

At Home in Almanyā? Turkish-German Spaces of Belonging
in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1961-1990

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ABSTRACT

SARAH THOMSEN VIERRA: At Home in Almany? Turkish-German Spaces of Belonging
in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1961-1990
(Under the direction of Konrad H. Jarausch)

In this dissertation, I examine the process through which Turkish immigrants and their children made themselves at home in West Germany from 1961 to reunification in 1990. Originally coming to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) through a temporary foreign worker program in the 1960s and 1970s, Turkish *Gastarbeiter* (guestworkers) defied the FRG's and their own initial expectations by extending their stays, bringing their families to live with them, and forming communities. While they were not the only group of *Gastarbeiter*, the growing visibility of the culturally and religiously "foreign" Turks prompted heated debates about their willingness and ability to become a part of German society. Public discourse and academic scholarship defined Germany's Turkish minority through deceptive dichotomies such as "traditional" or "religious" versus "Western-oriented" or "integrated." In the same manner, they created a spatial binary, depicting the Turkish-German community as living in a *Parallelgesellschaft* (parallel society) that hindered their integration into larger German society.

I challenge these discourses in two fundamental ways. First, I examine how Turkish immigrants and their children, in the course of their daily lives, actively participated in German society at the local level. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's theories on the production of space and Michael de Certeau's connection between daily life and power, I identify the

spaces of belonging the first and second generations constructed in their everyday landscape (workplace, home and neighborhood, school, and mosque) and analyze how those spaces affected their senses of belonging in German society. Second, through this examination of Turkish-Germans' spaces of belonging, I demonstrate the fallacy of integration as a linear process that starts in ethnic separatism and ends in assimilation. Rather, integration is a phenomenon that is spatial in nature, embedded in a particular historical context, and marked by reciprocal influences between the host society and immigrant group. Drawing on German- and Turkish-language sources, I situate the development of the Turkish-German community within German postwar history and show how the everyday experiences of Turkish immigrants and their children affected their own sense of identity and belonging even as they brought about a hybridization of German society.

To Oscar R. Thomsen,
who would have read it all
and had a thing or two to say about it.

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INTRODUCTION

Eren Keskin was born in 1960, one year before the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Turkey signed the bilateral labor contract that started the flow of *Gastarbeiter*, or guestworkers, into German firms. Thirty-three years later, he sat across the table from a German freelance historian to tell her the story of his intervening years. He was thirteen years old when, after having lived his whole life in a small village in rural Turkey, his parents brought him to live with them in a neighborhood in West Berlin. Though the transition itself was a “trauma,” Keskin was quickly distracted by the excitement of living in a big city. The veneer, Keskin told the historian, soon wore off and by the age of sixteen he was already working to earn money for his family. By twenty-two, he had married, started his own family, and later became the owner of the small *Kneipe* where the interview was taking place.

But Keskin was not interested in talking about his success as a business owner. Instead he focused on the changes in the neighborhood that made him uneasy. When he was growing up, the neighborhood had been more ethnically mixed, and he knew all of his neighbors. In the last few years, though, the population had become majority Turkish. There used to be a lot of work before the Wall fell, he explained to the German interviewer, but when the Wall came down unemployment shot up. And people from the East work for cheap! It’s hard for us, he continued, being stuck in the middle between Germany and Turkey. And now most of the kids that hang out at the park across from my business, Keskin

complained, are doing drugs. Keskin insisted, however, that “we are satisfied with Sparrplatz.”

The clatter of games going on in the background abated slightly as some of his customers paused to give their own opinions. One patron contended that the kids were doing drugs because they didn’t have any work; another blamed the drug use on boredom. Keskin concurred that unemployment, boredom, and drug use were connected, but no one could agree which was the cause and which the effect. Talk shifted to asylum seekers—Germany needs to tell them, “we’re full,” Keskin posited, but they can’t because of *Menschenrechte* (human rights). At this point in the discussion, the interviewer interjected a question: what about getting German citizenship? Keskin replied dismissively, “Ha! We have black heads, and everyone knows that we’re not Germans. You know?”¹

The interview with Keskin and the debate among his customers provide a revealing snapshot of the complex and often-conflicting forces at play in the settlement of Turkish immigrants and their children into German society, a process that began as a consequence of postwar labor policy in the Federal Republic. During the rebuilding process after the Second World War, the West German government began in 1955 to enter into a series of temporary labor contracts with southern and southeastern European countries. In 1961, when construction of the Wall halted the flood of labor pouring in from East Germany, the Federal Republic looked to Turkey for labor, and thousands of Turks took advantage of the opportunity, quickly becoming the most populous group of *Gastarbeiter*.²

¹ Eren Keskin (pseudonym), Wirt einer Kneipe am Sparrplatz, interview with Ursula Trüper, audio cassette, side A, “Die Leute vom Sparrplatz” Ausstellung (DLSA), Mitte Museum Archiv (MMA), Berlin, Germany.

² The migrant workers were called *Gastarbeiter*, or “guestworkers,” both to distinguish them from the term *Fremdarbeiter* (foreign laborers), most recently used under the Nazi regime, and to emphasize the intended temporary nature of their stay.

The majority of these migrant laborers worked in semiskilled or unskilled positions in industry, manufacturing, and agriculture; lived in dormitory or barrack-style housing; and intended to return to their homes after completing their term of service or accumulating a certain amount of savings. However, by the early 1970s, it was becoming apparent to many in Germany that these “guestworkers” were transforming into immigrants. Turkish workers—due to their larger numbers and to Germans’ perceptions of them as especially “foreign” culturally—became more visible and controversial than any of the other *Gastarbeiter* groups. While many early Turkish guestworkers returned home after a stint in West Germany, increasing numbers of these migrant laborers began renewing their work and residence permits and bringing their families from Turkey to live with them.

The reunification of families, accelerated by the official halt of labor immigration in 1973, resulted in three phenomena that significantly increased the visibility of the growing Turkish minority and gave rise to debate over its place within the German state: the growth of immigrant communities, the appearance of Turkish children in German schools, and the emerging presence of Islam. Each development has been met with reactions ranging from ambivalence to hostility. The German government initially reacted by trying to counter the influx of family members and its repercussions by offering financial incentives for return migration.³ Many guestworkers, however, seeing the possibility of coming back to Germany for work at a later time slip away, opted instead to commit themselves and their families for a longer stay in the Federal Republic than initially planned. The increasing concentration of

³ The history of the politics and policy of the guestworker program has been well explored and analyzed in previous scholarship; see Ulrich Herbert, *A History of Foreign Labor in Germany, 1880-1980: Seasonal Workers, Forced Laborers, Guest Workers*. Translated by William Templer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990); and Karen Schönwälder, *Einwanderung und ethnische Pluralität: Politische Entscheidungen und öffentliche Debatten in Grossbritannien und der Bundesrepublik von den 1950er bis zu 1970er Jahren* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2001). I will not be reexamining the political and policy aspects of the guestworker program, except where they are directly pertinent to the issues being discussed in this dissertation.

immigrants in certain areas of German cities led local and regional officials to institute proportional population caps designed to prevent “over-foreignization” in those districts. German parents, meanwhile, protested the high percentage of immigrant children in classrooms and expressed concerns about the effect this development had on the quality of their children’s education. Attacks on foreign residents, such as those in Rostock and Solingen, were met with both apathetic bystanders and pro-multiculturalism protestors. Beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the seeming incompatibility of Islamic and German cultural values, particularly with regard to the place of women, as well as growing fear of terrorism, led to a wide spectrum of German responses, from struggles over the building of mosques to governmental policy that attempts to celebrate diversity while outlawing associations considered a threat to constitutional values.

At the center of each of these debates stands the challenge of integration, the broad and at times misleading question of whether immigrants are able and willing to become a part of German society. Discourse concerning the meaning and ramifications of their integration has led some to define Germany’s Turkish minority through deceptive dichotomies such as “traditional” or “religious” versus “Western-oriented” or “integrated.” In the same manner, public discourse has also created a spatial binary, accusing the Turkish-German community of living in a *Parallelgesellschaft* (parallel society) that hinders their integration into larger German society. However, this view sets up integration as the result of a conversion from one essential identity (Turkish) to another (German) in a way that overlooks the composition of identity as being more fluid than fixed, and more complex than basic. At the same time, it denies the nature of integration as a process, rather than an endpoint. Meanwhile, in the midst of these arguments about identity and extreme examples

of cultural difference, the valuable and necessary perspectives of Turkish-Germans themselves have been neglected.⁴

In order to understand the current situation of Germany's Turkish minority, a change both of focus and of perspective is key. First, it is critical to study the development of this community within its historical context—and in particular within the context of the daily lives of Turkish immigrants and their children—to see how they have experienced integration with German society. Next, these processes must be examined not only from German perspectives, but also from the perspectives of those in the Turkish-German community. Those voices have been largely unheard and unheeded, and they constitute an important part of the broader story of post-war German history and society.

This dissertation explores the history of the Turkish-German community from the beginning of Turkey's participation in the *Gastarbeiter* program through the early years of the reunified Federal Republic of Germany, focusing specifically on the interaction between that community and broader German society. Far from operating solely within a *Parallelgesellschaft*, Turkish-Germans have conducted their daily lives in multiple spaces,

⁴ It is useful at this point to briefly explain the terminology I employ to describe the population that formed as a result of Turkish immigration to Germany. When discussing those who immigrated as *Gastarbeiter* or spouses of *Gastarbeiter*, I use "Turkish immigrants" or the "first generation." The children of these immigrants I refer to as the "second generation" or "Turkish-Germans," as they spent many if not all of their formative years growing up in Germany. The labeling of generations is not without issue, for two particularly salient reasons. To start, many Turkish immigrants came as teenagers, having lived most of their formative years in Turkey. Scholars who make this differentiation refer to this group as the "1.5 generation." In addition, because immigration from Turkey continued over a period of decades, members of the first generation could be highly acclimated guestworkers who had lived and work in Germany for twenty years, or relatively new immigrants with little experience of life outside of their hometown in Turkey. I retain the generational labels because ultimately they are useful for describing, analyzing, and understanding the history of Turkish immigration in Germany, despite their problematic aspects.

More broadly, the "Turkish-German community" encompasses all of those living in Germany who are connected by a Turkish national background, whether Turkish citizens or the children or grandchildren of Turkish citizens. References to "Germany's Turkish population" describes the same group. These terms are not without issue, but in general serve the purpose well. I do not use the popular phrase "German Turk," as it suggests that the second identity is the fundamental one. The hyphenated "Turkish-German" underscores the hybrid nature of the identity, while connecting it to the land in which one lives, rather than where one's parents or grandparents grew up.

both shared with the host society and created by actors within the community itself. By deconstructing integration as a process, I examine how Turkish immigrants and their children forged spaces of belonging for themselves as they moved through, changed, and were changed by their everyday landscape. Ultimately, this dissertation helps to answer two questions central to the understanding postwar Germany: first, what are the causes and consequences of positioning oneself—as Eren Keskin does—almost simultaneously within, between, and outside of German society; and second, what are the implications of this positioning for broader German society?

The Historiography of Immigration

The historiography of the *Gastarbeiter* program and subsequent Turkish immigrant population encompasses a broad range of themes and disciplines, including history, political science, sociology, and anthropology. Historians such as Ulrich Herbert and Klaus Bade trace German migration and foreign labor policy through its various incarnations from the nineteenth century to the present day.⁵ These scholars, through their historically-based investigations, argue that postwar foreign labor policies were the product not only of then-present day conditions, but also that they shared distinct and, at times, disturbing similarities with labor policies from Imperial and Nazi Germany. Others, including political scientist

⁵ See, for example, Klaus Bade, ed., *Auswanderer-Wanderarbeiter-Gastarbeiter: Bevölkerung, Arbeitsmarkt und Wanderung in Deutschland seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern: Scripta Mercaturae Verlag, 1984); Ulrich Herbert, *A History of Foreign Labor in Germany, 1880-1980: Seasonal Workers, Forced Laborers, Guest Workers*. Translated by William Templer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990); Klaus Bade, *Europa in Bewegung: Migration vom späten 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2000).

Karen Schönwälder, demonstrate that such policies and their resulting problems were not unique to Germany, but could also be found in other European countries.⁶

More recently, historians have begun to narrow their focus, examining the experiences of particular groups of *Gastarbeiter* and their impact on German society. Karin Hunn turns her attention to the immigration and settlement of Turkish guestworkers, arguing that this history cannot be understood without taking into consideration all the factors which affected it: German and Turkish migration politics; the state of, interests, and actions of business; and the attitudes of German society as well as Turkish immigrants.⁷ Other scholars show how the study of the *Gastarbeiter* program reveals as much about German history as it does about immigrant experiences. Monika Mattes introduces a new perspective to studies of *Gastarbeiter* by analyzing the employment of *Gastarbeiterinnen* in the Federal Republic, demonstrating how the recruitment of foreign women was aimed at “enabling” German women to stay in the home and out of the workplace.⁸ Finally, Rita Chin shows how the presence of foreign workers not only had an impact on the German economy, but “forced a major rethinking of the definitions of German identity and culture.”⁹ These historical studies

⁶ Karen Schönwälder, *Einwanderung und ethnische Pluralität: Politische Entscheidungen und öffentliche Debatten in Grossbritannien und der Bundesrepublik von den 1950er bis zu 1970er Jahren* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2001).

⁷ Karin Hunn, “*Naechstes Jahr kehren wir zurueck...*”: *Die Geschichte der tuerkischen “Gastarbeiter” in der Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005).

⁸ Monika Mattes, “*Gastarbeiterinnen*” in der Bundesrepublik: *Anwerbepolitik, Migration, und Geschlecht in den 50er bis 70er Jahren* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2005).

⁹ Rita Chin, *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 14. Anthropologist Ruth Mandel has also contributed to the growing discussion about how the presence of immigrant and ethnic minority communities affects the German state and society. Her recent book, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*, examines identity formation within the diverse Turkish diaspora as well as the Federal Republic’s efforts to come to terms with its own identity in relation to that community. See Ruth Mandel, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

have contributed significantly to historians' understanding of the many facets and implications of the *Gastarbeiter* program and worked to situate these developments within the scope of German history. However, with the exception of Hunn's work, the historical scholarship has not approached Turkish labor immigration from the viewpoint of the immigrants or utilized Turkish language sources.

Sociologists and political scientists interested in Germany's Turkish minority have primarily focused their attention on the factors they view as either promoting or hindering their integration into German society. Such factors include the activities of ethnic organizations, the rise of Islam, the experiences of Turkish women, and the influence of gender norms. Often, social scientists using ethnic organizations as a framework to explore Turks' integration into or isolation from German society do so by comparing Turkish groups with other ethnic organizations in Germany, or with Turkish associations in other European countries.¹⁰ Other scholars focus on Turkish associations as a way to examine collective or divergent senses of identity.¹¹ A third branch has explored how Germany's relatively few restrictions on associations allow space for the activities of Turkish political and religious organizations that are limited or outlawed in Turkey.¹² Though these organizationally-

¹⁰ Ulrike Schoeneberg, "Participation in Ethnic Organizations: The Case of Immigrants in West Germany." *International Migration Review* 19, no. 3, Special Issue: Civil Rights and the Sociopolitical Participation of Migrants. (Autumn, 1985): 416-437. Floris Freek Vermeulen, *The Immigrant Organising Process: The emergence and persistence of Turkish immigrant organisations in Amsterdam and Berlin and Surinamese organisations in Amsterdam, 1960-2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006).

¹¹ Ali Gitmez and Czarina Wilpert, "A Micro-Society or an Ethnic Community? Social Organization and Ethnicity amongst Turkish Migrants in Berlin," in *Immigrant Associations in Europe*, eds. John Rex, Daniele Joy, and Czarina Wilpert. (Brookfield, VT: Grower, 1987): 86-125. Gökçe Yurdakul, "State, Political Parties, and Immigrant Elites: Turkish Immigrant Associations in Berlin." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32, no. 3 (April, 2006): 435-453.

¹² For examples, see Ertekin Özcan, *Türkische Immigrantorganisationen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Die Entwicklung politischer Organisationen unter türkischen Arbeitsimmigranten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Berlin West* (West Berlin: Hitit Verlag, 1989); Betigül Ercan Argun, *Turkey in Germany: The*

oriented studies often approach their subjects through the perspectives of Turkish immigrants and thus are able to begin addressing political and religious orientations and identity, they are generally confined to the select number of individuals who participate in these organizations, primarily local elites. As such, they do not speak to a wide range of Turkish-Germans or to how everyday negotiations shape belonging.

Scholarship from various disciplines regarding the meaning and practice of Islam among Turkish-Germans explores the role of religion and religious organizations in the Turkish community and asks why Islam has occupied an increasingly important place among some sections of the community. Many, such as Andreas Goldberg and Yasemin Karakaşoğlu, attribute this to family reunification and the perceived hostility of Germans toward Turkish immigrants.¹³ Scholars argue that the increased visibility of immigrant communities and Islamic observance served to cause anxiety among Germans and to isolate immigrants from broader German society. Additionally, these scholars stress that immigrants' feelings of insecurity prompted parents to emphasize Islamic values that reinforced a patriarchal family structure.¹⁴ While some see the hybridization of European and Islamic values among members of the second generation as a positive development in an

Transnational Sphere of Deutschkei. Middle East Studies: History, Politics, and Law Series. (New York: Routledge, 2003).

¹³ See Andreas Goldberg, "Islam in Germany," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002): 30-47; Yasemin Karakaşoğlu, "Turkish Cultural Orientations in Germany and the Role of Islam," in *Turkish Culture in German Society Today*, eds. David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996): 157-179.

¹⁴ See Shireen Hunter, ed., *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural and Political Landscape* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002); Barbara Freyer Stowasser, "The Turks in Germany: From Sojourners to Citizens," in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Dursun Tan and Hans-Peter Waldhoff, "Turkish Everyday Culture in Germany and its Prospects," in *Turkish Cultural in German Society Today*, eds. David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996).

otherwise ambivalent relationship,¹⁵ researchers who focus on the building of mosques and the controversy that invariably ensues identify a persistent wedge between Turkish and Muslim communities and the host society.¹⁶ Though it cannot account for the experiences and perspectives of non-practicing or secular Turkish-Germans, the study of the connection between the Turkish Muslim community and their practice of religion provides a rich framework through which one can explore a range of ways that Turkish-Germans identify themselves and are identified by drawing on family relationships and cultural affiliations in different political and social spaces.

Often closely tied to discussion of Islam is scholarship concerning the relationship between migration and gender. Scholars such as Helma Lutz and Nira Yuval-Davis have stressed the importance of gender as a category of analysis in migration and ethnic studies, showing it to be a constitutive element of both the self and subjected identities of ethnic minorities and a central factor of how immigrants experience migration and settlement.¹⁷ Early studies focused on the possibilities, however problematic, for women to experience emancipation from traditional patriarchal social structures through life and employment in West Germany. Sociologist Nermin Abadan-Unat and others have argued that, while women who remained behind while their husbands left or who emigrated themselves but returned to

¹⁵ Peter P. Mandaville, "Muslim Youth in Europe," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen Hunter (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002): 219-229.

¹⁶ Gerdien Jonker, "The Mevlana Mosque in Berlin-Kreuzberg: An Unsolved Conflict." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 6 (November 2005): 1067-1081.

¹⁷ See Mirjana Morokvasic, "Birds of Passage are also Women..." *International Migration Review* 18, No. 4, Special Issues: Women in Migration. (Winter, 1984): 886-907; Caroline B. Brettell and Patricia A. deBerjeois, "Anthropology and the Study of Immigrant Women," in *Seeking Common Ground: Multidisciplinary Studies of Immigrant Women in the United States*, ed., Donna Gabaccia, 3-63. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1992): 41-64; Helma Lutz, Ann Phoenix, and Nira Yuval-Davis, eds., *Crossfires: Nationalism, Racism and Gender in Europe* (London: Pluto Press, 1995); Annie Phizacklea, "Gendered Actors in Migration," in *Gender and Ethnicity in Contemporary Europe*, ed., Jacqueline Andall (Oxford: Berg, 2003): 23-37.

Turkey did not experience significant emancipation, those who remained in Germany were able to exert more power in their family lives due to their financial contribution to the family's well-being.¹⁸

Later scholarship addressing the situation of the second generation complicates this connection between life in Germany and women's emancipation, depicting young Turkish-German women as "caught between two worlds" with Turkish patriarchy on one side and German emancipation on the other.¹⁹ Contributions to this debate continue to diverge as writers alternately focus on the role of the Turkish community, German society, or a combination of the two as hindrances to Turkish-German women's full emancipation.²⁰ Masculinity remains under-researched, with the notable exceptions of Margret Spohn's work on first generation Turkish men²¹ and Katherine Pratt Ewing's study of the stigmatization of Turkish and Muslim masculinity in German society as a tool of publicly accepted xenophobia.²²

¹⁸ Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Implications of Migration on Emancipation and Pseudo-Emancipation of Turkish Women," *International Migration Review* 11, no. 1 (Spring 1977): 31-57; Ayse Kudat, "Personal, Familial, and Societal Impacts of Turkish Women's Migration to Europe," in *Living in Two Cultures: The Socio-Cultural Situation of Migrant Workers and their Families*, ed. Unesco (Paris: Unesco Press, 1982): 291-305.

¹⁹ Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Identity Crisis of Turkish Migrants: First and Second Generation," in *Turkish Workers in Europe: An Interdisciplinary Study*, eds. İlhan Başgöz and Norman Furniss (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985): 3-22; Mehmet Yasin, "Gather up the bales, we are going back: Lost Generation, Runaway Girls are Speaking," in *Turkish Workers in Europe: An Interdisciplinary Study*, eds. İlhan Başgöz and Norman Furniss (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985): 175-191.

²⁰ See respectively, Umut Erel, "Gendered and Racialized Experiences of Citizenship in the Life Stories of Women of Turkish Background in Germany," in *Gender and Ethnicity in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Jacqueline Andall (Oxford: Berg, 2003): 155-176; Necla Kelek, *Die fremde Braut: ein Bericht aus dem Inneren des türkischen Lebens in Deutschland* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005); Seyran Ateş, *Grosse Reise ins Feuer: Die Geschichte einer deutschen Türkin* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 2003).

²¹ Margret Spohn, *Türkische Männer in Deutschland: Familie und Identität. Migranten der ersten Generation erzählen ihre Geschichte* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2002).

²² Katherine Pratt Ewing, *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

Each of these approaches further elucidates the nature of the Turkish-German community, providing in-depth treatment of, in most cases, just one category of analysis. As such, they are limited to particular aspects of society (political, economic, social, or cultural) or restrict Turkish-German identity to being either more “German,” more “Turkish,” or “caught between two worlds.” Recent studies, however, have begun examining both the transnational and local natures of the community and of Turkish-German identity. The link between transnational and local is also reflected in studies that explore this connection in business relationships, political movements, and marriage patterns.²³ Drawing on oral interviews, literature, film, and news media, these scholars have emphasized the multifaceted, fluid character of ethnic identity.²⁴ In his book on Turkish-German hip hop culture in Berlin, political scientist Ayhan Kaya, for example, argues that the identity of these “youngsters” is a diasporic one, grounded in a certain time and place and influenced by a range of factors.²⁵ Identity, therefore, cannot be understood as static or binary.

Other scholars have coupled this focus on the interaction between the transnational and the local aspects of identity with the framework of place to investigate how Turkish-Germans have been categorized by the places they inhabit and, conversely, how they have created and impacted their own places of belonging. Ethnologist Ayşe S. Çağlar argues that the “ghetto trope” reduces Turkish-German places of belonging in public discourse to

²³ Thomas Faist and Eyüp Özveren, eds., *Transnational Social Spaces: Agents, Networks and Institutions* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

²⁴ For examples, see Eva Kolinsky, *Deutsch und türkisch leben: Bild und Selbstbild der türkischen Minderheit in Deutschland* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000); Nade Al-Ali and Khalid Koser, eds., *New Approaches to Migration? Transnational communities and the transformation of home* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002); Thomas Faist and Eyüp Özveren, eds., *Transnational Social Spaces: Agents, Networks and Institutions* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004).

²⁵ Ayhan Kaya, *“Sicher in Kreuzberg”—Constructing Diasporas: Turkish Hip-Hop Youth in Berlin* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2001).

specific urban sites, thereby emphasizing difference and foreignness and ignoring the transnational spaces of Turkish-Germans that make them a part of Berlin beyond their ethnic or religious ties.²⁶ Equally relevant to this dissertation is cultural geographer Patricia Ehrkamp's study into how Turkish-Germans have created spaces of belonging in Duisburg-Marxloh and, through those spaces, localized their identity and enabled themselves to engage with the host society on their own terms.²⁷ Ehrkamp's use of place and extensive oral interviews allow her to explore how the daily experiences of Turkish-Germans influence their understanding of their own identities, and to embed those identities within the places of consumption in the contemporary landscape. Finally, Esin Bozkurt draws on the in-depth interviews she conducted with several Turkish immigrant families to examine the concept of home and how that understanding is influenced by generation and gender.²⁸ Despite her relatively narrow source-base, Bozkurt makes perceptive conclusions regarding the factors involved in feeling "at home" and the necessity of including those factors in both academic study and public policy concerning Germany's Turkish population.

Each of these approaches examines aspects of the Turkish-German community that are important when considering the place of ethnic minorities in German society. This dissertation builds on these insightful approaches, but pushes the level of analysis deeper to examine the critical aspect of the development of the Turkish-German community over time and the impact of the specific historical contexts on that development. Similar to Ehrkamp's

²⁶ Ayse S. Çağlar, "Constraining metaphors and the transnationalisation of spaces in Berlin," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 4 (October 2001): 601-613.

²⁷ Patricia Ehrkamp, "Placing Identities: Transnational Practices and Local Attachments of Turkish Immigrants in Germany," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 5 (March 2005): 345-364.

²⁸ Esin Bozkurt, *Conceptualising "Home": the Question of Belonging among Turkish Families in Germany*. (Frankfurt: Campus, 2009).

focus on the transnational and local aspects of identity, this dissertation examines how Turkish-Germans created spaces of belonging for themselves within and alongside broader German society. I situate the perspectives of Turkish immigrants and their children at the center of my analysis, and use the framework of space to incorporate diverse socio-economic, cultural, and generational influences. At the same time, I move beyond Ehrkamp's and others' studies by analyzing how spaces of belonging were constructed and developed within certain historical contexts.

In order to do an in-depth examination of the numerous influences on the Turkish-German community over time, I focus much of my analysis on the neighborhood of Sprengekier in Berlin-Wedding. Sprengekier, which is discussed more fully in Chapter 2, provides a rich source for such a study. The neighborhood is home to a diverse population of long standing, and as such has seen and weathered the same social, political, and economic storms of other, more well-known districts and cities. At the same time, it has been almost entirely overlooked by researchers, save for a study conducted by a local historian in the 1990s. By drawing on the history of Sprengekier and relating it to developments in Germany more broadly, I bring the experiences and contributions of the Turkish-German community into the narratives of postwar German history, and explain how this community and the spaces in which it operated grew and changed in response to individual agency, influences of the community, and changes in the political and economic landscape.²⁹

²⁹ On the need to locate the history of postwar immigrants to Germany within German history, see Konrad H. Jarausch, "Unsettling German Society: Mobility and Migration," in *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German History*, eds., Konrad H. Jarausch and Michael Geyer (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003): 197-220.

Space, Place and Immigrant Communities

My use of space, along with its investigations of everyday experiences and senses of belonging embedded in certain places, draws on a range of disciplines.³⁰ A space represents a place of convergence of meaning, routines, geography, and built environment. This understanding of space, its creation, and its functions is influenced by the French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre, who develops the idea of space as created and recreated by the people who inhabit it. At the same time, he posits that space can grow in ways unintended by its creators and, in turn, exert influence upon them. Lefebvre sets up the production of space as the interaction among three processes over time: representations of space, the ideals or imaginations contained within, and daily practice. He also differentiates between spaces produced by those in power to serve an abstract purpose (domination) and those created to address human need (appropriation).³¹ While most spaces do not neatly inhabit this binary, their basic intentions and functions serve as general guidelines for those sites I examine here: the pre-existing places Turkish-Germans shared with native Germans for the purposes of education and employment (domination), and those places Turkish-Germans created for their own needs (appropriation) that were not met by spaces they encountered when they came to Germany.

For practical applications of this conception of space, I turn to social and cultural historians, as well as cultural geographers. As an historian, studying marginalized communities, I use space as a way to examine how certain groups circumvented their

³⁰ I am not using space in the grander sense, as with migration routes, but rather looking at places connected with immigrants' senses of belonging and daily living. In addition, my use of space is separate from the debate concerning *Lebensraum* and German geopolitical spaces of influence.

³¹ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

political or social disadvantage through activity in various physical and social spaces.³²

Geographers employ the framework to explore how cultures use and are influenced by spaces, in addition to focusing on how groups form an “everyday landscape” of meaning through material objects.³³ For cultural geographers in migration studies, the use of space can be a successful concept in finding a balance between structure and agency.

Within the field of migration studies, scholars have debated the usefulness of both the micro theory of neo-classical economics, which stresses individual motivation and action, and world systems theory, a macro approach that emphasizes the role of the global economy, when dealing with international migration.³⁴ Migration theorists have argued that combining these two approaches allows us to understand the complex array of influencing and motivating factors at play in migrant families and communities.³⁵ The use of spaces of belonging achieves this balance, allowing me to bring together the larger structural factors at play within a given space with the impact of the individual motivation and agency of Turkish immigrants and their children on that space.

³² In doing so, I draw on the examples set by historians of minority and/or marginalized communities: Donna Gabaccia, *From the Other Side: Women, Gender, and Immigrant Life in the U.S., 1820-1990* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994); George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Sarah Deutsch, *Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston, 1870-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Bronwen Walter, *Outsiders Inside: Whiteness, Place and Irish Women* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

³³ For a historiography of cultural geography’s use of place in migration studies, see Rachel Silvey and Victoria Lawson, “Placing the Migrant,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 89, no. 1 (March 1999).

³⁴ See Douglas S. Massey, Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hoge, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino and J. Edward Taylor, “Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal,” *Population and Development Review* 19, no. 3 (September, 1993): 431-466.

³⁵ For a discussion of migration theory and the need to balance structural factors with individual agency, see the chapter entitled “Gender and Migration Theory,” in Eleonore Kofman, Annie Phizacklea, Parvati Raghuram, and Rosemary Sales, *Gender and International Migration in Europe: Employment, welfare and politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000): 21-43.

One of the arguments of this dissertation is that integration is a process that takes place largely on the level of everyday experiences, negotiations, and positionings. These daily experiences affect not only the immigrants, but also the spaces and societies they inhabit. As such, my dissertation is influenced by the theory and methods employed by *Alltagsgeschichte* (everyday history). This form of social history stresses a shift away from the perspectives of institutions in order to “develop a more qualitative understanding of ordinary people’s circumstances and lives, both by investigating the material realities of daily existence at work, at home, and at play [...] and by entering the inner world of popular experience in the workplace, the family, the neighborhood, the school.”³⁶ By approaching immigrants’ experiences at this level, I can take into account the emotional aspect of their belonging—the need to feel oneself accepted and at home.

This connection between place and everyday lived experience is key to my argument, and presents two theoretical challenges. First, in any scholarly study, the “recovering” of experience is problematic, as people (whether wittingly or unwittingly) craft the way they remember and relate their experiences. Interview subjects, especially those given the open space of an oral history, often present their lives as a cohesive story, fitting their experiences into an overarching narrative. To interrogate the narrative as well as its constitutive parts, I draw on the work of Joan Scott, Helga Lutz, and others, who address the challenges and opportunities of deconstructing experience and of examining migrants’ own “biographical work.”³⁷ At the same time, while I am sensitive to the role of language and its influence on

³⁶ Geoff Eley, “Labor History, Social History, “Alltagsgeschichte”: Experience, Culture and the Politics of the Everyday—a New Direction for German Social History?” *The Journal of Modern History* 61, no. 2 (June 1989): 314. See also, Alf Lüdtke, *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*. Translated by William Templer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

³⁷ See Joan W. Scott, “Experiences,” in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, eds. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (London and New York: Routledge, 1992): 22-40; Helma Lutz, “Hard Labour: The ‘Biographical Work’ of a

the communication and perception of experience, this dissertation shows the importance of agency, historical context, and material reality on subjects' ascription of meaning to the events in their lives.³⁸ Second, focusing on the lived experiences of individuals in a particular community presents the issue of representativeness and relating these experiences to the larger group—in this case, the Turkish-German community in one locality to the larger Turkish immigrant population. The nature of *Alltagsgeschichte* to focus on depth rather than breadth challenges scholars to make their studies relevant to broader historical inquiries and debates.

Yet, even as these challenges encourage scholars to be mindful of their theoretical and methodological approach, the connection between lived experience and *Alltagsgeschichte* provides a critically useful approach for analyzing marginalized communities, particularly immigrants. Konrad H. Jarausch, including *Alltagsgeschichte* within the development of a “social history experience,” recognized and highlighted this potential to “draw attention to individual people’s lives.” A focus on lived experience, Jarausch writes, “brings power down onto its basic operating level, showing its effect on regular lives, and thereby reshaping the accepted chronology.”³⁹ The caution remains that, “in order not to fall into a new incoherence, such multiple fragments in turn need to be

Turkish Migrant Woman in Germany,” *The European Journal of Women’s Studies* 7 (2000): 301-319; Umut Erel, “Gendered and Racialized Experiences of Citizenship in the Life Stories of Women of Turkish Background in Germany,” in *Gender and Ethnicity in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Jacqueline Andall (Oxford: Berg, 2003): 155-176.

³⁸ For an insightful article on rethinking and retheorizing experience, discourse, and agency, see Kathleen Canning, “Feminist History after the Linguistic Turn: Historicizing Discourse and Experience,” *Signs* 19, no. 2 (Winter, 1994): 368-404.

³⁹ Konrad H. Jarausch, “Toward a Social History of Experience: Postmodern Predicaments in Theory and Interdisciplinarity,” *Central European History* 22, no. 3/4, German Histories: Challenges in Theory, Practice, Technique (Sept.—Dec. 1989): 442.

related to one another to form a more complex and interdependent mosaic.”⁴⁰ In this work, the broader significance can be found both in its embeddedness in German postwar history and in its theoretical connection of space, everyday life, and agency.

French scholar Michel de Certeau provides a link between Lefebvre’s work on space and the concept of *Alltagsgeschichte* in his theoretical explorations of how people circumvent the intended use of those elements that make up a culture (institutions, traditions, language, etc.) and re-appropriate them to serve their own ends. This evasion of authority, whose goals are assimilation and self-replication, makes the everyday person an active “user,” rather than a passive consumer, of the materials and structures in their daily life.⁴¹ The relationship between ordinary people, their daily lives, and the authoritative structures they come into contact with provides a useful framework with which to understand the experiences of immigrant communities in a host society. Instead of grading on a simple scale of center versus margin or success versus failure, Certeau’s approach allows us to see immigrants’ participation in the host society as a series of nuanced and active negotiations that challenge authority even as they operate within it. In my own approach to the primary sources, Certeau’s theories of the “user” are particularly useful in helping me to see how Turkish immigrants and their children, with seemingly little power, utilized the materials available to them to create space and opportunities for themselves, while at the same time altering the society that surrounds them. Drawing on Certeau’s theories enables me to read the daily lives of the first and second generations as pro-active negotiations, rather than passive, powerless reactions.

⁴⁰ Jarausch, 438.

⁴¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984).

These theoretical approaches form the structure of my examination of the process of integration as the interaction between people, ideas, and environment. Part of this process, I argue, is the construction of a sense of belonging in one's everyday life. Belonging, in this sense, is related to the process of integration, but not synonymous with it. As Anne-Marie Fortier writes in her study of Italians in Great Britain, "Belonging, here, refers to both 'possessions' and inclusion. That is, practices of group identity are about manufacturing cultural and historical belongings that mark out terrains of commonality, through which the social dynamics and politics of 'fitting in' are delineated."⁴² By constructing spaces of belonging, migrants can create "a sense of place, a structure of feeling that is local in its materialization, while its symbolic reach is multilocal."⁴³ In other words, belonging encompasses both the feeling of "fitting in" to one's surroundings, and of having a degree of authority or legitimacy within them.

Whereas Fortier examines Italian immigrants' efforts to remain visible through the performance of belonging to their ethnic group through cultural events, I argue that the integration of Turkish immigrants and their children needs to be understood through their efforts to create belonging within their everyday landscapes and social spaces embedded therein. In this case, spaces of belonging are ones that the Turkish-German community came into contact with, operated within, shaped, and were shaped by on a daily basis. These spaces were affected by the composition, motivations, and activities of their participants, the physical sites in which they were located, and the reactions of those "outside" the spaces. While many of these spaces could be seen as positive in the sense that they served to connect

⁴² Anne-Marie Fortier, *Migrant Belongings: Memory, Space and Identity* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 2.

⁴³ Fortier, 163.

the immigrant community with the host society, this is not necessarily the case. Some spaces of belonging were constructed either alongside or in opposition to the host society. In these cases, the spaces of belonging could estrange its participants and those outside the space from each other. Even in these cases, however, the spaces were embedded in and drew legitimacy from the local environment.

The construction of a sense of belonging through one's daily activities leads to local identification. This necessitates analysis of activity at the local level, but with attention to the transnational influences at work on that level. In order to fully explore the interplay between the transnational and local elements of identity and belonging, I focus specifically on West Berlin, and within that city, the neighborhood of Sprengekiez in Wedding. West Berlin, though a relative latecomer to the *Gastarbeiter* program, soon had a large population of foreign workers, and by 1968 its Turkish population had grown larger than any other guestworker group.⁴⁴ Companies stationed in West Berlin hired significant numbers of female guestworkers, which allows me to explore the connection between the workplace and gender relations.

The district of Wedding, despite its large and long-standing postwar immigrant population, has generally been overlooked by scholarly research. Much more popular with researchers and the media have been the districts of Kreuzberg and, more recently, Neukölln. While these districts certainly have proven their value as subjects of scholarly inquiry, Wedding has characteristics that allow the researcher both to see the specificity of local integration and to relate the experiences of immigrants in Wedding more broadly. As with Kreuzberg, Wedding is a district that once shared a border with East Berlin, and its location

⁴⁴ Statistisches Bundesamt, Germany (West), *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1968), 151.

along the wall, together with its traditionally working-class population, resulted in the cheaper housing that attracted immigrants to settle there initially. In the early years of the guestworker program, migrant laborers moved into Wedding in numbers similar to Kreuzberg and in far greater numbers than those in Neukölln. As such, the present immigrant population in Wedding is large, diverse, and well-established. Yet, while the population demographics in Wedding and Kreuzberg were similar in the 1970s and 1980s, the latter experienced considerably more social protest and turmoil. Briefly stated, Kreuzberg was more radical and more visible. When residents of Kreuzberg were holding mass demonstrations against the city's proposed housing renovations, people in Wedding were forming discussion groups and petitioning support from city representatives. More mundane than its boisterous neighbor, Wedding garnered less attention, despite facing similar challenges of an increasingly diverse population. Within the district of Wedding, the history of which is discussed in the second chapter, this dissertation uses the experiences of the residents of Sprengelkiez to explore in-depth the dynamics of immigrant settlement and integration.

Within the context of the city, this dissertation explores the connections between daily life, the construction of belonging, and space in five sites within the everyday landscape of Turkish immigrants and their children: workplace, home and neighborhood, school, and mosque. These particular places incorporate both exterior spaces produced by and shared with Germans (work and school) as well as those created by the Turkish-German community to address their own needs (home and mosque), generally following the spaces of domination and appropriation discussed by Lefebvre. The neighborhood as a built environment was originally constructed and inhabited by Germans, but as more Turkish immigrants moved in,

the character of the place changed to an extent that it could no longer be quantified as either interior or exterior. Focusing on these specific places enables me to take into account the multiple reciprocal influences between German society and the Turkish-German community⁴⁵, as well as the internal dynamics of ethnicity, generation, gender, religion, and class within that community.

Just as the focus on space and place is key in addressing the diverse factors at play in the Turkish-German community, so too is a diversity of sources necessary in order to incorporate the varied perspectives and actors within these spaces. This dissertation utilizes materials produced across the various levels of society, from the institutional to the individual. For information regarding the recruitment and employment of foreign workers, I drew company-generated documents housed at Siemens Corporate Archive in Munich as well as the Deutsches Technikmuseum's collection of materials from AEG-Telefunken. These sources included recruitment brochures, company memoranda, and in-house newspapers, and provided me with information on both the practical issues surrounding the employment of *Gastarbeiter* and the companies' perspective on the benefits and challenges of their employment. In addition, studies on Berlin's demography conducted by the Statistisches Landesamt (State Office of Statistics) gave a picture of the growth and spread of the Turkish population in that city, while a report by the Büro für stadtteilnahe Sozialplanung (Office for District Social Development) provided a close-up view of settlement played out on the neighborhood level. Finally, I used student records—including

⁴⁵ It is important to note that these reciprocal influences were not necessarily balanced. As a relatively young ethnic minority population situated within a larger, more established host society, the influence exerted by the Turkish-German community was often much less than the influence of German social, economic, and political structures on that community. Despite this power imbalance, however, Turkish immigrants and their children, through their spaces of belonging, did prompt changes in the landscapes and structures in which they were located.

grade evaluations, reports on behavior, and correspondence—from two secondary schools in Berlin-Wedding to gain insight into the second generation’s academic performance and personal conduct from the perspectives of teachers and administrators, as well as what opportunities were available to them in school.

In addition to these institutional sources, I draw on articles from over two dozen German and Turkish newspapers, such as *Berliner Morgenpost* and *Hürriyet*, as well as more local periodicals like *Vis-à-Vis*. I found these news articles using a variety of methods. In some cases, I came across relevant articles in collections compiled and held by museum archives and individual records; others—including *Die Zeit* and *Der Spiegel*—were located through keyword searches using online databases. Finally, in the cases of *Hürriyet* and *Vis-à-Vis*, I methodically searched individual editions in a series of years (noted in the Bibliography) for articles relevant to the situation in Berlin generally and in Sprengekiez-Wedding more specifically. These media sources complement the institutional sources in three ways. First, I use these periodicals to help trace the development of the Turkish-German community locally and at the state and national level. German and Turkish journalists wrote extensively about the Turkish population in the Federal Republic, particularly as that population grew more settled and included families. Thus, I am also able to examine how the media both depicted and interpreted the Turkish experience “abroad.” Thirdly, while German coverage generally focused on the problems posed by this growing immigrant population, Turkish reporters wrote stories lauding “their countrymen’s” achievements in a foreign land. Through stories such as these, I examine the ways the media itself helped to form these spaces of belonging.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, I use oral histories conducted for this dissertation, as well as existing interview transcripts collected by Berlin's Mitte Museum and the Documentation Center and Museum for Migration in Germany, to investigate how individuals perceived, experienced, and reacted to the presence of a growing Turkish-German community in their everyday landscape. In order to develop a detailed picture of everyday life at the local level, I conducted oral histories with residents of Sprengelkiez as well as those connected in some way to the life of that neighborhood. From the fall of 2008 to the summer of 2009, I interviewed sixteen people: seven who identified themselves as Turkish or Turkish-German, and nine Germans. Among the former group, three belonged to the first generation and four to the second. Two of the second generation were also representatives from local mosques. Four of the German interview partners were longtime residents of Sprengelkiez, two were teachers in local schools, and three were educational administrators. I connected with my interview partners through my own initiative as well as referral by third parties or other interview partners. I selected people based on their connection to the district of Wedding and neighborhood of Sprengelkiez during the years covered in this study, and thus had to exclude some interviews as a result. The majority of the interviews were conducted in the interview subject's home, with a few taking place at the person's workplace. To keep my influence to a minimum, I posed open-ended questions, and generally waited until interviewees had finished their stories before asking more specific questions, interrupting only for clarification of particular points. Interviews usually lasted between one and a half to three hours.

Among those I interviewed was Dr. Eduard Ditschek, director of the Volkshochschule Berlin-Mitte. In addition to our interview, Dr. Ditschek allowed me access

to his considerable personal collection of documents pertaining to his years as director of Wedding's Volkshochschule, which included materials regarding the institution's course offerings, student participants in vocational training and theater programs, special events, internal correspondence and memoranda, press clippings, and videos of student theater performances. To my knowledge, this collection has not been utilized for any other research project.

Along with the oral histories I gathered for this dissertation, I also drew on pre-existing interviews in two separate archives. The first is the archive of Berlin's Mitte Museum, which covers the districts of Mitte, Wedding, and Tiergarten. In the early 1990s, a freelance German historian named Ursula Trüper conducted a series of interviews for an exhibit entitled "Die Leute vom Sparrplatz" (The people of Sparrplatz) at the Mitte Museum. As a volunteer at a community center on Sparrplatz (the Sparrladen), Trüper had personal connections with several of the neighborhood's residents, and used these to do interviews with a variety of local residents. Trüper conducted the majority of her interviews in German, but enlisted the assistance of a translator—Hatice Renc—for several of those with first generation Turkish immigrants. The majority of interviews were held in the homes of the interview subjects, with a few taking place at the Sparrladen or in the local Turkish-operated *Kneipe*. Trüper, for the most part, kept her questions open-ended, preferring to hear her subjects' stories with little of her own interruption, interjecting questions only when her interview partners seemed at a loss for how to proceed or to encourage elaboration on certain aspects of their stories. Her interview partners included elderly Germans who had lived in the neighborhood for decades; younger Germans who had moved there in the 1980s for the cheaper rent; first generation Turkish immigrants, among whom were two business owners;

and several second generation youth, from teenage girls to a ten year-old boy. Trüper's interviews, along with her background research on the history of Sparrplatz, provided a rich source of information on life in the neighborhood from the 1970s through the early 1990s, and until now have not been used by outside researchers.

While Trüper's and my interviews provide the bulk of the oral history source base, I utilized two additional resources for individual perspectives and histories. One was the interviews available at Documentation Center and Museum for Migration in Germany (DOMiD), located in Cologne. Founded in 1990, DOMiD originally documented the history of Turkish immigrants to Germany, but expanded to include all immigrants in 2005. For the purpose of this dissertation, I drew on the interviews conducted by Murat Güngör, especially those concerning Turkish gangs in Berlin, as well as the archived photographs of Fulya Yüksel⁴⁶ that document her early experiences as a *Gastarbeiter* for AEG-Telefunken in West Berlin. Yüksel's photographs provided a useful point of comparison with company documentation in Chapter 1, while Güngör's interviews with Turkish-German youth contribute significantly to the discussion of gang life in Chapter 5.

Finally, I draw on published interviews and memoirs in order to address the broad spectrum of experiences in the Turkish-German community. Published biographies and memoirs are often not considered representative of the "normal" experience, as they are written by people whose lives are extraordinary enough to garner widespread interest and consumption. Additionally, the author often has a specific purpose in writing the book, a particular agenda that shapes their narrative. In my use of memoir literature, I attempt to take into account the motivations of the author, while at the same time taking seriously the events

⁴⁶ Pseudonym.

and situations they feel shaped their lives. I also bear in mind that the experiences of the authors or subjects were embedded in their own particular everyday landscapes, not in the same places as Trüper's and my interview subjects. While these particular features of published memoirs and interviews understandably cause one to be mindful in their use, they still represent a valuable, though not central, source. Here memoirs and biographies are used not as illustrative of some representative norm, but rather as evidence of the broad range of experiences and diversity within Germany's Turkish population. Where they reflect situations present in the sources generated by residents of Sprengelkiez, they reinforce common experiences; where they differ, memoir literature highlights the Turkish-German community's diversity and suggestively locate silences in the Sprengelkiez community.

These broad and diverse source bases give insight into the lives of first generation Turkish immigrants, their children, public school administrators and teachers, community organizers, religious representatives, and German residents of the study neighborhood. Their voices are a critical component in my examination of the creation and contestation of spaces of belonging within everyday landscapes, illustrating both their active participation in German society as well as their constantly shifting status within that society.

Organization and Aims

The organization of my dissertation follows a double chronology in regard to the order of the chapters and the internal structure of each chapter. As a whole, the dissertation reflects the historical unfolding of the physical sites that the Turkish-German community inhabited. Within each chapter, I trace how particular spaces developed over time, often starting with the influences and activities of the first generation, and then exploring how

those sites changed in response to the increasing participation of the second generation. First, I look at the experiences of Turkish *Gastarbeiter* in the workplace, the site German society had brought them to occupy and where they began to make themselves at home. In this initial space of interaction and settlement, I ask how Turkish guestworkers used their workplace to further their own needs or agendas; what connections and relationships were forged that tied them to their new environment; and how their experiences in that site shaped their perception of their place in broader German society. The chapter examines the policies and practices of large companies such as Siemens and AEG-Telefunken, with particular focus on their West Berlin-based branches, and compares these with the narratives of Turkish *Gastarbeiter*. I draw on published interviews and secondary literature in order to put this material into the national context.

The workplace gave the initial reason for immigration and the financial means for family reunification, and as such enabled and encouraged the settlement of its workers and the (re)formation of their households. In the second chapter, I move forward chronologically and look at the role of the home and neighborhood in the construction of a sense of belonging, exploring how the Turkish-German community accommodated themselves to these new spaces, as well as the role of intergenerational conflict in that process. As the population of Turks in West Germany shifted from single workers to families in the 1970s, guestworkers moved out of company housing and into the city. How did family reunification and settlement change their understanding of their reasons for being in Germany? How did generational conflict and challenges to gender expectations shape those spaces of belonging within the home and neighborhood? In the second chapter, the story of Wedding, and especially Sprengekiez, moves to the fore as I examine the intersecting lives of its residents

as they adjusted to the neighborhood and to one another and responded to the changing social, economic, and political climates.

As Turkish immigrants moved out into German neighborhoods and established families, their children joined the neighbor youth in local primary and secondary schools. The third chapter explores the reciprocal influences between Turkish-German school children and the German schools they attended. School brought the second generation into direct contact not only with other school-aged Turkish and German children, but also with German authority figures and institutions. This analysis takes into account the reaction of parents, teachers, and administrators to the influx of “foreign” students, the impact of both formal education and informal socialization at school, and the role of the school as a cultural mediator. How did the second generation’s experiences in school—interactions with teachers and fellow students, as well as the lessons they learned there— make them feel more (or less) at home? As with the second chapter, I focus here primarily on the experiences of school children and their teachers in Berlin-Wedding, and bring in the narratives of Turkish-Germans from other parts of the country, as well as media coverage of issues surrounding the education of “foreign” children, for a broader perspective.

The shift from a narrow focus on work to one that included family and community life prompted Turkish immigrants to put an increased emphasis on religious observance and cultural traditions. In the fourth chapter, I examine mosques and the ways in which they have served as a religious, social and cultural spaces for Turkish immigrants and their children in West Germany. While the early *Gastarbeiter* were generally limited to small prayer rooms for religious observance, as the demography of the community changed, so did their religious needs, and Turkish Muslims founded their own mosques. Here, the main issue

is the extent to which the mosque has acted as both a “separate” space of retreat or exclusion from German society as well as a bridge that enabled them to feel more settled in their new home. Additionally, I am interested in how the usage of the mosque has changed from the first to the second generation, namely how the purpose of the mosque reflected the Turkish Muslim community’s changing relationship with German society and Turkish Muslims’ understanding of their place within it. While I explore the role of mosques in the lives of Sprengelkiez residents, more so than in the previous chapters, I draw on debates in local and national media regarding the growing Muslims population and coverage of controversy surrounding mosque construction projects in cities around the country.

In the final chapter, I deal with the continuation of certain trends identified in the previous chapters beyond the fall of the Berlin Wall and reunification. In it, I address how the place of ethnic minorities, such as Turks, in broader society was impacted by the post-reunification efforts to (re)define what it means to be German. How have Germans and Turks used pre-existing spaces to promote belonging? What new spaces have been created? In this chapter, I explore the continuation of the process of belonging in sites and spaces examined earlier in the dissertation, with particular focus on the city of Berlin, where the repercussions of reunification—both in regard to the political and economic climate as well as debates about the nature of German identity—were especially sharp.

When the *Kneipe* owner Eren Keskin described his rootedness in his local community in one sentence and retorted how his “black head” distanced him from native Germans in the next, he illustrated the complicated and changing nature of Turkish integration in Germany. While Turkish immigrants and their children have actively made a place for themselves in their everyday landscapes, their inclusion in and sense of belonging to German society in the

abstract were more tenuous. By bringing together the concepts of space, place, and everyday life, this dissertation examines the dual processes by which the first and second generations made themselves at home in their physical surroundings and created spaces of belonging within as well as alongside the host society. In so doing, I hope to better understand the tensions that influenced the experiences of Turkish immigrants and their children, shaped the Turkish-German community, and affected its place within German society. As the example of the interview with the *Kneipe* owner Eren Keskin suggests, the situation of Turkish-Germans cannot be understood as a straight line moving from “separate” to “integrated,” or as a permanent shift out of a *Parallelgesellschaft* and into German society. Rather, I hope to show in the following pages how the everyday experiences of Turkish immigrants and their children affected their own complex sense of identity and belonging even as they brought about a hybridization of German society.

CHAPTER 1

SETTLING IN: TURKISH GUESTWORKERS, WEST GERMAN BUSINESSES AND THE WORKPLACE

Sevim Özel was just seventeen years old when she left her home in a village in Turkey to work at a Siemens factory in West Germany. According to the contract's stipulations, she was supposed to be at least eighteen to take part in the labor program that took her so far from home, but her father felt it was an opportunity not to be missed or delayed, so they lied to the official at the recruitment center about her age. After an eight-month wait, an invasive medical screening, and a taxing three-day train trip, Özel arrived in West Berlin on a rainy October day and started her new job with Siemens. What began, however, as a temporary measure to make some good money and return home gradually turned into permanent change, as Özel settled into her new life in Berlin, met and married her husband, raised her children, and eventually retired. Nowadays she vacations in Turkey, but lives in a second-floor apartment in Berlin with her husband and youngest daughter.¹

Sevim Özel is one among hundreds of thousands of Turkish workers who came to West Germany in the 1960s and 1970s as part of a guestworker, or *Gastarbeiter*, program instituted by the Federal Republic to continue fueling its miraculous post-war recovery. In the early 1950s, the newly formed Federal Republic of Germany faced acute labor shortages in industry, agriculture, and mining. Not only was the often dirty, dangerous, and physically taxing nature of these positions unattractive to unemployed German workers, companies also

¹ Sevim Özel (pseudonym), interview by author, 30 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany.

had difficulty convincing them to move to the newly industrialized zones.² The temporary, regulated employment of a foreign, mobile workforce seemed the most appealing answer to this labor problem. Similar to the United States' employment of Mexican workers under the Bracero Program (1942–1967), the Federal Republic entered into a series of bilateral labor contracts, beginning with Italy in 1955 and extending to Turkey in 1961. The government's intention, shared by the migrant laborers who came to West Germany for work, was that these *Gastarbeiter* would be temporary cogs in the German economic machine. Yet in the years that followed, it slowly became apparent to the government, German society, and the *Gastarbeiter* themselves that this provisional workforce was becoming a permanent population.

Sociologists led the first scholarly inquiries into the Federal Republic's guestworker program with studies about immigration policy and the socio-economic effects of foreign labor employment. In an early study published in 1973 and again in 1985, British sociologists Stephen Castles and Godula Kosack examine the impact of migrant laborers on European class structure and the socio-economic status of the immigrants themselves. Their study, which draws on the example of West Germany, reasserts the class structure of European society and argues that labor migrants occupy a section of the increasingly stratified working class.³ While valuable in the breadth of its scope and the impressive synthesis of existing studies, Castles and Kosack's examination does not take into account the implications of political differences among the different immigrant groups, such as access

² Deniz Göktürk, David Gramling, and Anton Kaes, *Germany in Transit: Nation and Migration, 1955-2005* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 9.

³ Stephen Castles and Godula Kosack, *Immigrant Workers and Class Structure in Western Europe*. Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

to citizenship and membership in the European Community. In addition, they treat immigrants as a homogenous male group, failing to address the effects of the employment of immigrant women.

Castles and Kosack's Marxian analysis of the place of labor immigrants in Western Europe did not go unchallenged. Historian Ulrich Herbert calls theirs "a misguided and inadequate approach," and argues instead that immigration policy, at least in the German case, cannot be understood apart from its historical contexts. In this vein, Herbert examines Germany's use of migrant laborers from the *Kaiserreich* to the post-Second World War Federal Republic, showing how contemporary immigration policy is a product of Germany's historical experience with foreign workers. His historically based approach effectively challenges the earlier Marxian interpretations, but at the same time, Herbert also neglects the perspectives and experiences of the immigrants themselves and fails to address the gendered nature of immigration policy and practice.

Historian Monika Mattes continues this connection between the situation of migrant workers and the broader social and political trends in the Federal Republic in her study, *"Gastarbeiterinnen" in der Bundesrepublik: Anwerbepolitik, Migration und Geschlecht in den 50er bis 70er Jahren*. In it, Mattes focuses on the employment of women as part of the *Gastarbeiter* program, a topic largely absent in scholarship on postwar migration and temporary labor programs. She argues that the German government and businesses recruited *Gastarbeiterinnen* [female guestworkers] deliberately and employed them in jobs that would "enable" German women to maintain or return to their primary social role in the home. It was not simply an issue of labor market politics, but also of gender politics.⁴ This study

⁴ Monika Mattes, *"Gastarbeiterinnen" in der Bundesrepublik: Anwerbepolitik, Migration und Geschlecht in den 50er bis 70er Jahren* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2005).

successfully situates the guestworker program into broader political and social trends by highlighting the significant and hereto under-researched aspect of gender.

Writing at the same time as Mattes was her colleague and fellow historian Karin Hunn. While Mattes analyzes the employment of all *Gastarbeiterinnen* regardless of nationality, Hunn instead focuses on the history of Turkish guestworkers in the Federal Republic. She traces this history from the commencement of the bilateral labor contract with Turkey, through the *Anwerbestopp* and its consequences in the 1970s, to the economic crisis of the 1980s. Hunn argues that the history of Turkish *Gastarbeiter* cannot be understood without taking into consideration all the factors that affected it: German and Turkish migration politics: the interests, actions, and state of business: and the attitudes of German society as well as Turkish immigrants. Her study, more than those previous, examines the role of religion and concluded that Islam did not play a role in Turkish identity in the FRG until the late 1960s and early 1970s, when Turkish workers began to feel unwanted and discriminated against by German society.⁵ Hunn's detailed examination of the political, social and economic dimensions of the history of Turkish *Gastarbeiter*, along with her use of Turkish- as well as German-language sources, contribute significantly to our knowledge of postwar migration history. However, her study's lack of attention to *Gastarbeiterinnen* and to the perspectives of the *Gastarbeiter* themselves limits its contribution to the understanding of the formation and settlement of Turkish immigrants as a community, and not just workers.

