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Türkisch und Deutsch: Shifting Understandings of the German, the Citizen, and the Foreign

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Türkisch *und* Deutsch: Shifting Understandings of the German, the Citizen, and the Foreign

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by
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Introduction

In February 2015, Savas T., a German citizen of Turkish descent, was out clubbing in Southern Germany. Between 1 and 1:30 am, he was attacked by two men who had followed him into the bathroom. The men insulted Savas, calling him a “Shitty Foreigner,” and yelling “Heil Hitler,” as they gave the Nazi salute. Savas yelled back: “Shitty Nazis.” The two men proceeded to knock him to the ground, hitting and kicking him. The police did not classify the attack as a hate crime until Savas’ lawyer pressured to have a specialized unit investigate. The unit eventually found that Savas had been racially insulted and attacked, but the Prosecutor’s Office did not consider the racist motivation.¹ The horrific experience Savas endured reflects the extreme side of an issue with perceived outsiders that Germany continues to struggle with. Calling him a “Shitty Foreigner,” and the physical assault which followed, is a violent manifestation of the pervasive feeling in Germany that Turkish-Germans have not properly assimilated, hindering them from becoming full-fledged Germans.

Turkish-Germans make up the largest ethnic minority in the country. The origin of their presence can be traced to the 1961 *Gastarbeiter* (guest worker) deal which brought temporary workers from Turkey to West Germany. The Turkish workers were exceedingly susceptible to discrimination, stigma, and scrutiny from the beginning. As non-European citizens from mainly rural areas, their linguistic, cultural, and religious differences further ostracized them. This distinct image of otherness prevented a more complex understanding of those who came and worked in Germany. Their status as guests had left little focus on their integration into society, and thus the wall between German and immigrant seemed impenetrable. Of the 750,000 Turkish

¹ Amnesty International Ltd, comp. GERMANY: LIVING IN INSECURITY: GERMANY IS FAILING VICTIMS OF RACIST VIOLENCE. June 9, 2016. Accessed November 30, 2017. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur23/4112/2016/en/>.

workers who came to Germany as *Gastarbeiter*, around half permanently settled and brought their families over.² At the time though, these guests-turned-immigrants faced barriers to full citizenship and acceptance because of a lack of clear immigrant policy.

At the end of 1989, Germany began its project of reunification. The concomitant economic recession and issues in building a reunified identity gave way to a wave of violent xenophobic attacks in the 1990s. It was around this time that the government began taking the objectives of integration and an expanded notion of national identity more seriously. Even with the changes in government policy, today many Germans across the political spectrum point to Turkish-Germans as never having fully integrated. How is it that Turkish-Germans are still perceived outside of the national belonging, outside of the political conception of nationhood?

Turkish-Germans remain excluded from German nationhood, despite more recent state efforts to include them, because of a complex system of exclusion which has changed, but remained nonetheless. My theory is that the initial expected temporary status of Turkish people in Germany, in addition to the failure of the government to enact policies to integrate the Turkish immigrant population, influenced how Turkish-Germans were, and continue to be, conceived of in German society. When there were finally changes in citizenship laws and formalized integration efforts, Turkish-Germans were still regarded as outsiders in German society, even with access to citizenship and an established presence as a resident minority. There was a systemic divide which would not simply disappear with new laws and a reconstructed governmental stance on immigration.

² Prevezanos, Klaudia. "Turkish guest workers transformed German society." Deutsche Welle. Last modified October 30, 2011. Accessed December 6, 2017. <http://www.dw.com/en/turkish-guest-workers-transformed-german-society/a-15489210>.

I seek to explore the reasons that the presence of a large, visible Turkish-German minority is perceived as failed integration, a failure to Germanize. Through both immigration and immigrant policy, a nation-state's government chooses to what degree an immigrant population will be integrated into the larger society. The immigrant population itself then grapples with the degree of assimilation it can attain, but it is up to the host society to decide if this presence is accepted as belonging or as a continued outsider presence, even a threat. Acceptance cannot rest on the complete absorption of the host culture and complete disregard of other cultural identities, yet some see total assimilation as the only method, and feel that Turkish-Germans have failed to meet this standard. This failure may be most prominently displayed in Angela Merkel's repeated emphasis that *Multikulti* (the German slogan for its multiculturalist approach) has failed in Germany.³

Issues of nationhood, belonging, and Islam-centered-xenophobia are clearly not confined to Germany. I am interested in the German case in particular for its Nazi past, its forty-five-year division, its historically ethnocultural view of belonging, and previous denial of its stance as an immigrant country. There has long been an environment in Germany which made it difficult for those with non-German backgrounds to feel or be seen as full members of German society; there is a deeply engrained perception of those from Turkey or of Turkish background as permanently Other. I originally came upon the need to do this research as I noticed German peers comment on a divide between "Germans" and the Turkish-German population. I know that it is an on-going place of tension throughout the country, further heightened over the past few years.

The phenomenon that I explain in this paper has broader implications as well. In a world

³ Noack, Rick. "Multiculturalism is a sham, says Angela Merkel." The Washington Post (Washington D.C.), December 15, 2015, WorldViews. Accessed December 5, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/12/14/angela-merkel-multiculturalism-is-a-sham/?utm_term=.027b43085ed4.

of strong borders and passports, a new tension is found as seemingly concrete national borders are paired with a modern ease of movement and ever-increasing globalization. With the global connections in today's world and end to most colonial empires, migration is listed among the top issues universally; specifically, the migration of those from what is considered the "Global South," to more prosperous regions: the West or the "Global North." Throughout Europe the issue is intensified among fears of unstoppable migration to countries customarily defined ethnically, unlike traditional immigrant countries like the United States or Canada. These fears, which manifest themselves in divisive rhetoric and practices, further complicate national relationships with existing communities which are somehow viewed as unassimilable and unintegrated, like the Algerian community in France, South Asian community in Britain, and Turkish community in Germany. Each of these groups have a long and complex history within their countries; their presence is acknowledged, yet they are continually perceived as outsiders.

I have drawn my ideas from a milieu of books, academic essays, news articles, and in-person discussions. My thesis is further supported by scholarly writing on notions of membership, collective consciousness, and exclusion. The project has necessitated research into both political and social theory, as well as history, to explain the issue at hand. Adding to the academic foundation I've created for this project, I was able to conduct several interviews in Berlin in January 2018. The interviewees were mostly in their twenties and included both the children of Turkish immigrants and those with only German lineage. This personal form of research gave me a deeper look into how things are on the ground right now, and how perceptions have and have not changed over time.

This project is organized into three chapters. Chapter I explains how laws and norms marginalized and excluded early Turkish guest workers. This section provides background on

West Germany's treatment of its largest minority group to examine the ways that exclusion was fostered from the beginning. Chapter II looks at the tumultuous period of German reunification as the country came to accept that it was in fact a country of immigration and there would need to be changes to accommodate its newly recognized residents. The objective of this section is to emphasize the importance of the timing and reasoning behind the changes in policy affecting foreign nationals. Chapter III discusses the current discourse on Turkish-Germans and their increasingly-defining character: Islam. This chapter describes the present discourse on exclusion and questions the existing notions of what is acceptable and unacceptable as German.

Chapter I: No Country for Immigrants

No More Race Talk: Racialization through Ethnicization and Cultural Difference

The post-war economy of Northern and Western Europe experienced a severe shortage in the workforce. This shortage was coupled with high unemployment in the Southern European countries. In the 1950s, countries including the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), Sweden, and the Netherlands began recruiting foreign workers to fill their labor shortages, initially bringing workers from Italy, Greece, and elsewhere in Southern Europe. In West Germany the guest worker program was justified by the understanding that labor was especially short in a recently divided country, along with the assumption that the workers would soon return home with useful skills to contribute to their own economies.

West Germany was pressured by both Turkey and the United States to begin recruiting guest workers from Turkey. In October 1961, just two months after the Berlin Wall was erected, West Germany and Turkey signed a deal which would bring hundreds of thousands of Turkish guest workers to provide additional necessary and inexpensive labor.⁴ These workers, initially all men, would work unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in factories. The earliest guest workers were primarily from rural areas in Turkey with little opportunity for social mobility.

It was a mere ten years after the end of World War II that the first guest workers from Southern Europe were invited to work in Germany, and just sixteen when the first Turkish workers arrived. Germany has done a great deal to educate its citizens on its horrific past, but part of this process has entailed avoiding racialized discourse. The topic of race in Germany is

⁴ Bartsch, Matthias, Andrea Brandt, and Daniel Steinvorth. "Turkish Immigration to Germany : A Sorry History of Self-Deception and Wasted Opportunities." Spiegel Online. Last modified September 7, 2010. Accessed October 26, 2017. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/turkish-immigration-to-germany-a-sorry-history-of-self-deception-and-wasted-opportunities-a-716067.html>.

marked, more so than in other places, because of Nazism and the Holocaust. Alienating people based on racial differences in postwar-de-Nazified Germany was not going to happen, yet with this purposeful circumvention arose a widespread tendency to ignore race completely. Ethnicity, on the other hand, remained something more easily discussed and prided. The avoidance of discourse surrounding racial inequality and differences resulted most prominently in the use of ethnic, religious, and cultural differences to both justify exclusion and be named the cause of exclusion, almost as a politically correct replacement for racialized talk in Germany.

The book *After the Nazi Racial State* insists that racialization did not end after World War II, and even brings up the argument that after a military defeat, “the impetus for a politics of national redefinition and reconstitution intensified. How Germany, as two separate states, defined its people rested upon the notion of defining its people and others.”⁵ After World War II, it was obviously taboo to discuss race, but cultural and religious differences have been used since the first Turkish arrivals as a way to exhibit irreparable divisions between them and ethnic Germans in order to, for the most part, avoid biological ones. The book also interestingly makes the point that “Whereas the Nazi regime tended to rely on racial categories to distinguish between groups already within the nation, West German authorities elided this problem by marking guest workers as always outside it.”⁶ Germany continued to elucidate cultural and religious differences to maintain the divisions once guest workers, Turkish immigrants in particular, became an established force in the country. The avoidance of race enabled Germany to further distance itself from Nazism and neo-Nazi violence, but what actually remained were

⁵ Chin, Rita and Heide Fehrenbach. "Introduction: What's Race Got to Do With It? Postwar German History in Context. In *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*, by Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossman. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2009, 19.

⁶ Chin, Rita. "Guest Worker Migration and the Unexpected Return of Race." In *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*. 83.

other forms of racialized thought surrounding immigrants and their place, or lack thereof, in West Germany.

When discussing racialized, ethnicized, and other forms of discourse on difference in Germany, there is a point to be made that after World War II, there were not many German Jews left to be continually racialized; in this way, the face-to-face issue of anti-Semitism did not have to be confronted every day. This absence of the old-time Other is extremely important as it gave way to both an attitude of not seeing race as well as one which had still not expanded to include those with visibly different cultural and religious values, seen as deviating from the norm.

