

The Student Religion/Pluralism/Media/ Survey A Comparison of German and Turkish Secular High School Students from Research to Practice

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Abstract---

Purpose: *The purpose of our research was to find out if high school students want more discussion and/or education about religion in their schools and to assess their tolerance to other religions.*

Methods: *Two groups of secular high school students, German Non-Turkish and Turkish were asked questions about Religious identity, Pluralism, and Social Media. To assess religious tolerance, they were presented a picture of each religious symbol.*

Results: *Our study identified that students wanted more information about religions and our findings suggest that to encourage Pluralism and Religious Tolerance it is important to develop curriculum that will introduce students to different religions and to develop training to facilitate teachers' educational interventions.*

Implications: *Before one can build effective public policy for religious/pluralistic education, it is important to know more about young people and their religious belief systems. Because religion plays a significant role in history and society, pluralistic religious education is essential to understanding both the nation and the world.*

Keywords--- *Turkish German Students Pluralism Prejudice Religion*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Turkish immigrant population in Germany, known as guest workers, are historically said to face alienation from their culture as well as prejudice from their own immigrant community. Given the climate of religious intolerance it made sense to ask questions that not only test a student's knowledge of religion and interest in this subject; but also, whether it is important to develop policy for schools so that Religious Diversity (that is academic not devotional) be included in school curriculum. We used a questionnaire online (Gould, 2015; Duffy, 2005) that we had developed for the larger study addressing potential differing religious outlooks in German students attending religious versus secular schools. This study was conducted in three German Schools, two in Duisburg in Munster, Germany and one in Waldbröl, Northrhine-Westphalia Germany by college age students. We asked questions that addressed religious identity, pluralism, their use of social media and religious tolerance. To assess religious tolerance, we presented a series of pictures portraying students with religious symbols; headscarf, crucifix, kipper, turban, and meditation posture. (Questionnaire available by request).

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In the entire sample of 324 young people ages 13-20, 221 attended German secular schools, of which 26 students were of Turkish Muslim origin (Table 1). Using the answers recorded in the initial study we were able to compare the responses of these 26 Turkish secular students to those of the 195 non-Turkish German students who attended secular schools. Although this study was ethnographic rather than theory bound, we did seek 4 critical observations: 1. Are there differences in the extent to which Turkish and German students are engaged with religion? 2. Given the history of the “guest workers” in Germany since 1960 and the prejudice against Muslim people, would the German Students express hostility when seeing Muslim symbols? 3. Given the history of the “guest workers in Germany since 1960 and the prejudice against Muslim people would the Turkish students express hostility toward Christian Symbols? 4. Were there differences in pluralistic attitudes towards others religious symbols and to what extent did students want information on other religions?.

Table 1: Demographics

Students	All Secular		Non-Turkish		Turkish	
	221	100%	195	88%	26	12%
Male	111	50%	98	50%	13	50%
Female	110	50%	97	50%	13	50%
13-16	128	58%	114	58%	14	54%
17-20	93	42%	81	42%	12	46%

Responses to our questionnaire will give us information on the extent of religious tolerance and the extent to which students want more information about religions; information that will inform whether there is a need for religious programs in schools for teachers and students.

Background of Turkish Guest Workers in Germany

When this study was completed in 2015 news reports considered the same and similar issues for Turkish students and families as in the 1960’s when the Guest Workers arrived in Germany. This article and others referenced here speak to these similar issues from 1960 to the present.

“When students arrived from Turkey in the 60’s Turkish children and their parents found themselves in unfavorable positions throughout the different stages of German school education, mainly because the German education system failed to provide adequate language training for the children and showed a strong tendency to reproduce social inequality. Unfortunately, this may be the same case today for immigrants who move to Germany.” (Söhn, J., & Özcan, V. 2006).

An article written in 2009 stated that:

“Germany is home to more than half of Europe’s Turks and youth, because an important test of the permeability of social boundaries is whether the second and third generations of immigrants can cross them.... This Article concludes that despite recent progress Legal and cultural barriers continue to inhibit the assimilation of German

Turks into mainstream German Society....”If progress” is measured by the degree of assimilation attained, Turks appear to be making slow progress in Germany.”(Ross, 2009, p.685)

In 2011, another article entitled “Turkish guest workers transformed German Society” delineates the history of the negative arrival of Turkish workers in Germany.

