IMAGINING THE FAMILY:
INTERGENERATIONAL CULTURAL TRANSMISSION IN MIXED FAMILIES IN ISTANBUL

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Nevena Gojković Türünz

ABSTRACT

Accelerated and increasingly complex patterns of international migration are correlated with emergence of various types of transnational families and ever rising number of bi-national couples. Once a typical emigration country, Turkey has recently been established as a transit and receiving society, where numerous Europeans settled due to emotional ties with Turkish citizens. This thesis studies mixed European-Turkish families residing in Istanbul, as an "active and complex socio-cultural hybrid space" (Rodríguez García, 2006, 426). The self-definition is for each family open, fluid, and in a continual process of (re)construction. Although the creation of a new family always involves "imagining", mixed couples necessarily answer more abstract questions than mono-cultural: a) Who are we as a family and where do we stand vis-à-vis our respective societies? b) Who are our children going to be? c) How we will raise them?

Consequently, the thesis is divided into three main parts corresponding to the stated questions. First, I examine a) the social characteristics of the research participants, b) the reactions of family and friends to their relationship, and c) the adaptation strategies of non-Turkish partners to Turkish society. Second, I explore how these couples, as mothers and fathers, negotiate and pass specific aspects of their heritages to their children. Third, within the mixed families, mothers and fathers have at their disposal two distinctive sociocultural repertoires in regard to cultural transmission and parenting models, as they were raised and socialized in distinctive settings. Hence, I examine the non-Turkish participants' perceptions of a role of extended family, a concept of a good mother and child-rearing practices.

The thesis represents a qualitative micro study and derives from semi-structured in-depth interviews.

Key words: mixed families, transmission, child-rearing, symbolic boundaries

ÖZ

Çeşitli ulusaşırı ailenin ve iki-kültürlü/etnisiteli çiftlerin ortaya çıkması, uluslararası göçün giderek karmaşıklaşarak ivme kazanmasıyla bağlantılıdır. Bir zamanlar tipik olarak göç veren bir ülke olan tanımlanan Türkiye, son zamanlarda hem transit, hem de göç alan bir ülkeye dönüşmüştür. Çok sayıda Avrupalı, Türk vatandaşlarıyla olan duygusal bağları sayesinde Türkiye'ye yerleşmiştir. Bu tez, İstanbul'da ikamet eden Avrupalı–Türk aileleri, "aktif ve karmaşık sosyo-kültürel melez alan" olarak incelemektedir. (Rodríguez García, 2006, 426). Her ailenin kendini tanımlayışı, açık, akışkan ve daimi bir (yeniden) inşa sürecinde oluşur. Her ne kadar yeni bir ailenin yaratımı "tahayyül" gerektirse de, melez çiftler ister istemez tek kültürlü sorulardan çok daha soyut sorulara cevap vermektedirler. a) Biz bir aile olarak kimiz ve kendi toplumlarımız karşısında nerede durmaktayız? b) Çocuklarımız kimler olacaklar? c) Onları nasıl yetiştireceğiz?

Sonuç olarak, bu tez, yukarıda belirtilen sorulara karşılık gelen üç ana bölüme ayrılmıştır. İlk olarak a) araştırmanın katılımcılarının toplumsal niteliklerini b) ailelerinin ve arkadaşlarının onların ilişkilerine tepkilerini ve c) Türk olmayan eşlerin Türk toplumuna uyum stratejilerini inceler. İkinci olarak, bu çiftlerin anne ve baba olarak kültürel miraslarının belirli özelliklerini nasıl müzakere ettiklerini ve çocuklarına aktardıklarını araştırır. Üçüncü olarak, melez ailelerde ebebeynler, kendilerine özgü çevrelerde yetişmiş ve sosyalleşmiş olduklarından, kültürel aktarım ve çocuk yetiştirme modelleri konusunda iki ayrı sosyokültürel repertuara sahiptirler. Bu bakımdan, bu tez, Türk olmayan katılımcıların geniş ailenin rolü, iyi anne kavramı ve çocuk yetiştirme pratikleri üzerine olan algılarını analiz eder. Bu çalışma niteliksel mikro bir çalışma sunmaktadır ve yarı-yapılandırılmış derinlenmesine mülakatlara dayanmaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: melez aileler, aktarım, çocuk yetiştirme, sembolik sınırlar

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Turkish migratory field: Overview

In the last two centuries, the territory of modern Turkey has been a space of dynamic population movements and it has been characterized by both mass influx and mass outflow of people.

The high influx of Muslims from the Caucasus, Crimea, and the Balkans into Anatolia started at the end of the 18th century, accelerated in the 19th, and continued throughout the first decades of the 20th century. Russian advancement to Crimea and the Caucasus caused mass migratory movements of Tatars and Circassians to the Ottoman Empire. Akgündüz (1998) quotes the estimated number of 1,800,000 Tatars and approximately the same number of Circassians who found a shelter in today's Turkey between the mid-19th century and 1922 (p. 98). At the same time, the establishment of nation-states in the Balkans, as well as two Balkan wars in 1912 and 1913 caused a large-scale migration of the Balkan Muslims in the mainland of the Ottoman Empire. According to Akgündüz, in total "from 1793 to 1913 some 5-7 million Muslims immigrated into the Ottoman lands" (p. 100). In addition, Ülker (2007) cites 800,000 immigrants came from the Balkans between 1923 and 1939.

However, as Tolay (2012) reminds us "in the Turkish imagination, they were not migrants settling in a 'foreign' country; they were not 'foreigners' migrating to Turkey. Rather, they were considered as 'Turks' 'returning' to their 'homeland' (even though hardly any of them had ever lived in Turkey and most of them had only a remote knowledge of the Turkish language)" (p. 4). In general, they were quickly and thoroughly assimilated in the course of the nation-state building.

According to Ülker (2007) the rapid assimilation was conducted in two ways. First, the non-Turkish speaking Muslims were settled in Anatolia among the Turkish-speaking population. Second, the Turkish-speaking immigrants were settled in the Kurdish areas, and hence changed the demographic structure. The official state policy was undoubtedly assimilatory. As a result, the immigrants were

prevented from cherishing their language and culture, and were “Turkified”. Since the establishment of the Republic, the Turkish nation has been based on what Kaya (2012) labels as “the Sunni-Muslim-Turk trinity” (p. 91) and the incorporation of immigrants followed the same logic.

On the contrary, work-related emigration from Turkey was typical in the 1960s and 1970s. Millions of Turks left the country as a result of the recruitment agreements Turkey signed with various Western European countries, which lacked a labor force to sustain the post-war economic boom. After the recruitment process was stopped in 1975, the influx of Turks continued through a family reunification. In addition, in the aftermath of the Turkish coup d’état in 1980, the guest workers were joined by political refugees.

The phenomena related to Turkish immigrants in Germany are extensively researched, particularly in the German context, and the scholarship is exceptionally developed. Both Turkish and international migration scholars work on different aspects of Turkish immigrants in Europe. The topics include, but are not limited to: integration and citizenship issues (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003; Joopke, 2007; Favell, 2003; Mandel, 2008), transnationalism (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003; Caglar, 2001; Abadan-Unat, 2011), identities (Abadan-Unat, 1985; Caglar, 1991; Kastroyano, 2002), intergenerational cultural transmission (Nauck, 2001; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001), and Turkish youth in Germany (Faas, 2009; Sosyal, 2001; Caglar, 1998; Kaya, 1997).

In the last several decades, once a sharp distinction between sending countries of the poor global South and receiving countries of the rich North has become blurred. In addition to being established country of emigration, Turkey started to receive transit, temporary, and permanent immigrants and has developed into a “diversified migratory field” (Tolay, 2012, p. 2). Concurrently, the emigration to Turkey is a comparatively recent, but proliferating field of research.

First of all, as a result of “the ongoing political turmoil and clashes occurring in the neighboring areas, Turkey’s geographical location, and the policies of so-called ‘Fortress Europe’, applying highly restrictive admission procedures and increasing immigration control around the continent” (Icduygu, 2005, p. 6), Turkey is firmly established as a transit route for migrants from the Middle East aiming at reaching the European Union countries. “According to Turkish Ministry of Foreign

Affairs statistics, about 561,000 irregular migrants were apprehended between 2000 and 2008" (Kaya, 2012, p. 86). Moreover, Elitok and Straubhaar (2011) claim approximately 250,000 foreigners reside in Turkey. However, only 170,000 with a valid residence permit, which shows the high number of undocumented immigrants residing in Turkey under precarious life and work conditions.

A number of authors examine issues of transit and irregular migration. Kirişci focuses on refugees and asylum seekers, whereas İçduygu works primarily with the irregular migration. Kirişci deals with the refugees in historical perspective (i.e. refugees of Turkish origin to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1996) and contemporary Turkey, basically focusing on the relations between Turkey and European Union in regard to asylum and border management (1991, 2001, 2002, 2007). İçduygu (2005) identifies periods (1979-1987, 1988-1993, 1994-2002/2001, and 2001 onwards) and explains different forms of irregular migration flows to Turkey (asylum seekers and refugees and undocumented or clandestine migrants, first, from Eastern Europe and post-Soviet countries and second, from the Middle East and different African and Asian countries) (pp. 8-9). In addition, Didem Danış's (2006, 2007, 2011) works on Iraqi refugees in Turkey are particularly interested in the situation of Iraqi Christian women, whereas Ayşe Parla focuses on different aspects of Turkish immigration from Bulgaria (i.e. labor migration (2007, 2011) and belonging (2005, 2006, 2009)).

Moreover, due to the loose visa regime towards the post-Soviet countries, there are numerous circular migrants moving back and forth between their home countries and Turkey, who are mainly engaged in domestic work. Hence, a group of authors (Akalın, Bloch, and Eder) is engaged with the post-Soviet migration. Akalin (2007), Bloch (2011), and Eder (2007) emphasize a decisive role of informal networks and informal, sometimes intimate, sexual relations, for migrant women from former Soviet Union to succeed in coming to Turkey, ensuring a job and accommodation, and dealing with the Turkish government. In addition, Bloch claims many ex-Soviet women, particularly younger ones, eventually involve in a relationship with a Turkish man, married or not, as the only means to stay in Turkey or ensure certain benefits. Bloch labels it as "strategic intimacy", which means combining emotional and instrumental ties in order to gain different kind of security.

Furthermore, Turkey has also become an attractive destination for so-called "lifestyle" immigrants - "relatively affluent individuals moving to the places where they believe they can lead a better life" (Sudas, 2012, p. 1). According to Sudas, 114,320 people from the European Union own a property in Turkey (p. 4). Moreover, Canan Balkır (2007, 2009), and Berna Kirkulak (2011) are engaged with international retirement migration to Turkey, whereas Bianca Kaiser (2004) makes a research on German immigrants in Turkey.

Besides, Turkish policy makers' policies of education in establishing the country as a soft power has attracted more than 30,000 students from 155 countries to study in Turkey. Finally, the Turkish fast growing economy also attracts foreign businesspeople.

However, increasingly complex patterns of international migration and heightened mobility are also directly correlated with the emergence of various types of spatially dispersed transnational families. As many young people presently have an opportunity to meet potential life partners away from their hometowns and even home countries, there is also an evident trend of a rising number of cross-national couples. Hence, in this research, I focus on a particular group of migrants: "love migrants", the women and men from Europe, who settled in Istanbul due to their emotional ties with Turkish citizens and established a family. In the Turkish context, my work aims to be a contribution to the field by studying this unresearched phenomenon.

1.2. How to study cross-national families? The research question and thesis outline

For Bryceson and Vuorela (2002), a family is comparable to a nation, since both are imagined and real communities at the same time. The self-definition is for each family open, fluid, and in a continual process of (re)construction. Although the establishment of a new family always involves "imagining", mixed couples necessarily answer more abstract questions than mono-cultural ones: Who are we as a family and where do we stand vis-á-vis our respective societies? Who are our children going to be? How will we raise them?

As Rodriguez Garcia (2006) underlines, “[the] context of the formation and the dynamics of mixed unions constitute a particularly active and complex socio-cultural hybrid space, especially with respect to the upbringing of children” (p. 426). In addition, a family is a place where “the differences and identities of ethnic origin, class and gender intersect and are contested” (p. 419). Furthermore, Rodriguez García argues “[t]he most obvious context in which dynamics of conflict and accommodation take place is the upbringing of children, specifically in the intergenerational transmission of values and socio-cultural models” (p. 421).

Likewise, for Grillo (2008):

> The family is a social construct, which entails beliefs and values defining family members and relationships with them. It thus constitutes a moral order, albeit with widely diverse understanding of what that order should be. At the same time, certain conceptions of what the family is, and how relations within it should be conducted, are likely to be hegemonic in a particular national formation (p. 16)

Additionally, a family is “an important site in which relations of gender and generation are articulated” (p. 20). Following Grillo’s argument, a family can be studied as a moral order, and a “new gendered context” (Mahler & Pessar, 2006, p. 43), as a notion of morality governs entire family life, particularly appropriate gender roles and behavior, ideals of motherhood, and child rearing. Hence, values constitute an important subject of debate within the family.

The overall research question of my thesis is how the cross-national couples imagine their families. It is divided into three more specific research questions, corresponding to separate thesis chapters: a) how do non-Turkish participants engage with the Turkish society? b) how parents select identity markers and develop sociocultural competencies of children? and c) how do non-Turkish participants perceive Turkish child rearing practices and set symbolic boundaries?

The second chapter deals with the question “who are we as a family and where do we stand vis-á-vis our respective societies?” It is divided into three parts and examines a) the social characteristics of the research participants, b) the reactions of family and friends to their relationship, and c) the adaptation strategies of non-Turkish partners to Turkish society. I apply Berry’s model (1980, 1997, 2005, 2010) on acculturation strategies, accompanied with Tartakovsky’s (2011)

Acculturation Intensions Model, the study of Burgelt, Morgan, and Pernice (2008) on the effect of pre-migration experiences on adaptation strategies, and Safrdar's, Lay's and Struther's (2003) study on factors impacting personal well-being in the process of settlement in a foreign country.

The social characteristics of the research participants, or more precisely, the cultural capital they possess in Bourdieu's sense, is important for comprehending their adaptation strategies, as well as the ability to transmit their cultural heritage to children, albeit in a minority context. Moreover, over the course of my research, I realized there is a correlation between the adaptation strategy and the approach to children's religious and sociocultural socialization.

The third chapter focuses on the question "Who are our children going to be?" More precisely, I examine how these couples, as mothers and fathers, negotiate and pass specific aspects of their heritages to their children. Following Caballero's et al. (2008) model on approaching diversity within the mixed family, I explore how the parents decide naming children, their religious socialization, and acquiring of sociocultural competences.

The fourth chapter is engaged with the family relations and child-rearing practices. Within the mixed families, mothers and fathers have at their disposal two distinctive sociocultural repertoires in regard to cultural transmission and parenting models, as they were raised and socialized in distinctive settings. I examine the non-Turkish participants' perceptions of a role of extended family, a concept of a good mother, and a child rearing practices of the Turkish society. I draw on the theory of symbolic boundaries proposed by Michele Lamont (1992), as the results show that the non-Turkish parents tend to set boundaries between their own and Turkish society.

1.3. Methodology

My research represents an in-depth micro level study. Thus, the research methodology is qualitative**,** for a reason that the aforementioned research questions can be best answered through exploring and analyzing decisions, experiences, narratives, ideas, emotions, and perceptions of individuals. Mason (2002) argues the

usage of in-depth semi-structured interviews is appropriate when the goal of the research is “understanding of depth and complexity in people’s situated or contextual accounts and experiences” (p. 65).

I conducted interviews in Istanbul in Spring 2014 with 3 women from Serbia, one from Poland, Ireland, Russia, and Turkey, one women from Germany and her two daughters, one Turkish-Italian family (Turkish wife, Italian husband, and two children), and one man from England. According to the research criteria, the participants are in Turkish/European marriage, have children and reside in Istanbul or have resided there until recently. During the last year, the Turkish/French moved to Jamaica, one of the Serbian-Turkish couples settled in Ankara, and the Russian/Turkish couple moved to Nizni Novgorod. I reached the participants through personal contacts and public calls on Facebook pages “International Women of Istanbul”, TOMER (Turkish and Foreign Languages Research and Application Center), “Ex-Pats of Turkey”, and “Serbs in Istanbul”.

I conducted and recorded interviews in participants’ homes or in cafés and each lasted between 45 minutes and two hours. Interview protocol was linked to several main topics (getting to know each other, reactions of family and friends, adaptation to life in Istanbul, names and religious belonging of children, teaching of a minority language, experiences of child-rearing in a foreign country), rather than based on pre-defined set of questions. The structure of interviews was flexible, due to different experiences and priorities given to different aspects by informants. Such an approach allowed the informants to focus on issues most relevant for their own family. For instance, some participants skipped questions about the religious life in their family, whereas the others provided lengthy accounts.

Subsequently, I transcribed the interviews and coded them by “identifying appropriate blocks of text with a particular code” (Campbell et al., 2013, p. 297) and putting them into the coding scheme. Afterwards, I linked grouped quotations to relevant theoretical framework and analyzed them from the perspective of interpretivism. According to Fay (1996):

> Interpretivism may be defined as the view that that comprehending human behavior, products, and relationships consists in reconstructing the self-understanding of those engaged in creating or performing them. Put colloquially, interpretivists think that to comprehend others is to

> understand meaning of what they do, and that to understand this meaning is to understand them simply in their own terms (p. 113).

There is an over-representation of women among my research participants, as I primarily focus on female experiences, following the argument of Nira Yuval-Davis that mothers "embody boundaries of the cultural or national community" (cited in Bonjour, 2013, p. 63). Moreover, mothers are "cultural reproducers, the ones who are supposed to teach particular songs, and cook particular dishes, to be responsible for the symbolic identity being reproduced from one generation to another" (Yuval-Davis, 2009, p. 132). However, also Turkish women and foreign men are included, in order to compare their experiences with the experiences of foreign mothers.

Lastly, the establishing rapport with the research participants was quite smooth, as I am married to a Turkish citizen and have a small child. Thus, my own position is liminal. On one side, I am an insider. Virtually all participants perceived me as one of them, and as a result, readily shared their personal stories with me, with the assumption of mutual understanding and approval. On the other side, as a researcher I am an outsider, and I had to be particularly cautious not to imply my own experiences and perceptions during the conversation and thus divert the research participants from their own.

CHAPTER II

WHO WE ARE?

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS, REACTIONS TO CROSS-NATIONAL MARRIAGE, AND ADAPTATION STRATEGIES TO TURKISH SOCIETY

2.1. The research participants

The research participants are middle and upper-middle class people from nine different countries (England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Russia, Turkey, and Serbia). The main criterion for selection was that the non-Turkish participants moved to Turkey primarily because of a relationship with a Turkish citizen. Hence, I purposively excluded other types of immigrants (i.e. refugees, undocumented immigrants, work immigrants, circular immigrants from post-Soviet countries, or Turkish returnees from European countries) from the research. Nonetheless, I did not intentionally leave out people from the lower or upper classes. Rather, they neither replied to my public calls on Facebook pages (Serbs in Istanbul, TOMER, Expats of Turkey, International Women in Istanbul), nor was I able to contact them through personal contacts.

Later I found out that European, mainly English women who married Turks from the lower classes and rural areas gather in private Facebook groups called “I married a Turkish man and we are still together” (with more than 2,000 members) and “Turkish children”. Although I am a member of these groups, after a meticulous analysis of the groups’ content, I realized the issues of concern for those women significantly differ from those prominent in the accounts of my middle-class participants. The issues greatly vary and both groups are exceptionally active. Inter alia, they discuss hand kissing practice (the majority of them does it, whereas in my sample it is non-existing), Western girls being used by Turkish men for getting a visa or residence permit in the European Union, their husbands not helping with the

choirs, or not allowing them to celebrate Christian holidays. Besides, the majority lives in England or outside of Istanbul in Turkey. Therefore, I decided to limit the research to middle-class participants, residing in Istanbul.

