i eşkıya olduğu, buradaki konar göçer halkın evvelden beri eşkıyalık faaliyetlerinden şikayet olunduğu üzerine çalışmalar bina edilmiştir. Devlet söyleminde Tunceli kontrol altına alınması ve ulus-devletin sınırları içine alınması gereken bir isyankar bölgedir. Aşiretin çalışma ilkesi, normu kimi yerlerde hayatta kalmayı sağladığından çalmak olabileceğinden tarihsel olarak Dersim'de ekonomik

Dersim'le ilgili mevcut literatürün bir diğer ucu ise 1937-38 olaylarının soykırım olduğunu iddia eden görüştür. Tunceli'nin sol sosyalist bakıştan aktarılan tarihinde ise Kemalist feodallerle yörenin siyasi mücadelesine odaklanır. Devletle Dersim'in ilişkisi sol bakıştan eleştiriye tabi tutulur ve buradaki konar göçer toplulukların tarih boyunca haksızlığa maruz kaldığı, geri bırakıldığı ve devlet tahakkümüyle mücadele etme durumunda kaldığı işlenir. 1937-38 askeri harekatlarıyla burada kurulan güven ağları bu olaylar sonrası dumura uğramış ve tam olarak dağılmıştır. Bu dönemdeki tam dağılma sonrasında yöre insanları arasında bir duygu ve bağlılık var olmuştur.

Bu kompleks dinamikler içerisinde yerel ağlar bir şekilde var olmuş ve topraklarına geri dönüşlerine izin verilen *tertele*nin on sene sonrası bu bağlar yeniden uyanışa geçmiştir. Bu altyapı bilgisinden sonra tezin ikinci bölümünde Dersim'in bir bilgi stoğu (stock of knowledge) olarak ele alınması gerektiği ve bunun gerekçeleri üzerine bir çalışma yapılmıştır. Üçüncü bölümde emperyal dönemden 1970'lere Dersim/Tunceli tarihi irdelenmiştir. Dördüncü bölümde devletin Tunceli yöresine ilişkin geliştirdiği politikalar ve yatırım planları incelenmiştir. Beşinci bölümde 1970'lerdeki sol politikalar ve bunların Dersim/Tunceli'ye yansımaları ve gelişmeler ele alınmıştır. Son bölümde ise sonuç olarak 1970'li yıllarda yaşanan gelişmelerin bölgenin güven ağlarında yol açtığı değişimler ve siyasi uyanış ele alınmıştır.

Dersim/Tunceli'yi Bir *Bilgi Stoğu* Olarak Düşünmek

Dersim'in sadece bir ayrıksı niteliğinden ziyade, birden fazla ve çok katmanlı yapısına vurgu yapmak bu çalışmanın kazanımlarından biridir. Buna göre, periferde oluş, etnik sınırlar ve dini dinamikler bölgenin özel bilgi birikimini şekillendirdiği iddia edilmektedir. Dersim'i sadece tarihi, siyasi ve coğrafi bir bağ olarak hayal etmenin ötesinde, "Dersim/Tunceli" olgusunu bir bilgi birikimi olarak düşünmek gerekir. Bilgi stoku, zaman içinde biriken deneyimlerin, ilişkilerin, yerel geleneklerin ve günlük uygulamaların kolektifliği anlamına gelir. Bu ortak bilgi nesilden nesle aktarılır ve günlük yaşamda bireyin kullanımına sunulur. Dersim'i tek bir kategoriye sığdırmanın zor olduğu düşünülürse Dersim/Tunceli'yi tanımlamak için 'bilgi stoğu' çerçevesi kullanılabilir. Dersim her şeyden önce çok kültürlü, çok etnili, çok dinli ve bu bileşenlerin her biriyle derinden iç içe geçmiş bir kimliktir. Dersim'i hayal ederken bu senaryolardan yalnızca birini düşünürsek, bu çok yönlü yapıyı gözden kaçırmak söz konusu olabilir. Sonuç olarak Tunceli/Dersim'i siyasi görünümü, etnik bağlantıları ve içeriğindeki sosyal ve kültürel heterojenliğe göre tanımlayabiliriz.

Tunceli'nin bilgi birikiminde onu çevredeki Anadolu halklarından ayıran unsurlar bulunmaktadır. Bu özellikler çevreyi, etnik ve dini sınırları ve geleneksel sosyal örgütlenme biçimlerini içerir. Bunlar, bölgeyi ve toplumu şekillendiren ve tanımlayan, aynı zamanda birbirlerini karşılıklı olarak etkileyen, birbirine bağlı önemli faktörlerdir. Bu üç unsurun kolektif olarak bölgenin aidiyet kaynaklarını

şekillendirmesi nedeniyle bu yönlerin hepsiyle bir bölgeyi açıklamaya girişmesi çok önemlidir. Bu bileşenlerin bölge dinamiklerini şekillendirmedeki etkisi, yarattıkları yerel bağlantılarla birlikte bölgedeki günlük yaşamı, ilişkileri ve yerel ilişkileri de şekillendirmiştir. Bilgi stoğunun taşıyıcı unsurlarından belki de en mühimi Dersim'deki aşiret yapılarının gönüllü birliktelikler olmakla birlikte bir taraftan da pre-modern yapılar olduğunu kabul etmekten geçmektedir. Kapalı yapıda bir pre-modern grup olarak Dersimliler "varoluşsal bir tehdit" karşısında gönüllü olarak, adeta evden eve bir ağla birbirlerine bağlıdırlar. Bu tezin incelediği tarihsel dönemde ise bu yörede dini referanslı karışık bir örüntüler ağı göze çarpar. Bu ağlar tıpkı Tilly'nin anlattığı Waldensian'lar gibi yer yer gizli bir örgüt gibi çalışmaktadır. Gelecek bölümlerde ele alındığı gibi mülakatlarda bu gizlilik prensibi göze çarpmaktadır; gençler siyasal örgütlerde, sol ekipler içinde bile Dersimli olduklarını ifade etmemişlerdir. Bu tez kapsamında yapılan mülakatlarda, 1960ların sonlarına dek sol hiyerarşi içinde katılımcıların yerel isimleri ve iddialarıyla yer almadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Bu dönemde sol siyasette yerel iddialardansa enternasyonalist motivlerin baskın olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Katılımcılar siyasal örgütlenmenin aşiretten daha sıkı bağlar içerdiğini iddia etmişlerdir. Bu yıllarda düzene karşı çıkma isteklerini siyasal radikalizmle göstermeye başlayan öncü kadroların Dersim'e ilişkin bir iddiaları olmamıştır.

