

EUI WORKING PAPERS

RSCAS No. 2006/24



EU Minority Perspective and the Case of
Alevilik in Turkey

Bedriye Poyraz



EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
Mediterranean Programme Series

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE
ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

EU Minority Perspective and the Case of Alevilik in Turkey

BEDRIYE POYRAZ

EUI Working Paper **RSCAS** No. 2006/24
BADIA FIESOLANA, SAN DOMENICO DI FIESOLE (FI)

© 2006 Bedriye Poyraz

This text may be downloaded only for personal research purposes. Any additional reproduction for such purposes, whether in hard copies or electronically, require the consent of the author.

Requests should be addressed directly to the author.

See contact details at end of text.

If cited or quoted, reference should be made to the full name of the author, the title, the working paper, or other series, the year and the publisher.

Any reproductions for other purposes require the consent of the
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

The author should inform the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the EUI if the paper will be published elsewhere and also take responsibility for any consequential obligation(s).

ISSN 1028-3625

Printed in Italy in July 2006
European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
I – 50016 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)
Italy
<http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Publications/>
<http://cadmus.iue.it/dspace/index.jsp>

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

The Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies carries out disciplinary and interdisciplinary research in the areas of European integration and public policy in Europe. It hosts the annual European Forum. Details of this and the other research of the centre can be found on:

<http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/>

Research publications take the form of Working Papers, Policy Papers, Distinguished Lectures and books. Most of these are also available on the RSCAS website:

<http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Publications/>

The EUI and the RSCAS are not responsible for the opinion expressed by the author(s).

Mediterranean Programme

The Mediterranean Programme was set up at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the European University Institute in 1998. It focuses on the Mediterranean region.

The Mediterranean Programme engages in research with the twin aims of: a) generating intellectually excellent scholarly work; and b) contributing to the general policy debate relating to the flows of persons, goods and ideas between and within the Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western Mediterranean areas.

The Mediterranean Programme and its activities have been financed by: Capitalia, Compagnia di San Paolo, Eni spa, Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze, European Commission, European Investment Bank, Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena, and Regione Toscana.

The Annual Mediterranean Research Meeting brings together scholars from across the region.

<http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/Mediterranean/Meetings.shtml>

For further information:

Mediterranean Programme

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

European University Institute

Via delle Fontanelle, 19

50016 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI), Italy

Fax: + 39 055 4685 770

E-mail: MedProgSecretary@iue.it

<http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/Mediterranean/Index.shtml>

Abstract

In recent years the Alevis have become the focus of intense debate in Turkish politics and media. Since 1990, there has been renewed interest in and increased acceptance of their beliefs, along with a realisation that the Alevi community's political support is of strategic importance—as a form of insurance against radical Islam—to Turkey's modernisation process.

These developments, coupled with globalisation and Turkey's participation in the EU process, have brought the Alevis many freedoms that, up to now, they were not permitted to enjoy. Moreover the Alevi issue became a part of Turkey's European agenda despite the Turkish government's not having been aware or having approved of all EC's reports. No doubt all these developments positively affect Alevis in Turkey. However, as we understand from the EC report, it is very difficult to say that reality has totally changed for Alevis in Turkey.

Within the framework of the EU's perspective on minorities, I explore how Alevis define themselves, the discrimination they have experienced throughout their life, what they expect from the EU, and how they perceive the EU's acceptance of them as a 'religious minority'.

Keywords

Alevilik, cultural identity, European Union, minority, discrimination, religion European identity, European Commission, Turkey

The status of the Alevi as a people with a distinct cultural and religious identity has become one of the key issues on the agenda of Turkey's European Union (EU) process. The EU provides various cultural and social groups with new channels for entering the public sphere and staking identity-based claims. As a supranational organization that guarantees identity as a human right, the EU forced Turkey to recognize its ethnic and religious minorities as a condition for accession. Turkey's struggle for EU membership has thus created an opportunity for the Alevi. In this context, EU Commission reports on Turkey between 1998-2004 have emphasized the Alevi's demands.

What is Alevilik¹?

First, it is not easy to describe Alevilik because there is no single element in terms of political, cultural or social tendencies or in the sense of the overall consciousness to which Alevi supposedly subscribe. While certain sets of traditions, rules and symbols shape the collective space of Alevilik, the social relations, feelings, thoughts and behaviour practiced are multiple and complex. Different emphases on what Alevi share or what Alevilik corresponds to have all too often produced competing descriptions. These conflicting definitions often consider Alevilik as a heterodox sect within Islam, Christianity and Shamanism. In addition to these characteristics, Alevilik has also commonly been applied to different cultural communities with particular common meanings/values concerning rituals as well as language practices embedded in their historical memory. In the Republican period, Alevi experienced a significant transformation, which can be described in terms of secularisation, re-culturalization and politicisation. The process of transformation and re-culturalization of the Alevi reality has accompanied the recent revival of citizenship movements questioning the fundamental premises of the Republican model of Turkish citizenship.² Despite these challenges, I will attempt to summarize the most important characteristics of Alevilik.

Alevi are the largest religious minority in Turkey, numbering some 15 million people, equal to approximately 25% of Turkey's current population. The vast majority of Alevi are ethnic and linguistic Turks, though about 20% are Kurds.³ No accurate information or consensus exists on the number of Alevi present in society, however, because of the effects of the assimilative politics of the Turkish State since the time of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the tendency of many Alevi to conceal their identities in the face of political and social pressure.⁴ As part of this pressure, despite the high percentage of Alevi in the Turkish population, it is safe to assume that utterance of the word 'Alevi' by Alevi in the public sphere has been virtually absent for centuries. They generally made references to their particular interpretations and principles of the Islamic faith in order to differentiate themselves from the Sunni majority.⁵

From the point of view of the sociology of religion, Alevilik is referred to as a kind of syncretism formed as a result of Anatolian civilization's long interaction with different beliefs and cultures over different regions and time periods. Anatolian Alevilik is as a result heterodox, posing a remarkable contrast not only with Sunni Islam but also with the 'orthodox' Shiism of Iran and Alevilik in Syria. The syncretism of the faith is visible in its belief in the trinity of Allah, Muhammad and Ali. This heterodox faith is a 'folk' religion based on oral tradition, as opposed to written religion in which the beliefs and myths continued in Islamic forms. The absolute centre of Alevi faith is the *edeb* (morality). The ideal Alevi is 'master of his/her hand, tongue, loins'; it is a moral order that forbids theft, lying and adultery (*eline, beline, diline sahip ol*). Everybody must seek to obtain 'purity of heart' and self-knowledge, and piety is measured by lifestyle and not by ritual. Love and forgiveness are seen as important elements in interpersonal relationships. This feature of their faith is reflected in the communal nature of their rituals that aim to foster a sense of *birlik* (unity) and *muhabbet* (love). In contrast to Sunni rituals, women are included on an equal footing with men in all communal and religious gatherings. The ideal of equality, justice and respect for all give Alevi women a higher status in society than Sunni women. Alevi women are not required to be veiled and are not as segregated as

Sunni women, nor must they fear polygamy or one-sided divorce, as Alevi practice monogamy and divorce is comparatively rare.⁶

