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The Second-Generation Polish Émigrés in Istanbul as Transcultural Agents in the Ottoman Modernising Reforms in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries[1]

Abstract

This paper examines the transcultural agency of selected representatives of the second generation of Polish political émigrés to the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the 20th century: chemist, hygiene specialist and general Karol Bonkowski Pasha (1841–1905); general and state dignitary Władysław Czaykowski/Muzaffer Pasha (1843–1907); general and diplomat Hasan Enver Pasha (1857–1929) as well as diplomat, journalist and member of parliament Alfred Bieliński/Ahmed Rüstem Bey (1862–1934). Most of them were born and raised in the multi-ethnic empire, made careers in various fields and often reached the highest positions in the Ottoman state apparatus. They often played the role of transcultural intermediaries during the political and social transformations of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th and 20th centuries. This paper focuses on their involvement in the late Ottoman public sphere by elucidating their place in Ottoman society at the time of transition that characterised the period in question. By tracing the trajectory of these figures' identity entanglements, it examines their attitudes towards attachment to the Ottoman Empire and Poland. It underscores the importance of the Ottoman capital – Istanbul – as a contact zone in this process. It sheds light on various spheres of transcultural agency of these second-generation Polish émigrés in the late Ottoman state and society.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, multicultural society, cultural boundaries, transculturation, Turkey, Polish émigrés.

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Introduction

The long 19th century was a period of intense migrations of groups of different national, ethnic, regional and professional structures towards the cosmopolitan capital of the Ottoman Empire – Istanbul, Kushta, Constantinople.[2] There, the trajectories of ideas of national identity and modernisation brought by the émigrés and their descendants intersected. These *go-betweens* were involved in the process of shaping the foundations of the future Republic of Turkey while at the same time, they searched for their place in the host state.

Until the 19th century, the role of transcultural intermediaries in the Ottoman Empire traditionally belonged to the Levantines, Jews, Anatolian Greeks and Armenians. Only later they were joined by Polish political émigrés, who had participated in the 19th century national uprisings.[3] After the three partitions of Poland in the last quarter of the 18th century, which led to its disappearance from the map in 1795, the Ottoman Empire was one of the key destinations for Polish political émigrés who arrived in Istanbul seeking Ottoman support in their efforts to regain independence. While in the Ottoman Empire, they also participated in the late Ottoman modernising reforms. Thanks to their knowledge of French, education and familiarity with European mores, they gained access to the Ottoman court. These new émigrés therefore upset the balance between the existing ethnic groups, which had resulted from several centuries of negotiations. In that process, they had to forge their own Ottoman identity.

As this paper seeks to demonstrate, the situation was easier for the second generation of Polish political émigrés born in the Ottoman Empire. The chief focus of the current scholarship has been the five decades between the 1830 November Uprising and the 1877–78 Russo-Ottoman War, which were examined as the main period of Polish political activities in the Ottoman Empire (Lewak, 1935; Reychman, 1971; Dopierała, 1988). Much less attention has been given to the descendants of this political emigration in the Ottoman Empire. This paper in this respect complements the scholarship on the Polish political emigration in the Ottoman Empire. The following pages examine the cultural agency of selected representatives of the second generation of Polish émigrés in the Ottoman lands at the turn of the 20th century. Figures under scrutiny are chemist, hygiene specialist and general Karol Bonkowski Pasha

[2] The name Istanbul is Turkish, Kushta comes from Ladino, the language of the Sephardic Jews and Constantinople is the name used by the Greeks. On the ethnic identifications of Istanbul, see, among others: Herzog, Wittmann, 2019.

[3] The first wave of emigrants appeared already after the 1794 Kościuszko Uprising, then after the 1830–1831 November Uprising. Further waves followed: after the 1848 Revolutions, during the Crimean War (1853–1856) and the January Uprising (1863–1864).

(1841–1905), son of Antoni Bonkowski (1788–1848); general and Ottoman state dignitary Władysław Czaykowski/Muzaffer Pasha (1843–1907), son of Michał Czaykowski/Sadık Pasha (1804–1886); general and diplomat Hasan Enver Pasha (1857–1929), son of Konstanty Borzęcki/Mustafa Celâleddin Pasha (1826–1876) as well as diplomat, journalist and member of parliament Alfred Bieliński/Ahmed Rüstem Bey (1862–1934), son of Seweryn Bieliński/Nihad Pasha (1814–1895). Often educated abroad, similarly to the generation to their fathers, they also successfully participated in the reforms of the multi-ethnic empire and made careers in various fields. However, their motivations differed. For the first generation of the émigrés participation in the enterprises connected to the Ottoman modernising reforms was closely connected to the conviction that a strong Ottoman Empire was indispensable for Poland's future independence. As this paper seeks to demonstrate, for the descendants of these émigrés the well-being of the Ottoman Empire, which they perceived as their homeland and which at the time was gradually losing its territories to European colonial expansion and separatist nationalisms, was their priority. Moreover, forms of the cultural agency of the analysed individuals varied depending on the historical moment in which they were active and the degree of identification with their Polish roots.

To demonstrate various aspects of the discussed individuals' transcultural agency in the Ottoman public sphere, this paper mobilises a variety of primary sources: private correspondences, diplomatic correspondences, state records, press articles and published works from the archives and libraries in Poland, France, the United Kingdom, Turkey and Lebanon. Many of them have not yet been used by the previous scholarly works and have not been put into dialogue with each other.

This paper is divided into sections, each of which aims to elucidate the different facets of the transcultural agency of the selected individuals. It starts with the delineation of Istanbul as a contact zone. Next, this study situates the four protagonists of the paper within the Polish community of the late Ottoman capital, explores their connections with its members and analyses their stances towards their Polish ancestry. The following parts situate the selected individuals within the broader picture of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious late Ottoman society and discuss the role of European émigrés in the late Ottoman reforms. The subsequent parts analyse different factors and aspects of the transcultural agency of the selected case studies. These involved cultural-religious syncretism, the ideological legacy of fathers, exclusion and belonging to the so-called "third space", scientific activities as transcultural agency, as well as radicalisation and search for belonging in the period of World War I (WWI) and thereafter when the Republic of Turkey emerged as one of the successor states of the Ottoman Empire.

Istanbul as a Contact Zone

Istanbul was a city where cultural boundaries could be crossed. It was a transcultural hub, a centre of trade and political power, as well as a "contact zone". As defined by Mary Louise Pratt, it is a social space where different cultures meet, clash and struggle with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination, such as colonialism and slavery and/or their aftermath (Pratt, 1991, p. 34). For people from various geographical and cultural backgrounds the city, located on two continents, provided a productive sphere of activity. The concept of the "contact zone" emphasises not geographical locations but social zones and the interactions between "transcultural agents". Individuals who act as "transcultural agents", like those discussed in this paper, function beyond the confines of a single culture. These agents are intermediaries who facilitate interactions, exchanges or collaborations that transcend cultural boundaries among diverse cultural groups. In short, they mediate between cultures and play a crucial role in building bridges between different societies and communities. However, the process of mediation is often only a "side-effect" of their main activities. Referred to by Nikolas Jaspert as "latent brokers", their identity was inseparable from the so-called "double consciousness". "Transcultural agents" or "latent brokers" perform their "latent" or "official" task of brokering in the same environment based on the coexistence and interaction of different worldviews (Jaspert, 2019, p. 140).

