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From a ‘sort of Muslim’ to ‘proud to be Alevi’: The Alevi Religion and Identity Project combatting the negative identity among second-generation Alevis in the UK

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This article explains how the negative identity of second-generation Alevi- Kurds in the UK has been transmitted intergenerationally, linked to their history of persecuted exclusion in Turkey and to the transnational settlement of Alevi migrants in the UK, and how this sense of marginalization and invisibility in the receiving country can be addressed. Education is identified as a starting point for the underachievement and disaffection of Alevi pupils, which can lead them into more serious trouble and descent into the rainbow underclass. In the quest to tackle this identity issue, a unique collaborative action research project was set up between an Alevi community centre, local schools and a university to develop the world’s first Alevi lessons as part of the compulsory Religious Education curriculum in British schools. The Alevi Religion and Identity Project¹ is described and evaluated in terms of its outcomes, especially its contribution towards a more positive Alevi identity as a reflection of a vibrant community.

Key word: Alevi identity, religious education, curriculum intervention, anti-discriminatory action research, transgenerational trauma, transnational education policy

Prologue

I am an Alevi-Kurd, who grew up in a remote Alevi village in Central Anatolia and migrated to London at 18. In Turkey I experienced the forbidden nature of this identity once I started secondary school in the nearby town. At home, my parents constantly reminded me not to speak Kurdish, to the extent that I was dissuaded from playing with my peers. I was instructed not to disclose my Alevi-Kurd identity if I wanted to do well at school, but everyone knew who I was and Kizilbas² was a term of abuse I often heard during the beatings I received from teachers

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and my Sunni peers. From my first day at school, I was endlessly beaten and bullied, as were other Alevi and Kurdish pupils who were assumed to be heretics and from leftist backgrounds. We were punished and excluded despite the fact that it was the majority Sunni nationalist Turks who started the fights, often encouraged by the teachers. Ironically, I did well in Religious Education, passing my tests on the Qur'an. However, I was tormented by the teacher's stories about the fate of non-Muslims where the men would burn in hell and their wives would stoke the fires. This made me almost hate my parents for not being Muslim and I would beg them to convert. During Ramadan I tried to pass as a Muslim by fasting until I got home from school and at other times tried to match my Sunni peers' religious experience and was even recruited into a Muslim youth group. In hindsight the group I was recruited into was the Fettullah³ movement which Islamized Turkish/Kurdish youth. Interviews with Alevis educated in Turkish schools around the same time tell a similar story.

Introduction

This article focuses on the London Alevi-Kurd community, exploring the origins and consequences of the 'negative identity' associated with the second generation who came with their families in the late 1980s/early 1990s, seeking asylum from religious, ethnic and political persecution in Turkey. Specifically, this article begins by tracing how the assimilation experience of Alevi-Kurds in Turkey was negatively shaped by 'persecuted exclusion' (Cetin, 2014)⁴. The prologue captures this experience and helps us understand the 'negative identity' that has been transmitted through generations and to weave the individual experiences of Alevi-Kurds in Turkey and London into a transnational framework. In Turkey, the first generation's negative identity resulted from the Turkish state's history of persecution of Alevis and its attempts to assimilate them into Islam and this legacy explains their understandable reluctance to identify as Alevis (see Aydin, Tekdemir and Karakaya-Stump, this issue, for the histories of Turkish political oppression). Next, we analyse the 'segmented assimilation' (Portes & Zhou, 1993) of the first-generation Alevi-Kurds into their localized ethno-religious communities in London, which were bounded by the towns/villages in Turkey from which they migrated. Despite the relative invisibility of the first generation in the UK, they experienced a more positive identity here than in Turkey, stemming from their freedom to live and practise their religion without fear or humiliation⁵. However, despite this safer environment in the UK, both the first and second generations continue to experience problems in identifying with Aleviness and with mainstream society.

In its most extreme form, the second-generation's negative identity is epitomized by the high rates of male youth suicides, gang membership, drug-dealing and involvement in violence, which caused community leaders to seek help in countering this tendency and to promote a more positive identity for all their youth. Thus, in the first part of the article we address the meanings of transnational identities for both the first and second generation of Alevi-Kurds in Turkey and London in terms of both *etic* (as defined by outsiders) and *emic* (as self-defined) definitions (Andrews, 1989; Emre-Cetin, this issue) in order to capture the specificity of Alevi-Kurd identities. In defining Alevi identities, we also address the intersection with their primordial, situational (Fenton, 2010) and 'strategic'⁶ expressions for the first and second generations, drawing on the personal accounts of second-generation youth derived from Cetin's (2014) ethnography of young male suicide and the Alevi Religion and Identity Project (Jenkins & Cetin, 2014).

The second part of the article focuses on the Alevi Religion and Identity Project, set up as anti-discriminatory action research (Taines, 2014; Truman, 2004) to find solutions to the negative identity of Alevi youth and to monitor their outcomes⁷, entailing a unique collaboration between the London Alevi Cultural Centre and Cemevi (LACCC), the Prince of Wales Primary School in Enfield, Highbury Grove Secondary School in Islington and sociologists from the University of Westminster. It was in discussion with the Alevi youth⁸ about their negative sense of identity that they described their 'invisibility' in school and expressed a desire for Alevism to be taught in their schools' Religious Education (RE) lessons. Accordingly, this became the strategy to overcome their negative identity and in 2011 we devised and implemented teaching units on Alevism at Key Stages 1 and 2, subsequently extending them to Key Stage 3⁹ in 2012. This article briefly describes the process of implementation and the impact of the lessons on both the second-generation Alevi youth and beyond. In so doing, there are interesting parallels between the role of education, and more specifically, religious education in Turkey (Karakaya-Stump, in this issue), Germany (Cosan-Eke, 2014; Kehl-Bodrogi, 2001) and the UK to 'assimilate'¹⁰ Alevi youth. The analysis begins in Turkey with the persecuted exclusion of the first generation.

