



Inherited Conflicts: Spaces of Contention between Second-Generation Turkish and Kurdish Diasporas in Sweden and Germany

Bahar Baser

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

Florence, December 2012

European University Institute
Department of Political and Social Sciences

Inherited Conflicts:
Spaces of Contention between Second-Generation Turkish and
Kurdish Diasporas in Sweden and Germany

Bahar Baser

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

Examining Board:

Prof. Rainer Bauböck, EUI (Supervisor)
Prof. Friedrich Kratochwil, EUI (Co-supervisor)
Prof. Carl-Ulrik Schierup, REMESO, Linköping University
Prof. Thomas Faist, Bielefeld University

© 2012, Bahar Baser

No part of this thesis may be copied, reproduced or transmitted without
prior permission of the author

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to contribute to a broader understanding of spill-over of homeland conflicts to the host country by diaspora groups and analyses how the repercussions of the Kurdish question in Turkey are reflected in the interactions between second-generation Turks and Kurds in Sweden and Germany. It is argued that the on-going conflict adversely affects the relationship between the two ethnic groups, but that the tensions and conflict dynamics are not an exact reflection of the situation in the homeland, and instead take a different form in each hostland. The contentions between the groups and their grievances are dependent on several factors that are rooted in the hostland and directly or indirectly affect how these groups establish contact with one another. These include: the profile of the migrants; the size of the ethnic communities; the ratio of one ethnic community to another in the hostland; the political and discursive opportunity structures in the hostland; and the relations between the homeland and the hostland. The second generation were selected as the sample group in this thesis as they offer a clearer picture of the host country impact, as well as the persistence of conflict dynamics in the diaspora spaces.

The arguments that this thesis makes are based largely on field research, which included interviews with academics, politicians, migrant organisation leaders, as well as first- and second-generation diaspora members. Sweden and Germany were selected on the grounds that both have significant populations of non-European migrants and in particular because they have Turkish and Kurdish populations that show different diasporic tendencies, thus making them relevant cases for comparison. The comparison of their approaches to migrant incorporation; multiculturalism as a formal state policy; the corporatist structures that they have developed with migrant organisations; the profile of the migrants they have received; and, their approach to the Kurdish question in Turkey, sheds light on the varying dynamics of conflict-import to a host country by diaspora groups.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The four years I have spent working on this thesis have been some of the most exciting years of my life. I started this project to challenge conventional wisdom about many issues related to my subject, but ultimately the things I learned have also challenged me and pushed me to be more self-critical. I realise that I took much for granted before I started this enquiry and I had to learn and unlearn a great deal in order to reach to where I am now. Looking back, I feel blessed that I was given this opportunity. At the end of these four years I am completely a different person.

I am indebted to many people who walked with me during this journey, and advised and assisted me. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisors Professor Rainer Bauböck and Professor Freidrich Kratochwil for their valuable guidance and advice during the last four years. Without their support, this research would not have been possible. I thank them for their patience and for reading numerous drafts of this thesis – the feedback they gave me was immensely valuable. I would like to mention the late Professor Peter Mair, who offered support and guidance from the first day I was admitted to the EUI. I also thank Professor Thomas Faist and Professor Carl-Ulrik Schierup for taking part in my jury and for their constructive and useful comments.

I am grateful to many friends at the EUI but, in particular, I would like to thank Fabiano De Andrade Correa, Dejan Stjepanovic, Valentina Marcella, Alex Stummvoll, Jose Santana Pereira, Roxana Barbulescu, Leila Hadj-Abdou, Trajche Panov, Edurne Iraizoz, Anna Maria Athi, Asli Okyay, Gizem Korkmaz, Kivanc Atak and Francis O'Connor for their friendship and encouragement. I have unforgettable memories of my time in Florence and these people really made it special for me. I also thank Ken Hulley, Gabriella Unger and Monika Rzemieniecka who fixed so many logistical troubles for me. My work at the EUI would not have been easy without them.

For the purposes of this thesis, I spent time in both Sweden and Germany. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society (REMESO) for providing me not only with a workspace but also with a wonderful working environment while I was conducting my research in Sweden. In particular I would like to

thank Khalid Khayati who supervised my project at REMESO and helped me to get in touch with my interviewees. I am thankful to Rita Wikander, from the Swedish Institute, who was always ready to help, and Ingmar Karlsson (the former Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul) who offered invaluable assistance, support and guidance for my thesis. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences (Humboldt University), the Department of Peace and Conflict Research (Uppsala University) and Instituto Ciencias Sociais (Universidade de Lisboa) for providing me a workspace while I was writing this thesis.

I would like to show my appreciation to my professors Dilek Cinar, Zeynep Gambetti, Hakan Yılmaz, Ashok Swain and İbrahim Sirkeci with whom I have worked at different phases in my academic career. They treated me, first and foremost, as a colleague and they always believed in me and encouraged me to aim higher.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my beloved friends Hakan Vreskala, Josefine Landberg, Welat Zeydanlıoğlu, Veronica Buffon, Paulo Martins, Ekim Çağlar, Paulo Rocha, Henrique Santos, Lara Zampese, Azat and Nilay Gündoğan, Ahmet Alış and Bahadır Başer for their help and encouragement for the successful completion of this thesis. They always managed to put a smile on my face and I feel fortunate and blessed to have them in my life. I also want to thank my friends Lisa Pelling, Didem Oral, Çiğdem Bozdağ, Bilgin Ayata and Selin Türkeş for their valuable feedback and contributions to this thesis.

An honourable mention goes to my parents, Nihat and Nursel Başer, and my sister Burçe Başer for their unconditional love and support. I thank them for teaching me that my freedom and open-mindedness are the most valuable assets they could give me. They have been very understanding throughout the whole process, and they managed to make me feel their love even though I was so far from them.

Finally, I would like to convey my gratitude to all my interviewees in Germany and Sweden. I thank them for sharing their personal experiences with me and for making this thesis possible. Many of them touched my heart with their stories and taught me things I could not have learned from books. I could not tell them at the time, therefore I do so here instead.

Bahar Baser

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	
<i>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</i>	<i>1</i>
1.1 THE PUZZLE & THE SCOPE OF THE THESIS	4
1.2 ELABORATION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	7
1.2.1 Diaspora and Conflict	7
1.2.2 From “Imported Conflicts” to “Inherited Conflicts” in Transnational Spaces	8
1.3 METHODOLOGY	11
1.3.1 Selection of Interviewees	12
1.3.2 Reflexivity and Ethics	13
1.3.3 The Fieldwork	18
1.3.4 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research	22
1.4 CHAPTER OVERVIEW	23
 <i>CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE CONCEPT OF DIASPORA</i>	 <i>25</i>
2.1 DIASPORA & IDENTITY	25
2.1.1 Homeland Orientation & Long distance Nationalism	29
2.1.2 Diaspora Mobilization and Identity Formation	30
2.2 DIASPORA & THE TRIADIC RELATIONSHIP	35
2.3 DIASPORA & HOSTLAND	39
2.3.1 Hostland Opportunity Structures for Diaspora Mobilization	39
2.4 DIASPORA & CONFLICT	43
2.4.1 “Conflict Import” to the Host Country	45
2.4.2 Inherited Conflicts: The Debate on the Second Generation	46
2.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS	49
 <i>CHAPTER 3: THE KURDISH QUESTION AT HOME AND ABROAD</i>	 <i>51</i>
3.1 THE KURDISH QUESTION AS A TRANS-STATE ETHNIC CONFLICT	51
3.2 THE ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT	54
3.3 THE RISE OF THE PKK	58
3.4 THE KURDISH QUESTION IN THE POLITICAL ARENA	61
3.5 THE TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF THE KURDISH QUESTION	65
3.6 TURKISH RESPONSES TO KURDISH TRANSNATIONALISM	70
3.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS	73
 <i>CHAPTER 4: SWEDEN AND GERMANY: MIGRANT INCORPORATION AND MULTICULTURALISM</i>	 <i>75</i>
4.1 INTRODUCTION	75
4.2 SWEDEN: A MULTICULTURAL PARADISE?	78
4.2.1 A Historical Overview of Migration to Sweden	78
4.2.2 Sweden: From Assimilation to Integration Policies	80
4.2.3 Naturalization Policies and Political Participation in Sweden	83
4.2.4 Problematic Issues Related to Xenophobia, Employment, Education and Housing	86

4.2.5 A Critical Overview of Swedish Multiculturalism.....	89
4.2.6 The Swedish System and Migrant Organisations.....	91
4.3 GERMANY: FROM A LONG-LASTING HOST TO AN EVER-LASTING HOME?..	94
4.3.1 An Overview of Migration to Germany.....	94
4.3.2 Germany: How to Cope with the Guests?.....	96
4.3.3 Naturalization Policies and Political Participation in Germany.....	99
4.3.4 Problematic Issues in Germany.....	103
4.3.5 Multiculturalism in Germany: Ambiguity and Failure.....	106
4.3.6 Migrant Organisational Patterns in Germany.....	110
4.4 COMPARATIVE SUMMARY.....	113
 <i>CHAPTER 5: TURKISH AND KURDISH MIGRATION TO SWEDEN AND GERMANY...119</i>	
5.1 TURKISH AND KURDISH MIGRATION TO SWEDEN.....	119
5.1.1 The Turkish Community and Diaspora Mobilization.....	120
5.1.2 The Kurdish Community and Diaspora Mobilization	124
5.2 TURKISH AND KURDISH MIGRATION TO GERMANY.....	127
5.2.1 The Turkish Community and Diaspora Mobilization.....	128
5.2.2 The Kurdish Community and Diaspora Mobilization.....	132
5.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	135
 <i>CHAPTER 6: SWEDISH AND GERMAN APPROACHES TO THE KURDISH QUESTION.....137</i>	
6.1 THE SWEDISH APPROACH TO THE KURDISH QUESTION.....	137
6.1.1 Swedish Perceptions of the Kurdish Question.....	138
6.1.2 The Kurdish Question in Swedish Politics.....	141
6.1.3 Swedish–Turkish Relations.....	145
6.2 THE GERMAN APPROACH TO THE KURDISH QUESTION	146
6.2.1 The Conflict Becomes Visible: Overt Violence in Germany.....	147
6.2.2 Support from German Political Parties and Other Groups.....	155
6.2.3 Turkish–German Relations with Regards to the Kurdish Question.....	156
6.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	158
 <i>CHAPTER 7: SWEDEN: TWO WORLDS APART?.....161</i>	
7.1 HOW AND WHY DOES MOBILIZATION OCCUR?.....	161
7.1.1 “We had to respond to the Kurds somehow”.....	161
7.1.2 “My parents came here so that I could be a Kurd.”.....	164
7.2 CONTENTIOUS DIASPORA SPACES BETWEEN SECOND-GENERATION TURKS AND KURDS	168
7.3 INTERACTIONS AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL.....	172
7.4 ANTAGONISMS AT THE ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL.....	175
7.4.1 Inter-group Relations.....	175
7.4.2 Intra-Group Relations.....	176
7.4.2.1 The Turkish community: “The Kulu Domination”.....	176
7.4.2.2 The Kurdish Community: Discrepancy in Harmony?.....	178
7.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	180

<i>CHAPTER 8: THE IMPACT OF SWEDISH POLICIES ON TURKISH-KURDISH DIASPORA SPACES</i>	183
8.1 CHANGES IN THE ASYMMETRIES OF POWER: CONTESTED HEGEMONY?....	183
8.1.1 Turkish Perceptions.....	184
8.1.2 Kurdish Perceptions.....	187
8.2 IMAGINED ALLIANCES IN IMAGINED BATTLEFIELDS.....	189
8.3 “SWEDISH VALUES”: AN EXPLANATION FOR THE ABSENCE OF VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS?	191
8.4 THE IMPACT OF SWEDISH MULTICULTURALISM ON ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR.....	195
8.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	199
<i>CHAPTER 9: A REPLICAS OF TURKEY IN GERMANY?</i>	201
9.1 WHY AND HOW DID THEY BECOME MOBILIZED?.....	201
9.1.1 “First there were neo-Nazis....”.....	201
9.1.2 “I think all Kurds are born political. They just don’t know it...”.....	206
9.2 CONTENTIOUS DIASPORA SPACES AMONG THE TURKISH AND KURDISH SECOND GENERATIONS.....	211
9.2.1 Violent Contentions.....	212
9.2.2 Non-Violent Contentions.....	214
9.3 SOCIALIZATION AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL.....	220
9.4 INTRA-GROUP & ENTRE-GROUP INTERACTIONS AND RIVALRIES AT THE ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL.....	224
9.4.1 KOMKAR vs. YEKKOM.....	224
9.4.2The Turkish Diaspora: A Patchwork of Ideologies.....	227
9.4.3 Turkish & Kurdish Diasporas: Cooperation or Conflict?	230
9.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	234
<i>CHAPTER 10: THE IMPACT OF GERMAN POLICIES ON THE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN TURKS AND KURDS</i>	235
10.1 HEGEMONY RECREATED: A REPLICAS OF ASYMMETRIES OF POWER?.....	235
10.1.1 Turkish Perceptions	236
10.1.2 Kurdish Perceptions.....	237
10.2 IMAGINED COMMUNITIES’ IMAGINED BATTLE FRONTS.....	241
10.3 WHY ARE THERE VIOLENT CLASHES IN GERMANY?.....	242
10.4 GERMAN POLICY TOWARDS DIASPORA ORGANISATIONS.....	247
10.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	249
<i>CHAPTER 11: CONCLUSION</i>	251
11.1 PRIMARY EMPIRICAL FINDINGS.....	252
11.2 THE SECOND GENERATION & INHERITED CONFLICTS.....	263
11.3 FINAL WORDS.....	266
APPENDIX: DIASPORA ORGANISATIONS INCLUDED IN THIS RESEARCH.....	269
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	275

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADD: Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği (Kemalist Thought Association)

AKP: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Welfare Party)

BBP: Büyük Birlik Partisi (Great Unity Party)

BDP: Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (Peace and Democracy Party)

CHP: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (The Republican Peoples Party)

DİDF: Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu (The Federation of Democratic Workers Associations)

DOS: Discursive Opportunity Structure

EU: European Union

KIP: Kurdische Gemeinde in Deutschland (Kurdish Community in Germany)

KOMCIWAN: Komela Zarok û Ciwanên Kurd (Association of Kurdish Children and Youth)

KOMKAR: Yekitiya Komelên Kurdistan (The Federation of Kurdish Associations)

KRF: Kurdiska Riksförbundet (The National Kurdish Federation)

KSAF: Kurdiska Student och Akademiker Förbundet (Kurdish Students and Academics Association)

LDN: Long-distance Nationalism

MHP: Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (The National Movement Party)

PKK: Partiya Karakên Kurdistan (The Kurdistan Workers Party)

POS: Political Opportunity Structures

PSK: Partiya Socialist a Kurdistan (The Kurdistan Socialist Party)

SPD: Sozial demokratische Partei Deutschland (The Social Democratic Party)

STRF: Svensk-Turkiska Riksförbundet (Swedish-Turkish Federation)

TBB: Türkischen Bund in Berlin-Brandenburg (Turkish Union in Berlin-Brandenburg)

TGB: Turkische Gemeinde zu Berlin (Turkish community in Berlin)

TRF: Turkiska Riksförbundet i Sverige (The Turkish Federation in Sweden)

TSAF: Turkiska Student och Akademiker Föreningen (the Turkish Student and Academics Association)

TUF: Turkiska Ungdomsförbundet (The Turkish Youth Federation)

UNGKURD: Riksförbundet Ung Kurd Sverige (Federation of Young Kurds in Sweden)

YEK-KOM: Yekitiya Komelên Kurd li Elmanya (The Federation for Kurdish Associations in Germany)

1

INTRODUCTION

The international media has often reported violent confrontations between Turkish and Kurdish migrant communities in Europe. Each development regarding the Kurdish question in Turkey reverberates into the transnational space and receives an immediate reaction from the Turkish and Kurdish diasporas, which are dispersed not only across Europe but throughout the world. For example, during the summer of 2011, some 600 Turks gathered at Stuttgart in order to protest about the current situation in Turkey and to condemn the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party). PKK-sympathizers immediately began a counter-protest and burned a Turkish flag. Events took a turn for the worse when the protestors started throwing stones at each other, and at the German police, which also resulted in damage to surrounding businesses.¹ Again in the autumn of 2011, dozens of people were wounded or arrested in the Netherlands after a fight broke out between Turks and Kurds. In the aftermath of these events, several Kurdish associations sent petitions to the Dutch police asking for protection from Turkish ultra-nationalist attacks.² These examples are certainly not the only cases of violent encounters breaking out between the Turkish and Kurdish communities, and they are unlikely to be the last. In Europe today, scenes of this kind have become increasingly frequent especially after the 1990s. However, these events represent only the tip of the iceberg with regards to the contentions between the two communities and they show that the Kurdish question has been imported across borders and has taken on a transnational character.

To give further examples, the following statements have been selected from the interviews conducted during my fieldwork in Germany and Sweden:

Some Kurds say they come from Kurdistan. But where is this country? Who says it exists? They just live in a dream world. The funny thing is that they keep saying they are from Kurdistan even though they have Turkish passports in their pockets... Maybe it is easier to live in a dream world when you are in Germany...

¹ "Stuttgart'ta Türkler 'Teröre Lanet-Barış' Parolasıyla Yürüdü", 23 August 2011, *Hurriyet Newspaper*. Last access 21 May 2012. <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/planet/18554693.asp>

² "Fears of Further Turkish Kurdish Clashes in Europe", 19 November 2011, *Rudaw*. Last access 21 May 2012. <http://www.rudaw.net/english/news/turkey/4158.html>

(Turkish interviewee, Germany)

My parents left their relatives behind. I cannot block them out and forget I am a Kurd. My views are also connected with the political situation in the country. If Kurdistan were free, then I could focus on other things like enjoying my life.

(Kurdish interviewee, Sweden)

These testimonies offer an insight into current perceptions of the situation. For example: the denial of the existence of Kurdistan, the urge to “defend Turkey” from afar and protect its image in the eyes of the host society, and the notion of having a “duty” towards saving Kurdistan. What is interesting about all these quotes is that they are all rooted in discourses that we are accustomed to hearing in Turkey, and yet they were voiced by Turks and Kurds who were born outside Turkey (as the descendants of Turks and Kurds who arrived in Europe as labour migrants or asylum seekers) and who have never lived in the territory where the actual conflict exists.

Their statements show traces of “diaspora nationalism” which is a form of ethnic nationalism defined by A. Smith as “an ideological movement to secure for a self-defined ethnocultural population collective autonomy, unity and identity by restoring its members to their historic homeland” (2010: 4). In other words, they are long-distance nationalists (Anderson 1992, 1998) who have developed loyalties for a homeland³ they were not born in and for an ethnic identity they have developed from afar. Indeed, the formation of their identity has been affected by “the combined impact of both the ethnic conflict and international migration” (Sirkeci 2006: 271).

This thesis investigates diaspora nationalism among second-generation⁴ Turks and Kurds⁵ in Sweden and Germany and seeks to clarify their interest in, and devotion to, a political context that they have never experienced at first-hand. It highlights how the current situation in the homeland affects identity-formation and how the repercussions of the conflict in Turkey are

³ I am aware that the concept of “homeland” is a loaded term. In this thesis I occasionally use it interchangeably with “country of origin” and at times I also use it in order to explain the loyalties that diaspora members develop for a specific territory that they call either “Turkey” or “Kurdistan.” Therefore I strip the word from its national connotations when needed.

⁴ In this thesis, “second generation” is used as an umbrella term to describe the descendants of migrants who are born and raised in the hostland. It includes members of transnational migrant communities who are also third- and fourth-generation. Throughout the thesis, no distinction will be made between different generations.

⁵ This study solely focuses on the second-generation Kurds whose parents are Kurds from Turkey.

reflected in the interactions between these two groups. Although my findings show that the conflict in Turkey adversely affects the relationship between the two ethnic groups, the animosity and conflict dynamics are not an exact reflection of the situation in the homeland. The argument of this thesis is that the hostland⁶ has both a direct and indirect impact on the evolution of these inter-ethnic relations through its politics and policies. Moreover, there are other factors such as the profile of the migrants that are received by the host country, as well as the size and the composition of the communities, that play a role in the structural transformation of conflict dynamics. The primary research questions that this thesis seeks to answer are:

- In what ways do the second-generation diaspora members from opposing sides of the conflict interact with each other in the hostland?
- What is the impact of the hostland's policies and politics on constructing, shaping or eliminating the interactions between these diaspora groups?

By interaction, I refer to the inter-ethnic relationships between Turkish and Kurdish diaspora members that are formed in the hostland. I look at how the interviewees establish contact with each other, how much their perceptions were influenced by the conflict situation in Turkey and how their perceptions about “the other” affect their preferences while they construct their social and political circles both at the individual and organizational level. I questioned whether the loyalties of the Turkish and Kurdish second generation towards their homeland affect their mutual perception and the establishing of contact with one another. For example, their ways of choosing friends and spouses depending on their political stance were examined.

It is essential to emphasise here that the specific focus of this thesis is on Turks and Kurds who interpret “Turkishness” and “Kurdishness” as a *politicized collective identity* (Simon & Klandermans 2001). For this reason, it is not a study about the entire Turkish and Kurdish populations in Germany and Sweden, but instead sheds new light on the sub-groups within these transnational communities that have established political attachments towards the homeland. In other words, my sample consists of members whose parents have left a given homeland (for a variety of reasons) and who continue to identify politically with this homeland. I am aware that there are other members of the Turkish and Kurdish communities in these

⁶ I am aware that the term “hostland” has caused debate amongst migration scholars since it implies that diaspora members live in an everlasting “host” country that they can never call “home.” However, in this thesis I use the term neutrally and use it interchangeably with “country of residence.” Since the majority of the diaspora theoretical frameworks refer to the country of residence as the “hostland” and since I focus on both first- and second-generation members in the thesis, I find no issue with using it as a term to analytically explain the core arguments of my thesis.

given host states who solely identify themselves culturally with Turkishness and Kurdishness and opt to stay away from politics. Therefore, the subjects of this study are those who could be described as activists, protestors or opinion makers; those who speak their minds about the political events in Turkey – either on the streets, in places of protest, in the parliaments, at seminars, in newspapers or even in virtual chat rooms.

To borrow Brubaker's terms (2005) I am interested in Turks and Kurds who take a "stance" or have a "claim" about the politics of the homeland, as they refer to it either as Turkey or Kurdistan. Moreover, I see nothing natural about the confrontations between Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups, however in this study when I use descriptions such as "adversary", "rival" or "conflicting" groups I refer to my sample as this thesis concentrates primarily on those who describe themselves as an "adversary", "rival" or in "conflict" in their discourses and, more importantly, have at times acted in this manner, whether in their individual or organisational spheres.

The arguments that this thesis makes are based largely on my fieldwork in Germany and Sweden, which consists of approximately 200 interviews with experts, politicians with Turkish or Kurdish backgrounds, migrant organisation leaders, as well as first- and second-generation diaspora members. Sweden and Germany were selected as they both have significant populations of non-European migrants and in particular they have Turkish and Kurdish populations that show diasporic tendencies, making them relevant cases for comparison. I believe that these two cases show a great deal of variation in terms of receiving the Turkish and Kurdish migrants which gives me the opportunity to compare and contrast the host country's impact on inter-ethnic relations in diaspora spaces. A comparison of their approaches to migrant incorporation, multiculturalism as a formal state policy, the corporatist structures that they have developed with migrant organisations, the profile of the migrants they have received and their approach to the Kurdish question in Turkey is fruitful as it sheds light on the dynamics behind conflict-import to the host country by diaspora groups. In the following section, I introduce the puzzle behind this research and elaborate further on the research questions.

1.1 THE PUZZLE & THE SCOPE OF THE THESIS

Most of the violent conflicts fought since the Cold War have been intra-state conflicts. According to the Heidelberg Institute on International Conflict Research, there were 363 political conflicts in the world in 2010. Including major and minor armed struggles “intrastate conflicts accounted for a clear majority of the conflicts monitored, with 269 in contrast to 94 interstate cases.”⁷ These intra-state conflicts, which have ethnic, religious or ideological characteristics, are “no longer fought solely in war zones within national borders but are increasingly becoming dispersed and delocalized” (Demmers 2002:85). Many of these conflicts, both major and minor, and mainly in Asia and Africa, force large numbers of people to migrate either regionally or internationally (Zunzer 2004). As a result, members of conflicting parties find themselves in new countries of residence that have different contexts of rights, duties and opportunity structures. Leaving the homeland behind does not necessarily mean that the grudges and grievances between the two parties are forgotten. Instead, they may be carried to the new country of residence and take on a different form.

Numerous groups among these migrants, regardless of their status as refugees, asylum seekers or workers, maintain their connection to their homeland (whether it is defined by national borders or not) and in one way or another may become involved in the homeland conflicts from afar. Moreover, the conflicts, whether ongoing or recently ended, play a crucial role in how various migrants construct their identities and how they position themselves politically in their new country of residence. New opportunities in the host country, including the shifts in symmetries of power relations between two conflicting groups might pave the way for drastic changes in conflict dynamics among them. The conflicts could not only be transported to the hostland, but could also be transmitted to new generations which, in turn, cause a continuation of the tensions with each new generation.

The tensions that are rooted in homeland conflicts might reveal themselves in the host country in the form of clashes between rival groups, especially after critical junctures in the homeland situation. There are also other expressions of tension such as non-violent confrontations, verbal or discursive contentions, social/physical separation, or mutual avoidance (Hanrath 2011a). However, it is usually the violent interactions that catch the attention of the broader public, as these are more likely to be covered by the media or make their way into politicians’ speeches. Besides the confrontations between Turkish and Kurdish groups, there are various examples of

⁷Conflict Barometer 2010. Last access 21 May 2012. http://hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/ConflictBarometer_2010.pdf.

ethnic groups – such as the Tamils and Sinhalese in Canada, Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots in London, Serbs and Croats in Australia – who have tried or are still trying to settle their issues in their host countries in places of protests, in the back streets of migrant-populated districts, in parliaments, civil society organisations or cyber space.

In the literature, there has been a growing tendency to focus on the attachments of diaspora groups to the homeland and their role as peace-makers or peace-wreckers in homeland conflicts. However, the issue of conflict-import to the host country and the interactions between rival groups (especially with a focus on the second generation) has been understudied. This research project goes one step further than existing the studies and tries to understand how an ethnic conflict in the homeland is carried across borders with the migration of both ethnic groups and how it is recreated in a transnational space through generational continuation.

I aim to discover the mechanisms by which second-generation diaspora members embrace a sense of belonging to the homeland. Many studies have considered conflict-generated groups, voluntary-migrants, intellectuals in exile, or refugees, however studies that focus on generational continuation in diaspora mobilization are rare. The identity-construction of the second-generation diaspora members is vastly different to that of their parents – it is undoubtedly more complex and diverse, and I believe that their interactions with one another demonstrate clearly *the impact of hostland policies and politics* on the reconstruction of tensions from afar. Moreover, looking at the second-generation diaspora activism helps us to understand better the capacity of nationalist activities in the diaspora and their persistence in terms of generational continuation (Skrbis 2001). Therefore, this research aims to understand why a number of second-generation diaspora members, who were born, socialized and educated in the country of residence, have become involved in the homeland's contentious politics and carried on with the tensions that are imported from the homeland to the hostland; as well as how these sentiments affect their attitudes in the hostland towards the other diaspora groups who are supposedly their adversaries in the homeland. Finally in order to understand the diasporization process of the second generation and the conflict dynamics that they have constructed in the hostland, this thesis offers a more profound analysis of the ways in which the hostland policies and politics contribute to the negative or positive interactions between those two diaspora groups.

This thesis is also an effort to pave the way for two new discussions in the diaspora literature. Firstly, in this research I analyse two ethnic groups who both come from a country that is experiencing a “minor armed conflict”.⁸ Therefore, I observe the changes in power dynamics between majority and minority groups in a diasporic space and the impact of the hostlands’ policies and politics on this shift of power equilibrium. Secondly, I believe that many conflicts among the migrant groups in host countries, especially between Middle Eastern groups, are accepted and treated as a part of the “culture” of these ethnic or religious groups. The media and politicians, as well as (occasionally) academics, approach these conflicts with an orientalist understanding. I oppose the sweeping generalizations about “diaspora groups who carry their conflicts with them” and argue in this thesis that each diaspora group and the conflict dynamics it (re)constructs in a new host country setting are diverse and that the hostland’s impact needs further discussion and emphasis.

1.2 ELABORATION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.2.1 Diaspora and Conflict

In recent decades “diasporas” have become an increasingly popular topic for researchers, and continue to gain increasing recognition in the academic world. Some authors note that the use of the term diaspora has become an increasingly “trendy” concept (Safran 2007:1). Indeed, today we find an abundance of literature that focuses on various aspects of diaspora formation and mobilization – combining previous work on subjects such as migration, integration and social movements with the emerging studies on transnationalism. The concept of diasporas thus provides material for discussion for various fields of social science. The term has long been used to refer to specific dispersed groups such as Jews and Armenians, while currently it is also being used to describe expatriates, exiles, refugees, immigrants and, in particular, displaced communities and ethnic minorities (Cheran 2004: 2, Shuval 2000: 41). Demmers attributes the political weight that the diaspora groups have gained during recent decades to the rise of new patterns of conflict: the increase in the number of intra-state wars, the rapid rise in war refugees, developments in technology and communication and, finally, the increased production of cultural and political boundaries (Demmers 2007). These changes paved the way for the diaspora groups to become one of the most important non-state actors in the global

⁸The Kurdish question is defined as a “minor armed conflict” by the Armed Conflicts 2010, Uppsala University Conflict Data Program.
http://www.pcr.uu.se/digitalAssets/65/65909_armedconflicts_2010.pdf

arena. As Bordes-Benayoun explains “what was a painful condition in the past has gained a positive status” and being a diaspora has become “a force and a political slogan” (2010: 48).

In the field of social science there has been another shift in focus when investigating diaspora groups and their role in conflict resolution. Understanding the behaviour of diaspora communities gained increasing importance following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which threw a spotlight on migrants and their loyalties to their home/host country. Diaspora activism, in terms of political support for insurgent movements, sending remittances and participating in homeland affairs, has become highly significant. Many cases of conflict in the Middle East, Caucasus, and South Asia have been exposed to diaspora influences. Increasing numbers and growing economic strength makes diaspora groups more powerful. As a result of the better dissemination of information and improved communication, diasporas have greater potential to interact between the homeland and hostland (Demmers 2007, Baser & Swain 2008). The attachment that diaspora communities feel towards their roots and homelands, in many cases, motivates their intervention in conflicts in the homeland, and this needs to be studied further. How do the diasporic identities emerge? How do the diaspora communities strengthen their ties to the homeland? Who are the diaspora elites that direct the mobilization process? While academic studies related to the questions mentioned above have begun to emerge, there still remains much to discover about how the homeland conflicts are actually carried across borders and (re)created and (re)shaped in the hostland context.

1.2.2 From “Imported Conflicts” to “Inherited Conflicts” in Transnational Spaces

Within the academic field, there has been a noticeable rise in interest in the diaspora groups’ intervention in homeland conflicts, but without an appreciation that the conflict dynamics have also travelled beyond the homeland and have been (re)constructed in transnational spaces. So much emphasis is placed on the ties between the diaspora communities and the homeland that the issue of how diaspora involvement in homeland conflicts affects the forms of inter-ethnic interactions in the host country has been largely overlooked (Brown 2004:6). If we consider that many of Europe’s immigrants “originate from countries with violent intra-state conflicts between different social groups” (Hanrath 2011a:2), the transportation of conflicts to the current countries of residence seems impossible to leave out of the account.

Migration is a difficult experience, not least because a consequence of displacement is a sense of uncertainty. It is also an experience that underpins the already existing antagonisms and

strengthens the perceptions of migrant groups towards each other by reinforcing the notions of “us” and “them, in addition to “ethnic identifications” (Mohammad-Arif et.al. 2007). The political situation in the homeland or hostland may generate conflicts between diaspora groups, as well as discord among their ranks (Gayer 2007). However this process can vary significantly from one country of immigration to another, depending on the models of integration prevalent in each host country and other variables (Mohammad-Arif et.al. 2007). The social distance between the antagonistic groups is shaped through endogenous and exogenous factors and my contention is that one must also explore the post-migration perceptions of antagonistic diaspora groups about each other in order to fully understand the conflict dynamics that are transmitted to a host country. As Brown argues: “nationalism in diaspora settings often seems to have a life of its own, independent from political developments in the homeland, but constantly making reference to them” (2004: 15). Therefore, it would be short sighted to assume that the interactions between the two groups will not evolve into another form in a specific hostland context. Then the important question, which constitutes one of the main pillars of this research, is: “What is the impact of the hostland policies and politics on the conflict dynamics between two adversary groups in the hostland?”

There are a few studies that have highlighted the relevance of the issue of conflict import, such as those of Brown (2004) or Skrbis (1999) in their research on Serbian, Croat and Slovene immigrants in Australia and the USA. There is also a book by Danforth (1995) that focuses on Greek-Macedonian relations in Australia. Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) has produced one of the most comprehensive books about Turkish and Kurdish transnationalism and how Turkish politics played out in Germany. These studies focus primarily on the first generation and only occasionally use examples of second-generation testimonies. Assuming that the conflicts are imported to the hostland in one way or another, this thesis poses a question that, to date has not been addressed adequately: Is conflict-import limited solely to the first generation? As there are many examples of second-generation activism, how can we explain a second-generation diaspora member’s nostalgia for a land that he/she has never seen? And how do the second generation inherit the conflicts of their parents and establish relations with “the other” in their country of residence? Understanding the reasons why certain second-generation diaspora members continue to bear a grudge against each other in the hostland, in which they have never experienced the traumatic impact of the conflict, is essential for our understanding of the generational continuation of diasporic identity formation. Despite being

a crucial aspect of the diasporic experience, this process has yet to be fully appreciated. Therefore, the focus on the second generation should bring another dimension to the discussions about diaspora mobilization, long-distance nationalism, and conflict-import.

Apart from these examples, the studies undertaken thus far have tended to refer to the relations of adversary groups from separate homelands but what renders my study original is the fact that adversary groups from the same homeland constitute a far more complex phenomenon since this context harbours majority/minority group sensitivities, unpacks the embedded structures of hegemony in the homeland in a transnational space and brings about the shift in asymmetrical power relations among these rival groups. The hostland context provides fertile ground for the minority group to finally separate its social, political or economic spaces from the majority group, as well as offering the opportunity to realise long-desired aims such as nation-building, albeit far away from the imagined homeland. It also questions *the perceived power that the majority group hold over the minority group*, depending on the hostland's approach to the homeland conflict. In the literature, we read that the limits of diaspora mobilization are determined by the political opportunity structures that the host country provides, however they are also shaped by the national interests of the host country in the issue that actually mobilized the diaspora (Hassanpour & Mojab 2004: 219). This thesis attempts to illustrate the impact of hostland's national interests for its approach to the diaspora groups and their political agendas.

As I hypothesize that there are differences between the perceptions of the first and second generations, I argue that understanding the diasporic stance of the second generation is more relevant in the context of the hostland perspective. Research on the hostland as an essential factor for diaspora mobilization has been undertaken, yet the question of how it regulates and shapes the interactions between the two groups in its territory has been understudied. Except for a few studies, such as Khalid Khayati's (2008) on the different forms of diaspora mobilization of Kurds in Sweden and France and Wahlbeck's work (1999) which compares Kurdish refugee communities in the UK and Finland, there are few comprehensive studies that investigate the impact of hostland on the same ethnic community in different countries with regards to diaspora formation. However, it is crucial to understand how various types of host society institutions and policies give rise to different types of opportunities and ways of participating (Odmalm 2009: 149). It has been argued by several authors, such as Miall et al., that "whether a diaspora group is able to mobilize support clearly depends on the size, level of integration and political importance of the diaspora group, the political system of the host

government, and the wider foreign policy objectives of the host government” (2010: 14). Moreover, the social structures in the hostland, the resettlement policies, and the degree and forms of discrimination and xenophobia have an influence on the social organisation of the diaspora groups (Wahlbeck 1999: 143).

To date, there has not been sufficient research on how the political and discursive opportunity structures are perceived by the diaspora groups themselves. How do they interpret the situation in the hostland? How do they position themselves against each other under given circumstances in the hostland? How are the second-generation diaspora members with no homeland experience affected by the opportunities that the hostland provides? My aim is to address these questions and demonstrate how political institutions, migrant incorporation regimes, foreign policy preferences and political and discursive opportunity structures in the hostland may form and possibly control diasporic rivalries and the spillover of homeland conflicts into the hostland.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

This thesis is based on an ethnographic research which combines methods such as moderate participant observation and interviews with an extensive research that aims to understand the social processes from the inside by participating in these processes’ development (Flick 2006: 23). It is explorative as well as qualitative in nature and primarily relies on direct and participant observation, semi-structured group and individual interviews, as well as casual conversations. Interviews are mainly helpful for getting the story behind interviewees’ experiences and for understanding the informant’s point of view about a specific matter. Direct observation is a fundamental and highly important method in qualitative research. It entails the systematic recording of events or behavior in a certain social setting selected for research. The researcher enters this setting without predetermined conclusions in order to discover the recurring patterns of behavior or relationships that he/she aims to study (Marshall & Rossman 2006:98-99). Participant observation is another most commonly used qualitative research methods in social sciences. The term is used to describe the research method when the researcher goes to the field and spends some time with the subjects, acts like one of them and engages in social interaction. It is one of the most common data-gathering methods used in qualitative sociology (Marshall & Rossman 2006: 100). Participant observation was not conducted in the traditional sense, which normally requires participation in the cultural environment of the “researched group” for an extended period of time. Since I

had a sample of various groups from different ethnic, religious, political and organizational backgrounds, scarcity of time limited my ability to get involved with each group as much as an anthropologist would. However, I visited each organization a number of times during my fieldwork and participated in numerous activities related to my topic. I attended seminars, protests, marches, weddings, and meetings, as well as football tournaments in order to gain insights and find interviewees, which also gave me the opportunity to observe everyday routines of my interviewees. Therefore I would define my role as “moderate participation”. While gathering information for this thesis, I also utilized the webpages of diaspora organisations, documents and leaflets as well as other social media sources.

1.3.1 Selection of Interviewees

The thesis takes as its focus those Turks and Kurds born in Germany and Sweden who treat their Kurdish or Turkish identity as a politicized collective identity and have an interest in and influence upon homeland politics. I sought to reach members of the Turkish or Kurdish transnational community who had a “stance” towards the Kurdish question and other political issues in Turkey. I chose interviewees who were active in protest events, constantly followed the political developments in Turkey and tried to get involved – in one way or another – in the political projects constructed by the diaspora elites. Therefore, I would like to emphasise here that this thesis does not represent the *whole Turkish or Kurdish population* in Germany and Sweden, but, rather, tries to present a comprehensive study about second-generation Turks and Kurds who have a politicized ethnic consciousness and are part of a broader ideological or political collective movement. Accordingly, I found the participants of my study through migrant organisations – as well as blogs, discussion forums and protest events. Not all interviewees belong to a migrant organisation but all are active to some extent in Turkish or Kurdish politics. Among my interviewees were public intellectuals, authors, actors, politicians, musicians, and bloggers. At the organisations, I interviewed the leaders as well as the members.

I have excluded *religious groups* from this study for various reasons. Firstly, I wanted to focus solely on “ethno-national diaspora groups” and their perceptions about the Kurdish question. While the religious groups certainly have different opinions and would have contributed to the results of this study in a variety of ways, the aim of this project was to observe Turkish and Kurdish nationalism(s) among the second generation. The interviewees

are members of the larger transnational migrant community from Turkey but they were chosen because they give more priority to their ethnic, rather than their religious, identity. In order to remain as inclusive as possible I approached Alevi and Sunni participants from both sides.⁹ I also interviewed participants who belonged to movements such as Milli Görüş or Gülen Cemaat in Sweden and Germany. However, they were included in this study because they were also members of Turkish and Kurdish umbrella organisations or because they were active bloggers about politics in Turkey. In sum, I addressed the groups to which the mass media or politicians refer when they talk about the Kurdish or Turkish diaspora, rather than a “Muslim” diaspora.

I was also careful about *gender and class differences*. The proportion of female to male interviewees is almost equal. I was also aware of class differences and, as far as was possible, tried to include people from different classes. Since my aim was not to find a correlation between gender, class and diaspora mobilization, I tried to cover different groups in order to be representative and offer a general picture of the situation. Therefore the diversity of the approaches of different gender groups or social classes was not examined in this study.

1.3.2 Reflexivity and Ethics

In any research that utilizes ethnographic fieldwork methods, it is crucial that the researcher is aware of his/her “subject position” and how this position affects relationships between the researcher and the interviewee. Since the outcome of the study and the knowledge that it produces are very much dependent on this positionality, it is important that the researcher informs the reader where he/she stands (Al-Ali & Pratt 2006: 2). The researcher is by no means an “objective observer”, as Al-Ali & Pratt state: “...the gender, class, religion, sexuality, political orientation, nationality, ethnicity, age and geographical location of the researcher, among other factors, may have an impact on the research process” (ibid.). Therefore, the researcher should be conscious of his/her privileged positions and potential power relations with the groups that are under study. At this point, reflexivity becomes the core of the matter. The researcher adopts a “reflexive approach” which refers to a self-reflection process during the selection of the subject, the fieldwork, as well as analysis of the data gathered (Guillermet 2008).

⁹ There were also several atheists who had Sunni or Alevi background.

As Sultana further elaborates: “Reflexivity in research involves reflection on self, process and representation, and critically examining power relations and politics in the research process, and researcher accountability in data collection and interpretation ... being reflexive is important in situating the research and knowledge production so that ethical commitments can be maintained” (Sultana, 2007: 376). In other words, reflexivity refers to being conscious about the embeddedness of political dimensions of fieldwork and its impact on the outcome of the research, namely on the construction of knowledge (Nagar & Geiger 2007).

Before I embarked on this research, I was aware of the complexity of the subject I wanted to examine as this topic remains a sensitive issue in Turkey until today. A majority of the interviewees was born in Sweden and Germany and did not have first-hand experience of the conflict. However, particularly among the Kurdish interviewees, there were many who lost family members to this conflict. As a result, discussions around the topic often evoke emotions and sensitivity, making it more difficult to discuss certain issues during interviews.

I was also concerned that the fieldwork conducted would be challenging due to my ethnic background. As a Turkish researcher, I assumed it would be more complex to gain the trust of my interviewees, particularly the Kurdish respondents. I found that these challenges varied from one country to another. The plurality of actors, as well as heterogeneity of each group complicated matters as well.

Before going into details of my fieldwork experience, I shall define my position as a researcher, as it was difficult to distinguish whether I was an insider or outsider-researcher. Participants could question whether I was an insider-researcher for the Turkish diaspora members or an outsider-researcher for the Kurdish diaspora members. Traditional understanding of insider and outsider research suggests that the insider-researchers focus on a group to which they belong while the outsider-researcher is a complete stranger to the group under study (Breen 2007: 163). However as Collet very well explained in his article, “conducting research with diasporic communities ... adds complexity to the insider-outsider complications”. First of all, the diasporic communities are not monolithical actors but they are very heterogeneous due to many factors such as religion, class, political orientation etc., and secondly “transnationality as a defining feature of many diasporic communities introduces yet another set of complications regarding the insider-outsider dualism” (Collet 2008:79-80).

Since the term diaspora already by itself questions the meaning of home and belonging, how could a researcher like me define herself as an insider or outsider to these two communities? I surely had “the ability to interact naturally with the group and its members” (Breen 2007:163) with both Kurdish and Turkish interviewees, however at times I felt like a complete outsider to both. I could understand the cultural codes of both communities to some extent; however I was alien to those of their cultural codes that had been transformed by virtue of socialization in either Sweden or Germany. For instance, while we talked about the political issues in Turkey, I felt like an insider but when we talked about their problems as “second-generation” in Sweden and Germany, I personally felt like an outsider and even more so as they treated me like one. I sometimes had the “illusion of familiarity” (Breen 2007: 164) when I predicted the context of their responses on the outset of my questioning but quickly rid myself of this notion through rigorous self reflection following each interview.

I was thus both an insider and outsider during my fieldwork. At times, I attributed these labels to myself and at times these labels were attributed to me by the people I interviewed. As Guillermet states: “when you appear in this complex reality, people give you a status, they are seeking to find out who you are, what you want, what they can gain with you at the same time as you are searching for information” (Guillermet 2008). During my fieldwork, I realized that I had never previously been required to define “who I am”. Prior to embarking on this journey, I would have defined myself as simply a PhD student or a woman. However, during the fieldwork, I had to come to terms with the multiple identities I carry among these groups. For instance, I only came to realize that “I was Turkish” and “I was a Sunni Muslim” when I started my fieldwork in Sweden. Although I am not religious and my ethnicity is of no significance to me, I realized that I was considered as belonging to these groups. I have never had this negotiation of identity with myself before because I come from an ethnic-religious background which is perceived as the dominant/majority in Turkey and thus had the luxury to live my life without any need of questioning my identity. However, during the fieldwork, I was obliged to put myself in a category and even if I refused to do so, my interviewees “attributed identities” to me. This process, at the very beginning of my fieldwork in Sweden, forced me to “turn inward in order to turn outward” (Whittaker 1992: 191) and I constantly reworked how I positioned myself. As I will mention in the following paragraphs, me being put in an “essentialist” category – as a Turk therefore an insider for the Turkish diaspora was

almost impossible due to the transnational nature of this research as well as the plurality of groups and complexity of issues that are dealt with.

Insider and outsider moments during my fieldwork were revealed to me by the interviewees. How they received me varied depending on the questions I asked, the setting of our meetings, or the political stance they had, among many other factors. The boundaries between these two roles were dependent on both my background and their perceptions of me as a researcher. For example, for some Turkish respondents, I was an insider because I was ethnically Turkish. For them, it was not even a question that I favor the Turkish-side in this conflict. They answered my questions as if I were already familiar with how they felt towards the “other group” and they acted as if I were not asking them questions for an academic study but instead they were sharing their everyday complaints with me which they automatically assumed I would agree with it. Some other Turkish respondents received me as an outsider-researcher as I was born in Turkey and have not experienced being a “second-generation” in Sweden or Germany. Some felt intimidated about this; for example some interviewees especially in Germany ‘othered me’ because of the fact that I speak “Istanbul Turkish”, I was surely not “one of them”. My educational background also became an issue during many interviews as the respondents attributed my social status to that. Being a graduate of one of the most prestigious universities in Turkey (Boğaziçi University) caused a certain categorization of my identity as a “white Turk”¹⁰ which made my interviewees put a distance between us already from the beginning of the interview. However, as I said before, generally, my role as an insider or outsider usually shifted during an interview depending on the context.

In Sweden, there were very few negative reactions from the Turkish interviewees about my topic or my questions. I received a few undesirable comments – not before or during the interviews, but if the interviewee has searched for my name on the Internet and read about my previous academic articles or other essays related to the Kurdish question after the interview with me. In Germany, I received no negative reactions from the Turkish respondents. Most of the organisations I contacted were accustomed to hearing from researchers about interviews.

¹⁰ The term “white Turk” is used to describe a person who is rich, educated, Westernized, urbanized or a person who has a privileged status in Turkey. See a discussion by Prof. Baskın Oran; “White Turks, Black Turks and Grey Debate”, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=the-search-for-steps-of-wasps-around-anatolia-2010-11-22>, last access 15 October 2012.

My biggest initial challenge was finding Kurdish individuals, particularly in Germany. Since I did not have any references to start with, I encountered a great deal of suspicion from some Kurds. Although I explained my educational background and doctoral research aims, I was asked several times if I was working for the Turkish state. The Kurdish diaspora members had concerns about my background. This is surely not unique to my case. As Collet explains drawing on Meredith Minkler's work, there is a "dialectic of resistance" between outsider researchers and communities which have experienced historical trauma and internalized oppression. As he states: "...researchers who are "members" of the subordinating group are either rejected or viewed with great suspicion and mistrust based on what they historically represent to the community. Even in cases where such outsider researchers purport to act in an emancipatory way by "giving voice to" the neglected and disenfranchised, communities may still reject such efforts on the basis of not wanting to depend on outsiders for their representation(s)" (Collet 2008: 78). Drawing on the previous work of David Bridges, Collet argues that the groups under study might think that "in allowing members of the (former) subordinating group to cast their representations, they are reinforcing both the fact and perception of their subordination "as well as exposing themselves to potential misrepresentation" (Collet 2008: 78).

I was constantly reminded that `I was Turkish` during the interviews. Some respondents assumed that "I should have a pro-Turkish approach to begin with," while others questioned my "ultimate aim" in this research. Some perceived me as "the representative of Turkish state" and directed their mounted anger towards me during the interviews. Many also expressed that they did not understand why I got involved in such a sensitive issue. Some interviews included interviewees questioning me about my political stance. My knowledge on Kurdish history, Kurdish movement and famous Kurdish nationalist actors (from intellectuals to well-known guerillas) too, were constantly questioned.

Another important issue to mention is the power relations between me as the researcher and the Kurdish interviewees. While some were suspicious of my research aims, there were others who "appreciated" what I had been doing. I was welcomed to several Kurdish circles (mostly leftist) due to my interest in the Kurdish movement. As mentioned also Guillermet (2008), some interviewees calculated what they could gain from my study. Some saw my work as an opportunity to raise their voice about certain issues and openly answered my questions.

Others took the opportunity to “educate me” on Kurdish history as they perceived me as an “open-minded Turk”.

Finding Kurdish contacts in Sweden was fairly easy compared to my experience in Germany. I met my first Kurdish contacts through Dr. Khalid Khayati, a Kurdish-origin professor who is well-known among the Kurdish diaspora members, and therefore I did not face difficulty when approaching my interviewees. Although the Kurdish respondents were skeptical about my aims in the beginning, they opened up and agreed to conduct the interviews with me. Interviewing a couple of people from a student organisation became my reference point when I wrote to other organisations and this enabled me to schedule interviews easily. In Germany, it took me a longer time to get into certain circles to find interviewees. However, referrals from previous interviewees enabled me to gain access to numerous respondents after a couple of months.

The code of ethics in qualitative research requires that the researcher has the consent of his/her informants and refrains from harming them. The researcher should inform the participants about his/her research honestly and should by no means invade their privacy (Flick 2006: 46). Both in Germany and Sweden, I was careful not to mislead my interviewees about my ethnic or religious background or my intentions. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, I asked the interviewees to contact me and I did not record their real names, email addresses or phone numbers. I went to the places which they selected to conduct the interviews; cafes, houses organisations, or parks. All of the interviewees gave their consent for me to use their interviews for the purpose of my studies.

Flick states that one of the most important rules for qualitative research is that the researcher should provide full confidentiality to the participants of the study and make sure that they are not identifiable or the information they provided will not be used against the interest of the interviewees in the future by any institution (2006:49). I initially asked the interviewees to select nicknames, however, when I realized they were using nicknames that they also used on other social media websites, I decided to abandon this in order to protect my interviewees. Therefore, throughout the text I solely used their organisations’ name and I do not mention their age, names or any other information that could be used to identify them.

1.3.3 The Fieldwork

Sweden

In Sweden I conducted around 100 interviews over a total period of about six months. My first period of fieldwork lasted two months when I was hosted by the migration research institute REMESO during the winter of 2009. During this time, my aim was to gain a good general understanding of the situation and I mapped the field by undertaking direct observation. Initially, I had planned to interview experts and professors who had worked on subjects related to my topic and I conducted around 32 interviews with experts and first-generation Turkish and Kurdish diaspora members.¹¹ I contacted first-generation members of Turkish and Kurdish Diaspora groups and interviewed them by posing general questions regarding the situation in Sweden. It was essential to include the first generation in my research in order to analyse how the second generation differ. Being aware of the experiences of the first-generation interviewees helped me to see the impact of being born in Sweden for the relations between the two groups.

My second visit to Sweden lasted four months and I was based in Uppsala but also travelled to other cities such as Malmö, Lund, Södertälje, Stockholm, Örebro, Linköping, Norrköping, Västerås, and Göteborg in order to conduct interviews with second-generation diaspora members and undertake participant observation. I took part in a variety of activities – from annual congresses of youth organisations to football games, weddings and protests. Participating in these events enabled me to meet potential interviewees and gain access to different circles.

I have conducted extensive research on the Turkish and Kurdish migrant organisations in Sweden and selected the organisations that have homeland-oriented agendas. I studied their activities in order to see whether they match my diaspora definition. I wrote emails to the leaders of these associations in order to establish first contact. Some of them answered immediately and I reached their members through these channels. There were also cases when I received no response. In these cases I tried to find someone who could pass on the contact details of members.

¹¹ I interviewed Dr. Khalid Khayati and Dr. Minoo Alinia who have written the two most recent PhD theses about the Kurdish Diaspora. Moreover, I interviewed the former Swedish Consulate General to Istanbul, Ingmar Karlsson, who is currently a professor at Lund University. I also interviewed politicians with Kurdish backgrounds such as Nalin Pekgul from the Social Democrat Party and Gulan Avci from the Liberal Party.

In Sweden, by comparison to Germany, it was easier to map the field of diaspora organisations since Sweden records every umbrella and member organisation. Once I started searching for umbrella organisations, I easily found my way through the system. For both the Kurdish and Turkish sides I selected organisations that are frequently active and have a large member base. As they were ethnically organised – as opposed to in Germany where political divisions usually come to the fore – I believe that my sample is sufficiently representative. The total number of interviews and a gender breakdown is illustrated in the table below:

SWEDEN	Male	Female
Turkish	17	13
Kurdish	18	16

During the interviews, I prepared around 20 questions that revolved around the issues related to my research; however I also gave the respondents the opportunity to express themselves freely. The interviews usually lasted 1-2 hours, however I also conducted interviews that lasted up to 6 hours, particularly in the case of group interviews with 4 or 5 friends.¹² Apart from two interviews that were conducted over the internet (via Skype) the remainder were conducted face-to-face. More than half of the respondents allowed me to record their interviews.

Germany

In Germany, my fieldwork lasted for a total of 7 months. I was a visiting researcher at BGSS in Humboldt University in Berlin during my first 6-month visit. During the first month, I conducted direct observation. During the second month, I started doing participant observation at meetings, protest events, cafes, migrant organisations and ceremonies.¹³ I interviewed Kurdish origin politicians, various professors who work on similar topics, public

¹² Although I was not personally in favour of group interviews, I was obliged to agree to this method when the respondents left me no other choice.

¹³ Before I started the interviewing process, I undertook extensive research about migrant organisations in Germany. As opposed to the case of Sweden, the selection process was very complex in Germany for various reasons. There were hometownship associations with no political agendas, and many associations did not have a website therefore it was not easy to establish what kind of association they were and the names of these organisations did not reveal much about their character or activities. There were hundreds of Turkish organisations with ethnic, ideological or religious connotations. Most of the Kurdish organisations were constantly changing their names for security reasons. Therefore, even if I had their address, in many cases when I visited I saw that the association no longer exists.

intellectuals, artists, and film-makers. In total I conducted 28 interviews with experts and first-generation diaspora members.¹⁴

During the remaining 4 months, I attended numerous meetings organised by various Turkish or Kurdish organisations.¹⁵ Around 75% of the interviews were conducted in Berlin. The interviewees from Berlin came from different backgrounds and some had been born in other cities, like Flensburg or Munich, but had migrated to Berlin for work, study or personal reasons. Whilst I believe that Berlin is representative enough for the purposes of this study, I also travelled to other cities in order to incorporate the testimonies from individuals living in different parts of Germany. I also travelled to Bremen, Hamburg, and Düsseldorf in order to conduct interviews and participate in various events.

After completing my 6-month visit at Humbolt University, I undertook a one-month follow-up study in Cologne and Bonn. I visited the Kurdish Center in Bonn, NAVEND, and conducted interviews in this area, including with members of some religious groups with a strong stance against the PKK, the Union of Turkish Democrats and the youth organisation affiliated with the PKK.

While making my selections I drew upon other studies, such as those of Østergaard-Nielsen, Ögelman, and Faist in order to come up with a representative framework. I chose two umbrella organisations from the Turkish side that supposedly cover the conservative and social-democratic groups without a specific political agenda, and then I started including most active political groups such as the Grey Wolves, Kemalist Thought Association, Alperenler and others. My main criteria were that these organisations had considerable second-generation member support. There had been cases where I visited many leftist organisations that were solely run by the first generation (although they claimed to have youth associations

¹⁴ Among them, there were politicians such as Giyasettin Sayan who is a member of Parliament in Berlin from the Left Party; Riza Baran who is a former Kurdish politician and the founder of one of the first Kurdish organisations in Germany, Mehmet Aktas, a reputable Kurdish movie producer and documentary maker and Kenan Kolat who is the chairman of the one of the biggest Turkish umbrella organisations in Germany.

¹⁵ For instance, I attended a reception about the Dersim massacres; a seminar organised by the Kemalist Thought Association for the anniversary of the brutal murder of Ugur Mumcu; protests by several Kurdish associations condemning Turkey for its policies, a seminar organised by Amnesty International about the torture in 1980s in Turkish prisons; the filming of a Kurdish movie about Kurdish refugees; and an ANTI-FA protest organised by German groups associated with some Kurdish members which condemned the Turkish Grey Wolves in Kreuzberg.

as sub-groups) and there was no considerable activity. Therefore among the leftist groups I chose one group which acts as an umbrella organisation for many other groups and has a certain level of second generation support. When it comes to Kurdish organisations, my job was easier. There were two main organisations that have been discussed in various previous studies. There were also two more organisations that I included because they are frequently active. Moreover, I signed up for a 3-month Kurdish course in Berlin at one of the Kurdish organisations which helped me to gain a better understanding of the Kurdish language as well as helping me to establish contact with many Kurdish youths who had recently started to become politically active.

The interviews typically lasted between 1 and 2 hours, however some took much longer. I also conducted group interviews when I had no other choice. During the interviews, I applied the same method as in Sweden and I used the same 20 questions that I prepared in advance. In Germany, all of the interviews were conducted in person. Less than half of the interviewees allowed me to record their interviews.¹⁶ In total, with the second generation I conducted the interviews as shown below:

GERMANY	Male	Female
Turkish	20	18
Kurdish	22	18

Both in Sweden and Germany, the second-generation interviewees were all born in these countries (with the exception of 3 interviewees), and they were born after 1975. I chose these criteria in order to select similar samples in both countries.

In addition to my in-depth interviews and observations, over the course of 4 years, I frequently followed discussions in “cyber space” both for Germany and Sweden. I followed blogs, Youtube videos and the comments posted about these videos, websites that are designed to bring Kurds together such as Generations for Kurdistan’s Salvation or Turks in Germany on Facebook.

1.3.4 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

¹⁶ There had been cases when they waited until the interview was over to tell me what they really thought. Therefore, in the German case I often rely on my hand written notes rather than recorded interviews.

This thesis aims to answer two research questions that are crucial for understanding the reproduction of homeland conflicts in the diaspora spaces by the second-generation. Although it provides original insights into the literature, some limitations have been identified.

First of all, as will be mentioned in the next chapter, diaspora politics cannot be studied solely by looking at the hostland or homeland context. The transnational field in which diaspora mobilization takes place entails the interactions among the three main actors (diaspora, homeland and hostland) as well as the impact of transnational developments and opportunities. One cannot understand the nature of imported conflicts solely through the lens of the hostland. In this thesis, emphasis was placed on the hostland context by looking at numerous details that might affect the relations between two antagonistic groups. Keeping the transnational field in mind, I look at what might affect the interactions between the two communities. Yet, that does not mean that the homeland as well as other transnational actors do not play a role in the determination of such contentions. Further research might be conducted on the impact of the Turkish state on the relations between these two communities. One might look at the diasporization efforts of the Turkish state, for example, which groups are favored and which are undermined by the homeland. Moreover, more emphasis might be placed on the bilateral relations of homeland and hostland using a process tracing method in order to analyze the impact of foreign policy priorities and their impact on diaspora mobilization.

This thesis solely focused on diaspora groups which prioritize their ethnic identities over religious ones. However, it is also worth discovering what role religious diaspora groups play in sustaining or eliminating contentious spaces among the different diaspora groups. For example, does Alevi identity bring Turks and Kurds together? Are there Muslim groups which have a stance towards the Kurdish issue? What are their roles in the relations between the two communities? Further research might take up this point resulting in complementary work. Moreover, one might also look at the regional identities which are not taken into account in this study. For instance, further research can focus on “Dersimi” identity or may bring further insight on the perceptions of people in the diaspora who define themselves as “Zazas”. Their approach to both Turkish and Kurdish diaspora groups may deepen our understanding towards the reproduction of homeland conflicts in the diaspora.

1.4 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Chapter 2 provides an essential theoretical background to the rest of the thesis and summarises the main academic discourses on diasporas that are relevant to the research questions posed in this study.

Chapter 3 offers a concise introduction to the Kurdish question and looks at the dynamics behind the clashes between the Turkish state and the PKK. Furthermore, it focuses on the transnationalisation of the Kurdish question via Kurdish migration flows.

Chapter 4 outlines the similarities and differences between Sweden and Germany in terms of their migrant incorporation policies. It considers the differences in their approaches to issues such as “integration” and “multiculturalism”, as well as how they establish relations with the migrant organisations.

In Chapter 5, the focus shifts to the political profiles of the Turkish and Kurdish diaspora groups and their mobilization in Sweden and Germany. The main emphasis is on the early mobilization processes of first-generation Turks and Kurds. Chapter 6 outlines the approaches of Sweden and Germany to the “Kurdish question” and goes on to explain their policies for dealing with the question in their own territory.

Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10 present the empirical findings based on my fieldwork in Sweden and Germany. My intention is to map the social distance between the Turkish and Kurdish second generations in Germany and Sweden by basing my arguments on the narratives of interviewees representing different social, organisational, ideological, or religious groups. The two cases illustrate two different patterns of how the social, political and economic distance developed between these two ostensibly antagonistic groups.

Chapter 11 summarises the main findings of my thesis and explores their theoretical implications.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE CONCEPT OF DIASPORA

This chapter provides an essential background to the rest of the thesis. It summarizes the main academic discourses on diaspora that are relevant to the research questions posed in this thesis. It first sheds light on the debates regarding the concept at the semantic level, and then it links these debates to the issue of who belongs to a diaspora. The following sections outline different standpoints on diaspora mobilization and various interpretations on the formation of diasporic identity. It ends by looking at diaspora links to homeland conflicts, focusing on the second generation and their interpretations of the conflict in the country of origin.

2.1 DIASPORA & IDENTITY

It is widely acknowledged that studying diasporas is not an easy task, not least because the concept itself is controversial since there is still no universally accepted definition of the term “diaspora” (Cheran 2004:3). As Faist argues, striving for an exact definition of this term may be a futile exercise (2010: 14). In the past, “diasporas” applied primarily to Jews, and then to Greeks, Armenians and Africans. However, in the 1990s it became such a fashionable label that at least thirty ethnic groups declared themselves to be diasporas (or were described by others as such) (Cohen 1996: 507). At present, nearly every migrant group with a collective identity or that has established organisations in the receiving country, is referred to as a “diaspora” by themselves or by authors in the literature.

Brubaker calls this process a “‘diaspora’ diaspora”- a dispersion of meanings of the term in semantic, conceptual and disciplinary space.” He also adds that: “the category becomes stretched to the point of uselessness. If everyone is diasporic, then no one is distinctively so” (2005:1-3). There is an overlap between the concepts of diaspora, ethnic or religious groups, migrants, or transnational communities. That is why it is important to clarify a standpoint in the literature before commencing with empirical or analytical discussions about diaspora groups. Migration scholars should be explicit about which meaning they attribute to the term of

diaspora while simultaneously considering the political or other implications that the concept carries with it (Paerregaard 2010: 91).

The proliferation of the term encouraged a semantic debate over its definition. Almost all authors criticized the multiple meanings and tried to overcome the vagueness surrounding the definition by offering their own interpretation. However, while some definitions are too broad, and thus cause the term to lose its meaning, other definitions are so detailed that they do not refer to the immigrant groups which are accepted as diasporas by many researchers and academics. Many scholars have attempted to categorize the various aspects relevant to the definition of diaspora. A widely cited definition is that of Safran, who has developed six criteria to define diaspora groups as:

- a) dispersed groups from an original center to at least two peripheral places, b) that maintain a memory or myth about their homeland, c) that believe they are not fully accepted by their host country, d) that see the ancestral homeland as a place of return when the time is right, e) that are committed to the maintenance, safety and prosperity of the homeland and, f) that have group consciousness and solidarity (1991: 83-84).

However, this definition has been criticized strongly by many authors. First, it is not necessarily valid for many groups that are defined as diasporas today, moreover it does not even apply to the so-called “historic diasporas” anymore as they have transformed over time. In defining contemporary diasporas, scholars have pointed out that diaspora communities do not necessarily want to return home. As recent studies show, the idea of a return to the homeland has been replaced by circular exchange or transnational mobility (Faist 2010: 13). For instance, the classical diasporas such as Armenian or Jewish do not easily fit these criteria. Clifford, using the example of the African Diaspora, proves that in many cases there is no notion of returning home or recollections of a mythologized home country. He suggests these criteria might be regarded as additional rather than decisive criteria for defining diasporas (Clifford 1994).

Cohen also criticizes Safran’s categorisation.¹⁷ According to him, this definition was inspired by the Jewish experience, which cannot be applied to all diaspora groups, and, secondly,

¹⁷ Safran later adjusted his definition by stating that we classify diasporas on the grounds that they share most, if not all, of those characteristics: a) They share a common notion of “peoplehood” not only with the homeland but also with the homeland and ethnic kin in other countries, b) They are willing to survive as a minority by maintaining and transmitting a cultural and/or religious heritage derived from their ancestral home, c) In structuring their communities and adapting to their hostlands, diasporas

traumatic dispersion is not a *sine qua non* for all diaspora groups (1997:23). He recently proposed four additional criteria:

- a) we should include groups that disperse for colonial and voluntarist reasons, b) there should be more recognition of the positive virtues of retaining diasporic identity, c) diasporas mobilize a collective identity, d) diaspora can be used to describe transnational bonds of co-responsibility even where historically exclusive territorial claims are not strongly articulated (2008: 8).

However, in his definition as well, it is still not clear whether all dispersed communities are considered as a diaspora and this approach eradicates the thin line that separates diasporas from transnational migrant communities (Faist 2010: 13).

Safran is not the only author who tends to attribute to the diaspora experience a certain kind of *trauma and exile experience*. However many argue the contrary and suggest that this kind of a definition tends to ignore the existence of many other migrant groups that act like a diaspora or define themselves as such. For example, Bauböck suggests that a “traumatic” dispersal is not strictly necessary to define a group as a diaspora. He argues that “The historic fact of traumatic dispersal will certainly shape personal identities among coerced migrants, but this does not mean that they will always regard it as a public and collective identity associated with political claims.” Moreover, he adds that the criteria of traumatic dispersion “is not even strictly necessary, since groups whose migration was not traumatic and coerced may eventually mobilize as diasporas in response to trouble in the homeland”. For the latter point, he highlights the example of the 1998-99 Kosovo war where many immigrants volunteered to fight in the conflict despite residing in various European countries at the time as former guest workers. (Bauböck 2010: 314).

Of these competing definitions, one of the most useful syntheses comes from Brubaker. He suggests that diasporas can be defined by three core elements: a) dispersion in space; b) an orientation towards the ‘homeland’; c) a boundary-maintenance vis-à-vis a host society. Dispersion may occur as a result of a traumatic experience, however in some cases the segment of people who live outside the ethno-national homeland might also be described as a diaspora. Homeland orientation is the main determinant that shapes the diasporic identity. It might be

become themselves independent centers of cultural creation, although their creations continue to contain certain ethno-symbols, customs, and narratives of the homeland. d) Their cultural, religious, economic, and/or political relationships with the homeland are reflected in a significant way in their communal institutions (Safran 2007).

directed towards a real or imagined homeland, but the strength of the ties, collective memory and the idea of an eventual return to the homeland determine the actions of the diaspora. Lastly, Brubaker sees boundary-maintenance as another core element. Following Armstrong, he argues that a diaspora means preserving a distinct identity vis-à-vis the hostland. The diasporic identity is formed by resistance to assimilation to the host society through segregation or through exclusion by the host society. On the other hand, there also cases of creolization, hybridity or syncretism where one can develop a diasporic identity without experiencing total isolation. The most important element of boundary maintenance includes solidarity among members (2005: 5). In addition to the spatial dimension to diasporas, Brubaker also adds the factor of time, he states that what makes the diaspora phenomenon interesting is the persistence of boundary maintenance through generations (2005: 6-7).

Bauböck also argues that diasporas are multi-generational and the diasporic consciousness continues with the successive generation. He perceives the persistence of diasporic identity in a multi-generational perspective as the clearest way of distinguishing diaspora groups from the phenomenon of migrant transnationalism. As he argues that transnational networks need to be constantly replenished by new migration flows, he sees the dividing line that makes diaspora a separate concept from transnational community is its capacity to be passed on to successive generations despite the lack of new migration flows (2010:315). This generational continuation does not necessarily require segregation from the host society; second- or third-generation diaspora members might in fact be very well integrated but not completely assimilated to the host country – in other words, they might keep their attachments to the ancestral homeland. The successive generations in the diaspora combine the individual migration experience with the collective history of group dispersion and regeneration of communities abroad (Butler 2001). That is actually how the so-called “hybrid” identities of diaspora members come to existence.

This thesis is guided by Brubaker’s and Bauböck’s definitions of, and approaches to, the concept of diasporas. It agrees with Brubaker’s notion that: “...we should think of diaspora not in substantialist terms as a bounded entity, but rather as an idiom, a stance, a claim... As a category of practice, “diaspora” is used to make claims, to articulate projects, to formulate expectations, to mobilize energies, to appeal to loyalties” (2005: 12). Bauböck’s reflections on the definition of the concept and his emphasis on the intergenerational continuity, lateral links among diaspora members, the importance of examining elite interests and their political

projects together with opportunity structures shaped by other agents such as home and host country governments (2010: 316) are also taken into account throughout the thesis.

2.1.1 Homeland Orientation & Long distance Nationalism

Since conceptualizing diasporas and their attachments to their homelands calls for a deeper analysis of nationalism and identity theories through the lenses of globalization, one must take into account the multiple loyalties and hybrid of identities that diaspora groups bear in a transnational space (Koinova 2010: 150). One of the concepts most often referred to along this line is “long distance nationalism” (LDN) introduced by Benedict Anderson (1992, 1998). LDN became a popular model to describe the diasporic attachments to the homeland and/ or its politics. Nevertheless, and more often than not, the concept has negative connotations and it is usually used to describe the relationship between diasporas and their involvement in homeland conflicts. Diasporas are considered to be long-distance-nationalist marginal groups that do not give up easily on matters that are related to homeland conflicts and they are usually reluctant to make concessions for peace. It is argued that since diaspora groups do not live in the homeland anymore and consequently do not suffer from the absence of peace conditions, they keep their emotional attachments to the imagined homeland and make the conflicts even more protracted by not sacrificing their cause in exchange for a peaceful settlement. However, the usage of the term in this manner contains a negative connotation in itself as it depicts politically active diaspora members as irrational and irresponsible people who cannot be held accountable for their actions.

Glick-Schiller, however, argues that LDN does not necessarily refer to negative or violent activities. These actions may include voting, demonstrating, lobbying, offering financial support, creating works of art besides fighting, killing, and dying for the cause. She proposes a particular theoretical framework and offers a definition of LDN as: “a set of identity claims and practices that connect people living in various geographical locations to a specific territory that they see as their ancestral home” (Glick-Schiller 2004: 570). She describes four different political stances adopted by long distance nationalists towards their homeland: a) anti-colonialism, b) separatism, c) regime change, and d) participation. Those forms may overlap and be used inter-changeably with one another. She gives the examples of intellectuals in exile and the anti-colonial struggles during the 19th and 20th centuries. To illustrate separatism she refers to the struggles for self-determination and the ways in which diaspora members organise self-imposed taxes or similar activities to support armed conflicts. With regards to regime

change, the example of Cuba is given to demonstrate how diaspora member's opinion about the regime in the homeland may deviate from the actual situation at home (ibid.: 570-571). Finally, in terms of participation, the example of diaspora members who simply monitor homeland politics from afar is mentioned. Therefore long distance nationalists are expected to maintain some form of "devotion" to the homeland and, as a result these attachments, invest time and effort into homeland matters depending on the economic and political situation of the homeland as well as opportunities in the hostland (ibid.).

Glick-Schiller's definition covers almost all transnational activities that can be applied by diaspora groups. However, one still needs to emphasize the reasons why LDN occurs among members of the immigrant community in the first place. According to Skrbis (2001), a critical mass of political exiles is essential. He also lists the integration problems that immigrants face in their countries of residence – discrimination, segregation, lack of political opportunities – also contribute to the emergence of these sentiments. Although these conditions can accelerate diaspora formation, they alone do not explain the emergence of LDN. In addition, it is possible to find the formation of diaspora groups where there are no political exiles; instead we find examples of labour diasporas who become politically active in post-migration periods. Furthermore, segregation and discrimination alone cannot explain the preservation of attachments to the homeland in a political context. There are surely examples where feeling isolated in the hostland paved the way for strengthening a sense-of-belonging to the ethnic origin of the parents, there are also examples where members of diaspora groups are fully integrated into hostland society yet at the same time are very active in homeland politics. Therefore, the principal questions that arise from this discussion are: Why do transnational migrant communities internalize long-distance nationalism? How do they form their identity around these attachments? And how do they become mobilized?

2.1.2 Diaspora Mobilization and Identity Formation

Koinova suggests that the main issue with the definitional ambiguity of the term diaspora is the need to establish "to what extent diaspora is an essential or a constructed category" (Koinova 2007). One might engage with the analysis of diaspora mobilization by taking for granted that the "diaspora" is an outcome of the current transnational environment and that it is created by a strategic identity creation mechanism by certain elite groups. This argument links the diaspora debate to the constructivist explanations of understanding collective identities. On the other hand, one might argue that the emergence of diaspora groups could be explained by an

essentialist point of view: as a natural and automatic result of migration, exile or dispersion (Adamson 2008). According to this essentialist perspective, a diaspora is “a monolithic body, a group related to the people in the home country by affinity ties; kin and common descent” (Koinova 2006: 3). However, this perspective tends to ignore the mobilization factor in the diasporization process and runs the “risk of moving towards essentializing diaspora as an ethnic label rather than a framework of analysis” (Butler 2001).

I follow Adamson who builds on the constructivist approach which perceives “diasporic identity” as a social construction of transnational networks and identities, shaped and formed with the help of new developments in technology and communication (2008:7). Not all the members of an ethnic and religious community in a hostland constitute a diaspora. Diasporic identity is formed as a result of a combination of experiences both in the homeland and hostland and it indicates recognition of identities that are constructed in transnational space. Then diaspora is not simply a dispersed ethnic group but is a form of identity constructed by mobilization efforts of certain elites in the hostland context.