Guests NOT Immigrants

Their identity, then, defined by the German term [*Gastarbeiter*], reduces migrants to their function. A powerful term, it marginalizes and objectifies migrants, leaving limited conceptual, social, or linguistic space for meaningful incorporation into the society. Ultimately, the term virtually precludes a transformation from guest worker to immigrant – guests always go home again.⁷

In order to fully understand the history of the Turkish presence and social exclusion in Germany, it is important to realize that the Turkish population in West Germany initially came under the premise that they were not, and would not be, immigrants. The government supported the idea that they would definitely return home, and so grew the temporary identity for the workers and their families. They were *guest* workers; not migrants who would settle and become a part of the German nationhood. This is of significance as Turkish-Germans today make up the country's biggest ethnic minority. Those who came were expected to leave within a few years and could not bring their families with them. Until 1964, work and residency permits of only two years were given out, although this was later changed under pressure from companies who had

⁷ Mandel, Ruth Ellen. *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008, 55, on the German word "*Gastarbeiter*" (guest worker).

difficulty hiring and training new foreign workers so often.⁸ The recruitment had initially targeted only men, but as cleaning, restaurant, and textile industries demanded foreign labor as well, women began being recruited.

As Turkish workers were expected to return home, there were little to no legal or social efforts between the sixties and late eighties to incorporate them into German society. This was an issue which affected all guest workers but proved to be particularly detrimental for Turkish workers and their descendants who not only faced a language barrier, but also had a different religion, were often more recognizably different, and became the largest group of workers. By 1971, the number of Turkish nationals residing in West Germany surpassed all other foreign groups, and between 1970 and 1973, the Turkish population nearly doubled.⁹ As their numbers and visibility grew, the Turkish workers became seen as the quintessential *Gastarbeiter* in Germany.

The *Gastarbeiter* program was a clever way for Germany to make up for its labor shortage, while not committing to inviting in and making new citizens out of workers who filled it. The system was a legalized way to maintain a distinct divide between those who belonged in the nation: the citizen, and those who were only there temporarily: the foreigner. It opened up the possibility for foreigners to be in the country but remain concretely separate from the acknowledged society.

Amid the International Oil Crisis of 1973 and the lessened need for labor that it caused, migrants began to seem like an economic burden. It was during this that time that it became increasingly undeniable that some workers would not return to their countries of origin. That

⁸ Bartsch, Matthias, Andrea Brandt, and Daniel Steinvorth. "Turkish Immigration to Germany : A Sorry History of Self-Deception and Wasted Opportunities."

⁹ Chin, Rita. "Guest Worker Migration and the Unexpected Return of Race," In *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*. 73.

year, West Germany stopped letting in workers from all countries outside of the European Economic Community (EEC). This marked a point from which the only way to enter legally was through family reunification or asylum, and the majority of guest workers who would remain in Germany got visas for their families to join them. The presence of the Turkish workers had originally avoided provoking negative associations, as the idea that they would all return persisted. As it became clear that they were staying and bringing their families, their presence became worrisome.

The *Gastarbeiter* program, envisioned as a temporary economic solution, had presented unintentional results which came to transform the German landscape demographically, socially, and culturally, launching a large Turkish presence and influence within the country. In the early 1970s, as Germany began coming to terms with the fact that a portion of the Turkish guest workers were becoming Turkish immigrants. The effects of a lack of clear immigrant policy as well as the attitude of “*Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland*,” (Germany is not an immigrant country, a phrase repeated under the leadership of Chancellor Helmut Kohl) became more apparent.

During the early years of the guest worker program, there had been nothing but the framework of a Nazi-era law to guide the rights of foreigners in Germany. In 1965, a new foreigner law was introduced, with a characterization of the foreigner as a potential threat. The law gave full discretion to the state, as one section of the law reads, ““A residence permit may be issued if the presence of the foreigner does not harm the interests of the Federal Republic of Germany.””¹⁰ Also absent from the new law were mentions of family reunification. This law

¹⁰ Joppke, Christian. *Immigration and the Nation-state: The United States, Germany and Great Britain*. 66.

remained until the 1990s, maintaining a gaping hole in a cohesive approach to foreigners living in Germany.

Space, Place, and Movement: The Visibility and Invisibility of Foreignness

Turkish guest workers were not offered any language training, since they would only be in Germany for a short period of time. There was no need for German linguistic and social skills at work, and since they were not seen as possible permanent residents, many lived in Germany with little German skills. As Marco Martiniello writes of guest workers in *Immigration and the Transformation of Europe*, “His only social existence was as a worker... Either he worked or he had no place in the host country.”¹¹

The workers not only worked in largely Turkish environments but lived that way as well. In the years that the *Gastarbeiter* program was still recruiting on a rotation system, foreign workers lived mostly amongst fellow nationals in dormitories close to their factories. As they brought their families, a housing crisis emerged in some of the bigger cities where the largest population of guest workers resided. Added to the traditional barriers due to poverty, Turkish families encountered a lack of access to state subsidized housing due to discrimination. Cheap apartments close to their factories were becoming available as Germans vacated in order to distance themselves from the new immigrants or simply due to upward mobility. This evolution eventually led to the unintended creation of immigrant enclaves such as Marxloh in Duisberg and Neukölln in Berlin; neighborhoods now often referred to as centers for parallel societies in Germany.

In Berlin, the issue of finding suitable accommodation was tackled when migrants

¹¹ Parsons, Craig, and Timothy M. Smeeding. *Immigration and the Transformation of Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 311.

discovered 19th-century working class housing originally designated for urban renewal in the 1960s.¹² Economic conditions and availability in such areas encouraged workers to settle there, but soon policies were pushed to prevent the areas from becoming densely populated by Turkish families. It was felt that these areas, particularly Kreuzberg, Wedding, and Tiergarten, were self-segregated. From 1975-1979, laws were passed preventing immigrants from moving newly arrived family members into certain parts of the city. Some even suggested that only 10% of all residential units be rented to foreigners throughout West Berlin.¹³ These laws were justified on the grounds of integration through dispersal. This approach seemed clever and well-meaning in order to avoid what are now being called parallel societies; but in many other parts of the city with less foreigners, landlords were allowed to refuse to rent to Turkish families, so dispersal throughout the city was difficult. At the time, there were no proper anti-discrimination laws regarding housing and many landlords and others did not wish to live among the Turkish community.

The laws restricting Turkish nationals' housing options were in place until 1990.¹⁴ Turkish passports were stamped so many would officially be unable to move. Because of the difficulty in finding adequate housing outside of the three Berlin districts, some forged papers so they could live among the Turkish community which offered them their cultural network and support system. Such laws are an example of a larger issue with Turkish settlement in Germany; they were either restricted from becoming a part of German society or pushed to do so with little to no resources. As in Berlin, the German government prevented Turkish nationals from living in

¹² Wilpert, Czarina. "Identity Issues in the History of the Postwar Migration from Turkey to Germany." *German Politics and Society* 31, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 114. Doi:10.3167/gps.2013.31020.

¹³ Mathur, Saloni. *The Migrant's Time: Rethinking Art History and Diaspora*. Williamstown, Mass.: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2011, 95.

¹⁴ Mandel, Ruth Ellen. *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*. 147.

the areas most convenient for them but did not do much to ease the difficulties of finding adequate housing elsewhere to provide a safe and welcome place in the society.

The guest workers were initially supposed to be almost invisible, to give their labor and return home unseen. Isolation in enclaves was preferred; it became an issue once they were to remain, and the resulting dilemmas became difficult to solve. It is interesting that it was timing which most deeply affected the concepts of space; enclaves were great when temporariness was the expectation. Physical isolation and social separation were fostered, then the issues which arose out of this were hard to fix. As the idea of the temporary Turkish presence faded, Germany expected the *Turkishness* of the Turkish presence to fade as well, but what would happen to the predominantly Turkish areas? A sort of self-fulfilling prophecy emerged in this way as the exclusion which was once upheld by the mainstream society became a problem, eventually enabling the blame of exclusion to be put on the Turkish-German community itself.

Exclusion based upon the notion of temporariness extended into schools. Early on, there were examples across Germany of outward and seemingly pointless discrimination towards Turkish children in the school system. This was yet another manifestation of exclusion. In some schools, children were even taught in Turkish to prepare for a return to Turkey. As many of these children ended up remaining in Germany and had to mix into regular German classes with no previous German language training, they were referred to by some as “bilingual illiterates.”¹⁵ Also, until 1979 in certain German cities, classes were not to be more than 20-30% foreign. Although this policy may sound somewhat discriminatory in nature, in the case of language learning it makes sense to aim for a majority of a class to be native German speakers. The

¹⁵ Bartsch, Matthias, Andrea Brandt, and Daniel Steinvorth. "Turkish Immigration to Germany : A Sorry History of Self-Deception and Wasted Opportunities."

problem in some cases was that when it seemed the 30% mark of foreign students would be passed, 100% foreign classes were added.¹⁶

Within the regular German school system without segregated classrooms, there was ample room for structural discrimination towards immigrants which continues to be an issue. Germany has a very particular academic system. The secondary level of schooling, beginning around age nine or ten, is divided into three tracks: *Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, and *Gymnasium*. Once put on their respective track, children have little chance of changing their educational future. *Gymnasium* is the most direct route to university or other routes of higher education and *Hauptschule* is the “least prestigious track,”¹⁷ with the least demanding curriculum. An essential part of the *Hauptschule* track is acquiring a vocational apprenticeship combining on the job training with time in the classroom.

Early education is thus shown to be vital in the German school system. Among the most important characteristics of the system is the significance of the early point of determination. The early decision point has a special implication for the children of immigrants; if a child has recently arrived in the country or has parents who do not have a full command of the German language, they are immediately disadvantaged. When a child is from a marginalized community, their educational achievement or lack thereof is used as further evidence to support the idea of their group as unintegrated. Turkish-German students, relatives of guest workers, and the children of immigrants obviously have a huge range of experiences in the German school system, but there are patterns which should be noted. In a study on the educational success of immigrant and second-generation Turkish children, children in Germany were found to have on

¹⁶ Wilpert, Czarina. "Identity Issues in the History of the Postwar Migration from Turkey to Germany." 115.

¹⁷ Schuck, Peter H., and Rainer Münz. *Paths to Inclusion: The Integration of Migrants in the United States and Germany*. New York: Berghahn Books, 1998, 125.

average ten fewer hours with teachers each week than in the Netherlands, and less than France and Belgium as well. Mandel noted that in the 1980s, 8% of ethnic German students attended *Hauptschule*, while 35% of those with a Turkish background did.¹⁸ The numbers were generally the same as she researched and finished her book in 2006. Some point to the higher percentage of Turkish-Germans in *Hauptschule* as the result of the deep cultural differences which have been deemed problematic for decades. Such reasoning ignores historical implications, discrimination, and the difficulty of navigating the German school system without strong parental guidance. It is an educational system with deeply embedded structural discrimination and little opportunity for upward mobility, creating room for further rifts in German society.