The first generation in Turkey

The concept of 'negative identity' now being experienced by the second generation had been familiar to previous generations in Turkey as a feature of the long history of 'persecuted exclusion' (Cetin, 2014). As Cetin explains, in Turkey many Alevi families faced daily humiliation, discrimination, imprisonment and persecution (see also Emre-Cetin; Keles; Karakaya-Stump; Aydin; Tekdemir; and Okan in this issue). The majority of the first-generation Alevi migrants in this research grew up in the political climate of the post-1980 military coup which adopted the Turkish Islamic Synthesis (TIS) as its official state policy. Within this framework, Alevi communities who were previously practising their religious rituals such as *cem*¹¹ ceremonies in secret, were forced to abandon them altogether, leaving a generation with little or no knowledge of Alevi religion and cultural practices to pass onto their children. The negative identity attached to Alevis in Turkey as a religious and political ethnic group led some Alevis, especially those who migrated to the urban areas, to hide their identity, join different faith communities or abandon their religion altogether (Karakaya-Stump, this issue; Erdemir, 2005). In order to protect their children's interests, some parents passed themselves off as Sunni Muslims, and those from Kurdish backgrounds forbade their children to speak Kurdish in order to get rid of their accents and to use 'proper' Turkish so that they could be assimilated into mainstream society and secure a better future. This meant that in the process of 'assimilation' in Turkey, some people grew up unaware of their Alevi heritage and would not have been able to pass on their religious beliefs and practices even if they had known them (Sokefeld, 2008).

If parents were not passing on these traditions to their children and the religious leaders were no longer being called to arbitrate on village/community matters, this led to a loss of religious content and a breakdown in the regulative and integrative functions that religion had served for the community, which in any case was being fractured through persecution, assimilation and migration. As conditions worsened for Alevis in Turkey, large numbers migrated to the UK in a very short space of time in the late 1980s and early 1990s as asylum-seekers from the areas most affected by the massacres of Alevis. Their claims for asylum were based primarily on religious grounds as Alevis who had been denied their right to practise their faith, but also on political grounds as left-wing and ethnically Kurds.

The segregated integration of the first generation

The Alevi-Kurds arrived in Britain in the late 1980s to escape persecution both because of their ethnic Kurdish identity (and associated leftist politics) and for their religion. Whereas their primordial identity as Alevi had been viewed negatively by the Turkish state, it became a positive situational identity (Cetin, 2014; Fenton, 2010) in gaining refugee status in Britain. Some Alevi emphasized their ethnic Kurdish identity, some their political identity as engaging in left-wing parties, and others their Alevi religious identity in applying for asylum. In fact, the first-generation Alevi-Kurds in London were more absorbed in Kurdish politics and spent more time at the Kurdish, rather than the Alevi, community centres whilst their asylum and citizenship status was resolved. Most knew little about Alevism because it had been forbidden in Turkey, but now in London they could enjoy the fact that they were no longer under pressure to conceal their ethno-religious and political identity. However, outside of their community, most Alevi-Kurds were still defined etically in that they were assumed to be Muslims religiously and ethnically Turkish, hence rendering them invisible as Alevi in the receiving country.

Portes and Zhou's (1993) 'segmented assimilation' theory assumes that settlement countries, such as the UK in our case, are segmented and new migrants follow three possible adaptation/assimilation trajectories¹², dependent upon a set of 'individual level factors and contextual factors' (Zhou, 1997, p. 984). It is the third trajectory which applied most to the first-generation Alevi-Kurds in London, whereby economic integration was achieved through opportunities offered by the ethnic labour market enclave, (that is maintaining strong ties with Turkey, and doing business within the ethnic enclave on a national and transnational scale)¹³. At the same time, selective acculturation occurred because they maintained strong transnational attachments to their own communities of origin in Turkey as well as their ethnic cultural norms, values and resources (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Morawska, 2009). According to Cetin (2014, 2015), this was evident from their settlement patterns in London, which mirrored their city/village of origin and their adaptation trajectory was assimilation into their own ethnic community rather than into mainstream (British) society. This is what Morawska (2009, p. 18) describes as 'the ethnic-path adaptation within their own communities'. Many worked at the textile factories that were local to them, which offered low-paid, low-skilled and labour intensive jobs for them and their families, and lived on council estates in Hackney and Haringey. Despite these adverse conditions, the first generation

Alevi-Kurds considered themselves to be successful in many ways. For example, they sent remittances home to the family in Turkey and used any capital they had saved to start their own businesses when the textile industry declined (Enneli, *et al.*, 2005). In fact, the majority of them eventually bought their own homes in better areas of London moving out of social housing¹⁴. Moreover, they felt successful because they could exercise cultural and political agency in support of transnational Alevi and Kurdish politics.

Typically, a religious identity is associated with a sense of belonging within a community but this did not necessarily extend beyond, or even fully within, the boundaries of the Alevi community. In fact many Alevis have traditionally been strongly opposed to religion and much more inclined to engage with left-wing politics and embrace equality issues, seeing Alevism as a cultural tradition and defending secularism in all spheres of life (see Tekdemir, this issue). Others, as in the German Alevi community, were inclined to use religious identity as a basis for raising the visibility of the Alevi community, especially in the 1990s revival of Alevism as an identity, politics, culture and religion (Cosan-Eke, 2014). Keles (this issue) asserts how religious migration has led to a revitalization of Alevi religious identity in settlement countries through the freedom to express it, especially for the first generation. This new politics of religion has been an instrumental response to other faith groups, especially Muslims, asserting their rights to be recognized as a faith and have religious instruction in schools. Kehl-Bodrogi (2001) suggests that at least in the German context, religion became a common ground for a divided community wanting to assert their rights to have their religion institutionally recognized. This aspect of migration and its effects have been less well documented or researched in the UK (see Keles, this issue).

Like the other Turkish and Kurdish-speaking community centres, the Alevi community centres were initially set up to support the settlement and adjustment of newly arrived migrants. However, centres such as the London Alevi Cultural Centre and Cemevi¹⁵ (LACCC) became especially important in serving cultural and religious functions, establishing their difference from other Kurdish community centres which were more politically motivated, especially in relation to what was happening in Turkey. The LACCC became a place to hold religious ceremonies, especially funerals because neither Alevis nor Imams were keen to hold funerals in mosques and Alevi families wanted funerals to reflect Alevi values. Keles (this issue) points to the role of

the community centres as almost superseding religious leaders in providing for the welfare of their members. For example, the LACCC was proactive in bridging internal connections within the community through Alevi religious services, as well as outwardly to agencies of the British state and local councils by meeting the immigration, settlement and welfare needs of their members. The first generation were more positively disposed towards the state and education in particular as providing security and future prospects for their children. This made them feel proud and content with what they had achieved without anticipating the real difficulties and challenges the second generation faced when they started school and crossed the ethnic boundaries.