Istanbul was for centuries not only home to a multicultural society that had inhabited those lands even before the advent of Ottoman rule in 1453 but also an important destination for various groups of political emigration. Among them were consecutive waves of 19th-century Polish political émigrés. Poles counted on Ottoman support for their activities aimed at national independence. Istanbul was thus, from the early 1840s to the late 1870s, a key space of Polish activities against Tsarist Russia (Dominik, 2016, pp. 92–103).

The leading places on the map of Istanbul where Polish émigrés settled were cosmopolitan Pera (today's Beyoğlu) and neighbouring districts inhabited mainly by non-Muslims: Tatavla and Yeni Şehir (today's Kurtuluş) and Pangaltı, which are located within the borders of present-day Şişli. The European character of Şişli – home mainly to the Levantine community – ensured that the émigrés more easily adapted to the new conditions. The Polish community took part in the development of this part of the city. For instance, its members participated in the construction of the Georgian Catholic Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, where they funded a wooden altar with an image of the Virgin Mary of Czestochowa (Dominik, 2016, p. 96). Roman Catholic churches, where masses were celebrated in Latin, were noteworthy spaces of contact with other members of the Roman Catholic denomination. Şişli was

also home to organisations aimed at providing mutual assistance. Moreover, most of the Polish émigrés and their descendants are buried in the Roman Catholic cemetery in Feriköy located within the borders of Şişli (Dominik, 2014, p. 29).

It is thus no coincidence that Bonkowski Pasha and his relatives: the diplomat Ernest or the employee of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration Antoni; Muzaffer Czaykowski Pasha and his family; and Hasan Enver Pasha were neighbours. All of them lived in the last two decades of the 19th century in Pangaltı. The situation changed somewhat at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1902, Muzaffer Pasha left for Beirut while his son continued to live in the family home. Hasan Enver, on the other hand, moved to the Asian side of Istanbul following the 1908 Young Turk revolution.[4] At the time, the number of Poles who lived in Istanbul had been gradually decreasing. Many of its first-generation members had either left for the lands of partitioned Poland, other destinations or had passed away. The community counted around 200 people and consisted mainly of the widows of the émigrés and their descendants (Reychman, 1971, p. 121).

A special contact zone for Istanbul's Polish community was the house of Ludwika and Henryk Groppler, the centre of Istanbul's Polish community, located in the Bebek district on the Bosphorus, which earned the name "Polish village" in the 19th century. The Gropplers' house was even named the "Polish embassy" (1870–1887). The couple had excellent relations with the Ottoman elite. They combined their patriotic activism with running a thriving enterprise - marble and borax mines - and maintaining an open house. Polish visitors to Istanbul, like Adam Mickiewicz, Henryk Sienkiewicz and Jan Matejko, were warmly received there. Polish émigrés were also regulars at the Gropplers (Dominik, 2016, pp. 96–97; Nykiel, 2018, pp. 83–113).

In addition to specific districts, the space where Muslims and non-Muslims met and worked together was the *Bâb-ı âli* (Sublime Porte), initially the seat of the vizier, but in the 19th century a place identified with Ottoman power and the emergence of new ideas around the Tanzimat reforms (1839–1876) (Davison, 1963, p. 35). The term Tanzimat stands for "reorganisation" and the reforms of that period were initiated in response to the challenges faced by the Ottoman Empire, including military defeats, economic troubles and internal strife. The Tanzimat era began in 1839 with the issuance of the Gülhane Edict

[4] *L'indicateur ottoman, annuaire-almanach du commerce, de l'industrie de l'administration et de la magistrature* (Constantinople, 1888), pp. 142, 265; *Annuaire Oriental du commerce, de l'industrie, de l'administration et de la magistrature. 1889–1890* (Constantinople, 1889–1890), pp. 238, 280; *Annuaire Oriental du commerce, de l'industrie, de l'administration et de la magistrature. 1900* (Constantinople, 1900), pp. 298, 358, 476. Similar data is provided in the subsequent editions until 1914.

by Sultan Abdülmecid I (r. 1839–1861). The edict and the ensuing reforms aimed to modernise various aspects of Ottoman society and government. The key features of the Tanzimat reforms included: equality before the law, judicial and various reforms stretching from the judiciary through the administration and the military to the education system and economy. Europe figured as an important model for these reforms. Accordingly, during the Tanzimat era, transcultural mediation was at a premium given the reforming state's investment in a competent cadre. Over time, however, in the face of external threats, representatives of ethnic minorities began to be seen as potential enemies and collaborators (Davison, 1963, p. 18).

Another contact zone were educational establishments founded in Istanbul by missionaries. Their students received an education based on European models. One such school was the French-language Saint Joseph High School, run by the Lasallian Christian Brothers and located on the Asian side of the Bosporus in the Moda district. It was attended by Hasan Enver Pasha, who in his memoirs called it "the school of the brothers of Moda" (Enver, 1931, p. 4), and later by Alfred Bieliński (BOA DH. SAİDd 1/640). A key place among these establishments belonged to the Galatasaray High School (*Mekteb-i Sultani*, 1868–1923) located in Pera. It was founded in 1868, during the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz (1861–76) and was maintained from the private resources of the ruler. Interestingly, a Pole, Karol Karski (Hayreddin Bey), was involved in its creation (Łątka, 2001, p. 120). The school promoted a Western method of education, with a predominantly French influence. Both Hasan Enver Pasha (Enver, 1931, p. 4) and Alfred Bieliński studied at this institution (BOA DH. SAİDd 1/640).

Polish Connections

When it comes to relations with the Polish Istanbul community and Polish institutions in exile, Władysław Czaykowski/Muzaffer Pasha stands out. From 1866, he was a member of the Istanbul branch of the Union of Polish Emigration (*Zjednoczenie Emigracji Polskiej)* (Łątka, 2005, p. 80). Moreover, he was in ongoing contact with the leadership of Hôtel Lambert in Paris. He corresponded with Władysław Czartoryski before and during the 1877–1878 Russo-Ottoman War in which he served as an officer. These letters are illustrative of Czajkowski's overlapping allegiances to Poland and the Ottoman Empire, to which he referred as "a real fatherland" (*vraie patrie*) and "an adopted fatherland" (*patrie adoptive*) respectively. While he asserted that he was loyal to the Ottoman state, he stressed that he "was and would always remain above all a Pole" and that there were "no sacrifices that he was not ready to make" for the Polish cause (BCz 7262 II, pp. 203–206). The

imminent outbreak of the war awakened in him hopes that the issue of Poland's independence could return to the Ottoman, and even international, agenda. He thus reported to Czartoryski on the developments that were important from the point of view of Polish interests. He went as far as making plans for a possible uprising in the lands of partitioned Poland that would enjoy Ottoman support and would take place under Czartoryski's political leadership. Czajkowski was convinced that Poland would regain independence with Ottoman assistance. He thus argued for a pro-Polish stance from the high-ranking Ottoman dignitaries and was convinced of the moral and material support of the Sublime Porte in case of a rebellion against Russia in the lands of partitioned Poland (BCz 6658 IV). In his response, Czartoryski appreciated the pro-Polish predispositions of the Ottoman political leadership. However, since he was well informed about the situation in the country and among the émigrée community, he was aware of the slim chances of success of a potential revolt. The leader of the Hôtel Lambert also expressed his appreciation for Czajkowski's loyalty to Poland and his readiness to serve it (BCz 6658 IV).

