'Ethnicity within Ethnicity' among the Turkish-Speaking Immigrants in London

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to explore multi-faceted interactions among three segments of the 'Turkish-speaking' immigrant community in London, composed of the Turks and the Kurds from Turkey and Turkish Cypriots. Drawing on findings of an extensive anthropological fieldwork, this paper not only documents that these sub-groups co-exist and cooperate with each other creating a sense of collective belonging to Turkish-speaking communities versus the others but also shows frictions and conflicts often occurring about ethnic, political, and ideological issues. As a result, an uneasy symbiosis exists between these sub-groups in London where they find themselves in an awkward position of existing together while not belonging to a unified group which can be described by the notion of 'ethnicity within ethnicity'.

Turkish Cypriots first came to Britain as of the 1920s much earlier than most mainlanders.[1] Cyprus was a British colony between 1878 and 1960, and the rate of Turkish Cypriot immigrants increased following the end of British rule, which had been replaced by political turmoil and bloody clashes between the two ethnic communities of the Island. Another extensive flow of migration came after the atrocities following the Greek coup and the subsequent Turkish invasion in 1974. At the end of 1970s, the number of Turkish Cypriots in Britain was recorded as around 40.000.[2] This immigration continued until recently. Every year, a couple of thousands are added to the total number, which now appears to have reached a point of satiation. Estimates in the early 2000s suggested that 120.000 out of 250.000 Turkish-speaking immigrants living in Britain were Turkish Cypriots.[3] Today, according to the Turkish Consulate General in London's estimate, their number is approxi-

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mately 130.000. Their numbers have recently been outpaced by the immigrants of Turkish nationality (including students, *au pair*s and unregistered refugees), whose number is estimated at 150.000.[4]

Due to their much longer presence in Britain and to their familiarity with English culture through their colonial experience in Cyprus, Turkish Cypriots have accommodated to London life much better than the later immigrants from Turkey.

The first wave of Turkish Cypriot immigrants made their living mostly as unskilled laborers in the textile industry (see below). In addition, they were also engaged in the service industry and small retail trades such as catering, restaurants, bakery, grocery, hairdressing, dry cleaning and mini cab driving. But their children and grand children found opportunities for quality education, became fluent English speakers and found social and professional mobility, accessing prestigious occupational fields. Today, the Turkish Cypriots are teachers, civil servants, pharmacists, doctors, dentists, accountants, lawyers, insurers and entrepreneurs.[5]

The migration of Turks (read as immigrants from Turkey who have ethnically Turkish origins and/or identify themselves as Turkish) to Britain started to be significant in the early 1970s. Britain was not among the European countries that attracted mainland Turkish labor immigration on a large scale.[6] Originally, Turks traveled to Britain with educational goals in mind, such as improving their English and to pursue higher education. Therefore, the first Turks immigrating to Britain were young, educated, urban, middle class men. Many sought ways to stay permanently in Britain, particularly through arranged marriages with British citizens.

The first wave of Turkish migration to Britain gained momentum in the early 1970s, owing to the need for cheap labor in the textile and food industries, both of which were previously the domain of Turkish (and also Greek) Cypriots. The latter started to leave this type of work either because their socio-economic status had improved or they were not willing to maintain burdensome and low-level jobs anymore, or they were aging and close to retirement. At this point, certain Turkish Cypriots, familiar with these sectors were hired by employment agencies to serve as intermediaries to bring in human labor from abroad. Here, language played a crucial role. The agencies, administered by Turkish Cypriots, turned towards the rural poor of Anatolian towns to meet this demand. So, a labor migration from Turkey to Britain (nearly exclusively to London) occurred particularly in the

period between 1968 and 1972. Nearly all of these immigrants were men who would bring their wives and children to London years later.

Although the textile industry was the major sector for these subsistence laborers in London during the 1970s and 1980s, Turkish immigrants found many opportunities in the food sector as well. Because the 1970s was marked by a scarcity of workers in this sector, and because many Turkish Cypriot immigrants were already engaged in this trade.

