

НАУКА И ОБЩЕСТВО
SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

УДК 93/94+929

**STRANGERS. PROXIMITY. HOMELAND. IDENTIFICATION
WITH AND REJECTION OF TRANSCULTURAL LIFESTYLES
BASED ON THE MEHMED ALI PASHA PROJECT.
A POSITION PAPER**

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Phenomena such as migration, flight, integration, conversion and multilingualism play a major role in the multi-ethnic societies of Eurasia, whether in Germany and Austria or in Turkey and Tatarstan. In Germany, a model was developed on how to deal with these phenomena with young people in an emphatic, empowering and multilingual manner. This "Pasha method" ties in with the genealogy, language and religion of the participating children. The inspiration for the method came from Alabuga in Tatarstan in 2011¹. This text attempts to discuss further possibilities of utilizing the Pasha method in the light of interreligious relations and comparative biographical analysis, since the biographies between the Ottoman Empire and Germany in the 19th century were often colorful and multifaceted, like those of the Ottoman Pasha named Mehmed Ali from Magdeburg².

¹ An especially big, heartfelt thank you goes to our colleague Galuza Bondareva from Mendeleevsk (Republic of Tatarstan) for her suggestions and her six-stage method guide «Изучение родословной как средства духовно-нравственного воспитания школьников. Методическое пособие» [The study of the genealogy as a means of spiritual and moral education of schoolchildren. Method guide], Mendeleevsk, 2012.

² "Project" here refers to all activities around the book, the exhibition, the Geocaching safaries and films "The Pasha of Magdeburg", around the Mehmed Ali Pasha Archive, the international "Research-Network Pasha" and the "Pasha Method", s.a.: www.pascha-magdeburg.de (accessed: 2.2.2022).

Keywords: Mehmed Ali Pasha, Migration, Identity, History, Islam.

For citation: Çiçek H., Hotopp-Riecke M. Strangers. Proximity. Homeland. Identification with and rejection of transcultural lifestyles on the background of the Mehmed Ali Pasha project. A position paper. *Istoricheskaya etnologiya*, 2022, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.22378/he.2022-7-1.145-160>

Life is characterized by a wide variety of challenges that demands different strategies from individuals and societies. As sweeping as this statement may sound, it is a fact in very different areas of society, in the context of this article especially in the thematic aspects of migration, integration, foreignness, closeness, cultural translation, confessional conversion, cultural education and a new start, beginning and hope in manifold shades. Many stories about the fates of individuals or groups of emigrants confirm the above statement. For many emigrants or migrants, the new place of life they chose or where they ended up by chance offered opportunities they did not have, and often could not have, in their old homeland. The social and economic options in a foreign country may enable them to advance in education. Another group of migrants does not emigrate in the hope of changing their lives for the better due to better economic conditions in a new environment, but to escape political persecution and to simply enable survival. In the new homeland it is quite possible that they will no longer be able to pursue the professions they practised in their old homeland, such as engineer, doctor, teacher, etc., and will simply be forced to perform in more trivial or just different professions. In short, migration always means having to cope with challenges of all kinds, not just accepting change but shaping it. The history of the Huguenot from Magdeburg and later Ottoman Pasha is such a story – full of challenges and how to overcome them (Hotopp-Riecke 2015; 2018; 2020).

Migrants and immigrants have to struggle with many prejudices. Representatives of the major society in the host country repeatedly accuse many of them – as in the case of Syrian migrants in Turkey – of deliberately abandoning their home country due to various conflicts. This suggests that they ran away from challenges and are looking for an easier life at the expense of others. This insinuates, that the respective person or groups of people lack national loyalty towards their country of origin and also suggests that they might not be able to develop such loyalty for their new homeland either. Parallel to such accusations, it can also be held against them – ignoring the language barrier – that they are (El-Mafaalani 2012: 55–59; Heimken 2017: 10–12, 105–114; Yağdı 2019: 1–4) basically uneducated. For example, this argument is repeatedly raised with regard to the "Turkish guest workers" and their descendants who emigrated to Germany from the 1960s onwards. A not insignificant proportion of these people of Turkish origin – there has been relatively little academic research on this – were political refugees, Turkish or Kurdish intellectuals from the left-wing

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political spectrum who had little or no opportunity to earn a living in Turkey. In short, life can be unforgiving for a variety of reasons, forcing people to look for new options to cope with their daily challenges in regions other than their region of origin through different pull and push factors. The occupational, ethno-confessional and geographical changes naturally have an impact on the migrating person or group and their social stratification.

