

## Chapter 6

# Dispersion, Diaspora Identity and Belonging: A Case Study on the Turkish Migrants in Copenhagen

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### ABSTRACT

*Turks are one of those migrants living in Europe with constituting majority of the migrants in the country of residence and Denmark is among those countries that opened its doors to Turks since 1960's. In this research, I specifically focus on the diaspora consciousness, relations and belonging of the Turkish migrants in Denmark. In doing that, Copenhagen is chosen as the city for the case study. Focusing on the Turkish diaspora and reflection of the sociological realities in the issue of integration to Denmark is the basis of this research. I use qualitative research method and interviewed with 7 migrants from Turkey in living in Copenhagen while conducting my research applying structured interview method. In this study, I have found out that diaspora identity has a significant role in getting integrated to Denmark. As a result of these, migrant Turkish identity becomes bolder which has a direct affect in the level of integration to Denmark.*

### INTRODUCTION

#### Research Design, Research Questions, and Argument

Although there are a numerous academic researches and studies on the immigrants from Turkey in Western Europe, it is an unfortunate fact that there is an obvious scarcity of academic research on the Turks in Denmark. For that reason, author finds it beneficial to research migrant Turks in Denmark not only to get an analytical knowledge on these people but also to create an academic work that would be able to facilitate, foster and encourage future researches on the same topic.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-6918-3.ch006

As a matter of fact, there are multiple sub-branches of integration issue of Turks in Denmark because of the community's long history of migration to this Nordic Country. Given the cultural features and upbringing together with traditional way of living, it is believed that most of the Turks in Denmark experience some difficulties on integration (Yazgan, 2010).

Hence, the research questions are as follows,

1. What is the role of gender in the integration process of migrants from Turkey to Denmark?
2. How do the Turkish immigrants perceive of the Danish society, culture of Denmark and attitude of host society towards immigrants from Turkey and how do these attitudes affect migrants in the course of integration?

Although the issue of migrant Turks in Denmark has several aspects, as can be seen clearly from the content of the research questions, I choose to focus on specifically on gender. Having set such purpose helps to get to know more on Turkish Community with an academic perspective by getting into touch with immigrants and learn their experiences from the first hand.

Evidently, one of the most significant phases of the thesis is finding the people as primary sources of data (Booth, Colomb and Williams, 1995). It is an academic requirement to interview target group and discuss, ask, talk, and communicate for understanding the social situation and construct the thesis accordingly. The target group of this research is the immigrants from Turkey living in Copenhagen: Turkish men and women having immigrant background who came Denmark as voluntary migrants, guest workers or political refugees. To be more precise, members of the target group of research necessarily have to be a Turkish originated Danish Citizen or a Turkish citizen having a valid *opholdstilladelse* (Danish Residence Permit) who have been living in Denmark more than four years.

## **History of Turks in Denmark**

To begin with, Turkish existence in Denmark dates back to late 1960's as a result of acute labor force need of the Government of Denmark. As is known, 1960's were the years when the scars of the World War II started healing with the mutual collaboration of Western Europe under the leadership of the United States. Denmark's struggle for retrieve like the other European states led to the need of massive labor force therefore thousands of migrants around the world have flown into the European continent. Under such circumstance, first migrant flow from Turkey to Denmark happened in 1967, in order to respond this need. (Kuyucuoğlu, 2005, 190). Second flow continued in 1970's, when some of the Turkish migrants living in Germany decided to move to Denmark for better employment opportunities due to the stagnation in the German economy as well as the employment difficulties cause by the 1973 Oil Crisis. (Kuyucuoğlu, 2005, 190)

If it were asked why massive amount of Turks have chosen to migrate Europe, the answer would be the underdeveloped economy together with the high rate of unemployment in Turkey. In other words, poverty, fragile economy and massive unemployment in Turkey during late 1950's played a prominent role on getting Turks to migrate Europe with a view to seek better life conditions. Especially after military coup of 1980, excessive numbers of political refugees added up to the number of Turkish migrants since many of them flee to the countries like Denmark that eagerly provided asylum to these people. Starting from 1980, number of the Turks in Denmark was about to constitute the majority of the migrant population within the country (see Table 1).

