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### **Between Theology and Power: Karbala “Battles”**

It is assumed that the theologic utterance or in general theology which can be regarded as a construction itself to affirm its own foundation or constitutive postulates from inside of its own domain either functions as a strategic instrument of the power or is utilized by it. In this paper, we will attempt to point out that the dominant Sunni theology in Turkey acts for articulating the other theologic approaches and discourses in a certain way. In broad terms it tries to consolidate its dominance to become more prevalent while in a narrow sense it associates these other theologies with specific political projects to which it gives an overt support. Throughout this process dominant Sunni theology enters into a problematic relationship with Alevi belief which is one of the minority beliefs in Turkey. In this regard our objective is to capture the historical confrontation, conflict, integration and compromising moments of Alevi and Sunni theologies in a mutual relationship.

The first and the utmost significant confrontation moment that is also one of the turning points in the history of Islam is “Karbala Battle” which is attributed the central role by Alevis regarding the origins of this belief. However, Karbala incident is comprehended differently within different theological perspectives. We will pose such questions that what kind of differentiations these are, and how these differentiations are reconstructed within these theological domains. In this paper it is asserted that these comprehension and construction processes depoliticize the minority beliefs while themselves turn towards such different politicization path at the same time.

In recent Turkish political atmosphere, Karbala case becomes a matter of great concern for Sunni-conservative and liberal democrat understandings and, at the same time different democracy perceptions are forced to take side by or oppose to these different Karbala readings.

In this respect the Karbala case (Karbala Battle as a historical moment) turns out to be the battle area of these contested theologies and intertwines with the existing power practices. It can be said that “Karbala” as a space and “Karbala Battle” as an ongoing political struggle that can not solely be reduced to a particular moment of history correspond an actual crossroad of many different historical, cultural and political confrontations in that vein.