Basically, Alevi beliefs are based on recognition of the trinity consisting of Allah-Muhammed-Ali. The Alevi religious ceremony, the *cem* (traditionally performed as a nocturnal gathering), is led by a *dede*, a member of a hereditary priestly caste. During these ceremonies, religious poems in Turkish are sung, and men and women perform ritual dances (*semah*). Because women and men worship together, as opposed to the sex-segregated rituals in orthodox Sunni Islam, rumours to the effect that Alevi engage in communal sex during their religious rituals have been widespread among Sunnis.⁷ In their traditional social organization, the main bond was the *dede-talip* bond. According to this system, a set of villages in a certain region belonged to a particular Alevi *ocak* (hearth). The *dede* (priest) assigned to a particular *ocak* visited the villages designated to his holy lineage to perform *cem* and teach the way to his *talips* (followers). It was the *dede* who traditionally kept the Alevi networks intact. With migration, however, this social and spatial organization of the Alevi has dissolved, and the traditional *dede-talip* bond severed. Emerging networks of Alevi coming from various regions and ethnic backgrounds have replaced the traditional networks maintained by the *dede-talip* bond.⁸

Alevi are well aware of the contrast between their faith and Sunni Islam. The existence of the Directorate of Religious Affairs of the Turkish Republic is the most important clue of the State's denial of an Alevi society in Turkey. With the same logic, one of the most important signs demonstrating a democratic understanding of Alevilik is the Alevi Associations Federation within Turkey (which includes almost all Alevi associations in Turkey), which rejects representation within the Directorate of Religious Affairs, demanding instead total elimination of the Department. This demand illustrates that beyond their desire to attain protection of their rights, they attribute even more importance to democratisation of the country. However, Cem Vakfi (one of the Alevi associations) did demand representation within the Directorate of Religious Affairs.⁹

Due to living under social and political pressure for hundreds of years Alevi used to live silently and secretly. To explain their cultural identity in the public sphere is a very recent fact. Actually it would not be wrong to say that many things about Alevilik are not clear yet. In this context it should be emphasised that Alevilik perceptions are not fully crystallised among themselves either. However, very basically there are two Alevi groups: First is Alevi Associations Federation which covers majority of Alevi and Alevi Associations. According to the Alevi Associations Federation, Alevilik is not only a religious group but also as a way of life, that is a cultural, philosophic, historical and sociological fact. Within this wide perception, Alevilik is influenced by many cultures and religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism. The Second Alevi group, Cem Vakfi, accept Alevilik as sect of Islam and emphasises religious aspect of Alevilik.

Contemporary Alevi movements, representing the interests of a large minority in Turkey, provide a new source of energy for the revision of concepts of citizenship. Alevi have suffered from prejudice, and their culture has been arrested and excluded from the nation-building process. They were not able to integrate into the form of national identity based on the 'secular' principles that the Republican State provided as a means of promoting solidarity among citizens. What Alevi seek is a revised citizenship model in terms of rights assuring the condition of neutrality among culturally diverse individuals.¹⁰ In other words, since the Ottoman period, there have always been well-drawn boundaries between Sunni and Alevi communities. Sunnis, the major Islamic sect, have represented the State and the dominant culture, while Alevi have become representative of oppositional spaces and a relatively closed culture.¹¹

David Shankland, an anthropologist, has conducted several studies on various aspects of Alevilik, and his anthropological findings are that 'Alevi doctrines are embedded within the wider sphere of Islam, and the orthodox Sunni practices are not rejected but respected and side-stepped. Ultimately, this means that the Alevi communities in Anatolia define their everyday existence more in terms of peacefully going about their daily lives rather than engaging in any form of proselytising, and that

inherent within the very terms of their religion is a sense of tolerance of different beliefs and practices.’ According to Shankland, a sociological argument could be put forward to explain this tolerance: individual believers can take up different individual positions within the Alevi faith. Whatever the sociological explanation may be, there is a built-in respect for other people’s views which, along with the emphasis on the mystical inner self, gives Alevilik much of its fascination for the outside world, and indeed for its presented apologists.¹²

Bilici refers to a form of ‘liberation theology’ within Alevilik in contrast to Sunni orthodoxy. This branch, which defines Alevilik as a popular movement with an ideology supporting the oppressed, may be seen as a type of Marxist-Alevi theology analogous to the ‘the liberation theology’ of the 1970s and 1980s in Latin America. Alevilik draws its main support from intellectuals who previously played a part in various left-wing parties and trade unions. This form of Alevilik, which substantially intensified its activities and its production of material, particularly after the military coup of 1980 and the collapse of the Soviet Union, began to emerge as a movement following in the footsteps of Pir Sultan Abdal (sixteenth century martyr).¹³ On this ground, Bilici emphasizes that this aspect of Alevilik merges with mystical religious dimensions and in its new form establishes tools for liberal interpretations and alternative theology.

The other important point of Shankland’s study of the Alevi is that he emphasizes the different perceptions of religion between the Alevis and Sunnis and the reasons behind the Alevis’ more secular, democratic, and tolerant approach, which have led to the reawakening of interest in Alevilik and have made the Alevi one of the most debated subjects in Turkish politics and media.¹⁴ There are many factors behind the tolerance of Alevis. One of them arises from the circumstances of historical development. Alevi philosophy has not supported struggles for power, which separates it from the Sunni belief system.¹⁵

Shankland also suggests that the emergence of the Alevi as a secular community is a reflection of the wider transition to becoming part of the modern nation, and cannot simply be regarded as a desire to be relieved of actual and perceived persecution by the Sunni majority. This is in itself an important aspect of their lives in Turkey, but does not explain the manner in which they have allied themselves so forcefully with the idea that religion is a personal matter, and not something that should influence the State.¹⁶ On this basis, according to Shankland, the theories Gellner developed on the Islamic world should be revised because of the existence of the Alevis. Shankland emphasizes that Gellner, through his desire to cover an extremely wide breadth of material using sharply defined arguments, failed to consider the Alevis, which certainly illustrates a lacuna in his depiction of the ethnography of the Islamic lands. Consequently, Shankland concedes that Gellner’s contentions appear to be highly relevant; however, they should be extended and enriched through comparison with the Turkish material. Thus, at the very least, the dismissive criticism with which his theories have been met needs to be reconsidered, and, at best, he might provide a profoundly creative focus through which further work might be oriented.¹⁷

As motioned above, because speaking openly of Alevilik in the public sphere is something new, many things about Alevilik are not settled yet. No doubt this field needs more research. However, it is not wrong to say that Alevi society is more secular and democratic than Sunni society. First of all, almost as a block, Alevis have been voting for social democrat parties from the first Turkish Republic election until now.¹⁸ In this aspect especially Schüler study (1998) is very good, to show how and why Alevis vote for social democratic parties in Turkey.

The Rise of Alevilik in the Public Space of Turkey

Alevilik became the object of a process of rediscovery in the last two decades. The efforts at community revival were soon brought to the attention of the public, and thus the ‘question of Alevilik’ became one of the most discussed topics in the Turkish media.¹⁹ For the past fifteen years, Alevis have become known as Shankland described them, as a secular community both in Turkey and in Europe.²⁰

As mentioned above, although there are many discussions currently underway regarding how to characterize Alevilik, a near consensus has been reached in academic and popular literature that the Alevi are a primarily secular, democratic and tolerant community.