The neighborhood and educational issues persist to this day. The structures which hinder educational advancement and placed Turkish workers as separate from the German population, have played a part in the establishment of Turkish dominated areas which some call Little Istanbul, or, more pejoratively, self-made ghettos or parallel societies. It is interesting to note the fear that surrounds these areas as culturally threatening or too non-German as compared to reactions in the U.S., for instance, to Chinatowns in various cities across the country.

Exclusive Identity, Exclusionary Citizenship

The ethnocultural inflection of German self-understanding and German citizenship law makes it difficult to reconcile – in the political imagination of Germans and immigrants alike – the preservation of Turkish cultural identity and autonomy, for example, with the acquisition of German citizenship.¹⁹

Definitions, categorizations, and identities change in response to location and social relationships. A Kurdish man from Eastern Turkey may be grouped together as a non-white, non-

¹⁸ Mandel, Ruth Ellen. *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*. 166.

¹⁹ Brubaker, Rogers. *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992, 178.

German Turk along with an Alevite from Northern Anatolia or an Orthodox Christian from Istanbul. Such a range of perceptions and self-conceptions necessitate a thorough look into the portrayals of Turkish-Germans as a more generalized group, often simply as Germanized or unintegrated. Additionally, as Ruth Mandel points out, “the German context serves as a critical mirror through which Turkish subjects can recognize the characteristics of a variety of interpretations of their selfhood and confront them in different ways.”²⁰

As seen in other European countries, this historic exclusion of minority groups from the national image creates room for other lifestyles and cultures to flourish in isolation. It also fosters a resentment in some who further isolate themselves, choosing only to identify with the ethnicized version of themselves that the host society has placed upon them. This is a process which Mandel refers to as “auto-ethnicization,” resulting from the exclusiveness of the German national community paired with the often insular Turkish-German community.²¹

One may expect that it is the first-generation immigrants who identify most deeply with their homeland, but there is a trend among Turkish-Germans, and in fact Muslims across Europe, to more closely follow Islam and the traditions of their forefathers after experiencing discrimination and exclusion. Many argue that the generation today, much more Germanized and integrated into the mainstream society than their predecessors, are actually keener to maintaining their differences. Additionally, first-generation Turkish immigrants were largely secular, even the ones who were religious were less strict in their belief. Today on the other hand, nearly one-third of Turkish-German adults go to mosque in Germany, more than most Turkish-Europeans and even more than in some parts of Turkey.²² This is perceived as threatening by some, as one

²⁰ Mandel, Ruth Ellen. *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*. 3.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

²² Malik, Kenan. "The Failure of Multiculturalism: Community versus Society in Europe." *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2015: 27. Accessed December 7, 2017.

of my interviewees pointed out; “now you see some of the young guys are also very deep in their religion, maybe in this time they believe more in their religion than ten years ago.” Over the years, ordinary Turkish immigrants and their families became more aware of their Turkishness: of the even violent refusal of a large portion of Germany to accept them. In a less extreme version of such adherence to a Turkish background and Islam, Özlem Gezer writes about how after repeatedly being forced to be a representation of Turkey, she eventually realized she could never “be a proper German,” and thus embraced a more prominent Turkish identity; what she calls “a Turk with German roots, instead of the other way around.”²³ In kind, many take on a group identity which may not have been present previously. It is not only about shared attributes, origin, or language, but a shared identity which has been defined in relation to how they are defined by others and which stereotypes are associated with them. Thus, group identities are formed out of social circumstances and relationships with others. They are not inherent but become seemingly natural as groups are officially categorized and expected to be and act a certain way by the state and its majority.

Supporting the “us” and “them” mentality, the long-lasting narrow definition of citizenship was perhaps Germany’s most outwardly exclusionary policy. Germany’s strict citizenship laws lasted through the entire 20th century, keeping immigrants from fully entering German society. Until 2000, Germany went by a *jus sanguinis* rule of citizenship. This policy was based on the 1913 definition of German citizenship which defined national belonging by blood; if someone had at least one German parent, that person was German. The 1913 definition had been perverted by the Nazis with the Nuremberg Laws, yet *jus sanguinis* was not abandoned

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/western-europe/failure-multiculturalism>.

²³ Gezer, Özlem. "Why I Can Never Be a Proper German." Spiegel Online. Last modified November 7, 2013. Accessed February 5, 2018.

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/essay-on-racism-growing-up-turkish-in-germany-a-932154.html>.

after World War II, likely because this way of looking at citizenship maintained a sense of common identity for citizens of a country which was divided for more than four decades.

In Germany, unlike the United States or France who have long gone by a *jus soli* (birthright) definition of citizenship, it was not *where* you were born but *who* you were born to which defined you. Because of this, naturalization was virtually limited to people with German ancestry. Turkish-Germans were therefore kept in a sort of limbo, unable to become German on paper but expected to assimilate anyhow. The absurdity of this policy is most deeply illustrated when contrasting the legal treatment of *Aussiedler* (Ethnic Germans) and that of second or third-generation Turkish-Germans. As a Germany under Helmut Kohl improved its relationship with the Soviet Union in the 1970s, *Aussiedler* from the East, particularly Russia, Poland, Kazakhstan, and the former Czechoslovakia, were allowed to emigrate to Germany and naturalize upon proof of German ancestry living within the 1937 borders.²⁴

At a time when Germany did not look at itself as a country for immigrants, it would seem counterintuitive to have a law which brought in 2.6 million immigrants between 1950 and 1991.²⁵ But the admission of the *Aussiedler* was supposed to serve as a patriotic act; they could improve diplomatic and economic relations between West Germany and the former USSR and their citizenship involved no new national identity, as they were already German.²⁶ The admission of these “repatriates” was also a more popular alternative to the acceptance and citizenship of those, like Turkish immigrants, who, as non-European Muslims, deviated further from the classic cultural, ethnic, and religious image of Germany. Some even saw the *Aussiedler*

²⁴ Kurthen, Hermann. "Germany at the crossroads: national identity and the challenges of immigration." *International Migration Review* 29, no. 4 (Winter 1995). Academic OneFile.

²⁵ Fijalkowski, Jurgen. "Aggressive nationalism, immigration pressure and asylum policy disputes in contemporary Germany." *International Migration Review* 27, no. 4 (Winter 1993): 851.

²⁶ Senders, Stefan. "Laws of Belonging: Legal Dimensions of National Inclusion in Germany." *New German Critique*, no. 67 (Winter 1996): 174.

and their families as an alternate solution to the ever-declining German birth rate: better to increase the ethnic German birth rate than make *new* Germans out of foreigners.

Aussiedler were not to be viewed as immigrants, but as nationals returning to their homeland. They were offered a range of special provisions including language classes, the ability to maintain dual citizenship, and immediate access to the electorate, enabling their issues to be brought to the attention of politicians. The German government also established a law on foreign pensions, making *Aussiedler* eligible for German pension without contribution.²⁷

With the law on *Aussiedler*, a teenager from Russia with an ethnic German background but no command of German, could fairly easily become a German citizen. Conversely, the child of a Turkish guest worker who grew up in Germany as a native German speaker, and perhaps had never even visited the country of their passport, would remain a non-citizen.

As recognized residents, guest workers from Turkey and their families had full social and civil rights, at least in theory. However, as German sociologist Christian Joppke points out, providing them such rights while denying them of full citizenship ensured that the status of “guest” or “foreigner” would remain intact. He refers to this process as post-national membership, which may work for the first generation of immigrants — who are expected to hold onto at least some part of the idea of returning home someday — but as a setback for the next generations, told to be full Germans without access to citizenship. This made them forever labelled the foreigner; denizens separate from the true Germans. In Joppke’s view, “endowing foreigners with equal rights enabled maintaining the limitation of citizenship to ethnic Germans.”²⁸

²⁷ Schuck, Peter H., and Rainer Münz. *Paths to Inclusion: The Integration of Migrants in the United States and Germany*. 171.

²⁸ Joppke, Christian. *Immigration and the Nation-state: The United States, Germany and Great Britain*. 186.

The treatment of *Aussiedler* contrasted with that of other immigrant groups, particularly Turkish-Germans, exemplifies the historic ethnocultural approach to citizenship and belonging in Germany. Such barriers to citizenship, and openly preferential treatment for those with the same ethnic background, pushed Turkish immigrants and subsequent generations to feel excluded from the German identity, and all involved to see Germanness as something based in blood or genetics. I do not aim to argue against the inclusion of and assistance to the *Aussiedler*; it is honorable to provide for people who could build a better life in Germany. What is problematic is the lack of support for another immigrant population, and the way in which the *Aussiedler* repatriation emphasized the view of Germanness as only blood based.

Citizenship *does* matter, and immigration triggers a new role of having status as a citizen. In American cities, one of the goals of assimilation of immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was to give them a sense of civic virtue so that they would feel proud of their new home and feel respected and show respect. Although liberal states are to provide social and civil rights to all residents, there is a great importance in having citizenship not only for matters of political inclusion and suffrage, but for social inclusion and inclusion in the imagined community of a nation-state. As citizenship was deprived from the sizeable Turkish-German community, the expectation of return, both by some Germans and some Turks, could remain and increase conceptual boundaries between people in Germany. Non-citizenship is particularly harmful to the second and third-generation, leaving them to remain on the periphery of full German nationhood; more susceptible to injustices and stigma. Without citizenship, inequality has more room to prosper.

Successful integration of foreign groups requires a degree of mutual respect. It is neither a complete abandonment of the homeland nor a creation of one's homeland within the new land.

But, because of Germany's history and long-lasting approach to Turkish immigrants as foreigners, integration — and what it means to successfully integrate into German society as a Turkish-German — was hard to complete. Unlike traditional immigrant countries, an understanding of newcomers from certain regions as *foreigners* as opposed to *immigrants* prevented and continues to prevent an expanded notion of belonging, ever strengthening the divide between “us” and “them,” and leaving national understandings defined along ethnic lines. Turkish-Germans have been singled out as the ultimate difficult, unwanted group. As Mandel said, in a place which did not pride itself on immigration, “Turks are seen as simultaneously wrongful insiders and unintegratable outsiders.”²⁹ The initial marginalization of the Turkish guest workers and their families created a legal and socially constructed vision of difference which would remain and be further complicated by German reunification, even as Germany came to understand that a Turkish-German immigrant population had been established.

²⁹ Mandel, Ruth Ellen. *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*. 131.

Chapter II: A Reunified Germany for *Germans*

Who is Foreign in a New Nation?

