

The New Garments of Alevism

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In the past decade, Turkey's official image as a country of Sunni Muslims has been vigorously challenged by the 'coming out' of the Alevis, a large heterodox Islamic minority, which consists of approximately 15 million Turkish- and Kurdish-speaking members. Until that time, due to the official definition of Turkey as an ethnically and religiously homogenous nation, public expressions of deviating collective identities had been banned by law. However, a shift in government policy in the early 1990s enabled the Alevis to come to the fore and to inaugurate an ethno-political movement to achieve official acknowledgement.

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