Chapter 5

Cultural Identity of the Turkish Hip-Hop Youth in Kreuzberg 36

The previous chapter portrayed the prevalent life-worlds of the diasporic Turkish youth in order to demonstrate the major constituents of their identity formation processes. This chapter primarily sets out to delineate the process of cultural bricolage and the cultural sources that shape the processes of identity formation of the working-class Turkish hip-hop youth. Being subject to a kind of structural outsiderism, the working-class ethnic minority youths tend to celebrate their past and cultural authenticity. This tendency becomes apparent in their rising orientation to their homeland, religion and ethnicity, which thus become their main cultural sources. Secondly, I shall describe both the particularist and universalist constituents of the Turkish hip-hop youth culture in Kreuzberg. The particularist components of their leisure culture are '*âlem*' (meeting with friends), *dügüns* (wedding ceremony) and *arabesk* music, while the universalist ones are rap, graffiti, dance and 'cool' style. Turkish hip-hop youngsters tend to express themselves by means of these expressive forms of culture as they are seldom represented positively in the German media. In mapping out the main framework of the cultural identity formation process and leisure culture of these youngsters, I shall demonstrate the multicultural competence of ethnic minority youths.

Cultural Sources of Identity Formation Process Among the Turkish Youth

As it was outlined in Chapter 1, the modern individual has recently become subject to the simultaneous interplay of the global and the local (*glocal*). In the age of *glocalism*, individuals and groups tend to

form new identities by going back to basics. In this process of cultural identity formation, 'authentic' culture, ethnicity and what is related to the homeland become an important source of identity politics. Next, I shall examine these sources in order to display the particularist elements of the cultural identity of the Turkish hip-hop youth.

Orientation to Homeland

Orientation to the homeland can be perceived as one of the primary sources of identity for the diasporic youth. The diasporic youth tends to see Turkey as a shelter to protect themselves from their exclusion and ghettoisation in the public sphere, and to feel a sense of belonging. The symbolic bridge between the country of settlement and the homeland is built by means of regular summer vacations (*izin*), by listening to pop and rap music originating both in Germany and Turkey, and by an interest in famous football players like Tayfun playing in European level teams like *Fenerbahçe*. All three are examples of how the advancement of the means of transnational communications and transportation multiplies the diasporic communities' orientation to their homelands.

Orientation to the homeland is a never-ending issue for the Turkish communities in Berlin. Although there is a broad typology of different communities among the Turkish minority, orientation to the homeland is practically identical within almost all the communities. An obvious example is religious groups, who form various kinds of diasporic communities separated by strong boundaries from German society. These groups survive with the cultural and religious baggage they brought from Turkey, and prefer not to interact with the majority society. However, nationalist groups and left-wing secular groups, too, although they prefer interacting with the majority society, are also largely oriented to homeland affairs such as Turkey's internal politics and economic situation, which are often discussed in the traditional Turkish *cafés*, meeting places and leisure time activities.

The mythified summer vacations (*izin*) remain the main aspect of orientation to the homeland. The annual journey to Turkey has always been a great source of amusement for the youngsters. Previously, the rationale behind the *izin*s was mainly to visit relatives. Nowadays, the vacations have mainly become a journey to the land of sun and beaches. Before the Yugoslavian war, driving by car all the way through

Eastern Europe from Germany to Turkey was the most convenient way of travel. Most of the youngsters now talk about those days with nostalgia: The fun they used to have on the way with all the other family members and relatives; the enthusiastic impatience to arrive at the Turkish border, Kapikule; leaving the land of 'oppression' and 'discipline' behind; and living the journey with a feeling of 'full freedom.' Now, the children of those days have grown up, and they prefer going to Turkey with their own friends by plane as quickly as possible. The dreamy journeys of the past have only remained in the pictures taken during travels, in the nostalgic thoughts and conversations within the family.

Music is another primary aspect of the youngsters' orientation to Turkey. The rapidly growing market of pop music in Turkey has also influenced the young generation of Turkish pop-music singers in Germany. Recently, the music market in Turkey has become a significant career opportunity for a large number of pop and rap music singers in the Turkish diaspora. Accordingly, many Turkish-origin singers returned to settle in Turkey in order to have a share in the Turkish music market.[1] For instance, *Cartel*, a German-Turkish rap group to which I shall return in the next chapter, sold more than 300,000 copies of the album, called *Cartel*, in Turkey in 1995. There are dozens of Turkish music stores in Kreuzberg selling Turkish pop, arabesk, rap and folk music albums and arranging public concerts with the singers coming from Turkey.

In the Turkish discos of Berlin, the youngsters listen to these German-Turkish singers as well as the ones from Turkey. Listening to Turkish music, drinking Turkish *Efes* beer, and remembering the summer loves and vacations in Turkey, the youngsters construct a kind of imaginary journey back to Turkey. The infusion of Turkish pop music into the Turkish discos in Germany, and dancing to the rhythm of the Turkish pop singer *Yonca* as well as to *Madonna*, also gives the youngsters self-esteem – one which grows with one's own cultural capital (Trauffetter, 1995). The dancing spaces in the discos, which are dominated by what is Turkish, serve as a kind of imaginary remigration to the homeland and to the past. This imaginary remigration is the precondition of the solidarity network among the youngsters. This group setting also resembles a part-time diasporic community formation that excludes what is German. What these youth groups form in these spaces is a kind of part-time communitarianism that pro-

vides them with a political response to their exclusion from the public space in Germany.

