

The Transmission of Alevi Ritualistic Practices in Austria as the Religious Other's Society*

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Abstract

This study focuses on the music as part of ritualistic practice of the Alevis, a religious group of Islamic origin, in the living with religious others. The Alevis are a religious group that has traditionally inhabited Turkey and is known for its use of music and dance-like physical movements in its rituals. They constitute a religious minority in Turkey, where Sunnis are the majority. This study focuses on the Alevis, who live in Austria, a Christian society, as part of the Turkish migrant community. Whereas Austria has been a traditionally Christian country with a national government, it was historically formed as an immigrant state by receiving a number of migrants, including those from the former Habsburg Empire territories, workers from Turkey and Yugoslavia, and refugees from the Middle East. As a host country, the Austrian Government put in place policies and institutions to accommodate migrants of different ethnic and religious identities. People with different migratory roots, including Turkish immigrants, governed by these institutions.

In an environment where Turkish migrants are contained within the host society (Austria) as an ethnic minority, the Alevis are a religious minority contained within the Turkish migrant pool. In effect, they have double minority status. How are their rituals practiced in an environment that is contained within or adjacent to the religious other? This study focuses on their practices in educational settings because the transmission of music to the next generation is an important issue for those who form communities where they are the minority.

1 Overview of the Alevi

1.1 The Alevis as a Religious Group

The Alevis are a religious group with their roots in Turkey. Whereas their beliefs and practices have a lot in common with Islamic practices, they are, in many ways, unique. According to Zarcone [2013: 203], a notable characteristic of Alevism is that it blends antinomian Sufism and extremist Shi'ism (*Ghuluvv*) with shamanic, Manichean, Zoroastrian, and Christian elements. The name 'Alevi' is derived from the meaning of 'the followers of Ali,' Alī ibn Abī

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Ṭālib (598–661), a cousin of the prophet and founder of Islam, Muhammad, and son-in-law of his daughter Fāṭima' [Fıǧlalı 1987: 19]. Ali is the focal point of Alevi faith; the group follows Allah and Muhammad as the object of their faith. Further, in *cem* (the Alevi's religious ritual), the phrase '*Ya Allah, Ya Muhammed, Ya Ali*' is recited repeatedly. The number 'three,' which represents their presence, is respected in rituals and daily customs.¹ The Twelve Imams (Ali is the first and the 11 others were his followers) are of particular importance in Shi'i Islam and its streams, and also for the Alevis as *on iki / Dūvaz (Dūvazdeh) Imam*. Shi'i Islam and the Alevis are rather complicated subjects. According to Rıza Yıldırım, in terms of sectarian positionality, common wisdom deems Alevism to lie within the fold of Shi'i Islam [Yıldırım 2020: 255]. Given the central place of Ali bin Ebu Ṭālib (Imam Ali), the *ahl al-bayt* (People of the house or household of the Prophet Muhammad), the Twelve Imams, and the offspring of the prophet in their theology and religious praxis, a strong pro-'Alid position is obvious. The dominance of the Twelve Imams and ritual forms is the hallmark of Alevism. By contrast, however, Yıldırım noticed that one should not confuse Alevism with the Twelver Shi'ism, for they have certain differences both in terms of creed and socio-religious structure. Close scrutiny reveals that although convergence towards a Shi'i mode of theology is apparent, there is a recognizably distinct flavour in Alevi theology and religiosity [Yıldırım 2020: 255]. The Alevis rarely consider themselves 'Muslims,' for reasons such as having religious practices that differ from the five basic practices in Islam, such as *ṣalāt* and Ramadan fasting. Thus, opinions are divided as to whether or not the Alevis are an Islamic group.

1.2 The Alevis in Turkey

In Turkey, where Sunni Islam is the majority religion, the Alevis are a religious minority. According to Shankland, the numbers of Alevis are a tentative estimate. While censuses have been conducted in the Republic of Türkiye every 10 years, it has never been part of its agenda to request information on a person's religious affiliation (other than to ascertain whether they are Islamic, Christian, or atheist, *denisiz*), or to ascertain their ethnic background. Thus, researchers have long had to rely on estimates which, unsurprisingly, vary according to the researcher's personal orientation. Some have claimed that the number of Alevis is as high as 30 per cent of Turkey's population. Others have stated that there are as few as 10 per cent. [Shankland 2001: 20]. There are no clear data on the Alevis for two reasons. First, they have not been officially recognised as a religious group for several years. Second, several people conceal their Alevi identity, as exposure makes them vulnerable to slander, violence, and discrimination. Especially from the 1950s onwards, when Alevis began to move out of their

¹ The number '3' is seen in many places, such as in the number of times actions like the kissing of pillars and floors must be carried out upon entering a mausoleum or ritual site, and the number of candles lit during a ritual, among others. The number 12 is also seen in various places during rituals, such as in the dodecagonal figures.

rural communities and into societies where there were also a large number of Sunnis, they began to take strong and conscious *Takiyye*² [Dinçer 2004: 70]. The reason they conceal their origins as Alevis are that they risk facing unjustified slander, violence, and discrimination if they are exposed.

The challenges the Alevis face in Turkey can be seen in the educational field as well. Islamist policies were promoted after the general elections in 1950, when the *Demokrat Partisi* (democratic party) that preached Islamism came to power. In the 1950s, along with the construction of *camiis* (mosques), the establishment of theology departments in universities and the resumption of *ezan* (*adhān*) in Arabic led to the provision of religious classes as part of primary education. However, whereas Islam, Christianity, and Judaism were offered as options for those 'religious' classes, Alevi was not included. This continues to date, and is problematic as it does not give Alevi children the opportunity to learn about their own religion. After the Turkish government switched to multiparty politics in 1950, the activities of political groups in which some Alevis participated sometimes led to conflicts between Alevis and Sunni Muslims, which resulted in many casualties, such as those in 1978 and 1980. In 1980, under the guise of containing these incidents, there was a military coup d'état. Thus, the relationship between Alevis and religious others in Turkey has been tense, and continues to remain so to date.

The long history of marginalisation that the Alevis have faced as a minority, has shaped their cultural practices in such a way that they are suitable for the maintenance of their religious traditions. The next section describes their religious and cultural expressions.