Dersim/Tunceli'nin Siyasi Tarihi

Tezin üçüncü bölümünde Dersim'in tarihi altyapısı ele alınmıştır. Dersimli aidiyetinde yaşanan kırılma momentleri, değişim noktalarını daha belirginleştirerek kaleme alınmıştır. Kapitalist dünya sistemi içerisinde bir komün olarak Dersim, Osmanlı dönemi, erken cumhuriyet ve 1970 başları olarak üç periyoda ayrılarak ele alınmıştır. Tezde bu momentlerde kimi zaman (1937-38 ulus-devlet düzeninin tam kontrol hali, 1950 başlarına dek sosyo-kültürel dönüşüm gibi) içe kapanma; kimi zaman ise taraf olup saldırıya geçme (1937'ye dek ve 1970lerin ortalarından itibaren) şeklinde değişimler gözlemlenmiştir. Tezin bu kısmında 1937-38 olayları merkeze alınarak bir Dersim tarihi anlatısı yapılmıştır. Toprağa dayalı olmayan, kandaşlık bağıyla oluşan aşiret ve ocak sistemi bu dönem sonrasında sürgüne ve tam bir sessizliğe bürünmüştü. 1950'lerin başında Tunceli'ye geri dönüşün önü açıldıktan

sonra ise devletle buluşmaya ve 1960'larla birlikte ise yerini radikal sol siyasete bırakmıştır.

Cumhuriyet Öncesi Dönem

Tunceli'de bölgesel dinamikleri oluşturan tarihsel bağlamı anlamak için Dersim'deki güven ilişkilerinin evrimindeki spesifik anlara daha derinlemesine bakmak gerekmektedir. Dersim tarihinde dikkate alınması gereken ilk önemli moment imparatorluk dönemidir. Osmanlı döneminde, özellikle Tanzimat dönemine kadar Dersim'de yaşayan halk, devletin erişim alanı dışında olduğundan sürekli olarak değişime direnmişti. Dersim halkı diğer Kürt gruplarla birlikte bölgesel taleplerini dile getirmek için bir dizi isyan çıkardı. Tanzimat reformlarından sonra Kürt bölgelerini merkezileştirmek amacıyla bir dizi reform yapılmış ve bu reformların uygulanması sırasında bölgedeki birçok aşiretin silahlandırıldığı ve seferber edildiği görülmüştü. Bu aşiretlerin bir kısmı Dersimliydi. Bu nedenle devlet, doğu bölgelerinin ve Dersim'in kalkınması için aşiretlerin etkisini kırmaya yönelik ciddi planlar yaptı. Modernleşme çabalarının da etkisiyle bölgede devlet nüfuzu etkisini artırmış, kabile ilişkileri zayıflamaya başlamış ve kutsal soylar ile onların takipçileri arasındaki dini ilişkiler parçalanmaya başlamıştı.

1937-38 Dersim Olayları ve Askeri Operasyonlar

Cumhuriyetin kuruluşu ve Dersim'in bu yeni doğan rejim içerisinde yeni konumu ise ikinci önemli moment olarak karşımıza çıkar. Cumhuriyetin ilanı Dersim tarihinde önemli bir dönüm noktasını temsil eder. Buna göre bölgeye ilişkin resmi devlet algısı cumhuriyetin ilk yıllarında pek değişmemiş gibi görünüyordu; Dersim, topraklarında devam eden isyanlar nedeniyle hâlâ kargaşanın merkezi olarak görülüyordu. Dersim yöresinde çıkan isyanlar bu dönemde yoğunlaşarak önem kazandı. Dersim'i de kapsayan Vilayet-i Şarkiye'ye yönelik merkeziyetçilik politikaları erken Cumhuriyet döneminde de hız kesmeden devam etti. Sorun, merkezden uzak uzak bölgelerdeki yerel güçlerin nispeten özerk statüsünden ve bu bölgelerde merkezi otoritenin sınırlı tanınmasından kaynaklanıyordu. Cumhuriyetin kurulmasına rağmen Dersim ulusal güvenlik kaygısı olarak kaldı. 1937'de yol kapatma olaylarına yanıt olarak askeri

operasyon başlatıldı. Hükümet operasyonun isyanı durdurmak ve düzeni sağlamak için gerekli olduğunu iddia ederken, Ayhan Yalçınkaya gibi kimi yazarlarca bunun aslında daha geniş ve uzun vadeli bir devlet projesinin parçası olduğunu öne sürmüştü.

1937-38 askeri operasyonları şüphesiz bölge tarihinin en önemli momenti olarak kabul edilmelidir. 1937 yılına kadar yerel halkın ulus devletin ulusal yasal çerçeveyi dayatmasına direndiği Dersim/Tunceli'de cumhuriyetçi yetkililer ciddi bir muhalefetle karşı karşıya kaldı. 1935 yılında 2885 sayılı Kanunla Dersim'in idari sınırları yeniden çizilmiş; Tunceli ili, Erzincan ilinin Pülümür ilçesi ile Elâzığ ilinin Nazimiye, Hozat, Mazgirt, Ovacık, Pertek ve Çemişkezek ilçelerinin birleştirilmesiyle kurulmuştur. Bir yıl sonra kent merkezi Elaziz ilçesinden Kalan ilçesine taşındı. Özetle, merkezin bu dönemde ürettiği politikalar, öncelikle muhalif yerel aşiretlerin bastırılması amacıyla askeri güç kullanılarak hayata geçirildi. Bölgedeki yerel muhalif gruplar askeri güçle bastırılmaya çalışıldı. Bu amaca ulaşmak için Dersim ilinde askeri yönetim kurulmuş ve bölgeye yönelik rehabilitasyon programı başlatılmıştır. Bu program, 1935 yılında 2884 sayılı Tunceli Kanununun uygulanmasıyla başlamış ve 1947 yılında 5098 sayılı İskan Kanununda yapılan değişikliklerle tamamlanmıştır. Böylece merkezi yönetime bağlılığın sağlanması ve bölgenin ulus-devlet yapısına entegre edilmesi amacıyla, bölge yasal düzenlemeler ve sıkı yaptırımlarla çevrelenmiştir.

Yörede yerel ağların ve kültürel altyapının altüst oluşunun ilk dönemi 1937-38 yıllarını işaret etmektedir. Bu dönemde bölgedeki güven ağı kolektif eylemi kolaylaştırmış, yerel halk merkezileşmeye ve ulus-devlete adaptasyona protesto ve isyanlarla direnmiştir. Bu sebeple yaşanan askeri harekât sonrası dönemde yerel aidiyet ağları kökten değişime uğramıştır fakat bu bağlar tamamen yok olmamışlardır. Tilly'nin de söylediği gibi, Dersim'i bir güven ağı olarak hayal etmenin temel bileşeni bu yörenin güç kapasitesinden ileri gelmektedir. Bu dönemdeki büyük kırılma öncesinde bölgede birçok ayaklanma yaşanmıştı. Ama 1937-38 bunların hepsinden daha büyüktü; bu moment bölgedeki tüm kültürel altyapıyı değiştirdi.