Football is another crucial aspect of the orientation of the diasporic Turkish youth to their homeland. Most of the youngsters fanatically support one of the leading Turkish teams. When I was conversing with some of the youngsters in the *Naunyn Ritze* youth centre, talking about football warmed up the conversation quite rapidly. A thirteen year-old boy, a fan of *Galatasaray*, asked me which team I supported. When I said I was a fan of *Fenerbahçe*, the traditional rival of *Galatasaray*, we had a very lively conversation revolving around football. For a considerable number of Turkish youths, playing football provides a chance for social mobility. Although they may now play for a Berlin youth team, these youngsters aspire to playing in one of the first league teams of Turkey (Table 7).

Table 7: Major Turkish Football Teams in Kreuzberg

Football Team	Foundation Year	Total Members	Turkish Members
Altinordu	1995	100	100
Berlin Türkspor	1965	524	503
BSC Agrispor	1984	319	255
Hatayspor	1981	130	130
Hilalspor	1987	211	211
Karadeniz	1987	78	78
SG Anadoluspor	1978	343	211
Türkiyemspor	1978	455	441

Source: Der Bezirksbürgermeister von Berlin-Kreuzberg, 1.1.1996

Religion and Ethnicity

Apart from the orientation to homeland, there are other forms of cultural sources that shape the cultural identity of the Turkish hip-hop youth: religion, ethnicity and their reception in Turkey. Religion is a particularly influential cultural source of identity for the diasporic Turkish youth. The celebration of Islam among the diasporic Turkish youth springs, in part, from the German society's perception of them.

The majority society tends to employ Islam as a symbolic instrument to define the Turkish youth; and it is used in turn by the youngsters themselves. For instance, one of the rap groups, to which I shall return shortly, calls itself *Islamic Force*, although they have nothing to do with radical Islam. This kind of identity manifestation seems to indicate a growing kind of what Vertovec (1995: 13) calls 'cultural Muslim identity' among young Turks.[2]

The stress on religion is usually something they adopt from their parental culture as part of their negotiation with the majority society. The way the youth employs religion as a source of identity is quite distant from essentialist. This is a form of what Herbert J. Gans (1979: 6) calls 'symbolic ethnicity':

[A]s the functions of ethnic cultures and groups diminish and identity becomes the primary way of being ethnic, ethnicity takes on an expressive rather than instrumental function in people's lives, becoming more of a leisure-time activity and losing its relevance, say, to earning a living or regulating family life. Expressive behaviour can take many forms, but often involves the use of symbols – the symbols as signs rather than myths. Ethnic symbols are frequently individual cultural practices that are taken from the older ethnic culture; they are abstracted from that culture and pulled out of its original mooring, so to speak to become stand-ins for it.

Gans' expression of symbolic ethnicity is quite applicable to the situational use of ethnicity and religion by the Turkish hip-hop youth in Berlin. As a response to the extreme right-wing German militancy, arson attacks and governmental integration policies towards the privileged *Aussiedler* and *Übersiedler* (ethnic German expatriates), working-class Turkish youths began to politicise themselves to win space in the urban landscape. In the process of politicisation, the youngsters have extensively invested in ethnic symbols such as religious and national days, ethnic foods, attachment to homeland, return to the history of homeland and religious and/or ethnic figures.

There are some other sources of identity for the diasporic Turkish youth i.e., ethnic symbols appearing in the form of either ornaments or tattoo. These symbols usually refer to a covert way of communication amongst the youngsters. Kreuzberg is a place where a stranger could gain the trust of the youngsters in a short while by means of ethnic symbols. Ethnic symbols make communication easier, since

they express the distinction between 'us' and 'them.' But one should be careful in mapping out the symbolic meanings of these ornaments because they might be put on for fashion as well as for ethnic and political identifications.

Ethnic symbols are diversified according to ethnic and political allegiances. In this sense, the most popular ethnic symbols for right-wing Turkish nationalists are Turkish flag, grey wolf with a crescent moon, and Koran necklace; and for the *Alevis* the forked sword (*Zül-fükâr*), the picture of the *Chaliph Ali* and/or *Pir Sultan Abdal* (*Alevi* patron saint, 16th century) holding a *baglama*[3] in his hands. Before the Sivas affairs in 1993, *Alevis* used to keep these symbols in the form of picture on the walls of their rooms. Now, those symbols have become one of the main sources of identity for the *Alevi* youngsters. Previously *Alevi* youngsters also carried Turkish flags on their belt buckles, for instance. After the arson attacks in Mölln and Solingen, the *Alevi* youngsters used their Turkishness as the main base to articulate their reaction. Subsequently, in response to the killings of the *Alevi* intellectuals and people in *Sivas* and *Gazi Mahallesi*, they qualified this articulation by symbolically highlighting their *Alevism*.

Reception of Diasporic Youth in Turkey: German-Like (Almanci)

The identity formation of the diasporic youth results in a permanent dialogue between the country of settlement and the homeland. For instance, the reception of the Turkish diasporic youth in Germany and Turkey has an impact on their daily politics of identity. The overwhelming orientation of the Turkish youngsters to the homeland is both accelerated and disrupted by the official and popular discourses in Germany and Turkey. Considering how they are alluded to by the official German discourse ('*Gastarbeiter*', '*Ausländer*', '*Mitbürger*'), they are always represented either through their 'otherness' or through their 'displacement' (Çaglar, 1994: 97).