1.3 Alevi's Cultural Expression

1.3.1 *Cem*

The Alevis have a unique ritual called *cem*. This ritual is believed to have followed the ritual *âyin* of the Bektashi order, a Sufi order that had a great influence on the formation of Alevi.³

Cem takes place in a space called *cemevi*. A meeting hall in a community or a large room in a private home is typically set up as a *cemevi*. However, in urban areas, the community often has a room exclusively for *cem*. The congregation kisses the pillar or floor at the entrance thrice before entering the area designated as *cemevi*. The floor is carpeted. The congregation gathers around the *dede* (spiritual leader of the Alevi community, who leads *cem*). The *cem* proceeds with ritualistic actions performed by people who are charged with a special role

2 *Taqiyya* refers to the act of concealing one's faith or beliefs by Muslims under a state of necessity.

3 The Bektâşi Order was a Turkish *tariqa*, named after the 13th Century Sufi Hacı Bektâş-ı Velî (1209–1271). A Turkmen from Khorasan, Bektâş increased his followers in the Anatolian peninsula, mainly Turkmen like himself, but it is said that he taught both his own order and people in general, especially the villagers, from among whom the Alevi emerged [Mélíkoff 1998:6]. Bektâşi is one of the most important saints in Alevi. The ritual *âyin* of the Bektâşi order, which arose from a group of his followers, comprised those who read the *nefes*, played the *saz*, and responded to them. The *saz* players in this *âyin* contributed toward maintaining the Bektâşi faith, and began to play religious music alongside folk music in the city centre, outside the order [Özdemir 2016:86].

called *oniki hizmetleri* (12 services). The following is an example of the *cem* procedure in the communities I surveyed, although the procedure varies from region to region and community to community.⁴ The underlined text shows the first appearance of *oniki hizmetleri* and the **shaded text** shows the musical part.

1. *Dede, rehber,* and *zakir* enter the cemevi by kissing the door and floor thrice. *Kapıcı* stands by the door and *gözcü* watches the faithfuls so that they maintain silence.
2. *Dede* delivers a sermon.
3. The appointment of Hizmet is accompanied by ‘*oniki hizmet deyişi*’ sung by *zakir*.
4. *Maydancı* spreads the Maydan Postu (holy carpet) while chanting ‘*Ya Allah, Ya Muhammed, Ya Ali*’ and defines the central place of *cem*.
5. *Çerağcı* lights three candles while chanting ‘*Ya Allah,*’ ‘*Ya Muhammed*’ and ‘*Ya Ali,*’ thrice each.
6. *Süpürügeci* sweeps the floor with a broom thrice while chanting ‘*Ya Allah, Ya Muhammed, Ya Ali.*’
7. A pair of *ibrikçi* wash their hands thrice and kiss each other thrice while chanting ‘*Ya Allah, Ya Muhammed, Ya Ali*’ using the water blessed by *dede*.
8. *Zakir* sings ‘*düvazdeh imam.*’
9. *Zakir* sings ‘*tevhid.*’
10. *Zakir* sings ‘*miraçlama.*’
11. *Zakir* sings ‘*semah.*’ *Semahcı* whirl ‘*Kırıklar semahi*’ or ‘*giriş semahi.*’
12. *Zakir* sings ‘*semah.*’ *Semahcı* whirl other *semahs*.
13. *Sakkacı* mournfully intones *dua* (*du’ah*, prayer phrase) for Hüseyin.
14. *Sakkacı* distributes (or sprinkles) *Sakka suyu* (holy water) among (on) the faithfuls.
15. *Zakir* sings ‘*Mersiye.*’
16. *Süpürügeci* sweeps the floor again with a broom thrice while chanting ‘*Ya Allah,*’ ‘*Ya Muhammed*’ and ‘*Ya Ali.*’
17. *Çerağcı* puts out three candles while chanting ‘*Ya Allah,*’ ‘*Ya Muhammed*’ and ‘*Ya Ali,*’ thrice each.
18. *Maydancı* folds the *Maydan Postu* (holy carpet) while chanting ‘*Ya Allah, Ya Muhammed, Ya Ali.*’
19. *Lokmacı* (or *Kurbancı*) distributes *Lokma* (sacred meal) and *Kurban* (sacrificial animal) among the faithfuls.

⁴ I made this procedural list as a case study based on references and my observations in Istanbul from 2016 to 2019. The details of the *cem*s vary from community to community and region to region. The content is very different in urban areas like in Istanbul and the countryside, such as the central and eastern regions of Turkey, which mark the traditional hometown of the Alevi. Aside from regional variations, the standardisation of Alevi rituals in the ‘Alevi revival’ social movement of the late 1980s–1990s, brought about significant changes in *cem*.

From an early age, Alevi children are taken to *cem* by their parents. They begin by observing *cem*, imitating the actions of their elders, and participating in the ritual with their support. They gradually learn the ritual procedures and special *dua* (ar, *du'ā*) and finally become capable of practicing it on their own. Thus, a system is in place to pass on the religious traditions of the Alevi to the next generation (see figure 1).



Figure 1. Alevi children learning the procedures with older Alevi in *cem* (Photo: Manami Suzuki, Istanbul, 2019)

Cem comprises various movements and music, including religious allusions, and a dancelike whirling movement called *semah*. Music and *semah* are an important part of their rituals and symbolise their identity as a unique form of cultural expression. The musical parts of the *cem* are more memorable. Some rituals are accompanied by the sound of instruments and songs. The role of Alevi music in these rituals goes beyond creating an atmosphere of worship. The songs fulfil a meaningful function by honouring the great achievements of the saints, explaining the origin and significance of *cem*, and strengthening cohesion in the Alevi community.

1.4 Alevi's Religious Music and *Semah*

Music

The music of the Alevi comprises songs and *saz* played by *zakir* (ritual musician in *cem*). The *saz* is an instrument commonly played in Anatolian folk music as an accompaniment for singing and dancing or as a solo instrument. The Alevi consider it a sacred instrument. The *saz* symbolises the body of Muhammad or Ali, and because of its importance and role, it is often described by *zakirs* and other Alevi musicians as *Telli Kur'an* (stringed Qur'an) [Özdemir 2018: 172].