> The Turkish-speaking community in London appears, at first glance, to be relatively homogenous; that is, they are all Muslims. However, there are inner-divisions making this picture more complex

The second wave of Turkish migration to Britain came in the 1980s following the Turkish military coup in 1980 which devastated the leftist-socialist ranks and organizations in Turkey. So, many leftists fled to European countries, including Britain, to seek political asylum.

Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin started to immigrate to Britain in the early 1990s. The main cause was the acceleration of fighting between Turkish armed forces and the Kurdish militia movement, *the PKK*, in the southeast of Turkey where the majority of Kurds lived. Fighting and the subsequent chaos and insecurity forced local Kurdish populations to migrate either to other areas of Turkey (particularly for the ones who were relatively the better-off) or abroad as refugees. Britain was one of the host countries where Kurds sought and obtained political asylum.

This emigration was extensive throughout the 1990s and continued in the early 2000s. It completely transformed the demographic picture of the Turkish-speaking community in London. More than 50.000 people settled in Britain, primarily in London, as political refugees claiming asylum in connection with their Kurdish origins.[7]

The Kurds (read as Turkish citizens of Kurdish origins) followed in the footsteps of the preceding Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants. They found similar types of employment in London. They resided in the same neighborhoods where the members of the other two subgroups lived. They worked in the same sectors (mainly textile and catering) dominated by Turkish and Turkish Cypriot communities. However, the Kurdish community became the dominant community in many respects; politically in the beginning, but also culturally and economically later.

Most of the Kurdish refugees came from the rural areas of central-eastern and south-eastern Anatolian provinces, and the majority of them are affiliated with Alevism, a heterodox version of Islam (see the following section).

Religious Diversity and Internal Divisions

The Turkish-speaking community in London appears, at first glance, to be relatively homogenous; that is, they are all Muslims. However, there are inner-divisions making this picture more complex.[8]

Generally, the Turkish Cypriots do not manifest a strict religiosity. Nevertheless, no one can ignore the influence of a certain Sufi sheikh of Turkish Cypriot origin over people, and even the whole Turkish-speaking community. This influence even extends to the outer circles (both Muslim and non-Muslim) in the larger London society. This is Sheikh Nazım of Cyprus, who is considered to be one of the most important and distinguished Naqshbandi sheikhs of the present times. Sheikh Nazım began his lasting spiritual mission in the Western world in London of the early 1970s. Today, although he himself is in a state of retreat in Cyprus, his appointees and followers maintain his activities in London. His followers are made up of a heterogeneous group with a significant proportion of Turkish and Turkish Cypriot immigrants in London.[9]

Still, the majority of the immigrants from Turkey are reluctant to join the Naqshbandi circle of Sheikh Nazım. They prefer to attend the circles, which are the extensions of the most popular Islamic groups and organizations in present Turkey. The most prominent ones, among them, are *Mahmut Hocacı*s, Süleymancıs, and the *Fethullahçı*s.

Mahmut Hoca is one of the most well-known and influential Muslim figures in contemporary Turkey. Although a Naqshbandi like Sheikh Nazım, Mahmut Hoca differs from the latter with his stricter interpretation of Islamic practice and rigidity in his Sufi approach.[10] The circle has organized itself around the centre of a mosque in Stoke, Newington and attracted a considerable amount of Sunni-Muslim Turkish immigrants, who are of rural, lower class origins and who feel marginalized in London society.

 The *Süleymancı*s are the followers of the late Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan (d. 1959), a celebrated Islamic scholar with a Sufi background, who was active in the first part of the 20th century in Turkey. The first significant Islamic mobilization amongst the Turkish immigrant workers in Europe was initiated by the *Süleymancılar*.[11] In London, the *Süleymancı* organization is centered on a number

of mosques. The circle has also a long experience of engaging in the field of educa-
tion. They have a mosque complex in which religious lectures (Qur'an courses) are delivered; boarding facilities for students are provided; teaching of Turkish language and culture is conducted; conferences and wedding ceremonies are or-
ganized.