Two decades later, Muzaffer corresponded with Adam Ludwik Czartoryski, who formally owned the Polish settlement on the Bosporus, Adampol, founded in 1842 on the initiative of his father, Michał Czajkowski and on behalf of Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski. These letter exchanges concerned the fate of the settlement and the improvement of its inhabitants' situation vis-à-vis the Ottoman administration (BCz 6734 IV, pp. 16–19).

Czajkowski used mainly French, but he also spoke and wrote in Polish. He married a Levantine, a daughter of a translator from the Russian Embassy (AMAE NS 108, pp. 219–221). Czajkowski's Polish interlocutors stressed his command of the language and his interest in all the matters concerning his fatherland (Ciecierski, 2016, p. 600). His letters to a Polish noble and traveller Henryk Ciecierski, written not only in French but also in Polish, have been preserved by the Ciecierski family as mementos from the Polish-Ottoman Pasha.

Muzaffer's son, Fuad, was also connected with the Istanbul Polish community through the Benevolent Aid Society (*Towarzystwo Pomocy Dobroczynnej*). However, in Ciecierski's eyes, as a son of a Levantine and an Ottoman non-Muslim official, he was an "opportunist". In his memoir, Ciecierski recounts their first meeting when he asked Fuad if it would be difficult for him to leave his work in the Ottoman civil service. He allegedly replied in French that "as long as he served Turkey, he served it", pointing to an actual lack of attachment to the Ottoman state (Ciecierski, 2016, p. 602).

Karol Bonkowski[5] was also in contact with the Polish emigration in Istanbul (Łątka, 2005, p. 52). The relations of Bonkowski's with Poles can be described as pragmatic and practical. The case of Karol Bonkowski's brother, the aforementioned Ernest illustrates it well. When he served as an Ottoman consul in Tulcea (Romania), he corresponded with Princess Marguerite d'Orléans – wife of Prince Władysław Czartoryski. Having outlined his siblings' services to the cause of Poland's independence, Bonkowski asked the Princess to financially support his son's education in one of the Istanbul boarding schools. He motivated his plea by suggesting that the Princess, who was known for her "generosity for children born of Polish parents", would "contribute to the upbringing of a little Pole who in the future would be at the disposal of our dear Poland" (BCz 6655 IV).

Konstanty Borzęcki's son, Hasan Enver Pasha, did not know Polish. He corresponded with his father's Polish family in French. Yet, he considered emigrating to Galicia. Hasan Enver not only did not know the language but was also not familiar with the Polish realities. He expressed his concerns in the letters to his Polish family. Ultimately, he decided against leaving the Ottoman Empire.[6]

Non-majority/Minority

The fate of the fathers of the figures here under consideration and the time of their adulthood in the Ottoman Empire coincided with new historical circumstances. In some cases, Polish émigrés of the first wave converted to Islam. This was a deliberate political act of the refugees after the 1848 Revolutions to avoid extradition to Russia. Their children, on the other hand, represent interesting cases of religiously syncretic people or second- or even first-generation converts. In 1856, the Sultan promulgated the Imperial Reform Edict (*Islâhat Hatt-ı Hümâyûnu)*, which was another key edict of the Tanzimat era. This edict introduced 'freedom of religion' and a ban on calling an 'infidel an infidel' (*gâvura gâvur demek yasak*). Henceforth, in theory, one did not have to be a Muslim to work in the Ottoman administration. In fact, already in 1844, Sultan Abdülmecid I banned by law the execution of apostates from Islam. This change in the internal policy of the Ottoman state in the 19th century reached its climax when the old 'system of acceptance of difference' began to disappear

[5] Bonkowski was also known by different spellings of his name. Among them, one can distinguish: Charles Bonkovski, Bonkovski Pasha and Bongo Pasha. For consistency, in this text, we use the version Karol Bonkowski.

[6] Enver's letter to Marya Detloff, a cousin from Cracow, from 15 January 1913: "List Envera Baszy" [Letter of Enver Pasha], *Gazeta Narodowa* [The National Newspaper], Lviv, 24 (30 January 1913), p. 2.

and was legally replaced by a system of 17 semi-autonomous *millet* groups. For the Poles, who were looking for a utopian land (in place of a homeland that did not exist on the map), this was indeed a tempting opportunity. Their hope was based on the potential of the full meaning of *millet*, with its definition as: "an autonomous, self-governing religious community, each organised on the basis of its own laws and led by a religious leader who was accountable to the central authority, particularly with regard to the payment of taxes and the maintenance of internal security".[7] The concept of the *millet* was an importation of the Western model, in which the non-majority and/or 'others' had to be constituted as minorities.[8]

Ottoman national consciousness had begun to take shape before the wave of European Romantic nationalism. However, with the crisis of statehood, the key question emerged. What kind of nation should comprise the population of the new Ottoman state that would undergo a series of modernising reforms? Consequently, Ottomans searched for an ideology that, in the face of threats of territorial losses and loss of political sovereignty, would constitute a unifying bloc for a multi-ethnic society based on the *millet* system (Gara, 2017, p.71).

Transcultural Agents: 19th century European Refugees as Forerunners of Ottoman Modernisation

The 19th Polish political émigrés in the Ottoman Empire also participated in these developments. Historian İlber Ortaylı went as far as dubbing them "the forerunners of Ottoman modernisation of the Tanzimat era" (Ortaylı, 2000, pp.185–191). As Yalçın Küçük argued, the contribution of these newcomers was significant to the extent that "to the representatives of the new Turkish intelligentsia, new ideas were provided and instilled by the former Hungarian and Polish insurgents, some of whom became shopkeepers, butchers and grew into Ottoman society. Contact between them occurred when Turks were their customers who bought newspapers, tobacco or coffee" (Küçük, 1984, p. 679).

The modernising Ottoman state needed specialists in military, engineering and medicine. The new ideology needed publicists and journalists. The recruits for these tasks were representatives of the western-educated Ottoman elite and European émigrés. Accordingly, as they lived on the cultural borderline between Christians of European descent and Ottoman Turks of Muslim origin,

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7 The definition of *millet* after *Encyclopaedia Britannica:* https://www.britannica.com/topic/millet-religious-group [Accessed: 20 January 2024].

8 About the *millet* system and its transformations, see: Masters, Bruce, 2009, pp. 383–84; Ursinus, 2012; Braude, Lewis, 1982, pp. 319–337.

the descendants of Polish refugees, who inherited a bicultural formation, made their careers more easily in the Ottoman state apparatus and subsequently, in the newly founded Republic of Turkey. Their skills, which resulted from a syncretic model of upbringing and education, allowed them to participate in the reform process based on European models, strengthening the ideas of statehood, nation and national identity. Given their participation in the transformation of the Ottoman state, they were transcultural agents (Jobs, Mackenthun, 2013), who drew on the resources available to them from two or even more cultures. The milieu of Ottoman Christians and converts of Polish origin during the reform era in which the transmission of European cultural models took place was polyphonic and professionally diverse.

When characterising these individuals, generalisations such as "an Ottoman subject of Polish origin" or an individual "with a Polish soul" should be avoided since we are referring to "multilayered" identities, as Cemal Kafadar pointed out in his search for a contrary model to the "sealed" or "lid" identity. Those of the various communities and peoples under Ottoman rule were shaped by their interactions with each other and with people and ideas from neighbouring regions. The Ottoman identity model was thus fluid and dynamic, often contradictory and ambiguous (Kafadar, 1995, p. 22). The "layers" of *in-between* identity overlapped with each other and "came into contact" in a multilayered form.