One can roughly distinguish sociological and political factors among the reasons behind the acceptance of Alevi by both the Sunni community and the Turkish Republic. These reasons can be enumerated as follows: Sociologically, the rural exodus, which in the case of the Alevi reached its peak during the 1970s for economic and political reasons, is surely the most decisive factor. Migration to the cities inevitably imposed new, urban forms of expression on Alevilik, which in foregone centuries had existed principally in remote rural areas of the country. Rapid urbanization and a large increase in the number of educated Alevi and the emergence of an Alevi bourgeoisie resulted in a new social stratification.²¹

In very broad terms, the political factors can be reduced to three essential points. The first is the collapse of the socialist block in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s. As a result of this development, socialism, which in the previous two decades had an indisputable authority as an ideological alternative for the young and middle generations of Alevi, lost its former importance. Thus, a large part of the Alevi community, who became politically frustrated, began to redefine themselves as 'Alevi'. They discovered Alevilik as an ideology, which they now regarded as being even more just, egalitarian and libertarian than socialism. They then began to strive for Alevi ideals. Their return to the community to which they had previously belonged led to a rapid introduction of modern terms and methods into Alevilik.²² In other words, in the contemporary Turkish context, trying to ally with neo-liberalism and to establish a relatively organized market economy, rapidly urbanizing Alevi communities have come to mark their identities more with cultural and religious definitions. Many of them criticizing the 'strong class emphasis' of the pre-coup era, while the minority who do not often suppress for now the class dimension.²³

The second and perhaps most important factor was the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, or, more accurately, of political Islam in Turkey. After the 1980 military coup, a new National Security Council (MGK) was established, and findings showed that a degree of moderate Islam might counteract leftist influences and in particular the separatist Kurdish movement. The policies of supporting moderate Islam continued into Ozal's ANAP government. But these policies turned out to be counter productive as the Welfare Party (RP) gained popularity. When the Welfare Party won the most votes in the 1995 elections, it became very clear to the Turkish Republic that secularism could not be compromised. Not only by the secular camp in Turkey, which of course included the Alevi, but also abroad throughout the EU and the United States the seriousness of the situation was recognized.²⁴ Academics and politicians alike debated whether Turkey could possibly follow the path taken by Iran and Algeria. Fundamentalism was recognized as the most serious threat to the Turkish Republic's modernization projects. Because of their considerable and extensive historical legacy, the Alevi were put on alert by Islamic reassertion, which had gained a new impetus through the Islamic Revolution of Iran. According to Çamuroğlu, the most important motive for the establishment and rapid expansion of Alevi organizations today lies in the defensive instinct of the Alevi against the rise of Islamism, which led to various efforts by the emerging organizations to create political unity.²⁵

The third political factor responsible for the Alevi revival is the Kurdish issue. Since a significant number of Alevi are Kurds, they became aware through this conflict of the fact that nationalist tensions directly affected their community. Thus, when faced with Islamism, the Alevi tend towards the political choice of secularism and express their identity in political terms. When confronted with Kurdish nationalism, however, they tend towards the principle of unity and stress their religious identity and affiliation as Alevi.²⁶ On the other hand, the radical parts of the Motherland government, seeking a public recognition of religion as a means to avoid further social conflict, may have felt that emphasizing the overall Islamic basis of the Alevi tradition would be a way to welcome them in to the 'Turkish-Islam' synthesis that was at that point supported by them in an effort to bring conflicting groups into a sense of greater unity.²⁷

The rise of Kurdish separatism and Islamic fundamentalism started to be defined as a threat to the Turkish Republic. The State and its institutions therefore tried to gain more control over Islamic influences. Thus, in a twist of irony, after the 1980 coup d'état, the military government used Islam to control the left, which included most of the Alevi. In the 1990s, the policy was reversed and the Alevi became an important part of the struggle against fundamentalism. Today we find that Alevis enjoy both recognition and support by the Turkish State. Their existence is viewed as a kind of insurance against the unthinkable.²⁸

Without doubt, the rise of political Islam is highly significant, but it must also be seen in the context of other movements, such as the re-emergence of Alevilik, which contributes toward the overall heterogeneity of life in Turkey. These streams of thought are part of a much wider and more complex process whereby Turkish society, though remaining tremendously varied, appears to be becoming more overtly and sharply divided between secular and non-secular approaches. The military and senior bureaucracy have responded to the danger by deciding to more actively emphasize and teach moderate Islam. As the measures of 28 February 1997 indicate, they intend to combine this move with increasingly careful regulation of politics, civil service, and the media. It is clear that most Turks do not want the military to return to political power. As the years pass, it becomes increasingly clear that the 1980 intervention had profound effects on Turkey. Through this experience, the Turkish people realized that a military coup is not the optimal solution. When the coup took place, it was not only a move against religious fundamentalism, but it also damaged democracy as a whole in Turkey. During the military regime, people realized that no one was safe from arbitrary detention, interrogation, and harsh treatment, including the Prime Minister. These experiences made it very clear that democratic solutions are the only answer. In this regard, the Alevis as a community can be considered beneficial and rational supporters. Alevis are quiet in the society and as explained above very democratic, tolerant and definitely against the fundamentalist Sunni religious community. It is a large community that lends support to democratic and tolerant ideals, while shying away from some of the more fundamentalist practices found in the Sunni religion. For policy makers, the Alevi community should be considered an important ally in the process towards Turkish modernization.²⁹

However, the violent attack on the Alevis in the 1990s gave an enormous boost to the Alevi movement, generating a sharp increase in the number of Alevi associations in Turkey and abroad. During this period, Alevis described their political position openly against radical Sunni Islam. A massacre of participants in an Alevi cultural festival in Sivas on 2 July 1993 by Islamists aggravated this traditional tension and enhanced the tendencies toward the politicisation of the Alevi community. In Sivas, a mob emerging from various mosques after Friday prayers set fire to a hotel hosting attendees of an Alevi cultural festival. The festival had been organised by the *Pir Sultan Abdal Association* to commemorate Pir Sultan Abdal, the great Alevi poet-rebel of the sixteenth century. The mob chanted Islamic slogans, and then set fire to the hotel, killing 37 and injuring 60. Even more tragic was national coverage of the event, virtually making all of Turkey a witness. The Sivas incident occurred while the SHP (Social Democratic Party) was a member of the governing coalition. The SHP was strongly supported by Alevis and there were five Ministers in the government cabinet. No doubt this violent act impacted various spheres, especially the political position of the Alevis, and jeopardized their ties to the Social Democratic Party.

The other case occurred in Istanbul on 12 March 1995. Three gunmen in a taxi randomly shot at coffee houses and patisseries in Gazi, a neighbourhood popular with Alevis, killing two. Alevis in Gazi gathered to demonstrate against the attack. The police responded by shooting into the Alevi crowd. Demonstrations protesting the action of the police in Gazi were held in several Alevi-populated neighbourhoods in Istanbul, Ankara and İzmir during 13-15 March. Twenty protestors were shot dead and many injured by the police, in attempts to maintain order.

While the points mentioned above have brought the Alevilik reality into Turkey's public sphere, the EU processes have permitted the Alevis to demand their human rights more openly and safely.