Alevi songs are called *deyiş* (or *nefes*). Their musical characteristics are similar to those of Anatolian folk songs, whereas the *deyiş*, through their lyrics and melodies, have played an important role in facilitating the formation and maintenance of the Alevi faith and community. For example, one of the *deyiş*, *miraçlama*, is an epic poem representing the Ascension of Muhammad (*mi'rāĵ*), which is popularly known from the episode in the Qur'an, in Chapter 17 *Al-isrā* (The Night Journey), in which the Prophet Muhammad is taken by the angel Jebra'il to the heavens, has an audience with Allah, and then returns to our world. In *miraçlama*, the events in this episode are believed to be the basis on which *cem* and *semah* (religious whirling) takes place. *Miraçlama* tells us that Muhammad returns from the Kingdom of Heaven and knocks on the door of an assembly hall where his followers gather. This assembly is called *Kırklar meclisi* (the assembly of the forty) and is spoken of as the beginning

of *cem*. It is also said that Ali and his wife and Muhammad's daughter, Fāṭima, were also present at this assembly, which is the basis for women's participation in *cem* [Özdemir 2016: 53–54]. At this gathering, Muhammad drank crushed and squeezed grapes as *Şerbet* with the participants, and it is said that Muhammad shouted the name of Allah and began to whirl *semah*. This is



Figure 2: *Zakir* plays *saz* in *cem*
(Photo: Manami Suzuki, Istanbul, 2019)

described as the origin of *semah* in the Alevis [Onatça 2007: 60–67, 72–74]. *Miraçlama* contains the lyric *Muhammed bile girdi / Kırklar ile semaha* (Muhammad began to whirl *semah* with *Kırklar* (the forty followers), and when this part is sung, the participating Alevis begin to whirl *semah*, just like the characters in the epic. *Miraçlama* is charged with showing the believers the significance and validity of performing *cem* and *semah* by linking them to Muhammad's Ascension and actions. The believers learn the importance of *cem* and *semah* in the Alevi faith by listening to this *deyiş*, singing and whirling *semah* in line with the lyrics.

As seen in the *miraçlama*, *deyiş* is not only an accompaniment for the ritual, but its lyrics, together with the effective melody, tell believers something important and indispensable for the Alevi faith. There is also the *düvazdeh imam*, in which the names of the Twelve Imams who are important in the Alevi faith are listed in the lyrics, and the *oniki hizmet deyişi*, which is performed to pledge the *hizmetleri* to fulfil their role in the *cem* and the details of that role is explained in the lyrics, as well. Others have a secondary role of strengthening community cohesion through the believers' shared singing of and emotions toward the *deyiş*, such as the lament *mersiye*⁵ for the martyrdom of Imam Husain, which is sung at the end of the *cem* with a sad *dua* by *sakkacı* [Suzuki 2022].

Having thus formed their own religious identity, the Alevis, as mentioned above, have been placed in a difficult situation as a religious minority in Turkey. Their music is given importance in their social context. According to Sağlam, for centuries, the Alevis not allowed to practice their religion in public and were not allowed to pass on their religion in written form to the next generation. Music was the ideal element for teaching the philosophy of their religion to the younger generations. For Alevis, there is no such thing as a religious ceremony without music [Sağlam 2019: 133–134]. According to Karolewski, Alevi music transmits

⁵ *Mersiye* is discussed here as one of the Alevi *deyiş*, which is an important tradition for both Alevi and Islam, especially Shi'i Islam (Ar. *Marthiya*, Per. *marsiye*). In Arabic, it means 'mourning,' but it is also used to refer to 'mourning songs' or 'dirges,' a change from the means taken to express that mourning. Originally, it was used to mourn the death of relatives, friends, heroes, protectors, and important religious and political figures, among others, and to praise the achievements and virtues of the deceased and give comfort to those left behind. It is an important musical and literary tradition in Shi'i Islam, sung on occasions like *ta'ziye*, a mourning event for Imam Hussein.

excerpts of Alevi knowledge; thus, by being performed at special occasions, the music also serves as a means to teach, repeat, and interpret textual knowledge and religious beliefs [Karolewski 2015: 93].

Although *deyiş* is a ritual song, it is sung extensively outside of rituals and in everyday life. By living in the community and hearing *deyiş* from an early age, both within and outside rituals, the Alevi build up their religious knowledge.

Semah

Semah is an important component of *cem* and Alevi music, and is considered a means of approaching or uniting with Allah. *Semah* is called *Samah*, *Zemah*, *Zamak*, *Semek*, *Semağ*, etc., based on the region, and the word is derived from the Arabic word *sam/sim*, which is like the *semâ* in Mevleviye [Onatça 2007: 58]. *Semah* is performed by a mixed group of women and men, and is characterised by a formation that moves in a circle, in line with its name, ‘whirling’ *semah*; the movements include various religious signs, such as the movement of the palms of the hands, which ‘receive love from Allah,’ and the shape of the arms, which ‘represent the head from the neck of the crane’ [Onatça 2007: 58]. The combination of the series of movements varies from region to region and community to community, and numerous types of *semah* are practiced in different parts of Anatolia. They are described by outsiders as dance or circling dances, as they are often dance-like in appearance. However, the Alevis refer to performing *semah* as *semah dönme* (to whirl *semah*) and never say *semah oynatmak* (to dance *semah*), clearly identifying it as part of religious rituals [Dönmez 2015: 69–72]. It is a symbol of Alevi religious culture and is often represented in images on posters and logos for Alevi-related events and associations.

Semah is part of the *cem* ritual. It takes place once the *dede*'s *dua* and several ritual steps of the *oniki hizmetleri* have passed and is performed solemnly in the *cemevi*. In recent years, however, *semah* is performed as Alevi symbolic culture in public, such as at the Alevi festival *Hacı Bektaş Veli Anma Törenleri* as one of the activities for displaying Alevi cultural expression, especially after the ‘Alevi revival’ in the 1990s–2000s [Yıldırım 2017: 107–112].



Figure 3. Alevi whirl *semah* in *cem* (Photo: Manami Suzuki. March 2019, Istanbul)



Figure 4. Logo of the Alevi community representing *semah* (Photo: Manami Suzuki, March 2018, Berlin)

2 Alevi Diaspora in Austria

2.1 The Background

This section explains the Alevi migration to Austria. Immigrants from Turkey began to increase in the 1960s, partly owing to the labour agreement signed mid-decade between Austria and Turkey. This immigration pattern was influenced by the situation in Turkey at the time. Owing to a shift away from traditional agricultural production in the 1950s, many peasant farmers were made redundant by and lost their jobs to mechanisation [Şentürk 2017: 84–85]. Among them, many were Alevi. Between 1945 and 1975, the agricultural worker population including Alevi in Turkey fell from 80.3% to 60.9% [Çiçekli 1998: 24]. Since the 1950s, urban areas have seen an influx of former agricultural workers looking for jobs, creating a large and steady increase in both the population and unemployment rate in urban areas.