The second generation, anomic disaffection, suicide and negative identity

We define the second generation as children who received some or all of their formal education in the settlement country. The key difference between the generations is where they were educated, testifying to the importance of education in the receiving country for acculturation and assimilation (Dustmann, *et al.*, 2011; Faas, 2008; Crul & Doornik 2003; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Portes & McLeod, 1996). The second generation of children, who received all or part of their education in the UK, were containers of the desires of their parents for them to succeed at school, go to university and get professional jobs as in Portes and Rumbaut's (2001) first assimilation trajectory (Cetin, 2014). This wish, when previously expressed by first-generation parents in Turkey, would have meant their children moving to the cities or leaving the country, but the second generation could achieve these aims on their own doorstep. In fact, many second-generation youth, but by no means all, have taken precisely this route and are now working in the traditional professions as well as in business. Alternatively, they have been successful in the ethnic labour market in establishing their own businesses.

Cetin's (2014) ethnographic research explored the rising suicide rate amongst second-generation Alevi young men between the ages of 18-35, which was a new phenomenon for Alevi communities in Turkey and the UK¹⁶. Whilst it is not possible to establish definitive causes, there were some common features of their experience which contributed to their assimilation into Portes and Rumbaut's (2001) second assimilation trajectory of the 'rainbow underclass', within which suicide occurred. The pressure on the second generation to succeed educationally meant that if this trajectory of educational success was not working, which was more often the case for underachieving

boys, then they were more likely to become disaffected. Typically, problems of fitting in began at secondary school where the disaffected boys became involved with school-based 'gangs'¹⁷ connected with territorial issues, as well as for personal safety, and sought alternative sources of status to academic achievement through a tough, macho masculinity as part of the gang culture. Failure at school also brought them into conflict with their parents, although it might be a long time before parents became aware of any problems at school if they did not speak English. The children's role in mediating with officialdom on their parents' behalf could undermine parental authority due to dependence on the children to complete forms, interpret for them in meetings with state agencies and manage interactions with school, health and benefits services. This entailed some role reversal¹⁸ through children having access to their parents' intimate and financial details, creating scope for emotional blackmail from their own children. The underachieving pupils were adept at hiding letters or misleading their parents about any problems at school so that some parents knew nothing until their children were on the brink of exclusion and were powerless to alter the train of events. In interviews with parents, many said that despite their best efforts, they could not control and discipline their children once they became disaffected. They felt quite powerless when their children physically threatened or blackmailed them (Cetin, 2014).

Many of the second-generation youth aspired to the high-life and did not want to work long hours in the family business (shops, cafes or restaurants) available in the ethnic labour market. However, the kind of work the children could find if they were not going on to college or university was unlikely to support such consumer aspirations. If they worked for the family business or in the ethnic enclave, it was relatively easy money (in terms of not needing qualifications) but entailed working antisocial and long hours in low status occupations, which undermined youthful masculinities (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Some would get more money and status through gang-related criminal activities which would tie them into gang life and its attendant risks. It would also bring them into further conflict with their families and community, precipitating a downward drift into the rainbow underclass with an altogether different value-system, where work was undervalued and status achieved through income gained by illegitimate means and spent in conspicuous consumption. Even within the gangs, there was little hope of making the sort of money they dreamt about and when they became disillusioned with gang life, it was difficult to extricate themselves without threats being made to their

mother's/sister's/girlfriend's safety. Finally, personal relationships were often hard to sustain with girlfriends within this macho environment and if the girlfriend ended the relationship, this could trigger suicidal feelings as the young men felt increasingly trapped with nowhere to go¹⁹.

As outlined earlier, the first generation were subjected to a negative ethnic identity in Turkey, where to be Alevi was to be framed as outside the national identity defined by the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. However, their negative identity as Alevi-Kurd was transformed into a more positive one through the acknowledgement of their religious identity as a basis for their asylum status in the UK and the formation of localized ethno-religious communities in London (typically, Hackney, Islington and Haringey). However, Alevism continued in a more shadowy form for both the first and second generation, with Alevi religious identity lacking content through the failure to transmit its religious traditions from one generation to the next in Turkey. This had a substantial impact on how effectively the first-generation Alevis in Europe and the UK could reproduce their religion and how it functioned for subsequent generations in the settlement countries. This is manifest in the second generation (and even some of the first generation) knowing they are Alevi but not being able to explain its religious beliefs and practices.

Now it is the second-generation youth who became the focal point of community concerns with additional connections forged with schools, health professionals, police, religious leaders and significant others to foster a more 'positive identity' in the hope of preventing future suicides and involvement in gangs, *etc.*²⁰ As part of that quest and through connections with the University of Westminster through Cetin's research, our help was requested to address the problem of suicide and more broadly, the perceived negative identity of Alevi youth.

The invisibility of the second generation in school

Through consultation with the Alevi youth section in 2011, the heart of the issue appeared to be that they felt invisible in school and British society. Like the first generation in Turkey, the second-generation's identity is defined ethnically in that it is assumed that they are ethnically Turkish and religiously Muslim, thereby contributing to their invisibility and disaffection here. However, in the UK, the construction of their identity in these terms is due to widespread ignorance about Alevis as a distinct

religious, cultural or faith group rather than any direct attempt to assimilate them into the national religion as occurred in Turkey (Karakaya-Stump, this issue). At the Prince of Wales Primary School, where we collaborated to produce Alevi lessons for the RE curriculum and which a significant number of Alevi pupils attend, the deputy head reported that most teachers had never heard of Alevism before the project was introduced. Instead, they assumed that the Alevi pupils were Turkish and Sunni Muslim and tried to engage with them around Islamic customs. The deputy head also reported that the ‘Turkish’ pupils (which also included Alevi-Kurds), and especially the boys, were more likely to be underachieving and disruptive in school and reported limited success in engaging with their parents to manage their behaviour, an assumption that is more widely held with regard to Turkish-speaking pupils (Enneli *et al.*, 2005).

Interestingly, Alevi parents also contributed to their children’s invisibility in school, because they were cautious about revealing their Alevi identity outside of the community, perhaps because they carried over fears about how Alevi children might be treated in British schools, as was also the case for German Alevis (Cosan-Eke, 2014). For example, when registering their children for state schools, parents are asked what religion they belong to if any, and many Alevi parents would say Muslim or ‘no religion’ rather than Alevi. This identification with Muslim was partly explained in terms of dietary requirements, as parents did not want their children to eat pork.