Turkish migrants and their children in Germany are officially defined in Turkey as either '*gurbetçi*', or '*Almanya'daki vatandaslarimiz*' (our citizens in Germany). German-Turks are stereotypically defined by the Turkish people in Turkey as either '*Almanyali*' or '*Almanci*'. Both terms carry rather negative connotations in Turkey. The major Turkish stereotypes about the German-Turks are those of their being rich, eating pork, having a very comfortable life in Germa-

ny, losing their Turkishness, and becoming more and more German. Çaglar (1994: 98) defines those stereotypes as:

[t]he heavily overloaded cars packed with household goods that they bring from Germany for their houses in Turkey; their pretentiousness and readiness to pay any price when shopping; their different styles of dress and such details as the way their girls walk; [...] [their] readiness to pay more than local inhabitants for land, apartments, and brides.

Implicitly derogatory in its markedness, in its explicit differentiation from a non-emigrant Turk, the label bears witness to a combination of difference, lack of acceptance, and rejection (Mandel, 1990: 158). Their Turkish language and the way they dress are also influential in the construction of an '*Almanci*' image. The youngsters are also subject to this labelling. Mehmet (18) explained one of the memories he had from Ankara:

I was buying some clothes in a shopping centre in Ankara. When I was talking to the salesperson, a girl whom I did not know suddenly approached me and asked a question. "Excuse me, are you from Germany because I bet with my friend over there that you come from Germany." I did not understand how they realised. I think because of the way I spoke to the salesperson, or the way I dressed up. I do not really know. I mean, here we are called *yabanci* (foreigner), and there in Turkey, in my own country, they call us '*Almanci*'. I am depressed about that moment.

"[H]ere we are called *yabanci* (foreigner), and there [in Turkey] [...] they call us *Almanci.*" Such a line remains a very common discourse amongst the German-Turkish youth. *Almanci* designates someone who has adopted Germany, and *yabanci* refers to being a foreigner in the country of adaptation. The youth considers these two given distinctions in the process of their identity formation.

   The orientation to the homeland of the children of Turkish immigrants has always been a concern for scholars. Some of them argue that decreasing contact with the homeland will result in the loss of home (Kagitçibasi, 1987; Abadan-Unat, 1985). Explaining the alienation and exclusion of the first and second generations by the majority society, Kagitçibasi (1987: 199) differentiates the two generations:

The first generation hangs on to his traditional culture and identity, often as a defensive reaction to rejection by the dominant culture. This tendency is further strengthened by frequent visits to the country of origin and continuing close ties with family and kin. He carries his original national cultural identity with him. The second generation 'foreigner,' born in Europe, however, does not really have such a distinct identity (at least not to the same degree) to hang on to. He may even lack the language of the original country being thus deprived of meaningful interpersonal ties through visits home. There is, in fact, no 'home' for the *deculturated* or *culturally impoverished* second generation in a state of alienation [italics mine].

Kagitçibasi, in her statement, seems to disregard the increasing impact of the global interconnectedness and symbolic links between the subject and homeland. What emerges out of all these symbolic bonds is an 'imaginary homeland.' What is more, she also tends to essentialise culture as a practice by defining the youth as 'deculturated' and 'culturally impoverished.' Furthermore, she seems to reduce the cultural identity of the diasporic youth to an essentialist form of 'Turkish culture.' Here, cultural identity is not seen as a process but as being something fixed and essential. In fact, cultural identity is rather acquired and renewed in a continuous dialogue between self and external world. It is a dialogical process in which self is constructed collectively in relation to the 'other.' Contrary to what Kagitçibasi claimed, the orientation of the Turkish diasporic youth to Turkey has not declined, rather increased. The growing cultural interaction between Turkey and the diaspora has undoubtedly facilitated the orientation of the diasporic communities to the homeland.

Working-Class Turkish Youth Leisure Culture

The leisure culture of the working-class Turkish hip-hop youngsters consists of various components originating either from their parental culture or from global hip-hop youth culture. These constituents are namely '*âlem*' (meeting with friends), *dügüns* (wedding ceremony), *arabesk* music, rap, graffiti, dance and 'cool' style. '*Alem*,' *dügüns* and *arabesk* are those leisure time activities deriving from their working-class and/or rural-origin parental culture. These events are the other forms of orientation to the homeland, whereas rap, graffiti and dance are the main constituents of the global hip-hop youth culture which a

considerable number of diasporic Turkish youth have internalised. In what follows I shall describe both the particularist and universalist constituents of leisure culture among the working-class Turkish hip-hop youth living in Kreuzberg.

The working-class Turkish youngsters mostly 'hang around' together and entertain themselves in the group meetings taking place in one of the youngsters' house. They call these meetings '*âlem*' and themselves '*âlemci*.' '*Alem*' is a ritual that has been carried from '*sila*' (home) to '*gurbet*' (diaspora) by the migrants. In these ritualised meetings, they drink alcohol, listen to *arabesk* music, and experience imaginary journeys back home.[4] These events, organised among close circles of friends, provide the male youth groups with a ground for the construction of a 'part-time communitarianism.' Listening to *arabesk* music, talking about summer vacations, and drinking '*Raki*' or '*Efes*,' the youngsters recreate the homeland in their imagination.

Another aspect of their leisure culture is the wedding (*düğün*) ceremonies taking place in the specially designed Turkish wedding saloons such as *Dedem* (Wedding) and *Burcu* (Kreuzberg). Turkish wedding ceremonies in Berlin are not so different from their equivalents in Turkey. Both are very working-class oriented rituals and similar in terms of the performances of the folk music singers, *arabesk* singers, and folk dances with a double-sided drum (*davul*) and a double-reed instrument (*zurna*).[5] This type of wedding ceremony is a ritual brought by the rural migrants to the urban space. Dancing on *davul-zurna* for the migrants is, in fact, an imaginary journey back home and back to the previous rural life. The ritual is itself authentically performed in the open air in the villages and rural towns of Anatolia, because *davul-zurna* is such a combination of musical instruments that it should preferably be performed in the open air due to its high-volume. Thus, *davul-zurna* performances, which are accompanied by guests' folk dances in the wedding saloons, mostly bring about a kind of chaos. Urbanisation has transformed some rituals. Wedding ceremonies, which used to reproduce the communal pride in the rural space, have now been carried into the urban space.

