

WORKING WITH AND AGAINST STEREOTYPES: REPRESENTATIONS OF
HONOR AMONG TURKISH IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN A MIGRANT ASSOCIATION
IN BERLİN

by

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ABSTRACT

WORKING WITH AND AGAINST STEREOTYPES: REPRESENTATIONS OF HONOR AMONG TURKISH IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN A MIGRANT ASSOCIATION IN BERLIN

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This research offers an ethnographic analysis of twelve German-Turkish women who are members and also active workers of *Türkische Gemeinde in Deutschland(TGD)*¹ association. This thesis is the product of the twelve in depth interviews conducted in Berlin. This thesis aimed to focus on three major discourses of immigrant women on three major debates; 1) diversity in terms of heterogeneous identities, 2) integration of foreigners 3) Gender equality. The primal aim of conducting in depth interviews with the intent of pursuing the life stories of these women was to follow their own discursive constructions regarding their status of “being an immigrant” and also their ensuing floating discourses on “honor”. The rationale for the focus upon participants associated with TGD was to attain discursive constructions of honor which circulate within a homogenous association where participants share the communal workplace, but espouse different life narratives while defining their discursive constructions.

Through in depth interviews, two recurring motifs significantly appeared spontaneously in narratives of these women: virginity and headscarf. These two notions were paramount in almost every interviewee’s identification with the image of the German-Turkish immigrant woman. Since the main research methodology was to track discursive constructions of immigrants about gender and social role, the structure as well as findings of this study mirrors the structure of the participants’ own narratives. The women’s narratives provided the conceptual framework for this study which differed substantially from some of the essentialist points of view.

Apart from homogenous attributes as TGD members and heterogeneous ones as immigrants, these Turkish Muslim women voiced a common opposition to the stereotyping of nationality, presenting Turks as “resistant” to integration. Participants of this research were also were adamant in their counter-position against the representation of the German-Turkish women by the German media. The main goal of this research is to allow these women to speak out as individuals who wish to construct their own identities and definitions of honor as opposed to being confined by stereotypes.

¹ Türk Alman Toplumunu

ÖZET

STEREOTİPLERLE VE STEREOTİPLERE KARŞI ÇALIŞMAK: BERLİN'DE BİR GÖÇMEN DERNEĞİNDEKİ TÜRK GÖÇMEN KADINLARIN NAMUS TEMSİLLERİ ÜZERİNE

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Anahtar sözcükler: Göçmen, Alman-Türk göçmen, toplumsal cinsiyet, namus, Berlin

Bu çalışma *Türkische Gemeinde in Deutschland* (Türk Alman Topluluğu'nun) aktif üyesi olan 12 kadınla yapılmış etnografik araştırmanın analizlerinden oluşmaktadır. Bu tez Berlin'de gerçekleştirilmiş 12 derinlemesine görüşmenin ürünü olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Çalışmanın amacı göçmen kadınların 3 temel tartışma konusu olan; 1) heterojen kimlikler arasındaki çeşitlilik 2) yabancıların uyumu 3) toplumsal cinsiyet eşitlik konularına odaklanan söylemlerini ortaya koymaktır. Çalışmada derinlemesine görüşmelerin tercih edilmesinin temel amacı göçmen kadınların hayat öykülerini takip edebilme imkanına sahip olmak ve “göçmen olmak” konusunda kendilerine ait söylemleri elde etmektir, aynı zamanda bu bağlamda “namus” konusunda öyküleri ile ve söylemleri arasında yer alan algıları elde etmektir. Çalışmada TGD'de çalışan kadınlarla görüşmenin tercih edilmesindeki ana amaç, katılımcılar için ortak bir işyerinin ve dernek homojenitesinin yanı sıra farklı yaşam öyküleri ile tanımlanan söylemsel yapıların ortaya çıkarılması idi.

Derinlemesine mülakatların sonucunda, kadınların söylemlerinde spontane olarak çalışmanın iki temel motifi ortaya çıktı; bekaret ve başörtüsü; Neredeyse her görüşmecinin Alman-Türk göçmen kadın imajı tanımlanmalarının bir yerinde bu iki motif yer alıyordu. Bu araştırmada yöntemsel olarak temel amaç göçmenlerin toplumsal cinsiyet ve toplumsal roller konusundaki söylemsel yapılarının izini sürmek olduğundan, araştırmanın yalnızca sonuçları değil yapısı da katılımcıların söylemlerinin yapısını yansıtmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın kavramsal çerçevesini oluşturan kadınların anlatıları çalışmayı alışılmış özel yaklaşımlardan ayırmaktadır.

Katılımcıların hepsinin TGD üyesi olması ortak paydalarıydı, göçmen olmaları ise onları heterojen kılıyordu. Türkleri uyum sağlamaya “dirençli” olarak tanımlayan milliyetçi tektipleştirmeye bu Müslüman Türk-Alman kadınların karşı çıkmaları söylemlerinin ortak bir paydası idi. Bu kadınların diğer bir ortak duruşu ise Alman medyasında sunulan Alman-Türk kadını imajına karşı geliştirmiş oldukları güçlü tepki idi.

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı tek tip tanımlara maruz kalan bu kadınların kimliklerini ve namus algılayışlarını dile getirmelerine ve kadınların birey olarak konuşmalarına izin vermek olmuştur.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iv
Özet	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	7
II.1. The History of Turkish Immigration in Germany.....	7
II.2. Kreuzberg: A Visible/ Invisible Social Space	11
II.3.Perspectives on Immigration Toward Germany.....	16
II.4. Assimilation Paradigm.....	18
II.5.A Brief Look over Honor Concept in the Literature	21
II.5.1. The Issue of Virginity	30
II.5.2. The Issue of Headscarf	34
Chapter 3: Fieldwork Experiences and Methodology	39
III.1.Fieldwork Experiences and Methodology	39
III.2.Participants	42
III.3.Methods of Data Collecting and Data Analysis	43
Chapter 4: Findings	47
IV.1.Background and Immigration History of Participants	47
IV.2.Being a Turkish Woman in Germany	49
IV.2.1.Portraits of Turkish Women in the German Media and in Society: Participants Reactions	55
IV.3.Honor Constructions	60
IV.3.1.Issues of Virginity and its Relation to Honor	61
IV.3.2.Distinctions Between Personal Constructs of Honor and Perceived Societal Constructs of Honor	66
IV.3.3.Conforming to the Representation of “Muslim Woman”; Issues of Headscarf and its Relation to Honor	72
Chapter 5: Conclusions	78
V.1.Discussing the Research	78
V.2.Conclusion	82
V.3.For Further Research	85
Bibliography	88
List of Appendices	91

Chapter 1: Introduction

The slogan of the website Ha-ber.com is “the world’s window into Berlin news”. It is arranged as a news portal where German-Turkish immigrants from different cities of Germany can share news in relation to their common status of “being an immigrant”. The language of the website is Turkish and the target group is the wide range of German-Turkish immigrants. The news content generally covers meetings, gatherings, new laws and regulations about immigrants’ status and also about everyday cultural, social, political activities of German-Turks.

In both German and Turkish media, Turkish women are traditionally portrayed as veiled, uneducated, victimized and oppressed. It is not uncommon to see them pictured walking a few steps behind their husbands with a few children in tow. The caption beneath it will usually allude to their plight as oppressed and in need of being saved. As will be discussed further on, these portrayals tend to focus strictly on the women’s victimization and invisibility in society.

In Haber.com, an article appeared under the heading, “Turkish Women Discussed in Germany”, a title which echoed once again, and the standard news reports. However, the actual content was marked by a stance against the created stereotypes of how Turkish women are seen in the German media. The writer of the headline, Lale Akgun, a German Social Democrat member of parliament, offered in a meeting organized by the “Turkish German Businessman Association”¹, a view that stood in stark contrast to the commonly held view, saying (Put quote that is below here)

The German media perverts facts. They have an image which they try to fit Turkish women into. This image is one-sided and needs to be changed. Of course there are honor crimes, forced marriages. However these are rare cases. In fact according to some statistics, the picture is quite different. Young Turkish women are exhibiting a new profile. They are better educated than men and they are successful.²

As can be seen, Lale Akgün shows that there is a reality of German-Turkish women which significantly differs from the image projected by the German media. She calls attention to the fact that not all German Turkish women can be contained within this one-dimensional, superficial, and stereotypical, image. Such a stigmatized image presents German-Turkish women only as the victims of honor crimes and forced marriages. However, Akgün argues that this representation of women rarely reflects actual realities among German-Turkish women. Moreover, she puts forth her own portrayal of what modern German-Turkish women are like. Based on statistics, she reveals that the new emerging images of modern German-Turkish women in Germany are of women who are more educated than men and are more successful than men. This news piece not only was presenting the counter argument but was also providing a living image of this argument in the person of Lale Akgün. Akgün was furthermore criticizing the stigmatization of German Turkish woman by the German media and society as traditional, and was providing a new typecast of modern German-Turkish woman, embodied by herself, as the “new emerging” image.

What is thought-provoking in her quote, besides her opposition against the corrupted portrayals, is the mode of her opposition. While, confronting stereotypes, she reproduces a

² *Alman medyası durumu çarpıtıyor. Onlarda bir resim var ve Türk kadınına buna uydurmaya çalışıyorlar. Bu fotoğraf tek taraflı ve değişmesi gerekiyor. Elbette namus cinayetleri, zorla evlilikler var. Ancak, bu nadir bir durum. Oysa istatistiklere baktığımızda, durum farklı. Genç Türk kadınları gittikçe yeni bir görüntü oluşturuyor. Erkeklerden daha iyi okuyor ve işlerinde hayli başarılılar*

new stigmatization over German-Turkish woman by utilizing men as her standard for comparison. In that sense her reproduction necessitates success and education as the defining qualities of German- Turkish woman.

In this project, I will focus on similar dual dynamics of simultaneous challenges to and reproduction of stereotypes of a group of German Turkish women who work in the German-Turkish association, TGD³. Throughout the dissertation, discursive constructions of these women about the honor concept will be explored by taking into account three major concepts; 1) gender equality 2) diversity presented by the immigrant group 3) the “problem” of integrating foreigners.

My ethnographic research was conducted using twelve German-Turkish women who work in TGD. It is interesting to note that the above mentioned quotation which is cited from a parliament member is parallel to some of my participants’ narratives on their discursive constructions about their immigrant status, their womanhood and their honor perceptions as German-Turkish immigrant woman. Although none of my participants is a parliament member or has a role as a spokesperson of German-Turkish women, it is interesting to note that a similar logic that underlies Akgün’s discourse is proposed by a number of my participants. They implied a similar discourse about German-Turkish women. Similar to Akgün’s narrative about successful German- Turkish woman and in opposition to the media generated portrayals, many of my participants also presented themselves as working, powerful, independent woman.

Some of the participants of this research were designated as the spokespersons of the association. As the dichotomy between self-representation and institutional representation can at times be confused, the women I spoke to seemed to rely less on the latter when articulating their life stories. Nonetheless, the association’s official stance might have had some influence

³ TGD is the association German-Turkish immigrants association where this research was conducted. A more detailed description of the association will be provided in the method section

on their statements It is difficult to determine the extent of this influence without further study; however, a review of the Report of the Executive Board⁴ of TGD displays that the association is active primarily in areas of immigration policies, regulations on citizenship, language issues etc.⁵ Hence, the views of the participants in this research may have been influenced by the institutional discourse on these types of topics. I believe that in terms of their narratives on their womanhood and honor, my participants were positioning themselves against what they oppose and were trying to redefine the conventional image of German-Turkish women by creating a new model taken from their own perspectives. . However, their views are not able to be adequately considered without placing them in context. Their institutional stance as well as their being “Berliners” and members of the institution were noticeable and significant. The fact that TGD has mostly a local stand and is mostly active in local political issues may have also been reflected in the discourses of my participants.

For the present study, I conducted a two-week preliminary investigation including contacts with a number of associations and then I conducted twenty days of field work. The second part of my field work was conducted at TGD which is one of the biggest German-Turkish immigrant associations. TGD has a long history in Germany as an immigrant association and it includes more than twenty sub-associations in its structure. What differentiates TGD from other associations – as underlined by my participants- is the particular attention they give to embracing the role of women within its organization. The importance they attributed to women is the main reason that I recruited my participants from this association

I interviewed twelve women who are both members and also employees of TGD. By following their life narratives; I observed their discursive constructions about their immigrant status, about their belonging, and about their womanhood. Through these essential

⁴ *Yönetim Kurulunun 2006-2008 Dönemi Çalışma Raporu*

⁵ See Appendix for examples.

perspectives, I aimed to question the self positioning of German-Turkish women in terms of their point of view about gender equality, diversity and integration of foreigners. The main questions that I wished to follow were: How do they define themselves as immigrants and as women? How do these two positions influence their life experiences? And finally, how do perceptions and definitions of honor appear in their narratives?

This thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents a review of the literature on immigration, and an overview of the honor issue. The participants in the research projected a multilayered diversity amongst themselves, a multilayered structure that was also evident in the type of research questions I used. . Consequently, the literature review section also has a layered structure. This is achieved through an overview of the immigration literature that is limited to the specific case of Turkish Immigration in Germany. Under this title, the visibility and the invisibility of Kreuzberg as a social space is discussed and then through this urban space, the perspectives on immigration to Germany is presented where female, transnational aspects of Turkish immigration are taken under consideration. Following this brief overview, considerations of different aspects of Turkish immigration to Germany and the applicability of the assimilation paradigm is debated in the case of Germany. In this section, the overview on studies about stigmatization of German-Turkish immigrants is addressed wherein, the monolithic, essentialist studies are challenged and a more critical stance towards this paradigm is presented.

In the second part of the literature review chapter, I discuss in more detail the honor concept, given the fact that the notion of honor is frequently described in reference to gender, women's chastity and purity. Another purpose of this research was to step away from this typical honor-virginity-chastity relationship. My aim was to discover how perceptions of honor shift while new identities and belongingness are constructed from the framework of

German-Turkish immigrant woman. In this part, two other concepts frequently discussed in relation to honor: the issue of virginity and headscarf are examined.

In chapter three, the fieldwork experiences and the methodology are presented. In this section the backgrounds of participants and the properties of the association are introduced. Both the qualifications and limitations of the field experience are discussed and their negative and positive contributions are underlined in terms of the findings and the conclusions.

In chapter four, the narratives of the participants are reviewed and significant quotations are presented within the framework of three dimensions. The first dimension is the relation of honor with the issues of virginity. The second dimension highlights distinctions between personal and societal constructs represented in terms of honor. Finally, the last dimension underlines the representation of Muslim woman as associated with headscarf, in relation with honor.

In the last chapter, the arguments discussed in the findings section are formulized in light of the conceptual framework overviewed in the literature section. Also in this chapter, the limitations of the research and the possible future direction of research are discussed.

I believe, along with my participants, that I formed a “counter-position” with my thesis. I believe that my findings and my conclusions present a “counter-position” to created stereotypes, essentialist approaches and simplistic interpretations regarding German-Turkish women’s discursive constructions. I hope that I will be able to accurately reflect the fact that these twelve women not only presented a counter-position but also reproduced new typecasts and formulations based on their experiences.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

II. 1. The History of Turkish Immigration in Germany:

After World-War II, Germany needed surplus labor forces to reach a better financial level because of the economic crash. Some two decades later, in 1963, the import of foreign labor was officially institutionalized in Germany under the name of “guest worker” program. Workers from Turkey, Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Sri Lanka, Italy and Spain migrated to Germany. This stay was initially planned to be temporary. At that time period, there was a noteworthy migration of workers of Turkish background to Germany. A 2000-01 statistic regarding foreigners in Germany indicates that immigrants of Turkish origin constitute the largest group (nearly one third), followed by 1.0 million (ex) Yugoslavs...” (Münz & Ulrich, 2003:35).

The first wave of immigrants that moved to Germany as guest workers had not initially considered staying for that long in the host country. However, since their work became more valuable in time to the Germans and since they began to earn more than they would have earned in their homeland, their stay became as much a benefit for themselves as it had been for German nation. Following the arrival of their families, their history began to be written (Koçtürk, 1992). So with the arrival of families, a second generation born in Germany or had arrived as children began to be raised. As Soysal (2009) indicates, in the first stages of the history of immigration the proportion of the number of women in comparison with the number of the immigrant men were low. However with time, with the arrival of the ones left-behind at the home country and with the new-born immigrant’s children, the number of immigrant women increased dramatically. However, Soysal (2009) adds that women still remained invisible and their participation in the migratory movement was not considered. Given this invisibility of women in the lengthy history of immigration from Turkey to Germany, one aim of this project is to render a group of women visible by narrating their

discursive constructions within three major contexts; 1) diversity in terms of heterogeneous identities, 2) integration of foreigners 3) Gender equality. I will be exploring their self-positioning within each of these contexts focusing in particular on their articulations of the concept of honor.

To realize the above mentioned goal in this research, the main concern was to decide to whom to talk. The three above cited contexts, especially issues of integration of foreigners and the diversity issues forced me to think about a categorization of women by their generationality. However, due to their lengthy migration history, different generations co-exist among immigrants. Indeed, “generationality” is an ambiguous term in the debates on immigration. Although much of the literature takes for granted the position that German-Turkish immigrants can be positioned in terms of generationality as first, second, third immigration generations, more critical scholars assert that this definitional approach to generations is problematic and too general (Soysal, 2001; Burul, 2003; Ewing, 2006; Mandel, 2008).

To understand the problematic aspect of the generation concept, an overview of the sociological examination of this concept might be beneficial. In his study on “Generation as a sociological problem” (Kertzer, 1983). Kertzer explores in depth the transformation and the different usage of the term “generation” in the history of sociology and points to a number of problems in utilizing the concept. For example, if the immigration period is not strictly limited, immigrants who arrive during different decades are hard to categorize in terms of generations. As can be observed in Kertzer’s arguments, the issue of generation is especially problematic for immigration research. So it is important to note here that the concept of generation will not be a fundamental premise in either my theoretical frame or my

methodology. In this research, immigrants will be positioned according to their time of arrival.

In the case of migration to Germany, it can be observed that arrival time and generation do not necessarily match (Mandel, 2008; Soysal, 2003). Both the children of the arrivals born in the host country and workers arriving in the second wave of immigration are grouped under the same “category” i.e. “second generation”. In terms of defining the third generation, the situation becomes even more complicated. Another important issue that needs to be clarified before the expanded literature review is the depiction of “*Gastarbeiter*”. This term which is specific to immigrants in Germany, as indicated by Soysal (2003) was initially a descriptive term. *Gastarbeiter*⁶ initially depicted the temporariness of their status: “migrants and Turks in particular, appear as perpetual guest worker, arrested in a state of cultural and social liminality”. (Soysal, 2003:493). Although, the second mass migration during the 70’s was generated through political asylum seeking as well as economic reasons, they were still labeled as *gastarbeiters*.

With the changing perspectives both in social science and politics in terms of immigration policies and new regulations on citizenship, the focus moved away from the “guest” part of the descriptor to the defining properties of the immigrant. That is, they were frequently described or discussed with reference to their ethnicity, nationality, religion, etc. Still, as noted by Soysal (2003), their identities were defined in contrast to a putative Germaneness, and the focus was on the migrants’ otherness and differences. In my field study even though I was not particularly pursuing the immigrants’ positioning as “other”; I could definitely say that both my participants and TGD’s discourses were about or on the otherness of German Turks, the diversity of heterogeneous identities and the integration of foreigners

⁶ Guest Worker

into the host country. Contradictory viewpoints in the literature emerge precisely at this point when the discrimination between the two identifications (Turkishness and Germanness) is debated. A majority of scholars object to this terminology, indicating that labels such as Turkishness and Germanness inevitably entail essentialism, limiting the descriptions of immigrants to the excluded, victimized Turks against the powerful Germans. I suggest that this tension between the two proponents of this debate can lead to new formulations and conceptualizations (Soysal, 2001; Ewing, 2008; Kaya, 2000; Mandel, 2008).

Burul (2003) attempts to deal with this issue by creating a “third space” and developing new definitions and identities within this new space. Burul’s conceptualization is not shared by either the participants of this research or by other scholars Çağlar (2004) and Soysal (2004) examining immigrant experiences from different aspects, both suggest that the third space is insufficient and superficial as an explanatory concept. For instance, Çağlar (2004) by reviewing the German-Turkish media in Berlin points out the un-bounded quality of the constructions of the immigrants. Similarly but from a different perspective, Soysal, through narration of migrant youth experiences, emphasizes the multi-referential and connected aspects of immigrant experiences. Thus Soysal’s (2004) conceptualization points out the limitation of creating bounded space and labeling these bounded concepts as in-betweenness or hybridity. The present study hopes to go beyond these concepts; that is the narratives will not be limited to bounded concepts but will be allowed to reflect their multi-referential reality (Soysal, 2004). They were situating themselves as either close to Germanness or Turkishness depending on the subject they were talking about. Their ambiguous positionality is not resolved by situating themselves in a third space, but rather they position themselves differentially, based on the current situation; that is, they were reflecting multi-referential positionalities.

“The recent growth in Germany’s Turkish migrant population is more the consequence of limited refugee and illegal migration family reunification and natural growth of birth” (Çağlar, 2006:2). Although the illegality aspect limits the precision of these figures it is estimated that the number of foreigners in Germany has remained stable around 7, 3 million (SOPEMI, 2004; cited in Soysal 2006). It is this population that is the major focus of the present project. In this study Turkish German immigrants will be researched but not with the aim of differentiating them from Germans or defining their plight because of their Turkishness. The aim will be to look at the unique perspective offered by German Turkish women living in Berlin on honor perceptions. That is, as previously indicated, the framework of this study will neither be the bounded concept of Turkish identification nor their so-called exclusion but the women’s own created discursive constructs.

Since this study was conducted with German- Turkish Muslim women; it brings into account religion, orientalism, assimilation paradigm and gender as givens. At this point I think a clarification is needed; in the present study, the selection of German-Turkish immigrant women as subjects was an attempt to highlight the integration of the foreigner issue, in addition to gender issues. Last but not the least; conducting this work in Berlin aims to reflect the multidimensional aspect of Berlin, that is to point out to the city labeled as a “world city” with diversity So the three discourses that need to be kept in mind throughout this section and throughout the whole study are these three points of gender, integration and diversity.