Sökefeld, who accepts identity as an issue of movement and mobilization, argues that identities become politically effective only when they are endorsed by a certain number of people, and at this point it is important to question the reasons behind why and how these people are mobilized for such an identity, how they are made to accept and assume it (2006: 267). Similar to nations, diasporas need certain elites to accelerate and control their mobilization. The role of politically active elites and the migrant organisations gain great significance in terms of bringing members of transnational communities for a cause and turning them into diaspora groups with concerted interests. As Bauböck states: “Diasporas have to be invented and mobilized in order to come to existence” (2010: 315). Therefore, if one associates the concept of diaspora with a migrant community’s political project, then elite interests and ideologies should definitely be considered and an explanatory theoretical framework that focuses on diaspora behaviour should then frame its arguments no different than theories of nationalism. As he puts it: “What we need to look for are current conditions that provide incentives for elites to mobilize a constituency around a diasporic identity” (ibid.: 315). Even if the members of diaspora groups have individual reasons for being politically active or showing an interest in homeland issues, it is the elite efforts that draw the framework for repertoires of action.

Having stated that diasporas have much to do with mobilization rather than being the inevitable outcome of mass migration, the fact that various mobilizations centered around different ideas may occur among different members of the same diaspora needs to be considered. Consequently, one might say that although there is no consensus on a single definition of “diaspora”, there is agreement on the fact that diaspora groups are not homogeneous entities. Diaspora consists of various sub-groups and each member and group have diverse interests, backgrounds and expectations. In order to empirically prove this Lyon (2004) gives the example of the different segments within the Ethiopian diaspora, while Paerregaard illustrates the heterogeneity of diaspora groups by focusing on Peruvian migrants in several countries (2010: 92).

Obviously diaspora groups cannot be categorized under a single label – such as marginal, peace-maker, irresponsible, active, exile etc. – since each member of each diaspora has different levels of affiliation to the diaspora group and its agenda. For instance, Smith et.al. brought together various articles on diaspora groups and their role in international conflicts, and by comparing various cases they concluded that diaspora groups are internally heterogeneous and different parts of the same diaspora have different interests (2007:5). Diasporas might produce the exact same cleavages among different groups which are imported from the homeland, yet the cleavages might also occur after certain experiences in the hostland. Different groups within a diaspora might emerge and then they might unite under different circumstances or a united group might dissolve itself after certain developments in the homeland or after experiencing clashes of interest. Diasporas are continuously constructed and (re)constructed, they are situational and responsive to changes both in the homeland and hostland. Therefore, they cannot be taken as a monolithic entity and it is wrong to over-generalize when talking about the aims and interests of a group.

To facilitate studying diaspora communities, many authors agree that a mechanism should be created to understand intra-diaspora structures. For instance Sheffer categorizes diaspora membership into three groups: core, marginal and dormant members (2003: 100). Shain and Barth also divide the members into three categories: core, passive and silent members. “Core members are the organising elites, intensively active in diasporic affairs and in a position to appeal for mobilization of the larger diaspora. Passive members are likely to be available for mobilization when the active leadership calls upon them. Silent members are a larger pool of people who are generally uninvolved in diasporic affairs but who may mobilize in times of

crises” (2003: 452). But how do we know that they are silent members of the diaspora if there is no activism in their daily life? And more importantly, does the diaspora definition include the dormant members who appear to pay scarce attention to, or even seem completely unaffected by, homeland affairs? What mobilizes the silent members?

On this point, Safran (2007) argues that “diaspora consciousness may be revived after a special event, such as a revolutionary struggle or a tragic experience that brings back the importance of the kinship connection”. Demmers adds to the discussion the phenomenon of a “diasporic turn” which diaspora members might experience after specific events and developments, a stimulus that triggers diaspora identification (2007: 8). These kinds of arguments surely help us understand why a transnational community progressively might become a diasporic one. However, there is a tendency to assume that this shift will solely occur due to the developments in the homeland and diaspora formation is always a response to changes only in the homeland. What needs to be elaborated on is the fact that while having strong ties to the homeland is one of the main components to the definition of a diaspora, it does not mean that diasporas are completely neutral to the changes in the hostland. Diaspora formation is a continuous process and it never ends. Indeed the second generation might be even more responsive to the policy changes in the hostland regarding the homeland issues. The diasporic turn might occur in the hostland and it can even be started by certain second-generation elites. For example, as I discuss in the following pages, this is the case of the Turkish diaspora in Sweden. It is the second-generation diaspora elites that are trying to mobilize the Turkish community in order to lobby the Swedish government about their homeland.

In addition to this, it is important to acknowledge that a diasporic turn that a group or an individual experience is not static, instead it is due to change for various reasons. A dormant member can become active for a certain period and then might chose to become less active again depending on private reasons as well as due to changes in the homeland or hostland. For instance, in Germany I interviewed former PKK activists who arrived as asylum seekers, participated in violent protests and demonstrations in the late 1990s and chose to remain passive as they have families or businesses to take care of. They might still be active in the future but their activism remained dormant for a period of time. It is evident from this discussion that the number of diaspora members is hard to gauge and that being a diaspora member is not an automatic process but it involves the immigrant’s own desire, either a personal choice or as a result of being recruited by the diaspora elites, to mobilize around

certain ideas about the homeland. The next question is then how are those identities formed and shaped in an organisational manner? How do the elites mobilize these groups to become an imagined community with a collective goal and solidarity? How can an immigrant community group transform itself into a diaspora? What are the roles of the elites and migrant organisations?

Migrant organisations surely play a role as opinion-makers during the course of diaspora mobilization. They keep the *diaspora machine* running despite continuous fluctuations in the number of dormant and active members. They are active in consolidating and constituting the boundaries of diasporic identities. They sometimes spread biased and emotionally charged ideas. They may pursue a “two-track” strategy – on the one hand they strengthen commitments to the homeland, while at the same time they may try to enhance the rights of their members in the host country. They articulate a “public face” of the diaspora first to their own community and then to the funding bodies and local authorities (Griffith 2002: 182 , Perrin 2010: 53). They try to channel diaspora members’ individual efforts into one efficient movement and they constantly try to keep a balance between dormant and marginal members.

Ireland (1994) identified types of immigrant-origin political activity. His ideas were developed further by Ögelman (2000) in his study about the Turkish immigrant organisations in Germany. Ireland suggests three categories of migrant political participation in host countries: a) homeland-oriented: when migrants direct their political activity towards the homeland issues, b) institutional participation: when they explicitly target the host society, c) confrontational participation: when political activity occurs outside legal channels (1994: 24-26). He argues that the distinguishing factors among these categories are the legal status of immigrants, homeland organisational networks and finally the host country’s cultural guidelines for political action. Drawing upon these categories, Ögelman comes up with a four-cell typology of immigrant associations. He bases the distinguishing factors on funding, founding ideas and resources, and their goals:

- a) exile organisations, which are interested in inducing change in the homeland;
- b) sending-country leverage organisations, which lobby the hostland politicians in favor of the homeland;
- c) host-country leverage organisations, which focus on the sending country in the host country without transplanting homeland politics;
- d) integrationist organisations which solely focus on the domestic politics in the host country (2000:33-34).

Although these characteristics mentioned above form the basis of understanding the migrant organisations (which we may also apply to diaspora organizations), the categories might overlap and the profile of the organisations might change with time. An exile organisation might also target the host society and institutions in order to better integrate, which might affect its chances to be influential in directing hostland policies towards the homeland. Moreover, integrationist organisations might be accepted as the representatives of a specific community and although they are not inclined to do so they might have to make political declarations that are related to homeland issues. The reasons for joining the migrant organisations may be political, cultural, social or economic (Emanuelsson 2005:57). In this study, I have chosen migrant organisations that show diasporic tendencies and yet have the characteristics mentioned ranging from exile to integrationist and, which use mechanisms of political participation ranging from confrontational to institutional ones.

2.2 DIASPORA & THE TRIADIC RELATIONSHIP

Diaspora communities have the potential to play a significant role in homeland and hostland politics as well as a role in the international arena as non-state actors thanks to their transnational networking capacities. Most of the diaspora groups have started acting similarly to other interest or lobby groups and civil society organisations. For instance, in the host countries, they may influence policy-makers if they constitute an important electorate or are part of the political and economic elite. With regards to homeland politics, diasporas matter as they use political and financial means, such as economic investments, remittances or political contributions, controlling and manipulating the media to play an important role in influencing decision-making processes. They also influence their homeland's policies through their support or opposition to the governments, and providing financial and other support to political parties, social movements, and civil society organisations (Vertovec 1999). Who then are the relevant actors and what are their roles with regard to their impact on diaspora mobilization?

There is a *triadic relationship* among diasporas, the territorial states and contexts where such groups reside, and the homeland states and the contexts where they or their forbears come from; and diaspora theory has been structured around these multi-faceted relationships among these three actors (Vertovec 1999, Demmers 2002, Shuval 2000).

Diaspora, by definition, takes its *raison d'être* from a sense of belonging to the homeland. The relationship between diaspora groups and a *real or imagined homeland* is one of the most important components in the formation of diasporic identity. As Butler (2001) argued, the relationship with a homeland does not end with the departure of the initial group. Not only does it continue, it may also take diverse forms simultaneously, from the desire for actual return to an emotional attachment or the reinterpretation of homeland cultures in diaspora. Keeping those attachments is the main issue for diaspora groups if they are to live in the host country while keeping the “home spirit” alive. They maintain it either by maintaining ties to their homeland or by transporting several aspects of it with them and most probably by doing both. As the homeland becomes the main core that holds a community with a self-ascribed identity together, it also becomes the target of this community’s attention and projects in the future. In Falzon’s words the homeland becomes something a people in diaspora “are stuck with” even though they have become “unstuck” from it (Falzon 2003).

The strength of relations between the homeland and the diaspora is one of the main determinants of diasporic mobilization. However, there may not necessarily be a symmetrical relationship between the two. On the contrary, more often than not there is an asymmetrical link between the homeland and the diaspora, meaning that one is more dominant than the other depending on the political, economic and social situations in the home country. The dynamics of interaction do not automatically bring about a supportive brotherhood or unconditional solidarity. In the literature, there are many examples that show that homeland governments have an interest in creating a diaspora abroad as they see it as leverage in policy making procedures of the hostland. Therefore, diasporas are not simply a creation of elites in the hostland but they can be formed also by the efforts of the homeland governments (Bauböck 2010: 316). A home country might expect diaspora groups to lobby host country governments for their “cause” or they might simply assume that diaspora groups are bridges between the home and the host country. The homeland might also have an interest in maintaining strong ties with the expatriates and therefore might modify policies that will go along with the hostland’s conditions. Home countries might aim to attract remittances and foreign investment, and in order to achieve that goal they might pursue a highly determined policy to strengthen diaspora-homeland ties (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 211). Furthermore, certain elites in the home country might engage in mobilizing different sub-groups in the diaspora community to expand their interests and ideologies abroad.

There could be cases where diasporas are vulnerable to the demands of the homeland, especially where the homeland government has a powerful influence on diaspora affairs, or that the homeland may serve as a source of culture and pride or an articulator of some of the concerns of the diasporas (Safran 2007). On the other hand, the diaspora might also have a dominant role and make the homeland go along with its own policies. This is likely to occur if the homeland is in a weaker position and depends upon diaspora funds, investments and remittances for its development. For the latter, the impact of the Armenian diaspora on the development of Republic of Armenia is a good illustration.

The relationship between the hostland and diaspora is also crucial in order to understand the conditions under which diasporas develop. (The discussions surrounding this topic, which look at the impact of political and discursive opportunity structures and host country incorporation regimes are discussed in more detail in the sections below.) As Shain and Barth put it: “The basic nature of the hostland regime determines the ability of a diaspora to organise influence; indeed, it determines the ability to organise at all” (2003: 463). It is argued that in many cases it is the behaviour of the hostland government and society that affects the diaspora identity of a minority community (Safran 2007). The opportunity structures in the hostland are one of the fundamental determinants of the level of mobilization in the diaspora. How much room the hostland gives to the diaspora to express its own agenda or how much freedom the hostland grants to the diaspora groups to organise their own civil society groups, associations or the like, determines the success of diaspora involvement both in homeland and hostland political affairs. The way the host state allows the community to exert an influence affects the worth of the diaspora as a foreign policy asset in the eyes of the homeland (Shain& Barth 2003: 463).

As with diaspora mobilization, hostland opportunity structures are not static. They may change over time as the result of shifts in the hostland’s approach towards the diaspora group or towards the country they come from. As Østergaard-Nielsen highlights, in certain cases, the hostlands may not act just as “midwives but also as gatekeepers as they lay down rules and constraints for the diaspora’s political attempts to influence conflicts in their countries of origin” (2006:8). For instance, it is possible that the hostlands may ban certain ethnic organisations which they perceive as a security threat or which have connections to terrorist organisations (Wayland 2004). In different phases of the conflict cycle, the hostland might provide different opportunities; at times it may limit the scope of diaspora activism in order not

to jeopardize its relations with the other state, or at other times it might provide a huge range of opportunities at the discursive and political level in order to challenge the other state.

In several cases, the existence of a pre-migration trauma is accompanied by the post-migration traumatic experience resulting from discrimination, segregation or failure of integration in the host countries. When this occurs it might increase the solidarity among diaspora members and their incentives to organise themselves under a collective identity. Limited opportunities remind diasporas that they are not welcome in the hostland's society. This may actually contribute to additional traumas to that of the experience of being away from the homeland. As Shuval states, "the consequences of this migrant experience are that a diaspora culture helps to maintain a sense of community and belonging to a more rewarding and welcoming social entity" (Shuval 2000:47).

Finally, the relationship between the hostland and the homeland should be taken into account. The activism, success, or mobilization of diaspora groups is also dependent on the relations between the homeland and the hostland governments. For example, there are cases where the hostland has hostile relations with the homeland and prefers to prolong the conflicts in the homeland by mobilizing the diaspora groups as peace wreckers or the hostland might simply take a critical approach towards how a conflict is handled in the homeland and might feel the urge to protect one side of the conflicting parties, especially if they are its residents. Furthermore, there could be cases where the hostland political parties sees diaspora groups as potential voters or simply as citizens and can become quite sensitive to their demands with regards to social change in the home country. Especially in cases where the host country has leverage in the home country's affairs, diaspora groups can become an essential actor in this respect. In other cases, the host country might have historical links to the home country (as in the case of former colonies) which will have an impact on the course of relations between those two actors.

The relations between the homeland and the hostland might become difficult when the homeland wants to curb or accelerate diaspora formation of a certain group in the hostland. The homeland might want to interfere in hostland policies in order to prevent any threat to its interests. The situation of the Kurdish diaspora is a good case in point. As will be discussed in the following pages, the Turkish state constantly warned Germany to curb Kurdish activism on German soil. On a number of occasions this issue caused diplomatic crises. On the other hand,

the conflict in the homeland has at times spilled over and put Germany into difficult situations. The German state had to develop its own approach towards the Kurdish question, which was criticised by both Turkey and the Kurdish diaspora. The relations between the homeland and hostland evolves in a different direction with the emergence of diaspora groups and the interactions between these three actors cannot be studied independently. Therefore, the triangular relationship can be summarized as follows: there is a fragile balance of power between two actors and that balance is highly dependent on the third actor. As Shain and Barth have argued: “ If the hostland’s foreign policy is important to the homeland, and the hostland is receptive to the diaspora’s efforts to influence its foreign policy, then the diaspora’s ability to influence the homeland’s foreign policy is enhanced (Shain & Barth 2003: 464). Therefore even if one decides to focus on the relations between the first two actors, it is impossible to disregard the third.

2.3 DIASPORA & HOSTLAND

2.3.1 Hostland Opportunity Structures for Diaspora Mobilization

Although “post” and “trans” nationalisms have become particularly popular topics in the social sciences recently, there is still a lot to say about the nation-state itself. While diasporas are a subset of transnational movements, their capacity is very much dependent upon the space provided for them by the host country. Nell is right to argue that “far from being deterritorialized or global, transnational processes are bounded by nation states” (Nell 2008:17). It is thus essential to talk about the hostland, its migrant incorporation policies and the opportunity structures that it grants to the diaspora members.

Incorporation regimes can be described as “the patterns of policy discourse and organisation around which a system of incorporation is constructed” (Soysal 1994: 32). Each hostland has its own migrant incorporation regime which can vary significantly. Each regime is highly complex and has an impact on how the migrant groups get together, form associations, mobilize around a certain idea or participate in the host society. Several studies that have been conducted on this topic to date demonstrate that the politics of exclusion or inclusion in the host society affects the migrants`claims-making or identity formation activities (Koopmans & Statham 2000). Although these studies are not directly related to the transportation of homeland conflicts to the hostland, they still offer an idea of how different hostland contexts might lead to different patterns of expression of dissent. As Soysal highlights, “migrants arrive to the

hostland with an organisational repertoire of their own, however their practices acquire new forms and characteristics through interaction with host polity institutions” (1994: 84). Especially in terms of diaspora mobilization, diasporic turn, and the success of diaspora activism, the hostland institutional structure may provide the necessary tools to investigate different modes of diaspora activism.

As Odman pointed out: “The modes of migrant organisational action is facilitated or constrained by the incorporation pattern that the host country chooses, the opportunity structures that it grants to the migrant community and the institutional form that the host state has in terms of making immigrants formal partners in the decision making mechanisms” (Odman 2004: 475). In this light, I argue that the *political opportunity structures (POS)* are of particular importance in terms of diaspora mobilization and claims-making in a receiving country. The POS affects the ability of diasporas to function as interest groups (Esman 1986: 338). This is especially true if one considers the fact that the opportunity approach puts group mobilization in a political context and focuses on the question of why mobilization takes a certain form (Odman 2004: 474). For these reasons it is crucial to include this topic in my research because it helps me address one of my key research questions: *how the host country affects the diaspora mobilization and the interactions among diaspora groups*. Different hostlands provide different opportunities for diasporas who come from the same homeland, and hostlands might also provide different opportunities for different diaspora groups.

Tarrow argues that POS are: “...consistent dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure” (1994:82-85). This approach has been developed and interpreted in the field of citizenship and migrant incorporation by several authors such as Koopmans & Statham, Odman, or Soysal and is aimed at including both institutional and discursive dimensions of a political system. I find these interpretations to be applicable also to the diaspora movements. I argue that the opportunities a host country offers to migrants are a determining factor for diasporic movements: for example, if and how migrants mobilize around certain ideas and participate in the decision-making mechanisms of the receiving country.

What elements then do POS include? Wayland has argued that, for the most part, research on opportunity structures has taken “the openness or closure of political institutions and decision making mechanisms as the main variable, and then included the stability of elite alignments

supporting a polity, the presence of influential allies, and the state's capacity and propensity for repression" (Wayland 2004:416). Although there are different approaches towards defining the political "openness or closure" of a host society, or what to include with regards to those structures, I follow the most common approach used by researchers and see both economic and socio-cultural aspects as POS. Therefore, in this research, immigration and integration policies, as well as media coverage or diplomatic relationships with the country of origin¹⁸ are counted as essential elements of POS.

Having underlined the main elements, we should consider exactly how POS affect diaspora mobilization. How does the openness or closure of structures affect the claims-making of transnational groups? First, the openness of the POS in a host country may enable the transnational migrant communities to form diasporic organisations easily. Since mobilization is a key factor for such organisations, the openness of the system may facilitate the recruitment of members by making it possible to use the political arenas to draw attention to the diaspora's cause from both the members of the same ethnic/religious/ cultural group as well as the policy-makers in the host country. They may easily distribute flyers, organise seminars, deliver speeches, hold protests, or use diaspora associations for propaganda etc. As mentioned above, the openness of the structure might give them the chance to act as lobbies or interest groups. On the other hand, if the system is closed in terms of political opportunity structures, it might not facilitate the organisational procedure of diaspora formation but it might offer more incentives to members of immigrant communities to get together and mobilize if they were suppressed in the host country.

Giugni and Passy argue that closed POS tend to provoke more disruptive forms of action since the challengers need to raise the stakes in order to make their voices heard (2006: 3-4). Since the diaspora groups feel that they cannot express themselves adequately through political channels in the hostland, they might consider more aggressive means of raising their voice. The Kurdish diaspora's violent demonstrations across Europe after the capture of Öcalan in 1999 are a clear example of this. This argument may also explain why there is violence among rival minority groups in Germany but not in Sweden where the system is more open for ethnic

¹⁸ The list is given by Marieke van Houte, Anna Ormert & Jana Schildt in their article: "Migrants as civil society actors in the country of origin". Last access 21 May 2102. http://www.istr.org/resource/resmgr/Istanbul_abstracts/ISTR2010_0292.pdf

lobbying. In hostlands where diasporas believe they have a chance to influence policy-making through collective claims-making, aggressive methods may lose their appeal.

It is important here to remember that the very concept of POS has been the subject of debate in the field of social sciences and that it has been found to be fairly vague as a theoretical framework to explain the migrants' organisational behaviour. There are other factors, mentioned throughout the thesis, such as the structural characteristics of diaspora groups (size, generational continuation, motives for migration), which have a considerable influence on diaspora activism. Naturally, each country has different levels of openness and POS will vary from one country to another. At this point, my research also highlights Esman's conclusion that "Opportunities in some countries are not equally available to all migrant groups" (1986: 338). One diaspora group might benefit more from the hostland than another. Furthermore, the opportunities might change with time depending on policy changes in the homeland and / or hostland. Therefore each case in the hostland must be approached separately in order to offer an in-depth analysis of diaspora mobilization.

Another important issue is that the opportunity structures also have a public dimension; meaning that certain types of actors and discourses are included in public debates and these actors and discourses are received differently in the public sphere. Koopmans describes this as *discursive opportunity structures (DOS)* (Koopmans 2004). As Koopmans and Olzak highlight, discursive opportunities can be defined as "aspects of the public policy discourse that determine a message's chances of diffusion in the public sphere" and "the public sphere is a bounded space for political communication characterized by a high level of competition" (Koopmans & Olzak 2002:6) The idea of DOS is extremely useful for the purposes of this thesis, as it provides tools for understanding the struggle among diaspora groups who are competing for public attention in the hostland. The openness of channels of communication as well as visibility (Koopmans & Olzak 2002) are of the utmost importance for the conflicting parties who try to influence public opinion for their cause in the hostland. For instance, during my fieldwork in Sweden I heard Turkish diaspora members complain constantly about the lack of discursive opportunities for them to "defend Turkey", while in Germany the Kurdish diaspora lamented that they cannot make their voice heard. DOS also become particularly significant when we try to explain the *emotional impact* of opportunities in the hostland on diaspora groups and it shows that the *perceptions of diaspora groups* about the opportunities that are given to them also matter.

2.4 DIASPORA & CONFLICT

The political sway of diaspora groups has increased over the last few decades due to the rise of a new pattern of conflict, the rapid increase of war refugees, the increased speed of communication and mobility, and the production of cultural and political boundaries (Demmers 2002:86). A number of other factors have also played a role, such as the new policies pursued by the hostland in terms of integrating immigrants by encouraging multiculturalism rather than through assimilation, or the homelands interest in creating expatriate communities abroad. In addition, the idea of returning to the homeland is becoming less salient as it has been observed that diaspora members are reluctant to return home even if the conflict has ended and living standards improve. Indeed it could be argued that long-distance politics has become a preferable option for these communities. Although this argument cannot be generalized, it still refers to a high number of groups, especially those that emerge as the result of a civil conflict in the homeland. Their consciousness and solidarity are primarily defined by this continuing relationship with the homeland (Safran 1991).

Current research on diasporas in the field of international relations is primarily focused on examining its role as a “spoiler” of peace negotiations in homeland conflicts. Many have described diasporas as extremist, long-distance nationalist communities that pursue radical agendas, while taking advantage of the freedom and economic benefits that the host land provides them. The literature on “new wars” focuses on the negative side of diaspora involvement in conflicts, often blaming them for complicating an already difficult situation (Kaldor 2007). The influences of diaspora remittances and support of conflicts in the homelands have been well documented. The perception is that by sending remittances, as well as channelling huge funds through welfare organisations close to insurgent groups, diaspora members contribute to conflict escalation rather than supporting constructive conflict transformation (Zunzer 2005). Hoffman argues that, alarmingly, diaspora groups are becoming increasingly involved in violent acts and are participating in terrorist attacks against their own governments or international actors. He highlights four ways in which diasporas provide support for terrorist activities: fundraising, recruitment, procurement of weapons, and lobbying in the hostland. The most common examples are the Irish, Kurdish and the Sri Lankan diasporas. The strong Irish diaspora community in the United States was considered to be one of the classic cases of diaspora involvement in homeland conflicts. As Jonsson and Cornell

point out: “The IRA has been credited with pioneering the kind of sophisticated financial networks that many of the world’s large and long-lived terrorist organisations today use to sustain themselves [...] The IRA traditionally financed itself through [...] the Irish diaspora in the USA via organisations such as Noraid. According to some sources, diaspora funds accounted for up to half of its income during the late 1970’s and early 1980’s” (2007: 69-70). Most of the Tamil diaspora also perceived the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam) as an organisation which represented the hopes and aspirations of all Sri Lankan Tamils (Orjuela 2006). Large numbers of Tamil organisations and individuals, through the substantial transfer of remittances, supported the Tamil population living in the Northeastern part of the Sri Lanka, as well as the organisations affiliated with the separatist movement (Zunzer 2004).

Emerging research also finds diasporas to be the critical agents of social, political and cultural change in more constructive and less confrontational ways (Horst 2007). There is evidence of diaspora communities contributing to the promotion of peace in their homelands. They have been highly or partially effective in assisting conflict transformation processes and actively engaged in post-conflict reconstruction activities. There is an increasing belief that by lobbying governments, particularly in the host nations, and international organisations and by aiding the process of transition and reconstruction, diasporas are increasingly playing an important role in achieving political compromise and peaceful conflict resolution in their homelands (Hall & Swain 2007). Diasporas can have a positive political impact on peacemaking through human rights advocacy, raising awareness among the hostland public and decision-makers. In addition, they can potentially provide direct political support to pro-peace actors in the homeland, as well as participating in the homeland peacemaking initiatives as advisors. Members of the diaspora may also act as facilitators and communicators between the homeland officials and hostland peacemakers (Baser & Swain 2008).

The case of Somalia is noteworthy, as remittances are of very high economic importance domestically and much of the expertise and resources for sustaining the ongoing peace process come from the diaspora communities in the West (Koser & Van Hear 2003:9). In Afghanistan, diaspora groups assumed significant political roles after the US military intervention in 2001-2002 to ensure a smooth transition of power. Members of the Afghan diaspora played a critical role during the negotiation among various tribal groups in the formation of the post-Taliban government (Cheran 2004: 8- 9).

What is sometimes problematic with studies related to this topic is that many researchers tend to focus on the already disadvantaged groups whose efforts may appear to be more marginal in comparison with other groups who hold an advantaged position in the homeland. For instance, if one takes stateless and state-linked diaspora groups, or two groups from a homeland where there is civil war and one group is the majority, it is possible to see that academics are usually interested in the disadvantaged group whose activism may involve violence. Thus while both sides of the conflict make an effort to pursue their interests, the disadvantaged groups' efforts seem to be more visible as they tend to use unconventional methods. For instance, while the Turkish diaspora's efforts to curb Kurdish activism in a given hostland is perceived as "protecting homeland interests", Kurdish diaspora activism is seen as "getting involved in the homeland conflict", even though in essence both groups simply challenge each other's views about the homeland conflict. Therefore, it is important to be careful when using words such as "extreme" or "marginal" in discussions about diaspora activism and homeland conflicts.

2.4.1 "Conflict Import" to the Host Country

While there is abundance of interest in the newly popular subject of diaspora involvement in homeland conflicts, there remains much to be said about how these conflicts are imported, and how they (re)create and (re)shape the conflict dynamics in light of the opportunities and restrictions in the hostland context, especially by new generations.

A political dispute is, by definition, between two or more parties. Usually, both contradictory groups have a tendency to migrate to the countries they have access to. At times, immigrants belonging to different sides of a conflict may find themselves in the same country or region and form their own diasporic communities there. Since in most of the cases leaving the country of origin does not necessarily mean saying farewell to the past, diaspora groups have a tendency to affiliate themselves with the politics of both homeland and the hostland, especially if there is a conflict situation at home. Therefore they may continue to recreate the already existing homeland conflict dynamics in their country of residence and the dispute is carried with them. There might be members who want to leave the conflict behind and there might be others who moved specifically with the idea to contribute to the cause from afar. As many people migrate because of the political situation in their home country, it is highly likely that they will try to make their voice heard in the country where they reside.

In her work on imported conflicts, Perrin argue that there are four major factors that suggest a conflict has been imported to a host country: a) spatial distance, b) separation of social spaces, c) conflicts at the discursive level, and d) violent confrontations. Perrin argues that even the lack of contact among adversary communities should be seen as an act of avoidance and thus can be interpreted as the first sign of transported conflict. Violent confrontations usually occur during organised demonstrations as well as among pupils at schools. She offers the example of nationalist symbols such as flags which may provoke confrontations when they are used in the presence of the *antagonistic others* or subjected to insult in order to antagonize *the other* (2010: 27). Hanrath also argues that in many cases the intergroup relations are characterized by mutual disinterest and spatial segregation which can be defined as low level conflict. By viewing the other group as “the other” mutual stereotyping, unsurprisingly, occurs (2011a: 3). There are certain events that trigger dormant tensions among the antagonistic communities. Firstly, developments in the home country (such as military interventions, burned villages, forced migration, terrorist attacks) may affect the diasporic behavior in the hostland. Secondly, ritualistic celebrations of one of the antagonistic groups such as the birthdays or commemorations may trigger hostility. Here, Perrin gives the example of the annual commemorative events of the Hutu and Tutsi groups (genocide memorials or the anniversary of the assassination of the President Juvenal Habyarimana) which occasionally cause tensions in Belgium. She calls these triggers “*tension spikes*” – identifiable sources of conflict between antagonistic groups in the host country (2010: 29).

Returning to the triadic relationship, it comes as no surprise that the hostland might have an effect on the (re)production or (re)formation of conflicts since it plays an eminent role in terms of providing the opportunity structures that will enable the “organisation” of such movements. Secondly, there is another aspect in terms of the hostland’s contribution to the polarization of identities. As Rigby explains: “Members of a diaspora can carry with them not only the divisions of caste and class, tribe and ethnicity that fractured their home society, superimposed on these can be the new divisions generated from the residence in their host countries (2006: 3). Therefore, the complexity inherent to explaining diaspora behaviour needs to be acknowledged, especially when there is a homeland conflict involved (and *all* actors need to taken into account).

2.4.2 Inherited Conflicts: The Debate on the Second Generation

The debate on the second generation in Europe has become almost as popular as the debate on diaspora groups. Examples such as British-born Pakistani youths becoming involved in acts of terrorism in the UK; the riots by immigrant youths in France; or the Turkish second generation in Germany living in their own imagined Turkey in the heart of Berlin have raised many questions about the success of integration policies and the situation of immigrant youths in European countries (Crul 2008: 17). In some countries, integration has not been successful and the second generation is segregated from the host society, while in other countries they are highly integrated but at the same time highly mobilized as a diaspora. The situation of the second generation in European countries varies as a result of various factors such as the integration policies in the host country; the context of the home country; the level of xenophobia; or the success of diaspora elites in mobilizing the migrant community. In this thesis, the focus is solely on the mobilization of the second-generation youths as members of a diaspora group. Therefore, instead of looking at identity processes, this thesis mostly looks at outcomes of these processes.

Research on the generational continuity of transnational activities is still in its infancy and there is much to explore. Scholars are not in agreement as to whether the second generation have strong transnational ties as the first generation. Authors such as Portes (2001) and Rumbaut (2002) argue that the second generation have fewer ties with the homeland or those transnational ties are a “one-generation phenomenon”. Other authors argue that the second generation also keep ties with the homeland of their parents, however this attachment cannot solely be measured by looking at statistics such as remittances or frequency of visits to the homeland. There is a further debate regarding the diasporization of the second generation. How can one explain the nostalgia for the homeland of a second-generation immigrant? It is understandable that first-generation immigrants will have strong and clear memories of the homeland, but understanding why the following generations declare their loyalty and have strong opinions about the homeland conflicts requires further research. Some second-generation members continue this trend of creating the sense of belonging in the country of residence although they neither speak the language nor have they visited that “imagined” homeland, let alone do they intend to eventually move there. This is accomplished by selectively preserving and recovering traditions to create or maintain an identity with far-reaching historic, cultural and political significance – resulting in a sense of attachment to a different time, accompanied by hopes or visions of renewal (Gilroy 1987, Rouse 1991 cited in Shuval 2000:48).

Discussing the conflict-generated diasporas, Lyons argues that: “The trauma of violent displacement is vivid in the first generations’ minds and is often kept alive in subsequent generations through commemorations and symbols. In fact, one function of a conflict generated diaspora network is to make sure that the displacement’s original cause is remembered and the grievance passed on to the next generation” (Lyons 2004). It is widely accepted that this is usually how things work in conflict-generated diasporas and that the second generation becomes aware of the conflict situations back in the homeland through narratives rather than by experience and construct imaginary memories about the homeland. These memories are usually the products of stories and traditions passed down through time (even if these stories and traditions, and therefore the memories themselves, are inaccurate) (Kenley 2005: 3).

The discussion of how and in what ways the second generation develop a diasporic identity should lay out the competing views about the commitment of second-generation diaspora groups to the homeland. Some argue that the second and third generation are more active because the first-generation were occupied with their survival in the hostland and that successive generations did not have to focus on this. In contrast others argue that a diasporic sense of belonging becomes weaker with every new generation. Zunzer, for instance, while talking about Somalian refugees, points out that “There is a gap between the first-generation refugees and second-generation migrants: While the first generation is still highly politicized and concerned (with Somali affairs), the second generation has hardly any interest in even visiting the country (2005: 5). Rigby also argues that: “the new generations grow up speaking different languages, and their view of the world is inevitably influenced by the experience of living in different societies and cultures. In certain cases the sons and daughters of migrants focus more on their lives in what is for them their country of origin and feel less involved with the conflict that caused their parents to resettle in a new country” (2006: 3). According to this point of view, diaspora memory and trauma become less important with each generation. “People probably feel their primary allegiance to the society in which they are socialized. But some studies have documented transnational political activism among the descendants of immigrants, though it is likely to be less frequent and more selective in scope” (Levitt 2003: 184 quoted by Wayland: 2004).

Many authors disagree with the perception of the second generation as more passive by comparison to their parents. For instance, when Batta talks about refugee diasporas, she

hypothesizes that second-generation refugees create a stronger nationalist identity than the first-generation refugees in the absence of integration; therefore they tend to be more aggressive than first-generation refugees (2007: 19). Curtis also supports this view arguing that in the Kurdish case, the second generation is more likely to be active (he gives examples from his own study on Kurdish migrants). Following Bruinnesen (2000), Curtis argues that the second-generation Kurds who are born in Europe tend to be much more interested in the Kurdish identity and Kurdish politics than their parents. According to him there is a difference in terms of political activism between the first- and second-generation Kurds in Germany because the first generation was simply relieved to have survived and escaped the conditions in the homeland, whereas the second generation sees that their parents suffered discrimination both in the homeland and the hostland, and this experience combined with the collective identity and new technological developments has created more awareness among the next generation (Curtis 2005). Glick-Schiller also argues that the children of migrants, even those who have obtained citizenship in their new country of residence, may embrace long distance nationalism as a response to the racism and negative stereotyping that they encounter in the hostland. She offers the example of Turkish youths whose families have resided in a country for several generations and yet are denied full citizenship rights and need to look for a homeland transnationally (2004: 578).

This thesis also demonstrates that the second generation form strong ties with the homeland. Not only they do they form attachments, but they also inherit the conflict dynamics of the homeland conflict from prior generations and reconstruct the tensions in the hostland. Their actions and perceptions are based not only on the experiences of their parents in the homeland, but also on the information they gather from the media and other forms of communication, and finally their own experiences in the hostland. Therefore, the homeland conflict in the hostland, especially among the second-generation diaspora members, tends to be very different from the actual conflict at home and it should be approached accordingly. Understanding the dynamics of diasporic identity formation in successive generations and their interpretations of homeland conflicts constitute an important field of study for diaspora researchers. This inquiry aims to contribute to the diaspora literature by filling this gap.

2.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

As mentioned above, this study follows the amalgam of “diaspora” definitions suggested by Brubaker and Bauböck. I take diaspora communities as sub-sets of transnational migrant communities that retain attachments to their homeland, mobilize for certain causes and invest time and energy in order to challenge the policies and politics of both the home and host countries. What separate them from migrant groups are their *mobilized efforts* for particular political projects. The diaspora members could be politically active already in the homeland or they could become active after a certain “diasporic turn” that they experience in the hostland. It is impossible to provide an exact number of diaspora members in a given hostland; however the size of certain known categories (religious, ethnic etc.) offers us an idea about the *potential* size and strength of a diaspora group. Also, it cannot be assumed that an individual will consider himself a member for his entire life. There may be shifts [for instance after important developments in the homeland] that make them give up or accelerate their contributions in diasporic spaces.

Diaspora activism is highly dependent on certain factors that involve the triadic relationship between the diaspora, homeland and hostland. As “conflict import” to the hostland and “conflict transmission” to the next generations are at the core of my research the following chapters will focus solely on diaspora mobilization with regards to the homeland conflict. Above, I demonstrated how diaspora groups become involved in homeland conflicts and how they try to challenge homeland policies. In the following pages, I deal with one of the most important components of diaspora mobilization, which is generational continuation. The Kurdish-Turkish case helps us to understand the dynamics of the (re)construction of homeland conflicts and to illustrate how different hostland contexts affect the contentious diaspora spaces between two groups.

3

THE KURDISH QUESTION AT HOME AND ABROAD

In this chapter, I first analyse the particularities of the Kurdish question by focusing on its trans-border dimension and secondly I focus on the root causes of the conflict and discuss the historical background of the Turkish policies towards the Kurdish population. Putting an emphasis on the characteristics of Turkish and Kurdish nationalism, I explain the conditions that resulted in the Kurdish dispersal, firstly within Turkish borders and then beyond. In the final section, I focus on the transnationalization of the Kurdish movement and describe how the Kurdish issue has been carried beyond borders.

3.1 THE KURDISH QUESTION AS A TRANS-STATE ETHNIC CONFLICT

Kurds are the fourth largest group in the Middle East and they constitute the largest stateless ethnic group in the world. In Turkey, they are the second largest ethnic group after the ethnic Turks. There is no reliable census data about people of Kurdish origin in different countries. However, insightful estimates suggest there are some 30 million Kurds living in Turkey and its neighbouring regions. Approximately half of the world's Kurdish population lives in Turkey (Gunter 1991:7). In terms of religion, although the majority of the Kurds are Muslim, they belong to different sects of Islam (mainly Sunni or Alevi). Research has shown that the Kurdish population in Turkey is far worse off than the Turkish population in terms of their socio-economic situation and that they live under conditions of both material and non-material insecurity (Icduygu et.al. 1999: 991).

The Kurdish question is one of the most protracted conflicts in the Middle East and it is arguably the most serious issue in the Turkish Republic's political history (Cornell 2001:31). It not only affects the national and international politics of Turkey, but also has an impact on many neighbouring countries with Kurdish populations such as Iran, Iraq and Syria. It is no longer a problem solely for those countries, however, and in light of the significant Kurdish diaspora it has become increasingly a European debate (Van Bruinessen 1999).

The Kurdish question, defined by Kirisci & Winrow (1997) as a trans-state ethnic conflict, cannot be understood unless it is analysed within the context of the Turkish modernization project, as well as its geographical realities – which Cornell (2001) calls “the land of many cross roads”. When one attempts to compare the Kurdish question to other protracted ethno-national conflicts or the Kurds to other stateless-nations, it is essential to keep in mind the realities of the region and the pillars of Turkish nationalism, against which Kurdish nationalism is reacting.

The conflict has a peculiar nature due to its trans-border character and geo-political importance. Compared to other ethnic groups that have started insurgency movements, such as the Sri Lankan Tamils, Kurds receive much more notable attention from various actors – from neighbouring nation-states to international organisations. The geo-political importance of the region has attracted the attention of a variety of international actors and the debates about the Kurdish question are highly visible in world politics.

The trans-border character of the conflict also makes it a unique and complex case that cannot be resolved without a carefully tailored road map. As Ucarer and Lyons have argued, the idea that the world can be “cleanly divided into nation-states does not correspond to the reality of political identity and territory” (2001:925). The Kurdish situation is an apt example of this. The Kurdish population is divided between four states: Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria, and Kurds struggle for their rights, in various ways, within the realms of these states. Each development regarding the political situation of the Kurdish population in one of these countries has an impact on the other’s internal affairs. Although each Kurdish struggle in different countries of the Middle East have particular character and sometimes act independently from each other, the destiny of one Kurdish movement in one country is also interdependent to the success of other Kurdish movements and other countrys’ actions.

As Cederman et.al. have shown, the trans-border character of the Kurdish question places it within the category of ethnonationalist conflicts which involve external support from kin groups beyond the border. As trans-border ethnic affiliations have a significant impact on the probability of a conflict emerging, the geographical situation of the Kurdish population becomes particularly important. Other conflicts in the world, such as Croatia, Bosnia or Kosovo have also involved trans-border nationalisms (Cederman et.al 2009:403).

The Kurdish question is atypical in the sense that it has no strong religious or ideological dimension, as opposed to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and other global ethnonational conflicts, namely that the issues driving the conflict do not overlap with other important issues in Turkish society such as religious differences or ideological contentions. There are Kurds who place more priority on their religious affiliations than their ethnic background and they support political parties that prioritize religion. Some Alevi Kurds sympathize with Kemalist ideology while other Alevi Kurds are strong supporters of the Kurdish movement. There is also a significant number of Kurds who have an ethnic-awareness of their Kurdish identity but choose to align themselves with political parties with a leftist or religious-oriented agenda. Many Kurds were also voluntarily, or involuntarily, assimilated into Turkish society and have little interest in becoming involved in the Kurdish movement. Therefore, the political cleavages in Turkey are far from clear-cut, and it is difficult to offer a representative summary of “what Kurds want”. However, this does not change the fact that the PKK, and the political parties affiliated with it, represent the rights of Kurds and have increasing support from various segments of the Kurdish population in Turkey. These overlapping loyalties and ethnic, religious and ideological cleavages were also transported to the diaspora spaces with Kurdish migration and make it harder for hostland governments to approach the issue with conventional methods.

As Cornell (2001) has stated, the Kurdish issue also differs in many respects from other recent ethnic conflicts (such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Liberia, Nagorno-Karabakh or Rwanda) in the sense that despite the three decade-long conflict, tensions among the Turks and Kurds in everyday life are minimal by comparison to other intra-state conflicts.¹⁹ Although recent research by Saracoglu shows that there is an emerging “exclusive recognition” among the Turks which involves recognizing the Kurdish identity but remaining adverse to it (2009), and there have been certain attacks against Kurdish political party buildings in Western Turkey, inter-group clashes remain negligible despite the growing Kurdish opposition as a mass movement. Indeed it seems there is no significant risk that the violence will develop into a large intercommunity conflict as has occurred in other ethnonational conflicts worldwide.

¹⁹ However, recent studies show that inter-communal tension between the Turkish and Kurdish groups in Turkey has been growing. For further reading, see: Murat Ergin (2012): The racialization of Kurdish identity in Turkey, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, DOI:10.1080/01419870.2012.729672

This “exclusive recognition” (Saracoglu 2009) has much to do with the fact that the conflict caused significant internal migration of Kurds (whether forced or voluntary) to the western part of Turkey, which also accelerated the urbanization of the Kurdish population. There is now a significant Kurdish population in western Turkey, which can be described as an *internal diaspora*. Istanbul became one of the cities with the largest Kurdish population in the world. Internal migration also accelerated the Kurdish dispersal to Europe, as the first step of displacement. Many Kurds migrated first to western Turkey, due to the escalation of the conflict and insecurity, and settled permanently, while others tried to make their way to Europe after a temporary stay.

In Turkey, the PKK is currently perceived as similar to insurgent movements and organisations such as the IRA and ETA. The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement is often discussed by the Turkish media as a possible model for a Turkish-PKK ceasefire. The “Basque Model” has also been discussed in political circles in Turkey since the 1990s. However, there are more differences than similarities between these cases. For instance, the socio-economic situation in the Basque region cannot be compared to the situation of the Kurds who have suffered economic deprivation since the beginning of the Republic. Moreover, the religious dimension to the Irish conflict does not exist in the Kurdish case. It is also possible to compare the Kurdish issue to the situation in Sri Lanka where Tamils have experienced the suppression of their identity; yet the legacies of Sri Lanka’s colonial past call for other academic tools to investigate the roots of the problem which cannot be used in the Kurdish case. It is true that at first glance there appears to be a similar pattern between these organisations: they all started an insurgent movement against oppression and assimilation, and mobilized around ethno-cultural claims and the rights to self determination; they also used similar tactics – combining guerrilla movements (that occasionally used terrorist strategies) with political parties. The transnational character of these conflicts, such as the presence of strong and committed diasporas during the conflict phase, and their financial and political support to the insurgents may suggest certain similarities with the Kurdish case. However, the region and its geopolitical importance, the states that they are reacting to, and the root causes of the conflict differ immensely.

3.2 THE ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT

When it comes to unearthing the roots of the conflict, some scholars have argued they are to be found in the late Ottoman era with the dawning of Turkish nationalism (Sirkeci 2003: 193).²⁰ In this chapter, however, I focus on the Turkish tendency to perceive the Kurdish question as “a threat to the national unity of the Turkish Republic” as this is more strongly related to the Kurdish migration to Europe.²¹ This trend started in the 1920s when the foreign powers raised the possibility that a separate Kurdish state could be formed in south-eastern Turkey as a result of the Sèvres Treaty²², which was never implemented (ibid.).

The Kurds first fought alongside the Ottoman armies during the First World War and they then fought in the Independence War together with the Turks (Barkey & Fuller 1998: 9). However, during the following years, which witnessed modernist and secularist reforms of the Kemalist regime (including the abolition of the Sultanate in 1922 and the Caliphate in 1924), various Kurdish tribes began to express their disappointment with the new republic. Between 1924 and 1938, eighteen rebellions broke out against the new reforms and state authorities. Seventeen of these occurred in eastern Anatolia, and sixteen of them involved Kurds (Kirişçi 2004: 276).²³ The Sheikh Said Rebellion of 1925 and the Dersim Rebellion of 1938 have particular importance for Kurdish nationalists today.²⁴ These rebellions were aggressively suppressed and a significant number of Kurds were deported or forced to resettle as a result.

In terms of forming the future policies towards the Kurdish populated areas, the Turkish state was strongly influenced by memories of this history, and associated these rebellions with treachery and built arguments about them ranging from foreign involvement in carving up the Ottoman Empire, to the foreign support for the Kurdish rebellions in the early Republican era (Gunter 1991: 8). These approaches became the basis of the “Sèvres Syndrome” which is

²⁰ For further discussion of the situation of the Kurds during the Ottoman era see Barkey & Fuller 1998. For more information on the displacement and resettlement of Kurdish populations during late Ottoman times see Ayata 2011.

²¹ I also focus more on the Kurdish movements after the 1960s since considerable Turkish and Kurdish migration to Europe occurred after that date. There had been prior migration flows before the 1960s, which consisted mostly of students and intellectuals, however large number of Kurds migrated to Europe with the intensification of the conflict in Southeast Turkey.

²² The treaty promised autonomous states to the Armenians and the Kurds.

²³ According to İçduygu et.al. (1999) they can be considered as more religious and tribal in nature than ethnic or nationalist. However, authors such as Barkey and Fuller argue that the rebellions had both a religious *and* a nationalistic character (Barkey & Fuller 1998: 11).

²⁴ Most of these rebellions were small-scale however Alıs states the following three examples as the most important for the Kurdish movement: the Sheik Said Rebellion (1925), the Ağrı Rebellion, (1926-1927-1930) and the Dersim Rebellion (1937-39). According to him, there was no coherent nationalist sentiment, but rather local and tribal unrest (Alıs 2009: 64).

evident in every aspect of Turkish politics today²⁵. I return to this issue in the following pages when I discuss the tensions that are carried to Europe by Turkish and Kurdish migration.

The founders of the new republic followed the Ottoman policy of perceiving only the *non-Muslim* groups as “minorities.” Therefore, they did not grant minority rights to the Kurds. Instead, all Muslim groups, regardless of their ethnicity, language or culture, were considered “Turkish” (Barkey & Fuller 1998:6, Tocci & Kaliber 2008:3). The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne only granted minority rights to religious minorities and this revealed the concept for the new nation: a melting pot of Anatolian cultures (Tocci 2007:56). The emphasis was put on territoriality, rather than religion, and the 1924 constitution defined “Turks” as those living within Turkey’s boundaries and attached to the Turkish Republic by the bonds of citizenship (Kirişçi 2004: 276). However, the Turkish state’s approach to the Kurds at that time is often considered to have been somewhat ambiguous. As Yegen argues, the most appropriate term to define this unstable image of Kurds was ‘prospective Turks’ and the Turkish Republic has, in principal, perceived Kurds as Turks-to-be” (Yegen 2010). The aim of the new republic was to transform Turkey into a modern homogenous nation-state, in which the differences between citizens could be eliminated. Achieving this goal required strict assimilation policies towards the Kurdish population. As a result of the rebellions in Kurdish populated areas, the Turkish state started taking extreme measures in order to maintain control in the region (Tocci & Kaliber 2008: 3).

Firstly, in 1938 Turkish was declared as the only official language of the Turkish Republic. Education was reformed and made compulsory, and the sole language of education was to be Turkish (Gündüz-Hoşgör & Smits 2002:418). The existence of a distinct Kurdish identity was

25 Sèvres Syndrome can be simply defined as the perception of being encircled by enemies attempting the destruction of the Turkish state. As Hakan Yılmaz explains: “The Treaty of Sèvres, signed on August 10, 1920 by the victorious Allied powers (led by Great Britain and France) and representatives of the government of Ottoman Turkey, abolished the Ottoman Empire. The Turks were obliged to renounce all rights over Arab Asia and North Africa. Turkey itself was carved up among the Western powers and the Christian minorities collaborating with them, with provision for an independent Armenia, an autonomous Kurdistan, a Greek presence in eastern Thrace and on the Anatolian west coast, and Greek control over the Aegean islands commanding the Dardanelles. The basic assumption underlying the Sèvres Syndrome is that the Europeans perceive the Turks as the illegitimate invaders and occupiers of European-Christian lands and the oppressors of European-Christian peoples. Consequently, it is claimed that the Europeans’ perennial aim is to remove the Turks and restore those lands to their rightful owners, i.e., the Armenians and the Greeks in the past and now the Kurds”. For more info see. Yılmaz, Hakan (2011). “Euro-scepticism in Turkey: Parties, Elites, and Public Opinion”. *South European Society and Politics*, pp. 1–24.

denied and the Kurds were referred to as “Mountain Turks” in order to define them in a Turkish context. Gradually, the use of the Kurdish names was banned, causing the names of places and people to be changed. Traditional religious schools that offered an education based on Kurdish culture were closed and publications in Kurdish were banned. Even terms such as “Kurd”, “Kurdish”, “Kurdistan” and “the Kurdish language” were banned (Yegen 2010:2, Ucarlar 2008: 175).

Although suppression on the Kurdish identity has a long history, it should be emphasized that the solidification and propagation of the Kurdish question as an *ethnic* conflict only occurred fairly recently (İcduygu et.al. 1999: 993). As Alış states: “the majority of the Kurdish population remained aloof from politics in general and from nationalistic discourse in terms of both Turkish and Kurdish nationalisms” (Alış 2009: 51). The tensions lay dormant for some decades and only in the 1970s did the Kurds begin to demand cultural, linguistic and political rights.²⁶ For example, the Kurdish cause was advocated by several groups such as the Turkish Workers Party (the first legal party to recognize the Kurds), trade unions, revolutionary student movements such as Dev Genc, and, in particular, the Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearths (DDKO) (Tocci 2007: 56). This period, also witnessed the founding of the Kurdish groups PSKT²⁷ (The Socialist Party of Turkish Kurdistan) and the PKK (Kurdish Workers Party) (Nell 2008:178). The response to these groups was further suppression and, ultimately, the 1980 military coup.

After the military coup d'état of 1980, and as a result of Kurdish nationalist uprisings, the degree of suppression on the Kurds increased significantly. Kurdish parties were banned and the Turkish Army began to take strong measures in south east Turkey (Blatte 2003: 7). In the following years, Article 26 of the 1982 Constitution prohibited the use of the Kurdish language in public. These measures accelerated Kurdish migration to Europe and countries such as Germany received a significant number of applications from Kurdish asylum seekers. Leaders of various Kurdish political movements came to Europe and formed the basis for a strong

²⁶For further information on the Kurdish Movements of the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s see: Azat Zana Gundogan, Gundogan, Azat Zana. *The Kurdish Political Mobilization in the 1960s: The Case of the “Eastern Meetings.”* Unpublished MA thesis, Middle East Technical University 2005. See also the MA thesis of Ahmet Alış: *The Process of the Politicization of the Kurdish Identity in Turkey; the Kurds and the Turkish Labor Party, 1961–1971.* MA Thesis, Boğaziçi University, Atatürk Institute 2009.

²⁷ PSKT renounced the PKK’s ideology and the strategy it uses, labelling it “pure terrorism.” They tried to pursue a unification with other Kurdish groups in the so-called “anti-PKK alliance” TEVGER (Tevgera Rizgariya Kurdistan) in 1988 (Van Bruinessen 1998, Nell 2008: 179).

Kurdish diaspora that would challenge Turkish domination as they carried the movement beyond the Turkish state's reach and control.

3.3 THE RISE OF THE PKK

The rising awareness, accompanied by the trend of radical leftism in Turkey, led to a nationalist Kurdish movement that began demanding more rights for Kurdish people in the political arena. Initially, the Kurdish activists were embedded in Turkish leftist groups in universities and elsewhere and they sought to draw attention to the economic and political inequalities. Later, the Kurdish activists separated from the Turkish left and followed their own path. The Kurdish movement transformed itself from a small leftist circle to an organisation that took up arms against the state. This group of Kurdish activists was formed by Abdullah Öcalan (often referred to as Apo) in the late 1970s. In 1978 it officially took on the name PKK (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan) and declared that it would follow a Marxist-Leninist approach towards the Kurdish issue, with an ultimate aim of forming a Marxist-Kurdish state in the region (Karlsson 2008: 142). The PKK initially: “defined Kurdish tribal society as the main target of revolutionary struggle. It described Kurdistan as an area under colonial rule, where tribal leaders and a comprador bourgeoisie colluded to help the state exploit the lower classes...it advocated a revolution to clear away the contradictions in the society left over from the Middle Ages, including feudalism, tribalism and religious sectarianism” (Cornell 2001: 39).

The organisation took up an armed struggle against the Turkish state, beginning in 1984, and officially launched an insurgency in Turkey. They attacked both military and civilian targets – both Turks and Kurds – in order to maintain some kind of hold over the population in the region. The PKK also took issue with other Kurdish activists and intellectuals who did not follow the PKK's discourse. Unsurprisingly, the 1980 military coup d'état did not work in favour of the amelioration of the Turkish state-Kurdish relations.²⁸ Instead, the new constitution and the regime after the coup d'état signalled further suppression and strong measures were taken against both the Turkish and the Kurdish population. The military coup violently repressed the democratic civil society in Turkey – both Turkish and Kurdish – ostensibly in order to reconcile the political polarization. Among the severe measures taken during the military junta regime, Diyarbakir Prison No.5 is perhaps the most important. Many politicians,

²⁸ All parties, leftist and rightist, were dissolved within a year. Around half a million people were detained, 230,000 of them tried, 14,000 stripped off their citizenship and 50 executed.

artists, journalists and academics were put on trial and sent to Diyarbakir during and after the coup. The torture they were subjected to in the prisons has only recently been discussed openly. According to many authors, the Kurds who were detained at Diyarbakir for reasons such as sympathizing with Kurdish nationalist, Kurdish or leftist movements were one of the most important recruitment sources for the PKK in the following years. The eyewitness accounts of the torture and human rights abuses in this particular prison convinced even those without prior bonds to the PKK to join the organisation as a result of their traumatic personal experiences under the junta regime (Barkey & Fuller 1998:22). Many Kurds who were detained at Diyarbakir became supporters of the PKK, sought asylum in Europe or remained in Turkey and continued their activities. Among my interviewees in Sweden and Germany, there were Kurdish activists who were held in these prisons during the 1980s and the beginning of 1990s. Their activism inspired the second generation in Europe and they became influential figures in the diaspora organisations of several European countries.

In the meantime, the decline of other Kurdish movements due to their rivalry with the PKK, as well as the iron fist of the 1980 coup which crushed the leftist and Kurdish movements in Turkey, gave the PKK the opportunity to emerge as the only Kurdish movement after the 1980s. The PKK took advantage of this void and accelerated its mobilization efforts at home and abroad. One reason for its gradual rise was its success in turning itself from an elite-based organisation to a mass movement. The PKK bases were outside Turkish borders, mostly in Lebanon and Syria, while significant numbers of PKK members were sent to several European countries “on duty” to mobilize the Kurds who had migrated primarily for economic reasons and who did not have a politicized Kurdish identity. The diaspora Kurds provided resources for the PKK including financial contributions, social capital and guerrilla recruitment.

Most clashes between the Turkish state and the PKK occurred during the 1990s. During these turbulent times, the new regime equated all symbols of “Kurdishness” with terrorism and suppressed the Kurdish population even further. The PKK, on the other hand, started putting pressure on the Kurdish population to take sides in the conflict (Cornell 2001:39). The PKK targeted civilians, Turkish military bases, Kurdish tribal leaders and other rival Kurdish groups from the left- and right-wing. Since they adopted a “with us or against us” strategy, the PKK took a strong stance against other Kurdish groups and labelled them “traitors” or “enemies” (Barkey & Fuller 1998:43). It also targeted the families of local Kurds who had joined the pro-

government militia²⁹, bureaucrats, and state employees, including 170 primary school teachers because they symbolized the assimilation policies of Turkey on the Kurds. In the meantime, the Turkish state employed legal and illegal means – from the evacuations of villages, human rights abuses, “disappearances”, and extra-judicial killings; not to mention, the state of emergencies which naturally made people living in the region feel insecure (Tocci & Kaliber 2008:4, Yildiz 2005: 16).

Between 1984 and 1999, 8,000 civilians were killed as a result of PKK attacks and an unknown number of victims were killed (or disappeared) by “mystery” killings that have been attributed to the Turkish police, intelligence, gendarmerie and village guards. All in all, the clashes between the Turkish Army and the PKK caused more than 50,000 deaths (accompanied by disappearances). There were also thousands of internally displaced people as a result of the deportations of the Kurdish population from some 3,000 villages (Ayata 2011: 73). These systematic deportations are of utmost importance to understand the migration flows to Europe. Many migrants in several European countries initially became IDPs before applying for asylum. Their experiences strongly affected their activism in the hostlands in which they currently reside. My fieldwork observations also indicate that although many Kurds came to Europe, especially to Germany, as asylum seekers, as a result of brutal experiences in Turkey and discrimination and isolation in the hostland they volunteered to join the PKK through the mobilization efforts of several Kurdish diaspora organisations and they returned to the region to fight against the Turkish army.

The PKK enlarged its support-base through its own initiatives and as a result of Turkish suppression, which became more severe during that period. As a result of the deportations and village evacuations, as well as the intensification of the conflict in the region, the Kurdish question became deterritorialized in Turkey and spilled over into Europe. As Ayata explains, after the 1990s, the conflict was relocated to urban centres in Turkey and caused socio-economic problems including unemployment, poverty and crime as Kurds were disadvantaged in their new settlements – in other words they moved to the peripheries of cities and became a new urban underclass (Ayata 2011: 6) The oppression of the Kurds in the region, as well as their experiences of discrimination in their new settlements in Western Turkey, caused an ever-

²⁹ The Turkish strategy to curb Kurdish activism evolved into militarizing state-friendly Kurdish groups. The so-called “village guards” started fighting against the PKK in Kurdish populated areas after the mid-1980s. They were paid a salary by the state for protecting their villages from PKK activism and recruitment.

growing *ethnic differentiation* (Somer 2007). The conflict moved to other parts of Turkey and lost its territorial character. After the 1990s, throughout Turkey as well as in the diaspora spaces, it was easy to see the rising hegemony of the PKK over the Kurdish population at home and abroad.

The conflict took a different turn in 1999 when Öcalan was captured in Kenya, with the help of the US Intelligence, and sentenced to death.³⁰ At his trial for high treason, Öcalan stated that the PKK “no longer wanted independence for southeast Turkey but instead the new policy goal was greater cultural rights” and he called for a bilateral ceasefire. The PKK also dropped its claim for a separate state and softened its demands to that of a confederation and improved democratization for Turkey. However, this new outlook was criticized by certain members of the PKK cadre, as well as by some of its sympathizers. According to them, the new strategy offered little in terms of improved prospects for the Kurds (Khayati 2008: 72).

3.4 THE KURDISH QUESTION IN THE POLITICAL ARENA

History has witnessed different phases of the Kurdish question. The PKK declared several ceasefires throughout the conflict and windows of opportunities for reconciliation have been missed on countless occasions. The Turkish state mentality equated the Kurdish question with terrorism and neglected the fact that there had been dissatisfaction with the state policies even before the PKK had started its insurgencies. There have been times when the notion that Turkey needed to solve the terror problem before it could embark upon a new process of democratization was dominant, but at other times the belief that a democratization process could help to appease the Kurdish population who sympathized with the PKK (and thus eventually decrease PKK support and recruitments) has prevailed. The PKK also altered its discourse and has shifted its stance many times. Adapting to the needs of the times, they softened the Marxist-Leninist discourse, stopped ignoring the religious aspects, and modified their demands from a separate state to a federal structure under the Turkish state without

30 Öcalan was sentenced to death, but due to the EU accession reforms in Turkey, the Turkish parliament adopted a decision to abolish capital punishment. This enabled Öcalan to be sentenced to life imprisonment in October 2002 (Kirisçi 2004: 274).

abandoning violent insurgency as a means of struggle.³¹ Hence, today it is adapting itself to the needs of the new political perspectives in the world.

In the meantime, Turkish society witnessed various discourses of several governments on the Kurdish issue. Turkey's interpretation of the "Kurdish question" in the 1960s naturally differs from its approach today. For example, after the military intervention of 1960, Cemal Gürsel made a speech at Diyarbakır (when declaring himself president) and stated: "There are no Kurds in this country. Whoever says he is a Kurd, I will spit in his face" (Sirkeci 2000:150). Prime Minister Turgut Özal made the first, cautious, step towards a negotiation with the Kurdish opposition. He even discussed legalizing the PKK in 1991. The ban on the Kurdish language, be it spoken, used in songs, or recorded, was also lifted during that year (Tocci 2007: 61). Nevertheless, the "village guard system" was established and preserved during his term (Ayata 2011:77).

It came as a surprise to the Turkish public when the Prime Minister Demirel made a statement in 1991 saying "we cannot ignore the Kurdish reality anymore". However, this did not necessarily mean that the Kurdish "reality" was accepted or immediately put onto the political agenda. After Özal's death in 1993, Turkey once more adopted a militaristic approach to the problem. Shortly after Öcalan's arrest in 1999, Demirel made another statement highlighting that there should only be one spoken language in Turkey, and that he was against broadcasting in Kurdish (Kirisci 2004: 278). Moreover, Bülent Ecevit and his coalition government maintained that the Kurdish issue was a socio-economic rather than political problem, which, in the long run, prolonged the finding of a resolution to the conflict.

In the meantime, the PKK affiliated political parties in the Turkish political arena were suppressed harshly. From 1990s onwards, the Constitutional Court in Turkey banned various Kurdish political parties that had the Kurdish question on their agenda.³² In 2009, the Constitutional Court banned the Demokratik Toplum Partisi (DTP) due to its links with the

31 According to Barkey & Fuller, PKK explained its radical stance from the 1980s and the beginning of 1990s as a reflection of the broad, extreme-leftist ideologies that dominated Turkish politics around that time (Barkey & Fuller 1998:24).

32 In 1993, Halkın Emek Partisi (HEP), which had 18 members of parliament in the 1991 elections, was banned. Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi (ÖZDEP) was also banned, in 1993; Demokrasi Partisi (DEP) in 1994; in 1996 Demokratik Değişim partisi (DDP); the Demokratik Kitle Partisi (DKP) was banned in 1999; and Halkın Demokrasi Partisi (HADEP) was banned in 2003. There was also Hak ve Özgürlükler Partisi (HAK-PAR), which was put on trial but ultimately was not banned. Demokratik Halk Partisi (DEHAP) dissolved itself before the decision of the Constitutional Court.

PKK and it was replaced by Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (BDP). Today, the BDP is the main Kurdish party and it is influential among the Kurdish populated regions of Turkey. However, it is widely assumed that it cannot fully distance itself from the PKK.³³

Until 2002, when the state of emergency on the Kurdish populated areas in south-east Turkey was lifted, Turkey approached the Kurdish question as a security problem and acted accordingly by trying to develop a military solution. Only after 2002 did Turkey begin implementing the laws required for European Union accession, and prepare reform packages that would help secure its potential EU membership (Yildiz 2005: 18). Many have argued that among Turkish political parties, the AKP can be considered as the “turn of the tide” for the Kurdish question. For example, early in 2009 a TV channel that broadcasts in Kurdish (TRT 6) was launched, and Kurdish centres were formed at several universities in Kurdish populated areas, as well as the Institute of Living Languages at Mardin Artuklu University. However, many Kurds perceive these reforms as a “cosmetic operation” which they argue falls short in meeting Kurdish demands (Khayati 2008:74). Moreover, the return of 34 PKK militants with the promise of unofficial amnesty was badly handled. The fact that this was celebrated as a *victory* by the BDP and PKK supporters caused discontent among nationalist circles in Turkey and moreover it caused significant displeasure within the ranks of the AKP.

Many agree that today the “Kurdish opening” has been dropped, especially after the last electoral success of the AKP. In addition, there were several incidents that made the government appear contradictory in its approach to the Kurds. For example, the fact that numerous Kurdish children faced a jail sentence after participating in protests and many high profile Kurdish politicians and Kurdish rights defenders were accused of being affiliated with the urban wing (KCK) of the PKK and imprisoned.³⁴ The government launched a political purge right after the elections of June 2011 and there are concerns about the suppression of the freedom of press. For example, there were 97 members of the news media imprisoned in Turkey “including journalists, publishers and distributors, according to the Turkish Journalists’

33 For detailed information about the ban on DTP see for example Merzuka Selin Turkes, “Internal-External Consistency in the EU’s Human Rights Policy: Comparative Study of the EU’s Positions on Closure Cases of DTP and Batasuna. ECPR Conference Paper, 2010 Porto.

³⁴“151 Kurds charged in Turkey over PKK-rebels links”, 18 June 2010. Last access 21 May 2012. <http://www.ekurd.net/mismas/articles/misc2010/6/turkey2718.htm>

Union, a figure that rights groups say exceeds the number detained in China”.³⁵ Moreover, according to an independent news agency, “Ten elected mayors, eight mayor assistants, two deputy mayors, two former mayors, two provincial general assembly presidents, four provincial general assembly vice presidents and 29 municipality council members are currently in prison in Turkey.” It also stated that: “7,748 party executives and employees were taken into custody and 3,895 were arrested between 14 April 2009 and 6 October 2011”.³⁶ The “Uludere (Roboski) Incident”³⁷ also has a place in the collective memory of the Kurds in Turkey, and it echoes into the diaspora spaces. Kurds are highly sceptical about the AKP and its agenda, while the AKP’s approach towards the Kurdish movement is becoming increasingly bitter.

The conflict continues and whilst the AKP government has pursued a more authoritarian outlook during recent years, the members of parliament from the BDP are trying to push the government towards a more civil process in order to change the constitution and settle the dispute. The BDP launched its own strategy for a resolution called “Democratic Autonomy” and is producing propaganda to make its voice heard in Turkish political circles, whereas the AKP is trying to marginalize the Kurdish activists and gather votes from the BDP base. In the meantime, the BDP has developed a discourse (which was also used by the previous Kurdish political party DTP³⁸) that calls for support not just from an ethnically Kurdish electorate but also from the Turkish voters. It launched a new programme and wanted to develop its image as a “Party for Turkey” rather than “Party for the Kurds.” It has developed agendas that could address leftists, feminists, human rights activists and non-Muslim minorities in Turkey. The PKK’s and BDP’s demands from the Turkish state include freedom for mother language education, recognition of Kurds as a distinct minority, the release of PKK detainees, house-arrest for Öcalan, and preparing a new constitution that recognizes Kurdish rights. In the mean

³⁵“Charges against journalists dim the democratic glow in Turkey”, *The New York Times Europe*, January 4 2012. Last access 21 May 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/05/world/europe/turkeys-glow-dims-as-government-limits-free-speech.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all

³⁶“7748 people in custody, 3895 arrested in 30 months”, 07 October 2011. Last access 2012. <http://bianet.org/english/minorities/133252-7748-people-in-custody---3895-arrested-in-30-months>

³⁷ On 28 December 2011, Turkish officials ordered an air-strike in Southeastern Turkey that killed 35 Kurdish smugglers (17 of them were juveniles) who are said to have been mistaken for PKK militants. Many Kurds call this incident the “Roboski massacre” and have asked for a formal apology from the Turkish state.

³⁸ More information about the BDP’s “Party for Turkey” approach can also be found in studies that are related to DTP. See, for example, Seref Kavak, *Kurdish Ethno-political Transformation in Turkey: Democratic Society Party (DTP) Experience (2005-2009): A pro-Kurdish Party Between Ethnic&Non-ethnic Political Agenda*, LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing (6 April 2012).

time, the AKP government accuses the BDP of having ties to a “terrorist organisation” and of galvanizing the conflict in Turkey.

3.5 THE TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF THE KURDISH QUESTION

While Kurds in Turkey continue to make demands of the Turkish government, diaspora Kurds in Europe also participate in this claims-making process by following alternative strategies at the local, national, and supranational level. Due to the transnational networks (both Turkish and Kurdish), the conflict has spilled over to the European countries that accepted migrants from Turkey. The diffusion of the conflict reveals itself by occasional protests, hunger strikes, or violence between Turks and Kurds in Europe.

Whilst no recent or reliable census of the Kurdish population in Europe has been undertaken, the most widely accepted estimates are that there are around 850,000 Kurds dispersed throughout Western Europe, of which approximately 500,000 - 600,000 live in Germany. The unreliability of the statistics result from three main factors: (1) many Kurds hold Turkish citizenship and therefore do not appear in official European state statistics; (2) thousands of Kurdish migrants in Europe remain undocumented; and (3) current estimates of the Kurdish population published in studies, or on Kurdish websites, incorporate all Kurds, including those from Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. As the Kurds in Turkey held Turkish nationality when they arrived, they have typically been grouped in with “Turkish migrants” in the literature.

The change in status from “guest worker” to “asylum seeker,” especially after the 1980s, becomes greatly significant when one looks at the political activism of Kurdish communities in Europe. The literature usually ignores the earlier two flows (economic and environmental) and tends to label the Kurdish community as a “conflict-generated,” “exile,” or “victim” diaspora, which ultimately paves the way for a perception of Kurds in Europe through this one-dimensional lens. There is a corresponding tendency to focus on the Kurds who arrived after the 1980s, and especially after the 1990s, by scholars and researchers working on activism in the diaspora. However, we should not ignore the complexity of the Kurdish population in Europe. Prior migration flows need also be taken into account in studies about Kurdish activism in Europe. The mobilization of the PKK in Europe, particularly in Germany, encouraged many labour migrants who were not politically active before they migrated to

support the Kurdish movement, and their rising awareness about their ethnic identity paved the way for differentiating their transnational political and social spaces from Turkish migrants.

The establishment of ethnic organisations in Europe naturally followed the waves of Kurdish migration. Initially many Kurds participated in Turkish organisations, however dissociation began after the 1980s (this process is analysed in the following chapters regarding the Turkish and Kurdish migrants in Sweden and Germany). Students and workers formed the early Kurdish organisations and these organisations later added cultural aspects to their agenda. Finally, after the 1980s, the establishment of organisations gained a political touch with the escalation of the conflict in Turkey. The Kurdish diaspora employed a variety of methods, firstly to rally their own followers and secondly to make their voice heard – both in their host country and throughout Europe. These activities included organising petitions and campaigns, violent and non-violent mass demonstrations and protests, sit-ins, highway blockades, hunger strikes and self-immolation. As Grojean has argued, since 1982, “pro-Kurdish demonstrations have occurred almost monthly throughout Europe and the average number of protests annually could be several hundred” (Grojean 2011: 182).

Before the mid 1980s, there were Kurdish diaspora organisations in Europe that contributed to the Kurdish movement in various ways; however these could not be described as mass movements. For instance, there were other pre-existing groups such as Rizgari or Kawa, or those organised under different names such as KOMKAR (The Association for Kurdish Workers for Kurdistan), but during the 1990s the PKK became the most dominant Kurdish movement in Europe. The activities of pro-PKK Kurdish organisations in Europe surpassed that of earlier groups.

In the beginning, the PKK dominated the Kurdish diaspora spaces in Europe, with little focus on the lives of Kurdish migrants in Europe. Almost all of its activities were directed towards the conflict in the homeland. This is one of the main differences between KOMKAR and PKK affiliated organisations. As Bruinessen (2000) states:

It [the PKK] was never very interested in the situation of Kurds in Europe; all of its activities were geared to support for the struggle in Kurdistan. Other organisations, most notably KOMKAR, on the other hand, continued to focus primarily on the needs and rights of Kurdish workers in Europe.

He also mentions that after the arrival of the PKK, other Kurdish organisations also shifted their focus onto homeland issues (Van Bruinessen 2000). Although other Kurdish organisations changed their discourse to adjust to the new conjecture, the PKK won over the diaspora Kurds. Many of the asylum seekers then constituted the cadre of PKK organisations in Europe (Kirisci 2004:289). Kurdish second-generation youths were recruited from several European countries (especially Germany) to join the movement. In Europe, Germany became the centre for the cultivation of the Kurdish movement (Curtis 2005: 8). The PKK was supported financially by Kurds living in Europe, although they were also engaged in money laundering and the organisation used all these resources to finance its activities³⁹ (Barkey & Fuller 1998: 30-31, Cornell 2001: 40). As Soguk has mentioned, radio and television stations also worked as “a catalyst” and “mobilized the latent proto-nationalist emotions of the diaspora into a political community” (Soguk 2008: 182). The PKK and several affiliated organisations also published journals and magazines to increase awareness among the Kurdish population in Europe and beyond (Renard 2008).