“Turkish workers arrived in Germany to fill the demand for cheap labor in a booming post-war economy. Many of them never left, creating a minority community...A treaty signed by the two states on October, 1961 established the conditions for the guest workers...The employment of Turkish workers was meant for a limited time...like others who had come to Germany that had previously come to Germany as guest workers...Between 1961 and 1973, around 2.7 million Turks applied for a job for a job in Germany, but only 750,000 were actually accepted, Half of those who came returned to Turkey ...the other half remained in Germany. Today (2011) among 2.5 million people with a Turkish background live in Germany, making them the largest migrant community in the country....In contrast to citizens of EU countries, Turks cannot have dual citizenship. If they possess both, they must choose between Turkish and German citizenship by their 23rd birthday.”(Prevezanos, 2011)

In 2011, Helen Whittle, wrote an article entitled “Germans warm up to immigration but miss the point.”

“Germans increasingly see immigration as a benefit to the country. But experts say people's views are contradictory: Expecting immigrants to blend in to a homogenous society nullifies the benefit of multiculturalism.” (Whittle, 26,10,11)

In 2015, in an article entitled “Guest workers become issue for Germany” it was stated that:

“Germany has depended heavily on low-income immigrants for their economic muscle, but the country has been slow to accept them as full members of society. At a time when Germany is once again embroiled in a heated immigration debate, immigrants, especially Turkish and other Muslims, are often accused of not doing enough to integrate not learning German sufficiently and living in parallel societies, isolated from mainstream German culture”. (Gonzalez, 2015)

In 2015, Zaman spoke of the Turkish immigrants, who return to Turkey:

“The third and fourth descendants of Turkish immigrants, who were born in Germany and are better educated than their predecessors’ generations, are prone to emigrate to Turkey- not because they are not integrated but because of their cosmopolitan identity, discriminations in Germany and their better economic prospects in their families’ home country.” (Zaman, 2015)

In addition, even after 2015 when this study was completed there were similar responses as in the 60’s. For example, in 2016, at a meeting in Berlin, Prof. Dr. Detlef Pollack, sociologist at the Münster University’s Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics” research project stated that:

“People of Turkish origin who live in Germany lack the feeling of being welcome, or being recognized. More than half of immigrants from Turkey and their descendants feel they are second-class citizens, no matter how hard they try to belong....In sharp contrast to the attitude of the majority society, people of Turkish origin mostly ascribe positive attributes to Islam such as solidarity, tolerance and peaceableness.” (Van Melis, 2016).

Again, in an article entitled “So what are you?” the feeling was described in words: “I feel like a German, but I still feel Turkish when I talk to my relatives.” (Oscan, 2017).

“ A very important issue is that education is related to economic conditions of the parents. Raoufi addressed this conversation in 2017.

In order to appreciate the educational problems faced by guest-workers' children in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), it is essential to emphasize a given set of socio-political and economic conditions determining the way of life of their parents. In order to appreciate the educational problems faced by guest-workers' children in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), it is essential to emphasize a given set of socio-political and economic conditions determining the way of life of their parents. Who are the Gastarbeiter? The German word Gastarbeiter refers to a certain group of foreigners who are ' guest-workers', also referred to as foreign or alien workers, in the FRG. 1 The economic function of guest-workers is to regulate Germany's employment.” (Raoufi, 2017)

In 2018, the conversation was continued about the Germans of Turkish descent who struggle with identity and for acceptance. Ozil Uzan, a famous soccer player said:

“I am a German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose” said Mesut Ozil, who recently quit the national soccer team, citing racism.” My heart is still Turkish...said Uzan, whose father came to Germany in 1966 as a guest worker and found a job in a Ford automotive plant.” Uzan is not alone. Experts say many second-and third-generation people of Turkish descent in Germany feel similarly conflicted.” (Smith & Eckardt, 2018)

Again in 2018, Bonefeld&Dickha user supported the issue that stated that Anti-Muslim sentiment is on the rise in Germany. They studied Teachers reactions to migrant students.

“For the study released in 2018, 204 people studying teaching were asked to grade two identical exam papers, penned by an eighth-grader. The difference was the name of the student on the paper. The teaching students invariably assigned poorer marks to the paper of "Murat" (a common Turkish name) while "Max" had higher marks.... Bonefeld, co-author of the survey, told Germany's Spiegel that the results surprised them and would provide a new perspective for the training of teachers to be more objective. The survey's authors also note that more than 80 percent of participants can correctly identify the child's name to his migrant background.” (Bonefeld, M.& Dickhauser, D. 2018). This background suggests that German students may experience negativity and hostility to Turkish students and Turkish students may express negativity and hostility to Germans. Whether German or Turkish students would want more information is unknown.