II.2. Kreuzberg: A Visible/Invisible Social Space:

The locality “Kreuzberg” is significant in this project as well as the city Berlin. In many of my interviews, the significance of both Kreuzberg and Berlin is articulated by my

participants. Their interpretations and the importance of belonging to Berlin and to Kreuzberg will be cited in the next section.

Besides the significance of Berlin for my participants, its meaning for the Association is another point that merits attention. Since the women I talked with are members of an association, the locality of the association both within the urban space context, i.e. in Berlin and also within the larger context, i.e. its locality in Germany becomes important. Migrant associations situated in bigger cities, where the highest number of immigrants live; are subject to different policies of funding etc from the host state and render them more organizational and beneficial. As Soysal (1994) indicates; “In localities like Berlin and Hamburg, migrants’ cultural, youth and women’s organizations do receive substantial support”(Soysal, 1994:108). Since my ethnography was conducted through an association in Berlin, the policies regarding these associations and the substantial support received were reflected in my study.

Not only is Berlin significant for my participants and the association but Kreuzberg is also important. In addition to Kreuzberg’s contribution to the everyday lives of my participants as a locality where they spend their free time; Kreuzberg is also the arena where the association executes its activities.

There is a new Berlin wall rising in the city of Berlin. To cross this wall you have to go to the city’s central and northern districts- to Kreuzberg, Neukölln and Wedding- and you will find yourself in a world unknown to the majority of Berliners (Stehle, 2005:58)

As the quotation above refers, Kreuzberg is one of the three main districts that German-Turks reside in. Besides Kreuzberg; Neukölln, Wedding and also Tiergarten are the three other localities that have the highest percentage of Turkish residents. In Kreuzberg the percentage of German-Turkish residents is 19.3, in Neukölln the percentage is lower (13.7) but still is consequential compared to other localities, in Tiergarten the percentage is 10.2

(Mandel, 1996). Kreuzberg becomes distinct among these localities, first because of its high German-Turkish population and second, the urban transformation that occurred after the fall of the wall contributes to the significance of Kreuzberg; the transformation of the invisible Kreuzberg toward the visible.

The statistics above focus on the “the unknown quality” of Kreuzberg. Other scholars (Kaya, 2000; Jonker, 2006) have underscored the otherness and the Turkishness of Kreuzberg. This otherness of Kreuzberg was also reflected in the social politics of 1975 to 1990 through government attempts to regulate and limit the number of the Turkish immigrants residing in Kreuzberg and in the other three districts (Mandel; 2008). Mandel notes that Turkish passports were stamped at this time to forbid German-Turkish immigrants from living in these districts. She refers to this practice and the general social political approach in order to introduce a parallel between Jews and German-Turks in terms of the similarities of the historical position of Jews and German-Turks. She states that “A similar [to Jews] ambivalence in German discourse about Turks can be identified. Turks are seen simultaneously as wrongful insiders and unintegratable outsiders” (Mandel, 2008:131). It is important to note here that Mandel underlines in her study that this attempt to compare the two groups is in a way essentialist, since this attempt defines homogenous groups such as “Jews” and “Turks. However, she concludes that the similarity is striking nonetheless and claims that “Turkish migration itself challenges Germany and Germans to confront taboos surrounding the Holocaust” (Mandel, 2008:140). In this study I do not precisely consider Turkish immigrants similar to “Jews” as Mandel (2008) points out. Although this type of an analysis may be considered as an overgeneralization and an essentialist view in itself, both group’s representation especially in the media as an homogenous group brings out an unavoidable similarity. This type of essentialist perspective will not be espoused since this approach assumes the cohesiveness of

German-Turkish immigrants. This is a homogenizing approach, whereas in other studies, Kreuzberg is not perceived as such; on the contrary it is perceived as an urban space where new identities with their own rules and dynamics are created. With the obvious increase in the number of immigrants in the final years of the 80's and with the fall of the Wall a lot has changed in the political, social and also financial realm. Significantly Kreuzberg, where German-Turks congregated when they first arrived, changed as a city. "In the new spatial and narrative configuration of the city, Kreuzberg was no longer a desolate margin next to the Wall- a '*Gastarbaiter*' quarter, where the (Western) City literary met its borders" (Soysal, 2001:67). A new aspect of Kreuzberg was apparent in terms of urban spatiality and this change could be considered as significant in the lives of German-Turks since a large majority of German-Turks were now living in that urban space.

The transformation of Berlin with the fall of the Wall has also affected Kreuzberg. With the Wall gone, this space is no longer on the "edge" but at the "center". This re-ordering of spatiality has contributed to a different type of integration. For example, when one takes a walk in Kreuzberg today, one observes 'head shops' or art cafes run by Germans right next to *döner* houses and Turkish book and newspaper vendors. This new spatiality attracts some Germans as well as German-Turks. The area however, is still a locality that you enter into under a big sign in Turkish reading "*Kreuzberg Meydanı*"⁷. Kreuzberg's reputation as a Turkish Ghetto has earned it the nickname, "Little Istanbul," and is serviced by a subway train ironically called the Orient Express" (Mandel, 1989:27). Similar to Mandel, many scholars also perceive Kreuzberg as a Turkish ghetto, where marginalized, non-integrated Turks live (Kaya, 2000; Schiffauer, 2004; Önder, 1996). It is portrayed by some scholars as a locality where Turks interact with each other and where Germans never stop by. At this point it is beneficial to note that Germans cannot be regarded as one single whole, just as it is erroneous

⁷ Kreuzberg plaza.

to define Turks as a homogenous whole. Kreuzberg is still very foreign to some Germans, but at the same time, it is becoming a stopping point for some Germans. It is important to note here that, during this research a parallel understanding of Kreuzberg among the German-Turks also appeared: for some of my participants, Kreuzberg was their birth place and was significantly fundamental to their identities; however, for others it was not perceived as an urban space that was different from any other locality in Berlin.

Not all scholars portray Kreuzberg as the Turkish ghetto, however. For Soysal (2001), Kreuzberg is not a typical ghetto, but rather, it is the symbol of “hip”. Kreuzberg is not a place that is excluded from the mainstream. On the contrary “Kreuzberg has become the ceremonial ghetto for the metropolis” (Soysal, 2001:67). Soysal’s conceptualization of Kreuzberg is in contradiction the more essentialist presentation of Kreuzberg by Mandel (1996) in her initial study. Mandel’s earlier writings (1996) depict Kreuzberg as “Little İstanbul” and she utilizes the concept of “*Gurbet*”— in expounding her descriptions of immigrants. The concept of diaspora is frequently used as an explanatory agent-- and the discussion of “Return myth” where the immigrant’s primary aim is to return to the homeland, characterizes this typical essentialist view. However, other scholars challenged both the return myth (Ewing, 2006) and the diaspora explanation (Soysal, 2001). In her study Ewing (2006) highlights that the so-called return myth is just that, a myth. Her ethnography revealed that very few endorsed this idea of returning to the “homeland”. Furthermore, Soysal (2004) also underlines that diaspora is not a valid explanation in terms of exploring immigrant realities. In the present study the conceptualization proposed by the latter scholars will be embraced. Kreuzberg rather than being viewed as a diasporic locality will instead be viewed as a “ceremonial ghetto for metropolis” (Soysal, 2001:67).

Based on this brief history of immigration to Berlin and also on reviews of the urban transformations happening in the post-socialist era, it becomes possible to conceive of Berlin in all its hybrid, heterogeneous aspects and to consider Berlin as a “world city” (Soysal, 2001). It is important to underline that in this research, the city of Berlin and its role in this lengthy history of migrants will be taken into account; since Berlin has always played a significant role in the constructions of immigrants; as evidenced by their tendency in some context to prefer to identify themselves as Berliners; instead of as Turks, Germans, or *auslanders*⁸ (Schiffauer, 2004). The key point that needs to be clarified is that in this study these “Berliners” depictions of immigrant women are important. They identify themselves often as Berliners and they are members of an association situated in Berlin and represent mostly the factual “problems” of Berliners.

II.3. Perspectives on immigration to Germany

This research project explores the constructions and definitions of honor among a group of German-Turkish women who are members of the TGD association. Therefore it is more pertinent to focus specifically on the intersections of gender and immigration research. However, prior to this mapping out of the feminization of immigration literature, I will try to position my review at the intersection of gender and immigration in the context of this research. .

Studies about the female immigration to Europe significantly from third world countries are a highly popular area of study (Morokvasic, 1984; Brouwer& Priester, 1983; Jonung, 1982). If we narrow down the frame and focus on the case of female immigration to Germany, it is seen that there tends to be many scholars who work specifically on immigration to Germany (Soysal, 2001, 2003, 2004; Kaya, 2000; Çağlar, 2004, 2006; Ewing

⁸ Foreigners

2008; Burul, 2003). These scholars particularly focus on everyday experiences of immigrants and explore their constructs about how they define and perceive their existence in the host country. The ethnographic part of this study demonstrates that a single, coherent perspective does not exist among German-Turkish migrants; in terms of defining their discursive constructions about issues such as gender equality, diversity and integration they had divergent point of views.

In addition to the perspective of scholars on immigration, there is also a tendency to investigate the German-Turkish migration experience from a transnational perspective (Jurgen, 2001). For Schiller (1995); “Transnational migration is the process by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Schiller, Basch, Blanc; 1995). However, Jurgen makes the assertion that in the case of immigration to Germany, the concept of transnational migrant does not really fit, since there is no border-crossing that goes on back and forth (Jurgen, 2001). However, as Çağlar and Soysal explore, from the early 2000’s, German-Turkish immigrants’ movements, social, political, religious border-crossing activities, enabled the consideration of the Germany case as the focus of the transnational migration studies (Çağlar&Soysal, 2003). In opposition to Jurgen’s perspective, Mandel’s concern over German-Turkish immigrants’ border-crossing movement could also be taken into account. In her study Mandel investigates the transnational existence of German-Turkish immigrants that focus on back and forth trips between the host county and the homeland. The lengthy immigration experience to Germany and the specific quality of the immigration process and its results as discussed earlier in terms of forging new identities, which is in opposition to Jurgen’s claim, is a transnational process. However, while I disagree with Jurgen’s dismissal about lack of transnationalism, the present study does not focus on the transnational aspects of the experiences of the immigrant group in question. As Soysal (2008) indicates in his study,

“transnational migration” is a new label that emerged while defining the migratory movement. However since the patterns of the transnationalism such as capital, information and goods will not be cited and highlighted in this study; the transnational perspective will not be the key determinant of the present study. But this fact is not due to an absence of transnationalism in the story of migration between Germany and Turkey as Jurgen (2001) mentioned; but it is due to the fact that more individual and less transnational narratives occurred during the field work.

It is possible to talk about some scholars who prefer to focus on the female aspect of Turkish migration to Germany (Koçtürk, 1992; Mandel, 1989; Abadan-Unat, 1982; Ewing, 2008). My study can be placed among these viewpoints, since it focuses on women’s perceptions and definitions of honor. However, since the women in this study construct their honor concept within their experiences as German Turkish women, the general immigration focus in the case of Germany is also important. So it is beneficial to take into consideration both the particular female focus and the general focus in the case of Germany.

II.4. Assimilation Paradigm

Wimmer and Schiller (2002) discuss the assimilation discourse of immigration within the theory of nation building. They argue that historically immigrants were seen as special objects in the nation building project. They discuss how this nationalist paradigm affected social sciences. For example, the description of immigrants as “absorbed into the national body through a politics of forced assimilation and benevolent integration” (Wimmer & Schiller, 2002: 309). Hence they emphasize that not only this nationalistic methodology looked at immigrants who “remain loyal to another state as long as they are not absorbed into the national body through assimilation and naturalization” but also note that the post-socialist, post globalization framework also reflected this “nation” perspective by focusing on

“diasporas” and “transnational communities”. This frame does not differ that much from essentialism. What is essential for Wimmer and Schiller is to follow the process which contributes to individuals out of the national discourses. Wimmer and Schiller (2002) argue that unlike the claims of scholars such as Mandel, cosmopolitanism does not truly reflect a post-nationalist state. They feel that this approach to cosmopolitanism highly underestimates the effects of nationalism which are still very much apparent in post-globalization, cosmopolitan, transnational processes. Stolcke (1995) also supports this view that the effects of nationalism or even racism continues within the disguise of identifying cultural identities. This type of approach provides a basis for identifying “the culturally different, non integrating other” that can easily be scapegoated instead of analyzing true social change. For example; this type of national bounded approach is observed in developing a discourse over the assimilation of immigrants as in the case of Germany. There tends to be a perception of the dichotomy of Germaneness and Turkishness in the context of immigration toward Germany. These two identifications as Turkish and as German are perceived in the literature as if they are incommensurable and essentially distinct (Erel, 2003). Instead of this homogenizing approach, this study will focus on the cosmopolitan, diversely connected identifications of the women interviewed rather than focusing on the positionality of a specific group.

For the case of Germany, while considering discourses over assimilation, another existing tension within the literature becomes apparent. On the one hand, studies which conduct *monolithic* assumptions on immigrants portray immigrants as a single entity and replicate stereotypes (see for example Mandel, 1996; Erel, 2003). In these kinds of studies, immigrant stereotypes -- German –Turkish immigrants in this case -- are linked precisely with their non-integration and their integration. Obviously studies, those which are closer to essentialist approaches, assume immigrants to be a monolithic group, and argue that German-

Turks are not integrated to German society and moreover are represented as excluded and victimized Muslims in the host country. The reproduction of stereotypes becomes inevitable. “Stereotypes are one of the currencies of social life. They represent long-established prejudices and exclusions, and -like nationalist ideology itself - they use the terms of social life to exclude others on cultural grounds” (Herzfeld, 1993:72). Since German-Turks constitute a minority in Germany, their nationalities and their religious identities are their most significant qualification that differentiates them from native Germans. So created stereotypes and prejudices derive primarily from these possible nationalist ideologies. In the literature, the Turkishness of German-Turks i.e. their national identity is perceived by some scholars as a homogenous descriptor of all German-Turkish immigrants, who resist integration and confine themselves to the socially and culturally traditional sphere. This homogenous perspective could be read parallel to Wimmer and Schiller’s theorization of assimilation. For the above mentioned scholars (Mandel 1998, 1996; Erel, 2003) it is seen that assimilation and naturalization is normal and they could live within the borders of the nation state with their national identities by adopting these stereotypes and by fitting into the nation state as it is delimited by the host nation.

In his book “Transnational Connections” Hannerz (1996) considers “the nature of the local under conditions of the globalization” (Hannerz, 1996:22). Within this framework, Hannerz seeks to understand the local without staying in the limits of national boundaries. On the contrary, he explores it through a far broader concept: globalization. In terms of the case of Germany, the challenging, more recent studies move away from the assimilation narratives and talk about transnational connections (Soysal, 1996), and the cosmopolitan ways of social life (Çağlar, 2004) of German-Turks and challenge the nation-state building project as well as emphasize their explorations that go “beyond territorial boundaries of nations and cultures”

(Soysal, 1996:63). These scholars explore the otherness and differences of immigrants, while investigating the other side of the assimilation paradigm (Soysal, 1996; Çağlar, 1997). These scholars tend to present the integration of immigrants, in specific cultural/social areas where migrants publicly express themselves visibly. Studies concentrating on visible productions of immigrants such as the youth projects, rap songs (Soysal, 2004) or immigrant radio culture (Çağlar, 2005) are examples of such. They argue that the non-integration could not be generalized to all migrants and could not be deduced from every area of all immigrants' lives.

Recent studies (Çağlar, 1997; Soysal, 2001, 2003, 2008, 2009; Ewing, 2008) have challenged stereotyped depictions of German-Turks. There is an obvious tension between the essentialist studies that homogenize immigrants as a whole (Mandel, 1989, 1996) and the challenges to these unilateral approaches. For the later group of scholars, considering German-Turks as a unified assemblage, as a homogenous group, is an error that needs to be avoided. For these scholars, to take into account only a monolithic understanding of migrants might jeopardize the possibility of challenging the created boundaries among Turkishness and Germaneness. The present study will explore the multi-dimensionality of the German Turkish identities rather than unidimensional differences between Germans and Turks.

II. 5. A brief overview of honor concept in the literature

Earlier studies and conceptualizations in the literature on “honor and shame code” focused primarily on the linkage of sexuality and men’s honor in the Mediterranean and the Middle East (Parla, 2004). Indeed, this type of conceptualization is not limited to earlier views but finds reflection in more recent writings as well, such as, Welchman and Hossain’s (2005) definition of honor being almost exclusively related to women’s sexuality. They define violations of family honor as “adultery, premarital relationships (which may or may not include sexual relations), rape and falling in love with an “inappropriate” person.” (Welchman

&Hossain, 2005:5). As Welchman and Hossain indicate honor is defined in relation to women's sexual and familial roles. Thus a woman's 'inappropriate' attitudes are linked to family honor, which is defined by her significant other, husband, father or brother.

In a review of earlier studies (Goddard, Llobera& Shore, 1994), the otherness of Mediterranean culture was highlighted in relation to honor and shame duality. Field studies and articles about Mediterranean culture were fashionable in the second half of the 20th century and were structured in relation to the notions of "shame" and "honor". Similar to the definition provided by Welchman and Hossain (2005), other scholars such as Peristiany (cited in Goddard, Llobera& Shore, 1994) refer to the assumption of male domination over women's honor and shame, emphasizing the assumption of the honor concept as homogenous within a "residual category" and focusing on "the male honor" in particular.

In opposition, some scholars consider the honor concept as shaped by social context; for instance Herzfeld (1980) in his study challenged this concept of honor by arguing that such a term with its moral valuation needs to be understood within its specific linguistic and social context (Herzfeld, 1980). In terms of this research project, Herzfeld's framework applies here since immigrants are situated in a heterogeneous social context. In the present study which investigates the perceptions and definitions of honor of a group of German-Turkish women, it is important to take into account the social productions that are reproduced from "being immigrant". Even though immigrants will not be categorized as a coherent, homogenous cultural group, they will be explored as a group who share a primary experience: that of "being an immigrant" in a particular urban space marked by the heterogeneous, cosmopolitan aspect of Berlin. For example, some writers introduce the idea that Berlin and especially Kreuzberg has a definitive and distinctive role in immigrant identities (Kaya, 2000; Mandel, 2008). Since Berlin's many distinctive qualities such as its history of division, and its

attraction for immigrants from heterogeneous backgrounds has been an area of interest for different scholars this present study will investigate the contribution of the locality on perceptions of honor of participants, although this urban based focus is not the primary goal.

The above mentioned point of views expressed by Welchman and Hossain (2005) are still valid for the traditional discourses which introduce the patriarchal status of men in the familial relations. Although the importance of these factors cannot be disclaimed, the importance given to sexuality in constructions of honor at times obscures the contribution of other factors (Parla, 2004). This point is well exemplified by the everyday usage of the Turkish word honor which clearly has two very different connotations: one related to sexuality as suggested by Welchman and Hossain (2005); the other to honesty vis a vis ethics. Welchman and Hossain's (2005) perspective is one way of defining honor; however, more recent studies have challenged this perception and definition of honor. More recent approaches challenge this unidimensional and homogenous understanding of the honor-shame complexity. Within these studies, when understanding honor, socio-political and institutional contexts become significant variables. Variants such as state regulations, (Parla 2001) laws (Koğacıoğlu, 2004); customs and patriarchal discourses over tradition have been considered and have been utilized to challenge the classic picture on honor. In her study on traditional discourses and naturalization of authority⁹, Koğacıoğlu underlines that her challenge in discussing honor crimes is to approach critically the inclination of differentiating "traditions" and "customs" from what gets framed as tradition. (2008) Koğacıoğlu develops her discussion through discourses over the seeming stability of tradition;

⁹ All translations are the work of the author of this thesis.

¹⁰ *Gelenek Söylemleri ve İktidarın Doğallaşması*.

Just as years go on, so do centuries... , States collapse, others are established yet, tradition is not affected. People migrate- or are forced to migrate, they are scattered, and different ethnic groups, religious communities, armies and, paramilitary powers clash with each other. Modes of productions change and so do modes of commerce, and the groups who produce and trade, however tradition stays intact.¹¹(Koğacioğlu, 2008:184)

The quotation presented above highlights that tradition is represented as resistant to all societal, political and economical changes. It is perceived and accepted as such. It is assumed that honor as a concept and honor crimes in connection to this concept is a production of this stable norm. As Koğacioğlu indicates, the concept of honor which is a controlling, disciplining norm, needs to be reformulated every day; however, in the traditional discourses, due to the representation of the traditional, or what Koğacioğlu terms the “tradition effect,” the ancient continuity of meanings and practices, norms such as honor are separated from the power relations and “transformations” that in fact produce and reproduce honor norms (Koğacioğlu, 2008). Koğacioğlu exemplifies and discusses the production and reproduction of such honor norms through an exploration of the legal system. In the present study the same challenge against the stability of tradition will be taken into consideration. German Turkish women’s perceptions and definitions about honor will be discussed within the theoretical framework of the dichotomy between the traditional and the modern. It is believed that the same type of reformulation of the concept of honor may be necessary in this context.

There are certainly other feminist scholars (Arat, 1996; Kandiyoti 1987; Parla, 2001) who have taken a critical approach to the dichotomy between modern and traditional and have

¹¹ *Öyle ki seneler hatta yüzyıllar geçiyor, arada devletler yıkılıyor, devletler kuruluyor ve gelenek etkilenmiyor. İnsanlar göç, ediyor, ettiriliyor, dağılıyor; değişik etnik gruplarla dinsel cemaatler, ordu ve paramiliter güçler birbiri ile çatışıyorlar. Üretim biçimleri, ticaret şekilleri, üretilen ve değişen mallar, üretim ve ticareti yapan gruplar değişiyor; ama gelenekler değişmiyor.*

explored in depth this dichotomy. These scholars have essentially brought up a division between the public and private sphere that exists in the state and transposed the distinction of traditional and modern in the state regulation system where women are positioned in the private sphere with limited rights. However, it is important to underline the role of the state here. According to Parla (2001), in Turkey, one has to pay equal attention not only to the history of women's sexuality regulated by kinship networks, but also to the history of the state regulating female sexuality based on the definition of women as chaste, pure, asexual protectors of the family in the project of becoming a republic (Parla, 2001). For a woman's honor and shame, her private life is not only in her husband/father/brother's custody but also regulated through the image of the new Republican woman who is equal only when chaste and asexual. These scholars expose how the state too has come to play a significant role in defining and delimiting proper norms of sexuality for women. In doing so, Parla (2001) urges a rethinking of the traditional/modern dichotomy, and, of the division between the public/private spheres.