One of the primary tasks of consolidating the nation-state, after all, was defining the legal and ideological parameters of membership in order to differentiate insiders from outsiders.³⁰

Germany prolonged its outdated ethnocultural understanding of nationhood partly because of its division. The exclusion of immigrants from the national image was incentivized in order to achieve the vision of a unified Germany. It would be a state for the German people, kept apart for long after the war, to one day be reunited under one flag.

Reunification in 1990 saw a rise in social unrest, issues of identity, and xenophobia. The project of reunification was a daunting and important task, and also a financial burden. The combination of the accompanying economic recession, inflation, increased taxes, housing shortage, and unemployment, gave way to a rise in nationalistic attitudes. The years immediately following saw an increase in social tension. Most mentionable was right-wing fanaticism and nationalism, which had been less detectable since the fall of the Nazis. The presence of non-citizens increasingly began to be perceived as the *problem* of non-citizens; the problem of immigrants and refugees, who were then targeted because of their differences.

Among the most foreboding tasks facing the reunified nation was defining its membership. Reunifying a divided nation made necessary a new national pride; there had to be some common identity to unite two Germanys who'd been separate for over forty years. The ethnocultural definition was there, but something more was required in a reunited, post-Nazi Germany with a wide variety of ethnic groups from both within and beyond Europe.

³⁰ Chin, Rita, and Heide Fehrenbach. "What's Race Got to Do With It? Postwar German History in Context." Introduction to *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*. 11.

Reunification also came with the realization that Germany *was* a country of immigration, and that its cultural and racial makeup were changing. The early nineties saw the beginning stages of a shift from a *jus sanguinis* to a *jus soli* definition of citizenship. With reunification and the return of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe, Germany had completed its nation-state project and the reliance on citizenship based in descent had become less valuable and relied upon. However, the seeds had already been sown and there existed a privileged set of foreigners: other Europeans (especially ethnic Germans), whose rights and cultural backgrounds had enabled them to easily fit into Germany both legally and conceptually. There could slowly be changes in legal membership, but the barriers to the national belonging remained, and were especially apparent in the violence following reunification.

Upon reunification many laws needed to be amended, added, and abolished. Among the most impactful of those was the changed legislation regarding non-citizens within Germany. A new foreigner law went into effect in January 1991.³¹ Absent from the new law was mention of Germany as a non-immigrant country and suggestions for return migration. The liberalized law had come as the Turkish population grew, becoming a very visible community in Germany still virtually void of citizenship. In 1981, one member of parliament was quoted saying “the foreigner problem...is a Turkish problem.”³² At the time, Turkish immigrants were the only foreign group growing rather than shrinking. A fear of domination by a distant culture arose and so began a heated debate which paved the way for the introduction of a new foreigner law in 1991. The divide between foreigner and German remained though, as the language of the new law retained its stance on the guest worker system as a failed one-time event and made clear the

³¹ Joppke, Christian. *Immigration and the Nation-state: The United States, Germany and Great Britain*. 84.

³² Der Spiegel. "Ausländer: Schmerzhaftes Grenze gezogen" [Foreigners: A Painfully Drawn Line]. (West-Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany). December 7, 1981. Accessed February 5, 2018. <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-14351381.html>.

immigration of non-European Union (EU) citizens was unwanted. It acknowledged the effects of the *Gastarbeiter* program on Germany's population, yet still did not take a welcoming stance on immigration. The new law kept up with the changes but remained firm on its stance that a large influx of foreigners would not be welcomed in the near future.

The dissolution of Yugoslavia and subsequent wars also exacerbated the tensions in newly reunified Germany. During a period when the country had closed its doors to virtually all forms of economic migration, it had one of the most liberal asylum policies ever put in place, influenced greatly by its Nazi past as an act of redemption. Before the asylum surges post-reunification, 1980 had seen the highest number of asylum-seekers in one year: over 100,000. More than half of them were from Turkey, where there had been considerable political unrest in the years leading up to 1980 culminating in a military coup that September.³³ Germany's liberal asylum policy, paired with a newly reunified nation and an ever-narrow definition of nationhood, created further tension and contradictions within the German state.

Between 1988 and 1992, 1.1 million asylum claims were filed in Germany.³⁴ The relaxed asylum policy and arrival of so many asylum seekers created an atmosphere which made it seem to many that entry was uncontrolled. The strains of reunification paired with an increase of asylum seekers exacerbated xenophobic and ethnocentric feelings. Media reports at the time exaggerated the numbers and impact of asylum seekers. Some politicians focused in on the issues of asylum, migration, and violence, leading to a picture of a new nation threatened by outsiders.

³³ Joppke, Christian. *Immigration and the Nation-state: The United States, Germany and Great Britain*, 87.

³⁴ Oezcan, Veysel. "Germany: Immigration in Transition." Migration Policy Institute. Last modified July 1, 2004. Accessed February 5, 2018. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/germany-immigration-transition>.

A series of attacks in the nineties exposed a disturbing perception which linked foreigners and migration to a variety of issues facing the whole nation. Xenophobic feelings among the public materialized in neo-Nazi attacks as the permanent presence of foreigners was deemed dangerous and threatening. Considering Germany's past, this rise in nationalism, racism, and xenophobia was especially frightening. The angry chanting of Nazi-era slogans from the mouths of skinheads and neo-Nazis inevitably brought up horrifying memories.

Between 1990 and 1992, there was an 800% spike in reported attacks on foreigners in Germany.³⁵ These attacks had racist, xenophobic, and anti-Semitic motivations. A majority of the violence was directed at asylum seekers. In 1992 there were more than 1,400 attacks on foreigners. Local populations cheered for neo-Nazis as they attacked asylum centers and anyone they deemed foreign-looking in the cities of Hoyerswerda and Rostock-Lichtenhagen. Riots throughout East Germany ended with the firebombing of a hostel housing asylum seekers. Just one month later, there were a series of attacks at refugee centers close to the Polish border. In Berlin, Jewish gravestones were destroyed and a Holocaust memorial was bombed.³⁶ These attacks caused many injuries, resulted in arrests, and furthered the unrest and tension.

In November 1992, the first deadly neo-Nazi attack occurred in the West German town of Mölln. In the middle of the night, two men who belonged to a local neo-Nazi group threw firebombs into two different homes with Turkish-German residents. Three people died; two young girls, Yeliz Arslan and Ayşe Yılmaz, and their fifty-one-year-old grandmother, Bahide Arslan. Nine others were injured.³⁷ Nobody should ever be harmed, let alone killed, for their

³⁵ Fullerton, Maryellen. *Germany for Germans: Xenophobia and Racist Violence in Germany*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch, 1995.

³⁶ Joppke, Christian. *Immigration and the Nation-state: The United States, Germany and Great Britain*, 86-93.

³⁷ Teitelbaum, Michael S., and Jay Murray Winter. *A Question of Numbers: High Migration, Low Fertility, and the Politics of National Identity*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1998, 11.

differences, but the attack in Mölln showed Germany and the world that there was not simply an issue with migration and newcomers. All three of the victims in Mölln had been longtime residents in Germany, and the two girls, as much of the Turkish-German community, had been born and raised in the country. They spoke the language and were educated in Germany; it was their home. Yet to many they remained as foreigners and died as a result of this perception in its most violent form.

In a report published in 1995, Human Rights Watch (HRW) described the violence of the time, criticizing both the German government and police for not responding quickly and stringently enough to quell the hatred. When direct action was taken, there was an increase in the numbers of police on the streets and prosecutors informed on hate crimes; still to some activists and victims the response was too little and came too late. The HRW report concluded that there was “an ongoing need for political and moral leadership not only to condemn violence against non-Germans, but also to take the lead in countering the more subtle forms of racism and xenophobia that contribute to the marginalization of minority groups.”³⁸ There was a pressing need for actions which punished perpetrators and supported a deeper understanding of issues facing minority communities in Germany to prevent violent and deadly attacks from occurring in the first place.

In late 1993, both perpetrators of the Mölln attack were sentenced after being charged with murder and arson. One received life in prison, while the other, a juvenile at the time of the crime, received the maximum juvenile sentence of ten years.³⁹ As exhibited in the prosecution of the Mölln attackers, new approaches were taken to combat the hatred, and they were taken more seriously. The attack and subsequent case marked a shift in German attitude towards hate crimes.

³⁸ Fullerton, Maryellen. *Germany for Germans: Xenophobia and Racist Violence in Germany*, 5.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

There was enormous reaction from the public condemning the murders and cases of violence against non-ethnic Germans have received more attention, while the perpetrators have received tougher prosecution.

Even as the German government began to take action to condemn hate crimes and prosecute the perpetrators, a contradictory stance remained. On May 26, 1993, the *Bundestag* (German Parliament) voted to change Article 16 of the Basic Law regarding asylum.⁴⁰ The resulting amendment restricted the entry of asylum seekers who had come from or passed through countries which were designated safe states. Critics of the 1993 change argued that the decision supported the idea that the problem was foreigners, consequently also supporting neo-Nazi views and violence. The amendment was produced as part of a larger compromise between the various political parties active in the German parliament at the time. Another often overlooked but important aspect of this compromise is its decision to end the ethnic migration of *Aussiedler*.⁴¹

Just three days later, on May 29, five longtime Turkish-German residents died after their house was set on fire. The attack, which took place in the town of Solingen, became the deadliest attack since reunification. The two deadliest had now been inflicted upon the largest ethnic minority in Germany with a thirty-plus year presence. Many of the attacks during the period were framed as having been perpetrated against foreigners, but people with deep histories in Germany were attacked as well, notably Turkish-Germans and Jews.

In Solingen, the arson attack killed three girls and two women from one family and wounded fifteen others. Saime Genc, 4; Hulya Genc, 9; Gulstan Ozturk, 12; Hatice Genc, 18,

⁴⁰ Fullerton, Maryellen. *Germany for Germans: Xenophobia and Racist Violence in Germany*, 5.

⁴¹ Teitelbaum, Michael S., and Jay Murray Winter. *A Question of Numbers: High Migration, Low Fertility, and the Politics of National Identity*, 28.

and Gursun Ince, 27, all died in the fire which was set as they slept. It is unclear whether or not the five victims had all been born in Germany, but it does not matter. They were targeted because of their status as descendants from a country and culture that their murderers did not believe belonged in Germany.

The four perpetrators, all German men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, were handed down sentences between ten and fifteen years.⁴² Especially to an American, a hate crime resulting in death may be expected to bring down a harsher sentence. Due mainly to the young age of most of the perpetrators at the time of the attack and trial, the sentences were not too lengthy. Although, the sentences were harsher than expected for such young men in Germany. To some, including many of the Turkish-German community who held protests calling for life sentences, the prison terms were not enough. To others, the trial's outcome signaled an understanding that Germany would not tolerate such acts anymore and wanted nothing to do with racists and neo-Nazis who evoked a memory of Nazism.