In addition, the similarity within my sample in regard to education, previous experiences of living abroad, and international travel is noteworthy. Among my research participants, only one person (a German wife, Caroline) possesses an apprenticeship degree, whereas all the others hold at least bachelor's diploma, including one professor at a university and a Ph.D. candidate. The most common profession for female participants (six out of ten) is a professor of language and literature, which is in line with the argument linguistic competence significantly increases the cross-national matching opportunities. Garrido and Olmos (2014) identify mastery of the language as a crucial cultural resource, which "increases opportunities for contact and communication" (p. 303). On the other hand, male participant are typically engineers and thus able to readily work in different countries.

Among ten interviewed couples, only one met in the city where both partners settled permanently. Caroline (German) and her husband Mehmed (Turkish) attended the same high school in a small German town at the end of the 1970s. This story is illustrative of a mixed marriage between a wife of a majority ethnic group and an immigrant man in a context of German guest workers migration. Mehmed's parents were low-skilled manual workers from rural Turkey. They came to Germany during the first wave of labor migration from Turkey and never succeeded in mastering the German language. Mehmed, thanks to the effort and encouragement of a primary school teacher, attended gymnasium, which paved him a road to university. As the only Turk in the class, he developed close friendships with ethnic Germans, fully mastered the language, and became part of the mainstream German society. An unintended consequence of his educational success was the alienation from fellow co-nationals in Germany. The detachment from Mehmed's ethnic, religious, and linguistic background in turn critically influenced the raising of children in an exclusively mono-cultural (German) manner.

According to the analysis of Furtado and Theodoropoulos (2008) on how education of immigrants affects their ethnic attachment, "the relationship between education and ethnic attachment depends on the average skill level of a person's

ethnic group as well as his nativity, age at arrival, and race" (p. 2). When Mehmed was growing up and eventually embarked into university studies, the vast majority of Turks in Germany were low-skilled manual workers. The discrepancy between him and the Turkish community regarding education intersects with his nativity (all German friends) and his arrival to Germany at an early age which enabled him to be proficient in German language explain his preference for marring a German.

In all other instances, husbands and wives are significantly younger than Caroline and Mehmed. Seven other couples are in their 30s, whereas two couples are in 40s (Didem, Turkish and Alberto, Italian; Richard, English, and Ayşe, Turkish). Hence, the other couples got to know each other, not in a context of classical work migration from poor global South to rich global North, but in circumstances involving international travel, studies abroad, or temporary high-skilled position in a foreign country. Education, especially language learning, proves to be a critical factor in cross-national mating.

Roger (English) and his wife Ayşe met while she was pursuing her MBA in England. Sanja (Serbian), back then a student of Turkish language and literature at Belgrade University, met her husband Çetin through common friends while attending a summer language school in Istanbul. After several years of a precarious long-distance relationship, they finally settled in Adana with Çetin's parents, prior moving to Istanbul. Kassia (Polish) worked as a retailer in Burberry in London when, at a New Year's Eve party, she came across with her future husband Berk, who was attending a yearlong English course. Similarly, Clare (Irish) met her husband Bulut in Birmingham, where he was a student of the English language. Likewise, Didem (Turkish) and Alberto (Italian) happened to attend the same school of English language in London. In addition, first they lived for five years in London, then in Trieste, Ankara, and Lahore before settling in Istanbul. Lastly, Tanja's (Serbian) and Sergen's first encounter occurred during an English language course in Malta. The fact that the educational activity in question is attendance of a foreign language course demonstrates an openness and curiosity towards foreign cultures present prior meeting their life partner. Moreover, high competence in a common language, which is in all cases except Sanja's is English, is crucial in establishing a relationship.

Furtado (2006, 2008) argues education affects intermarriage through three mechanisms. They are a) *the cultural adaptability effect*, b) *the enclave effect*, and c) *the assortative matching effect*. First, “the cultural adaptability effect suggests educated people are better able to adapt to different customs and cultures” (Furtado & Theodoropoulos, 2008, p. 3). Second, “the enclave effect suggests that educated immigrants are more likely to move out of their ethnic enclaves because, for example, they have larger geographic labor markets” (Furtado & Theodoropoulos, 2008, p. 3). Correspondingly, the educated participants in my research had opportunities to study abroad and thus meet partners of different ethnic origin. Third, “the assortative matching effect posits that marriage surplus increases when education levels of husband and wife are similar. This implies that given a costly search process, educated immigrants may be willing to substitute similarities in ethnicity for similarities in education” (Furtado & Theodoropoulos, 2008, p. 3).

Moreover, international business is one more context favorable for cross-national matching. Defne (Turkish) met her husband Julien (French) while he was on a short working contract in Istanbul. After several months of a long-distance relationship during his post in Algeria, they were married and later lived in Morocco, Sri Lanka, and Istanbul. For the last several months, they reside in Jamaica. In addition, Julien spent some time alone on contracts in Cameroon and Pakistan, whereas Defne stayed with their daughter in Istanbul. Svetlana (Russia) met Kerem when he worked as an engineer in Russia and subsequently they have moved back and forth between Istanbul and Nizni Novgorod.

Finally, given the rise in international travel, it is not surprising one couple came together in the tourism context. Aleksandra (Serbian) happened to be Umut’s host in Belgrade through Couchsurfing, a website providing an opportunity for travelers to find local people in every city and stay with them for free. Several weeks after Umut returned to Istanbul, he proposed Aleksandra to join him for a long trip through Southeast Asia. Prior her settling in Istanbul with him, they extensively traveled through Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam for several months.

Furthermore, one important characteristic of the sample is their overall secularism. Only Caroline (Germany) reported being an observant Protestant, whereas her husband Mehmed is not religious. In addition, the only observant Muslim is Umut. Although Aleksandra and Umut are exceptional in this respect as

they are both pious, one does not prevent the other from observing their religious obligations. This finding is in line with research demonstrating religious groups act as gatekeepers.

Carol (2013) studied attitudes toward the intermarriage of native population in Belgium, the Great Britain, Germany, and Switzerland, and immigrants from ex-Yugoslavia, Morocco, Turkey, and Pakistan. The results show immigrants coming from countries with higher degrees of religiosity (Pakistan and Morocco) are less likely to approve intermarriage than immigrants from ex-Yugoslavia and Turkey. Carol concludes "religious identity among migrant and practice among both natives and migrants are associated with reluctance to intermarry" (p. 67).

Alike, Dribe and Lundh (2011) examined intermarriage for 138 immigrant groups in Sweden between 1990 and 2005. According to their results, the intermarriage rate varies from below 5 percent in some groups (immigrants from the Middle East and Africa) to over 70 percent for the others (Western Europe and North America). The authors argue that cultural factors (values, religion, and language) are crucial for understanding the phenomena. They draw conclusion as results show that "the tendency to religious endogamy is highest for immigrant groups from countries with a high level of religiosity, especially from Muslim countries" (p. 320).

In addition, Lucassen and Laarman (2009) conclude on the basis of empirical study on intermarriage in Europe in the post war period "migrants whose faith has no tradition in Western Europe intermarry at much lower rate than those whose religious background correspond with those that are common in the country of settlement" (p. 1). The authors point out that people of Hindu and Muslim backgrounds are the least likely to intermarry.

To summarize, the shared characteristic of my research participants are: higher education, belonging to middle-class, loose adherence to a religious in-group, previous experiences of living abroad and international travel, and mastery in foreign languages. In all cases, correspondence in education level, socioeconomic status, and lifestyle supersedes ethnic, cultural, and religious differences. This finding corresponds to the assumption of Blau, Beeker, and Fitzpatrick (1984) that people in general have preferences for in-group marriage, however, "if various

social affiliations intersect, the rates of intermarriage would depend on the degree to which many social affiliations intersect" (p. 600).

When discussing homophily - "the principle that a contact between similar people occurs at a higher rate" - McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook (2011), following Lazarsfeld and Merton, distinguish between ascribed status homophily and acquired status homophily. "Status homophily includes the major socio-demographic dimensions that stratify society – ascribed characteristics like race, ethnicity, sex, or age, and acquired characteristics like religion, education, occupation, or behavior patterns" (p. 419). Besides, religion is typically inherited from the family. The couples in this study demonstrate a high degree of acquired status homophily. Furthermore, "value homophily includes the wide variety of internal states presumed to shape our orientation toward future behavior" (p. 419). Correspondingly, Garrido and Olmos (2014) argue that critical for interethnic matching are socioeconomic and cultural preferences. Particularly important are cultural resources, which "include values, opinions, lifestyles or views of the world, and mastery of the language" (p. 303). Kalmijn (1998) emphasize the role of the cultural similarity in establishing and maintaining close long-term relationships:

> Similarity of values and opinions leads to mutual confirmation of each other's behavior and worldviews, similarity of taste is attractive because it enlarges opportunities to participate in joint activities, and similarity of knowledge creates a common basis for conversation, which enhances mutual understanding (p. 399).

The participants frequently emphasize shared values and lifestyles: "We were always very liberal, free minded, we did not need to reach an agreement on main values, because we believe in universal values" (Didem and Alberto, personal communication, 27 May 2014). In addition, all participants present themselves as open-minded, liberal, and cosmopolitan. Caroline claims "although my family was conservative, I grew up to be open minded" (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014). Similarly, Defne argues, "my family is not religious or nationalist at all and we know foreigners" (Defne, personal communication, 10 June 2014). Additionally, Aleksandra problematizes the existence of national groups "For me nations are something completely artificial, I don't believe in borders. Not all people are the same, but that diversity makes this world wonderful. Borders should not be

walls, but open, let's get to know each other" (Aleksandra, personal communication, 6 June 2014).

The self-reported personal characteristics of the research participants correspond with the claim of Benet-Martínez and Haritatas (2005) that certain cognitive and affective traits facilitate development of bicultural identity. The authors point out qualities such as "tolerance of and interest in new values and lifestyles" (p. 1022), "emotional stability (i.e. resilience, flexibility)" (p.1022), "extraversion (i.e. sociability and expressiveness)" (p. 1023), and "agreeableness (i.e. empathy and warmth)" (p. 1023) to be crucial for being comfortable in two social and cultural settings. Among my research participants the influence of personal characteristics is two-fold, they influence both the initiation of a relationship with a foreigner, and even more importantly, the attitude toward the partner's country and the adaptation strategies, as will be shown subsequently.

Finally, I argue my research participants possess mobility capital, defined as "the knowledge amassed through international mobility that increases one's potential ability to move abroad and to assimilate into national and transnational structures" (Scott & Cartledge, 2009, p. 76). Furthermore, "it may relate to the modification of existing forms of capital (social, cultural, linguistic, economic, or human) or it may involve the acquisition of a new type of capital resource altogether (Scott & Cartledge, 2009, p. 76). The section 2.3. will demonstrate the role of participants' social characteristics and different types of capital impact adaptation strategies to the Turkish society.

2.2 The initial reactions and acceptance of the relationship

Although the rate of mixed marriages is increasing, and marriages based on love are the norm in Western societies, the majority of people still marry someone from the same social, ethnic, and religious circle. Attitudes towards mixed intimate relationships greatly vary and in extreme cases lead to violence. Smart and Shipman (2004) criticize the individualization thesis advocated primarily by Bauman and Beck and a selection of a partner as a "free" choice of an individual. Rather they argue that the majority of people still take into account preferences of their parents and thus marry a person sharing ethnicity and religion. Smart and Shipman (2004)

claim, on the basis of empirical research, selection of a partner based on love does not correlate with “rejecting an entire tradition and other family and kinship obligations” (p. 12). Rather people in mixed marriages, combine “elements of individualization with a deep commitment to other aspects of traditional cultures” (p. 14).

People who independently choose out-group partners usually still want the support of their parents. This corresponds with Campbell and Wright’s claim (2009) argue “adjustment to intercultural marriage is related to the level of acceptance the couple experiences in their circle of friends, at work, in neighborhoods, and in other social environments outside the family” (p. 859). In this research, the first obstacles that the cross-national couples are facing are the overall adverse reactions of the parents and friends.

All participants report minor objections from the parents, such as a mild skepticism (“Are you sure?”, Kassia, Tanja), referring to a movie “Not without my Daughter”, depicting an American lady trying to escape Iran (Kassia, Clare), and subtle discomfort (“Of course they were uncomfortable. My mother was a bit upset. Both mothers. Also, my father was not happy. But they never told us no”(Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014).

Nonetheless, in a few cases the parental objection was stronger. Caroline’s German parents “did not want a Muslim son-in-law, and they showed it openly, until this day” (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014). They set clear and impermeable ethnic (native Germans vs. immigrant Turks), religious (Christian vs. Muslim) and class boundaries (middle class vs. low-skilled workers). They met Mehmed’s parents only once and never welcomed him in their home. On the other hand, they eagerly accepted their first-born daughter and raised her themselves in order to allow Caroline to finish her studies. To summarize, they refused Mehmed, in spite of his full assimilation into the German society and rupture with Islam, but eventually resorted to a strategy of taking over the responsibility of children and raising them in a pure German and Christian setting.

Furthermore, only one set of parents had openly tried to stop the relationship. From Richard’s long account, it is possible to extrapolate how significant the moral conventions are for opposing an out-group union:

> We had a great difficulty. I was married before, and I have children from my previous marriage. And that's no, no. Anytime I would have time off I would travel to Turkey to try to get permission from her parents for our marriage. Many visits, they would not even see me, they would just tell her she should finish with me. Eventually, my wife falls in some kind of depression. She wanted to be with me, I wanted to be with her, the parents were against it and in the end I think her parents said ok. It took them a long time, and they love me now, but to this day I have to keep my life very separate. My in-laws don't acknowledge that my children exist. Even my daughter does not know that she has a brother and a sister. I used to have to deny my own children to people here. It is a lot of mental cruelty to me. It's horrible (Richard (English), personal communication, 29 May 2014).

Faced with their daughter's firm decisiveness to marry an Englishman, they finally approved it, although with an implicit condition to hide relevant information about his previous life, which violates their moral code and may provoke condemnation from their social circle. While studying parental reactions on intimate out-group relationships within the Turkish immigrant community in the Netherlands, Munniksma, et al. (2011) developed the concept of "family reputation vulnerability" (p. 576). It refers to "the extent to which parents think that the behavior of their child affects the reputation of the family within their ethnic community" (p. 576) and in "cultures that put high value on conformity and family integrity it is more important for parents that their children do not deviate from in-group norms" (p. 576). In this case, the family reputation is preserved by not revealing the personal history of a son-in-law.

Stephan and Stephan (2000) examine prejudices and stereotypes towards ethnic groups through integrated threat theory, which distinguishes four types of subjectively perceived threats that out-group represents toward in-group: realistic threats, intergroup anxiety, negative stereotypes, symbolic threats (p. 25). First, realistic threats are "threats to the very existence of the in-group (e.g., through warfare), threats to the political and economic power of the in-group, and threats to the physical or material well-being of the in-group or its members (e.g., their health)" (p. 25). Second, intergroup anxiety refers to anxiety members of one group may feel when in the presence of members of the other group, for instance, discomfort, shame, and embarrassment (p. 27). Third, the negative stereotypes lead members of one group to expect certain negative behavior from members of a certain group. In Stephan and Stephan's words: "to the extent that the expectations

are negative, conflictual or unpleasant interactions are likely to be anticipated" (p. 28). Fourth, the symbolic threats are "threats to the worldview" (p. 25) and involve "perceived group differences in morals, values, standards, beliefs, and attitudes" (p. 25). Most importantly, symbolic threats are based on the in-group belief "in the moral rightness of its system of values" (p. 25). The most relevant for my research are negative stereotypes and symbolic threats.

The gender-based stereotypes against Turkish men as womanizers or oppressive towards their wives at the beginning of a relationship are frequently reported. For families with Christian backgrounds, the perceived treatment of women in Turkey presents a major threat and it is a consequence of negative stereotypes toward Turkish men. The fear based on negative stereotypes is exemplified in Clare's account: "My sister was very frightened, maybe I would be also if she married a Turk. There are many misconceptions of what Muslim culture is. It is a lack of knowledge, it boils down to ignorance, and in a way you cannot blame them" (Clare, Irish, personal communication, 2 June 2014).

Moreover, as Sanja claims the majority of friend's reactions can be summarized as "Please, don't tell me you were dating a Turk? Long-distance? So, you really think he is not cheating on you?" (Sanja, personal communication, 8 February 2014). Likewise, Defne (Turkish) reports her first encounters with a husband's family and friends:

> He is coming from the south of France, it is a small village. They have never seen a Turkish person before. They were telling me ''but you cannot dress like that in Turkey, can you?'' when I was wearing short sleeves. Also, every time when we went to visit someone new, they would ask Jerome if I drink alcohol and eat pork. When they came to Istanbul for the wedding they realized that Turkey is not a country like Iran at all. They were surprised to see it and they completely changed their ideas about Turkey (Defne, personal communication, 10 June 2014).

However, the prejudices against Turkish men diminish once when a close contact is established. It corresponds to the Kalmijn's (1998) argument intermarriages influence transformations of negative attitudes towards other groups. According to Kalmijn:

> Interaction gives people an opportunity to realize the individual variety among the members of another group and, in doing so, may ultimately weaken their prejudices and stereotypes. Because intermarriage often connects the social networks of the two spouses, this applies to a range of out-group members and not just to the immediate partners (p. 396).

Furthermore, it is intimately important for Europeans their Turkish family is not "traditional". The "traditional" Turkey is widely imagined as conservative, backward, or to be more precise, as antithesis to Europe and its culture. When asked about the Turkish in-laws, the majority of participants began their story by stating how modern and secular they are. Modernity and secularism are outlined as factors, which enable communication and ensuring the harmonious relationship. The most common strategy is to distance a husband's family from Islam ("His family is modern. They are secular. There is no Ramazan. They don't pray. And they are from Istanbul, I don't think I would go somewhere in the East" (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014).

Likewise, Sanja (Serbian) simultaneously emphasizes a husband's non-complying attitude and autonomy by challenging the norms and authorities on one hand and on the other hand, how progressive his parents are: "For me the greatest difference between Serbs and Turks is that here non-married couple cannot stay during the night in a same house. But we stayed together when we were not married and we even went to his parents in Adana" (Sanja, personal communication, 8 February 2014). On the contrary, no one attempted to inscribe positive characteristics to the European counterparts, as if their "modernity" is taken for granted. The participants' narratives echo internalized Eurocentrism, in which Turkey is yet to reach full "modernity". However, by insisting on the "modernity" of Turkish family, men and women from Europe negotiate and transform symbolic boundaries between *them* (as Turks, Muslims, Eastern) and *us* (Western, secular, modern).

Moreover, not only foreign but also Turkish participants underline their families modern outlook ("You know, I come from a family that is not nationalistic or religious at all. And we know foreigners" (Defne, personal communication, 10 June 2014). What is more, Didem links religion to the rural origins of her mother by saying "My parents were not religious actually, they never practice it. My father was even quite against religion I would say. Only sometimes my mother is religious,

because she is coming from the Anatolian side" (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014).

Didem's perception reflects the Turkish urban secularist discourse. In this discourse constructed by Republican elites, as explained by Demiralp (2012), pious Muslims are depicted as provincial, lower-class, even different in physical appearance with their skin color being darker than their urban counterparts. The internal distinction between Islamists and secularist, and "black" Turks and "white" Turks, reproduces the Orientalist Western view of Turkey. As Demiralp argues, for the republican elites of the Turkish Republic, "Islam became a heuristic or a mental short-cut to describe the 'primitive' rural other, and secularism defined the way to Western modernity and civilization" (p. 514).