The European Union's Minorities Perspective

The current academic discussion of the EU's minority's perspective cannot take place without considering the EU attitude toward enlargement. EU enlargement has contributed to the formation of a role for the EU in the promotion and defence of human rights and the advancement of fundamental democratic principles. Thus, cementing identity has the potential to influence European foreign policy (EFP). It creates a certain bias for, and strengthens the argumentative power of, those parties who advocate foreign policy options that can be legitimised with reference to this identity.³⁰

However, the identity of Europe is contested. Its culture, although occasionally and partially shared, can never be defined into a single coherent dominant theme.³¹ European integration was conceived as a form of federation, respecting the national and cultural diversity of the member-states.³² The reality does not always match the ideal, but the very perception and recognition of the ideal is at least a step in the right direction towards the protection and nurturing of minorities within Europe, whether they are cultural, political, ethnic, or social.³³

In the words of Giuliano Amato and Judy Batt, 'the EU's emphasis on minority rights in its external policy toward the new democracies has been effective in checking majority-nationalist tendencies and prompting dialogue with minorities in those states which are determined to become full EU members in due course'.³⁴ Indeed, respect for human rights generally, and minorities in particular, are explicitly included in the Copenhagen criteria for accession, the requirements a candidate state must meet in order to become an EU member-state.³⁵

The reason the EU should become more actively involved in minority rights revolves around the basic principles of liberalism and democracy. However, the EU will find it hard to maintain its agnostic stance on minority rights vis-à-vis its members.³⁶ On one hand, the Union will contain a significant number of new members with important but marginalized minorities, while on the other, it will consist of old members where minorities are more integrated and less numerous, but where a culture of minority promotion and of minority rights has been developing.³⁷

The Copenhagen criteria have been widely viewed as constituting a successful incentive structure and sanctioning mechanism for the EU in the promotion of human rights and the protection of minorities. The EU's 'conditionality' on the accession of the Central and Eastern European candidate countries (CEECs) is one that potentially embodies a power asymmetry whereby the EU can use conditionality as an instrument to exert political leverage. The EU in the CEECs understands conditionality as one of the primary means of democracy promotion and the creation of foreign-made democracy.³⁸

Some studies argue that minorities represent a challenge to democratising nation-states with serious potential for political instability and, consequently, are best managed by centralization and assimilatory policies. Multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity are also viewed, more generally, as a significant issue for the political stability of nation-states.³⁹

The first Copenhagen criterion states that: 'Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, human rights, the rule of law and respect for and protection of minorities'. The Copenhagen criteria reformulated principles that had been persistently advocated by the democracies of Western Europe during the Cold War as international standards to which the Communist states should be held to account. This norm-oriented tension in the international relations between the two parts of a divided Europe can be traced from the Helsinki Final Act (1975) through to the agreement on a pan-European system of political norms set out by the Copenhagen Meeting of June 1990 and the Paris Charter. The latter dropped the 'persons' formulation and instead referred to minority protection in the following terms: 'peace, justice, stability and democracy require that the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities be protected and conditions for the promotion of that identity be created'.⁴⁰

Of great symbolic significance was that the group rights of minorities were now included as part of the menu of preconditions for EU membership. However, a standard of norm compliance was set for

the new candidates, which was much higher than the EU had ever been able to agree on internally for its member-states. It was a peculiar combination of claims from two standpoints. Firstly, it attempted to reconcile two competing views of liberal democracy: one emphasising procedural essence and commitment to equal respect and neutrality (democracy, the rule of law, human rights), the other encapsulating a collective goal of recognition of group differences and rights (respect for protection of minorities). Secondly, given that there were no standards for the recognition of the group rights of minorities within the EU and that the practice of member-states is highly asymmetric, the legal foundation for such political norms was very thin.⁴¹

The protections are to be enjoyed by ‘persons’ not ‘groups’, and there is no mention of ‘nationality’ or ‘national minority’. The protection of minorities as a ‘group’ appears to be understood by the EU in 1993 as a norm that should be implemented by candidates for membership (overwhelmingly, at the time from the ex-Communist CEECs) but not by member-states.⁴²

The link between eastern enlargement and the EU’s broader role in the promotion of democracy and human rights relates to three aspects of the EU’s enlargement policy practices. The first is the assertion of the protection of democracy as a rationale for eastern enlargement in EU policy-makers’ discourse about enlargement. The second aspect is the explicit establishment of respect for democracy and human rights as a precondition for membership. The third link is changes in the founding treaties that spelled out more explicitly the principles that underpin membership in anticipation of an accession of potentially fragile democracies.⁴³

Generally, it is possible to gain important insights into EFP from a perspective that acknowledges that the EU’s identity matters causally for foreign policy. Materialist approaches and rationalist perspectives that exigencies identity see EFP essentially as the result of competing material interests. There include the member-states’ different security concerns and their relative vulnerability, as well as competition between such security concerns and conflicting economic interests within and across the member-states within the institutional constraints of the Common Foreign Security Policy’s decision-making structure. A focus on identity formation at the EU level allows taking additional factors into account, namely the evolving discourse about the EU’s role and constitutive norms that define a collective identity for policy makers from the member governments and EU institutions.⁴⁴

Recognition of Alevi Identity at the EU Level

Under this title we should consider two points: one, what kind of relationship Alevis living in Europe, especially in Germany, had with Europe, and two, how Europe referred to the Alevis in official documents.

Moreover, the Alevi politics of difference as practiced in Germany have made Alevis recognisable as a separate community through reference to universalistic values emphasizing differences between Alevis and other Turkish immigrants. This strategy has facilitated the granting of a measure of institutional integration to the Alevi community of Germany, which in turn has yielded resources for a transnational politics of identity aiming at formal recognition of Alevis in Turkey. Alevi efforts to be recognised as equal citizens in Germany and to achieve some degree of institutional integration have made possible the opening up of a transnational space for identity politics. This strategy has made use of the changing state of relations between Turkey and the EU as a major referent, and has consciously evolved alongside these relations. The Alevi struggle thus extends beyond relations within and between two nationally defined states.⁴⁵ The Alevi case is of particular interest because it shows that an orientation towards ‘integration’ and a strong ‘homeland perspective’ are not necessarily mutually exclusive. As the Alevi example demonstrates, a ‘homeland perspective’ need not prevent ‘integration’ into Germany society; rather, both perspectives may develop interdependently.⁴⁶ In this context, limited studies indicate that more Alevis who live in Germany have become German citizens.

Although the Alevi Federation did not explicitly promote the idea of naturalisation within its community, many Alevis have applied for German citizenship. According to a survey conducted with members of Alevi associations in Hamburg, 55.6% of the respondents had German citizenship. A comparison of these figures with the number of immigrants of Turkish citizenship who had naturalised as Germans by 2000 (424, 512) shows that the rate of naturalisation is much higher among Alevis than among Turks in general. As an open community, Alevis are recognised by German authorities. The Ministry of the Interior sponsored an initiative for enhancing dialogue among different religious communities. This project started with a large conference organised by the Alevi Federation in December 2002 in Cologne. Asked in an interview why the Ministry had funded the conference of a religious community, a Ministry representative replied, 'We have no problems with the Alevis because they accept our political system. The Alevis are very open.'⁴⁷ This statement clearly illustrates the success of the Alevi politics of identity in Germany. No doubt the Alevi issue will be brought to the EU agenda by those Alevis living in Germany, and in this regard, they have surpassed Turkey's Alevis.

Turkish media and authorities reacted quite negatively to the recognition of the AAKM (Almanya Alevi Konfederasyon Merkezi) as a religious community in Berlin. This negative reaction was accentuated by an incident in June 2000 related to the inclusion of the Alevi issue on Turkey's European agenda by the Commission. In the course of the preparation of the report, Alevi organisations presented their claims to EU officials. They formulated their usual demands for the first time in a European arena. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs found itself in an awkward position, as it had not been informed of this meeting. Turkish media denounced the Alevis for negotiating with the EU against Turkey and its national interests.⁴⁸ It can be said that the Alevi struggle for recognition in Turkey has centred more on the issue of difference, whereas efforts in Germany have been focused primarily on the issue of equality.⁴⁹

No doubt these internal and external developments brought the Alevi issue to the European Commission (EC) agenda. In December 1999, at the Helsinki summit, Turkey was recognised as a candidate to the EU. The conditions Turkey must fulfil in order to begin negotiations for membership are the Copenhagen criteria, including the protection of minorities. However, in 1998 the first Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession stated that: 'Turkey's Alevi Muslims are estimated to number at least 12 million. There are no government-salaried Alevi religious leaders, in contrast to Sunni religious leaders'.⁵⁰ One year later, in 1999, the Commission again mentioned the Alevis: 'As far as freedom of religion is concerned, there still exists a difference of treatment between those religious minorities recognised by the Lausanne Treaty and other religious minorities'.⁵¹