In order to understand the dynamics of that settlement, particularly in its early stages, this chapter examines the experiences of Turkish *Gastarbeiter* in the workplace, the space German society had brought them to occupy and where they began to make themselves at

⁵ Karin Hunn, "*Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück...*": Die Geschichte der türkischen "*Gastarbeiter*" in der Bundesrepublik (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005).

home. Focusing specifically on the situation in West Berlin, I bring Lefebvre's and Certeau's notions of the use of everyday spaces together with primary sources from the perspectives both of the guestworkers and the companies who employed them in order to address three questions: First, what kind of workplaces were West German companies trying to create? Second, how did Turkish guestworkers experience these spaces and begin to use them in ways unintended by their employers? And third, how did the workplace change in response to the presence and actions of the Turkish employees and, eventually, owners? In answering these questions, I argue that Turkish guestworkers, by their presence as well as their active negotiations and circumventions, created spaces within West German businesses that mediated their permanent settlement in a country that officially maintained its non-immigration identity.

Needs and Expectations: Attracting and Preparing Turks for Work in West Germany

The postwar *Gastarbeiter* program was not the first time that Germany turned to foreign workers to fill the gaps in its own labor force. From Polish women harvesting sugar beets in 18th century Prussia to the forced and slave labor on German farms, in factories, and in concentration camps in the Third Reich, Germany already had a long history of migrant workers. This latest iteration drew on those past experiences in both its ambitions for a temporary, cheap labor force, and its regulations enforcing those ambitions.

Several factors influenced the Federal Republic's decision to initiate a series of bilateral labor contracts. Reconstructing the West German economy in the wake of the Second World War required a vast and diverse labor force, one that could not be fully staffed by that country's population, as much of the manufacturing was highly labor intensive. This labor

crunch became even more acute in 1961 when construction of the Wall halted potential workers from coming in from the East, and was exacerbated by contemporary gender politics, which encouraged (German) women to maintain or return to their traditional roles in the home. Employing foreign workers on a temporary basis would allow West Germany to solve its own labor shortcomings without having to compromise its commitment to the male breadwinner family model.

Whatever the West Germans' motivations, their overtures found a ready audience in both the Turkish government and its citizens, and by 1974 Turkish *Gastarbeiter* outnumbered their fellow foreign workers.⁶ While earlier scholarship has credited Turkey's slow industrialization and lagging economic development, paired with high population growth, for Turks' willingness to immigrate to West Germany for work, a recent study suggests a more nuanced picture. In *Labour Migration from Turkey to Western Europe, 1960–1974: A Multidisciplinary Analysis*, Ahmet Akgündüz argues that the “capitalist transformation process in agriculture,” which led to more mechanized means of production, resulted in a surplus working population in rural areas and increased pressure on small landowners. “Moreover,” Akgündüz writes, “economic development and change and increasing linkages with the West also affected values, cultural perceptions and the taste of consumer goods particularly among youngsters in urban and capitalised areas.”⁷ As a result, working in Western Europe became an acceptable and even preferred means for many

⁶ Statistisches Bundesamt, Germany (West), *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1974), 144.

⁷ Ahmet Akgündüz, *Labour Migration from Turkey to Western Europe, 1960–1974: A Multidisciplinary Analysis* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 47.

middle- and lower middle-class Turks to solve their own labor problems and achieve their financial and lifestyle goals.

The Turkish government, too, had high hopes for participation in a temporary labor program with the Federal Republic. While the short-term absence of rural and un-skilled workers would benefit Turkey's economy through the easing of unemployment and the boon of workers' remittances, the government also reasoned that the returning, newly-skilled workforce would accelerate the country's industrialization and modernization processes. At the same time, the political and bureaucratic demands of the *Gastarbeiter* program, such as inter-governmental and -business communication and coordination, along with the experience of Turkish workers in West Germany and other European countries would "stimulate the idea of integration of the country into the European political and economic community."⁸ With these potential benefits in mind, the Turkish government set up the administrative framework, which included labor recruitment agencies, for Turkish nationals to work in Western European countries, making the process predictable and affordable for even the poorest of its citizens and setting into motion a large-scale labor migration.

While both the Turkish and West German governments employed recruitment strategies at the federal level, business leaders mounted their own efforts to win over potential workers not just to West German industry, but specifically to Siemens, AEG-Telefunken, and other such leading companies. When these companies began hiring Turkish workers for their factories in West Berlin, they set out to create and propagate an idealized workplace that would be attractive to potential employees. This was particularly important in the period directly following the initiation of the labor contract between the Federal Republic and Turkey, as West German businesses could not yet rely on word-of-mouth to spur interest.

⁸ Akgündüz, 94.

Additionally, companies had discovered that West Berlin itself, deep within communist East Germany and often considered a likely battleground should the Cold War grow hot, proved a difficult sell to West German workers. As such, brochures full of colorful images and glowing descriptions of life and work in West Berlin were a part of the companies' campaigns.

One such brochure, published by Siemens (a global German engineering company) in the mid-1960s and full of glossy pictures of a vibrant West Berlin, sought to describe the reader's potential workplace as at once historic, modern, and familiar. With over 40,000 employees manufacturing the latest in machinery and home appliances, Siemens was world-renowned. Prospective Turkish employees were reassured that the company was familiar to "your countrymen," who "work happily at Siemens and are accommodated in cozy and beautiful rooms." "Some compare us to a large family," the brochure continues, and "we do a lot to lighten the living and working stresses of our foreign co-workers."⁹ In the pictures that follow, the recipient of the brochure is treated to images of efficient foreign workers operating large, gleaming machines in spotless factories. Men and women, Germans and *Gastarbeiter*, work together harmoniously, with management and foreign consuls looking on approvingly.¹⁰ The message of the brochure is clear: a job at Siemens means working for an important company, doing interesting work, and enjoying pleasant co-workers—all while earning a "good wage."

⁹ "Das Haus Siemens" in "Deutscher Text für Broschüre zum Anwerben von Arbeitskräften aus Griechenland und der Türkei," p. 2, Rundschreiben zur Beschäftigung von Ausländischen Arbeitnehmern, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, Siemens Corporate Archives (SCA), Munich, Germany. While the document is not dated, the content, language, and placement in the file suggest publication in the mid-1960s.

¹⁰ Greek-language edition of Recruitment Brochure, Rundschreiben zur Beschäftigung von Ausländischen Arbeitnehmer, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, SCA. The document corresponds to the German translations from the document in footnote "8," and was also published in Turkish and distributed at recruiting stations in Turkey.

While the brochure illustrates the idea of a modern, attractive workplace, the company's internal memoranda reveal the steps Siemens took to control conditions in the workplace before the guestworkers even left their country of origin. Such concerns, and the tactics used to address them, were also common to other West German businesses. In addition to the efforts Siemens made to attempt to ensure that the presence of Turkish guestworkers in their factories would be temporary, the company also sought to create a workplace as unencumbered by human frailty and social distraction as possible. To this end, they required extensive medical screenings of all potential foreign employees, both in the country of origin¹¹ and immediately after new employees arrived in West Berlin.¹² Determining that the young women applying were not pregnant was a normal part of the medical screening process, as well as part of Siemens' effort to keep workers from being distracted by caring for family members. In this vein, Siemens initially banned guestworkers from bringing any member of their family with them who was not also employed and sought to discourage women from getting pregnant in Germany by stressing the difficulties pregnancy would raise.¹³ The workplace, then, was to be an efficient, harmonious space with healthy, productive workers, unencumbered by familial distractions. That, at least, was the goal.

Between West German businesses' recruitment efforts, the Turkish government's facilitation, and the growing role of social networks, Turkish *Gastarbeiter* soon became a

¹¹ "Beschäftigung von Gastarbeitern: Bisherige Ergebnisse des Arbeitskreises Ausländerfragen im Berliner-Siemens-Bereich," pp. 1 and 4, 2 October 1970, Rundschreiben zur Beschäftigung von Ausländischen Arbeitnehmern, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, SCA.

¹² Özel, 4.

¹³ "Beschäftigung von Gastarbeitern: Bisherige Ergebnisse des Arbeitskreises Ausländerfragen im Berliner-Siemens-Bereich," p. 1, 2 October 1970, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, SCA.

significant portion of the foreign worker population in the Federal Republic. Between 1960 and 1974, over one million people migrated from Turkey for work in West Germany.¹⁴ Of those, over fifty percent emigrated from urban centers.¹⁵ While Turkish migration to West Berlin was not significant in the first few years of Turkey's participation in the *Gastarbeiter* program, by the end of 1966, Turks made up twenty-seven percent of the 17,817 guestworkers in that city. The number of *Gastarbeiter* in West Berlin, as well as of Turkish workers among them, grew rapidly in the coming years, so that by the end of 1974, forty-nine percent of the 87,593 of its *Gastarbeiter* were from Turkey.¹⁶ The shift to large-scale employment of *Gastarbeiter* in West Berlin occurred at a time when Turks began to increasingly outnumber their fellow guestworkers, and this change was reflected in the growing number of Turkish workers in that city. Their jobs brought Turkish workers onto the factory floors of large companies like Siemens, AEG, and Osram, and into contact with fellow *Gastarbeiter*, German co-workers and supervisors, and with a new, and initially bewildering, work environment.

On the Job: Turkish Workers' Experiences in the Workplace

West German companies generally employed *Gastarbeiter* in jobs that were unattractive to German workers, and the experience of Turkish guestworkers reflected this. In the early stages of the *Gastarbeiter* program, foreign labor importation focused on filling positions in mining and manufacturing with male guestworkers. The mining industry in the

¹⁴ Akgündüz, 96.

¹⁵ Ibid., 163.

¹⁶ Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, *Statistisches Jahrbuch Berlin 1977* (Berlin-Wilmersdorf: Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, 1977), 168.

Ruhr region employed large numbers of *Gastarbeiter*, including Turks, to staff their operations in open cast and pit coal mining. These were, in many ways, the quintessential guestworker jobs: employees worked in shifts around the clock in high-risk, strenuous, and dirty conditions. Mining companies began recruiting from Turkey heavily after the guestworker program extended to that country, and many *Gastarbeiter* saw mining as a way to get a foot in the door before moving on to better jobs. While the conditions were difficult, Turkish miners, more than guestworkers in other fields, benefitted from continuing education and training opportunities offered by employers who were interested in producing and maintaining a qualified workforce.¹⁷

As well as working in the coal mines of the Ruhr region, migrant laborers worked in heavy industry throughout the Federal Republic, including the manufacture of automobiles. In the BMW factories of Stuttgart, the Mercedes plants in Regensburg and the Ford factories in Cologne, *Gastarbeiter* men worked on assembly lines, performing low-skilled but physically challenging labor in shifts. While the labor-intensive nature of the work was similar to that in mining, manufacturing companies generally showed less interest in improving and promoting the skills of their foreign employees, and relations between the Turkish workforce and German management were often strained.¹⁸

West Berlin had its share of heavy industry, including metal production and manufacturing, and also employed large numbers of male guestworkers in light industry and construction.¹⁹ Also in West Berlin, more so than in the other *Bundesländer*, women came to

¹⁷ Hunn, 218-237.

¹⁸ For a description and analysis of the wildcat strikes at the Ford plant in Cologne, see Hunn, pp. 237-260.

¹⁹ Andrea Baumgartner-Karabak and Gisela Landesberger, *Die verkauften Bräute: Türkische Frauen zwischen Krezberg und Anatolien* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1978), 82.

constitute a significant minority of the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* population, comprising well over one-third of all Turkish workers in the city by the early 1970s. As was the case with their male compatriots, the majority of *Gastarbeiterinnen* were employed in metal production and manufacturing, followed by consumer goods manufacturing.²⁰ These jobs in light manufacturing also entailed assembly line work. Individual *Gastarbeiter* could staff either a single or various stations in the production process, including the use of different machines to assist in this work. Women were considered desirable workers for light manufacturing positions, which required patience and dexterity, particularly for those involving the assembly of electrical products.

How did Turkish guestworkers experience their new workplaces, and how did they begin to use them in ways their employers never intended? For those who came through direct recruitment, the transition into the new job could be a quick and disorienting one. Sevim Özel remembers it being only the second day that she and her new co-workers were in Germany before a translator took them by bus from the company dormitory to the factory. There, they underwent another intensive medical examination and were returned to the dormitory. The next day, the translator picked them up again from the dormitory, this time at five-thirty in the morning, to take them to their first day of work.²¹ When Siemens hired Azra Demir, she had already been in the country for two months, but the transition to factory work was very difficult. Even though she worked with other Turkish women, she was

²⁰ Baumgartner-Karabak and Landesberger, 82.

²¹ Özel, 4.

accustomed to village life, and the atmosphere at the large factory felt strange and overwhelming to her.²²

Part of the disorienting newness of their workplace stemmed from language barriers. Though many Turkish *Gastarbeiter* worked primarily with other Turkish employees, very often their direct supervisors were Germans, almost none of whom could speak Turkish. In the larger companies, translators were available for assistance with specific situations, but generally not for help with the normal, daily routine. Leyla Sezer, who came to West Berlin to work for AEG-Telefunken in the late 1960s, remembers struggling with language barriers, especially in the early days of her employment. She adopted the strategy of just saying “yes” whenever she did not understand what someone asked her. As one can imagine, this strategy led to some awkward situations. During her interview with a German historian, she recounted an incident when her supervisor asked her to leave the machine she was at and work on another. Unsure of what he was saying, Demir simply replied, “Yes.” When he came back to check on her progress later that day, he was surprised to find her still working on the first machine. Later, a German co-worker approached her and asked if she would join him for a drink after work. Again, not understanding the question, she answered, “Yes.” The next day, the German man confronted her, and angrily asked why she had not met him the day before. Another co-worker, a friend of Sezer’s, had to help straighten the matter out.²³

²² Azra Demir (pseudonym), interview by Hatice Renc, 9 March 1993, audio cassette, “Die Leute vom Sparrplatz” Ausstellung (DLSA), Mitte Museum Archiv (MM), Berlin, Germany.

²³ Leyla Sezer (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper and Hatice Renc, 28 January 1993, transcript, DLSA, MMA.

Turkish guestworkers responded to these unfamiliar and overwhelming workplaces in a variety of ways. Many tried to reestablish old social networks as a way to not only cope with their new employment and living situation, but also make the most of it. This group used the tools and connections available to them through the workplace and their knowledge of German labor needs and employment practices to bring over adult family members, spouses, and eventually children to live with them in West Berlin. And since company housing allowed little accommodation for families²⁴, this reunification inevitably led to Turkish guestworkers seeking privately owned apartments and setting up their own households.²⁵

While some guestworkers sought to reestablish familial connections fractured by migration, others set about building new social networks. Many of the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* were young and unmarried, and instead of delaying marriage until they returned permanently to Turkey, they opted to marry and start families while working in West Germany. Often a family member back in Turkey would arrange their marriage with a suitable partner, but this was not always the case. In some situations, the social networks Turkish guestworkers constructed in their workplaces and dormitories served as a critical resource for potential mates. For example, after four years of living and working in West Berlin, Sevim Özel decided that getting married was a good solution to the problem of unwanted attention from Turkish men. Instead of sending word to her parents back in Turkey, she turned to a co-worker and friend, whom she knew had a brother-in-law who was looking for a wife. The

²⁴ Marcel Michels, “Ausländische Arbeitnehmer bei Siemens Berlin in den 1960er/70er Jahren” (Master’s Thesis, Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität München, 2001): 52, SCA.

²⁵ For specific example, see Bilge Yılmaz (pseudonym), interview by author, 2 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany. For general discussion of family reunification, see Herbert, *A History of Foreign Labor in Germany*.

friend introduced the two, and soon after Özel and he married.²⁶ Özel's marriage illustrates the importance of continuing family relationships, such as between her co-worker and brother-in-law, as well as the new networks being formed—both of which were rooted in the workplace.

The formation of new social and familial networks, as well as the continuations of established social relationships, also found a nourishing environment the workplace's domestic extension—the *Wohnheim*, or dormitory. As mentioned previously, many *Gastarbeiter* were housed by their employers in company-owned dormitories. These *Wohnheime* came in many forms, including military barrack-style housing, existing apartment buildings, school-style dormitories, and newly constructed buildings. While a dormitory might have housed *Gastarbeiter* from more than one country, they were single-sex residences with strict rules regulating the times and manners in which men and women could interact. As with the workplace itself, companies wanted the *Wohnheime* to be free of those difficult social problems that sexual and intergenerational relationships prompted.²⁷ At the same time, company dormitories offered foreign workers a cheap and easily available housing option that allowed them to save their wages to send back home.

Just as West German businesses' expectations for the workplace and *Wohnheim* were similar, so too were the ways companies attempted to build and propagate an idealized version of worker housing. These “cozy and beautiful rooms” that were a part of companies' efforts to “lighten the living and working stresses of our foreign co-workers” were featured in

²⁶ Özel, 7-8

²⁷ “Beschäftigung von Gastarbeitern: Bisherige Ergebnisse des Arbeitskreises Ausländerfragen im Berliner-Siemens-Bereich,” p. 7, 2 October 1970, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, SCA.

the same brochures that sought to entice foreign workers to employment in West Germany.²⁸ In one brochure designed to recruit Turkish and Greek women, Siemens featured a newly built dormitory that had housed *Gastarbeiterinnen* from southern Europe since 1963, all of whom, the company assured the readers, “are happy in Berlin and feel comfortable in the bright and friendly spaces.”²⁹ The brochure included pictures of a common room, a bedroom, a kitchen and a laundry room. The picture of the common room shows a clean, well-furnished space with high ceilings framed by drapes. Four young women inhabit the scene: one stands near the record player, deliberating between two albums; another sits at a table and sorts through a box of index cards; and the final two chat at a nearby table. Each woman is dressed in a smart blouse and skirt, with her hair fashionably styled. The scene in the bedroom is similarly set, with two women well dressed and peacefully engaged. One plumps the pillow on her bed, while the other writes a letter at a table.³⁰ Both pictures promise the viewer access to these clean, airy, well-furnished spaces as well as the chance to achieve the cosmopolitan status of their inhabitants.

These pictures and their message are supplemented by those of the kitchen and laundry room. The picture of the spotless white and stainless steel kitchen features gleaming countertops and appliances, and the corresponding description offers “whoever would like to prepare meals after their own taste can use the communal kitchen. Electric hotplates, pots and pans are there for your use.”³¹ The kitchen scene features only one woman—dressed

²⁸ “Das Haus Siemens” p. 2, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, SCA.

²⁹ “Bildunterschriften—Siemens Aufnahmen”, Rundschreiben zur Beschäftigung von Ausländischen Arbeitnehmer, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, SCA. While the document is not dated, the content, language, and placement in the file suggest publication in the mid-1960s.

³⁰ “Bildunterschriften—Siemens Aufnahmen”, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, SCA.

³¹ Ibid.

more for an evening out than for one staying in and cooking—who is cooking a meal in a single blue pot. No ingredients, dishes, or utensils clutter the sanitary countertops. The image of the laundry room is even more bare. A window lets natural light into a room furnished with electric washing machines, a row of basins and water faucets, and what appears to be a water heater. Though the caption explains that “in a laundry room with electric washing machines and dryers, the female residents can wash their laundry,” no one is present in the room.³² Unlike the depictions of the common room and bedroom, which present the residents as much as the rooms, the kitchen and laundry room photographs foreground modernity and the bright and shining appliances that the residents may not have access to in their home countries. Even as they highlight the technology, the almost complete absence of women using the appliances reinforces Siemens’ depiction of the women as *Bewohnerinnen* [residents] rather than workers in the context of the *Wohnheim*. Yet, it is clear that none of these “bright and friendly spaces” would be available to these women without employment in West German companies like Siemens or AEG-Telefunken.

While a look at photographs of similar spaces taken by AEG-Telefunken *Gastarbeiterin* Fulya Yüksel reveals similarities in subject matter and themes, it also introduces a more realistic depiction of life in a *Wohnheim*. Yüksel came to West Berlin from Istanbul in 1964 to work for AEG-Telefunken, and moved into the company’s *Wohnheim* at Stresemannstrasse 30 in Kreuzberg.³³ For the next eleven years, Yüksel worked and boarded with other Turkish guestworkers, occasionally capturing her daily life on film. Her subjects in the first few years in West Berlin roughly mirror those from the Siemens brochure, but

³² Ibid.

³³ Eberhard Seidel-Pielen, *Unsere Türken: Annäherung an ein gespaltenes Verhältnis* (Berlin: Espresso/Elf. Press, 1995), 87.

provide a personal perspective. One of her earliest staged pictures echoes the common room photograph of the Siemens brochure. In the photograph labeled “Televizyonlu Salon” [television lounge], Yüksel, dressed in a knee-length skirt with her hair swept up in typical 1960s fashion, stands in front of a large television.³⁴ Here, the television takes the place of the record player and the subject looks directly into the camera, suggesting to the viewer that she recognizes the significance of the television. Another picture that foregrounds technology is a shot of the kitchen, entitled “Im Wohnheim: Beim Kochen” [In the dormitory: while cooking].³⁵ As in the Siemens’ model kitchen, the focus in Yüksel’s picture is the room itself, the long waist-high countertops and the boxy refrigerator. Her choice of subject matter in these photographs shows that the availability of new technologies was an important part of her experience of these new spaces, which she wanted to document and share.

In the depiction of personal spaces, however, Yüksel’s and Siemens’ depictions differed greatly in both the physical make-up of the bedroom and its uses. Unlike the Siemens brochure, whose picture of the bedroom suggests a relatively generous space for two occupants, Yüksel’s photographs show the multiple bunk beds that are more in line with other former residents’ accounts of their sleeping quarters in the dormitories. Instead of the single beds with plump pillows of the brochure, Yüksel and her roommates occupied white metal bunks beds with matching blankets. Yet, while the room is less luxurious than its idealized version, Yüksel’s pictures display a space both more personal and more social in

³⁴ “20.11.1964 Televizyonlu Salon,” in Bestand: Fulya Yüksel (pseudonym), BT 163, 6a, Sig. A000202, Dokumentationszentrum und Museum über die Migration in Deutschland, e.V. (DOMiD) Cologne, Germany.

³⁵ Im Wohnheim: Beim Kochen, “1965 Berlin, Stresemannstr. 30, Fraun Wohnheim Telefunke” [sic], in Bestand: Fulya Yüksel (pseudonym), BT 150, 1, Sig. B000008, DOMiD.

nature. In one photograph, presumably taken by one of her roommates, Yıldırım sits on her bottom bunk, quietly reading a letter.³⁶ One year later, the roommate snapped another picture of Yıldırım in a much different mood. She stands in the middle of the floor, with her arms held out and smiling, as if caught in the middle of dancing.³⁷ Though the room is tidy, it appears more lived-in than the earlier photograph, with shoes tucked away under the bed and postcards arranged on the walls. This was a space that, by bringing together connections from home and souvenirs from new experiences, guestworkers made personal.

At the same time the *Wohnheim* bedrooms served as a personal refuge, they also functioned as social spaces, places where new friendships and networks were formed. Yıldırım demonstrates this visually in a photograph taken of her on a top bunk with four of her friends and fellow residents (including noted writer, Emine Sevgi Özdamar).³⁸ These are not the sedate ladies of the Siemens brochure, despite similarities in hairstyle and dress. The young women in this picture are smiling and laughing as they lounge with each other on the crowded bed, which bows slightly under their combined weight. Yıldırım's photograph hints at the role of the *Wohnheim* as a place to forge new connections, to make new friends of similar age and background with whom one could have adventures that resulted in new postcards being displayed on one's bedroom wall.

Yıldırım's depictions of life in an AEG-Telefunken *Wohnheim* reflect the experiences of other guestworkers in the dormitories of companies such as Siemens' and the chocolate manufacturer Sarotti. While women's dormitories were generally considered nicer than the

³⁶ "1964 Mektuplar," in Bestand 163, 7a, Sig. A000204, Sig. B000008, DOMiD.

³⁷ Berlin 1965, Frau in Wohnheim, in Bestand 163, 2, Sig. A000190, Sig. B000008, DOMiD.

³⁸ Frauen im Wohnheim, Berlin 1964, "Sevgi, Sevim, Filiz, Nuran, Aysel," in Bestand 163, 1, Sig. A000189, Sig. B000008, DOMiD.

men's, most former residents recall sharing their bedrooms with three to five others. Surprisingly, few recount episodes of conflict with roommates.³⁹ Roommates as well as co-workers, the guestworkers who lived together in the *Wohnheime* also socialized together, whether that meant staying in and chatting in one's bedroom or going out grocery shopping, dancing, or on weekend excursions. This sort of socialization may well have been an intention of businesses that housed their foreign employees together, but, as in the workplace itself, company officials set out to control the activities of their *Gastarbeiter*.

While Yildirim's pictorial representations of life in the *Wohnheim* challenge aspects of the companies' official portrayal of that space, and find resonance in other guestworkers' experiences, her accommodation cannot be seen as typical of the living situations of all *Gastarbeiter*. Housing shortages existed across the country, exacerbating the challenge of companies to provide adequate accommodation for their migrant laborers. In addition to constructing new housing for the *Gastarbeiter*, businesses also used existing structures, including old apartment buildings, student dormitories, military and prisoner-of-war barracks. The living conditions of some of these older structures were lacking, to say the least. In early 1970, the restructuring of the industry with the founding of Ruhrkohle AG necessitated a large influx of labor, and 3,000 workers were requested from Turkey. By August of the same year, 1,295 had arrived, causing severe problems for the company regarding their accommodation.⁴⁰

When Turkish representative Sirri Mete Atsu from the Industrial Mining and Energy Union (*Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie*, IGBE) went out to observe the living

³⁹ Özel, 5-6; and Aziza A., interview with Alev Yildirim, 27 July 2004, digital recording 20040272.mp3, DOMiD.

⁴⁰ Hunn, 222-223.

conditions of Turkish miners, he was shocked by what he saw. “Prisoner-of-war camps would have certainly looked better,” Atsu remarked. At one *Wohnheim* for Eschweiler Bergwerksverein, there was one shower for 150 people, and the kitchen and bathroom were in two different barracks. The beds were old, the rooms were too small to hold the requisite table and chairs, and the building was infested with cockroaches. At another *Wohnheim*, Atsu discovered that the night watchman unleashed a dog at night to patrol the grounds. When men returned from working the night shift, they routinely had to wait twenty to thirty minutes for the watchman to restrain the dog, so they could enter their “home.”⁴¹ Even when the conditions were adequate, the *Wohnheime* could still be isolated from nearby towns, limiting guestworkers’ contact to life outside of the workplace. Hayrullah Şenay, who worked as a welder outside of Hamburg, recalled that his employer’s *Wohnheim* reminded him of his days in the military. “You couldn’t really describe it as bad,” he conceded, “but a barrack is ultimately a barrack.” He continued, “I lived in that dorm for... nine years—it was a house of loneliness.”⁴²

Though living conditions could vary widely, narratives about life in the *Wohnheime*, whether they come from the guestworkers themselves, their children, or journalistic accounts, nearly always discuss the company rules that regulated life there. Indeed, sometimes the *Gastarbeiter* learned about the dormitories’ rules before they even saw the buildings themselves. When Fulya Yıldırım landed in West Berlin, a Turkish translator from AEG-Telefunken met her and her new co-workers at Tempelhof Airport, where she explained their

⁴¹ Ibid, 222-223.

⁴² “Wir sind hier, um zu bleiben—Der Moscheegründer Hayrullah Şenay,” in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 206.

dormitory's rules.⁴³ Among those regulations most often mentioned by former residents are a curfew on weekday and weekend evenings and a prohibition on visitors of the opposite sex. These restrictions can be seen as part of West German businesses' efforts to ensure that their *Gastarbeiter* remained a focused, productive workforce, not distracted by social relationships or familial responsibilities.

Many guestworkers, however, found ways around the companies' attempts to limit their social lives in this way. While the *Heimleiter* (house director) and *Pförtner* (front desk clerk) may have been able to restrict who entered the *Wohnheim*, they generally could not keep residents from leaving that regulated space, nor could they control the actions of their employees once they left. Sevim Özel recounts how some of her housemates would avoid the difficulty of the curfew by simply leaving the *Wohnheim* for the entire weekend, returning on Sunday evening before the curfew. Özel also remembers how groups of Turkish men, also guestworkers, would wait outside her dormitory, hoping to meet up with the *Gastarbeiterinnen* who were heading out for the weekend.⁴⁴ Though she felt too nervous to meet new people in this way, Özel had the impression that most of the women in her *Wohnheim* had fewer qualms about enjoying an evening at the disco, or perhaps a weekend in the city, with new acquaintances. Yet one did not have to leave the *Wohnheim* to subvert their employers' purposes. Relationships made and maintained in the dormitory could result in new social networks that were at odds with the company's interests. Özel's own marriage,

⁴³ Fulya Yüksel (pseudonym), interview for "Wir waren die erste...", audio cassette MD 0009, Bezirksmuseum Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum Archiv (BFKA), Berlin, Germany.

⁴⁴ Özel, 5-8.

facilitated through a connection with a friend and co-worker, shows such circumvention could be subtler than simply leaving for the weekend.⁴⁵

Özel's marriage also represents one of the many ways in which the composition and the meaning of the workplace were shifting from what West German businesses originally intended. By 1974, the federal government had put a stop to further labor immigration due to economic downturn and corresponding increased levels of unemployment. Companies, concerned about losing their now-trained foreign workforce, petitioned to extend their current labor contracts. At the same time, Turkish guestworkers, realizing any future return to West Germany for work was unlikely, increasingly decided to prolong their stay and bring their families from Turkey to live with them.

From Workplace to Classroom: Preparing “Foreigners” for Life in German Society

While the ban on recruitment initiated a marked shift from the temporary to permanent status of Turkish workers, the transition had been happening gradually over the course of their employment. One way to track this transition is through the in-house newspapers of Siemens and AEG-Telefunken. In 1971, the *AEG-Telefunken Report* started publishing one page with an article translated into the native languages of its guestworkers in each edition of its monthly newspaper. The purpose of the articles was to educate foreign workers about particular aspects of their rights and duties as employees, safety concerns, company business, and German culture. The earliest articles focus almost exclusively on issues for guestworkers as workers. This comes through particularly clearly in the inaugural article, entitled “We, from our homeland Germany.” It opens by addressing “our esteemed

⁴⁵ While company documentation and guestworkers' narratives often discuss the controls on heterosexual relationships, there is a uniform silence on the existence of same-sex relationships.

co-worker” and states in the first sentence that “You have come from your fatherland to Germany in order to work here.” The article then acknowledges that this new experience can be difficult, particularly as language problems may make one feel isolated “from the community to which one rightfully belongs.” This multilingual page promised to keep its foreign co-workers informed of “the most important events in the internal management of the business.” And what was the critical issue addressed in this first article? What follows is a lengthy description of what actions to take and company offices to contact should one fall ill during a vacation from work.⁴⁶

For the rest of 1971 and well into the next year, articles continued to focus mainly on informing foreign employees about the particulars of living and working in Germany as workers. These often included topics centered on the physical well-being, such as the obligatory nature of health insurance in Germany⁴⁷, the importance of a nutritious diet⁴⁸, identifying public and company warning signs⁴⁹, and automobile safety.⁵⁰ Interestingly, only one article throughout the entire run of the multilingual section focused exclusively on German language acquisition. This article, titled “Guide to Residence Help: Foreign workers, learn German!” begins by pointing out, rather unnecessarily, that guestworkers’ lack of mastery of the German language made contact with their German co-workers and

⁴⁶ “Sizler vatanımızdan Almanya,” *AEG-Telefunken Report*, July/August 1971, p. 15, Deutsches Technikmuseum Historisches Archiv (DTHA), Berlin, Germany.

⁴⁷ “Sizler Almanya’da işçi olarak kanunen bir hastalık sigorta şirketinin azassısınız,” *AEG-Telefunken Report*, November 1971, p. 14, DTHA.

⁴⁸ “Afiyetler temenni ederiz: Almanya’da yemek söyle yenir,” *AEG-Telefunken Report*, January 1972, p. 14, DTHA.

⁴⁹ “Isaretler, Levhalar, Renkler,” *AEG-Telefunken Report*, April 1972, p. 15, DTHA.

⁵⁰ “Her dört Marktan biri vatana: Otomobil sahipleri dikkat!”, *AEG-Telefunken Report*, June 1972, p. 14, DTHA.

resolution of workplace problems difficult. While “our company” works to ensure that its foreign workers receive translation assistance so as to be aware of their rights, “it will be much better if you understand and speak the same language, the German language.” The writer goes on to advise participation in a German language course or the purchase of “a good grammar manual”, and recommends two by name, one for adults and one for children. Though AEG presumably offered its own language courses, the writer does not point the reader in the direction of any specific course.⁵¹ Companies often addressed the problem of language differences by holding their own German-language courses for their foreign employees, or by working in tandem with local *Volkshochschule* to develop and offer such courses. In the case of Siemens in West Berlin, the company began collaborating with the *Volkshochschule* in Spandau in the early 1960s to offer weekly, entry-level language classes for Siemens *Gastarbeiter*. These sessions took place at the worksite after hours, were organized into trimesters, and cost three Deutsche Marks (DM) for each participant. Those who wanted to pursue higher-level lessons could take such courses free of charge during the workday. However, guestworkers’ limited interest and the lack of well-developed teaching materials and methodologies restricted the success of these measures.⁵²

Trade unions also provided language instruction for foreign workers in the Federal Republic. While not initially supportive of the *Gastarbeiter* program, unions quickly shifted their position in order to influence its implementation. Specifically, unions worked to ensure that migrant laborers received the same pay and protections as their German counterparts, in an effort to make certain that working and social standards did not deteriorate as a result of

⁵¹ “Mesken Yardımı kılavuzu: Yabancı işçiler Almanca öğrenin!”, *AEG-Telefunken Report*, March 1972, p. 14, DTHA.

⁵² Michels, “Ausländische Arbeitnehmer bei Siemens Berlin,” 57-58.

their employment. Despite these efforts, unions were not particularly successful in involving *Gastarbeiter* in their activities early on, because everyone—both trade unionists and the guestworkers themselves—considered the situation temporary.⁵³ In addition, the unions' practice of charging fees, inability to prevent deportation for non-work related reasons, and restrictions on the ways guestworkers could participate made them wary of union involvement.⁵⁴ Unions were most successful with *Gastarbeiter* incorporation in places where foreign workers had already joined and facilitated outreach to their *Landsmänner* (countrymen). With *Gastarbeiter* involved, unions began publishing foreign language informational sheets, held instructional sessions on their goals and activities, and organized language courses. In 1964, the *Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*, (Confederation of German Trade Unions, DGB) sponsored sixty language courses in North Rhine-Westphalia alone. While the unions tried to foster solidarity between German and foreign workers, they continually had to deal with tensions between the two groups. These tensions were particularly evident after the economic downturns of 1966 and 1973 gave rise to animosity against *Gastarbeiter*, who were depicted as stealing jobs from German workers.⁵⁵

From the late 1960s to the late 1970s, the articles in Siemens' in-house newspaper, the *Siemens Mitteilungen*, illustrate a similar sense of separation between Germans and foreigners by focusing on *Gastarbeiter* as workers and as different from their German counterparts. In early articles, this difference is articulated by describing activities among Turkish guestworkers. A 1971 article entitled "Foreign Folklore in a Cultural Group at

⁵³ Hunn, 120-122.

⁵⁴ Ray C. Rist, *Guestworkers in Germany: The Prospects for Pluralism* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), 126-129.

⁵⁵ Hunn, 124-136.

Siemens Berlin” briefly states that, in the last two years, two new groups were added to Siemens’ *Kulturkreis* in West Berlin: a Yugoslavian folklore club and a Turkish dance and theater troupe. The Turkish group, according to the article, would be hosting a *Heimatabend* for “our Turkish co-workers.”⁵⁶ Another short article, published two years later, describes an outing for a group of *Gastarbeiter* from a factory in Regensburg. Turks, Yugoslavs and Tunisians enjoyed a day on the Chiemsee in a field-trip organized by Siemens and designed to give these workers the opportunity to get to know their “guest-home from another perspective than the daily working world.” The accompanying picture shows a diverse group of men and women, dressed in casual weekend clothes and standing in rows for the photograph.⁵⁷ While the articles were intended to highlight the leisure activities of Siemens’ *Gastarbeiter*, they also reveal the separateness of the foreign workers from their native German counterparts almost twenty years after the first guestworkers came to West Germany and over ten years after Turks were included in that group.

In December 1973, we see the first article about interaction between German and Turkish co-workers, or rather, one German co-worker.⁵⁸ The first third of the article, “It’s not quite like home,” focuses mainly on two Turkish employees at the home appliance factory in West Berlin. These two men, because of their German-language skills, hold office hours in their factory’s *Betriebsbüro* (operation’s office), where they are met by their fellow countrymen who seek advice on everything from rental contracts to doctor’s visits. The article, published in German and Turkish, then shifts its focus to a German superintendent at

⁵⁶ “Ausländische Folklore im Kulturkreis in Siemens Berlin,” *Siemens Mitteilungen*, January 1971, p. 18, SCA.

⁵⁷ “Gastland—einmal anders erlebt,” *Siemens Mitteilungen*, October 1973, p. 12, SCA.

⁵⁸ “Ganz wie Zuhause ist es nicht,” *Siemens Mitteilungen*, December 1973, pp. 5-7, SCA.

the plant who took an active interest in helping his Turkish employees get acclimated. Called “Türkenvater” by Turkish journalists, Kurt Emberger realized from the beginning that language and cultural issues would make things more difficult for his Turkish employees. He started a tradition of visiting the dormitories in the evening with a case of beer to get to know his men better “and make them feel more relaxed.”⁵⁹ Emberger, the article continues, worked hard to see that Turkish workers had trusted associates on the necessary committees and kept his door open for those who wanted to discuss matters with him personally. The factory also made accommodations for their Turkish guestworkers’ religious needs, including dietary restrictions and providing a prayer room on the premises. Counseled by company doctors that inadequate nutrition contributed to the poor health of their Turkish *Gastarbeiter*, Siemens also sent out a flyer with Turkish workers’ paychecks that encouraged them to join their “fellow countrymen” in the company cafeteria for inexpensive, pork-free meals.⁶⁰ Despite these efforts, “it took three to four years,” Emberger remarks, “for the German workers, including supervisors, to get past their reservations.”⁶¹

Though affirming the success of such measures, the writer of the article comments that “one hears time and again ‘At the factory, we feel equal,’” but at government offices and on public transportation Turks still felt as outsiders. Yet he discounts that this is due to discrimination. Instead, the writer argues that these rude interactions are a normal part of daily life that Germans are accustomed to, and that Turks’ lack of German language skills

⁵⁹ “Ganz wie Zuhause ist es nicht,” p. 6.

⁶⁰ “Mittagsessen für türkische Mitarbeiter,” Rundschreiben zur Beschäftigung von Ausländischen Arbeitnehmer, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, SCA.

⁶¹ “Ganz wie Zuhause ist es nicht,” p. 6.

lead to many misunderstandings. “One needs to think about both sides,” he concludes, and not assume that others see things in the same way we do.⁶²

This article, while new in its focus on Turkish workers as multi-dimensional people, continues in the vein of the earlier articulations on difference. In this case, the writer discusses difference in language, religion, and socio-economic background (there is brief mention that many of the Turkish workers are from rural areas), and concludes an otherwise fairly upbeat piece by mentioning the misunderstandings that those differences can occasion. At the same time, however, the workplace comes to the fore as a space of intercultural cooperation and successful integration. The Turkish workers have advocates in the company and, while acknowledging that the process took several years, the article speaks of the “integration” of Turkish workers in the past tense. The transition may be difficult, the writer seems to concede, but the inspiring example of Siemens shows that it is possible.

West German businesses’ growing awareness of and concern with their foreign employees’ personal lives outside the workplace soon started showing up in articles dealing with family life, social customs, and integration into broader society. An article on AEG-Telefunken’s foreign language page concerning school attendance, which came out in January 1973, was aimed at the parents among its foreign workforce. It explains that school attendance was obligatory for all children up to the age of fifteen (specifying both sons and daughters), regardless of whether they had already completed their required schooling in their country of origin. It also assures parents that “appropriate schools” are available for children with mental or physical disabilities, and that German school authorities want to

⁶² Ibid., p. 6.

work with parents concerning their children's education.⁶³ This was the first time the multi-lingual section directly acknowledged guestworkers' roles as parents of children (not just infants) in West Germany.

The *AEG-Telefunken Report*'s focus on the family continued in the summer of 1974. The Federal Republic, having recently shut down the *Gastarbeiter* program, allowed family members of foreign workers to reunite in West Germany, provided that they adhered to certain stipulations. The article "How are you able to bring your family?" spells out point-by-point what conditions employees needed to meet before they can bring their family to live with them. The requirements included a minimum three-year legal residency in West Germany, proof of adequate housing and means of support for one's dependents, and a close relationship, either as spouses or minor children, with those seeking to come to Germany. The article goes on to detail the necessary paperwork and the government offices responsible for processing the applications. With the exception of the familiar opening refrain of how life in a foreign country can be difficult and lonely and the admission that "it is therefore understandable" that one would want to be with one's family, the tone of the article is relatively dry, in keeping with the pattern of policy-related announcements.⁶⁴

While these sorts of articles continued throughout the 1970s, many of the issues discussed on the multi-lingual page during this time also reflected an increasing company interest in the private lives and activities of its foreign workforce. In a 1975 article entitled "Leisure Pursuit: Sports," the writer tries to impress upon his readers the importance of healthy free-time activities. Working a second job, watching television, or sitting in a bar, he

⁶³ "Okula gitmek bir Yükümlülüktür," *AEG-Telefunken Report*, January 1973, p. 14, DTHA.

⁶⁴ "Ailenizi nasıl getirebilirsiniz?," *AEG-Telefunken Report*, July/August 1974, p. 14, DTHA.

lectures, are not healthy activities, nor are they the best forms of relaxing. We understand, the writer continues, that it will be difficult for you to choose “one of the typical manners of how some Germans pass their free time. But why not try it”? The article then names the company offices that could guide the readers to the appropriate leisure time activities. If the readers wanted to start their own sports clubs, the writer informs them that both insurance coverage and “official recognition as an organization [are] required” to compete against other teams. The article closes with a caution against allowing “national pride” to add antagonism to sporting events, as “[w]hat has to prevail is the idea that sports are meant to be relaxing” and serve to establish new personal contacts.⁶⁵ Perhaps more than any other to this point, this article demonstrates not just a desire to inform and educate the foreign workers in their employ, but to mold them to fit into German society. At no point does the article refer to how guestworkers used free time before coming to West Germany, nor does it acknowledge with more than a passing reference the financial situation that prompted many *Gastarbeiter* to work long hours or more than one job. Instead, the writer enumerates and encourages typical “German” leisure pursuits.

This paternalistic attitude surfaces again in a 1977 article entitled “Life in Society,” in which the company attempts to extend its reach into the communities and homes of its foreign employees. The writer begins by explaining that life in a major city “requires of all of us a better understanding and consideration” of one’s fellow residents, “especially on the part of families that come from countries with different customs of living” as they seek “to adapt themselves to the new community.” These “foreigners” may not understand the reactions of their German neighbors if they continue to live their lives as if they were still in

⁶⁵ “Serbest zaman mesguliyeti: Spor,” *AEG-Telefunken Report*, February 1975, p. 14, DTHA.

“their fatherland, where in accordance with their southern temperaments” they are accustomed to celebrating holidays more often and more noisily. Their German neighbors, the writer points out, prefer peace and tranquility, and will call the police. It would be much better to have a “friendly dialogue” with one’s German neighbors beforehand, explain one’s own customs, and reach a compromise that will promote community harmony.

The second half of the article focuses on the use of communal spaces, such as stairways and courtyards, the appropriate use of which, according to the writer, was also important for good relations between neighbors. First, children needed to show respect for others when they were playing in these communal spaces. Second, residents should keep the common spaces clean. For example, “a dirty staircase... does not offer an agreeable aspect for those who use it, and, apart from this, it can affect the health of the inhabitants, especially of children.” Additionally, the writer warns, trash that spills out of the receptacles in the courtyard can attract germ-bearing rats. To solve this problem, the article details how foreigner workers should break down their garbage into smaller pieces before disposing of it.⁶⁶ While the over-arching goal of the article is to promote good community relationships, the writer puts the responsibility for this at the door of the “foreigners”, assuming that their dirty, disrespectful habits are the cause of discord. The solution? Foreign residents needed to set aside the customs of their “southern temperaments,” and adopt the social and hygienic habits of their German neighbors.

This trend of companies acknowledging the settlement of their foreign employees in West Germany and making efforts to provide information relevant to their familial and social, as well as working, lives continued through the second half of the 1970s. By 1978,

⁶⁶ “Toplumda yasanti,” *AEG-Telefunken Report*, October 1977, p. 14, DTHA.

AEG-Telefunken Report had published an article on how to deal with a death in the family, and, a year later, another on preparation for retirement.⁶⁷ The latter article describes how retirement benefits are calculated from income and, as with other policy- and benefits-related bulletins, lists the necessary documentation and government and company offices involved in its distribution. However, there is no reference to how to access or receive these benefits from abroad, nor does it mention return to their foreign employees' countries of origin. So, while both articles acknowledge that a generation of foreign residents have reached old age and require attention and information specific to that stage in life, through its omissions the article recognizes that many were in West Germany to stay. Overall, the trend in the foreign-language articles demonstrates not only West German businesses' growing recognition of the changing status of their "guestworkers" from workers to parents to members of society, but also shows how the workplace itself was shifting from a space of production to a space of education and partial Germanization.

The *Siemens-Mitteilungen* articles during the same years also began to take up the theme of integration, highlighting the diversity of the workforce and stressing the company's efforts at encouraging cross-cultural relationships and cooperation. In late 1980, a writer from the company newspaper gathered together a group of "ausländische Mitarbeiter" (foreign co-workers) in Munich, three women and seven men, to discuss their lives in West Germany and experiences with "xenophobia." In "Their homeland does not let them go," the writer opens by musing that Germans and foreigners live and work together, but "do they also belong to us?"⁶⁸ Their answers were recorded in their native languages and,

⁶⁷ "Ailede ölüm halinde nasıl hareket etmeli?", *AEG-Telefunken Report*, June 1978, p. 14, DTHA; "Emeklilige hazırlık," *AEG-Telefunken Report*, November 1979, p. 14, DTHA.

⁶⁸ "Die Heimat lässt sich nicht los," *Siemens Mitteilungen*, December 1980, p. 13, SCA.

interestingly, not translated into German. Instead, the writer summarizes the “surprising” results for the “natives” to read: The vast majority intended to return to their countries of origin soon, two of the three women have children that do not live with them in West Germany, and many feel like they are sitting “between two chairs.”⁶⁹ The *ausländische Mitarbeiter* reserve criticism for anonymous Germans who blame the “foreigners” for taking jobs from Germans and collecting social welfare benefits. The writer concludes by providing contact information for employees who would like to obtain copies of the foreign-language edition of the *Siemens-Mitteilungen*, a resource that most of his interview subjects were unaware existed.

Two years later, the same reporter attempted a similar project, but with a different tenor that suggested foreign workers were grappling with—and making progress in—becoming a part of German society. This article, entitled “Conforming without losing your identity: Discussions with foreign co-workers,” focuses on Siemens employees at a factory in West Berlin who have been in Germany for years, speak German well, and like their jobs. When asked about problems with integration, the group points fingers in both directions. Some, echoing a previously discussed *AEG-Telefunken Report* article, respond that the foreigners themselves are to blame: They are accustomed to living in a certain way and do not want to change their traditions. Another disagrees. He spent two years working in Brazil, where he encountered groups of third-generation German immigrants who “drink their beer and don’t speak a word of Portuguese.” “Is someone in Brazil more tolerant than

⁶⁹ “Die Heimat lässt sich nicht los,” p. 16.

here?” he asks.⁷⁰ Despite the disagreement over where to lay blame, all agree that language is key in successful integration.

The next day, the writer interviewed a group of young people involved in Siemens’ apprenticeship program, asking them similar questions regarding integration. The interns are slightly more circumspect than their adult counterparts, stressing the importance of open discussion and polite perseverance in the face of misunderstanding and discrimination. One young man recognizes the resentment against foreigners, but claims nice clothes and a good appearance can go a long way in mitigating such feelings. There are places that often refuse to admit foreigners, he concedes, but “with my friends, freshly shaven and wearing a tie, I don’t have any problems.”⁷¹

The increasingly positive articles continued two years later in “So wonderful to be at home again: From foreign co-workers who feel comfortable here.” This article, supplemented with multiple photographs of smiling, hard-working “ausländische Mitarbeiter,” focuses on three employees who were among the first group of Spanish *Gastarbeiter* to come to West Germany, why they stayed, and their satisfaction with the lives they had built. The reporter, who had also written the previous two articles, also interviewed a Yugoslav woman, a Greek man, and a Spanish couple, and the general tone of the story was one of satisfaction and success. These foreign workers had been at Siemens for decades, were married with children, felt happy with their lot, got along well with Germans, and had no intention of returning “home.”⁷²

⁷⁰ “Anpassen, ohne die Identität zu verlieren: Gespräche mit ausländischen Mitarbeitern,” *Siemens Mitteilungen*, December 1982, p. 5, SCA.

⁷¹ “Anpassen, ohne die Identität zu verlieren: Gespräche mit ausländischen Mitarbeitern,” p. 6.

⁷² “‘Schön, dass wir wieder Zuhause sind’: Von ausländischen Mitarbeitern die sich hier wohl fühlen,” *Siemens Mitteilungen*, December 1984, pp. 6-7, SCA.

An article in December 1988 suggests that, at least for one Turkish employee in a West Berlin factory, the integration process was successful and complete. The sense of his successful assimilation begins with the title, “Ein Türke in Berlin: ‘Wat ick mache, erleichtert das Leben’”, (A Turk in Berlin: What I make, makes life easier) identifying the Turkish employee as a Berliner down to the diction. Seyfettin Göndöven first came to West Berlin in 1965, arriving on a plane full of Turks with contracts to work for Siemens. A few days after he arrived, Göndöven met a German woman in the *Kneipe* around the corner from his *Wohnheim*, whom he married three years later. Their son, the writer affirms, is a “dyed-in-the-wool Berliner.”⁷³ The focus on Göndöven’s personal life, though, is brief, with the majority of the attention being given to his activities at Siemens. Göndöven had worked in the manufacture of home appliances since first coming to Siemens in the 1960s and was very proud of the product and his work. Multiple photographs of Göndöven and the product—on the assembly line, showing the product to a consumer, using a Siemens coffee maker with his wife—fill the two-page spread, liberally peppered with descriptions of the appliances and their use, even “way out in Turkey.”⁷⁴ The pictures and the text taken together not only identify Göndöven as a fully-integrated Berliner and valuable Siemens employee, but also link the man and the product to each other in a way that seems to make their stories inseparable. One can scarcely imagine Göndöven without his appliances, or the other way around.

⁷³ “Ein Türke in Berlin: ‘Wat ick mache erleichtert das Leben’”, December 1988, p. 24, *Siemens Mitteilungen*, SCA. The subtitle of this article is written in a Berliner dialect, suggesting that the “Turk” mentioned in the title has acclimated to the point where he speaks like a local.

⁷⁴ “Ein Türke in Berlin: ‘Wat ick mache erleichtert das Leben’”, pp. 24-25.

These articles on integration in the 1980s suggest a progression that may be slow and not without stumbling blocks, but that could be—and in some cases was—ultimately successful. The titles of the articles trace this development as the emphasis shifts from the connection between foreign workers and their “Heimat” to functioning within the host society to feeling “at home” and finally to being identified by a concrete place. What is more, the workplace itself is shown as a site that fosters and promotes integration. Foreign employees, the articles seek to demonstrate, receive support from fellow countrymen and interested German co-workers, learn German, develop important skills, and become a part of a society—all through their achievements in the workplace.

Despite the shift in focus to the factors influencing integration, the newspaper does not, with few exceptions, change the way it refers to Turkish workers and their children as “foreigners” and “guests.” Throughout the articles already discussed, writers use the words “Ausländer”, “ausländische Mitarbeiter,” or “ausländische Mitbürger” in referring to those employees who came to the company through the *Gastarbeiter* program or from immigrant communities in West Germany. This discursive othering continues and becomes even more noticeable in articles addressing the children of these “ausländische Mitarbeiter.” In 1979, the *Siemens-Mitteilungen* featured a story on a traffic safety clinic, a program held by the daycare center at Berlin Siemensstadt as part of the international “Year of the Child.” The cover photograph of that month’s issue shows a little boy, about six years old and with a dark complexion, standing on the curb and peering cautiously for oncoming traffic around a Volkswagen Bug parked on the street. The corresponding article also features bright photographs of a multi-ethnic group of children playing and practicing traffic safety with

their parents, care providers and a policeman.⁷⁵ In a letter to the editor two months later, a man from Munich applauded the newspaper for its choice of the little boy for the cover page. He looks cautious, but not afraid, the letter writer notes. “How good also,” he continues, “that you chose a little foreign guest [*einen kleinen ausländischen Gast*] as the representative. That underlined the international meaning of the theme ‘Year of the Child.’”⁷⁶ The use of the word “guest” not only illustrates the reader’s distinction between the German children and the children of “foreign co-workers,” it also emphasizes the assumed transient nature of their stay in West Germany. The boy, a “little foreign guest,” can only temporarily inhabit that space; he does not belong to it permanently.

Though the theme of the traffic safety clinic was not integration, the company daycare facilities at Siemens’ Berlin factories did host events aimed specifically at bringing together German and “foreign” children. In October 1981, the *Siemens-Mitteilungen* featured a story on such an event: two daycare centers hosted a play day with the intention of furthering the language development of the foreign children. There are no misunderstandings in the games, the article says, for the children understand each other and get along well. “Together with their German friends, the little foreigners—the majority of whom were born in Berlin—learn ‘easy’ German.” The article adds that parental interest helps their children’s progress, and that, through participating in Parents’ Evenings, the adults also get the chance to know each other better.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ “Verkehrserziehung für die ganz Kleinen: Statt Sandkastenspiel auf die Strasse”, *Siemens Mitteilungen*, June 1979, pp. coverpage, 22-23, SCA.

⁷⁶ “Herzerfrischend”, *Siemens Mitteilungen*, August 1979, p. 22, SCA.

⁷⁷ “Wenn kleine Ausländer berlinern”, *Siemens Mitteilungen*, October 1981, p. 9, SCA.

The role of company daycare in the integration of the children and their parents shows up again over a decade later in an article entitled “Living with each other—Learning from each other.”⁷⁸ The cover shot features a colorful picture of a group of kindergarteners messily brushing their teeth; the child in the front of the group has darker skin and the title underneath reads, “Integration begins in Kindergarten.” The goal of the article, the writer informs his readers, is to learn “how Germans and foreigners meet with each other in their free time.” At the time, about sixty percent of the children at the Johanna-von-Siemens daycare center were “children of foreign ancestry.” The daycare center, according to the article, had become a site of intercultural meeting and friendships, where parents, as well as their children, enjoy the center’s activities, “bring specialty foods from their countries of origin, and use the opportunity to get to know each other and break down prejudices.”⁷⁹ One of the events hosted by the daycare center was a St. Martin’s day celebration.⁸⁰ After participating in the parade with their children, the parents gathered in the garden of the Siemens clubhouse and socialized over *Glühwein* and *Bratwürste*. The second half of the article contains interviews with some of the parents, who testify to the value of the daycare center not only for their children’s well-being, but also for their own relationships with co-workers and their comfort in German society.

The company daycare center, then, in addition to being a physical sign that foreign workers were having families, comes to the fore as a new site to encourage and advance foreign co-workers’ and their children’s integration into German society. An extension of

⁷⁸ “Miteinander leben—voneinander lernen”, *Siemens Mitteilungen*, December 1991, p. 4-5, SCA.

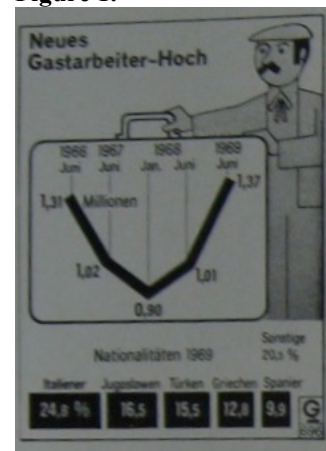
⁷⁹ “Miteinander leben—voneinander lernen”, p. 4.

⁸⁰ St. Martin’s Day is a popular saint’s day in Germany in honor of Martin of Tours, a former Roman soldier turned monk. Children celebrate by carrying lanterns and singing songs in a procession after nightfall, for which they are given small treats.

the workplace, the daycare center provided a space for foreigners and Germans, parents and children, to meet and get to know each other. At the same time, as depicted in the articles, it became a space for foreigners to learn how to be German: how to speak the language, play the games, and celebrate the holidays. Even as the *Siemens-Mitteilungen* and the daycare centers' coordinators laud the positive benefits on integration of the centers, they continue to use the German/foreigner dichotomy in their language, even for those children born and raised in West Germany. The continuity of such language throughout the newspaper from the 1970s to the early 1990s reveals the entrenched mindset that employees and their children “with foreign backgrounds” would continue to be regarded as outsiders who, though they may be an important part of the workplace, did not fully belong in German society.

This situation is perhaps best illustrated in two final examples from the *Siemens-Mitteilungen*. The earliest article concerning guestworkers appeared in November 1969 and was entitled, “New Guestworker High” (Figure 1). The article explained that the numbers of guestworkers in the Federal Republic had reached unprecedented levels, with Turks quickly moving into first place. The accompanying illustration is of a man with dark, curly hair and moustache, holding a large suitcase upon which a chart reflecting the growing numbers of *Gastarbeiter* is drawn.⁸¹ This same

Figure 1.

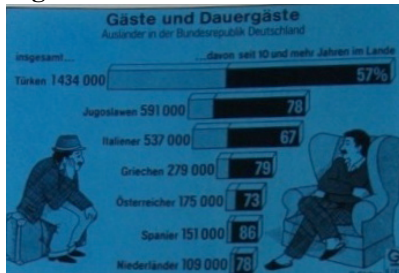


character shows up eighteen years later in an article entitled, “Guests and Permanent Residents” (Figure 2). On one side of the article, which explains that for many “foreigners” Germany has become a second home, the stereotypical guestworker wears traveling clothes

⁸¹ “Neues Gastarbeiter-Hoch”, *Siemens Mitteilungen*, November 1969, p. 23, SCA.

and sits on his suitcase. On the other side, the same character relaxes in an easy chair, wearing house slippers.⁸² The two illustrations show the shift from guestworkers being

Figure 2.



defined as transitory—complete with suitcase—to the realization that these guests had made themselves at home. Yet, at the same time, the consistent depiction of “the guestworker’s” physical appearance clearly demonstrates a static focus on difference.

Unsettled in German Workplaces, Settling into German Neighborhoods

Even as Siemens and other West German businesses sought to facilitate (and be seen as facilitating) their “foreign co-workers” transition into and success in their companies, the workplace remained for many *Gastarbeiter* a space of instability. Whether due to illness, injury, pregnancy, layoffs, or being fired, many Turkish workers found that having a job in West Germany did not mean having job-security. In 1970, only 871 Turks living in West Germany were unemployed. Just five years later, that number would increase over fifty-fold, with 46,794 Turks being reported as out of work. That number decreased to just over 37,000 by 1980⁸³, but then shot up again in the early 1980s to over 90,000 in 1985.⁸⁴ By 1971, Turkish workers outnumbered all other *Gastarbeiter* in the ranks of the unemployed, with the disparity continuing to widen.

⁸² “Gäste und Dauergäste,” *Siemens Mitteilungen*, November 1987, p. 12, SCA.