*Table 1. Origins of the Turkish migrant in Denmark according to the academic studies available*

	Migrant Origin in Yazgan's Sample Space	Migrant Origin in Özmen's Sample Space
City	16,9%	10,8%
Rural district	38,6%	42%
Village	44,6%	44.2%

Source: Yazgan, 2010; Özmen, 2010.

Surprisingly, however, migration relations between Turkey and Denmark are somewhat different than the other major countries of immigration. To be precise, majority of the first group of migrants from Turkey to Germany was not only from big cities but also educated and having a profession. (Toksöz, 2006, 29). Contrary to that, vast majority of the Turks came to Denmark was uneducated, unskilled and were from rural areas of Anatolia (Özmen, 2010). Secondly, Turkey has never signed a Labor Force Exchange Agreement with Denmark as it did with Germany in 1961, which is to secure the migration flow as well as migrant rights. Lack of such agreement helped thousands of migrants flee to Denmark even though vast majority are unskilled and did not know any second

Language (Hedetoft, n.d.). Due to the massive need to labor force, until late 1980's, migrant flows were continuous and had some specific kind of sequence; migrant Turks generally came either from the same village or the same city. Consequently, this led them to settle in the same neighborhood of the same city for keeping in touch frequently. Another reason of living as communities like in *Ishøj* and in *Høje Taastrup* in Copenhagen is because the employment advantages of *Region Storekøbenhavn* of the time of migration.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Diaspora**

Diaspora is one of the appealing concepts in the academic arena when it comes to the issues of immigration, transnational migration and ethno-cultural diversity studies. In 19<sup>th</sup> century, first academic reference to the concept of diaspora has been made to analyze the Jewish communities living in different parts of the world. This first version of diaspora concept was used as the conceptualization of homeland since Jews were the sole most populated diaspora group living worldwide. Today, Diasporas are defined not only by homeland orientation but also by the memories of individual and collective past (Hedetoft, n.d.). Lexically meaning, diaspora firstly means the Jews living outside Israel, secondly refers to the people who have been dispersed from their homeland either voluntarily or forcefully (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). As can be expected, through 21<sup>st</sup> century, numerous qualified studies on diaspora have been conducted with a view to understand this phenomenon.

To begin with, academia defines diaspora as the group of people that have been removed from their initial place of residence (Johnson, 2012). Contemporary diaspora studies prioritize understanding the process of the diaspora formation as people officially migrate to the host society's state (İbid). Main aim of such understanding is to identify several perspectives concerning issues of migrants using multi-disciplinary method. Before getting into analytic discussion on the concept, it is necessary to clarify the difference between a diaspora group and an immigrant group. Making this distinction does matter since

usage of these two is not of permissive choice of the scholars (Ahmed, 2013). While ‘diaspora’ itself suggests agency and action with economic and social levels concerning homeland relations vis-à-vis host society, the term ‘immigrant’ does not provide a concrete basis since it corresponds to a quite wide meaning for which academy makes a strict distinction in between those two notions (Johnson, 2012). In other words, diaspora understanding went beyond the sameness through a focus on common origins, due to the stretching of the term diaspora to the immigrant, refugee, guestworker, expatriate and exile communities of transnational moment (Tölölyan, 1991; Brubaker, 2005; Kılınç, 2013).