At the same time, it must be mentioned that overcoming the challenges or making a better life for oneself possible, which can be related to an adequate income, among other things, requires many efforts on the part of the immigrants. At the same time, it is not possible without the willingness of the major society to accept the newcomers and to support (Pott 2002: 405–420) them as well. This difficult interplay has been made³ tangible in the German-speaking world with the statement that "workers were called for but people came" ("Es wurden Arbeiter gerufen doch es kamen Menschen an"). Among other things, this makes it explicitly clear that the workers of Turkish origin who were recruited to Germany as so-called guest workers did not always and explicitly intend to return to their old homeland, but set out on their journey to the centre of Europe with a wide variety of hopes, wishes and goals, some with the hope of returning, some with the aim of making a new start.

The question "Can migrants become part of the majority society?" is asked⁴ frequently in the media. At first glance, this question can be answered with a simple "yes". This is for a simple reason, because some parts that make up today's European major societies emigrated themselves not so long ago. Erika Thurner shows in her study "The Golden West", that Turkish immigration to Austria or to the province of Vorarlberg contributed to the fact that the inner-Austrian "guest workers" from Carinthia or Styria found steadily greater acceptance, whereas they had been (Thurner 1997: 25–54) repeatedly excluded and negatively portrayed in Vorarlbergs society and the press previously, for example. At the same time, such a question as the one above shows us that reality can rarely be captured in all its facets by such simple questions. To take another example, a look at the service sector in Germany and Austria shows how strongly immigrants are already enmeshed within the German major society. German or Austrian politicians with a migration background would be another example; hundreds of actors, athletes and scientists, currently also virologists

³ This bon mot, which is very well known in German-speaking countries, comes from the pioneer of Turkish rock music, the Azerbaijani-Armenian-born Cem Karaca, a legend of German-Turkish music history (* 5 April 1945 in Istanbul, † 8 February 2004 in Istanbul; lived in Cologne, Federal Republic of Germany, 1979–87 because of a warrant issued by the Turkish military dictatorship). Karaca also set poems by the great-grandson of the Pasha from Magdeburg, Nazım Hikmet (Yaghoobifarah 2014).

⁴ Read the very informative article by Jens Schneider: <https://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/kurzdossiers/308203/integration-in-superdiverse-nachbarschaften> (accessed: 2.2.2022).

such as the couple Özlem Türeci and Uğur Şahin⁵ represent further evidence of participation in or opportunities for advancement in the major society.

Many immigrants and also their descendants have to deal with mistrust and prejudice despite their integration as well as their intensive integration efforts into the majority society. The author himself can contribute to this topic as a contemporary witness. Born into a Kurdish-Alevite family⁶ originating from Dersim (Tunceli), they were labelled "Kızılbaş"⁷ and excluded by the Turkish majority society. For example, the Alevitic and Sunni communities lived in different parts of the village and there were also two separate cemeteries for the dead of the two faith communities. Once in Austria, however, his family, or rather he, now had to deal with similar challenges in Austria. Here, they were strangers too and, to the astonishment of the author or his family members, they were called "Turks". Looking at the 1990s and the increasing conflict between Kurds and Turks in south-eastern Turkey, Austria's major society became aware, that not all of those who had immigrated in the 1960s were "Turks". Now, however, Kurds and Turks were accused of endangering social peace in Austria because of their political struggles. In short, societies composed of di-

⁵ The couple has received many awards for their achievements as the world's first developers of anti-corona vaccines. Özlem Türeci's family comes from Fındıklı near the border with Adjara / Georgia. Uğur Şahin's family belongs to the Arabic-speaking Alawite population group of the Turkish province of Iskenderun. S.a.: Oltermann, Philip: Uğur Şahin and Özlem Türeci: German 'dream team' behind vaccine. The 'Prussian Turk' couple's company BioNTech developed the breakthrough Covid vaccine with Pfizer. S.: The Guardian, 20.11.2021, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/10/ugur-sahin-and-ozlem-tureci-german-dream-team-behind-vaccine?> (accessed: 24.01.2022).

⁶ Dersim (Kurmançî-Kurdish Dêrsim, Ottoman درسم, Armenian Տէրսիմ / Դէրսիմ Tersim, dimilkî-Kurdish: Dêsim) is the unofficial name of an area and the city of Tunceli in Turkey. It is the region with the highest proportion of Alevis in Turkey, the majority of whom speak the Kurdish language Dimilkî or Zaza. Before the Armenian genocide, the Dersim region was also an Armenian settlement area. The province gained great notoriety through the Dersim uprising in 1937/38, in the course of which tens of thousands of people died or were deported. After the uprising, Dersim was renamed Tunceli; "tunç" in Turkish means bronze or iron, "el" is the hand or fist. "Iron fist" here refers to the suppression of the Alevitic Dersim uprisings in 1937/38.