⁸³ “Arbeitslose Ausländer im Bundesgebiet nach ausgewählten Staatsangehörigkeiten,” *Jahreszahlen 1980*, Bundesagentur für Arbeit, p. 71.

⁸⁴ “Arbeitslose Ausländer im Bundesgebiet nach ausgewählten Staatsangehörigkeiten,” *Jahreszahlen 1990*, Bundesagentur für Arbeit, p. 69.

The unemployment statistics for *Gastarbeiter* in West Berlin tell a similar story of workplace instability. According to information compiled by the *Bundesagentur für Arbeit*, just over one thousand⁸⁵ of West Berlin's 136,922 foreign residents were unemployed when the government froze the *Gastarbeiter* program in 1973.⁸⁶ Two years later, over seven thousand of the *Ausländer* living there were without work.⁸⁷ Though that number had receded to 5,650 by 1980, in the following years it rose again, reaching over fourteen thousand by 1990.⁸⁸ Although these statistics do not speak directly to the unemployment rates of specific national groups, between 1973 and 1990 Turkish residents comprised between forty and fifty percent of the foreign population in West Berlin, and most likely experienced levels of unemployment at least comensurate to their proportion of that population.⁸⁹

As the statistics show the increasingly precarious nature of guestworkers' employment, the workers' stories reveal the multiple factors at play that made the workplace a volatile, insecure space for the "ausländische Mitarbeiter." For some, disagreements with their co-workers and supervisors led to a quick dismissal. Before Soner Polat opened his own café in Sprengelkiez, he worked as a translator at a bread factory in West Berlin. In his role as translator, he mediated between Turkish employees and management, a position he

⁸⁵ "Arbeitslose Ausländer nach Landesarbeitsamtbezirken," Jahreszahlen 1985, Bundesagentur für Arbeit, p. 59.

⁸⁶ Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, *Statistisches Jahrbuch Berlin 1973* (Berlin-Wilmersdorf: Statistisches Landesamt Berlin,, 1974), 41.

⁸⁷ "Arbeitslose Ausländer nach Landesarbeitsamtbezirken," Jahreszahlen 1985, Bundesagentur für Arbeit, p. 59.

⁸⁸ "Arbeitslose Ausländer nach Landesarbeitsamtbezirken," Jahreszahlen 1990, Bundesagentur für Arbeit, p. 65.

⁸⁹ See Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, *Statistisches Jahrbuch Berlin 1973* (Berlin-Wilmersdorf: Statistisches Landesamt Berlin,, 1974), 41; Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, *Statistisches Jahrbuch Berlin 1981* (Berlin-Wilmersdorf: Statistisches Landesamt Berlin,, 1981), 40; and Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, *Statistisches Jahrbuch Berlin 1991* (Berlin-Wilmersdorf: Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, 1991), 52.

held for four years until a dispute with his German boss ended in a fistfight and he was fired.⁹⁰ In another case, a Turkish man working for a cleaning firm was fired after he reacted angrily to seeing a co-worker (a Turkish woman) behaving in a way he considered inappropriate.⁹¹ For others, it was not a disagreement with supervisors that led to leaving the workplace, but rather an inability to understand them. When Beyhan Kaya came to West Berlin in 1973, she went to work at a candy-making factory. Though she worked very hard at her job, after six months at the factory she left to take a position with a cleaning company, pointing to her poor German-language skills as the reason for her change in career.⁹² Azra Demir and many of her Turkish co-workers lost their places at Siemens not because of their inability to speak German (which she could), but rather due to their illiteracy.⁹³

For women like Kaya and Demir, pressures outside the workplace often exerted their influence on that space, making their continued employment difficult if not impossible. Sevim Özel succinctly summed up her situation: “Two shifts, three children, housework, visits, family.”⁹⁴ As the West German business officials had feared, when Turkish workers became wives and mothers, their family responsibilities made their working lives increasingly complicated. While some women were able to arrange childcare through family or neighborhood connections, or with company childcare services, for many others the responsibility of caring for their children made their continued presence in the workplace

⁹⁰ Soner Polat (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper and Kemal Kurt, 18 June 1993, transcription, p. 15, MMA.

⁹¹ Beyhan Kaya (pseudonym), interview by Hatice Renc, 9 March 1993, transcription, p. 6, MMA.

⁹² Kaya, 5-6.

⁹³ Demir, 1.

⁹⁴ Özel, 16.

untenable. This was the situation for Leyla Sezer. After six and a half years of working for AEG-Telefunken, she had to leave her job after the birth of her second child (having left her first child in the care of family back in Turkey). “There was no one there,” she stated simply, “to care for [the baby].”⁹⁵ Kaya, who had left her position at a factory and taken a job with a cleaning company, had to leave that job after having her daughter.⁹⁶ Yet this exit from the workplace was not always a permanent one, as in the cases of both Demir and Kaya, who would eventually return to work outside the home. Thus, even though West German companies’ fears of losing their female workforce to familial responsibilities were realized, not even their absence from the workplace was a permanent development.

West German businesses’ long battle against illness and injury reveals another factor in workplace instability. Despite medical examinations pre- and post-immigration, safety education, and company doctors, Turkish *Gastarbeiter* were human beings performing arduous and often dangerous tasks, susceptible to sickness and workplace injuries. Hüseyin, in an interview about his work experiences in West Berlin, recalled how the dust at the plastics factory, which he had heard caused cancer, would get into the workers’ eyes and noses. We had masks, he explained, but it was too hot to wear them. At a later job for a textile factory, Hüseyin had to take care not to lose a finger to the machines he stood in front of and worked with the whole day.⁹⁷ For others, it was not a sudden accident, but the long process of illness that forced them to leave the workplace. Demir eventually had to leave her

⁹⁵ Leyla Sezer (pseudonym), interview by Hatice Renc and Ursula Trüper, transcription, p. 2, DLSA, MMA.

⁹⁶ Kaya, 5-6.

⁹⁷ Kemal Kurt and Erika Meyer, eds, *...weil wir Türken sind/ ...Türk olduğumuz için: Bilder und Texte von Türken/ Türklerin resim ve öyküleri* (Berlin: express-Edition, 1981), 40.

job at Sarotti's after fourteen years because her health deteriorated.⁹⁸ Kaya's return to the workplace was made necessary when her husband had to leave his job due to hearing loss.⁹⁹

While these factors were largely based on workers themselves, market forces also played an important role in the instability of the workplace. In some cases, this was reflected in increasing mechanization of the production process. Toward the end of her tenure at Sarotti's, Demir watched as one co-worker after another was fired. It used to take two or three women to operate one machine, she noted, but now the machine did everything. "We, we are used up. Germany, how could Germany be used up? The whole companies are still running. But with fewer people. But it runs as it did earlier, better!"¹⁰⁰

Other companies, suffering under the oil shock recessions of the 1970s, either closed down entirely or moved their operations to a less expensive location. The workplace itself could disappear out from under the feet of its workforce, as was the case with Sezer's job at a bicycle manufacturing company¹⁰¹ and Hüseyin's position at the *Kunststoffabrik*.¹⁰² Turkish workers at larger firms were not safe from such developments, either. After almost a century, AEG-Telefunken shut down the factories at its Brunnenstrasse location in Berlin-Wedding in 1984, which had employed significant numbers of *Gastarbeiter* since the 1960s. After reunification, Siemens followed federal subsidies out of Berlin into the "Speckgürtel" region outside the city, leaving behind hundreds of "ausländische Mitarbeiter" to find new positions elsewhere. Thus while some Turkish workers, such as Seyfettin Gündöven at

⁹⁸ Demir, 8.

⁹⁹ Kaya, 6.

¹⁰⁰ Demir, 8.

¹⁰¹ Sezer, 2.

¹⁰² Kurt and Meyer, eds, ...*weil wir Türken sind*, 40.

Siemens, found themselves as permanent a part of their workplace as the large machinery they operated, others found that being uprooted and unsettled was as much a fact of life in their workplaces as it was in broader German society.

A small but growing number of Turkish residents chose to deal with the instability of the workplace by creating their own work. Already by the 1970s and increasingly in the

Figure 3. Turkish-owned green grocery in Berlin, 1971.



1980s, Turkish immigrants were opening up a variety of businesses, from grocery stores, cafés, and restaurants to tailoring shops, video rental stores, and travel agencies (Figure 3).¹⁰³

While relatively little has been written regarding the early development of Germany's Turkish-owned businesses, a 1987 study

carried out by social scientists Jochen Blaschke and Ahmet Ersöz sheds light on the backgrounds, motivations, and experiences of small business owners in West Berlin's Turkish community.¹⁰⁴ Their study focused on thirty-four Turkish entrepreneurs (thirty-two men and two women) with businesses on a popular street in the West Berlin district of Kreuzberg.¹⁰⁵ Blaschke and Ersöz concluded that the immigrants' socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds largely determined the ways by which they came to own and operate a

¹⁰³ Turkish-owned green grocery, 1971, from Alexandra Aziz, "Das neue Kleingewerbe," in "... da sine wir keine Ausländer mehr": *Eingewanderte ArbeiterInnen in Berlin 1961-1993* (Berlin: Berliner Geschichtswerkstatt e.V., 1993), 46.

¹⁰⁴ Jochen Blaschke and Ahmet Ersöz, *Herkunft und Geschäftsaufnahme türkischer Kleingewerbetreibender in Berlin* (Berlin: Berliner Institut für Vergleichende Sozialforschung, 1987).

¹⁰⁵ At the time of their research, 8,133 Turkish men and 6,671 Turkish women aged twenty years or older lived in that district, which reveals the small percentage of those embarking on business ownership. See *Berliner Statistik: Melderechtlich registrierte Ausländer in Berlin (West) 31. Dezember 1986* (Berlin: Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, 1987), 8.

business and the extent to which their endeavor was successful. Those coming from a rural area or a provincial town in Turkey, a group that represented the vast majority of Turkish small business owners, were especially likely to view having one's own business as a way to achieve financial security. Indeed, many decided to open up their own store after losing their job in a German company.¹⁰⁶ Having experienced the volatility of the workplace, some Turkish immigrants saw self-employment as an opportunity to create and inhabit a stable workplace, where one did not have to follow others' orders.¹⁰⁷

Not only did a growing number of Turkish immigrants consider business ownership a solution to the uncertainty of employment in the German workplace, some also saw it as an opportunity to establish more secure financial and working futures for their children.¹⁰⁸ One of the men Blaschke and Ersöz interviewed left his job of ten years at a textile factory to open his own shop with the goal of creating secure employment for his sons. After two years, he had bought out his partner's share in the bakery and had six employees working for him, including his two sons.¹⁰⁹ This outlook suggests that the process of conscious, permanent settlement was, for at least some of Berlin's Turkish community, already underway as enterprising immigrants sought to gain a stable foothold not only for themselves, but also for their children.

This example of the bakery owner also reveals another important aspect of the Turkish-owned workplace—it was a space of family, not individual, endeavor. Blaschke and Ersöz found that the vast majority of the business owners they interviewed and observed

¹⁰⁶ Blaschke and Ersöz, *Herkunft und Geschäftsaufnahme*, 25-30, 39-40, 67.

¹⁰⁷ Kurt and Meyer, 42.

¹⁰⁸ Blaschke and Ersöz, 67.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

relied on family connections for the initiation and operation of their enterprises. While family might have provided the motivation for opening a business, they also often supplied the initial capital through either personal savings or by serving as a middleman with the bank. Indeed, none of the business owners in Blaschke and Ersöz's study financed their start-up without some form of assistance from family members.¹¹⁰ In many cases, a spouse or another close family member would arrange for a loan from the bank, since many of the aspiring business owners were unemployed. Family contribution to the operation of the business, however, did not stop at financing. In the majority of cases, family members either worked at the store or held jobs outside of the business in order to provide financial support to the family independent of the store's income. In approximately eighteen percent of the businesses in the study, the owner's children also participated in the daily responsibilities of operating the family store.¹¹¹ Turkish immigrant-owned businesses, therefore, were often a familial space initiated with the idea of providing a secure workplace for the owner and his or her children, and financed, operated, and supported through the efforts of family members.

At the same time that operating a business tied the owner closely with his or her family, it also forged important and indispensable bonds with the broader Turkish immigrant community. In the early development of Turkish-owned businesses in West Germany, entrepreneurs would most often open up businesses they believed would fill a need within the Turkish immigrant community, such as grocery stores and restaurants where one could buy foods not available in German shops. One's customers and one's suppliers, then, would often also be one's countrymen. Such enterprises contributed to what Blaschke and Ersöz,

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 61-62.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 63-64.

among others, call “ethnic colonies.”¹¹² In both public and academic forums, many argued that, by operating in such ethnic niche markets, Turkish businesses owners were contributing to the production of a *Parallelgesellschaft* apart from German society, which hindered both their and their customers’ integration.

Indeed, Turkish businesses did serve as intermediary spaces where Turkish immigrants could bring the familiarities of “home,” whether regarding diet, language, or social engagement, into the host society.¹¹³ At the same time, however, operating a business dependent on local customers tied Turkish owners to the daily life of the neighborhoods in which they lived and worked. During an interview with a freelance German historian in the early 1990s, a Turkish-German café owner focused not only on the challenges he faced as a business owner, but also on how these related to the troubles of the neighborhood in general, including drug use and unemployment.¹¹⁴ Thus, first and second generation-owned businesses, situated in West Berlin neighborhoods and serving both Turkish and German customers, created spaces that mediated and encouraged settlement into West German neighborhoods by connecting the business owners to neighborhood interests even as they facilitated the formation of ethnic communities.

While Turkish entrepreneurs hoped to create successful, independent businesses that would give them and their families secure financial footing in their new home, they often found these workplaces as unstable and difficult as their German workplaces had been. A

¹¹² See Blaschke and Ersöz, *Herkunft und Geschäftsaufnahme*; and Rauf Ceylan, *Ethnische Kolonien: Entstehung, Funktion und Wandel am Beispiel türkischer Moscheen und Cafés* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2008).

¹¹³ See Eren Keskin (pseudonym), *Wirt einer Kneipe am Sparrplatz*, interview by Ursula Trüper, 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA; and Kurt and Meyer, 41-42.

¹¹⁴ Keskin.

variety of factors influenced the challenges Turkish small business owners faced. Blaschke and Ersöz stress the importance of the immigrants' social, economic, and work backgrounds both in Turkey and West Germany prior to business ownership. The majority of small business owners involved in their study had grown up in the countryside or small towns, though many had lived on the outskirts of larger cities prior to coming to West Germany.¹¹⁵ Only a minority had had business experience before emigrating, and the vast majority had only an elementary school education.¹¹⁶ Perhaps most important to Blaschke and Ersöz is the fact that very few had received any kind of vocational training, either in operating a business or in performing the particular type of work their companies offered.¹¹⁷ They were, in other words, ill-prepared for the demands of owning and operating their own businesses.

In addition to the challenge of lack of training, immigrants had to contend with the barriers to entrepreneurship inherent in their legal status in West Germany. Often, residency permits did not allow Turkish residents to own a business, which led many earlier business owners to pay a German "straw man" to serve as the fictitious head of the company.¹¹⁸ Problems of the status of residency, mistakes on official documentation, and confusion about city regulations could result in the loss of the privilege of owning a business, and even the loss of residency entirely.¹¹⁹ In addition to bureaucratic challenges, Turkish businesses, like their West German counterparts, were vulnerable to market forces. An owner of a Turkish restaurant ran his first businesses, a vegetable shop, with the help of a Turkish friend and a

¹¹⁵ Blaschke and Ersöz, 52.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 58.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 59-60.

¹¹⁸ Blaschke and Ersöz, 41; and Kurt and Meyer, 41.

¹¹⁹ Polat, 16.

German front-man for five years before a financial crisis in the early 1970s forced him to close the shop and return to factory work. Three years later, he obtained the necessary permits from the city and financing from friends and family to open up his own restaurant. The work itself, the man emphasized during his interview five years later, was grueling and the hours long, but much better than having to “dance to the pipes of the *Meister*.”¹²⁰

Ownership over the workplace, then, did not always bring about the stability and success that Turkish immigrants may have failed to achieve in the West German workplaces they had been brought in to inhabit. Lack of experience, bureaucratic hurdles, market forces, and demanding work responsibilities loaded this new space with difficulties that challenged the successful settlement of Turkish immigrants into their new neighborhoods and West German society. Yet, at the same time, the creation of these new spaces clearly reflects the active attempts of the former *Gastarbeiter* to establish more permanent places for themselves in their new home. The existence of these businesses wove Turkish immigrants—starting with family networks and branching out into suppliers, other business owners, and customers—more tightly together even as it rooted them firmly in the physical and social spaces they had now come to inhabit. This new workplace, though perhaps no more stable than the old one, served a similar function: it provide space for the formation of new relationships and the strengthening of existing ones that allowed Turkish immigrants to gain a more steady—if not entirely secure—foothold in their new home.

Conclusion

Having examined Siemens’ and AEG’s intentions, Turkish guestworkers’ experiences, and the changes that occurred when those two forces collided, we return to the

¹²⁰ Kurt and Meyer, 41-43.

question of how the reciprocal influences of the Turkish guestworkers and their workplaces shaped the immigrants' permanent settlement in West Germany. The workplace became, through the actions of the Turkish guestworkers and the reactions of their West German employers, a space that gave them the purpose to migrate, the financial means of supporting their settlement, and the social networks to rebuild old and create new family relationships that soon led to a new generation being born and raised in Germany. The daily interaction in the workplace of these factors created a space in which guests could turn into residents.

Companies facilitated this settlement administratively: encouraging *Gastarbeiter* to renew their work and residency permits, using the social networks of their foreign workers to recruit their friends and family members, and assisting their employees (in varying degrees) to navigate the bureaucratic maze of life in West Germany. This transition from temporary to permanent, in the workplace and in West German society more broadly, was acknowledged by West German companies, who increasingly positioned and promoted themselves as multicultural spaces. In-house newspapers lauded examples of cross-cultural cooperation, highlighted *Gastarbeiter* clubs that gave traditional dance and song performances, and interviewed successful foreign workers who told of their satisfaction with their jobs. Such coverage did not deny that *Gastarbeiter* faced difficulties, but suggested that the workplace was a space where those could be overcome.

Yet, as the tone of the later *Siemens Mitteilungen* articles suggests, settling into German society was not the same thing as being considered a part of it. In addition to providing assistance with bureaucratic hurdles to settlement, companies tried to encourage their foreign employees to fit themselves into German society and social norms. Use of free time, relations with neighbors, personal health and hygiene—German businesses perceived

points of differences and encouraged immigrant workers to set aside their own habits and adopt the customs and values identified as more German. The tension between the employers' efforts to smooth their "foreign co-workers'" settlement into German society, as well as in the workplace, and the companies' consistent focus on and articulation of difference helped to set the tone for an ambiguous status of Turkish residents in West Germany as simultaneously foreign and permanent.

Men and women experienced this ambiguity in the course of daily life on the job. On one hand, the connections foreign workers made on the job helped them to rebuild their families and social networks that made life in West Germany more familiar, settled, and enjoyable. However, on the other hand, the workplace was not a stable or dependable site. For women, the worsening of the German economy in the 1970s and 1980s as well as the complications of family life kept them moving in and out of the workplace throughout their working lives. Pregnancy, raising children, and caring for ailing or injured relatives divided women's time and energy, rendering their connection to the workplace inconsistent and therefore less secure. For men, the jobs that initially brought them to West Germany began to disappear in the 1980s, leaving them either unemployed and dependent on their wives' incomes or searching for alternate ways to support themselves and their families. Some chose to go into business for themselves, a risky situation that often did not bring the hoped-for stability but did allow a sense of independence and power not present in German companies.

The appearance of Turkish-owned businesses embedded small business owners in particular neighborhoods even as it strengthened ties within the immigrant communities. At the same time, the increased community visibility that accompanied the opening of such

businesses reinforced the paradoxical positioning of being both foreign and permanent. The placing of Turkish residents on the periphery of German society would become even more apparent as Turkish families moved into West Berlin neighborhoods, changing the makeup of those communities even as they themselves changed in response to their new surroundings.

CHAPTER 2

AT HOME AND AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD: SPACES OF COMFORT, CONFLICT AND COMMUNITY

Like most neighborhoods, Sprengekiez is at its best in the summer. Bordered by a canal, the commercial Müllerstrasse, and a technical college, this thickly populated neighborhood in the Wedding district of West Berlin, can feel a bit grim in the winter, when the gray of the streets and apartment buildings blends with the overcast sky. Warm summer days, on the other hand, bring residents into the Kiez's public spaces, now shaded by leaf-laden trees and brightened by the occasional flowering window box or bush. People crowd the shop-lined Müllerstrasse, buying groceries, leaving school, or grabbing a quick meal at a convenient *Stehcafe*. They disappear and reappear from the subway station, racing across the street to avoid the throng of vehicular traffic. City buses lumber past, collecting passengers and depositing more into the orderly *mêlée*.

A few blocks away from the bustle of Müllerstrasse, one finds a quieter corner of the neighborhood: Sparrplatz (Figure 4).¹ Surrounded by apartment buildings, an elementary school, and a student dormitory, this residential square seems to offer something for every resident.

Figure 4. Children on Sparrplatz, 2009.



¹ Children on Sparrplatz, 2009, photograph by author, Berlin, Germany.

Children run, climb, and swing until their parents, watching from nearby benches, drag them away from the playground. Youth challenge each other to a game of table tennis, play basketball, or simply loiter underneath the shade of the trees. On the outskirts of the square, a drunk sits quietly on a bench with a bottle of beer and a dirty rucksack. The sidewalks surrounding the square are filled with residents on their way to and from the day's events, while others sit at tables outside a café, drinking tea and playing backgammon. It is a scene that belies the Kiez's troubled reputation, even as it reflects one of the developments often blamed for the neighborhood's problems: a large proportion of "foreign" residents.

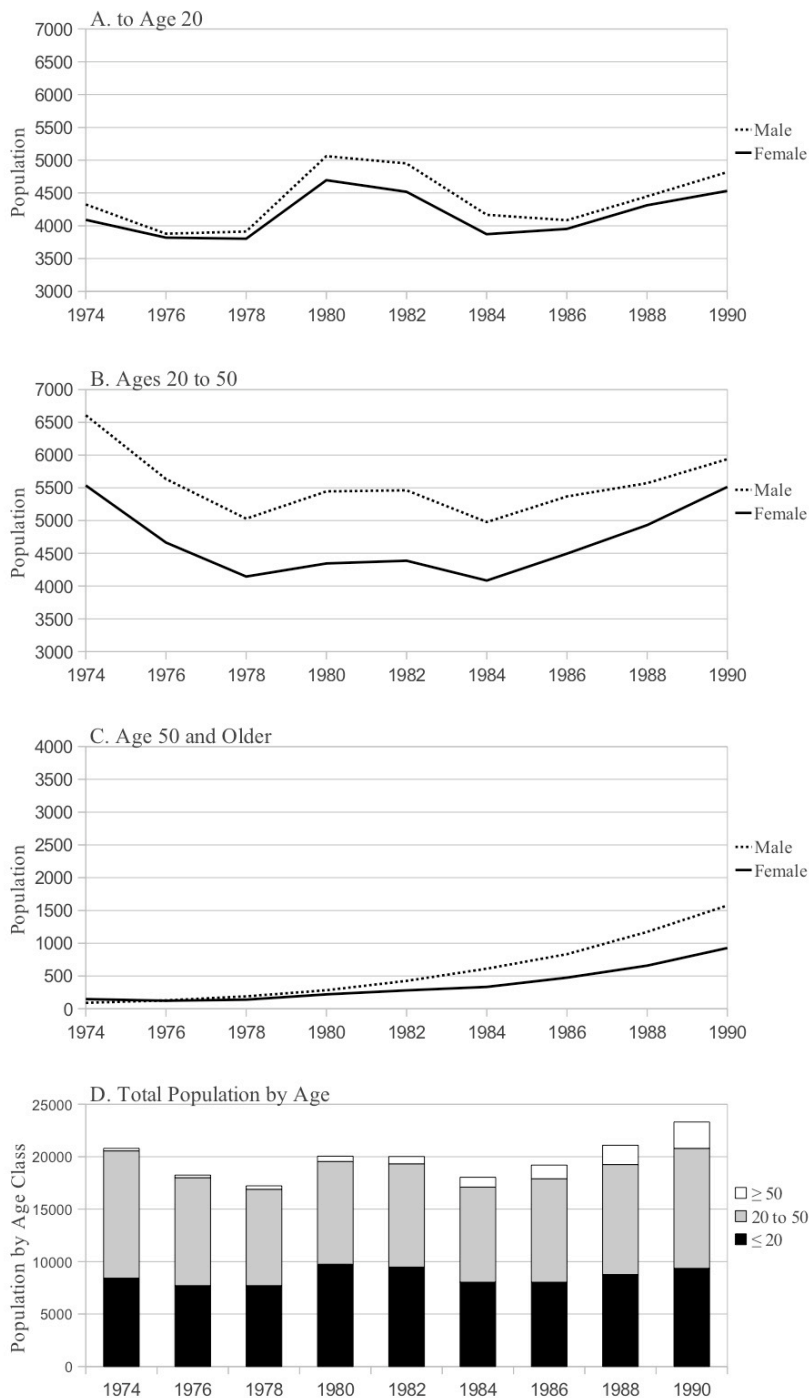
As spouses and children joined their working relatives in West Germany in the late 1960s and early 1970s, these families moved out of company housing and into residential areas, reestablishing their households in whatever apartments were affordable and available to them. Particularly in West Berlin, this often meant small, one- or two-room apartments in turn-of-the-century *Altbauten* in various stages of neglect and decay. Life in Sprengelkiez of forty years ago was no exception. Its apartment buildings, sometimes with two *Hinterhäuser* (rear buildings) and a *Quergebäude* (side building), were generally in poor condition, and Sparrplatz itself was a barren field, with sections occasionally used to grow food. Located in a traditionally working-class district, the neighborhood was one of the most densely populated in the city until the end of the Second World War. In the decades following the war, however, many families moved out of the area, and the remaining community was largely comprised of the elderly, singles, and "*soziale Behinderten*."² In the 1970s, Turkish guestworkers and their families began moving into the shrinking neighborhood, gradually filling up its empty apartments and inhabiting its public spaces.

² A term used in the 1960s and 1970s for "socially disadvantaged."

A look at population statistics regarding Turkish residents in Wedding reveal how that community grew and changed in the years following the *Anwerbestopp* (recruitment halt) in 1974. The first three graphs on the following page demonstrate the change in composition of Wedding's Turkish population by gender and age. Figure 5A depicts those between birth and twenty, the majority of whom were born in Germany or were brought there by their parents. The next graph, 5B, charts the population change among twenty- to fifty-year-olds, the group most likely to have come to Germany to work or to rejoin their spouse abroad. Figure 5C focuses on the population over fifty years of age. Members of this group generally migrated to Germany as workers or spouses of workers, and, of the three, this group shows the most consistent growth over time. For those under the age of fifty, the graphs reveal a decrease in population in four years after the *Anwerbestopp*, ostensibly as some *Gastarbeiter* took advantage of financial incentives for return migration offered by German government. The population continued to grow in the years after 1978, with a temporary dip around 1984. While men generally outnumbered women, the male/female population gap narrowed over time, with the exception of those over fifty. The final graph, Figure 5D, brings the three age groups together to display the overall population changes of the three age groups from the *Anwerbestopp* to reunification. This figure highlights two realities that, together, both counter and explain local German perceptions about the district's Turkish population. First, among some German residents, there was a sense that in the 1980s there were suddenly large numbers of Turkish immigrants in their neighborhoods. However, while the overall numbers do reveal a growing population, that growth was gradual. Yet, the compositional change may explain this view, as youth and those over fifty, whose numbers grew the most, were more likely to be visible in public spaces than their working relatives.

Figure 5. Turkish Population in Berlin-Wedding, 1974 to 1990.

Source: Statistical Reports compiled by the Statistisches Landesamt Berlin from 1975-1991. See Bibliography for full bibliographic references.



The movement of Turkish guestworkers and their families into the neighborhood initiated two key developments in the settlement of Turkish immigrants into German society: close proximity to and interaction between Turkish and German residents on a local level, and the formation of a multi-generational Turkish community. As such, the home and neighborhood both as a site and as a trope have been topics of academic investigation from scholars of various disciplines. Earlier studies focused largely on the effects of housing conditions on the ability of first and second generation Turkish immigrants to successfully integrate into broader German society. Using data gathered from West Berlin and Frankfurt, sociologist Ray Rist examines West German housing policies at the federal and state level, before turning to his attention to the living conditions of guestworkers in those cities. Rist finds that, in comparison to Germans' living conditions, guestworkers consistently occupied older apartment buildings with fewer amenities in less desirable neighborhoods. In addition, they were more densely housed and generally paid more in rent than Germans in equivalent circumstances. These conditions, Rist argues, reflected the status given to guestworkers in German society and segregated the immigrants from that society, even as many cited a desire to live among Germans as one of their reasons for moving out of company housing.³ Historian Ulrich Herbert similarly framed his discussion of guestworkers' housing conditions in the context of challenges to immigrant integration, highlighting German residents' fears of ethnic enclaves turning into segregated ghettos.⁴

³ Ray C. Rist, *Guestworkers in Germany: The Prospects for Pluralism* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), 149-175.

⁴ Ulrich Herbert, *A History of Foreign Labor in Germany, 1880-1980: Seasonal Workers, Forced Laborers, Guest Workers* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 193-254.

More recent studies have moved away from looking at the policies and conditions of immigrant housing and toward examining the use of immigrant neighborhoods to forge the exclusion and inclusion of its residents. Anthropologist Ayse S. Çağlar investigates the use of the ghetto trope in German political culture as a way of discursively separating Turkish residents from broader German society. Categorizing Turkish-Germans through an ethnically separate urban space, Çağlar argues, blinds the German public to the ways that Turkish-German residents construct their belonging in Berlin in ways that move past ethnicity.⁵ Regarding inclusion, cultural geographer Patricia Ehrkamp explores how Turkish residents of Duisburg-Marxloh formed spaces of belonging within the context of their homes and neighborhoods. For Ehrkamp, consumption, both of goods in local stores as well as of media within the home, constitutes a significant tool employed by first and second generation Turkish residents to make their surroundings their own.⁶

The factors of generation and gender have often been brought together by scholars examining the dynamics of settlement and integration in the home and neighborhood contexts. Earlier studies focused almost entirely on how women's and girls' experiences in Germany affected their positions within the family, beginning with studies on how working outside the home affected women's power within it. Nermin Abadan-Unat argues that, by working outside the home, Turkish women living in Germany were able to exercise increased decision-making power in the context of the family.⁷ As academic and popular studies

⁵ Ayse S. Çağlar, "Constraining metaphors and the transnationalisation of spaces in Berlin," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 4 (October 2001): 601-613.

⁶ Patricia Ehrkamp, "Placing Identities: Transnational Practices and Local Attachments of Turkish Immigrants in Germany," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 5 (March 2005): 345-364.

⁷ Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Implications of Migration on Emancipation and Pseudo-Emancipation of Turkish Women," *International Migration Review* 11, no. 1 (Spring 1977): 31-57.

shifted their attention to the second generation, this understanding of emancipation through life in Germany became more complex. Though the focus on the patriarchal structure of Turkish family life remained, scholars such as Umut Erel also highlight the ways the German society limited women's development and opportunities.⁸

Only recently have researchers begun to directly examine the effect of migration and life in Germany on Turkish men and masculinity. While Margret Spohn interviewed first generation Turkish men in order to develop typologies of their roles within the family, Katherine Pratt Ewing challenges these typologies by showing how the identity of Muslim men has been constructed in contrast to the modern German national self.⁹ Ewing argues that this stigmatization of Muslim men (predominantly Turks), often pictured as patriarchal tyrants within the home, precludes them from full cultural citizenship within German society.

The common focus of these three different approaches is how living conditions and family relationships—primarily acted out within the home—have shaped the ways immigrants have interacted with German society. This chapter brings together these separate but related discussions in its examination of the development of spaces of belonging within the home and neighborhood. Intercultural as well as intergenerational spaces, these sites were central to the experiences of Turkish immigrants and their children both within German society and within the Turkish-German community. In this chapter, I explore how Turkish immigrants and their children experienced daily life within their homes and neighborhood,

⁸ Umut Erel, "Gendered and Racialized Experiences of Citizenship in the Life Stories of Women of Turkish Background in Germany," in *Gender and Ethnicity in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Jacqueline Andall (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2003): 155-176; Necla Kelek, *Die fremde Braut: ein Bericht aus dem Inneren des türkischen Lebens in Deutschland*. (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005); Seyran Ateş, *Grosse Reise ins Feuer: Die Geschichte einer deutschen Türkin* (Berlin: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003).

⁹ Margret Spohn, *Türkische Männer in Deutschland: Familie und Identität. Migranten der ersten Generation erzählen ihre Geschichte* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2002); Katherine Pratt Ewing, *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

accommodated themselves to these new places, and, through their presence and actions, changed them. In academic and public discourse, as well as in the memories of local residents, these sites were seen as spaces of conflict and contestation. While this was certainly the case, the home and neighborhood also provided the setting for intercultural and intergenerational conversation and collaboration that forged new spaces of belonging for Turkish immigrants and their children.

A Brief History of Sprengelkiez

An examination of the development of spaces of belonging within the home and neighborhood requires a thorough look at the daily experiences of Turkish immigrants and their children at the local level. To this end, I have selected the neighborhood of Sprengelkiez as a lens through which to explore those experiences in-depth, while simultaneously drawing on previously conducted interviews and secondary literature that address these themes in other locations. The district of Wedding, similar to Kreuzberg and Neukölln, has a large and diverse population of *Mitbürger Migrationshintergrund* who came to settle there during the years of the *Gastarbeiter* program and after. Yet Wedding has generally been overlooked by scholars and media in favor of the more well-known “Little Istanbul” or the increasingly popular (or notorious) Neukölln. With its under-researched, well-established, and diverse population of Turkish and Turkish-German residents, Wedding serves as fertile ground on which to explore the experiences of Turkish immigrants.

Originally more of a village with gardens and stables on the outskirts of Berlin, by the mid-nineteenth century Wedding had become a district of the city, its garden houses replaced by five-story apartment buildings with one or two side buildings. The trade and industry

centered in Wedding brought in a working-class population, which in turn contributed to an increasingly left-leaning political milieu. By the 1920s, Wedding had become a stronghold for the Social Democratic Party (SPD) as well as for the newly-formed Communist Party (KPD). Residents of “Red Wedding,” were thus generally not receptive to the rise of the National Socialists, who rioted through the district after the Reichstag fire on February 27th, 1933.

Wedding, and with it Sprengelkiez, experienced significant destruction during the Second World War. The district saw heavy fighting in the last days of the war, with Schulstrasse, a street just outside of Sprengelkiez, acting as a front line for three days. By the end of the war, over one third of all apartments in the district were destroyed, approximately three and a half million cubic meters of rubble lay in the streets, and the population shrunk to less than three-quarters its pre-war size.¹⁰ Among the buildings destroyed by bombing were many of those surrounding Sparrplatz. Frau B., a longtime resident of the neighborhood, remembered the last bomb that fell in the neighborhood. She, her children, and other residents of her building had sought shelter in the basement during the raid. Thinking all was clear, a neighbor decided that she and her two children would return to their apartment. Frau B. had just left the basement with her own children to follow the neighbor when she heard a noise overhead, and raced back down into the shelter. The bomb crashed into the hall, taking out the entire staircase above the second stair. Those who had left the basement were stuck in their apartments until the fire department came by with a ladder to let them down.¹¹

¹⁰ Bezirksamt Wedding von Berlin, Abt. Bauwesen, eds., *Der Wedding im Wandel der Zeit* (Berlin: Bezirksamt Wedding, 1985), 17-35.

¹¹ Ursula Trüper, “6. Der Krieg,” in “Die Leute vom Sparrplatz: Eine Ausstellung im Heimatmuseum Wedding, März 1995” (Unpublished manuscript, Mitte Museum, 1995), “Die Leute vom Sparrplatz” Ausstellung (DLSA), Mitte Museum Archiv (MMA), Berlin, Germany.

Though some aspects of neighborhood and district life resumed quickly after the end of the war, adequate living space remained an urgent need throughout the forties and fifties. By the early 1960s, city government had decided that, for districts such as Wedding and Kreuzberg, large-scale *Sanierung* (demolition and construction) would address the need for adequate housing, change the districts' working-class image (and perhaps even composition), and, in the context of the growing Cold War, be a "shop-window of the West."¹² Those buildings included in the *Sanierung* plans were purchased by a few large companies who would work with the city to carry out the demolition and reconstruction. Many of the long-term residents moved to other parts of the city, allowing the corporations to rent out the vacated apartments in the interim before the *Sanierung* would take place. These apartments, which were available only temporarily, in poor condition, without their own toilets and sometimes without hot water, were considered undesirable and their rents were correspondingly low. The city's guestworker population, facing both financial restraints and discrimination in the housing market, therefore found these apartments accessible and affordable, and began to move into their neighborhoods, including Wedding's Sprengelkiez.¹³

Labor, Family and Conflict within the Home

For many first generation Turkish immigrants, the process of setting up a home began with a long and difficult search for housing. While the West German government had been eager to bring them in as workers, many landlords were not nearly as receptive to having

¹² Ursula Trüper, "7. Sanierung," in "Die Leute vom Sparrplatz: Eine Ausstellung im Heimatmuseum Wedding, März 1995", DLSA, MMA.

¹³ Engin Günükutlu, interview by author, 8 May 2009, digital recording, Berlin, Germany.

them as tenants. Indeed, classified advertisements for rental properties would sometimes specify “no foreigners.”¹⁴ When interviewed in 1980, one man described his difficulty finding appropriate housing for his family. Despite checking the classifieds in the *Berliner Zeitung* each morning, having a German-speaking friend make phone inquiries, and visiting the *Wohnungsamt* (housing office), he, his wife, and their four children, who had joined him in 1974, were still living in a single-room apartment without a rental contract. He expressed his frustration, asking:

How can you integrate into a society that refuses you a home? The politicians can talk about integration until they drop dead. Now I am very determined, and I can't get on with them anymore [mit ihnen nicht mehr anfangen]. I find comfort only with my fellow countrymen. We're good enough for work, but not as neighbors [zum Zusammenleben aber nicht]. And then I'm supposed to integrate with my exploiter!¹⁵

Others, such as Beyhan Kaya, had to move several times in their first years on the rental market, not due to discrimination, but rather to financial reasons or because a growing family required more space.¹⁶ Often, connections with family, friends or neighbors played a key role in finding adequate housing. Leyla Sezer and her husband, who moved to Sprengelkiez in 1969, lived in a one-room apartment that the birth of their first baby made too small. The caretaker of their building, a German woman, had heard of a one-and-a-half-room apartment opening up and told Sezer about it. This connection enabled Sezer and her growing family to move into more suitable housing.¹⁷

¹⁴ Kemal Kurt and Erika Meyer, eds., ...*weil wir Türken sind/ ...Türk olduğumuz için: Bilder und Texte von Türken/ Türklerin resim ve öyküleri* (Berlin: express-Edition, 1981), 23-29.

¹⁵ Kurt and Meyer, ... *weil wir Türken sind*, 23.

¹⁶ Beyhan Kaya (pseudonym), interview by Hatice Renc, 9 March 1993, transcription, p. 15, DLSA, MMA.

¹⁷ Leyla Sezer (pseudonym), interview by Hatice Renc and Ursula Trüper, 28 January 1993, transcription, p. 4, DLSA, MMA.

The work did not end when the new home was secured. Rather, for first generation Turkish immigrants, the home constituted a site of continual labor. Material improvement of the home was one way Turkish immigrants worked to create a space for themselves and their families in their new surroundings. As Turkish families became more settled into their new neighborhoods, they became increasingly interested in improving their direct living conditions. Engin Günükutlu, the representative of Wedding's *Büro für stadtteilnahe Sozialplanung* (Office for District Social Development), remembers that, while Turkish residents of Sprengelkiez were uninterested in supporting the city's plans for renovation at first, by the late 1980s they were fully on board. When he visited their apartments to inform them of the city's plans, he noted that they had outfitted their homes well, with nice curtains and furnishings.¹⁸

The majority of the labor that took place in the home, however, focused less on its material improvement than on the day-to-day efforts of house-cleaning and childcare. Most often these tasks fell to the women in the family, many of whom also worked outside the home. Asked if she had good memories of her past twenty-four years in Berlin, Sezer answered, "We didn't have enough time for good memories. You go to work, leave work, pick up the children from Kindergarten, go home, as a woman you cook, I don't know... in the evenings you go to bed and in the morning, always the same."¹⁹ For Kaya, the home was also defined primarily by labor, particularly in regard to the care of her children. In response to a question about her use of free time, Kaya replied that she only got two days off every two weeks, and those were filled with housework. Her son, apparently, preferred her

¹⁸ Günükutlu, 8 May 2009.

¹⁹ Sezer, 10.

homemade bread to store-bought. “Ugh,” she would answer to his request, “do you think your mom’s a robot?” Then she would make him the bread.²⁰ Gülen Yeğenoğlu, a single mother living in Frankfurt who opened her own business in order to stay home with her son, writes extensively of the steps she took to make her home a good environment for him to grow up in, from its physical location in proximity to his school to having snacks ready for his friends who would visit after class.²¹ Especially for women, then, the home became almost an extension of the workplace, in that it was a site of constant demands and labor.

The reality that women were responsible for the major share of labor in the home reveals another aspect of the role of this site in the construction of a sense of belonging: the home as a space of contradiction. This contradiction can be further defined as the almost simultaneous presence of spaces of empowerment and subjugation within the home, and has been heavily influenced by gender relations within the context of the family. For women, as the previous examples illustrated, the home was often a site of subjugation to the family’s needs, interests, and, at times, demands. This could be particularly severe for Turkish women who moved to West Germany specifically to marry. Often, these women worked only in the home, and had little contact to life outside that sphere, save for within the Turkish community. Even more so than with Turkish women who worked outside the home, it was especially challenging for these women to forge independent networks, learn how to access social and financial assistance, or gain the language proficiency necessary to operate

²⁰ Kaya, 12.

²¹ Gülen Yeğenoğlu, *Almanya’daki Yirmi Yılım* (Turkey: Milliyet Yayınları, 1988), 27, 47-48.

successfully outside of their immediate Turkish community. The home was their main site of activity and interaction, within which they were expected to serve the needs of the family.²²

Although such cases of Turkish women who migrated to West Germany for marriage are often overrepresented in the media for their apparent illustration of extreme cultural difference, *Gastarbeiterinnen* have also experienced the home as a site of gendered conflict and subjugation. As discussed above, Turkish women were often expected to take on the majority of the housework and childrearing responsibilities, not wholly unlike their German counterparts. Indeed, in some cases, this imbalance in the household division of labor continued even when the wife held more than one job and the husband was out of work.²³ In interviews some women framed their position in the home, and in relation to their husbands, as one of oppression. Nimet Erdem described her husband as jealous and controlling, always asking her where she had been, ordering her not to wear make-up, and telling her what clothes she could wear. “He behaved like women didn’t have any right to their own say in the matter,” she explained. “Sometimes I thought that I was damned to living like that, to being oppressed. At least, that’s how I felt sometimes.”²⁴ For Erdem, the situation was further exacerbated by the fact that her husband had a second wife, with whom he also had children. When they would fight, he would leave the apartment they shared and move in with his other wife. Their home was peaceful, Erdem confessed to the interviewer, only

²² The stories of these women have been particularly prevalent in a growing body of memoir literature and popular studies, including Ayşe and Renate Eder, *Mich hat keiner gefragt: Zur Ehe gezwungen—eine Türkin in Deutschland erzählt* (Munich: Blanvalet, 2005) and Necla Kelek, *Die fremde Braut: ein Bericht aus dem Inneren des türkischen Lebens in Deutschland* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005).

²³ Kaya, 13-15.

²⁴ Nimet Erdem (pseudonym), interview by Fatos Topac and Ursula Trüper, 8 January 1993, transcription, p. 6, DLSA, MMA.

when her husband left.²⁵ Kaya, who married while on vacation in Turkey, complained that after years of marriage her husband still did not listen to or try to understand her.²⁶ After long days in the workplace, these women and many others came home to a place where they were expected to continue taking orders and working for others' welfare.

Yet women were not the only ones who found the home to be a site of conflict and struggle. Men, in their roles as husbands and fathers, could also feel restricted, limited, or disrespected within the home. For Hamburg resident Demir Gökgöl, his responsibility for the well-being of his family kept him in a marriage that neither spouse wanted and at a job he did not enjoy. Once their son reached a certain age, the couple divorced and his wife returned to Istanbul. Gökgöl eventually left his job, pursuing a career as a musician and an actor.²⁷ Though Kazım Arslan's family joined him in West Germany with the purpose of rebuilding the household, tensions between Arslan and his wife, as well as between Arslan and his eldest son, also resulted in a split in that family. He recalled his son's direct disrespect and disobedience, together with disagreement between him and his wife over how to raise the children, as significant sources of conflict within the home. Arslan explained his lack of authority over his son, saying, "I noticed that I didn't have a deep connection with my children, who I only knew from summer vacations when I would visit my family for a couple

²⁵ Erdem, 5.

²⁶ Kaya, 6.

²⁷ "Ohne Jazz kann ich nicht leben—Der Künstler Demir Gökgöl," in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 139-158.

of weeks.”²⁸ Thus, some men would return home after a long day of taking orders at work to have their own authority within the home directly challenged.

Fathers and husbands who tried to exert their authority within the home could also find their wishes and intentions indirectly circumvented by their wives and children. In Erdem’s case, she tired of her husband’s jealousy and domineering attitude, and, after awhile, started ignoring his orders. She and her children also took advantage of his absences to countermand his expressed wishes. When one of their daughters ran away to marry a Yugoslavian man, her father was so angry he forbade his wife from allowing their daughter back into the house. However, during a time when he was away and the daughter needed a place to stay, Erdem received her daughter and son-in-law into the house, though she herself did not approve of the marriage.²⁹ Thus, while the home could be a site of subjugation and gendered power dynamics, as in the workplace, those who experienced oppression found ways to subvert the authority and pursue their own agenda.

Decision making, as reflected in the above example, constituted a forum within the home in which gender as well as generational power structures came into play. In the late 1980s, psychologists Ute Schönplflug, Rainer K. Silbereisen, and Jörg Schulz conducted a study of decision-making practices in Turkish immigrant as well as German households in West Berlin.³⁰ While the researchers originally set out to explore the influence of social networks on internal family decision making, their findings reveal the ways working-class

²⁸ “Die Geschichte über Deutschland gefielen mir—Der Bauarbeiter Kazım Arslan,” in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 90-93.

²⁹ Erdem, 2-3.

³⁰ Ute Schönplflug, Rainer K. Silbereisen, and Jörg Schulz, “Perceived Decision-Making Influence in Turkish Migrant Workers’ and German Workers’ Families: The Impact of Social Support,” *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, vol. 21, no. 3 (September 1990): 261-282.

Turkish and German families approached certain types of issues. To an extent, the behavior of both types of families reflected adherence to traditional gender roles. In the case of Turkish immigrant households, the psychologists found that fathers had authority in family and financial issues, but joint influence with mothers in matters concerning the children. Fathers also had less influence in financial decisions than in family matters. In the German households, which were of similar family makeup and socio-economic circumstances as the Turkish participants, each parent exerted equal influence in family and financial decisions, and mothers held authority in regard to the children. Finally, Turkish mothers attributed less influence to their children in family decision making than the Turkish fathers did. Ultimately, Schönflug, Silbereisen, and Schulz conclude that it is cultural factors, rather than socio-economic status, that determined the decision-making practices in the families that participated in their study.³¹

While the authors caution against drawing broad conclusions from the results of the study given the relatively small survey pool (fifty Turkish and seventy-two German families participated), their interpretations shed light on the shifting nature of power within the home. For example, the discrepancy in the mothers' perceptions of their children's influence in decisions that concern them suggested to the researchers that Turkish mothers' "own status of low influence in the family leads them to attribute even less power to the child." Fathers' attribution of influence to the children, on the other hand, might have reflected a "partial adaptation to the values of the host society" or "reflect the father's evaluation of the given children's resources", such as those gained through school.³² Children's importance as

³¹ Schönflug, Silbereisen and Schulz, 280.

³² Ibid., 279.

translators of the host society for their parents shows up in personal narratives as well as scholarly research and reveals how traditional power relationships became blurred or even inverted within the home. In addition, while fathers retained some authority in financial matters, their influence in this area was not absolute. Mothers, perhaps by virtue of their own outside employment and in their role of managers of the household, were important participants in this area. Thus, while fathers were considered the head of the household and perceived as the ultimate authority figure, that position could be fixed, negotiable, or illusory depending on the type of decision being made or the fathers' level of knowledge concerning that decision.

The home, however, was not only a forum of competing interests and conflict. It could also be a site of partnership and pride, a space in which married couples worked together to improve their and their children's living situation and general well-being. Azra Demir joined her husband in West Berlin three years after he first moved there and, in recalling their life together since the couple's reunification, she said, "my husband and I worked together hand in hand, head to head, life to life."³³ For Demir, this sense of teamwork stemmed from her and her husband's continued hard work outside of the home to contribute to the well-being of the whole family. The theme of partnership shows up in other life histories as well, particularly in regard to supporting the development of children.³⁴

In addition to being a space of cooperation for the family's well-being, the home also constituted a site in which the first generation could demonstrate improvements in financial security and success. In her memoir, *Gülen Yeğenoğlu*, a single mother living with her son

³³ Azra Demir (pseudonym), interview by Hatice Renc, 9 March 1993, transcription, p. 10, DLSA, MMA.

³⁴ For example, Sevim Özel (pseudonym), interview by author, 30 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany.

in Frankfurt, repeatedly references the physical changes and additions she made to her home to make it more livable and enjoyable for her son and herself, from the early days without a refrigerator to when she was able to purchase a new record player.³⁵ Hüseyin Yılmaz, a trade unionist in Hamburg, similarly framed the home in physical terms, as a way to chart the growth of his family and financial success in his profession.³⁶ For Erdem Dilşen, also of Hamburg, living in a home of his own took on the particular significance of success and of rootedness. “Once he [my son] was born,” he recounts, “I began to dream of our own house. Sometimes I think the Turk is like a Schwab, he lives by the motto: ‘Strive, strive, build a house.’”³⁷ Thus, while the home was clearly a site of gendered expectations, power struggles, and disappointment, it also provided the first generation with a space through which they could work together to improve their household, both the physical place and the family members who occupied it.

The second generation also found the home to be a site of contradiction, though this contradiction could manifest itself in different ways. On the one hand, the home constituted a space of comfort, support, and refuge. Filiz Güler, daughter of Sevim Özel, grew up with her parents and two siblings in a small apartment in Sprengelkiez. It was a tight space for three children, Filiz Güler recalled, “but I naturally never really noticed that, it was a very wonderful childhood”.³⁸ In comparison with other families she knew, her parents gave Filiz

³⁵ Yeğenoğlu, *Almanya’daki Yirmi Yılım*, 42, 51.

³⁶ “Ich gebe nicht klein bei: Der Gewerkschafter Hüseyin Yılmaz,” in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 259.

³⁷ “In Uhlenhorst kennt mich jeder: Der Kaufmann Erdem Dilşen,” in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 108. The German text for this expression reads, “Schaffe, schaffe, Häusle baue.”

³⁸ Filiz Güler (pseudonym), interview by author, 27 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 2-3.

more freedom, they had more of a sense of humor, and “one could also talk with them.”³⁹

The home as a supportive environment shows up in the memoir of Green Party member Cem Özdemir as well, whose narrative unfolds how he became active in German politics.

Growing up in small Bad Urach, Özdemir recounts mainly pleasant and domestic scenes of playing with the neighborhood children, being cared for by his German “Oma” and “Opa” while his parents were at work, and enjoying evenings when his parents’ friends would come over to play cards and drink tea until late in the evening.⁴⁰ Home, for Özdemir, meant a connection to both his familial Turkish and his local Swabian roots through the people associated with that space.

On the other hand, many members of the second generation found the home to be a site of conflict, predominantly with parents. Although assertions that their parents’ expectations and rules were restrictive and unfair are present in interviews with both sexes, it is more often at the center of young women’s narratives.⁴¹ Indeed, some young women make a direct comparison to the treatment of their brothers versus their own when discussing their frustration with parental control. In some families, Filiz Güler recalled, sons were treated like “pashas, who are spoiled and allowed to do everything.”⁴² Leyla Sezer’s daughter, Sanem, told her interviewer that when her brother wanted to leave the house, he simply would say he was going out. When she wanted to leave, however, she would have to answer questions about where she was going, who she was going to be with, et cetera, and at the end

³⁹ Güler, 4.

⁴⁰ Cem Özdemir and Hans Engels, *Ich bin Inländer: ein anatolischer Schwabe im Bundestag* (Munich: DTV, 1997), 16-18, 26-27.

⁴¹ For two examples of young men’s frustrations with parental control, see Kurt and Meyer, 64-67.

⁴² Güler, 4.

of all the questions, her parents would give her orders on how to behave. Also, she was expected to do the housekeeping, since her mother worked outside the home. “Go to school, come back from school, end the day with housework and then cooking and such, finished,” Sanem complained. “And then the next day go to school again, come home again, and don’t experience anything new, what kind of life do I have?”⁴³

Sanem credited the difference in treatment to being Turkish, making direct connections to her parents’ mindset as Turks who left the country in the late 1960s. Her parents’ “old-fashioned” attitudes prompted Sanem to hide the fact she had a boyfriend, though she eventually told her mother. Despite her frustration with her parents’ treatment, she empathized with their motivations. Her mother, she explained, was afraid that Sanem would drop out of school if she had a boyfriend and was concerned that her daughter’s honor would suffer if people learned she was dating. However, unlike her friend’s mother, who dragged her daughter to a gynecologist to check if she was still a virgin after learning she had spent the morning alone with a young man, Sanem’s mom trusted her, something Sanem valued. Her father, though he may not have trusted her, cared for her very much and wanted the best for her, Sanem felt, and this made his controlling attitude understandable if not appreciated.⁴⁴

While Sanem perceived a direct link between being Turkish and her parents’ restrictive behavior, others challenged the cultural connection as a factor in their upbringing. In a 2004 interview, Turkish-German rap artist Aziza A. related there was never any sense of growing up “in two cultures” in her family, and that she did not have to confront this topic

⁴³ Sanem Sezer (pseudonym), interview and transcription by Ursula Trüper, DLSA, MMA, 9.

⁴⁴ Sanem, 14-15.

until journalists began asking her questions about it. When you are eighteen, she explained to her interviewer, you want to figure out what life is all about, and parents try to decide how much of it you should experience. For her family, it was not a question of culture, but of her father worrying about his children being outside late at night because of what could happen. “Child, I trust you,” he would say to her, “but I don’t trust those other people.” Aziza found his argument logical, but still snuck out of her window and went to Berlin’s discos anyway.⁴⁵

For some young women, however, the extreme nature of their parents’, and especially their fathers’, control precluded any empathy or understanding. The growing body of memoir literature from Turkish-German women in the Federal Republic provides numerous examples of such situations. For Seyran Ateş, a well-known lawyer and women’s rights activist, the move from Istanbul to Berlin resulted in an immediate restriction of her freedom of movement. In her memoir, Ateş unfolds a narrative of overcoming the obstacles of a harsh family life and religiously restrictive community, which at times threatened both her liberty and her life. As a youth, while her brothers were allowed a considerable amount of liberty, Ateş’s boundaries were “to the corner on the left and the shoe store on the right.”⁴⁶ Growing older, she began to increasingly resent her parents’ restrictions: when she was not at school, Ateş was required to be at home, where her parents and older brother treated her like a servant and beat her when she did not please them. As a teenager, Ateş ran away from home twice, returning after the first time when her father promised to reform. Even free from the confinement and abuse of her family, Ateş reflected on the meaning of her parents’

⁴⁵ Alev Yildirim, interview by Murat Güngör, 27 July 2004, digital recording, “A, Aziza-Interview—20040272.mp3”, Dokumentationszentrum und Museum für Immigration in Deutschland (DOMiD), Cologne, Germany.

⁴⁶ Seyran Ateş, *Große Reise ins Feuer: Die Geschichte einer deutschen Türkin* (Berlin: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003), 51.

apartment door. It was, she writes, “a symbol that I was not allowed to freely make decisions that affected my own life. Physically I broke through that door, but it stayed in my mind for a long time.”⁴⁷ Two other memoirs follow similar themes of familial and cultural restriction. Sociologist Necla Kelek, who moved to Germany as a young child with her family, found as she grew older that she was increasingly confined to the home, a space marked for her by conflict with her father and older brother and a sense of being in servitude.⁴⁸ For Devrim, brought to West Berlin by her parents as a teenager, home became a place of “quarrels, quarrels, and only quarrels.” “It slowly became clear to me,” she recalls, “that I couldn’t live in this home any longer, because I wouldn’t be able to cope with it in the long run.”⁴⁹

Thus, as with the first generation, home for the second generation constituted a site of contradiction that contained spaces of both comfort and conflict, encouragement and repression. These spaces could also be highly gendered, making the home a more restrictive (and sometimes even abusive) place for daughters than it was for sons. The father-daughter relationship was particularly charged, and young women—like their mothers before them—often dealt with their parents’ expectations and rules by hiding those aspects of their lives they felt would prompt direct conflict. At the same time, however, some of the second generation found strength and support in the relationships forged and acted out within the home, even if they did not realize it at the time. Though journalist and memoirist Hatice Akyün recounts little about tension between herself and her parents while growing up in Duisburg, her references to her thrill at learning what the word “*volljährig*” (of age) meant

⁴⁷ Ateş, 128.

⁴⁸ Necla Kelek, *Die fremde Braut: ein Bericht aus dem Inneren des türkischen Lebens in Deutschland* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005), 92-113.

⁴⁹ “Devrim,” in *Wo gehören wir hin?*, ed. Michael Kuhlmann and Alwin Meyer (Göttingen: Lamuv Verlag, 1983), 126.

and the self-described wild life she led after moving out strongly suggest her experience of home as a place of at least some restrictions and frustration.⁵⁰ Yet, in describing her experiences as an adult going back to the home of her parents, her tone is full of affection and humor. Whether drinking tea in her parents' living room among the forest of couches and cushions or sitting around the dining room table with her parents and siblings first enjoying, then suffering through, the enormous and enticing meals her mother prepared, Akyün makes clear that her relationship to that place and its people has shifted from antagonism to appreciation and respect.⁵¹ Akyün's narrative reflects not only the contradictory nature of the home, but also how the first generation employed the home as a social space, utilizing it for entertainment and to maintain family relationships.⁵²

Social, Intergenerational and Intercultural Spaces in the Home and Neighborhood

While the home is often framed in the context of relationships within the nuclear family (ie. husband/wife and parent/family), the social spaces within that site expanded to include extended family as well as friends. Homes became a primary site of socializing within the growing Turkish community, as family members, friends, and acquaintances dropped in to catch up on the latest news, often without prior notice. Sevim Özel did not always particularly welcome these visits. She and her husband worked different shifts throughout the week and were home and awake at the same time only on the weekends. But

⁵⁰ Hatice Akyün, *Einmal Hans mit scharfer Soße: Leben zwischen zwei Welten* (Munich: Goldmann, 2005), 71-72.