## Diaspora Identity

Diaspora identity is constructed upon the collective as well as individual memories of the past often-carrying hideous exile incidents from the homeland to the host land (Ahmed, 2013). Basically, collective memory is promoted by an ‘ethnic myth’ which is a shared historical experience together with belonging to a geographical region. Steven Vertovec suggests that preserving the ‘collective memory’ and taking guards against any potential threat is one of the cultural components of the diaspora identities (Vertovec, 1997). This defense attitude is called as ‘Boundary-maintenance’ holds significance in maintaining collective memory (Brubaker, 2005; Tölölyan, 1991). No doubt, boundary-maintenance is being consolidated as globalization increases its tangibility over time, which turns the world into a smaller spot. Recent developments achieved in technology especially in the field of communication has a great share on helping diaspora members remain connected to the homeland without experiencing any obstacles. In addition to this, a considerable decrease on the costs of aerial transportation, free movement of information, goods and labor are another sectors that can be seen as triumph in connecting diaspora to the homeland (Kılınç, 2013).

Floya Anthias suggest that culturally identical people living in different nation states who are feeling attached to a homeland are united under diaspora organization (Anthias, 1998). Through such orientation, a new authentic diaspora identity is formed on a transnational level that goes beyond the national border and boundaries. Moreover, Anthias emphasizes the significance of diaspora identity by saying that it should be studied separately from the notion of ethnicity and race since “identity and cultural narratives of belonging take on ‘ethnic’ forms which are themselves centrally linked to location, in terms of territory and social positioning” so consequently “the bonds that tie are heterogeneous and multiple.” (Anthias, 1998)

Additional to what has been said above, Steven Vertovec refers to the significance of consciousness as one of the components on forming diaspora identity. How he sees diaspora is as a ‘type of consciousness’, which is being generated among contemporary transnational communities recognizing its multi-locality (Vertovec, 1997). Since members of diaspora are being perceived as the people having been vested with transnational identity, Vertovec explains these people’s awareness of being simultaneously home away from home or here and there (Vertovec, 1997). Kılınç expresses what stimulates Vertovec’s argument on the awareness of multi-locality derives itself from the need to connect the self with others, both ‘here’ and ‘there’, who share the same ‘roots’ and ‘routes’ (Kılınç, 2013). Correspondingly, James Clifford departs from Paul Gilroy’s notion on ‘travelling cultures’ and states that diasporas are located in between two very real realities: “on their one side there are nation states, and on the other side there are travelling cultures in which “they involve dwelling in a nation-state in a physical sense, but travelling in an astral or spiritual sense that falls outside the nation-state’s space/time zone.” (Clifford, 1998; Gewertz, Errington, Clifford, 1998)

## Dispersion

Furthermore, when it comes to reasons behind the formation of diasporas, contemporary diaspora studies have very much focused on the dispersion of migrant populations all around the world. Basically, scholars classify driving forces of diaspora establishment in two groups: voluntary and forced dispersion (Braziel and Mannur, 2003). While former represents diasporas formed by the economic distresses and unemployment existing in the homeland, the latter speaks for the political pressures or exile causing people to leave the homeland. According to Jana Evans Braziel, in our modern times, diasporas are no longer formed by forced dispersion as was in the case up until mid-twentieth century –i.e. Jewish Holocaust - but rather voluntary dispersion is the new-postmodern phenomenon of 21<sup>st</sup> century which is supported by the “dominant flows of global capitalism, ethnic nationalism, and corporate transnationalism.” (Braziel & Mannur, 2003). Such differentiation holds importance because even today, these two driving forces behind the formation of diasporas are the most encountered examples worldwide. The main subject of this thesis, Turkish Diaspora in Denmark is historically formed both by voluntary and forceful dispersion which is going to be discussed in the next chapters.

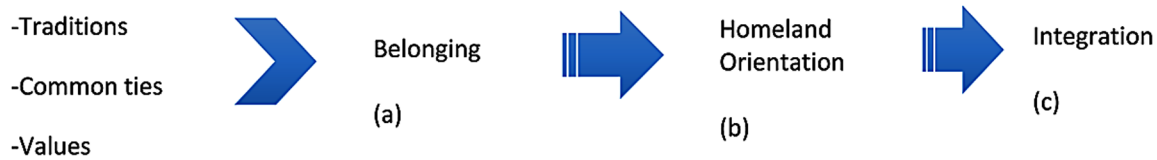
## Belonging, Homeland Orientation and Boundary Maintenance

Diaspora studies have proven that, orientation to a homeland plays a prominent role on the integration characteristic of the diaspora communities (Brubaker, 2005). Soysal explains such importance with the argument that implies “the primary orientation and attachment of diasporic populations is to their homelands and cultures and their claims and citizenship practices arise from this home-home bound, ethnic orientation.” (Soysal, 2000) Additionally, Safran argues that there are six criteria for a group to be classified as a diaspora and four of them are related to homeland, which is to be explained in the next section (Safran, 1991).