Multiculturalism: A Solution to Social Woes?

Among the instability of the early nineties, the German government started to express a more encouraging view on the preservation of Turkish culture. Germany had begun to acknowledge its stance and history as an immigration nation. As the government and policies became more inclusive towards the immigrant population in some ways, an approach which centered on the ideas of zero immigration or total assimilation leaned more towards multiculturalism.

⁴² Cowell, Alan. "Germans Sentenced in Arson Killing of Turks." New York Times (New York, NY), October 14, 1995. Accessed February 5, 2018. <https://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9A07E2DB1339F937A25753C1A963958260>.

Multiculturalism has been known as one of the two main approaches in dealing with difference in Europe, the other being assimilationism. In Germany, the assimilationist view could arguably work well with immigrant groups such as the Polish or Dutch, whose cuisine, language, and outward appearance could more seamlessly be seen as already adjusted and appropriately German. Especially with communities which were marginalized and had built comfortable communities influenced by their home culture, the argument for assimilation began to seem futile. The visibility of many Turkish-German areas, like Kreuzberg in Berlin, prevented such populations from being considered assimilated to German culture; which many see as the only option. But assimilation is not preferable as it forces people to give up their identities; it should not be required for social participation. Furthermore, even assimilated groups are often never accepted as part of the majority, such as the Jews in certain pre-war European countries.

As Turkish-Germans became a more visible and permanent presence, a tension arose between the assimilationist view and the multiculturalist approach. Multiculturalism is an approach to difference which is supposed to have a variety of cultures peacefully coexist. It basically rejects assimilationist ideology and demands that cultural differences be recognized and maintained. This approach may sound ideal but can also be problematic; it assumes that certain cultures just cannot exist as one and therefore must remain largely separate within a society. Additionally, as Kenan Malik writes in *Foreign Affairs*, multicultural approaches and policies “implicitly assume that...diversity ends at the edges of minority communities. They seek to institutionalize diversity by putting people into ethnic and cultural boxes – into a singular, homogeneous Muslim community, for example – and defining their needs accordingly.”⁴³ Consequently, many multiculturalist policies can actually encourage division and add to the lack

⁴³ Malik, Kenan. "The Failure of Multiculturalism: Community versus Society in Europe." 21-22.

of coherent immigration policy, leading to the creation of so-called parallel societies in which people “live cloistered from the rest of society and suffer from higher than average unemployment, higher school dropout rates, and for some disaffected Muslim youth, the lure of radical Islam.”⁴⁴

The idea of multiculturalism in Germany is deeply influenced by the established Turkish-German community and the anxiety surrounding Islam. As with Jews before and during WWII, with a recognition of a Turkish-German presence, religion once again became a large element of incompatibility. I do not at all mean to equate the horrors of the Holocaust with the Turkish-German experience, but rather to emphasize the persistence of the ethnocultural understanding of German belonging. Especially since 9/11 and other Islamist terror attacks, the belief that Islam cannot be at harmony with a Western democracy has grown. During the heyday of *Multikulti*, there were a variety of efforts to incorporate Turkish and Islamic tradition into German everyday life. Unfortunately, these efforts often involved minimal impact from the communities in question and tended to treat members as a monolith, disregarding the range of their voices and identities.

The German brand of multiculturalism then, in some way, furthered exclusion. For instance, it underlined the existence of different ethnicities and cultures, but was promoted for quite some time without multicultural citizenship. This is yet another indictment of how Germany implemented multiculturalism in an effort to produce inclusion, yet still acted in ways which supported exclusion. Christian Joppke argues that, in practice, a multiculturalist approach tends to reify identity through its paternalism, as ethnic minorities remain with restricted political

⁴⁴ Angelos, James. "What Integration Means For Germany's Guest Workers." *Foreign Affairs*. Last modified October 28, 2011. Accessed October 2017.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2011-10-28/what-integration-means-germanys-guest-workers>.

rights. This exclusion and/or control continues with the multiculturalist outlook and leads to the formation of what he refers to as “apolitical communal groups,” often resulting in self-ethnicization and fertile ground for fundamentalism.⁴⁵ Ghassan Hage argues another, more extreme, case against multiculturalist and assimilationist policies, “In much the same way, we can say that neither multiculturalism nor assimilation have the interest of the ethnic/racial Other as their final aim. They are both modes of producing/transforming other cultural forms into something acceptable for consumption by the dominant culture.”⁴⁶ In Europe, multiculturalism is generally no longer seen as the best approach to immigration and integration. History has shown us that multiculturalist and assimilationist policies both have little influence on the divisions of society and can even make things worse.

Legal Boundaries Between *Citizen* and *Foreigner* Redrawn

After the instability of reunification, the debate surrounding citizenship successfully left the political arena and a grassroots movement began. One million signatures were collected throughout Germany in support of a reformed law regarding citizenship.⁴⁷ After the post-reunification spike of hateful violence, more people saw it as a way to avoid future xenophobic incidents and tendencies, and ensure that all groups living within Germany were made to feel more comfortable and welcome as a belonging part of society. A changed naturalization law was put into effect in 1993. Residents of at least fifteen years without a criminal record could naturalize, and children who had lived in Germany for at least eight years, with six or more years of schooling, could naturalize between the ages of sixteen and twenty-three. Anyone who

⁴⁵ Joppke, Christian. *Immigration and the Nation-state: The United States, Germany and Great Britain*. 244.

⁴⁶ Hage, Ghassan. "État de siège: A dying domesticating colonialism?" *American Ethnologist* 43, no. 1 (2016): 46.

⁴⁷ Joppke, Christian. *Immigration and the Nation-state: The United States, Germany and Great Britain*. 206.

naturalized and held citizenship from another country beyond the European Union would have to renounce their other citizenship. During this period, the Maastricht treaty also gave all EU citizens the right to vote in local elections in Germany, an example of the legal benefits easily accessible to Europeans and largely unachievable by foreign residents in Germany. With the changes in 1993, the naturalization rate did increase from 0.4% to 2.5%, but in 1995 only 3% of the 7 million residents holding other passports naturalized, as opposed to 8% in the Netherlands.⁴⁸

The reformed naturalization requirement put forth in 1993 was a big step in ensuring that longtime Turkish-German residents could access citizenship in Germany. Still, it was only in 2000 that citizenship would be opened up to all those deserving of it, and 2014 when the ban on dual citizenship was lifted for non-EU members. Children born in Germany on or after January 1, 2000 to a foreign parent who has resided within the country for at least eight consecutive years, can now become citizens. Someone who has an unlimited residency permit for at least three years can also naturalize. Finally, as of 2014, children who obtained citizenship upon birth are no longer required to give up their second citizenship. Those who had given up their other citizenship before then cannot reclaim it. Mete and Emre,* two Berliners I interviewed whose parents emigrated from Turkey, are both only able to hold a German passport, while their parents all hold only Turkish. This decades-late granting of full rights to a vulnerable minority within the country enabled, among other things, the ethnocultural understanding of Germanness to endure.

How much can be repaired with equitable citizenship laws granted so late? For nearly four decades, citizenship was largely inaccessible for Turkish-Germans, even for the second and

⁴⁸ Kurthen, Hermann. "Germany at the crossroads: national identity and the challenges of immigration." *International Migration Review* 29, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 931. Academic OneFile.

* Names of all interviewees have been changed

third-generations born and raised in the country. Enabling and easing access to citizenship was an important step but did not get rid of exclusion in all its forms. Today, twenty-five years after the first liberalized naturalization law was put into effect, a woman born to Turkish parents, who is a citizen, is still often seen as further from German than a woman like myself, American and Jewish, but with fair skin, light hair, and blue eyes. Although universal citizenship was a hugely important step in Germany's relationship with immigrants, citizenship for (almost) all does not mean the society has somehow "transcend[ed] particularity and difference."⁴⁹ Essential in understanding how the extension of recognition and legal rights through citizenship has not widened the conception of Germanness or bolstered social justice and equality, is the knowledge that non-citizens had most of the rights of citizenship before they gained citizenship. With such rights, non-citizens could remain internal outsiders on the periphery of belonging even once citizenship was accessible. Unfortunately, a German passport is not the key to acceptance.

⁴⁹ Young, Iris Marion. "Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship." *Ethics* 99, no. 2 (January 1989): 250. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2381434>.

Chapter III: Contemporary Barriers to Belonging

Fear of the Other: Both New and Known

Today it is hard to deny that Germany is a country of immigration. There are active integration efforts and programs in place to ease immigrants into the German economy, housing, and way of life. Still, there remains a conceptual and visible divide between those with non-German backgrounds, as even established resident minorities like the Turkish-German community remain within the category of foreign. The legacy of the failure to incorporate people from Turkey and those of Turkish descent into the national belonging, has an impact on the way that foreigners, particularly Muslim Middle Easterners, continue to be perceived in Germany. The heightened presence of Muslims refugees in Germany since 2015 has evoked the memory of the Turkish-German experience with belonging. The problem of exclusion remains for Turkish-Germans and now also shapes the inclusion and exclusion of other groups. Interestingly, the influence goes both ways as the perception of the newcomers, too, shapes attitudes towards Turkish-Germans.

The term “refugee crisis” is used to describe the influx of asylum seekers who made their way into Europe beginning in 2015. The conflict in Syria was, and continues to be, the main driver in this migratory movement, but hundreds of thousands from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Eritrea have sought asylum in Europe as well. This crisis has not only aroused humanitarian and economic concerns, but has also provoked questions, fears, and anxieties concerning integration. During the peak of the crisis, the attitude in Germany seemed to be generally welcoming. In August 2015, the country suspended the Dublin Regulation for Syrians. This EU regulation stipulates that one must register and claim asylum in the first member state they reach. With the suspension, Syrians were allowed to claim asylum in Germany no matter where they had been

before. A few days after the suspension, Chancellor Angela Merkel declared “*Wir schaffen das*” (We can do it) when faced with taking in hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers.⁵⁰ Over one million people ended up entering and claiming asylum in Germany that year.⁵¹

In 2016 it was recorded that 18.6 million people living in Germany had a “migrant background.”⁵² Between three and four million of those were of Turkish origin.⁵³ 800,000 of those had citizenship, a large number, but still strikingly lower than the total.⁵⁴ The number itself begs the question; has the German national understanding and sense of belonging widened to include the Turkish-German community? Even among the most recent generations to whom citizenship is attainable, there is a struggle to build an identity as Germans in isolation from stereotyped views of who they should be as people with Turkish heritage. This is due to a combination of historical, social, cultural, and physical factors. Even if a law is changed to respect group difference, “Others” continue to be marked as different by a society whose norms and internal perceptions remain unchanged.⁵⁵

I want to elucidate the complicated relationship that second and third-generation Turkish-Germans have to their sense of belonging and national identity vis-à-vis Germanness: a product of how both the state and ethnic Germans ascribe their membership in a community. The

⁵⁰ Dockery, Wesley. "Two years since Germany opened its borders to refugees: A chronology." Deutsche Welle. Last modified September 4, 2017. Accessed March 29, 2018.