⁵¹ Akyün, 24-33.

⁵² Interestingly, second generation narratives do not often describe the home as a place of retreat from an ambivalent, if not openly hostile, outside world. This sort of sanctuary function is seen more in the framework of social spaces in the neighborhood, discussed later in this chapter.

then, unfailingly, friends would start showing up on Saturday. There was not even time to clean, Özel remembered, as one visitor followed another.⁵³ Special events, as well as these everyday visits, also took place within the home. When her daughter decided to marry the young man she had run away with, Nimet Erdem insisted, despite the difficulty of the situation and against the wishes of her husband, that her daughter's marriage should be celebrated. Finances made renting a hall untenable, so Erdem hosted the wedding reception in her own home.⁵⁴ For the first generation, then, the home opened up social spaces that enabled them to maintain relationships with their extended family, friends, and other members of the Turkish community, as well as to demonstrate their hospitality and the material evidence (the new refrigerators, furniture, and curtains) of their hard work outside the home.

The second generation also experienced the home as a site of social interaction and socialization. However, unlike the first and second generation's mixed feelings about the home in connection to the nuclear family, the latter's narratives of the home as a social space are generally quite positive. Filiz Güler situates her memories of family visits directly within her discussion about her happy childhood. "We have extended family here, uncles and aunts, and we always met every weekend, celebrated birthdays," she recounted. Mostly these visits took place within the home, but occasionally the family would also meet for picnics in nearby Schiller Park.⁵⁵ Bilge Yılmaz remembers her relatives and family friends getting together every day after work, either in her parents' home or a relative's apartment. Yılmaz

⁵³ Özel, 10.

⁵⁴ Erdem, 9.

⁵⁵ Güler, 3, 5.

recalled that on those evenings, three or four families would get together and, after they sent the children off to play quietly:

the women were there and the men were there, you know. The men talked about politics and work situations, the women then naturally about the children, also about work. They of course also worked, and more about cooking and food and talked about raising the children and so on.⁵⁶

The children played either in the apartment or outside in the courtyard (Figure 6).⁵⁷ On the weekends, sometimes the family would watch television together: Russian fairy tales on the East German

channel or *Sesame Street* for the children, news programs for her father, and the one-hour Turkish-language program for everyone. These visits provided the second generation with the opportunity to interact with other children their own age as well as adults, creating a unique intergenerational space important in their socialization.

Another part of the second generation's socialization within the home was language learning. For many—if not most—families with two Turkish parents, the primary language spoken in the home was Turkish. Members of the Özel household communicated wholly in Turkish at home, which Filiz Güler now considers to have been a great benefit to her, as it gave her good facility with her parents' native language and the skills she needed to learn other languages later in school.⁵⁸ For others, the transition from a Turkish-speaking

Figure 6. Turkish children playing in Sprengelkiez courtyard, 1980



⁵⁶ Bilge Yılmaz (pseudonym), interview by author, 2 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 8.

⁵⁷ Turkish children playing in Sprengelkiez courtyard, 1980, photography by Hans Wolfermann, Berlin, Germany.

⁵⁸ Güler, 1, 10.

household to a German-speaking school system proved a particular challenge and made some feel dissatisfied with their abilities in both languages.⁵⁹

While the primary language in most households was Turkish, the social spaces within the home could still provide opportunities to learn German. As we saw in the example of Bilge Yılmaz's family get-togethers, the television brought German into the home through a variety of types of programming, particularly before the appearance of Turkish-only channels in the late 1980s and 1990s. In fewer cases, Turkish parents employed German *Tagesmütter* (nanny) to care for their children during the workday. Timur, ten years old at the time of his interview in 1993, was partially raised by his German *Tagesmutter* in Erding. After his parents moved to West Berlin, his mother stayed home with him, but Timur had very fond memories of his *Tagesmutter*. "She was really nice," he told his interviewer earnestly. "I can never forget."⁶⁰ Cem Özdemir learned German, as well as the regional Swabian dialect, from his German "Oma" and "Opa" who minded him while his parents were at work.⁶¹ Thus, while these domestic spaces largely socialized the second generation to participate—at least linguistically—with the Turkish community, the home was not wholly separate from the environment in which it was situated. Intercultural spaces could also exist within the home that facilitated the second generation's transition to other social contexts outside of that site.

In many ways, the neighborhood served as an extension of the home for both the first and second generation. While the early Turkish residents of Sprengelkiez may not have known many other people when they first moved to the neighborhood, they soon settled into

⁵⁹ Kurt and Meyer, 45-49; Lale, interview by Ursula Trüper, 28 May 1992 and 4 June 1992, transcription, DLSA, MMA, 4. The issue of language in the school will be addressed in the next chapter.

⁶⁰ Timur (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 22 June 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁶¹ Özdemir and Engels, 16-18.

their new surroundings and made connections with their neighbors. Leyla Sezer's description of neighborhood life—that "everyone knew everyone"—echoes the sentiment of many long-time residents, and those who felt less well-acquainted with their neighbors at the time of their interview consistently referenced the closer ties they had held in years past.⁶² For Sevim Özel, even now a trip to the store always includes seeing acquaintances, while "every few steps I meet someone, hello, hello."⁶³ Eren Keskin, the manager of a bar on Sparrplatz, related that he knew his neighbors better in the earlier days, but despite losing some of those connections, he was still satisfied with his location and his family's life there.⁶⁴ Though the transition to life in West Germany (and specifically on Sparrplatz) was difficult for Sezer, "bit by bit we got used to it," she related. "So, if I'm away, everything's strange to me. Now if I come back again, this Sparrplatz, like my home..."⁶⁵

Turkish residents turned their neighborhood into an extension of their homes through the formation of new social spaces both in the neighborhood's pre-existing public realm and in local, immigrant-run businesses. The different types of neighborhood sites employed for everyday socializing reflected a distinctly gendered form of socializing. In general, Turkish women from the first generation utilized outdoor public spaces that did not require them to spend money and allowed them to watch over their children, such as the benches next to Wedding's city hall building or those around the playground on Sparrplatz. The presence of Turkish women socializing on Sparrplatz led German residents as well as the media to begin

⁶² Sezer, 3.

⁶³ Özel, 27.

⁶⁴ Eren Keskin (pseudonym), *Wirt einer Kneipe am Sparrplatz*, interview by Ursula Trüper, 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁶⁵ Sezer, 8.

describing the scene as resembling “an Anatolian village.”⁶⁶ Sometimes, those women who had time to meet with each other outside the home brought snacks to share as they chatted about their days. Beyhan Kaya would now and then join her friends in the park, who shared tea, chips, and other snacks. “Do you think we chat and don’t eat anything while we’re at it?” she asked her interviewer, laughing. “It’s like a cafeteria.”⁶⁷ First generation Turkish men also utilized public spaces, such as train stations or a fountain near Leopoldplatz, but by the mid 1970s and 1980s, such public locations were generally occupied by and associated with Turkish women. As Kaya said, “Our men don’t come out of the *Lokal* (pub) anyway. Our *Lokal* is there. In the park. That’s where we also spend our days.”⁶⁸

When Turkish entrepreneurs began opening businesses in the 1970s and 1980s, their cafés, bars, and restaurants provided the first generation not only with spaces of consumption where they could feel more confident that the food preparation adhered to certain dietary restrictions, but also presented a setting for the construction of new social spaces outside the home. In general, these new sites were utilized foremost by first generation Turkish men. Whether having breakfast before their shift started at work or enjoying a leisurely glass of tea in the afternoon, Turkish men inhabited these places and used them to create primarily single-sex spaces for socializing.⁶⁹ In *Ethnische Kolonien: Entstehung, Funktion und Wandel am Beispiel türkischer Moscheen und Cafés*, sociologist Rauf Ceylan examines the ways these Turkish-owned cafés affected their patrons’ perception of and integration into the

⁶⁶ For example, Beate Hahn (pseudonym), co-founder of the Sparrladen, interview by Ursula Trüper, 7 July 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁶⁷ Kaya, 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 8.

⁶⁹ Kurt and Meyer, 41-42.

host society. Using the Duisburg district of Hochfeld as a case study, Ceylan charts the development of the Turkish café scene from the opening of the first tea house in 1975 through the following three decades. The study reveals not only the diversity and divisions within the Turkish community, but also the ways that the cafés themselves furthered the isolation of the Turkish community within the host society.⁷⁰

When the first Turkish-owned café opened in Duisburg-Hochfeld in 1975, it served as a space where Turkish men could use their free time to pursue their own interests and traditions apart from broader German society, which many found unwelcoming and discriminatory. The first café, Adem's Café, served as a local meeting point where Turks from a spectrum of political, ethnic, and religious affiliations drank tea, socialized, and enjoyed the occasional musical group, bellydancer, or, with the advent of the VCR, movie. As the Turkish population grew, such cafés proliferated and began to reflect the internal divisions within that community.⁷¹ Ceylan locates the disintegrative effect of Turkish-owned cafés partially within this development; the narrowing of the customer-base of the cafés meant (and means) that those utilizing these commercial and social spaces were becoming an ever-increasingly homogenous group. Not only were they being further isolated from German society, but they were also self-segregating from others in the broader Turkish community. He writes:

For adults as well as for youth, the cafés became a place of flight where they would spend hours. As a result, their spaces of learning and experience—and therefore their chances for information and interaction—would shrink to just the café. Because they

⁷⁰ Rauf Ceylan, *Ethnische Kolonien: Entstehung, Funktion und Wandel am Beispiel türkischer Moscheen und Cafés* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2006).

⁷¹ Ceylan, 185-193.

concentrated only on a disadvantaged milieu, the social network of such people became increasingly homogeneous.⁷²

This effect was particularly detrimental for those café-goers who were unemployed. For these customers, the local café went beyond being a place to socialize with friends or unwind after a long day. It became a place of refuge or “flight,” where Turkish men went to pass time and escape the four walls and responsibilities of the home and the judgment of the community. One of Ceylan’s interview subjects related a story a friend had shared with him. The friend, who lived next door to a café, would pass by each morning and evening on his way to and from work. At the end of the day, he would see the same men sitting in the café who had been there when he walked by first thing in the morning.⁷³ Such men would sit in the café, drink, and play games throughout the day in an effort to escape the boredom of being without work. The proliferation of Turkish-owned cafés narrowed these men’s connections further, making it that much more difficult to find work if they were looking.

While the clientele of these cafés may have been diverse in political, ethnic and religious orientation, they were universally men. With the exception of some of the employees, Turkish and Turkish-German men constituted the overwhelming—if not only—occupants of these social spaces. Those who held jobs would stop by their local café on the way home from work, and often spend hours drinking tea and socializing with their friends. Wives, tired of waiting for their husbands’ return, would sometimes go down to the café to retrieve them or send out one of their sons with a message to their fathers to come home.⁷⁴ The café, then, became one of the most important social spaces for Turkish men, giving them

⁷² Ibid., 215-216.

⁷³ Ibid., 207-210.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 188. The name of the *Kneipe* “Gordon’s” was later changed to “Pamukkale.”

the opportunity to meet up and converse with their peers in an informal setting free of the authoritative structure of the workplace and relatively apart from the responsibilities of the home. Throughout the 1980s, as the likelihood of a quick return to Turkey diminished, the number of Turkish-owned cafés grew in response to this social need.

In Sprengelkiez, German residents watched as some of the older, traditional *Kneipen* gave way to establishments like Gordon's, the bar run by Keskin, and Şafak, a café operated by Soner Polat.⁷⁵ As in Duisburg-Hochfeld, these cafés served the Turkish and Turkish-German men in the neighborhood, though the relative size of Sprengelkiez meant the cafés were fewer in number. Though not as numerous, these tea houses were highly recognizable and well-known. In good weather, Şafak's patrons moved their conversations and backgammon games to the sidewalks in front of the café, making them even more visible to their neighbors. In this way, as with the Turkish women sitting around the playground at Sparrplatz, Turkish men and the places they inhabited in the neighborhood began to categorize and define one another.

Like their parents, the second generation also used the neighborhood as a forum to create independent social spaces that pushed the boundaries set for them within the context of the home. While much socializing with friends took place at each other's apartments, young Turkish-Germans also met up in various places throughout the neighborhood, including in local parks, in front of their schools, on Sparrplatz, or simply on street corners.⁷⁶ Like many teenagers, they went to the movies, played sports, and talked about school, family, romantic

⁷⁵ See, for example, Christine Lange, Viola Werner, and Thomas Hofmann (pseudonyms), interview by Ursula Trüper, 27 July 1994, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA; Eren Keskin, Trüper interview, 1993; and Soner Polat (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper and Kemal Kurt, 18 June 1993, transcription, DLSA, MMA.

⁷⁶ Filiz Güler, email to author, 4 June 2009; Emre and Erkan (pseudonyms), interview by Ursula Trüper, 7 December 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA; Timur, 22 June 1993; Güler, 3.

relationships, and the future. Yet, as in the home, gendered expectations of acceptable behavior exerted strong influence over how second generation youth experienced and operated within these different spaces.

Girls and young women felt the effects of this social control most acutely, and blamed the large Turkish community in their neighborhoods for their lack of freedom. “If we’re out till 6:00pm,” Lale, the teenage daughter of Turkish immigrants, complained, the neighbors “say ‘why are you out, go home, and such things. I think that’s way more strict [than the Germans]!’”⁷⁷ Her neighbor Aylin agreed. People in her neighborhood, she explained, are very concerned about appearances, and it is important to them that a young woman be a virgin. While she was angry about the ways that Turks ran each other down, Aylin qualified her explanation of the reasons for this kind of social surveillance. “How should I say this: the people here are actually quite old-fashioned,” Aylin explained. “Of course, there are also people who are very modern now, and such, but many people here are totally old-fashioned. They think old-fashioned and, yeah, because of that they worsen all relationships.” For Aylin, then, the social surveillance and control she experienced was not the manifestation of culture or tradition, but rather “old-fashioned” values and thinking. Her mother trusted her, she related, and did not mind if Aylin chatted on the street with a “guy,” but when the reports of her daughter’s behavior got back to her parents, it hurt their pride.⁷⁸

Whatever prompted their Turkish neighbors, the result of the social policing was clear: the spaces young women created and inhabited in the neighborhood became increasingly constricted as they transitioned from childhood to adulthood. Afraid of drawing

⁷⁷ Lale (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA, 5.

⁷⁸ Aylin (pseudonym), interview and transcription by Ursula Trüper, 22 December 1992, DLSA, MMA, 2-3.

the attention of their neighbors, young women regulated their behavior in public, taking care to not be seen in situations that could be perceived as inappropriate. Even girls with relatively lenient parents were affected by these social restrictions. Filiz Güler, after talking about the ways religious observance showed up in her primary school, explained, “One is raised with it, I mean, I always paid attention to it, too, that I wasn’t seen on the street if I was talking with a guy and like I already said, my parents probably wouldn’t have had anything against that”.⁷⁹ Other young women spoke repeatedly of wanting to feel free, to be able to take part in activities that German girls their age did, like dancing or swimming, or to simply “go out” without being watched, questioned, and reported on.⁸⁰ The social restriction of these spaces constantly reminded young Turkish-German women that they were held to a different standard than their German classmates and friends. At the same time, it made belonging to the neighborhood’s Turkish community seem to come at the price of personal freedom. For young Turkish-German women, then, the social spaces they created in the neighborhood allowed them a measured amount of autonomy from the home, but with strict boundaries whose trespass came with distinct costs.

While young Turkish-German men often inhabited the same neighborhood sites and participated in similar activities as young women, the network of social control was not as concerned with their activities and therefore exerted less power on their social spaces. However, this did not mean that young men were free from the influence of negative gender expectations and stereotypes. Family as well as Turkish neighbors pressured these youth to keep their behavior within acceptable bounds and out of “trouble,” and some of the more

⁷⁹ Güler, 17.

⁸⁰ For example, Lale, 6; Kurt and Meyer, 68-69.

hostile German neighbors cast them in the role of troublemaker regardless of their conduct.⁸¹ In addition, such negative gender stereotypes limited young men's access to structured social spaces. Organizers of neighborhood activities curtailed these youth's participation out of concern of violence, a phenomenon that will be discussed later in this chapter. For some young men, struggling in school and with little interest in what they saw in their future for work, membership in their neighborhood's or district's gang meant belonging to a group of people and a place in which they could gain and exercise power. Turkish street gangs served as a significant space of belonging for many young men in West Berlin, forging a connection between national (Turkish) and locally-based identities. These gangs began to emerge in West Berlin in the late 1970s, but it was not until the late 1980s and early 1990s that they became more widely prevalent. As such, their development and role as a space of belonging will be explored more thoroughly in the final chapter, which deals with Turkish-German spaces in post-reunification Berlin.

While it is clear that the home and neighborhood played a significant role in the formation of an inter-connected Turkish community and spaces of belonging (and exclusion) within that community, the extent to which these settings and spaces both enabled and were used to promote intercultural relationships is more ambiguous. Living in close proximity gave German and Turkish residents regular opportunities to interact, and some used these circumstances to get to know their new neighbors. When Sezer declared that, around Sparrplatz, "everyone knows everyone," she did not exclude her German neighbors from that relationship. Instead, she specifically referenced those connections: "Turks, Germans, they know us all, we know them, too. If we come out, we know everybody. The Germans know

⁸¹ Margaret Fischer (pseudonym), interview by author, 20 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany.

Turks, Turks know Germans.”⁸² Kaya, who changed apartments multiple times before she and her family settled into Sprengelkiez, recalled having very positive interactions with her German neighbors over the years. She had particularly fond memories of one of her landlords, whom she called “Dad.” During her pregnancy, he would always ask after her health and give her fresh fruit from his garden including, she fondly remembered, ten wonderful smelling quinces.⁸³

Yet, such positive interactions seem not to have led to close interpersonal relationships among German residents and the first generation. As Sezer’s words illustrate, there was still a distinct sense of “us” and “them,” which, as we will see later in this chapter, was present among German residents as well. Some Turkish residents attributed this sense of separation from Germans and German society as evidence of *Ausländerfeindlichkeit* (xenophobia). While the Turkish residents of Sprengelkiez who gave interviews did not point to specific examples of the *Ausländerfeindlichkeit* of their German neighbors, most shared stories of experiencing discrimination, and a few expressed concern about their own safety and the safety of their children. Demir blamed the conflict between Germans and Turks, which she saw as intensifying in recent years, wholly on the Germans. She went so far to declare that “Every day we’re near death”, perhaps reflecting on the recent neo-Nazi arson attack on two house in Mölln that resulted in the death of two Turkish girls and a 51 year-old woman.⁸⁴ Other first generation Turkish immigrants have been more circumspect,

⁸² Sezer, 8

⁸³ Kaya, 13-14.

⁸⁴ Demir, 4.

conceding that the fault for any *Gegeneinander* (conflict) could be found on both sides.⁸⁵

Regardless of to whom blame was assigned, the experience of discrimination could serve as a wedge between German and Turkish residents, fostering a sense of separateness even as they carried out their daily lives side by side.

The reactions of German residents to the settlement of Turkish immigrants and their children also reflect an acknowledgement of separateness. This distinction between the German and Turkish residents began with the first Turkish families to move into the neighborhood, but grew markedly more pronounced as the number of Turkish residents increased over the years. Interestingly, while Turkish residents have lived in Sprengelkiez since the mid- to late-1960s, many German residents date their presence in the neighborhood to the early 1980s. “We say in the neighborhood that it happened pretty abruptly over three years... over three, four years,” related Klaus Wolfermann, resident of Sprengelkiez since the late 1960s. “I have this statement from a woman who still lives around here [...]. She said, ‘One day I looked out the window, everything is Turkish.’”⁸⁶

Often, the growing presence of Turkish neighbors was connected directly to those social spaces they constructed within the landscape of the neighborhood, such as the cafés discussed earlier. Some met this development with at least tacit acceptance. Peter Krause, who moved to an apartment on Sparrplatz in 1981, first discussed the interactions he had with his Turkish neighbors when asked about the *Zusammenleben* (living together) in the Kiez, describing how he helped a family in his building when their son was having trouble in school. After this, he mentioned the local Turkish bar and the presence of Turks in public

⁸⁵ For example, “In Uhlenhorst kennt mich jeder: Der Kaufmann Erdem Dilşen,” in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 115.

⁸⁶ Klaus Wolfermann, interview by author, 10 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 11.

places.⁸⁷ Krause did not seem particularly concerned about the appearance of these “Turkish” spaces or residents. Similarly, Anja Vogel referenced direct interaction she had with her Turkish neighbors, specifically how Turkish mothers brought their babies to her for advice once they learned she was a nurse. Vogel, however, went a step farther than Krause and sought to distinguish and defend “our Turks” from the troubles other Germans in the neighborhood had with Turks. The Turks who cause trouble, she maintained, are not “our Turks”; they come in from outside. She continued by explaining that the Turks who grew up on Sparrplatz and went to school with her daughter were, at the time of the interview, in their 20s and 30s and still friends with each other. They are not foreigners, she insisted, they have lived here their whole lives.⁸⁸

Not all German residents, however, greeted their new neighbors or the changes they made in the neighborhood with such acceptance or even ambivalence. Some long-time German residents used the language of nostalgia to express their unhappiness, decrying the loss of “German” spaces and the proliferation of “Turkish” or “foreign” spaces in the neighborhood. Such was the case during a 1994 joint interview with a woman who had lived on Sparrplatz since before the Second World War and a man who had grown up there since his birth in 1965. The two discussed the various small businesses—*Kneipen*, a drug store, a soap shop—that had disappeared from the neighborhood and the “Turkish” cafés and *Kneipen* that took their place, making it clear that they considered the developments unsatisfactory.⁸⁹ In addition, the interviewees framed the transition in terms of cause and

⁸⁷ Peter Krause (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 21 July 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁸⁸ Anja Vogel (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 29 June 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁸⁹ Lange, Werner and Hofmann.

effect, without taking into account the impact that larger chain stores moving into the neighborhood had on these small, German-run businesses, as other residents had done.⁹⁰

In other cases, German residents were more blatant in laying blame at the feet of their “*ausländische Mitbürger*” (foreign fellow citizen) for the decline of the quality of neighborhood life. Margaret Fischer first moved to Sprengelkiez in the mid 1970s, drawn by the opportunity to have a larger apartment for herself, her husband, and their four children. There was a strong sense of community in the neighborhood when she first moved in, she recalled. Neighbors knew, socialized with, and cared for each other; the public spaces were clean and safe. “Yeah, and here on Sparrstrasse then, more and more *ausländische Mitbürger* moved in. I don’t want to say anything else, you know?” Fischer concluded with a short laugh.⁹¹ She attributed each negative development in the neighborhood—fighting on the playground, the closure of German-owned businesses, litter in common spaces—to its growing “foreign” population.⁹² Though Turkish families were already living in Sprengelkiez when Fischer and her family first moved there, in her memory there was a clear transition from the nearly idyllic German neighborhood to the apathetic, unfriendly foreign-majority community. Her personal interactions with her Turkish neighbors were characterized mainly by their indifference and animosity, with the notable exception of a young school friend of her son’s who would visit their house and enjoy meals containing pork with them.⁹³ For Fischer, the creation of “Turkish” spaces constituted a process of alienation from the neighborhood she had valued and enjoyed, and signaled the Turkish

⁹⁰ For example, see Wolfermann, 26-27.

⁹¹ Fischer, 1.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 1, 7, 5.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 5.

residents' unwillingness to integrate into their immediate environment and German society more broadly.

Media coverage of West Berlin's growing immigrant population reflected German residents' concerns about the ability and willingness of their Turkish neighbors to "integrate" into West German society. Newspapers across the country were particularly interested in the situation in West Berlin and, throughout the 1980s, published numerous articles concerning the size of the Turkish population, the reactions of German residents, and the efforts of the Berliner Senate to deal with the "problem" of foreigners. A good example of the type of article published at this time is a 1981 piece in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* with the headline: "The Borders of Berlin's Integrative Ability."⁹⁴ The article opens by using statistics to detail the significant demographic shifts experienced by West Berlin since the mid-1960s; nearly 400,000 Germans had left the city and over 240,000 "foreigners" had moved in, making up twelve percent of the city's population. Turkish immigrants, numbered at 120,000, represented a "disproportionate" number of that group.⁹⁵

The writer then proceeds to discuss the political debates about how to deal with this growing foreign population, including efforts to change regulations in a way that would prevent the immigration and residency of unemployed foreigners. The article tries to locate the causes of the growth of the population, and thus the nexus of the problem that required this political wrangling. In this section of the article, the writer focuses mainly on the phenomenon of family reunification and particularly on the presence of older Turkish children who had completed their education in Turkey and were having difficulty finding

⁹⁴ Hans Haibach, "Die Grenzen der Integrationskraft Berlins," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 November 1981, Bundespresseamt Archive (BPA), Berlin, Germany, accessed 7 April 2009.

⁹⁵ Haibach, *FAZ*, 27 Nov. 1981.

work in West Berlin. Not only were growing numbers of unemployable Turkish youth presenting a problem for the city, but the city itself was becoming “overly full” of foreigners in general, and Turks more specifically. To illustrate this point, the writer singles out Kreuzberg, saying that two-thirds of that district’s residents were Turks. In addition, foreign children were taking up more and more space in Kreuzberg’s primary schools. The writer concludes his article by pointing out that of those foreigners eligible to apply for citizenship, very few showed interest in this opportunity.⁹⁶

The theme of this article, and many others that would follow, is clear: foreigners, and particularly Turks, were taking up too much space in a German city. Their sheer numbers, inability to be employed, and impact on certain neighborhoods made them undesirable “Mitbürger”, prompting the government to take action to try to limit, or at least mitigate, their presence and influence. Later articles highlighted different aspects of the city government’s efforts to do so, including banning further immigration to districts that already had “too many” foreign residents and encouraging naturalization for foreigners who continued to live in the country.⁹⁷ Such efforts were designed ostensibly to serve two purposes. First, as *Innensenator* Heinrich Lummer stated in a 1982 *Rheinische Post* article, “Berlin must stay German.” If a German wakes up one morning in Kreuzberg, walks out of his apartment and feels more like he is in Anatolia than his own *Heimat*, it creates tension, the *Innensenator* argued. These articles in general, and Lummer’s statement in particular, reflect the tone of conservative politics at the time regarding West Germany’s growing

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ For examples, see Annegret Schröder, “Ausländerproblem: Berlin ist viertgrößte Türkenstadt der Welt,” *Handelsblatt*, 30 November 1981, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009; Heinz Kühn, “Wenn wir erst einmal die Türken los sind...”, *Vorwärts*, 1 April 1982, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009; Liselotte Müller, “Türken von Berlin wollen keine Deutschen werden,” *Hannoversche Allgemeine*, 10 July 1982, BPA accessed 7 April 2009.

diversity, emphasizing the necessity of maintaining a distinct German culture or character. For this reason, as well as for the geopolitical significance of Berlin for German history and unity, it was critical that Berlin remain “German.”⁹⁸

For West Berlin and other German cities, in order to stay “German” it was essential that immigrants become “German.” This emerged in the media as the second goal of governmental actions concerning the city’s foreign population. If too many foreigners concentrated in a particular district, it was argued, it would become increasingly difficult for them to “integrate” into German society. It would create a “cultural distance” between German “natives” and the new arrivals, as well as facilitate the growth of ethnic enclaves in German cities.⁹⁹ While references to emerging ethnic “ghettos” suggest a dark connection to the Jewish ghettos of the Nazi past, politicians, journalists and scholars seemed more concerned about the potential for the development of U.S.-style poverty-stricken, ethnic neighborhoods in German cities. At this point, two separate conversations in West German political discourse merged in the press: challenges to the successful integration (still relatively undefined) of foreign residents and the persistently poor living conditions of lower-class populations in cities. While *Sanierung* programs had already highlighted that foreign families often lived in sub-standard conditions¹⁰⁰, now the national press connected those living conditions with foreign residents’ ability to integrate into both their immediate

⁹⁸ Dieter Stadach, “‘Berlin muß deutsch bleiben,’” *Rheinische Post*, 14 August 1982, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009.

⁹⁹ “Viele Berliner Türken haben Heimweh,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 18 May 1983, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009.

¹⁰⁰ See “Sanierungsskandal im Wedding: Sparstrasse [sic] 24 droht Zwangsräumung,” *die tageszeitung*, 9 February 1983, Presse Inhalte: Sozial—Spi W, MMA; “Sparrstrasse 24: Mietern droht Zwangsräumung”, *Berliner Morgenpost*, 10 February 1982, Presse Inhalte: Sozial—Spi W, MMA.

surroundings and German society.¹⁰¹ The importance of immigrants' everyday experiences in the home and neighborhood assumed a central role in the debate over integration.

In Sprengekiez, however, the experience of the *Sanierung* opened up an intercultural space for German and Turkish residents to work together toward a common goal. Housing in working-class neighborhoods throughout the city, but especially in the districts of Wedding and Kreuzberg, had become run-down through a combination of war damage, neglect, and general wear-and-tear, a situation the city began to address through large- and small-scale *Sanierung* programs beginning in the 1950s and 1960s. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, the city's attention had reached Sprengekiez, and, while the trend of *Kahlschlagsanierung* (complete demolition and construction) had given way to smaller scale projects, the initial plans called for the complete demolition of multiple tenanted apartment buildings, including several around Sparrplatz.

Hans Wolfermann, who had at this point been living on Sparrplatz for over a decade, found out about the city's plans for the demolition of his apartment through a friend at the *Bausenat*. Wolfermann's mother, who owned the building, had applied for funds to upgrade the windows in her building. When the application reached the friend's desk, his supervisors approved the renovation for the front building but not for the *Hinterhaus*, which was "not to be maintained in the long run." The friend passed this information on to Wolfermann, who wrote a letter to the city requesting further information, but received no answer. And then suddenly, Wolfermann remembers, there was preparation for the *Sanierung*.¹⁰² Wolfermann, on staff at a local university and active in the anti-nuclear power movement, was highly

¹⁰¹ "Viele Berliner Türken haben Heimweh," SZ, 18.5.83; "Beteiligungsmodelle können den Ausweg weisen," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 17 July 1985, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009.

¹⁰² Wolfermann, 18.

dissatisfied with both the city's intentions for his neighborhood and their handling of the matter, and began to meet with tenants of his building, who decided collectively to challenge the city's plans. The population in Sprengekier, and particularly around Sparrplatz, had been undergoing significant structural changes in terms of age and ethnic-makeup. Younger German families had been moving out of the neighborhood for years. In their place, German college students and Turkish *Gastarbeiter* had moved in, attracted by the low rents and neighborhood amenities. A number of the German students living in Sparrstrasse 21 formed a *Wohnhausgemeinschaft* (tenants' cooperative), working together to improve the condition of their common home. When the city's *Sanierung* plans threatened to displace them, they joined Wolfermann's effort.

While the campaign against *Sanierung* in Kreuzberg was characterized by public demonstrations and house occupation, the residents of Sprengekier opted for a less dramatic approach. The group of resident activists, called the *Mieter-Initiative-Sparrplatz* (Tenants' Initiative), wrote letters to city officials, politicians, and local media. They held information sessions for their neighbors, and met with representatives from the various offices involved in the *Sanierung*. Their agitation and refusal to quietly accept the city's plans prompted the creation of a new office to act as liaison between the residents and the city in matters regarding the social implications of local infrastructure: the *Büro für stadtteilnahe Sozialplanung* (BfsS). Though the BfsS was a branch of the city government, from its inception its workers saw themselves as advocates for the neighborhood's residents, and they met with the local activists to find a solution that would address the neighborhood's needs and concerns.

The inclusion and participation of Sprengelkiez's Turkish residents was a critical aspect of activities of the both the Mieter-Initiative and the BfsS. "We were always open to the Turks [...] Germans, Turks, we only spoke of residents," said Wolfermann. "Yes, we wanted to achieve a better situation for the residents [...], we couldn't care less, which nationality they were."¹⁰³ While Wolfermann remembers little friction or suspicion between the two groups, Zafer Turan, then the BfsS representative, felt it took time to establish trust with the Turkish residents. When he showed up as a Turkish-speaking representative of the BfsS to talk with them about an alternate plan for the *Sanierung*, Turan recalled, it took time for the Turkish residents to move past their skepticism.¹⁰⁴ Flyers announcing community meetings and containing updates related to the *Sanierung* were published in German and Turkish, including one that invited all those interested to attend the monthly meetings held at Wolfermann's apartment.¹⁰⁵

The importance of Turkish residents' participation was not merely symbolic; by the early 1980s, first generation Turkish immigrants and their children comprised a significant segment of Sprengelkiez's population. As residents of apartment buildings around Sparrplatz, Turks were disproportionately affected by the city's plans for renovation. Part of these plans included eviction from those buildings slated for demolition, a situation highlighted in local press coverage regarding the *Sanierung*.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, some saw the city's plans for district-wide *Sanierung* as part of an effort by politicians to diminish the number of

¹⁰³ Wolfermann, 18.

¹⁰⁴ Zafer Turan (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 11 October 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

¹⁰⁵ Mieter-Initiative-Sparrplatz, "Stadterneuerung: Untersuchungsbereich Sparrplatz," Der Senator für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, April 1981, Presse Inhalte: Sozial—Spi W, MMA.

¹⁰⁶ See "Sanierungsskandal im Wedding," *taz*, 9 February 1983; "Sparrstrasse 24", *Berliner Morgenpost*, 10 February 1982.

foreigners living in Wedding, whom they assumed would be easy to evict from their apartments in neighborhoods planned for demolition and reconstruction.¹⁰⁷ The BfsS, however, saw resident-supported renovation and modernization as a way to promote the breakdown of segregation in the neighborhood, specifically separation based on age and nationality.¹⁰⁸ Eventually, the city, the BfsS, and the residents of Sparrplatz came to a satisfactory compromise: in general, the *Vorderhäuser* (front building) and *Seitenflügel* (side wings) would be renovated, including the modernization of plumbing, while the second *Hinterhäuser*, which were in poor condition and received little natural light, would be demolished.¹⁰⁹ In addition, the community organization and the BfsS continued to work on developing the neighborhood to meet the needs of its residents, such as improving the playground and social spaces on Sparrplatz itself.

While the community's response to the *Sanierung* opened up an intercultural space and brought the neighborhood together with a common purpose, did it have lasting effects? When posed with this question, Wolfermann first answered in the affirmative. "In the beginning, yes. And it exists still. I'm still greeted by a few." Of course, he added, some have moved away and back to Turkey, but he had visited an old neighbor there when taking trips down south. Later in the interview, Wolfermann amended that their collective action did not result in strong individual relationships between German and Turkish residents, but set the stage for other neighborhood-wide efforts, such as women's breakfasts in the

¹⁰⁷ Turan, 11 October 1993.

¹⁰⁸ Büro für stadtteilnahe Sozialplanung, "Vorbereitende Untersuchungen Berlin-Wedding: Untersuchungsabschnitt C, Neue Hochstraße—Sparrplatz" (West Berlin: Der Senator für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, 1983), 71.

¹⁰⁹ Günükutlu.

community center.¹¹⁰ Zafer Turan and Engin Günükutlu each supported this assessment, citing the community festivals as evidence of the results of the campaign against *Sanierung*.¹¹¹ Outside of the circle of community leadership, however, memory of the *Sanierung* and the neighborhood's collective action against it is dim, if present. First generation Turkish residents interviewed a decade later who were not directly involved did not mention those events at all, and the second generation exhibited no memory of them. The intercultural space opened by the *Sanierung*, then, seemed to have lasting effect only in setting the stage for community-based activism that promoted the formation of new public spaces of interaction, and generally did not foster cross-cultural friendships directly.

While the second generation had little involvement in or memory of the *Sanierung*, the neighborhood provided the setting for a host of other spaces that allowed Turkish-German children and youth to forge intercultural relationships. These spaces, both informal and structured, brought local children from a range of nationalities into social interaction with each other and enabled Turkish-German children to gain skills and support that promoted their settlement into the neighborhood. Spaces for play were among the first informal intercultural spaces to open up for the second generation. Initially, children often created spaces for play in the *Hinterhöfe* (courtyards) of their apartment buildings, as their parents wanted them to stay close to home.¹¹² In the common space of the *Hinterhöfe*, as well as other neighborhood locations, the second generation came into contact with other

¹¹⁰ Wolfermann, 21, 23.

¹¹¹ Turan; Günükutlu.

¹¹² Yılmaz, 3.

children in their building, sometimes forging friendships that eased their transitions to school.¹¹³

For those who lived near or on Sparrplatz, the square also provided for the formation of friendships through informal play. The playground, which evolved and grew over the years due to residents' advocacy and activities, now boasts a full complement of swings, slides, teeter-totters and monkey bars. Much of the square is shaded by trees in the summer, and benches around the playground and throughout the square give parents a place to rest while keeping an eye on their children. Some of the later renovations to the park added features aimed at serving the neighborhood's middle and high school-aged youth, including ping pong tables and a fenced area for soccer. Younger children, though, seem to have benefitted most from the social spaces that the Sparrplatz park hosted.¹¹⁴

Turkish children were not only able to meet their neighbors and have the opportunity to make new friends; they also learned and practiced their German language skills. In some cases, informal social spaces in the neighborhood, such as the park at Sparrplatz, provided the second generation with a better setting to learn German than their schools did. Elif, who was in all-Turkish classes for her six years in primary school, saw the multicultural spaces of play on Sparrplatz as an opportunity to improve her German language skills in a way she felt she could not do at school. On Sparrplatz, she recounted, she had Spanish, Greek, Yugoslavian, and German friends, and she made a concerted effort to spend time with them, rather than other Turks, so she would be forced to speak in German.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Timur.

¹¹⁴ Emre and Erkan.

¹¹⁵ Elif (pseudonym), interview and transcription by Ursula Trüper, 11 December 1992, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA, 1.

These informal neighborhood spaces also nourished friendships that started in the context of the school, and exposed Turkish-German children to new experiences, lifestyles, and expectations. When Lale spent time with her German friends outside of school, they would wander around the neighborhood, chat with each other, perhaps enjoy some ice cream. Socializing with her German friends in the informal atmosphere of the neighborhood gave Lale a sense of how different parental and community expectations influenced these girls' daily lives. She felt that her German friends were "more free" than she was, based on how they could use the unstructured neighborhood spaces and the relationships they were allowed to pursue within them.¹¹⁶ Though there is little evidence of the second generation visiting their German friends at home, when such visits did occur, Turkish-German children and youth could learn more about the daily lives of their German friends, including new types of foods, family dynamics, and holiday celebrations.¹¹⁷

In addition to the various informal spaces the second generation created within the neighborhood, they also utilized more structured forums that German community organizers instituted with the specific goal of providing social, educational, and intercultural spaces for local children and youth. These formal spaces developed in Sprengelkiez in the 1980s with the opening of two such sites: the Sparrladen community center and the Ostergemeinde (Oster Church) youth group. The story of the Sparrladen begins with Katrin Mayer, a German social worker and the eventual founder of the community center. In the mid 1970s, Mayer worked for a government agency that focused on providing assistance to immigrant women and children in abusive situations. She became increasingly dissatisfied with the

¹¹⁶ Lale, 3-4.

¹¹⁷ Fischer, 5.

short-term nature of the solutions her agency implemented, and at the same time was shocked by the statistic that half of all children in the city's *Sonderschule*¹¹⁸ were Turkish. Mayer could not believe that all those children were mentally handicapped, and wanted to understand why they were sent to such schools in the first place. As she explored the matter further, she discovered that many Turkish families did not send their children to Kindergarten, which could cost fifty Deutsche marks (DM) per child, and that they generally lived in areas of the city populated predominantly by other Turks. In addition, there were only two bi-lingual classes in West Berlin by 1982, one in Schöneberg and another in Kreuzberg. Turkish children, she found, were unable to understand their lessons when they entered the first grade, so they would fail and be sent to the *Sonderschule*. The problem, Mayer concluded, "lay in the German language."¹¹⁹

The more Mayer learned, the angrier she became that no one was trying to solve this growing challenge. She resolved to act. Having located the source of the problem in language difficulties, Mayer decided the best course of action was to teach Turkish children (as they were from the largest immigrant group) the German language through play, which would give them a better chance to succeed once they entered school. Through a connection with the BfsS, she found a Turkish woman who was studying to be an *Erzieherin* (teacher or school aide) and was interested in partnering with Mayer.¹²⁰ With the help of the tenants' cooperative in Sparrstrasse 21, they began reaching out to Turkish parents in the neighborhood. First, they stuffed mailboxes with bilingual fliers explaining their project, and

¹¹⁸ *Sonderschule* are schools for mentally and physically handicapped children.

¹¹⁹ Katrin Mayer (pseudonym), co-founder of the Sparrladen, interview by Ursula Trüper, 6 July 1992, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

¹²⁰ Mayer did not mention the name of her first partner during her interview.

next they went from apartment to apartment, so the Turkish families could ask them questions about themselves, their plans, and their funding sources. By 1982, Mayer and her now two Turkish partners were playing with and teaching thirty to forty children on Sparrplatz and looking for a place to use during the winter months.¹²¹

In the next three years, the “Sparrladen,” as they came to call their community center, went through several changes in staff and location. With the exception of Mayer, the staff of the center turned over several times, and the center moved from a shared space with another community organization to their own location in a former apartment on Sparrplatz. Funding from the city enabled them to secure this site and hire a full-time *Erzieherin* and a social worker, as well as three to five assistants.¹²² By February 1985, Mayer, her co-founder Beate Hahn, and their co-workers were ready to declare the Sparrladen’s official opening, which they and the children celebrated with a large party.

Mayer and Hahn’s plan for the Sparrladen was to create a culturally mixed environment in which children with immigrant backgrounds would gain the language and social skills they needed to succeed both in school and in German society. To this end, the center’s workers put together set groups from waiting lists, including a group for young children just entering the first grade, another for children in primary school, and a *Mädchengruppe* for young women in secondary school. In addition, they started two groups for local women: one for young German mothers to help them obtain their diplomas, and another for Turkish women, aimed at bringing them out of the isolation of the home and into contact with other women. The center also hosted a local *Volkshochschule* class for illiterate

¹²¹ Mayer.

¹²² Hahn.

women. Mayer made an effort to have an equal number of Turkish and German assistants, but at the Sparrladen all were expected to speak German. If someone spoke Turkish (and was caught), they had to pay for the mistake by putting a penny in a jar. Finally, Mayer and her co-workers strove to achieve a balance between parental trust, which included walking the girls home if activities ended after dark and not allowing men into Sparrladen, and transparency to the community, symbolized by the center's large windows.¹²³

The success of Sparrladen, based on Mayer's original goals, was mixed. At first, children with both German and immigrant backgrounds took advantage of the programs and activities offered at the Sparrladen. However, the Turkish parents, Hahn explained, began to consider Sparrladen "their center," and though the workers tried to counter this mindset¹²⁴, according to Mayer, the Turkish children pushed out the German children who were coming to the center.¹²⁵ After awhile the German children stopped coming to the community center, and it became, as Hahn phrased it, a "rein-türkisch" (purely Turkish) establishment. Attempts to bring together the two women's groups were unsuccessful¹²⁶, and Turkish began to mingle with the German being spoken during the center's daily activities.¹²⁷

Despite these deviations from the original plan, Mayer felt fairly satisfied with the work being accomplished at the Sparrladen, pointing to positive feedback during Parents' Evenings as evidence of the center's role in helping immigrant children learn German.¹²⁸

¹²³ Hahn.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Mayer.

¹²⁶ Hahn.

¹²⁷ Former Sparrladen assistant, conversation with author, 10 July 2009, Berlin, Germany.

¹²⁸ Mayer.

The workers succeeded in gaining the trust of many Turkish parents in the neighborhood, who sent their children to Sparrladen and would also occasionally volunteer to assist the center's workers with particular activities. For young people from the neighborhood, including Timur, Sanem, and Lale, Sparrladen constituted an easily accessible place in their everyday landscape where they could meet with friends, improve their German, and participate in fun activities—all of which deepened their sense of belonging to the neighborhood in which the center was located. In addition, for young women, the community center was a structured social space free of the negative connotations of the more informal spaces they inhabited in the neighborhood that might draw the unwanted attention of the Turkish community's social control. One of the things Sparrladen failed to provide, however, was a structured space for young men to socialize and participate in organized activities. Mayer regretted this lack, and considered opening a music center for young men, but did not out of concern over the possibility of violence.¹²⁹

While Turkish boys past primary school did not have structured spaces available to them at the Sparrladen, another local site—the Oster Church— began in the mid and late 1980s to make efforts to include the neighborhood's Turkish youth, boys and girls, in their activities. When Hans-Peter Meyendorf was hired by the Protestant church in 1985 to take over direction of youth activities, he and a core group of church youth decided that their recreational activities should be open to the entire community, including Turkish youth. “We couldn't do integration,” Meyendorf explained; that was not his job or his goal. Instead, he and the youth group wanted to bring people in the neighborhood together for fun and community, and they started by inviting their Turkish friends and acquaintances, some of

¹²⁹ Mayer.

whom they had known since Kindergarten, to a variety of small activities and larger events.¹³⁰

One of the exciting, if short-lived, events planned by Meyendorf and the youth group was a series of open parties that took place in the church's basement. Supported by Meyendorf and a few older teenagers from the church, the youth group planned the evening, picked out the music, decided on snacks and drinks, and invited their friends from the neighborhood. In the beginning, the open parties were a success; a mix of local youth showed up, danced, socialized, snacked, and were sent off shortly before ten o'clock by the same "Rausgeschmissen" (throwing-out) song. Unfortunately, after a few weeks "tourists"—Meyendorf's word for Turkish youth from outside the neighborhood—arrived and began causing trouble. Meyendorf and the older youth volunteers had to start collecting weapons at the door and having conversations with the troublemakers about appropriate behavior. Then, one week, someone threw a tear gas canister through the basement window into the room where the party was being held. When you throw tear gas at a demonstration, Meyendorf pointed out, at least you're in the open air and the gas can dissipate quickly. But their parties were in a basement, a small, confined space. Another time, someone else used a fire extinguisher to the same effect. The "Party-Tourism" was becoming dangerous, and Meyendorf and the youth group discontinued the open parties.

While the Oster Church's parties may not have enjoyed a long run, they did provide a structured space in which the neighborhood's Turkish youth could socialize informally with the members of the youth group. They were also able to learn about the youth group's smaller-scale activities, and several Turkish-German youth became regular participants in the

¹³⁰ Hans-Peter Meyendorf, interview by author, 20 July 2009, digital recording, Berlin, Germany.

group. It is important to note that the small group's activities were not religiously based. "Simply a group of friends," Meyendorf clarified. "It's not always about the big book." This group met regularly for a variety of free-time activities, including playing soccer in nearby Rehberge Park, listening to music, playing cards, making videos, and taking weekend trips. After the Wall fell, the weekend trips included tours throughout Berlin and into the surrounding countryside, including a house the pastor owned on the former border with East Germany. Occasionally, the youth group took trips out of the country, though they stayed within Europe to avoid trouble with visas. The makeup of the group was consistent, with older members rotating out and younger people coming in over the years, and Meyendorf felt they got to know each other fairly well in the course of their time and activities together.¹³¹

While the core group of participants may have gotten along well together, the same could not always be said of the rest of those who took advantage of the space and activities the church offered in the afternoons. In the early 1990s, as a part of a city-wide study of how young Berliners dealt with cultural differences, journalist Eberhard Seidel-Pielen interviewed three Germans who regularly met in the Oster church's *Jugendkeller* (basement) with other neighborhood youth.¹³² Though Seidel-Pielen describes the Oster church's *Jugendkeller* as "a place where exclusion will not be allowed," the youths' answers reveal an internal self-segregation of German and Turkish participants. When Seidel-Pielen arrived for the interview, he found the Turkish youth occupying the main front room and his German interview subjects in a small office in the back.

¹³¹ Meyendorf, 20 July 2009.

¹³² Eberhard Seidel-Pielen and Klaus Farin, *Der Gewalt die Stirn bieten: Berliner Jugendliche auf der Suche nach neuen Normen und Umgangsformen im kulturübergreifenden Milieu*. *Miteinander Leben in Berlin* (Berlin: Ausländerbeauftragte des Senats, 1992).

In response to his question about whether all the different groups of people who use the *Jugendkeller* got along well together, the girl and two boys (ages 12, 14, and 15 respectively) were unanimous in their negation. Sandra explained that they occupied different rooms because “they [the Turkish youth] come here, act all cool and think everything belongs to them. The Turkish youth are older,” she went on, “they talk mostly about us, but always only in Turkish, hardly ever in German.” She knew the Turkish youth talked about them, she said, because a Yugoslavian friend of hers who understood Turkish would tell her what they were saying.¹³³ Oliver and Peter were more concerned with being beaten up, mentioning repeatedly that the Turkish youth (whom Meyendorf clarified later in the interview were chiefly young men) responded to situations that annoyed them with threats of violence.¹³⁴ To avoid confrontation, they would leave the front room when the older Turkish youth showed up. However, even as they occupied separate social spaces within a common youth center, the interviewees were not ready to say the Turkish youth did not belong in the site itself. If Turks were excluded, Sandra reasoned, they would just sit outside on the street, and if Germans were excluded they would do the same. The *Jugendkeller* “should be for everyone,” she concluded.¹³⁵

When Meyendorf entered the discussion toward the end of the interview, he complicated the “us” versus “them” dichotomy the youth had set up. Meyendorf pointed out that they had forgotten about a couple of youth that they likely did not think of as foreigners anymore, who interacted with them as a matter of course and participated in common

¹³³ Seidel-Pielen and Farin, 29.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 29-30.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 30.

activities. “The closer the contact one has,” Meyendorf explained, “the less one sees another person as a foreigner,” but rather as a friend. At the same time, he added that the interviewees had also left out the fact that there were a couple of German youth who socialized with the Turks in the front room.¹³⁶ Perhaps the two examples Meyendorf highlighted were the beginnings of a common, intercultural social space being created in the *Jugendkeller*. Just a year later when Seidel-Pielen returned to conduct a follow-up interview with the same three German youth, they reported that the situation had markedly improved even from the previous year.¹³⁷

The second generation’s use of and experiences in structured intercultural spaces reveals several aspects of their settlement into the neighborhood. First, as within the home and informal social spaces, gender played an important role in the extent to which Turkish-Germans could participate in and belong to intercultural spaces. For young women, the Sparrladen, whose workers made direct efforts to connect with their parents and which provided an all-female space, constituted a place where they were able to socialize with friends, as well as benefit from and enjoy the center’s activities, without feeling anxious about how their participation would be perceived. Community workers at the Sparrladen, however, did not offer activities for young men, despite their realization that such spaces were sorely needed, because of the men’s reputation for violence. The *Jugendkeller*, however, deliberately opened its doors to young Turkish-German men, choosing to engage with them and deal with whatever issues arose.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 32.

¹³⁷ Eberhard Seidel-Pielen, *Unsere Türken: Annäherung an ein gespaltenes Verhältnis* (Berlin: Espress/Elf. Press, 1995), 127.

Second, Turkish-German participation in both informal and structured intercultural spaces illustrates their willingness, and sometimes eagerness, to take part in activities outside of the Turkish community, or *Parallelgesellschaft*. Whether motivated by a desire to improve their German-language skills, to enjoy new experiences, or just to have fun, the second generation took advantage of those opportunities to an extent that sometimes overwhelmed the German organizers and participants. Finally, in forging spaces of belonging within those sites, Turkish-Germans sometimes made themselves so “at home,” that they alienated other German participants in those sites. Particularly in the more structured sites, like the Sparrladen and *Jugendkeller*, some of the German children felt that the Turks were taking over and changing the site into a “Turkish” space. This sentiment echoes that of their parents’ in regard to the proliferation of Turkish social spaces in the neighborhood, and contributed to further antipathy among neighborhood residents, despite the bridges being formed and the blurring of lines between the two communities.

Conclusion

Despite their reputation as central to Germany’s Turkish *Parallelgesellschaft*, this examination of the home and neighborhood shows that these sites have had a more nuanced effect on the settlement and sense of belonging of Turkish immigrants and their children in German neighborhoods and society. Perhaps one of the most overarching characteristics of these sites in the lives of the Turkish-German community is the home and neighborhood as a space of contradiction. On one hand, the first and second generations created and experienced the home and neighborhood as a space of comfort and community. The security and opportunities that the home contained enabled the first generation, to an extent, to

construct personal spaces through which they could forge and experience a deeper sense of belonging. For the second generation, the familial and social spaces within the home could offer support, education, and relationships that prepared them for life outside its walls. Similarly, the neighborhood provided social and intercultural spaces that brought residents together and helped Turkish immigrants and their children forge a stronger sense of community. For the first generation, social spaces in the neighborhood gave them the opportunity to relax and enjoy themselves in a place unconnected to the responsibilities of the home (Figure 7).¹³⁸ The second generation constructed similar spaces of belonging, but, more so than their parents, they used these spaces to forge relationships with residents of other nationalities, making connections and gaining skills that would help them succeed later on.

Figure 7. Teahouse on Sparrplatz



At the same time, both the first and second generations experienced the home and neighborhood as sites of conflict and struggle. This conflict was generally the result of two distinct, yet sometimes intertwined sources: gendered expectations of behavior and intercultural struggle over shared spaces. Women and girls, especially, experienced restrictions on their personal freedom and social opportunities based on what their families and the neighborhood's Turkish community considered appropriate behavior for their gender. Young women in particular were subjected to social control that limited their social spaces in the neighborhood. Yet gendered expectations did not affect only women; the same social control network that monitored young women's activities also judged their fathers'

¹³⁸ Teahouse on Sparrplatz, photography by author, Spring 2009, Berlin, Germany.

reputations based on those activities. In addition, as one sees in the example of the Sparrladen, German preconceptions about young Turkish German men led them to be excluded from spaces and opportunities available to young women and children in the neighborhood.

This last point illustrates the other main source of conflict in the neighborhood: friction between German and Turkish or Turkish-German residents. While examples of both large- and small-scale intercultural cooperation in Sprengelkiez exist, the spaces of belonging that the growing Turkish-German community constructed in the neighborhood were not unequivocally positive. Not only did Turkish neighbors sometimes encroach on the social spaces young Turkish-German women were trying to build, but some German residents also felt that these “ausländische Mitbürger” were “taking over” common spaces and pushing out familiar landmarks of the German neighborhood. For some, though not all, of the spaces constructed by the Turkish-German community, it was more a connection to a physical place rather than an abstract society that helped them to feel a sense of belonging—a situation that frustrated the second generation just as it did German neighbors.

As the number of immigrants in Sprengelkiez increased, so did the feeling among some German residents that the root of neighborhood’s problems was its “foreign” population. The discourse of immigrants as a problem extended from the neighborhood into local schools, where the second generation came into contact with new opportunities for, and challenges to, their sense of belonging.

CHAPTER 3

LEARNING TO BELONG: THE SECOND GENERATION AT SCHOOL

Perhaps even more than the workplace and neighborhood, the school has been a site charged with expectations, symbolic importance, and practical challenges in connection to the growth and belonging of the Turkish community in German society. When Turkish families reunited with their relatives working in the Federal Republic and settled into residential neighborhoods, Turkish children and youth began attending German elementary and secondary schools. This development presented both political and pedagogical issues for West German governmental and educational authorities as they grappled with the question of whether to prepare these children for a life in West Germany or a return to their *Heimatland*. While the answers to this question ranged across the spectrum according to the political make-up of the individual *Länder*, the federal government, the media, and the public largely agreed that the school constituted the most important site for promoting the successful integration of foreign children into German society.

Widespread agreement on the significance of the school for *Gastarbeiterkinder*, however, did not preclude controversy. As with the example of the neighborhood, for many German parents and teachers, the presence of foreign children in their local schools seemed sudden, overwhelming, and unwelcome. The same newspaper articles that reported on the growing numbers of foreign residents in German cities often highlighted the most extreme examples of schools with high percentages of *Ausländerschüler*, using words like

“Hochburg” and “Überflutung” to describe the situation.¹ This overwhelming of German classrooms, parents feared, would diminish the quality of their own children’s education, as teachers’ attention would be taken up by students unable to understand the lessons.² Such concerns and reports merged to form a narrative that became dominant in the discourse about the education of “foreign” children: *Migrantenkinder* had over-run German schools, creating conditions that made it impossible for the foreign children to follow the instruction and thereby lessening the quality of education for German students. This narrative continues to thrive in political debates and public discussions today, illustrated by the growing tendency of some German parents to send their children to schools in districts with smaller populations of “foreign” residents.³

Much of the academic scholarship regarding the second generation and school has examined similar themes to those at play within the dominant narrative: the influence of the politics of the guestworker program on educational policy and the practical challenges of and for *Migrantenkinder* in German schools. While some studies presented a relatively positive tone about the potential of the school as a site of integration for *Gastarbeiterkinder*,⁴ most

¹ “Hochburg” means stronghold, and “Überflutung” refers to a flood, inundation or overflow. For examples, see Hans Haibach, “Die Grenzen der Integrationskraft Berlins,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 November 1981, Bundespresseamt Archiv (BPA), Berlin, Germany, accessed 7 April 2009; Annegret Schröder, “Ausländerproblem: Berlin ist viertgrößte Türkenstadt der Welt,” *Handelsblatt*, 30 November 1981, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009; Heinz Kühn, “Wenn wir erst einmal die Türken los sind...,” *Vorwärts*, 1 April 1982, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009; Liselotte Müller, “Türken von Berlin wollen keine Deutschen werden,” *Hannoversche Allgemeine*, 10 July 1982, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009.

² Such feelings came up in my own interviews as well. See Margaret Fischer (pseudonym), interview by author, 20 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany; Andreas and Christine Zimmermann, interview by author, 18 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany.

³ See, for example, “Oma mit guter Adresse,” *Der Spiegel*, 26 October 1998, p. 94-97.

⁴ Herbert R. Koch, *Gastarbeiterkinder in deutschen Schulen* (Königswinter am Rhein: Verlag für Sprachmethodik, 1970). Koch was drawing on his experiences and the data he collected as a school inspector in Düsseldorf.

scholars saw the persistent adherence to the idea of the rotation principle (if not the actual practice) as detrimental to the quality of the education of foreign students.⁵ A 1978 study by sociologist Ray Rist, while addressing a variety of factors in the incorporation of foreigners into German society, focuses on the role of education in particular. Rist examines how the German school system in general, and the approaches of two specific *Länder*, Berlin and Bavaria, presented *Gastarbeiterkinder* with a series of barriers that kept from them achieving integration through education and worked against Germany becoming a “more ethnically pluralistic society.”⁶

Political scientist Joyce Mushaben agrees with Rist’s assessment of the Turkish community experiencing a degree of economic but not social integration. In her 1985 study, she highlights challenges to the education of the second generation—including language difficulties and the lack of preschool education for Turkish children—as a key element of continued social isolation.⁷ For Ursula Boos-Nünning and Manfred Hohmann, this social and cultural isolation of migrant children, which they perceived to be increasing, was attributable to both the decrease in funding for their education as well as the sustained focus on these children as “special problems” for the school system.⁸ Later studies have continued to investigate the school as an agent of integration, comparing the educational achievements

⁵ The rotation principle refers to the aspect of the *Gastarbeiterprogramm* that stipulated migrant laborers would serve in the Federal Republic for a limited time and then return to their country of origin, to be replaced by new *Gastarbeiter*.