As much as the orientation to a homeland matters in determining diaspora, it is also a key role player when it comes to integration issue. Ahmed underlines the fact that the relationship between homeland orientation, belonging and ability of integration are interconnected with one another like the shackles of a chain (Ahmed, 2013). The process that leads to the belonging creation phase of diaspora members (Turks in Denmark in this thesis) to the homeland is pretty much determined by the common ties and values. In other words, common ties and values produce belonging (a) of diaspora members. In detail, contemplation of homeland as a ‘mythic place of desire in diasporic imaginations’ easily set up a bridge between the host land that diaspora resides and their mystical homeland (Khayati, 2008). The bridge, which constructed by the common ties, values and traditions in between two localities, make the diaspora create their own world in order to “make sure they feel at home while abroad by being attached to the imagined homeland emotionally (Edmuds, 2012).’ As a consequence of such process, diaspora members live abroad “physically but live culturally, mentally and emotionally at their homeland at least with a desire to return one day by striking a balance between living here and remembering another place that makes them “diaspora communities are not here to stay (Ahmed, 2013).” As the last phase, homeland orientation (b) that is formed by belonging consequently affects the ability of integration (c) of the diaspora members.

Additional to what discussed above, Ahmed talks about boundary maintenance that is the need to be feeling attached to the homeland by maintaining cultural boundaries while living in the host society (see Figure 1). Additionally, this defensive behavior generally prevents diaspora members to get connected

*Figure 1. Ahmed Nuri Ahmed's Scheme on interconnection between belonging, homeland orientation, and integration*



with the host society. As a natural consequence of maintaining the boundaries, diaspora members would face significant challenges while integrating themselves to the culture of the host society. However this challenge would be overcome with the mutual efforts of the host society and diaspora members. As Ahmed says although boundary maintenance causes major difficulties in integration, success is not impossible: "On the hand, diaspora communities do not [necessarily have to] refuse to adapt to the host society [in order to] live in harmony... This fact depends on the specific case and structure of the diaspora- i.e. openness of a diaspora group, host society's attitudes in the place of arrival, and the political system and the culture in the country of arrival." (Ahmed, 2013, p. 44) The interconnected affection between the three concepts explained above together with the maintaining of boundaries will be applied to the Turks in Denmark and carefully analyzed in the chapter of 'Main Findings and Analysis'.

## Diaspora Consciousness

'Diaspora consciousness' is a particular kind of awareness said to be generated among contemporary transnational communities' and it holds quite an importance for diaspora members to be able to integrate the host society profoundly (Safran, 1991). As much as the consciousness of the diaspora is depended on the collective and individual memory of the members together with cultural heritage, it is also shaped by the experiences of exclusion, discrimination, segregation and othering carried out by the host society. "[Consciousness of diasporas] is constituted [in two ways:] negatively by experiences of discrimination and exclusion, and positively by identification with an historical heritage (such as 'Indian civilization') or contemporary world cultural or political forces (such as 'Islam')." (Safran, 1991, p. 4) As a natural human reaction, any hostile attitude coming into existence in the form of discrimination by the host society is reciprocated by diaspora members in the form of collective defense and collective detachment from the society. In other words, diasporas are more prone to take up a collective position if the host society tends to exclude their members. This social reality is defined as the negative diaspora consciousness. What Ahmed emphasizes is although diasporas have hybrid identities by carrying transnational kind of perspective, such look does not necessary have to mean they lack a solid nationalist sense. Conversely, it is a high possibility that some of the diasporas might choose nationalism as a way of preserving their identity against other identities. As Clifford points out, as well as some diasporas are identified as their antinationalist nationalism, there are also examples that clearly proves some of the most violent articulations of purity and radical exclusivism come from diaspora populations (Clifford, 1994).

