

THE ROLE OF GENDER IN THE CONTEXT OF “ROOTS” MIGRATION:  
WHY DO GERMANY-BORN TURKISH WOMEN MIGRATE TO TURKEY?

by  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE ROLE OF GENDER IN THE CONTEXT OF “ROOTS” MIGRATION: WHY DO GERMANY-BORN TURKISH WOMEN MIGRATE TO TURKEY?**

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Key Words: roots migration, return migration, second-generation, German-Turkish,  
Gender

While a gender perspective has been applied in the broader field of migration studies, it has largely been neglected with respect to the phenomenon of return and roots migration – movement to the home country, or parental country of origin, respectively. A central goal of the present research is to probe into the role of gender-related factors in the context of roots migration, which is done by way of the paradigmatic case of Germany-born Turkish women moving to Turkey.

Based on a multi-scalar ethnographic approach employing semi-structured interviews, this study argues that motives for roots migration can be clustered into four, non-mutually exclusive categories: i) “dream”, ii) “opportunity”, iii) “romance”, and iv) “education”. A central finding is that that gender and gendered images of social roles, especially so in the context of romance-related movements (such as family reunion in the context of marriage), figured prominently in the interviewees’ migratory narratives. An equally important and pervasive issue was that of discrimination experienced in Germany. My main theoretical contention is that researchers need to show more conceptual awareness when using the term “return” migration (return to one’s home country), as a large portion of second-generation migratory patterns, both in the German-Turkish case and elsewhere, are in fact “roots” migrations (movement to the parental country of origin).

## ÖZET

### CINSİYET PERSPEKTİFİ VE KÖKLERİN OLDUĞU ÜLKEYE GÖÇ: ALMANYA DOĞUMLU TÜRKİYE KÖKENLİ KADINLAR NEDEN TÜRKİYE'YE GÖÇ EDİYOR?

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Alman-Türk, geri dönüş göçü, ikinci kuşak, köken göçü, toplumsal cinsiyet

Cinsiyet perspektifi, göç çalışmalarının geniş bir alanında kullanılmış olmasına rağmen, geri dönüş ve köklerin olduğu ülkeye göç – anavatana ya da ebeveynlerinin kökenine dönme olgusu ihmal edilmiştir. Bu araştırmanın temel hedefi toplumsal cinsiyetle ilişkili faktörlerin, köklerin olduğu ülkeye göç üzerindeki rolünü araştırmaktır. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerin veri toplamanın ana aracı olarak kullanıldığı çok basamaklı etnografik yaklaşımına dayanılarak, bu çalışma köken göçünün nedenlerini, birbirine bağlı olmayan dört seçkin kategoriye ayrılabilceğini tartışıyor: i) “hayal”, ii) “olanak”, iii) “aşk” ve iv) “eğitim”. Toplumsal cinsiyet ve sosyal rollerin toplumsal cinsiyet üzerindeki algısı, özellikle duygusal bağlam sonucu ortaya çıkan yer değiştirmeler (evlilik durumundaki aile birleşimi gibi), görüşmelerin anlatılarında belirgin bir şekilde ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrımcılık ikinci bir önemli push faktörü olarak saptanmıştır. Temel teorik görüşüm, araştırmacıların "geri dönüş" göçü (birinin kendi ülkesine dönüşü) terimini kullanırken daha kavramsal farkındalık göstermeleri gerektiğidir. Hem Alman-Türk örneğinde hem de herhangi bir yerdeki ikinci kuşak göçmen modelinin büyük bir çoğunluğu gerçekte köklerin olduğu ülkeye yapılan göçleridir.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Turkish migration to Europe has gained considerable attention over the past decades, both in public and academic discourse. The origins of the story date back to the early 1960s when Turkish workforce had been temporarily recruited to fill labor gaps in Germany and other European countries. While some of these individuals have returned after a couple of years of employment, a significant portion has stayed, with their spouses and children subsequently joining them in the host country. Today, Germany is the country which harbors the by far largest Turkish community living outside the homeland.<sup>1</sup>

These labor mobility patterns, however, have changed over the course of time. In recent years, net emigration to Germany from Turkey has considerably shrunk resulting in a situation today, where effectively more people move from Germany “back” to Turkey (Pusch, 2013, p. 15). Among these people are not only first-generation returnees – individuals moving back to their “actual” home country – but also second- and third-generation people migrating to their ancestors country of origin – whom I shall make a plea for referring to as “root” migrants.

These changing migratory trends have not gone unnoticed by the scholarly community, either. In fact, research on German-Turkish return migration has become a virtual “growth industry” with numerous paper and book-length analyses proliferating on the topic within a short period of time (to name but a few: Bürgin & Erzene-Bürgin, 2013; Durugönül, 2013; King & Kılınç, 2013; Kılınç, 2013; Pusch, 2013; Razum, Sahin-Hodoglugil, & Polit, 2005; Rottmann, *forthcoming*, a; Rottmann, *forthcoming*, b; Sezer & Dağlar, 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed history of German-Turkish migration see *inter alia* Abadan-Unat, 1995; Abadan-Unat, 2011; Akgündüz, 2008; Çağlar & Soysal, 2004; 08.08.14 16:01Kaya, 2007; Pusch, 2013; Şule, 2012; Ünver, 2012.

Extant scholarship on the topic of German-Turkish return migration has mostly focused on the subgroup of highly qualified second-generation migrants, moving to their parents' country. Analysts have thereby focused on the nature and extent of transnational connectedness amongst migrants and their compatriots (Baraulina & Kreienbrink, 2013; Fauser & Reisenauer, 2013; Gümüş, 2013; Splitt, 2013), individual motives for migration including professional career advancement goals (Aydın, 2013; Baysan, 2013), or the intention of seeking clarifications on questions of identity and belonging (Kılınç, 2013; Rottmann, forthcoming a).

Important aspects that have not yet been researched in-depth in the seminal literature on German-Turkish return migration are *gender related issues*. This circumstance is unfortunate in view of the otherwise prominent role of female-centered analyses in international migration scholarship, more generally (Boyd, 2006; Caritas, n.d.; Vertovec, 2007).<sup>2</sup>

Looking at the issue of gender-induced migration from today's vantage point, one can say that not so much the number of women migrating has changed over time, but rather their rationales. As a Caritas report lucidly explicates, "more women are now migrating independently in search of jobs, rather than as 'family dependents' traveling with their husbands or joining them abroad" (Caritas, n.d., p. 1-2). Gender, in Boyd and Grieco's account, is a social category capable of exerting an impact on individual migratory decision-making. According to the authors, gender affects individuals during three different stages: the pre-migration stage, transition across state boundaries stage, and post-migration stage (Boyd & Grieco, 2003, p. 3-4). Precisely how gender influences the migration of Germany-born Turkish women can be meaningfully captured by applying Boyd and Grieco's analytical distinction – which I shall also resort to as a central analytical heuristic.

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<sup>2</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, female migration was comprehended in terms of wives following or joining their spouses in the respective country of settlement, an occurrence which is also known as family reunification, and as such, was only tangentially referred to (Boyd & Grieco, 2003; Caritas, n.d.; Pedraza, 1991). In the 1970s and 1980s, however, female migration gained increased attention as an independent phenomenon. This strand of research was mainly interested in the question 'whether migration "modernized" women [and emancipated] them from their assumed traditional values and behaviors' (Boyd & Grieco, 2003, p. 1).

## 1.1. Research Questions and Arguments

How do gender-related factors affect the process of “return” migration in the case of Germany-born Turkish women? This case appears particularly interesting given the high level of politicization and media attention Muslim women receive in Europe – especially so in Germany with its prominent Turkish population. While there exists some research analyzing Muslim women and their livelihood situation in European countries (to name but a few: Blaschke, 2004; Ehrkamp, 2010; İlkkaracan, 1996; Jouili & Amir-Moazami, 2006; Pratt Ewing, 2008; Riesner, 1990), extant gender-sensitive work, to my knowledge, places no explicit focus on the issue of return or roots migration per se. Writing about the stereotyping of Muslims in Germany, Pratt Ewing (2008), for instance, points out that “the covered Muslim woman has become a spectacle in the Western media,” where Muslim women, as the author posits, are perceived “as victims of male brutality who must be rescued from traditional, oppressive male morality, which is imagined as a total control over female bodies and actions” (Pratt Ewing, 2008, p. 1-2). Related research conducted by Umut Erel largely corroborates these insights additionally underlining that stereotyping ‘erases the diversity and complexity of gender and sexual relations and identities and most importantly the agency of migrant women’ (Erel, 2011, p. 233).

The analysis of how gender-related factors influence the migratory process of Germany-born Turkish women is of central concern to my research. In order to explore the motivations for these women to migrate to Turkey as well as to distill how their gender shapes their migratory conduit, the following set of questions was devised to guide my overall analysis:<sup>3</sup>

- a) what were the motivations for women to migrate to Turkey? Did they consider moving to other countries?
- b) How did they experience their lives as women in Germany, in the wider society, in their neighborhood/community, at home within their families?
- c) What were their *ex ante* expectations of life in Turkey (and what did they in fact experience)?

---

<sup>3</sup> For conceptual clarification a discussion of how they would define themselves in term of identity and in relation to the migration (e.g. as German, Turkish, German-Turkish, etc and as return-migrants, emigrants, or something else) will be pursued as well.

In terms of methodology, a multi-scalar ethnographic approach based on semi-structured interviews was adopted, as it allows for a critical engagement with migratory flows and accompanying processes of social change. Participants of my study were women of Turkish origin who were born and raised in Germany and decided to migrate to Turkey at some later point in their lives

Studying German-Turkish roots migration bears relevance on both theoretical and social grounds. Theoretically, the study case at hand, given its paradigmatic status, bears the potential to fill a theoretical gap with regards to the role gender plays in the context of roots migration. As pointed out above, gender is still a comparatively “young” perspective in migration scholarship. Alas, a theoretically guided, gender-sensitive, empirical analysis of the phenomenon of return migration is yet to be undertaken. Socially, this research makes a plea at setting aside *ex ante* stereotypical conceptualizations of Muslim women as individuals who are oppressed, subordinated and deprived of any form of agency. Instead, a call is made to granting Muslim women the breadth and depth of self-sufficient decision making of which they are very well capable.

The organization of the ensuing chapters is as follows: Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature on German-Turkish “return” and “roots” migration. Chapter 3 elaborates the research design and methodology. In Chapter 4 the theoretical framework of the present research is presented and key terms are discussed, couched in extant approaches on migration and gender. The empirical analysis follows in chapter 5. Finally, chapter 6 concludes with a discussion of key findings, empirical and theoretical implications, limitations of the present study, and avenues for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### GERMAN-TURKISH “RETURN” AND “ROOTS” MIGRATION: A LITERATURE REVIEW

While studies on German-Turkish “return” and “roots” migration have been mushrooming in the last years, one major caveat has been their almost exclusive focus on transnationalism, highly qualified people, adaptation processes upon arrival, identity, belonging, and citizenship. Before proceeding with a review thereof, though, a brief conceptual clarification is in order as regard “return” and “roots” migration: return migrants are individuals who move back to their home country, whereas “roots” migrants are individuals who move to their ancestors’ country of origin – a more elaborate discussion can be found in section 4.2. The ensuing literature review employs the respective terms where appropriate which means that changes to terminology are made where the original accounts lack conceptual sensitivity.

In 2009 Kamuran Sezer and Nilgün Dağlar published a study on the reasons for migration of Turkish Academicians and Students in Germany (TASD). Through standardized questionnaires, they aimed at shedding light on the intentions of highly qualified people to immigrate to Turkey. Further, by asking “do you intend to move to Turkey in the future?” the researchers wanted to inquire how the TASD identify with Germany and how they are emotionally bound to Germany. The study showed that one third of TASD has intentions to migrate to Turkey (Sezer & Dağlar, 2009, p. 11). Although the researchers were surprised by what they perceive as a high number of migration-willing TASDs, a major shortcoming of their questionnaire is that it only gave the possibility to answer with “yes” or “no”. As known, however, forced-choice designs tend to draw undecided respondents into inappropriate answer categories. Amongst other key findings of the study are that especially men generally tend to leave Germany due to lack of *Heimatgefühl* (feeling at home). Women, so the study, tend to migrate rather for professional reasons, albeit the lack of *Heimatgefühl* is also named as

an important factor for females. Students, the study concludes, migrate primarily due to professional reasons after completing their studies. Further, the authors find that willingness to migrate seems to decrease with increasing commitment (single, partner, married). Married TAsD seem to be more willing to migrate if their partner is of Turkish origin, this propensity decreasing, however if they have children. Furthermore, bad economical perspectives in Germany seem to increase willingness to migrate as TAsD see more opportunity to increase their life quality in Turkey. Higher unemployment rates amongst the migrant society in Germany in comparison to non-migrant Germany, a blooming economy in Turkey, and internationalization of Turkish companies function as push and pull factors for migration to Turkey, respectively. The parents of TAsD also seem to take a prominent role in the willingness to migrate. Low education status, bad German knowledge, unhappiness with life in Germany, and Turkish citizenship of the parents are assumed to cause insufficient participation in German society which in turn increases TAsD's willingness to migrate. The study further assumes a stronger connection of children with the mother – rendering the latter's attitude crucial for the intention to migrate of the children.

Harking back on existing theoretical accounts, Yaşar Aydın (2013), conducts semi-structured interviews to pursue the question of whether different societal changes in Turkey are decisive for emigration of highly qualified people with Turkish origins from Germany. This analytical move brings into focus factors related to the country of destination rather than the country of settlement such as the lack of integration or discrimination, as is done by most studies. Aydın finds the decision to emigrate to hinge upon three Turkey-related factors: i) a positive image of Turkey (resulting from economical and political changes in Turkey), ii) transnational orientations and relationships as well as diverse contacts to Turkey, and iii) recourse on migration networks. A core theoretical point put forward by Aydın is that scholars should emphasize more pull factors when doing transnational migration research. In my view, it would appear pivotal, however, not to do so at the expense of entirely deemphasizing push factors. After all, many studies do in fact attribute migratory motives of Euro-Turks to push factors, that is, socio-political parameters (such as discrimination, lack of economic opportunities) prevalent in the country of residence.

Tatjana Baraulina and Axel Kreienbrink, in *“Transnationale Lebensführung von RemigrantInnen in der Türkei? RückkehrerInnen in Ankara und Antalya”* (2013), examine through qualitative interviews whether Turkish returnees from Germany are

members of transnationally organized networks and, in turn, are actors of “basic” transnationalization processes. Further, the authors scrutinize how returnees’ professional efforts contribute to the transnationalization of professions and markets and thus foster the establishment of cross-border social institutions and/or systems (Baraulina & Kreienbrink, 2013, p. 236). The authors identify four types of returnees: i) people in retirement, ii) families with school-age children, iii) adolescents without German school qualification, and iv) young adults with German education. Three central motives for return are identified: a) economic insecurity in Germany, b) aspiration for education, and c) personal attachment (ibid., p. 239). The study concludes that, although there is often a transnational component to the lives of returnees, it can also be passive or jeopardized through individual mobility decisions resulting in a disruption of previous transnational contacts. In Germany accumulated skills are found to contribute to processes of transnationalization only, if at all, at the base – returnees rather profit from already advanced systemic processes of transnationalization without being transnational actors themselves. The results, the authors argue, constitute a critique towards the argument that migrants and returnees are highly influential in terms of social change – they are result from, rather than cause social change. While the study bears some interesting insights, criticizable is its conceptual imprecision insofar as the term “return” is used to encompass migrants from different generations (i.e. both return and roots migrants) – I shall elaborate at length the implications of this shortcoming in section 4.2.

Julia Splitt, in *“Offshoring und Migration: transnationale Biographien deutsch-türkischer call center-agents in Istanbul”* (2013), analyzes how economic off-shoring (i.e. the international relocation of businesses following lower wages or specific, locally present comparative advantages) shapes the social transnational landscape between Germany and Turkey. Methodologically, Splitt engages in fieldwork in two different call centers in Istanbul where she employs biographic-narrative interviews with German-Turkish call center agents. A key argument made by the author is that economic off-shoring is said to spur cross-border connections which, in turn, is conducive to the creation of a new transnational social space encompassing physical mobility as well as immobility (through inability of traveling back to Germany due to the lack of residence permits) but also imaginary or virtual forms of transnational migration (through cross border calls and email correspondence with Germany, sometimes using German pseudonyms).



Alper Baysan (2013), departing from the assumption that studies in the parental country of origin help acquiring intercultural competences which, in turn, increase the probability of “roots” migration afterwards, scrutinizes the motivations for Erasmus students from Germany with Turkish origin to do exchange studies in Turkey. Based on qualitative interviews, Baysan finds individuals’ goals, identities, and motivations to vary considerably. A key point the author makes is that the students’ educational sojourn, at any rate, served the purpose of “testing the waters” in Turkey for a possible future roots migration.

Burak Gümüş, in “*Transmigration zwischen Deutschland und Istanbul: Erwartungen, Erfolge und Ernüchterungen von Hochqualifizierten*” (2013), examines i) whether Germany-born Turkish roots migrants are indeed transmigrants, ii) what disillusionments the roots migrants face upon migration, and iii) why Istanbul is such an attractive destination. The author, employing semi-structured interviews and email correspondences, concludes the following: a) Germany-born roots migrants cannot *per se* or at all times be seen as transnationals, this, Gümüş argues, depends on their endowment with financial and social capital, i.e. the ability – or lack thereof – for actual visits and maintaining social contacts in Germany<sup>4</sup>; b) the overtly positive images the roots migrants have of Turkey usually undergo a reassessment upon arrival meaning that the problems roots migrants face integrating into Turkish society are not to be underestimated; and c) Istanbul is an attractive destination due to its similarities to “western” cities in terms of life style. Especially for women, according to Gümüş, the city’s anonymity and diminished forms of social control pose a magnet for roots migrants.

Alexander Bürgin and Defne Erzene-Bürgin (2013), running an online standardized questionnaire on 85 roots migrants, for the first time inquire into the motives for German-Turkish migrants for moving to Turkey using quantitative methods. They outline six main reasons: i) little career opportunities in Germany, ii) work place discrimination, iii) lack of feeling at home in Germany (*Heimatgefühl*), iv) mobility, v) career opportunities in Turkey, and vi) non-economic pull factors (social, emotional, psychological, e.g. desire of something new, explore one’s roots, partner or

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<sup>4</sup> Since starting new social contacts upon arrival in Turkey requires time and energy, Gümüş argues that during that time it is difficult to keep in touch with social contacts in Germany, thus rendering the individuals in question not “truly” transnational.

family, desire to raise children in own cultural context, and attractiveness of the world city Istanbul). A contentious point thereby made by the authors is that the reasons for migration among German-Turks are said not to significantly vary from those without a migratory background – say German-Germans. As such, Bürgin and Erzene-Bürgin see German-Turkish migratory intensions primarily rooted in the necessities of the globalized competitive economy. However, it remains questionable, to say the least, how meaningful it is to treat general labor mobility and return/roots migration as the same thing. After all, collapsing the two categories would likely eclipse factors such as discrimination which are often cited as important reasons driving return/roots migration.