II. METHODS

This survey consisted of fixed questions addressing religious identity (table 2) pluralism (table 3), use of social media (table 4), as well as free written responses to a series of pictures depicting various religions (Table 5-9). The responses to these religious symbols were reviewed and categorized separately by two reviewers. If there was disagreement, a consensus category was agreed upon. The categories are as follows: Positive, Neutral, More Information, Negative, and Hostile. Because of the very small sample size of Turkish students, this study must be considered a pilot. We did use Chi Square analysis in the hopes of identifying responses where there are marked

differences. Note that the term secular used in this paper refers to the fact that the students attended secular rather than religious based schools.

Table 2: Religious identity

Students	All		Non-Turkish		Turkish		
	221	100.0%	195	88.00%	26	12.0%	
Q.9	DID YOU GROW UP ATTENDING SOME FORM OF RELIGIOUS OR SPIRITUAL SERVICES WITH YOUR FAMILY?						
	Yes and I still do	78	35.3%	57	29.2%	21	80.8%
	Only when I have to	54	24.4%	50	25.6%	4	15.4%
	Yes but I no longer go	43	19.5%	42	21.5%	1	3.8% P<.001
Q.12	DO YOU EVER LOOK TO RELIGIONS WHEN EXPERIENCING CONFLICT						
	YES	98	44.3%	75	38.5%	23	88.5%
	No	118	53.4%	115	59.0%	3	11.5% P<.001
Q.13	WHEN GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT TIME DO YOU GENERALLY						
	TEND TO KEEP IT TO YOURSELF	115	52.0%	104	53.3%	11	42.3%
	TALK ABOUT IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS	146	66.1%	128	65.6%	18	69.2%
	ASK YOUR PARENTS FOR ADVICE	88	39.8%	73	37.4%	15	57.7%
	TURN TO A TEACHER OR SCHOOL COUNSELOR	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
	HAVE A SUPPORT NETWORK THRU A CHURCH OR SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION	8	3.6%	5	2.6%	3	11.5%
	RELY ON RELIGION IN YOUR OWN WAY	25	11.3%	18	9.2%	7	26.9% P=.03
Q.8.	DOES THE TOPIC OF RELIGION OR SPIRITUALITY EVER COME UP IN <i>conversations with your friends</i>						
	YES	110	49.8%	90	46.2%	20	76.9%
	NO	100	45.2%	94	48.2%	6	23.1% P<.001

Table 3: Pluralism

Students	All Secular		Non-Turkish		Turkish		
	221	100%	195	88%	26	12%	
Q 7	Do you feel that understanding different religions is important to understanding current events in the world						
	YES	190	86.0%	166	85.1%	24	92.3%
	NO	24	10.9%	22	11.3%	2	7.7% N.S.
Q 17	Have you ever wished that you know more about a religion either your own or another one						
	YES	141	63.8%	118	60.5%	23	88.5%
	NO	74	33.5%	72	36.9%	2	7.7% P < .004
Q 14	Is your Community Multi -Faith						
	YES	157	71.0%	134	68.7%	23	88.5%
	NO	59	26.7%	56	28.7%	3	11.5% P =.05
Q 16	Have you heard the term religious pluralism or interfaith						
	YES	19	8.6%	18	9.2%	1	3.8%
	NO	197	89.1%	173	88.7%	24	92.3% N.S.

Table 4: Use of social media

Students	All Secular		Non-Turkish		Turkish		
	221	100%	195	88%	26	12%	
Q 24	Do you ever listen to religiously influenced music						
	exclusively	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	often	8	3.6%	6	3.1%	2	7.7%
	sometimes	101	45.7%	91	46.7%	10	38.5%
	never	102	46.2%	96	49.2%	6	23.1%
							N.S.
Q 25	Do you visit religious website						
	exclusively	1	0.5%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%
	often	6	2.7%	3	1.5%	3	11.5%
	sometimes	48	21.7%	36	18.5%	12	46.2%
	never	160	72.4%	150	76.9%	10	38.5%
							P<.001
Q 26	Do you watch religiously based TV programs or movies						
	exclusively	2	0.9%	2	1.0%	0	0.0%
	often	4	1.8%	3	1.5%	1	3.8%
	sometimes	106	48.0%	86	44.1%	20	76.9%
	never	103	46.6%	99	50.8%	4	15.4%
	X						P<.003