There were also other media agencies promoting Kurdish rights whilst being critical of the PKK, however, they were not as widespread or strong as the pro-PKK media bodies.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Rigoni (when researching the Kurdish media in Europe) found around 80 newspapers and magazines that are published by Kurdish associations and private publishers⁴¹ (Rigoni 2001: 5). In terms of visual media, Medya TV and Roj TV produced cultural, educational and political programmes that reached Kurds throughout Europe and helped to establish a “consciousness” about the developments in Kurdistan (Ostergard-Nielsen 2006: 7).

There were also serious political attempts by Kurds in Europe to make their claims more visible to the European audience. For many, the founding of a Kurdish Parliament in Exile in 1995 proved that the centre of Kurdish political activity had shifted to Europe (Van Bruinessen

³⁹ It is estimated that the financial support the PKK received from Europe was between 200 and 500 million US dollars during the mid 1990s, and between 1996 and 1997 PKK funding was some 20 million Marks in Germany alone (Radu 2001: 55).

⁴⁰ There is more diversity in terms of Kurdish diasporic media today and it still plays a significant role for the mobilization of the Kurds for the Kurdish cause. There are around 160-170 websites (according to an interviewee from Berlin) based in Europe that are followed by many Kurds regularly. Some are pro-PKK and some are highly critical of its actions, others are more academic and neutral. There is also a very recent development in terms of the expansion of Kurdish media in Europe. Since 2009, *Le Monde Diplomatique* has been printed in Kurdish. It is prepared by a professional group based in Berlin that is highly cautious about the use of Kurdish language. At an interview with one of the owners, Kadir Satik, he underlined the fact that their desire had been to encourage a standardization of the Kurdish language.

⁴¹ 25 of these were in Germany, 21 in Sweden, 6 in Belgium and 5 in France (Rigoni 2001: 5-6).

1998:46, Blatte 2003: 9, Radu 2001:55). Although the Parliament in Exile⁴² was formed by the PKK and did not receive any support from the other significant Kurdish organisations, it was perceived as a semi-legitimate representation of Kurds from Turkey by the European authorities. Until it disbanded in 1999, the Parliament in Exile had several offices in Europe and connections with several European political parties (Kirisci 2004: 289). After its dissolution, the KCN (Kurdistan National Congress) was formed and also organised meetings across Europe.

Kurdish activists in Europe challenge Turkish hegemony by every possible means in diaspora spaces thanks to the opportunities provided to them by the hostlands. Besides the opportunities to cultivate the Kurdish culture and nation-building efforts, the diaspora spaces also provided the Kurdish diaspora with the possibility of interacting with Kurds from other parts of Kurdistan. During my interview with Metin Incesu, the chairperson of the Kurdish Institute NAVEND in Bonn, he stated that for the first time the Kurds were re-united in diaspora spaces and tried to get to know each other again after decades of separation. He pointed out that there was surely some contact between the Kurds who live in the cities bordering Iraq and Turkey etc., or among the Kurdish intellectuals who reside in Europe, however the diaspora in Europe gave large numbers of Kurds with diverse backgrounds the opportunity to meet and unite efforts for the Kurdish cause. It is possible to see numerous Kurdish diaspora organisations that do not exist in Turkey and have a pan-Kurdish character in terms of their membership base and political agenda. Diaspora therefore becomes the political space where Kurdish identity is (re)constructed through the (de)construction of other identities imposed on the Kurds by Turks, Persians or Arabs.

Kurdish organisations played an important role in this process. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the diaspora organisations and elites acted as opinion-makers and channelled the frustrations and expectations of Kurds into concerted efforts. A Kurdish Institute in Paris was formed in 1983 by Kurdish intellectuals with the help of the Socialist government in France. It aimed to cultivate the Kurdish language, hold conferences and publish journals and was a

⁴² For more information see, for example, Barkey & Fuller 1998, Chapter 2. They stated that: “The Parliament in exile thus faces a serious representational problem. It has sought, so far unsuccessfully, to enlist other, more serious, Kurdish movements into its ranks. The very important moderate and active (Turkish) Kurdish Socialist party, for example, headquartered in exile in Sweden under the leadership of Kemal Burkay, has declined to join the parliament. Burkay feels that the KPE cannot be taken seriously as a parliament since it is in many ways self-appointed; as a parliamentary body it is also premature in its establishment, as it controls no territory and has no international recognition.”

largely neutral organisation. Subsequently, other Kurdish institutes followed this initiative in Brussels, Berlin, Moscow, and Washington DC. In 1997, a Kurdish library was opened in Stockholm.

Taking advantage of the favourable political environments in different hostlands, Kurds tried to further their struggle through conventional as well as unconventional methods (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003). While the Kurdish activists were seeking unity and harmony in various aspects, Europe became the playground for the self-exploration of the Kurdish movement (Gunter 1991:13, Van Bruinessen 2000, Khayati 2008). Today there are thousands of small Kurdish organisations, as well as several Kurdish umbrella institutions in Europe, that aim to form a united diaspora in order to lobby at the European national and supranational levels. These organisations throughout Europe run activities such as Newroz⁴³ festivals, memorial days for the Halepce massacre, seminars to discuss the situation of the Kurds in the Middle East, campaigns for the release of Kurdish politicians, and language and dance courses. In doing so they try to propagate certain myths, which is a fundamental aspect of diaspora formation. Their aims are firstly to mobilize Kurds for their cause and help raise awareness about the Kurdish identity and culture and, secondly, to attract the attention of European politicians, bureaucrats and finally the public.

The organisations include KON-KURD, which was founded in Belgium for similar purposes and serves as an umbrella organisation for various Kurdish groups across the globe. It is based in Brussels and is responsible for lobbying activities at the European institutional level. YEKKOM, which is based in Germany and covers around 50 Kurdish organisations, is known to sympathise with the major goals of the PKK. FEYKA in France, FEDKOM in Holland, and FEYKURD in Denmark are also large Kurdish organisations that support the PKK's line. Finally, there is KOMKAR, a transnational Kurdish organisation and the first federation of Kurdish worker's associations. It is against the use of violence to promote the Kurdish cause. KOMKAR was affiliated with the Özgürlük Yolu movement in Turkey and distanced itself from the PKK line by focusing on improving the Kurdish workers' standards of living in Europe, rather than the struggle for an independent Kurdistan⁴⁴ (Van Bruinessen 2000). In the

⁴³ Newroz has gained a political character as a result of the Kurdish movement using it to mobilize the masses. For further information see Aydın 2005.

⁴⁴ It is argued by authors such as Jorgensen that the organisations that sympathise with the traditional PKK line managed to reach a broader segment of society (such as women, artists, students and the self-employed) whereas KOMKAR recruited less broadly. He also claims that KOMKAR was better

past, there was often friction between the PKK and KOMKAR, which occasionally ended in violence.⁴⁵ For example, some PKK members were sentenced for the murder of several KOMKAR members (Ucarer & Lyon 2001:936).

3.6 TURKISH RESPONSES TO KURDISH TRANSNATIONALISM

Since the rest of the thesis deals with the relations between Kurds and Turks from a second-generation perspective, in this section I briefly mention the general trends in terms of inter-ethnic relations in Europe.

Increasing ethnic awareness among the Kurds in Europe brought with it ethnic differentiation. Many Turks became familiar with the conflict after they migrated to Europe and they felt – in one of my interviewee’s own words – “frustrated” by Kurdish activism. Significant dissociation between the Turkish and Kurdish groups became evident, especially after the intensification of conflict in Turkey as well as in European countries (mainly in Germany). This divide has been observed by many researchers, as well as by state officials. The Third Ambassadorial Congress, which gathered Turkish ambassadors together from 180 different countries all over the world, also became a platform to discuss this separation in transnational space. According to the ambassadors, the Turkish-Kurdish divide is getting deeper every day in Europe and since the ban on the PKK in Europe, the Kurdish associations and activists have retired into themselves and cut off all relations with Turkish groups.⁴⁶ A similar study conducted in London confirmed these observations. According to Miall et.al., there is almost no dialogue between the Turkish and Kurdish communities in London; instead, there is polarization (Miall et.al 2010: 20).

Both communities followed developments in Turkey closely. Critical events such as the capture of Ocalan, the PKK offensives that kill Turkish soldiers (or vice versa), and the ban

at making itself visible at the official level but was not as strong as the above-mentioned organisations which gathered thousands of people for their demonstrations and protests (Jorgensen 2009).

⁴⁵Another sign of tension was at the Newroz of 2003, when Sivan Perver, one of the most famous Kurdish singers in the world whose songs are said to help mobilize people for the Kurdish cause, was singing at a concert organised by KOMKAR and that was sabotaged by PKK supporters, who used violence to end the concert. Today there is still an evident social and political strain between the two groups, however serious violent encounters have not recently been recorded.

⁴⁶“Avrupadaki Turkler ve Kurtler Birbirine Yabancilasti,” *Sabah*, January 1, 2011. Last access 21 may 2012. Available at: http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2011/01/05/avrupadaki_kurtler_ve_turkler_birbirine_yabancilasti#.

on Kurdish political parties and politicians have had a significant impact on relations between Kurdish and Turkish groups in Europe. These events occasionally provoke violent encounters between the two groups. In Germany and Belgium in particular, violent clashes between Turks and Kurds are reported in the media after crucial events occur in Turkey regarding the Kurdish issue. The gulf between new generation Turks and Kurds is likely to widen, and their relationship may end up resembling that of the Armenians and Turks, who once lived in the same geographical region but are now driven apart by mutual prejudice.

The degree of dissociation among these groups is dependent on various factors that I examine throughout the rest of the thesis. In each hostland, and even in each city, the level of the conflict reveals itself differently depending on the social composition of the Turkish and Kurdish populations and the structural characteristic of their diaspora. Class differences, motives for migration, economic dependencies, and religious and political cleavages all play a role. The approach of the hostland towards the Kurdish question is also of great importance.

The spillover of the conflict not only caused tensions between the two ethnic groups in different hostlands but it also agitated the Turkish state. The transnational activism of the Kurdish diaspora in Europe has created what Ayata (2011), drawing from Keck and Sikkink (1998), describes as a “boomerang effect”; although suppressing Kurdish activism in Turkey caused displacement of the Kurds, it also worked in their favour to raise their voice on international platforms which in the end backfired for Turkey. As discussed in the following chapters, Kurdish activism caused a grudge between Turkey and the hostlands that offered certain discursive and political opportunities to the Kurds. For instance, there has been constant pressure by Turkey to ban PKK-related organisations and TV channels in several European countries. This list includes Firat News Agency in the Netherlands, ROJ-Group and Denge Mezopotamya Radio in Belgium, ROJ TV and MMC TV in Denmark, Newroz TV in Norway, and Yeni Ozgur Politika Newspaper in Germany (Eccarius-Kelly 2010). ROJ TV is a notable example due to the persistence of the Turkish state’s demands for its closure. A further example is Turkey’s suspension of relations with the Netherlands because it granted permission to the Kurds to hold gatherings of the Kurdish National Congress (Ayata 2011). A similar incident occurred when Prime Minister Erdogan spoke at a high profile security conference about the voluntary or involuntary support that European countries give to the PKK, which he described as completely unacceptable (Eccarius-Kelly 2010).

It should be mentioned that the deterritorialization of the Kurdish question, combined with the opportunity structures that the European countries provided to the Kurdish diaspora which allowed Kurdish nationalism to flourish, caused a consolidation of the suspicions about foreign countries and their intentions both among the Turks in Turkey and abroad. The discourses of Turkish politicians about European countries' relations to the Kurdish diaspora showed traces of "Sèvres Syndrome". Since the beginning of the conflict, many politicians made declarations that blame different European countries for the intensification of the conflict in Turkey. The criticisms directed towards Turkey regarding its European Union membership in the framework of Kurdish rights are predominantly interpreted as interference in Turkey's internal affairs and politicians, bureaucrats and the public became sceptical about the intentions of the European states that provided the Kurdish movement with welcoming opportunity structures.

Many authors argue that the "Sèvres Syndrome" can be considered as the chosen trauma of the Turkish nation (Özçelik 2006). Unsurprisingly, I observed that the Sèvres Syndrome was present in the respondents' discourses and I believe that the contentions between Turks and Kurds in the diasporic spaces cannot be fully understood unless the Sèvres Syndrome, one of the main foundational myths of the Turkish Republic, is taken into account. Somer argues that:

The average Turk's perception of social-political diversity is still affected by the so-called 'Sèvres syndrome,' which refers to the dominant ways in which Turks interpret how they lost their empire and came to the brink of colonization in the early twentieth century. These interpretations attribute the Ottoman meltdown to the unbridled spiralling of hostile minority nationalisms that foreign powers fostered and liberal Ottoman-Turkish elites endorsed (Somer 2007).

In line with his argument, I observed that the majority of respondents frequently mentioned the "intentions of foreign powers to divide Turkey". Therefore, the "instinctive scepticism" towards the "other groups" and foreign countries seems also to prevail in the diaspora. Among the nationalist and conservative circles, as well as occasionally in leftist circles, I detected a feeling of "living side by side with the enemy", which "compelled" groups to do something in order to "save" Turkey from foreign power's/hostland's aims. The feelings of exclusion and the presence of xenophobia and discrimination in the host countries also added to this experience. Many stated that they "witness" this situation in their host countries which "help the traitors" who want to divide Turkey. The PKK in particular is perceived as the tool of foreign powers that want to destabilize Turkey (Kirişçi 2004: 284). As one interviewee put it: "everything

happens in front of their eyes and their hands are tied” in the hostland. That is why they direct their disappointment towards the host society as much as they direct their anger to the Kurdish activists in the hostland.

Although the second-generation Turks in the diaspora were spared the teaching of the official historical narratives and discourses at schools in Turkey, they were still affected by these components of Turkish nationalism by the transmission of the narratives of their parents as well as other factors such as the Turkish media. Turkish organisations also help to disseminate various discourses that reinforce the fear of a possible threat to the territorial integrity of Turkey.

3.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Kurdish issue is one of the most protracted conflicts in the world. Due to its trans-border dimension and geo-political importance, it has received world-wide attention and yet no concrete resolution is in sight. It is not solely a problem within Turkish borders but also in neighbouring states with Kurdish populations that have similar conflicts that arose from suppressing Kurdish demands – from the right to native language education to secession. The conflict in Turkey cost many people their lives and internal and external displacement of the Kurds. While internal displacement created a new urban underclass, external migration paved the way for the dispersal of Kurds throughout the world, and especially in Europe.

Displacement came hand in hand with the diffusion of the conflict beyond Turkish borders. Kurds started showing diasporic activism in their hostlands and challenged the Turkish state from afar. The presence of Kurdish and Turkish migrants in these hostlands before the conflict-generated migrations and their mingling with the new politicized migrants have created new conflict(s) in the hostlands which have their own dynamics, even though the source of the contentions are rooted in Turkey. The Turkish and Kurdish diasporas are challenging each other in the hostland using the political and discursive opportunities that are provided to them in this context. The PKK used violent and non-violent tactics abroad in order to make its voice heard and Turkish diaspora groups often collaborated with Turkish state actors in order to counter-react to Turkish activism.

During the last decade, PKK affiliated groups have altered their strategies and non-violent methods have gained popularity among the diaspora. As a result of various factors, such as the post 9/11 security measures and changes in the paradigm of struggle amongst the Kurdish diaspora members, there has been a move away from militant activities in Europe, such as violent protests and open PKK propaganda, towards a more modest transnational movement that seeks to raise awareness about the Kurdish issue in a human rights context. Kurdish activists understood the importance of diaspora mobilization abroad and civil society organisations in Turkey, and they are attempting to transform their movement into a political one.

The Kurdish question has not been solely imported to Europe by the Kurdish migration, but also imported by the Turkish diaspora groups, as well as the Turkish state. The struggle between the two parties took on a different form in each hostland and different strategies have been pursued in order to contest or reconstruct sovereignty in transnational space.

The “Sèvres Syndrome” is (re)contextualized in the Turkish diaspora spaces. Sèvres Syndrome needs to be borne in mind while analysing the Kurdish question, the PKK and Turkish reactions to these two issues, especially in the diaspora. The opportunities that are given to the Kurdish communities in several countries in Europe, and which help Kurdish nationalism and its components flourish, are perceived as a blatant example of the bad intentions of the Western powers towards Turkey. The fear that European countries have not given up on the idea of carving up Turkey into smaller nation states is still very much alive in the diaspora, as well as in Turkey, and it affects how the Turkish diaspora interpret, and react to, Kurdish activism in Europe. Combined with the sources of the conflict that are explained in the context of the roots of the “Kurdish question”, one may argue that there are certain myths, memories, historical narratives and traumas that are transported to the hostland and they still stand as the building blocks of various discourses about nationalism. I argue that before paying attention to the particularities of the Kurdish question and to the main pillars of the Turkish nationalism it would not be possible to understand the contentious diaspora spaces.

4

SWEDEN AND GERMANY: MIGRANT INCORPORATION AND MULTICULTURALISM

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I analysed the roots of the Kurdish question in Turkey and how it caused the displacement of Kurds firstly within Turkish borders and then to Europe, which eventually led to the diffusion of this conflict into transnational space. Sweden and Germany are among those European countries that experienced conflict-generated Kurdish migration. Considering that there were already existing labour migrants from Turkey in these two countries (including Kurds who had migrated for economic reasons), they also became the settings for Turkish-Kurdish contentions to play out.

In this chapter, my aim is to explain the evolution of the migration and integration policies that concern these two migrant communities and their descendants. For the purposes of this thesis, it is essential to understand the political and social environment in these hostlands. As the second generation were born in these countries and socialized into it, understanding the hostland conditions enable me to interpret their identity-formation against the host society and against the “adversary other”.

I firstly analyse the migration flows to Sweden and Germany, especially after the 1960s, which provides a background for our understanding of the composition and profile of the migrant communities in these two countries. Although both cases deserve more space to discuss their migrant incorporation regimes – on issues such as the current regulations for refugees and the recent policy changes towards newcomers and their implications – they will not be discussed thoroughly here as they are beyond the scope of this thesis.

Secondly, following the historical overview of migration to both countries, I deal with the immigration and integration policies that these countries have developed over the last five decades. As discussed in Chapter 2, recent studies on diasporas show that the distinct integration policies of hostlands offer different possibilities for diaspora mobilization. For

example, in his book on the Kurdish diaspora, Khayati demonstrated that Kurdish communities in Sweden and France developed diverse strategies of diaspora formation due to the differences between the migrant incorporation regimes of these two countries (Khayati 2008). Esman also argued that “a welcoming or unwelcoming opportunity structure” is one of the main determinants for a diaspora’s choice to turn inward and drift towards separation or to adjust to the hostland environment” (Esman 2009: 119). In this vein, I also suggest that the confluence of immigration and integration policies of the hostlands and the profile of migrants in broader terms affect the diasporization process of migrants and provides them with different tools to construct their discourses.

Thirdly, I focus on the issues related to citizenship and the rights for political participation, which are among the main components of a hostland’s opportunity structures. Strict naturalization policies and an exclusivist approach towards migrants’ political rights can directly affect migrants’ sense of belonging to the host country. Moreover, it has long been debated whether easy acquisition of citizenship facilitates integration into the host society. While many authors argue that easy naturalization policies have a positive impact on social inclusion, there are also authors who argue that the “feeling of inclusion” does not necessarily come with naturalization. For instance, Eliassi (2010) argues that his interviewee accounts show that Swedish citizenship is not perceived by his interviewees as tantamount to being a “real Swede”. The administrative barriers to naturalization might be lifted, however the social barriers to full integration might still remain. In terms of political participation, the debate also continues. While discussing the two opposite views in the literature, Nell highlights that some authors claim that political participation in the host country increases the transnational activity of the migrant groups; while others argue that political integration to the host country decreases homeland-oriented activities (Nell 2008). In this vein, comparing Sweden and Germany by using the Turkish and Kurdish communities as case studies will enable me to contribute to these academic debates.

Fourthly, I examine the problems that migrants and their descendants face in the hostland, from xenophobia, discrimination, and problems with educational opportunities to unemployment, which are crucial factors for understanding identity-formation in the diaspora. The aim is to provide the reader with an understanding of the existence, and persistence, of structural discrimination in Sweden and Germany. Many authors such as Anderson (1992) suggest that alienation from the host society might actually engender marginal ways of identity-formation

towards the homeland, while others have indicated that one of the *sine qua non* conditions of becoming a diaspora is that the members of the migrant groups believe they are not completely accepted by the host society. Indeed, a “troubled relationship with the host society” was included in the definition of diasporas (Safran 1991:83-84, Cohen 1997:26). On the other hand, it has been suggested that diaspora members might be very well integrated to the host society and yet still show diasporic behaviour, therefore diaspora formation does not necessarily undermine integration (Nell 2008: 27-28). As I illustrate in this and following chapters, I find there to be evidence supporting both claims and I argue that integration and diasporic activism are not mutually exclusive.

Finally, I focus on the approaches of Sweden and Germany towards multiculturalism and the role of migrant organisations. I discuss if their policies regarding these two issues enforce identity-politics among migrant groups, and if so in what ways they affect the mobilization processes around homeland-oriented agendas. The importance of migrant organisations for diaspora mobilization is explained in detail in Chapter 2. Although not all migrant organisations show diasporic patterns, it is still important to understand how they are incorporated into the policy-making procedures of the host countries. As Østergaard-Nielsen has discussed extensively, different migrant organisations work in different ways in different hostlands. The reasons for the diversity of strategies can be explained with the notion of “institutional channelling”, which is a term she borrows from Ireland (1994). According to this explanation, the different systems in host countries make the migrant groups channel their activities in a specific way. Although these policies are often tailored for the migrants to express their views about the hostland politics, they are still useful analogies to be applied to the migrant activities that are homeland-oriented (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 70). These issues are of the utmost importance for this thesis as they shed light on the political environment in which diaspora groups become mobilized.

In the following pages, I first analyse the migration and integration policies of Sweden and Germany in turn, and then offer a comparative summary of these two countries. As will be discussed in the following pages, Sweden and Germany have had distinct patterns of migration and integration policies since they first started receiving migration flows in the 1960s. The

Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX)⁴⁷, which is a tool to measure and compare integration policies of EU member states, as well as Canada, Norway, Switzerland and the USA, despite its limitations, provides a useful comparison between Sweden and Germany. The index shows that Sweden is quite successful in its integration policies and consistently ranks first as the most positive and inclusive destination choice for immigrants. Sweden scored “best practice” on labour market access among other countries, although it is considered to be one of the most problematic integration policy areas in Sweden.⁴⁸ Regarding family reunion, political participation and anti-discrimination, only a minor upgrading is needed to reach its full potential, despite the fact that those areas are often subject of criticism regarding integration problems in Sweden. On the other hand, despite recent improvements, MIPEX ranks Germany as 12th (just below Italy and Luxembourg and just above the UK and Denmark) and it is said to be only half-way favourable in terms of integration policies. It also scores only average for Europe on policies such as education and family reunion policies. It scores far lower on equality policies.⁴⁹ However MIPEX only gives us an idea about the policy perspective of these issues, while the implementation of these policies may sometimes indicate other results. The perceptions of the migrants and their descendants on these issues do not always match with the results given by this index, as will be discussed below.

4.2 SWEDEN: A MULTICULTURAL PARADISE?

4.2.1 A Historical Overview of Migration to Sweden

Sweden only became a immigration country at the beginning of the 20th century. Prior to the 1930s, it was an emigration country, with around one million Swedes emigrating from Sweden, mainly to the United States. After the Second World War, it began to receive labour migrants and refugees. Although the numbers were low compared to the country’s acceptance of refugees and asylum seekers today, the 1930s could still be described as ‘the wind of change’ for Sweden (Benito 2005: 6). The developments after the end of the Second World War, resulted in Sweden opening its doors to migrants and it has received immigrants from all over

⁴⁷ MIPEX focuses on the policy areas, such as labour market access, family reunion, access to citizenship, political participation, education and anti-discrimination, which are less concerned with the social or cultural integration of immigrants, than with economic or political integration. Therefore, it does not reflect the whole picture with respect to the success of a country’s integration policies. Secondly, MIPEX only focuses on the legal obstacles to immigrant integration. Although it demonstrates the lack of such obstacles for immigrants when finding a place in the job market, research shows that structural discrimination exists, which is not yet legally proven.

⁴⁸ Country Profile Sweden, MIPEX, www.mipex.eu/sweden

⁴⁹ Country Profile Germany, MIPEX, www.mipex.eu/germany

the world, beginning in the 1950s (Demker 2007: 3). By receiving large numbers of migrants and asylum seekers, Sweden has encountered a new situation that arose from a new demography and new social and cultural realities (Khayati 2008: 179).

The first significant flow of immigrants to Sweden was from the Baltic countries, particularly Estonia, who arrived as refugees at the end of the Second World War. There were also Finnish citizens, Danish and Norwegian Jews who attempted to escape to Sweden during war-torn times. The second stage, between 1949 and 1971, refers to the free entry granted to labour immigrants to meet Sweden's labour shortage due to the booming export industry (Korkmaz 2005: 52, Demker 2007:6). It is said that during this period 550,000 Finns and around 60,000 Yugoslavs migrated to Sweden (Westin 2006). Other immigrants, mainly from Greece and Italy, and later Spain, Portugal, Finland and Turkey followed. With Sweden abstaining from the guestworker system that existed in Germany, foreign workers were given the same wages and rights as Swedish citizens, due to cooperation with the Swedish Trade Union Confederation. Sweden had a policy of permanent immigration which perceived the labour migrants as future citizens (Westin 2006, Jorgensen 2009). This situation endured until the beginning of 1970s when Sweden officially ended labour migration from non-Nordic countries (Jorgensen 2009: 145, Westin 2006).⁵⁰

The third and fourth stages refer to the refugees and asylum seekers from third world countries, as well as from Eastern Europe, after the 1970s. In the 1980s, Sweden received several refugee flows from Chile, Middle Eastern countries – such as Iran, Iraq, and Turkey – and refugees from Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia. A large-scale flow occurred after the conflict in Yugoslavia when Sweden provided refuge to those who had escaped the conflict. This migration flow of refugees and asylum seekers changed significantly the composition of migrants (Bevelander & Pendakur 2009). Currently, the majority of the refugee population in Sweden is comprised of Iranians, Iraqis, Chileans, Argentineans, Peruvians, Kurds, Turks and Eritreans (Korkmaz

⁵⁰The laws regulating labour migration were modified in 2008, however since the focus of this thesis is on the second generation, the new reforms will not be analysed intensively. The Government Offices of Sweden explain the new policy as follows: “Sweden has created an efficient and flexible system for labour immigration. The new rules for labour immigration entered into force on 15 December 2008 and their aim is to facilitate the recruitment of labour from third countries. An employer who cannot meet his or her labour needs with employees from EU/EEA countries or Switzerland is allowed to employ a third-country national if it can be ensured that the terms of employment and insurance protection are equivalent to those that would apply for an employee already in Sweden.” <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/3083>

2005: 53-54).

Currently, immigrant flows occur mostly from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo in the form of family reunification, while asylum seekers continually arrive from Iraq, with a particularly strong influx charted shortly after 2003. These groups are followed by refugees and migrants (also predominantly family reunification) from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey. Membership to the EU also saw some liabilities for Sweden in terms of the freedom of mobility for European and non-European citizens. For instance, today the refugee policy can be considered to be more restrictive than in previous years, as Sweden has become less open to admitting refugees or asylum seekers after signing the Schengen Cooperation Agreement in 2001. There is migration from EU member states, but the numbers are quite low compared to the influx of non-European migrants (Jorgensen 2009: 146, Westin 2006).

Today, Sweden has approximately 9 million inhabitants, with 200 different nationalities and 14% of the population having been born outside Sweden. Including the second generation, the percentage of non-native Swedish residents rises to 20%. Currently, the number of children born in Sweden with at least one parent born abroad amounts to over 900,000.⁵¹

4.2.2 Sweden: From Assimilation to Integration Policies

In Sweden, immigrant workers from various countries were granted easy access to permanent residency (see footnote for recent modifications⁵²) – dissimilar to the guest worker system. In fact, Sweden encouraged immigrants to bring their families and become naturalized. Swedish migrant incorporation policies followed three distinct phases: from 1945 to 1964 (assimilation), from 1965 to 1975 (preparations for a multicultural approach) and lastly, from 1975 (multicultural), (Korkmaz: 2005: 54). Currently, authors such as Khayati (2008), Westin (2006) and Schierup and Alund (2009) suggest another major break in the 1990s regarding Swedish multicultural policies when Sweden began fine-tuning its multicultural approach towards assimilation and thus tightened its policies on refugees and asylum-seekers.

⁵¹Government Offices of Sweden, “Swedish Integration Policy”, December 2009. Last access 1 June 2012. <http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/13/77/34/5b7683a6.pdf>

⁵² Government Offices of Sweden declared that: “Since 15 December 2008, Sweden has had rules on labour immigration that make it easier for employers to recruit labour from third-world countries. The employer’s assessment of the need to recruit foreign labour is the key point when processing residence and work permit applications. The individual employer is best placed to know what skills are required in the business and what recruitment needs exist.” <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/14293/a/114169>

During the first phase, migrant integration was expected to be an automatic process that would occur naturally, and the ultimate goal of Swedish immigrant policy was assimilation (Korkmaz 2005:54; Khayati 2008: 180). Shortly after the Second World War, Sweden drafted immigration laws without considering the process of integration, and thus ignored the issue of exactly how immigrants should be handled in society (Khayati 2008: 181). Between the 1950s and 1960s Sweden did not have any specific policy that would help incorporate migrants into Swedish society. Only in the 1960s were various regulations put in place to improve the situation of immigrants in the country (Westin 2006, Dingu-Kyrklund 2007:1). During the second phase (mid-1960s –1975), Sweden had no official policy to ensure the successful integration of immigrants. However, in the beginning of the 1970s, Swedish language courses for immigrants were launched, while municipalities and associations gained the right to support activities that would encourage immigrants to attend those courses. By the mid-1970s, the Swedish parliament finally adopted an integration policy, which Westin (2006) calls “a radical break from the *laissez-faire* system”. In 1975, its three immigration policy objectives were declared to be: equality (*jämlikhet*), freedom of cultural choice (*valfrihet*) and partnership (*samverkan*)” (Westin 2000, Jederlund & Kayfetz 1999).

Equality stood for the principle that all immigrants should have equal rights and opportunities to other Swedish citizens, including the same obligations as the rest of society. The second category, *freedom of cultural choice*, permitted immigrants to choose the extent to which they adopt a new identity and/or preserve their own. However it also indicated that whatever choice the migrant makes, it should not contradict the *core Swedish values*. The *cooperation and solidarity* principle aimed to enable the immigrant groups and the Swedish-born population to delineate issues of common interest by creating a sense of togetherness. The last objective is a type of ‘partnership,’ meaning that participation should be promoted by enabling the immigrants to vote in municipal or regional elections, while naturalization should gradually be made accessible to the immigrant groups. The idea of partnership also paves the way towards forming a legal basis to create and control immigrant associations that are linked to the Swedish state (Odmalm 2004: 475, Korkmaz 2005: 55, Jederlund & Kayfetz 1999, Westin 2006). Alund & Schierup describe this policy as the government’s effort to sustain social equality among ethnic groups and Swedish society, as well as to enable the immigrant population to exercise political influence (Alund & Schierup 1991: 99). The implementation of the multicultural policies provided various rights to migrant groups, from voting rights in municipal elections (for resident non-citizens), to education in their native languages in

schools, funding for native language books and journals and financial aid for migrant organisations based on ethnic identity (Akesson 2011: 219).

This immigration policy was devised at a time when Sweden enjoyed a steady economy, full employment and forecasts of continued rapid growth (Jederlund & Kayfetz 1999). By the mid-1980s the Swedish system was in crisis, resulting in increasingly negative attitudes towards immigrants and their descendants. Restricting migration became a matter for debate and in 1989 the government (led by the Social Democrats) began to pursue stricter rules for accepting political asylum-seekers (Westin 2000: 6). In the early 1990s, reactions against immigration policy and immigrants emerged. Similar to other European countries, Sweden confronted a series of discussions on racism and xenophobia. It was understood that what Sweden needed was no longer an immigration policy, but rather an integration policy that would help to build bridges between the new ethnic and cultural groups, as well as within Swedish society (Khayati 2008: 187, Jederlund & Kayfetz 1999). The critiques of the migration policies of that time finally resulted in the establishment of a new research commission to present a report about the current situation. In 1997 the Swedish parliament agreed on a new integration policy aiming to give the same opportunities and rights to non-native residents. The new strategy was called 'Sverige, framtiden och mangfalden' (Sweden, the future and diversity) (Benito 2005:23). The main difference between this and the prior policy was that the new policy addressed migrants and all society sectors, whereas the former had solely addressed the migrants (Akesson 2011:219).

The Swedish integration model of 1997 was also based on three main principles, which defined the Swedish immigration policy; however they have been interpreted differently over time. The new objectives after the mid-1990s can be summarized under the heading "integration", which is fairly vague compared to the three initial ambitious policies of the 1970s and 1980s (Lindvall & Sebring 2005: 1067). The three main objectives were not completely abandoned, however, rather they were softened with the new understanding of integrating immigrants into Swedish society. More stress has been placed on the term *diversity* rather than *multiculturalism* and the new policies are tailored accordingly.⁵³

⁵³ For instance, the Swedish government policy report for the 21st century states the objectives for the future as the following: "Equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for all regardless of ethnic or cultural background, a community based on diversity, a society characterized by mutual respect and tolerance, in which everyone can take an active and responsible part, irrespective of background." <http://www.temaasyl.se/Documents/%C3%96vrigt/Engelskt%20material%20om%20Sverige/integration>

Since then, the Swedish public discourse about integration refers to maintaining one's culture in private domains but at the same time achieving socio-economic assimilation into Swedish society, which essentially means integrating into the labour market (Akesson 2011: 218). Westin argues that the various terms "appearing in this discourse over the years – integration, pluralism, multiculturalism and diversity – all seem to stand for" accepting (certain) differences but *doing things the Swedish way*. According to him, although Sweden uses different terminologies to address the migration issue, assimilation is always seen as the best solution (Westin 2003: 3). I discuss the concept of *doing things the Swedish way* in the following sections.

4.2.3 Naturalization Policies and Political Participation in Sweden

Sweden's citizenship regime is one of the most liberal in Europe. Since citizenship is based on *jus sanguinis*, the descendants of migrants are not automatically entitled to acquire Swedish citizenship. Nevertheless, naturalization processes are relatively straightforward compared to other European countries such as Germany (Westin 2006). The acquisition of Swedish citizenship can vary for different groups of immigrants. While immigrants from Nordic countries can apply after only two years of residence, recognized refugees must wait for four years in order to be eligible. Nordic immigrants need only register for a tax number, whereas refugees need to make an official application to the Swedish Migration Board, which could take up to a year to be granted. Migrant groups other than refugees need at least five years of continuous legal residence and must hold a permanent residence status in order to be able to apply for naturalization (Benito 2005).

The second generations born in Sweden acquire citizenship fairly easily by comparison to their parents. A child born to a family holding Swedish citizenship acquires it automatically. If anyone under the age of 18, whose parents are not Swedish citizens, has lived in Sweden for over 5 years and has a permanent residence permit, he/she can become a Swedish citizen through notification.⁵⁴

%20policy.pdf.

⁵⁴ "In most cases, children with foreign citizenship become Swedish citizens in conjunction with a parent's successful application to become a Swedish citizen. In some cases, a child may become a Swedish citizen 'independently' through notification. Notification is a simpler method of becoming a Swedish citizen." See the official website of Swedish Immigration Office for more info www.migrationsverket.se. Last access 11 June 2012.

There is also no requirement (for both first and second generations) involving a substantial knowledge of Swedish history or traditions and there are no citizenship tests – as in Germany (and other European countries). The obligation to have sufficient knowledge of the Swedish language was abolished together with general assimilation policies. The only condition that could potentially create problems for some applicants is the “good conduct” clause, which requires immigrants to have a clean record in terms of criminal activity or misdemeanours. According to the statistics, around 50% of foreign-born immigrants become citizens after five or more years of permanent residence in Sweden (Benito 2005: 17).

Due to the Swedish Citizenship Act (of 2001), Sweden is also one of the most generous countries in terms of recognizing dual citizenship. An individual acquiring Swedish citizenship may keep his or her prior citizenship if the law in their country of origin permits it. As with other European countries, Sweden was sceptical about permitting multiple nationalities (Gustafson 2002: 468), however it no longer ignites debates on dual loyalties. Rather, on the Swedish Migration Board website it is stated that dual citizenship is perceived as an advantage and it is even encouraged.

Sweden perceived the naturalization of immigrants as a fundamental part of the integration process and encouraged the immigrants who hold a permanent residency to apply for naturalization (Westin 2000: 29). Nevertheless, the question of whether or not the acquisition of citizenship contributed to improved integration efforts is not clear. Research shows that Swedish citizenship is not considered as an indicator of better integration in Sweden. Because it is relatively easy to acquire (compared to other European countries), it may demonstrate that Sweden does not consider this to be a fundamental part of Swedish identity. For the migrants, it does not have the same emotional aspect as in Germany since it does not require them to renounce their former citizenship.

Acquiring Swedish citizenship is not necessarily conducive to cultural integration. Instead, it is also possible that immigrants approach naturalization from a pragmatic point of view. As Icduygu demonstrated in his work on Turks in Sweden, migrants may choose not to naturalize because they feel more Turkish than Swedish, or to naturalize for pragmatic reasons – even though their ties remain with Turkey. He claims that, typically, acquiring citizenship does not constitute a normative or moral commitment to Sweden (Icduygu 1996). My interviewee

accounts also show that naturalization does not necessarily indicate a *sense of belonging*, however easy naturalization policies and the allowance of dual citizenship decrease the *sense of not belonging* to Swedish society. It also increases migrants' and their descendants' self-confidence in the hostland.

With regard to political participation, Sweden was one of the first countries in Europe that allowed immigrants to participate in the municipal elections, starting from 1976, with the condition of having 3 years prior residency in Sweden. The motivation behind this move was to increase the political and social integration of foreign residents into Swedish society (Benito 2005:21). Despite the easy naturalization process and the authorities' intention of encouraging the political participation of migrants and their descendants, research shows that the turnout at elections is quite low among non-native Swedes. For instance, it decreased from 60% in 1976 to 35% in 2002 (Benito 2005). While the debate in Germany revolves around the lack of voting rights for permanent residents and strict naturalization requirements (at least until 2000), the debate in Sweden often revolves around the democratic deficit. In Sweden, permanent residents are allowed to vote in local elections and the naturalization process is relatively easy compared to other European countries, so why do migrants and their descendants not participate in political spheres as expected?

Bevelander and Pendakur (2009), having undertaken extensive research on the Swedish electoral survey, have demonstrated that immigrants are less likely to vote than native-born Swedes. They argued that naturalization increases the tendency for political participation among non-native Swedes and the Swedish system aims to make non-native Swedes feel that they have a say in politics in Sweden. Yet, the participation of non-native Swedes depends on other factors such as age, gender, having a Swedish partner, holding Swedish citizenship and being born outside Sweden. The descendants of migrants who are born in Sweden are more likely to vote than their parents. The authors argue that the low turnout has a lot to do with the non-native Swedish citizens' perceptions of belonging and social inclusion in Swedish society.

Although the overall voting of non-native Swedes seems to be quite low, the level of political participation among my interviewees was startlingly high. Almost all of them were interested in Swedish politics and more than half of them were active in Swedish political parties as members or activists. Therefore, the essential conclusion for the purposes of this thesis may

be that voting has a lot to do with general political engagement. I further saw that showing an interest in homeland politics is not mutually exclusive with political participation in the hostland. Instead, I observed that they usually went hand in hand.

In terms of political participation, the Swedish system also simplified the rules for becoming a member of the Swedish political parties. As Benito explains, there are no restrictions for non-native Swedes who reside in Sweden to become members of political parties. Many parties welcome their participation and create specific sections where migrants can contribute in their own way. He also argues that:

Immigrants establish Swedish sections of political parties that are active in their home countries. Many immigrants come to Sweden as refugees from dictatorships and therefore their work here is often aimed towards the home country in order to make changes in the country's politics. This is allowed by the Swedish law and even supported by the Swedish political parties to different extents (Benito 2005:24-25).

Therefore, the political parties in Sweden also encourage the participation of migrants by providing them with incentives to bring home country related concerns to the party agendas. Hence, migrants and their descendants do not perceive being active in Swedish political spheres as a barrier to their activism for homeland politics. While in Sweden showing an interest in homeland politics is does not necessarily perceived as a barrier to integration to the host country. In Germany the situation is quite different, as will be discussed below.

4.2.4 Problematic Issues Related to Xenophobia, Employment, Education and Housing

As discussed above, recent surveys suggest that Sweden is quite successful in its integration policies and consistently ranks as the most positive and inclusive option for immigrants. A significant number of recent studies have shown that the situation is not as positive internally as it is viewed externally. In fact, the presence of a large number of cultural and ethnic groups in Sweden has consequently caused a transformation in the Swedish societal structure, which has produced its own set of problems (Khayati 2008: 181) involving the labour market, access to education and housing as well as the rise of xenophobia.

Sweden has been taking measures to avoid these issues, yet recent studies reveal there are problems with the implementation of these reforms. Despite following a different pattern to Germany, through the recognition of diversity, multicultural reality and efforts to combat discrimination, Sweden still shows similarities to Germany with regards to issues of structural

discrimination, xenophobia, Islamophobia, unemployment and segregation. Let me touch upon these issues with various examples.

In terms of the existence of *xenophobia* in Sweden, visible racism against immigrants or refugees began at the end of the 1980s, including a number of attacks by racist youth groups that targeted the residences of non-Swedes. Anti-immigrant reactions were notable in the early 1990s, with racist and anti-racist groups fighting each other on the streets. During this period, as a result of the rise of racist sentiments, the homes of some refugees were attacked. In 1993, a mosque was set on fire by racist and ultranationalist groups, and significant damage was inflicted upon the shops and properties of non-Swedish residents (Westin 2000: 33, Khayati 2008: 188, Jederlund & Kayfetz 1999).

The xenophobic discourse was also carried to the political sphere with the emergence of the New Democracy Party (Ny Demokrati). It did not, however, achieve much long-term success, apart from 1990-1992 (Demker 2007: 4). In 2006, however, an extreme right-wing party with an anti-immigrant agenda came onto the political scene. The Swedish Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna) openly pursued a nationalist agenda and received 2.9% of the votes. During the 2010 elections, they managed to gain 5.7% of the votes and won 20 seats in the parliament.

Various studies prove that immigrants and their descendants face *discriminatory behaviour when seeking employment*. A report written in 2005 for the Swedish Migration Board claimed that Muslims are exposed to the strongest racial harassment in Sweden. According to the report, “70% of ethnic discrimination reports came from people with a Muslim background, and almost 40% of those questioned in the survey said they had witnessed verbal abuse directed at Muslims.” It is common among immigrants to change their names to Swedish ones because they believe it will increase their chances of securing job interviews.

Digging deeper, a study by Stockholm University on ethnic and religious segregation in the labour market compared the earnings of a group of immigrants who changed their names to Swedish-sounding or neutral names, to the earnings of immigrants who kept their birth names, and observed a blatant difference (Arai & Skogman-Thoursie 2007). Moreover, a report by ILO demonstrates that, although native Swedes and non-Swedes hold the same qualifications,

employers give priority to native Swedes.⁵⁵ A white-collar labour union Jusek also found that only 50% of immigrants with college degrees were employed compared to 85% for native Swedish graduates. Immigrants faced a greater risk of unemployment (six times higher than for native Swedes). The study also showed that ethnic segregation reflects itself in salaries. There is a massive difference among non-Swedes and native Swedes with regards to income classes. Westin also draws attention to this problem by stating that a new underclass defined by ethnicity and race is emerging (Westin 2000:36).

Segregation in the housing market is another problematic issue. Most of the immigrant communities in big cities such as Stockholm, Gothenburg or Malmö live in small ghettos, some with minimal or no contact with native-Swedes. On the national scale, the Swedish policy of giving accommodation to immigrants and refugees on the basis of dispersal proved ineffectual, as the immigrant populations remain concentrated in certain cities and districts. This kind of physical segregation could be considered problematic, as a multicultural society cannot function peacefully if foreigners and natives do not interact. If one also considers the strictly defined positions in the societal power hierarchy, which condemns immigrants to constitute a lower class compared to native-Swedes, then a new orientation in the integration strategy seems highly necessary (Hellgren 2005: 25). Rosengård is a case in point to illustrate the situation in the suburbs. It is a city district in Malmö and almost 60% of its inhabitants are of a non-Swedish background. There have been several clashes between the local youth groups and the police. Youth groups set cars, kiosks, and recycling stations on fire and attacked the authorities by throwing stones.⁵⁶ These events caused debates in the parliament as well as in the media and revealed Sweden's integration problems. For Alund and Schierup (2009), these violent conflicts between young people and the police, as well as unrest in the disadvantaged peripheries of large cities, are a clear sign that Sweden is also suffering from the "pace of neo-liberal globalization" which brings about segregation and social exclusion.

MIPEX data suggests that Sweden has strong laws and policies that are formed to prevent discrimination and in recent years the policies became easier to use for the victims. Germany, instead, is said to have anti-discrimination bodies that are weaker than other European

⁵⁵ International Labour Office, Synthesis Report, "Discrimination Against Native Swedes of Immigrant Origin in Access to Employment", December 2006. Last access 20 June 2012. See http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/download/swedish_discr_synthesis.pdf

⁵⁶ "Rosengård Sparrat –Efter Brandinferno" *Expressen*. Last access 12 June 2012. <http://www.expressen.se/kvp/rosengard-sparrat---efter-brandinferno/>

countries. Sweden established a number of institutions and gradually amended its laws in order to prohibit discrimination. Weak in nature, however, these policies have yet to significantly alter the actual situation (Westin 2000:36). Furthermore, the report called “Swedish Integration Policy for the 21st Century” also addressed the issue of discrimination and xenophobia. The plan is to strengthen legislation and actively work towards prohibiting these two negative aspects from all spheres of social, political and economic life. As part of its plan, the government allocated 30 million SEK between 2000 and 2003 for youth organisations such as Sweden against Racism (Sverige mot racism).

The Ombudsman against discrimination serves as a negotiating partner between the two contesting sides and can present employment complaints directly to the labour market court (Jorgensen 2009:156). However, it has been criticized for not being efficient enough and thus unable to be a powerful actor in prohibiting discriminative acts by employers (Khayati 2008: 186). On January 1st 2009, Sweden's new anti-discrimination act was enforced. The act replaced the Equal Opportunities Act and six other anti-discrimination laws, while introducing two new grounds for discrimination: transgender identity or expression, and discrimination on grounds of age. Although there is more tolerance towards cultural differences today compared to the 1990s, a great deal remains to be achieved.

4.2.5 A Critical Overview of Swedish Multiculturalism

In Sweden, multiculturalism became the official political ideology and acknowledged cultural diversity as an asset. Although it has been modified several times and there have been significant reforms throughout recent decades, the approach of Swedish integration policies towards immigrants is criticized as being essentialistic and ethno-centrist. According to many scholars, the implementation of the principle of freedom of choice actually leads to the emergence of a minority culture in the private sphere and prevents social exchange between the minority and majority groups. The policies are also assimilationist in character, even though they constantly underline the importance of diversity (Kamali 2004:59 cited in Bartl 2009, Westin 2003).

Essentially, the system solidifies ethnic boundaries by acknowledging and supporting the differences in cultural heritage and tradition (Alund & Schierup 1991:1). Drawing from Alund and Schierup, Akesson also argues that perceiving culture from an essentialistic perspective is evident both in national integration policy and in everyday practice. A homogenising view of

culture reifies ethnic groups and underlines their difference from the core Swedish society (2011: 221). According to Alund, Swedish society has been undergoing a separation along ethnic lines, which causes the perception of social inequalities as cultural differences. Culture is taken for granted as the result of an ethnic or racial background and it is understood in essentialist terms, as something pure and related to some inherent ethnic core (1998: 176). Therefore in reality, the idealistic principles of Swedish multiculturalism suffer from serious problems in their implementation. The system invokes an image of Swedish society where groups from different cultures or ethnicities (with no common values or identities) simply co-exist in their own corners (Akesson 2011: 221).

Alund argues that the Swedish system actually *reduces* ethnicity to something eternal, particularly through the Swedish media's preoccupation with immigrants (invandrare). By doing so, the stress on ethnic and cultural differences creates an "us and them" situation, consequently supporting ethnically defined groups and distinct social positions (Alund 1998:177). Odmalm also offers an alternative interpretation of how ethnicity is perceived in Sweden, suggesting that the "dominantly white Swedish perception" has the power to produce ethnic categories in which migrants can be categorized (Odmalm 2004: 477). Both authors put emphasis on the hierarchical relation that the Swedish system has created regarding "Swedish culture" and "migrant cultures", however I argue that it also affects how the migrant groups perceive each other. Cultural differences are understood within the framework of ethnic identity, therefore the migrants and their descendants do not only perceive themselves as culturally/ethnically different to the native-Swedes but also as completely different from other groups who reside in Sweden. Each ethnic group also embraces an "us versus them" approach towards others, which may gradually cause dissociation.

More importantly, while there has been much debate as to the failure or success of Swedish multiculturalism, the fact that there is a strong assimilationist element to Swedish multiculturalism should not be neglected, as mentioned by Westin (2003), Akesson (2011) and other scholars. Apart from the cultural barriers that are invisibly erected between Swedish society and the migrants, it is also evident that there is an expectation that the migrants and their descendants adapt to the *core Swedish values*. Although they are not forced upon non-native Swedish citizens, there is still an insistent tone when the multicultural discourse is verbalized by the Swedish politicians and other authorities. As opposed to the *Leitkultur* debate in Germany, in Sweden the migrants and their descendants are invited to adopt these values

voluntarily. This actually paves the way for the assimilation of many migrants and their descendants into the *Swedish way of thinking* without even realizing it. At the core of the success of the Swedish system lies the ability to convince them that they do not lose anything from their *essence* by adapting to the *Swedish values*. In this regard, in the discourses of Swedish politicians and authorities as well as media bodies integration and multiculturalism are not perceived as mutually exclusive concepts, but they instead complement each other.

I argue that in Sweden there is a tendency among the diaspora groups to adapt to certain elements of the hegemonic culture in order to make their own compatible with the core host society values. My fieldwork results showed evidence that the second-generation diaspora make efforts to familiarize themselves to the *core Swedish values*, willingly or unwillingly, but most importantly they internalize the “values” that are imposed on them by the dominant hostland culture. While they see their culture as unique and distinct from others, including from the hostland culture, they simultaneously assimilate into the dominant culture just as the system expects them to. These issues will be dealt in detail in Chapters 7 and 8 with examples from my interviewees’ testimonies.

4.2.6 The Swedish System and Migrant Organisations

Since the 1970s, when Sweden accepted multiculturalism as an official policy, immigrants have been encouraged to form their own organisations along mostly ethnic and occasionally religious lines. Sweden has defined migrant groups by their collective ethnic identity, considers ethnicity as *a natural social grouping*, and consequently treats these groups as other corporate groups in Swedish society (Soysal 1994: 46), which is a policy criticized by many since “little room was made for mixed identities or for organisations based on more than one ethnic loyalty” (Akesson 2011: 219).

Migrant organisations hold the same status as Swedish organisations with a constitutional right to preserve and develop their cultural heritage. The organisations are not restricted or constrained by the Swedish state, unless they have an agenda that contradicts democratic values (i.e. Swedish core values, such as: democracy, human rights, freedom of speech) (Odmalm 2004:475). These associations are perceived as the most effective channel for immigrants to participate in the social and/or political arenas, and since their formation these organisations have been integrated into the corporatist structure of Swedish system. According to Alund and

Schierup:

Sweden is probably alone in Western Europe in the extent to which its public life is controlled, tamed and regulated. Probably no other Western European state has been as successful in controlling and transforming radical claims and spontaneous organisation by disciplining and institutionalizing them through incorporation and co-optation - a fact which [...] has been closely linked with Sweden's elaborate corporate structure (1991: 17).

In this vein, Odmalm also argues that organised life in Sweden is “highly regulated and tightly steered” by the Swedish state. The state has a top-down approach when it comes to the regulation of migrant organisations, with a controlling and monitoring rather than cooperating approach (Odmalm 2004:476). As Alund and Schierup stated, state-sponsored multiculturalism appears to have turned into a *tower of Babel*, where the immigrant organisations particularized their cultural traditions. However, this resulted in a lack of cultural exchanges and immigrant groups developed a tendency to become disconnected, both from each other and Swedish society (Alund & Schierup 1991:19). In their later essay, Alund and Schierup (2009) define their metaphor of *tower of Babel*:

a hierarchically nested conglomeration of ethno-nationally defined social collectivities; monitored and depoliticised through the powerful vehicle of a generous - but highly conditioned - system of public support to ‘migrant organisations’, and inserted into a discriminatory ethnic division of labour

Migrant organisations are treated as natural channels for the incorporation of their constituencies as formal bodies and they are expected to be the bridges between the Swedish state and the migrants. This system, without doubt, enforces the creation of nationwide migrant organisations who are supposedly the “representatives” of their ethnic group in Swedish society (Soysal 1994: 47). Immigrant elites are well aware of the fact that, in Sweden, larger organisations allow voices to be heard, which encourages groups to act accordingly. In smaller cities, locally formed organisations have a tendency to be bound under a larger umbrella organisation, which improves action amongst themselves, as well as relations with Swedish authorities. On the national level, the umbrella organisations supply consultative bodies and advisory councils, where each is attached to the state (Odmalm 2004: 475).

The Swedish state, in order to implement the equality principle, provides subsidies similar to other Swedish organisations (Odmalm 2004:475). Jorgensen explains that the Swedish state provides three kinds of support to migrant organisations. First, it covers their administrative costs; secondly, it funds organisations that support integration; and thirdly, it offers funding for

projects that promote integration. In order to reach this goal, the organisations must meet certain criteria: the majority of members must be of immigrant descent, their activities must only be conducted within Swedish borders, or they must assume the structure of a national organisation (Jorgensen 2009: 162). The number of members is also an important factor, as the greater the number the more likely it is to receive funding. Migrant organisations can receive financial support from the Swedish state when they are defined as ethnic groups and have at least 1000 members. Only then are they incorporated into a central plan and treated as equal to other Swedish organisations that benefit from the funding scheme (Soysal 1994: 48). The funding scheme has a comprehensive plan with regards to who is eligible for funding (ibid. 91). Therefore, organisations are preoccupied with attracting more members and thus do not pursue radical goals which might scare away potential members.

The Swedish model also aims at eliminating competition among the ethno-national migrant organisations. Local authorities enforce a monitoring system that attempts to maintain a balance among the ethnic organisations to ensure little overlap between the agendas or activities of organisations (Odmalm 2004: 476). Therefore, it can be argued that the Swedish model encourages the organisations to form under a visible, yet vaguely ethno-cultural, identity in order to fulfil the criteria for state funding. Furthermore, after the 1990s the state decided to fund only those organisations with projects that contribute to integration (especially youth and women's integration). Therefore, the immigrant organisations that are willing to receive funding from the state have to direct considerable energy towards these kinds of projects in order to "survive" the system.

My interviews with the diaspora organisation representatives clearly show that they are very concerned with increasing their membership numbers and fulfilling the project requirements implemented by the Swedish state in order to secure funding for their activities. Therefore, many diaspora organisations are composed of members who also hold memberships of many sub-organisations under one umbrella to increase membership numbers. Therefore the membership of an organisation does not always indicate its actual strength.

Research on the immigrant associations also shows that the financial support from the Swedish state has a considerable impact on the structure of immigrant organisations and the content of their claims-making activities. The migrant organisations are under strict regulations regarding what type of activities they are allowed to engage in (Odmalm 2004: 477). The state

emphasizes to the immigrant organisations that their agenda should be free from party politics. Therefore most of the organisations claim to be independent and refrain from showing open support for political parties, both Swedish and international (although a closer look at their websites and activities gives a clear picture about their political tendencies). My findings also support this point since most of the people I interviewed from immigrant associations stressed the importance of state funding as a reason for not following a partisan political agenda.

4.3 GERMANY: FROM A LONG-LASTING HOST TO AN EVER-LASTING HOME?

4.3.1 An Overview of Migration to Germany

Germany has 81.8 million inhabitants⁵⁷ and roughly one in six German residents has an immigration background.⁵⁸ In Germany, the main non-German background groups are those from Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, Italy, Greece and Poland (Koopmans et al. 2001:76) and about 5 million of these immigrants have non-EU backgrounds (Anil 2005: 457).

The population with migration backgrounds who reside in Germany can be traced back to a range of different migration patterns: for example, the ethnic German migrants in Germany which number some 3 million. Since their integration and citizenship arrangements are different from non-German migrant groups⁵⁹ (ibid.), I focus predominantly on the issues that are related to Turkish and Kurdish migrants from Turkey and their descendants.

The biggest flows of non-ethnic German migrants after the Second World War were labour migrants who arrived to meet shortages in specific industries. The *Wirtschaftswunder* (Economic Miracle) that occurred in the post-war period created a significant demand for labour. The construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 put an end to the flow of workers from Eastern Europe and workers escaping the German Democratic Republic in the 1950s (Chapin 1996). Hence, the guest worker system was established to meet the labour shortages within the vastly developing German industry. Between 1955 and 1968, the Federal Republic of Germany

⁵⁷ Statistisches Bundesamt: <https://www.destatis.de/EN/Homepage.html>

⁵⁸ The Demographic State of the Nation, Berlin Institute for Population and Development, March 2006. http://www.berlin-institut.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Studien/Kurzfassung_demografische_lage_englisch.pdf

⁵⁹ For example: “Between 1945-1949, about 12 million ethnic Germans came to Germany as expellees from east European countries and the former Soviet Union...These people of German descent were “resettlers” returning to their country from East European states such as Poland, Romania, the former Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and the former Soviet Union” (Anil 2005: 456).

signed intergovernmental contracts with eight countries: Italy (1955), Spain and Greece (1960), Turkey (1961 and 1964), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965) and Yugoslavia (1968). Similar to Sweden, Germany did not have colonial links to Turkey, however it chose to import labour forces from Turkey when the Spanish, Portuguese and Italian labour forces proved insufficient (Faist 2000:84, Kaya & Kentel 2005:16).

After 1973, Germany stopped recruiting migrant workers due to the economic crisis. It ended this period of labour migration with around 2.6 million foreign workers on its soil.⁶⁰ When the oil crisis threatened to stall the economy in 1973, the guest workers were suddenly seen as an economic burden. There was a strongly held belief among the authorities that the guest workers would one day return home (Chapin 1996). Instead, the guest workers stayed in Germany - despite the fact that they were no longer needed - during a time of unemployment and economic crisis. Unlike in Sweden, the German authorities miscalculated the consequences of the guest workers' permanent stay as residents, and therefore made little effort to help them settle and refused to accept them as permanent members of German society.

From 1973 to 1976, the numbers of employed migrant workers dropped sharply, while the number of foreign residents climbed from 4 to 5 million between 1973 and 1989 due to family reunification and asylum seekers (Davy 2005: 123). In the 1980s, there was a flow of asylum seekers due to the right to enjoy asylum enshrined in Article 16⁶¹ of the constitution. The numbers peaked in 1992 with 1.2 million foreigners - of which 438,000 were asylum seekers.⁶² The increase was in part an outcome of the conflict situations in the former Yugoslavia and in Turkey. The law was amended in 1993 with restrictive measures, which caused a decrease in asylum applications (Anil 2005:459) and consequently increased illegal immigration (Abadan-Unat 2002:48).

⁶⁰ Faist underlines that even before the oil-crisis in 1973, the socio-political discussion group (representatives from German unions, employers, church and welfare groups, federal and state ministries) agreed on a unilateral termination of labour recruitment (Faist 2000a: 85).

⁶¹ The Basic Law, Article 16 proclaimed; "Persons persecuted on political grounds enjoy the right to asylum."

⁶² Until the end of 1992, German asylum regulations were less strict than the other European countries. In the first half of the 1990s, Germany has received considerable migration from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe due to the political changes in the region. Moreover, from 1988 to 1993, Germany also received migration flows of ethnic-Germans from Eastern Europe who migrated to settle in Germany. According to the statistics around 1.6 million of them migrated during that period. That is why after 1992, Germany decided to follow a less generous asylum policy (Aybek 2012: 46-47).

From the 1980s onwards, the guest workers staying permanently in Germany, along with family members who took advantage of the family reunification options, and finally the asylum seekers, changed the migrant profile to a more heterogeneous one and pushed Germany towards further reforms in regulating its relations with the foreign nationals after long debates. Besides this heterogeneity, an increasing share of the foreign residents was born in Germany, constituting the second generation, and they were not granted German citizenship at birth and were treated as foreigners in a legal sense (Ozcan 2004).

In 2000, Germany introduced a “Green card” system in order to attract highly qualified information technology experts. The card did not allow permanent residency but granted residency for a maximum of five years (Ozcan 2004). Since 2003, Germany has mostly accepted officially registered foreign populations comprising temporarily admitted migrant workers and students (Cyrus 2005: 9). In recent years, migration has become small-scale, mostly from European citizens and family reunifications. Labour migration seems to be statistically small compared to the other migration flows (Süssmuth 2009: 5).

4.3.2 Germany: How to Cope with the Guests?

Although Germany is one of the largest migrant receiving countries in Europe, its experience with migrants of non-German background was and remains a strikingly challenging process. It is often taken as the typical example of an exclusivist model of migrant incorporation along with other countries such as Austria or Switzerland. However, since the early 1990s, Germany has been modifying its legislation in a more inclusive way (Jorgensen 2009:169). For a long time, German policy rejected the motto “Germany is an immigration country” (Cyrus 2005: 8), however this rejection only revealed the political attitudes towards migrants, but it could not hide the social reality that Germany is facing today (Eckardt 2007: 237).

The self-perception of the German state as not being an immigration country has clearly affected the way the integration and citizenship regime has been constructed throughout the years (Jorgensen 2009:169). Although Germany has a long history of migration, it was only at the turn of the millennium that the debates finally showed a tendency to favour a more liberal approach to immigration (Cyrus 2005:15), which can be considered as rather late compared to Sweden where a liberal approach emerged in the 1970s with the first significant flows of labour migration. In Germany, the incentive to regulate laws in order to ensure the social integration of migrants did not emerge in the 1970s when the workers actually became a permanent fixture

in Germany, but only at the end of the 1990s when the German authorities acknowledged that something had to be done when “immigration created substantial political pressure in favour of a more inclusive form of citizenship” (Green 2000: 107).

There were no significant changes to immigration or citizenship laws related to the migrants from Turkey in the 1980s. In the early 1990s, discussions began about the political rights of immigrants in Germany (Hailbronner 2010: 3) In 1990, a new law replaced the former 1965⁶³ Aliens Act which had no provision for accommodating the needs of guest workers for a secure and reliable basis of their stay in Germany. The new law simplified naturalization procedures for two main groups: young immigrants between 16 and 23 years old and older immigrants with at least 15 year residence in Germany (Green 2000: 110) and aimed to introduce legal clarity and certainty on matters related to the stay of guest workers underlying the “alien status” of these people (Davy 2005: 124).

“How to cope with the guests” was a question that has always been a matter of debate between the right and left wing parties in German political spheres. When the red-green coalition (Social Democrats and Greens) took the lead in 1998⁶⁴ there was a very important transformation in German self-definition with regards to immigration, since the Greens have usually defended pro-migration ideas - supporting dual citizenship, reforms to combat racism and the idea of a multicultural society (Davy 2005:124). However, the coalition had to drop the dual nationality issue as they relied upon the support of other parties that opposed the idea.⁶⁵ The CDU-CSU consistently opposed changing immigration and integration policies, preferring to adhere to the federal government’s 1981 declaration that Germany is not a country of immigration, and that three principles should guide migration policy: non-EU immigration should be reduced as much as possible, the voluntary return of settled foreigners should be promoted and those foreigners who wish to remain in Germany should be integrated (Martin 1999).

⁶³ The 1965 Act had passed as a result of the intentions of the German Ministry of Interior to replace the regulations that dated back to the Third Reich. According to Aybek, the final version of the law included some liberal notions however it left room for interpretation for the administrative units to decide on issues such as work permits and residency. He argues that as a result of this law, the main responsibility on these issues again stayed at the administrative level (Aybek 2012: 41).

⁶⁴ At that time, the number of foreign nationals in Germany were around 7 million. A majority of them had been living in Germany for decades without any political rights. Around 2.6 million of these foreign nationals were born in Germany (Hailbronner 2010: 3).

⁶⁵As Hailbronner discusses: “The German public appeared deeply divided over the issue. While a clear majority of the mass media, as well as the churches and humanitarian organisations were in favor of multiculturalism and dual nationality, the German population became increasingly critical about a substantial increase of dual nationals resident in German” (2010: 19).

At that time, the growing number of the second generation who were born, educated and socialized in Germany and yet treated as foreign nationals caused significant debate. Although the main political parties agreed on the fact that something needs to be done in order to facilitate integration and naturalization in Germany, the debates usually revolved around how and under what conditions these processes would take place (Hailbronner 2010: 3). After much bargaining among the main political parties, the reform liberalizing the Citizenship Law was accepted in 1999⁶⁶ which confirmed the introduction of certain elements of the *jus soli* principle by legislation. As of January 1st of 2000, the old citizenship law (based on the Law of the German Reich from 1913) which was solely based on *jus sanguinis* was replaced by a more liberal citizenship law which was still restrictive in many aspects yet was without doubt a significant step towards perceiving migrants as potential citizens of Germany and towards integrating migrants into German society by granting them the right of acquisition of German citizenship (see the next section for a detailed discussion) (Hailbronner 2010: 13-14, 20).

In 2000, the government appointed the Süßmuth Commission to work out proposals for an immigration and integration policy reform. Then in mid-2001, the commission presented a report entitled "Structuring Immigration, Fostering Integration". The report suggested that Germany should acknowledge the fact that it is an immigration country and various measures should be taken towards a more modern immigration framework. The series of attempts to further modify the immigration laws finally led to results in 2004. The new Immigration Act (which came into effect in 2005) showed that immigration was approved of, but it tried to control and limit further immigration (Aybek 2012: 38-51) A package of reforms was adopted which deals with the residence law, right of asylum, employment and integration. It brought various adjustments to the migration law yet did not work in favour of the immigrants as far as expected. It put more emphasis on integration requirements and introduced the provisos of having sufficient knowledge of German and the completion of an integration course (Hailbornner 2010: 8). The 2007 reform of the Citizenship Law brought further significant

⁶⁶This is considered to be a major change in Germany since the new law replaced the nationality law of 1913 (Reichs- und Staatsangehörigkeitgesetz) that was valid since the German Empire through the Third Reich and the Federal Republic. Although it has been amended many times during the last decades, its replacement carries a symbolic value (Hailbronner 2010: 1)

changes, especially with regard to the naturalization requirements relating to the standards of knowledge of the German language and the adoption of integration tests.⁶⁷

4.3.3 Naturalization Policies and Political Participation in Germany

Naturalization is an essential element of integration into German society since it constitutes the legal precondition for political participation. Until 2000, German citizenship had been based first and foremost on the principle of *jus sanguinis*. A person acquires German citizenship if one of the parents is a German citizen, irrespective of place of birth, but before 2000 birth in German territory alone was not sufficient for obtaining citizenship. The first major reform of naturalization was embedded in the Alien's Law of 1991 (which introduced the right to acquire citizenship after fifteen years of permanent residence and facilitated naturalization for foreigners between age 16 and 23 who live in Germany continuously).

In 1999, the Citizenship Law replaced the previous law of 1913 and became effective on January 1st 2000. This new law has increased the numbers of eligible non-native Germans who can apply for citizenship from 2.5 to 4.5 million (Street 2012). According to the current law, in order to naturalize, a person should have resided in Germany for 8 years⁶⁸, have a permanent residence permit, be able to sustain his/her own living without welfare or unemployment benefits, accept German law and constitutional values, pass the naturalization test and not have any criminal record. Furthermore, he/she should have sufficient knowledge of German and renounce his/her previous citizenship (exceptions to this requirement are mentioned below).

For the second-generation children born on or after January 1st 2000 (to non-German parents), if one or both of a second-generation child's parents have been living in Germany for 8 years and hold a permanent residence permit, then he/she obtains German citizenship automatically at birth. However, between 18 and 23, he /she must choose between the parents' citizenship and German citizenship (This is called the "option model"). If the child does not renounce a foreign nationality obtained at birth, then the German citizenship expires automatically.⁶⁹ According to a recent study presented by the Ministry of Interior in June 2012, only 2% of the second

⁶⁷ The requirements for knowledge of the German language have become tougher – a B level certificate of the Common European Reference Framework for Languages. The integration test was also adopted on 5 August 2008 (Hailbronner 2010: 11).

⁶⁸ This period can be reduced to seven years with successful attendance at an integration course, and can also be reduced to six years in the case of special integration measures.

⁶⁹Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.
<http://www.bamf.de/EN/Einbuengerung/InDeutschland/indeutschland-node.html>

generation chooses their parents' nationality when they decide between German and foreign citizenship.⁷⁰

Despite the liberal elements introduced by the new law and later amendments, the reforms are still found to be unsatisfactory by migrants from Turkey residing in Germany and the naturalization requirements are still perceived as restrictive. The new Citizenship Law has also brought new requirements in the name of security measures, which according to Miera reduce the naturalization potential for residents of Muslim origin. "Not only the concrete acts but mere indications of an assumption" are also found sufficient to reject an application in matters related to internal security (Miera 2009b). The Immigration Act of 2004 has changed some requirements for the right to naturalization but left in place exclusion for unconstitutional political activities (Hailbronner 2010: 15-17). Under the influence of post- 9/11 security measures, even affiliations to legal religious and political organisations can constitute grounds for rejection of naturalization applications. Drawing from various examples, Miera argues that "in some cases German authorities even withdrew the German citizenship of already naturalized members of such organisations" (Miera 2009b). Concerns about this attitude of German authorities and the consequences of the new amendments were frequently mentioned by the Kurdish interviewees who were PKK supporters during the course of my fieldwork.

Dual citizenship is one of the core debates between German political parties and it is also one of the main demands from the Turkish community. Changes in the Citizenship Law did not necessarily pave the way for changes in the understanding of dual citizenship, particularly for the Turkish community. Dual citizenship is accepted for EU-citizens and for the migrants whose home countries do not allow the renouncing of their nationality such as Afghanistan, Algeria, or Eritrea.⁷¹ According to Miera, "the principle of disallowing multiple citizenship predominantly affects people of Turkish citizenship" and the Turkish community feels that the restrictions on dual citizenship issues target them in particular. They feel that they are more discriminated against compared to the other non-native German groups. Language tests and other bureaucratic challenges, many Turkish migrants are reluctant to apply for naturalization in Germany. During an interview with the spokesman of a Turkish organisation, Miera was told

⁷⁰ "Türk Gençleri İki Pasaport Arasında", *Deutsche Welle*, 24 June 2012. Last access 24 June 2012. <http://www.dw.de/dw/article/0,,16047103,00.html>

⁷¹ Between 2000 and 2008, around 50% of the naturalizations included people who have dual citizenship. The main group who naturalized while holding the previous citizenship status are German (Spat-) Aussiedler (Miera 2009b).

that “Turkish people have the feeling that they are not wanted here” and they also feel that their loyalties to Germany are constantly questioned (Miera 2009b). My findings also corroborate her results. Both Turkish and Kurdish interviewees, whether or not they held German citizenship, underlined that they do not feel “wanted” in Germany although many stated that they have loyalties for Germany. The past discourses regarding Germany as an immigration country, as well as current integration debates, have lessened their enthusiasm for participation in German society and politics.

According to the statistics, the number of naturalizations in general, have been on the rise after the implementation of the new citizenship law. However, compared to Sweden, they still remain low. In 2000, half of the applicants who applied were already eligible before the reform. In 2010, the number that naturalized reached 100,000, which is far below expectations (Street 2012). Moreover, in recent years, migrants from Turkey in Germany show naturalization statistics that are lower by comparison to other communities. The reasons could be that the migrants from Turkey are already satisfied with their denizenship status or they are still waiting for a more democratic citizenship law, which allows dual citizenship. It is also possible that they did not see any benefit in acquiring German citizenship, and the bureaucratic paperwork also deters people⁷² (Faas 2010: 45, Kaya 2009: 47-49). Moreover, social rejection institutionalized in the German governmental and societal structure, the existence of psychological barriers to renouncing former citizenship as well as legal and technical barriers from the German side play a role (Anil 2005: 455).

In his innovative research, Alex Street also reached the conclusion that since the citizenship reform in 2000, parents have a noticeably decreasing tendency to naturalize. According to him, the reform on the citizenship law in 2000 provided *jus soli* and thus it eliminated the “intergenerational motive to naturalize for many eligible parents”. He argues that the first

⁷² In addition to this, based on my interviews among the first generation, I would argue that there is a discrepancy between the Turkish and Kurdish migrants. The Turks tended to keep their Turkish citizenship because they still felt Turkish and they perceived acquiring German citizenship as treason against the Turkish state. They also have a prospect to return, they invest in Turkey and they do not want to lose various rights in Turkey by the loss of citizenship (such as inheritance or the right to be buried in Turkey after death). These factors make the Turks think twice about renouncing their Turkish citizenship. On the other hand, politically-active Kurds had a tendency to be more willing to acquire German citizenship in order to avoid persecution in Turkey. They were already in exile because of accusations against them in Turkey and thus they did not want to take any further risk by keeping their Turkish citizenship as they believed German citizenship would be more secure for them. Unfortunately, there are no available statistics which study Turks and Kurds in a comparative manner in this context.

generation, despite their long term residency in Germany, do not prioritise the acquisition of German citizenship but they see it as an important matter for their children (Street 2012).

The low naturalization rates create a democratic deficit since a large minority group is excluded from political rights such as voting (Jorgensen 2009:177). There are a significant number of people with Turkish origin who have lived in Germany for decades and yet are denied voting rights at the national and local level. This exclusion from voting predictably weakened migrants' interest in political participation and position in the hostland (Cyrus 2005:31). Only EU-nationals are allowed to vote in elections of the local and European Parliament. There were several attempts in the late 1980s in Berlin, Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein to grant voting rights to foreigners in the local elections however the Federal constitutional Court blocked these attempts (Anil 2006: 54)

With regards to participation in political parties, although there are no official statistics about the percentage of members with migration backgrounds in political parties in Germany (Miera 2009b), as naturalized citizens, Turkish migrants are represented in all political levels as many main political parties have members with Turkish backgrounds (Jorgensen 2009: 178). However, their numbers are quite low if one considers the size of the Turkish community in Germany. Residents who are not naturalized can become members of political parties except Bavarian CSU and CDU, which require a one-year waiting period (Miera 2009b). Less than 1% of former guest worker groups are said to be members of a political party (Cyrus 2005).

