Chapter 4

Identity and Homing of Diaspora

Kreuzberg as a Turkish ethnic enclave connotes a very particular set of images, signs, symbols, sounds and associations, which revolve around its reputation as '*Kleines* Istanbul' (Little Istanbul). As portrayed in the previous chapter, Kreuzberg has become a 'diasporic space' for the Turkish migrants who exhibit a cultural continuum between the homeland and the country of settlement. Kreuzberg, as a diasporic space, has a crucial impact on the identity formation of the Turkish youngsters. The way the youths construct their identities in the shifting boundaries of various life-worlds is imbued with the social, cultural and political landscape of this ethnic enclave. In this sense, this chapter, on the one hand, aims to investigate the main life-worlds of the working-class Turkish youths, shaping the process of their identity construction. In doing so, the multicultural competence, which they develop in the process of negotiating within and between these distinct social spaces, will be demonstrated. On the other hand, I will also briefly recite the multicultural discourse of the middle-class Turkish youth living outside Kreuzberg in order to build, by way of contrast, a broader view of the working-class youth.

Life-Worlds of the Working-Class Turkish Youth in Kreuzberg

The increasing autonomy of life-world forms, which goes beyond the boundaries of production, results in a higher level of individual differentiation in everyday life and in a release from traditional family ties. As Alberto Melucci (1989: 51) has stated, the consequences of such an autonomy may be as follows: increasing independence felt by individuals from family bonds; increased social mobility at both everyday life level and occupational level; and multiplication of cultural identi-

ties and life-styles. Turkish ethnic minority youth in Kreuzberg always shifts between the spaces of home, street, school and youth centre. There is always a clear-cut boundary between these social spaces produced by the diasporic youth. In this section, I will scrutinise the multiplication of cultural identities in these various highly gendered life-worlds and how the male diasporic youths manage to construct a syncretic form of culture by crossing various milieus and discrete life-worlds. These non-conscious acts of 'crossing' or cultural reproduction by the youngsters will be explicated by a set of examples on code-switching.

Life in the Youth Centre

Undoubtedly the youth centre occupies the biggest space in the lives of the youngsters. The youth centre serves as a refuge from the parental discipline for the minority youth and acts as a haven from the hostility of the 'outside world,' and as a place in which dignity, self-respect and recognition are internally defined. They live like 'brothers' and 'sisters' in the centre. The youngsters consider the centre a substitute 'family' environment where they congregate, cook, entertain, communicate and protect themselves against external challenges. There is always a hierarchy in this 'family' setting amongst the youngsters. The elders feel themselves responsible for the younger members; and the young ones respect the elders. To illustrate the situation of respect, when the younger members realise that a relatively older member of the group is arriving into the *café*, they stop making noise and become more respectful to each other. Rather than the German youth workers the youngsters respect better the 'elder brothers' whom they see as a part of 'their own community.' This respect from the youngsters springs from the hierarchical structure behind in-group relations.

The ethnic minority youths are stuck with a kind of 'language of fatalism' (Hebdige, 1987: 40), or to an *arabesk* way of life. The common lines, which they use to express their state of being, are '*Ahh ulan ahh!*' (deep sigh with an inner resistance), '*Acimasiz dünya!*' (Cruel world!), '*Bütün insanlar suçlu!*' (Human beings are all guilty), or '*Isyanlardayim!*' (I am fed up!). Most of the youngsters have no future prospect in their own eyes. They generally attend the vocational schools (*Berufsschulen*) to gain a degree, but they actually do not feel

attached to those related occupations. Although most of the youngsters have job training such as mechanics, hairdressing, and building construction, they do not prefer carrying on the profession they had in the school.

Life in the Street

Street is another space where the youngsters form a different form of life-world. The streets of Kreuzberg 36, in a broader sense, witness the struggles of resistance, local political cultures, a particular articulation of a post-industrial political-economy and urban myths of gang violence. Street as a 'public space' is transformed into a 'private space' by the working-class youths. When the centre is closed, for instance before 15.00 o'clock, and during Sunday and Monday, the street becomes the favourite meeting space where the youths congregate and 'hang out.' Streets become essential for the working-class youths in terms of the 'production of space' in the sense that Henri Lefèbvre (1989) stated. Listening to music in their own sport-cars with high-decibel volume, having a chat with their own 'mates' on some particular street corners, speaking loudly, and staring at strangers are all the spatial practices of the youths. These practices are employed by the youths to produce their own social space and territory as opposed to the strangers and parental discipline.

Street, which is a safe habitat for the residents, might well be irritating for some others. The streets in the peripheral space, such as ethnic neighbourhood, have their own mythified stories. The streets of Kreuzberg have many such stories as such. Those streets have hosted many spontaneous riots and uprisings as well as many multicultural festivals. May Day in the year 1989 witnessed one of these riots in Kreuzberg.[1] Taner, one of the participants, narrated the incidences with nostalgic mimics:

In the May Day we plundered almost everything we saw. We exploded. This social explosion might happen again. We were plundering the posh shopping centres and cars in the streets, even the Turkish pilgrims were plundering. Approximately ten shopping-centres were plundered by Turkish, German, Kurdish, drunk, pilgrim etc. It was like Los Angeles in 92, and Kadiköy in May Day 1996.[2] We were dancing while plundering. I was extremely happy that day, I was fighting against the system. These incidences happened mostly in Kreuz-

berg. It was like a 'revolution.' We were all together, Turk, Kurd, German, Fascist and Arab.

Taner's narrative gives us more clues about the character of the streets of Kreuzberg. The streets house some united battles of Turkish and German dwellers in the May Day uprisings as well as in some other spontaneous uprisings such as anti-racist demonstrations.[3]

Previously, the main occupants of the streets were the mythical gangsta groups like 36ers, 36 Boys and 36 Juniors in *Naunyn Ritze*. Taner, who is one of the founders of the 36ers, said that the gangsta group was providing the younsters with an alternative sense of family: "My group was my family. We were all together with the younger ones like a family. For instance we did not let the little kids smoke, and we used to protect them." The youngsters roaming around the streets are aware of the fact that, someday, they might risk imprisonment through fighting, carrying guns and drug use. Since they have been living with this risk for so long in their ethnic enclave, it seems that they have internalised this risk. The experience of imprisonment turns out to be a source of *distinction* for the boys.[4] This *distinction* makes them feel 'cool.' It is as if the youngsters, who previously were jailed, affirm the meaning of the word 'cooler' in American slang: 'cooler' means jail, a place where someone cools down.