Furthermore, for Muslim families, the perceived lack of morality of the Western world is threatening. In general, the grandparents are the most afraid that their cultural traits, including religious belief, will not be transmitted to grandchildren. However, if they get a warranty that grandchildren will learn their language and be versed in their customs, the objection toward cross-cultural marriage cease to exist.

Additionally, my research confirms a gender-differentiated attitude towards mixed marriage. According to Islamic religious law, a Muslim man is permitted to marry a non-Muslim woman (Christian and Jewish), whereas the opposite is not allowed. Cila and Lalonde argue although women are primarily caregivers and "carriers of cultural and religious continuity for future generations" (p. 359), there is a concern if a woman is married to a non-Muslim she would not be allowed to raise her children in Islam. On the other hand, a Muslim man would not face it, "given the Islamic tradition of the father having the final say in how children are raised" (Peek, 2006, as cited in Cila & Lalonde: 2014, p. 359). Therefore, intergenerational transmission of religion is ensured when a Muslim man marries non-Muslim, at least at the theoretical level.

The only highly religious family Muslim family in the sample did not object to a Serbian Orthodox Christian daughter in-law. Aleksandra (Serbian) reported a wonderful reaction from Umut's parents, although she anticipated their disagreement, as she is not Turkish and Muslim. What was important for Umut's family was to ensure the intergenerational transmission of Islam. As it was secured

by Aleksandra’s agreement to raise children in “a Muslim spirit”, thus a potential basis for objecting to their marriage ceased to exist.

Similarly, Caroline reported how supportive her in-laws, low-skilled Turkish immigrants in Germany were, “Certainly they expected having Turkish gelin. But they accepted me immediately. They only had this one son, and they realized that our relationship was good for him. I pushed him at school, I pushed him in the university. They saw it would do him good” (Caroline, German, personal communication, 1 June 2014). In Caroline’s case, Mehmed’s parents recognized the advantages of a marriage with a native German. It corresponds with Remennick’s (2009) understanding that marriage to a native is “a guide to a new society, facilitating both cultural adjustment and practical matters” (p. 725).

On the other hand, seemingly secular families such as the family of Richard’s wife fiercely objected a Christian son-in-law, which actually corresponds to the Islamic tradition. Their relationship with Richard greatly improved upon his acceptance to register a daughter in the Turkish population office as a Muslim, albeit he finds it strange: “She is registered as Islam. She is unusual, because they should take father’s religion, but it is easier for me, because of the family. Although I am a Christian” (Richard, English, personal communication, 29 May 2014). The Turkish family managed in assuring, at least, formal transmission of religion.

As reported by the research participants, the main reasons for objections to cross-national marriage in this research can be summarized as moral concerns, in a sense of different moral codes (such as in Richard’s case, whose previous marriage and children present a moral obstacle) and fear of loss of religion, language, and national identity in subsequent generations. Upon ensuring children will be familiar with the heritage, in-laws tend to accept the marriage. Transmitting religion is a condition of particular importance for religious people. Mastering a language is an important factor enabling communication with the in-laws and hence leading to the acceptance, accompanied with prolonged periods of life together in the same household and particularly, when children are born, respecting each other’s heritages.

In this research, each cross-national family is formed despite various degrees of initial refusal by the parents and suspicion of friends. It is indicative of the individualization process in societies in question. Didem and Alberto explicitly

dismiss their parents' opinion by saying "what our parents thought never had too much importance for us. But even if they objected, it would be not a problem because we have a very strong bonding with each other. No outsider effect would influence us" (Didem and Alberto, personal communication, 27 May 2014).

With the passing of time, generally closer relationships between parents and sons- and daughters-in-law develop, attitudes change, and tensions decrease. All participants except the German-Turkish couple report a significant improvement of mutual relationships despite a tense beginning. Even Richard (English), whose in-laws at first refused a meeting, reported a warm and emotional relation with them, albeit complex and loaded with disagreements.

2.3 Adaptation Strategies to Turkish Society

Since modern mass international migration was initiated, scholars pondered the ways in which newcomers adapt to the host society. Robert E. Park and W. I. Thomas from the Chicago School of Sociology in 1920 concluded that immigrants inevitably go through a straight process of upward mobility. The presumption was that the assimilation to the majority society is necessary and inevitable. Through the assimilation process, immigrants are gradually to become similar to members of the host society and abandon their cultural heritage. Milton Gordon (1964) "assumed that acculturation involved change on the part of an ethnic group in the direction of middle-class Anglo-American culture, which itself remained largely unaffected" (as cited in Alba & Nee, 1997, p. 833). Gordon views biculturalism merely as a transitory phase toward the full adoption of host society culture (cultural assimilation). In his account, immigrants are to develop close relations with members of host society (structural assimilation), which results in intermarriage (marital assimilation) and eventual ethnic identification with the host society. The approach of the American society and American scholars was parallel with the processes in the Turkish society. The assimilation was considered to be a one-way process, in which only immigrants change, whereas the majority stays intact.

Alba and Nee (1997, 2005) revisited the classical assimilation theory and defined assimilation as "the decline of an ethnic distinction and its corollary cultural

and social differences" (p. 11). The novelty in their approach is that the assimilation is taken not as a straight-line trajectory, but as an intergenerational process, in which different ethnic groups adopt various modes of accommodation. For instance, Alba and Nee consider Jews, Japanese, and Cubans in the United States opt for more collectivist modes (to be included into the society as a group), whilst Germans and Scandinavians chose more individualist means of adoption into the new society. However, the outcome is still considered to be a full assimilation.

Alejandro Portes (1993) proposed an alternative approach, segmented assimilation theory, which questions the inevitability of the upward mobility and gradual full cultural adjustment. The author distinguishes consonant, dissonant, and selective acculturation. Consonant acculturation means both immigrants and their children adopt the host culture and language, whereas in a case in dissonant acculturation, children are far more successful than their parents. Finally, selective acculturation means both parents and children will assimilate into the host society, but in the meantime preserve ties with their ethnic community and home culture. According to this theory, the behavior of parents exceptionally influences chances for the upward mobility of the offspring. The central argument of the thesis is parental human capital (education, occupation, and language competence) is decisive for the children's outcomes.

Although the assimilation theory is challenged, in recent research intermarriage is still taken as the final assimilation phase. Meng and Gregory (2005) suggest intermarriage is crucial for economic assimilation. As a result of the native partner's assistance in learning language and customs of the society, and providing information about these and contacts, intermarried immigrants are better off economically than non-married counterparts. Bisin and Verdier (2000) argue that an individual parent's ability to transmit cultural traits to their children depends on partner choice. In a case where a minority member marries heterogeneously, chances for successful transmissions are limited and most likely a child will interiorize a majority set of cultural traits. For Quian and Lichter (2007) "intermarriage provides a clear signal that minority group members have adopted cultural patterns of the host or majority population, such as its language and customs, and that they have been absorbed, both economically and politically into mainstream society" (p. 70).

Scott and Cartledge (2009) discuss assimilation in relation to individuals who migrate abroad for emotional reasons. In their view immigrants belonging to transnational families possess resources enabling the uncomplicated assimilation into the "host" society. It is their claim that "few first-generation migrants can be said to have 'gone native'. Moreover, those that have tend to share one thing in common: they live with a partner born and brought up in the host country" (p. 61). In addition, in their argument women are more likely to be assimilated into their partner's society due to their superior language skills and for the reason "national identity/patriotism tends to be a less intense locational tie for women than it is for men" (p. 66).

However Song (2009) corrected a widely-held assumption on intermarriage as a final stage in assimilation process:

> So while intermarriage may be said to herald a form of structural assimilation in terms of one's status and formal inclusion in certain families and social networks and institutions, we cannot assume that minority individuals (or couples) who have intermarried necessarily feel welcomed, or that they "belong" in many mainstream settings (p. 341).

Sang further argues that a person marrying into a native family will not necessarily receive a warm welcome and social acceptance. In accordance with Sang's argument, this research finds: a) a correlation between a quality of a relationship with Turkish in-laws and adaptation to the Turkish society and b) a correlation between strength of ties with a family of origin and success in transmitting cultural heritage. Hence, my research discusses adaptation strategies while taking particularly into consideration the relationship with in-laws.

Relatively recently the scholarship on acculturation has abandoned uni-linear understanding of the acculturation process, with a premise that immigrants will inevitably cease to nurture their cultural identities and have became similar to native members of a new society. Predominantly, advancement of communication technologies and progressively cheaper transport created structural conditions that challenged the dominant assimilation approach.

Berry (1980, 1997, 2005, 2010) developed a theoretical model on four acculturation strategies based on two dimensions: "the degree to which people wish to maintain their heritage cultures and identities" and "the degree to which people

wish to have contact with those who are outside their group and participate with them in the daily life of the larger society" (2010, p. 476). They are labeled as assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. Individuals who do not aim to preserve their cultural heritage tend to assimilate fully into the new society. Integration combines maintenance of cultural with participation in larger social networks. "The marginalization strategy is defined by little possibility or lack of interest in cultural maintenance (often for reasons of enforced cultural loss) and little interest in having relations with others (often for reasons of exclusion or discrimination" (p. 476). Furthermore, "the separation strategy is defined by individuals who place a high value on holding on to their original culture and avoid interaction with members of the new society" (p. 476).

When analyzing the adaptation strategies of my research participants to Turkish society, I combine Berry's theoretical framework with Tartakovsky's (2011) Acculturation Intensions Model, the study of Burgelt, Morgan, and Pernice (2008) on the effect of pre-migration experiences on adaptation strategies, and Safrdar's, Lay's and Struther's (2003) study on factors impacting personal well-being in the process of settlement in a foreign country. To conclude, I analyze four basic adaptation strategies (assimilation, integration, marginalization, and separation) through combination of factors outlined by Berry (2010), Tartakovsky (2011), Burgelt et al. (2008), and Safdar et al. (2003).

Tartakovsky's (2011) Acculturation Intensions Model focuses on the factors underlining the preferences for different acculturation strategies. The author defines immigrant's acculturation intentions as "the immigrants plans to engage in the specific cultural practices that ensure a desired level of their interaction with people from the host country and from their country of origin as well as the immigrants adherence to the corresponding cultural norms and values" (p. 85).

According to this model, the main factor is "the attitudes towards the country of origin and the receiving country, as it primarily affects immigrants' intentions to interact with and accept the norms and values of each society" (p. 86). Second, the model takes into account the effect of social norms expressed in the immigration laws, welfare programs for immigrants, and the policies (p. 87). Third, perceived control over the acculturation process combines "personal resources needed for acculturation (e.g. the ability to learn languages, openness to new experiences,

flexibility, financial resources, and job skills) and perceived environmental constraints (e.g. perceived discrimination and social support)" (p. 87). Fourth, the effect of psychological resources on the immigrants refers to specific personal traits. On one hand, those who are open to new experiences and flexible generally opt for the assimilation and integration into the host society. On the other hand, in Tartakovsky's words "those who lack the required resources are probably forced to choose acculturation strategies that enable them to interact mostly within their society of origin and avoid interacting with the host society (separation and marginalization)" (p. 87). Finally, the effect of environmental constrains refers on personal experiences of the immigrants. This model "assumes that the immigrants tend to interact with the members and adhere to the norms and values of a society, which they feel is accommodating towards them, while they tend to distance themselves from a society which they perceive as a rejecting" (p.87).

Furthermore, the study of Burgelt, Morgan, and Pernice (2008) on how pre-migration experiences impact acculturation strategy is relevant for this research. They identified readiness to migrate, upbringing in an open family with contacts with foreigners, and degree of previous travelling (responsible for ability to manage challenges in a foreign country), as decisive factors for adequate adaptation to the new society. Hence, the research assesses a willingness to move to Turkey and a type of previous travelling in regard to chosen adaptation strategy.

Finally, Safdar, Lay, and Struthers (2003) identify several factors important for personal well-being in the course of acculturation process corresponding to the context of integrated individuals. They particularly emphasize perceived bicultural competence, as "individuals with high perceived competence have a certain level of knowledge of the host society, are more familiar with its cultural values and beliefs, and have better communication ability" (pp. 560-561). Additionally, they point out the significance of connectedness to family. In this research, both connectedness to a family of origin and to partner's family bear significance. Hence, family allocentrism, as opposed to idiocentrism (focus on the "unique aspects of self and the division of self from the others" (p. 561)), refers to a sense of a strong connectedness to others.

This research finds only one instance of assimilation, Caroline's husband Mehmed. Although they currently reside in Istanbul, Mehmed was educated and

established his career in Germany, they met there, and their children were born and spent the majority of their lives there. As the only ethnic Turk in his high school and at the university ("He loved playing soccer and he had his soccer friends all being Germans. And being the only Turkish child at school he was just forced to talk in German. So when we met he would talk German even to his siblings" (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014) and through a marriage with Caroline, his access to formal and informal networks of Germans was smooth. Despite of the presence of his family and numerous co-ethnics, as a result of his upward mobility, he limited his contacts to Germans. His wife Caroline explained why as a couple they mostly socialized with Germans from the perspective of class and cultural differences:

> We did have Turkish friends at the university, but they were all single, so they would not be relaxed to come to our house. Also, we knew some other Turkish-German couples, but we do not have much contact with them, because they are mostly workers. They marry some worker German girl to stay there. There was no point in having relationship with them, there were no topics to talk about, things that we are interested in and things they are interested in are just different (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014).

Mehmed's personal traits (i.e. ability to quickly master the German language, acquire skills necessary for highly qualified jobs, and easily form friendships with ethnic Germans), coupled with social support (teachers, girlfriend), a tendency to avoid discrimination (a result of a low status of the Turkish community), lack of interest in preserving Turkish language and culture, and plans for long-term stay in Germany are the factors which contributed to his successful assimilation.

The case of Caroline and Mehmed represents an exception among my research participants, and it occurred in the context of Germany. None of the participants reported a pressure to assimilate into the Turkish society.

The most common adaptation strategy in Turkey is integration. Sanja (Serbia) represents an ideal case of a perfectly integrated person into the Turkish society, whereas simultaneously keeping exceptionally strong ties with Serbia. She holds a BA in Turkish language and literature, and works as a translator in Serbian language and an administrative staff of a famous Turkish hospital, which on a daily basis admits patients from former Yugoslavia for treatment. In Istanbul her social

life is divided between her and husband's joint Turkish friends and relatives, several friends from Serbia, and an international group of people (from Romania, Macedonia, Russia, etc.) with whom she works at the same hospital. On a daily basis, she speaks Serbian, Turkish, and English and communicates with people from numerous countries. She fully participates in formal and informal networks of the host society and at the same time effectively keeps strong connections with Serbia as a result of her job and informal networks. After setting the initial boundaries towards the in-laws regarding upbringing of her child, she cherishes a harmonious relationship with them. She keeps her own "ethnic private niche" for herself in the diaspora, without involving her husband and son.

By choosing to specialize in Turkish language and literature prior to meeting her husband, she already showed an interest in Turkey and became proficient in Turkish culture, history, and society. Considering pre-migration factors of adjustment, she had cultural and linguistic capital and a positive attitude towards the partner's country. She is fully culturally and socially competent in both Serbian and Turkish settings, and practices what Steven Vertovec (2004) calls "bifocality" or "dual orientation" in everyday life (p. 977).

Along with Sanja (Serbian), the integration strategy is employed by three more women: Aleksandra (Serbian), Kassia (Polish), and Clare (Irish). What is common for all of them is exceptional eagerness to learn the Turkish language and mastery and prolonged periods of time in the same household with the Turkish in-laws. It proved critical for the language acquisition, but also for the diminishing of "acculturation stress" and satisfaction with a life in Turkey. When a major life event, such as transition to marriage and parenthood, occurs in an unfamiliar context, a social support is critical for overcoming stress. In fact, the women who had lived with a Turkish mother in-law once and established a harmonious relationship with her outlined this experience as an enormous asset enabling successful adoption.

The professional satisfaction (economic integration also proves to be an important factor in overall adaptation. Aleksandra and Umut pursue their joint dream of establishing an organic farm, whereas Kassia and Clare work as English teachers. Besides, their social networks are diverse. Besides cherishing friendly relations with husband's family and friends, they have friends within an international community and with fellow nationals.

To summarize, in all four cases, there was a present eagerness to move to Turkey, and prior experiences of international travel, as suggested by Burgelt et al.; personal resources (openness toward Turkish culture, devotion to studying Turkish language, job skills); social support of Turkish in-laws wide group of friends and family connectedness and a lack of perceived discrimination; positive social norms (easy access to residence permits).

Only one couple in the sample Didem (Turkish) and Alberto (Italian) reported a separation from the both societies. The essential reason for it is a lack of support by both sets of parents, although they claim they opted voluntarily for what they call multicultural life. Berry received criticism of the marginalization strategy (see van Oudenhoven et all. 2006) by the authors arguing immigrant group does not opt voluntarily to be marginalized. They are rather forced. However, the difference between voluntarily and forced marginalization is a difference between affluent and low-skilled immigrants (refuges, asylum seekers). Both husband and wife complain about the treatment they receive from their parents ("Her mother sometimes, even after 20 years of our marriage, if she has a chance she is staring at me as if I am coming from some other planet" (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014). Moreover, in Alberto's words:

> Actually, I never had a good relationship with my mother, we always had problems. She is also not type of grandmother who would take care or spend time with grandchildren. I always felt I never got any help from her side. And Alberto's mother, she was a typical mother in-law, jealous of me, always interfering, always criticizing, you are not cooking well. But, fortunately, he never took her side (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014)

As a result, Didem and Alberto have created their own private niche and detached themselves from multiple actors in the society. They travel frequently and easily resettle as a family. They are equally distant from respective Turkish and Italian societies and perceive themselves as a "multicultural" family, with a supra-national identity. Accordingly, their social circle is limited exclusively to the international community. In spite of full proficiency in Turkish and Italian, they still prefer to stay in limited international circles in Turkey and other countries. As Didem recounts their experiences from Pakistan: "We went out to a very small club only for foreigners, Pakistani are not allowed to go. Also, we were friends with their

high society. Very nice people, always throwing a lot of parties" (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014). Similarly, Alberto observes. "Foreigners live like in an island in Ankara, so you meet them all the time. We were in Turkey, but still in multinational environment" (Alberto, personal communication, 27 May 2014). Finally, they openly reject to be associated with their heritages ("Our friendships are very limited, we cannot be friends with only Turkish or only Italian couples, justwith mixed couples" (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014) and create a private "third space".

Furthermore, if not faced with a welcoming attitude, foreign parents tend to develop an antagonistic position toward host society and hence opt for a marginalization strategy. It is usually coupled with personal disinterest toward the culture and particularly typical for men from the countries on whose respective cultures are assumed to have a higher value, such as England and France. Hence, they tend to develop a feeling of cultural superiority. Richard moved unwillingly to Turkey due to his wife's illness and was initially confronted with unwelcoming attitude of in-laws. Hence, in his view, living in Turkey presents a sacrifice ("I gave up so much, for example a great and important job" (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014). He did not have previous experiences with life abroad, neither speaks a foreign language. It is in line with that Burgelt's et al (2008) empirical finding that "those participants who travelled less had more limited experiences, knowledge and understanding of themselves and life, and a smaller response repertoire" (p. 291).

On the other hand, his wife speaks perfect English and adapted exceptionally well to the English society. He is particularly resentful toward his in-laws and Turkish culture. He claims he does not like anything neither about Turkish culture, nor about life in Turkey. His consistent refusal to learn Turkish is in line with the separation strategy: "I constantly get harassed, "Why don't you learn Turkish, you've been married for so long… I met my wife in England, we have been living in England 7 years before we moved to Turkey, and we never had a need to speak Turkish. We still speak English to each other. My mother and father in law, they don't speak English" (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014). His attitude towards Turkish language ("It is a useless language, face it, English is an

international language" (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014) prevents him from mastering it and being competent to fully participate in the society.