Table 5: Response to headscarf

	All Students		Non Turkish		Turkish	
	221		195		26	
Positive	36	16.3%	28	14.4%	8	30.8%
Neutral	94	42.5%	84	43.1%	10	38.5%
More Information	12	5.4%	12	6.2%	0	0.0%
Negative	61	27.6%	57	29.2%	4	15.4%
Hostile	10	4.5%	9	4.6%	1	3.8%
No Answer	8	3.6%	5	2.6%	3	11.5%

For all P = .06

Combining Negative and Hate P =.03

Table 6: Response to Crucifix

	All Students		Non Turkish		Turkish	
	221		195		26	
Positive	34	15.4%	25	12.8%	9	34.6%
Neutral	152	68.8%	141	72.3%	11	42.3%
More Informati	5	2.3%	3	1.5%	2	7.7%
Negative	23	10.4%	21	10.8%	2	7.7%
Hostile	2	0.9%	1	0.5%	1	3.8%
No Answer	5	2.3%	4	2.1%	1	3.8%

P<.004

Table 7: Response to Kipper

	All Students		Non Turkish		Turkish	
	221		195		26	
Positive	36	16.3%	34	17.4%	2	7.7%
Neutral	121	54.8%	108	55.4%	13	50.0%
More Information	27	12.2%	21	10.8%	6	23.1%
Negative	19	8.6%	18	9.2%	1	3.8%
Hostile	7	3.2%	4	2.1%	3	11.5%
No Answer	11	5.0%	10	5.1%	1	3.8%

P=.04

Table 8: Response to TURBAN

	All Students		Non Turkish		Turkish	
	221		195		26	
Positive	25	11.3%	24	12.3%	1	3.8%
Neutral	98	44.3%	85	43.6%	13	50.0%
More Information	18	8.1%	16	8.2%	2	7.7%
Negative	47	21.3%	42	21.5%	5	19.2%
Hostile	22	10.0%	20	10.3%	2	7.7%
No Answer	11	5.0%	8	4.1%	3	11.5%

N.S.

Table 9: Reaction to Buddhist Meditation

	All Students 221		Non Turkish 195		Turkish 26	
Positive	82	37.1%	69	35.4%	13	50.0%
Neutral	80	36.2%	78	40.0%	2	7.7%
More Informati	28	12.7%	24	12.3%	4	15.4%
Negative	16	7.2%	10	5.1%	6	23.1%
Hostile	1	0.5%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%
No Answer	14	6.3%	13	6.7%	1	3.8%

P<.001

III. RESULTS

Religious Identity

Religious Identity was strong for Turkish students compared to German students; Turkish students grew up attending religious services more often and looked to religion when experiencing conflict in their life. When going through a difficult time Turkish student tended to rely on their parents for advice (57.7% vs 37.4%) and on their religion (26.9% VS 9.2%). For the Turkish students the topic of religion or spirituality came up more often when talking with their friends (76.9 vs 46.2%) (Table2)

Pluralism

A high % of both Turkish and non-Turkish students 92.3% and 85.1% , believed that understanding different religions is important to understanding current events in the world. However, slightly more Turkish students wished to know more about other religions (88.5% vs 60.5%) and more often lived in a multi faith communities (88.5% vs 68.7%). Very few of the both Turkish and non-Turkish secular students had heard the term religious Pluralism or Interfaith (3.8% and 9.25%) (Table3).

Use of Social Media

Neither Turkish or non-Turkish students listened to religious influenced music exclusively or often. However, fewer Turkish students never listened to religious music (23.1% vs 49.2%). Compared to non-Turkish students a higher percentage of Turkish students visited religious websites (57.7% vs 20.5%). In addition, a higher percentage of Turkish students watched religiously based TV programs or Movies (84.6 vs 49.2%) (Table4).

IV. RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE ASSESSED BY RESPONSE TO RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

Headscarf Symbol

Compared to the Non-Turkish Students, a higher percentage of Turkish students had positive responses (30.8% vs 14.4%) to a picture of a woman wearing a Scarf and fewer had negative response (15.4% vs 29.2%) More Non-Turkish students expressed a negative reaction (29.2% vs 15.4%). Few Turkish and non-Turkish students expressed

a hostile reaction to women wearing a headscarf (3.8% vs 4.6%). Although, German students had a high percentage of negative and hostile combined (33.8%) When viewing the headscarf, the majority of Germans were either positive or neutral. (Table 5)

Crucifix Symbol

Compared to Non-Turkish students, Turkish students had a more positive response to the Crucifix (34.6%vs12.8percentage). Whereas non-Turkish students had a more neutral response (72.3%) then Non-Turkish students (42.3%). Negative and Hostile reactions were not common in either group, 11.3% or 11.5% respectively. (Table 6)thus, there is no indication that Turkish students as a group are prejudiced against Christians.

