

## Only a few years... and then a whole life in Altona

*“My father Ahmet Buldur came to Hamburg in 1962 from the wealthy port city of Ayvalik on the Aegean to earn money for a few years. He was 26 years old and had no knowledge of the language. But at Menck & Hambrock, where he worked as an excavator driver, the guest workers helped each other. He was a well-known footballer in his home town and founded the first Turkish soccer club in Hamburg. My mother was from Istanbul and worked at the head post office. My father approached her in front of Hertie in Ottenser Hauptstrasse. That was the beginning of their life together in Hamburg, which lasted 54 years. I was born here in 1975.”*

- Handan Buldur –



Ahmet Buldur as a construction equipment operator at Menck & Hambrock, around 1967  
Photo: privately owned

### The First German-Turkish Daycare

In 1979, one in three newborn children in Altona had roots from a non-German culture. In 1988, a parents' initiative founded Hamburg's first German-Turkish daycare center, the Mottenkiste e.V.. Imam Yavuz is still an educator there today: "We sing Turkish songs together and celebrate the festivals of both countries." Elisabeth von Dücker, a founding member of the Ottensen District Archives e.V., registered her daughter there: integration should be developed from both sides. As a cultural scientist, she documented the Turkish community in Ottensen, an area in the Altona district.

### Integration at the Elementary School

As a teacher at the Rothestraße Elementary School, Gabriele von Leffern developed concepts for German and Turkish classes, taught mutual respect, and promoted German school qualifications. At that time, she was a pioneer who paved the way for many.

Initiatives worked in very different ways to integrate the "guest workers." They demanded the Turkish language in the town hall, space for the slaughter of lambs, and active and passive voting rights, initially at the municipal level. In 1975, a mosque was inaugurated at Bahrenfelder Straße 92 – to this day, it remains almost invisible to Germans.



Streetscenes in Ottensen  
Photo: Elisabeth von Dücker, n.y.

## A Place of Arrival for Centuries

Altona has been a place of arrival for immigrants for centuries. Jews have been arriving since the 16th century. Other persecuted religious groups also chose Altona as their new home: Catholics, Mennonites, and Huguenots. The successful port city, which offered freedom of religion, attracted more than just the Buldur family. Networks proved sustainable over long periods. To this day, the population is large, and its most famous son is the film director Fatih Akin.

The small Altona district of Ottensen is considered by many today to be a "model multicultural neighborhood." Nevertheless, exclusion and displacement, everyday racism and discrimination, still exist here.

**Sayın Altonalılar,  
sizleri 23 Ağustos 1980 Cumartesi  
günü saat 15.00 te başlayacak  
Altona Rathaus yanındaki  
Christianskirche 'ye  
bitişik çimenlikte yapılacak  
olan Uluslararası Pikniğe  
davet ediyoruz!**

Biz "Ausländer in Altona", yani "Altona'daki yabancılar" isminde bir dernek olarak, bu sente oturuların, Alman olsun, Türk olsun, başka bir memleketten olsun, beraber oturup, sohbet edip, eğlenmeleri sağlamak istiyoruz. Her memleketin özel yemekleri sunulacak, çeşitli müzikler sergilenicek, çocuklar beraber oynayacak, büyükler de eğlenecek.

Bu piknikte, herkesin konuşmaya, dertleşmeye, dostluk edinmeye fırsat bulacağını umul ediyoruz.

Tek arzusumuz, bir hatıra veya bir mînder getirerek, allece eğlenemize katkıda bulunmaktır.

Piknik yerinde beraber olmak âileğiyle ...

**Not:** Yağmur yağdığı takdirde, bu eğlence Werkstatt 3, Bernatweg 32, Hamburg-Altona, üçüncü katta yapılacaktır.

Ausländer in Altona e.V., Bernatweg 32, 2000 HH 50 (V.i.S.d.P.)  
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Katılacak Örgütler: Arbeiterwohlfahrt/Türkdanış, Griechische Gemeinde in Hamburg und Umgebuung e.V., Initiative Stadtteilarchiv Ottensen, Halkçı Devrimci Birliği Hamburg, Portugiesisches Freizeitsentrum e.V.

Invitation to the citizens' picnic in Ottensen. Various initiatives invited people to similar events during this time.  
Flyer from 1980, Stadtteilarchiv Ottensen – Geschichtswerkstatt für Altona e.V.

Following the closure of Menck & Hambrock, space for something new is being created. Local residents called the site Kemal-Altun-Platz  
Photo: Asmus Henkel, n.y.



A community breakfast was intended to promote contact, with mutual Skat and Tavli lessons.  
Photo: Elisabeth von Dücker, n.y.