During the course of my interviews, the spokesmen of the migrant organisations underlined that reforms are needed in the political rights of migrants who live in Germany for decades without such rights. Many perceive that the right for political participation does not necessarily indicate integration, but it is still a symbolic gesture on behalf of the German authorities showing that they are ready to embrace the non-native German citizens. As Kenan Kolat mentions in one of his interviews: "If Germany were to pass appropriate legislation, it would have a major effect, because it would be a signal to the people: we accept you".⁷³

Among my interviewees, only a few were active members of political parties in Germany. Turkish and Kurdish organisation leaders informed me that the Greens and other parties at the

⁷³ Michal Dimitrov's interview with Kenan Kolat for Open Citizenship Journal (Volume 2, Summer 2011), titled "Participation is Key to Integration".

left side of the spectrum, in particular, have the highest number of members with migration backgrounds. However, since my questions revolved around the openness of political parties for lobbying and the space they provided for homeland-oriented politics for migrants, the situation was much different from Sweden. The majority of the interviewees believed that although there are first- and second-generation Kurdish or Turkish descent politicians who are active in political parties, bringing up homeland issues is perceived as problematic in Germany. The common argument was that such behaviour hinders one's chances of a political career.

4.3.4 Problematic Issues in Germany

Anil argues that: “as ‘guests’ are not permanently guaranteed civil rights and more importantly, as ‘guest’ implies a temporary status”, the German approach, albeit divided in two camps – the left and right, affected how the migrants perceive themselves in German society. The ethno-cultural understanding of German citizenship reinforced “prejudice and stigmatization” against non-German residents, and more importantly created a “class cleavage on a hereditary basis” (Anil 2005: 466). This attitude has a huge impact on how Turks, Kurds and other groups formed their transnational identity and how they emotionally invested their loyalties to Germany. Research shows that 75% of Turkish origin residents in Germany feel they are treated like second-class citizens (Mueller 2006: 25).

With regards to *xenophobia* in Germany, it is widely acknowledged that certain immigrant groups have been subject to negative attention for decades. Especially in the 1980s and 1990s, the German reaction against the immigrant population took two forms: direct physical attacks on the migrant population and electoral support for right-wing political parties (Chapin 1996). Among the ethnic immigrant communities from various backgrounds such as Greeks, Italians or Yugoslavs, the Turks suffered the most in terms of stigmatization, and negative perceptions or attributions (Mueller 2006: 19). Migrants from Turkey have often been targeted by racist and extreme right-wing groups since they settled in Germany because they formed the biggest, and consequently the most visible, migrant group. After the 1980s there was a visible campaign against migrants from Turkey. It was not uncommon to see “Turken raus” (Turks out) or “Erschlagt die Turken” (kill the Turks) graffitied in German cities (Abadan-Unat 2002: 63). Two significant incidents are worth mentioning here: the first was in Mölln, in 1992, when a racist group set a Turkish migrant populated building on fire and three Turkish immigrants died. Following this, in Solingen in 1993, a similar tragedy occurred and claimed the lives of five Turkish women. The attacks caused many protests by the Turkish community. However,

these are not the only incidents. Even today, occasionally newspapers report the harassment, beating or killing of Turkish and Kurdish migrants in racist attacks. These issues deeply affected how the migrants from Turkey interacted with German society.

The reactions to racist approaches to migrants from Turkey also included counter-violence. Immigrant neighbourhoods, the so-called “ghettos”, started forming their own gangs and were willing to fight “the Skinheads” (White 1997: 765). The groups were either ultra-nationalist groups based on ethnic identity, or they were called migrant groups in general with no specific reference to ethnicity or religion. I encountered several second-generation members who used to belong to Turkish or Kurdish gangs (my interviews with them will be analysed in Chapter 10). These forms of resistance did not help to ameliorate the image of immigrants in the eyes of the German society but instead they paved the way to the emergence of perceptions that associate immigrants with criminal activities. Although groups openly demonstrating racist tendencies against immigrants are less visible today than they were in the 1990s, they continue to exist.⁷⁴ Reports about racism and xenophobia showed that the police register more extreme right-wing crimes by comparison to earlier periods.⁷⁵

It is also important to mention that today although immigrants constitute more than 10% of the German population, they face two major problems that are strongly interlinked: *unequal opportunity in employment* and *unequal opportunity in education* (Yurdakul 2006: 439). The unemployment rate was estimated to be around 16% in 2000 and 20% among the immigrants, and immigrants are less likely than German natives to find a job (Yurdakul 2006: 439). According to Yurdakul, one of the reasons behind the unemployment rate is the lack of equal opportunities in education for second- and third-generation Turks and Kurds. The Turkish origin second and third generations are more likely to become unskilled workers or to lack vocational training (ibid.).

⁷⁴There are also other factors which helped xenophobic tendencies grow in German society. According to the Annual Report (2007) on Ethnic Discrimination and Xenophobia in Germany, in 2005 the police registered the highest number of violent attacks against the immigrants by politically motivated right-wing groups since the year 2000. The statistics of the year 2006 also showed parallel results in terms of a rise in the number of extreme right wing crimes. The Annual Report on the Ethnic Discrimination and Xenophobia in Germany (2007). http://www.efms.uni-bamberg.de/pdf/efms_Data_Collection_Report_2006.pdf

⁷⁵Moreover, several xenophobic attacks on the dwellings of migrant residents, Kebab bistros and a Muslim prayer room, received a great deal of public attention. For more information see: Racism, Xenophobia and Ethnic Discrimination in Germany. Update Report 2008. <http://www.efms.uni-bamberg.de/pdf/Rassismus%20update%202008.pdf>

The Report on Racism, Xenophobia and Ethnic Discrimination in Germany (2008)⁷⁶ mentioned that more than 50% of the migrant background residents in Germany believe that they are discriminated in the labour market. Another report in 2010 included the results of the first systematic discrimination testing study in Germany proving that applicants with a Turkish sounding name face discriminatory barriers in terms of access to the labour market.⁷⁷ In terms of education, research shows that migrants and their descendants clearly continue to be underprivileged in the German educational system. The PISA studies of 2001 and 2006 conducted by OECD proved the educational underperformance of migrant students which clearly shows that the second generation were disadvantaged by the educational system compared to their German peers (Faas 2010: 53). In 2008 it was revealed that 20% of the complaints regarding discrimination are in the field of education⁷⁸ and in 2010 this decreased to 12%.⁷⁹ These issues were frequently brought up by the leaders of migrant organizations during our interview. Many claims that the problems related to education and employment are one of the main reasons why the second generation cannot be successfully integrated. For some, these problematic areas were even the main reasons behind the violent encounters between Turkish and Kurdish communities in Germany. I touch upon these issues in detail in Chapter 10.

Researchers also pointed at the shift in the debate that publicly *Islamized* the migrants from Turkey in Germany. The debates on *Islamophobia* in Germany is by no means a post-9/11 phenomenon, it existed long before that in public and political discussions. The international debate on the antagonism between Islam and the Western world is reflected in the German debate on norms and values and in the reduction of the debate on the “Muslim other” (Miera 2009a). Christoph Ramm (2011) shows that debates on the incompatibility of Islam to German norms and values can be traced back to the early 1990s and the multiculturalism debates of that era. Currently what one sees is that “the image of immigrants has been increasingly ‘Islamized’, thereby taking up and reshaping older discourses which focused on their ethnic and cultural ‘otherness’ as foreigners or on the vision of a second generation ‘caught between two cultures’”. Migrants from Turkey in Germany are reduced to a “Muslim collective” who live in

⁷⁶Racism, Xenophobia and Ethnic Discrimination in Germany. Update Report 2010. <http://www.efms.uni-bamberg.de/pdf/Rassismus%20update%202008.pdf>

⁷⁷Racism, Xenophobia and Ethnic Discrimination in Germany. Update Report 2008. http://www.efms.uni-bamberg.de/pdf/CDC_Germany_2010_efms.pdf

⁷⁸Racism, Xenophobia and Ethnic Discrimination in Germany. Update Report 2010. <http://www.efms.uni-bamberg.de/pdf/Rassismus%20update%202008.pdf>

⁷⁹ Ibid.

parallel societies (Ramm 2011). The skepticism towards Islam reveals itself in many ways. For instance, there are cases related to the right of wearing headscarf in various German states. The discussions about whether it was appropriate to wear the headscarf in classrooms were very popular in 2003, after the case of a ban on headscarf (a school teacher was banned from wearing a headscarf in the classroom) in Baden-Württemberg.⁸⁰ For Faas, these kinds of events are evidence that policy-makers and parts of the general population have a tendency to refuse to accept the accommodation of Muslim rights in German society (2010: 48-50).

When it comes to anti-discrimination measures to protect migrants and their descendants, the reforms were fairly ineffectual. As Jorgensen points out: “The debate and investigation of institutional or structural discrimination” is simply absent (Jorgensen 2009: 179). Compared to Sweden where the first discrimination laws were passed in the mid-1980s, Germany only included anti-discrimination in its penal code in 2005 when an EU-directive required it to do so. However, German legislation still provides relatively modest protection against discrimination, although it passed the EU Racial Equality Directive and Employment Framework Directive in 2006. Furthermore, even though there is a recently established anti-discrimination centre called ADS (Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes), it cannot investigate claims on its own and therefore does not work effectively (Ersanilli 2010: 35).

The current legislation is accepted to be weaker than in other European states (Faas 2010: 48). MIPEX data also suggests that Germany has made relatively few commitments to equality compared to other European countries. The reasons why Germany’s laws are ineffective in preventing discrimination are its lack of strong equality bodies and state institutions.⁸¹ In the light of these examples, it can be said that despite the fact that they followed distinct patterns of integration policies and despite the fact that MIPEX data suggests a big difference between Sweden and Germany in these policy areas, we find evidence that both Sweden and Germany have problems with structural discrimination and xenophobia and the extreme-right wing in both countries is on the rise.

4.3.5 Multiculturalism in Germany: Ambiguity and Failure

⁸⁰Baden-Württemberg became the first in Germany to ban the headscarf. Other states followed this decision (Bavaria, Bremen, Thuringia, Lower Saxony, North-Rhine Westphalia, Saarland and Hesse). The decision caused fierced debates about religious freedom. For more info see *BBC News*, “German state backs headscarf ban”, 1 April 2004. Last access 1 June 2012. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3591043.stm>

⁸¹ Country Profile Germany, MIPEX, www.mipex.eu/germany

In 2010, in a speech addressed to the young Christian Democrats Angela Merkel said:

[...] the so-called ‘multikulti’ concept – ‘that we are now living side by side and are happy about it’ – does not work. ‘This approach has failed, utterly [...]. We feel bound to the Christian image of humanity – that is what defines us. Those who do not accept this are in the wrong place here.

She also added that the migrants should learn German as soon as possible and that immigrants should work harder to integrate into German society.⁸² This argument is somewhat ironic considering that Germany never had a comprehensive multicultural policy towards the immigrant population and their descendants (Miera 2009a). Instead, the German approach to multiculturalism can be said to be unenthusiastic when it comes to implementing policies that would encourage multiculturalism. As Schönwalder explains, today the politicians are using the concept in order to refer to the negative experiences of the past or to the illusions of leftist parties about German society; however it is not possible to talk about Germany abandoning multiculturalism, as she underlines “such an official policy has never existed – at least on the federal level” (2010: 152).

In today’s Germany, “integration” is a much more popular concept compared to multiculturalism; these concepts are even used in a mutually exclusive manner and integration is presented as an alternative to multiculturalism. Although in reality Germany was a multicultural country, it never applied multiculturalism as an official policy or as an institutional form. Therefore, many politicians and various media bodies use the term as an explanation for the existence of “parallel societies” and problems related to immigration. The term *Leitkultur*⁸³ (*leading culture*) is used as a political discourse against multiculturalism which is perceived as divisive by various German politicians, especially from the right wing parties. Although the use of the term *Leitkultur* caused serious political debates, it actually underlined the perceptions of many politicians and media bodies about how things should be handled in Germany: assimilation to German culture should be compulsory and immigration

⁸²“Angela Merkel; Multiculturalism in Germany has utterly failed”, *Daily Mail*, 18 October 2010. Last access 12 June 2012. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1321277/Angela-Merkel-Multiculturalism-Germany-utterly-failed.html>

⁸³ The term was first used by the sociologist Bassam Tibi, in 1998, in a European context when he wanted to invent a word that would represent European common norms and shared values. The term then was reinterpreted by several German politicians (such as then parliamentary leader of the CDU, Freidrich Merz) after the year 2000 and started being used in debates related to German national identity and migration (Miera 2007: 5-6). The term signifies German core values that immigrants *should* adopt in order to successfully integrate into German society. It has a connotation that sees the host society culture superior to the migrants’ cultural background and it signifies cultural assimilation.

should be controlled and reduced. As a result of reactions from the leftist parties, the *Leitkultur* debate stayed dormant for a while, however it is brought back to the table after important events such as the Muhammed cartoon affairs in Denmark. According to Miera, the aspects that the *Leitkultur* includes (German language, loyalty to constitutional values, human rights, secularism, sufficient knowledge about German history and culture) are overtly or tacitly targeting the Muslim population in Germany because of the way it is debated and the discussions usually involve connotations that accuse the Muslims of lacking these “core” attributes which the *Leitkultur* offers (Miera 2007: 6).

Although the debates about assimilation have shifted to a level where “integration” has replaced the word “assimilation”, Germany still has problems with defining what it means to “integrate” into German society. Is it essentially a process of “turning Turks into Germans” as Mueller (2006:14) argued in one of his articles? Or is it the assimilationist approach that *Leitkultur* has reinforced as Miera suggested? (2007:2). Perhaps we should revisit the questions that Schönwalder asked: “What does integration mean? How assimilationist is this concept? How much space does it allow for ethnic plurality?” (Schönwalder 2010: 154)

There have been recent policy developments for the integration of immigrants, however in Germany there has not been an institutionalized coherent integration policy (Korkmaz 2005: 47). Since the main political parties (especially the Christian Democrats) have finally acknowledged that Germany is an immigration country, now there are varying approaches to the interpretation of “integration”. While the SPD sees integration as a consequence of naturalization, the CDU sees integration as a prerequisite for naturalization. The contention between the two major parties can be observed in every aspect of migration policy including matters that are related to naturalization and dual citizenship (Faas 2010: 44).

Currently what is aimed at with the new integration debate is to sustain the integration of migrants and their descendants at socio-economic as well as cultural levels. It suggests that certain issues such as the acquisition of German language are the first priorities in order to facilitate integration process. The main elements of multiculturalism such as recognition of cultural diversity and granting group rights are perceived as a danger for societal cohesion rather than a *must* for integration. The German system also requires “foreigners” to respect German constitutional values and adapt to German culture. However, these discussions are usually accompanied by debates on the compatibility of Islam to democracy or the

unwillingness of migrants to cooperate on the issues related to integration (Schönwalder 2010: 154).

Implicit German political acknowledgement of being a multicultural society emerged around the time of the new immigration law of 2004. Later, the coalition of Conservatives and Social Democrats, who came to power in 2005, has given priority to integration issues. For instance, Chancellor Merkel initiated a dialogue with representatives of different migrant communities and other institutions on a government level with the intention of developing a national integration programme (Miera 2009a). There had been several developments such as the integration summit in July 2006, or the establishment of integration courses. The need to promote “integration” paved the way for the organisation of several summits such as the *Integrationsgipfel*⁸⁴ and *Islamkonferenz*. The former was a platform to discuss educational opportunities, employment for the second generation, and German language learning (Faas 2010:44) and it was the “first governmental initiative in German immigration history that aimed to involve immigrants in an institutionalized debate” (Miera 2009b). In comparison to Sweden, these initiatives indicate that the debates about integration and multiculturalism are very much constructed in a religious context rather than an ethnic one⁸⁵.

Moreover, a youth integration summit (Jugendintegrationsgipfel) was organised in order to discuss issues related to language education, local integration and cultural diversity (Faas 2010: 47). However, these initiatives did not really solve the problems and remained symbolic. The developments have not paved the way for the full embracing of the idea of a multicultural society and many federal states, led by the conservative parties, went on making a distinction between “us” and “them”(Faas 2010:46).

During my interviews, almost all of the interviewees made reference to these current debates and to the rise of Islamophobia in Germany in order to illustrate “why they cannot feel German or why they feel they are discriminated in Germany.” Many claimed that immigrants are seen as problematic and Islam is perceived as a security issue in Germany. Moreover, leaders of Turkish associations underlined that when the German politicians talk about immigrants and their integration problems they actually solely mean “Turks” and they feel like they are the targeted group for the criticisms about integration issues.

⁸⁴ The first summit was in July 2006, after which it became an annual event.

⁸⁵ I thank Prof. Thomas Faist for bringing this issue to my attention.

4.3.6 Migrant Organisational Patterns in Germany

Soysal characterizes the German approach to migrant organisations as a model that combines corporatist and statist patterns. Although its organisational structure involves many characteristics of a corporatist system, the German state has a strong presence in the political order as the centre of sovereignty. Unlike the Swedish model, the German model does not put migrants into ethnic categories and does not make special provisions for “participation of migrants as collectivities”. In contrast to Sweden, migrant organisations are not given a special role in incorporation policy and there are no coherent formal links that connect the migrant associations to the state system (Soysal 1994).

For a long time there was no institutionalized system that supported centralized migrant organisations as they existed in Sweden (White 1997, 755). As Koopmans et.al. pointed out, Germany has maintained a policy approach where migrants are excluded from political participation. With the exception of the weak Foreigners' Councils (Ausländerbeiräte) at the local level, migrants had no institutionalized channels of accession to the political process in Germany (2001: 78). Each *Land* had its own policies towards migrants and migrant organisations. Thus, each ethnic group has been provided with different opportunity structures in different localities (2009: 239). Soysal explains: “Because of the German federal political and administrative structure, migrant policy and its implementation differ considerably among local states (Länder), as well as between the states and the federal government” (1994: 62). Therefore, there is no nation-wide formulated German policy and the current policies do not necessarily target collective groups, especially as “formal ethnicities” as in the case of Sweden.

The federal budget did not include a special funding system for migrant organisations, however at the local level there were a certain number of grants that could be offered to migrant organisations on a project basis (Soysal 1994: 108). Furthermore, the German system had not developed a strategy for facilitating the formation of migrant associations. As Koopmans et.al stated: “there was no institutional focus for minority claims in the form of an official minority, racial equality, or antidiscrimination politics that might legitimate migrant demands and identify responsible authorities for their implementation” (2001: 78). However this trend seems to have begun to change during recent years.

Lately, Germany has adopted policies that perceive immigrant organisations as partners in the integration process. The migrant organisations work closely with the German authorities regarding the issues of integration. Many authors agree that migrant organisations are started to be taken seriously and are recognized by the authorities today as bridges between the migrant groups and the German authorities. Immigrant associations are accepted as political actors in today's Germany as they defend immigrant rights vis-à-vis the German political parties as well as the local and federal German authorities (Cyrus 2005; Jorgensen 2009, Yurdakul 2006). Although there is fragmentation and sometimes rivalry among the migrant organisations, they are still accepted as representatives of their group. However, at this point, *who represents whom* becomes a critical question. Previous research shows that there are several thousand Turkish organisations founded under different names, sometimes with overlapping agendas. Some associations are political, some are based on hometownship bonds and some are religious. There are also associations solely for women. Youth organisations are mostly established under the umbrella of first-generation organisations. Statistics also show that the level of participation in migrant organisations is very low compared to migrant participation in Sweden (Jorgensen 2009:240). Therefore it is difficult to say who is to be taken as representative of the Kurdish or Turkish population. The heterogeneity among the migrants from Turkey is much deeper and more visible in Germany compared to Sweden. Since the lack of an official institutionalized system that incorporates immigrants in central organisations eventually caused a fragmented organisational pattern, it is hard to find an association that represents all the Turks or all the Kurds in that way (Jorgensen 2009:40). The state's funds to support the migrant organisations are limited and, in contrast to Sweden, the number of members does not affect the amount of financial help a particular organisation may receive from the state (Jorgensen 2009: 241).

For a long time there was a suspicion that the associations were encouraging the emergence of parallel societies and hampering integration (Cyrus 2005:37). Mushaben emphasizes the fact that the spectre of parallel societies also overshadows the civic participation of migrants and their descendants in ethnic organisations. An example she gives is that when migrants apply for German citizenship, if they tell the authorities that they are active members of ethnic organisations their chances of being granted citizenship may be lowered (2008: 30). Cyrus also underlines the fact that Islamic communities and immigrant associations of an ethnically homogeneous composition, or with a focus of orientation on the homeland, are viewed with "serious suspicion" (2005:8). Especially after 9/11, the prejudices towards the Islamic

organisations increased. Associations are subject to particular clauses of the German association law. Political activities are severely prohibited when the domestic security of German citizens is threatened and when it supports or causes the use of aggression and hostility. As Cyrus explains, political activities can be restricted when they pose a threat or when they have a tendency to harm “German and foreign residents or of distinct groups of foreign residents, foreign policy interests of Germany or the public order or any other interests of the Federal Republic.” Moreover, German authorities may ask the immigrant associations to inform them of their activities and demand information such as the names of members and the amount and source of the financial resources. Especially after 9/11, there has been an amendment on special regulations that has lowered the threshold that allows the government to forbid foreigners’ associations (2005:18).

If one considers the first organisations that were established in the 1980s by migrants from Turkey who were in exile for political reasons (Turkish left or Kurdish activist), the organisations initially did little more than (re)produce the homeland conflicts in Germany (with a few exceptions). Only after the beginning of 1990s, with the change of the discourse in Germany, did migrant organisations start to develop an orientation towards German politics (Cyrus 2005: 41-42). Moreover, as research shows, the focus of the orientation of many migrant organisations moved from homeland issues to the current situation of migrants and their descendants in the host country (ibid, 52), and eventually started following a “dual agenda” (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003).

The organisations formulate political decisions, plan campaigns and facilitate relationships between the migrant community and the host country. They gradually became very important, active political agents in the German political system (Yurdakul 2006: 436). During my interviews with the representatives of migrant organisations, I got the impression that they all have close links to different sectors of the German authorities. It was as if each migrant organisation was affiliated with a German political party and politicians from that party. In addition, several organisation leaders were themselves politicians from a German political party either at the local or at the national level. This also offered clues as to which organisation follows which political ideology.

When conducting my fieldwork in Germany, it was evident that some migrant organisations were focusing on host country issues as well as home country ones, while other Turkish

organisations were much more interested in improving their current situation than they were in Turkish politics. Some organisations I visited were working as help-centres for newly arrived immigrants but also for those who have been residing in Germany for some time. Their aims were to form projects related to the further integration of immigrants and their descendants to German society. They offered integration courses as well as German language courses. The Kurdish organisations were much more homeland oriented compared to the Turkish organisations, TGB (Türkische Gemeinde zu Berlin) and TBB (Türkischen Bund in Berlin-Brandenburg) which are the two umbrella organisations considered to be the most representative of Turkish immigrants in Berlin. Unlike in Sweden, it was clear that various migrant organisations in Germany had been transplanted from Turkey and for a long period were controlled remotely from the headquarters in Turkey. There were well-established Turkish communities representing several political or religious stances. The organisations transplanted from Turkey, or those that are newly established in Germany, are very much affected by the host country environment and therefore should be treated as a product of the new conditions in the host country's political and social environment.

The system's openness to migrant lobby organisations and its acceptance of homeland politics in its parliament is one of the main differences between Germany and Sweden. When it comes to lobbying in Germany, the migrant organisations have a hard task. As Ögelman et.al show, the German political context is less favourable to pluralist competition than other liberal states, therefore, unless the German state privileges an organisation or institution through patronage and incorporation schemes, migrant organisations as pressure groups do not stand much chance in pushing policy change. As the authors emphasize, the lobbying capacities of the organisations are independent of their centralized structure, size of membership or representativeness (Ögelman et. al. 2002: 154). That is why, the lobby efforts are mostly carried on an individual basis and the active members of associations try their chance in German political circles by becoming members of German political parties and make a career in German politics in order to outline their community's' demands. Yet, the German system is also very much closed to the promotion of homeland matters (Ibid. 155) as it is perceived as a sign of a lack of integration and discussions about homeland politics are accepted to be counterproductive for further integration of migrants.

4.4 COMPARATIVE SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have described the migration flows to Sweden and Germany and the historical development of immigration and integration policies, stressing the major reforms and changes that are important for the migrants from Turkey and their descendants. I then analysed their approach towards multiculturalism and the role of migrant organisations.

Both Sweden and Germany gradually became more heterogeneous after several migration flows starting in the 1960s. They both received labour migration, family reunification and asylum seekers. The main difference is that Sweden acknowledged that it is an immigration country and from the 1970s onwards started developing an integration policy. Unlike Germany, Sweden did not have a guest worker system. Therefore migrants were initially expected to assimilate to Swedish society. However, by the mid-1970s there was a shift in this understanding and multiculturalism became the official policy set in place to manage the diversity in Swedish society. The migrants were encouraged to become a part of the welfare system, which allows them to integrate economically whilst keeping their cultural heritage. The Swedish state also granted political rights to non-citizens at the local level from the 1970s. The relatively easy naturalization process, as well as the possibility to acquire dual citizenship, gave the non-native residents and naturalized citizens a feeling of confidence in Sweden.

In Germany political authorities finally came to terms with the idea that the so-called “guest workers” were not going to return to their countries of origin and that they would settle in Germany with their families, bringing their cultural baggage with them. For a long time, migrants were given the right to integrate only at the economic level of society and they were deprived of political rights. They lived like “local foreigners” (Abadan-Unat 2002: 254). Recently, there has been a move towards a more civic and territorial understanding of citizenship and nationality compared to the previous ethno-cultural approach towards membership in the German state. This change was an outcome of long debates and bargaining processes between the main political parties. However, despite this shift, Germany continues to struggle to “leave behind the image of the third-generation ‘foreigner’ (Auslander) or ‘foreign citizen’ (ausländische Mitbürger)” (Faas 2010: 55). The issue of migration has long been a topic of debate between the right- and left-wing and has been used as election material. Due to the poorly handled integration policies over the decades, efforts to integrate foreign nationals and their descendants into German society are often perceived to have failed.

In both Sweden and Germany despite their different approach to migrant incorporation and integration policies, there is significant evidence of discrimination and xenophobia towards the migrants and their descendants. Sweden seems to be doing much better in terms of reforming anti-discrimination policies and it scores relatively high in the MIPEx index on the issues related to integration and anti-discrimination. In Germany, discrimination and segregation seem to be much more noticeable. In the course of my fieldwork, the interviewee testimonies showed that in Sweden, the Turkish and Kurdish second generation were aware of the discriminatory patterns; however they stated that they have no personal experiences of discrimination – with a few exceptions. In Germany however, almost all interviewees drew attention to discrimination and xenophobia, which they claim to have experienced in daily life. One reason for this may be that in Germany, discrimination and xenophobia occur in much more visible forms compared to Sweden, and another reason may be that the Turkish and Kurdish communities constitute the biggest “foreigner” community in Germany, while in Sweden they are the tenth biggest community. While in Germany, migrants from Turkey feel they are stigmatized by several politicians and the media, and that the integration debates target them specifically, the common perception of my Swedish interviewees was that there are groups who are targeted more than the migrants from Turkey. They do not feel that they are the subjects of the critiques related to integration problems.

What can we say about the integration problems in these countries and their impact on diasporic identity formation? During my fieldwork, I have found evidence for both types of arguments that I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Some members of both the Turkish and Kurdish communities diverted their feelings of frustration and sense of “not belonging” to in the host society towards a (re)constructed identity on ethnic or religious terms. The experts and leaders of associations I interviewed also underlined the feelings of exclusion in the host society in order to explain marginalization and use of violence among the second generation. However, I also interviewed diaspora members who described themselves as “fully integrated” into German and Swedish society and yet showed great – perhaps the greatest – interest in bringing the homeland conflicts to the hostland’s political agenda. It can even be argued that the diaspora elites usually belong to the “most integrated” segments of the transnational communities. Therefore, with regard to the reproduction of homeland conflicts in the hostland in particular, what is crucial to look at more closely is that *how the hostland integration affects the strategies that diaspora members use* rather than focusing on the correlation between

transnational ties and the levels of integration. I unpack this topic in the following chapters with the evidence I gathered throughout my fieldwork.

With regards to the correlation between political participation in the host society and diasporic activity, I argue that it is impossible to offer generalizations. In some cases, diaspora members use the opportunities in the hostland in a pragmatic way and political participation is beneficial in order to influence policy change in the hostland with regards to the homeland issues. In other cases, exclusion from citizenship and political participation rights might push the migrant community to strengthen its ties with the homeland and consequently increase homeland-oriented activity. However, my observations show that in Sweden, the straightforward naturalization processes, as well as political participation rights gave the interviewees confidence in their position in Swedish society. Although they do not feel they are “real Swedes”, they stated that they feel integrated in society and enjoy equal rights. In Germany, however, the past experiences of difficulties with naturalization and the current debates on the lack of dual citizenship rights for migrants from Turkey caused feelings of exclusion among the diaspora groups.

In Sweden the multicultural environment gives immigrants and their descendants great poise with regard to preserving their cultural heritage. Yet, as shown above, there are many problematic aspects concerning the implementation of those policies. Research shows that today, Sweden faces the dilemma of bridging the gaps between the native Swedish population and the naturalized immigrants and their descendants, with regards to granting equal opportunities in the labour market or political participation in decision-making mechanisms. Moreover, the Swedish multicultural system ethnicizes the migrants and their descendants and put them in culturally distinct categories. This, in the end, creates a hierarchy between the Swedish culture and the others.

Unlike in Sweden where multiculturalism is a compound element of integration policy, in Germany the debates that revolve around multiculturalism usually depict the term as mutually exclusive with integration. The Swedish system expects migrants and their descendants to respect the *Swedish values* while retaining their own distinct cultural heritage, and in doing so Sweden tacitly encourages a certain level of assimilation. Since the migrants and their children are not obliged to leave their cultural baggage behind, this process goes much more smoothly when compared to Germany. In some cases, migrants and their descendants might

even internalize this hierarchical relationship between their own and Swedish culture and adapting to the *Swedish values* is seen as success and it is prized. Although the discourse on *Swedish values* has an undertone which also criticizes elements of migrant cultures, especially those with Muslim backgrounds – for instance in debates related to honour killings, it still comes in a package which is garnished with a multiculturalist discourse where the migrant does not feel the threat of losing his/her cultural heritage. Unlike in Sweden, in Germany the *Leitkultur* debate has a more compelling connotation for the migrants and their descendants. The debates surrounding *Leitkultur* and the integration of migrants usually openly suggest that the German core culture is superior to the others, especially to the Muslim culture which makes the non-native residents/citizens uncomfortable. The rhetoric about the adaptation of migrants to German culture and values underlines the supposed inferiority of other cultures, which in the end makes it difficult for non-natives to identify themselves as a part of German society. It is also important to add that while Swedish multiculturalism debate revolves around the ethnic identities of the migrants and their descendants, religious identities have been a matter of discussion in the German debate. Therefore, it is clear that the two countries have different approaches towards the application of multicultural policies⁸⁶.

Lastly, unlike in Germany, the Swedish system was successful in creating “representative” migrant organisation bodies which get involved in decision making mechanisms. In Germany instead, the inter-group rivalries and fragmentations as well as the size of the communities have made it harder for German authorities to deal with them simultaneously. There is also still no coherent state system that incorporates these associations in an institutionalized manner. Besides this, the associations have serious financial problems as they lack funding from the state. These characteristics of the organisational patterns in Germany are highly distinct from the corporatist structure of the Swedish system. Compared to other countries in Europe, in Germany the migrant organisations can be considered as fairly weak in terms of exerting political influence (Miera 2009b). In Sweden, migrant organisations believe that they can make a difference, at least at the discursive level. Instead, in Germany the leaders of associations informed me that they do not have much power to influence decision-making procedures (especially with regards to issues related to the homeland). On the other hand, in Sweden the interviewees stated that if they get together in an organised manner, they believe that they can affect policy changes and they feel comfortable about bringing their homeland

⁸⁶ I thank Prof. Thomas Faist for bringing this issue to my attention.

issues to the Swedish political agenda. The fieldwork results starting from Chapter 7 provide illustrations of differences between Sweden and Germany on these matters.

5

TURKISH AND KURDISH MIGRATION TO SWEDEN AND GERMANY

In this chapter, the focus of my analysis shifts to the profiles of Turkish and Kurdish communities and their political mobilization in Sweden and Germany. My contention is that in order to understand the organisational patterns that the second-generation diaspora members have shaped, (re)shaped, or created from scratch in a hostland context, it is crucial to analyse how the first arrivals became politically mobilized.

5.1 TURKISH AND KURDISH MIGRATION TO SWEDEN

Immigration from Turkey to Sweden began after the mid-1960s in the form of labour migration. These immigrants mostly came from a small district called Kulu (Konya) (Bayram et.al. 2009: 91) and they were typically of peasant origin, with a low educational background (Westin 2003: 991). The profile of migrants from Turkey shifted with the arrival of asylum-seekers (mostly Assyrians and Kurds) who came to Sweden after the 1971 military intervention. Another wave of migration began after the military coup in 1980 and on this occasion the asylum-seekers were mostly of Kurdish origin.

Today, migrants from Turkey constitute the tenth-largest migrant group in Sweden. It is estimated that Assyrians and Kurds combined outnumber ethnic Turks. However, this data is based on various strands of fieldwork rather than on official statistics (Westin 2003: 992). Today, the estimated number of Turks given by Turkish organisations varies between 80,000 and 100,000, but half of this number is considered to be the second generation, and it also includes migrants from Turkey with different ethnic backgrounds. According to the recent estimates of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in Turkey, the number of Turkish citizens residing in Sweden is around 67,000, and between 1990 and 2008 around 33,000 Turkish migrants acquired Swedish citizenship (or dual citizenship).⁸⁷ However, these statistics also include the ethnic Kurds who are described as “Turkish migrants”.

⁸⁷The Ministry of Labour and Social Security Official Website. Last access 30 May 2012: http://www.csgeb.gov.tr/csgebPortal/diyih.portal?page=yv&id=1#_ftn8

With regard to immigrants of Kurdish origin, Emanuelsson estimates there are between 25,000 and 40,000 now living in Sweden (2005: 83), while Khayati (2008) suggests it may be closer to 55,000. However, as these estimates also include individuals of Kurdish origin migrating from other Middle Eastern countries⁸⁸, it is difficult to offer an exact figure. Nevertheless, it is clear that Kurds from Turkey constitute the largest Kurdish group in Sweden (Khayati 2008: 202).

5.1.1 The Turkish Community and Diaspora Mobilization

The largest group of Turkish immigrants are those who came from Kulu⁸⁹ (Konya) and the migration flows took the form of labour migration and family reunification. In some cases, 100-150 people from the same village migrated to Sweden and, in other cases, several generations of families would all move together. Therefore, the migrants from Konya are the most dominant group among the Turkish community, and the sense of belonging and the loyalties they harbour also revolve around this regional identity - family ties and regional attachments are particularly strong.

According to a recent study on the Turkish population in Sweden, Turkish immigrants usually speak Turkish at home, follow the Turkish media, and have a fair understanding of the Swedish language. However, according to the results of this survey, 71% of them 'felt' Turkish, regardless of having been born in Sweden or living in the country for more than 30 years (Bayram et.al. 2009: 104). Naturally these results may vary from one generation to another, and the younger generations are much more fluent in Swedish, have better social mobility in

⁸⁸ "There have been attempts to calculate the number of Kurds in Sweden on the basis of how many school children are taught in a Kurdish language as their mother tongue. In Swedish compulsory school (the first nine years) pupils who speak a language other than Swedish at home have the right to receive education in their mother tongue. In the 2007/08 school year, more than 3,000 pupils received education in two of the Kurdish languages, making Kurdish the fifth largest mother tongue language taught in Swedish schools (Swedish National Agency for Education 2009, 44). Parkvall estimates that there are approximately 66,000 people who speak Kurdish in Sweden, with the largest number of speakers living in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Uppsala (Parkvall 2009, 91). With 66,000 speakers, Kurdish would be the fifth largest language in Sweden after Swedish, Finnish, Serbo-Croatian and Arabic (Parkvall 2009: 160)." Source (in Swedish): Parkvall, Mikael. 2009. *Sveriges språk – vem talar vad och var? Rapport från Institutionen för lingvistik vid Stockholms universitet* Reports from the Department of Linguistics at Stockholm University. Stockholm 2009. This information was found as a result of personal contact with Lisa Pelling, a PhD student from the University of Vienna. Her forthcoming PhD thesis is titled: "Post-remittances: Tracing the Transition of a Transnational Community".

⁸⁹ There were also many Kurds among this group; however, they either accept Turkishness as an umbrella identity or they are not present in political diaspora spaces in Sweden. Only with the second generation did Kulu Kurds start becoming visibly politically active.

Swedish society, and many feel Swedish and Turkish at the same time.

Turkish immigrants preserve their culture and traditions through organisations. They use these as a platform to make their voice heard by the Swedish authorities. In addition to the umbrella organisations that represent the Turkish community in Sweden, there are also various sub-committees that focus on issues related to women, youths, students, or sports. These organisations typically have websites that provide forums and blogs for Turkish columnists to comment on particular issues and the situation for Turks living in Sweden. In addition to the association websites, there are online newspapers and discussion forums as well as social network sites (Facebook, etc.) that bring Turks together virtually and inform them about developments both in Sweden and Turkey.

The Turkish organisations' leaders claim that Turks in Sweden have a fairly comfortable life compared to the living standards of other Turkish immigrants in other European countries. Since many of them have relatives living in France, Germany, or the Netherlands, they are able to compare the living standards in Sweden with the situation of migrants in other countries. However, certain issues were raised during my fieldwork that are commonly mentioned by the Turkish elite in Sweden. The complaints typically involve the lack of possibilities for Turkish immigrants to learn their mother tongue since the courses that are provided in schools are not considered satisfactory. Other problems cited include xenophobia, racism, unemployment, and housing issues. Certain organisations frequently carry out projects to overcome these problems and to secure improved integration into Swedish society, and these projects are usually financed by the Swedish state.

Homeland-Oriented Political Activities and Diaspora Mobilization

In terms of the political orientations of Turkish migrants in Sweden, the country offers an exceptional case. Apart from a few leftist groups that fled Turkey for political reasons in the 1970s and 80s, the Turkish migration to Sweden was the result of labour migration, and, significantly, these labour migrants came predominantly from a specific region. This migrant profile reveals itself in the organisational structure of the Turkish groups. Unlike other groups from Turkey, such as Kurds and Assyrians, the Turkish organisations have, until very recently, distanced themselves from the political sphere and acted solely as bridges between the Swedish authorities and the Turkish community.

In time, rivalries emerged among the Turkish community, not on the basis of political ideology but, rather, of regionalism; in other words, they were the result of micro-nationalism. The first Turkish organisation, Turkiska Riksförbundet (the Turkish Federation □ TRF), assumed a leading role among the Turkish population for two decades. However, the ‘Kulu domination’ over the Turks who migrated from other cities and regions in Europe engendered a level of dissatisfaction with the activities that were pursued. Other members of the Turkish community who were not from Kulu wanted to form another organisation. During the 1990s, second-generation Turks who wanted to surpass the TRF mandate and follow a more ‘integration-oriented’ and ‘Sweden-oriented’ agenda formed a second Turkish umbrella organisation Svensk-Turkiska Riksförbundet (the Swedish-Turkish Federation □ STRF). This organisation also followed a non-partisan programme and, until very recently, refrained from Turkish politics in order to focus on the social situation of Turks in Sweden. The STRF also cooperated with a youth association called Turkiska Ungdomsförbundet (the Turkish Youth Federation □ TUF). Besides these three umbrella organisations, Turkiska Student och Akademiker Föreningen (the Turkish Student and Academics Association □ TSAF) is another youth association that recently became active for Turkish students. Formed mainly by the second and third generation, these organisations began focusing on the problems of the Turkish community in Sweden and on the cultivation of Turkish culture.

As these organisations did not have a clear ideological stance on Turkish politics it is problematic to label them by their connections to political parties in Turkey. The organisations support different Swedish parties, and their activities vary, yet, when it comes to issues regarding Turkey, they tend to present a united front during protests and campaigns. It is, in fact, quite difficult to identify the political movements among them. For example, movements such as the Grey Wolves⁹⁰ or Milli Görüş⁹¹ are large migrant networks in Germany with connections to political parties in Turkey. However, there are no groups (except for small associations which have no significant mass support) that could be counted as satellite institutions of these movements in Sweden. I interviewed one association member connected to the TRF with links to the Milli Görüş who explained that there was once an association in Stockholm tied to the Grey Wolves, but that it no longer exists. There is also no significant support for leftist movements (with headquarters in Turkey) as there is in Germany. People

⁹⁰The Grey Wolves are the youth branch of an ultra-nationalist political party, MHP, in Turkey. They are mobilized in several European countries and are occasionally involved in fights with Turkish leftist groups, PKK followers or neo-Nazis.

⁹¹ A religious movement that originated in Turkey in 1969 and flourished in Germany.

who belonged to the Turkish left started supporting the leftist parties in Sweden and did not form well-established transnational networks with leftist movements in Turkey as they did in Germany.

Turkish politics was put back on the organisational agenda as a result of developments in both Turkey and Sweden. More than half of the interviewees noted that the first political activities started at the end of the 1980s and lasted throughout the 1990s during a period when the Kurdish movement was very active in Sweden. Kurdish activism caused some irritation among Turks, leading to reactionary responses. Although no violence was recorded, such as the street fights that occurred between Turkish and Kurdish ultra-nationalist groups in Germany, there was evident tension and growing social distance. However, this did not lead to an established structure or entrenched mobilization among members. The so-called diasporic turn, which galvanized the Turkish community to become politically active regarding homeland issues, was the 'Genocide Bill' passed by the Swedish Parliament in March 2010, which approved a resolution recognizing the mass killing of Armenians under the rule of the Ottoman Empire in 1915 as genocide. The recognition also included other ethnic groups such as Chaldeans, Syrians, Assyrians, and Pontian Greeks, garnering the support of five of the seven Swedish parliamentary parties, mainly from the left of the political spectrum. The decision strongly disappointed the Turkish community in Sweden. Turkish associations felt isolated throughout the process; both before and after the parliament passed the bill. They organised various protests, published journal articles on the issue, and recently formed lobby groups with the aim of impacting upon the politics of their hostland.

Among the first- and second-generation diaspora members, there were a number of highly visible differences in the levels of interest in Turkish and Swedish politics. The second generation was more active in terms of organising protest events and forming lobby groups to influence policies related to Turkey at the national and supranational level. They reacted more strongly to developments in Sweden related to Kurdish activism or other issues related to Turkish politics. For example, in the case of the Genocide Bill, my fieldwork shows that nationalism is evolving quickly among Turkish youths, the impetus being to 'do something for Turkey'. As a young member of the TUF put it:

We cannot ignore the fact that the image of Turkey becomes our image here. We cannot just say, 'I don't care'. Whatever happens in Turkey affects us here in Sweden.

Seeking to improve the image of Turkey, first in Sweden and then in Europe, the second generation embarked upon projects to affect decision-making procedures at the supranational level. For example, 25 members of the TUF and STRF organised a visit to the European Parliament in April 2011 to lobby for the Turkish accession into the EU, with the support of the Turkish Embassy in Stockholm. These can be interpreted as signs of the emergence of, what Sheffer (2003) calls “an incipient diaspora” initiated in particular by the second generation.

5.1.2 The Kurdish Community and Diaspora Mobilization

The Kurdish community in Sweden is more heterogeneous compared to the Turkish community. Various Kurds came to Sweden as labour migrants from the Konya region with the first wave of migration from Turkey. However, after the 1971 coup in Turkey, the number of Kurdish immigrants from Turkey rose significantly. Many were accepted as refugees, particularly after the 1980 Turkish coup d'état. During this period, the Kurds fled the chaotic atmosphere of oppression, non-recognition, and persecution in Turkey (Westin 2003: 992).

Similar to many other stateless diaspora groups, Kurds were highly active in terms of establishing associations and speaking out about political matters. While the Kurdish identity and traditions are predominately preserved, they were also emphasised to the second generation by these associations. Sweden has also been very supportive in terms of the cultivation of the Kurdish identity by supporting civil society organisations and other similar of migrant associations. In the early 1980s, an umbrella organisation for all Kurdish organisations called the Kurdish National Union was formed and officially recognized by the Swedish government.

Regarding the transnational activities of Kurdish immigrants, Sweden is an interesting case as its Kurdish migrant profile differs from that of other European countries. The country tends to host a comparatively highly educated Kurdish intelligentsia consisting of journalists, authors, academics, artists and directors. In addition to that, Sweden became a safe haven for Kurds who fled the oppression of their homeland, granting them the opportunity to cultivate their culture through the preservation of their traditions and the survival of their mother tongue, which was potentially endangered in Turkey. Van Bruinessen emphasises that Kurdish writers found Sweden “a much more stimulating environment for developing Kurdish into a modern literary language than they would have found back in Turkey, even if the language had not been banned there” (1999: 10). Today, Sweden broadcasts two Kurdish TV channels and a number of radio stations, has three main Kurdish umbrella organisations with international and

transnational networks, and several publishing houses that promote Kurdish culture and ideas (Jorgensen 2009: 223). The Swedish government has also financed the publication of books in Kurdish and, in the early 1980s, it was the only country that offered such opportunities for the Kurdish cause. There is a government sponsored Kurdish library in Stockholm, as well as several Kurdish publishers in Sweden that together have published thousands of books and journals drawing attention to the Kurdish cause or to cultural and linguistic issues. As Van Bruinessen pointed out, it was in Sweden that “A true revival of Kurmanci literature” took place (1994: 24).

Diasporic Activities of the Kurdish Diaspora in Sweden

Turkish and Kurdish organisational patterns vary immensely with respect to the structures of their organisations and activities in Sweden. Unlike the profile of the Turkish community, the profile of the first-generation Kurdish diaspora consisted partly of intellectuals and other political activists in exile. It is crucial to appreciate the importance of those already politicized migrants who arrived after the 1980s, as they were predominantly responsible for mobilizing the Kurdish movement in Sweden. Amongst my Kurdish interviewees from the second generation, only one claimed that his father had migrated for economic reasons. The remaining participants shared stories of their parents’ political activities, their suppressed lives in the harsh conditions during the 1970s and 80s, and, finally, how they found refuge in Sweden and continued their activities for the Kurdish movement. These facts, unsurprisingly, affected how the second-generation Kurds formed their identity in Sweden. Therefore, to understand the second-generation Kurdish diaspora in Sweden, it is necessary to understand the motives of first generation.

Seyhmus Diken, a Kurdish intellectual from Diyarbakir, recorded his observations about the Kurds in the diaspora. He conducted various interviews with the Kurdish activists he calls ‘the exiles from Amed’, the majority of whom resided in Sweden. Based on his interviews, it is clear that the activists who escaped to Sweden in the 1970s and 80s certainly harboured the desire to contribute to the Kurdish cause. This issue is touched upon numerous times by Diken’s interviewees, of which many held leading positions in the Kurdish movement in Sweden. According to these respondents, most of the Kurdish asylum-seekers belonged to leftist or Kurdist movements. The narratives also reveal the significance of language and literature for the Kurds in Sweden. The respondents told Diken that they were already active when they migrated to Sweden, and had one question in mind: ‘What can I do for the Kurdish

struggle in Turkey while I am in Sweden?’ In a similar vein, one of the interviewees, J. İhsan Espar, said “we were aware that we had some duties” and that he always lived with the idea that one day his peers back in Diyarbakır might ask him: “What have you done in Europe for the Kurdish cause in all these years?” (Diken 2009: 130). These narratives make clear the motivations behind the mobilization of first-generation Kurds in Sweden.

Most of the Kurdish political organisations in Sweden had a political orientation and (albeit unofficially) were linked to political movements in Kurdistan. Therefore, the political fragments and rivalries were also carried to Sweden by the first-generation Kurdish migrants. For instance, *Kurdiska Riksförbundet* (the National Kurdish Federation □ KRF) in Sweden supports the Kurdistan Socialist Party and, consequently, has links to other small political movements in Turkey. As Khayati points out: “This group of people has been known for their anti-PKK attitude, which was perhaps a good reason for them to ensure Kurdistan’s Democratic Party of Massoud Barzani, which continues to influence the organisation” (2008: 232). During my interview with Gulan Avci, a Kurdish-origin politician from the Liberal Party (*Folkpartiet Liberalerna*), she mentioned that the “KRF is for all Kurds from all parts of Kurdistan. Political parties are welcome to participate, except for the PKK... In the KRF, there are Kurdish intellectuals who faced problems with the PKK, even in Turkey.” On the other hand, most of *Kurdiska Radet’s* (the Kurdish Council) members sympathise with the PKK. However, the tension between these communities is almost negligible when compared to their interactions in Germany.

Apart from *Kurdiska Student och Akademiker Förbundet* (the Kurdish Students and Academics Association □ KSAF), which is an umbrella organisation for students of Kurdish background, it appears that other Kurdish youth groups are connected to the first-generation organisations even if they manage to work independently from them. For instance, KOMKAR is tied to KOMCIWAN, and UNGKURD has close ties to *Kurdiska Radet*. However, at times, these youth organisations join forces when there is an event that concerns the Kurdish situation in the Middle East. Many Kurdish organisations are mobilizing their resources to attract the attention of young people to the Kurdish cause and to spread “awareness” about the Kurdish situation among younger generations.

A few observations can be made regarding the differences between the first and second generations. First, as mentioned above, Sweden mostly welcomed Kurdish intellectuals in the

1970s. These Kurds were already politically active and belonged to Kurdish political movements other than the PKK. Therefore, the first arrivals did not initially sympathize with the PKK, and some even tried to keep it at a distance. Although some members of the Kurdish community changed their perceptions in later years, they constituted a separate stratum of the Kurdish movement, known as the “Swedish School” (İsveç Ekolü), which places a strong emphasis on the cultivation of the Kurdish culture and language rather than political issues. What I observed about the second generation is that they have overcome their hesitations about the PKK and, although many are not staunch supporters, they agree it is the only Kurdish voice in Turkey and in Europe. Although some might criticize its strategies, there is a tendency to respect its existence as the sole movement that can bring the Kurds their long hoped for freedom.

Another observation is that the second generation’s approach to the Kurdish question was almost completely nationalistic, and it was quite clear that the majority of the interviewees ignored the Marxist-Leninist ideology of the PKK. Many did not define themselves as leftists or socialists, words that were commonly used by the first-generation interviewees. It appears that the second-generation Kurdish participants have left behind the ideological baggage that the PKK came with in the 1980s and focus solely on the “Kurdish” parts of the PKK discourse.

Finally, one can clearly see that the ideological or political rivalries among different Kurdish groups such as KOMKAR and the PKK-affiliated organisations were smoothed out with the emergence of a second generation that gives more priority to “Kurdishness” as a whole rather than to different approaches to the resolution of the Kurdish question. Another important factor is the lack of violent conflicts between rival groups in Sweden. Although PKK members murdered two dissidents from other Kurdish groups, these atrocities occurred some 30 years ago, whereas fights and violent encounters in Germany between KOMKAR and YEKKOM happened just a few years ago. Therefore, the second generation can be said to give more priority to “unity” among the Kurds in Sweden and to try to reconcile different approaches under one roof.

5.2 TURKISH AND KURDISH MIGRATION TO GERMANY

Migration from Turkey to Germany began as a result of the bilateral agreements made between Turkey and Germany in the 1960s. They were accepted as guest workers that would return to

Turkey and the agreements were based on the proviso that the Turkish workers would stay no longer than two years, as stated in the recruitment treaties (Sen 2004). The high rate of unemployment, financial instability, and political problems in Turkey forced the Turkish immigrants to postpone their return, at least until the age of retirement and many eventually became permanent residents in Germany.

The highest number of migration flows to Germany from Turkey occurred between 1961 and 1973. Since 1973, the character of Turkish immigration to Germany has turned into a broader population migration – in the form of family reunification and asylum seeking rather than predominantly labour migration (Faist 2000: 82, Kaya & Kentel 2005:16). The political instability in Turkey had a significant impact on the profile of the migrants who came to Germany at the end of the 1970s and early 1980s. The military coup d'état in 1980 and the policies that ensued forced many activists (Kurdish and leftist) to live in exile in various European countries, including Germany (Faist 2000:83). With the new flow of immigrants, the fact of permanent residence became much clearer. It is no coincidence that the first attempts to form ethnic and religious organisations began at the end of the 1970s and continued into the early 1980s.

According to the official statistics released by the Turkish Ministry of Labour and Social Security, today some 1.6 million Turkish migrants live in Germany. The statistics also show that between 1972 and 2009, around 770,000 of these migrants acquired German citizenship.⁹² They constitute the largest foreign population in Germany and live mainly in highly industrialised areas where the first-generation migrants found work.⁹³ These figures include people of Kurdish origin since the German system does not gather statistics regarding ethnicity.

5.2.1 The Turkish Community and Diaspora Mobilization

Migrants from Turkey comprise the largest foreign population in Germany (around 30% of foreign-background communities) (Kaya 2002: 36). Today, no one talks about the guest workers anymore, and the Deutsch-Turken are considered a permanent part of Germany (Kaya 2007: 483). Individuals of Turkish origin are found in every aspect of society, working in jobs

⁹²The Ministry of Labour and Social Security Official Webpage. Last access 30 May 2012: http://www.csgeb.gov.tr/csgebPortal/diyih.portal?page=yv&id=1#_ftnref1

⁹³ They are concentrated only in 4% of German territory, usually in industrial regions such as the Ruhr basin, North Rhineland, Westphalia, or Baden-Württemberg and in cities such as Berlin, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Munich, and Stuttgart (Kastoryano 2002, Amiraux 2005: 70).

ranging from construction, to engineers or as the CEOs of large companies. In Berlin alone, more than 5,000 Turkish businesses currently employ over 20,000 workers in 90 different fields of activity (Kaya 2002: 36).

In terms of a sense of belonging and identity, it is hard to make generalizations. There are nationalist circles as well as completely assimilated groups. As Østergaard-Nielsen points out: “While surveys show that Turks socialize with Turks rather than members of wider society, other surveys also point to the fact that more and more Turks now feel equally attached to Germany and Turkey” (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 34). Some second-generation members have a “back to Turkish roots” attitude that reveals itself in every aspect of life; for instance, the inter-marriage rate between native Germans and other ethnic groups is only 5 percent (Mueller 2006: 29). While others state that they feel “more German than Turkish” and are not even fluent in Turkish anymore.

The Turkish identity is preserved thanks to the opportunities that technology and globalization offer. Travel to Turkey is no longer expensive: a ticket from Berlin to Istanbul need only cost €50-100. Turkish districts in Germany are covered with Turkish satellite dishes that show almost all Turkish channels. Turkish media is also available in Germany, for example, newspapers and magazines (such as *Merhaba*) are published there, and it is possible to find almost all the major Turkish newspapers, such as *Hurriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Sabah*, *Turkiye*, and *Taraf*, at kiosks. Political issues, Turkish history, current and past political debates, and Turkish or Islamic cultural issues are often extensively covered by the media, which helps the Turkish community keep their transnational ties with the homeland and its politics and transmit it to new generations. There are also numerous Turkish organisations that organise activities related to Turkish culture, politics, or religion to maintain solidarity among Turkish community members. The religious organisations are said to have the highest number of members, and there are more than 2,000 Islamic prayer rooms and around 150 mosques in Germany.⁹⁴ The Turkish state also sends teachers and imams to Germany to educate the young generations.

Turkish Diaspora Formation in Germany

⁹⁴ This information came from a leader of one of the Turkish associations.

Organisations help to preserve the Turkish identity and encourage discussion about Turkish politics. In the beginning, as in the case of Sweden, Turkish associations did not have a political agenda. They were mostly clubs for “Turkish workers” to play backgammon, drink tea, and discuss daily events in Turkey. One of the reasons for these politics-free gatherings was the fact that the workers were not there to stay for a long period (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 46), and the political environment was not as turbulent as it would become in the 1970s. The Turkish organisations were formed to support the Turkish workers and to offer solidarity and advice on how to survive in Germany. Most of the Turkish associations, including the Kurdish ones, were initially local and based on hometownship bonds.

In the 1960s, there were around 19 Turkish associations, however after the migration flow in the 1970s the number of associations rose. In 1974, for instance, there were already 112 active worker associations. Over time, they became extremely polarized by the ideological, religious, and ethnic cleavages in Turkey. The leftist organisations separated from the mainstream workers’ organisations, and the religious-based organisations were able to flourish in Germany, although they were banned in Turkey. Many organisations at that time became the satellites of several political movements and parties that had headquarters in Turkey (Abadan-Unat 2002: 54). A significant number of Turkish organisations in Germany are highly politicized (ethnically, religiously, or ideologically), and they are sometimes antagonistic.⁹⁵

Apart from the leftist and religious fundamentalist groups, most of the Turkish organisations are pro-state (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 63). Many organisations pursued the Kemalist ideology and formed organisations that they defined as social democratic. They had a considerable member base. The Kemalist Thought Association is one of the best examples of such organisations. The leftist groups in Germany range from orthodox communist groups to small marginal factions and almost all of them are satellite movements with headquarters in Turkey. There are movements such as DHKP-C⁹⁶ or the Turkish Communist Party (TKP). They have low-budget newsletters and leaflets but are by no means mass movements in Germany, in fact their impact is almost non-existent (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 50). They usually have first-

⁹⁵ For example, in 1973, the ultra-nationalist party (MHP) established organisations in cities such as Hannover, Köln, Munich, and Stuttgart. This party also had a militia group called “the Grey Wolves”. There were occasional clashes between the Grey Wolves and the Kurds or between the Grey Wolves and the leftist Turkish workers organisations □ especially in the 1980s.

⁹⁶ A leftist organisation that originated in Turkey and has, on occasion, resorted to violence to achieve its aims.

generation members or young newcomers rather than second-generation members. I interviewed people who belonged to these groups because their membership overlapped with those of the other main Turkish or Kurdish organisations. Among the leftist organisations, the Federation of Democratic Workers Association (DIDF) has a considerable member base, and it brings Turks and Kurds together under its roof. It also has a youth branch that organises camps and seminars. They are active in both Turkish and German politics. Interviewees with leftist tendencies were selected from this federation.

During the last two decades, many organisations have become unified under several federations that operate at local, national, and transnational levels. Numerous Turkish organisations lean on homeland politics, while others place an emphasis on hostland-related projects and occasionally show an interest in homeland politics.

The main umbrella organisations in Berlin, such as Türkischer Bund in Berlin-Brandenburg (the Turkish Association in Berlin-Brandenburg □ TBB) and Türkische Gemeinde zu Berlin (the Turkish Community in Berlin □ TGB), compete to be the voice of the Turkish community, while others take sides along ideological lines. This fragmentation affects their ability to work together to pursue common goals and make their voice heard collectively regarding their rights in Germany (Ögelman et al. 2002: 152). The TBB and TGB are similar to the TRF and STRF in Sweden. They are mostly interested in projects that are related to the situation of Turkish migrants and their descendants in Germany, and occasionally make declarations or organise protests that are related to homeland politics. They are considered to be the main lobbying groups in Germany for Turkish interests (especially in Berlin), because the other associations take an overly ideological stance and cannot act as representatives of “Turks in Germany” in the way these two organisations can.

The Turkish diaspora, with all its sub-groups, is not an incipient diaspora like the Turkish community in Sweden. It is a long-established diaspora with constant ideological injections from Turkey, and the second generation follows this trend by adding an emphasis on German politics at different levels (depending on the organisation). I also observed that the majority of my politically active interviewees usually followed the same pattern as their parents. Migrant organisations with diasporic tendencies are often attended by entire families, and the younger generations – unless they refuse □ tend to follow this tradition. Therefore, one of the strongest pulls for political mobilization is derived from family influences.

5.2.2 The Kurdish Community and Diaspora Mobilization

Kurdish migration to Germany also started with the bilateral agreements between Turkey and Germany. Since Kurds in Germany are not recognized as a separate ethnic group, statistics do not show the percentage of Kurds among the first flows of migration to Germany from Turkey. They are all considered to be Turkish and as they hold Turkish citizenship, there are no available data on their number. However, it is known that one of the first flows of Kurds occurred after the earthquake in Varto, Muş. After another earthquake in Van-Muradiye in 1976, many Kurds migrated to several countries in Europe. These migration flows were followed by Kurdish-origin migrants from the Dersim, Erzincan, Bingöl, and Lice areas.⁹⁷ According to the Kurdish Workers Federation (KOMKAR), the number of Kurds in Germany is about 900,000.⁹⁸

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Kurdish diaspora is not a homogenous entity. The diaspora comprises labour migrants, students, those who came to join their families, asylum-seekers, refugees, and exiled intellectuals. The labour migrants became politically active and were mobilized, in part, as a result of the political opportunities in European countries, which fostered a process of self-discovery in political terms. A large number of Kurds only discovered their ‘Kurdishness’ as a politicized identity in Germany (Leggewie 1996: 79, Van Bruinessen 2000, Demmers 2007: 17, Curtis 2005: 3). In addition, the mobilization efforts of the Kurdish elites encouraged many Kurds to embrace their ethnic identity and mobilize around the Kurdish cause.

In the beginning, the German authorities perceived the Kurds as a sub-group of Turkish immigrants and initially paid little attention to their cause. Because they arrived in Germany as ‘Turkish citizens’, they were treated as such by the hostland. Thus in addition to struggling to overcome discrimination and xenophobia in Europe, they had to fight for ethno-cultural recognition as ‘Kurds’. Ammann draws attention to the invisibility of the Kurdish population in Germany by highlighting the fact that even Kurdish stores and restaurants are not recognizable because they are treated as “Turkish” or “Middle Eastern” (Ammann 2005: 1013). Another example is the issue of “Kurdish” names. Because parents were allowed to choose only state-

⁹⁷ The details about Kurdish migration to Germany offered here are the result of personal contact with Rıza Baran, the president of the Kurdische Gemeinde in Berlin.

⁹⁸ KOMKAR official website: http://www.komkar.org/wer_wir_sind.html

approved names for their children, Kurds of Turkish nationality had to give their children Turkish names. The German authorities allowed only names that were approved by the Turkish consulate (Mushaben 2008: 154). There have been cases, for instance, in 2009, in which the Turkish embassy refused to give passports to children whose names had certain letters from the Kurdish alphabet (X, W, and Q) that are banned in Turkey.⁹⁹ Furthermore, their Kurdish identity was not treated as a distinct identity by the German state, and their children still had to attend Turkish migrant schools or were put into Turkish classes. Many interviewees complained about this, saying that Turkish assimilation policies were also imposed in the diaspora context in Germany. Therefore, Kurdish immigrants in Germany felt doubly excluded by both dominant groups: the Germans and Turks.

Formation of the Kurdish Diaspora in Germany

Having been inspired by the political climate in Turkey, some organisations changed the designation of their members from “Turkish migrants” to “migrants from Turkey” to be more inclusive toward the other ethnic groups, such as the Kurds, at the beginning of the 1970s. Many Kurds were already involved in leftist movements and were attending leftist organisations, however this did not prevent the gradual dissociation of two groups. After the mid-70s the Kurds started forming their own organisations in Germany. Starting with the Iraqi Kurdish organisation the Kurdish Students Society in Europe (KSSE), Kurdish organisational structures rapidly multiplied. Ammann reported 150 Kurdish organisations in Germany in 2005 (Ammann 2005: 1013).

My interview with Rıza Baran, one of the founders of the first Kurdish association in Germany, offers an important summary of the course of events in the Turkish community in Germany. His testimony showed that Turks and Kurds initially started gathering together under organisations that were supposed to bring “immigrants from Turkey” together, and they did not prioritize one ethnic identity over the other. However, with time, the Turkish members of the main associations came to disagree with the Kurdish demands in Germany such as education in Kurdish and the recognition of Kurdish as a separate identity. Therefore, many Kurds left the Turkish organisations and founded their own associations that aimed to unite Kurds together to raise their voice for their rights in Germany.

⁹⁹ “Turkish consulate in Germany refuses to give passport to child due to his Kurdish name”, *Support Kurds in Syria*, 16 October 2009. Last access 21 May 2012. <http://supportkurds.org/news/turkish-consulate-in-germany-refuses-to-give-passport-to-child-due-to-his-kurdish-name/>

According to Baran's accounts, the Kurdish activists aimed to form a separate Kurdish association, but in the 1970s they found it difficult to establish an organisation with the name "Kurdistan" in it, as they were afraid that they could be deported back to Turkey. This is why, despite the fact that almost all the members were Kurdish, the first Kurdish organisation took the name "Kultur-und Hilfsverein der Arbeiter der Türkei." By 1979, there were already 30 Kurdish associations. They decided to form a federation to unite their efforts, and in 1979, they founded KOMKAR. It became the first organisation in Germany that used the name "Kurdistan". Baran also mentions that a small number of KOMKAR members were deported by the German authorities because of their activism, but this did not stop the Kurds from seeking to establish separate organisations from the Turks. After the mid-1980s another political actor, namely the PKK came to the fore and the Kurdish diaspora spaces were dominated mostly by PKK-affiliated groups. A detailed account of this is given in Chapters 3 and 6.

Today, the Kurdish organisations in Germany carry out activities related to Kurdish politics, culture, and identity. They watch the Kurdish TV, follow news websites written in Turkish, Kurdish, and German, and produce literature related to the plight of Kurdish people. The organisations also run seminars, mother-tongue education, folk dance courses, festivals, and celebrations (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 62). It is important to emphasise once again that the Kurdish organisations with a political agenda do not represent the whole Kurdish population in Germany. Although some of them claim to do so, they represent only a small part of the Kurdish community (ibid. 61) because many Kurds are not politically active, especially with respect to the Kurdish issue.

The two main umbrella organisations that are currently recognized as representatives of the Kurdish community in Germany are KOMKAR and the Federation for Kurdish Associations in Germany (YEKKOM). By contrast to Sweden, where there is little tension between the two organisations (amongst their second-generation participants), the relationship between KOMKAR and YEKKOM in Germany is not so positive. The participants in Sweden said that while they believe these kinds of rivalries were normal in the past, right now what is more important is the unity of the Kurdish community so that they can act together. However, in Germany, we see a clear dissociation – except in a very few cases when they join forces. The tensions and occasionally violent clashes between KOMKAR and YEKKOM surely had an

impact on how second-generation members perceive each other. There is little contact between their youth groups (KOMCIWAN and Komalen Ciwan). Moreover, as is the case in Sweden, the Marxist-Leninist discourse has also been abandoned by most of the second-generation interviewees. Although a majority of the first-generation participants defined themselves as socialists or leftists to explain their involvement in Kurdish movements, the second generation usually referred to the Kurdish identity and Kurdishness in a nationalistic sense to explain why they became mobilized in Germany.

5.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has analysed the political profiles of Turks and Kurds in Germany and Sweden, focusing in particular on first-generation diaspora mobilization. The reasons behind political activism, the sizes of the communities, the profiles of labour migrants and refugees, and the positive and negative experiences that these groups have had in different hostland contexts sheds light on how the younger generations created their diasporic identity and embodied their political activism accordingly.

Clearly, the two countries show different profiles of their Turkish and Kurdish communities. In Sweden, there has been a clear divide between the Turkish and Kurdish communities from the outset. The Kurdish community consists of members who were already politically active in Turkey and came from middle-class backgrounds, while the Turkish community consists of members from rural areas of Central Anatolia with working-class backgrounds. The social differences and general interest in political matters vary significantly in these communities, which already sets clear boundaries between them in their hostland. The number of Turks and Kurds are somewhat more balanced in Sweden compared to the ratio of these two groups in Germany. Kurds in Sweden are highly visible in the public and political spheres compared to the Turkish community.

Turks and Kurds constitute the tenth largest migrant group in Sweden, while in Germany, they constitute the largest migrant community. Turks (including the Kurds who define themselves as Turks) outnumber Kurds in Germany. Both communities are extremely heterogeneous, yet it can be argued that there is no strong class difference among them as in the case of Sweden. Turks are more visible in the political and public spheres in Germany by comparison to the Kurdish migrants and their descendants. These differences have an impact on the interactions

between the two communities, which will be explained in greater detail in the following chapters.

SWEDISH AND GERMAN APPROACHES TO THE KURDISH QUESTION

In this chapter, I outline the approaches of Swedish and German governments to the Kurdish question during the last decades and explain their policies for dealing with this issue in their own territory. Their approaches – combined with the strategies that the Kurdish activists used – determined the scope of opportunity structures in these countries. These two cases represent two different contexts due to various factors. For example, while Sweden is considered as the heart of intellectual activism of the Kurdish movement, Germany stands as the most crucial country for the PKK and its struggle to fervour Kurdish nationalism among the Kurdish immigrants. Moreover, the relationship between these host countries and Turkey are quite different. The transnational political field that involves Turkey, Germany and Sweden and other countries as well as the supranational institutions such as the EU also matters in terms of interpreting the different course of evolution of Kurdish question(s) in these two countries.¹⁰⁰ Although the Turkish state's impact on the relations between the two diasporas are out of the scope of this thesis, it is still important to give a perspective of the triadic relationship among the three actors: diaspora, hostland and the homeland.

I firstly explain how the Kurdish question has become visible in these countries, and I then analyse the reactions of the state institutions towards the Kurdish and Turkish community, studying the criminalisation or support for the Kurdish movement by governments and political parties. Finally, I examine the relations of these two countries with Turkey through the perspective of the Kurdish question.

6.1 THE SWEDISH APPROACH TO THE KURDISH QUESTION

Sweden is one of the few countries in Europe in which there have been no notable violent clashes between Kurdish and Turkish diasporas. By comparison to other countries such as Germany or France, where violent encounters between the two communities occasionally hit the newspaper headlines, relations between the Turkish and Kurdish communities appear to

¹⁰⁰ I thank Prof. Thomas Faist for bringing up this point to my attention.

be fairly calm. The Kurdish question in Sweden followed a different pattern than in Germany, and the conflict dynamics between the Turkish and Kurdish groups have been reproduced differently in these two countries, as is explained in the following chapters.

Sweden provided the Kurds with welcoming political and discursive opportunity structures, enabling them to mobilize and act in the interests of the Kurdish movement. Since the mid-1970s, it has granted various rights to the Kurdish diaspora, such as freedom of association and the right to education in their mother language, as well as recognising “Kurdishness” as a separate identity from “Turkishness”, by contrast to other countries that categorise Kurds along with ethnic-Turks under the label “Turkish migrants”.

In the 1980s, there were various groups of Kurdish activists in Sweden who represented different ideas about a resolution to the Kurdish question. These included members of leftist groups in Turkey or those who had been active in Kurdish movements prior to the PKK. They made significant efforts to unite Kurds on certain issues, act in harmony, and determine strategies on how to act after arriving in Sweden as asylum seekers. PKK supporters also came to Sweden before the 1980s, though they did not mobilize significantly until after the 1980 military coup in Turkey. After the 1980s, PKK-affiliated groups condensed their efforts to recruit Kurdish activists for their cause, however this was not as widespread as in Germany. One reason for this could be the relatively small size of the Kurdish community compared to Germany. According to Van Bruinessen, one of the main reasons for their low recruitment rate is that some of the Kurds in Sweden were already highly politicised before their arrival (2000:10), and they maintained their loyalties to the previous movements such as PSK, Kawa or Rizgari.

Whereas the Kurdish discourse in Germany was more PKK dominated, Kurdish activism in Sweden had a different character. It focused more on linguistic and cultural issues from a nationalist perspective. Among the Kurdish migrants in Sweden, there were influential figures – authors, singers, and public intellectuals – who placed importance on the promotion of Kurdish culture. Hence, Kurdish activism took the form of literary publications, efforts towards language standardisation, and the purification of Kurdish culture from Turkish, Persian, or Arab influences.

6.1.1 Swedish Perceptions of the Kurdish Question

The Swedish approach to the Kurdish question was greatly affected by the Swedish political perspectives of that time. Olof Palme, who led the Swedish Social Democratic Party for many years, had a big impact on how the Swedish state, as well as the public, perceived conflicts throughout the globe. He was a defender of the third world: he stood apart from the major world powers and supported liberation movements. He was, as many described him, a true “internationalist”. Palme’s foreign policy priorities were centred on sustaining peace in the world, and he spent his life supporting movements in different global regions, from Cuba to South Africa. As Johansson and Norman claimed: he “set his stamp” on Swedish foreign policy, and his perspective is evident on the Social Democrats’ party programme from the 1975 onwards (1992: 365). Under the heading of “All People’s Freedom, the Whole World’s Peace”, the Social Democratic Party declared its support for the “self-determination for every nation” to gain a just world order (1992:365). Palme believed that Sweden had a special mission to support the liberation movements in the third world, help the “oppressed” and spread the message of international solidarity –not for any reasons of self-interest for Sweden but for the sake of humanity (1992:366).

In this vein, once the Swedish public became aware of the Kurdish problem, many became supportive of the Kurdish cause and perceived it as the struggle of an oppressed nation. The current Swedish approach is not very different from the Olof Palme years. In the words of Ingmar Karlsson¹⁰¹, the former Consulate General to Istanbul:

Swedes were very well aware that there is a Kurdish problem. We are one of the oldest nation states in the world and for Swedes it is quite natural that one nation should have one state. Everyone in Sweden is aware of Kurdistan on the map. They believe that since Kurds have been living there for a thousand years, they should have their own state.

The Kurdish activists benefited from the Swedish approach and got involved in projects related to Kurdish situation in the Middle East. Certain Kurdish activists saw these opportunity structures in Sweden as a chance to gather Kurds from Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey and start a nation-building project in diaspora spaces; however, other activists joined powers with the PKK which followed a different strategy than others and put their faith in a militaristic approach as the only path to a definitive solution. The PKK organised fundraising campaigns, accepted donations, and encouraged Kurdish immigrants to pay their “revolutionary tax” and also recruited Kurdish youths, as they did in other European states.

¹⁰¹ Author’s interview with Ingmar Karlsson, January 2010.