The youngsters see their elder friends, who spent some time in jail, as a role model. Bülent (20) was a new face in *Naunyn Ritze*. He was previously in jail due to the drug use and violence. For Bülent, the jail experience has ruined his life. He thought that he had nothing left to lose or to win. He has been in such a pessimistic state of mind. On the other hand, as a person who has had a jail experience, he was highly respected by the youngsters within *Naunyn Ritze*. Apart from the other elder 'brothers,' he was another symbol of authority in the centre. Although he was in despair for the prison experience, he had the tendency to use this experience as a distinction, or the symbolic capital, in his relation with the community youngsters.

Another source of *distinction* that the ethnic minority youths tend to have on the street is the mobile phone. Almost all the guys have a mobile phone, which is a symbol of masculinity. They have no money but they have 'handy' (mobile phone). It gives a 'cool' style to the youngsters. Sitting in a Turkish *café*, such as *Café 1001* in Charlottenburg, many mobile phones could be seen on the tables. It is as if the

phones are in a symbolic battle on the table. Gülsen (16) explained that if she quits smoking, her elder brother promised to buy her a mobile phone.

Friendship is also a vital constituent of the life-world in street. Turkish youngsters express that after a certain age it becomes easier to communicate with the co-ethnics because the mimicry counts to a wider extent in the age of adolescence. It becomes difficult for them to have a silent communication with the Germans through mimics, and to have serious talks with them. They see it as a cultural difference between their German friends and themselves. Thus, they tend to give up 'hanging around' with the German friends. They imply that at this age they need mature and satisfactory talks with their friends, whereas their German 'mates' seem very childish to them. They cannot have a proper '*muhabbet*' (in-depth talk) with their German 'mates.' The difference between diasporic Turkish youths and their German 'mates' springs from the fact that they have a rather different mimicry and subjectivity. Raising the difference in mimicry as a reason of not getting on well with German 'mates' is, in fact, a way of representing difference in the process of identity construction. Bhabha's definition of mimicry is quite illuminating in finding out its importance for the identity formation and articulation:

Mimicry is at once resemblance and menace [...] In mimicry, the representation of identity and meaning is rearticulated along the axis of metonymy. As Lacan reminds us, mimicry is like camouflage, not a harmonisation of repression of difference, but a form of resemblance, that differs from or defends presence by displaying it in part, metonymically (Bhabha, 1994: 90).

Mimicry attempts to include some while excluding some others. What really matters in mimicry is the expression of resemblance with the co-ethnics as well as expressing difference from 'others.' The discourse of mimicry constructed by the Turkish youth is "a form of defensive warfare, which marks those moments of civil disobedience within the discipline of civility: signs of spectacular resistance" (Bhabha, 1994: 121). Raising mimicry as a difference provides minority youths with an instrumental ground, where they could develop a form of resistance against the dominant regimes of representation.

On the other hand, subjectivity is also an essential element of inter-ethnic friendships between Turkish and German youths. Migrants'

children or grandchildren have a permanent negotiation between the world of youths and the world of grown-ups due to their particular subjectivity. For instance, being able to summarise or translate the key points of a news story engage in dialogue with adults, form opinions, take a stand on issues, and even challenge and attempt to change elders' views makes a young person feel 'grown-up' and encourages others to perceive them as such (Gillespie, 1996: 118).

Courtship is another constituent of the street life to be mentioned. Going out with a German girl is quite normal for the Turkish boys. In the *Naunyn Ritze* youth centre, there were some boys going out with German girls, and cohabitating with them. Nevertheless, both the Turkish boys and girls held a strong belief that the Turkish boys' relationships with German girls would not result in marriage. One of the Turkish girls stated "the reason why 'our' guys are going out with the German girls is just to *use* them and to do that thing, which they cannot do with the decent Turkish girls." Claire E. Alexander's classification of 'private women' and 'public women' in mapping out the modes of courtship of the male black Londoners (Alexander, 1996: 157-186) is also applicable to the working-class Turkish youth in Berlin. Turkish boys generally consider Turkish girls to be 'our' women. It is significant that when the boys encounter Turkish women in Kreuzberg, or in other districts of Berlin, they rarely enter into interaction with them. Having been contemplated as sexually inaccessible, at least for casual encounters, by the Turkish youth, the Turkish women have their own place in the private sphere of the Turkish boys, whereas the German women belong to the public space that is easily accessible. The association of the German women with the public space allies Turkish boys more closely to the power relations reflected in wider society.

The youngsters have also been used to living together with the presence of police in the street. They call the police officers '*amca*' that literally means 'uncle' in Turkish. Neco says, "we are so close to the police officers, so we consider them our relatives." The youngsters can easily recognise the civil police officers 'hanging out' or driving around in the street. Since there is drug traffic around *Kotbusser Tor* and the youth centre, the police always inspect the district. While the presence of police in the streets is tolerated by the youngsters, they are seriously disturbed by the police occupying their own space in the youth centre because the youth centre is considered somewhere safe from police interference.

Life in the School

School is also one space, which is quite distinct from the other social spaces in regard to the differentiation of the people with whom the youths interact. The youngsters who attend the high school always complain about their teachers. They believe that the reason behind their failure is the racist and discriminatory behaviours of their German teachers to whom they have to be subject. Be it male or female, never-ending discussions with the teachers are the common problem. They always tend to blame the teachers, but not themselves, for the failure they experience.