Susan Rottmann, in “Citizenship ethics: German-Turkish return migrants, belonging and justice” (*forthcoming*, a), scrutinizes how citizenship and belonging is renegotiated within the social circle of return migrants’ dwelling in Istanbul. Resorting to the analytical tools of the anthropology of ethics, Rottmann argues that conceptions of respect and equality constitute the main pillars of the concept of citizenship for the return migrants. A key point raised by Rottmann is that cosmopolitanism is a notion frequently used by returnees in debates about national citizenship showing the continuing “importance of national belonging and ethics, regardless of citizens’ transnational mobility” (Rottmann, *forthcoming* a).

In another piece entitled “Cultivating and contesting order: ‘European Turks’ and negotiations of neighborliness”, Susan Rottmann argues that Turks returning from Germany “feel they act as modern, ‘European-Turks’ and exemplify good neighborliness” by “maintaining aesthetically pleasing homes and gardens, keeping public places clean, and obeying rules and laws in public” (Rottmann, *forthcoming*, b). The author also finds, however, that the native Turkish population does not always warmly welcome this lifestyle. The neighborly ethics exercised by returnees, according to Rottmann, at the same create “anxieties about individualism, reciprocity, ‘modernity’ and ‘European-ness’ in Turkey” (Rottmann, *forthcoming* b).

Nilay Kılınç (2013), employing open-ended and in-depth interviews, presents yet another study on German-Turkish return migrants. Her contribution compared to previous work lies in the emphasis of the role of narratives. Kılınç, somewhat parallel to Rottmann’s argument, also finds that members of the second generation constantly

renegotiate their identities and belongingness.<sup>5</sup> The second generation's "return" differs importantly from the first generation "because the second generation's understanding of 'home' is more blurry compared to their parents" (ibid., p. 58). This difference, according to the author, leads the second generation to feel alienated in the first two years upon arrival in Turkey. Especially female migrants, Kılınç finds, struggled in the renegotiation of their gendered identities as "they had to adapt the new rules of gender roles" in Turkey which differ from European countries (ibid., p. 57).<sup>6</sup>

A study by the German Federal Office for Migration (*Bundesamt für Migration*) brings some light to the figures of return and roots migration movements to Turkey. According to the study, the number of emigrants with Turkish origin is rather small. According to their statistics, from 2007 to 2012 only 14'000 to 17'000 emigrations of Turkish citizens were registered along with 4'000 to 5'500 immigrations of Germans to Turkey. This number, in comparison with the total population of around three million Turks in Germany, is found to be relatively small (Alscher & Kreienbrink, 2014). About 20% of the emigrants with Turkish citizenship were born and socialized in Germany and are thus seen to be part of the second or third generation (ibid., p. 7). There also appears to be a difference between the sexes in terms of the age at which they decide to migrate. Women tend to migrate rather prior to 24, while the frequency of men migrating hits a peak after the age 35. The authors of the study take this as an indicator of, different reasons for migration among men and women (ibid., p. 8), but do not further elaborate. Another intriguing finding is the reported gap between those who express a willingness to migrate and those who actually take the step and migrate. A lack of *Heimatgefühl* is among the most mentioned aspects for migration-willing people (40% to 60%). For the actual migration, however, the authors state that family and partner related reasons seem to be of greater importance – 63% as opposed to 28% lack of *Heimatgefühl* (ibid., p. 172). Experiences of discrimination, by contrast, are not

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<sup>5</sup>In particular, Kılınç pursues the following research questions: i) the ways in which "family narratives and practices construct the imagined and gendered 'home' for the second generation," ii) how "childhood memories from the homeland visits affect the second generation's belongingness and perception of 'home'," and iii) "the ways in which the second generation renegotiate their diasporic and gender identity in the parental homeland" (Kılınç, 2013, p. 4).

<sup>6</sup>Wessendorf's (2007) research on Swiss-Italian second generation "roots migration" suggests similar results: "female roots migrants experienced gender-related cultural expectations and practices as one of the main challenges of integration in Italy" (Wessendorf, 2007, p. 1085).

found to be decisive (ibid., p. 9). However, the authors' distinction between lack of *Heimatgefühl* and discrimination as two distinct things may not be all too warranted. Experiences of discrimination, I would argue, are often the root cause of what can be labeled a lack of feeling at home, (*Heimatgefühl*).

King and Kılınç, in their study entitled *'Euro-Turks' Return: The Counterdiasporic Migration of German-Born Turks to Turkey* (2013), construct a typology of return movements distilling five categories: i) return as part of a family decision; ii) as a traumatic experience; iii) as an escape and a new start; iv) as a project of self-realization; and v) return to live the "Turkish way of life" (King & Kılınç, 2013, p. 21). First, "return as part of a family decision" usually brought the second-generation to Turkey during their teens without them having a say in the decision making process. Second, "return as a traumatic event" refers to the time of adaptation in Turkey upon arrival. The loss of friends, the change of school/workplace and environment was a traumatic experience for some of the participants. Third, "return as an escape and a new start" indicates migration undertaken in order to escape 'from an individual or family situation, usually connected with some kind of family rupture, and moving to Turkey as a reaction to the anti-Turkish discrimination in German society' (King & Kılınç, 2013, p. 29). Fourth, "return as self-realization" refers to a 'sense of achievement and maturity' and can also be achieved through university education for example through exchange programs 'to test the water [...] and decide whether they want to return' for a longer time period (ibid., p. 32-33; see also Baysan, p. 2013). Finally, "return and the Turkish way of life" refers "to attractions of life in Turkey," warmer human relations and family values, "the relaxed attitude to rules and regulations," and "the lively and cosmopolitan atmosphere" in Istanbul (King & Kılınç, 2013, p. 34). These categories, according to the authors, should not be conceived of as mutually exclusive, as they found their participants to have drawn upon two or more in their accounts (ibid., p. 21). While the authors' attempt at typological theory-building is surely laudable, a crucial point which is not further perused pertains to the question of how gender influences the presented narratives of return. To the discussion thereof I shall now turn.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Ethnography

The traditional ethnographic “field” as a more or less clearly delineated and enclosed space has been increasingly challenged on the grounds that in an increasingly interconnected world it is basically impossible to find such enclosed field. These shortcomings have led anthropologists to advocate what is nowadays called a “multi-sited” approach (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997; Marcus, 1995; Xiang, 2013). In migration research, the limitations of the traditional one-dimensional analysis are especially apparent in that the social field has come to encompass different places in the context of more globalized social interactions. Nevertheless, there remain disputes amongst scholars. While Marcus conceives of the multi-sited approach to be the most appropriate tool for contemporary migration research, Xiang even goes further to argue that multi-sited may not be multi-sited enough as researchers “have to stand somewhere in order to confront problems and engage with changes”. The inevitable inter-linkage of different social sites leads Xiang to suggest “multi-scalar ethnography” instead, which integrates not only the analysis of different scales (or sites) at which actors engage with one another, but also how those scales interact with each other. Here, any scale is thought to be delineated by its “spatial reach of actions” (Xiang, 2013, p. 284). The multi-scalar approach is thus, to use Xiang’s own words, “concerned with how social phenomena, such as transnational migration, are *constituted* through actions at different scales” (ibid., p. 284; original emphasis).

Through this method it is then possible to account for the complexity of migration as no single scale needs to be assumed to be operating independently from one another (e.g. an actor not having any financial problems which may disrupt the migration

process, but, in turn, having legal problems may). Adding another dimension to multi-sited ethnography, multi-scalar ethnography “provide[s] us with a vantage point to understand how multi-sited connections actually work, and what the sites mean to each other” by looking at “[r]elations across multiple scales” (Xiang, 2013, p. 284). Equally important are the positionality and perspective of the actors, as well as the ethnographer, as Xiang notes, multi-scalar ethnography is a reflexive ethnography in which the “ethnographer has to be constantly aware of where she is” on the perspectival scale (ibid., p. 285).

What are the advantages of using a multi-scalar approach in the present research context? First, it allows taking into consideration various spaces, or scales for that matter, which impact the individual migratory intentions, the very decision making process (including reactions from the environment and considerations about the future life in Turkey). Second, rather than providing a comprehensive account about the movement *per se*, multi-scalar ethnography is primarily concerned “about logics of actions, emerging capacity, and possible changes. [The idea is not only to follow] flows and connections, but more importantly [to] trace[...] people’s concerns, calculations, and strategies” (ibid., p. 295-297). In doing so, multi-scalar ethnography aims at capturing “why certain changes take place and other[s] don’t, and identify the interfaces between mobility and institutions where intervention is feasible and productive” (ibid., p. 296). As such, multi-scalar ethnography is well suited to exploring the ways in which gender shapes the migratory process of German-Turkish women.<sup>7</sup>

Relevant scales in the present context are as follows: social background/position (level of integration); family relations and connections to Turkey (friends or family); legal situation (i.e. Turkish or German passport, blue card etc); economic capital; and socio-political discourse on the Turkish population in Germany (especially on women and return migration). In order to capture these scales and their relative effect on migrant women, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The form of semi-structured interviews was chosen in order to reach a certain degree of comparability between the different participants, and thus be able to derive more general conclusions. The conversations were thereby guided by a prepared set of questions, yet not entirely

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<sup>7</sup> To be sure, a comprehensive application of Xiang’s logic would imply also including the narratives of women who continue their lives in Germany – i.e. who did not migrate – because this would help elucidate their reasons to stay. While certainly insightful, doing so would extend the means available to me in the context of this thesis but remain worthwhile pursuing in future work.

constrained by them as to provide enough space for the participants to express what they deemed important in terms of their personal migratory narratives (see Mason, 2002; O'Reilly, 2005).

The interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim (including pauses, laughter, sarcasm, mocking and other non-verbal communications) and notes were made on the general course of the interview (e.g. flow, interruptions, emotions, connection to the interviewee). A mix of *literal, interpretive and reflexive reading* was employed for analyzing the collected data (Mason, 2002, p. 149). A literal reading denotes focusing on “words and language used, the sequence of interaction, the form and structure of the dialogue, and the literal content” (ibid., p 149). Interpretative reading entails going beyond the raw data in that one is also “concerned with what you see as your interviewees’ interpretations and understandings, or their versions and accounts of how they make sense of social phenomena” (ibid., p.149). Finally, a reflexive reading was also employed in order to locate myself as part of the collected data and “explore [my] role and perspective in the process of generation and interpretation of data” (ibid., p. 149).

In the process of analyzing the interviews, I read the transcripts repeatedly. Since the order of the questions altered from one interview to another depending on the flow of the conversation, in a first step, I coded the interviews thematically along subjects that were central to my research questions. In a second step, I created a table (see appendix) with an overview of each individual’s central statements, such as expressed identity, parental history of migration, view on the term “returnee”. In a final step, I took notes on what I deemed or on what was expressed by the interviewees to be important for their narratives. After writing the section on research findings, I compared and contrasted my writing once again with the transcripts.

### **3.2. Interviews**

Interviews were conducted with a total of 15 participants between the ages 25 and 39. The conversations lasted around 1-1.5 hours, plus usually around half an hour to an hour of small talk before and after. The interview was broadly organized in three parts: i) life in Germany, ii) relations to Turkey and the idea of roots migration, and iii)

motivations for and decision making to migrate. The beginning and the end of the interview were held following a standardized scheme, informing and asking the same things to every interviewee in the same order. I started off each conversation asking for permission to record the interview for subsequent transcription and data analysis. The interviewees were reassured that the records are treated confidentially. I also informed the participants that they would be given pseudonyms and that the anonymization of further information was also possible (e.g. place of residence in Germany and/or Turkey), if so desired. Further, I made sure to inform them about the semi-structured nature of the interview, thus providing them space to ramble on their narratives, add what *they* deem important or ask questions to me in return. As a last point, I asked about their language of preference – clarifying also that my Turkish was good enough to follow daily talks - and asked them to speak the way they felt most comfortable and not to feel forced speaking German. Then, I continued by asking them to tell me about how they grew up, their environment, family, friends, classmates, etc. Other than these standardized aspects, the remainder of the interview was conducted in a rather flexible way depending on the course of the conversation, and included questions on the following issues:

- i) what experiences did you have as someone of Turkish origin, as a woman, as a woman of Turkish origin; how did your environment perceive you?
- ii) How did the idea of going to Turkey emerge, was it a constant subject at the dinner table, spontaneous, slowly emerging, one defining event? How was your connection to Turkey, yearly visits, family, and friends? Do you have other people in your environment who migrated? Did/Do you consider other places than Turkey? How do you think about the term returnee? Would you see yourself as a returnee?
- iii) What was pushing away from Germany and pulling to Turkey? Who participated in the decision-making? How did your environment react to the idea to move to Turkey? Do you visit Germany, how often? Where do you see your future?

Most of the interviewees talked very freely. In cases, however, where I felt some hesitation, I sometimes tried talking about myself as an attempt to make the interviewees feel more comfortable. (I felt that my efforts to learn Turkish, sharing the migratory experience of moving to Turkey from a European country (Switzerland) and



my experiences with a Swiss-Colombian hybrid identity<sup>8</sup> were beneficial to the relationship between the interviewees and myself, especially with less outgoing participants.)

### 3.2.1. Selection of Interviewees

The sampling strategy employed for this research was the “snowball method”, whereby the “snowball” was initiated at different points. As is valid for all studies applying this method, it is often rather difficult to claim representativeness of samples that are put together in this manner. Yet, the researcher can to some extent account for bias knowing the socio-demographic make up of the sample. For instance, in my sample educationally disadvantaged women are absent. This precludes making inferential statements about the latter’s migratory situation. Nevertheless, in terms of age, place of residency (in Germany and Istanbul/Turkey), and family background (as well as having an own family or not), the selected participants represent a fairly mixed assemblage of individuals which enables deriving a first tentative set of conclusions about the ways in which gender influences migratory decisions.

A key contact pool I used was the Facebook group *Rückkehrerstammtisch* (returnees table of regulars), which meets monthly and serves the purpose of networking. Membership in the group depends on approval but, in my experience, seems to be granted readily. Once joined, like-minded people are cordially invited to take part in mutually organized social events. Other groups and organizations which I

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<sup>8</sup> Hyphenated identity labeling was first brought forward by Ayhan Kaya “*Sicher in Kreuzberg*“ *Constructing Diasporas: Turkish Hip-Hop Youth in Berlin* (2001). Kaya uses the term “German-Turk in the Anglo-Saxon academic tradition to categorise diasporic youth; the term attributes a hybrid form of cultural identity to those groups of young people” (Kaya, 2001, p. 4). Acknowledging the differences of political regimes of immigrant incorporation in Germany and the U.S., Kaya argues, that “Turks have never been defined as German-Turks or Turkish-German by the official discourse” but have rather been considered *appart* (ibid., p. 4). The rationale to stick to the term then is twofold: first, “the term distanced the researcher from essentialising the descendants of the transnational migrants as ‘Turkish’,” second, “it underlines the transcultural character of these youths” (ibid., p. 4). The term “German-Turks” and its derivatives (German-Turkish, Turkish-German) shall be used in this sense throughout the thesis. It should further be noted that some of the interviewees of the present study would also refer to themselves in form of a hyphenated identity.

contacted were the Facebook group *German-Turkish Academicians*, where a friend posted my request, and the *German-Turkish network*. I also sent emails to the networks *Tandem*, *Die Brücke* (the bridge), and the *Turkish-German University (TGU)*. Following the suggestion of one interviewee who works at the TGU, I made a request both to Tandem and the TGU administrators to forward my message to their members/students. However, neither *Tandem* nor the *Turkish-German University* replied to my appeal. *Die Brücke* replied that they would print my message in the next newsletter. The most effective channel by far for reaching out to potential interview partners was the *Rückkehrerstammtisch*, where I got a reply of initially five, of which one did not match the criteria and another stopped corresponding while trying to schedule a meeting. About a month later, I posted for a second time, again getting five responses, one of which was male and another again stopped corresponding when trying to reschedule a meeting she had forgotten about. One contacted me after hearing from an acquaintance about my research, however, stopped corresponding after a while when trying to reschedule a meeting we had to cancel due to a set of events taking place in the broader area of Istanbul. The remaining interviewees were found either through friends or through earlier study participants, resulting in having two sisters and their friend, two cousins, and three friends in the sample.

My contacting message included information about myself (Swiss-Colombian, who grew up in Switzerland, my educational background, Erasmus student at Bilgi University, Master student at Sabanci), information about my research, (i.e. study on the reasons why women who were born and grew up in Germany migrate to Turkey), and that I was looking for interviewees who would be willing to share their experiences. Eligible as study participants were individuals who 1) were born and raised in Germany (school-leaving qualification), 2) had at least one parent who migrated from Turkey to Germany.

I decided to include the information about my bi-national background, principally for two reasons: firstly, when I went to a meeting of the *Rückkehrerstammtisch* in June 2013 I realized that people showed more interest towards me when I said I was Swiss-Colombian than when I merely mentioned I was interested in studying “return migration” – in the latter case I had the feeling that I was just one amongst many researchers. Secondly, a bi-national background would constitute one connection to the interviewees who also experienced growing up with two cultures. Here is an excerpt of my research notes taken during my visit to the regulars meeting:

After the speech I went to introduce myself to the administrator of the Facebook page and organizer of the event. I told her that I had recently joined the Facebook group and had come to the first Stammtisch that evening that I am a cultural studies student at Sabanci University and interested in “return migration”. Which she commented with ‘ah like so many others too’. I then added that I wanted to get to know people, come to the Stammtisch and learn about it and that I hoped this was ok. She said, of course and that I should just come and join and then asked whether I had met some people already. People coming by and greeting her constantly interrupted our talk. She then also asked about my age, my background and where I was from and after saying that my mother was Colombian and my father Swiss, she said: ‘aah, why didn’t you tell me earlier, we would have celebrated you as our first Swiss-Colombian member’. And again I was introduced as such to the next person crossing our way.

### **3.2.2. Setting and Language of Interviews**

The majority of the interviews were conducted during March and April 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey. One of the interviewees, Beyza, was still living in Germany at the time and Pelin in Konya – these two interviews were conducted via Facebook-video-chat. For the remaining interviews, I offered to go to the neighborhood of the interviewees and left the choice of the specific location up to the study participants. The majority of the interviews were conducted in public spaces, such as a cafés or parks. The double interviews with Alev and Gizem, and Ceylan and Aylin took place in Alev’s sister’s home, following a baby shower to which I was kindly invited as well. During the interview with Ceylan and Aylin, Aylin’s brother was also present (the siblings share an apartment). His presence, however, did not meddle with the interview. Similarly, during the interview with Emel her husband and daughter were around, walking in and out of the café. Since we were talking in German, Emel’s husband could not follow our conversation so that, at some point, we paused the interview and talked in Turkish as he was curious about why I chose to come to Turkey, my field of study and alike. The presence of a male person, however, did not disturb the course of this interview either. In that, my experiences were rather different from Kılınç, who notes:

There were some occasions where the female interviewees’ boyfriends or husbands joined the interview for a while. At these times, the male partners tended to dominate the conversation and the female interviewees hesitated to answer the questions or they asked the opinion of their partners. In general these men were suspicious about the intention of my research, they openly showed their hesitation and when they heard their girlfriend or wife

started to give information which would be personal, they intervened. This attitude was followed by an interrogation-like questions session towards me (2013, p. 34).

The language of the interviews was in all cases predominantly German, as the participants expressed their feeling more comfortable with German. Often, the interviewees uttered certain terms in Turkish, either because there is no respective term in German (e.g. *almancı*, *dershane*, *kismet*), or because the appropriate German term slipped their mind. Ceylan expressed her preference of mixing Turkish, German and English, forming a “remix” and that she needed people who understand German, Turkish and English.