In the early 1980s, the PKK's image was damaged as a result of its violent activities in Sweden. At that time, there had been purges within the Kurdish movement, orchestrated by the PKK, to silence various currents within the movement and to be recognized as the sole representative of the Kurds. Various Kurdish activists who did not sympathise with the PKK and its methods, or the former PKK cadre who wanted to distinguish their activities from the PKK were murdered across Europe¹⁰², including in Sweden. In 1983, two former PKK members were killed in Stockholm and Uppsala, resulting in the Swedish government accusing the group of terrorist activities. Two Kurds were consequently convicted and sentenced to life for the murders (Bondeson 2005:89). The PKK's methods started raising questions about the unconditional support given to Kurdish activists; some politicians, including Olof Palme, became critical of its methods. In 1983, Sweden categorised the PKK as a terrorist organisation and denied an entry visa to the group's leader, Abdullah Öcalan, who was living in Damascus, Syria. However, Swedish authorities did allow other members of the PKK – such as the spokesman for Western Europe, Huseyin Yildirim¹⁰³ – to remain in the country (Gunter 1991:14). In 1984, 18 Kurds were deported because they had links to the PKK.¹⁰⁴

When Olof Palme was murdered in 1986, the authorities were suspicious of a PKK connection, due to several threatening remarks made by the PKK against the Swedish authorities following the declaration of the PKK as a terrorist organisation (Bondeson 2005:89). The claims were never legally proven, and the murder remained unresolved and the allegations against the Kurdish activists were eventually dropped. The suspicion surrounding the murder of Palme, as well as the PKK's violent activities, sparked serious debates in political circles about how to deal with this issue without stigmatising the Kurdish population in Sweden, as well as debates concerning the categorisation of PKK as a terror organisation (Riksdagens protokoll 1986–87:59). Despite the issues that negatively affected the image of

¹⁰² According to Haut, up to 20 were murdered between 1985 and 1987. (See paper by François Haut, "Kurdish Extremism and Organised Crime – the Kurdistan Workers Party", Centre de Recherche des Menaces Criminelles Contemporaines 1998.) However, my interviewees who were PKK cadre in the 1990s told me that the number is much higher.

¹⁰³ According to Bondeson, the reason for such a decision was the possibility of torture and prosecution if they were delivered to Turkish authorities, although there was cooperation between Turkish and Swedish intelligence services regarding the PKK activities in Sweden (Bondeson 2005:89).

¹⁰⁴ The author does not indicate a source for this information. Please see the paper by François Haut, "Kurdish Extremism and Organised Crime – the Kurdistan Workers Party", Centre de Recherche des Menaces Criminelles Contemporaines, 1998.

Kurds in Sweden, support for Kurdish activism quickly recovered and neither PKK sympathisers nor other Kurdish activists living in Sweden have since resorted to violence to draw attention to their cause.

The Swedish approach to the Kurdish question and the PKK is relatively positive by comparison to Germany. One of the main reasons is that (aside from the two abovementioned murders) only a few arson attacks and assaults on Turkish migrants and their properties have been carried out by Kurdish activists, (which are negligible compared to the number of incidents in Germany). There have been no violent mass encounters between Turks and Kurds and Kurdish demonstrations are peaceful and usually end without any interruption by the police. Secondly, the Swedish perception of the self-determination struggles has determined the limits of support for the Kurdish movement, which is much greater than in Germany (especially during the period after the 1993 ban on the PKK). Kurdish activists benefited from this approach and began efforts to enhance the scope of opportunities provided to them by Sweden. They gave priority to integration into Swedish society and take up positions in circles related to media, art, cinema, literature, and academia. They have been fairly successful in rebuilding a positive Kurdish image. Therefore, in the public spheres, the Kurdish movement does not have any criminal connotations. It is quite common to see Swedish participants at Kurdish festivals, gatherings, or political meetings. Most political campaigns organised by Kurdish organisations receive immediate attention from Swedish society. The Kurdish cause is met with support from almost all Swedish political circles, both left wing and right wing. The levels of support for the PKK might vary; however, the Kurdish cause has been interpreted as a *just cause* by many political parties and civil society organisations.

6.1.2 The Kurdish Question in Swedish Politics

By the 1970s, Turkey's Kurdish question had already become an issue in parliamentary discussions, even before the PKK arrived in Sweden. At times, Swedish parliamentarians debated the Kurdish situation in Swedish society by underlining that Sweden should condemn the repression and assimilation policies towards the Kurds in Turkey (Riksdagens protokoll 1979–80:66). At a parliamentary speech in 1979, Oswald Söderqvist, the foreign spokesman of the Communist Party (Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna, today's Leftist Party), addressed this issue. He defined the Kurdish question to the parliament and he discussed Swedish perceptions (among leftist circles) of the conflict at that time that remain valid even today:

The Kurds in the Middle East currently total about 20 million, which is equal to the combined population of the Nordic countries. They are the majority in an area of over 500,000 square kilometers. But unlike the Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, Finns, and Icelanders, the Kurds have no country. After the so-called victory in 1918 over the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East was divided into new states that were created without taking into account the population in the area. The main reason was oil, which the victorious powers wanted to continue to master. Therefore, Kurdistan was split across four different countries: Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. Boundaries were drawn across the country where Kurds have lived for several thousand years. . . . And in all these countries, they have suffered over 50 years of heavy political, military, and cultural oppression (Riksdagens protokoll 1979–80:47, Author’s translation).

According to many Swedish politicians of that time, what happened to the Kurds was unfair since the borders between Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria were drawn without taking the Kurds into account. Swedes frequently followed the news from the Middle East and supported Kurdish activists, either by taking their concerns to the parliament, giving political support, or facilitating asylum applications. Parliamentary discussions touched upon issues related to political prisoners throughout Turkey and the oppression of the Kurdish identity; various politicians asked the Swedish government to declare a strong stance about these issues (Riksdagens protokoll 1979–80:159). Several Swedish politicians also tried to bring the Kurdish situation to the attention of UN authorities. For instance, the issues concerning the state of emergency in the heavily populated Kurdish regions of Turkey provoked left-wing Swedish politicians to condemn Turkey on several occasions.

In the 1980s, the issue of labelling the PKK as a terrorist organisation became a heated debate in parliament, and numerous parliamentarians were against the decision (Riksdagens protokoll 1989–90:90). Although the strategies the PKK used were not condoned, the motivations behind their acts – for example, the Turkish oppression of the Kurdish population and harsh measures the Turkish military had used after the 1980 coup – drew much more attention from politicians. Several of them addressed parliament to draw attention to the forced displacement of Kurds from their villages by the Turkish government. Various politicians asked the Swedish parliament to take a stance on that occasion and let Sweden be a driving force to condemn Turkey for this behaviour (Riksdagens protokoll 1989–90:85).

At the end of the 1980s and during the 1990s, the intensification of the conflict in Turkey echoed into the diaspora spaces. The conflict caused heated debates in Europe, especially in Germany – due to escalation of violence. Since there were no significant violent encounters

between Turks and Kurds or other groups in Sweden, Swedish politicians did not react in the same way as in Germany, which warned the two groups not to bring their homeland conflicts to the hostland. Thus, while in Germany the Kurdish question became a *domestic problem* and was dealt within the realm of *immigrant problems*, in Sweden, it was mostly perceived as a *foreign policy issue*. Therefore, during the 1990s and 2000s, Sweden harshly criticised Turkey in the context of the EU membership negotiations. Turkey's membership to the EU, the Copenhagen criteria, and minority rights, were frequently brought up in parliamentary discussions in Sweden whenever Turkey was discussed. For instance, the Social Democrats brought up the human rights abuses in the Swedish parliament with a motion in 1996. They wanted to draw attention to the evacuation of villages by the Turkish army and torture in prisons. They also gave examples of South Africa, Northern Ireland, and Chechnya, stating that peaceful negotiations were needed to solve such problems (Motion1996/97:U634).

Such developments are still closely followed today. Sweden became one of the leading countries to criticise human rights abuses in Turkey. During the 2000s, it also became one of the most prominent advocates of Turkey's EU membership because Sweden believed it would be a huge step for Turkey's democratisation process. Although Swedish politicians gave considerable support for this, they still discuss the improvement of the Kurdish situation at each diplomatic meeting.

Currently, nearly all political parties in Sweden are critical about the Turkish attitude towards its Kurdish population; however, their level of support shifts, depending on the position of parties on the right-left spectrum and their engagement with Kurdish groups on a voter basis. For instance, the Moderate Party (Moderaterna) strongly supports Turkish membership to the EU, yet it frequently remarks upon minority rights issues in Turkey, warning Turkish authorities about the Copenhagen criteria. They also strongly criticise the PKK for its violent acts. They have good relations with the AKP government and give support to AKP's "Kurdish opening".

The Liberal Party (Folkpartiet Liberalerna) offers another discourse about the Kurdish question. For example, its leaflet "Demands of the Liberal Party Regarding Kurdistan and the Kurdish Question"¹⁰⁵ was distributed to native Kurdish voters before the elections in September 2010. The leaflet condemned Turkey for doing so little to improve Kurdish rights

¹⁰⁵ Author's e-mail correspondence with Fredrik Malm.

in Turkey, foreseeing further pressure from the EU side of the Turkish government. It also demanded that investigations be carried out in Turkey regarding use of chemical weapons against PKK fighters. It is important to note that this example shows a centre-right-wing party that might welcome the Kurdish cause, while it is rare in Germany to find such support from non left-wing parties.

Interest in the Kurdish question is shown not only by political parties but also by individual politicians. For instance, Fredrik Malm from Folkpartiet often publishes articles on his personal website about human rights abuses in Turkey.¹⁰⁶ As president of the Liberal Youth of Sweden, he was awarded a prize for “his public dedication to the Kurdish question and the promotion of Kurdish peoples’ rights in different areas with striking empathy and understanding” (Khayati 2006: 176). Together with Integration Minister, Erik Ullenhag, Malm also took the initiative as an individual politician and signed a bill calling for a coordinated Swedish policy towards Kurdistan to protect Kurdish rights in the region. It states: “The people of Kurdistan have the right to self-determination – in the form of federalism, autonomy or local self-government”.¹⁰⁷

The Kurdish political party in Turkey (the BDP) has strong relations with leftist parties in Sweden. Aside from the Social Democratic Party (Socialdemokraterna) who has been a supporter of the Kurdish rights for decades, the Left Party (Vänsterpartiet) is known in particular as the most Kurdish-friendly political party in Sweden. By a motion in 2009, Vänsterpartiet explained its stance towards the Kurdish question:

The situation of the Kurds has engaged many Left Party members in the past 30 years. Our commitment to justice, human rights, and freedom, and our connection to many Kurdish friends have made it necessary to fight for the Kurdish cause. The Left Party is thoroughly monitoring developments in different regions of Kurdistan through site visits and contacts to sister parties, organisations, and volunteers (Motion 2009–10:U205 Kurdistan).

Jacob Johnson, a member of parliament from the Left Party, visited Turkey in the summer of 2010 and declared that the PKK should be taken off the US and EU terrorism lists. He also organised a press meeting in Diyarbakir to discuss the current situation of Kurds in Turkey.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Fredrik Malm’s personal website: <http://fmalm.blogspot.de/>

¹⁰⁷ Author’s e-mail correspondence with Fredrik Malm.

¹⁰⁸ “Johnson’dan çözüm önerisi”, *Yüksekova Haber*, 2 July 2010. Last access 10 June 2012. <http://www.yuksekovahaber.com/haber/johnsondan-cozum-onerisi-33244.htm>

6.1.3 Swedish–Turkish Relations

In past decades, there have been ups and downs in the bilateral relations between Sweden and Turkey as a result of two significant disagreements. The first issue was *Sweden's ongoing criticism of Turkey's human rights and democratisation record* – an important factor for their deteriorating relations. Turkey still remembers Sweden's hesitation about Turkish membership at the 2000 Helsinki summit.¹⁰⁹ However, since 2000, Sweden has become one of the strongest supporters of Turkish accession to the EU, and many Swedish politicians have made speeches about the benefits of Turkey's membership. Due to the development of bilateral relations in the last few years, Turkish–Swedish relations are now in their golden era, with greater cooperation, and several trade agreements having been signed. Turkish politicians are pleased with Sweden's support for Turkish accession to the EU, and there have been many diplomatic meetings between Sweden and Turkey, especially since the AKP came to power. During the last decade, better diplomatic relations have been cemented by visits to Turkey by the former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson in 2004, the Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia in 2006, followed by the Swedish Prime Minister in 2009. The current Swedish government, led by the Moderate Party, continues to prioritise healthy relations with Turkey.¹¹⁰

The second problematic event that should be mentioned occurred in March 2010, when *the Swedish Parliament approved a resolution recognising Turkey's 1915 mass killing of Armenians as genocide*. The recognition included other ethnic groups – such as Chaldeans, Syrians, Assyrians, and Pontian Greeks – and had the support of five out of seven Swedish parliamentary parties, mainly from the left. The Swedish parliament became the first in the world to acknowledge the Turkish genocide of Assyrians. Although Sweden's governing centre-right coalition opposed the measure, it passed in a 131-to-130 vote, due to a few centre-right parliamentarians who crossed their party's ideological lines. In the end, the parliament voted against the Swedish government's official position. Turkish associations argued that “the Kurdish lobby” played an important role in the acceptance of the resolution (the outcomes of these events are discussed in the following chapter). After the results were announced, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs called the move “unfortunate”, as it posed an additional impediment to stabilising relations between Armenia and Turkey. Turkey

¹⁰⁹ “A Swedish Witness to the Silent Revolution: Turkey Decoded”, Şahin Alpaly, *Today's Zaman*, 14 July 2008. Last access 10 June 2012. <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-147415-a-swedish-witness-to-the-silent-revolution-turkey-decoded.html>

¹¹⁰ The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website: www.mfa.org.

recalled its ambassador to Sweden, and Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan cancelled his visit to Sweden shortly after the vote. Relations have since smoothed over however, especially as a result of the efforts of the Moderate Party and Foreign Minister Carl Bildt.

In terms of the Turkish approach to Kurdish mobilization in Sweden, Turkey has, unsurprisingly, been disturbed by Swedish support for the Kurdish cause. Turkish politicians have made various appeals to the Swedish authorities to curb PKK's activities on Swedish soil. Turkey was relieved when Sweden was obliged to outlaw the PKK due to EU policies when Sweden's official recognition of PKK as a terrorist organisation came with the 2002 decision of the EU Council to place the PKK on its terrorism list. Over the last couple of years, dissatisfied with the EU's decision, several Turkish politicians – including Parliamentary Speaker Mehmet Ali Şahin – declared that Sweden should act more sensitively about PKK mobilization in Sweden and highlighted that the PKK is still on the EU terrorism list.¹¹¹

With the participation of pro-Kurdish party politicians from Turkey, numerous conferences are held in Sweden about the Kurdish question. These initiatives from Swedish parliamentarians are condemned by Turkey, firstly as interference in domestic politics, and, secondly, as encouragement for the PKK in the international arena. In addition, the Swedish media's refusal to refer to the PKK as a “terrorist group” is one of the ongoing Turkish complaints against Swedish authorities.

6.2 THE GERMAN APPROACH TO THE KURDISH QUESTION

Germany might be considered as the European country that has suffered most from the spatial diffusion of Turkey's internal conflicts. It has received the highest number of Kurds and Turks in Europe and, therefore, contentions between them have become highly visible in German public sphere. The conflict's escalation in Turkey is also felt in Germany in the form of violent and non-violent confrontations between Turks and Kurds. Germany witnessed the rise of Turkish and Kurdish nationalism in various forms and, unlike Sweden, perceived the

¹¹¹ “Turkey Expects More from Sweden to Counter PKK”, *Hurriyet Daily News*, 23 May 2011. Last access 12 June 2012. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=turkey-expects-more-from-sweden-to-counter-pkk-2011-05-23>

evolution of Kurdish mobilization on its soil as a “security problem” due to aggressive and criminal activities.

According to Van Bruinessen (1999) the PKK was the first Kurdish organisation to recognise the importance of the Kurdish diaspora, sending members to Germany even before the 1980 military coup in Turkey. After the 1980s, Germany was eventually identified as “a second front” by the PKK during its war with the Turkish Army (Leggewie 1996:79) as it provided them with a liberal political environment to become mobilized and promote the Kurdish movement without fear of oppression and persecution. Moreover, due to the relatively large size of the Kurdish community in Germany (compared to other European countries), the PKK seized the opportunity to recruit from this group –and many Kurdish immigrants supported the PKK both politically and financially.

The problems of Kurdish migrant integration, as well as the exclusivist nature of German migrant incorporation policies – among other reasons – made it a fertile ground for the rise of Kurdish nationalism. The PKK has managed to secure considerable numbers of recruits among asylum seekers, as well as from second-generation Kurds. As Faist suggested: “Among refugees who struggle with adaptation in their new environments, the acceptance of radical organisations is higher than among those who stayed [in Turkey]. This means, symbolic ties can be mobilized more efficiently among refugees” (2000:221).

As a result of the PKK’s mobilization activities and the arrival of asylum seekers, the number of people who identified themselves as “Kurdish” rose from 20% in the 1980s to 76% in the 1990s (Blatte 2003:10). As Leggewie pointed out – when talking about Kurds who initially arrived as “Turkish migrants” – Turks did not become Germans but instead they became Kurds in Germany. Because the Turkish state denied their existence and Germany did not give them political recognition, Kurds started gaining political awareness about their identity (1996:79). The rising number of migrants of both Turkish and Kurdish origin has made Germany the country with the biggest “Turkiyeli” (from Turkey) community in Europe. Therefore, it is no surprise that the tensions among them were more frequent and visible in Germany than in Sweden.

6.2.1 The Conflict Becomes Visible: Overt Violence in Germany

Even in the early 1980s when there were no signs of violent encounters between the Kurdish and Turkish groups in Germany, there was some discontent regarding the spill-over of the Kurdish question. The Germans did not welcome the homeland-oriented political activities of its migrant communities. Even in 1982, the issue of *Ausländerextremismus* (*Foreigners Extremism*) was discussed in the Bundestag in regard to the danger of these organisations posing a threat to German domestic security. In a survey conducted in 1985, when violent events were relatively rare compared to the 1990s, many Germans declared that they were disturbed by the immigrant groups' activities related to homeland-politics and they were concerned by the Turkish-Kurdish contentions (Chapin 1996).

In the beginning of the 1990s, PKK activities became much more visible in Germany due to clashes between Turkish and Kurdish nationalists (the Grey Wolves and the PKK supporters) and among different fragments of the Kurdish nationalist groups, which were impossible for German authorities to ignore. Each time there was an event in Turkey related to the conflict, Kurdish activism became visible: blocking highways, invading Turkish consulates, and vandalising Turkish properties – which was proof for the German authorities that the conflict had been imported to Germany. In the mid-1990s, PKK sympathisers were charged with around 200 arson attacks against Turkish properties, stores, and banks (Leggewie 1996:79, Mushaben 2008:154). As a result of these violent activities, German authorities closed down dozens of associations that had links to the PKK (Abadan-Unat 2002: 269), and they expressed their determination to prevent the spill-over of the Turkish-Kurdish conflict to Germany (Leggewie 1996:79).

There have been also fights among rival Kurdish groups in Germany, gradually establishing the basis for German authorities to perceive the PKK as a criminal organisation. According to Ucarer and Lyon, the hostility that caused trouble for German administrators was also related to the rivalry between the PKK and KOMKAR, which had claimed the lives of some Kurdish activists and left others injured in Germany and elsewhere. Even before the clashes in the 1990s', the Bundesverfassungsschutz (Office of the Protection of the German Constitution) began observing the activities of both groups in the late 1980s (Ucarer & Lyon 2001:937); as a result of rising violent events, German authorities began to consider outlawing the PKK.

In addition to violent encounters with Turkish nationalists and other Kurdish groups, in 1992 the PKK declared Germany to be its “second enemy”, after Turkey, due to its relations and

military cooperation with the Turkish state. The targeting of German tourists in Turkey, as well as damaging Turkish and German property finally paved the way for the official criminalisation of the organisation (Ögelman et al. 2002:150). As a result of these threats and the occupation of the Turkish Consulate in Munich¹¹², Germany prohibited the PKK and banned its activities in November 1993.¹¹³ However, this ban seems to have been highly ineffectual and only caused further Kurdish anger towards the German state. Frequent Kurdish protests against the ban, the use of violence, and the German's police's intervention at these events looked similar to the situation in Turkey. Rather than stopping the protests and the hostility associated with them, the ban was followed by additional protests and escalating Kurdish activism in Germany (Ucarer & Lyon 2001:935).

Right after the ban in 1993, a number of PKK members were arrested in Germany for securing funds for the PKK. German police had actively hunted the PKK cadre and extradited PKK militants to Turkey – despite being caught on German territory. The intelligence officials admitted that the ban had created disappointment and anger among the PKK followers against Germany. Some intelligence agents also claimed that the number of PKK members had nearly doubled since the ban, rising from 5,000 to 9,000 between 1993 and 1999, which meant they worked underground and that the ban had failed (Blatte 2003:10, Chapin 1996). The deportation of Kurdish activists became a hot debate during this period. The government's frequent declarations about possible deportations and arrests made an impact on Kurdish activists in Germany and, as Leggewie pointed out, the Kurdish population in Germany felt victimised by German domestic and foreign policy (1996:82). According to my fieldwork accounts, this is still the case and the “victim” sentiment is very much predominant among Kurdish diaspora members.

After a violent Kurdish Newroz in 1994, this issue was addressed in Bundestag by the then-Foreign Minister Kinkel: *“To all the Kurds living in Germany: Do not bring your conflicts to Germany, and do not think that violence is the way to realise legitimate political aims”* (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003:74). This kind of rhetoric was used many times by several

¹¹² Kurdish activists invaded the Turkish Consulate in Munich and took hostages on 25 June 1993.

¹¹³ In January 1998, German authorities announced that the PKK is no longer listed as a terrorist organisation but that it is instead a criminal organisation due to its involvement with drug trafficking, murder, money laundering etc. However, the PKK was put on the terrorism list once again following the decision of the EU in 2002. For more information see: United States Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 1997 - Germany*, 1 April 1998, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/46810713c.html>.

politicians from various political parties to address the Kurds about their “inappropriate behaviour” in Germany. A speech made by former Chancellor Helmut Kohl also laid out the German perceptions of the issue:

These groups [Turks and Kurds] are deeply opposed enemies to each other. [...] One can assume that there are under 4000 supporters of revolutionary Marxist groups, 18000 extremist-Islamic-fundamentalists, and just over 7000 extremist Turkish and Kurdish nationalists [...] Those who are threatened with prosecution in their homelands for this reason are often granted the right to stay in Germany. [...] Under no circumstances must this be allowed to develop into a licence for them to wage violent disputes with each other here in our country. [...] This disrespect of our law on foreign guests has to be countered with all our determination. Anyone who commits criminal offences here, no matter what the political or ideological motivation is, has to be made responsible for them. [...] Anyone who does not do this must expect to be deported from Germany. [...] We will not tolerate being the location for civil wars (Helmut Kohl, addressing Bundestag number 16, as cited in Chapin 1996).

Therefore, German politicians constantly reminded the Kurds that there was a risk of deportation if they continued to pursue such activities. Compared to the Swedish politicians’ speeches of that time – which mostly concentrated on the situation in Turkey – we see how the Kurdish question became an internal problem for Germany, spilling over into the public sphere.

A few years after the ban, Öcalan made a statement to the German authorities saying: “Germany has launched a war against the PKK....Should Germany decide to stick to this policy, we can return the damage. Each and every Kurd can become a suicide bomber” (Ucarer & Lyon 2001:941). In response, Germany’s then interior minister Manfred Kanther made the following declaration: “Police beaten bloody, blocked motorways, shopping districts sinking into chaos, cross border riot tourism: the behaviour of violent Kurdish criminals and their ringleaders is tantamount to a declaration of war on our rule of law” (as cited in Chapin 1996). Unlike in Sweden, where Kurdish activism adapted itself to the hostland’s opportunities and discourses, in Germany, the PKK contested the German state and limited its opportunities also by its own actions, deemed unacceptable in the hostland’s political and social framework.

While Kurdish activists protested against Germany, Turkey criticised Germany for turning a blind eye to the PKK’s clandestine activities, even after the ban, and for not being serious enough about the PKK’s transnational mobilization . It is argued that German authorities

calculated every possibility and wanted to act for German interests, at the same time keeping good relations with Turkey. For example, Leggewie stated:

[There was a well-founded] suspicion that the German government, despite the 1993 ban on the PKK, has entered into a sort of silent agreement with its leader, Öcalan, probably taking him for a sort of second Yasser Arafat and intending not to be caught unprepared if the Kurds should gain their independence in the future (1996:82).

Similarly, Van Bruinessen explains the course of events as follows:

From 1996 on, a series of highly placed Germans – the head of the internal security service, politicians close to Chancellor Kohl, various government advisors – visited Öcalan in Lebanon or Damascus. They apparently received pledges that the PKK would henceforth refrain from violence on German soil. Germany never lifted the ban in exchange, but it silently allowed PKK activities, and the authorities adopted a less hostile attitude towards the PKK. Germany won altogether more in these diplomatic exchanges (2000:6).

Although there may have been a tacit agreement between the PKK and the German authorities, as claimed by Leggewie and Van Bruinessen, the German police and intelligence service still targeted various Kurdish organisations and publishing houses, and many people were arrested for their organisational links to the PKK. Despite efforts to juggle the expectations of both the PKK followers and the Turkish state, in the end Germany could not please both sides.

The most well-known violent events organised by PKK activists happened right after the capture of Öcalan in 1999. Kurdish protesters organised an invasion of the Israeli embassy¹¹⁴ in Berlin, which was resisted by the Israeli security guards. In the end, three Kurdish protesters were killed and some were injured. After the events, German authorities made declarations stating that if PKK sympathisers continued to act in violent ways, they would be deported. German Chancellor Schröder declared that the demonstrators would face the “force of law”.¹¹⁵ There were violent mass demonstrations throughout Germany, as well as incidents

¹¹⁴ As the Washington Post reported: “Kurdish protesters invaded the Israeli Embassy on February 1999, right after the capture of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan. The confrontation occurred as PKK supporters focused their wrath on Israel following unconfirmed news reports that Israeli intelligence officials helped Turkey track down and capture him”, *Washington Post*, 18 February 1999. Last access 12 June 2012. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/daily/feb99/kurds18.htm>

¹¹⁵ “Germany Warns Öcalan Supporters”, *BBC News*, 18 February 1999. Last access 8 June 2012. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/281670.stm>

of hunger striking and self-immolation that concerned German authorities. Many German politicians warned Kurdish activists to remain calm and to refrain from violence.

The PKK's activities in Germany, as well as inter-ethnic encounters with Turkish nationalists, also played a part in the rise of xenophobia against "foreigners". As a KOMKAR representative mentioned, these events were debated by the German parliament and the media. Right-wing politicians in particular used these events as an excuse to accuse immigrants of destabilising Germany and threatening the security of the German people. The Kurdish question is thus lumped in with "immigration debates" and has damaged opportunity structures for both Turkish and Kurdish migrants in Germany.

After the capture of Öcalan in 1999, relations between Turks and Kurds quietened down compared to the beginning of the 1990s, although there have been occasional mass demonstrations. German authorities kept the PKK under surveillance, various PKK cadres were arrested, and several organisations banned. PKK followers went underground and organisations that sympathize with the PKK but operate as advocacy groups and civil society organisations started flourishing in the 2000s.

Pressured by the Turkish state and its own security concerns, Germany banned ROJ TV in 2008, a Kurdish TV channel that airs clips from the guerrilla war in the mountains.¹¹⁶ As a result of these events, Kurdish leaders of United Communities of Kurdistan issued an open threat against Germany, an ultimatum to the Merkel government, demanding that it puts an end to its "hostile policies against the Kurdish people and their liberation movement".¹¹⁷ In 2008, in reaction to German measures, PKK militants seized three German climbers from their camp on Mount Ararat's eastern Agri province in Turkey. They made the following statement: "The German tourists will not be released unless the German state announces that

¹¹⁶ The news reports stated: "In Germany the interior ministry banned Viko, which supplied Roj TV with programming like the entertainment program 'Good Morning Kurdistan', only six weeks after the Wuppertal raid, and took Roj TV off the airwaves[. . .] According to the court order against Viko and Roj TV, the station is opposed to 'the concept of international understanding,' glorifies the armed struggle against Turkey, fuels the personality cult of Abdullah Öcalan and indoctrinates its viewers into PKK ideology. The Wuppertal studios have been off the air since the ban was imposed, and state security officers have locked the station's doors. Roj TV continues to broadcast from its studio in Brussels". See *Der Spiegel* 15 July 2008. Last access 21 May 2012. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,566033-2,00.html>

¹¹⁷ "Germany becomes a target of the Kurdish PKK", *Der Spiegel*, 15 July 2008. Last access 21 May 2012. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,566033,00.html>

it has given up its hostile policies against the Kurdish people and the PKK”, which was published by the PKK’s own media agencies. The statement continued: “Their kidnap was a reaction to what Germany is doing. We urge the German government to undertake a new policy towards the Kurds”.¹¹⁸ German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble stated that Germany would not give in to blackmail. Chancellor Angela Merkel made a call to the kidnappers to release the hostages.¹¹⁹ After being kept hostage for one week, the climbers were released.

It should be emphasised that although Germany limited the scope of PKK’s actions in its territory, which is perceived by many Kurds as pro-Turkish, the Kurdish diaspora still enjoyed the opportunity structures that Germany offered and which were nonexistent in Turkey. Kurdish PEN was formed in Cologne, several research institutes (Kurdology) were founded, and conferences about the Dersim massacres of 1938, the situation of the Kurds in Turkey, Turkey’s EU accession, and its Kurdish minority, were held throughout Germany. Kurds were allowed to hold peaceful demonstrations and some cities even approved Kurdish education at schools. However, these developments did not mean that the Kurdish population recovered from the emotional burden that the 1993 ban put on them. Their perceptions about Germany’s approach to the Kurds remain fairly negative.

It is impossible to offer here an exhaustive chronology of the PKK’s actions in Germany from the 1990s to today.¹²⁰ However, as shown, relations were strained and the situation there is vastly different from that in Sweden. Today, the image of the PKK in Germany is clearly a negative one, and the organisation remains under surveillance – even if many believe that the PKK no longer plans to commit violent crimes on German soil. Kurdish organisations affiliated to the PKK in Germany have been declaring their intention to establish advocacy groups and civil society organisations to put forth their demands. However, it is still common

¹¹⁸“PKK Sets German Hostage Demands”, *BBC News*, 10 July 2008. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7500282.stm>, “PKK: German hostages to be freed if Turkey ends operations”, 14 July 2008. Last access 10 June 2012. <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,3484125,00.html>

¹¹⁹ “Germany becomes a target of the Kurdish PKK”, *Der Spiegel*, 15 July 2008. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,566033,00.html>

¹²⁰ A detailed chronology of violent encounters between Turkish and Kurdish groups in Germany between 1990 and 1999 can be found at UNHCR’s “Minorities at Risk” Project: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,,CHRON,DEU,,469f388ec,0.html>

to hear news of clashes between Kurdish and Turkish groups and arson attacks on Turkish properties.

The 2008 Annual Reports on the Protection of the Constitution by the Federal Ministry of Interior¹²¹ lists a number of violent attacks for which the Komalen Ciwan was responsible. It estimates that there are approximately 11,500 PKK sympathisers, and categorises them as extreme-left wing rather than extreme nationalist. While it addresses the protest mechanisms used by PKK sympathisers in German territory, it underlines the fact that at many festivals, there are calls to Kurdish youth in Germany to join the PKK. The report uses the example of the 12 July 2008 Mazlum Dogan Youth, Culture and Sports festival. The report has a special section, dedicated to the youth branch of the PKK in Germany, stating:

Among all sectors of the organisation in Germany, the PKK youth which usually appears under the name of Komalen Ciwan shows the highest publicly perceptible propensity for violence. A common modus operandi in this group's offenses are the so-called "hit and run actions", i.e. arson attacks carried out in the streets or directed against premises – usually by means of improvised Molotov cocktails – and a fast escape afterwards (235).

The report suggests that "some demonstrators strongly aimed at initiating violent physical clashes with people of Turkish origin". The 2009 report also claims that Komalen Ciwan were responsible for various arson attacks on Turkish and German properties and individuals, particularly during the February 2009 protests that coincided with the anniversary of Öcalan's capture in 1999. The same events were repeated with increased intensity the following year, which, as the 2010 annual report states, resulted in numerous altercations between the Komalen Ciwan and Turkish ultra-nationalists.

There is also evidence that the PKK recruits second-generation youths; a recent example is the arrest of a Kurdish man supposedly directing the Komalen Ciwan (youth organisation) in Dusseldorf.¹²² The last three Annual Reports on the Protection of the Constitution by the Federal Ministry of Interior argue that the PKK continues to advocate the collection of a "revolutionary tax"¹²³ as well as recruiting second-generation members and organising violent

¹²¹The annual reports can be found at the official website of the Federal Ministry of the Interior: www.bmi.bund.de.

¹²²"Two alleged PKK members arrested in Germany", 20 July 2011. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.ekurd.net/mismas/articles/misc2011/7/turkey3293.htm>

¹²³ Many interviewee accounts also confirmed the existence of such events.

attacks against Turkish targets in Germany. German security agencies estimate that the revolutionary tax secures funds of some 10 million Euros annually for the PKK.¹²⁴

6.2.2 Support from German Political Parties and Other Groups

As in Sweden, the most visible and consistent support for Kurdish groups comes from the German leftist parties, such as *Die Linke*. Several politicians, including members of parliament, join in with Kurdish activities such as festivals and demonstrations. For instance, the Tatort Kurdistan initiative¹²⁵ caused a significant debate about German left-wing support for the Kurdish cause. It was put together to draw attention to human rights abuses in Kurdistan and Germany's impact on the situation by trading arms with countries such as Turkey. In the 2010 Report on the Protection of the Constitution, the Federal Ministry of Interior described the Tatort Kurdistan initiative as a security threat to Germany, though many leftist and Kurdish groups contested this. Parliamentarians from *Die Linke* – such as Ulla Jelpke and Andrej Hunko – declared that it is not the Kurds but Germany that is to blame, since it sells weapons to Turkey. They also presented a motion of protest to the parliament, arguing that the reports from the Interior Ministry were criminalising the Kurdish movement.¹²⁶

Die Linke not only gives full support to such initiatives but also offers political support to the issue of the recognition of the Kurdish identity in Germany. In 2012, a call for the German state to recognise the Kurdish identity as separate from Turkish was published on Die Linke Nordrhein-Westfalen's website, underlining the fact that almost one million Kurds in Germany cannot be ignored as a separate ethnic group. In its statement, Die Linke also argued that, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the German–Turkish recruitment agreement, the Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan may not legitimately speak on behalf of the Kurds as they are not represented at that summit.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ “Germany becomes a target of the Kurdish PKK”, *Der Spiegel*, 15 July 2008. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,566033-2,00.html>

¹²⁵Tatort Kurdistan official website: <http://tatortkurdistan.blogspot.de/hintergrund/>

¹²⁶ “Suçlu Silah Satan mı, Karşı Çıkan mı?”, *Yeni Özgür Politika*, 06 August 2011. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.yeniozgurpolitika.org/index.php?rupel=nuce&id=742>

¹²⁷See Die Linke's official website:

[http://www.dielinke-nrw.de/index.php?id=3629&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=27423&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=3627](http://www.dielinke-nrw.de/index.php?id=3629&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=27423&tx_ttnews[backPid]=3627)

The SPD and The Green Party also show an interest in the Kurdish question. Although they are careful to distance themselves from the PKK, they support the Kurdish initiatives regarding human right issues in Turkey. They publicly criticised Turkey – especially before the AKP came to power – for failing to grant minority rights to the Kurdish population in Turkey. In Germany, individual figures from these parties come to the fore with their support for the Kurds. For instance, The Green Party’s co-chair Claudia Roth is one of the politicians who has tried to reach out to German authorities about the human rights abuses against Kurds. Moreover, there are various NGOs and anti-fascist groups that show solidarity with the Kurdish movement in Germany and participate in their protests.

6.2.3 Turkish–German Relations with Regards to the Kurdish Question

Turkish–German relations have also been shaken from time to time due to Kurdish activism in Germany. Turkey has frequently put pressure on Germany to be more decisive about ending PKK activities. Germany is thus left in the difficult situation of maintaining a balance between the German-Turkish state relations and the opportunity structures it provides to the Kurdish diaspora. This is not always easy to accomplish and issues related to the Kurdish question frequently put a strain on the relationship between Turkey and Germany.

Kurdish activism and the PKK’s contestations of German policies, despite being criminalised in Germany, make an impact on German foreign policy. German–Turkish trade relations, especially in terms of military equipment, raised serious debates in German politics and caused strong reactions among the Kurdish community in Germany. After various Kurdish protests Germany eventually ceased to sell military equipment to Turkey, which showed clearly what diaspora politics and activities are capable of accomplishing¹²⁸ (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003:43–44). In March 1992, the Minister of Defence Gerhard Stoltenberg resigned after a scandal about the illegal delivery of Leopard tanks to Turkey (Ayata 2011). Another example is the speech of then-Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer during an official visit to Turkey. He asked the Turkish government to abolish the death penalty, offering the violent protest activities of Kurdish migrants in Germany as an example for the urgency and importance of doing so (Abadan-Unat 2002:271). Unsurprisingly, the Turkish state saw this

¹²⁸ As Østergaard-Nielsen reports; “in April and May 1994, there was a halt to arms sales to Turkey by the German state. Although it was lifted after a short while, in 1995 March, German government this time refused to pay a total of 150 million subsidy for the construction of two frigates that are used by the Turkish navy” (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003:43–44).

as German interference in internal affairs and accused the country of caving in under the PKK's threats.

In particular Turkey was angered by the fact that it took 10 years of monitoring for Germany to decide to ban the PKK and its affiliated organisations; certain Turkish politicians even accused Germany of letting a terrorist organisation grow on its soil. Moreover, the Kurdish question is usually put forward by German politicians as evidence that Turkey is not yet ready for EU membership, and this is a source of dismay for Turkish authorities. For example, Joschka Fischer wrote: "Turkey's EU compatibility is put to the test in Diyarbakir and Erzurum, not in Izmir and Istanbul".¹²⁹ In particular, the Christian-Democrat party rejects Turkish EU accession and wants to offer a "privileged partnership" instead of full membership – which the Turkish state finds completely unacceptable. In one of his interviews with *Bild* newspaper, Prime Minister Erdoğan declared, "We feel Germany has abandoned us in the EU bid".¹³⁰

However, despite the criticisms about the Kurdish question, German politicians frequently mention Turkey's strategic importance and trade relations in speeches. For example, Fischer said: "Turkey is of strategic importance to Europe's security given the paradigm shift in world politics. [...] Turkey is already an important economic partner for Germany and other member states and will even gain in importance once accession negotiations have begun".¹³¹ Germany clearly does appreciate its economic ties with Turkey and is therefore hesitant about jeopardising its diplomatic relations with the country.

In July 2010, the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle held a joint press conference at which Davutoglu stated that Germany and Turkey should create a more strategic dialogue with one another. Discussing to the fight against the PKK, he said:

We expect our friends to cooperate with us against acts of terrorism that kill citizens, police officers, and innocent people. Unfortunately, most important

¹²⁹ "Turkey's European Perspective: The German View", European Stability Initiative. Last access 12 June 2012. http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi_turkey_tpq_id_8.pdf.

¹³⁰ "Erdoğan slams Germany for tolerating terrorists at press conference". Last access 30 May 2012. *Business Turkey Today*. <http://www.businessturkeytoday.com/pm-erdogan-slams-germany-for-tolerating-terrorists-at-press-conference-with-merkel/>.

¹³¹ Ibid.

financial and logistic sources are in Europe. We expect our European friends and especially Germany to cooperate more actively in combating terrorism.¹³²

The parliamentary speaker Cemil Çiçek – whilst on a nostalgic rail journey from Turkey to Germany as part of the celebrations of the 50th year of Turkish migrants in Germany – strongly criticised the German policy towards the PKK, claiming that “there are twice as many PKK [and] DHKP/C members in Germany as in the Kandil Mountains” and he also complained about Germany’s lacking effort in fighting terrorism on its soil.¹³³ And in a speech given at a gala dinner in Berlin to mark the same anniversary (in October 2011), Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan said:

Those who tolerate terrorism become an accessory to the bloody face of terrorism. [...] I am calling on those who turn a blind eye to the activities of the terror organisation in their publications, foundations, fundraising efforts as well as on those who let criminals roam freely [on their soil]. Are you aware of an 8-month-old baby slain in her mother’s womb [by the PKK]?

The Prime Minister publicly accused Germany of being the biggest stronghold in Europe for PKK activities, including the revolutionary tax funds transferred to the PKK which amount to some 6 million Euros.¹³⁴ Chancellor Merkel responded to these criticisms by reassuring that Germany is “on [Turkey’s] side” and that they have the “utmost determination” to “fight against terror, especially the PKK. There is no doubt about that”.¹³⁵ However, the Turkish government will remain dissatisfied with such promises until Kurdish organisations in Germany – especially those with clear links to the PKK – are closed and banned.

6.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Sweden has become an important country for the Kurdish diaspora. It is the country in which “Kurdishness” is officially recognised and supported by native politicians and intellectuals. It

¹³² “Turkey seeks more active role against the PKK”, *World Bulletin*, 28 July 2010. Last access 30 May 2012. http://www.worldbulletin.net/news_detail.php?id=61918

¹³³ “Parliamentary speaker slams Germany over PKK”, *Hurriyet Daily News*, 27 October 2011. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=parliamentary-speaker-slams-germany-over-pkk-2011-10-27>

¹³⁴ “Erdogan slams Germany for tolerating terrorists at press conference”, *Business Turkey*. Last access 30 May 2012, Business Turkey Today. <http://www.business-turkeytoday.com/pm-erdogan-slams-germany-for-tolerating-terrorists-at-press-conference-with-merkel/>

¹³⁵ Ibid.

is a hub for intellectual contributions to the Kurdish culture as well as for the standardisation of the Kurdish language. The Kurdish community effectively utilised such opportunities and made the Kurdish diaspora one of the most politically active communities in Sweden. Since Olof Palme's term in office, Swedish foreign policy has become much more third-world oriented by comparison to other countries such as Germany. Since Palme, Sweden has become a country that supports liberation movements around the world, and many Swedish politicians support the idea that each nation has the right for self-determination. In this vein, the Kurdish struggle was also welcomed. Apart from two incidents that damaged the image of the Kurdish movement in Sweden – such as the murder of PKK dissidents and the allegation of involvement in Palme's murder – there is strong support from Swedish society for the Kurds and the struggle for their rights in Turkey. In general, although approaches to the PKK might vary, politicians and other public figures are usually critical about Turkey's approach to its minorities, including the Kurds.

Since the PKK has not committed violence in Swedish territory since the early 1980s and since there have been no violent encounters noted between Turkish and Kurdish communities, the Kurdish movement is not criminalised in Sweden. In addition, for these reasons, it has not been seen as a domestic problem but instead perceived as a foreign policy issue. When this issue is addressed in the Swedish parliament, the references are not about Turkish or Kurdish communities living in Sweden but address Turkey directly.

The German case is quite different from the Swedish one, as German authorities did not recognise Kurdish as a separate ethnic identity until very recently. Ethnic Kurds who came to Germany were counted as "Turks" because of the passports they carried. The Kurdish movement was stigmatised by violent demonstrations and clashes with Turkish groups; therefore, it did not receive as much support from German politicians and authorities as it did in Sweden. As the situation became more disturbing for German society, German politicians started advising Turks and Kurds in Germany to act cautiously; PKK supporters were specifically warned about possible deportations. The PKK also targeted Germany with the excuse that it has trade and military cooperation with Turkey and that Germany had to get involved in its own Kurdish conflict. These negative incidents caused the criminalisation of the Kurdish movement; more importantly, however, they paved the way for rising xenophobia and extreme right-wing ideas. The conflict not only became a domestic issue in Germany but also a subtitle under the main subject of problems that arise from migration.

It is clear that the Swedish opportunity structures have been more favourable for the Kurds – above all the right to learn their mother tongue and easy access to citizenship – compared to other European countries. However, Germany also offers opportunities to Kurdish migrants that are not available to them in Turkey. It also provides grounds for freedom of speech and association. Although Germany was in a difficult situation, particularly if we consider the size of its Turkish and Kurdish communities as well as its relations with Turkey, it still granted asylum to numerous Kurdish activists and opportunities for the cultivation of the Kurdish movement. It should be noted that the PKK is also responsible for limiting an already limited (compared to Sweden) opportunity framework.

SWEDEN: TWO WORLDS APART?

This chapter is based on extensive fieldwork research in Sweden, which consisted of interviews with second-generation Turkish and Kurdish diaspora members as well as experts and politicians from various political parties from the first generation (see Appendices). I look first at the identity-formation of second-generation Turkish and Kurdish interviewees in order to grasp the main motives behind their mobilization for homeland politics. Secondly, I consider how their loyalty to homeland issues affects their antagonistic relationship with the *other* at the individual and organisational levels. Lastly, I underline the complex intra-group relationships in order to provide a complete picture of the (re)construction of Turkish-Kurdish contentious spaces in Sweden.

7.1 HOW AND WHY DOES MOBILIZATION OCCUR?

A diaspora is based on a collective identity and entails “the individual’s perception of belonging to and identifying oneself with a certain group of people” (Prins 2010: 11). Therefore, when looking at a diaspora, we find a collective identity that can turn a multifaceted transnational migrant group into a politicized entity through the mobilization of identity politics. The diasporic turn, which migrants experience on either an individual or a group level, may only happen when the sense of belonging to the homeland takes on meaning in a collective context. In order to better understand the stances of second-generation Turks and Kurds towards the Kurdish question, it is essential to be clear about their motivations for participating in migrant organisations or becoming politically active. In the following sections, I analyse how the respondents form their identity, and what factors affect their decision to become interested in homeland politics.

7.1.1 “We had to respond to the Kurds somehow”

For the purposes of this study, I interviewed 30 Turkish participants (17 male and 13 female) who were born in Sweden. They were selected because they were, in one way or another, politically active in terms of Turkish politics. For example: by joining in activities such as

festivals, protests and petitions, or by writing blogs, contributing to online discussions, or working as journalists writing about Turkish and Swedish politics in Swedish newspapers. They were all born after 1975, and came from Alevi and Sunni backgrounds, and their parents were predominantly from Central Anatolia. They regularly followed Turkish and Swedish media, and more than half spoke better Swedish than Turkish. Although it was not the *sine qua non* condition during the selection of interviewees, it transpired that the majority of them also showed interest in Swedish politics and some participated regularly in Swedish political parties.

When I asked Turkish interviewees about their sense of belonging, the common reply was that they felt Swedish when in Turkey and Turkish when in Sweden. Many claimed they do not feel they will ever be fully accepted by native Swedes as “Swedish enough” because of their dark hair, religion and culture, and, in Turkey, they feel they do not fit into the “Turkish way” of life and thinking. Most stated that they felt socially and economically integrated in the Swedish system and that, so far, they had not experienced any serious discrimination. Some claimed that they felt a certain degree of isolation from the native Swedes, and they tended to be friends with other Swedish citizens with foreign backgrounds. They do not, however, feel completely excluded from the political and economic spheres of the Swedish system as individuals. One reason for this may be that many of my interviewees were still students undertaking their undergraduate or graduate degrees, and thus had yet to try and enter the job market. There were also other interviewees who had high-ranking jobs such as engineers or finance managers. The interviews I conducted revealed that they had confidence in the rights granted by the Swedish state. Yet, with time, they found that they also needed to socialize with other Turkish people.

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) argue that the sense of ethnicity among the second generation increases when they reach early adulthood. This was also the case for the Turkish and Kurdish interviewees whose political activism began during their late teenage years. Many referred to their process of “self-discovery”, in which they came to understand that they were different from native Swedes. This revelation took on greater significance as they grew older.

Most of the respondents had become familiar with Turkish organisations while they were at high school or university. Aside from those whose parents were already active in such organisations, the reasons they gave for becoming active members of an organisation varied.

Most had very little or no interest in Turkish politics, and simply joined in order to explore their Turkish identity, make friends, and take part in integration projects. Over the last decade, many became interested in Turkish politics as a result of: a) Kurdish activism, which pushed the Turkish community to mobilize in Sweden, b) the Genocide Bill of 2010, which was a source of great disappointment for the Turkish community, c) the deteriorating image of Turkey in Sweden, and d) the efforts of the Turkish state and embassy to transform the Turkish community into a diaspora.

The second generation's mobilization occurred in order to protect the image of "Turkishness" in the face of a threat in the host country by other ethnically politicized groups. Most of the respondents told me that their parents did not encourage them to get involved in politics; on the contrary, they asked them not to get involved and instead to focus on their studies. This is echoed by the comments of a TUF member:

My father always told me to stay away from politics. That is what he did when he lived in Konya, Turkey. But here, in Sweden? I tell him it is impossible for me to stay away. I was at school with the Kurdish kids. We used to play football together... But suddenly they came up with their Kurdish propaganda... It was then that I decided to watch Turkish news, learn more about Turkish politics, and become active in the organisations.

The Turkish youth were inspired by Kurdish activism in Sweden, which triggered nationalist reactions. As one of the interviewees stated:

At first I thought we did not have to organise ourselves against the Kurds...we are brothers. It is just a handful of extremists engaging in separatist propaganda. I told myself, we have our state, army, intelligence service, and embassy in Sweden—it is not our job to respond to these Kurds. But after the genocide bill, I changed my mind. I realized that we are on our own and we will have to bear the consequences if we do not act.

Initially, reactions against Kurdish activism did not unite the Turkish diaspora. Although some joined Turkish organisations, aside from a few demonstrations they did not organise activities to counter Kurdish activism. The real push to do so was the Genocide Bill of 2010, which came as a shock to the Turkish community, especially the second generation. They believe it stigmatized the Turks in Sweden and would have consequences: for example, issues related to the genocide would be taught in schools and memorials would be erected in Sweden. They found this to be "unfair" towards them. The Genocide Bill also caused more

antagonism towards the Kurdish diaspora as the majority of my interviewees claimed that it was only passed because of the presence of a strong Kurdish lobby in Sweden.¹³⁶

My interviews reveal that although the participants were economically and socially well-integrated within Swedish society, they strove to be even more active than their parents in terms of influencing the Swedish decision-making processes regarding Turkish political issues because they were more affected than the first generation by the genocide resolution approval process. They appear to feel frustrated and betrayed by their “home country” – as most of the interviewees also considered Sweden to be their “home”. Finally, the respondents were extremely upset by the worsening image of Turkey in Sweden’s eyes, and started to develop strategies in order to combat this. Although the Turkish youths who are now active in organisations held dissimilar political views and came from various parts of the political spectrum, in spite of their differences they managed to unite around these main issues and form a “central tendency” (Esman 2009: 113) within the diaspora. Their frequent meetings with the Turkish Embassy also strengthened their desire to “do something for Turkey” in Sweden.

Today, the Turkish community in Sweden can be described as an incipient state-linked diaspora. As Sheffer points out, even though there is noticeable variation between state-linked and stateless diasporas, they are alike in terms of preserving attachments to their ethnic identity (2003: 153). The Turkish community certainly mobilized for different reasons than their Kurdish counterparts, but their diaspora formation is similarly linked to homeland issues (which they either brought with them, or which followed them). Whilst the Kurdish diaspora mobilized due to developments in the homeland, the Turkish community was pushed to mobilization by developments in the host country. Although initially, there was no incentive to be politically organised, over time, conditions in the host country “compelled” the Turkish community “to do something.”

7.1.2 “My parents came here so that I could be a Kurd.”

¹³⁶ Several Kurdish groups supported the passage of the bill by the parliament. They held demonstrations before and after the process in favour of the Genocide Bill. Moreover, various politicians with Kurdish backgrounds gave speeches in the Swedish Parliament related to this issue. Several Kurdish organisations’ websites also supported the process. Overall, these acts were proof for the Turkish community that a “Kurdish lobby” played a role throughout the whole process.

I interviewed 34 Kurdish participants (18 male and 16 female) who were all born in Sweden. All were involved in homeland-oriented activities related to Kurdish politics and as with my Turkish participants, they joined activities, attended festivals and protests, signed petitions, wrote blogs, regularly participated in online discussions, and worked as journalists who write about Kurdish politics in Swedish newspapers. It transpired that a majority of them showed an interest in Swedish politics and some participated regularly in Swedish political parties. They were from Alevi and Sunni backgrounds, and were born after 1975. They regularly followed Kurdish and Swedish media, more than half spoke better Swedish than Kurdish and almost none of them spoke Turkish.

Almost all of my interviewees said that they felt both Kurdish and Swedish. They appeared to see no contradiction in this dual identity; in fact, for many, this was something they cherished. Several interviewees said that up to a certain age they had felt “more Swedish,” and that their “Kurdishness” had only later become a more significant part of their identity. Many interviewees stated that as they grew older and became more aware of the reasons why their parents had migrated, or about the Kurdish situation in the Middle East, they started to develop a more politicized Kurdish identity. The majority of respondents said they felt “fully integrated” in Swedish society. They spoke fluent Swedish and many of them were students at Swedish universities.

The majority of the interviewees stated that they had not experienced any significant discrimination in Sweden. One respondent from UNGKURD argued that the studies on structural discrimination in Sweden were only relevant to the migrants who came in the 1980s, and that the younger generations did not experience discrimination.¹³⁷ When I asked “would you say that you are happy here?” the answer was:

I think everyone is happy here. I don't feel discriminated against at all. This is a paradise if you compare it to other states. I might say that they failed on some integration policies but I don't see any discrimination.

Another interviewee from KOMCIWAN asserted:

¹³⁷ My results about discrimination are of importance at this point, because unlike the findings of Alinia (2004) and Eliassi (2010) who clearly showed structural discrimination patterns in Swedish society, the respondents said they were not subjected to discrimination and they felt like a part of Swedish society and they seemed to have had a more positive experience than the recent research about discrimination in Sweden suggests.

[...]racism exists and sometimes people with non-Swedish backgrounds are discriminated against, but I don't feel that I have experienced discrimination.

As mentioned above, the reason for this could be that young people are predominantly students and have not yet looked for a job or tried to buy a house. This does not, of course, mean that discrimination does not exist in Sweden, however, it does give us an idea about how second-generation Kurds who are politically active regarding homeland issues perceive the Swedish majority attitude towards them. It also shows that mobilization around an ethnic identity does not necessarily occur as the result of segregation or discrimination within Swedish society. Regarding the issues of discrimination and integration, the testimonies of Turks and Kurds living in Sweden are different from those living in Germany, as will be discussed in the following chapters.

In Sweden, the Kurdish diaspora groups are among the most politically active in the country. Their organisational patterns differ from Turkish organisations, as initially they had different motivations to mobilize. Drawing from the narratives of the interviewees, the reasons for the mobilization of the Kurdish second generation are: a) the unpleasant experiences of their parents in Turkey due to their Kurdish identity, b) individual experiences with the Turkish state, c) individual experiences with Turks in Sweden, d) development of their consciousness about the Kurdish cause and e) the Kurdish elites' mobilization efforts.

The descendants of the politically-active Kurds show the greatest interest in the Kurdish issue, and have attended seminars, meetings, and demonstrations since they were young. They were raised in a political atmosphere where issues related to the Kurdish cause were discussed daily. Many respondents said that the Kurdish situation was often the subject of "dinner table conversations" with their parents. The level of involvement was higher if one of their parents had experienced prison, torture, or discrimination as a result of their Kurdish background or Kurdish nationalist activities. Only a few respondents whose parents came from the Konya region in the 1960/70s stated that their parents were not very politically active in Sweden and that they had been recruited by Kurdish activists while they were university students.

In the course of the interviews, it transpired that it was much harder for second-generation Kurds to *forgive and forget* what their parents had been subjected to in Turkey. For example, a respondent who is a member of UNGKURD stated:

I support the PKK with all my heart. I respect the guerrillas without a doubt... My father was in Diyarbakir prison in the 1980s; later his friends bribed some people and brought him to Sweden. Now he cannot walk because of the torture. He is paralyzed. Every day I go home and I see him... Nobody has the right to tell me that I support a terrorist group.

Certain experiences in Europe and in Turkey have had an impact on their perceptions of their ethnic identity. Fights with Turkish students at school, hearing profanities about Kurds in Turkish circles, or watching the news have triggered an interest in homeland politics. A respondent told me about a childhood memory from the 1990s when, during his first visit to Turkey, he went to a wedding in a village in Konya, and Turkish soldiers interrupted the event to check the IDs of attendees. He said: "At that moment, I understood why my parents had migrated to Sweden. Being Kurdish in Turkey was a crime." Another respondent made a reference to the ban on the Kurdish language:

On our first visit to Turkey at the end of the 1980s, before we got on the plane from Stockholm to Istanbul, my mother told me I was not allowed to speak Kurdish with her once we landed in Turkey. At first I thought it was a game but then at the airport I understood how serious she was. Every time I opened my mouth to say something she started panicking and sweating... I remember her hands were shaking while holding mine. I hated the country that made my mother feel like that.

The majority of my respondents talked about their parents' experiences, and repeated that they cannot and should not forget why their parents migrated to Sweden. Moreover, the majority of my respondents had, or still have, relatives who joined the PKK as armed fighters, and constantly follow the news from Turkey in order to stay highly connected with where their parents came from. It seemed that they felt it was their "duty" to get involved in politics, in memory of their parents and those who were left behind. Therefore, one of the main reasons they were driven to mobilize for the Kurdish cause was the experience of their parents and family members under the Turkish regime. With regard to the "comfortable life" in Sweden, an interviewee stressed "we are not egoists." Reflecting upon his relatives back in Mardin, he told me he did not have the *luxury* of thinking only about himself.

The organisations also play an important role for the mobilization of the Kurdish youth. Kurdish associations are making a particular effort to mobilize young Kurds by organising concerts, folk-dance nights, language and history courses, and movie screenings, which are all aimed toward strengthening the Kurdish identity. The youth organisation KOMCIWAN is an illustrative example and it offers Kurdish language, dance, and theatre courses, as well as

activities such as weekend camps that bring together young Kurds from all over Europe. Another example is UNGKURD, a youth association in Sweden known for its support of the PKK.

7.2 CONTENTIOUS DIASPORA SPACES BETWEEN SECOND-GENERATION TURKS AND KURDS

In this section, I look at “the role of otherness in fashioning identity” (Mohammad-Arif et.al. 2007) in the context of the host country in order to investigate both antagonistic groups and to understand how these contentious political identifications are carried beyond borders. When analyzing the formation of the *other* in the South Asian communities in London, Gayer explains that diaspora groups may start to feel secure enough in their new diasporic spaces to form a separate identity to replace the one *imposed* by the home or host country. In doing so, they reconstruct their uniqueness by stressing the differences from their constructed *other* in order to finally “be themselves” (Gayer 2007). This analysis is also applicable to the Kurdish diaspora’s stance towards the Turks and the Turkish identity in Sweden.

Karner (2007: 48) argues that ethnic identities are tied to social processes of categorization that include some identities while excluding others, thereby creating and reproducing social boundaries. The identity-maintenance of a group entails criteria for determining membership and exclusion. Therefore, ethnicity is not primarily conceived as the interactions between pre-defined groups, but as a process of (re)creating groups by identifying the boundaries between them (Wimmer 2008). This social process was particularly prominent in the discourses of both Turkish and Kurdish respondents. The diaspora became the transnational space in which these two groups (re)produced their social boundaries with respect to the situation in Turkey, but also by taking into account the nuances of the host country. Turkish and Kurdish identities were (re)constructed in the host country, while boundaries between these identities took on an added significance.

As Brubaker suggests, boundary maintenance is one of the indispensable criterion of diaspora identities. According to him it is the boundary-maintenance in a community that enables us to talk about a “distinctive community” as a diaspora. Thanks to boundary-maintenance, the diaspora can form a transnational community that is held together by an active solidarity as well as by dense social interactions (2005: 6). Drawing on Brubaker, I argue that during the

diasporization process both groups have created a kind of boundary-maintenance vis-à-vis Swedish society that does not completely exclude “Swedishness” but also contains strong elements of the homeland. Besides boundary-maintenance, the experience of being in Sweden also served another important aspect of identity creation especially for the Kurds: *boundary-drawing* vis-à-vis other foreign groups in Sweden, including the “antagonistic others” – Turks, Arabs, and Persians. But how did this process affect relations between Turks and Kurds? And how did the boundary-drawing take place?

Let me start with the Turkish case. Turkish nationalism tended to produce inclusive values that played down, or suppressed, difference (Sommer 2005: 3). In the diaspora spaces, it was easy to detect a similar stance among the Turkish respondents. They remained loyal to the official Turkish discourse while they defined “Turkishness” with civic interpretations, pointing to the fact that people who are born in Turkey are considered Turkish. However, after seeing that the majority of Kurds in Sweden do not wish to be defined as such, some had to “throw in the towel” over this ideal definition. Unlike various Turkish respondents in Germany who perceived “Kurdishness” as a sub-culture of a broader Turkish cultural context, in Sweden almost all interviewees perceived “Kurdishness” as a separate ethnic identity. Yet they still underlined the fact that Turks and Kurds have many similarities and roughly the same “culture,” despite their different ethnic backgrounds. The Turkish construction of the definition of Turkishness was very much in line with the Turkish state’s current official discourse (the AKP version, rather than the discourse of the previous decades that completely rejected the Kurdish identity) and reproduced boundaries that remain permeable for those Kurds who accept “Turkishness” as an umbrella identity.

When discussing the two communities, “We are all brothers” or “We are all immigrants” were the two most common statements offered by respondents. Throughout the interviews, they tried to find reference points in order to prove that Kurds and Turks have much in common. References to the Independence War, where Turks and Kurds fought side-by-side, or religion were frequently made. Common customs and traditions were also mentioned, while the “absurdness” of attempts to culturally separate Turkishness and Kurdishness was also frequently underlined. Many respondents told me that they have no problem with Kurds, and only with “terrorists.” However, the definition of “terrorism” they provided was so broad that almost anyone who supports Kurdish rights in a human-rights context could be included.

While Turkish respondents made frequent references to the similarities of the two ethnic groups, the Swedish experience, which offers the possibility of cultivating their identity without the imposition of Turkishness by the Turkish state, gave the Kurds the freedom for *boundary-drawing* and its *maintenance*. The Kurdish community in Sweden has made an effort to distinguish itself from the Turkish community *by all means*, which Griffith (2002: 141) describes as a process of *going back to Kurdish things*. In order to do so, they focus on their differences and limit their interactions with the Turkish community. Aydın (2005: 2) claims that in the process of limiting the unity of identity and culture, Kurds may follow two patterns. First, they posit the cultural differences against the hegemonic culture, and second, they create cultural homogenization within their own community. In Sweden, thanks to the opportunities they are given, Kurds have separated their political, social and economic spaces from the Turkish community and distanced themselves from the Turkish language, Turkish music etc., and in some cases even from Islam – as they see it as a tool of manipulation used by the Turks and Arabs. Their boundary-drawing excluded Turks as far as possible, while including Kurds from other parts of Kurdistan. Drawing on Smith's work (1995: 66-69), Griffith (2002) characterizes the Kurdish efforts to set their own culture and language apart from Turkish identity as "*cultural purification*." This term describes the Kurdish diaspora's efforts to discard the traces of Turkish culture on their Kurdish identity. This process is evident through the Kurdish diaspora's use of the opportunity structures in the host country to counter the hegemonic impositions of the "Turkish identity."

What is interesting in the Swedish case is that the diaspora Kurds were particularly careful with respect to their use of the Kurdish language. Griffith (2002: 139-141) argues "acquisition of the Kurdish language is seen as central to restoring the sense of national integrity," and that conscious acquisition of the language and culture was a part of the Kurdish elite's strategy to foster Kurdish nationalism. The first generation in Sweden took a stance and refused to teach their children Turkish, as they perceived it as the language of the "oppressor." This was not the case in Germany, as many of the Kurds I interviewed only spoke Turkish or German; even if they spoke Kurdish, they were also fluent in Turkish. As mentioned in the previous chapter, mother-tongue education is offered by the Swedish school system. Kurdish children, therefore, learned Kurdish rather than Turkish at school, which is extremely rare in Germany.

While Turkish respondents tried to underline the commonalities between themselves and Kurds, the Kurdish respondents formulated mutually exclusive identities by (re)constructing

and (de)constructing historical narratives, past experiences, and official statements. The result was the creation of an antagonistic *other* as a defining characteristic of ethnicity (Mohammad-Arif et.al. 2007). In contrast to the accounts of my Turkish participants, Kurdish respondents argued that Turks and Kurds do not, in fact, have much in common, and maintained that “Kurdishness” is an identity very distinct from “Turkishness.” Kurdish respondents were unwavering in their rejection of the Turkish understanding of identity, and they all emphasized that they found the notion of being Turkish due to citizenship “unacceptable.” When I asked: “would you say you are different from the Turks?”, one interviewee from UNGKURD responded:

Of course we are! We are the same people as the Kurds but not the Turks. Different language, different culture, different people. Turks are Mongols. We have different histories. I don't think we have anything in common at all. We are just forced to live together. That's it.

Despite the Turkish respondents' references to common customs and traditions, the Kurdish interviewees argued that most of the similarities between the two cultures were a result of the Turkish “invasion” of Kurdistan and that, moreover, the diaspora should “right” these historical “wrongs.”

Many participants said that they do not have problems with Turks, only with the Turkish state. During the interviews, however, statements about “fascist Turks who support the state's policies” or “Kemalist Turks who are against Kurdish rights” came up frequently. Those who were active in the Kurdish movement, in one way or another, chose to put a certain distance between themselves and Turks, which, over time, has engendered the complete erosion of the relationship between the two communities. I encountered Kurdish interviewees in Sweden who would “feel guilty” if they happened to enjoy Turkish music. Anything Turkish was considered to be a “bad influence.”¹³⁸

¹³⁸ There was also an observable degree of intra-group pressure among the Kurdish respondents. Many hesitate to engage with Turkish people because they did not want to be criticized by other Kurds. The testimonies, as well as my observations of several Kurdish social media forums and blogs, demonstrate that group control is exhibited over the behaviour of Kurdish members. For instance, the two Kurdish girls who went to Turkey (Antalya) to spend their holidays were a matter of discussion on a Kurdish forum on Facebook. The posting received more than 200 comments, predominantly condemning their behaviour, within an hour. According to the commentators, “they have contributed to Turkish tourism while their Kurdish brothers are dying to save Kurdistan.”

A shared religion and having a migrant background are two things that we might assume could bring these communities together, and perhaps form an umbrella identity encompassing the ethno-national identity. However, while these two umbrella identities still bring many Turkish and Kurdish community members together in German diasporic spaces, this is not the case in Sweden. For instance, Eliassi's work shows that "there is an anti-Islamic sentiment among young Kurds who call for a rejection of Islam as part of the Kurdish identity." Eliassi's (2010: 121) interviews with young Kurds in Sweden demonstrated that many see Islam as a tool of the "oppressor," from which they must distance themselves. My findings also corroborate his results. Most of the interviewees admitted that they have a difficult and distant relationship with religion. They also mentioned that religion would be unable to bring them together under an umbrella identity with the Turks. A few Turkish respondents, on the other hand, answered in a more "inclusive" manner, arguing that they are "all Muslims, they have something in common so they should act together." However, the majority of the Turkish respondents added that they did not believe religion could bring the two groups together under one identity. Most of the respondents from both groups expressed that the experience of having a foreign background is not relevant for establishing relations, unless a Swedish umbrella organisation unites them behind one project. Regarding this possibility, one of the interviewees from KSAF stated:

Nothing is bad enough in Sweden to make us form an alliance with the Turks. If we have to, we will choose Swedish racism over Turkish assimilation.

In Sweden, the majority of the Kurdish respondents tend not to feel any affiliation with the Turkish community. As observed, coping with and surviving in an alien environment, facing the same barriers in society or the presence of discrimination and xenophobia did not prevail over ethnic tensions in Sweden.

7.3 INTERACTIONS AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Gayer (2007) argues that the "construction of the other and the confrontation with this intimate enemy lies at the heart of identity politics," and that "the construction of inimical figures" is extremely important for the identity formation process. This is also the case when one investigates the contentious spaces among the supposedly adversary groups in a diaspora context. The construction of the *other* was noticeable in all spheres of life, at the individual and group levels, especially within the Kurdish diaspora.

The majority of Turkish and Kurdish respondents declared that they had very few friends from the *other* group. Respondents from both the Turkish and Kurdish side informed me that as children they had experienced some contact with each other, but as they grew up and gained a political consciousness, they distanced themselves from each other. When I asked if they would consider having friends from the other group, almost all of them stated that it was highly unlikely. It was evident that the boundaries between the communities in Sweden are constantly renegotiated as they politically position themselves against each other.

Most of the Turkish respondents think that they are open to friendship with the Kurds and that it is the Kurds who put up boundaries. Many said that they used to have Kurdish friends but lost contact with them as they grew up. Some argued that “someone who supports a terrorist group cannot be my friend.” Others said it would be hard to communicate with people who “want to divide their country.” The majority of my interviewees told me that their experiences with Kurdish classmates or neighbours were extremely limited. They remember their parents interacting with first-generation Kurds; after the intensification of the conflict, however, these interactions became less and less frequent. The testimonies showed that the interviewees assumed Kurds were always hostile to them. One interviewee from TUF offered his opinion about the reasons for the social distance between the two groups:

I think the Kurds grew up with the idea of revenge. But the Turks did not care at all. I don't even remember one occasion that my parents talked about the Kurds or the Kurdish question at home. I didn't care about them until I started watching the Turkish news [...] For me it is clear who is in the right. The Kurds support a terrorist organisation.

The Turkish interviewees demonstrated they are sceptical about Kurds even though they do not have close relations with them. They voiced their prejudice and tended to assume that *all* Kurds in Sweden support the PKK, which they consider to be a terrorist organisation. One can detect a highly important difference between the testimonies of Turkish diaspora members in Sweden and Germany. Contrary to the “all Kurds support the PKK” discourse of the Turks in Sweden, in Germany, the majority of the respondents insisted that “not all Kurds support the PKK.” Since a considerable percentage of the Kurdish population in Germany is not politically active, Turkish respondents had a tendency to perceive the PKK and its supporters as a marginalized group without mass support. In Sweden, however, the Turkish respondents had witnessed the activism among the Kurds and generally chose to distance themselves from the Kurdish community. There was also a tendency to distinguish the “diaspora Kurds” from

the “real Kurds (Kurds in Turkey)”; the interviewee narratives illustrated that the Kurdish community in Sweden is perceived as an exceptional community who are marginal, extremist and PKK supporters, and that they are different from the Kurds who live in Turkey. The profiles of the first-generation Kurds (asylum seeker, refugee etc.) were frequently mentioned in the course of the interviews.

The Kurdish respondents answered similarly about their socialization with the Turkish community on an individual level. Drawing from the interviews, it appears there is very little dialogue between the two groups at the individual level on political or indeed any other issues. This can be explained by several factors. First, most of the Kurds I interviewed claimed that “all Turks are fascists,” “all Turks are ultra-nationalists,” or “all Turks dislike Kurds.” For example, one interviewee asked: “How would a Turk react to an Öcalan poster in my home? If I cannot invite them to my home, how can I call them a friend?” Secondly, in addition to their political stance, they had memories from their childhood when they began to encounter problems interacting with their Turkish peers. Most of the Kurdish interviewees had stories to tell from school when they first stated they were “from Kurdistan” and received negative reactions from their Turkish classmates. The Kurdish flag also provoked protests among their Turkish neighbours or classmates, and these experiences made the Kurdish respondents feel that the Turks and Kurds are unable to get on well together.

Skrbis (2001) argues that “the marriage market” is also another indicator of contentions among ethnic groups in the diaspora. As he states, diaspora members may perceive the idea of marriage with someone from the same ethnic background as an insurance policy against losing their cherished social and cultural homogeneity. Therefore, marriages could be based upon nationalist feelings and sentiment. While looking at Serbian-Croat relationships, he found out that even the most liberal interviewees had very negative perceptions about the idea of marrying someone from the antagonistic group. When I asked if they would ever consider marrying a member of the *other* group, the answer was, predictably, a resounding no. Most of the Kurds said they would never consider doing so, and, even if they happened to have a Turkish partner in the future, they would find it very difficult to introduce him/her to their parents. Many Kurdish participants argued that marrying a Turk would lead to significant problems in the future, as they themselves refused to speak Turkish and would not want their children to speak what they saw as the “language of assimilation.” The majority of the Turks said marrying a Kurd would not pose a problem unless their partner supported the PKK or

secession from Turkey. For the Turks, a Kurdish partner would only be acceptable if she/he respects the territorial integrity of Turkey and national symbols such as Atatürk or the Turkish flag. Both groups seem to prefer intra-group marriages. Indeed, folk dance nights, ethnic festivals, concerts and picnics, as well as gatherings at migrant associations, serve as occasions for singles to find suitable spouses from the same ethnic background.

7.4 ANTAGONISMS AT THE ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL

7.4.1 Inter-group Relations

It is important to look beyond individual relations and move to organisational interactions in order to understand the contentions in the diaspora context. Despite the abundance of communication, tensions, and cooperation among the Turkish and Kurdish organisations in Germany, a surprising result emerged from my interviews in Sweden: there was *almost no communication* between the two groups at the organisational level. To my knowledge, there are no joint declarations, no co-organised events, or petitions among the first-generation Turkish and Kurdish organisations. Among the second generation, I found that there were very few attempts to build bridges that would enable the groups to communicate with one another. The panels organised by Kurdish organisations did not invite representatives from any Turkish organisations. The case was the same for the Turkish panels and seminars. As noted, there had been various attempts at cooperation but none had led to any concrete results. I illustrate this point with an example involving the intention of Turkish association members to celebrate the *Newroz* festival together with the Kurdish groups.

A Turkish youth organisation invited the Kurdish associations to a *Newroz* gathering, and as the symbolic value of *Newroz* festivals for Kurdish nationalism is well known, this was a bold step. The Turkish side offered to organise a dinner for members from each group. The offer was rejected, however, by the Kurds, who wanted to celebrate *Newroz* solely with other Kurds. The Turkish interviewee admitted that he was relieved about this rejection, as he had concerns about this kind of get-together. He suggested that a fight would have been inevitable and added that he had worried about the members of his organisation who might protest about the arrangement of such an event with the Kurds. On the other hand, the Kurdish respondents said that they interpreted the invitation as part of the Turkish official policy aiming to “Turkify the *Newroz*,” and therefore did not consider celebrating this traditional festival with the Turks. They also gave two major reasons for the “absurdness” of such an idea: first, they

could not think of celebrating Newroz without the Kurdish flag, which the Turks would not be happy about; secondly, the members of the associations would not appreciate such a move, especially because of the symbolic value of Newroz.

Both groups are aware of their lack of mutual communication, but want things to stay that way, as they are worried about possible tensions flaring up between the two groups as well as the potential for negative reactions from their own constituencies. Therefore, their attitude can be summarized as *keeping a certain distance*, rather than building bridges for future collaboration on the resolution of the Kurdish question or any other issues.

7.4.2 Intra-Group Relations

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the diaspora is not a homogenous but a multi-layered entity. It is a heterogeneous group of individuals and associations pursuing different goals and aims. Sometimes those groups are at loggerheads, at other times they exist in harmony and form part of a larger unit. These dynamics can be observed in the diaspora spaces in Germany, in which echoes of almost all political movements in Turkey can be heard. However, the case of Sweden reveals a much more dormant political environment, consisting of rivalries and solidarities that are mostly *produced in Sweden* due to the endogenous factors that affect diaspora mobilization there.