A remarkable amount of the youngsters were raised in Turkish classrooms where there were almost no Germans. The children of the migrants have been subject to certain regulations with regard to education. The official policy in most of the provinces of Germany requires that 'foreigners' in the classroom should not exceed 20 percent of any school class (in Berlin the quota could be extended up to 50 percent).[5] This regulation is considered to be one of the factors behind the presence of high numbers of Turkish children in *Sonderschule* (Table 6). *Sonderschule* is a different kind of primary school having special classes for children who are believed to have 'learning difficulties.' Most of the immigrants' children are asked to attend these schools because of their 'impotence' in German language. Depending on their success, the students of *Sonderschule* have a chance to switch to the other schools. Then, these students most likely encounter some other problems such as the incompatibility of the previous *Sonderschule* curriculum to the new curriculum. The hierarchical structure of the German educational system, in a way, tends to imprison the children of immigrants who are in rather disadvantageous position.[6]

Table 6: The Number of the German and Non-German Students in Kreuzberg

A. Grundschulen

Classes	German	Foreigner	Foreigner %
Class 1	803	866	52.9
Class 2	924	942	50.5

Class 3	856	892	51.6
Class 4	948	763	44.6
Class 5	815	752	48.0
Class 6	751	747	49.9

B. Hauptschulen

Classes	German	Foreigner	Foreigner %
Class 7	158	262	62.4
Class 8	159	270	63.0
Class 9	192	180	48.4
Class 10	151	198	56.7

C. Realschulen

Classes	German	Foreigner	Foreigner %
Class 7	64	74	53.6
Class 8	58	53	48.0
Class 9	61	69	53.1
Class 10	103	118	53.4

D. Gymnasien

Classes	German	Foreigner	Foreigner %
Class 7	191	59	23.6
Class 8	171	46	21.2
Class 9	154	41	21.0
Class 10	183	57	23.8

E. Gesamtschulen

Classes	German	Foreigner	Foreigner %
Class 7	289	189	39.5
Class 8	297	167	36.0
Class 9	263	210	44.4
Class 10	262	201	43.4

F. Sonderschulen

Classes	German	Foreigner	Foreigner %
Class 1,2	67	29	30.2
Class 3	36	17	32.1
Class 4	21	17	44.7
Class 5	14	12	46.2
Class 6	33	20	37.8
Class 7	20	16	44.4
Class 8	25	11	30.6
Class 9	16	--	--
Class 10	8	--	--

Source: Der Bezirksbürgermeister von Berlin-Kreuzberg, October 1996

German and middle-class Turkish families do not prefer sending their children to the primary and especially to the secondary schools in Kreuzberg, because they believe that children raised in these schools with the working-class migrants' children, become more violent and less academically able. Being raised in these classrooms, Turkish children often display a lack of confidence in their interaction with the majority society due to their inadequate German language and their deficient empathy with the Germans. The consequence of the lack of interaction could overtly be seen in the common playground of the Turkish and German children. The *Naunyn Ritze* youth centre has a park and playground for the children in *Waldemarstraße*. There is always a youth worker in the park, dealing with the children. What was striking for me was to see that Turkish and German children (6 to 12-year-old) hardly interacted in their games. Sometimes, this lack of interaction might also lead to violent acts between children. For instance, once the German children built a little wooden-house under the supervision of the Turkish youth worker in the children's play park of the *Naunyn Ritze* youth centre, then the Turkish children silently came to the park at night and destroyed it.

It seems that the official authorities are reluctant to do something in order to open the channels of communication and interaction between the children of the ethnic groups. In an interview, I asked Barbara John, Commissioner of Foreigners' Office, whether she was trying to

change this picture. She said "we cannot force the people to do this or that; all we are trying to do is to convince the Turks to leave Kreuzberg to live in better conditions." The rationale behind this official discourse seems to be aiming to disseminate the Turkish enclave in Kreuzberg.[7]

Life in the Household

Family is another space where the youngsters live.[8] The general assumption within and outside the Turkish community concerning the nature of the Turkish family is that working-class Turkish families are relatively more crowded than their German equivalents. The number of the members of the families ranges from six to ten for the twenty youngsters whom I interviewed in *Naunyn Ritze* and *Chip*. Most mothers are either housewives or manual workers. On the other hand, most fathers are manual workers on either construction sites or assembly lines. Some parents have retired and a significant number are unemployed. The ones who are retired have the chance to switch between Turkey and Germany.

Discipline within the family is the primary aspect. Those youngsters, who are very relaxed and self-confident in the public space, suddenly turn out to be very silent and 'respectful' under the power of a father. Parents try to keep their children away from the streets and the youth centres. They believe that interacting with 'deviant' German and Turkish youth in the streets and youth centres will make their children disrespectful. Thus, they encourage their children to go to some community associations such as *Alevi* associations, *hemsehri* (fellow-villager) associations, community centres and/or mosques.

Another assumption about the Turkish family structure in Berlin is that the familial bonds within the Turkish community are more powerful than in German society. Although these bonds become weaker in comparison to working-class family culture in Turkey, the children are still expected to live with their parents until they get married. The parental culture is still quite influential in choosing a marriage partner. Parents still have their say in the selection of a spouse. The criteria of selection are usually very simple: the potential spouse should preferably be from the same ethnic and religious origin. For instance, a German spouse is not preferred unless s/he converts to Islam; and there is also a strong boundary between *Sunni*s and *Alevi*s in terms of

marriage. Hitherto, arranged marriages from Turkey were quite widespread. The youngsters have recently come to terms with the ever-lasting wish of their parents to go for arranged marriages. Although I have no statistical data indicating the decreasing pace of arranged marriages from Turkey, the radically resisting statements of the youngsters were quite instructive in understanding the new trend. The girls are the ones who used to extensively suffer from arranged marriages. When their 'age of marriage' came, their parents used to arrange a marriage for them during the summer vacation (*izin*) spent in Turkey.

Another aspect worth mentioning in its relation to the familial life of the youngsters is represented by the conversations about the relatives, friends and immovable belongings back in Turkey. The family members talk either about relatives they miss or the immovable belongings they left behind or recently bought. Daily, by means of those in-family-conversations and collective memories, youngsters revisit living relatives; or they watch the videotape they previously recorded in a wedding ceremony in Turkey; or else they watch the videotape showing the summer cottage and/or house they bought in the previous visit to Turkey. Each of those ritualised practices signifies an imaginary journey back home for the youth in the diaspora.

No one, neither parent, nor teacher, nor youth worker has a complete knowledge about the youngsters' life worlds. The youths always switch between these different spaces. They should negotiate and compromise between various social-cultural scapes in order to find a way through. What they construct in these shifting spaces is a kind of cultural bricolage leading to the formation of a *Third Culture*. The *third culture*, to which I will shortly return in the following chapter, "is a bricolage in which elements from different cultural traditions, sources and social discourses are continuously intermingled with and juxtaposed to each other" (Çaglar, 1994: 33).