The Alevi Religion and Identity Project originated in response to talking to Alevi young people about their sense of self and their marginalized exclusion at school, which made it hard for them to feel a sense of belonging when no one knew about them. Descriptions of their experiences of school typically included the assumptions made by their teachers and peers about them being Sunni Muslim. In fact most of the schools that the Alevi children attended had a large proportion of Muslim pupils and they were counted among them. Some recalled that their teachers would ask them why they were not praying or fasting and they would explain that they were ‘sort of Muslim’ but did not follow the same practices. One student described an incident when her RE teacher asked the class what religion they belonged to and she said she was Alevi. The teacher thought that she was making it up and it was not until her father went into the school next day to explain that the family was Alevi that she was believed. One of Cetin’s young male respondents who was disaffected at school explained that his admissions

form stated he was Muslim and that teachers saw him as a troublemaker. This was most apparent in RE lessons as the following extract reveals:

I had no interest in education, especially the RE lessons. Because we were registered as Muslims, I was put in Muslim groups in RE classes. I was sleeping most of the time because I realized that what they were saying and doing were not things that we were doing at home. I understood that we were Alevi but never said this to them. (*Cemal*)²¹

Moreover, some of the youths described being bullied by Muslim peers for not praying and fasting and that sometimes they would pretend to fast to avoid conflict.

Similarly, when we talked to the young people, they described how they would define their identity in terms of what they were not, primarily as 'not Muslim' or 'sort-of Muslim' rather than Alevi, depending on their audience. Another participant explained that he adjusted his description of himself according to his audience demonstrating a situational orientation (Fenton, 2010). For example, if asked he would say he was Turkish as he said people would not know about Kurds. If he was asked directly if he was a Kurd, he would say that he was. When asked about whether he knew he was Alevi, he replied:

Well we had the picture of Ali and Twelve Imams at our home, things like that. I knew we were Kurd and Alevi but I was saying we were Turkish and Muslim because it was easy and I did not have to explain things to people. (*Cemal*)

Another of Cetin's young respondents, interviewed in 2011, said he did not know he was Alevi until he went to school and saw other children wearing the *zulfikar*²².

I asked them what it was. They told me they were Alevi and Alevi people wear *zulfikar*. Then I came home and asked my parents if we were Alevis and they said yes. I asked what Alevism was but they just said that we were Alevi and Alevis like Ali and *zulfikar* is Ali's sword and so on.... Then my dad said he didn't know more. He told me to go and ask Hasan, my aunt's husband.... To be honest, if someone asks me now I will say I am Alevi but I can't explain it. I know I am Alevi but I can't explain what it is. (*Ali*)

The young people felt that they did not want to have to explain their religion all of the time or were not able to do so, and often resorted to describing their faith in a shorthand way as ‘Muslim’ or ‘sort of Muslim’ in order to fit in. This perpetuated their sense of being outsiders. This we describe as strategic identification, switching between Alevi identity out of school and Muslim identity in school and with peers. It is suggestive of the psycho-social pressures that Alevi pupils experienced as being ‘othered’ in relation to Muslim pupils and resonates with the experience of the first and second generation, who were wholly or partly educated in Turkey (Jenkins & Cetin, 2014).

The Alevi Religion and Identity Project

It is important to first provide some transnational context to teaching about Alevism in schools before going on to describe the Alevi Religion and Identity Project in the UK. In Turkey, the history of persecuted exclusion persists in religious education (RE), which was made compulsory in the 1980s as part of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis and wholly concentrated on Sunni Islam to teach future generations to be good citizens. However, subsequently one of the demands made by Alevis during the ‘Alevi Opening’ in 2006, an AKP project to address issues raised by Alevi communities in Turkey, was to end the mandatory religious education classes in schools and ban any negative representations of Alevism in school textbooks. These demands have not been met by the AKP and in fact there has been a further intensification of Islamization through recent educational reforms (Karakaya-Stump, this issue). Where Alevism is covered at all in the RE curriculum, it is taught as a branch of Islam. Thus, the first Alevi lessons in the world were introduced in German schools in 2002 as a result of the German Alevi Federation’s campaign to gain state recognition of Alevism as a distinct faith, which followed the earlier successful campaign by Muslims to gain religious instruction in Islam in state schools. Also, in Germany, the inclusion of separate lessons on Alevism was originally based on it being identified as a branch of Islam²³ and was reported as a strategic representation of Alevism in Germany in order to get the lessons approved by the state, where Alevism could be taught in schools as an elective (Cosan-Eke 2014; Kehl-Bodrogi, 2001). The introduction of Alevi lessons in the UK was conducted at the local level rather than at national or federal levels and it is to this project we now turn.

Anti-racist research stresses the importance of giving minority ethnic students a voice to foster their sense of belonging in school and how they relate to Britishness and

identity in the school context (Taines, 2014; Keddie, 2014; Osler, 2011). When we talked to the Alevi youth, we were surprised to discover the strength of their feelings of exclusion at school, especially in RE. These lessons became a flashpoint for their feelings of exclusion because, whilst other world religions were taught, religious diversity did not include Alevism. They felt a certain injustice in learning about other religions when no one knew about theirs and wished that other children could be taught about Alevism too. It was out of this desire, namely that their religion be taught alongside other world faiths in RE lessons, that the action research project to introduce Alevi lessons into schools began. The key partners were the London Alevi Cultural Centre and Cemevi (LACCC), Prince of Wales Primary School, Enfield and the University of Westminster. They were later joined by Highbury Grove Secondary School in Islington to extend the lessons to Key Stage 3.

In early 2011, a meeting with Alevi parents was set up at the primary school and also attended by the LACCC to encourage them to be more actively involved in their children's education. As part of the quest to introduce Alevi lessons, it was also attended by the University research team. At that meeting the Chair of LACCC explained how hard it was to teach young people about their religion because most Alevis do not really know what Alevism is, even when it is their core identity and they are attending events at the Community Centre. He further explained that because the first generation were forbidden from practising their religion in Turkey, they knew little about it which meant they could not transmit it to the next generation, which partly explains why Aleviness is a weak signifier of religion and why the youth experience their identity negatively (Cetin, 2014). Also, without a definitive sacred text there are different interpretations and perspectives amongst Alevis about what Alevism is, its history and its relationships to other religions, which made it very difficult to find common ground, a point confirmed by Karakaya-Stump and Tekdemir (this issue) and Kocan and Oncu (2004). A working party was set up and extended meetings were held over the next year or so to research and plan the curriculum. It was important that it related to what was being taught at the rest of Key Stage 1 and 2 and that it followed the attainment targets of the locally agreed Enfield RE syllabus in terms of 'learning about' and 'learning from' different religions (Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE) Agreed Syllabus for Enfield). In this respect, the aims of RE in the

UK are very different to the Turkish context, in the sense that it is absolutely not taught in terms of how to be religious (Karakaya-Stump, this issue).