*Fethullahçı*s, also called as the (Fethullah) Gülen movement, are rapidly gain-
ing influence over the Turkish-speaking community in London, in comparison with the previously mentioned circles. It is ever quickly taking precedence over the others. This is a transnational Turkish-Islamic organization, which, according to some observers, is on the way to becoming the world's leading Muslim net-
work. The activities are not limited to the religious and educational spheres, but reach the spheres of economics and international politics.[12] In this sense, this is a relatively new trend for the Turkish-speaking community in London. A mosque outside of London in Edmonton has recently been opened and this movement has been seeking appropriate channels to introduce educational institutions in and around London.

This religious depiction of the Turkish-speaking community in London will be incomplete if Alevism is not also considered, as many of the Kurdish refugees are *Alevi*s. Generally at odds with various groups in Sunni Islam, Alevism is a het-
erodox, syncretic sect, which appears more mundane and liberal in its religious attitude.[13] In London, the bulk of the Turkish-speaking Alevi immigrants are of Kurdish origin, who came to Britain under refugee status. Yet at the same time, there is a significant amount of Turkish Alevis within the community.[14] Recently, the Alevi segment of the Turkish-speaking community has experienced a split within itself. The moderate Alevis in London's Turkish-speaking community have long been affiliated with the *London Cemevi* (its registered name, 'England Alevi Cultural Centre and *Cem Evi*'), which operates as a centre to meet the religious, cultural, educational and entertainment needs of the immigrant Alevi population in London.[15] Some of the Alevis of Kurdish origin and with leftist-socialist back-
grounds, have recently had serious quarrels with the people in charge there, and, as a result, set up the 'England Alevi Institute,' holding dissident and more radical positions.

Economy and Subsistence: From the Mill to the Market

As mentioned before, the employment opportunities for the Turkish-speak-
ing community in London had for decades been limited to a number of sectors, among which the textile industry took the lead. Successively, Turkish Cypriots,

Turks, and Kurdish refugees were all employed and then later became employers in this sector. They followed each other in filling the workshops and creating a case of "employment by rotation". Textile workshops provided subsistence for the Turkish-speaking immigrants in London until the mid-1990s, when the sector totally collapsed as a result of the developments, which will be described below.[16]

Turkish Cypriots, who were the first ones to enter into the textile industry within the community, substituted the Greek Cypriots who had, in turn, substituted the Jewish community in this trade. An elderly woman of Turkish Cypriot origin said that when she had started to work in such a mill, "the owner was a Jew." Later, the Jewish community moved on to better and more prestigious branches of business, such as retail and shopping industries. The gap left by the Jewish community in textile workshops was filled by the Greek Cypriots at first, as both employees and employers, and later by the Turkish Cypriots. From the late 1970s, Turkish immigrants from Turkey entered the scene as laborers. Eventually, they, too, started to buy the workshops and become the employers in this sector. Finally, the Kurds of Turkey joined the process were first hired as workers and then, in turn, became employers in this sector.

Observers have stated that in 1986 and 1987, 1500 out of 2000 textile workshops in London were either owned or controlled by Turkish-speaking immigrants. The average number of people who were employed in a mill was 30. This number can be added to the other 500 workshops owned by Greek Cypriots. So, for this period we can estimate that around 50.000 people from the Turkish-speaking community were working in this trade. It is reasonable to think that these numbers increased until the early 1990s. In this period, nearly 95 percent of the community in London was either directly or indirectly linked with textile work for their livelihood.

The textile industry stayed under the control of the Turkish-speaking community until it collapsed in the mid-1990s. The collapse was due to a shift by retailers as they opted for importing low-cost products from emerging markets, where labor costs were much lower, such as Eastern Europe and Turkey. Another reason for the collapse was the unlawful business practices by the workshop owners. Certain observers argue that corrupt practices or tricks were used with short-term interests in mind. The British authorities turned a blind eye, as they considered this sector a "rag trade" and it only employed Turkish-speaking immigrants. But since the mid-1990s, when nearly 90 per cent of textile industry went abroad, the British authorities no longer tolerated such practices. Tougher measures were issued and those who committed tax fraud were imprisoned. Others argued that intracommunal competition in the textile trade hurt communal interests overall.