The substitute notion of negative diaspora consciousness, positive diaspora consciousness refers to the collective ability to harmonize the culture that the members carry by birth and the culture of the host society adopted later. Clifford explains that this notion is quite different than nationalism since it is about feeling global. Essentially, this sui generis notion implies that historical and cultural heritage of

diaspora does not lead to contradiction between host society and members of diaspora as long as they are constructed in a positive way. In spite of the fact that negative diaspora consciousness is the popular topic of research on diaspora studies, American Indians, Māori's of New Zealand and Polynesian natives of Hawaii are the diasporic communities that are classified as the groups who have positive diaspora consciousness (Safran, 1991). Interviews with the Turkish originated people residing in Copenhagen will be able to reveal what type of consciousness that the Turkish Community in Denmark has.

## **MAIN FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INTERVIEWS**

### **Dispersion**

There are multiple reasons of the Turkish immigration flow to Denmark. First and foremost, one of the main reasons is clearly the to find a job and be employed for a long period. If the condition in Turkey to be studied in late 1960's when the first flows of Turkish migration to Denmark, it can be clearly seen that the rate of unemployment is quite high therefore the guest worker invitation coming from Denmark has been replied positively by the vast majority of the Turkish immigrant candidates. Not surprisingly, up until today, employment keeps being the major reason for migration to Denmark:

*My father came here [Denmark] to find a job [to be employed] and provide his family a better quality of life. (K. Ayşe, personal communication, March 2, 2014)*

Second grand reason of Turkish migration derives itself from the political clash and chaos. In other words, endless political upheaval in Turkey forced politically active Turks to leave their homeland. Two of the major forced dispersion flows due to political reasons have taken place in the year of 1980 and the decade starting by 1990. To be more frank, Turkish coup d'état of 1980 intended to perish thousands of political activists which made vast majority of those activists to leave their homeland immediately in order not to be penalized unlawfully by the military administration.

*The reason why I came to Denmark is nothing but political. My husband and I were very much politically active in the late 1970's. My husband run away to Denmark shortly after the military took over in September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1980. I immediately supplied my passport and meet him in Copenhagen. It was very tragic because I left my baby girl behind since I lacked the father's written approval. It took months to take my daughter back. If you ask me why we have chosen to migrate to Denmark, I do not have a specific answer. My husband wanted to go to Sweden since Sweden was not a member of NATO and presented itself as neutral. While the Danish Immigration Service has processed our application, our daughter had started kindergarten and already started learning Danish. By the time they [Danish Immigration Service] told us we are free to move to any country that ratified Geneva Convention, we had already settled in Denmark and did not want to confuse our daughter with another foreign language and system. We would have moved to America or Canada but we've chosen to stay here. (K. Ümran, personal communication, April 4, 2014)*

When it comes to the political pressure in 1990's, it can be said that Government carried out immense political pressure against Kurds of Turkey. Since the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) –a Kurdish Ter-

rorist Organization- increased its attacks severely in early 1990's; Government of Turkey intentionally put massive pressure against the Kurdish Intelligentsia as if its members have to do with the Kurdish Terror. Consequently, numerous Kurds of Turkey migrated to Denmark to seek asylum. Although Kurds define themselves as ethnically different than Turks, most of them define themselves as the part of the diaspora since their homeland is Turkey together with the other Turkish Immigrants:

*Admittedly, they've [Kurds] been through a lot. Being forced to leave their homeland and moving to a different country is catastrophic. Although we've issues with Kurds of Turkey, we are the people of the same homeland. [We share the same homeland] (K. İbrahim, personal communication, May 6, 2014)*

Last but not least, another major reason of dispersion is the family reunification. To be more specific, family reunification in Turkish Immigration case come into being in two ways; either an immigrant Turk marries another Turk living in Turkey and spouse move to Denmark through marriage or a Dane gets married to a Turk living in Turkey and Turkish spouse migrates to Denmark.