Dersim/Tunceli'de toprak ve yerel aidiyet ilişkisi, Cumhuriyetin ilk yıllarında yaşanan bu olaylar zincirinin ardından karmaşık ve zorlu bir hal aldı. Erken Cumhuriyet döneminde yaşanan olaylar bölge için tarihi ve coğrafi süreklilik açısından farklılaşma yaratmıştır. Mesela zorunlu ve kitlesel bir göç düzenlemesi hayata geçirildi ve çok sayıda ihraç edilen Dersimli grup Anadolu'nun çeşitli bölgelerine yerleştirildi. Yöre kimliğine ilişkin bu çalkantılı dönem Dersim için önemli bir kırılma işlevi gördü. Çünkü uzun bir süre bu yörenin içerikleri her anlamda kesintiye uğradı. Bu dönemin ardından bölge kendi içine çekilerek hem bölgede hem de iskân edilen coğrafyalarda kapalı bir topluluk olarak varlığını sürdürmeye çalıştı. Bir diğer ifadeyle, 1937-38 dönüm noktasının yerel halk için dönüştürücü sonuçları olmuştur. Yazılı olmayan geleneği ve mahrem dede-talip ilişkisine vurgu yapmasıyla karakterize edilen Alevilik, bu zorunlu yerleştirmeden özellikle etkilenmiştir. Zorunlu göç, yerel kimliğin önemli bir unsuru olan dini bağlılığı sekteye uğrattı. Müritlerin dini liderlerinden ayrılması, inanç ve ritüellerinin uygulanmasında aksamalara yol açtı. Böylece Dersim yavaş yavaş yaşayanların hafızasında bir mitik öğeye dönüşüyordu. Bölgenin kimliğinin merkezinde yer alan Dersim Aleviliği, tarihsel bağlamıyla olan güçlü bağını yitirdi. Bu noktada "sürgün" bu yöreyi incelerken göz önüne alınması gereken başat bir kavram olarak karşımıza çıkar. Yerleşik hale gelen gruplar bu olay sonrasında dağılmıştır. Topraklardan kopuş ve dağılma hemen fiziksel hem duygusal olarak yöre insanını dönüştürmüştür. Bu yöredeki konar göçer toplulukların içe kapanması ve sessizlik dönemi olarak görülmelidir. Öte yandan 1930'lu yıllardaki çalkantıların sonuçları arasında Dersimliler arasında kültürel farkındalığın ve toplumsal aidiyet duygusunun arttığı da iddia edilebilir. Bu dönemde sert tedbirlere maruz kalan Tuncelililer arasında dayanışma duygusu elbette pekişmişti. Tunceli'deki özel olağanüstü hâl rejiminin kaldırılması ve sınır dışı edilen ailelerin evlerine dönmesine izin verilmesi kararı ancak 1946'nın sonlarına doğru alınabilmişti. Siyasi farkındalığın artması ve çeşitli siyasi hareketlerin bu dönemde sonra gelişmesi, bölgesel aidiyetin gelişmesi açısından bir başka olumlu sonuç olarak değerlendirilmelidir.

1970'ler

Küresel çapta kimlik siyasetinin partikülaristik bir yere gitmesi Tunceli yöresini de etkilemiştir. 1970'li yıllar halk düzeyinde Türkiye siyasetine ve özellikle de radikal

politikalara eklemlenme olarak su yüzüne çıkmaya başlamıştır. 1970'lerde Fatsa, Artvin, Nurhak ve benzeri coğrafyalar benzeri şekilde siyasi olarak hareketli yıllarını biriciklik iddiasıyla yaşarken Dersim de bu trendden nasibini almış ve yerel ajandasına kimlikler siyasetini eklemiştir.

Bölgedeki çalkantının ulusal sonuçları oldu ve Tunceli'ye yönelik önyargıların ve olumsuz stereotiplerin artmasına katkıda bulundu. Siyasi türbülanslı 1960'lı ve 70'li yıllarda sadece Tuncelili olmak şüphe uyandırıyor ve bireyleri önyargıların hedefi haline getiriyordu. 1950'lerden itibaren Tunceli'de aşiret düzeyi ana politikaya eklemlenmeye başlamıştır.

Charles Tilly'nin Güven Ağları Analizi

Çalışmanın teorik kısmı olan 3. bölümde derin bir Tilly anlatısında yer verilmiştir. Charles Tilly "güven ağları" analizi ile literatüre önemli bir katkı sağlamıştır. Tilly çalışmalarında "güven" ve "güven ağları" kavramlarını, tanımlanmış bir toplumdaki içsel etkileşimler ağını, devletle olan ilişkilerini ele alarak resmetmek için kullanmaktadır. Tilly, insanların ortak bir sosyal, politik, ekonomik veya kültürel amaç doğrultusunda bir araya gelerek toplumsal hareketler oluşturduğunu iddia etmektedir. Bu hareketler emek, para, bilgi, dini bağlar ve kandaşlık bağları gibi bir dizi kaynağa bağlıdır. Tilly'ye göre güven ağları içerisinde olan bireyler gruptaki öteki paydaşlara güvenirler ve bu bireylerin doğrudan kontrolleri dışındaki riskleri veya belirsizlikleri azaltacak şekilde hareket edeceklerine inanırlar. Batı toplumlarındaki sosyal hareketler tipik olarak üç tanımlayıcı özellik sergiler: ortak talepleri ilerletmek için organize kolektif eylem, çeşitli siyasi taktiklerin kullanılması (halka açık toplantılar ve protestolar dahil) ve katılımcılar arasında meşruiyet, birlik, güç ve bağlılık gösterileri. Toplumsal hareketler belirli toplumsal değişimlere, organize baskıya tepki olarak veya iktidardakilere meydan okumak için ortaya çıkabilir ve yeni dayanışma ağları oluşturabilirler.

Charles Tilly'ye göre bir güven ağı akrabalık, işçilerin karşılıklı yardımlaşması, gizli dini mezhepler, çeteler, haydutlar, ticari gruplar etrafında oluşabilir. Bu ve benzeri tüm toplulukların amacı mülksüzleştirme, baskı, ya da zulüm tehditleri karşısında

grubun kendilerine bir koruyucu sığınak olması ve topluluk üyelerine uzun dönem amaçlar uğruna güç vermesi ve destek hattı oluşturması gereksinimidir.

Charles Tilly aynı zamanda bu ağların merkezi güçten uzakta konumlanmış marjinal nüfusları nasıl barındırdığıyla da ilgileniyordu. Bazı sosyal gruplar, iktidardakilerle resmi bağlardan bağımsız olarak, ortak hedeflere ve karşılıklı güvene dayalı ittifaklar oluşturur. Tilly'nin belirttiği gibi, tarih boyunca bu tür dayanışma gruplarına katılanlar, hükümetin kontrolü dışında faaliyet göstermenin yollarını bulmuşlardır. Geleneksel olarak çeşitli nedenlerden dolayı kendilerini güç merkezlerinden uzaklaştıranlar hükümetin baskısından korkmaktadırlar çünkü mülklerinin ya da kazanımlarının ellerinden alınabileceğinden endişe etmektedirler. Siyasi bir rejim yerel güçlerini zayıflatabilir veya mallarını tehlikeye atabilir. Mülksüzleştirilme veya sömürülme korkusu nedeniyle bir güven ağının üyeleri, güçlü güvenleri nedeniyle önemli ortak çıkarlara sahiptir ve risk içeren kolektif faaliyetlere katılırlar. Bireyler güven ağlarını başarılı bir şekilde koruduklarında, hükümet müdahalesine direnirler ve sınırlandırılmış bölgeleri üzerindeki hükümet kontrolünü zayıflatırlar, hükümetin taleplerine minimum düzeyde uyarlar ve hükümet tarafından kontrol edilen kamu kaynaklarına daha az katkıda bulunurlar.