The late Ottoman social and environmental realities are best approached by adopting a transcultural perspective – the antithesis of the national approach. Transculturality allows for the study of multi-layered connections, non-linear temporalities, and cultural transgressions. In the case of transcultural agents, their complex/multi-layered identities and mobilising their roots in Western/Polish and Eastern/Ottoman cultures contributed to the spread of ideas of parliamentarism, constitutionalism, democracy and nationalism in the late Ottoman state, and on the eve of the founding of the Turkish Republic.

Factors of Agency and Cultural-Religious Syncretism

At the turn of the century, with the new ideology of statehood and national thought, there were shifts in the previous boundaries of tolerance and intolerance within which Ottoman religious groups coexisted. In the case of many Ottoman subjects with conversion experience in first and even second generations, the category *in between* placed them in Ottoman society in the so-called "third space" as defined by Homi Bhabha (Bhabha, 2004, pp. 53–56). In the later period of the development of Kemalism, the category of "dissenter" (*kâfir*) again caused exclusion, sometimes leading to a double exclusion: by the

original religious group and the new one - those who belong to it, as it were, from birth (Uzer, 2016, p. 98).

Son of Michał Czaykowski/Sadık Pasha and a French woman Leonida (Gabaret), Władysław Czaykowski/Muzaffer Pasha received primary education at the Jesuit College in Belgium (Łątka, 2005, p. 80). After completing higher education at the prestigious French military school Saint Cyr, he was called in the early 1860s by his father, by then a general in the Ottoman army, to join him in Istanbul (BCz 7043 T. 27). There Czaykowski, a Muslim after his conversion in 1850, lived with Ludwika Śniadecka, whom he married according to the Muslim rite, so formally he was a polygamist (Chudzikowska, 1982, p. 229). His children were educated with the financial help of the Polish emigration centred around the Hôtel Lambert (BCz 6658 IV). Władysław's education was overseen by Duchess Anna née Zamoyska Sapieha, mother-in-law of the leader of the Hôtel Lambert, Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, who was involved in social and philanthropic activities in exile. The duchess directed the young Czaykowski to the leading Paris high school Collège Rollin. Then, thanks to her, he continued his studies at the aforementioned Saint Cyr Military Academy (BCz 7043 T. 27). From 1859 onwards, Michał Czaykowski, who served as commander of the Polish-Slavic Sultanic Cossacks' Legion formed during the Crimean War in the Ottoman army, pressured the duchess to have his son leave school early and continue his education at his side in Istanbul (BCz 7043 T. 27). Given the elitist nature of the school, Anna Sapieha strongly opposed this proposal. Despite her explanations regarding the superiority of European military education over its Ottoman counterpart, she was unable to dissuade Sadık Pasha from this decision (BCz 7043 T. 29). Władysław's letters in Polish and French addressed to both Duchess Anna Sapieha and her daughter Anna née Sapieha Czartoryska confirmed his gratitude to the Czartoryski family for their patronage of his education. He stressed in them that as an adult he wished to dedicate himself to work for the Polish cause (BCz 7032 IV T.1, pp. 329–330; BPP 766, p. 20).

While already in Istanbul, the young Czaykowski was initially appointed captain of the legion of the Sultanic Cossacks and then commander of the Polish officers' school. He participated in the reorganisation of the Ottoman army, which he completed in 1885. After that, he was elevated to the rank of general (*pasha*). At the same time, he was appointed commander of the Imperial Stables – a position which required the trust of the Sultan. He was also the chairman of the committee responsible for the organisation of the Hamidiye Corps, an irregular cavalry corps that was formed in 1891 by Sultan Abdülhamid II and operated in the south-eastern provinces of the empire (Akarlı, 1993, pp. 197–198; Łątka, 2005, p. 80).

During his stay in the Ottoman Empire, he adopted the name Muzaffer, but unlike his father, he did not convert. Muzaffer Pasha's story reveals how his Christian and European connections eventually contributed to his professional rise to one of the highest administrative levels – that of a provincial governor. The Ottoman governors elected during this period were a product of the Tanzimat reforms, which aimed to modernise the Ottoman administrative system and to incorporate non-Muslims into the system on an equal basis. The number of non-Muslim bureaucrats thus steadily increased (Braude, Lewis, 1982, pp. 339–368). In 1902, Czaykowski put forward his candidacy for governor of the recently created Mutasarrifate of Mount Lebanon (*Cebel-i Lübnan Mutasarrıflığı*), whose population was predominantly Maronite Christian. This was an autonomous district created under an international guarantee after the civil war between the Maronites and the Druze in 1860 when France and Britain intervened on behalf of each group, respectively. As a result of the agreement, it was agreed that a non-Lebanese subject of the Ottoman Empire, Christian (locally known as *mutasarrıf*), appointed by the Sultan, was to rule over the province (Akarlı, 1993, pp. 32–33). Muzaffer's profile fitted these requirements very well and, having accepted this choice, he was promoted to field marshal (*müşir)* and given the rank of vizier.

Excellent as a soldier, Muzaffer had no experience as a politician. He surrounded himself mainly with Lebanese liberals averse to the Maronite clergy and associated with the Sunneen Masonic lodge (Sommer, 2014, p. 153). As a *mutasarrıf*, Muzaffer failed to carry out most of his reform projects, among which was to expand the boundaries of the autonomic Mutasarrifate of Mount Lebanon, to reform the courts according to European standards and halt emigration (AMAE NS 108, pp. 233–240).

Numerous complaints about Muzaffer's rule by influential local Maronite families had been received in Istanbul, but were neither supported by evidence nor confirmed by the foreign missions that exercised control over the region (MPA 27/137, 320; MPA 29/138). A document from the Ottoman archives describing this situation, dated 14 January 1905 and issued by the vizier's chancellery, indicates that there was a need to send a special Ottoman official from the Ministry of the Interior to Mutasarrifate to investigate the matter on the ground (BOA Y.A. HUS. 483/37). French diplomats in Beirut initially endorsed the candidacy of Muzaffer and supported his governorship (AMAE NS 108, pp. 219–220). Muzaffer's appointment was also welcomed by the local Maronite Christian population of Mount Lebanon (AMAE NS 108, p. 223). However, French diplomats soon after repeatedly pointed out the weakness of his governance, which they regarded as lacking a coherent direction, and stressed the repeated complaints from the local population to their consulate (AMAE NS 109, pp. 2–9; 72–88; CADN 166/PO/E/271).

As a well-connected Christian, Muzaffer managed to make an outstanding military career. Given his French education, for a long time he also enjoyed the patronage of the French government. In light of the peculiarities of Ottoman society and the army, those Polish Christians, who had weaker connections, facilitated their careers in the army by converting to Islam.[9] Most often, however, this group occupied the aforementioned "third space". This concept also extends to the next generation, who are also sometimes subject to so-called in-group marginalisation. This positioning is most evident in the case of the Borzęcki family, both the father, Celaleddin Pasha, and his son, Hasan Enver Pasha (Kaim, 2020, p. 238).