⁶ Ray C. Rist, *Guestworkers in Germany: The Prospects for Pluralism* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), 205.

⁷ Joyce Marie Mushaben, “A Crisis of Culture: Isolation and Integration among Turkish Guestworkers in the German Federal Republic,” in *Turkish Workers in Europe: An Interdisciplinary Study*, eds. İlhan Başgöz and Norman Furniss (Bloomington: Indiana University Turkish Studies, 1985), 125-150.

⁸ Ursula Boos-Nünning and Manfred Hohmann, “The Educational Situation of Migrant Workers’ Children in the Federal Republic of Germany,” in *Different Cultures, Same School: Ethnic Minority Children in Europe*, ed. Lotty van den Berg-Eldering and Jo Klopogge (Berwyn, Pa: Swets North America, 1989), 55.

of German and non-German students as a way to measure the successful incorporation of the latter. Whether focusing on health, social conditions, and family socialization⁹ or the structural factors of the German school system and labor market,¹⁰ scholars have generally concluded that students with migrant backgrounds are under-performing in comparison to their German peers. Their relatively poor performance in school, researchers have argued, whether due to language difficulties, educational policies, or discrimination, has put their integration into German society at risk.

Even as the discourse around the school, education, and “Überflutung” has brought to the fore real challenges to the German educational system and its students, it obscures the complex interactions between teachers, students, administrators, and parents. At the same time, it reduces the nuanced reciprocal influences between students and school to the label of a “problem.” While numerous examples exist of low achievement and classrooms with high percentages of non-German students, some of which will be examined in this chapter, there is also a multitude of stories illustrating mutual benefit between students and school, and also of students with migrant backgrounds achieving some degree of academic success. The following analysis shows how these seemingly contradictory evaluations can be reconciled.

In this chapter, I approach this much-discussed site—the school—as offering multiple spaces that the second generation confronted, created, and experienced. The school brought the second generation into direct contact with other school-aged children, as well as German authority figures and institutions. In this place, the second generation was exposed to, both

⁹ M. Alamdar-Niemann, D. Bergs-Winkels, and H. Merkens, “Educational Conditions of Turkish Migrant Children in German Schools,” 22, no. 2 (June 1991), 154-161.

¹⁰ Susanne Worbs, “The Second Generation in Germany: Between School and Labor Market,” *International Migration Review* 37, no. 4 (Winter 2003), 1011-1038.

through formal education and informal socialization, what it meant to fit into German society. At the same time, while not completely free of parental influence, the school was apart from parents' direct oversight and thus provided the second generation with a measure of independence that allowed them more flexibility in creating their own spaces of belonging. How did second generation children adapt themselves to this place? How did their teachers and the institution itself react to and change because of their presence? To what extent did their experiences at school make the second generation feel more (or less) at home?

To address these questions, this chapter analyzes the experiences of Turkish-German students in *Grund*-(primary), *Ober*-(secondary), *Berufs*-(vocational) and *Volkshochschule* (post-secondary school), taking into account both formal instruction and informal socialization.¹¹ I first examine the spaces the second generation experienced within the *Grund*-, *Ober*-, and *Berufsschule*, the levels of compulsory schooling, before turning my attention to the role of the *Volkshochschule*¹² in their construction of belonging. By exploring the reciprocal influences between the second generation and their schools, this chapter demonstrates how the school served simultaneously as a site of inclusion and exclusion, furthering the second generation's sense of conflicted belonging.

¹¹ The distinction between formal instruction and informal socialization is not always a neat one. As later examples will show, informal socialization occurred in formal classroom settings, while formal instruction took place in social groups and theater clubs. As such, this chapter discusses the two forms of education, but is not organized along those, at times, blurry lines.

¹² The *Volkshochschule* is similar to the American community college, in that it is not obligatory and offers a variety of classes to the community.

Laying the Foundation: The *Grund-*, *Ober-*, and *Berufsschule*

A Site of Struggle and Conflict

The debate over the role and responsibilities of school in the lives of children with migrant backgrounds began years before Turkish students started filling the seats in German classrooms. In the early- to mid-1960s, the rapid growth in the numbers of *Gastarbeiterkinder* in schools across the country, combined with debates about the developing European Community and reform movements regarding the German educational system, prompted politicians at the federal level to take an active interest in educational policy. Initially, the majority of politicians, as well as the Standing Conference of the Ministers for Education and Cultural Affairs,¹³ held to the idea of the rotation principle and concluded that if *Gastarbeiterkinder* were to be educated in German schools, they should be prepared to reintegrate into their country of origin. This perspective shifted in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the recognition that many *Gastarbeiter* were extending their stay and bringing their families to live with them in West Germany. Under the SPD-FDP coalition, the federal government adopted a dual strategy of encouraging the return of migrant workers to their countries of origin while promoting the integration of *Gastarbeiterkinder* into German society through education in the German school system.

In the years following the *Anwerbestopp* (recruitment halt), the significant growth and diversification of the immigrant population led politicians to increase their reliance on the German school system not only as the site of *Gastarbeiterkinder* integration but also as a tool to combat ghettoization of ethnic minorities and improve their position in the labor market. Economic downturn and increasing conservatism, however, shifted the discussion from the

¹³ The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs is a federal body that issues policies to the *Länder* regarding education, but does not have the power to enforce its suggestions.

integration of children with a migrant background to a questioning of the ability and desire of immigrants in general to integrate into German society. Such sentiments were especially popular within the CDU/CSU, which came to power in the *Bundestag* (federal parliament) in 1982 with Helmut Kohl at its head as chancellor. While the government continued to view the school as an important weapon to combat ghettoization and the growing unemployment levels of “foreigners,” the tenor of the debate—at least at the federal level—had grown more critical.¹⁴

A basic description of the German educational system is helpful when considering these political and policy debates and their implications. In general, children are required to attend *Grundschule* (primary school) for four to six years, depending the *Land*, after which time they continue on to one of four different types of *Oberschulen* (secondary schools) based on their academic ability and their parents’ wishes. The *Gymnasium* is the highest level of secondary schooling, prepares students to proceed on to university, and commences with a diploma called the *Abitur*. The intermediate-level secondary school is the *Realschule*, which educates students for lower-and mid-level white-collar and vocational occupations. The *Hauptschule*, the lowest level of secondary education, teaches the same subjects as the *Realschule* at a slower pace, offers vocational training, and ends with the *Hauptschulabschluss*. Finally, the *Gesamtschule*, a product of reform movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, combines the other three schools into one and thus offers a number of possible certificates of completion. Students coming from *Haupt*-, *Real*-, and *Gesamtschulen* who take part in a *Lehre* or *Ausbildung* (apprenticeship) must also be enrolled in a

¹⁴ For an in-depth study of the influence of political developments on the development of educational policy regarding *Gastarbeiterkinder*, see the forthcoming master’s thesis; Brittany Lehman, “Education and Immigration: Federal Debates and Policies in West Germany, 1963-1989” (Master’s Thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2010).

Berufsschule, where they learn skills for their occupation not taught on the job. Each level of German secondary schooling has its own tenure, certificate(s) of completion, and track to a particular type of occupation, with its corresponding place in the social strata. Thus, debates about the role of the school in the integration of *Gastarbeiterkinder* implied not only their participation in German society, but also what their place in that society would be.

While these debates were taking place at the federal level, the *Länder* were designing and implementing their own educational policies, resulting in a variety of approaches to the education of *Gastarbeiterkinder*. The strategy in Berlin to foreign student education soon became based on the premise that the second generation needed to be equipped to lead successful lives in Germany. Citing evidence that showed *Gastarbeiter* were staying, bringing in their families, and having children in growing numbers, school officials based their program on the goal of the quickest possible integration of foreign children into the German school system. Foreign students were placed in classes with German students and had additional

Figure 8. Children in Turkish language class, Berlin 1972



German and Turkish language instruction in smaller, separate classes (Figure 8).¹⁵ The program in Berlin also adhered to (or, at least, attempted to adhere to) a twenty percent cap of foreign students in each German classroom and, until the 1980s, left teaching of the children's native languages to the consulates and embassies of the sending countries, supplying those classes with facilities and maintenance.¹⁶ Berlin officials felt that the

¹⁵ Children in Turkish language class, Berlin 1972, from Martin Greve and Tülay Çınar, *Das Türkische Berlin. Miteinander Leben in Berlin* (Berlin: Die Ausländerbeauftragte des Senats, 1998), 44.

¹⁶ Rist, 226-228.

integration of foreign children into the school system was a necessary step towards their success in German society at large.

Despite the good intentions of Berlin school officials, leftist critics charged the program with seeking the “Germanization” of foreign children. The lack of incorporation of their foreign students’ languages and cultures ignored “an important pedagogical tool” and broke the connection between home and school. Also, the practical implementation of the twenty percent cap meant that those foreign students who exceeded the quota were educated in separate classes, entirely composed of other foreign students; for example, during the 1976–77 school year, half of all *Gastarbeiter* children in secondary vocational school were educated in a foreigner-only class. Finally, Berlin schools experienced high dropout rates among their foreign students. In 1976, the chief administrative official of education estimated that sixty percent of foreign students left before finishing their studies.¹⁷

Nationwide statistics concerning foreign students showed consistent overall growth in the school system, yet uneven representation in the different levels of education. Between 1970 and 1980, the number of foreign students in *Grund-* and *Hauptschule* increased five-fold. While this figure may reflect success at the lower levels of education, a look at the rates of increase in the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* are less encouraging. During the same ten years, the percent of foreign students in *Gymnasium* grew from one to two percent, and in the *Realschule* it rose from less than one percent to just over two.¹⁸ In 1979, twenty-two percent of all German children were students at a *Gymnasium*, compared to 0.0046 percent of all

¹⁷ Ibid., 228-232.

¹⁸ Sekretariat der Kultusministerkonferenz, *Statistische Veröffentlichungen der Kultusministerkonferenz: Ausländische Schüler in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1970 bis 1983* (Bonn: KMK, 1984), 43-83.

guestworker children.¹⁹ On the other end of the spectrum, the number of foreign students in the *Sonderschule* grew over six times as large during the 1970s.²⁰ Critics charged that foreign students with language difficulties were often sent to the *Sonderschule* despite having no learning disabilities or handicaps. In addition to the challenge of dealing with language difficulties, the dual strategy of integration and preparation for return did not serve the foreign children well in regards to education in the 1970s. Nor was it very successful in readying them for the job market once they left school. A 1979 questionnaire completed by *Gastarbeiter* parents revealed that forty-six percent of the young adults ages sixteen to twenty did not have a job or an apprenticeship position, and were not attending school.²¹

While such statistics depict generally poor performance of foreign students in West German schools, the personal narratives of Turkish-Germans reveal multiple and interrelated challenges that made the school a site of struggle. One of the first struggles the second generation faced was overcoming the language barrier. While some had the opportunity to learn German as children on the playground or from childcare providers, many others entered school with little to no knowledge of the language, as their parents spoke their native language with them at home. And for those who had attended school in Turkey, they also had to adjust to a different educational system. Such was the case for Hanife Kurtal: half of the school year passed before she began to understand what was going on around her. With the help of a parent volunteer, she improved her German well enough to take part more

¹⁹ Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Identity Crisis of Turkish Migrants: First and Second Generation," in *Turkish Workers in Europe: An Interdisciplinary Study*, eds. İlhan Başgöz and Norman Furniss (Bloomington: Indiana University Turkish Studies, 1985), 9.

²⁰ Sekretariat der Kultusministerkonferenz, *Ausländische Schüler in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 96.

²¹ Ulrich Herbert, *A History of Foreign Labor in Germany, 1880-1980: Seasonal Workers, Forced Laborers, Guest Worker* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 242.

actively in classroom activities, noticing as she did so that the lessons were very different from those she had in Turkey.²² Not being able to fully participate in class negatively affected the second generation's ability to learn their lessons, and often worked to isolate them from their fellow classmates. Lawyer Seyran Ateş recalled feeling estranged from her classmates, who showed no interest in involving her in their games. Unable to communicate with her teachers and the other children, she experienced her first year of school "as if behind a veil."²³

Being in one of the many *Ausländerklassen* mitigated the social isolation the second generation felt from their peers, but also hindered students' ability to learn German, despite the additional German-language classes given there. Deniz, a young woman born in Berlin to Turkish *Gastarbeiter*, recounted being in 'Turkish classes' all the way through *Grundschule* and into *Oberschule*. She and her classmates spoke in Turkish with each other, though their teacher was German.²⁴ Bilge Yılmaz had a similar experience. "At the time, we were guestworker kids," she reflected, comparing her generation with her children's, "we didn't have very good German, because all of us Turks were in one class."²⁵ Though some officials, including Berlin's *Schulsenatorin* Hanna-Renate Laurien (CDU), insisted that "reine Ausländerklassen" (pure foreigner classes) did not lead to isolation from German society, few of those interviewed mentioned having close friendships with Germans in their

²² Kemal Kurt and Erika Meyer, eds., *...weil wir Türken sind/ ...Türk olduğumuz için: Bilder und Texte von Türken/ Türklerin resim ve öyküleri* (Berlin: express-Edition, 1981), 46.

²³ Seyran Ateş, *Große Reise ins Feuer: Die Geschichte einer deutschen Türkin* (Berlin: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003), 56-57.

²⁴ Deniz (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 12 December 1992, transcription, "Die Leute vom Sparrplatz" Ausstellung (DLSA), Mitte Museum Archiv (MMA), Berlin, Germany, 1.

²⁵ Bilge Yılmaz (pseudonym), interview by author, 2 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 16.

schools.²⁶ Filiz Güler counted it as an advantage that, though she was in a “reine Ausländerklasse,” her best friend was Albanian, which forced them to speak in German with each other. If caught speaking Turkish during class, however, Güler (or whomever the offender was) had to put a penny in a jar as a symbolic punishment.²⁷

Even after second generation students knew German well enough to participate more fully in classroom activities and lessons, German as a subject often proved a persistent challenge. An examination of the *Abgangszeugnisse* (diplomas) from a Wedding secondary school in the mid- to late-1980s reveals a Turkish-German student body with diverse academic strengths and weaknesses. A significant minority—averaging about one-third over the course of six years—earned a “4” or worse in their German courses.²⁸ Lale, who attended another *Oberschule* in Wedding, lamented her continual struggle with German grammar, which started in primary school and continued to plague her in eighth grade. She liked geography and history, she told her German interviewer, but she hated German.²⁹ This struggle with language could also affect otherwise high-achieving students in the more advanced levels of the German school system. Filiz Güler, armed with ambition and a stack of report cards littered with 1s³⁰, proceeded on to *Gymnasium* with the official

²⁶ “Senatorin Laurien für reine Ausländerklassen: Deutsche Kinder dürfen nicht zur Minderheit werden,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, 13 August 1982, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009. Deniz K. mentioned making friends with a German girl who was in the classroom next to hers during her first year in *Oberschule*.

²⁷ Filiz Güler (pseudonym), interview by author, 27 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 1, 15.

²⁸ *Abgangszeugnisse*—Theodor Plievier Oberschule, academic years 1985/86 through 1990/91, accessed 23 April 2009, Theodor Plievier Oberschule (Hauptschule), Berlin, Germany.

²⁹ Lale (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 28 May 1992 and 4 June 1992, transcription, DLSA, MMA, 18-22.

³⁰ Grading in the German school system is done on a numbered scale, with “1” being the highest grade one can receive and “6” the lowest.

recommendation of her primary school. Once there, however, the academic challenge set her back on her heels. The subject matter was harder, the expectations higher, and in addition Güler felt that language made the *Gymnasium* a greater challenge to her than her German classmates:

But in the *Gymnasium* I noticed that it was just difficult, because of language barriers I'd say . . . somehow something was missing from the vocabulary, I noticed that in German. I would think, oh I want so much more, I want to express myself between and the essays, why aren't they coming together? Why do I always get a 4? Then I looked at one of my German friends and thought, hmm . . . she gets 1s and 2s. And so I thought, yeah, maybe they have it a little bit easier.³¹

While Güler felt motivated to do well in school and had parents that supported her education, this was not the case for all young women. For some, the struggle they experienced at school was partly the result of conflicting expectations, lack of interest, or lack of support. Families, and sometimes also the young women themselves, considered school to be unnecessary or a distraction from their duties to the family or their futures as housewives and mothers. Güler remembered some of her classmates in the *Grundschule* did not care about their progress in school: "They wanted to get married as soon as possible," she explained.³² Lack of motivation could lead to young women leaving school before they received the training necessary to prepare them for the German job market. Deniz, for example, left school at age fourteen after the ninth grade without doing an *Ausbildung* to run away and marry her boyfriend.³³

While some young women voluntarily left school early, others, like Azra Demir's eldest daughter, were kept home by their parents to take care of the household. Demir

³¹ Güler, 9.

³² Ibid., 8.

³³ Deniz, 1.

expressed regret over the decision, but explained that it was a common practice in the neighborhood and no one had told them school attendance was mandatory. The local *Grundschule* did, however, send a letter to their home, saying they must send their second daughter to school.³⁴ Necla Kelek, on the other hand, decided on her own to leave school when the constraints from home in that space became too intense. As a young child, she found school to be a place of excitement and fun; yet, as she grew older, her parents began to place restrictions on her that altered her experiences at school. No longer allowed to have German friends or participate in sports, Kelek felt herself separated from what school had meant for her and what it continued to represent for the other students. This exclusion became so intense that Kelek decided she no longer wanted to attend school and stayed home for six months, until her father received a letter from the school informing him that she was required to return. Initially, her parents were not upset by her decision to stay home, feeling she had learned enough for the life they saw in her future, as a wife and mother. When she was forced to return, her father justified the continued education by commenting that uneducated women could only expect uneducated husbands.³⁵ For some young women, then, the dissonance between their parents' (or their own) expectations for their future and the schools' imbued that site with a tension some felt could only be escaped, not resolved.

Difficulties with language or parental expectation were not the only sources of conflict at school, however. Güler's transition from *Grundschule* to *Gymnasium* reveals another challenge encountered by the second generation at school: conflict with their teachers and fellow classmates. Sometimes this conflict was spurred by teachers' different (and

³⁴ Azra Demir (pseudonym), interview and transcription by Hatice Renc, 9 March 1993, DLSA, MMA, 10.

³⁵ Necla Kelek, *Die fremde Braut: ein Bericht aus dem Inneren des türkischen Lebens in Deutschland* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005), 92-113.

discriminatory) expectations of their “foreign” students relative to their German ones.

Though Güler had received the official recommendation of her school to proceed to the *Gymnasium*, a few teachers cautioned her against it, saying that it could be too difficult for her. “[I have] also heard that from others, that it’s said to so-called children with a migration background, ‘hmmm, careful, I wouldn’t recommend the *Gymnasium* to you.’”³⁶ Lale told her interviewer about a French teacher at her school—also a foreigner, the young woman pointed out—who “looks at me like she’s never seen a Turk before, as if I’m her enemy.”³⁷ One of Cem Özdemir’s first memories of school is of a day in kindergarten when the water pistol of another child went missing. He was accused of stealing the toy, and the teacher, who “had probably developed her pedagogical approach between 1933 and 1945,” was not going to allow him to go home until it was “found.” When the toy was found, no one bothered to apologize to Özdemir for the false accusation.³⁸

Though none of the second generation interviewees felt that *Ausländerfeindlichkeit* was a daily event during the school day, many found that their fellow students could be quite blatant in their displays of hostility and xenophobia. Deniz described an incident in 6th grade when some of the German students in the class next to hers told the Turkish students that they all needed to “go away.” “Actually, I like Germans,” Deniz added, “but when they say something like that, I don’t know [laughing] what they have against Turks.”³⁹ Lale told her interviewer about a boy at her school who loved soccer and would play with the Turkish

³⁶ Güler, 2.

³⁷ Lale, 8.

³⁸ Cem Özdemir and Hans Engels, *Ich bin Inländer: ein anatolischer Schwabe im Bundestag* (Munich: DTV, 1997), 24-25.

³⁹ Deniz, 1.

students, even though he hated them—perhaps because they were better at the game than he was, she reasoned.⁴⁰ Being laughed at for mistakes made in class⁴¹ and called names like “Scheiss-Ausländer” and “Scheiss-Türke”⁴² were other ways the second generation experienced hostility at school. When Emre and a group of friends stirred up trouble at their *Oberschule*, it was the sole German participant—the young man was careful to point out—who turned them in, resulting in Emre being expelled from school.⁴³ Such events, even when not clearly motivated by xenophobia, led many Turkish-German students to feel cut off from their teachers and classmates more generally, and set the groundwork for further misunderstandings, conflict, and distrust.

Turkish-German youth also experienced struggle, exclusion, and discrimination at the *Berufsschule*, both on an individual and an institutional level. Many who completed their studies at *Haupt-*, *Real-*, or *Gesamtschule* and wanted to continue on to do an apprenticeship found positions difficult, if not impossible, to come by. For some, the problem was a legal one. In 1974, the federal government passed a law prohibiting foreign youth who immigrated that year and after from receiving a work permit. The immigrant youth would have to wait five years before they could apply for the permit, which was required not only for employment but also for apprenticeship positions.⁴⁴ Thus, one part of the migrant population, despite legal immigration, was barred from obtaining legal job-training and

⁴⁰ Lale, 8.

⁴¹ “Devrim,” in *Wo gehören wir hin?*, ed. Michael Kuhlmann and Alwin Meyer (Göttingen: Lamuv Verlag, 1983), 116.

⁴² Lale, 7-9.

⁴³ Emre and Erkan (pseudonyms), interview by Ursula Trüper, 7 December 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁴⁴ Wolfgang Gehrmann, “Keine Chance für Nesibe Alatas: Im Kampf um Lehrstellen und Arbeitsplätze bleiben die Gastarbeiterkinder auf der Strecke,” *Die Zeit*, 21 March 1980, accessed online.

employment. In other cases, it was not official barriers that kept them from apprenticeships, but employer prejudice. A young Spanish student, the only one of her female classmates to not secure an apprenticeship, described her search: she went to a dozen different doctors' and dentists' offices to apply for a position as a doctor's assistant, but found at each practice that their apprenticeship was "already filled." "Maybe it's natural, that they want to take Germans first," said the Spanish woman resignedly, but she finds it "just so stupid," that the doctors "always want to know the same thing, where I come from and what my parents do. We're not lepers."⁴⁵ In another case, a young Turkish man visited Hannover's Federal Employment Office weekly in search of an apprenticeship, only to be turned away each time despite having completed his education at the *Hauptschule* and being able to speak German well. Ultimately, the young man gave up and started working odd jobs instead of finding stable employment.⁴⁶

In a 1981 report, the Federal Ministry of Education and Science concluded that only one quarter of all foreign youth of the age of compulsory vocational training (between fifteen and eighteen) were continuing their education or had obtained an apprenticeship. For those who immigrated to West Germany as teenagers, this statistic rose to fifty percent.⁴⁷ Politicians, social scientists, and the media began increasingly to link the difficulty of foreign youth to secure apprenticeships to failed integration and a perceived growth in youth violence. Journalists used phrases like "social time bomb"⁴⁸ and "social explosive," noting

⁴⁵ "Gemeine Lumpen, Saulgeis—rauswerfen," *Der Spiegel*, 26 December 1977, 46.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴⁷ Der Bundesministerium für Bildung und Wissenschaft, *Arbeiterkinder im Bildungssystem* (Bad Honnef: Bock, 1981), 41, 46.

⁴⁸ Ruth Hermann, "Die soziale Zeitbombe tickt: Immer mehr junge Ausländer werden in die Kriminalität gedrängt," *Die Zeit*, 3 November 1978, accessed online.

that Turkish youth experienced the highest levels of unemployment and inability to secure an apprenticeship.⁴⁹ Though a 1990 report from the Federal Ministry of Education and Science emphasized the positive trend of increasing numbers of “foreign” youth enrolled in vocational training,⁵⁰ the press continued to stress the relationship between lack of opportunity for foreign youths and participation in organized violence. One *Spiegel* article published in 1990 frames the connection explicitly, labeling its young interviewees either by their gang affiliation or their level of education.⁵¹ Discrimination and conflict in the school system, illustrated through lack of opportunity for apprenticeships, the media concluded, led *ausländische Jugendliche* into a life of crime.

While second generation students were often on the receiving end of hostility in school, this was not always the case. Indeed, Turkish-German students, like their fellow classmates, also instigated conflict. Teachers documented these classroom conflicts in students’ files, report cards, and letters home to parents. Most cases were relatively minor, for example, students being distracted during lessons or not turning in their homework.⁵² Some students received reprimands and letters home for getting caught breaking school rules, such as smoking on school grounds.⁵³ Still others, however, were more actively disobedient

⁴⁹ “Ausländer: Schmerzhaft Grenze gezogen,” *Der Spiegel*, 7 December 1981, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-14351381.html>, (accessed 9 July 2011).

⁵⁰ Der Bundesminister für Bildung und Wissenschaft, *Grundlagen, Perspektiven, Bildung, Wissenschaft: Berufsbildungsbericht 1990* (Bad Honnef: Bock, 1990), 120-124.

⁵¹ “Jeder Deutsche ein Nazi,” *Der Spiegel*, 19 November 1990, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13502026.html>, (accessed 9 July 2011).

⁵² Female student’s personal file in Schülerbogen, Kl. 10a, Fr. Shambyaks, Abschluss 1989, and female student’s personal file in Schülbogen, Kl. 10, Fr. Siebold, A-Ko, Abgang 1990, Herbert-Hoover-Schule (Realschule), accessed 27 May 2009, Berlin, Germany.

⁵³ Male student’s personal file, Schülerbögen, Kl. 10b, Fr. Rosenow, H—Z, Abgang 1992, Herbert-Hoover-Schule (Realschule), accessed 27 May 2009, Berlin, Germany.

and challenging of authority. Despite receiving positive evaluations throughout *Grundschule*, one young woman's behavior took a different turn once she reached the seventh grade. At first her rebellion was relatively small and passive; she stopped paying attention in class and turning in her homework. By eighth grade, however, her challenges to teachers' authority grew more apparent, including throwing erasers during class and insulting the teacher.⁵⁴ The space of conflict and hostility within the school, then, was something the second generation contributed to, even when they did not create it.

Students and teachers were not the only participants in this space of conflict. Parents, too, found the school to be a site of struggle and, at times, hostility. In some cases, these struggles stemmed from Turkish parents' limited schooling background or lack of understanding of the German school system. Prior to 1972, the Turkish educational system consisted of primary, middle, and secondary schools, with only five years of primary school education being compulsory. A diploma was awarded with the successful completion of each level. The German system, however, not only required longer attendance, but also had a more complicated series of tracks and diplomas. One *Realschule* principal explained such conflicts with the following example: a Turkish-German student's parents were upset with the school, because they wanted their son to be a doctor and, apparently, did not realize that the type of *Oberschule* their son attended did not allow for that possibility.⁵⁵ The difference between the Turkish and German systems of education, as well as the relative complexity of the levels of schooling in Germany, contributed to this confusion. For someone not familiar

⁵⁴ Female student's personal file in Schülerbogen, Kl. 10a, H. Schriefer, A-J and K-Z, Abgangs 1990, Herbert-Hoover-Schule (Realschule), accessed 27 May 2009, Berlin, Germany.

⁵⁵ Erik Weber (pseudonym), interview by author, 25 May 2009, Berlin, Germany.

with or raised in this system, understanding its various tracks and their implications could be a considerable challenge.

In other cases, parents entered into an ongoing conflict between their children and the school's teachers or administrators. When Elif's teacher sent her to the principal's office for refusing to stop eating an apple during class—two German girls were eating bread at the same time, the young woman told her interviewer, and the teacher did not tell them to stop—the principal sent her home for three weeks. When she returned, the principal informed Elif that she would be fined for missing so much school. She protested, saying that the only reason she had been gone was because the principal had made her leave. *You can't prove that*, the principal apparently replied. When Elif's stepmother heard this story, she and her daughter marched directly back to school and the stepmother demanded that Elif be transferred to another school. At first the principal refused, but changed his mind after the stepmother threatened him with a formal accusation to the education supervisory council. Elif transferred to a new school and received her *Hauptschulabschluss* (certificate of completion from the lowest level of secondary schooling) within a year.⁵⁶

Parents did not confront teachers and administrators only in regard to disciplinary actions, however. They also countered school officials' expectations and decisions in order to advocate for their children's improved educational opportunities. One of the first tasks Gülen Yeğenoğlu took up when she moved to Frankfurt was to seek out a school she felt would best equip her son for their new life in Germany. Once she found such a school, she met with its director and counselor, as well as the teacher whose class her son would attend, to argue the case for her son's admittance. In addition, Yeğenoğlu maintained contact with

⁵⁶ Elif (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 11 December 1992, transcription, DLSA, MMA, 3.

those people as her son progressed through his education.⁵⁷ When his son's teacher wanted to move him from a Hamburg *Gymnasium* to a *Hauptschule*, Behçet Algan went to school to discuss the proposed change with the teacher and refused, politely, to have his son moved. "My son stayed in the *Gymnasium* and finished with a 2.4," Algan recounted. "Now he studies law. Unfortunately, I have to say that many foreign families were affected by such problems. [...] Who fought, won. Who did not fight, those children were sent to the *Hauptschule*."⁵⁸

Whether it was parents arguing with school administrators over their children's educational options, teachers trying to exert their authority over students with unruly behavior, or students encountering hostility and *Ausländerfeindlichkeit* from their fellow classmates, the school could be a site of constant conflict and struggle. Certainly much of this conflict was common to schools; German teachers, for example, had dealt with disciplinary issues among their students long before the children of Turkish *Gastarbeiter* entered their classrooms. Yet the second generation's experiences of conflict, and in particular those that included prejudice, in this site worked to separate them from the other school children. Rather than having the integrating effect that many German politicians, school administrators, Turkish parents, and the general public had hoped for, the spaces of conflict within the school often made it very difficult for the second generation to feel as though they belonged either to the school or to broader society.

⁵⁷ Gülen Yeğenoğlu, *Almanya'daki Yirmi Yılım* (Turkey: Milliyet Yayınları, 1988), 20-22.

⁵⁸ "Altona ist mein Dorf: Der Friseur Behçet Algan," in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 70.

A Land of Opportunity

Part of the reason the school could be so full of conflict was precisely because the participants involved realized the potential advantages this site could offer the growing number of children with a migrant background. The earlier examples of Yeğenoğlu's and Algan's advocacy, even as they reveal the difficulties "foreign" children faced in school, illustrate the perception of the school as a highly significant place for the well-being of their children. Indeed, many parents, originally intending to spend a limited amount of time in Germany, lengthened their stay out of consideration for their children's futures. According to a 1973 survey in the Ruhr region, thirty-one percent of parents considered their children's education a motivating factor in their decision to lengthen their stay, while fifty-five percent said their children's occupational interests influenced their decision. Sixty-one percent wanted their children to continue schooling and twenty-four percent preferred their children be involved in an apprenticeship. In 1974, a more extensive survey in Cologne found that thirty-two percent of parents saw the *Arbitur* as the educational goal for their children and thirty-one percent wanted an apprenticeship or certification from occupational schools, while twelve percent would be satisfied with the *Hauptschulabschluß*.⁵⁹ A similar survey a year later among the Turkish community also indicated that a significant number of parents were staying longer than intended out of concern for their children's education; women in particular placed weight on vocational and professional training for their children.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Czarina Wilpert, "Children of Foreign Workers in the Federal Republic of Germany." *International Migration Review* 11, no. 4 (Winter 1977): 481-482.

⁶⁰ Ayse Kudat, "Personal, Familial and Societal Impacts of Turkish Women's Migration to Europe," in *Living in Two Cultures: The Socio-Cultural Situation of Migrant Workers and their Families*, ed. Unesco (Paris: The Unesco Press, 1982), 299.

The narratives of the first generation parents bear out the statistical evidence that their children's education was a major motivating factor in lengthening their stay in Germany.⁶¹ In Hamburg, Hadiye Akin, recalling her husband's plan of leaving Germany after three years, remarked, "But then the children came. And, at the latest, if the children are in school, you can forget about going back."⁶² Such a statement is common among the stories of the first generation. Some first generation Turkish immigrants more explicitly link their children's participation at school with increased opportunities for them. Nermin Özdil, who also stayed on in Hamburg because of her children's education, exhibited pride in her children's scholastic achievements, which included a university education for each of them. She explained her own supportive role as going to every parents' evening and inviting their teachers to her home for tea.⁶³ Not only did some first generation Turkish immigrants see German schools as advantageous for their children, but their own participation in that space opened up new opportunities for themselves as well. More so at the *Grundschule* level, teachers invited their students' parents into the classroom to contribute to and join in special festivities, which allowed Turkish parents to become more familiar with their children's teachers and the school itself and brought them into contact with other parents.⁶⁴

For the second generation, the spaces of opportunity they encountered and created within the context of their primary and secondary schools enabled them to form and maintain

⁶¹ For examples, see Ayse Kudat, "Personal, Familial and Societal Impacts of Turkish Women's Migration to Europe", 299; and Czarina Wilpert, "Children of Foreign Workers in the Federal Republic of Germany." *International Migration Review* 11, no. 4 (Winter 1977): 481-482.

⁶² "Ich bin, wie ich bin: Die Lehrerin Hadiye Akin," in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 52.

⁶³ "Ich hatte die Startnummer 311: Die Stoffverkäuferin Nermin Özdil," in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 176-177.

⁶⁴ Ute Schmidt (pseudonym), interview by author, 29 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 4. I discuss the parents' role in cultural exchange at school later in this chapter.

friendships and other social relationships similar to those they experienced in their neighborhoods. Some made friends quickly, easing the transition into this new site and setting a positive tone for the rest of their career at school.⁶⁵ For others, the transition was decidedly rockier, but ultimately successful. When Seyran Ateş first arrived at the *Gesamtschule*, she felt excluded by her classmates, but decided to prove that she belonged there. Eventually Ateş succeeded in making a place for herself, to the point of being elected the school representative.⁶⁶

Fellow students, however, were not the only ones that helped the second generation forge a sense of settlement and belonging in this space. For students like Cemil, a kind and patient teacher eased the difficulties of schoolwork and created a positive impression of Germans in general.⁶⁷ When asked about *Ausländerfeindlichkeit* during his interview, ten-year-old Timur talked about how he had not experienced anything like that at school. His teacher, he said, was “so nice” and “ashamed of Nazis” and people like that.⁶⁸ The context of the boy’s statements shows the connection he made between the positive relationship he had with his teacher and his sense of belonging at school in general. Similarly, Emre’s respect for his principal helped him to feel more comfortable at his new *Oberschule*, despite the circumstances of his transfer.⁶⁹ This type of space could also be very significant for youth, and especially young women, for whom the home was a stifling or even abusive place. As a young child, Ateş preferred to be at school rather than home, because at school, even during

⁶⁵ Yılmaz, 2.

⁶⁶ Ateş, 73-83.

⁶⁷ Kurt and Meyer, 53-55.

⁶⁸ Timur (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 22 June 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁶⁹ Emre and Erkan. Emre was expelled from his previous *Oberschule* for disciplinary reasons.

the times when she felt isolated from her fellow students, her teachers respected and praised her for her achievements.⁷⁰ Later, though she tested into the *Gymnasium*, she chose to attend a *Gesamtschule*, because it meant an extended school day. The support Ateş and others like her received at school made them want to invest themselves and their energy in that relatively safe and welcoming space.

Positive relationships with teachers and fellow students often had more tangible benefits than an abstract sense of comfort and belonging. As in the neighborhood, the second generation forged relationships that often brought concrete rewards. Friendships with fellow classmates made one feel more a part of the school as a whole, but could also mean assistance with schoolwork, protection from bullies, and help learning German. When Lale started taking swimming lessons as part of her fourth grade curriculum, she was so inept that she nearly drowned. A school friend helped her to learn to swim, and by the end of the year, Lale was the second best swimmer in her class.⁷¹ Teachers, too, provided tangible support and assistance to second generation students. One of Elif's teachers, upon learning that her student wrote poetry, put her into contact with a *Frauenladen* where Elif gave a reading that brought her an invitation to share her poetry on a television show.⁷² Elif also received timely support from a colleague at her *Berufsschule*, who would drive her home after class so she could avoid being hassled by a rejected suitor.⁷³ When Filiz Güler struggled with particularly difficult schoolwork at the *Gymnasium*, she would call a former teacher of hers

⁷⁰ Ateş, 67.

⁷¹ Lale, 18.

⁷² Elif, 5. Elif ultimately declined the invitation to be on the television program, as some of her poetry concerned her relationship with her father, and she did not want those sentiments to get back to him.

⁷³ Ibid., 7.

from primary school who was always ready to help.⁷⁴ Thus, some of the connections the second generation forged at school offered them skills and support that helped them develop personally as well as enabled them to operate more successfully in that space.

Just as the school fostered relationships that helped Turkish-German students succeed academically, it also offered more formal avenues for the second generation to consider and prepare for their lives once they finished their required schooling. For students who attended a *Haupt-, Gesamt- or Realschule*, a *Betriebspraktikum* (internship) was a part of their formal instruction. Students were given a variety of professions to choose from, some of the more popular being in the fields of health care, customer service, industry, and manufacturing.⁷⁵ Such courses exposed student participants to possible future occupations, taught them some of the skills they would need to succeed in those positions, and sometimes also helped them to make contacts in that particular industry. Other students participated in *Lehre* and *Ausbildung* (school-facilitated apprenticeships) that served a similar function. Those involved in apprenticeships also had to attend courses at a *Berufsschule*, where they would learn those skills that were not part of on-the-job training. Bülent Kaplan began his *Lehre* at age fifteen, one of two Turks among the forty apprentices. Between his responsibilities at the company and the *Berufsschule*, he did not have much free time, but still enjoyed going to a *Kneipe* (bar) with his Turkish and German colleagues and sometimes playing some soccer.⁷⁶

Large businesses, like Siemens and AEG-Telefunken, also coordinated with *Berufsschulen* and brought “foreign students” into their apprenticeship programs, often

⁷⁴ Güler, 9.

⁷⁵ Günter Linkiewicz, ed., “Ernst-Schering-Oberschule, Gesamtschule, 12. März 1986” (Berlin, 1986), 92.

⁷⁶ Bülent Kaplan (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 14 June 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

highlighting this fact in their company newspapers. In a 1982 *Siemens Mitteilungen* article, two of the young Turkish-German “Azubis”⁷⁷ interviewed described the types of jobs they were training for and what positions they hoped to hold in the future.⁷⁸ In the early 1980s, Siemens also instituted a “Benachteiligten-Programm” (program for the disadvantaged) at its Frankfurt branch that focused on bringing young Germans without their *Hauptschulabschluss* and “foreigners” (which included those born in Germany and those who had moved there only recently) with language difficulties into an apprenticeship program. Through this training program, apprentices learned either telecommunications or electrical systems installation.⁷⁹ Such formal training, conducted in tandem by *Berufsschulen* and German companies, was (and still is) essential for youth in Germany in order for them to succeed on the job market once they left school, and students were aware of its significance.

Many in the second generation saw these courses as opportunities to improve their own situations and make their futures more secure. Güler’s comparison between her generation and the one following reveals the emphasis she and many of her classmates put on the importance of their experiences in school. “I believe [we were] much more motivated,” Güler explained, “one thought, I must find a place in German society and that only happens through education.” The difference, she believed, may be found in what one generation could pass on to the next. The first generation was not able to offer so much to the second, but the third grew up with bigger apartments and pocket money; they had fewer restrictions

⁷⁷ “Azubis” is slang for “Auszubildende,” or apprentices.

⁷⁸ “Anpassen, ohne die Identität zu verlieren: Gespräche mit ausländischen Mitarbeitern,” *Siemens Mitteilungen*, December 1982, p. 6, Siemens Corporate Archives (SCA), Munich, Germany.

⁷⁹ “Trotzdem sind wir Fremde hier,” *Siemens Mitteilungen*, December 1986, 3-page article, page numbers unknown, SCA.

and more “comfort.” Perhaps that made the third generation feel like they should not need to try too hard, Güler surmised.⁸⁰

Such was not the case with many in the second generation, and young women in particular, who did not want to live and work like their parents. After Aylin completed her *Realabschluss*, she continued on to do an apprenticeship as a foreign-languages secretary. It would be a good career, she thought, and allow her to be independent of her family and the need for a husband.⁸¹ Sanem, who was sixteen years old and dating a man seven years her senior at the time of her interview, was adamant about finishing her *Ausbildung* and starting a career before getting married. Her reasons for wanting a career were both practical and personal. What if her husband got sick? she posited; then they would need her income. But more than that was the desire to put her training into action and have an interesting life. “The main thing is,” Sanem explained, “if someone asks me, ‘what are you,’ I say ‘yeah, I’m a trained retail saleswoman,’ I’ve got something [to fall back on]. And I don’t say, ‘yeah, I finished 10th grade, and now I sit at home.’ Then why did I go to school for ten years? For nothing. For nothing at all!”⁸² Job training at school offered the second generation a way to prepare themselves for the working world beyond the classroom, and many young Turkish-German women seized the opportunity to attain financial security and even a small measure of independence.

School activities outside of the context of classroom lessons also allowed space for the second generation to explore their interests in ways that led them to their professional

⁸⁰ Güler, 7-8.

⁸¹ Aylin (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 22 December 1992, transcription, DLSA, MMA, 2.

⁸² Sanem (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 4 March 1993, transcription, DLSA, MMA, 8-9.

pursuits. Even while Cem Özdemir experienced difficulties in school, the environment influenced his social and political values and provided the space for him to develop and put into practice those political views. Like Ateş, he was elected as his class and then school representative. With his friend Harmut, he began trying to educate fellow students about issues concerning the Third World and atomic and chemical warfare. Though he did not find the administration very supportive of his activities, several teachers were, and Özdemir mentions one in particular, with a background in the peace movement, who significantly aided in and encouraged his political socialization.⁸³ Thus, within the framework of school, Özdemir came to learn about contemporary political issues, develop his stances on those issues, and put into action his response, setting the groundwork for his participation and success later on in the Green Party. Similarly, during her time in the *Gesamtschule* and especially while serving as the school representative, Ateş found the space to develop her interests in and engagement with issues of rights and the law, which would eventually evolve into her future career.⁸⁴ Representing more than a series of courses and exams, the school served as a place in which Ateş and Özdemir could experiment with their own developing interests, equipping them with the tools and providing them with the structures that would eventually lead them to their future careers.

A Space of (Cross-)Cultural Education and Socialization

One of the opportunities the school presented for both its students and teachers was to create a space of cross-cultural education. The student body and, in later years, the teaching

⁸³ Özdemir and Engels, 44-46.

⁸⁴ Ateş, 73-83.

staff constituted an increasingly ethnically diverse population, one that rubbed shoulders on a daily basis and spent a significant chunk of their waking hours together. This continually close proximity, along with the school's mandate to equip its foreign students for a successful transition into German society, provided the conditions for the development of spaces within the school in which students and teachers, whether purposefully or by accident, could learn about each others' languages, customs, and traditions. Sometimes, these interactions led only to shallow exchanges or the perpetuation of stereotypes. Interviews with some German administrators and teachers, for example, revealed very generalized knowledge based on perceived religious differences: "Turks" celebrate Ramadan, do not eat pork, and women sometimes wear headscarves.⁸⁵ Despite this, encounters between the second generation, their classmates, and their teachers through formal instruction and informal social activities did result in spaces of cross-cultural education, however limited they may have been.

Most of the intentional, structured cross-cultural education occurred within the context of the classroom, as teachers worked to fulfill their role as imparters of German language and culture to their *ausländische Schüler*. In the classroom, the second generation encountered a new educational system with different lessons, expectations, and ways of interacting than they had experienced before, had they attended school back in Turkey. As discussed earlier, most Turkish-German students grappled with the challenge of learning and operating in a language other than the one that they spoke in the home. Language-learning thus became one of the first spaces of cultural education the second generation experienced. In many cases, *Gastarbeiterkinder* received special German-language instruction in addition

⁸⁵ For example, Paul Hoch (pseudonym), principal of a *Grundschule*, interview by Ursula Trüper, 29 October 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

to that present in the course of daily classroom lessons. At a primary school in Sprengelkiez, these additional classes consisted of four to five students who would be taken out of their regular class for a few hours each week for German lessons.⁸⁶ Early language instruction was fairly piecemeal, stitched together by teachers in response to an immediate need rather than as a result of training and preparation. By the mid-1980s, however, teachers and some school administrators began to address the situation more systematically, developing strategies for teaching their foreign students German language and cultural more efficiently and effectively.⁸⁷

Schools concerned themselves with more than preparing their foreign students to enter German society, however. Particularly in the 1970s and stretching into the 1980s, German schools were also expected to equip the *Gastarbeiterkinder* for the increasingly unlikely *Rückkehr*, their family's return to their country of origin. For the children of Turkish immigrants, this task was to be accomplished by teachers from Turkey, who held special classes in German schools. Selected by the Turkish government, these teachers were generally strong supporters of Kemalism, and thus secular nationalists.⁸⁸ Their classes, conducted solely in Turkish, consisted of Turkish-language instruction, but also geography, history, and other subjects, opening up another space of cultural education for the second generation.⁸⁹ While many considered these classes to be educating the children about their

⁸⁶ Maja Herbert (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 16 June 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁸⁷ This process is discussed more at a later point in this chapter.

⁸⁸ Ruth Mandel, "A Place of Their Own: Contesting Spaces and Defining Places in Berlin's Migrant Community," in Barbara Daly Metcalf, ed., *Making Muslim Space in North America and Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 155. "Kemalism" refers to the political ideology championed by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and adopted by the Republic of Turkey that, among other platforms, advocates a distinct separation of religion and the state.

⁸⁹ Güler, 13-14.

“Heimatland”, it is important to remember that many if not most of the second generation knew Turkey only from childhood memories, their parents’ stories, or vacations to visit family. For those born in West Germany, the connection to Turkey was even more tenuous. In addition, few had received formal education in the Turkish language, or in the history, politics, and culture of their parents’ country of origin. This was particularly true at the primary school level and over time became increasingly the case in secondary school as the Turkish community grew more established and immigration laws more stringent regarding family reunification. Thus, these Turkish classes also constituted a space of cross-cultural education, teaching the growing numbers of Turkish-German children for whom Turkey was simultaneously the “Heimatland” but not their home.

Students were not the only ones who encountered and were affected by these new cross-cultural spaces. Though likely not a majority, some German teachers found themselves learning Turkish in their efforts to successfully communicate with and teach their foreign students. For some, this occurred primarily if not entirely in the context of their own classrooms during the course of their lessons. Ute Schmidt, a preschool teacher, described her shock at the number of “Ausländer” in her class when she first started at a primary school in Sprengelkiez. “But it was exciting and interesting,” she said, recounting her experiences. She began by learning how to pronounce all of her students’ names correctly, and soon she was learning Turkish words. “I have to say [...] I can’t say a whole sentence correctly,” she confessed, “but I can understand a lot of words. I had to, because I, when I tested the kids, whether they named colors or numbers or their body parts, I had to learn all of that.”⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Ute Schmidt (pseudonym), interview by author, 29 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 3.

Schmidt grew close to many of her students, enjoyed warm support from their parents, and remained in touch with a number of them even after her retirement.

While some teachers picked up Turkish as they went along, others enrolled directly in Turkish language classes as a way to equip themselves for the challenge of a multicultural classroom. When Sabine Müller started teaching in West Berlin in the mid-1970s, a quarter of the students in her first class were the children of immigrants. Some, she recounted, spoke German very well, while others struggled. “That meant, I was confronted with this from the beginning. And at first, I didn’t know how to deal with it.” Müller decided soon thereafter to take a Turkish course and learn the differences between the German and Turkish languages, as most of her foreign students were Turkish. She also drew on her Turkish colleagues, first those employed by the Turkish government and later independent teachers, for help with the new language and in communicating with her students.⁹¹ For Müller, understanding her students’ language was part of being a good teacher, and her efforts contributed to a space of cross-cultural education that would gradually extend beyond her own language-learning to incorporate all of her students and the classroom itself.

Particularly in the earlier years of immigrant settlement and until the mid- to late-1980s, few teachers received education or training specific to the instruction of *Ausländerkinder*. While many in West Berlin and throughout West Germany struggled to effectively teach increasingly diverse student populations, some took it upon themselves to develop strategies and programs to meet these new challenges. In West Berlin, a movement to incorporate both German and Turkish languages into classroom instruction began in the

⁹¹ Sabine Müller (pseudonym), interview by author, 14 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 1.

early 1980s with two teachers at a primary school in the district of Kreuzberg.⁹² Teachers in other districts with high foreigner populations, such as Wedding and Tiergarten, looked on their efforts with interest. Especially in the beginning, the bilingual education approach was very much a grassroots effort, as interested teachers met with each other, discussed the pedagogy, and developed their own instructional materials. Soon, however, teachers took the idea in a different direction; instead of using *zwei-sprachige Erziehung* (bilingual education) in foreigner-only classes, they integrated the concept into mixed classrooms of German and migrant students. By the mid- to late-1980s, similar programs were popping up all over the city, aided by funding from the sympathetic Red-Green [SPD-*Grünen*] coalition government in the Berliner Senate.⁹³ At its highpoint, approximately sixty schools throughout the city offered bilingual classes to their students.⁹⁴

Bilingual education came to Wedding primary schools in the late 1980s and early 1990s, due in part to the efforts of Sabine Müller. Eager to be an effective teacher and willing to try new things, Müller began incorporating the approach into her own classroom and soon became a passionate advocate and developer of the program. “I observed, how wonderful it is for the children and also for the parents,” she explained. As part of the program, the classroom furniture and tools are labeled with tags bearing both their German and Turkish names. The students and parents come into the classroom, “and discover: Aha! There’s something Turkish, there’s something Turkish, there’s something Turkish. My language is accepted, and I’ll be accepted, too.”⁹⁵ For Murat Güngör, another primary school

⁹² Müller, 4.

⁹³ Ibid., 2.

⁹⁴ Erol Kayman (pseudonym), interview by author, 29 May 2009, digital recording, Berlin, Germany.

⁹⁵ Müller, 4.

teacher who has worked in Tiergarten and Wedding, one of the strongest pedagogical features of the bilingual approach has been its utilization of what the children have already learned before they enter school. Instead of starting from zero, Güngör related, the approach builds on students' previous knowledge, making them feel more confident in the classroom, which in turn encourages their learning process.⁹⁶

The implementation and practice of the *zwei-sprachige Erziehung* approach opened up an obvious and deliberate cross-cultural educational space in primary schools throughout the city in which teachers and students, German and “foreign,” participated actively. As the statements and observations of both Müller and Güngör reflect, the verbal and visual inclusion of German and Turkish created a space that allowed for all participants to be involved in daily classroom activities on a relatively even level. At the same time, the bilingual educational program did not limit itself to bridging language differences; teachers incorporated other exchanges, such as celebrating holidays from different cultures in the classroom, and often emphasized commonalities in particular religious or cultural traditions. Müller illustrated this aspect of the program with the example of Abraham, a central figure in the Muslim Festival of the *Opferfest* (Sacrifice) as well as in the Christian Bible.⁹⁷

Such holiday celebrations did not occur solely in bilingual classrooms. Turkish-German students learned about and experienced German holidays and traditions in classrooms and school-wide celebrations throughout the year. These celebrations also provided parents with the opportunity to experience and contribute to the classroom as a cross-cultural space. When Schmidt's preschool class celebrated St. Martin's Day, parents

⁹⁶ Kayman.

⁹⁷ Müller, 4.

brought homemade baked goods and joined in the class party, part of which took place in a nearby Catholic church. “They thought it was fantastic,” Schmidt remembered, that they could take part in the festivities and the singing. Schmidt credited parental participation in this and other class celebrations with helping parents to feel more comfortable in the classroom and with the school in general.⁹⁸

Thus, primary and secondary schools played multiple and at times conflicting roles in the lives of the second generation, their parents, and their teachers. At times, the participants in these spaces found them to offer opportunity and inclusion, at others conflict and exclusion. As with their parents in the workplace, Turkish-German students in primary and secondary schools came into direct contact with Germans, institutions, and expectations that alternately served to embed them in the host society even as they continued to define the second generation as “foreign.” In the 1980s and early 90s, however, the experiment of bilingual classes began to open up spaces that recognized the potential contribution of a multicultural approach to the education and success of all students. Unfortunately, administrative support and funding for *zwei-sprachige Erziehung* programs began to wane in the mid-1990s as well-to-do German families moved out of the central districts of the city and into more suburban areas. By 2009, only five of the original sixty schools still offered bilingual classes.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Schmidt, 4.

⁹⁹ Kayman.

The *Volkshochschule* as Community *Vermittler*

While *Grund-* and *Oberschulen* educated their foreign students for success within the German school system and eventually society, Wedding's *Volkshochschule* (VHS) had a similar, but broader objective. The VHS also set out to facilitate the successful adjustment of Berlin's foreign residents into the city; however, due to its unique educational mandate and the influence of individual personalities on the direction of its programs, the VHS took a different approach to the challenge. Reaching out to the city's immigrant (especially Turkish) population and German residents, from the mid 1970s the VHS used language courses, career preparation, social events, and cultural offerings to promote cross-cultural understanding and mutual accommodation. These efforts opened up spaces related to, and yet distinct from, those present in required schooling: purposefully intermediary spaces designed to equip immigrants to lead productive lives in Germany and relate with Germans, as well as to help Germans understand their new neighbors, and creative spaces that promoted collaboration between Germans and immigrants on cultural projects. To be sure, some of the spaces the second generation experienced in primary and secondary schools were also present here. Students struggled with coursework, peers, and teachers found opportunities to learn skills that would improve their chances for financial success, and learned about German society and culture. Yet the different approach adopted by the VHS and the voluntary participation of the first and second generation in its programs combined to create unique spaces of belonging that worked to further weave them into the fabric of the city.

A Purposefully Intermediary Space

Housed in a building on Müllerstrasse and then later in an *Oberschule* in Wedding not far from the Sprengelkiez neighborhood, the *Volkshochschule* was well-situated to observe and react to the changing demographics of that district. By the mid-1970s, the school already had what was then called the “Türkenprogramm,” headed by Sever Sarioğlu. Director Sarioğlu, according to his successor Dr. Eduard Ditschek, “set the tone” early on by making the personal decision that the VHS needed to offer something that would engage and assist the growing Turkish community in the surrounding neighborhoods.¹⁰⁰ In 1985, Dr. Ditschek was hired with the mandate to bring together the *Türkenprogramm* and the *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* program under a single department, originally called the *Ausländerprogramm*, which he eventually entitled the *Interkulturelles Bildungsprogramm* (Program for Intercultural Education).¹⁰¹ This newly formed department brought together the language, job training, and cultural offerings directed toward the district’s immigrant population under one roof, offerings that grew and changed in response to the dynamic neighborhood around them.

Figure 9. German course for Immigrants at Wedding’s Volkshochschule, 1970



The initial offerings of the VHS, however, consisted mainly of language courses in both German and Turkish at a variety of levels. The German-language courses took place in schools around the district and were offered both in the afternoons and evenings, so as to

¹⁰⁰ Dr. Eduard Ditschek, interview by author, 11 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 16.

¹⁰¹ Ditschek, 1.

accommodate both Turkish-German youth and their working parents (Figure 9, previous page).¹⁰² Early Turkish courses were geared at promoting literacy in one's native language, stressing the development of reading and writing skills.¹⁰³ Over time, the types of language classes available diversified as the VHS became aware of specific needs and found the staff to fill them. By the fall of 1985, the VHS, in cooperation with *Familienfürsorge* (family welfare services), was holding a Turkish language and literacy course for women in a building on Sparrplatz, "in a space that is, for other reasons, trusted by [the women] and nearby their apartments." The following semester, the two institutions planned a similar German language and literacy course in the same location for those participants.¹⁰⁴ The number and types of language courses continued to expand, so that in the first two semesters of 1987, the Wedding *Volkshochschule* gave seventy-four German courses with a total of almost five thousand classroom hours and fifteen literacy courses with over fifteen hundred hours of instruction.¹⁰⁵

The second area in which the VHS tried to serve as an intermediary space for the city's immigrant population was in career training and preparation. As with language classes, the VHS saw courses designed to teach marketable skills to immigrant students as an important way to facilitate their integration into the city, and began offering such courses in the mid- to late-1970s. From the start, the VHS had specific target groups, based primarily

¹⁰² German Course for Immigrants at Wedding's Volkshochschule, 1970, from Martin Greve and Tülay Çınar, *Das Türkische Berlin. Miteinander Leben in Berlin* (Berlin: Die Ausländerbeauftragte des Senats, 1998), 16.

¹⁰³ "Wedding Halk Yüksekokulu: Türkler için Almanca Kursları," promotional literature, Wedding Volkshochschule, personal files of Dr. Eduard Ditschek (EDF), accessed on 26 May 2009, Berlin, Germany, 0-5.

¹⁰⁴ "Kooperation mit Selbsthilfegruppe, freien Trägern und andere in der Ausländerarbeit engagierte Institutionen," Vb IV 101, Betr.: Vb-A-Bericht, Wedding Volkshochschule, EDF, accessed on 26 May 2009, 1.

¹⁰⁵ "Interkulturelles Bildungsprogramm: Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektive (1987)," Wedding Volkshochschule, EDF, accessed on 26 May 2009, 1.

on gender and age, in mind. In a 1981 report to a working group on *Ausländerforschung*, then-director Sarioğlu wrote that courses in sewing, cooking, hair styling, and cosmetics were “especially interesting for female participants,” while teenage boys and men were “naturally more interested in technical fields,” such as “practical photography, car repair, technical drafting, and electronics.”¹⁰⁶ Articles in Turkish-language newspapers concerning the VHS’s course offerings occasionally, though not always, reflected the gendered and generational targeting. A 1986 article in *Hürriyet* highlighted the woodworking and truck mechanics courses offered for young men and the tailoring and hair styling courses for girls and women.¹⁰⁷ A year later, however, another article in *Hürriyet* simply listed some of the available courses, such as computer and typing courses, and attributed only the textile and beauty classes to girls and women.¹⁰⁸

The VHS also increasingly turned its attention to youth ages 16-25 whose chances for successful integration were seen as particularly threatened due to either their recent arrival (which meant they had not been through the German school system), their lack of a secondary school diploma, their unemployment, or a combination of these factors. In cooperation with the Wedding *Arbeitsamt*, the VHS began in 1982 to offer a thirteen-month career preparation course for “*Sonderschule* graduates, foreigners with language difficulties, and youth who only went to *Hauptschule* through the eighth grade.”¹⁰⁹ The program, called

¹⁰⁶ “Betr.: Ausländerforschung in der Bundesrepublik und West-Berlin,” report by Sever Sarioğlu to Prof. Dr. Detlef Bischoff, Wedding Volkshochschule, EDF, accessed on 26 May 2009, 2.

¹⁰⁷ “Wedding VHS yabancılar için kurslar düzenliyor,” *Hürriyet*, 4 September 1986, EDF, accessed on 26 May 2009.

¹⁰⁸ “Wedding VHS’de öğrenciler için çok kurs var,” *Hürriyet*, 15 January 1987, EDF, accessed on 26 May 2009.