Bunun yanı sıra, Tilly'nin "güven ağları" analizi dinamik bir tanımı içerir; yazara göre dünya tarihinde ethnieden ulusa geçişte ideal bir demokrasi görülmemiştir. Demokrasiye yaklaşılır (*convergence*) ya da demokrasiden uzaklaşılır (*divergence*). Charles Tilly'ye göre "güven" iki yönlü bir kavramdır. Hem topluluk içi bireyler arası hem de siyasal otoriteye karşı güven dinamikleri çalışır. Varoluşsal bir tehdide karşı güçlü bağlar, koordinasyon ve yardımlaşma duyguları bir grubun güven ağları kurmasına olanak sağlar. Bir toplulukta güven ağları ne kadar güçlüyse devlet müdahalesine o kadar kapalıdır ve devlete karşı direnir. Devletin gücünü kırmaya çalışır.

Demokrasilerde, güven ağlarının kamu politikalarına dahil edilmesi, Tilly'nin de vurguladığı gibi, genellikle baskı veya sermaye yoluyla sağlanır. Demokratik sistemlerde güven ağlarının kamu politikalarına kısmi entegrasyonu gerçekleşmiştir. Kısmi entegrasyon, değerli uzun vadeli kaynakların ve işletmelerin sürdürülmesi için

devlet garantilerine, sübvansiyonlarına ve hizmetlerine güvenmek anlamına gelir. Bu, ayrıcalıklar elde etmek veya devletin hizmetlerinden yararlanmak konusunda bağlılığı teşvik etmek için devlet mekanizmalarıyla temasa geçmek anlamına gelir. Temelde Tilly'nin önerdiği şey, demokrasinin pekişmesinin güven ağlarının kendilerini devletle ne ölçüde uyumlu hale getirdiğiyle ilişkili olduğudur. Toplumda güven ağları ve benzeri bölünmeler arttıkça toplum demokrasiden uzaklaşma eğilimine girdiği ifade edilmiştir.

Bu çalışmada Dersim/Tunceli'yi anlamak için bir değişken atanabileceğini ve bunun da Tilly'nin güven ağları kavramsallaştırması olabileceği iddia edilmiştir. Cumhuriyet öncesi ve Cumhuriyet sonrası dönemleri göz önüne aldığımızda Dersim-devlet ilişkisini anlatırken iki farklı modeli göz önüne almak gerekmektedir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Cumhuriyet öncesi döneminde Dersim ile hükümet arasında "aracılı özerklik" düzenlemesi mevcuttu. Bu sistemde, güven ağları içindeki yerel liderler, kendi etki alanlarında özerklik karşılığında yöneticilere kaynak ve itaat sağlıyordu. Cumhuriyetin kurulmasının ardından Dersim'deki güven ağları demokrasi çerçevesinde değişikliklere uğramıştır. Güven ağı analizi, 1970'li yıllarda Dersim'in sosyo-politik koşullarını incelemede faydalı bir araç olarak tanımlanmıştır. Dersim'in dayanışma ağları, tarihsel nedenlerden dolayı yer altı bir güven ağı şeklinde oluşmuş ve ülkedeki demokrasinin melez yapısı nedeniyle 1970'li yıllara kadar varlığını sürdürmüştür. Bu dönemdeki yerel gelişmelerin değişen iç dinamikler ve grup davranışları perspektifinden incelenmesi Dersim/Tunceli araştırmalarına yeni bir katkı sunma iddiasındadır.

Dersim'deki Güven Ağları

Literatürde kapsamlı bir şekilde tartışıldığı üzere Dersim yöresi, imparatorluk döneminden bu yana hükümetler tarafından sürekli olarak bir güvenlik meselesi ve merkezi sorun olarak algılanmıştır. Cumhuriyet kurulduktan sonra hükümet tek bir etnik köken, din ve kültürü teşvik ederek birleşik bir ulusal kimlik yaratmayı hedefledi. Dersim/Tunceli gibi izole bölgeler bu ulus inşa etme çabalarının odak noktası haline geldi. Hükümetin Dersim/Tunceli üzerinde kontrol kurma girişimleri bu sürecin bir parçasıydı ve bölgenin sürekli olarak marjinalleştirilmesine ve merkezi

iktidar yapılarından dışlanmasına neden oldu. Tilly'nin devlet-toplum ilişkileri ve yerel dayanışma ağlarına ilişkin argümanlarına bakıldığında Dersim/Tunceli'nin kendi kamusal alanında bir tür güven ağı ve koordinasyon ürettiği iddia edilebilir. Yöre halkının kendi içinde özel bir dayanışma ilişkisi bulunmaktadır, yerel halk arasında güçlü bağ ve koordinasyon bulunmaktadır. Yerel topluluklar bu yörede yüzyıllarca akrabalık, kabile bağları ve dini bağlantılar gibi güçlü bağlara dayanan kapalı bir sosyal yapıyı korumuştur. Tilly'nin dediği gibi birleştiren ve bağlayan bu bağlar, onları dışarıdakilerden ayıran, ortak bir dini ve etnik kimliğe sahip uyumlu bir grup yaratmıştır.

Dersim'deki güven ağları büyük ölçüde hem bölgesel güçlerden hem de merkezi hükümetten gelen dış tehditlere yanıt olarak gelişti. Hem Sünni Kürt çoğunluktan hem de Bektaşi Alevilerden farklı olan Kürt Alevileri, tarihsel olarak diğer gruplarla gerilimli ilişkiler kurmuştur. Bu atmosferde iç birlik duygusu ve güçlü grup içi güven ağlarının ortaya çıkışı söz konusu olmuştu. Devletin bölgeye Kürtlük, Alevilik ve geri kalmışlık üzerinden muamelesi de bu yerel ağları daha da şekillendirmiştir. Daha da önemlisi, devlet ile Dersim'in güven ağları arasındaki karmaşık ilişki, bölgede bir dereceye kadar özerkliğe yol açmıştır. Devletin eylemleri, bölgede oluşan bu dayanışma ağlarının zaman içinde nasıl oluştuğunu ve geliştiğini doğrudan etkilemiştir.

Dersim'in aidiyet duygusunu etkileyen faktörlerin başında iktidar tarafından yönlendirilen fiziki baskılar ve bölgesel güçlerle yaşanan çatışmalar gelmiştir. Bölgenin tarihi, ekonomik olarak hayatta kalma, dini kimliğinin korunması, yerel siyasi güç dengeleri ve dış tehditlere karşı savunma ihtiyacı tarafından yönlendirilmektedir. Güven ve uzun süredir devam eden yerel ilişkiler üzerine inşa edilen bu yapılar, devletten bağımsız olarak gelişebildi ve bu da bölgede özerklik duygusunu teşvik etti. Yerel halk, ortak din, dil ve etnik aidiyetlere dayalı güven ağlarına sahip olduğu için, merkezi otoritelere bağımlı olmadan kendi ihtiyaçlarını karşılayabiliyor ve özyönetim düzeyini koruyabiliyordu. Yöre halkı büyük bölgesel güç merkezleri arasında kolektif stratejiler belirleyerek kendilerini dış etkilerden korumaya çalışmıştır. Yöre, Osmanlı modernleşme döneminde merkezileşmenin adımlarından biri olan vergi tahsilatı ve askerlik başta olmak üzere hükümetle

anlaşmazlıklar yaşamaktaydı. Uzun yıllar boyunca özellikle bu iki hat üzerinde gerginlikler gelişti ve yaptırımlar imparatorluk merkezi tarafından uygulandı. Siyasal otorite böylece yüzyıllardır bu yöreye hâkim olmaya ve hegemonyasını tek taraflı olarak sürdürmeye çalışmıştır.