7.4.2.1 The Turkish community: “The Kulu Domination”

Although the Turkish community in Sweden is not homogenous, it can be divided into several distinct groups. Through my fieldwork observations, I detected the *soft* tension between the migrants who come from the Kulu district and those who do not. This “hometown nationalism,” as one of my interviewees described it, has an impact on the relations between the migrants from Kulu and those from other regions. People from Kulu, who constitute a large portion of the Turkish migrant population, founded some of the first migrant organisations in Sweden. The board members of these organisations were also mostly from Kulu, leaving little room for groups from other parts of Turkey. The competition between these groups was frequently mentioned during the interviews, to the extent that it was sometimes deemed more important for the Turkish groups than their friction with the Kurds in Sweden. As mentioned in the previous chapter, these events finally paved the way for the emergence of new Turkish organisations in Sweden.

There is also a generational rupture among the Turkish community. The second-generation Turks I interviewed often stated that they did not like being given “orders” by the first-generation organisations. Their political agenda, as well as socio-economic strategies, are much more in line with *the Swedish way of thinking*, as one of the interviewees explained. Therefore, the youth organisations seek total liberation from the organisations dominated by the first generation. Apart from these conflicts, I witnessed some discussions between the more religious and conservative fragments of the youth organisation and those who wanted to keep the organisations religion-free. These kinds of divergences of opinions are not as sharp and clear-cut as they are in Germany, however, and ideological stances do not cause segregation within the youth community. They have more or less managed to harmonize all differences and establish a “central tendency” towards common issues such as their stance against the PKK and the Armenian Genocide Bill. Almost all members that I interviewed, despite their different political stances, had more or less the same opinion about these two topics.

There is no noticeable mass support for groups with links to political parties or movements in Turkey. One can argue, therefore, that unlike in Germany where political agendas are transplanted from Turkey to the first- and second-generation organisations, in Sweden second-generation Turks who support nationalist, Kemalist, or neo-liberal conservative tendencies found their place in TUF or TSAF and work together in harmony. Apart from different political stances, I also observed that many interviewees adopted an inconsistent political stance. For instance, they would consider themselves Kemalists but also support the AKP government. Or, following discussions on blogs or social media websites such as Facebook, one can see that various young Turks may comment on issues related to Turkish politics and fully support the AKP and Prime Minister Erdoğan, but also use the grey wolf (the symbol of the ultranationalist party) as their social network profile picture. This is very interesting if we bear in mind that the Kemalists, ultranationalists, and religious conservative liberals are the three main competing political parties in Turkey. One of the interviewees explained:

Here we love everything about Turkey because we embrace it as a whole. I love it for its history, with the Ottomans or with Ataturk. I will support whoever is the prime minister or president because they represent Turkey.

It was evident, however, that the majority of the interviewees were sympathetic to the AKP. The most important thing in their opinion was that, after the AKP came to power, the image of the Turks in Sweden as well as Turkey's image in the world improved.

It is also crucial to mention two of the Kurdish origin interviewees who were active in Turkish organisations in Stockholm and Malmo. Although they were of Kurdish origin, they chose to align themselves with the Turkish community. For the first interviewee, a Kurd whose parents were from Konya, Turkishness was an umbrella identity. She stated that she has a loyalty to Turkey and that she felt both Turkish and Kurdish. She joined the Turkish community because she was harshly criticized by other Kurds in Kurdish organisations for perceiving the PKK as a terrorist organisation and because she did not support its separatist politics. The second interviewee was also sidelined by the Kurdish community because he opposed the PKK and its strategy towards the Kurdish question. He was an active blogger on issues related to Turks and Kurds in Turkey. Due to the fact that he frequently criticizes the PKK and the political party BDP, his blog became one of most widely-read websites by the Turkish community. These examples show that there is indeed a space for "good Kurds" in Turkish organisations.

7.4.2.2 The Kurdish Community: Discrepancy in Harmony?

The Kurdish diaspora is also vulnerable to the inter-group rivalries rooted in the history of Kurds and the Kurdish movement. There are many different perspectives, standpoints, and divergent approaches concerning what the movement's strategy should be towards the Kurdish issue. These kinds of divisions are also evident in the diasporic spaces. As in the case of the Turkish community, however, the second-generation Kurdish diaspora in Sweden also managed to smoothen out their differences and created a well-functioning system that enabled them to meet on a common ground and channel their energy into a cause that would please all the groups in the diaspora: the amelioration of the situation of Kurds in all parts of Kurdistan.

Within the Kurdish diaspora, there are many groups, each with different approaches to the resolution process and how the negotiations with Turkey should be handled. I tried to categorize the main divisions, drawing information from the interviews conducted in Sweden, Germany, and elsewhere. Among the interviewees, there were PKK supporters who are unwavering in their support of Öcalan (the 'Apocular'); PKK supporters who sympathise with PKK activities but disapprove of the post-Imrali Öcalan statements; and Kurdish nationalists

who are against the PKK and its methods. There are also smaller groups consisting of Kurdish nationalists who do not belong to any organisation but support the idea of a separate state and, therefore, find the PKK to be too passive, or at least unable to achieve this goal, as well as Kurdish nationalists who not only want a separate Kurdish state from Turkey but also support a unified Kurdistan, which would bring the four parts together. These are only the main trends and the list could be extended. Unlike in Germany, however, the differences among the groups in Sweden are not clear-cut. For instance, the well-known competition between KOMKAR and PKK supporters is not as acute as in Germany, where violent clashes had occurred due to this friction. The interviewees from different groups such as KSAF, UNGKURD, and KOMCIWAN have used a softer tone when criticizing each other. For instance, a member who sympathizes with the PKK explained the tension between KOMKAR and the PKK:

It all started when the PKK was coming up in the late 1980s. The difference between the Öcalan and Burkay movements was the method. The PKK said we can use force and arms, Burkay said it is not the time to do that...he was postponing [...] Even if you are a true communist, you will shoot a Maoist because you are a Stalinist.

A member of KOMCIWAN expressed his thoughts about the PKK as follows:

My perception about the PKK is that their cause is noble. The guerrilla soldiers fighting in the mountains could be seen as freedom fighters and that is something that I support. Even if I think that taking it through the political avenues is better.

The perceptions of these two groups about the other are extremely rigid in Germany, where there is a clear conflict of opinion. In Sweden, however, the two movements are more willing to engage with each other. Although they are organised separately, they have overlapping memberships to KSAF. Therefore, cooperative efforts between the two groups, in terms of trying to exert an influence in Swedish political spheres, are possible. The majority of respondents said they are “trying to unite Kurdistan” in Sweden by sustaining a sort of plurality in the movement. This kind of cooperation was also observable at the ideological level. For instance, although the majority of the UNGKURD members I interviewed introduced themselves as “leftists,” they informed me that they support Kurdish candidates from all political parties, including right-wing parties. For them, “Kurdish representation” in the Swedish parliament was more important than left/right competition. This was also true of other Kurdish organisations, such as KSAF, which has close relations with Kurdish and Kurdish-friendly politicians from all political parties in Sweden. It transpired that the aim of many Kurdish respondents was to enhance unity among the different approaches towards a

resolution. Support for the PKK was not the only driving force, as in the German case. On the contrary, the PKK and other groups were perceived as parts of a “greater cause”; therefore, all Kurdish movements should be supported. As one of the interviewees stated:

It is important to deal with our problems while we are among Kurds but I don't want us to discuss these issues in front of others. We should keep the image of a unified Kurdish community. This is what we need now.

However there were also members who criticized the “lack of politics” in the Kurdish debate in Sweden. They complained about the importance placed on “culture,” and while they did not necessarily believe this was a bad thing, they felt that Kurds in Sweden were not aware of the “real political discourses” dominant in the Kurdish geography today. For instance, an interviewee blamed the Swedish approach to migrant cultures for this development. In his words:

One could look at the Swedish way of advocating ‘culture’ to Kurds, Turks, and all immigrants. The Kurds in Sweden were, for a long time, by far the most prominent culturally, intellectually and so on, but never politically. In advocating ‘culture’ over ‘politics,’ the Kurds in Sweden have become less politically aware than Kurds elsewhere.

According to him, the “culturalization” of Kurdish politics is a result of Swedish policies that push people to define themselves in ethno-cultural terms. I discuss the issue of *doing things the Swedish way* in the next chapter.

There are numerous social media forums, particularly Facebook¹³⁹, where one can observe disagreements between group members over questions such as why the PKK no longer wants a separate state or why Kemal Burkay returned to Turkey. However, while intra-group disagreements exist, the “public face” of the Kurdish community is always depicted as unified and strong. *Intra-group othering* surely exists as members discuss various topics related to political cleavages in Kurdish politics. Forum members, as well as my interviewees, place more priority on “unity within the movement” rather than loyalty to their particular fraction, which they see belonged to their parents’ time.

7.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

¹³⁹ I regularly followed the group Generationen för Kurdistans Självständighet (Generation for Kurdistan’s Independence), on Facebook.

As it became clear from the interviews, motivations for participating in the organisations and becoming politically active were very different among the Turkish and Kurdish communities. The reactions of the Turkish side were not coherent or uniform, as their participation and political activism were reactions to stimuli within the host country. Most of them chose to avoid politics unless they felt that their identity was threatened in the host country. Conversely, using the opportunity structures provided by the host country, Kurds mobilized against the Turkish state on Kurdish issue. Accordingly, their actions are directed towards the Turkish state, while the Turkish community's actions are mostly a reaction to Kurdish activism in Sweden and to the perceived deterioration of the image of Turkey abroad.

Although, at first glance, there is no visible conflict between the two groups in Sweden, the narratives of the interviewees reveal the dissociation of the two communities. The gradual polarization of the two groups correlates with the marginalization of their respective conflicts with the Turkish state and the PKK. The second-generation Turks and Kurds grew up in a different environment and thus formed their identity differently to their ancestors. Today there are almost no more interactions between the two groups and multiple conflict patterns can be detected, including spatial distance, separation of social spaces, mutual avoidance, and conflicts at the discursive level.

8

THE IMPACT OF SWEDISH POLICIES ON TURKISH-KURDISH DIASPORA SPACES

In this chapter, my aim is to analyse the impact of Swedish policies and politics on the (re)construction of the homeland conflict in diaspora spaces. I first focus on how Turkish hegemony over Kurds is contested in Sweden as a result of political and discursive opportunities that are provided to the Kurdish diaspora. Secondly, I look at the “alliances” that both diaspora groups build with other diasporas present in Sweden to “strengthen their fronts” in contentious spaces. Thirdly, I analyse the interviewee testimonies regarding the *Swedish values* that were constantly brought up during the course of the interviews in order to explain why “there is no violent conflict between the two groups” in Sweden despite the abundance of conflict in other countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, and France. Lastly, I examine the multiculturalist policies of Sweden and its approach towards migrant organisations. The impact of these policies for the relations between the two groups is of the utmost importance for a comprehensive understanding of the contentions between Turks and Kurds in Sweden.

8.1 CHANGES IN THE ASYMMETRIES OF POWER: CONTESTED HEGEMONY?

Many authors such as Mohammad-Arif & Moliner argue that: “migration fosters nationalism among migrants, through exacerbated expressions of national identity, defined along ethno-religious lines” (Mohammad-Arif & Moliner 2007). In the Turkish-Kurdish case, such trends are certainly evident. Yet, there is also another aspect to consider in addition to the migration experience, which is often neglected in the literature dealing with the Turkish and Kurdish diasporas. Sweden is not simply a case where two adversarial groups found themselves in the same physical environment abroad as migrants. One should also take into account the fact that one group is the majority and the other is the minority in Turkey and that these roles are significantly challenged in Sweden.

The host country context, through the new opportunities and environment it provided, caused a “change in the balance of power” between the two groups, which affected the roles played by the groups as “majority” and “minority” in the homeland. With respect to the hegemony of the Turkish state over the Kurds in the homeland, this “traditional” order underwent significant transformation in the diaspora. In contrast to Germany, where the Kurdish community became a “minority within a minority” and were treated as a sub-group of Turkish immigrants, the Kurds in Sweden were seen as a distinct ethnic group since the onset of Kurdish migration to Sweden. If one also considers that in Sweden the number of people of Turkish and Kurdish origin from Turkey is almost equal and, moreover, the total number of Kurds from Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey outnumber the Turks, it becomes clear that Sweden presents a starkly different picture compared to Germany. The relative and absolute size of the communities allowed the Kurds to be able to completely avoid the Turks. The rejection of the Turkish language and the lack of economic or social dependencies also created a different set of conflict dynamics from those that exist in the homeland.

As a result of my interviews, I realized that Turkish respondents from the second generation were disappointed to have lost the upper hand in the conflict within Swedish borders. Unsurprisingly, this situation was recognized and appreciated by the Kurdish respondents. The shift in the balance of power aggravated the “Sèvres Syndrome” felt within the Turkish diaspora, which was manifest in the collective blaming of Sweden for “allowing this [breeding of terrorists] to occur” as one of the interviewees put it. Therefore, the Turkish community has taken a stance against both the Kurdish community and the Swedish state for the resulting shift in the balance of power, while most of the Kurds welcome this. Sweden’s approach to the Kurdish question in an historical context was addressed in Chapter 6. Below, I discuss the *Turkish and Kurdish perceptions* of this approach and their impact on the interactions between the Turkish and Kurdish groups.

8.1.1 Turkish Perceptions

During the course of the interviews, the majority of Turkish respondents listed similar grievances: the Swedish state is partial when it comes to the Kurdish question and supports the Kurds by all means; whatever the Turks have to say about the Kurdish question is badly received; Turks are disappointed by the Swedes’ behaviour and feel discriminated; the Turks feel the need to be involved in politics at an organisational level only because the Swedish

state takes sides in this conflict, and there are no political parties that care about the Turks except for the Moderate Party.

This disappointment revealed itself in almost every interview. Their assertions regarding the existence of the “Kurdish lobby” and its alliance with other groups pushed the Turks into a reactionary and politicized restructuring of their associations. During the interviews, I asked why they took the Genocide Bill to be the ‘last straw’ when Kurdish activism had always existed in Sweden. Several interviewees said “they could not take it anymore,” and that “they felt like they had to do something to show that they exist and that they care”, while some others argued that the Genocide Bill was the first time that the Swedish state openly became involved in contentious issues of the homeland and showed its bias “officially”. The answers revealed that this activism was a reaction to a long-held complaint about the Swedish attitude toward the Turks. Two interviewees from the TUF argued:

I always say that Sweden is a country for minorities. There is no place for us Turks here. Even the parties who call themselves right-wing are still left-wing according to my understanding. Sweden is a leftist country by nature. That is why they always think minorities are right. Therefore, whatever we say... they don't listen... They discriminate. I wish Turks were minorities as well, so that they would ask us how we feel.

I said come on... This is Sweden. It is supposed to be my country as well... If we are both your citizens [Turks, Assyrians and Kurds], then why don't you think of me as well...? You are favouring one son over the other.

My Turkish respondents argued that they are disturbed by Sweden's support for the Kurdish movement. Various interviewees underlined the fact that they are not opposed to improving Kurdish rights and were even in favour of linguistic rights for the Kurds. What disturbed them, however, was being on “the wrong team” in the eyes of the Swedish authorities. Almost all the participants had an openly negative stance towards the PKK and agreed that, although the PKK is on the terror list in EU countries, Sweden has a loosely tolerant policy towards it. Many others also mentioned that they feel frustrated in Sweden with regard to the Kurdish question, stating that they have no chance of “defending Turkey or themselves” because they are labelled as the “bad guys” by the Swedish authorities and Swedish society. They also felt that the Swedish authorities and media silenced their voices. On several occasions the interviewees reminded me of the example of Ingmar Karlsson, the former Consulate General to Istanbul, who has written a book about the Kurdish question and received criticism from the Kurdish activists in Sweden because of his book title: *Kurdistan: landet som icke är*

(*Kurdistan: The Country That Is Not*). In Kurdish circles, the book was deemed not Kurdish-friendly enough. The Turkish interviewees mentioned several times that, “even for a Swede, it is hard to criticize the Kurds in Sweden.”

Here, one should remember the *discursive opportunity structures* that were outlined in chapter 2. Koopmans (2004) argues that the opportunity structures also have a public dimension, which means that certain types of actors and discourses are included in public debates, and that these actors and discourses receive different reactions. He calls these *discursive opportunity structures*. This concept helps us explain why the Turkish interviewees felt discriminated against, although they have the same political opportunity structures as the Kurds in Sweden. The Turkish community complained that at the discursive level, they feel like they are subject to bias and they are not given enough space to express themselves.

One of the interviewees said that, until a certain age, he had felt ashamed to have come “from Turkey”, because of the Swedish stance towards the country. He then decided, however, to become an active blogger in order to counter-balance the pro-PKK Kurdish activity in Sweden and “tell the truth about the Kurdish question to the Swedes”. The complaints were not only about the Swedish authorities, but also about the Swedish media. One interviewee from TSAF said: “If I had not known anything about Turkey and learned everything from the Swedish media, then I would hate that country.” A former president of the TUF also said that one can see human rights abuses against the Kurds on Swedish television news programs and in newspapers. He asks: “aren’t there any nice things happening in Turkey?”

Almost all participants mentioned the existence of an “anti-Turkey lobby” consisting of the “historical enemies” of Turkey, such as Greeks or Armenians, who are supported by the “minorities from Turkey”, the Assyrians and Kurds. They also referred to “dividing Turkey” as the ultimate aim of many European countries. As one Turkish participant explained:

The only reason that this resolution was passed is because there are lots of people in Sweden who are enemies of Turkey. They say: lets plan something to harm Turkey and now they have found this. Greek, Armenian, Swedish...it doesn't matter... Their aim is to prevent Turkey from developing and to destroy its image in Europe.

In many interview responses and diasporic media extracts it is hard to ignore the traces of “Sèvres Syndrome.”

The participants also made comments about individual political parties. For instance, almost all of them said they would never vote for the Leftist Party, as it is very partial in its support of the Kurds and the PKK. They were also reticent about the Social Democrats, which, for years, the Turks had voted for. After the genocide bill was passed, they said the Social Democrats should “forget about Turkish votes” because they had ignored the feelings of the Turkish community in Sweden. Another participant from the TUF said there is no party in Sweden that “likes” Turkish people and cares for them, and that she feels underrepresented in Sweden as a Swedish citizen of Turkish origin. As they feel isolated by the left-wing parties – that are extremely pro-Kurdish in their eyes, many Turks began establishing links with other political parties. The fact that at that time Foreign Minister Carl Bildt had also been very critical of the parliament's passage of the genocide bill gave the Turkish diaspora an incentive to seek an unofficial but tacit alliance with the Moderate Party. As the Moderate Party is perceived as the most Turkey-friendly political party in Sweden, it is no surprise that many Turks align themselves with it.

8.1.2 Kurdish Perceptions

The Kurdish interviewees, unsurprisingly, had a more positive perception of Sweden. Almost all the participants said they appreciate living in Sweden and agreed that Kurds enjoy more freedom in Sweden than in the countries from which their parents originated. Almost all mentioned that the Swedish state is very supportive of the cultivation of the Kurdish language and culture. Kurdish activism was not criminalized in Sweden as it was in Germany and they all stated that Sweden gives them room to discuss the Kurdish issue and that the Swedish public is aware of the “Kurdish situation.” Few, however, argued that Sweden supports everything they do. The rest had different opinions: some argued that Sweden is very fickle in its support of the Kurdish movement; some expect Sweden to be less friendly to Turkey; some are critical of the Moderate Party’s close relations with the Turkish community; and some expect the EU to pressure Turkey more for reforms.

Almost all participants agreed with the idea that the EU and Sweden should pressure Turkey more to improve Kurdish rights. The majority of them have not found Swedish efforts to be satisfactory in this regard. Moreover, various participants would not agree with the assumption that Sweden is pro-Kurdish. According to them, Sweden supports “freedom,” which is a component of *Swedish values* and thus it has not given any special treatment to the

Kurds that it would not give to any other group. In some cases, various participants criticized Sweden for giving more support to Palestinians than to the Kurds.

Almost all participants claimed that there is an entity that could be referred to as “the Kurdish lobby” in Sweden. One of the interviewees said:

The Kurdish lobby is very effective. They are very organised; the people who are trying to exert pressure are similar to the Israeli lobby.

Based on their narratives, one can say that they refer to a well-organised cluster of Kurdish activists who are gathered under one aim: to lobby the Swedish political circles for pro-Kurdish activities. It is not simply a group of people, but rather a collaboration of Kurdish associations and individuals seeking to exert influence.

In terms of political parties, many participants agreed that the leftist parties are much more supportive of the Kurdish movement. There is also a liberal political party (Folkpartiet) that has added the situation of the Kurds to its party agenda. Some interviewees complained that although Swedish political parties show solidarity with the Kurds, discussions in Swedish political circles about the emergence of a separate Kurdish state were almost non-existent. A participant from UNGKURD had something to say about this :

You don't see people talking about independence. They say it is stupid fighting with arms. They say lay down your weapons and ask for your human rights. Basically, they [Swedish politicians] are saying what the Turks are saying in a more democratic way.

Kurdish nationalists were for the most part happy with Swedish policies towards the Kurds. However, Kurdish activists with leftist tendencies were sceptical about the sincerity of the Swedish approach. The leftist Kurds raised further points of criticism, such as the Swedish economic alliance with Turkey. According to them, Sweden and the EU placed great importance upon the economic relationship, and did not sanction Turkey as expected. Instead, European countries and Sweden were selling weapons to Turkey. Moreover, since 2002, the PKK has been banned in Sweden because of EU legislation. The Kurdish participants were very disappointed with this decision. One of the participants from UNGKURD said:

Sweden helped us [the PKK] a lot in the beginning. But after 2002, we were put on the terror list after the PKK had already agreed to a ceasefire. Isn't it strange? So, my answer is no. Sweden does not support us unless it is in its own interest. Realpolitik...

A few participants claimed that Sweden is following its own interests and that one day it may abandon the Kurds. When I asked about the Swedish attitude towards PKK activities in Sweden, I heard similar responses from different interviewees who were affiliated with the PKK or its organisations in Sweden. One of them said:

We [the PKK] are accepted as a civil society organisation in Sweden. We have 22 organisations related to the PKK and they are legal. I mean, I can say our activities and work are 90% legal, 10% illegal. We have our own tax system and a very loosely organised umbrella organisation. The Swedish police would arrest you if you are doing something illegal, that's why we try to operate under Swedish law as far as possible. The SAPO and other intelligence services know what we do.

However, none of the participants felt that Kurdish activism was criminalized; PKK members and supporters have not felt the urge to go underground after the PKK was put on the terror list by the EU. The majority said that they are not afraid of being arrested or harassed about their activism.

8.2 IMAGINED ALLIANCES IN IMAGINED BATTLEFIELDS ?

As Rigby explains, the diaspora members may carry with them not only the divisions of caste, class, tribe, and ethnicity that fractured their home society, but new divisions generated from residence in their host countries superimposed on these already existing fractions (Rigby 2006: 3). I argue that the experience of displacement combined with residing in Sweden had such a significant impact on the Turkish and Kurdish communities that it pushed them to take a position against each other. Divergent social and historical circumstances have produced different patterns of community relations in each different settlement (Gayer 2007), and Turkish-Kurdish relations have taken on a different form in Sweden than they have in Germany. Today, both groups act in an antagonistic way at the discursive level, forming “fronts” to be able to “defend themselves or strike back,” as one of my interviewees put it.

One salient feature is that there are new “battlefields” that have been created by the conditions in the host country. These battlefields are also present in the political arena, and the polarization of the groups has penetrated the Swedish public sphere. Turkish organisations have been seeking cooperation with other groups that are ostensibly in conflict with the Armenian, Assyrian, or Kurdish groups. They make alliances with Azeri associations, and have welcomed cooperation with Iraqi Turkmens and Kazaks. During my interview with the

leader of STRF, I asked whether this move had a pan-Turkish connotation. The answer was that it was only done for economic reasons, as the Swedish system rewards institutions for having a large number of member organisations. However, it is evident that there is a pattern of forming pan-ethnic alliances, and that collaboration between historically antagonistic groups is not simply coincidental. An example is that the Azeri associations protested with the Turkish federations against the genocide resolution. They were given space to voice their own concerns during the protests. The speaker from the Azeri associations mentioned the “Hodjali Genocide”¹⁴⁰ during the Karabakh war, and reminded the attendees that a considerable percentage of Azerbaijani territory was under Armenian occupation. Therefore, the Armenians were to blame for committing genocide.¹⁴¹ One may argue that this kind of polarization was not surprising due to the historical context of these groups; I argue, however, that developments in Sweden made it necessary for these groups to cooperate and also provoked nationalist feelings on both sides, making the deep cleavages much more visible.

Within the Kurdish community, one can see a pan-Kurdish pattern. It is well-known that Kurds are not only free to explore their heritage and identity in a more liberal environment compared to where they originate from, but they also have the opportunity to mix with other Kurds from Syria, Iraq, and Iran. This particular possibility may contribute significantly to the creation of a “Kurdish identity and culture,” which brings together the entire Kurdish population from the other Kurdish populated areas in the Middle East. Therefore, the diaspora also becomes a space for the Kurds to rediscover the idea of “Kurdistan” as a whole: as one of my interviewees mentioned, they “unite Kurdistan in Sweden.” The environment in the host countries offers the Kurds the possibility to get to know each other after years of separation by borders and to overcome regional diversity. In the diaspora, the Kurds attempt to homogenize, and if possible, to unify the community. According to my fieldwork observations, Kurds from Turkey feel much closer to the Kurdish groups from Iraq, Syria, and Iran than to the Turkish groups. In Sweden, the second-generation Kurds had no attachment to any Turkish group but formed their associations in a more pan-Kurdish manner. For example, the largest Kurdish students’ association in Sweden, KSAF, is a party politics-free organisation that gathers Kurds from four different countries and allows the Kurdish youth to embrace “Kurdistan as a whole.” Rather than forming four different diaspora groups (Iranian,

¹⁴⁰ During the Karabakh war between Karabakh Armenians and Azerbaijan, on 26 February 1992 the civilians who live in the Hocali town of Karabakh were massacred by the Armenian army. Official records claim that 613 people were found dead after the attack.

¹⁴¹ TRF magazine. Last access 3 June 2012. http://trf.nu/yeni_birlik/yeni_birlik_2_2010.pdf.

Turkish, Syrian, and Iraqi Kurds), the Kurdish youth seem to have achieved a unified identity and paved the way for the formation of a single Kurdish diaspora that is sensitive to political developments in all four parts of Kurdistan.

Besides this obvious pan-Kurdish pattern, Kurdish groups also form contingent alliances with Assyrian, Armenian, or Greek communities on issues that serve their collective interests. The Genocide Bill of 2010 is an example of such an effort. Moreover, the Kurdish diaspora has strong relations with the Jewish diaspora in Sweden. Barlt (2009), who conducted studies on young Kurds in Stockholm, discovered that there is strong cooperation between the Kurdish youth organisations, the Jewish student organisation Judstud, and an Armenian student organisation. According to her, these cooperations can be accepted as indirect political statements (2009: 45). She also argues that it is unsurprising that in “search” of sympathizers or allies, the Kurdish diaspora has singled out the Jews. She suggests that there are certain analogies between the two: a history of oppression, genocide, the goal of a nation-state and an influential diaspora (Bartl 2009: 51).¹⁴² My interviews also confirmed a similar pattern. The “common enemies” brought diaspora groups together or at least helped to pave the way for contingent collaborations. Many interviewees, including Gulan Avci, a former parliamentarian from Folkpartiet, also mentioned that the Kurdish diaspora could take the Jewish diaspora as its role model.

8.3 “SWEDISH VALUES”: AN EXPLANATION FOR THE ABSENCE OF VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS?

Perhaps one of the most obvious differences between Sweden and Germany in terms of relations between their Kurdish and Turkish communities is that there are high numbers of violent encounters between the two groups in Germany, whereas, in Sweden, almost no significant violent events are reported.

My very first interview was with a member from the Social Democrat Party who has Assyrian origins. I asked why there have been no major violent outbreaks between the Turkish and Kurdish diasporas thus far. The first thing he told me was:

¹⁴² One of her interviewees explained that the reason for this collaboration lies in the fact that “they” have suffered as “we” have and “they” have the same enemies as “we” do (Bartl 2009: 51).

In Sweden, we learn how to avoid conflict. It is a cultural thing. In Sweden, values such as tolerance, democracy, respect for everyone and everything, freedom of speech are passed through breast milk. And we learn about them as we live in Sweden.

This line of thinking also revealed itself in the majority of the interviews. I came across new concepts mentioned both by the Turkish and Kurdish respondents: *Swedish values*, *Swedish mentality*, and *the Swedish way*. A majority of the second-generation Turks and Kurds used these terms to explain how to cope with conflicts at the individual or community level, and to make their voices and grievances heard. Most of my interviews juxtaposed several concepts while defining the so-called *Swedish way*: democracy, equality, tolerance, respect for others, avoiding conflict, freedom of speech, respecting the ideas of others, and, finally, the belief that violence never works. The respondents frequently mentioned the principle of *mobilizing in a collective manner* in order to raise awareness and lodge collective complaints. Many added that they *learned* to be more *open-minded* and *tolerant* towards others through their experiences in Sweden. Based on the interviews, one can argue that the second generations' mentality about conflict management is highly influenced by their socialization in Sweden. I illustrate two examples from my interviews with members of UNGKURD and TUF:

For me, Swedish values accept every kind of opinion. You have the freedom to think anything you want. In Sweden you have no fear of your thoughts and no one should have a fear of expressing themselves.

The Swedish way is the only way. We have to apply this to all problems we have. You get organised, go to your destination and make a collective complaint to make your voice heard. I think this is the best way.

The majority of the interviewees mentioned that they would not consider using violence to solve their conflicts with the members of the opposite group because they knew that “it is not the right way” and that it is not “acceptable” in Sweden. The leaders of the organisations also mentioned that if any violent protest or counter protest occurs in Sweden, they are sure that their activities will be criminalized and their reputations will suffer. This would jeopardize the state subsidies they receive and paint them in a negative light in the eyes of Swedish society. Therefore, they adapt their discourses to the *Swedish way*.

The majority of respondents appreciated the “values” mentioned above, as they stated frequently that they value the freedom, rights, and possibilities in Sweden. Interviewees from both sides underlined frequently during the interviews that “whatever happens in Sweden, it is

better than in Turkey.” The respondents made this point with comments such as the following one from an UNGKURD member:

We are (as Swedes) very respectful for human rights and democracy. When suppression exists, people rebel. In Sweden we are not suppressed, therefore, we do not need to rebel.

According to the interviewee quoted above, Sweden gives individuals every opportunity to express themselves. Therefore, people do not need to use violence to raise their voices. It is also valid for relations at the individual and organisational level as they tried to avoid conflict. This could explain the absence of any violent encounters between the two groups to some extent. However, my impression was that avoiding conflict could lead to the avoidance of contact. For instance, as the Turkish and Kurdish organisations knew they would not agree at some point, they stopped trying to create a dialogue and avoided each other.

At this point, one might question whether the members of the diaspora actually embraced the Swedish values mentioned above, or just adopted them in order to save face for their ethnic group and their organisations. This would be a subject for another study. However, a few observations may be made about their behaviour. First of all, it was striking to see that a high number of my interviewees had *internalized* the Swedish discourse on *Swedish values* and appreciate them. They do not, however, perceive this as assimilation but see it as an asset that they have acquired in Sweden in addition to their own culture and values. Accepting the *Swedish values* was a learning process, and for many mastering them suggested successful integration. Secondly, although they acknowledge that there is discrimination and xenophobia in Sweden, they still have a tendency to idealize Sweden as the “best country in the world” or “the cradle of democracy.” It could even be argued that they internalized their “otherness” and embraced the “multicultural discourse” that has been present in the speeches of Swedish politicians since the 1970s.

There were also exceptions from both groups who were sceptical about these concepts. A member of the KSAF claimed:

Sweden has no impact on me. Swedish values? ...People learn to be cowards in Sweden. Not that you should beat up someone when you do not agree with them...but... people should be able to support what they think. You know what is acceptable to say and you act accordingly. That is not honest.

A Turkish respondent also claimed that in Sweden they always have to act in a *hypocritical* way. This is the same for other groups, as they hide their real feelings about each other. Some interviewees also said they are sometimes tired of the political correctness in discussions related to the Kurdish issue and other matters. The majority of the interviewees from both the Turkish and Kurdish side argued that both groups try to conduct themselves in a way that does not “bother the Swedes.” As one Kurdish interviewee mentioned, “Swedish society, the *white judging eye of the Swedes*, is present whenever Kurds and Turks debate in Sweden.” As he went on:

The immigrant in Sweden is a second-class citizen, who is fooled into believing that there is a Swedish way, superior than their ways. Everything immigrants do in Sweden is judged by Swedish society, and the immigrants in Sweden, who live, think, drink, and eat in Sweden, are existentially and psychologically products of Swedish society. If there is no violence between Kurds and Turks in Sweden, it is because they do not dare to. It would only result in a media sensation about the immigrant, who is ‘unable to adapt to Swedish values’ and so on, and we all know that we can only be the losers in such a debate.

As the narratives of the interviewees from both sides show, although the contentions involve the homeland conflict and the discussions focus on the antagonisms between the Turkish and Kurdish groups, the answers one way or another always point at to the question: “What do the Swedes think about us?”

The issue that concerns this study, however, is how the Swedish system *channelled* Turkish and Kurdish activism in a *Swedish way*. As can be seen from the interviewee accounts, the activists act in a certain way – to save face or because they embrace these values – in order to maximize the impact of their actions and maintain a positive image in the eyes of the Swedish public, media, and authorities.

Brown argues that the migrants’ forms of political participation are closely related to the opportunities provided by the host country. As he suggests: “the more inclusive the political system is, the more the activities are channelled into that system and shaped accordingly, rather than taking place outside the system in more confrontational or extra-legal forms” (2004: 104). In the Swedish case, the migrant organisations (including those of the second generation) are very much aware of the fact that they have a greater chance of success if they raise their voice in the *Swedish way*. This means avoiding violence, framing arguments in a human-rights context, and distancing themselves from aggressive behaviour or language, such

as hate-speeches. Consequently, the diaspora groups framed their actions and grievances in a manner that is *acceptable* to the host country.

While talking about Serbs and Croats in Australia, Brown explains the mechanisms that are put forward by the Australian authorities to curb the potential conflict between two groups as follows:

[...] The lesson is straightforward: liberal democracies accept dramatic forms of political participation like protests and demonstrations, but they also grant their citizens civil and political rights [...] For this reason, the most drastic forms of political protest are often not required, and violence and domestic conflict are less likely (2004: 106).

I argue that the mechanisms in Sweden work in a similar fashion. As Ingmar Karlsson mentioned during our interview: “in Sweden if you have a problem, you solve it by engaging in politics, not by isolating yourself.” Overall, the diaspora groups internalized this mechanism and framed their strategies accordingly. Therefore, all the arguments, grievances, and even antagonisms are channelled and institutionalized in harmony with the Swedish system. The diaspora elite, in particular, played an important role in calming aggressive stances and sustaining unified action. For instance, when Brown talks about the Serbs and Croats in Australia, he offers the example of the Australian Croat elite who engaged in self-censorship, formed new community goals, and redefined their foreign policy and homeland interests as they were ever cognizant of the judgment of Australian political officials and especially of the media and the public (Brown 2004: 106). Turkish and Kurdish diaspora elites also followed a similar strategy, in which “protecting the group image” was prioritized above all else.

8.4 THE IMPACT OF SWEDISH MULTICULTURALISM ON ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

In Sweden, multiculturalism is the official policy of migrant assimilation and deemed an asset by the government. The migrants and their descendants have been given the chance to preserve their ethnic and cultural background while integrating into the political, economic, and social structures of the Swedish system. This is an ethno-centric approach, which naturalizes ethnic divisions among people and, consequently, enforces ethnic divisions within society. It leads to the emergence of a minority culture in the private sphere and inhibits social

exchange between minority and majority groups. It also solidifies ethnic boundaries by acknowledging and supporting differences in cultural heritage and tradition (Alund & Schierup 1991). The consequence of these policies, however, could be the enhancement of the problematic nature of intra-ethnic relations.

Migrants and their descendants are treated as separate ethnic minorities. They are treated as “one ethnic body” by the system and distanced from the core of native Swedes, and, in return, they have the right to preserve their culture and the baggage that accompanies it. This dynamic creates and enforces an “us” and “them” situation. The literature usually focuses on this situation in terms of the relations between the native Swedes and the groups with migrant backgrounds. However, my research illustrates that the same relationship also exists between migrant groups of different ethnic backgrounds in the same hostland. Diasporas may remain loyal to homeland issues and if there is a conflict in the home country, it might also be imported to Sweden. These kinds of loyalties, in the end, might pose a challenge to the maintenance of peaceful inter-ethnic relations in a host country (Brown 2004: 103). In this regard, Sweden’s multiculturalist system inadvertently stokes the fires of ancient conflicts and paves the way for the solidification of these antagonisms, including alliances between groups against each other, or the tacit rupture of relations, while at the same time keeping them under control through both visible and invisible mechanisms.

During the course of my fieldwork, I observed four important consequences of the Swedish system with regards to the conflict import. First, the multicultural system allocates migrants into ethnic boxes, which helps to sustain intra-group harmony. Since the migrant organisations seem to represent specific ethnic groups, the elites try to instil and manage group cohesion. The migrant organisations, desirous of acting as the representatives of a certain group, had to soften their discourses in order to be supported by more members of the community. In the end, intra-group rivalries are attenuated to such an extent that they become invisible to the outside community. For example, the rivalry between the two Kurdish groups, PKK and KOMKAR, was not as noticeable as it is in Germany. The diaspora group was focused on aims that would be acceptable to all group members. In the case of the Kurds, there is a focus on human rights abuses against the Kurds in Turkey, and the petitions, campaigns, and protests attract Kurds from different parts of the political spectrum. For the Turks, the Genocide Bill is an apt example. Their energy is focused on reversing the

recognition process or at least preventing its future implications, which brings members of the Turkish diaspora with different political ideologies together.

Second, the central migrant organisations were encouraged to organise themselves ethnically. In order to benefit more from state funding for projects and subsidies, as well as to stand strong and powerful as an interest-group, the migrant organisations followed a pan-ethnic policy, which in the end led to the emergence of pan-Kurdish and pan-Turkish attitudes. This observation also goes hand in hand with issues such as imagined enmities mentioned in the above section, where both groups made alliances with ethnic kin groups or followed the approach of “my enemy’s enemy is my friend.”

The impact of Swedish multiculturalism varies for different groups, depending on their situation back in the home country. The Swedish system, without doubt, brings benefits to the Kurdish community. Being recognized as Kurds, with all their cultural and linguistic rights, means that they can express their culture freely, which they could not do in their homeland. As Eliassi illustrates, this situation offers exceptional possibilities for Kurdish mobilization. According to him, Swedish multiculturalism both strengthens ethnic Kurdish identity and helps in the promotion of Kurdish nationalism. He also adds that because of the situation of statelessness, Kurds see the organisations as their official representatives for advocating Kurdish interests (Eliassi 2010: 107). Therefore, the situation helped the Kurds to draw boundaries with Turks and Arabs, enforced group cohesion, both among the Kurds from Turkey and the Kurds from different parts of Kurdistan, and, finally, released them from the “minority within a minority” situation (which prevails in Germany).

With regard to the Turkish organisations, they have lost a considerable number of members because Kurds choose to become members of Kurdish associations. Although Kurds continue to join these associations for the reasons mentioned in the above sections, this has become more rare. Instead, they decided to follow a pan-Turkish path in order to gain more Azeri, Kazak, and Turkmen members. They still appreciate the multicultural system Sweden provides, which recognizes their distinct identity and does not force them to assimilate. They frequently mention, however, that it would have been better had they organised themselves as “migrants from Turkey.”

The third main observation concerns inter-organisational relationships. Although the system pushed the groups for further intra-group cohesion, it curtailed the possibilities of inter-ethnic relations. If tension exists between two communities, then multicultural policies might sustain and strengthen these cleavages and boundaries with time. When Moliner (2007) analyses British multiculturalism, he offers a similar argument, saying that while reifying and institutionalizing cultural differences, it encourages minority groups to be internally homogenous and externally divided by tight boundaries. Brown also came up with a similar argument regarding Australia's multicultural policies:

While Australian multicultural policy thus codifies liberal principles and, in theory, does not respect any element of a culture that contains within it notions of racial or ethnic superiority, the reality is that some ethnic and migrant communities utilize the political space generated by the policy to defend ethnocentric distinctions and historical enmities, and to perpetuate these attitudes to their posterity (2004: 58).

He further argues that in some cases ethnic community leaders perceive multicultural policy as consent to maintain homeland conflicts and ethnic separation (2004: 106). These observations are also confirmed by my fieldwork results in Sweden. As mentioned in the above sections, the political space provided by the Swedish system was also used to foster ancient hatreds that are fuelled by current events in the country of origin. Obviously, arguments such as this do not mean that multiculturalism creates these conflicts. What should be emphasized, however, is that the multicultural system maintains the political spheres in which these grievances are kept alive and vivid. This, in the end, facilitates the emergence of antagonisms between opposing ethnic groups and their descendants.

The fourth observation concerns state subsidies for ethnic organisations in Sweden. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the central migrant organisations are dependent on the Swedish state for financial support, as their establishment is enabled through state funding. As the state controls the activities of these organisations, it also defines the limits and boundaries on their actions (Alinia 2004: 164). Therefore, migrant organisations were powerfully shaped by the Swedish system. For instance, as mentioned in the previous chapter, their projects were very much in line with *Swedish values*, because this increased their chances of obtaining additional funding. As financial aid is necessary for their survival, almost all the associations I contacted were running projects that addressed the situation of women or youths and integration. Moreover, youth organisations receive more funding than first-generation organisations. That is why the first-generation organisations were eager to create youth

organisations as sub-committees or as separate (although organically-linked) associations in order to secure more funding. Lastly, as the size of membership matters in terms of the state funding an organisation receives, it is very important for an organisation to increase its number of registered members. That is why the groups mentioned above had an incentive to pursue pan-Kurdish or pan-Turkish policies. Finally, as financial help from the state depends upon the monitoring of these organisations, the leaders pursue apolitical or non-religious strategies. Therefore, the associations do not *openly* support any Swedish, Turkish, or Kurdish political party (however members are tacitly aware of the affiliations of each organisation to particular political parties). In sum, financial concerns (dependent upon the state's monitoring of the organisation's agenda) shape the content of the claims of the associations as well as their membership profile.

8.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has analysed the impact of Swedish policies and politics on the interactions between two diaspora groups. I have illustrated that the confluence of Swedish opportunity structures and the composition of groups in terms of absolute and relative size paved the way for the reconstruction of the conflict in a different way compared to Turkey or Germany. The Kurdish diaspora found the opportunities to reverse the Turkish hegemony imposed on them and completely separated its diaspora spaces from Turkish influence. This shift in the traditional power structures engendered a different relationship between the two groups.

In Sweden, while the Turkish diaspora feels isolated and discriminated against, believing that Sweden takes the Kurdish side in the conflict, Kurds appreciate the opportunities that are granted to them. Antagonism between the two groups boosts their incentive to form alliances with other diaspora groups in order to strengthen their capacity to influence policy change in Sweden. These alliances were formed firstly along pan-ethnic lines and secondly along historical enmities, which in the end increased their scepticism about the other group. The Swedish approach towards multiculturalism and migrant organisations also had an impact on how the contentions between the two groups are manifested.

In sum, I argue that the absence of regular, systematic, or overt violence between Kurds and Turks does not mean that the ethnic tensions between them are being well managed by the Swedish authorities. The Swedish system has provided a platform to conceal the tensions and

present them in a politically correct manner. Diasporas act in certain ways in order to work in harmony with the Swedish system and, therefore, adjust to modes of actions and discourses that are “acceptable” to the host country. However, the tensions between the two communities remain omnipresent in every social and political interaction.

A REPLICIA OF TURKEY IN GERMANY?

In this chapter I map the contentious diaspora spaces between Turkish and Kurdish diasporas in Germany based on the narratives of second-generation interviewees from different strata, organisations, ideological or religious backgrounds, as well as various first-generation organisation leaders, politicians and experts. In the following pages I first discuss the identity-formation of second-generation Turkish and Kurdish interviewees and the main motives behind their mobilization for homeland politics. Secondly, I look at how their loyalty to homeland issues affects their relationship with the “antagonistic other” at individual and organisational levels. Lastly, I place an emphasis on the complex intra-group relationships in order to offer a complete picture of the (re)construction of Turkish-Kurdish contentious spaces in Germany.

9.1 WHY AND HOW DID THEY BECOME MOBILIZED?

As mentioned throughout the thesis, collective identity and mobilization are at the core of the definition of diasporas. When analysing the conflicts, tensions or cooperation among diaspora groups, it is essential to understand why these collective identities are triggered and how people became mobilized. In this section my aim is to understand how the interviewees define their sense of belonging to both Germany and their ancestors’ homeland, and, consequently, how they became active in diaspora spaces.

9.1.1 “First there were neo-Nazis....”

For the purposes of this study, I have interviewed 20 male and 18 female Turkish participants who were born in Germany. They are selected because they were one way or another politically active related to the issues of Turkish politics. They joined activities, festivals, protests, signed petitions, wrote blogs, regularly participated in online discussions. Most of the participants spoke both German and Turkish, and while some had difficulties with Turkish all were fluent in German. They came from different backgrounds: some were university students, while others had been working for some time – as engineers, teachers, construction workers or car mechanics. Naturally, their levels of economic, social and political integration varied. In order to provide a representative sample I aimed to include interviewees, of both genders, with different political backgrounds, as well as from different social classes.

The majority of my interviewees defined themselves as “firstly Turkish and then German” or “Turkish and German”. Many pointed out that even if they might “feel” German; they did not feel comfortable stating this overtly because German society does not accept them as “real Germans”. Many preferred to describe themselves as from a specific city, rather than Germany as a whole. For example, being a “Berliner”, as a self-definition, was predominant among the interviewees from Berlin. All of the interviewees talked about discriminatory German policies and everyday racism that they, their parents, and friends had encountered in daily life.

Based upon my interviews, it can be said that the majority of the Turkish second generation grew up with the awareness that they were of Turkish-origin. Apart from a few individuals who told me that they had felt “completely German” until adolescence, the majority claimed that they always “felt Turkish”. However, their ethnic identification did not necessarily mean that they took an interest in homeland politics. Different motives for this were stated by the interviewees, including: exclusion and a feeling of “not-belonging” in Germany; the presence of extreme right-wing groups in Germany; the political affiliations of their parents; Kurdish activism; and the influence of friends and diaspora organisations.

Before going into further detail, three facts about studying the Turkish diaspora in Germany should be highlighted. Firstly, one of the main differences between the Turkish diasporas in Sweden and Germany is that the diaspora communities in Germany became mobilized not only as a result of developments in the hostland but also because of the initiatives of headquarters in the homeland. Secondly, one of the main factors that triggered the formation of ultra-nationalist and nationalist Turkish groups was the presence of the extreme-right wing in Germany (rather than Kurdish activism). Thirdly, there are many people who have a personal interest in homeland politics but who do not participate in any organisation, hence looking solely the organisations in Germany will not offer us the whole picture.¹⁴³

As different levels of political activism exist in diaspora spaces in Germany, I begin with the ethnic gangs that have ultra-nationalistic tendencies. Fights between these groups (Turkish and Kurdish) have tended to be “ethnicized” by the media and officials. Although ethnic gangs were more active in the 1990s, they continue to exist in migrant populated areas and can be

¹⁴³ This is why half of my interviews were with Turks and Kurds who were not members of any association.

considered as a part of diaspora since they frequently refer to Turkish politics in their discourses. Moreover, they show clear signs of the mobilization that can later form the basis of politically active groups.¹⁴⁴ In my interviews, I began by asking why they became mobilized in the first place.

The interviewee accounts indicated that the main motive was the idea that the second generation must protect their identity and domains in their neighbourhoods against racist groups and their attacks. My research agrees with Argun when she states that in Germany the radicalization of the political landscape and the acceleration of the *ghettoization* process happened as a result of xenophobic attacks by the far-right. She argues that this was a setback for integration, as well as a strengthening of ultra-nationalism in Turkish diaspora spaces throughout Europe (Argun 2003: 44). White also asserted that the responses to xenophobic incidents in Germany “illustrate the principle that social identity is the outcome of a dialectic between images of self and images of self against others.” She points out that the responses vary according to the background of Turkish groups in terms of education, class, or gender. However, it is clear that there has been a withdrawal from German culture and a consolidation and defence of ethnic identity boundaries (1997: 765). In the late 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, the *other* was predominantly perceived as the “neo-Nazis” and perceiving Kurds as the *other* was uncommon. Youth gangs usually consisted of members from different ethnic backgrounds – including Turks, Kurds and Yugoslavs.

In her study about Turkish youth, Julia Eksner discussed the Turkish youth gang “36” in Kreuzberg and other districts of Berlin and analysed how they developed defence mechanisms against organised racist attacks. According to her accounts, a Turkish gang could rally together 500 youths for “protection” (2007: 21). She also points out that whilst these groups were described as “gangs” by the media, in reality they were loose organisations based on territorial loyalties (ibid. 38). It could be argued that these ethnic gangs paved the way for the ethnically organised groups that, over time, became antagonistic. The reactions to German extreme right-wing movements, led to the reinterpretation of ethnic identity among the Turkish youth and these (already mobilized) groups redoubled their efforts for other political motives.

¹⁴⁴ For instance, many interviewees stated that they did these kinds of things “when they were young” but that they are now “active in other ways”. Some of the interviewees who stated that they used to belong to the ethnic gangs when they were younger told me that they now attended Turkish organisations with “nationalistic sensitivities”.

It should be noted that there are significant overlaps between ethnic gang members and Grey Wolves supporters. The interviewees who belonged to such groups claimed to have an interest in Turkish politics because they saw no point in getting involved with German politics. Besides xenophobia and discrimination in Germany, the third and fourth generation listed Kurdish activism as another reason for their interest in Turkish politics. Yet becoming active to counter-balance Kurdish activism was not as dominant among German interviewees as it was in Sweden. I noted that there is a difference between the narratives of the second and third generation in terms of taking a stance against Kurdish groups. The second generation makes more reference to the xenophobia and street fights in Germany in the 1990s when explaining the interest in Turkish nationalism. For example, one of the most famous gangs in Berlin was called the “36 Boys” and they were involved in street fights with other gangs as well as skinheads. They were active in the 1980s until the mid-1990s. There were also other groups such as “Junior 36”, “The 20 Boys”, or the “Black Panthers”. Both the ethnic gang members and Turkish ultra-nationalists referred to the “good old days” when Turks and Kurds gathered together in Berlin and elsewhere in Germany. However, events took a different turn with the intensification of the conflict in Turkey, especially after the 1990s. According to the interviewees, the blame has to be placed with the “militant Kurds” who supported the PKK and “asked for trouble”. One of the interviewees explains the change in stance as follows:

Our neighbours, with whom we grew up, suddenly covered their homes with Öcalan posters. They started supporting terrorism...They attacked our shops and organisations. What do you expect? I mean... should we just stand and watch?

The third generation, especially those born after 1990, have no recollection of any collaboration with Kurdish companions.

With regard to the interviewees with no affiliation to ultra-nationalist groups or gangs but who have an interest in homeland politics, there are other factors that help us understand their contentions with the Kurdish diaspora. As a result of the interviews, I came to understand that although the second generation were born in Germany, many had internalized the idea that they “come from Turkey”. Growing up following the political and social developments in Turkey, watching Turkish TV, reading Turkish newspapers, and keeping in touch with their relatives in Turkey all undoubtedly affected the formation of nationalistic sensitivities among the Turkish second generation. The intensification of the Kurdish question is also strongly felt in diaspora spaces and is a source of concern about the homeland. Many interviewees mentioned that they were, and are still, worried about their relatives back in Turkey who are involved in military

service (some had close relatives who had been killed as a result of PKK attacks). It was also mentioned that family friends or relatives who were born in Germany felt so concerned about the situation in the homeland that they had volunteered to go to Turkey to serve their military duty.

Many interviewees said that their first encounter with Kurdish activism had begun at elementary school when teachers asked about their families and origins. When a Kurdish friend/acquaintance/neighbour used words such as *Kurd*, *Kurdistan*, *PKK* or *Öcalan* the Turkish respondents felt irritated and responded in a disputative manner. In addition, some interviewees said that they were encouraged by their parents to learn about Turkey and to react when Kurds or Germans said anything negative about Turkey, at school or elsewhere. Kurdish protests, organised in order to show support to the PKK, as well as several arson attacks on Turkish shops and business also triggered nationalist feelings among the Turkish community. Many interviewees stated that even if they had initially been disinterested in Turkish politics, the “Kurdish question in Germany” gradually pushed them to take a stance.

In the course of my field work, I realized that the parents’ political background and activism played a significant role in how the second generation reinterpreted both homeland and hostland politics. Among the interviewees who were members of associations, there were only a few exceptions whose father/mother were not also members. It was also hard to ignore the fact that it was usually the father who determined the political orientation of the family. For example, the interviewees who belonged to the Grey Wolves or Alperenler said that their parents were already members of this organisation and they grew up in this context. Interviewees from ADD and DIDF also followed their parents’ political ideas and became members of such groups at a very early age. Only the umbrella organisations with no party-political agenda, such as the TBB and TGB tended to show a different pattern of family association.

Moreover, the circles that the second generation socialize with also have an impact on the formation of political ideas among diaspora members. Interviewees from areas like Wedding, Neukölln and Kreuzberg in Berlin showed a greater tendency towards Turkish nationalism than the other interviewees from areas such as Charlottenburg where the density of the Turkish and Kurdish population is lower. Some of my interviewees admitted that they began to take an interest in movements such as the Grey Wolves or Alperenler because of their friends.

In Germany, I observed that “banal nationalism” (Billig 1995) is more common compared to Sweden. Many people choose to wear T-shirts incorporating the Turkish flag, almost all shops display a Turkish flag and a portrait of Ataturk, and some interviewees had tattoos in the shape of the star and crescent or other Ottoman figures. However, based on my fieldwork findings, I would argue that the motive behind this is not to antagonise the Kurdish community but because they are perceived as symbols that reinforce and celebrate an imagined sense of solidarity among the Turkish community in Germany. People who have Turkish flags in their shops are not necessarily hostile to Kurds, nor do they necessarily define themselves as nationalists. Nevertheless, it is very common in Germany and it is more of a response to the situation in Germany than a reaction to what is going on in Turkey.

9.1.2 “I think all Kurds are born political. They just don’t know it...”

For the purposes of this study, I interviewed 22 male and 18 female Turkish participants who were born in Germany. They were selected because they were one way or another politically active related to the issues of Turkish and Kurdish politics. They joined activities, festivals, protests, signed petitions, wrote blogs, regularly participated in online discussions. Most of the participants spoke German and Turkish and/or Kurdish, and while some had difficulties with Turkish all were fluent in German. They came from different backgrounds: some were university students, while others have been working for some time in varying jobs. Naturally, their levels of economic, social and political integration varied.

The Kurdish respondents defined themselves in a similar manner to the Turkish participants. The dominant recurring theme was that they do not feel “completely German”. Thus while they may “feel German”, they believe they will never be truly accepted in German society. Most of them supported the idea of full integration into German society with equal rights as Germans however they were against *Germanification*. Almost all interviewees talked about their experiences of discrimination and xenophobia and claimed that it is rife in Germany.

The majority of Kurdish interviewees spoke Turkish and German fluently and a number of them also spoke Zazaki or Kurmanchi. They followed the Kurdish and Turkish media closely to learn about homeland politics and many of them were aware of the day to day developments in Turkey with regard to the Kurdish question. As many speak fluent Turkish, they knew about each newspaper’s particular approach to the Kurdish question and could discuss the comments

of columnists in newspapers on certain issues as well as television shows that mentioned the Kurdish issue.

Contrary to Sweden, the profile of migrants in Germany is more heterogeneous and their personal histories about how they became politically active also show a great deal of diversity. There are also different ways of contributing to the homeland politics: youth gangs, PKK-supporting organisations/groups, KOMKAR members, and people who do not belong to any specific group but support to the Kurdish cause in other ways.

With regards to the ethnic gangs, unlike the Turkish interviewees, the Kurdish respondents made few references to ethnic mobilization when mentioning collaborating with the Turkish community against the German right-wing groups. Instead, many explained their ethnic awareness and mobilization by mentioning the first time they took a position against Turkey and the Turkish community in Germany. The above-mentioned motives for the activities of Turkish gangs also apply to the Kurdish case, however their main “antagonistic other” are the Turks, rather than neo-Nazis. This is illustrated by the Kurdish journalist and movie producer Mehmet Aktas’s interview with the youth gang “Kurdish Boys” in Kreuzberg in the mid-1990s. The narratives of the interviewees show that even then, the Kurdish youth who defined themselves as “Apocu” started perceiving the “Turkish nationalists” as the *other* and formed their strategies accordingly. They also described the “skin heads” as their “enemy” but claimed that the main contentions were with “the Turks”. His interviews show that developments in Turkey often became insignificant because life in Germany brought its own dynamics for the Turkish and Kurdish youth. Ethnic gangs usually gave each other “fighting dates” (Kampftermine) and fought for no concrete reasons (Aktas 1996:76-80). Drawing on my own interviews I argue that many gang members remain active in homeland politics but they redirect their efforts into organisational activities as they grow older. For example, in Berlin, the trend continues, though currently these fights have shifted to other neighbourhoods such as Wedding rather than Kreuzberg. Apart from the ethnic gangs, there are other groups that show an interest in Kurdish politics and express their contentions in different ways – yet it goes without saying that there is a considerable overlap between the gang members and PKK supporters.

Apart from the ethnic gangs, there are other ways in which the Kurdish second generation participates in issues related to homeland politics. There was a significant distinction between

the self-discovery processes of descendants of labour migrants and those of asylum seekers who arrived after the 1980s. The descendants of labour migrants became mobilized mainly as a result of efforts of the PKK. Although KOMKAR organised events centred on the Kurdish language or the Kurdish situation in Turkey, the bulk of mobilization efforts came into being after the PKK arrived in Germany. They recruited many second-generation members to send them to the PKK camps in the mountains, as well as cadres of the PKK within Germany.¹⁴⁵ Eccarius-Kelly, basing her arguments on police reports, suggests that the number of Kurdish second-generation members who joined the PKK as fighters is about 1800-2000 (since the 1990s). According to her, it is impossible to know the precise number because families (whose children have disappeared) usually choose to remain silent in order not to jeopardize their migrant situation in Germany or because they are scared of the reaction they might receive from the PKK (2010: 179).

During the 1990s, second-generation Kurds started showing an interest in Kurdish politics even though their parents were not politically active. This interest in homeland politics is usually explained within the integration-segregation framework.¹⁴⁶ Many second-generation Kurds are seen to “get over” their so-called identity crises by *becoming Kurds*. The way in which Griffith explains the situation of his interviewees in London is also pertinent for the situation in Germany. He writes about how they: “identified with affiliation to the Party, its leadership (particularly Öcalan) and the nation, a process in which Kurdish identity has been effectively channelled through the Party and its ideology” (Griffith 2002:138). Unlike in Sweden, where the Kurdish identity is mostly formed around Kurdish culture and language, in Germany the main pillars of Kurdish identity among the second generation predominantly revolve around the

¹⁴⁵ For instance, one of my interviewees (a first-generation Kurd) was a PKK dissident who left the PKK in 2000 and served a short prison sentence in Germany for his engagement with the PKK. He told me that he was responsible for the recruitment of Kurdish second-generation members and for arranging their transportation to the PKK camps in the Middle-East. He confirmed that the Kurdish youth in Germany had shown great interest in joining the PKK to take up duties in European branches or serve in the mountains.

¹⁴⁶ In the literature, this issue is highly contested. There is a tendency to explain the second generation’s interest in the PKK through the integration-segregation framework. At this point, I believe that the argument that “migrants became politically-active about homeland issues or even extremists because they were discriminated by the German society” may explain, to some extent, the recruitment rates for the Kurdish movement. However it is hardly sufficient to understand the mechanisms underlying diaspora mobilization. Moreover, this explanation for the participation in the Kurdish cause upsets the Kurds in Germany because they think it “degrades” their cause. Most of my interviewees were disturbed by the fact that the Kurdish movement has been (and continues to be) depicted as a movement for the “hopeless youths who could not integrate.” As I demonstrated in the above section, the reasons for participation varied and they are far more complex than previously understood.

PKK and its politics.¹⁴⁷ As Van Bruinessen (2000) points out: diaspora spaces “provided the PKK with a large pool of marginalised second-generation youths, for whom participation in the struggle gives meaning to their lives and is a source of self-respect”.

When asked about the first time they felt “Kurdish”, some respondents (descendants of labour migrants) answered that up until a certain age they felt they were “Turkish”. Various events had, however, “opened their eyes” and as a result they had become aware of political issues. In addition to the efforts of organisations for mobilization and the parents’ political background, there were also other symbolic markers that caused awareness among the Kurdish second generation. For example, an interviewee from KOMCIWAN told me that he became more conscious about the Kurdish issue after his first experience of Kurdish music – he said he listened to a song by Sivan Perwer and realized he had to do something for the Kurds. Female participants also frequently mentioned a film called *Beritan*, which tells the story of a guerilla woman, as a trigger for their interest in the PKK.

The interviewee narratives also reveal that many Kurdish labour migrants and their descendants decided to hide their “Kurdish identity” in order to avoid trouble with the Turkish community or the authorities in Germany. They tried to stay away from politics, political discussions and many claimed to be “Turkish” when asked by Turks or Germans. With the amplification of the Kurdish question in Turkey, the situation became much tenser. The relatives of these migrants started joining the Kurdish movement in Turkey and their previous efforts to keep a distance from politics became harder to uphold. They started hearing stories about cousins who had been arrested or killed while fighting against the Turkish army, and it became difficult to remain indifferent, even though their parents were not involved in such movements. Several interviewees mentioned that their relatives were recruited by the PKK at youth festivals and that they became “martyrs” and this is one of the reasons they became interested in the various Kurdish associations.

¹⁴⁷Many interviewees, who support the PKK position talked about their experiences accordingly. In their narratives we hear that: “Thanks to PKK today, I know who I am. My parents were apolitical people from Malatya. Now I think...they were scared somehow. The PKK helped me to survive in Germany, educated me and showed me how to help the Kurds elsewhere”. “I always wanted to be a part of it... I mean the Kurdish struggle. But as a child, I didn’t know how. My friend from our mahalle (district) took me to one of the organisations formed by the PKK and I said, yes, finally I am home.”

The arrival of the Kurds after the 1980s was mostly due to political reasons related to leftist or Kurdish politics and their descendants were raised in a political environment. According to my interviewees it was *natural* for the descendants of already politically-active parents to become mobilized for the Kurdish cause. The memories of Turkey of the second generation's parents have an impact on how they perceive the Kurdish question. There were also participants whose parents had disappeared in the 1990s, or had been subjected to torture. For many interviewees who came from such backgrounds, joining the cause was seen to be their *duty* and the *right thing to do*. An interviewee whose father was a leading figure in the Kurdish movement in Turkey during the 1970s stated that "it was his destiny" to become involved in homeland politics. He says:

I think all Kurds are born political. They just don't know it... I am active because when I was born my father was already an exile in Germany. I saw how he suffered. We all suffered because of Turkey.

Although the descendants of most asylum seekers were encouraged by their parents to show an interest in the Kurdish cause, the descendants of labour migrants were usually discouraged. Many interviewees told me that their mothers begged them not to become involved with the PKK. Some other interviewees also mentioned that their brothers or male cousins were "forced" to marry when they were teenagers in order to prevent them from joining the PKK.

Like the Turkish diaspora, Kurdish diaspora members did not necessarily participate in the associations. Among the Kurdish interviewees, there were many who did not participate in Kurdish organisations, even if they sympathized with the PKK and joined protests that they became aware of through Facebook or other media. It is also important to emphasize that although the PKK is the most dominant movement among the Kurdish diaspora members, there are also nuances to the approaches towards the Kurdish issue in Sweden. Among the interviewees there were PKK supporters who were willing to follow Öcalan no matter what (the 'Apocular'- the most dominant group in Germany); PKK supporters who sympathize with PKK activities but disapprove of the post-Imrali Öcalan statements; and smaller groups consisting of Kurdish nationalists who do not belong to any organisation but support the idea of a separate state and therefore find the PKK to be overly passive, or at least unable to achieve this goal. I also interviewed Kurdish nationalists who not only want there to be a separate Kurdish state from Turkey but also support a unified Kurdistan which brings the four parts together.

9.2 CONTENTIOUS DIASPORA SPACES AMONG THE TURKISH AND KURDISH SECOND GENERATIONS

Unlike in Sweden, in Germany there are *significant interactions* among Turks and Kurds who have a politicized ethnic identity. There are many kinds of relations between diaspora members and it is possible to find mutual avoidance, total dissociation, hatred, co-existence, cooperation, close friendships, marriage, and business partnerships, despite the fact that members of the two diasporas have very different political views.

The course of the Turkish-Kurdish confrontation in Turkey, the failure of the Turkish diaspora groups to recognize the grievances and traumatic experiences of the Kurds and the rising Turkish nationalist discourse – which left no room for the Kurds to embrace their own identity freely and raise their voice in Germany, alienated even moderate Kurds in diaspora spaces. Moreover, the violent tactics of the PKK in the 1990s caused much antipathy and hatred among the Turkish diaspora towards pro-PKK Kurds or those participating in the Kurdish cause by other means. Yet, the level of dissociation is much lower compared to Sweden. I have interviewed Turks who boycotted Kurdish shops because they believed that by not doing so they would be contributing to the PKK budget. Similarly there are Kurds who refuse to eat in Turkish restaurants because they believe that all Turks are fascists. On the other hand, I saw a significant number of close friendships and inter-marriages between Kurds and Turks – despite their conflicting ideological stances. There are numerous organisations that bring Turks and Kurds together and, moreover, most of the Turkish organisations from different ends of the political spectrum have Kurdish members who distanced themselves from the Kurdish movement or who perceive the Turkish identity as an umbrella identity.

In the following pages, I focus first on the actors who were involved in the violent clashes that occurred in various German cities. Any search on the Internet will reveal thousands of videos and essays, as well as newspaper abstracts, about the Kurdish-Turkish fights in Germany. There were also non-violent confrontations between the two groups that were the result of prejudices, presumptions, experiences, or expectations. Since these violent encounters are frequently reported in the news and set the agenda, many tend to accept these as the current state of the relationships between the two groups. However, these events should be considered as extreme

and marginal. The real divide is much more deeply embedded and, as a result, is often overlooked.

9.2.1 Violent Contentions

The clashes between Turkish and Kurdish nationalist groups usually take two forms: spontaneous violent outbreaks – that are sparked by events such as a football games or gang-encounters, and semi-organised violent clashes – that occur after mass demonstrations that may have become violent or occur when group members decide to attack a certain place or Turkish/ Kurdish business. I have already touched upon the ethnic gang encounters; therefore below I focus on the organised political groups. I contacted members of both diaspora groups who have actively participated in mass-demonstrations, violent protests and marches – including the Israeli embassy occupation where three Kurdish protesters died in 1999 and the Turkish march that became violent, in 2007.

As Eccarius-Kelly highlighted, the German police monitored both Turkish ultra-nationalist groups and the PKK for a long time because they showed militarist tendencies for violence. During recent years, there has been a debate about the fact that the new generations appear to be much more radical by comparison to their parents (Eccarius-Kelly 2010:178). There are very few violent encounters between Turks and Kurds in Germany that do not involve second generation or youth participation and in the German intelligence reports the names of two groups repeatedly come to the fore: the Grey Wolves and Komalen Ciwan. Both Turkish ultra-nationalists and PKK supporter groups use a similar discourse against each other as well as against the host country in which they reside. On their websites, both groups warn their members against assimilation or integration (which they see as a trap) and they call for keeping the “ethnic essence” and “identity”.¹⁴⁸

The Grey Wolves belong to the ultra-nationalist party (MHP) which is linked to the “Turkish Federation” in Germany. They have been operating in Europe since the 1970s (Argun 2003: 43) and in the 1990s could be considered as the biggest Turkish lobby in Europe. However this is no longer the case. According to Østergaard-Nielsen, the number of sympathizers rose after the racist attacks on Turks in Solingen and Mölln (2003: 51) and peaked at the end of the

¹⁴⁸For Komalen Ciwan see: “Komalen Ciwan-Avrupa, 4. Kongresi’ni yaptı”, *Firat News*, 24 October 2009. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.firatnews.org/index.php?rupel=nuce&nuceID=15825>; for Grey Wolves see the official website of the Turkish Federation in Germany, <http://www.turkfederasyon.com/index.php/kurumsal/turkfederasyon/hakkimizda>.

1990s. However, the number of organisation members does not reflect the actual number of Turkish ultra-nationalists in Germany – many are not members of any organisation.¹⁴⁹ During my fieldwork, I met numerous Turkish nationalists who sympathize with its ideology but do not regularly participate in its meetings.

Komalen Ciwan, a youth organisation affiliated to the PKK, is usually associated with violent attacks against Turkish targets as well as the German police. They call themselves the “Apocu Genclik” (Apoist Youth) and they are organised in Europe under the name “Komalen Ciwan Avrupa”. They occasionally plan synchronized events across Europe after critical junctures in Turkey and they see the PKK as the only representative movement for “Kurdish Freedom”¹⁵⁰ – threatening “everyone who supports Turkey” by saying that they are Komalen Ciwan’s “operational targets.”¹⁵¹ The videos they have uploaded, as well as their webpages, usually post calls for taking “revenge” on the Turkish state and its supporters. They believe that “every Kurdish youth” should participate, and the organisation’s leaders argue that violence is the only appropriate reaction to “fascism” – and is thus legitimate. The organisation also arranges guerrilla recruitment from various European countries – publishing articles that state: “the mountains are calling for you”, “revenge for all our martyrs” or “we are the children of rebellion”.¹⁵² Police intelligence reports in Germany, or other countries such as Switzerland¹⁵³, describe Komalen Ciwan as a potential threat of violence.

The degree of antagonism was evident in my interviewee accounts. For instance, one respondent who had played an active role in the occupation of the Israeli consulate in Berlin said he does not feel sorry and he wishes that he could die for “the cause” (he also named his daughter after one of the three protesters who died at the event). He explains his behaviour by referring to the lack of possibility for Kurds to express themselves both in Turkey and

¹⁴⁹ For instance, among my interviewees there have been Turkish respondents who sympathized with the ideology of the Grey Wolves; however they do not regularly attend meetings of the Turkish Federation in Germany.

¹⁵⁰ Their website states that: “The world associated the Kurdish people with the PKK, and the PKK with Leader APO. Therefore, Leader APO is the only legitimate representative of the free Kurd that refuses to be the slave of the state. Leader APO means the Kurdish people” <http://www.rojaciwan.com/>

¹⁵¹ See the related news. Last access 12 June 2012: <http://www.kurdish-info.eu/News-sid-Komal-n-Ciwan-Attack-threat-from-Komalen-Ciwan-Youth-movement-und-8207--14118.html>

¹⁵² PKK affiliated website for youth members: <http://www.rojaciwan.com/>

¹⁵³ Annual Report 2010, of the Federal Intelligence Service, Switzerland. http://www.vbs.admin.ch/internet/vbs/en/home/documentation/publication/snd_publ.parsys.5549.downloadList.8989.DownloadFile.tmp/ndbjahresbericht2010e.pdf

Germany. Interviewees from both sides who have participated in violent protests during the last ten years stated that they were *proud* of clashing with the other side, or that they saw it as their *duty*. Their actions are perceived as attempts to intimidate the other group. Violent clashes between the Turkish and Kurdish groups occur when there are developments related to the Kurdish question in Turkey or because there is an important change in German policy regarding this issue. However, the testimonies of interviewees, as well as the events I followed through the mass media and on online social networks such as Facebook, indicate that often it is not even felt necessary to have an “excuse” to clash with one another.¹⁵⁴ The majority of my interviewees from the cohorts mentioned above treated these kind of violent encounters as “normal”. Both sides claimed that it is the other group’s provocation that causes these events and that they are only “reacting” to the other. It seems clear that both groups perceive using violence as a *legitimate method* to quarrel with each other.

It is also important to mention here that not all PKK supporters join violent protests, vandalizing Turkish business or the occupation of consulates. And not all Grey Wolves supporters commit violence against Kurdish nationalists. There are Turkish nationalism(s) and Kurdish nationalism(s) that contain the repertoires of a political stance. Moreover, the ultra-nationalist groups include other members from different organisations, such as Alperenler or Berlin Mehter Takımı, whose names are usually ignored when mentioning these clashes.

9.2.2 Non-Violent Contentions

As mentioned above, violent outbreaks should not be seen as a general characteristic of Turkish/Kurdish relations. The positions that one group takes against another are multifaceted and may shift with time according to the conditions in both the homeland and the hostland, as well as due to personal reasons. Hanrath argues that there are people who see the conflict and the differences between these two groups as ever-present and feel that the conflict is embedded in every aspect of daily life; on the other hand there are those who deny that there is a “Kurdish question” at all (2011a, 2011b). In the middle between these two opposite ends, lie the diasporic spaces in which the two antagonistic groups interact in various ways.

¹⁵⁴ For instance, in November 2011, two Turkish youngsters stopped a Kurdish youth on the street and asked whether he was Turkish. When he answered: “I am Kurdish”, the Turkish boys attacked him and he was stabbed. In retaliation, a group of Kurdish youngsters attacked the Grey Wolves’ headquarters in Kreuzberg and harmed whoever was in their way.

The findings of my fieldwork suggest that the exchanges between the Turkish and Kurdish diasporas in Germany show different patterns compared to Sweden. In the following subsections I analyse the particularities of the German case by focusing on the impact of the relative and absolute size of both groups, as well as the use of language and economic dependencies, which significantly changes the dynamics between the two groups.

Relative and Absolute Size of the Two Groups

In Germany, at a first glance, the composition of the two communities seems to mirror the situation in Turkey. The Kurdish and Turkish population somewhat replicates the proportion of Kurds to Turks, the percentage of politically active Kurds compared to non-active Kurds, and the ideological, religious and political cleavages in Turkey.

I argue that the *boundary-making* process of Kurdishness – as a separate identity – has not been as easy as in Sweden. Since the population of Turks and Kurds is much bigger and the percentage of Turks was higher than Kurds, it was harder for the Kurdish community to isolate itself completely. As mentioned in the previous chapters, and drawing on Wimmer, ethnicity is not only conceived as interactions between two groups but rather as a process which involves (re)creating and (re)identifying boundaries (Wimmer 2008). During the boundary-making phase, it was harder for the Kurds to remain distinct from the Turkish diaspora since Germany did not offer the same conditions to the Kurdish diaspora as Sweden. Moreover the sizes of both diasporas are far greater than in Sweden, which makes mutual avoidance difficult; instead there is a constant interface as they tend to live in ethnically (Turkish and Kurdish) dense areas.