⁵¹ Rietig, Victoria, and Andreas Müller. "The New Reality: Germany Adapts to Its Role as a Major Migrant Magnet." Migration Policy Institute. Last modified August 31, 2016. Accessed October 2017.

⁵² Götttsche, Florian, and Destatis. "8.5% increase in the population with a migrant background." News release. August 1, 2017. Accessed March 29, 2018.

https://www.destatis.de/EN/PressServices/Press/pr/2017/08/PE17_261_12511.html;jsessionid=63DC55AB0D2C3BA01C19E1A19B71563D.cae1.

⁵³ Crul, Maurice. "Pathways to Success for the Second Generation in Europe." Migration Policy Institute. Last modified April 1, 2007. Accessed October 2017.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/pathways-success-second-generation-europe>.

⁵⁴ Malik, Kenan. "The Failure of Multiculturalism: Community versus Society in Europe." 27.

⁵⁵ Young, Iris Marion. "Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship." 260.

complexity is furthered by the fact that all of them are German citizens, which should mean they are full members of the nation in every way. Germanness, and their relation to it, is shaped by the experiences of their forefathers and the ascriptions given to them by ethnic Germans.

In “Germanness or Rights,” Daniel Williams describes his interviews with second-generation young adults in Germany. He notes the main difference in their views; some “understood Germanness as a self-asserted identity, and others...saw it as an externally-imposed ascribed identity.”⁵⁶ In my own interviews, I noted something very similar. Andrea is a fifty-something-year-old from Frankfurt. She is German, and to her knowledge, all of her ancestors were too. When asked about the German identity she said; “I think it’s very clear if a German is a German, with German grandparents, and a German father...you can clearly see they are German.” In her opinion, someone with Turkish parents could only be Turkish. Such an externally imposed view, held by not all but many, can play a large role in shaping both the individual’s sense of self as well as the overall identity of the community in question. Views like Andrea’s are not echoed everywhere, and it may have to do with a generational divide or the region that she grew up in. Second-generation Turkish-Germans responded quite differently, but some also expressed feeling Turkish before feeling German; a result of both internal and external factors. For instance, Mete told me that he identifies strongly with the Berliner Turkish lifestyle; something “different than just a German or a Russian or Austrian guy but...also different from Turkish in Turkey, it’s Turkish in Berlin...it’s another experience from anywhere else, even in Germany.” He feels strongly connected to both the Turkish and German influences in his life, but above all feels a specific connection to his experience in Berlin. Mete feels like a true, homegrown Berliner, but to others he may come off as foreign, simply not a full German. Emre

⁵⁶ Williams, Daniel. “Germanness or Rights? Second Generation Young Adults and Citizenship in Contemporary Germany.” *German Politics and Society* 31, no. 2. (Summer 2013): 4. Doi:10.3167/gps.2013.310204.

explained to me that she identifies first as Turkish, an identification mainly due to others' recurrent perception of her as Turkish above all else.

Cynthia Miller-Idriss conducted interviews in Berlin in 2000 and 2001. She interviewed a student named Mehmet, a German citizen born in Germany to Turkish immigrants. Mehmet explained how he *feels* German himself but isn't accepted by many as so, who question how he can feel German with his background. This exposes the continued doubt that Germans, even in a city like Berlin, can be of non-ethnic German or non-European descent. Miller-Idriss explains how experiences such as Mehmet's (which are still omnipresent as I found in Berlin eighteen years later) provide proof that there remains a large "role of racial and ethnic characteristics, such as skin tone, in patterns of xenophobic or racist behavior, even if race and ethnicity are not discussed in young Germans' explanation of citizenship or national belonging."⁵⁷ In Williams', Miller-Idriss', and my own interviews, outward appearance, culture, and religion were mentioned frequently as premises for exclusion. As one young man Williams interviewed said: "I mean, we are foreigners here. That doesn't change with a passport... In the end you don't belong 100 percent to this country. You aren't Germanic or really German... The problem is simple. When you see me, I don't look very German, as people imagine German to be."⁵⁸ Therefore, today, even if we move beyond the question of citizenship, basing belonging upon looks and culture are two major ways in which Turkish-Germans are continually excluded from the national belonging.

When it is not specifically phenotype, language, or style of clothing brought to the table as clear indication of non-Germanness, separation in terms of both origin and cultural

⁵⁷ Miller-Idriss, Cynthia. "Everyday Understandings of Citizenship in Germany." *Citizenship Studies* 10, no. 5 (November 2006): 559. Doi:10.1080/13621020600954978.

⁵⁸ Williams, Daniel. "Germanness or Rights? Second Generation Young Adults and Citizenship in Contemporary Germany." 41.

understanding is evoked. Some describe it based on “distance” from Germany and German culture. This feeling was brought up during my interview with Andrea. When asked if she notices any divide between Germans with just German ancestry, and those with an immigrant background, she mentioned a cultural distance:

It depends on the country where they come from, also Turkish people or Muslims are different from German people so they are separated usually. Europe has many different cultures, you look from Norway, to Spain or from Belgium to Italy; they’re complete different cultures and behaviors and whatever but here are some more close together than others. German [compared] with Turkish is a big difference, but German with Belgium, or German with Netherlands is much more closer [sic] together so there is not as big a difference also from the outside: how they look.”

Model Immigrants and Parallel Societies: A Lasting and Expanding Debate

A pervasive public discourse identifies a problem group – primarily with either a Muslim background or a Turkish/Kurdish, or Arab origin, who are labeled as not integrated or capable of being integrated.⁵⁹

There remains a great deal of debate on whether or not Turkish-Germans have successfully become a part of German society. Currently, the topic is most frequently brought up in discussions about model immigrants and parallel societies. Model immigrants are groups perceived to have higher socioeconomic success and integration potential than the average population. Such active debates serve as a reminder that questions of integration, belonging, and membership in the national community remain at the forefront of political, economic, and societal discourse.

Among the notable voices in this debate is German politician and former banker, Thilo Sarrazin. In the summer of 2010, Sarrazin published a book which threw the debate into the spotlight. *Deutschland schafft sich ab* (Germany Abolishes Itself) sold over one million copies

⁵⁹ Wilpert, Czarina. "Identity Issues in the History of the Postwar Migration from Turkey to Germany." 122.

by the end of 2010.⁶⁰ The book criticizes Germany's approach to postwar immigration, saying that people with certain origins who've since moved to Germany have lower cognitive abilities. The book also argues that those of Turkish and Arab backgrounds are actively against integration. The popularity of the book enabled opinions that were long labeled taboo to become speakable.

Although Sarrazin is regarded as a right-wing hate figure by many, his writing has influenced the way that people in Germany view Muslims, particularly those from Turkey and Arab countries. In a book released in 2016, he reiterates many of the claims from his first book, as he explains why there are no integration prospects for the refugees who arrived in 2015, saying they:

come from countries with low educational achievement. Their cultural and cognitive profile is similar to that of Muslim immigrants from those countries of origin who are already in Europe. It is therefore likely that they will develop similarly in terms of educational achievement, labour market integration, social benefit, crime and susceptibility to fundamentalist thought.⁶¹

The consequences of Sarrazin's writing and standing as an influential figure are great, impacting conversations surrounding culture, religion, and otherness. Dangerously, within his explicitly racist and xenophobic writing, many Germans who do not consider themselves particularly right-leaning or conservative find some of what they call truth. In an interview with NITRO, a German news and media magazine, Sarrazin expressed his beliefs on integration possibilities with racist undertones:

This [inability to integrate] is shown by the experience we have had with different groups of immigrants so far. Vietnamese or Chinese are on average different from

⁶⁰ Angelos, James. "What Integration Means For Germany's Guest Workers."

⁶¹ Welt Politik "Sarrazins Angst vor Massen von ungebildeten Migranten" [Sarrazin's Fear of Masses of Uneducated Migrants]. WeltN24. Last modified April 20, 2016. Accessed October 29, 2017. <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article154544470/Sarrazins-Angst-vor-Massen-von-ungebildeten-Migranten.html>.

Turks, Arabs or black Africans. We have immigrant groups that, after one generation, do not pose any integration problems at all; on the contrary, they perform better than many Germans in terms of all indicators such as income, labour market participation and educational attainment. However, we also have groups on the contrary. And 98% of the current mass immigration is made up of groups in which there are demonstrably great difficulties of integration. Those who neglect this now act irresponsibly and stupidly.⁶²

This is a fairly common perception, as American journalist Christopher Caldwell argues in his book *Reflections on the Revolution of Europe*. He claims that modern immigration to Europe is different than ever before, because people from beyond the West are harder to assimilate and multiculturalism has, and will always, fail. Caldwell writes “immigration from neighboring countries does not provoke the most worrisome questions, such as ‘How well will they fit in?’ ‘Is assimilation what they want?’ and, most of all, ‘where are their true loyalties?’”⁶³

Thinking back to the discussion of difference, we can note the perception of Turkish immigrants as more distant from German culture. This is an interesting point when considering the topic of model immigrants in Germany, distance does not seem to play as large a role. Take what Sarrazin said about Vietnamese and Chinese immigrants versus those from the Middle East and Africa. Jannik, one of my interviewees, brought up a similar perception when asked if he feels there is a divide between ethnic Germans and those of other backgrounds:

The most present for me are Turkish people...since they're the biggest group, so you see them together. They have whole districts in cities where they live and do their own stuff... Also, there are lots of people from the old communist countries or Vietnam, but it doesn't feel like they're so stuck together...also with Polish people you cannot really tell [they are not German].

⁶² Sarrazin, Thilo. "Es wird weiter Zuwanderung geben." [There Will Be Further Immigration]. Interview by NITRO. *The European: Das Debatten-Magazine*. Last modified April 9, 2017. Accessed October 29, 2017. <http://www.theeuropean.de/sarrazin-thilo/12046-interview-mit-thilo-sarrazin>.

⁶³ Caldwell, Christopher. *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe: Immigration, Islam, and the West*. New York: Doubleday, 2009, 9.

This comparison is often made: that East Asian immigrants come from a faraway culture but do not bother anyone or impose upon Germany in the same way as Turkish-Germans and Turkish immigrants. In such views, East Asian immigrants have used the German system to succeed, while Turkish-Germans have not. The issue at hand also ties into another common impression that Turkish-Germans live in parallel societies. Even the most left-leaning of those I interviewed brought up parallel societies. She mentioned how, in Berlin, the only place she feels such a divide is in Neukölln, but that in places like Munich and Dresden she knows huge parallel societies exist.