These scholars who embraced a critical rethinking of the Turkish modernization process have emphasized an avoidance of "reductionist definition of both modernity and modernism" (Bozdoğan & Kasaba, 1997). Thus, Kandiyoti (1997) focusing on the role of familial, sexual and gendered discourses about Turkish modernity investigates the how and the why of the importance of these identities in terms of modernity discourses (Kandiyoti, 1997). In her study "Gendering modernity" Kandiyoti (1997) expresses that in Turkey, the private emerged as a new concept while modernization discourses arose. This construction took place within the modernist project that changed identities for both men and women: "Both individual expressions of masculinity and femininity and different norms and styles of cross-gender interaction gained new meanings in a field powerfully defined by new

parameters” (Kandiyoti, 1997). Thus, the discourses which challenge the passage from tradition to modern under the name of the “modernity project” have influenced the actors of this change; men and women, and clearly affected the social life, urban space, living spheres, life styles etc. Within this modernity project the social position of women became crucial. The gendered role and expression of womanhood have an important distinction in terms of definitions of modernity. This clear polarization of tradition and modernity with its reflection on the gendered roles of women may also be the model while looking at immigration, since the immigration process is assumed to be from “east” to “west” or from “tradition” to “modern”.. Within the framework of this study the process of modernization that Kandiyoti (1997) and other scholars explore in terms of the gendered aspect and expression of the Turkish state is important in understanding the dichotomy of traditional and modern; but I believe that it will be more important to focus on the narratives of my subjects and determine whether this issue of modernization is important for their special circumstances.¹² In the case of Germany, the dichotomy of the traditional and modern becomes certainly important in the context of immigration. Ewing (2006) indicates the similar stigmatizing approach over the traditionality of German-Turks. She discusses some reflections of stereotyped approaches in studies of Turkish immigrant communities. Typically, such studies focused on Islam and standardized Muslims i.e. Turks with traditional values. However, the definition of modern and traditional metamorphosed in a sense into a more “orientalist” aspect when the subject of study took a more transnational aspect. The distinction of modern vs. traditional was transformed into a distinction between the “West” and the “East”. From this point of view, Germany is considered modern, Turkey, traditional (Ewing, 2008). Thus, for the Turkish man to be categorized as modern, German discourse expects improvements in his cultural and

¹² I think in another project, exploring narratives of woman about both the honor issue and the headscarft issue around this Turkish modernization process; and to focus on the “Kemalist” and in relation to it “asexual” aspect would be interesting.

linguistic patterns. The German-Turk who comes from a rural background does not fit these categories, and is thus perceived as traditional and is in a sense not welcomed. Their non-integration, represented within the German discourses, are a result of the same dichotomy of traditionality and modernity. “The perceived lack of modernity associated with a Turkish village background makes their integration problematic” (Ewing, 2008: 200). Honor and the social production of the honor concept are also seen as important tests of modernity or traditionality. Ewing in her treatment of tradition discusses traditional men with its equally conventional discourse: honor.

Ewing’s discussion about honor within the framework of traditionality and modernity starts with a discussion of the external perceptions of traditional and modern in terms of immigrant status. “The most blatantly stereotypical formulations map the dichotomy of modernity and tradition onto German and Turkey so that Germany is understood as modern and Turkey as traditional” (Ewing, 2008: 28). Ewing investigates the contributions of Turkish nationalist and feminist discourses on the German discourses that stereotype the Turkish man as traditional and wherein the Turkish man is positioned as the oppressor. In discussions of honor, the role of traditional Turkish man as oppressor is frequently cited in Ewing’s writings. She argues that the image of the German-Turkish woman is seen as the product of the tradition of Turkishness which in turn defines honor as a concept specific to Turks and Muslims. Within the discussion of honor, Ewing criticizes the point of views that focus on multiculturalism or hybridity. She feels that both of these perspectives carry with them the danger of essentializing. She explicitly underscores that hybridity is another public discourse that essentializes the polarities of homogenous Germans and traditional Turks, mediating a third clearly defined group carrying properties from both and being labeled as hybrid. This

becomes particularly apparent in discussions of honor where honor is directly associated with stigmatized portrayals of the traditional, Muslim Turkish men (Ewing, 2006).

At this point it is important to note that assumptions about transported values are not new and unique to German-Turks in Germany. As Hannerz (1996) refers to under the title of “cultural package,” the transportation of values is seen as a consequence of the mobility of all human beings; in other words, as an impact of immigration it is commonly believed that immigrants somehow pack up their values, customs, traditions and bring them intact to the host country as if in a suitcase. Hannerz (1996) describes “The mobility of human beings themselves and the mobility of their meanings and meaningful forms” with each other (Hannerz, 1996:19) as a defining, explanatory concept. Approaches similar to Hannerz’s (1996), underscoring a parallel between the mobility of migrants and the mobility of meaning, is also reflected in more recent approaches in the literature. Viewpoints such as Önder’s (1996) describing the immigrants as “packaging” their values and setting in a new urban space with this “baggage” are taking Hannerz’s point of view one step further. In the case of German-Turks, honor is perceived as a leading value of the “baggage” (Ewing, 2008) In that sense, the honor concept is perceived as a cultural value transported through the experiences of immigrants, thus within the “social work”(Ewing, 2006) experience the honor concept remains stable, and stigmatized for the traditional man from a rural background. At this point, Ewing opens a new perspective of discussion and explains this stigmatization through “miscommunication” (Ewing, 2008).

“At the heart of such miscommunications are the naturalized, stereotypical representation of Muslim men and boys, who are characterized as particularly resistant to the ‘democratic values’ and egalitarian gender relation of German society as they seek to constrain their women and maintain personal and familial honor”(Ewing, 2008:92).

Clearly the miscommunication cited by Ewing is a result of the modern German discourse/life style and the perceived, stigmatized Turkish traditional autocratic pattern of life. Miscommunication occurs between the so called egalitarian “German” approach over gender relations and the so called resistant stance taken by the German-Turkish man who has “transported” the family honor concept to the host country , in the baggage form of “traditional” values , maintaining familial and personal honor as an elemental concept.

Ewing frames her discussion of honor within the confines of German portrayals of German Turkish men as a “traditional, oppressive, Islamic man”. However, it should be noted that Ewing’s study, where the traditional approach of German-Turks plays a foremost role, a large portion of participants come from an Islamic environment¹³ (Ewing, 2006; Mandel, 1996) , which in turn may have reduced the perspective to a single dimension. Even though Ewing (2006) conducted her ethnography mainly with an Islamic association, the fact that he concluded this non stereotyped observation contributes to her non-essentialist argument.

Many discussions of honor in Germany associate the case of Hatun Sürücü¹⁴ crime, and its relationship to Islamic values. These media references concluded with two predominant notions: “virginity” and “headscarf”. These two notions appeared as the stigmatized, transported values of German-Turks to Germany. It will be interesting to explore if the same discussions are presented by participants of the present study, who were recruited from a non-religious¹⁵, heterogeneous association.

¹³ It is important to note here that Ewing conducted her fieldwork in a primarily religious affiliated association; Milli Görüş.

¹⁴ Hatun Sürücü is a young German- Turkish woman, who was killed by her brothers on February, 7 2005.

¹⁵ TGD does not declare itself either as a religious or non-religious association; its declarations are about politics rather than religion. However, the reason for using the term “non-religious” was to differentiate the field work of this study from Ewing’s ethnography.

II.5.1. The issue of virginity

The issue of virginity is one that is linked frequently with honor, both in the participants' minds and in the literature. Many scholars have pointed out the association between virginity and honor.

“Women thus carry the burden of safeguarding group identity and group honor. The female body symbolizes the social boundaries of cultural identities, and virginity ultimately represent the demarcation between ingroup and outgroup mores” (Özyeğin, 2009:111).

Virginity is assumed to be linked to the female body and is perceived as the ultimate definer in terms of cultural identification. This perception sees woman as the bearer of the morality of the group that she belongs to. A review of Turkish feminist studies indicates that some post 1980 scholars have challenged the group that embraced the ideology of secular, ethnic and linguistic homogeneity of Turkey (Kasaba & Bozdoğan, 2000). Within this emerging challenge, the reformulation of the woman's identity was the locus point, and new discourses about virginity and honor have developed with new discourses and ways of activism (Altnay, 2000).

Virginity as well as honor is a complex and ambiguous notion to define. Even though virginity is not a written law in Turkey's recent Penal Code, the concept is well internalized by every citizen of Turkey who is also aware not by law but by other ideological state apparatus –such as schools, media tools- (Althusser) that a daughter, a woman, a wife needs to evade everything that might “stain family honor” (Parla, 2001:77). This avoidance is evidenced particularly by “protecting their virginity”. The police as well as the state are entrusted to protect not only life and property but also honor and chastity as well (Parla,

2001:79). Parla's study investigated the national and republican ideology of Turkey's modern state regulation system which involves both the "traditional" regulator impact of virginity together with the ideals of "modernized" and "westernized" Turkey's republic's image of the new woman. By highlighting how the vigilance over women's virginity becomes appropriated by state discourses and practices that police the boundaries of appropriate sexual behavior, Parla (2001) seeks to move the discussion on virginity examinations beyond viewing them as remnants of tradition, and instead urges us to view them as sovereign acts carried out by the modern state.

The discourse of the dichotomy of tradition and modern appears to question the link, in particular, honor, chastity of the man, family, group and the state to which the female body belongs to. From this perspective, another dimension of defining honor becomes apparent: the duality between men and women in terms of defining honor. Nükhet Sirman (2006) defines honor as such: "The term [honor] connotes the ability of the person to live up to standards of masculinity and femininity as set by the society. The difference in what honor entails for men and women is the difference in gender" (Sirman, 2006: 44). In that sense, the definition of honor is determined by patterns of femininities and masculinities, and both definitions differ based on gender relations. "A woman's honor, by contrast to a man's, is linked only to her sexuality" (Sirman, 2006: 44). In the case of Germany, the same concern is apparent; the honor of the woman becomes linked to her sexuality, and the stigmatized traditional man becomes the focus of these interpretations of honor.

As Ewing indicates, for this type of "traditional man", honor is not a term that has a clear cut distinction from reputation and respect. However, in her study, she implies that the discursive constructions widespread in the case of Germany, regarding German-Turkish men does distinguish honor from reputation and respect. Although media portrayals and the

“classical German” viewpoint reduces the Turkish men’s honor construction to a single dimension, the men in her study deny this. There are two separate words denoting honor in Turkish (*Şeref* and *namus*). Ewing indicates that the stigmatization of the traditional Turkish male among German-Turks differentiates honor from the two other concepts; reputation and respect. She indicates that “honor is linked to what has been stigmatized as an archaic form of masculinity manifest in practices such as an excessive protection of the women in one’s family and the recourse to violence in the face of insult”(Ewing, 2008:122). So with this prevalent discourse that is built on masculinity, the stereotyped German Turkish men’s portraits reveal the tension apparent in German-Turkish men about honor, sexuality and his masculinity. These variables bring virginity to the center of focus, which clearly becomes an important indicator in the perspective/discourses of “traditional” German Turkish men (Ewing, 2008). The family of the honor crime’s victim explained the act in the following terms:

“She deserves what she got- the whore lived like a German” (Frankfurt Allgemeinde, March 18, 2005; cited in Ewing, 2006).

For her family, Sürücü was living like a German, adopting German friends and trespassing the boundaries between Germaneness and Turkishness with her attitudes. In the discourses of German society over the Hatun Sürücü case within the diasporic social space, honor and reputation was associated with the stigmatized Turkish man and the killing of Hatun Sürücü was portrayed as a forthcoming crime that a traditional man could carry out (Ewing, 2008). Honor is taken as a concept peculiar to Muslims and Turks, and the woman who did not behave in accordance with the honor code of Turkishness, who did live “like a whore” in a sense deserved to be killed within this traditional portrayal. However even if this was the typical portrayal in the German media, Ewing (2008) highlights with her ethnography that among German-Turkish immigrants there is no single common point of

view for killing Hatun because of her unchastity. She emphasized that the honor concept is more fluid than rigid for the Turkish German men she interviewed.

The honor killing of Hatun was an important event in terms of German society and media. The murder was covered widely in the German media and created a “moral panic” over the non-integration of German-Turks (Ewing, 2008). Hatun Sürücü’s¹⁶ case is indispensable in understanding the honor perceptions internally (immigrants themselves) and externally (media representation) Hatun Sürücü’s crime is important in the present study since it is kind of turning point in terms of the representation of German-Turkish immigrants, both men and women in the media. The reason for the crime focused on the virginity issue linked with the honor of Hatun and her father and brother. In addition to her sexuality the media coverage linked her murder to her Muslim identity. Her behavior as a “German” was linked to her choice of not wearing a headscarf. Finally, Ewing underlines that “Hatun’s murder was linked to a broader threat of Turkish men that forms an important component of the German national imaginary” (Ewing, 2008:179). It appeared that with this crime the Turkish German man had shown his true self. So in the case of Germany, the linkage of honor discourses traversed between two major dichotomies: first, between traditionality and modernity; secondly among differing patterns/gender roles of femininities and masculinities.

The duality of Germanness and Turkishness also became an important focus point while defining honor. It can be said that in addition to the defining roles played by modernity versus traditionality and femininity versus masculinity in discourses about honor, the attempt to position themselves in the German-Turkish dimension also becomes essential.

¹⁶ Hatun Sürücü crime is crucial to understand the dynamics of Islam and woman’s perception in the host country. As well as the the attacks of 9/11 and as well as the change around the world toward Islam; the Hatun Sürücü case became a turning point in the specific case of Germany more precisely in the perception of German-Turkish women.

II.5.2. The issue of Headscarf

The headscarf is an important concept in discussions of these dimensions¹⁷ since it is a concrete/visible signifier of women's bodies and discourses about veiled or unveiled women in relation to modernity are debated in relation to this symbol. The immediate linkage of the headscarf with the Muslim view and Islam becomes important in terms of distinguishing German-Turks from the others who do not share the same religious view. So the headscarf becomes the key factor in terms of naming the reason of otherness/non-integration of Muslims in the host country. Before focusing on the case of German-Turks; a brief overview of headscarf and its place in the modernization path of Turkey is important to note.

Islamic traditions, on the other hand, were assumed to obstruct the way to Western style civilization and social progress. In this frame of mind the liberation of women was equated with the accomplishment of civilization. The abandonment of veiling as the symbol of Islamic traditions would mean the emancipation of women and their attainment of the status of human beings. Thus, the emergence of women from privacy to participation in (civilized) social life by means of education lies at the very center of the Westernization project (Göle, 1996:40).

As Göle indicates in her study "The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling", during the modernization project to create a new republic, the headscarf was seen as a handicap, the symbol of Islam and tradition. The West regarded as the modern, viewed the veil as uncivilized and so the women's bodies were again an important feature in terms of this modernization project. With the unveiling of women in Turkey, women became visible in the social, public space and her visibility was no longer forbidden. With her unveiling, in a sense, a concrete step toward the West was taken. "Unveiling came into being as an imperative of this process [Modernization process]" (Saktanber, 2006:21). In Saktanber's (2006) narrative on the modernization process of Turkey, the significant feature of the headscarf is highlighted and yet she indicates that "Headscarves might be tolerated for uneducated or rural women, but

¹⁷ Dimensions of tradition, modernity; Turkishness, Germanness, religious, secular.

not for university students who were supposed to be the agents of enlightenment” (Saktanber, 2006:21). So, in that sense the unveiling of women in Turkey was significantly important for visible women, modernized women; however for the traditional or rural ones, the enlightenment of unveiling was not an important component due to their perception of invisibility.

The modernization project of Turkey, with its emphasis on differentiating the traditional woman from modernized ones, was a predominant discourse in Turkey until approximately the 1980’s. However, in the case of Germany, similar discourses over the headscarf of German-Turkish women are currently being debated in German society and in German media. In the perceptions of German-Turkish women from the perspective of the host country; the headscarf has a substantial meaning: the oppression and the victimization of women is linked to the widespread discourse about the act of veiling. However, the German media portrayals differ from Turkey’s modernization discourse; in German media coverage, all women are stereotyped as traditional and invisible actors. These discourses situate women with the headscarf as if their oppression is the product of the headscarf. In that sense the headscarf is seen as the cultural stigmata of the traditional Turkish woman who is in need of modernization and emancipation (Mandel, 2008).

Within the German media coverage, the issue of Islam in relation to honor perception does not differ from the coverage of the virginity issue. “In the media representations they have been typically portrayed as “beyond the veil” thus silent” (Soysal, 2008) As Soysal (2008) indicates, the headscarf issue is crucial for perception of German-Turkish woman in the host country. The significance of the headscarf and its direct relation with Islam enables the categorization of woman as silent and powerless. Besides the role of the headscarf that renders German-Turkish women invisible and silent, its perception as an indicator of

motivation for honor killings is also important. More concretely, the ethnography conducted by Ewing (2008) explores the reaction of the community (Both German and Turkish communities) to Hatun Sürücü's murder. Her choice of not wearing headscarf is frequently cited as a possible motive (Ewing, 2008). Apparently, from the German perspective, the unveiling of Hatun is perceived as the reason for the honor crime so the headscarf was perceived as an important feature in defining honor. Ewing highlights the linkage between the honor and the headscarf by citing media reports on the killing. She cites that in the German media tabloids investigations of Sürücü's honor killing focus was given to the "modern life" of Sürücü and primarily to the absence of the headscarf and finally to its relation to the issue of honor. However, Ewing notes the statement of Hatun's brother –Mutlu Sürücü—which clearly states that the motive of the honor crime was not the headscarf.

The headscarf represents the proof of the fundamental 'nonintegrateability' of the Turks. The scarf is seen as ugly, backward, and most of all, threateningly un-German, but also something intransigently innate to Turks and Turkish identity (Mandel, 2008:305).

Although the stereotyped portrayals of women are represented in the German media, this same sentiment is not so apparent in the German Turkish community and the counter-positioning of women obviously exists and in the present study, these counter-positions and perceptions will in particular be highlighted.

So in terms of the three major points that this project aims to explore, the narratives of German-Turkish women about the headscarf is significant. It is significant to understand the gendered aspect of the headscarf; since it is perceived especially in the media coverage as the "traditional costume" of all Turkish women in Germany. To understand the diversity and the integrative aspect of immigrant women, it is also important, since with the headscarf, the diversity and heterogeneity of women disappear; and through the act of veiling; discourses over the non-integration of German Turkish women are raised.

Mandel investigates the issue of the headscarf in the realm of its political context. She explores the meaning of the headscarf for Germans from within the framework of nationhood and identity (Mandel, 2008). As the quotation above mentions, on the one hand, more rightist political views suggest that the headscarf is the symbol that demonstrates the non-integration of Turks. The oppression of the German-Turkish women is seen as representative of the Turkish identity. In that sense this point of view is close to the above mentioned media portrayals narrated by Ewing in the case of the Sürücü's honor crime. According to this point of view, the headscarf is seen as an obstacle that ontologically/essentially differentiates the two nations. However, on the other hand, the more liberal political views cited by Mandel argue that the headscarf as an obstacle to be removed was to achieve the integration of both nations and make possible the emancipation of German-Turkish women (Mandel, 2008). It is interesting to note that in Ewing's narrative the headscarf issue is closely linked to honor. Whereas in the above mentioned traditional German political perspective the headscarf issue is closely related to non integration.

In Mandel's ethnography, besides the represented political views of the host country, it is possible to track the German-Turkish women's own interpretations on the act of veiling. She indicates in her research that women who wear the headscarf do not come from the rural or the traditional part of Turkey, as believed by many. On the contrary, many veiled women claim that they are "Kemalist" women who prefer to wear the headscarf especially in the host country, to highlight their Turkishness, since their identification as Turkish and their Muslim identities are so frequently interrogated. "In Turkey, her Turkishness had never been called into question; in Turkey there was no need for her to don the headscarf" (Mandel, 2008:306). In that sense, in contrast to the more liberal political views, the headscarf is not an obstacle

On the contrary it is necessary for the German Turkish woman for her adaptation and emancipation in the host country.

In the present study, although I did not introduce the issue of the headscarf as a factor, it did appear as a valuable notion in my participants' constructions of honor. As Mandel indicates, these women do not adopt the defining role of headscarf as suggested by German typecasts. However they underline the significance of the concept while they define their counter-position by appropriating the scarf and redefining it. In that sense, as well as the issue of virginity, the headscarf indicates a lot about the lives and perceptions of German-Turkish women. However, the headscarf has more dimensions in terms of political debates and in terms of its significant role while denoting women in terms of traditionality and modernity (Mandel, 2008). Its linkage to honor perceptions is more layered than is the perception of virginity. Virginity is more directly discussed in that context, directly in relation to the honor crime (Ewing, 2008). The headscarf has a more indirect relation but multiple dimensions on German-Turkish women's lives. In the initial planning phase of this project, the headscarf was not considered as a primary area of investigation. However during my interviews it became apparent that a discussion of honor with German Turkish women without touching upon this subject was almost impossible.