Similarly, Julian (French), an engineer in a large multinational company, who had lived twice in Istanbul, once he worked there and once between two posts abroad, never attempted to learn Turkish. As in Richard's case, a lack of a common language blocks effective communication with the in-laws who do not speak English. In both cases, the wife acts as a mediator, translating back and forth. What is common for Richard and Jerome is their having a more positive attitude toward the home country and their temporary stay in Turkey.

The third marginalization case is Tanja (Serbian). In her case, loosely involved both set of families of origin, lack of proficiency in Turkish, inability to find a job as a professor of French language and literature, and refusal of co-ethnics due to the prejudices against Turks led to marginalization. Tanja claims that a group of affluent Serbs living in Istanbul, circles around the consulate and pilots working for the Turkish airlines, did not accept her due to her marriage to a Turkish man.

Finally, it is possible for a regression in adaptation to occur. Due to deteriorated relationship with a husband and his parents, Kassia's (Poland) initial contentment with a life in Turkey turned into a feeling of resentment. Beforehand fully integrated into the society, she withdrew into separation and became overtly critical of the society and culture. The main reason is lack of help she receives from Turkish in-laws in regard to child rearing.

> My mother in-law is not really eager to take care about Doga too much, not as much she should or could. Last year I left him with her only for one night and afterwards she said she does not want to take care of him for a night. I left him again last week and she called me to come and take him. She is 56 and healthy; she does not like kids, to be honest. She is never involved in playing with him. She does not take him to the park (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014).

Her personal disappointment had led to the disappointment into the country and culture. It is coupled with obstacles to visit her home country and disinterested of her husband in Poland ("My husband and son were never in Poland. It is too expensive to go there" (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014)) and detachment from her family ("My parents are divorced and my mum lives in Italy.

Also in Poland some families are very close, I just didn't have that experience" (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014)).

In conclusion, my research is in line with Scott's and Cartledge's (2009) claim that "transnational family *milieus* formed from mixed-nationality relationship migration provide migrants with relatively rapid and direct access to host-country sociocultural networks (p. 66).

However, the findings of my research contradict the argument of Scott and Cartledge (2009) that love immigrants, unlike the other types of immigrants, are expected to go through "extreme assimilation". In the author's empirical research on women from the Great Britain married in France and the vice versa, the participants fully adapted to partner's society and, for instance "all interviewees spoke their partner's language at home and only a minority had brought their children up to be genuinely bilingual" (Scott & Cartledge, 2009, p. 77).

On the contrary, in my research English is the most common language spoken between Turkish and non-Turkish partner. Even the participants who have a good command of Turkish prefer to speak English with the partner. Moreover, all non-Turkish participants successfully teach native languages to their children, even in cases of Serbian and Polish, which are not prestigious and widely used languages. Additionally, rather than becoming members solely of Turkish partner's social networks, the participants tend to maintain relationships with their co-nationals and other foreigners in Turkey. Instead of becoming assimilated (except in Caroline's and Mehmed's case), the non-Turkish participants preserve strong emotional and social ties with the countries of origin.

Moreover, Scott and Cartledge (2009) explain the ease and rapidness of extreme assimilation in British-French marriages by the proximity of the respective cultures. Thus, the immigrants "have negotiated shallow "identity frontiers" in forming transnational families" (p. 61). Contrastingly, Roer-Strier and Ben Ezra (2006) argue Western women who married Palestinian men and live in Palestine undergo double marginalization, as foreigners and as women in a patriarchal society. The authors agree with Scott and Cartledge on the importance of a native family. In their view, the husband's family is "the primary agent for conveying local values and practices and for defining what is expected from a man and, in particular, his foreign wife" (p. 52). However, the foreign wife remains a stranger as "the

environment is embedded with cultural symbolic boundaries that keep the foreign wife outside the cultural group" (p. 52).

Consequently, in order to adapt to the society and fulfill expectations of in-laws, Western women in Palestine use strategies that are found neither in Scott's and Cartledge's nor in my research. According to Roer-Strier and Ben Ezra, there are 6 strategies of adaptation, namely "(a) knowledge of Arabic language, (b) changing the style of dress, (c) adoption of socially assigned family and parental roles, (d) conversion to Islam, (e) adoption of local beliefs and values, and (f) modifying childrearing ideologies and practices according to the local customs" (p. 46).

All female participants in my research learned the Turkish language. Nonetheless, no one converted to Islam, nor changed the dressing style. Furthermore, in contrast to the Palestinian case, as the subsequent two chapters will show, the non-Turkish participants tend to challenge Turkish family and parental roles, keep their beliefs and values, and, lastly, not only preserve their childrearing ideologies and practices, but also set symbolic boundaries toward ideologies and practices of Turkish society.

Roer-Strier's and Ben Ezra's research found "the assimilated cultural adaptation pattern" and "the ambivalent cultural adaptation pattern" to be most prominent among their research participants. In the first strategy, the foreign women attempt to challenge social marginality and "completely engages in new cultural practices, entirely adopting the Palestinian Islamic culture" (p. 46). In the second strategy, the women "change their lifestyle according to certain local customs, such as relinquishing salaried work, adopting some dress codes, in some cases conversion to Islam; but at the same time, they challenge societal norms in order to keep basic values, such as freedom of thought, or Western values and childrearing practices" (p. 47).

In my research the most common strategy is integration, and none of the participants reported a significant social pressure of any kind. I consider several factors to be decisive.

First, the Turkish partners come from overtly secular, middle-class families, and the families in my research reside in urban, secular areas of Istanbul. As a result, the social pressure on non-Turkish women to change and adjust their behaviors and

appearance is low. Moreover, the welcoming attitude of Turkish in-laws is most frequently cited favorable factor for successful adaptation to Turkish society.

Nonetheless, the case of non-Turkish women who married religious, low educated men from rural areas differs significantly. As I discovered through content analysis of the Facebook groups “I married a Turkish men” and “Turkish children”, their strategies are similar to those of Western women in Palestine. In both cases, Islam and patriarchy strongly influence gender relations and role. Consequently, many women convert to Islam and cover, change dietary habits, abstain from consuming alcohol, et cetera. Thus, their adaptation strategy may be labeled as assimilation in Berry’s sense.

Second, the native countries of my research participants are not far from Turkey. Hence, they can easily maintain strong emotional, social, and even professional ties. Besides, when non-Turkish parents approve a marriage with a Turkish citizens and frequently visit Turkey, they provide crucial support. In addition, the participants reported being friends with other Europeans in Istanbul. The networks of ex-pats represent a specific social space for mutual support.

Third, the Turkish and non-Turkish partners have shared “cultural capital” in Bourdieu’s terms. Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes three forms of cultural capital:

> Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the *embodied state*, i.e. in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified state*, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace of realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the *institutionalized state*, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee (p. 84).

Similar personal characteristics (i.e. openness and flexibility), consumption of similar cultural goods, and parity in education level of non-Turkish and Turkish partners denote shared lifestyles and values, and consequently facilitate integration.

In other words, perceived “cultural” distance between partners is low. According to Benet-Martínez and Haritatos (2005), the perception of distance or overlap between two cultures impact acculturation. The authors argue that “the perceptions that one’s two cultures are non-overlapping, dissociated, and distant from one another is related to more learning- and performance-related aspects of the

acculturation experience” (p. 1040). In my research, none of the participants refer to cultural differences with the Turkish partner. Additionally, apart from mastering the Turkish language, the research participants did not need to acquire particular skills for successful living in Turkish society and adopt particular social norms and codes of behavior.

CHAPTER III

WHO WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO BE?
IDENTITY MARKERS, COMPETENCIES, AND BELONGING

3.1. Approaches to diversity within the mixed family

In cross-national families, parents have at their disposal two sociocultural repertoires from which to choose and combine elements to be transmitted to their children. Upon the birth of a baby, a conscious imagining of the family begins. The parents' deliberate choice of a given name, taught languages, religious and cultural traditions with which children will be familiar with, and a selected citizenship(s) are parts of an active imagining. Parents critically influence the position of a child toward their respective societies, as well as a child's ability to be a functional member of these societies, and his or her sense of identity and belonging.

Hence, this chapter focuses on how mothers and fathers negotiate and pass specific aspects of sociocultural heritage to their children. More precisely, I examine how parents decide to name the children and how they influence the development of their religious and sociocultural competencies.

I discuss names of children, taken as the most important identity markers. The names are immediate and powerful signifiers of the collective belonging. Upon the birth, the first far-reaching decision, which reflects parents' political, religious, and general identity concerns, is naming of a child. Names strongly associated with particular religious or ethnic groups represent an automatically visible collective affiliation mark. The couples in this research are triply diverse; they are inter-ethnic, inter-religious, and inter-linguistic. The fact that one parent comes from a Christian and the other from a Muslim background complicates the choice, taking into a consideration abundance of names with a religious connotation or the roots from Quran and Bible. Besides, there is a scarcity of names common in Turkey and Christian countries of Europe.

I examine the naming choices of parents by following Lieberson's and Bell's (1992) argument:

> The naming activity is ultimately a social process, and the resulting pattern of name usage reflects combined influenced of the imagery associated with each name, the notions parents have about the future characteristics of their children, estimates of the response of others to the name, the awareness and knowledge of names through the mass media and other sources, parents' beliefs about what are appropriate children's names for persons of their status, and institutionalized norms and pressures (p. 514).

When choosing a name, parents in my research commonly combine the imagery of a life they want for their child and an attempt to please both sides of the family. Depending on a life imagined, parents opt for a) an ethnic and/or religious name, b) a cosmopolitan name, or c) a name or a combination of names emphasizing a child's double heritage.

Religious socialization within the family is the next topic. Furlong and Ata (2006) propose six patterns of accommodation in Christian-Muslim marriages: a) conversion or annexation, b) ignoring and withdrawing, defined as "a de facto policy of ignoring the question of religious difference" (p. 254), c) active policy espousing a plurality of faiths refers to a strategy in which partners participate in religious activities of the other one, d) compromising and negotiating "is a radical pattern in which both parties leave their religion of origin and take up an 'in-between' allegiance" (p. 254), e) pastoral/ecumenical yielding refer to different extent of merging of "the rites and practices of different faiths" (p. 254), and f) respect for "otherness" is a strategy in which "couples chose to individualize religious observation, with each partaking in his/her religious life and respecting the other's difference without co-opting or minimizing the difference" (p. 254).

In addition, when it comes to inter-generational religious transmission, parents may decide to raise children in only one faith, or to bypass both and raise children as atheists or agnostics, or as suggested by Froese (2008) to have a multi-religious or inter-religious practice.

Third, I examine parental decisions and influence on the development of children's sociocultural competencies. Children from mixed families do not automatically have access to double cultural repertoires. Active and continuous paternal involvement in a favorable surrounding is a prerequisite for children's language acquisition, apprehension of religious traditions, and knowledge of appropriate behavioral codes in diverse social settings. The multiple cultural

competencies and integrated plural identities denote "'individuals' ability to incorporate different cultural aspects in themselves, store them in a cultural and religious inventory and retrieve what is appropriate in a particular context" (Arweck & Nesbitt, 2010, p. 11) and have to develop over a long-lasting period. It depends on a decision and efforts of parents with which aspects of their respective traditions children are going to be familiar. During the research, I observed the ideas of what kind of life parents imagine for their children lead their choices of identity markers and development of competencies.

In analyzing parental approaches on identity markers and the development of religious and sociocultural competencies, I follow the model proposed by Caballero, Edwards, and Puthussery (2008), which distinguishes three typical approaches (open individualized, mix collective, and single collective) parents employ in order to deal with difference and belonging of their mixed offspring. The model is based on qualitative research of mixed couples in England.

The authors describe these approaches as "typifications". Typifications are "taken-for-granted, common-sense frameworks concerning the constitution and implications of difference and belonging that parents use to make sense of bringing up their mixed children" (p. 22). Additionally, the authors discuss the discursive motives underlining each typification.

According to the authors "the key feature of the open individualized typification is that children's identity and sense of belonging are not seen as necessarily rooted in their particular racial, ethnic, or religious background" (p. 954). The individual typification is found among the middle-class parents, who possess enough resources for international travel. Typically, parents encourage their children to be cosmopolitan, rather than to identify with a particular ethnic or religious group. Additionally, they commonly insist that children develop "an organic self", which means that children are encouraged to develop their potentials and chose which aspects of parental backgrounds to cherish and incorporate into their identity.

Furthermore, "the key feature of the mix typification is that children's racial, ethnic and faith background is understood as rooted and factual part of their identity" (p. 956). In this case, children are either encouraged to form a "specific mix" of parents' heritages or mixedness itself is perceived and cherished as an

identity. However, the authors claim that they do not find evidence of mixed typification in regard to religion. Unlike in the individual typification, for the mixed one is characteristic to consider racial, ethnic, and religious background as important factors of one's identity.

The single typification is found mostly among the religious families. In this children are raised to interiorize and belong only to one parental heritage. It is typical for families that underline "the importance of the set of rules and values for living a life that a single aspect of the family's heritage supplies" (p. 957). In addition, "a single collective approach may also be expressed as a deep personal commitment and a sense of ontology, so that one aspect of heritage is seen as an intrinsic part of the children's identity" (p. 958).

3.2. Open individualized approach: Cosmopolitan children

The open individualized typification is characteristic for two families in my research. As anticipated, it is a case of Defne and Julien (French) and Didem and Alberto (Italian). Both families frequently resettled for work. The notion of cosmopolitanism played a significant role in a choice of name for children. As Defne narrates the process:

> Once we bought a book with French names there was Serena, from the root Serenity. We liked it, it comes from Latin and means peaceful, *dingin* in Turkish. Then we searched for Turkish name and we both liked Maya, it exists in Europe, even in Nepal and it means love. We knew that she is going to have international life and we wanted a universal name for her (Defne, personal communication, 10 June 2014).

The ethnic origins of name Serena Maya are not detectable at a glance, neither belonging to Turkey nor France is stressed. There is a clear intention to name a child in line with a life the parents prepare and desire for her, along with its beautiful meaning, peace and love.

Both couples who have been living across continents incline toward easy to pronounce, international names to prepare their children for effortless resettlement. The parents have clear ideas what they want for the offspring and with a selection of

a particular name tend to ensure the desired outcome. The imagined well-being of a child is the sole most significant incitement.

> We chose names we liked, very international, Asya and Luca. We wanted names easy to pronounce because we travel to different cultures. That's why. But, my mother in-law wanted Luigi, a name of Alberto's father, but it is too difficult to pronounce in Turkish. To joke with her I told her "I will call him Mustafa." She was so upset; you can't imagine (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014).

Didem at once disregarded an exclusively Italian name, along with a custom of naming grandsons after the paternal grandfather.

The families with international lifestyle, such as Didem's and Alberto's and Defne's and Juline's, effortlessly adapt to the local context. As Didem said: "When we are in a place where everybody celebrates the end of Ramadan and Bayram, then we celebrate too. If we are in Italy and people are celebrating Christmas, then we also celebrate it. But we did not celebrate Christmas in Pakistan" (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014). Remarkably, these two families do not have religious rituals and celebrations of their own, independent from the current context.

Moreover, Defne underlines a secular and social character of religious holidays:

> Usually we are in France for Christmas, so we celebrate. But we don't go to church, of course. I mean, in France no one goes to church anyway. So we eat, drink, like other people. When we are in Turkey we celebrate Kurban Bayramı, Julien really likes it, then we go to visit my grandparents. Serena celebrated her first Easter in Jamaica. It is a big thing, hiding eggs, finding eggs et cetera (Defne, personal communication, 10 June 2014).

The more parents are cosmopolitan in their outlook and with an international lifestyle, the national identity of children gains less prominence. Didem and Alberto have always lived and socialized in limited international circles, among the diplomatic and academic personnel, and they are proud of their rootlessness: "our children cannot get along with Turkish children. They cannot get along with Italian kids. Their friends must be multicultural kids" (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014). At the same time, Didem is critical to their national backgrounds, as

"both Italian culture and Turkish culture, they are not open-minded culture" (Didem, personal communication, 27 May 2014).

Their children have always attended international schools and never lived long enough in one place to feel native. As their teenage son who joined us at the end of the interview commented, "You are a foreigner everywhere. When I am in Italy, I am Turkish, but here I am Italian. When they see you are a foreigner, they treat you differently" (Luca, 27 May 2014). However, their family represents the only genuine "multi-lingual space" among all studied cases, as all four of them speak fluent Turkish, Italian, and English and effortlessly switch between the three languages in daily conversation.

Similarly, Serena Maya attends international schools and her friends come from the variety of national and religious backgrounds. At the age of three she is already fluent in Turkish, English, and French. For the parents who are themselves detached from their nations, the ethnic identity of the child is not important, and they claim that bi-cultural upbringing is certainly an advantage for children. Serena Maya associates the countries with the loved ones.

> For her Turkey is 'anneanne' (grandmother in Turkish). When we swim, and I say let's swim far, she says, are we going to Turkey, are we going to anneanne? France is "papi" (grandfather in French) and a tractor because he has a tractor. For now, she simultaneously absorbs both cultures, and it is normal for her. Our children[1] have two cultures at home from the beginning onwards, and these young Turks in Germany for instance, they meet a foreign culture out of their home, especially only when they start to go to school and socialize (Defne, 10 June 2014).

Apparently, Defne and Julien encourage the emotional belonging of their daughter to Turkey and France, as well as her sociocultural competence in both national contexts. However, they do not aim that she develops any strong national identification. Similarly, Didem and Alberto provided their children with knowledge of Turkish and Italian, but prefer that they develop cosmopolitan attachment instead of attachment to their national groups.

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[1] Defne refers to my son and her daughter.

3.3. Mix collective approach: Bi-national children

The most common approach of the research participants is to stress both backgrounds and it is found among the families in which a non-Turkish parent opts for integration strategy. When it comes to names, they either choose one name, common in both countries, or give two distinctive names, each corresponding to one parent's background.

When opting for a single name, the parents look for common ground. For Sanja and Çetin the only criterion was both a Serbian and Turkish name, and they managed, although it is almost impossible to find a common boy's name. The name, Bora, denotes a type of wind in Turkish and also it is a nickname derived from an ancient Slavic name, combining the words fight and glory.

The motive was to please both families and to avoid that a child's name sounds foreign in the country of one parent. Their disregard of the name's meaning is in line with their bi-national orientation in raising a boy, without any universalistic pretensions. Sanja and Çetin are aware of the significance of the name. Thus, they actively searched for the "solution." Similarly, Svetlana and Kerem opted for a distinctively Muslim and Turkish name, but quite typical for Russian Tatars. As Svetlana said, "Murat is also a Russian name, many Tatars have that name" (Svetlana, personal communication, 5 June 2014). Albeit not ethnically Russian, the name is familiar in the Russian context. The most common stated motive for choosing one name is to set belonging to both countries, but also its simplicity and familiarity in both national contexts.

The choice of a single name in a way camouflages the double heritage. On the contrary, a combination of two ethnic names is a powerful symbol of the child's mixed background. The majority of children in my research in fact have two names. The following example shows the emotional significance of a name and importance for the family members of acknowledging both aspects of heritage. Clare and Bulut's story is an outstanding example of honoring each other's fathers and heritages:

> Mete is my father's in-laws name, and it means leader, it is from old Ottoman, and I wanted to respect my father-in-law. I said that to my

> husband, he said no way. I was shocked. Then he said, “Let’s call him Can, it is easy for Irish relatives.” I thought it was horrible, and we were arguing, we were arguing. In the end, my mother in law said, "Why don’t you put it together?” Ok, brilliant. Two days later my husband went to take his identity card and took his father with him. He registered him, came back and said “Look, there is a card!” And it was written James Metecan. I said, what’s that? He said, “You respected my father by calling him Mete, now I respected your father (Clare, personal communication, 2 June 2014)

Upon the finding out that the child is also called James, Clare cried from the happiness and informed all her Irish relatives, who shared her joy. This example illustrates, in spite of agreeing to live in Turkey, to raise children there and give them Turkish names, a familiar name conveys intimacy and belonging for Clare. Little gestures of acknowledging the roots of the other parent and respecting their heritage significantly strengthen the relationship. Hence, the choice of a particular name can be taken as a gesture of honoring the other parent and his or her family.