In the 1950s, Austria sought to recruit foreign workers in order to address the country's economic development needs triggered by post-war reconstruction [Bauer 2008: 6]. It signed a labour agreement with Turkey allowing *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) into the country in 1964. West Germany had also signed a similar agreement in 1961. The *Gastarbeiter* system involved a regular exchange of workers. However, the program resulted in approximately 265,000 immigrants from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia remaining in Austria between 1961 and 1974 [Bauer 2008: 6]. The guest workers called over their families and married partners from their home countries. The early immigrant workers were primarily men without families, but by 1971, the proportion of female foreign residents exceeded 39% of the total foreigner population in Austria. The proportions of women and children in the immigrant population increased from 39.4% and 14.8% (1971) to 44.4% and 22.5% (1981), respectively [Bauer 2008:6].

Year	Events	Population
1951		112
1961		217
1964	Austria signed a labor agreement with Turkey	
1971		16.423
1974	The recruitment of <i>Gastarbeiter</i> was terminated	
1975	Ausländer-beschäftigungsgesetz (Foreigner Employment Law) was enacted.	
1981		59.900
1991		118,579
2001		127,226
2011		112,461
2018		117,297

Table 1: Movement of the immigrant population from Turkey⁶

6 Statistik Austria Website “Bevölkerung nach Staatsangehörigkeit und Geschlecht 1951 bis2001”

As Table 1 shows, the population kept increasing even when recruitment stopped in 1974. In Turkey, the economic instability of the late 1950s triggered a military coup in 1960, followed by continued social instability in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, many people from Turkey turned to Europe for asylum and refuge, and relied on their families and relatives who had moved to Europe earlier and those within the Turkish immigrant communities. Currently, it is only possible to make approximate estimates of the population size by relying on self-reportage and/or conjecture. According to statistics gathered by the Austrian government and those of the Alevi community living in Austria, as of January 2018, there were about 272,000 immigrants from Turkey (including 117,297 Turkish citizens) living in Austria [Statistik Austria 2019: 27] , among whom about 30%, or 80,000 people, were Alevi.⁷

2.2 Alevi's Social Environment in Turkey and Austria: Alevis and *Islamgesetz* (Islam law)

One difference between Turkey and Austria vis-à-vis the position of the Alevis in society centres on the official recognition of the Alevi as a religious group. For example, in Turkey, there is no official religious education for Alevi children because the Turkish government considers the Alevis a cultural organisation and not recognise a religious group. Therefore, the Alevis continue to strive to be recognised as a religious group in Turkey [Göner 2017: 119–121].

In Austria, the Austrian Alevi religious association (*Avsturya Alevi İnanç Toplumu / (Islamische) Alevitische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*) has been recognised as an official religious organisation by the Kultusamt (Austrian Cultural Agency) since 2013.⁸ By having the Alevi association recognised as a 'religious organisation' by the Austrian government, the Alevis were able to establish their position as a religious group in their adopted, if not home country. Thus, 'Alevi' is listed as a religious group by the Austrian government. This affected the content of the *Islamgesetz* (Islamic law), which was subsequently re-established in 2015 by the *Kultusamt*. *Islamgesetz* in Austria is a law that defines the rights and obligations of authorised Islamic religious organisations and their followers. While most Austrians are Christian, we can find Austria's involvement with Muslims throughout history owing to its geographical location, bordering on Eastern Europe,

<https://archive.is/20090923155125/http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/bevoelkerung/volkszaehlungen/bevoelkerung_nach_demographischen_merkmalen/022884.html> (accessed 07. 11.2019) and "Bevölkerung zu Jahresbeginn 2002-2019 nach detaillierter Staatsangehörigkeit" <https://www.statistik.at/wcm/idc/idcplg?IdcService=GET_PDF_FILE&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=071715> (accessed 7.11. 2019)

⁷ Austurya Alevi İnanç Toplumu Website. "Yasallaşma süreci önce ve sonrasına dair..." <http://www.Aleviten.at/tr/?page_id=1852> (accessed 7.11. 2019)

⁸ Austurya Alevi İnanç Toplumu Website. "Alevilik yasal haklarımız" <http://www.Aleviten.at/tr/?page_id=5674> (accessed 7.11. 2019)

where a large number of Muslims are distributed, and its historical background, given that it brought Muslim countries under its rule during the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Bosnia and Herzegovina had a large Muslim population owing to Ottoman rule. From the 19th century onwards, they became part of the empire following its occupation (1878) and annexation (1908) from Austria. This led to an increase in the influx of Muslims from this region into Austria, which made it necessary to keep track of the Muslims and control them by law [Watanabe 2015: 89–90]. This led to the enactment of the *Islamgesetz* in 1912 as the law for Muslims in the Empire's territory. Although the law recognised Islam as a religion and its activities as a religious organisation, the only 'Islam' mentioned here was the Sunnite Hanafi school, which was common in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and did not refer to any other Islamic group.⁹

In the 1960s, the need to amend the 1912 *Islamgesetz* was pointed out because of the increase in migration from Turkey and other Islamic cultural spheres in West Asia and North Africa. The reasons for the amendment included the following. The fact that the current *Islamgesetz* was enacted about 100 years ago, during the Habsburg Empire, and that although this law had not been put to practical use since its enactment in 1912, the increasing proportion of Muslims in Austria owing to immigration since the 1960s had created a need for practical application. The 1912 *Islamgesetz* only referred to the Hanafi school as Muslim; it became necessary to reinforce the management of Islamic religious groups that were not covered by the 1912 version, such as the Sunna groups, which were not limited to the Hanafi school, and the Alevi and Shi'i groups.¹⁰

The new Islamic law thus enacted on 31 March 2015, replaced the 1912 Islamic law, and was officially named *Bundesgesetz über die äußeren Rechtsverhältnisse islamischer Religionsgesellschaften-Islamgesetz 2015* (Federal law on the external legal relationships in Islamic Religious Societies or Islam Law 2015). It does not limit the sects or schools of thought covered, but is declared a law only for 'Muslims.'¹¹ Under this law, the rights of Muslims in Austria were guaranteed, after establishing that Austrian law takes precedence over Islamic religious rules.¹² Along with specifying the rights guaranteed to Muslims under these religious categories and some exceptions, the law enumerates the Islamic groups that

9 Although the construction of mosques and other projects were planned based on this law, it was never put to practical and effective use owing to the two World Wars beginning in 1914, followed by the dissolution of the empire after World War I and the secession of Bosnia and Herzegovina from Austria.