After the workshops were shut down, most people in the community found themselves unemployed. Some tried to survive on social security or by relying on family/kin support. Others started to look for jobs in the fields they previously had been working in when they lived in Turkey. So, a variety of occupations and businesses began emerging among the community members, such as electricians, construction workers, decorators, bus and taxi drivers. In addition, more small businesses began to be developed, such as hairdressers, jewelers and florists.

At the same time, a great many people in the community, who had lost their jobs in the textile sector, moved to the second most important sector in the Turkish-speaking community, that is, the food or catering industry, or, using a much more popular term in the community, *Kebapçılık* (the *Kebab* business). A Turkish magazine reporting on the catering business in the community makes it clear that the number of restaurants owned by Turkish-speaking people reached 15.000 in 2001 whereas the number was not more than 200 in 1975.[17]

All these options aside, the most significant economic development in the community's life was the growth of local market businesses. This activity was transferred from the South Asian immigrants who maintained it many years all over London. The new South Asian generation, well educated and qualified, no longer wanted to take over their fathers' businesses, but looked instead for more prestigious professional occupations. The timing was right; just as the South Asian community started to leave this trade, the Turkish-speaking community had to leave the textile industry. In various parts of London, the shops (groceries, greengroceries, off-licence, etc.), which had been run by Asians for decades, were turned over to the Turkish-speaking community. Even the ones who did not have enough capital invested in this business by obtaining loans from close relatives.

This new economic endeavor was not without risks, as this was also the time when the big supermarkets spread with their mini stores everywhere. This had been another reason why the South Asians had been leaving this sector. The large supermarkets caused a sharp decline in business for many small local shops.[18]

Settlement Split based on Ethnic and Ideological Frictions

In choosing to reside in London, newer immigrants from Turkey followed the path of Turkish Cypriots who had settled in London much earlier. The residential patterns of Turkish Cypriots were by and large in line with Greek Cypriots who came to London during the same periods and for the same reasons, which were

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directly connected with political turmoil in Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriots, who had immigrated to Britain during colonial times, settled down in the areas, which were either intersecting with or adjacent to those of the Greek Cypriots. These were the areas of Newington Green, Haringey, Stoke Newington, Dalston, and Tottenham in the north, and Peckham, Lewisham and Greenwich in the south of London.[19] When the Turkish and Kurdish immigrants from Turkey reached London, they headed to these same areas (mostly to the ones in North London) for settlement.

The earliest immigrants of Turkish and Greek Cypriot origin kept friendly relations with each other in London's alien environment. However, in the 1970s when crisis broke out and the situation turned devastating in Cyprus, the relations between the two communities rapidly deteriorated and they began to distance themselves from each other. A further split occurred later, this time within the Turkish Cypriot community itself, because of the controversies regarding the Turkish military presence in Cyprus after the events of 1974. Some Turkish Cypriots were in favor of it, while the others were against it. The Turkish Cypriots who

were against the Turkish military inter-
vention in matters of Cyprus did main-
tain relations with the Greek Cypriots.
Later in the 1990s, this same group of
Turkish Cypriots got closer to the Kurd-
ish refugees, who had come to London
with similar sentiments against the Turk-
ish state apparatus. In contrast, the Turk-
ish Cypriots, who supported the Turkish
action in Cyprus behaved with greater
ethnic sensitivity and remained distant
from the Greeks. Instead, they tightened

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their relations with the nationalist-conservative segments of the Turkish immi-
grant community. The Kurdish refugees, too, improved their relations with Greek
Cypriots on the basis of their shared discontent with the Turkish state.