In November 2000, the Commission seemed to have become more serious about Alevis: 'The official approach towards the Alevis seems to remain unchanged. Alevi complaints notably concern compulsory religious instruction in schools and school books, which would not reflect the Alevi identity, as well as the fact that financial support is only available for the building of Sunni mosques and religious foundations. These issues are highly sensitive; however, it should be possible to have an open debate on them'.⁵² This statement is reiterated in nearly the same words in later reports. The interesting point is that it is situated in the section concerning freedom of religion, included in the chapter on 'civic and political rights', and not in the chapter on 'rights and protection of minorities', which concerns mainly Gypsies and Kurds. In this frame, the EC has implicitly recognised Alevilik as a religious phenomenon, and legitimised the Alevis' demands. Thus the Alevi issue has been inscribed in Turkey's European agenda among the points of necessary improvement for EU accession.⁵³

No doubt all these developments positively affected Alevis in Turkey. In 2000, Alevilik was both recognised as a religious community in Berlin and inscribed in Turkey's European agenda, albeit in a disconnected manner. Since then Alevis in Germany and Turkey have attempted to take advantage of these developments to obtain recognition in Turkey itself, putting transnational linkages into practice.⁵⁴

However, as we understand from the EC report, it is very difficult to say that reality has totally changed for Alevis in Turkey. 'The official approach towards the Alevis is unchanged. The Presidency

of Religious Affairs has not taken up Alevi concerns. Particular Alevi complaints relate to compulsory religious instruction in school and school books which fail to acknowledge the Alevi identity and the fact that financial support is only available for the building of Sunni Muslim mosques and religious foundations.⁵⁵ As some examples in my limited case study illustrate, compulsory religious instruction has been a nightmare for all Alevi students.

With regard to freedom of association and peaceful assembly, 'in February the Cultural Association of the Union of Alevi and Bektaşî Formations was dissolved on the grounds that, according to Articles 14 and 24 of the Constitution, and Article 5 of the Law on Associations, it was not possible to found an association by the name of Alevi or Bektaşî, which refer to Muslim religious communities. Following an appeal by the association, the case is pending before the Supreme Court.'⁵⁶ With regard to freedom of religion, the Commission only mentioned, 'There has been no improvement in the status of the Alevis.'⁵⁷

Although the 2003 report does refer to a positive change which occurred in the case of the Alevis in Turkey, it continues to emphasize undemocratic practices towards the Alevis: 'As far as the situation of non-Sunni Muslim communities is concerned, there has been a change as regards the Alevis. The previously banned Union of Alevi and Bektaşî Associations was granted legal status in April 2003 that allowed it to pursue its activities. However, concerns persist with regard to both representation in the Directorate for Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and compulsory religious instruction in schools which fail to acknowledge the Alevi identity.'⁵⁸

The Alevi issue was placed on Turkey's European agenda without the Turkish government's awareness or approval in 2004 as well: 'As far as the situation of non-Sunni Muslim minorities is concerned, there has been no change in their status. Alevis (estimated population of 12-20 million) are not officially recognised as a religious community, they often experience difficulties in opening places of worship and compulsory religious instruction in schools fails to acknowledge non-Sunni identities. Most Alevis claim that as a secular state Turkey should treat all religions equally and should not directly support one particular religion (the Sunnis) as it currently does through the Diyanet.'⁵⁹

Turkish media, authorities and society reacted quite negatively to the recognition of the Alevis as a religious community by the EC in 2004. In other words, the European Human Rights Agreement not only guaranteed religious freedom for Sunnis but also for the Alevis. In this context, the Turkish government should make all changes necessary for guaranteed freedom of religion for anyone. The government mission should be to now put in to practice those changes.⁶⁰ As was mentioned previously, the EC has referred to the Alevis as a minority in all reports on Turkey's progress since 1998; however, the last report drew the biggest and most negative reaction from media, society and the government, when it recommended that Turkey 'should accept Alevi as minorities'. It is safe to say that a vast majority of the government Cabinet Members do not accept Alevis as a sect of Islam. After the Commission report, Prime Minister Erdogan, in his first television interview, tolerated all the criticism of Turkey and commented that he was very pleased with the result. But his displeasure and anger were clear at being requested by the EC to accept Alevis as a religious minority. In this interview, Erdogan repeated his concept of the Alevis, and emphasized once more that as Alevis are not a sect of Islam, they can only be accepted as a cultural identity.⁶¹

Most reactions were quite surprising. Alevis and liberal intellectuals who are very respectful of any identity are against the EC idea. Almost all of the Alevi organizations made a formal declaration that they are not a minority, but are in fact the 'co-creator of this country'. For example, the head of the Alevi Bektaşî Dernekleri Fedarasyonu (Alevi-Bektaşî Associations Federation), Atilla Erdem, made such a declaration on several occasions, and he emphasized that Alevis are not a minority, that they 'co-created this country'. Erdem believes that whatever Sunnis have done for this country, Alevis have done the same and no less. Thus, Alevis seek to be equal, not a minority.⁶² There are two reasons behind this perspective. First of all it is very clear that the meaning of minority has negative connotations commonly in Turkey because of the *Lausanne Treaty*. According to the *Lausanne Treaty*

only Armenians, Greeks and Jews who are live in Turkey are accepted as minorities. In the course of time, the word ‘minority’ gathered a negative connotation. It became equal to ‘danger’ for Turkish Unity. That’s why Alevis don’t want to be in this category. Secondly to describe Alevis as a minority is not Alevis’ demand. On the contrary this definition came from EU. As mentioned above, Alevis accept themselves and want to be accepted by others as ‘co-creators of Turkey’, not a minority. This debate came onto the agenda just before the negotiation decision date. After Turkey started the negotiation process, these kinds of debates slacked off. However, this topic requires further analysis, taking into account historical, sociological and political considerations.

Nuray Mert, an intellectual, academic professor and columnist for *Radikal*, the most liberal newspaper, expressed her extreme disappointment in her column, with the following statements:

I can understand any kind of minority demands but this does not mean all kind of minority demands are justifiable, reasonable, democratic and acceptable. Why are the Sunni Turks accused each time just because they are the majority? Alevis should give up trying to explain their freedom through decreasing freedom of the Sunnis. Alevis cannot ask for the abolishment of the Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (Official Religion Department). It is not the business of the Alevi to modernize Sunni Islam.⁶³

It is really disappointing that this distinguished academic professor, who is known as very democratic and tolerant, did not recognize that this country claims to be secular but is still governed and very strongly dominated by Sunni Islam. This professor did not want to understand that most Alevi object to the State financially supporting any religious sect because it is a contradiction of secularism and democracy.

Alevis’ Explanation of Their Identity: Case Study

I aimed to determine how Alevis define themselves, the discrimination they have experienced throughout their life, and their expectations from the EU, as well as their perception of the EU’s acceptance of them as a ‘religious minority’. To answer such questions, two focus groups were formed comprised of different generations of Alevis. Group 1 was chosen from university students, and included twelve students, each from a different semester, two students from the Master’s program and one from the Doctorate program. To locate Alevi students for the study, I approached three of my students with whom I am well acquainted and learned that two of them were Alevi. The remainder of the sample was founded by those three students from among their close acquaintances, and thus the participants in the focus group felt at ease and non-threatened.