⁷ Alevis are and have been repeatedly labelled as "Kızılbaş" in Turkey and thus religiously and socially excluded. The "Kızılbaş" were followers of the Safavids and thus political opponents of the Ottomans. The history of conflict led to the term "Kızılbaş" being associated as negative; among other things, with the accusation that the "Kızılbaş" would commit incest etc. in their rituals and thus violate the Sharia and Islamic norms of order; cf. in more detail Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, *The Kizilbash-Alevis in Ottoman Anatolia: Sufism, Politics and Community*, Edinburgh University Press, 2019, passim. The Kizilbash ethnic group of modern-day Afghanistan share a genesis history with Turkey's Kurdish and Turkic Alevis, but are Twelver Shia and Persian speakers.

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verse cultures and religions need an immense repertoire of civil commitment so that a community can exist and its diversity can be accepted as an asset by all. Important role models can be helpful here, be it multi-ethnic entities like Switzerland or historical life stories or successful life plans with losses and challenges.

How can the story of Mehmed Ali Pasha contribute to a better understanding of the migration experiences and history of many people in Germany and Austria? This article attempts to work out in a compact manner with political and religious-studies perspectives, how challenges and possibilities of the history of Mehmed Ali Pasha may be insightful for the present or raise questions of identity and religion. The levels discussed in this article are only selectively connected with each other and should be⁸ mentioned here as possible future working fields based on the "Pasha method".

1. Thematic area participation, according the Mehmed Ali Pasha method

The fact that the everyday challenges that Mehmed Ali Pasha (born Ludwig Carl Detroit, a Huguenot from Magdeburg) had to overcome, in a situationally flexible manner, still move us today and are encountered again and again, can be accepted without further ado. The tragic fate or the early death of their parents confronted the Magdeburgian Huguenot and his sister Rosalie with facts that they could hardly influence at their age. Obviously, the closest relatives were also unable to provide⁹ the two orphans with a new home. Even if research on this still has to bring more details to light, it can be cautiously formulated that the two children had to grow up quickly due to their particular precarious situation. This at least can be gleaned from the biography of Mehmed Ali Pasha. His dropping out of school and his apprenticeship as a merchant, followed by his escape, can be interpreted that the young Huguenot, supported by his multilingualism and thirst for knowledge, wanted to lead a self-determined life. His decision to work as a ship's boy, with all the risks that entailed, and to accept great distances – travel was by no means as safe and self-evident at that time as it is today – also testifies to the determination of the will of the future Pasha in search of a better life.

⁸ For the Pascha method, see (Hotopp-Riecke 2020) and the corresponding chapter in the next book by Hotopp-Riecke, Theilig, Gibatdinov, Çiçek and colleagues (will be published in 2022 by hirnkost-Verlag Berlin).

⁹ According to Thomas Engelhardt (see his article in the next book by Hotopp-Riecke, Theilig, Gibatdinov, Çiçek and colleagues, to be published in 2022, Berlin), there is evidence of Detroit families with the same name, but not necessarily related, in Magdeburg at the beginning of the 19th century. Apparently, several families or persons named Detroit had fled to Magdeburg from different parts of France. The Severin / Savarin family on the mother's side can also be traced to Magdeburg and its environs, but at that time they probably did not have the resources to take in the brother and sister.

Many "guest workers" who came to Germany from 1960 onwards have structural similarities to the story of the Magdeburgian. Their decision to leave for the Federal Republic of Germany, a country whose language they did not speak, whose culture and customs they did not know about and whose history they possibly had little knowledge of, also testifies to a determination that must not be overlooked. For example, the active search for better economic options than in the old homeland in order to significantly improve their own living conditions. As a similar history of encounters between immigrants from Turkey or the "Orient" – albeit in the opposite direction – it is often worth comparing the differences in the welcoming culture, the support for integration or the obstacles to naturalisation in the respective host societies: different transcultural interferences occurred at different times on the Elbe and the Bosphorous. Both in the Ottoman Empire and in the German-speaking world, there were periods of peaceful exchange and recruitment of foreign "skilled workers" on the one hand, and periods of wars, deportations and forced conversions on the other.¹⁰ As illustrated in the book "Der Pascha von Magdeburg" on the basis of numerous biographies, there was both the Ottoman nobleman or the sutler or the foot soldier who converted to the Catholic or Protestant faith between the Alps and the Elbe, made a great career or simply survived – even if under the gloomy omen of forced Christianisation – as can be read in several hundred biographies that colleagues Theilig, Coşan and Hotopp-Riecke have been researching for years¹¹. However, a paradigm shift between the last centuries and the contemporary immigration of the last 60 years is striking: While in the past centuries transcultural exchange dominated under the sign of coercion and violence and reciprocal acculturation developed only indirectly via the military, trade and exchange of elites (travellers, diplomats, academics), this relationship changed abruptly with the beginning of the recruitment agreement between the FRG¹² and Turkey: For the first time in history, a peaceful – albeit under economic and political constraints – organised form of migration dominated.