Some cases illustrate these alliances. For example, there are rumors that some
Greek Cypriots who left Haringey for more prestigious neighborhoods in London,
deliberately prefer to rent their houses, flats and stores in and around Haringey
to the Kurds. As a result, Haringey is now known as a Kurdish neighborhood. On
the other hand, as the Turkish Cypriots with a nationalist stance prefer to live and
work in Newington Green. So, this side of Green Lanes became, over time, a mag-
net for Turkish immigrants with a conservative outlook; resulting in a prevalence
of a community holding right-wing Turkish nationalist aspirations. Today, the
neighborhoods in Haringey and Stoke Newington, which constitute the upper-
northern parts of Green Lanes, are heavily occupied by immigrants identified (or
identifying themselves) as leftist, Kurdish or Kurdish-Alevi, while the Newington
Green area is referred to as the place of rightist-nationalist Turks.

A Turkish Cypriot, for instance, places great emphasis on this regional divide
in the residential structure of the community in North London and argues that
no 'Turk' has been left in Haringey, which is now identified with 'Kurdishness'
as a whole. When asked how about Newington Green, however, he immediately
responds by saying, *"There's the 'Bozkurt' (Orası Bozkurt'tur!)"*. *Bozkurt* means the
'Grey Wolf', the legendary symbol of the ultra-nationalist Turkist ideology repre-
sented firmly by the *MHP*, the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*)
and its youth organization, *Ülkücü Hareket* (the Idealist Movement) in Turkey.
So, this implies that Newington Green is under the control of Turkist-nationalist
immigrants. Indeed, there are a number of associations, locals and cafes around
this area which support this argument. For example, one place used by *MHP* sym-

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pathizers was said to have been bombed by their adversaries, who were accused of being supporters of the *PKK*. Another example is when leftist refugees and supporters of the *PKK* in Haringey wanted to hold a demonstration against Turkey, the police did not allow them to go down to Newington Green.

These cases indicate that ethno-political and ideological divisions among the Turkish-speaking immigrants have given rise to certain regionalism in their living space in London, while other dynamics, particularly economic factors bring together an otherwise divided and separated people.

Fissions and Fusions

A great deal of this paper has focused on tensions, polarizations and splits based on opposite ethno-political and ideological orientations among the sub-groups of the Turkish-speaking community. Although conflict and tensions are real, these communities share a great deal in common culturally, economically, and emotionally. Above all, the Turkish language brings them into close contact with each other, particularly as regards to commercial, financial, legal, medical issues, and social-cultural activities in London. For instance, many members of the Turkish Cypriot community, particularly the ones from the second generation, have experienced an upward mobility and became well-educated professionals. For them, many Turks and Kurds, who remain at lower socio-economic levels in London, constitute a valuable market source. Since most of the first generation Turkish and Kurdish immigrants are not proficient in English and they still are not adapted to British culture, they depend on these Cypriots to assist them in sorting out their problems and many areas of life in England in general. Thus, the Cypriots who are doctors, dentists, accountants, lawyers, solicitors, barristers, etc., are the ones to whom the Turks and Kurds seek out to deal with the difficulties they encounter. For the Turkish Cypriots, these people are considered a circle of 'customers exclusive to them'. Again, the language component plays a key role as Turks and Kurds cannot communicate in English and explain what they need to another doctor, dentist or solicitor who cannot speak Turkish.

In certain respects it is not easy to delineate the boundaries between the Turks and Kurds of Turkey in London. Both communities share common strategies in dealing with life in England, have similar life styles and living conditions. So, there

is a great deal of intermingling and coex- istence. Therefore, coping with and sur- viving the alien environment becomes a priority over potential political, ethnic, and ideological tensions. Here economy becomes the most important factor, over- riding political and ideological frictions.