Muzaffer Pasha's sons worked in the Ottoman foreign service. At the height of his career, Fuad reached the post of the consul general in São Paulo – an appointment that took place shortly after his father died in 1907 (BOA BEO 3182/238648; BEO 3293/246931; İ.HR. 409/48). During Muzaffer Pasha's governorship of Mount Lebanon, he was also often present in Beirut (AMAE NS 109, pp. 136–137). He made his way to the lands of partitioned Poland thanks to his visit to Henryk Ciecierski in Słowiczyn in Podlasie in 1903.[10] He also had some command of Polish (Ciecierski, 2016, p. 593). Muzaffer's other son, Reşid, who held attaché posts in Rome and the Hague, ultimately proved to be a "failure".[11] His behaviour caused trouble to his father, which, in the opinion of the French consul in Beirut, negatively affected Muzaffer's position as governor of Mount Lebanon. Among other things, in 1905 Reşid was convicted of fraud that he had committed during his stay in Paris (AMAE NS 109, pp. 246–247; CADN 166/PO/E/271).

Ideological Legacy of Fathers, Exclusion and "Third Space"

Hasan Enver was the son of a couple of converts and, for part of his life as an employee of the Ottoman administration, was a declared Muslim and even held Pan-Islamist views. For the record, he was the son of a would-be priest and former 1848 insurgent from Greater Poland, and later an Ottoman captain

[9] For newly arrived Slav and Hungarian soldiers who were Russian or Austrian subjects and who were considered deserters because they had fled the Crimean War (1853–1856), a change of religion from Christianity to Islam was a necessity. A large group of refugees decided in most cases to opt for a "camouflage" version of such conversion. Pragmatism also suggested to most of them that conversion was compulsory if they were to command sufficient respect from their subordinates, and if, guided by Polish romanticism, they hoped to remain true to their idea of winning independence for their homeland from the Ottomans. The newly arrived belonged for the most part to trained military cadres. For more on this subject, see: Deringil, 2012.

[10] Private archives of Teresa Ciecierska-Chłapowa made available to the authors of the paper.

[11] On Reşid's service in the Ottoman administration, see: BOA HR. SAİD. 8/2.

of the general staff and head of the cartography department at the Ministry of War, Konstanty Borzęcki, who became famous as Mustafa Celaleddin Pasha. Hasan Enver opted for a military career after his father's death and for the rest of his life identified with his father's views. Celaleddin Pasha was a pioneer of Turkism - the ideological basis of the modern Republic of Turkey. His book *Les Turcs anciens et modernes* (The ancient and modern Turks, 1869) influenced the formation of political thought in the next generation, having inspired Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (Turan, 1982, pp. 25–27). It contributed to the conception of a new Turkish language. Borzęcki also formulated the social and political foundations for the reform of the modern Turkish nation and the Turanian concept of the ethnogenesis of the Turks. He thus unwittingly created the historical, linguistic and etymological basis of Turkish nationalism. Remarkably, his theses did not resonate in his time, but only in the 1930s. Moving within the realm of imagined entities: his own identity as an Ottoman Muslim (having transgressed from a would-be Catholic cleric) and an imagined nation, Borzęcki established a close link between personal and national identity (Kolodziejczyk, 2011, p. 127). Isolated from his émigré compatriots, he created a theory of ethnic Turkic ancestry perhaps precisely out of a need for compensation to reconcile his overlapping identity layers within broadly understood European roots.

Hasan Enver, as the son of Borzęcki and Saffet Zeliha Hanım, the eldest daughter of another convert, Ömer Lütfi Pasha, left behind a series of essays entitled *Türklerin menşe'ine dā'ir* (On the Origin of the Turks).[12] They were maintained in the spirit of his father's works. Similar views that alluded to the ideas of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism can also be noticed in Enver's memoirs and reflections entitled *Mes idées* (My ideas): "Islam is a strong stone of brotherhood that knows neither regions, nor government, nor nationality" (Enver, 1931, p. 21). The then-reigning Sultan Abdülhamid promoted Pan-Islamism as an ideology aimed at uniting the Muslim world in light of Western European and Russian colonial expansion (Karpat, 2002; Landau, 1990). An opportunity to reassert himself in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkist ideas was Hasan Enver's visit to China. He travelled there as the head of an Ottoman delegation in 1901 during the Boxer Rebellion against the Great Powers' interventionism (Karpat, 2002, p. 237; Landau, 1990, pp. 43–44). Two decades later, he wrote about this political mission as follows: "If I went to China and gathered all the Muslims around me, I would create a republic" (Enver, 1931, p. 17).

[12] Enver Pasha's articles from *Umūmiye Mecmū'ası* (The General Public Journal) were transliterated from Ottoman into modern Turkish and published in the monthly *Tarih ve Toplum* (History and Society) from January to April 1984.

Despite being a Muslim, Hasan Enver Pasha lived outside the Turkish-Muslim community, in a "third space" just like his father, about whom he wrote: "Could my father, as a convert, not be friends with any Christian? Could he have found among the Turkish-Muslims someone with similar beliefs and mentality? Never!" (Enver, 1931, p. 4). Despite posing as a devoted Muslim, Enver *de facto* maintained close contact with Polish and Hungarian Christians and was known as Edward among them (Karpat, 2004, p.147). He also corresponded with his Polish cousin, the nun Kunegunda (Marianna Borzęcka), to prove the Catholic heritage of his ancestors (Łątka, 1993, p. 90). He considered emigrating. Given his second marriage to a Catholic woman, he may have been planning to convert. Imbued with modernist ideas, after his retirement following the 1908 Young Turk revolution, Hasan Enver Pasha, together with his second wife, Hortence who was of Dalmatian origin, founded a private French-language high school in Erenköy, on the Asian side of the Bosphorus (Ataer, 1976, p. 63).

For some, Hasan Enver's 'Christian' background was valuable, for others it was a reason for suspicion and denunciation. Enver recalls one of his enemies, who called him a spy and sent the following telegram to the palace to prove his alleged disloyalty: "How is it possible for Enver, whose father, grandfather and himself are non-believers, to become the civil and military administrator of the city of Volos?" (Enver, 1931, p. 13). Upon receiving this news, the sultan allegedly hastily contacted Marshal Ethem Pasha to enquire who Enver was. Upon learning that Enver was the son of Mustafa Celaleddin Pasha and son-in-law of Mehmed Ali Pasha, Sultan Abdülhamid II ordered Enver to be promoted to the rank of colonel and to "expel this spy from Thessaly" (Enver, 1931, p. 13).

Epidemics Prevention as a Sphere of Transcultural Agency

Before the open hostility towards Christians, Antoni Bonkowski (1788–1848) found himself among the sultan's valued Catholic subjects. He was a Polish émigré who assisted Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839) in the disbandment of the Janissary corps in 1826 and rose to the rank of colonel. He modernised the Ottoman army orchestra by adding European instruments. He also took part in the war against the governor of Egypt Muhammad Ali Pasha in 1832 and 1839. He owed his high position, despite his non-conversion, to the patronage of the French government. As a result of his marriage to Miryam, daughter of an Armenian Catholic clergyman, he had four sons (Lewak, 1936, p. 306).