¹⁰⁹ “10 Jahre Berufsvorbereitende Vollzeitlehrgänge: mit internem Abschluss des einfachen und erweiterten Hauptschulabschluss, 1982-1992, Wedding,” Wedding Volkshochschule, EDF, accessed on 26 May 2009, 2.

HASA (*Hauptschulabschluss für Arbeitslose*) was geared as much toward developing self-confidence and overcoming learning difficulties as toward learning marketable skills.

Classes met five days a week, climbing to an eventual 40-hour week by 1985. From 1983 to 1992, 321 students had participated in the program, including 252 “Inländer” and 69 “Ausländer.” Of those participants, 5.1% remained unemployed after completion of the program and 10.3% worked as unskilled labor. The remainder (and vast majority) worked in a range of careers, from childcare and medical professions to technical careers and industry.¹¹⁰

Though the statistics suggest HASA proved successful for the majority of its participants, by 1987 the VHS had decided a separate preparatory course was needed for the *Späteinsteiger* —foreign youth who came to Germany at an age where they were no longer required to attend school. “For these participants,” a HASA report reads, “the training course offers practically the only chance to be able to learn a professional career in Germany.”¹¹¹ The course, entitled V-HASA or Vor-HASA (*Vorkurs zum Hauptschulabschlusslehrgang*), combined intensive German-language lessons with career training and socio-pedagogical work in its effort to point immigrant youth “to the possibilities and routes to integration in education and career.”¹¹²

A report on the class of 1990–1991 gives us an overview of that year’s participants. Twenty-five of the twenty-seven students who started the course completed it; nineteen of whom were women and six were men. The majority was born in Turkey, five were born in

¹¹⁰ “10 Jahre Berufsvorbereitende Vollzeitlehrgänge,” 20-21.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 18.

¹¹² “Vollzeitlehrgang für ausländische Jugendliche: zum Abbau schulischer Defizite und zur Vorbereitung auf einen Beruf im Bereich Textil/Bekleidung, V-HASA 1990/91,” Bezirksamt Wedding von Berlin Abteilung Volksbildung und Volkshochschule Wedding, EDF, accessed on 26 May 2009, 4.

Germany, and all identified as Muslims. All the students lived at home with their parents, who, with only two exceptions, had unlimited employment permits. Though most had only lived in Germany for a couple of years, two-thirds felt “*wohl fühlen*” (comfortable) living in Berlin and none planned to return to Turkey in the near future. At the beginning of the course, eighty percent of the program’s participants wanted to pursue further education and training after the V-HASA course, rather than go directly into the workforce.¹¹³ One month after completion of the course, nine had begun a course for qualification in sewing, four were waiting to start the HASA program, one had an apprenticeship at an upscale department store, two more had applied for apprenticeships in technical drafting, and another was receiving training at a foundation for disadvantaged youth. The numbers, the report insists, do not tell the whole story: the participants “improved their language abilities, greatly increased their school and general knowledge, gained a clear picture of the field of textiles and clothing, and acquired a basic facility with data processing and typing.”¹¹⁴

Each of these VHS course offerings, from the cosmetics classes to the V-HASA program, aimed to provide its participants—primarily members of the growing Turkish community—with practical skills that would better facilitate their settlement into life in Berlin, and German society more generally. While the school’s available courses and the marketing of those courses often reinforced a gendered understanding of which professions were appropriate for whom, it is unclear whether VHS officials and instructors were driven by their own preconceptions of men’s and women’s work or by what they thought potential Turkish students would be most drawn to. What is clear, both in the language and job

¹¹³ “Vollzeitlehrgang für ausländische Jugendliche,” 5-8.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 27.

training courses, is an increasing focus on women and young adults, two groups the VHS saw as particularly in need of intermediary spaces that would enable them to gain valuable skills for their personal and financial well-being. And the continuation and proliferation of such courses strongly suggests that their target audiences considered them a worthwhile opportunity and utilized these spaces for their own advancement.

In addition to formal instruction, the VHS also hosted clubs and events aimed at facilitating social interaction both within particular immigrant communities and between immigrants and Germans. In the mid-1980s, the VHS began to hold a biweekly *Frauenkreis* (women's group) for Turkish women, almost all of whom had moved to Germany to join family there. In a description of the group's activities for a VHS catalog of cultural offerings, facilitator Serpil Dalaman wrote, "Fixated on their traditional, gender-specific role, [the participants] have almost no contact with the outside world." The goal of the *Frauenkreis*, then, was to introduce these women to each other and to their new surroundings, helping them to "widen their *Bewegungsspielraum* [social space] and get to know their new environment better."¹¹⁵ At their biweekly meetings, the participants heard informational presentations by guest speakers on subjects such as "the role of women, child-rearing, health, and legal issues", which the women followed up with lively discussion. The women also went on sightseeing trips and excursions designed to introduce them to the larger city outside of their neighborhood. Finally, the *Frauenkreis* also hosted events open to German participants, creating a space where they could share aspects of Turkish culture (particularly food culture).

¹¹⁵ Serpil Dalaman, "Türkischer Frauenkreis," in *Kunstvoller Alltag: Kommunale Kulturarbeit der Volkshochschule Berlin-Wedding*, Ursula Diehl, Gisela Weimann and Eduard Ditschek, eds. (Berlin: FAB-Verlag, 1990), 122.

Like the V-HASA program, the *Frauenkreis* brought together instruction with social support, though in a less formal setting. While not attempting to train the women in a particular career, the VHS and Dalaman clearly wanted to equip the participants with tools to develop their own self-confidence and an understanding of life in their new home. The meetings allowed women to learn about aspects of the host society in a safe, middle space between their homes and the society itself. One of the women's excursions took them to a media network's Turkish editorial department, where a female moderator interviewed the participants. In response to a question about the usefulness of the *Frauenkreis*, one woman answered, "I was freed from my loneliness. Now I have built a network of social connections and a group of friends." She concluded by wishing that as many women as possible would participate in their meetings.¹¹⁶

The VHS also organized special, one-time events specifically geared toward bringing foreign residents and Germans into contact with each other. Sometimes these events were purely social in nature. In January 1974, the VHS organized a "German-Turkish" evening at Wedding's city hall, complete with food, drink, music, and dancing. Though the atmosphere at the beginning was strained, soon, the newspaper account assured its readers, "through drinks, cookies, and a thick haze of cigarette smoke, Germans and foreigners came quickly together."¹¹⁷ Around one hundred Germans and immigrants, mostly Turks, participated in the event, chatting and dancing in the front hall of the city hall for three hours. The evening

¹¹⁶ Dalaman, "Türkischer Frauenkreis," 123.

¹¹⁷ "Bei Getränken und Keksen kamen sich Ausländer und Berliner näher," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 13 January 1974, EDF, accessed 26 May 2009.

was such a success, coordinators talked about making it a regular event and discussed finding a bigger space to accommodate the crowds.¹¹⁸

At other times, the VHS organized events that presented their audiences with performances by the different cultural groups that operated under its auspices. One such event, entitled “‘Orient-Rock’ and Turkish Folklore”, brought together traditional Turkish folklore, dance, and music with a modern rock band that fused American rock music with “oriental elements” to produce a sound that the program writer described as “navigating an integration course.”¹¹⁹ With this particular event, the VHS aimed to form a bridge between Germans and foreigners, but also between generations. The cost for attending was kept relatively low (three Deutsche marks (DM) for adults, one and a half DM for students and the unemployed), and the snack time, complete with Turkish food and a variety of drinks, would “hopefully offer enough opportunity for friendly exchange.”¹²⁰ With these types of events, the VHS hoped to combine education and socializing to introduce different elements of the surrounding community to one another.

Unfortunately, the Wedding VHS was not always successful in its efforts to bring together different members of the community, at times due to the lack of interest of the targeted, potential German participants. In 1986, the VHS attempted to host a meeting of German teachers and Turkish parents to discuss the particular challenges to Turkish-German youth in German society and school system. A German teacher organized the event, inviting

¹¹⁸ “Bei Getränken und Keksen.”

¹¹⁹ “‘Orient-Rock’ und türkischer Folkloretanz: Eine Veranstaltung der Volkshochschule Wedding,” program notes, Wedding Volkshochschule, EDF, accessed 26 May 2009, 2. No date other than “Freitag, 31 Mai” is on the document; however, the address of the VHS and that it fell under the auspices of the “Ausländerprogramm” suggests the event took place in the early 1980s.

¹²⁰ “‘Orient-Rock’ und türkischer Folkloretanz,” 2.

other German teachers from local schools, and Commissioner for Foreigners of the Berliner Senate Barbara John was the keynote speaker. However, no German teachers—other than the event’s organizer—showed up to the meeting, leaving John to conclude, wrote a journalist, that they would rather “sit in front of the television... than participate in the event.”¹²¹ A year and a half later, Michael Weiß, Ataman, and Serpil Dalaman organized a weekend getaway for participants in the HASA program with the intention of bringing together German and Turkish youth to get to know each other better, learn about one another’s culture, and, in particular, for German students to hear about the experiences of their Turkish peers. However, only one German student, a young woman, ended up participating in the weekend trip.¹²² While the weekend proved a good opportunity for Turkish-German students to discuss the challenges they faced and draw support from one another, the intended middle ground for cross-cultural engagement and understanding largely failed to materialize. At the same time, however, it illustrates, together with the earlier examples of social and cultural events, that the VHS worked not only to facilitate immigrants’ introduction to and successful settlement in Berlin, but also to create intermediary spaces through which German residents would come to better know and understand their “new neighbors.”

A Collaborative and Creative Space

These seminars, events, and concerts were all a part of the Wedding *Volkshochschule*’s efforts to be, in the words of Director of the *Interkulturelles*

¹²¹ “Dertleştiler: Wedding Schule’de yapılan katlan gençlerimiz,” *Tercüman-Berlin Ilavesi*, 12 December 1986, EDF.

¹²² Christian Blees, “Am Frühstückstisch fehlten die Oliven,” *Der Tagesspiegel*, 26 June 1988, EDF.

Bildungsprogramm Dr. Eduard Ditschek, “a site of meeting and exchange [that] brings people from different cultures together.”¹²³ In addition to the one-time events discussed in the previous section, the VHS instituted and hosted projects that stressed the “exchange” aspect of Ditschek’s words. For these projects, Germans and their “ausländische Mitbürger” came to better know and understand each other through the process of collaboration in artistic production. While film series, art exhibitions, and multicultural clubs played a role in producing this collaborative, creative space, I focus here on perhaps the most well-known example of cross-cultural artistic production during the 1980s and early 1990s, a German-Turkish theater workshop that came to be named Kulis.

The story of Kulis highlights the importance of individuals in the creation of a particular space, even as it reflects the influence of the community and common experiences. When Ditschek became the director of the then *Ausländerprogramm*, the department’s largest cultural program was a combination of Turkish folklore courses, which included traditional Turkish music and folk dance. The focus on Turkish folklore was the brainchild of Ditschek’s predecessor, Sever Sarioğlu, who had decided early on that the VHS needed to reflect and serve the needs of the community around it. Sarioğlu invited well-known instructors from Turkey to teach classes at the Wedding VHS, and had many of the costumes for performances sewn in Turkey as well. Ditschek continued to support this program when he assumed directorship, but a disagreement between the VHS and the Turkish folklore instructors led to a split, and the Turkish instructors left the VHS to set up an independent folklore organization in Kreuzberg.¹²⁴

¹²³ “Mit Ausländern ins Gespräch kommen,” *Lokal-Anzeiger*, 6 February 1991, *Jugendtheater Presse* Binder, EDF.

¹²⁴ Ditschek, 1.

Ditschek and others at the Wedding VHS wanted to continue having a cultural program in which “an intellectual discussion concerning life as migrant and immigrant” could take place. “It seemed to me,” Ditschek explained, “that theater would be an interesting thing. But that naturally had something to do with my biography, with the topic of my dissertation.”¹²⁵ As a university student, Ditschek had studied general and comparative literature, and, at the time, was writing his dissertation on theater and film in the 1920s. His own gravitation toward theater as the *Ausländerprogramm*’s next cultural program was met and sharpened by the application of Yekta Arman for the position of theater director.¹²⁶ The 32-year-old Arman had been working as an actor and director since completing his formal training as an actor in Istanbul fourteen years earlier. Beginning in 1984, he was a member of Kreuzberg’s professional Turkish theater, Tiya Trom (my theater)¹²⁷, and he came to the VHS with the notion that he should not just be working with professional Turkish actors. Arman was looking for a place where he could do theater work with young people from immigrant backgrounds. “And so we came together, Yekta and I,” recalled Ditschek, “... and that was 1986.”¹²⁸

Though both Arman and Ditschek had originally hoped for an even number of students with German and immigrant backgrounds, from the beginning the majority of the young participants came from Turkish families. The program from the group’s first

¹²⁵ Ibid., 2.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 2.

¹²⁷ “Auch Deutsche können den Sketch auf türkisch verstehen,” *Der Tagesspiegel*, 8 November 1986, *Jugendtheater Presse Binder*, EDF.

¹²⁸ Ditschek, 2.

production lists twenty-two actors with Turkish names and seven with German names.¹²⁹

Participants were generally working-class youth in their late teens to early twenties, and came from districts throughout the city—though most lived in either Wedding, Kreuzberg, or Neukölln.¹³⁰ Over the ten years that it operated, the *Deutsch-Türkisches Jugendtheater* (German-Turkish Youth Theater) was comprised of around twenty-five participants, a third of whom formed a core that stayed with the group between six and seven years (Figure 10).¹³¹ One of the main goals of the ongoing theater workshop, Ditschek recalled with a slight laugh, was teaching the young participants “soft skills,” such as punctuality and reliability. The youth would come to practice late, unprepared, and distracted. But their enthusiasm for the theater would eventually overcome all that, and when it came to performances, “absolute concentration and dependability reigned.”¹³²

Another challenge for the young actors was language. Since the significant majority of the young actors, as well as the director, came from Turkish backgrounds, much of the conversation during practices took place in Turkish, though the productions themselves were mainly in German. This could be difficult for Ditschek and the German youths, who understood little or no Turkish. Yet, at the same time, the language and cultural differences spurred the “intellectual discussion” and exchange that Ditschek and the VHS had hoped for, and proved one of the elements of group participation that young people found most appealing. “It’s really a lot of fun and really interesting to do theater with Turkish friends,”

¹²⁹ “Yaşasın şiir/ Hoch lebe die Poesie,” Deutsch-Türkisches Jugendtheater/ Türk-Alman Gençlik Tiyatrosu, Volkshochschule Berlin-Wedding, 29 May 1986, EDF, 3.

¹³⁰ Ditschek, 4.

¹³¹ Ibid., 13.

¹³² Ibid., 4.

26-year-old electrician Markus Eitel told the *Nord-Berliner* newspaper. “You also get a look into Turkish mentality that otherwise you only perceive superficially.” His 19-year-old fellow actor, Aylin Uyunc, added, “The idea, that Germans and Turks do theater together, I think it’s great. And after [my first] play, I’m definitely going to keep participating.”¹³³

The participation of all the young actors in the development and preparation of each play reveals the extent to which the VHS served as host to collaborative, creative spaces in the lives of the second generation in particular. While the first production, “Yaşasın şiir/ Hoch lebe die Poesie,” brought together poetry from German and Turkish literary traditions, subsequent productions were original plays or series of sketches developed by Arman, Ditschek, and the actors themselves. First they decided on a topic, then the actors wrote scenes or ideas around that theme. Arman collected the students’ thoughts and compiled them into a rough draft, which he gave to Ditschek for revision. Once the revision was ready, the whole team set to work bringing the play to the stage.

Figure 10. Image of Actors from “So eine Klasse” Program



The intentions of the group’s founders, the makeup of the participants, and the collaborative way in which both parties worked created a space that coalesced into a series of productions dealing directly with the challenges of cross-cultural communication and multicultural life in Berlin. They examined the relations between German and Turkish co-

¹³³ “Die Inszenierung ist wieder konfliktr chtig aufgebaut,” *Der Nord-Berliner*, 29 March 1990, *Jugendtheater Presse* Binder, EDF.

workers (“Abend mit Manne und Memo”, 1987),¹³⁴ explored the dynamics of interaction and conflict within a classroom (“So eine Klasse,” 1988) (Figure 10, previous page),¹³⁵ and depicted the second generation’s struggles with daily life and violence (“Die Band und die Bande,” 1991).¹³⁶ Through this space, the actors—Turkish and German—were able to create representations of their own experiences and ideas, to exercise and hone their skills in acting and the theater, and to collaborate with and learn from other youth that they may not have otherwise befriended. This last aspect was of central importance to the *Interkulturelle Bildungsprogramm*, which, Ditschek stressed time and again in VHS literature and newspaper articles, was about learning from one another more than just integration.¹³⁷

This influence of this collaborative, creative space started in the Wedding *Oberschule* where the group practiced, and expanded to include sites throughout Wedding and other districts in Berlin. Ditschek smiled as he recalled how the theater group “practically occupied” the basement of the *Oberschule* where the VHS was based. No one wanted to let them use the space¹³⁸, and the head janitor routinely swore at them for being there. Ditschek,

¹³⁴ Eddi Ditschek, “Das Deutsch-Türkische Jugendtheater der Volkshochschule Wedding,” in *Kunstvoller Alltag: Kommunale Kulturarbeit der Volkshochschule Berlin-Wedding*, Ursula Diehl, Gisela Weimann and Dr. Eduard Ditschek, eds. (Berlin, 1990), 101.

¹³⁵ Eddi Ditschek, “So einen Klasse: Eine neue Produktion des Deutsch-Türkischen Jugendtheaters der Volkshochschule Wedding,” *Vis-à-Vis*, December 1988/January 1989, Binder: Altbestand Wedding 11.1987—04.1990, MMA; Image of Actors from “So eine Klasse” Program, EDF.

¹³⁶ “Die Band und die Bande: Eine neue Produktion des Deutsch-Türkischen Jugendtheaters der Volkshochschule Wedding,” *Vis-à-Vis*, May 1991, Binder: Altbestand Wedding 11.1987—04.1990, MMA.

¹³⁷ For example, see Eddi Ditschek, “Das Deutsch-Türkische Jugendtheater der Volkshochschule Wedding,” in *Kunstvoller Alltag: Kommunale Kulturarbeit der Volkshochschule Berlin-Wedding*, Ursula Diehl, Gisela Weimann and Dr. Eduard Ditschek, eds. (Berlin: FAB-Verlag, 1990), 100-102; Eddi Ditschek, “So eine Klasse,” *Vis-à-Vis*, April 1989, Binder: Altbestand Wedding 11.1987—04.1990, MMA; Eddi Ditschek, “Volkshochschule als Ort Interkultureller Bildung,” *Vis-à-Vis*, September 1990, Binder: Altbestand Wedding 11.1987—04.1990, MMA.

¹³⁸ Relations between *Volkshochschule* Wedding and the Theodor-Plievier-Schule could be less than amicable, particularly in regard to the use of space and supplies.

however, had his own keys and the theater group made themselves at home in the basement, practicing late into the evenings and putting up posters from their different performances to personalize the space.¹³⁹ Their first performance took place in the auditorium of the VHS, with subsequent performances throughout Wedding, including at the city hall and in a school auditorium near Sparrplatz, Kreuzberg, and Schöneberg. From their debut with “Yaşasın şiir/ Hoch lebe die Poesie,” the German-Turkish Youth Theater attracted a diverse audience, ranging from local German and Turkish residents to more prominent guests such as Commissioner for Foreigners Barbara John and Turkish consul Mehmet Gücük.¹⁴⁰ The *Jugendtheater* played for receptive and responsive audiences throughout Berlin, as well as in other cities where they traveled for competitions, which fulfilled the other main goal Ditschek and Arman had for the theater group: educating the community about both the work of the youth theater and the VHS more generally.¹⁴¹

Audience members were not the only ones to learn about the efforts of this multicultural *Jugendtheater*, however. The group’s composition and the subject matter of their plays attracted the attention of the newsprint media, from district-level monthlies like *Vis-à-Vis* to widely circulating dailies such as *Der Tagesspiegel*, *Hürriyet*, and *Tercüman*. Coverage of the performances was consistently positive in tone, with both German- and Turkish-language newspapers applauding the youth for taking on the difficult topic of daily *Nebeneinander* (coexistence).¹⁴² The group’s engagement with the contemporary problems

¹³⁹ Ditschek, 11.

¹⁴⁰ “‘Yaşasın şiir’ yeniden sahneleniyor,” *Hürriyet*, 29 May 1986, *Jugendtheater Presse Binder*, EDF.

¹⁴¹ Ditschek, 4.

¹⁴² It is interesting to note that, despite the similar tone in press coverage, the Turkish-language papers often used the possessive when discussing the actors with Turkish background in Kulis (“our youth”).

of immigrant youth and the challenges of integration were a constant focus of the news coverage. In the words of one *Milliyet* article, the strength of the production, in this case “Sketch-Topf,” was that it “depicts the problems of Turks or Germans on one hand, and on the other compels thought through laughter.”¹⁴³ Kulis’s productions and the coverage they received attracted the attention of the Turkish Parents Association of Berlin-Brandenburg and resulted in a high point in the life of the group: the reception of the Mete Eksi prize in 1992.

Mete Ekşi, born and raised in Kreuzberg, was the son of Turkish immigrants. In 1991, Ekşi was attacked with a baseball bat and killed by a young man from Marzahn when he tried to mediate a fight between right-wing extremists and a group of Turkish youth from Kreuzberg. The prize, given by the Turkish Parents Association of Berlin-Brandenburg, was set up a year later to advance initiatives that worked toward peaceful relations between Germans and foreigners.¹⁴⁴ It was a proud moment for all the participants in Kulis. “I can still well remember the presentation ceremony,” Ditschek recounted with quiet pride. “I still have the certificate that we received, and I think we received twenty-five hundred marks.” He laughed. “Naturally we put the money right into the next production.”¹⁴⁵

After ten years of collaboration, however, Kulis began to change shape. Some of the students were ready to move on; they had jobs and families that made participation in late-night rehearsals and productions difficult. Another faction took the opposite route. The “theater-obsessed,” as Ditschek referred to them, wanted to form the group into a professional theater troupe, which, for them, meant finding a new director and not being

¹⁴³ “Gururlandık...”, *Milliyet*, 13 March 1987, *Jugendtheater Presse Binder*, EDF.

¹⁴⁴ “Durchs Theater Zugang zu Ausländern gefunden,” *Der Tagesspiegel*, 22 November 1992, *Jugendtheater Presse Binder*, EDF.

¹⁴⁵ Ditschek, 9.

affiliated with the VHS. “We [Arman and Ditschek] felt like the youths’ behavior was like a little mutiny or a little revolution,” Ditschek recalled, “but in reality it was a quite normal emancipation process.” Ditschek and Arman stepped aside, and the remaining participants continued on with a new director. Unfortunately, the new incarnation of Kulis did not meet with much success, and disbanded not long after when the director left the group.¹⁴⁶

Over the ten years that it had been in existence, Kulis performed ten premieres and gave over two hundred performances, with around one hundred fifty youth participants.¹⁴⁷ Under the auspices of the Wedding *Volkshochschule*, the staff and students formed a collaborative, creative space in which they pursued their common interest in theater and could address, on their own terms, the challenges and conflicts they saw in the community around them. Through the performances of these collaborations and their news coverage, this creative, cross-cultural space extended beyond its origins at the VHS through the local community and, albeit to a limited extent, broader German society.

Conclusion

The school has been a critical site for the second generation since the first *Gastarbeiterkinder* began showing up in German classrooms in the 1960s. Charged with simultaneously preparing them for the *Rückkehr* and integrating them into German society, school administrators and teachers struggled with how to best educate these new students, often without any specific training to that end. The importance of the school in the successful integration of Turkish-German children, emphasized by German politicians,

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 14.

¹⁴⁷ Yekta Arman, “1985—1995 10 Jahre KULIS: Deutsch-Türkisches Theater an der Volkshochschule Wedding,” *Jugendtheater Presse* Binder, EDF.

media, and the public as well as Turkish parents, has been met in equal measure by controversy, frustration, and anger at its apparent failure.

While the discourse surrounding the education of children “with a migrant background” has narrowly defined the school—specifically the primary and secondary school— as the site of a “problem,” this analysis has revealed the complex and at times conflicting ways second generation students influenced and were impacted by the spaces they experienced in school. As with the home and neighborhood, the school became a site of contradiction. On one hand, Turkish-German students experienced struggle, conflict, hostility, and discrimination. Teachers and fellow students, both intentionally and unknowingly, created spaces of exclusion that informed the second generation of their foreignness and reinforced the mindset that this was not their “home.” Turkish-German youth dealt with this exclusion in a variety of ways, sometimes challenging others’ perceptions and proving that they “belonged,” and other times acknowledging the exclusion and constructing a sense of belonging separate from the school.

Even as the second generation struggled with the academic and social difficulties of school, they also found and created within it spaces of opportunity that enabled them to pursue their own interests and goals. They learned new languages, received career training, and attended apprenticeships. They forged friendships that provided emotional support as well as academic assistance. Young women, perhaps even more so than their male peers, saw in the school the chance to equip themselves with the tools necessary for future independence, for a career that would keep them from having to rely on, and thus be subject to, their families for financial support. It is important to note that many of these experiences were not unique to Turkish-Germans, or even to children with migrant backgrounds. All

students, German and non-German, created and experienced these spaces of opportunity within the context of the school, and the Turkish-German students' use of them reflects the ways in which they were settling and adapting to school life and expectations.

The Turkish-German youth were not the only ones adapting, however. School administrators, teachers, and even the physical classrooms themselves were changing in response to these new students. Schools offered additional German language instruction, hosted Turkish teachers who held classes for students with Turkish parents, and began printing informational letters home in Turkish and German. While Turkish-German students were the intended target of cross-cultural education, some German teachers found themselves learning Turkish, becoming familiar with Turkish traditions and customs, and adapting their lessons and teaching styles to more effectively educate their increasingly diverse classes. This last effort found an organized outlet in the development of bilingual education. Beginning at the grassroots level, teachers developed a bilingual approach to the education first of *Gastarbeiterkinder* and then of mixed classrooms, where the incorporation of German and Turkish promoted the participation of all the students in this space of cross-cultural education.

Where the *Grund-* and *Oberschulen* were largely concerned with equipping their “foreign” students for life in German society, the *Volkshochschule* saw a different role for itself. Though it took years for this position to be officially defined and promoted, the VHS served as an intermediary and a *Begegnungsort* (place of encounter) for members of the community around it. For the school, its directors and instructors, this had two practical implications. First, they provided courses and programs through which “ausländische Mitbürger” could be introduced to German society and learn the skills necessary for existing

productively within it. Second, the VHS created spaces where German and foreign, predominantly Turkish, members of the community could meet, interact with, and learn from each other. While they often met with limited success, the collaborative nature of such spaces highlighted the importance of communication rather than assimilation, and gave their participants the opportunity to move past superficial understanding to more honest exchange. The German-Turkish Youth Theater, with its multi-ethnic makeup and long-term duration, was perhaps the most effective and clearest example of this type of collaborative space.

Thus, the school, in its various forms, came to host spaces of inclusion and exclusion, opportunity and conflict, collaboration and separation. The second generation, and to a more limited extent the first as well, experienced such spaces on a regular basis, sometimes even simultaneously. As with the home and neighborhood, the effects of such spaces on the second generation's identities were ambivalent, but overall led to a bounded, at times almost defensive, sense of belonging. That defensive sense of belonging would find another home and outlet in the next space to develop in the Turkish-German landscape, the mosque.

CHAPTER 4

FROM THE *HINTERHOF* TO THE STREET FRONT: THE COMPLEX POSITION(INGS) OF THE MOSQUES IN THE TURKISH-GERMAN COMMUNITY

It is not always an easy thing to find a mosque in Berlin. While there are dozens throughout the city, particularly in the central districts, the vast majority are tucked away in *Hinterhöfe* (courtyards), readily accessible to those who know where to go but invisible or elusive to strangers. Often housed in former factories or warehouses, these mosques provide spaces for worship, education, and socialization for the city's growing Muslim community, the bulk of which has its origins in the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* population. And, just as that burgeoning community made itself felt in workplaces, neighborhoods, and schools, so too did its religious places begin to become a part of the urban landscape. However, while these places of worship seemed increasingly a part of daily media reports about Turkish "foreign residents," finding an actual mosque could prove to be a challenge.

A visit to the Yunus Emre Mosque on Reinickendorfer Strasse is a case in point. The building itself is not difficult to locate. It stands on a moderately busy street, the immediate area characterized more by businesses than apartments. The trees, already in full leaf on a late spring morning and scattered among the buildings and along the street, save the atmosphere from the depressing concrete blandness which less affluent commercial zones in Berlin tend to have. A sign on the front of a long, two-story building heralds the destination. Passing through the hall, one enters a large courtyard, a chain-link fence separating the open space from the neighboring building to the left and a vacant lot just beyond the bushes across

the concrete yard ahead. Yet, the search is not quite over. Which of the rear doors leads to the mosque?

Through the nearest door and up a flight of the stairs, one enters a small room littered with shoes, some pairs lining the wall in an orderly fashion and other, smaller ones scattered impetuously across the floor. The entry leads to a larger room that appears to run the length of the building. On a Saturday morning, an elderly man instructs a group of young boys in Turkish at a long table. A woman, perhaps in her mid-thirties and northern European in appearance, comes forward to greet the visitor. She introduces herself as Melek and gives a brief tour of the mosque, describing some of the events that took place there and explaining the religious function of the furnishings. A deep crimson carpet, patterned to orient supplicants toward Mecca, covers the floor, its expanse interrupted only by two support pillars in the middle of the room and a small pulpit to the right of the *mihrab*¹ on the far wall. It is empty, but Melek describes how it fills on Friday afternoons. Like the previous room, the prayer hall is spotless, orderly, and, in the absence of a table of young boys, serene. This is not a “proper” mosque, built specifically for its use, but it serves its purpose.²

The elderly man speaking Turkish, the young boys dutifully studying the Qur’an on a sunny Saturday morning, the German convert in a headscarf, the spacious prayer room: each of these elements has been the subject of political, media, and academic discourse concerning the growth of Islam in Germany. Though not a topic of interest in the earlier years of the *Gastarbeiter* program, scholarship on Islam in Germany, and Europe more generally, has exploded in the past twenty years. Researchers from across the social sciences and

¹ A *mihrab* is a small niche in the wall that directs the attention of the worshippers toward Mecca.

² This is a description of my own visit to the Yunus Emre Mosque in early June 2009.

humanities have investigated the meanings, practices, and perceptions of Islam as a way to understand its role in the Turkish-German community. More specifically, scholars have sought to understand Islam's influence on the relationship between that community and broader German society. One of the early questions scholars have explored is why religion seemingly became more important to the Turkish-German community over time. Yasemin Karakaşoğlu and Andreas Goldberg, among others, attribute this development to family reunification in the 1970s, but also viewed it as a defensive posture assumed in the face of perceived hostility by Germans.³ As Germans witnessed the growth of immigrant communities and the increasing visibility of Islamic observance, many reacted with an anxiety and hostility that worked to isolate immigrants—and their children—from broader German society.

Such feelings of isolation and insecurity within the Turkish immigrant community, scholars have contended, prompted the first generation to emphasize Islamic and traditional cultural values that reinforced a patriarchal power structure.⁴ Scholarship focused on gender (which, until recently, was entirely about women) has invariably tied the position of women to the practice of Islam. The headscarf as a symbol of patriarchy, oppression, community identity, and individual agency has long been at the center of this debate, both in Germany

³ See Andreas Goldberg, "Islam in Germany," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002): 30-47; Yasemin Karakaşoğlu, "Turkish Cultural Orientations in Germany and the Role of Islam," in *Turkish Culture in German Society Today*, eds. David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996): 157-179.

⁴ See Shireen Hunter, ed., *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural and Political Landscape*. (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002); Barbara Freyer Stowasser, "The Turks in Germany: From Sojourners to Citizens," in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Dursun Tan and Hans-Peter Waldhoff, "Turkish Everyday Culture in Germany and its Prospects," in *Turkish Cultural in German Society Today*, eds. David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996).

and other European countries.⁵ Studies, both popular and academic, have concentrated especially on second generation Turkish-German women, examining the role of Islam in young women's emancipation and participation in broader German society.⁶ Some scholars have seen young women's fashion, specifically the combination of the headscarf with stylish clothing, as evidence of a hybridization of European and Islamic values. This "Euro-Islam" evident in the second generation is heralded as a positive development in an often otherwise ambivalent relationship.⁷

The purpose-built mosque, in a sense, is the architectural version of the headscarf. Its appearance and multiplication has been the second highly visible indicator of the growth of Islam in Germany. Scholars researching the dynamics of mosque construction have examined the various actors and elements of the controversy that almost invariably ensues, finding this visual marker of Islam to be a persistent wedge between Muslim communities and broader German society.⁸ However, while critics of such construction projects have often pointed to the mosque as evidence of a *Parallelgesellschaft* and a hindrance to

⁵ For an insightful treatment of this issue in the French context, see Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

⁶ See Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Identity Crisis of Turkish Migrants: First and Second Generation," in *Turkish Workers in Europe: An Interdisciplinary Study*, eds. İlhan Başgöz and Norman Furniss (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985): 3-22; Mehmet Yasin, "Gather up the bales, we are going back: Lost Generation, Runaway Girls are Speaking," in *Turkish Workers in Europe: An Interdisciplinary Study*, eds. İlhan Başgöz and Norman Furniss (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985): 175-191, Umut Erel, "Gendered and Racialized Experiences of Citizenship in the Life Stories of Women of Turkish Background in Germany," in *Gender and Ethnicity in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Jacqueline Andall (Oxford: Berg, 2003): 155-176; Seyran Ateş, *Grosse Reise ins Feuer: Die Geschichte einer deutschen Türkin*. (Berlin: Rowohlt, 2003); Necla Kelek, *Die fremde Braut: ein Bericht aus dem Inneren des türkischen Lebens in Deutschland*. (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005).

⁷ Peter P. Mandaville, "Muslim Youth in Europe," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen Hunter (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002): 219-229.

⁸ Gerdien Jonker, "The Mevlana Mosque in Berlin-Kreuzberg: An Unsolved Conflict." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 6 (November 2005): 1067-1081.

immigrant integration,⁹ other scholars, such as Rauf Ceylan and Thomas Schmitt, have argued that, despite the often intense controversy, a purpose-built mosque can and has served an integrative function for immigrant Muslim communities.¹⁰ Mosques, they contend, can root their members in the local community, provide important social services, and serve as forums and tools for dialog with other German political and religious organizations. The extent to which they have operated in such a manner, however, remains a point of contention among academics, politicians, and the media alike.

In this chapter, I examine the mosque as a religious, cultural, and social space for the Turkish community in West Germany, focusing in particular on its contested location both apart from and within German society.¹¹ As the character of the Turkish population shifted from a temporary workforce to an established and multi-generational community, the mosque, too, developed to reflect the changing needs and interests of its users. This chapter identifies the layers of purpose and use that came to construct the mosque as a space, and explores how those, in conjunction with the physicality of mosques, affected the relationships between the Turkish community, German society, and the environment in which the first and second generations conducted their daily lives. Ultimately, I find that the mosque served simultaneously as a site of religious and cultural preservation that could work as a separate

⁹ Christine Brunn, *Moscheebau-Konflikte in Deutschland: Eine räumlich-semantische Analyse auf der Grundlage der Theorie der Produktion des Raumes von Henri Lefebvre* (Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2006).

¹⁰ Rauf Ceylan, *Ethnische Kolonien: Entstehung, Funktion und Wandel am Beispiel türkischer Moscheen und Cafés* (Wiesbaden, 2006); Thomas Schmitt, *Moscheen in Deutschland: Konflikte um ihre Errichtung und Nutzung* (Flensburg: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2003).

¹¹ It is important to note that I am looking almost entirely at mosques with predominantly, if not wholly Turkish membership. Turks and Turkish-Germans constitute the overwhelming majority of Muslims in Germany, and most mosques draw from distinct ethnic or national groups for their membership.

social system, and as a platform from which Turkish and Turkish-German Muslims could reach out to broader German society.

Out of Sight: Prayer Rooms and Mosques as Sites of Religious and Social Well-Being

No one, it seems, gave much thought to the religious lives and well-being of the Turkish workers who participated in the bilateral labor contracts that first brought them to the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1960s. The West German government's interest in the *Gastarbeiter* was economic; they constituted a quick and relatively inexpensive way to get the German economy back on its feet. To restate a now-common refrain, they called for labor, not people.¹² Nor did the government in the Republic of Turkey feel compelled to account for the religious needs of its citizens abroad. The parties in power during the 1960s and 1970s in Turkey represented that country's strongly secularist political tradition, viewing religion as a private matter that did not have a place in policy formation.¹³ Referring to both West Germany and Turkey, Ceylan writes, "The public and cultural life moved to the background, because the minimal, material goals had priority."¹⁴ As such, when the first waves of Turkish *Gastarbeiter* arrived, they found little space for religious observance, with the occasional exception of minor efforts by company cafeterias to provide non-pork meal options.

¹² This phrase has become ubiquitous in connection with the history of *Gastarbeiter* in West Germany, making the original source difficult to place. However, some locate its origin in Max Frisch's 1967 book, *Überfremdung: Öffentlichkeit als Partner* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1967).

¹³ Barbara Freyer Stowasser, "The Turks in Germany: From Sojourners to Citizens," in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, ed., *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 60.

¹⁴ Ceylan, 130.

Gastarbeiter narratives suggest that the workers themselves gave little thought, at least at the beginning, to how they would worship in a foreign country. For the same reasons that they largely tolerated minimal living conditions and difficult work, Turkish immigrants initially did not take significant steps to institute places of worship. However, communal religious practice, and particularly ritual prayer, soon became a way for these uprooted individuals to experience and express solidarity with their countrymen.¹⁵ When Turkish Muslims began to look for places where they could gather together for prayer, they found their options limited. Some companies responded to the requests of their Muslim employees and provided space within the workplace for common prayer. As we saw in Chapter 1, a Siemens factory in West Berlin, on the urging of a German superintendent sympathetic to his Turkish employees' needs, offered a room for Muslim workers to use for prayer, in addition to making efforts to address their dietary restrictions.¹⁶

Yet this was not always, or even often, the case. Frequently, Muslim *Gastarbeiter* congregated outside the workplace in order to pray together. They met in the basements and attics of the company dormitories, in whatever spaces were available and would suit the purpose. One Turkish man, in reflecting on his early years in Duisburg-Hochfeld recalled: "At that time we didn't have the possibility to live out our religion. We prayed in the basements of the dormitories. There weren't any mosques, any organizations and such."¹⁷ Another recounted, "I moved to Hochfeld on November 23, 1973. I looked right and left for a mosque, but didn't find one." Instead, he and some of his co-workers would drive from

¹⁵ I use the masculine version consciously, as I have yet to find reference to early *Gastarbeiterinnen* participating in this type of common prayer.

¹⁶ "Mittagessen für türkische Mitarbeiter," Rundschreiben zur Beschäftigung von Ausländischen Arbeitnehmer, Sig. 10585-1, Schlüssel 04610585, Siemens Corporate Archives (SCA), Munich, Germany.

¹⁷ Ceylan, 127.

their home to Duisburg-Hochfeld to a prayer room in another part of the city.¹⁸ Larger gatherings, such as holiday festivals, sometimes required more space than the informal prayer rooms could offer, requiring the faithful to find another place to worship. In one such case, a group of *Gastarbeiter* in Duisburg-Hochfeld, with the help of a Turkish translator, negotiated with a local church to rent space for Ramadan and *Opferfest*.¹⁹

Yet, even when these men could find the space to worship, they still lacked a religious authority figure, an imam, to lead them in prayer. Instead, the men would choose among themselves someone to perform the duties of the imam. These meetings provided a space of familiarity and belonging, where men could see to their own religious welfare and enjoy the community of like-minded believers. The informal nature of these men's religious observance, their services as well as their debates on religious issues, took place "within the framework of their inherited tradition, which was mainly the Sufi-tinged Islamic paradigm of their Anatolian roots."²⁰ Improvisation, then, was the rule for religious observance in the early years of Turkish immigration to West Germany.

By the 1970s, however, Muslims were growing tired of this ad hoc manner of worship. At the same time, family reunification changed the character, and thus the needs, of the Turkish immigrant community. The arrival of families began to formalize religious observance and called for both a change of place for worship and a shift in focus to include social services that would assist spouses and children with the transition to life in a new country. This prompted the first physical relocation of prayer rooms. Men who had moved

¹⁸ Ibid., 130.

¹⁹ Ibid., 130-131.

²⁰ Stowasser, 61.

out of the dormitories could not hold religious services there, and prayer rooms in company factories were not sufficient for larger-scale religious services. This growing community needed fixed sites adequate for their changing religious and social needs. Thus, prayer rooms moved from the attics and basements of the company dormitories to larger spaces off courtyards, in former factories, workshops, and, in one case at least, even an old *Kneipe*.²¹ Hayrullah Şenay recalled that the first space his mosque was located in was an area of Hamburg frequented by drug dealers and prostitutes: “The room was damp and dark, but it was better than nothing.”²² These new mosques constituted the first formal institutions formed by Turkish *Gastarbeiter* and reflected not only the changing community demographics, but also a growing realization that their return to Turkey would be further in the future than they had originally planned. The mosques, then, were some of the first roots the Turkish community put down in German soil.

Ceylan traces the founding of the first mosque in the district of Duisburg-Hochfeld in 1974, showing how the institution developed out of the needs and initiative of a group of Turkish *Gastarbeiter* in that city. After approximately fifteen years of gathering in makeshift prayer rooms and acting as their own imams, the group decided to take the step of establishing their own mosque. One of the founding members recalled that at one of the prayer meetings, as the group was deciding who would lead the service, he suggested: “‘If it’s always such a problem, why don’t we just found our own mosque. Bring me a pen and paper.’ Then I asked the circle, ‘How much money can you spare?’ and collected the

²¹ Ceylan, 127.

²² “Wir sind hier, um zu bleiben—Der Moscheegründer Hayrullah Şenay,” in *Gekommen und Geblieben: Deutsch-türkische Lebensgeschichten*, ed. Michael Richter (Hamburg: Edition Körber Stiftung, 2003), 216.

offering. With that we founded the first mosque”.²³ Using the funds gathered from Turkish guestworkers throughout Duisburg, the group rented a former *Kneipe* and set to work renovating it to serve their religious needs. Each step proceeded on the initiative, funding, and muscle of the guestworkers, without guidance from the Islamic umbrella organizations that would soon work to unite mosques and believers under their direction. Ceylan argues that this mosque, and the early ones to follow, were not subject to the same regulations as they would have been in Turkey and thus, as with German immigrant churches in eighteenth-century United States, were informed and shaped by the context in which they developed.²⁴

In 1974, the Osmanlı Camii opened its doors for service.²⁵ As the only mosque in Duisburg, Ceylan writes that it “offered a cultural center and an emotional refuge.”²⁶ Muslims living throughout the city went to the Hochfeld mosque to socialize and pray with each other. “It was a refreshment for us, something special, that we could perform religious services in this mosque,” an early member recounted to Ceylan. “Before that, we had prayed outside of the mosque, but through a mosque, later also with an imam, from whom we could learn a lot, our religious life achieved another quality.”²⁷ In the beginning, users of this new common space came from diverse backgrounds, including different political or religious orientations and even non-Turkish Muslims. Outside of the oversight and control of bosses and dormitory directors, the men met to attend to their spiritual well-being, but soon began drawing on the knowledge and experiences of fellow believers to aid them in other aspects of

²³ Ceylan, 133.

²⁴ Ibid., 133-138.

²⁵ *Camii* is Turkish for mosque.

²⁶ Ceylan, 138.

²⁷ Ibid., 137.

their lives as well. They discussed the regulations regarding family reunification and what documentation was required to bring one's family to West Germany. They also organized the purchase of *halal* meat.²⁸ The mosque, then, became a site where Turkish immigrants could see to their social needs, in addition to religious obligations.

As the Turkish Muslim community expanded, so, too, did the social spaces within their mosques. There continued to be room for working men to gather, pray, socialize, and exchange information, but the aging of the first generation and the new members of the community added layers of social services to its original intent. As the first generation of Turkish *Gastarbeiter* retired, the mosque grew in its importance to the lives of older Muslim men. The mosque served as the center of their spiritual lives at a time when religious devotion occupied a significant place in their thoughts and daily routines, a development motivated in part by their own approach to death. Praying, studying the Qur'an, and discussing religious subjects with fellow believers gave them a feeling of "inner peace" that many did not find at home, distracted by the "nonsense" of the television and the banality of daily life.²⁹

Along with this serenity, older Muslims found old friends and co-workers. "Here I have the possibility to meet with my former co-workers, my friends," recounted one man. "I can talk with them here, share my problems with them."³⁰ Some mosques included a *Teestube* (tearoom) to encourage such social spaces. The mosque also connected these elderly men with younger members of the *Gemeinde* (religious community), from whom they

²⁸ Ibid., 133-140. As the community grew, however, political and religious divisions within the mosque led to some members leaving to attend the new mosques being founded around the city.

²⁹ Ibid., 148-151.

³⁰ Ibid., 151.

could receive emotional support and also practical assistance. “They always help me,” a retiree in his sixties said. “If I say, ‘Tomorrow I have to take care of something,’ they come with me and help.”³¹ By bringing together old friends and linking the older generation with the younger, the mosque not only improved the quality of their lives, it also rooted them more firmly in the community—both the people and the place. For many elderly Muslim men, then, the religious and social spaces of the mosque assumed an even larger place in their lives, as they shifted from the working world to the slower, more reflective pace of retirement.

For women, and particularly those who moved to West Germany to rejoin their husbands, the mosque could provide space for socializing, participating in community events, and negotiating the social and bureaucratic mazes of the host society. While the home and neighborhood constituted the main social spaces for Turkish immigrant women, some also found the mosque a safe and familiar space to meet with friends. This could take place either in prearranged gatherings, such as during preparations for a communal festival, or more informally, like pausing for a chat when dropping off the children for *Koranschule* (Qur’an instruction school). In addition, mosques began offering German language and literacy classes for women, or would provide the space for local organizations—such as the Wedding’s *Volkshochschule*—to conduct language classes.³² These classes brought women in to participate in the life of the mosque even as they enabled them to engage with German society on a more confident, or at least more informed, footing. Many mosques, however,

³¹ Ibid., 151.

³² Irina Leffers and Christholde Thielcke, “Zwischen Religion und Jugendarbeit: Angebote und Aktivitäten,” in Gerdien Jonker and Andreas Kapphan, eds., *Moscheen und islamisches Leben in Berlin* (Berlin: Ausländerbeauftragte des Senats, 1999), 30-34.

did not consider programs for the social well-being of women to be a priority, and it has only been more recently that such spaces have opened up for interested women.³³ The Beyazid Mosque in Berlin-Wedding, for example, began offering German language classes for women some thirty years after its founding.³⁴

Mosques were originally founded for the religious needs of the first generation Turkish immigrants, but their focus quickly expanded to include the youth of that community. The religious education of the youth, specifically the *Koranschule*, has constituted the primary space for the second generation at mosques, and is discussed in-depth in the following section. Despite the central place of religious education, mosques have also been the site of other educational and social spaces. Some mosques offered recreational activities for local Muslim youth, including sports teams, as a way to engage them in the life of the mosque community and provide them with a safe and healthy environment.³⁵ Other mosques, with more financial and personnel resources, have also offered homework assistance, computer programs, and other similar support. As with the spaces of social well-being offered to women, these initiatives have been more recent developments. Local Muslim communities have used their mosques as sites to promote the well-being and success of their children in German society through such programs; however, the most dominant space for Muslim youth in the mosque was, and continues to be, religious education in the form of the *Koranschule*.

³³ Hamza Chourabi and Riem El-Solami, "Moscheenräume, Räume für Frauen?" in Gerdien Jonker and Andreas Kapphan, eds., *Moscheen und islamisches Leben in Berlin* (Berlin: Ausländerbeauftragte des Senats, 1999), 35-40.

³⁴ Mehmet Asker (pseudonym), interview by author, 8 June 2009, Berlin, Germany.

³⁵ Asker.

The Mosque as a Site of Religious Education

If the mosques began as a site for the first generation's religious observance, they found a new and even more pressing need among the children of their founders. In culturally Christian West Germany, many Turkish Muslim families faced the challenge of raising children that would be religiously and culturally rooted in Islam and the Turkish state. A January 1978 article in the European edition of the Turkish daily *Hürriyet*, entitled "Politics has no place in a mosque," articulated the role of the mosque in meeting this challenge. Next to a picture of the president of Bremen's Turkish Islamic Cultural Association with a group of *Koranschule* students, the caption reads: "Through the major efforts of the Islamic Association in Vegesack, our children who are growing up under a German influence are also having the spirit of religion and loyalty to the homeland through the organized Qur'an courses." Further into the article, the writer reiterates the importance of this project, stating that the efforts of President Hasan Kızılıkaya and his organization "have been unified" on the necessity "to educate the youth who have forgotten their Turkishness and their religion."³⁶

The perceived need for the second generation to be rooted in Islam and "Turkishness" required that the mosque become a site of religious and cultural education and preservation. *Korankurse* (Qur'an instruction courses), then, became a standard part of religious life in West German mosques from the mid-1970s onward. Such was the case in two Berlin-Wedding mosques visited by residents of Sprengekiez: the Beyazid mosque and the Yunus-Emre mosque. Beginning as a small prayer room on Sparrstrasse, the Beyazid mosque moved to its present location on Lindowerstrasse in 1976. Though the organization that operates the mosque has offered a variety of religious and social services since its founding,

³⁶ "Camide politikanın işi yoktur," *Hürriyet*, 1 January 1978, p. 6, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Zeitungsbibliothek (SBZ), Berlin, Germany.

in those early years the mosque was open only for prayer times, Friday prayer, and *Koranschule*. At the time, Mehmet Asker, now an official of the mosque, was a student taking the *Korankurse*. There were many more children in those days, Asker remembered. Classes were held during the weekdays after school. Now, Asker contended, parents are “more relaxed,” and the mosque offers *Korankurse* only on the weekends.³⁷ The Yunus-Emre mosque, which started in a small apartment in 1976 before moving to its Reinickendorfer location, also offered *Korankurse* from the early days of its founding.³⁸ These *Koranschulen* became a familiar space for numerous Turkish-German children in Sprengekiez whose parents sent them there for religious instruction.

The spaces that developed in response to the second generation consisted of religious education centered on the Qur'an itself, as well as exposure to religious rites and practices. While *Korankurse* differed among mosques, they were generally single-sex classes held by Turkish-speaking instructors. The children learned to read and recite the Suras in Arabic, though most of the students could not translate the text into a language they understood.³⁹ *Koranschule* was meant to introduce and connect the second generation to the holy text and focal point of their community's religious belief, and, at the same time, expose students to the forms of religious worship and obligation. The location of the classes, within the center of the Muslim community, served to expose and familiarize the youth with Islamic religious life. Those *Koranschule* that held single-sex classes, and that encouraged (if not required) young girls to wear a headscarf, impressed upon the students a visual and social form of

³⁷ Asker.

³⁸ Onur Korkmaz (pseudonym), interview by author, 6 June 2009, Berlin, Germany.

³⁹ Asker.

religious observance distinctly different from the educational spaces they experienced at school.⁴⁰ The location, language, and format of instruction demonstrated to students the mosque's interpretation of the values and practices of Islam, some of which found resonance with their lives outside the mosque and others of which separated them from their other everyday spaces. On one hand, *Koranschule* provided its students a shared experience with others of similar background and gave them a way to make sense of their world through a religious lens. On the other hand, the experiences and lessons of *Koranschule* were not likely to find resonance outside the immigrant community, adding to its students' sense of difference from German society.

A group of photographs of a mosque on Lindowerstrasse in Berlin-Wedding reflect the ways in which Turkish-German children were exposed to and experienced religious instruction and practice. Taken by writer and photographer Kemal Kurt for a museum exhibit in 1993, the pictures show young students taking part in *Koranschule* and a prayer meeting. The image of young girls and women in *Koranunterricht* (Qur'an class) shows a spacious room with light filtering through sheer curtains pulled over the windows on one side of the room. Around two dozen girls and young women kneel or sit cross-legged on the carpeted floor in small groups throughout the room. In front of each student is a small wooden desk with either worksheets or a book laying open on top. Some are bent studiously over the work in front of them, while others look across the room or chat with the girl next to them. Each girl is dressed in long-sleeved shirts or sweaters with pants or long skirts in a manner suggesting both modesty and chilly weather. Similarly, everyone in the room wears a generous headscarf, though the ages of youngest girls suggest these were donned for the

⁴⁰ It is worth noting, however, that the single-sex nature of these classes was not wholly at odds with the social spaces Turkish-German youth encountered and formed within the neighborhood, as seen in Chapter 2.

purposes of the class. Finally, an older woman—presumably the teacher—has stood up in front of her own desk and is talking with the students nearest her.⁴¹

The photograph of the young boys' *Koranunterricht* shares several attributes with that of the girls'. Each student kneels in front of a small wooden desk, their respect for the religious nature of the space shown by their shoeless feet and the *taqiyahs*⁴² that cover several of the boys' heads. Light glows through the large windows in the wall. The makeup of the class, also, is single-sex. This class, however, is much smaller. Only thirteen students kneel in front of the wooden desks, each with its own Qur'an open on top. They form a semi-circle with the teacher at the head. The teacher, perhaps in his thirties or forties, wears a white collared shirt with a dark tie and cardigan. His demeanor is serious as he leads the class.⁴³ Both photographs certainly depict a classroom scene, but with clear differences from that which the children experienced in school. The head-coverings, the kneeling desks, and the single-sex environment set the *Koranschule* apart, marking it as a unique and distinctly religious space.

A third photograph shifts its focus in terms of subject, depicting instead a group of men and boys in prayer. The photographer stands to the front and side of the participants, capturing them as they perform communal prayer. The group is a diverse one: a man in work overalls stands near another in slacks and a sports coat, boys pray next to older men. Yet they face in the same direction, going through the same physical motions of ritual prayer—

⁴¹ Kemal Kurt, "Moschee Lindowerstr. (1993), Neg. 26/32A," "Die Leute vom Sparrplatz" Ausstellung (DLSA), Mitte Museum Archiv (MMA), Berlin, Germany.

⁴² A *taqiyah* is a small cap worn by Muslim men.

⁴³ Kemal Kurt, "Moschee Lindowerstr. (1993), Neg. 621/6A," DLSA, MMA.

standing, kneeling, bowing.⁴⁴ For the boys in the photograph, the space in which they are participating is one of religious education. Like apprentices, they learn their religious obligations through action, by praying alongside their fathers, brothers, and fellow Muslims. At the same time, it constitutes a space of religious preservation. The participation of the second generation in the religious life of the mosque helped to ensure the continuation of that community. As such, *Koranschule* and communal prayer were not only about teaching the second generation to be good Muslims, but also to identify with and take part in the broader (and local) *ulama*.⁴⁵

The second generation responded to the efforts of their elders in a variety of ways. For some, their exposure to religious life as a young person led to increased participation as an adult. Mehmet Asker attended *Koranschule* at the Beyazid mosque as a young boy, and later came to serve the mosque in an official capacity.⁴⁶ Similarly, Onur Korkmaz participated in *Koranschule* and religious celebrations at a mosque in Berlin-Wedding while growing up, and ultimately moved into a leadership position in the Yunus Emre mosque as an adult.⁴⁷ Ceylan posits that the participation of the second generation, members of which have increasingly pushed for purpose-built mosques, reflects a broader desire to be a part of German society and to make a permanent space for the Muslim community within it.⁴⁸ While Werner Schiffauer would agree, in his study on the Islamic organization Millî Görüş, he acknowledges that the second generation's assumption of leadership roles does not

⁴⁴ Kemal Kurt, "Moschee Lindowerstr. (1993), Neg. 619/25," DLSA, MMA.

⁴⁵ The *ulama* encompasses the global Muslim community.

⁴⁶ Asker.

⁴⁷ Korkmaz.

⁴⁸ Ceylan, 175.

necessarily mean the beliefs and practices of those particular organizations and mosques will come to reflect a more liberal “Euro-Islam.”⁴⁹ In any case, it is clear that at least for some among the second generation, the mosque has become a central point of both their religious and their working lives.

For many others, however, *Koranschule* was an obligation or rite of passage that, at least initially, did not lead to greater participation in local religious life. A series of interviews conducted in the early 1990s of young Turkish-German girls in their early teens reveals an ambivalent attitude toward such religious spaces. Aylin recalled going to *Koranschule* during the summers whenever her family was not traveling. She would make good progress, but then vacation would come to an end and she would return to school, forgetting what she had learned that summer. In discussing her own relationship with Islam, Aylin contended that she found the religion very positive, but too complicated. Maybe she would be more devout, she thought, once she was older.⁵⁰ Lale attended *Koranschule* early in the mornings and took her time there much less seriously than Aylin. “I screwed around,” she confessed, not sounding particularly repentant. She and her friends often got into trouble, and once she was even made to leave class. Yet Lale contended that it was good for parents to send their children to the mosque to learn about the Qur’an. While she mused that she would likely do the same with her own children, what they (and she) would actually learn did not seem especially important to her. “They shouldn’t learn too much,” Lale explained, “but they should go. That’d be good for me, too.”⁵¹ For Aylin and Lale, then, participation

⁴⁹ Werner Schiffauer, *Nach den Islamismus: Eine Ethnographie der Islamischen Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2010), 225-266.

⁵⁰ Aylin (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 22 December 1992, DLSA, MMA, 11-12.

⁵¹ Lale (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 4 June 1992, DLSA, MMA, 14-15.

in the educational spaces of the mosque was a valuable experience (albeit one whose value was perhaps clearer in retrospect), but not one that called them into deeper relationship or identification with the mosque community. Instead, *Koranschule* constituted a rite of passage, “good” and perhaps necessary for its own sake, but not a significant factor in their daily lives.

Finally, some among the second generation found *Koranschule* neither personally compelling nor generically “good.” Rather, their reaction to participation in spaces of religious education took on a decidedly negative tone. While in some cases this was due to general disinterest on the part of the student, in others the conduct of the instructors made the space unwelcoming or even hostile. The Özels are not a particularly religious family; though the father is a devout Muslim, he “doesn’t force us, ‘you must do this,’” Sevim Özel explained. However, when the children came of age, Özel and her husband sent them to the local mosque for *Koranschule*. But the teachers, Özel recalled, were “a little strange. They hit hand [*sic*] or did something like that. My husband heard, says, ‘No, you [kids] can’t go anymore.’” “We were there for maybe two, three weeks at most and that was it,” her daughter, Filiz Güler, added.⁵² Özel followed the story about her children’s *Koranschule* experience with another about a local *Hoca* (teacher) who convinced a member of the mosque to entrust his savings to him, and then absconded with the funds—a story she seemed to find more amusing than upsetting.⁵³ The negative experience of the *Koranschule*, coupled with their parents’ leniency in matters of religious observance, distanced the Özel children from participation in institutional religious life, a separation they maintained in adulthood.

⁵² Sevim Özel (pseudonym), interview by author, 30 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 22-23.

⁵³ Özel, 23.

Thus, despite the overarching goal to weave the second generation into the fabric of the observant Muslim community, Turkish-German children's experiences in the mosque could and sometimes did alienate them from that site and the type of religious observance it symbolized.