> The Kurdish immigrants, whose mother tongue is Kurdish, generally express themselves in Turkish and this plays a crucial role in creating communal links between the Kurds and the Turks. Sometimes religion, too, functions as a means of unification

As the catering and service industries have started to take precedence over tex- tile work, economic interests and priori- ties have also come to the fore *vis-à-vis* political and ideological ones. The work environment produces a social network. For example, the textile workshops provide a close-knit atmosphere in which kin- ship ties, political alliances, ethnic connections and ideological agreements were all taken into account, while the service industry has now created a more risk oriented outlook for people involved in it. Thus, as far as money is concerned, nei- ther the Turks nor the Kurds can ignore each other. They need each other to build these trade and businesses within the limited sphere of activities of the communi- ty. The following case illustrates this point. In an interview with the executives of a local Turkish newspaper published in Newington Green, which has a pro-Turkish outlook in political terms, they suggest that they could not ignore and close their doors to refugee immigrants even though they may hold antagonistic positions against Turkey. This was because advertisement was their only source of income. So, they had to appeal to the small shop-owners and businesspersons, many of whom were members of the refugee immigrant community. If they refused to do business with this community, they would risk their economic/commercial inter- ests. The executives referred to another newspaper, which went bankrupt because it refused to deal with the immigrant refugee community because of their political views.

In sum, economic dynamics bring together people whom ethno-political sen- sitivities divide. The Kurdish immigrants, whose mother tongue is Kurdish, gen- erally express themselves in Turkish and this plays a crucial role in creating com- munal links between the Kurds and the Turks. Sometimes religion, too, functions as a means of unification. Religious Kurds, although they have negative feelings against the Turkish regime, come for prayer to the mosques in the areas controlled by conservative-nationalist segments of the community and construct relatively workable relations with them.

Generational Clash

The members of the Turkish-speaking community, divided in ethnic, political, ideological and religious lines, are united in the fear of 'losing their children'! From the mosques to the leftist-socialist associations and from the Turkish-nationalist unions to the exclusively Kurdish platforms, the most staggering and agonizing problem people talk about frequently is that, in Britain, their children are getting out of hand, and do not belong to them anymore.

There is an apparent cultural gap that is inter-generational. There are serious clashes between the first generation immigrants from Turkey and the second and third generations born or brought up in Britain. Sometimes, the terms 'gap' or 'clash' remains inadequate to exactly explain the situation. What exists actually is, in both literal and metaphorical senses, 'deafness' between the generations.

This 'inter-generational deafness' is the result of children receiving their education in British schools.[20] The youngsters who learn English at school can express themselves competently in this language, whereas most parents can only speak Turkish, and do not have any difficulty in maintaining their lives by communicating solely in Turkish. As mentioned earlier, these people go to Turkish doctors for medical treatment, apply to Turkish solicitors for their legal difficulties, ask help from Turkish accountants for financial problems, and have their hair cut by Turkish hairdressers. It is perfectly possible for them to live in North London without having any need for English.

For the children, the situation is the other way around. As they were born, brought up, and educated in Britain, they speak less Turkish and know little about Turkey and Turkish culture. This creates cultural problems between parents and children. Unfortunately, sometimes the parents cannot show their children enough affection due to the hardship of life in London. Their working conditions generally do not give them any chance for caring for their children. Most men now work in catering and service sectors (in the restaurants, local markets, off-licenses, etc.) mostly at night, from dusk to dawn. So, when their children are at home, they are at work, or vice versa.

Many times, parents do not have any idea about what is going on at the schools, either. The most dramatic example given in this context is as follows: If the student causes problems in the school or does not attend the classes, the school administration sends a letter of complaint home in order to inform the parents. But, because they are at work, the child throws the letter away. Or, even if the letter is received by the parents, as it is written in English, they give the letter to their child

to read it for them, and get misinformed by their child. Thus, bad behavior is not corrected, such as skipping school, drug addicting and gang fighting, etc.[21]

The perception and interpretation of the problem by the parents of first generation can be aptly demonstrated by the following common phrase: *"We are losing our children"*. In daily practice, this problem manifests itself, externally, with the youngsters' adoption of violence, forming gang groups in schools and streets; and, internally, with the growing incidences of suicide attempts. Another and more dangerous development is the involvement of youngsters in illegal-criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, and similar mafia activities in and around the community.