### 3.3. Textual Analysis

Textual analysis has come to be a valuable means to accomplish this goal insofar as ethnographical research has become increasingly textualized. This has happened through the so-called textual turn, which discovered culture as text, rendering the integration of cultural analysis and textual analysis crucial. The discussion about where the meaning of a text precisely lies – whether in the text itself or in the reader (Culler, 1997; Fish, 1980; Graff, 1995) – has been important for advancements in the context of narrative and biographical interviews as well. The following questions were thus present throughout the present research: *What influence has the prospect of the interviewer on how s/he analyzes the conducted interview? Would someone who did not lead the interview come to the same conclusions? We can ask similar questions even for the interview itself, while it takes place: Does the interviewee understand the question the same way as the interviewer means it? What power has the interviewee on the meaning of the question? And then, if the interviewee answers to a question understood differently, does the interviewer notice this, or does s/he rather “hear” it in the way answering the question s/he thinks to have asked?* The advantage, then, in the case of interviews as opposed to texts is that we can always ask follow-ups to our vis-à-vis about how s/he meant what s/he asked or responded. Nevertheless, the discussion in literary theory about the location of meaning can make us more aware of these kinds of confusions and thus help to attain more sensitive representations and interpretations.

### 3.4. Further Concerns

There are a number of important points to keep in mind when conducting ethnographic research: a first issue concerns the positionality of the researcher in relation to the participants, and a second matter pertains to how the participants' narratives are represented in the written scholarly work. The first aspect is closely related to what Bourdieu (1990) refers to as the "scholastic point of view". The researcher, he argues, asks self-posed problems, not problems that "are posed, often quite urgently, by the necessities of life," as for the people studied (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 381). The scholar then has to be wary not to impose his/her own perspective (scholastic view) into the minds of the participants (ibid., p. 382). Unawareness of the scholastic vision could lead to the researcher asking questions the participants "do not raise and could not ask themselves (that is, truly produce as such) unless they were predisposed and prepared by their social conditions of existence to take up a 'scholastic point of view' on the social world" (ibid., p. 384). In accordance with this discussion, the questions for the interviews were formulated in a manner which was perceived to be as neutral and non-suggestive as possible in order not to prime the respondents with my own perspectives and ideas. Special attention was paid as to how participants refer to themselves or construct their identities (as women and "return" migrants); the emic terminology – how participants talked about themselves – in turn influenced the terminology used in the research at large. However, it is not to neglect that the socio-political and media attention and representation of the issue at hand may have worked towards shaping this emic terminology.

The second aspect to keep in mind when conducting interviews concerns the representation of the migrants' narratives. In order to interfere as little as possible and enable the reader to create their own image of each interviewee, the findings section consists to a large part of paraphrased answers of the interviewees including direct quotes "regularly and at length" (Clifford, 1983, p. 139). If wished by the participants, they were given the possibility to double-check their narratives in their final version and correct potential misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

## CHAPTER 4

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Terminology used in the context of migration research has often been plagued by ambiguity. To this end, a few conceptual points are in order before laying out the theoretical framework of the present study.

#### 4.1. Who is the “Second Generation”

A generation is commonly defined as a group of people exposed to the same or very similar social, political and/or economic circumstances during lifetime. Applied to the specific group of immigrant offspring, however, the term second-generation lacks the contextual coherence in the form of a commonality of experiences of individuals since it lumps together people, who would technically not be considered as part of the same generation. This is not to preclude that the immigrant offspring can share commonalities if they are born in different times. Yet, it should be noted that historical, demographic, and socio-political changes can easily lead to significant experiential differences, rendering the usage of the term “second generation” problematic.

To avoid conceptual ambiguity, the term will herein be utilized in reference to people born to immigrant parents. The term “Germany-born” shall be used interchangeably. The latter notion has been adopted from King and Kılınc (2013), who use the term “German-born”, and slightly changed in order to emphasize more than a mere geographical relationship, and to avoid making implications in terms of (ethnic) identity and/or citizenship.

## 4.2. From “Return” to “Roots Migration”

### 4.2.1. “Return” Migration and the Second-Generation: A Critique

Another term, which is frequently employed in the literature, but lacks a proper empirical justification, is “return” migration (used to refer to second-generation migrants moving to their parents’ country of origin). The term’s usage in the seminal literature is problematic for two reasons: firstly, how can someone return to a place where s/he has not lived in before?<sup>9</sup> Second and relatedly, concurrently used notions such as *home (country)*, or *guest* are devoid of meaning if the subject in question is not a genuine returnee in the sense that s/he undertakes repatriation. As to the first point, *return* implies that individuals have already lived in Turkey, yet, this is often not the case among second-generation migrants. Most of the latter were born in Germany and know Turkey, if at all, only from vacations and/or family visits. Thus, the term *return* is not accurate. As to the second point, the term *return* further calls forth the idea of the country of immigration – Germany – as a *host country*. This then, brings with it the imagination of Germany as a temporal “home”, where one is a guest and thus required to behave in a certain way (which differs from how one behaves at home). Moreover, it legitimizes certain treatments and the denial of rights; a *guest* is usually not considered as being equal to the *host*.<sup>10</sup> The usage of these implicit metaphors further supports and legitimizes discourses of integration, assimilation, cultural difference and distance. Through words like *return* and *home* a sense of difference is implied between a “regular” migrant and a “returnee”; a person *returns* to where s/he originally came from, or goes *home* where s/he belongs to.

One crucial pitfall of the usage of these terms, where they are not appropriate, is that the migratory process of German-Turks is placed in a different complexion; reasons such as discrimination in the labor market may become secondary as migrating to the

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<sup>9</sup> This problematic has also been addressed elsewhere (see King & Christou, 2010, p. 169; King & Kılınç, 2013, p. 4; Kılınç, 2013, p. 1, 12), however, the term “return”, although often in quotation marks, is continued to be used in these studies.

<sup>10</sup> For a detailed discussion of guest-host distinction and related discourses of hospitality in the context of immigration see Rosello (2001).

*home country* appears to be a “natural” and self-explanatory move. A *home* is a place where one can “rightfully” stay, and where one is always welcome.<sup>11</sup>

My first-best explanation for this rather unfortunate state of affairs is that researchers seem to have adopted notions predominantly used in public discourse to avoid terminological confusion. It goes without saying, however, that such a pragmatic approach is hard to be justified in a scientific context.

#### 4.2.2. “Roots” Migration: A Plea for more Conceptual Precision

For the reasons elaborated above, I shall opt for referring to the act of migration to their parent’s country of origin, as undertaken by Germany-born Turkish migrants, as “roots” migration in lieu of “return” migration. According to Wessendorf, roots migration describes “the migration to a place where members of the second generation originate from, but where they have never lived“ (Wessendorf, 2007, p. 1084).

Wessendorf ethnographic study on second-generation Italians who migrated from Switzerland to Italy exemplifies that the roots migrants “could not ‘go back’ to a place where they had never lived” (ibid., p. 1088). Even though the Switzerland-born migrants in Wessendorf studies were not technically returnees, moving to Italy bore a special emotional value for them: “Although they [the roots migrants] do not ‘return’ to their parents’ homeland (they have never lived there), they move to a place which has always been part of their identity and their everyday lives, and their migration is strongly motivated by nostalgia” (ibid., p. 1091). Wessendorf then identifies three general patterns amongst the numerous and “various personal reasons for roots migration [...]: the degrees of social integration in Italy during the holidays, of cultural and social integration [...] among Italians in Switzerland, and of structural integration in Switzerland” (ibid., p. 1091-1092). With regard to the first pattern, the feeling of high

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<sup>11</sup> The semantic discrepancies described above found also, albeit rather implicit, resonance in popular discourse. An increasing amount of newspaper articles, for instance, refers to the problems of adaptation German-Turkish migrants face upon their arrival in Turkey, revealing that for those individuals their moving to Turkey in fact entails a tedious process of preparation and adaptation (see also Gümüş, 2013; Kılınç, 2013) – unlike natural “homecomers“ who would by definition be “back“ home and ready to carry on from where they left. This circumstance led some journalistic observers to use the term “old new homeland” (*alte neue Heimat*) instead.



social integration, especially close kin networks during the holidays in Italy, helped creating a “nostalgia for the homeland” (ibid., p. 1092), as well as expectations about how life will be after undertaking roots migration. As to the second pattern, close connections with Italian social networks in Switzerland led to the expectation of finding a similar life-style and cultural norms in Italy as well. The level of structural integration also turned out to be an important factor for roots migration. Amongst Wessendorf’s study participants 16 out of 21 worked in the service sector prior to migration, but many of them had white-collar jobs upon arrival (ibid., p.1092). In addition, the study participants emphasized that “their decision to live in Italy was *not* motivated by feeling socially or culturally excluded in Switzerland,” but rather by “the attractiveness of southern Italy” (ibid., p. 1093).

While there are many parallels between the migration history of Germany and Turkey as compared to Switzerland and Italy, one point of difference is particularly worthwhile mentioning (see also Kılınc, 2013). The roots migrants in Wessendorf’s study moved to Southern Italy – a region marked by rural characteristics. The roots migrants in my study, by contrast, migrated to Istanbul, a vast and dynamic metropolis. Common sense would therefore suggest there to be different reasons between Swiss-Italian and German-Turkish roots migrants. Indeed, while degrees of social integration in Turkey and cultural and social integration amongst Turks in Germany did not bear major influence in the German-Turkish case, feelings of social or cultural exclusion in the country of socialization, which were almost entirely absent in the Swiss-Italian context, did contribute to German-Turkish individuals’ desire of engaging in roots migration<sup>12</sup> – a detailed discussion will be presented in chapter 5.

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<sup>12</sup> King and Kılınc found that “those participants who can be considered the most integrated, whose parents were most open-minded, and who were reasonably well-off by the general standards of the Turkish immigrant population in Germany, were the ones who had returned.” (King & Kılınc, 2013, p. 52). Well-integrated individuals, however, could also experience alienation from their parents’ culture or the feeling of not being allowed to live their parents’ culture as well, which in turn could add to the feeling of social and cultural exclusion. What is more, well-integrated individual, as my study shows, still face discrimination and stereotyping by the majoritarian society, again possibly adding to a feeling of social and cultural exclusion.

### 4.2.3. Participants' Views: We are not Technically "Returnees"

Following the theoretical considerations in the preceding sections, a question that begs itself pertains to the study participant's own perceptions about their status as return/roots migrants. In fact, most participants uttered the above-mentioned critique of the difficulty of returning to a place they had never lived before. Concerns of family and friends on whether the migrant will "make it" in Turkey also show that there is a certain degree of unfamiliarity with the country of destination. Some interviewees also shared the view that referring to them as "returnees" carries too much political connotations and is a hypocritical term to be used by the majoritarian society in Germany. On the one hand, the German state expects German-Turks to integrate into German society and, on the other hand, degrades them as Turks as soon as they maintain intentions to move to Turkey. Gülnur's describes this dilemma very lucidly:

*weil einerseits denke ich mir in Deutschland will man dass man sich integriert, integriert und von mir aus auch assimiliert, aber dann wenn man dann zurück in die, also wenn man dann in die Türkei zieht, heisst es dann Rückkehrer, wenn ich ne Deutsche bin wie kann ich dann rückkehren?*

[because, on the one hand I think Germany wants that one integrates, integrates and if you like assimilates, but if one then returns, well, moves to Turkey, they say returnee, if I'm German, how can I return then?]

While some of the interviewees would see themselves as emigrants, others do not quite feel as emigrants but neither as returnees.<sup>13</sup> Emel, for example, says that she is not an emigrant. She would be an emigrant if she had gone to another country. Yet, she does not consider herself a returnee either. Also, arguing for a terminological distinction between German-Germans and Turkish-Germans, others added that their choices for destinations were already strongly biased by their Turkish origin. As Beyza states:

*dass wir in eine Rolle in eine Identität hineingeboren werden, wir da halt mit, eine gewisse Vorbelastung einfach bei der Entscheidung haben, jemand*

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<sup>13</sup> It should be noted at this point that Pelin, who sees herself as a returnee, migrated at the age of 25, married a Turkey-Turk, has a 10 year old son and has been in Konya for 13 years. She says she is fully integrated, she is a Konyali. In Germany, although she was happy there and did not experience many problems, she was always the Turkish girl living in Germany and had this inner urge to move to Turkey, raise her children in her own country, own culture, and own religion. Also Turkish is her language "Turkish has always been mine". None of the other interviewees expressed such strong feelings about Turkey or Turkish language.

*der aber nicht Türkisch ist und sich dann überlegt, eh in die Türkei oder nach Istanbul zu gehen, der ist für mich ein wahrer Auswanderer ja, das ist ein richtiger Auswanderer der sich das überlegt und sich was aussucht und eh dann dahin geht, und bei uns ist es einfach, wir haben diese Identität schon und wir haben eh, z.B. die Anzahl der Länder in die wir vielleicht gehen würden schon arg beschränkt dadurch, dass wir das eben haben ne, und ehm ja Differenz aber halt auf jeden Fall.*

[that we are born into a certain identity, we have a certain prior encumbrance at the decision, but someone who is not Turkish and then eh thinks of going to Turkey or Istanbul, this is a true emigrant for me, this is a true emigrant who thinks about it and chooses something and eh then goes there, and for us just, we have this identity already and we have eh, for example the number of countries we would maybe go to is already considerably limited because we have this, right, and eh yes difference, but definitely]

One should also mention that there is yet another view suggesting there to be no difference between a German-German and a Turkish-German migrant going to Turkey. Sedef, for example, felt strongly about not making any distinction:

*Deutsche lernen ja Englisch und Französisch früher, wie ist denn das bei Deutschen, die jedes Jahr nach Frankreich fliegen, aber keine Familienteil haben, also (unverständlich) und ziehen nach Frankreich dann, dann kann ich ja auch sagen, du kannst ja die Sprache, bist du auch Rückkehrer jetzt, nein.*

[well Germans learn English and French former, how is it for Germans who fly to France every year, but don't have family there, well (not understandable) and move to France then, well then I could also say, you know the language, you are a returnee now, no].

Overall, most interviewees would see themselves as some sort of emigrants, yet distinguished from emigrants without Turkish ancestors. Most also regard both Germany and Turkey as their home countries (*Heimat*). It is against this backdrop, then, that the term “roots-migration” put forward by Susanne Wessendorf (2007) is conceived of as more accurate in the present context. The term does not quite bear the same connotations as “return-migration”, as discussed above at length, while yet preserving the pre-migratory relationship Germany-born Turkish migrants maintain with Turkey. An aspect that would be neglected using simply “emigration” as advocated by Pusch (2013) and could further overshadow the role of (ethnic-related) factors, such as discrimination, on migration. Due to the pre-migration connection to Turkey (e.g. identification as Turkish, having relatives and friends in Turkey, and having traveled

there various times throughout their lives) – roots migration is perceived as the most appropriate term to use when referring to second-generation German-Turkish migrants moving to Turkey. It is to be noted that the term is by no means used in an essentialistic manner in the present study. Table 1 presents a summarizing juxtaposition of the terms return and roots migration.

	<b>Return Migration</b>	<b>Roots Migration</b>
<b>Place of Birth</b>	Country of Origin (e.g. Turkey)	Country of Residence, (e.g. Germany)
<b>Parents Place of Birth</b>	Country of Origin,(e.g. Turkey)	Country of Origin ( e.g. Turkey)
<b>Place of Upbringing</b>	Mostly Country of Origin (e.g. Turkey)	Country of Birth, (e.g. Germany)
<b>Generation</b>	First Generation	Second Generation and subsequent generations
<b>Know the Country of Origin from</b>	Living	Holidays, Family Visits
<b>Mother tongue/preferred language</b>	Language of Country of Origin (e.g. Turkish)	Language of Country of Birth (e.g. German)

Table 1: A Juxtaposition of “Return” and “Roots” Migration.

### 4.3. Gender and Migration

Female migration has for a long time been regarded an epiphenomenon of labor induced male migration, in that women were conceived to merely follow their spouses in the context of family reunifications. However, contemporary scholars have come to recognize female migration as an independent phenomenon, and move beyond the idea of “family dependents” (Caritas, n.d., p. 2). For instance, a Caritas background paper on female migration states amongst the reasons of female migration both economic and non-economic factors. In terms of economic factors, the study names increasing labor demand in destination countries, “family obligations, unemployment, low wages, limited social and economic opportunities and the desire to expand their horizons” (ibid., p. 4). In terms of non-economic factors, the research points out “surveillance by communities and patriarchal traditions that limit opportunity and freedom, getting out of a bad and abusive marriage, fleeing from domestic violence, and desiring equal

opportunities” (ibid., p. 4). Migration, according to the Caritas paper, “contributes to gender equality and empowerment of women by providing them with income and status, autonomy, freedom, and the self-esteem that comes with employment” (ibid., p. 6). Moreover, as has been showed repeatedly in academic research over the last years, migration is not a “gender-neutral” experience as often assumed but actually highly influenced by gender on different levels and at different stages (Boyd, 2006; Boyd & Grieco, 2003; Caritas, n.d.; Pedraza, 1991; Pessar & Mahler, 2003).

Gender is then best understood as a social construct, calling into play the various “norms, behaviors, and expectations associated with being female or male” (Boyd, 2006, p. 1). Consequently, the content of gender may vary from one society to another (Boyd & Grieco, 2003, p. 2). Gender should therefore be conceptualized as a process, as something that is fluid and changeable, rather than fixed and static (Pessar & Mahler, 2003, p. 813). At the same time, gender should also be conceived as a structure, “a latticework of institutionalized social relationships, that by creating and manipulating the categories of gender, organize and signify power at levels above the individual” (Ferree, Lorber, & Hess, 1999, p. xix as cited in Pessar & Mahler, 2003, p. 813). Migration, in this perspective, can serve as a means to changing certain, prevalent structures and the gender construction schemes they accompany. This is well exemplified in Umut Erel’s work on Turkish women migrating to the UK who, he finds, have managed to “escape particular forms of gendered control and enable a wider choice of gendered lifestyles” (2011, p. 231) by way of migration.

As to migration research, various scholars have argued for bringing in a gender lens to better understand when, why and how women migrate (see Boyd, 2006; Boyd & Grieco, 2003; Palmary et al, 2009; Pedraza, 1991; Pessar & Mahler, 2003; Stalford, Currie, & Velluti, 2009). Pedraza argues that “a truly gendered understanding of the causes, processes, and consequences of migration” has yet to be developed and that

[p]aying attention to the relationship between women’s social position and migration will help fill the void regarding our knowledge of women as immigrants and contribute to a greater understanding of the lives of women. It will also elucidate those aspects of the process of migration that were neglected by the exclusive focus on men (Pedraza, 1991, p. 304).

Yet, Pessar and Mahler argue that the former neglect of women in migration research has now “shifted [...] in the opposite direction that the male migrant as study subject disappeared almost to the same degree as the female migrant had previously”

(Pessar and Mahler, 2003, p. 814). The authors argue that rather than taking gender as a variable gender should constitute a more central concept for studying migration, paying special attention to negotiations of gender relations (ibid., p. 814, 826). Future research then, they conclude, needs to integrate data from retrospective interviews as well as immediate ethnographic observations in order “[t]o improve our understanding of this complex transnational area” (ibid., p. 826). Boyd and Grieco (2003) add to this the necessity of integrating gender into theories of international migration, as well. To this end, the authors have in fact put forward a quite useful outline of a first “gender theory of migration,” suggesting different stages and factors where gender can have strong influence on migration. The research proposed herein shall build upon Boyd and Grieco’s pioneering work by adapting their model. Thereto I shall now turn.