Today, in the third decade of the 21st century, we are familiar with the success stories of a Cem Özdemir or a Serap Güler, representative of many migrants and their children, both of whom hold important positions in German politics and can be compared on a structural level and soberly with the merely geographically opposed life paths of the Pasha from Magdeburg, his mentor Ömer Pasha¹³ and his adjutant Murad Efendi.¹⁴

¹⁰ The Janissary musicians at European courts or the thousands of Muslims in Saxony and Prussia in the 17th/18th century, Tatar-Muslim lancers in the Saxon and Prussian armies along with their families, can be representative of this. See (Theilig 2013) and (Hotopp-Riecke 2017).

¹¹ Other examples for migration processes in this context in (Theilig 2018; 2022).

¹² Federal Republic of Germany.

¹³ Ömer Pasha, like Mehmed Ali Pasha, was not a "real" Ottoman, but also a convert, see (Hotopp-Riecke 2018) as well as in the next book by Hotopp-Riecke, Theilig, Gibatdinov, Çiçek and coll., to be published in 2022, Berlin.

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Serap Güler comes from a Turkish-Sunni family and is currently a member of the German Bundestag. She belongs to the Christian German Union (CDU) party and previously worked for the state of North Rhine-Westphalia as Secretary for Integration in the Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration. The fact that Muslims can be members of a party that is Christian, at least in name and programme, has been a novelty in Germany for some years and can be read on the one hand as an expression of inclusive modernity and pragmatism. On the other hand, this is branded¹⁵ by conservative critics as programmatic arbitrariness, "social democratisation" and pandering to the "multicultural zeitgeist", although Germany, like Austria and Switzerland, has long since arrived in the reality of an immigration society.¹⁶ Since 2012, Güler has been repeatedly elected to the CDU federal executive committee at federal party congresses, most recently in 2020. Güler's Muslim convictions make her particularly attractive to the CDU, because she can obviously build a bridge for her party to the Muslim electorate and people with an immigrant background.

By no means should this give the impression that the politician, as a bridge builder, would not criticise her own party. While her party colleagues, including Roland Koch¹⁷, took a stand against dual citizenship, she voted in favour of such a law mainly by pointing out that such a step in German integration policy was necessary and important. The state would openly express its interest in new citizens without tearing them away from their roots or countries of origin. Of course, legal challenges also played a role for Koch and other CDU politicians, which is why they opposed such a law, the explanation and analysis of which

¹⁴ Murad Efendi (1836–1881), the adjutant of Ömer Pasha and Mehmed Ali Pasha during the Crimean War of 1853–56, was actually named Franz von Werner. See in detail the article by Dr Marlen Schachinger in this volume. S.a.: Herfert, 2009.

¹⁵ The "Kieler Nachrichten" noted that the CDU was "making ingratiation its programme" and threatened to lose face with "programmatic arbitrariness" (23.06.2014). Critics blame this intercultural opening, among other things, for the election defeat in 2021. S. URL: <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/presseschau-programmatische-beliebtheit-100.html> [22.01.2022]. S. a. e.g.: Bok, Wolfgang: For what does the CDU still stand? – Addiction to favour brings down the CDU. Merkel's zeitgeist policy has not been convincing for a long time. In: CICERO, Berlin: Res Publica, 21.3.2021, Online at URL: <https://www.cicero.de/innenpolitik/cdu-csu-krise-gefellsucht-konservatismus-bundestagswahlen-parteien-programm-waehlerschaft> (accessed: 23.1.2022).

¹⁶ For example, some regions and cities in western Germany have been areas with a high proportion of people with a migration background for several decades. More than 20 per cent of the people in Lower Saxony have their own or their family's immigration biography. Their share of the population is increasing. The city of Frankfurt am Main has a share of 45% in 2011, in Hamburg 36.7% in 2020, in Cologne 40% also in 2020, see: <https://www.fr.de/frankfurt/jeder-zweite-migrationshintergrund-11174044.html> (accessed: 22.1.2022).