The participants of this research predominantly are not religious, neither have they raised the children in a religious spirit. Nonetheless, the parents distanced from the respective religious backgrounds still enjoy in traditional festivities of Christmas and Easter, however, without a religious connotation and visiting churches and mosques. In addition, children love festivities and enjoy in decorating the Christmas tree and egg-hunting for Easter. Christmas for Clare is “just tree and gifts, no pictures of Jesus and Merry” (Clare, personal communication, 2 June 2014), whereas for Richard, whose family celebrates it in Istanbul, Easter is “egg hunting. Sezen adores it” (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014).

Apparently, the complex story of Jesus’s resurrection is omitted. In many instances, children’s access to religious knowledge and practice is intentionally blocked by parents. The general tendency is as Kasia explained: “When he is older I will explain everything to him. What are religions, differences between religions, he can decide for himself what he wants to be, what he wants to do” (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014). For non-Turkish participants, the celebration of Christian holiday is important only from the cultural point of view. Froeser’s study (2008) on the religious practices of children from mixed Christian-Muslim marriages in Germany likewise found out that children do not visit churches or mosques, but celebrate Christmas, and observe Muslim holidays “in the immigrant's

parent’s country of origin and presumably retain a positive emotional relevance for the children throughout the context of the extended family” (p. 43).

My finding contradicts Caballero’s et al. who did not find instances of religious mixing in their research. Mine rather corresponds to the findings of Arweck and Nesbitt (2011). Their 3-years ethnographic research on the religious identity formation of youngsters from mixed-religion families showed most parents who established mixed families did not have much of religious upbringing in their families of origin (p. 32). Frequently, their research participants reported expectations from schools to provide religious knowledge for their children and enable them to make informed choices for themselves (p. 33).

Furthermore, no one revealed any pressure for converting to Islam. The reason may be that children of Turkish fathers born in Turkey are automatically registered as Muslims, and Islam is stated in their identity cards. Even Richard’s daughter Sezen is a Muslim officially. In this sample, only Kassia’s son Milan Doga and Defne’s daughter Serena Maya do not have Islam mentioned in their ID. In Turkish context, children of foreign mother are automatically registered as Muslims, and thus there is no evident pressure for mothers to convert, unlike, for instance, in Israel. Hacker’s study (2009) revealed a strong “gendered pressure to convert” due to “Jewish religious law, according to which a newborn is Jewish only if s/he was born to a Jewish mother” (p. 184).

Moreover, the same non-Turkish parents who do not transmit religious knowledge to their children are trying hard to teach them languages and provide them with sociocultural competencies necessary for living in their countries. Children in general possess both citizenships, maintain frequent contact with relatives abroad and, when living in Turkey, especially in an early age, perceive the other parent’s homeland through the emotional prisms.

Sanja is deeply aware of it of the importance of the language:

> The most important thing for me is that he learns Serbian. It would be a pity to be a foreigner in his own country. I was the most afraid of that. When he was six months old, I quit my job to be with him. My brother and sister came. After that, he spent 3 weeks in Belgrade, and came back with my mum who stayed for 2 months here. So, full five months he was intensively exposed to Serbian. When he is watching cartoons, it is always in Serbian. Our all books for him are in Serbian. He will speak Turkish certainly, so

whenever Turkish takes over Serbian, we send him to Serbia (Sanja, personal communication, 8 February 2014).

Mothers are exceptionally devoted to teaching the child a native language when in a minority context. Kassia, whose son Doğa Milan is three years old claims he understands Polish better than Turkish: “I just spend all the day with him, I work part-time, I am at home during the day, so I talk, talk” (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014)

In addition, it is important to underline that a resentment of one parent's toward the other country affects children. For instance, Richard’s antipathy towards the Turkish society impacts his 7-years-old daughter’s development of national identity. When asked about her feelings for England and Turkey, he firmly stated: “Suzan is English, she is not Turkish. Sometimes when I say some things to her, she says to me “Daddy, stop behaving Turkish! If I would say “Put the jacket on, it is cold outside,” she would say “O, dad, you are so Turkish." She got it; she is very clever” (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014). As can be read from this extract, Richard is proud of her grasping of “wrong doings” of the Turks, such as worrying too much about the weather conditions.

To conclude, the majority of the families in my research (7 out of 10) follow the mix collective approach. It means that parents acknowledged both heritages through the name of children and encourage their proficiency in both languages and social contexts. However, the same with the parents who opt for open individualized approach, the inter-generational religious transmission is blocked by the parents. Children’s knowledge of religious traditions is limited to cultural aspects.

3.4. Single collective approach: Mono-national children

I will discuss two cases in this section. It is important to note neither of them can be labeled as fully single collective approach. However, in the first case (Aleksandra and Umut), there is an intention of a father to firmly set belonging of a child to Islam and Turkey. In the second case (Caroline and Mehmet), there was no such an intention, but due to different factors I will outline further, the children grew up to feel exclusively as Germans and to be competent only in German society.

In the first case, the setting of mono-national and religious belonging started with choice of a name, Mustafa. Although when I heard the name my assumption was that the baby was named after Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, it turned out that Mustafa is one of Prophet Muhammad's names. The following narration of Aleksandra shows the complexity of a naming selection process and the impact of macro relations between national groups on a micro level:

> First, Umut didn't want a Serbian name because he thought he would have problems here. People would ask him "So, what is that Ivan?", then he would have to explain all the time his mother is Serbian. But there is something about Serbs for sure. My mother- in- law, I never asked her, I don't want to embarrass, but.. When we were getting married, she was telling everybody that I am from Bosnia! I didn't want to correct her in front of all the people. Anyway, yes, I like name Mustafa, although it is still foreign for me. A couple of times my husband said we could give some Bosnian name. Then I realized it is ok if it is foreign, but a Muslim name. I said I don't want a Bosnian name! If I would give a name from the Balkans it would be something like Teodor, a genuine Serbian name. If it's not like that, I don't want any name (Aleksandra, 6 June 2014).

Evidently in Umut's family milieu, the events from the Bosnian war (1992-95) and solidarity with the Bosnian Muslims still bear importance, resulting in the feelings of animosity towards Serbs. For his family, the key criterion was that the name is recognized as a Muslim one. Apparently, there is "a hierarchy of acceptable foreign-ness" in this case, where Bosniaks rank higher than ethnic Serbs. As Breger and Hill (1998) explain: "This means that not all groups of outsiders appear equally 'strange,' some groups seem more familiar, their presence is more tolerated, their cultural practices perhaps even admired" (p. 8). Serbs are not only Christian and thus religiously foreign, but, what is more, stigmatized as enemies of the ethnic group, which has numerous ties with the Turks.

Stigma here is understood in Goffman's sense as "an attribute that is ascribed negative meanings in certain contexts and that associates the individuals possessing the attribute with moral inferiority" (Bursel, 2012, p. 476). By avoiding a non-Muslim foreign name, Umut not only deliberately situates his son's belonging, but also camouflages his connections to the stigmatized ethnic group. It is a preventive destigmatization strategy, taking into account his son's future emotional and

psychological well-being. As Khosravi (2012) has suggested “When a religious or ethnic group is stigmatized, the relationship between names and social stigma becomes explicit” (p. 65). Numerous studies in the European countries have demonstrated individuals with Muslim sounding names face a significant discrimination in housing, employment and everyday life.

Studies of Bursell (2012) and Khosravi (2012) in Sweden analyzed the phenomenon of a name change among the Middle Eastern migrants as a successful destigmatization strategy of ‘pragmatic assimilation” (Bursell, 2012, p. 483). More precisely, it means that the Swedish sounding names facilitate everyday communication with the natives while simultaneously preserving the ethnic and cultural identity in the private sphere (p. 483). Likewise, in the public sphere, Mustafa will appear no different than any fellow Turks, while he can freely maintain contact with his Serbian relatives and cherish his Serbian cultural heritage in his private life.

Moreover, the Serbian side of the family reacted negatively. As Aleksandra claims, first they insisted that a little boy should have one Turkish and one Serbian name. However, after the parents decided to call him only Mustafa, the Serbian relatives began calling him with Serbian-sounding nicknames.

Among all, only Umut is an observant Muslim, whereas Aleksandra is in the process of search for her faith, and they have decided to bring up their son Mustafa as a practicing Muslim. However, even in their case, the final decision depends on the child and Aleksandra’s and Umut’s common values are more significant than a mere official belonging to Islam:

> When we got engaged, my husband asked me if I agree for children to belong to the Muslim faith. So, the child will be raised in that spirit, but we cannot know if he is going to be a believer. What is important is to learn moral principles, why something should be done or not. To know to ‘read’ himself and the world around him, to respect elders, to search for truth, not to be satisfied with the material, because it cannot satisfy our longings, to be modest, grateful, to appreciate what he has, to accept with peace what life gives to him, to be brave, not to aim at earning a lot of money, to invest, to help others, to know how to recognize plays of his own ego. And what he will chose at the end, well, it is his path, we all have our own path (Aleksandra, personal communication, 6 June 2014).

Furthermore, in Aleksandra's case, both families are trying to enforce their national identities to the child; Turkish family openly, Serbian in a more subtle way. Ironically, for Aleksandra national identity is not important at all. In her cosmopolitan world-view, she resembles secular and cosmopolitan couples in this research, but due to the religiosity of Umut's family and the covert nationalism of Aleksandra's relatives, macro Serbian-Turkish relations have a significant impact on her life. Two more Serbian women shared their life stories, but their relations with Turkish husbands and in-laws are not loaded with the historical burdens and recent political turmoil.

> Turks here have, I think, much more developed national identity than us. The Turks will be much more aggressive in that regard. Listen, we got his Serbian passport, because Turkish is too expensive, and there is no need to take it now. We will one day when we travel to the east. Ours is seven times cheaper, and he can travel everywhere. And Umut's brother said! "Is he like a foreigner going to enter our country? I will pay for his passport!" They have that, that nationalism. They have that term *gavur*, he said, "is he going to come to Turkey like *gavur?!* (Aleksandra, personal communication, 6 June 2014).

As mentioned previously during the naming discussion, Aleksandra is accepted as a daughter-in-law, but Serbs as a nation are still resented. Umut's family tends to certify boy's unquestionable belonging to the Turkish nation and Islam. However, thanks to Aleksandra's effort to teach Mustafa Serbian and frequent visits to Serbia, inevitably his sociocultural competence in Serbian setting is being developed.

In the second case, Caroline's children, raised in Germany with a strong influence of the German grandparents and minimal input of the Turkish grandparents, identify exclusively with their German heritage. I met Caroline and her two daughters in Istanbul. The younger, who moved to Istanbul with her parents several years ago and attends German school, complained that everything was much better in Germany. In Caroline's words, when they moved to Istanbul the girl "refused to learn and to talk Turkish after all" (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014). The older daughter claims that her Turkish-ness is limited to the cuisine: "I think I always felt German. Especially here in Turkey I don't feel Turkish, not at all. I can't even order a meal here! I don't watch Turkish movies because I cannot; I

don’t speak the language. But of course, I have Turkish influences in my cooking, I adore kofte” (Yasemin Jale, personal communication, 1 June 2014).

However, it was not an intention of the parents. The aim was to raise children to be competent in both societies and to be aware of both heritages. It started with a choice of two distinctive ethnic names for each child:

> Caroline: We decided to give them an international name that Germans can pronounce and secondly a Turkish name, to please my family in- law. For the girls, we had a choice, so they are Yasemin Yale, Suzan Güşen, Sara Sibel, and Melisa Meryem. But for boys no. So our son is Deniz Tugay. My husband wanted Tugay. I didn’t know what it means, so I said ok, no problem. Now I know it is a military name. I didn’t know that. When I found out, it was too late.
> Interviewer: How do you call the children in your family? Do you use both names?
> Caroline: Well, they were called with international names by the German family and with the Turkish names by the Turkish family. For example, our oldest daughter is still Jale in Turkey and Yasemin in German family. That’s why we chose to have two names and especially one Turkish name (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014).

Moreover, although Caroline and Mehmed come from religious families, they agreed not to raise their children in any particular religion. They have been spending all Islamic holidays with the Turkish relatives and Christian with Germans, but each member of the family has had a freedom to independently search for a right faith. So far, only one daughter chose to be baptized as a Protestant Christian, whereas other four children are agnostics.

However, as a result of Mehmed’s assimilation into German society and his unwillingness to teach children Turkish, they developed strong German ethnic identity. Additionally, in this particular case, the language barrier prevented the Turkish grandparents from transmitting cultural knowledge to their grandchildren, coupled with the underprivileged class position. Caroline claims her Turkish in-laws lacked skills and resources to teach her children the Turkish language.

Along with the obtained higher education, marriage with a German woman significantly facilitated his integration into the German society, but at the expense of his children’s connections and familiarity with Turkey. None of his five children speak Turkish, and hence did not gain a “multiple cultural competences”, that would enable them to live and work in Turkey without difficulties.

3.5. Discussion

The studies from other contexts have confirmed that the detraditionalization of naming practices indeed occurred (Lieberson & Bell, 1992; Edwards & Caballero, 2008; Elchardus & Siongers, 2011), in a sense the naming process does not follow prescribed patterns and is not an institutionalized ritual anymore. However, the selection of the name is not fully individualized, or to be more precise does not depend solely on personal taste. Edwards and Caballero (2008) who studied naming practices among the mixed families in the UK reported the importance of highlighting heritage. Lieberson and Bell (1992), as well as Elchadrus and Siongers (2011), discovered correlations between preferences for particular names and class and education of the parents. In this research all participants, in spite of diverse ethnic background, are highly homogenous in terms of class and education. Unlike in Lieberson's and Bells' study in the US and Elchardus' and Siongers' study, difference in preferences cannot be explained in class and education terms.

My research confirms previous findings. On one hand, no one has reported a child was named after an ancestor, by the Godfather or Godmother (as it is a traditional pattern in Serbia), after the Saint (as a practice found in Catholic countries), neither a Muslim Turkish ceremony of name giving after 40 days, accompanied with the reading from the Quran. Besides, not one single informant mentioned a particular relative, such as paternal grandfather, is entitled to choose a name. In all instances, it is exclusively the decision of parents, with minimal input of grandparents and relatives in forms of suggestions.

The affiliative practices, nonetheless, remain, whereas the necessity of emphasizing heritages and pleasing wider families constrain the individual taste of the parents. When couples strongly claim they are cosmopolitan and detached from respective ethnic and religious background, personal taste prevails. On the other hand, the name serves as a "collective identifier" for couples who want to raise a child bi-nationally (Sanja and Cetin, son is Bora) or only in one religious tradition (Aleksandra and Umut, son is Mustafa). The parents have various motives during the naming process, some of them being more prominent than others. The prevalent rationale is always to facilitate the child's life and integration into the social circles where, according to parental vision, a child will live. For Mustafa's father Umut, a

Muslim name prevents his dissimilitude from other children, which in turn may cause distress for a small child. Sanja and Cetin, Bora's parents, motivation is to make him native in Serbia and Turkey, whereas parents who opt for two ethnic names, such as Doga Milan, highlight dual nationality and also the distinctiveness of a child. Both couples who have been living across continents (Didem and Alberto, Defne and Julian) incline toward easy to pronounce, international names supposed to prepare their children for effortless resettlement. The parents have clear ideas what they want for the offspring and with a selection of a particular name tend to ensure the desired outcome.

Furthermore, my research shows a tendency of parents have an explicit agreement on how to approach religious diversity within the family. In my research, two sets of parents who follow an open individualized approach employ the strategy of "ignoring and withdrawing" (Furlong & Ata, 2006). They do not have any religious rituals of their own, but rather adapt to the local context and celebrate holidays of the country where they are at the moment. In addition, parents who follow mixed approach of Caballero's et al. (2008) model tend to encourage a plurality of faiths, albeit solely from cultural perspective. In the entire sample, only one child (Mustafa) is raised in a particular faith. Moreover, with the exceptions of Umut's family and Caroline's in-laws and parents in Germany, grandparents have not attempted to provide grandchildren with a religious instruction.

However, occasionally the grandparents do not agree with a decision of parents and may try to covertly determine a child's and daughter in-law's religious belonging. In two reported cases it occurred with the consent of a Turkish man and the mothers found out many months and years after.

> We had an agreement when we got married and then had a child that he would grow up and then decide what religion he wanted. But then 2 weeks after he was born this imam comes to the place, they said "It is just to bless the baby for good luck." I said ok, why not? That happened, I didn't question anything, my mother in-law is a believer and I wanted to make her happy, to make her comfortable, to show I respect what she was doing. But I didn't know it was making him Muslim. The hoca, imam, came in his dress, I can't even remember, they recite a prayer for a name. Ok, so, I thought it was just a blessing. I guess my mother in-law convinced my husband to do it. That was fine, 6 months later or 2 years later he told me they made him as a Muslim. I wasn't angry, I just said "I thought we spoke about this". And he said "You know, my mum said he is living here." The way I looked at it

> was, we already decided that my son will grow up in Turkey, we will live in Turkey. Ok, it happened, there is no point in me shouting at people, being angry, he's gonna live here, he'll go to Turkish school, ID card.. We raised him to be an honest, good boy, it doesn't matter what is written in his *kimlik*[2]. He is very open, he's been to many of my relatives' weddings, he's been to church many times (Clare, personal communication, 2 June 2014).

Furthermore, although Caroline and Mehmed are not religious, they got getting married in a religious ceremony and without consent of her parents. At that occasion, she unwillingly and unintentionally converted to Islam:

> There was imam sitting in the living room with my parents in-law. And I just had to recapitulate what they told me. Say it again. There is no God, but Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet in Arabic. That means they made me being a Muslim, without me actually knowing. I found it many years later" (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014).

Strikingly, Caroline recounts that afterwards her in-laws had never attempted to make her practice Islam. Clare, as well, points out the tolerance of her mother in-law. The question remains if for their in-laws a symbolic act of becoming a Muslim is crucial. Besides, no one revealed any pressure for converting of mothers.

My finding is quite different from Cottrell's (1990) conclusion, based on a review of literature on cross-national marriages between 1950 and 1990, in the majority of studies maladjustment of mixed children is emphasized. According to Cottrell, the dominant themes in studies from the 1950s to beginning of the 1980s focused on colonial marriages and war bride (women from East Asia married to American soldiers) are "isolation" and "alienation". American men who married Asian women were considered losers from lower classes. Later the trend moved towards the notion of "marginality" and this idea was particularly prominent in literature on Western women married to men from non-Western societies (pp. 154-156).

Furthermore, my findings contradict Remennick's (2009) research on Russians immigrants married to native Israelis, who almost never succeed in teaching Russian language to the children. Moreover, Remennick argues in Israeli

[2] Turkish identity card.

context "partners quite seldom preserve equal parts of their old and new identity, lifestyle and social circle. Typically, one of them would make a gradual transition to accommodate the culture of the other and thus increase homogeneity and minimize conflict" (p. 720). Furthermore, the insistence of both parents on bilingualism of the children counters Remennick's research in which "about half of the Hebrew-speaking parents objected to "confusing" babies and toddlers by another spoken language" (p. 730).