Group 2 was chosen from those who participated in various activities at the Hacı Bektaş Veli Vakfi (an Alevi organization). In other words, although they did not hold active roles in this centre, they wanted to practice Alevilik in a different manner and present themselves formally as Alevi. Group 2 participants (5 women, 5 men) were older, 35-60 years of age. Generally, these participants do not hesitate to present themselves as Alevi, with the exception of one woman who withheld her family name because her son was a student at Gazi University.⁶⁴ Participants were from varied backgrounds, among them teacher, worker, housewife, small business entrepreneur, and retired.

To gain the confidence of the participants I informed them that I also am Alevi, and, although they made no such request, I assured them that their names would not be included in this report. Both groups were asked three questions, and within this framework, I formulated three categories as follows:

First Category: Identity of the Alevi

This category actually emerged as a result of responses to the first question. Group 1 (university students) participants in general individually investigated Alevilik, consciously chose it at approximately the same age, and are extremely proud to be an Alevi. Group 2, when asked to define

Alevilik, characterized it as a sect of Islam, in contrast to the university students who defined Alevilik as a way of life, a philosophy and cultural identity. The Ph.D. student (P.O.) provided the following clarification: ‘The religious aspect of Alevilik is not important for me. I am a deist, but the cultural aspect is more important. You cannot be proud of something given by birth, but I am proud to be Alevi. I do not know anything about it and am also not curious to learn; to me it is something to be Anatolian. That girl from the Black Sea makes me crazy. And I want to vote for the Alevi one.’⁶⁵ As can easily be seen, (P.O.) has a very high awareness of her identity. From the older group (Group 2), (M.D.) primarily emphasized the religious aspect, referring to the Alevi massacres throughout history and describing Alevilik through discrimination. ‘We love Hz. Ali, Hüseyin and Muhammad. We saw mass murders at the hands of Yavuz Sultan Selim (who murdered many Alevi while en route to the Iran War), the death of Pir Sultan Abdal (an Alevi bard hanged by an Ottoman Sultan) and the Sivas massacre. Ali should be the fourth Caliph (Halife); they killed grandsons of Muhammad.’ While the younger group of university students focused on the recent mass murders, the older generation gave more emphasis to historical discrimination and religious mass murders.

It should be recalled that Alevilik was originally a very closed society and based in rural regions. As they have only recently immigrated to city centres, being faced with modernity is a new challenge, and there is no doubt a possibility of their forgetting their origin. So it is thus significant how the young generation of Alevis explain themselves as who was born in the city and completed the education process. One university student (Y.) commented, ‘Unfortunately I was born into Alevilik; I wish I could have chosen it later.’ He does not believe in religion but does believe in God. Another student (M.) commented, ‘to believe in something has always been important for me. I am not interested in logic. Religion has always been a fairy tale to me, which is why the story of Adam and Havva was always more interesting for me than Darwin. I chose Alevilik because it is very close to Sufism (Tasavvuf). So I can say that although I was born as Alevi, I chose it consciously.’ Another student (B.) parallels these thoughts, saying: ‘They say that you cannot become Alevi, that you have to be born as an Alevi; however, I chose it even though I was born into it. I am reading and researching Alevilik and know more about it than the older generation.’ Student (N.): ‘my father is Sunni and my mother is Alevi. So I learned and practiced Sunni until secondary school. Without any pressure I decided to learn about Alevilik and afterwards I loved it and chose it’. Student (O.) has a similar story. Her father is Sunni and her mother is Alevi. She conveyed, ‘I was under no pressure to choose any sect of religion. However, when my friend C. asked me on behalf of this group if I am Alevi, because I trusted him, I said yes. If someone else had asked me, I do not think that I could have said yes.’

A man from the older group described his identity through the Sunni–Alevi conflict. ‘We are not concerned with others’ beliefs. For us, seventy-two nations (millet) are equal,⁶⁶ whereas they have *giaour* (gavur-infidel, non-Muslim).’ The women in the older group mostly explained identity by emphasizing love- that Alevilik does not discriminate against any religion, race, or language, that it has love for everybody and tolerates everybody. In this small group, it is not difficult to see the differences between the men and women. The men are more questioning and seek their human rights. Women expect only to be tolerated. When compared to the older generation, the young generation is more forthcoming in explaining themselves and in asking for the right to practice their identity. The other difference between the groups is that the older generation still feels pressure; they remain very close to the horrific experiences (i.e. massacres) of the past.

Second Category: Experienced and Perceived Discrimination

Some participants from both groups claimed to have experienced mass murders first-hand; some were unable to relate their experiences without becoming highly emotional. (S.) from Group 1 had experienced a very typical discrimination.

When I was in high school my religion teacher told us one day that Alevis believe in the devil. When I heard this I could not control myself and asked him how he knew that. He became very angry and demanded that I leave the class, and I was unable to return for some time. My father

went to the school to talk to the director. The teacher instructed me to memorize a very long and difficult prayer, which even most Sunnis do not know. I studied this prayer for a very long time even with the help of my family. We actually studied the prayer together as a family. My father then requested that the administration appoint a commission to oversee my examination because we could no longer trust the teacher. I was successful in reciting the prayer without looking at the material and I passed the exam by commission decision.

While the emotional trauma suffered by this young woman is obvious, only psychologists can speculate on the long-term effects of such discrimination at a young age.

An adult from Group 2, (M.D.), related, ‘When I was doing my military service we were carrying some things on the river. One of my friends fell, and he did not know how to swim. I immediately jumped in and rescued him. When he recovered, he told me that I was a very good person even though I was Alevi. I was very saddened that even though I had saved his life, he was still able to discriminate against me; there is nothing more to say.’

A student from Group 1 (B.) explained another typical discrimination, in which ‘My first boyfriend broke up with me because I am Alevi. He said that our relationship would not work. It was really very emotional for me’. A male student, (M.), was unable to finish high school within the normal process. He was dismissed from school because of religion class and had to complete high school outside the regular procedure. While his story is familiar, his following comment was surprising: ‘It was actually entirely my problem that I could not memorize those prayers, since my other friends memorized them easily’. Other group participants immediately intervened, explaining that in fact he was not at fault, that it was completely normal that he would have difficulty memorizing prayers in which he does not believe. It was without doubt the tensest moment among the students’ focus group. It is surprising that a university student, quite aware of his identity, could still not recognize that he was the subject of discrimination, and this is an important finding among many Alevis that deserves emphasis. Rather, with the passage of time, the discrimination has become internalised and is their normal reality. A male student (Y.), who lost one of his relatives during the Sivas massacre, openly wept and was no longer able to participate in the discussion.

As explained previously, many participants from both groups cite the Sivas massacre as a personal experience. While many such events exist throughout Alevi history, the Sivas case is very unique in that it occurred recently, was highly tragic, and perhaps most importantly, was witnessed by the entire nation on live television- by members of the government, army, police and Parliament- and yet nothing was done to prevent it. The pain suffered by the Alevis was irreversible, and the event became a turning point in the relationship between the Alevis and the Turkish State. The Alevi society for the first time began to define itself politically against radical Islam.

A female student (N.) conveyed her most important experience of discrimination as the conflicts she witnessed between her mother, who was Alevi, and her father’s family, who were Sunni. ‘...My mother and grandmother argued nearly every day. Finally my mother decided to divorce my father after a very long period’. A female student (P.O) related an important point: ‘We are living in a capitalist system, according to which one’s economic and social situation, education, and class should be the most important. Nevertheless I have to hide my Alevi identity from the office boy. He, in fact, is in a better situation than me even in a capitalist system.’ From Group 2, a woman explained: ‘I was visiting with a group of friends when one commented that Alevis have incest in the *cem* (Alevi religious ceremony). I was shocked, having heard such a thing for the first time, and turned to my family to learn the truth. I learned that this is a common lie used to slander the Alevi community. It was then that I began to learn more about my culture and my identity’.