There is no denying that there are parts of German cities dominated by the Turkish language, food, and culture. The problem with the negativity surrounding these areas is that they are understood as places where immigrants settled without attempting to become “German.” This leads to more extreme views and concerns: if Muslim immigration is not stopped, big parallel societies and economies will develop and drain the German economy rather than further it. People see such places as the future of Germany, dominated by Turkish and Muslim influence if immigration and asylum seeking is not stopped.

This does not mean that everyone feels this is a problem, and things have changed over generations as Andrea pointed out:

Berlin is the second biggest Turkish city...there are areas in Berlin where there are only Turkish. You have Turkish hair cutters, Turkish newspapers; everything is Turkish, but it is normal now. Twenty years ago, my parents would say “never go to Berlin...oh they’re all from abroad,” but from the next generation who grew up [as] internationals, who can go around Europe without any borders more or less, they are very open.

It is a positive sign that more young adults have grown up to know the Turkish-German community as an established immigrant group. It is important that people know the historical

circumstances that have led to present situations. With such an understanding, less suspicion and blame is put on the shoulders of immigrant communities.

It was interesting to observe the contrast between the views of those fearing parallel societies and the views of Turkish-Germans who were born and raised in Germany. For instance, Emre told me when asked if her identities ever seem to come into conflict:

Not too often, because there are many, many people who are Turkish in Germany. Sometimes there could be a problem between values that Turkish have, like if you are extreme religious. I think this is really hard because some people are afraid of Muslim's religion and you are more separate if you are more religious...some people will not think you belong here.

The Circulation of Discourses on Exclusion

The politics which grew out of the Turkish presence in Germany continue to produce exclusion in new ways. This fear or suspicion of Muslims that Emre mentioned evokes a whole new influence on the acceptability of Turkish-Germans as belonging members of German society. *After the Nazi Racial State* identifies such fear as a more “recent emergence of a racialized discourse around Muslim immigrants.”⁶⁴ Particularly since the events of 9/11 and the War on Terror, a discourse has emerged focusing even more so on the Muslim identity of Turkish-Germans than before; a further marker of difference and deviation from the German identity partly rooted in Christianity, even as a secular state. As more Christians are raised secular while more Muslims are religious, a feeling of being taken over culminates in a fear of the eventual loss of Germany's mainly Christian populous. In today's polarized world, the full integration of the Turkish-German population seems to require “relinquishing cultural particularities and pathologies that they [Germans] associate with Islam...The existence of

⁶⁴ Chin, Rita, and Heide Fehrenbach. "What's Race Got to Do With It? Postwar German History in Context." Introduction to *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*. 2.

enclaves in major German cities where Turkish is the primary language, worship takes place in mosques, business are predominantly Turkish-owned, and seemingly backward customs and behaviors predominate often serves as proof of the Turkish community's unwillingness or inability to integrate."⁶⁵

Additionally, in the wake of the refugee crisis, "the roles of religion, culture and identity in liberal democratic societies have again come under a microscope."⁶⁶ This is happening across Europe, but perhaps most prominently in Germany: the EU member with an acutely complicated understanding of nationhood and highest number of asylum seekers. Fear grows as questions arise on whether or not the newcomers can become a part of the nation, complicated by the already present sense of division. "As newcomers to the social and political arena of established societies, immigrants are often perceived and classified in relation to existing divisions and social categories."⁶⁷ In the Turkish-German case, as with many existing Muslim communities throughout Europe, this process has the opposite effect as well: established communities within the society are also perceived and classified in relation to the newcomers.

In Germany, the widespread sexual assaults on New Year's 2016 in Cologne were allegedly committed mainly by migrant men of North African origin. This major event intensified the debate on religion, ethnicity, and cultural compatibility. The reports "fed into racialized fears of refugees and immigrants [or refugees] promoted by groups on the radical

⁶⁵ Chin, Rita, and Heide Fehrenbach. "What's Race Got to Do With It? Postwar German History in Context." Introduction to *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*. 12.

⁶⁶ Banelescu-Bogdan, Natalia, and Meghan Benton. In Search of Common Values Amid Large-Scale Immigrant Integration Pressures. June 2017: 4. Accessed March 19, 2018. Brussels, Belgium: Migration Policy Institute Europe.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/search-common-values-amid-large-scale-immigrant-integration-pressures>.

⁶⁷ Winter, Elke. "Trajectories of Multiculturalism in Germany, the Netherlands, and Canada: In Search of Common Patterns." *Government and Opposition* 45, no. 2 (2010): 186.

right, even as racialized fears returned to mainstream discourses.”⁶⁸ Such discourses not only impact recent refugees and immigrants, but also established groups within Germany such as Turkish-Germans.

Right-wing groups and their sympathizers took this tragedy as an opportunity to evoke old tropes of Muslim sexuality and violence.

This regime, which produces the male Muslim as inevitably violent, and Muslim women as simultaneously victims of and complicit with male Muslim violence... [has shifted] to white, German women as victims of Islam. This is perhaps not so much a shift as the perceived realization of the threat increasingly emphasized over the last decades: a fear that the presence of Islam in Germany would inevitably lead to violence against women.⁶⁹

Looking at the incident in its most simple form, without historical context, it is easy to point to Islam as the main issue at hand and reject immigration, while also popularizing the alarmist threat of a cultural takeover.

After New Year’s, concerns intensified and tensions rose. Perhaps fearing violent backlash, it is alleged that the German police and media tried to delay reporting that the attacks were committed by North African migrants. A “fear of overstepping the boundaries of tolerance” resulted in such inaction and heightened tensions.⁷⁰ The backlash to the partial cover-up led to the use of discriminatory practices, such as extra police attention at public events towards men who look North African and Turkish. The police in turn denied racially profiling anyone, even though Germany does not actually have an anti-discrimination law and police are not prohibited from stopping and checking someone for the way they look. Germany’s law of equal treatment states that “all people should be treated equally and not be disadvantaged because of their race,

⁶⁸ Weber, Beverly. "We Must Talk About Cologne: Race, Gender, and Reconfigurations of 'Europe.'" *German Politics and Society* 34, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 68. Doi:10.3167/gps.2016.34045.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 74-75.

⁷⁰ Banelescu-Bogdan, Natalia, and Meghan Benton. In *Search of Common Values Amid Large-Scale Immigrant Integration Pressures*. 15.

gender, age, religion, sexual orientation or a disability.”⁷¹ The law does not cover interactions between the state (i.e. the police) and individuals.

Just as more recent events influence social understandings and relationships, the memories of World War II and the Holocaust, too, loom large in the German collective consciousness. It would seem that a country with the dark history of Nazism and the Holocaust, would have rid itself of an ethnocultural identity. But “politically incorrect,” sentiments, suppressed for years, are now being expressed more and more openly amid the supposed clash of civilizations occurring across Europe. There is the interesting defense of Jews brought up from the right-wing. When asked about Nazism, supporters of a far-right agenda are now showing their support for Jews as victims of Muslim perpetrators. When Marc Jongen of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) spoke at Bard in 2017, he pointed out that Jews were now leaving France for Israel because of threats from Muslims. He sought to avoid being dubbed a Nazi and further his generalization of Muslims as incompatible with a German and European way of life. Such statements point to a trend in which intricate histories are being ignored and narratives are being manipulated to create a simplistic ideological battle of “us” versus “them.” Such a conjecture of all Muslims as being a threat to European Jews not only ignores the anti-Semitism native to European communities, but also names every Muslim as a threat. Yes, there have been attacks that target Jews, but that should not result in the alienation of another religious minority. Attacks by radical Islamists in Germany and other regions are a clear threat to security. But, using such awful acts as justification to assign a negative view of *all* Muslims is harmful and often pushes those already marginalized to fall further from mainstream society. Positive moves welcoming

⁷¹ Bleiker, Carla. "Is 'racial profiling' illegal? Depends on where you live." Deutsche Welle. Last modified January 3, 2017. Accessed March 20, 2018. <http://www.dw.com/en/is-racial-profiling-illegal-depends-on-where-you-live/a-36988027>.

Muslims in Germany should be supported and acknowledged. For example, in 2006 Merkel's party, the Christian Democrats (CDU), established a German Islam Conference and a National Council for Integration.⁷² This conference has recently been focused on security and terrorism.

A few short decades ago, people across Europe saw the solution to many social problems and identity politics outlined previously in multiculturalism. Fast forward to today, and many of those same people see multiculturalism as the underlying issue *behind* those same problems. Shortly after Sarrazin gained notoriety, Angela Merkel said that *MultiKulti* had "absolutely failed."⁷³ Supporters of this sentiment claim that multiculturalism has allowed too much immigration without enough integration, saying it's resulted in less "social cohesion, undermined national identities, and degraded public trust."⁷⁴ They see a strict defiance to German culture, and Western identity overall, through a visible adherence to Islam and lasting tie to another culture. Is it really total assimilation that is the goal of those who point to *MultiKulti's* drawbacks? As has been a criticism from many minority groups worldwide; even if "integrated," such groups often remain outsiders, not totally accepted by the majority. There is a tension between the sense of otherness when one remains attached to Turkish culture and the continued marking as an outsider, even after the desired level of integration is attained.

Perhaps at this point focus should be on working to solve social problems, instead of "focusing on abstractions such as the failure of multiculturalism or whether Islam 'belongs' in Germany."⁷⁵ The education system is one area which, with comprehensive planning, could greatly improve social opinions and relationships. It is important that German states reform a system which separates children at age ten, basically deciding their entire educational path very

⁷² Wilpert, Czarina. "Identity Issues in the History of the Postwar Migration from Turkey to Germany." 119.

⁷³ Angelos, James. "What Integration Means For Germany's Guest Workers."

⁷⁴ Malik, Kenan. "The Failure of Multiculturalism: Community versus Society in Europe." 21.

⁷⁵ Angelos, James. "What Integration Means For Germany's Guest Workers."

early on. On a more general level, Germany should continue forming policies and making efforts, such as the Islam Conference, that serve in part to support the Turkish-German community. It is imperative that this moment in time, full of divisive rhetoric, not negatively impact a hardworking and long-standing community.

To gain a better understanding of the discourse dividing Germany at the moment, one can simply look at the recent elections. On the political spectrum Turkish-Germans continue to be marginalized. There had been a turn in German political rhetoric between the nineties and present-day from anti-immigration to protected rights for foreigners and new citizenship laws. The new direction of policies and governmental discourse mismatched the abiding restrictive conceptions of nationhood and the reality on the ground. This led some to distrust the words and actions of their current leaders regarding immigration, as they felt the country was being given to outsiders unwilling to integrate. The buildup of such attitudes, in addition to many other historical factors and social relations, has led to a recent anti-foreigner trend in politics. The shift is interesting to note in contrast to the open-door policy, representing a recurring dilemma in German political thinking and action between racist, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, and xenophobic impulses and more liberal democratic aspirations.