#### **4.2.1. Boyd and Grieco’s Decision-Making-Stages Model**

According to Boyd and Grieco, gender influences migration at three different stages: a) the pre-migration, b) transition across state boundaries, and c) the post-migration stage (2003: 3-4). Within each of these stages there are further distinguishable sub-levels of gender intersections. Let us consider each in turn.

During the *pre-migration stage*, Boyd and Grieco note, gender systemic (macro) factors as well as individual (micro) factors influence the possibility of migration. Three additional subsets of issues can be distinguished: i) gender relations and hierarchies; ii) status and roles on three different levels (individual, familial, and societal); iii) structural characteristics of the country of origin (Boyd and Grieco, 2003, p. 3-4). At the *transition-stage* “[n]ational policies of the countries of origin can influence migration through prohibitive, selective, permissive, promotional, or expulsive rules of exit that may affect men and women migrants differently” (ibid., p. 4). Implicit or explicit assumptions about the status and roles of men and women (within the family and in society) often condition the policies of the countries of origin (ibid., p. 4). Further, the immigration laws and regulations of the destination countries influence migration; assuming a certain status (dependent for women, and independent for men), and by assuming these status women are placed not in a “market role,” but in a “family role,” which in turn can reinforce factors responsible for the social vulnerability of female migrants. And lastly, immigration laws and regulations influence migration through the

type of work for which the female migrant is recruited based on “traditional sex roles and stereotypical images regarding the place of women in society” (Boyd & Grieco, 2003, p. 4). Other than nation-states, intermediary organizations and institutions and international conventions can also influence migration (ibid., p. 4). Finally, at the *post-migration stage* migration can be affected differently in terms of integration outcomes primarily shaped “by three factors: 1) the impact of entry status on the ability to integrate and settle [(residency and employment rights)]; 2) patterns of incorporation into the labor market [(racial, birthplace, and gender based hierarchies)]; 3) the impact of migration on the status of women and men” (e.g. in alterations in the spousal relationship; position of migrant woman within family; movement from one system of gender stratification to another) (ibid., p. 5). Figure 1 gives a schematic overview.

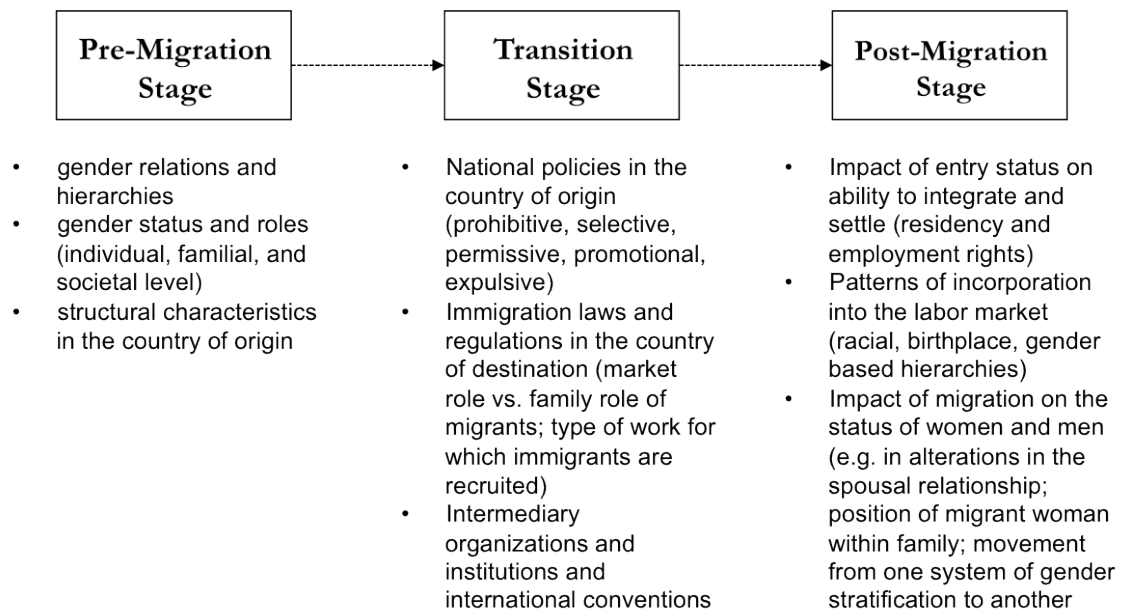


Figure 1. Boyd and Grieco’s Decision-Making-Stages Model: An Overview

Applying a gender perspective on migration, Boyd (2006) argues, then raises four key questions:

- a) “How do the norms, social relationships and hierarchies associated with being female or male affect the potential for migration and the experience of migration for women and men?”
- b) “How do gender inequalities in destination countries affect the experiences of migrant women and men?”

c) “To what extent and in what ways” is migration beneficial or disadvantageous to women and men?

d) “What steps must be taken to endure equal opportunities and outcomes for migrant women and men?”

(Boyd, 2006, p. 1).

By examining these questions, it is possible to gain “insight into the gendered nature of migration,” the experiences migrant women have over the course of migration and also during a possible return, possible inequalities and opportunities they face in the countries of destination, “and the nodes of policy interventions at domestic, bilateral and/or multinational levels” (Boyd, 2006, p. 1).

When applying this model to the context of second generation roots migration it has to be kept in mind that the model’s starting point is a “monocultural” migrant (e.g. who grew up with one culture and emigrate from their country of origin to a new unknown place, or back from that place to their country of origin where they grew up in) rather than “bi-cultural” or “multicultural” migrants (e.g. who grew up with two cultures and migrate to a – to some extent – known place, their parents’ country of origin) such as the study participants of this thesis. Thus, the questions raised and the points of influence of gender identified by Boyd and Grieco have to be asked twice for the migrants in question of this study: first, for the culture (with gender norms, social relationships, and hierarchies) their parents raise them in, and second, for the culture of the majoritarian society in which they encounter themselves. Different gender imaginaries in the two respective cultures can then further inhibit or promote emigration.



## CHAPTER 5

### EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Research on both roots and return migration suggests that women tend to face more losses in terms of freedom, autonomy, and status when migrating to their/ parental country of origin (Goldring, 2001; Kılınç, 2013; Wessendorf, 2007). Global gender equality indicator comparisons between Germany and Turkey suggest that Germany, overall, qualifies as being more gender equal than Turkey. In this light, it is a fair question to ask why German-Turkish female migrants would possibly choose to migrate to Turkey. However, many of the interviewees stated that Istanbul or other big cities were the only places where they would migrate to. This may suggest there to be regional gender-equality differences within Turkey (e.g. an east-west divide), which macro-studies such as the Global Gender Equality index may not accurately capture. The subsequent chapter presents a detailed account of the participants' narratives. In order to attain a profound image of the interviewees, the first section starts with a depiction of their upbringing in Germany, key experiences, and how these shaped their lives. The second section recollects how the participants' idea to move to Turkey materialized and does so by focusing on: i) the individual decision making process; ii) systemic push and pull factors; iii) perceived situation of women in Germany and Turkey; and iv) the reactions from family, friends and acquaintances to the idea of migrating to Turkey.

#### **5.1. Life in Germany: Introducing the Interviewees**

Although all the interviewees' parents were born in Turkey, the age at which they migrated to Germany varied between six to 27 years. In all cases, the interviewees'

grandparents first came to Germany as “guest-workers” beginning in the 1960s. Generally speaking, the younger the study participants’ parents’ age at the time of migration, the less “return” figured as a prominent issue at home. In around half of the cases the mother went to Germany after marrying, in only one case the father. Two fathers left Turkey due to political reasons in the late 70s and early 80s.<sup>14</sup>

The interviewees can be categorized into three groups, according to how they characterize their growing up in Germany and what importance they ascribe to different experiences of discrimination, (ethnic-gendered) stereotyping, and “othering”. The first group is composed of interviewees who reported repeated difficulties with living in German society, feeling unaccepted and/or even ostracized throughout different phases of their lives. The second group includes those who reported clashes every now and then, with friends, teachers, or officials. The third group is made up of interviewees who said they were overall happy with their lives in Germany, notwithstanding some minor incidents of discrimination. Lastly, it should be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive, but primarily serve analytical purposes (the categorization was derived inductively based on trends observed in the empirical data).<sup>15</sup>

### **5.1.1. “But you are Turkish!?”: Of Discrimination and Exclusion**

Sedef, Alev, and Gizem, all grew up in Berlin Wedding, a district known for its high share of immigrants relative to the native German population. Sedef and Alev are sisters, born with three years difference (1989 and 1986 respectively). Gizem is the same age as Alev, and they have known each other since the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The neighborhood in which they grew up was full of Turks, Bulgarians, and Arabs, so they were raised with little contact to German-Germans. This socio-demographic reality was also reflected in the make up of school classes. German children, my interviewees tell me, were separated from immigrant offspring on purpose. Where this was not achievable, German-German parents made sure to send their children to other schools

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<sup>14</sup> A more detailed listing can be found in the appendix.

<sup>15</sup> If not stated differently, the quotes were translated into English by the author. The original quote is given for long indented quotes, short quotes are provided in English translation only (still as direct quotes). In cases where the original statement contains Turkish the original and translated text is provided.

with fewer immigrants. Sedef tells me that getting a high school degree was close to impossible, because of discrimination, which is why she thinks that her completion of junior high school is a rather special achievement (*Hauptschulabschluss*). Against all odds, she continues, she was lucky enough to get an apprenticeship at a Turkish dentist (where most of the clients were also of Turkish origin) after graduating junior high school:

*'Du bist sowieso Ausländerin, mit deinem schwarzen Kopf wirst sowieso nicht weiter kommen. Sei froh dass dich ein türkischer Zahnarzt aufgenommen hat.'* Und das sagt mir ein Lehrer kurz vor meiner mündlichen Prüfung, meiner letzten Prüfung. Weil ich hatte vorher blonde Strähnen drin gehabt, da haben sie gesagt ja ich würde so wie ne Deutsche sein und als ich dann die Prüfung hatte hatte ich schwarze Haare gefärbt gehabt. Und da hat er mir gesagt mit der Haarfarbe wirst du nie im Leben schaffen. Aber ich hab trotzdem bestanden.

[‘You are anyways foreigner, with your black head you won’t come far anyways. You should be happy a Turkish dentist accepted you.’ And this is what a teacher tells me shortly before my oral exam, my last exam. Because before that I had blond highlights put in my hair, then they said I was like a German and then when I had the exam, I had dyed my hair black. And then he said: ‘with that hair color you will never make it.’ But I passed anyways.]

Alev recounts how the senator responsible for education was sent to them to intervene in examinations. On another occasion, a woman from the Duden publishing house came by in school and stated during her talk: “you don’t need to study, you won’t come far anyways”. Alev further states that they were treated demeaningly during basketball games when they played against less “stigmatized” districts of Berlin. Certain districts, Alev admits,, she tried to avoid as well because she would not feel comfortable going there as a Turkish woman. Gizem agrees with Alev (their interview was conducted at the same time) and adds: “there is xenophobia in Germany, there is no sense in denying this and well I did not necessarily have much contact with Germans, but you can see it even from the looks that you are not necessarily wanted in Germany.” Gizem and Alev both feel they are neither Turkish, nor German, but rather multicultural. Yet, while Alev would see herself as *Berlinerin* (from Berlin), Sedef perceives of herself as Turkish, *Erzincanlı* (from Erzincan), but not *Berlinerin*: “*o sıcaklık yok. Çünkü orda yabancısın burda yabancısın. Annem babam’ın köyü diyorum.*” [this warmth is not there. There you are foreigner here you are foreigner. I say my parents’ village]. Sedef also recalls being associated with certain issues stereotypically attributed to Turkish culture: “you [”Turks”] have forced marriage, you

hit children, are you being hit as well? You use girls as maids, you are 10 children at home.” Similar instances of stereotyping Sedef reports to have taken place at work as well. For instance, her colleagues at the drugstore would ask about how she could only endure not having pre-marital sexual intercourse. The extent of stereotyping and the resulting alienation is well summarized by Alev noting:

*die fragen dann immer so komische Fragen, als ob wenn du vom Mond kommen würdest, ja also deswegen (lachen) so komische Fragen halt, wenn dann so, sieht man bist du direct sowieso schon ausgeschlossen, da braucht man gar nicht mehr eh, reden, direct Ausschluss, also so sind wir grossgeworden und seit dem sind wir hier, ja.*

[they then always ask such weird questions, as if you came from the moon, yeah because of that (laughter) just such weird questions, when then so, you see you are anyways already ostracized, you don't even have to eh, talk, exclusion directly, that is how we grew up and since then we are here, yes.]

Nevin, the oldest to migrate amongst the interviewees, grew up in a town between Cologne and Düsseldorf. She describes her father as being very authoritarian, but did not talk much about her mother. Nevin says that she experienced a strong clash between her Turkish home and German environment. She recalls one incident, at the age of four, when she asked a neighbor girl to come play at her house, receiving what she found to be a strange answer: “but you are Turkish?!” Nevin tells me that she did not quite understand the response back then and answered: “so?” From today’s vantage point, she thinks that it must have been the mother’s fear of not quite knowing what the two girls would be doing at Nevin’s house – a Turkish house – preferring to keep things under control. It was through spending so much time at a friend’s house that Nevin got to know German culture, she notes. These cultural insights, however, made it even harder for her to endure the narrow boundaries put up by her authoritarian father during her teenage years. Suddenly, she recalls, she was no longer allowed to engage in certain social activities with her friends, and got imposed curfews. It was at that time, Nevin, tells me, that she first started to make Turkish friends. Her father would allow her to meet up with them, and not impose as many restrictions: “There he had nothing against it, probably he thought, same mentality right, because Germans they live more liberal (“*freizügig*”) this is dangerous, so better to lock her up a little, to restrict her a little.” Although she had fun with her Turkish friends as well, Nevin continues, incessant conflicts with her father led her to flee to Turkey to do an internship in a factory in

Bursa. Nevin would have liked to go somewhere else than Turkey, but she could not ask her father for money, on ethical grounds, for the very reason of getting away from him. She thus saw the best solution in going to Turkey where she could stay with her aunt. After a one-year long sojourn abroad, Nevin was happy to return to Germany and motivated to go for higher education at a university. Having finished her studies in textile technology in Munich, Nevin started her professional career working for “Kik”, a textile discounter, where she would stay until migrating to Turkey. Nevin recalls two significant incidents at her workplace where she felt discriminated against because of her Turkish origins. In one situation, she told her work colleagues that she had applied for German citizenship. Her boss, Nevin tells me, was very interested in what her father would think about her becoming German. Her father did not really care, Nevin states, as he knew that a key purpose for her naturalization was making international business travel easier. When Nevin disclosed these rather pragmatic reasons to her superior, he was notably unhappy about it: “This is exactly what disturbs Germans, well ehm, we have many advantages, firstly well, because we know one language more than them, right because we feel at home here in this country as well [...] then I thought, this is again that German jealousy.” In another situation, Nevin’s superior was doing a business call with a Turkish client in the conference room. After having hung up the phone she turned to Nevin saying: “those shifty Turks”. Other than the blunt discrimination she felt in that instant, Nevin found that comment also to undermine her integrity in the office, especially towards her subordinates. However, afraid that filing a complaint against this bold act of discrimination would jeopardize her career, Nevin ultimately decided not to take any measures – a decision which she said she regrets today. Thinking about the future, Nevin says that she does not quite know yet whether she will stay in Turkey for good, but reflecting about her life in Germany during our conversation, she says to have realized never having “talked so extensively about those disadvantages, those cultural disadvantages,” These negative experiences, Nevin tells me, may very well constitute reasons for her to stay in Turkey.

Nevcivan grew up in Lüdenscheid, a small city close to Dortmund. Having started primary school in Germany, Nevcivan spent the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades in Turkey as part of her father’s plan to return and start a new life in Turkey. The return plan, she tells me, did eventually not work out which is why they moved back to Germany after two years. Having finished high school, Nevcivan decided to go studying in Istanbul. One of the prime movers for doing so, she tells me, was her being constantly categorized as either a

Turk or a German-Turk by German society. A specific event which got under her skin was when they were talking about Turkish guest workers in an ethics class. Nevcivan remembers her teaching saying: “but a guest leaves after a while, goes back home.” In this context, Nevcivan tells me that she found that her Polish or Russian friends were treated more favorably:

*das ist ja auch Religion, das zu tun hat, also dass sie sagen, du bist, also die Türken sind Muslime, eh die denken da anders die haben andere Sicht und Kultur und eh Religion, ehm das hab ich dann gemerkt.*

[well, this is also about religion, has to do with it, well that they say, you are, well Turks are Muslim, eh they think differently, they have a different view and culture and eh religion, ehm that I noticed then].

Nonetheless, Nevcivan also told me about positive experiences she had in Germany. One story she highlights is about a teacher helping a lot improving her German language skills. Another is about a teacher offering a religious friend of Nevcivan’s room to do her daily prayer. About the specific situation of Turkish women in Germany, Nevcivan shares with me the following impression: “*daha çok yardım ediliyordu, weil die Deutschen hatten eh diesen Vorstellung, dass die Türkischen Frauen eh unterdrückt werden*“ [they helped more, because the Germans had that image that Turkish women eh are suppressed], they wanted to make sure the girls would not be suppressed in their Turkish communities, “by fathers and brothers”.

Aylin’s story is somewhat different. She was born in Resum, near the German-Dutch border, where she lived until the age of five when her parents send her to Turkey to stay with her grandmother. Her parents, Aylin tells me, were planning to return to Turkey which is why she was sent there earlier in order to learn Turkish. After it had become clear that the parents would not be able to carry out their return plans, however, Aylin returned to Resum as well – this was at the age of 10. Having lived five years in Turkey, she tells me that her knowledge of German had shrunken substantially. While her teachers were generally very helpful in overcoming her linguistic deficits, Aylin notes that a piercing Turkish accent rendered interactions with her peers rather difficult, resulting in her becoming often the victim of bullying. Other than that, Aylin tells me of one instance where a teacher of hers blamed her for political problems in Turkey: “you should be happy you are allowed to speak Turkish in Germany because in your country you don’t allow Kurdish people to speak their own language.” These and similar experiences, Aylin states, have hindered her from making friends – she even talks about

herself as being “antisocial” in this context – and, over the course of time, even made going to school very difficult: “*çok zorlaya okula gittim yani, bacaklarım arkamdan geldi*” [It was really hard for me to go to school, that is, my legs came behind me]. Aylin tells me that these negative experiences early on spurred her desire to move somewhere in the future, where she would not be an outsider, and where she would not stand out because of her accent.

### **5.1.2. “It Came Up Every Now and Then”: Torn Between Two Cultures**

Ceylan’s parents never really talked about going back to Turkey. They were happy with their livelihood in Germany and thought of return, if at all, as an option once they were retired. Ceylan grew up in a largely German-German populated neighborhood in Cologne where she was overall happy notwithstanding some resentments she felt German-Germans maintained towards foreigners. However, approaching the qualification phase for the German *Abitur* (high school diploma), Ceylan says she started having problems at school. She remembers of instances where her German teacher would call her out only to disgrace her in front of her classmates. These incidents, Ceylan tells me, considerably diminished her motivation in school and eventually led her grades to get worse: “This affected me psychologically”, says Ceylan, in that it spurred hatred towards the German language and German society at large. She even refused speaking German whenever possible during last year she lived in Germany. Eventually, she was not permitted doing her *Abitur*, despite her being an overall satisfactory and engaged student. This situation ultimately led Ceylan to leave that school and join a long-distance education program at a German-Turkish school instead, where she obtained her *Abitur* in the end.