There are some main reasons why the guests go to wedding ceremonies. Firstly, they want to entertain themselves; secondly, they conceive it as a duty to go to the weddings and to give a gift (mostly money and/or gold)[6] to the new couple with the consideration that their own children will get married some day; and sometimes to meet

friends and/or relatives who live a long distance away. In one of the weddings, to which Yüksel, the owner of a music store in Adalbert-straße invited me, what was remarkable was the golden jewellery worn by the youngsters. It was an *Alevi* wedding of a couple originating from the city of Erzincan (eastern Anatolia), and the gold necklaces of *Zülfükâr* sword and of *Pir Sultan Abdal* in various sizes were obviously the most popular ornaments among the *Alevi* youngsters, reflecting their allegiance to ethnic symbols. Apart from symbolising the ethnic/religious/peer group values, gold is also a dramatisation of wealth.

Another crucial aspect of the wedding ceremonies worth mentioning is the selection of the singers and groups by the hosts. The selection of famous and popular groups and/or singers by paying big amounts yields a *distinction* to the parents of the couple, especially that of the groom. In most weddings, although the parents of the groom are not able to afford big expenses, they do their best in order to gain a superior social status within the community.

Folk dance is an indispensable part of the wedding ceremonies both in Turkey and in the diaspora. In modern urban Turkey, the circle folk dances (*halay*) are closely identified with the countryside and almost everywhere seen as a devaluation of country living. However, diaspora populations perceive these dances as bearers of ethnic identity. In Berlin, elegant and urban Turks take pleasure in dancing circle dances, whereas in Turkey, city people might prefer not to identify with this type of folk dancing. It seems that in the diaspora populations, the question of rural origin may be less significant than ethnic identification, and the positive and valued aspects of it, including dance, music and food. Besides providing a cultural distinction, circle dances also offer a sense of collectivism to the diasporic communities. Collectivism is literally embodied in the shape of the dance and the shared code of communication between the dancers.[7]

So far in this chapter I have outlined the particularist aspects of the working-class Turkish hip-hop leisure culture. Next, I shall outline the common aspects of the global hip-hop culture, which serves to integrate a significant number of working-class Turkish diasporic youths into the mainstream youth culture.

Hip-Hop Youth Culture and Working-Class
Diasporic Turkish Youth

Hip-Hop is a youth culture that enables ethnic minority youths to use both their own 'authentic' cultural capital and the global transcultural capital in constructing and articulating their identities. It provides the diasporic youth with a ground where they can use their ethnicity as a strategising tool to articulate their identities in response to the majority nationalism and racism. It also serves as a mechanism to incorporate the ethnic minority youth into the global youth culture. The youngsters' use of 'authentic' culture as a strategising tool in the process of identity formation principally springs from their need to come to terms with the unpleasant present pervaded by racism, unemployment, exclusion and poverty. As Clifford (1988: 5) has rightly stated, the diasporic groups who are alienated by the system and swept up in a destiny dominated by the capitalist West, no longer invent local futures; what is different about them is that they remain tied to traditional pasts and ethnicities. Remaking, or recovering, the past serves at least a dual purpose for the diasporic communities. Firstly, it is a way of coping with the conditions of the present without being very critical about the *status quo*. Secondly, it also helps to recuperate a sense of self not dependent on criteria handed down by others – the past is what the diasporic subjects can claim as their own (Ganguly, 1992: 40).

However, Turkish youngsters, while having a sense of looking backward, also tend to transcend the exclusionist policies of the German nation-state by exhibiting a transnational articulation of culture. In fact, what makes these youngsters hip-hop youth are not those particularist cultural sources, but universalist constituents. There are various ways in the global hip-hop culture through which ethnic minority youths can resist the dominant regimes of representations and incorporate themselves into the mainstream. Rap, graffiti, dance, and the 'cool' look are some examples. All these particular aspects of hip-hop culture attempt to localise power and to create a distance between the already-excluded youth group and the legitimate forms of institutions such as police, education and media. These are the attempts by the youngsters to get away from the limited boundaries of the 'ghetto' life. This is a chance to broaden the living boundaries in a way that leads to the incorporation of the youth into the mainstream culture. By doing graffiti, rap, or breakdance, they all want to be 'da

King' ('da' is the vernacular of article 'the'). Roaming around the city, trying to discover the outskirts of the urban landscape, painting and tagging (signing) graffiti, attending break-dance competitions and parties, and fighting against rival youths, they do all these things with, and within, the gang.

Hip-Hop culture has become very popular among Turkish youngsters since the late eighties. Especially, Turkish youngsters living in Kreuzberg at around that time switched from gangsta group formation to hip-hop group formation.[8] Taner (26) is one of the main figures of the Turkish hip-hop scene in Berlin, who experienced this transformation:

Before the wall came down there were American discos where the American soldiers used to go to. They brought the life from America to Berlin. They brought here all those DJing, break-dance, white dancing gloves, and all those sorts of things. Hip-Hop started with the Americans here, with dance and music. Then we, the Turks, have found ourselves in this culture. We have grown up with two different musical tastes: *arabesk* at home and hip-hop in the American discos.