In the UK, religious education is a compulsory legal requirement in schools but the curriculum is agreed at the local level. Under the terms of the 1996 Education Act, it is the local Standing Advisory Committee on RE (SACRE), which has discretion over teaching about faiths which represent local communities (Department of Children, Schools and Families, 2010). In preliminary discussions with an independent RE adviser about how best to introduce Alevism into the RE core curriculum, she suggested that the lessons might be better placed in the Social Moral and Cultural Education curriculum, where the fusion of Alevi religion and cultural practices could be incorporated. Admittedly, the Alevi community struggle over whether they define themselves as primarily an ethnic or faith group, but this suggestion was not popular, not least because the working party stressed the importance of recognizing Alevism as a distinct faith rather than as a set of cultural practices. Moreover, the Alevi youth framed their negative identity around their invisibility in school and in particular in RE lessons, so any solution needed to address its absence in RE. In presenting the proposal for Alevi lessons to the Enfield SACRE²⁴ operating at local authority level, they too needed some persuasion of the distinctiveness of Alevism from Islam, as had been the case in Germany (Cosan-Eke, 2014; Kehl-Bodrogi, 2001), but once convinced, they approved the introduction of the units on Alevism. Thus, the Prince of Wales Primary School became the first in the world to integrate Alevi lessons into the core RE curriculum rather than as an option²⁵. Moreover, Alevism was treated from the outset as a distinct faith as opposed to being a branch of Islam. Like Germany, the inclusion of Alevi lessons in schools was a central part of the Alevi community's strategy to gain state recognition of Alevism²⁶.

In November 2011, the Alevism lessons were introduced at the school through a preliminary whole school, staff-development session to inform the class teachers about the project. They were instantly engaged when they could see how many Alevi pupils they had in their classes and, in fact, only one class had no Alevi pupils at all. The class teachers decided to teach the Alevism lessons to their year groups too and adapted the Key Stage 1 materials as appropriate to the level of these groups. A launch assembly was well attended by Alevi parents, some coming into the school for the first time. As the children walked into the assembly they could hear Alevi music playing and some of

the pupils recognized it as the music they would hear at home, generating considerable excitement at this confluence of home and school life (Barron, 2007). One or two children went home after school that day to ask their parents if they were Alevi, having recognized the music. The parents then called the LACCC asking if they could learn more about Alevism and other parents also rang to ask if their school could offer Alevi lessons, and so the impact of the project began to be felt beyond the school. In fact, many parents and a few schools with Alevi pupils across the country are now showing an interest in, or starting Alevi lessons too²⁷.

The lessons focused at Key Stage 1 on 'Growing up in an Alevi home' and on 'Key Figures in Alevism' at Key Stage 2. The *dedes* (religious leaders) who serve the LACCC visited the school and attended the lesson where pupils rehearsed the twelve services of the *cem* ceremony. Firstly, the teacher asked who in the class was Alevi and about ten pupils raised their hands, eager to proclaim their faith identity. This moved some of the Alevi adults almost to tears as they remembered how they had been beaten for their faith in Turkish schools. For them, to see the children's enthusiasm together with the engagement of the rest of the diverse, multi-ethnic class in Alevi rituals was a profoundly emotional experience. A permanent display of Alevi artefacts was set up in a cabinet outside the school hall and this provided further tangible evidence of the inclusion of Alevism in the school's ethos and was the source of considerable pride amongst the Alevi children and noticed too by visiting Alevi parents, who then felt more comfortable with the school and more keen for their children to attend. Where previously, Alevi pupils, especially the boys, had been perceived as disruptive, and one boy had been on the brink of exclusion, now relationships between Alevi pupils and staff were much better, based on a clearer understanding of Alevi beliefs and culture. Gradually a shift occurred with Alevi pupils feeling more included because the school knew about and accepted their faith and teachers were able to talk to them about Alevism, where previously they had tried to engage with them as Muslims. Some of the Alevi pupils in the school also participated in a presentation by the working party to the Enfield SACRE to report on the progress of the Alevi lessons. They brought along their books and answered questions about Alevism, generating a positive response to this initiative. Like other school community-building initiatives (Shirley, 2009), the Alevi lessons had positive outcomes in terms of pupils' and parents' identification with both the school and the wider Alevi community. The Alevi pupils scored more highly in the

end-of-year SATs tests than was predicted²⁸. When the school had an OFSTED²⁹ inspection in 2012, the report commended the Alevi Religion and Identity Project:

The school identified an underachieving group of Alevi pupils of Turkish and Kurdish heritage. One of the deputy headteachers introduced an Alevi scheme of work which teaches about the Alevi culture and, as a result, these pupils have grown in confidence and self-esteem as well as improving attainment (Prince of Wales Primary School OFSTED Report, 2012, p.6).

The outcomes of the project were reported back to the Alevi youth and they were encouraged to ask their secondary schools if they would offer Alevi lessons as part of the RE curriculum too. One pupil at Highbury Grove Secondary School asked her head teacher, who gave her approval as there is a significant proportion of Alevi pupils in the school. The head of RE was also very supportive of the project as long as the students were involved in the design and delivery of the curriculum. It was agreed to produce a half-unit on Alevism for Key Stage 3 (11-14) and to run the lessons the following year with two groups of Year 9 pupils (aged 13-14). A working party was established with about sixteen students working with members of the original working party to design the curriculum, which again had to fit in with the objectives and attainment targets of Key Stage 3. Four girls from Years 9-12 delivered the lessons, supported by the head of RE and other members of the working party, both pedagogically and in terms of specialist knowledge of Alevism. The lack of knowledge about Alevism was reflected in the difficulties experienced in researching the lesson content due to both the absence of specific sacred texts to draw upon and resources in English. Moreover, the second generation students delivering the lessons found they could not answer the questions about their religion, which contrasted with the greater knowledge of other pupils about their religion. In order to counteract this, at least one member from the cultural centre was always present and, together with the head of RE, made comparisons with other religions to embed the pupils' understanding of Alevism.