One of them, Karol Bonkowski Pasha, played a significant role in the Ottoman modernising reforms. He was a scientist, chemist, hygiene specialist, sanitary inspector as well as a general. After graduating from the Ècole Superieure de Pharmacie de Paris in 1865 (Edmond Fremy and Michel Eugène Chevreul were among his teachers), he worked at the Pasteur Institute in microbiology and bacteriology (AN AJ/16/1943; Lewak, 1936, p. 307). On his return to Istanbul in 1865, he took up the post of professor of chemistry at the Class of Pharmacy of the School of Medicine (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Şahane*). In 1878, he became the Sultan's chief chemist (BOA İ.DH. 930/73679, Arık 2019, p. 58). He received the rank of general (*mirliva*) in 1892 and was appointed inspector general of public health in the empire (*Dersaadet ve Bilumum Vilâyât-ı Şâhâne Hıfzıssıhha Ser Müfettişi*) (Baytop, 1985, pp. 173, 341).

In 1876 he joined the Ottoman Medical Society (*Cemiyet-i Tıbbiye-i Osmaniye*) and in 1879 established and became the first president of the Pharmacological Society (*Dersaadet Eczacı Cemiyeti*) (Baytop, 1985, pp. 215–216, 341), contributing to the institutionalisation of the profession of pharmacist (Gümüş, 2019, p. 121; Baytop, 1985, p. 341; Arık, 2019, pp. 59–61), and was a member of several chemical and medical societies in France and Belgium. In 1897, he became a sanitary inspector in the Higher Military Commission (*Erkân-ı Harbiye Heyeti*) of the Alasonya army (Günergun, 1992, p. 239).

Bonkowski Pasha represented Ottoman Turkey at International Sanitary Conferences: Venice (1892), Dresden (1893), Paris (1894) and Moscow (1897) (CADN 166PO/E/470). In 1893–1895, he introduced the method of modern disinfection during cholera epidemics (Çil, 2023, p.106). Bonkowski proposed the establishment of a "Centre for Disease Control" in the quarantine stations: in 1892 in Edirne, in 1893 in Trabzon, in 1894 in Izmir and in 1902–3 in Syria (Damascus and Aleppo) (Gümüş, 2019, pp. 123–125). In 1897, during the Turkish-Greek war over Crete, he was head of sanitary units and organised hospitals, ambulances sent to the front and helped the Red Cross (Lewak, 1936, p. 307).

Bonkowski's professional background was influenced by contemporary scientific and medical developments in Western Europe. His knowledge, which he owed to foreign studies and international experience, enabled him to introduce sanitary and medical solutions in the Ottoman state. From the legacy that he left behind it is difficult to know to what extent he benefited from the heritage of Middle Eastern medicine, and whether the transfer of expertise in the 19th/20th century was only in one direction, from West to East, and whether Istanbul was also a favourable "contact zone" in this respect.

Radicalisation

Another figure of Polish origin appears on the wave of nationalising Turkishness based on the ideology of Pan-Turkism, Alfred Bieliński, the son of a Christian and former insurgent of the 1848 Revolutions, Seweryn Bieliński/ Nihad Pasha and of Mary Sandison, daughter of the British consul in Bursa, Donald Sandison. Sandison had originally been a merchant in Constantinople, and after an unsuccessful bid in 1834 for the position of consul in Thessaloniki, won in the competition for the position of consul in Bursa. In 1868, he married Mary Zohrab, daughter of Constantine Zohrab, an Armenian Catholic merchant from Iran, also an Anglophile. Alfred's mother was therefore also of Armenian-Persian descent.[13] In this way, Donald Sandison gained connections to the local Armenian commercial elite (Zeytinli, 2018, pp. 31–56; BOA İ. TAL.55/44; BNA, FO, 78/329B).

Alfred was a gifted linguist. His mother tongue was English. He learned Polish from his father. In addition to Arabic, Persian and Ottoman Turkish, he was fluent in French, German, Italian and Greek (BOA DH. SAİDd. 1/640). According to Bieliński's friend and prolific journalist, Celal Nuri İleri, English and French were his main languages of communication. Although his Turkish was allegedly not equally good, till the last days of his life he did his best to master it.[14] He was a translator, journalist, member of parliament and most importantly, a diplomat, who became the first and last Ottoman ambassador to the United States. After conversion to Islam in May 1914, he took the name Ahmed Rüstem.[15] We can guess the motives behind this decision. During the formation of the Turkish nation in the ethno-religious sense, he supposedly wanted to declare his belonging to the newly formulated "Turkishness" by means of his religious allegiance. Loyal to the Ottoman state, Alfred fiercely defended its interests in the international arena. He wrote, among other things, on the so-called Armenian question in his 1918 work *La guerre mondiale et la question Turco-Arménienne* (The World War and the Turco-Armenian Question). The diplomat responded to the anti-Ottoman propaganda carried in the American press. He defended Ottoman policies towards its Christian citizens, especially Armenians, while condemning the European colonial and racist practices of the United States. He first voiced these ideas in an article

[13] On Alfred Rüstem's mother's Armenian-Persian genealogy, see: Oğuz, 2020, pp. 131–132.

[14] Celal Nuri İleri, "Ahmet Rüstem Bey Merhum II", *Vakit,* 13 October 1934.

[15] "Rustem Bey Converted. *Former Turkish Attaché at Washington Abjures Christianity", The New York Times,* 23 May 1914. See also Ottoman press: *Sabah,* 9 Mayıs 1330; *Tanin,* 9 Mayıs 1330 [22 May 1914].

published in a Washington newspaper *Evening Star* on 8 September 1914.[16] As a result of this polemic, he was dismissed from his post as ambassador and declared *persona non grata* shortly thereafter.[17]

These ideas were further developed in the above-mentioned 1918 work. Ahmed Rüstem pointed out the hypocrisy of the West, not limiting himself to conventional anti-imperialist rhetoric and recounting the atrocities Britain committed in its colonies, but also exposing Britain's brutality in Ireland. He also referred to the Russian-Polish theme, mentioning the ruthlessness of imperial Russia in the lands of partitioned Poland following the 1830 November and 1863 January uprisings and during WWI. As for the Armenian events, while Ahmed Rüstem acknowledged the tragedy experienced by the Armenians during WWI, he emphasised that the Turks also experienced great suffering at the time. In his view, the responsibility for this tragedy lay with the Armenian revolutionary committees that mobilised the Armenian masses against Ottoman rule (Ahmed Rüstem Bey, 1918, pp. 65–132).

Given his views expressed in the aforementioned treatise, Ahmed Rüstem represents a complex form of Turkish nationalism emblematic of his time, which characterised the period after the Second Constitutional Era (1908–1918/22). At the same time, some of its idiosyncratic aspects reflect its European origins and a variant of Polish 19th century liberal nationalism. As Doğan Gürpınar notes, his criticism of imperialism had different roots and motivation from those of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) members. He attributes it to his Russophobic views, which made Rüstem an outspoken Turkish nationalist who abhorred the perceived hypocrisy of Europeans and European liberalism (Gürpınar, 2014, p. 198). Deft in rhetorical argument, he reached for rights and freedoms, using European political terminology, and repeatedly emphasised his allegiance to humanitarian values. He did not renounce the ideals of 19th century liberalism.

Nevertheless, his disillusionment with the West also caused a transformation in his belief in rights and freedom. The impetus for the growth of his anti-imperialist views was the Russian expansion into Poland, British support for Russia in the Great War and the atrocities committed by the Russians against Polish civilians during WWI. The son of a Polish aristocrat was thus forced to speak in a language that combined the 19th century liberalism with an anti-Western ethos in the fashion advocated by the CUP.

Alfred Bieliński among the many identities available to him chose Turkish, although ethnically he was not a Turk. However, by means of his

[16] "Statement by the Turkish Ambassador [Rüstem]", *Evening Star,* 8 September 1914.