Third Category: Alevis’ EU Perspective

This category is based on the third question, which was designed to analyse the Alevi expectation from the EU. Neither group was pleased that EU accepts Alevis as a religious minority, though they

were pleased to be a part of the EU agenda. All students, with the exception of two female students, were certainly against the EU's accepting Alevi as a religious minority. As moderator I intervened, asking the student to explain how, in spite of the discrimination they had experienced, they still opposed being accepted as a minority? They clarified that while Alevi may be a minority, they are not able to trust the EU in this aspect. Only two female students (P. and O.) were pleased with the EU definition. 'Alevi are a minority and the EU's only concern is human rights, and nothing else.' Other students, however, were distrustful, fearing an ulterior motive behind the EU's decision, e.g. that the EU may one day use the Alevi for some purpose against Turkey. All participants of Group 2 believed that if Turkey were to become a member of the EU, it would become a more democratic country. However, one woman stated, 'I believe that we will have more rights, but if the Aczimendicis (one of the most radical Sunni groups) also acquire more rights, then they will kill us immediately.' It may be that the Alevi community does not have sufficient information about the EU; the leftist background of many of the university students may also be a possible explanation of their opposition to the EU's minority concept.

Conclusion

Alevi movements have come to the forefront and challenged the State's role in moulding the moral and cultural life of citizens. Alevi have sought to establish the equality of culturally different citizens both in terms of a legal status that guarantees non-discrimination and in terms of participating in collective self-government without concealing their difference.⁶⁷

I believe that the Alevi issue is more important than any kind of minority issue for the EU. If those who are part of the decision-making mechanism of the EU can recognize the existence of the Alevi society in Turkey, they will easily understand the importance of Alevi for EU public opinion. That is, to the extent that Turkey's membership in the EU will serve as an important bridge or step for peace between civilisations, recognition of the existence of the Alevi society will serve as the important bridge for EU public opinion in understanding Turkey positively. Academics thus bear the responsibility of studying this issue, while the politicians bear the responsibility of understanding the Alevi society.

Bedriye Poyraz
Ankara University Faculty of Communication
Email: poyraz@media.ankara.edu.tr

Endnotes

- 1 I have chosen to use the Turkish term *Alevilik* instead of *Aleviniss* and *Alevism* because it covers both its ideological construction as a social movement and its social identity aspect.
- 2 G. Koçan and A. Öncü, 'Citizen Alevi in Turkey: Beyond Confirmation and Denial', *Journal of Historical Sociology*. Vol.17, 4. p. 473
- 3 D. Zeidan, 'The Alevi of Anatolia', <http://www.angelfire.com/az/rescon/alevi.html>, p.1
- 4 R. Çamuroğlu 'Alevi Revivalism in Turkey' in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds). *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 1998, p.84; Ayşe Ayata 'The Emergence of Identity Politics in Turkey', *New Perspectives on Turkey*, No. 17, 1997, p.30; T. Erman and E.Göker, 'Alevi Politics in Contemporary Turkey', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 36, No.4. October 2000, p.99
- 5 I. Melikoff, 'Bektashi/ Kızılbaş: Historical Bipartition and Its Consequences' in T. Olsson, E.Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds). *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives* Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 1998.
- 6 Koçan and Öncü, 'Citizen Alevi in Turkey: Beyond Confirmation and Denial',. p. 475
- 7 Ş. Şahin, 'The Rise of Alevism as a Public Religion', *Current Sociology*, May 2005, Vol. 53(3), p. 466
- 8 Şahin, 'The Rise of Alevism as a Public Religion', p. 471
- 9 There are a lot of different Alevilik interpretations here.
- 10 Koçan and Öncü, 'Citizen Alevi in Turkey: Beyond Confirmation and Denial', p. 464
- 11 Şahin, 'The Rise of Alevism as a Public Religion', p. 466
- 12 D. Shankland, 'Anthropology and Ethnicity: The Place of Ethnography in New Alevi Movement' in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds). *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 1998, pp. 21-22,
- 13 F. Bilici, 'The Function of Alevi-Bektashi Theology in Modern Turkey', in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds). *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 1998, p.52
- 14 D. Shankland, *Islam and Society in Turkey*. Huntington: The Eothen Press, 1999, pp. 132-168; *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of Secular Islamic Tradition*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pp.154-172
- 15 A. Yalçınkaya, *Alevilikte Toplumsal Kurumlar*, Mülkiyeliler Birliği Yayını, Ankara, 1996, p.199
- 16 Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of Secular Islamic Tradition*, p. 173
- 17 Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of Secular Islamic Tradition*, pp. 174-182
- 18 For details see H. Schüler, *Türkiye'de Sosyal Demokrasi, Particlik, Hemşerilik, Alevilik*. [Translation: Y.Tombul], İletişim Yayınları, Ankara, 1998; Yalçınkaya, *Alevilikte Toplumsal Kurumlar*; Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of Secular Islamic Tradition*, pp. 204-207
- 19 Çamuroğlu, 'Alevi Revivalism in Turkey' p.79
- 20 Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of Secular Islamic Tradition*, p.169
- 21 Çamuroğlu, , 'Alevi Revivalism in Turkey' p.79
- 22 Çamuroğlu, , 'Alevi Revivalism in Turkey', p.80
- 23 T. Erman and E.Göker, 'Alevi Politics in Contemporary Turkey', p.100
- 24 M.Aringberg-Laantza, 'Alevis in Turkey Alawites in Syria: Similarities and Differences' in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds). *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 1998, p.155
- 25 Çamuroğlu, 'Alevi Revivalism in Turkey', p.80; *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Spring-Fall 2003, 28-29, p. 181
- 26 Çamuroğlu, , 'Alevi Revivalism in Turkey', p.80; T. Erman and E. Göker, 'Alevi Politics in Contemporary Turkey', p.100
- 27 Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of Secular Islamic Tradition*, p.156
- 28 B. Poyraz, 'The Turkish State and Alevis: Changing Parameters of an Uneasy Relationship', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.41, No.4, p.506
- 29 Poyraz, 'The Turkish State and Alevis: Changing Parameters of an Uneasy Relationship', p.507
- 30 Ulrich Sedelmeir, EU Enlargement, Identity and the Analysis of European Foreign Policy: Identity Formation Trough Policy Practice, *European Forum Series*, RSC No. 2003/13, p.1