Hip-Hop has provided these youths with a ground to incorporate themselves into the mainstream global youth culture. In what follows I shall describe the common constituents of the global hip-hop youth culture as much as they relate to the Turkish hip-hop youth in Kreuzberg. As there will be a separate chapter on the rap music and the rappers, I shall leave rap out for the time. Graffiti, dance and 'coolness' are the aspects to be examined in the following section.

Graffiti

The word 'graffiti,' taken from Italian, served originally as the name of inscriptions scratched on walls. The word is related to the name of a particular technique of mural painting, that of '*sgraffito*.' Today, other techniques are used apart from scratching and/or carving: felt tip pens are used inside and on small areas, aerosol spray cans are used outside and on large areas. Regina Blume (1985) has defined the motives for producing graffiti as:

(a)   a proof of existence – *scribo, ergo sum* (I write therefore I am);
(b)   a need to express oneself;
(c)   a sense of belonging to a group;
(d)   a pleasure in aesthetic, creative and physical acts; and
(e)   an expression of boredom.[9]

Having all these motives, graffiti, or tagging, becomes a way of resistance against the formal life, sanctions of the adults, and the legitimate world of the institutions. The world of graffiti is the youngsters' other world because grown-ups do not read them, and also this is the world in which the minority youth can express itself with its own vernacular language without any restriction or questioning.

Graffiti is a way of expression of the poverty of the urban 'ghetto,' of youngsters' territorial claims, and of their power. It is the freedom of writing '*Kanak*' instead of '*Kanake*,' or '*masaka*' instead of '*Massaker*.' Writing graffiti on the forbidden walls like the metro stations is a kind of covert war waged against the official authorities. Sneaking in the dark of the night with the spray cans and masks without being captured by the police sounds like the accomplishment of a 'mission impossible.' Graffiti, for the subaltern ethnic minority youngsters, refers to the 'bombing' of the institutional space. Constructing a counter-hegemonic space, the graffiti makers wage a war against the power of state. These youngsters are the 'spray warriors,' or the 'street heroes,' who fight against the official authorities for the localisation of power. The youth localise their power in their graffiti and street fights providing them with a sense of recognition by the public. This Hegelian sense of subjective recognition could have a 'productive' context:[10] a youngster, for instance, could come to transform himself as a thinking and active subject; and he could also achieve his self consciousness in a dialogue of mutual recognition with the public.

Recently, the local authorities have tried to legitimise graffiti by using it as an educational tool for the kids and youngsters. For instance, the graffiti on the walls of the *Admiralstraße* is an attempt to warn the youngsters against the dangers of drug and violence and to strengthen the feeling of neighbourhood (Figure 1, see p. 235).

Graffiti is also a source of *distinction* for the youth. To become famous, a graffiti marker must go beyond his local boundaries in the city. The more tags (personal signs) you have all around Berlin, the more popular you become within the hip-hop community. '*Slai*' is a

tag which I have seen almost all around Berlin, in Schöneberg, Wedding, Kreuzberg and Tiergarten. '*JFK*' is the most popular graffiti group in Berlin.

They always prefer making graffiti in the most dangerous places: the walls of metro stations or high buildings. It is also quite normal to see a graffiti like '*36 Boys*' all around the city, so that the group called '*36 Boys*' may well be popular amongst the youngsters, and of course constitute a threat to the police force, who are the 'enemy' for these youngsters. Eyüp, a 22-year-old boy in *Chip*, quit making graffiti when he was let off by the police officers after his apprehension:

I was tagging around four o'clock in the morning in Kotbusser Tor metro station. After I finished my work, the police caught me on my way home. I mean, I was pissed off with myself, because they didn't see me tagging. They just saw the spray can in my hand. I should have better hidden it. Anyway, they took me to their car. I was extremely afraid that they were gonna beat me and tell my parents that I was tagging. Then I was surprised because they did not harm me; they just gave me a speech about the violation of the rules, and then gave me a lift up to my apartment. They even didn't tell my parents. I got shocked really. Then I decided to quit doing these things. But, I tell you, if the police had beaten me, I would carry on tagging much more than I used to.

The Berlin graffiti scene is composed of Germans as well as the minority youngsters. They have a bilingual graffiti magazine (German-English) called *BackJumps*. The magazine consists of written and figurative form of graffiti samples from Berlin and other urban centres such as New York, Paris, London and Melbourne. The graffiti artists also have a transnational connection with the hip-hop scene in the other European cities like Paris, Amsterdam and London. The language of graffiti is usually English. By using English as the graffiti language, the Turkish hip-hop youngsters have both the feeling of sharing a code of communication with the outside world, and of sustaining a resistance movement against the supremacy of the German language. On the other hand, in figurative graffiti, the common rule is to imitate others' figures, TV-cartoons, and comics. All the figures in the graffiti made in many different countries look like each other, with big eyes (as in the globalised Japanese TV-cartoons) and a style of dressing similar to that of the American-black hip-hop scene

(Figure 2, see p. 236).[11] Adapting various aspects and colours from their ethnic arsenal, the youngsters make their own additions to the globalised style of figurative graffiti, and build up their local style of graffiti. Then, graffiti turns out to be a field where culture is constructed on the basis of bricolage and hybridity with the global and local motives.