[17] BOA, HR. MTV. 419/34; "Rustem Bey Takes Leave", *The New York Times,* 3 October 1914. See also: Erol, 1973; Wasti, 2012, pp. 781–796; Karacagil, 2022, pp. 142–197.

conversion he wanted to underline his allegiances. If this reading of Ahmed Rüstem's motivation is close to the truth, he underscored it with 19th century ideals, according to which religion came before ethnos. While under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's rule and the formation of Kemalism, the development of national identity defined by 'Turkishness' (*Türklük*) reinforced references to tribes and civilisations and pre-Islamic roots, the 'new Turk' defined by this complex process had to be loyal to the state regardless of his or her religion. This gradually affected the homogeneity of 'modern' society and seriously challenged the testimony of the collective memory of the Ottoman past. Historian Philip Mansel explains the rapid transformation of cultural pluralism into nationalism by the carrying capacity of national ideas. The social, economic and cultural bonds between *millets*, built up by the fact of co-existence in the same city, and neighbourhood, became insufficient to satisfy the hunger for the emotions offered by nationalism. The city - Istanbul - was no longer a sufficient environment. People dreamed of their own country (Mansel, 1995, p. 64).

Alfred Bieliński's conversion to Islam in 1914 was an important moment. At this time, many non-Muslim diplomats lost their positions under the suspicion that their "being in contact with foreigners would entail difficulties in confidential matters" (Findley, 1982, p. 364). These were times when the issue of conversion had changed the emphasis from religion to national loyalty, and a convert to either side or a dissenter was a man disavowing his previous convictions and coming over to the side of the enemy.

Ahmed Rüstem's father Seweryn Bieliński was a lecturer at the St Cyr military school in Paris after emigrating following the 1848 Revolutions. His property was confiscated by the Austrians until a political amnesty, but he refused to return to Austria. During the Crimean War, he fought in the Polish Legion and was awarded French, British and Ottoman decorations. He then went on to work in the Ottoman army, where, as Nihad Pasha, he held high positions in the Ottoman state apparatus. He was appointed High Commissioner in Bulgaria (Sofia) after the 1877–78 Russo-Ottoman War and the Treaty of Berlin (1878) (Lewak, 1936, p. 56). He was considered a loyal bureaucrat while being a non-Muslim (Findley, 1982, pp. 355–356).

Between 1850 and 1908, non-Muslims made up twenty-nine per cent of the Foreign Ministry's staff. From 1850 there were only seven of them and in 1892 there were ninety-three. According to Findley, the principles of the 1856 edict were implemented closer to 1880 as reforms seeking ethnic egalitarianism (Findley, 1982, pp. 343, 352). Proficiency in French, equated with intellectual modernity, was given importance. This fluency was demonstrated not only by non-Muslim groups of the empire but also by pro-European Turkish Muslims. This recruitment relied on interpersonal relations and the mix of patronage

connections (*intisab*). These personal recruitment selections thus still had patrimonial features, with the dominance of Greek Phanariotes and Armenian families traditionally present in places, while Christians from Europe represented a relatively new group.

In an 1849 letter written by one of the leaders of the Polish emigration, General Józef (Joseph) Wysocki, and addressed to Seweryn Bieliński in the refugee camp of Vidin, the former vehemently opposed the proposal of conversion to Islam offered by the Ottomans to the Polish insurgents who found themselves within Ottoman borders following the failure of the 1848–49 Hungarian War. He justified it by the fact that Polish refugees were there as representatives of Poland and accordingly, such a move, even if only political, would bring shame on the country and a stain on the Polish name (BK 2455, pp. 35–36).

The 1856 edict introduced "freedom of religion". Nevertheless, conversions were more frequent during the last quarter of the 19th century. Although the death penalty for conversion had been formally prohibited since 1856, the Ottoman authorities went to great lengths to prevent such conversions (Deringil, 1998, pp. 115–116). Ottomanism was ambivalent towards non-Turkish and non-Muslim Ottoman subjects, oscillating between attitudes of acceptance, assimilation and exclusion. The latter stance was displayed by some advocates of emerging Turkish nationalism of the Second Constitutional Era. The position of the head of the nationalist and Turanian organisation *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver is a case in point (Uzer, 2016, pp. 22, 37–39). He preached the unity of religion (Islam), and language (Turkish) as the constituent elements of the conception of nation. This less inclusive atmosphere towards non-Muslims may have contributed to Alfred Bieliński's decision to convert.

Moreover, the descendants of Polish émigrés may have been influenced not only by pro-European or supranational views, but also by "inherited memory" or the "homeland of the fathers". At times, we observe, as in the case of Ahmed Rüstem, an ideological radicalisation characteristic of the second generation of emigrants. It constituted a way to prove their loyalty. Ahmed Rüstem's uncompromising pro-Ottoman stance and his conversion to Islam can thus be read as conscious acts of searching for his own identity and a way to affirm his belonging to the Ottoman-Turkish homeland. This radical attitude could have also been caused by a sense of the threat of dual statelessness among the second-generation émigrés - inherited from their fathers - from Poland under partition, and their personal one, from the Ottoman Empire, which as the 'sick man of Europe' was threatened by territorial disintegration. Ahmed Rüstem regarded himself as "an Ottoman of Polish origin" or "the son of a Pole who

had found asylum in Turkey". To explain his attitude to the Ottoman state, he referred to it as "the country in which he was born and in which he in turn was kindly treated" and for which he "did nothing but constantly nourish a feeling of attachment" (Ahmed Rüstem Bey, 1918, pp. III–V).

In the case of the Borzęcki family, the father's vision of nation was influenced by several circumstances, including his upbringing in a Polish landed gentry family, his stay in a seminary, his disillusionment with the failure of the Greater Poland Uprising, his exile from his homeland, his conversion to Islam, his status as an Ottoman subject, his active role in the Ottoman army, and his role as a journalist and pioneer of the ideology of the budding Turkish nationalism. While Borzęcki's views display an inclusive, modern, Enlightenment conception of nationhood, based on citizenship regardless of ethnic criteria, and which, as Walicki explained, "originated from the tradition of noble republicanism and developed in 18th century Poland" (Walicki, 2009, p. 444), in Ahmed Rüstem's case we witness a nationalist radicalisation resulting from the historical and political conditions that characterised the development of an exclusivist Turkish nationalism during the final years of the Ottoman Empire.

Complex Identity Choices of the Bieliński Family

During the Turkish War of Independence (1919–1922) Ahmed Rüstem provided further proof of his allegiance to his homeland. He was present at the 1919 congresses in Erzurum and Sivas in the capacity of the foreign policy counsellor and interpreter by the side of the leader of the resistance movement Mustafa Kemal (Karacagil, 2022, pp. 309–314). He was valued by the future Atatürk because of his knowledge and diplomatic experience in a circle which was dominated by soldiers and lacked diplomats and bureaucrats. Ahmed Rüstem was a member of parliament from Ankara to the last Ottoman parliament and a short-lived deputy to the Grand National Assembly in Ankara (BOA DH. İ. UM. EK., 118/57; DH. İ. UM. EK., 118/81). The year 1920 marked a sudden break in relations with Mustafa Kemal and in September he retired from public services. After leaving Ankara for Western Europe that year, he returned to a newly established Turkey in 1923 (Karacagil, 2022, pp. 336–361), However, as a sign of recognition for his lifelong services to the Ottoman/Turkish state, a bill passed by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in October 1920 granted him a pension, which he continued to receive until his death in 1934 (BCA, 030.18.1.1/6.46.5, 18/1/(1)339).[18]

[18] For Ahmed Rüstem's obituary in the *New York Times*, see: "Rustem Bey dies; Turkish Diplomat", *The New York Times*, 25 September 1934.