¹⁷ Also a member of the CDU and represents a conservative migration policy. For more information <https://www.roland-koch.de/lebenslauf/> (accessed: 23.01.2022).

would go beyond the scope of this article. Güler is also active in the headscarf debate and argues in a fact-oriented¹⁸ manner; she has so far advocated that girls who are not of religious age, who would not have exceeded the age of 14, should not have to wear a headscarf. All girls of religious age should decide of their own free will whether they want to wear one or not. In family policy, the politician is a defender of the abortion ban and thus in line with many European conservative parties with Christian colouring. In education policy, she demands that immigrants need to learn the language of the German state so that they can participate in the major society. She also does not spare criticism of the current foreign policy and religious policy of her parents' country of origin: Turkey.

With regard to minority policies of both states, Turkey and Germany, especially religious freedom and minority rights, comparative studies in the context of inclusive educational modules of the "Pasha Method" and further work in general within the framework of migration research and sociology of religion would be useful, including a historical perspective on the German and Ottoman Empires.

Juxtaposing political or cultural figures from the 18th or 19th century and their lives with those from the postmodern era offers many points of reference and opportunities for comparison. This is certainly the case with the biography of Cem Özdemir. He belongs to the German party landscape like no other. From 2008 to 2018, he was the federal chairman of the Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen party. He is one of the first German politicians of Turkish origin with a Muslim migration background. Özdemir was born in Urach. In the last federal election in 2021, he won more than 40% of all votes in his constituency in Stuttgart and has been Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture since December 2021. He came to the ministerial swearing-in ceremony on his bicycle and showed once again that the issue of climate, among others, is high on his political agenda. Özdemir also originates from a Muslim Sunni family¹⁹. His parents Nihal and Abdullah are of Turkish and Circassian origin, which probably also facilitates his access to more Turkish-conservative voter groups, since solidarity with formerly deported peoples such as the Circassians and Crimean Tatars is postulated as their political terrain by currents that can be classified as rather nationalistic to panturkistic. Like Güler, Özdemir strives to promote integration in Germany through education policy. At the same time, he advocates for multilingualism. The German language as well as the mother tongue of migrants should be promoted in an equal manner in public schools as opposed to private schools. Furthermore, the Federal Minister is an active supporter of the EU and

¹⁸ https://www.nw.de/nachrichten/zwischen_weser_und_rhein/22112751_Kontroverse-um-Kopftuchverbot-Serap-Gueler-verteidigt-Vorstoss.html (accessed: 23.01.2022).

¹⁹ The former co-chairman of the federal German party *Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen* has been the Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture since 8 December 2021. Cf. *Taştekin, 2020, p. 6*.

Çiçek H., Hotopp-Riecke M. Strangers. Proximity. Homeland. Identification with and rejection of transcultural lifestyles on the background of the Mehmed Ali Pasha project is also very critical of Brussels' foreign policy with regard to Turkey's or Russia's annexation of Crimea as well as its treatment of the Crimean Tatar-Muslim minority population. At the same time, there is no lack of criticism for China or solidarity with the massively repressed Uyghurs there.

Newly in government since November 2021 is also the Free Democratic Party of Germany (FDP) with its Secretary General Bijan Born in Tehran into a Jewish-Iranian family, Bijan was placed in the care of his uncle in Grevenbroich at the age of eleven to give him a better perspective in life. Djir-Sarai repeatedly described his early experiences in an authoritarian regime as formative for his political commitment, especially his advocacy for civil and human rights (Jan 2010; Weinthal 2019).

Like Mehmed Ali Pasha, the above protagonists of German politics have had remarkable political careers. Just like the Pasha, they take responsibility for the most diverse communities living in Germany today. They are committed to the German state and show that their parents' origin was not an obstacle to establishing themselves in the German major society. By no means does the author want to suggest that all migrants must be politically active. Rather, they want to point out, that the interaction with the majority society can happen in a variety of ways on different social terrains – art, business, sports, politics – as illustrated by the above examples and the review of Mehmed Ali Pasha's history. The fact that this never happened without headwinds and challenges and will not happen without resistance is shown by these examples, but also by recent incidents in the field of sports, for example, when all the players are celebrated as heroes when the German national team wins, but when the team loses, the captain of the team with African roots or players of black color in general are portrayed as undesirable foreigners in Germany and are racially insulted. This also applies to politicians²⁰ of Turkish origin or in the case of the Pasha from Magdeburg, who had to go through similar experiences of chauvinistic rejection during the peace negotiations in Berlin.