The production of the third culture by the Turkish diasporic youth is a production going beyond the conventional Hegelian and Marxist understandings of production. Stereotypically it is believed that working-class diasporic youths do not produce anything, they just 'hang around' and do nothing. This is a common opinion amongst parents, majority society, formal institutions and scholars. Such a stereotype is bound to the ideology of productivism. As Henri Lefèbvre (1989) has rightly posed, production does not necessarily

137

require either product or labour. His notion of production is quite different from that of economism:

[W]ords, dreams, texts and concepts produce labour on their own account; […] This leaves us with a curious image of labour without labourers, products without production processes, or production without products, and works without creators (no 'subject' and no 'object' either) (Lefèbvre, 1989: 72).

Turkish diasporic youth in Kreuzberg produces a web of social spaces composed of youth centre, street, school and household. This is a social space constituting a locus of communication by means of signs, symbols, images and objects, a locus of separations and a milieu of prohibitions (insiders-outsiders). Furthermore, this is a space giving rise to the production of a postcultural youth culture in the 'borderlands' of 'various cultures.' All these life-worlds are imbued with the diasporic space in Kreuzberg. In what follows I shall describe the major constituents employed by the working-class Turkish youths to construct a new home in Kreuzberg.

'Sicher in Kreuzberg': The Homing of Diaspora

Modern diaspora identities inscribe a homing desire while simultaneously creating syncretic cultures in the borderlands. The question of desiring home in diaspora is precisely linked to the processes of exclusion operating in the given circumstances. The discourse of home in the diaspora is an essential need to challenge the existing regimes of exclusion and subordination. In this sense, the youngsters refer to Kreuzberg as 'Little Istanbul.' As it was explained above, all the images, signs, symbols and objects in Kreuzberg contribute to the mystification of Istanbul and Turkey in the imagery of the Turkish minority. The use of familiar signs and symbols in the diaspora is, in fact, a quest for homing. All the youngsters without any exception use the word 'sicher' in explaining how they feel in Kreuzberg. The word 'sicher' literally means 'sure' and 'secure.' Being sure of what, and feeling secure against what? Kreuzberg is the new home for them, where they are always sure of their moves and positions.

Kreuzberg is literally a Turkish ethnic enclave providing Turkish migrants and their descendants with a web of solidarity, security and confinement. Yüksel (26) expressed how they rarely go outside

138

Kreuzberg, apart from those places where their schools are located. When they leave Kreuzberg, they have the feeling that they have gone outside their home:

If Kreuzberg did not exist, then Germany would be unbearable to live in for us. Here the water and the climate are awful. Nothing has taste here, but wherever I go outside Kreuzberg I am longing for, let's say, a woman going back home from shopping with a full bag in her hands. Kreuzberg is a habit.

Kreuzberg no longer marks an international frontier for the Turkish youth. They navigate between their worlds, not only when they make an annual vacation trip to Turkey (*izin*), but also "daily when they leave the Turkish inner sanctums of their cold-water flats, their Turkophone families and neighbours, their *Kleines*-Istanbul ghetto to enter the German speaking work world and marketplace, where the characteristic economic relations between *First* and *Third* worlds are linguistically, socially, and culturally reproduced" (Mandel, 1996: 151).

Kreuzberg is their very own living territory, they feel secure there and they do not have any feeling of alienation. It is the Germans from other districts, according to Neco (25), who feel alienated in Kreuzberg, not the Turks. No youngster feels attached either to Germany or Berlin, but they are attached to Kreuzberg. The youths identify themselves with Kreuzberg. Kreuzberg provides them with a sense of security, behavioural certainty, assurance and confidence as it previously did, and still does, to their immigrant parents (Çaglar, 1994: 53).

The feeling of being simultaneously 'home away from homeland' or 'here and there' reveals a form of 'double consciousness' and 'awareness of multilocality' in the imagery of the diasporic youth. The awareness of multilocality or 'double consciousness' becomes a crucial aspect of their identity formation and articulation. When the youngsters have been asked about where home was for them, they all hesitated to pose clear boundaries between Turkey and Kreuzberg. When I asked Ayhan (20) from *Naunyn Ritze* about his feelings on Kreuzberg, he said:

The moment when you asked the question, my hair stood on end. I love Kreuzberg. I feel myself secure here. Everything is normal here; the rest of Berlin is like a dead-land. On the one hand, it is making us suffer, on the other hand there is always someone here helping you. For instance I learned graffiti

and break-dance here. It has brought some things to us as well as taking away some other things from us. It is cool. Seriously speaking, for me home is Kreuzberg. Home is where we live in. Some people might think that I have become conceited and that I am in vain, but here is my home. I have not been brought up in Turkey.

The youngsters are highly attached to their own local boundaries. Owning the district they live in, they place a boundary between themselves and the majority society. Their own street is a kind of protective wall for them; they hardly leave the street. Kreuzberg is a 'fortress,' which they and their parents have constructed in the span of time. The streets of Kreuzberg give the warmth of home to the youngsters. For instance, while their German 'mates' meet in each other's house to converse or to entertain, the Turkish youths prefer meeting in the street. When the centre is not open in the holidays, they meet in front of the youth centre.

Although they have strong local identifications, they may also vary in their identification depending on the context. Neco said: "When we are asked where we are from in Berlin, we say we are from Kreuzberg; but if the same question is asked to us outside Berlin we say we are from Berlin. We say we are from Berlin, because we know that Berlin always seems exotic to the other Germans. Berlin is Kreuzberg." By doing so, Neco and his 'mates' seem to be aware of their situational local identification, which prompts them to play with the images of the townscape in the imagery of outsiders.