   Sometimes the graffiti artists might go further and have their own peculiar style. This peculiar style provides them with the possibility to switch to painting. *Erhan*, or *Gino*, is one of them. *Erhan* used to be a graffiti artist. Now, he is a painter. Although he is just 18 years old, he has held many exhibitions in Germany. He works in a workshop in the attic of the *Naunyn Ritze* youth centre. The titles of his works are all English, e.g., 'Jump to the Future,' 'Disappearing Footsteps,' 'Eagle Eyes,' 'Birth of Virgin' and 'Dedicated to Hasan.' The use of English gives him a sense of being incorporated into the global culture. It is amazing to see the shift in his work from the figurative graffiti to painting. This artistic switch has given his work a postmodern look. What he is providing the audience with is a hybrid art composed of two distinct artistic forms: graffiti and painting.

Dance

Break-dance is another constituent of the hip-hop youth culture. The dance-floor has a threefold function for the diasporic youth. Firstly, the dance-floor provides the Turkish youth with a substantial ground for the homing of the diaspora because they appear to be the 'hosts' in the dance-floor. Secondly, the dance turns interethnic confrontations from fighting to dancing. As *Özcan* (19), a Turkish youngster in *Naunyn Ritze*, said 'there were previously fights in the streets, now there is dance, we compete on the stage. I show my superiority by way of dancing.' In doing so, hip-hop youth affirms the "sublimation of fight into dance, of conflict into contest, of desperation into style and a sense of self-respect" (Hebdige, 1988: 216). Finally, the dance is also another source of *distinction* that the boys tend to use against 'others.' Previously, breakdance as a distinction was convertible to economic capital: some of the *Naunyn Ritze* youngsters have made some money from participating in the break-dance competitions organised in Berlin.

'Cool' Style

'Cool' is an American word which has become a very crucial motto of the contemporary hip-hop youth culture. It literally means "(2) not affected by passion or emotion […] (3) lacking enthusiasm warmth of interest; lacking in cordiality […] (5) (of jazz music, a jazz musician) restrained or relaxed in style […]; characteristic of those who favour relaxed music; good, excellent, admirably up to date, stylish […]."[12] Recently, especially since the early 1980s, the word 'cool' has been extensively used in hip-hop youth culture by blacks and Latinos living in the United States. Ruth Horowitz (1983: 87-88) has defined 'coolness,' in the context of Chicano youth in Chicago, as the ability to stand back from certain situations and rationally evaluate others' actions. The contextual use of 'cool' posits a distance between the object and the subject who is using the word. Being cool, looking cool, or staying cool has a critical connotation in itself. It is a way of expressing a transcending reality for the youngsters.

In hip-hop culture, a critical gaze is very crucial. It requires positioning oneself at a reasonable distance to the external world, so that one can keep the critical look. Unlike the recent techno, punk, or grunge cultures, one is never supposed to get lost in the artificial world of entertainment, and s/he should always keep her/his 'coolness.' An example is the way the rappers and their groupies move in the concerts, or in their daily lives, which looks very serious and masculine. This masculine posture symbolises resistance against subordination. It gives the impression that these ethnic minority youngsters have been consciously positioning themselves against cruelty, hostility and inequality springing from capitalism. Their cool style is a challenge against the hegemony of the dominant regimes of representations. By looking so, the youngsters are also challenging, at a symbolic level, the stereotypes of the outsiders about their indifference to life, which may come from both the majority society and from middle-class Turkish communities. The German society may have stereotypes about their violence and vandalism; on the other hand the middle-class Turkish groups may treat them as troublesome, lazy and non-integrationist. Thus, their cool style is, at the same time, a response to the stereotypes of both Germans and Turks.

The cool style which is performed in accordance with a critical posture has also something to do with the way the youngsters dress.

The clothes are chosen to represent both a sense of freedom and an 'authentic' working-class backlash. Wide and comfortable outfits are a major part of the cool style. It symbolises freedom and comfort as opposed to the traditional tight and stiff outfit. The way the rappers and the break-dancers dress also represents the celebration of working-class origin. Wearing wide overall trousers they resemble the mine workers, or the construction workers. Hebdige (1987: 123-124) previously defined the difference between the early youth cultures and their relation to each other in terms of class:

[P]unk style was perhaps interpreted by the teddy boys as an affront to the traditional working-class values of forthrightness, plain speech and sexual puritanism which they had endorsed and revived. Like the reaction of the rockers to the mods and the skinheads to the hippies, the Teddy boy revival seems to have represented an 'authentic' working-class backlash to the proletarian posturing of the new wave.

Departing from the statements of Dick Hebdige concerning the youth 'subcultures' of the earlier periods, hip-hop may well be considered the new form of youth culture representing an 'authentic' working-class backlash to the proletarian posturing of the 'new wave.' Yet, it goes beyond the notion of 'subculture' because the formation of ethnic minority hip-hop culture seems to retain a more complex process, which is characterised by globalisation and modern diasporic consciousness.

   The word 'cool' has become a transcultural notion and the motto of a distinct youth style. It is evident that this word has quickly been adopted in many languages. Since culture is becoming more and more global and transnational, the national languages become incapable of creating new words to comply with such a rapid cultural change. German, French and Turkish are some of the languages to which the word, 'cool,' has infused without any resistance. German language has even produced the antonym with the prefix of '*un*': '*un*cool.'

   Although 'cool' is a very global word, it might have many local connotations in itself. The Turkish rappers' use of the word is, of course, a cultural translation. Thus, the word might lose some of its content as well as gaining some other connotations. MC Ünal, pronouncing the word with a very American accent, states that "what is cool in Berlin might not be considered cool in München, for instance."