Dersim'in bir güven grubu olarak değerlendirilip değerlendirilemeyeceğini daha da kanıtlamak için Dersim'de var olduğu iddia edilen bazı güven ağı dinamiklerini diğer bazı güven ağı örnekleriyle karşılaştırmak gerekmiştir. Zaman, coğrafya ve spesifik bağlamlardaki farklılıklara rağmen Dersim'deki güven ağlarının dinamikleri, Charles Tilly'nin tanımladığı 14. yüzyıl Waldensian topluluğunun dinamikleriyle benzerlikler taşımaktadır. 14. yüzyılda Fransa'da yaşayan dini bir topluluk olan Waldensian'lar, hükümetleri tarafından sapkın ilkel Hıristiyanlar olarak kabul ediliyordu. Alplerin yüksek kesimlerinde yaşayan bu topluluk, hayvancılık ve tarımla uğraşan Hıristiyan bir gruptu. Dini inançlarından dolayı evlenmeyen, sadece dini öğretileriyle meşgul olan bir din adamları vardı. Kendi topraklarında papalık otoritesine direndiler, yemin etmeyi reddettiler ve ölüm cezasına karşı çıktılar. Devlet, bu topluluğu sapkın olarak kabul ettiğinden, kamuya açık vaaz vermekten kaçındılar çünkü devlet onların kamuya açık öğretiler vermesini yasaklamıştı. Aksine, vaazları kişiden kişiye ve evden eve güvenli bir gizlilik içinde gerçekleşti. İnançları, gizliliğe öncelik vermeleri ve gizli uygulamalar nedeniyle varoluşsal bir tehdit ve zulüm korkusu hisseden bu toplum bu satırların yazarına Dersim Aleviliğini anımsatmıştır. Dersimliler tıpkı Waldendian'lar gibi hayatta kalabilmek için devlet baskısına karşı iç güven bağları kurdular. Her iki toplum da kendilerini korumak ve hayatta kalmak ve kimliklerini korumak için gizlilik teknikleri geliştirmişti. Dersim halkı da Waldensian'lar gibi siyasi otoritenin çevresinde yaşayan yarı göçebe bir tarım topluluğudur. Dış güçlerle yüzleşme konusunda ortak bir geçmişleri olduğundan, büyük ölçüde güçlü aile temelli, dini ve etnik ilişkilere güvenmekteydiler. Yukarıda da belirttiğimiz gibi Dersim'in direniş kapasitesi bu iç güven bağlarına ve direnişe yardımcı olan coğrafyaya bağlıdır. 1938 öncesinde devletin bölgedeki kontrolünün sınırlı olması, Türkiye'nin devlet kurma sürecinde önemli bir engel teşkil etmekteydi. Dersim'in iç yerleşik ağlarını çözmeye odaklanan devlet politikaları amacına ancak 1937-38 senesinden sonra total bir harekât planıyla ulaşabilmişti.

Kısacası, yerel aidiyet dinamiklerinin zamana ve koşullara göre değişen yapısı açısından Dersim halkının örgütlenmesi, 1923-1938 yılları arasında Tilly'nin tanımladığı şekliyle tipik bir güven ağı olarak sınıflandırılabilir. Cumhuriyetin kuruluşundan 1937-38 olaylarına kadar Dersim pre-modern sosyal yapısını korumaya devam etmiş ve klasik bir güven ağı grubu olarak kalmıştır. Bu tarihe kadar bozulmadan devam eden dayanışma ve güven ilişkileri, 1937-38 sonrasında yaşanan zorunlu göç nedeniyle alt üst oluş yaşamıştır. Yüzyıllar boyunca devletin etkisinden uzak yaşayan bölge nüfusunun yerel dinamikleri, cumhuriyetin 1938'de sert önlemler ve zorunlu göç yoluyla bölgede tam otorite kurmasıyla dramatik bir şekilde değişime uğradı. Buradaki güven ağları alt üst olmuştu. Yaklaşık on yıl boyunca topraklarından ayrılan yerel halk, Tilly'nin "yeraltı güven ağı" olarak adlandırdığı şeye dönüşmüştü. Bu büyük trajedinin ardından Dersim halkı adeta kapılarını dış dünyaya kapattı. Bu dönemde manevi rehberlerin (pirlerin) takipçileriyle (talipler) bağları kopmuş, dini inanç ve uygulamalar sözlü olarak aktarılıp sürdürüldüğü için kritik bir kültürel kopuş yaşanmıştı. Bireyler yaşadıkları coğrafyadan koparak göç ettikleri yerlerde birbirlerine bağlı oldukları aidiyet, din ve dil üzerinden hayatta kalmaya çalışmışlardır. Bu durumda, güven ağlarının kısmen değişime uğradığı ilk aşamayı, merkezle ilk doğrudan temas kurdukları 1937-38 sonrasına atfetmek gerekir.

1948'den sonra yerel halkın topraklarına dönmeye başlamasıyla bu dönem Dersim'deki dayanışma ağlarının başka bir gelişme aşamasına işaret ediyordu. 1950'li yıllardan sonra Dersim'in topraklarına geri dönen nüfusu bir güvenlik ve sadakat önlemi olarak güven ağlarını yeniden güçlendirmişti. 1950'li yıllarda yerel halk devlet yatırımlarını, sağlık, eğitim hizmetlerini ve diğer kamu hizmetlerini kabul etmeye başladı. Bu durum, devletin yatırımları ve sosyalist fikirlerin devreye girmesi ve bölge sakinlerinin siyasallaşması nedeniyle yerel bağlarda yeniden çözülme görülmesine yol açmıştı. Gençliğin kamu siyasetine dahil olması entegrasyon ve demokratikleşmeyi beraberinde getirerek 1960'lı ve 1970'li yıllarda güven ağını daha da aşındırdı. Dolayısıyla Dersim yöresindeki güven ağı dinamikleri bu dönemde sürekli bir dönüşüme uğradı. Bu değişiklikleri iki temel güç şekillendirdi: Birincisi, hükümet yatırımları ve entegrasyon politikaları dış kaynaklara bağımlılığı teşvik ederek iç bağları zayıflattı. İkincisi, yerel halkın bir kesiminin, yani Dersimli

gençlerinin siyasallaşması, güven ağlarının genişlemesine, daha geniş siyasi hareketlerle etkileşimin kolaylaşmasına ve Dersim'in daha geniş dayanışma ağlarına entegre olmasına yol açtı.

Güven ağlarının demokratik sisteme kısmi entegrasyonunun ise 1960'ların sonlarında yerel halkın siyasete katılımının yaygınlaşması ve hükümetin bölgede etkisinin ana nedeninin eğitim hizmetleri olmasıyla başladığını söylemek gerekir. Bu dönemde bölgesel kalkınma planları aracılığıyla devletin varlığı artmış, genç kuşak entelektüel olarak siyasetle iç içe geçerek bölgede siyasi canlanmayı beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu iki faktör Tunceli'de var olan güven ağları dinamiklerinin dönüşümüne önemli katkı sağlamıştır. Buradan anlaşılmaktadır ki Dersim'de güven ağı dinamiklerinin yoğunluğu tarih boyunca dalgalanmalar göstermiştir. Bu toplumsal ağlar kuruluş, güçlenme, erozyon, yeniden canlanma ve yeniden zayıflama aşamaları yaşayabiliyordu. Bu döngüsel model, Dersim toplumu ile devlet arasında, farklı tarihsel dönemlerde farklı sosyo-politik koşulların şekillendirdiği gelişen ilişkiyi yansıtmaktadır.