One significant finding is in all cases, except in a German-Turkish marriage, families are multi-lingual. Not only in cases when one a parent is native-speaker of English, but in all other, English language is a main language of communication between parents, although all foreign wives speak Turkish. Moreover, the general strategy when talking to children is one parent-one language. Hence, the children are enabled to be functional members of both societies. It corresponds to a common view among the research participants that being raised bi-nationally is an immense advantage. There is a consensus that practically there are no disadvantages for children when parents come from different countries.

In addition, all mothers in the research speak the father's language. Nonetheless, the opposite is not the case. There is a tendency among the fathers not to be familiar with the mother's language, unless her native language is English. Defne speaks French, whereas Turkish of her husband Julien, who, however, have lived in Istanbul, is limited to basic phrases. Sanja, Aleksandra, Kassia, and Tanja are all fluent in Turkish, while their husbands have no knowledge at all of Serbian or Polish. Even Richard, who lives in Turkey for years, does not speak Turkish, and, what is more, disregards it as a "useless language."

An additional finding of this research is when the fathers are in a minority context they tend not to teach their children the language. As Caroline said "I was pushing Mehmed, I wanted them to be bilingual, he didn't know how to cope with it. My husband just would know Turkish as his mother language from the heart; he didn't know how to explain" (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014). Furthermore, Didem claims her children only learned Italian while attending an Italian school in Istanbul.

Finally, my research shows that almost all children are raised to become fully socially and culturally competent in both societies. Solely in the German-Turkish marriage, children unintentionally turned out to be mono-national.

CHAPTER IV

HOW WE RAISE OUR CHILDREN? SETTING SYMBOLIC BOUNDARIES

4.1. Context

Distinctive parenting styles correspond to the socioeconomic contexts of particular societies. Parenting aims at installing appropriate values and its final goal is a well-adjusted, functional, and culturally and socially competent child. According to Bornstein (2012) “culture-specific patterns of child-rearing can be expected to adapt to each society’s specific setting and needs” (p. 213). In addition, Bornstein argues that a particular way of parenting is crucial for maintenance of culture:

> Parents bring certain cultural proclivities to interactions with their children, and parents interpret even similar characteristics in children within their culture’s frame of reference; parents then encourage or discourage characteristics as appropriate or detrimental to adequate functioning within the group (p. 213).

The empirical research of Rudy and Grusek (2001) confirms the argument parenting styles correspond to the social context and societal needs. The authors discovered authoritarian parenting, “characterized by the imposition of an absolute set of standards, the valuing of obedience and respect for authority” (p. 202) is harmful to a child in Anglo-European context where high value is put on personal autonomy, but it is functional in collectivist cultures. Besides, the authors argue that when the authoritarian parenting is employed by Western parents, it is not coupled with warmth, but rather correlated with parental rejection and low control. On the other hand, among people originated in collectivistic cultures, such as Egyptian Canadians high levels of authoritarianism and warmth correlate.

Values are at the center of intergenerational cultural transmission and child upbringing. Çileli (2000) defines values as “psychological structures that are

internalized as a result of cultural, societal, and personal experiences" (p. 297). Furthermore, the author states "values, together with roles and adult behavior patterns of a given culture, are the key processes in the achievement of social continuity and change" (p. 297). In the migration context, parents must put a conscious effort to transmit effectively preferred values. The more social context and culture of the society of immigration are different from the society of origin, the greatest is an endeavor to achieve vertical, intergenerational cultural transmission. According to Schönpflug (2001) "in the case of family migration, the effectiveness of transmission from parents to children should be less effective because the transmission of culture of origin may be dysfunctional in the host country" (p. 176).

Recently the scholarship began to be interested in parenting in different migratory contexts and the transmission of culturally specific values. Several studies on parenting conducted in Europe and Australia show significant differences between Turkish immigrant and native parents, and explain these differences by focusing on discrepancies between individualistic and collectivistic societies. According to Phalet and Schönpflug (2001), individualism-collectivism can be studied in "its relational aspect of relatedness or separateness from the family" (p. 491). Furthermore, Phalet and Schönpflug's study of intergenerational transmission in Turkish immigration families found out the effective transmission of collectivist family values, which "have in common the primacy of ingroup needs and interests" (p. 490) (such as family loyalty and less investment in autonomy and achievement goals) from Turkish parents to children.

Steinbach (2013) studied the frequency of contact between parents and adult children and compared native Germans and Turkish immigrants. As expected, the research showed German parents on average see their adult children less frequently than the Turkish counterpart. Steinbach, drawing on Nauck and Klaus (2003) interprets the finding by arguing, "Turkish tradition gives highest priority to lineage and establishes a comprehensive set of duties and interactions among parents and children" (pp. 1117-1118).

Ayşe Yemen et al. (2010) studied parenting behavior of the Turkish mothers in the Netherlands and found persistent patterns of behavior among the second generation mothers, which differ from the practices of the Dutch society. However, the authors point out a level of a maternal acculturation as an important factor

determining adherence to authoritarian or authoritative parenting style. Although in general "Turkish mothers were observed to be more intrusive than Dutch mothers, reflecting more demands without explanation, more (physical) interference in the child's activities, and less respect for the child's autonomy", it is found "Turkish immigrant mothers who felt more emotionally connected to the Dutch culture used more authoritative control" (p. 624).

Correspondingly, Yağmurlu and Sanson (2009) examined the discipline techniques of Turkish mothers in Australia, depending on the mother's level of acculturation. They found that "Turkish mothers who had attitudes supporting more interaction with the larger Australian society appeared to be more dissociated from traditional Turkish child-rearing patterns" (p. 375).

This chapter focuses on experiences and perceptions of foreign parents, coming from individualistic cultures, who raise their children in Turkey. It is based on the theoretical model of a family change in cultural context developed by Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı (2002) and the concept of symbolic boundaries proposed by Michele Lamont (1992). Lamont defines symbolic boundaries as "conceptual distinctions that we make to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space" (p. 9).

The key questions of the chapter are: a) how foreign parents perceive family relations, child-rearing practices and related values of the Turkish society; b) how these practices and values are different from theirs c) how, on the basis of perceived differences, the foreign parents create symbolic boundaries specifically toward their Turkish in-laws, perceived typical Turkish "mothers", and Turkish society as a whole.

In the course of my research, several issues in participant's narrative emerged as a consequence of differences between Turkish one and independent family model. The first issue is a degree of closeness and a role of the extended family in child rearing. The second is a concept of a good mother. The third is foreign parents' creating symbolic boundaries toward the Turkish in-laws, Turkish mothers and Turkish society as a whole. The basis of differences stems from the variability in cultural, religious, and socioeconomic contexts.

4.2. The family models

On the basis of the premise that a typical model of a family adjusts to the specific needs of each society, Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı (2002) has proposed a Model of a Family Change in Cultural Context. Instead of taking for granted the assumption of modernization theory that the family models in non-Western societies will during the process of urbanization and industrialization eventually converge with the normative Western model of a nuclear independent family, Kağıtçıbaşı established her model by differentiating emotional and material interdependence in the family. Hence, the socioeconomic development of a collective society leads to the family model of emotional/psychological interdependence. Kağıtçıbaşı distinguishes between three ideal family models, based on the combination of values to be transmitted to children, necessary for the maintenance of the dominant socioeconomic structure, and the value of children for a family unit.

The family model of total interdependence is dominant in traditional, agrarian societies. In such a context, intergenerational dependence is essential for family survival. In agrarian societies, children work from an early age and subsequently a higher number of children increases the family affluence. A child has clear economic/utilitarian value for parents. Hence, an independent person who follows self-interest is seen as a threat to a family's well-being, and the obedience is a crucial promoted value.

The opposite is the family model of independence, exemplified by the middle-class nuclear family of the Western societies. As old people have income and pensions, they do not need to rely on the offspring. Thus, intergenerational interdependence is deemed unnecessary, and self-reliance and autonomy are significant and functional values.

The third, emerging model is the family model of emotional/psychological interdependence, typical of societies in which a necessity for children’s material contribution to older parents ceases to exist. Hence, it is characterized by independence in the material realm and interdependence in the psychological realm. This model combines personal autonomy with relatedness to close others. Kağıtçıbaşı situates Turkey among the societies with the prevalent model of

psychological/emotional interdependence. Alike, Erden-Imamoglu (2013) claims that Turkey is a "community culture", where, in spite of the decrease of material intergenerational interdependence, "dependency rather than individuality and independence, is a desirable feature in interpersonal relationships" (p. 84).

Kağıtçıbaşı (2005) furthermore expends her model by arguing a concept of autonomy is comprised of two distinct dimensions. They are the degree of distancing of self from others ("interpersonal distance") and the degree of autonomous functioning ("agency"). In Kağıtçıbaşı's words "Separate selves are distanced from others with well-defined self-boundaries, whereas the boundaries of connected selves may be fused with others. (Agency) extends from autonomy to heteronomy. Autonomy is the state of being a self-governing agent, whereas heteronomy is being governed from outside" (p. 404). To sum up, separate self and autonomy are found among individuals in the family model of independence, related self and heteronomy in the family models of interdependence, and autonomous-related self in the family model of psychological/emotional interdependence.

Following Kağıtçıbaşı's theory, Mayer et al. (2012) distinguishes between three subsamples within the Turkish society. Once when the Turkish society is divided into clusters, the findings demonstrate the parallel existence of all three family models in the society. The model of total interdependence is characterized for poor, rural strata, while on the contrary affluent urban classes incline toward the model of total independence.

Mayer's conclusion is supported by the research of Ataca and Sunar (1999) on continuity and change of family life in Turkey. In Turkish rural areas, children's economic value is still salient and the male child is preferred, as a son shall provide security for parents in their old age. However, rising urban middle classes tend toward the Kağıtçıbaşı's proposed model. Thus, a preference for a child's sex has shifted toward daughters, as a result of decline of economic assistance and advance of emotional support function.

Concurrently, improvement of women's status in a family resulted in lower fertility and shared decision-making. "Important decisions are no longer made solely by the husband; shared and wife dominant decision-making are more frequently mentioned in crucial areas such as birth control, children's education and discipline, buying an expensive item, and problem solving" (p. 88). Apparently, marital

relations among Turkish urban middle classes are moving towards greater gender equality.

In addition, Kağıtçıbaşı and Ataca's (2005) comparison of 1975 and 2003 Value of Children Studies demonstrates the transformation of prevalent family model in Turkey. In 1975, 75 percent of women preferred having a boy, whereas in 2003 this number declined to 41.1 per cent. It is in line with a prediction that decreased material interdependence, as a result of significant economic growth and increase in women's education, leads to the focus on psychological well-being. Besides, in 2003 study, participants frequently mentioned independence as an important quality for children, while in 1975 independence/self-reliance did not appear at all.

Yağmurlu (2006), following Kağıtçıbaşı's model, investigates the impact of socioeconomic background and maternal level of education, taken as a crucial variable, on long-term socialization goals of Turkish mothers. The highly-educated mothers in Yağmurlu's research reported socialization goals for their children, which are strikingly contrasting from those typical for an interdependent family model. They aspire to have children who are motivated, positive, peaceful, psychologically healthy, diligent, decisive, self-confident, and smart. Besides, "they also reported that they wished their children to have the necessary skills that would help them to accomplish their *own* ideals and actualize their potentials in life. Mothers in this group also emphasized the importance of being a person who knows what she/he wants and struggles for what she/he believes to be true" (p. 42). On the contrary, low-educated mothers put importance on obeying values and decisions of the family, being compliant with societal norms, respecting elders, and being close to other family members.

My research confirms the relevance of Kağıtçıbaşı's model. Albeit it is not possible to classify families of the participants into her ideal types, the non-Turkish participants tend to strongly adhere to the individualistic family model, by repeatedly stressing independence as a crucial value. Besides, my research shows the understanding of self primarily influence how a person judges family relations, a mother's role, and socialization goals for children. Both dimensions, interpersonal distance and autonomy-heteronomy impact their perceptions and practices.

4.3. The symbolic boundaries

As Bonjour and De Hart (2013) argue "The realm of the intimate – family life – is where the crucial boundary work is done; where the sharpest distinctions between 'us' and 'them' are drawn" (p. 73). In the cross-national marriages, *us* and *them* are present in the same family, raising same children. Being a good parent is of utmost importance for individuals. Hence, in the case of a disagreement, the other side is perceived as wrong, even as doing possibly harmful things for a child's well-being. However, non-Turkish parents almost unanimously deny existence of cultural differences within the couple. They even distance themselves from "mixed" families, as in Alberto's words "Probably our case is not the best case for your research. We already had a common ground; we didn't need to make it" (Alberto, personal communication, 27 May 2014).

The participants most frequently reported a strong consensus with the partners on socialization goals and desired transmission values. Perhaps, there is a gender bias in this finding, taking into consideration the majority of research participants are women, and hence principally responsible for the children rearing. Nonetheless, the strong union of the partners is expected, taking into consideration a necessity to deal with a long distance relationship and a various initial degree of refusal and judgment by families of origin, friends, and acquaintances. Rather, the participants point out Turkish parents in-law, the Turkish mothers, and the Turkish society as a whole as the *others*.

According to Lamont (1992):

> Boundary work is an intrinsic part of the process of constituting the self; they emerge when we try to define who we are: we constantly draw inferences concerning our similarities to and differences from, others, indirectly producing typification systems. Thereby we define our own inwardness and the character of others, identity being defined relationally (p. 9).

In addition, Lamont proposes three distinct types of symbolic boundaries: moral, socioeconomic, and cultural. On the basis of the conducted in-depth interviews, this research expends the issues proposed by Lamont around which the symbolic boundaries are created. "Moral boundaries are drawn on the basis of moral

character; they are centered around such qualities as honesty, work ethic, personal integrity and consideration for others" (p. 4). In my research, moral boundaries are the most common and constructed in regard to qualities such of respect and independence and the disdain for other's conceptions of morality, such as in a case of *ayıp* (shame) and gender-differentiated upbringing. The issue of what is perceived as insufficient independence of Turkish children is the most commonly reported.

In Lamont's view "socioeconomic boundaries are drawn on the basis of judgments concerning people's social position as indicated by their wealth, power, or professional success" (p. 4). However, the participants in my research, particularly those from post-communist countries of Eastern Europe (Serbia, Poland) link perceived negative aspects of child rearing to the socioeconomic structural conditions of the Turkish society. It is setting symbolic boundaries vis-á-vis countries. In addition, participants, coming both from Eastern (strong ideology of equality) and Western Europe (where citizens have had on their disposal abundance of commodities for decades) criticize large gap between classes in the Turkish society and *status consumption,* which is "used to express a social class position" (Üstüner & Holt, 2010, p. 248) and a *consumption-focused lifestyle.*

Finally, "cultural borders are drawn on the basis of education, intelligence, manners, tastes, and command of high culture" (p. 4). The cultural boundaries are created around issues of manners, hygiene and cleanliness, and education.

Unconsciously, foreign parents constantly define and re-define different types of symbolic boundaries. When discussing child-rearing practices and relations within the family, the participants tend to contrast one's own country with Turkey and arguing the former one is a better place for raising children is common, and to explain the differences in terms of binary oppositions. The binary oppositions exemplify the boundaries between two social groups. Strikingly, only one mother pointed out Turkey as a preferred child rearing place, perhaps as a result of the detachment from her own family of origin.

4.4. Closeness between extended family members

As the participants come from the more individualistic societies than Turkey, the common issue in their narratives is a perceived excessive involvement of the Turkish parents in-law. When individuals who internalized different concepts of self, as described by Kağıçıtbaşı, come into close contact, communication gaps occur and misunderstanding and disapproval of the actions and viewpoints of the others is frequent. According to Kağıçıtbaşı, the dimensions of autonomy, “interpersonal distance” and “agency”, “underlie self, self-other relations and social behaviors, and in turn reflect basic human needs of relatedness and autonomy” (p. 404). The dimension of interpersonal distance has implications for the understanding of personal space and time. Besides, it refers to attitudes towards the intergenerational dependence. The dimension of agency, which distinguishes between autonomy and heteronomy, mostly affects the understanding of who has the authority over raising children.

Richard is an Englishman who unwillingly moved to Istanbul as a result of his wife’s health conditions. He highly values independence and privacy and considers intergenerational separation to be healthy and necessary. The following quotation illustrates his view toward the intergenerational relations and private space:

> I am typically British and there is a saying “Englishman’s home is his castle”. When someone comes to my house, even if it is my own mother, she is my guest. But, when the mother in law visits, she is not a guest, she takes over the kitchen. We bought our house in England; the in-laws came over to see it. I went out to work one day, I came home and it was a different room! They moved everything around. The furniture, everything! I was like what the hell is going on! But they think they got a right to do that. We, my wife and I decided where we want things to go, but they came and decided they want it this way! And my wife said “Don’t say anything, don’t say anything, we’ll change it back when they go.” You don’t change people’s homes! But for them, they helped us and it was much better that way (Richard, Personal communication, 29 May 2014).

There is a synchrony between Richard and his mother, as they have a tacit agreement on a proper behavior. In his view, any guest, including extended family

members, shall remain confined to the assigned place open for public (a living room). On the other hand, the Turkish mother in-law unintentionally, in spite of her goodwill and intentions to help, simply by roaming through the flat of her daughter and son in-law, violates presupposed normative codes of conduct in the British society.

Being socially competent in both societies, Richard's wife acts as a cultural mediator. As a result of studies and life in the Great Britain for a long time, she has acquired the necessary knowledge, skills, and understanding of a proper behavior. Although she comprehends her husband's need for privacy, at the same time she attempts to avoid offending and hurting her own parents, which would happen if she limits their actions.

In addition, Richard regards the attempts the Turkish in-laws make on having material interdependence as a control: "They want to know your finances, everything. There is so much control the Turkish culture" (Richard, Personal communication, May 29, 2014). For him, it is incomprehensible grownups are not ashamed to depend on the parental financial support. "My brother in-law is nearly 30 years old, he has a job, but he still takes an income from his parents. This is not shameful for him, but for me it is a huge issue" (Richard, Personal communication, 29 May 2014). As a result of a collision in comprehending relations between extended family members, what is an act of generosity for Richard's Turkish parents in-law, he judges as an act of suppression:

> There is no freedom, they suppress you. My parents in law bought us a house without us knowing! Ok, we were renting a flat, they were helping us financially when we came to Turkey, ok in England we didn't have to do anything with my parents, so they helped us here the first year, to settle in. We settled, we liked it there and then suddenly we got a call. "We bought you a home, the one you're renting. Hello!! They expected me to be delighted and happy, but I was kind of shocked because something so big is a decision taken by my wife and I. I didn't have a problem with their financial help, that's fine, but to make a decision for us without actually saying!" (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014).

Different family models and concepts of self, entitle family members various rights. However, these tacit rights provoke resentment in other sociocultural context.

To illustrate this, a right to freely move around the daughter's house, a sign of intimacy and closeness for Richard's in-laws, in his view is an intrusion into the personal space. Besides, a presumed right to decide on behalf of the younger, Richard perceives as suppression, a right to rely on the help of elder's as shame, and a right to intervene, as in the case of rearranging furniture, as an intrusion. The words he chooses to describe his feelings and their actions, resulting from the different understanding of a degree of closeness between family members, bear a strong moral connotation (suppression, shame, intrusion). This case illustrates the depth of internalization of culturally determined concepts of family and self.

Different family models imply various power relations among the family members, exemplified through the issues of decision-making. Opposing the influences of in-laws, as a rule with the support of a Turkish husband or wife is another common issue in the participants' narratives. The disagreements and misunderstandings arise from the contrasting views over the degree of closeness and of a right to bring decisions related to a child.