Here, 'cool' refers to the acceptability of something within hip-hop youth culture in a local sense. It intimates a local cultural code depicting what might suit hip-hop culture. Incidentally, the word 'hip' is another American word, which likewise has an extensive use in the world. In slang, it literally means "(1) following the latest fashion in especially popular and jazz music, clothes, etc., stylish […]."[13] 'Hip' is also a new word that has entered the German language. It depicts trendy and stylish, such as a 'hip concert,' 'hip colour,' or 'hip movie.'

Hip-Hop Youth Style: A Cultural Bricolage

German-Turkish youngsters, at first glance, might seem as if they are practising a conventional and essentialist form of cultural identity that they have taken out of the ready-made package of cultural attributes carried across from homeland by their parents. Such a conclusion would be misleading because the formation and articulation of cultural identity is a process, which is not free from the constant intercourse between various social groups, classes and cultures. As Czarina Wilpert (1989: 21) accurately states:

The significance of the concept of cultural identity within this framework derives from the assumption that, in the construction of a collective ethnic identity, culture becomes a resource. It is not that culture, which may be in continual transformation, is viewed as something static and fixed, nor that an immigrant 'community' is considered to live as a homogenous closed cultural entity within a foreign society. Rather, elements of culture, its signs and symbols, may be transformed or filled with new meaning and take on a new significance in this process. This is accomplished in a particular context at a specific moment in history in interaction with the conditions and principles which structure the lives of the immigrant descendants, and with reference to the resources they have at hand for understanding the world around them […].

Hereby, Wilpert reminds us of two significant points. The first point to be considered is that reification of culture in the diaspora is a vital instrument to be employed in the process of identity formation. The second point to bear in mind is that the community culture formed in the diasporic space is not immune to the allure of the culture of the wider society, unchanging, or always clear and unambiguous. Kreuzberg is not a traditional little village cut off culturally, socially, and

ecologically from the majority society; its community culture cannot be equated with that of *Gemeinschaft* (Töennies, 1957).

In this sense, there are at least three main landmarks that shape the cultural identification of the German-Turkish hip-hop youth in Berlin:

a) 'authenticity' which is the expression of imagined Anatolian culture;
b) global culture which is mainly the imitation of urban Black American symbols; and
c) German culture which refers to the life styles of German peer groups to which the German-Turkish youngsters desire to adapt themselves.

For instance, as outlined in the previous chapter, the language used by the German-Turkish youth in Berlin reflects a mixture of their Turkishness, Germanness and cosmopolitan identity. This refers us to the 'multiple cultural competence' of the descendants of migrants.[14] Modern diasporic communities like the Turkish diaspora in Europe should learn to inhabit at least two identities, "to speak two cultural languages, to translate and negotiate between them" (Hall, 1993: 310). People belonging to such cultures of hybridity tend to gravitate either to 'Tradition' or 'Translation.' Gravitating to tradition is an attempt to restore the former purity and authenticity which are felt as being lost, whereas choosing translation acknowledges that identity is subject to the play of history, politics, representation and difference rather than being subject to purity (ibid.: 309).

What German-Turkish youngsters construct is a form of cultural bricolage, or creolization, which literally means the interruption of the monolithic structure of the nation-state in a way that leads to the emergence of a 'third space' (Bhabha, 1994), or a 'third culture' (Featherstone, 1990). Cultural bricolage is also what Homi Bhabha calls a 'differential communality,' and what Felix Guattari (1989: 14) refers to as the 'process of heterogenesis.' By the *'processes of heterogenesis'* Guattari negates the Hegelian and Marxist dialectics whose aim is the 'resolution' of opposites. He argues that "our objective should rather be to nurture individual cultures, while at the same time inventing new contracts of citizenship: to create an order of the state in which singularity, exceptions, and rarity coexist under the least oppressive conditions" (ibid.: 14). He describes this formation "as a logic of the 'included middle,' in which black and white are indistinct, in which the beau-

tiful coexists with the ugly, the inside with the outside, the 'good' object with the bad" (ibid.: 14).

Cultural bricolage is, in a sense, constitutes a 'third space' that enables other positions to emerge (Bhabha, 1994: 211). This creolization process brings about the emergence of a transnational identity, or what Gilroy (1987: 13) calls a 'syncretic culture.' As Gilroy (ibid.) states, "culture does not develop along ethnically absolute lines but in complex, dynamic patterns of syncretism." Cultural identity is not something fixed and permanent, "it refers to becoming as well as being, and is never complete, always in process" (Hall, 1991: 47). Thus, cultural identity of the German-Turkish youth is formed on the basis of continuous dialogue between past and future, between homeland and country of residence, between different worlds of meaning, between various life-worlds, between global winds and local resistance, between 'roots' and 'routes,' and between 'here' and 'there.' Gilroy's (1987, 1993) definition of a kind of duality of consciousness – with direct reference to W. E. B. Du Bois' notion of 'double consciousness' underlines diasporic individuals' awareness of multilocality which derives from their attachments to those given continuous dialogues. The 'double consciousness' of diasporic subject serves to bridge the gap between the local and the global.