II. Thematic field of religion according the Mehmed Ali Pasha Method

Many sociological studies point out, that the failure of integration, as well as if the wishes and goals of long-established citizens to realise a better life for themselves and their families within the majority society remain unfulfilled, can force them to start accusing immigrant groups that migrants would bear respon-

²⁰ The far-right party "Alternative for Germany" (AfD) repeatedly attracts attention in German parliaments with racist or fascist statements against MPs with a migration background. For example, in 2017, AfD parliamentary group leader Alexander Gauland had spoken of "disposing of the German government's integration commissioner, Aydan Özoğuz, in Anatolia". The statement, with which Gauland alluded to Özoğuz's Turkish roots, caused great outrage. Afterwards, around 20 criminal charges of incitement of the people were filed. S.: (Bender 2017).

sibility for the non-achievement of their goals and wishes as parts of the majority society. Immigrants are repeatedly confronted with the fact, that they take "everything" away from the long-established citizens. The Austrian right-wing populist FPÖ²¹, for example, builds its political programme on such claims. This can lead to a situation where the participation of a certain group of people in the majority society is 100%, but parts of the majority society do not take note of this or claim the opposite. In Germany, this is being politicised and instrumentalised especially by the AfD. Today's Europe currently has to cope with such challenges, whether within or outside the European Union, although it must be said that this is not a new phenomenon. Rather, the statement applies here: old wine in new bottles. One aspect of this problem will be briefly highlighted here.

Due to the specific secularisation in Europe, developments are taking place on this continent that cannot be observed in this way elsewhere. Even though the mainstream churches – Catholic and Protestant – are experiencing a rapid loss of members, religiosity continues to play an important role. The institution of the church is losing importance in Austria and Germany, and likewise religion at the state level no longer has the significance it once had. In other words, the formal affiliation of individuals to a religion represented by a specific religious institution – such as the Catholic Church – is currently in decline, forced for some years by paedophilia scandals in both major churches that have not been adequately cleared up. At the same time, individual religious convictions are gaining in importance. Many religious groups in Europe are affected by these developments, which indicates that they are not immune to the specific European secularisation.

Among European Muslims, the discussion about their religion has been sparked since the beginning of the Austrian and German-Islamic communities, and not only because of state requirements. In Europe, many Muslims themselves have begun to critically question their Muslim socialization, to examine it historically and to discuss²² it emancipatively. I am not referring to the question of the compatibility of Islam and democracy. To be fair, no religion can be easily reconciled with a democratic system. Rather, the question is what possibilities the state can open up for religions so that positivist and religious law

²¹ The FPÖ emerged in the 1950s from the VdU (Association of Independents). A large part of the founding members were former National Socialists. The party was transformed into a mass right-wing populist party especially in the 1990s by Jörg Haider, who served as party leader in 1986. The FPÖ repeatedly attracts attention with right-wing extremist and xenophobic statements and thus also aims to mobilise voters for itself. For more information: <https://www.parlament.gv.at/PERK/PK/PP/index.shtml> (accessed: 26.1.2022).

²² Unfortunately, however, the discourses on Euro-Islam, as it is called, are still taking place in a decoupled or poorly networked manner between Eastern and Western Europe. See: (Tezcan 2013). The main and not uncontroversial trigger of a Euro-Islam debate is: (Tibi 2020; Riedel 2007).

Çiçek H., Hotopp-Riecke M. Strangers. Proximity. Homeland. Identification with and rejection of transcultural lifestyles on the background of the Mehmed Ali Pasha project does not end up on a collision course. Likewise, it must also be asked, whether a religion or its adherents are prepared not to politicise their religion. The democratic, liberal constitutional state must set legal limits for religions so that all religious groups can live together. Likewise, the state must also allow for negative religious freedom – freedom not to have a religion – and much more. The history of Europe shows that a non-neutral religious policy on the part of the state can always lead to conflicts.

At present, Muslims in Europe can critically question the Islamic structures in their parents' countries of origin, as well as the Islamic structures that have emerged in various European states since the 1960s. In Germany, for example, many Muslims of Turkish origin are not prepared to follow the religious recommendations of the Turkish religious authority Diyanet without question and organise themselves outside this "remote-controlled" structure. Even if Islam lacks an institution like that of the Catholic Church, there are certainly Islamic bodies (institutions) that lay claim to interpretative sovereignty over Islamic teachings. Such a privilege is claimed by the Turkish state-run Diyanet authority and its European offshoots, such as the DITIB²³ in Germany. Germany has reacted to this development, among other things, by convening the "German Islam Conference" and institutionalising it – albeit not without controversy over its equal representation. Likewise, numerous institutes for Islamic theology have been founded in order to take account of the multifaceted nature of Islam that is emerging in Europe and Germany, to train their own German-speaking specialists – imams, lecturers, social educators – and thus to generate interpretive sovereignty.