Leyla grew up in Berlin as well – just like Alev, Gizem and Sedef - but did so in a different part of the city: “it was mixed, it was a mixed district, so I’m not from the typical Kreuzberg, I’m not from there, it was a mixed district, more amongst [German-Germans].” Leyla tells me that her family’s relationship with their German-German neighbors was good, better than with the Turkish neighbors: the German neighbors even “left us their keys when going on holidays, we left them ours, because, I mean no one leaves their keys with anyone else nowadays, especially not a German to a foreigner, or a Turk to a German”. As with Ceylan, it was problems with one teacher who put

obstacles in her way at school, which spurred her resentments towards Germany, ultimately feeling so much discriminated against because of her Turkish roots, that she did not want to go to school anymore. This decrease in motivation resulted in worse grades in her case as well. Leyla further recalls that a Polish-origin classmate of hers at the end of primary school received a straight recommendation for secondary high school (*Realschule*), whereas Leyla's recommendation was with reservations (meaning, she was advised to go to *Hauptschule*, the secondary school with less reputation instead).

Beyza, who lived in Münster before moving to Dortmund for her studies, spent a considerable amount of the first four years of her life with her grandparents in Zonguldak, Turkey. Münster, she finds is a very multicultural place where she never felt any problems because of her Turkish origin. Her parents, Beyza notes, were frequently talking about buying property in their province and returning there some day. She further states that she has been brought up with the ideal to learn the German language and behave like an ordinary member of society, albeit the circumstance that "you always have that head, you're the guest worker and at some point you'll go back in any case":

*Das hab ich von meinen Eltern gelernt, dass es halt wichtig ist sich dem dann anzupassen wo man dann lebt, ne dass man nicht auffällt, dass man so ist wie die anderen, dass man einfach das was man als seins hat trotzdem weiterlebt, aber halt eben so, dass niemanden das stört, ne und dass ein einheitliches kulturelles Bild eben entsteht.*

That I learned from my parents, that it is important to adapt to where you live, right, not to stand out, to be like the others, to just continue to live what you have as yours but in a way that it does not bother anyone, right, so that a coherent cultural image emerges.

Beyza, as some of the other interviewees (Ceylan and Leyla), also experienced problems at school (grades) with some teachers. She felt treated so unfairly in two cases that she even filed a complaint with a lawyer, ultimately causing her teachers to yield and correct the wrongdoing. Finally, in Beyza's view, as a woman of foreign origin, pressure to prove oneself vis-à-vis the majoritarian society is even more pronounced than as a man:

*dann eben als ausländische Frau doppelt so dann erstmal demjenigen gegenüber zeigen musste, 'hör mal zu, so kannst du nicht mit mir reden, das funktioniert nicht, weil ich kann genauso reden wie du und ich kann mich*



*genauso artikulieren wie du, ' das man sich das Bild erstmal bei den Leuten erschaffen muss um halbwegs ernst genommen zu werden.*

[then as a foreign woman you have to show twice towards the other, 'listen, you can't talk like that with me, that does not work, because I can talk just like that as well and I can articulate myself just like you,' that you have to create that image first with people to be taken halfway seriously.]

As regards work, Beyza shares with me that on two different occasions she was discriminated against because of her Turkish roots. In one case, while working as a German tutor, the mother of one of Beyza's pupils reportedly complained that a foreigner was teaching German, prima facie presuming that Beyza would not be capable of doing her job right. On a second occasion, Beyza was working as a hostess where she had to face a client who did not want a foreigner to accompany him. In both cases, however, Beyza notes that her superiors stood behind her stressing her excellent performance and repudiating the blatant discrimination. Nevertheless, Beyza also tells me of instances of sweeping stereotyping. For example, when working as a hostess she notes one of her colleagues commented her dress, saying: "not that your brother will come around the corner because you are wearing a short skirt." Other occasions where she felt stereotyped was when looking for a job. She felt that employers would not give her a job because they assumed her, as a foreigner, to be having children soon making her a financial burden for the company. More generally, Beyza also complained about the circumstance that sometimes people would tell her how good her German was – an utterance which she finds very disturbing considering that she grew up in Germany and German was her mother tongue. Overall, Beyza states that discrimination was an issue every now and then and that she considers herself lucky to have had people supporting and standing behind her in critical situations.

Meral's parents came to Germany as youngsters in the context of family reunification. She was brought up close to Bielefeld in a mostly German-German populated neighborhood. In her parent's view, life was better and easier in Germany, making return neither an attractive, nor frequently debated topic over the course of her upbringing. Meral sees herself as an unconventional thinker in a Turkish community; having lived in a students' residence, going abroad on her own, or sharing the flat with male room mates were things that were also hard to accept for her parents in the beginning. Meral also pointed out that she saw in herself a stark contrast to her older sister, whom she perceived as being the perfect Turkish girl (*Vorzeigemädchen*): "she

always made tea when guests came, did the service, cooked, cleaned, loved and married a Turk, married early, did an apprenticeship at ehm, well is now an official and that is exactly what my parents always desired.” Family visits to Turkey she found rather boring, as they mostly entailed sitting around all day, playing cards, or reminiscing about old times. And since her sister was the “perfect daughter in law,” spoke better Turkish, and was more familiar with Turkish culture in general, Meral says that she always felt to have been in her sister’s shadow. One particular issue, constantly preoccupying her mind, was the society-imposed burden of having to decide between Turkish and German culture. As to the former, Meral tells me that it was a Turkish internet forum for rock music that first showed her another side of Turkish society and led her to engage more with it - especially with the scene in Istanbul. German society, she says, described her as the “best example for integration”. Meral even says she had right wing sympathizer from her class she was friends with. Nevertheless, she also vividly remembers countless moments where she was confronted with stereotypes of Turkish women. In one case, a new classmate asked her whether she could decide on her husband herself. In another case, friends, who would share very intimate details with one another, would never ask her the same question presuming different pre-marital behavior on the part of Meral. These things, she tells me, startled her back then, and that she has only come to understand them years later.

### **5.1.3. “I was happy in Germany”: Two Cultures Brought Together**

Zeynep grew up in a mostly German environment close to Dortmund. Since her parents did not know German very well when Zeynep was little, they bought her German audio books for children, and sent her to the elderly neighbor next door in order to learn German before starting kindergarten. Return was not discussed much at home, she tells me. Her parents feel comfortable in Germany and even built a house on the countryside when she was 18 years old. It was only recently that her parents have come to think about moving to Turkey after retiring – at least for some months of the year. Her peers in school were also mostly German and it was during her studies – for which she moved to the city – that Zeynep first had Turkish friends. That time, she notes, was also period she began to be confronted with questions of religion:

*‘ja ich bin Moslem’ – ‘ja Alevite oder Sunite?’ – (lachen) ‘ja weiss ich nicht, muss ich mal nachfragen, was seit ihr denn?’ – ‘ja Aleviten’ ok ich nach Hause Papa gefragt, ‘ja wir sind Suniten’ ich sag ‘Papa meine Freunde sind Aleviten, ist das schlimm, er so ‘quatsch,’ ja solche Erfahrungen hab ich gemacht.*

‘well I’m Muslim’ – ‘yes but Alevi or Sunni?’ – (laughter) ‘well I don’t know, I have to ask, what are you?’ – ‘well, Alevi’ ok, I went home asked my father ‘yes we are Sunni,’ I say ‘Dad, my friends are Alevi, is that bad?’ and he said ‘nonsense,’ yeah I had such experiences.

Zeynep did not encounter problems with German society in general, but says that this could depend on the person, for example, whether someone adjusts to society, or decides to exclude him-/herself from societal activities. There was one Latin teacher, who turned out to be a member of the extreme right wing party, NPD, which Zeynep sees as the main reason why her Latin grades went down. But apart from that she overall felt treated fairly by her teachers.

Emel was raised in Gronau-Westfalen in a mostly German-German populated neighborhood. She tells me that she enjoyed life in Germany and did not have any problems growing up. While other foreign classmates of her would be “picked at” in school, she did experience such problems: “I don’t know if it was my character, but no one could tease me or something like that, they had me, I also adapted, this does not mean I was like a German, they all knew I was Turkish.” Emel insisted on maintaining her Turkish customs. For instance, when friends came over, she would ask them to take off their shoes when entering the house, and usually put on Turkish music. Her parents, she says, granted her a lot of freedoms while her siblings were imposed a number of restrictions. For example, Emel could stay late if there was a work dinner, yet, when she wanted to go out with friends she, too, had a curfew. Emel further tells me that she held a special place in the family and Turkish community, some kind of prestige, compared with other Turkish residents. This was so, Emel finds, because she finished *Realschule* and then started working at a lawyer’s office. The lawyer she worked for was fascinated by her bilingualism, which helped her get the job in the first place, and enabled her to translate for Turkish clients. A rather negative experiences Emel shared with me, is one situation with a former English teacher. In view of her below average performance in class back then, she recalls her teacher presuming her German to be bad as well. Emel recalls her saying: “‘well you can, from Emel we can’t expect that she writes a two or three [one being the best]’ or something like that she said and there I was, that really

hurt me, because she thought, I was a foreigner, I can't be good in German." Further, although her friends were very understanding and respectful with regards to her cultural customs, she sometimes still had to explain why she would not go out late, or why she would fast during Ramadan. Emel also had to watch not to eat pork accidentally, and therefore usually ended up choosing vegetarian or chicken-dishes. These aspects, she tells me, sometimes made her think whether daily-life in Turkey would not perhaps be easier.

Gülnur grew up close to Stuttgart, also in a mostly German-German populated environment. Notwithstanding that her family had a lot of Turkish friends, Gülnur finds that she was able to maintain both German and Turkish culture alongside. Family return to Turkey in Gülnur's case, while not a predominant issue within the family, has been a contemplation for later when retired. While she finds not to have been really discriminated against because of her Turkish roots, Gülnur tells me about situations of stereotyping, where people would ask why she did not wear a headscarf, or why she was not allowed to engage in certain activities (e.g. going out) – things that were very normal and natural for Gülnur, as she finds her parents to be quite modern and open-minded. Relatedly, Gülnur regrets that in public discourse there is often no distinction made between Turkish culture and Muslim culture and that both are often simply lumped together. Stressing the importance of differentiation, Gülnur notes:

*zum Beispiel wenn die Tochter im Sportunterricht nicht am Schwimmunterricht teilnehmen darf, heisst es ja die Türken dürfen am Schwimmunterricht nicht teilnehmen, wegen ja, was weiss ich weil die kein Badeanzug oder sowas, das ist ja Schwachsinn, wenn das hier [in der Türkei] irgend ne Familie in der weiss nicht, privaten Schule bringen würde, dann würden sich die Leute hier genau so aufregen und sagen, schickt ihre Tochter nicht zum Sportunterricht weils ein Mädchen ist oder sowas, wenn, das Problem was die Deutschen eigentlich in Deutschland mit den sozusagen Türken haben, den Deutsch-Türken haben genau dasselbe Problem haben die Türken hier auch mit den Familien die einfach streng religiös geprägt sind oder einfach sich eh, nicht nur also nicht modern denken wollen einfach und deshalb finde ich auch irgendwie falsch das man halt ehm, das alles sozusagen unter Türken abstempelt, weil ich eben dieses Verhalten nicht ein Türkisches Verhalten für mich und manchmal einfach nur Muslimisches Verhalten oder ja, und das ist auch manchmal auch ein irgeleitetes Verhalten, weil es manchmal nicht mal ein Muslimisches Verhalten ist, sondern irgendwie von irgendwelchen Hocas so gepredigt wird, die meistens keine Ahnung haben*

[for example if a daughter is not allowed to participate in swim lessons, because well, I don't know, because no swim suit or something like that, that's nonsense, because if here [in Turkey] some family in the, I don't

know, private school would do that, then people here would be irritated similarly and say, ‘does not send the daughter to swim lessons because she is a girl or what,’ when, that problem that Germans actually in Germany with so to say Turks have, German-Turks exactly the same problem do Turks have here with families who are strictly influenced religiously or just eh, just not want to think modern and that is why I think it is somehow wrong to just ehm, that everything is so to speak categorized as Turks, because for me this is not Turkish behavior and sometimes actually just Muslim behavior and well, sometimes also a misguided behavior, because sometimes it is not even Muslim behavior, but something preached by some *hocas*, who most of the time have no idea.]

Yasemin also grew up in a mostly German-German neighborhood in Bad Homburg, a town close to Frankfurt am Main. The family had good contacts to both German and Turkish families. However, Yasemin’s mother, who had migrated to Germany after marrying, soon succumbed to homesickness leading the family to return to Turkey – Yasemin was 16 at the time. She wanted to become a pharmacist in Germany, but had not been able to get an apprenticeship. In Turkey, Yasemin then finished high school and went on to study German at a university to become a German teacher. She looks back at a good life in Germany, as well as good friends with whom she is still in touch. However, when she first started to wear a headscarf in Germany some people she found to have reacted a little estranged: “‘why are you wearing a headscarf’ and so on, they also ehm, they also asked and ‘why do you do that,’ but after I explained that I also wanted it myself and it wasn’t because of the family, but I wanted it, they accepted it.”

Pelin grew up in a village close to Nürnberg with many Turkish families and many conservative “farmer-Germans” (“*Bauerndeutsche*”). She never had any problems due to her Turkish origins, and was always accepted as the Turkish girl living in Germany. Pelin’s friendship circle was very heterogeneous comprising of Italians, Greeks, and even right-wing extremists. Her father, she tells me, was very authoritarian: “eh you know probably how some Turkish girls grow up in Germany, always the strict brother, the father *pi pa po* [and so on], eh mine was also strict, but I had that advantage, I had a perfect mother.” Her father put much emphasis on their children learning about Turkey, the Turkish language and Turkish culture. He would regularly buy Turkish newspaper and in the evenings randomly choose among articles whose content he would have Pelin and her brother summarize. Her parents, Pelin adds, also placed a lot of importance on traveling to Turkey once a year for a period of one month.

Even if money was tight, or something else was in the way, they would make it possible somehow, she tells me. Pelin recalls also her mother buying things double, one for Germany and one for the house in Turkey, preparing deliberately for the prospect of return – an issue, so Pelin, which was a pervasive matter during her upbringing. Pelin spoke highly about her mother, emphasizing her superb skills as an educator, as well as her mediation skills vis-à-vis Pelin’s father’s authoritarian approach to bringing up their children. She portrays the relation with her parents metaphorically, describing her mother as the “good cop” and her father the “bad cop”. While her father would just forbid certain things, her mother would sit down and explain why they should or should not do something, emphasizing that they always wanted the best for the children. It is because of her mother, Pelin says, that she was accepted in the German and Turkish communities, and could maintain customs from both cultures. When finishing school, Pelin was the only Turkish girl who was allowed to go to the city, to Nürnberg, for an apprenticeship. Although her father was not all too excited about it in the beginning, her mother was able to convince him stressing the underlying educative purpose. In the end, her father succumbed, Pelin tells me, yet did not miss threaten her either: “if I hear that she is doing something wrong or hanging out with guys, then I will kill you both’ (laughter).” One profound experience which re-assured her in the belief that she did not want to raise her children in Germany, Pelin tells me, was when her superior at work expressed that he could not understand how, out of his two apprentices, the Turkish one passed the exam and the German one failed.

## **5.2. ”Roots” Migration to Turkey**

### **5.2.1. The Decision-Making Process**

Differences in the migratory decision making process of the interviewees can be broadly clustered into four categories: a) they had always dreamt of living in Turkey (“dream”), b) a trip to Istanbul or a presented opportunity led them to consider moving to Turkey (“opportunity”), c) their spouses located in Turkey were decisive

(“romance”), and d) serious problems in school in Germany led them to continue their education elsewhere (“education”).<sup>16</sup>

#### 5.2.1.1. “It’s always been my dream”: Dream

Beyza tells me that the idea of going to Turkey – of going “home” – was present in her mind all throughout her childhood. The family had moved to Germany as guest workers. Consequently, they saw the most “normal” thing to do in going back to their homeland (*Heimat*). It is Beyza’s dream to live and work in her *Heimat*. This desire, she tells me, has been markedly spurred by the discrimination she experienced in Germany – especially on the job market – albeit her having obtained a second Bachelor’s degree. The following quote exemplifies her state of mind:

*bevor ich mich hier nochmal mit meiner Herkunft rumschlagen muss, ja, da denkst du dir halt da geh ich lieber in meine Heimat und eh schlag mich halt nur mit meinen eigenen Landsleuten rum und dann soll wirklich der die Stelle bekommen der besser ist.*

[before I have to bother with my origins again here, well, then you think then I prefer to go to my homeland and then just bother with my own compatriots and then the one who is better shall get the position.]

Beyza has spent many vacations in Turkey and even stayed once for about a year when she traveled around and visited relatives. It was a “voluntary antisocial year”, she tells me grinningly. When finally moving to Istanbul in September 2014, she will lastly realize her dream of living in her homeland: “I do go to stay”, Beyza tells me in a determined manner. She could imagine going somewhere for a while sometime in the future, but back to Germany probably not.

Similar as Beyza, Pelin grew up in a home where the idea of return was constantly present – her parents were buying domestic appliances in preparation for their house in and their return to Turkey one day, as well as making sure their children know about Turkey and Turkish culture. Although she was overall happy in Germany, Pelin shares with me that she, too, has always had an “inner urge” to go to Turkey. It is something she cannot quite explain: “it is how it is”. The incident described above, where her boss was surprised about the Turkish apprentice passing the exam and the German one

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<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive, nor fixed.

failing, has been turning point for Pelin. It made her realize, firstly, that she wanted to continue her education and, secondly, that she wanted to leave Germany:

*das war schon eigentlich eines der Beweggründe überhaupt, wo ich gesagt habe so, ok ich bin wirklich Türkin und eh ich möchte nicht in Deutschland bleiben und ich möchte auch mein Kind nicht hier in dieser Umgebung eh aufziehen, es ist nämlich schwer zwischen zwei Kulturen.*

[this was actually one of the turning points, where I said, ok I'm really Turkish and eh I don't want to stay in Germany and I don't want to eh raise my child here in this environment either, because it is difficult indeed in between two cultures.]

Pelin wanted to raise her children in their own culture, their own religion, and their own country one day. She did not believe she had the same strength as her mother to raise her children, torn between two cultures. Her dream was to move to Istanbul and work in the textile sector. In order to have better chances in Turkey, she went to language school and learned Spanish in addition to her knowledge of German, Turkish and English: “the more languages, the better the chances”. Then, during her last semester at school, she met her later husband on the internet. They chatted online for about three months also meeting a couple of times. She tells me that they connected instantly. After getting married, Pelin joined him in Konya – running contrary to her dreams of living in Istanbul. In retrospect, Pelin thinks that meeting her husband was a help sent from God: “the good Lord actually helped me a little bit and said ‘ok I’ll look for a husband in Turkey and then everything will be much easier there.’” Today, she notes that she is very happy in Konya and has even become a true *Konyalı* [from Konya]. Further, she is very happy to realize her wish to raise her children in Turkey – according to their own culture and religion, in their own *Heimat*. Pelin tells me that she enjoys very much being a mother and housewife: “I love the most being at home and taking care of the child and my husband, that is where I really blossom out, yes (laughter).” Asked about her dream of working in the textile sector in Istanbul, she tells me that she now finds Istanbul to be too chaotic, and that she would not want to move there anymore.