In sum, the first generations of the Turkish-speaking community, particularly the Turks and the Kurds, live in a country where they do not speak the language or try to learn it. Neither can they give enough care to their children, who are educated, cultured and socialized in British society. So, the parents' inabilities to know and speak English do not prevent them from living in Britain, but prevent them from living with their children.

Concluding Remarks

As far as the 'Turkish Diaspora' in Europe is concerned, Britain can be distinguished from other European countries in some respects. First, the immigrant population in Britain concentrates only in London. Second, from the 1950s to the mid-1990s, the great majority of this population had been employed only in one sector, the textile industry. Lastly, this population has an additional component of Turkish Cypriots, who definitely have influenced and placed their mark over the life of the immigrant community from Turkey in both economic and social-cultural terms. In fact, the immigrants from Turkey followed the path opened by the Turkish Cypriots in respect of settlement patterns, ways of sustenance, and social and cultural accommodations to London life.

It is possible to find within London's Turkish-speaking community the impact of political and ideological polarizations fed by ethnic and religious conflicts in Turkey. It was particularly through the refugee immigrants, who hold strong political sensitivities, that the ground for such a division or split has been laid. In the course of time, however, this political split seems to have faded into the background, as the realities of surviving and making a life for themselves in London, particularly in economic terms takes precedent. For sure, the economic and commercial activities are still being preferentially linked to cultural categories such

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as ethnic, religious, or regional identities, and tribal or sectarian affiliations. At the same time, no one takes these parameters as absolutely binding in transactional practices, as insistence on them would not be rational but actually detrimental to their economic interests.

As a sub-cultural group with its significant inner-ethnic diversity, the Turkish-speaking immigrant community has recently started to attract attention in Britain. The immigrants from Turkey have just recently started to have a "second generation." Only recently, has the community created its own socialization spaces, entertainment settings and media activities in London. This might be considered good, but it is also a process giving rise to new problems and difficulties.

At the forefront of these problems is the generation clash. With the emergence of the "second generation" in Britain, the immigrants from Turkey now face this problem. The psycho-cultural impasses of the second-generation immigrants and, connected with this, their troublesome relations with the parental generation constitute its base. The youngsters are squeezed between the traditional Middle Eastern culture imposed on them by their parents and modern Western culture in which they are born and bred.

Another reason for this generational gap is the difference between two generations in terms of ability to command the English language, which is the main functional language in social life. For the first generation, the obvious lack of English has never been a serious problem, thanks to the widespread use of Turkish in their daily routines from home to the workplace in London. As for the second and (in the case of the Turkish Cypriot immigrants) third generations, they have no deficiency in commanding English as they received their education in England. For them, the problem is reversed: they are becoming alienated from the culture and language of their parents.

To make matters worse, the world that the young generations are acquainted with is not accessible for the parental generation, as the latter do not have sufficient knowledge of the language to enter and understand that world. Thus, they remain outsiders. As a result, a mutual cultural deafness defines the setting. It is possible to assume, however, that as time goes on and further generations are born, this language-based lack of cultural communication will be bridged and this problem will eventually disappear.

It seems quite clear, as in the case of the other European countries of 'Turkish Diaspora' that the idea of returning home and starting a new life in the homeland is now out of the picture for Turkish-speaking immigrants in Britain. The young generation, born and bred in Britain, have adapted to (and adopted) modern British life, whereas they are alien to the social and cultural climate of Turkey. As for the older generation, the health and social security facilities available in Britain, whereas extremely restricted in their home countries, are the main factors, which discourage them from going back home. So, 'the myth of return' has no credibility at all in any circle of the community.

Endnotes

1. Mehmet Ali Aydın, *Turkish Speaking Communities & Education: No Delight* (London: Fatal Publications, 2001), p. 6.

2. F. M. Bhatti, *Turkish Cypriots in London* (Birmingham: Muslims in London-Research Papers – The Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, 1981), p. 3.