Kipper

Although the Turkish students wanted more information (23.1 vs 10.8%), they were less positive (7.7% vs 17.4%) and more hostile (11.5% vs 2.1%) then the Non-Turkish students. (Table 7).

Turban

The majority of students were either neutral or wanted more information (57.7 Turkish and 51.8non-Turkish). Both had similar negative and hostile reactions (26.9 Turkish and 31.8 non-Turkish) (Table 8)

Buddhist Meditation

The Turkish students expressed fewer neutral (7.7 vs 40%) and more negative reactions (23. % vs 5.1%). Table 9

V. DISCUSSION

In this small pilot study, we found that there were both similarities and differences between German and Turkish students. Turkish students grew up attending spiritual and religious services with their families, and still do (80.8% vs 29.2 %), and looked towards religion when experiencing conflict (88.8% vs 38.5%). Both groups talked about religion with their friends (69.2% vs 65.6) , but Turkish students also tended to ask their parents for advice (57.7% vs 37.4%) and relied on religion in their own way (26.6% vs 9.2%) . Turkish students used more religious social media then German students. Most significant was that more Turkish students looked to religion when experiencing conflict in their lives (88.5% vs 38.5%) and the topic of religion came up more often with their friends (76.9% vs 46%). However, both the German and Turkish students expressed a variety of responses, indicating that within each group there exist multiple views towards both religion and pluralism.

“In the tradition of visual information, religious symbols have gained a status of both and “an ancient modern” nexus and as a dependable medium retaining cultural identity. (Tzankov&Schiporst, 2010)When students were asked, “What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you see or think about women wearing a head covering” many German and Turkish students expressed neutral responses to the question (43.1% vs 38.5%). The German students wanted more information (6.2% vs 0.0%). As would be expected, Turkish students expressed more positive responses(30.8% vs 14.4%) while German students were more negative towards the Head Scarf (29.2% vs 15.4%), Both groups expressed a low percentage of hostile responses (4.6% vs 3.8%).

When students were asked “What is the first thing that comes to mind when you see or think about a person wearing a crucifix around their neck” Turkish students were more positive (34.6% vs. 12.8%) and wanted more information (7.7% vs. 1.5%) . Non-Turkish students more neutral (72.3% vs 42.3%). Both groups have similar Negative plus Hostile responses (11.3% vs 11.5%). These findings suggest that although the Turkish students were a minority within the secular schools, they do not express strong anti-Christians sentiments.

When students were asked about the “Kipah” =Yarmulke” there were more positive responses by non -Turkish students (17.4% vs 7.7%). However, the desire for more information was highest in the Turkish students (23.1% vs 10.8%) suggesting that the education of Turkish students in their schools about Jews and the Holocaust was extremely important and would be helpful for the Turkish students who came to Germany. Both answered in a similar neutral way (55.4% vs 50%). While German students were more negative, Turkish students were more hostile. Taken as a whole the Turkish students expressed less acceptance of Jews then the German students. In Munster, Germany and Hollenberg Gymnasium in Westphalia, Germany there are very few Jews and in Munster the only surviving Synagogue numbered 142 members in 1961 (Jews in Munster, 2013).This lack of personal contact supports the need for pluralist education as an intervention to promote religious tolerance.

The overall responses of Turkish German and non-Turkish German students to seeing a man wearing a Turban were statistically similar. Both groups had positive responses, but the Turkish students appeared less positive. (12.3% vs 3.8%) and wanted more information (8.2% vs. 7.7%)

However, students from both groups expressed negative and hostile responses (31.8% and 26.9%). In addition, for both the Turkish and non-Turkish students a negative and hostile response was highest to the symbol of a man wearing a turban. Perhaps unfamiliarity played a part in generating these negative perceptions.

As to the Buddhist Symbols, many non-Turkish and Turkish students were positive (35.4% and 50.0%).The non-Turkish students expressed responses that are more neutral.(40% vs 7.7%), while the Turkish students had a higher percentage of negative responses (23.1% vs 5.2%).