In view of all the literature that has been reviewed the present study will attempt to explore the intersection of the concepts honor, immigration and gender. The many paradigms that will be utilized in the study will be diversity, integration of foreigner and gender equality

Chapter 3: Fieldwork Experiences and Methodology

III. 1. Fieldwork Experiences and Methodology

As I set out to explore German-Turkish women's discursive constructions of honor, I was unsure about how to recruit people to participate in my study. Since that there are a number of associations where immigrants congregate, I felt that Turkish associations would be a good starting point for forming connections with individuals to participate in the study. As Soysal (1994) indicates in her study, migrant associations use the resources of the host country. They define their goals, activities, and strategies in relation to the existing conditions of their host countries. Thus, I decided to reach immigrants living in Berlin through such associations, where they are expected to "organize traditionally" (Soysal, 1994) I conducted preliminary fieldwork in Berlin, in September 2008, to gather more information about immigrant associations in Berlin. I interviewed representatives of a number of immigrant associations, such as TGD (*Türkische Gemeinde in Deutschland*) an umbrella association that has many subordinate associations. BTBTM (*Türkisches Wissenschafts- und Technologiezentrum*) and TBB (*Türkischer Bund in Berlin-Brandenburg*) were two of these umbrella associations that I contacted. While TBB seems like a subordinate association of TGD organizationally, my fieldwork showed that these two associations are indeed two major associations that work side by side. I talked with the representative of "Deukisch", a more recent association that targets German-Turks youth under 28 years old. I also interviewed delegates of "İslamische Föderation" (*İslam Federasyonu*) and "Die Stimmeder Aleviten in Europe" (*Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Konfederasyonu*) to observe if there are varied viewpoints among Sunnis and Alevis and to explore the impact of religion among Turkish immigrants. These interviews were not focused on issues of honor, but they provided information about

diasporic lives of immigrants. The final interview was held with the representative of “*El İşi Evi*” which was a feminist association

My preliminary fieldwork led me to rethink the design of my research. Firstly, given the diversity of people and issues I encountered, I decided to narrow down my focus in this study. My first intention was to choose my interviewees according to their age groups. I initially regarded my participants’ generations as significant in terms of their self-identification as immigrants, and believed that the generation they belong to might influence their definitions of honor. However, generation is a very ambiguous term, and the definition of first, second and third generation greatly differs based on different viewpoints. Therefore, I decided not to take generation as a central feature to distinguish my participants.

Having seen how immigrant associations function in Berlin, I decided daily affiliations are a more significant factor compared to categories such as generation that are typically used to categorize German-Turks). As a result, I decided to take TGD as my research field and women who work at TGD and at TBB as my participants. TGD is an umbrella association, under which associations from different political affiliations with different goals gather. Thus, I did not prefer to expand my field study and talk with women from different associations that are under the umbrella of TGD. Rather, I preferred to stay with a limited group of women, who are all members of TGD, but also work in TBB.¹⁸

TGD is an association founded in 1995 at Hamburg. My first reason for the choice of TGD is its lengthy history of fourteen years and its wide target group. “TGD is an association that aims to provide equality in legal, political, social rights to German-Turks and other immigrants. In this sense the goal of TGD is to be an interest and benefit association and to

¹⁸ All my participants did not directly work for TGD. They identify themselves as workers of TBB, but they are automatically members and workers of TGD because TBB is one of the member associations of TGD in Berlin.

fight against racism exclusion and xenophobia.”¹⁹ ²⁰ On the other hand, TBB began as a student movement at the Technical University of Berlin. At the time, the association was named “BTBTM” and it was a German-Turkish student collective campaigning for equality of rights. Since then, their search for equal rights has continued. TBB has become a well-known, larger umbrella association under which BTBTM still actively campaigns as the student collective (Yurdakul, 2006).

Another important reason that persuaded me to choose TGD as my research field is the association’s specific emphasis on women’s existence in the association. In order to receive substantial financial resources from the host state, the association needs to open a quota for women members. Eda, with whom I talked about TGD, underlined that TGD attaches a specific importance to having women actively involved in the association. She underscored that there is a quota of female members in the administrative board of the association. Last but not the least, their kind reception and sincere willingness to help assured me to work with them.

During December 2008, I conducted the second part of my fieldwork in Berlin that lasted for twenty days. I conducted interviews with twelve women. I contacted some of the participants from Istanbul via e-mail. I accessed them with the assistance of the representatives that I talked with during my September visit. Once each participant was contacted, she was asked to name her own choice of meeting place. Some preferred to meet with me outside of the TGD or TBB buildings. Some women preferred to meet me in coffee houses or in places like “*Simit Dünyası*”. These places were all in Kreuzberg with German-Turkish owners. It was interesting to note that all participants who asked to meet outside of

¹⁹ <http://www.tgd.de/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=7> retrieved at 11/04/2009

²⁰ *Türklerin ve diğer göçmenlerin Almanya’da yasal, politik, sosyal alanlarda eşit haklara sahip olmalarını, eşit uygulama görmelerini sağlamak ve bu anlamda Almanyalı Türklerin bir hak ve çıkar örgütü olmak, Türk ve yabancı düşmanlığına, ırkçılığa ve ayrımcılığın her türlüsüne karşı kararlı bir mücadele vermek.*

their offices met me in Kreuzberg. It should be noted that TBB and TGD offices are not located in Kreuzberg, but are a few subway stops away. I met with nine of my participants in their workplaces; in TGD or TBB buildings. Even if it was not the case with every interview, meeting with participants in their office during their office hours appeared to be somewhat of a limitation. Some participants needed to catch meetings or to keep working, so those interviews were conducted under the pressure of time limitations. Nevertheless, I complied with the demands and work conditions of all participants in following out my research.

III.2. Participants

Participants of this research were twelve women who work at TGD and/or TBB and who were also members of TGD. There were no other criteria for selection other than identifying oneself as a German-Turkish woman and working at TGD. There were no age restrictions; the youngest participant was seventeen years old and the oldest one was fifty-three years old. Six of the women were married and six were single. However, this equal division in terms of their marital status was a coincidence. Two of the women were working there as interns, one woman was the secretary of the president of the association, and three of them were members of the executive board. The rest were working actively in several projects of both TGD and TBB.

With the help of my preliminary research, I contacted some participants in advance from Istanbul. However, the majority of the participants were recruited through snowball sampling, with the help of my initial interviewees' referrals. The snowball sampling method could have been risky, since I was in Berlin for a limited time. Luckily, I did not face any problems this time, but a more reliable method of sampling could be used in further researches in terms of gathering interviewees. Overall, the women that I was referred to by my participants were willing to participate in my study. Only four women refused to take part

in this research. Three of these women were veiled. Thus, none of my participants were veiled.

In addition to individual interviews, I had also planned to conduct two focus groups. My aim was to listen to women's perceptions of honor individually and also to observe how these perceptions diverged or converged in small group discussions with other women. However, the first four participants, whom I invited to join to such focus group, rejected me. They told me that they do not want to share their personal perceptions with their "colleagues". At this point I felt the handicap of exploring a group of people who know each other and who work with each other. Since both TGD and TBB are workplaces for my participants, there were issues of superiority and power. I think power relations and the private nature of the subject honor were the main reason for their rejection of my focus group demand. It could be interesting to explore discursive constructions of honor in personal and group settings. I hope to explore this possibility in my future research.

I want to note here that all my participants had volunteered to help me in terms of providing connections with new participants and I felt that they were also very helpful during the interviews. I am grateful for their sincere approach and honesty.

III. 3. Methods of Data Collecting and Data Analysis

The main data collection method used in this research was conducting semi-structured, in-depth interviews. I preferred not to use a structured questionnaire, since I aimed to allow my participants to present their life stories in their own way and I did not want to direct them with rigid questions. My goal was to make them as comfortable as possible, because their sincerity was important in terms of getting their personal perceptions and constructions about honor. During the interviews, I allowed my participants to direct the conversations. Some

participants were particularly active in leading. Moreover, their spontaneous responses led me to consider two important themes that contextualize honor, which will be discussed later in my findings section under the “virginity” and “headscarf” headings. I did not introduce these issues to my participants through interview questions; rather they emerged from within participants’ responses.

A digital tape recorder was used during the interviews. I tried to keep note taking to a minimum because I wanted the interviews to be open-ended, genuine conversations. After each interview, I recorded my observations. I had my own field notes in addition to the recordings of the interviews. None of my participants objected to the use of the recorder. Since I aimed for friendly conversations, I did not want my participants to see me as the interrogator. Thus, I was open to questions they had for me. Sometimes they asked me personal questions about my own perceptions and definitions, but usually their questions were about Turkey and how people in Turkey perceived them.

In interviews, I did not directly introduce questions about their perceptions of honor. I started by asking them about their families’ and their own life narratives that led them to Germany. I tried to track their life stories, starting from their birth, going through their educational life, their work experiences, and their everyday life experiences by highlighting their immigrant status in Germany and their womanhood. I introduced the issue of honor by using familiar motifs that they could know from their everyday lives. For instance, I used Fatih Akın’s movie “Duvara Karşı / Gegen die Wand”²¹ as a point of departure to initiate discussions related to honor. The Hatun Sürücü²² case was another important incident to introduce the honor discussion, since it was a recent issue. All my participants were either

²¹ Fatih Akın is a German Turkish movie maker. He was precisely known by my participants with his movie “Gegen Die Wend/Duvara Karşı” in which he narrates struggles of a German Turkish woman against her family and her life.

²² Hatun Sürücü was a German-Turkish woman who was living in Berlin and who was a victim of an honor crime. Her case will be discussed in detail later.

familiar with the Hatun Sürücü case or Fatih Akin's movie, so introducing the honor issue was not a problem in my interviews.

Since I do not speak German, the interviews were conducted in Turkish. At times this was challenging, because some participants did not feel that they were fluent enough in Turkish. In general, even though they had difficulties in finding some words, they managed to explain themselves. Only one participant did not wish to be a part of this research because of her embarrassment about her fragmented Turkish. At the end, I convinced her to participate. Nevertheless, I felt that she was not entirely comfortable. While language may have complicated my communication with my participants, it can also be seen as a factor that enriched the interactions. Since languages can be central to people's identities, the use of Turkish in these interviews did not only enable communicational convenience but also pointed to the meanings of language for immigrant women's identities.

The shortest of my interviews lasted for half an hour and the longest one was two hours long. None of them were too short or too long; I felt that every interview was very insightful for my research. All of the interview recordings were transcribed by me. I ensured my participants about confidentiality issues, explaining that only I would listen to these recordings. To aid in my data analysis, I utilized a coding program.²³ I read through all the transcriptions and coded them. My goal was to collect certain narratives under shared codes to be able to compare narratives of all participants with each other. I coded transcriptions in a way that would not limit my perspective; I used a large number of codes in order to be able to interpret narratives diversely.

Finally; I believe that the fact that my participants were members of the association was always a challenge that I had to deal with. However, I feel that these women. were

²³ HyperResearch is a coding program that manage the transcriptions in a systematic order.

talking about their personal experiences, about their own discursive constructions; reflecting the issues of integration of foreigners, diversities and gender equality; the institutional discourse may have contributed to their reflections.

Chapter 4: Findings

IV.1. Background and Immigration History of Participants

Other than the most important shared experience of “being German- Turkish,” all twelve participants whom I interviewed were all females and at the same time workers of *TGD*. The youngest contributor was seventeen, the oldest one, fifty three years of age. Age was not a factor in the planning and recruitment stage of this project; however I was careful not to restrict myself to a specific age group since my aim was to obtain wide and varied perspectives that might represent -the different subjectivities of immigrant women. Six of these women were married; the other six were single. The equality of the number of single and married women was a coincidence. It was interesting to discover a common point about their significant others; all married women were married to German-Turkish men. These men were all immigrants from Turkey as well.—. On the one hand, some underlined the fact that their choice was intentional “I was always saying; I will marry someone from Turkey” (Cihan) ²⁴while others told me that their husband’s nationality and immigrant status was a coincidence “I did not explicitly think about not having a German husband, on the contrary marrying my husband was a coincidence”²⁵.

Nine of these women were born in Berlin. The rest were born in Turkey. It was interesting to note that, all nine women who were born in Germany also indicated that they were born in Berlin. In a sense they identify themselves as Berliners. Some of them even highlighted their being born in Kreuzberg. This was an indicator of the importance of Kreuzberg in their lives. This implicated that in a wider point of view their belonging to Berlin and significantly to Kreuzberg was an important indicator in understanding their

²⁴ “*Hep diyordum ki Türkiye’den birisi ile evleneceğim, kararlıydım, sonra onunla tanıştım.*”

²⁵ “*Aman Alman olmasın diye düşüncelere hiç bürünmedim, tam tersine benim eşim tesadüf oldu.*”

immigrant experiences and in a more local sense understanding their membership and belonging to the association.

These preceding, possibly coincidental, details about the participants motivated me to think about their constructions of belonging, and how this is reflected in their definitions and constructions about honor. As indicated in the methodology section, participants frequently chose Kreuzberg as a meeting place. This fact and the fact that almost all of them somewhere in their discussion referred to Kreuzberg was interesting to note.

It is also interesting to note that many of my participants utilized Kreuzberg as a reference point while discussing different subjects. For example while revealing feelings of belonging, Kreuzberg became focal point: “As I said, Kreuzberg, Neukolln, Wedding, I can feel safe in these three because there are lots of Turks.”²⁶ (Yasemin) Whereas, another participant Zeynep referred to Kreuzberg in a discussion of social network, again she talks about having moved out of Kreuzberg for convenience, but she continues to describe her life as:

That is why we live there. I mean our thinking was not to move there because there aren't many Turks. Our kids still go to school there [Kreuzberg]. Every morning we go to Kreuzberg, we return home to go to bed²⁷

Similar to Zeynep, many participants referred to Kreuzberg in their narratives however Kreuzberg was not specifically mentioned while discussing their constructions of honor.

In terms of geographical locality of the families' roots, participant's origin city was not a determinant factor in the selection process. Since my purpose in this study did not

²⁶ “Dediğim gibi Kreuzberg, Neukolln, Wedding bu üçünde kendimi güvende hissedebilirim çünkü bayağı Türk var.”

²⁷ “O yüzden o tarafta oturuyoruz şimdi yani şu değildi düşüncemiz yani Türkler burada çok yoklar oraya gidelim. Çocuklarımız hala orada okula[Kreuzberg] gidiyorlar. Biz her sabah Kreuzberg'e gidiyoruz. Akşam yatmaya evimize geliyoruz.”

include looking at effects of backgrounds in Turkey, but rather was to focus on the current city they share and follow (discursive) constructions they build while living in this city, while working in TGD as German- Turkish women. There were interviewees from Diyarbakır, Ürgüp, İstanbul, Ankara, Edirne etc. However, while they were focusing on their current constructions as German-Turkish women who live in Berlin, sometimes they were indicating/strengthening their arguments by comparing life in Berlin with their place of origin. However this place of origin was referred in general as “Turkey” and no specific mention of cities or localities were observed. This is an interesting area of further research since the present study cannot conclude whether the omission of the origin cities was intentional or meaningful in terms of the participants.

IV.2. Being a Turkish Woman in Germany

Although I chose to interview women who work for TGD, their primary common characteristic was their means of identification; their being women from Turkey. Geographically they were all immigrant women who migrated from Turkey, from different places of origin. However their common denominator is their country of origin. Although these women work for TGD, the interviews indicated that they have frequent contact with daily life in Germany. That is, many of them live outside of Kreuzberg; their children go to school with Germans etc.

The word foreigner always sounds as negative, I’ve never seen or heard it in a more positive sense. The word ‘*Auslander*’ is like an insult to me. When they call me Turk, I feel it as an insult, I perceive it such.²⁸ (Eda)

Hence their being Turkish is an important part of their identity. It was pronounced by all participants that they were facing advantageous and disadvantageous sides of their German-

²⁸ “*Yabancı kelimesini hiç bir şekilde daha pozitif anlamda hiç bir yerde ne duydum ne gördüm çünkü hep böyle negatif. Auslander bana küfür gibi geliyor artık. Türk dediği zaman bana gerçekten küfür gibi hissediyorum, öyle algılıyorum.*”

Turkish status. Many mentioned that they were facing stereotypes. Some interviewees responded with indignation to these stereotypes while some responded more calmly and smoothly. However they all articulated that they face these stereotypes and in their own way they all try to “answerback” to these stereotypes.

As well as their identification as Turkish, for all participants’ “womanhood” was a determinant factor in my research. Related to their status as women, their motherhood, and their social place as working women obviously affect their narratives, since it is an issue in their everyday lives as well as their identification as Turkish. Obviously, it is difficult to generalize the impact of their identification as Turkish and womanhood to all German-Turkish immigrant women, however, these two notions were dominant among the life stories that I obtained. Definitely while narrating their constructions of honor, both their Turkishness and their womanhood had a strong influence, they were dominant motifs in their life narratives and honor definitions. This Chapter explores the relation of these two notions in women’s lives in Germany.

“Being a woman is already disadvantageous”

First of all, being an immigrant woman is already disadvantageous. Women face difficulties everywhere in the world. When you observe, even at the most equal, modern countries, even though woman and man do the same job, they are being paid differently. Again woman becomes disadvantageous. In that sense this is problematic in general all over the world, not only in Germany ²⁹(Ezgi)

The above cited quotation is very descriptive in terms of understanding the “disadvantageous” sides of being an immigrant woman. However, Ezgi, points out that these disadvantages are not unique to Germany or to Berlin. Ezgi is a German- Turkish woman who was born in Germany. She is married, a mother, and actively working in TGD. From her

²⁹ “Bence ilk etapta yurtdışında göç kökenli olup bir de kadın olmanın zaten dezavantajları var, kadın dünyanın her yerinde daha farklı zorluklarla karşılaşılıyor. Baktığımız zaman dünyanın en eşit, en modern, en çağdaş ülkelerinde bile baktığımız zaman kadınla erkek, aynı iş yapan iki insan ayrı ayrı maaş alıyor. Gene kadın dezavantajlı oluyor bu durumda yani baktığımız zaman bu genelde dünyanın sorunu, Almanya değil.”

quotation, it is not difficult to note that she has faced “disadvantages” of being a woman in addition to her immigrant status. However Ezgi also affirms that womanhood is disadvantageous everywhere in the world and that being a woman in Berlin is not much different from anywhere else. It is noted in the literature that this double disadvantage described by Ezgi is frequently faced by women immigrants. Erel in his work indicates that, “As *auslander*, they [women] are seen as exterior to German society and only perceived in terms of problems” (Erel, 2003:165). Ezgi’s argument enables us to think once more about existing and believed prejudices about Turkish women as *auslanders* and as woman. “The image of young woman whose family deprives her of her freedom and rights was a central part of the limited repertoire of images of immigrants that filmmakers constructed” (Ewing, 2008:65). The image of stereotyped German-Turkish women is recently discussed both by German moviemakers and also by Turkish moviemakers. Since films are strong instruments to access to a wide majority, the images created within these are accepted as unquestionable molds. However Ezgi is very careful not to construct such an image and takes pains to note that her situation is a result of womanhood and not her identity as Turkish. The trapped and deprived woman does not really exist among Ezgi’s narratives. On the contrary, in her narratives, the image of a socially active woman appears who struggles with the “disadvantages” of being a woman, just the same as any other women struggling anywhere around the world.

It is also interesting to observe that Ezgi focuses on the inequality of pay in describing “woman’s disadvantages”. It is clear that her status as an earner, a “breadwinner” is primary for her construction of her identity. During the interview with Ezgi she repeated several times how important was the money that she earns by herself. She believed in the necessity of earning her own money. Apparently being “the breadwinner” is an issue for her and as a

woman and as a mother. Although Bora (2005) concluded that the breadwinner role was not necessarily related to empowerment, Bora's study was conducted among domestic workers. However in my study, the fact that the women were more educated and were office workers may have contributed to their feeling of empowerment. However at this point it is important to remember that, I do not generalize Ezgi's perspectives to all the women that I interviewed. Still although not all of them included wage-earning as an important part of their identity, all my participants were active women in TGD who preferred to work and earn their own salary, which in itself implies an identity including economic power.

In the descriptions of their identity constructs many interviewees commented on how they are perceived and how they feel about this perception. It appears that being Turkish becomes important when seen from the eyes of others.

“Nobody deems you suitable of Turkish womanhood”

If you are civilized, well informed, if you could talk a little bit, nobody deems you suitable for Turkish womanhood. And you are expected to receive this as a compliment; you are expected to be thankful as if being a Turkish is a disgrace or a disaster. Because when you talk about Turkish women; in people's mind, oppressed, beaten, victimized from honor crimes, forced to marriage quiet, humble [*ağzı var dili yok, boynu bükük*] women who walk behind their husband appears.³⁰ (Belgin)

After reading the quotation above, I thought about “being deemed suitable for Turkish womanhood.” The quote seems to be self-contradictory. On the one hand, Belgin is resisting against an idea of Turkish womanhood while later in her narrative it becomes apparent that it is the content of the definition of Turkish womanhood she objects to, not the concept itself. Clearly being a Turkish woman is a compliment for Belgin; however, from my perspective using nationalities as compliments is quite strange. Belgin's resistance against usage of

³⁰ “Eğer medeni bir insansanız bilgiliyseniz, biraz amiyane tabirle ağzınız laf yapıyorsa kimse size Türk kadını olmayı layık görmüyor. Sizden de bunu iltifat olarak algılamamanızı bekliyorlar ve ay teşekkür ederim falan demenizi bekliyorlar. Sanki kadını deyince akla kocasının üç adım arkasından yürüyen, dayak yiyen, ezilen, namus cinayetlerine, töre cinayetlerine kurban giden, zorla evlendirilen, kişiliksiz, ağzı var dili yok boynu bükük insanlar geliyor”.

“Turkishness” as an insult again contradicts her perception of it as a compliment. Belgin is a Turkish woman, who was not born in Germany but decided to come to Germany for her undergraduate studies and also one of her main motives for coming was to be with her German boyfriend whom she had met in her origin country. Now she is in Germany for over 30 years, she is married to a Turkish man and she is a mother. However her comment about reactions she faces about her “Turkishness” and “her womanhood” is not unique to her, it is not an outcome of her own life story. All my participants, in some way, stated these types of counter reactions about stereotypically held notions of their Turkishness and womanhood.

Of course all participants did not comment on the disadvantageous aspects of being a German-Turkish immigrant female. However any mention of special satisfaction about being Turkish woman in Germany was also missing. Still I had some participants who were neutral; who had not personally faced these kinds of problems but were aware of possible disadvantages

Canan is the daughter of a worker family. Her parents migrated to Germany at the end of sixties. She is the youngest of four siblings. She is 24 years old and is working at the second job that she applied to. In her narrative it is possible to track her awareness about possible disadvantages,

I think even if Turkishness is not an actual determinate you feel it. For example when you apply for a job, if the employer needs to choose between two, he/she says “I better not hire this one”. I mean I did not experience it myself, I can’t say for sure, nevertheless you feel that way.³¹(Canan)

She repeated several times that she does not face personal difficulties about her identification as Turkish and female, but she mentions about her “feelings” and she talks

³¹ “Bence Türk olmanın tam belirtisi olmasa da hissediyorsunuz. Mesela iş başvurusu yaptığı zaman mesela diyelim iki kişi arasından seçenek yapması gerekiyor patronun, o zaman diyor ben yine bunu almayayım. Yani ben birebir yaşamadım, garanti diyemem ama öyle bir sezinti hissediyorsunuz.”

about “sensing things”. I talked to other participants who claimed not to have faced personally such problems but believed in the existence of these kinds of prejudgments about their identification as Turkish and womanhood. None of the participants believed that distinctions and specific designations accompanied their Turkish womanhood. In many interviews, this same phrasing of “feeling”, “sensing” was utilized, it could imply that although the participants are unable or unwilling to discuss concrete events, they do discuss their impressions of events.

