

Abstract

Title: Alevis in the Federal Republic of Germany Today

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Alevis supported Atatürk's policy of secularization after World War I. The first President of the Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, selected elements of Alevi culture with which to construct a new Turkish national identity. Although it appeared that the Alevi identity would dissolve and transform into a single Turkish one, in connection with changed religious policy in the 1980s, the Alevi religious movement instead began to internally mobilize and renew their cultural and religious identity. This was true not only for the Alevi movement in Turkey but also in Germany. Alevis managed to organize and create interconnected networks of organizations across Germany, Turkey and throughout Europe during the last twenty years demonstrate a confident public presence. Alevis in Germany emphasize that they are part of German society, not strangers. They established numerous clubs and organizations representative of the Alevi movement in the struggle for recognition of their rights as a religious group in Germany and in Turkey. They have integrated Alevi religious instruction into German primary schools and have promoted identity using modern media such as radio, television or the internet in recent years.

The aim of this work is to analyze the development of Alevi identity and participation of Alevis in Turkish and German society; to what extent the Alevi identity transformed in the past three decades and what strategies the Alevi movement use in the struggle for recognition of their rights as religious group; to what extent and how the Alevi movement in Germany affects the political situation in Turkey; and integration strategies of the Federal Government of Germany and Alevi organizations.

Keywords: Alevis, Germany, Turkey, identity, integration