An important finding across the responses for all of the symbols for both the Non-Turkish and Turkish students was their expressed need for more information on differing religious groups. There also appeared to be a relationship between a high need for more information and the expression of negative reaction. We believe that their unfamiliarity has important implications. It can be hypothesized that prejudice and stereotyping has almost everything to do with unfamiliarity of the subject in the community, at home and in student lessons and classes at school.(Webber, Mark, (1990). Prejudice and stereotyping are biases that work together to create and maintain social inequality. Prejudice refers to the attitudes and feelings—whether positive or negative, conscious or non-conscious—that people have about members of other groups (Vescio and Weaver, 2013). If we take negative and hostile responses as indicative of prejudice, only 33.8% of German’s were prejudiced towards Headscarf and only 11.5%of Turkish students were prejudiced against Christians. Both groups expressed strong desire to learn more about other Religions

Future Directions: From Research to Practice

It is clear from this pilot study, that the introduction of interfaith and pluralistic education was desired by the majority of both German and Turkish students and its introduction is of great importance. In this section I will outline some examples of curriculum in the schools and in community, as well as training for the teachers.

“Interfaith dialogue means to hold on to our faith while simultaneously trying to understand another person’s faith. It demands honesty and respect from its participants so that both individuals may present their religions sincerely.” (Crowely, 2010)

“The First India Indonesia Interfaith Dialogue (IID), (2018) was held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on 3-5 October 2018. A seven-member delegation from India led by Hon’ble M.J. Akbar, Minister of State of External Affairs (MOS MJA) participated in the dialogue. The Indonesian delegation was led by Hon’ble A.M. Fachir, Vice Foreign Minister of Foreign Affairs” (First India Interfaith, 2018).

In Germany, a conference/course is planned in 2020 referred to as AWM course no: 8201001.

“This week's focus is on developments in German society and in the Christian community within Germany. Challenges for the integration (in society and community) of people of other cultural and religious character are pointed out and solutions presented and discussed. The participants also learn to be able to react objectively to right-wing and anti-Semitic propaganda”. (Haller & Yasser 2019)

In the United States, I work with the “Islamic Network Group.” ING is a peace-building organization providing face-to-face education and engagement opportunities that foster understanding of Muslims and other misunderstood groups to promote harmony among all people. Founded in 1993, ING, and its affiliates around the country facilitate:

“Thousands of presentations, training seminars, workshops, and panel discussions annually in schools, colleges and universities, law enforcement agencies, corporations, and healthcare facilities.... Online curriculum on topics related to cultural awareness and building bridges are available to educators and community organizations....The ING Youth Speakers Program empowers teen American Muslims to counter Islamophobia through formal presentations and informal conversations. “ (Islamic Network Group, 2019)

Facing History Facing Ourselves in Boston, Mass. with offices all over the United States is another organization that is combating prejudice, and stereotyping with its many programs in the community and in the schools.

“Facing History’s resources address racism, prejudice, and antisemitism at pivotal moments in history; we help students connect choices made in the past to those they will confront in their own lives. Through our partnership with educators around the world, Facing History and Ourselves reaches millions of students in thousands of classrooms every year.”(Facing History. Facing Ourselves, 2019)

The Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics” University of Munster has inspired my research into this very complex work and inspired me to look at the issues of Pluralism and Research to Practice in a profound and caring way.

“The Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics. Dynamics of Tradition and *Innovation*” has been investigating since 2007 the complex relationship between religion and politics across eras and cultures. They analyze in transepochal studies ranging from antiquity to the present day the conditions and factors that make religion an engine of political and social change, with their focus being above all on the paradox that religions often develop their innovative potential precisely by drawing on their traditions.” the Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics. Dynamics of Tradition and Innovation....The researchers concentrate on the monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and on their polytheistic precursors. The research network is the largest of its kind in Germany; and, of the Clusters of Excellence, is one of the oldest and the only one to deal with the issue of religion“(VanMjelis, 2016)

Lastly, I would like to mention Trackii, the group that has supported my work and where I learn and share the very difficult vision we all hold. Track ii Citizens for diplomacy:

“Envision a world in which citizens recognize the beauty of individual difference and the joy of rich cultural heritage through cross cultural alliances that create lasting peace and sustainable life. Drawing on a long history of successful citizen diplomacy grounded in awareness, Track Two structures gatherings so that participants can explore the conditions and predispositions that influence their own actions and those of others.” (Track ii, 2019)

VI. CONCLUSION

Our study of German and Turkish students attending secular school did not identify widespread prejudice of German towards Turkish or Turkish towards German students. Both groups expressed a desire for more information about different religions. These findings support the need for promoting non-prejudicial pluralism by integrating education on religion into school-based education.

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