Little is known about the last years of Ahmed Rüstem's life. We know nothing about his descendants or even whether they existed at all. From Ahmed Rüstem's obituary authored by the afore-mentioned Celal Nuri İleri, we only learn that he was married for a brief period of time and spent most of his life as a bachelor.[19] His sisters and brother, together with their mother, moved to the United Kingdom. According to documents from British archives, their British citizenship was restored. Mary de Bilinski [Bieliński][20], mother and widow, who had been born British, assumed Ottoman citizenship through her marriage to Seweryn Bieliński in 1858 and in 1906, as a 72-year-old, was naturalised again as British (BNA HO 144/836/145369, HO 334/74/120). Sister Lilian Estelle de Bilinski, born in 1875 in Istanbul, was also granted British citizenship in November 1906 (BNA HO 144/836/145370). Another sister, Elsie Frances de Bilinski, by an oath of office in 1906, also took British citizenship, and together with her sister and mother settled in a rented villa in Kensington, London (BNA HO 144/834/144643, HO 334/43/16423). They invoked their grandfather, Donald Sandison, as a widely respected aristocrat, who was a guarantor of their rights to British citizenship.

Meanwhile, an extensive dossier from 1914 to 1922 from the British Home Office is devoted to Ahmed Rüstem's brother Seweryn Oswald Bieliński, whose numerous functions in the Ottoman Empire and from 1915 onwards for the British Crown were to provide evidence of his "Britishness" (BNA HO 144/1726/270690, HO 334/94). Oswald was granted British citizenship only in May 1922 (BNA HO 334/94/9167). At the time, he was Director General of the National Bank of Turkey in Istanbul, married in 1921 to a British citizen Adriana Hilda Leibbrandt and resided in Pera (BNA HO 334/94). The citizenship certificate was handed over on 22 May 1922 by the British High Commissioner in Constantinople, Horace Rumbold, who took the oath from Bieliński. Quite remarkably, Ahmed Rüstem is listed in this diplomatic correspondence as a possibly "suspicious person" (BNA FO 383/99). Mentioned in correspondence in light of Albania's 1912 declaration of independence, where he served as an Ottoman minister, he was described as "a rascal though an agreeable one" (BNA FO 800/76/3) Among the documents relating to Seweryn Oswald Bieliński, there is no trace of Alfred Rüstem seeking naturalisation. On the contrary, a note appears that in contrast to his brother, Alfred Rüstem remained a "Turk" (BNA HO 144/1726/270690). Remarkably, Seweryn Oswald had applied for British citizenship earlier, but he was not granted it. He was told that this was not possible until he was a resident of the British Empire. The

[19] Celal Nuri İleri, "Ahmet Rüstem Bey Merhum II", *Vakit,* 13 October 1934.

[20] The form Bilinski was often a spelling used by the British, the French as well as the Ottomans for the surname Bieliński.

perception of him as an Ottoman citizen, a country from the opposite camp during WWI, was repeated in further correspondence.

His example is revealing of how he sought to mobilise his British and Polish roots to make a convincing case for his naturalisation. During the British occupation of Istanbul after WWI, he went through the complicated route of the British bureaucracy so that, as the inspector of the Ionian Bank in Athens, he could first land in Alexandria, then under British protection, and then stay for a month in London, where he met the Bank's Board of Directors (BNA FO 383/99). The latter was in correspondence with the British Foreign Office and the Interior Ministry regarding his case. This correspondence stressed his upbringing in a British tradition through his maternal side, his preparatory and higher education at Rugby School, as well as his subsequent work in the British capital in the New Oriental Banking.

As for his periods of employment in the Ottoman Empire, it was highlighted that he worked in institutions that represented British interests such as the Imperial Ottoman Bank. Seweryn Oswald thus asked to be recognised as British, as he was half-English by birth and fully British in terms of language and social and business connections. In the meantime, he also resorted to underscoring his Polish family background to make his case. In the correspondence, he explained that with no prospect of permanent residence in England, to divest himself of his Ottoman citizenship, he became an Austrian subject and registered as a Pole in Galicia (BNA HO 144/1726/270690). Understandably, this status put him in a different light than as an Austrian or Ottoman subject during WWI. At the same time, at the outbreak of the war, he denounced Austrian protection by submitting a note to the Austrian ambassador in Athens and instead stressed his professional connections to British institutions (BNA HO 144/1726/270690). Furthermore, Seweryn Oswald's Polish background and the resulting friendly positioning towards the British Crown was also attested by the key figures of the Polish Information Committee – a leading Polish émigré institution in London (BNA HO 141793, FO 383/99).

Conclusion

Through the case studies, by using a microhistorical approach, we observe individual factors that contributed to the transcultural identity of the hybrid figures discussed in this paper. These included religious syncretism, the social status of their fathers' generation and political legacy; Polish Romantic nationalism or co-existing forms of Ottoman patriotism. Thanks to these biographical microhistories, we can witness the process when the sharp contours of the archetypal émigré gradually blur until finally, a self-perceived

declared ethnic identity assigned to the ruling ideology emerges. Various heterogeneous ethno-religious groups negotiate their Turkishness while it is still in the formative stage, until finally, through a top-down process, they all become citizens of what was planned to be a homogeneous Republic. In all this, Istanbul remains like a foster child of the new statehood and, with all its multi-ethnic resources, ends up in the Turkish foster family.

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- 766: Władysław Czaykowski to Anna née Sapieha Czartoryska, 24.12.1856, p. 20.
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- ***Foreign Office (FO)***
- 383/99: Letter from the 9th of July 1915, Sir Elliot, Ionian Bank in Athens, to Sir Arthur Nicolson, Foreign Office and the permit on the 17th of August 1915.
- 78/329B
- 800/76/3: Letter from Count de Salis to William Tyrrell from 12 May 1912, p. 10.
- ***Home Office (HO)***
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- Letter from 28 October 1914.
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- Letter from 13 February 1922 (to 1st Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, the Under - Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from the British High Commission in Constantinople, Horace Rumbold.
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  3182/238648
  3293/246931
- *Dahiliye Nezareti (Ministry of the Interior)*
- DH. İ. UM. EK. İdare-i Umumiye Ekleri
  118/57
  118/81
- DH. SAİDd. Dahiliye Sicill-i Ahval İdare-i Umumiyyesi Müdüriyeti
  1/640
- *Hariciye Nezareti (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)*
- HR. MTV. Mütenevvia Kısmı
  419/34
- HR. SAİD. Hariciye Sicill-i Ahval İdare-i Umumiyyesi Müdüriyeti
  8/2
- *İrade (Decrees)*
- İ.DH. İrade Dahiliye
  930/73679
- İ. HR. İrade Hariciye
  409/48

- İ. TAL. İrade Taltifat
  55/44
- *Yıldız Sarayı (The Yıldız Palace)*
- Y.A. HUS. *Hususi Maruzat*
  483/37
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  030.18.1.1/6.46.5
  030.18/1/(1)339
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