10 Islamischen Alevitischen Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich website "İslam Yasası 2015" <http://www.aleviten.at/tr/?page_id=5900> (accessed 8.26. 2019)

11 This may be because people with roots in more diverse countries and regions reside in Austria than when the 1912 version of the Islamic Law came into force. While looking at people living in Austria today, the scope of what should be covered as 'Muslims' is wider than what it was when the 1912 version came into force, and based on future social conditions, this scope may be extended further by the migration of 'Muslims' to Austria, which was not envisaged when the Act came into force. It is presumed that this is a measure to ensure that some are not excluded from the scope of the law by specifying the subject matter.

12 *Islamgesetz 2015*. <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblAuth/BGBLA_2015_I_39/BGBLA_2015_I_39.pdf> (accessed 7.11. 2019)

are recognised by the Act, and states that these groups are entitled to carry out religious activities like rituals, festivals, and other events, and educational activities as religious groups. The law names *Islamischen Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich* (the Islamic Community in Austria),¹³ and *Islamischen Alevitischen Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich* (tr. *Austurya Alevi İnanç Toplumu*, the Islamic Alevi Community in Austria), under Chapters 3 and 4 of the 2015 Islamic Law, respectively.¹⁴ The new *Islamgesetz* enacted in 2015 includes a mention of the *Austurya Alevi İnanç Toplumu* and its rights as a religious group in, 4. Abschnitt, §16–§22, which include, for example, the right of assessment, to choose and protect its name, conduct religious services in special institutions and youth education, food regulations, holidays, dismiss religious officials from duty, and create and control cemeteries. The Alevi Society was recognised by the Austrian Government an ‘Islamic religious organisation.’ There is a disagreement as to whether or not Alevis is to be treated as a form of Islam. Although they are clearly influenced by the religion, they are often seen by themselves and others as separate from Islam in Turkey, as they differ in many ways, including their religious practices and philosophy. When the Alevi Association was recognised as an Islamic religious organisation (*Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft*) in Austria, there was strong opposition from some Alevis belonging to the association, who left the *Austurya Alevi İnanç Toplumu* and joined another Alevi organisation, tr. *Avusturya Alevi Birlikleri Federasyonu* / ger. *Föderation der Aleviten-Gemeinden in Österreich*.¹⁵ I assume that one of the reasons they dared to aim for recognition as an Islamic organisation in this context was that the process was easier than applying for status as a religion distinct from Islam. For the Austrian people, Islam has historically been a familiar religious other, and there was some acceptance of it, as seen in the mentions of the *Islamgesetz* and the *Islamischen Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*. That is to say, Alevis, a newcomer as a religious group on the Austrian side, sought acceptance in the country by utilizing as foothold the relations with Islam that Austria has built.

The *Kultusamt*, which was responsible for enacting the Islam law, is a department established in the *Bundeskanzleramt* (Prime Minister’s Office). It handles the implementation of religious laws. This includes the recognition of churches and organisations of various religions. If any religious organisation applies for registration and is approved, it can receive constitutional status and protection. The one of ways for protection to the religious organization permission to receive religious education as a compulsory subject at public

13 *Islamischen Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich* (IGGiÖ / IGGÖ) is a mutual organisation for Muslims living in Austria. It was founded in 1979. It comprises Muslims from Turkey and former Ottoman territories, so Sunnis are demographically predominant.

14 *Islamgesetz 2015*. <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblAuth/BGBLA_2015_I_39/BGBLA_2015_I_39.pdf#sig> (accessed 24.11. 2019)

15 In an interview, a member of the Alevi Federation said: They said to me, “We (Alevi) are not Muslims. What defines us as Muslims if we don’t go to mosques and don’t fast during Ramadan?”

schools in Austria.¹⁶ Following the enactment of the Islam law, Alevis established its position as a religious organisation in Austria. This was a great opportunity for Alevis to obtain more advantages than those available in their home country, such as being able to procure a place for cultural transmission in the public education curriculum. This is discussed below.

3 Transmission of Alevi Faith to the Next Generation

The Austrian Alevis have gained a more stable position than their Turkish counterparts in recent years. However, it has remained a challenge to identify ways to transmit their religious traditions to the next generation. The transmission of religious customs to the next generation is important in maintaining the Alevi identity as a religious group. In Turkey, the process of passing knowledge onto the next generation is established through participation in *cem* and living in the community from an early age. Alevis naturally acquire knowledge about their faith in their lives by talking to and joining *cems* together with parents, grandparents, relatives, and other close believers. Today, almost half a century after they began to leave their traditional communities through migration, the first generation, which participated in rituals in Turkey and accumulated local knowledge of Alevi is now older, whereas the second and third generations are becoming the focus of the community. Living as migrants in Austria, they have far fewer opportunities to learn ‘aspects of Alevi life,’ including rituals and music. It is accentuated in the second and third generation of migrants. In my interview with her, Yeliz Yıldırım, a teacher and Austrian-born Alevi, mentioned her confusion when she first joined *cem* in 1992: ‘I was very confused. I couldn’t understand anything, why they cry, why they call anyone’s name and who they are, what they do...’ [March 2019, Vienna].

These words indicate that the Austrian-born Alevis are no longer familiar with Alevi practices, including *cem*, as they live far away from ‘home.’ In my observations of *cem* as it is practiced in Austria, I saw Austrian Alevis awkwardly chanting the *dua*, which is common in Turkey, while checking their notes. They performed the steps in the ritual one by one, while receiving instructions from the *dede*. Yıldırım felt the need for Alevi children to have the opportunity to learn about their religion, and is leading the religious education for the younger generation of Alevis in Austria now.