In Germany, minorities in Islam also have the opportunity to make their voices heard. For example, the Alevis who come from Turkey. Regardless of whether Alevites see themselves as part of Islam or not, in Germany they have the opportunity to determine their religion and its contents themselves due to the freedom of religion practised by the state. This can lead to a dialogue between Turkish Sunni and Alevitic believers from Turkey, the consequences of which cannot be foreseen at present. In present Turkey, such initiatives are already nipped in the bud because the Diyanet and the politics of the Islamist and nationalist parties deny the Alevis any religious independence.

With regard to the Mehmed Ali Pascha project, the above developments point to various challenges that need to be overcome in the context of integration work, cultural and political education, but above all in the inner-Islamic discourse itself. One approach was and is the appreciative youth work open to

²³ DITIB (Turkish: Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği, German: Türkisch-Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion) is the European offshoot of the Turkish Office for Religious Affairs (Diyanet). Since 1984, it has been one of the most important Muslim organisations in Germany and also claims to represent all Muslims in Germany. It is repeatedly the focus of criticism because it is accused of distancing itself too little from the religious policy of the Turkish state.

religion and ideology by means of transcultural workshops based on the "Pasha Method" at the Saxony-Anhalt State Association for Cultural Child and Youth Work, which has so far conducted hundreds of events with several thousand participants over the past 11 years, including with Alevitic, Karaim and Yezidi youth who are otherwise subsumed or ignored under larger religious groups.

Turkish nationalist and Islamist groups like to use the stories of converted Europeans to defend their interpretation of Islam as the only correct one. The discussions on Islam taking place in Europe within the universities and in the social framework are often branded as a "Trojan horse" to distance Muslims from the "true" Islam. For example, that modern democratic principles would already be realised in the Shura assemblies, since the time of the origin of Islam. Conversions are also interpreted to mean, among other things, that people are returning to their original nature, especially since certain Islamic groups are convinced that every person is born Muslim into the world. This is intended, among other things, to implicitly and explicitly assimilate people through religious discourses of power²⁴. At the same time, people who leave Islam or adopt another religion are branded as "godless or traitors" and worse, just as there were and are repeated voices in relation to Ludwig Carl Detroit regarding his change of religion. The research of the Turkish colleague Hasip Saygılı, for example, shows that there are still derogatory and insulting statements in the context of the reception of Mehmed Ali, where other Turkish authors refer to the Pasha from Magdeburg with pejorative attributes that originate from times of religious wars long thought to have been overcome. Negative terms such as "dönme" (Ottoman/Turkish "convert"), "Alman mühtedisi" (German Kovertit), "murtat" (traitor to the faith), "murtat paşa" (traitor pasha), "sünnetsiz gavur" (uncircumcised godless man) and "itibarsız" (shameful/dishonourable) are found in such texts (Hotopp 2018: 63–64).

As previous – rather cursory – research on Mehmed Ali Pasha has shown, the High Porte sent him to Berlin in 1878 on the basis of his biography and knowledge of German politics and culture so that he could negotiate in the best possible way for the empire. This suggests a political foresight on the part of Ottoman politicians, whereby reactions of the Germans to the Magdeburg Pasha during the peace negotiations in Berlin at the same time show that his political and individual career was not accepted as normal or at best tolerable in the German Empire.

At present, it cannot be ruled out that as the sources become more accessible, even more perspectives will open up in the "Pasha Research Network", since in Mehmed Ali Pasha the different "worlds" of the 19th century are reflected in one person and, for example, an Albanian perspective need not be the same as a German or Turkish one. In our current political modernity, people are

²⁴ s.: Elger, Ralf/Friederike Stolleis (Eds.): *Kleines Islam-Lexikon. Geschichte – Alltag – Kultur*. München, 2018. <https://www.bpb.de/nachschlagen/lexika/islam-lexikon/21533/mensch/> and the literature recommended there.

Çiçek H., Hotopp-Riecke M. Strangers. Proximity. Homeland. Identification with and rejection of transcultural lifestyles on the background of the Mehmed Ali Pasha project looking for unambiguities and would rather have all "exhausting" ambiguities nipped in the bud. Integration research around the Pasha can have a salutary counter-effect here.