Yasemin’s situation is somewhat different from the other interviewees insofar as she moved to Turkey together with her family, at a time when she was 16 years old and her youngest brother four. Yasemin recalls that especially her mother, who went to Germany after getting married, missed Turkey and her family. Yasemin’s mother wished to go back so she could see her parents more often than just once a year.



Yasemin herself also recalls enjoying holidays in Turkey and wanting to move there: “as children we also wanted to, we always liked Turkey, that is why we did want to go back to Turkey as well.” The family examined when it would be best for them to go back, so that the movement would not have any negative impact on their children’s’ education (e.g. repeating a year). Ultimately, they left after Yasemin finished 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Yasemin tells me that she had not been able to find an apprenticeship in Germany, and that moving to Turkey would have enabled her finishing high school as well as taking the university entrance exams. If she would have found a good apprenticeship, so Yasemin, she may have considered staying with relatives in Germany. Probably she would have moved to Turkey at a later point, though, since her family would be here, she adds. Her future she also sees in Istanbul. Yasemin is a German teacher now and preparing to take the exam to become a civil servant. Apart from the time she would have to move somewhere assigned by the state, as is required for civil servants, she does not want to live anywhere else than Istanbul – she does not entirely preclude going to Germany again for a couple of years, either, but would not want to do so forever.

#### **5.2.1.2. “Istanbul? Why not?!”: Opportunity**

In 2005, Gizem first traveled to Istanbul on a cultural journey with her family. This was the first time, she tells me, she figured she wanted to move to Istanbul: “and I had a look at this all, and from that moment onwards, I knew that I will live here [in Istanbul] and I thought about how I can do it.” At that time she was studying in Germany, but did not like the study program very much. On top of all, she got sick, which led her to making the decision to drop out of university in Germany and prepare for the university entrance exam in Turkey. In 2009, she moved to Istanbul and started studying German to become a German teacher. At the time of the interview, she was looking for a job as German teacher. Gizem sees her foreseeable future in Istanbul, yet she, too, cannot entirely rule out moving somewhere else at some later point, either.

Meral prepared her roots migration very thoroughly and in a step-by-step manner. A Turkish online rock music forum led her to engage more closely with Istanbul and made her realize that there was a modern Turkey as well – apart from the rather traditional image she had obtained from family visits which she did not like as much. During these family visits, Meral tells me, she felt constantly being in the shadow of her

older sister – the perfect Turkish girl – and that her family would always choose her sister over her, if they had to. Growing up, Meral was torn between two cultures and felt pressure having to decide for one or the other. The online rock music forum, however, brought her to realize that she could indeed integrate both cultures. Meral thought of going to Istanbul right away, but then changed her mind and decided to finish high school in Germany first. Wanting to become a German teacher, she then thought that it would probably make more sense to study German in Germany and stayed. Her first trip to Istanbul was to a rock music festival. She stayed with her family and went to the concert with her cousin and his girlfriend. At the concert, she tells me, she also met with people from the forum. In a next step of her roots migration preparation, a year later, she visited a friend in Istanbul and only went to visit her relatives shortly. Meral tells me that this way she got to know the city a little more. After that, it was a study trip which led her to stay at a hotel in Istanbul with her classmates. Meral notes: “well you realize, it was first family, then a little further, then a little more independent.” The next step for her was to go on Erasmus to Istanbul for one year. During exchange studies at Marmara University, she stayed in a shared flat organized by herself. It was important to her to accomplish everything by her own means, even if this meant refusing help from family and relatives – Meral tells me that she even refused to let them pick her up from the airport. Part of her rationale to not accept any help, Meral argues, was that she felt social pressure (“comments on her life”) whenever she would ask relatives for help. Then, finally, after another year in Germany finishing her undergraduate studies, she moved to Istanbul to work as a German teacher. Proudly, she lets me know: “and yes, in 2011, I was in my own shared flat as a student and now I’m, as a teacher, completely independent [...] it worked out (smirking) it took long, but it worked out.” Her future she sees in Istanbul – maybe Izmir or Ankara at a later point. Unless the political situation becomes unbearable – meaning interferences into private life by public authorities – Meral would not consider moving back to Germany. Moving to another country, she finds, is not really an option either. Before migrating to Turkey, she had spent some time in Italy to learn Italian. Her idea was to add a third-country-experience to her bicultural identity. Yet, in the end it was Turkey that she decided was the right place for her. The prime movers for doing so, she adds, were probably her Turkish language skills and family ties.

Gülnur was not really planning on moving to Turkey. Fascinated by the city during a trip with a friend, Gülnur decided to do an internship in Istanbul back in 2011.

At first, she was taken by the city and thought she should move there more permanently. However, after a while she came to realize that there were aspects about social life in Turkey she was not sure about being able to cope with in the long term. When her internship was over and Gülnur went back to Germany, she held the option of going to Istanbul in the back of her head – as a possibility for the future – but she was not actively looking for ways to go there:

*Dann hab ich halt zufällig gesehen dass Miss Turkey anfängt wieder und dann hab ich mir gedacht, ja eigentlich hatte ich ja bis jetzt noch nie die Gelegenheit da mitzumachen, halt wegen der Uni oder wegen so anderen Sachen, dachte ich mir, jetzt kann ich eigentlich da mal mitmachen, und dann hab ich mich halt da beworben und dann wurde ich halt eingeladen, dann hab ich da einfach mitgemacht aber ich hab mir ehrlich gesagt nichts so grossartiges dabei gedacht, eigentlich nur ne Zeitverschwendung (Lachen).*

[Then I saw by coincidence that Miss Turkey had started again and then I thought, well actually I had never had the chance to participate, because of university or other things, I thought, now I can actually participate there and well, then I applied and well was accepted, so I just participated, but I honestly did not think much doing so, actually only a waste of time (laughter).]

Gülnur had been invited to a beauty pageants contest before, she tells me, but never had the time to participate because she did not want to interrupt her studies for that. Other than her curiosity in the contest, the prospective of a trip to Japan for nominated participants of Miss Turkey, markedly drew her attention. Being nominated, the organization told her, chances were high that she could make career as a model or actress. That is, she tells me, when Gülnur decided to move to Istanbul where she now does modeling jobs and takes acting and diction classes here and there. However, Gülnur neither see her future in Turkey, nor in Germany. She would like to go somewhere else, even if it was only for six months or a year: “if tomorrow someone would offer a job in New York”, she would leave right away.

In Nevcivan’s case, incessant stigmatization experiences in Germany led her to leave Germany. These experiences, she told me, pressured her to restraining herself and withdrawing from society. Her father still thinks about trying again and move to Turkey, but Nevcivan says he probably could not do it because he has been living in Germany for too long. Her mother however, sees Germany as her home – it is where she has her work and her friends. Studying in Turkey was one option amongst many for Nevcivan. Another option was joining the German Armed Forces and go to

Afghanistan. In the end, she decided for studying law in Istanbul. Nevcivan especially wanted to avoid having only Turkish clients later on, which is what would have happened if she stayed in Germany to study. Further:

*ich wollte dann Türkisch lernen und was ganz anderes also Leben, weg aus ehm meine Familie, also die, selber etwas tun, selber etwas oder irgend ganz alleine, ich wollte auch gucken ob ich das ganz alleine schaffen kann*

[I also wanted to improve my Turkish and live something completely different, away from ehm my family, well they, do something on my own, something alone or some all alone, I also wanted to see if I can do this all on my own.]

In the future she would like to spend a couple of month in Shanghai, maybe do an internship there. Nevcivan has been learning Chinese for about one and a half years and loves Chinese culture. In the long term, however, she says that she may as well stay in Istanbul.

### **5.2.1.3. “Till death do us part”: Romance**

Emel was largely happy with her life in Germany, but played sometimes with the thought of moving to Turkey, because she thought it would make some aspects of daily life easier – for example, avoiding eating pork. Further, she missed being in Turkey and interacting with Turkish people assuming she would there not have to explain certain things such as her not going out late at night. Yet, Emel noted that her migration ideas were merely thoughts – no more no less. Ultimately, it was her husband – boyfriend at that time – who actually encouraged her to go to Turkey: “my husband (laughter) he was the one, he was the reason actually why I moved to Turkey.” For that purpose, Emel decided to take the university entrance exam and study German in Turkey – which is also what she told her parents. Emel’s parents did neither know about her boyfriend, nor about the fact that much of her motivation to move to Turkey stemmed from the wish to spend more time with him, but supported her endeavor since they thought educational purposes to be underlying her movement intentions. It would have been more complicated, Emel says, for her husband to go to Germany. He is self-employed and his business is based in Turkey. Moving to Germany would have not only required learning a new language, but also starting from scratch. Emel, on the other hand,

already knew Turkish and considered Turkey her homeland as well: “so, I said ok I come, and then I came here (laughter).”

Alev had been envisioning about moving to Turkey and decided to make a first step doing a two-month internship in Istanbul in 2010. Her curiosity to see about whether she could live in Istanbul on a permanent basis coincided with her meeting her husband-to-be, and contemplations about marriage. Alev did not want her husband to follow her to Germany, however, thinking that a life which was difficult for her, would have probably been even more difficult for her husband, neither knowing German culture nor language. In addition, the prospect of becoming pregnant at a later point worried her, especially considering the odds of her husband finding a job in Germany. The following quote illustrates Alev’s concerns lucidly:

*Ich bin dafür das Frauen arbeiten und sich auch weiterentwickeln, bloss, wenn die Frau schwanger ist, können sie ne bestimmte Zeit nicht arbeiten, nicht, und wenn ich jetzt in Deutschland ware, hätte ich nicht gearbeitet und mein Mann, weiss ich ja nicht, ob er ein Job findet und die Sprache lernt und alles, dann wären wir beide sozusagen, auszeit im Job und dann ich will nicht von Harz 4 leben, als Studentin und mein Mann ist ja auch nicht grad ohne Qualifikation.*

[I’m all for women working and developing, but when the woman is pregnant, they can not work for a certain time, and if I was in Germany, I would not have worked and my husband, I don’t know if he could find a job and learn the language and everything, then we both, so to speak, time out from the job and then, I don’t want to live from social security (*Harz 4*) as a student and my husband is without any qualifications either.]

In Turkey, however, pregnancy would not have been a problem since her husband could have continued working in the interim. Her future Alev sees in Turkey but would prefer a place “calmer” than Istanbul. Alev shares with me that, if she would have married someone in Germany, it would have been different as she may have stayed there. Yet, in that case Alev also points out that she would have probable retained this “inner urge” of seeing about life in Turkey.

Zeynep also took a first step by doing an internship in Turkey, as part of her training as a lawyer. After finishing a first required internship in the U.S., Zeynep chose Istanbul for the second required internship on the grounds that she was already familiar with the language. It was her first time in the city and she tells me that she was fascinated. Zeynep always used to say that, if she was to move to Turkey one day, it would be Izmir (where her parents are from). Having moved to Istanbul, she comments

ironically: “I cheated on Izmir with Istanbul (laughter), because I don’t know, it still fascinates me.” During her internship she then thought of moving to Istanbul more permanently. After finishing her lawyer’s degree in Germany, Zeynep visited Istanbul for a job interview. However, when she fainted in a crowded city bus on a hot day, she started rethinking whether Istanbul may not perhaps be “too much” for her, after all. Subsequently, Zeynep turned down the job offer and decided to stay in Germany. Nevertheless, she kept on traveling to Istanbul for holiday visits. During one particular visit, she tells me, she fell in love with the man who came to be her husband later on. With someone at her side, she found that it would be easier to live in Istanbul, encouraging her to try again and take the step to migrate. Her husband is a soldier and was going to complete 10 years of service at the time of research. This gives him the possibility to go somewhere else than Istanbul. Zeynep sometimes throws in the idea of going to Germany, which he could in principle do since, as a marine, he could go for advanced training in deep-sea diving and work in Germany. Her husband, though, is rather lukewarm to the idea: “why should I give up on my country and my people and leave all this here up to them?” In those cases, Zeynep tells me, she just smiles, nods, and says: “we’ll see when it’s time (laughter).” Izmir is another option for her to move to in the foreseeable future – it is very likely, she says, that they will not stay in Istanbul in the medium term. A friend of Zeynep’s – returning to Germany after six years in Istanbul because she has a son and the political situation in Turkey is worsening – assured Zeynep that, as soon as her daughter was born, she would change her mind and want to go back to Germany as well: “I don’t know”, Zeynep notes grinningly.

Nevin spent one year in Bursa in her late teens to take distance from her authoritarian father:

*ehm zwischendurch bin ich auch einfach mal ein Jahr nach, in die Türkei abgehauen weil ich halt Distanz brauchte ne also ich war auch nie der Mensch der so eingesperrt werden konnte, also so, ich hab rebelliert eigentlich, ne also für ne Türkin.*

[ehm in between I also just skipped out of town and went to Turkey because I needed distance, right, well also I was never the kind of person that could be locked in, well so, I rebelled actually, right, for a Turkish woman.]

She worked as an intern in a textile fabric and lived with her aunt. Although she would have liked to go somewhere else – maybe even another country – it was the easiest way to get away without having to ask her father for money. Nevin subsequently

went to München and studied textile technology, before starting work as a buyer for “Kik” – a German textile discounter. It was on a business trip where she met her future husband. He was from Turkey. They wanted children but that would have been more difficult in Germany. Nevin would have had to work, she tells me, because her husband would probably not have easily gotten a job. Since they had already gotten married rather late (in terms of age) they did not want to wait much longer with having children. Consequently, they decided to live in Turkey where Nevin’s husband could continue his regular job. In the initial phase, Nevin also worked in her husband’s office – doing business with her old work colleagues from Germany. Having taken a maternity leave and enrolled her son in preschool, Nevin is now slowly returning to work again. If she had not gotten married, Nevin tells me, she may have moved to Turkey as well, but definitely much later as she would have continued to work for “Kik” for at least 10 more years. The couple is leaning towards living in Turkey in their future, while at the same time building a security net in Germany as well. A good argument for staying in Turkey is that her son would not have to feel like an *Ausländer* (foreigner). Yet, due to concerns about the political situation in Turkey, moving to Germany is not entirely off the table, either.

Sedef completed advanced education at a dentist office in Istanbul, but did not think about staying in Istanbul permanently. It was when her husband proposed, and she realized that it would be difficult for him to find a job in Germany, that she decided trying living in Istanbul. She holds onto a more traditional idea of gender roles according to which she could not have imagined being the breadwinner while her husband would be looking after the house. As Alev and Nevin, Sedef also thought that a possible pregnancy would have made her working difficult. Besides, her husband has a good job and a house where he does not need to pay rent in Istanbul: ”why should we give this up?” she asks. Between the engagement and the wedding, Sedef moved forth and back between Germany and Turkey. At some point, she started working again at the dentist office where she had done her training. But when she got pregnant, Sedef tells me, she had to quit her job because the risk of her getting infections at the hospital was too high. At the time of the interview, she was seven months pregnant, had the nursery set, and was waiting for the baby to be born. After giving birth in Istanbul (so the baby could have double citizenship), however, she was planning to return to Germany. She tells me that in Germany, she could benefit from social insurance. Until her daughter reaches the school age, Sedef shares with me, she plans to travel back and forth between

Istanbul and Berlin. For later, she considers it a possibility stay in Germany with her daughter where she could go to school, and visit her husband during school holidays. Yet, all of this, she notes, will ultimately depend on the political situation in Turkey.

#### **5.2.1.4. "Non scholae sed vitae discimus": Education**

Leyla and Ceylan were both comfortable in Germany. In neither case was return a salient subject at home as both families conceived of life in Germany as easier and more comfortable. Also, both were satisfactory students – Ceylan was very engaged in school and was even the school's spokes person. However, in both cases it was one teacher who they felt evaluated them unfairly due to their Turkish origins. Their grades dropped suddenly and the teacher exposed them repeatedly in front of the class. As Leyla recalls:

*mein Lehrer mein Mathelehrer, mich eigentlich vor der ganzen Klasse blossgestellt hat, nur weil ich eine Frage gestellt hab oder nur weil ich Fragen gestellt habe und er war mit seinen Antworten von wegen ich bin nicht dazu berechtigt oder ich bin nicht dazu, keine Ahnung irgendwas was er immer gesagt hat, das fällt mir gerade nicht ein, ehm dir das zu erklären, also im Sinne von, schau es dir selber an und lerne selber und mich immer halt auch bei Aufgaben rannahm die ich nicht wusste nur damit er mich irgendwie blossstellen konnte weil ich halt Ausländerin war.*

[my teacher, my German teacher, exposed me in front of the whole class only because I had asked a question or because I asked a question and he answered, like I was not in the position to, no idea, there was something he always said I don't remember now, ehm to explain this to me, in the sense of, 'look it up yourself and learn it by yourself or he picked me for questions I could not answer so he could expose me, because I was a foreigner.]

In Ceylan's case, it was her German teacher. The discriminatory treatment affected her psychologically, she tells me, and led to a strong resentment towards German language and society. In the end, she saw herself forced to quit school and complete her high school degree through long distance education at a German-Turkish school. During those two years, she notes to have barely spoken German – she deliberately refused to do so whenever possible. After getting her high school degree, she went to Istanbul to study. Her main goal was to leave Germany and in Turkey, she saw the most accessible option. Also, she had missed Turkey which she knew only from holidays. Her memories were nostalgic and characterized by a feeling of summer and sun: "it seemed to me life was always like summer (laughter)". Her choice of university



was language driven – she wanted to go to an English speaking university. In the end, however, she came to regret her choice of joining the Turkish literature program because she felt disadvantaged not being able to compete on equal terms with her classmates. In retrospect, Ceylan tells me that, if she had the chance, she would not choose Turkey again but rather go to Australia and visit Istanbul in the context of an exchange program. Asked about where she sees her future Ceylan responded:

*Im Niergendsland (lachen) ich weiss nicht, ich hab keine Hoffnung mehr mit meinem Leben [...] ich hab die Hoffnung verloren, was heisst die Hoffnung ver-, ich weiss nicht mehr, ich weiss nicht wo ich leben kann, wo ich leben werde, ich weiss nicht was aus meiner Zukunft wird, ich will auch nicht nach Deutschland, aber ich will auch nicht für immer in der Türkei leben.*

[In noonesland (laughter), I don't know, I don't have any hope left for my life [...] I lost hope, what does it mean I lost hope-, I don't know anymore, I don't know where I can live, where I will live, I don't know what will be with my future, I also don't want to go to Germany, but I don't want to live in Turkey for ever either.]

Ceylan sees a possible option in graduate school abroad – by the time of the interview Ceylan had been applying to schools in Sweden.

Leyla also lost interest in going to school and begged her father during one year to let her go to Istanbul in order to finish high school there. Her father was concerned about her living in Turkey all by her self. Yet, having closely observing Leyla's deteriorating grades and increasing struggles with school for over a year, her father eventually agreed. Leyla moved to Istanbul into her family's apartment. Her uncles living in the same building meant for her family that she would not be all-alone after all. In the beginning, her uncles and other relatives tried to control her, she tells me, and also started rumors about the "German girl alone in Istanbul", which caused her father to asking to bring her back to Germany. However, explaining what was really happening she was able to calm him down and, over time, the local relatives also stopped controlling and interfering in her life. After finishing her Bachelor's in German language in Istanbul, Leyla wanted to do her Master's in Germany. In order to do so, she spent a year in Berlin. However, having been told that, as a Turkish woman, her chances of getting a job as a German teacher would not be good, Leyla did not see why she should spend two more years on a Master's without a job prospect, instead of starting work a good position in Istanbul. In the end, Leyla decided to move to Istanbul where she has been working as a German teacher the last time we spoke.