Next, I examine how the Alevis pass on their faith to the next generation in Austria in this social situation, and the role that music and *semah* play in transmission. I use the cases of *Religiösunterricht* (religious class) and *Çocuk eğitim cemi* (educational *cem* for children) in Austria. These examples show us how the ritual and musical elements derived from the Gem are used in educational settings.

¹⁶ Bundeskanzleramt Website “Das Kultusamt” <<https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/kultusamt>> (accessed 7.11. 2019)

3.1 Alevi's *Religionsunterricht* (Religious Class)

3.1.1 *Religionsunterricht* in Austria

Religious lessons are a learning opportunity brought to the Alevis by the social institutions of Austria as host society. In Austria, the Catholic Church constitutes a majority of the population, but there are also people who belong to other religious groups, such as Protestantism, Orthodoxy, and Islam. The system in place in this environment is the *Religionsunterricht*, which forms part of the Austrian school curriculum. All students must take a class on their religious affiliation.^{17,18} In this class, students learn about a wide range of their own religion, including the object of belief — God, saints, history, religious practices such as worship, and the social environment surrounding the religion, such as the same religious groups in other countries. Religious education in Austria is regulated by the Religious Education Act of 1949, revised in 1993, which makes religious education a compulsory subject for all students belonging to legally recognised churches and religious groups.¹⁹ The term ‘legally’ means that they are authorised as religious organisations by the *Kultusamt*, the Austrian government’s cultural office. These religious classes are provided by teachers dispatched by authorised churches and religious organisations. The content is planned and organised by the respective churches and/or religious organisations and follows a syllabus submitted to and approved in advance by the Ministry of Education.²⁰ A religious organisation that has obtained this approval is the *Alevitische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*, which was approved by *Kultusamt* in 2013. Like other churches and religious organisations, it is authorised to send teachers to schools with Alevi children to give lessons on their own religion.

At the time of study, Turkey had neither officially established nor provided such classes for Alevis to learn about their own religion. There are no demographic data on religious categories from the Austrian government since 2001 as the government stopped collecting the data. The population belonging to each religious association is based on unofficial statistics and

17 Up to the age of 14 years, the parents choose, and from the age of 14 years onwards, the children choose whether or not to take religious classes that year. However, it is a compulsory subject and is not possible to take classes in other religions as long as the student belongs to a legally recognised religion. In secondary education, it is possible to choose it as a subject for Matura examinations (final examination for the secondary education level) if the student has continued to take classes for nine years.

18 Austrian government website “Religionsunterricht” <https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/leben_in_oesterreich/kirchenein__austritt_und_religionen/Seite.820014.html> (accessed 8.18. 2019)

19 The *Kultusamt*, the Cultural Office, is a department in the *Bundeskanzleramt*, the Prime Minister’s Office, and is responsible for the implementation of religious legislation. This includes the recognition of churches and associations of various religions, including Christianity and Islam, and if a religious organisation applies for registration and is authorised, it may be considered one of Austria’s religious organisations. It then enjoys constitutional protection, and is entitled for its religious education curriculum to become a compulsory subject in public school.

20 The Legal Information System on the Republic of Austria Government Website “Religionsunterrichtsgesetz” <<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10009217&ShowPrintPreview=True>> (accessed 8.18. 2019)

declarations by the associations themselves. However, in order for religious organisations to receive legal recognition, they must have at least 0.2% of Austria's national population in their congregations,²¹ which means that there are at least 16,000 adherents in each of the religious organisations. An overview of the licensed religious groups shows that in addition to religions historically rooted in Austria and the surrounding region, such as Catholicism, there are groups whose population is assumed to have increased owing to immigration, such as Islam, the Armenian Apostolic Church, and the Alevi. It is clear that the system was implemented as one of the social and political approach from the Austrian government to the migrants as a religious other.

The system allows religious groups like the Islamic and Alevi groups, which have historically not been common in Austria, to carry out public activities. They must apply to the Cultural Office for approval, and submit their syllabi for religious classes to the government in advance. This suggests an intention on part of the Austrian government to control or track these religious groups, including their beliefs and what they try to pass on to the next generation. This suggests that the Austrian government, as the religious other, intervenes in the activities and educational content of each religious group, and such intervention may cripple the activities of these religious groups. Despite these concerns, religious classes offer Alevi knowledge that is otherwise not available in Austria, given that the Alevis have left behind their traditional communities.

In the *Religionunterricht* for Alevis, students light three candles at the start of the lesson with a Turkish *dua* and shouts of 'Ya Allah' 'Ya Muhammed' 'Ya Ali' and put them out again at the end with *dua* and shouts. The students and teachers, except for the person who lights/extinguishes the candle, turn over with their right hand on their left chest and respond to the *dua* with 'Allah Allah!' (figures 5 and 6). These movements mimic the lighting and extinguishing of candles in the *cem*, which marks the beginning and end of the ritual performed by *çeraci*, one of *Hizmetler* (items 6 and 7 on the *cem* procedure list).

Recreating a part of the *cem* with the students in each lesson is thought to have the effect of making the students aware that they are gathered in class as a group with the same religious identity as Alevis, and that what takes place here is a lesson on the Alevi religion.

21 Republic of Austria government website "Gesetzlich anerkannte Kirchen und Religionsgesellschaften" <https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/leben_in_oesterreich/kirchenein__austritt_und_religionen/3/Seite.820015.html> (accessed 8.18. 2019)



Figure 5 (left). Students lighting and turning off candles to imitate the action of *çeracı* in Alevi *Religionsunterricht* at the primary school level. Figure 6 (right). Students lighting and turning off candles to imitate the action of *çeracı* in Alevi *Religionsunterricht* at the Senior secondary school level (Photo: Manami Suzuki, Vienna, June 2016)