However some participants pointed out that especially during their educational life they did not feel the preconceived concerns about being a German-Turkish woman. On the contrary they pointed out the positive reactions they get in their educational life because of their femininities/their gender

I felt that positively, both as a human and practically, they [] helped me a lot. I had a different relationship with Germans. This enabled me to approach them with love and understandings in contrast to Turks who were trampled and insulted and approached them in a hostile manner.³²(Belgin)

Belgin completed her undergraduate and graduate education in an engineering department. During the interview she repeated several times about her success in such a “male dominated” department. So in a sense she believes that her gender was a positive qualification in her educational life. She was the only girl in the department and she argues that the fact of being the only woman enabled her to create good and humane relations with Germans. As well as Belgin I talked with other participants about this positive aspect of being a woman in a “male dominated” department.

³² “Çok pozitif anlamda yaşadım ben, hem insan olarak hem pratik olarak o kadar çok yardım aldım ki, Almanlarla benim biraz başka bir ilişkim var. Bu Burada ezilen, örselenen Türkler kadar düşmanca değil tam tersine büyük bir anlayışla ve sevgi ile onlara yaklaşmama sebep oldu.”

Still, as well as external prejudgments and created stereotypes, women themselves reproduce their own stereotypes in their narratives. For example the above cited quote and Belgin's perception about being successful as a woman in a male dominant department is another stereotype. Obviously she believes in the prejudgments about engineering being a "male" profession and by emphasizing her success in this arena as a woman she implicitly accepts this position. She also appears to place herself in her relationship with German friends as a "female engineer" rather than a just a woman. I argue that these reproductions of stereotypes are the production of the multi-referential, hybrid structure (Soysal, 2008) of the "immigrant status" where they try to position themselves as woman.

These reproduced stereotypes appeared most notably in debates about how a Turkish woman must be and how she must not be. In these discussions it appeared that Turkish women among themselves also create some categories, and actually reproduce stereotypes similar to ones they react to when they come from an outsider.

Some act in a way not appropriate for Turkish girls. For example girls who hung out with Germans do things. My friends are not like that. Of course I choose them based on this. ³³(Yasemin)

Similar to the self contradictory statements about their identity, this is also an area of contradiction. While the women object to others utilizing stereotypes in describing them, they themselves at times impose similar types of descriptions about "Turkish women".

VI.2.1. Portraits of Turkish Women in the German Media and in Society: Participant Reactions

The purpose of the previous section was, to introduce perspectives of immigrant women around their own constructions. Some questions such as how their Turkishness and

³³ "Türk kızlarına yakışmayan hareketler var bazılarında. Mesela bunları daha çok Almanlarla gezip tozan kızlar yapıyordur. Mesela benim arkadaşlarım öyle değil. Tabii arkadaşlarımı da ona göre seçiyorum."

their womanhood impact them were discussed and in this discussion their constructs and their self identifications were principal. Women's own identifications and women's own reproductions around stereotypes were significant in terms of understanding "being a Turkish woman in Germany". In this section, I aim to discuss more external portraits of Turkish women. In the literature section, the portrayals of immigrant women were discussed and their silent image was debated. Here, in this section it is essential to observe their stand around their representations in the media and in German society. How are they usually represented in the Media or in German society? How do external instruments see these women and how are they responding to them?

In almost every interview "the media" appeared as an important instrument in every participant's lives. Interestingly the media was not apparent or defined differently for each participant, on the contrary it is observed that media has an almost common and similar role in their lives. In a sense media is the space where the fixed stereotypes about woman and immigrants exists. Almost every participant discussed an aspect of the portrait created in the media: the woman who walks behind her husband, with her headscarf, carrying her shopping bags.

I mean if you look at the media; it is as if all women stay at home. As if all women follow their husband, as if they are not allowed anything. Through media it is reflected as if there is such an image³⁴ (Yasemin)

This above narrated image of the media appeared in every interview. Yasemin who complained about this representation was born in Germany and she is 18 years old. Belgin, who was born in Turkey and migrated there in her early twenties, is now 53 years old, she also mentioned this disturbing image of the media. That is to say this image is not relevant to the age of the participant, or her length of stay in Germany or her country of birth. In the case

³⁴ "Yani medyada Öyle bir portre çizildi ki sanki bütün kadınlar evde otururlar, kocalarının arkasından gelirler, izinleri yoktur sanki böyle bir imaj varmış gibi yansıtıldı medyada."

of the media, as a space where German- Turkishness is reduced to stereotypes and where they are represented as “humble” portraits, women object. The “why” and the “how” of these objections are my main topic in this part.

Obviously in narratives of German-Turkish immigrant women who react toward these represented portraits, Islam and their Muslim identity plays a role. They relate these constructs explicitly with their Muslim identity so in a sense with their identification as Turkish.

“The Monster that is called Islam”

Germany is one of the extremely individualist and capitalist countries. From this perspective, the synthesis of Islam, the Anatolian culture and the Anatolian synthesis and then the fact that woman has a specific position within it of course created a monster [*öcü yaratıldı*]: and it is called Islam. Here the fact of giving specific roles and moods to specific types has definite functions in terms of politics.³⁵(Ezgi)

Someone says ...”I see Immigrant Turkish women and I feel sad. They are veiled, they have five children, and they carry shopping bags, groceries all the time”. There are lots to say to this, but it really hurts, it is so weird.³⁶ (Müge)

Following discourses such as Ezgi’s, the created image within the media is always usually related with Islam. The women who walk behind her husband are veiled, and obviously her veil is the symbol of Islam. These women are portrayed with their veil and thus are perceived as silent with their veil (Soysal, 2009) So every Turkish woman; veiled or not, is involved in this representation and it is mainly to this generalization that women object All

³⁵ “Aşırı kişiselleşen dünya da çok materyalist, kapitalist olan ülkelerden birisi burası Almanya, böyle baktığımız zaman tabii İslam sentezi, Anadolu kültürü, Anadolu sentezi iste kadının belirli bir konumu olması tabii ki bir ocu yaratıldı bu da İslam olarak adlandırıldı, burada belirli tiplerin belirli rollerin verilmesi, belirli kalıpların verilmesi tabii politik ve siyasi acıdan bakıldığı zaman belirli fonksiyonlar alıyor”

³⁶ “Ben bu göçmen kadınları görüyorum, Türk kadınlarını ben üzülüyorum onlara falan dedi. Baş kapalı, yanında beş çocuk, alışveriş torbaları ile sabahtan akşama kadar taşıyorlar falan dedi. Yani söylenecek çok şey var buna ama dokunuyor işte, çok garip bir şey.”

my participants pointed out that their reactions were not about the meaning of veil but the general constructs and stereotypes it evokes

That is to say, Islam is depicted as a monster, which in turn creates new monsters. The new monster is the husband and women are victims of both Islam and their husbands. Some participants underlined that they object because they take this personally, they think that it is an attack to their Turkishness and their womanhood. They feel that this portrayal does not reflect their own realities but affects their lives and their constructions.

Anyway, they are continuously asking, you are Turk but how come you are not veiled? I need to explain myself to every German. I am able to explain, but I don't know how long I will keep explaining or I will ignore them. Even though I was not born here, on every corner every German or foreigner asks me this. It makes me crazy and it sometimes provokes me.³⁷(Müge)

Müge is a newly arrived migrant to Germany; however she is really disturbed about these portraits especially the ones that are linked to the veil. Nevertheless, not all women are as angry or resentful as Müge. Not everybody perceives these representations as an explicit attack from the media or the German society. For some it is received as a natural product of a sensation seeking media which tries to pervert facts to get attention from the reader

Actually good examples need to be published. This is not done either by the German media, or German society. In any case when you make news of intellectual, successful women people do not read. This is "tabloid media" and that correspond with Turkey's media and media tools. Look at news that they are presenting; beaten, veiled, women forced to marriage are the focus (Belgin)³⁸

³⁷ "Yani devamlı devamlı sen Türksün ama neden başın kapalı değil ya ama ben bunu her Alman'a anlatmak zorunda kalıyorum. Şimdi ben açıklama şeyindeyim ama bilmiyorum daha ne kadar açıklarım ya da bazen ignore ederim ama burada doğup büyümemiş olmama rağmen her köşede her Alman, her yabancı birinin bunu sorması beni sinir edebiliyor, provoke edebiliyor."

³⁸ "Halbuki iyi örneklerinde ortaya çıkarılması gerekiyor. Bunu Alman medyası başta olmak üzere Alman Toplumunu yapmaya hiç çalışmıyor. Zaten örnek, bilgili, akıllı, başarılı kadını haber yaptığımız zaman okumuyor okuyucu. Burada ki çok hani boyalı basın dediğimiz; Türkiye'deki gazetelere tekabül eden basın, yayın araçları. Onların yaptığı haberlere bakın; dayak yiyen kadınlar, zorla evlendirilen kadınlar, başı bağlı kadınlar ön planda."

Obviously Belgin does not take these representations as an attack from German society; however, she thinks that these news are explicitly created due to commercial concerns of the media. They aim to get the attention of readers by reflecting on only some aspects of “veiled”, “beaten” and “forced to marriage” women.

At this point it is important to question the place where these women situate themselves. “I am not in need of being saved”³⁹ says Pınar and she explains that these created portraits of women from Turkey are the types who need to be saved according to German society. Obviously Pınar does not see herself within three above mentioned categories. I would definitely generalize that all my participants share the same point of view. They oppose stereotypes which urge them to stay among these repeated three categories. However, it is still critical how they appear to need to reproduce new identity constructions, categories to define themselves in order to detach from the portraits created by the German media and the German society. In detaching themselves from veiled women, beaten women, women forced to marry, they create a new category “woman who does not need to be saved”.

It is difficult to be at the same level or even higher than them [German society] Above all, German women want to see Turkish women in an another perspective, especially women that is to say from their point of view, we need to be needy, we need to be open to their education, we need to be women who might be saved by them.⁴⁰(Pınar)

A common definition that I gathered from all my participants is similar to Pınar’s. A few softer arguments similar to Belgin’s existed. However; usually women are complaining about their constant need to declare and to explain themselves. They repeat that they need to struggle strongly to deconstruct the stereotypes created by the media. However they all point

³⁹“ Kurtarılmaya muhtaç değilim ben.”

⁴⁰ “Bir Türk kadını olarak onlarla aynı seviyede, hatta daha yüksek seviyede olmanız zor oluyor Almanlar için. Alman için bu v ar. Hele ki kadınlarda, Alman kadınlar Türk kadınıni başka türlü görmek istiyorlar yani onların yardımına muhtaç, onların eğitebileceği, onların kurtarabileceği bir kadın olmanız gerekiyor onların gözünde.”

out that they succeed in presenting themselves. They claim that as successful/active working woman, they do not fit into created stereotypes however while they distinguish themselves as “strong and active” woman and detach themselves from ones who fit into these portraits, still I am questioning again do they not reproduce new stereotypes?

IV.3. Honor Constructions

In the previous two sections, I focused on constructions of German-Turkish women about their womanhood and their identification as Turkish. I tried to fill this big picture with narratives of a group of woman who identify themselves as “powerful, independent, working women”. It was seen in their narratives, their struggle to distinguish themselves from stereotyped German-Turkish women portrayed in the German media as *auslanders* who are “veiled”, “beaten” and “forced to marriage” women. Since my primal aim was to investigate constructions of “honor” among these women, their self identifications were significant to me since I aimed to follow circulations of their perceptions about honor, from their own perspectives and form their life stories

Women’s definitions about honor were related to two main notions: “virginity” and “headscarf”. As for debates about virginity, the notion of “sexuality” was a dominant motive. However, it was interesting to observe the place where these women situate themselves to talk about these two major notions. Women were talking about sexuality, and relating their sexuality with the issue of virginity by situating themselves on a “counter position”, that is, they were not defining their own position but defining their position as what “they did not believe in”. As working women they were careful to define themselves in contrast to figures of stereotyped German-Turkish women

“In minds of our Turkish people virginity always appears, but of course this is not it for me, my stand is different from them. However it is it for most of people”⁴¹(Eda).

Narratives such as Eda’s was ubiquitous, a distinction between their standpoint and other’s position were frequently underlined by participants. From Eda’s narratives, her intent to differentiate her understandings from other “Turks” is apparent; however by repeating the common beliefs and by positioning herself on a counter-stand, again she reproduces new stereotypes.

Similar to the “virginity” notion, the “headscarf” also appeared as an important feature while they define their constructions about honor. In terms of debates around headscarf as it relates to honor constructions, a significant discourse that constructs itself in between modernity and traditionalism appeared. Within these discourses, the perceived molds of “Muslim woman” were discussed precisely and again a pattern similar to their description of their identities as working women was apparent. It was interesting to observe that in discussions of honor; again they framed their position in terms of an opposition to an accepted, presented position.

“Here I look and see that unfortunately our girls are persuaded by a piece of cloth, but of course from my perspective honor is not that”⁴² (Belgin).

The “*is not that*” part of the quote almost appears in each participant’s narrative. This type of narrative such as Belgin’s appeared to be almost a revolt; indicating distinction between the societal perceptions and personal perceptions

In the next section, I will inspect how discursive constructions of honor are handled among these twelve women. My main motive is to explore perceptions and also reactions

⁴¹ “Bizim Türklerde bakirelik geliyor aklına ama tabii o değil yani benim için değil. Benim durduğum nokta farklı. Birçok insan için o olduğunu düşünüyorum ama.”

⁴² “Burada bakıyorum maalesef kızlarımız bir parça beze tav oluyorlar, namus tabii ki o demek değil benim gözümde.”

about these constructions, by primarily focusing on its relation to debates of virginity and headscarf.

IV.3.1. Issues of Virginity and its relation to honor

While I was conducting my interviews, the most difficulty I had, was getting my participants to talk about the issue of honor. As I already stated in my methodology section, I prompted these discussions by bringing to the foreground the issue of the Hatun Sürücü⁴³ incident which was familiar to all of them and also the portrayals in movies of Fatih Akın⁴⁴ which they were also acquainted with. Although the Hatun Sürücü case or Fatih Akın's movie enabled me to bring up the issue of honor, it was noted that the participants did not feel these cases were relevant to their definitions.

It was interesting that the way the women approached the issue of honor was similar to their self identifications discussed in the previous section. Although possibly this is not as striking as it appears since a straightforward linear consistency spreading over their lives may be expected. Their challenge in terms of their self-description was to resist against well-known stereotypes which were describing "beaten, victimized immigrant Muslim women". The "working, powerful immigrant women" image/construction was observable in their narratives while they described what they were or were not. Many participants provided their honor descriptions in a counter positioning format that is rather than describing what honor is; they frequently discussed what honor is not.

Especially when the participants related honor with sexuality and virginity I could definitely say that I felt the intent of first a denial and then a self explanation in terms of the

⁴³ "Hatun Sürücü was a German-Turkish woman who was living in Berlin and who was a victim of an honor crime. Her case will be discussed in detail later."

⁴⁴ Fatih Akın is a German Turkish movie maker. He was precisely known by my participants with his movie "Gegen Die Wend/Duvara Karşı" in which he narrates struggles of a German Turkish woman against her family and her life.

relation of honor and virginity, “The concepts of honor and virginity locate the prestige of a man between the legs of a woman” (İlkkarcan, 2000). This idea is presented frequently in the discussions of honor in the literature. However, many of the participants first reactions in terms of trying to describe honor was to indicate their objection to this definition.

Honor is not reduced to between two legs

“According to me, honor is not reduced to between two legs or a skirt, [*namus bence iki bacak arasına işte eteğe ya da bacağa indirgenemez*] even the act of a woman being with a man in the same bed or her act of having premarital sex, these are not honor in my perception.”⁴⁵(Ezgi)

When I asked Ezgi about her perception and her possible definitions about honor, she first intends to explain to me what was *not* her definitions of honor. As the quotation above indicates, honor is not defined in terms of “between two legs” or is not determined by the skirt of a woman. It is not having premarital sex or it is not sharing the same bed. She explains to me what she does not believe in this definition, however following this she is able to indicate her awareness about honor for me. I argue that this awareness comes from stereotypes about honor perceptions of German Turkish women. Obviously most of my participants, as German-Turks tries to protect and differ themselves from these representations, they attempt to not fit the mold of what is expected of them by these stereotypes and then to construct their own definitions around what they deny. In a sense they have a defensive stand in terms of their constructions, they tend to determinate what “they are not”.

This obviously does not overlap with my society’s perception of honor“

You know what the real/actual honor for me, I thought about that a lot; if I could smile every morning while looking at myself in the mirror and be honorable, be honest with myself that is honor for me. Of course it does not overlap with my society, it does not overlap with perceptions of

⁴⁵ “*Namus bence iki bacak arasına işte eteğe ya da bacağa indirgenmiyor, hatta bir kadının bir erkekle birlikte bir yatakta olması, evlilikten önce ilişkiye girmesi bunların benim kavramımda namus değil.*”

honor of the society where I live in or I belong to. *[Tabii ki bu benim toplumumla örtüşmüyor, benim yaşadığım ya da ait olduğum toplumdaki namus kavramı ile örtüşmüyor.]*⁴⁶(Ezgi)

Obviously for Ezgi her “actual” honor is not related to sexuality or more specifically virginity, it is actually related to her own honesty, but she can only come to this definition through what she objects to. However she is careful to underline that her own definitions does not overlap with the ones that she identifies as her “own society”. From her narratives, I know that she identifies as her “own society” the Turkish society although she for all practical purposes lives in German society. In that definition, it is obvious that the struggle of these women about where/which society or/and nation they belong to becomes apparent in their narratives. It could be understood from her that Turkish society’s honor definition is related to virginity, to premarital sex or to the sexuality of a woman. So it could be argued that also for German-Turkish women who belongs to Turkish society, virginity is the motive which defines the honor concept; nevertheless as she underlined, she differs herself from the norm and I argue that she explicitly makes this distinctions due to her stand point as a working woman.

Another striking narrative was presented by Eda, she indicated that the word honor is associated with virginity in her mind and she thinks it is an association constructed by society.

It is always in my mind, when you say honor, first virginity appears in my mind. It is a construct of the society. It comes to my mind but I do not intend to say that, but it is just like when you say yellow and the sun comes to your mind.⁴⁷(Eda)

⁴⁶ “Benim için gerçek namus ne biliyor musun ben bunu çok düşündüm, sabah kalkıp aynaya baktığımda, kendime bakıp gülebiliyorsam, dürüst davranmak, namuslu davranmak, kendime dürüst olmak bu benim için namus. Tabii ki bu benim toplumumla örtüşmüyor, benim yaşadığım ya da ait olduğum toplumdaki namus kavramı ile örtüşmüyor.”

⁴⁷ “Artık böyle beynime işlemiş, namus dediğin zaman ilk olarak bakirelik geliyor aklıma, toplumdaki yazılmış. O geliyor ama ben kendim tabii ki onu kastetmiyorum ama vardır ya sarı dersin güneş gelir aklına.”

Similar to Ezgi's narrative, Eda intends to construct her own honor perception by designating what is dictated by society and what she is opposed to. From Eda's quotation I feel her experience as being "betwixt and between" (Turner, 1974) Eda is betwixt defining her own perceptions as well as between her own constructions and constructs of the society. It is apparent that from Eda's perspective that virginity is still highly valued by society, in that sense although she personally wishes to object to this definition, virginity almost automatically appears in her mind when she thinks about her definition of honor. The betweenness/ambivalence of Eda is more factual as a German Turkish woman, possibly because of her immigrant status. However it is important to note that, a similar research could be conducted among a group of women who are members of an association in Turkey; for example in İstanbul and similar transitions, definitions about honor with different assumptions and approaches could also be observed. Nevertheless it is possible to track the influences of migration in this research unlike İstanbul, since it is obvious that these women create positionality/counter position in terms of representations about their German—Turkishness. So, in this research, although while they describe their honor constructions, their immigrant track is not apparent; the fact that the counter positioning process is the same appears to indicate that it does have an impact. In Eda's case, she appears to be in transition in terms of defining her own construction. She is stuck between two constructions and attempts to liberate herself by not denying the legitimacy of the honor concept and by constructing her own definition of honor "I don't even use honor as a word in my everyday life, it does not exist in my life"⁴⁸(Eda) and she continues "Of course in the family, for my mother and for my father, honor is the most important thing, they dictate to me that honor is the most important thing."⁴⁹(Eda)

⁴⁸ "*Ben namus kelimesini hiç kullanmıyorum, hayatımda yok yani.*"

⁴⁹ "*Tabii ama aile içinde annem için, babam için en önemli şey namus, bana da en önemli şey namus diyorlar.*"

It is interesting to note that these women, probably because of their “special” status as working immigrant women not only define themselves as opposed to definitions provided by the cultural definitions they face from their cultural identity, they also need to define themselves in contrast to the definitions provided by German society. Their intent to respond to both the cultural definitions and also definitions/representations of German society, could be considered in relation to their institutional stand. They emphasize their social status as working, powerful and independent women and by underscoring their social status as a worker of TBB, they are constructing their definitions of honor. It is interesting that many of my participants in their narrations about honor related honor to work. Indicating where these women wish to locate themselves in this. That is, they appear to wish to present their definitions of honor specifically in a nongendered position.

From my stand point, I see honor as honesty, ethics. I do not think of it as between two legs. Both women’s and men’s honor are not different. Being an honourable person is to be honest in terms of work, it is working without denigrating others or without *haram* (anything that is obtained in a way that in religion is defined as undeserved, unjust).⁵⁰(Pinar)

As the quotation above presents, these women underline their stand point and they distinguish their stand point in terms of their motive of independency and their work.