As the previous Kurdish settlers were labour migrants and did not have the same political attachments to the Kurdish cause as asylum seekers, it became harder for the Kurdish elite in Germany to detach the Turkish-Kurdish relationship and launch the boundary-drawing process with a wider Kurdish population in Germany. Therefore the process of cultural purification and a *return to Kurdishness* did not occur as pervasively as in Sweden.

While the Kurdish elite certainly managed to mobilize a significant number of second-generation Kurds whose parents were labour migrants, they created a group that was, in Griffith's terms, for Kurdish nationalist youths with a "passionate espousal of Apoism" (Griffith 2002: 152) rather than culturally and socially "Turkishness-isolated" Kurdish nationalists. As Leggewie points out, the PKK "did what it could to radicalize the ethnic

contrast” (Leggewie 1996: 82) in the 1990s, however whilst they managed to create politically isolated generations, socially and economically the interactions more often than not prevailed. Therefore, one of my main findings in this thesis is that in Sweden the predominant idea among the second-generation Kurds is the *Kurdistani identity*, while in Germany identification with the PKK, and above all its leader, is the principal identity marker.

Language as common denominator

Billig asserted that in attempting to “create a separate nation” nationalists will often create “a distinct language” (Billig 1995: 32-33). The significance given to languages by any nationalist movement comes as no surprise. Griffith, while talking about Kurdish nationalists, states that what the Kurdish organisations wanted to combat above all was the assimilation of Kurdish community into the “Turkish speaking community”. In Germany, this was also the case but there were few concerted efforts by the Kurdish organisations to prevent this. The dominant language and dominant sub-cultures were usually Turkish, therefore it was hard not to be affected. Turkish was taught at schools, spoken by their parents at home, or in the streets in the daily life of Turkish and Kurdish migrants who lived in districts such as Kreuzberg, Wedding and Neukölln in Berlin. Although second-generation Kurds may have become “Kurdish nationalists”, they continued to speak in Turkish, consume Turkish products and culture, and are referred to as “Turkish” in Germany.

Nesrin Ucarlar, in her study about the Kurdish linguistic rights, states that: “...status and acquisition planning for a minority language reflects the struggle of minority elites for power both to resist the hegemony of the majority language and to dominate diversities within the minority language” (Ucarlar 2009: 199). The attempt to “reverse” the hegemonic imposition of Turkishness on the Kurds was observed among the Kurdish elite in Sweden with their leaning toward the cultivation of Kurdish culture through linguistic developments. In Germany however, especially in PKK supporting circles, first priority was given not to reversing the linguistic and cultural hegemony but to political mobilization.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ It should be noted here that there are recent attempts by PKK affiliated organisations in Germany towards prioritizing Kurdish speaking among the Kurdish youth. For instance, Komalen Ciwan has made several declarations through the last couple of years about the importance of Kurdish language. They made a call to all Kurdish youths to end “auto-assimilation” and reject speaking in Turkish. However, despite these efforts, the use of Kurdish language among the new generations is lacking in Germany.

The hostland opportunity structures also failed to encourage efforts towards the standardization or cultivation of the Kurdish language as in the case of Sweden. Although Kurdish was not banned (as it is in Turkey) and Kurds were allowed to use it in public spheres, this was not enough to make it widespread among the Kurds. Since the Kurds in Germany were not acknowledged as a separate ethnic group but as a sub-group of “Turkish migrants”, they are treated as “Turkish” by German society and elsewhere. Their descendants have not studied Kurdish at schools (with only a few exceptions), and Kurdish parents who were fluent in Kurdish sometimes preferred to teach their children Turkish rather than Kurdish. When I asked several first-generation Kurds why they used Turkish as the primary language at home, some answered that it was easier because it was “the language they were used to speaking”. However, some referred to the uncertainty of their situation in Germany – they were not sure if they could acquire citizenship or permanent stay in Germany and since they fear they may have to return to Turkey one day, they taught their children Turkish first. Some respondents also said that although they did not intend their children to learn Turkish, they had nevertheless learned it from their friends at school and they did not prevent or prohibit this. A few parents also stated that by speaking Turkish at school their children were able to keep a low profile and avoid “stigmatization” as Kurds.

Although it is possible now to learn Kurdish at German schools in cities such as Duisburg, Wesel, Bottrop, Bonn, Cologne and Munster, it is still not enough for the Kurdish activists who want Kurdish to be equally recognized as Turkish. Around 1,500 Kurdish pupils learn Kurdish at school in Germany.¹⁵⁶ There are also migrant organisations, such as KOMKAR, that offer Kurdish courses for a very low fee.¹⁵⁷ The textbooks are interesting as they teach not only the Kurdish language, but also “Kurdishness” as ethnicity, Kurdish nationalism and the Kurdish movement. In the Kurdish textbook, used at KOMKAR’s Kurdish language courses, there are frequent references to Kurdistan, and how it was “invaded by Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria”. Moreover, the names of the cities, villages or regions are given in their Kurdish form. It is a clear example of how ethnic awareness can be revived through language education as it also includes cultural aspects; however for some reason the popularity of language courses is very low – despite their affordability. Among my interviewees, over half were unable to speak Kurdish fluently (some spoke no Kurdish at all). There were some participants who learnt

¹⁵⁶“Kürtçe Almanya’nın Bir Kentinde Daha Eğitim Dili”, *Firat News*, 11 October 2011. Last access 12 June 2012. <http://www.firatnews.tv/index.php?rupel=nuce&nuceID=51176>

¹⁵⁷ 25 Euros per month.

Kurdish later in life in various organisations, however between themselves mostly spoke in German or Turkish. That was one of the main differences between Germany and Sweden, where almost all Kurdish participants refused to speak a word of Turkish with me. Their rejection of using the Turkish language was, by itself, a political statement.

Ucarlar has conducted several interviews with the Kurdish elites in the diaspora regarding the development of the Kurdish language and the political struggle.¹⁵⁸ In her words¹⁵⁹:

It is striking that the most popular Kurdish movement, the PKK, has never initiated clearly a specific policy to protect and develop the Kurdish language. Therefore, the movement is criticised for failing to focus significantly on linguistic rights as one of its main struggles [...] The source of the support for which the PKK was competing did not lie in linguistic rights. To the contrary, the Kurdish people did not patronise other Kurdish political groups emphasising language and culture, as they were accused of favouring cultural nationalism by some left-wing political movements (2009: 216).

As Ucarlar reports, other Kurdish diaspora elites also said that the PKK was an exception because of its attitude towards the Kurdish language compared to other groups such as the PSK. Ucarlar quotes Nedim Dagdeviren:

The PKK is always seen and analysed as a political organisation, but rather I regard it as a military organisation [...] A military organisation has less concern for issues such as language and culture [...] Such military organisations recruit people through a militarist discourse; they do not need to tackle the issue of mother tongue.

This was also the case with the German Kurdish diaspora where development of the Kurdish language was relegated to a second priority – an issue that would be addressed once the “struggle for freedom” had been solved.

¹⁵⁸ She quoted Mehmet Uzun, an influential Kurdish author, who said: “the Kurds believed that the political struggle would serve other fields such as the survival and vitality of the Kurdish language. However, this was not the case.” Uzun was critical towards the cultural institutions and organisations that were not eager to develop the Kurdish language, but instead gave priority to political mobilization (Uzun 2001: 240-1 quoted in Ucarlar, 2009: 215).

¹⁵⁹ As she further explains: “Although the PKK did not give priority to the linguistic rights of Kurds in its political strategy and did not refrain from using Turkish in its meetings and publications, it did use the Kurdish language and Kurdish historical symbols or mythical names to recruit ordinary people and gain their support. This also means that as ordinary people became active members of the PKK, they started to speak in Turkish in order to follow the instructions, meetings and publications of the movement. Therefore, it seems that the PKK was one of the agents that prevented the protection and development of Kurdish” (Ucarlar 2009: 215).

In the course of my interviews, I saw that being a “Turkish speaking community” gave many interviewees (from both groups) a sense of sameness or commonality, even though the Kurdish respondents complained about Turkish assimilation politics and the patronizing behaviour of the Turkish state. Nonetheless, their approach towards the Turkish community in Germany was more moderate than among my Kurdish interviewees in Sweden. Furthermore, for some Turkish respondents, it was another reason to believe that the Kurds are a subgroup of Turks and to maintain this attitude towards the Kurds: “We are all Turks in the end, we come from the same place, we speak the same language, so what is the difference between us?”

Economic priorities: The struggle to make a living

Unlike in Sweden, in Germany the size of the Turkish and Kurdish diasporas is fairly equal, and the two groups cannot, therefore, afford to completely cease contact for any significant length of time because of their socio-economic inter-dependencies. During the fieldwork I met various members of the two communities who preferred to hide their political position in order not to lose customers. Most of the Kurdish migrants, despite their political stances on the Kurdish issue, chose to give their businesses Turkish names or to play Turkish as well as Kurdish music in order not to “scare the Turks away” as one of my interviewees put it. Most Kurds do business with the Turks, and, interestingly, both prefer to do business with each other rather than with other groups. Therefore, some Kurds and Turks, although they are politically active, may put their economic interests first and soften their political tone.

In Germany, Kurdish diaspora members, who do not soften their political tone can be considered to have made *a choice* and stand to lose customers and economic gain, in order to stand up for their political beliefs. There are shops with signs painted in Kurdish nationalist symbols and colours such as green, yellow and red; and with names using Kurdish words that do not exist in Turkish such as Welat, Newroz or Rojda. Yet, the number of members who opt to keep their political identity in their private spheres and pursue a “politically-neutral” business career are not negligible. I interviewed a café owner who used to be active in YEKKOM and now occasionally joins the activities of the DİDF. Although he was born and raised in Germany, spoke fluent Kurdish, Turkish, and German, in his café, one finds only Turkish newspapers (mainstream and even nationalist) and magazines, as well as German newspapers. He usually plays Turkish music. When I told him this surprised me, he answered: “A man has to eat... I need to take care of my family. If I play Kurdish music here, in Kreuzberg, I will be bankrupt within two months. Business is business.” I also met a Turkish

shopkeeper who was a member of Grey Wolves in the late 1990s, who nonetheless sold books and DVDs about the Kurdish movement. He stated: “they have an audience. A client is a client”.

Griffith (2002) argues that “economically motivated Kurds” in London are usually seen as betraying the Kurdish cause by the “politically active Kurds.” This observation concurs with my findings in Germany. Amongst my interviewees were Kurds who were extremely critical about the Kurdish shopkeepers who give their businesses Turkish names, speak Turkish with their customers, and hide their Kurdish identity. One respondent said:

You say you'd give your life to the Kurdish movement but for 5 lira more in your pocket you choose to please the Turks? I haven't even bought an egg from a Turkish shop...

Another finding from my fieldwork is that most Turkish shops do not refrain from putting up a Turkish flag or a portrait of Ataturk for fear that they may lose Kurdish customers. I asked Turkish shop and restaurant owners whether they were wary about displaying nationalistic symbols and majority said that they were not, nor had they considered if it would disturb Kurdish passers-by. I argue that this attitude is also a political statement that underlines the invisible hierarchies between the two groups that are carried to the hostland and inherited by the younger generations.

9.3 SOCIALIZATION AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Turkish respondents in Germany, similar to the Swedish case, usually focused on the commonality of Turkish and Kurdish culture and focused on their shared history and destiny. The discourses “We are all Muslims”, “We are all Anatolians”, and “We are all immigrants”, were repeatedly mentioned. For those who defended a broad definition of Turkishness, the politically active Kurds were usually seen as “misguided” or “fooled by foreign powers who want to divide Turkey.” In Germany, the number of non-politically active Kurds, who define themselves as Kurdish, Turkish, Kurdish origin Turk or Muslim seems to be higher than the politically active Kurds. In the end, the Turkish respondents’ testimonies showed that they felt quite confident with their definition of “Turkishness” as the politically active (especially PKK-supporting) circles of the Kurdish diaspora seemed quite marginal.

With regards to the Kurdish perceptions, there was a category of Kurds who did not deny the commonalities of Turkish and Kurdish culture. Several interviewees referred to the “Anatolian culture” and said that Turks and Kurds, despite their differences, share a common heritage. However they stated that Turkish ethnicity was given priority in Turkey and became the dominant group and oppressed Kurdish identity. This was the reason why they complained: “we are brothers, but why is there oppression in Turkey?” They underlined the importance of valuing this rich cultural heritage, which both Turks and Kurds should appreciate and cherish, rather than trying to *patronize* one another. Many Kurds, despite their support for the Kurdish nationalist movement, had a “Turkiyeli (from Turkey)” identity. Some interviewees did not identify themselves as part of “one group” with the Kurds from other parts of Kurdistan and they did not think that separation is the ultimate goal of the Kurds in Turkey. These interviewees often referred to the notion of “living in harmony” as long as Kurds have their rights in Turkey.

The negative experiences of xenophobia and discrimination by German state institutions and society, the experience of being the *other* for the native Germans – as Muslim, Middle Eastern, or Turkish, maintains a shared identity among the Turkish and Kurdish populations. The new generations, even though they do not have the experience of living together in Turkey, are living together in Germany and facing similar problems and barriers in society that could potentially bring them together. The negative experiences of being from a migration-background might actually bring two groups together in order to unite their powers behind a cause. At times the issues in Germany that they contest are so important that the need to work together might surpass the ethnic contentions between the groups. For instance, I met several Kurds who support the Kurdish cause but participate in events run by Turkish organisations when issues such as migrants’ rights or discrimination are at stake. Some mentioned that the Kurdish organisations are too homeland-oriented and they do not form well-structured projects in order to affect policy making in Germany with regards to “migrant-issues”. That is the why, when they want to do something about their life in Germany – “not just as Kurds but as migrants” – they do not hesitate to work with members of Turkish organisations. This “We are both victims in Germany” attitude sometimes enables the groups to surpass the ethnic rivalries and build contingent alliances with each other. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it is mostly the Kurds who support Turkish initiatives rather than vice versa.

Unlike in Sweden, being from a Muslim background can also bring together the two groups when they feel this identity is threatened. During recent years, the rising Islamophobia in Germany has made both groups feel a solidarity with each other and support projects that deal with this issue. However, in everyday life, each group (not just ethnic but also ideological) has its own mosques and places of prayer. The Turkish diaspora is fragmented, for example: Alperenler have their own mosque next to their organisation building, as do the Grey Wolves. There is also one mosque in Kreuzberg, Berlin, which is known as the “Kurdish mosque.”

How did the long-distance nationalist feelings of these diaspora groups penetrate into private spheres?

As Hanrath observed, the support for the PKK demarcates the boundary between friendship and enmity: “While for a lot of Turks the disapproval of the goals of the Kurdish nationalist movement or at least dissociation from the PKK remains the condition-sine-qua-non for ongoing friendships and relations, Kurds expect at least a solidification of their struggle for freedom and recognition as a people from their counterparts” (Hanrath 2011b: 21). During the course of my interviews, the Turkish respondents argued that they already have numerous Kurdish friends (mostly non-PKK). However, their approach to the politically active Kurds was quite different. Interestingly, the majority of my respondents knew the migration history of people in their neighbourhood. They made a distinction between asylum seekers and labour migrants. The descendants of labour migrants who are not PKK supporters are seen as the “good Kurds” that they can establish relations with. However, the descendants of asylum seekers are treated with suspicion. One of my interviewees, a Turkish nationalist from Düsseldorf, said: “I always wonder what their fathers did wrong in Turkey before they came here.” Many interviewees argued that asylum seekers “lied” in order to be able to come to Germany and that they “stabbed Turkey in the back.” The asylum seekers’ experiences in Germany, “their easy access to certain rights”, were frequently compared to the *painful memories*¹⁶⁰ of the respondents’ parents when they first moved to Germany. Some interviewees said they refuse believe that the Turkish army burned Kurdish villages or that counter-guerilla groups committed extrajudicial killings. They view these as “lies created by asylum seekers” and feel that the “Kurdish question” was created in order to “harm the Turkish-Kurdish

¹⁶⁰ They refer to their parents who were labour migrants. The painful memories include bad working conditions, discrimination, and xenophobia in Germany as well as problems of acquiring citizenship.

brotherhood.” Some argued that the Kurds had discovered how to “play the victim” in Europe because they realised that “it sells.”

With regard to the Kurdish respondents, the picture was very different to Sweden. Many Kurdish interviewees acknowledged that they are used to “tolerating” or “ignoring” Turks when they make nationalist comments because they feel the Turks are “not aware of the situation”, “blinded by nationalist ideology”, or “ignorant about politics” and that “the Kurdish struggle is with the Turkish state but not with Turkish people”. The majority of respondents had many Turkish friends, whether as close friends or acquaintances and they said they had no problem establishing relationships. The common theme that I heard is that “Turks and Kurds are not enemies... unless they talk about it.” Many Kurdish interviewees told me that they prefer “not to broach the subject in order not to cause trouble.” They are active in Kurdish politics in their own circles but when Turks are present, they are more careful about their comments. A shop-owner who was born in Germany explained:

Sometimes Turks come to my shop, and if there is a Kurdish song playing, they make negative comments. Once, one of them said: “Bro, couldn’t you find better music to listen to?” You see, we are in Germany now and I am still not allowed to listen to Kurdish music. I asked “are you disturbed?” and he answered: “Why don’t you put on something that everyone can understand?” I said ok, and changed the CD. Why cause trouble... It is not like you can teach a 50 year-old man about his country’s history.

I heard many stories like this in Germany. Hanrath noticed a similar trend and said that: “Many admit that they think carefully before revealing their Kurdish identity, as they fear that this will have repercussions in their neighbourhood” (Hanrath 2011b: 7). In Germany, there was a noticeable tendency to “turn a blind eye to the Turkish nationalists” which did not exist in Sweden.

I observed that this behaviour is decreasing among the third generation and as every new generation of Kurds has weaker attachments to Turkey and to the Turks, the rekindling of Kurdish identity in the future may bring more dissociation with the Turks in the diaspora. The political situation in Turkey also has an impact on this. As a KOMCIWAN member explained to me:

I used to be more tolerant of the Turks. You know, they were ignorant... But now the situation is different in Turkey. They know about JITEM, mass graves, and all the other things that had been done to the Kurds. So now, I think I am losing my tolerance.

It goes without saying that there were Kurdish interviewees, who take a stronger stance against normalizing relations with Turkish background people in Germany. Some mentioned that it only accelerates the “auto-assimilation” process, and should be avoided for the sake of the Kurdish movement. “No good comes from the Turks” was a sentence that I heard in three different interviewee accounts. For them, *being purified from the influence of other cultures* was one of the main steps to complete the Kurdish nation-building process. None of the perceptions mentioned above indicate a general trend among the Kurdish interviewees, but they do reveal the diversity of the reactions of the Kurdish diaspora.

With regard to inter-marriages, the majority of the Turkish respondents said it is possible if they are not PKK supporters. Among my interviewees who sympathized with the PKK, there were also some who were married to Turkish women/men. Notwithstanding the few interviewees who said it is impossible (usually the third generation), there still seems to be no big taboo about this in Germany and concerns about this issue are related to political contexts rather than ethnicity. In fact, religious cleavages can sometimes be even more important than ethnic background.

9.4 INTRA-GROUP & ENTRE-GROUP INTERACTIONS AND RIVALRIES AT THE ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL

All Turkish and Kurdish organisations in Germany have different opinions, interests and missions (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 68). In the following section, the aim is not to describe the web of relations between the different groups but solely to focus on their interactions with each other regarding the Kurdish question.

9.4.1 KOMKAR vs. YEKKOM¹⁶¹

The historical evolution of KOMKAR and YEKKOM has been analysed in the previous chapters. In this section I focus on the fragmentation between the two groups at the organisational level by basing my arguments on the narratives of second-generation

¹⁶¹ As there are many Kurdish organizations in Germany, it is not possible to talk about all of them. I solely focused on the relations between the two main umbrella organizations and their youth branch. Their membership base usually overlaps with other organizations as well.

members.¹⁶² It is essential to remind the reader that not all members of KOMCIWAN or YEKKOM have the same stance towards the current situation.

KOMKAR members have a particular perception of the PKK. According to them, the PKK was founded by the Turkish state in order to marginalize the Kurdish movement. They often believe that the leader of the PKK, Öcalan, and its core cadre have been secretly working for Turkey. They describe Öcalan's stance towards the resolution of the conflict as Kemalist. One very active member of KOMCIWAN explained: "One has to be a fool not to see that Öcalan is a hard-core Kemalist when reading his books or Imrali notes." Moreover, they support federalism and for them the idea of dropping the possibility of a separate state or federalism from the PKK agenda was the very sign that the PKK does not truly represent Kurdish rights. KOMKAR and KOMCIWAN, usually organise their protest events or activities related to Kurdish history and culture separately from PKK organisations. The two groups rarely join forces for public events.

Many KOMCIWAN members strongly criticized the PKK and its organisations in Germany. For many, violent incidents such as the occupation of the Israeli Consulate, blocking highways and clashes with Turkish ultra-nationalists negatively affected the Kurdish image in Germany, caused the criminalization of the Kurdish movement in general and prevented other Kurdish groups who did not sympathize with a military struggle, from developing strategies towards a resolution. This negative image rendered these groups "simply un-operable" as one respondent said. The negative image that surrounded Kurdish activism since the 1990s affected KOMKAR's activities firstly in terms of open support and secondly in terms of the funding they seek in order to realize their projects.¹⁶³

Some interviewees from this group mentioned that PKK organisations constantly tried to sabotage their activities and tried to silence them, especially in the 1990s and early 2000s. They reminded me of the 2003 Newroz celebrations where PKK members sabotaged a concert and talked about the PKK murdering KOMKAR leaders in order to be the only representative of the Kurdish movement. The outcome of these events was the development of certain prejudices about PKK organisations. Moreover, some respondents explained that the events of the 1990s

¹⁶² It should also be noted that the number of Kurdish diaspora members that are active for the Kurdish cause are much larger than a total of the members of KOMKAR and YEKKOM.

¹⁶³ One KOMCIWAN member noted: "I understand why the PKK did it, but one should think about the pros and cons of such behaviour. They made the Kurdish plight visible, yes...but they ruined our image in Europe...I can even say like they made us appear wrong, although we have a right cause."

affected their socialization process at school and among friends. The narratives of interviewees from KOMCIWAN indicated that they had spent so much energy trying to explain to others that “they are Kurds but not PKK”, that in the end some of them disguised their Kurdishness (when they were younger) to avoid conflicts. An interviewee said: “I decided to say I am Alevi. That saved me the trouble of explaining I am Kurd but not PKK.” Although almost all interviewees from KOMCIWAN accept the fact that it was the PKK which brought the Kurdish cause to an international platform and made it visible to European politicians and the public, they find the PKK’s strategy problematic.

YEKKOM or other PKK supporters’ approaches to KOMKAR are also harsher than in Sweden.¹⁶⁴ For them, KOMKAR was to blame for the “divisions in the Kurdish movement” since they do not “recognize the PKK as the sole representative” of the Kurds, which ultimately suggests that the PKK “is not legitimate enough.” One interviewee from Bremen argued that KOMKAR is actually using the criminalization of the PKK in Germany to create a political space for itself. Other interviewees from this group used terms such as “traitors” when describing KOMKAR, and many were suspicious of its close relations with German political circles. Some called it a “German project” devised to “put the PKK down”.¹⁶⁵ Some interviewees also mentioned that KOMKAR was founded in Europe and that its members did not experience torture or other kinds of oppression in Turkey after the 1980s.¹⁶⁶ A recurring theme was that KOMKAR members are alienated from the actual situation in Turkey and their approach is “too European” to work in Turkey. They believe that PKK supporters had “suffered most” and thus “their way should be taken into account.”

Especially after the return of Kemal Burkay¹⁶⁷ to Turkey, supporters of YEKKOM or other PKK groups accused KOMKAR of “collaborating with the Turkish state.” KOMKAR’s stance on the Kurdish opening launched by the AKP government revealed a gap between the

¹⁶⁴ For instance, the divide was so evident that some supporters of the PKK had such negative perceptions of KOMKAR that they cancelled their interviews with me once they heard that I was also interviewing KOMKAR members.

¹⁶⁵ One respondent from Cologne, who is very active in PKK mobilization in Germany noted: “The Kurdish movement is a rebellion. It is a rebellion against suppression ... by any state... Turkey, Germany, wherever. How can a movement that calls itself Kurdish collaborate with states, politicians, and bureaucrats to solve this problem? Where is the logic in that?”

¹⁶⁶ However, many KOMKAR members had been detained in prisons in Turkey, where some were tortured and had faced brutal experiences.

¹⁶⁷ A well-known Kurdish politician who has been living in exile in Sweden for the last 40 years and had close connections to PSK and KOMKAR.

understandings of the two groups. KOMKAR organised a European-wide meeting in order to discuss the latest political developments in Turkey. The PKK, YEKKOM and KONKURD boycotted the KOMKAR Conference and in a press release claimed that the conference only serves the AKP's interests.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, KOMKAR's efforts to establish a dialogue with the Turkish diaspora are received negatively by other Kurdish circles.

Members of these organisations might interact normally in daily life, however at the organisational level relations are strained from time to time. Despite the organisational divergence, I also met members of the Kurdish diaspora who attend the protests, seminars or events of both groups. There were also Kurdish language, drama or folkdance teachers who worked for both organisations without finding this problematic. I interviewed a second-generation Kurd in Berlin who said: "For me it does not matter...Kurds are the most important. PKK, KOMKAR or other groups... Anyone who does something for the Kurds gains my respect."

9.4.2 The Turkish Diaspora: A Patchwork of Ideologies

Despite the fact that in the literature there appears to be a desire to "even out" the political stances of the Turkish diaspora in Germany towards the Kurdish question, the Turkish diaspora(s) comprise enormously varied individuals and groups with very different experiences, in terms of class, religion and politics. Therefore, their stances towards Turkish politics vary. As Argun points out, 80% of the Turkish associations in Germany (there are at least 2,000) have a distinct political orientation (2003: 40). The German case is not as simple as the Swedish case where there are two very strong mainstream Turkish organisations. Since many Turkish organisations have broader agendas than simply countering Kurdish activism there are many Kurdish members within these Turkish organisations. The leader of one of the main umbrella Turkish organisations is even said to be of Kurdish origin. I also met Kurdish members within the Turkish ultra-nationalist associations but they could be described as assimilated Kurds who give more priority to Islam or take "Turkishness" as an umbrella identity.

¹⁶⁸"Diaspora Kürt Konferansı' toplanıyor", *Agustos 28 2010*. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.aknews.com/tr/aknews/4/177728/>

The clashes between the Grey Wolves and the Turkish leftists in Germany still left a remarkable imprint on the younger generations. The Grey Wolves not only fought with the Kurdish nationalists but also with the Turkish leftist groups – from socialist to communist. Although the clashes happened many years ago, both groups have retired into their corners and have put a distance between each other. There is no platform or common ground that can bring them together.

The leftist organisations usually get mobilized according to the fractions that they have in Turkey. However, since they are concerned about the situation of the workers from Turkey, they might organise joint-protests or marches in Germany concerning the issues of migrants from Turkey. Occasionally, they might also organise joint-activities for the Kurdish cause. Moreover, the 1st May celebrations might bring Turkish leftist groups and Kurdish organisations together. The May 2011 celebrations, included groups such as AGIF¹⁶⁹, DIDF¹⁷⁰, ADHK¹⁷¹, Kurtuluş Cephesi¹⁷² (Salvation Front) as well as KOMKAR and YEKKOM in various German cities.¹⁷³ However, these leftist groups have a tendency to isolate themselves from the Turkish mainstream organisations.

Apart from the leftists, almost all mainstream Turkish organisations – from Kemalist to ultra-nationalist, Muslim-nationalist to conservative-liberal – agree on one issue: the “PKK is a terrorist organisation.” Therefore, it is almost impossible to find Turkish organisations cooperating on issues related to PKK affiliated organisations. However, the stances of the Turkish organisations vary when it comes to “the limits of rights” that should be granted to the Kurdish population in Turkey and Germany. Organisations that are close to the AKP-line generally supported the reforms that had been covered in the “Kurdish initiative” package. For the Kemalist interviewees, these reforms only exacerbated the problem and caused a division among the Turkish and Kurdish populations. The ultra-nationalist circles took a different view. The Grey Wolves agreed with the Kemalists and described the AKP and its sympathizers as “traitors” or “merchants who are playing games with Turkey”, while the BBP and Alperenler in Berlin declared that “the terrorists have been given a chance (the Kurdish opening) but there

¹⁶⁹Germany Immigrant Workers Federation.

¹⁷⁰Federation of Democratic Workers Organisations. <http://www.didf.de/>

¹⁷¹Avrupa Demokratik Halklar Federasyonu. <http://www.adhk.de/>

¹⁷²Their website: www.kurtuluscephesi.com

¹⁷³“ATIK Avrupa’da 1 Mayıs’ı Coşkuyla Kutladı”. 1 May 2011. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.atik-online.net/2011/05/atik-avrupada-1-mayisi-coskuyla-kutladi/>

won't be a second one". Therefore, the stances of each organisation are different which also affected their organisational behaviour.

The ADD or groups related to Kemalist circles in Turkey usually tend to join forces with Alevi organisations. They would rarely work with ultra-nationalists. They organise their own marches and protests, mostly targeting the PKK or the AKP. For instance, the ADD organised protests against the AKP government in Berlin and their slogans blamed the government for bringing back the "Sèvres Treaty".

Centre-left and centre-right groups, as well as umbrella organisations with no Turkish-political-party attachment, could find some common ground and work together in Germany. In particular, it is possible to see a joint effort behind projects related to discrimination, dual citizenship or migrant rights in general. It is important to mention the TBB and TGB in this regard. Although they appear to be similar to the mainstream Turkish umbrella organisations in Sweden, there are important differences.¹⁷⁴ When I interviewed the leader of TBB, I was reminded that there had been cooperation between TBB, TGB and Kurdische Gemeinde. For example, when these three organisations made a joint press-declaration on 25th April 2008 about the 1st May celebrations in Kreuzberg. However, Yurdakul argues that cooperation on "Turkish politics" is rare between the two Turkish organisations, by giving the example of the "Turkish March" organised by the TGB that the TBB did not take part in. She also quotes one member of the TGB, who explains that when the leader of the PKK was captured, they organised a protest and the TBB refused to participate. As her interviewee reports, the TBB found these acts to be "fascist" (2006: 448). This is also a clear example that the issues related to the Kurdish question also affect the relationships of Turkish organisations in certain ways and although feelings of discomfort about the Kurdish movement is common, there is no visible effort to form a "common tendency" among the Turkish diaspora groups.

¹⁷⁴ Yurdakul compares the attitudes of these two organisations in Germany with respect to their differing political views on incorporation/assimilation, nationalism/ ethnicity, and secularism/Islam. Although each group claims to represent the Turkish community in Germany, the TBB is known for its social democrat tendencies, while the TGB is more conservative in nature. The TBB is more sympathetic to the assimilation of the Turkish population to German society as a minority group, whereas the TGB encourages retaining "Turkishness" while integrating in German society. While the TBB praises secularism and women's rights issues, the TGB concentrates primarily on projects about teaching Islam in schools or the "headscarf issue". As Yurdakul argues, the TBB is mostly concerned with the issues that happen in Germany regarding Turkish politics, while the TGB has a tendency to believe that the Turkish community in Germany has strong attachments to Turkey and is affected by the developments that happen there (2006: 435-441).

9.4.3 Turkish & Kurdish Diasporas: Cooperation or Conflict?

One important fact to mention is that the organisational relations, although they concern the second generation, are still led by the first generation. For example, if there is a fight between Turkish and Kurdish youth on the streets, the leaders of first-generation organisations will apologise to each other. It should also be noted that the organisations founded by the first generation often have board members that are from the second generation.

Unlike in Sweden, in Germany most youth organisations were founded and operated under the wings of first-generation organisations. The main reason for this may be that the organisations founded by the first generation have difficulty securing funding, and there is not enough money or support to separate the youth branches from the main organisations. Therefore, the youth organisations, with a very few exceptions, are usually organically linked to the main organisations which set their strategies or agendas. In my opinion, this has a significant impact on the political stances of the younger generations, who do not have the opportunity to “find their own way”. Moreover, membership in organisations is usually a “family thing”. The father will join an organisation and his wife and children will follow. Therefore the second generation, or more specifically the youth organisations, end up imitating their parents’ political attitudes. The following examples, although concerned with the second generation, illustrate the approaches of the leaders of the main organisations.

When it comes to the attempts made by both sides to ameliorate the damaged relations, there are various examples. Unlike in Sweden, there were numerous joint-declarations made by the Turkish and Kurdish organisations or diaspora elite and intellectuals in order to avoid further violence or to open up a dialogue to resolve the “Kurdish problem” in Germany. One of the major clashes between the two groups occurred in 2007, when Turkey was launching attacks on the Northern Iraqi border. As the newspapers reported, the clashes took place in Berlin's Kreuzberg area at the end of a demonstration by Turkish nationalists with the slogan "Unity and Fraternity between Turks and Kurds."¹⁷⁵ Turkish protestors started attacking the Kurdish shops and organisations, and the Kurds fought back. After these events, Kenan Kolat (president of one of the main umbrella organisations) and Riza Baran (who was a member of the Berlin Parliament and also the president of the Kurdish Centre in Kreuzberg) made a joint press

¹⁷⁵ “Police Fear More Clashes between Turks and Kurds in Berlin”, 29 October 2007. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,2851349,00.html>

declaration condemning any kind of violence used by both sides. There were also meetings and dialogues between Kolat and Baran in order to solve this problem. However, among the Kurdish interviewees, several participants were not supportive of this act; they claimed they were not the ones who started the fights and therefore they did not want to apologize for something they had not done. On the Turkish side, other organisations that are close to the Turkish nationalist line, explained to me that they were disturbed by this joint declaration. According to a Turkish nationalist member of an organisation, “things just got out of hand a little bit, but it should be understood that there is no room for terrorists here.” Even cooperation posed some risks and the leaders of diaspora organisations had to be careful, as they did not want to lose the support of their constituencies. These examples show that the initiatives are more individual-based in character rather than widely supported. Therefore they are very fragile and can take another form when other leaders arrive or when the current leaders cannot please the majority of their constituencies through such acts anymore.

Kurdische Gemeinde and the TBB also organised meetings in April 2012, in order to develop a strategy to fight racism and structural discrimination in Germany. They plan to have regular meetings regarding issues such as education, problems with housing, finding employment and racism.¹⁷⁶ It is an example that on the issues related to the interests of both groups, cooperation is possible. However, the Kurdische Gemeinde is an exception because of its leadership and political attitude (as mentioned above). Many Turkish organisations hesitate to cooperate with Kurdish associations that have a homeland-oriented agenda/political stance and, more importantly, the word “Kurdistan” in their name.

There has been a recent attempt by the “Union of European Turkish Democrats”¹⁷⁷ (UETD), which is an organisation formed with the support of the AKP government in 2004, as part of their policy to keep the diaspora involved in homeland affairs and to become involved in diaspora affairs. The UETD frequently publishes criticisms of PKK actions in Turkey on its website. The UETD has organised several meetings with KOMKAR in order to discuss the “Kurdish initiative” and a possible resolution for the Kurdish question.¹⁷⁸ They also supported the return of the exiled intellectual Kemal Burkay to Turkey after 30 years. They are trying to

¹⁷⁶ “Kurdische Gemeinde zu Berlin zu Gast beim TBB”, 20 April 2012, TBB Official website. Last access 3 June 2012. http://tbb-berlin.de/?%20id_menu=16&id_news=202.

¹⁷⁷ Union of European Turkish Democrats. <http://www.uetd.de/index.php?id=2&L=1>

¹⁷⁸ Avrupa’da Kürt Açılımı Görüşmeleri 28 June 2011. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.euractiv.com.tr/yazici-sayfasi/article/avrupada-kurt-acilimi-gorusmeleri-019366>

establish networks with the Kurdish associations and intellectuals that have no ties with the PKK. Therefore, it can be observed that the cooperation initiatives usually tend to by-pass the PKK circles. Moreover, the initiatives usually come from more moderate organisations that have a more liberal discourse. The cooperation and solidarity among the moderate groups from both sides is certainly important for developing a common understanding of the Kurdish question, however it cannot prevent violence in the streets since the actual problem is between the PKK supporters and the Turkish nationalists.

The PKK-linked organisations prefer to address the German political parties or NGOs rather than the Turkish organisations and they usually tend to avoid contact with the Turkish diaspora. Unsurprisingly, the Turkish diaspora organisations also ignore the PKK-linked structures, as they are perceived as “terrorist”. Moreover, Kurdish organisations are never invited to receptions and gatherings at the Turkish consulates and embassies.

Leftist organisations are an exception in terms of sustaining a constant dialogue with Kurdish circles. For instance, the DIDF has a balanced number of Turks and Kurds in its organisation and they work on projects related to a possible solution for the Kurdish question. However, they only address a small community. Their website shows solidarity with the Kurdish movement, using the Kurdish slogan “Edi Bes e!” (Enough is enough!). They demand that the AKP government end the war and stop the bombings.¹⁷⁹ The DIDF also published a joint-declaration with YEKKOM in support of the Kurdish independent candidates for the elections in Germany.

Yet, things are not so smooth between the leftists and Kurds. There is scepticism among the Kurdish circles towards the “Turkish Left”, and an historical antagonism as many first-generation Kurds blame the Turkish leftists for not taking the “Kurdish issue” seriously enough and for trying to curb Kurdish activism in order to focus on “more universal problems.” Many first-generation Kurds came to resent the Turkish left and transmitted this idea to successive generations. Thus, although there are examples of crucial cooperation between these groups, it

¹⁷⁹ Their slogans for the campaign: “Jetzt reicht’s!:- Schluss mit den Angriffen auf die kurdischen Regionen!

- Türkisches und kurdisches Volk möchten in Frieden leben.
- Erheben wir unsere Stimme gegen Blutvergießen!” <http://www.didf.de/?p=1813>

should be kept in mind that Kurds do not have full trust in Turkish leftist organisations. A number of PKK sympathizing interviewees offered their perceptions of the interactions between the two movements:

What is Turkish Left? Does it even exist? ‘Turkish’ and ‘left’ ...I can’t put these two words together.

Maybe we should appreciate their contributions, but... the Turkish left has nothing of its own, what can it give to us?

Conversely, the Turkish leftists think that Kurdish movement has lost its socialist/Marxist-Leninist character and has become a typical nationalist movement – which in theory, they oppose. However, they support it anyway because they perceive the Kurds as “an oppressed minority that needs support.”

Lastly, it is important to ask whether religion brings these two groups together at the organisational level. According to my fieldwork observations, the Kurdish question in Turkey also affects the relations of Kurds and Turks who belong to the same religious group or sect. For instance, I interviewed a second-generation Alevi Turk who was active in Kemalist organisations as well as being a leading figure in one of the Alevi associations in Berlin. According to him, the other Alevi members of that association do not want to work under the same roof as those who wish to divide Turkey. The association was, in principle, open to anyone with an Alevi background. However, he explained to me that all members have to sign a document before they are accepted, which contains the following paragraph:

In particular, I profess allegiance to the free democratic basic order of the Federal Republic of Germany and to the constitutional order. I also advocate the Western orientation of Turkish society in the spirit of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the humanist interpretation of the faith in accordance with the values of the Alevi Bektashi Mevlevi.¹⁸⁰(Author’s translation)

As these examples show, one might find contention as well as cooperation between the two groups in Germany. However, dissociation (especially between the PKK affiliated organisations and the others) is quite visible and may well increase.

¹⁸⁰ The original text is: “Insebesondere bekenne ich mich zur Freiheitlich Demokratischen Grundordnung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der verfassungsmassigen Ordnung. Ich setze mich auch für die westlichen Austrichtung der türkischen Gesellschaft im Sinne von Mustafa Kemal Atatürk und für die humanistischen Auslegung des Glaubens nach den Werten der Alevi-Bektaschi-Mevlevi ein.”

9.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Unlike in Sweden, the second generation in Germany complains about discrimination and xenophobia. These issues are highly important in terms of identity-formation and showing an interest in homeland politics. Many feel that even if they were born in Germany and hold German citizenship (and more importantly “feel” German), they will never be accepted as “real Germans” by society. The reasons behind Turkish mobilization were usually explained by referring to the existence of a German extreme-right wing and discrimination, rather than the Kurdish activism itself. Turkish mobilization started long before the PKK became active in Germany. However, the already-mobilized Turkish groups then channelled some of their efforts against Kurdish activism due to the intensification of the conflict in Turkey. With regards to the Kurds, the motives for mobilization showed different patterns between the descendants of the labour migrants and asylum seekers. Yet, what is certain is that the PKK dominate the Kurdish movement in Germany.

In Sweden, I showed that there is significant dissociation between the two groups, indeed there is almost no contact. In Germany, however, there is a great deal of interaction – which at times leads to violence. The two groups have economic dependencies that the members of both communities cannot afford to jeopardise. Moreover, since many Kurds in Germany still use “Turkish” as their first language, there is a feeling of “commonality” between the two groups. The degree of xenophobia and Islamophobia in Germany sometimes pushes the members of two groups to form contingent alliances in order to contest the situation that undermines their “migrant rights”. In terms of relations at the organisational level, it is still taboo for the Turkish organisations to establish relations with any organisation that openly supports the PKK. The majority of the association leaders that I interviewed admitted their hesitations about this issue. The reasons behind this could be the reaction from the Turkish Embassy. Thus they usually leave the “job” of “dealing with the Kurds” to the Turkish official institutions and try to keep their distance, notwithstanding the leftist organisations. Most mainstream organisations such as TBB and TGB usually prefer to focus on the problems of Turkish community in Germany and they intervene in Turkish-Kurdish politics if necessary. With regards to the Kurdish organisations, so far only the Kurdische Gemeinde and KOMKAR is open for dialogue and the PKK-organisations usually tend to by-pass Turkish associations.

10

THE IMPACT OF GERMAN POLICIES ON THE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN TURKS AND KURDS

10.1 HEGEMONY RECREATED: A REPLICAS OF ASYMMETRIES OF POWER?

In the Swedish case, I have argued that the diaspora experience altered the traditional roles of “majority” and “minority” groups that existed in Turkey. Conversely, in Germany these hierarchies are to some extent preserved, and took on another form in diasporic spaces without causing a significant shift in the “asymmetries of power”, making the Kurds “a minority within a minority”. In Germany, the Kurds are still working hard to challenge the majority/minority hierarchies that are imposed on them by the Turkish state.

What became very apparent to me when interviewing the Turkish community in Germany was that various Turkish respondents continue to perceive the Kurds as “a minority” rather than as “another migrant community” with equal rights to the Turks. Thus, although some 50 years have passed and two or three new generations have followed, the Kurds are still perceived by the Turks in Germany as subjects of the Turkish state; therefore, any demands that they make to the German authorities - such as education in the Kurdish language, the right of association, or even matters involving the organisation of festivals - are not well-received by the majority of the Turkish community. In fact they may even be perceived as “separatist acts” - even on German territory. In the Swedish case, I indicated that the Turkish testimonies showed that they believe they have lost the upper hand in the conflict in Sweden. However, in the German case, Turkish testimonies reveal a sense of confidence as they feel that the Turkish state, Turkish bureaucratic institutions and the Turkish diaspora groups in Germany have the “upper hand” in the conflict and that “the situation is somewhat under control”.

Although Germany, as a hostland, provided freedom of expression and association, the testimonies of interviewees reveal that Kurds still do not feel “confident enough” to speak out about their demands. Moreover, their perception of Germany is far less positive than that of my interviewees in Sweden for their hostland. Despite being outside Turkey, many Kurdish respondents did not feel that they are on “equal terms” with the Turkish diaspora members. The interviewee accounts reveal that second-generation diaspora Kurds do not compare their situation in Germany to the situation of Kurds in Turkey anymore; instead their reference point is the German state, the Turkish diaspora in Germany and their relative positioning in the public sphere. As a representative of a Kurdish organisation in Berlin told me: “when Kurds want to do something, anything... they firstly consider the Turkish reactions in Germany, then they think: what will the Germans say? Finally they tell themselves...Turkey will not allow it anyway”. Drawing from the testimonies of my second-generation Kurdish respondents, I argue that the decision to become Kurdish in a politically active manner is not so easy or natural as it is in Sweden, it still involves risks and consequences – even if they are not as serious as in Turkey.

Below, I analyse the *Turkish and Kurdish perceptions* of the German approach towards the Kurdish question. The examples quoted below do not necessarily represent the real situation but they are the interpretations of the interviewees about their situation in Germany.

10.1.1 Turkish perceptions

The main Turkish perceptions about the “Kurdish question” in Germany and the sources for tension can be summarized as follows: many Turkish respondents still perceive the Kurds as a *minority* even though they live in a different country, and most of them find the flourishing of the Kurdish identity in Germany disturbing, believing that Germany is to blame for its failure to halt the development of the PKK and that it has taken the Kurdish “side” in this conflict. Many also argued that while Germany eventually understood that the “PKK is a terrorist organisation” and tried to curb Kurdish activism, it has already “missed the boat” in this respect. It was easy to see traces of the “Sèvres Syndrome” in the testimonies of the respondents from various backgrounds. As one interviewee mentioned:

Turks and Kurds lived in peace for so long... and let’s see when this conflict started. When Turkey was about to become a strong world power again... The terrorist cells did not grow in Turkey because they could never do the things they

did in Germany. They came here, and they became stronger here...with the help of Europeans. We are not fools, we are aware of that.

These kinds of sentiments were also observed by Østergaard-Nielsen, who argued that the antagonisms between the Turkish and Kurdish communities were explained by the Turkish organisations as a “German project.” She claims that while the hostland politicians perceive the Turkish-Kurdish contentions as a result of the political situation in Turkey, the Turkish side blames the hostland for the dissociation of the two ethnic groups. There is a tendency among the Turkish community to interpret German policies as a strategy to divide the Turks and Kurds in Germany in order to handle these communities more easily (2003: 117). It is interesting to note that although she conducted her research almost a decade ago, and although I conducted my interviews with the second generation, the perceptions of the Turkish diaspora appear to be largely the same. During my fieldwork, some interviewees said they believed that Germany had intentionally weakened Turkey, while others argued that it was the official German policy to divide the migrant communities in order to prevent them from speaking with one voice.

The Turkish respondents in Sweden were very concerned about the existence of an “anti-Turkish lobby” in the country. The Turkish respondents in Germany did not refer to this, and instead they talked only about the PKK which they consider as to be a “criminal and terrorist” organisation. In their opinion, one cannot talk about a Kurdish lobby that has an influence on German politics, however it is the German policy that supports the PKK and escalates the conflict between the two groups.

In terms of political parties, most of the respondents said they would not vote for “Die Linke” as they support the PKK-organisations and always attend anti-Turkey receptions, seminars or marches. However, they did not have a strong contention with any other political parties in Germany. The common theme from the narratives of respondents with various backgrounds was: “We do not negotiate with the terrorists. Germany should not either...” Moreover, Germany’s interest in the Kurdish question – as demonstrated by political parties, NGO’s or individual figures - was disliked as it is perceived as intervening in Turkey’s internal problems.

10.1.2 Kurdish perceptions

The main Kurdish perceptions about the “Kurdish question” in Germany and the sources for tension can be summarized as follows: The Kurdish identity is still not fully recognized in

Germany; there is discrimination and segregation – both by the Turks and Germans; Germany takes Turkey’s side in the conflict; the Kurds feel pressured both by the German and Turkish authorities; they feel under pressure from Turkey *despite* residing in another country; and, finally, Kurdish activism is criminalized and this causes hesitation among second-generation Kurds who want to contribute to the Kurdish cause.

The issues of how the Kurds are perceived as a sub-group of the Turkish community or their “invisibility” in statistics and bureaucratic matters, as well as in public spheres, have been dealt with in the preceding chapters. Therefore, it can be said that in the German case, it is the Kurds who complain about the lack of *discursive opportunities*. Many Kurdish respondents have *complaints* about rather than an *appreciation* of their lives in Germany. One interviewee said:

In Germany I can be a Turk, a Muslim, an Alevi, a Middle Eastern, a foreigner, an immigrant, I don’t know... a taxi driver... but still not a Kurd. When I say I am a Kurd, Turks attack me, Germans think I am a terrorist and the German state says you don’t have a state so there is nothing called “Kurdish”. You don’t have a passport.

My observations showed a similar pattern to Østergaard-Nielsen’s. For instance, she states that: “...the lack of comprehensive recognition of a Kurdish minority separate from the Turkish minority is interpreted by the Kurdish migrant organisations as the result of persistent pressure by Turkey and Turkish organisations in Germany” (2003: 100). Although the second-generation Kurds assume that the situation of the Kurds in Germany *must be better* than in Turkey, their only experience is their current life in Germany. Therefore it is evident that the second generation do not compare their situation to the Kurdish situation in Turkey but instead their reference point is the relatively hierarchical position between them and the Turkish community in Germany. Since the structural inequalities between them are essentially (re)produced in the German context (albeit with various nuances), they firstly build discourses about their situation in the hostland and the contentions that arise from it.

Most of them told me stories about their parents and how their political behaviour was criminalized, how their life was full of uncertainty and how they were still preoccupied with their political actions although they had left Turkey. One of the interviewees talked about her father’s experience with the German state authorities:

My father was arrested in Germany in the 1990’s. Although he was not from the PKK, he was joining activities about the right for education in native language. He was a teacher. They took him to the court and accused him of things he has never

done...Then the judge said: “maybe you haven’t committed any violence yet, but you are a dormant criminal.” What was that supposed mean? All Kurds were in the end criminals?

Most of the interviewees agreed with the notion that Germany does offer them enough support and instead takes the Turkish side in this conflict. They believe that Germany could have done much more to push Turkey towards a resolution to the Kurdish question, for example, by using the excuse of EU membership conditionality. Although the issue of Kurdish rights was put on the table numerous times by the German authorities with regards to the possible Turkish accession to the EU, many Kurds believed that this was a “German strategy” to exclude Turkey from the EU and to put the Kurds off with trumped-up excuses.¹⁸¹

Additionally, most of the respondents said they were upset by the ban on the PKK. The ban, combined, with the impact of the violent methods used by the PKK in Germany, brought about the criminalization of the Kurdish movement in general. The Kurdish diaspora members’ activism then put them in a difficult situation. For instance, Ayata mentioned a campaign organised by the PKK-sympathizers in Europe. The campaign was called “I am PKK” and it envisaged PKK supporters signing a petition declaring: “I am PKK.” Ayata, researching the Kurdish media, has found out that some PKK sympathizers who signed this document suffered negative consequences.¹⁸² Among my interviewees, there were many who said that although they are active in Kurdish organisations affiliated with the PKK, they were scared of deportations or punishments – even though they hold German citizenship. Surprisingly some interviewees believed that the “German state can take their citizenship back if they wanted to”. Lastly, the interviewees often mentioned that they feel the “breath of Turkey” on their necks, as they believe they are under continual surveillance by Turkish authorities – as well as the German authorities. It is striking that when I looked at the Kurdish protests (especially PKK-affiliated), almost half of the ones I noted targeted Germany and the German authorities in order to induce a policy-change, while in Sweden almost all of them targeted Turkey.

¹⁸¹ As one respondent from Hamburg mentioned: “Being Kurdish means coming terms with the fact that no one in the world cares about you but other Kurds...I do not think Germans ever cared about us. They just do not want Turkey in... But they already have a lot of people from Turkey in Germany... What do they do? They keep giving us piece of candy... you know, like the way you silence children.”

¹⁸² Ayata reports: “...there are several cases of Kurdish immigrants who signed the petition and, years later, were declined German citizenship by the local naturalization office, which argued that their signatures on the document threw their loyalty to Germany’s constitution into question. Two higher court rulings overturned the decision of the local naturalization office, but in another third case, a Kurdish woman petitioned the European Court of Human rights, where her case is pending” (Ayata 2010: 149).

While PKK sympathizers blame Germany for “carrying out Turkish assimilation policies” and Turkey for imposing its “assimilation policies on Kurds even in Germany”; the interviewees from KOMKAR also added their complaints and blamed the PKK for the criminalization of the Kurdish movement in general. Interviewees stated:

Germany supports the PKK but not the Kurdish cause. If they wanted, Germans could have finished the PKK in a day...But they just think maybe one day they can use the PKK against Turkey. So they keep them... Whatever happens, happens to the Kurds.

“Germany supports the PKK and sees it as the only representative of the Kurds. That is why they do not refer to us (KOMKAR), when they talk about what the Kurds want... They benefit from the PKK’s fight with the Turkish Army. They sell weapons to Turkey and they let the PKK grow here. What a nice deal...”

According to them, German authorities perceive the PKK as the representative of the Kurds and do not leave room for other Kurdish movements that pursue non-militarized strategies for their cause.

With regards to the political parties, the Kurdish respondents had varying opinions. Some stated that political parties such as Die Linke, the Greens or SPD occasionally talk about Kurdish rights and that they appreciate this. However, other interviewees stated that no political party in Germany fully supports the Kurds or the Kurdish struggle. The leaders of associations also agreed that such attempts are usually made by individual politicians rather than political parties themselves. A Kurdish politician in Berlin also agreed on this point, when I asked him about the German approach towards the Kurdish cause. According to him, Germany does not dare to drive a wedge between the two countries for the sake of the Kurds. He says:

The Greens or SPD also talk about the Kurdish rights... But when they come to power, they suddenly forget. Why? Because they cannot do anything. Germany has a foreign policy that it has been pursuing for decades.” He adds: “For any political party, coming to power in Germany does not mean you are going to change the established policies. It is more like driving a train...your route is already set and you just enjoy the ride.

Compared to the Swedish case, one can immediately sense that the Kurdish respondents in Germany “lack the self-confidence” that the Kurds in Sweden gained from the opportunities given to them. Most of the interviewees in Germany used words like “uncertainty”, “criminalized” or “unfair”, while the respondents in Sweden said “equal opportunity”, “freedom of speech” and “Swedish perception of Kurdish cause as a just cause.”

10.2 IMAGINED COMMUNITIES' IMAGINED BATTLE FRONTS ?

Germany illustrates a different pattern about the imagined pan-ethnic alliances, compared to Sweden. With regards to pan-Turkish tendencies, there are few alliances with Uyghurs, Kazakhs and Iraqi Turkmen. Turkish diaspora groups usually tend to support Azeri associations on their national days or at important ceremonies.¹⁸³ There are also joint receptions organised by the Azeri or Turkish Embassy in order to cement the Turkish-Azeri friendship. The Turkish diaspora groups that participate in these kinds of events usually show solidarity to Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, while Azeri authorities in Berlin make declarations supporting Turkey in its war with the PKK.¹⁸⁴ There is solidarity among various Turkish and Azeri diaspora associations but this cooperation is usually to support Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh case rather than Azeri support for the Turkish organisations. As mentioned before, the Turkish associations included in this study have considerable mass support, therefore they do not necessarily seek further alliances, except temporary contingent cooperation.

With regards to the Kurdish community, I have demonstrated that there is a clear pan-Kurdish pattern in the organisational behaviour of Kurdish second-generation diaspora groups in Sweden. In Germany instead, there is hardly a pan-Kurdish member base within the organisations. Although most of the associations use the title “Kurdish” or “Kurdistan” it is hard to find an organisation that has members from all over Kurdistan with a political-party free agenda.¹⁸⁵ Although there are Kurdish centres such as the Kurdish Institute of Berlin (now

¹⁸³“Berlin’de 20 Ocak Faciasını Anma Günü Düzenlendi” 21 January 2011. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://tr.salamnews.org/tr/news/read/28284/berlinde-20-ocak-faciasini-anma-toumlreni-duumlzenlendi/>. In 2008 there was a joint conference organised by the Turkish and Azerbaijani diaspora about “Turkic communities living abroad”. The joint declarations that were made at the conference involved creating solidarity among Turkic groups (Azeri, Turkish, Iraqi Turkmen), organising lobby activities for the recognition of the Hocali genocide and setting a joint-activities calendar that would bring Turkic groups together regularly and encourage unity among them. “Azerbaycan ve Türk Diaspora Teşkilatı’nın Berlin Konferansı”, 31 March 2008. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.bizturkmeniz.com/tr/showArticle.asp?id=13333&updatefrom=0&from=100>

¹⁸⁴“Berlin’de Cumhuriyet Balosu Düzenlendi”. Last access 30 May 2012. http://haber.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14870&Itemid=0

¹⁸⁵Ammann comes up with a similar argument when she talks about the Kurds in Germany: “...Kurdish pan-ethnicism has lost much of its former significance. Once prevalent an all parts of Kurdistan and diaspora locations, Kurdish pan-ethnicism is becoming increasingly theoretical as regionalization takes hold. Kurdish parties focus on the Kurdish regions in their respective states rather than on Kurdistan as a whole” (2005: 1017).

situated in Bonn), NAVEND (Zentrum für Kurdische Studien e.V) or Europäisches Zentrum für Kurdische Studien (EZKS), these are rare examples and they are research institutions rather than diaspora organisations.

Kurds from Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey opted to organise separately and have their own agenda at stake without building a pan-Kurdish umbrella organisation, especially for the generations who are born in Germany. Second-generation diaspora groups often followed their parents' patterns of political movements and stayed at the organisations which their parents had participated in.

This trend is not limited to Germany as a hostland, in fact, when we look at other studies we see that Sweden is the exception when compared to Germany or other European countries. Both Griffith and Wahlbeck arrived at a similar conclusion in their studies on the Kurdish community in Britain and Finland. Firstly, it can be said that the “political discourse in each part of Kurdistan is different, and so are the political forms of action” (Van Bruinessen 1992: 35 quoted in Griffith 2002: 129). Secondly, Turkification, Arabisation and Persification played a big role in the identity formation of the first arrivals which affected the behaviour of their descendants. Wahlbeck observed that in ordinary life, there was little contact between refugees from different parts of Kurdistan and it can be argued that a united Kurdish community does not exist (Wahlbeck 1999: 143). Even after two generations, one cannot talk about a “Kurdish diaspora” that unites all Kurds (from Syria, Iran, Turkey and Iraq) behind a coherent nation-building project. Therefore organisational patterns also follow this line. Although they are open to all Kurds, the client base is national in character (Griffith 2002, Wahlbeck 1999).

The organisations that have a party-political agenda, such as PKK-affiliated ones, also have Kurdish members from Iraq, Syria and Iran. Yet, the aim is not to construct a pan-Kurdish project but to support the PKK. For instance, Griffith mentions (when discussing the Kurds in London) that members of the PUK or KDP are scorned by the PKK Kurds (2002: 178). I observed a similar pattern, even in the testimonies of the second-generation Kurds in Germany. There has been no significant effort as by the youth organisation KSAF in Sweden, to absorb all Kurdish political movements and create a melting pot with pan-Kurdish aims at its core.

10.3 WHY ARE THERE VIOLENT CLASHES IN GERMANY?

When I asked about the violent encounters between Turks and Kurds in Germany, the participants always returned to issues such as the deficiencies of the German system, discrimination, and xenophobia. Drawing from the interviews and fieldwork observation, I would suggest that the reasons for occasional violent encounters are as follows: the sense of “being discriminated against and excluded from German society”; unemployment and constant dissatisfaction with the German system; the tendency for young people to turn to criminal activities in their neighbourhoods; the repercussions of important political events in Turkey and constant provocations from both sides; and both groups’ dissatisfaction with the German policies regarding the Kurdish question.

Leaders of both Kurdish and Turkish organisations underlined the “insufficient opportunities”, particularly for the second generation in Germany. According to Kenan Kolat from TBB, the spontaneous encounters between youth groups should not be seen as ethnic conflicts but random youth fights. In his own words:

Many young people get involved in these kinds of youth gangs or groups, but then when they grow up they forget about it. I believe it is just a phase the second generation goes through in Germany. Turk is more Turk, Muslim is more Muslim... In search of identity, young people do these kinds of things.

A leader of a Kurdish organisation also stated:

Most of the young people have nothing to lose in Germany. They do these things just to get some attention. Their parents worked so hard and had no time to show these kids love or attention... Once they feel rejected by the German society, they lay about one another.

The leaders of associations are not the only supporters of such views. Academics also agree that integration problems cause frustration among the Turkish and Kurdish second generation. After extensive fieldwork research, Ruth Mandel argued that many second-generation Turks and Kurds internalized the discursive process of exclusion produced within German public spheres. According to her, the systematic discrimination in Germany produced a “vacant space, an empty signifier of belonging” (Mandel 2008:155). Kaya also states that “the attitude that the new generations have, can be interpreted as a chosen survival strategy in response to the limitations in German state at political, legal or economic levels” (2002: 41). Moreover, in an interview, Nalan Arkat, the general secretary of the Turkish Community in Germany, commented on the identity-building processes of Turkish youth: “We're seeing a lot of young, third-generation Turkish people look for an anchor in religious, ethnic, and nationalistic

feelings, because mainstream society in Germany is not offering them that anchor.”¹⁸⁶ These findings suggest that both Turkish and Kurdish second generations find that anchor in the diaspora spaces of their “imagined homelands” of which they have very little personal knowledge or experience.

Essentially, this line of thinking suggests that “lack of opportunities” and the “lack of a sense-of-belonging to Germany” might cause youths to return to their parents’ ethnic identity and eventually this identification might perpetuate antagonistic behaviour towards other groups. While this assessment explains the antagonistic behaviour of Turks and Kurds who are born in Germany, it can over-generalize and miss the other factors that pave the way for violent encounters. Firstly, the political and historical context of the Kurdish question seems to be undermined if the emphasis is solely put on the exclusionary policies of Germany. As the testimonies of various Kurdish respondents showed, the motives behind mobilization do have much to do with their parents’ experience in Turkey and Germany, their parents’ political background, as well as their personal perspectives of the Kurdish question.

Secondly, among the interviewees there were many who are socio-economically integrated into German society and yet show considerable interest in homeland issues and have also experienced violent encounters with the other group. I argue that showing an interest in homeland politics does not necessarily indicate integration problems, and violent encounters are not limited to the unemployed, uneducated or disintegrated youth.

Thirdly, these opinions tend to ignore the transnational character of the events. Although this thesis has discussed the hostland’s institutions, opportunity structures and approach to the Kurdish question, and the important role these can play for how Kurds and Turks interact with each other, we should not ignore the transnational character of diaspora mobilization that transcends the national borders of both homeland and hostland. In fact, many researchers have asked: “Does Germany make migrants extremists, or do extremist migrants come to Germany?” In the literature, there is a tendency to blame Germany and its failure with integration policies. Yet, bearing in mind that the extremist events mostly happen in Germany, what we observe today is that even the countries with a long-standing account of implementation of integration policies or multiculturalism through state systems, occasionally

¹⁸⁶“There is no real mood for celebration”, 26 October 2011. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://www.thelocal.de/society/20111026-38425.html>

experience Turkish-Kurdish tensions, protests or violent clashes. While it is true that the second generation is more likely to be mobilized by extremist groups as they have a future full of uncertainties and problems with belonging and integration, this does not fully explain the character of their dissent. For instance, the recent occupation by “Apo followers” of the offices of major newspaper and TV channels happened in many countries including the UK, Denmark, and Germany.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, many diaspora groups, for instance Komalen Ciwan, consist of transnational networks that can organise coordinated events simultaneously throughout Europe. Therefore, explanations need further reference to the transnational character of the events – even if we look at the organisational structures in a hostland context that established the grounds and limitations for diaspora mobilization.

Fourthly, the tactics and rhetoric used by the second generation have a lot to do with the diaspora elites who channel the homeland interests of the second generation into collective action. For example, although all the members of diaspora organisations face the same social and economic barriers in Germany, the fights occur only among certain groups. Therefore, the strategies adopted by the elites, the ideology of the organisations, and group-dynamics also carry equal weight explaining the Turkish-Kurdish tensions in Germany.

One should also distinguish between the organised and spontaneous encounters between the two groups. Spontaneous encounters may happen among small or large groups, after certain events such as football games or important developments in the homeland that awaken the nationalistic sensitivities of these groups. They could occur anywhere – in Turkey or even in Sweden – but they don’t hit the headlines in newspapers. Organised encounters are more significant as they are planned by certain elite groups in order to express dissent and/or show one group’s power and strength to the other. They are, above all, about competition for political spaces and discursive possibilities in the hostland. Demonstrations turn into *demonstrations of power*. Turks or Kurds organise their mass protests in areas that are densely Kurdish/Turkish populated, aware that there could be violence at some point during the protest (at times this is deliberately provoked by certain extremist elites).

The size of both communities also plays a role for the likelihood of violent encounters. As one of the Turkish interviewees said:

¹⁸⁷“Eylemciler RTL’I Bastı”, 29 September 2011. Last access 30 May 2012. <http://bianet.org/bianet/diger/133049-eylemciler-rtli-basti>

We are together all the time, we live in the same buildings, in the same streets...eat at the same places, socialise in the same areas. We talk about Turkey one way or another. It is impossible not to have disagreements and fights. How could you expect otherwise?

The fact that both groups show an interest in homeland politics also raises the likelihood of altercations. For instance, in Sweden many Kurdish interviewees stated that the Turkish community is almost invisible in public spheres and that they do not feel the need to form a discourse that would confront the Turks. Instead they often put their energy behind lobbying Swedish political parties rather than responding to what the Turkish diaspora is doing. In Germany, however, both groups are visible in terms of their political activities and that increases the chances that both groups follow what the other group is doing closely and react to it.

With regard to the choice of mobilization patterns among second-generation Turks and Kurds, one can immediately see the difference between the Swedish and German diasporic spaces. While the Swedish system is much more open to migrants' claims-making mechanisms, the German system is more closed to the influence of migrant organisations that push for policy change related to the homeland issues. As Østergaard-Nielsen suggested:

The more inclusive the political system, the more activities take the form of *institutional participation*, which is explicitly and directly aimed at the host society and takes place through the channels available in a positive fashion. Alternatively, migrant activities take place "outside the system" in the form of *confrontational participation*, which is political activity taking place outside legally available channels, such as unannounced demonstrations or more serious illegal actions (2003: 23).

In the light of Østergaard-Nielsen's argument, if we take the Kurdish case as an example, in Sweden we see that the Kurdish movement has adapted to the Swedish system and the claims making processes run smoothly with the Swedish opportunity structures granted to the Kurdish community. From the right to native language education at schools, to the freedom of associations, from lobbying political parties to participating in elections as candidates, Kurds are able to raise their voice without much interference from the Swedish state. However, in Germany, the capacity of Kurdish organisations or individual activists to act is very much limited by German policy, which calculates its moves towards its own interests and its relations with Turkey. This is a further reason why the Kurds, until very recently, opted for

confrontational participation and usually organised underground, which ultimately limited their diaspora spaces even more.

The same rule applies to the Turkish communities in different host states as well. The Turkish community in Sweden *embraced or was courtesy bound to embrace the Swedish values*. Since their interpretation of the *Swedish way* included avoiding confrontation and violence, they tried to find other channels – such as counter-lobbying – to enhance their political spheres. In Germany, some Turkish groups felt they had to “do something about Kurdish activism”, and used violence or counter-violence, and mass protests (which escalate into damaging Kurdish buildings and shops) in order to make their point. If one looks at the annual Turkish marches, or the mass demonstrations against the PKK, it is possible to observe that the aim is to show that they are *strong* and that they *care* to the PKK supporters in Germany as well as German policy makers. Therefore, these violent clashes may also be counted as examples of Turkish or Kurdish irritation with Germany itself.

Based on the fieldwork observations, I argue that in Sweden both Turkish and Kurdish groups think twice before they act as they want to be careful about the *public image* of their groups. However, in Germany some groups may be nonchalant about German public opinion since they think “they have nothing to lose” as they already have a “bad image”, while other organisations such as the TBB, DIDF and KOMKAR not only avoid but condemn such acts.

10.4 GERMAN POLICY TOWARDS DIASPORA ORGANISATIONS

Since multiculturalism was not an official policy of migrant incorporation, migrant organisations in Germany followed a different pattern compared to Sweden. Ideological fragmentation played as big a role as ethnicity and religion. The German system did not give the groups incentives to attenuate intra-group rivalries and unite to act as representatives of one ethnic group. Although there is freedom of association it did not lead to the institutionalization of ethnic minorities as in the case of Sweden.

Accordingly, pan-ethnicism did not flourish in Germany. There is a tendency to organise pan-ethnic protests or events, however it is hard to find migrant associations with pan-Kurdish or pan-Turkish agendas and the diaspora spaces are highly fragmented. Moreover, state subsidies did not function as effectively as in Sweden. Since Germany does not fund the migrant

organisations according to their member base, this mechanism does not give incentives to the organisations as it does in Sweden. Thus, the organisations did not sacrifice their ideological stances in order to have a politics-free agenda, nor did they seek cooperation with other groups from the same ethnic background.

Argun claims that it is the German institutional understanding that created ethnic and national splits among the Turkish community and perpetuated cultural stereotypes in order to keep the migrants under control. She gives the examples of government-financed cultural activities of immigrants that ultimately highlight cultural differences (Argun 2003: 68-69). I disagree with her comments on this point. In my opinion, the funding of immigrant cultural activities does not necessarily cause divisions and tensions. Looking at the history of German-Kurdish diaspora relations, it is hard to argue that Germany intentionally encouraged the Kurdish organisations and caused a deep divide between the Turks and Kurds. The German approach can be better explained by looking at how little attention it paid to the structuring of migrant organisations and/or Turkey's internal problems (unless they became visible in Germany). Surely, freedom of speech, the freedom of association, and the lack of pressure on identity politics had an impact on groups such as the Alevi and Kurds whose identities were contested and suppressed in Turkey. Therefore, Germany granted them space to form their policies and raise their voice freely, yet that does not mean that the German institutional understanding created these frictions. The German experience, just by providing a platform for ideas, paved the way for long-held antagonisms to come to the fore.

Kurdish organisations have benefited from freedom of association but their transnational spaces were not as *protected* as in Sweden. Kurdish organisational activities were still bound to their *nationality* and Turkey had a big impact on how the German authorities perceived their organisations. As they are not recognized as a separate ethnic identity from Turks, they are perceived as subgroups of "Turkish migrants", which makes them vulnerable to the possible sanctions imposed by Turkey, despite the fact that they are in Germany. For instance, there have been times when Kurdish organisations in Germany were "unable to obtain ABM-Krafte, that is, state-subsidized assistance. When politicians from the Greens demanded an explanation, the government replied that German authorities take the relationship with Turkey into consideration when dealing with Kurdish organisations in Germany" (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 100). Faist also wrote about the impact of Turkey on the activities of the Kurdish organisations when he explains that the Turkish state asked the German authorities not to grant

official status to Kurdish organisations. He gives the example of when the German Federal Government, in 1985, had not recognized Kurdish as a distinct ethnic group (“Volksgruppe”), which was a status that is needed for the organisations to be eligible for government funding (2000: 222). Østergaard-Nielsen gives examples from Bundestag reports, such as that of the Foreign Ministry, stating that Germany should not financially assist Kurdish organisations as they view themselves as “combat units.” She showed that German authorities were highly concerned about “disturbing Turkey” in this respect. As she puts it: “The Turkish side pushes for more multicultural policies in Germany however within their nationalist discourse limits” (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 39).

A KOMKAR representative explained the new trends in German policy towards managing migrant organisations. According to his accounts there is a new initiative in Berlin to bring the migrant organisations together as representatives of ethnic groups and to offer funding for several projects. However, he says these kinds of initiatives are always *under construction* since German authorities still cannot decide whether migrant organisations help or hinder integration. Moreover, he added that German authorities hesitate because the Turkish state might react negatively to the funding of Kurdish organisations, especially those with the word “Kurdistan” in their name.

Therefore, the “fortresses of each ethnic group” as they existed in Sweden, did not develop in Germany so easily and the transnational social and political spheres of the Turkish and Kurdish diaspora groups have been affected by these differences and took different paths in the two countries.

10.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has analysed the impact of German policies and politics on the interactions between the two diaspora groups. I have demonstrated that the combination of German opportunity structures and the composition of groups in terms of absolute and relative size, paved the way for a mechanism that does not favour the Kurds. The Kurdish diaspora found opportunities to form strategies to get mobilized and contest Turkish sovereignty in Germany; nevertheless a complete reversal of the Turkish hegemony imposed on them did not occur. The perception of many Kurds is that they are *victims* both in Turkey and Germany.

Various Turkish interviewees believed that the Turks have the “upper hand” in Germany, however they still accuse their hostland of supporting the PKK and having bad intentions about the territorial integrity of Turkey. On the other hand, some Kurds argue that the German approach to the Kurdish situation is very much bounded by its economic and diplomatic relations with Turkey and that Germany would never prioritize Kurds over Turks. These perceptions affect how these groups channel their activities, first against each other and secondly against their hostland – Germany.

Occasionally there are violent encounters between the two groups. Leaders of associations, academics and researchers see integration problems, unemployment, and the identity crises of the second generation as explanations for violent encounters. However, there are other factors that should be taken into account such as the transnational character of the movements, the historical and political context in the homeland and the diaspora strategies that are determined by the elites rather than members themselves.

In diaspora spaces in Germany, ideological cleavages matter immensely and alliances along ethnic solidarity lines are not as common as in Sweden. Kurdish organisations do not have the same opportunities as other Turkish organisations – which have a clear hostland agenda (such as the TBB or TGB). The Swedish system has provided a platform for Turkish and Kurdish diasporas to conceal the tensions and present them diplomatically, but in Germany, there exists a belief among those who resort to violence that their image is already tarnished and thus they do not bother to put their demands in a package that is acceptable to the hostland’s political context.

CONCLUSION

The main intention of this study was to contribute to a broader understanding of imported conflicts by analysing how the conflict in Turkey is reflected in the interactions between second-generation Turks and Kurds living in Sweden and Germany. It explored the impact of each of the hostland's political and discursive opportunity structures and policies concerning the issue. For this thesis, second-generation individuals were selected as the sample group, because they offer a clearer picture of the host country impact as well as the persistence of conflict dynamics in the diaspora spaces. The two main questions that guided this study were:

- “In what ways do the second-generation diaspora members from opposing sides of the conflict interact with each other in the hostland?”
- “What is the impact of the hostland's policies and politics on constructing, shaping or eliminating the interaction between those diaspora groups?”

The findings reveal that the on-going conflict adversely affects the nature of the relationship between the two ethnic groups. The tensions and conflict dynamics are not, however, a pure reflection of the situation in Turkey; instead, they take on a different form within each hostland. Moreover, the second and first generation construe the conflict differently and the second generation's interpretation of the conflict, and approach to members of the other group, are strongly affected by their socialization in the hostland.