Tunceli'ye Yönelik Devlet Yatırımları ve Değişen Yerel Dinamikler

Tezin 4. bölümünde Dersim/Tunceli'nin devlet mekanizmalarıyla olan ilişkileri ele alınmıştır. 1960'ların ortasından 1970'lerin ortalarına kadar Tunceli'ye yönelik kamu yatırım planları ve uygulamaları belgelenmiş kanıtlarla analiz edilmiştir. Hükümetin eğitim, tarım, sanayileşme, bayındırlık gibi çeşitli alanlarda yaptığı yatırımların izi, Valilik Yatırım Raporları, Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Birinci ve İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planları ve Milliyet gazetesi arşivindeki kayıtlardan izi sürülmüştür.

1960'lar ve 1970'li yıllar Dersim'de tam bir toplumsal veya siyasal dönüşüm olmasa da kısmi bir uyanışın işaretini içinde barındırmaktadır. Bu dönem siyasi ve toplumsal uyanışın erken bir aşaması olarak tanımlanabilir. Bu dönemde yapılan öncü siyasi çalışmalar sayesinde 1990'lı yıllardan itibaren kolektif siyasi seferberlik ve katılımı tartışmak mümkün hale geldi.

Modernleşmenin bölgede yarattığı toplumsal değişimlerin ardındaki önemli faktörlerden biri yerel dönüşümlerin itici gücü olan devlet yatırımlarıdır. Cumhuriyet

hükümetleri, 1937-38'de kesintiye uğrayınca devlet yatırımları yoluyla bölgede bağlılık oluşturmaya çalıştı. Devletin aslında tüm dezavantajlı bölgelere ve tabii ki Tunceli'ye yatırımlarıyla müdahil olması, bölge üzerinde kontrol, yönlendirme ve hatta manipülasyon yapma olanağını sağlamıştır. Modernleşme ve merkezileşme çabalarının yalnızca bu bölgeye özgü olmadığını da belirtmekte fayda vardır. Dersim/Tunceli az gelişmişlik açısından Cumhuriyet döneminde bir istisna değildir. Tezde çalışılan dönemde, Anadolu'nun pek çok kısmı da tıpkı Tunceli gibi yokluk ve geri kalmışlık standardındadır.

Dönem kalkınma raporları ve gazete kupürleri incelendiğinde, bölgenin sosyal hizmetlerinin, bayındırlık işlerinin ve ekonomik koşullarının 1960'lı ve 1970'li yıllarda gözle görülür dönüşümler geçirdiği ortaya çıkmıştır. Tunceli bugüne kadar ulusal ve uluslararası gelişmeleri takip etmede geri kalmış olsa da devletin o dönemde yaptığı yatırımlarla bölgeyi modernleştirme yönünde kademeli çabalar sarf ettiği ortadadır. Cumhuriyetin ortaya koyduğu vatandaşlık kriterleri ve toplumsal ihtiyaçlar evrensel olarak tüm vatandaşlar için geçerlidir ilkesince cumhuriyetin erken yılları boyunca Anadolu'nun tüm coğrafyalarına ulaşılmaya çalışılmıştır.

Devletin Tunceli yöresinde çeşitli sektörlere yönelik hedefli yatırımları, yerel dayanışma ve aidiyetlerin farklılığını sarsmış, dolayısıyla değişime yol açmıştır. Özellikle eğitim alanındaki gelişmelerle birlikte Tunceli, yıllar süren çatışmaların ardından ulus devletle bağlantı kurarak yavaş yavaş sisteme entegre olmaya başlamıştı. Bu entegrasyon sürecinde toplum da çeşitli değişikliklere uğramıştır. Toplumun temel destek sistemleri olan iç dayanışma ilişkileri ve güven ağları, dış güçlerin bu ağlarla taahhütlere girmesiyle değişmeye başlamıştı ve yer yer yeniden canlanmıştı. Yatırımlar bölgedeki geleneksel aidiyet tutum ve kalıplarını etkileyerek sınıf yapısında değişikliklere yol açmıştır. Dersim'in aşiret bağları ve dini hassasiyetleri gibi yerel otorite kaynakları bu dönemde aşiret etkisinin azalmasıyla zayıfladı. Tarım ve sanayi sektörlerinde merkezileşmeye yönelik adımlar, ekonomik kalkınma planları, eğitim alanındaki reformlar, göç eden bireylerin bölge ve geleneklerle bağlarının zayıflamasıyla birleşince, bu dönemde sekülerleşme eğiliminin belirginleşmesine katkıda bulundu. Sonuçta Dersim kimliğinin kendine

özgü yönleri bu dönemde çokça sorgulandı, yer yer gözden çıkarıldı ve dönüşüme uğradı.

Bu bağlamda, 1970'li yılların Dersim için önemli bir referans noktası olması, kendi yerel tarihi mirasını radikal siyasi gruplara temel olarak kullanma fırsatı vermesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu dönemde sol hareketler asıl kökenlerini Alevilik tarihinde aradılar; Alevi isyanlarının tarihi onlara ilham kaynağı oldu ve Alevilik onlara zulme karşı mücadele potansiyeli sunmuş oldu. 1970'lerde gelişen sol kadrolar, Tunceli'yi kendi hareketleri için önemli bir merkez haline getirmek için önemli çabalar sarf ettiler ve elbette Tunceli'deki siyasi ve kültürel aidiyetin sonraki periyotta değişmesine katkıda bulundular. 1960'lı yıllardan itibaren sosyalist hareketlere katılmanın Dersimli toplumunda bireysel farkındalığın oluşmasında önemli etkisi oldu.

Ancak görünen odur ki, bu siyasi aktivizm yerel kültürel unsurlar ve gelenekler üzerinde ters etki yaratarak bu bağların öneminin azalmasına yol açtı. Diğer gruplarla etkileşimlerin artması ve ulusal siyasete katılım sonucu geleneksel toplumsal mekanizmalar değişime uğramaya başladı. Bireylerin aidiyet ve yerellik duygularının bu dönemden itibaren dalgalanmalara maruz kaldığı yapılan görüşmelerle ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, toplumsal tutumlar ve aidiyet kalıplarındaki değişimin ortaya çıkması ve yayılması daha uzun sürdü; çünkü kent merkezlerindeki değişikliklerin etkisini çevreye ulaştırmak için daha fazla zaman gerektiriyordu. Toplumsal değişimlerin karmaşıklığı ve etkilerinin bölge toplumunda görülmesi için gereken süre göz önüne alındığında, siyasi gelişmeler sosyo-kültürel ve siyasi kalıplarda zamanla önemli değişikliklere yol açmıştır.