"Berlin is Kreuzberg." This narration of Neco refers to the fact that the youngsters realise that Kreuzberg used to be previously conceived by the west Germans as the major exotic and enigmatic quarter of Berlin. Referring to this perception, Kreuzberg youngsters tend to have a strong pride with their own territory. Neco's narration about Kreuzberg seems to be complementary to what Yüksel (26) said:

Once upon a time, Kreuzberg was like a battlefield. Everything was falling apart here. Some of the families didn't even have a toilet of their own; they used to share the common toilet with the other families in the courtyard of the building. Some of the houses had neither electricity nor water. We grew up in such an environment. Everything has changed along with the reunification. Before the reunification, the West German tourists often used to visit Kreuzberg just to have a quick look without getting off the tourist bus. They were afraid

of us. It was as if they were visiting a zoo, and the bus was like their cage protecting them from the dangerous animals. Then, when they got back home, they expressed their enthusiasm and happiness to their friends in visiting Kreuzberg.

Kreuzberg gives the youngsters a sense of security, not only because it is a space they were born into, but also because it is a place they can socially control. The social control of the living space is based on mainly ethnic and *hemsehri* (fellow villagers) bonds. *Hemsehrilik* is a network of solitary interpersonal relations based on regional ties. It is thought of as a primordial tie like kinship (Çaglar, 1994: 159). Although the *hemsehri* bonds have recently become weaker, they are still crucial instruments, which the youngsters play with. For Eyüp, a 22-year-old-boy in *Chip* youth centre, *hemsehrilik* is still a very important concept: "I automatically fancy my *hemsehris* from Aksaray (a middle Anatolian city). For instance, I don't like the people from Samsun and Konya, whereas my *hemsehris* are worthy for anything." Bagdagül, an 18-year-old-female from *Naunyn Ritze*, is also very sensitive about the issue of kinship and *hemsehrilik*: "*Hemsehrilik* is very important here. Almost all Kreuzberg belongs to *us.*" Here, 'us' refers to the Turkish residents from Erzurum – a city in the eastern Anatolia. Then, she added that she did not bother about *hemsehrilik*. There is a contradiction in her narration. On the one hand, she is internalising the category of 'us,' on the other she posits a distinction between herself and the rest. In fact, she is aware that *hemsehrilik* is a crucial social capital for herself as well as for the rest of 'us.'

However, there are some aspects of this ethnic enclave that the youngsters dislike. These aspects are basically related to their privacy. Gossip is an important institution in the Turkish enclave of Kreuzberg. Almost all the residents know what is going on in Kreuzberg. Yüksel (manager of the rap group *Islamic Force*) has brought a yellow aluminium window from Turkey for his music store in *Adalbertstraße*, the very next day almost everybody in Kreuzberg heard the news, even found out how much it had cost Yüksel. He stated that the kiosk at the opposite side has already ordered the same aluminium from Istanbul just after he fixed his window.

The community culture of the neighbourhood also has a great impact on the gender relations as well as on the institution of gossip. Boys say, "Kreuzberg girls are our sisters." They can easily determine

which girl is a stranger in their own district. They chase the 'stranger girls' in the streets and make insolent remarks to them without looking at their nationality. Elif, youth worker, described how she had some problems in the very first days when she started to work in the *Naunyn Ritze* youth centre. Firstly, she was chased by the youngsters in the street; and then the boys in the centre started to compete between themselves for her attention without knowing that she was a youth worker in the centre.

Gossip is also an influential instrument for the parents to keep their children under control. There is always a social control on both boys and girls, so that they must be careful in their relations with the other sex. The girls, for instance, are always afraid of getting caught by some familiar eyes when they 'hang around' with boys. They are concerned of being given the label of 'nasty girl.' Most of the girls in the centre also refrain from smoking in public, because they fear their elder brothers or parents. Thus, they tend to smoke secretly in the toilet, or outside the centre. Smoking at such an early age gives them a feeling of freedom. It is a symbol of freedom, which they consider against the authority of parental power and male dominance. The role of gossip is not also very different for the boys from the parental perspective. Ayhan (20) says,

If one of my relatives sees me hanging around with a German girl, then the next day everybody here and in Turkey hears this 'unacceptable' thing. They start making gossip about my family and me. They accuse my parents of not having been able to raise good children.

Ayhan's statement underlines the fact that gossip is a strong means of social control. As Marie Gillespie (1996: 154) stated, gossip that focuses on violations of moral codes, norms and values serves to reinforce them. Furthermore, gossip reinforces the boundaries between insiders and outsiders in the process of inter-ethnic relations as well as in that of intra-ethnic relations, i.e., German-Turkish and/or *Alevi-Sunni.* Thus, gossip strengthens the sense of living in a secure community space as opposed to the hegemonic culture, and also provides the subordinated masses living in the margin with a source of positive identity.

However, the youngsters are well aware of the limitations of Kreuzberg; feeling secure is not enough for the youngsters. From time

to time, the youngsters express their willingness to move out. Kreuzberg indeed 'has a bad name,' as I have heard expressed in many conversations I had with the youngsters. Most of the youngsters have no thought about their future prospects. Yet, they are not content with their expectations. They complain about the stereotypical perception of Kreuzberg held among the German employers and school administrations. Devrim (17) made many job applications to do his obligatory praxis (*Praktikum*) as a student. He had no positive response: "Of course, they don't accept me, because I am from Kreuzberg. I will keep applying." Mehmet (18) is another youngster trying to study social pedagogy:

I am trying to be registered in one of these schools. I call them to get some information. In the beginning of the conversation, everything goes fine. I speak as good as the Germans without any accent. Then they start asking questions about my background to get informed. When I tell them my name and that I am living in Kreuzberg, suddenly the conversation changes. The person who is on the other side of the line hesitates for a while; it is like a silence for a second. Then he tries to find some excuses to explain to me that I am not eligible for their school. Kreuzberg has a bad reputation. I am not eligible for their school, simply because I am a Turk living in Kreuzberg.

These examples as well as some others, which have been described to me, indicate that a Kreuzberg address by itself is a handicap when looking for job. I have not been able to confirm this impression statistically, but I was convinced by those youngsters, who were hopelessly applying for jobs, that this impression has some truth in it.

The youngsters are also aware of the fact that moving out of Kreuzberg is very difficult. Mehmet (18) and his parents moved out for two years, and then came back again: "it was very difficult for us to live outside Kreuzberg. All my friends and relatives are living here. Here I feel much better although there are many obstacles to living here." Affirming the importance of close ties is the fact that many of those who can afford to move to a 'nicer' area do not. They stay and repair their homes, reasserting the image of the community as a good place to live. The expression of the wish for moving out, for social advancement, is predominantly a class issue. It is the class difference that makes some people express their wish to move out of this ethnic enclave more readily than the others are. Hikmet (30), a final year stu-

dent of medicine, spoke of his intention to move out for the future of his children. Ferat's (18) father who has a university degree and a small-scale private enterprise also expresses his wish to move out for the future of his only son.