The thesis approached the notion of diaspora from a constructivist perspective and focused solely on the Turks and Kurds who have strong ties to the homeland and show some form of interest in homeland politics. A diaspora is defined as a sub-set of the transnational migrant community. Thus, this thesis agrees with Faist's argument that “transnational communities encompass diasporas, but not all transnational communities are diasporas” (2010: 21). This thesis also adheres to Bauböck's statement that “A group's transformation into a diaspora needs to be explained by contemporary experiences of exclusion, ongoing conflicts in the homeland (mostly involving demands for regime change or national self-determination) and the mobilizing activities of ethnic minority elites in the country of settlement” (2008: 3). Collective mobilization and the concerted efforts of the elites were taken into account while selecting the sample for this study. An essentialist understanding of the definition of the

concept which considers all members of the Turkish or Kurdish community as a part of the diaspora was not pursued. In the next section, I summarize my empirical findings and present the insights I gained through my empirical research with theoretical discussions.

11.1 PRIMARY EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

One of the main empirical findings of this study is that the contentious diaspora spaces are nourished by the historical legacies and current developments of the conflict in Turkey. The characteristics of each group, however, are particular to each country. The two cases show a significant level of diversity in terms of how the Turkish-Kurdish conflict has been imported across borders by the first generation, as well as the ways in which the second generation has inherited the conflict dynamics.

In terms of inter-ethnic interactions, although in Sweden the majority of the interviewees displayed an attitude of strong enmity, they did not engage in violence. No violent clashes or protests have been noted between the two groups in Sweden, yet the absence of violence does not necessarily indicate peace. There is a complete separation of social, political and economic spaces and interactions between the two groups. The Kurds used the political opportunities in Sweden to benefit from boundary-drawing mechanisms, and have distinguished themselves from the Turks at every possible turn. There is no intermingling or any experience of co-existence, which consequently leads to further estrangement, dissociation, and mutual avoidance. In Germany, however, besides the group of Kurds who have established boundary-drawing mechanisms (as the Kurds in Sweden have), there are many members of the Kurdish diaspora who remain ambivalent about completely severing social, political, and economic ties with the Turkish community. These members of the Kurdish diaspora are politically active in the Kurdish movement but still see numerous commonalities with the Turkish community, including language, religion, and economic relations, and do not dissociate themselves completely from Turkey or the Turkish community. Inter-ethnic marriages are common, and Turks and Kurds tend to maintain relations at both the individual and the organisational level. Although groups that exist in Sweden surely exist in Germany as well, the profile of diaspora members exhibits a great deal of diversity and their approaches are multi-layered.

Displacement, in itself, is a form of transformation. The hostland impacts upon the formation of relations between the two groups, especially if the two groups originate from the same country. The change in location displaces the conflict from the sovereignty of the home country into another context with a different a set of opportunities and limitations. As the conflict dynamics adjust to the new conditions, the pre-existing homeland hierarchies may prevail, or, on the contrary, the hegemony of one group may be challenged by the other or even reversed. As I have shown in this thesis, the (re)construction of conflict dynamics took two different forms in the two countries. While the hegemony of Turkishness over Kurdishness was reversed in Sweden, the Kurdish diaspora in Germany still feels pressured by the Turkish state and Turkish identity. How then can we explain this difference?

This study revealed that the hostland experience directly and indirectly challenged the already established hierarchies of the two groups. For instance, the Swedish context caused a shift in the imbalance of power between the two groups. Swedish politics and policies towards the Kurds allowed them to counter-balance the existing majority-minority situation in Turkey. Swedish policies supporting the Kurdish movement, granting Kurds citizenship, and teaching Kurdish at schools gave the Kurdish diaspora an increased level of confidence and paved the way for the creation of cultural unity by constituting counter-hegemony against Turkification while homogenizing the Kurdish identity among Kurds. The Swedish understanding of multiculturalism, which ethnicizes minorities, also benefited the Kurdish diaspora and helped in the construction of the second generation's pan-Kurdish identity. In turn, the Turkish diaspora has come to be disappointed with Sweden and feels politically isolated. In Germany, however, there is still an on-going struggle by the Kurdish diaspora to reverse the hegemonic influence of Turkey and the Turkish diaspora and it appears that it has still not accomplished this. Due to the favourable political circumstances in Sweden, second-generation Kurds have managed to loosen Turkey's hegemonic control over them, while in Germany, although they are to a large extent politically active, Kurds are still influenced by Turkish culture, identity, and politics and their transnational spaces are not as protected as in Sweden.

At the core lies the transformation of conflict dynamics between the two communities due to the impact of displacement. The Kurdish question was given a new transnational dimension and changed significantly in both form and content. Both groups surely import certain contentions from the homeland, however their struggle also has much to do with the positions

and resources in the hostland. In both countries, from a Bourdieusian perspective, there are autonomous political fields of Turkish and Kurdish diasporas (certainly with intra-group divisions). In these fields, each group, depending on its political position, has its own actors, habitus, and political capital. The political fields were sometimes independent from Turkish or Kurdish politics, solely targeting German or Swedish politics, and sometimes they aimed for policy change in Turkey. While explaining their enmity towards the other, they refer to the conflict situation in Turkey as much as to unpleasant encounters and experiences in the hostland. They compete for power and resources in Turkey as well as in the hostland; therefore, their political agenda and strategies are tailored transnationally, and they adopt different methods than in Turkey in order to compete with each other in the transnational space.

Certain characteristics should be identified in order to better understand how the conflicts are (re)interpreted depending upon these factors. In the following pages, I categorize the reasons for the variation of conflict dynamics under two headings: (1) *structural characteristics of diaspora groups*, and (2) *the impacts of host country policies and politics*. I argue that the *structural characteristics of diaspora groups* provide various explanatory factors that yield certain types of diaspora formation, and consequently different conflict dynamics. Secondly, I illustrate *the impacts of host country policies and politics* on these interactions. Various determinants, such as citizenship regimes, approaches to multiculturalism, migrant organisations, or foreign policy priorities, are critical to understanding the contentions between the two groups. I have argued in this thesis, following Ireland, Brown and Østergaard-Nielsen, that different hostlands and society opportunity structures channel diaspora behaviour in various ways. However, neither political opportunity structures nor the host country's foreign policy priorities can explain entirely the composition of interactions between two groups without taking into account the structural characteristics of the diaspora groups.

1) The Impact of Structural Characteristics of Diaspora Groups on Imported Conflicts

This empirical study revealed that certain structural characteristics of the Turkish and Kurdish diasporas have engendered particular conflict dynamics between the two groups. In order to understand how the conflict is imported and transmitted to subsequent generations, it is important to take these features into account: the profile of the diaspora members, migration

motives of the first generation, class differences between the two groups, size and composition of the groups and the ratio of one group to the other within the host country.

This study corroborates previous research that the *initial migration motives of the first generation are of significant importance for diaspora mobilization* (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 18). In addition to that, the mobilization motives of the first generation help us understand the differences between the Turkish and Kurdish diasporization process and understanding the political mobilization of the first generation helps us to grasp the motivations of the second generation. The profiles of the first generation as labour migrants, asylum seekers, or refugees have an impact on the organisational dynamics and political strategies they pursue in the host country. In today's world, it is difficult to distinguish between the profiles of the different diasporas, as several migration flows continue to augment the already existing diaspora groups with new members and new motivations: some migrants who come as asylum seekers may chose not to be politically active after settling in the host country, or labour migrants may become politically active very gradually. However, the categories of stateless, state-linked, conflict-generated, and labour diasporas still hold to a certain extent, and may at least help us understand the similarities and dissimilarities between the diaspora mobilizations of different groups. For example, the *difference between organisational patterns of stateless and state-linked diasporas* (Sheffer 2003: 244) is apparent in this study. The first generation's narratives about their motives to migrate directly affect the formation of the diaspora, and these characteristics are transmitted to the second generation. The ways that the second generation adopts or rejects these traits are predominantly dependent upon conditions in the host country.

Although both Turkish communities in Sweden and Germany involve groups who migrated predominantly for economic reasons, in these two countries we see different patterns of mobilization. Sweden hosts an incipient Turkish diaspora. The majority of the Turkish migrants who settled in Sweden came from a small town named Kulu. Most of the Turks came as workers through migration chains and were not politically active when they arrived in Sweden. As I have shown in the previous chapters, it is the second generation that leads the diaspora mobilization and they mobilized as a result of developments in Sweden, and most of their actions target the Swedish state. The Turkish diaspora in Germany, however, initially mobilized for different reasons. They first saw the “extreme right wing in Germany” as the “other,” and their associations were formed in order to preserve their Turkish identity and

stand against assimilation. Their attachments to Turkish politics were also sustained by elites, as the associations were usually the satellites of organisations headquartered in Turkey. Therefore, while in Sweden the second generation were the entrepreneurs of diaspora mobilization, in Germany many second-generation diaspora members followed their parents' footsteps of being politically active about homeland issues.

The first generation of the Kurdish diaspora in Sweden had been politically active since they first migrated. Therefore, their children also adopted such attitudes towards political activities. Sweden has been eminent for hosting the Kurdish intelligentsia in exile, which contributed vastly to the development of Kurdish culture and language. The political activism in the diaspora has continued and been strengthened by each generation, and has produced both homeland- and hostland-oriented strategies. Conversely, in Germany the profile of the Kurdish diaspora was very diverse, with members from different social, economic, political, and religious backgrounds as well as from different migration flows. Labour migrants and asylum seekers constituted a heterogeneous political spectrum in the diaspora spaces, which affected how the diaspora gradually developed. The PKK's mobilization efforts turned it into a mass movement among the Kurdish diaspora members who became politically active in Germany, in contrast to the elite movement in Sweden that placed more priority on culture and language than on political mobilization. The second generation has been predominantly mobilized by the PKK and its affiliated organisations, therefore their repertoires of actions differ from the Kurdish diaspora in Sweden.

I observed that *class differences* also play a role in terms of the formation of relations between the two diaspora groups. Class differences among the communities affected how diaspora relations were initially established and transmitted to the second generations. For instance, in Sweden, the Kurdish and Turkish first generation were initially distant due to their dissimilar backgrounds. The first of the Kurdish community to migrate mostly did so for political reasons and were university students or had high levels of education. The Turkish migrants, however, mostly came from rural backgrounds and many were illiterate. The interviewee accounts reveal that there were no considerable interactions during the early days of the diasporas and this already-existing dissociation became much more permanent with the second generation. In Germany, however, the first-generation Turks and Kurds had mostly rural backgrounds and arrived as labour migrants. Therefore, there was a certain level of interaction between the two communities from the beginning. Although the asylum seekers arrived at a later stage, they also

integrated into this already existing Turkish-Kurdish community. Therefore, the second generation socialized in an environment wherein Turkish and Kurdish groups mingle in their daily lives. As the interviewee narratives showed, their parents' relations with the other group also affected their perception.

Apart from the profile of migrants, which created different diaspora strategies and structures, one should also take into account the *size and composition* of these migrant communities. One of the main findings of this thesis is that the larger the size of the diaspora, the more political diversity will exist among the diaspora organisations. When the size of the community is small, there is an intra-group tendency to become closer and iron-out certain differences in order to raise a stronger collective voice. For example, in Sweden, both Kurds and Turks formed fewer organisations compared to those in Germany where almost every political group that exists in the homeland can be found. Therefore, I argue that the size of the diaspora does not necessarily show a positive correlation to its strength, as sometimes a smaller diaspora community might be disposed towards stronger intra-group harmony and thus act more effectively than a large, heterogonous diaspora with manifold affiliations.

The *ratio of the groups* also affects the attitudes of one group towards the other. For instance, in Sweden the ratio of Turks to Kurds is almost equal (Kurds might even outnumber Turks if Kurds from Iraq, Iran, and Syria are also taken into account), while in Germany, Turkish migrants (and the Kurdish origin migrants who define themselves as Turkish) vastly outnumber the migrants who define themselves as Kurds. The situation in Sweden enabled Kurds to separate themselves socially, politically, and economically from Turks, and this made it easier to counteract Turkish hegemony. Combined with the apolitical profile of the Turkish migrants, Kurds found a space to make their cause heard and did not encounter serious reactions from the Turkish community. In Germany, however, "Turkish pressure" was placed upon the Kurdish community, as many testimonials in the previous chapters illustrate. Kurdish respondents admitted that there is a certain level of economic and social dependency and that they had interactions with Turks; therefore, they sought to avoid trouble. The Turkish presence was so dominant in ethnic neighbourhoods and in certain cities, such as Berlin, that it was not as easy to create a mutual-avoidance situation as in Sweden. Moreover, due to these demographic facts, in Sweden the majority/minority dynamics between Turkish and Kurdish groups are not reproduced and instead became nearly reversed. In Germany, however, the Kurdish community is still in the situation of being a "minority within a minority."

The ratio of Turks to Kurds is also important when we consider the *Swedish and German political parties and their electoral aims*. In Germany, political parties tend to be more careful with their approach to the Kurdish question in order not to deter Turkish voters. By contrast, in Sweden many parties cater to Kurdish voters since Kurds outnumber the Turks in Sweden and the Turkish community has a reputation for being apolitical towards Swedish politics.

2) *The Impact of the Host Country's Political Opportunity Structures on Imported Conflicts*

Many authors argue that the migrants respond to the institutional opportunities in the host country and form their discourses accordingly. The opportunity structures in the host country are one of the fundamental determinants of the level of mobilization of the diaspora. The amount of space a host country offers to the diaspora to express its own agenda, or the degree of freedom it grants to the diaspora to organise their own civil society groups or associations, determines the scope and success of diaspora involvement both in homeland and host country political affairs. Some argue that if the host country has a more liberal system that provides open political opportunity structures to the migrant groups, there will be an increase in their transnational activities. Others argue that the more inclusive the host country system is, the less likely migrants will be to engage in diaspora formation.

Based on the empirical findings of this study, I argue that generalizations are not possible and that correlations between these variables are case-specific and dependent upon various factors. As Østergaard-Nielsen has previously mentioned, political opportunity structures are an important driver of immigrant politics, but might function differently when it comes to promoting homeland politics (2003: 24). Moreover, opportunity structures may favour one group over the other or provide disparate amounts of space for the two adversarial groups, a dynamic that lies at the core of this thesis's findings. As well as *political opportunity structures*, the *discursive opportunity structures* also need to be taken into account (Koopmans 2004), as does the complexity of the social and political context in transnational spaces. The diaspora spaces are shaped by a combination of determining factors, none of which can be analysed in isolation. There are many variables that need first to be understood and examined in order to recognise the impact of the host country on the formation of conflict dynamics. These include: citizenship regimes, the openness of the system for political participation and ethnic lobbying, the integration of diaspora members into the host society,

the presence of xenophobia and discrimination, the approach of the host country to multiculturalism and migrant organisations, and, finally, the foreign policy priorities of the host country with respect to the homeland conflict.

The interviewee accounts show that participants, both in Sweden and Germany, approach the issue of *citizenship* in a pragmatic way. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the citizenship regime in Sweden allowed for an easier naturalization when compared with Germany. Although acquiring citizenship does not make the respondents feel “fully Swedish”, they do feel “included” in Swedish society. Since Sweden permits dual citizenship, Swedish citizenship does not pose an “emotional challenge” or affect the sense of belonging to the homeland, but instead it is used instrumentally to acquire a political voice – in society, as well as in the elections. In Germany, on the other hand, although the system has undergone many reforms over the past decade, the interviewees frequently mentioned how “exclusionary” the German system is, using citizenship as an example to explain how their parents suffered and why they do not feel free to express their German identity. This affects their identity-formation processes and increases their interest in homeland politics.

The *access to rights and privileges such as political participation* also has a noteworthy impact on the strategies used by diaspora groups. For example, the Kurdish diaspora took advantage of the political opportunities provided by Sweden and managed to raise their voice within many political parties. The *discursive opportunities* that the Kurdish diaspora has in Sweden (such as the existence of celebrities, authors, intellectuals, and activists), combined with the public sympathy for their cause, provide the Kurdish community with a source of strength and self-confidence. In Germany, however, interviewees from both groups stated that they think they have limited access to political circles. It is mostly Turkish origin politicians who make references to the conflict in their speeches within the context of Turkish membership to the EU, as Kurdish diaspora members are not as visible in the political spheres as they are in Sweden.

The Swedish system is more open than the German system to *ethnic lobbying*. In Sweden, both Turkish and Kurdish respondents stated that if they organise their interests in a collective manner they can try to lobby certain political parties. Both groups have favoured political parties, and the diaspora elites try to convince their constituencies to engage in “block voting”. In Germany, however, the Kurdish interviewees stated they could not do so because

the German system is not open to these strategies. There was an understanding among both groups that “if there is anyone in Germany who could launch lobby activities, it is the Turkish state, not the diaspora groups.” In Sweden, both Turkish and Kurdish diaspora groups channelled their efforts into forming lobby groups in order to exert political influence, while in Germany, both groups tried to exert an influence in German politics about homeland issues by addressing each other when they had a problem (either on the streets or at meetings) while simultaneously trying to affect policy-making procedures in Germany. Both diaspora groups’ leaders told me during the interviews that they thought “the Germans have grown tired of the Kurdish question” therefore they are wary about getting involved in such engagements with German politicians. For many, it would be a futile effort.

In the diaspora literature, there is a tendency to correlate diasporic activity negatively with *integration*. According to the supporters of this view, *xenophobia* and *discrimination* in the host country increase the intensity of the sense of belonging to the homeland. Looking back at the fieldwork results, it is evident that, to a large extent, the liberal naturalization and inclusive migration policies paved the way for the successful integration of the second generation. The majority of my interviewees claimed that they do not feel discriminated against or alienated by Swedish society. Although, this is not a reflection of the feelings of the entire Turkish and Kurdish community, it does indicate who tends to become mobilized for an ethnic cause. It is clear that those who try to contribute to the homeland affairs, in any capacity, are relatively well-integrated into Swedish society, speak Swedish fluently, and have high levels of education. In Sweden, therefore, my results corroborate Jorgensen’s (2009: 352) findings that “particular groups appear to be integrated (or assimilated) in majority society while they at the same time display sustained transnational ties and in general articulate transnational identifications.” In Germany, however, I encountered a very different situation. The majority of interviewees did not feel they were a part of German society, and had experienced discrimination in some form or another. Their Kurdish or Turkish identity was more dominant than their German identity. Although in this study I tried to include interviewees with different class, religious, and political backgrounds, it was notable that Turks and Kurds who felt excluded from German society had a stronger tendency to identify with their Turkish or Kurdish roots and be involved in homeland-oriented politics and associations. Nevertheless, there are diaspora members who are very well integrated into the society and yet active in Turkish or Kurdish politics. Therefore, I have argued throughout this thesis that the integration problems in the hostland help us to understand the strategies and

repertoires of actions used by diaspora groups rather than explaining the root causes of diasporic mobilization itself.

Multicultural policies play thus a significant role in shaping the forms of ethnic political activism in the host country. I argue that *the approaches of the two host countries towards multiculturalism changed the content of the antagonism between the two diasporas*. In the Swedish multicultural system, which strengthens ethnic identities, both groups constructed their own ethnic fortresses to defend against the other. It also solidified ethnic boundaries by acknowledging and supporting the differences between the two groups' cultural heritage and traditions (Alund & Schierup 1991). These policies, however, could exacerbate the problem of intra-ethnic relations. During the course of my fieldwork, I observed several aspects of the Swedish system. First, its multicultural system that separates migrants into ethnic boxes helps to sustain an intra-group harmony. Second, because the system is based on "purely ethnic principles" (Alund & Schierup 1991), it also encourages the central migrant organisations to organise themselves along ethnic lines. Moreover, in order to benefit more from state funding and subsidies allocated for projects, as well as to stand strong and powerful as an interest-group, the migrant organisations followed a pan-ethnic policy, which in the end led to the emergence of pan-Kurdish and pan-Turkish attitudes. Moreover, the multicultural system facilitates the mobilization process of diaspora groups; it even creates incentives for such endeavours. However, since diasporization happens not because of isolation or segregation but because of institutionalized diversity management, it has a lot more potential to successfully mobilize and penetrate the hostland's political systems.

The German case shows a different pattern. First, since multiculturalism was not an official policy of migrant incorporation, migrant organisations in Germany pursue their own agendas and organise mostly around ideological differences, rather than ethnicity. Ideological stances play as much a role as ethnic or religious cleavages. Secondly, pan-ethnicism did not flourish in Germany as it did in Sweden. There is a tendency for migrants to organise pan-ethnic protests or events; however, it is hard to find migrant associations with pan-Kurdish or pan-Turkish agendas, as the diaspora spaces are highly fragmented in terms of ideological basis. The German system does not fund migrant organisations according to the size of their membership and this incentive for organisations is thus absent in Germany. In Sweden, organisations try to soften their political tone, attract as many members as they can, and invest in youth projects as much as possible in order to receive more funding. Since this is not the

case in Germany, many organisations do not have an incentive to pursue a politics-free agenda and do not try to seek cooperation with other groups from same ethnic background. The lack of an institutionalized multicultural system may facilitate diaspora mobilization in Germany in different ways compared to Sweden. As discussed throughout the thesis, feelings of non-belonging to Germany, as well as resistance to assimilation, might cause the ethnic identities to become even stronger and might engender a “going back to the roots” attitude among the second-generation diaspora members. However, the lack of an “official” multiculturalism policy, and a hostile political environment that perceives transnational ties as a barrier to integration, may avert diaspora efforts to penetrate the political systems of the hostland. Although diasporas may build stronger transnational ties, their chances of affecting policy-making processes might be lower compared to other countries where diversity and multiculturalism are accepted as an asset.

The foreign policy priorities of the host country and its approach to the homeland conflict also matter immensely when diasporas mobilize their efforts to raise its voice about the homeland conflict, whether to give support to the homeland government or, in this case, to contest the homeland’s territorial integrity or sovereignty. The opportunities in the host country surely cannot satisfy both groups while the two are constantly competing for the attention of the host country regarding their cause. Since conflicts are very sensitive, *the opportunity structures provided by the host country do not explain anything unless we also look at how they are perceived by the diaspora groups.* In Sweden, one group feels it has the upper hand in the discursive spaces within the borders of the host country, while the other one has accused the state of being biased and blind to the issues related to the conflict. In Germany, on the other hand, we see that both groups feel disturbed and disappointed by the German approach to the Kurdish question and both groups accuse Germany of favouring the other. Freedom of speech in Sweden undoubtedly allows both groups to voice their demands. The Turkish diaspora, however, feels that “they are not allowed to speak about the Kurdish question,” and that “whatever they say is perceived badly by the Swedes,” or that “the decision has already been made about who is right and wrong on this particular issue.” In other words, they feel limited in the degree to which they can express themselves. In Germany, on the other hand, both groups complain about the lack of opportunities for different reasons. While Kurds try to contest Turkish domination over them on German soil, Turks accuse Germany of helping the “enemies of the Turkish state.” Germany’s close relations with Turkey and the Turkish state’s diplomatic and political presence in Germany

serves as a pacifier for the Turkish population to some extent, but makes the Kurds feel like the victim of both states.

Lastly, one should also take into account the fact that the *foreign policy stances of the host countries are not stable and there may be policy shifts resulting from political changes in either the host or the home country*. For instance, in Sweden the current ruling party has close connections with Turkey, and Kurdish respondents report a shift in Sweden's position after they came to power. Another important factor is that the perceived limitations in the host country may occur after flawed strategies have been pursued by the diaspora groups. For instance, the Kurdish movement has been somewhat criminalized in Germany, as Germany approaches the Kurdish question on its soil as a security problem rather than solely as a universal human rights issue. But why is this case? I argue that the violent strategies used by the PKK, especially during the 1990s (i.e. arson attacks against Turkish shops and restaurants, murders, and violent demonstrations), undoubtedly had an impact on the German stance towards the issue. The Kurdish movement is still paying the price for this negative image, and the perceived limited discursive opportunities are partly the consequence of the acts committed by the Kurdish diaspora in the past. Therefore, one can argue that different host countries may also provide similar opportunities for the diaspora groups to voice their demands and create favourable conditions for mobilization. These *opportunities, however, at times can be underutilised by the diaspora groups*, ultimately limiting their own political space.

11.2 THE SECOND GENERATION & INHERITED CONFLICTS

One of the main aims of this research was to analyse the political mobilization of the second generation towards homeland related issues and contribute to the previous discussions on this subject. This thesis clearly shows that diasporic mobilization is certainly *not a single generation phenomenon*. As illustrated throughout the thesis, the second generation displays an interest in forming transnational ties for various reasons, such as the political background or preferences of their parents, their individual experiences in the homeland and hostland, or the efforts of diaspora elites and organisations.

The interviewee narratives revealed that the interest in homeland politics is fostered by certain experiences, starting from secondary school onwards. Among the Kurdish interviewees, in

particular, there was a tendency to reframe the brutal experiences of their parents and relatives in the Turkish regime, and to build their own narratives of the homeland conflict. The impact of the stories that are passed down to the second generation could be detected in the responses of the interviewees. Moreover, their experiences with people of Turkish descent in their host countries, as well as their experiences during their visits to their homeland, clearly contributed to their political mobilization. The Turkish interviewees were also affected by the political affiliations of their parents and referred to their experiences with Kurds in the host country in order to explain why they showed an interest in homeland politics in the first place. Furthermore, both groups were affected by the mobilization efforts of diaspora organisations. The elites and organisations are the sources from which the second generation learned their ideological doctrines. Besides these explanations, one should also add the impact of online social networks, newspapers, and TV channels, which contribute to diasporic identity-formation amongst the second generation. Through these mechanisms, they gather information and (re)construct the conflict dynamics on their own in a new setting. Their way of perceiving the situation in the homeland surely differs from the first generation. At times, it was evident that some of the interviewees had never experienced life in the homeland because there was a certain level of *absence of memory* in their discourses. Many narratives showed clear evidence of being based on *learned* rather than *lived experience*.

Another point of discussion in the diaspora literature is whether the second generation are more extreme than their parents. It is not possible to offer a definitive answer to this without over-generalising the situation. There might be cases where the second generation show almost no interest in homeland conflicts, have a more extreme stance, or very modest attitudes. I agree here with Alinia that “each individual acts differently in this process and defines her/his own relation to the society based on their own specific situation, needs and experiences” (2004: 251). Individual experiences in the host country almost certainly affect the process of identity-formation, and it has been widely discussed in the literature that the experiences of discrimination, xenophobia, and segregation have a significant impact. For some second-generation members, clinging to homeland issues and ethnicity can be perceived as means of struggle and resistance (Alinia 2004: 253). Others might choose to fight for their rights of inclusion into the host society and cling to both homeland and host country issues and identities. Integration problems cannot solely explain the diasporic identity of the second generation; individual experiences, the political context of the homeland, memories that are passed onto them by family or friends, and the experiences of their parents surely matter as

much as their experiences in the host country. In most cases, these factors are intertwined. As I show throughout the thesis, lack of integration and the experiences of discrimination and xenophobia explain the *strategies* diasporas apply more than diasporic mobilization itself.

One of the main conclusions that this empirical study offers is that *the second generation's involvement strategies are different from those of the first generation*. The second generation (re)interprets the homeland conflict according to their own accumulation of knowledge, experiences in the homeland and host country, interactions with the “antagonistic other” and the circumstances under which they live. Their repertoires of actions and the way they construct their discourses carry elements from their socialization in the hostland. For instance, in Sweden, we see that second-generation Kurds may prefer not to carry on the ideological rivalries of the first generation that prevented unity in the movement, and instead want to minimize cleavages in order to raise a stronger collective voice. Or, as in the case in Germany, the second generation may transfer the contentions to another field, such as ethnic gangs or music, and challenge the other group through their actions which do not exist in the homeland. In Sweden, the Turkish second generation shows more interest in Turkish politics than their parents. That does not, however, make them extremists or irrational; on the contrary, their behaviour tells us that although it is the homeland conflict that constructs the framework for contentions, the second generation have mobilized to protect their position in the host country when they feel that developments in the homeland threaten this.

Another factor that helps us explain the difference of mobilization between the first and the second generation is the *shifting political situation in the homeland*, and this may affect the second generation differently than the first. As Van Bruinessen (2000) stated, many second-generation Kurds found out about their Kurdish identity in Europe after the 1990s. This is surely related to the escalation of the conflict in Turkey and, more importantly, the success of the Kurdish movement, which helped the Kurds to gradually gain awareness about their identity. Therefore, when analysing the second generation, one should also keep in mind that the conflicts themselves are subject to transformation.

Finally, based on the interviewees' narratives, I argue that the second generations' construction of diasporic narratives do not necessarily involve returning to the homeland as the majority of my interviewees did not contemplate returning to the homeland for good. A majority of the respondents in Sweden – both Turkish and Kurdish – emphasized that they do

not wish to return to the homeland but would like to contribute to its well-being. Some of the Turkish respondents in Germany stated that they might move to Turkey if they were to find a good job there.

In sum, I argue that in diaspora studies there is a tendency to produce a nostalgic discourse about the transnational activism of the second generation, which usually places an emphasis on the “imagined” aspect of identity construction. However, as I have attempted to show in this thesis, the second generation may also have very concrete reasons to become mobilized in the host country. Whilst we may approach the “inherited conflicts” as *imaginary*, we must try to avoid devaluing the national and political aspirations that these groups have for their homeland issues. The roots of the contentions may lie in the home country but we should keep in mind that in today’s globalized world the developments in the homeland are far more easily synchronized with the transnational spaces.

11.3 FINAL WORDS

After each and every clash between Turkish and Kurdish nationalists, German politicians made statements warning the Turks and Kurds “not to bring your conflicts here!” In the 1990s, the repercussions of the conflict in Turkey were felt in Germany and German authorities started to view Turkey’s “Kurdish problem” as a security issue. On the other hand, almost all the politicians I interviewed in Sweden told me: “There is no conflict between the Turks and Kurds here.” For many, the lack of violent encounters between the two groups amounted to peace. While German authorities treated the dispute between the two groups as “the same conflict brought from the homeland” in Sweden the perception that “there is no conflict between Turks and Kurds” predominated. But is this really the case?

This thesis has demonstrated that Turkey’s Kurdish conflict has been imported to both Sweden and Germany with (re)interpreted conflict dynamics. It has shown that the conflict cannot be either packed into one’s suitcase or left behind. Especially because the particularities of the Kurdish question are strictly attached to *identity*, it cannot simply be forgotten. If the homeland conflict – although we may define it as a separatist, territorial, ethnic or minority problem – has a lot to do with identity itself, it will always be imported because it involves one group’s denial about, or superiority over, the other. It involves one people’s struggle to claim their identity, while another perceives this effort as “treacherous” and “separatist.” I argue that it is inevitable that the sources of tension between the two

communities will be carried to the host country; the forms that the conflict may take, however, depend on the various factors I have discussed above. The conflict might be (re)constructed in a way that is highly visible, as in the case of Germany, or the struggle for sustaining/reversing the hegemonies that exist in the homeland might remain invisible, as they do in Sweden. But they do not disappear. As long as the homeland conflict persists, the political context will be felt by the Turkish and Kurdish communities abroad. The lack of violent encounters in the host country does not mean that there is peace. Instead, as I have shown in the Swedish case, it might even mean further dissociation between the two communities. Although the conflict dynamics are transmitted to the second generation, the second generation (re)constructs the conflict through the prism of their experiences in the host country. The positions that they take against the *other* are shaped by both their imagination of the homeland conflict and their lived experience in the host country. Therefore, while the roots of the contentions originate in the homeland, the ways of expressing dissent originate in the host country.

The Kurdish question is but one example of the many conflicts transported across borders as a result of migration flows. As long as conflicts persist, diaspora groups from both sides will eventually find themselves living together in the same host country. In today's world, politics seems to be mostly about local disputes and conflicts that have become transnational and globalized. Tamils and Sinhalese, Israelis and Palestinians, Armenians and Azeris and many other groups find themselves in the same host country struggling for domination in transnational spaces. The host countries, deliberately or unwillingly, either reinforce the same homeland hierarchies and hegemony for the already disadvantaged groups, or enable them to contest the majority group's sovereignty over them. There are no encoded patterns of diasporic activity that could fully explain how a diaspora would act under certain conditions. The particularities of the conflicts make each case *sui generis*. What is important is that they need to be interpreted and treated accordingly.

APPENDIX

DIASPORA ORGANISATIONS INCLUDED IN THIS RESEARCH

TURKISH ORGANISATIONS IN SWEDEN

TRF (Turkiska Riksförbundet / Turkish Federation)

The Turkish National Federation is the oldest Turkish umbrella organisations in Sweden and its headquarters are in Stockholm. It was founded in 1979 and now encompasses 24 Turkish associations across the country, with approximately 12,000 affiliated members. The majority of its members are first- and second-generation immigrants from Kulu, in the Konya region. The TRF is believed to have close ties to the Swedish Social Democrats due to its president's affiliations with the party.

STRF (Svensk-Turkiska Riksförbundet / Swedish-Turkish Federation)

Established in 2003, the STRF consists of 15 associations from nine cities (Stockholm, Malmö, Gothenburg, Varberg, Norrköping, Västerås, Eskilstuna, Linköping and Jönköping) and includes around 4,000 members. With its headquarters in Gothenburg, the STRF is a new national association formed by second-generation Swedish-Turks with the aim to develop integration projects in Swedish society. The STRF chose to work separately from the TRF due to the tension between the two groups. According to several interviewees, the TRF is an organisation for Kulu Turks only. Albeit tacitly, this organisation has close ties to the Moderate Party in Sweden.

TUF (Turkiska Ungdomsförbundet/ Turkish Youth Federation)

The Turkish Youth Federation was formed in 1983 (as a committee under the Turkish Federation) as a starting point to bring Turkish people together under one roof. Since 1995, the TUF has worked as an independent organisation currently consisting of nearly 7,000 members and 35 organisations from 11 regions: Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö, Västerås, Sweden, Varberg, Gävle, Norrköping, Linköping, Jönköping, Uppsala and Eskilstuna. The TUF was revived by the efforts of STRF members and now works in cooperation with the STRF as an independent youth organisation with membership overlap between the two organisations.

TSAF (Turkiska Student- och Akademiker Föreningen / Turkish Students and Academics Association)

In February 2002, the Turkish Students and Academics Association was formed with the ambition to unify all students of Turkish descent. Through their discourse, the TSAF claims they do not adhere to a political organisation and their activities are free of ideology and religion, however, it supports the political activities of the TUF and STRF.

KURDISH ORGANISATIONS IN SWEDEN

KRF (Kurdiska Riksförbundet i Sverige / National Kurdish Federation)

Created in 1981, the Federation of Kurdish Associations in Sweden has around 42 affiliated associations. It is the oldest and probably the largest Kurdish organisation in the country, and sees itself as religiously and politically independent. It has between 8,500 and 9,000 members (Khayati 2008:232). It is an ethno- national organisation with independent women and youth organisations (Jorgensen 2009).

Kurdiska Radet (Kurdish Council)

The Council of Kurdish Associations in Sweden sympathizes with the PKK and is a member of the European-wide umbrella organisation KONKURD. Founded in 1994, it has more than 20 affiliated organisations (Khayati 2008: 232, Jorgensen 2009).

KOMKAR i Sverige (Svensk Kurdiska Arbetarföreningen / Kurdish Workers Federation in Sweden) - KOMCIWAN i Sverige (Youth Organisation of KOMKAR)

KOMKAR is the first federation that brought several Kurdish Workers Associations together, firstly in Germany and then in Europe. It had started its mobilization by the 1970s and in 1976; established organic links to the Kurdish Socialist Party (PSK) founded by Kemal Burkay. KOMKAR i Sverige is another branch of that federation. As the youth branch of KOMKAR, Komciwan organises youth events and runs projects promoting better integration into Swedish society and the preservation of the Kurdish identity. As the Kurdish Children and Youth Association, Komciwan was founded in 1998 in Stockholm and has since presented itself as Sweden's principal organisation, providing and promoting the demand for Kurdish culture.

UNGKURD (Riksförbundet Ung Kurd Sverige / Federation of Young Kurds in Sweden)

The most politically organised youth group in this study, the National Association of Young Kurds Sweden is a second- and third-generation Kurdish organisation aimed at organising and motivating the Kurdish youth in Sweden. As stated on their website: “We consider it important to know our identity and not feel rootless.” It is a platform that works to solve issues of

integration, equality, solidarity and education. The union currently has five member organisations in Sweden: Stockholm, Uppsala, Gothenburg, Örebro and Borlänge. In 2007, the first local association was formed in Stockholm; by 2009, they had founded a Congress of Young Kurds that encompasses different associations across Sweden. Most of its members sympathize with the PKK line.

KSAF (Kurdiska Student och Akademiker Förbundet / Kurdish Students and Academics Association)

In 2002, the Kurdish Student Academic Association was founded in Stockholm, with umbrella organisations established in 2009. Their website claims that their national and local associations are politically and religiously independent. As declared by its members, their goal is to bring together Kurdish and Kurdistan-interested persons through various activities, such as cultural activities that focus on Kurds and Kurdistan. In addition, members are committed to attracting attention to the Kurdish issue. Today, local associations are present in almost all university cities in Sweden, including Linköping, Örebro, Stockholm, Uppsala, Väst and Scania.

TURKISH ORGANISATIONS IN GERMANY

DIDF (Föderation Demokratischer Arbeitervereine / The Federation of Democratic Workers Association)

Founded in December 1980 as an umbrella organisation of workers associations from Turkey, it has more than 50 member associations and groups today. They claim to be a democratic, non-partisan, independent, but not apolitical organisation. DIDF is an association founded by Turkish and Kurdish workers. It is concerned with political developments both in Germany and in Turkey. On their website, they state that they are against nationalism, militarism and war because these activities hinder brotherhood between groups. They are against any kind of ethnic nationalism and they are dedicated to leftist principles. They have links to the Labour Party (Emek Partisi) in Turkey. They have a youth organisation that is linked to the first-generation organisations, called DIDF Jugend.

Almanya Turk Federasyonu (Föderation der Türkisch-Demokratischen Idealistenvereine in Deutschland /Federation for Turkish Democratic Idealist Organisations) - Grey Wolves (Bozkurtlar)

This is one of the oldest associations in Germany and was founded by the Turkish ultra-nationalist political party in Turkey, called MHP (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi / Nationalist Movement Party). It was founded in 1978 in Frankfurt and currently has around 300 organisations in Germany and 500 in Europe (Interview with the president of ATF in Berlin). This federation promotes an ultra-nationalist ideology that rejects assimilation into German society (Abadan-Unat 1998: 243). Initially, its aim was to curb the leftist and Kurdish movements in Turkey, as well as in Europe. Although they say they are independent from the political parties in Turkey, their website, as well as their headquarters in Berlin, display the literature of the MHP and its leaders. They use the same symbols as the MHP does in Turkey such as the wolf or three crescents on a red banner. Their youth organisation (the Grey Wolves) has been involved in several clashes with Turkish leftist, Kurdish and other groups.

ADD (Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği / Kemalist Thought Association)

This is also a satellite organisation which has headquarters in Turkey. It was founded in 1997 by “patriotic Turks” (as their website claims). They have 35 member associations in Germany. They state a commitment to Kemalist ideals such as the protection of territorial integrity, embracing anti-imperialism, and creating a modern and democratic Turkey. They managed to organise mass protests against “terrorism” in Germany. They are in line with the Turkish political party CHP which was founded by Ataturk himself. There are numerous second-generation Turks among their members.

BBP (Büyük Birlik Partisi- Great Unity Party) -Alperenler (Youth Organisation of Great Union Party)

Alperenler are the youth organisation of a Turkish political party called BBP (Büyük Birlik Partisi / Great Union Party) which is right wing, ultra-nationalist, and has religious sensitivities. They were also involved in street fights (especially in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s) with Kurdish as well as leftist groups. They declare their commitment to the late leader of the BBP, Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu. They also have their own mosque next to the organisation. They have recently tended to align themselves with the AKP government. They joined in many protest activities or counter-protests (which occasionally ended in violence) against Kurdish activities with the Grey Wolves (although they are supposedly rival groups).

TGB (Turkische Gemeinde zu Berlin / Turkish community in Berlin)

It is an organisation mostly supported by members of the conservative-liberal spectrum. It usually works on projects that are against discrimination and they work as an advice office to protect Turkish rights in Germany. They have their own definition of integration, which foresees the protection of cultural and religious differences and they are certainly against assimilation policies. It has close links to the CDU and as far as I understood from the interviews they have close communication with the AKP in Turkey. Their website indicates that they represent around 100,000 people of Turkish origin in Berlin and they are the umbrella organisation for around 76 Turkish organisations, which makes them the largest in Berlin.

TBB (Türkischen Bund in Berlin-Brandenburg / Turkish Union in Berlin-Brandenburg)

The Turkish Association Berlin-Brandenburg (TBB) is a non-partisan umbrella organisation of various groups and individuals. Currently, the Turkish Association has 26 member organisations. It works as an advice centre for the Turkish immigrants and has developed numerous projects on integration, women's rights and youth education. It is said to have close links to the SPD. They support full integration of Turks to the German society and they organise campaigns in order to push for policy changes about the issues such as dual citizenship in Germany.

KURDISH ORGANISATIONS IN GERMANY

KOMKAR (Konfederasyona Komalen Kurdistan / The Association for Kurdish Workers for Kurdistan) - KOMCIWAN (Youth Organisation of KOMKAR)

It is a transnational Kurdish organisation that became the first federation of Kurdish worker's associations and is against the use of violence to promote the Kurdish cause. KOMKAR was affiliated with the Özgürlük Yolu movement in Turkey and distanced itself from the PKK line by focusing on improving the Kurdish workers' standards of living in Europe, rather than the struggle for an independent Kurdistan. Only after the 1980s did it become politically active and add Kurdish rights to its agenda (Van Bruinessen 2000). However it is argued by authors such as Jorgensen that the organisations that sympathize with the traditional PKK line managed to reach a broader segment of society (such as women, artists, students and the self-employed) whereas KOMKAR recruited less broadly. KOMKAR was better at making itself visible at the official level but was not as strong as YEKKOM or other PKK-affiliated organisations, which drew thousands of people to their demonstrations and protests (Jorgensen 2008). KOMCIWAN is the youth organisation of KOMKAR, operating in Berlin and other cities in Germany. It brings young Kurds together and organises activities such as language courses, theatre groups,

Kurdish folk dancing courses and German integration lectures. It encourages young Kurds to participate in politics.

YEKKOM (Yekitiya Komalen Kurd Li Elmanya / Federation for Kurdish Associations in Germany)

It is the federation constituted by migrant organisation in 1994 and supported by Kurdish members who openly support the PKK. It was founded after the ban on other Kurdish PKK-affiliated organisations in 1993 (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 62). It is mostly supported by the asylum seekers who arrived in the 1980s and beyond. It has both first- and second-generation members and its constituency was nourished by the new flows of migration from Turkey. Its headquarters are in Düsseldorf and it has around 70 organisations connected to it.

Komalen Ciwan (Young Kurds- A PKK Affiliated Youth Group)

The German Federal Ministry of the Interior defines Komalen Ciwan as the youth organisation of the PKK in Germany. It has been under German surveillance for a long time. It is thought to be the youth organisation responsible for PKK recruitments. In the Ministry reports, they are held responsible for the recent arson attacks on Turkish property in Germany.

KIP (Kurdische Gemeinde in Deutschland / Kurdish Community in Germany)

KIP tries to gather Kurdish origin people in Germany around a common ethnicity, to get the Kurdish identity recognized as a separate identity in Germany and to involve German NGOs and other groups (Faist 2000:219).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abadan-Unat, N. (2002). *Bitmeyen göç: konuk işçilikten ulus-ötesi yurttaşlığa*. İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Adamson, F. (2008). Constructing the diaspora: Diaspora identity politics and transnational social movements. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the ISA's 49th annual convention, "Bridging multiple divides", San Francisco Hilton, San Francisco, CA, USA.
- Aktaş, M. (1996). *Sesime Gel*. İstanbul: Avesta Yayınları.
- Al-Ali, N. & Pratt, N. (2006). Researching Women in Post-Invasion Iraq: Negotiating 'Truths' and Deconstructing Dominant Discourses. *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies*, 8, nos. 1 & 2.
- Aliş, A. (2009). The process of the politicization of the Kurdish identity in Turkey: The Kurds and the Turkish Labor Party, 1961–1971. Unpublished MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, Atatürk Institute.
- Alinia, M. (2004). Spaces of diasporas: Kurdish identities, experiences of otherness and politics of belonging. *Studies in Sociology* 22, Department of Sociology, Göteborg University.
- Ålund, A (1998). Swedish multicultural society. *Soundings*, 9, 176-181.
- Ålund, A., & Schierup, C-U (1991). *The paradoxes of multiculturalism*. Aldershot, Hampshire: Avebury.
- Amiriaux, V. (2005). Turkey and the European Union: From immigration to integration. In O. Roy (ed.), *Turkey today: A European country?* London: Anthem Press.
- Ammann, B. (2005). Kurds in Germany. In M. Ember, C. R. Ember, & I. Skoggard, *Encyclopedia of diasporas: Immigrant and refugee cultures around the world, volume 2: Diaspora communities*. Springer Publishers.
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Anderson, B. (1998). *The spectre of comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the world*. London: Verso.
- Anil, M. (2005). No more foreigners? The remaking of German naturalization and citizenship law 1990–2000. *Dialectical Anthropology*, 29(3-4), 453-470.
- Anil, M. (2006). The New German Citizenship Law: Its implications on German Demographics: Research Notes. In "Challenges of Demographics in Germany:

Selected Policy Discussions", ed. Richard R. Vertugo.
<http://www.fulbright.de/fileadmin/files/togermany/information/2003-04/gss/GSS2003-workingpapers.pdf#page=48>

- Arai, M., & Skogman Thoursie, P. Giving up foreign names: An empirical examination of surname change and earnings. *Sulcis working paper 2007:1*, Stockholm University.
- Argun, B. E. (2003). *Turkey in Germany: The transnational sphere of Deutschkei*. New York / London: Routledge.
- Ayata, B. (2011). The politics of displacement: A transnational analysis of the forced migration of Kurds in Turkey and Europe. Unpublished PhD thesis, Johns Hopkins University.
- Aybek, C. (2012). Politics, Symbolics and Facts: Migration Policies and Family Migration from Turkey to Germany. *Perceptions*, Summer, XVII, Number 2, 37-59.
- Aydin, D. (2005). Mobilizing the Kurds in Turkey: Newroz as a myth. Unpublished MA Thesis, Middle East Technical University.
- Barkey, H. J., & Fuller, G. E. (1998). *Turkey's Kurdish question*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield.
- Bartl, J. (2009). Questions of belonging: An anthropological field study among Kurdish students in Stockholm. Unpublished MA thesis, University of Vienna.
- Baser, B., & Swain, A. (2008). Diasporas as peacemakers: Third party mediation in homeland conflicts. *International Journal on World Peace*, 7(7), 7-28.
- Baser, B. & Swain, A. (2011). Stateless Diaspora Groups and Their Repertoires of Nationalist Activism in Host Countries. *Journal of International Relations*, Vol.8, No.1, 20.
- Baser, B. (2011). Swedish Parliament's Recognition of the Genocide Resolution and its Impact on the Turkish Community in Sweden, *Diaspora Studies*, Volume 3, Number 2.
- Baser, B. (2011). Kurdish Diaspora Political Activism in Europe with a Particular Focus on Great Britain. *Diaspora Dialogues for Development and Peace Project*, Berlin: Berghof Peace Support.
- Batta, A. (2007). Refugee integration, long distance nationalism, and refugee-related violence: When myths become reality. University of North Texas, Department of Political Science, Denton, TX.
- Bauböck, R. (2008). Ties across borders: The growing salience of transnationalism and diaspora politics. *IMISCOE Policy Brief 13*, 1-8.

- Bauböck, R. (2010). Cold constellations and hot identities: Political theory questions about transnationalism and diaspora. In R. Bauböck and T. Faist, *Diaspora and transnationalism: Concepts, theories and methods*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Bayram, N., Nyquist, H., Thorburn, D., & Bilgel, N. (2009). Turkish immigrants in Sweden: Are they integrated? *International Migration Review*, 43(1), 90-111.
- Benito, M. (2005). Active civic participation of immigrants in Sweden. Country report prepared for the European research project Politis, Oldenburg.
- Bevelander, P. & Pendakur R. (2009). Voting and Social Inclusion in Sweden. Paper presented at 6th IZA Meeting Conference Paper, Bonn, May 2009.
- Billig, M. (1995). *Banal nationalism*. London: Sage Publications.
- Blatte, A. (2003). The Kurdish movement ethnic mobilization and Europeanization. Paper presented at the European Union Studies Association (EUSA), 8th biennial conference, 27-29 March, Nashville, TN.
- Bondeson, J. (2005). *Blood on the snow: The killing of Olof Palme*. Cornell University Press.
- Bordes-Benayun, C. (2010). Contemporary diasporas, nationalism, and transnationalism politics. In A. Gal, A. S. Leoussi, & A. D. Smith, (eds.), *The call of the homeland: Diaspora nationalisms, past and present*. Leiden: Brill Academic Publications.
- Breen, Lauren J. (2007). The researcher “in the middle”: Negotiating the insider / outsider dichotomy. *Australian Community Psychologist*, Volume 19, No 1.
- Brown, G. S. (2004). Coping with long-distance nationalism: Inter-ethnic conflict in diaspora context. Unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Texas, Austin.
- Brubaker, R. (2005). The ‘diaspora’ diaspora. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(1), 1-19.
- Butler, K. (2001). Defining diaspora, refining a discourse. *Diasporas* 10(2), 189-219.
- Cederman, L-E., Girardin, L., & Gleditsch, K. S. (2009). Ethnonationalist triads: Assessing the influence of kin groups on civil wars. *World Politics*, 61(3), 403-437.
- Chapin, W. D. (1996). The Turkish diaspora in Germany. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 5(2), 275-301.
- Cheran, R. (2004). Diaspora circulation and transnationalism: Agents for change in the post-conflict zones of Sri Lanka. Policy paper submitted to the Berghof Foundation for Conflict Management, Berlin, Germany.
- Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9(3), 302-338.
- Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the nation state: From victims to challengers. *International Affairs*, 72(3), 507-520.

- Cohen, R. (1997). *Global diasporas: An introduction*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Cohen, R. (2008). *Global diasporas: An introduction*. 2. Edition, London: UCL Press.
- Collet, B.A. (2008). Confronting the insider-outsider polemic in conducting research with diasporic communities: Towards a community based approach. *Refuge*, 25, 77-83.
- Cornell, S. E. (2001). The Kurdish question and the Turkish political system. *Orbis*, 45(1).31-46.
- Crul, M. (2008). The second generation in Europe. *Canadian Diversity*, (6:2), 17-19.
- Curtis, A. (2005). Nationalism in the diaspora: A study of the Kurdish movement. *Nationalism, ethnicity and conflict*. University of Utrecht.
- Cyrus, N. (2005). Active civic participation of immigrants in Germany. Politis Country Report. Oldenburg: University of Oldenburg.
- Danforth, L. (1995). *The Macedonian conflict: Ethnic nationalism in a transnational world*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Davy, U. (2005). Integration of immigration in Germany: A slowly evolving concept. *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 7, 123-144.
- Demker, M. (2007). Attitudes toward immigrants and refugees: Swedish trends with some comparisons. Paper presented at International Studies Association 48th annual convention, February 28 – March 3, Chicago, Illinois, USA.
- Demmers, J. (2002). Diaspora and Conflict: Locality, long-distance nationalism, and delocalisation of conflict dynamics. *The Public*, 9(1), 85-96.
- Demmers, J. (2007). New wars and diasporas: suggestions for research and policy. *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development*, 11, 1-26.
- Diken, S. (2009). *Amidalilar, sürgüdeki Diyarbekirliler*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.
- Dingu-Kyrklund, E. (2007). Citizenship, migration, and social integration in Sweden: A model for Europe? Ceris Working Paper No. 52.
- Eccarius-Kelly, V. (2010). *The Militant Kurds: A Dual Strategy for Freedom*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International.
- Eckardt, F. (2007). Multiculturalism in Germany: From ideology to pragmatism - and back? *National Identities*, 9(3), 235-245.
- Ecksner, J. (2007). *Ghetto ideologies, youth identities and stylized Turkish German: Turkish youths in Berlin-Kreuzberg*. Münster: Lit Verlag.
- Eliassi, B. (2010). A stranger in my homeland: The politics of belonging among young people with Kurdish backgrounds in Sweden. Mittuniversitetet, Härnösand, Sweden.

- Emanuelsson, A-C. (2005). *Diaspora global politics: Kurdish transnational networks and accommodation of nationalism*. Göteborg: Department of Peace and Development research, Göteborg University.
- Ergin, Murat. (2012). The racialization of Kurdish identity in Turkey, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, DOI:10.1080/01419870.2012.729672. p.1-20, iFirst Article.
- Ersanilli, E. (2010). *Comparing integration. Host culture adoption and ethnic retention among Turkish immigrants and their descendents in France, Germany and the Netherlands*. Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit.
- Esman, M. J. (1986). Diasporas and international relations. In G. Sheffer (ed.). *Modern diasporas in international politics*. London and Sydney: Croom Helm. 333–49.
- Esman, M. J. (2009). *Diasporas in the contemporary world*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Faas, D. (2010). *Negotiating political identities: Multiethnic schools and youth in Europe*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Faist, T. (2000). Transnationalization in international migration: Implications for the study of citizenship and culture. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23(2), 189-222.
- Faist, T. (2000a) *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2000, Reprints 2004, 2008) (ISBN: 0-19-829391-7).
- Faist, T. (2010). Diaspora and transnationalism: What kind of dance partners? In R. Bauböck and T. Faist, *Diaspora and transnationalism: Concepts, theories and methods*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Falzon, M-A. (2003). Bombay, our cultural heart: Rethinking the relation between homeland and diaspora. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 26(4), 662-683.
- Flick, U. (2006). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Gayer, L. (2007). The volatility of the ‘other’: Identity formation and social interaction in diasporic environments. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal* [online].
- Gilroy, P. (1993). *The black Atlantic: Double consciousness and modernity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Giugni, M., & Passy, F. (2006). Influencing migration policy from outside: The impact of migrant, extreme-right and solidarity movements. In M. Giugni & F. Passy (eds.), *Dialogues on migration policy*. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers.
- Green, S. (2000). Beyond ethnoculturalism? German citizenship in the new millennium. *German Politics*, 9(3), 105-24.

- Griffiths, D. J. (2002). *Somali and Kurdish refugees in London: New identities in the diaspora*. London: Ashgate.
- Grojean, O. (2011). Bringing the organization back in: Pro-Kurdish protest in Europe. In M. Casier & J. Jongerden (eds.), *Nationalisms and Politics in Turkey. Routledge studies in Middle Eastern politics*, 182-197. London:Routledge.
- Guillermet, Elise. (2008). Reflexivity- A Tool for the Anthropologist. *Antroweb*, <http://antropologie.zcu.cz/reflexivity-a-tool-for-the-anthropologist-an-ex>
- Gunduz-Hoşgör, A. & Smiths, J. (2002). Intermarriage between Turks and Kurds in contemporary Turkey: Inter-ethnic relations in an urbanizing environment. *European Sociology Review* 18(4), 417-432.
- Gunter, M. M. (1991). Transnational sources of support for the Kurdish insurgency in Turkey. *Conflict Quarterly*, Vol 11, 7-29.
- Gustafson, P. (2002). Globalisation, multiculturalism and individualism: The Swedish debate on dual citizenship. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 28(3), 463-481.
- Hailbronner, K. (2010). Germany country report, 2010. EUDO citizenship project. <Http://eudo-citizenship.eu/docs/countryreports/Germany.pdf>
- Hall, J., & Swain, A. (2007). Catapulting conflicts or propelling peace: Diasporas and civil war. In A. Swain, R. Amer, & J Öjendal (eds.), *Globalization and challenges to building peace*. London, New York & Delhi: Anthem Press.
- Hanrath, J. (2011a). Tensions between migrant groups: Imported or home grown? Recommendations for municipal actors with reference to the Turkish Kurdish conflict. Development and Peace Foundation, policy paper 33.
- Hanrath, J. (2011b). Imported or home-grown? Dealing with conflicts between Turks and Kurds in Berlin. Draft paper prepared for the IPSA-ECPR joint conference: "Whatever happened to North-South?" Sao Paulo, Brazil, February 16-19.
- Hassanpour, A., & Shahrzad, M. (2004). Kurdish diaspora. In M. Ember, C. Ember & I. Skoggard (eds.), *Encyclopedia of diasporas, part I*, 214-224.
- Hellgren, Z. (2005). The myth of the multicultural society: Immigrant mobilization contesting the Swedishness of structures. Academic paper presented at the 9th annual Aage Sorensen Memorial Conference, Harvard University, April 20-21, 2005.
- Horst, C. (2007). The role of diasporas in civil war. Working paper presented at the CSCW workshop on the transnational facets of civil war, PRIO Oslo.
- Icduygu, A., Romano, D., & Sirkeci, I. (1991). The ethnic question in an environment of insecurity: The Kurds in Turkey. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(6), 991-1010.

- Icduygu, A. (1996). Becoming a New Citizen in an Immigration Country: Turks in Australia and Sweden and Some Comparative Implications. *International Migration*, (34:2), 257-272.
- Ireland, P. R. (1994). *The policy challenge of ethnic diversity: Immigrant politics in France and Switzerland*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Jederlund, L., & Kayfetz, V. (1999). In transition: From immigration policy to integration policy. *Sweden Scandinavian Review*, Vol 87.
- Johansson, Alf. W, & Norman, Torbjörn. "Sweden's Security and World Peace", in *Creating Social Democracy*, eds. Klaus Misgeld, Karl Molin, Klas Amark. Penn State University.
- Jonsson, M., & Cornell, S. (2007). Countering terrorist financing: Lessons from Europe. *Conflict & Security, Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, (8:1), 69-70.
- Jorgensen, M. B. (2009). National and transnational identities: Turkish identity in Denmark, Sweden and Germany. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Spirit series no. 19.
- Kaldor, M. (2007). *New and old wars: Organized violence in a global era*, 2nd edition. Stanford: Stanford California Press.
- Karlsson, I. (2008). *Bir diplomatın gözüyle kürt sorunu*, İstanbul: Homer Yayınları.
- Karner, C. (2007). *Ethnicity and everyday life*. London/ New York: Routledge.
- Kastoryano, R. (2002). *Negotiating identities. States and immigrants in France and Germany*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kaya, A. (2002). Aesthetics of diaspora: Contemporary minstrels in Turkish diaspora. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 28(1), 43-62.
- Kaya, A. (2007). German-Turkish transnational space: A separate space of their own. *German Studies Review*, 30(3), 483-502.
- Kaya, A. (2009). *Islam, migration and integration: The age of securitization*. London: Palgrave.
- Kaya, A., & Kentel, F. (2005). Euro-Turks: A bridge or a breach between Turkey and the European Union? Brussels: CEPS Publications.
- Kenley, D. (2005). History and nationalism: The imagined community in the twentieth century. Keynote address for the Elizabethtown College History Department.
- Khayati, K. (2006). Diasporian Kurds in Sweden as transnational citizens. World Congress of Kurdish Studies, Irbil, 6-9 September, 2006.

- Khayati, K. (2008). From victim diaspora to transborder citizenship? Diaspora formation and transnational relations among Kurds in France in Sweden. PhD thesis, Linköping studies in arts and science, no. 435, Linköping University.
- Kirisci, K. (2004). The Kurdish question and Turkish foreign policy. In D. Kerides & L. Martin (eds.), *The future of Turkish foreign policy*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Kirisci, K., & Winrow, G. M (1997). *The Kurdish question and Turkey: An example of a trans-state ethnic conflict*. London: Frank Cass & Co.
- Koinova, M. (2010). Diasporas and international politics: Utilising the universalistic creed of liberalism for particularistic and nationalist purposes. In R. Bauböck and T. Faist, *Diaspora and transnationalism: Concepts, theories and methods*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Koinova, M. (2006). Diaspora involvement in ethno-national violence: Causal mechanisms and the cases of Kosovo, Chechnya and Nagorno-Karabakh. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Town & Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego, California, USA.
- Koinova, M. (2007). Diasporas and conflict during the post-conflict reconstruction of divided societies: Lebanese and Albanian diasporas compared. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association 48th annual convention, Hilton Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA, February 28, 2007.
- Koopmans, R. (2004). Movements and media: Selection processes and evolutionary dynamics in the public sphere. *Theory and Society* 33(3-4), 367-391.
- Koopmans, R., & Olzak, S. (2002). Right-wing violence and public sphere in Germany: The dynamics of discursive opportunities. Conference Paper can be found at: <http://www.Princeton.edu/culturalpolicy/conferences/olzak.pdf>.
- Koopmans, R., & Statham, P. (2000). Migration, ethnic relations, and xenophobia as a field of political contention: An opportunity structure approach. In R. Koopmans & P. Statham (eds.), *Challenging immigration and ethnic relations politics: comparative European perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 13-56.
- Koopmans, R., & Statham, P. (2001). How national citizenship shapes transnationalism: A comparative analysis of migrant claims-making in Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands. *Revue européenne de migrations internationales*, (17:2), 63-100.
- Korkmaz, T. (2005). Comparison of Swedish and German immigrant integration policies within the light of the European Union framework. Unpublished MA thesis, Linköping University Department of Management & Economics.

- Leggewie, C. (1996). How Turks became Kurds, not Germans. *Dissent*, 43(3), 79-83.
- Lindvall, J., & Sebring, J. (2005). Policy reform and the decline of corporatism in Sweden. *West European Politics*, 28(5), 1057-1074.
- Nell, L. M. (2008). Transnational migrant politics in the Netherlands: Historical structures and current events. Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, PhD Thesis. Universiteit van Amsterdam.
- Lyon, A. J., & Ucarer, E. M. (2001). Mobilizing ethnic conflict: Kurdish separatism in Germany and the PKK. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24(6), 925-48.
- Lyons, T. (2004). Engaging diasporas to promote conflict resolution: Transforming hawks into doves. Paper presented at the Institute for Global Conflict and Cooperation Washington Policy Seminar.
- Mandel, R. (2008). *Cosmopolitan anxieties: Turkish challenges to citizenship and belonging in Germany*. Duke University Press.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing Qualitative Research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Martin, P. L. (1999). Guest worker policies: An international survey. In A. Bernstein & M. Weiner (eds.), *Migration and refugee policies: An overview*. London: Pinter.
- Miall, H., Ornert, A., & Simsek, D. (2010). Transnational communities and conflict policies. University of Kent, Conflict Analysis Research Center.
- Miera, F. (2009a). European approach to multicultural citizenship: Legal, political and educational challenges. Germany, European University, Viadrina, September 2009.
- Miera, F. (2009b) Political Participation of Migrants in Germany. European Commission, EMILIE Project Brief.
- Mohammad-Arif, A., & Moliner, C. (2007). Introduction. Migration and constructions of the other: Inter-communal relationships amongst South Asian diasporas. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal* [online].
- Moliner, C. (2007). Frères ennemis? Relations between Panjabi Sikhs and Muslims in the diaspora. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal* [online].
- Mueller, C. (2006). Integrating Turkish Communities: A German Dilemma. In “*Challenges of Demographics in Germany: Selected Policy Discussions*”, ed. Richard R. Vertugo. <http://www.fulbright.de/fileadmin/files/togermany/information/2003-04/gss/GSS2003-workingpapers.pdf#page=48>
- Mushaben, J. M. (2008). *The changing faces of citizenship: Social integration and political mobilization among ethnic minorities in Germany*. New York: Berghahn Books.

- Nagar, Richa and Susan Geiger. (2007). Reflexivity and Positionality in Feminist Fieldwork Revisited. In eds. Adam Tickell, Eric Sheppard, Jamie Peck and Trevor Barnes, *Politics and Practice in Economic Geography*. London: Sage, 267-278.
- Odmalm, P. (2004). Civil society, migrant organisations and political parties: Theoretical linkages and applications to the Swedish context. *Journal of Ethnic and migration studies*, 30(3), 471-489.
- Odmalm, P. (2009). Turkish organisations in Europe: How national contexts provide different avenues for participation. *Turkish Studies* 10(2), 149-163.
- Ögelman, N., Money, J., & Martin, P. L. (2002). Immigrant cohesion and political access in influencing host country foreign policy. *SAIS Review*, 22(2), 145-165.
- Orjuela, C. (2006). Distant warriors, distant peace workers? Multiple diaspora roles in Sri Lanka's violent conflict. Background paper of the high level expert forum on 'Capacity building for peace and development: Roles of diaspora.' Toronto, University for Peace, 19-20 October 2006.
- Østergaard-Nielsen, E. (2003). *Transnational Politics: Turks and Kurds in Germany*. London /Newyork: Routledge.
- Østergaard-Nielsen, E. (2006). Diasporas and conflict resolution-part of the problem or part of the solution? Copenhagen: DIIS Brief.
- Ozcan, V. (2004). Germany: Immigration in transition. *Migration information source*, July 2004.
- Özçelik, S. (2006). Theories, practices, and research in conflict resolution and low-intensity conflicts: The Kurdish conflict in Turkey. *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, 26(2), 133-153.
- Ögelman, N. (2000). Directed Discontent, Turkish Origin Organizations in Germany. Univ. Dissertation: Austin, Texas.
- Ögelman N, Money J, Martin PL. (2002). Immigrant cohesion and political access in influencing hostcountry foreign policy. *SAIS Review*, 22(2): 145–165.
- Paerregaard, K. (2010). Interrogating diaspora: Power and conflict in Peruvian migration. In R. Bauböck and T. Faist, *Diaspora and transnationalism: Concepts, theories and methods*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Perrin, N. (2010). Beyond the core conflict: new minorities, new confrontations & new policies. Final report of the work package 5 of the research project, International Civil Society forum on conflicts (INFOCON).

- Portes, A. (2001). Introduction: The debates and significance of immigrant transnationalism. *Global Networks: A Journal of Transnational Affairs*, 1(3), 181-193.
- Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the second generation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Prins, A. (2010). Retribution or reconciliation: An analysis of the effects of the defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam on discourses of violence and reconciliation in the Tamil diaspora. Unpublished MA thesis, Utrecht University.
- Radu, M. (2001). The rise and fall of the PKK. *Orbis*, 45, (1), 47-58.
- Ramm, C. (2011). The German integration debate and the public 'Islamization' of Turkish immigrants. Conference paper, "Bringing migration and history into the equation: Re-imagining nationhood and belonging" 5-7 October 2011, Berlin, Germany.
- Renard, T. (2008). Kurdish activism in Europe: Terrorism versus Europeanization. *terrorism Monitor*, 6(13).
- Rigby, A. (2006). Axes of solidarity-diasporas. Conference paper, "Unarmed resistance: the transnational factor," 13-17 July 2006, Coventry University, Center for Peace and Reconciliation Studies.
- Rigoni, I. (2002). *Turkish and Kurdish media production in Europe: A comprehensive overview*. ESRC Transnational Communities Working Paper.
- Rumbaut, R. G. (2002). Severed or sustained attachments? Language, identity, and imagined communities in the post-immigrant generation. In P. Levitt and M. Waters (eds.), *The changing face of home: The transnational lives of the second generation*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in modern societies: Myths of homeland and return. *Diaspora*, 1(1), 83-99.
- Safran, W. (2007). Concepts, theories, and challenges of diaspora: A panoptic approach. Prepared for presentation at the workshop on "Dispersione, globalizzazione e costruzione dell'alterità: Diaspore et migrazioni nel bacino del Mediterraneo et oltre (xix-xx secc.)", sponsored by University of Pisa, Department of History. Marsala, Italy.
- Saracoglu, C. (2009). "Exclusive recognition": The new dimensions of the question of ethnicity and nationalism in Turkey. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 32(4), 640-58.
- Schierup, C-U. (1991). The ethnic Tower of Babel. Political marginality and beyond. In A. Ålund & C-U. Schierup (eds.), *Paradoxes of multiculturalism. Essays on Swedish society*. Aldershot: Avebury.

- Schierup, C-U and A. Ålund (2009). From paradoxes of multiculturalism to paradoxes of liberalism, Conference paper. Nation-State, Immigration and Cultural pluralism. International Conference. Moscow, 18-19 September 2009.
- Schiller, N-G. (2004). Long-distance nationalism. In C. R. Ember, M. Ember, & I. Skoggard, *Encyclopedia of diasporas*. Springer Publishing.
- Schönwalder, K. (2010). Integration policy and pluralism in a self-conscious country of immigration. In Steven Vertovec, Susanne Wessendorf (eds.) *The Multicultural Backlash*. London/ Newyork: Routledge.
- Şen, F. (2003). The historical situation of Turkish migrants in Germany. *Immigrants and Minorities*, 22(2-3), 208-227.
- Sen, F. (2004). Turkish diaspora in Germany. http://www.qantara.de/webcom/show_article.php/_c-478/_nr-171/i.html
- Shain, Y., & Barth, A. (2003). Diasporas and international relations theory. *International Organization*, 57(3), 449-479.
- Sheffer, D. (2003). *Diaspora politics. At home abroad*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shuval, J. (2000). Diaspora migration: Definitional ambiguities and a theoretical paradigm. *International Migration*, 38(5), 41-57.
- Simon, B., & Klandermans, B. (2011). Politicized collective identity. *American Psychologist*, 56(4), 319-331.
- Sirkeci, I. (2000). Exploring the Kurdish population in the Turkish context. *Genus, International Journal of Demography*, 56(1-2), 149-175.
- Sirkeci, I. (2003). Migration from Turkey to Germany: An ethnic analysis. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 2003(28-29), 189-208.
- Sirkeci, I. (2006). *The environment of insecurity in Turkey and the immigration of Turkish Kurds to Germany*. UK: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Skrbis, Z. (2001). Nationalism in a transnational context: Croatian diaspora, intimacy and nationalist imagination. *Sociological Review/Revija za Sociologiju*, (3-4), 133-145.
- Skrbis, Z. (1999). *Long-distance nationalism: diasporas, homelands and identities. Research in migration and ethnic relations series*. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.
- Smith, A. D. (2010). Diasporas and homelands in history: The case of the classic diasporas. In A. Gal, A. S. Leoussi, and A. D. Smith (eds.), *The call of the homeland: Diaspora nationalisms, past and present*. Leiden: Brill Academic Publications.

- Smith, H. (2007). Diasporas in international conflict. In H. Smith & P. Stares (eds.), *Diasporas in conflict: Peace-makers or peace-wreckers?* (pp. 3-16). Tokyo: United Nations University Press.
- Soguk, N. (2008). Transversal communication, diaspora, and the Euro-Kurds. *Review of International Studies*, 34, 173-192.
- Somer, M. (2005). Resurgence and remaking of identity: Civil beliefs, domestic and external dynamics, and the Turkish mainstream discourses on Kurds. *Comparative Political Studies*, 38(6), 591-622.
- Somer, M. (2007). Defensive and liberal nationalisms, the Kurdish question and modernization/democratization. In E. F. Keyman (ed.), *Remaking Turkey: Globalization, alternative modernities, and democracy*, pp. 103–35. Oxford: Lexington Books.
- Soysal, Y. N. (1994). *Limits of citizenship: Migrants and postnational membership in Europe*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Sökefeld, M. (2006). Mobilizing in transnational space: a social movement approach to the formation of diaspora. *Global Networks*, 6: 265–284.
- Street, A. (2012). Intergenerational Motives for Naturalization and the Value of Citizenship. Unpublished paper, European University Institute.
- Sultana, Farhana. (2007). Reflexivity, Positionality and Participatory Ethics: Negotiating Fieldwork Dilemmas in International Research. *ACME Editorial Collective, journal compilation*.
- Süssmuth, Rita. (2009). The Future of Migration and Integration Policy in Germany. Washington DC: Migration Policy Institute, Working Paper.
- Tarrow, S. (1994). *Power in movement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tocci, N. (2007). *The EU and conflict resolution: promoting peace in the backyard*. Routledge: London.
- Tocci, N., & Kaliber, A. (2008). Conflict society and the transformation of the Turkey's Kurdish question. Shur-case study report, wp 01/08.
- Ucarlar, N. (2009). Between majority power and minority resistance: Kurdish linguistic rights in Turkey, Unpublished PhD thesis, Lund University.
- Van Bruinessen, Martin (1994). Kurdish nationalism and competing ethnic loyalties. Original English version of: Nationalisme Kurde et ethnicités intra-Kurdes. *Peuples Méditerranéens*, 68-69, 11-37.

- Van Bruinessen, Martin (1998). "Shifting national and ethnic identities: the Kurds in Turkey and the European diaspora", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* (18: 1), 39-52.
- Van Bruinessen, M. (1999). The Kurds in movement: Migrations, mobilisations, communications and the globalisation of the Kurdish question. Working paper no. 14, Islamic Area Studies Project, Tokyo, Japan.
- Van Bruinessen, M. (2000). Transnational aspects of the Kurdish question. Working paper, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Florence.
- Vertovec, S. (1999). Conceiving and researching transnationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2(2), 447-462.
- Wahlbeck, Östen (1999). *Kurdish diasporas: A comparative study of Kurdish refugee communities*. London: Macmillan.
- Wayland, S. (2004). Ethnonationalist networks and transnational opportunities: The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. *Review of International Studies*, 30(3), 405-426.
- Westin, C. (2000). The effectiveness of settlement and integration policies towards immigrants and their descendants in Sweden. Migration branch, Ilo, Geneva. International migration papers 34.
- Westin, C. (2003). Striking a balance between diversity and social cohesion: Examples from Sweden. National Europe Centre paper n°74. Paper presented to conference entitled "The challenges of immigration and integration in the European Union and Australia", 18-20 February 2003, University of Sidney.
- Westin, C. (2003). Young people of migrant origin in Sweden. *International Migration Review*, (37:4), 987-1010.
- Westin, C. (2006). Sweden: Restrictive immigration policy and multiculturalism. *Migration information source*.
- Whittaker, E. (1992). The birth of anthropological self and its career. *Ethos*, 20, 191-219.
- White, J. B. (1997). Turks in the new Germany. *American Anthropologist*, 99(4).754-69.
- Wimmer, A. (2008). Elementary strategies of ethnic boundary making. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31(6), 1025-1055.
- Yegen, M. (2010). Banditry to disloyalty: Turkish nationalisms and the Kurdish question. In A. Kadioğlu & F. Keyman (eds.), *Symbiotic antagonisms: Sources, discourses and changing nature of Turkish, Kurdish and Islamic nationalisms in Turkey*. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press.

- Yildiz, K. (2005). *The Kurds in Turkey: EU accession and human rights*. London: Pluto Press.
- Yilmaz, H. (2011). Euroscepticism in Turkey: Parties, elites, and public opinion. *South European Society and Politics*, ifirst article, 1-24.
- Yurdakul, G. (2006). State, political parties and immigrant elites: Turkish immigrant associations in Berlin. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32(2), 435-453.
- Zunzer, W. (2004). Diaspora communities and civil conflict transformation. Berghof occasional paper no. 26. Berlin: Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management.
- Zunzer, W. (2005). Potential peace actors outside their homeland. *New Routes, a Journal of Peace Research and Action*, 10(1), 5-6.