3. İhsan Yılmaz, "Londra'daki Türkiye ve Türk Diasporası", Sedat Laçiner (ed.), *Bir Başka Açıdan İngiltere* (Ankara: ASAM Yayınları, 2001), pp. 147-151.

4. See "Turkish Community in the UK", *www.turkishconsulate.org.uk*

5. For the history of the Turkish Cypriot immigration, *see* Sarah Ladbury, "The Turkish Cypriots: Ethnic Relations in London and Cyprus", J. L. Watson (ed.), *Between Two Cultures: Migrants and Minorities in Britain* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1977); Robin Oakely, "Family, Kinship and Patronage: The Cypriot Migration to Britain" V. S. Khan (ed.), *Minority Families in Britain – Support and Stress* (London: MacMillan, 1979)**.**

6. Yılmaz notes that unlike the case of Germany, there was no special bilateral agreement between Turkey and Britain regarding labor migration (Yılmaz, "Londra'daki Türkiye…", p. 137).

7. Laçiner argues that this immigration was organized by the *PKK* who transported thousands of Kurds from Turkey abroad with the aim of building more financial and political supports from the outside world. Sedat Laçiner, *Açık Kapı Politikası'ndan Yabancı Düşmanlığı'na: İngiltere'de Irkçılık, Dış Göç ve Irk İlişkileri* (Ankara: ASAM Yayınları, 2000) pp. 44-45.

8. For a study of Turkish Muslims living in Britain, Talip Küçükcan, *Politics of Ethnicity, Identity and Religion: Turkish Muslims in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), Chps. 9 and 10.

9. For an account of Sheikh Nazım's Naqshbandi community in London, see Tayfun Atay, "Naqshbandi Sufis in a Western Setting", unpublished PhD Thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, the University of London, 1994; Tayfun Atay, "The Significance of the Other in Islam: Reflections on the Discourse of a Naqshbandi Order of Turkish Origin in London", *The Muslim World*, Vol: LXXXIX, No's: 3-4 (1999).

10. Ruşen Çakır, *Ayet ve Slogan – Türkiye'de İslami Oluşumlar* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1990), pp. 60-65.

11. Çakır, *Ayet ve Slogan*, p. 132.

12. For the Gülen movement, see M. Hakan Yavuz and John L. Esposito (eds.), *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gülen Movement* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2003). As a summary of its recent progress, see, "How far they have travelled", *The Economist*, March 6, 2008.

13. On Alevism in Turkey, see David Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of a Secular Islamic Tradition* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

14. For the details of different forms of Alevism in Turkey, see Tord Olsson, et al. (eds), *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives* (İstanbul: Swedish Research Institute Publication, 1998).

15. As an illustration of this Centre's stance regarding Alevism, see Ali Yaman and Aykan Erdemir, *Alevism-Bektashism: A Brief Introduction* (İstanbul: England Alevi Cultural Centre and Cemevi Publication, 2006).

16. A recent analysis of the work strategies of Turkish immigrants can be found in A. Erdemir and E. Vatsa, "Differentiating irregularity and solidarity: Turkish immigrants at work in London", *Working Paper No: 42. ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society* (University of Oxford, 2007).

17. "İngiltere'de Kebab Ticareti," *Turkish Catering News*, January, 2002.

18. See, "Family-run Asian shops disappear", *The Guardian*, January 5, 2002.

19. The boroughs having the largest Turkish populations are Hackney, Enfield, Islington and Greenwich; in the first three, Turkish is the second commonly spoken language after English (Andrew Gimson, "I'm Turkish by descent, but British born and bred", *Evening Standard*, June 11, 2001).

20. For an account of the educational problems of Turkish-speaking community, see Aydın, *Turkish Speaking…*

21. In his study, Mehmet Ali Aydın also touches upon the problem of increase in gang groups among the youth of the Turkish-speaking community in schools particularly against the Black gang groups of the same ages, Aydın, *Turkish Speaking…*, p. 10.