For Aylin, going back to Germany was difficult mainly due to language deficiencies. In addition, peers mocking her, playing pranks on her, and portraying her as a thief, made life in Germany difficult. Like Ceylan, she eventually got her high school degree through long distance education at a German-Turkish school and decided to study in Turkey. For Aylin, too, it was the most accessible place to go, also because she had the possibility to enroll in English-based study programs in Turkey:

*zum Beispiel auf unserer Uni [Boğazici Universität] wir haben ja Englisch studiert, wir hatten alle gleichen Englischstandart [...] deswegen konnte ich auch, konnte ich mich auf gut ehm ausdrücken, sie haben mich auch gar nicht gelacht, wenn ich so falschen Wort gesagt habe und so weiter, genau so wollte ich auch haben.*

[for example at our university [Bosphorus University] we studied in English right, we all had the same English level [...] that why I also could ehm express myself well, they also did not laugh at me, if I used a wrong word and so on, it is exactly how I wanted it to be.]

Another reason for her to choose to Turkey was her boyfriend, who was in Istanbul. For her future, Aylin wishes to go to graduate school abroad but, in the long term, Turkey will probably be her permanent destination. Yet again, Aylin says that she can also envision living in Germany.

### **5.2.2. Push and Pull Factors**

Repeatedly named *push factors* were the weather in Germany (always grey, cold, and rainy), as well as monotone life (doing the same things day after day, empty streets after sunset, early closing time of stores further contributing to the empty streets). Moreover, rather distant social dealings in everyday life were named as being alienating in Germany. Additional push factors were categorization as Turks or German-Turks, stereotyping, discrimination, and xenophobia causing a feeling of not being truly accepted as a part of German society.

*Pull factors*, on the other hand, were the climate of Turkey, the sea, and the city of Istanbul and its heterogonous life styles. With regrads to the latter, Nevcivan states:

*in Beyoğlu, da laufen Frauen mit Burka, also oder eh Frauen mit, also die Haut zeigen und die gehen nebeneinander und das hat man nirgendwo, also hier wird niemand dann so schief angeschaut, in Deutschland also in Berlin*

*kannst du das nicht, wenn eine Frau also nur mit Augen zeigen, dann denken, dann wirst du schief angeguckt.*

[in Beyoğlu women walk around in burqa, well or eh women with, well who show skin and they go side by side and you don't have this anywhere else, well here no one is looked at askance, in Germany, well in Berlin you can't do that, if a woman only shows her eyes, then they think, then you are looked at askance.]

“Warmer” social interactions were also named as pull factors. In this regard, Zeynep tells me she, would have prima facie expected people in Turkey to be more willing to help, for instance pregnant women by offering seats in public transportation. However, she came to conclude that this was not necessarily true. Likewise, friendships in Turkey, which Zeynep also expected to be warmer and closer, turned out to be evenmore superficial than in Germany. Another pull factor was Turkey as a predominantly Muslim country which, according to Emel, is appealing because she does not have to watch what to eat. Also overall better job opportunities spoke in favor of migrating to Turkey.

It should be noted at this point that the political situation and education system in Turkey were also mentioned repeatedly as an important aspect for the decision of where to stay in the long term. Insecurity or strong interferences with private life, as well as style and quality of education when thinking about future children, many participants saw as arguments speaking for living in Germany.

### **5.2.3. Perceived Situation of Women in Germany and Turkey**

Looking at gender equality indicators from the “Global Gender Gap Report”, there is no doubt that Germany would seem to be a more favorable place for women to live than Turkey. In terms of economic participation and opportunity (i.e. labor force participation; wage equality for similar work; estimated earned income; legislators, senior officials and managers; professional and technical workers) Germany ranked 46 and Turkey 127; in educational attainment (i.e. literacy rate, enrolment in primary, secondary, and tertiary education) Germany's rank is 86 while Turkey is 104; measuring health and survival (i.e. sex ratio at birth, and healthy life expectancy)

Germany is number 49 and Turkey 59; and in terms of political empowerment (i.e. women in parliament and in ministerial positions, and years with female head of state) Germany ranks 15 while Turkey is ranked 103 (The Global Gender Gap Report 2013, 2013, p. 206-207, and 360-361). The interviews conducted for the study at hand, however, exemplify that most of the interviewees had not explicitly thought about how the larger gender equality gap in Turkey compared to Germany could affect their post-roots-migration-life. Amongst those who did consider these issues, some simply put the thoughts away, (similar as with the political situation), and decided to see how it goes. Others perceived of the immediate social environment as the most decisive factor of how gender imaginations would affect them in the new home, taking precautions only in terms of what neighborhood to live in. Yet others believed women were better off in Turkey. To repeat a point made earlier, most interviewees only considered big cities such as Istanbul, Izmir, and Ankara as possible destinations. These cities might also be more gender equal on average than smaller cities and more rural parts of Turkey and thus not be representative of Turkey as a whole.

#### **5.2.3.1. “You have to know your rights”**

Beyza is one of those who reflected about the situation of women in Turkey, finding it to be different, if not more difficult, to be a woman in Turkey. She, however, did not consider this a major factor in her decision-making. Knowing what she is capable of, Beyza told me that she was confident it would work out on the job market. As a single woman in her late twenties, she thinks it may even be an advantage in Turkey as employers will probably not expect a pregnancy out of wedlock – something she felt was the case in Germany. In Turkey, however, she hopes employers would look at her qualifications rather than make assumptions about her private life, increasing her chances on the job market as a result. Overall, Beyza tells me that she would prefer to bother with her “own people” rather than with stereotypes and discrimination based on her Turkish origins and gender in Germany.

Zeynep has a rather sober outlook on gender equality issues. She is of the opinion that people simply have to know their rights. However, this stance, as she tells me, may very well stem from getting laid off just a week before our interview rather than considerations about women’s situation prior to migration. As to the reasons for getting

laid off, her employer, a lawyer, put forward that he had not been happy with her work for year or longer. For Zeynep it is clear, though, that it was her pregnancy that led him to let her go – it was just one week before her maternity leave would have started, she tells me. Besides, she continues, the accusations of her boss about not doing her job properly were not true anyways. Knowing her rights Zeynep is pursuing the case with a lawyer who told her that such incidents happen on a regular basis because most people do not pursue a lawsuit. Her determination to do so, Zeynep contemplates, may stem from her growing up in Germany where people, as Zeynep argues, generally insist more on their rights. This is not to say that pregnant women are not discriminated against in Germany, she continues, but it would not happen to that extent there. Yet, other than that she thinks life can be easier – especially for pregnant women – in Turkey which offers more services such as online grocery shopping with delivery to the house.

Meral, having thoroughly reflected gender issues, tells me that she knew what to expect, and what to pay attention to in relation to gender, and that keeping certain things in mind would entirely suffice for getting along. For instance, Meral argues that as a woman many things are a little more expensive in Turkey – a woman may have to pay a taxi to go home at night, or pay more rent to live in a safe neighborhood where she can walk home without any hesitations. Specifically with regards to living situation, Meral tells me that she would not put her name on the doorbell, or when asked whom she is living with, she would prefer saying with her family:

*ehm die fragen dann halt 'ja wo wohnst du, wohnst du mit deiner Familie?' Und sobald man dann nein sagt, schieben sie da Kopfkino und denken sie können was weiss ich was mit dir machen, das ist echt schon ecklig, aber naja, das sind halt so Sachen wo man aufpassen muss. Ehm deswegen sag ich jetzt dann auch immer dass ich mit meiner Familie wohne und ehm, diese "independent woman" muss man hier nicht wirklich zur Sprache bringen.*

[ehm they ask then 'well where do you live, do you live with your family?' And as soon as you say no, they do head cinema and think they can do, what do I know what with you, this is really disgusting actually, but well, that's how it is, these are things where you have to be careful. Ehm that is why I always say now that I live with my family and eh that "independent woman" you don't really have to mention this here.]

A related issues Meral brought up was clothing, finding that woman may have to be more careful in Turkey than in Germany. In this regard, something that worries her are discourses of "legitimate" rape or assaults justified, for instance, by way of a liberal

dressing style of the victim. Should such pretexts become more frequent and private life more restricted, especially for women, Meral would consider moving back to Germany.

Ceylan was afraid of Istanbul and the people – especially men. She says she did not meet any men in the first two years and did not go out often. When she first arrived, she thought Istanbul was like a village and people would be more primitive than in Germany. Ceylan tells me, however, that she soon dropped these views because she came to realize they were mostly based on stereotypes she brought with from Germany.

### 5.2.3.2. “It depends on your social surrounding”

Nevcivan argues that it is the social surrounding that matters most in Turkey. Prior to moving to Turkey, she was expecting disadvantages for her as a woman, but this never occurred. Comparing herself to a friend living in Pendik, who is married, unemployed, and has a lower educational status, she find her social environment being mostly composed of university students and graduates to be the main reason why she did not have negative experiences. Her friend, for instance, reported that when going to the authorities she would feel mistreated as a woman. For Nevcivan the case is clear: “if you as a woman don’t have this strength, then you are at a disadvantage.

Pelin’s main concern about her situation as a woman when moving to Turkey was to know her future family-in-law’s mindset – if the mother and daughters are not “suppressed”, Pelin would not be, either. Knowing that and also having her husband at her side was reassuring for her and she did not have any other considerations.

Gülnur finds Turkey to be different on societal and political grounds with family values playing a central role. Gülnur concurs with others in that the neighborhood is the key factor

*man muss jetzt nicht irgendwie versuchen die Welt zu verändern wollen indem man nach Fatih geht und sagt, ja ich glaub, mir egal was ihr denkt, ich lauf jetzt mit meinem Minirock hier rum und wohn hier in diesem Apartment (Lachen) [...] alleine.*

[well you don’t have to try somehow to change the world by going to Fatih and saying, ‘well I think, I don’t care what you think, I’m gonna walk around here in my miniskirt and live in this apartment (laughter) [...] alone.]

Also, Gülnur tells me that interactions with men in Turkey are different from Germany, finding women in Germany chattier with male acquaintances while in Turkey women block conversations earlier. In the end, Gülnur argues that everybody should know what kind of social environment s/he prefers and choose accordingly.

### 5.2.3.3. “Women have it easier here”

Against all objectively measurable factors, Emel is of the opinion that she is freer in Turkey than in Germany:

*Und als Frau, weisst du, was ich jetzt dazu sagen kann, als Türkin, eh du kennst ja jetzt unsere Kultur, durften wir halt nicht so viel, obwohl ich eigentlich, ja ich möchte jetzt auch nichts falsches sagen, meine Eltern haben mir wohl vieles erlaubt.*

[And as a woman, you know, what I can say about this, as a Turkish woman, eh well, you know our culture now, we were not allowed that much, although, I actually, well I don't want to say anything wrong now, my parents allowed quite a lot.]

It seems less a feeling of being allowed to do things, rather than the circumstances that does not need to explain certain restrictions she may have had in Germany as a Turkish woman. Overall, Emel feels that her living in Turkey considerably soothed her parents. Being in Germany, she tells me her parents would have feared her getting married to a German. In Turkey, by contrast, she would be amongst Muslims which her parents found reassuring. Yet, in reality Emel tells me that she has also experienced gendered role perceptions. For instance, as a school principal she experienced how an elderly man would refuse to talk to her, instead preferring to address a male teacher about a matter of which he was technically not in charge.. The older generation, she finds, sometimes treat women differently, whereas the younger ones would not usually do that and show her and her status as a teacher respect.

Nevin is convinced that women have more advantages and it is easier for them in Turkey than in Germany. As a housewife, she experiences more help in Turkey than in Germany. Turkish men know better how to take care of a woman, she says: “*okşuyorlar kadınları*” [they flatter women]. She tells me about men helping carry shopping bags and try to make life as easy as possible for women. As to work, Nevin says she never

took a job outside her husband's firm. While she has considered it, her husband discouraged her by saying that women in Turkey would "destroy" her. Nevin states:

*ja die Frauen hier die sind gerissener, ehm grad in der Arbeitsweil ne die Konkurrenz ist sehr gross, die sind darauf getrimmt halt immer nach vorne zu gehen, und du, du bist ehm verwöhnt ne, also du hast irgendwo dein ehm also du würdest es nicht einfach haben.*

[well, women here are more cunning, ehm especially in the business world right, the competition is very high, they are trained to always go forward and you, you are ehm, you are spoiled right, well you have somewhere your ehm, well you just would not have it easy.]

Gizem and Alev hold a similar perspective, finding it easier for women in Turkey: "because if you look at how many people here sit around at home and are, eh, pregnant, or gave birth to their children and how they are treated, also outside, it is much better" (Alev). Gizem adds, that people also offer seats in busses (recall that Zeynep had different experiences) and help carrying, for example, grocery bags. Alev adds, that in Germany you have to show more as a woman than men, meaning that women have to prove themselves twice in a way to earn acknowledgment. Gizem adds: "Women have it easier here [in Turkey] I think [...] because here you are looked at as a woman [...] I also don't understand why some women claim being at a disadvantage [in Turkey], I cannot understand this". For Alev, it is ultimately about choosing the right husband, one who shares the same values as one does. There are dominant men in every culture, and if you do not get along with a certain type you just have to get them out of your life, Alev concludes.

#### **5.2.3.4. "I didn't think much about that"**

Leyla mentions that clothing-wise Germany is more liberal. For example, when wearing a skirt in Turkey, she feels that many more men stare at her. Diverging from the previous interviewees, Leyla definitely perceives a gender equality gap in Turkey, finding women generally to be refused their rights.

For Yasemin, concerns about how life would be as a woman in Istanbul were not as central as worries about whether she would find friends easily. Generally, Yasemin agrees with Leyla that women are freer in Germany, but adds that this may also depends on one's social environment.



As previous interviewees, Sedef argues that the neighborhood is decisive for how she feels in Turkey. She lives in Kartal, a rather conservative district where she feels she cannot necessarily do as pleases her, yet, if she would be living in a different neighborhood such as Kadıköy this would probably not be the case.

Aylin did not have any major consideration about the situation of women.

#### **5.2.4. Reactions from the Social Environment**

##### **5.2.4.1. Support**

Beyza and Gizem's family and friends supported their decision to realize their (new) dream and move to Turkey – yet sad that they would leave. Beyza adds that since her parents are planning to move to Turkey themselves they are happy about her plans as having at least one daughter already in Turkey will make it easier for them to return as well. And also Beyza's younger sister is now dreaming of going to Turkey.

Pelin's social circle was not surprised about her going to Turkey – but her going to Konya was somehow unexpected and startling. Pelin tells me that some of her mother's friends were concerned about Pelin moving to Turkey for marriage because there had been various cases in town where the women later got divorced and returned. Pelin's mother though was sure her daughter would make the right decision and will be happy. Should it not work out for some reason – "*kismet*" [destiny] – then their door is not closed either and Pelin could always come back.

Nevin's social environment, having met her husband, reacted positively and thought she was doing the right thing. Pelin (Nevin's cousin) expressed during the interview how surprised she was when Nevin told her she was moving to Turkey since she, and also her family, was much more Germanized than Pelin herself. Besides, Nevin had studied and worked in Germany for years and was about 10 years older when migrating than Pelin, who moved at the age of 25 when everything was changing anyways (e.g. she was finishing school and start something new).

Yasemin's situation was different since it was her whole family who was moving to Turkey. The only reaction Yasemin recalls is that her friends were sad about her leaving.

#### 5.2.4.2. Concern

Emel's former kindergarten teacher had big concerns about her moving to Turkey because of a bomb explosion shortly before in Istanbul. Her parents, however, backed her because of her study purpose. Other people Emel knew were supportive as well. When she went back on school holidays and visited her old workplace, people were very impressed that she had made it: "they didn't expect this from me (laughter) that I become a teacher and so on. They did not expect it [...] they were happy for me." However, it turned out that people had thought she might come back wearing a headscarf or that she may have gotten engaged. There was even a rumor about Emel's father engaging her to someone in Turkey: "and then someone apparently spread around that I came here [to Turkey] and my father had engaged me with someone (grinning) [...] that is why I had to live here now and so on."

Ceylan's old classmates also had similar thoughts, asking her why she was going to Turkey and whether she got forced to marry someone. But her parents, whose opinion was of much more importance to her, were very supportive since she was going to study in Turkey. Her uncle, though, had some more concerns about a girl living alone in Turkey "ah what do you want to do in Turkey – a girl all alone?!".

Meral's parents, too, were worried about her being alone in Istanbul, yet did not put obstacles in her way. During previous stays in Istanbul, such as Erasmus, she finds that she had already proven being capable of living in Istanbul. This, as well as her perspective to help building the Turkish-German University, was reassuring for her parents making them feel more relaxed about letting her go. Meral's friends, while mostly supportive and encouraging, also had some doubts in that they did not quite know how to imagine Istanbul, having a more traditionally connoted picture in mind – "but of course if I would have said, I don't know, America or Italy, then they would have reacted more excited, like woow cool, then they would have been more jealous".

Nevcivan's parents were overall happy about her moving to Turkey – this being the best of the options she had for her near future after graduating high school. Her teacher, who had helped her a lot with German, conceived of Nevcivan knowing Turkish and German as an asset – more so than Turkish is in Germany. Some of her friends, though, she adds, had the impression that human rights were basically non-existent in Turkey and that women would be treated as animals – "they do not really know Turkey though," Nevcivan notes.

While Zeynep's parents were very supportive, her friends thought it was courageous of her to go to Turkey. Just as in Nevcivan's case, Zeynep's friends thought women would not be respected in Turkey and warned her that it would be very different from what she knew from holidays (issues such as social security, or health insurance). She states: "I was told often that I have to adapt to certain things, be it for example with insurance or hospital issues, which run very differently here, but you get used to it, I don't think it is that bad."

Alev's parents wanted her to gain work experience in Germany first, and to migrate at a later point. Alev, however, preferring to start work in Turkey, ultimately managed to convince her parents. . She reasoned that it would also be easier for her parents to go back to Turkey given that their children were already there.. Some friends and relatives were surprised and argued, for example, that she would earn better in Germany, but for Alev money was not the only thing that counts.

#### **5.2.4.3. Opposition**

Leyla begged her father to have her finish high school in Turkey. While he had agreed back then, he could never stand watching Leyla leave again after visits: "well, that's how it is for Turks, 'ah all my daughter shall stay with me' but well, everyone has their own way". Her relatives were also rather opposing the idea "'ah a Turkish girl on her own in Turkey, this is not possible' and 'mmh what do you wanna do there'." They also spread gossip in the beginning, Leyla recalls: "right, like 'now a German, in Turkey on her own' and ehm 'nothing good will emerge from this'" which elicited doubts again in her father about her living in Turkey being a good idea. Leyla's mother reacted very differently – she also loves Istanbul and would move the minute she has the opportunity. Thus having one of her daughters there would at least give her the possibility to visit more often. A Turkish friend of Leyla's was surprised and said: "'life there is so difficult and you don't know anybody there, you are way too young, on your own there, this is not possible' and so on," but Leyla says she did not care and that she just wanted to try it out.