Kreuzberg is a diasporic space for the working-class Turkish youth. It gives the youngsters a complex sense of homing. On the one hand, as long as these youngsters are surrounded by the signs, music, rhythms and major issues of Turkey in the diaspora, they tend to have an 'imagined sense of belonging' to the homeland Turkey, which has been 'deferred' as a spiritual, cultural and political metaphor. On the other, they develop a strong sense of homing to the 'Turkified' Kreuzberg due to the same reason.

Middle-Class Turkish Youngsters and the Question of Identity

A good understanding of the social discourses of the working-class Turkish diasporic youth partly depends on the incorporation of the class aspect into the analysis. In this section, I will reflect upon the question of identity as it is expressed by a middle-class Turkish youth group living outside Kreuzberg. As I pointed out before, this is the group of youngsters who constituted the third group of the research, *BTBTM* youth. At the end of their group discussions, which they undertook within their own group under the supervision of Nurdan, they organised a youth festival (*Jugendfest*) where they presented their views on various issues such as xenophobia, racism, hostility in the media, generation conflicts, and specially the question of identity. The festival was held in one of the multicultural venues of Berlin, *Werkstatt der Kulturen*, on the 18th of May 1996. Barbara John, commissioner of Foreigners' Office, Ingrid Staumer, senator of cultural affairs, Hayrettin Erkmenoglu, Turkish counsellor in Berlin, German and Turkish media were in the audience.

The festival was primarily set up in order to present to the audience how 'multicultural' and cosmopolitan the Berlin-Turkish youth was. The sense of being '*multikulti*' in all the spheres of daily life is a crucial symbolic capital for these youngsters. Multiculturalism becomes a principal source of identity politics for them. The multicultural capital provides them with a sense of recognition by German society. This is the way they gain access into the mainstream culture. They extensively use the term '*multikulti*' in expressing their music taste, friendships,

life styles, and their neighbourhood. In this sense, the selection of the folklore, dance and music performances for the festival was made to underline their multicultural image: a Jewish music group, an amateur German dance company called '*Multikulti*', a Turkish folklore group, and a Kurdish folklore group. *BTBTM* youths were also very curious about not calling the festival as '*Türkische Jugendfest*', because they were keen on showing their cosmopolitan and multicultural identity.

Besides the discourse of multiculturalism, which became apparent in the festival, another crucial point was displayed by the youngsters: the correlation between representation and the question of identity. These are the youngsters who are mostly represented in both German and Turkish media in Berlin. Berlin-Turks are proud of them, because these youngsters are the 'good' representatives of the Turks living in Berlin, and they are the ones who have been able to integrate into the German society 'without losing their Turkishness.' Germans are also proud of them because these youngsters represent 'how well' the German integration policies have been working.

It is evident that contemporary discussions on identity are partly related to the dominant regimes of representation in the media. It was striking for me to realise in the course of the research that it was the middle-class youth that attempted to draw attention to the 'question of identity' rather than the working-class Turkish youth. The working-class youths that are relatively away from the manipulation of media, seem to be quite content with their identity without problematising it. On the other hand, since the middle-class youths have been in a dialogical relation with the media, they tend to conceive the 'identity question' as granted. The way these youngsters raised the issue of identity was, in fact, a reflection of their representation in the media.

The question of identity is mostly problematised by the media in a way that influences the identity formation process of ethnic minority youth. The middle-class youths give response to their own representation in the media. What they discussed in the *Jugendfest* was not their own identity problems. What they did was, in fact, having a 'chatter about the chatter' about their identity. The chatter about their identity, which they chattered was the chatter, made up by the media. This is like the chatter about the sport that we chattered about, not the sport itself as a practice (Eco, 1986: 162-163).[9] Thus, we rather tend to discuss about what is represented to us by the media, but not about

the event itself. In addition to their difference from the working-class youth in terms of their problematisation of the identity issue, the middle-class youngsters also have a different sense of place in the diaspora. Unlike the working-class Turkish youth, they do not feel any attachment to the places they are living in. They rather attach themselves to the '*multikulti*' city of Berlin. In what follows, I will shortly examine their sense of place and home in the diaspora.

Middle-Class Turkish Youth: Cosmopolitan Self and 'Heimat'

The middle-class Turkish youth has rather a cosmopolitan understanding of home. They mainly express that they long for Turkey when they are in Germany, and yearn for Germany when they are in Turkey. They rather feel an affinity with Berlin rather than with their neighbourhood and Germany. What strikes them in Berlin is its multicultural character. Multilocality is very influential in their identification of themselves as well. Gülten (17) expresses her feelings about home in such a way:

Home is where you are living, and where your friends are. For the time being, home is both Germany and Turkey for me, I do not want to define home actually. Home itself should attract you. I am still in search of home. Home should be something, which depends on your way of life. I miss Germany when I am in Turkey. Mine is something cosmopolitan, something which I will never be able to define: Both Turkish and German. We take the good parts of both. This is richness.

The middle-class youths all either have dual citizenship, or are in the process of gaining it. They see dual citizenship as being equal to the Germans, and having a cosmopolitan identity. For instance, if they have a problem with the police, they state that the police have a tolerant behaviour towards the Turks having German passport, and that "they can't ask you stupid questions like 'Where are your residence documents?'" This group of youngsters is much more mobile compared to the working-class youth. They sometimes prefer going to other countries for vacation such as the USA, Morocco, Spain and France. Another advantage of German citizenship appears in this case, i.e. there is no need for a visa to go to other European Union countries. However, some youngsters insist on not having German citizen-

ship. Dilek (18) is one of them. She does not want to have German citizenship, she states:

[T]he Germans want to assimilate us. If I have German citizenship, then I will be doing what they want me to do. I don't want to. As a Turkish citizen who was born here, I must have the same rights as the German citizens. This is discrimination and racism, and I am fighting this. I am against a given identity. As long as they don't accept dual citizenship, I won't get the German citizenship.