There was a positive reception for the Alevi lessons in the school, which was evident both from the non-Alevi students who had never heard of Alevism and from the Alevi students themselves³⁰, for whom their religion and ethnic identity was being institutionally recognized for the first time. What was most surprising to the Year 9 pupils was the forbidden nature of the religion, the history of persecution of Alevis in

Turkey and how it had to be practised in secret. One aspect of this legacy and negative identity of the second generation was reproduced in the hidden informal network of Alevi pupils throughout the school whose wider experience was that everyone else assumed they were Turkish and Muslim. It was also reflected in the ambivalence expressed by one Alevi student to reveal her Alevi identity in the lessons. It was only in response to the positive class engagement with Alevism, and its legitimacy conferred by the identification of many similarities with other Abrahamic religions in its rituals and symbolic meanings, that she was able to visibly relax sufficiently to show her interest in the lessons. Thus the Alevi lessons represent a historic achievement in giving a legitimate voice to Alevi pupils, parents and the wider community. More importantly, Alevi values are now being expressed without shame or embarrassment in these participating schools, which have embraced Alevism in an inclusive educational framework, which stands in marked contrast to the education system in Turkey (see Karakaya-Stump, this issue). In fact, the lessons were given national coverage in the Turkish press, sending an important message about religious diversity and tolerance to the Turkish government which denies the existence of Alevism as a distinct religion.

Conclusion

The 'negative identity' which had permeated down from the first to the second generation has to be understood in the different transnational contexts of Turkey, Germany and the UK, where Alevis have settled. Whilst the persecution of Alevis, their invisibility and hidden nature of Alevism continues in Turkey, there are both similarities and differences in the 'negative identity' of the first generation (and members of the second generation who received at least some of their formal education in Turkey) and those wholly educated here. The prologue illustrates the pressures Alevi-Kurds faced in Turkey to hide their identity and render themselves invisible when attending school. Alevi youth in Turkey experience what we can describe as a splitting-off of their Alevi selves in order to pass as Turkish and Muslim to survive their schooldays and beyond and, as Karakaya-Stump (this issue) argues, the new education reforms are further Islamizing Turkish youth, which will only serve to increase their discomfort in school. Whilst the second generation in the UK may not have experienced or witnessed the trauma of being Alevi in Turkey, they too feel invisible in British society which tends to define them etically as ethnically Turkish and religiously

Muslim, an assumption that leads to all sorts of negative outcomes in terms of misunderstandings with teachers and peers about them not following Muslim religious practices and a feeling of not belonging in school or the wider British society. Moreover, Alevi youth have reported being bullied here too, despite there being an institutional culture of zero tolerance of bullying or discrimination (Department for Education, 2014).

This action research project was inspired by a plea from the LACCC to help tackle the negative identity permeating the second generation and associated problems. The second generation carry the intergenerational scars of their parents' efforts to suppress their Aleviness, to the extent that some children do not know they are Alevi or what it means to be Alevi beyond the cultural practices maintained by the family. The limited content of Alevism, dependent as it has been on the oral transmission of its beliefs and rituals, has further contributed to the negative identity and invisibility here of the second generation, which for some has spiralled into underachievement, disaffection with school and their communities, and a dangerous descent into the rainbow underclass of gangs, criminal activity, drugs and despair, even suicide. We identified education as a flashpoint at which underachievement and disaffection first surface, leading on to involvement in gangs as an alternate source of status and conflicts with parents, schools and authority more generally. Through discussions with young people and the LACCC, the issues confronting Alevi pupils were identified through their difficulties in defining their identity as Alevi. They could describe themselves in terms of what they were not, hence a negative identification and did not know enough about their religion and culture to articulate a more positive identity than that. What emerges is a conflict between etic, strategic and emic definitions of Alevi identity, insomuch as Alevi youth have also used the etic definition of their identity as Turkish and Muslim in institutional contexts strategically to avoid having to explain themselves, whilst emically they define themselves as Alevi at home with their families and in the wider Alevi community. The young people desired Alevism to be included in RE lessons because that was where they felt their exclusion most strongly and so that other children could also learn about their religion, which empowered them to feel that they had a legitimate presence in school, rather than living on the margins as an outsider ethnic and religious group.

The Alevi Religion and Identity Project created a unique 'community of practice' (Jenkins & Cetin, 2014; Barron, 2007) between the LACCC, Prince of Wales Primary

School, Highbury Grove Secondary School and sociologists at the University of Westminster, bringing together our knowledge and skills to design and deliver half units on Alevism for the RE curriculum at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. The aim was to generate for the first time in the UK, an emic definition of Alevi beliefs and values within the institutional context of these schools. The recognition of the success of the project was evident in diverse ways and for all parties involved. The pupils reported a greater sense of belonging in both schools, achievement levels improved at Key Stage 2 and they enjoyed better relationships with their teachers based on an understanding of Alevi culture and faith. At the Prince of Wales Primary School, Alevi parents were very interested in the lessons and became more engaged because their presence was treated so positively and respectfully and there were Alevi teachers/teaching assistants who could interpret for them. Some parents made contact with the Alevi Centre to find out more about Alevism or to ask if other schools could teach the lessons too. The fact that the local Standing Advisory Committee for RE supported the introduction of Alevi lessons, the Prince of Wales school OFSTED report praised the project, and it received the British Educational Research Association prize for its unique collaboration between a university and school were significant outcomes to consolidate a positive identity for Alevis. The Alevi Federation has since gained charitable status from the Charity Commission in recognition of Alevism as a religion, drawing on the project as evidence of its institutional support and legitimacy. This combination of the emic definition of what counts as Alevism and the etic acceptance of Alevism as part of the rich diversity of faith groups in the schools, has constructed a mediated identity of Alevism in a new much more positive form³¹. Moreover, religious diversity is generally seen as a positive dynamic of British society, as evidenced by the success of the project.