*I met my wife in Turkey. She came to Turkey for vacation and we met in the hotel that she was staying. Some months later we got married and moved to Denmark. (K. İbrahim, personal communication, May 6, 2014)*

*My wife and I have met through our friends' linkage. She was a teacher in Turkey and after getting married, she moved here. (K. Murat, personal communication, June 7, 2014)*

## **Homeland Orientation and Boundary Maintenance**

### **Homeland Orientation**

As discussed in a detailed way in *Theoretical Framework* chapter, Homeland orientation is one of the significant concepts in formation of the diaspora. Orienting the self to homeland is highly related to the idea of return. In other words, idea of return refers to moving back to the homeland after they have enough savings to live spend their retirement in Turkey (Ahmed, 2013). Frankly, either as voluntary dispersion or forced dispersion, vast majority of the Immigrant Turks long to get back to Turkey at some point of their life. The ones who came to Denmark for better employment possibilities, desire to get back homeland at least for retirement. Immigrants who have been forcibly dispersed have as much desire to get back homeland as the economically oriented immigrants.

*Having lived in Denmark for more than 30 years is enough for one to miss homeland. We're selling our house and planning to move by September. (K. Asim, personal communication, April 8, 2014)*

Idea of return as part of immigrants' future goal leads them to form a Turkey image in which they constantly refer the Turkish way of living every time they face difficulties in Denmark. In conjunction with what discussed in the previous chapter on the concept of homeland orientation, contemplation of homeland as a 'mythic place of desire', is being replenished as the immigrants develop the communication with the host society.



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*Concept of friendship is very different here. You can call your friends to grab some coffee in a short notice however here you need to call your friend days before you would like to meet.*

*Having plenty of friends at work does not mean to sustain these relationships after work. I rarely get to see my colleagues in weekend. Personal space in Denmark is so huge. However in Turkey, this is completely different. You can meet up your colleagues after work, in the weekend and even call whenever you want to. (K. Ümran, personal communication, April 4, 2014)*

Besides the above-mentioned factors that form homeland orientation, host society's attitude also plays a prominent role in determining this orientation. Most of the interviewees point out that although they were born in Denmark, possess Danish Nationality and became a part of the Danish society; they criticize the host society's attitude towards the people who have immigrant background. They express the fact that no matter how good they speak Danish and how successful they are, immigrants feel themselves as the second-class citizens.

*I was a very successful student throughout my studies. I was always among top 5 students of my schools. However my teachers never accepted my success. They always approached me with doubt. One year before Gymnasium studies, we took a test, which was given all over Denmark to set the student levels. I scored 100% in Danish Language and when the official results arrived, I saw that I was the Top 1 of my school and Region. Unfortunately, my teachers never congratulate me, again approached me with doubt because this was not understandable for an immigrant kid to be able to be that much successful in Danish Language. That's why I miss and want to return to Turkey. You can never be segregated for your background. As soon as I finish my master thesis in Copenhagen University, I am leaving Denmark. (K. Ayşe, personal communication, March 2, 2014)*

Although there are several different driving forces as can be seen above, majority of the Turkish immigrants have a high tendency in orienting themselves to the homeland. Difficulties experienced and difference in culture increase the desire to move to the homeland for good in the future. Contemplation of the homeland also helps immigrants to keep their mood high whenever they are emotionally down or feel alienated by the host society (Ahmed, 2013).