IV.3.2. Distinctions Between Personal Constructs of Honor and Perceived Societal Constructs of Honor

Hatun’s crime, it appears was to desire to lead a normal life in her family’s adopted land. The vivacious 23-year-old beauty, who was raised in Berlin, divorced the Turkish cousin she was forced to marry at age 16. She also discarded her islamic headscarf, enrolled in a technical school where she was training to become an electrician and began dating

⁵⁰ “*Namus kavramına ben durduğum yerden dürüstlük, etik anlamda bir kelime olarak görüyorum. Hani iki bacak arası olduğunu sanmıyorum. Erkeğin ya da kadının namusu farklı değil, yani bir onurlu bir insan olmak iş anlamında dürüst olmak kimseyi karalamadan, haram yemeden çalışmak.*”

German men. For her family such behavior represented the ultimate shame. The embrace of “corrupt” Western days.⁵¹ (Jody K. Biehl)

The above cited quotation is from an article published in “Spiegel Online”⁵². It is an article that describes the murder of Hatun Sürücü by her brother in February, 2005. The whole article is about Muslim women who try to follow a “Western Life” and who are hindered by their family members. The article does not represent “honor crime” as an unusual fact, on the contrary the piece typecasts the image of a victimized Muslim woman by generalizing the image to all German-Turkish women. What my participants reacted to is not the issue of honor crime; what they object to are these kinds of generalizations. They underline that they concretize their objections by working, by their institutional stand and thus becoming independent and not silent. Similar to created stereotypes in the media and in the German society about their identification as Turkish and their womanhood, there is a standardization of perceptions about honor. When there is a debate about honor of German-Turkish women, the Hatun Sürücü case becomes an issue. It is almost as if all German- Turkish women are reduced to women who are in danger of being killed by their family, if they adopt a “Western” life style.

As well as their revolts against societal constructs about their immigrant status as women, they also react against constructs about their honor perceptions and definitions. They all try to respond to these in their own way, by introducing their personal perceptions against societal constructs.

⁵¹ The quotation is cited from the e-article of “The Death of a Muslim Woman: The whore lives like a German” by Jody K. Biehl, published at 03/02/2005. The whole article could be retrieved from <http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,344374,00.html>

⁵² A major German mainstream media tabloid journal.

We Fought against that

Everything is very heterogenous. Westerners look to Turkey and see only this[Honor crimes]. In Germany also, they look at us and perceive all us as their counterparts. We fought against that. Not all German-Turkish people are conservative, religious or uneducated.⁵³(Zeynep)

Zeynep is a German- Turkish woman who was born in Germany, but was sent back to school in Turkey until university. So she had the chance of experiencing the Turkish social life until she was eighteen and since then she has experienced German social life as an immigrant woman. The beginning of her narrative is very interesting: she directly opposes the homogenous generalization such as Biehl's. Moreover, she clearly believes that the German society perceived as homogenous, is really heterogenous, in terms of their beliefs, their educational levels. However, it is surprising to discover her own stereotypes within this heterogeneity. Germany is still West for her and, she perceives all Germans as "Westerners". While she complains and revolts against the tendency of reducing German-Turks as a homogenous assemblage, she also substantiates the same reductive reasoning.

Zeynep's argument does not that differ from any similar objections to homogenizing generalizations. It is similar to objections of a veiled woman against being labeled as "backward, ultra-religious etc." . What distinguishes Zeynep from that example is the fact that her distinctive feature is her immigrant status. The similarity on the process of "othering" is inescapable.

In her narrative, naming their survival as a fight she appears to take a quiet aggressive and rebellious stance. Obviously her fight is through becoming a working, powerful,

⁵³ "Çok heterojen aslında herşey. Batılılar Türkiye'ye bakıp sadece bunu görüyorlar[Namus cinayeti], burada da bize bakıp işte hepsi onların bir devamı diyorlar. Biz bunun savaşını veriyoruz. Burada ki tüm Türkler tutucu, dinci, eğitimsiz değil."

independent woman. In her words, that is what makes her different from the conservative, religious and uneducated ones and that is what distinguishes her perceptions of honor from the generalized stigma.

“For me honor could be defined from sexuality to honesty at work/ ethic at work. Honor for me is really sincerity; sincerity at what we are doing”⁵⁴(Zeynep).

It is obvious that being a working woman and introducing her perception of honor in her work with her sincerity is important for her and differentiates her from standardized definitions.

When I scan all my interviewees narratives about constructions of honor, besides these objections against typecasts, there is also a distinction among societal constructions and personal ones. “Honor is very personal but also societal”⁵⁵ (Yasemin). Yasemin’s simple definition about honor perception is very clear and definitely reflects all participants’ perceptions. This distinction is very clear in the reactions of my participants against these dual definitions while they construct their own. From the narratives I observed that some participants compromise in terms of facing these distinctions, some are more definite about it and underline the importance of the personal in terms of defining their perceptions. This stance could be assumed as a “counter position” which I tried to discuss around their resistance against representation in German media and society. Some create a synthesis of these two positions in their emerging definitions of honor. They are careful not to situate themselves or others close to either personal or societal constructs.

⁵⁴ “*Namus benim için cinsellikten tutunda, iş namusuna kadar. Namus benim için gerçekten samimiyet, yaptığımız işte samimi olmak.*”

⁵⁵ “*Namus hem çok kişisel hem de çok toplumsal.*”

It is our treasure as a woman

At the end we are members of Turkish society, we are Turkish and virginity is our ultimate value, what do you say, our treasure as a woman. *[Bizim definemiz kadın olarak]* If you want to “give” it to someone, give it to one that you think of sharing a life time. That is how I think about honor.⁵⁶(Aslı)

Aslı underlines her independency and power as a working woman in her narrative when she talks about her everyday life and about her identification as an immigrant woman in German society. However while she talks about her construction of honor, she underscores her identification of Turkishness and importance of its societal norms in terms of talking about sexuality, virginity and honor. Even though she opposes created stereotypes attributed to her immigrant status, when the debated issue is honor her personal perceptions and understandings and the societal constructions coincide. Even if it is our personal “treasure” which is the issue, we need to think about what society expects from us as Turks.

Honor coincides with people’s individual truths

“Everyone has her own perception of honor. That is why when people make mistakes about their own truth, they make mistakes to their own honor. For me honor coincides with people’s own truths. It’s about themselves. I do not think there is a general expression for it. Neither in Germany nor in Turkey, it is about people themselves and every one has their own truths and shortcomings.”⁵⁷(Müge)

⁵⁶ “*Ne de olsa Türk toplumundayız sonuçta, Türk’üz bakirelik bizim için en büyük değer, ne derler bizim definemiz kadın olarak. Onu birine vermek istiyorsan bir ömür geçiririm dediğin kişiye ver bunu. Yani ben öyle düşünüyorum namus konusunda.*”

⁵⁷ “*Herkesin kendine özgü namusu var. O yüzden işte insanlar kendi doğrularına yanlış yaptıkları zaman kendi namuslarına yanlış yapıyorlar. O yüzden bence namus insanın kendi doğruları ile bağdaşiyor. Kendisi ile alakalı. Genel tabiri olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Ne Almanya’da ne Türkiye’de herşey insanın kendisi ile ilgili. Her insanın kendi doğru ve kendi yanlışları var.*”

Contrary to Aslı, it is clear that according to Müge, honor constructions are personal. Societies' perceptions and typecasts do not coincide with Müge's definition. In Germany or in Turkey, according to her, honor is about people's own constructs and honor is about people's own honor. Müge represents the approach firmness in choosing her personal definition of honor while Aslı appears to be willing to compromise on this point. On the other hand Eda reflects her own point of view, she underlines the stance of the society and its unpreparedness of discussing the virginity link to the definition of honor. In that sense she seems like implying a third positioning for this emerging perceptions over virginity.

Among Turks, virginity comes to our mind, it is not for me and I think it is not it for most people. It changes. However people do not agree/accept, at heart, they accept that it is not it[virginity] but nobody reflects it to outside. I mean most of people are not ready to discuss that.⁵⁸(Eda)

While a third position may be observed in Eda's narrative which is characterized by her guardness in the presentation of the term "virginity". She clearly talks about virginity, but does not use the actual word, she prefers to imply it. It seems like her guarded narrative is the product of her emerging perception about virginity, sexuality and honor. Actually Eda implies that perceptions of honor are neither societal or personal. There is another emerging understanding considering honor concept and Eda thinks that it is not yet discussed openly in the society. This might be considered as a new perception about honor emerging parallel to third identities developing with new generations. It appears from Eda's narrative that she is in the process of reforming her structure of honor which will be placed in a third space away from the personal and societal.

⁵⁸ "Bizim Türklerde bakirelik geliyor aklına tabii o değil, benim için değil ve birçok insan için olmadığını düşünüyorum. Değişiyor o da . Ama insanlar şeyi kabul etmiyor, içinde belki onun [bekaret] olmadığını kabul ediyor ama dışarı doğru kimse bunu yansıtmıyor. Bunu tartışmaya hazır değil."

IV. 3. 3. Conforming to the Representation of “Muslim Woman” Issues of Headscarf and Its Relation to Honor

Within this chapter, I tried to discuss representations of Muslim woman several times. However my aim was to introduce women’s reactions against created stereotypes and portraits believed in the media and in German society about their identification as Turkish and their womanhood. It was not my aim to direct the conversations on the Muslim motive narrated in these portraits, but the issue came up spontaneously. However I think the term “headscarf” appeared differently yet significantly in narratives of women. Of course the frequent use of the motive is not coincidental, it is a consequence of these portraits and the women were vocal with their reactions against portraits of veiled women in the media. At this point I need to note that none of my participants were veiled. This fact was not my personal choice, there were working women in TBB/TGD who were veiled, and however they did not want to participate in this research. I approached three of them but they refused to participate.

The second part of this chapter, the women to whom I talked with, believed that a representation of “Muslim woman” existed. “For Muslims in Germany, the association of Islam with violence and terrorism has been a source of negative stereotyping, as in the rhetoric surrounding honor killing. The backwardness of immigrants is often attributed to their Islamic belief and practices” (Ewing, 2008:133). Similar to Ewing’s approach, the women to whom I talked to complained about being typecast unidimensionally as Muslim immigrant women. They introduced that this representation was accepted and generalized to all German-Turkish women. The representation of a woman who is veiled, who stays at home, in her private sphere and who could only exist in the public sphere in the shadow of her husband is the stereotype. As Soysal (2008, 2009) indicates, women are associated with the veil and are represented as silent contributors of the migratory movement. Nevertheless the discourses/narratives of women to whom I talked rebelled against this representation.

However it was interesting to discover that similar to their virginity discourses, they were taking a counter position against veiled women and they were distinguishing themselves from this representation and these women.

Similar to the “virginity” issue, “headscarf” was also associated with the perception of honor. However again like virginity it was used as an instrument to react against representations/portraits of the German media and society.

It helps one to acquire multi-dimensionality

They ask me, what if your husband asks you to wear a headscarf. These questions come from our German friends. Although being an immigrant is difficult, it helps one to acquire multi-dimensionality [*çok yönlülük*] especially if one has the capability of managing these difficulties. (Zeynep)⁵⁹

This quotation cited above is illuminating and exemplifies questions that German-Turkish women are facing. This question is about headscarf, and it displays points of views of German friends of Zeynep. Obviously her friends see the fact of “wearing headscarf” as an act that could be done with the will of her husband. So the representation that includes the invisibility of woman is apparent in the question of her friends. Zeynep relates these questions to difficulties of being immigrant. However it is interesting to note that Zeynep situates herself against these questions as a powerful woman who is capable to manage these difficulties. She sees herself as someone who could acquire “multi-dimensionality” from these difficulties. This notion of “multi-dimensionality” is very interesting, in terms of observing how Zeynep situates herself. She situates herself against all unidimensional stereotypes. This multi-dimensional positioning is similar to the previously discussed synthesis of two positions: the position which can be explained by assimilations paradigm and the counter position. In the case of Zeynep she emphasizes that her immigrant status provides her with an

⁵⁹ *“Kocan başını bağlamamı isterse bağlar mısın diye soruyorlar. Alman arkadaşlarımızdan bu sorular geliyor. Yani göçmen olmak çok zor, ama becerebilene, çok yönlülükte kazandırıyor.”*

advantage in creation of a new synthesis or a new multi dimensional position. As indicated in the literature section by referring to Mandel’s ethnography, the type of multi-dimensionality that Zeynep talks about appeared in a different way; for instance by wearing a headscarf to highlight the identification as Turkish. However, Zeynep preferred to talk, make her voice heard by nurturing herself from the institution.

However the participant’s reactions are not as distinctly clear-cut as are their reactions against the created relation between virginity and honor. I felt like the women were against these generalized portraits that develop due to their being “Muslim” women: however their approach is more compromising.

We are facing these difficulties. In addition to difficulties that anyone could face, as a woman, as an immigrant, as an immigrant woman and as a Muslim woman, you are facing such different prejudices; you need to work on it. You need to understand these prejudices and then you need to react if you have a reaction.⁶⁰(Zeynep)

Zeynep’s perspective is really thought-provoking. By her statement I understand that she does not perceive being a Muslim immigrant woman as a disadvantage, on the contrary she benefits from her Muslim identity and uses these dimensions of herself, to understand prejudices and forms new constructs. In a sense she is reacting but she is not reacting blindly. She thinks by multi-dimensionality, these representations related to headscarf, to womanhood, to identification as Turkish and as Muslim could be understood and could be answered back if you are capable and strong.

⁶⁰ “O sorunlarla zaten karşılaşıyorsunuz. Normal bir insanın karşılaşılabileceği sorunların dışında göçmen olarak, kadın olarak, göçmen- kadın olarak ve de Müslüman kökenli kadın olarak o kadar farklı önyargılarla karşılaşıyorsunuz ki, onlarla işte çalışmanız lazım, önyargıları anlamamız lazım ki tepkinizi ona göre olsun ya da tepki verebilirsiniz.”

What is Islam? What is Turk?

They are looking at me strangely they ask me if my parents do not object to my walking around unveiled. They ask about the headscarf, but they only ask to get information. Some of them do not know anything. What is Islam? What is Turk? They simply do not know.⁶¹(Serap)

Serap was the youngest of participants of this research, she was born in Germany. She had gone to mosque for Koran courses until she was fourteen. Her mother was veiled, she underlined that her mother was the only one in her family who was veiled and wearing headscarf was her own choice. The above quotation exposes that German-Turkish woman faces lots of questions about her religious choice, her “being Muslim”, still what is thought-provoking about her narrative is her acceptance and reactions about this representation. She clearly associates these questions with their ignorance about Islam and/or Turks. She is not taking these approaches as attacks against herself or her identification as Turkish or her identification as Muslim. “Islam seems too complex. Consequently when woman is the issue, honor comes to mind.”⁶²(Serap). According to Serap due to the lack of knowledge about Islam, the headscarf becomes a topic. It is due to complexity of Islam and the lack of knowledge about this complex notion that renders headscarf, honor and women in relation with each other.

Obviously as seen in Serap’s and Zeynep’s perspective there is a reaction or an inclination to explain and understand the generalized representation of relation between honor, womanhood and headscarf. Another interesting debate developed in relation to honor and headscarf discussion. As soon as the discussion about honor started the headscarf issue also came up. However I felt like they did not have as strong or as clear a judgment as they

⁶¹ “Tuhaf tuhaf bakıyorlar bana, senin annen baban bir şey demiyor mu açık geziyorsun diyorlar. Başörtüsü konusunu soruyorlar, sırf bilgi almak için soruyorlar. Bazıları hiç bilmiyor. İslam ne? Türk ne? Bilmiyorlar.”

⁶² “Müslümanlık çok karmaşık geliyor. Dolayısıyla kadın gelince namus meselesi akla geliyor.”

had in the case of the link between virginity and honor. On the contrary, while they evade making definite judgments, they question the meaning of the headscarf for those who wear it.

I see our girls who live under oppression, but their outfits seem too 'respondent' to me. I mean for example they wear a headscarf however the blouse that she puts on totally exhibits her body.⁶³(Aslı)

Aslı's narrative clearly investigates the meaning of wearing headscarf, in her own perception of honor she underlines that "According to me honor is not a piece of scarf or leather"⁶⁴. So even though headscarf is not her construction of honor, she still investigates the signification of headscarf. In the quotation above, it is interesting to observe that she embraces what she opposes. She accepts that the headscarf is "ours" and our girls wear it under oppression, but their respondent style obviously bothers her, and the meaning of headscarf (whatever it is) disappears.

When you look at her face you see that she has lots of make-up, you ask yourself so why did you wear a headscarf? It is my opinion however by wearing headscarf, by doing what their parents and the neighborhood want, their headscarf brings them some freedom.⁶⁵(Aslı)

The quotation above is very interesting, in that, Aslı believes that there are different pathways to "freedom". She herself is a working independent, powerful woman, achieving her own freedom. She also attributes power to the veiled woman, believing that her pathway to freedom is through compromise and creating an appearance of fitting the representation.

⁶³ "Kızlarımızı görüyorum baskı altında yaşıyorlar evet, ama kıyafetleri falan bana çok şey geliyor yani karşılık veren. Yani mesela turban takmış ama pantolonunun üzerinde ki badisi vücudunun bütün hatlarını belli ediyor."

⁶⁴ "Namus bence bir bez parçası veya bir deri parçası değil."

⁶⁵ "Yüzüne baktığın zaman bir ton boya içine girmiş, diyorsun o zaman ya kızım o başındakinin anlamı ne? Benim görüşüm tabii ama başını kapatıp bir nevi anne babasının çevresinin istediğini yapmakla belki o başörtüsü ona bazı özgürlükler getiriyor."

In the next final section of this thesis the primal findings of this research project such as the women's positioning themselves in terms of identity and honor will be discussed within the framework of the literature.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

V.1. Discussing the Research

Once my research project started, it became clear to me that my project's theoretical background could not be simply on honor, immigration or women. Clearly it had to take into account perspectives from all of these areas and focus on their intersections. I aimed to focus on three major discourses of immigrant women on three major debates; 1) diversity in terms of heterogeneous identities, 2) integration of foreigners 3) Gender equality.

I chose to interview only the women employees of TBB/TGD -- a German-Turkish immigrant umbrella association--, as these women shared not only an identity as immigrants, but they were also German- Turkish women with multiple identities who were mothers, or working career women. They had an institutional background, and this stand needed to be taken into consideration.

The progress of German-Turks as immigrants was an important focal point for the research. However, the place of women and their progress in their migrant experience within that larger focal point was significantly important.

At the very beginning of the research, I thought that the generation positioning i.e. distinguishing my participant women according to their generation might, be a central point of the research. However, after conducting the research and as some scholars have argued, I realized that the generation concept and its definition do not match with the arrival time of migrants (Soysal, 2003; Mandel, 2008). So differentiating them by an ambiguous term could be quite risky and problematic for the entire research. As well as the theoretical background, the interviews that I conducted proved the instability and in a sense non-existence of the

generation difference in the everyday life of immigrants. I could definitely argue and conclude that none of my participants referred to a generation to which they belong. While they talked about their history as immigrants or while they tried to differentiate themselves from a different age group, they always used terms such as “first comer”, “next arrival groups” etc. In terms of their discourses about immigrant experiences,

Similar to generational difference, I assumed at the very beginning of the research that the urban space could be a significant determinant in lives of immigrant women. I started my argumentation from the point that Kreuzberg, as some scholars have indicated was the diasporic space of German-Turkish immigrants (Mandel, 1996; Kaya, 2000; Jonker, 2006). It might be considered as a homogenous space of living for them. However, when I conducted the research and concluded my fieldwork in Berlin, I realized that this was a monolithic/essentialist approach that I would prefer to avoid. In terms of the contribution of the living/urban space, more cosmopolitan approaches (Çağlar, 2001) match much more closely with the content of my research. As a result of my interviews, it is important to note that Kreuzberg was an important locality for most of my participants; however they were not seeing Kreuzberg as a diasporic space where they were excluded and stuck. Some of my participants were actually living in Kreuzberg and did not prefer to go outside of the locality; however they noted that their choice of living in Kreuzberg was not an act of resistance against integration but was a condition of their life from the start of their immigrant experience. In relation to my ethnographical findings, I could definitely say that for my participants, Kreuzberg was not a Turkish ghetto where non-integrated German-Turkish immigrants were excluded (Soysal, 2001). In contrast, Kreuzberg was a locality of the world city, Berlin (Soysal, 2001) where they enjoyed their free time.

In terms of discussing the assimilation paradigm and its relation to my ethnographic research, I could definitely indicate that all my participants resisted the essentialist approaches of considering their identification as Turkish. By labeling themselves as working, powerful German-Turkish women, they were standing against created stereotypes about their identification as Turkish and about their womanhood. In that sense, in contrast to monolithic assumptions which consider German-Turkish immigrants as a single entity who are resistant to integration (Mandel, 1989;1996) they articulated in their own narratives their counter-positioning as integrated, modern, working, powerful woman. In that sense the institutional stand of these women became also important; these powerful women debated three major discourses in relation to their perceptions of honor by this stand/perspective. In every life narrative, the oppressed, victimized, veiled Muslim woman representation appeared. However each participant repeated that this created typecast was essentializing the German-Turkish immigrant women stand point and thus they all expressed that they positioned themselves against these essentialist/monolithic approaches. All of the participants underlined that they challenged these mis-representations of immigrants and women. As for the relationship of these narratives with the theoretical background of this research, I could conclude that the women's narratives were tending to present culturally and socially integrated positions which challenge the invisible representation of immigrants. A cosmopolitan stance in terms of social experience as woman (Çağlar, 2004) and their preference to go beyond national and territorial boundaries (Soysal, 1996) were the two fundamental peripheries of their immigrant lives. Some participants indicated that the immigrant experience as a woman enabled them to construct a multi—dimensional way of living which was nourished by the experience of being an immigrant woman, positioning themselves against the unidimensional differences between Germans and Turks.

As I conducted my research, my primary aim was to investigate perceptions and discursive constructions of honor in life narratives of a group of German Turkish women. A brief look over the history of honor literature in Turkey indicates a major dichotomy between the modern and the traditional. It is presented by some viewpoints that the naturalization of male dominated authority and of tradition when defining honor, were innately accepted, and the issue of honor was thus linked with tradition, women and their sexuality were essentialized. However, the challenging theoretical perspectives which focus on criticizing naturalized traditional discourse (Koğacıoğlu, 2008) were beneficial for grounding my ethnographical findings. My research indicates that, similar to the resistant, counter-positioning standpoints of women observed in terms of discourses over the assimilation paradigm, a similar stance against the generalized traditional discourses in terms of honor constructions was also noticeable. I could conclude that my participants demonstrate that although there are women deprived and victimized by these traditional discourses, still a monolithic assumption over all German-Turkish women is unacceptable from their stand point. That is, they themselves did not feel victimized. At least in their verbalizations, my participant's narratives oppose the moral panic created in the German national imagination and stand against the perception of traditional masculine discourses linked to German-Turkish women's honor (Ewing, 2008).