* * *

To summarise, this chapter has indicated particularist and universalist aspects of the Turkish hip-hop youth living in Kreuzberg. It was concluded that the Turkish hip-hop youth has simultaneously developed a form of cultural nationalism and a syncretic 'third culture.' The sources of their cultural nationalism are twofold: the first one is the majority nationalism that has recently been quite hegemonic and even coercive in Germany. This point is enormously important in view of what I will argue in the following pages because it shows that ethnic identities are not simply the product of 'traditional mores,' but the result of an unequal conversation between majority and minority groupings. Sandra Wallman (1978) suggests that boundaries and social definitions are always the result of an encounter between at least two social agents. She puts the focus on the ethnic majority – not on the minority populations – because it is [majority] ethnicity, according to her, which determines the boundary of 'them' and 'us.' The second

source of this cultural nationalism is the media, both German language media and Turkish language media. In Berlin, one will immediately realise that Turks, or other ethnic groups, are excluded in the German print media or radio-TV. In that way, the feeling of exclusion and segregation for Turks may increase. They are, in a sense, forced to get back to their own cultural and local settings by the structural adjustments. On the other hand, as explained in the third chapter, international Turkish media and Berlin-Turkish media insist on the notion of Turkishness to sustain the particularist ethnic sentiments of the German-Turks.

The syncretic 'third culture' of the Turkish hip-hop youths derives from their multicultural competence, which enables them to switch between various cultures such as minority culture, majority culture and global culture. To put it differently, they form their cultural identity through the hybridity of 'tradition' and 'translation,' authenticity and syncreticism, heritage and politics. The practice of cultural bricolage fosters a relationship among heterogeneous elements in a meaningful ensemble, which displays both harmony and tension. (Clifford, 1997: 12). This multicultural competence is acquired by means of transnational communications and transportation, sustaining the pace and density of relationships of the diasporic youth with the homeland and the entire world. The 'third culture' that is formed by the diasporic youth, at the same time, has a progressive nature. This syncretic culture, as Melucci (1989: 14) has correctly stated, is "the journey into unfamiliar territory […] [which] teaches us to recognise ambivalence, encourages us to acknowledge different points of view, and thereby stimulates awareness of potential freedoms […]."

Hip-Hop culture has emerged as a source of alternative identity formation and social status for the Turkish diasporic youth living in an ethnic enclave whose older local support institutions have been demolished. Alternative social identities were formed in fashions and language, and in establishing neighbourhood crews or posses. These crews, who are composed of hip-hop fans, artists, musicians, and dancers, are new kinds of families providing insulation and support in a complex and unyielding environment and may, in fact, contribute to the community-building networks that serve as the basis for new social movements (Rose, 1994: 34). As this chapter was an attempt to interpret the discourses of Turkish hip-hop fans, artists and dancers in Kreuzberg, I will explore those of the rappers in the next chapter.

Notes

1 Tarkan, Candan Erçetin, Özcan Deniz, Azer Bülbül, Sibel Sezal, Can Kat, *Cartel*, Erci-E, Karakan, Bay X, Rafet El Roman, Ahmet and Ünlü are some of these singers and/or groups. There are also some other singers coming from other countries such as BenDeniz (Switzerland), and Cemali and Özlem Tekin (USA). It is ironic that not only Turkish origin singers and/or groups are coming to Turkey to seize a share in the expanding Turkish pop music market, but also some non-Turkish singers are coming into the market with Turkish lyrics such as 'Endi ve Pol' (Andy and Paul are English pop singers and they print their names with Turkish vernacular). For further information, see Greve (1996, 1997) and Köhne and Kepenek (1997).

2 In his research on the young Muslims in Keighley, West York-shire, Vertovec (1995) drew our attention to two Asian football teams called 'Keighley Young Muslims' and 'Keighley Muslims' in order to expose the construction and articulation of 'cultural Muslim identity' among young Muslims.

3 *Baglama* is a musical instrument having a guitar-like body, long, and strings that are plucked or strummed with the fingers or a plectrum. *Baglama* has always been one of the main symbols of the *Alevi* culture.

4 The word '*âlem*' literally means amusement and/or entertainment.

5 *Zurna* is a kind of authentic Turkish musical instrument having a flute-like body with shrill pipe usually accompanied by a drum.

6 Çaglar (1994: 196) states that 'although the *hemsehri*s of the bride and groom do not feel obliged to pin gold on the bride any more, the amount of gold Turkish brides receive in Germany is higher in comparison with Turkey.' For the *hemsehri*s of the bride and groom, it is a symbolic capital to have gold pinned on them in public.

7 Gillian Bottomley (1987) touches on a similar tendency amongst the Greek diaspora in Australia. She points out that Greek *kalamatianos* (a circle folk dance that is very similar to Turkish folk dance halay) danced by young people in a Sydney club is not that danced by villagers in Greece. This is because, she states, such a traditional ritual gives a positive distinction to the diasporic youth from dominant Anglomorph population.

8   Gangsta groups in Kreuzberg drew great attention from both Turkish and German media in Berlin. For further information, see "Ghetto Sisters," *Brigitte* 19 (1990): 125-132; "Vereint Jagd auf Skinheads," *Der Tagesspiegel* Nr. 13562 (6 May 1990); "Der Haß darauf, als Nichts zu gelten," *Süddeutsche Zeitung* Nr. 184 (11/12 August 1990); "Die Barbaren kommen!" *Zitty* 4 (1993); and "Türk Kizlari Çetesi," *Tan* (9 March 1990 – Turkish).

9   In her work on graffiti, Blume (1985) has explored the historical aspects, sources, forms, functions and addresses of graffiti.

10   The notion of 'productive' is free from its Marxist connotations, which imprison the subject into an ideology of productionism. The term has rather a Lefèbvreian meaning transcending crude and brutal economism.

11   For further information, see Henkel et al. (1994).

12   See *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

13   See *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

14   Ålund (1992: 75) mentions 'double cultural competence' in the Swedish context to refer to cultural bricolage of the immigrant youth simultaneously fitting both into their own parental cultural identity and Swedishness.