Aylin's parents wanted her to stay and study in Germany. Her mother was also concerned about her living alone in Istanbul because of criminality. Her relatives, in

turn, were of the opinion that she would not be able to make it in Turkey due to the different systems.

Gülnur's parents as well thought it would be better if she would stay in Germany and continue her career in the path she had started but they did not oppose her or speak against her. Her friends thought it was courageous of her to try out something like that and move to Turkey from one day to another without having a job – “at this point I have to thank my parents (laughter),” Gülnur adds.

In Sedef's case, her father did not want her to go to Turkey at all, because he thought life there was more difficult than in Germany. Also, not having anything on her name worried him, he said: “what are you going to do when your husband throws you out of the house? You don't know how people are.” But since he realized that she is fine in Turkey and knowing that she will be back in Germany because of the child, he does not say anything – for the moment, Sedef adds and continues: “other than that they terrorized me heavily, many relatives as well, ‘don't go,’ ‘it's not like on holidays’”. For her mother, by contrast, her being happy is all that counts. Sedef's friends, she says were shocked because they did not expect that from her but they were very supportive after all.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

#### 6.1. Summary of Key Findings

The present thesis, being especially sensitive to gender-related factors, has explored the broader spectrum of plausible motivations for second-generation roots migrants to move to their parental country of origin. For analytical purposes, the following scales had been previously defined as the relevant foci of research: social background/position (level of integration); family relations and connections to Turkey (friends or family); legal situation (i.e. Turkish or German passport, blue card etc); economic capital; and socio-political discourse on the Turkish population in Germany – especially with regards to women and return/roots migration. On all scales, except for economic capital, the positions of the interviewees varied greatly, that is to say, where they positioned themselves in society, the connections to Turkey prior to migration (family and friends), whether they were German or Turkish citizens, and how they experienced confrontations with stereotypes about Turkish women and Turkish women migrating to Turkey (e.g. suppression, forced marriage). In terms of economic background and capital, all interviewed study participants were descendants of guest worker families and amongst the first in their families to pursue higher education. Most of the interviewees also expressed that support from their parents or husbands, material and immaterial, made it easier (and sometimes possible, in the first place) to move to Turkey. However, close connections to Turkey (e.g. regular and lengthy visits, family, friends) and a strong parental wish to return some day, coincided with those who expressed moving to Turkey as being their life-long dream.

Based on an ethnography study of the paradigmatic case of Germany-born Turkish female roots migrants, I inductively deduced four general, non-mutually

exclusive categories of roots migration: i) dream, ii) opportunity, iii) romance, and iv) education. The first group is composed of women who have always dreamt of moving to Turkey and who identify strongly with Turkey, and/or Turkish culture. In these cases return was also often a subject of discussion at home (the parents were buying property and/or appliances in and for the home in Turkey, or they made sure their children would know about Turkey and Turkish culture). The second group can be described as comprising of rationalistic, opportunity-driven roots migrants. In many cases, it was previous visits to Istanbul that led them to move, or an (economic) opportunity (e.g. career option) presented itself at the right moment where moving to Turkey seemed the best alternative amongst other possibilities. The third group can figuratively be labeled romance insofar as marriage constituted the primary reason for roots migration. Even though they may have considered moving to Turkey independently from marriage, ultimately, their husbands-to-be played a decisive role therein. Lastly, the fourth group is composed of those individuals who experienced serious problems in school in Germany, rendering it necessary for many to finish high school through alternative ways such as correspondence education or by horizontal transfer to schools in Turkey. It should be underlined that although not mentioned as primary or stand-alone motive for migration all of the interviewees expressed facing some degrees of discrimination, (ethnic-gendered) stereotyping, and/or “othering” leading – to different extents – to alienation from German society in general.

## **6.2. Decision-Making Stages: Applying Boyd and Grieco’s Model**

To recall, in Boyd and Grieco’s (2003) theoretical account, gender is conceived to influence the *pre-migration stage* through systemic-level (macro) factors and individual-level (micro) factors. Specifically, these are: i) gender relations and hierarchies, ii) status and roles on three different levels (individual, familial, and societal), and iii) structural characteristics of the country of origin (Boyd and Grieco, 2003, p. 3-4).

*Systemic-Level Factors.* Looking at gender-equality indicators from the “Global Gender Gap Report” would suggest Germany to be a more desirable place to live for

women than Turkey.<sup>17</sup> On all indicators, Germany scores by a wide margin better than Turkey. The interviews I held, however, show that these structural characteristics appear not to have been actively taken into consideration in the migratory decision-making process. Rather, my interviewees pointed at the importance of knowledge about conditions at the place of destination (e.g. social make up of a given neighborhood). For those few interviewees who were roughly aware of the gender-equality gap between Germany and Turkey, discrimination and (ethnic-gendered) stereotyping they experienced in Germany outweighed gender equality considerations in the end – Beyza, for example, noted that she would rather “bother with her own people” than with “double discrimination” in Germany in the role of a woman and a member of the Turkish community.

*Individual-Level Factors.* Perceived Discrimination and (ethnic-gendered) stereotyping in Germany were other prominent issues raised by my interviewees. Most of the participants experienced incidents of expectations, discrimination, and stereotyping in relation to gender roles, status, relations and hierarchies by their families as well as German society. Some participants pointed at great social disparities between their family and German-German environment. Among the most frequently encountered ethnic-gendered stereotype was the image of the vulnerable Turkish women, depicted as a victim of domestic violence, forced marriages, and treated as if they do not themselves possess any freedom of choice. I found it especially noteworthy in this respect, that some of my interviewees explicitly underlined their wish to manage everything on their own during their moving to Turkey, refusing any help from family and relatives.

As to the link between integration in German society and the migratory motives of my interviewees, my findings largely concur with insights presented elsewhere (see Aydın, 2013; King & Kılınç, 2013; Riesner, 1990); it is not necessarily a lack of integration that led Germany-born Turkish women to migrate, as many of them

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<sup>17</sup> Among the GGGR gender-equality indicators are: i) economic participation and opportunity: labor force participation; wage equality for similar work; estimated earned income; legislators, senior officials and managers; professional and technical workers for; ii) educational attainment: literacy rate, enrolment in primary, secondary, and tertiary education; iii) health and survival: sex ratio at birth, and healthy life expectancy; and iv) political empowerment: women in parliament and in ministerial positions, and years with female head of state (WEF, 2013).

perceived of themselves as very well integrated members of society. Rather, incessant (ethnic-gendered) stereotyping and “othering” resulting in alienation were of prime importance. Meral, for example, was even labeled the “perfect example for integration”. Regardless, the people I spoke with yet reported frequent encounters with stereotypes about Turkish culture, be it through asking questions or making statements such as whether they could choose their husbands themselves or whether their parents hit them, or through constant “othering” through expressions such as: “but not you, the other Turks, you are different”.

These insights stand in direct opposition to Alscher and Kreienbrink (2014). Intriguingly, the authors argue that not discrimination, but rather a lack of *Heimatgefühl* – feeling at home – in Germany is the root cause for (return/roots) migration. However, this raises the critical question of what caused the lack of *Heimatgefühl* in the first place? In my view, the most commonsensical explanation for the latter’s lack lies in perceived discrimination and experiences of stereotyping – social exclusion, broadly construed. In more technical terms, this would simply mean that discrimination/stereotyping is a central cause of lack of *Heimatgefühl*. Indeed, my empirical findings lend support to this argument insofar as many interviewees, who alluded to a missing *Heimatgefühl*, directly linked that missing feeling to pervasive experiences of discrimination.

The influence of micro factors in terms of gender relations, roles, hierarchies, and status, becomes most apparent in the case of romance, that is, marriage related migration to Turkey. Concerns about their husbands not getting a job in Germany (or getting a job below his qualifications because Turkish degrees are often not recognized in Germany), were often named as reasons why the interviewed women decided to go to Turkey. In addition, thoughts about future children and the absence from work due to maternity leaves were stated as further arguments for moving to Turkey. Nevertheless, even where marriage was the decisive rationale for roots migration, additional factors were in play: 1) Turkish language knowledge (while the husband would have had to learn German, the women already spoke Turkish); 2) German-education (more readily accepted in Turkey, than Turkish ones in Germany making it easier for the women to find a job in accordance with their qualifications); 3) discrimination and xenophobia (against the women themselves as well as the wish to prevent their children the feeling



of being a foreigner. Nevertheless, it appears that possible female unemployment is more readily accepted than male unemployment.

The social environment (family, friends, teachers, and other acquaintances) of the interviewees constitutes another important scale which intervened in the migratory decision-making process on the familial and societal level at which gender imaginations played out. A common reaction received by almost all interviewees was the alleged argument of a “girl not being able to live alone in Turkey”. These concerns were mostly raised by the interviewees’ Turkish relatives and, as such, can be attributed to prevailing gender role imaginations within Turkish cultural circles. Yet, especially parental opposition based on cultural scripts, such as those mentioned above, appeared to have been less pronounced where the parents themselves maintained a return prospect. Reactions by the German-German environment, on the other side, were marked by prejudices and stereotypes vis-à-vis life in Turkey.

### **6.3. Concluding Remarks**

The present study illustrates that the motives for Germany-born Turkish women to undertake roots migration are manifold. The ways in which gender affects migratory journeys is equally diverse. Most importantly, the findings of this study suggest that gender related issues are seldom actively taken into consideration in the migratory decision-making stage, indicating a rather passive, or indirect, influence of gender on migration.

Considering that all study participants mentioned cases of gendered stereotyping and discrimination in Germany, the present research argues that these factors should not be *prima facie* dismissed as done by some academic and non-academic authors (see Aydın, 2013; Alscher & Kreienbrink, 2014). The empirical insights (that is, the interviewees’ life stories in Germany) also underline need for a more differentiated and informed engagement with “Turkish culture” and gender in Germany. A starting point to tackle this problematic would be more to enhance prevention of racism and discrimination, intercultural and –religious dialogue, and propagating integration as a two-way process, especially emphasizing the often neglected or not acknowledged state/majoritarian society to immigrant direction.

At the theoretical level, this study argues for more conceptual awareness when referring to return migration. It is suggested here to use the term “roots migration”, whenever referring to movements of members of the second generation to the parental country of origin.

#### **6.4. Limitations and Avenues for Future Research**

In the analytical evaluation of the empirical material, it was not possible to include the second and third stages of Boyd and Grieco’s model. The experiences the women had during their actual journey and upon arrival in Turkey, including their surprises and disillusionments, constitute a matter which remains to be followed up. Other than that, including participants who chose to stay in Germany would help shed light on two further questions: first, why do some women migrate and others stay? Second and relatedly, what is the role of gender in this respect? Moreover, conducting a study of how male roots migrants’ narratives’ are shaped by their gender would also serve the purpose of obtaining a more complete image of the role of gender in roots migration across sexes. A study potentially worthwhile to follow up in this respect is Pratt Ewing’s (2008) research on Muslim men in Berlin which illustrates how men’s lives (a group considerably less paid attention to) are affected by prevailing stereotypes about the allegedly oppressing, violent image of the Muslim man.

**APPENDIX: TABLE OF INTERVIEWEES**

**A. Particulars**

No	Informant	Age/ year of birth	Age at migration/ year	Reason for migration	Place of living in GE	Current place of living	Education/Curr ent occupation	Citizenship	Preferred Language
1	Beyza	28/1985	Planned for September 2014	Dream	Münster	Dortmund	Bachelor, Mathematics/student Architecture	German	German
2	Sedef* <sup>ooo</sup>	25/1989	24/2013	Romance	Berlin (Wedding)	Kartal, Istanbul	Clerk; dental hygienist/ pregnant	German (&Turkish)	Sometimes German, sometimes Turkish; mixing a lot
3	Meral	25/1988	24/2012	Opportunity	Löhne (Bielefeld)	Kadiköy, Istanbul	Bachelor, German teacher/German teacher	German	German
4	Leyla***	26/1987	17/2004- 2012; again in 2014	Education	Berlin (Siemensstadt)	Atasehir, Istanbul	Bachelor, German teacher/ German teacher	German and Turkish	German
5	Alev* <sup>ooo</sup>	27/1986	25/2012	Romance	Berlin (Wedding)	Maltepe, Istanbul	Business graduate/ IT support	German and Turkish	German, mixing a lot
6	Gizem <sup>ooo</sup>	27/1986	23/2009	Opportunity	Berlin (Wedding)	Kartal, Istanbul	Bachelor, German teacher/looking for work	German and Turkish	German, not mixing

7	Gülnur	25/1988	24/2013	Opportunity	Close to Stuttgart and München	Nişantaşı, Istanbul	Bachelor, Sociology and Communication Studies/Modeling, actris training	Turkish, residence permit for Germany	German
8	Ceylan++ +	25/1988	19/2007	Education	Troisdorf (Köln)	Close to Bogazici University, Istanbul	University Bachelor, Turkish Literature/ student	German	Mixing all; German, Turkish and English
9	Aylin+++	26/1987	5-10; 20/2007	Education	Ressum (Bremen)	Mecidiyeköy, Istanbul	Bachelor, psychological counselling and guidance/looking for job	German	Turkish
10	Yasemin* **	26/ 1988	16.5/2004	Dream (family return)	Bad Homburg	Üsküdar, Istanbul	Bachelor, German teacher/German teacher	Turkish	Turkish, enjoys speaking German
11	Nevin**	39/1975	17 for 1 year, then 35/1992, 2010	Romance	Inbetween Colone and Düsseldorf	Istanbul	Textile technician/house wife, mother & part time homeoffice	German	German
12	Zeynep	34/1980	32/2012	Romance	Close to Dortmund	Besiktas, Istanbul	Lawyer/ pregnant	German	German

13	Emel***	30/1984	21/2005	Romance	Gronau Westfalen	Gebze	Bachelor, German and English teacher/ mother	German	Turkish by now
14	Pelin**	38/1976	25/2001	Dream	Close to Nürnberg	Konya	Foreign languages/ housewife, mother & part- time pastery	German	Turkish
15	Nevcivan	25/1988	22/2010	Opportunity	Lüdenscheid	Eyüp, Istanbul	Law student	German	Turkish by now, but often mixing German out of reflex

\* sisters

\*\* cousins

\*\*\*/ooo/+++friends

**B. Identity, Migrational Identification, and History of Family Migration**

No	Informant	Identity	Returnee?	Parental reason for migration	Parents year/age at migration to Germany	Parents wish to return?	Hometown/residence of parents	Siblings/place of residence
1	Beyza	Turkish	No; emigrant to parents' country	Father: 80es, military coup, Mother: father guestworker, family reunification	F: 1983/20ies, M: 1973/12	Yes	Zonguldak/Germany	1 sister (20)/Germany
2	Sedef* <sup>1000</sup>	Turkish	No; emigrant, no difference to German-Germans	F: asylum seeker, M: to take care of her uncle's children	F: 1980/27, M: 1970s/15/16	When retired	Erzincan/Germ any	3 sisters(33, 38, 18)/Ireland, Istanbul,Germany
3	Meral	German-Turkish /Almanci	No; if thinking about family migration then maybe, but only looking at her individually she did not return but emigrate	F and M: fathers guestworkers, family reunification	Both 1970s/15/16	Maybe when retired	M: Ingöl, F: Erzurum/Germany	2 sisters (29 and 12)/ Germany
4	Leyla***	From Turkey, born and raised in Germany; Turkish-German, more Turkish than German	No; just moved to Turkey	F: marriage, M: father guestworker, family reunification	F: 20ies?, M: 7	Maybe when retired (part-time), mother would if given the possibility	Black sea/Germany	3 sisters (24, 20 and 18)/ Germany

5	Alev*/°°°	Multicultural; German/Turkish (written on top of each other)	No; rather emigrant	F: asylum seeker, M: to take care of her uncle's children	F: 1980/mid- 20ies, M: 1970s/14/15	Yes, at some point	Erzincan/ Germany	3 sisters (33, 25, 18)/ Ireland, Istanbul, Germany
6	Gizem°°°	Multicultural; German/Turkish (written on top of each other)	No; emigrant	F and M: fathers guestworkers, family reunification	Both in primary school	Maybe when retired	Denizli/ Germany	2 brothers (24, 11)/ Germany
7	Gülneur	"I was born in Germany, but I'm originally Turkish"; German- Turkish/Almanci negatively connotated	No; rather emigrated, but depends on what happens in the future; difference to German- Germans	F: father guestworker, family reunification; M: marriage	F: ca 1976/10-11, M: 1985/23	Sometime when retired	M: Adana, F: Cankiri/ Germany	1 younger brother/ Germany
8	Ceylan+++	No feeling of nationality; <i>from</i> Germnay, bron and raised there, parents from Turkey; not Turkish, not German; international personality; from space, we all come from god	No; nomade	F: to work; M: father guestworker, family reunification	F: 1970s/25, M: 6/7	Not really	M: Tokat, F: Elazig/ Germany	1 brother, 1 sister, both younger/ Germany

9	Aylin+++	World; does not feel like Turkish, does not feel like belonging somewhere; no feeling of nationality	No	father guestworker, family reunification; M: marriage	F: 16, M: 24	wanted to, but probably not anymore	Tekirdag/ Germany	1 brother/ Istanbul
10	Yasemin***	In Germany: from Turkey; in Turkey: Turkish, but also from Germany	Yes, but not fully returned; thoughts and many things she does as in Germany, lives as in Germany	F: father guestworker, family reunification; M: marriage	F: 1974/14/16, M: 1986/20ies?	returned	M: Bayburt, F: Rize/ Istanbul	2 brothers (23, 14)/ Istanbul
11	Nevin**	Turkish; raised in Germany; German-Turkish/ Turkish-German	No; it's not decided yet where they will settle; feels as being in Istanbul for a visit	F: to work; M: joined a year later	F: 1973/ M: 1974	cannot because of disabled son	M: Bursa, F: Eskisehir/ Germany	4 borthers (42(GE), 36, 28, 25)/ Germany
12	Zeynep	In Germany: Turkish; In Turkey: also something German; German, but originally from Turkey	No; other word, but does not know what; sees no difference to German-Germans anymore (have very similar experiences throughout daily life in Turkey)	F: father guestworker, family reunification; M: first joining sister in Germany, then marriage	F: 1970s/16, M: 1975-6/19	Maybe when retired (part-time)	M: Manisa, F: Izmir/ Germany	1 brother (29)/ Germany



13	Emel**	In Germany: emphasized that from Turkish; in Turkey: from Germany; no longer referring to herself as German-Turkish; fully settled	No; <i>not</i> emigrated, emigration would be to another country; roots migration	F: father guestworker; married and went to Germany; M: married and went to Germany	both: 1970s?/20ies?	returned part-time	Ardahan/ Germany and Gebze	2 older sisters, 1 younger brother/ Germany
14	Pelin**	Turkey; bron and raised in German; <i>not</i> German-Turkish; Konyalı; always been the Turkish girl living in Germany	Yes, returned to own country with her own culture, her own religion; also her parents will return	F: father guestworker, family reunification; M: marriage	F: 1970/18? 20?, M: 1972/shortly before starting university	yes	M: Eskisehir, F: Erzurum/ Germany	1 brother (33)/Germany
15	Nevcivan	In Germany: from Turkey; in Turkey: from germany; third country: from Germany; German-Turkish; thinking German; feeling Turkish	No; emigrated; different from German-Germans	F: father guestworker, family reunification; M: marriage	F: 15, M: 22	F: yes; M: no	Sinop	2 brothers (20, 4), 2 sisters (24, 17)/ Germany

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