Preserving and Practicing Turkishness

The mosque, however, was not an exclusively religious space. Tightly intertwined with religious observance were the practice and preservation of Turkish identity. Mosques became centers of "Turkishness" for both the first and second generations. For the second generation, spaces of cultural preservation focused on connecting children to their parents' (and, ostensibly, their) Turkish roots. The 1978 *Hürriyet* article mentioned earlier was not alone in pointing out the necessity of educating "our Turkish children" "who have forgotten their Turkishness."⁵⁴ Nearly a decade later, *Hürriyet* continued to highlight the importance of cultural as well as religious education in these spaces. In an article about the opening of a mosque in Berlin-Wedding, the writer quotes an announcement by the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB) Attache in Berlin, Hayrettin Salli, that describes the activities of the mosque, beginning with religious education:

The biggest problem of our citizens living abroad is the future of their children who are growing up far away from the national and religious culture and the air of their homeland. As part of the services we provide for the Turks living around Berlin, a Qur'an Advancement Course has been going on for the past two years with the help of the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs [...]. This course aims to teach our middle school-level children about their mother tongue Turkish and their religion Islam without getting in the way of their regular classes. The courses start in the afternoon on work days for about two hours and begin with the [Turkish national anthem].⁵⁵

⁵⁴ "Camide politikanın işi yoktur," *Hürriyet*, 1 January 1978, p. 6, SBZ.

⁵⁵ "Nuruosmaniye Camii ibadete açıldı," *Hürriyet*, 20 November 1986, p. 18, SBZ.

In this section, Salli identifies the most significant challenge to the Turkish community in West Germany as imparting their national/cultural and religious values to their children. The first remedy for this problem, he argues, is a religious education intertwined with elements of Turkish culture and nationalism, such as the singing of the national anthem. However, DITIB, along with other Islamic organizations, did not see religion-focused education as the single solution to preserving Turkish culture in the second generation youth. Salli continues:

Along with Qur'an and religious information classes, another class on Turkish is given and place is allotted in classes and homework to topics that would familiarize students with Turkish culture and the Turkish homeland. Also, keeping in mind that they are living in a foreign country, students are suggested to be in mutual understanding and good relations with the people of this country. Through this way we are trying to serve the national and religious culture.⁵⁶

Thus, the leadership of Islamic organizations used mosques as centers of religious learning, but also a place through which Turkish-German youth could be connected to the “Turkish homeland” and the cultural elements inherent in that connection. Their efforts contributed to the fusion of religious and national identity among the second generation, reflected in Lale’s description of Islam as the “Turkish religion.”⁵⁷

Turkish-German youth, however, were not the only participants in these spaces of religious and cultural preservation, as Islamic organizations extended the opportunities to practice and perform the “Turkish religion” to their parents’ generation as well. In addition to the spaces of religious observance discussed earlier, mosques served as a place to gather and celebrate Islamic holidays. These celebrations, such as for Ramadan and the Festival of Sacrifice (*Kurban Bayramı*), brought the first and second generations together to the mosque,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Lale, 14.

infusing religious holidays with national traditions and culture. As these holidays constituted significant community events, Turkish-language newspapers, such as *Hürriyet*, consistently reported on the activities surrounding Ramadan and *Kurban Bayramı* in West Germany throughout the late 1970s and 1980s. These articles focused on three main themes: the attendees, the manner in which the holiday was observed, and the emotions connected to the celebration.

The composition and number of attendees remained an important aspect of the news stories covering religious celebrations. In August of 1977, “just as it happens every year [Turkish] mosques around Europe filled up with the faithful.”⁵⁸ The following year the writer echoed the earlier story: “just as it happens every year, this year as well with the start of Ramadan our mosques abroad filled to the brim and spilled over.”⁵⁹ “The tens of thousands” of “Berlin’s Turks passed through the streets of Berlin in droves, running to the mosques from the early hours of the morning” in September 1983. This article continues to describe the scene: “With many of the believers being unable to fit into mosques and *masjids* [smaller prayer rooms] in the city, they prayed in the courtyards and fulfilled their duties towards God.”⁶⁰ In June 1986, “Despite it being a working day, the mosques filled up and overflowed to the gardens and streets with the faithful on the morning of bayram.”⁶¹ Whether the descriptions reflect actual attendance or the reporters’ rosier version, the focus on numbers seeks to underline the universal and heartfelt religious observance of Turkish Muslims “abroad.”

⁵⁸ “Ramaza’ın ilk cuması gurbette muhtesemdi,” *Hürriyet*, 21 August 1977, p. 1, SBZ.

⁵⁹ “Gurbette camiler doldu, tasta...,” *Hürriyet*, 7 August 1978, p. 1, SBZ.

⁶⁰ “Berlin, bayramda Türkiye’ye yasadı,” *Hürriyet*, 23 September 1983, p. 17, SBZ.

⁶¹ “Bir bayram daha geçti,” *Hürriyet*, 21 June 1986, p. 15, SBZ.

In addition to stressing the numbers filling the mosques and spilling out of them, the writers constantly connect these faithful back to their kinsmen in Turkey. Participants were referred to as “our compatriots,” “Muslim Turks in Berlin,” “Berlin’s Turks,” and “our citizens,” along with other similar identifiers. These labels linked the Turks living in West Germany to those in Turkey through their religious and national identities, and emphasized their devotion to their religion and place within a larger Muslim Turkish community by focusing on the mass of the gatherings. Articles also highlighted distinguished guests who joined in these religious celebrations.⁶² Local religious leaders, representatives from the national Islamic umbrella organizations, important businessmen, visiting officials from Turkey—these participants, singled out among the “droves” of the faithful, strengthened the connections of local worshipers to those across the country and back in Turkey. At the same time, they lent a degree of legitimacy and establishment to the proceedings. Such guests would not have been present at the early celebrations of Ramadan in the back rooms of *Kneipen* or rented halls of churches. Now, in these official mosques, they stood as the religious and cultural figureheads of an established Turkish Muslim community.

Together with these visiting dignitaries, the men, women, and children of West Germany’s Muslim community celebrated the holidays with a mixture of religious and cultural traditions. Prayer was a central feature of these events. Through the practice of ritual prayers and of giving thanks, individual participants became part of the larger body of

⁶² For examples, see “Ramazan’ın ilk cuması gurbette muhtesemdi,” *Hürriyet*, 21 August 1977, p. 1, SBZ; “Gurbette camiler doldu, tasta...,” *Hürriyet*, 7 August 1978, p. 1, SBZ; “Ramazan’ın bereketi Berlin’de yasandı,” *Hürriyet*, 29 August 1978, p. 3, SBZ; “Berlin, bayramda Türkiye’ye yasadı,” *Hürriyet*, 23 September 1983, p. 17, SBZ; “Aksemsettin Camii ibadete açıldı,” *Hürriyet*, 29 May 1986, p. 20, SBZ; “Bir bayram daha geçti,” *Hürriyet*, 21 June 1986, p. 15, SBZ.

believers. Newspaper articles stressed this fusion through repeated use of phrases like “unity,” “being together,” and “hearts became one.”⁶³ In addition to ritual prayers, participants also appealed to Allah regarding developments in Turkey. In the late 1970s, during a period of escalating violence between left- and right-wing forces and political unrest that culminated in the 1980 military coup d'etat, *Hürriyet* recounted the prayers of the faithful in West Germany being “for our country’s and our people’s peace, for Turkey to come out of the straits it is currently in and for the terror in the country to be finished.”⁶⁴ The prayers, together with the communal manner in which they were performed, connected participants to each other through their common faith and national identity.

Participants also reinforced their national and cultural identities through a second major attribute of religious festivals: food. Particularly at the *iftar* dinners during Ramadan, food played a central role in communal religious gatherings; the preparation and consumption of these celebratory meals gave the first generation an opportunity to enact their cultural traditions ‘even while abroad,’ and pass them on to their children. A reporter covering an *iftar* dinner at a mosque near Frankfurt highlighted the role of food in an article entitled, “Not much missing from Ramadan abroad.” The article is surrounded on two sides by photographs: in one, a group of men sit at a long, rectangular table, their *iftar* meal in front of them; in the other, a smaller group of women and a boy enjoy their meal, sitting on the floor at a round table. One of the captions reads, “There was nothing missing on the iftar tables given at the Bonames Mosque.”⁶⁵ The meal itself almost becomes a guest as the writer

⁶³ “Berlin, bayramda Türkiye’yi yasadı,” *Hürriyet*, 23 September 1983, p. 17, SBZ.

⁶⁴ “Gurbette camiler doldu, tastı...”, *Hürriyet*, 7 August 1978, p. 1, SBZ.

⁶⁵ “Gurbet’in Ramazan’ı memleketi aratmıyor,” *Hürriyet*, 30 August 1977, p. 1, SBZ.

describes the scene: “Present at the table decorated with many various Turkish foods ranging from baklava to börek were [the visiting dignitaries.]”⁶⁶ A year later, a writer goes into greater detail about the composition of the meal. Next to two pictures again displaying the men’s and women’s *iftar* tables is a list of the foods present at “spectacular” iftar: “5 sheep, 800 lahmacun, 100 pide, 300 watermelons, and 50 kilos of yogurt.” This *iftar*, the readers are informed, “the guests said they would never forget for long years to come”.⁶⁷ In the following years, articles focused less on the exact makeup of the meal than on the practice of consuming it communally.

As fervent as the prayers and present as the tables of food were the emotions that the religious festivals brought out. Sorrow and happiness, joy and disappointment—participants experienced and displayed a range of feelings, but the causes of such emotions seem to be more distinct. On one hand, there was a palpable undercurrent of sadness that permeated the events, a feeling a DITIB attaché labeled in 1985 as “the pain of being abroad.”⁶⁸ Religious holidays and the festivities they brought reminded Turkish Muslims that they were far from “home.” Living in a non-Muslim society complicated full and proper participation in religious festivities. Work schedules overlapped with the timing of religious obligations, and animal-cruelty laws made ritual sacrifices difficult. In celebrating together, participants “tried to dissipate the feelings of sadness coming from being far away from their relatives and families.”⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Ibid., pg. 13.

⁶⁷ “Ramazan’ın bereketi Berlin’de yasandı,” *Hürriyet*, 29 August 1978, p. 3, SBZ.

⁶⁸ “Yoneticiler Bayramımızı kutladı,” *Hürriyet*, 27 June 1985, p. 15, SBZ.

⁶⁹ Gurbette camiler doldu, tastı...”, *Hürriyet*, 7 August 1978, pg. 1, SBZ.

The constant reference to distance from loved ones and homeland, of being “abroad” in a “foreign world,” emphasizes the source of the sadness, but being together “alleviated the unhappy feeling” through its creation of a space of cultural preservation and performance. *Iftar* dinners were often highlighted in media coverage of the Turkish community in West Germany. As the special meal at which Muslims break their daily fast during the month of Ramadan, the *iftar*, which is often celebrated communally, reaches the level of national holiday in Muslim-majority countries such as Turkey. Celebrated abroad, this ritual of breaking one’s Ramadan fast became a way of connecting to one’s memories and traditions of the homeland. A newspaper article from the late 1970s recounts how “the iftar dinner eaten in the men’s section passed with jokes and happiness,” while “the women had the opportunity to sweetly talk with each other.”⁷⁰ “The happiness brought by the holiday,” another writer contended in an article five years later, echoing a now-familiar refrain, “alleviated the unhappy feeling of being far away from our loved ones abroad.”⁷¹ Through communal celebration, participants created a space to experience and celebrate their Turkishness. As the title of a 1983 article states, “Berlin lived Turkey during bayram.” “Muslim Turks of Berlin,” the reporter writes, “lived the joy of being together on such a day despite being so far away from the homeland. [...] Forgetting all resentments and hugging each other after the prayers, the believers who filled the mosque had the opportunity to live the bayram air of Turkey.”⁷² “Turkey”, then, could be recreated within the context of these spaces of religious and cultural preservation.

⁷⁰ “Ramazan’ın bereketi Berlin’de yasandı,” *Hürriyet*, 29 August 1978, p. 3, SBZ.

⁷¹ “Yoneticiler Bayramımızı kutladı,” *Hürriyet*, 27 June 1985, p. 15, SBZ.

⁷² “Berlin, bayramda Türkiye’yi yasadı,” *Hürriyet*, 23 September 1983, p. 17, SBZ.

For the majority of the Muslim Turkish community, the mosque constituted the physical and symbolic center of both religious education and celebration. While *Koranschule* brought the youth into the mosque and informed them of the tenets of the “Turkish religion” of Islam, prayer services and holiday celebrations taught them how to practice their religion as well as their parents’ cultural traditions. Likewise, observing religious holidays created space for the first generation to fulfill religious obligations and participate in Turkish cultural traditions as members of a larger community. While these spaces clearly promoted a sense of belonging within the Turkish community through shared religious and cultural beliefs and traditions, to what degree did they affect the relationship of the first and second generations to broader German society?

A Space Apart, or a Part of Society?

Perhaps more than any other aspect of Turkish immigration to Germany, the growing presence of Islam of and Muslim believers in that culturally Christian state has been the most controversial. That controversy has, time and again, featured the mosque as its focal point, and the language of difference and distance has figured prominently in public discourse regarding the physical spaces of Islam. The early prayer rooms used by the first generation elicited little response from the German media and political sphere, but the appearance of the *Koranschule* brought the issue from the private rooms off the *Hinterhöfe* increasingly to the center of public consciousness. While family reunification prompted the opening of *Koranschulen*, it was not until the late 1970s that German politicians and media began to zero in on the mosque as a present and growing threat. This sense of danger was heightened, if not caused, by international events, namely the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The specter of

an international and violent Islamic political movement combined with the domestic experience of a growing Muslim population operating outside the oversight and understanding of German society producing calls to be aware of and address the emerging threat.

The spring of 1979 saw a burgeoning media attention to the *Koranschulen* in West Germany, with articles focusing on how instructors in those schools were passing on more than religious instruction to their students. In an article entitled, “In the middle of Germany: Turks drill hate into children,” a reporter for *Welt am Sonntag* opens by describing the lessons young Turkish children would learn in their “particular type of Sunday school”: warnings that seemingly friendly German teachers were Christian missionaries or Jewish agents in disguise, the forbidding of friendships with Germans, “as they are Christians and eat pork,” and the sanctioning of killing anyone who went against such lessons. The strangeness and threat of these “underground” and “illegal” *Koranschulen* are compounded by the reporter’s description of the class itself. “The lesson takes place in dank basements or dark courtyards,” the reporter writes. “It lasts three to six hours. The teachers are dressed entirely in black”—calling to mind the radical mullahs of revolutionary Iran. The separation of boys and girls, along with the covering of girls’ hair, accentuates the foreignness of the situation, while the use of corporal punishment implies a propensity toward violence. The instructors, the reporter informs, belong to the extreme-right Turkish opposition party known as the Gray Wolves. Outlawed in Turkey, they use *Koranschulen* in West Germany to indoctrinate the youth in Turkish nationalism and a hatred for their host society.⁷³

⁷³ “Mitten in Deutschland: Türken säen Haß in Kinder,” *Welt am Sonntag*, 11 March 1979.

The themes introduced in this article—the foreignness of *Koranschulen* and their dangerous mixture of religion with radical politics—continued in the German media throughout the late 1970s and into the 1980s. To some, the perceived increasing radicalism and fanaticism of mosques in West Germany could be tied directly to the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini’s call for international Islamic revolution.⁷⁴ The Federation of German Trade Unions (DGB) contributed its voice to the growing hum of concern in April 1979. Warning that *Koranschulen* were “insular” and led “mainly by unauthorized persons” who taught “reactionary fanaticism and hostility to all strangers,” the DGB lamented the inability of the federal government to oversee the classes and advocated bringing such religious instruction into public schools.⁷⁵ Karl-Heinz Göbel, head of the DGB’s department for foreign employees, argued that doing so would ensure instruction by qualified teachers and avoid creating a state within a state.⁷⁶

Some officials from Islamic organizations in West Germany tried to counter the growing concern and suspicion. Necdet Demirgülle from the Islamic Cultural Center in Frankfurt explained to *Die Welt* that *Koranschulen* were the only alternative for Turkish children to learn about Islam, as it was not included in religious instruction in German schools. “In our *Koranschulen*,” Demirgülle told the reporter, “children are advised [that] they must cooperate with the structure of this society and live peacefully with each other.”⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Horst Zimmermann, “Wenn Suren-Pauken zum Pflichtfach wird: Gegen Khomeinis Jünger sind die Behörden machtlos,” *Saarbrücker Zeitung*, 26 April 1979. See also, Frank Lämmel, “Koranschulen in Deutschland: Feindbilder im Namen Allahs?” *Münchener Merkur*, 14/16 April 1979.

⁷⁵ “DGB gegen Koranschulen—Farthmann: Wir sind machtlos,” *Die Welt*, 9 April 1979.

⁷⁶ “An Koranschulen nicht nur Religion? DGB wendet sich gegen Indoktrinierung türkischer Gastarbeiterkinder,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 9 April 1979.

⁷⁷ Martina Kempff, “Mohammeds Wort soll Einzug an den Schulen halten,” *Die Welt*, 17 April 1979.

Mohammed El-Sayed, secretary of the Islamic Community of southern Germany, told a reporter from the *Münchener Merkur* that the children in his organization's *Koranschule* learned “prayer, order, cleanliness—and how one behaves toward other people.”⁷⁸ These public statements were geared toward presenting the *Koranschule* in a light that would make it seem not only non-threatening, but also familiar. Many Germans, however, remained unconvinced by such assurances. Concerns persisted about the alien nature of mosques and Muslims as well as of their connections to political extremists and terrorism. Islamic organizations' secrecy surrounding the sources of their finances—rumored to come from Libya—contributed public fears about the potential for their local *Koranschulen* to become, in the words of one reporter, a site that acted as an agent “for ideas that could serve as the basis for political terror.”⁷⁹

While the perception of the mosque as a separate and threatening space remained, the early 1980s saw a shift in focus from the menacing specter of politically extremist Islam to the impact on the Turkish children who attended *Koranschule*. To be sure, the German public and politicians were still concerned about an Islamic fundamentalism at odds with their political and secular values, but by the 1980s the discourse had changed. Now, the consequence to be averted was not simply hostility toward German society but the hindrance of successful integration of Turkish children into that society. Bundestag representative Thomas Schroer articulated this growing consensus in a 1982 article entitled, “How Integration is Hindered: *Koranschulen* are Breeding Grounds for Resentment.” Schroer

⁷⁸ Frank Lämmel, “Koranschulen in Deutschland: Feindbilder im Namen Allahs?” *Münchener Merkur*, 14/16 April 1979.

⁷⁹ Horst Zimmermann, “Wenn Suren-Pauken zum Pflichtfach wird: Gegen Khomeinis Jünger sind die Behörden machtlos,” *Saarbrücker Zeitung*, 26 April 1979.

states his case bluntly, arguing that “*Koranschulen* established in all Germany’s major cities hinder the opportunity to live together. They are breeding grounds for prejudices,” he continues, that teach not only the Qur’an and the Islamic moral code, but also spread anti-Semitism, advocate the oppression of women, and practice corporal punishment—all in sympathy, if not cooperation, with the fascist Gray Wolves.⁸⁰ Schroer’s points about the secrecy of the mosques, the lack of oversight, and the opposition of such organizations to the secular Turkish state draw from the anxieties that arose in the 1970s. Yet, in his article, the German politician gave voice to a new and growing concern—that children who attend *Koranschule* would be “less able to integrate and less tolerant of other religious views and behaviors than other foreign children.”⁸¹ “Whoever sends his child to *Koranschule*,” Schroer warns, “harms him, because he forces the child to remain foreign.”⁸²

The solution, as Schroer and many others like him saw it, was taking Islamic religious instruction from the dark and secretive corners of the *Hinterhöfe* and placing it in the public schools, where it would receive necessary oversight. Muslims had a right to religious freedom, and Turkish children, he reasoned, had a right to religious education. “So, what is a matter of course for Protestant and Catholic children in our schools, must apply to Turkish children of the Islamic faith as well.”⁸³ Similar sentiments and criticisms echoed throughout the press in the early 1980s. While the secrecy surround the mosque prohibits one from knowing much about what happens within, reporter Liselotte Müller contends, it is clear

⁸⁰ Thomas Schroer, “Wie Integration verhindert wird: Koranschulen sind Brutstätten für Ressentiments,” *Sozialdemokratischer Pressedienst*, 1 March 1982, p. 4, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009.

⁸¹ Schroer, 4.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 5.

“that it strengthens the youth’s defensive posture against the host society. In recent days, the intolerant direction of Islam has won the upper hand.” Bringing Muslim religious instruction into the public schools, Müller argues, would “give space to an enlightened and tolerant form of Islam.”⁸⁴ However, the lack of a single organization with the authority to speak for all West Germany’s Muslims combined with the similar lack of a central governing body with the ability to enact country-wide educational reform made this an issue that was, and remains, a challenge.

The next significant debate concerning the Turkish Muslim communities began to emerge in the early 1990s and was in full swing by the following decade: the controversy over building mosques. As previously discussed, in the first decades of Turkish immigration to and settlement in West Germany, practicing Muslims utilized temporary sites or rented spaces that they could use to fulfill their religious obligations. These spaces consisted of almost entirely pre-existing sites in the local landscape, and, as the return home remained on the mental horizon of the first generation, they did not set out to construct purpose-built mosques to serve the needs of their religious community. However, by the 1990s, it had become clear that the *Rückkehr* was a receding dream, particularly for the second generation. Islamic organizations and mosque communities began to consider constructing “real” mosques in which they could perform their religious obligations.

This move from the *Hinterhof* to the street front has met with varying degrees of both resistance and support from Germans in the neighborhoods of the proposed renovation and construction projects as well as the public more broadly. The balance of opposition and support often determined the measure of success Muslim organizations would have in their

⁸⁴ Liselotte Müller, “Türken von Berlin wollen keine Deutschen werden: Senat dringt auf Einbürgerung/ ,Dritter Weg’ ist keine Dauerlösung,” *Hannoversche Allgemeine*, 10 July 1982, BPA, accessed 7 April 2009.

construction projects. In 1999, the Union of Islamic Cultural Centers (VIKZ) purchased an old factory in Stuttgart, which they hoped to renovate and use as a mosque and boarding school. Local residents, citing concerns about traffic, noise, and “being overrun” by Muslims, protested to the city government. The issue divided the local political representatives, with the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Republikaners coming out against the plan, the Greens and Free Democrats unequivocally supportive, and the Social Democrats (SPD) conditionally supportive. Neither did the Turkish Consul General support the organization’s efforts, stating that Turks already enjoyed sufficient worship space. Ultimately, the city council blocked the group’s plans for a mosque, suggesting that they consider a building site farther out of town.⁸⁵

While the case of the VIKZ mosque in Stuttgart illustrates the consequence of lack of unified political support, the debacle of Kreuzberg’s Mevlana mosque reflects a clash of missteps, miscommunication, and missed opportunities (Figure 11, next page).⁸⁶ The story starts with the members of the Mevlana Camii, affiliated with the Islamic Federation of Berlin (IRB), and Millî Görüş, who had a history of conflict with secular and leftist Turks in the area that enhanced their sense of being persecuted for their religious beliefs by German society. In the late 1990s, this community began to take measures to construct a purpose-built mosque near their current location on Kottbusser Tor. The Mosque Foundation, a committee set up to facilitate the building of the mosque, met with roadblocks at each step in the process. First, they discovered that the land they purchased as the site for their mosque—a plot they had been attempting to buy for more than fourteen years—had been sold to them

⁸⁵ Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 118-119.

⁸⁶ Mevlana Mosque, Berlin, [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mevlana_Moschee_\(Berlin\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mevlana_Moschee_(Berlin)) (accessed 9 July 2011).

at twice its actual value. Rather than trying to hold the seller accountable, the Mosque Foundation sued the municipality, contending that they had changed the official designation of the plot in order to hinder the construction of the mosque.⁸⁷ This was only the first in a series of missteps by the Mosque Foundation and miscommunications between that body and the municipality.

Over the next several years, the Mosque Foundation developed and presented a number of plans for construction to the municipality as well as to its own members. The more modest plans, which called for renovation of the existing building and the addition of an extension, met with the municipality's approval but were unpopular within the mosque community. This constituency wanted a larger building that reflected its use and the money invested. The Mosque Foundation responded with plans to demolish the existing structure and build a much larger mosque in its place, complete with an elaborate façade and minarets. These plans pleased the mosque community, but were rejected by the municipality, who contended that they had not agreed on such a structure. Straining relations with the governing board still further was the Mosque Foundation's intention to include a large shopping mall underneath the mosque that would help offset the costs of construction and maintenance. To this, the municipality responded that, while a religious and cultural center was appropriate, "a shopping mall belongs in a

Figure 11. Mevlana Mosque, Berlin



⁸⁷ Jonker, 1070-1073.

different department all together. It is against all existing regulations.”⁸⁸ The Mosque Foundation responded to the city officials by publicly accusing the municipality of discriminating against Muslims. Money and media problems continued to trouble the Mosque Foundation, and the pressure applied to Millî Görüş after the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 caused the Islamic Federation of Berlin to break its connection with that organization.⁸⁹ The purpose-built mosque for the Mevlana Camii community never made it off the drawing board, and its members continue to worship in their original accommodations.

One final example of a disputed mosque construction demonstrates the elements that compose the controversy surrounding the Turkish Muslim community’s move from

Figure 12. Model of Central Mosque, Cologne



invisibility to a public presence—the Central Mosque of Cologne (Figure 12).⁹⁰ In spring of 2006, after ten years of plans, struggles, and compromise, the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB) received permission to build the first representative mosque in the

city of Cologne and the largest in Germany.⁹¹ At over one hundred thousand, Cologne has one of the largest Muslim populations in the country, but no large, central mosque. Instead, in the tradition of Muslim communities in Germany, there were around forty-five smaller

⁸⁸ Ibid., 1074.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 1076-1079.

⁹⁰ Model of Central Mosque, Cologne, <http://deutsche-islam-konferenz.de> (accessed 9 July 2011).

⁹¹ A representative mosque is one with a traditional architectural design, including a dome and minarets.

mosques, reflecting various ethnic backgrounds and sectarian orientations.⁹² The mosque would be located in Cologne-Ehrenfeld, a district with a high percentage of Turkish residents. Reviewing the entries to their competition for the contract, DITIB chose the plans of German church architects Gottfried and Paul Böhm. Endeavoring to blend traditional Islamic architectural forms with modern style, the Böhms designed a building with a large central dome, constructed with non-conjoined pieces to give the impression of transparency and openness, flanked by two minarets.⁹³ Glass walls reinforced DITIB's efforts to communicate the mosque's—and the community's—transparency, and the size of the mosque was calculated to avoid overshadowing its neighboring buildings.⁹⁴ Receiving the city's approval for their plans, DITIB set out to construct the city's first representative mosque.

City government approval, however, did not equal universal acceptance. A coalition of city residents, calling themselves “*pro Köln*” (pro-Cologne), formed in opposition to the mosque's construction and proceeded to agitate against the project, allying themselves with extreme-right political parties from across Europe, such as the Austrian Freedom Party and Belgian's Vlams Belag. Yet, it was the condemnation of writer Ralph Giordano, a Jewish German and Holocaust survivor, that propelled Cologne's local conflict into a country-wide controversy. Giordano entered the fray to protest the building of the mosque, which he describes in a 2005 article as evidence of a growing parallel society that oppresses women

⁹² Miriam Bunjes, “Erstes Minarett über Köln,” *die tageszeitung*, 3 March 2006, <http://www.taz.de/?id=archivseite&dig=2006/03/03/a0012> (accessed 11 July 2011).

⁹³ Helmut Frangenberg, “Moderner Kuppelbau mit zwei Minaretten,” *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, 21 September 2006.

⁹⁴ Mark Landler, “Germans Split over a Mosque and the Role of Islam,” *The New York Times*, 5 July 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/05/world/europe/05cologne.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all (accessed 11 July 2011).

and refuses to bear the responsibilities of German society. The fact that it was to be a DITIB mosque—an organization that positions itself as dialogue-friendly and pro-integration—only causes Giordano more concern.⁹⁵ While Germany’s legal and political values protect religious diversity, the writer argues, Turkey’s Ministry of Religion does not, and DITIB is an arm of that ministry.⁹⁶ While the positions of Giordano and Pro-Cologne are similar, Giordano considers the group a “local chapter of contemporary National Socialists”⁹⁷ and resists their efforts to co-opt him or his statements with their own.

Pro-Cologne’s demonstrations were matched by opposing protests from members of trade unions, political associations, and the general public, who argued that Muslims have the right to freedom of religion, which should include the construction of places of worship.⁹⁸ When Pro-Cologne attempted to host an “International Anti-Islamization Congress” in September 2008, members from all levels of society demonstrated against the forum and the organization to such an extent that the event had to be cancelled.⁹⁹ Despite the heated

⁹⁵ There are several Islamic umbrella organizations in Germany, each with its own character. The Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB) is the largest and connected to the Turkish government’s Ministry of Religious Affairs. It supports Turkey’s brand of political secularism, and takes an active role in inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogues. As such, it is often seen as the more integration-friendly of the umbrella organizations. The next two largest organizations are the Islamic Community, Millî Görüş (IGMG) and the Union of Islamic Cultural Centers (VIKZ), both of which are more religiously and politically conservative. Millî Görüş has been under investigation by German authorities for its connections to a charity with ties to Hamas, as well as for its anti-democratic and anti-Semitic statements.

⁹⁶ Ralph Giordano, “Nicht die Moschee, der Islam ist das Problem,” in Franz Sommerfeld, ed., *Der Moscheestreit: Eine exemplarische Debatte über Einwanderung und Integration* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005), 37-51.

⁹⁷ Landler, “Germans Split over a Mosque and the Role of Islam.”

⁹⁸ Anna Reimann, “‘We want the Cathedral, Not Minarets’: Far-Right Mobilizes against Cologne Mega-Mosque,” *Spiegel Online*, 19 June 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,489275,00.html> (accessed 11 July 2011).

⁹⁹ Yasemin Schooman and Riem Spielhaus, “The Concept of the Muslim Enemy in the Public Discourse,” in Jocelyne Cesari, ed., *Muslims in the West After 9/11: Religion, Politics, and Law* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 208-209.

controversy, construction on DITIB's Central Mosque continues, and in February 2011 the organization celebrated its roofing ceremony.¹⁰⁰

This clash over the construction of Cologne's Central Mosque grew from its local origins to a country-wide controversy and ultimately became part of the broader international discourse on the place of Islam in Western societies. At the center of this debate is the distinction between making a place for oneself in society and remaking that society. For those who oppose its construction, the Cologne mosque and others like it constitute a symbol of Muslim difference and separatism. Whereas the existence of the *Hinterhof* mosques, and the *Koranschulen* they contained, represented the withdrawal and secrecy of the Muslim community, purpose-built mosques have, for many Germans, come to stand for a blatant rejection of German values and a refusal to integrate. More than that, they are evidence of what some have termed the "Islamization of Europe," a foothold of Muslim infiltration into "Fortress Europe."¹⁰¹ Through such media representations, political debates, and public demonstrations, the mosque has become a discursive space of separation, antagonism, and threat.

Yet on the other side of this argument are those who contend that the move from private courtyards to public visibility reveals not a hostile separation from the host society but a deliberate effort to make a permanent place for oneself within it. In the words of DITIB member Kılıç Iqbal, purpose-built mosques, in this case the Cologne Central Mosque, "will show we are a part of society."¹⁰² Returning to his study of mosques in Duisburg-

¹⁰⁰ Bildergalerie Bauphase, Dachverband Türkisch-Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion, e.V., <http://www.zentralmoschee-koeln.de/default.php?id=14&lang=de> (accessed 14 July 2011).

¹⁰¹ This term, while certainly not restricted to one organization, has been used by Pro-Cologne. See Reimann, "'We want the Cathedral, Not Minarets'".

¹⁰² Jason Burke, "Mosque stirs racial passion in Germany," *The Observer*, 15 July 2007.

Hochfeld, Ceylan finds that mosques improve the quality of life for their members as well as encourage them to identify more strongly with their neighborhood.¹⁰³ In addition, by bringing Muslim centers of worship onto the street front in representative mosques, the broader public is able to have more direct experiences with Muslims and Islamic worship. This interaction, an imam from Duisburg-Hochfeld contends, acts as a deterrent to prejudice through a fuller understanding of Muslims' beliefs and practices.¹⁰⁴ On the side of the Muslim community, the building of a representative mosque can be a concrete demonstration of their desire to put down permanent roots in the host society. As Omer Alan concludes, "Whoever builds mosques wants to stay."¹⁰⁵ Thus, as Ceylan argues, representative mosques can be and have been spaces that anchor their members in their local environment and encourage better understanding between the mosque community and the host society.

Ceylan's position on mosques as integrative agents supports earlier research by geographer Thomas Schmitt. In his study on the conflicts surrounding the construction and use of mosques in Germany, Schmitt concludes that, in addition to acting as a visible representation of the recognition of the Islamic community in German society, the mosque has served as a bridge and facilitator between Muslims and non-Muslims. While the building itself has provided the physical space for interactions between Turkish Muslims and Germans, the mosque has also allowed Turkish immigrants and their children to communicate and work with other German associations as a united group. From the platform of the mosque, Turkish Muslims have entered into interreligious dialogue, given their input

¹⁰³ Ceylan, 149.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 175.

¹⁰⁵ Ömer Alan, "Muslime im Ruhrgebiet: Wer Moscheen baut, möchte bleiben," in *Kommunalverband Ruhrgebiet (Hrsg): Standorte Ruhrgebiet 1999/2000* (Essen: 1999).

on neighborhood issues, and consulted with local groups regarding construction projects.¹⁰⁶

This cooperation at an institutional level puts Turkish immigrants and their children on more equal footing with their German counterparts and has allowed Turkish Muslims to positively participate in German society as they work to make a space for themselves within it.

Cooperation between mosque communities and German associations has resulted in successful mosque construction projects that avoided the bulk of the controversy that plagued the more well-known examples. One of the earlier examples of such cooperation is

Mannheim's Yavuz Sultan Selim mosque (Figure 13).¹⁰⁷ In 1984, the *Islamischer Bund* (Islamic Coalition) Mannheim started talking with city officials about the possibility of building a large mosque in the center of the city. During the next seven years, the Muslim group worked with local churches and the Office of Foreigner Affairs to garner support for their efforts. The Catholic priest of the church across the street from the proposed site

organized an interfaith committee, the *Christlich-*

Islamische Gesellschaft Mannheim (Christian-Islamic Association of Mannheim), that worked to calm the fears of local residents protesting against the building of the mosque. The collaborative effort paid off; in 1993 the city council gave its final approval and two years later the mosque

opened its doors. Similar to the construction of the Cologne Central mosque, the *Islamischer Bund* chose a design for their mosque that reflected their commitment to openness and

Figure 13. Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque, Mannheim



¹⁰⁶ Thomas Schmitt, *Moscheen in Deutschland: Konflikte um ihre Errichtung und Nutzung* (Flensburg: Deutsches Akademie für Landeskunde, 2003).

¹⁰⁷ Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque, Mannheim, <http://thegoldennuggets.theroots.de> (accessed 9 July 2011).

transparency, symbolized in the numerous small, triangular windows that face the street front. Held up as an example for its contribution to social order and education, the mosque has offered classes for Germans to learn about Islam and operates an institute dedicated to interfaith cooperation and education.¹⁰⁸

The 2008 construction of the Merkez Mosque in Duisburg-Marxloh is another example of the mosque as a space of interethnic and interreligious cooperation (Figure 14).¹⁰⁹

With space for up to twelve hundred worshippers, the Duisburg mosque was, at the time, the largest in Germany, and yet it attracted none of the controversy associated with the Cologne Central Mosque. Officials



Figure 14. Merkez Mosque, Duisburg-Marxloh

from DITIB entered into dialogue with local leaders and organizations early in the planning stages and made compromises in its design that made it more welcome to members of the broader community, such as keeping the minaret to half the height of the nearby Catholic church's spire. DITIB also decided from the start that the new mosque would not broadcast the call to prayer—a controversial tradition even in the best situations.¹¹⁰ While the construction project was not entirely without its detractors,¹¹¹ many residents have developed

¹⁰⁸ Fezter and Soper, 118.

¹⁰⁹ Merkez Mosque, Duisburg-Marxloh, <http://www.skyscrapercity.com> (accessed 9 July 2011).

¹¹⁰ Carolin Jenkner, "Why No One Protested Against Germany's Biggest Mosque," *Der Spiegel International*, 27 October 2008, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,586759,00.html> (accessed 15 July 2011).

¹¹¹ Emily Harris, "Two Mosques, Two Different Reactions in Germany," NPR, 11 October 2007, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=15043704> (accessed 11 July 2011).

a sense of civic pride concerning the local mosque, a feeling further encouraged by a corresponding rise in real estate prices.¹¹²

Apart from cooperation in construction projects, participation in local life also has brought the mosque and its community into German society. In Berlin-Wedding, Turkish and Turkish-German Muslims have hosted festivals aimed at creating shared space with the broader community within the mosque. Onur Korkmaz of the Yunus Emre Mosque described such celebrations his mosque community has hosted in their courtyard: members prepare a wide variety of traditional Turkish foods and small gifts and invite their neighbors to join them for a meal. The goal is to start conversations, because when you talk with people, Korkmaz explained, stereotypes break down. He insists that this is not only important for Germans, but also for Turks, who have built a “capsule” around themselves and need to break out of it.¹¹³ Some attempts at interreligious community activities, however, have not been as successful as others. Mehmet Asker remembered an instance when his mosque invited a local church to participate in an *iftar* meal with them, but nobody from the church came. While he did not feel that the lack of attendance was due to any animosity, it was clear that Asker was disappointed by the absence of a positive response and did not mention his mosque having attempted a similar event since then.¹¹⁴ Despite such setbacks, both that effort at community involvement and other more successful attempts demonstrate the mosque both as a space of openness and cooperation as well as a means for Turkish

¹¹² Jenkner, “Why No One Protested Against Germany’s Biggest Mosque.”

¹¹³ Korkmaz.

¹¹⁴ Asker.

immigrants and their children to become a part of German society by making a space for themselves within it.

Increased Religious Observance, Secularization, or Something Else?

It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which the first and second generation have remained active in the life of the mosque over the course of Turkish immigrant settlement in Germany. Within the last decade, researchers have attempted to measure the degree of religiosity in the Turkish immigrant population and determine the impact of generational belonging and length of time in Germany on that aspect of community life. In October 2000, the Germany's Foundation Centre for Studies on Turkey, headed by Faruk Şen, conducted a survey on the influence of religion in the daily lives of "two thousand immigrants of Turkish origin." Generally, the majority defined themselves as "religious" (64.6 percent), while just over a quarter of respondents described themselves as "not religious."¹¹⁵ Yet, despite the majority identifying as religious, only about thirty-six percent of respondents claimed membership with a mosque organization,¹¹⁶ and a minority from each age group—with the exception of those over sixty—replied that they visited a mosque on a regular basis.¹¹⁷

Among Şen's survey respondents, generational differences quickly become apparent. The older generation tended to be more religious than the younger, with levels of religious observance (individual as well as corporate activities) increasing with age. However, younger respondents, despite considering themselves not very religious, still participated in

¹¹⁵ Faruk Şen, "Euro-Islam: Some Empirical Evidences," in Ala Al-Hamarneh and Jörn Thielmann, eds., *Islam and Muslims in Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 39.

¹¹⁶ Şen, 42.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

traditions related to religion, such as observing dietary restrictions and giving to the poor. Şen suggests that this pattern reflects a separation in the minds of the second generation of religious observance and cultural practice.¹¹⁸ A 2004–2005 study conducted in Kiel focused on the second and third generations, examining the importance of religion and degree of religious observance. As in the Şen survey, the Kiel study found that observance of religious customs was not necessarily tied to membership in a mosque organization or even regular visits to a mosque. In addition, the Kiel study measured the importance of religion in comparison to the amount of time participants, their parents, and their grandparents had been living in Germany, finding that, in general, the longer the stay in Germany, the less central religion became.¹¹⁹

Taking these two studies together demonstrates why one should be wary of postulating the existence of a secularization versus increased religiosity dichotomy. Though religion and mosque attendance appear to be of more importance to the first generation than those that followed, it is also apparent that, while religion may not be the dominating aspect of their identity, it has continued to play an important role in the lives of many in the second generation. The importance of religion to their identity, it seems, is in many cases not connected to participation in the life of the mosque. Instead, many in the second generation have created spaces for themselves outside the realm of the mosque where they explore, redefine, and practice Islam. This space, what many have come to call “Euro-Islam,” will be addressed in the final chapter.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 40.

¹¹⁹ Kea Eilers, Clara Seitz, and Konrad Hirschler, “Religiousness among Young Muslims in Germany,” in Ala Al-Hamarneh and Jörn Thielmann, eds., *Islam and Muslims in Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 83–115.

Conclusion

More than any of the other sites discussed previously, the mosque demonstrates the changing composition and character of the Turkish-German community over time. From the impromptu and informal spaces of communal prayer created by *Gastarbeiter* men to the multi-faceted religious and cultural institutions that would later be run by their children, the importance and reach of the mosque has broadened far past its original context. At the same time, the mosque as a physical and symbolic site has become more settled and entrenched in its local environment, as its members and users created spaces within it that dealt with numerous religious, cultural, and social needs. That the Turkish community has used the mosque as a means to create spaces of belonging within their daily landscape is apparent; the extent to which those spaces have served to facilitate integration into German society, however, is less clear-cut.

From the beginning, Turkish immigrants constructed the mosque to address needs unknown, unacknowledged, or ignored by both the Turkish government that sent them and the West German government that received them. The mosque became a way to fulfill religious obligations as well as preserve and perform a religious and cultural identity that did not have a place in German society. This was especially true for first generation men. As *Gastarbeiter*, they founded the first *Hinterhof* mosques, assuming a role leadership and authority that they generally did not enjoy in the workplace. The mosque became a site of religious observance, but also one of social networking and, in Ceylan's words, an "emotional refuge" where they could find serenity amid the banality and stress of daily life. Once these older workers retired, the mosque took on an increased significance in their lives, linking them to old friends and introducing them to younger members of the community who

could assist them in their various needs. For first generation women, the mosque held similar if not equal importance as a social and cultural space, enabling a smoother transition into the host society or allowing them to maintain social lives apart from that society. However, the mosque, particularly in its earlier years, was a space dominated and primarily utilized by men.

Koranschule taught the second generation the fundamentals of Islam and to memorize the Sura, and at the same time purposefully educated them in what it meant to be Turkish—nurturing an identification with the Turkish “homeland” through language and lessons. This pairing of Turkish nationalism with religious instruction grew more apparent in the 1980s as the probability of the *Rückkehr* diminished. Youth responded differently to the lessons given at the mosque, running the gamut from becoming involved in the administration of the mosque to avoiding it entirely as adults. *Koranschule* in the 1970s and early 1980s seemed to purposefully take the second generation out of German society, physically and culturally. Even when Germany was not held at arm’s length as an enemy, that it was “foreign” in comparison to the “homeland” was a sentiment expressed both deliberately and unconsciously.

The “pain of being abroad,” however, could be soothed by participation in religious and cultural festivals hosted by the mosque. These events allowed the first generation to celebrate their religious and cultural identity while they introduced the second generation to the cooperative performance of Turkishness. The participants, the prayers, the food, the visiting dignitaries—all of these elements created a space in which one could “live the bayram air of Turkey.” Turkey—as the immigrants remembered it—was recreated in West

Germany. Thus, the mosque has acted as a separate space, constructed as a refuge from a society that did not have a place for Turkish Muslims' religious and cultural identities.

The Turkish Muslim community, however, was not the only agent in creating the mosque as a separate space. While that population maintained it as a separate physical and cultural space, West German politicians and the media discursively transformed it into an isolated and hostile space. First by forging links between West German mosques and Iranian-style extremist political Islam, and then through their consistent depiction of the *Koranschule* as a threat to integration, public discourse emphasized a foreignness and threat at odds with German values. Muslim spaces in general and mosques more specifically were constructed as distinctly non-German spaces, alien at best and deleterious to state security at worst.

The move from the courtyard to the street front put "Islam in plain sight" and prompted a collision of the first generation perception of the mosque as a refuge, the German reaction to Islam as a threat, and the second generation's desire to root their religion in the soil of their home.¹²⁰ For some, purpose-built mosques represented a shift from an invisible threat to a concrete foothold, a transformation of the German landscape and society into something foreign and unacceptable. As such, much (if not most) mosque construction prompted passionate protest. And yet, by choosing to invest significant time, energy, and resources into such projects, the Turkish Muslim community was making the strong statement that they considered Germany their long-term, if not permanent, home. Rather than looking back to a homeland they knew mainly through their parents' stories and from summer vacations, the second generation was building a physical and lasting space of

¹²⁰ Landler, "Germans Split over a Mosque and the Role of Islam."

belonging in the place they saw as their future. At the same time, not all non-Muslims have stood in opposition to mosque-building efforts, many seeing the move into the open as a positive development in immigrant integration.

Additionally, mosques have provided Turkish immigrants and their children with a platform through which they can engage with German society on a united and institutional level. This ability, to an extent, has balanced the power dynamics inherent in interactions between immigrants and their host society. Through mosque-based organizations, Turkish and Turkish-German Muslims have engaged with community leaders and governing boards in connection with construction projects, neighborhood initiatives, and issues of religious education in public schools. This type of interaction has also introduced Germans to their Turkish Muslim *Mitbürger*, giving them a better understanding of the community that has existed alongside them for nearly four decades. Such active engagement has drawn the Muslim community into German society and rooted them more firmly in their local environments.

Ultimately, the role of the mosque in the integration of Turkish immigrants and their children is ambiguous. For many, it has enabled them to participate in a religious community that did not constitute a large part of the host society before their arrival, tied them more tightly to their local environments and neighborhoods, and assisted in the transition to life in Germany. At the institutional level, the mosque has put the Muslim community on more equal footing with German society. Yet, at the same time and especially in its earlier years of operation in West Germany, the mosque constantly reminded Turkish immigrants and their children that they were living “abroad,” and actively taught the development of separate

national and cultural identities in the second generation.¹²¹ German politicians and the media reinforced the identity of Muslims as “foreign,” adding the dimension of the mosque as a threatening site. Thus, the mosque has come to exist both within German society and on its margins, with the tension between the two representing perhaps the defining feature of the Turkish-German community.

¹²¹ The extent to which mosques would reinforce a separate national and cultural identity depended (and still depends) upon whether the umbrella organization with which they were affiliated encouraged open dialogue and integration or emphasized the maintenance of “Turkishness.” Today there are still many mosques that conduct their religious education and services in Turkish and Arabic only, though this is certainly not universal.

CHAPTER 5

BELONGING IN REUNIFIED GERMANY

For Bilge Yılmaz, the fall of the Berlin Wall was nothing short of momentous. A resident of Wedding since her parents brought her to West Germany at the age of eight, the then-twenty-four-year-old woman had grown up with the Wall's presence and implications in her daily life, and she felt its destruction keenly. Yılmaz and her family followed the events on the television news, but that was not enough. "At the time, we had visitors from West Germany, from Stuttgart," Yılmaz recalled. "We went with them [to the Wall] and there was a ton of people on the street, on either side. [...] We tried, too, to break down that scuzzy wall. We still have pictures of it, that was really so wonderful, it was a pure experience."¹

However, what started as the "wonderful" event of a divided country becoming whole, Yılmaz related, soon turned sour as first her employer and then her husband's left Berlin for more financially attractive locations elsewhere. As manufacturing jobs emigrated from the area, the neighborhood suffered. "The people suddenly didn't have work," Yılmaz explained, "if no more work, then no more money." Local businesses started to shut down. At this point in her narrative, German reunification becomes European unification, bringing with it the Euro and higher prices. The "economic hardship" of reunified Germany became

¹ Bilge Yılmaz (pseudonym), interview by author, 2 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 20.

more than many families in the neighborhood could handle.² The Wall had fallen, but the financial and social challenges facing residents in Sprengelkiez had only intensified.

The worsening economic situation throughout Germany in the early post-reunification years opened a space for right-wing extremists and neo-Nazis to blame the country's financial woes, and especially its high unemployment rates, on non-ethnic Germans. Whether they were recently-arrived asylum seekers or second generation youth who had lived their whole lives in Germany, "foreigners" became a target of political rhetoric and, on several tragic occasions, physical violence. In 1991, a mob attacked a hostel in Hoyerswerda that housed Mozambican laborers, part of a larger series of attacks against asylum seekers and former contract workers in the east. In 1992, hundreds of rioters converged on a housing complex for asylum seekers in Rostock-Lichtenhagen, throwing Molotov cocktails and clashing with police. That same year, three Turkish residents of Mölln were killed in a firebombing of their home. The violence continued into the following year: four skinheads set fire to a house in Solingen belonging to a Turkish family. Two women and three young girls died, and fourteen other family members were injured. While the Solingen attack in particular galvanized hundreds of thousands to denounce far right radicalism and march in support of multiculturalism, it was clear that the struggles of the newly reunified German state were not limited to ethnic Germans alone.

Though the connection is often lost in discussions of German reunification, the Wall separating the two Germanys played a significant role in the lives of Turkish immigrants and their children. Each major stage of the Wall's existence had ramifications for the Turkish-German community. Its construction prompted the sharpening of the labor crisis that brought

² Yılmaz, 20-21.

the Turks to the country, and to Berlin in particular, as *Gastarbeiter*. Its presence defined district boundaries and, at least in part, neighborhood character. Finally, its physical removal changed both the political makeup and economic conditions of the reunified state, weakening the foundation on which the Turkish-German community had begun to construct its belonging.

Recently, scholars have begun to widen their research into the effects of German reunification to include the impact on the country's ethnic minority communities. At the forefront of scholarship into the effects on the Turkish-German population is social scientist Nevim Çil. In her dissertation and subsequent publications, Çil explores the impact of reunification on the Turkish community, paying particular attention to how the first and second generations responded differently to that process.³ By focusing on generation, Çil is able to demonstrate the close ties between identity and belonging, as well as present new perspectives on the meanings of the *Mauerfall* and reunification. The first generation, she argues, experienced reunification as a disappointment, as their economic contributions to Germany were ignored and their own employment positions were lost. Though the second generation as a body experienced reunification as a social collapse rather than an economic one, their reactions differed depending on their age at the time of *Mauerfall*. The older youth, who had generally worked hard to incorporate themselves into German society and succeed economically, grew disillusioned as belonging in the unified German state took on an increasingly ethnically-based bent. For those in their preteens during reunification, the process constituted a moment of self-awareness in which they came to realize their place at

³ Nevim Çil, *Topographie des Außenseiters: Türkische Generationen und der deutsch-deutsche Wiedervereinigungsprozess* (Berlin: Schiler, 2007).

the margins of German society. Thus, for those in the second generation, Çil argues, “Turk” became a synonym for “outsider,” an identifier of one’s position in a minority group.⁴

If Çil is correct and the fall of the Wall and German reunification left members of the Turkish community feeling pushed farther toward the margins of German society, how did that development unfold in their daily lives? How were the spaces in their everyday landscapes affected by the events of 1989 and 1990? Did all their spaces of belonging deteriorate due to reunification, or were there ways in which the Turkish-German community became even more “at home” in post-1989 Germany?

In this chapter, I briefly re-examine the four everyday places (workplace, home and neighborhood, school, and places of worship) during the years following reunification, tracing the lines of continuity and highlighting new developments. A look at the Turkish-German community throughout the 1990s and beyond reveals a diversification of its experiences, which had significant consequences for members’ senses of belonging. At the same time, this chapter also demonstrates that, despite the very real challenges to immigrant belonging posed in the reunification environment and the accompanying disillusionment, the Turkish-German community managed to solidify its foundations within the German state and make key entrées into German society.

Working Hard, Hardly Working

As discussed in Chapter 1, an economic downturn in the 1980s followed by the upheaval caused by reunification resulted in a significant destabilization of the workplace for many first generation Turkish immigrants. While ethnic Germans also suffered job losses and workplace instability, the situation was especially acute for non-German workers.

⁴ Nevim Çil, “Türkische Migranten und der Mauerfall,” *APuZ* (May 2009): 40-46.

Turkish workers, in particular, suffered. Throughout the country, the Turkish unemployment rate rose from 10 percent in 1990 to 24.8 percent only five years later. In comparison, the general unemployment rate in 1995 was 10.8 percent and 16.6 percent for all *Ausländer*.⁵ In Berlin alone, the unemployment rate by the mid-1990s had reached 16.4 percent for native Germans and almost 27 percent for workers with an immigrant background.⁶ For some Turkish workers, their move into the ranks of the unemployed was the result of the emigration of their jobs out of the city, as was the case with Yılmaz and her husband. Others, however, pointed the finger of blame to the newly arrived former East Germans. One disaffected young man told a reporter, “I’ve lived here for nineteen years. But when I try to find work, I find nothing. Employers look at [people from the former East] and think, ‘I can pay them a little less, and besides that, they’re my countrymen. Why should I leave them in a bind?’”⁷ Whatever the direct cause, those who had originally come to Germany in order to work found that goal seriously challenged in the years following reunification.

Yet, even as a stable workplace became increasingly elusive, a growing number of immigrants sought stability and independence by opening businesses of their own. In 1981, only 4.7 percent of all *Ausländer* in West Germany owned their own business. By the time the Wall fell, that number had increased to just over 7 percent. Finally, by 1995, 8.5 percent of all *Ausländer* in the “old” *Bundesländer* were self-employed. In the mid-1990s, Turks represented the second largest group of non-German business owners, coming in behind

⁵ Armin Fuhrer, “Türkische Unternehmen boomen,” *Welt*, 14 July 1997, 15.

⁶ Hedwig Rudolph and Felicitas Hillmann, “Döner contra Boulette—Döner und Boulette: Berliner türkischer Herkunft als Arbeitskräfte und Unternehmer im Nahrungsgütersektor,” in Hartmut Häußermann and Ingrid Oswald, eds., *Zuwanderung und Stadtentwicklung* (Opladen/Wiesbaden: Leviathan, 1997), 93.

⁷ “In Kreuzberg kommandieren wir,” *Der Spiegel*, 19 November 1990, 161.

Italians. The statistics for Berlin are notable: between 1991 and 1994, there was an almost forty percent rise in new businesses with immigrant owners.⁸

According to a 1997 study of Turkish-owned businesses in Berlin by Hedwig Rudolph and Felicitas Hillmann, the majority of entrepreneurs did not open businesses as a way to escape unemployment. Similar to Blaschke and Ersöz's study ten years prior, Rudolph and Hillmann found that most based their reasoning on either the desire to be their own employer or to create an alternative to factory work. Additionally, the vast majority relied on family both for financing of the business and for labor.⁹ Initially, the majority of these new businesses were in the food services industry, as immigrant entrepreneurs flocked to this sector in numbers relatively high compared to their German counterparts. In 1992, one quarter of all immigrant-owned businesses in the country were in the food services industry, compared to six percent of German-owned companies. For Berlin, one-third of all new businesses opened by immigrants were in this sector—and thirty-six percent of those Turkish. Of the 1,129 Turkish-owned food service businesses in Berlin in the mid-1990s, the three most common were *Imbisse* (fast food bars) with 422, grocery stores with 204, and restaurants with 150.¹⁰

The presence and proliferation of Turkish-owned businesses began to change the way that Berliners, Germans, and foreigners (such as tourists) perceived of and experienced the city. Berlin became known for its ubiquitous Turkish *Imbisse*, which served up *Döner*

⁸ Rudolph and Hillmann, 95.

⁹ Ibid., 100-101.

¹⁰ Ibid., 95-98.

kebabs for the person on the go.¹¹ At the same time, the mid-1990s saw the beginning of a transition from first to second generation business ownership. The second generation, having grown up and been educated in Germany, was better equipped to deal with German bureaucracy as well as with diverse customers and suppliers. “It’s not a problem for me to think multiculturally,” a twenty-nine-year-old owner of a construction company with twenty employees told a reporter from the *Berliner Morgenpost*. The reporter noted that the naturalization rate among business owners was particularly high, as citizenship could smooth out bureaucratic tangles significantly.¹² Operating a business, then, anchored members of the Turkish-German community and recreated the urban landscape to reflect its changing social makeup.

A 2007 study carried out by researchers at the *Fachhochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Berlin* offers a look at developments in immigrant-owned businesses into the decade following Rudolph and Hillmann’s study. Locating their study in Berlin-Mitte (comprised of Wedding, Mitte, and Kreuzberg), the researchers sought to investigate the growth and composition of the “ethnic economy,” and identified three types of enterprises. The first, which constituted twenty-five percent of the 272 businesses in the study, employed family members and had a single-ethnicity customer base. The second (fifty percent) included German customers as well, while the third (twenty-five percent) had both German

¹¹ Eberhard Seidel-Pielen, *Aufgespießt: Wie der Döner über die Deutschen kam* (Hamburg: Rotbuch, 1996). Regarding the changing perception of Berlin, guidebooks for Germany and Berlin in 1989 and 1990 often mention the presence of Turkish immigrants, particularly in connection with Kreuzberg. However, over the next two decades, the Turkish community and “ethnic” businesses not only characterize parts of the city, they have become tourist destinations. For a couple of examples, see David Stanley, *Lonely Planet: Eastern Europe on a Shoestring* (Hawthorn, Australia: Lonely Planet, 1991); Steve Fallon, Anthony Haywood, Andrea Schulte-Peevers, and Nick Selby, *Lonely Planet: Germany* (Hawthorn, Australia: Lonely Planet, 1998); Andrea Schulte-Peevers, Kerry Christiani, Marc Di Duca, Anthony Haywood, Catherine Le Nevez, Daniel Robinson, and Caroline Sieg, *Lonely Planet: Germany* (Footscray, Australia: Lonely Planet, 2010).

¹² Britta Petersen, “Jenseits von Döner Kebab,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, 26 July 1998, p. 39, Presse Inhalte: Sozial-Spi. W, Mitte Museum Archiv (MMA), Berlin, Germany.

customers and employees.¹³ The average “ethnic” entrepreneur was a man between the ages of thirty-six and forty-five years old, and had earned a *Gesellenbrief* (certificate of apprenticeship). Proprietors of Turkish background constituted the vast majority of business owners in the “ethnic economy” (173 out of 272). Similar to the findings of Rudolph and Hillmann’s study, an overwhelming majority were sole proprietors of their business and worked in the retail or food service industry.¹⁴ Additionally, the *Fachhochschule* researchers found that some thirty percent of businesses in the ethnic economy were owned and operated by women.¹⁵ This is a significant difference from Rudolph and Hillmann’s study, which located no women proprietors of Turkish-owned businesses in the food services sector ten years earlier.¹⁶ As the later study does not break down business ownership by type and ethnicity, it is not possible to tell the role Turkish-German women played in the ethnic economy. However, the difference between the two studies is still remarkable and suggests a growing role of second-generation women in the city’s business leadership.

The spectrum of Turkish and Turkish-German experiences in the workplace after reunification is striking. At one end, first generation (and, eventually, second generation) workers were expelled from the labor market or failed to gain entry. At the other end, however, a stratum of the Turkish-German community created new spaces for themselves, their family members, and their employees to earn a living and participate in the city’s economic life. In so doing, they rooted themselves more deeply in their local community,

¹³ P. Kayser, F. Preusse, J. Riedel, and B. Umbreit, *Ethnische Ökonomie als Chance der Standortenentwicklung* (Berlin: Fachhochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft und Institut IKO, 2008), Vorwort.