Outlook

The "Research Network Mehmed Ali Pasha" as well as the interdisciplinary practical guide "Method Pasha" will help to make it possible to intertwine a migration history of the 19th century with the present of our immigration societies and to highlight what added value we can gain from this past for our present. For today's identities, self-images and images of other people with a migration background within the majority society must also be perceived and valued on the basis of their richness of facets, their potentials and micro-sociological contexts beyond unambiguities in order to be able to act for the benefit of all. On closer inspection, we realise that many people with whom we live in "one" society have their own particular history of migration. This has been true throughout the ages and the life of Mehmed Ali Pasha can stand as an example of this. Looking at the Berlin Congress of 1878 alone, at which Mehmed Ali Pasha, of German-French descent, played a leading role for the Ottoman Empire together with his Greek and Turkish colleagues, while German-born military officers dominated the Russian side at that time and tried to assert Russia's interests, where Hungarian aristocrats represented the Habsburgs and the English-born diplomat Waddington²⁵ negotiated on the French side, national one-dimensionality was rather the exception. In other words, in all the services of the 19th century powers of the time, diversity of lifepaths, multilingualism and confessional diversity were not special. The age of nationalism and, somewhat simplistically, in the aftermath of the Berlin Congress, with the advent of both world wars and their venerating effects on the "century of genocides and expulsions"²⁶ we forget about the social normality of ethnocultural diversity as well as multilingualism on the European continent. Interdisciplinary education and research modules within the framework of the Mehmed Ali Pasha Project can provide a sober and fact-oriented view of this past, with all its challenges up to the present. The life path of a Huguenot orphan boy from Magdeburg

²⁵ William Henry Waddington (* 11 December 1826 in Saint-Rémy-sur-Avre, Département Eure-et-Loir; † 13 January 1894 in Paris), the son of Thomas Waddington (1792–1862), an English spinning mill owner but resident in France, and Janet MacIntosh Chisholm, a Scot, was a French archaeologist, numismatist, politician and diplomat, Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1877 to 1879 and Prime Minister of France in 1879. He was French ambassador in London from 1883 to 1893.

²⁶ "In retrospect, the 20th century has often been described as one of genocides and expulsions. It began with the genocide of the Armenians by the Turks (1915) and ended with "ethnic cleansing" in the disintegrating Yugoslavia. In between, in Europe alone, there were, among others, the forced deportations of Crimean Tatars, Chechens, Volga Germans [...], the extermination of Jews by the Nazi regime, the expulsion of Germans from their eastern territories and of Hungarians from Slovakia." S.: (Hirsch 2003).

provides an exemplary way of dealing with conversion, diversity and equal opportunities for migrants and can thus possibly contribute to a better intercultural dialogue.

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Received February 7, 2022

Accepted for publication April 22, 2022

НЕЗНАКОМЦЫ. БЛИЗОСТЬ. РОДИНА. ИДЕНТИФИКАЦИЯ И ОТРИЦАНИЕ ТРАНСКУЛЬТУРНЫХ ОБРАЗОВ ЖИЗНИ НА ФОНЕ ПРОЕКТА МЕХМЕДА АЛИ-ПАШИ. ИЗЛОЖЕНИЕ ПОЗИЦИИ

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Такие явления, как миграция, бегство, интеграция, обращение и многоязычие, играют важную роль в полиэтнических обществах Евразии, будь то в

Германии и Австрии или в Турции и Татарстане. В Германии была разработана модель того, как справляться с этими явлениями с молодежью решительным, расширяющим возможности и многоязычным образом. Этот «метод паши» связан с генеалогией, языком и религией участвующих детей. Вдохновение для метода пришло из города Елабуги Республики Татарстан в 2011 г. В этом тексте делается попытка обсудить дальнейшие возможности использования метода паши в свете межрелигиозных отношений и сравнительного биографического анализа, поскольку биографии между Османской империей и Германией в XIX в. часто были красочными и пышными, как у османского паши по имени Мехмед Али из Магдебурга.

Ключевые слова: Мехмед Али-паша, миграция, идентичность, история, ислам.

Для цитирования: Çiçek H., Hotopp-Riecke M. Strangers. Proximity. Homeland. Identification with and rejection of transcultural lifestyles on the background of the Mehmed Ali Pasha project. A position paper // Историческая этнология. 2022. Т. 7, № 1. С. 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.22378/he.2022-7-1.145-160>

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Поступила 07.02.2022

Принята к публикации 22.04.2022