The question of who does and who does not belong in Germany still looms largely overhead. As the recent refugees are mainly from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, Islam is evoked as the largest difference between the newcomers and natives, with some calling it a clash of cultures. We are now confronted with the rising popularity of right-wing groups such as the populist AfD, who gained nearly 13% of the seats in parliament in the September 2017 election.⁷⁶ Douglas R. Holmes write that “the stranger, the exile, the alien, and the dispossessed

⁷⁶ BBC. "German election: Merkel wins fourth term, AfD nationalists rise." Last modified September 25, 2017. Accessed October 26, 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41376577>.

haunt the margins of this populism.”⁷⁷ Populist politicians believe strongly in belonging to a culture, they express a nostalgia of better, more virtuous times. For right-wing populist groups in Germany today, both the eternal stranger and the alien are seen as a threat-to-be-conquered so that society may return to a purer, and therefore more successful, form.

Among the political groups most visible in their hatred and condemnation towards Germany’s Muslim minority and refugees is Patriotic Europeans Against Islamization of West (PEGIDA). PEGIDA is a group created in Dresden in 2014. In January 2015, 18,000 marched there to stand against immigration. What was so interesting about these marches, which began even before the height of the refugee intake in the summer of that year, were the attendees. “Pegida’s marches have inevitably attracted neo-Nazis, soccer hooligans and assorted far-rightists, but most participants are the same average Europeans whose anxieties and frustrations have also found expression in opposition to the European and to globalization.”⁷⁸ Luckily, the movement has since died down, with attendance rates under 2,000 at their marches over the past few years.

Still very active and increasingly influential is the AfD, a specifically anti-Islam group who now has 94 seats in the German parliament.⁷⁹ Like PEGIDA, their popularity among regular voters, not only ultra-nationalists and neo-Nazis, sends a negative message to newcomers and resident minority communities alike, with slogans such as “*Bunte Vielfalt? Haben wir schon,*” and “*Neue Deutsche? Machen wir selber,*” (roughly translates to “Diversity in Color? We have

⁷⁷ Holmes, Douglas R. *Integral Europe: Fast-capitalism, Multiculturalism, Neofascism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000: 6.

⁷⁸ The Editorial Board. "The Marches in Dresden." *New York Times* (New York, NY), January 7, 2015, Opinion. Accessed March 19, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/07/opinion/the-marches-in-dresden.html>.

⁷⁹ BBC. "Germany coalition deal reached after months of wrangling." BBC. Last modified February 7, 2018. Accessed March 28, 2018. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42973419>.

enough” and “New Germans? We can make them alone”).⁸⁰ Thus, a recurring problem reappears: the issue of German national identity and the relegation of those with a foreign background, especially Muslims from the Middle East, as permanently Other. Marc Jongen is quoted on behalf of the group as saying, “a society which is too inhomogenous [sic] is likely to lose its democratic form because it will be split into parallel societies.”⁸¹ A perceived threat against European values and traditions is increasingly vocalized, as Germans wonder if Merkel’s open-door policy was the right choice and whether or not they will be able to properly integrate and accept the mainly Muslim Middle-Easterners who have found refuge in Germany.

The AfD is among the most vocal opponents of multiculturalism, calling it an “ideology...blind to history.”⁸² Their political program listed online sees integration as a one-way street: “He [the immigrant] has to adapt to his new host country, not the other way around.”⁸³ The program lists most immigrants and refugees as people with bad integration prospects. Aside from their stance on Islam, another AfD opinion impacting Turkish-Germans is their view on citizenship. The AfD sees citizenship as a final part of integration; they are against dual citizenship and seek out stricter requirements for naturalization. AfD politicians’ opinions on the Turkish-German community seem largely negative. The party’s co-founder and serving parliament leader, Alexander Gauland, showed the hateful side of this perception in a response to another politician. Aydan Özoguz, German Minister for Migration, Refugees, and Integration, was quoted saying that a specifically German culture is unidentifiable. Gauland said that after

⁸⁰ Elzer, Christoph. "Burgunder statt Burka: Die irren Wahlplakate der AfD" [Burgundy instead of Burka: The Inappropriate Election Posters of the AfD]. *Abendzeitung*. Last modified June 7, 2017. Accessed April 29, 2018. <https://www.abendzeitung-muenchen.de/inhalt.anti-islam-humor-burgunder-statt-burka-die-irren-wahlplakate-der-afd.b5e34f9f-f69a-4841-acc2-89e408be948d.html>.

⁸¹ Jongen, Marc, and Ian Buruma. "Does Democracy Need To Be More Populist?" Lecture, Hannah Arendt Center at Bard College's Crisis of Democracy: Thinking in Dark Times, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, October 13, 2017.

⁸² Alternative for Germany. *Manifesto for Germany*. Berlin, Germany: AfD, 2016: 46. Accessed March 28, 2018. https://www.afd.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/111/2017/04/2017-04-12_afd-grundsatzprogramm-englisch_web.pdf.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 62.

telling her what a specifically German culture is “she'll never come back here and we will be able to dispose of her in Anatolia, thank God.”⁸⁴ Özoguz’s statement was controversial, but surely did not garner Gauland’s response.

Exemplifying their anti-Islam stance, the AfD program firmly states that Islam does not belong in Germany and any expansion of the Muslim population is seen as a danger incompatible with German culture. Writing in their preamble, the party tries hard to prove that their views are not comparable to those of Nazis, underlining the Jewish influence on German history: “the AfD firmly opposed Islamic practice which is directed against our liberal-democratic constitutional order, our laws, and the Judeo-Christian and humanist foundations of our culture.”⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Deutsche Welle. "AfD's Alexander Gauland slammed over 'racist' remark aimed at minister." Last modified August 29, 2017. Accessed March 28, 2018.

<http://www.dw.com/en/afds-alexander-gauland-slammed-over-racist-remark-aimed-at-minister/a-40277497>.

⁸⁵ Alternative for Germany. Manifesto for Germany. Berlin, Germany: AfD, 2016: 47.

Conclusion

This paper has followed the history, role, and perception of Turkish-Germans as Germany, with its deeply complex and sordid past, developed into an immigrant country but remained with a narrow conception of Germanness. I have explained how the country did not historically consider itself a nation of immigration, apparent in its citizenship requirements, lack of coherent immigrant policy, and pushback against foreigners. Germany still has difficulty seeing those with migratory backgrounds as *German*. An intricate system of exclusion has developed over the years, changing and evolving but remaining in place. At the foundation of the exclusion that Turkish-Germans have faced is an ethnic idea of nationhood and the fact that the first Turkish presence was expected to be a *guest* presence. Even after the country reunified and gradually changed its legal treatment of foreigners, Turkish-Germans were, and are still, excluded from the conception of German nationhood. There remains the deeply engrained perception of Turkish immigrants and their descendants as Other.

These issues have been further complicated by the increasing distrust and anxiety surrounding Muslim Middle Easterners throughout Europe and the West. The image of the “Islamic Turk” has been associated with that of the unassimilable foreigner in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.⁸⁶ Visible distance from what is considered the norm, especially for Muslims, is deemed threatening. What was once said behind closed doors is becoming publically speakable, as divisive and xenophobic rhetoric seems to be normalizing. The discourse and popularity of explicitly Islamophobic politicians and parties, such as the AfD and PEGIDA, purport that it is not only the practices and beliefs of newcomers which have no place in Germany, but also those of groups who have lived and contributed to German society for

⁸⁶ Mandel, Ruth Ellen. *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*. 13.

generations. This is particularly alarming, because after World War II it seemed that violence and racism was just among right-wing nationalists. Now, the line is being blurred between the extreme right-wing and average citizens who openly share similar sentiments and support for drastic measures.

There is an incessant importance in understanding the *reasons* Turkish-Germans have been kept outside of the national identity. Critical is the awareness of the ways exclusion was actively fostered from the beginning, as well as how Germanness continues to be based on exclusion, phenotype, descent, and religion. Only with such an understanding can people unlearn the perception of difference as threatening and demolish harmful stereotypes. As Turkish-German academic Zafer Şenocak writes: “What matters is an enlargement of the notion of Germanness. The Turk belongs as a German element to Germany and not as a Turkish [element]. Only so can it change...and give birth to a hybrid culture.”⁸⁷ The hope is that this generation will be different: more socially aware and tolerant and that then *all* Germans will be able to confront challenges ahead together. However, with a rise in nationalism across Europe and a growing rift between “us” and “them” or “natives” and “invaders,” the future can look bleak; active effort must be taken to prevent further division.

The questions being raised in Germany are inherent in liberal democracies. Therefore, issues surrounding identity, citizenship, belonging, and difference are really microcosms of a larger picture. The emergence of a strong right-wing and nationalist parties is being seen across Europe and beyond. With a supranational body like the European Union, defining a common European identity has come into importance, but gets tricky with the emergence of such groups and voices. There has long been a European struggle with colonialism and anti-Semitism, and the

⁸⁷ Leggewie, Claus and Zafer Şenocak. *Deutsche Türken. Türk Almanlar*. Berlin: Rowohlt, 1993: 11.

historic presence of racial, cultural, and religious superiority in Europe has given way to a new problem with Muslims in particular, invoking a racialized idea of Europe.⁸⁸

Historically, the National Question across Europe related to the emancipation of certain minorities. Today, it is a question regarding the majority against the backdrop of an invasion of the foreigner, reasserting “itself in Europe as a variety of profoundly racialized projects of anti-immigrant nativism, from which there is...no immunity for the native-born European children and grandchildren of migrants of decades past, often permanently inscribed as being ‘of migrant background’ or indefinitely categorized as ‘foreigners.’”⁸⁹ This sketch aptly describes the views which keep Turkish-Germans from the general understanding of German nationhood. These divisions are particularly salient, because the European Union aspires to be a post-national project. In part, it aims to transcend borders and build an idea of European solidarity. In order to uphold and expand the project of Europe, the EU must address problems of national identity, belonging, nationalism, and xenophobia. Germany, and all of Europe, must begin to interrogate what has been called “the apparent ‘given’ of a world...divided into ‘ourselves’ and ‘others.’”⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Balibar, Étienne. "Es Gibt Keinen Staat in Europa: Racism and Politics in Europe Today." *New Left Review* 1, no. 186 (March-April 1991). Accessed April 26, 2018. <https://newleftreview-org.ezprox.bard.edu/I/186/etienne-balibar-es-gibt-keinen-staat-in-europa-racism-and-politics-in-europe-today>.

⁸⁹ De Genova, Nicholas. "The European Question: Migration, Race, and Postcoloniality in Europe." *Social Text* 34, no. 3 (September 2016): 80. Accessed December 5, 2017. Doi:10.1215/0162472-3607588.

⁹⁰ Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson. "Beyond ‘Culture’: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference." *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (February 1992): 16.

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