Having a cosmopolitan identity, the middle-class youth, in fact, seeks social change in their country of settlement. On the other hand, the disadvantaged working-class youth, as Brake states, "is not anti the prevailing social order, but seeks a place within it" (Brake, 1980: 26). By raising the question of identity, the middle-class youths aim to negate the way they are presented by the German media, which homogenises the German-Turkish youth. In the context of Turkish diasporic youth, another crucial difference between the two youth cultures is that the form and style of the working-class youth culture is mediated by the local neighbourhood whilst that of the middle-class youth culture is mediated by the translocal class orientation. Apart from the fact that Berlin-Turkish youths have a multicultural competence, there is also another general aspect worth mentioning, i.e., their linguistic competence that enables them to switch codes, as they find appropriate.

Language and 'Code-Switching'

Berlin-Turkish youth, be it working-class or middle-class, undoubtedly manifests relationships of 'boundary transgression' by means of linguistic competence. Turkish youths have a peculiar language of their own. They speak a creole language. It is a mix of Turkish, German and American-English. This new form of city speech in the migrants' suburbs is a verbal celebration of ghetto multiculturalism, twisting German, Turkish and American slang in resistance to the official language. Leaving aside the American slang, which they pick up, from the movies and songs, they habitually switch between Turkish and German, and sometimes between three languages Turkish, Kurdish and German. Although imperfectly, the youngsters tend to

use all these languages at once in order to express themselves. In linguistics, this is called code-switching. S. Poplack (1980: 588) defines code-switching as "the alternation of two [or more] languages within a single discourse, sentence, or constituent." Poplack states that there are three major types of switching: i. intra-sentential switching; ii. inter-sentential switching; and iii. tag-switching, or emblematic switching.

i. Intra-sentential switching: This type of switching includes the switches made within a sentence.
Example: Nezaman *Fahrprüfung* yapacaksin?
            (When are you going to get *the driving test*?)
This type of switching may well be made by all the youngsters from each segment of the community. It does not really require a full competence in both languages. This is the common switching type that the working-class Turkish youngsters mostly repeat.

ii. Inter-sentential switching: These types of switches occur between sentences. Each clause or sentence is uttered in one language or another. Proficiency in both languages is the precondition of this switching mode because major portions of the utterance must conform to the rules of both languages.
Example: Ben bir zamanlar çok kitap okurdum.
            Ab und zu hab' ich mal so'n Drang, was zu lesen.
            (Once upon a time I used to read a lot.
            Time to time I feel a desire to read something.)
The *BTBTM* youngsters, who were in the Gymnasium, were often repeating the inter-sentential switching in their mutual conversations. On the other hand, the working-class Turkish youths were not capable of switching inter-sentially as well as the others, since they had a lack of grammatical knowledge on Turkish and German.

iii. Tag-switching, or emblematic switching: This type involves the insertion of an exclamation. Poplack (1980) calls this type of switching 'emblematic switching' because it serves as an emblem of the bilingual character in a monolingual sentence. Emblematic switching is also quite common for any youngster.
Example: *Ich meine*, ben de kitap okumasini seviyorum.
            (*I mean*, I like reading too.)[10]

148

Sociolinguistically code-switching may well have some functions for the bilingual utterer. Rene Appel and Pieter Muysken (1987: 118) have pointed out the following functions of code-switching. Firstly it has referential function for the utterer to fill in the lexical gaps of one language. Since the speaker does not know the exact equivalent of a word, s/he consciously tends to switch to the other language. Secondly, it has directive function for the speaker to involve and/or to exclude a person from a part of the conversation. Thirdly, it may have an expressive function for the speaker to express her/his transcultural identity. Fourthly, it may have a phatic function for the utterer to emphasise something in his/her utterance by changing the speech-tone and the language. In the fifth place, code-switching may have a meta-linguistic function for the speaker who wants to impress the others by showing his/her linguistic skills. Finally, it may also have a poetic function in switching puns and jokes.

Apart from these types of code-switching, the youth may make other mix-ups between Turkish and German due to the different grammatical character of the languages. Turkish language springs from the Ural-Altaic language family like Finnish, Hungarian, Mongolian and Korean languages. Turkish is from the Altaic group as Mongol and Korean. All these languages share three common features. These features are namely agglutination, vowel harmony and lack of grammatical gender. Turkish is a language without any article and with many suffixes. This is the reason why the Turkish youngsters tend to adopt German nouns without any article, and they sometimes add suffixes for case – and plural-marking.

Example a: Burada *Grundschule*den önce *Kindergarten*'e gitmek sart.
             (It is obligatory here to attend *the Kindergarden* before *the primary school*.)
             -den   : Ablative case in Turkish
             -e   : Dative case in Turkish
Example b: Yasak yerlere grafiti yaptigin zaman *Ruhm*un oluyor.
             (When you make graffiti on the illegal places, you get *fame*.)
             -un   : Genitive case in Turkish
Example c: En çok *Action-movie*leri seviyorum.
             (I like the action-movies most.)

> -ler   : Plural marking +
> -i   : Accusative case in Turkish

They also sometimes mix verbs by paraphrasing with the Turkish verbs. They usually use the German infinitive verbs in combination with the Turkish auxiliary verbs of *yapmak* (to do, to make), *etmek* (e.g. *devam etmek*: to carry on), and *olmak* (to be).

Example a: Kimleri *einladen* etmek istiyorsun?
              (Whom do you want to invite?)
Example b: Ceketini neden *abmachen* yapmiyorsun?
              (Why don't you take off your jacket?)
Example c: Dün olanlari gördügüm zaman *überraschen* oldum.
              (When I saw what happened yesterday, I got surprised.)

The language, which is used by the working-class Turkish youth, is basically called *Kanak Sprak*.[11] *Kanak sprak* should, in fact, be written as '*kanake sprache*' in German, but this is the way the Turkish youngsters vernacularise it like many other examples. They quite often spell the words in the way they are pronounced. The words that are written on the cover of the tape of rap group *Cartel* are quite illustrative in this sense. The group have written the Turkish vernaculars of the English and German words such as '*existira sipesiyal tenks*' instead of extra special thanks, '*ekistira gürüse*' instead of extra *Grüße* (greetings), '*Asiyatik Variyors*' instead of Asiatic Warriors, '*Getobilaster Tiim*' instead of Ghettoblaster Team, and '*Kiroyzberg 36*' instead of Kreuzberg 36.