## **Boundary Maintenance**

Boundary Maintenance is one of the appealing concepts for the Turkish immigrants. Living outside homeland within host society increase the tendency of boundary maintenance. While first and second generation migrants have been maintaining boundaries through preserving culture against assimilation by trying to live a traditional lifestyle, starting from the last two decades means to maintain the boundaries have started to change. Until the widespread usage of Internet connection started, first and second generation kept boundary maintenance by visiting family and friends in Turkey in summer vacations. With the significant changes in technology, Turkish immigrants started keeping up the recent developments in Turkey through the means of Internet such as mass media websites, *Twitter* and *Facebook*. Being able to communicate instantly through online applications like *Whatsapp* and video calls through

Skype ease the lives of Turks living in Denmark for catch up with their family and friends back in Turkey. Additionally, most of the immigrants purchased sophisticated cable systems in order to watch Turkish channels at home.

*I intend to go to Turkey once in a year for my summer vacations for seeing my family, relatives and friends. (K. Murat, personal communication, June 7, 2014)*

*This year I am going to be retired. I am not planning to move to Turkey for good since my daughter lives here. But then again I want to spend some period of the year in Turkey while some other period in Denmark. (K. Ümran, personal communication, April 4, 2014)*

*When I first came to Denmark, I was extremely missing my mother. Everyday I was calling her on a booth. At the end of the month, I used to realize that I was paying between 2000 and 4000 DKK just for telephone card. Is it the case now? You have unlimited Internet and are able to speak whoever you want with such a small amount of money. (K. Murat, personal communication, June 7, 2014)*

The downside of excessive boundary maintenance is that it prevents migrants' integration abilities. In other words, trying to catch up the developments in Turkey not only about the country but also about family and friends easily distract the immigrant and distant him/her from the host society. Especially for the time being, when the means of technology is this much extended, it is really difficult to adopt oneself to another culture and a different society.

*I have a colleague who is a Turkish immigrant in the school that I am working and she has been living in Denmark for 30 years. Unfortunate enough, she cannot speak Danish at all. She and her family watch Turkish TV channels all the time and she only hangs out with the other Turks. Whenever she gets a mail, she asks my help for translation. Everybody has a freedom of action however if you are living in a country different than your homeland, you should be able to speak the local language at least in beginner level in order to realize yourself and express yourself freely. (K. Murat, personal communication, June 7, 2014)*

## **Diaspora Consciousness**

There are certain aspects that define immigrants as the diaspora outside the boundaries of their homeland. Sharing same identity, culture and belonging to the Turkish homeland, are the main characteristics that make the Turks as a diaspora. Although some scholars claim that religion as part of Turkish culture plays a primary role for the Turks in Europe when defining Turkish diaspora (Özmen, 2010), this is not the case for the Turks in Denmark. To be more specific, Turkish diaspora in Denmark is neither ethnically nor religiously homogenous. While Turks and Kurds are the two largest ethnic groups coming from Turkey, Alevites and Sunnis represent the two major religious sects. What is more, members of these two ethnic groups can also be from either of the two sects: Sunni Turk, Alevi Turk and Sunni Kurd and Alevi Kurd. While religious values prominently determine the way of living of the Sunni Turks and Kurds, when it comes to Alevis, they have a more libertarian interpretation of Islam and do not live solely on religion. Vast majority of the interviewees underline the fact that such heterogeneous composition of Turkish diaspora is mostly culturally oriented, not religiously. Some members of diaspora who need to make religious emphasis on daily life basis do this as a reaction to the discrimination and segregation done by

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the host society to the Muslims (Yazgan, 2010). Especially with the rise of Islamophobia in Denmark after 9/11 and the Cartoon Crisis of *Jyllands Posten* in 2005, this tendency to emphasize religious identity among Turkish migrants has increased.

What is common in the narratives is the issue of belonging. Living in a host society as an ‘outsider’ disappoints diaspora members deeply. As a matter of fact, this disappointment has two aspects: firstly, host society’s unwilling behavior to accept the immigrants and secondly, home society’s (Turkish society) judgmental approach to the immigrants in which they think once they leave their homeland, they lose their identity and cultural values.