3.1.2 Alevi Music in *Religionsunterricht*

In this class, *deyiş* is both a subject to be learnt and teaching material used to provide knowledge. For example, the following is a text that is used in the secondary school Alevi class. It is one of the *deyiş* called *düvazdeh imam*. It is titled *Medet ey Allah'im medet* (Help my Allah help). *Düvazdeh imam* is a *deyiş* sung in the course of *cem* (see item 8 on the *cem* procedure list), in which the names of the Twelve Imams are listed in order. By listening to and singing this *deyiş* in class, students can learn the names of important Islamic saints who have become distant figures in their lives, especially among those living in Christian countries. The class uses this material and translates it from Turkish into German to enhance their understanding. According to Yıldırım, the Turkish language used in *cem*, including *deyiş* and *dua*, is special and can be difficult to understand even if one is able to speak Turkish. The low level of German language acquisition among Turkish immigrants used to be a social problem, but during my observations in 2019, I found that the second and later generations of Austrian-born immigrants spoke German fluently, especially the younger generations, who spoke German with other Turks. When I asked the students in the Zaza language class offered for the Alevi community I visited in Berlin, 4 out of 11 participants, all young people in their late teens to late twenties, felt that they did not fully understand Turkish. Thus, the classes were conducted in German, even though all the students were Turkish (including German-born Turkish migrants). These factors suggest that the younger generation may not be able to understand the meaning and significance of poems if they merely listen to them in class. Thus, translation from Turkish to German is necessary to understand *deyiş* more clearly and receive more Alevi knowledge. Students engage with *deyiş* by listening, translating, and singing in class. Alevi music is ideal for teaching the philosophy of the religion to younger generations [Sağlam 2019: 131–132]. The music transmits some Alevi knowledge. By being performed at special occasions, music serves as a means to teach, repeat, and interpret textual knowledge and religious beliefs [Karolewski 2015: 93]. The form of learning in schools using *deyiş* follows the role of *deyiş* in

the transmission of the Alevi religious tradition.

The position of the Alevi as a religious group in Austria is more stable than that in Turkey, despite their demographic inferiority and reduced opportunities for contact with and participation in Alevi customs, including rituals. This is because their separation from their original community and status as migrants in a society formed by religious others and the consequent dilution of their consciousness and knowledge as Alevi, risk endangering the continuation of their religious tradition as Alevi. This case study shows that the role of the Daesh, which was formed in Turkey to preserve and transmit religious traditions and knowledge in difficult relationships with the religious other, has been recognised by the Alevi themselves for its role in the transmission of traditions, even after changes in the form of education owing to migration to Austria, and continues to play an important role in the efficient transmission of necessary knowledge to the next generation.

3.2 *Çocuk (Eğitim) Cemi*

3.2.1 Content and Purpose

The aforementioned Alevi *Religionsunterricht* is an important place for the Alevi to acquire knowledge. However, as Alevi teacher Yıldırım stated in an interview, the important thing is to link the classroom content with real practice, and no amount of accumulation of learning on the desk is sufficient. ‘*Cem ist Schule,*’ she said, and it is only by going to *cem* and actually seeing what one learns in class in the ritual that people can finally understand it. However, at present, not many young Alevi in Austria, which is a Christian society, have made it a habit to participate in *cem*. The ritual is led by adults with experience. It is difficult for the children taking classes to have the opportunity to practise *cem*. The *Çocuk (Eğitim) cemi* (educational *cem* for children) compensates for the lack of practice in the classroom curriculum and is charged with linking desk-based knowledge with practice.

Çocuk (Eğitim) cemi was launched in 2014 as an extra-curricular activity of the religious class led by Yıldırım and other teachers who are sent by the Alevi Association to each school to conduct classes. When Yıldırım and others approached them with the plan for *Çocuk cemi*, she said, *dede* and older Alevi in the community balked, and were concerned that it was different from the original approach and were unsure of whether the children would understand it. *Dede* and older Alevi now participate in *çocuk cemi*, teaching and supporting the *cem* together with the other teachers. This suggests that they also



Figure 7. Students kissing the floor thrice at the entrance to *cemevi* upon entering the sanctuary (Photo: Manami Suzuki, 2017, June, Vienna)

solved the problem by being directly involved in monitoring the content. Practical teaching has not been officially incorporated into the school curriculum in Turkey.²² It is difficult to conduct practical classes like *çocuk cemi* within the official education curriculum in Turkey, where Alevis are not recognised as a religious group and religious classes are not conducted for them. Massicard reported on the Turkish *eğitim cemi* (educational *cem*) in Ankara in May 2000, which was not aimed at educating children. Instead it used the stadium in Ankara for *semah*, music, and *cem*, and conducted the ceremony with a different intention, as it sought to share Alevi religious practices within the congregation and make outsiders recognise its value as folklore [Massicard 2013: 130–132].



Figure 8. Teacher explaining *hizmet*. (Photo: Manami Suzuki, 2017, June, Vienna)

Çocuk cemi in Austria involves children aged about 8 to 15 years, especially those in *Volksschule* (primary school) that practice *cem*, including *dua* and various prescribed movements. Currently, it takes place once a semester, twice a year, in January and May (or June), near the end of the winter and summer semesters, respectively. This suggests the purpose of the *Çocuk cemi* and the intention on part of the Alevi teachers to link both knowledge and practice by allowing children to experience the lessons, as Yıldırım said.

3.2.2 Music and *Semah* in *Çocuk (Eğitim) Cemi*

In *Çocuk (Eğitim) cemi*, *oniki hizmet deyişi*, *düvazdeh imam*, *tevhid*, *miraçlama*, *mersiye*, and other *deyişs* are played as in regular *cem*s.²³ Before each *deyiş* is sung, the teacher explains the lyrics, how to listen to the *deyiş* to, the movements that should be performed while listening, and the meaning of each movement. For example, *oniki hizmet deyişi* explains the roles of *hizmet* in *cem* and students should go to the square in front of *dede* and prostrate themselves when their own *hizmet* is called in the lyric. The word *miraç* in *miraçılama* refers to Muhammad's



Figure 9. Alevi teacher and students whirl *semah* in *çocuk (eğitim) cemi* (Photo: Manami Suzuki, 2017, June, Vienna)

22 Interview with Yeliz Yıldırım (Vienna, March 2019).

23 Owing to the special skills and knowledge required, only *dede* and *zakir* are often performed by adults in *Çocuk (Eğitim) cemi*. According to *dede*, in the future, these roles will also be practiced by children.

ascension and leads to the whirl *semah* at the end. *Mersiye* tells about the death and sorrow of Imam Husain, and so on, all of which is explained in detail in German. This explanation is necessary to support children who are unfamiliar with the Turkish language used in *deyiş* and *dua* to participate in the gem with a clearer understanding. It also maintains the importance of the *deyiş* and *semah* as Alevi traditions, which at seemingly appears to be simply music and dance accompanying a ritual, is accurately recognised



Figure 10. Students holding hands to share their sorrow when *mersiye* is sung. (Photo: Manami Suzuki, 2017, June, Vienna)

as part of a religious act that is specifically ‘read (*okunur*)’ and whirl (*dölnür*). For example, with respect to *semah*, which comprises dance-like movements, Sokefeld and Shankland pointed out the danger of shifting the perception from ‘part of a religious ritual’ to ‘dance,’ based on both the method of practice and awareness of the practitioner.