As for the honor perceptions and definitions of German-Turkish women, two major notions became apparent: the issues of virginity and headscarf. Virginity was an expected topic at the beginning of my research since the link between the notion of honor and sexuality is often implied and exists with more clarity in the everyday lives of women. However, the discursive constructions presented by my participants, considering the issue of virginity, appeared to be occasionally compromising but frequently was presented in a rebellious

manner. More rebellious approaches resisted understandings which stigmatized the traditional man in defining honor (Ewing, 2008). In a compromising or in a rebellious way, I could conclude that all my participants demonstrated that their honor perception was detached from these masculine, traditional stigmatized discourses. The issue of virginity which links the honor perception with their virginity was negated by these women and this position was used as an instrument to position themselves over and against alleged, generalized discourses.

Although the issue of virginity was expected in discussions of honor, I was not expecting the issue of the headscarf to be directly linked to the issue of honor. However, while discussing my participant's constructions about honor following the issue of virginity, the issue of headscarf appeared. They repeatedly indicated that with their identities as Muslim and as women, the headscarf was linked to honor in their narratives through the portrayals of media tools and by stereotypes created over their religious identities. Some discourses implied that the headscarf was a key factor in defining otherness and as a signifier of non-integration of women linked to their Turkish identity (Mandel, 2008). So I can conclude that there are layers evident in discussions relating honor and headscarf. That is, the headscarf seemed to be clearly related to their identification by honor. Once again my participants discussed their positioning regarding honor, in a counter positioning way. They were very clear in their adamant opposition to the unidimensional typecasting of such signifiers as the headscarf.

V.2. Conclusion

The most marked conclusion of this research was the new dimensions highlighted by these women in consideration to their womanhood and their constructions of honor linked to their womanhood. The conclusion appears to be that, as seen in the literature section, the existing tension between scholars (Mandel, 1989; Soysal, 2001) in terms of the issue of integration and non-integration of German-Turkish immigrants, may also be observed in the

narratives of women while defining their belongingness as migrants and as women. Their apparent stand against typecasts about their identities, especially against represented stereotypes about their identification as Turkish and their womanhood in relation to their Muslim identities as German-Turkish immigrant; is observed throughout the research. Furthermore, it could be noted that in the present study, the women live within multilayered diversities which are observed in their narratives on many topics. This characteristic enabled me to observe this multilayered structure throughout their constructions of honor in the realm of two notions: virginity and headscarf.

As indicated in the introduction section, my aim was to introduce female's definitions of honor, with their own narrative, without providing any structure or standards. My initial questions were: how does honor reify in their daily lives? Are their definitions or perceptions of honor influenced by their immigrant status? Is honor a common issue that they face in their everyday life? How do they identify themselves in their multilayered lives? As woman? As immigrant? As mother etc.? And how do they construct discursive constructions of honor in these multilayered diversities of identity roles? I was hoping to go beyond monolithic, homogenizing assumptions about German-Turkish women. It is also important to note here that the institutional stand of my participants was particularly significant in terms of understanding and analyzing their discourses. In addition to this institutional stand; TGD's positioning in Berlin and its integrative political debates were seen within participant's responses to these questions. They were symbolizing a local voice that represent in a way TGD; not a more national voice that refer to their identification as Turkish.

Consequently, as presented in the findings section, I have come to conclude that the participants of this research who are members of an association, reflected divergent and challenging definitions and constructions about their immigrant status, womanhood, and

finally, their honor constructions. Although these constructions are always linked to their German-Turkishness, to their “being a foreigner” in the host country, they do not position themselves into the typecasted, homogenous picture of either “foreigner” or a “German-Turk”. In their narratives, they challenge these monolithic assumptions by highlighting their stance as powerful, modern, working women. They tend to construct their definitions by underlying their counter-positioning against the representation of German-Turkish women and try to construct their own definitions in their own multilayered diversities.

I argue that this emphasis on the multilayered diversity emerging from resistance to typecasting is the most marked contribution of the present research to the existing immigration canon in terms of the positionality of woman in the host country. However, it is interesting to note that it is also new and significant that these contributions are from narratives of women who are represented as the “foreigner” in the public space, who are stigmatized and who are victimized due to their Muslim identities. These women highlight that they do not need to be saved because of their religious identities and mention that they are in charge of their own salvation through their success as working women, as powerful mothers and as multidimensional German-Turkish immigrant women.

Consequently, this research enabled me to investigate a group of working, powerful women who stand against the created stereotypes derived from their womanhood, their immigrant status and their Muslim identity. I attempted to investigate their definitions and perceptions of honor within this framework where their counter-positioned stand became visible in their constructions. I could conclude that these women are always in search of explaining what –they are not---, while they reflect their constructions of honor, and I argue that these self-explanatory stands through this process evolve into a more layered identity. In forming their positions, the women initially attempt to challenge the commonly believed

stereotypes that are productions of their identifications as Turkish and then challenge the commonly believed traditional discourse in terms of their womanhood, particularly their honor. So these women are not only positioning themselves against the created representation of the host country but also against their own internalized masculinized, traditional discourses. However it is interesting to note that in doing so, they tend to reproduce new positive stereotypes about how a working, powerful, German-Turkish women need to be.

V.3. Further Research

The interesting conclusions reached by the present study beg the question of whether these conclusions are limited to this association or this group of women. For further research, a more comprehensive ethnography focusing on the unique aspects of the city could be conducted. Due to time constraints, I could not research the localities more specifically or of the city Berlin. For further research, the meaning of the urban space, and its implications on the lives of German-Turkish immigrants could be investigated in depth.

It is also important to note that, this research by definition is a qualitative exploration of the perceptions of twelve women who are members of the same association. The purpose of the present study was not to generalize about German Turkish women but to examine the viewpoints of these women. It would be interesting to study the frame in which women belong, expand the group; and conduct a more extensive research with a more heterogeneous group. In doing so, the possibility of more divergent perspectives could arise.

The final formulation that can be generated from the present study is the question of whether their counter positioning as well as the new transforming identity and honor constructions observed in the study are products of this present multilayered, multicultural possibly cosmopolitan Berlin community or on the other hand the result of the German-

Turkish female immigrant experience regardless of locality. These questions can be pursued in the future.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 2006-2008 Executive Board Report of TGD
- Appendix 2 Report: Media and immigrants in Federal Germany
- Appendix 3 Time for a Turkish-German channel!
- Appendix 4 The evaluation of German Turkish community 2007
- Appendix 5 Hürriyet Berlin
- Appendix 6 Hürriyet Berlin

ALMANYA TÜRK TOPLUMUNUN 2006-2008 DÖNEMİ YÖNETİM KURULU RAPORU

Almanya Türk Toplumunu (TGD) 2005 yılında değişik görüş ve eğilimlerden dernek ve çatı kuruluşların biraraya gelmesiyle kurulmuştur. Çoğulcu yapısına rağmen, 270'in üzerindeki örgütümüz şu ortak hedefler ve ilkelerde ortak davranmaktadırlar:

- Federal Almanya 1. ve 2. kuşağın ve onların burada doğan torunlarının yeni vatani olmuştur. Bizler içinde yaşadığımız bu toplumda eşit haklarla ve dışlanmadan toplumun parçası olarak yaşamak istiyoruz.
- Kültürel kimliğimizi korumak, içinde yaşadığımız toplumun kültüründen etkilenecek de geliştirmek istiyoruz.
- TGD kuruluşundan bu yana bu alanlarda çalışmalarını sürdürmekte ve toplumsal katkısını sunmaktadır.

TGD Genel Kurulları her iki yılda bir yapılmaktadır. Sunulan bu rapor Nisan 2006 ile Haziran 2008 arasını kapsamaktadır.

1. Göç ve Vatandaşlık Yasaları

Uzun tartışmalardan sonra yeni Göç Yasası 1.1.2005 tarihinde yürürlüğe girmiştir. Büyük sertleştirmeler getiren bu yasa 2006 yılı başında gündeme getirilen yeni zorlamalarla Ağustos 2007 tarihinde yeniden engellemeler çıkarmıştır.

TGD açısından vatandaşlık yasasındaki değişiklikler son yılların en önemli yasal dönüşümüdür. Alman vatandaşlığını alma aşamasında kendi vatandaşlığımızdan vazgeçmemeye konusundaki siyasal istemimiz ne yazık ki, olumsuz sonuçlandı gibi, daha önceden olanaklı olan çifte vatandaşlık da ortadan kalkmıştır. Bir de buna 2005'in başında Alman vatandaşlığının kaybı da eklenmiştir 50.000'in üzerinde Türk kökenli Alman 1998, 1999 yıllarında Alman vatandaşı olduktan sonra yeniden Türk vatandaşlığına başvurmuş, ancak işlemlerin Türkiye'de 1.1.2000 sonrasına sarkması nedeniyle Alman vatandaşlıklarını yitirmişlerdir. Yasal konumun net olmayışı, Federal Hükümetin katı tutumu Türk toplumunu hayal kırıklığına uğratmıştır. Üstüne bir de eyaletlerin farklı yaklaşımları ve uygulamaları eklenince içinden çıkılmaz bir durum ortaya gelmiştir.

Bu aşamada TGD hemen hemen tüm ilgili politikacı ve hükümet yetkilisiyle görüşmüş ve birden fazla farklı çözüm yolları önermiştir. Ne yazık ki, istenen sonuç alınamamıştır.

Burada söylenmesi gereken bir başka konu da TGD'nin tüm girişimleri İçişleri Bakanı tarafından reddedilmiştir.

Basın ve yayın organları sayesinde görüşlerimiz, istemlerimiz kamuoyuna taşınmış, bu şekilde toplumsal muhalafet görevimiz bir şekilde yerine getirilmiştir.

Yeni Göç Yasası, tam adıyla „Göçün Yönlendirilmesi ve Kısıtlanması, Oturma Statülerinin Düzenlenmesi, AB Üyesi Ülkelerin Vatandaşlarının ve Yabancıların Uyumunun Sağlanması Yasası“, süresiz oturma izni alma hakkını sınırlamış, zorlaştırmıştır. Oturma izninin sağlam temele dayanması kanımızca uyum için temel oluşturmaktadır. Oturma statüsü sağlam olmayan kişilerin kendilerini güvenceli hissetmesini ve uyum sağlamasını beklemek hayal olur.

2007 yılında yürürlüğe sokulan yeni düzenlemeler başlatılan uyum zirvesi sürecini olumsuz etkilemiş olmasına karşın yine de çıkarılmıştır.

Vatandaşlık yasasında da hiçbir gerekçe yokken getirilen kısıtlama ve engellemeler altında Alman vatandaşlığına geçişin istenmediğinin bir göstergesidir.

2. Irkçılık ve Yabancı Düşmanlığı

Barışçı, eşit haklara dayalı ve karşılıklı saygıyı içerecek geleceğe yönelik bir politika şu 3 sütüne dayanmalıdır:

- Toplumun her alanında eşit haklar
- Kültürel azınlıkların korunması ve desteklenmesi için Ayrımcılığa Karşı Yasa
- Okul öncesi, okul ve üniversite eğitiminde kültürlerarası eğitim

Yabancı düşmanlığı ve ırkçılığa karşı yasal yaptırımlar TGD'nin öteden beri savunduğu en önemli istemlerinden birisidir.

Böylesi bir yasa bir yandan ırkçı ve antisemitik yaklaşımları ve eylemleri yasaklamalı, buna karşı önlemler getirmeli, öte yandan da göçmenlere toplumsal eşitliğin sağlanması için gerekli destekleri vermelidir.

2006 yılında gecikmeli olarak çıkartılan Eşit Davranış Yasası ne yazık ki belirli lobi gruplarının baskısıyla sulandırılmış ve sonuçta işlevi çok sınırlı bir yasa haline gelmiştir. Ayrımcılığa Karşı Büro kurulmuş olmasına karşın, bu büronun yöneticisi çıkarlarını savunmak durumunda olduğu kesimlerin değil, hükümetin ve ekonominin lobisini yapar duruma gelmiştir.

Kurulan danışma kuruluna göçmen örgüt temsilcileri alınmamış ve genelde hükümete yakın kişiler bu göreve atanmıştır.

Türklere ve göçmenlere yönelik saldırı ve ırkçı yaklaşımlarda son yıllarda büyük bir artış olmuştur. 2002-2006 arasındaki ırkçı saldırıların sayısı 365'ten 726'ya yükselmiş, Türklerin işyerleri, büroları ve camilerine yapılan onlarca saldırı düzenlenmiştir. En son Ludwigshafen'de gerçekleşen ve 9 kişinin ölümüyle ilgili olay hala tam olarak aydınlatılamamış, politikacıların daha hiçbir araştırma yapılmadan ırkçı saldırı olmadığı doğrutusundaki açıklamaları Türk toplumunda kuşku yaratmıştır.

Mölln ve Solingen'in 15. yıldönümlerini gerek düzenlediğimiz gerekse düzenlenen törenlere katılarak anılmıştır. Bu çerçevede Yahudi merkez Konseyi ile varolan ilişkilerimiz daha da geliştirilmiştir.

3. Eğitim ve Öğretim

Çocuklarımızın geleceği alacakları iyi bir okul ve meslek eğitimi ile olanaklıdır. TGD çocuklarımızın eğitim durumlarının iyi olmadığı düşüncesindedir. Bunlar istatistiklerde de görülmektedir. Alman öğrencilerle karşılaştırıldığında Türk öğrenciler iki kat daha fazla okulu diploma almadan terketmektedir (23%). Alman öğrencilerin 1/3'ü üniversiteye gitme hakkını alırken, Türklere bu oran 10%'dur. Meslek eğitiminde de durum farklı değildir.

Bu kabul edilemez bir durumdur. Bu nedenle meslek çatı örgütlerimizle (FÖTED, ATÖF, BTS) birlikte bir Eğitim Kampanyası başlatılmıştır. Eğitimin eyaletlerin işi olması nedeniyle çalışmalara bir yandan eyalet örgütlerimiz tarafından yürütülmüş, diğer yandan kampanyanın öncülüğünü Almanya Türk Veli Dernekleri Federasyonu ve Almanya Türk Öğretmen Dernekleri Federasyonu yapmıştır. Kampanya tüm hızıyla sürmektedir. Kampanya çerçevesinde 50 Türk kökemli lise öğrencisi Berlin'e davet edilerek seminerler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Federal Bakanlar Schavan ve Böhmer tarafından da kabul edilen gençler aktif çalışmaya da kazanılmıştır. Eğitim elçilerin ilk atamaları yapılarak 35 arkadaşımız elçi olarak görevlendirilmiştir. Hamburg örgütümüz öğretmenine merhaba de adıyla oldukça başarılı bir kampanya başlatmıştır. Kampanya çerçevesinde 50'nin üzerinde etkinlik gerçekleştirilmiştir. Kuzey Ren Vestfalya ve Aşağı Saksonya eyaletlerinde Veli Akademileri gerçekleştirilmiştir. Kampanyanın daha nitelik ve yaygınlık kazanması ancak belirli bir finansmanın sağlanmasıyla olanaklıdır. Bu konuda görüşmeler sürmektedir.

PISA araştırmaları Alman okul ve eğitim sistemimin sosyal bakımdan alt tabakalarda olan çocukların eğitimlerine yeterince çözüm getiremediğini ortaya koymuştur. Bu gruba Türk çocukları da girmektedir.

Yukarıda belirtildiği üzere Türk çocuklarının eğitim durumlarının düzeltilmesi için onlara ve ailelerine gerekli desteklerin verilmesi zorunludur. Eğer bu çocukların Almanya'da geleceklerinin olması isteniyorsa, bu destekler kaçınılmazdır.

4. Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği Üyeliği

TGD, Türkiye'nin AB üyeliği sürecini desteklemektedir. Ekim 2004'de Türkiye ile müzakerelerin başlanmasına karar verilmiştir. TGD bu aşamada AB üyelerinin Türkiye'ye karşı çifte standartlı davranışını eleştirmiştir. Sürekli olarak Türkiye'ye yeni koşulların konması kabul edilemez. Türkiye bu süreçte dışlanamaz.

Hedef tam üyeliktir. Üyelik dışında adı ne olursa olsun hiçbir statü TGD tarafından kabul edilmemektedir. Gelecek dönemde Türkiye'deki sivil toplum örgütleriyle diyalogun güçlendirilmesi önem taşıyacaktır.

5. Ulusal Uyum Planı ve Uyum Zirveleri

Yeni Hükümet uyum konusunu ele alarak bir ulusal uyum planı yapmak üzere Temmuz 2006'da ilk Uyum Zirvesini toplamıştır. Zirveye TGD de davet edilmiştir. TGD 4 ayrı çalışma grubuna uzman kişilerle katılmış ve ulusal uyum planına yönelik somut çalışmalar yapmıştır. Uyum Zirvesine sunduğu geniş kapsamlı raporlar ilgililerce çok olumlu bulunmuştur.

Tüm bu çalışmalar olumlu yolda sürerken Ocak 2006'da ortaya atılan göç yasınının sertleştirme girişimlerine karşı diğer göçmen örgütleriyle birlikte Başbakan'a açık mektup gönderilmiş, Uyum Bakanı ile yapılan toplantılarda bu eleştiriler dile getirilmiştir. Gerek basın toplantıları gerekse protesto eylemlerine rağmen yasanın çıkarılması sonucunda Temmuz 2007'deki ikinci zirve TGD, FÖTED ve DİTİB tarafından protesto edilmiştir. Bu protesto kamuoyunda geniş bir yankı bulmuş, TGD'nin Türk toplumundaki konumunu da pekiştirmiştir.

Protestodan sonra Hükümetle yapılan görüşmeler sürmüştür; eleştiriler dile getirilmeye devam edilmiştir. Başbakan ve diğer bakanlarla yapılan görüşmelerde eleştirilerimiz ve haklılığımız kamuoyuna anlatılmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu çerçevede diğer göçmen örgütleriyle daha yoğun işbirliğinin yapılmasının zorunluluğu ortaya çıkmıştır.

6. Alman İslam Konferansı

Federal İçişleri Bakanı tarafından düzenlenen İslam Konferansına da TGD davet edilmiş ve çalışma gruplarında iki temsilci ile yer almaktadır. İslam Konferansı çerçevesinde 3 İslam Zirve toplantısı yapılmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra 4 çalışma grubu 2 ayda bir biraya gelmektedir. Yoğun tartışmaların yaşandığı bu toplantılarda TGD ve FÖTED temsilcileri seküler kesimin sesi olarak etkili bir çalışma yapmaktadır. Özellikle İslam ve Modernite konusunun önemine inanan TGD bu alanda AÜ İlahiyat Fakültesi ile işbirliği yapmaktadır. Bir İslam Uzmanlık Merkezi oluşturma çalışmaları sürmektedir. Müslümanlar Koordinasyon Konseyi (KRM) özellikle Milli Görüş ve diğer bazı örgütlerin içinde yer almasından dolayı olumlu bulunmamaktadır.

7. Örgütlenme

Almanya Türk Toplumunun tabana yayılma çalışmaları bu dönemde yoğunlaşarak Rheinland-Pfalz örgütü kurulurken TGD'ye katılmıştır. Atıl durumda bulunan Aşağı Saksonya ve Bavyera örgütleri de yeniden yapılandırılmış ve işlerlik kazanmıştır. Kuzey-Ren Vestfalya örgütümüz de bir atılım göstermiş, genişleme çalışmalarına başlamıştır.

Bremen ve Saarland eyalet örgütlenmeleri için de girişimler başlatılmıştır. Bu konuda 2008 içinde gelişmelerin olacağı işaretleri alınmıştır.

Diğer eyalet örgütlerimiz de gelişme göstererek tabanlarını genişletmiştir.

Almanya Türk Öğrenci Dernekleri Birliği de duraksama dönemini atarak yeni ve etkin bir yönetim kurulunu iş başına getirmiştir. Üye sayısını 20'e çıkartarak geniş tabana yayılma çabasını arttırmıştır.

Almanya Türk Veli Dernekleri Federasyonu yönetimde kuşak değişimini başarmış ve hem yeni bir yönetim seçmiş hem de üye dernek sayısını arttırmıştır.

Diğer federasyonlarımızda da olumlu gelişmeler görülmektedir.

Almanya Türk Akademisyen Dernekleri Birliği bu gelişmeye ayak uyduramayarak kamuoyundan silinmiştir. Bu alanda yeniden bir başlangıcın yapılması yararlı olacaktır.

Almanya çapında 500'e yakın Türk kökenli avukat, savcı ve yargıç ile bağlantıya geçilerek Almanya Türk Toplumunu Hukuk Konseyi kurulmuştur. İlk aşamada 100 hukukçunun üye olduğu konsey çalışmalarını 2008'in ikinci yarısında arttıracaktır.

Almanya'da üniversitelerdeki Türk kökenli bilim insanlarının katılacağı Almanya Türk Toplumunu Bilim Konseyi çalışmaları sürmektedir. Aynı şekilde Almanya Türk Toplumunu Sendikal Konseyi ve Kültür Konseyi çalışmaları için ilk adımlar atılmıştır.

8. Projeler

Almanya Türk Toplumu geçmiş yıllarda da projeler gerçekleştirerek insanlarımıza doğrudan hizmet vermek, genel motivasyonu arttırmak hedefini gütmüştür. Bu çerçevede proje çalışmaları sürmektedir.