*Living in Denmark as a Dane by birth is the issue. If you are not a Dane by birth or possess immigrant background, there is no chance for you to be a true component of the society. I believe I have integrated fully to Denmark but for Danes I am an immigrant, which means I am ‘the other.’ Unfortunately, it is the same case for me when I go to Turkey. They believe I lost my values and identity because I have been living abroad for years. (K. İbrahim, personal communication, May 6, 2014)*

When interviewees are asked on the integration ability of the diaspora members, vast majority was not optimistic. While some were criticizing fully the members of the Turkish diaspora for being ultra-conservative resisting to integrate, some were thinking integration requires reciprocal effort both from the host society and the diaspora members.

*I think Denmark as a country of immigration, fulfilled all of its duties to its immigrants. They provide free education, health care and all kinds of social support. If there is one side to blame when it comes to integration, it must be the immigrants.” (K. Asim, personal communication, April 8, 2014)*

*I do not believe the issue of integration is solely the responsibility of the immigrants. There are two parties in this issue, the host society and immigrants. If one party fulfills its responsibility but the other party behaves unwilling to do the same, then integration process gets ruined. All the parties should be constructive and willing to cooperate with each other. (K. Murat, personal communication, June 7, 2014)*

Another interesting issue is the relationship between the members within the diaspora. In line with what discussed in the previous chapter on the concept of diaspora consciousness, being part of the diaspora is not obligatory but it is all about being willing to it. The answers from the interviewees were quite diverse when this matter is questioned. Although the ties of the diaspora members seem tight according to answers, there are also the ones who choose to step out the diaspora entourage.

*Turks in Copenhagen have very close relationship with each other. Even the neighborhoods that they live like Ishøj and Høje Taastrup are known as the Turkish neighborhoods. They specifically choose the neighborhood to live in order to be close the other members of the diaspora not to miss getting into touch. (K. Ümran, personal communication, April 4, 2014)*

*My daughter says she does not want to get close with the Turks living in Copenhagen because she says they are very much judgmental, uptight and eager to gossip. For example she has a Danish boyfriend and they are living together, which is not acceptable in eyes of the Turks. (K. Ümran, personal communication, April 4, 2014)*

## CONCLUSION

It is a fact that transnational migration has become one of the prominent issues of not only the global politics but also international relations. As is known, mobility across countries becomes easier more than ever with the great achievements in the technology. While people move from one country to another, social, political and economic problems as a result of such mobility might be experienced due to the difference in cultural identities in between different societies. To be more specific, gender, diaspora, integration and dispersion are some of the concrete topics that are discussed as part of the transnational migration issue in the academic world. Among those, diaspora and integration are frequently studied as these concepts constitutes the backbone of the migration studies.

Throughout this paper, I have found out that diaspora relations of Turkish migrants in Denmark has a specific effect on the level of integration to the Danish social life. It can be said that homeland orientation of the migrant Turks might prevent the Turkish migrants' ability to keep up with the Danish social realities. There might be several reasons for the migrants to orient themselves willingly to the life in Turkey even though they live in Denmark. Among these, negative attitudes of the Danish society and/or the negative immigration rhetoric of the Danish politicians can be listed. These approaches might harm the relationship between the host society and the Turkish migrants which might end up jeopardizing the integration abilities of the latter. Formation of a populous diaspora also plays a significant role in constructing a Turkish migrant identity in Danish society thanks to the large number of Turkish population.

In conclusion, it can be said that the existence of the Turkish migrants in Denmark since 1960's is an interesting example for comprehending the notion of integration on transnational level. As the constituting majority among the whole migrant population in Denmark as of 2014, migrant Turks and their diaspora consciousness are studied in a detailed way throughout this paper. In order to get a more analytical insight, there needs to be conducted more academic researches on this field. Further studies not only helps analyzing the migrants in relation to Denmark but also might play significant roles on facilitating integration with the concrete findings. Until more researches get conducted, it is hoped that this paper helps the reader to get a clear understanding of the integration issues of migrant Turks in Denmark.

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*This research was previously published in Social Considerations of Migration Movements and Immigration Policies edited by Şefika Şule Erçetin, pages 66-82, copyright year 2018 by Information Science Reference (an imprint of IGI Global).*