Sökefeld discussed *semah* practice in Turkey and reported that no part of *cem* should be folklorised, but that the increased opportunities for practice outside *cem*, such as whirling *cem* at cultural festivals and learning in classrooms, has led to the emergence of the Alevis who ‘dance’ *semah* at weddings; they often clash with *dede* and other Alevis who respect tradition [Sökefeld 2004: 142–143; 2005: 216–217]. Shankland’s discussion of attitudes towards *semah* in the German diaspora communities shows that after it is learned in Turkey, the dance is sometimes passed around at weddings and other occasions as though it were folklore, German Alevis, not only *dedes*, but also the younger generation Alevis also maintain the value of the *semā* (*semah*) as part of the ‘religious ritual’ of the *semā* (*semah*) by strictly enforcing that the *semā* (*semah*) must not deviate from the religious act of approaching God [Shankland and Çetin 2005: 70–71]. Their reports show that the line between *semah* as ‘part of a religious ritual’ and *semah* as ‘dance’ can easily change based on the consciousness of the practitioner. The practice of *semah* in a state of disconnection from *cem* without a sufficient supply of awareness and knowledge of *semah* to practitioners and listeners may tilt the emphasis from *semah* as a religious practice to *semah* as a performance.

Each line between *deyiş*/folksong and *semah*/dance has been naturally shared in the traditional Alevi community by witnessing those practices at *cem*. No matter how similar they may be to folk songs and dances, the Alevis do not call it ‘singing’ and ‘dancing’ but rather ‘talking’ and ‘whirling,’ thus consciously or unconsciously placing them in a special position as religious acts. They link *cem* with *semah* and *deyiş*, and to the adults in the community that they saw and heard about when they were young. Living away from traditional communities and mixing with people from different religious backgrounds, listening to or imitating and

practicing only *deyiş* or *semah* independently from *cem*, for example through YouTube, risks blurring the line between *semah* and dance or *deyiş* and folk songs, as Sökefeld and Shankland reported, and leading to the folklorisation of religious practices. It is important to learn about *deyiş* and *semah* through a religious class, but it is also important to see, hear, and practice them as they are practiced in the *çocuk (eğitim) cemi*, a place constructed as a ritual, albeit one recreated for the class.

In a changing social environment owing to immigration, especially in preserving the Islamic religious tradition in a society with a demographic predominance of Christians as the religious other, I believe that the *Religionsunterricht*, which accumulates knowledge on the desk, and the *çocuk (eğitim) cemi*, which puts that knowledge into practice, work together in an important manner to pass knowledge that is closer to actual Alevi practice to children.

3.3 Effect on the Next Generation

How has the Alevi religious music that is learned in *Religionsunterricht* and *çocuk (eğitim) cemi* affected the younger generation? In living as a migrant in Austria as part of a Christian society, there is far less contact with 'aspects of Alevi life,' including rituals and music. These classes offer a rare opportunity for Alevis to encounter their religious culture. Thus, some of the young generation that has encountered Alevi music and *semah* contribute toward maintaining them. For example, the cultural festival *Ozanların Nefesi* was organised in Innsbruck in 2018 by the younger generation that had taken these religious classes. The cultural festival invited a number of Alevi *saz* players from Turkey, who played *deyiş* together with the Austrian-born generation, and then concluded with a symbolic ceremony in which they handed over *saz* as the religiously and musically significant instrument to the Austrian youth. At a *saz* class held by the Alevi society, I met a child who became interested in *saz* after listening to Alevi music in *Religiounsunterricht*. She begged her parents to buy her an instrument from Turkey so that she could attend the class. Another young woman who participated in *cem* and whirling *semah* with the older generation said that the class gave her opportunity to find her religious identity, and that she now participates in the rituals while learning *cem* procedures and *semah*.

According to Kiyotaka Aoyagi, cultural awareness and psychological direction differs for each migrant generation. First-generation immigrants continue to have a strong psychological and cultural orientation towards their home country. However, the second generation, in contrast to their parents' homeland orientation, try to assimilate into the local culture. The third generation has almost entirely assimilated into the locality and can often afford to reflect on their roots again [Aoyagi 1987: 67]. The generation that was born in Austria and whose childhoods had not yet formed a place for *cem* and learning about Alevi, tends to be the 'second generation' in Aoyagi's theory, as the interviews suggest that have drifted away from *cem* and other Alevi customs as they assimilated into the locality. Even later generations of

Alevi youth and children are offered the opportunity to discover their religious roots in the *Religionsunterricht* and *çocuk (eğitim) cemi*, as they speak fluent German and question who they are while assimilating into their host society.



Figure 11. Alevi festival “*Ozanların Nefesi*” organised by young Alevi (Photo: Manami Suzuki, 2018, June, Innsbruck) Figure 12. Young generation Alevi learning *saz* (Photo: Manami Suzuki, 2018, May, Vienna) Figure 13. Young Alevi joins *cem* and whirl *semah* with the older generation (Photo: Manami Suzuki, March 2018, Innsbruck)

Conclusion

When migrants leave their homeland to live in an environment that has never existed before, various obstacles make it difficult for them to practice what they have taken for granted in their homeland. In the case of the Alevi in Austria, this manifests as difficulties in passing on their religious customs to the next generation, which is adjusting to a completely different religious environment. The Alevi in Austria are an example of how migration has opened up new possibilities for religious and cultural expression. In Turkey, the political environment has often endangered the position of the Alevi as a religious minority and the expression of their identity. In Austria, encounters with the religious other have created a stable space for their transmission. This has led to new possibilities in Austria, Alevi *Religionsunterricht* and *çocuk (eğitim) cemi*, and has encouraged activities by the Austrian-born generation, such as the organisation of cultural festivals.

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