Commonly, the non-Turkish daughters in-law challenge the tacit authority of the Turkish grandparents. It is a process of asserting power over the child-rearing and it is implicit or explicit, fully or partially successful. Sanja's case represents a process which started with her being exposed to a set of clear expectations from the husband's family regarding child-rearing, followed by her explicit refusal and finally acceptance of unquestionable position of authority of the young mother:

> I will tell you how I managed to fight for my own. Here, everything is standardized, since the child is born. He has to get used to being cold, they put them to sleep by swinging them in a sheet, and they swing them on their legs. It is a must. They have a custom to wash babies in salty water; they said it has to be done. I said, of course we are not going to do that, baby will not be washed until his umbilical cord falls of! In principle, they respected my decisions. From time to time, even if they tried something, they didn't succeed because Bora was used to my way. Now when we live alone, it is easy. But in Adana I had to say no explicitly. So, I said, who once put my child to sleep on the legs or on a sheet, I will give him to that person to put him to sleep always! I was clearly against it. So they learned first to look at me before doing something. Now I let them sometimes, because he is too old to get used to it (Sanja, personal communication, 8 February 2014).

Apparently, Sanja encountered a pre-determined set of practices to be conducted with a newborn. Since she disputed the habitual actions (exposing a child to cold, bathing before the umbilical cord is off, swinging on adult's legs, etc.), each time she had to explicitly oppose them, and simultaneously make sure sure her son is adopting her desired way of behavior. It was a long interplay between Sanja's attempts to achieve complete autonomy and in-laws' attempts to establish heteronomy. Eventually, once when she was convinced into her position of supremacy and the child behaved in a preferred manner, as an act of goodwill she let her Turkish relatives to treat him the way they want.

Sanja's case is the rare one of the achieved one-sided authority over child-rearing issues. More frequently, there is a continuous tension between the approaches. After a lengthy complaint about the behavior of Turkish children, I asked Richard how he and his wife manage to raise their daughter in a way they want, he replied, "Because I am quite strong, my wife is quite strong. They know it. But still, when Sezen is with them, she can do everything she wants, but when she comes back to us then there is a level of discipline and structure" (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014). Richard emphasizes their "strength" to point out that the in-laws are aware of it, but, nevertheless, admits that he and his wife are not able to direct the behavior of the grandparents: "Food is a great example. Sezen doesn't like something, they prepare something else. Sezen wants ice-cream, Sezen gets ice-cream. With us, if she doesn't like it, unless she really doesn't like it, well that's the choice" (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014).

As it was outlined previously, Richard considers his brother's in-law relying on his parents for financial support to be shameful. However, he is well aware his in-laws do not share his attitude towards the money and even regard it wrong and immoral. "They just keep giving, giving, giving, giving, but she needs to understand the value of money. I would guess they consider me to be mean, but I am not mean, I am just being responsible! Children here don't know responsibility; they don't know the value of money" (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014). He is justifying himself, being attentive to their critical position. Evidently, when two contrasting understandings of financial matters and responsibilities collide, the issue of money becomes a moral issue.

Correspondingly, Kassia confesses disregard of her decisions:

> If I leave Doğa with my mother in-law, I know they will give him only biscuits to eat. They don't respect you, you are a mother, you decide how to raise your child. I am not watching TV too much with Doga, not eating unhealthy food at all, but nobody from my husband's family respects that. They know my ideas. I even say according to some research this is quite harmful because it can be a reason of hyperactivity, for example, giving an iPod to a child, but seriously they say but why don't you buy him an iPod (Kassia, Personal communication, 4 June 2014).

Kassia considers herself as a mother to be a main decision-maker. Taking into consideration a lack of common ground (healthy vs. unhealthy food; pro vs. anti-technology position), she feels her authority as a mother is shaken. Being threatened, Kassia in vain backs up her position with scientific proof. However, her lifestyle is exceptional. She avoids consumption as much as she can ("I grow up in a communist country. Some ideas are great in communism. I don't buy clothes. Either my son gets something, either he wears second-hand used clothes" (Kassia, Personal communication, 4 June 2014)), she is unusually devoted to nature, and abstains from privatized services, which in Poland the state provides ("There is no state nursery in Turkey. It is weird when the government tells you to have 3 kids and then you don't have a place to put them. I am not going to send him to private school definitely. I am really against, because I know how kids from private schools are spoiled" (Kassia, Personal communication, 4 June 2014)). Hence, her worldview collides with grandparents' who want to pamper the child with sweets and gifts.

Only one participant, Clare (Irish), assesses family relations she encounters in Turkey as preferable over those in her native country. In Clare's case, the closeness she feels towards her Turkish family and the Turkish society partly results from the estrangement from her own family "I am embarrassed to say, but sometimes when I go to visit my family and enter the house, my siblings, even my nieces and nephews, they would not stand up from watching television, they would just wave "Hi, auntie." And carry on watching their television" (Clare, Personal communication, 2 June 2014). Consequently, Clare undoubtedly enjoys Turkish family culture:

> Family orientation is very important in Turkey. They have no social system. They have no old peoples' homes. If people have a problem, if they don't have a job, if their parents get old, People look after their families, people support their families and that is very important for me. Sometimes they are too close, but family bonds. In general, I like it. I want my son to know that family is really important (Clare, Personal communication, 2 June 2014).

The harmonious relationship with in-laws is a decisive factor preventing resentment toward Turkey and the othering. Both Clare and Aleksandra had a close cooperation with husbands' families since their children were born. At the moment of giving birth, both women lived with their in-laws, and presented a child rearing team with their mother's in-law, who in return respected mother's decisions ("I raise him in a very relaxed manner and the grandmother supports me in that. She does many things with a child, I have less work to do and I learn a lot from her" (Aleksandra, Personal communication, 6 June 2014)). Consequently Clare and Aleksandra greatly appreciate Turkish society and culture.

4.5 What is a good mother?

Social, cultural, and economic factors all impact dominant mothering practices in one society. The cultural models of parenting and family correlate with motherhood ideologies and discourses. Along with the socioeconomic structure and cultural norms and values, the dominant political discourse in one society shapes the public perception of an ideal concept of a family and forms the expectations from the citizens.

Melis and Parmaksız (2012) point out a distinction between motherhood as experience and motherhood as ideology. On one hand, the universal mothering work refers to reproduction and nurturing of children. On the other hand, societies differently determine the ideas and practices associated with it. More precisely, "motherhood is grounded on idealized notions related to motherwork in a specific social environment" (p. 125). Besides, the authors claim that in Turkey "each and every political power acted to constitute a specific gender regime and defined the motherhood accordingly" (p. 127).

The status of women was at the center of the Turkish modernization. The early Turkish Republic, sometimes referred to as the "feminist state" (see White, 2003) embarked into a top-down project of female emancipation. "The Republican state determined the characteristics of the ideal woman and set up a monopolistic system to propagate this ideal in a population that held often quite different values and perceptions of ideal women's behavior" (White: 2003, p. 145). This educated, unveiled, employed, urban, and progressive woman was meant to symbolize the new state. However, the emancipation was confined to the public sphere. The patriotism and the nation required women to marry and give birth, and in fact, one of the functions of education was to train women to raise proper citizens. Until the large scale rural to urban migrations initiated in 1950s, these reforms were limited to big cities and rural women stayed unaffected by "the state-led promotion of women's equality in the public sphere" (p. 155), thus representing the *other* of the idealized republican woman. Nationalist movements, such as the Turkish one, according to Kandiyoti (2004), "reaffirm the boundaries of culturally acceptable feminine conduct and exert pressure on women to articulate their gender interests within the terms of reference set by nationalist discourse" (p. 49).

Nonetheless, the emancipation of women in the public sphere was not accompanied by their emancipation in the private sphere. The traditional gender division of work within the household and power relations between men and women were not of interest for the modernization project, neither issue of domestic violence. In spite of public emancipation, Eslen-Ziya and Korkut (2010) argue for Kemalist modernization project women are "sacred symbols or totems of modernization" (p. 312), whose "highest duty was defined as child rearing and motherhood, which epitomized 'republican motherhood'" (p. 318).

Until the 1980s and neoliberal transformation of Turkey, the covered women were regarded as belonging to the lower classes and rural areas, as the antithesis of urban and secular women. When the neoliberal policies limited state role in the economy, it enabled the rise of private business and consequently jeopardized the privileged secular elites closely related to the state. "Many small- or medium-scale, mostly family-owned and Anatolian-based businesses that claim an Islamic identity were founded in this new economic environment" (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2009, p. 11). As a result, religious veiled women from newly emerged Muslim middle and

upper classes entered the public sphere and urban spaces. Young, educated, and modern veiled women "for the secular public represented the frightening cultural Other who threatened the modern, urban, Western lifestyle" (Sandıkcı & Ger, 2007, p. 192).

The conservative outlook of the current Turkish government is evident in the public statements of high political officials. In line with the previous political establishment, they also attempt to impose their ideological position on the constituency. Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan defends his view on women's position through religious requirements: "Our religion (Islam) has defined a position for women (in society): motherhood."[3] Likewise, Turkish Health Minister Mehmet Müezzinoğlu, who during the visit to the first born baby in 2015 in Istanbul stated: "Mothers should not put another career other than motherhood at the center of their lives. They should put raising good generations at the center of their attention."[4] Yazıcı (2012) argues that the discourse of the Turkish ruling AKP party, as a consequence of the joint forces of Islam, neoliberalism, and conservatism, promotes the ideal patrilineal family of three generation, specifically as a contrast to the Western nuclear family, "in which adult/married children 'neglect' their duties to their own elderly parents" (p. 113).

However, the AKP's position towards the priorities women should hold does not substantially differ from the previous republican discourse. What is different is the approach toward the position of women in public sphere (not encouraging gainful employment) and female public appearance (modesty and chastity symbolized trough the way of dressing on one hand and non-covered women symbolizing progress and modernity). The motherhood as a highest duty remains a constant in Turkish political discourse.

The conducted researches demonstrate the impact of political discourses on motherhood ideologies and practices and suggest an exceptional child-centrism. Erden-İmamoğlu (2013) argues:

[3] http://www.dw.de/motherhood-should-be-womens-priority-turkish-president-erdogan/a-18083263).

[4] http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/mothers-only-career-should-be-motherhood-turkish-health-minister-says.aspx?pageID=517&nID=76360&NewsCatID=341

> Women have a greater socialized tendency to use the marital role to define their identity and reliance on marriage as a source of personal gratification. Since the Turkish women are socialized by adopting the traditional woman's role, she evaluates child rearing almost as the only aim in her life and always pushes the motherhood role to the forefront (p. 91).

Findings of Ozhan Dedeoğlu (2010) confirm Erden-İmamoğlu's argument:

> The mothering and consumption practices of mothers who reflect the "good mothering" discourse are centered on the themes of self-sacrifice and ultimate fulfillment, devotion and child-centeredness. Children reflect success of mothering practices and social and material status of their mothers (p. 13).

Both Erden-İmamoğlu's and Ozhan Dedeoğlu emphasize the central role of motherhood for identity and devotion to children for Turkish women. There is a great respect and admiration for mothers in Turkish society, but in return expectations are high. A mother shall be selfless, tireless, and without the wishes of her own.

The non-Turkish research participants are frequently critical to self-sacrificing motherhood and losing of mother's personality and autonomy. The relationship between the mother and the child is related to the concept of self, particularly to the dimension of interpersonal distance. The understanding of the interpersonal distance influences both behaviors of the mother and the desired characteristics of the child, primarily how independent the child should be. When asked for her opinion about social expectations of a good mother in Turkey, Kassia replied:

> Good mother in Turkey – a child will always be clean and have ironed clothes. I don't iron clothes. Only if it is really necessary for me. But his clothes, nothing will ever force me to iron his clothes. But it is expected to do it and you are expected to boil already boiled water before you give him to drink. Even for bathing! You should boil water before you take him to the shower. But I was like "O, my God!" Also, a mother here doesn't have a right to complain if she is tired. Her role is only to take care of this kid and meet all his needs, there is nothing else. In Turkey it is quite normal that after you have a child, you will just stay at home. Your social life will end. I go out in the evening and have a beer with my friends, for me it is normal and healthy (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014).

At the practical level Kassia is fully devoted to her 3 years-old son, as she holds a part-time evening job and actively spends daytime with him. Her motherhood ideology is focused on empowering children by "teaching them to keep in touch with their feelings, getting to know the child as an individual, and promoting independence and boundaries" (Johnston & Swanson, 2006, p. 514). However, at the symbolical level she asserts her autonomy from her son through her wishes and her personal space. Besides, set her deliberate practices as opposite to those of an imagined, typical Turkish mother (it is expected to iron – I don't; your social life will end – I go out and have a beer).

Likewise, Caroline observes, "In Turkey, I think, Turkish mothers are the servants of their children. And in Germany, of course, we serve our children as well, but, there is a verse, when they are small give them a nest, and when they are big give them wings and enable them to use the wings" (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014). Caroline emphasizes the end goal of child rearing in her understanding: fully autonomous children.

Additionally, when I asked Richard what is a good mother for him, he employed contrasting and explained it through binary oppositions.

> For me, a good mother is what I got, a working mother, who contributes to the family just as I do. That's what is the most important for me. I never wanted a housewife. I don't want to sit and talk how much a neighbor paid something. I want to have a meaningful conversation. I would like that she cooks a bit better. But we get by, because she is completely opposite from her mother. Her mother is a traditional housewife who constantly talks about food. The structure of soup, how many carbohydrates. The mother would cook for hours and hours and hours just to create something. But when we get home, we say "Ok, let's have some pasta" (Richard, Personal communication, 29 May 2014).

Whereas Kassia contrasted herself with a "typical" Turkish mother, Richard contrasts his wife with her own mother. In his view, a good mother holds gainful employment, which has a higher value than a maintenance of a household, is able to have a meaningful conversation, which a traditional housewife is not, does not excel in cooking, unlike her mother who is highly devoted to it. However, looking down on the traditional female role is again an ideological stand, and Richard's narrative echoes the debate on working versus stay-at-home mothers in the British society on

who is the better mother. The British and American societies are so polarized in regard to the maternal ideal that an expression “the mommy wars” was coined in the 2000s. Although some scholars (Hays, 1995; Zimmerman et al., 2008) argue that the media created a false controversy, in Richard’s account a clear preference for the one side is apparent.

4.6. Moral boundaries

The issue of moral boundaries is strictly correlated with the individual understanding of good motherhood. The participants tend to set moral boundaries foremost in regard to the desired qualities they foster in children. The main issues is independence of children. In narratives of the European participants who highly value and encourage independence, it is expressed in the children’s ability to cope with the life on their own, to be self-confident, and freely speak up their mind. Participants frequently criticize what they perceive as excessive relying on Turkish, even adult, children on their parents. What is more, they consider it as an apparent lack of ability to take care of their life and take pride in the fact that their own children differ. I asked Caroline what does she think how children in Turkey are raised. Although the question did not refer to her children, Caroline exemplified perceived Turkish children by contrasting them to hers.

> They are not independent at all. When I see my own children, they learned to cope with life on their own. When my oldest daughter was 11 she would look after 3 of her brothers and sisters. She is extraordinary. My second daughter went to high school to New Zealand when she was 16, all on her own, she travelled half the world and she managed. When the third one finished high school, she travelled around the world, she did work and travel for 1 year, and that is not very common here. For example, we have in our office some Turkish young engineers, just finished university. They wouldn’t know how to handle life, you have to tell them what to do, but my children know what to do, they can decide for themselves. But they can’t, they have to ask mummy and daddy, and mummy is still doing the washing, looking after them, and mummy is preparing dinner (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014).

Caroline, as well as other participants, ascribes values to practices and lifestyles. For her, travelling has a normative value and she expects it from young people in order to prove their independence and capabilities. On the other hand, close proximity to and relying on parents are signs of weakness and immaturity. The socioeconomic structure of a given society and international relations decisively impact one's ability to travel. Young people from Turkey, unless they belong to privileged strata, are faced with strict visa requirements and much less financial resources than their German peers. Hence, it is important to note travel is a class and citizenship-based value.

In addition, parents who take the independence as a crucial value tend to stress equality in intra-family relations and decision-making process, and encourage their children to express their opinions. Particularly, the decision-making reflects the nature of intra-family relations. Schönpflug (2001) considers the decision-making influence to be an important indicator of family structure. The author argues in traditional patriarchal Turkish family father is the main decision-maker, followed by the mother, whereas "children are at the very end of the decision hierarchy" (p. 219).

I asked Richard what in his opinion a good child is in Turkey:

> Turkish parents treat children as children until, as I said, pretty much their death. You cannot express your opinion. If you express an opinion that is not your parents' opinion, it is considered rude or you might be provocative. I'll give you an example. When we moved to Turkey we were buying things for our home and of course parents in-law came with us and we were looking for a rug. My wife and I were looking at it with my father in law, it was nice and I said "Sezen, come, what do you think about it? Do you like it?" My father in-law turned and said "Why do you ask her? You decide! Why are you asking a child?" and I said "Because it is her home as well." That's how we do, we decide together (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014).

Apparently, Richard perceives an ideal good child in Turkey as one who does not contradict the parents. Besides, he deliberately raises his daughter in an opposite manner, supporting her to be out-spoken, treating her as an equal member of the household, who participates in decision-making.

The issue of respect that elders demand from younger ones is frequently reported in the interviews and closely related to the structure of the family. Only two

participants point it out as a positive feature of the Turkish society, as opposite to the situation in England and Serbia. Clare particularly stressed the importance of respect. “Number one for me was that people respect each other here. There are some disrespectful people, but in general children are taught to respect their elder and I wanted him to grow up in a culture where they know to respect people” (Clare, Personal communication, 2 June 2014). Others, as in the aforementioned example of opinions and decision making, relate it to the perceived authoritarian culture of the Turkish society, and openly state their preferences for more egalitarian inter-generational relations within the family.

The respect younger pay to the elders is embedded in Turkish language. Words such as *teyze* (aunt), *amca* (uncle), *abi* (older brother) and *abla* (older sister) are commonly used with non-related people. Typically, adults address their mother’s friends as teyze, and to call her by her name would be a taboo. This practice denotes intimacy and extends family relations to acquaintances, friends, and even people in shops and in the street. Besides, in a conservative society such as Turkish, when non-related people use *abi* and *abla* with the opposite sex, it dismisses a potential sexual connotation. Nonetheless, when it is used among siblings, it introduces hierarchy. The older one, *abi* or *abla*, is entitled to respect and obedience of the younger. Hence, the usage of these words intermingles hierarchy and intimacy. This linguistic practice upset some non-Turkish parents, as they perceive it to be against equality.

> Addressing others as *abi* and *abla* seriously bothers me, especially within the family. I wouldn’t allow that one of my children address the other like that. It introduces cold relations in the family. My husband didn’t know anything else, but I see he has changed. Now he doesn’t use a word *abi*, because he doesn’t want that Bora *(the son)* feels that he is so small. Now when I say sometimes “*Abi* geldi (*an older brother came*)”, my husband warns me not to use *abi*, because they are equal. Either he changed because of the child, because he always has a fear that his child is not in the back, but I think he took it from me. Because it really bothers me. There is no something like that in Serbia (Sanja, personal communication, 8 February 2014).

Whereas Snezana considers a hierarchy established through linguistic practice to be connected with a lack of warmth among the family members, Sunar and Fisek argue hierarchy has a positive function. “They suggested that the strong

hierarchy within the Turkish family offsets the high level of intimacy, interdependence, and proximity, providing differentiations between family members while still allowing for interconnectedness" (Sunar & Fisek: 2005, as quoted in Harwood et al., 2006 p. 12).

The last issue around which moral boundaries are created is a concept of shame, *ayıp*, related to gender-differentiated approach to child rearing. *Ayıp* has a strong moral connotation and doing something ayıp brings disgrace to the actor. It is not a simple violation of rules of conduct, what in English would be to behave inappropriate or rude, it is *ayıp etmek* – doing shame. When it comes to children, a child playing with his or her body and a little boy doing what the girls should do are to be warned and corrected. Kassia observes that the gender division is informally and even unconsciously taught from an early age in Turkey, considering that some mothers find it appropriate to intervene when her 3 years-old son appears to violate cultural codes.