Öte yandan 1970'ler yeni bir varış noktasını temsil etmektedir. Çünkü bu dönemde siyasal ve toplumsal gelişmeler dolayısıyla Tunceli/Dersim'de yeni bir içre bir network oluşuyordu. Yerelde yeni bir bağlılık ve taahhüt (*commitment*), yani yeni bir gönüllü birliktelik oluşmuştu. Tilly'nin tanımıyla tıpkı 14. yüzyıl Waldensian'ları gibi zulüm korkusuyla gizleme (*concealment*) yoluyla devlet zorunun üstesinden gelmeye çalışıyorlardı. Bu noktada bu tezde, yalnızca savaşkan bir topluluk, ya da bir pre-modern bir aşiret olarak düşünülürse kimi dinamiklerin eksik kalacağını

düşündüğüm Dersim'in, 1937-38 sonrası ve 1970'ler politik uyanışıyla birlikte aşamalar kaydeden bir gönüllü birliktelik; dayanışma ilkesini gönüllü olarak paylaşan bir topluluk olmaya dönüşmeye başladığını iddia edilmeye çalışılmıştır. *Trust networks* analizinin elimizdeki nesnelerle uyuşan noktaları olduğunu bir kez daha tespit edilmiş oldu. Bölgeye yönelik yapılan yatırımlar ciddi tepkimelere yol açmıştı; varoluşsal tehdit ile kurulan ilişkide gizleme (*concealment*) aşınmaya yol açmaya başladı. Demokrasilerde durmaksızın kurulan ve yıkılan demokrasiye yaklaşma (*convergence*) ve ondan uzaklaşma (*divergence*) akışında ise bu dönemde bölgede yatırım planları yoluyla görece bir demokrasiye yaklaşma görülmektedir. Devletin bölgeye yönelik yatırım planları bu dönemde itici güç olmuştu. Yatırım planları ve özellikle eğitim alanında yaşanan reformlar toplumsal bilinç ve siyasi dönüşümün gerçekleşmesini mümkün kılmışlardır.

Bir Paradigma Değiştirici Olarak Gençlik

Tezde belirtildiği gibi, bölge çalışmaları bölgesel özelliklerin benzersiz niteliklerini ve ortak noktalarını belirlemek için yararlı bir araç görevi görmektedir. Bu akademik çaba aynı zamanda röportajlar ve sözlü tarih araştırmalarıyla da büyük ölçüde desteklenmektedir. Geçmişe farklı bir bakış açısı getirmek için sözlü kanıtlar, bu araştırma için yerel tarihin detaylandırılmasında uygun bir araçtır. Bu bağlamda Tunceli ile ilgili 1970'li yıllardaki siyasi gelişmelere ilişkin yazılı belgeler sınırlı olduğundan, bölgesel içgörü elde etmek ve bu döneme ilişkin bilgi edinmek için sözlü kaynakların gerekli olduğu görülmektedir. Bu nedenle, tezimin ilk aşamalarında, çalışmam için nitel araştırma tekniklerinden biri olan anahtar bilgilendirici görüşmeyi, bölgesel analiz yapma yöntemi olarak benimsemeye karar verdim.

Bu kapsamda görüştüğüm kişiler, söz konusu dönemde gençlik hareketlerinin içinde aktif olarak yer alanlar ya da siyasete o dönemde katılsalar da ilerleyen yıllarda ideolojik aktivitelere mesafe alıp, profesyonel mesleklerini yapmayı tercih eden insanlardı. Görüşmelerden elde edilen bilgiler bu tez için değerli bir referans materyali olarak hizmet etmiştir; röportajlar insanlara kendi hayatlarına dair yorumlar yapma fırsatı vermiştir. Cumhuriyet döneminde okullara giden, eğitim alan

ve askerlik görevini yerine getiren katılımcılar, yurttaş olarak ulus devletin sağladığı fırsatlardan faydalanan kesimdi. 1970'li yıllar, kent merkezlerinde Dersimli gençlerin dış etkilere açıldığı ve siyasi hareketlerde görünürlük kazandığı bir dönem oldu. Görünürlüğün artması nedeniyle yerel aidiyetleri yeni fikirleri, felsefeleri ve kültürel yönleri benimsemeye daha açık hale geldi. 1970'lerdeki siyasi çalkantılar bu Dersimli gençler arasında yeni bakış açılarına ilham verdi. Merkezde, yer aldıkları siyasi örgütlerde geleneksel inanışlarını ve yerel aidiyetlerini sorgulamaya başladılar. Genç kadroların büyükşehirlerde sol sosyalist ideolojilerle kucaklaşmasından çok sonra yeni fikirler bölge sakinlerine ulaştı. Ancak, bu araştırma ve düşüncelerin yerel aidiyet kalıplarında tam bir dönüşümle sonuçlanmadığını da belirtmek gerekir. Dersimli Aleviler, 1970'li yıllara kadar güven ağlarını ve yerel aidiyet unsurlarını kitle hareketlerindeki diğer yoldaşlardan uzakta sürdürdüler. O dönemde tek motivasyonları siyaset olduğundan yerel aidiyetlerine ve geleneklerine gündelik yaşantılarında yer yoktu. Gençlik düşünsel olarak tamamen laik sosyalist sola kaymıştı.

Bu açıklamaların yanı sıra, gençlerin dönem anlatılarında yer yer özcü bir bakışın bulunduğu uyarısında da bulunmak elzemdir. Zira dönem koşulları dolayısıyla kimi gençler bir muhayyel devletle Dersim'in sürekli çatışması anlatısını bir stereotip olarak aktarmışlardır. Ben bu sebeple mülakatlarımda siyasi tavrı gençlik döneminden sonra evrilmiş, sonradan "kapitalist" olmakla itham edilen kişilerle de görüşmeye çalıştım. Bu kişilerden beklentim döneme eleştirel olarak bakabilecek olmalarıydı ve mülakatlar sonucunda bu beklentim bilgi kaynaklarım tarafından da kısmen doğrulandı. Türkiye'de bu dönemde solun girmediği yer olmamasına rağmen iki katlı perifer olan Dersim'de sol tahmin edilebileceği gibi güçlü ama sağın da mevcut olduğu gerçeğini de akıldan çıkarmamak gerekir. Çünkü siyaset bu yıllarda hala aşiretler arasında bir pazarlık unsuru olarak yürütülmekteydi.

Sonuç olarak bu dönemi özellikle merkezdeki ve bu yöredeki gençlerin çabalarıyla siyasi bir canlanma dönemi olarak nitelendirmek gerekir. Gençlerin radikal sol siyasi gruplara dahil olması ve bu radikal oluşumların Dersim'i direniş sembolü olarak siyasete dahil etme çabaları, bölgenin siyasi canlanmasına ve uyanışına yol açmıştır. Bu da bölgenin muhalif siyasete yeniden dahil olması için yeni bir başlangıç oldu.