Bu bağlamda 2007 Ağustos'undan itibaren "**Uyum Artı Kılavuz Projesi**" başlatılmıştır. Proje Berlin, Frankfurt am Main ve Aachen'da hayata geçirilmektedir. Proje Federal Almanya Göçmen ve Mülteciler Dairesi tarafından finanse edilmektedir. Uyum Artı Kılavuz Projesi, Rhein-Main Türk Toplumu ve Kuzey Ren Vestfalya Türk Toplumu ile işbirliği içinde uygulanmaktadır. Bu proje çerçevesinde sorumluluk üstlenecek göçmen kökenli gönüllü uyum kılavuzları aranmaktadır. Bu projeye katılacak kişiler, toplam 20 saatlik teorik eğitim programı çerçevesinde kendileri için hazırlanan kursa katılacaklardır. Kurs şu dersleri içermektedir: İnternet taraması, raporlama teknikleri ve dokumentasyon, iş ve toplantı organizasyonu, konuşma teknikleri ve kültürlerarası iletişim, uyum hizmetleri hakkında bilgiler, Göç Yasası ve Eşit Muamele Genel Yasası üzerine bilgiler. Haziran 2008'e kadar toplam olarak 79 gönüllü eğitilmiştir. Gönüllü Eğitim Kılavuzları aldıkları bu eğitim sonunda, çevrelerinde yaşayan, uyum gereksinmesi olan insanlara kılavuzluk yapacaklardır.

Almanya Türk Toplumu "Gelecek İçin Eğitim Kampanyası çerçevesinde Ekim 2007'de **„Gençler ile En İyi Uygulama Projesi**"ni başlattı. Proje bağlamında bir yıllık içinde Almanya'nın 7 kentinde 8 etkinlik düzenleniyor. Bu kampanya bağlamında, gençler (kendi bakış açılarından) çalışma pazarına doğru başarılı bir uyum nasıl olmalı konusunda bilgilendirilip, aktif olmaları için teşvik edileceklerdir. Proje göçmen kökenli ve meslek açısından düşük başarısı olan gençlerin sesi olup, onların „hak sahibi“ olarak daha iyi bir uyum için gereken aktif katılımını desteklemektedir. Gençlere uygun ödüllendirme törenleriyle göçmen kökenli gençler, başarılı bir eğitime ve mesleğe doğru yönlendiriliyor. Projemize ekonomi ve medya alanındaki göçmen kuruluş ve projelerini de katarak, sorumlu aktörlere ulaşip, uyum ve çalışma pazarı bağlamında gerekli ağırları oluşturmaktayız.

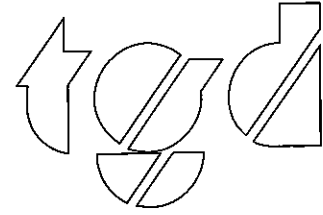
Projenin hedefleri:

- En İyi Uygulama Modelleri çerçevesinde destek gören gençlerin tanıtımı ve diğerlerine örnek olmaları
- En İyi Uygulama Modellerini uygulayan kurumların ve projelerin tanıtımı ve ödüllendirilmesi
- Gençleri ve ailelerini bilgilendirmek
- Bu proje çerçevesinde başarılı gençlerimiz, hem diğer gençlerimizi kazanmak için tanıtım yapıp, hem de medyanın bütün iletişim araçlarını kullanıp, geniş bir şekilde Alman kamuoyuna sunmaktadırlar.

Bu projeler dışında MOQA adıyla Eğitim Kampanyası için altyapı projesi, çevre bilincini geliştirme projesi, meslek eğitimi yapan gençleri destekleme projesi, Türkiye'den aile birleşimi çerçevesinde geleceklere bilgilendirme projesi çalışmaları sürdürülmektedir.

TÜRKISCHE GEMEINDE IN DEUTSCHLAND e.V.
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Karlsruhe, 20.06.2006

FEDERAL ALMANYA'DA MEDYA ve GÖÇMENLER

Almanya Türk Toplumunu (TGD, <http://www.tgd.de>) Genel Başkan Yardımcısı Şeref Erkayhan, yaklaşan „Uyum Zirvesi“ öncesi yaptığı açıklamada, bu süreç içinde Medya'nın rolüne değindi. 15 Temmuz'da Karlsruhe'de, özellikle televizyonun uyum sürecindeki etkin rolünün de ele alınacağı bir dizi panel düzenleyeceklerini bildiren Erkayhan'ın açıklaması şöyle:

“Federal İstatistik Dairesi'nin yaptığı “Mikrozensus” adlı son araştırmaya göre, Almanya'da her beş kişiden biri yabancı kökenlidir. Bu araştırmaya göre Almanya'da toplam 15 milyon 300 bin göçmen yaşamaktadır. Bazıları bizzat kendisi göç etmiş, bazılarının en azından anne ya da babası yabancı bir ülkeden gelmiş, kimi Alman vatandaşlığına geçmiş, kimi ise hala “Yabancı” veya „Misafir” kalmıştır. Bu araştırma bir yandan göçün sayısal boyutunu yansıtarak, Almanya'nın bir göç ülkesi olduğunu ispat etmekte, diğer yandan ise Almanlar'ın ve Göçmenler'in **bu ülkedeki yaşamı birlikte biçimlendirmelerinin önemini** vurgulamaktadır.

UYUM değil KATILIM !

Almanya'da bazı partiler tarafından „öncü kültür” sloganlarına sığınarak yapılan uyum veya entegrasyon politikaları, sadece uyum sürecine zarar vermekle kalmamış, „Uyum” kelimesinin kendisini dahi yıpratmıştır. Bugüne kadar göçmenlerin Alman toplumuna entegrasyonu şeklinde tek taraflı olarak kullanılan „uyum” kavramı, göçmenlerde asimilasyonu andırır hale gelmiştir. Bu süreç içinde Alman toplumunun farklı dil, kültür ve dine sahip olan göçmenlere uyum konusu ise yeterince sorgulanmamıştır. Oysa uyum kapsamında göçmenlerin olduğu kadar Alman toplumunun da sorumlulukları vardır ve Alman toplumu sorumluluğunun bilincinde davranmamıştır.

Bu nedenle Almanya'da göçmenlerin topluma her alanda eşit katılımını ve bu vesileyle her iki toplumun birbirine yaklaşmasını sağlayacak politikalar geliştirilmeli ve hayata geçirilmelidir. Çünkü uyum katılımı gerektirir. Başarılı bir uyum politikasının temeli toplumun her kademesini kapsayan katılım politikalarıdır.

KATILIM sürecinde MEDYA !

Özellikle televizyon, gelişmekte olan çok kültürlü bir toplumun barışçıl bir şekilde ortak yaşamına en fazla katkı sunabilecek araçlardan biridir. Bir toplumdaki değerlendirme, davranış ve alışkanlıkların oluşum ve değişim süreci üzerinde medyanın gücü, başka hiçbir araçla kıyaslanamayacak ölçüde önemlidir. Fakat Alman televizyon kanallarının, nüfusun yaklaşık olarak beşte birini oluşturan göçmenleri, genelde negatif (şiddet, önyargıya dayanan

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programlar vs.) olaylarla bağlantılı olarak göstermesi; sadece uyum değil televizyonların yayın politikalarında gözden geçirilmesini zorunlu kılmaktadır.

ÇÖZÜM ÖNERİLERİ

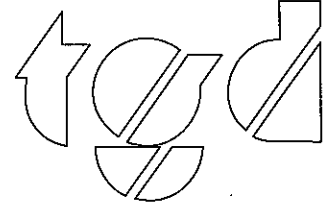
Federal Almanya'da katılım politikası içerikli yeni bir televizyon politikası belirlenmelidir. Alman medyaları, misafir işçilik döneminin kapandığını algılayarak, içsel olgu haline gelen göç gerçeğine uygun, kültürel zenginlikleri içinde barındıran yayın politikalarını üretmek zorundadır.

Alman televizyonlarında çalışan personel içinde göçmenlere de yer verilmelidir. Film ve diziler yoluyla topluma gönderilen „yabancı imajı“ konusuna dikkatle yaklaşmalı, ortak stratejiler oluşturmalı ve topluma film ve diziler yoluyla birleştirici mesajlar verilmelidir.

Göçmen kökenli yazar ve sanatçılar, yapımların plan ve üretim aşamalarında görev almalıdırlar. Göç konusunun toplumsal önemi, Film-Akademileri'nin ders programlarında da yer almalı, geleceğin yönetmenleri ve oyuncularını, yükseköğrenimleri sırasında bu olgunun bilincine varmalıdırlar. Radyo ve Televizyon kurullarında göçmenlere de yer verilerek, göçmenlerin karar aşamalarında yer almaları sağlanmalıdır.”

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Karlsruhe, 18.08.2006

Türk-Alman Kültür Kanalı'nın zamanı geldi!

Almanya Türk Toplumunu ARD ve ZDF'e yedi maddelik bir öneri paketi hazırladı.

Federal Almanya'da yaşayan milyonlarca göçmenin ve Alman toplumunun birbirlerine uyum sağlamalarını kolaylaştırmak için bir televizyon kanalı kurulması fikrini desteklediklerini bildiren Almanya Türk Toplumunu (TGD, <http://www.tgd.de>) Genel Başkan Yardımcısı Şeref Erkayhan, ancak böyle bir kanalda „Kim Milyoner Olacak“ veya ARD'de yayınlanan „Acemiler için Türkçe „ gibi programların sunulmasının yetersiz olacağını söyledi. Erkayhan şöyle devam etti:

„Almanya'da endişe duyulan paralel toplumların oluşmaması için, televizyon kanallarında sadece göçmenlere yönelik yapımların değil, genele hitap eden geniş kapsamlı yapımların sunulması gerekmektedir. Bu nedenden dolayı sadece göçmenlere yönelik 3-4 saat yayın yapan dijital bir televizyon kanalı yerine, Alman-Fransız kanalı olan Arte benzeri, geniş bir izleyici kitlesine hitab edebilecek bir Türk-Alman Kültür Kanalı'na gereksinim var.“

Böyle bir televizyon kanalındaki yapımların maliyetinin yüksek olacağı söylemine karşılık, Almanya'da yıllardan beri milyarlarca Euro vergi ve radyo, televizyon harcı ödeyen göçmenlere bu paraların hizmet olarak geri dönmediğini vurgulayan Erkayhan, „hükümetin uyum politikasındaki samimiyetini bu tür projelere vereceği finans desteği gösterecektir“, dedi.

Almanya Türk Toplumunu'nun Medya konusunda hazırladığı yedi maddelik öneri paketi şöyle:

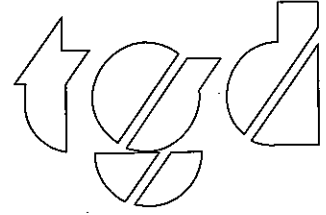
1. Federal Almanya'da katılımı hedef alan yeni bir medya politikası oluşturulmalı, resmi televizyon kanalları, uyumun şartı olan toplumsal katılımı konu alan yapımlar üretmeli ve yayımlamalıdır.

2. Federal Almanya'daki Türk medyası Almanya Türkleri'nin sorunlarıyla çok daha yakından ilgilenmekte ve uyum sürecinde daha etkin olmaktadır. Alman medyası uyum konusunda sorumluluğunun bilincinde yayımlar yapmamakta, göçmenlerle konuşmak yerine, göçmenler hakkında konuşmaktadır. Film ve diziler yoluyla topluma göçmenler hakkında „yabancı imajı“ gönderilmemelidir. Televizyon kanalları nüfusun azımsanmayacak bir oranını, yaklaşık olarak beşte birini oluşturan göçmenlerin yaşantılarına daha fazla yer vermeli, toplumu birleştirici yapımlar üretmeli ve yayımlamalıdır.

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Berlin, 29.12.2007

ALMANYA TÜRK TOPLUMUNUN 2007 YILI DEĞERLENDİRMESİ

2007 yılı Almanyalı Türkler açısından yine sorunlarla dolu olarak sona eriyor. Türkler içinde yaşadıkları toplumla barış içinde içiçe yaşamayı ve kendi kültürel değerlerinin korunmasını, bu değerlere saygı gösterilmesinden başka bir şey istemiyorlar. İçinde yaşadıkları ve benimsedikleri bu toplumdaki gelişmelerden en olumsuz olarak onlar etkileniyorlar. Eğitimde, iş piyasasında karşılaştıkları sorunlar daha ağır oluyor.

2007 yılı Türkçenin yasaklanması tartışmalarıyla başladı. Anadilimizin yasaklanması gerekçesi de Almancanın yeterince öğrenilemediği idi. Bilimsel ve yaşamın gerçeklerinden uzak bu yaklaşımın arka planında kültürümüze karşı dile getirilmeyen bir red olgusu vardı. Oysa her tarafta ikidillilik, çokdillilik öne çıkarken, konu Türkçe olduğunda niye farklı bir davranış içine giriliyordu ki?

2007 yılının bir başka önemli konusu Almanya İslam Konferansının çalışma gruplarını sürdürülmesi ve 2. İslam Zirvesi idi. Bu çalışmaya Almanya Türk Toplumunu yoğun olarak katılmakta ve laik ve seküler düşüncenin önemini sürekli olarak dile getirmektedir. Bu bağlamda 2008 yılında TGD bünyesinde bir İslam Uzmanlık Merkezinin kurulması çalışmaları da yoğunlaştırılmıştır.

Ulusal Uyum Plan çalışmalarına birçok uzmanıyla katılan Almanya Türk Toplumunu, bu planda çok önemli noktaların yazılı hale getirilmesini sağlamıştır. İş piyasasından, eğitime, kadın sorunsalından basın yayın politikalarına kadar yapılan öneriler kabul görerek plana alınmıştır. Bundan sonra planın yaşama geçirilmesine çalışmak olacaktır Almanya Türk Toplumunun hedefi.

2007 yılının Türkleri en çok üzen olayı kuşkusuz yeni Göç Yasası olmuştur. Tüm uyarı, öneri ve tepkilere karşın yasa Ağustos sonunda yürürlüğe konmuştur. Aile birleşimi sayıları da aşağıya inmiştir. Bu ayrımcı yasayla ilgili hukuksal mücedelemiz süremektedir. Yasa gündeme geldiğinde Almanya'da Türk toplumunun büyük örgütleri 2. Uyum Zirvesini protesto ederek katılmamışlar, Almanya tarihinde ilk kez ortak bir tavır ortaya koymuşlardır. Bu sayede Almanya basınında yasayla ilgili eleştirilerimiz yer almıştır.

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Türkiye’de yapılan seçimlerde Türkler yine yeterince katılma hakkından yoksun kalmışlar, Almanya kökenli milletvekili çıkartamamışlardır. Yeni Hükümet bu konuyu çözeceğine söz vermiş olmakla, şu ana kadar bir sonuç alınmamıştır.

2007 sonuna doğru Müslümanlarla ilgili yapılan bir araştırma yanlı olarak kamuoyuna sunulmuş, bazı politikacıların garip öneriler yapmasına yol açmıştır. Gelen tepkiler üzerine İçişleri Bakanı daha yumuşak bir mesaj vermek zorunda kalmıştır.

Tam bu olayın arkasından bu kez Alevi toplumunu rencide edecek bir filmin yayımlanması, Alevi insanlarımızı ve diğer toplumsal güçlerin tepkisini çekmiştir. Almanya Türk Toplumunu Alevi insanlarımızla yerini alarak tepkisini açık ve net olarak ortaya koymuştur.

2007 yılında Almanya Türk Toplumunun Eğitim Kampanyası başlatılmış, bu doğrultuda 30’un üzerinde toplantı, seminer gerçekleştirilmiştir. Hazırlanan www.veli.tgd.de internet adresi yayın yaşamına geçmiştir. Bu yıl liseyi bitiren 50 genç Almanya’nın değişik kentlerinden Berlin’e gelerek hükümetin bakanlarıyla görüşmüştür.

Aralık ayında da Almanya Türk Toplumunu Hukuk Konseyi kurularak örgütlenmede önemli bir adım daha atılmıştır.

2007 yılında Almanya Türk Uyum Kılavuzu Projesinin Berlin, Aachen ve Frankfurt kentlerinde yaşama geçirmiştir. Bu proje ile fahri çalışmalar desteklenecektir. Youngster adlı bir başka proje ile de gençlerimize yönelik örnek projeler kamuoyuna tanıtılacaktır.

Almanya Türk Toplumunu 2008 yılında Bilim Konseyini kuracak, İslam Uzmanlık Merkezini gerçekleştirecektir. Eğitim Kampanyasına hız verilecek, gençlerimizin meslek eğitimi sorununa el atılacaktır. 2008’de yeni projelerin de gerçekleştirilmesine önem verilecektir.

Önümüzdeki yıl Almanya’daki diğer sivil toplum kuruluşlarıyla işbirliğinin arttırılacağı bir yıl olacaktır.

Almanya Türk Toplumunu 2008 yılının tüm insanlarımıza huzur getirmesini diler, herkesin yeni yılını kutlar.

Kenan Kolat
Almanya Türk Toplumunu Genel Başkanı

Hürriyet - A, 08-02-2008



Hatun Sürücü anıldı

Töre cinayetine kurban giden Hatun Sürücü'nün ölümünün 3. yılında düzenlenen anma törenine katılan Almanya Türk toplumu Genel Başkanı Kenan Kolat, her olayın uyumla bağdaştırılmaması gerektiğini söyledi.

TÖRE cinayetine kurban giden Hatun Sürücü, ölümünün 3. yılında öldürüldüğü Berlin'deki evinin önünde anıldı. Tempelhof-Schöneberg İlçesi Belediye Başkanı Ekkehard Band, çelenk koyup Hatun Sürücü anısına bir konuşma yaptı. Band, konuşmasında Hatun Sürücü'nün özgürlüğünü yaşamak isteyen kadınlar için bir sembol haline geldiğini söyledi. Anma törenine katılıp Sürücü anısına çiçek koyan Almanya Türk Toplumu

Genel Başkanı Kenan Kolat "Buna benzer olaylar başka toplumlarda da olabilir. O yüzden bu tür olayları sadece belli bir topluma yönlendirici konuşmalar yapanlar büyük hat yapıyorlar." Anma törenine, Eyalet Göç ve Uyumdan Sorumlu Senatör Heidi Knake-Werner, Yeşiller Partisi Eyalet Meclis Grup Başkanı Fransızka Eichstaedt-Bohlig, milletvekilleri Özcan Mutlu, Bilkay Öney de katıldı.

■ Murat TOSUN/BERLİN

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Töre cinayeti heyeti Berlin'de

Töre ve namus cinayetlerini inceleyen Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi araştırma komisyonu ilk olarak Berlin İçişleri Senatörü Ehrhart Körting ile Göç ve Uyumdan Sorumlu Devlet Bakanı Böhmer ile görüştü. Heyet görüşmelerine devam edecek.

TBMM Töre ve Namus Cinayetlerini Araştırma Komisyonu heyeti, çeşitli temaslarla bulunmak amacıyla Almanya'nın başkenti Berlin'e geldi. Fatma Şahin başkanlığındaki heyet, dün Berlin Eyaleti İçişleri Bakanı Ehrhart Körting, daha sonra da Alman hükümetinin göç ve uyumdan sorumlu Devlet Bakanı Maria Böhmer ile görüşti.

Bazı Alman milletvekilleri, hükümlüler ve Türk dânes temsilcileriyle de görüşecek olan heyet, yarın basın toplantısı düzenleyecek. Heyet bugün, Federal Adalat Bakanlığı Müsteşarı Alfred Hartenbach, Berlin eyaletinin göç ve uyum sorumlusu Günter Piening ve Berlin Eyaleti Ekonomi, Çalışma ve Kadın Bakanı Harald Wolf ile görüşecek.

Heyette, Şahin'in varı sıra komisyon üyeleri Semiha Özyüç ve Mchlusat Vedat Melik ile BM'nin kadınlara yönelik şiddete karşı mücadeleden sorumlu özel raporörü Yakun Ertürk yer alıyor.

Heyete, Almanya Türk Toplumu (TGD) Başkanı Kenan Kolat ve Berlin Konsolosu Bleda Kaçar eşlik ediyor.

■ BERLİN



Berlin'de bulunan TBMM Araştırma Komisyonu heyeti görüşmelerine bugün de devam edecek.

Milliyet, 04.06.2006

'Uyum değil katılım'

Federal hükümetin gerçekleştireceği 'Uyum Zirvesi'ne destek vereceklerini açıklayan Almanya Türk Toplumu, Uyumdan Sorumlu Bakan Böhmer'e önerilerde bulundu.

Uyumdan Sorumlu Devlet Bakanı Prof. Dr. Maria Böhmer'le (CDU) görüşen Almanya Türk Toplumu (TGD) yöneticileri, 'uyum' kavramı yerine, 'katılım' kavramının kullanılmasını önerdi.

Böhmer'e Federal hükümetin düzenleyeceği 'uyum zirvesi' üzerine TGD'nin görüşlerini anlatan, bu konudaki önerileri içeren bir de mektup veren TGD Genel Başkanı Kenan Kolat, Yardımcısı Hilmi Kaya ve Yönetim Kurulu Üyesi Eren Ünsal, entegrasyon politikalarının 'siyasal, sosyal, eğitimsel, kültürel ve ekonomik katılım' çerçevesinde ele alınması gerektiğini savundu. TGD'nin çalışmalarını yakından izlediğini ve takdirle karşıladığını belirten Prof. Dr. Böhmer, zirve öncesinde TGD'nin de görüşlerini öncelikle öğrenmek istediklerini ve mektupta yer alan görüşleri dikkate alacaklarını söyledi.

Uyum zirvesine tüm katkı gösterileceklerini açıklayan TGD yöneticileri de oluşturulacak tüm çalışma gruplarına uzmanlarını gönderileceklerini taahhüt ettiler.

Bakan destekleyecek

TGD Genel Başkanı Kolat bu grupların başkanlıklarının eş yetkili kişilerden oluşmasını ve bunlardan birinin mutlaka göçmen kökenli olmasına dikkat edilmesini önerdi. TGD ile ortak çalışmayı istediklerini belirten Prof. Dr. Böhmer, bu öneri üzerine düşünceğini de belirtti. Bakan ve TGD yöneticileri, uyum zirvesinin bir kereye mahsus bir girişim olarak kalmaması gerektiği konusunda da görüş birliğine vardılar. TGD heyeti, ayrıca Böhmer'e yaz döneminde sonra başlatılacakları eğitim kampanyası üzerine de bilgi verdiler. Böhmer bu kampanyanın hamiliğini üstleneceğini açıkladı.



TGD Genel Başkanı Kenan Kolat, Yardımcısı Hilmi Kaya ve Yönetim Kurulu Üyesi Eren Ünsal, Uyumdan Sorumlu Devlet Bakanı Prof. Dr. Maria Böhmer'le biraraya geldi.