> In Turkey sometimes he plays with a doll in a park. If some girl has a doll and a toy stroller for her and he wants to play with it, other mothers would say: "*Ayip*, *ayip*, you are a boy!" It is not like that in Poland. In Poland boys and girls play with the same toys. But here girls don't really play with boys. I tried to make him play with girls, he has some girlfriends in the park, but their mothers are artists, free spirits. But, yes, children play separately and they are raised like "You are going to be a big boy, you will go to the army" (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014).

Kassia emphasizes only a specific group of mothers (artists, free spirits) does not mind their daughters playing with her son. Besides, her intentionally encouraging behavior is not widely socially accepted. Kassia's case reflects a tendency of the majority of the research participants to raise their children in a certain manner, even when it collides with the mainstream. Rather, the non-Turkish participants consider that the Turkish way of upbringing are not functional.

To conclude, when it comes to moral boundaries, the research participants tend to draw lines between what they see as a dominant practice and value in the Turkish society and the one they prefer. The independence of children as an end goal of socialization is preferred over redundant relying on parents, which provides safety, but hinders freedom. Having a separate opinion and being outspoken is

valued more than complying with parental opinions. Equality of family members is preferred over respect. Lastly, there is an overall agreement that mixing of boys and girls in play groups is normal and necessary, which disregards the gender-differentiated approach.

4.7. Socioeconomic boundaries

Primarily the participants from Eastern Europe (Poland, Serbia) link perceived negative aspects of child rearing in Turkey with its socioeconomic structural conditions. In their views, these conditions present obstacles for both good mothering and development of desired qualities in children. As a legacy of the communist era, the states in Poland and Serbia still provide high quality free education, health care, and a long, paid maternity leave. The Turkish labor law stipulates 16 weeks of maternity leave, compared with 52 weeks in Serbia and combined parental 52 weeks leave in Poland. Besides, unlike Eastern Europe, Turkey has an abundance of privatized schools, universities, and hospitals. Hence, participants from the Eastern Europe expect quality services from the state.

In Sanja's view, the parental active participation is decisive for raising an independent child:

> I think they raise children in a very stupid way here. First, because of work no one here can afford to stay with kids. Second, here children are forced to spend the entire day at school. They cannot play alone in the street or stay alone in the house. Essentially, they get a very little education directly from the parents. Then after school they go to Dersane, do their homework there, they receive so much information, but don't learn anything concrete. Children are not independent, for them knowledge is summarized and everything is programmed. They cannot go by themselves, because they don't go to a state school across their home, but with a school shuttels. They do not go alone anywhere, they are completely dependent. The parents take them by car, so that, god forbid, something will not happen (Sanja, personal communication, 8 February 2014).

For Sanja, the Turkish socioeconomic system represents an obstacle to a "good motherhood", which means to spend an abundance of time with a child, to actively participate in his or her development, and to foster the independence and autonomous play, exploration, and learning. She considers the structural reasons to

prevent optimal parental involvement and influence. As children are most of the time directly supervised by unrelated adults and their activities are structured, it hinders the development of their independence and critical thinking. Besides, Sanja commented for her raising a child in Serbia would be much easier, because "everything is provided by the state, education, health care, here in Turkey everything is so expensive!" (Sanja, personal communication, 8 February 2014).

In addition, both participants from Eastern and Western Europe are critical toward the large class gap and what they consider to be excessive consumption of the Turkish middle and upper classes. On one hand, those from affluent Western countries (England, Germany) have had plenty of commodities on their disposal for decades. On the other hand, those from Eastern Europe grew up in a system which stressed equality and the class differences are still much lesser than in Turkey.

> My wife was a waitress while studying in England. She couldn't do that in Turkey. If she did it, neighbors would say, "Do you know their daughter is being a waitress? Maybe they have financial problems!" I strongly believe university students should work. But here it is just not acceptable, especially in this kind of culture where they are more concerned with what society would think than with what benefits their child would have… some good skills, responsibility, the value of money. The class that I associate with, a lot of students that come to this university, they don't have any idea what is the value of money. Children arrive in top range cars here and they live in apartments their parents are renting to them (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014).

As Sanja, Richard relates the socioeconomic conditions in Turkey with the prevention of development of preferred qualities. He takes what is normative in England as a reference point. The custom of university students being engaged in paid work leads to their autonomy from the parents and material independence. On the contrary, in Richard's opinion, due to the large class inequalities in the society, parents of middle and upper middle classes do not encourage their children to have a part-time job associated with lower classes (such as being a waiter). As a result, youngsters are prevented from gaining skills and learning responsibility, but the status of the family remains intact. Here, the critic of over-consumption is coupled with the critique of the material dependence.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy some participants set socioeconomic boundaries toward partner's family of origin, but mistake them for national cultural

differences. For instance, when Caroline (German) explains the approach of her parents in-law toward her children, she generalizes their socioeconomic situation (unskilled manual guest workers in Germany) and applies it to the entire Turkish society: “There are no children's books in Turkey. They are just learning to have toys and books with pictures to look at and learn from” (Caroline, Personal communication, 1 June 2014).

4.8. Cultural boundaries

In this research, cultural boundaries are not used in a sense of cultural differences between nations, but referring to “cultural standards such as intelligence, refinement, curiosity, and aesthetic sophistication” (xxiii) as elaborated by Lamont, (1992) are less prominent than moral and socioeconomic boundaries. Only one participant, Richard, stresses what he perceives as a difference in manners between Englishmen and Turks. Nonetheless, he explains a lack of manners of his 7 year-old daughter as a consequence of Turkish class division. In his view, the structure of Turkish society prevents him from transmitting an important cultural trait to his daughter.

> I am a typical English; I love manners, please and thank you. Occasionally my daughter lacks manners, especially when she is speaking Turkish, she just says yes, no, I want. But here waiters are surprised sometimes when we say thank you to them. It is serious status system in Turkey, a huge divide. There are people who are served and they treat others like they don’t exist. It bothers me a lot, I absolutely hate it (Richard, personal communication, 29 May 2014).

Furthermore, two issues Caroline raises, namely the importance of cleanness in Turkish society and differences that she and her husband (in other cases Turkish in-laws figure prominently), serve to create cultural boundaries in Lamont’s sense. When asked about non-agreements with her husband in regard to their children’s upbringing, Caroline (Germany) acknowledged them, but reported being a main decision-maker in child-rearing issues:

> You know, Turkish children are not allowed to get dirty. German children are allowed, we appreciate them getting dirty. That was hard to cope. But he

> would let me do. When they were older they wanted to attend hobbies, learn music, play instruments. I would let them go or drive them to the places. He really objected me being a taxi driver for children. But I fought for it and in my opinion, it was good to do it, to show them possibilities they might have. At the far end when you ask him now, he says it was the right thing, but at that time it was hard for him and he didn't want me to do it (Caroline, personal communication, 1 June 2014).

In the second part of Caroline's account, she is setting a typical cultural boundary in Lamont's sense. The disparity between her and her family on one hand (native in German, socially and culturally proficient, middle class membership) and the husband and his family on the other hand (low-skilled manual guest workers) enhances her sense of cultural superiority and conviction her approach to children is the right one.

Additionally, the first part of Caroline's quotation resonates with those of the majority of other research participants, who have observed the significance of hygiene and cleanliness in Turkish society. For instance, Kassia event considers the issue of cleanliness to be a crucial obstacle for her in establishing cordial relations with other mothers she meets. Cleanliness is one of the criteria for inclusion into the circle of "good mothers":

> Some mothers don't like me because I let Doğa do everything in the park. He can get dirty, he can play with mud. They see that I am being bad example to their children. They want their children to stay clean. But, they take children to shopping mall. First of all, that is what is unhealthy and not playing with a mud. There are millions of viruses and bacteria there. I hate it. I don't want to instill the values of capitalism, consumption, buying new things all the time (Kassia, personal communication, 4 June 2014).

Allegranzi et al. (2006) claim hygiene is deeply influenced by religious and cultural factors. The authors point out different religious requirements of Christianity and Islam. Unlike in Catholicism, which lacks instruction on hygiene in daily life and rituals, apart from "the ritual of sprinkling of holy water on hands before consecration of the bread and wine and the washing hands after touching the holy oil" (p. 29), Islam provides detailed instructions. Not only before each of the 5 daily prayers, but the believers are expected to wash their hands before and after every meal, after going to the toilet, after touching a dog, shoes, or a cadaver, and after handling anything soiled (p. 31). Hence, Christianity acknowledges the solely

ritual purpose of hand washing, whereas in Islam it has both ritual and hygienic, cleansing function.

On the other hand, Ger (1999) connects washing and cleaning practices to economic growth in Turkey and upward mobility. According to his findings, the participants tend to engage in high impact consumption, which include spending an abundance of cleaning products and hot water, once when they are affordable. Ger concludes, "There is a close association between cleanliness and aesthetics of the home. While "dirty" symbolizes poverty and backwardness, "clean" symbolizes a distance from poverty, modern civilization, respectability, religious virtue, beautification of the home, as well as hygene."[5] However, Kassia's decision to let her son play with a mud it not only a matter of cleanliness. It reflects a tendency to allow her son to freely explore his environment and develop independence, and desired level of child's physical activity.

4.9. Discussion

The case of Kassia (Polish) summarizes the most appropriately the clash between what she perceives as a dominant family model and a concept of motherhood, and all three sorts of symbolic boundaries are prominent in her accounts. Although it is not a typical case and other participants point out fewer differences, it is an illustrative example, which encapsulates numerous issues arising when a child is reared in a foreign context. She is critical to the family model of interconnectedness, as in her view she and her husband are the sole responsible persons to decide on a direction of the child's upbringing. Therefore, she denies the authority of the Turkish grandparents to determine how her son should behave and what he should eat and get. However, she confesses that she does not have control over their approach to him and regards it as disrespect.

Furthermore, Kassia draws a firm line between herself and a prototypical Turkish mother in many aspects. She deliberately opposes a self-sacrificing, child-centeredness and finding fulfillment only through a child. Although in practice she

[5] http://www.acrwebsite.org/search/view-conference-proceedings.aspx?Id=8262

is exceptionally devoted to her three years-old son, he does not attend a day care and she teaches in the evenings, at the symbolical level, she finds it important to assert her independence and keeps a private sphere for her own.

Besides, Kassia sets the conscious symbolic boundaries through the practices she does (let her son get dirty in mud, knowing that it will provoke resentment from fellow mothers in a park) and she rejects to perform (refusing to iron the child's clothes, although it is a widespread social norm). On the other hand, she advocates for the stricter discipline of children than she finds in the Turkish society:

> They do everything what children want. If a child wants a toy or a sweet or a drink, they buy it immediately. It is not like that in my culture. Kids here are allowed to watch TV as much as they want, but they are not taught any responsibilities in the house. Actually 2 or 3 years old can have little responsibilities already. He is helping me to fill dish washer. But Turkish kids don't have any responsibility such as tidying their own room or collecting their toys (Kassia, Personal communication, 4 June 2014).

Also, she encourages her son to play with girls and toys considered to be girlish, albeit knowing it can be seen as shameful behavior, as some mothers she encounters warn her son that it is *ayıp* to play with dolls. It is her purposeful action against perceived gender-differentiated approaches to children. Opposing to that, she forbids that friends and relative provide him with car toys and weapons, and encourages gender-neutral toys.

Nonetheless, Kassia is far from an isolated case. Although the other participants tend to put emphasize on one or two symbolic boundaries, still different types of symbolic boundaries repeatedly intersect. According to Zerubavel (1999), "classifying is a universal mental act that we all perform as human beings" (p. 53). Thereupon, when participants want to explain family relations, motherhood, or child rearing practice they observe in Turkish society, they inevitably compare them to those in their home countries. Besides, at the core of all contrasting and othering the participants employ is the vision of what kind of adult children should become.

Studies on parenting in individualistic countries stated previously in this chapter show that immigrants' adoption of the host country's parenting styles largely correlates with their acculturation level. In this research it is true to a certain extent. The acceptance of and positive attitude the upbringing ways in the Turkish society depends on a combination of acculturation level and the harmonious relationship

with the Turkish in-laws. When there is a common ground between a non-Turkish parent and Turkish in-laws on the direction of child rearing and crucial values, and when they are supportive and respectful of parent's decisions, the setting of symbolic boundaries is minimal. On the contrary, misunderstanding and conflicts with the in-laws greatly contribute to the disdain for Turkish society, even when a person is fully integrated, such as Kassia.

Finally, although the majority participants reported a parenting style that is different from the mainstream one, they at the same time never mention their children's behavior as unfitting in the Turkish context. It shows the internalized belief in the rightness of their way of child rearing.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

My research shows that each mixed family is indeed a "socio-cultural hybrid space" (Rodríguez García, 2006, p. 426) of its own. The parents deliberately bring decisions that will affect all aspects of life of their children. First of all, a name choice immediately determines belonging of a child. Afterwards, the parental intentional decisions determine which aspects of the respective sociocultural heritages are to be transmitted to the next generation. The following table summarizes three distinctive parental approaches (open individualized, mix collective, single collective) to diversity within mixed families in regard to: names, religious accommodation of two faiths in the family, religious transmission to children, development of sociocultural competences, spoken languages, and belonging. Throughout my research, I observed that the adaptation strategy of a non-Turkish parent to the Turkish society correlates with the approach to diversity.

Table 5.1: Approaches to diversity within mixed families

	Open individualized approach	**Mix collective approach**	**Single collective approach**
Names	Universal, no ethnic references	Ethnic, references to mixed heritage	a) religious b) both ethnic
Religious accommodation (Furlong & Ata, 2006)	Ignoring and withdrawing	Plurality of faiths	Respect for "otherness"
Religious transmission (Froese, 2008)	Bypassing both faiths	Transmission of cultural aspects	One faith
Sociocultural competencies	Both societies + preparation for an "international life"	Both societies	a) German b) Turkish/Serbian
Spoken languages	English, Turkish, a minority language	English, Turkish, a minority language	a) German b) English, Turkish, Serbian
Belonging	Cosmopolitan	Both nations	One nation/religion

Table 5.1 (continued)

Adaptation strategy of a minority parent	Marginalization/Separation	Integration	a) Assimilation b) Assimilation/Integration

However, there is an important difference between purposeful decisions on names and sociocultural intergenerational transmission and perceptions of the appropriate relations with an extended family, a concept of a good mother, and child-rearing practices. Whereas the decisions and actions related to the former are purposeful, the setting of symbolic boundaries is not a deliberate process. Rather, the parents who were socialized in a non-Turkish context apply their tacit, taken for granted assumptions of what is right and wrong to the relations and practices common in the Turkish society. The research participants reported numerous points of misunderstanding and even conflict in regard to family relations and child upbringing, arising from the deeply interiorized concepts of self and family. Following the theory of symbolic boundaries of Michele Lamont (1992), I classified the issues into moral, socioeconomic and cultural boundaries. The following table summarizes boundaries and illustrates each issue with a quotation.

Table 5.2: Summary of symbolic boundaries:

Symbolic boundaries	**Example**
I Moral boundaries:	
Independence of children	"Turkish? Children are not independent. For them knowledge is summarized and everything is programmed. They do not go alone anywhere, they are completely dependent" (Sanja).
Decision making in the family	"Parents decide everything for children in Turkey. They have no critical thinking ability; they don't have an opinion, because they have never been asked" (Richard).
Respect	"Parents in Turkey require respect from their children from an early age. But we don't ask for respect from him, we are like friends" (Kassia).
Ayıp	"Sometimes my son plays with a doll in a park, like some girl has a doll and toy strollers for her and he wants to play with it. Often other mothers say "*Ayip*, *ayip*, you are a boy" (Kassia).

Table 5.2 (continued)

II Socioeconomic boundaries	
Socioeconomic structural conditions of Turkish society	"Because of work no one here can afford to stay with kids and children are forced to spend the entire day at school. Essentially, the kids get a very little education directly from the parents" (Sanja).
Excessive consumption	"I am really against private schools because I know these kids, and they are spoiled. They live in a big *site* with private pools and gyms. It is again obsession. I grow up in a communist country. Some ideas are great in communism" (Kassia)
III Cultural boundaries	
Education	"My sister in-law does not know how to teach her children colors, numbers, shapes. She always wanted me to teach them that kind of things" (Caroline).
Manners	"I love manners; I like please, thank you. But my daughter lacks manners when she speaks Turkish. In Turkish she just says yes, no, I won't" (Richard).
Hygiene	"Taking children to shopping mall is unhealthy; not playing with a mud. There are millions of viruses and bacteria there. I hate it. I let my son to play with mud" (Kassia).

Finally, there are two main factors influencing all topics I analyzed in the thesis. The cultural capital of the non-Turkish participants and their relationship with the Turkish in-laws decisively impact a) their adaptation strategies to the Turkish society, b) their ability to transmit the sociocultural heritage, and c) the process of symbolic boundary setting.

As the couples in my research possess similar cultural capital, they are able to effectively transmit their heritage to children albeit in a minority context, and raise their children the way they want, even when it is in a collision with the dominant practices in the Turkish society.

In addition, I did not find a clear correlation between the possession of cultural capital and the setting of symbolic boundaries regarding child rearing practices. The research participants with similar cultural capital reported quite different experiences and opinions. However, the cultural capital has an impact in

the sense that non-Turkish parents feel competent and confident about their parenting styles, even when they contradict with the prevailing child rearing practices in the Turkish society.

The setting of symbolic boundaries primarily depends on the relationship with Turkish in-laws.The research participants who have most harmonious relationship with the in-laws almost find no faults in Turkish ways of child rearing. On the other hand, those who have antagonistic relations with the in-laws tend to be the most critical to the Turkish society as a whole. Correspondingly, a good relationship with in-laws leads to integration adaptation strategy, whereas less harmonious relationship leads to separation or marginalization.

Lastly, there are certain limitations of this thesis, which, however, open up space for future studies. Primarily, I intentionally excluded two important concepts, namely transnationalism and cosmopolitanism, from my theoretical framework. I did not take into account the relations toward the society of origin of a non-Turkish parent, but rather focused on the adaptation strategies to the Turkish society. Hence, a future research on the topic might include the transnational practices and also cosmopolitan lifestyles and identities.

Second, the research focus is on perceptions and experiences of the non-Turkish partners, while the perspectives of Turkish partners, grandparents, and children are missing. Future studies may possibly shift to the perspective of the native partner, i.e. how it is to raise a child with a foreigner in his/her home country. Particularly, my thesis lacks the perspective of the Turkish partner about setting of symbolic boundaries regarding child rearing practices.

In addition, although the most important finding of my thesis draws the attention to the importance of native in-laws, when it comes to the adaptation to Turkish society, ability to transmit non-Turkish part of sociocultural heritage, and the setting of symbolic boundaries, I did not conduct interviews with grandparents. What I consider particularly fruitful for future research would be a longitudinal following of children from cross-national marriages, i.e. how they transform the emotional perceptions of societies in an early age to more cognitive understanding and construction of identities. The comprehensive understanding of a cross-national family requires taking into account opinions and experiences of all involved actors. It means including children and both sets of the grandparents in a research design.

Third, my research participants are predominantly secular, coming from upper-middle class and having high educational backgrounds, and residing in Istanbul. As I did not conduct interviews with, for instance, Western women who converted to Islam or moved to rural areas of Turkey, I was not able to analyze these issues.

Finally, each of the topics I tackled in my thesis has a potential for an elaborate research. My thesis represents only a top of an iceberg, showing certain issues that cross-national families face. Nonetheless, my thesis, with all its limits, hopes to contribute to the research field and bring insight to the growing number of Europeans who live in Turkey and establish families with Turkish citizens.

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