-
- 31 Michael Wintle, 'Introduction: Cultural Diversity and Identity in Europe', in M. Wintle (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe*. Brookfield: Avebury/Ashgate Publishing Company. 1996, pp. 4-5
 - 32 Giuliano Amato and Judy Batt. 'Minority Rights and EU Enlargement to the East'. Report of the First Meeting of the Reflection Group on the Long-Term Implications of EU Enlargement: the Nature of the New Border. September 1998. Online at: <http://www.iue.it/RSC/Amato98-PP.htm>
 - 33 Winte, 'Introduction: Cultural Diversity and Identity in Europe', pp. 4-5
 - 34 Amato and Batt. 'Minority Rights and EU Enlargement to the East'
 - 35 Boris Tsilevich '*EU Enlargement and the Protection of National Minorities: Opportunities, Myths, and Prospects*' on line at: <http://www.eumap.org/journal/features/2001/oct/euenlarge/>
 - 36 Amato and Batt. 'Minority Rights and EU Enlargement to the East'
 - 37 Andre Liebich. *Ethnic Minorities and Long-Term Implications of EU Enlargement*. 1998. Online at: http://www.iue.it/RSC/WP-Texts/98_49t.html
 - 38 J. Hughes and G. Sasse, 'Monitoring the Monitors: EU Enlargemnt Conditionality and Minority Protection in the CEECs', on line: http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/Focus1-2003_Hughes_Sasse.pdf, p.1
 - 39 Hughes and Sasse, 'Monitoring the Monitors: EU Enlargement Conditionality and Minority Protection in the CEECs', p.3
 - 40 Hughes and Sasse, 'Monitoring the Monitors: EU Enlargement Conditionality and Minority Protection in the CEECs', pp.7-8
 - 41 Hughes and Sasse, 'Monitoring the Monitors: EU Enlargement Conditionality and Minority Protection in the CEECs', pp. 8-9
 - 42 Hughes and Sasse, 'Monitoring the Monitors: EU Enlargement Conditionality and Minority Protection in the CEECs', p.11
 - 43 Ulrich Sedelmeir, *EU Enlargement, Identity and the Analysis of European Foreign Policy: Identity Formation Through Policy Practice*, European Forum Series, RSC No. 2003/13, p.7
 - 44 Sedelmeir, *EU Enlargement, Identity and the Analysis of European Foreign Policy*, pp.20-21
 - 45 Martin Sökefeld, 'Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition', *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Spring-Fall 2003, 28-29, pp. 135-136
 - 46 Sökefeld, 'Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition', pp. 135-136
 - 47 Sökefeld, 'Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition', pp.149-150 (The interview was aired on the radio station NDR Info on 5 January 2003.)
 - 48 Sökefeld, 'Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition', p. 182
 - 49 Sökefeld, 'Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition', p. 157
 - 50 Commission of the European Community, 1998, p.19
 - 51 Commission of the European Community, 1999, p. 13
 - 52 Commission of the European Community, 2000, p.18
 - 53 Elise Massicard, 'Alevist Movements at Home and Abroad: Mobilization Spaces and Disjunction', *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Spring-Fall 2003, 28-29, p. 181
 - 54 Massicard, 'Alevist Movements at Home and Abroad: Mobilization Spaces and Disjunction', p. 181
 - 55 Commission of the European Community, 2001, p.27
 - 56 Commission of the European Community, 2002, p.37
 - 57 Commission of the European Community, 2002, p.39
 - 58 Commission of the European Community, 2003, p.36
 - 59 Commission of the European Community, 2004, pp. 44-45
 - 60 M.Merdan Hekimoğlu, *Hürriyet*, 16.10.2004
 - 61 Interview with Taha Akyol on CNN, 12 November 2004
 - 62 The common notion of minority in Turkey generally refers to the Armenians, Jews and Greeks those non-Muslims. That's why Alevis do not want to be like non-Muslims minorities in Turkey.
 - 63 Nuray Mert, *Radikal*, 12,14,17. 10.2004

- 64 This university, known as radical religious and nationalist university in Ankara.
- 65 Currently there is folk music contest. Most of participant are Alevi however a girl who from Black Sea become first for many weeks. But in the end an Alevi girl won the contest.
- 66 ‘Seventy two nations is equal’ is one of the most important Alevi philosophic criteria
- 67 Koçan and Öncü, ‘Citizen Alevi in Turkey: Beyond Confirmation and Denial’, p. 473

References

- Amato, G. and J. Batt. 1998. 'Minority Rights and EU Enlargement to the East'. Report of the First Meeting of the Reflection Group on the Long-Term Implications of EU Enlargement: the Nature of the New Border. September. Online at: <http://www.iue.it/RSC/Amato98-PP.htm>
- Aringberg-Laanatza, M. 1998. 'Alevi in Turkey Alawites in Syria: Similarities and Differences' in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds), *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*. Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, pp. 151-166.
- Ayata, A. 1997. 'The Emergence of Identity Politics in Turkey', *New Perspectives on Turkey*. No. 17, pp. 59-73.
- Bilici, F. 1998. 'The Function of Alevi-Bektashi Theology in Modern Turkey', in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds), *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*. Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, pp. 51-62.
- Çamuroğlu, R. 1998. 'Alevi Revivalism in Turkey' in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds), *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, pp.79-84.
- Erman, T. and E. Göker. 2000. 'Alevi Politics in Contemporary Turkey', *Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol. 36, No.4, pp. 99-118.
- Hughes, J. and G. Sasse. 2003. 'Monitoring the Monitors: EU Enlargement Conditionality and Minority Protection in the CEECs', online: http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/Focus1-2003_Hughes_Sasse.pdf
- Koçan, G. and A. Öncü. 2004. 'Citizen Alevi in Turkey: Beyond Confirmation and Denial', *Journal of Historical Sociology*. Vol.17, No. 4, pp. 464-489.
- Liebich, A. 1998. 'Ethnic Minorities and Long-Term Implications of EU Enlargement', Online at: http://www.iue.it/RSC/WP-Texts/98_49t.html
- Massicard, E. 2003 'Alevist Movements at Home and Abroad: Mobilization Spaces and Disjunction', *New Perspectives on Turkey*. Spring-Fall, pp. 163-187.
- Melikoff, I. 1998. 'Bektashi/ Kızılbaş: Historical Bipartition and Its Consequences', in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds), *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*. Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute.
- Hekimoğlu, M. 2004. *Hürriyet*. 16 October.
- Mert, N. 2004. *Radikal*. Articles published 12,14,17 October.
- Poyraz, B. 2005. 'The Turkish State and Alevi: Changing Parameters of an Uneasy Relationship', *Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol.41. No.4, pp. 503-513.
- Şahin, Ş. 2005. 'The Rise of Alevism as a Public Religion', *Current Sociology*. Vol. 53 No. 3, pp.465-485.
- Schüler, H. 1998. *Türkiye'de Sosyal Demokrasi, Particlik, Hemşerilik, Alevilik*. [Translation: Y. Tombul], Ankara: İletişim Yayınları..
- Sedelmeir, U. 2003. *EU Enlargement, Identity and the Analysis of European Foreign Policy: Identity Formation Through Policy Practice*, European Forum series, EUI Working Papers RSCAS No. 2003/13.

- Shankland, D. 1998. 'Anthropology and Ethnicity: The Place of Ethnography in New Alevi Movement', in T. Olsson, E. Özdalga and C. Raudvere (eds), *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives*, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, pp.15-22.
- Shankland, D. 1999. *Islam and Society in Turkey*, Huntington: The Eothen Press.
- Shankland, D. 2003. *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of Secular Islamic Tradition*. London: Routledge Curzon.
- Sökefeld, M. 2003. 'Alevis in Germany and the Politics of Recognition', *New Perspectives on Turkey*. Spring-Fall, pp. 133-161.
- Tsilevich, B. 2001. 'EU Enlargement and the Protection of National Minorities: Opportunities, Myths, and Prospects' on line at: <http://www.eumap.org/journal/features/2001/oct/euenlarge/>
- Wintle, M. 1996. 'Introduction: Cultural Diversity and Identity in Europe', in M. Wintle (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe*. Aldershot, Brookfield: Avebury/Ashgate Publishing Company, pp. 1-7.
- Yalçinkaya, A. 1996. *Alevilikte Toplumsal Kurumlar*, Ankara: Mülkiyeliler Birliği Yayını
- Zeidan, D. 'The Alevi of Anatolia', <http://www.angelfire.com/az/rescon/alevi.html>, p.1