This project is unique in facilitating a much greater visibility of the Alevi community in London and in a markedly different way to how they are presented in Turkey. It is hoped that the celebration of Alevism through its inclusion in the core RE curriculum will stem the feelings of disaffection in Alevi pupils and help them to reconnect positively with both their schools and their Alevi identity because they now feel that it is an acceptable identity and that they have a legitimate place in the school. Thus, we have addressed the problem of a negative identity, not only from the perspective of Alevi youth but also from the educational perspective through the lessons, in recognition that it can make a difference between social inclusion facilitating

educational achievement and social exclusion which can lead to the slippery slope towards the rainbow underclass.

Since the project began in 2011, Alevi youth, at least those connected with the LACCC, have shown themselves to be increasingly resilient and able to handle the pressure of a negative identity. The British Alevi Youth Federation has grown from strength to strength and is actively involved in bringing Alevism into their schools and have since started up an after-school club at Highbury Grove School to continue to provide opportunities for students to learn more about Alevism and have started Alevi student societies at their local universities. Nationwide, the Alevi Federation was established in 2013 and new Alevi Centres have opened in Doncaster and Nottingham. Now, when visiting the LACCC, it is noticeable that there are posters which assert 'Proud to be Alevi', in much the same way as earlier identity politics campaigns in the 1980s like 'Black is beautiful' turned discrimination into a celebration of difference (Hall, 2005). Finally, this micro project has had significant implications for Alevi communities in Turkey, who since the Alevi revival have been struggling to either get compulsory RE abolished or have Alevism included in the core RE curriculum in Turkish schools and who now face the aggressive Islamization policies to indoctrinate them into the national religion. What is distinctive about our Alevi lessons, which have operated at the micro level of individual schools in local authorities, is that we have introduced Alevism as a religious identity distinct from Islam, to forge a sense of inclusion/belonging for future generations of Alevi pupils in UK schools. In other words, our project is based on the principle of 'difference as diversity', which is inclusive, whilst at the other extreme in Turkey, this 'difference' is not tolerated. Moreover, this project showcases a model of anti-discriminatory action research (Truman, 2004) which works with and for marginalized communities to promote a sense of inclusion and belonging in school and could be adopted by other ethno-faith groups similarly struggling for recognition. Currently, an RE consultant is developing the Alevi lessons into a professional teaching pack of the curriculum³² which can then be used by other schools with Alevi pupils. This religion and identity action research is now feeding into the next phase of our collaboration with the Alevi Federation to generate a survey of the transnational Alevi-Kurd community in the UK to help support the community's case for greater visibility through inclusion in the 2021 UK national census as an ethno-faith group.

Notes

1. The core members of the Alevi Religion and Identity Project are Nadide Koroglu, Israfil Erbil, Haydar Ulus, Hasan Bolucek and Semih Savasal, and the Youth Group from the London Alevi Cultural Centre and Cemevi; Ms Julia Clarke from Prince of Wales Primary School; Mr Barry Ackerman from Highbury Grove Secondary School; and Dr Celia Jenkins and Dr Umit Cetin from the University of Westminster.
2. Alevis are also known as *Kizilbas*, which was used by non-Alevis as a term of abuse and was synonymous with being a heretic and blasphemous. See Aydin, this issue for a fuller explanation.
3. Being a member of the Struggle Against Communism Associations in the late 1960s, the Fettullah Gulen's movement was the closest ally of the AKP government until very recently, when there was conflict over the distribution of power and resources. Gulen's supporters from within the police released tapes which revealed corruption in the AKP government and Erdogan's logistical support to Islamist groups in Syria, including ISIS. The Turkish authorities retaliated by identifying him as the leader of the Terrorist Organisation called 'parallel state' within the state (see <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/01/akp-gulen-conflict-guide.html#>).
4. This concept denotes the history of the Alevi-Kurds as an ethno-religious minority in Anatolia who were both persecuted and excluded as subjects under the Ottoman Empire and 'citizens' of the Modern Turkish state due to their Alevi religious and Kurdish ethnic differences. Their peculiar history and ambiguous relationship with the Turkish Republic makes Alevi-Kurds, to borrow the term from Gold (1992), a 'twice minority' because of their religious and ethnic marginality. This is because Turkish official ideology defines citizenship on the basis of religion and ethnicity in which Sunni Islam and ethnically Turk are together the dominant form of identity and which excludes all other ethno-religious groups such as Alevi Kurds (*cf* Koçan & Oncu, 2004). In certain situations, the Alevi Turks can draw on their ethnic Turkishness while the Sunni Kurds can draw on their religion to associate themselves with the discourses of Turkish national identity. But these options are not available for Alevi Kurds. In the UK, the majority of Alevis are Kurdish but some define themselves as ethnically Turkish. However, it is very common for Alevis to put their religious identity above their ethnic identity as Kurds or Turks although this can very much depend on the context in which they are identifying themselves.
5. In fact, unlike other religions, there was not much to practice as Alevis do not attend a place of worship regularly or follow a particular dress code or rituals. More importantly, they

were no longer under pressure to pass as Muslim and could attend the *cemevi* without fear of reprisals.

6. We use the term ‘strategic’ instead of *takiyye*, which has been used by many scholars to describe how Alevis hide their identity and pretend to be Sunni in order to avoid conflict. In fact the term *takiyye* is an Islamic term meaning to deceive someone. For example, Sokefeld (2008) used the term *takiyye* to refer to survival strategies of the Alevis in Turkey and Germany but especially those who migrated to the cities. However, the term *takiyye* also means that actors are making a deliberate rational choice to achieve a material goal, such as passing as Muslim for business purposes or to get/keep a job (see Karakas, 2007). Our use of the term ‘strategic’ identity is reserved for the experience of those second-generation Alevis in British schools who do not actively and deliberately claim to be Muslims but will say that they are Muslim in order to avoid further questions from their teachers and peers, mainly because they cannot explain what Alevism is.
7. (see the link below: <http://www.westminster.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/humanities/2011/sociologists-pioneer-alevism>).
8. After being invited as academics by the London Alevi Cultural Centre and Cemevi (LACCC) to talk to their committees about the problem, we attended youth meetings which were organised by the Alevi Youth Committee to seek their views on the problems affecting Alevi young people here.
9. The national education system in England and Wales is divided into four key stages. Key Stage 1 is from 5-7; Key Stage 2 from 7-11; Key Stage 3 from 11-14, and Key Stage 4 from 14-16 (Ball, 2013).
10. We use the term ‘assimilation’ to refer to the integration of Alevis into multicultural British society. We are aware of the fact that in the Turkish context especially, it has a negative meaning, but its usage here is consistent with the segmented assimilation theory which best describes the adaptation patterns of the first and second-generation migrants (Portes, *et al.*, 2005; Alba & Nee, 1997).
11. The *cem* is the main ritual in Alevism and is a gathering of Alevis in a service led by a *dede*, a religious leader, with the consent of the members present (see http://www.alevynet.org/AjaxRequestHandler.ashx?Function=GetSecuredDOC&DOCUrl=App_Data/alevynet_org/AleviNewsEventsArticles_en-GB/_Documents_2015-16/Alevisim%20Booklet.pdf)
12. The first assimilation trajectory confirms the ‘time-honoured upward mobility pattern’ where immigrants enter the mainstream middle-class through acculturation followed by assimilation. The second is ‘the downward-mobility pattern’ which produces acculturation