Dersim halkı yerelde de bu aşırı sol siyasi gruplara sempatiyle karşılık verdi ve yıllardan beri ilk kez siyasetle bireysel planda ilişki kurmaya başladı. Kısacası 1970'li yıllarda radikal sol örgütler sosyo-politik gelişmelerin gerçekleşmesi için Dersim halkını harekete geçirdi. Bu siyasi canlanma çağında değişimler geleneksel Dersimli kimliğini de yeniden şekillendirdi. Röportajlar, sosyalist sol harekete katılımın halk arasında da seküler tutumlara yol açtığını ve bunun yerel kimlik üzerinde önemli bir etkiye yol açtığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Yereldeki güven ağlarının bu dönemdeki durumuna bakıldığında, devletle etkileşimin çeşitli biçimleri göz önüne alındığında, güven ağlarının burada giderek gevşemeye başladığı ve aynı zamanda mevcut demokratik sistemle bütünleşmeye başladığı görülmektedir. Yatırımlardan ve kalkınma planlarından duyulan memnuniyet bu dönemde bölgedeki okullaşma oranlarına da bakılarak algılanmalıdır. Elbette ki toplumsal düzeyde siyasi erke muhalefet tamamen sona ermiş değildir. Bu süre zarfında bölgenin kendine özgü güven ağı dinamikleri de bir yandan var olmuş ve halk merkezi yönetime tam olarak uyum sağlayamamıştır. Bu sebeple 1970'lerin başı, güven ağında çeşitli düzeylerde gözlemlenebilir değişimlerin belirginleştiği bir döneme işaret etmektedir.

Sonuç

Osmanlı döneminde bu bölgedeki çatışmaların ana sebebi bu yörenin siyasi düzene uyum sağlayamaması, Dersim'in ayaklanmaların ve yağmaların sürekli merkezi haline gelmesinden kaynaklanıyordu. Tüm etnik ve dini kimliklerin tek bir Türk çatısı altında birleştirilmesini amaçlayan ulus-devlet, bu hedefe ulaşmak için önemli önlemler almıştı. Bu ortamda halkın sosyal, siyasal ve ekonomik gerekler açısından yeni döneme ayak uydurması zorunlu hale gelmiştir. Askeri müdahaleler Dersimlilerin reformlara karşı ayaklanmaları, hükümetin reddedilmesi, vergi ödeme konusunda toplumsal huzursuzluk ve 1930'lu yıllara kadar zorunlu askerliğe karşı çıkma nedeniyle gerçekleşti. Dersim'de yaşanan isyanları, 19. yüzyıldan itibaren Kürt bölgelerinde başlayan Osmanlı merkeziyetçiliğine karşı direnişin tipik örnekleri olarak görmek gerekir. Bölgesel isyanların bir diğer nedeni de aşiret ve dini liderlerin bu değişimlere karşı iktidarlarını sürdürme ve ayrıcalıklarını koruma çabalarıydı. Bu

nedenle Birinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında bile yerelde devam eden huzursuzluk ve eşkıyalık nedeniyle çeşitli askeri operasyonlar yapılmış ve bölgeye askeri birlikler gönderilmiştir. Diğer muhalif gruplara örnek teşkil etmek amacıyla 1926, 1930, 1937 ve 1938'de "sürgün operasyonları" adı verilen cezai tedbirler uygulandı. Askeri operasyonların ardından hayatta kalan bölge sakinleri, idari yeniden yapılanma ve zorla yeniden yerleştirme gibi ek düzenleyici önlemlerle karşı karşıya kaldı. Bu sosyal dinamizm bölge için yeni bir sosyal ve politik değişim dalgasını da beraberinde getirdi.

Önceki bölümlerde de belirtildiği gibi Dersim, çeşitli birim ve analiz düzeylerinde birçok farklı açıdan incelenebilir. Bu farklı bakış açılarının ortak noktası bu bölgenin kırsal, antik, hatta mitolojik bir coğrafya olarak değerlendirilmesidir. Dersim yöresinin kendine özgü yapısal özellikleri, 1970'li yıllara kadar pre-modern aşiret yapısının varlığını sürdürdüğünü iddia etmemize olanak sağlamaktadır. Tarihsel olarak savaşçı ve konar göçer bir topluluk olarak bilinen Dersim nüfusu, bu yıllarda pre-modern aşiret yapısını büyük ölçüde korumuştur. Bu bağlamda Dersim'de varlığını sürdüren pre-modern kabile yapısının 1970'lerde de devam ettiğini gösteren gazete kupürlerinden parçalara tezin ilgili bölümlerinde yer verilmiştir. Dolayısıyla Dersim'in siyasi tarihi boyunca güç dinamikleri ve devlet-toplum ilişkilerindeki değişim ve devamlılıkları güven ağları analizi üzerinden okumak mümkündür ve litaratüre bu analizin katkısı birtakım çekinceler saklı kalmak koşuluyla mümkündür.

Bu tezde Dersim'in marjinal bir perifer topluluk olmaktan çıkıp Türk tarihinde tanınmış bir ulusal figür haline gelmesini sağlayan önemli dönüm noktaları tartışılarak incelenmiştir. Güven ağları paradigması, topluluğu dış etkilerden veya tehditlerden koruyan biricik yöresel özellikleri incelemek için yararlı ancak 'sınırlı' bir çerçeve ortaya koymuştur. On yıl boyunca güven ve dayanışma ağlarında değişimleri tetikleyen olaylara odaklanan bu yaklaşım, Tunceli'nin kendine özgü dinamikleri uyarınca yöreye "güven ağları" analizini de aşan daha dikkatli bir yaklaşımı gerektirmektedir. Tilly'nin analizi Dersim'i açıklamaya uyarlanabilir çünkü Tilly bir güven ağını tanımlarken esnek varsayımlar sunmuştur ancak Tunceli/Dersim'deki yerel aidiyet daha değişen ve karmaşık dinamiklere sahiptir. Bu sebeple, bu tez çalışmasında Dersim/Tunceli'de var olan güven ağlarını bazı

çekincelerle kullanılmıştır. Bu kavram her ne kadar dinamik ve adaptif bir tanım olsa da Tunceli'deki sosyal dinamikleri açıklamakta kısıtlı kalmaktadır. Dersim'in çok katmanlı sosyo-kültürel ve siyasi yapısını açıklamakta kullanılması için belirli yönlerden modifiye edilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu yöreyi açıklayan bir kavram olarak görülebilecek olan 'güven ağları' analizi, Tilly'nin basit ve esnek bir şekilde anlattığı formuyla bu yöreyi yeterince açıklayamamaktadır. Çünkü Dersim çok daha karmaşık dinamiklerle örülü bir coğrafya ve kültürel alandır. Dolayısıyla "trust networks" tanımı Dersim için kullanılabilir ama bu yöreyi açıklama potansiyelinde belirli sınırları vardır. Bu çalışmanın literatüre katkısı da güven ağları paradigmasının Dersim/Tunceli'yi sınırlı şekilde açıklayabileceğini dile getirmektir. Son olarak, bu çalışmada Dersim yöresinin tarihi ve ayırt edici özellikleri bakımından temel olarak güven ağı paradigmasının merceğinden aydınlatılabileceği iddia edilmektedir. Bundan sonraki çalışmalar, bölgenin geçmişindeki farklı tarihsel dönemleri ek boyutlarla araştırarak Dersim'in güven ağı dinamiklerinin anlaşılmasını derinleştirebilir. Bu tür araştırma çabaları, Bölge Çalışmaları ve Ortadoğu Araştırmaları alanlarına katkıda bulunma, bu alanları yeni akademik perspektiflerden yeni bakış açıları ve anlayışlarla zenginleştirme potansiyeline sahiptir.

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