¹⁴ Kayser, Preusse, Riedel, and Umbreit, 43-49.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁶ Rudolph and Hillmann, 101.

even as they changed the way the city was experienced by residents and perceived by non-Berliners. Such a wide range of experiences suggests that, for those who were part of the labor force in post-reunification Germany, one's sense of belonging may have become even more tied to one's socioeconomic status than one's ethnic identity or membership in a minority group.

Building Bridges, Guarding the Gates

Just as the post-1989 workplace was marked by bipolar experiences, so, too, were impressions of the home and neighborhood sites. In the years following reunification, Wedding (along with the rest of Berlin) saw the burgeoning of organizations, initiatives, and efforts directed toward improving the situations of its residents. While they may have held this very general goal in common, the types of associations that surfaced and their methods of dealing with perceived challenges varied widely. Here I will discuss local organizations that took opposing courses of action to improve the lives of local residents: those that advocated multiculturalism and cooperation to overcome social and economic problems, and those that sought protection and belonging through violence and ethnic separatism.

The *Kommunales Forum Wedding* (Community Forum of Wedding) is an example of a grassroots organization that has worked to improve living conditions in the neighborhood environment through civic engagement and support of local initiatives. Banding together in November 1988 partially as a consequence of local activism during the conflict over the *Sanierung*, the Forum's original members reflected the diversity of their neighborhood: university employees and the unemployed, clergy and renters' advocates. Each founder was initially motivated by the high levels of unemployment and poverty in their *Kiez*, and sought

to involve local residents in combating such challenges through programs ranging from lunches for senior citizens to neighborhood beautification.¹⁷ As part of a diverse district, the Forum also engaged (and continues to engage) in promoting cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. In this vein, it inaugurated a working group in 1999 called *Interkulturelle Kommunikation in der Kommune* (Intercultural Communication in the Municipality, IKK). The IKK was coordinated by a representative from the Forum as well as one from *Volkshochschule Wedding*, and brought together interested local participants and various experts in a quarterly public forum where they discussed the challenges of multiculturalism and instituted projects aimed at furthering cross-cultural cooperation.¹⁸ The Forum's efforts to improve the quality of life in Sprengelkiez earned them national recognition when they received the "Living Democracy" prize from Bundestag President Rita Süßmuth in 1998. In an article covering the event, the reporter noted that the organization continued its efforts to improve life in its Kiez, despite losing its office due to an inability to pay rent.¹⁹

Shortly after receiving the "Living Democracy" prize, the *Kommunales Forum* was formally joined in its efforts for neighborhood renewal by Berlin's city government. By the mid-1990s, it had become painfully clear that unemployment, poverty, and deteriorating infrastructure were affecting some neighborhoods at levels far exceeding those of others. In response, the city government instituted a new program, called *Quartiersmanagement* (Neighborhood Management, QM), in hopes of finding solutions to these entrenched social

¹⁷ "Agentur für gesellschaftlich nützliche Qualifizierung und Beschäftigung im Sprengelkiez - Warum es uns gibt." <http://kommunales-forum-wedding.de/cms/index.php?page=warum-es-uns-gibt> (accessed 11 August, 2011).

¹⁸ "Projekt: Interkulturelle Kommunikation in der Kommune (IKK)," *Newsletter Zukunftskonferenz Müllerstrasse*, no. 7 (December 1999), *Veranstaltungen im Wedding (1992-2004)*, MMA, 1.

¹⁹ "Preis für Kiez-Engagement," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 25 January 1998, *Presse Inhalte: Sozial-Spi. W*, MMA.

and economic problems. The QM's mandate reflected that of the *Kommunales Forum*: developing and supporting self-help projects through which local residents could improve their own situation.

As a “problem Kiez,” Sprengekiez was one of the first to be “managed,” and the “Sparrplatz” QM and *Kommunales Forum* wasted little time in cooperating in their like-minded efforts.²⁰ Residents, however, had mixed reactions to the new organization. While some saw its opening as positive for the Kiez, others questioned its ability to enact real change.²¹ The more cynically-minded wondered whether the new initiative was more political window-dressing, intended to look like the government was addressing local problems but more interested in advocating multiculturalism than dealing with economic issues.²² Whatever the locals' opinions of them, the QM staff hit the ground running. Over the course of their first nine months in operation, they designed and carried out a survey among the residents with the intention of uncovering the neighborhood's positive attributes and areas for improvement. While the majority of respondents replied that they felt at home in their Kiez, both German and non-German residents expressed the desire for more cross-cultural contact with their neighbors, and generally blamed non-Germans for the lack of contact.²³

²⁰ “Problemkiez wird jetzt gemanagt: Weddinger Sparrplatz soll vor weiterem Niedergang bewahrt werden,” *Tagesspiegel*, 27 February 1999, Presse Inhalte: Sozial-Spi. W, MMA.

²¹ Dilek Güngör, “‘Viel verändern wird sich hier nicht’: Am Sparrplatz haben nur wenige einen Job? Quartiersmanager sollen die Lebensqualität verbessern,” *Berliner Zeitung*, 8 August 1999, Presse Inhalte: Sozial-Spi. W, MMA.

²² Margaret Fischer (pseudonym), interview by author, 20 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 6-7.

²³ “Gutes multikulturelles Miteinander im Kiez,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, 27 October 1999, Presse Inhalte: Sozial-Spi. W, MMA.

By the end of the 1990s, many of the initiatives put forth to encourage cross-cultural connections had come to focus on religion. Contention over religious instruction in the schools, the proliferation of mosques, and the increasing visibility of practicing Muslims made religious differences a flashpoint, but, advocates of multiculturalism thought, also an opportunity. Alongside the intercultural communication effort hosted by the *Kommunales Forum* and the *Volkshochschule*, the QM in Soldinarstrasse partnered with a Tiergarten association to initiate a similar interreligious dialogue. The meetings, which began in November 1999 and took place at the Wedding *Volkshochschule*, brought together participants interested in learning more about the different religions represented in their district. At its second meeting, the group discussed abstract theological issues, as well as what different religions had to say about the problems faced by their neighborhoods. In addition, participants suggested communal religious holiday celebrations as a way to forge interreligious ties. The next meeting was scheduled to take place at the Islamic Cultural Center on Lindowerstrasse the following month, the first step in a plan to visit local places of worship. The meeting closed with a prayer—in German and Turkish—“for unity.”²⁴

Efforts at interreligious dialogue extended beyond working groups and institutes of higher learning. Local activists initiated less formal programs that reached into the daily lives of residents. Bilge Yılmaz, a community-minded person with children, began a project with coworkers at the Oster church’s Kindergarten to bring interreligious understanding to some of the youngest members of the Kiez. “We wanted to bring together this dialogue between Christians and Muslims,” Yılmaz recounted. Even though the Kindergarten was Protestant, “there are also many children of other nationalities and have other beliefs, you

²⁴ “Projekt Interreligiöser Dialog,” *Newsletter Zukunftskonferenz Müllerstrasse*, no. 7 (December 1999), *Veranstaltungen im Wedding* (1992-2004), MMA, 3-4.

know.”²⁵ Beginning in 2003, Yılmaz and her colleagues—another Turkish person and two Germans—introduced an element of religious education into the children’s day once each week. They would celebrate various festivals together, talk about how their families observed religious holidays, and tell stories that the different religions held in common. “The children understood it, and it can produce benefits, no disadvantages.” After four years, however, Yılmaz and her colleagues stopped the program. Yılmaz blames the current political climate for the lack of similar programs in the neighborhood, and continues her activism through participation in other local multicultural initiatives.²⁶

At the same time that the *Kommunales Forum* and residents like Bilge Yılmaz were trying to improve local conditions through intercultural cooperation, many young Turkish-German men pursued the solution to their problems down a different track altogether. Angered by experiences of prejudice and alienated by feelings of foreignness, some young men sought belonging and empowerment through participation in street gangs. Turkish street gangs began in the 1970s, prompted in part by the desire of young Turkish men to protect themselves and their neighborhoods from skinheads. At the same time, these organizations were distinctly territorial, with fights between gangs from different districts—such as Wedding’s Black Panthers and Kreuzberg’s 36 Boys—being frequent and violent.²⁷

The fall of the Wall only added fuel to the fire. Gone was the physical boundary that separated Turkish street gangs in the western districts from skinheads and neo-Nazis in the east. Burgeoning white supremacy activities encouraged by the one hundredth birthday of

²⁵ Yılmaz, 10.

²⁶ Ibid., 11.

²⁷ Joachim Gästel, “Black Panthers, Fighters und Türkiye Boys,” “Jugendcliquen im Wedding: Von den Wilden Cliquen zu Banden und Fighters” Ausstellung (JWA), MMA.

Adolf Hitler and an election that brought the Republikaner into the Berlin City Parliament further enflamed the situation. While Wedding itself remained fairly quiet during this time (one researcher credits the approximately five hundred members of the Streetfighter gang with keeping the peace), other parts of the city erupted in violence.²⁸ At a demonstration held to mourn the death of Ufuk Sahin, a man stabbed to death by a German racist, neo-Nazis gave the nearly 7,000 participants the Hitler salute before attacking the demonstrators. A group of Turkish gang members emerged from the crowd, and a violent battle between the two sides began as police tried to protect the crowd and stop the fighters.

In addition to such large-scale engagements, there were numerous smaller confrontations between Turkish and right-wing extremist gangs, both sides seeing violence as the only way to protect themselves, their loved ones, and their neighborhoods.²⁹ In 1990, the police estimated the number of “armed youth” in West Berlin at around four thousand.³⁰ For the Turkish gangs in these western districts, skinheads and neo-Nazis remained the primary enemy. However, as time passed, territorialism assumed a greater role, and gangs again turned their attention back to conflicts between neighborhoods and districts.³¹ The city attempted to deal with the increase in gang activity through a combination of law enforcement, social workers, and mediated discussions between different gangs.³²

²⁸ Joachim Gästel, “Jugendgangs der Neunziger Jahren,” JWA, MMA.

²⁹ “Brisante Kiste,” *Der Spiegel*, 26 June 1989, 47-51.

³⁰ “‘So ein Grgefühl der Befreiung’,” *Der Spiegel*, 12 November 1990.

³¹ Barbara Supp, “Die Droge heißt Respekt,” *Der Spiegel*, 26 May 1997, 110-113.

³² “Brisante Kiste,” *Der Spiegel*, 26 June 1989, 47-51; “‘So ein Grgefühl der Befreiung’,” *Der Spiegel*, 12 November 1990.

Membership in a gang offered several benefits to young Turkish and Turkish-German men. First and foremost, a gang provided young men with a sense of belonging, both to the people in the group and also to a particular place. Turkish gangs were, as noted above, strongly territorial. As one 36-er told a journalist in 1990, “We say it like this: Kreuzberg belongs to us. We are in charge here. What we say, goes.”³³ The second part of the young man’s statement illuminates another advantage of gang membership: power. In an environment of high unemployment, visibly escalating hostility to perceived foreigners, and loss of social place due to reunification, gangs became a vehicle through which young men (and some young women) could step out of the role of victim and fight back. And fight they did.

“Violence was like breakfast,” one member of the Bulldogs told a researcher in 2005. Participating in violence proved the young men’s masculinity and enhanced their reputation. It was also an integral part of drug dealing and extortion, activities that brought gang members the money they wanted. “It was obviously about the money,” another Bulldog remarked.³⁴ With funds from these illicit activities, gang members could purchase the consumer goods they wanted and that made them look the part. Unimpressed with the grocery stores and *Döner* stands of their fathers and put off by the social stigma of living off the system, these young men fought for a lifestyle they were either unwilling or unable to achieve otherwise.³⁵ In so doing, the young men, similar to the other community-based

³³ “In Kreuzberg kommandieren wir,” *Der Spiegel*, 19 November 1990, 160.

³⁴ The young man’s exact words were, “es ging ganz klar um die Cola.”

³⁵ “Bulldogs,” interview with Murat Güngör, “Zwei, drei Jahre Almany...” Exhibit, digital recordings 20050503.mp3, Dokumentationszentrum und Museum über die Migration in Deutschland, e.V. (DOMiD), Cologne, Germany.

organizations discussed earlier, attempted to solve the socioeconomic challenges they were facing, but through the medium of ethnic separatism and violence.

Multiculturalism in the Classroom

The two decades following reunification saw the continuation of challenges to education in a multicultural context that had begun to surface in the 1970s and 1980s. On the one hand, school administrators and teachers were still trying to deal with high percentages of students for whom German was not their first language. Particularly in working class neighborhoods where immigrant communities tended to settle, educators faced the pedagogical challenge of teaching lessons to students with, at times, vastly different German language skills. Maja Herbert, a teacher of forty years, began working at a primary school in Sprengelkiez in 1990. The number of children per teacher at the school, she said, made effective teaching especially challenging. In one class, Herbert told a researcher, there were twenty-four Turkish students and one German teacher. They simply could not understand each other. “It’s madness,” she said with a laugh. Herbert insisted that the school needed more space for classes, more teachers, and more money. We are a rich country, she explained, but we skim when it comes to our children.³⁶

Ute Schmidt, a pre-school teacher at a local primary school in the 1980s and 1990s, saw what she considered a lack of funding for and attention to teacher preparation as well. Schmidt recalled how she and her colleagues received very little, if any, special training regarding teaching in a multicultural classroom. Some time after reunification, however, the city *Senat* provided a German as a second language course for a number of Berlin teachers at

³⁶ Maja Herbert (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 16 June 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

a school of education. “The *Senat* was pretty clever,” Schmidt remarked wryly, “they gave us a certificate, but not so that they would have to pay us any better.”³⁷ While organized efforts of teacher training would increase in the 1990s, the majority of instructors continued to rely on experience, rather than formal training, to deal with the unique challenges of a multicultural classroom.

Yet, in a reunified Berlin, there were some teachers who did not have the sort of on-the-job training upon which many of their colleagues relied: those from former East Berlin. East Berliners generally did not have much contact with foreigners, since the East German government had kept its contract laborers largely separate from the host society. As a result, when teachers from the former East obtained positions in western districts, such as Wedding, Kreuzberg, and Neukölln, they were confronted with new personal experiences and pedagogical challenges. Filiz Güler, who grew up in Wedding and now works there as a primary school teacher, remembers when East German teachers began working in her district. “Naturally, they hadn’t had any contact with foreign children,” Güler recounted, “and I still always hear, even though ten or more years have passed, that they can’t deal with them, or are really different.”³⁸ In addition to the difficulties this could cause in the classroom, at times it also prompted tensions between the teachers themselves. Primary school teacher Sabine Müller noted the strained relations between colleagues at her own institution. “After German reunification many Turkish people experienced that they were again pushed to the back of the line,” Müller explained. “That was also for Turkish teachers;

³⁷ Ute Schmidt (pseudonym), interview by author, 29 June 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 7.

³⁸ Filiz Güler (pseudonym), interview by author, 27 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 11.

people came from Berlin, from [East Germany], that had no university degree, but despite that they took some courses, and immediately became public employees, and made the same money as those that had worked here for thirty years.”³⁹

It was a combination of factors, then, that led to deteriorating conditions in a number of urban schools in the late 1990s. Even before the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)⁴⁰ examinations were given and analyzed, many residents of Germany looked upon the situation of their local schools and endeavored to send their children to schools outside their neighborhood, to schools with fewer “foreigners.” Some used the addresses of relatives to get their children into more desirable schools; others opted to send their children to private or religious institutions. While the majority of such parents were ethnic Germans, even some Turkish parents were following suit and enrolling their children in schools with lower numbers of “foreign” students in hopes of improving their children’s language learning and educational opportunities.⁴¹

The release of the first PISA report in 2000 revealed a situation in German schools much worse than many had assumed. Almost a quarter of all fifteen year olds either could not read or could barely do so. Scores in math and science were similarly shocking. The lowest performing students were young men either from migrant backgrounds or from socially disadvantaged families. In addition, Germany had the largest gap between the

³⁹ Sabine Müller (pseudonym), interview by author, 14 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 11.

⁴⁰ The PISA is an analysis conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that evaluates the scholastic level of fifteen year olds across the world. The first PISA test was conducted in 2000, and has been held every three years since.

⁴¹ “Oma mit guter Adresse,” *Der Spiegel*, 26 October 1998, 94-97. See also Margaret Fischer (pseudonym), interview by author, 20 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 13.

highest and lowest levels of achievement of any of the thirty-two participating countries.⁴²

The results sparked much debate over the ability of the German school system to address the needs of children with migrant backgrounds and concerns that it had failed fulfill its role as their means of social advancement. Critics pointed out the high percentage of students with Turkish background who failed to graduate from secondary school (approximately half in 2002) or obtain an *Ausbildungsplatz* (apprenticeship training position) if they did graduate (around forty percent). “Nowhere in Europe,” wrote one reporter, “are the abilities of students so far apart from one another, and in almost no country does the background of the children have so great an influence on educational achievement as here. This applies especially to the foreign problem children of the educational system.”⁴³ While the scores in the second PISA evaluation in 2003 rose somewhat, the relative success rates of students with migrant backgrounds continued to concern education officials, teachers, and parents alike.

Islam Beyond the Mosque

Religious spaces, perhaps more than any other, expanded and changed shape after German reunification. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Muslim communities began to put down permanent roots in the form of purpose-built mosques throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s. These projects, and the increased visibility of the communities they served, sparked heated debate about the place of Islam in German society and the compatibility of

⁴² “Die Pisa-Analyse: Sind deutsche Schüler doof?” *Spiegel Online*, 13 December 2001, <http://www.spiegel.de/schulspiegel/0,1518,172357,00.html> (accessed 27 July 2011).

⁴³ Martin Spiewak, “Weil Deutschland alle Schüler braucht,” *Die Zeit*, 6 June 2002, http://www.zeit.de/2002/24/Weil_Deutschland_alle_Schueler_braucht (accessed 28 July 2011).

that religion with German culture. Mosque construction, however, constituted only one facet of the broader debate. As the visibility of observant Muslims increased, religious spaces began to extend beyond the mosque and the workplace (in the form of prayer rooms) and into new sites in the everyday landscape.

One of the places into which religious spaces expanded was the school. Initially, school officials paid relatively little attention to the religious backgrounds of their “foreign” students. However, in the 1990s, teachers and principals started to note an increased observance among the children with Turkish background, a devotion marked by larger numbers of young women wearing a *Kopftuch* (headscarf). Two principals of secondary schools in Wedding recalled that one hardly ever saw the headscarf in the 1970s and 1980s; it was not until the mid- to late-1990s that they first showed up in their schools. While neither principal considered the headscarf itself to be a problem, both were concerned that some of their Turkish students felt pressured—both by families and by other students—to wear the headscarf as well.⁴⁴ Some administrators and teachers also used the headscarf as a measure of students’ integration, viewing those who wore it as “aggressive” about their religion, to use the word of a primary school principal.⁴⁵ In addition, some Turkish-German students in secondary schools observed Ramadan, fasting during the course of the school day. Again, for one secondary school principal, the issue was not that students chose to fast, but rather that some of those began to pressure others into fasting as well.⁴⁶ Both the secondary school principals and the primary school principal tied the increased religious observance and the

⁴⁴ Max Schulz (pseudonym), interview by author, 29 May 2009, Berlin, Germany; Erik Weber (pseudonym), interview by author, 25 May 2009, Berlin Germany.

⁴⁵ Paul Hoch (pseudonym), interview by Ursula Trüper, 29 October 1993, audio cassette, DLSA, MMA.

⁴⁶ Weber.

pressure to conform to the growth of the Turkish immigrant community and the continual influx of new members from Turkey.

While some religious spaces in school developed organically as a result of the growing Turkish-German population, the introduction of another such space was deliberate and engineered. As discussed in the previous chapter, concerns and anxieties about what was being transmitted to Turkish children in *Koranschule* prompted many to call for transfer of Islamic religious education from the mosques to public schools. The trend continued through the 1990s until it became nearly universal across the political spectrum following the September 11th, 2001 attacks in the United States. At this point, however, *Islamunterricht* advocates were confronted with the practical obstacles of implementing such a course. No single Islamic umbrella organization could legitimately claim to represent all Muslims in Germany, thus German politicians and education officials faced the dilemma of which organization they should partner with. Another significant sticking point was the almost complete lack of properly trained instructors. In the words of one *Spiegel* reporter, “The *Länder* are searching for educators with a training that does not even exist.”⁴⁷ Officials in some of the *Länder*, including Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia, and Lower Saxony, attempted to find suitable instructors among those who already taught Turkish.⁴⁸

The situation in Berlin, however, was unique. A 2001 court decision ended a two-decade-long struggle by the Islamic Federation to teach *Islamkundestunden* (Islamic studies periods) in Berlin’s public schools. The organization brought a case to the city’s administrative court, and the court found in its favor, saying that the city’s school

⁴⁷ Cordula Meyer, “‘Wenn Allah möchte’,” *Der Spiegel*, 5 August 2002, 49.

⁴⁸ Meyer, 48-49.

administration was required to provide classroom space for voluntary *Islamkundestunden* as part of the constitutionally protected freedom of religion. Yet, while the case accomplished the spatial transition from the mosque to the school, it circumvented the intended purpose of the move. Because in Berlin the religion courses are voluntary and their content is the responsibility of the religious community, school officials had no influence over what the courses would teach.⁴⁹ The class itself may have transitioned to the public schools, but its control was still centered in the mosque.

The struggle over the location and content of religious education has been one part of the larger battle over the character of Islam in Germany. Even before the September 11th terrorist attacks, German politicians and the broader public anxiously watched what they feared to be the growing radicalization of Muslims in Germany. The anti-German and anti-Semitic rhetoric of some imams affiliated with Millî Görüş, that organization's outreach to Turkish-German youth, and its political and financial connections to extreme rightist parties in Turkey have caused many in Germany to conclude that, at the least, this particular brand of Islam was inimical to the country's cultural and political values.⁵⁰ These fears were confirmed when it was uncovered that the men who carried out the September 11th attacks in the United States had ties to a terrorist cell in Hamburg.

Yet, at the same time, numerous Muslims in Germany were attempting to define and articulate their religious beliefs in a way that illustrated both their compatibility with German political values and their contribution to broader society. In 2004, DITIB's chairman, Rıdvan Çakır, sat down with a reporter from *Die Zeit* in an effort to publicize his organization's

⁴⁹ Carolin Ströbele, "Islamunterricht an Berlins Schulen erlaubt," *Spiegel Online*, 25 October 2001, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,164474,00.html> (accessed 25 July 2011).

⁵⁰ "Der Islam ist der Weg," *Der Spiegel*, 12 February 1996, 44-49.

values and character. Çakir emphasized the distance between his group and self-identified Muslim terrorists, explaining that such groups misused Islam for political ends. “We condemned the attacks in New York, Istanbul, and Madrid immediately and in clear words—in German and in Turkish, by the way,” Çakir reprimanded the reporter. “However, these were not transmitted through the German media.” Çakir went on to describe the apolitical nature of Islam—in line with the tradition of Turkish secularism. DITIB’s stance on the headscarf demonstrated this religious/political divide. Whether a woman wears a headscarf or not does not make her more or less religious, he argued. “The present debate [over the headscarf] is not religious, but political. And thus we do not take part.” Additionally, Çakir posited that imams in Germany should speak German, but said there were currently no properly trained imams who could fulfill this role.⁵¹ The DITIB chairman’s position on the separation of the political and the religious, as well as his strong stance against terrorism, reflected the viewpoints of many Muslims in Germany, despite its lack of media coverage relative to that of more extreme perspectives.

Finally, some Muslim thinkers, German politicians, and academics posited another religious space they considered more suited to life in Germany: Euro-Islam. This, advocates claimed, would be a form of Islam compatible with daily life, responsibilities, and privileges in Europe. Some of the definitions advocates of Euro-Islam laid out sounded similar to the values set forth by Çakir in the *Die Zeit* interview. *Bundestagpräsident* Wolfgang Thierse, in response to a question from a *Spiegel* reporter about an “ideal Islam,” defined Euro-Islam as recognizing the separation of church and state, embracing pluralism, and practicing religious

⁵¹ “‘Das Kopftuch ist nicht so wichtig,’” *Die Zeit*, 3 June 2004, <http://www.zeit.de/2004/24/ditib-interview> (accessed 29 July 2011).

tolerance.⁵² Syrian-German political scientist Bassam Tibi went even further, calling for a reformation in Islam and Muslim renouncement of efforts to convert others to Islam.⁵³

Researchers have found evidence to support the presence of this type of Euro-Islam, particularly among the second generation. Scholars point to more open and tolerant attitudes toward religious difference, personal study and interpretation of the Qur'an, and the hybridization of modesty with fashion as indicators of the growth and viability of European-influenced Islam.⁵⁴

The German government took a step toward encouraging a Euro-Islam in 2006 when it invited Muslims from a broad spectrum of religious, cultural, and political backgrounds to take part in open dialogue aimed at creating and promoting a German-Islam. The participants—who ranged from a representative of the conservative *Verband Islamischer Kulturzentren* (VIKZ) to Islam-critic and feminist Necla Kelek—joined the government in forming the *Deutsche Islam Konferenz* (German Islam Conference, DIK), headed by Minister of the Interior Wolfgang Schäuble (CDU). On the agenda for the first meeting were the long-standing issues of the training of German-speaking imams and religious instruction in public schools.⁵⁵ Though it is difficult to gauge the impact of such an organization on the local level, a survey conducted by the DIK in 2009 does illuminate some aspects of Muslim

⁵² “Thierses Traum vom Euro-Islam,” *Spiegel Online*, 23 December 2001, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/debatte/0,1518,174243,00.html> (accessed 29 July 2011).

⁵³ Cordula Meyer and Caroline Schmidt, “Europeans Have Stopped Defending Their Values,” *Spiegel Online*, February 10, 2006. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/0,1518,440340,00.html> (accessed 25 July 2011).

⁵⁴ For example, see Peter P. Mandaville, “Muslim Youth in Europe,” in *Islam, Europe’s Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen Hunter (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002): 219–229.

⁵⁵ “Lowering the Wall Between Mosque and State,” *Spiegel Online*, 27 September 2006, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,439410,00.html> (accessed 20 August 2011).

daily life in Germany. While reaffirming well-known information, such as the predominance of Turks among Muslims in Germany, the survey also turned up new data that challenged common stereotypes, particularly in regard to women and girls. For example, approximately seventy percent of Muslim women in Germany answered that they did not wear a headscarf. In addition, ninety percent of Muslim girls participated in class trips, swimming lessons, and sexual education classes.⁵⁶ These results suggest, if not a German-Islam, than at least one that conforms more to German social customs than previously assumed. However, Bassam Tibi's own experience is a caution against declaring Euro-Islam's total victory over the public identity of Islam in Germany. Despite being a longtime German resident and citizen, Tibi felt that he was unable to be seen as a German by Germans or a Muslim by Muslims. He called his a "failed integration," and took a position at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York in 2006.

Conclusion

This brief examination of developments in the Turkish-German community demonstrates some of the significant challenges facing that population since reunification in 1990. Economic instability and high unemployment affected workers with a Turkish background disproportionately. As jobs emigrated from the city and a new surge of ethnic German workers flooded the labor market, the first generation in particular found themselves bereft of the inducement that had brought and anchored them to living in Germany.

Economic hardship took its toll on homes and neighborhoods, as many small businesses

⁵⁶ Deutsche Islam Konferenz, Summary: "Muslim Life in Germany," (2009), http://www.deutsche-islam-konferenz.de/cln_170/nn_1883412/SubSites/DIK/EN/BisherigeErgebnisse/Dokumente/dokumente-inhalt.html?__nnn=true (accessed 20 August 2011), 7-8.

closed their doors and more financially secure residents moved away. The second generation, many coming to an age at which they should have been entering the workplace, were faced with a situation very different from the one their parents had previously enjoyed. For some young men, their decline in socioeconomic status coupled with rising anti-foreigner sentiment motivated them to seek their own solutions through gang membership and illicit activities. Their lack of economic opportunity was tied in part to a school system that still grappled with the challenges of educating a diverse student body for social and economic success. At the same time, school officials, German policy makers, and Islamic organizations—while largely in agreement on where Islamic studies classes should take place—had yet to arrive at a solution as to how they should be conducted. The broader German public had become even more anxious about the Muslims, who had in the intervening years grown more visible and vocal, living among them.

Despite these many challenges, the post-reunification decades were not wholly negative ones for the Turkish-German community. Indeed, several noteworthy developments further rooted that population both in their everyday landscapes as well as German society more broadly. The number of Turkish-owned businesses increased markedly, tying their proprietors to the customers they served and giving a segment of the Turkish-German community an opportunity to influence the character and economic conditions of their environment. In the neighborhood, local activists—both German and Turkish—worked together to improve the economic and social conditions of their neighbors. Their efforts at intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation created spaces for open discussion and debate, and, while they may not have resulted in agreement, they did promote understanding and common cause. Finally, the expansion of religious spaces into other

aspects of daily life, as well as public discourse, has given Turkish Muslims the chance to integrate their religious beliefs with their daily lives even as it enables them to redefine what it means to be Muslim in the face of one-dimensional media portrayals.

Thus, the two decades after German reunification witnessed continuations of developments that began as far back as the 1970s as well as new situations prompted by the fall of the Wall and the political, economic, and social restructuring that followed. While these developments had conflicting influences on the sense of belonging among Turkish immigrants and their children, one thing was clear—members of the Turkish-German community were taking an increasingly active role in articulating the challenges that they faced and seeking solutions. That their approaches to addressing these challenges could be very different reflected the growth and diversification the community had experienced during its fifty years of existence.

CONCLUSION

AT HOME IN ALMANYA: INTEGRATION AS HISTORY, RECIPROCITY AND SPACE

Born in West Berlin to Turkish *Gastarbeiter*, Filiz Güler spent her childhood playing in Wedding's parks, attending its public schools, and wandering its streets with friends. She excelled at her studies, motivated by her parents' encouragement, a teacher's support, and her own ambition. Despite being discouraged by well-meaning but misguided instructors, Güler opted to continue her schooling at the *Gymnasium*, and ultimately earned a university degree. Now an adult with a family of her own, Güler lives and works in Wedding as an elementary school teacher, specializing in English language instruction. Güler speaks flawless German, considers religion a private matter, sees Germany as her home, and has a successful career that required advanced education. By most measures, she is the poster-child for a well-integrated Turkish-German.

At one point in her life, however, Güler wanted to leave Germany. While discussing some of the difficulties she encountered growing up with a different language and culture, Güler admitted, "Beginning at twenty, I really wanted to live in Turkey, I wanted to study there. I had this drive, this desire. It was pretty bad." With time, that desire diminished, and at present she cannot imagine relocating to Turkey or what her life would have been like had she made the move.¹ However, the fact that—despite embodying in so many ways the traditional markers of successful integration—she did not feel at home in the place she had

¹ Filiz Güler (pseudonym), interview by author, 27 May 2009, transcription by Perrin Saylan, Berlin, Germany, 2.

been born and raised calls into question the ways that the relationship between immigrant communities and host societies is understood and measured.

While more recent scholarship has taken an increasingly nuanced approach to understanding the the history of Turkish-Germans, the dominant popular narratives regarding immigrant integration in Germany articulate it as a linear movement, in which immigrants move from ethnic separatism toward the goal of assimilation into the host society. Part of the reason for this teleological conception of integration lies in the perspective from which the narrative is most often told—a German perspective. Thus, one of the goals of this dissertation has been, as much as is possible, to examine immigrant integration from the perspective of its foremost participants, Turkish immigrants and their children.

As told from the view point of the host society, there are only two outcomes of integration: success or failure. While success is measured by language acquisition, financial independence, and cultural “passing,” failure consigns immigrants to living a parallel existence, holding on to traditions and customs foreign to German society. Such separation is seen as disadvantageous to immigrants, as well as, at times, dangerous to the host society. However, as Filiz Güler’s experience reveals, the success versus failure dichotomy is simplistic and misleading. It reduces to a bare equation a complex relationship of interconnected, contending, and conflicting experiences, belongings, and identities. In order to better understand the dynamics of integration, it is necessary to take into account its essential elements: one, a historical process built on everyday experience; two, a reciprocal relationship between immigrant community and host society; and three, an interactive process that is spatial in nature.

The immigration of Turkish workers, their coalescence into an immigrant community, and the increasing diversification of that community cannot be understood in isolation from broader German history, nor can Germany's post-war history be complete without acknowledgement of the role played by the *Gastarbeiter* and subsequent ethnic minority populations. At each step in its development, the Turkish-German community has been affected by events, situations, and ideas unfolding in Germany. The thousands of Turkish citizens who left their homes in search of well-paying jobs did so in response to West Germany's demand for labor—a demand fueled by the Economic Miracle and the halt of immigrant labor from East Germany. As demonstrated by Ulrich Herbert, the Federal Republic's use of foreign labor was grounded in the past experiences of the *Kaiserreich*, the Weimar Republic, and even Nazi Germany.² In addition, as Monika Mattes has shown, the choice to utilize foreign workers was influenced by a political and social desire to enable German women to remain in the home.³

Family reunification among Turkish immigrants was prompted in large part by the oil crisis and subsequent economic downturn of the early 1970s. In the government's attempt to make it more difficult for immigrants to enter the Federal Republic, they made *Gastarbeiter* choose between leaving permanently or committing to a longer stay. Those who opted to stay often brought their families to be with them, setting into motion a series of developments that resulted in the creation of a new community of Turkish-Germans and introduced a set of practical and ideological challenges to German society. The economic downturn in the 1980s and the upheaval caused by German reunification left many Turkish

² Ulrich Herbert, *A History of Foreign Labor in Germany, 1880-1980: Seasonal Workers, Forced Laborers, Guest Workers*. Translated by William Templer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990).

³ Monika Mattes, "*Gastarbeiterinnen*" in *der Bundesrepublik: Anwerbepolitik, Migration, und Geschlecht in den 50er bis 70er Jahren* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2005).

immigrants without work and threw their belonging in a nation of “one people” into question. Rising unemployment and uncertainty among ethnic Germans opened space for right wing extremists , who blamed “foreigners” for the country’s ills. The response of many in the Turkish-German community to this perceived and real hostility was to turn to their religious identities, forcing German society to address the consequences of religious differences in public and private spheres.

As these broad historical changes were taking place, the Turkish-German community was undergoing change on a basic, everyday level. The types of workplaces that Turkish immigrants, and eventually their children, inhabited became more varied. While unskilled or low-skilled positions in manufacturing largely drew Turkish workers to West Germany (and West Berlin especially), over the years they found work increasingly in the service sector, including as small business owner-operators. From banks to *Imbisse* and school teachers to housekeepers, Turkish-Germans are present as both owners and employees in all levels of the economy. At the same time, however, the workplace has grown more unstable.

Manufacturing and service sector positions have been particularly sensitive to economic downturns, and Turkish workers have often been the first to find themselves out of work. Small business ownership, while giving immigrants a measure of independence and control, did not necessarily grant them financial security. Thus, for both men and women of Turkish origin, even as the ways in which they participated in the German the workplace have become more varied, their position in these workplaces has also grown more unstable.

While the diversification of the workplace happened gradually over the course of the past four decades, the first major development in the home and neighborhood occurred more quickly. For many Turkish *Gastarbeiter*, “home” in West Germany originally meant the

company dormitory, and it was not until family reunification in the mid-1970s that they moved out of the *Wohnheim* and into neighborhoods. Homes became the center of the Turkish community's social life, a place where families and friends gathered to celebrate holidays or simply to spend an evening together playing cards. At the same time, the home also constituted the center of familial obligations, and required constant labor, particularly from women. Thus, the home was the site of many conflicting spaces: from a place of security and society to a "prison" of stifling expectations and work.

Similarly, the neighborhood offered space for socializing, but also oversight. Men and women created separate spaces for themselves away from the responsibilities of the home, though men generally moved their socializing indoors as Turkish-owned tea houses and *Kneipe* opened their doors. For the youth, the freedom of the neighborhood was tempered by the expectations and social control of their neighbors, who kept watch for improper behavior. As the neighborhood became more "Turkish," young women especially felt this pressure increase. By the 1980s, though, formal sites were opening up with the intent of providing the youth, and young women in particular, with space to enjoy each other's company while receiving help with school work or learning new skills. The formalization of social spaces for youth in the neighborhood was followed in the 1990s by the organized efforts of residents as well as city government to improve the local quality of life. Integration became not only a process through which Turkish immigrants and their children made themselves at home, but also a project that locals and outsiders alike sought to carry out within the boundaries of the neighborhood.

As with the neighborhood, the school slowly came to be viewed as a site where integration could be facilitated. When the second generation entered German schools,

administrators and teachers were unprepared and inconsistent in their approach to the children's education. Initially, it was unclear whether foreign students were to be prepared for a return to their country of origin (or, rather, their parents'), or if they were to be educated for life in Germany. As the prevailing political and administrative opinions focused on the school as a tool for immigrant integration, teachers in schools with high percentages of "foreign" students grappled with how to implement this integration within the classroom. Some developed innovative ways to bring the backgrounds of all of their students into the learning process, and some of these approaches were formalized in teacher training programs.

While politicians, administrators, teachers, and parents debated the purposes and methods of education, Turkish-German youth attended classes, formed friendships, pushed the boundaries of "acceptable" behavior, and struggled with discrimination and the challenges of a new language. They used the school as a place that was at least partially independent of parental and neighborhood oversight to create new spaces of belonging where they could explore their own interests, and they utilized it to prepare themselves for life outside the building's walls. For some of the second generation, however, the benefits of the school were outweighed by the challenges they faced there, and they left, seeking belonging and success elsewhere.

Perhaps more than any other place, the mosque reflects the development and diversification of the Turkish-German community over time. Initially, religious spaces were confined to whatever free spaces Turkish *Gastarbeiter* could carve out of their everyday landscape: attics or basements in the *Wohnheim*, a break room in the factory, a hall in a sympathetic local church. The growth of the Turkish immigrant population, particularly after

family reunification, necessitated locating new spaces for worship, and newly formed religious organizations rented rooms in former workshops, office buildings, and apartments in *Hinterhäuser*. Within these new spaces, mosques facilitated religious instruction for the youth, and brought the faithful together for daily prayer as well as holiday celebrations. In so doing, they sought to sustain the religious community as well as preserve and practice Turkish culture—a source of comfort for the first generation and education for the second. While women had a role to play in the religious life of the mosque, it began as and continued to be predominantly a place for men to meet, worship, learn, and educate. Additionally, the second generation had a variety of reactions to the community's religious spaces. For some, participation in *Koranschule* and religious festivities gave them a sense of belonging that prompted increased involvement. The negative or ambiguous experiences of others, however, led them to distance themselves from the structures of organized religion.

Mosque communities became increasingly organized and centralized over time. While the move from impromptu prayer rooms to rented halls initially resulted in a diversification of mosques based on political, cultural, theological, and ethnic backgrounds, those different communities forged ties to like-minded mosques and, eventually, formed umbrella organizations at the national level. Such connections provided the administrative and financial support necessary for religious communities to begin constructing purpose-built mosques. The visibility (or, in some cases, the proposed visibility) of these mosques brought Islamic organizations in direct dialogue—and, at times, conflict—with German institutions and the public, providing Turkish Muslims with a platform from which they participated as near-equals.

This brief description of the development of the Turkish-German community reveals the nature of integration as a historical process. Situated within and influenced by specific historical contexts, integration was an incremental and variable process driven by the needs, wants, and experiences of those in the immigrant community. The factor of generation played a particularly significant role in this regard. The first generation, brought to Germany solely for work, carved out of their everyday landscape the basics that they needed to form a community within which they could work, raise children, fulfill religious obligations, and feel at home. Theirs was an integration, or space-making, largely defined by their relationship to the workplace and the factors that influenced it. The second generation built upon the foundation their parents laid, even when they sometimes rebelled against it, and sought to understand and make a place for themselves within German society. For them, the school, then, was central—a site whose spaces reflected broad political opinion as well as students' own activities. In both cases, the specific historical context played a pivotal role in their experiences, their ability to create spaces of belonging, and, ultimately, their overall sense of belonging in Germany.

At this point, it is helpful to take a step back from the results and reconsider the sources. While this dissertation draws on scholarly studies, media coverage, and immigrants' accounts from across the Federal Republic, the core of its analysis focuses on the relationships between belonging, daily experience, and space in the daily lives of residents of Berlin-Wedding, and, more specifically, in Sprengekiez. Comparison with similar studies—such as Rauf Ceylan's *Ethnische Kolonien*, Esin Bozkurt's *Conceptualising "Home,"* and Patricia Ehrkamp's "Placing Identities"—has demonstrated how the dynamics of integration in this relatively narrow geographic place resonate in other neighborhoods

across the country.⁴ At the same time, this study reveals the specifically local nature of integration. What other neighborhoods had a Sparrladen, a *Volkshochschule* director interested in multicultural theater, or a resident-led initiative to counter and restructure the city's housing renovation plans? The spaces of belonging created by Turkish immigrants and their children in and around Sprengelkiez were to a large degree, but not entirely, rooted in and influenced by local conditions. Thus, while their experiences are relateable to and reflected in Turkish-German communities across the country, they also demonstrate integration as a process that takes place in the context of local history.

Just as the story of the Turkish-German community demonstrates the nature of integration as a historical process, at the same time it illustrates the centrality of the reciprocal relationship inherent in that process. That is, what we call "integration" happens not only within an immigrant community, but also between that community and the host society. It occurs at the borders of the different communities as interaction causes the perceived boundaries between them grow indistinct. During their integration process, the Turkish immigrant population came into contact with German spaces, learning either to operate within them or to change them to suit their needs. In the words of Michel de Certeau, immigrants became active users, rather than just passive consumers.⁵ Concurrently, in some cases the German spaces responded to the presence of Turkish users, adapting to meet their needs and take advantage of their contributions. Thus, the line between the groups (or,

⁴ Rauf Ceylan, *Ethnische Kolonien: Entstehung, Funktion und Wandel am Beispiel tuerkischer Moscheen und Cafes* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag fuer Sozialwissenschaften, 2006); Esin Bozkurt, *Conceptualising "home": the question of belonging among Turkish families in Germany* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2009); Patricia Ehrkamp, "Placing Identities: Transnational Practices and Local Attachments of Turkish Immigrants in Germany," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 5 (March 2005): 345-364.

⁵ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (University of California Press, 2002).

perhaps, the perception of difference and separateness) blurred, and something new formed at the borders.

One of the clearest examples of this phenomenon in this dissertation is the Wedding *Volkshochschule* during the 1980s and 1990s. Though it already offered German language courses, a member of the school's administration put the institution on the path to being a facilitator of integration in the 1970s when he began a Turkish folklore group. When Eduard Ditschek took the reins in the 1980s, he wanted to continue this outreach to the district's immigrant population. Ditschek's own training, however, was in literature and theater, and he wanted to use these tools to build a space that would bring together German and Turkish participants and culture. Together with Turkish director Yekta Arman, Ditschek formed a theater troupe under the auspices of the *Volkshochschule*. The actors started by giving dramatic readings of works from notable Turkish and German literary figures, but soon Ditschek, Arman, and the student participants focused instead on creating their own works, plays that spoke about their experiences and issues facing their communities. This fusion of youth and adults, Turks and Germans, theater and reality inhabited the fuzzy borderlands of integration and resonated with audiences from both cultures. At the same time, the *Volkshochschule* expanded this space through other ventures: hosting clubs and organizations, offering courses, hiring faculty, and arranging art exhibits that reflected the diversity of the institution's surroundings and its participants.

Perspectives that focus solely on the ways immigrants adapt to the host society miss this reciprocal element of integration. They fail to see that integration is not only Turkish children learning to speak German in schools, but also teachers becoming aware of their new students' cultural backgrounds and using them as a teaching aid in the classroom. Instead,

the reciprocal influences highlighted are often characterized by conflict and violence, such as fights between Turkish street gangs and skinheads, or so-called honor killings of young women by male relatives. Recognition of joint influences and reactions reveals how Germans and immigrants acclimated to each other, and further acknowledges the role of Turkish immigrants in shaping German society in the postwar period.

This reciprocal acclimation has resulted in hybrid identities at three levels: the individual, the immigrant community, and the host society. As demonstrated throughout this dissertation, residents of Berlin—mainly those with Turkish background but also some ethnic Germans—molded their own identities and perspectives by incorporating elements from and attributing behaviors to different cultures. Many young women of Turkish background, for example, expressed the desire to be free of certain religious and cultural restrictions in order to pursue their own personal and professional interests. They attributed their ambition for independence and success to the “German” part of their identity, and were frustrated when their parents’ and the community’s traditional “Turkish” values stymied their efforts. The Turkish-German community itself is also hybrid, formed by the interaction of myriad experiences, ideas, and backgrounds. As such, it is hardly uniform, only loosely connecting the diverse and contradictory identities with which it is affiliated. Finally, the reciprocal influences at work in integration have led to the hybridization of the host society as well. Not monolithic to begin with, German society has been pushed— sometimes subtly, sometimes more dramatically—to change in response to the presence and activities of Turkish immigrants and their children. From local efforts at cross-cultural understanding to national discussions about mosque construction and the place of Islam, German society has, at all levels, come to engage with and respond to its changing composition. It is important to

note, however, that the amount of influence different actors exerted on each other was not balanced. The nature of the relationship between an immigrant community and the host society, with the relative power that each wields given size and degree of establishment, makes an equal degree of reciprocal influence highly unlikely, if not impossible. Immigrants certainly must do more to conform to a host society than that society must alter to accept them. Yet, this study has demonstrated that, despite the relative inequality, Turkish immigrants and their children have prompted changes in German society—politically, culturally, and economically. In incorporating immigrants—however slowly or reluctantly—the host society itself changes, and begins to reflect the identities of its newest members.

Recognizing this reciprocal aspect of integration also highlights its spatial element. Indeed, the language of integration is full of spatial references: center versus margin, insider versus outsider, bridges and borders, to name a few. The public discourse concerning Turkish immigrants in Germany has often reflected the relationship between integration and space. The *Koranschulen*, for example, were described as sequestered in courtyards, outside the oversight and control of state governments. Immigrant neighborhoods became ethnic ghettos, located within but closed off from the rest of the community. Turkish-owned tea houses, restaurants, travel agencies and the like were (and are) part of a “parallel society,” existing alongside but never intersecting with German society. Scholars have noted that this discursive positioning has been used to exclude Turkish immigrants and their children from being considered full members of society. Ayse S. Çağlar, examines the use of the ghetto trope, arguing that it “simplifies the complexities of immigrants’ presence in society” and restricts their incorporation into the city by defining them as a potential danger to “the

national and social cohesion of German society.”⁶ Similarly, John S. Brady focuses on how the discourse of immigrants as dangerous is constructed with references to threatening ideas and activities festering in separate and unregulated spaces, such as mosques.⁷ These examples highlight how the discursive link between space and integration is often employed to exclude immigrants from belonging to the host society by demonstrating difference or revealing a potential threat.

Immigrant settlement and integration, however, are directly connected to immigrants’ ability to make spaces for themselves in the host society. As demonstrated throughout this dissertation, Turkish immigrants and their children made spaces of belonging for themselves within the sites of their everyday landscapes. Space, as posited by Henri Lefebvre, is created through the interaction between the design of the physical environment, its ideals or purpose, and the actions of its inhabitants over time.⁸ The spaces constructed by Turkish immigrants and their children could work to connect them to German society, mediate their interaction with Germans, or attempt to separate them entirely. Interestingly, even those spaces understood as separate could play a role in aiding their integration into German society.

As shown both in this dissertation and Ceylan’s study, the mosque has served to connect participants with both their physical environment and German society more broadly.⁹ Though considered a separate space by many Muslims and non-Muslims alike, efforts to grow this religious space through construction and education projects have brought Turkish-

⁶ Ayse S. Caglar, “Constraining metaphors and the transnationalisation of spaces in Berlin,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 4 (October 2001): 602, 603.

⁷ John S. Brady, “Dangerous Foreigners: The Discourse of Threat and the Contours of Inclusion and Exclusion in Berlin’s Public Sphere,” *New German Critique*, no. 92 (April 1, 2004): 194-224.

⁸ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

⁹ Rauf Ceylan, *Ethnische Kolonien: Entstehung, Funktion und Wandel am Beispiel türkischer Moscheen und Cafés* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag fuer Sozialwissenschaften, 2006).

German Muslims into dialogue with their German neighbors and various institutional bodies. Learning to articulate their belief systems as well as their earthly pursuits to a non-Muslim audience has helped Turkish immigrants and their children understand the workings of a secular society, even as they made a place for themselves within it.

Just as such separate spaces such as mosques troubled those concerned about Turkish integration, so, too, did the immigrant community's continuing ties to Turkey appear to pose a stumbling block to their complete incorporation into German society. Certainly there were and are numerous and strong connections between Germany's Turkish population and the Republic of Turkey: the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Turkey staffs DITIB mosques with their imams, political and religious organizations banned in Turkey have found Germany to be a useful base, and numerous Turkish "foreign residents" in the Federal Republic own property and businesses in Turkey.¹⁰ In addition, the advent and proliferation of satellite television have brought contemporary Turkish media and entertainment into homes in Berlin, Cologne, and Stuttgart. Indeed, several interview subjects—both ethnic Germans and Turkish-Germans—pointed to the ability to "switch on" Turkey on a daily basis as one of the most significant challenges to integration.

Yet, a continuing practical and sentimental attachment to Turkey has not precluded those with a Turkish background from creating a home for themselves in Germany, as seen in the numerous examples in this dissertation. Nor is it surprising that Turkish immigrants and their children would maintain such connections to their and their parents' "homeland." What would be more surprising, and most unusual historically, would be a complete break with their past lives and the experiences of their families. Immigration prompts a renegotiation of

¹⁰ Betigül Ercan Argun, *Turkey in Germany: The Transnational Sphere of Deutschkei* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

belongings, a shift in the nature and hierarchy of the aspects of one's personal identity. One facet might come to the fore as a more operative identity, while another aspect of identity—belonging to one's "homeland"—grows more abstract. In other words, the connection to the country of origin remains an important aspect of immigrants' identities, but it becomes renegotiated and redefined in the host society. As is common with many immigrant groups, the familial, religious, social, and cultural links Turkish immigrants share with those in Turkey are, to greater and lesser degrees, a part of their lives and identities in Germany. The challenge has been for Turkish immigrants and their children to incorporate those roots and transnational spaces into their daily lives and spaces of belonging in the Federal Republic. Their sense of belonging hinges upon the success of their efforts to construct such spaces, which depends on numerous factors—individual agency, responses of others inhabiting those sites, the historical context, and so on. As such, these spaces of belonging have been neither stagnant nor consistent across the different sites in the everyday landscapes. Turkish immigrants and their children can and have felt more "at home" in certain places and at certain times than others.

This last point leads directly to what is possibly the most significant development in the Turkish-German population over the fifty years since the first Turkish *Gastarbeiter* came to the Federal Republic: the steady and continuing diversification of that community. It is difficult to make general statements regarding the integration of Turkish-Germans precisely because that population has grown so diverse. What began as a group of single and unaccompanied workers came to consist of spouses and children, asylum seekers and refugees, Turks and Kurds, secularists and political Islamists, leftists and conservative nationalists. Just as in any society, extremes exist at both ends with the majority of the

population falling somewhere in the middle. For people with a Turkish background in Germany, this has meant the presence of a *Parallelgesellschaft* in which some residents of Turkish background conduct their daily lives with little if any connection to German spaces and society. At the other end are those whose only connection to the immigrant community is a name that “sounds Turkish.” The majority of Turkish-Germans, however, inhabit a more complicated space—less easily defined, less present in discourse on integration, but more reflective of their broader belonging in German society.

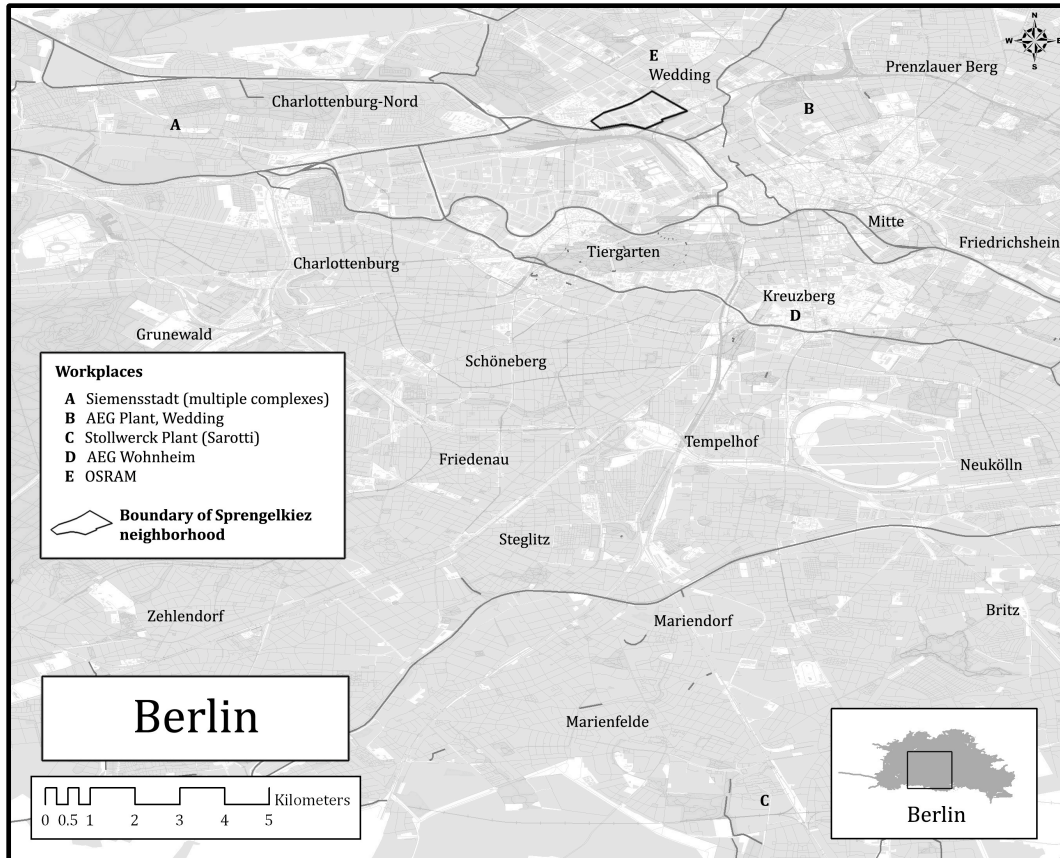
Leyla Sezer, forty-seven years old at the time of her interview with a German historian in 1993, summed up the development of her sense of belonging in this way. “Within ten days we came here, boarded the train and came here. It was interesting. With a small suitcase,” she added, demonstrating with her hands how small the suitcase was. “And now, like a stamp, we stuck here.” She named the items in her suitcase: two sweaters, two skirts, two dresses. We arrived, she continued, “rented an apartment, bought stuff, made ourselves at home. [...] And now—we can’t just return within another ten days. We couldn’t return within another ten years. Look, how the years have passed we just didn’t notice it. Today, tomorrow, today, tomorrow, we said: how many years!”¹¹ Sezer’s succinct description lays bare the complicated process of integration, from its beginning with the move itself to settling in to the day when one looks around and realizes they are at home. She and her family invested their lives in Germany, her suitcase now only being brought out for trips to Turkey on vacation. The fact that Sezer had, only a few sentences previously, somewhat ironically described herself as a “foreigner” reveals that integration does not find its conclusion in a permanent and irrevocable sense of belonging. Removing the imaginary

¹¹ Leyla Sezer (pseudonym), interview by Hatice Renc and Ursula Trüper, 28 January 1993, transcription, p. 15, “Die Leute vom Sparrplatz” Ausstellung, Mitte Museum Archiv, Berlin, Germany.

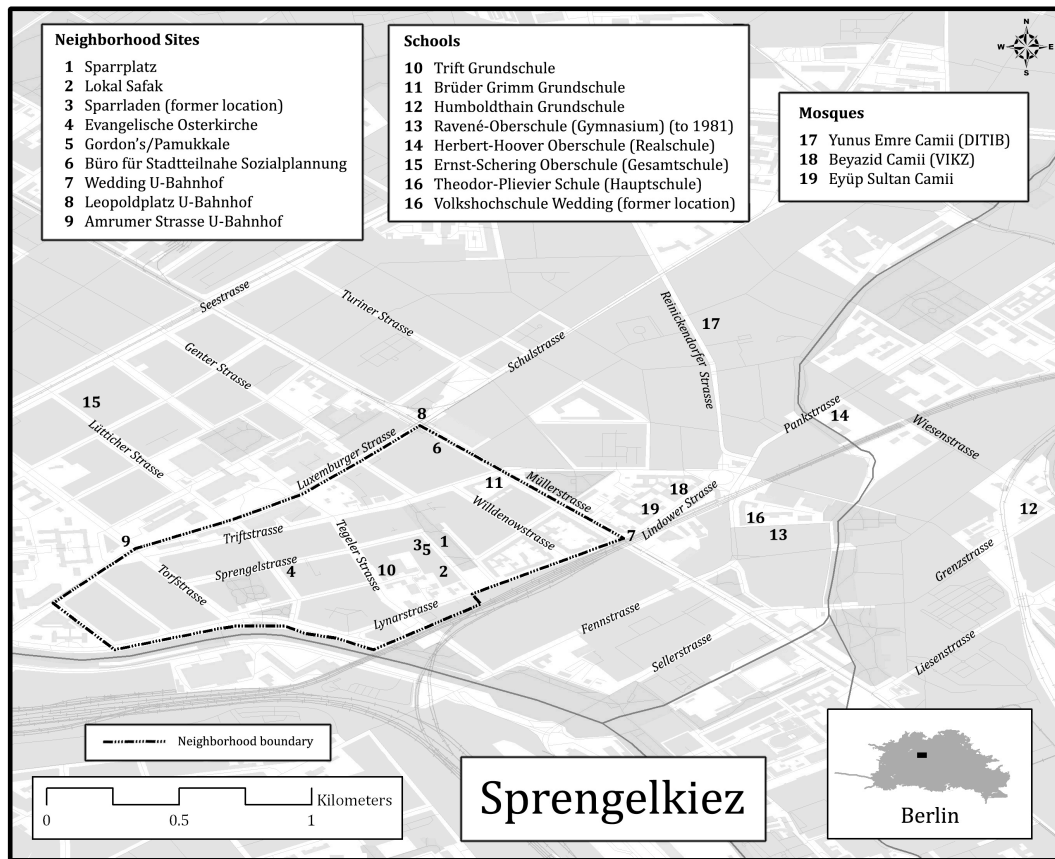
endpoint allows us to see the progress the Turkish-German population has already made, and to recognize Sezer as a member of the society in which she has lived and worked her entire adult life. For her and over three million others, Turkey may continue to be the “homeland,” but Germany is where they feel at home.

APPENDIX

Map of Sprengelkiez in relation to referenced workplaces.



Map of referenced local sites in and around Sprengelkiez.



Map of Sprengelkiez
Source: Quartiersmanagement Sparrplatz



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