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To summarise, having to practice various life-worlds, the working-class Turkish youth in Kreuzberg acquires the competence to behave appropriately in a number of different arenas. There are linguistic, social and cultural boundaries between their life-worlds (youth centre, street, school and household). The youngsters always have to translate and negotiate within and between these rigidly defined boundaries. The way they behave in these life-worlds is imbued by the conditions of the diasporic space in which they have been living. As far as it constitutes a symbolic bridge and cultural continuum between the

diaspora and the homeland, Kreuzberg, '*Kleines* Istanbul,' turns out to be the new home for the youngsters. Kreuzberg provides the working-class youth with a 'fortress' protecting them against the destabilising effects of racialisation, rising unemployment, misrepresentation and discrimination. To put it differently, Kreuzberg serves as a security valve for the youngsters to soften the firm strokes coming from the external world. The youngsters in Kreuzberg also develop a 'demotic' discourse against the dominant discourse of the majority society (cf. Baumann, 1996). Their multiculturalism developing in response to the dominant ideology of multiculturalism (a form of high-culture) springs from their own form of resistance.

This chapter has been concerned with the question of identity and how it is predominantly related to representation and dominant discourse. In this sense, it was noted how the middle-class Turkish youths are highly influenced by their representation in the media. The German media tend to represent the Turkish youth as a homogeneous group suffering an identity crisis while wedged between two cultures. The media problematise the process of identity construction and articulation by the Turkish youngsters. As depicted above, these youngsters, who are responsive to the media, take their representation in the media as a starting point to redefine their identity. Taking the 'identity crisis' as granted, the youngsters tend to 'chatter about the chatter about their identity.' It was also stated that the multicultural discourse of the middle-class youth was essentially shaped by their concern about integrating into the mainstream multiculturalism. This is why their discourse of multiculturalism that is defined in relation to the dominant discourse of multiculturalism is, by and large, different from that of the working-class Turkish youth. Thus, this chapter has provided a ground for the investigation of the working-class hip-hop youth culture in particular by portraying the cultural identity formation and articulation processes of the working-class minority youth has been portrayed in relation to that of the middle-class youth. The following chapter will elaborate the primary features of the expressive hip-hop culture among the Turkish youths living in Kreuzberg.

Notes

1   For further information about the 1989 May Day demonstrations, see "Steine in die Senatskosmetik," *Taz-Berlin* (2 May

1989); "DGB zählte 610.000 beim Tag der Arbeit," *Taz* (2 May 1989); and "In Kreuzberg kommandieren wir," *Der Spiegel* 47/1990.

2   In the May Day demonstrations of 1996, a youth was killed, many others were wounded and the underclass people living in the margins in Kadiköy, Istanbul plundered many shopping centres, banks, and offices. The riot was partly organised and partly spontaneous. To put it differently, spontaneity in this occasion was the metalanguage of the peripheral space and/or marginality.

3   Here, paraphrasing from Antonio Gramsci (1971: 198), it should be stated that 'spontaneity is the characteristic of the history of subaltern classes and indeed of their most marginal and peripheral elements.'

4   I am using the term *distinction* in the sense that Pierre Bourdieu used it. Bourdieu, in his work *Distinction* (1984), calls attention to how different kinds of capitals (social, cultural, symbolic and economic) have been put into play by members of each social class and group in order to create a difference or *distinction*.

5   Article 35a of the Berlin-Brandenburg Education Act required a 30 percent quota for the 'foreigner' students. If the number of foreign students exceeded the 30 percent quota, and then either this quota could be extended to 50 percent under the condition that all the foreigner students spoke fluent German, or the 'foreigner classrooms' could be formed. Article 35a was declared void in September 1995 through the initiatives of the Association of Berlin-Brandenburg Turkish Parents (ABBTP). According to the figures of the ABBTP, the percentage of the Turkish students who have been educated in the 'foreigner classrooms' in Berlin was 20 percent for the *Grundschule* and 50 percent for the *Hauptschule*. For further information, see *10 Jahre Elternarbeit 1985-1995: Eine Documentation des Türkischen Elternvereins in Berlin-Brandenburg e.V.*

6   According to the figures of the *Statistische Veröffentlichungen der Kultusministerkonferenz, Dokument* No. 119 (Dec. 1991), 55.8 percent of the foreigners in *Sonderschule* in Berlin was made up by the Turkish students (Table 6).

7   A regulation, which was issued in 1975, has already forbidden foreigners from taking up residence in some districts of Berlin.

These restrictive zoning laws, enforced by the *Ausländerpolizei* (Aliens Police), identify three quarters of the city – Kreuzberg, Wedding and Tiergarten – as off-limits to the last desirable foreigners (those from the Third World). These are the districts with the highest percentage of Turkish residents, with 21.2 percent, 17.6 percent, and 6.2 percent respectively. It seems that the zoning laws, regulating the whereabouts of foreigners, went successful because the Turkish population of some new districts such as Neukölln and Schöneberg has become more than that of Wedding and Tiergarten, with 19.5 percent and 8.7 percent respectively (Source: *Statistisches Landesamt, Einwohnerregister*, 30.6.1996). The further stage of this process also seems to be convincing the Turks to leave Kreuzberg and settle down in some other districts of Berlin.

8   Although I have had limited material on households, due to the nature of my research, the family, as a principal constituent of the diasporic space needs to be taken into consideration in order to understand the diasporic consciousness.

9   Umberto Eco attributes to the 'chatter about chatter about sport' in order to express the impact of the press on the interpretations which we consider as our own.

10   The examples for code-switching were taken from the unpublished paper of Hasim Anik and Fügen Sengün (1995).

11   '*Kanak Sprak*' is also the title of the book that has been written a Turkish writer, Feridun Zaimoglu (1995). In his book, he has edited many brief articles written by some Turkish youngsters in a wide variety from the rappers to the Islamic fundamentalists. He attempts to explore the street German used by the Turkish youth with their own vernaculars. He ironically calls the world of the young Turks '*Kanakistan.*'