and assimilation into the 'rainbow underclass' or existing underclass made up of different ethnic groups living in permanent poverty. The third is upward mobility through the ethnic labour market.

13. For a more detailed account of this theoretical approach, see Portes & Zhou (1993) and Morawska (2009).
14. This was facilitated by the Government's Right to Buy scheme, which gave financial incentives to existing tenants to buy their council houses.
15. LACCC was the first Alevi cultural centre and *cemevi* to open in 1993, following the surge of protests arising from the treatment of Alevis in the Sivas massacre in Turkey. It took three years for Alevis to establish a community centre that catered for their religious and cultural needs such as organising funerals and *cem* ceremonies. However, there is a widespread feeling and evidenced by interviews with the first generation that the newly established LACCC only attracted those who defined themselves as Turkish and Alevi, distinguishing themselves from the Alevi-Kurds and 'politicized' (Marxist and socialist) Alevi Turks. In other words, the Alevi-Kurds did not fit into the membership frame of the LACCC because of their ethnic and political characteristics. However, with the recent change of governance and management of the community centre, this exclusive attitude has also shifted to a more inclusive one towards membership, who are now far more diverse to include Alevis from various ethnic and political backgrounds such as Kurds, Turks, and Marxists.
16. Suicide is not unknown among Alevis in Turkey and abroad but young male suicide is a new departure as in the past, it was the women and older members of the community who tended to commit suicide (Cetin, 2014).
17. We are aware of the difference between the academic definition of a 'gang' and the self-definition of gangs by the second-generation Alevi-Kurdish schoolchildren. Gang was a term used by the second-generation participants to describe themselves, but in fact it refers to school-based groups who engaged in low-level activity and stuck together in ethnic enclaves to protect themselves and to generate a tough reputation (Cetin, 2015).
18. According to Portes and Rumbaut (2001) role reversal is one of the most important determinants of downward assimilation into the rainbow underclass. When children gain power over their parent(s) at a very young age, they usually make poor decisions and manipulate situations in their own interests which often lead to more serious trouble, parental conflict and an eventual slide into the rainbow underclass with chronic anomie.
19. Interviewees and many members of the Alevi community believed that 'boys were committing suicide because of their girlfriends', who are often portrayed as heartless. For

example, this viewpoint was articulated through media reporting of one suicide case, that of Hasan Bal, who hanged himself from the balcony of his ex-girlfriend after she broke up with him (<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/hayatimdan-cik-sozu-onu-bitirdi-13185878>).

Another prevailing discourse around suicide was that the young men were either killed and made to look like suicide or were forced by the gangs to commit suicide because of their 'internal' conflicts.

20. All London Alevi, Turkish and Kurdish community centres launched a joint campaign to say 'no to gangs' and the 'degeneration of youth' and they organised several meetings and marches to protest against the gangs who were believed to be recruiting Alevi and Kurdish youth (<http://www.starkibris.net/index.asp?haberID=59663>).
21. The participants' names are fictitious.
22. The *zulfikar* is an Alevi symbol of a sword to represent justice and is often worn on a chain around the neck by Alevi men and women of all ages.
23. The debate about whether Alevism is taught as a branch of Islam is contentious but in this instance Kehl-Bodrogi explains its use as strategic as illustrated by the following quote: 'Analogous to denominational Christian instruction, there should not be only one type of Islamic instruction. In fact, separate instruction should exist for Sunnism and Alevism. In this reasoning, Alevism clearly appears as an Islamic denomination' (Kehl- Bodrogi, 2001, p. 9).
24. Enfield SACRE Agreed Syllabus for RE can be found at their website
<http://webfronter.com/enfield/sacre/menu/mnu2.shtml>
25. Since 2012 in Germany at least one state has now introduced Alevi lessons into the core RE syllabus, e.g. North Rhine Westphalia. See
http://www.schulentwicklung.nrw.de/lehrplaene/upload/klp_SI/SI_KLP_Alevitische_Religionslehre.pdf
26. In fact, the British Alevi Federation has very recently been granted charitable status, which means that Alevism is officially recognised as a faith and has access to the same rights to charitable status as other faiths. See
http://www.alevinet.org/MAP.aspx?pid=AleviNewsEventsArticles_en-GB
27. There is currently a campaign run by the Alevi Federation Women's Committee to encourage Alevi parents to approach their children's schools about introducing Alevi lessons.
28. Standard Attainment Tests set a national standard of achievement in the national curriculum subjects of Maths, Science and English at each Key Stage. They are sent off to

be marked independently from the school, so those marking it were not influenced by the impact of the Alevi lessons.

29. OFSTED, the Office for Standards in Education, is the government schools' inspection service which checks that schools are maintaining national standards.
30. The head of RE reported that he was constantly stopped by pupils requesting Alevi lessons too and some Alevi pupils from older year groups were actually given permission from their class teachers to attend the lessons.
31. For example, the Chair of the Alevi Federation proclaimed at a meeting to announce their acceptance by the Charity Commission as a religion, that they no longer needed to explain themselves as they just need to say they are Alevi now. See the link below for Erbil's press release: (http://www.alevynet.org/MAP.aspx?pid=Haberler_en-GB&aid=nn_148829266_92832609)
32. This will be launched in the summer of 2016 and made available on the British Alevi Federation website with supporting materials. See education section for existing resources on Alevism: <http://www.alevynet.org>

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which won the British Educational Research Association prize for a unique collaboration between a school and a university. They are currently conducting a Leverhulme/British Academy funded transnational survey of the London Alevi community and its transnational kinship networks.

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